

Station Road West Car Park, Canterbury, Kent

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment Report

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SUMMARY

This report presents a provisional desk-based assessment constituting rapid archaeological appraisal of land comprising the Station Road West Car Park, Canterbury, Kent (centred on NGR 614507 158275; Fig 1). The report was commissioned by Richard Moore of Canterbury City Council in September 2016 in view of proposed redevelopment of the site.

On the basis of previous work within the proposed development area and nearby, archaeological remains of regional significance are likely to be extant within the proposed development area.

In the first instance, a programme of archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area by the excavation of trial trenches is recommended which should also include a programme for the taking of geoarchaeological boreholes. Should archaeological remains be found a further programme of archaeological assessment and/or excavation to ensure either preservation in situ or preservation by record may be required by the local planning authority.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents a provisional desk-based assessment constituting rapid archaeological appraisal of land at Station Road West Car Park, Canterbury, Kent (centred on NGR 614507 158275; Fig 1). The report was commissioned by Richard Moore of Canterbury City Council in September 2016 in view of proposed redevelopment of the site.¹
- 1.2 This assessment is a consultation document prepared for the client which may be submitted as part of a planning proposal (supplementing a heritage statement for example). It constitutes a pilot study assessing the potential for further research, either desk-based or in the field. Additional desk-based research and/or fieldwork may be requested by planning authorities or specified as conditions on any planning consent, although any request for further desk-based work should clearly demonstrate the benefits of such an approach as opposed to field evaluation, for example.
- 1.3 The objective of the current research, verbally agreed with the client and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), has been to view readily available existing evidence in order to assess the extent and nature of any heritage assets with archaeological interest within the Proposed Development Area (PDA), and thereby gauge the likelihood of heritage assets of archaeological interest being affected by development within the PDA. Research has been undertaken to an appropriate level of detail in response to funding limitations which affect the affordable scope and provisional nature of the study, as well as the particular circumstances of the proposed development.

2. POLICY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

- 2.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with national and local policy regarding heritage assets and with reference to research frameworks.

National policy

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG March 2012) sets out a series of core planning principles designed to underpin plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system. In terms of development proposals affecting known heritage assets, the following principle states that planning should:

Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

- 2.3 By definition the historic environment includes all surviving physical remains of past human activity. Heritage assets include extant structures and features, sites, places and landscapes. The European Landscape Convention definition of a historic landscape describes: ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ (Council of Europe 2000: which came into force in the UK in March 2007; see research frameworks, below). Furthermore the

¹ See: Anonymous 2012 *Canterbury West Regeneration Zone: development brief* Canterbury City Council, 27 July 2011

historic landscape encompasses visible, buried or submerged remains, which includes the buried archaeological resource.

2.4 Policy 126 states that:

Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of the place.*

2.5 When determining planning applications, the following policies are especially pertinent:

128. 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.

129. 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 the heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

132. 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed

building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

139. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

- 2.6 The existence of the latter within a proposed development area can be partially investigated and to an extent predicted via desk-based assessment, but field evaluation and/or archaeological monitoring of groundworks are likely to be a planning requirement and should be expected.

Local policy

- 2.7 Applying the same general principles on a local scale, the relevant Canterbury District Local Plan (2001–2011: First Review; Canterbury City Council 2006a; 2006a; 2006b; currently under review) policies are BE3 (World Heritage Sites), BE5–6 (Listed Buildings), BE7–8 (Conservation Areas), BE9 (buildings of local architectural or historic interest), BE10 (Historic Landscapes), BE14 (Scheduled Ancient Monuments) and BE15 and BE16 (Archaeology).

- 2.8 The PDA has previously been included in the development brief prepared by Canterbury City Council for the Canterbury West Regeneration Zone (Anonymous 2012), noting that the site has been allocated for employment use, Class B1 activities together with retention of public car parking, in the Local Plan. The development brief also considered the cultural and historic value of local heritage assets and historic industrial landscape as well as the archaeological potential of the area.

Research frameworks

- 2.9 The national and local policy outlined above should be considered in light of the non-statutory heritage frameworks that inform them. While the regional South East Research Framework for the historic environment (SERF)² is still in preparation, initial outputs are available on-line and have been considered in preparing this report, in order to take current research agendas into account.

3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The PDA is situated abutting the west side of Station Road West, bounded on the west by the main railway line and on the north by the Network Rail car park and forecourt to Canterbury West Railway Station (Fig 1). The area lies at approximately 11m OD, the area sloping artificially from the north-west to south-west.
- 3.2 Bedrock geology in the area of the PDA comprises the Seaford Chalk formation overlain by Pleistocene 2nd Terrace River Gravels, these deposits overlain in turn by head Brickearth, on the lower slopes of the western valley side of the Great Stour.³ A

² <http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/south-east-research-framework>

³ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

mineralized fragment of elephant tusk, tentatively dated to the Hoxnian Interglacial period, *c* 425,000–380,000 BP, was recovered from the 2nd Terrace Gravels during excavations on the adjacent former Hallet’s Garage site in 2011 (Gollop 2012, 13).⁴

4. DESIGNATIONS

4.1 The PDA lies to the north of the city wall and Westgate and consequently within the immediate setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (National Heritage List Number 1003554).

