

BUILDING RECORDING  
OF  
THE GREYHOUND INN,  
MUCH PARK STREET,  
COVENTRY

Shona Robson-Glyde and Elizabeth A Curran

Illustrations by Shona Robson-Glyde

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Worcestershire County Council

Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,  
Worcestershire County Council,  
Woodbury,  
University of Worcester,  
Henwick Grove,  
Worcester WR2 6AJ



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Project 3504  
Report 1770



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## **Building recording of The Greyhound Inn, Much Park Street, Coventry**

**Shona Robson-Glyde and Elizabeth Curran**

### **Part 1 Project summary**

Archaeological building recording was undertaken at The Greyhound Inn, Much Park Street, Coventry (NGR SP 3373 7868). It was undertaken on behalf of Halcrow Group Ltd, and their client Stoford Developments Ltd. The project aimed to identify the historic nature of the structure on the site and provide a record of the building's exterior.

The recording of The Greyhound Inn concentrated on the exterior and façade of the building. The building is three storeys tall and has an off-centre front door with flat pilasters, frieze and moulded cornice. The ground and first floor windows have rusticated arches with keystones. The structure was built in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, as testified by the architectural style and brick size. It is shown on a 1748 map of Coventry, although a building on the same plot is shown on Speed's 1610 map of Coventry. The Greyhound was first mentioned in the 1850s in a trade directory and was shown as a public house on a Board of Health Map of 1851.



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## Part 2 Detailed report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

Archaeological building recording was undertaken at The Greyhound Inn, Much Park Street, Coventry (NGR SP 3373 7868, Fig 1), on behalf of Halcrow Group Ltd, and their client Stoford Developments Ltd.

#### 1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IfA 2008). The project also conforms to the English Heritage Guidance *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (EH 2006).

#### 1.3 Aims

The Institute for Archaeologists defines archaeological building recording as 'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building' (IfA 2008, 2).

This project aimed to produce a record of the exterior of the building and produce an assessment of the significance based upon the professional judgement of the specialist team.

### 2. Methods

#### 2.1 Documentary search

A desk-based assessment has been carried out for the area around the site of The Greyhound Inn (Rogers 2007). Following this an archaeological evaluation was also carried out adjacent to the site (Phear 2007). A large excavation was also completed by Birmingham Archaeology (Mitchell and Colls 2009). Documentary information is presented within the former report.

#### 2.2 Fieldwork methodology

##### 2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

Fieldwork was undertaken on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

The recording of the building consisted of a photographic survey of the exterior of the building and measured survey. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot. The photographic survey was carried out with a Sony α350 digital camera. All photographs were recorded on pro-forma Photographic Record Sheets. Annotation of existing ground plans and elevations complemented the photographic record along with notes completed whilst on site.

#### 2.3 Building recording methodology

The project conformed to the specification for a level 2 survey as defined in the English Heritage document *Understanding historic buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (EH 2006). This level of survey is described as a visual record supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type. The record will produce enough information to produce conclusions about the building's development and use and will include the following elements of survey:

##### Photography

- General view or views of the building in its wider setting or landscape
- External appearance of the building, using oblique and right angle shots

#### Drawings

- Roughly dimensioned sketched plan, section, or elevation
- Measured elevations (when required)

#### Written account

- A summary of the building's form, function, date and sequence of development

### 3. **Topographical, historical and archaeological context**

The Greyhound Inn lies to the south of the Coventry city centre, inside the circuit of the inner city ring road, and on the west side of Much Park Street (Fig 1). The Greyhound Inn is a locally listed building (DCT624) and is also noted on the Coventry City Historic Environment Record (MCT370) as a public house within St Michael's Civil Parish. The site lies within an archaeological constraint area as designated by Coventry City Council (DCT889).

The area within the immediate vicinity of The Greyhound Inn has previously been subject to a desk-based assessment (Rogers 2007) and a large excavation was undertaken by Birmingham Archaeology to the immediate west of south of The Greyhound Inn (Mitchell and Colls 2009). Both of these sources have been used to produce the below summary of information.

