



390–406 High Road, Wembley, Brent, London

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

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390–406 High Road, Wembley, Brent, London

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Regal London Ltd to prepare an archaeological desk-based assessment for 390–406 High Road, Wembley, Brent, London, centred on NGR TQ 18602 85276. The proposed development scheme is for the redevelopment of the site, comprising the construction of purpose-built student accommodation with ground floor employment space(s).

This desk-based assessment has identified only a small number of known heritage assets of later prehistoric and early medieval date within the wider study area, suggesting some level of activity during these periods; no known evidence of Roman activity within the area has been identified. The site and study area probably fell within the agricultural hinterland/woodland located to the south of the medieval settlement of Wembley situated on Wembley Hill. Historic mapping demonstrates the continued agricultural nature of the site until the end of the 19th century, after which the site remained vacant until the construction of a depot in the mid 1950s.

The proposed redevelopment of the site has the potential to have an adverse impact upon any surviving archaeological remains that may be present. This report has highlighted the low potential for prehistoric, Roman and early medieval remains to be present within the site and has suggested that any medieval and post-medieval agricultural features/deposits are likely to have been at least partially truncated by 20th-century development of the site. It is suggested that there is little requirement for further archaeological surveys or mitigation measures associated with the proposed development of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) has been commissioned by Regal London Ltd to prepare an archaeological desk-based assessment for 390–406 High Road, Wembley, Brent, London, henceforth known as ‘the site’. The site is centred on NGR TQ 18602 85276, and its location is shown on Figure 1.
- 1.1.2 This report has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments* (2020) and *Planning Practice Guidance - Historic Environment*, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021).

2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1.1 The proposed scheme is for the redevelopment of existing office/retail properties at 390–406 High Road. This will comprise the construction of purpose-built student accommodation with ground floor employment space(s).

3 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The site is situated in the Wembley Central ward of the town of Wembley in the London Borough of Brent. It lies approximately 12.5m north-west of central London and was historically part of the former county of Middlesex.
- 3.1.2 The east of the site lies at c 53m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and slopes gently downwards from this point towards the west of the site, which is situated at c 52m aOD (Topographic Map nd). The Wembley Brook is located c 550m south of the site and the River Brent, a tributary of the River Thames, is c 1.7km to the east.
- 3.1.3 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 2022), the underlying bedrock geology is clay, silt and sand of the London Clay Formation, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 48–56 million years ago in the Palaeogene period. No overlying superficial deposits are recorded (*ibid.*). The soils within the site are recorded as slowly permeable, seasonally wet and slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (Cranfield University nd).

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The purpose of this desk-based assessment is to determine as far as reasonably possible, from existing records and observations, an understanding of the historic environment within the site and surrounding study area in order to:
- provide an assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to survive within the site;
 - assess the significance of known and predicted archaeological remains;
 - assess the likely impacts of previous development upon the survival of any archaeological remains;

- assess the potential for impacts from the proposed development upon the surviving archaeological resource; and
- provide proposals for further evaluation, whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the archaeological resource is not sufficiently well defined.

5 PLANNING BACKGROUND

5.1 National Planning Policy

5.1.1 Section 16 of National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2021) as issued in July 2021 sets out the Government’s planning policies in relation to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

5.1.2 Paragraphs 194 and 195 state:

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

5.1.3 Paragraphs 199 and 200 state:

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered*

parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional (non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets).

5.1.4 Paragraphs 201 and 202 state:

201. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

5.1.5 Paragraph 203 states:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset

5.1.6 Paragraph 205 states:

Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

5.2 Local Planning Policy

London Plan 2021

5.2.1 The London Plan (March 2021) provides the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environment, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years (GLA 2021). Those policies considered relevant are outlined below.

Policy HC1: Heritage conservation and growth

A) Boroughs should, in consultation with Historic England, local communities and other statutory and relevant organisations, develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London’s historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying, understanding, conserving, and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets, and improving access to, and interpretation of, the heritage assets, landscapes and archaeology within their area.

B) Development Plans and strategies should demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the effective integration of London’s heritage in regenerative change by:

1) setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in placemaking

2) utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process

3) integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings with innovative and creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place

4) delivering positive benefits that conserve and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing.

C) Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets’ significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

D) Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable, development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets.

E) Where heritage assets have been identified as being At Risk, boroughs should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use.

Brent Local Plan

5.2.2 The Brent Development Management Plan forms part of the Brent Local Plan (Brent Council 2016) and contains detailed planning policies that are used to determine planning applications for the development of the borough.

Policy DMP 7: Brent's Heritage Assets

Proposals for or affecting heritage assets should:

- a. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the archaeological, architectural or historic significance and its wider context;*
- b. Provide a detailed analysis and justification of the potential impact (including incremental and cumulative) of the development on the heritage asset and its context as well as any public benefit*
- c. Retain buildings, structures, architectural features, hard landscaping and archaeological remains, where their loss would cause harm;*
- d. Sustain and enhance the significance of the heritage asset, its curtilage and setting, respecting and reinforcing the streetscene, frontages, views vistas, street patterns, building line, siting, design, height, plot and planform and ensure that extensions are not overly dominating;*
- e. Contribute to local distinctiveness, built form, character and scale of heritage assets by good quality, contextual, subordinate design, and the use of appropriate materials and expertise, and improving public understanding and appreciation;*
- f. Where demolition is proposed within a conservation area detailed plans for any replacement building will be required to allow consideration of whether the replacement would contribute positively to the character or will be applied to ensure construction of the approved scheme is implemented together with agreed mitigation measures appearance of the area. In cases where demolition is permitted conditions and/or legal agreements will be applied to ensure construction of the approved scheme is implemented together with agreed mitigation measures.*

5.2.3 Brent Council's Draft Local Plan covering the period 2019–41 went through Examination in Public between 29 September and 16 October 2020. The Planning Inspector has since written to Brent Council, concluding that the Brent Local Plan 2019–2041 provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the London Borough of Brent, provided that a number of minor modifications are completed. It is anticipated that a report will be taken to Full Council on 24 February 2022. The modifications do not impact upon the archaeological considerations set out within this report.

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Scope and Sources Consulted

- 6.1.1 A 500m search area (hereafter 'the study area') has been used to identify designated and non-designated heritage assets which could be affected by the proposed development. The assessment was informed through both a desk-based review and a site visit.
- 6.1.2 The following sources were consulted to inform this assessment:
 - National Heritage List for England (NHLE) for designated heritage assets;

- Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER) for non-designated heritage assets and archaeological events;
- Brent Museum and Archives for historic maps and manuscripts;
- Groundsure Mapping for historic Ordnance Survey (OS) maps
- Geotechnical data as held by the client and the British Geological Survey; and
- Other relevant primary and secondary sources including published and unpublished works as held by OA and relevant libraries.

6.1.3 For ease of reference each heritage asset identified has been allocated a unique OA number. This is included in the heritage gazetteer provided in Appendix A, referred to in the text where relevant and marked on Figures 2 and 3. A full list of sources consulted can be found in Appendix B. Historic mapping for the site is depicted on Figures 4–10.

6.2 Assumptions and Limitations

- 6.2.1 Data used to compile this report consists of secondary information derived from a variety of sources. The assumption is made that this data is reasonably accurate.
- 6.2.2 The records held by the Greater London HER are not a record of all surviving heritage assets, but a record of the discovery of a wide range of archaeological and historical components of the historic environment. The information held within it is not complete and does not preclude the subsequent discovery of further heritage assets that are, at present, unknown.

7 WALKOVER SURVEY

- 7.1.1 A walkover survey of the site was carried out on 2 February 2022 in overcast conditions. All areas of the site were accessed, and no new archaeological features were identified during the visit.
- 7.1.2 The site comprises a roughly rectangular plot of land, c 0.14ha in area, and is currently occupied by Pitman House (402–406 High Road) to the west (Plate 1) and Fairgate House (390–400 High Road) to the east (Plate 2). A tarmacked car park is located to the rear of the properties. The site is bounded by the pavement and High Road to the south, office/retail buildings to the east and west, and vacant land to the north. The rear of the site is accessible via a side road to the west of Pitman House (Plate 3).
- 7.1.3 In the east of the site, Fairgate House comprises an E–W aligned ground floor retail/commercial space, with a six-storey office block aligned N–S above, creating a T-shaped plan. The north end of the office block is supported on a series of concrete pillars, with ground level car parking available below, behind Fairgate House (Plate 4). Connected to the west side of Fairgate house is Pitman House, a three-storey building that extends at ground level to the rear (Plate 5). A brick wall and an adjacent brick and timber extension protrude from the rear of Pitman House (Plate 6).
- 7.1.4 A number of covered manholes, largely situated adjacent to the properties within the site, provide access to underground utility services related to the buildings (Plates 3

and 6). Drainage grates were also observed on site, generally distributed adjacent to the properties.

