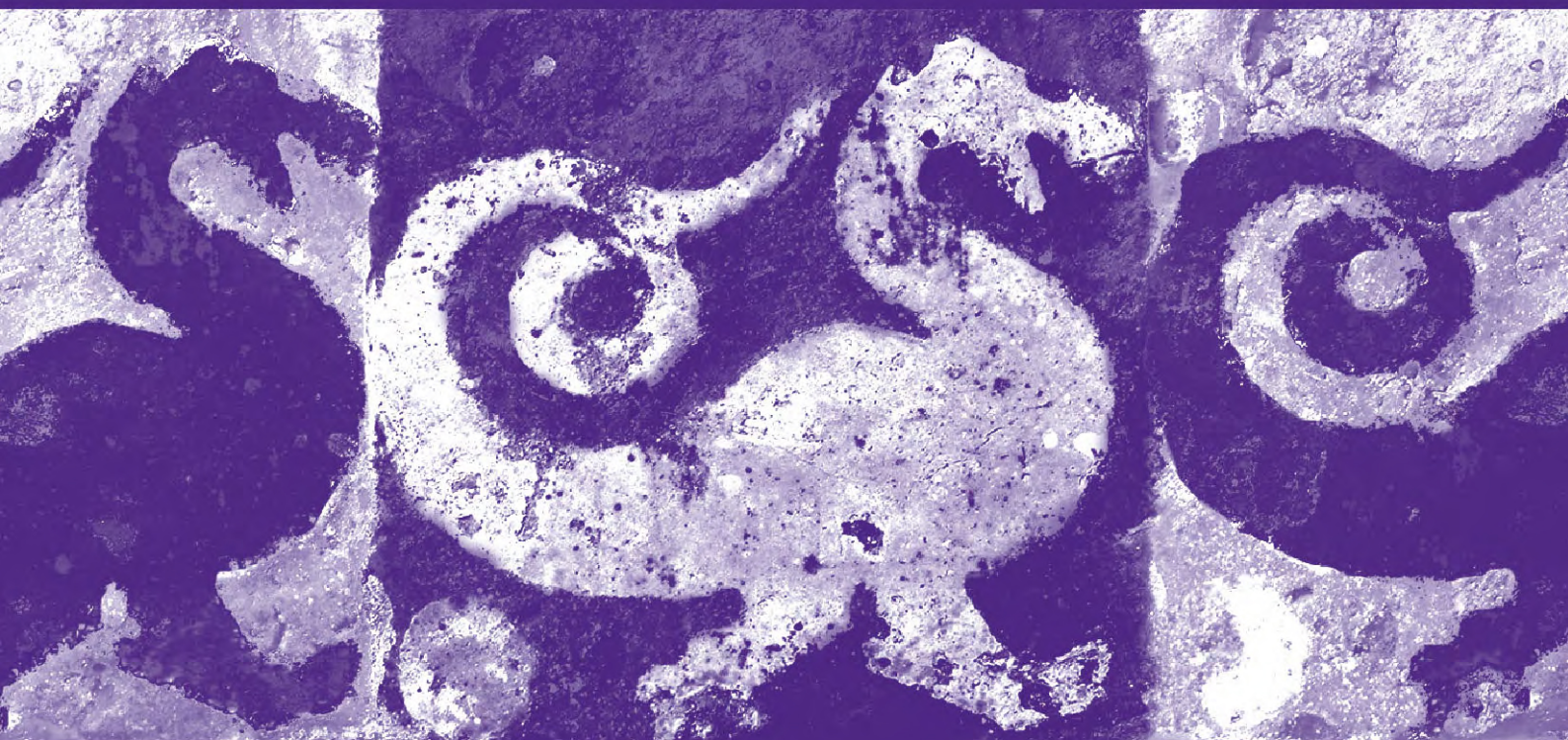


DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT
OF THE ARROW WORKS,
STUDLEY, WARWICKSHIRE



DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT OF THE ARROW WORKS, STUDLEY, WARWICKSHIRE

Darren Miller

Illustrations by Steve Rigby

26th September 2011

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Project P3667
Report 1867

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Desk-based assessment of the Arrow Works, Studley, Warwickshire

Darren Miller

Summary

This report assesses the implications for the historic environment of a proposed redevelopment. It is based on Historic Environment Records, a parish survey, maps, and archives. It is also informed by a walkover survey of the proposed development area.

The assessment identifies the Arrow Works factory as a heritage asset of architectural and potential cultural significance. The factory was built in 1947-1949 as the main needleworking factory of Henry Milard and Sons Ltd, and won three awards for architectural merit. Most of the original factory survives, although its fabric and setting have been compromised to some extent by later changes.

The assessment also identifies potential heritage assets in the form of a palaeochannel of late glacial origin and remains of medieval and post-medieval agriculture. It also suggests that the Roman road known as Rykniel Street could have run through the proposed development area, alongside the present Birmingham Road, and that there were medieval or post-medieval buildings on the frontage of Redditch Road, to the east of the proposed development area.

In the light of this assessment, the Client is advised to obtain further information on the architectural and potential cultural significance of the Arrow Works factory, and to consider the likely impact of their proposals on potential heritage assets.

Report

1. Background

1.1 Planning background

The assessment was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey Midlands (the Client) to inform a planning application to Stratford-on-Avon District Council (the Local Planning Authority). The application will propose a residential development. In line with national and local government policies on planning and the historic environment, the Client is required to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by the proposals, on the basis of an appropriate desk-based assessment (DCLG 2010, policy HE6; SADC 2006, policy EF11). In current terms, a heritage asset is defined as ‘a building, monument, site, area, or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions’ (DCLG 2010, Annexe 2).

