

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH, HOUGHTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**ST MARY'S CHURCH, HOUGHTON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>St Mary's Church, Houghton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation.</i>		
<p><i>In November 2007, Archaeological Solutions conducted an archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to St Mary's Church, Houghton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2812 7209). The investigation was commissioned in advance of works to construct a new meeting room, vestry and welfare facilities adjacent to the north wall of the church (Planning ref. H/07/01411/FUL).</i></p> <p><i>Evidence of prehistoric activity from as early as the Palaeolithic period has been recovered from the Ouse gravels in Houghton. Neolithic finds are particularly numerous, and include several flint tools found close to the development site. Roman settlement in Houghton has also been recorded, with many domestic finds indicating a rural settlement of moderate status. Houghton is recorded as having a church at the time of the Domesday survey, which may have been located in approximately the same position as the extant 13th century church of St Mary's. Early medieval pottery has been found close to the site, suggesting that it was in the core of the medieval village. The site itself lies within St Mary's churchyard, adjoining the north side of the church building.</i></p> <p><i>The remains of six articulated skeletons were present within the trial trench; these remained unexcavated. Each burial was aligned east to west (with the head to the west). Burial 2 cut Burial 3. Individual grave cuts could not be determined, and the fills were identical and could not be distinguished. Disturbed human bone was located throughout subsoil layers L1002 and L1001. A modern soakaway (F1010) was located in the eastern 2.20m of the trench.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>November 2007</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>TBC</i>
P. number	<i>2988</i>	Site code	<i>AS1099</i>
Type of project	<i>Trial trench evaluation</i>		
Site status	<i>Possible archaeological potential</i>		
Current land use	<i>13th century church; graveyard</i>		
Planned development	<i>Construction of a new meeting room, vestry and welfare facilities adjacent to the north wall of the church</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>6 articulated burials aligned E/W</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Post-medieval CBM</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>Huntingdonshire</i>	<i>Houghton</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>470m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 2812 7209</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>10m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Jon Murray</i>		
Funded by	<i>St Mary's Church, Houghton PCC</i>		
Full title	<i>St Mary's Church, Houghton, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Evaluation.</i>		
Authors	<i>Unger, S., Woolhouse, T., Brogan, G</i>		
Report no.	<i>2964</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>Nov 2007</i>		

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HOUGHTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In November 2007, Archaeological Solutions carried out an archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to St Mary's Church, Houghton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2812 7209). The investigation was commissioned in advance of works to construct a new meeting room, vestry and welfare facilities adjacent to the north wall of the church (Planning ref. H/07/01411/FUL).

Evidence of prehistoric activity from as early as the Palaeolithic period has been recovered from the Ouse gravels in Houghton. Neolithic finds are particularly numerous, and include several flint tools found close to the development site. Roman occupation in Houghton has also been recorded, with many domestic finds indicating a rural settlement of moderate status. Houghton is recorded as having had a church at the time of the Domesday survey, which may have been located in approximately the same position as the extant 13th century church of St Mary's. Early medieval pottery has been found close to the site, suggesting that it was in the core of the medieval village. The site itself lies within St Mary's churchyard, adjoining the north side of the church building.

The remains of six articulated skeletons were present within the trial trench, and these remained unexcavated. Each burial was aligned east to west (with the head to the west). Burial 2 cut Burial 3. Individual grave cuts could not be determined, and the fills were identical and could not be distinguished. Disturbed human bone was located throughout subsoil layers L1002 and L1001. A modern soakaway (F1010) was located in the eastern 2.20m of the trench.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November 2007, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at St Mary's Church, Houghton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2812 7209; Figs. 1 & 2). The archaeological investigation was required to support a planning application for the construction of a new meeting room, vestry and welfare facilities adjacent to the north wall of the church (Planning ref. H/07/01411/FUL). The investigation was commissioned by Campbell Rees on behalf of St Mary's Church PCC.

1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA; dated 01/08/2007) and a Specification compiled by AS (dated 24/09/2007). The archaeological evaluation followed the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (both revised 1999), as well as those highlighted in the *IFA Standard*

and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (revised 2001) and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation aimed to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The evaluation also aimed to identify area of previous ground disturbance on the site. As the site was located within a graveyard, it was of particular importance to ascertain the depth and density of any burials present.

Planning policy context

1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).

1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains in situ. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.

1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to the conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

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

2.1 The site is located adjacent to St Mary's Church in the south of the village of Houghton. The village is situated between the towns of St Ives (c. 3.25km east) and Huntingdon (c. 4km west). Houghton lies on the north bank of the river Great Ouse. The site adjoins the north side of the parish church and adaptation to the north wall will be required as part of the proposed development. An extant gravestone stands within the area of the proposed development.

2.2 The existing St Mary's Church (HER CB14883) is known to have been built in the 13th century and is thought to have had an earlier predecessor on the footprint of the present church. The site is within the church graveyard and is therefore fairly likely to contain human remains. South of the site (c. 30m) is a mooring shed for boats. The church faces east onto Mill Street, which leads south to Houghton watermill (125m south of the site). On the opposite side of the road are residential properties. To both the north

and north-west of the site are also residential dwellings and cottages, with a small 19th century chapel 45m to the north-west.

3 METHODOLOGY (Desk-based assessment)

Information was sought from a variety of available sources in order to meet the objectives of the desk-based assessment.

3.1 Archaeological databases

3.1.1 The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot-finds within Cambridgeshire comes from the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER). In order to provide a representative sample, the HER database was searched for all known entries within a 1km radius of the site. Entries within an approximate 1km radius of the site are listed (Appendix 1) and plotted below (Figure 3). Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2. Significant HER entries from beyond the 1km radius have also been discussed where relevant.

3.2 Historical and cartographic sources

3.2.1 The principal source for these types of evidence was the Cambridgeshire County Record Office (CRO), Huntingdon. Relevant documents are listed in Appendix 2 and reproduced in Figures 4-7.

3.3 Secondary sources

3.3.1 The principal sources of secondary material were the Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon, as well as AS's own reference library. All sources, including websites, are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Geological/geotechnical information

3.4.1 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 based on the work of the Geological Survey of Great Britain.

4 THE EVIDENCE

4.1 Topography, geology and soils

4.1.1 The settlement at Houghton is located on relatively level land at an elevation of approximately 10m AOD. The land slopes gently downwards to the south, towards the course of the river Great Ouse. Houghton Mill, c. 100m south of the site, lies at a local low point of around 8m AOD. The majority of the former county of Huntingdonshire

consists of a broad open vale underlain by Oxford Clay (Sheail 2000, 1; Website 2). Houghton itself is on the border between Oxford Clay and Ampthill Clay. Along the Ouse the clay is overlain by river terrace gravels. The soils in the area are of the Efford 1 association, comprising fine loamy soil over gravel, variably affected by groundwater (SSEW 1983). These types of soil have traditionally supported cereals and grassland with some horticultural crops (SSEW 1983).

4.2 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric (c. 700,000 BC – AD 43)

4.2.1 Much of the evidence for early prehistoric activity in Cambridgeshire was found during 19th century gravel working along the river terraces of the Cam and Ouse (Reynolds 2000, 5). Houghton is situated close to the river Great Ouse, which seems to have been attractive to early hunter-gatherer groups. Several spot finds of Palaeolithic handaxes have been made in the area (HER 01673, 01674 and 00821). One of these was recovered less than 100m from the site; the others were found within 300m (HER MCB17409). Mesolithic finds are more limited (HER 01703 and 01941), but also suggest some activity in the Houghton area at this time.

4.2.2 There is a wealth of evidence for the Neolithic period in the area, possibly due to Houghton's proximity to the river, with one find spot located particularly close to St Mary's Church. Within a 1km radius of the site, over 15 Neolithic find spots have been recorded. One particular find spot (HER 00821), 1km south-east of the site, yielded over 30 flints. The majority of these finds were flint scrapers or flakes; they may represent an area of Neolithic occupation. A rough-out of a Neolithic flint axehead was found directly adjacent to the church (125m north-east of the site), on the other side of Mill Street (HER 01851).

4.2.3 Evidence for later prehistoric activity has also been recorded in the area. Two Bronze Age ditches (HER 08201) were identified 625m east of the site, with Bronze Age pottery, a knife and some human remains found 625m to the north-east (HER 01941c). Other prehistoric activity (875m south-east of site) includes an Iron Age domestic bowl (HER 01935b), with pottery and a loomweight recovered from close by (01941d).

Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)

4.2.4 The Ouse valley saw intensive Roman occupation, with villa sites and numerous lower-status rural settlements identified from cropmarks and excavations along the river terraces. Several Roman finds were noted in the parish in the early 20th century, but the precise find spots are not recorded (HER 02743). There have been many spot finds of Roman pottery, domestic objects and coins in the parish (HER 02817, 02750 and 01941e). A large Roman decorated ornamental pot (HER 02739a) has been found 125m south-east of the site, close to Houghton Mill. Several other Roman objects have also been found in this area (HER 02773). The Victoria County History records a Roman cemetery on Houghton Hill, 1.5km north-east of the site (Page 1932, 179).

Anglo-Saxon (AD 411 – 1065)

4.2.5 Evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation occurring as a continuation of Roman settlement is fairly common in Cambridgeshire (Taylor 2000, 24). A wooden hut with several Anglo-Saxon finds, including clay rings and pottery, has been found 625m south-east of the site (HER 01913). Around 500m east of the site, an Anglo-Saxon crouched inhumation and several bronze and iron ornaments has been excavated (HER 02654). Other finds in the parish include stray finds of an Anglo-Saxon bronze brooch (HER 02695) and a spearhead dredged from the river Ouse, near to the watermill (HER 02767).

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)

4.2.6 In Domesday Book, Houghton was entered as *Hoctune* and has been known by many variations through the centuries, but most frequently as Houghton with Wyton, named with the western neighbouring village (Morris 1975). A church was mentioned in Domesday Book, although it was explicitly stated that there was no resident priest (Morris 1975), possibly indicating a satellite chapel still served by a minster church. The 13th/14th century parish church of St Mary's (HER CB14883) is located in the approximate centre of the village (immediately to the south of site), facing onto Mill Street. It is thought that an Anglo-Saxon/ Norman predecessor of the present church stood on the same spot, although there is no surviving above-ground evidence for this (Website 1). The original 13th century church had a cruciform floor plan with the walls consisting of pebble rubble with dressings of Barnack stone (Website 1). The impressive tower and spire were completed by the end of the 14th century (Website 1). The church has several notable features, including the original double piscina with surviving wooden shelf above, dating to the 13th century (Website 1). Surrounding the site and the church is the medieval graveyard. This was obviously used as a burial ground throughout the medieval period and has continued to be used in the post-medieval era.

4.2.7 Meadow lane in Houghton was part of the medieval road used by travellers to get to the important fair in St Ives. The site of a medieval watermill (depicted on a map of 1514) lies less than 250m away from the site. An early medieval pottery vessel has been found close to the church (HER 07819), while evidence of medieval ridge and furrow has been recorded c. 125m to the south-east of the site (HER CB15423). St Mary's Church therefore seems to have lain at the core of the medieval village.

Post-medieval and modern (AD 1540 – present)

4.2.8 Several surviving structures in Houghton date from the 15th - 18th centuries. A possible Tudor moated homestead (HER 02671a) is known c. 250m north-west of the church; a 16th century potsherd was recovered from the site. The George and Dragon Inn (HER 02722), 130m north of the site, is a 15th century domestic dwelling converted into a public house and is thought to be the oldest building in the village (Page 1932, 179).

Other domestic buildings, such as Glebe cottage c. 40m north-east of the site, were built in the 17th century.

4.2.9 An important building in the village is Houghton Mill (HER 02723), located at the southern end of Mill Street (c. 125m south of the site). The extant building was constructed from the 18th century onwards, although earlier mills are thought to have existed in approximately the same location (from the Anglo-Saxon period) (Page 1932, 179). The present mill building is a five storey three wheel watermill which was restored and still runs at weekends. Another post-medieval building in the village is the United Reformed chapel (HER 14592), lying close to the site (c. 45m north-west), built in c. 1840. It is a listed building, but is currently used a residential retreat rather than a reformist church (HER 54069).

4.3 The site

Inclosure map, 1773 (Figure 4)

4.3.1 The Inclosure Map of 1773 depicts the church on a small plot of land numbered Plot 90. There is some duplication of numbers on the Inclosure map, which the Huntingdon record office staff found unusual. There is a separate plot, also numbered Plot 90, to the south of the church, but this does not have any buildings or structures shown on it and was not under the same ownership. The church is shown approximately in the middle of its small plot, and appears to have had a transept, giving the church an overall cruciform floorplan. The plot was recorded in the accompanying Inclosure Award (Appendix 5) as 'church and churchyard'. The land surrounding Plot 90 was mostly occupied by small houses/yards and farmland. To the west of the church were several small plots, numbered 83, 84, 85, 86, 87 and 88, which mostly had small structures built on them, some possibly outbuildings rather than houses. To the south of the church was a moderately-sized plot (89) with three linear structures, which is described in the Award as a house and yard owned by John Allprofs (Appendix 5). The plots north of the church are shown as divided into two, numbered 91. They comprised a house and yard and possibly one outbuilding to the west of the field. The plots to the east of the church (Plots 96 and 97) were fairly large fields with only one small structure in the north-west corner. They were presumably in agricultural use.

1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1887 (Figure 5)

4.3.2 Houghton underwent moderate change in the century between the parish Inclosure and the production of the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map. The church transept may have been slightly altered, possibly causing some disturbance to the proposed development site, which adjoins the north side of the building. The Ordnance Survey Map depicts the land surrounding the church, including the proposed development site itself, as a graveyard. Land to the west of the church was much more developed than on the previous map (Plots 83-88 on the Inclosure Map), with a school depicted on what was originally Plot 86. To the south-west of the church, the rectory of St Mary's is shown as an 'L'-shaped building. Immediately to the north-west, a relatively large chapel (the

united reform chapel) was shown in what had been Plot 87. Another school had also been built to the south- east of the church by this time. The housing to the east of the church was also much more developed. To the north, several earlier buildings may have been extended since 1773. Mill Street, to the east of the church, was depicted with the corn mill (now known as Houghton Mill) at the south end of the road.

2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1913 (Figure 6)

4.3.3 The 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map shows no alterations to the church or the churchyard. Many of the surrounding buildings also remained unaltered, with the two schools, chapel and the corn mill still being depicted. There was some slight modification to other buildings in the vicinity of the site. Notably, the ‘L’-shaped building within the boundaries of the rectory plot was no longer depicted, suggesting that it had been demolished. Land to the south-east remained meadow/agricultural plots along the river margins.

3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1924 (Figure 7)

4.3.4 No changes to the site are shown on this map; the church building is still identical to that shown on the 1887 map. A flag staff is depicted as being present on the site. The two schools are no longer depicted, suggesting a possible change of use for one or both of the buildings to domestic housing. There are no other significant changes visible in the area of the site.

5 Discussion (Desk-based Assessment)

5.1 Archaeological background

5.1.1 Several Palaeolithic tools, including handaxes, have been found in the area, attesting to the abundance of early prehistoric material contained in the Ouse terrace gravels, although mainly in secondary deposits. Mesolithic finds are also known in the area; the Ouse valley was probably used for movement and hunting by mobile populations of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers. Fifteen find spots of Neolithic flints are recorded in the Cambridgeshire HER within 1km of the site. This dense distribution suggests some settlement in Houghton by this time, although it may still have been on a seasonal basis. Further up the Ouse valley, Neolithic ceremonial monuments are known at several locations, for example, at Rectory Farm, Godmanchester, where a large trapezoidal enclosure has been excavated (Malim 2000, 8). A Neolithic axehead has been found in close proximity to the church. Bronze Age and Iron Age finds are also represented in the parish, but not on such a large scale.

5.1.2 Evidence of Roman settlement, including numerous spot finds of pottery and domestic objects, has been found in Houghton and also close to the proposed development site.

5.1.3 Evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation in Houghton comprises a timber hut

excavated 625m to the south-east, and a burial found 500m to the east of the site. Chance finds of Anglo-Saxon date have been found closer to the proposed development site. These include a spearhead dredged from the Ouse near the watermill, although this may have travelled some distance from its original point of deposition. By the late Anglo-Saxon period, Houghton was clearly a settlement of some size. Domesday Book records a church on the estate, albeit without a resident priest.

5.1.4 Houghton would probably have been a moderate-sized settlement in the medieval period. The present St Mary's church was built in the 13th century, replacing an earlier church, indicating a large enough community at this time to warrant the building. A watermill is also recorded on a late medieval map. Early medieval pottery has been found close to the church. The site would therefore have lain within the core of the medieval settlement.

5.1.5 There was a considerable amount of post-medieval building in Houghton. Domestic housing was built in the 16th/17th century, shown by the George and Dragon Inn and many domestic cottages such as The Glebe. Important post-medieval buildings in Houghton include Houghton Mill and the united reformist chapel.

