

**151 HIGH STREET, HUNTINGDON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**151 HIGH STREET, HUNTINGDON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

CHER No: ECB 2841

Authors: Gary Brogan (fieldwork and report)	
NGR: TL 2417 7161	Report No: 3097
District: Huntingdon	Site Code: AS904
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 2470
Signed:	Date: May 2008

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>151 High St. Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire; archaeological monitoring and recording</i>		
<i>In February 2008, Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording during a development to the rear of 151 High Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire</i>			
<i>A previous trial trench evaluation of the site, conducted by AS in 2005, revealed evidence of medieval rubbish pit activity and quarry pitting. However, the deposits observed during the monitoring and recording relate to the post-medieval and modern periods. All of the excavated foundation trenches showed a broadly similar sequence of post-medieval and modern make-up layers; the only features observed being a modern rubbish pit (F2007) in Sample Section 5 and a pile in Sample Section 3.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>27th February</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>Y</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number		Site code	<i>AS904</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological monitoring and recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within area of archaeological potential</i>		
Current land use	<i>Established garden plot</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential</i>		
Main features (+dates)			
Significant finds (+dates)			
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>Huntingdonshire</i>	<i>Huntingdon</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>Approximately 0.2 ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 2417 7161</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)			
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA)</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Gary Brogan</i>		
Funded by	<i>Roshclose Ltd</i>		
Full title	<i>151 High St., Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, archaeological monitoring and recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Brogan, G</i>		
Report no.	<i>3097</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>May 2008</i>		

151 HIGH STREET, HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In February 2008, Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording during a development to the rear of 151 High Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

A previous trial trench evaluation of the site, conducted by AS in 2005, revealed evidence of medieval rubbish pit activity and quarry pitting. However, the deposits observed during the monitoring and recording relate to the post-medieval and modern periods. All of the excavated footing trenches showed a broadly similar sequence of post-medieval and modern make-up layers; the only features observed being a modern rubbish pit (F2007) in Sample Section 5 and a pile in Sample Section 3.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2008, Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) conducted archaeological monitoring and recording during a development to the rear of 151 High Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 2417 7161) (Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Graham Handley Architects on behalf of Roshclose Ltd in response to a planning condition (required based on the advice of Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA)). It was undertaken during the development of the site (Planning Application H/01/01472/OUT). An archaeological desk-based assessment and trial trench evaluation had been previously carried out (Mundin, Woolhouse, Williamson 2005)

1.2 The monitoring was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by CAPCA, dated 7th December 2007, and a specification compiled by AS (dated 17th December 2007). The project followed the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 1999) and the requirements of the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the monitoring were

- to ensure the archaeological excavation and monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- to secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- to secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required;

- to secure the analysis, long-term conservation and storage of the project archive.

1.4 Research priorities are set down in the regional archaeological research frameworks, namely Glazebrook (1997), and Brown and Glazebrook (2000).

Planning Policy Context

1.5 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).

1.6 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.

1.7 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

2.1 The site is situated in the south-east of Huntingdon's historical town centre, on the north eastern side of High Street (Figs. 1 & 2). The proposed development site is located to the rear of No. 151, comprising a well established garden which slopes gently to the northeast; a narrow passage runs along the side of the existing property leading to High Street. The site is accessible from St Clement's Passage to the northwest. It is bounded to the north by a car park, to the east by land at the rear 153 High Street, and to the west by modern residential properties.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY & SOILS

3.1 Huntingdon lies on the River Ouse at approximately 10m AOD. The ground rises gradually to around 40m AOD some 2.5km north of the town centre and to around 30m AOD 1.5km west of High Street, to the north of Alconbury Brook (Fig. 1). Just south of the town, the Ouse meanders away from its northward course and begins to flow eastward towards Ely, before turning north towards its mouth at The Wash.

3.2 Geologically, the margins of the river Ouse valley are associated with alluvium, overlying terraces of river gravels and Jurassic clays (Edmonds & Dinham 1965). The site itself is located on 1st and 2nd river gravels

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk-based assessment and trial trench evaluation had previously been undertaken (Mundin, Woolhouse & Williamson 2005). In summary:

4.1 The desk-based assessment showed that the site is situated immediately to the east of the probable 9th century Danish burh and late Saxon town; and within the core of the medieval settlement. Excavations nearby have revealed strong indications of activity in the area in the late Saxon and early medieval periods, possibly including occupation, though no remains of dwellings have yet been identified with certainty. The assessment found the site's main potential was for the existence of similar remains of late Saxon or early medieval date, perhaps with the potential to shed further light on land use in this part of the town. The primary and secondary sources agree that Huntingdon declined from the late 14th century onwards, with once built-up land becoming marginal.

