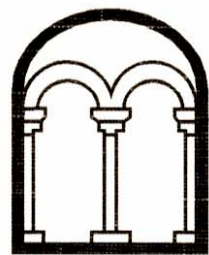


**THE OLD SUBSTATION
ST PETER'S ROAD
ST ALBANS
HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

Albion
archaeology



**THE OLD SUBSTATION
ST PETER'S ROAD
ST ALBANS
HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

Document: 2013/80
Version: 1.0
Issue date: 16th May 2013

Project Code: SS2059
OASIS ID: albionar1-139858

Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Ian Turner	Mark Phillips	Drew Shotliff

Produced for:
Acepark Developments Ltd



Contents

List of Plates.....1

List of Figures.....1

Preface.....2

Key Terms.....2

1. INTRODUCTION 4

 1.1 Planning Background.....4

 1.2 Site Location and Description.....4

 1.3 Archaeological Background.....4

 1.4 Project Objectives.....5

 1.5 Methodology.....5

2. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS 7

 2.1 Introduction7

 2.2 Overburden and Geological Deposits7

 2.3 Archaeological Remains.....7

 2.4 Discussion and Conclusions7

3. BIBLIOGRAPHY 9

4. PLATES..... 10

5. APPENDIX 1: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM..... 10

6. APPENDIX 2: HER SUMMARY SHEET..... 13

List of Plates

Plate 1: Geological deposit (101) and darker soil within areas of modern disturbance

Plate 2: Geological deposit (101) observed beneath the north-west boundary wall

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Plan of archaeological monitoring area

Figures are bound at the back of the report



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

The project was commissioned by Michael Hardiman & Associates LLP on behalf of Acepark Developments Ltd and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Simon West, District Archaeologist for St Albans City and District Council.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Ian Turner and Wiebke Starke (Archaeological Supervisors). This report has been prepared by Ian Turner with figures by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

The assistance of Fergus Doyle (Acepark Developments Ltd) throughout the project is gratefully acknowledged.

*Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford.
MK42 0AS
☎: 0300 300 8141
Fax: 0300 300 8209
e-mail: office@albion-arch.com
Website: www.albion-arch.com*

Version History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>16th May 2013</i>	<i>n/a</i>

Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

ALGAO	Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
DA	Development Area
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation
Procedures Manual	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> , 2nd ed, 2001 Albion Archaeology



Non-Technical Summary

Planning consent has been granted for change of use from Sui Generis (substation) to Class C3 (residential) to create three self-contained flats in the former substation on St Peter's Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire.

The development area lies partially within an area of archaeological significance within the boundary of the Saxon and medieval town. The medieval town boundary, 'the Tonman Ditch', is projected to run through this area. The site contains an electricity substation built in the early 1930s.

Planning consent for the development contained a condition requiring a programme of building recording and archaeological monitoring of sub-surface deposits affected by the development. Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the archaeological works. Building recording was undertaken prior to the start of the development and forms the subject of a separate report. Archaeological monitoring took place during groundworks between 17th December 2012 and 4th January 2013.

Features identified within the development area were all modern in date. These comprised large concrete foundation 'pads' and cable trenches associated with the site's previous use as an electricity substation. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period were present. No evidence was found for buildings which are shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879.

It was noted that the development area is c. 1.20m lower than the ground surface in the car park of the adjacent public house which borders the west and north sides of the site. This suggests that the area has been lowered and that earlier deposits are likely to have been truncated. Further truncation would have occurred during the use of the site as an electricity substation with the excavation for foundations and cable trenches.

No evidence was found for the medieval town boundary known as the 'Tonman Ditch'. If it did continue across the site, then it is likely that the significant truncation and modern disturbance noted above has removed it. It is also possible that it may have been located outside of the development area.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

Planning consent (5/10/2836) has been granted for change of use from Sui Generis (substation) to Class C3 (residential) and single storey side extension with habitable roof space to create three self-contained flats in the former substation on St Peter's Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The development area lies partially within an area of archaeological significance (AS.R.25: St Albans; Saxon Kingsbury, Saxon and medieval town and Sopwell Nunnery; Policy 111) close by the medieval town boundary and contains a substation built in the early 1930s.

