

COVENTRY'S MEDIEVAL SUBURBS

EXCAVATIONS AT HILL STREET,
UPPER WELL STREET AND
FAR GOSFORD STREET
2003-07

**Paul Mason
Danny McAree
Iain Soden**

with contributions by

Philip L Armitage, Paul Blinkhorn, Mark Bridge, Andy Chapman, Pat Chapman, Mark Curteis,
Geoff Egan, Val Fryer, Tora Hylton, Quita Mould, Rob Scaife, Tim Upson-Smith
and Penelope Walton-Rogers

illustrations by

Amir Bassir, Jacqueline Harding, James Ladocha, Fanny Martin, Halle Moharramzadeh and Pat Walsh

ARCHAEOPRESS ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD

Gordon House
276 Banbury Road
Oxford OX2 7ED

www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978 1 78491 562 9
ISBN 978 1 78491 563 6 (e-Pdf)

© Archaeopress and the individual authors 2017

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.

Printed in England by Holywell Press, Oxford
This book is available direct from Archaeopress or from our website www.archaeopress.com

Contents

List of Figures	vii
List of Tables.....	x
Contributors	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
1. Introduction	1
Project background	1
Topography and geology.....	1
Scope and approach	3
Hill Street and Upper Well Street.....	3
The City Wall and Ditch	3
2. Historical background	3
Changes in street layout.....	5
Historic maps and plans	7
Far Gosford Street.....	13
Landmarks in the vicinity	13
Historic maps and plans	15
Previous archaeological work	21
Gosford Gate Excavations (1932)	21
3. Archaeological background.....	21
King Street/Well Street Excavations (1960-61)	23
Godiva Street (1970)	23
Cox Street (1976-1978)	23
Fleet Street/Spon Street (1987/1990).....	23
Friars Road (1990)	23
The Cheylesmore (1991)	23
Bridge Buildings Excavations (1991).....	23
Anchorsmith Tavern (1991)	23
Cheylesmore Manor (1992)	24
Belgrade Plaza evaluation (2003)	24
Hill Street (2003)	24
Upper Well Street (2002-4)	24
Belgrade Theatre (2005)	24
Far Gosford Street evaluation (2006)	24
Excavation strategies	25
The site archive	25
4. Hill Street and Upper Well Street excavations	27
Summary of site chronology.....	27
The extra-mural settlement (12th century – AD 1851).....	27
Pre-ditch structures and pits, (Phase 1, 1100-1403)	27
The city ditch (1403-late 18th century)	39
The ditch at Hill Street/Bond Street	39
5. Finds and environmental evidence from Hill Street and Upper Well Street	47
The medieval and post-medieval pottery from Hill Street	47
<i>by Paul Blinkhorn</i>	
Analytical methodology	47
Fabric.....	47
Chronology	48
Vessel occurrence	49
Cross-fits.....	49
The pottery.....	49
Overview	56

The medieval and post-medieval pottery from Upper Well Street.....	59
<i>by Paul Blinkhorn</i>	
Fabric.....	59
Chronology	60
The assemblages	60
The leather from Hill Street	60
<i>by Quita Mould</i>	
Methodology.....	60
Introduction	61
The nature of the assemblages	61
The footwear	61
Evidence of cobbling	65
The dating of the late medieval footwear	66
Post-medieval shoes of welted construction	66
Other leather objects	67
The leather from Upper Well Street	82
<i>by Iain Soden</i>	
Other finds.....	84
The flint from Hill Street	84
<i>by Andy Chapman</i>	
Building material from Hill Street	84
<i>by Pat Chapman</i>	
Building material from Upper Well Street	86
<i>by Pat Chapman</i>	
Floor tiles from Hill Street	86
<i>by Iain Soden</i>	
Textiles from Hill Street	87
<i>by Penelope Walton Rogers</i>	
Metal working debris from Hill Street	87
<i>by Andy Chapman</i>	
Other finds from Hill Street	88
<i>by Tora Hylton, with Mark Curteis, Geoff Egan and Iain Soden</i>	
The city ditch.....	88
The plots	89
Personal possessions.....	92
Miscellaneous items.....	93
Religious souvenirs.....	94
Building equipment.....	94
Windows	95
Household	95
Lighting.....	95
Food preparation	95
Security	96
Miscellaneous	97
Trade	97
Coins	97
Jettons.....	97
Tokens	99
Personal seal	99
<i>by Iain Soden</i>	
Cloth seals	99
<i>by Geoff Egan</i>	
Tools.....	99
Worked horse radius	100
<i>by Philip Armitage</i>	
Horse equipment	100
Miscellaneous fittings	101