#### *Historical background*

In the early medieval period, Coventry had been divided between the land held by the prior in the north and land held by the Earl of Chester in the south. The Greyhound Inn lies within the boundaries of Cheylesmore Park, the Earl's manor, and was south of the park pale which ran from Greyfriars Lane to Whitefriar's Street. By the mid-13<sup>th</sup> Century the boundaries of the park relaxed enabling Much Park Street, and to a limited extent Little Park Street, to develop as major routes south out of the city towards London. Economic decline in the late medieval period was widespread and it is suggested that Coventry seems to have suffered acutely (Soden 2005, 35). However, the first map of Coventry by John Speed, in 1610 (Fig 2), depicts Much Park Street as a built up area. Occupying the area that corresponds to The Greyhound Inn is a building on the street frontage with an extension to the rear. Samuel Bradford's map of 1748 (Fig 2) shows the site has changed little and gives a clear indication of the extent of the buildings. The house on the street frontage is shown extending some way into the backplot, with additional outbuildings and a garden to the rear. Sharp's map of 1807 (Fig 2) shows little change to Much Park Street. It was a commercial part of the city in the 1820s as can be seen by the 1828-29 trade directory (Pigot 1828) with a specialism of ribbon making. However, it is not until the 1851 Board of Health Map (Fig 2) that a detailed picture of the individual holdings and buildings along the street can be obtained. On the map the building is now marked 'The Greyhound P. H.' and includes a passage in the southern boundary of the plot, labelled 'Greyhound Yard', that allowed access from Much Park Street into an area to the rear of the properties. The 1850 trade directory (White 1850) shows that Much Park Street had become even more of a commercial area with 32 different trades on the street including eleven ribbon manufacturers. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888 (Fig 2) shows a similar layout to the buildings on the site with the plot boundary having much in common with earlier plot divisions, which is also the impression given in the 1903 (Fig 2) Ordnance Survey. On this map the building is now simply labelled 'Inn'.

In the Second World War Coventry's general manufacturing industries were targets for the Luftwaffe. The Blitz of the 14-15<sup>th</sup> November 1940 and the Baedekker raid in 1941 destroyed much of the fabric of the city centre, including the Cathedral. While the buildings of The Greyhound Inn appeared to have been untouched, Much Park Street was damaged during the bombing raids. By the 1970s reconstruction and redevelopment radically altered the street layout, with many of the frontages replaced with free standing buildings set back from the street. Planning documents from 1976 (Fig 3), show an existing plan of the building together with the proposed demolition of a portion of the rear of the building to create a new Service Road to the north and west of the building. By 1977 the south of Much Park Street fronted onto a stretch of the city's Ring Road known as Ringway St Johns, which replaced St Johns Street.



### *Archaeological background*

Archaeological excavations carried out at various locations along Much Park Street suggest the pattern of development in the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries was characterised by metalworking, and non-intensive, though increasing, occupation. The excavation in advance of the construction of an extension at The Greyhound Inn revealed early evidence for a hearth, a number of pits and possible boundary ditch. Thin layers of charcoal indicated the possibility that industrial processes were being undertaken on the site (Flitcroft 1997). In the 14<sup>th</sup> Century in Much Park Street, all the pre-14<sup>th</sup> century buildings and occupation were cleared and the first substantial buildings on the street were constructed, consisting of timber built on stone footings (Rogers 2007). Additional evidence from earlier excavations seems to suggest that the timber buildings in Much Park Street appeared to have had a mixed domestic and industrial usage (Rogers 2007).

Archaeological excavations carried out in 2008 between Much Park Street and St John's Street, to the immediate rear of The Greyhound, revealed evidence of occupation of the area from the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Mitchell and Colls 2009). This first phase of occupation was pretty low density due to the fact that the area was still within Cheylesmore Park. There was increased activity, particularly immediately to the rear of The Greyhound, in the 13-14<sup>th</sup> century consisting of cess pits, storage pits and tanning pits that were then reused as rubbish pits. The 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century usage of the site saw a deliberate and regulated building programme which was evident in the form of laid out plot divisions defined by walls and ditches. Well-preserved sandstone building foundations for timber-framed buildings were revealed. These were identified as buildings with urban tenement plots and three of the plots were to the rear of The Greyhound. The 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century saw a dramatic increase in activity on the site, consisting of intercutting pits within the plot boundaries. The pits were being used for quarrying stone, storage, tanning and also for waste and there was evidence of different functions within the separate plots, including metalworking. The 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century saw a reduction of pit cutting signifying a change in the functions of the plots. Also, the plot boundary ditches were being replaced with fences. Post 1550 two large stone-lined cesspits were excavated to the rear of the sandstone buildings in two of the plots. These contained a large amount of artefacts of domestic and industrial nature. There was limited evidence of the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century occupation which may have been due to the 1970s construction on the site removing the shallower deposits. The 19<sup>th</sup> century sources show structures in the most of the backplots, some which were not revealed in excavations. The 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century saw the south of the excavation area being used as a ribbon dye works with extensive remains of the building foundations being revealed. These works were known about from cartographic and historical sources and had been constructed in the late 1800s and demolished in the 1950s (Mitchell and Colls 2009).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Building description (see Fig 4)

The Greyhound Inn (Plate 1) is a brick built structure on Much Park Street in the southern part of Coventry. It was built on the west side of the road, with its frontage facing the street. The building is three storeys tall (Fig 4) and has a gabled roof with chimneys on each side. The ground and first floor window openings have rusticated arches with central keystones (Plate 2). The window openings of the second floor have slightly segmental brick arches (Plate 3). The windows of the first floor have window frames and glazing bars forming 6 and 12 light windows. The second floor has 8 and 8 light casements with wooden frames and glazing bars. The window cills are of sandstone. The main door is flanked by flat pilasters capped with decorative capitals and above the door is a fan frieze and moulded cornice (Plate 4). A blocked opening (Plate 5) to the left shows the former entrance into the rear of the plot which is marked with an oval sign saying 'Court 32' (Plate 6). The rear of the structure is a mixture of low-level modern structures and rebuilt 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century structures (Plate 7). Both the south (Plate 8) and north gables (Plate 9) of the building have also been re-skinned in modern brickwork. The north gable has an attached 1990s extension (Plate 9) built in a style reminiscent of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century chapel with semi-circular arched doorway and rusticated window and door arches.

