

Archaeological Watching Brief  
of land at  
**NO. 38 WALTON ROAD,  
SHIREHAMPTON, BRISTOL.**  
for  
Mr Philip Pinnell



Report No. 2060 / 2009  
BHER No. 24645

By Emily Glass



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Archaeological Watching Brief  
of land at  
**NO. 38 WALTON ROAD,  
SHIREHAMPTON, BRISTOL,**

Centred on  
N.G.R. ST 53005 76840

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<i>Date Issued:</i>	11th May 2009 

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### Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	c.	Circa
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	Km	Kilometre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	m	Metre
BC	Before Christ	MoB	Museum of Bristol
BCC	Bristol City Council	NGR	National Grid Reference
BCL	Bristol Central Library	NMR	National Monuments Record
BCMAG	Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery	OS	Ordnance Survey
BHER	Bristol Historic Environment Record		
BRO	Bristol Record Office		
BSMR	Bristol Sites & Monuments Record		

### NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

May, 2009.

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## **SUMMARY**

A 3-day archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks associated with the construction of two semi-detached bungalows following the demolition of an existing pre-fabricated house and garage at No. 38 Walton Road, Shirehampton, Bristol, BS11 9TA. The excavation comprised linear machine dug foundation trenches 0.60m wide for concrete footings to depths of between 1m and 1.80m deep. In addition, two drainage inspection holes were also removed during the construction of these foundations.

The evidence examined suggests that the study area served as undeveloped agricultural land until the mid twentieth century when the site was developed for housing after the Second World War. The area of Shirehampton is considered to be an area of archaeological potential, not least in view of Palaeolithic and Roman finds which have been made in the area.

The watching brief revealed no features or deposits of archaeological significance that were observed during the intrusive groundworks.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by Mr Philip Pinnell to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of two semi-detached bungalows following the demolition of an existing pre-fabricated house and garage at No. 38 Walton Road, Shirehampton, Bristol, BS11 9TA (**Fig. 2**).
- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned to comply with the condition of planning consent (Application reference 08/03001/F) and in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2008). It was a condition of the planning consent for the development that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken while monitoring all intrusive groundwork.
- 1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken for three full days between 14th and 16th April 2009 under the supervision of Emily Glass who also compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with the Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number BRSMG 2008/75 and a copy of the report will be made available to the National Monuments Record maintained by English Heritage. The project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24645 and in the OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations as: bristola1- 49047.

## **2. THE SITE**

- 2.1 The site (centred on NGR ST 53005 76840) lies approximately 7km north-west of Bristol city centre, and about 150m south-west of the centre of Shirehampton village. The property is bounded by Walton Road to the west, to the north by Walton Cottage (32 Walton Road), east by the rear gardens of Nos. 20 and 21 Church Leaze and to the south by 40 Walton Road (Fig. 1).
- 2.2 A detached single-storey prefabricated house and a detached garage formerly occupied the site.
- 2.3 The study area lies at approximately 32m aOD and the geology comprises Pleistocene gravels on the second river terrace (British Geological Survey 1967)
- 2.4 There are no listed buildings in the immediate vicinity and the site does not lie within a Conservation Area.
- 2.5 The Bristol Historic Environment Record has entries for several findspots of Palaeolithic flint and stone tools around Shirehampton (BaRAS 2005a; BaRAS 2005b), which have been listed in Appendix 3.
- 2.6 No dedicated archaeological studies have been devoted to the site but there have been a number of archaeological projects within the wider area, including a borehole survey at the High Street Garage (now Somerfield Garage) located 60m to the north of No. 38 Walton Road (BaRAS 2007).

### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 No previous archaeological assessment has been carried out on the site. Prior to the present project the study area formed part of an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2008). The full historical and archaeological background to the site is contained within this document. Relevant details are summarised below:
- 3.2 The site lies in the tithing of Shirehampton in the historic parish of Westbury-on-Trym (the other two tithings of the parish being Stoke Bishop and Westbury) in Henbury Hundred in the county of Gloucestershire. Note: Shirehampton became an independent parish in 1844 and was incorporated into the City and County of Bristol in 1904.
- 3.3 There is evidence of human activity from the gravel deposits in the Shirehampton area dating from the prehistoric period. Previous archaeological fieldwork has recorded faunal remains and a significant quantity of flint tools, including handaxes, dating from as early as the Palaeolithic. Indeed, some 250m south of the site at Station Road, a Palaeolithic artefact (BHER 9900) was discovered.
- 3.4 There is evidence of Romano-British activity in the area, including the finding of Roman pottery and a sandstone disc (BSMR 5743) in 1928 at St Bernard's Road, approximately 250m to the south-east. The site of the town of *Abonae* (Sea Mills) is situated only about 2.5km to the south-east of the site, while Kings Weston Roman villa lies only about 0.7km to the north.
- 3.5 Prior to the Norman Conquest of 1066 the lands at Shirehampton were held by the church at Westbury-on-Trym, but following the conquest they were seized by William FitzOsbern whose widow later granted them to the Abbey of Cormeille in Normandy. King Henry II (1154 –89) later confirmed the grant, which was further ratified by a bill issued by Pope Alexander in 1168.
- 3.6 It was during the reign of King Henry V (1412-22) that the Dissolution of alien priories commenced and the lands at Shirehampton belonging to Cormeille Abbey were confiscated and passed to Westbury College. In 1544 the estate was granted to Sir Ralph Sadler, remaining in the ownership of the Sadler family for 120 years.
- 3.7 It was during the 18th and 19th centuries that Shirehampton developed from a small hamlet into a village. The area became fashionable with wealthy landowners who built large houses in the area, including the Southwell family at Kings Weston House to the east of the village.
- 3.8 Isaac Taylor's map of 1772 (**Fig.3**) shows that the site was previously located within Great Bradley Field belonging to St Peter's Hospital. St Peter's Hospital was situated in central Bristol and functioned as the main workhouse in Bristol and may have been part funded by multiple landownership revenues. This map also shows linear strip fields that had been laid out to the south-east of the site which were developed into some of the earliest streets radiating off Shirehampton High Street as seen on the 1st Edition OS map of 1879 (**Fig.4**).
- 3.9 The coming of the railway (Shirehampton station opened in 1865) and the opening of the first Dock at Avonmouth in 1877 had a dramatic effect on the development of the area.
- 3.10 By the time of the First World War (**Fig. 5**) the north-western side of Walton Road was under development for housing, however the opposing side and the area behind St Mary's Church was left undisturbed, with the 1938 rapid survey (1:10560) showing no development on the site until after World War Two when the semi detached estate Church Leaze and Walton Road pre-fabricated housing were constructed.
- 3.11 Walton Road lies a short distance west of the village of Shirehampton Conservation Area, designated in 1975.



#### **4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2008). The condition was part of the Delegated Report and Decision by Kate Cottrell, Planning application number 08/03001/00F (Cottrell 2008). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999).
- 4.2 The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundworks. As stipulated in the planning decision notice (Cottrell 2008) this area of Shirehampton is known to lie on gravel deposits that date to the Palaeolithic period and previous archaeological fieldwork in the vicinity has recorded faunal remains and flint tools surviving within these deposits. This type of material occurs in only a very few locations in the UK and is at present not well understood therefore this site was of particular archaeological interest.
- 4.3 The purpose of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits or features revealed by the groundworks. Where present, it was aimed that these deposits would add to the knowledge and understanding of the development of the area.
- 4.4 The watching brief involved monitoring of the ground reduction across the site, mechanical excavation of foundation trenches along the footprint of the proposed dwelling, drainage and manhole removal.
- 4.5 The archive and any finds were to be marked with the accession number (BRSMG 2008/75) obtained from Bristol Museum prior to the start of the fieldwork.

