

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**The White House, St Mary's College, Bitterne Park,  
Southampton, Hampshire**

**Building Recording**

**by Genni Elliott**

**Site Code: SOU1635**

**(SU 4445 1358)**

**The White House, St Mary's College, Bitterne Park,  
Southampton, Hampshire**

**Building Recording  
For Blaze Construction**

by Genni Elliott  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SOU 1635

**November 2013**

## Summary

**Site name:** The White House, St Mary's College, Bitterne Park, Southampton, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU 4445 1358

**Site activity:** Building Recording

**Date and duration of project:** 13th September 2013

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site code:** SOU 1635

**Summary of results:** The White House or Bitterne Grove was built c. 1791 as a large, square building. Extensive additions were made prior to the tithe map of 1845. The height of the building was raised c. 1912 and re-roofed.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Southampton Museum in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 27.11.13
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# The White House, St Mary's College, Bitterne Park, Southampton, Hampshire Building Recording

by Genni Elliott

Report 13/184

## Introduction

This report documents the results of building recording at The White House, St Mary's College, Bitterne Park, Southampton, Hampshire (SU 4445 1358) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Eugene Broderick of Blaze Construction, 93 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9DQ. The White House is undergoing extensive repair works which has entailed the removal of lime mortar and cement render to reveal detail of the underlying structure. Monitoring of this work by the Southampton Historic Environment Team prompted the requirement of a programme of building recording of the revealed structure. This report documents the results of the building survey. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the City's policies on historic buildings. The fieldwork was undertaken by Genni Elliott on 13th September 2013 and the site code is SOU 1635.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Southampton Museum and a copy sent to the National Monuments Record in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The White House is located within the grounds of St Mary's College, on the east side of Middanbury Lane, in the area of Bitterne Park. This lies on the east side of the River Itchen, Southampton (SU 4445 1358) (Fig. 2). The land slopes from north to south from approximately 38m above Ordnance Datum to 30m aOD with the building situated on a terrace. The land slopes from the Wittering Formation above London Clay above Portsmouth Sand (BGS 1987).

## Historical Background

The White House, formerly known as Bitterne Grove, is grade II listed and described as:

'Early C19. Three storeys and modern attic. Stuccoed and hipped and mansarded slate roof. Wide bracketed eaves cornice. Six windows with glazing bars. The 4 central window bays project slightly. The main block is flanked by small one storey pavilions which project considerably. On the north or entrance front these are of painted brick, have one triple sash with elliptical arch modillion cornice and gable over and are linked to the main block by a curved wall. In the centre of this front is a semi-circular porch. On the

south or garden front the pavilions have curved fronts of 3 windows each. The main block has 3 round-headed windows on the ground floor with a Venetian window to the west of these and a doorway to the east with pilasters and a projecting cornice, over.'

Bitterne Grove was built about 1790 by Richard Leversuch and shortly afterwards purchased by James Dott, who lived there from 1791 until his death in 1844. It changed hands a few more times, until it was purchased by the French Catholics who used the house to train priests before opening it as a boarding school in 1922. During this period a chapel, dormitory and new roof was added. During World War II the house was used by the Home Guard (Vale, 1980, 1983). A picture taken prior to the roof being replaced shows the house to have half-sized windows on the second floor and what is probably a hipped roof.

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted at the Hampshire Record Office in order to show the development of the site. The earliest map to show the building is the South Stoneham Tithe map of 1845 (Fig. 3). The scale of the map means the building can not be seen in great detail but it would appear it consists of a central area with a wing at either end, a porch on the north side and an extension on the west end.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 (Fig. 4) shows a bit more detail. The shape of the wings at either end of the house can be seen to be curved on the southern side of the building. The porch on the north side of the building is also curved and there is a further small extension on the western side of the building. The only change by 1897 (Fig. 5) appears to be the demolition of the small extension on the western side of the building that had appeared on the earlier 1885 map. No further changes have occurred by 1910 (Fig. 6). However by 1933 (Fig. 7) significant changes have taken place. A large, L-shaped extension has been added to the eastern end of the building, though no changes have been made to existing building. It is at this point that the building becomes known as St Mary's Roman Catholic College, rather than Bitterne Grove. No further changes can be seen on the 1941 and 1947 maps. By 1960 (Fig. 8) a building has been built to the east and connected to the existing building via a corridor. On the 1973 map the building is at the junction of two map sheets and consequently the exact nature of the extensions to the east are unclear, however a further extension has been added to the west.

## **Methodology**

The building survey was carried out in accordance with guidelines set out by the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (RCHM 1996) and English Heritage (EH 2006). The survey comprised a photographic survey and drawn record, paying attention to the methods of construction, chronological development and alterations, and

features of special interest and comprised only the external structure of the building. The building has been recorded photographically both digitally and on 35mm format using colour print and black and white media which are catalogued (Appendix 1).

## **Description (Fig. 9)**

Bitterne Grove stands on a terrace of land with its main entrance on the northeast east side (Pl. 1) with a patio area at the rear before the land slopes away to the south (Pl. 2). It is a three-storey building, six windows wide with a slate mansard roof covering the main central area. The two wings either side have a pitched slate roof. The building can be sub-divided into four distinct parts; the central area, the southeast wing, the northwest wing and the lean-to extension.

### The Central Area

The central area consists of the main three storey element of the building, covered by the mansard roof. Within this part of the building more than one phase of construction can be observed.

#### *Phase 1*

The original building consisted of the four window wide very central part of the building which was originally two and a half storey's high. It was constructed of red bricks, 223mm x 103mm x 59mm (8 7/8" x 4 1/16" x 2 3/8") laid in Flemish bond, bonded in lime mortar. The northeast elevation contained the large front door with fan light enclosed by a classical style curved portico with flat roof. Earlier photographs show the statue on top of this portico. Either side of the front door was a sash window of six panes above six panes. The first floor consisted of a row of four sash windows; none of which had horns. Above each of the windows was a gauged flat brick arch.

The rear, southwest elevation contained only three windows across its width on the first floor. These were the same as the ones round the front. On the ground floor were three French windows with fan lights set back in arches. Each had three steps up to it. Repair work has been carried out around all of the doors which may suggest that the original may have been a different size or could have been windows (Pl. 3).