## 4.2 Dating

The external recording of the building has indicated a preliminary date for The Greyhound Inn. The size of the bricks used to construct The Greyhound Inn give it a date of the mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> century. These bricks were coursed in Flemish Bond and measured 9 ¼" by 4 ¼" by 2 ¾". The 1748 map of Coventry (Fig 2), produced by Bradford, shows a building on the site of The Greyhound Inn which is likely to be the same structure as was recorded.

The excavations carried out to the rear of The Greyhound in 2008 (Mitchell and Colls 2009) revealed extensive medieval remains dating to the 14-15<sup>th</sup> century. Sandstone building foundations and boundaries formed burgage tenement plots and The Greyhound Inn was built on the same alignment as these plots. The lines of the plots were still visible within the property boundaries shown on 20<sup>th</sup> century mapping. The building plots measured 16 feet, around 5 metres, in width which is a standard width for medieval building tenement plots. The Greyhound Inn measures around 10 metres across its frontage and therefore is the width of two of the plots.

The Greyhound Inn is set on the frontage of Much Park Street. The sandstone building foundations revealed in the excavation were set a long way back from Much Park Street and were therefore less likely to have formed buildings of domestic use. The domestic property of the plots would most likely have fronted Much Park Street as The Greyhound does. The cellar of The Greyhound may therefore contain remains of earlier structures, especially as it is believed that some of the excavated medieval buildings were still standing, albeit in a much altered form, into the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The double width of The Greyhound building plot was already in place by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as the 1610 map (Fig 2) shows a double width structure, with a rear wing, on the street frontage. The size and position of the plot have not changed. All of the mapping shows the same plot with buildings on it on the street frontage and stretching along the northern boundary. It is very unlikely that a medieval building was completely demolished and rebuilt in the 17<sup>th</sup> century again in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and then in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, as well as the possibility of medieval remains surviving in the cellar, it is possible that at least part of an earlier structure survives within the upper floors of the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century building.

The main frontage building appears to have changed little from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century however, the rear of the building appears to have been altered throughout time as functions of the outbuildings changed. The 1851 Board of Health map (Fig 2) shows a building of the same size on the frontage with little change to the rear structures in comparison with the 1748 map (Fig 2). By this time however, the building is known as The Greyhound Public House with the rear marked as Greyhound Yard. It is possible that the structure was already an inn prior to the time of this map, but not likely. The 1828-29 Pigot Directory (Pigot 1828, 822) shows that there were fifteen public houses on Much Park Street and none of these was called The Greyhound. It is always possible that the building was known by another name prior to being called The Greyhound but this does not seem likely. The Greyhound does not appear in any of the trade directories until 1850 (White 1850, 548). It is probably this change to a public house that saw the addition of the rusticated arches above the ground and first floor windows and possibly the decoration around the door also.

The Greyhound Inn was altered during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as part of the 1970s redevelopment of the area. The Ringway was constructed in this period along with a large multi-storey car park to the rear of The Greyhound Inn and a printing and stationary department adjacent to the building to the south. The Coventry City planning archives contain details of a 1976 planning application to rebuild part of The Greyhound Inn. The documents include ground plans of the building showing its separate rooms prior to the alterations being carried out. The ground floor is shown with a bar, smoke room and private lounge all opening off the ground floor passage (Fig 3). This layout, with its separate bar, smoke room, lounge and enclosed space is typical of the layout of a 1930s or earlier public house and suggests that its interior had been little changed from this period. Therefore the alteration of the ground floor of the building would have involved compromising this traditional design. The rear of the ground floor was demolished in order to make way for a service road to the multi-storey car park and printers. The plans show that as well as the rebuilding of the rear out-buildings the south and north gables were also re-skinned in modern brick and the second floor rear elevation was also

rebuilt. Presumably the demolition of the rear part of the pub had a structural effect on much of the fabric and therefore the rebuilding of the rear elevation and the strengthening of the side walls were necessary. The building breaks for the re-skinning of the two gables are visible on the frontage elevation (Plate 10, Fig 4).

The Coventry City planning archives also hold details of a planning application to build an extension against the north gable of The Greyhound Inn (Fig 3). This application was successful and the extension still existed at the time of the recording. The application documents hold plans showing the existing layout of the building in 1998 (Fig 4). The more traditional layout had been altered on the ground floor. The bar and smoke room had been completed opened up into one large lounge. This included the blocking of the passageway opening and the removal of the passageway wall to extend the size of the ground floor room. The internal furnishings would most likely to have been completely updated as well.