5.2 Archaeological potential

5.2.1 The site has potential for remains of several periods:

- **Prehistoric – high potential.** Several Palaeolithic finds have been made in the parish (HER 01673, 01674, 00821 and MCB17409) and large numbers of Neolithic flints have also been recorded in the area, including an axehead very close to the site (HER 01851).
- **Romano-British– moderate potential.** The quantity of Roman pottery recovered from sites in Houghton, and the quality of some of the sherds (e.g. HER 02739a) indicates the probable presence of one or more Roman settlement sites, possibly including high-status occupation.
- **Anglo-Saxon – moderate potential.** The Anglo-Saxon hut (HER 01913) with numerous domestic finds and a crouched inhumation indicate early Anglo-Saxon settlement in the parish, although perhaps not in close proximity to the church. There is also a possibility of an Anglo-Saxon church and churchyard beneath the footprint of the extant church.
- **Medieval – high potential.** The site is within the grounds of a medieval church (HER CB14883) with a possible Anglo-Saxon/Norman church/churchyard beneath. The graveyard surrounding the church (infringing on the site) will probably have been a burial ground throughout this period and also into the post-medieval era, suggesting potential for human remains from both periods. Early medieval pottery was found within the immediate vicinity of the church

(HER 07819) and a medieval watermill and ridge and furrow are also known close to the site.

5.3 Previous ground disturbance and state of preservation

5.3.1 There has been some known structural activity on the site. By 1887, the north 'wing' of the church was no longer present, which suggests it was demolished between 1773 and 1887 (Figs. 4-5). The foundations of this wing would lie directly on the proposed development site and are likely to be in a good state of preservation. However, these foundations may have truncated any remains of an earlier Saxon or Norman church (though these may still exist if deeply-stratified). The site may also infringe on the graveyard (possibly Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval) and the preservation of the human remains is likely to be very good because of the lack of development on the area. Possible landscaping of the area in the 19th/20th century may have caused shallow truncation, but this is likely to have been minimal.

5.4 Impact of proposed development

5.4.1 The proposed development involves the construction of a new meeting room, vestry and welfare facilities adjacent to the north wall of the church. Although a small building, the construction of the building is likely to cause considerable ground disturbance within its footprint. The construction of the new meeting room may also affect the façade of the 13th century church wall which it will be adjoining and thus an assessment of the historic fabric may be useful.

6 METHODOLOGY (Trial Trenching)

6.1 One trench, measuring 7m x 1.6m, was excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig.2). The trench location was approved by CAPCA. It was located within the footprint of the proposed new meeting room.

6.2 Undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated, thereafter all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector.

7 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

7.1 Trench 1 Fig. 8

<i>Sample section: West end, east facing section.</i> 0.00 = 8.25m AOD	
0.00 – 0.22m	L1000. Topsoil. Humic dark brown sandy loam.
0.22 – 0.37m	L1001. Subsoil. Mid to dark brown, gritty clay sandy loam. Contained fragments of disturbed human bone throughout. Moderate mortar, gravel inclusions and occasional CBM fragments.
0.37 – 0.55m+	L1002. Subsoil/mixed grave fills. Light grey/brown, sandy clay with lenses of reddish brown sand. Moderate gravel and occasional mortar fragments and charcoal flecks.

Description: The remains of six articulated skeletons were present within the trench. These remained unexcavated but the level at which they were located was recorded. In order to locate the natural geology a hand-operated auger was used.

7.1.1 Natural light brown sand and gravel (L1003) was located at 6.47m AOD. This was revealed using a hand-operated auger along the southern side of the trench. The auger sample was taken from the mixed layer (L1002) of light greyish brown sandy clay present in the base of the trench (from a level of 7.45m AOD). This layer (L1002) was present to the depth of the natural sand and gravel.

7.1.2 Six burials were partially revealed and each was aligned east to west (with the head to the west). Burial 2 was revealed to cut Burial 3. The table below lists the burials, their heights above Ordnance Datum and below the existing ground level:

Burial No.	Context No.	Height (AOD)	Height below existing ground level
1	F1004	7.67m	c. 0.58m
2	F1005	7.44m	c. 0.81m
3	F1006	7.41m	c. 0.84m
4	F1007	7.47m	c. 0.78m
5	F1008	7.54m	c. 0.71m
6	F1009	7.45m	c. 0.80m

7.1.3 Each burial was cleaned enough to establish if it was articulated. Individual grave cuts could not be determined and the fills were identical and could not be distinguished; L1002 was the number given to the more general layer formed by the grave fills, located below the subsoil (L1001). Disturbed human bone was located throughout layers L1002 and L1001.

7.1.4 A modern soakaway (F1010) was located 0.10m below the topsoil in the eastern 2.20m of the trench. This remained unexcavated as it contained a cover of corrugated sheets that were possibly asbestos. One of these sheets had been dislodged, making the interior of the soakaway partially visible. It contained loosely packed concrete and brick rubble. The soakaway was immediately re-covered. Due to the presence of this soakaway the top of the burial layer was not exposed in the south-eastern part of the trench. In the north-western part of the trench excavation remained at the same level as the other burials to allow access to and from the trench.

8 CONFIDENCE RATING

8.1 Excepting the obvious presence of human burials, it is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features and finds during the evaluation.

9 DEPOSIT MODEL

9.1 Very humic topsoil (L1000) was present across the trench. This was on average 0.25m deep.

9.2 The subsoil consisted of mid to dark brown, gritty clay sandy loam (L1001) and was a maximum of 0.20m thick; this lay beneath topsoil L1000. Both the topsoil and the subsoil contained numerous tree roots. L1001 also included a moderate amount of mortar fragments (possibly from the construction of the 19th century north wall of the church) and disturbed human bone.

9.3 Layer L1002 was a substantial deposit that was formed by a number of indistinguishable grave fills. It consisted of light greyish brown, sandy clay with lenses of reddish brown sand. It contained abundant amounts of disturbed human bone. This layer was revealed to be 1.42m deep by the auger survey.

9.4 Natural light brown sand and gravel was revealed at 6.47m AOD (1.78m below the existing ground level) by the auger survey.

10 DISCUSSION

10.1 Description of the Archaeology

10.1.1 Six articulated skeletons were present within Trench 1. The level at which the uppermost burials were located within the trench was between 7.67m and 7.41m AOD, that is 0.58m to 0.84m below the existing ground level. The burials were revealed to be well preserved, and all aligned east to west.

10.1.2 A modern soakaway at the east end of the trench was not examined due to a

possible asbestos cover.

10.2 Interpretation of the site: archaeology and history

10.2.1 The presence of burials within the grounds of a church is not unexpected. The possibility of the graveyard encroaching onto the excavated site was anticipated during background research carried out for this project (see section 5.3.1) and it was thought that human remains of Anglo-Saxon, medieval or post-medieval date were potentially present. The date of pottery recovered from the subsoil layers L1001 and L1002 that directly overlay the burials, suggests that they are of post-medieval date.

10.3 Interpretation of the site: topography and geology

10.3.1 The natural light brown sand and gravel was present at a depth of 1.78m below existing ground level or 6.47m AOD.

10.3.2 The potential for 19th/20th century landscaping to have caused shallow truncation was identified during background research. Any such truncation was not apparent in the excavated trial trench

10.4 Preservation

10.4.1 The burials were sufficiently well preserved to identify them as articulated. They were not excavated and so further analysis regarding their degree of preservation was not carried out.

10.5 Finds and Environmental evidence

10.5.1 Two pieces of CBM (61g) were recovered from subsoil layer L1002. The same layer produced five sherds of pottery (59g), amongst these were three sherds dated to 1700-1900 and two sherds of medieval pottery, one of which was heavily abraded and the other showed signs of less severe abrasion; these sherds are clearly residual. The presence of these sherds in layer L1002 is most likely to be due to the regular disturbance of soil in the graveyard, causing the mixing of deposits of different dates. Subsoil layer L1001 produced 1 sherd of pottery (12g) which was dated to 1600-1800 and 2 iron nails weighing a combined total of 15g. A single metal pin (SF1) was recovered from Burial 5 (F1008). This object was under a centimetre in length (DP3).

10.6 Research potential

10.6.1 The research potential of the data provided by the Trial Trench Evaluation at St. Mary's Church is limited. The presence of burials in the grounds of a medieval church is not unexpected. The probable post-medieval date of these burials does nothing to inform on the possibility for the current church to have had an Anglo-Saxon or Saxo-Norman precursor.