At either end of the house were two chimneys.

#### *Phase 2 (Figs. 10 and 11)*

To the northwest and southwest of the original building a one room, one window wide extension was added, set slightly back. The front elevation consists of a curved, yellow brick wall on the ground floor, containing a sash

window and joining the original building with the two wings at either end. In the northwest wall it would appear that there was once a doorway that has subsequently been blocked up beneath the window (Pl. 4).

Above this was a timber frame construction, containing a window at each storey. The timber frame consisted of re-used oak timbers containing peg holes and mortices. The construction consisted of a timber joist supporting two upright posts each side of the window, tied together with a brace (Pl. 5). Supported on this was a second joist, window and timber frame. Smaller uprights were then added to hold laths for plaster. At the northwest end it was possible to see chiselled carpenters marks on some of the timbers (Pl. 6). Part of the southeast end had been rebuilt in brick, presumably when the roof was raised, c. 1912.

The rear elevation was entirely brick built with a window on both the first and second storeys. The construction was of red brick with slightly blue headers measuring 212mm x 102mm x 60mm (8 3/8" x 4" x 2 3/8") laid in English bond with lime mortar. On the ground floor the northwest end contained a Venetian style window, similar in size to the French doors of the original building. The southeast end contained a door, set back in an arched porch with a pilaster on either side (Pl. 7). Alcoves were present either side of the door.

### *Phase 3*

The final phase of construction within the central area of the building was the raising of the building height and the new roof. Plans deposited with Hampshire Record Office show that this was carried out around 1912. The raising of the roof could be seen in the change of brickwork particularly at the southeast and northwest ends of the building on the northeast elevation where a brick soldier course was laid with English bond above it, bonded with cement mortar (Pl. 8). The English bond extended across the entire frontage and rear of the central area of the building. Above the windows were concrete lintels, except in one instance where a gauged flat arch was present. This is possibly indicative of later repair work, prior to the entire building being rendered. A scrap of newspaper found beneath part of the render dated to 1952.

### The Northwest Wing (Fig. 12)

The northwest wing consists of a single storey structure with a curved wall at the rear. The northeast face consists of a facing of yellow bricks measuring 218mm x 103mm x 61mm (8 5/8" x 4 1/8" x 2 3/8") laid in Flemish bond with lime mortar. Behind this facing, the walls are of red brick laid in English bond. The roof is pitched and covered in slates, hidden behind a parapet. A large sash window with side lights, of six over six

design, was located centrally within the frontage, recessed into an archway. The curve of the archway, above the window, was bricked up and covered in laths to enable plastering (Pl. 9).

The southwest face was also constructed of yellow bricks laid as headers in lime mortar to construct a curve which stood proud of the central area of the building. The bricks measured 114mm wide by 60mm thick (4 ½" x 2 3/8"). Within the curved wall were three tall sash windows of six over six panes. As on the northeast face, a parapet concealed the roof.

Where visible, the northwest face was constructed of red bricks bonded in lime mortar, measuring 220mm x 110mm x 62mm (7 7/8" x 4 3/8" x 2 7/16"). The lower part was obscured by a lean-to extension but the upper part of the wall contained five half-sized sash windows of three over three panes. Originally two chimneys would have been visible, but one had been removed (Pl. 10).

#### The Southeast Wing

The southeast wing is similar in construction to the northwest wing and consists of a single storey structure with a curved wall at the rear. The northeast face consists of a facing of yellow bricks measuring 218mm x 103mm x 61mm (8 5/8" x 4 1/8" x 2 3/8") laid in Flemish bond with lime mortar. Behind this facing, the walls are of red brick laid in English bond (Pl. 11). The roof is pitched and covered in slates, hidden behind a parapet. A large sash window with side lights, of six over six design, was located centrally within the frontage, recessed into an archway. The curve of the archway, above the window, was bricked up. Two different types of brick can be seen in this archway and probably represent repair work. Lath grooves in the uppermost brickwork suggest that it was originally the same as the northwest wing (Pl. 12).

The southwest face was also constructed of yellow bricks laid as headers in lime mortar to construct a curve which stood proud of the central area of the building. The bricks measured 114mm wide by 60mm thick (4 ½" x 2 3/8"). Within the curved wall were three tall sash windows of six over six panes. As on the northeast face, a parapet concealed the roof.

#### The Lean-to Extension

The lean-to extension on the northwest side of the building shows evidence for much alteration with blocked doors and windows, areas of rebuilding and an extension to the southwest. The bricks are primarily of red bricks measuring 216mm x 110mm x 62mm (8 1/2" x 4 3/8" x 2 7/16") bonded in lime mortar and laid three stretchers to one header in Flemish garden wall bond. The roof was covered in felt (Pl. 10).



## Conclusion

It is possible to see at least three and possibly four phases of construction at Bitterne Grove. The original building consisted of the four window wide central area built in Flemish bond, two and a half storeys high. It is unclear whether the additions to the northwest and southeast are of one or two phases. The ground floor plan (Fig. 13) shows thicker walls in the northwest end of the building which would indicate two phases of construction; the southeast is less clear. The timber framing is a light weight structure which removes the need for structural walls on the ground floor where the curved wall is present. It is clear from the map evidence that all this construction was carried out prior to the title map of 1845, and therefore must have been done in the period of James Dot's ownership. Plans dated to 1912 show the final phase of construction with the raising of the building and the new roof.