Other finds from Upper Well Street	102
<i>by Tora Hylton</i>	
Costume fittings	102
Household	103
Tools	103
Other objects	103
Environmental evidence	103
Animal bones from Hill Street	103
<i>by Philip L Armitage</i>	
Summary	103
Introduction	105
Descriptions of the species represented	105
Interpretation and discussion	107
Animal bones from Upper Well Street	109
<i>by Philip L Armitage</i>	
Introduction	109
Interpretation & Discussion	110
Conclusion	110
Plant macrofossils and other remains from Hill Street	110
<i>by Val Fryer</i>	
Introduction and method statement	110
Sample composition	111
Discussion	111
Conclusions	112
Plant macrofossils and other remains from Upper Well Street	113
<i>by Val Fryer</i>	
Introduction and method statement	113
Results	113
Discussion	113
Pollen from Hill Street	113
<i>by Rob Scaife</i>	
Introduction	113
Pollen method	113
The pollen data	114
Ditch section 110	114
Ditch section 55	116
Discussion	116
Conclusions	117
6. Far Gosford Street excavations	119
Summary of site chronology	119
The extra-mural settlement (12th century – 1643)	119
Environment pre-dating the frontage (to late 13th century)	119
Structural timber post	120
Early occupation features	120
The medieval street frontage (late 13th/14th-early 15th centuries)	122
Features to the rear of the frontage	128
Abandonment	130
The second street frontage (15th-mid-17th centuries)	130
Plot b	130
Plot c	133
Plots d and e	133
Plot f	138
Open land to the rear of the tenements	139
The Civil War (1642-49)	140
The strengthening of Gosford Gate defences in 1643	140
Defensive measures of 1645	140
The post-medieval street frontage (1662-early 20th century)	142

Post-Civil War	142
18th-century rebuilding	142
Wells.....	146
Ovens/kilns.....	146
167-172 Far Gosford Street and Court 16	147
The Calcott and Singer Factories (1896-1926)	150
7. Finds and environmental evidence from Far Gosford Street	151
The medieval and post-medieval pottery	151
<i>by Iain Soden</i>	
The assemblage.....	151
Medieval pottery (1100-1250)	151
Later medieval pottery (1250-1500)	151
Early post-medieval types (c 1500-1640)	153
The Civil War period (1640-60)	153
Post Civil War (1660-1850).....	153
Conclusions	155
Hoard of silver hammered coins	155
<i>by Mark Curteis</i>	
Other finds.....	155
Ceramic building material	155
<i>by Pat Chapman</i>	
Roof tile.....	155
Floor tile	158
Brick	159
Conclusion.....	159
Slag and metalworking debris	159
<i>by Andy Chapman</i>	
Finds	159
<i>by Tora Hylton</i>	
Introduction	159
Period groups	160
The finds by functional category.....	161
Personal possessions	161
Equipment and furnishings	162
Horse equipment	163
Commercial Activity	164
Evidence for craft and industry amongst the finds	164
Weapons	165
Catalogue of illustrated finds (Fig 7.5)	165
Clay tobacco-pipe	167
<i>by Tim Upson-Smith</i>	
Environmental evidence	167
The mammal, bird and fish bone	167
<i>by Philip Armitage</i>	
Introduction	167
Preservation & bone modification	167
Interpretation and discussion	168
Conclusion.....	169
Plant macrofossils and other remains	169
<i>by Val Fryer</i>	
Introduction and method statement	169
Sample composition.....	170
Discussion	171
Conclusions	171
Pollen	172
<i>by Rob Scaife</i>	
Introduction	172
Pollen procedure.....	172

The Pollen Data	172
Discussion and conclusions	174
Conclusions	174
Dendrochronology	174
<i>by Mark Bridge</i>	
Introduction	174
Results and discussion.....	174
8. Discussion.....	177
Early Coventry and its environs	177
The development of the medieval suburbs	178
The extra-mural suburbs.....	179
The city's defences.....	181
Life in the medieval suburbs.....	184
Coventry's suburbs during the Civil War.....	187
The post-medieval suburbs.....	188
Bibliography	191