The assessment conforms to a proposal prepared by the Service (HEAS 2011), and to the Institute for Archaeologist’s *Standards and guidance for desk-based assessment* (IfA 2008).

1.2 Aims

The aims of the assessment were:

- to collect relevant information relating to heritage assets;
- to assess the potential significance of any heritage assets;
- to assess the impact of the proposed development on these heritage assets

1.3 Methods

1.3.1 Documentary research

The most relevant sources for the history of the proposed development area were collected and assessed.

Records of archaeological monuments and events within 1km of the area were obtained from the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record, along with records of Listed Buildings and Historic Landscape components. Archives (including manuscript maps) were consulted at the Warwickshire Record Office. Published sources were consulted at the Worcestershire History Centre, and in the Service’s own library. Other sources were obtained from the Internet.

The HER records are listed and briefly described in Appendix 1. Other sources are listed in Section 9. The archaeological context of the proposed development area is illustrated on Figure 2 (for the Roman and medieval periods) and Figure 3 (for later periods). The area itself is shown in detail on Figure 4, and the numbered photopoints on Figure 4 correspond to Plates 1-16.

1.3.2 Walkover survey

Access to the proposed development area was arranged by the Client, and a visit was made on 1 September 2011. No buildings were entered, and the land to the west of the main building was inaccessible, but the rest of the area was inspected. Photographs were taken and notes were made on a large-scale Ordnance Survey map.

2. The proposed development area

2.1 Location

The proposed development area is on the north side of Studley between the Redditch Road (the B4093) and the Birmingham Road (the A4305). The centre of the site is at NGR SP 07091 64357. In administrative terms, the area is in the civil parish of Studley, in the Stratford-on-Avon District of Warwickshire, but it is only 600m from the Borough of Redditch in Worcestershire.

2.2 Topography, geology and soils

The area is on the first terrace of the River Arrow, between 66 and 70m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is fluvioglacial drift over mudstone (Keuper marl; British Geological Survey 1986). The soils have not been surveyed, but soils immediately to the north have been mapped as stagnogleyic, slowly permeable soils of the Salop Association (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1986; Ragg *et al* 1984).

2.3 Current land-use

Current land-use is shown on Figure 4 and the numbered photopoints on this figure correspond to Plates 1-16. In summary, the proposed development area consists of the Arrow Works factory, extensive surfaces to the north, a grassed area to the east, extending to Birmingham Road, and a more extensive area of grassland and shrubs to the west, extending to Redditch Road.

3. Heritage assets

3.1 Designated heritage assets

There are no designated heritage assets within the proposed development area. There are also no designated heritage assets nearby whose setting might be affected by the proposals.

3.2 Undesignated heritage assets

3.2.1 The Arrow Works

The Arrow Works can be regarded as a heritage asset of architectural interest.

The history and architecture of the factory are described in a book by a former employee, Mr B T Lee (Lee 1986, 73-78). It was built between 1947 and 1949, along with a Research Block the south, just outside the proposed development area. It was a long-planned development by Henry Milward and Sons (the main trading name of Amalgamated Needles and Fish Hooks Ltd) who were then, and had long been, the leading manufacturer of these products at factories in Redditch and Studley. The factory was intended to centralise the manufacture of needles, modernise processes, and establish better working conditions. The land for the factory had been purchased in parcels since 1935 (WRO CR 3097/131). The estate was several times larger than the factory to leave room for expansion and provide a spacious, attractive setting. The architects were S N Cooke and Partners and the architect in charge was Edward Holman FRIBA. The contractors were J Whittall Ltd (building) and R M Douglas Ltd (landscaping).

In his book, Mr Lee describes the design and architecture of the factory in the following terms:

'Basically, the factory was a north light building in two sections. A wide east to west corridor divided the Making section (wire rod to finished needle) from the Put-up section (inspection to packing and despatch).

A novel feature in design was the decision to put the cloakrooms and toilets at the front of the factory. There was also a well-equipped medical centre with a consulting

room, surgery, and rest room. Workers in 'black' jobs, like hardening and scouring, would enjoy the benefits of shower baths and changing rooms with ample locker space. Another surprise was the absence of offices, except for the Works Manager, Roland Burton and for the invoicing department under Horace Farley. The theory was that this was essentially a factory, and for many years administrative offices like Sales, Cost, Wages, and Finance remained at Central Works, only a short walk away. Hence all concerned, works, management or visitors, went in and out of the new building by its imposing main entrance, which was also the clocking-on hall for all the workers.

The whole of the estate was landscaped, and many more trees were carefully chosen to present the appearance of a modern factory in a parkland setting. Beyond the front of the factory well cut lawns contained a fish pond and teak benches for people to sit on, if they wished, in fine weather during the lunch hour. A well-equipped canteen at the back of the building with a completely glazed west wall looked out onto a patio and distant green fields. The largest windows were all confined to the west wall of the factory.

The brickwork and window surrounds matched the Technical Block, namely Himley sand-faced lavender bricks and Empire stone in Cotswold colour for the sills and lintels. The rear wall of the 19 bays were 'commons' laid in lime mortar, so that, when it was necessary to extend the building (to the west, and for which 50% allowance had been made) this temporary wall could be easily knocked down' (Lee 1986, 75-76).