4.2 The preceding evaluation comprised three trial trenches. All three trenches exhibited a similar deep, well stratified sequence of deposits with the natural sand being truncated by several fairly dense groups of inter-cutting features. The latter comprised sub-circular and sub-oval pits indicative of rubbish pit activity, and quarry pitting for the natural sand and gravel.

4.3 Several of these features produced pottery of post-conquest date from sealed contexts, however the main phase of activity dated to later in the medieval period (12th to 14th centuries). These deposits were sealed by late medieval soil horizons. A late medieval quarry Pit F1055 dominated the centre of Trench 1 truncating much of the earlier stratigraphic sequence. Trenches 1 and 2 exhibited a post-medieval soil horizon which displayed evidence of possible ridge and furrow cultivation. This deposit forms a transitional point in the stratigraphic sequence, with the overlying deposits comprising later post-medieval levelling and make-up layers, punctuated by discrete rubbish pits. In Trench 3, evidence for post-medieval structures was excavated in the form of wall foundation F1013 and brick built drain F1010.

5 METHOD OF WORK

5.1 The proposed development was constructed on piles and ground beam foundations. The archaeological monitoring focussed on the excavation of ground beams and any deeper excavations. Groundworks were carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under the close monitoring of an archaeologist.

Undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated to an appropriate depth determined by the building engineer. Exposed surfaces of sample sections were cleaned as appropriate and examined for archaeological features and finds. Sections, deposits and archaeological features were recorded by means of *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed. Excavated spoil was checked for finds.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Ground Beams

The excavation of ground beam foundations was observed on 27th February 2008. None of the trenches were excavated to a depth sufficient to expose the natural geology, or the medieval horizons recorded during the previous evaluation of the site. Excepting a modern pit and a pile, only make-up layers were observed.

6.1.1 Foundation Trench 1

<i>Sample Section 1: northwest facing</i> 0.00=9.85m AOD		
0.00 – 0.20m	L2000	Layer of demolition rubble forming modern ground surface.
0.20 – 0.30m	L2001	Modern surface. Compact dark grey-black clinker.
0.25 – 0.45m	L2002	Modern make-up layer. Friable, coarse yellow sand and gravel.
0.50 – 0.80m	L2003	Modern make-up layer. Friable, brick fragments and lime mortar.
0.10 – 0.80m	F2009	Cut for modern surface and make-up
0.10 – 0.60m	L2004	Post-medieval soil. Compact, dark brown clayey sand with frequent flint pebbles.
0.60 – 1.00m+	L2005	Post-medieval soil. Friable, mid brown sandy clay.

Description No archaeological features were present. A modern surface of compact clinker (L2001) was located on average 0.20m below the present ground level. This surface was laid on make-up deposits L2002 and L2003. The surface was observed in Sections 1, 2 and 3.

6.1.2 Foundation Trench 2

<i>Sample Section 2: northeast facing</i> 0.00=9.86m AOD		
0.00 – 0.25m	L2000	As Sample Section 1.
0.23 – 0.28m	L2001	As Sample Section 1.
0.20 – 0.50m	L2002	As Sample Section 1.

0.50 – 0.80m	L2003	As Sample Section 1.
0.25 – 0.80m	F2009	As Sample Section 1.
0.80 – 1.00m+	L2005	As Sample Section 1.

Description No archaeological features were present.

6.1.3 Foundation Trench 3

<i>Sample Section 3: southeast facing</i> <i>0.00=9.85m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.25m	L2000	As Sample Section 1.
0.20 – 0.30m	L2001	As Sample Section 1.
0.30 – 0.60m	L2002	As Sample Section 1.
0.60 – 0.80m	L2003	As Sample Section 1.
0.25 – 0.80m	F2009	As Sample Section 1.
0.20 – 0.55m	L2004	As Sample Section 1.
0.55 – 0.90m	L2005	As Sample Section 1.

Description A single modern concrete pile, associated with the current development, was observed at the north-east end of this trench. The modern cut (F2009) containing the make-up (L2002 and L2003) and compact surface (L2001) was observed. No further features were present.

6.1.4 Foundation Trench 4

<i>Sample Section 4: southwest facing</i> <i>0.00=9.89m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L2000	As sample section 1.
0.10 – 0.20m	L2006	Buried topsoil.
0.20 – 0.65m	L2004	As sample section 1.
0.65 – 1.05m+	L2005	As sample section 1.

Description No archaeological features were present.

