

Archaeological Watching Brief
at
**HARTCLIFFE METHODIST CHURCH,
MOWCROFT ROAD, HARTCLIFFE, BRISTOL.**
for
Leadbitter



Report No. 2132/2009
BHER No. 24782



Bristol and Region Archaeological Services

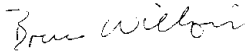

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Archaeological Watching Brief
at
**HARTCLIFFE METHODIST CHURCH,
MOWCROFT ROAD, HARTCLIFFE, BRISTOL.**

Centred on
N.G.R. ST 58540 67850

Client: Leadbitter

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<i>Approved by:</i>	Bruce Williams
<i>Signature:</i>	
<i>Date Issued:</i>	8th June 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.

June, 2009.

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks associated with the construction of nine flats and four houses in the grounds of the former Hartcliffe Methodist Church, Mowcroft Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol.

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the intrusive groundworks.

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- Figure 1 Site location plan, scale 1:2500
- Figure 2 Plan showing study area in detail and direction of plates, scale 1:500
- Figure 3 Ordnance Survey plan, 1886, superimposed onto the modern street plan, scale 1:2500

Plates

- Cover View north-west across site from the, south-eastern corner
- Plate 1 Area A after ground reduction, showing root disturbance and a land drain, looking north
- Plate 2 Excavation of foundation trenches in area B, looking north

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by Leadbitter to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of nine flats and four houses in the grounds of the former Hartcliffe Methodist Church, Mowcroft Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol.
- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned to comply with the condition of planning consent (planning ref 09/00197/F) and in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2009). The work was monitored by Bob Jones of Bristol City Council.
- 1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken between May 2009 and June 2009 under the supervision of Heather Hiron who also compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number BRSMG 2009/30 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 24782 and in the OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations as: bristola1-57841.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site (**Cover**), centred on NGR 58540 67850, lies to the south of the junction of Mowcroft Road and Wroughton Drive, which also bound the site to the north, east and west. The standing part of Hartcliffe Methodist Church and No. 83 Wroughton Drive bound the southern side of the site. The south-east corner of the site is at a height of 54.75m aOD sloping down to 53.75m aOD at the north-west corner.
- 2.2 According to the British Geological Survey, the site lies on Lower Liassic clay with limestone, of the Jurassic period.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Prior to the present project the study area formed part of an archaeological Building Survey (Bryant 2009). The full historical and archaeological background to the site is contained within that document. Relevant details are summarised below:
- 3.2 The site lies within the tithing of Bishopsworth, or Bishport, in the parish of Bedminster. This was part of the County of Somerset until 1951, when it became part of the City and County of Bristol.
- 3.3 Romano-British activity has been identified in the surrounding area, in the form of pottery found at Briscoes Avenue to the north of the site. The area appears to have been intensively farmed in the Roman period, and it is thought that the sites of medieval farms in the area date back to this period.
- 3.4 There are two farms with historically significant names in close proximity to the site, Pigeonhouse Farm to the north, and Pottery Farm to the west. However, the former of these was previously called Arthur's Court, after the Arthur family. The Smyth family of Ashton Court were associated with Arthur's Court from 1570. The site itself sat on the edge of a triangular field probably associated with one of these farms (**Fig. 3**).
- 3.5 In January 1950 a Compulsory Purchase Order was issued for the area and Bristol City Council bought both the farms for £33,462 from William White. The area was then developed into a municipal housing estate, which was occupied by 1952. In 1957 planning permission was granted to build the Methodist Church on the site.

