
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

15 – 17 NORTH STREET, BISHOP'S STORTFORD,
HERTFORDSHIRE

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING
AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

HER request No. 87/14

Authors:	William Waring (Building recording & report) Lee Prosser (Building recording & report) Zbyszek Pozorski (Fieldwork) Antony RR Mustchin (Editor) Kate Higgs (background research)	
Illustrations:	Kathren Henry	
NGR: TL 4869 2146		Report No: 4741
District: East Herts		Site Code: AS1872
Approved: Claire Halpin		Project No: 5786
Signed:		Date: 04 February 2015 Revised: 22/03/2016

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**Unit 6, Brunel Business Court, Eastern Way,
Bury St Edmunds IP32 7AJ
Tel 01284 765210**

**P I House, Rear of 23 Clifton Road, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5AF
Tel: 01462 850483**

**e-mail: info@ascontracts.co.uk
www.archaeologicalsolutions.co.uk**



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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	15-17 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire		
<p><i>In October 2014, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an historic building recording and archaeological monitoring at 15-17 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. The recording was commissioned in response to the requirements of a planning condition as advised by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit.</i></p> <p><i>The site comprises the two properties of 15 – 17 North Street, and a collection of historic ranges to the rear; all currently under demolition/redevelopment. Despite extensive alteration to the property throughout its history, significant historic fabric survives, particularly at upper level. Furthermore, neither building demonstrates evidence suggesting it is timber framed, and they are of typical urban 18th century construction utilising brick and timber, but not as a timber construction system.</i></p> <p><i>For reasons of health and safety, archaeological monitoring of ground reduction to the rear of the properties was restricted; no access to the area was permitted.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	15/10/2014 and 31/10/2014		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	
P. number	5786	Site code	AS1872
Type of project	Historic building recording and archaeological monitoring		
Site status	Brown field		
Current land use	Under development		
Planned development	Conversion of building into restaurant and domestic residences		
Main features (+dates)	-		
Significant finds (+dates)	-		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Hertfordshire	East Hertfordshire	Bishop's Stortford
HER/ SMR for area	Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record		
Post code (if known)	CM23 2LD		
Area of site	c. 1400m ²		
NGR	TL 4869 2146		
Height AOD (min/max)	c. 75m		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	n/a		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Waring, W., Prosser, L. and Pozorski, Z.		
Funded by	Marshgate Bishops Stortford LLP		
Full title	15-17 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire: Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Monitoring		
Authors	William Waring Lee Prosser Kate Higgs		
Report no.	4741		
Date (of report)	February 2015		

15 – 17 NORTH STREET, BISHOP’S STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

SUMMARY

In October 2014, Archaeological Solutions carried out an historic building recording and archaeological monitoring and recording at 15-17 North Street, Bishop’s Stortford, Hertfordshire. The recording was commissioned by in response to the requirements of a planning condition as advised by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit.

The site comprises the two properties of 15 – 17 North Street, and a collection of historic ranges to the rear; all currently under demolition/redevelopment. Despite extensive alteration to the property throughout its history, significant historic fabric survives, particularly at upper level. Furthermore, neither building demonstrates evidence suggesting it is timber framed, and they are of typical urban 18th century construction utilising brick and timber, but not as a timber construction system.

For reasons of health and safety, archaeological monitoring of ground reduction to the rear of the properties was restricted; no access to the area was permitted.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2014, Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out historic building recording and archaeological monitoring and recording at 15-17 North Street, Bishop’s Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2LD (NGR TL 4869 2146; Fig. 1). The recording was commissioned by Marshgate Bishops Stortford LLP in response to requirements issued by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit. advice issued by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCC HEU, Alison Tinniswood, dated 3rd December 2013) and are required in compliance with a planning condition on approval requiring a programme of archaeological work (EHDC Planning Ref. 3/13/1936/FP). It was proposed to change use of 15-17 North Street, Bishop’s Stortford from A1 (retail) to A3 (restaurant) and construct of a single storey rear extension to No 17, demolish existing buildings to the rear of 15-17 North Street and replace with a residential development of 12No 2-bedroom apartments and associated parking. The works were carried out according to a written scheme of investigation prepared by AS (dated 19th may 2014), approved by HCC HEU.

1.2 The programme of building recording and archaeological/building monitoring and recording followed the procedures outlined in the English Heritage document *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice, 2006* and also conformed to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2008). The level of recording was to Level 1/2 as defined in the EH documents. The project also conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief*

(revised 2008), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

Planning Policy Context

1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF 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. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.4 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The town of Bishop's Stortford is located in East Hertfordshire and lies 43km to the north of Central London (Fig. 1). The site is located in the historic core of Bishop's Stortford. It also lies within Area of Archaeological Significance No. 114, as designated on the EHDC Local Plan. The area includes the medieval and later settlement core of Bishop's Stortford which is believed to have late Saxon origins, with the original settlement potentially centred on North Street close by to the east. The historic development of the settlement is detailed by Hunns (2000).

2.2 The site comprises a large, roughly rectangular plot of land covering an area of c.1400m² (Fig. 2; DP 1). It is located on the western frontage of North Street and is bound to the west by the north to south aligned course of Basbow Lane. To its immediate north lies Sworder's Yard and properties fronting Basbow Lane, whilst to the south stands No. 13 North Street and further properties along Basbow Lane. The site currently comprises Nos. 15 – 17 North Street, which are Grade II structures located along its eastern frontage and formerly in use as Pearson's department store. To the rear stand a number of associated 19th - 20th century structures which

are proposed for/undergoing demolition. It is proposed to undertake a change of use of the site from A1 (retail) to A3 (restaurant) and construction of a single storey rear extension to No. 17, demolition of existing buildings to the rear of No. 15 - 17 North Street and their replacement with a residential development of twelve 2-bedroom apartments and associated parking.

3 METHOD OF WORK

3.1 Historical and cartographic sources

The principal source for this type of evidence was Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, based in County Hall, Hertford. Relevant documents are listed in the bibliography and reproduced in Figs. 3 - 9.

3.2 Secondary sources

The principal sources for this type of evidence was Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, based in County Hall, Hertford, and AS's own in-house library, in addition to online resources. Unpublished sources regarding the assessment area, such as previous field evaluation reports and desk-based assessments, have also been consulted. All sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.3 Building Recording

3.3.1 The site was visited on 31st of October in order to compile descriptions of the building and undertake the drawing and photographic work. The written description and analysis was carried out by Will Waring and Lee Prosser.

3.3.2 The photographic recording was conducted using a Canon 60d, a scale was used wherever possible, and a flash was employed for internal shots. A pictorial index of the digital photography and selected colour plates are included below together with location plots (Figs 10 - 12).

3.4 Geological/geotechnical information

A description of the superficial and solid geology of the local and surrounding area was compiled in order to assess the likely presence and potential condition of any archaeological remains on the site. This information was drawn from appropriate maps published by the Geological Survey of Great Britain (BGS 1978), and the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW 1983).

3.5 Archaeological monitoring

3.5.1 The principal element monitored was large-scale ground reduction to the rear of the properties, conducted alongside demolition works.

3.5.2 For reasons of health and safety, archaeological monitoring of ground reduction to the rear of the properties was severely restricted; no access to the area immediately behind the extant buildings was permitted. However, a photographic

record of the works in this part of the site was made (see Plates). Owing to the concurrent demolition works and restricted access, visibility of underlying strata was poor. The area adjacent to the properties had been significantly truncated by modern structures. This area contained modern made ground comprising CBM rubble. The rear (western) part of the site appeared to have been re-modelled to provide access to the lower eastern part of the site. No earlier deposits were observable and the natural geology was not exposed.

4 THE EVIDENCE

4.1 Topography, Geology & Soils

4.1.1 The topography of Bishop's Stortford is undulating but generally slopes down towards the River Stort, which flows 220m to the east on an approximate north to south orientation. The site is situated above the flood plain on the eastern side of the river at approximately 75m AOD. The solid geology of the environs is sand of the Thanet Formation, which was deposited c.55 million years ago and stratigraphically overlies London Clay and Upper Cretaceous White Chalk (British Geological Survey 1978). The majority of the town area lies on soils of the Hanslope association, which are described as slowly permeable, calcareous clayey soils with some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils, all of which are at slight risk of water erosion (SSEW 1983).

4.1.2 The area surrounding the site, which comprises the historic core of Bishop's Stortford, has been subject to extensive previous archaeological investigations. Previous works include an evaluation at Nos. 14-16 Water Lane and 150m to the east, which apparently overlies the former course of the River Stort (HER EHT4370). In the overburden layers was medieval to early post-medieval pottery, but no other archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded. An evaluation at 20 Hadham Road also revealed no archaeological finds, features or deposits apart from the lower courses of a brick wall, part of a building shown on the 1879 OS map (HER EHT5300).

