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**ST MARY'S HOUSE, CLACTON ROAD,
LITTLE OAKLEY, ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Matthew Adams (Fieldwork & report) Peter Thompson MA (Research)	
NGR: TM 2120 2846	Report No: 3851
District: Tendring	Site Code: LOSM11
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: P4245
Signed:	Date: June 2011

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	St Mary's House, Clacton Road, Little Oakley, Essex		
<p>In February 2011 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological monitoring and recording at St Mary's House, Clacton Road, Little Oakley, Essex (NGR TL 509 359). The monitoring was conducted in compliance with a planning condition attached to a planning approval for improvements to the building (Tendring Planning Reference 10/01224/FUL & 10/01225/LB).</p> <p>Prehistoric flints, Roman tile and pottery, and late medieval pottery have been recovered from within 200m to the south-west (EHER 3327, 3324, 3326, 3329). The property is the Grade II* listed former Church of St Mary, which dates from the early 12th century with later phases of medieval building and has Roman tile incorporated within its fabric (EHER 3304, 3332). It is constructed over an earth platform which showed evidence of an earlier church beneath (EHER 3321). The church was restored in the 19th/20th centuries becoming redundant in 1973. It originally stood in an oval churchyard which was extended to the west. It is now a residential dwelling.</p> <p>The monitoring was carried out during the excavation of a French drain around the building perimeter. It recorded the construction cuts for the east and west walls of the now demolished vestry which once abutted the north wall of the chancel. No artefacts were recovered.</p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	14 & 17 February 2011		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	TBC
P. number	4245	Site code	LOSM11
Type of project	Archaeological Monitoring & Recording		
Site status	Grade II*		
Current land use	Residential		
Planned development	Home improvements including installing a drain around the building exterior and internal works to alleviate damp		
Main features (+dates)	Construction cuts for former vestry walls		
Significant finds(+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Essex	Tendring	Little Oakley
HER/ SMR for area	Essex HER (EHER)		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	c.100m ²		
NGR	TL 2120 2846		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.23m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team		
Project supervisor (PO)	Matthew Adams		
Funded by	Mr Grahame Jenkins		
Full title	St Mary's House, Clacton Road, Little Oakley, Essex Archaeological Monitoring & Recording		
Authors	Adams, M. & Thompson P.		
Report no.	3851		
Date (of report)	June 2011		

ST MARY'S HOUSE, CLACTON ROAD, LITTLE OAKLEY, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

In February 2011, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording at St Mary's House, Clacton Road, Little Oakley, Essex (NGR TL 509 359). The monitoring was conducted in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for improvements to the building (Tendring Planning Reference 10/01224/FUL & 10/01225/LB).

Prehistoric flints, Roman tile and pottery, and late medieval pottery have been recovered from within 200m south-west of the site (EHER 3327, 3324, 3326, 3329). The property is the Grade II listed former Church of St Mary, which dates from the early 12th century with later phases of medieval building and has Roman tile incorporated within its fabric (EHER 3304, 3332). It is constructed over an earth platform which showed evidence of an earlier church beneath (EHER 3321). The church was restored in the 19th/20th centuries becoming redundant in 1973. It originally stood in an oval churchyard which was extended to the west. It is now a residential dwelling.*

The monitoring was carried out during the excavation of a French drain around the building perimeter. It recorded the construction cuts for the east and west walls of the now demolished vestry which once abutted the north wall of the chancel. No artefacts were recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2011 Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording at St Mary's House, Clacton Road, Little Oakley, Essex (NGR TL 509 359; Figs.1-2). The monitoring was conducted in compliance with a planning condition attached to a planning approval for improvements to the building (Tendring Planning Ref. 10/01224/FUL & 10/01225/LB), and was commissioned by Mr Grahame Jenkins.

1.2 The archaeological monitoring was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Team ((ECC HEM) A. Gascoyne; dated Jan/2011), and a specification compiled by AS (dated 31/01/2011), and approved by ECC HEM.

1.3 The monitoring aimed to identify and record any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The project had the specific aim of identifying any burials or evidence of earlier phases relating to

the church building. The brief also required a programme of building monitoring/recording to be carried out when future internal works to the property take place.

Planning policy context

1.4 PPS5 states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The Planning Policy Statement aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. It aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. It states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment and to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past, and to make this publicly available, should be taken, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs. 1 - 2)

2.1 The former parish church is located 3km south-west of Harwich, mid way between Little Oakley and Great Oakley and is 100m north of the B1414 which links those two villages. The former church is at the south end of its sub-rectangular precinct which is enclosed by hedges and surrounded by open fields. The former medieval church was converted to a residential dwelling c.1984, and is now known as St Mary's House.

3 METHODOLOGY (Desk-based assessment)

3.1 Archaeological databases

3.1.1 The Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) was consulted in order to identify any local archaeological finds or remains in the area that might be affected by, or relate to, the development. Sites within 750m are listed in Appendix 1 and relevant sites are described in the text (Section 4.2).