4.1 The PDA lies within the Canterbury Conservation Area (as defined in the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990) but outside the Canterbury Area of Archaeological Importance.⁵

4.2 The PDA is not situated in nor contains any other designated heritage assets. It is situated, however, immediately to the south-west of Canterbury West Station, erected 1846 (National Heritage List Number 1242649) and the Goods Shed, built circa 1860 (National Heritage List Number 1258199), both listed buildings under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for their special architectural or historic interest. The setting of both heritage assets may be affected by the proposed redevelopment. Policy 129 of the National Policy Planning Framework applies to the setting of these designated heritage assets.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

5.1 A search of Canterbury City Council’s Urban Archaeological Database has been undertaken at the Canterbury Archaeological Trust offices. In addition, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust annual reports on-line and grey literature report lists and reports have been checked. These records have been assessed in terms of their particular relevance to the PDA and only significant evidence is cited in this report.

5.2 It has been considered beyond the means of this project to pursue detailed questions requiring an in-depth study of primary documentary and cartographic sources. General historical context for archaeological findings is provided where applicable/significant in terms of results, and a survey of published and unpublished maps (including geology and contour survey) has been undertaken. A full list of maps consulted is provided in the list of sources at the end of the report. Only maps showing significant topographical developments are reproduced here.

5.3 No pertinent geophysical surveys were available. Only photographs, images or results showing significant features or topographical developments are reproduced, the findings incorporated with map regression, documentary evidence and archaeological sections of the report as appropriate and fully referenced.

5.4 All results of analyses are presented below in synthesis and in order of chronology.

⁴ A fragment of a ‘handaxe’ was also reportedly recovered during the excavations; this is being investigated at the time of writing.

⁵ https://mapping.canterbury.gov.uk/webapps/Planning_information/

Late prehistoric (c 100 BC–AD 43)

- 5.5 The earliest archaeological features recorded from the area date from the late Iron Age period, consisting of short lengths of ditches infilled by the mid first century AD. These features have been recorded to the south-west at Orchard Street (Boden 2003), to the south-east in the vicinity of North Lane (Rady 2009, 7–8) and during investigations in 2011 on the site of the former Hallet's Garage (Gollop 2012, 13). The ditches have been described as parts of field systems, evidence of an agrarian land use (Rady 2009, 43) but the ditches, widely separated and on various alignments may equally have marked tenurial or administrative boundaries or have had some other utilitarian function such as drainage given the location close to the valley floor. Their presence, however, does demonstrate the presence of a riverside landscape that was being managed and utilized as early as the late Iron Age period, between circa 100 BC and the mid first century AD.⁶

Romano-British (c AD 43–450)

- 5.6 For the early Roman period, from the mid first through to the late second century AD, there is definitive evidence for occupation. The principal topographical feature is the alignment of a major Roman road leading out of Westgate now represented by St Dunstan's Street. It has been identified as representing a section of Iter II in the Antonine itinerary (Rivet and Smith 1979, 157–60). Traces of the metalling associated with the road have been recorded and a succession of V-shaped roadside drainage ditches have been traced along the north-eastern side of the Roman road (Rady and Boden 2012, 19). Excavations on the site of the former Hallet's Garage site in 2011 recorded an east–west aligned ditch, domestic refuse pits, sunken-featured buildings and large quantities of brick and tile presumably from another nearby structure (Gollop 2012, 13–14) adjacent to the Roman road. Late second- and third-century pits were also recorded along the southern boundary of the site. Archaeological excavations to the north of the main railway line in 2011 recorded a large Roman period Brickearth quarry as well as numerous lesser pits. An early Romano-British kiln has been recorded to the south-east at North Lane (Bennett 1978) and two mid third-century types have been excavated abutting the north side of Kirby's Lane (Wilkinson 2013; Martin and Wilkinson 2013, 11–12). Roman period Brickearth quarry pits have been recorded on other sites in this area (Rady 2009, 8–10) indicating that this part of the suburb outside the Roman town was given over to industrial use between the mid first and mid third century AD.
- 5.7 From the late third century the area of the former Hallet's Garage site, extending as far north as the Station Road West Car Park, was used as an inhumation cemetery. The excavations undertaken on the site in 2010–11 recorded 137 burials, arranged in groups and rows, with a group of sub-adult burials to the north of the early Roman ditch which may have acted as a boundary within the cemetery (Gollop 2012, 14). Late Roman inhumation burial is known to have extended across a wide area to the south and south-east. A further 14 late Roman inhumation burials were recorded during excavations in 2012 on the south side of Station Road West. At least one of the burials had been recut by another and one grave contained a coin of Constantine minted between AD 324 and AD

⁶ Earlier cultural material comprising pottery of Bronze Age and early Iron Age date, as well as flint flake artefacts of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date, and a Mesolithic flint implement, have also been recovered as residual finds from later Roman and medieval features during archaeological excavations in the area north and north-east of St Dunstan's Street (Rady 2009, 7; Rady and Boden 2012, 17).