## References

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- EH, 2006, *Understanding Historic Buildings*, English Heritage, London
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- RCHME, 1996, *Recording Historic Buildings: a descriptive specification*, 3rd edn, Roy Comm Hist Monuments (England), London
- Vale, J, 1980, *The Lost Houses of Southampton*, Southampton
- Vale, J, 1983, 'The Country Houses of Southampton, reprinted from *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* Vol. 39, Southampton

## APPENDIX 1: Photographic Catalogue

### A. Digital

<i>Cat. No</i>	<i>Direction of view</i>	<i>Scales</i>		<i>Comment</i>
1	SW	-	Front	General view <b>(PI. 1)</b>
2	S	-	Front	To chapel
3	SE	2x1m	Front	Jointing S. wing to main building <b>(PI. 11)</b>
4	SW	2x1m	Front	N wing timbers S. top
5	SW	-	Front	N wing timbers S. top
6	W	2x1m	Front	N wing timbers N. top
7	W	-	Front	N wing timbers N. top
8	SW	2x1m	Front	N wing bottom <b>(PI. 5)</b>
9	SW	-	Front	N wing bottom carpenters mark III <b>(PI. 6)</b>
10	S	1x1m	Front	S wing above window <b>(PI. 12)</b>
11	SE	-	Front	General view showing laths
12	E	-	Rear	General view <b>(PI. 2)</b>
13	NE	-	Rear	General view central area
14	NE	-	Side	General view lean to <b>(PI. 10)</b>
15	NE	2x1m	Rear	Brickwork around door <b>(PI. 3)</b>
16	NE	2x1m	Rear	Brickwork around door
17	N	2x1m	Rear	Large rear door <b>(PI. 7)</b>
18	N	-	Rear	Lack of jointing
19	NW	-	Rear	Jointing
20	N	-	Rear	Roof over N wing
21	W	-	Front	N wing above window <b>(PI. 9)</b>
22	W	2x1m	Front	Brickwork under window, N wing <b>(PI. 4)</b>
23	S	2x1m	Front	Laths top, S wing, S side <b>(PI. 8)</b>
24	SW	2x1m	Front	Laths top, S wing, N side
25	S	2x1m	Front	Laths bottom, S wing

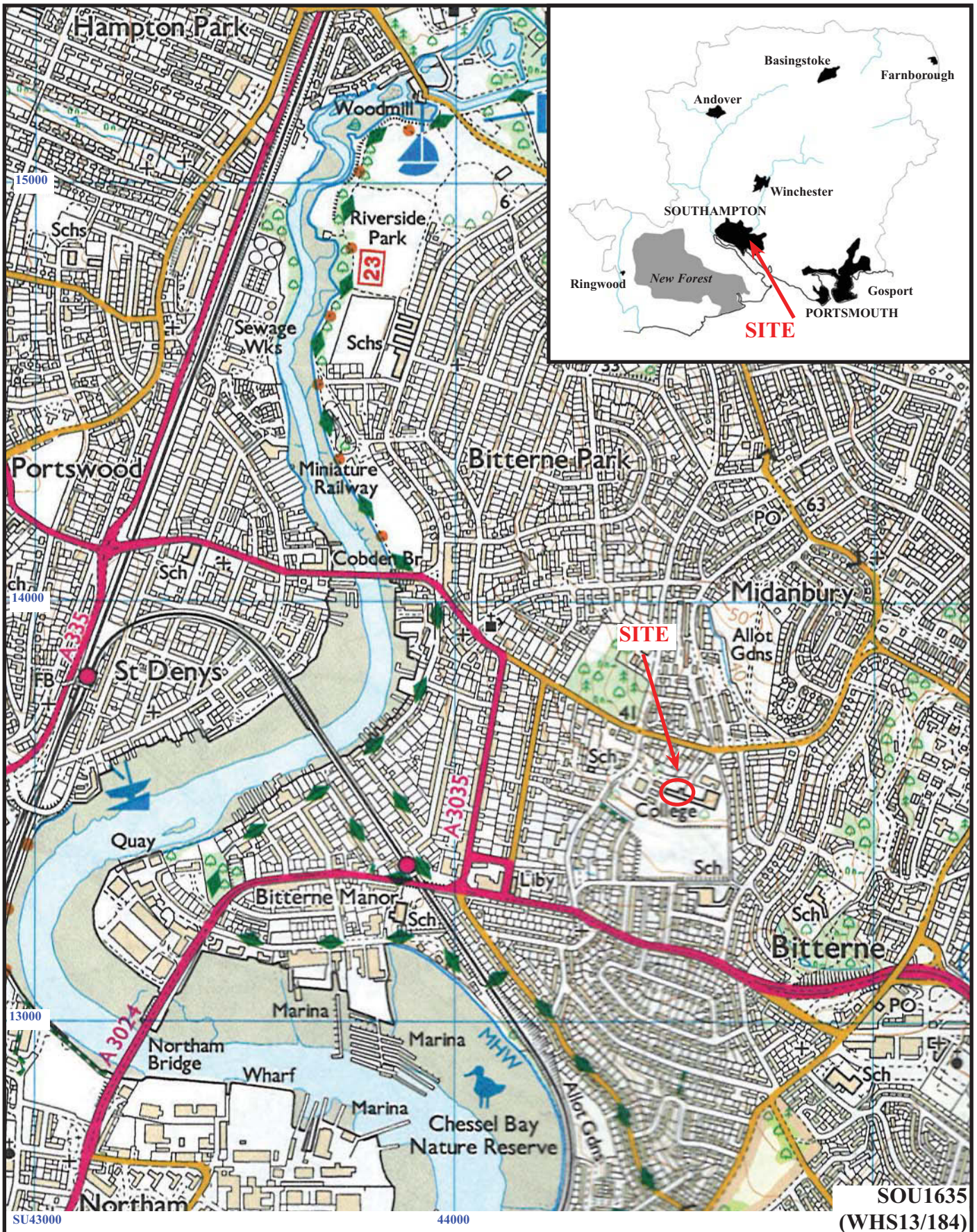
### B. Colour Prints

<i>Cat. No</i>	<i>Direction of view</i>	<i>Scales</i>		<i>Comment</i>
1	SW	-	Front	General view
2	S	-	Front	To chapel
3	SE	2x1m	Front	Jointing S. wing to main building
4	SW	2x1m	Front	N wing timbers S. top
5	SW	-	Front	N wing timbers S. top
6	W	2x1m	Front	N wing timbers N. top
7	W	-	Front	N wing timbers N. top
8	SW	2x1m	Front	N wing bottom
9	SW	-	Front	N wing bottom carpenters mark III
10	S	1x1m	Front	S wing above window
11	SE	-	Front	General view showing laths
12	E	-	Rear	General view
13	NE	-	Rear	General view central area
14	NE	-	Side	General view lean to
15	NE	2x1m	Rear	Brickwork around door
16	NE	2x1m	Rear	Brickwork around door
17	N	2x1m	Rear	Large rear door
18	N	-	Rear	Lack of jointing
19	NW	-	Rear	Jointing
20	N	-	Rear	Roof over N wing
21	W	-	Front	N wing above window
22	W	2x1m	Front	Brickwork under window, N wing
23	S	2x1m	Front	Laths top, S wing, S side
24	SW	2x1m	Front	Laths top, S wing, N side
25	S	2x1m	Front	Laths bottom, S wing