4.1.3 An evaluation of land between 23 North Street and Basbow Lane, which lies 50m to the north, consisted of three trenches that revealed the remains of backyard activity and an early 19th century structure fronting Basbow Lane (HER EHT5520; Williams & Ilson 2006). Garden soil at approximately 0.3m thick directly overlay natural. The site was located on a hillside with a flat 'plateau' area around Trench 2 adjacent to Basbow Lane and sloped down towards North Street to the north-east (*ibid.*). The brick structure was probably a small cellar, possibly associated with the slaughterhouse which is believed to have formerly stood on the adjacent plot. The majority of the features dated to the 18th and 19th centuries, and modern period. Sparse evidence of earlier activity took the form of abraded pottery sherds of 17th/18th century date, but no activity pre-dating the post-medieval period was identified during the evaluation.

4.2 Archaeological & Historical Background

4.2.1 There are few prehistoric sites in the environs of Bishop's Stortford in comparison with other river valleys such as the Lea to the south-west (Hunns 2000). There is a little evidence for the prehistoric period from the vicinity of the site, although a possible bronze axe (HER 4895), and a late Bronze Age occupation site comprising a boundary ditch and rubbish pits (HHER 1090) are recorded in Bishop's Stortford. Another site at Woodside Industrial Estate revealed early Iron Age to Romano-British occupation, including storage pits, ditches and a possible round house drainage gully (HER 9816).

4.2.2 In contrast to the prehistoric period there is abundant evidence for Romano-British settlement at Bishop's Stortford. The Roman Road of Stane Street, running between Braughing and Colchester, is located some 750m north of the site (HER 6520). The Romano-British settlement developed in the area where Stane Street crossed the Stort, which was discovered when Cannon's Close housing estate was built in the 1950s (Hunns 2000). Remains of buildings, rubbish pits, a tile kiln and cremation and inhumation burials were identified, along with large quantities of pottery dated between the 1st - 4th centuries AD (HERs 513, 2234, 514, 512). The known extent of the Roman settlement reaches to within 600m of the site, but no Romano-British remains are recorded in the vicinity of the site.

4.2.3 The late Anglo-Saxon manor of Stortford was held during the reign of Edward the Confessor by Eadgifu Swanneshals, also known as Edith the Fair, and the purported mistress of King Harold (Hunns 2000). The Domesday Survey of 1086 depicts a substantial estate of six hides, with land for ten ploughs and woodland for 300 pigs. There were two mills and a resident priest with two knights (Morris 1976). William the Conqueror sold the manor of *Estereferd* to William, Bishop of London, and by 1086 its name had corrupted to *Storteford* with the affix added later (Gover, Mawer & Stenton 1938, 201). The Scheduled Ancient Monument of Waytemore Castle (a motte and bailey structure) is first mentioned at this date and is located approximately 300m to the east of the site (SAM 20628; HER 28). It was probably initially an earth and timber structure with the motte the largest in Hertfordshire, but before the end of the 11th century a masonry shell keep was added.

4.2.4 The medieval period in the area surrounding the site is represented by a number of standing buildings, including The George Hotel, The Boar's Head, Tissiman's, Nos. 2 – 4, 6 10 & 21 North Street (HERs 9478, 10730, 10731, 10737, 10739, 10740 & 10747). Bridge Street, which lies 100m to the south-east, is the site of both the medieval St Osyth's Well and Mill Bridge (HERs 15432 & 18517), whilst medieval pottery is known from Water Lane (HER 17401). In the 16th century, Bishop's Stortford was a thriving centre of trade and commerce with many inns, mercers and shoemakers recorded (Hunns 2000). During the 17th century, malting began developing as an important industry, but c. 1670 some of the inns suffered when a bridge was built over the Stort due to repeated flooding.

4.2.5 A significant event for the town during the post-medieval period was the opening of the Stort Navigation in 1769, which linked Bishop's Stortford with London via the Lea Navigation, itself constructed in the 18th century. This provided a direct link to the markets of London and, as a result, the prosperity of the town in the 18th -

19th centuries was fuelled by the brewing and malting industry. In 1842 the Northern and Eastern Counties rail line opened to the east of the site (Cooper 2005, 77; HER 5543). The area surrounding the site contains a large number of post-medieval and early modern standing buildings, which attests to its importance as Area of Archaeological Significance No. 114.

4.2.6 The site occupies a prominent location along the western frontage of North Street (Fig. 2). Basbow Lane and North Street, between which the site lie, are two of the early thoroughfares within the town. It is designated within the probable area of medieval tenements, which lay to the south of Hadham Road, and to the immediate west of the area of the tanning industry, which dominated the 16th and 17th century town (Hunns 2000). The site has been subject to a previous historic building assessment (RPS 2003). The assessment confirmed that Nos. 15 - 17 North Street are Grade II listed buildings (HER 12278; IoE No. 160958; see Appendix 1, below). Originally built as two houses, the structures date to the 17th century (Smith 1993), later converted to retail use, and latterly Pearson's department store. The buildings occupy two medieval burgage plots running between Basbow Lane and North Street, and they almost certainly replace earlier, medieval predecessors.

4.2.7 The historic building assessment dated the earliest record of the buildings on the site to 1782 when and Thomas and Ann Pryor, corn chandlers, leased what is now No. 15 North Street 'to Peter Ramsay of Bishops Stortford' – an auctioneer (RPS 2003). Furthermore, the Dury and Andrews map of 1766 (Fig. 3) and Bryant's map of 1822 (Fig. 4) show North Street to be substantially developed. The business usage of both Nos. 15 and 17 North Street from 1800 onwards is well-documented, including the sale of auctioneer business in 1820 to James Hillat Summers (*ibid.*). The site is shown to have been developed by the 1839 tithe map (Fig. 5), which depicts North Street and much of Basbow Lane as lined with buildings, although many of the individual property boundaries are not shown. The outbuilding on the site is depicted as an 'L' shape rather than the rectangle as now. It appears to be associated with Plot 420 which the tithe award identifies as being owned by Richard Lydekker and under the occupancy of Joseph Fairman. This site plus those surrounding are classified as garden.

4.2.8 By 1858, the sole owner of the auctioneer business and Nos. 15 – 17 North Street was George Edward Sworder, who also owned a number of other properties in the town. The Kelly's Directory entry for 1862 describes the site as 'George Edward Sworder. Auctioneer & estate agent, furnishings and general ironmonger and upholsterer, North Street' (Kelly 1862). The Ordnance Survey maps of 1879 and 1898 (Figs. 6 & 7) show the general layout of the site as it is today, with the frontage along North Street consistent with modern depictions, however the rear ranges along Basbow Lane are shown in a different configuration with small structures occupying the space. In 1939 the Ordnance Survey depiction of the site (Fig. 8) is largely the same as in the late 19th century, with a similar configuration of buildings with the exception of a small change in the layout of the north-west corner of the property and the construction of a large building immediately north of the site on Basbow Lane. The 1968 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 9) shows a consolidation of the rear structures along Basbow Lane into a larger building, and an amalgamation of structures on the northern boundary of the site. A c. 1900 view of No. 17 North Street (Appendix 1) depicts only one set of door and step access into the building.

5 THE BUILDINGS

17 North Street:

Ground Floor

5.1 The ground floor of No. 17 (DPs 2 – 5) comprises a large open and consolidated space, which has been comprehensively altered and stripped of most features of interest. The general configuration of the historic ranges can still be discerned however. The location of the original chimney stack is now represented by three cement columns on concrete pads close to the main entrance (DP 2) which continue to support the surviving elements of the stack at upper level. To the north, the principal intermediate joist from the first phase of the building's development is now visible, as a heavily chamfered, but latterly boxed-in timber. Elsewhere, a suspended ceiling prevents further observation. To the rear is a canted wall of 18th century brick and the rear wall of a probable former stair turret. The rear range retains its principal joisting system, chamfered and lime-washed, with common joisting surviving, supporting wide 18th century boards above; the jointing is tenoned into the principals with a diminished haunch, which suggests a later 17th or early 18th century date. On the central, northern side of the ground floor space, internal stripping of the building has resulted in the exposure and destruction of a small cellar. The Victorian shop fascia also survives (DPs 2 & 5), comprising a pine lintel situated behind a cast iron shop façade; supported at ground level on un-mortared yellow gault 'Arlesey' bricks of mid- to later 19th century date.