4 THE EVIDENCE Fig.3

4.1 Topography, geology and soils (Fig. 1)

4.1.1 The site is near the top of a ridge at approximately 23m AOD with a valley

to the west and the coastline varying between 1 and 2.5km to the east. The local soils are loams, often over clay, which overly beds of shelly sand, sand and gravel and lenticular clay.

4.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

Prehistoric & Romano-British

4.2.1 Eight undated prehistoric flints were found scattered in an area approximately 180m south-west of St Mary's Church (EHER 3327). In the same area Roman pottery, including 2nd century Samian ware and tegula and hypocaust tile was also recovered, suggesting that a Roman building stood in the vicinity (EHER 3329, 3324 & 3326). Roman tile has also been noted incorporated in the fabric of St Mary's church prior to its rendering (EHER 3304).

Anglo-Saxon

4.2.2 A limited excavation carried out in advance of converting the church to a dwelling found that the 12th century nave was built on an earth platform containing charcoal and human bone. Beneath the platform a single post hole suggested the presence of an earlier building, and a human skeleton lay partly underneath the south wall of the nave (EHER 3321).

Medieval

4.2.3 The earliest surviving part of the Grade II* listed church, is the nave which dates from the early 12th century. The chancel was rebuilt in the 14th century and a north vestry added but later demolished, the west tower was also built by c.1500 but not completed (EHER 3332). There are 12th, 14th and 15th century windows, 14th and 15th century doorways, and other features and fittings of medieval date. The church walls are of septaria and flint and rubble, with limestone dressing, and the roof is tiled. The earliest earth floor layers had a late 12th to early 13th century grave cut into them containing a priest holding a pewter chalice. Late medieval pottery was found at the same location as the Roman pottery and tile recovered to the south-west (EHER 3328).

Post-medieval

4.2.4 The church was partly restored in 'modern times' with the south porch and tower partly rebuilt (EHER 3265), and the current floor of wood and tile set in concrete was laid down in 1902. The churchyard is said to contain interesting trees and shrubs and was used for occasional burials up to 1973 when the church became redundant (EHER 34371). It was converted to a residential dwelling c.1984.

4.3 The site

4.3.1 The 1777 Andre & Chapman shows St Mary's Church and Little Oakley Hall and nicely illustrates the topography of the area at the time (Fig. 4). The c.1840 Tith map shows the church set within its oval graveyard enclosure with a later post-medieval field boundary respecting the church precinct boundary (Fig. 5). The 1st and 2nd edition OS maps of 1881 and 1897 show the church (also named the rectory) in greater detail (Figs. 6 & 7). There are no new buildings. A small rectangular field enclosure features to the east of the site. The 1923 OS map shows that the church yard enclosure has been extended to the west and there are remains of the old boundary as a bank or earthwork with a small ancillary building at its north end (Fig. 8). Some time after 1923, possibly when the church was made redundant, the church boundaries were re-formed in their current form.

5 METHODOLOGY (Archaeological monitoring and recording)

5.1 Archaeological monitoring observed external works at the eastern end of the building. Namely the excavation of c.0.20m of topsoil around the perimeter of the chancel; followed by the excavation of a trench for the proposed French drain. The trench was excavated at a width of 0.45m and to an average depth of 0.40m; the north-east corner was taken to a depth of 0.80m where it led to a soakaway.

5.2 The excavation was undertaken using a tracked 360° excavator, fitted with a toothless bucket. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using pro forma recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS Fig.9

Sample Sections

Sample sections of the stratigraphy were recorded at intervals along the excavation area, and the results are tabulated below:

Sample Section 1 (DP4)

<i>South-east corner, north facing</i> <i>(1m length)</i> <i>0.00 = 23.37m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. Dark grey brown, friable, sandy silt with occasional flint.
0.20 – 0.40m+	L1001	Subsoil. Mid yellow brown, loose, silty sand with occasional flint stones and occasional CBM fragments.

Sample Section 2

The drawn section begins below the c.0.20m of excavated topsoil.

<i>South , north facing 6m (6m length) 0.00 = 23.25m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.00 – 0.56m	L1005	Made ground. Mid brown grey, friable sandy silt with moderate flint stones, moderate CBM fragments and lenses of mortar.

Additional description of deposits

Subsoil L1001 may be a graveyard soil. No grave cuts were apparent and no skeletal remains were encountered; this was likely due to the relatively shallow depth of the excavation.

Made Ground L1005 was in the vicinity of the now demolished vestry which once abutted the north wall of the chancel. It was a mid brown grey, friable sandy silt with moderate flint and CBM fragments and lenses of mortar. It was excavated to a depth of 0.54m, and continued below the required excavation depth for the drain.