330, demonstrating that burial continued into the fourth century (Martin and Wilkinson 2013, 9–11). Earlier records include inhumation burials at the south end of Kirby's Lane during sewerage works in 1868 (Pilbrow 1871, 151, 153) and finds of urns, lamps, pots and a clay figurine made between in 1844 during the building of the railway and the area of the station suggests other burials (Wheeler 1932, 76). The find spots are not precise and some finds may have been made during the laying out of Station Road West by 1846. Other fourth-century inhumation burials have also been recorded from the former Bus Depot site to the south-east (Rady 2009, 16-24) and along North Lane, a slightly earlier mid second- to third-century cremation burial as well as an inhumation burial have been recorded (Leggatt 1991).⁷

Anglo-Saxon and medieval (c 450–1540)

5.8 There is little archaeological and no historical documentary evidence for occupation in this area of the St Dunstan suburb in the Anglo-Saxon period. The archaeological excavations against the north-east side of St Dunstan's Street in 2011 however recorded a series of pits containing domestic refuse dated to the eighth to ninth century. Although no structures were identified, the presence of burnt daub from ovens or other structures indicates nearby occupation (Gollop 2012, 15). Another pit was recorded during excavations to the north of the railway line at 28 St Dunstan's Street in 2012 (Rady and Boden 2012, 20). Medieval occupation and the laying out of the present road and street pattern dates from the twelfth century along North Lane. On the former Hallet's Garage site buildings were apparently first erected in the thirteenth and fourteenth century on deliberately constructed building terraces abutting the north-east side of St Dunstan's Street. The buildings continued to be occupied and modified into the sixteenth century. To the rear of the properties, extending to the southern boundary of the Station Road West Car Park, the ground was given over to extensive excavation of pits for the extraction of Brickearth from the twelfth century preceding the development of the street frontage. A similar pattern of medieval clay quarrying has been recorded in other areas north-east of St Dunstan's Street during the medieval period.

5.9 North-west of the main railway line and opposite Station Road West Car Park, archaeological evaluation investigations in 2010 recorded extensive deposits of silty clay that had infilled a large feature or features to a depth in excess of 3.80m below the present ground surface from the early medieval period (Pratt and Holman 2010, fig 5). These deposits, laid down in horizontal beds (Gollop 2010, figs 5–6), have been described variously as either colluvial or waterlain gradually infilling an early watercourse that flowed southwards to the valley floor of the Stour (Gollop 2010, 21) or infilling large quarry pits (Pratt and Holman 2010, 5). The area was not subsequently subject to detailed archaeological investigation. This feature may extend southwards across the Station Road West Car Park.

⁷ Up to 40–50% of the former Hallet's Garage site had been disturbed by later medieval and modern features and structures suggesting the cemetery population was originally much greater (Gollop 2012, 14). A similar situation was recorded on the site excavated at 6–8 Station Road West where much of the site was disturbed by medieval quarry pits and late Victorian basements (Martin and Wilkinson 2013, fig 10).

5.10 Historic mapping shows that the area occupied by Station Road West Car Park lay to the rear of properties fronting onto the north side of St Dunstan's Street during the post-medieval period, on the boundary between the built up suburb and the open countryside. W. and H. Doidge's plan of 1752 (Fig 2) and the Andrews and Wren plan of 1768 (Fig 3) for example show the area under cultivation as hop fields. The urban topography of the area was significantly altered when the South Eastern Railway took over the existing Canterbury and Whitstable Railway in 1844 and constructed a new branch railway line between Ramsgate and London by 1846, works which included the construction of the Canterbury West Station. The laying out of a new access road, Station Road West, from St Dunstan's Street to the railway station, effectively left a narrow marginalized strip of ground on the southern side of the railway line and Station Road West. This area is first shown in detail on the 1:500 Ordnance Survey plan surveyed in 1873 which shows sidings at the north end and structures abutting the railway line, with ground on the east under cultivation and laid out as strip allotments (Fig 4). Much the same layout is depicted on a later plan surveyed in 1906 (Fig 5). By 1938 buildings have been erected at the north end (Fig 6) and a similar layout is shown on aerial photography dated December 1960. Station Road West Car Park was laid out in its present form sometime between 1988 and 1990 by which date the railway buildings at the northern end had been demolished and the South Eastern Canterbury West Station Car Park had also been created.

