

# **OLD BASING**

## **MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT SURVEY**

Produced for

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

by

Bob Edwards

# KEY

SMR No.

16

Scheduled Monument boundary



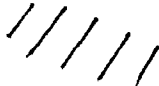
Modern development



Nationally Important Archaeological Remains



Area of High Archaeological Potential



Area of Archaeological Potential



**NAME** Old Basing  
**PARISH** Old Basing  
**HUNDRED** Basingstoke  
**NGR** SU 666529

**GEOLOGY** Upper chalk in southern part of the village, Reading Beds in the northern part, including Oliver's Battery, and alluvium along the river valley.

## **SITE CONTEXT**

The village lies on the south-eastern side of the valley of the River Loddon which flows to the north-east past the settlement. The majority of the village lies at around 80m OD but the land rises slightly to the south of the village centre where Basing House stood.

## **PLAN TYPE AND DESCRIPTION**

Irregular rows/irregular agglomeration. Considering that Old Basing has a long history as being a major manorial centre, it is somewhat surprising to find that there is little evidence for organisation of property plots in the plan. The church lies at the heart of the settlement at the southern end of a sub-oval unit that is surrounded by roads with the churchyard to the south of the church protruding out but this may be due to a road realignment after the construction of the canal which passes through the southern part of the settlement. The sub-oval unit is an important feature of the plan as the early minster status of the church and the fact that Basing was a royal estate would indicate that the estate was the site of a royal establishment or *villa regalis*. It has been suggested that in some Wessex towns where there was a *villa regalis*, it was located in such oval or sub-oval units.

In the mid-nineteenth century there was relatively little occupation within the sub-oval unit. The majority of the property plots lay alongside the road which led from Basing House along the western side of the church. The plots, especially at the southern end near Basing House were irregular in size and shape with empty plots or closes between houses. At the northern end of this street there was a block of properties which had longer, roughly parallel boundaries that stretched down to the river. This unit is the only part of the village that exhibits any hint of planning.

To the north of the village centre there is post-medieval development with cottages in small regular plots and some in plots with their long axes along the roadside suggesting that they are encroachment onto road-side waste which frequently occurred in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A small number of such plots can also be seen at the southern edge of the village.

## **CHURCH & CHURCHYARD**

St Mary. The crossing tower is basically Norman but the majority of the church is late Perpendicular, and almost entirely of brick. Major repair work was undertaken in after 1645 and was drastically restored in the nineteenth century (Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 89).

The church at Basing is considered to have been an Anglo-Saxon minster church (Hase 1994, 53). Minster churches were, in most cases, founded on royal estates from the mid-late eighth century and a college of priests served a large area or *parochia* from the minster. As more churches were founded within the *parochia* the basis for the system of parishes began to develop resulting in the break-up of *parochia* from the tenth century.

## **BASING HOUSE**

Basing House. Basing Castle, a motte and bailey, stood on the site of Basing House. The castle was probably the main residence of Hugh of Port who held extensive lands in Hampshire in the eleventh century. In the sixteenth century the castle was extensively rebuilt and a new house built by the Marquis of Winchester. During the English Civil War the house was besieged, stormed and destroyed by Parliamentary forces.

## **AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL**

There are two Scheduled Monuments in the village. Basing House (SM Hants 7), the site of a medieval castle and later house at the southern end of the village, and Oliver's Battery (SM 24337), the origin of which is uncertain. It is variously described as a motte and bailey castle which was superseded by the castle on the site of Basing House, and as a siege-work built during the siege of Basing House by Parliamentary forces during the Civil War, hence the name given to the monument.

The sub-oval unit, which has been divided by the railway line, is an Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) despite the level of modern development that has occurred within the area. This area is a possible site for a Saxon royal establishment with the church adjoining. Given that few such sites have been studied, this area represents an important archaeological resource and excavations within the area could greatly assist in the understanding of the development of the village. The area adjoining the sub-oval unit to the north-east and stretching to the southern edge of Oliver's Battery is also an AHAP. Within this area there are several surviving late medieval buildings and its proximity to the motte and bailey makes this area a possible site for early settlement.