Description of the archaeology

F1003 and F1006 were both linear in plan and were recorded in section. They were very similar in appearance. Both were 0.70m wide with near vertical sides. F1003 was excavated to a depth of 0.40m, and F1006 to a depth of 0.60m. Both features continued below the required excavation depth for the service trench. Their fills comprised mid yellow white, loose, sandy mortar with occasional CBM and flint. They contained no other finds. They represent the construction cuts for the east and west walls (M1008 and M1009 respectively) of the now demolished vestry which once abutted the north wall of the chancel. They align with the surviving nubs of the vestry walls recorded within the north façade of the chancel. Walls M1008 and M1009 (DP11 and DP12) were exposed against the north wall of the chancel.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The Grade II* listed former Church of St Mary dates from the early 12th century with later phases of medieval building and has Roman tile incorporated within its fabric (EHER 3304, 3332). The church was restored in the 19th/20th centuries becoming redundant in 1973, and converted to a residential dwelling c.1984. The monitoring recorded the construction cuts for the east and west walls of the now demolished vestry which once abutted the north wall of the chancel. No artefacts were recovered.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at Colchester & Ipswich Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank the client Mr Grmahe Jenkins for funding the project and for his kind assistance.

Archaeological Solutions Limited would also like to thank Ms Laura Belton of the Essex Historic Environment Record Office and staff at the Chelmsford Record Office

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of Mr Adrian Gascoyne of Essex County Council Historic Environment Team

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SSEW 1983 *Soil Survey of England and Wales: Soils of South East England (sheet 4)*. Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

WEB SITES

Heritage Gateway
Unlocking Essex's Past

APPENDIX 1: ESSEX HER INFORMATION

EHER Number	National Grid Reference	Details
<i>Prehistoric 700,000 BC to AD 43</i>		
3327	211 283	8 prehistoric flints found scattered south of St Mary's church
3539	207 281	Late Neolithic to Late Bronze Age stone axe head found near Great Oakley Hall
3540	207 281	Fragments of an Iron Age pot found near Great Oakley Hall
3260*	20 28	Neolithic battle axe
3271*	21 29	Several late Bronze Age axeheads found in a bank in Glebeland between two fields
<i>Romano-British AD 43- 410</i>		
3329	211 283	Roman pot including 2 nd century samian ware found south of St Mary's Church
3324	211 283	Roman tegula and hypocaust tile found south of St Mary's Church
3304	212 284	St Mary's House (former church), fragments of Roman tile visible in the walls now obscured by render
3326	212 284	Roman tile from a drainage trench south of St Mary's Church
3537*	2168 2884	Cremation urn containing burnt bone in 'Glover's Field'
<i>Anglo-Saxon AD 410-1066</i>		
3321	212 284	Earth platform under the 12 th century nave containing human bone. Beneath was a single post-hole and a burial underlay the south wall of the nave
<i>Medieval 1066-1539</i>		
3332	212 284	St Mary's House (formerly St Mary's Church, Little Oakley). 12 th -15 th century with 19 th -20 th century restoration work
3328	211 283	Later medieval pot found south of St Mary's Church
3330	213 285	Moated site at Little Oakley Hall
3538*	2060 2812	Site of medieval moat
34371	212 284	St Mary's Church declared redundant in 1973
<i>Post-medieval 1539-1900</i>		
3323	215 283	Post-medieval brick and tile found south of Little Oakley

34353	207 281	18 th century timber-framed barn 90m ESE of Great Oakley Hall Farmhouse
34352	207 281	18 th century timber-framed barn 40m ESE of Great Oakley Hall Farmhouse
3322	211 283	Post-medieval glass south of St Mary's Church
3520	207 289	Brick kiln at Saltwater Bridge
3646	207 289	Brick kiln cottages a post-medieval roofed house
<i>Modern 1900+</i>		
17369	215 289	WWII heavy anti-aircraft gun emplacement
3265	212 284	St Mary's House (formerly St Mary's Church, Little Oakley). The church was partly restored 'in modern times' when the south porch was added and the tower partly rebuilt
17369*	2158 2885	Crop marks of multiple ditches probably associated with anti-glider defences
<i>Undated</i>		
3331	216 287	Ring ditch and enclosure east of Little Oakley
3325	211 283	Sandstone whetstone found south of St Mary's Church
47058*	2116 2928	Crop marks of linear ditches

APPENDIX 2: CARTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Map Description	Date	Scale
Site Location: OS Explorer	Modern	1:25,000
Detailed Site Location	Modern	
HER Information	Modern	1:10,000
Andre & Chapman	1777	
Tithe map	c.1840	
OS 1st edition	1881	1:2,500
OS 2 nd edition	1897	1:2,500
OS 3 rd edition	1923	1:2,500

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
General view of site. Looking north-west.