11 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at the Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Campbell Rees for commissioning this evaluation, on behalf of St Mary's Church Houghton PCC

AS also gratefully acknowledges the advice and input of Richard Hoggett, Assistant Archaeologist, Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice.

AS acknowledges the assistance of staff at the Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon.

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APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA

The following sites are those that lie within a *c.* 1km radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). The locations of the sites are shown in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2.

HER No.	NGR TL	Description
<i>Prehistoric (700,000 BC – AD 43)</i>		
00821	288 717	A large find spot on a field which is now permanently pasture land. One Palaeolithic flint, 35 Neolithic/Bronze Age flints with numerous domestic beakers and bowls, several Iron Age vessels and loom weights were found. Can currently be found in Norris Museum.
01673	2876 7171	A Palaeolithic flint handaxe and Levallois worked flake found at this point. Now in Norris Museum.
01674	286 728	A Palaeolithic flake of grey flint found at this spot.
01703	289 727	A Mesolithic microburin found at this spot.
01703a	289 727	Several Neolithic flint implements were also found at the same point as the above find including several brown worked flints.
01831	285 728	A Neolithic flint scraper was found at this point.
01838	280 730	Several flint artefacts dating to the Neolithic period were found at this point.
01849	275 715	Two pointed flaked tool found here thought to be of Neolithic date.
01851	282 721	Part of a rough out of a Neolithic flint axehead was found in a resident's garden.
01852	284 725	Neolithic unpatinated brown flint found at this spot.
01853	284 728	Several Neolithic flint implements were found at this point.
01854	285 726	A Neolithic flint scraper was found at this point.
01906	286 728	Spot find of the point of a Neolithic flint.
01935a	288 716	An Iron Age dark grey ware found near to waterworks. Found with a V-shaped ditch which was of Pre-Roman Iron Age date.
01935b	2886 7169	An Iron Age carinated bowl of brown ware found by the site of the Houghton pumping station.
01941	2864 7170	Early Mesolithic to Bronze Age finds found on an excavation in 1929 (rabbit warren) including a Mesolithic Tranchet axehead and numerous Neolithic arrowheads and axes.
01941c	2864 7170	Bronze Age finds on the same site as 01941 including a knife, lithic implement, a sherd of pottery and some human remains.

01941d	2864 7170	Iron Age finds on the same site as 01941 including a sherd of pottery and a loom weight.
01954	287 726	A Neolithic circular scraper of grey flint found at this point.
01955	288 727	Small leaf-shaped arrowhead thought to be of the Neolithic period found at this point.
01957	285 722	Small Neolithic flake tool of brown flint found at this spot.
02687	289 719	A lithic implement is recorded at this spot thought to be from the early Neolithic to late Bronze Age.
02688	288 720	A flint gauge is recorded at this point thought to be from the early Neolithic to late Bronze Age.
02693	280 730	A flint scraper is recorded at this point thought to be from the early Neolithic to late Bronze Age.
02748	2734 7150	Over a period of 13 years, 250 worked flints have been found in a resident's garden, close to River Haithe. Exact prehistoric period unknown.
08201	275 723	Two bronze Age ring ditches found at this location.
09375	286 728	A Neolithic awl, with honey colour flint was found at his spot.
MCB17409	2809 7206	A Palaeolithic flint handaxe was found at the same time as two phases of 19 th century flood defences were found close to the mill (see MCB17409 in post-medieval section). It was found re-deposited in one of the clay flood banks.
<i>Roman (AD 43 – 410)</i>		
01904	2893 7174	This was a spot find of Roman pottery, no further details given.
01935	2886 7169	Several sherds of Roman pottery found at this site, ranging from 1 st to 4 th century, with a V-shaped ditch which was of Pre-Roman Iron Age date. See 01935 in Anglo-Saxon section for AS finds.
01941e	2864 7170	Roman finds on the same site as 01941 including a coin of Constantinus, several roof tiles and box flue tiles, some pottery and a beehive quern.
02671	280 724	A slight excavation took place in 1925 in Jubilee Oak Field which found Roman tile and potsherds with some isolated human remains.
02713a	2763 7258	Roman pottery found at this point, may be related to mound and ditch found but uncertain.
02739a	2818 7195	Roman pottery found by Houghton Mill Pool. Remains of a large pot with a painted surface and evidence of a raised Greek key pattern.
02743	28 72	St Ives museum records that several Roman finds were found by location uncertain except for parish. A hexagonal glass bottle and a bone spindle whorl were found including other small domestic finds.
02750	277 726	Roman pottery found at this spot, no further information.
02751	2781 7225	Roman pottery found at this spot, no further information.

02759	2834 7185	Roman pottery found in rabbit warren, no further information available.
02766	285 725	Roman pottery and coins found in the village, no further information.
02773	283 719	Several sherds of Roman pottery and coins found on the site of Houghton Mill.
02817	28 72	Eight 1 st , 2 nd and 4 th century Roman coins found including coins of Domitian, Hadrian and Commodus. Exact location in parish unknown.
<i>Anglo-Saxon (AD 410 – 1066)</i>		
01913	2861 7166	An early Anglo-Saxon hut was found with clay rings, a broken knife, pottery and animal fauna.
01935	2886 7169	An Anglo-Saxon storage jar was found on a site with other features; see 01935 (roman) and 01935a.
02654	2862 7207	Saxon crouched inhumation burial found in resident's garden with bronze and iron ornaments.
02695	283 719	Saxon Bronze saucer brooch thought to be 6 th or 7 th century found near to Houghton Mill.
02767	282 720	Anglo-Saxon spear dredged from the river near the watermill, possibly in the 1980's, further information being researched.
<i>Medieval (AD 1066 – 1550)</i>		
02622	281 719	The site of a medieval watermill depicted on a map of 1514.
02686	2829 7114	Base of a medieval cross found close to Hemingford Abbots church. The socket of the base is made from stone.
02718	277 722	St Margaret's and All Saints Church, Wyton is a medieval church dating to the 13 th century. There are modern alterations but the building is listed (54072). The church was sold in 1979 and is now under private ownership.
02739	2818 7195	This is the site of a medieval quern stone, found near Houghton Pool.
07819	2821 7199	Early medieval pottery found in 1948 by a resident. No further information.
08664	287 722	Meadow lane is part of the ancient medieval road used by travellers to get to the fair in St Ives. It may also have been used by travellers using the Ermine Street (old Roman road) who would have wanted to avoid Abbots Ripton.
10348	2827 7118	St Margaret's Church, Hemingford Abbots is thought to date back to the 12 th century. There are several later additions and late medieval wall painting exists in the interior. It is a listed building (53919).
CB14883	28124 72092	St Mary's Church is early medieval in date and had had several 14 th century additions. The walls are mainly of pebble rubble with dressings of Barnack stone. The double pascina is a notable feature of the church with the wooden shelf above dating to the 13 th century. The church is listed (54105).

CB15423	28255 71995	A field survey took place in advance of the National Trust buying the land. A medieval ridge and furrow cultivation were found.
<i>Post-medieval (AD 1550 – 1900)</i>		
02671a	280 724	Possible site of a Tudor moated homestead. Building work on the site discovered a 16 th century pot sherd.
02717	275 714	Post medieval house in Hemingford Abbots.
02720	2832 7113	This is the location of the Manor House in Hemingford Abbot. It is a listed building (53918).
02721	283 712	A post-medieval barn stands at this point. No further information.
02722	281 722	This was the previous George and Dragon Inn which was built in the 15 th century, although originally intended to be a domestic house.
02723	2816 7197	A five storey three wheel watermill known as Houghton watermill. The present structure is mostly 18 th century although there is a possibility of an earlier structure dating to the Anglo-Saxon period but there is no firm evidence of this.
02724	282 722	A post-medieval domestic house is on this site, no further information.
02725	283 722	A post-medieval farmhouse on Magdalene College Farm.
02726	283 724	A post-medieval domestic house is at this point, no further information.
CB14952	2807 7213	This is a united reformed chapel built in c. 1840. The fabric is of yellow gault brick with a low pitch slate roof overhanging at eaves. It is reported that Potto Brown, a famous local, paid for this church to be built. A good example of 19 th century architecture and is a listed building (54069).
<i>Modern (AD 1900 – present)</i>		
MCB17409	2809 7206	Evidence of two phases of 19th century flood defences was found close to the Mill, perhaps to deal with flooding in the area. Some early medieval pottery was found in the investigations but could be residual or waste/debris. See MCB17409 for Palaeolithic find.
<i>Undated</i>		
01941f	2864 7170	Numerous finds on the site of 01941 including several hearths, a pot boiler and a crucible.
02713	2757 7257	Earth works consisting of a mound and ditch have been found at this point.
06845	2860 7125	A ring ditch was found at this point but no dating evidence available.
12124	288 723	A park and garden known as the 'Elms'. Date of design and planting unknown.
12125	283 726	A park and garden which is known as the rectory gardens.

