

# Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:  
65 CATHERINE STREET  
ST ALBANS  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

NGR: TL 1474 0769

*on behalf of H & C Ltd.*



Calli Rouse BA PIFA

January 2009

ASC: 1061/SAC/3



Letchworth House  
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,  
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE  
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700  
Email: [office@archaeological-services.co.uk](mailto:office@archaeological-services.co.uk)  
Website: [www.archaeological-services.co.uk](http://www.archaeological-services.co.uk)



## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	SAC	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1061
<i>OASIS ref:</i>		<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	St Albans		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	St Albans		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 1474 0769		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.58 sqm		
<i>Present use:</i>	Former shop and associated building		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Conversion to apartments, with extensions		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Unknown		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	St Albans District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	27/01/2009		
<i>Client:</i>	H&C Limited 168 Hillcroft Crescent Oxhey Watford Hertfordshire WD19 4NZ		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mr Phillip Corbin		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Calli Rouse	<i>Date:</i>	29/01/2009
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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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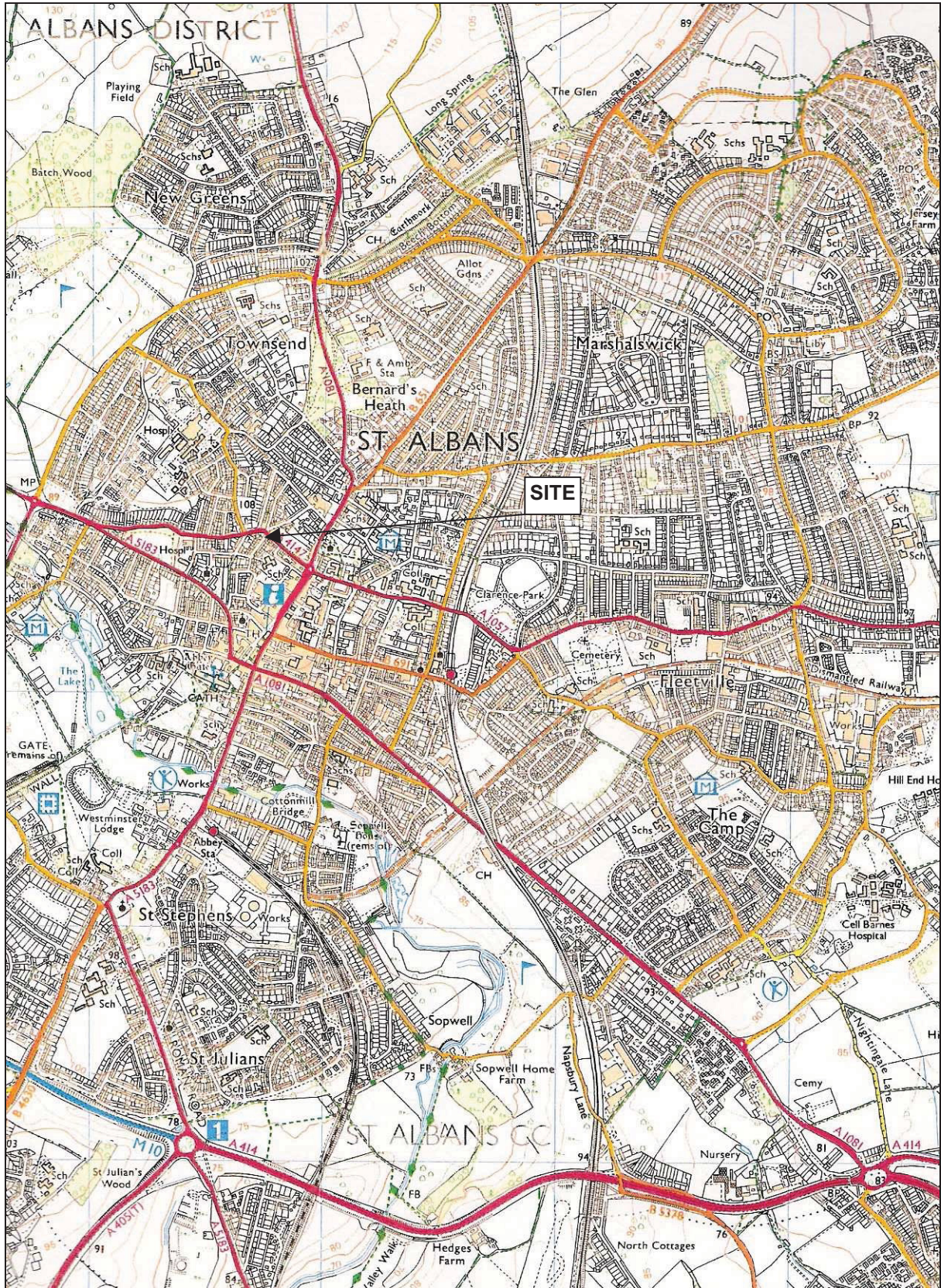