6. INTERIM IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Existing impacts

6.1 Works undertaken between 1988 and 1990 for the laying out of the Station Road West Car Park included ground reduction from north to south. The precise extent and depth of this ground reduction is not known but would probably have removed or impacted upon any archaeological features and deposits that may have been present.⁸ Observations have previously been undertaken in January 1951 during commercial excavations at the north-western end of Station Road West Car Park (at about TR 14555833), when Brickearth deposits were recorded at depth without any associated archaeological finds.⁹ Further observations were undertaken in September 2012 during improvements to the Canterbury West Station forecourt and the Southern Eastern Car Park. Redeposited dark blackish brown soils overlay orange-brown Brickearth clay soils with a sharp horizon between the two deposits. No detailed examination however was undertaken to determine whether the Brickearth soils were also redeposited, as for example as fills in clay quarries (Figs 7–8).

⁸ Canterbury City Council Archives are presently being searched to recover any maps, plans and documentation relating to the construction of the Station Road West Car Park (pers comm R. Goudie, Canterbury City Council). Records concerning an archaeological watching and recording undertaken during the groundworks are also being searched in the Canterbury Archaeological Trust Archives. Top of Brickearth deposits were recorded at the northern end of the former Hallet's Garage site between 10.51m to 10.58m above OD (Gollop 2009, 12) and north of the railway at 28 St Dunstan's Street between 11.18m to 11.81m above OD (Gollop 2010,

⁹ Canterbury City Museums: Frank Jenkins Archive (Box 1): FJ/CNBK2, f. 18r.

Potential

- 6.2 There is some residual potential for the survival of deeply excavated Roman and medieval period features across the Station Road West Car Park. There is also a potential for the survival of cultural artefacts of Palaeolithic date and associated palaeo-environmental deposits from the 2nd Terrace River Gravels, perhaps particularly at the interface with the overlying clay Brickearth deposits.

Mitigation

- 6.3 In the first instance, a programme of archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area by the excavation of trial trenches is recommended, which should also include a programme of geoarchaeological boreholes. Should archaeological remains be found a further programme of archaeological assessment and/or excavation, to ensure either preservation *in situ* or preservation by record, may be required by the local planning authority.

Maps and Plans Consulted

Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) Canterbury Sheet 289 1:50000 Series Southampton, Ordnance Survey for Institute of Geological Sciences, National Environment Council, 1982

W. and H. Doidge *A Plan of the Antient City of Canterbury* 1752

J. Andrews and M. Wren *A Plan of the City of Canterbury* 1768

Ordnance Survey Maps and Plans (published at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton)

Kent Canterbury Sheet XLVI.3.9. Scale 1 to 500. Surveyed 1873, published 1874

Kent Sheet XLVI.3. Scale 1:25000. Third Edition 1907. Surveyed 1871-72, revised 1906, published 1907

Kent Sheet XLVI NE. Scale 6 inches to 1 mile. Provisional Edition. Surveyed 1871-72, revision of 1906 with additions in 1938, published 1945