First Floor

5.2 The first floor has also been consolidated into a single open space (FF01) (DPs 13 – 16), but with traces to indicate the earlier partitioning, including the presence of down-stands and boxed-in joisting where partition walls have been removed and earlier ceilings disguised. The stair to the upper floor is housed within its own turret but rises from this floor up to a second stair, having been inserted against the north wall. The stack which previously lay in the centre of FF01 has been replaced with boxed in steel columns. Where the stair originally returned to the lower level, we now see a small vestibule, retaining a large six-over-six, 18th century sash window. The windows to the five bays of No 17 comprise two-over-two, early to mid-19th century sash windows. The rear wing adjoining the stair turret comprises a single room (FF02) (DP 15), stepped up from the main floor level. This room houses a chimney stack in its western end, with niches on either side; two windows on the southern side consist of six-over-six, early 19th century sash windows.

Second Floor

5.3 Most historic fabric, and much of the original layout is preserved at the upper level. The main five bays of the historic building are divided into two principal rooms with a connecting closet divided by the surviving chimney stack; a further room is situated at the southern end. SF01 is lit by two windows on the east (DP 32), with a blocked fireplace to the south. To the south is SF02, connected by a small closet (SF1A), which accommodates the chimney stack. To the south is a further small room (SF03), lit by single light (DP 31). All rooms have two-over-two sash windows

with 1830s to 1850s glazing bars. Late 17th to early 18th century doors to rooms SF1A to SF03 survive, being thin, two-panelled doors, one with H-L hinges, two with applied mouldings. SF01 is fairly simple with little historic fabric visible. SF02 has a 19th century pine floor and an 1830s cast iron fireplace with a solid surround (DP 30). Very little historic fabric is visible in SF03. The roof above the main frontage is of collar purlin form, of oak and soft wood, with jointed, nailed-on collars with clasped side purlins, typically later 17th or early 18th century in form.

5.2 The rear rooms of No. 17 are given access via the turreted winder stair mentioned above, although here any early joinery apart from the structural elements have been lost and replaced with modern treatment and fire screen protection (DP 27). An early window survives above the stair however, retaining late 17th century mouldings to a mullion with lead comes, saddle bars and original casements with an iron catch and scrolled pull (DP 26). The staircase gives access to the rear rooms to the north via a stair lobby (SF07) (DP 27). SF04 has a blocked door to SF01 on its eastern wall. SF04 retains original plasterboard surfaces on all four sides of the room, along with a six-over-six, 18th century sash window on the northern side. In the north-west corner part of the roof structure is exposed to reveal an oak, clasped side-purlin roof reusing earlier timbers. Ceiling joisting is of softwood with common joists, jointed with pendant soffits supporting lath and hair plaster.

5.3 Rooms SF05 and SF06 are contained within a discrete wing to the west. SF05 is simple with 19th century skirting, and a 19th century casement window on the north, replacing an earlier sash. The partition to the west is of horizontal boards. SF06 contains 19th century cupboards and narrow pine boarded floors. Rooms SF05 and SF06 are both given access via a corridor extending from SF07.

5.4 Room SF08 is given access via a four-panelled Victorian door from a corridor extending from the stair lobby. SF08 is a plain room with a chimney stack on the western wall, with flanking windows and early 19th century glazing bars. SF09 (DP 28) is a small w/c, retaining a six-over-six, late 19th century sash window on the western wall.

15 North Street:

Ground Floor

5.5 The ground floor of No. 15 North Street has been consolidated and subsequently re-divided arbitrarily with falsework (DPs 7 – 10). The remaining visible fabric comprises a series of principal and common ceiling joists which appear to define the positions of earlier rooms (DP 11 & 12). A large principal joist extends laterally east/west; likely an insertion to support historic north/south joists. All are heavily chamfered with diminished haunch and pendant soffit form. On the northern side, historic joisting defines five bays or cells with a series of principal joists, some are chamfered. None retain mortises for studwork and therefore there is no indication of earlier partitions. The two sides of the structure are divided by large timber and a Victorian cast iron stanchion. To the south is an east-west joist, chamfered and stopped at both ends. Nothing else is visible except in exploratory apertures where we see historic joisting and wide oak/elm floor boards above.

First Floor

5.6 Little remains of the historic layout on the first floor of 15 North Street. Although good historic joists are preserved in FF02, along with a 19th century six-over-six sash window on the eastern wall. Room FF03 is mostly reconfigured, but exposed walling on the south reveals 19th century studwork with some traces of early 19th century wallpaper, in addition to an eight-over-eight sash window on the eastern wall. FF04 retains little other than a simple six-over-six 1820s window, whilst FF05 retains a three-over-three sash window and a one-over-one late 19th century window.

5.7 The building's rear wing (FF01) is pushed out (DP 18), and was constructed after conversion to a department store. This range retains a decorative roof, comprising 2 chamfered pitch-pine tie-beams with brackets and raking queen struts with pierced trefoils and lozenges. A modern stair case rises on the southern side.

Second Floor

5.8 The frontage of the second floor is crowned by a single longitudinal roof (DP 25), interrupted by a chimney stack, as well as a short, rear lateral roof on the northern side only. The main frontage is a purlin roof with a single dormer behind a parapet (DP 24). The floor is conspicuous in retaining very wide oak/elm floor boards, but only the northern end survives. Originally, the whole roof would have been fully accessible before the floor level was raised in the 19th century to create grander rooms below. The roof is of clasped, side-purlin form, comprising three bays with a single truss with queen posts with intermediate cambered collars, all underdrawn.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

6.1 For reasons of health and safety, archaeological monitoring of ground reduction to the rear of the properties was restricted; no access to the area immediately behind the extant buildings was permitted. However, a photographic record of the works in this part of the site was made (see Plates). Owing to the concurrent demolition works and restricted access, visibility of underlying strata was poor. The area adjacent to the properties had been significantly truncated by modern structures. This area contained modern made ground comprising CBM rubble. The rear (western) part of the site appeared to have been re-modelled to provide access to the lower eastern part of the site. No earlier deposits were observable and the natural geology was not exposed.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Analysis during stripping-out provides additional information to that offered in the initial appraisal (RPS: 2013). Firstly, a great deal of historic fabric survives at upper level, but important structural and decorative traces also remain at lower level in some areas. The initial appraisal suggested that both buildings are 16th century, and that they are timber-framed. Further analysis is able to clarify this, and confirm that No. 15, which appears to be marginally earlier, is probably 17th century, while

No. 17 retains all the characteristics in structural and decorative form to place it firmly in the last decade of the 17th or the first decade of the 18th century. The use of the term 'timber-framed' is a misnomer. Rather, both are typical urban properties of the period, utilising brick and timber, but the outer walls are not, and never have been of timber, which would qualify the term.

7.2 Originally, No. 15 was the more modest of the two properties, preserving historic fabric which suggests that the rear ranges only rose through two storeys, though nothing remains of this structure at upper level.

7.3 No. 17 is altogether grander and more refined, in addition to being more structurally coherent. The main five-bay block has a shallow, double roof in typical Georgian style, giving access to rooms along the main frontage and rear together with a stair turret which retains good diagnostic evidence of its date, and a large rear range on the north side which appears to have been constructed around the same time or slightly later. With the position of the chimney stack and original staircase, it conformed to a typical layout of entrance passage with rear stairs, and rooms to the left and right. Much of this layout appears to have been swept away in the 19th century however, with the remodelling of the ground and upper floors for display purposes, and the growth of accretive structures to the rear. However, while much has been lost, a great deal of fabric survives, both in terms of visible detail, but also extensive early plasterwork and floors. This is particularly true at upper level, where the building has retained its domestic finishes.

7.4 No archaeological remains were observable during the programme of monitoring.

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APPENDIX 1



Circa 1900 view, No. 17 North Street

APPENDIX 2 BUILDING LISTING



© Mr Philip Coomes

IoE Number: 160958

Location: PEARSONS, 17 NORTH STREET (west side), BISHOPS STORTFORD, EAST HERTFORDSHIRE, HERTFORDSHIRE

Photographer: Mr Philip Coomes

Date Photographed: 30 August 1999

Date listed: 26 July 1971

Date of last amendment: 26 July 1971

Grade II

5253NORTH STREET(West Side)No 17(Pearsons)

1. 5253 NORTH STREET (West Side) No 17 (Pearsons) TL 4821 SE:3/66 26.7.71 II
GV 2. Two houses now one shop. On south (formerly No 15), mid C18. Painted brick, steep old red tile roof. Two and a half storeys, 3 windows. Ground floor early C19 shop front with slim pilasters to door and modern north window. Triple-hung bowed sash window on south. Zigzag fan over door. First floor sash windows and band beneath parapet. One gabled dormer. C17 timber frame in rear of shop. On north mid C19. Stucco, slate hipped roof. Three storey, 5 windows. Ground floor, cast iron, arcaded shop front in 3 bays of 3 arches with spiralled mullions. Architraves and cornices to first floor windows, plain eaves.

