

**Land to the rear of 6 St Peter's Road,
Petersfield, Hampshire**

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

For Merlin Danesmount

by Steve Preston

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SPP06/107

September 2006

Summary

Site name: Land to the rear of 6 St Peter's Road, Petersfield, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 7472 2319

Site activity: Desk-based assessment

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Preston

Site code: SPP06/107

Area of site: c. 250 sq m

Summary of results: The site, although small, occupies a prime location in the core of medieval Petersfield, close to the parish church. It does not appear to have been extensively truncated by modern development, so the archaeologically relevant levels may be intact. It will be necessary to provide further information about the potential of the site from field observations, in order to draw up a scheme to mitigate the impact of development on any below-ground archaeological deposits if necessary.

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Report 06/107

Introduction

This desk-based study is an assessment of the archaeological potential of two small parcels of land located to the rear of 6 St Peter's Road, Petersfield, Hampshire (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Ms Carole Stellman, of JKL Ltd, The Studio, Hoddington, Upton Grey, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG25 2RT on behalf of Merlin Danesmount, Lutidine House, Newark Lane, Ripley, Surrey GU23 6 BS, and comprises the first stage of a process to determine the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains which may be affected by redevelopment of the area.

An application for planning permission is to be submitted to East Hampshire District Council for the demolition of the existing building and the erection of four cottages. As the area is designated an Area of High Archaeological Potential, an assessment of the likely archaeological potential of the site will be submitted with the application.

Site description, location and geology

The site currently consists of a parcel of land approximately 15m by 2m and a slightly larger plot of 22m by 11m, the latter occupied by a modern store. The building is a simple brick-built structure with canopy covering the unloading area. There do not appear to be any basements. The smaller plot of land now lies within the yard area of the complex with the previous structure having been removed. The development area is centred on NGR TQ 7472 2319. The site is located on Folkestone Beds (BGS 1990). It is at a height of approximately 60m above Ordnance Datum on the west side of the valley of the Rother which flows past about 1km to the north-east.

Planning background and development proposals

Planning permission is to be sought for the demolition of an existing 20th-century storage building on the site and the construction of four cottages.

Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16 1990) provides guidance relating to archaeology within the planning process. It points out that where a desk-based assessment has shown that there is a strong possibility of significant archaeological deposits in a development area it is reasonable to provide more detailed information

from a field evaluation so that an appropriate strategy to mitigate the effects of development on archaeology can be devised:

Paragraph 21 states:

‘Where early discussions with local planning authorities or the developer’s own research indicate that important archaeological remains may exist, it is reasonable for the planning authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out...’

Should the presence of archaeological deposits be confirmed further guidance is provided. *Archaeology and Planning* stresses preservation *in situ* of archaeological deposits as a first consideration as in paragraphs 8 and 18.

Paragraph 8 states:

‘...Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation...’

Paragraph 18 states:

‘The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled...’

However, for archaeological deposits that are not of such significance it is appropriate for them to be ‘preserved by record’ (i.e., fully excavated and recorded by a competent archaeological contractor) prior to their destruction or damage.

Paragraph 25 states:

‘Where planning authorities decide that the physical preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains is not justified in the circumstances of the development and that development resulting in the destruction of the archaeological remains should proceed, it would be entirely reasonable for the planning authority to satisfy itself ... that the developer has made appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of remains.’

The Hampshire County Council Structure Plan (review) (HCC 2006) reiterates many of these points: Policy E14:

‘Where nationally important archaeological sites and monuments, whether scheduled or not, and their settings are affected by a proposed development there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation *in situ*. The need for the preservation of unscheduled sites of more local importance will be considered on merit. Where preservation is not possible then, before planning permission is granted, it should be demonstrated that appropriate arrangements have been made for a programme of excavation and recording prior to development taking place.’

‘348. When considering proposals for development, the local planning authorities will ensure the availability of accurate information on the condition and significance of archaeological sites affected by development proposals. Such information is essential for the decision-making process on planning and land-use issues and for monitoring the effectiveness of the planning process in protecting archaeological sites.’

‘349. The authorities will promote, where practicable, the appropriate management and enhancement of important archaeological sites and monuments and where resources permit, assist owners to maintain them in good condition and to adopt sympathetic land management regimes.’

The Hampshire County Council Structure Plan also considers the historic landscape. Specific policies cover Registered Parks and Gardens, which are in any case statutorily protected, and registered Battlefields, which should be a material consideration. Furthermore:

‘352. In addition to historic parks and gardens and battlefield sites, there is the wider historic landscape, the conservation of which is equally important and which deserves to be protected from development. Local planning authorities should take account of these historic components of the landscape in their local plans and development control work’.

East Hampshire District Council’s Local Plan (First Review, 1998; Second Review, adopted March 2006) contains further policies relating to the historic environment.