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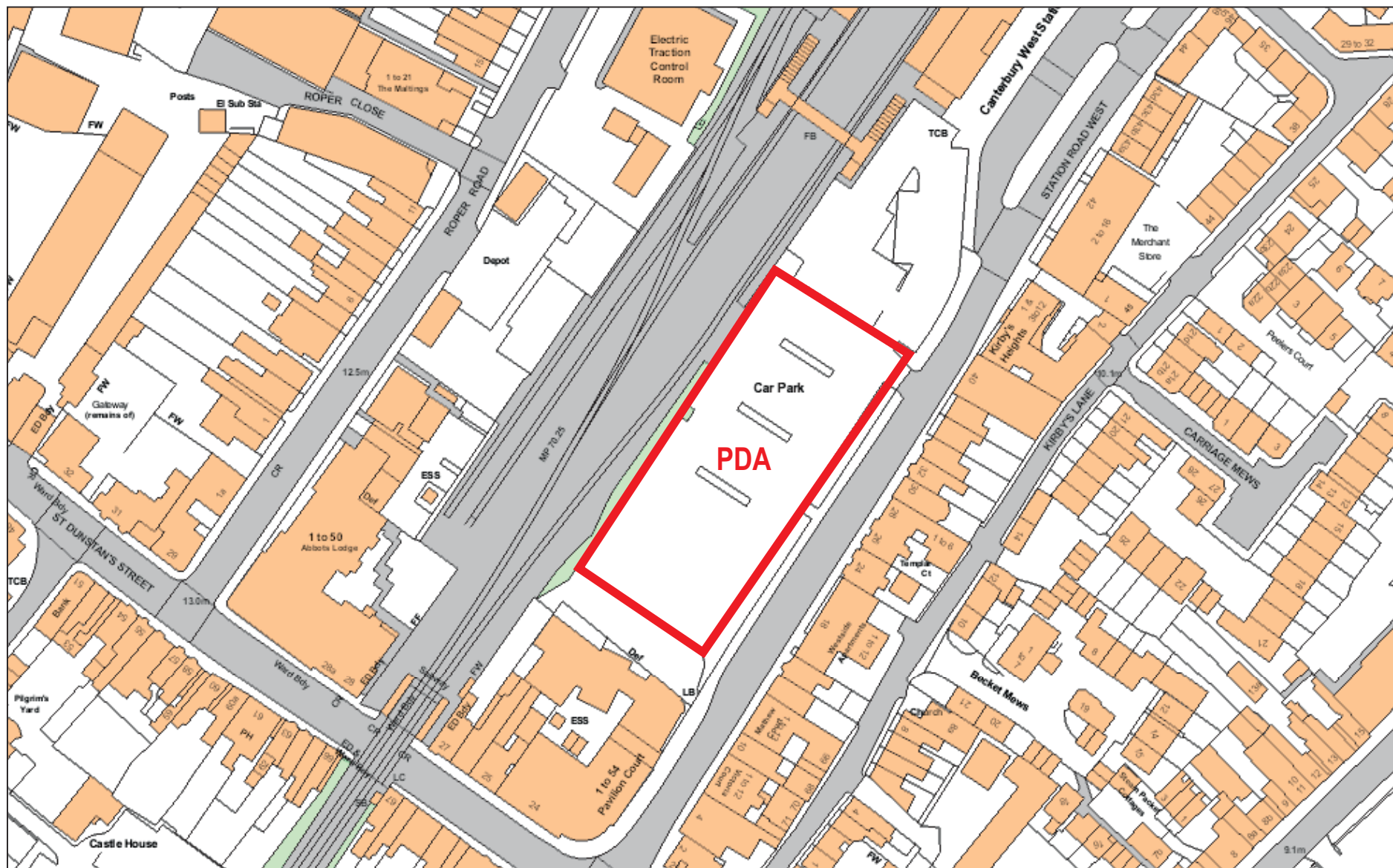


Fig 1. Location of the Proposed Development Area (PDA)



Fig 2: Extract from W. and H. Doidge *A Plan of the Antient City of Canterbury* 1752 showing properties fronting onto St Dunstan's Street and Kirby's Lane with hopfields to rear to north