6.1.5 Foundation Trench 5

<i>Sample Section 5: northwest facing</i> <i>0.00=9.91m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.10m	L2000	As sample section 1.
0.10 – 0.45m	L2006	As sample section 4.
0.25 – 0.65m	L2004	As sample section 1.

0.65 – 1.00m+	L2005	As sample section 1.
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Description A single pit was recorded. Pit F2007 (2.40+ x 0.50+ x 0.60m+) was not bottomed and only its southwest side was exposed. This side was initially straight and very steeply sloping before a sharp break to straight and steep-moderate slope. It was filled with (L2008) very mixed demolition rubble that also contained animal bone, CBM, metal fragments, glass fragments, and plastic. This pit represents a modern rubbish pit.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors hindered the recognition of any archaeological features and finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 All of the sample sections revealed a similar sequence of make-up layers. A topsoil layer was only present on the northwest side (sections 4 & 5) and this had been buried by a demolition layer (L2000) that covered the whole site.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1.1 The observations relate to the post-medieval and modern periods. All of the trenches showed a broadly similar sequence of post-medieval and modern make-up layers; the only features observed being a modern rubbish pit (F2007) in Sample Section 5 and a pile in Sample Section 3.

9.1.2 A previous trial trench evaluation of the site conducted by AS in 2005 revealed evidence of medieval rubbish pit activity and quarry pitting. However, due to the restricted depth of the foundation trenches and other excavations, no further evidence of activity of this date was revealed.

10 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with the finds from the site, at the Cambridgeshire County Archaeology 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.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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AS also gratefully acknowledges the advice and the input of Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA).