8 HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BASELINE

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The nature of the archaeological resource within the site and the surrounding study area is discussed by period below. The locations of designated and non-designated heritage assets are marked on Figure 2, and the locations of previous archaeological events are shown on Figure 3. Further details of all sites are provided in Appendix A.

8.2 Designated Heritage Assets

8.2.1 No designated heritage assets are recorded within the site, and only one listed building is located within the study area. The Roman Catholic Church of St Joseph (OA 1) is situated c 225m east-south-east of the site and is a Grade II listed post-war church in a loosely neo-Georgian style with Romanesque influences, built in 1955–7 to designs by Reynolds and Scott. The modern church replaced a small late 19th-century building that was originally used as a cemetery chapel, serving the small cemetery (OA 8) located at the end of Waverley Avenue.

8.2.2 The northern part of the study area falls within the Wembley High Street Conservation Area, which is defined by two distinctive areas of housing based around Wembley High Street and Wembley Hill Road, with The Green Man public house (OA 9) at the summit of Wembley Hill. The area is characterised by the building design and street setting, which reflect the historic street pattern and historic rural character of the area (Brent Council 2006, 5). An appraisal of the conservation area outlines the special character and appearance of the area, highlighting its potential to contain a range of archaeological remains relating to the medieval hamlet of Wembley (*ibid.*, 8).

8.3 Previous Archaeological Investigations

8.3.1 No previous archaeological investigations have been carried out within the site. The GLHER records 15 investigations within the surrounding study area comprising six desk-based assessments (OA 11–OA 16), three evaluations (OA 23–OA 25) and six watching briefs carried out in the north-east of the study, in the area of Wembley Stadium (OA 17–OA 22). Where relevant, the results of these investigations are discussed by period in the sections below. However, no significant archaeological remains were encountered during the six watching briefs (OA 17–OA 22), all of which revealed made-ground deposits related to 20th-century development overlying the natural London Clay. Archaeological evaluation (OA 24) at 34 Wembley Hill Road, c 375m east-north-east of the site, revealed a sequence of alluvial deposits but no archaeological features or finds.

8.4 Prehistoric Period (500,000 BP – AD 43)

8.4.1 The site and surrounding study area are situated on London Clay. Limited archaeological evidence of prehistoric activity has been identified on the claylands of north London and the wider London Clay zone, which contrasts with the abundance

of sites recorded on the gravels of the River Thames and its tributaries (MOLA 2000; Brown and Sheldon 2018, 62).

- 8.4.2 No heritage assets of specific prehistoric date have been recorded within the site or study area by the Greater London HER. However, a single sherd of late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from a shallow modern pit excavated during an evaluation (OA 25) at the Ark Elvin Academy (formerly Copland Community School), c 225m south-south-east of the site (Wessex Archaeology 2008). Although residual within a modern feature, the pottery provides some, albeit very limited, evidence of a low-level and perhaps transitory presence in the wider landscape during the late Bronze Age.

8.5 Romano-British Period (AD 43 – 410)

- 8.5.1 During the Roman period, Wembley was situated to the north-west of the Roman city of *Londinium* and west of the Roman road Watling Street. No heritage assets indicative of Roman activity have been recorded within the site or the study area, which is consistent with the more general absence of evidence for Roman settlement on the clay-topped high ground of north London, possibly reflecting the well-wooded nature of the landscape in the period (Brown and Sheldon 2018).

8.6 Medieval Period (AD 410 – 1550)

Early Medieval Period (AD 410 – 1065)

- 8.6.1 Wembley is likely to have developed from a small Saxon settlement, a sub-manor of the ancient parish of Harrow. The first documentary reference of Wembley or ‘Wemba Lea’—meaning ‘Wemba’s clearing’—is from a charter dated AD 825 (OA 3; Bolton *et al.* 1971a; Weinreb *et al.* 2008, 996). There is no specific mention of Wembley in Domesday Book (1086), though it records the settlement at Harrow, located in the Hundred of Gore in the county of Middlesex (Open Domesday nd).

Later Medieval Period (AD 1066 – 1550)

- 8.6.2 During the medieval period, the parish of Harrow (also known as Harrow on the Hill) comprised 12 centres of settlement, of which Wembley was one, located in the south-east of the parish. The medieval settlement of Wembley lay on the north side of a large triangular green on the top of Wembley Hill, c 260m north of the site, and is known to have had well-wooded surroundings (Bolton *et al.* 1971a; Brent Council 2006). It gave its name to a 13th-century family, and in 1212 it was a township with four head tenements. In 1316 it contained two tithings, although this included the medieval settlement at Tokyngton (meaning ‘the farm of the sons of Toca’, which also had late Saxon origins (OA 2) located to the east, and it is unlikely that the settlement at Wembley was very large (Bolton *et al.* 1971a). High Road, which runs directly south of the site and continues to the west and south-east as Harrow Road, is likely to have medieval, if not late Saxon, origins.
- 8.6.3 Located approximately 475m to the east of the site was the possible location of the Tokyngton free chapel dedicated to St Michael (OA 4), one of two chapels mentioned in c 1234–40 (Bolton *et al.* 1971c). Excavations carried out in 1986 by the Department of Greater London Archaeology (DGLA) recovered a few sherds of 13th- to 14th-century pottery but identified no significant archaeological features of medieval date

to suggest the presence of the chapel, which may have been located further to the north.

- 8.6.4 At the end of the medieval period, the site and surrounding landscape was part of a large open field system that was served by scattered farmsteads (Bolton *et al.* 1971a). The agricultural nature of the landscape during the medieval period is reiterated by the results of archaeological investigations carried out within the study area. During the 2008 evaluation (OA 25) at the Ark Elvin Academy (formerly Copland Community School, c 225m south-south-east of the site, medieval remains (OA 6) comprising a shallow gully and shallow parallel ditch, both containing 12th- to 14th-century pottery, were recorded and considered to have been related to land drainage (Wessex Archaeology 2008).

8.7 Post-Medieval Period (AD 1550 – 1900)

- 8.7.1 The rural settlement character of the study area continued from the medieval period into the early post-medieval period. Wembley Manor, having previously been in the hands of Kilburn Priory, was granted to the Page family in the mid 16th century following the dissolution of the priory (Bolton *et al.* 1971b). Wembley House is considered to have been the main house (OA 5) belonging to the Page family, who were important landowners in the area during this period (*ibid.*). It was first recorded in 1510 and then assessed in 1672 as part of the hearth tax. It is unclear if a 'Wembley House' depicted on the 1865 OS map (Fig. 6), c 95m south-east of the site, may correspond with the Page family's house (OA 5).
- 8.7.2 One of the earliest maps to show the wider landscape is Speed's 1646 map of *Middlesex described with the most famous cities of London and Westminster*, which indicates the location of 'Wembly Hill' (*sic*; Fig. 4). Rocque's 1746 map of *London and 10 Miles Round* (Fig. 5) more clearly shows the disposition of the site during the 18th century. It depicts the settlement at Wembley Green situated on Wembley Hill, to the south of which are several properties located along Harrow Road (now High Road). The site appears to have comprised agricultural land on the southern slopes of the hill. A similar depiction of the landscape is given on a map of the roads, lanes, commons, greens and other waste land in the manor and parish of Harrow surveyed in 1759 (not illustrated).
- 8.7.3 By the mid 18th century, a number of buildings were located along the southern and eastern edges of Wembley Common and along a road leading north and west from Wembley Hill, falling within the Wembley High Street Conservation Area (Brent Council 2006). One of those on Wembley Green was a timber-framed inn, which is likely to have had at least early 18th-century, if not late medieval, origins. As illustrated on Rocque's 1746 map (Fig. 5), the inn was called the 'Barley Mow', and by 1785 it was known as the 'Green Man'. The inn retained this name to the present day, though the timber-framed building was destroyed by fire in 1906 and replaced by the present Edwardian building (*ibid.*, 7). In 1991, archaeological evaluation (OA 23; DGLA 1991) at The Green Man pub and hotel, c 380m north of the site, uncovered the remains of two 19th-century walls (OA 9), one of which may have been related to a garden boundary and the other an outside privy. Also recorded were a brick-lined

drain containing fragments of clay tobacco pipe and a posthole from which 19th-century pottery was recovered (*ibid.*).