The factory was opened in 1952, and continued to produce needles of all kinds until the late 1990s. Since 2001, it has been the headquarters of Ricor Ltd, 'a well-established manufacturer of metal pressings and welded assemblies' (Ricor website).

Although the function of the factory has changed considerably since 1949, most of the original fabric survives, judging from successive Ordnance Survey maps, photographs held in the company archives, and observations made during the walkover survey (Fig 4; Plates 1-14). The main changes appear to have been:

- The construction (by 1971) of a single-storey brick building to the north-west of the factory. The building consists of two bays with pitched asbestos roofs. The southern bay is open (Plates 9 and 11).
- The construction (by 1971) of a two-storey brick building and throughway between the rear elevation and the building described above (Plate 12).
- The construction (by 1971) of a canteen and toilet (now board room) against the rear elevation, to the north of the throughway (Plate 10). Both brick buildings with flat roofs, the canteen incorporating brick pilasters and large windows beneath corrugated metal panels.
- The construction (by 1971) of a building against the rear elevation, near the north-west corner of the factory (Plate 8). A brick building with a flat roof and large multi-lighted windows, replacing an similar building on much the same footprint (WRO CR 3097/19)
- The removal of metal louvres along the rear elevation. A photograph taken in the early 1950s shows one louvre high in the gable end of each north light building (CRO 3097/19)
- The creation and later infilling of windows along the rear elevation (Plate 13).
- The more recent (1993) replacement of the rows of small, centrally hinged windows in the front elevation, shown on photographs of 1952-1955 (WRO CR 3097/19 and 334), with eighteen deeper, multi-lighted windows beneath a continuous metal pantile (Plate 1).

The grounds of the factory have changed more considerably since 1952, and especially in the last thirty years. The main changes have been:

- The demolition and clearance of a building *c* 30m to the north of the factory (WRO CR 3097/334).
- The infilling of a pond in the grassed area in front of the main entrance and the removal of a flight of steps leading down to it (WRO CR 3097/334).
- The creation of earth bunds along the west side of the factory.
- The abandonment of a house *c* 100m to the south-east of the factory. The house was built by 1955, but has clearly been uninhabited for some time and is now roofless.

3.3 **Potential heritage assets**

The proposed development area could contain archaeological deposits of various periods. If present, these deposits could be regarded as heritage assets of archaeological significance.

3.3.1 **Palaeochannel**

The earliest detailed maps of the proposed development area show a stream entering it from the south-west (WRO CR 410/M212; CR 569/235; QS575/1101; Fig 3). None of the maps shows it continuing across the area or discharging into the River Arrow, but its course is suggested by a field boundary and confirmed by a geological map which shows a strip of fluvio-glacial gravel on much the same line (British Geological Survey 1986). On this evidence, it appears that the stream was culverted as it entered the proposed development area, then channelled into a field ditch, and then culverted again or left to find its own outlet. This evidence is supported by a note on watching brief undertaken *c* 80m north-east of the factory in 2007 (EWA 9429; Palmer 2007). The note refers to grey alluvial clay and an infilled culvert on a south-west to north-east alignment. The line of the stream is shown on Figure 5.

The grey alluvial clay is likely to represent the former stream channel, or palaeochannel. Such deposits often preserve evidence of environmental change and human activity, although the note does not indicate plant remains or artefacts.

3.3.2 **Roman road**

The east side of the proposed development area could contain remains of the Roman road known as Ryknield or Ickneild Street (Fig 2).

This length of Ryknield Street connected a fort at Metchley near Birmingham with a small town at Alcester. The line of the road between Ipsley and Washford was established by excavation and fieldwork in the late 1960s, during the rapid expansion of Redditch (Fasham 1988). A section of the road was excavated at NGR 06830 66260 (Fasham 1988, 7-10), and its line was traced southwards from field evidence as far as the Birmingham Road above Washford Mill (Fasham 1988, 11). Its course between this point and Studley is uncertain but if it held its course, and crossed the Arrow near Washford Mill, it would have passed to the east of the proposed development area, as shown by the right-hand line on Figure 5.

Alternatively, the road could have passed through the east side of the proposed development area. This inference assumes that the Roman road followed the straight length of the present Birmingham Road to the south-east of the factory. Projected northwards, this line crosses the grassed area in front of the factory and the access road to the north-east, as shown on Figure 5.

However, it is more likely that the Roman road lies beneath the present road from Washford to Studley. In the first place, no evidence of the Roman road was found during the watching brief referred to above. Secondly, it is clear that the medieval road followed the line of the present road, as Washford Mill (the supposed Roman crossing point) was established by 1185 and a ford at Washford Bridge was established by 1226 (Hooke 1980, 77; MWA 8677). Thirdly, the present road follows the optimum route above the valley floor, represented on Ordnance Survey maps by the 65m contour. It is possible, though unlikely that the Roman surveyors of Ryknield Street ignored this advantage, especially in an area prone to seasonal waterlogging.

3.3.3 **Medieval and post-medieval remains**

The proposed development area should contain at least some remains of medieval and post-medieval activity.

The likeliest remains are those of ridge and furrow earthworks, the characteristic signature of medieval and post-medieval ploughing. Traces of ridge and furrow were identified and recorded immediately to the north of the area in the late 1970s (Fig 3; Hooke 1980, Primary Record WA 6481). In addition, there is documentary evidence that the area lay in one of medieval Studley's open fields. A deed of 1542 conveyed land in a field called 'Barberfeild' which had formed part of the estate of Studley Priory (Hooke 1980, 9 and 14). Later deeds and field-names shown on the tithe map of 1849 show that Barberfield lay between the Birmingham Road and the Redditch Road (WRO CR 569/235). The field had evidently been enclosed and converted to pasture by 1824 (WRO QS575/110; Fig 3), but it had probably been ploughed for centuries, leaving indelible traces below the present surface. It is also very likely that the former ploughsoil contains pottery and other artefacts mixed-in with manure.