Policy ENV15

‘In order to protect the historic heritage of the District development which would adversely affect buildings, features and areas which are of historic, architectural or archaeological interest, or their setting, will not be permitted.’

Policy ENV19:

‘Proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a Listed Building, Conservation Area, or any other building or feature of particular historic or architectural interest will not be permitted.’

Policy ENV22

‘Development will not be permitted which adversely affects important archaeological sites, buildings, monuments or features, whether scheduled or not, or their settings. If there is evidence that archaeological remains may exist in the Local Plan area whose extent and importance are unknown the District Council will require developers to arrange for an archaeological field assessment to be carried out before the planning application can be determined, thus enabling an informed and reasonable planning decision to be made.

‘The District Council will seek mitigation of the impact of development proposals by securing suitable designs to minimise physical destruction. Where this is not possible or feasible then the District Council will not allow development to take place until satisfactory provision has been made for a programme of archaeological investigation and recording prior to the commencement of the development’

Specific policies also cover Listed Buildings, and buildings in Conservation Areas, and Historic Parks and Gardens. The Council takes the view that proposals on sites adjacent to a Listed Building, Conservation Area, or any other building or feature of particular historic or architectural interest should be affected by the constraints attaching to those Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, or other buildings themselves.

The site is within both the town's Conservation Area and an Area of High Archaeological Importance. According to the guidance (in Edwards 2000), in this area, 'archaeological evaluation should be undertaken prior to determination of any planning application that is likely to have a significant impact' [on archaeological remains].

Methodology

The assessment of the site was carried out by the examination of pre-existing information from a number of sources recommended by the Institute of Field Archaeologists paper '*Standards in British Archaeology*' covering desk-based studies. These sources include historic and modern maps, the Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record, geological maps and any relevant publications or reports.

Archaeological background

General background

To the southeast of Petersfield lies Petersfield Heath, an area of outstanding prehistoric archaeology. It contains a Bronze Age barrow cemetery, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The wider area is rich in archaeology of all periods, with, for example, several Roman villas nearby. Modern Petersfield is a town with a remarkable historic townscape character, a considerable number of the town centre's buildings dating back to the 17th or 18th centuries (and some beyond this), and its layout preserves very faithfully the medieval burgh plots probably as old as the 12th century. Despite, or perhaps because of, this evident historic quality, the town itself has not seen a great concentration of archaeological investigation. In the 1970s and subsequently, it was commonplace to fear that Victorian and modern development would have destroyed much or all of the medieval evidence in successful medieval towns, both generally and in particular in reference to Petersfield (Hughes 1976, 113). This, it is becoming increasingly clear, here as elsewhere, is by no means always the case, and whilst survival may in places be unpredictable and patchy, it can also be surprisingly extensive. A programme of works on the High Street in the early 1990s, for instance, established that medieval deposits and features do survive amidst more recent development (Ford 1990; Torrance and Ford 1993; Fox and Hughes 1993; Currie 1996).

Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record

A search was made on the Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record on 6th September 2006 for a radius of 500m around the proposal site. This revealed 150 entries, the vast majority of which are Listed Buildings. The entries other than listed buildings are detailed in Appendix 1 and their locations plotted on Figure 1, along with the most relevant of the listed buildings. The other listed buildings are too numerous to plot; suffice it to say the area is one of considerable historic architectural character.

Prehistoric

Despite the site's close proximity to the extensive prehistoric activity recorded at Petersfield Heath, there is little record of prehistoric finds from the immediate search area. A number of early antiquarian finds whose precise provenance is not determined have been given a representative grid reference for the approximate area, including a Palaeolithic hand axe, Mesolithic blade and Neolithic fabricator [Fig. 1: 1]. More closely located finds include a number of Mesolithic flints from a spot to the west of the site [2]. There is no record of finds from the Bronze or Iron Ages in the search area.

Roman

There is just one reference to Roman finds, comprising some residual pottery found in medieval features during an excavation just north-west of the site [3].

Saxon

There are no records relating to this period within 500m of the site (nor indeed anywhere close to the town)

Medieval

Considerably more evidence relates to the medieval period, as might be expected. Most important is the Church of St Peter from which the town derived its name [7]. This was an unusually large church for such an isolated location in the 12th century. Inevitably it has seen much later work, mainly in the late 19th century. One entry relates to documentary sources for a 15th-century grange [8]. Investigations in the area have quite commonly encountered medieval features surviving below or behind modern buildings [3, 4, 6] with pottery ranging from the 13th century onwards, and on occasion such pottery is found although no features could be associated with it [2, 5, 9].

Post-medieval

Features dating from the 16th to 19th centuries can be traced from maps [11–15] or have been located in a number of archaeological investigations within the study area [4, 9, 10, 12]. The latter have rarely added to our understanding of the town's development. Four AHBR entries are for historic parks or gardens [14, 15, 17].