Because the development had the potential to impact upon significant heritage assets the local planning authority, St Albans City and District Council attached a condition to the planning consent requiring the submission and approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), a programme of historic building recording and archaeological monitoring. This is in line with Policy 111 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994 and PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment'

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by developer to produce the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2012a) and to undertake the building recording and archaeological monitoring. The results of the building recording are the subject of a separate report (Albion Archaeology 2012b).

The archaeological investigation and monitoring took place between 17th December 2012 and 4th^{January} 2013. The results are presented below.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The site occupies a level area of ground surrounded by a brick wall situated on the corner of Hatfield Road and St Peter's Road, St Albans. The substation is set back slightly from the road frontage. It is centred on grid reference TL 15165 07473

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The development area is in the vicinity of the line of a ditch that formed part of the medieval boundary of St Albans. There are two defensive ditches on the eastern side of the town: Tonman Ditch, which marks part of the borough boundary; and, to its west, Monk Ditch.

A section across the Tonman Ditch, to the north of Sopwell Lane, was excavated in 1975 (Saunders and Havercroft 1978) and its bank was noted in 1876 by Henry Fowler, who lived in one of the houses on Bricket Road backing onto the earthwork which rang along Marlborough Road (Niblett and Thompson 2005). Marlborough Road comes out onto Hatfield Road opposite St Peter's Road, putting the line of the ditch in the vicinity of the development area.

The other boundary, Monk Ditch, ran parallel and to the west of Tonman Ditch, although its course is uncertain. Monk Ditch is attested from documentary sources and was in existence by the beginning of the 15th century. Saunders and



Havercroft suggest that the line of Monk Ditch might mark the extent of the 10th-century defended town. The postulated line of Monk Ditch is to the west of the development area.

The eastern region research agenda published in 2000 (Brown and Glazebrook) noted that work in many of the region's towns had been minimal over the last three decades and that an understanding of basic chronologies was still often required. Although much more work had been done by the time the revised agenda was published in 2008 (Medlycott and Brown), further work on the surveying and assessment of towns is noted as a continuing aim, along with a better understanding of their morphology and development. In the case of St Albans, for example, the exact course and chronology of the medieval defences is only partially understood.

The site also contained a substation, probably built in the early 1930s soon after the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company took over the supply of electricity to St Albans. Although the power supply industry and the structures associated with it has been subject to EH MPP programme, in most cases the record has concentrated on power stations rather than structures associated with the supply. These structures represent an important element of the interwar suburban landscape and demonstrate the spread of electricity into the domestic home.

1.4 Project Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological fieldwork are detailed in the WSI. The general objectives were:

- to monitor and supervise all groundworks with the potential to reveal archaeological remains.
- to investigate, characterise and record any archaeological deposits encountered within them.
- to produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to ensure that the archaeology is 'preserved by record'.

The potential proximity of one of the town's medieval boundaries suggested the site could further understanding of the medieval topography of the town and add to existing information on the chronology and development of urban centres within the eastern region.

1.5 Methodology

The groundworks consisted of the following main elements (Fig. 2):

- Pit excavated to remove hydrocarbon contamination (diesel), measuring 5.5m x 4m x 2.5m deep.
- Trenches machined to facilitate the removal of seven large concrete blocks. Trench sizes and shapes varied; all were *c.* 1m deep.
- New-build ground reduction of an area 9m x 8.5m x 0.60m deep.
- New-build south wall footings trenches, *c.* 14m x 0.65m wide x 2m deep.



- New-build north-west footings trench, along curtain wall, 10.5m x 0.45m x 0.90m deep.
- Ground reduction for new garden area, 20.5m x 6m x 0.40m deep.