2
Trench for french drain beside south wall of chancel. Looking west.



3
Trench for french drain beside east wall of chancel. Looking south.



4
Sample section 1. Looking south.



7
General view of topsoil excavation beside north wall of chancel. Looking east.



8
Trench for french drain beside north wall of chancel. Looking west.



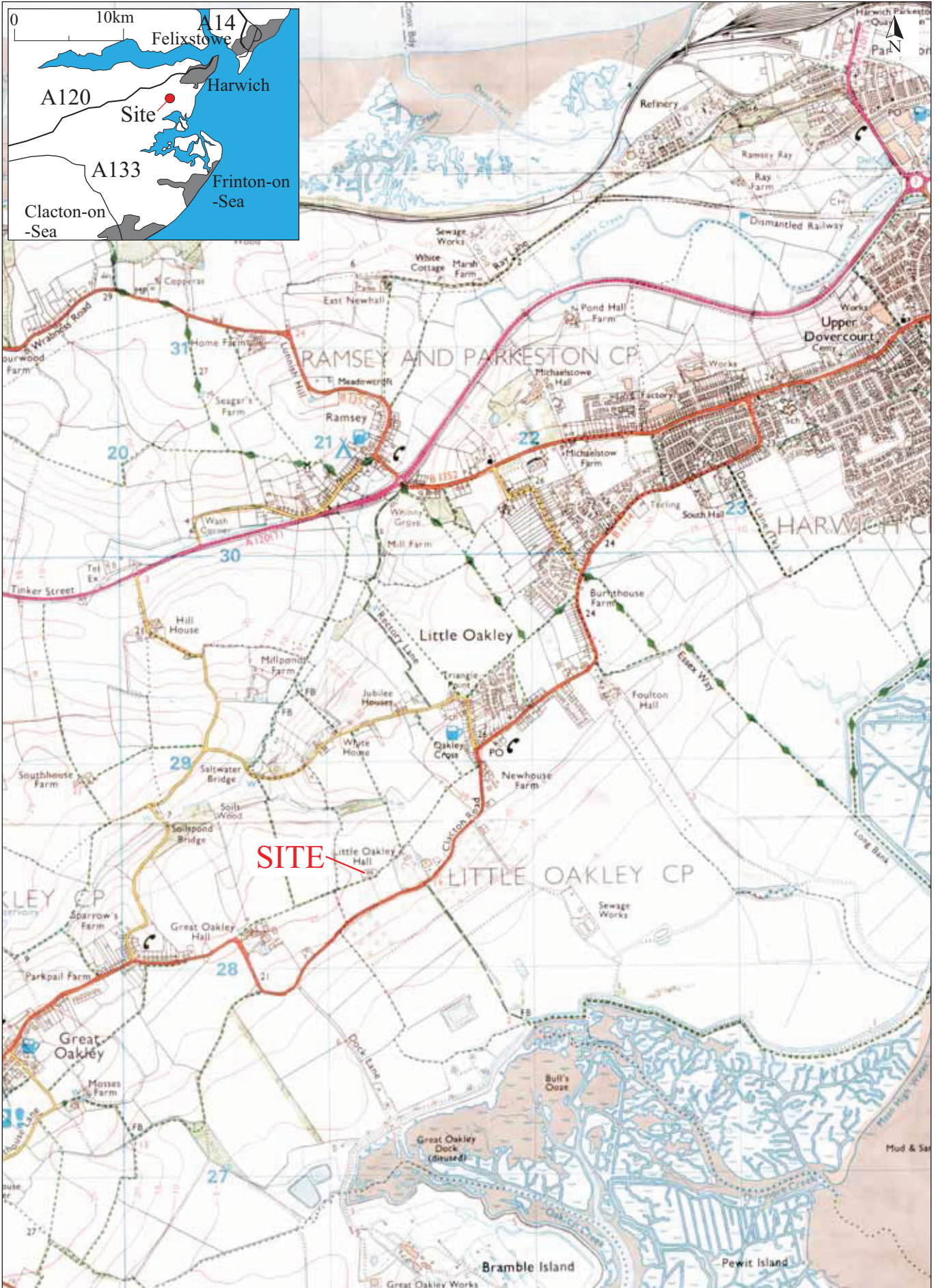
9
North elevation of chancel, vestry wall nubs M1008 and M1009 visible beneath render. Looking south.



