

Gardener's Public House, Well's Road, Nottingham: An Archaeological Watching Brief



For Mr Kulbinder Johal

Prepared by Camilla Collins

Report Number: 048/2018

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Summary

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Kulbinder Johal to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Gardener's Public House, Well's Road, Nottingham (National Grid Reference SK 58912 41859). The work was undertaken during the construction of ten new dwellings (planning ref. 15/02767/PFUL3).
- The site lies at approximately 77.4m AOD and is located to the north-east of Nottingham City Centre. The site is bounded by Kildare Road to the west and Well's Road to the east.
- A medieval healing spring (SMR M2057) is reputed to have been present on or near the site, possibly below The Gardener's public house and associated car park. Early references are uncertain; the well known as the 'Brodewell' was probably elsewhere but the 'Oswell' might refer to this location.
- A chapel was built adjacent to the well, dedicated to St. Ann, the mother of the Virgin Mary. The well thereafter became known as St. Ann's Well, although it has also been known locally as Robin Hood's Well due to stories associating Robin Hood with this vicinity.
- After the dissolution of the monasteries, Woodard House, later St Ann's House, was built on the site in 1609, apparently reusing parts of the chapel or its foundations.
- By the mid 19th century the popularity of the well had diminished. St Ann's House was demolished and a new house built. The spring was enclosed and a monument in the form of a gothic spire constructed over it. In 1887 this was demolished when the whole site was cleared to make way for the embankment and viaduct of the Nottingham Suburban Railway which remained in use until 1954. The Gardener's public house was constructed on the site in 1968 after the closure of the railway.
- No archaeological features, finds or deposits were encountered during the course of the watching brief.
- The ground within the site appears to have been heavily disturbed during the construction and the demolition of the railway embankment and viaduct which once occupied a large part of it. It is likely that any archaeological remains which may have been present have been severely truncated or removed entirely by these earlier phases of development.

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Acknowledgments

The project was managed by Ed Taylor and the fieldwork was undertaken by Johanna Greaves, Pete Watkin and Lawrence Platt. Mr Kulbinder Johal is thanked for commissioning the work. The project was overseen by Scott Lomax, Acting City Archaeologist for Nottingham City Council.

1 Introduction

1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology (T&PA) was commissioned by Mr Kulbinder Johal to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Gardener's Public House, Well's Road, Nottingham (National Grid Reference SK 58912 41859) (Fig. 1). The work was undertaken during the construction of ten new dwellings on the site (planning ref 15/02767/PFUL3).

1.2 In light of the archaeological potential of the site, the Local Planning Authority placed the following conditions upon the Grant of Planning Application:

8. Details of arrangements for archaeological monitoring of the construction process shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to carrying out any development involving the breaking of ground. The archaeological monitoring arrangements shall be put in place during the construction process in accordance with the details as agreed.

Reason: to ensure that any archaeological remains of significance are safeguarded in accordance with Policy BE16 of the Local Plan.

1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was submitted by T&PA in response to this condition and was subsequently approved by Scott Lomax, Acting City Archaeologist for Nottingham City Council. The WSI stated that the archaeological watching brief be carried out in accordance with appropriate professional standards, as defined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard & Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014).

1.4 The T&PA site code is GPH.

2 Topography and Geology

2.1 The site lies at approximately 77.4m AOD and is located to the north-east of Nottingham City Centre. The site is bounded by Kildare Road to the west and Well's Road to the east.

2.2 The sedimentary bedrock is mapped as Tarporley Siltstone Formation of the Mercia Mudstone Group, comprising siltstone, mudstone and sandstone, which formed approximately 242 to 250 million years ago in the Triassic Period. No superficial deposits have been recorded (BGS; accessed 2018).