Where possible, machine excavation was undertaken with a toothless bucket to ensure that any sub-surface archaeological remains could be clearly identified.

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

- IfA's *By-Laws and Code of Conduct (2010)*;
- IfA's *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs and Field Excavations (updated 2008) and finds (updated 2008)*;
- Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork and the Analysis of Fieldwork Records (2001)*;
- English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide (2006)*;
- The ALGAO *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. EAA Occasional Paper No. 14 (2003);
- *The old substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans: Written Scheme of investigation for a programme of building recording and archaeological monitoring*. Albion Archaeology 2012/158



2. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

2.1 Introduction

The groundworks only revealed features and deposits associated with the use of the site as an electrical substation. They are summarised below.

2.2 Overburden and Geological Deposits

The overburden (100) was 0.40m thick; it comprised mid brown grey sandy clay with frequent small and medium stones and occasional modern brick, tile, bottle glass and metal fragments. This is interpreted as a levelling layer associated with the use of the site as an electricity substation. Layer (100) directly overlay undisturbed geological deposits (101) across the site.

Six large concrete weight-bearing pads, *c.* 0.60–1m deep, which truncated the overburden and the undisturbed geological deposits, were also present (Figure 2).

The undisturbed geological deposits (101) comprised mid orange sandy silt with occasional patches of light orange yellow and light grey sandy silt (Plates 1 and 2).

2.3 Archaeological Remains

The features present were all of modern date. They comprised large concrete weight-bearing ‘pads’ and cable trenches associated with the site’s previous use as an electricity substation.

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period were present.

2.4 Discussion and Conclusions

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period were revealed during the course of the groundworks. There was also no trace of the buildings illustrated on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879 that occupied the site prior to the construction of the substation.

It was noted that there was no trace of a buried topsoil or subsoil between the overburden layer and the undisturbed geological deposits, which suggests that the surface has been truncated.

It was also noted that the site is *c.* 1.20m lower than the ground surface to the west and north outside the boundary wall which stands *c.* 3.60m high (measured inside the site). This suggests that the ground has been terraced, levelling it with the ground to the south. It seems likely that this was done when the boundary wall was constructed. The high wall along the north and west sides of the plot appears to have formed the rear wall of the buildings shown on the 1st edition OS map (Albion Archaeology 2012/171, Section 2.2.1). This lowering and terracing by 1.20m would probably have destroyed any archaeological features that might have once existed at the north-west end of the site.



Further truncation of any surviving features would have occurred when the site was in use as an electricity substation from the 1930s onwards. The substation building itself has foundations that are *c.* 0.80m deep and to the west of the building a number of cable trenches and concrete foundations up to 1m deep were found. The lack of any features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period may be due to truncation during the modern period.

It is assumed that the medieval boundary, the 'Tonman' Ditch, would have been a substantial feature which might be expected to have survived such truncation. However, the feature was not present within the site, either as result of truncation or possibly because the course of the ditch did not run through development area.

The project archive will be deposited with Verulamium Museum (accession no. SSP12). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-139858).



3. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology, 2012a. *The old Substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire: Written Scheme of investigation for a programme of historic building recording and archaeological monitoring.* 2012/158

Albion Archaeology, 2012b. *The old Substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire: historic building recording.* 2012/171

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J., 2000. *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8.

Medlycott, M. and Brown, N. 2008. *Revision of the Regional Archaeological Framework for the Eastern Region.* ALGO East of England.

Niblett, R. and Thompson, I. 2005. *Alban's Buried Towns: An Assessment of St Alban's Archaeology up to AD 1600* (English Heritage)

Saunders, C. and Havercroft, A.B. 1978. Excavations in the City and District of St Albans 1974-76, *Hertfordshire Archaeology* Vol. 6:1-77



4. PLATES



Plate 1: Geological deposit (101) and darker soil within areas of modern disturbance. Scale 1m.