The west side of the proposed development area may also contain the remains of medieval or post-medieval buildings. There is no evidence of settlement along the Birmingham Road before the 20th century, but the Inclosure map of 1824 shows buildings along both sides of the Redditch Road, to the south of the proposed development area (WRO QS575/110). It also shows two or three buildings on the west side of the road, directly opposite the proposed development area, and two buildings on the east side of the road, just outside the proposed development area. The tithe map of 1849 shows more buildings in the same locations, as do subsequent Ordnance Survey maps (WRO CR 569/235; Fig 4). None of the maps show any buildings within the proposed development area. However, the survey which recorded the ridge and furrow earthworks also recorded pre-19th century house platforms and other earthworks (Fig 3; Hooke 1980, Primary Record WA 6481), and it is possible that both frontages were more developed in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

4. **Significance**

The architectural significance of the Arrow Works cannot yet be considered in detail. However, a preliminary assessment can be made, based on the judgement of contemporaries and analysis of the external fabric. Similarly, the archaeological significance of the remains inferred above is necessarily uncertain, but their likely significance, if present, can be discussed in general terms.

4.1 **Arrow Works**

As documented in the company report and accounts for 1951, the architects of the factory were awarded the bronze medal and diploma of the Royal Institute of British Architects and a triennial award for a building of exceptional architectural merit (WRO CR 3097/31; Plate 3). The factory was also awarded the gold medal of the Three Counties Architectural Association (Lee 1986, 77). Fashions in architecture change, and the factory has not been listed, but the three awards represent a judgement and endorsement that must be respected and may still carry weight, although both the fabric and the setting of the factory have been compromised by later changes, as described above. The factory can also be said to have a cultural interest to the local community, as a familiar workplace and a visible reminder of the long-established needleworking industry in Studley.

4.2 **Potential heritage assets**

As discussed above, it is likely that the proposed development area contains a relict stream or palaeochannel. The significance of the deposits would depend on their state of preservation. If they were waterlogged and finely-stratified, with a high organic content, they would be regarded as highly significant, especially if they were associated with cultural material. However, the grey alluvial clay found on the line of the stream in 2007 was not identified as significant, and has probably been reworked by a combination of seasonal waterlogging and historic land-use.

It is also likely that the area contains traces of medieval and post-medieval agriculture. Such remains are ubiquitous, however, and would probably not be regarded as significant.

As for the other remains inferred above, they are less likely to exist but would probably be regarded as highly significant, whatever their state of preservation. In particular, any remains of Ryknield Street along the east side of the proposed development area would resolve the uncertainty over its line and provide more evidence for its construction, maintenance, and post-Roman history.

5. **Recommendations**

The Client is advised to obtain further information on the architectural and potential cultural significance of the Arrow Works factory. It is likely, though not inevitable, that the local planning authority will require a fuller assessment before considering proposals that would involve the redevelopment of the site.

The Client is also advised to consider the likely impact of their proposals on the potential heritage assets identified in this assessment, and to change or modify those proposals accordingly. In particular, any development involving major groundworks along the line of the palaeochannel, or along the frontages of Birmingham Road and Redditch Road, would probably have archaeological implications.

6. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, and unless directed otherwise, the Service will publish the following summary in the most appropriate journal or journals.

In August and September 2011, the Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service undertook a desk-based assessment of the Arrow Works in Studley, Warwickshire (NGR SP 07091 64357). The assessment was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey Midlands to inform a planning application.

The assessment identified the Arrow Works factory as a heritage asset of architectural and potential cultural significance. The factory was built in 1947-1949 as the main needleworking factory of Henry Milward and Sons Ltd, and won three awards for architectural merit. Most of the original factory survives, although its fabric and setting have been compromised to some extent by later changes.

The assessment also identified potential heritage assets in the form of a palaeochannel of late glacial origin, and remains of medieval and post-medieval agriculture. It also suggested that the Roman road known as Ryknield Street could have run through the proposed development area, alongside the present Birmingham Road, and that there were medieval or post-medieval buildings on the frontage of Redditch Road, to the east of the proposed development area.

7. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank Alan Jarvis (Taylor Wimpey Midlands), Ben Wallace (Warwickshire County Council) and Mat Clarke (Ricor) for their kind assistance.

8. **Personnel**

Research materials were collected by Elizabeth Curran and Darren Miller. The assessment was undertaken by Darren Miller, with advice on the factory buildings from Shona Robson-Glyde (Historic Buildings Archaeologist). The illustrations were drawn by Steve Rigby. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers.