4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2009). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundworks.
- 4.2 The watching brief involved the monitoring of the mechanical excavation of the ground reduction, foundation trenches and service trenches associated with the constructions of the two buildings.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 All groundworks (**Fig 2**) were carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator.
- 5.2 No features or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed and no artefacts predating the modern period were recovered during intrusive groundworks at the site. The full details of the deposits that were uncovered are contained within the archive, a summary follows:
- 5.3 Area A, (**Plate 1**) located in the east side of the site, was reduced to a level of 53.75m aOD from which the foundation trenches were dug to a maximum depth of 1.20m. The groundworks revealed a modern drain and associated manhole, two land drains and various areas of root disturbance from trees, which were either still standing or had only recently been removed. Topsoil in the north of this area was 0.34m thick in the northern end and overlaid a yellow clay sub-soil layer 0.25m thick, which in turn sealed the natural lias clay.
- 5.4 A service trench was excavated in order to redirect a drain found in area A, and was situated between areas A and B. The southern end of the area revealed the foundations of the recently demolished part of the Methodist Church, with which the drain was associated, and the north end cut through topsoil and natural clay as found in areas A and B.
- 5.5 Area B in the north-west corner of the site was reduced to a level of approximately 53.75m aOD, and the foundation trenches (**Plate 2**) were then excavated to a maximum depth of approximately 1.20m. Topsoil, sub-soil and natural lias clay were revealed in the northern half of area B, similar to that in area A. The southern half of the area revealed the foundations, tarmac, hardcore, sewerage and cabling associated with the Methodist church. The last parts of the footings in area B were not monitored as it had been established that the church footings had disturbed the whole of the remaining area.

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 prior to the housing estate being erected in the 1950s the only human activity on the site was agricultural, or that construction of the church and housing estate may have destroyed any archaeology on the site.

7. PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Heather Hirons 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 Heather Hirons. The project was managed by Bruce Williams.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

Published Works

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Maps

Ordnance Survey 1:500 plan, 1886

Unpublished Material

BaRAS 2009, *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Building Recording and Watching Brief at the Former Hartcliffe Methodist Church, Mowcroft Road, Hartcliffe*

Bryant, J. 2009, *Archaeological Building Survey of Hartcliffe Methodist Church, Mowcroft Road, Bristol*

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BaRAS would like to thank Leadbitter, Knightstone Housing Association, and Renelec for their assistance and co-operation and Bob Jones and Peter Insole of Bristol City Council for their 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.