There are over 130 entries for post-medieval listed buildings. Of these, the most relevant to the present study are 2, 2a and 4 St Peter's Road [16], 12 St Peter's Road [18] and the group at 18–20 The Square [9]. The site of the former Petersfield House is just to the south of the site; what remains of its stables are listed [11].

Undated, negative

Apart from the inevitable undated features in most archaeological investigations, totally undated remains, including building foundations and wells, have been recorded in a number of places [5, 11, 15, 19]. Recent evaluations have been useful in determining the extent of modern truncation of the archaeologically relevant levels at a number of sites, including two where this truncation appears to have been more or less total, or no remains were originally present [8, 14].

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Located some 850m south-east of the proposal site, the Petersfield Heath Common Bronze Age barrow cemetery is Scheduled (SAM 84). The proposed development could not affect either the monument or its setting, as there is a considerable built-up area separating them. The statue of William III in The Square, which had been SAM 205, is no longer Scheduled.

Cartographic and documentary sources

Petersfield is first mentioned by name in AD1182. It is not listed in Domesday Book (AD1086) as it was then part of the royal manor of Mapledurham. It is possible that the town was a new foundation in the later 12th century (Beresford 1976, 447), although the earliest remains in the parish church of St Peter are probably to be dated around 1120, so that there must have been some form of settlement in the early 12th century. The place-name, which is self-explanatory (Mills 1998), although a somewhat unusual formation for a place-name, suggests that there was not much else to any settlement, so perhaps the church was relatively isolated.

The town grew prosperous from the wool and cloth trade, as did so many in medieval England, gaining a fair in 1255, although there does not appear to be any reference to the granting of a market. The 17th century saw the town's population double, and by the 18th century it had become an important stop on the coach route between London and Portsmouth (Edwards 2000). Among those buried in St Peter's graveyard was John Small (1737–1826), who as a member of the Hambledon Cricket Club was possibly one of those who played in the first Hambledon game recorded, and was regarded as the greatest batsman of the 18th century (he was the scorer of the first recorded century).

St Peter's Road was known as New Way in 1841, with the obvious implication that it was not part of the medieval layout, although it is probable that the burgage plots fronting High Street (to the north) would have had a back lane at around this distance south.

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted at the Hampshire Record Office in order to ascertain what activity had been taking place throughout the site's later history and whether this may have affected any possible archaeological deposits within the proposal area (see Appendix 2).

The earliest map available of the area is that by Christopher Saxton, published in 1575 (Fig. 2). This shows no detail for the site, Petersfield being depicted only schematically, although it does indicate the importance of the town in relation to its surrounds at this time. A century later, Norden's map (1695) shows no more detail except for the depiction of main roads (Fig. 3). The first map showing any detail for the area is the Tithe map of 1841 (Fig. 4). This clearly depicts the layout of the town centre, with burgage plots fronting High Street. What is now St Peter's Road is shown as New Way. The area to the south of New way is unoccupied (plot 141 is noted as Gardens in the accompanying apportionment). Of some note is the peculiar circular space in New Way. This must surely be related to the demolished Petersfield House and its formal grounds, possibly a carriage turning circle. The area of the site itself is unoccupied and is still subdivided along the burgage plot lines, except where encroached upon for this turning circle. This layout is retained in the somewhat sketchy map accompanying the Petersfield Enclosure Act of 1857. New Way has been renamed Short Cut. Other than the broad outline of the street grid, however, this map provides no detail (Fig. 5).

Mapping to modern accuracy arrives with the First Edition Ordnance Survey, undated but probably 1873 (Fig. 6). The area of the site is now shown as a single plot, no longer subdivided, and laid out to formal gardens, most probably a public garden with a pavilion, or perhaps a villa with private gardens. The building itself appears to be just to the north of the area of the proposal site, although it is difficult to be certain. The circular space at the front of the site is retained, although the southern half of the circle has been swallowed up by development. Strangely, the streetname has reverted to New Way. The Second Edition is identical for the site itself (not illustrated). By the revision of 1909, nothing has changed except that the street is now St Peter's Road (not illustrated). The Ordnance Survey of 1932 shows a complete change, however. Vestiges of the semi-circular boundary to the site remain, but a large building has been erected (just off the site) on the south-eastern portion, and the area to the rear which includes the site is open space. Apart from the addition of the storage building, this is more or less the current configuration of the area.