2.3 The overlying soils are characterised as freely draining slightly acid sandy soils (Soilscape; accessed 2018).

3 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 A medieval healing spring (SMR M2057) is reputed to have been present on or near the site, possibly below The Gardener's public house and associated car park. Early references are uncertain; the well known as the 'Brodewell' was probably elsewhere but the 'Oswell' might refer to this location.
- 3.2 A chapel was built adjacent to the well, dedicated to St. Ann, the mother of the Virgin Mary. The well thereafter became known as St. Ann's Well, although it has also been known locally as Robin Hood's Well due to stories associating Robin Hood with this vicinity.
- 3.3 After the dissolution of the monasteries, Woodard House, later St Ann's House, was built on the site in 1609, apparently reusing parts of the chapel or its foundations.
- 3.4 By the mid 19th century the well's popularity had diminished. St Ann's House was demolished and a new house built. The spring was enclosed and a monument in the form of a gothic spire constructed over it. In 1887 this was demolished when the whole site was cleared to make way for the embankment and viaduct of the Nottingham Suburban Railway which remained in use until 1954. The Gardener's public house was constructed on the site in 1968 after the closure of the railway.
- 3.5 Excavations have been undertaken on the site several times with traces of the railway and St. Anne's House recovered. Made ground has been established to a depth of at least 4m below the terrace level without apparently finding anything of significance. A borehole investigation carried out by amateur archaeologist David Greenwood (Greenwood 2007) took samples from below this level and reported red brick in lime mortar at 6.4m, with sherds of medieval and Romano-British pottery brought up from successively deeper levels (all of which would be significantly lower than the current level of The Wells Road; a recent borehole in this vicinity found natural clay at 5m).
- 3.6 A desk-based assessment of the site was undertaken during 2011 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) (Clarke 2011). This document concluded that there was a possibility of medieval and post-medieval remains surviving on the site beneath the later railway embankments.
- 3.7 A geotechnical survey was undertaken on the site during 2013, consisting of test pits and boreholes. The results of the survey suggested a concentration of made ground around the centre and east of the site containing a large amount of building debris and rubble. This is likely to be associated with the railway construction and demolition. The boreholes were excavated to considerable depth, however, none of the holes revealed any water as expected from Greenwood's excavations in the 1980s. The survey indicated that undisturbed ground may be present towards the western edge of the site (Wardle and Lacey 2013).
- 3.8 Evaluation trenching carried out by Trent & Peak in 2014 did not reveal any remains or features dating to before the 19th century (Mapplethorpe and Malone 2014).

4 Objectives and Regional Research Questions

- 4.1 The aims and objectives of the fieldwork were in accordance with the WSI produced by T&PA.
- 4.2 The general objective of the archaeological watching brief was to identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development and to achieve an appropriate level of *preservation by record*. Where practical within the constraints of the watching brief and development, this included an assessment of the overall extent, date and state of preservation.
- 4.3 Any archaeological remains encountered during the archaeological watching brief presented an opportunity to address research questions as set out in the East Midlands Heritage Research Agenda (Knight et al. 2012). Specific research questions that are relevant to the current scheme of work include:

Post-Medieval (1485-1750)
<i>8.1 Urbanism: morphology, functions and buildings</i>
6. How can we advance studies of building plans and standing remains, especially where hidden inside later buildings, and of caves and cellars?
<i>8.6 Ecclesiastical structures, estates and burials</i>
1. What was the impact of the Reformation upon ecclesiastical buildings and monastic estates?

5 Methodology

- 5.1 The programme of archaeological mitigation comprised continuous archaeological monitoring of intrusive groundworks relating to the redevelopment with the potential to impact on features and layers of archaeological significance. Monitoring took place during May and June 2016 and January, October and November 2017.
- 5.2 The intrusive ground works included the reduction of the ground level in targeted areas across the site in advance of the insertion of piling.
- 5.3 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken, and all exposed surfaces were inspected by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Any archaeological deposits were hand cleaned and recorded where appropriate. All contexts were given an individual context number. Plans and sections of all contexts including features were drawn on drafting film in pencil at a scale of 1:20/1:50, and showed at least context numbers, all colour and textural changes and principal slopes represented as hachures. Digital photographs of each context were taken, together with general views illustrating the principal features of the excavations. Digital colour images were taken with a DSLR at 7 megapixel minimum resolution. Written records were maintained as laid down in T&PA recording manual.
- 5.4 All excavation and recording was carried out in line with CIfA guidelines and standard archaeological practice.