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



## Summary

*During January 2009, ASC undertook an archaeological watching brief at 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, in advance of the conversion of the existing building in to apartments, and the construction of a storage area to the rear of the building. Only the larger of the footing trenches were observed, and these comprised little or no subsoil or made ground, over mixed orange/grey sandy clay natural soil. No archaeological finds or features were observed within the site.*

### 1. Introduction

1.1 In January 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 65 Catherine Street, St Albans. The project was commissioned by Philip Corbin, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Barclay 2008), following discussions with the St Albans District Council Archaeological Officer.

#### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

#### 1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

*Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

#### 1.4 *Management*

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

#### 1.5 *The Site*

##### 1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is located in the town and district of St Albans, at NGR TL 1474 0769 (Fig. 1). It occupies a rectangular area of *c.*650 square metres at the junction of Catherine Street and Etna Road, to the west of the town centre (Fig. 2). There are two linked buildings on the site, 65 Catherine Street and 2a Etna Road. Both are two-storey, of brick construction under slated roofs. No. 65 was formerly a shop, with accommodation above, and 2a appears to have been a dwelling. There is a small yard to the rear. Service plans have not been provided.

##### 1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site lies at an elevation of *c.*120m OD in an urban area, and soils are likely to have been modified or removed. Prior to development, soils in the site area

were probably those of the Batcombe association, described as ‘fine silty over clayey and fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging (Soil Survey 1983, 582a). The underlying geology comprises glacial gravel (BGS 1978, 239).

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development comprises conversion of the existing buildings to apartments, and the construction of a storage area to the rear of the building.

1.5.4 *Previous Archaeological Work*

ASC carried out a Historic Building Recording of the buildings on the site in April 2008 (Sammelmann 2008).





Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

## 2. Aims & Methods

### 2.1 *Aims*

The aims of the watching brief were:

- To consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains that are liable to be threatened by the development.
- To produce an accurate and full record of the archaeology present, so that a permanent record will be made and the results presented in such a way that they may be re-examined and interpreted in the future.

### 2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

### 2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the following methodology:

- Monitoring of soil and overburden stripping
- Inspection of subsoil deposits for archaeological features
- Rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits
- Subsoil stripping under archaeological supervision
- Examination of any service and foundation trenches and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits
- Rapid examination of spoil-heaps for archaeological material
- A programme of post-excavation analysis, archiving and, if necessary, publication

### 2.4 *Constraints*

The northernmost footing trench collapsed before it could be properly recorded, but not before it had been noted that it contained no archaeological finds or features. The drainage runs and further hand-dug footings were not observed, on agreement with the District Archaeologist.



### 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods.

This section has been compiled with information from readily available sources.

3.2 ***Iron Age*** (600BC-AD43)

The area was of considerable importance during the late Iron Age and it is thought that occupation was dominated by a settlement at Prae Wood (Wheeler & Wheeler 1936). Settlement of this period has been found at a variety of locations in this area, such as Gorhambury (Neal *et al* 1990) and Folly Lane, where an important Late Iron Age high-status burial has been recorded (Niblett 1999).