### C. Monochrome Images

<i>Cat. No</i>	<i>Direction of view</i>	<i>Scales</i>		<i>Comment</i>
1	SW	-	Front	General view
2	S	-	Front	To chapel
3	SE	2x1m	Front	Jointing S. wing to main building
4	SW	2x1m	Front	N wing timbers S. top
5	SW	-	Front	N wing timbers S. top
6	W	2x1m	Front	N wing timbers N. top
7	W	-	Front	N wing timbers N. top
8	SW	2x1m	Front	N wing bottom
9	SW	-	Front	N wing bottom carpenters mark III
10	S	1x1m	Front	S wing above window
11	SE	-	Front	General view showing laths
12	E	-	Rear	General view
13	NE	-	Rear	General view central area
14	NE	-	Side	General view lean to
15	NE	2x1m	Rear	Brickwork around door
16	NE	2x1m	Rear	Brickwork around door
17	N	2x1m	Rear	Large rear door
18	N	-	Rear	Lack of jointing
19	NW	-	Rear	Jointing
20	N	-	Rear	Roof over N wing
21	W	-	Front	N wing above window
22	W	2x1m	Front	Brickwork under window, N wing
23	S	2x1m	Front	Laths top, S wing, S side
24	SW	2x1m	Front	Laths top, S wing, N side
25	S	2x1m	Front	Laths bottom, S wing





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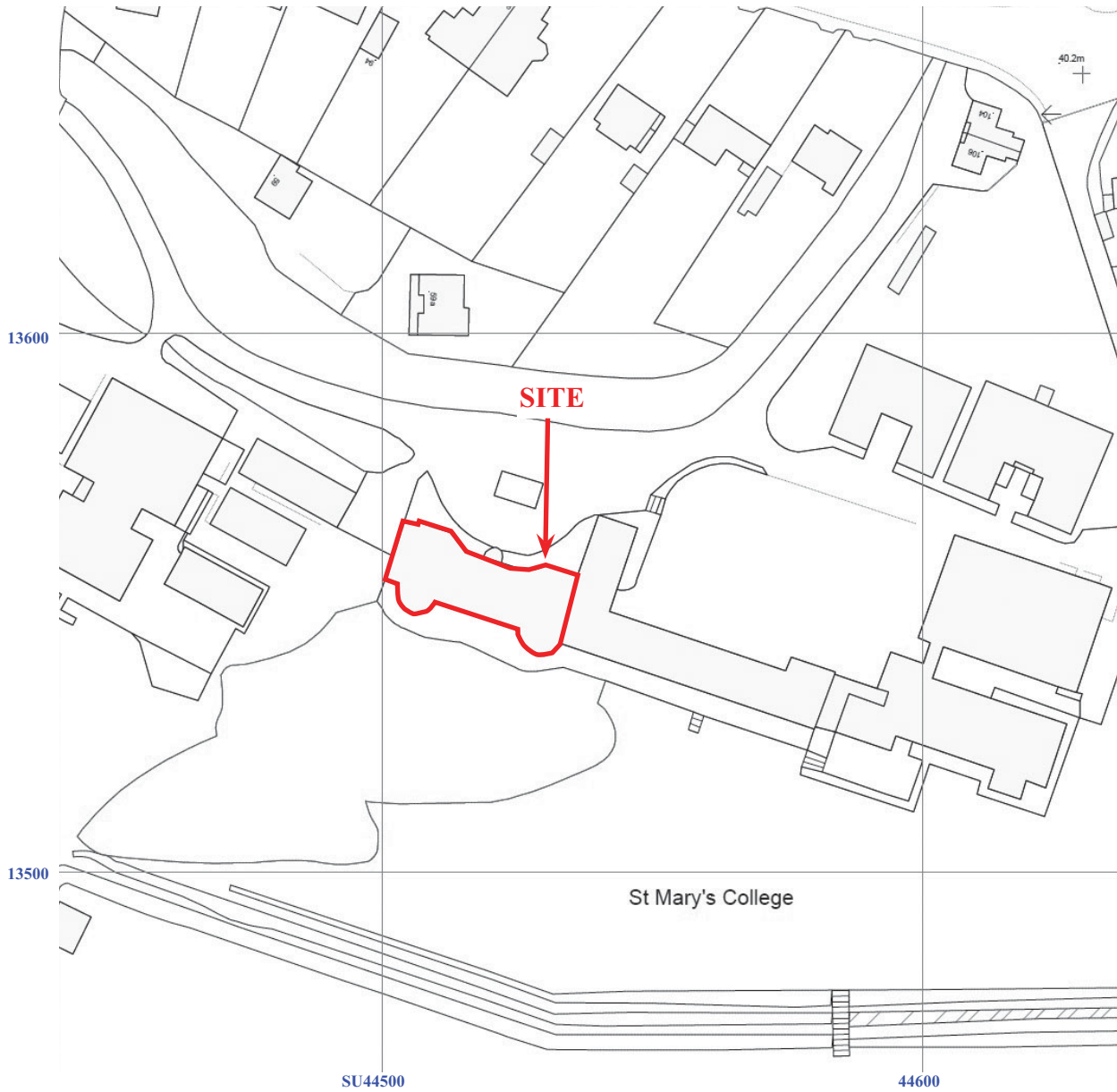
**The White House, St Mary's College, Bitterne Park,  
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Figure 1. Location of site within Southampton and Hampshire.

