



LADYEWELL HOUSE, FERNYHALGH LANE

Preston,
Lancashire

Archaeological Watching Brief



Oxford Archaeology North

June 2005

Croft Complete Homes Ltd

Issue No: 2005-6/329

OAN Job No: L9463

NGR: 5562 3363

Planning Application No: 06/04/0828

Document Title: LADYEWELL HOUSE, FERNYHALGH LANE, PRESTON,
LANCASHIRE

Document Type: Watching Brief

Client Name: Croft Complete Homes Ltd

Issue Number: 2004/2005/329
OA Job Number: L9463
Site Code: LS04

National Grid Reference: SD 5562 3363

Planning Application No: 06/04/0828

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SUMMARY

Following a request by Croft Complete Homes Ltd and under the recommendations of Lancashire County Archaeological Service, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) undertook an archaeological watching brief on the 15th November 2004 during the construction of a conservatory adjoining Ladyewell House, Fernyhalgh Lane, Fulwood, Preston (centred on SD 5562 3363).

Ladyewell House is situated at the end of the metalled section of Fernyhalgh Lane which runs south-west from D'urton Lane, *c* 2.5km east of the village of Broughton, and is located in an area of some archaeological potential. Local archaeological sites range from prehistoric and Roman find spots to a medieval oratory (small chapel) and shrine. The proposed development was to include the excavation of a foundation trench 1m wide, 0.8m deep and running for a total distance of 17m, forming three sides of a 7m by 5m rectangle against the rear of the building. However, after excavation of the initial 4m of the foundation trench to a depth of up to 1.4m, the ground was deemed to be unsuitable for building and ground works were halted. No archaeological features were observed and resumption of the watching brief will not be required during future development, as this will take place on a concrete raft.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North would like to express its thanks to John Croft of Croft Complete Homes Ltd. for commissioning the work.

Dave McNicol undertook the fieldwork and compiled this report. Drawings were produced by Mark Tidmarsh. The project was managed by Alan Lupton, who also edited the report, along with Stephen Rowland.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 A watching brief was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology North (OA North), in November 2004 at Ladyewell House, Fernyhalgh Lane, Fulwood, Preston Lancashire (SD 5562 3363; Fig 1), on behalf of Croft Complete Homes. The work was undertaken to satisfy a condition on the planning application required by Lancashire County Archaeological Service (LCAS). A brief outlining this work was issued by LCAS (*Appendix 1*).
- 1.1.2 The site lies on, or near to, the site of a medieval oratory (small chapel) and was the site of a Catholic shrine during the middle years of the seventeenth century (Fig 2). There have also been reports of prehistoric flints found within the area, as well as find spots of Roman coins. Consequently, there was potential for the groundworks encountering significant archaeological deposits.
- 1.1.3 The watching brief monitored the groundworks during the construction of a conservatory adjoining the back of Ladyewell House. These groundworks were to involve the excavation of a 1m wide and 0.8m deep foundation trench around the perimeter of the planned conservatory, which was to measure 7m by 5m (Fig 3).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 WATCHING BRIEF

- 2.1.1 A programme of field observation was undertaken during the excavation of the foundation trench to record the location, extent and character of any surviving archaeological features and deposits that may be revealed during the ground disturbance. The work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), and generally accepted best practice.
- 2.1.2 The patio paving stones were removed by hand, and the concrete patio removed with the use of a hydraulic breaker. A 1m wide trench was excavated both by hand and with the use of a 360° mini-tracked excavator (Plate 1). The trench was located around the perimeter of the proposed conservatory, and excavated to a maximum depth of 1.4m. A monochrome and colour slide photographic record was maintained throughout.

2.2 ARCHIVE

- 2.2.1 A full archive has been prepared to a professional standard in accordance with current United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC 1990) and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the Lancashire County Record Office (Preston) on completion of the project. Copies of the report together with the archive will be deposited with the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record in Preston.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 SITE LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.1.1 The site of the conservatory extension is located on an area of patio within the back garden of Ladyewell House, Fernyhalgh Lane, Fulwood, Preston Lancashire (SD 5553 3356; Fig 1). Ladyewell House is situated in a rural location approximately 2.5km north-east of Preston city centre and 200m west of the M6 motorway and is used as a Catholic devotional centre.