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Site locations	2
Figure 2.1: Hill Street/Upper Well Street plot reconstruction with detail taken from Samuel Bradford's map (1748-9)	4
Figure 2.2: Hill Street/Upper Well Street historic maps: a) Extract from John Speed's map, 1610; b) Extract from Samuel Bradford's map, 1748-9; c) Map of western half of site, 1838; d) Board of Health map, 1851; e) Plan showing Mr Jacombs house, 23rd February 1852; f) Ordnance Survey 2nd edition map, 1905.	6
Figure 2.3: Far Gosford Street historic maps: a) Extract from John Speed's map 1610; b) Extract from Samuel Bradford's map, 1748-9; c) Thomas Sharpe's 1807 map of Coventry; d) Board of Health map, 1851; e) Ordnance Survey 1st edition map, 1889; f) Ordnance Survey 2nd edition map, 1905; g) Plan showing Calcott Brothers Factory site, 1913.	16
Figure 2.4: Far Gosford Street plot reconstruction	19
Figure 3.1: Far Gosford Street previous excavations, 1932-present	21
Figure 3.2: Hill Street/Upper Well Street previous excavations, 1960-present	22
Figure 4.1: Hill Street, 12th-14th centuries	28
Figure 4.2: Hill Street frontage, 12th-14th centuries	28
Figure 4.3: Section showing Hill Street stratigraphy in vicinity of city ditch	30
Figure 4.4: Hill Street, 15th-mid 17th centuries	31
Figure 4.5: Hill Street frontage, 15th-mid 17th centuries	31
Figure 4.6: Pits behind Building B, Hill Street, Plot I	32
Figure 4.7: Section through cess pit 1384	33
Figure 4.8: Section through stone-lined pit 1475	33
Figure 4.9: Plan of Wealden-type house, Hill Street, Plot I	34
Figure 4.10: Remains of Wealden-type house with pits and postholes of Building D beyond	35
Figure 4.11: Hill Street Plot H, 18th century	36
Figure 4.12: Section through clay-lined pits 1694 and 1738	37
Figure 4.13: Hill Street Plot H, plan of Jacombs' House	37
Figure 4.14: Jacombs' House from rear yards, Hill Street Plot H	38
Figure 4.15: Jacombs' House, ash pit of fireplace	38
Figure 4.16: 19th-century cellar at rear of Jacombs' House	39
Figure 4.17: Section through city ditch 3	40
Figure 4.18: City ditch, western section, 3, looking west	41
Figure 4.19: City ditch, central section, 5, looking north-west; note fenceline stakeholes in far shoulder	41
Figure 4.20: City ditch, eastern section, 110, looking south-east; 19th-century engine base in foreground	41
Figure 4.21: City ditch, section 110, remains of collapsed fence	42
Figure 4.22: City ditch, section 3, basal fills (21)-(24)	42
Figure 4.23: Leaves preserved in 16th century fill of city ditch, section 3	43
Figure 4.24: Excavations at corner of Upper Well Street and Bond Street	44
Figure 4.25: Ditch section at corner of Upper Well Street/Bond Street, looking south-west	45
Figure 5.1: Pottery, Hill Street, 1-8	52
Figure 5.2: Pottery, Hill Street, 9-14	55
Figure 5.3: Pottery, Hill Street, 15-16	55