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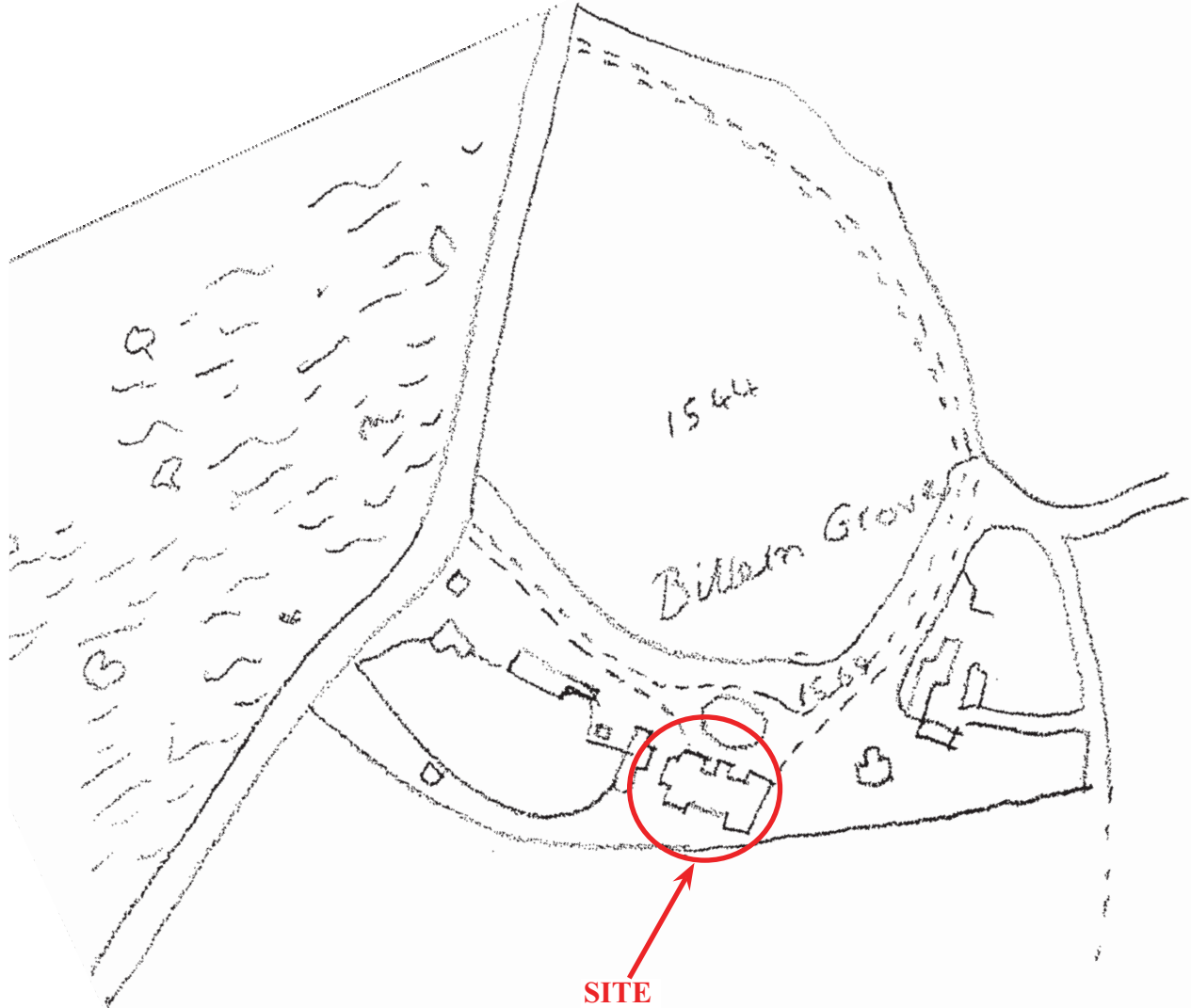


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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Building recording**

Figure 3. South Stoneham Tithe Map, 1845.

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Southampton, Hampshire, 2013  
Building recording

Figure 4. First Edition Ordnance Survey, 1885.

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Figure 5. Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 1897.

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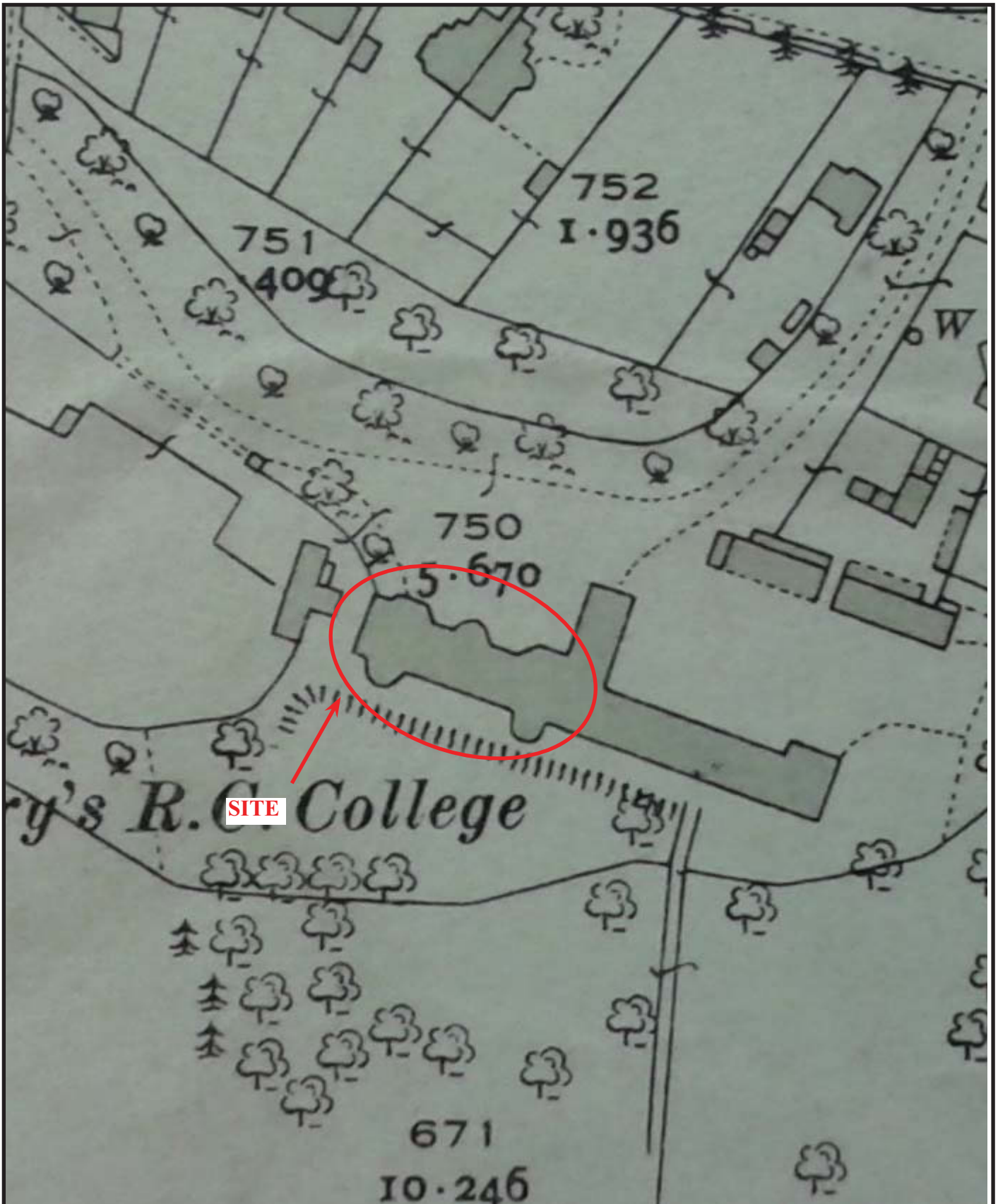
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Figure 6. Third Edition Ordnance Survey, 1910.