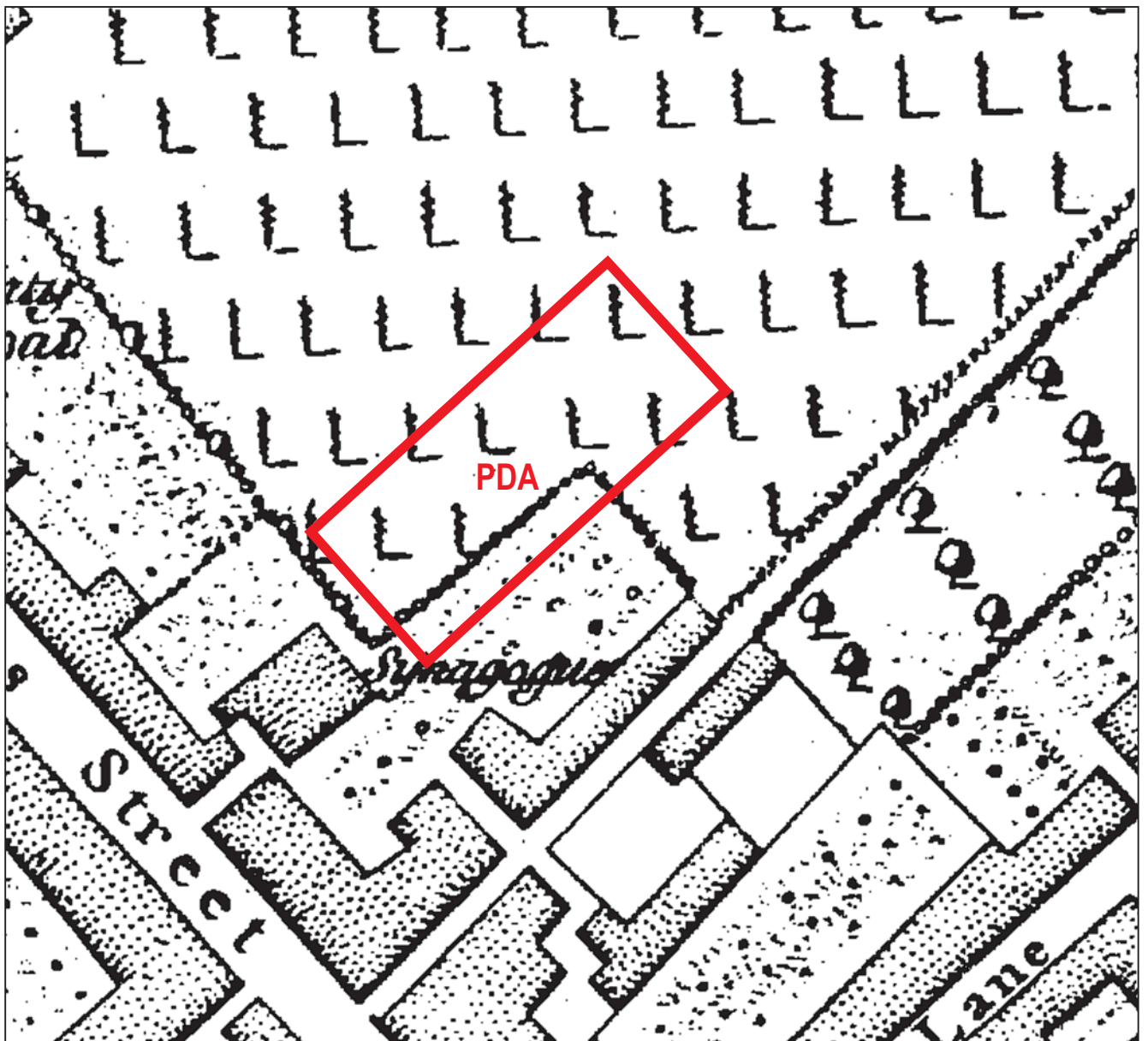


Fig 3: Extract from J. Andrews and M. Wren A Plan of the City of Canterbury 1768 showing properties along frontages at junction of St Dunstan's Street and Kirby's Lane, hedged gardens to the rear and hopfields to the north, in relation to the location of the PDA