At the southern end of the village there are three further AHAPs. Two cover the property plots along the southern side of The Street between the church and Church Lane and on the south-western side of Church Lane, and the third covers the area of the farm complex to the north-west of Basing House which includes the medieval tithe barn. There are late medieval buildings within these areas and evidence for earlier development may be recovered through excavation in these parts of the village.

The majority of the area of property plots along the western frontage of The Street is an Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP). There has been a significant level of modern development along the western side of the core of the village, especially in the areas behind the frontage plots. This will have resulted in the loss of information relating to property boundaries, particularly within the block of plots at the northern

end of The Street opposite Oliver's Battery where there was a hint of regularity. Small-scale excavation within the AAP may, however, reveal some archaeological data that could be used to understand the development of the village.

To the south-east of the church there is a small AAP. Again, there has been development within this area but it retains archaeological potential as it may be that evidence for any change in road alignment caused by the construction of the canal will be found here.

## SMR DATA

### SU65SE

9	66305225	Pit containing Iron Age and Roman pottery
10	66335225	Roman pottery
11	66505250	Mesolithic flint tools
12	66505335	Roman pottery
15	67005400	Mesolithic flint tools
16	66855343	Roman pottery and coin
18	66695413	Neolithic flint tool
19	66795352	Medieval motte and bailey (SM 24337)
20	66595291	Medieval church
28	66155310	Post-medieval watermill
29	66905380	Post-medieval watermill
44	66355259	Medieval ringwork and bailey (Basing Castle) and sixteenth century house (Basing House) (SM Hants 7)
45	66125280	Medieval barn
46	66135287	Medieval fishpond
47	66355259	Roman pottery, coin and building material
48	66355259	Iron Age pottery and flint flakes
49	66355259	Post-medieval defensive lines built during Civil War
50	66505260	Medieval rectangular enclosure and pottery
51	66505260	Roman pottery
55	65705320	Saxon settlement site
59	66605290	Medieval village mentioned in Domesday Book
60	66005200	Tudor-Jacobean formal garden
61	67355300	Roman road
62	66505252	Medieval dovecote
86	66305380	Medieval pottery
87	66305280	Post-medieval pottery
92	66755325	Medieval building
94	66575286	Medieval building
94	66575286	Medieval building
95	66545288	Medieval building
96	66715322	Medieval building
109	67005400	Faunal remains, date unknown
141	66175283	Trackway, date unknown
142	66125322	Linear feature, date unknown

## CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Tithe Apportionment map 1842 HRO 21M65/F7/179/2

## PRIMARY HISTORIC SOURCES

### Anglo-Saxon charters

945 King Edmund granted land at Basing and other locations to Aethelnoth (Sawyer 1968, 505).

956x953 Aethelnoth granted land at Basing and elsewhere to the New Minster, Winchester (Sawyer 1968, 1418).

951x955 King Eadred willed land at Basing to his mother (Sawyer 1968, 1515).

### Domesday Book

Hugh de Port holds Basing. Altei held it from King Edward; he could go wither he would. Then it answered for 11 hides; now for 6.5. Land for 10 ploughs. In lordship 3 ploughs; 20 villagers and 41 smallholders with 11 ploughs. 7 slaves; 3 mills at 50s; meadow, 19 acres; woodland at 25 pigs. Value before 1066 #12; later #8; now #16 (Munby 1982, fol 45a).

The Domesday entry for Basingstoke recorded a market there. This market was one of only three recorded in the Hampshire section of the Domesday Survey and possibly indicates that Basingstoke was becoming the more important of the two settlements although the construction of a castle at Basing by de Port shows that Basing remained the main administration centre in the late eleventh century if it was no longer the mercantile centre.