## 5. **Synthesis**

The building known as The Greyhound Inn was constructed in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. The architectural style of the building and the brick size confirm this date. The building shown on the site on the 1748 map of Coventry is likely to be the same structure as that still existing today. The building was probably constructed as a house on the street frontage with outbuildings and yard to the rear, accessed by a passage.

The first documentary evidence for the building as a public house was in the 1850 trade directory (White 1850) and then on the 1851 Board of Health Map (Fig 2). The need for a further public house on a street that already contained twelve other public houses at this time is not obvious. However, it was a commercial area of the city that contained a wide range of trades and therefore had not only passing business but also a large number of local inhabitants.

The building has undergone a large number of alterations in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century as documented in the Coventry City planning archives. The alterations have resulted in the ground floor of the building being largely rebuilt during the 1970s truncation of the building and completely remodelled by the 1990s. Much, if not all, of the original architectural features on the ground floor will have been lost through these alterations. However, the upper floors of the building, and the cellar, have not been subject to such wide-reaching alterations and any original features of the building may possibly still exist in these areas.

Given the continuation of the medieval buildings, revealed during the excavation, into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the cartographic evidence of the unchanged footprint of The Greyhound it seems highly likely that surviving within the building is evidence of structures of a date earlier than the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup> century appearance of the pub.

### 5.1 **Research frameworks**

The West Midlands Regional Research Framework for Archaeology (WMRRFA) tends to concentrate on the below ground archaeological evidence of the region, rather than the still existing standing archaeology of historic buildings. Although Soden in his paper (2003a) on early post-medieval Coventry discusses Coventry at this period, there is no mention of standing buildings with the exception of the remains of medieval monastic houses still surviving, to a varying degree, within the City. By contrast, Soden's paper (2003b) on late post-medieval Coventry reminds us that whilst there a number of listed buildings in Coventry there is also a local list to ensure attention is drawn to locally important historic buildings. The Greyhound Inn is on the Coventry local list.

*The English Pub: a history* (Haydon 1994) has a study on the historical, economic and social reasons behind the construction of pubs and the laws that governed the selling of alcohol. CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has recently carried out a joint project with English Heritage, the National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. This aimed to discover, and produce a list, of those pubs that had remained substantially unaltered since 1945. Of the 60,000 pubs in Britain only around 200 of these were able to be included on the list. It includes buildings of any date the only criteria being that the interior is wholly or substantially altered. Regional inventories are the level in the pub preservation hierarchy. They list, in addition to pubs on the National Inventory in the area, those interiors which, whilst altered, still have significant

historic or architectural value. The National Inventory has recently updated their list and it now includes only two pubs of any date in the whole of Warwickshire. The Peacock in Rugby is

'a sturdy Victorian hotel of brick with a peacock in relief on the corner, this has a nearly complete and interesting interior. The layout and fittings are mostly original but there seems to have been an inter-war reworking as suggested by the terrazzo floor with its Art Deco-style borders' (<http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk/pubs/national-inventory-maps.asp>).

The other pub in Warwickshire is The Black Horse in Coventry. This building is

'a prominent three-storey Victorian local with two long parallel rooms - public bar on the right and lounge on the left. The counter and the bar back in the public bar are hard to date and may be either Edwardian or inter-war. Certainly the fire-surround in the lounge looks like 1920s. Both rooms have fixed seating, that in the lounge quite elegant work probably from the 1920s which must be the date for the most remarkable feature - the mock timber, half height flower and leaf frieze and panelling in the lounge (it looks like Lincrusta work). At the rear the staircase hall has been turned into public drinking area. Some etched windows remain. Facing the front entrance was an off-sales hatch (now panelled over)' (<http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk/pubs/national-inventory-maps.asp>).

The Greyhound Inn would have contained features similar to these if it had not been so radically altered. The layout of the pub in the 1970s, as shown on the planning documents, suggests that the interior was remarkably unaltered, at least from the 1930s. By the 1990s documents however, the ground floor has been so radically altered that the original layout cannot be discerned. Therefore it is not likely that original features would survive. With the amount of alteration to The Greyhound Inn at this time, it would not be expected for such a building to be included on the list.

Architecturally, the study of public houses tends to concentrate on the Victorian highly decorated buildings (Spiller 1973). The history of public houses is a popular subject and numerous books have been produced concentrating on the social and economic side to their development as well as their architectural interest. As well as Haydon (1994) others of note are Clark 1983 and Jennings 2007.