Figure 5.4: Pottery (plates), 1-4	58
Figure 5.4: Pottery (plates), 5-6	59
Figure 5.5: Late medieval shoe styles from Hill Street	63
Figure 5.6: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 1-3	69
Figure 5.7: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 4-5	70
Figure 5.8: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 6-9	71
Figure 5.9: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 10-11	72
Figure 5.10: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 12.....	74
Figure 5.11: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 13.....	74
Figure 5.12: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 14-15	75
Figure 5.13: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 16-17	76
Figure 5.14: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 18-19	77
Figure 5.15: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 20-22	79
Figure 5.16: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 23-24	80
Figure 5.17: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 25-26	81
Figure 5.18: Leather shoes, Hill Street, 27.....	82
Figure 5.19: Leather shoes, Upper Well Street, 28-30.....	83
Figure 5.20: Leather shoes, Upper Well Street, 31-32.....	85
Figure 5.21: Slip decorated floor tile, Hill Street.....	87
Figure 5.22: Other finds, Hill Street, 1-5.....	89
Figure 5.23: Other finds, Hill Street, 6-10.....	90
Figure 5.24: Other finds, Hill Street, 11-17.....	91
Figure 5.25: Other finds, Hill Street, 18.....	98
Figure 5.26: Other finds, Hill Street, 19-22.....	100
Figure 5.27: A cow skull from city ditch context (8); note child's shoe in association.....	108
Figure 6.1: Section showing Far Gosford Street stratigraphy in vicinity of post 223	119
Figure 6.2: Oak post 223, felling date 1162-1212.....	120
Figure 6.3: Sandstone slabs (315) consolidating alluvium adjacent to post 223	121
Figure 6.4: Hearth 533, underlying Far Gosford Street frontage, 14th century	121
Figure 6.5: Far Gosford Street frontage, simplified section.....	122
Figure 6.6: 14th-century frontage, looking west	122
Figure 6.7: Features, 14th century	123
Figure 6.8: Street frontage, 14th century.....	124
Figure 6.9: Room 1, looking south.....	125
Figure 6.10: Room 2, looking north.....	125
Figure 6.11: Room 3, looking north.....	126
Figure 6.12: Room 4, looking south.....	126
Figure 6.13: Rooms 3 and 4, smithing debris (479).....	127
Figure 6.14: Coin hoard from Room 2	128
Figure 6.15: Some of the coin hoard after cleaning	128
Figure 6.16: Timber-lined pit 632	129
Figure 6.17: Timber and stone-lined pit 672	129
Figure 6.18: Far Gosford Street, features, 15th-mid 17th centuries.....	131

Figure 6.19: Far Gosford Street frontage, 15th to mid-17th centuries	132
Figure 6.20: Frontage, looking west	133
Figure 6.21: Rooms 6 and 7, looking south	134
Figure 6.22: Fragment of 14th-century grave slab reused in wall 293, Room 6	134
Figure 6.23: Room 10, pitched-tile hearth 437.....	135
Figure 6.24: Room 10, oven 476.....	136
Figure 6.25: Room 11, looking west	136
Figure 6.26: Far Gosford Street, land to the rear of the tenements (medieval – Civil War)	137
Figure 6.27: Room 14, hearth 515.....	138
Figure 6.28: Room 13, oven 462.....	139
Figure 6.29: Far Gosford Street, Civil War features	141
Figure 6.30: Civil War ‘half-moon’ ditch 90, dated 1643	142
Figure 6.31: Section through Civil War ditch 93	143
Figure 6.32: Laid flagstone surface, Civil War period	144
Figure 6.33: Far Gosford Street, features, 18th century	145
Figure 6.34: Dog-legged foundations 112 of eastern building, looking west	146
Figure 6.35: Newel stair in eastern building leading to Springfield Brook?.....	146
Figure 6.36: Plan of 18th century bread (?) ovens	147
Figure 6.37: Bread oven or malting kiln 189 to rear of western building	148
Figure 6.38: Far Gosford Street, later post-medieval features	149
Figure 6.39: Number 1, Court 16, looking north	150
Figure 7.1: Coloured creamware (Tortoiseshell Wheildon-type), c 1750-80, layer (111)	154
Figure 7.2: Cologne grog-decorated coloured white ware, c 1750, layer (228).....	154
Figure 7.3: Zoomorphic finial/aquamanilie, layer (145)	157
Figure 7.4: Slip decorated floor tile	158
Figure 7.5: Other finds, 1-10	166
Figure 8.1: Court 6, Spon Street (formerly 7 Much Park Street).....	180
Figure 8.2: 1451 Wine Bar, Spon Street (formerly the Green Dragon Inn, 122-123 Much Park Street)	180