- 8.7.4 The largely agricultural nature of post-medieval land use within the wider study area is reiterated by the recording of several types of land drains (OA 6) during the 2008 evaluation (OA 25) at the Ark Elvin Academy (formerly Copland Community School), c 225m south-south-east of the site (Wessex Archaeology 2008). The approximate site of a post-medieval windmill (OA 7) shown on a 1673 map (not illustrated) is also located 370m north-north-east of the site.
- 8.7.5 The overall layout of the site appears to have remained largely the same throughout much of the post-medieval period. By 1817 the parliamentary inclosure of the parish of Harrow had regulated field boundaries and ownership. The enclosure map (not illustrated) shows that the triangular area of Wembley Green north of Harrow Road (now High Road) comprised seven parcels of land, which largely remained the same until the mid 19th century. By the time of the 1865 OS map (Fig. 6), the site fell within a large agricultural field that formed part of ‘Wembleyhill Farm’ located on the north side of the road (now High Road). The site remained much the same at the end of the 19th century, as illustrated by the 1896 OS map (Fig. 7), which also indicates that a number of properties had been developed in the vicinity by this time.

8.8 Modern

- 8.8.1 As indicated by historic mapping, the area immediately surrounding the site continued to be developed into the 20th century. The site itself does not appear to have undergone any significant changes, though a new route of the Great Central Railway had been constructed by the time of the 1914 OS map (Fig. 8), and the area directly north of the site formed part of the associated embankment. The site remained undeveloped until the mid 1950s (Fig. 9), when a depot was constructed at 390–400 High Road, occupying the eastern half of the site. By 1968 (Fig. 10) 402–406 High Road (Pitman House) had been constructed in the west of the site, while the adjacent depot had undergone some modifications. The east of the site had been redeveloped by the early 1980s into its current form (Fairgate House).
- 8.8.2 The Greater London HER records a number of heritage assets of modern date within the study area. The King Edward VII Park (OA 10), opened in 1914, extends into the north-west of the study area, 325m from the site. The Grade II listed Roman Catholic Church of St Joseph (OA 1) is situated c 225m east-south-east of the site. Located approximately 150m further to the south is its associated cemetery (now closed; OA 8), in which around 200 people were interred, with no evidence of gravestones visible.

8.9 Undated

- 8.9.1 No heritage assets of unknown date have been recorded by the Greater London HER within the site or study area.

9 PREVIOUS IMPACTS AND SURVIVAL

- 9.1.1 The site was probably in use as woodland/agricultural land associated with the settlement on Wembley Hill situated to the north of the site from at least the medieval period and throughout the post-medieval period, with cartographic evidence indicating that the site formed part of Wembleyhill Farm in the mid 19th century. Medieval/post-medieval ploughing of the site is likely to have truncated any sub-surface features and deposits that may have been present.
- 9.1.2 While development of the area around the site expanded during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly with the construction of the new route of the Great Central Railway, the site itself remained unoccupied until the construction of a depot in the mid 1950s, with further development carried out on site throughout the second half of the 20th century. The construction of the later 20th-century buildings is likely to have caused disturbance to any archaeological remains that may have been present within the site. It is therefore unlikely that significant below-ground remains will survive within the majority of the site. Nevertheless, it is possible that archaeological remains, if present, may survive in the less disturbed areas outside the footprint of the former and existing buildings, including along the site boundary and the car park to the rear of Pitman House in the north-west corner of the site. The extent to which any such deposits have been affected by the insertion of the modern services, evidence for which was identified during the site visit, is unclear.

10 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND SIGNIFICANCE

- 10.1.1 No heritage assets of prehistoric date have been recorded within the study area, though a residual pottery sherd of late Bronze Age date may hint at a very limited and perhaps transitory presence in the wider landscape during the later prehistoric period. In addition, no known heritage assets of Roman date have been identified within the study area. This reflects the limited known remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods within the wider landscape of Wembley and more broadly across north London (MOLA 2000). The site is considered to have low to negligible potential to contain archaeological remains of these periods.
- 10.1.2 The northern part of the study area falls within the Wembley High Street Conservation Area, highlighting the potential of the area to contain archaeological remains relating to the medieval hamlet of Wembley, which had at least late Saxon origins. Documentary evidence dating to the early 9th century makes reference to Wembley and implies that the surrounding landscape was largely wooded. The scarcity of early medieval remains within the area suggests that settlement was located away from the site. Together with 20th-century development of the site, there is limited potential for the site to contain remains of early medieval date.
- 10.1.3 The site and study area fall within proximity of the late medieval settlement of Wembley, situated on the summit of Wembley Hill to the north, and probably constituted part of the surrounding woodland/agricultural landscape. Therefore, there is some potential for medieval remains within the site, though this is considered

to be limited due to probable truncation from post-medieval agriculture and modern development.

10.1.4 Historic mapping dating to the 18th and 19th centuries demonstrates the continued rural settlement character of the area throughout the post-medieval period, with the site having formed part of an agricultural field adjacent to Wembleyhill Farm in the mid 19th century. While late 19th- and early 20th-century OS maps indicate there was an increasing level of development in the surrounding area during this time, the site itself was not developed until the mid 1950s, with subsequent phases of development on site carried out in the later 20th century. As a result, the site has limited potential to contain post-medieval remains.

10.1.5 It is anticipated that any medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains that may be present within the site are likely to be of limited local significance given the largely agricultural nature of activity in the vicinity. If present, *in situ* remains of earlier date, such as those indicative of prehistoric, Roman or early medieval activity, would be of notably higher significance, though the potential for such remains is considered to be very low.

11 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

11.1.1 It is understood that the proposed scheme comprises the redevelopment of the office/retail properties at 390–406 High Road to provide new purpose-built student accommodation with ground floor employment space(s) (Fig. 11). The proposed base scheme will consist of c 330 beds (comprising a mix of bed types), flexible commercial space and requisite student amenity and ancillary space over two joined blocks of 15 and 11 storeys.

11.1.2 The potential impacts resulting from the scheme would be dependent upon the nature of the groundworks and the exact construction methodology. It is anticipated that the proposed development could result in groundworks associated with some or all of the following activities:

- Demolition and clearance of the existing buildings;
- Landscaping and grading of the site to create level ground;
- Excavation of foundation trenches and installation of piling caps for the foundations of the new buildings;
- Excavation of trenches for new services, soakaways and other attenuation features;
- Ground modification for infrastructure; and
- Any other intrusive groundworks.

11.1.3 Given the 20th-century development of the site, it is unlikely for there to be any significant surviving below-ground archaeological remains across much of the site, and any development impacts are likely to be negligible. Nevertheless, it is possible that, if present, archaeological remains may survive in the less disturbed areas of the site, notably around the site boundary and in the north-west part of the site. Any such

deposits are likely to have been disturbed by the insertion of the modern services which the site visit suggested are likely to be present within this part of the site.

12 POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER WORK

12.1.1 The effect of the proposed development on potential archaeological remains will be a material consideration in the determination of a submitted planning application. This desk-based assessment has not identified any archaeological remains of sufficient importance to prevent or significantly constrain the development of the site, which has been developed since the mid 1950s. Redevelopment of the site has potential to have an adverse impact upon any surviving archaeological remains that may be present. However, this report has demonstrated that the site has low potential to contain archaeological deposits predating the medieval period and has suggested that any later deposits are likely to have been at least partially disturbed/truncated by 20th-century development. On the basis of the low potential of the site and the likelihood that any deposits that may have been present are likely to have been significantly affected by the post-war development of the site, it is suggested that there is little requirement for further archaeological surveys or mitigation measures associated with the proposed development of the site.

13 CONCLUSION

13.1.1 The site has been developed to some extent since the mid 1950s and is currently occupied by Pitman House and Hairgate House (390–406 High Road). This desk-based assessment has not identified any archaeological remains of sufficient importance to prevent or significantly constrain the development of the site. The later 20th-century development of the site is likely to have had an adverse effect on any archaeological remains that may have been present.

13.1.2 The historic and archaeological baseline has identified only a very small number of known heritage assets of prehistoric and early medieval date within the vicinity of the site; no known Roman remains have been identified. The site and study area probably fell within the agricultural hinterland/woodland located to the south of the medieval settlement of Wembley situated on Wembley Hill. Historic mapping demonstrates the continued agricultural nature of the site until the end of the 19th century, after which the site remained vacant until the construction of a depot in the mid 1950s.