Listed buildings

Petersfield is a very well-preserved historic town, retaining much of its post-medieval character, not only in layout, but indeed in its surviving buildings, many from the late 17th or early 18th centuries. This is reflected in the number of Listed Buildings within the study area. The AHBR contains over 130 listed buildings within the 500m search radius. These are too numerous to show in detail on Figure 1. The most significant include the Grade I listed 12th-century Church of St Peter, only some 80m west of the site, and the statue of William III in the Square (originally this had stood at the entrance to Petersfield House (Edwards 2000)). Listed at Grade II* are The Old College, Heath Lodge, Dragon House, 9 Dragon Street, 11 Dragon Street, Goodyers (recorded twice), and 1 The Square. The remaining entries are for Grade II listed buildings, mostly town houses. Six entries are for buildings not offered the protection of statutory listing, but considered of local historical importance. Development on the site would therefore be required to fit sympathetically into the historic townscape and to respect the character and setting of the listed buildings. The other Listed Buildings closest to the site include a group on St Peter's Road (2, 2a and 4) and slightly further south, number 12, and a group on The Square (18, 19, 20).

Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields

There are four registered parks and gardens but no registered battlefields within close proximity of the site. None of the parks/gardens (Heath Lodge, Petersfield Physic Garden, Dragon Street and Petersfield House), nor their settings, is in a position to be affected by proposals for the site.

Historic Hedgerows

There are no hedgerows, historic or otherwise, on the site.

Aerial Photographs

The site areas lies within an urban area which has been developed since before the advent of aerial photography. No photographic collections have therefore been consulted.

Discussion

In considering the archaeological potential of the study area, various factors must be taken into account, including previously recorded archaeological sites, previous land-use and disturbance and future land-use including the proposed development.

The site lies in the heart of the medieval town plan, amongst burgage plots fronting High Street (the most important of the original medieval streets). Whilst the evidence suggests St Peter's Road may be of much more recent origin, it is likely that a medieval back lane would have existed in the same location and the proximity of the site to the medieval church also indicates high potential for medieval archaeology to be present. This is reflected in the area's designation as an Area of High Archaeological Potential and a Conservation Area. If medieval (or earlier) archaeology were present, the site would be in a prime location to provide evidence relating to the origins and development of the medieval town, whose early history as understood at the moment is almost entirely conjectural.

However, the building of Petersfield House in the 18th century entailed extensive landscaping and clearance of a large area south of St Peter's Road and it appears this may have extended to the north as well. The House was demolished in 1793, and St Peter's Road was known as New Way in 1841, so that it is possible this area immediately surrounding the site of Petersfield House may have been considerably redeveloped over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. The site seems to have been mainly in use as gardens in this period. None of the developments on the site, including the 20th-century store, are likely to have involved deep disturbance, so any archaeological deposits originally present are likely to remain intact.

Despite the small extent of the area, which suggests that development would not have a *significant* impact on the archaeology of the town as a whole, it will be necessary to provide further information about the potential of the site from field observations, at least to determine the extent of any truncation, in order to draw up a scheme to mitigate the impact of development on any below-ground archaeological deposits if necessary. As the site is occupied by an upstanding structure, such a scheme would be best implemented as an appropriately worded condition to any consent gained. A scheme for this evaluation will need to be drawn up and approved by the archaeological advisers to the District Council and implemented by a competent archaeological contractor, such as an organization registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

References

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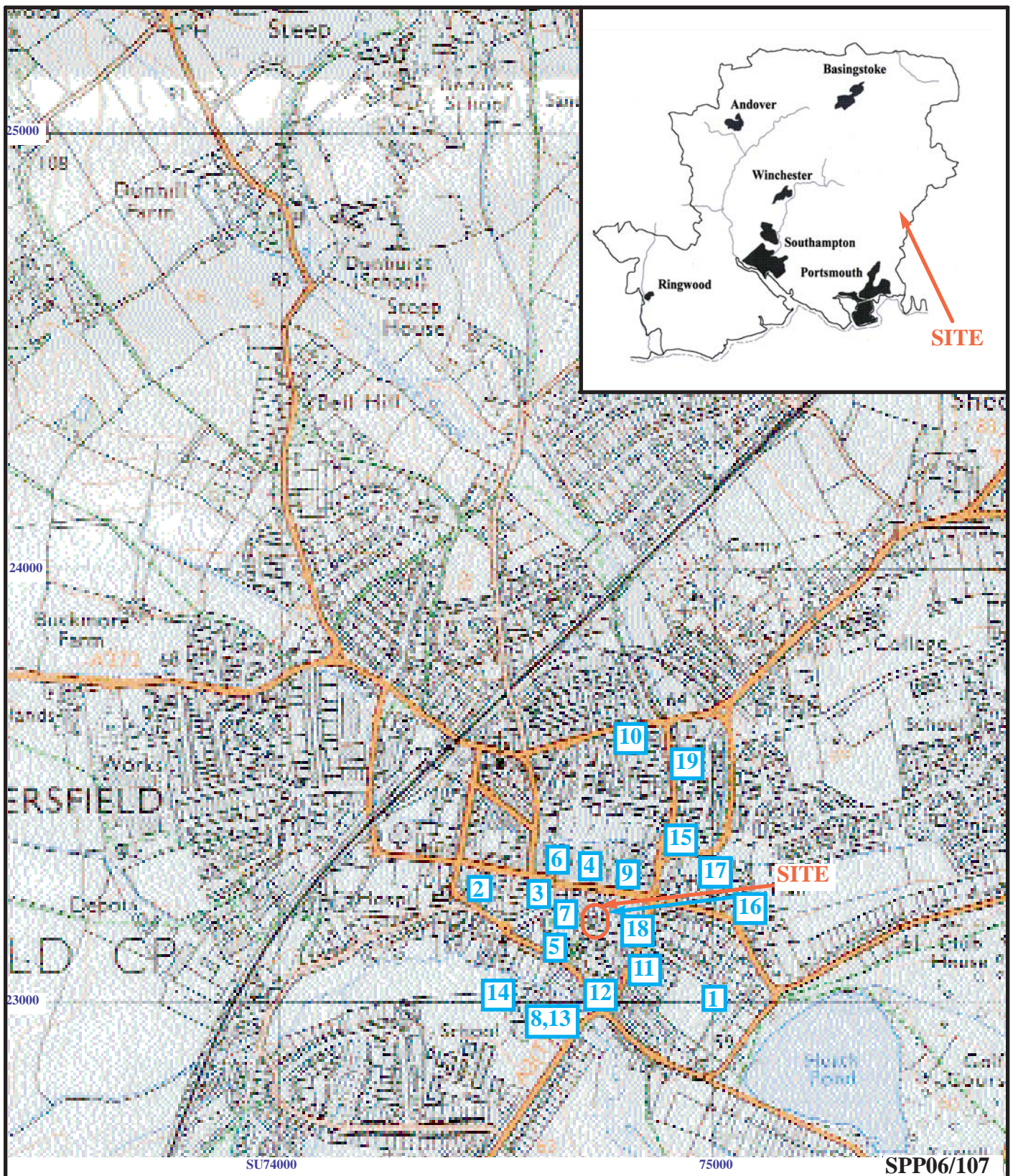
APPENDIX 1: Sites and Monuments Records within a 500 m search radius of the development site