11
East vestry wall M1008. Looking south.

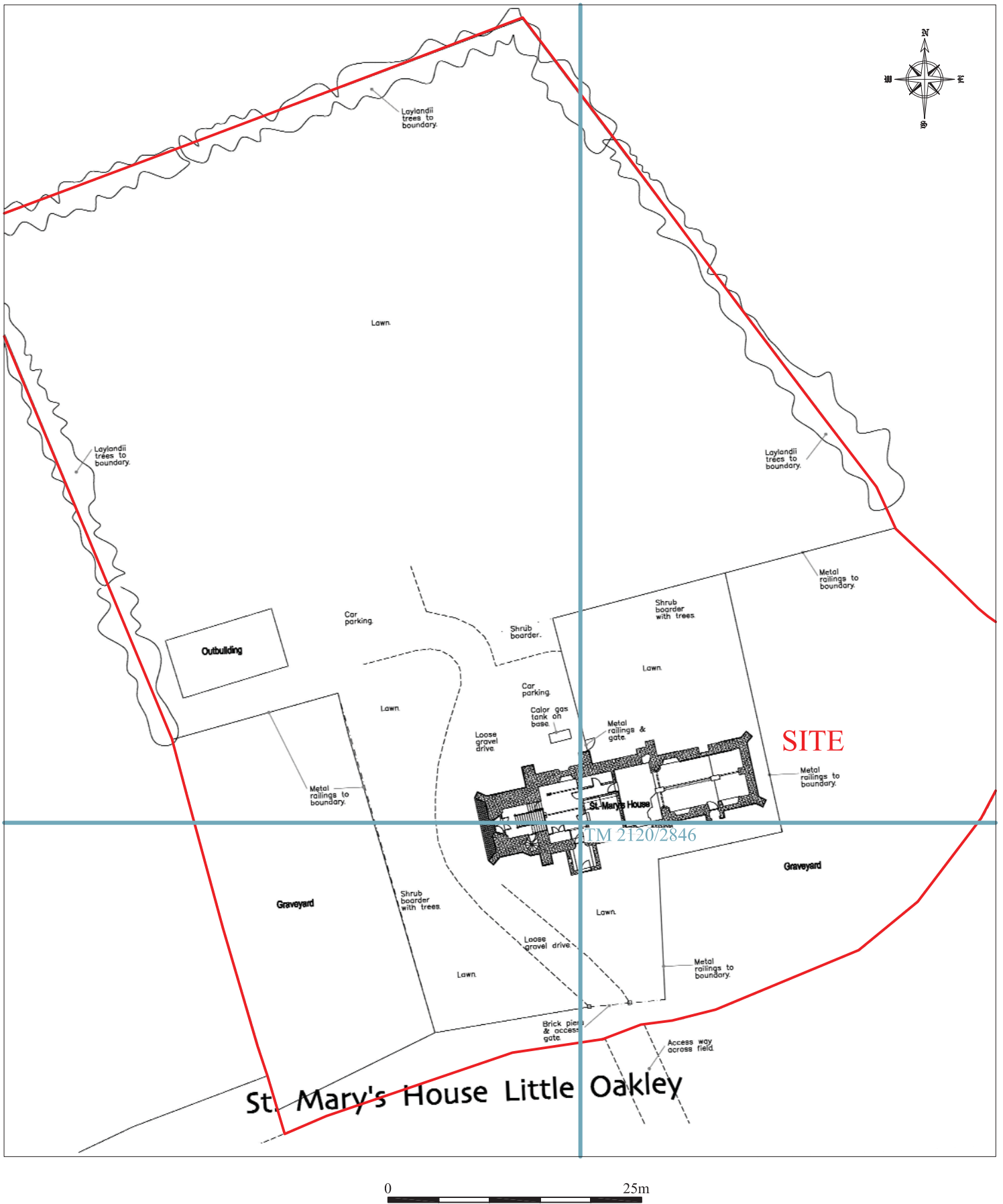


12
West vestry wall M1009. Looking south.

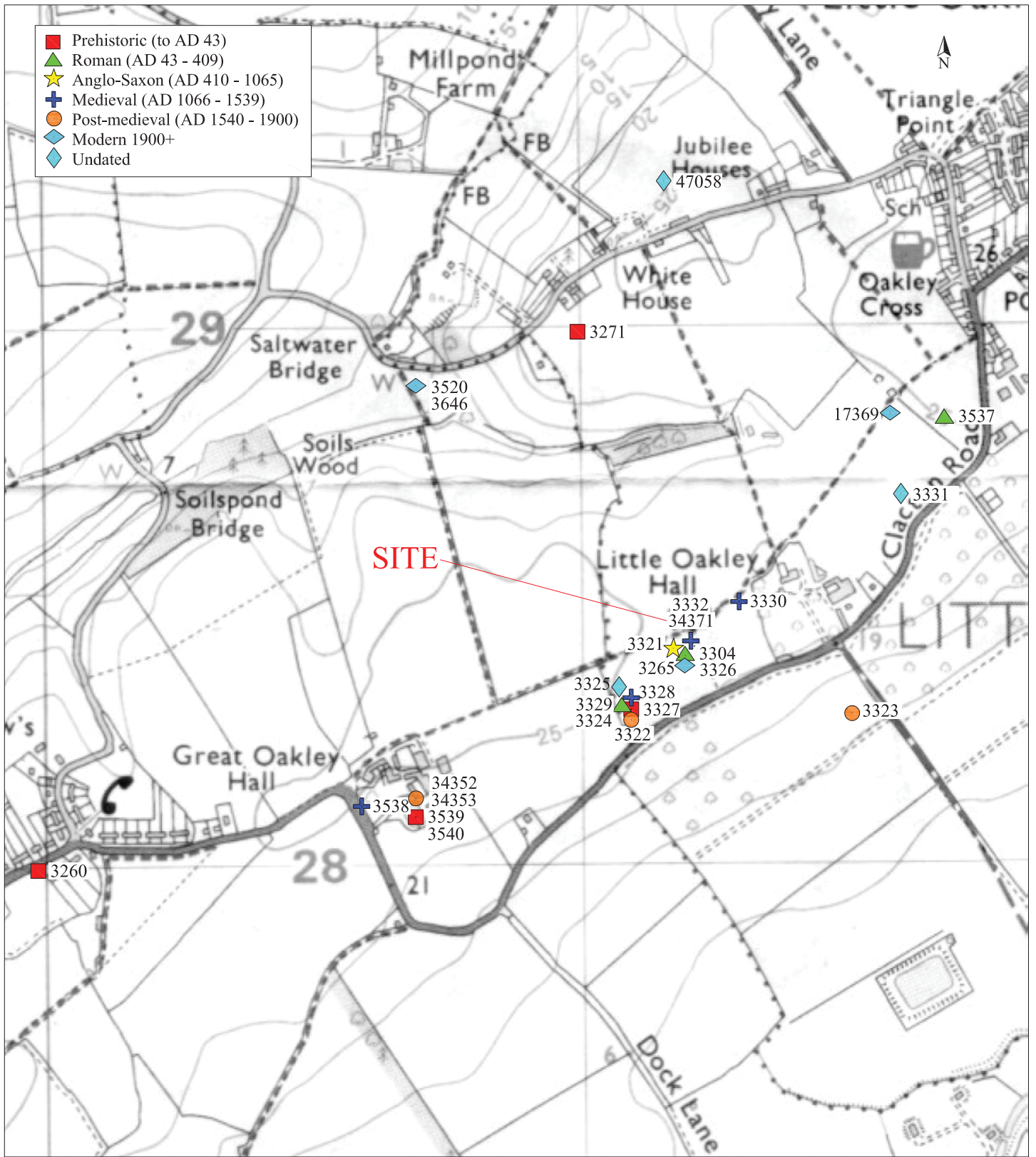


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:500 at A4