3.2 GEOLOGY

3.2.1 The solid geology consists of Permian and Triassic rocks (British Geological Survey 1979) which are overlain by deposits of glacial drift (Countryside Commission 1998). The soils are classified as Salop soils, which are slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged, reddish fine-loamy and clayey soils (Ordnance Survey 1983).

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.3.1 **Prehistoric:** no known sites of this date are located on the site itself and there is little evidence for prehistoric (Palaeolithic to Iron Age) activity within the immediate area; such evidence as there is, is restricted to a number of isolated find-spots of prehistoric stone tools, indicating that the area was in use during the prehistoric periods (OA North 2002).

3.3.2 **Roman:** Roman coins have been found in the grounds of the current building, which may relate to the use of the springs at the site as a focus for votive behaviour during the Roman period. It was believed that springs had various deities associated with them to whom offerings were made, a tradition that has persisted from Roman and medieval times to the modern day wishing wells.

3.3.3 **Early Medieval:** Ladyewell Shrine ('Our Lady of the Well') is located by a natural spring. Its associations as a shrine can be seen in the Anglo-Saxon name of Fernyhalgh Lane which translates to 'Ancient Shrine' (Donlan nd). The date of its origin is somewhat obscure but it is believed to have been a pagan shrine christianised in the seventh century and used as a baptistry for pagans received into the Church after the conversion of the Edwin, King of Northumbria in AD 627 (*ibid*). A small chapel was later built, respecting the shrine, but fell into disrepair until around 1100 when an Irish aristocrat, Fergus Maguire, is believed to have been led to the site in a dream to rebuild the chapel (*ibid*). Whilst the exact date is uncertain, the earliest documentary evidence relates to a license in the Chetham Society's "Chaunderies of Lancashire". It is stated that "*on Jan 8th 1348-49 a licence was granted by Archbishop Zouche to Thomas, son of Gilbert de Singleton to have divine service by a fit chaplain within the manors of Broughton Fernyhalgh and Farmholes for three years, without injury to the parish church of Preston in Amounderness*" (*ibid*).

- 3.3.4 The area of land around Fulwood was in all probability forested and relatively uninhabited during the early medieval period, though small-scale settlement may have begun at this time. A key indicator is the name Fulwood itself, which derives from ‘foul wood’ meaning a boggy and marshy woodland area (Knight 1986). The woodland was presumably fairly substantial, extending in a band across the north of the town (Kenyon 1991, 68).
- 3.3.5 **Later Medieval:** Following the Norman Conquest, Fulwood formed part of the demesne Forest of Lancaster, which had been carved out of Preston parish. Fulwood is variously referred to as *Fulewde* in documents from 1199, *Fulewude* in a survey of 1228 and *Fulewode* in 1297 (Knight 1986, Hunt 1992). The Forest was the hunting preserve of the King, and was pre-Conquest in origin; under the Normans, the practice was formalised and the areas subject to its laws extended. The demesne lands also included Myerscough and Swainshead, with the land between these three areas forming the greatest part of the forested land, extending north from the line of St George’s Road in Preston. Despite the increased popularity of parks for hunting during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and increased commercial exploitation of forests in the form of vaccaries, the land remained identified as forest well beyond the medieval period and, even though the southern extent was pushed back to the line of Watling Street Roman Road (running through Fulwood itself) by the thirteenth century, still extended over 2000 acres 250 years later (Kenyon 1991, Hunt 1992).
- 3.3.6 In 1547, an act of Parliament assigned to the Crown all Chauntries and free chapels along with all the monies destined for obits, anniversaries and church lights. The chapel at Ladyewell was destroyed and its revenues, furniture and bell were confiscated (Donlan nd). The site of the chapel is not precisely known but it is believed to be located between the well and the present M6.
- 3.3.7 **Post-Medieval:** after the reformation and the destruction of the chapel, neighbouring Catholics continued to visit Ladyewell to pray. However, after the accession of James II in 1685, Ladyewell House was built to serve as a Mass centre (Donlan nd). The outward appearance of Ladyewell House did not differ much from that of the other large dwellings in the area. The ground floor was used for the residence of a priest and the upper floor was used as a chapel. Later a wing was added on the western side to give accommodation to the Lancashire clergy (*ibid*).
- 3.3.8 During the Second English Civil War, Fulwood’s moors witnessed a dramatic conflict between the Royalist forces, commanded by the Duke of Hamilton and Sir Marmaduke Langdale, and Oliver Cromwell’s Parliamentarians. The Battle of Preston took place on 17th August 1648, on land to the south-west of Ladyewell House. Although superior in numbers, caught strung-out on the march, the disorganised and disparate Royalist forces were dispatched piecemeal by the concentrated Parliamentarian forces over the ensuing days (Plant 2005).
- 3.3.9 In the eighteenth century, a course for horse-racing was established on Fulwood Moor under the patronage of Lord Derby, who organised races there between 1786 and 1833. Races were also held on Preston Moor, run by the