13.1.3 It is understood that the site will be redeveloped to provide purpose-built student accommodation with ground floor employment space(s), which could adversely impact upon any surviving archaeological remains that may be present within the site. However, this report has highlighted the low potential for prehistoric, Roman and early medieval remains to be present within the site. It is possible that remains of subsequent medieval and post-medieval agricultural activities may be present on site. However, it is probable that 20th-century development of the site will have at least partially damaged any earlier deposits or features.

13.1.4 On the basis of the low potential of the site and the likelihood that any deposits that may have been present are likely to have been significantly affected by the post-war

development of the site, it is suggested that there is little requirement for further archaeological surveys or mitigation measures associated with the proposed development of the site.

APPENDIX A GAZETTEER OF KNOWN HERITAGE ASSETS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

Abbreviations

LB	Listed Building	SM	Scheduled Monument
RPG	Registered Park and Garden	RB	Registered Battlefield
CA	Conservation Area	WHS	World Heritage Sites

OA	HER Ref.	List Entry	Name	Type/Grade	Period	Easting	Northing	Link
1	MLO107967	1431030	Roman Catholic Church of St Joseph	LB II	Modern	518839	185172	https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1431030
2	MLO118781	n/a	Tokynton	PLA	Early medieval	519331	185087	n/a
3	MLO20379	n/a	HIGH RD	MON	Early medieval	518805	185205	n/a
4	MLO68362	n/a	WEMBLEY	MON	Medieval	519095	185345	n/a
5	MLO19947	n/a	HIGH RD SOUTH OF	MON	Medieval to post-medieval	518705	185205	n/a
6	MLO99419	n/a	High Road, (Copland Community School), Wembley, {medieval and post medieval land drains}	MON	Medieval to post-medieval	518715	185018	n/a
7	MLO74468	n/a	WEMBLEY HILL BRENT	MON	Post-medieval	518805	185605	n/a
8	MLO107318	n/a	Waverley Avenue, Wembley, [St Joseph's Cemetery], Brent, HA9 {late 19th century cemetery}	PK	Post-medieval to modern	518851	184984	n/a

OA	HER Ref.	List Entry	Name	Type/Grade	Period	Easting	Northing	Link
9	MLO58359	n/a	Wembley Hill/Dagmar Avenue [The Green Man Hotel], Wembley {Post medieval and modern structures}	MON	Post-medieval to modern	518686	185668	n/a
10	MLO103678	n/a	Park Lane/St John's Road, [King Edward VII Park], Wembley, Brent, HA9 7RX, {20th Century Park}	PK	Modern	518261	185639	n/a
11	ELO17220	n/a	Vale Farm Sports Ground [Wembley Trunk Main] London Borough of Brent: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment	DBA	n/a	518123	185301	n/a
12	ELO14947	n/a	London Euston to Watford Junction and Willesden Junction to Clapham Junction: heritage audit	DBA	n/a	518213	185084	n/a
13	ELO18827	n/a	High Road (No. 416-444) [Wembley Link], Wembley, HA9: Desk Based Assessment	DBA	n/a	518500	185310	n/a
14	ELO14329	n/a	Wembley Hill Road/Southway/Harrow Road, Wembley, Brent: Desk Based Assessment	DBA	n/a	519020	185340	n/a
15	ELO20172	n/a	High Road (No.435-441), Wembley: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment	DBA	n/a	518321	185154	n/a
16	ELO1246	n/a	High Road [Copland Community School], Wembley: Desk Based Assessment	DBA	n/a	518733	184931	n/a
17	ELO7384	n/a	Wembley Hill Road, [W04, Wembley Stadium], Wembley, Watching Brief	WB	n/a	519002	185656	n/a
18	ELO7841	n/a	Royal Route/Stadium Way, (W07, south of Wembley Stadium), Wembley: Watching Brief	WB	n/a	518944	185598	n/a
19	ELO7841	n/a	Royal Route/Stadium Way, (W07, south of Wembley Stadium), Wembley: Watching Brief	WB	n/a	519066	185590	n/a

OA	HER Ref.	List Entry	Name	Type/Grade	Period	Easting	Northing	Link
20	ELO18281	n/a	Royal Route, Wembley W10: Watching Brief	WB	n/a	519112	185484	n/a
21	ELO7288	n/a	Wembley Hill Road, [Wembley Stadium Station], Wembley: Watching Brief	WB	n/a	518985	185361	n/a
22	ELO14560	n/a	[Wembley South West Lands] Brent: Archaeological Watching Brief	WB	n/a	519090	185370	n/a
23	ELO9032	n/a	Wembley Hill/Dagmar Avenue [Green Man Hotel], Wembley, Brent: Evaluation	EV	n/a	518686	185668	n/a
24	ELO4915	n/a	Wembley Hill Road (No 34) [Mahatma Gandhi House], Brent, HA9: Evaluation	EV	n/a	518992	185434	n/a
25	ELO7731	n/a	High Road, (Land at Copland Community School), Wembley, Evaluation	EV	n/a	518715	184995	n/a