APPENDIX 3 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	15 – 17 North Street, Bishop’s Stortford, Hertfordshire
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire
Village/Town: Bishop’s Stortford	Parish: Bishop’s Stortford
Planning application reference:	3/13/1936/FP
Client name/address/tel:	Marshgate Bishops Stortford LLP
Nature of application:	-
Present land use:	Under development
Size of application area: c.1400m ²	Size of area investigated: c.1400m ²
NGR (8 figures):	TL 4869 2146
Site Code:	AS1872
Site director / organisation:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Historic building recording and archaeological monitoring
Date of work:	November/December 2014
Location of finds/Curating museum:	-
Related SMR Nos: -	Periods represented:
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	-
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p><i>In October 2014, Archaeological Solutions carried out an historic building recording and archaeological monitoring and recording at 15-17 North Street, Bishop’s Stortford, Hertfordshire.</i></p> <p><i>The site comprises the two properties of 15 – 17 North Street, and a collection of historic ranges to the rear; all currently under demolition/redevelopment. Despite extensive alteration to the property throughout its history, significant historic fabric survives, particularly at upper level. Furthermore, neither building demonstrates evidence suggesting it is timber framed, and they are of typical urban 18th century construction utilising brick and timber, but not as a timber construction system.</i></p> <p><i>For reasons of health and safety, archaeological monitoring of ground reduction to the rear of the properties was restricted; no access to the area was permitted.</i></p>
Author of summary: William Waring Antony RR Mustchin (Editor)	Date of Summary: 04 February 2015 Revised: 22/03/2016

APPENDIX 1



Circa 1900 view, No 17 North Street

PLATES



Plate 1 Main frontage of Nos. 15 – 17 North Street. Taken from the east (DP 1)



Plate 2 Main interior ground floor space of No. 17, showing cast iron shop front, and columns replacing the original chimney stack. Taken from the north-west (DP 2)



Plate 3 Interior ground floor space of No. 15, with modern room divisions and preserving roof timbers. Taken from the west (DP 7)



Plate 4 Roof timbers above ground floor of No. 15. (DP 11)



Plate 5 FF01, No. 17. Showing the 19th century sash windows and the three columns replacing the original chimney stack. Taken from the north-west (DP 13)



Plate 6 FF02, No. 17, showing chimney stack on the western wall, and two 19th century sash windows on the southern wall. Taken from the east (DP 15).



Plate 7 First floor rear range of No. 15, extended during use of the building as a department store. Taken from the east (DP 18)



Plate 8 Roof structure above the main frontage of No. 15. Visible is the single truss with queen posts and cambered collars. Taken from the north (DP 25)



Plate 9 Early window preserved above stairway to second floor of No. 17. Retaining original casements and late 17th century moulding style, with iron catch and scrolled pull (DP 26)



Plate 10 SF01, No. 17, showing sash windows with 1830s-1850s glazing bars, as well as preserved late 17th/early 18th century door, leading to SF1A (DP 32)

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
Main frontage of Nos. 15 & 17 North Street. Taken from the east.



2
Main interior ground floor space of No. 17 (GF01). Taken from the north-west.



3
Main interior ground floor space of No. 17 (GF01). Taken from the north.



4
Main interior ground floor of No. 17 and access to ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the north.



5
Main interior ground floor space of No. 17 (GF01). Taken from the north-west.



6
Rear elevation of No. 17. Taken from the west.



7
Interior ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the west.



8
Interior ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the north-west.



9
Interior ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the east.



10
Interior ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the south-east.



11
Roof timbers above ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the west.



12
Roof timbers above ground floor space of No. 15. Taken from the south-west.



13
FF01, No. 17. Taken from the north-west.



14
FF01, No. 17. Taken from the north-east.



15
FF02, No. 17. Taken from the east.



16
FF01, No. 17. Taken from the east.



17
FF01, No. 15. Taken from the north.



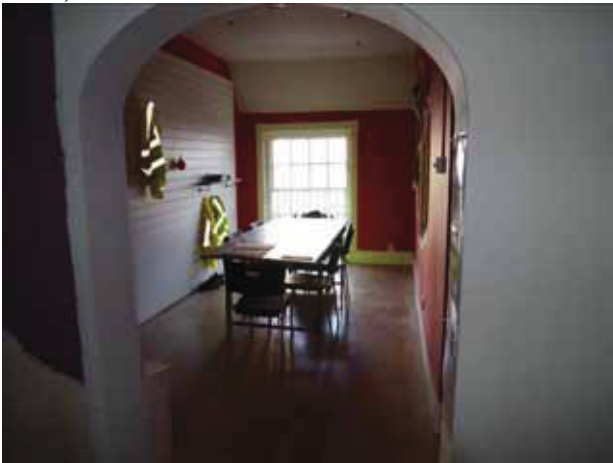
18
FF01, No. 15. Taken from the east.



19
FF06, No. 15. Taken from the north-east.



20
FF04, No. 15. Taken from the west.



21
FF05, No. 15. Taken from the west.



22
SF01, No. 15. Taken from the south-east.



23
SF01, No. 15. Taken from the west.



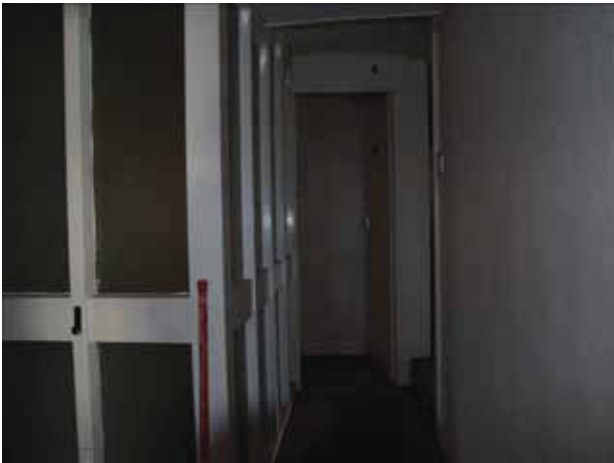
24
SF02, No. 15. Taken from the west.



25
SF03, No. 15, showing front roof structure of No. 15. Taken from the north.



26
Window preserved above winder stair towards 2nd floor of No. 17. Taken from the west.



27
SF07, stair lobby of No. 17. Taken from the east.



28
SF09, No. 17. Taken from the north.



29
SD08, No. 17. Taken from the east.



30
SF02, No. 17. Taken from the north-west.



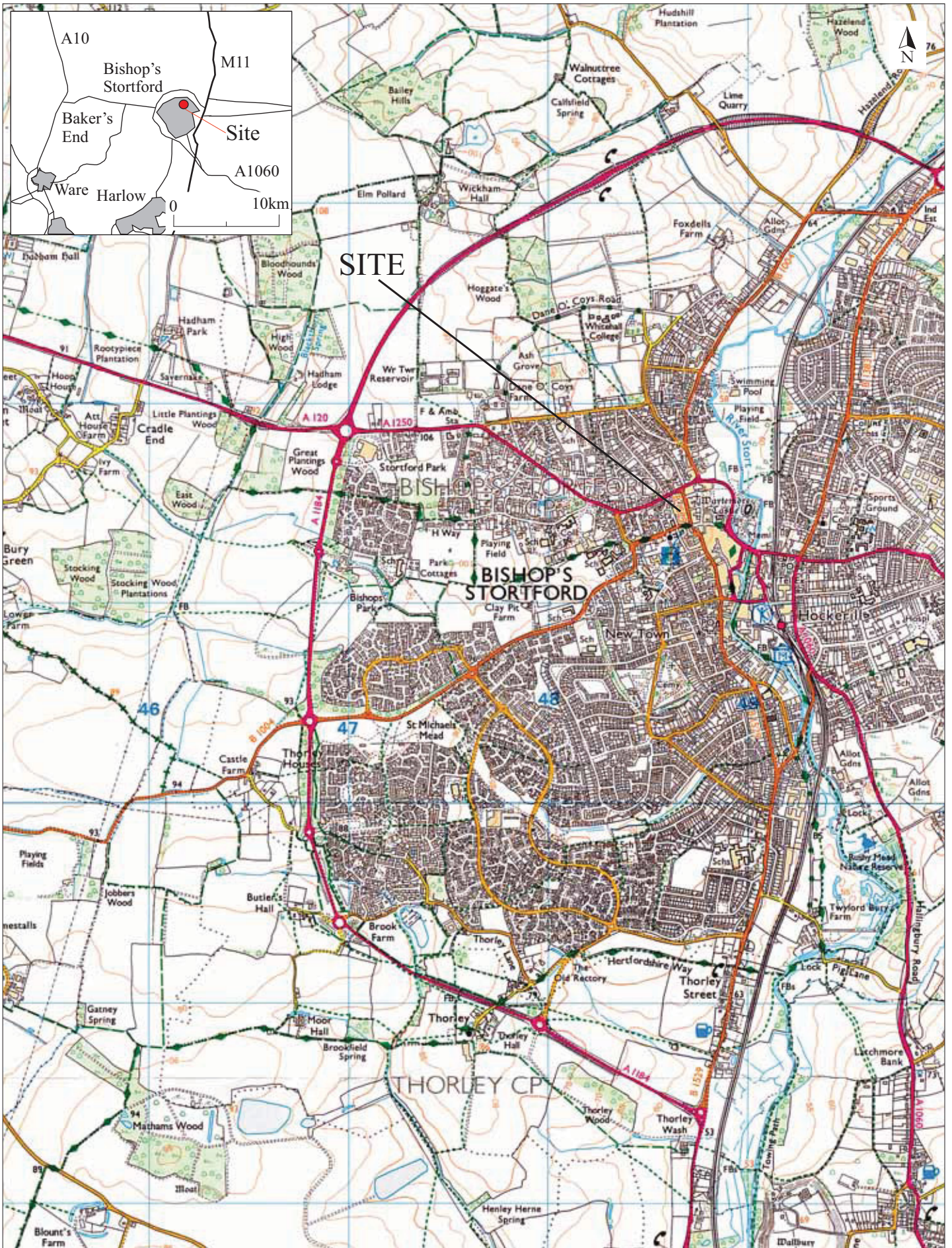
31
SF03, No. 17. Taken from the west.