Preston Corporation, and begun around the same time. However, the latter races were not as popular as those of Lord Derby, and the track closed in 1791 (Knight 1986).

- 3.3.10 Farms of late seventeenth to eighteenth century date indicate a period of increased building and prosperity across the country (Platt 1994), when middle class yeoman farmers began to become a powerful social and economic force (Marshall 1991). Fulwood Hall, still standing to the south-west of the site and with a lintel date of 1639, was the seat of the Clayton Family, who were wealthy landowners (Knight 1986).
- 3.3.11 Across Britain, the eighteenth and nineteenth century Parliamentary Enclosure Acts caused the intake of large areas of available land around the peripheries of earlier medieval enclosures. This post-medieval enclosure is often visible as well-surveyed straight enclosure roads and walls and hedges of uniform type, which ignore the natural features of the landscape (Hodges 1991). An Enclosure Act for the parish of Fulwood was passed in 1817, from which date enclosure of the lands around Fulwood began in earnest (Knight 1986).

4. WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 RESULTS

4.1.1 The site was stripped of paving stones (**101**) and concrete (**102**), and a 1m wide trench excavated to 0.8m in depth. Within the entire depth and extent of the foundation trench, the ground underneath the patio consisted of post-medieval building debris (**103**) (*see Appendix 2*). An attempt to reach solid geology by excavating the foundation trench to a total depth of 1.4m was unsuccessful, finding only more building debris. This material was unsuitable for the construction of foundations and, due to the lack of any solid geology being encountered, excavation of the trench was stopped when it was 4m long. The limited width of the trench meant that it was not possible to ascertain the extent of this deposit of demolition debris. No archaeological features were uncovered during the watching brief, although several finds were retrieved from the building debris.

4.2 FINDS

4.2.1 **Introduction:** in total, 39 artefacts were recovered from the watching brief, the majority of which was pottery (32 fragments), with small quantities of clay tobacco pipe (four fragments), glass (one fragment), and iron (two fragments) also present. The finds were all retrieved from building debris **103**, and are listed in Table 1.

4.2.2 **Pottery:** the assemblage contained a mixture of kitchenware, tableware, and bedroomware vessels. The kitchenware comprised a North West purpleware jar dated to the sixteenth to eighteenth century, brown-glazed red earthenware dated to the late seventeenth to early twentieth century, and brown-glazed grey stoneware dated to the eighteenth to early twentieth century. The tableware was mainly white earthenware, decorated with 'Asiatic Pheasants' (Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 29), 'Rhine' (Kelly 1999, 190, pl 39.3), and 'Willow' (Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 402) transfer-printed patterns, and a tankard base was decorated with inlaid slip very similar to that illustrated by Draper (1984, 50, number 104). Bone china cup and saucer fragments decorated with lilac sprigs were also present, and the bedroomware included a transfer-printed soap dish, a basin rim decorated with 'Broseley' (Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 62) transfer-printed pattern, and several fragments from chamber pots. The overall assemblage can be dated using the tablewares, which are much more diagnostic than the kitchenwares (Draper 1984, 5), to the late eighteenth to twentieth century.