## 6. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*Archaeological building recording was undertaken on behalf of Stoford Developments Ltd via their agent Halcrow Group Ltd at The Greyhound Inn, Much Park Street, Coventry (NGR ref SP 3373 7868). The recording of The Greyhound Inn concentrated on the exterior and façade of the building. The building is three storeys tall and has an off-centre front door with flat pilasters, frieze and moulded cornice. The ground and first floor windows have rusticated arches with keystones. The structure was built in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, as testified by the architectural style and brick size. It is shown on a 1748 map of Coventry, although a building on the same plot is shown on Speed's 1610 map of Coventry. The Greyhound Inn was first mentioned in the 1850s in a trade directory and was shown as a public house on a Board of Health Map of 1851.*

## 7. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the Simon Griffin of Halcrow Group Ltd and Ian French of BAM Construction for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project.

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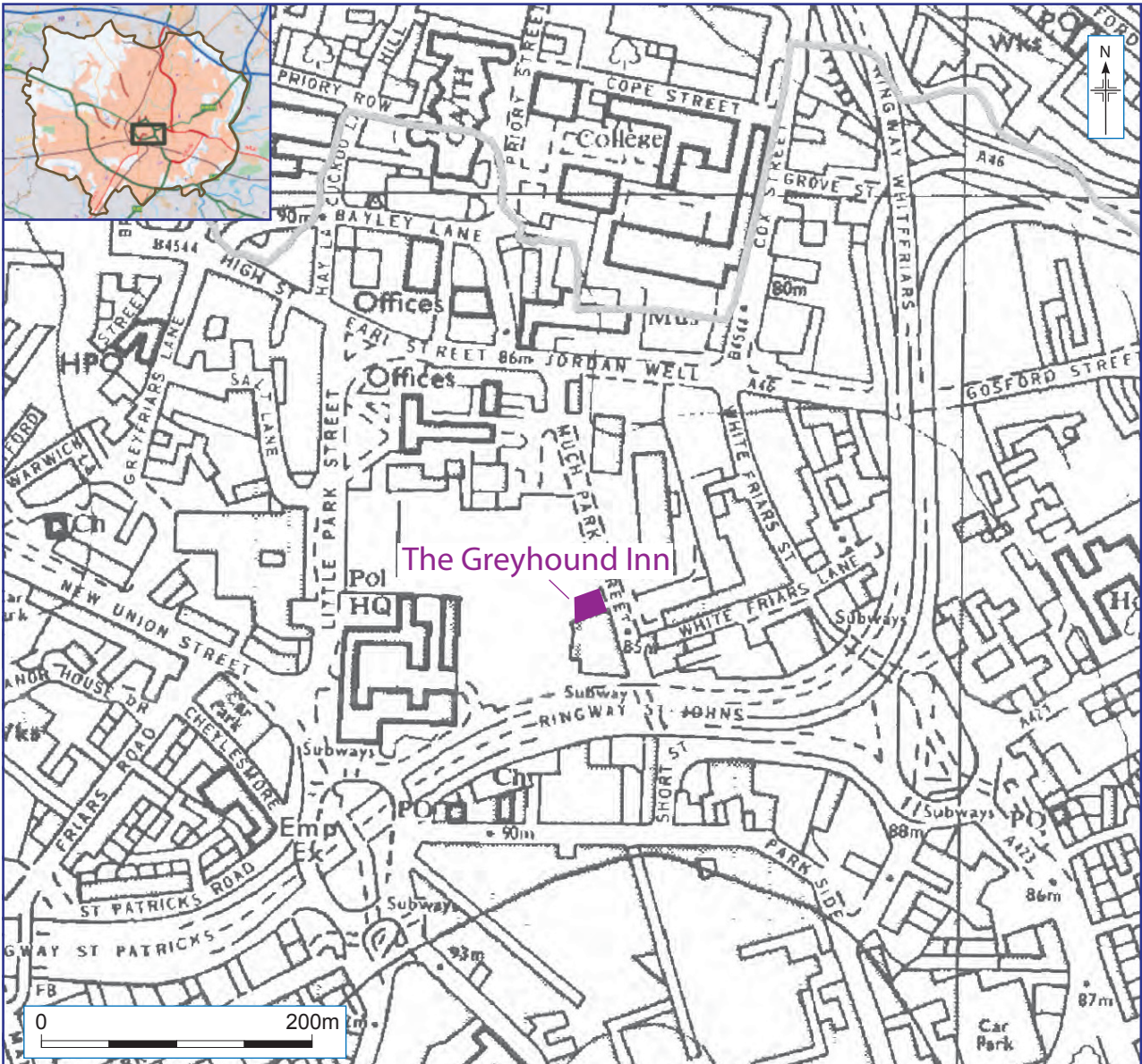
## 8. Personnel

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Shona Robson-Glyde. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Hal Dalwood. Fieldwork was undertaken by Shona Robson-Glyde and Elizabeth Curran with illustration by Shona Robson-Glyde.

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## Figures



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Location of the site.