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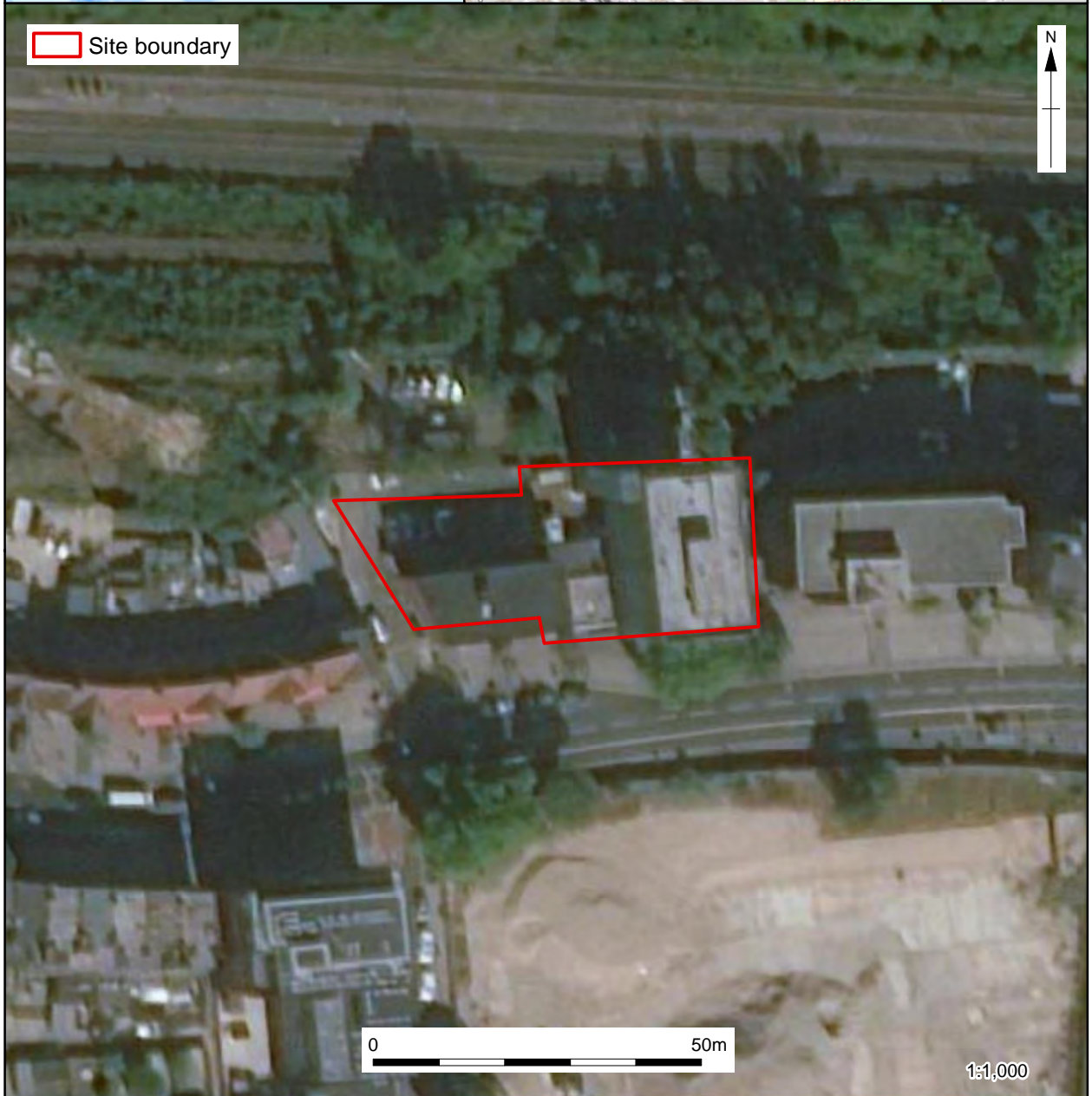
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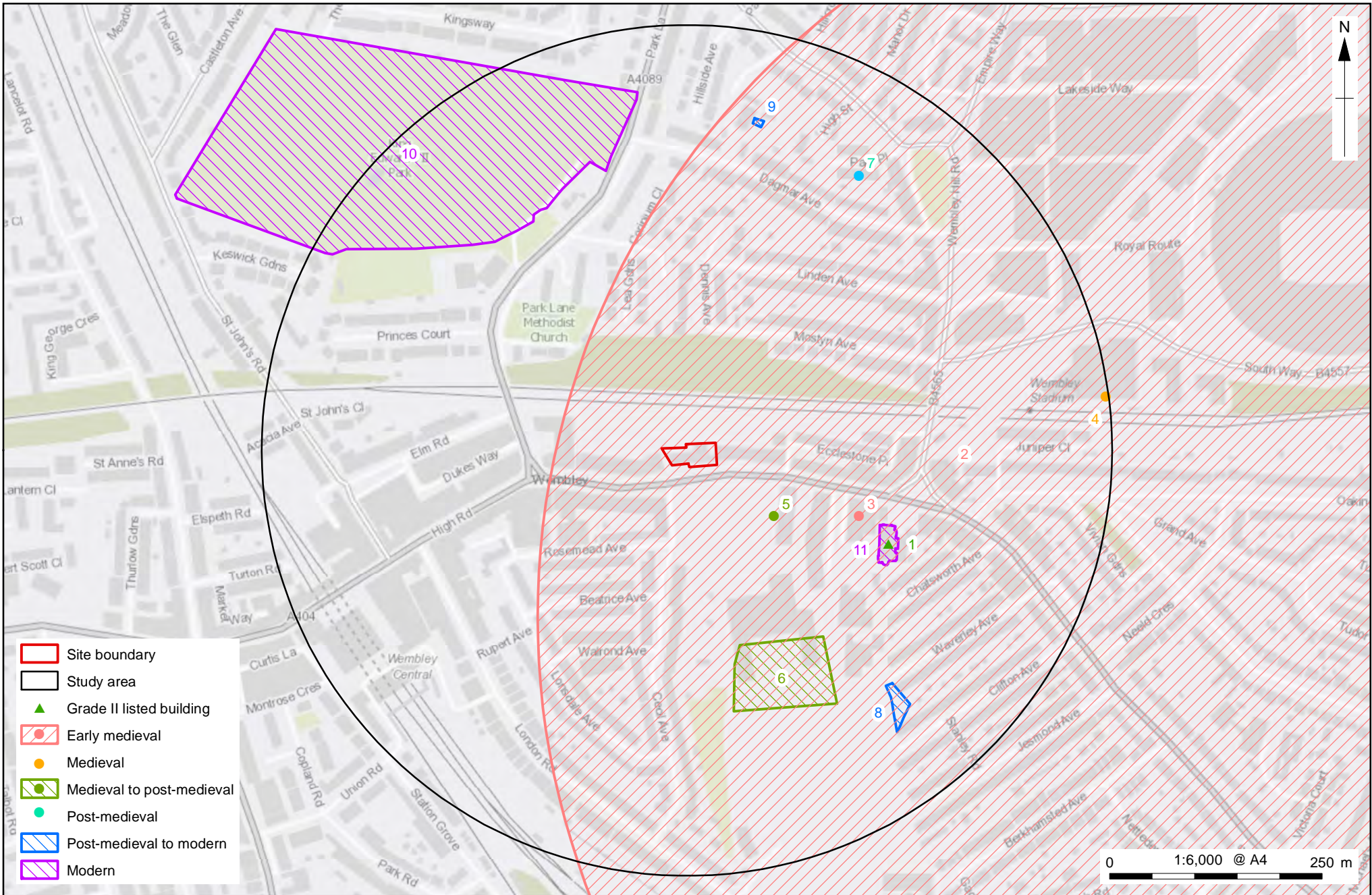
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Figure 1: Site location

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Figure 2: Designated and non-designated heritage assets