32
SF01, No. 17. Taken from the north-west.

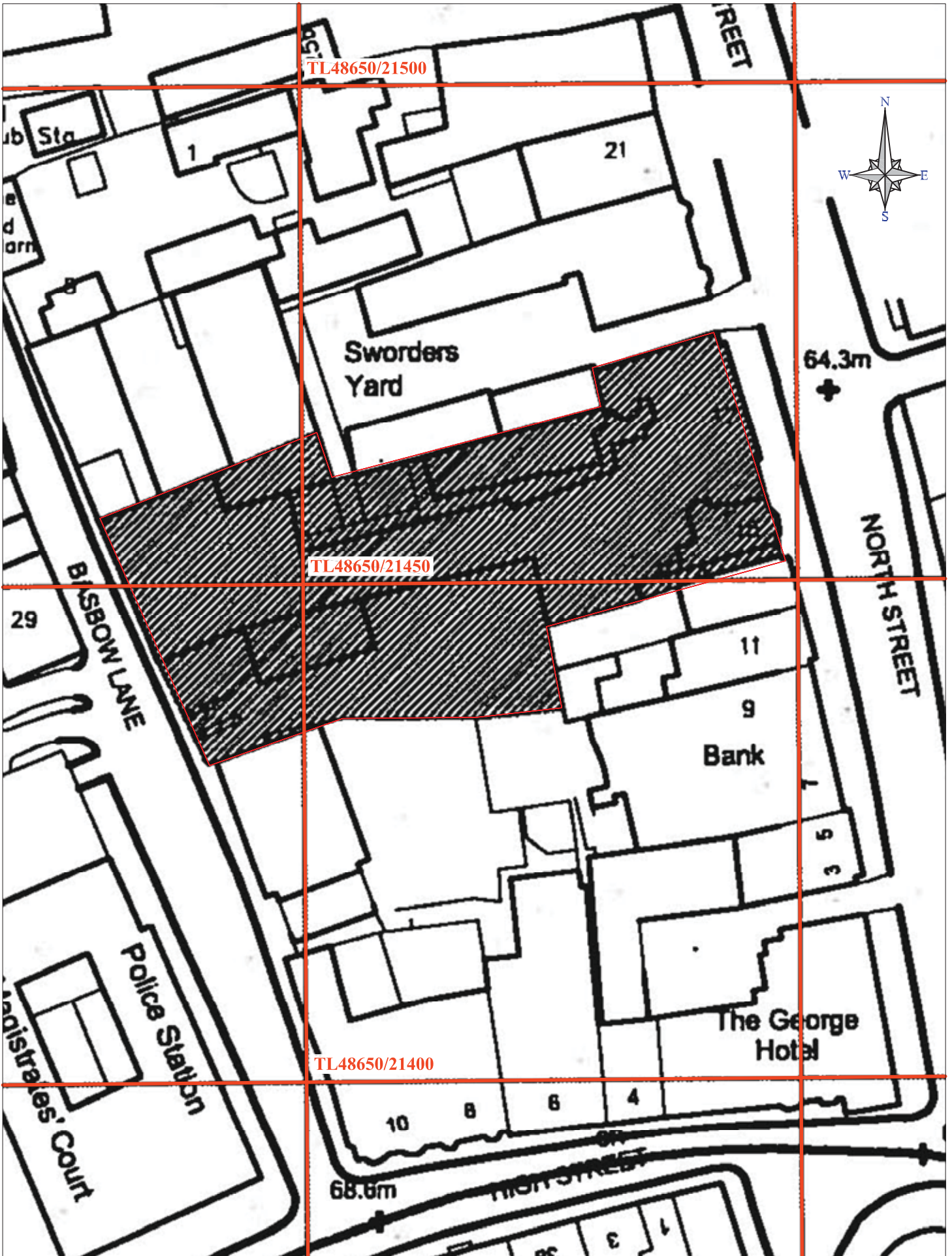


33
Cast iron fireplace of SF02, No. 17. Taken from the south.



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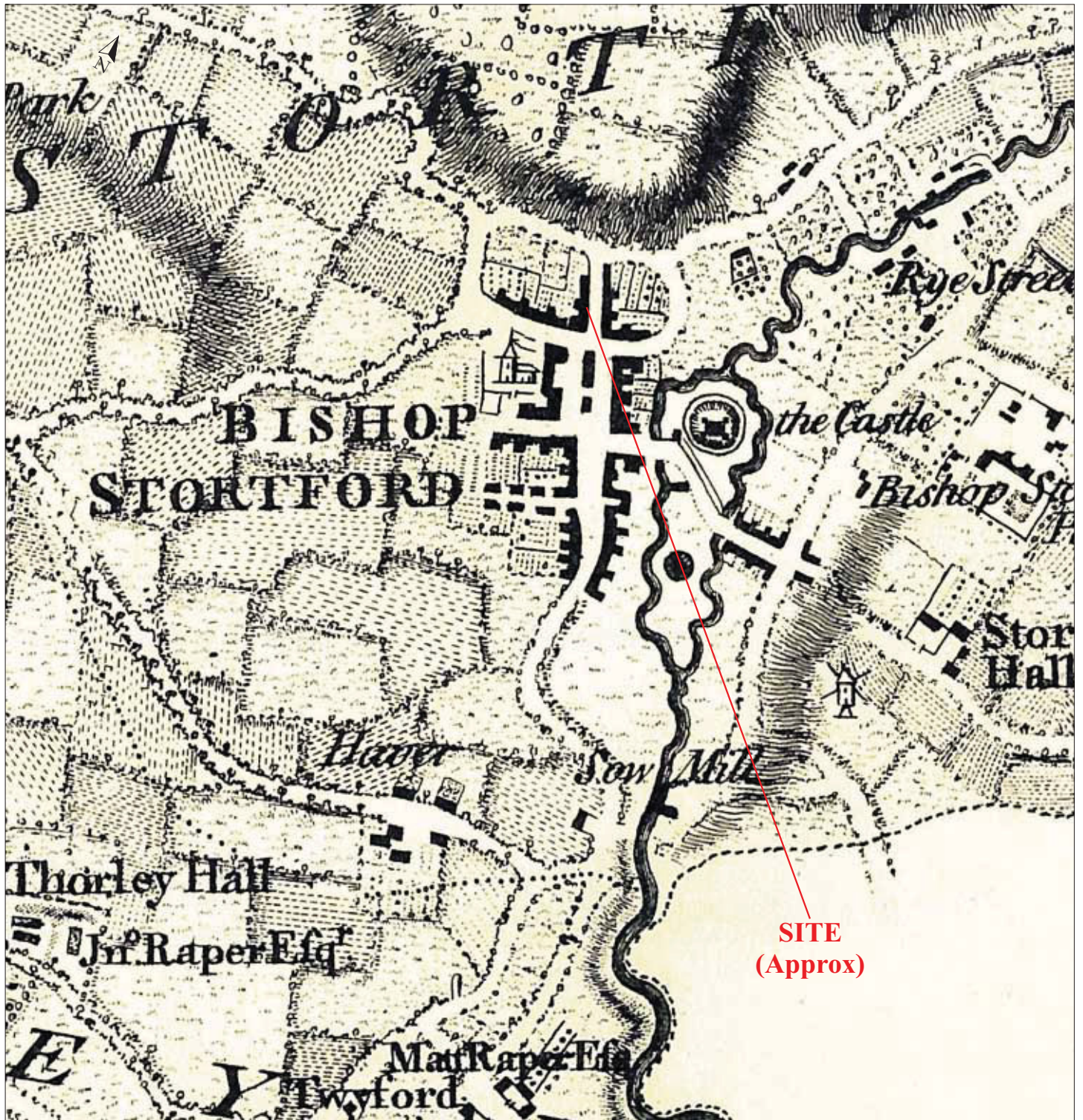
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan

Scale 1:500 at A4



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Fig. 3 Dury & Andrews' map, 1766
Not to scale



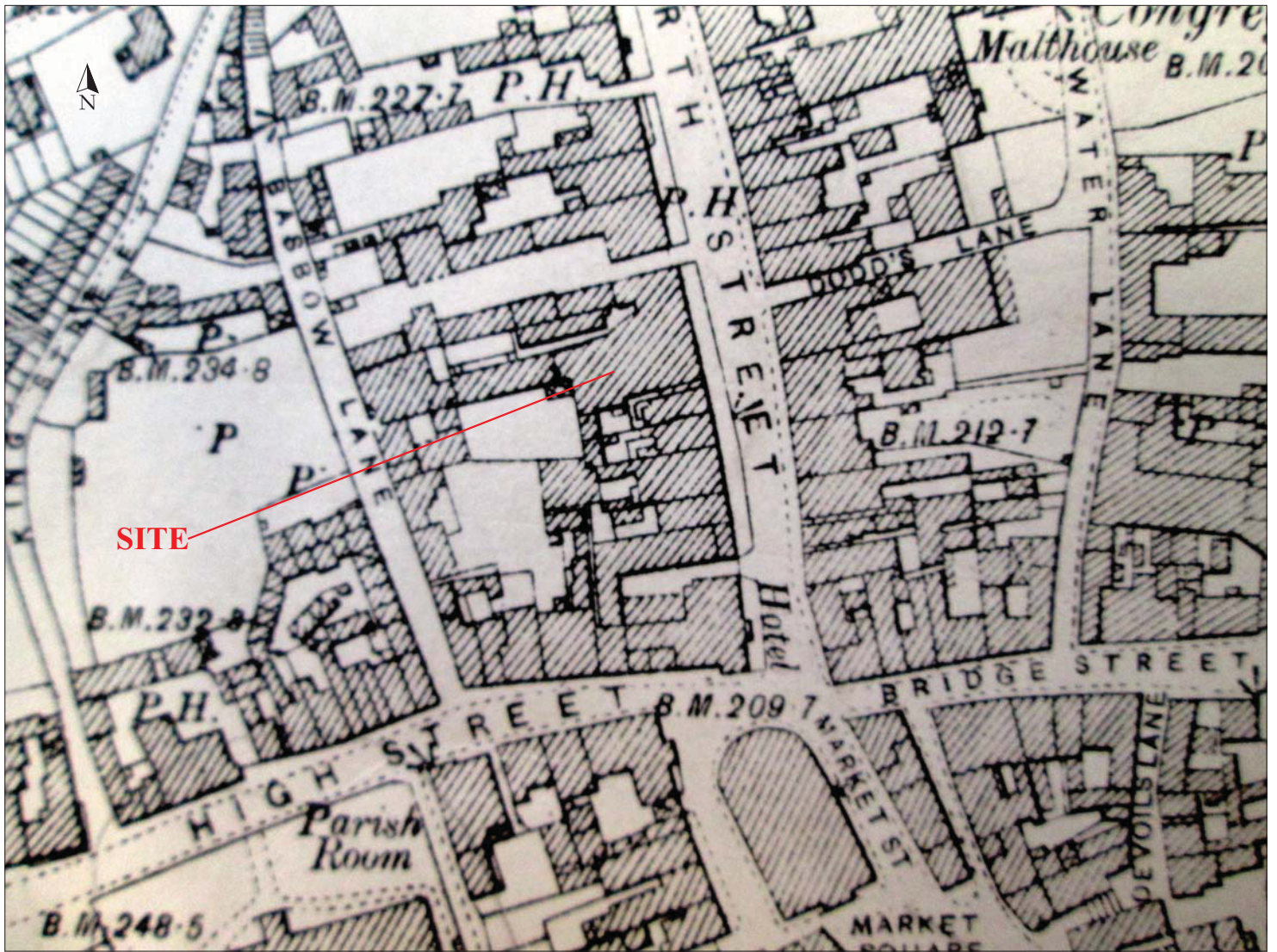
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Fig. 4 Bryant's map, 1822
Not to scale



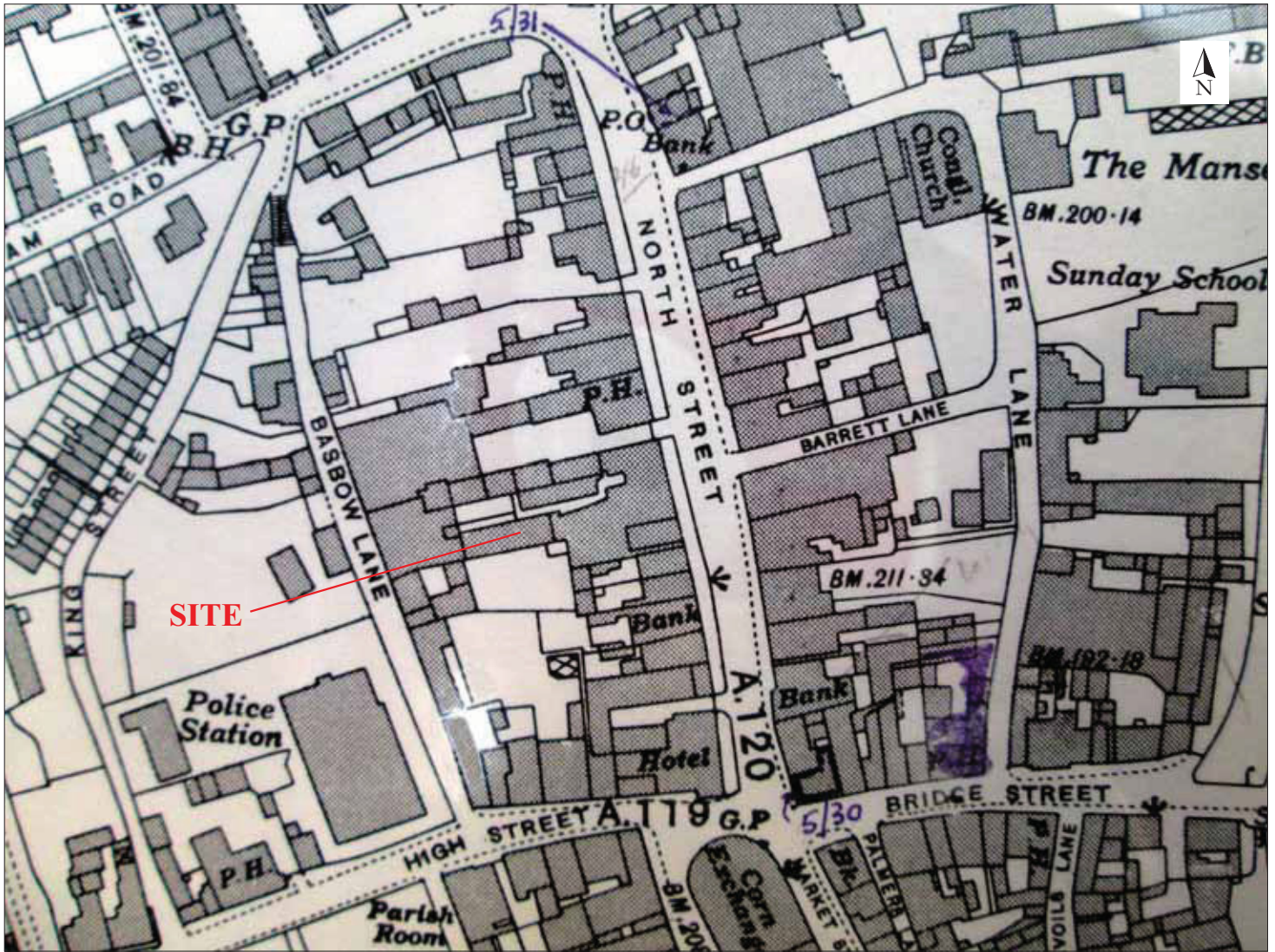
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Fig. 5 Tithe map, 1839
Not to scale