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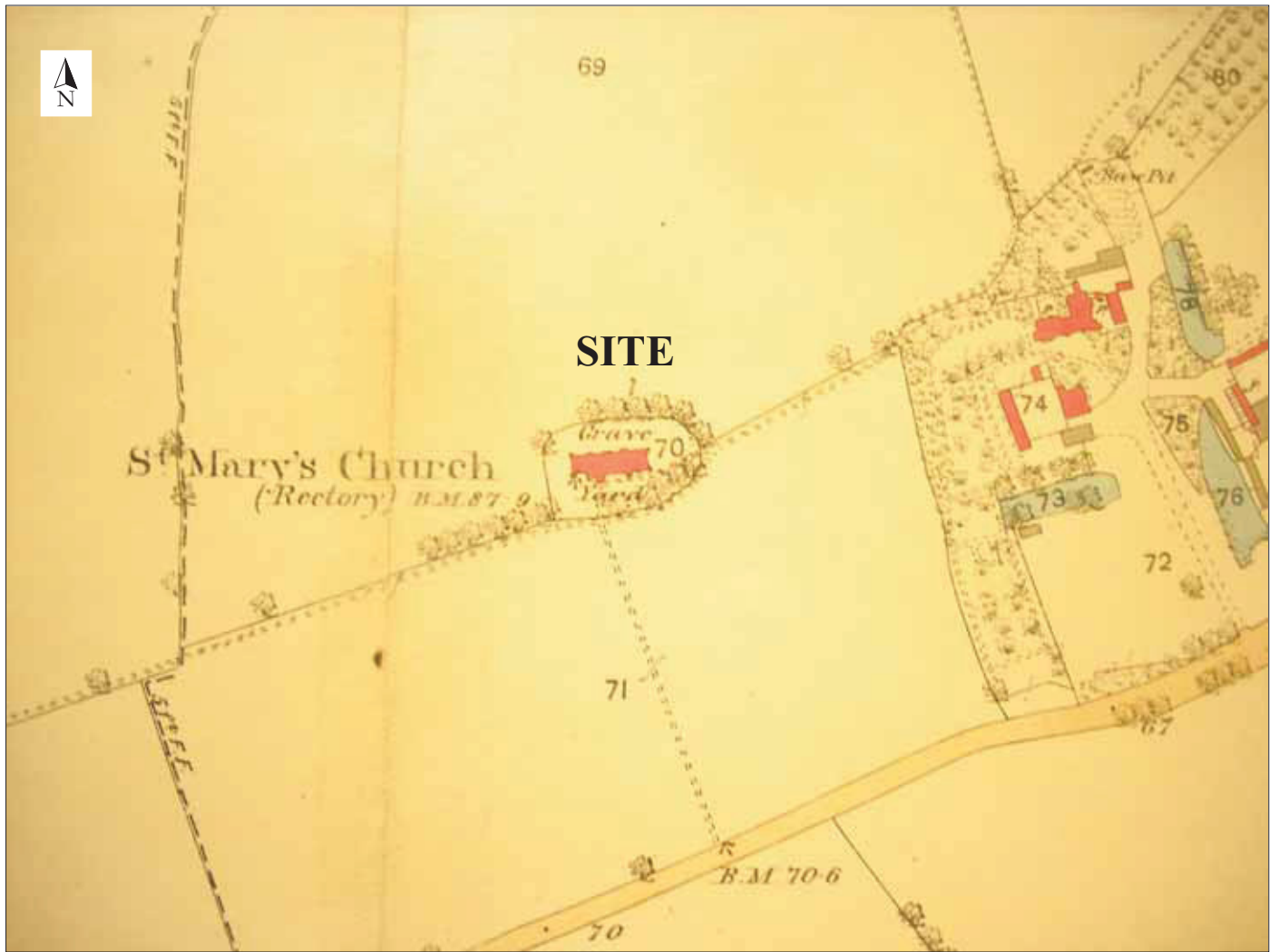
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Fig. 3 HER data
 Scale 1:10,500 at A4