4.2.3 **Clay tobacco pipe:** in addition to three undiagnostic stem fragments, a complete bulbous bowl was recovered. It had a milled rim, a spur, and an impressed mark resembling an orb on the rear. It was dated to approximately 1660-80 (Ayto 1994, 8).

4.2.4 **Glass and iron:** a colourless glass tumbler was recovered, and was dated to the eighteenth to twentieth century. A corroded iron nail and a second corroded iron object were not closely dateable.

4.2.5 **Conclusions:** a small domestic assemblage, which was largely pottery-based, was recovered from the building debris. It was dated to the late eighteenth to twentieth century, and is a typical assemblage in terms of the tablewares and kitchenwares present. A seventeenth century clay tobacco pipe bowl bearing an impressed stamp is of interest as it adds to the records of marked clay pipes from the area.

Context	Quantity	Material	Description	Date range
103	8	Pottery	Lilac sprig bone china cup and saucer	Late eighteenth - twentieth century
103	1	Pottery	Brown-glazed grey-bodied stoneware hollow-ware base	Eighteenth - twentieth century
103	1	Pottery	Brown-glazed red earthenware	Late seventeenth - early twentieth century
103	2	Pottery	North West purple ware stoneware jar	Sixteenth - eighteenth century
103	19	Pottery	White earthenware, including 'Rhine' plate rim, 'Asiatic Pheasants' ashtray rim, 'Willow' plate rim, blue transfer-printed soap dish, 'Broseley' basin rim, red transfer-printed chamber pot rim, factory-made slipware tankard base, and carinated bowl	Late eighteenth - twentieth century
103	1	Pottery	Factory-made self-glazed buff earthenware bowl rim with white slip stripes	Late eighteenth - twentieth century
103	4	Clay tobacco pipe	Bulbous bowl with milled rim and impressed orb stamp on rear, and stems with medium bores	Late seventeenth - early eighteenth century
103	1	Glass	Colourless tumbler	Eighteenth - twentieth century
103	2	Iron	Corroded nail and other long thin object	Not closely dateable

Table 1: Finds Summary

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 The groundworks were stopped prematurely due to the lack, at a suitable depth, of any solid geology onto which the conservatory foundations could be built. A new construction plan, involving the use of a concrete raft will not require a watching brief. The location of the site, on, or near to, the site of a medieval oratory and Catholic shrine, had potential for the preservation of archaeological features, but the limited extent of the groundworks meant that there was little opportunity to ascertain their presence. It is possible that archaeological stratigraphy survives intact beneath the thick deposit of demolition debris. Finds, such as the late seventeenth century clay pipe lend support to the re-use of the shrine during the reign of James II.
- 5.1.2 It is difficult to know whether the demolition debris derived from a nearby building that related to Ladyewell House, or from an earlier part of the building itself, perhaps a later extension. Sections of the foundations for the current building revealed within the trench indicate the brick fabric of the rear of the building to be fairly modern in appearance, while other parts would appear to be of breeze block construction. It is possible that, prior to the laying of the patio, the rear part of the building has been renovated during the twentieth century. Any foundations associated with this event may have cut through deposits containing eighteenth and nineteenth century pottery, which became mixed in with the demolition debris along with finds dating to the period of demolition. The thickness of the demolition debris cannot be explained solely on the basis of a need to level-up the ground prior to the laying of the patio, and it is possible that any earlier structures to the rear of Ladyewell House may have been cellared.

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APPENDIX 1 - PROJECT BRIEF

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Location: LADYEWELL HOUSE, FERNYHALGH LANE, FULWOOD, PRESTON.

Proposal: ERECTION OF CONSERVATORY TO REAR OF PROPERTY,

1. Summary

An application for planning permission has been submitted to Preston City Council for the erection of a conservatory at Ladywell House, Fernyhalgh Lane. The site has produced finds of Roman coins, possible worked flints and was the site of a medieval chapel. Planning Application Number 06/04/0828

There is a possibility that archaeological remains may exist on this site but little is known of their extent or of their state of preservation. Lancashire County Archaeology Service has advised that the archaeological deposits that may occur on the site should be recorded as they are encountered. It has, therefore, been recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out during development.