No	SMR Ref	Grid Ref (SU)	Type	Period	Comment
1	18502 18503 18054	75 23	Findspot	Palaeolithic Mesolithic Neolithic	Palaeolithic ovoid handaxe found in 1889, Mesolithic blade, Neolithic flint fabricator
2	34617 34618 34619	7447 2324	Findspot	Mesolithic Medieval	Mesolithic flints. medieval and later pottery
3	18523 18531 34593	74578 23218 745 232	Excavation	Roman, Medieval	Roman pottery, medieval features including a well, a wall and flight of steps; pottery from 13th century onwards.
4	34571 34572 34573 34590 35359 35361	7468 2330	Evaluation Watching brief	Medieval Post-medieval	13th-15th century ditch, two small gullies, hearth (12th-14th century), 16th-17th century pit, later foundations and a well
5	34608 34613	7460 2313	Findspot	Medieval	Medieval pottery, undated limestone wall foundation
6	36906 36908 36909 36910	7459 2330	Watching brief	Medieval	Rectangular stone building foundations, hearth, two pits, possible smithing site
7	1518 41150	74644 23186 7464 2322	Listed Building Documentary	Medieval	Church of St Peter, 12th century, with much 19th century work. Grade I. Placename evidence for Petersfield
8	50283	74616 22958	Documentary Evaluation	Medieval Negative	The Grange, first mentioned 1484, possibly monastic. Evaluation trenches revealed nothing.
9	52762	74750 23289	Watching Brief	Medieval Post-medieval	Stone foundation and other features all post-medieval; some residual medieval pottery
10	34609	7477 2363	Watching brief	Post-medieval	Well
11	50284	74722 23118	Documentary	Post-medieval	Petersfield House, built 1730, demolished 1790; The Grange is one of its stables, Grade II listed (must be a different The Grange from 50283)
	34614	7470 2310	?	Undated	Limestone wall foundations
12	50285	74630 23020	Documentary Evaluation	Post-medieval	Ponds shown on maps from 1773, not there by 1871; evaluation trenching may have located pond deposits
13	50286	74560 22970	Documentary	Post-medieval	Stable building part of the 1730s complex, shown on maps 1773, demolished between 1871 and 1932
14	50287 51823	74520 23010 745 230	Documentary Evaluation Historic Park	Post-medieval Negative	18th century canal, possibly 17th century mill leat; evaluation suggests entire area subject to modern levelling. Petersfield House, landscaped park shown on 1791 map.
15	54765 54766 51773 51791 34615	74886 23344 74892 23326 748 231 748 233 7488 2353	Documentary Documentary Historic Park Historic Park Watching brief	Post-medieval	Almshouses on 1841 map; ruins on later maps. Brewery partially over ruins of almshouses; badly damaged World War II. Dragon Street 18th century garden and Petersfield Physic Garden. Watching brief recorded undated well.
16	13706	74690 23190	Listed Building	Post-medieval	The Fruit Basket (2a St Peter's Road) 17th century timber framed building, Grade II
	13707	74690 23185	Listed Building	Post-medieval	2 St Peter's Road, late 17th or early 18th century timber framed building, Grade II
	13708	74690 23185	Listed Building	Post-medieval	4 St Peter's Road late 17th or early 18th century brick building, Grade II
17	51790	750 229	Historic Park	Post-medieval	Heath Lodge
18	13709	74780 23165	Listed Building	Post-medieval	12 St Peter's Road late 17th or early 18th century, brick building, Grade II
19	13753	74769 23225	Listed Building	Post-medieval	18 The Square, 18th century building, Grade II
	13754	74680 23217	Listed Building	Post-medieval	19 The Square, 18th century building, Grade II
	13755	74668 23212	Listed Building	Post-medieval	20 The Square, 18th century building, Grade II
20	32152	74650 23246	Listed Building	Post-medieval	Statue of William III as Roman senator, Grade I, restored 1912; originally outside Petersfield House, moved ?1793 or 1812. AHBR does not mention it is also an SAM
21	34612	7492 2356	Excavation?	Undated	Unclear; limestone wall foundations, much truncation, seems to be some medieval and post-medieval evidence but the record is incoherent.