## 5. RESULTS

- 5.1 All groundworks were carried out using a JCB 180° mechanical excavator using a toothed bucket measuring 0.60m in width. The exception to this was the ground reduction work, for which a 1.60m toothless grading bucket was used.
- 5.2 The excavation of trenches was hindered by the presence of two deep manholes located across the rear south-east trench to be excavated. In order to satisfy building inspectorate requirements and provide a stable foundation for the building, the rear trench was excavated to a depth of between 1.60m and 1.80m. The foundations running perpendicular to this were started at this depth and then stepped up to the original trench depth of 1m (**Plate 1**). The central inspection hole was removed entirely (**Plate 2**) and the trench shuttered for the concrete foundation construction.
- 5.3 The watching brief revealed naturally formed deposits throughout the footprint of the proposed building. The maximum depth of the trenching was between 1.60m and 1.80m and the minimum was 1m. Variable natural deposits comprising of contexts 102, 103 and 104 were seen approximately 0.60m to 0.70m below ground surface. The deeper trenches exposed 104 (**Plate 3**), which was comprised of compact mid brownish-yellow sandy clay with common flint gravel inclusions and patches of dark brown coarse sands that undulated across the site (**Plate 4**). Above 104, and occasionally mixed within it, were deposits of soft mid yellowish-brown sandy clay with occasional gravels (102) and compact brownish-pink sandy clay (103).
- 5.4 Above this level the deposits were more regular and consistent. Subsoil 102 comprised of soft mid orange-brown silty-sand, seen to depths of between 0.30m and 0.40m and was potentially colluvial in origin (BaRAS 2007). This was overlain by 0.3m of topsoil (100), which was partially removed during ground reduction works (**Plate 5**).
- 5.5 Despite the foundations proceeding to depths further than originally anticipated there were no features or deposits of archaeological significance observed during the excavation and no artefacts predating the modern period were retrieved during the intrusive groundworks at the site.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of the intrusive groundworks. The lack of archaeological deposits may indicate that any structural remains related to the nearby Romano-British sites of Abonae (Sea Mills) and Kings Weston did not extend into the application area. In addition the lack of finds, particularly of flint tools dating to the Palaeolithic or prehistoric period, indicates that this particular site may not have been utilised to any great length during that time.
- 6.2 Prior to the post-WW2 pre-fabricated housing development along the south-east side of Walton Street, the study area comprised undeveloped land during periods for which documentary sources are available. The site formed part of enclosed fields utilised for pasture or agriculture and orchards as indicated on maps (**Figs. 3 to 5**). The evidence suggests that the study area has comprised undeveloped land from at least the eighteenth century (**Fig. 3**), and probably long before. The lack of archaeological features or artefacts retrieved during the watching brief indicates that any prehistoric settlement is unlikely to be located on this site.
- 6.3 Although no evidence has been found for features of archaeological interest over the study area, it is known to lie in an area of archaeological potential, notably in relation to the Palaeolithic and Roman periods. There is abundant evidence for both periods in the Shirehampton area. Notwithstanding the lack of evidence for features of archaeological interest on the study area itself, important finds, notably Palaeolithic artefacts, have been found in the immediate environs (see Appendix 3).

## 7. PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Emily Glass who also produced this report. The illustrations were prepared and the report compiled by Ann Linge. The archive was compiled and prepared for deposition by Emily Glass and the project was managed by Bruce Williams.

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

### Published Works

- BaRAS 2005a *Archaeological Watching Brief of land adjacent to No. 1 Barrow Hill Crescent, Shirehampton, Bristol.* (Report No. 1371/2005: BSMR No. 22200)
- BaRAS 2005b *Archaeological Desktop Study of land at Jubilee Allotments, Myrtle Drive, Shirehampton, Bristol* (Report No. 1495/2005: BSMR No. 22212)
- IFA 1999 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (Institute of Field Archaeologists)

### Maps

- Isaac Taylor Maps of Several Estates Belonging to E. Southwell Esq.1772 (Ref: BRO 26570)
- Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, surveyed 1879
- Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, surveyed 1912
- Ordnance Survey 1:10560 map, 1938

### Unpublished Material

- BaRAS 2007 *Shirehampton Garage, Shirehampton High Street: Interim Report* (Forthcoming client report)
- BaRAS 2008 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief during Development at 38 Walton Road, Shirehampton, Bristol* (unpublished client report by Longman, T.)
- Cottrell, K. 2008 *Delegated Report and Decision Document for No. 38 Walton Road, Bristol.* Bristol City Council Planning, Transport and Sustainable Development.

## 9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BaRAS would like to thank Philip Pinnell and LEG Bishop for their assistance and co-operation and Bob Jones for his advice.

## **APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement**

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

### **NATIONAL POLICIES**

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work which would affect a SAM.

### **ODPM PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE**

The Planning Policy Guidance of Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) consolidates advice to planning authorities. The Guidance stresses the non-renewable nature of the archaeological resource, details the role of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), encourages early consultation with county and district archaeological officers and sets out the requirement for developers to provide sufficient information on the archaeological impact of development to enable a reasonable planning decision to be made.

PPG 16 also indicates the circumstances where further work would be necessary and outlines the use of agreements and conditions to protect the archaeological resource.