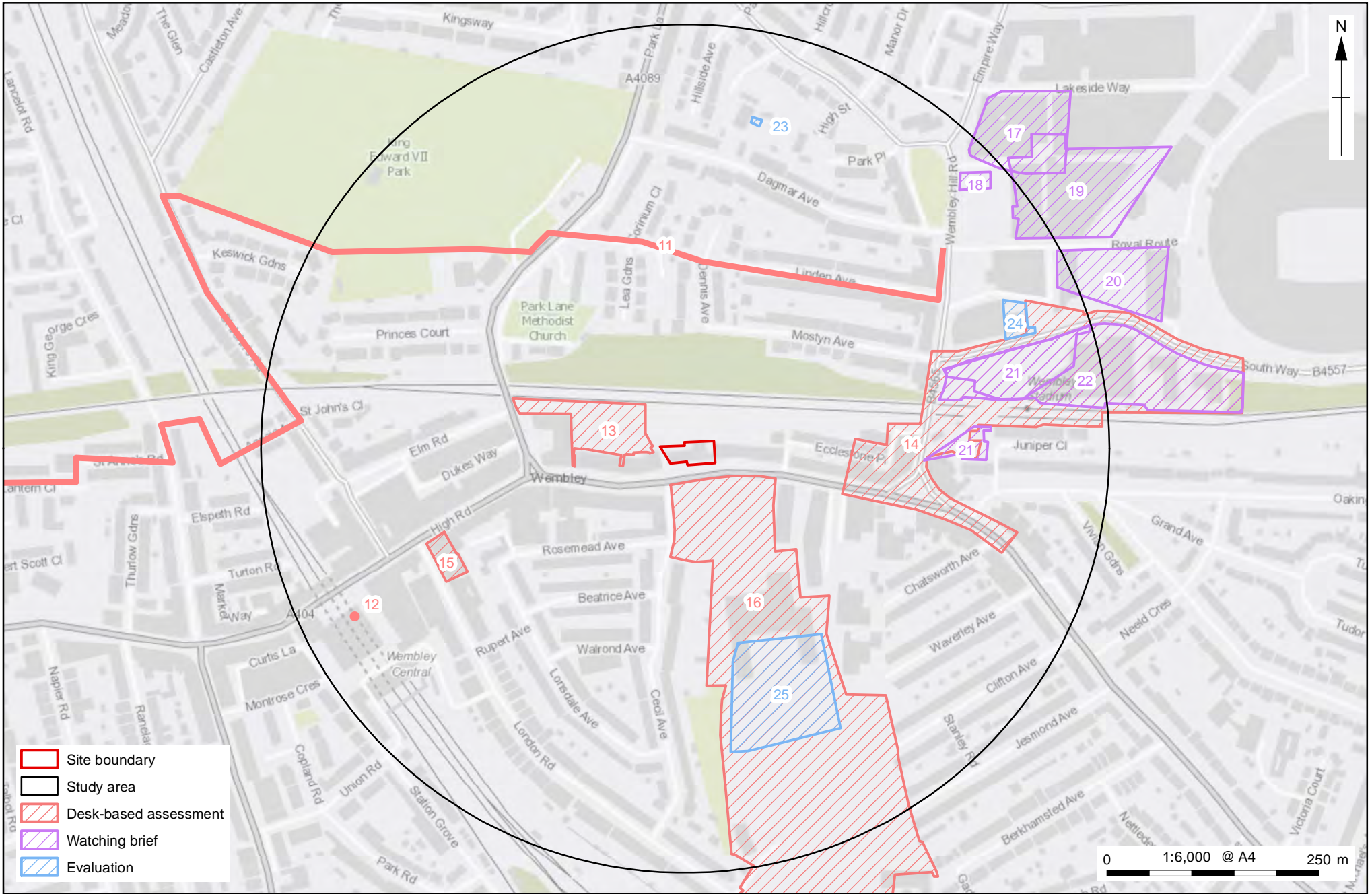


Figure 3: Previous archaeological investigations

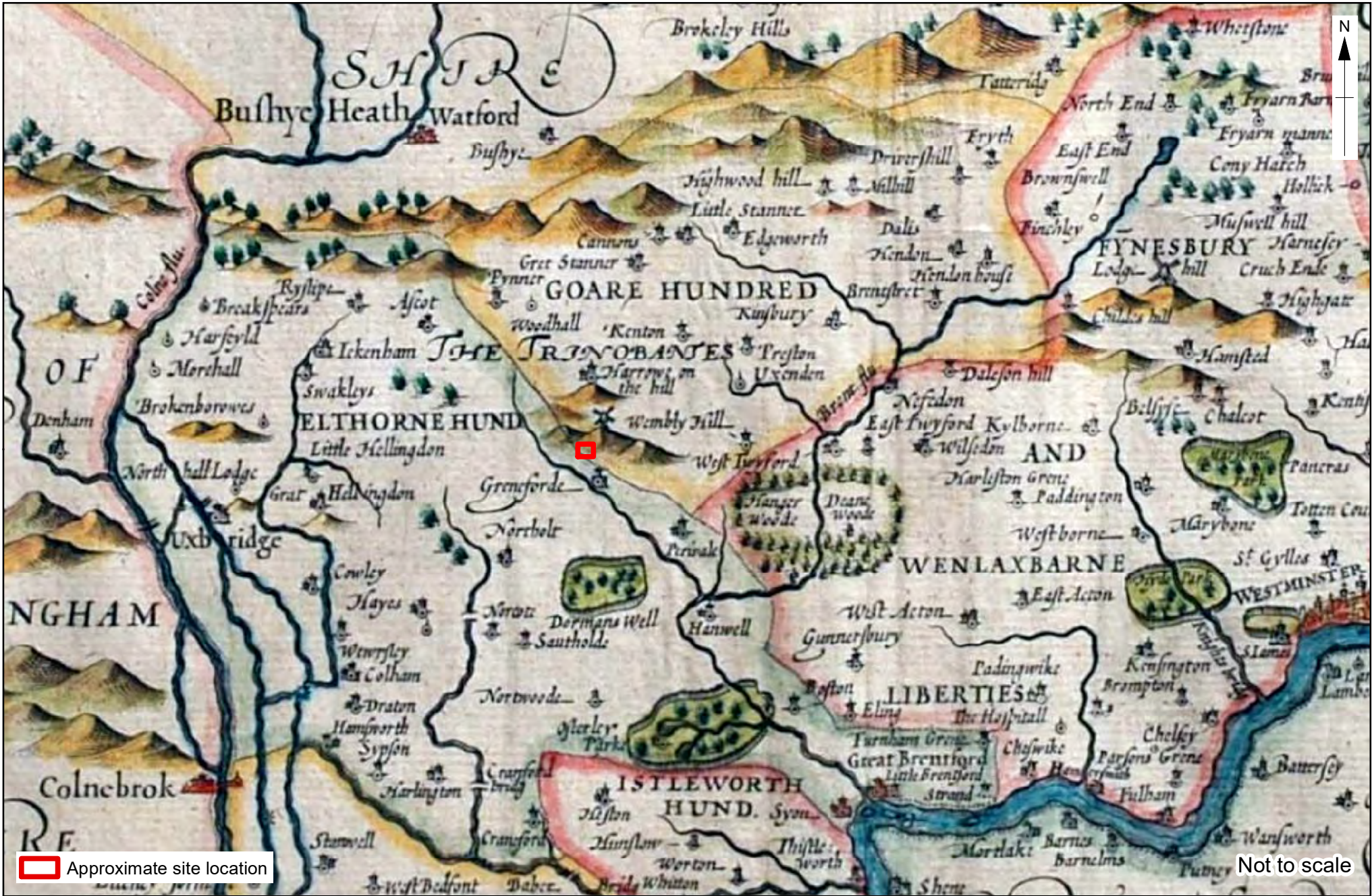


Figure 4: Extract from Speed's 1646 map of Middlesex described with the most famous cities of London and Westminster



Figure 5: Extract from Rocque's 1746 map of *London and 10 Miles Round*

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Grid Ref: 518605, 185276

Map Name: County Series
Map date: 1865
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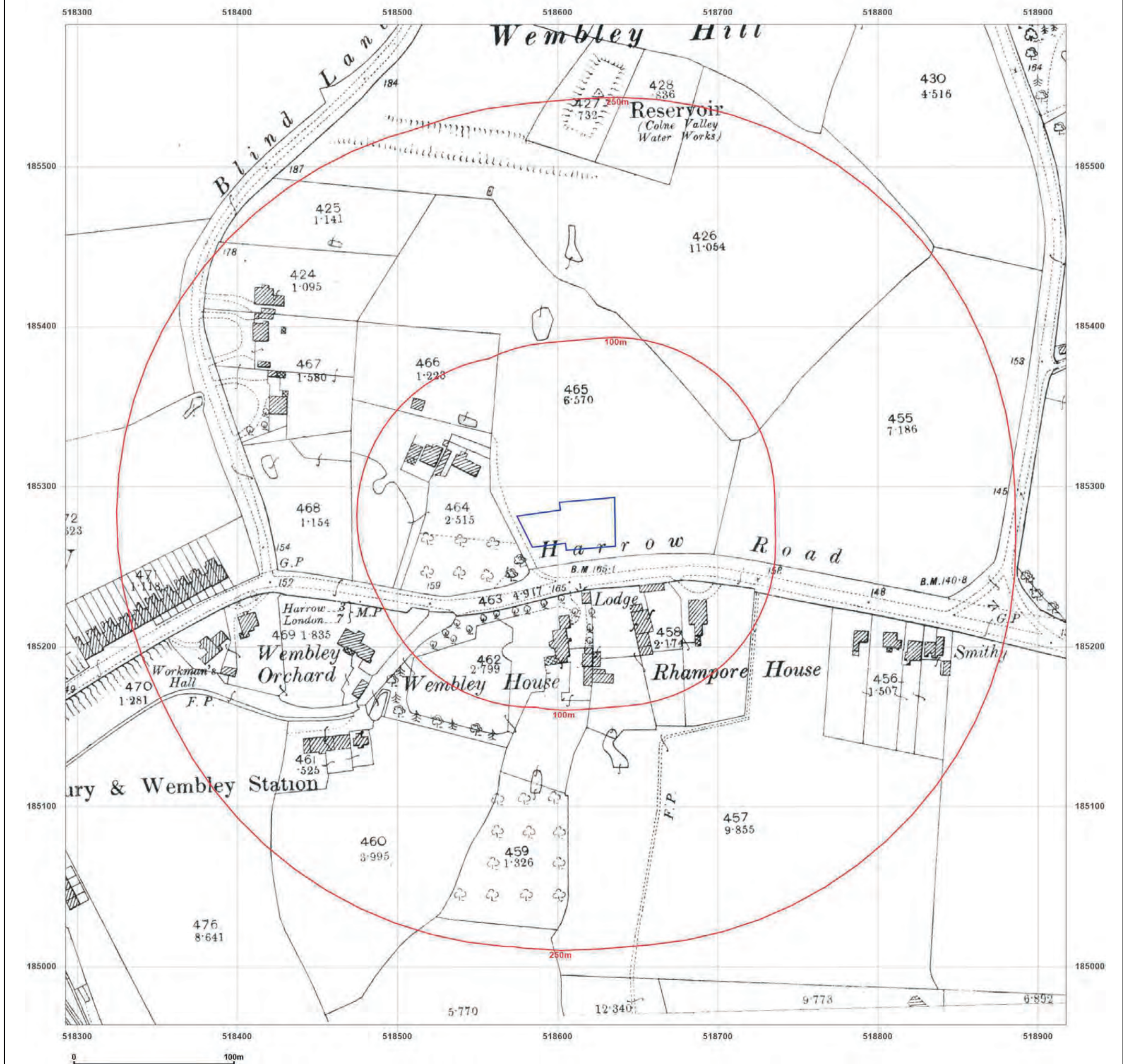
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Figure 6: 1865 Ordnance Survey map, 1:2500





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Figure 7: 1896 Ordnance Survey map, 1:2500