9. **Sources and bibliography**

HER records

[See Appendix 1]

Ordnance Survey maps

1887 *Warwickshire, sheet 31 SW* (1:10,560)

1905 *Warwickshire, sheet 31 SW* (1:10,560)

1955 *Sheet SP 06 SE* (1:10,000)

1977 *Sheet SP 06 SE* (1:10,000)

1990 *Sheet SP 06 SE* (1:10,000)

2011 Digital mapping held by Worcestershire County Council

Archives

CR 410/M212, 18th century estate map

CR 569/235 Studley tithe map and apportionment, 1849

CR 3097/19 Photographs of Arrow Works, 1952-1955

CR 3097/30, Annual reports, 1925-1948

CR 3097/31, Annual reports, 1948-1960

CR 3097/131, Sales catalogue and plans, 1935

CR 3097/334 Aerial photograph of Arrow Works, c 1952

MA 1947 06/SE Aerial photograph of Arrow Works construction site, 1947

QS575/110 Studley Inclosure map, 1824

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Internet resources

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council website (<http://stratford.gov.uk>) with links to planning policy documents (<http://www.stratford.gov.uk/localplan>) and records of planning applications (<http://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanning/Map.aspx>)
- Portable Antiquities Database (<http://finds.org.uk/database>)
- Ricor Limited website (<http://ricor.co.uk>)
- Warwickshire online HER (<http://timetrail.warwickshire.gov.uk>)
- Wikipedia entry on Henry Milward and Sons (http://en.wikipedia.org.uk/Henry_milward_%26_Sons)

Appendix 1: Historic Environment Records

Events

HER number	Site name	Grid reference	Date	Description
9429	Watching brief at Birmingham Road	SP 0721 6449	Modern	No evidence found of Roman road on projected line south of Washford. Observations showed ploughsoil and made ground over marl.
9726	Evaluation at 47-51 High Street	SP 0714 6393	Modern	Two trenches excavated in advance of development found remains of a 19 th century pit and privy, along with a possible furrow.
9184	Evaluation of former Studley Garage, Birmingham Road	SP 0732 6412	Modern	Sample trenching found no significant archaeological deposits or artefacts.

Monuments

HER number	Site name	Grid reference	Date	Description
445	Rykniel Street	SP 0892 5704	Roman	Length of road from Metchley to Bourton-on-the-Water
567	Washford Mill	SP 0710 6501	Medieval to modern	Site of documented mills and converted post-medieval buildings.
568	Studley Mill	SP 9761 6402	Medieval to modern	Site of mill represented by documents and earthworks.
572	Studley Priory	SP 0746 6412	Medieval	Site of documented Augustinian Priory and archaeological remains.
6163	Site of fishponds	SP 0758 6401	Medieval to post-medieval	Fishponds shown on late 18 th century map assumed to have belonged to Studley Priory.
6164	Site of moat	SP 0745 6404	Medieval	Moat inferred from ditches noted in late 19 th century and late 1970s.
6165	Site of hospital	SP 0746 6412	Medieval	Documented hospital at Studley Priory.
6166	Priory Church	SP 0745 6412	Medieval	Site of church established by observations in late 19 th century and late 1970s.

HER number	Site name	Grid reference	Date	Description
6167	Site of Washford fishponds	SP 0694 6506	Medieval	Earthworks of fishponds, surveyed and partially excavated in 1968
6168	Site of medieval buildings	SP 0694 6506	Medieval	Stone foundations of three 13 th /14 th buildings, partially excavated in 1968.
6169	Possible site of water mill	SP 0724 6475	Medieval	Site inferred from former braid in River Arrow, shown on tithe map of 1849.
6481	Earthworks of deserted settlement	SP 06706451	Medieval/post-medieval	Earthworks near 19 th century buildings surveyed in late 1970s.
7302	Brickworks east of Four Elms Farm	SP 0644 6364	Post-medieval to modern	Brick kiln shown on late 18 th century map.
7304	Washford Bridge	SP 0727 6461	Post-medieval to modern	Inferred site of post-medieval bridge, rebuilt c 1819 and again in 1923-4.
7307	Clay pit at Studley Common	SP 0624 6383	Modern	Clay pit mapped after 1930
7823	Site of Priory Needle Mill	SP 0770 6398	Modern	Needle mill shown on OS map of 1886
7824	Site of Pound	SP 0733 6393	Modern	Pound shown on OS map of 1886.
7825	Site of Brewery	SP 0726 6410	Modern	Brewery shown on OS map of 1886.
7827	Site of Gas Works	SP 0741 6334	Modern	Gas Works shown on OS map of 1886.
7833	Site of pit	SP 0804 6457	Modern	Clay or gravel pit shown on OS map of 1886.
8227	Albion House needle manufactory	SP 0732 6364	Modern (19 th century)	Needle mill documented from 1831.
8603	Studley Manor House grounds	SP 07575 63374	Modern	House and gardens shown on OS map of 1886.
8677	Washford	SP 97176 64882	Medieval	Ford documented in 1221.
8683	Turnpike road from Sernal Ash to Digbeth	SP 08076 65325	Post-medieval to modern	Turnpike road established by Act of Parliament in 1766.
9035	Wall foundation at	SP 07502	Medieval	Foundation found during

HER number	Site name	Grid reference	Date	Description
	Priory Farm	64107		groundwork in 2001.
9536	Studley medieval settlement	SP 07213 63720	Medieval	Possible extent of settlement inferred from OS map of 1886 and aerial photographs.
9747	Settlements south of Studley	SP 07389 62962	Post-medieval	Three areas of settlement inferred from OS map of 1886.
12742	Surface and pit to rear of 47-51 High Street	SP 0714 6383	Modern	19 th century cobbles and privy found during evaluation in 2010.
2469	RC church of St Mary, Alcester Road	SP 0742 6346	Modern	Stone church with nave, chancel, and south porch, built 1953.
3777	Green Lane Needle Mill	SP 0665 6458	Post-medieval to modern	Needle mill in part of Griffin Inn.