6 Results (*Plates 1-6; Figures 2 and 3*)

- 6.1 Across the site a deposit of mid orange red clay with coal and brick inclusions (0021) was encountered up to 1m below present ground level. It extended beyond the depth of the groundworks but was at least 0.40m thick. This was overlain in turn by up to a further three layers of made ground (0016), (0011) and (0010) each were between 0.10m to 0.30m thick and comprised brick fragments, crushed brick, ash, clay and shale in varying quantities. Construction layers for the modern car park comprised a compacted hardcore layer overlain by tarmac. Elsewhere a thin subsoil and topsoil were found to overly the made ground layers described above.
- 6.2 No archaeological features, finds or deposits were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Previous archaeological and geotechnical investigations at the site suggested deep deposits of made ground. Groundworks for the new development reached a depth of 1m below the current ground level and were entirely within made ground. The natural substrate was not exposed and no archaeological features finds or deposits were encountered.
- 7.2 The ground within the site appears to have been heavily disturbed during the construction and the demolition of the railway embankment and viaduct which once occupied a large part of it. It is likely that any archaeological remains which may have been present have been severely truncated or removed entirely by these earlier phases of development.

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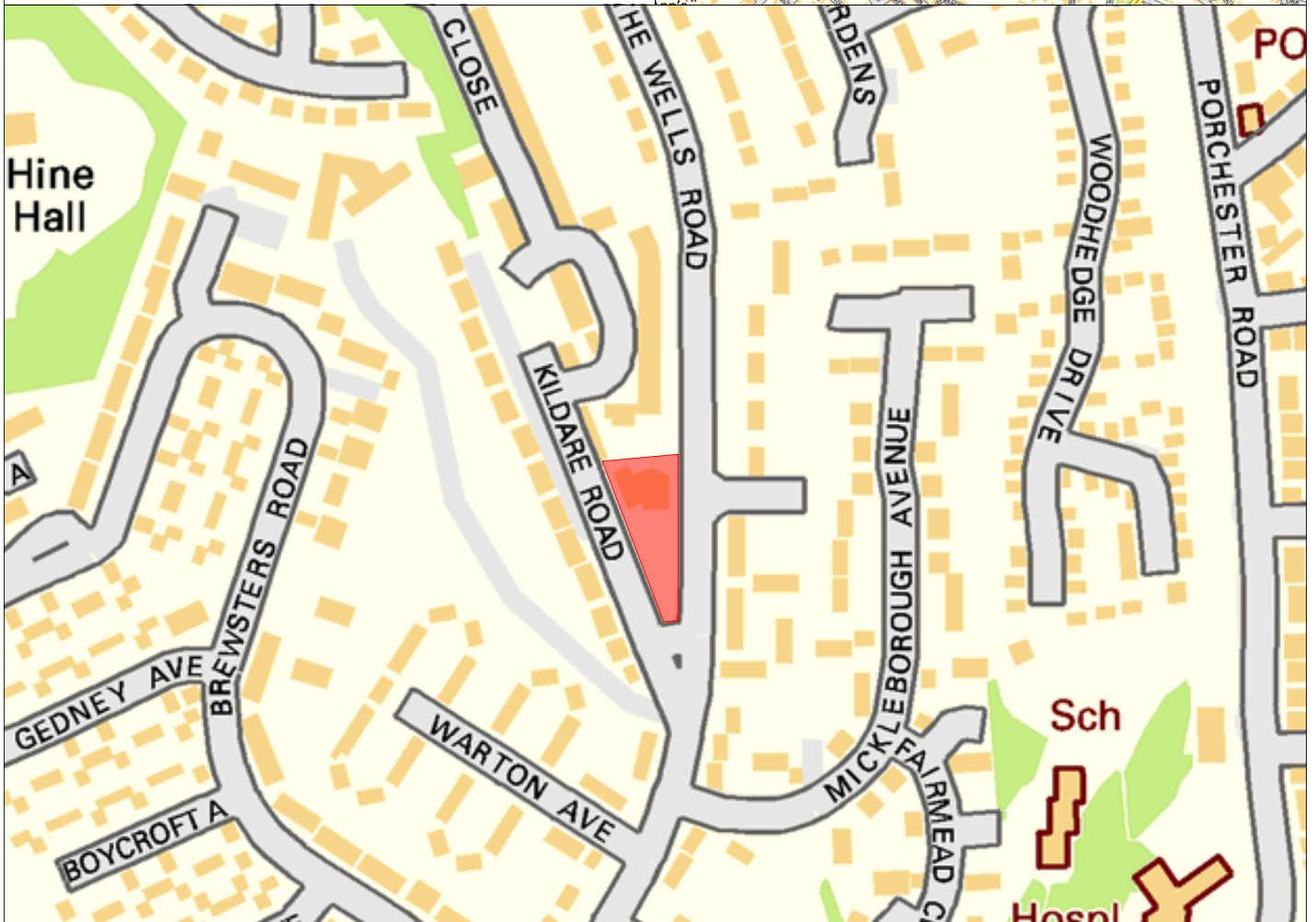
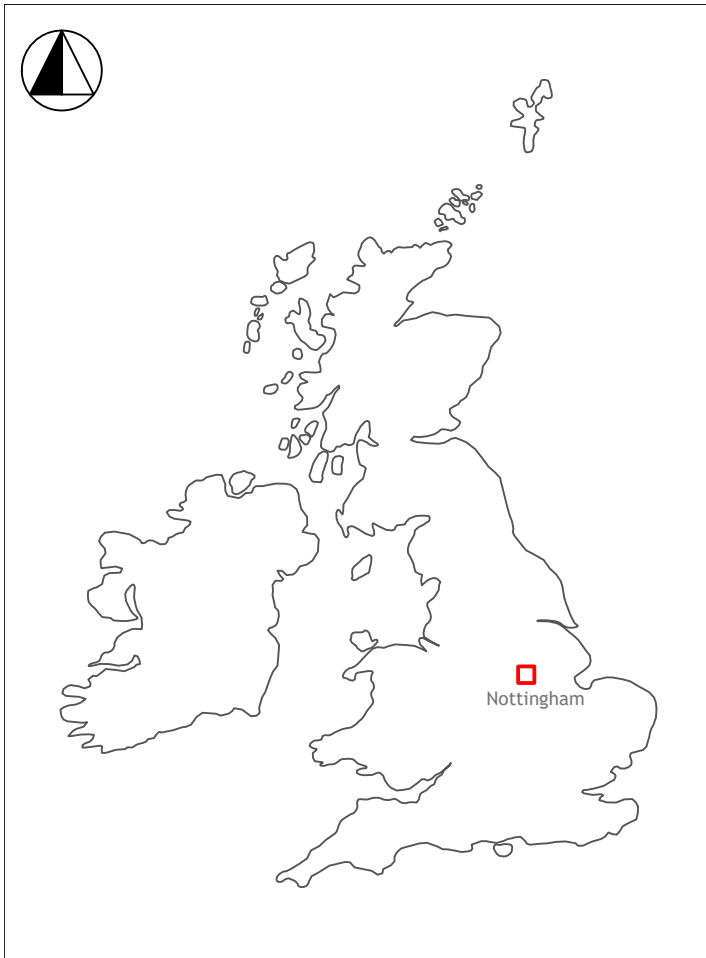
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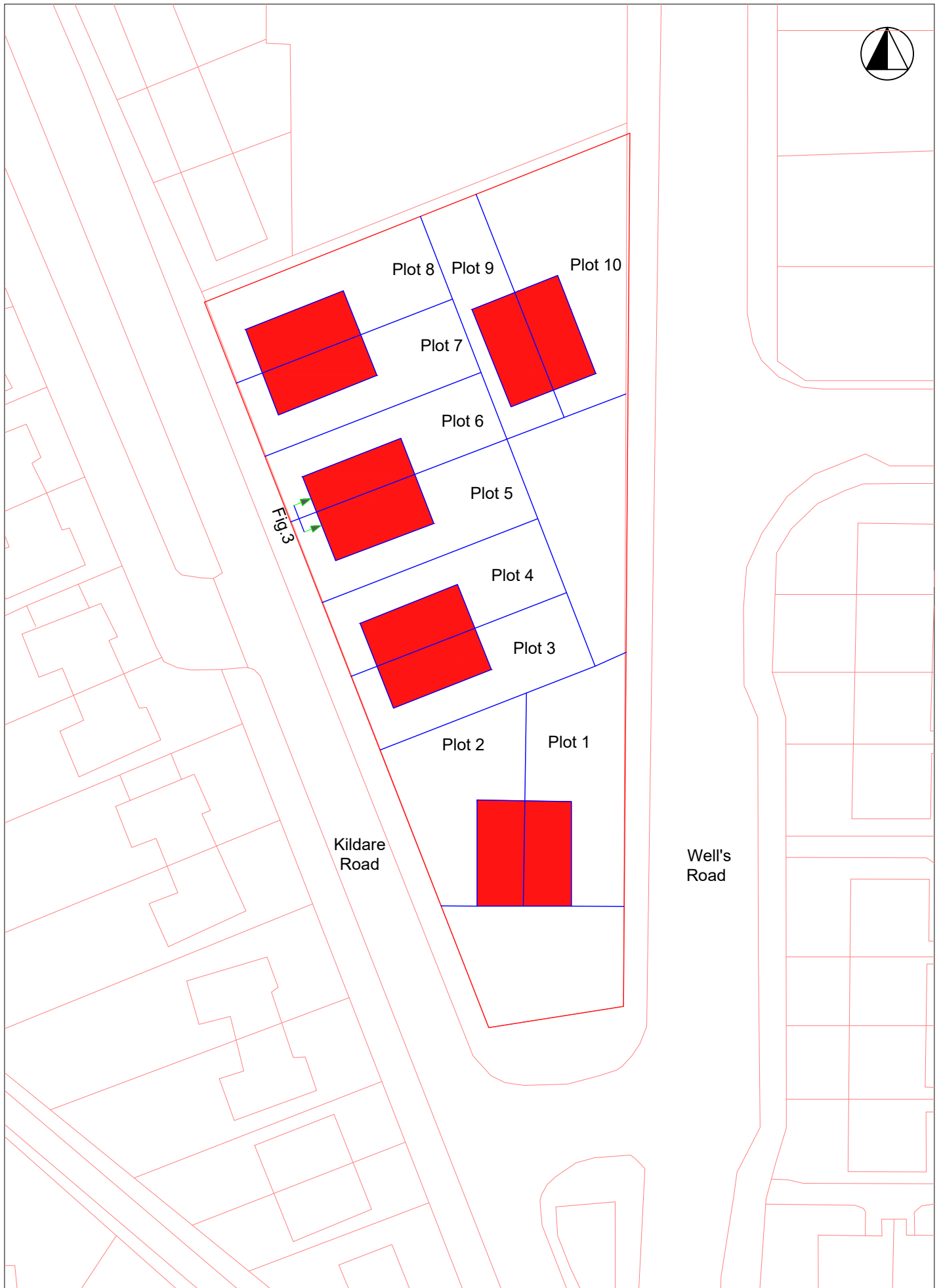
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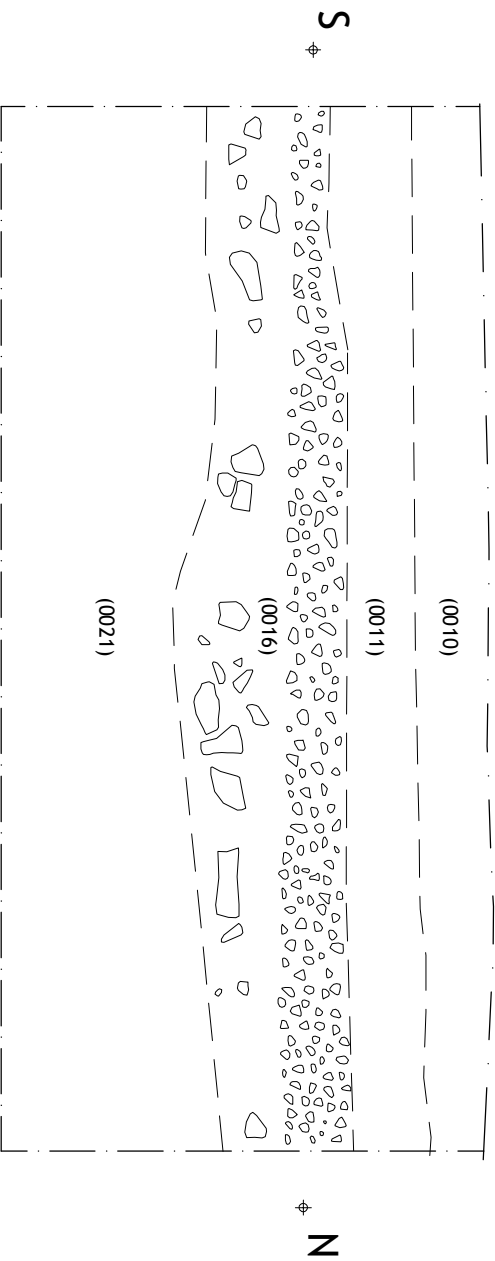
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Figures