APPENDIX 2 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Date	Map	Scale	Location
1773	Inclosure map and award	-	CRO
1887	1 st Edition Ordnance Survey Sheet XVIII.15	25'': 1 mile	CRO
1900	2 nd Edition Ordnance Survey Sheet XVIII.15	25'': 1 mile	CRO
1924	Ordnance Survey Sheet XVIII.15	25'': 1 mile	CRO

APPENDIX 3 LISTED BUILDINGS

The following listed buildings are those that lie in the immediate vicinity of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2.

Pref. Ref	NGR TL	Name	Grade	Description
54068	28134 72204	Chapel Lane cottages	II	18 th century timber framed cottages without shut at rear.
54074	28174 72231	The Green	II*	15 th century house and former Inn. Once an important inn in the market square.
443321	28174 72146	Bath Haccerem and Dolly Peg cottages	II	A row of late 18 th century thatched cottages on Mill street which are timber framed.
54094	28170 72242	Black Horse cottage	II	Late 16 th century timber framed house. Probably a later extension to adjoining 14 th century open hall, known as 'The Green.'
54121	28255 72166	Buckley House and Thrae	II	A 16 th /17 th century house with a continuous jetty.
54104	28152 72113	Glebe Cottage	II	An early 17 th century timber framed cottage of two buildings, with a thatched roof.
54078	28160 72203	Memorial shelter and clock tower	II	Memorial monument with shelter and clock tower dated to 1902 and erected in the memory of Mr G. Brown, a local resident.
54076	28179 72187	Monument to Potto Brown	II	A bronze bust of Potto Brown, erected in the 19 th century for a man who contributed greatly to the community of Houghton, as one of the millers of Houghton mill.

54105	28127 72090	The parish church of St Mary's	II	St Mary's Church is early medieval in date and had had several 14 th century additions. The walls are mainly of pebble rubble with dressings of Barnack stone. The double pascina is a notable feature of the church with the wooden shelf above dating to the 13 th century.
54073	28140 72210	Provender House and Scrivener's foodstore	II	This is a mid 19 th century house with shop frontage which is currently the only shop in Houghton.
54103	28158 71971	Houghton Mill	II*	17 th century watermill rebuilt and extended in 18 th /19 th centuries. The current building replaces an early mill burnt down. The mill comprises of three waterwheels and is the hands of the National Trust.
54102	28158 72034	Mid-19 th century house	II	Mid-19 th century house located on Mill street, close to the riverside.
54261	28163 72211	Telephone Box	II	A 1935 telephone kiosk, type K6 designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.
54117	28258 72195	Sweet Briar	II	Early 19 th century house with porch.
54070	28070 72111	The Lindens	II	Early 19 th century gault brick cottage with thatched roof.
54122	28325 72139	The Manor	II	The Manor was built from 1905 and is built in the vernacular revival style.
54075	28198 72202	Three Horse Shoes public house	II	A 17 th century timber framed public house.
54069	28056 725131	United Reform Chapel	II	Nonconformist chapel built c 1840 and is associated with the locally famous Potto Brown.
54077	28168 72201	Village pump	II	Cast iron gothic hand pump c. 1870's donated by Potto Brown.
54087	28155 72263	White Cottage	II	Originally a pair of 19 th century cottages with a thatched roof.
54086	28154 72246	Fernleigh and small house	II	Mid 18 th century house with 19 th century addition to right hand.

APPENDIX 4 FIELDWORK IN AREA

Event No.	NGR TL	Site	Type of fieldwork/description of findings
ECB1058	28278 71942	Houghton Mill	Field observation/ Survey looking at associated with earthworks surrounding.
ECB212	28163 71987	Houghton Mill	Watching brief of the surrounding area.
ECB2424	29516 70681	St Ives to Hemingford flood alleviation	Watching brief and subsequent excavation finding a possible Quaker cemetery, post medieval timber supports and post medieval brick wall boundary.
ECB2445	28094 72048	Site near to Houghton Mill	Watching brief on 'The Moorings' embankment structure.
ECB2539	28636 72126	The Elms	Evaluation at 'The Elms', Thicket road.
ECB2651	2861 7166	The River Ouse	Excavations in 1092 found a Saxon hut.
ECB389	27792 72224	St Margaret's and All Saints Church	Watching brief related to the church in Wyton.
ECB565	27791 72225	St Margaret's and All Saints Church	Watching brief related to the church in Wyton in 1995.
ECB695	2864 7170	Rabbit Hill	Excavations took place at rabbit hill in 1929 which reported a range of prehistoric finds and some roman evidence. (HER 01941, 01941a, 01941b, 01941c, 01941d, 01941e, 01941f)

APPENDIX 5**1773 INCLOSURE AWARD**

Entry No.	Owner	Plot/Field name	Area (a.r.p)
89	John Allprofs	House and yard	1.3.29
90	-	Church and churchyard	0.1.37
91	John Samer	House and Yard	0.1.3
91a	John Samer	Rectory house and garden	0.0.23
93	Samuel White	House and yard	0.1.28
94	Philip Cunliffe	House and yard	0.1.21
95	Mary Bailey	House, yard and garden	0.1.5
96	John Offloy	House and yard	0.2.3
97	John Allprofs	-	1.3.29

APPENDIX 6 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

AS 1099: Saint Mary's Church, Houghton, Cambs

Concordance of finds by feature

Feature	Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery	CBM (g)	Other
1001		Subsoil	1600-1800	(1) 12g		Fe Nails (2) 15g
1002		Subsoil	1700-1900	(5) 59g	61	
1008		Burial 5				SF 1: Metal Pin (1) <1g

APPENDIX 7 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery

Peter Thompson

The evaluation recovered 6 sherds weighing 69g from the subsoil. Two medieval sherds comprise a medieval shelly ware jar rim of 12th to 13th century date and a glazed oolitic limestone Lyveden-type jug sherd of 12th-14th century date. Two hard fired red earthenwares with glossy glaze are Cistercian ware. The remaining two sherds are post-medieval red earthenware and a jug sherd in refined white earthenware.

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1001	Subsoil	1x12g PMRE	1600-1800	Abraded clear (brown) glaze both sides
1002	Subsoil	1x20g M/Shell 1x7g LYV 2x25g CIST 1x5g REFWE	1700-1900	Medieval shelly ware abraded jar rim 12 th -13 th c. Lyveden-type green glazed jug body sherd with applied iron strip CIST – drinking jug body sherd and small rod handle to cup REFWE – jug neck with clear glaze and yellow slip lines

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

Two fragments (61g) of highly abraded post-medieval CBM were recovered from Subsoil L1002. Both fragments are derived from c.12-14mm thick flat roof tile with a smoothed upper surface and a rougher base but are in different fabrics. One fabric is oxidised orange red with inclusions of common coarse sand with sparse flint and clay pellets, and the second in oxidised yellow-brown with inclusions of common medium quartz and black iron rich grains with sparse very coarse oxidised fragments of grog. Both the form and the fabrics are relatively common types in the region in the post-medieval period.