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Hill Street plots H, I and J, summary of documentation	9
Table 2.2: Ryley Street census records, 1851	11
Table 2.3: Upper Well Street plots L, M and N; summary of documentation.....	12
Table 2.4: Far Gosford Street, plot a, documentary interpretation	17
Table 2.5: Far Gosford Street, plot b, documentary interpretation	17
Table 2.6: Far Gosford Street, plot c, documentary interpretation	17
Table 2.7: Far Gosford Street, plot d, documentary interpretation	18
Table 2.8: Far Gosford Street, plot e, documentary interpretation	18
Table 2.9: Far Gosford Street, plot f, documentary interpretation	19
Table 4.1: Summary of site chronology, Hill Street and Upper Well Street	27
Table 5.1: Hill Street excavations, ceramic phase chronology	48
Table 5.2: Hill Street, pottery occurrence per ceramic phase by number, weight and EVE.....	48
Table 5.3: Hill Street, pottery occurrence per ceramic phase by fabric type and weight (g).....	50
Table 5.4: Hill Street, vessel occurrence by date, by EVE, expressed as a percentage of coeval : assemblage	50
Table 5.5: Hill Street, other finds by origin and functional category	92
Table 5.6: Hill Street tenements, summary counts of the identified animal bone : elements/fragments (NISP) by taxa/species	104
Table 5.6.1: Hill Street, city ditch, summary counts of the identified bone elements/fragments (NISP) by taxa/species.....	104
Table 5.8: Hill Street, pollen diagram for city ditch, section 55	115
Table 6.1: Summary of site chronology, Far Gosford Street	119
Table 7.1: Far Gosford Street, pottery quantification	152
Table 7.2: Far Gosford Street hoard, coin catalogue.....	156
Table 7.3: Far Gosford Street, the roof tile fabric	157
Table 7.4: Far Gosford Street, finds by functional category.....	161
Table 7.5: Far Gosford Street, summary counts of the identified bone : elements/fragments (NISP) by taxa/species.....	168
Table 7.6: Far Gosford Street frontage, pollen diagram	173

Contributors

Philip L Armitage MSc PhD

Freelance animal bone specialist, Brixham, Devon

Paul Blinkhorn BTech

Freelance pottery specialist, Northampton

Mark Bridge PhD

Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory, Mill Farm, Mapledurham, Oxfordshire, RG4 7TX

Andy Chapman BSc MCIfA FSA

Senior Project Manager, MOLA, Bolton House, Wootton Hall Park, Northampton, NN4 8BN

Pat Chapman BA CMS ACIfA

Project Supervisor, MOLA

Mark Curteis BA PhD

Curator of Social History and Art, Chelmsford Museum

Geoff Egan PhD FSA

Formerly of the Museum of London and British Museum (deceased)

Val Fryer BA MCIfA

Freelance environmental specialist, Norfolk

Tora Hylton

Finds and Archive Manager, MOLA

Paul Mason BA MCIfA

Formerly Project Officer, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Danny McAree MA MBA PGDip PCIfA

Formerly Project Supervisor, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Quita Mould BA MA FSA

Barbican Research Associates

Rob Scaife PhD

School of Geography, University of Southampton, Highfield, Southampton, SO17 1BJ

Iain Soden BA MCIfA

Formerly Senior Project Officer, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Tim Upson-Smith BA PGDip

Formerly Senior Supervisor, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Penelope Walton-Rogers Dip.Acc. FSA

The Anglo-Saxon Laboratory, Marketing House, 8 Bootham Terrace, York, YO30 7DH

Acknowledgements

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology, gratefully acknowledges the generous support and understanding of our clients Oakmoor Deeley Partnership and their Project Managers Rose Project Services, together with UNITE Integrated Solutions plc and their archaeological consultants, University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). We express our appreciation of the enthusiasm of Coventry City Council, especially Chris Patrick and George Demidowicz. Thanks to the Coventry Ambassadors Group for their interest shown in the excavations.

We recognise the meticulous part played by the Museum of London Conservation Service in conserving over 120 shoes, the part of Buckinghamshire County Museums for their X-rays of ferrous and non-ferrous finds and to Mark Curteis of Chelmsford Museum for his help with the more exotic coins and jettons. We gratefully acknowledge the help of George Demidowicz, Peter Coss and Michael Hinman for use of their time and unpublished notes in the preparation of the historical documentation for this report. Thanks also to Dr Nat Alcock, who, in tandem with the evaluation of the Far Gosford Street site, looked through the archives pertaining to the former Astleys and Calcott factory holdings. This report was edited for publication by Rob Atkins, Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman.

Finally, as always, we are indebted to the many staff, listed below, and volunteers that assisted with the fieldwork, and to those from the Coventry and District Archaeological Society (CADAS) whose contribution is, as always, greatly appreciated and to the metal detectorist Derek Webb who gave many hours of his time to both projects.