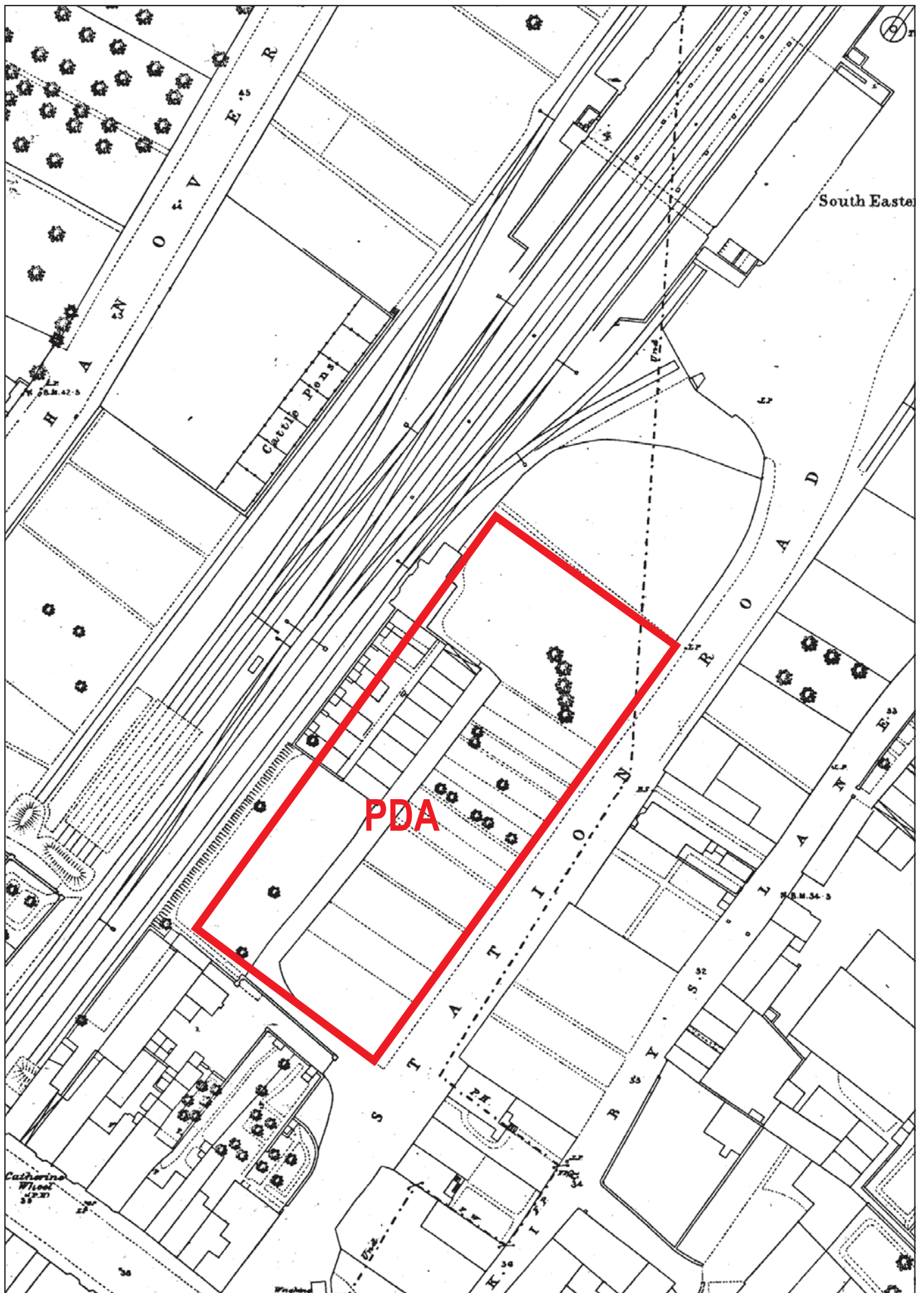


Fig 4. Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Canterbury Sheet XLVI.3.9. Scale 1 to 500. Surveyed 1873, published 1874

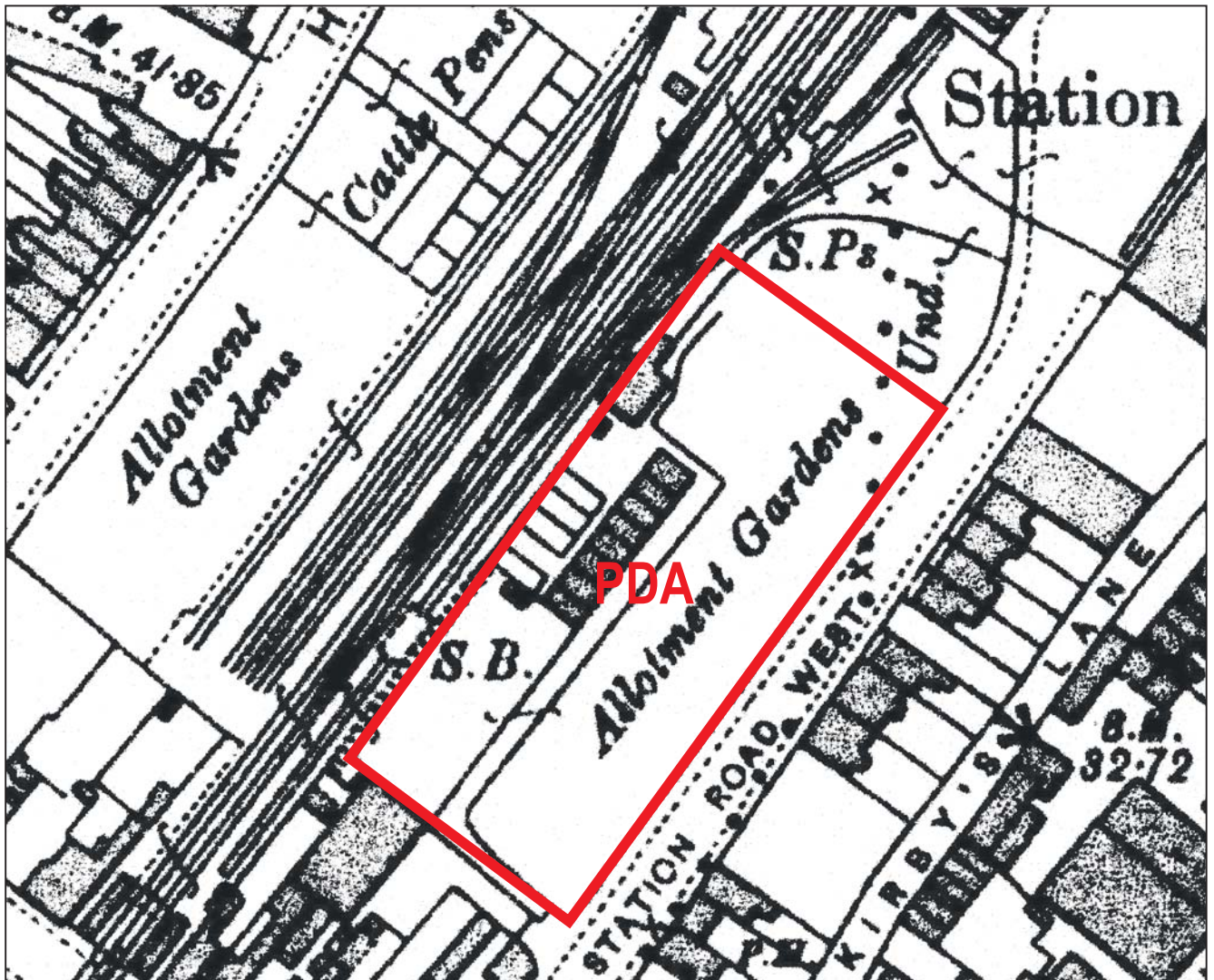


Fig 5. Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XLVI.3. Scale 1:25000. Third Edition 1907. Surveyed 1871-72, revised 1906, published 1907