3.3 ***Roman*** (AD43-c.450)

Following the Roman conquest there was a shift in settlement and a Roman town, known as *Verulamium*, was laid out on the south side of the river Ver. It developed into the third largest town in Roman Britain and the remains are now a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Niblett 2001; Wheeler & Wheeler 1936). Communication in the area was dominated by a major Roman road, now known as *Watling Street*, which ran from *Londinium* (London) through *Verulamium* to the Midlands.

The early phase of buildings in the town was constructed of timber, and many were destroyed during the Boudiccan Revolt in AD60-61 (Frere 1972). The town was subsequently rebuilt and expanded and was later encircled by gated walls (Niblett 2001). A number of cemeteries are recorded outside the town walls, notably on King Harry Lane to the south west of the town (Stead & Rigby 1989). St Alban, the first British Christian martyr, was executed in AD209 within the town walls (Niblett 2001, 137-139).

St Albans began to decline after the departure of the Roman army, with many of its buildings falling into disuse. By the 5<sup>th</sup> century much of the population had relocated (Niblett 2001, 127-146).

3.4 ***Saxon*** (c.450-1066)

The focus of the settlement shifted to the north side of the river during the Saxon period, where a new site known as Kingsbury developed (Niblett 2001, fig 75). King Offa of Mercia founded an Abbey dedicated to St Alban and the present cathedral, occupies the site of the Saxon abbey. A market was established in the town during the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

3.5 ***Medieval*** (1066-1500)

The Domesday Survey entry records the Abbot as being the major landholder in St Albans in 1086. The 46 burgesses held half a hide and there were 3 millls, woodland for 1,000 pigs, a park for wild beasts and a fishpond (Williams & Martin 2002, 376). The medieval core of the present town dates from the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, when a settlement was laid out around the market place. The extent of the 12<sup>th</sup> century town is

unclear and it is not known but it is likely that the Tonmman Ditch, which has been identified to the east and west of the town, may be part of this phase of occupation (Niblett & Thompson 2005, 302). Catherine Street and Cock Lane were probably the northern limits of the town before the revision of 1327.

A market was held by the monastery every Wednesday and Saturday and we are told that Abbot Wulsin enlarged the market place in the tenth century. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the market was granted to mayor and burgesses under the charter of incorporation by Edward VI (VCH online).

Burgage plots are known to have existed between St Peters Street and Tonman Ditch to the west (Fig. 3), although when these were first established is also unclear (*ibid.*). The town probably outgrew its original boundaries and a new borough boundary was established in 1327, which is shown on Hare's map of St Albans dated 1634 (Fig.3).

The Catherine Street/ St Peters Street area was the centre of the first Battle of St Albans in 1455. The second battle took place in February 1461 and centred around Bernards Heath immediately north of the town. In both cases the town was plundered and the victims buried in St Peter's church (Niblett & Thompson 2005, 263, 288).

### 3.6 *Post-Medieval* (1500-1900)

Before the arrival of railways, as many as seventy coaches passed daily through the town as this was the first stage out of London on the way to and from the Midlands, the north-west counties, and on one route to Ireland (VCH online). Although some roads had been rerouted, St Albans retained its medieval layout and failed to grow until the arrival of the railways. The parliamentary borough boundary was redefined in the 1830s and enlarged in 1879 under the St Albans Extension Act (VCH online).

Three railway stations were constructed in the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The London and North-Western Railway opened theirs in 1858, the Great Northern Railway Company opened their branch from Hatfield to St. Albans on 16 October, 1865 and the Midland Railway opened their station for the Bedford to London line in 1868 (*ibid.*)

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century expansion included the development of Etna Road in 1899 on the same alignment as the Tonman Ditch (Billings 2006, 43; Niblett & Thompson 2005, 269). The present site is located on the corner of Catherine Street and Etna Road on land that may previously have been just outside Tonman Ditch and therefore the medieval town boundary.

### 3.7 *Modern* (1900-present)

The first map to show the site after it had been developed is the 1939 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 4)

According to the St Alban's Almanack, the house numbers along Catherine Street and Etna Road were rather different in 1899; number 65 Catherine Street is not mentioned as the odd numbers only go up to 33 (evens go to number 74) and the house numbers in Etna Road begin with number 4. However, it is possible to extrapolate from the



description in Kelly's Directory that the present site was used by TS Howard, boot maker in 1900 and that it was numbered 45 at the time.