Figure 1



Speed's map of 1610



Board of Health map of 1851



Bradford's map of 1748



Ordnance Survey map of 1888

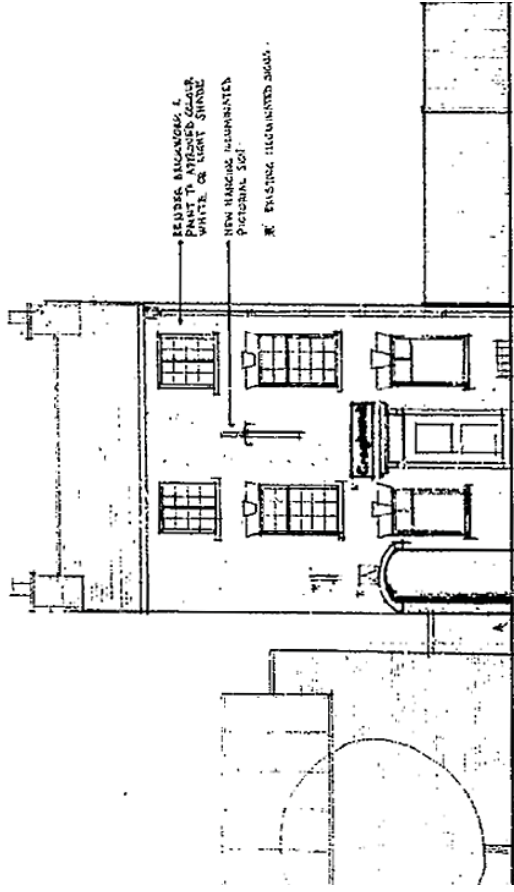


Sharp's map of 1807

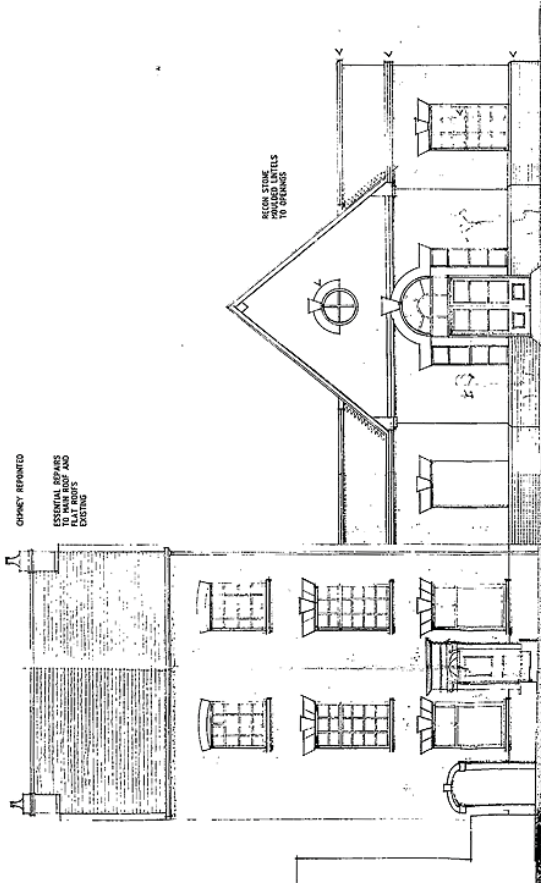


Ordnance Survey map of 1903

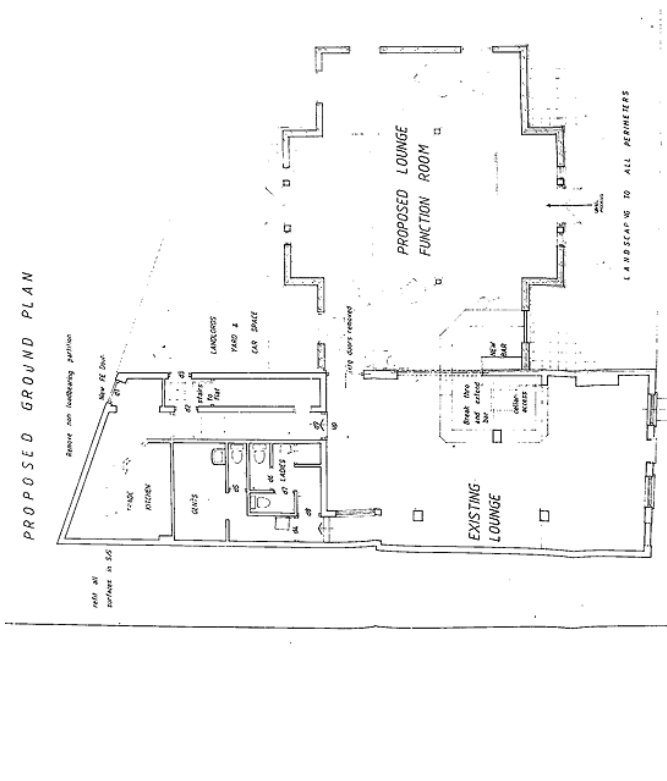
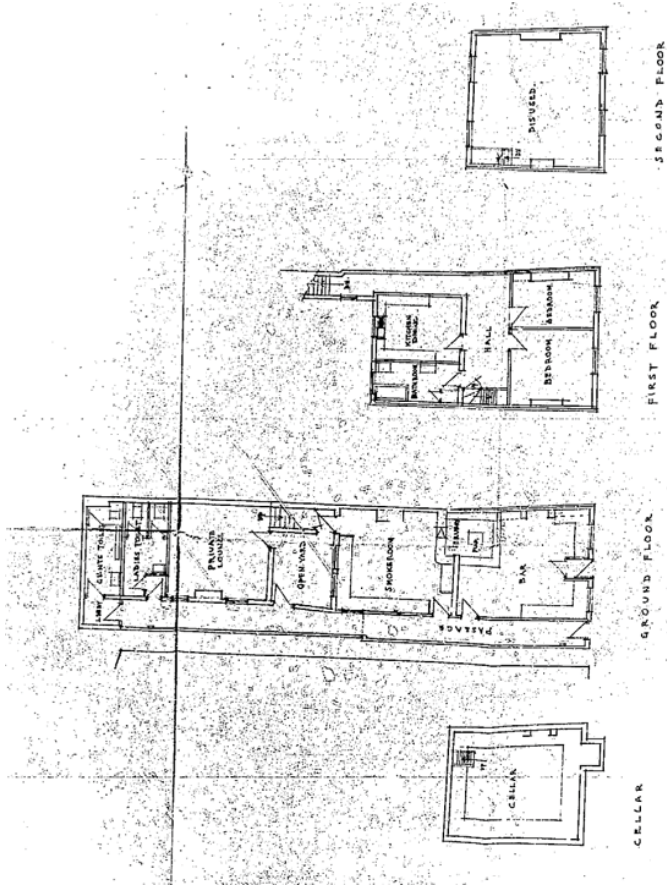