<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 4 Chapman & Andre, 1777
Not to scale

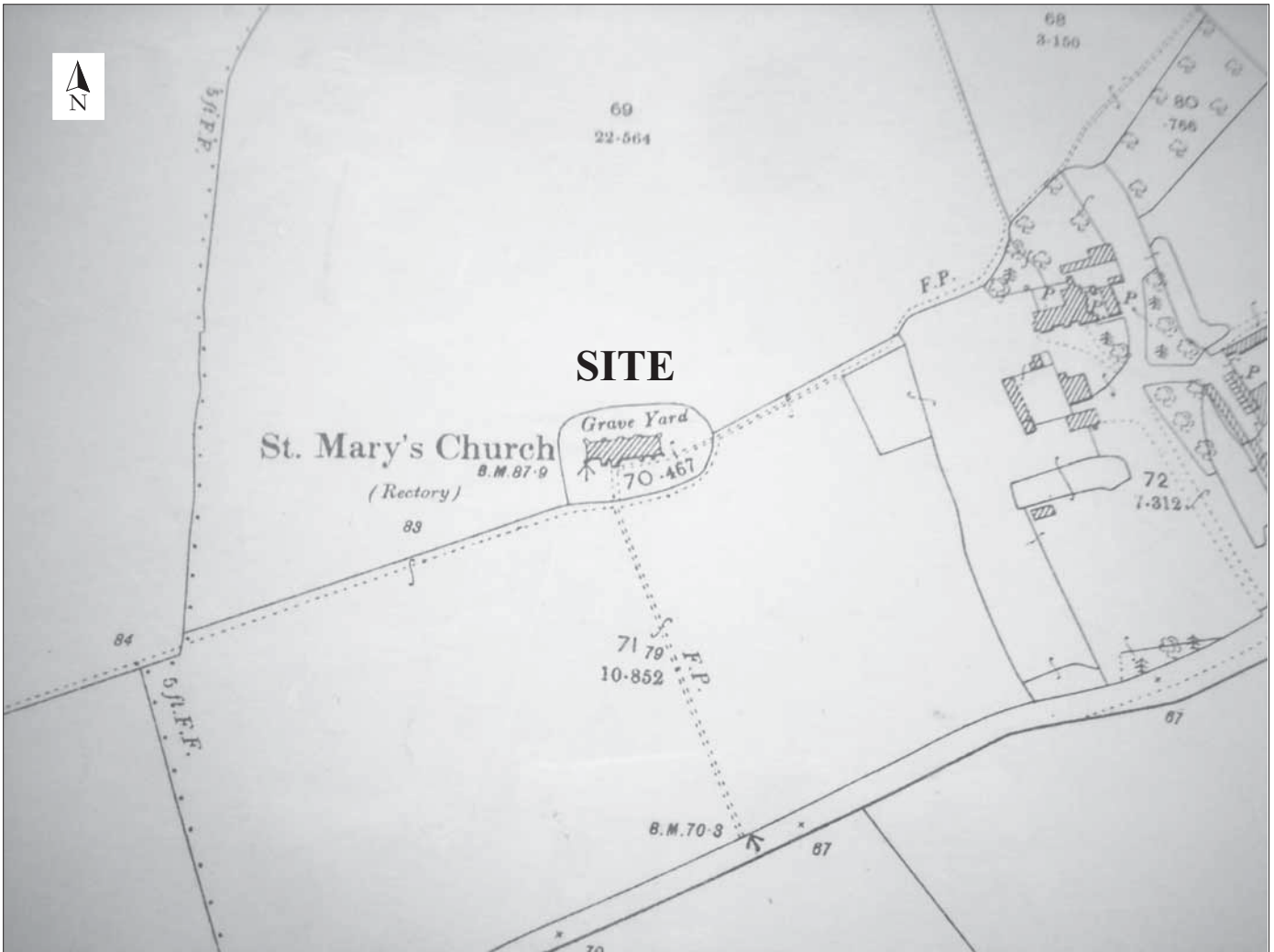


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Fig. 5 Tithe map, c.1840
Not to scale



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<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 6 OS map, 1881
Not to scale