By 1923, William Lupton had taken over the premises, which he had converted to a grocery store (Kelly's Directory 1923). The house number had changed in 1934 and Etna Road is recorded as a separate entity for the first time. William Lupton still occupied Catherine Street end of the property and there are two entries for number 2 Etna Road; a Charles Anderton is recorded as having the yard as a monumental mason and Mrs Anderton presumably occupied the house.

William Lupton and Mrs Anderton are still registered for the same in 1937-8, but a Bernard Oakley had by this time taken over the use of the yard (Kelly's Directory 1937-8). The following year Arthur Lupton had taken over number 2a. It became a builders yard in 1939-40 and is registered to Arthur Lupton and William Bowers. Mrs Anderton had been reinstated in number 2a and stays there until 1946.

In 1949 William Lupton was still in number 65, but by this time it is owned by Bernard Oakley, who also owned number 2a. William Bowers was still recorded as using the yard as a builders yard (Kelly's Directory 1949).

The entries remain the same until 1967, when number 65 was not recorded at all and William Bowers was registered for the yard (Kelly's Directory 1967). Between 1968 and 1971 number 65 Catherine Street was registered in the Kelly's Directories as being A1 Motor Accessories, and they were also at numbers 69/71. Number 2a Etna Road was occupied by Tony Deamer and the yard was still in the hands of William Bowers.

A1 motors carried on trading at numbers 65 and 69 Catherine Street between 1972 and 1975 and had also extended into the yard. Tony Deamer was still living at number 2a (Kelly's Directories).

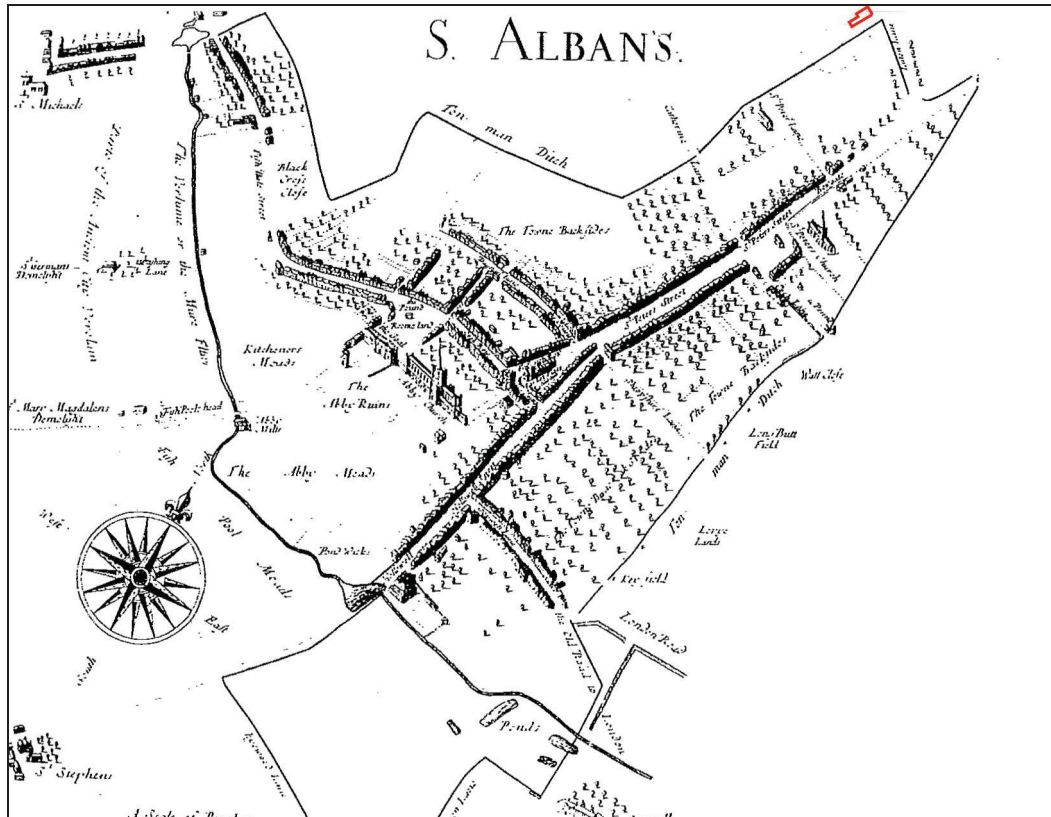


Figure 4: Hare's map of 1634 (not to scale)