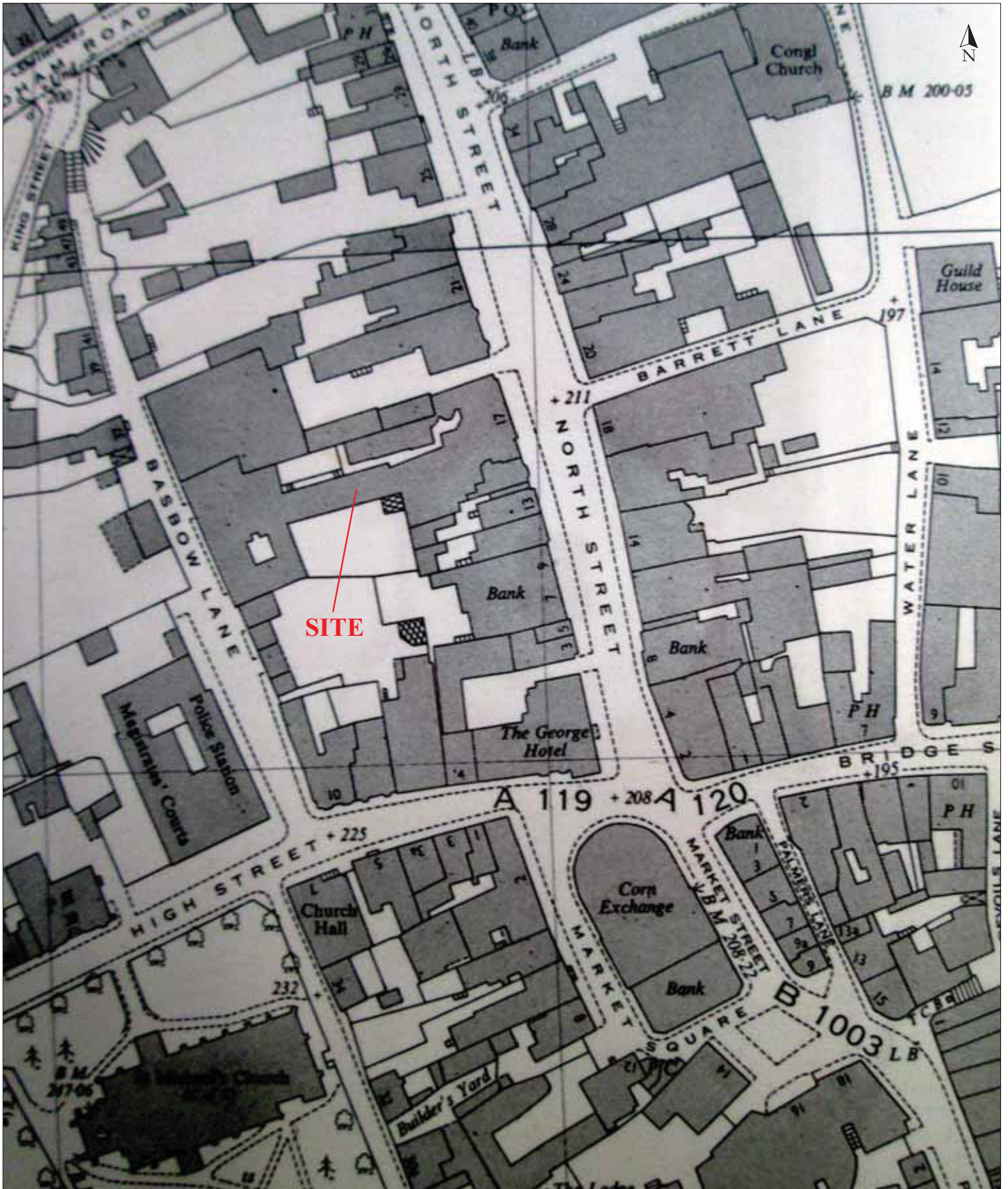
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Fig. 6 OS map, 1879
Not to scale



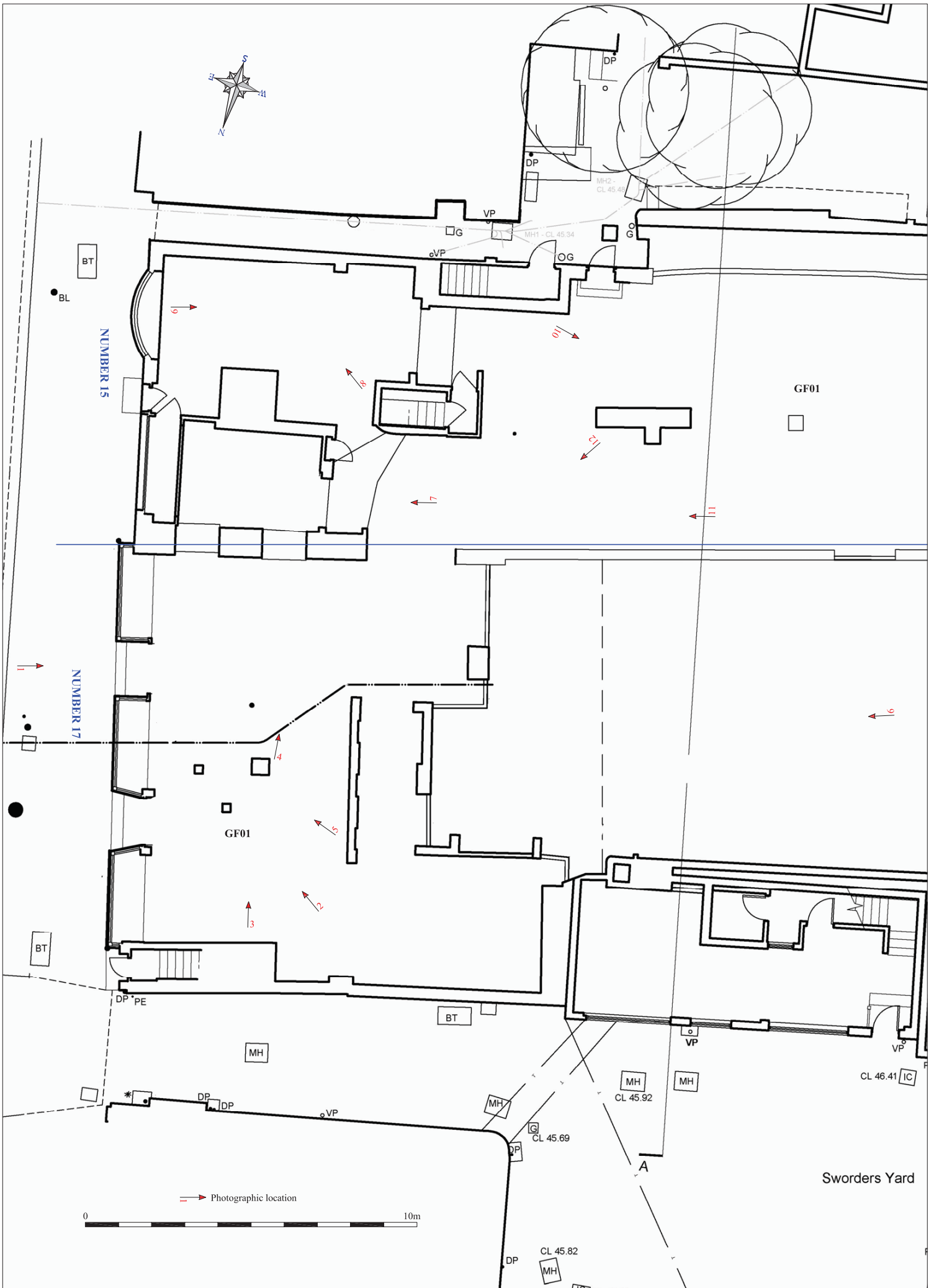
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Fig. 7 OS map, 1898
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Fig. 8 OS map, 1939
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Fig. 9 OS map, 1968
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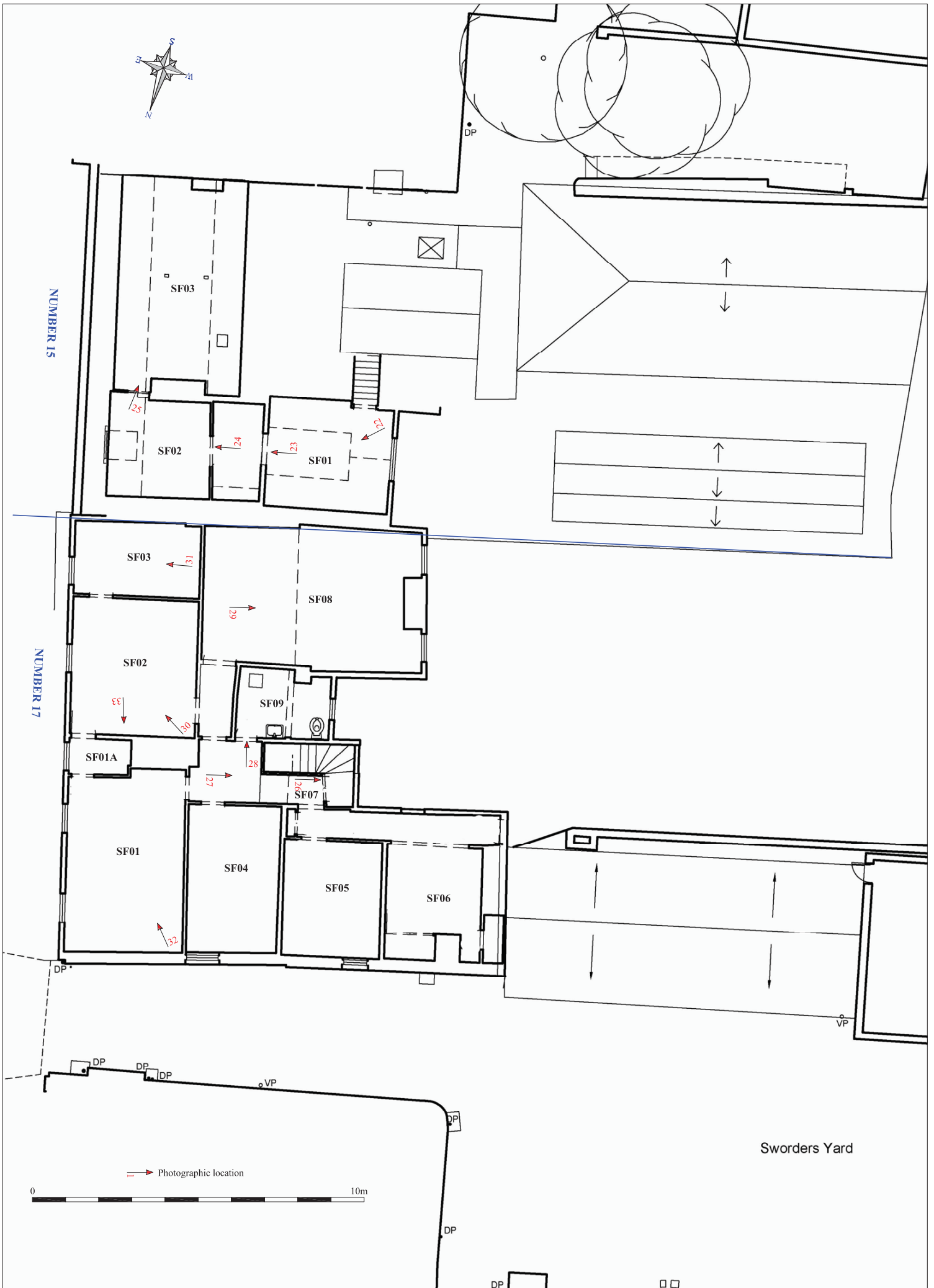