This recommendation follows the advice given by central government as set out in *Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG16)* issued by the DoE.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 NGR: SD 5562 3363. Ladywell is at the end of the metalled section of Fernyhalgh Lane which runs southwest from D'urton Lane, c 2.5 km east of the village of Broughton. D'urton Lane runs east from the A6 at the southern end of Broughton village.

Current Land Use and Vegetation Cover: The site of the conservatory is a patio area adjoining the house. The patio area lies within the garden of the house, which is used as a Catholic devotional centre.

3. Planning Background

- 3.1 The development is of a conservatory building adjoining the house. Because of the potential for archaeology on the site, it has been recommended that the groundworks for the conservatory be carried out under an archaeological watching brief. Planning permission has been granted with a condition requiring that a programme of archaeological work be implemented.

4. Archaeological Background

- 4.1 Ladywell House is thought to have been built on, or near to, the site of a medieval oratory (a small chapel) and was the site of a Catholic shrine during the middle years of the 17th century (PRN 1706). A cross in the grounds may be

medieval in origin and associated with the oratory (PRN 1707) Roman coins have been found in the grounds of the current building, possibly relating to the use of the springs at the site as a focus for votive behaviour (springs were often believed to have associated deities to whom offerings would be made – a practice which is mirrored in the more recent idea of the 'wishing well') during the Roman period. There are also reports of finds of flints from the area, possibly deriving from prehistoric occupation or activity again focussing on the springs (PRN 25084).

4.2 Further details of these sites can be obtained from the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record, quoting the PRNs.

5. Requirement for an Archaeological Watching Brief

5.1 The proposed development would damage or destroy archaeological remains which may be present on the site. It has therefore been recommended that an archaeological watching brief should take place to record the presence and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits.

6. Objectives

The objectives of the watching brief are to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site, including its presence or absence, character and extent, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality, in order to make an assessment of its worth in the appropriate context.

6.2 The results of the watching brief may be used to:

- produce a record of the location, nature and date of any archaeological remains encountered on the site; and
- add to knowledge about the previous history of activity on the current site and its surroundings; and
- provide information to influence future planning decisions in the area.

6.3 The watching brief will cover the whole of the area to be disturbed by the development including building foundations, service trenches and other earthmoving activities.

7. Schedule of Works

7.1 An adequate written record will be maintained of archaeological features and finds encountered.

7.2 The location of all archaeological features and finds will be indicated on a measured plan of the site at an appropriate scale.

7.3 Where appropriate, measured drawings will be made of archaeological features encountered.

9.4 Access to the land will be arranged by the client and the successful contractor will need to liaise to ensure that suitable arrangements are established

9.5 This brief shall not be altered without the express consent of the LCAS. It allows some flexibility of approach but deviations from the agreed project design shall be discussed and agreed in advance with LCAS. A copy of the brief on computer disc can be supplied upon request.

10 Further Information

10.1 Further information and details of the proposed development can be obtained from the Mr John Croft, Croft Complete Homes, Unit 6, Pitman Court, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 9ZG. Tel: 01772 703777. Fax: 01772 703888

10.2 Further queries regarding this brief or the general conditions can be addressed to the Lancashire County Archaeology Service, Lancashire County Council Environment Directorate, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston, PR1 8RD, Tel. 01772 531734. Fax 01772 534201.