Figure 5: Ordnance Survey plan of 1939 (not to scale)

## **4. Results**

- 4.1 One watching brief visit was made to the site, during which the excavation of the main footings relating to the proposed development was observed (Fig. 3). The trenches were all between *c*1m and *c*1.5m deep. The northernmost trench collapsed in on itself before it could be properly recorded (Plate 3), but no archaeological finds or features were observed within it.
- 4.2 The southernmost footing trench (F1, Fig. 3, Plate 1) was cut through up to *c*0.5m of mid brown subsoil with inclusions of modern rubbish, which overlay between 1m and 1.5m of mid orange/grey sandy clay.
- 4.3 The second footing trench (F2, Fig. 3, Plate 2) contained little to no subsoil, and instead had a layer of mixed, 'dirty' natural, again with inclusions of modern debris overlying the natural clay soil. This trench partially intersected the existing drainage run, and a modern manhole was located 1.2m from its western end. A further existing manhole was located at its eastern end. No archaeological finds or features were observed within either of these trenches.





**Plate 1:** Footing trench F1, looking northwest, 2m scale



**Plate 2:** Footing trench F2, looking northwest, 2m scale



**Plate 3:** Collapsed trench, looking northwest

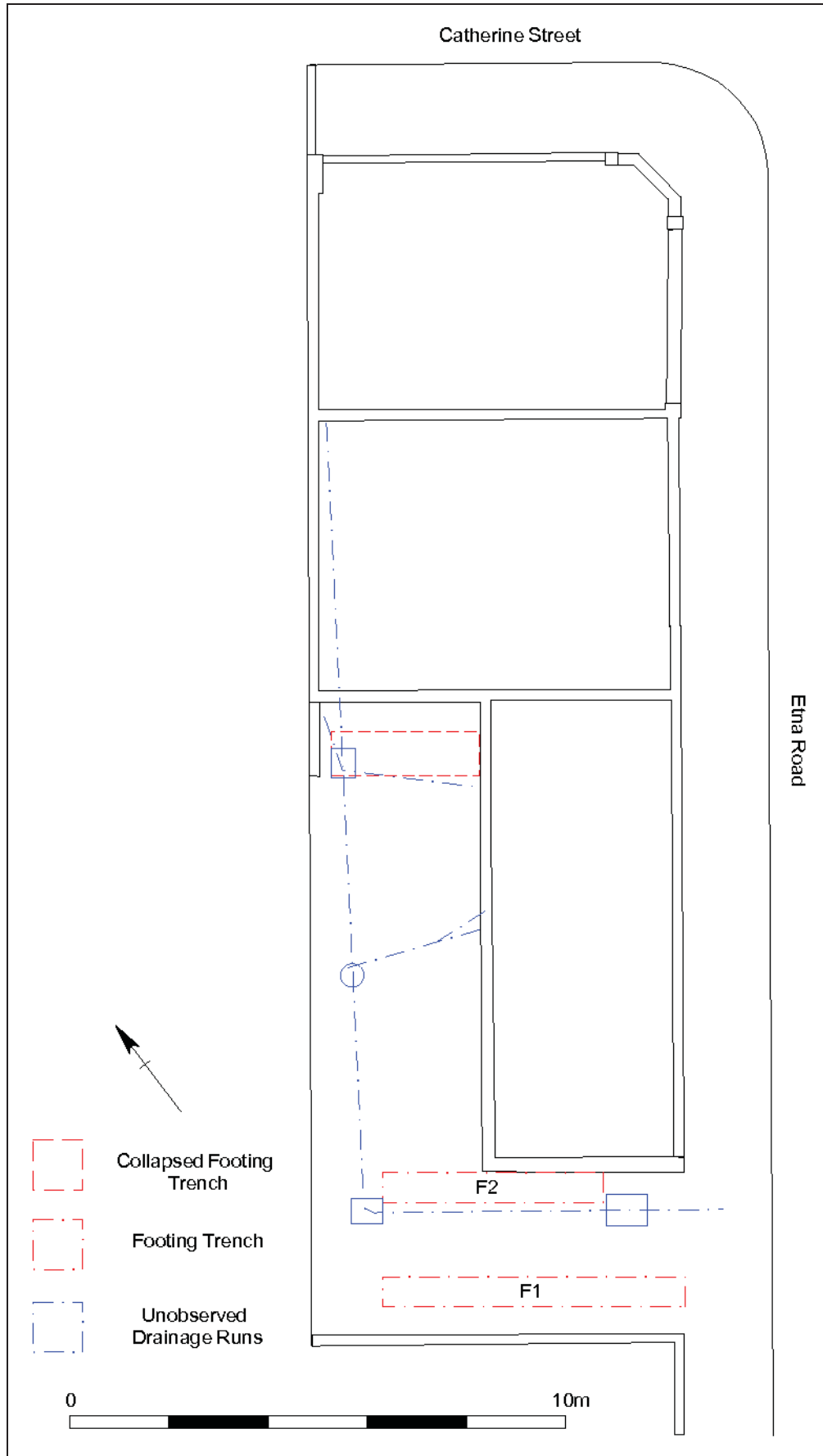


Figure 5: Watching brief observations (scale 1:125)



## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 Cartographic evidence shows that the site lay outside of the core of medieval settlement in the area (Fig. 4), and was not developed until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century (Fig 5). The findings of the watching brief would indicate that the site is unlikely to have been utilised in any major way before the construction of the current building at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.2 While the possibility of the existence of individual, isolated features away from the observed groundworks cannot be ruled out, any such features are likely to be of little significance, and are unlikely to be greatly affected by the development.
- 5.3 *Confidence Rating*  