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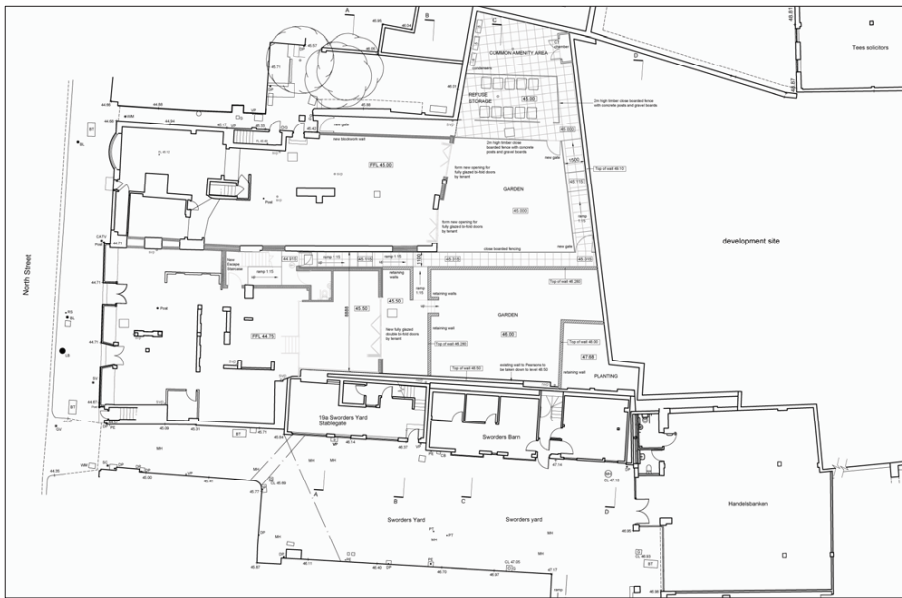
Fig. 10 Ground floor plan

Scale 1:100 at A3

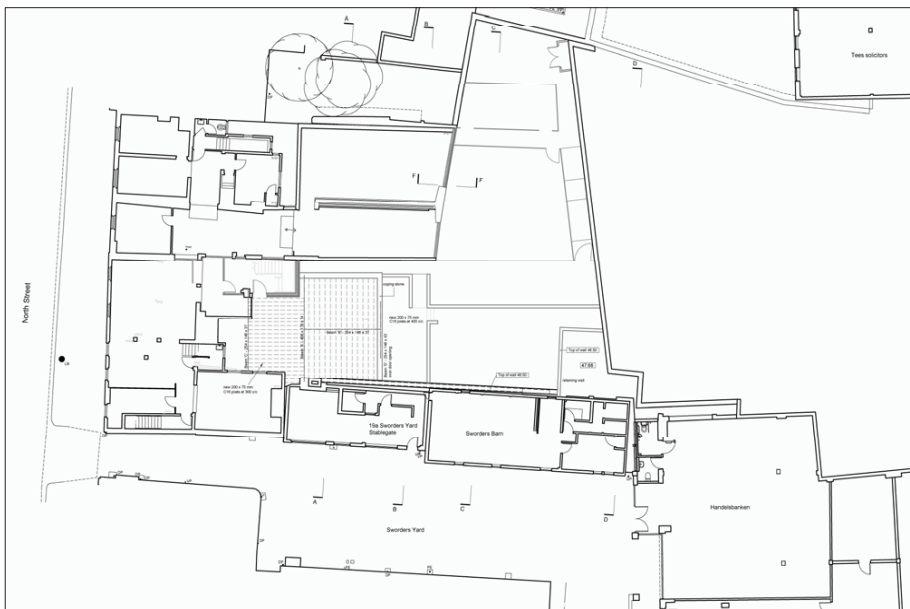




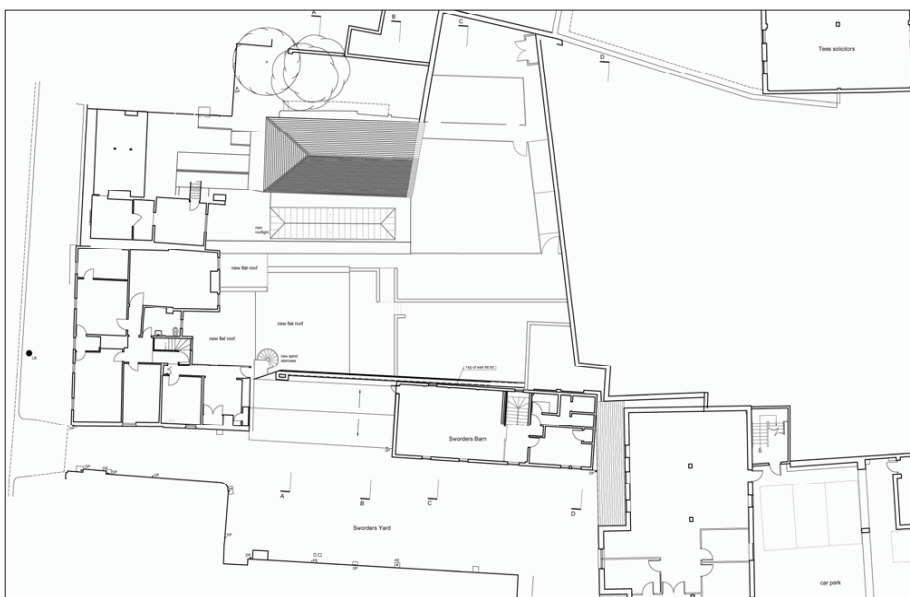
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Fig. 12 Second floor plan
 Scale 1:100 at A3



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR