
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**PROPOSED EXTENSION, 79 HIGH STREET,
HARROLD, BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION,
RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION**

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NGR: SP 9456 9556	Report No. 3487
District: Bedford	Site Code: AS 1276
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3684
Signed:	Date: February 2010

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Proposed extension, 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire</i>		
<i>In February 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication on land to the rear of 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 9456 9556). The programme was commissioned by Burrhouse Developments Ltd, and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a new rear extension to the house.</i>			
<i>The site is located within historic core of the village of Harrold. Its principal potential is for medieval remains associated with the High Street frontage, and the local pottery production industry.</i>			
<i>In the event the monitoring revealed a pit containing a post-medieval sherd of pottery, a modern soakway and an undated ditch/drain.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>8th – 9th February 2010</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>3684</i>	Site code	<i>AS 1276</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication</i>		
Site status	<i>Grade II Listed Building</i>		
Current land use	<i>Rear yard of the house</i>		
Planned development	<i>New rear extension to the house</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Post-medieval pit, undated ditch/drain and soakway</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Bedfordshire</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Harrold</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Bedfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>MK43 7BJ</i>		
Area of site			
NGR	<i>SP 9456 9556</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c. 43m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Bedford Borough Council</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Burrhouse Developments Ltd.</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed extension, 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire. Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z., & Tweedie, H.</i>		
Report no.	<i>3487</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>February 2010</i>		

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION

SUMMARY

In February 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication on land to the rear of 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 9456 9556). The programme was commissioned by Burrhouse Developments Ltd, and was undertaken in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a new rear extension to the house.

The site is located within historic core of the village of Harrold. Its principal potential is for medieval remains associated with the High Street frontage, and the local pottery production industry.

In the event the monitoring revealed a pit containing a post-medieval sherd of pottery, a modern soakway and an undated ditch/drain.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2010 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication on land to the rear of 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 9456 9556; Figs. 1 & 2). The programme was commissioned by Burrhouse Developments Ltd, in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a new one- and two-storey rear extension to the residential property (Bedford Borough Council Planning Ref. 09/00035/FUL).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by Bedford Borough Council (dated 27/08/2009), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 22/10/2009), and approved by the Council. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2001), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objectives of the project of archaeological monitoring and recording were:

- to establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;

- to establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- to recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region; and
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

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 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 located at 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire (Fig. 1), within the historic core of the village. It is occupied by a semi-detached Grade II Listed Building (HER 2291), dating to the late 18th or early 19th century. The property is surrounded by historic residential dwellings fronting the High Street, as well as new developments to the south.

2.2 The proposed extension is to be constructed to the rear of the property, in a grassed area and former orchard. It will be on the site of a previous rear-wing which covered a slightly smaller floorspace.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies in the valley of the Great River Ouse, which flows some distance to the south, and is bordered on the east and south by small streams, tributaries of the River Ouse. The site is situated at a height of c. 43m AOD.

3.2 The geology of the area comprises argyllic brown earths and fine loamy soils overlying valley gravels. The latter are derived from the Great Ouse and overlie Great Oolite Limestone.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 During the 1950s investigations of the gravel quarries to the north of the development area revealed extensive evidence for occupation from the Bronze Age through to the Saxon period (HER 64). Finds included 17 or 18 complete and partial Anglo-Saxon burials, complete with grave goods which included pot sherds, beads, a possible sword, a small knife and part of a scramasax. The excavation also revealed 16 – 18 ploughed out possible Bronze Age barrows, indicating settlement from c. 1400BC. Iron Age settlement was also evident from finds of roundhouses and querns.

4.2 Excavations adjacent to these in the former Bridgman Works (HER 16942; Albion Archaeology 2002) identified a spread of archaeological features dating from the late Bronze Age through to the post-medieval period. Survival of archaeological deposits across the site was variable, with preservation being best in the east of the site where the former factory had not caused disturbance. The features recorded included a number of late Iron Age to early Romano-British rectilinear enclosures and a driveway, and evidence of Romano-British domestic occupation represented by a stone-lined pit which showed signs of burning and is thought to represent a corn-drying or malting oven. The discovery of Romano-British occupation so close to the current centre of Harrold demonstrates that there has been continuous occupation in the area since the Late Bronze Age. The area adjacent to Town Farm also contained extensive areas of prehistoric and Saxon occupation. These included pits, ditches and the remains of a medieval Holloway. It seems that these deposits are likely to extend into the adjacent area.

4.3 Harrold is known for its priory which was founded in 1136/8 on land granted by Sampson Le Fort to the Abbey of St Nicholas of Arrouaise (HER 62). The priory housed nuns and was originally governed by a prior and a few cannons, before being released by the parent abbey in 1181 and being governed by a prioress. The importance of Harrold as a medieval town is also evident from a number of features including the ancient six arched Harrold Bridge (HER 999) which is mentioned in documentary sources as early as 1136-46, and the watermill which is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086 (HER 1067). In addition, Harrold is known as a centre of pottery production and a kiln (HER 1183) has been excavated to the north east of the site which produced jugs with stabbed handles, cooking pots and large bowls of a coarse shelly fabric varying in colour from pink and buff to grey. The kiln has been dated to the early 13th century from finds of its products in local stratified deposits.

4.4 Excavations to the south of the High Street at Harrold Priory Middle School (Albion Archaeology 2008) identified extensive medieval remains

including evidence of building foundations which might be associated with Harrold Manor, which is itself believed to have been built on the site of Harrold Priory (HER 6757, HER 62, HER 1068). Excavations in the area of Harrold Manor support the hypothesis that Harrold was a major centre of medieval pottery production as a large number of wasters were recovered, and it was found that 'hardcore' used during the construction of the medieval manor was made in part from crushed pot.

4.5 To the east of the site, at 85 High Street, remains of medieval occupation consisting of walls and pits were recently identified in the course of an archaeological evaluation by Northamptonshire Archaeology.

4.6 The building of 79 High Street is Grade II listed alongside 77 High Street, as a pair of late 18th or early 19th century houses of coursed limestone rubble with welsh slate roof and stone gable coping. Its location, and the extent of the village in 1901, is shown on Fig. 3.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1. The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the excavated area was scanned by metal detector.

5.2 The principal element monitored was the mechanical excavation of trench foundations for the proposed rear extension (Fig. 2).

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 A sample section was recorded:

<i>E part of foundation trench, sample section. Facing ESE (DP6)</i>		
<i>0.00 = 43.42m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1000	Modern made ground. Blackish grey, loose, clayey silt with sand and CBM rubble.
0.12 – 0.35m	L1001	Made ground containing ?redeposited natural. Mid to dark yellow, loose, gravel with grey, friable, clayey silt.
0.35m+	L1002	Natural. Mid to dark, loose, gravel.

6.2 The monitoring recorded one post-medieval ?pit. F1007 (1.30 x 0.60+ x 0.90m; Fig.4, DP 8). It was located in the western part of the site and was visible in both sections of the foundation trench. It had moderate to vertical sides and a flattish base. Its plan could not be distinguished. F1007 was a pit as opposed to a linear feature. Its fill, L1008, was a blackish dark grey,

compact, silty clay. One fragment of post-medieval glazed pottery was recovered from this deposit.

6.3 In the southern corner of the foundation trench a modern soakway F1003 was present (Fig.4, DP 4). Due to collapsing sides of the trench and rising water table the soakway had to be mechanically-excavated for safety reasons. It was a circular pit (c. 2m of diameter and c. 1.50 – 1.80m of depth) filled with stone and brick rubble and mid to dark grey, friable, clayey silt (L1004) with some linear drainage (2m+ x 0.80 x 0.55m) roughly aligned north/south.

6.4 The monitoring revealed an undated linear feature, possibly a ditch or a drainage trench. F1005 (0.60+ x 0.60 x 0.58m; Fig.4, DP 7) was located in the southern part of the trench and was aligned north/south. It was visible in both sections of the trench and it had moderate to vertical sides and a concave base. Its fill, L1006, was a light brown, friable, sandy silt. No finds were recovered from this deposit.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 The site was overlain by a modern made ground, L1000, likely derived from the recent demolition of the rear wing of the house, and the removal of the yard surface. Below L1000, was Made Ground L1001 and it contained re-deposited natural gravel. It varied in thickness (0.20-0.40m) and it was more substantial in the southern part of the site. The natural geology, L1002, was a mid to dark, loose, gravel, and was encountered at c. 0.25 – 0.60m below the existing ground surface.

8 CONFIDENCE RATING

8.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for medieval archaeology associated with the High Street frontage and the local production of pottery.

9.2 In the event the only archaeological feature to be dated was F1007, a possible pit containing one sherd of post-medieval pottery. The groundworks revealed that the area of the proposed rear extension to the house, in particular in its south-eastern part, was significantly disturbed by a modern soakaway and drain.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at the Bedford Museum (Accession No. BEDFM.2009.81). 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Burrhouse Developments Ltd for their co-operation and funding the project, in particular Mr Steve Ayres.

AS would also like to acknowledge the Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record for providing background information, and the Bedfordshire Record Office.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Geoff Saunders of Bedford Borough Council.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. 79 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire. View SE.



DP 2. Area of the proposed extension to the rear of the house. View ENE.



DP 3. Foundation trench. View ESE.



DP 4. Foundation trench, part E. View NNW.



DP 5. Foundation trench, part W. View NNW.



DP 6. Foundation trench, part E. Sample section. View ENE.



DP 7. F1005. View NNW.

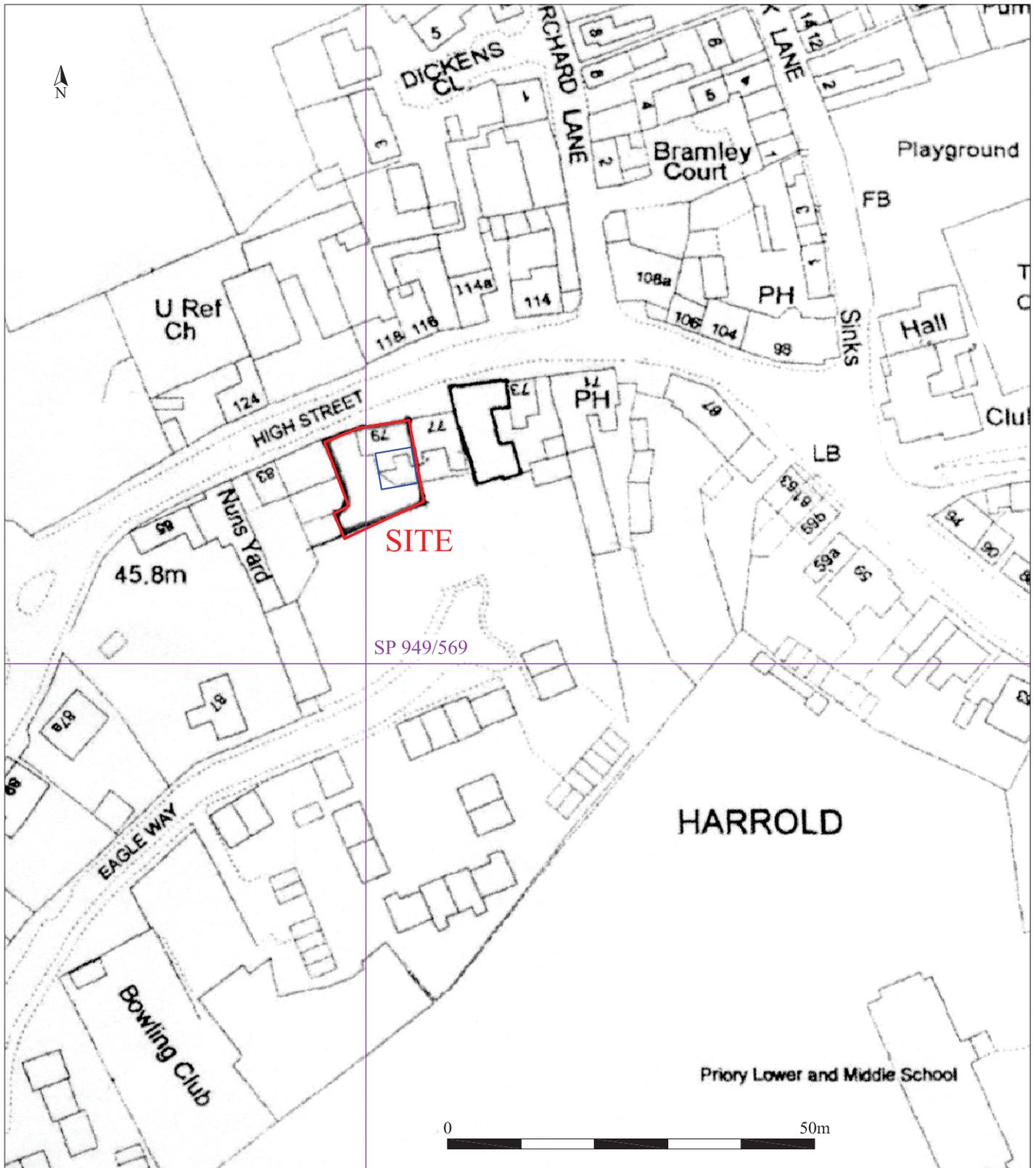


DP 8. F1007. View ENE.



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

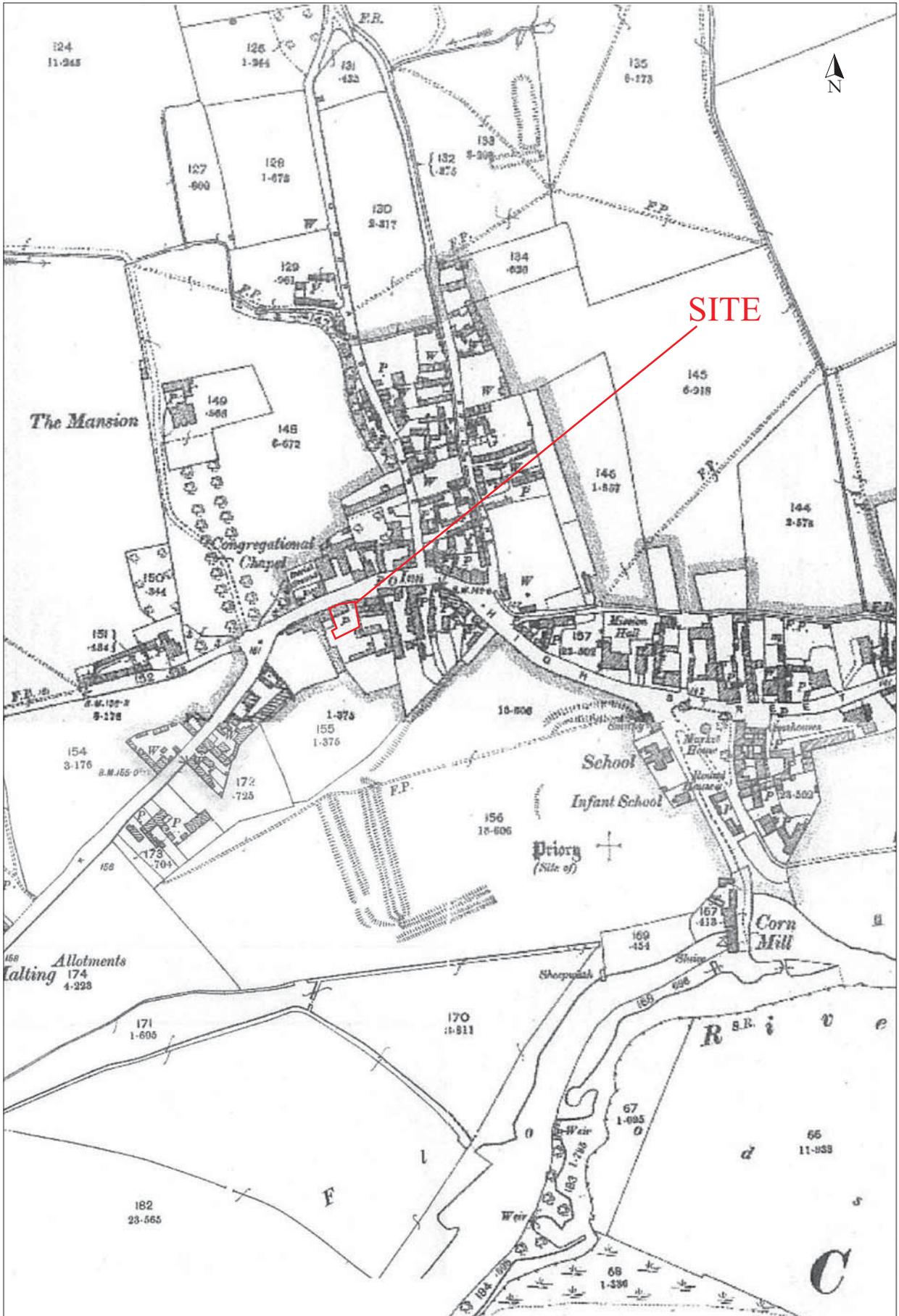


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— Area of watching brief

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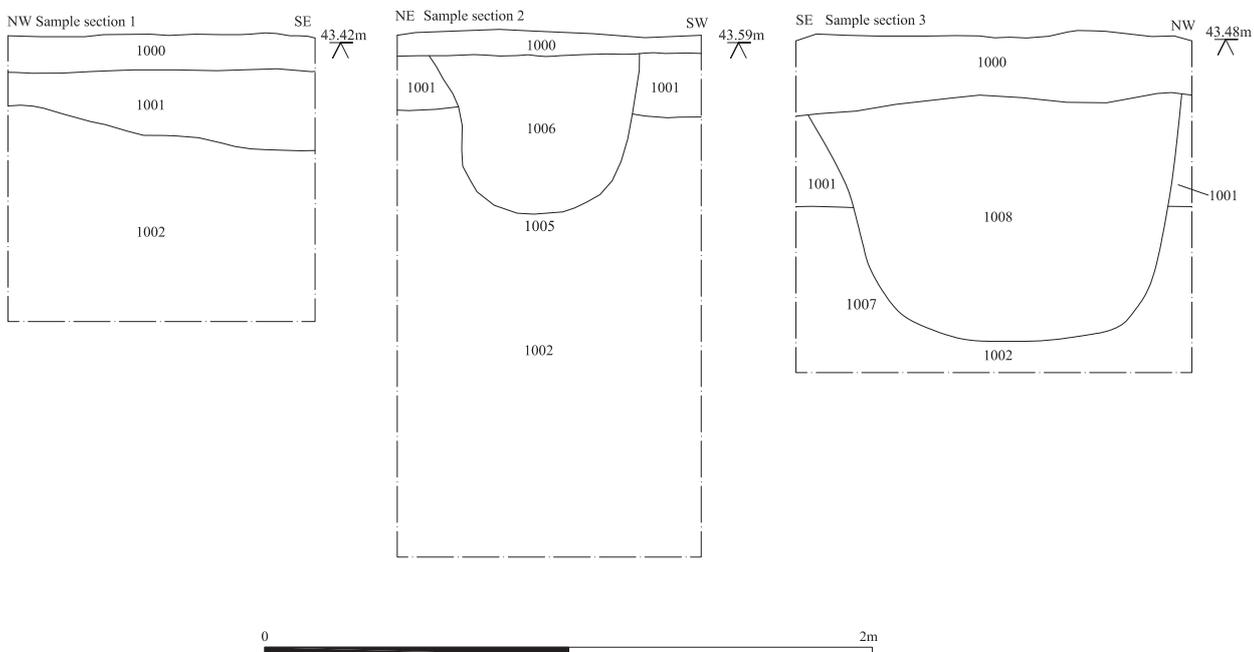
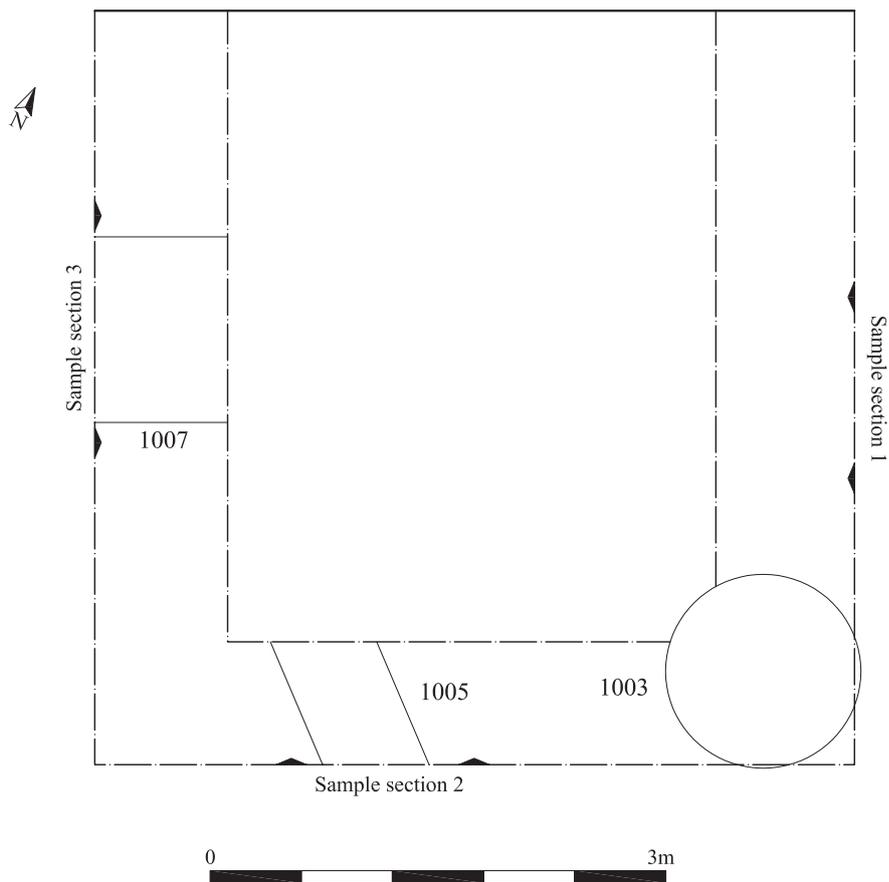
Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:750 at A4