### **DISTRICT POLICY**

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

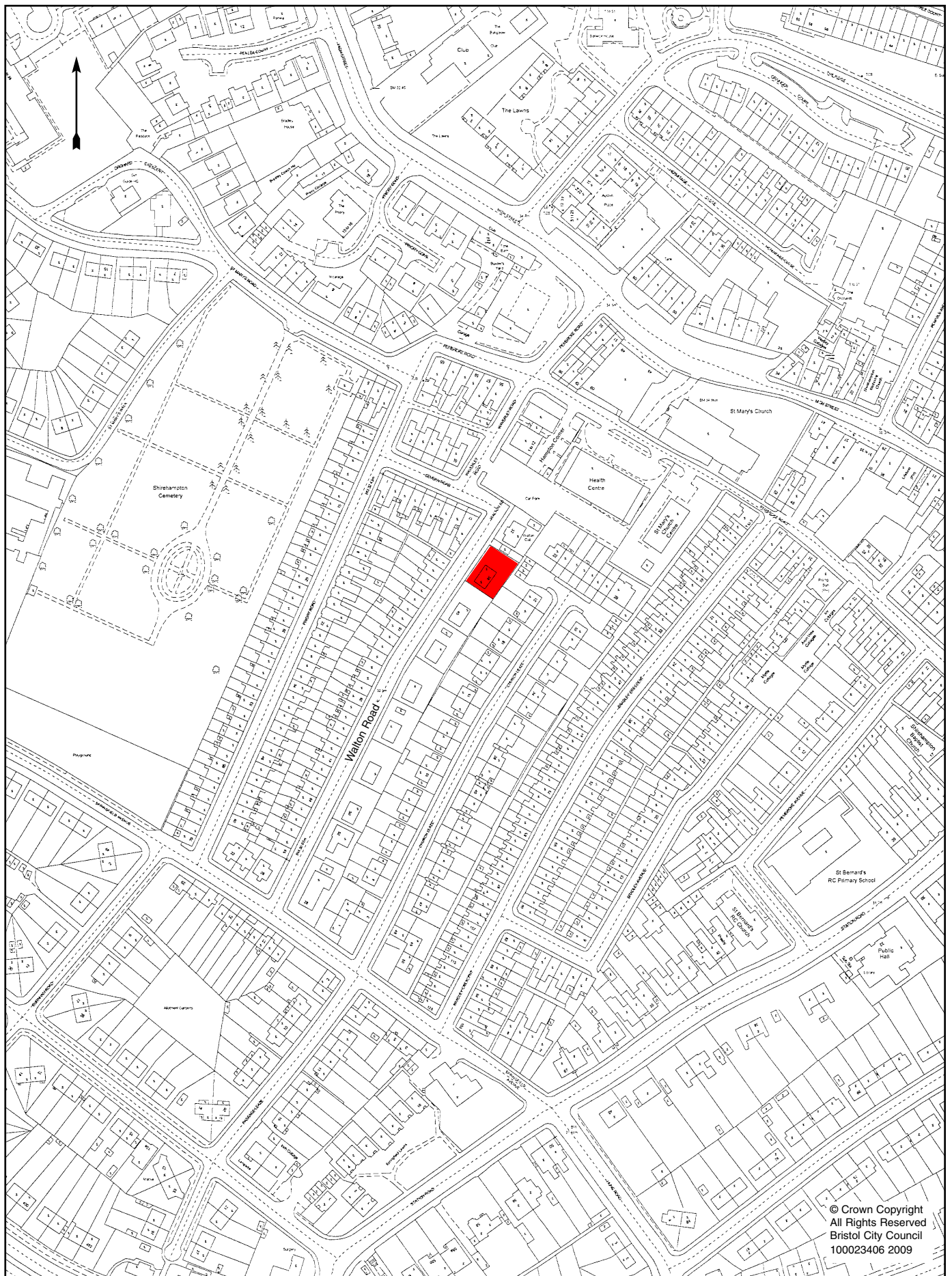
## APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Description
100	Topsoil – Friable, dark brownish-black, sandy-silt. Depth 0.30m
101	Subsoil – Soft, mid orange-brown, silty-sand. Depth varies between 0.30m and 0.40m
102	Soft, mid yellowish-brown, sandy clay, with occasional gravels. Depth varies between 0.30m and 0.45m
103	Compact, brownish-pink, sandy clay undulating deposit appearing within 104 as lenses and patches - variation within natural geology.
104	Compact, mid brownish-yellow sandy clay with common small flint gravel inclusions and dark coarse sand and grit.