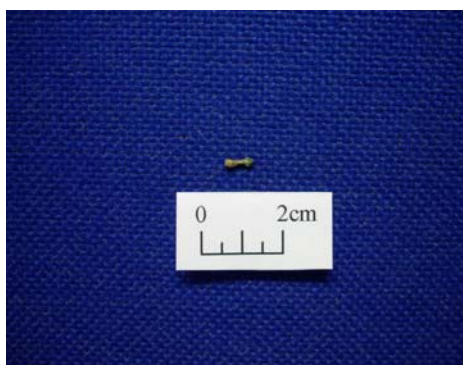
PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



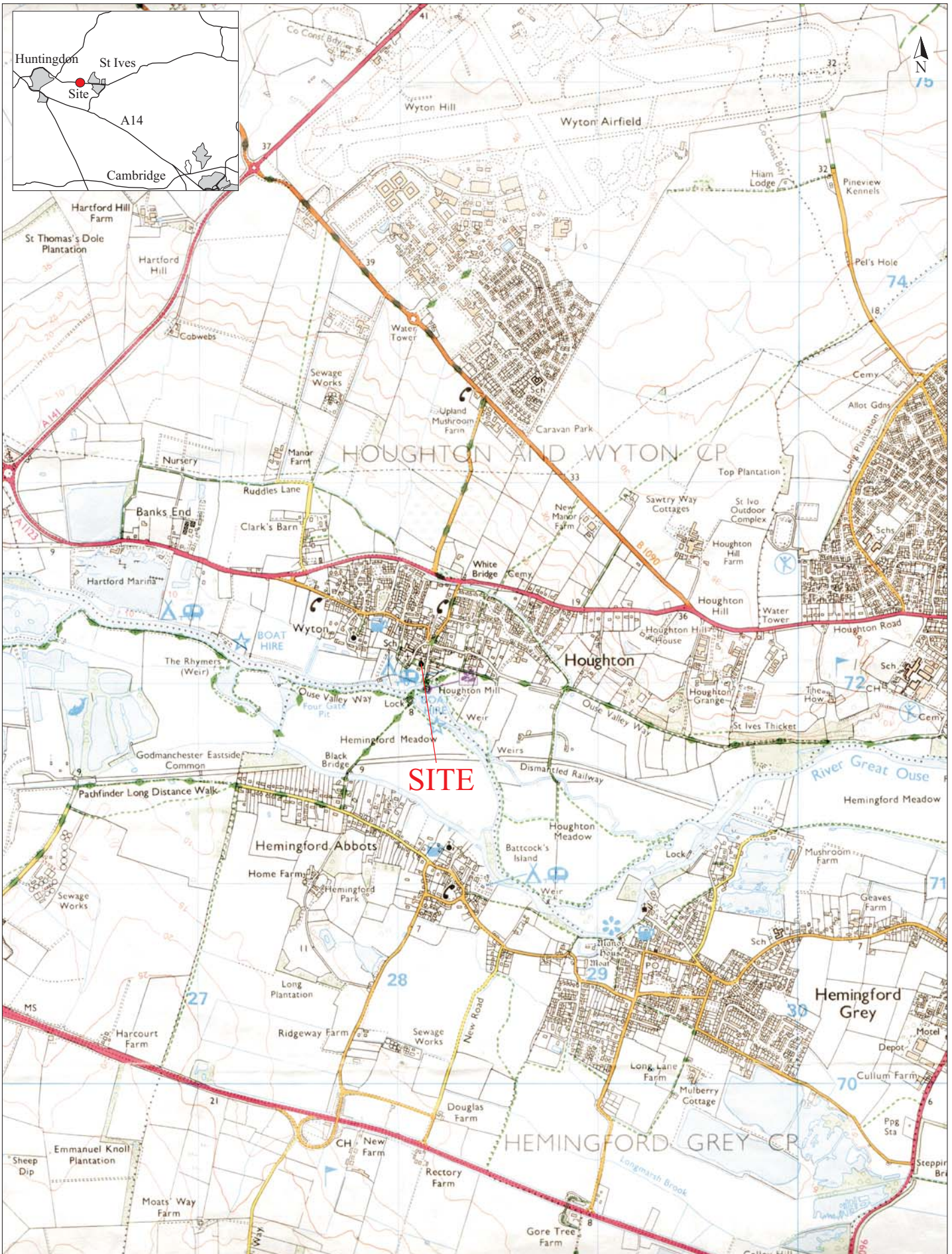
DP1
The site looking east



DP2
The site looking west



DP 3
Metal Pin (SF1) recovered from
Burial 5 (F1008)