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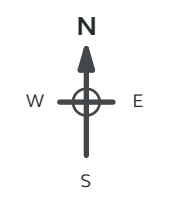
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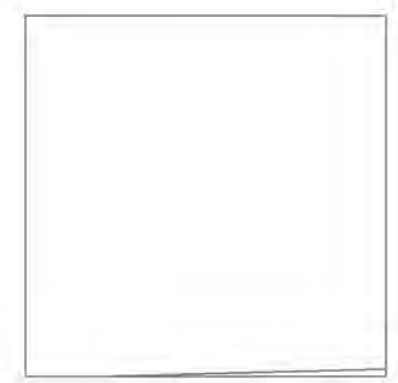
Map date: 1914

Scale: 1:2,500

Printed at: 1:2,500



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Edition N/A
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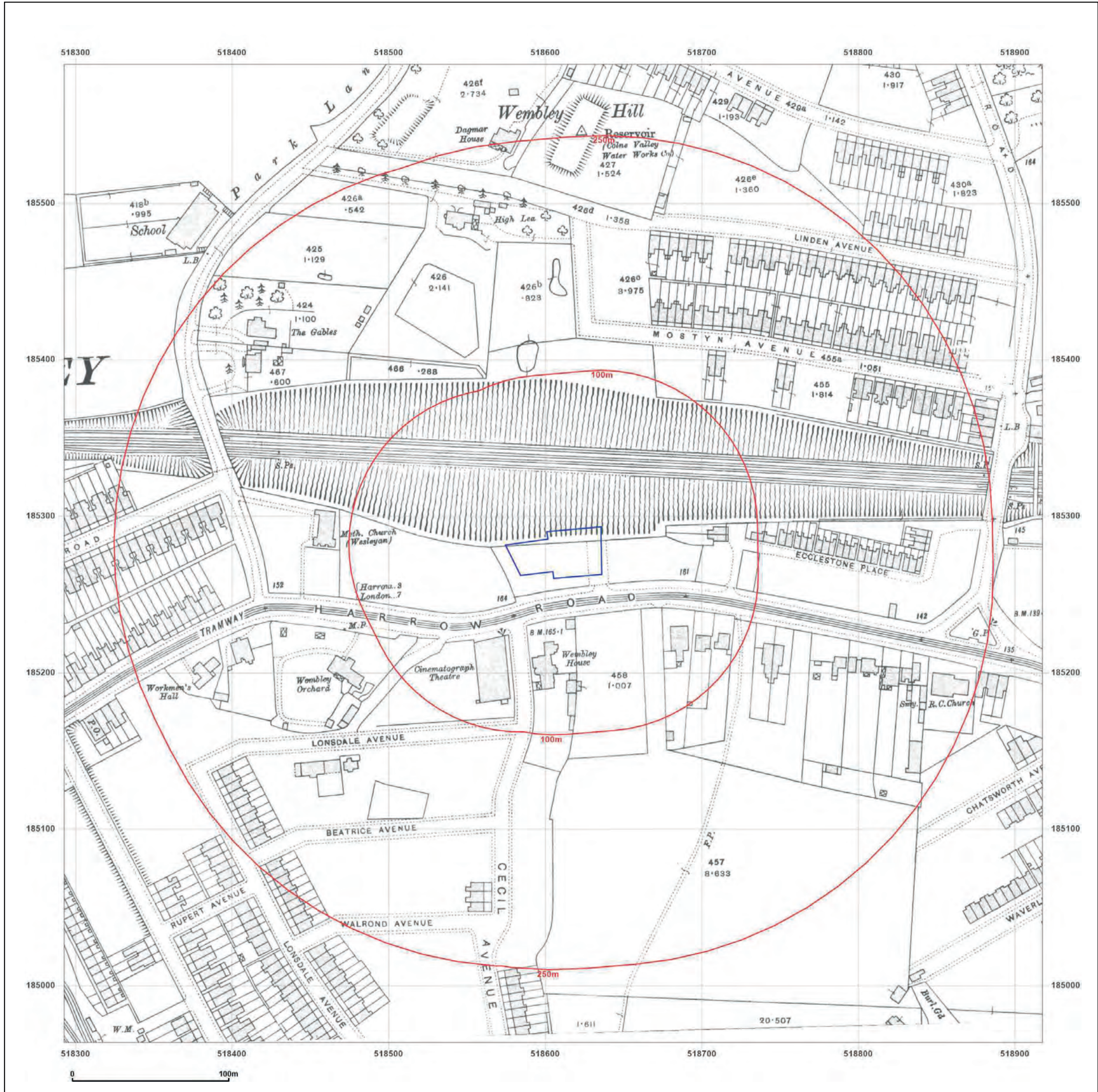


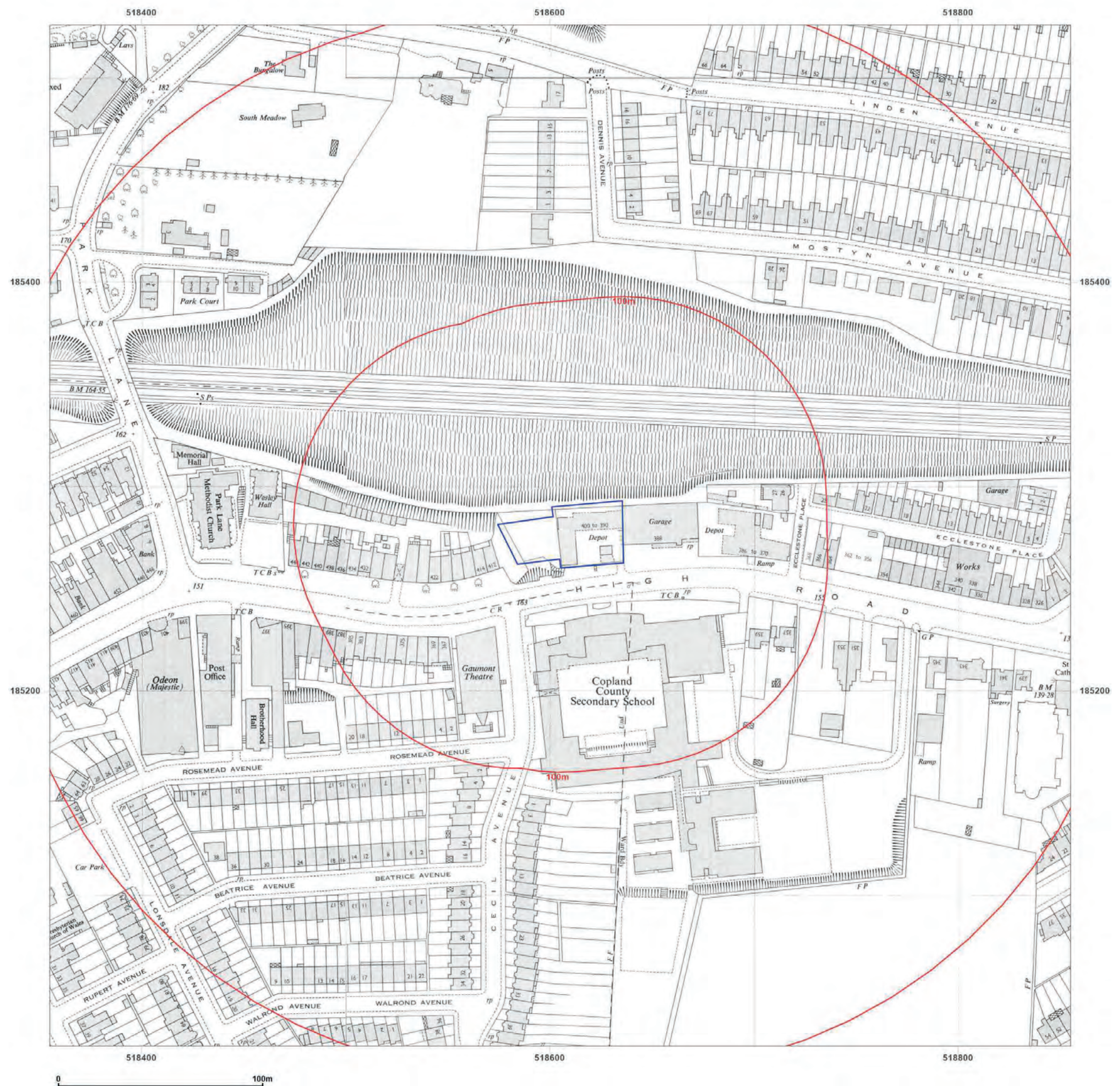
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Figure 8: 1914 Ordnance Survey map, 1:2500