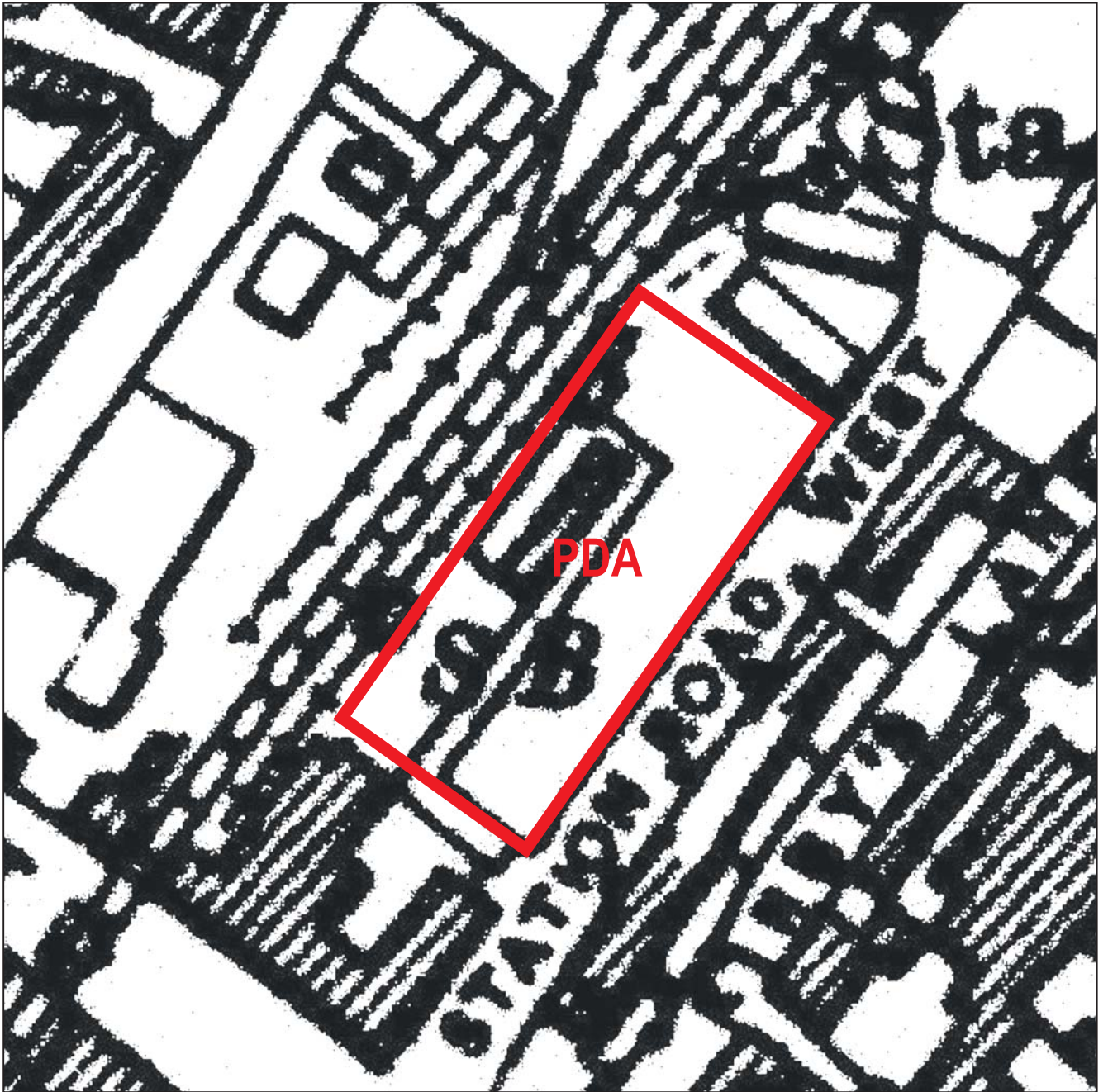


Fig 6: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XLVI NE. Scale 6 inches to 1 mile. Provisional Edition. Surveyed 1871-72, revision of 1906 with additions in 1938, published 1945



Fig 7: Station Road West South Eastern Car Park Improvements September2012



Fig 8: Station Road West South Eastern Car Park Improvements September 2012. Note the raised level of the railway line which is shown on the Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Canterbury Sheet XLVI.3.9. Scale 1 to 500. Surveyed 1873, published 1874 (Fig 4 above)