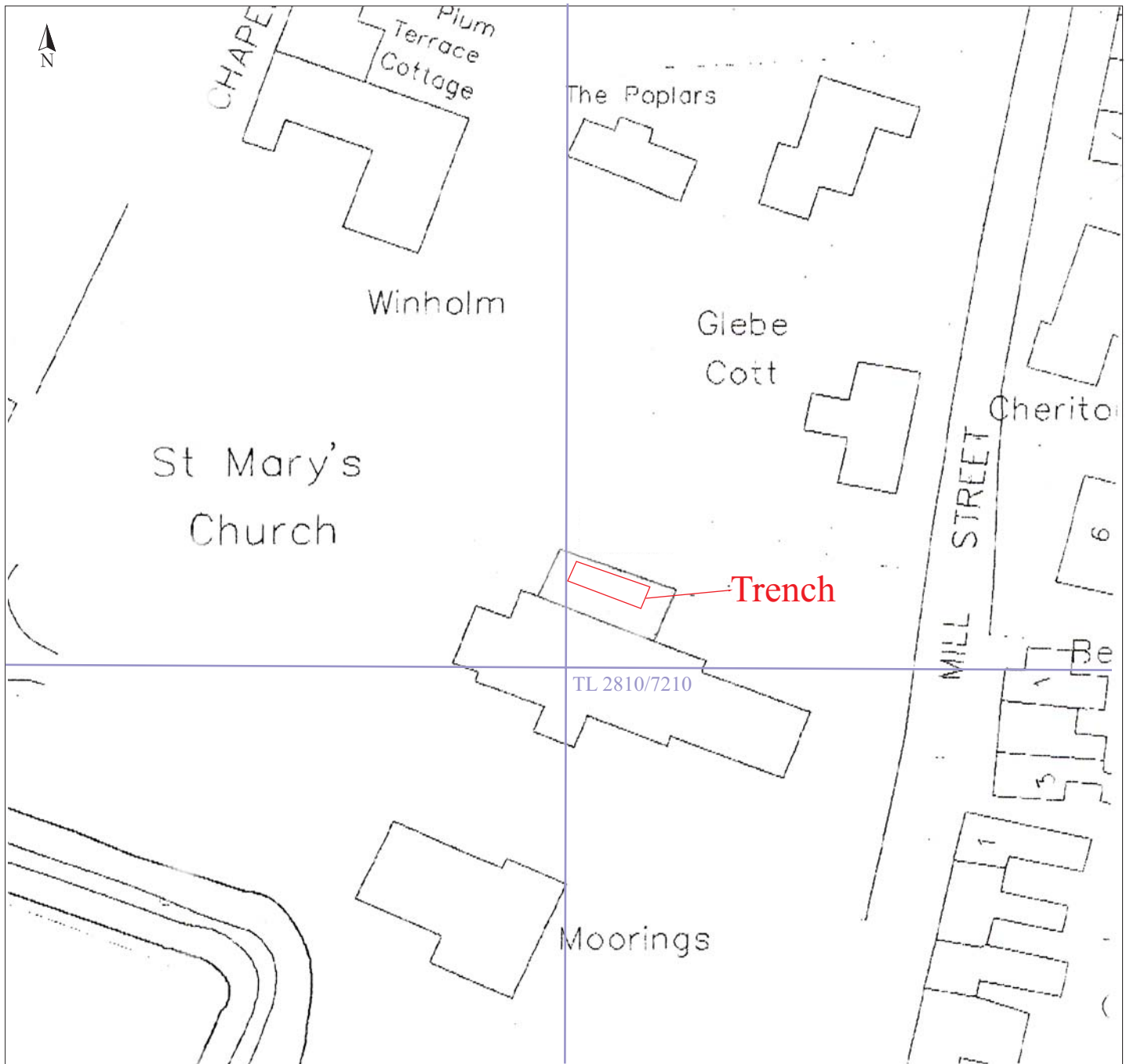


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Fig. 1 Site location

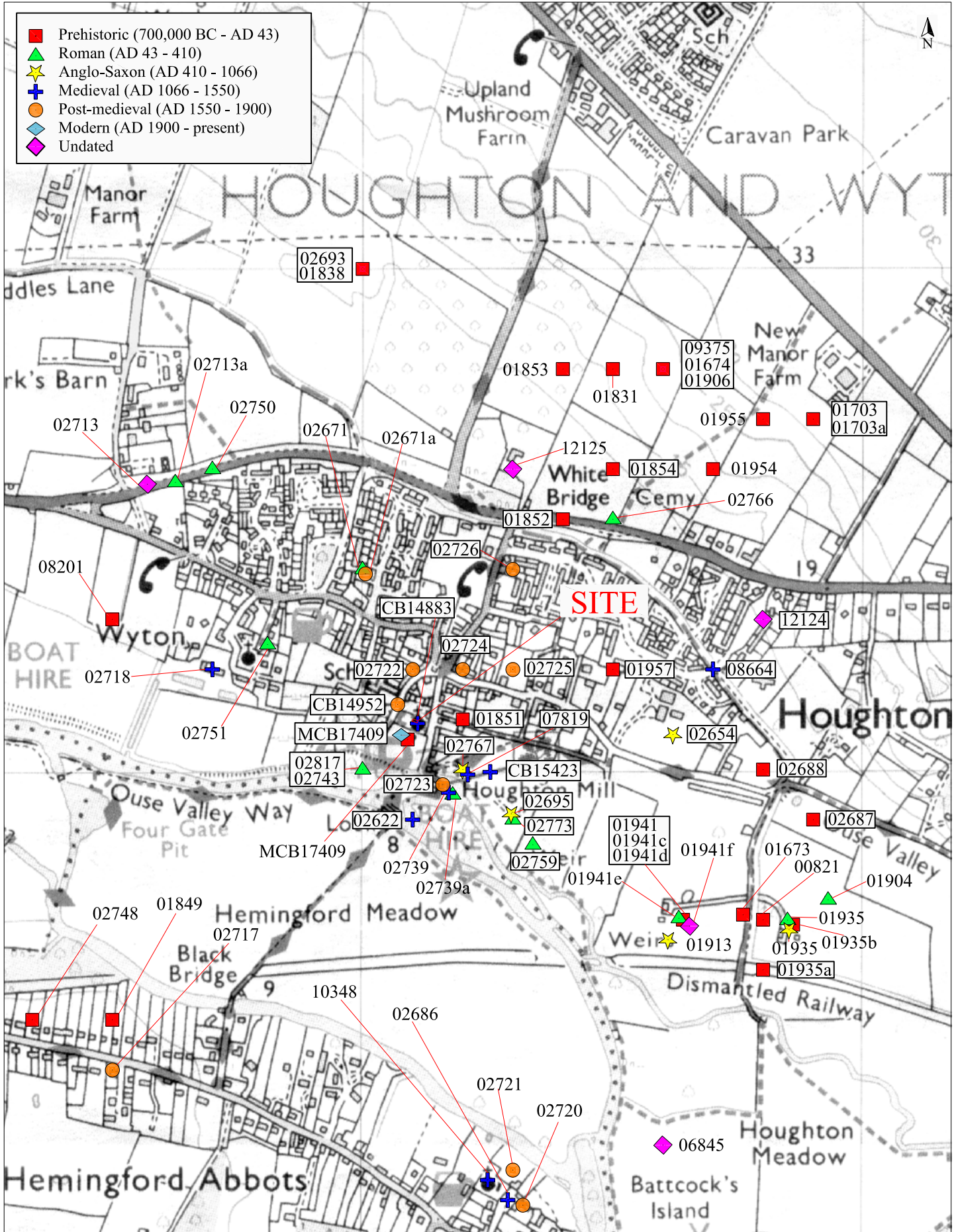
Scale 1 : 25,000



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



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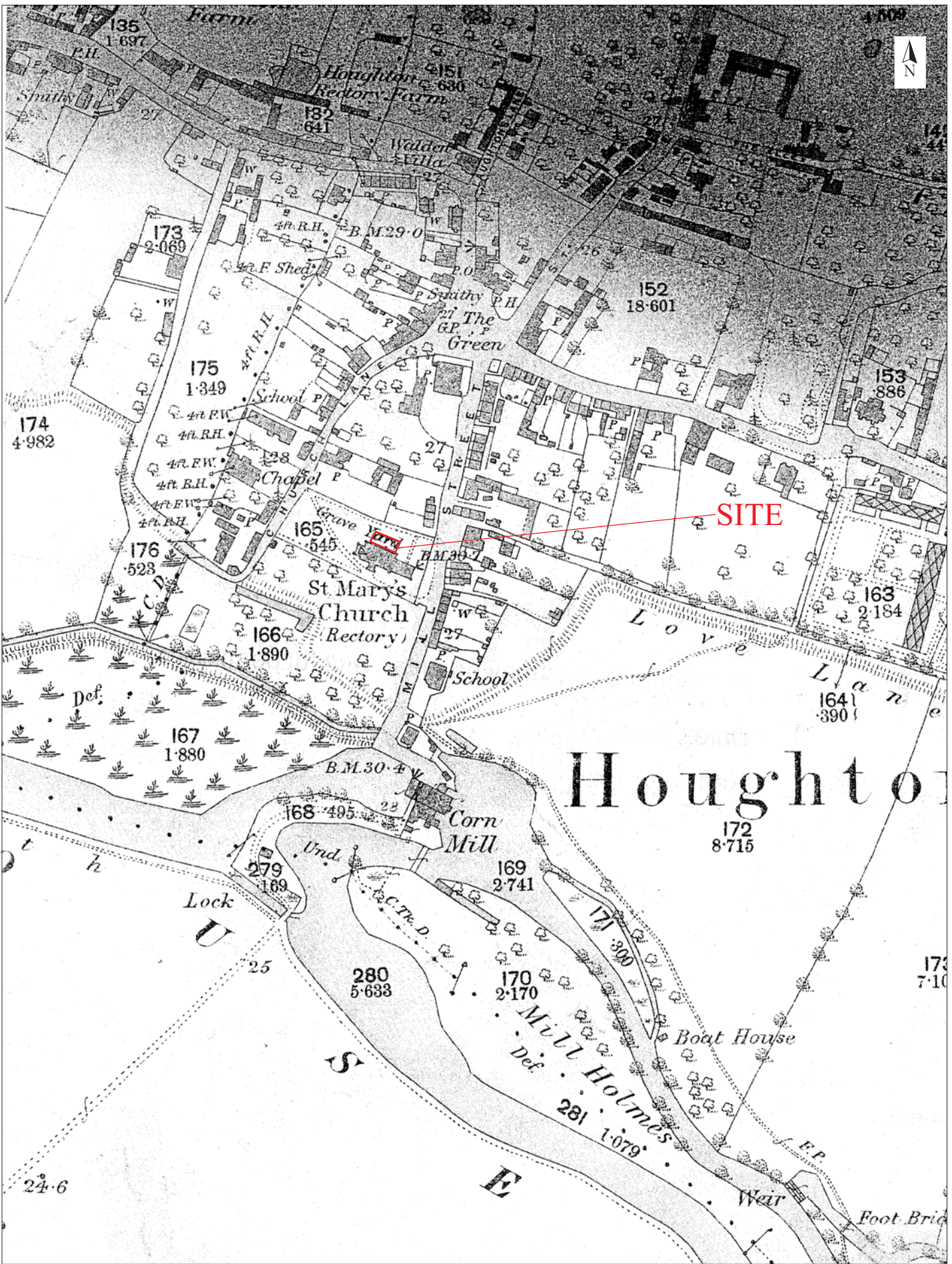
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Fig. 3 HER Data