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Map Name: National Grid
Map date: 1956-1957
Scale: 1:1,250
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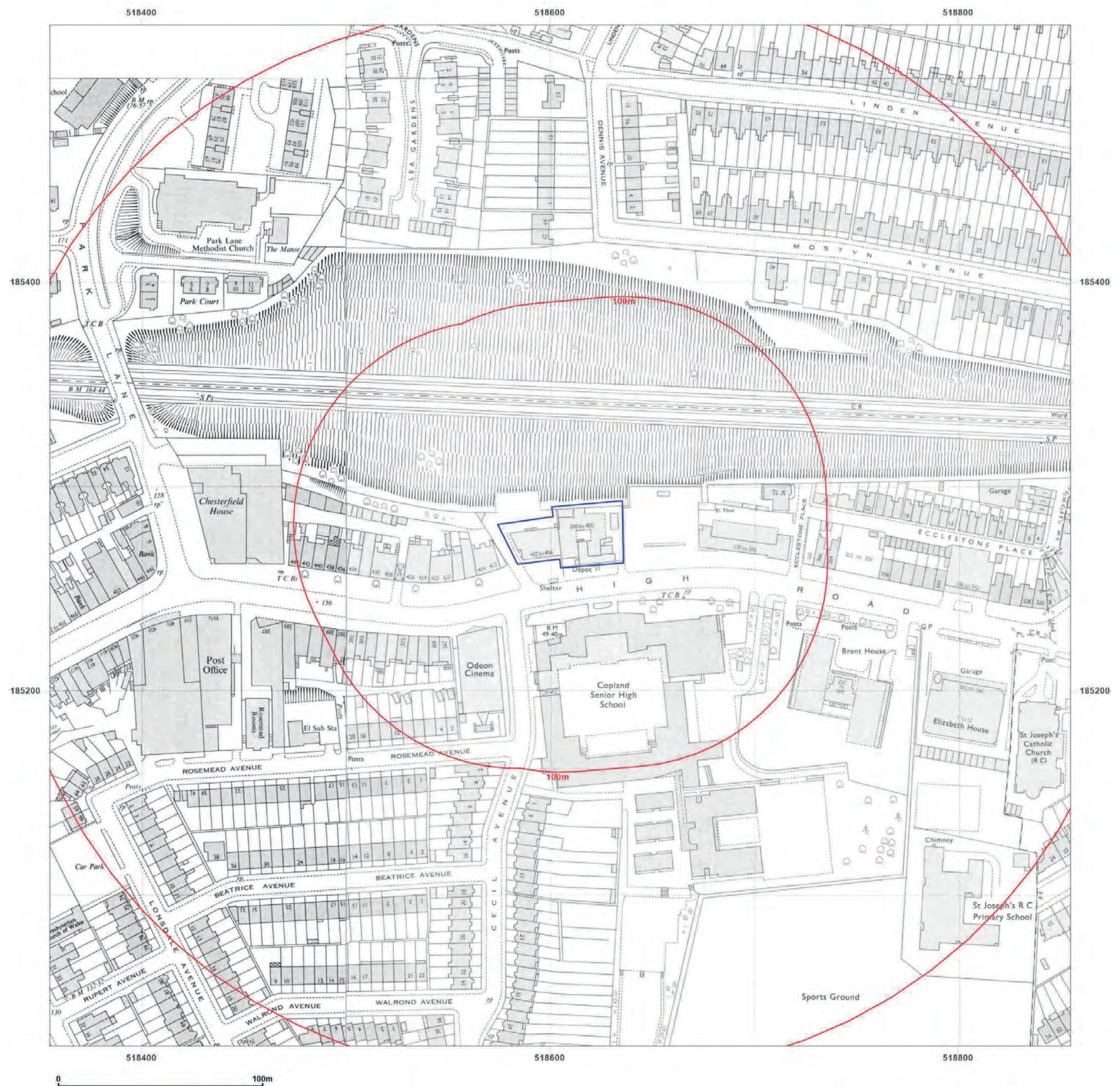
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Figure 9: 1956-7 National Grid map, 1:2500



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Map Name: National Grid
Map date: 1968-1970
Scale: 1:1,250
Printed at: 1:2,000



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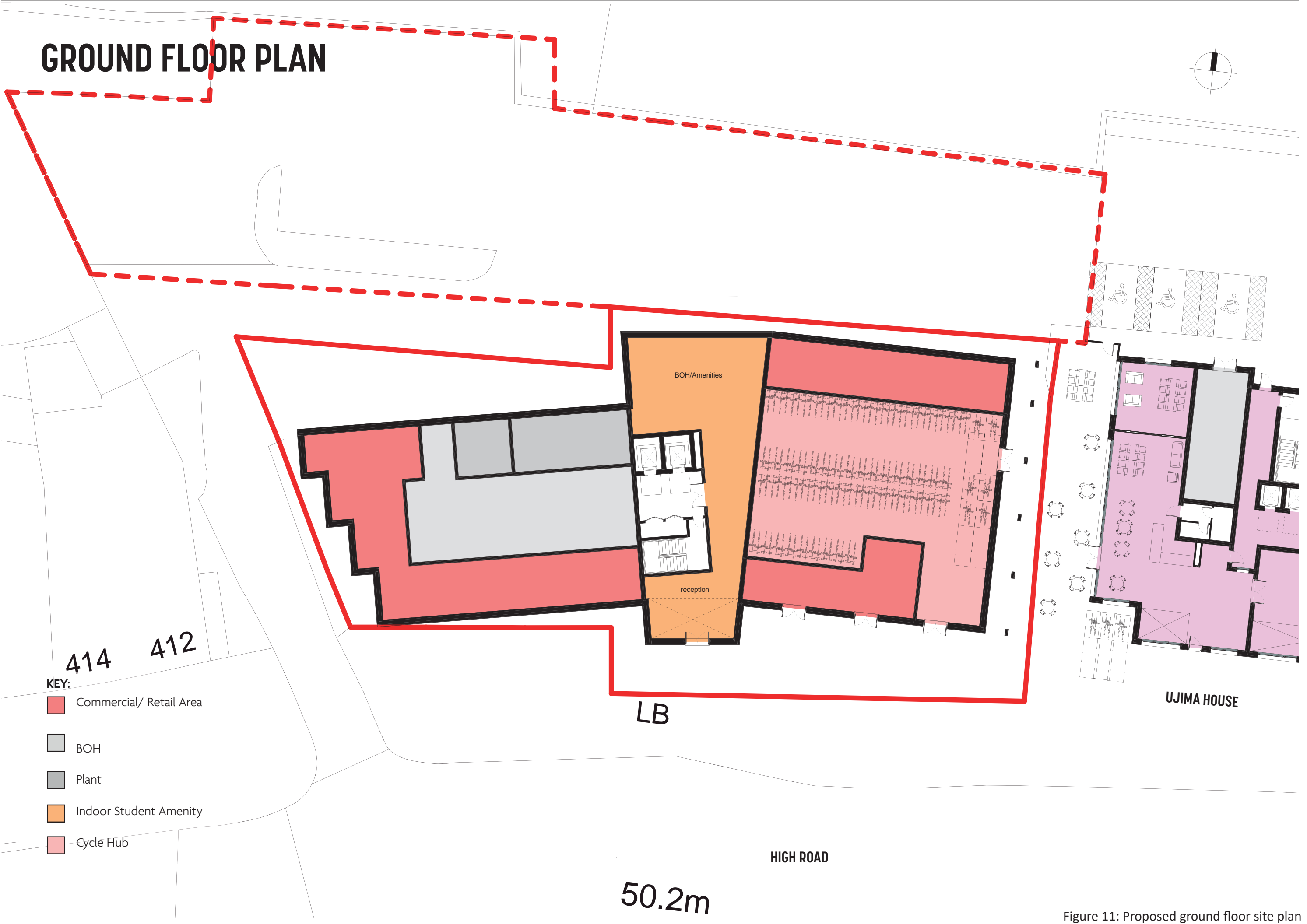
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Figure 10: 1968–70 National Grid map, 1:2500

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



- KEY:**
- Commercial/ Retail Area
 - BOH
 - Plant
 - Indoor Student Amenity
 - Cycle Hub

Figure 11: Proposed ground floor site plan



Plate 1: Pitman House and side access road, looking north



Plate 2: Fairgate House, looking north-north-east



Plate 3: View to rear of Pitman House with modern service impacts, looking south-south-east



Plate 4: View to rear of Fairgate House, looking east



Plate 5: View to rear of Pitman House and Fairgate House, looking east-south-east



Plate 6: Brick wall and extension to rear of Pitman House, looking south-south-east



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