James Brown, Jim Brown, Adrian Burrow, Dan Cherry, Damion Churchill, Paul Clements, Martin Cooper, Lauren Davies, Jonathon Elston, Nathan Flavell, Anne Foard-Colby, Mick Garside, Miranda Haigh, Kieran Haines, David Haynes, Peter Haynes, Samantha Hepburn, Jennifer Jackson, Chris Jones, Jennifer Kinsman, Alexa Lea, Wallis Lord, Rhiannon Mann, Danny McAree, Mark Patenall, Gemma Quinn, Emma Rae, Naomi Sewpaul, Carol Simmonds, Rob Smith, Mark Spalding, Alex Thorne, Tim Upson-Smith, Elizabeth Verrinder, Angela Warner, Michael Webster and Ailsa Westgarth.

1. Introduction

Project background

Hill Street, Upper Well Street and Far Gosford Street are located at opposite ends of the walled medieval city, 1.2km apart (NGR: SP 3292 7917 & SP 3313 7927; SP 3420 7888 respectively; Fig 1.1). In each case these sites lie close to the modern ring road, but at the inner end of the medieval thoroughfares, in the lee of the late medieval defences.

The significance of the sites in the study of Coventry's archaeology is that they lie in very similar locations relative to the city and that they comprise three suburban streets which stood directly outside the city gates for much of the medieval period. Such similarities facilitate ease of comparison in terms of land planning, construction methodologies, character and relative fluctuations in the long-term economy of the suburbs. It also serves to highlight what differences there were, if any, between the experiences and economies of properties within the city walls (such as excavated at Much Park Street 1970-74, Broadgate 1974-5 and Derby Lane 1982-4) and those here which were excluded by the construction and operation of those defences in peace and war. In terms of the material assemblages, the site also had the potential to highlight differences in the focus of a variety of trades and industries.

Hill Street/Upper Well Street and Far Gosford Street sites contain substantial portions of the city's defences, never before looked at in such detail. The new data is of great value in comparing the results with those previously gained from a variety of smaller sites such as King Street and Lamb Street 1960, Godiva Street 1970, Cox Street 1976-8, Friars Road 1990, The Cheylesmore 1991 and Hill Street 2002-3. The work has, in some detail, married up excavated data and documentary sources for the working of the defences over a period of 250 years.

For the first time, the immediate suburban environment has come under scrutiny and an unprecedented level of botanical data has come to light in a programme of sampling for both seeds and pollens as a guide to the changing character of the streets.

The margins of the medieval city are a fertile place to look in principle, since they have not been overly developed since the medieval period. Therefore they stand to retain greater quantities of early environmental remains, less likely to be present in the busier city centre. Thus, forming a circuit around the massively redeveloped centre, they have a potential to tell us far more about the early city environment in which Coventry grew.

Northamptonshire Archaeology, now part of MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology), undertook the

excavations over 2003-7. Preliminary work in advance of development for the Belgrade Plaza at Hill Street took place in stages comprising an evaluation (Thorne 2003), three watching briefs (Mason *et al* 2005; Mason *et al* 2006; McAree 2006a) and two excavations (McAree and Mason 2006; Mason and Soden 2007). A full client report was written bringing together the results of these excavations (Mason *et al* 2008). Work at Far Gosford Street took place prior to the construction of Callice Court (private accommodation for Coventry University). Initial archaeological work comprised an archaeological evaluation by ULAS (Richards 2006), a palaeoenvironmental survey (Head and Wilkinson 2006), a report on the coin hoard (Mason and Soden 2006) and these were followed by an excavation by MOLA Archaeology (Mason and Soden 2008).

At Belgrade Plaza the work was funded by Oakmoor Deeley and managed by Rose Project Services, while at Far Gosford Street work was carried out by UNITE Integrated Solutions plc and managed by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. Both sites fell under the auspices of Coventry City Council's Conservation and Archaeology Section who monitored on behalf of the Planning Authority.

Topography and geology

The Hill Street and Upper Well Street sites constituted a surface car park, bounded by Upper Well Street to the north-east, Bond Street to the south-east, Hill Street to the south-west and the new Belgrade Plaza car park to the north-west (formerly known as Leigh Mills). The site lay at c. 81m above Ordnance Datum. The Radford Brook, a tributary of the River Sherbourne (itself a tributary of the Warwickshire Avon) flows through a culvert beneath the modern ground surface and crosses between the two excavated areas on an approximate south-east to north-west alignment. The mapped geology of the site is Keuper Marl, stiff red clay of the Triassic Enville Beds. This overlies distinctive coarse-grained red sandstone, which in turn seals Carboniferous coal seams (BGS 1984).