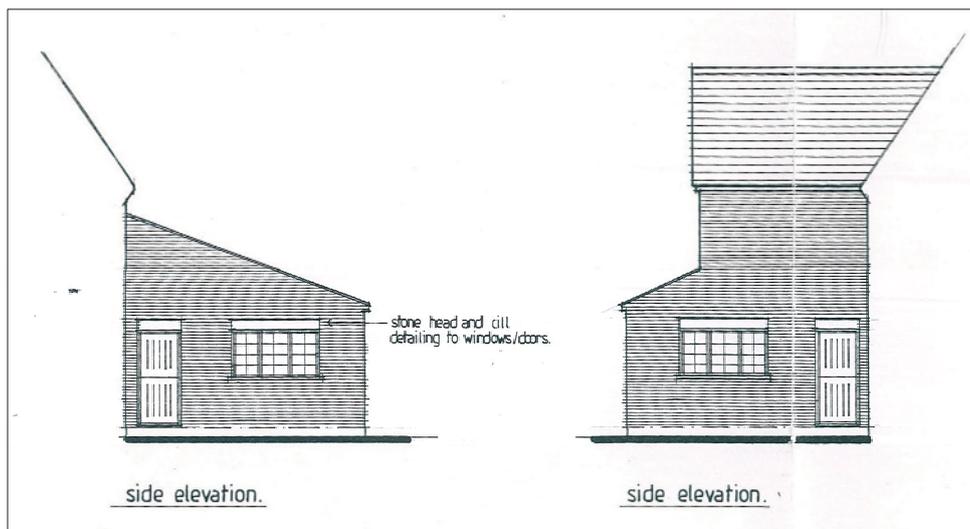
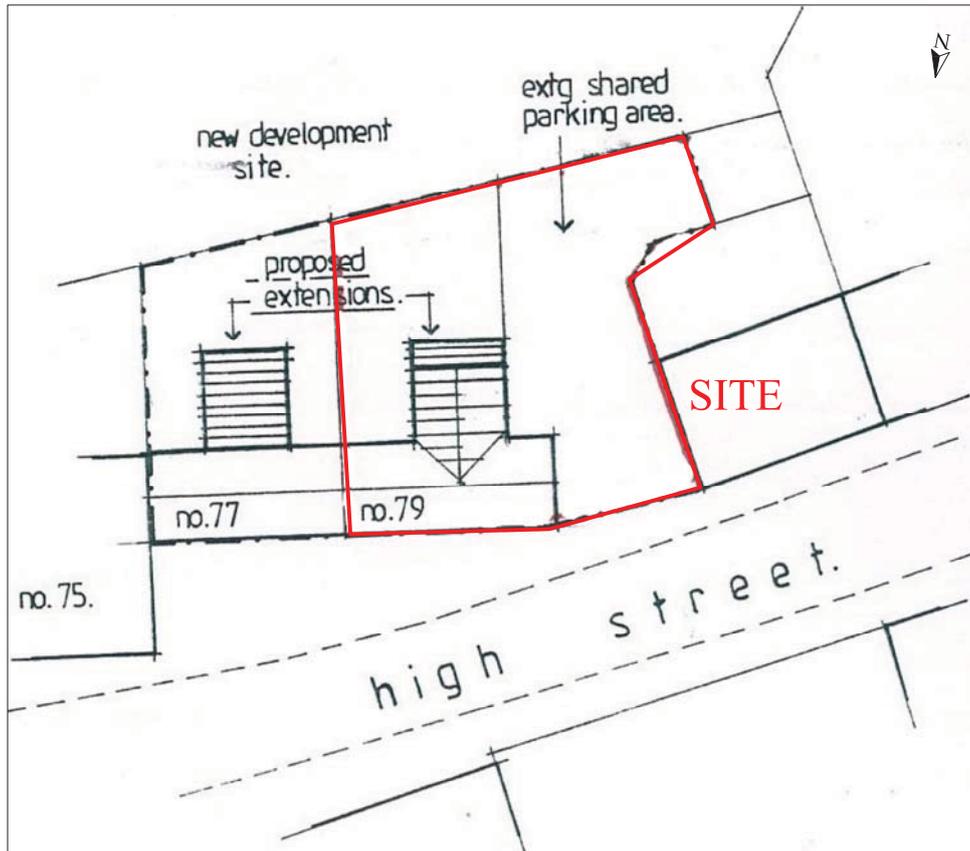
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Fig. 3 2nd edition OS map, 1901
 Not to scale

HOUSE



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Fig. 4 Area of watching brief & sections
Scale 1:50 and 1:25 at A4



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Fig. 5 Proposed development plan
 Scale plan at 1:250 and elevations at 1:100 at A4