The watching brief was undertaken in dry, sunny conditions, and full cooperation was received from all parties involved. As a result, a high confidence rating is attached to the results of the watching brief.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The watching brief was commissioned by Philip Corbin for H & C Ltd, and the writer is grateful for his assistance. The project was monitored by Simon West on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Calli Rouse BA PIFA. The report was prepared by Calli Rouse and edited by bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

## **7. Archive**

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive for the building recording and watching brief will be deposited with HALS.

## 8. References

### *Standards & Specifications*

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

### *Secondary Sources*

- Barclay, C. 2008 *Project Design for Historic Building Recording and Watching Brief: 56 Catherine Street, St Albans* (ASC Report 1061/SAC/1)
- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Billings, T. 2006 *Victoriana: a St Alban's Streetscape* Oxford: Parchment Printers
- Kelly's Directory (various dates)
- Neal, D. S. Wardle, A. and Hunn, J. 1990 *Excavation of the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval Settlement at Gorhambury, St Albans*. English Heritage Archaeological Report. **14**
- Niblett, R. 1999 *The Excavation of a ceremonial Site at Folly Lane, Verulamium*. Britannia Monograph Series **14**
- Niblett, R. 2001 *Verulamium The Roman City of St Albans*. Tempus Ltd
- Niblett, R. & Thompson, I. 2005 *Alban's Buried Towns* Oxford: Oxbow Books
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Semmelmann, K 2008 *Historic Building Recording at 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire* ASC/1061/SAC/2
- VCH online 'The city of St Albans: The borough', *A History of the County of Hertford: volume 2* (1908), pp. 469-483.  
URL:[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=43311&strquery=st alban](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=43311&strquery=st%20alban).
- Wheeler, R. E. M. & Wheeler, T. V. 1935 *Verulamium, a Belgic and Two Roman Cities* Research Report of the Society of Antiquaries of London **11**
- Williams, A. & Martin, G. H. 2002 *Domesday Book, A Complete Translation*. Penguin Books.



## Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: Catherine Street, St Albans		Project No/Code: 1061 1		Sheet: 1 of 1		
Client/Developer: P. Corbin		Date of visit:				
Contact:			Phone:			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 9.45		Finish: 5.30		
Completed by: CR						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Sunny, dry						
Observations: Observed footing <sup>trench</sup> at N end of site, c.1m deep - Collapsed before any proper photographs could be taken Two footing trenches were excavated at S end of site 0.6m wide, between 1.5m & 1m deep. S-most trench cut through between 0.5m - 0m mid brown subsoil with nod inclusions into <del>red</del> mixed orange/grey sandy clay. 2nd footing trench contained no subsoil, & comprised mixed made ground with nod inclusions into natural (as before) - horizon unclear. No archaeological finds/features observed.						
Comments: Further excavation will be cancelled by hand from Thursday						

## Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire			SITE NO/CODE: 1061/SAC
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	Footing trench, looking northwest, 2m scale
2	✓	✓	Footing trench section, looking southwest, 2m scale
3		✓	Collapsed trench, looking northwest
4		✓	Collapsed trench, looking northeast
5		✓	Footing trench, looking southeast, 2m scale
6		✓	Footing trench, looking southeast, 2m scale
7		✓	General site view from Etna Road, looking northwest
8		✓	General site view from Etna Road, looking northwest
9	✓	✓	Footing trench, looking northwest, 2m scale
10	✓	✓	Footing trench, looking northwest, 2m scale
11		✓	Footing trench, looking northwest, 2m scale
12		✓	Footing trench, looking northwest, 2m scale
13		✓	Footing trench section, looking southwest, 2m scale
14		✓	Footing trench section, looking southwest, 2m scale

## Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire		
Short Description:	During January 2009, ASC undertook an archaeological watching brief at 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, in advance of the conversion of the existing building in to apartments, and the construction of a storage area to the rear of the building. Only the larger of the footing trenches were observed, and these comprised little or no subsoil or made ground, over mixed orange/grey sandy clay natural soil. No archaeological finds or features were observed within the site.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	Building recording
Current land use:	Domestic	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	No
Monument type:	-	Monument period:	-
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TL 1474 0769
District:	St Albans	Parish:	St Albans
Site address: (with postcode if known)	65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 5BN		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c.58 sqm	Height OD: (metres)	c.120
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	N/A	Project design originator:	Barclay, C. (ASC)
Project Manager:	K. Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	R. Zeepvat
Sponsor / funding body:	H & C Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	27/01/09	End date:	27/01/09
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	HALS	-	
Paper:		Archive box	
Digital:		CD	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	An Archaeological Watching Brief at 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1061/SAC/3		
Author(s):	Calli Rouse BA PIFA		
Page nos	22	Date:	29/01/2009



## Appendix 4: HER Summary Sheet

Site name and address: 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire		
County: Hertfordshire		District: St Albans
Village/Town: St Albans		Parish: St Albans
Planning application reference: Unknown		
Client name, address, & tel. no: H&C Limited 168 Hillcroft Crescent Oxhey Watford Hertfordshire WD19 4NZ		
Nature of application: Conversion to apartments, with extensions		
Present land use: Domestic		
Size of application area: n/a		Size of area investigated: n/a
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 1474 0769		Site code: 1061/SAC
Site director/Organization: Bob Zeepvat / ASC Ltd		
Type of work: Watching Brief		
Date of work:	Start: 06/10/2008	Finish: 07/10/2008
Curating museum: HALS		
Related SMR nos: -		Periods represented: -
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -		
Summary of fieldwork results:  During January 2009, ASC undertook an archaeological watching brief at 65 Catherine Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, in advance of the conversion of the existing building in to apartments, and the construction of a storage area to the rear of the building. Only the larger of the footing trenches were observed, and these comprised little or no subsoil or made ground, over mixed orange/grey sandy clay natural soil. No archaeological finds or features were observed within the site.		
Author: C.Rouse		Date: 29/01/2009