Gardener's Public House, Well's Road, Nottingham
East facing section, Plots 5 and 6



Plates



Plate 1: Plan view of Plots 1 and 2 after ground reduction, viewed looking south-west.



Plate 2: East facing section of Plots 1 and 2, viewed looking west.



Plate 3: Plan view of Plots 3 and 4 after ground reduction, viewed looking north-east.



Plate 4: South facing section of Plots 3 and 4, viewed looking north.



Plate 5: East facing section of Plots 5-6, viewed looking west.



Plate 6: South facing section of Plots 7 and 8, viewed looking north.



Plate 7: South facing Section of Plots 9 and 10, viewed looking north.

Appendix 1: OASIS Data Collection Form

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OASIS ID: trentpea1-297464

Project details

Project name	Gardener's Public House, Well Road, St Ann's
Short description of the project	Trent and Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Kulbinder Johal to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Gardener's Public House, Well's Road, Nottingham (National Grid Reference SK 58912 41859). The work was undertaken prior to the construction of ten new dwellings on the site as part of Nottingham City Council planning consent 15/02767/PFUL3. A medieval healing spring (SMR M2057) is reputed to have been present on or near the site, possibly below The Gardener's public house and associated car park. The monks are recorded as having built a chapel adjacent to the well, dedicated to St. Ann, the mother of the Virgin Mary. After the dissolution of the monasteries, Woodard House, later St Ann's House, was built on the site in 1609, apparently reusing parts of the chapel or its foundations. By the mid 19th century its popularity had diminished. St Ann's House was demolished and a new house built. The spring was enclosed and a monument in the form of a gothic spire constructed over it. In 1887 this was demolished when the whole site was cleared to make way for the embankment and viaduct of the Nottingham Suburban Railway which remained in use until 1954. The Gardener's public house was constructed on the site in 1968 after the closure of the railway. High levels of modern disturbance were encountered during the archaeological monitoring of the ground works, both relating to the railway embankment and the construction phase of the public house. The natural substratum was not encountered within the confines of the archaeological monitoring. No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the ground investigations. It is likely that any archaeology that may have been present has been truncated by modern construction.
Project dates	Start: 17-05-2016 End: 13-11-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	GPH1 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	GPH2 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	15/02767/PFUL3 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England
 Site location NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM Gardener's Public House, Well Road, St Ann's
 Study area 0 Square metres
 Site coordinates SK 58912 41859 52.970534393285 -1.122665689141 52 58 13 N 001 07 21 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Trent and Peak Archaeology
 Project brief originator City/Nat. Park/District/Borough archaeologist
 Project design originator Ruth Humphreys
 Project director/manager Edmund Taylor

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive Exists? No
 Paper Archive recipient Nottinghamshire HER
 Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Drawing", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Unpublished Text"

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