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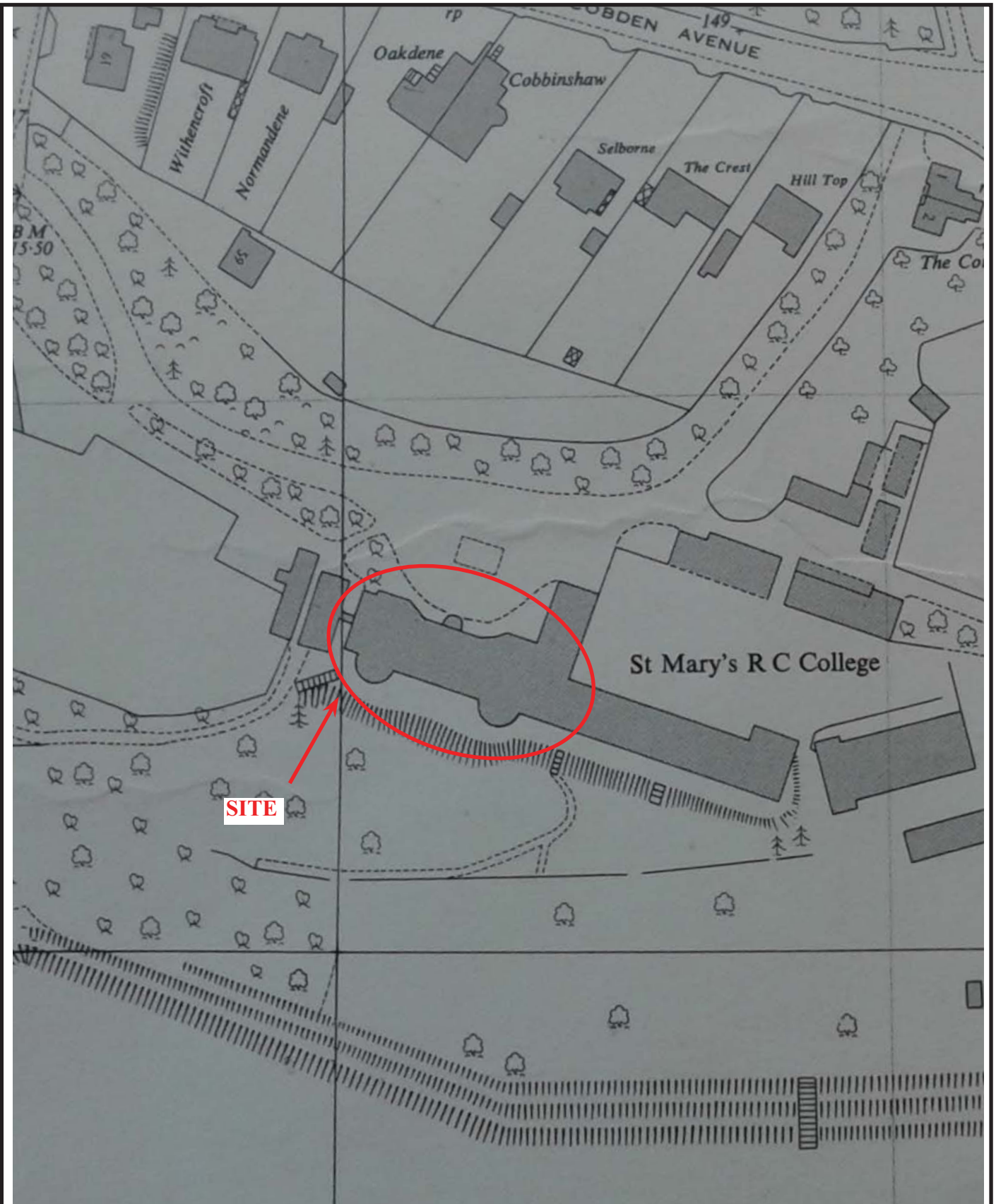


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Figure 7. Ordnance Survey, 1933.

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Figure 8. Ordnance Survey, 1960.