Plus 133 listed buildings (and a further 6 unlisted but recorded), including the Grade I listed Church of St Peter and the Statue of William III; and the Grade II* The Old College, Heath Lodge, Dragon House, 9 Dragon Street, 11 Dragon Street, Goodyers, and 1 The Square.

APPENDIX 2: Historic and modern maps consulted

1575	Christopher Saxton (Fig. 2)
1695	John Norden (Fig. 3)
1841	Petersfield Tithe map (Fig. 4)
1857	Petersfield Enclosure map (Fig. 5)
1870s	Ordnance Survey First Edition 25 inch series Sheet LII.16 (Fig. 6)
1893	Ordnance Survey Second Edition 25 inch series Sheet LII.16
1909	Ordnance Survey Revision 25 inch series Sheet LII.16
1932	Ordnance Survey 25 inch series Sheet LII.16 (Fig. 7)
1990	Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1265 (1:25000) (Fig. 1)
2003	Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping (Fig. 8)

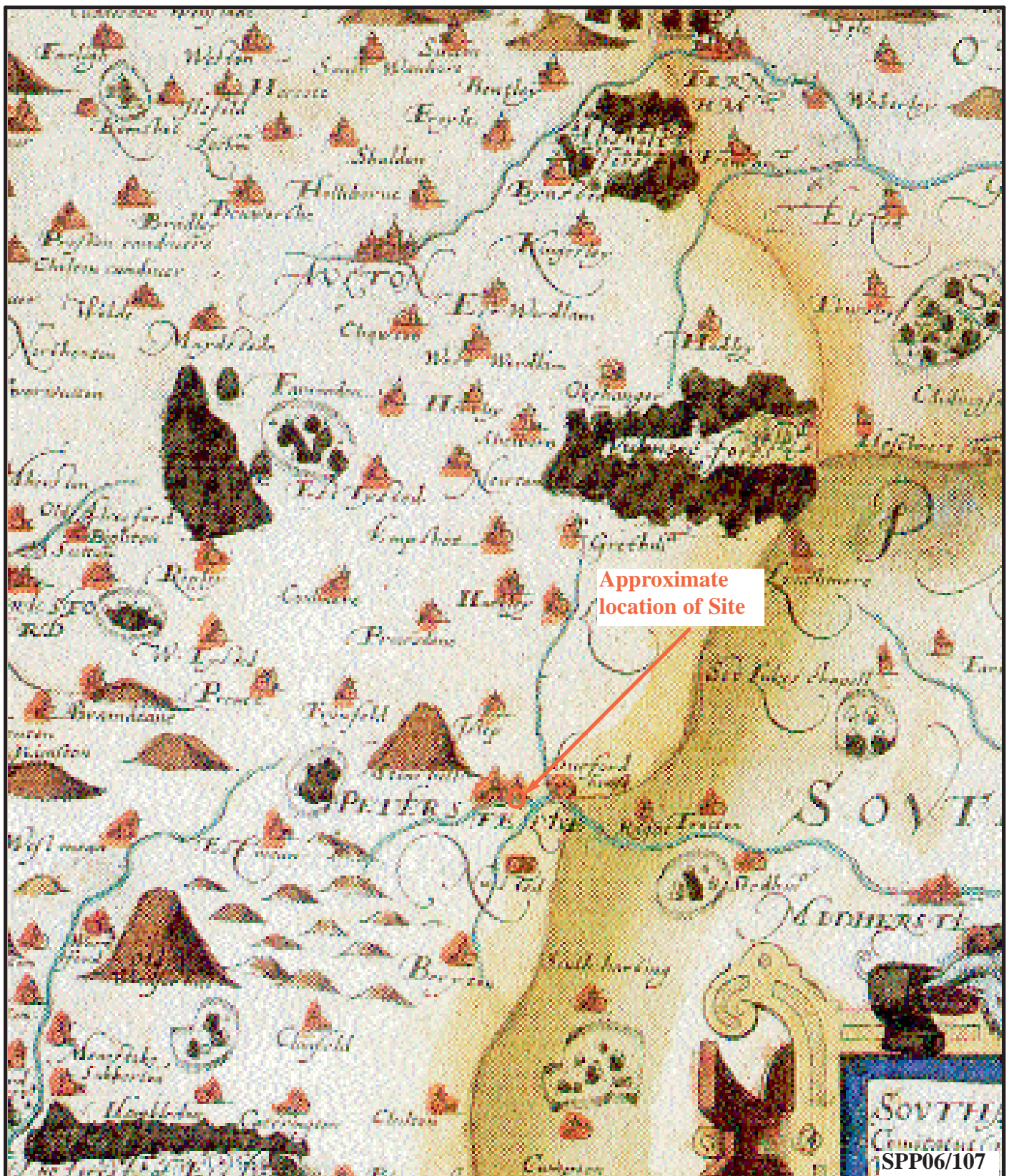


**Land to the rear of 6 St Peter's Road, Petersfield,
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Archaeological Desk-based Assessment**

Figure 1. Location of site within Petersfield and Hampshire, showing locations of AHBR entries.

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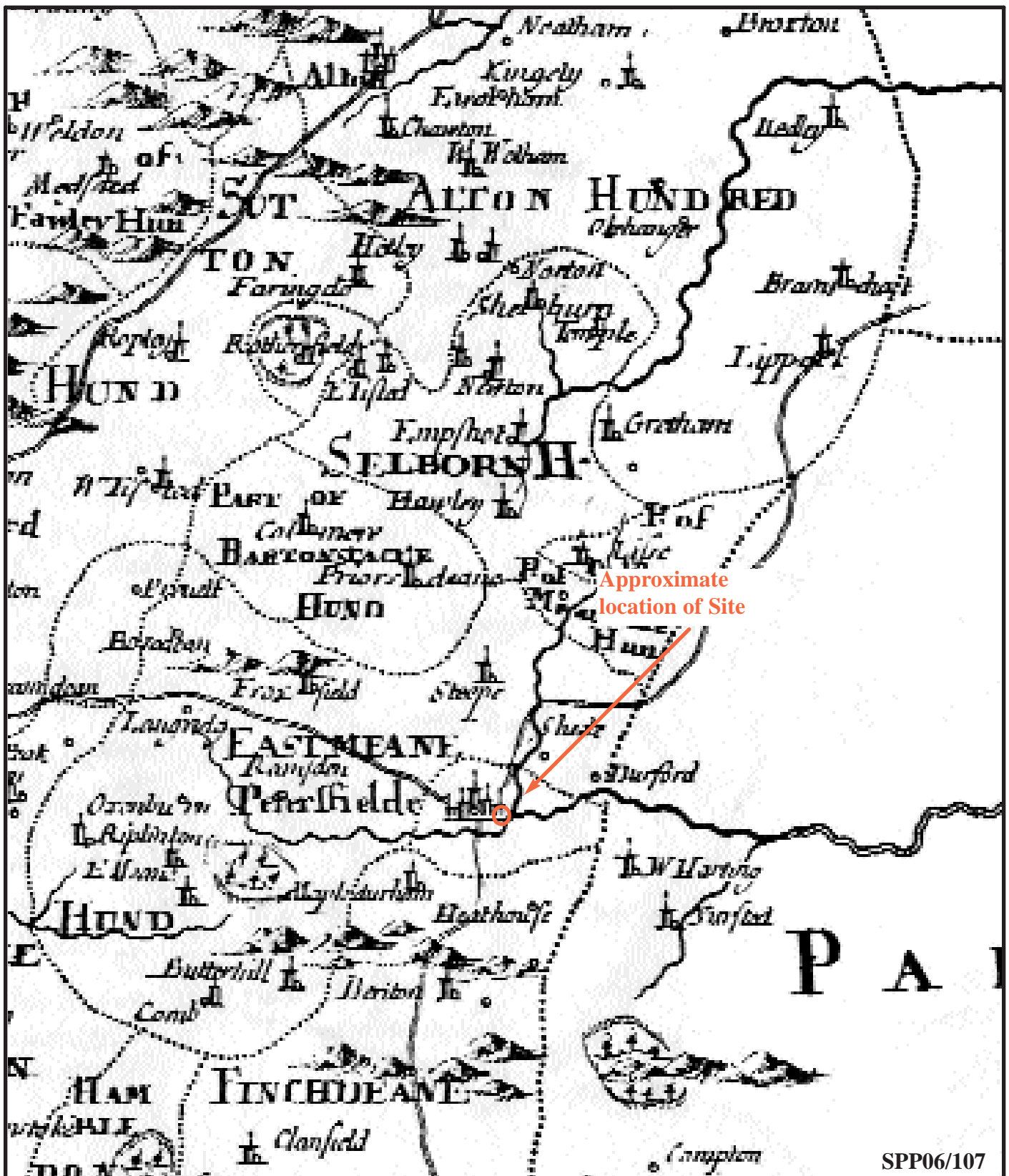
Figure 2. Saxton's map of Hampshire, 1575.