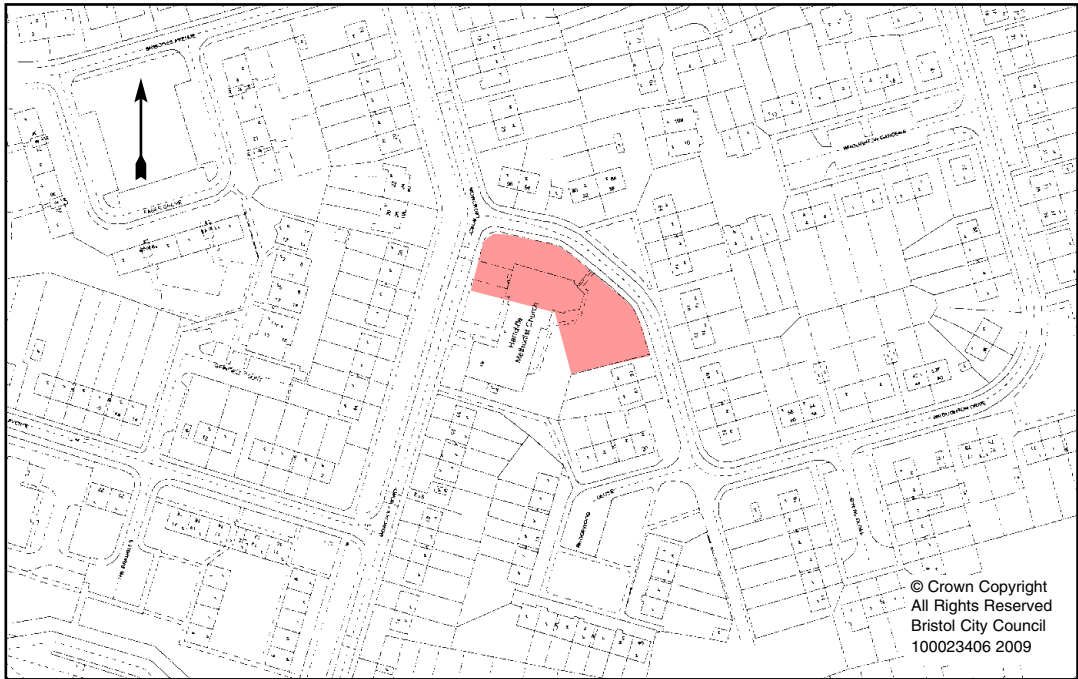


Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:2500

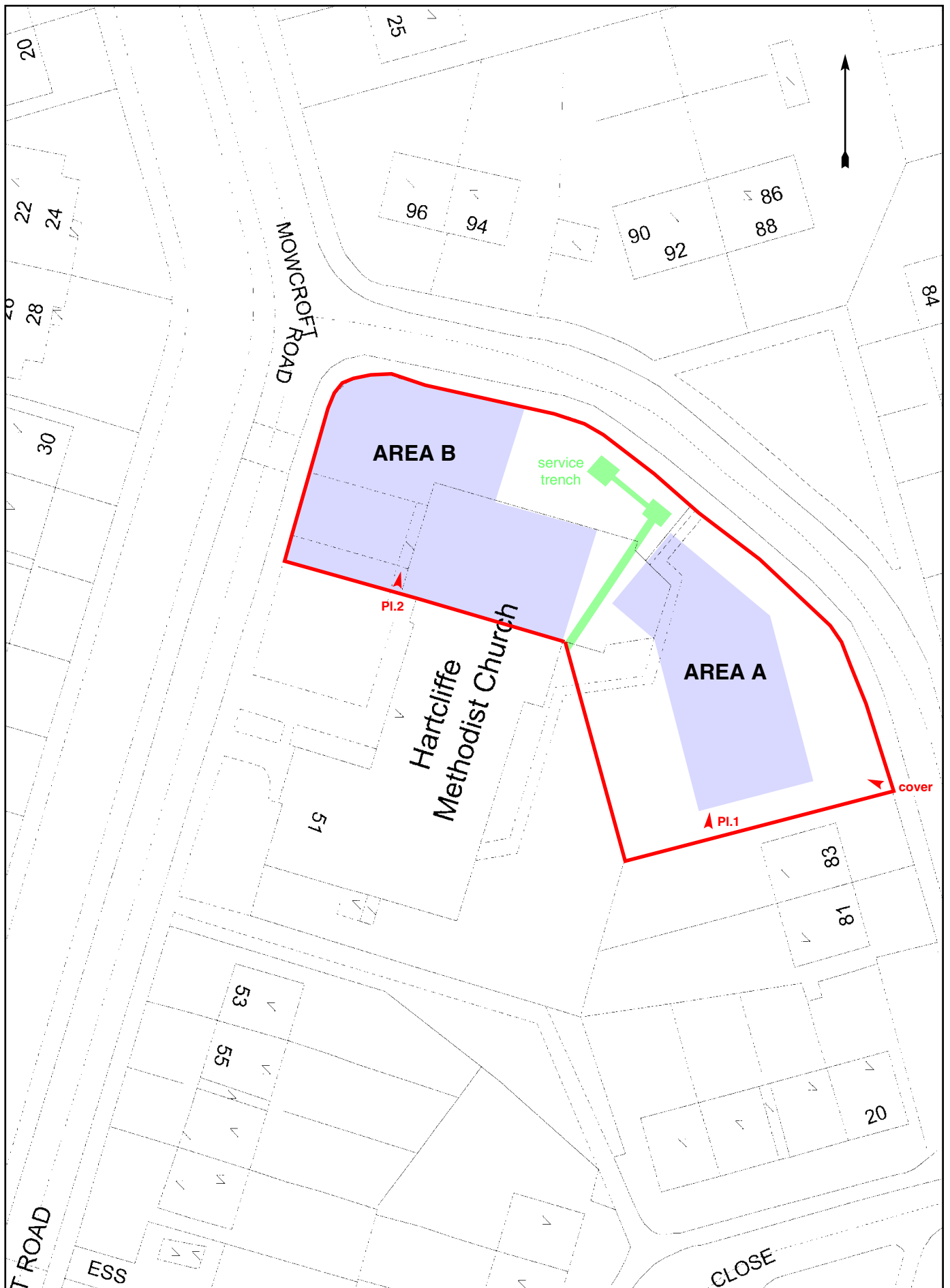


Fig.2 Plan showing study area in detail and direction of plates, scale 1:500

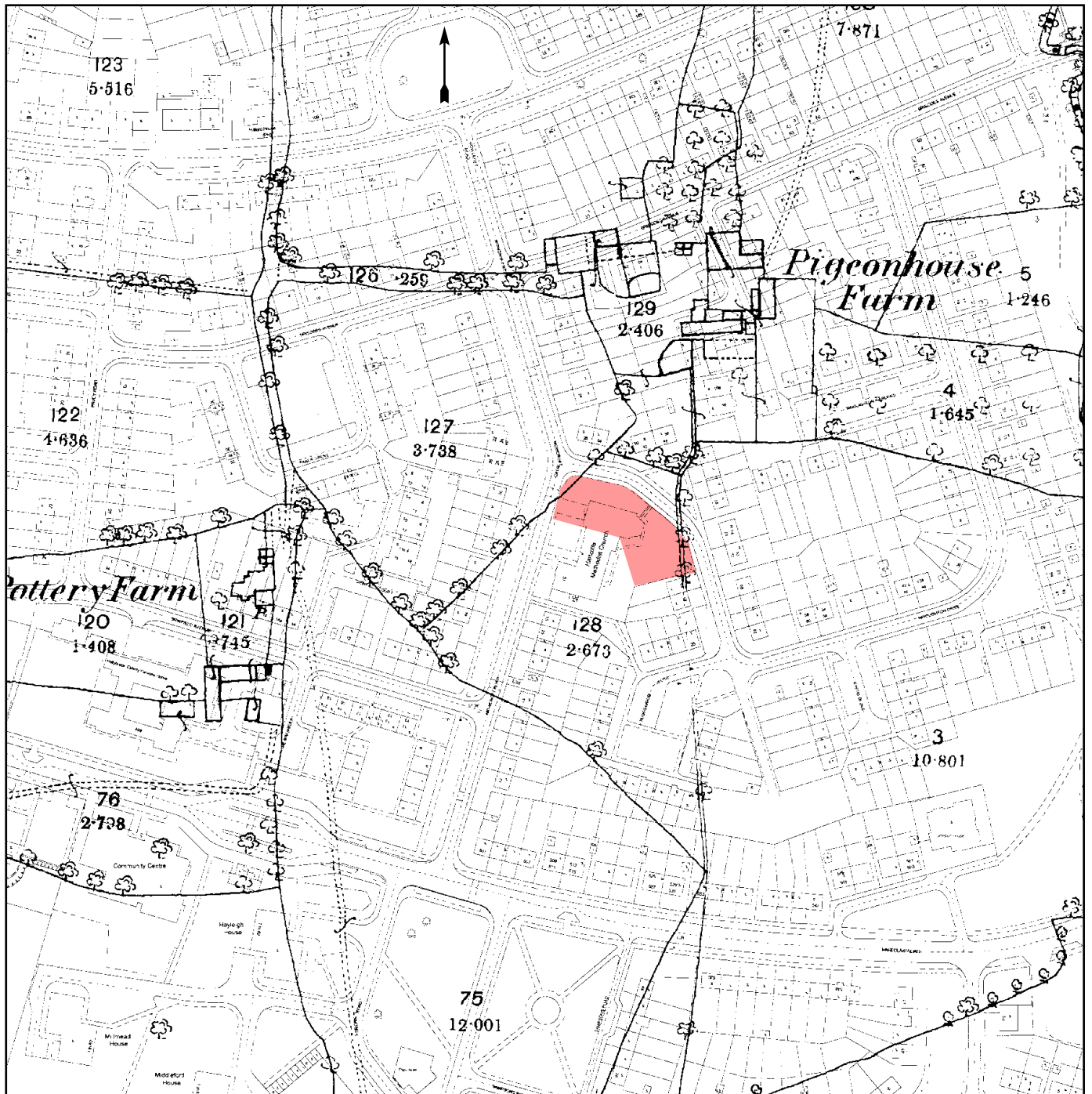


Fig.3 Ordnance Survey plan, 1886, superimposed onto the modern street plan, scale 1:2500



Plate 1 Area A after ground reduction, showing root disturbance and a land drain, looking north



Plate 2
Excavation of foundation
trenches in area B,
looking north.