## PLACE-NAME

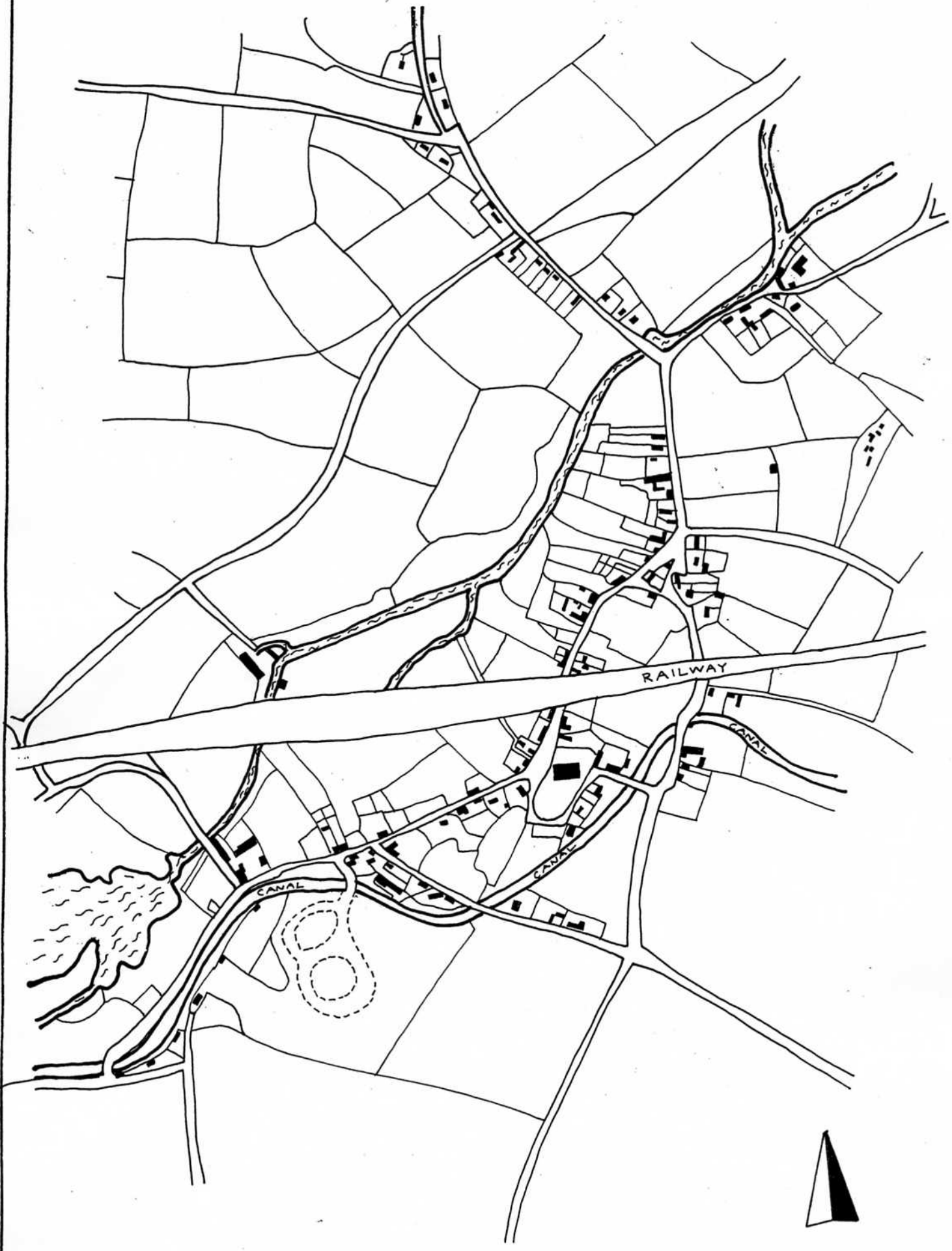
871 *basingum*; c.894 *basengas*; 1086 *Basinges*.

OE folk-name based on the personal name *Basa* (Coates 1993, 29). Names such as Basing, which are categorised as '*ingas*' names were thought to be the oldest place-names in England but this is now disputed. However, it is acknowledged that they are probably relatively early (ie before c.600) (*ibid*, 12). The *stoc* (stoke) element in the name Basingstoke implies that it was a secondary settlement dependent upon another place, in this case it is Basing that would have been the primary settlement (Room 1988, 29). It is likely that Basing was an important royal estate in the mid-Saxon period (Hinton 1986).