Figures



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Location of the site

Figure 1

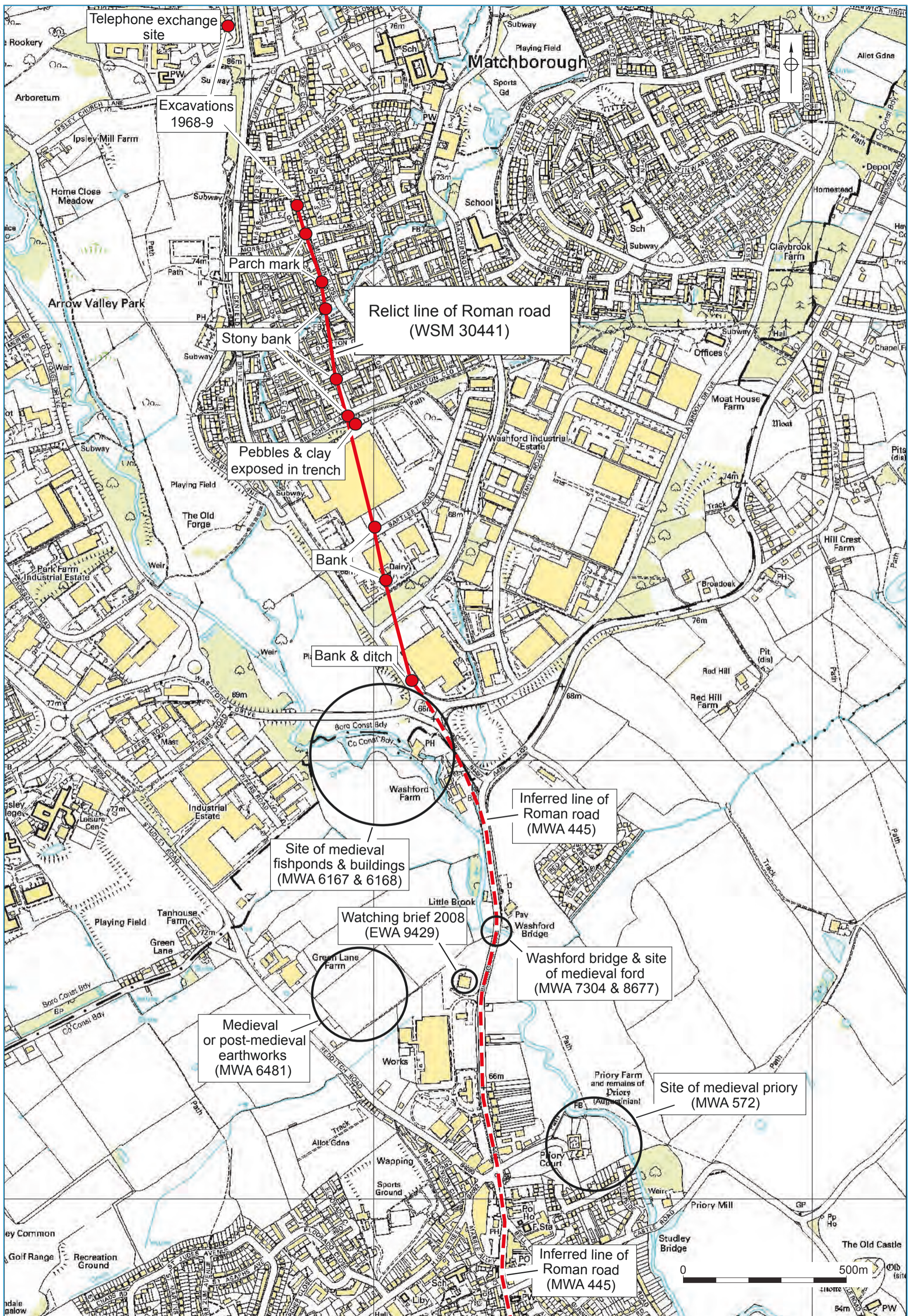


Figure 2: Roman and medieval sites and monuments

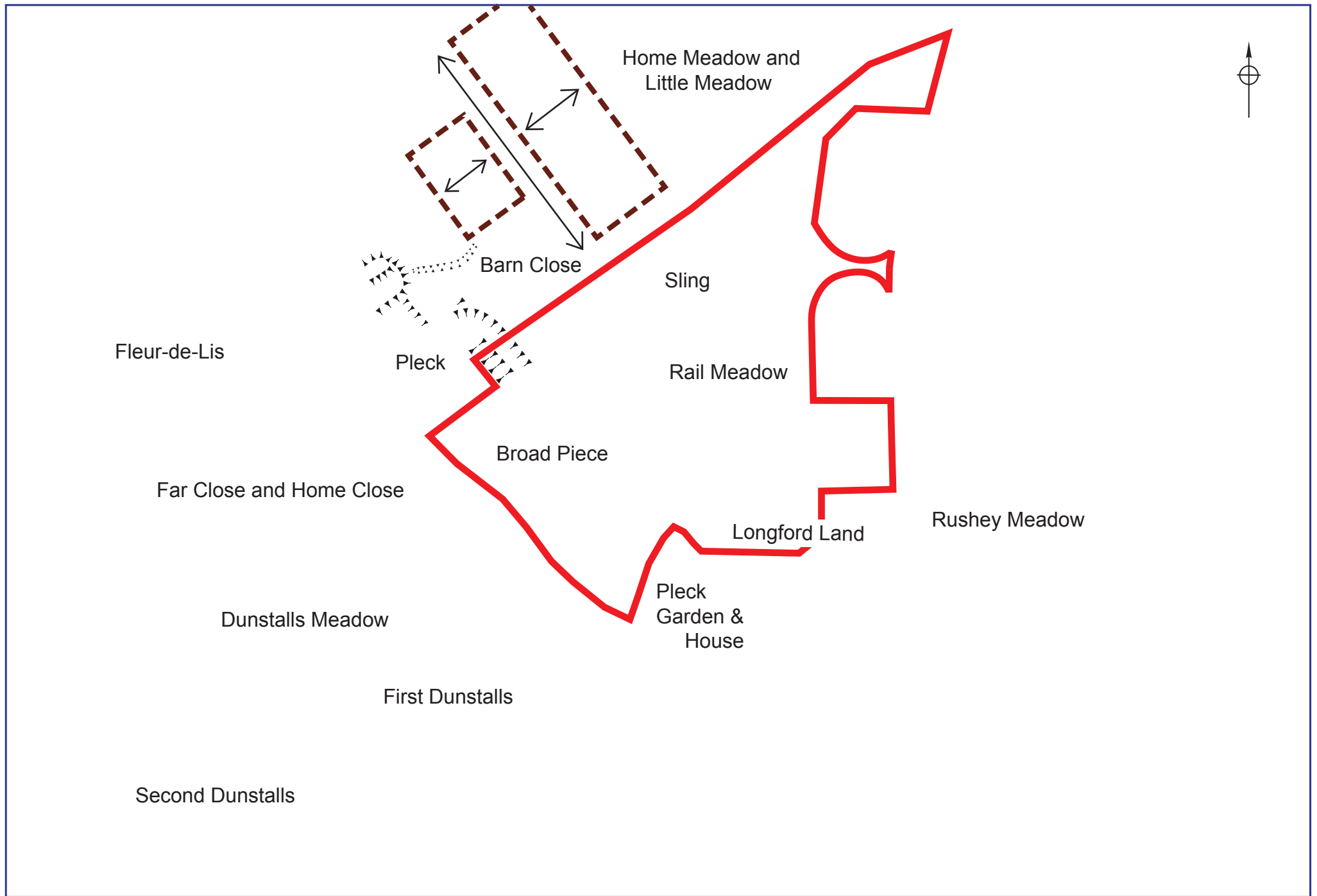