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*Front (north) elevation*



*Rear (south) elevation*



*East end*



*West end*

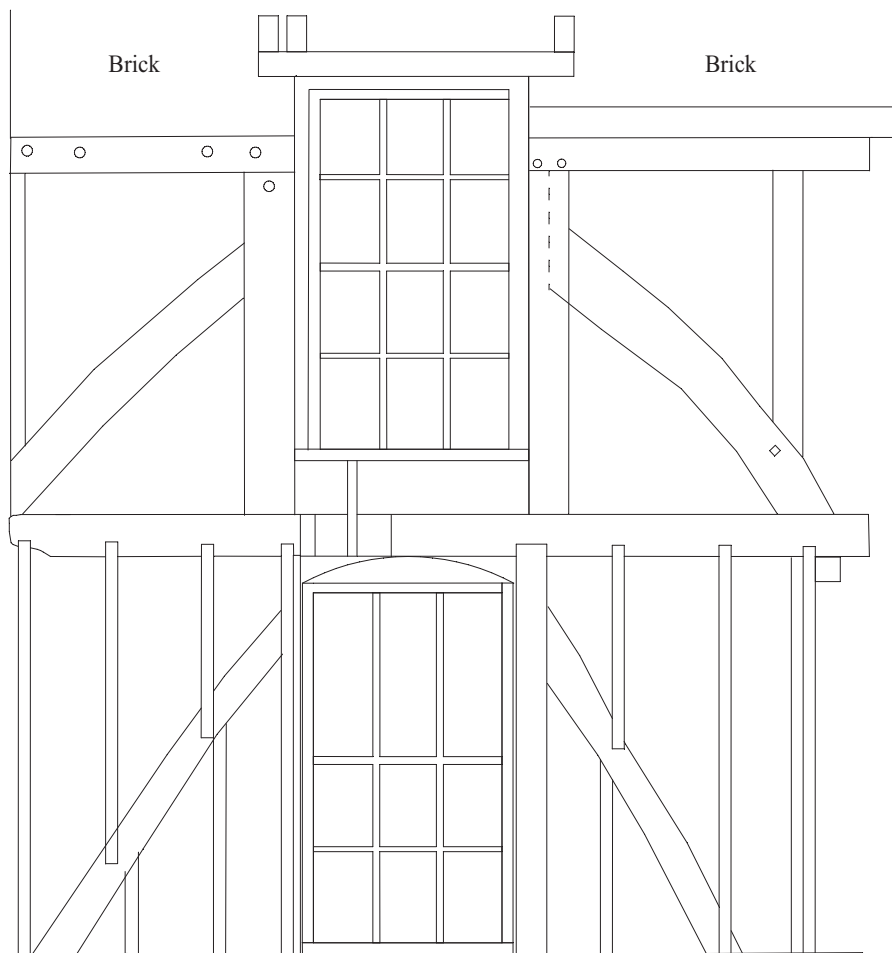
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Building Recording**

Figure 9. Elevations.



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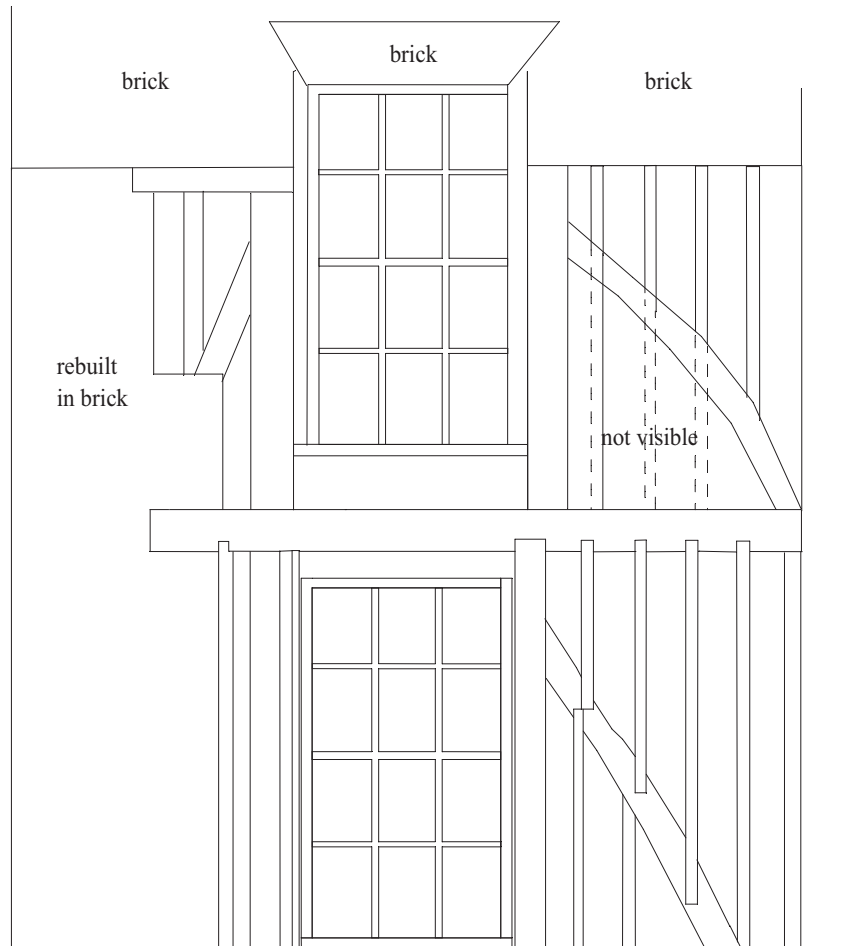
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Figure 10. Timber framing (front north wing).



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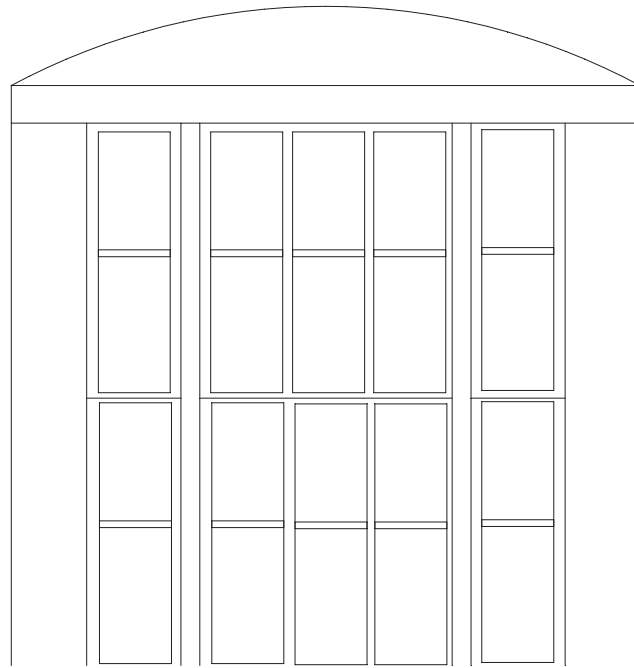
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Figure 11. Timber framing (front south wing).



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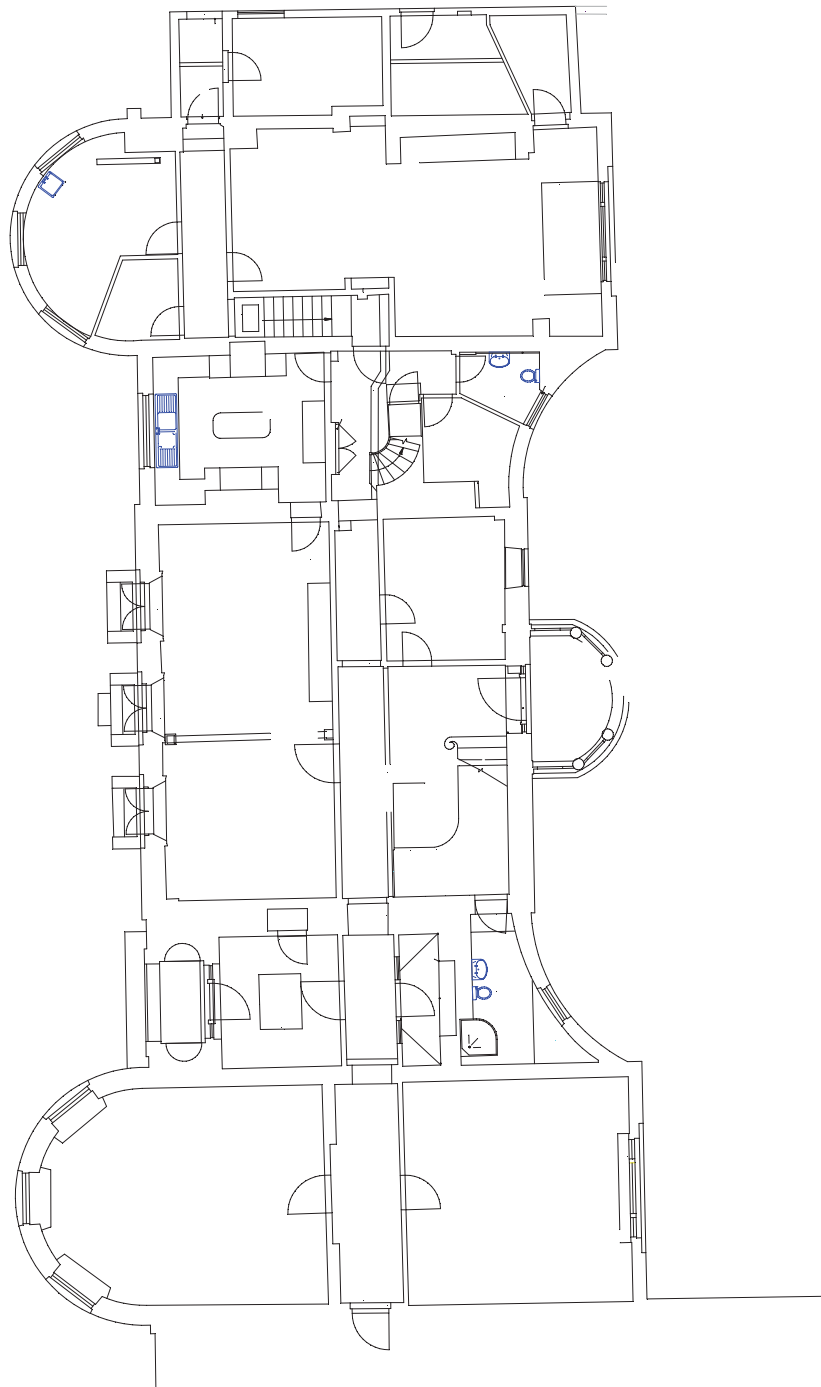
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Figure 12. Archway window.



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(WHS13/184)

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Figure 13. Ground floor.



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Plate 1. Front of building, looking south west.



Plate 2. Rear of building, looking east.



Plate 3. Brickwork around door, looking north east,  
Scales: 1m.



Plate 4. Brickwork under window, N wing, looking west,  
Scales: 1m.

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Southampton, Hampshire, 2013**  
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Plates 1 - 4.

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Plate 5. North wing bottom, looking south west,  
Scales: 1m.



Plate 6. North wing bottom carpenters mark III,  
looking south west.



Plate 7. Large rear door, looking north,  
Scales: 1m.



Plate 8. Laths top, South wing, South side, looking south,  
Scales: 1m.

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(WHS13/184)

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**Building recording**  
Plates 5 - 8.

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Plate 9. North wing above window, looking west.



Plate 10. General view lean to, looking north east.



Plate 11. Jointing South wing to main building, looking south east, Scales: 1m.



Plate 12. South wing above window, looking south, Scale: 1m.

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(13-184)

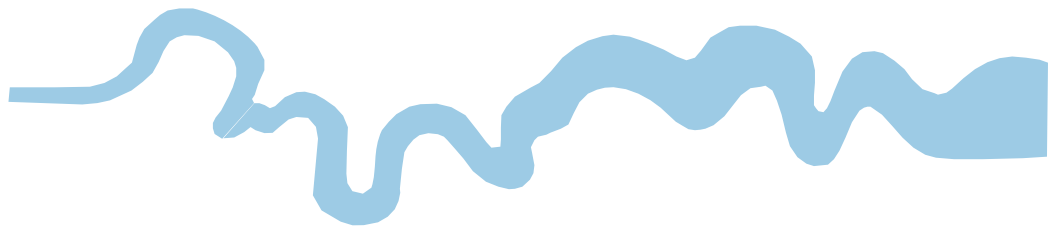
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Plates 9 - 12.

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC
↓	↓



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