Plate 2: Geological deposit (101) observed beneath the north-west boundary wall



5. APPENDIX 1: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID	albionar1-139858
PROJECT DETAILS	
Project name	Old Substation Site, St Peter's Road, St Albans - Watching Brief
Short description of the project	Planning consent was granted for the change of use and extension of a former substation in St Peter's Road, St Albans to create three self-contained flats. A condition for a programme of archaeological monitoring and historic building recording formed part of the planning consent. Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the works. Features identified within the development area were all modern in date. They comprised large concrete foundation 'pads' and cable trenches associated with the site's previous use as an electricity substation. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period were present. No evidence was found for buildings shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879.
Project dates	Start: 17-12-2012 End: 04-01-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SS2059 - Contracting Unit No. SSP12 - Museum accession ID albionar1-138170 - OASIS form ID
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	None
Significant Finds	None
Investigation type	Watching brief
Prompt	Planning condition
PROJECT LOCATION	
Country	England
Site location	Old Substation Site, St Peter's Road, St Albans
Study area	117.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 15165 07473
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology



Project brief originator	No Brief
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Mark Phillips
Project director/manager	Robert Wardill
Project supervisor	Ian Turner
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Physical Archive Exists?	NO
Physical Archive notes	N/A
Digital Archive recipient	Verulamium Museum
Digital Archive ID	SSP12
Digital Contents	Other
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography', 'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Verulamium Museum
Paper Archive ID	SSP12
Paper Contents	Other
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Drawing", "Microfilm", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"
Paper Archive notes	To be stored at Albion Archaeology until deposition
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	The Old Substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans: Archaeological Monitoring
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Phillips, M'
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Turner, I'
Other bibliographic details	2013/80
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford
Description	Comb bound report



5. APPENDIX 2: HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Old Substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans		
County: Hertfordshire		District: St Albans City and District
Village/Town: St Albans		Parish: N/A
Planning application reference: 5/10/2836		
Client name, address: Acepark Developments Ltd, Building 52 Suite 9, Wrest Park Enterprise Centre, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HS		
Nature of application: Construction of residential dwellings		
Present land use: Disused electricity substation		
Size of application area: 288m ²		Size of area investigated: 117m ²
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 1516/0747		
Site code (if applicable): SS2059		
Site director/Organization: Robert Wardill / Albion Archaeology		
Type of work: Archaeological monitoring		
Date of work	Start: 17/12/2012	Finish: 04/01/2013
Location of finds and site archive/curating museum: Verulamium Museum		
Periods represented: Modern		
<p>Relevant previous summaries/reports:</p> <p>The Old Substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Historic Building Recording & Archaeological Monitoring (Albion Archaeology Report No. 2012/158)</p> <p>The Old Substation, St Peter's Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire: Historic Building Recording (Albion Archaeology Report No. 2012/171).</p>		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>Planning consent has been granted to create three self-contained flats in the former substation on St Peter's Road, St Albans. The development lies partially within an area of archaeological significance within the boundary of the Saxon and medieval town. The medieval town boundary, 'the Tonman Ditch', is projected to run through this area. The site contains an electricity substation built in the early 1930s.</p> <p>The planning consent included a condition requiring a programme of building recording and archaeological monitoring. The building recording took place prior to development and was reported separately. The archaeological monitoring took place between 17th December 2012 and 4th January 2013.</p> <p>The features identified within the development area were all modern. They comprised large concrete foundation pads and cable trenches associated with the site's former function as an electricity substation. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts earlier than the modern period were present. No evidence was found for the 'Tonman Ditch' or buildings shown on the 1st edition OS map. The development area is c.1.20m lower than the land that borders its west and north sides. This suggests that the ground was reduced, possibly removing earlier deposits. Modern intrusions associated with the substation caused further disturbance.</p>		
Author of summary: M. Phillips		Date of summary: 16/05/2013