Figure 3: Site boundary on OS map of 1887 with field names from Inclosure map of 1824 and earthworks from Hooke 1980 Primary Record 6481

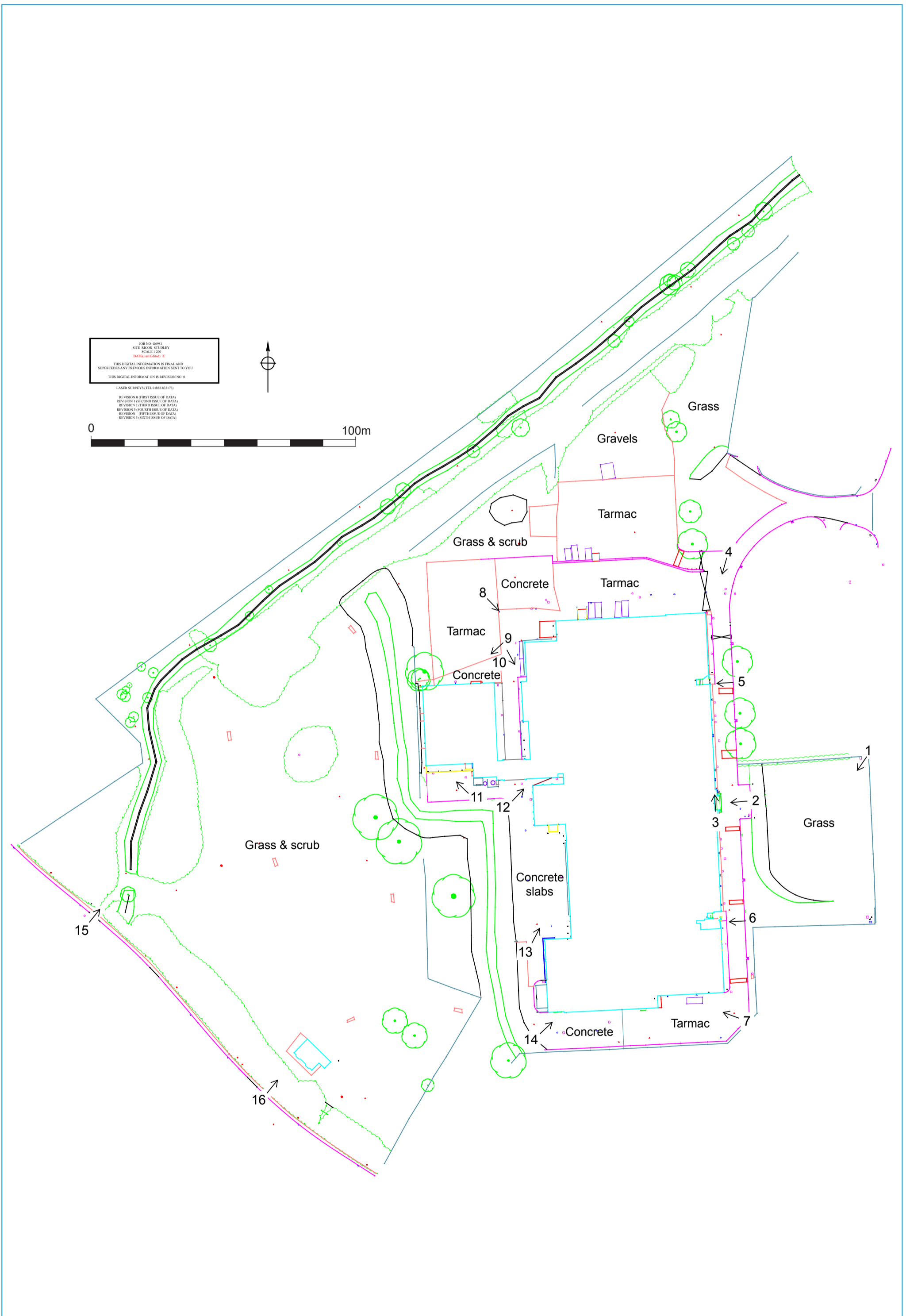


Figure 4: Plan of proposed development area with numbered photopoints corresponding to Plates 1-16