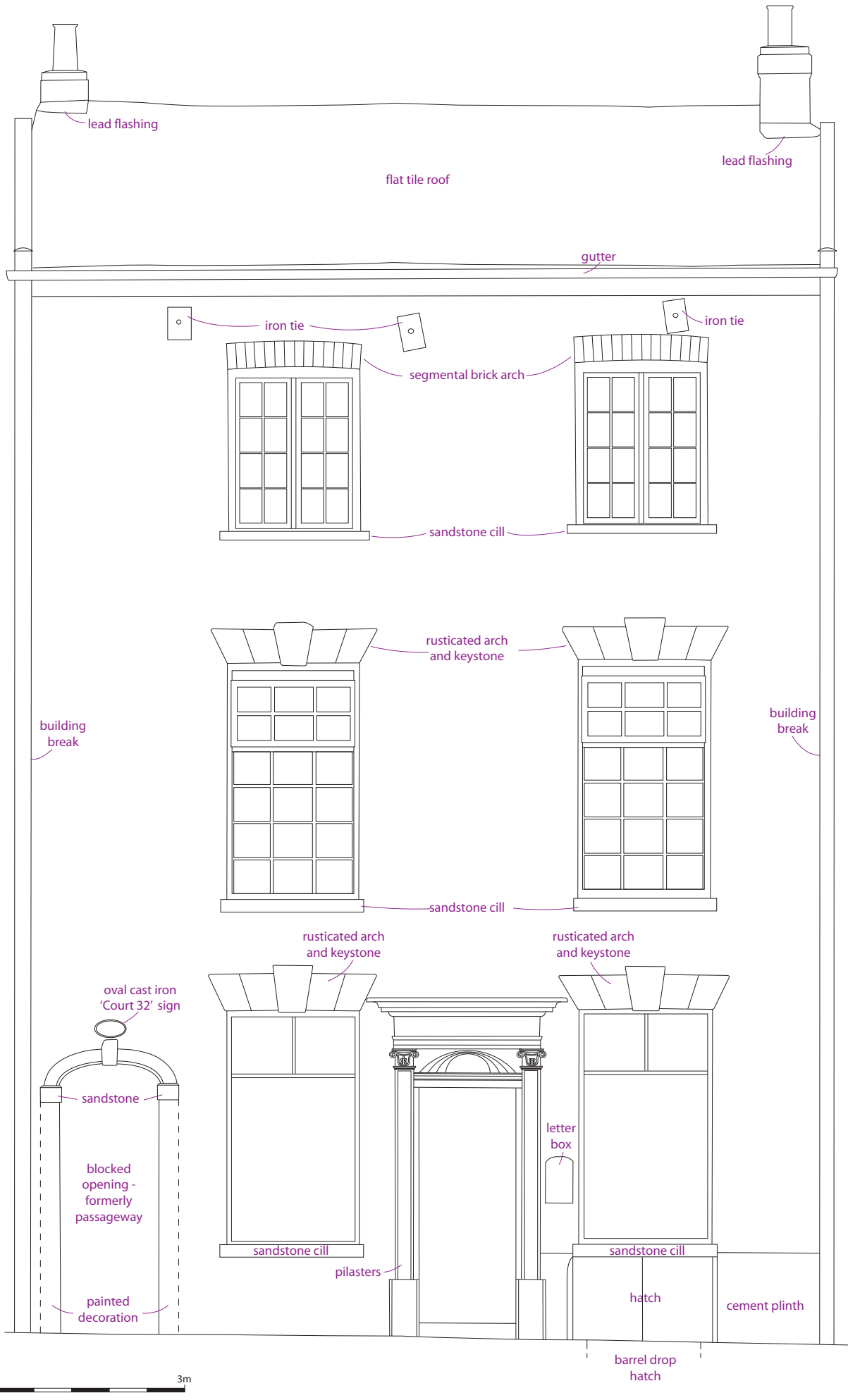


Front Elevation



PROPOSED ELEVATION TO MUCH PARK STREET





Frontage elevation of The Greyhound Inn

Figure 4

## **Plates**

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*Plate 1: The Greyhound Inn, from the south east*

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*Plate 2: Detail of a first floor window opening, including rusticated arch with keystone*

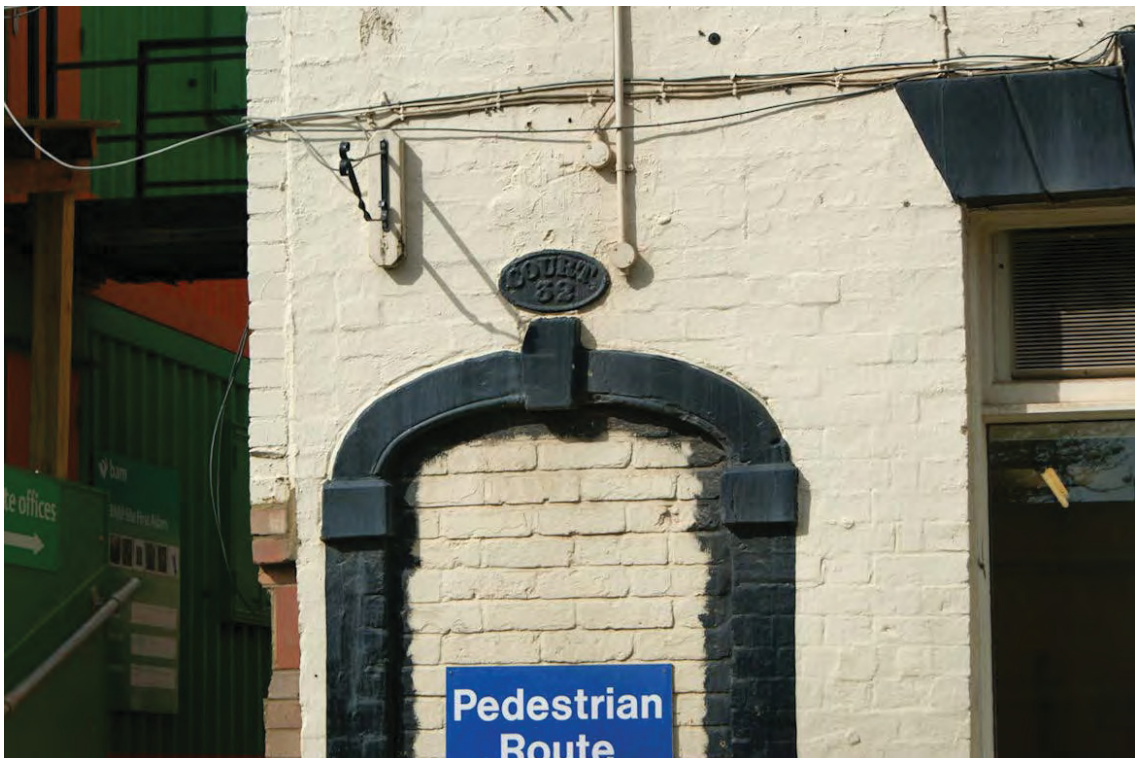


*Plate 3: Detail of a second floor window opening, including slightly segmental brick arch*

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*Plate 4: Above the main entrance to The Greyhound Inn is a fan frieze and moulded cornice*



*Plate 5: The blocked opening of the former entrance to the rear plot*



*Plate 6: Detail of the oval sign above the blocked opening saying 'Court 32'*



*Plate 7: The rear elevation of The Greyhound Inn, from the south west*





*Plate 8: The south gable of The Greyhound Inn*



*Plate 9: The north gable and 1990s extension to The Greyhound Inn*

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*Plate 10: Detail of the building break to the south elevation of the building*

## **Appendix 1 Technical information**

### **The archive**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Fieldwork progress records AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 29 Digital photographs
- 2 Scale drawings
- 1 Computer disk