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Figure 3. Norden's map of Hampshire, 1695

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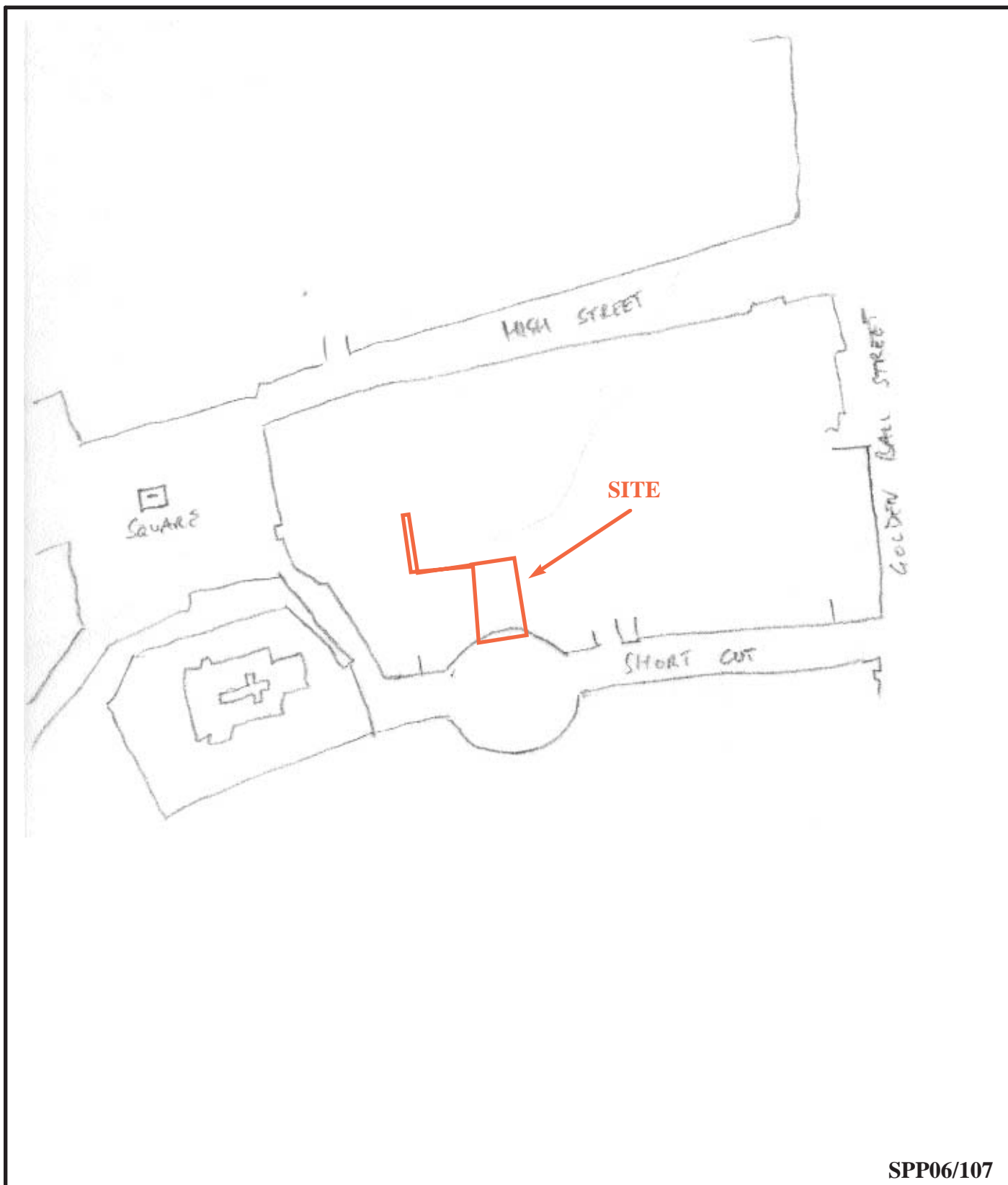
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Figure 4. Petersfield Tithe map, 1841

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Figure 5. Petersfield Enclosure map 1857.

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Figure 6. Ordnance Survey First Edition, c. 1873.

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Figure 7. Ordnance Survey Revision, 1932.

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