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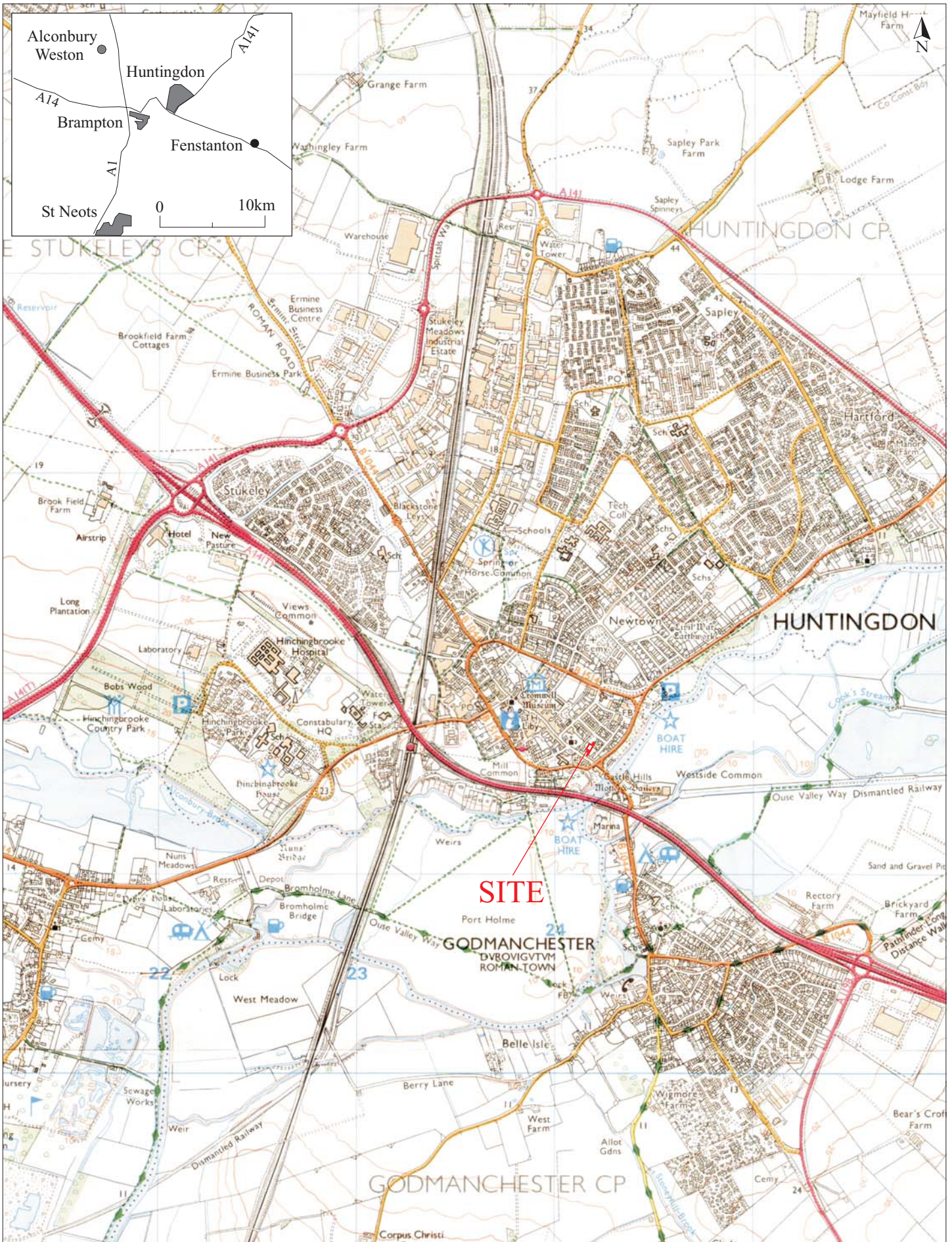
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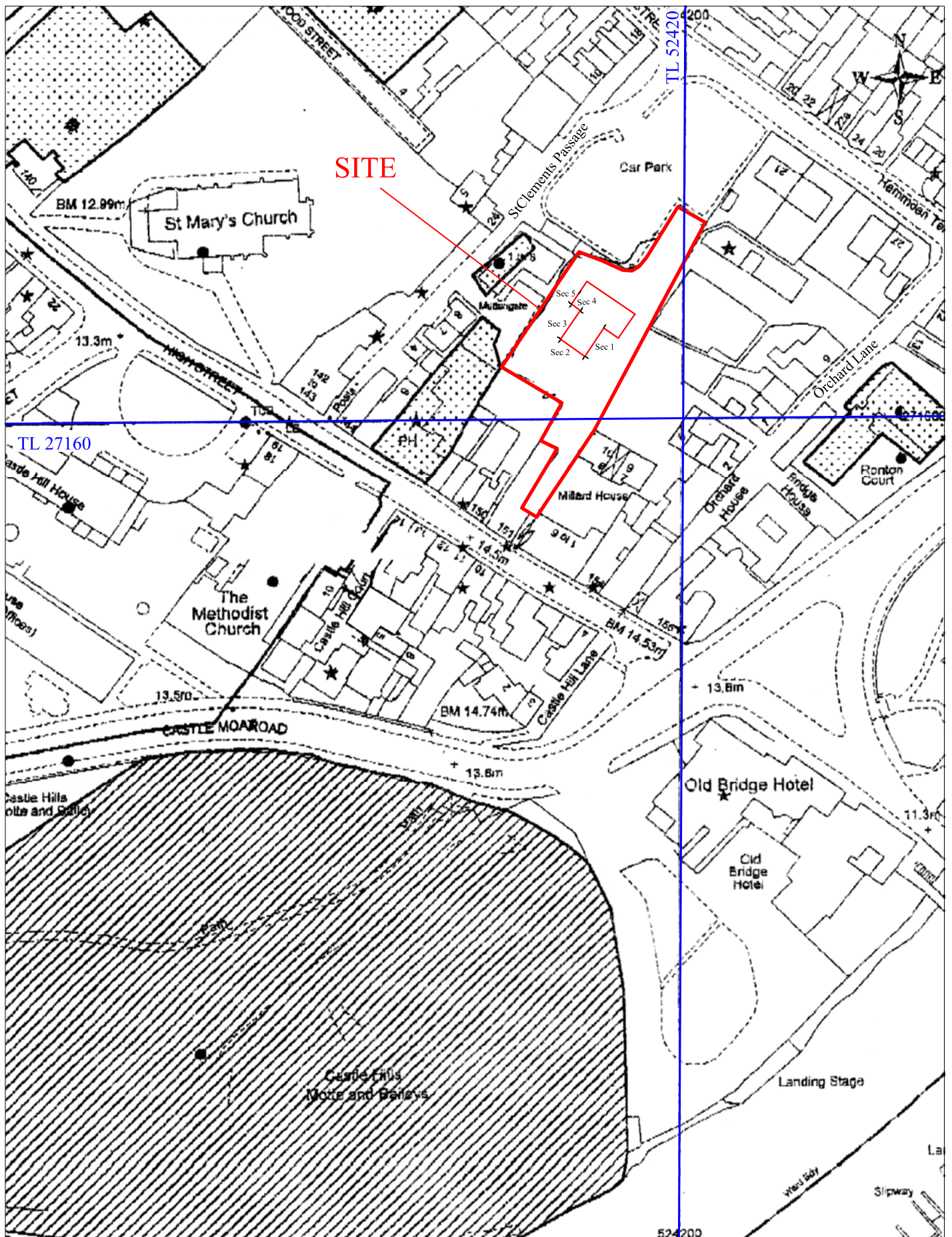
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:1250 at A4