**APPENDIX 3: Bristol Historic Environment Record Summary of Palaeolithic Finds in the Shirehampton area.**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Year</b>
9900	Station Road	Discovery of a Palaeolithic artefact	
9903	Meadow Grove	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts	
9905	Old Barrow Hill	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts	
9907	Grove Leaze	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts	
9909	Dursley Road	Discovery of a Palaeolithic artefact	
9911		Discovery of a Palaeolithic handaxe	
10704	Nibley Road	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts at Cotswold Estate	1947
10705	St Mary's Road	Discovery of a Palaeolithic handaxe	1948
10706	Shirehampton Cemetery	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts	
21317	Meadown Grove	Discovery of a Palaeolithic handaxe	
21331	Markham Close	Discovery of Palaeolithic material	
21332	Meadow Grove	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts	
21333	Dursley Road	Discovery of Palaeolithic artefacts	
21487	Woodwell Road	Discovery of a Palaeolithic handaxe	
21489	Portway	Discovery of a Palaeolithic handaxe	

(Data taken from BaRAS 2005a and BaRAS 2005b)



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Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:2500



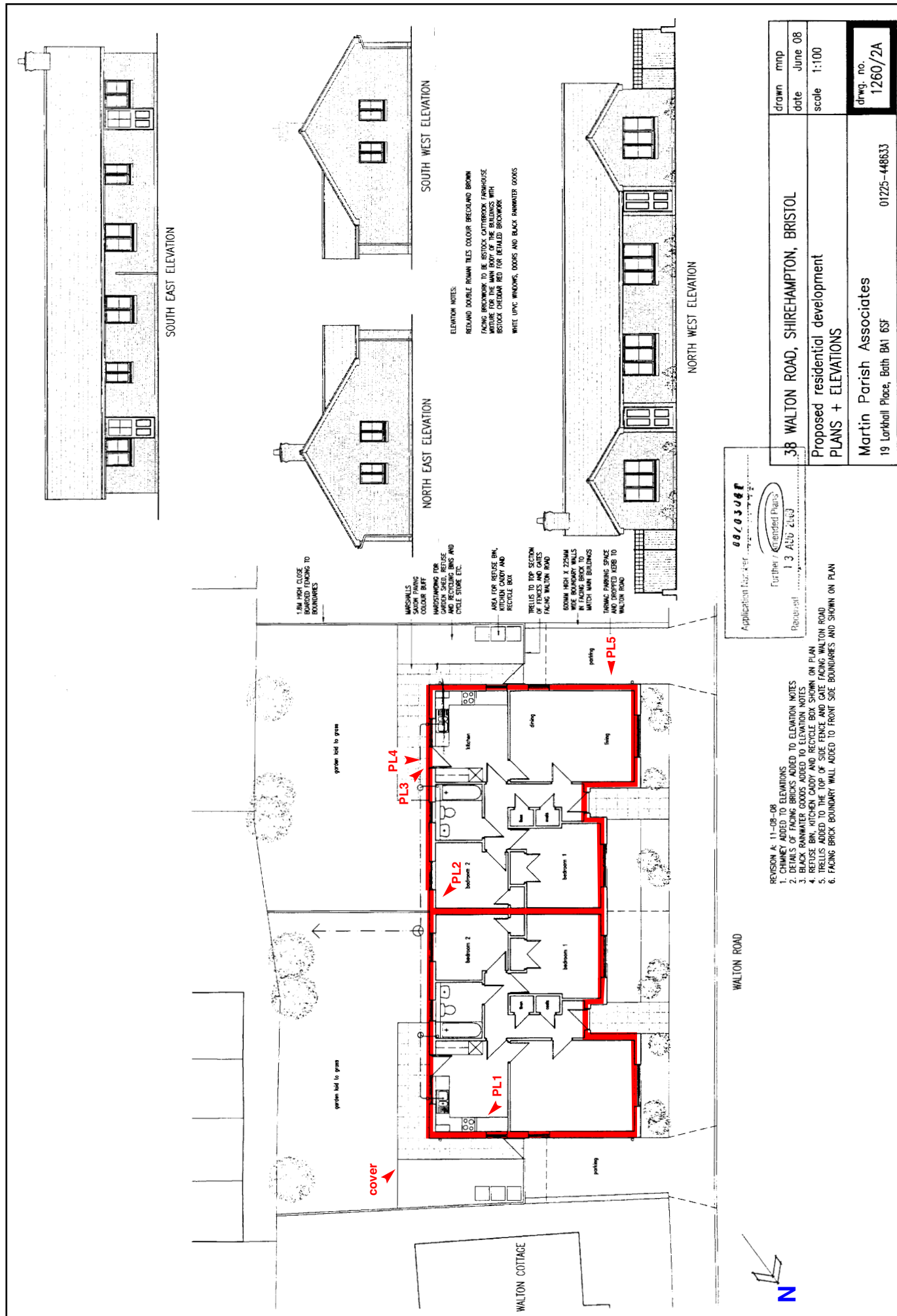


Fig.2 Plan and elevation drawings of proposed building development showing foundation trench locations and plate directions

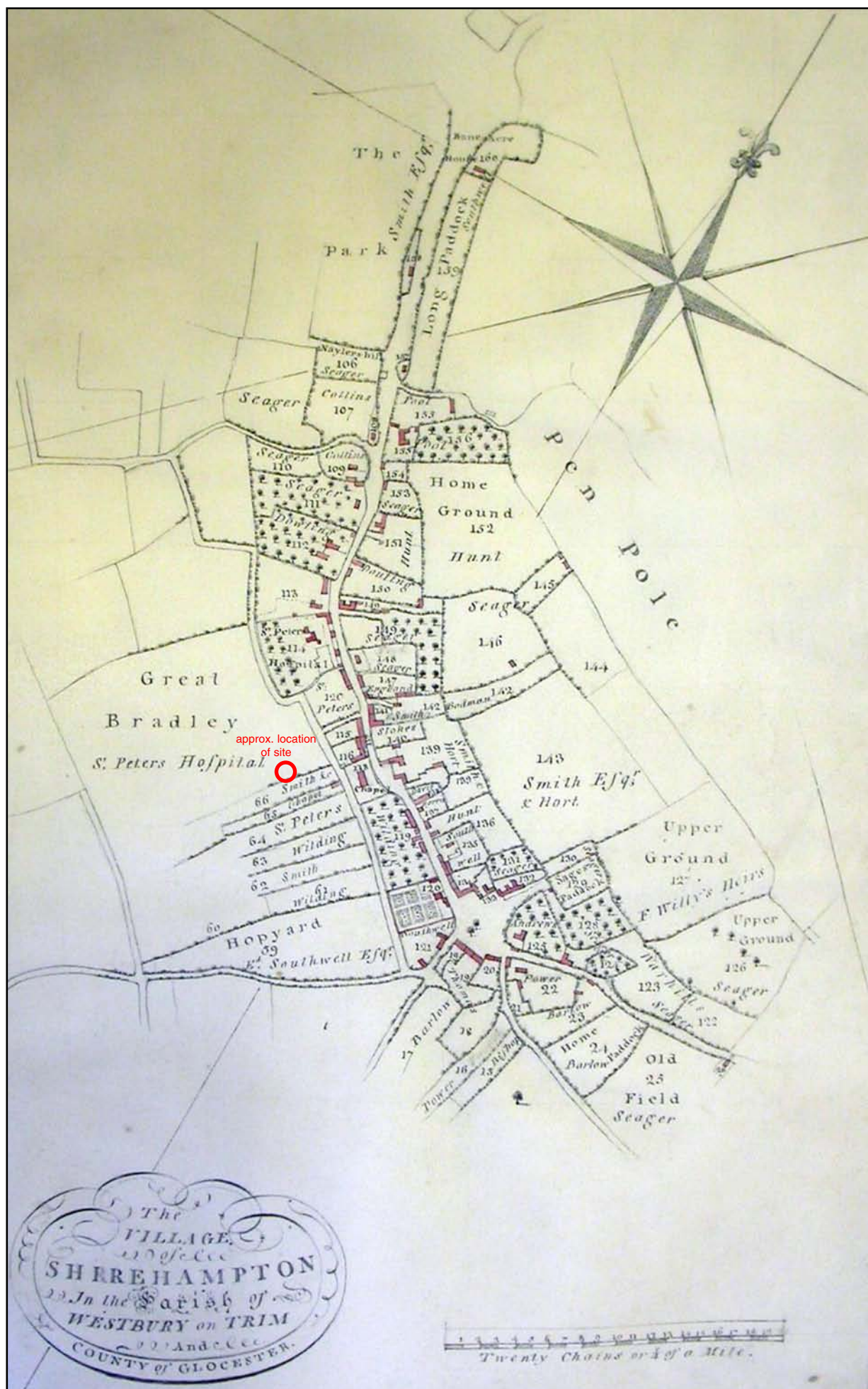


Fig.3 Isaac Taylor's map of 1772 showing Shirehampton High Street and surrounding area