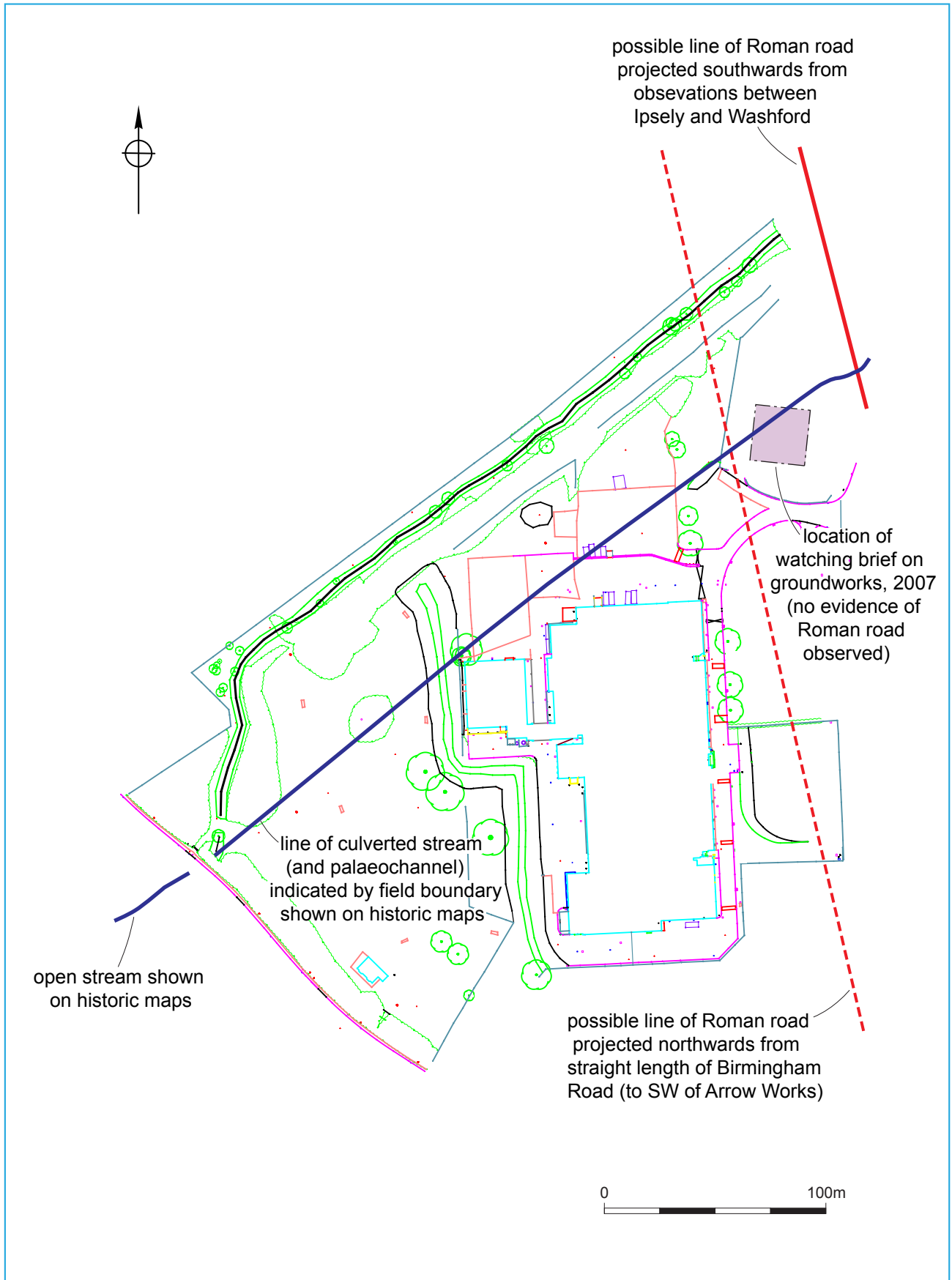


Figure 5: Line of culverted stream (and palaeochannel) and two possible lines of Roman Rycknield Street

Plates



Plate 1: Front elevation of factory



Plate 2: Front entrance of factory



Plate 3: Commemorative plaque on north side of front entrance



Plate 4: north-east corner of factory



Plate 5: Entrance in north side of front elevation



Plate 6: Entrance in south side of front elevation



Plate 7: South-east corner of factory



Plate 8: North-east corner of factory



Plate 9: Building to west of factory, facing south-west



Plate 10: Buildings on west side of factory



Plate 11: Building to west of factory, facing north-west



Plate 12: Building and throughway on west side of factory



Plate 13: rear elevation of factory



Plate 14: South-east corner of factory



Plate 15: Land to west of factory



Plate 16: Derelict house to west of factory