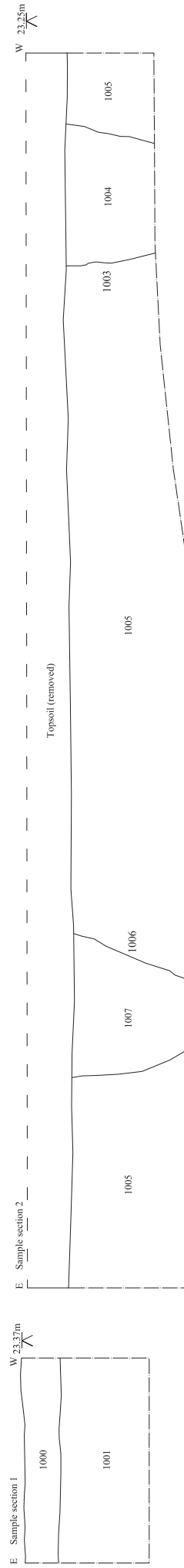
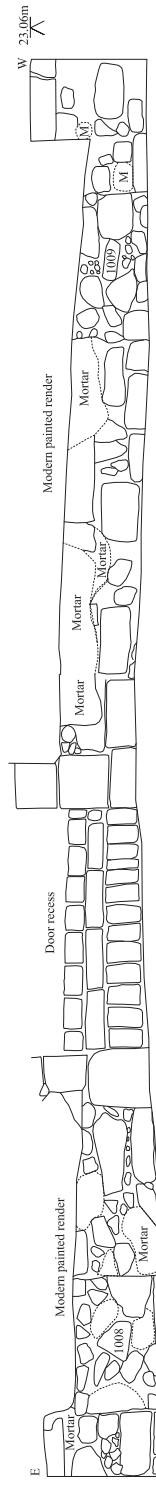
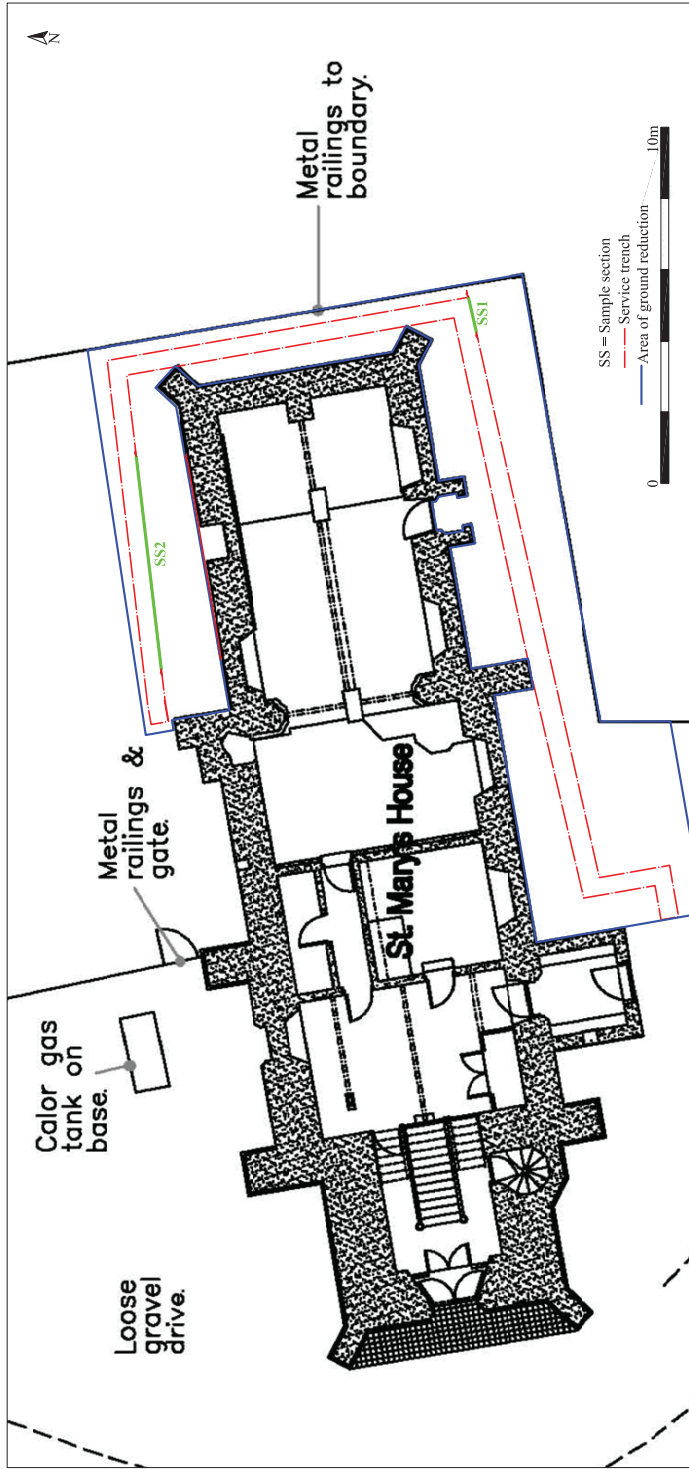
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<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 7 OS map, 1897
Not to scale



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Fig. 8 OS map, 1923
Not to scale



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Fig. 9 Sections and section location plan
 Scale 1:20 and 1:150 at A3