APPENDIX 2 - CONTEXT LIST

Context	Description	Maximum Depth
101	Paving slabs for patio	0.1m
102	Concrete surface beneath patio	0.2m
102	Demolition debris	1.4m

ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Location Map

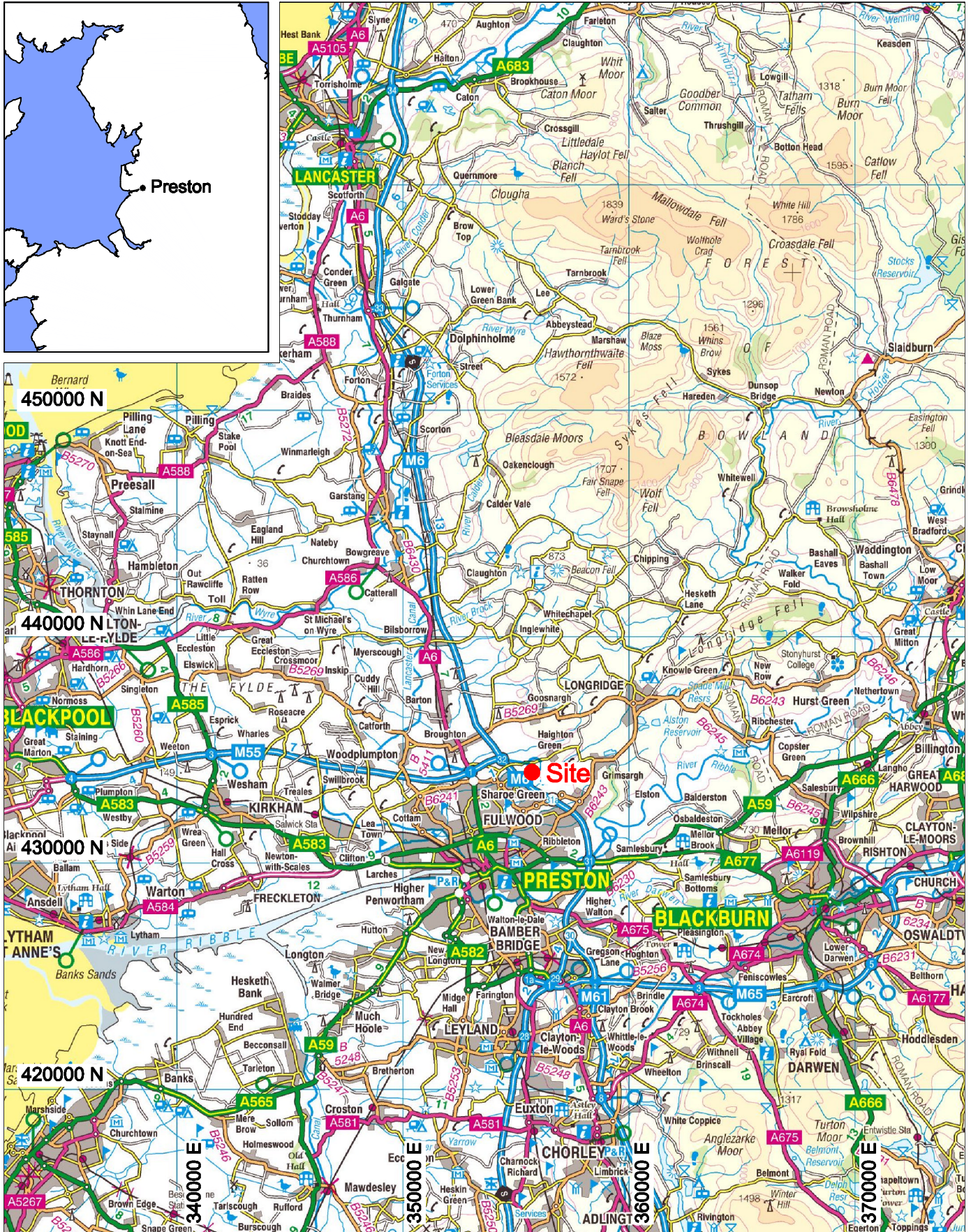
Figure 2: Detailed location plan

Figure 3: Plan of area covered by watching brief

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Plate 1: Excavation of the Foundation Trench

Plate 2: West end of the trench, showing the current foundations of Ladyewell House