The Far Gosford Street site comprised the historic frontage of Far Gosford Street and a portion of the properties which once stretched back as far as Gulson Road to the south. To the immediate west lies the course of the River Sherbourne, while to the east once flowed that of the Springfield Brook, a feeder stream, long since culverted below ground. The geology of the sites is Keele Series sandstones, siltstones and conglomerates, a sub-division of Carboniferous Upper Coal Measures, overlain by varying thicknesses of alluvium (Head and Wilkinson 2006, 7).

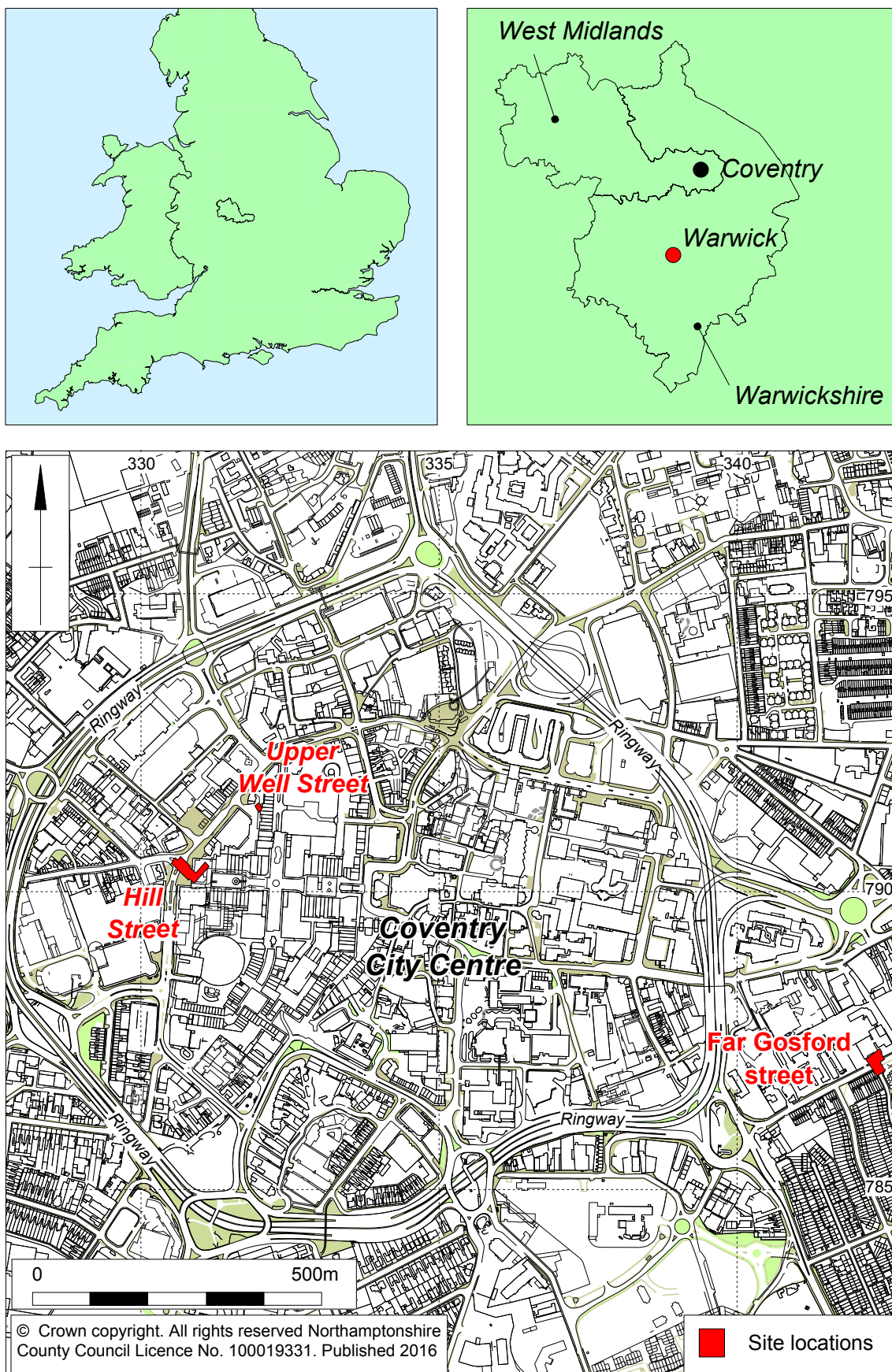


FIGURE 1.1: SITE LOCATIONS