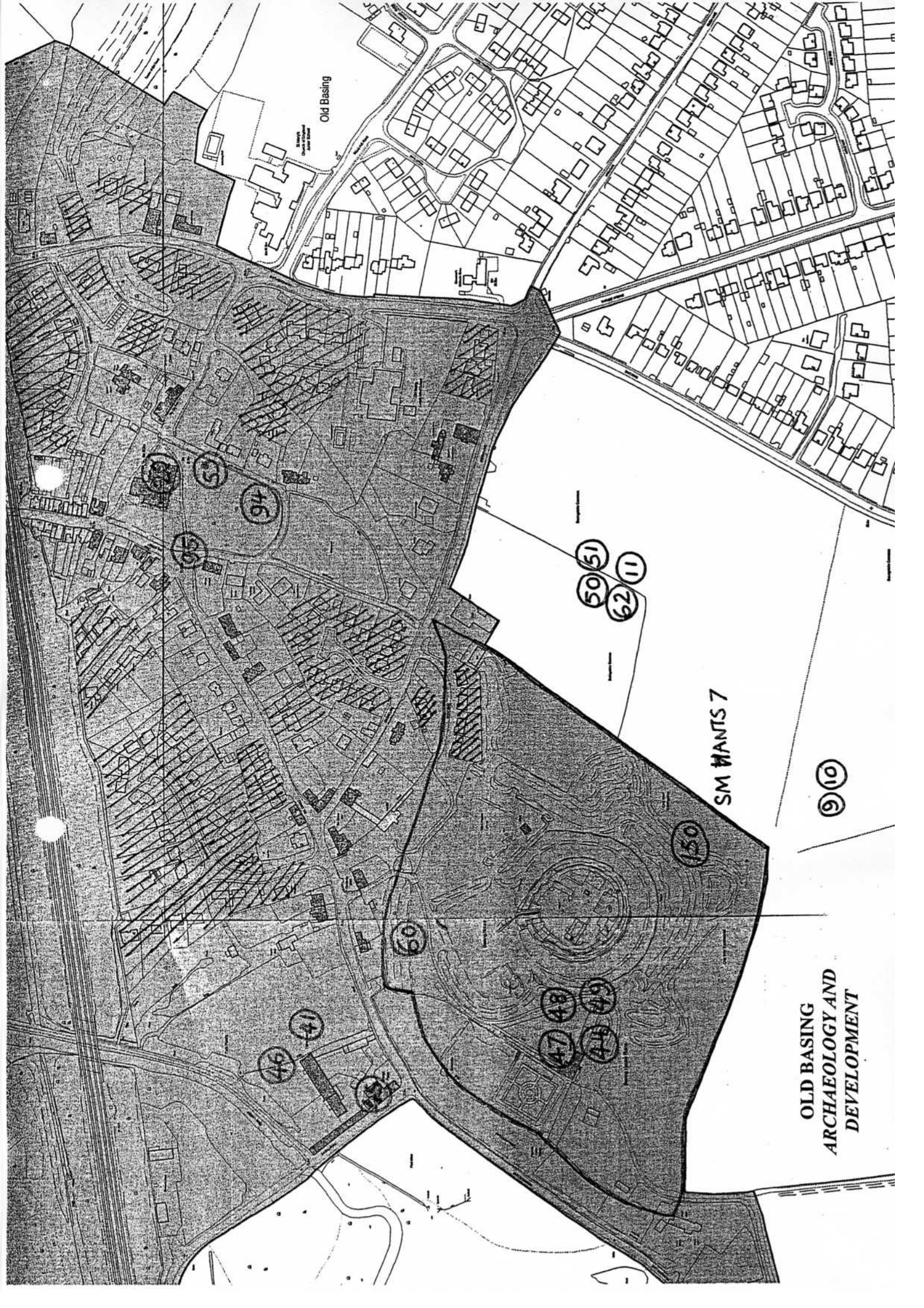
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OLD BASING 1842







Old Basing

SM WANTS 7

OLD BASING  
ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
DEVELOPMENT

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