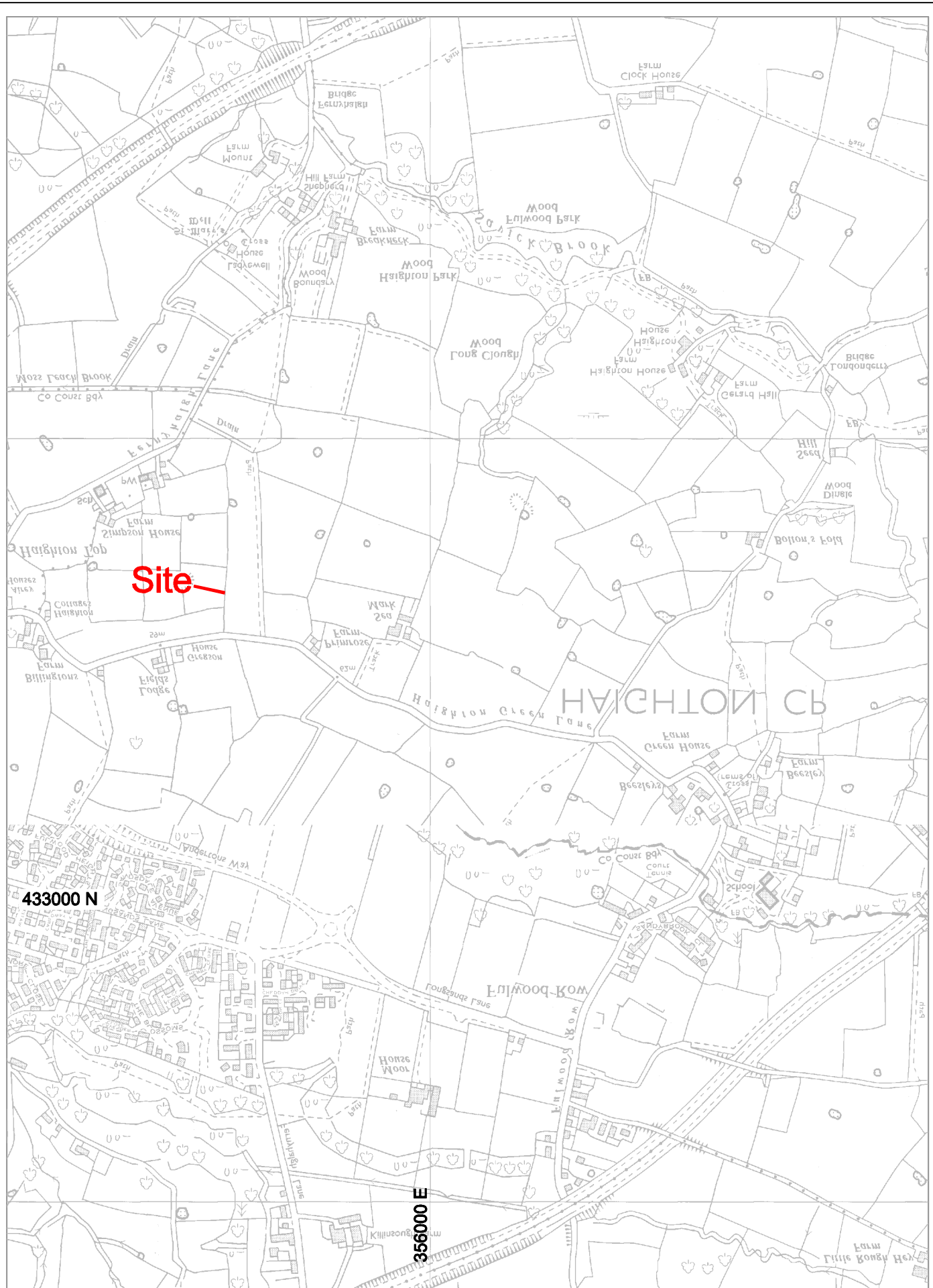


based upon the Ordnance Survey 1:250000
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0 2500 5000
metres