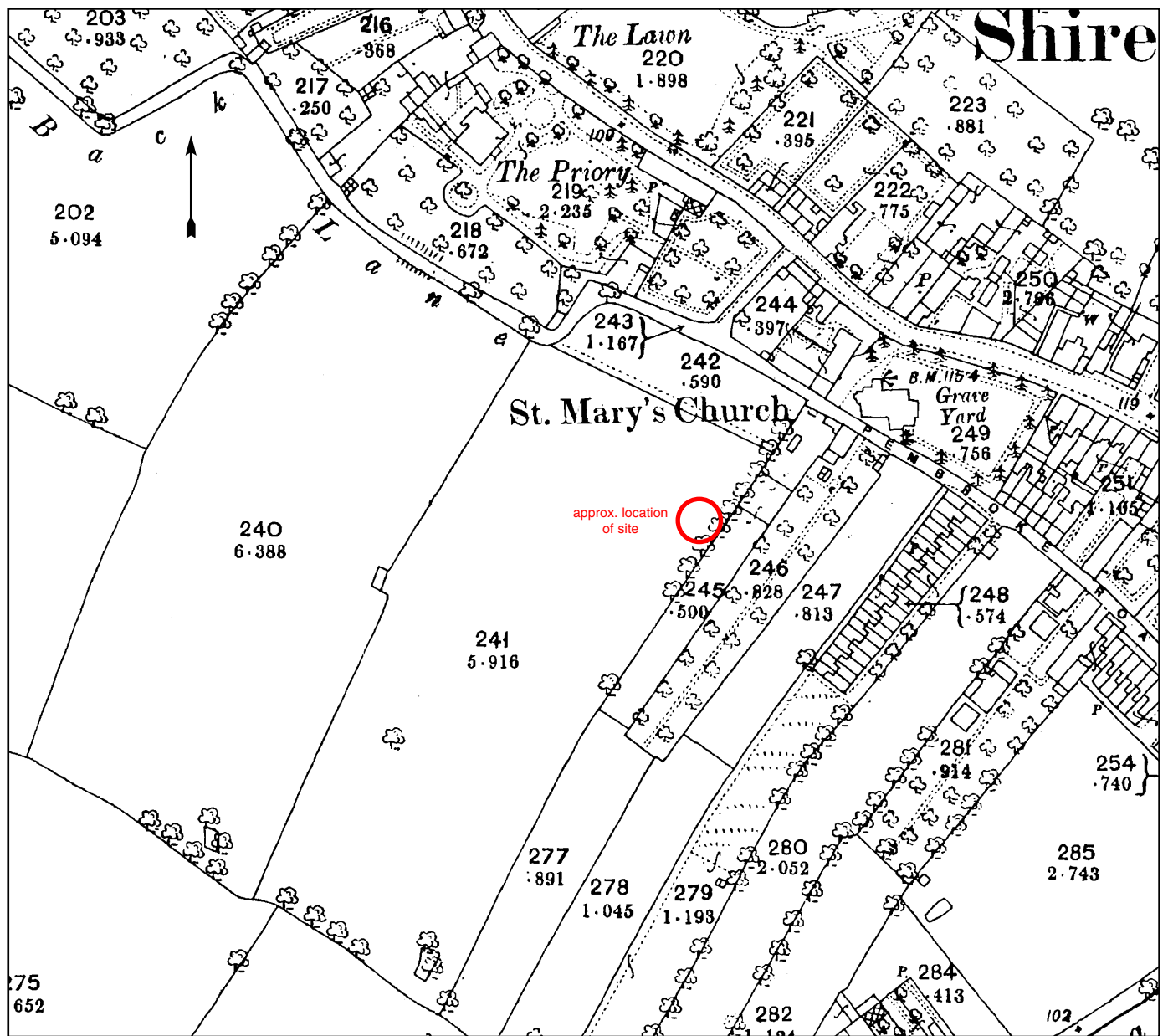


Fig.4 First Edition 1879 OS plan, scale 1:2500



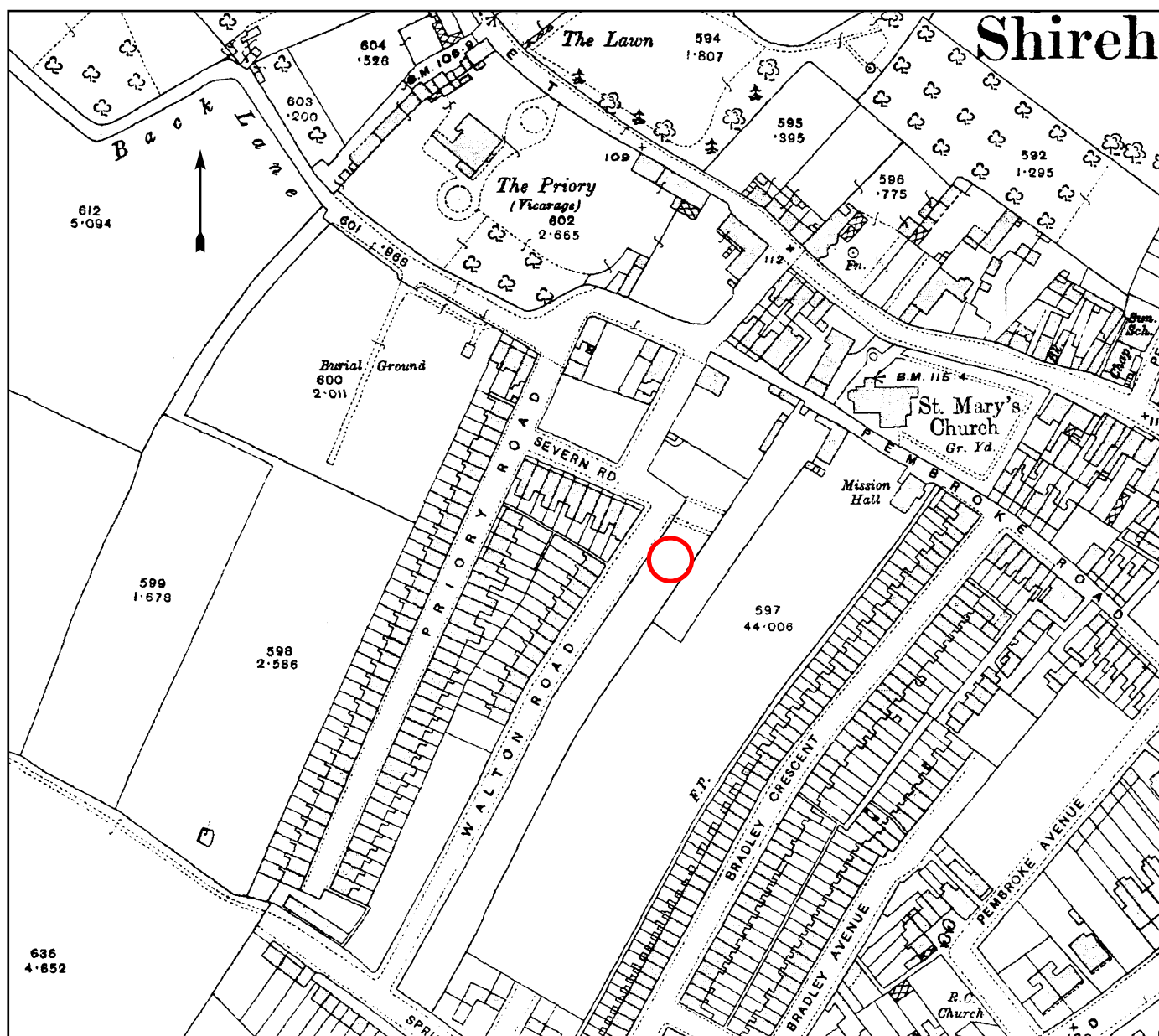


Fig.5 Third Edition 1912 OS plan, scale 1:2500



Plate 1 Stepped foundation trench, from the west



Plate 2 Area of removed drainage inspection hole, from the west





Plate 3  
Rear foundation trench,  
1.6m to 1.8m deep,  
showing location of Plate  
4, from the east



Plate 4  
Section showing deposits  
below topsoil and subsoil,  
from the south-east



Plate 5  
Foundation trench  
machined to standard  
depth of 1m, from the  
south-west