Scale 1 : 10,000 at A4

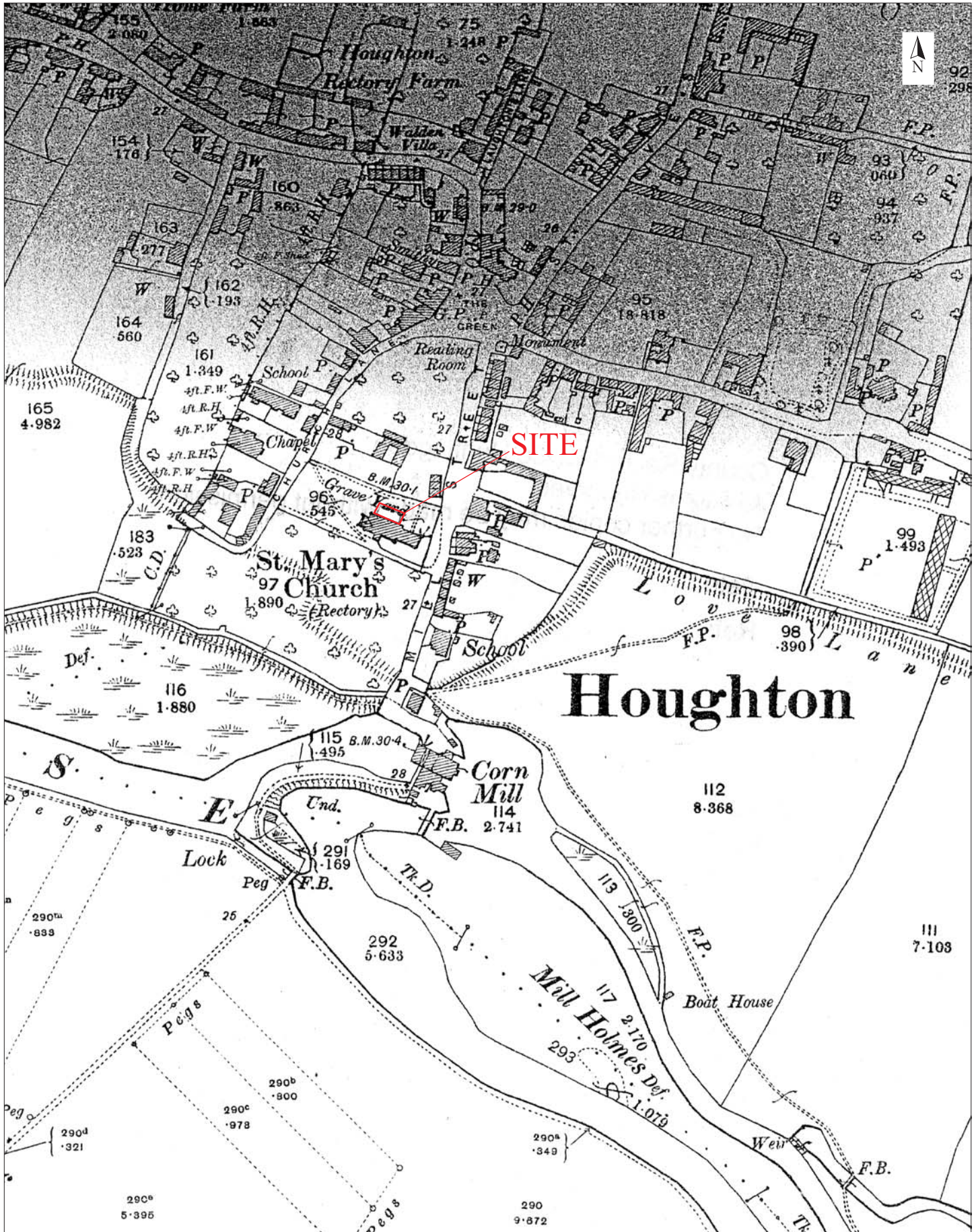


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Fig. 4 Houghton inclosure map, 1773
Not to Scale



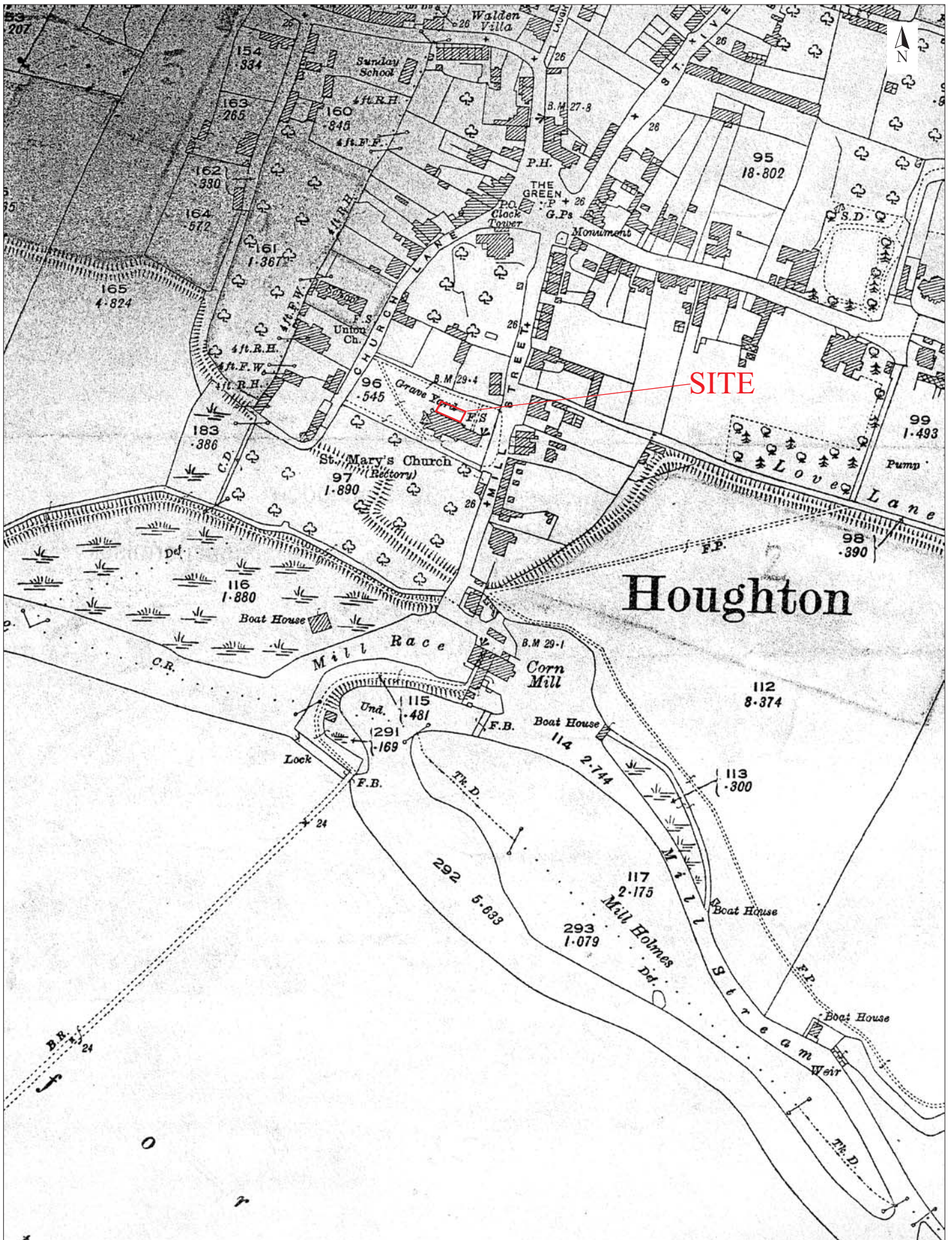
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Fig. 5 1st Edition OS map, 1887
 Scale 25" : 1 mile at A4



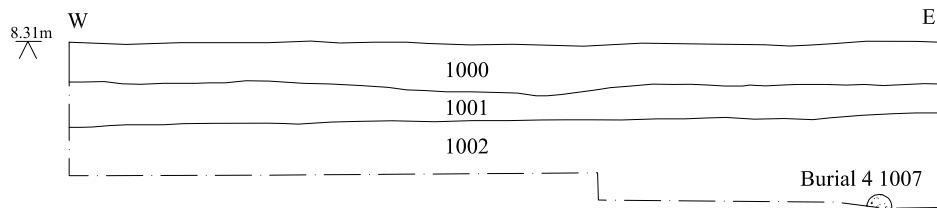
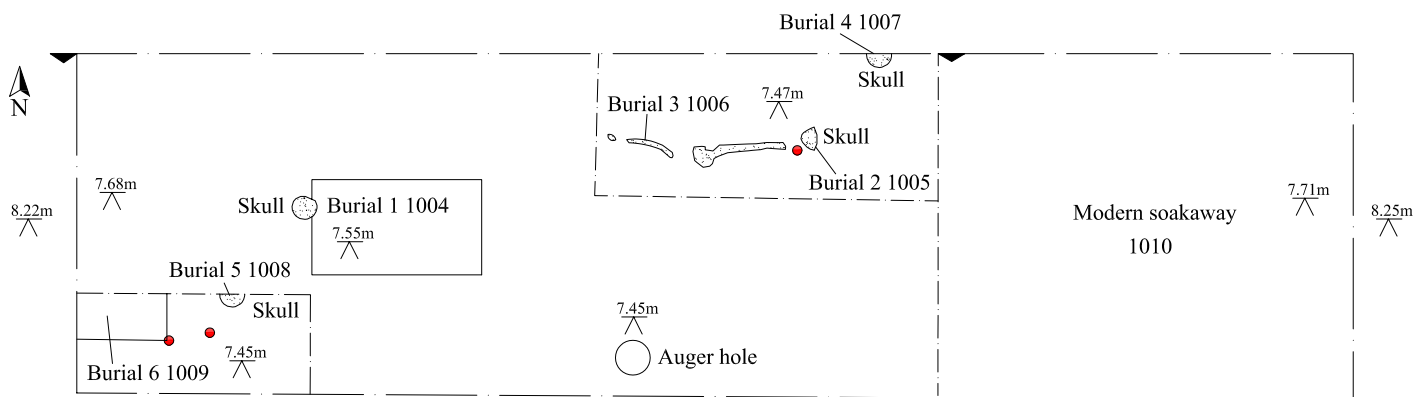
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Fig. 6 2nd Edition OS map, 1913
 Scale 25" : 1 mile at A4



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Fig. 7 3rd Edition OS map, 1924
 Scale 25" : 1 mile at A4



• Nail



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Fig. 8 Plan and section
Scale 1:40 at A4