Figure 1: Location Map



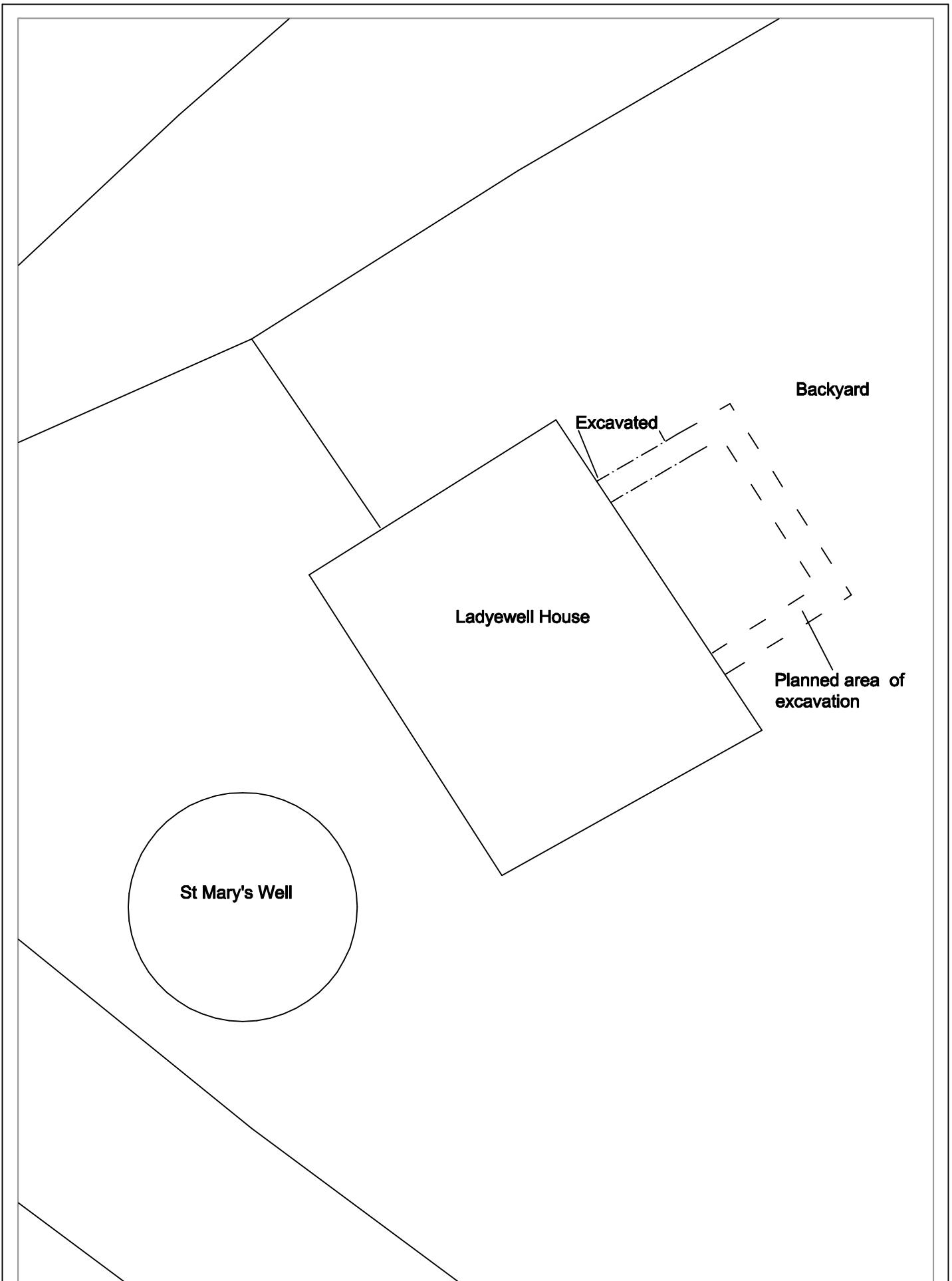
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0 250m



Figure 2 : Detailed location map



based upon the Ordnance Survey 1:10000
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Scale 1:200 at A4



Figure 3 : Plan of area covered by watching brief



Plate 1: Excavation of the Foundation Trench



Plate 2: West end of the trench, showing the current foundations of Ladyewell House