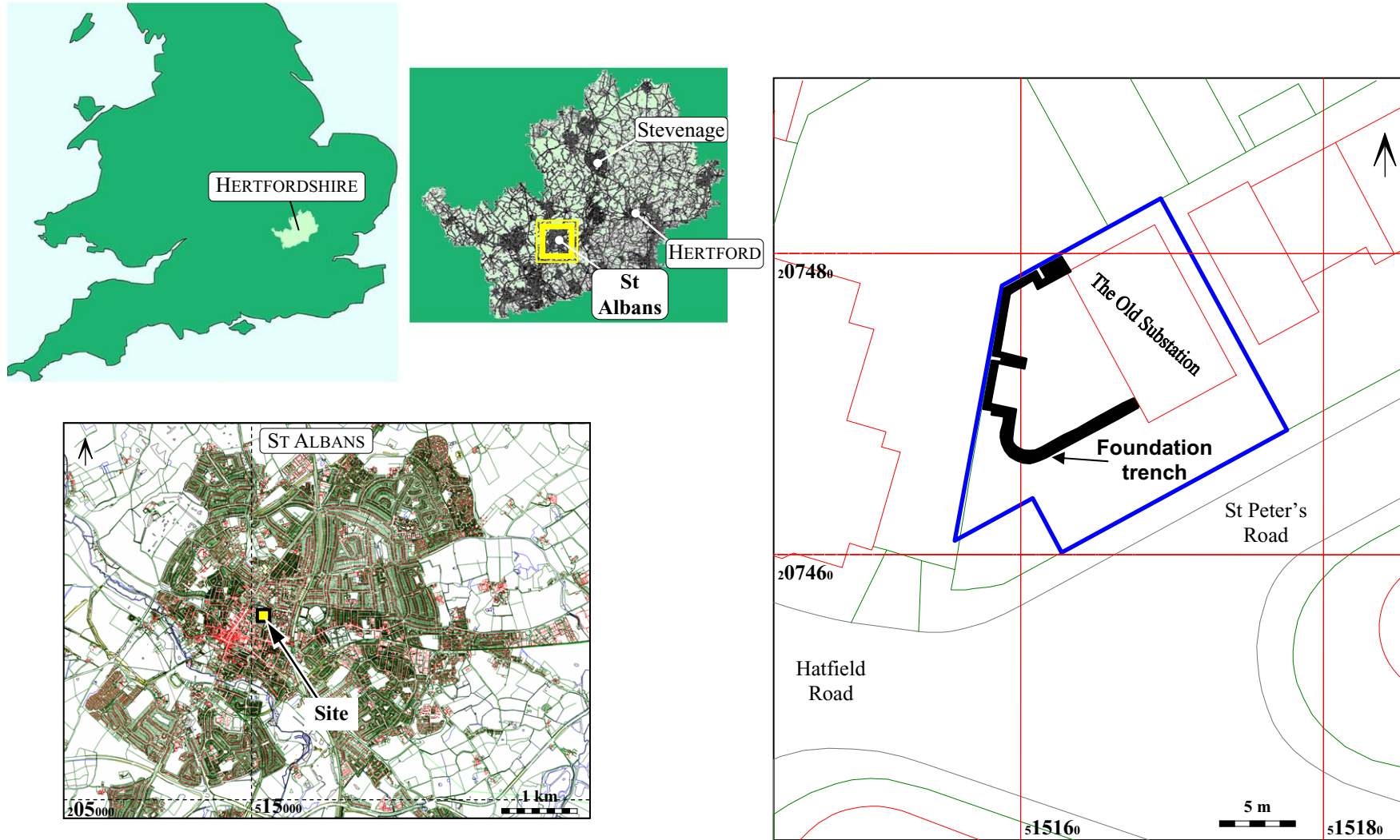
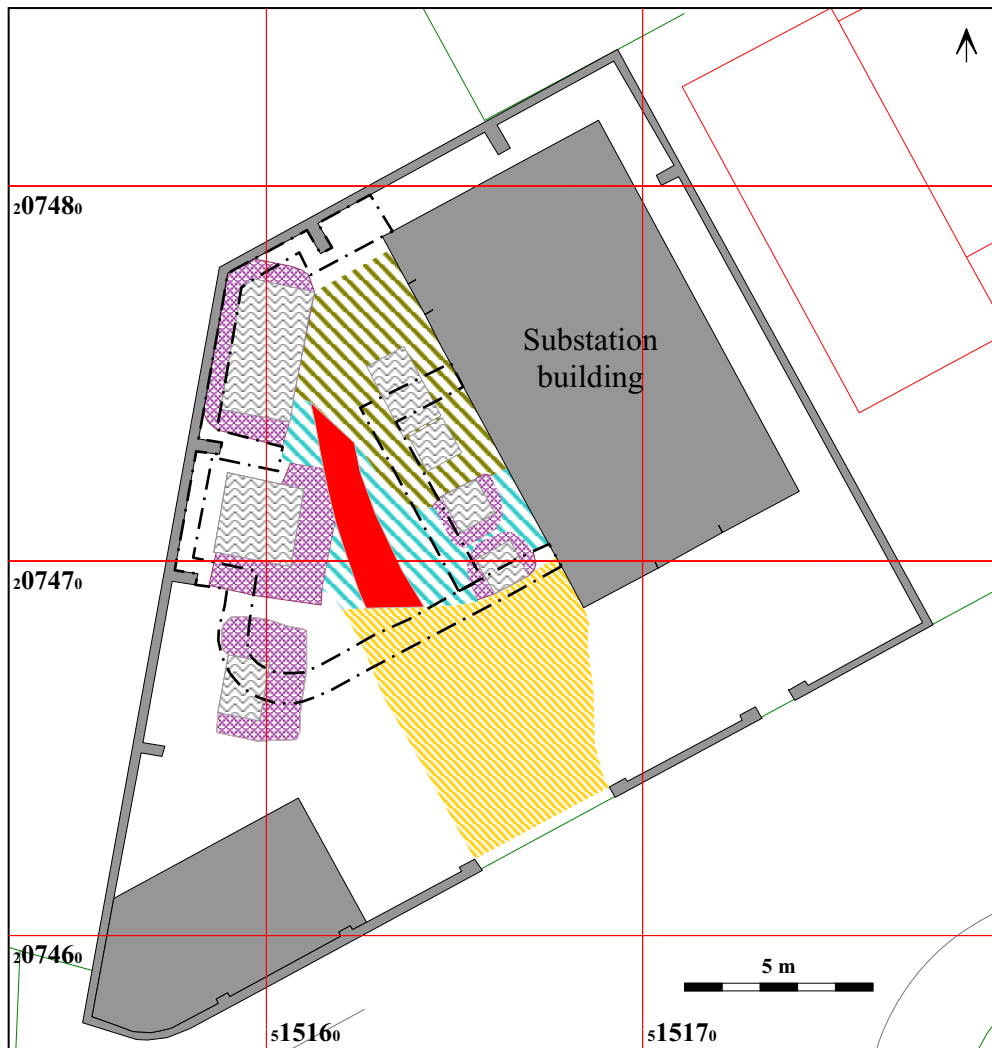


Figure 1: Site location

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Central Bedfordshire Council. Licence No. 100049029 (2011)










-  Foundation trench
-  Concrete block removed
-  Ground reduced to geological deposits
-  Ground reduced by 0.30m
-  1m-deep trench to remove concrete block
-  Cable trench
-  2.5m-deep trench to remove hydrocarbon contamination

Figure 2: Plan of archaeological monitoring area

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Central Bedfordshire Council. Licence No. 100049029 (2011)

Central
Bedfordshire

Albion
archaeology



Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford
MK42 0AS

Telephone 01234 294000
Email office@albion-arch.com
www.albion-arch.com

