



# BRISTOL & WEST ARCHAEOLOGY

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BRI Haematology and Oncology  
Centre, Horfield Road, Bristol

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## Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief Report

Client: University Hospitals Bristol NHS  
Foundation Trust

21 October 2013

# Bristol & West Archaeology

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## BRI Haematology and Oncology Centre, Horfield Road, Bristol

### Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief Report

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**Summary**

An archaeological evaluation and watching brief were undertaken during the groundwork stages for the construction of an extension to the Bristol Royal Infirmary Haematology and Oncology Centre, Kingsdown, Bristol.

The evaluation involved the excavation of a trench across the line of Terrell Street, which revealed extensive, deep, made-ground deposits that sealed a layer of topsoil, indicating that Terrell Street did not lie in this location.

During the subsequent watching brief the line of Terrell Street was revealed together with remains of part of the basement and ground floor of a 19th century building, possibly Terrell Cottage, the cellar of another building, a well and other post-medieval walls. Significantly, this revealed that BRI landscaping during the 1960's had in places preserved basements and other archaeological remains.

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**Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Andy Headdon of University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, which also funded the archaeological work. Thanks are owed to Mr. Julian Bolitho of WYG Planning and Design and Mr Kieran Kelly and Mr Kristian Preeves of Laing O'Rourke for their cooperation and assistance.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Project background

- 1.1 University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust received planning consent from Bristol City Council (Ref. 12/00203/F) to construct an extension to the existing Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI) Oncology Centre located in central Bristol. Attached to the consent was a pre-commencement condition (5) that required the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (evaluation) in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation. Two pre-occupation conditions (18 and 19) required completion of the programme of archaeological work and an archaeological watching brief during development groundworks.
- 1.2 Both the evaluation and the watching brief were undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (BWA 2012) approved by the Senior Archaeological Officer for Bristol City Council and followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE: The Project Managers' Guide)* (EH 2006).
- 1.3 The evaluation was undertaken on 24 September 2012 by Sarah Newns and the watching brief by Raymond Ducker, commencing on 1 May 2013 and concluding on 17 May 2013.
- 1.4 This report was written by Raymond Ducker. The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery under accession number BRSMG 2012/35. A digital copy of the report will be provided to Bristol City Council for inclusion in the Historic Environment Record database. The evaluation element of the project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as BHER Event 25162 and database of the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) as bristola3-131880

### Site location

- 1.5 The site is centred on NGR ST 58500 73500 and occupies approximately 1216<sup>2</sup>m adjacent to the existing BRI Haematology and Oncology Centre building located on Horfield Road, Kingsdown, being enclosed wholly within the precinct of the BRI between Upper Maudlin Street, Horfield Road and Montague Hill. The site is bounded west by Horfield Road, east by a current development for a new BRI Ward Block and north by an access road and short belt of trees

### Geology and Topography

- 1.6 The published British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 scale geological map of the area (sheet 264) indicates the site is underlain by the Triassic Mercia Mudstone Group overlying the Carboniferous Millstone Grit Sandstone Formation.
- 1.7 Until the current development the land was used for hospital car parking with access driveways, set about 1m to 1.5m below the level of Horfield Road behind a concrete retaining wall. At the northern end of the site lay a short belt of trees, beyond which the land falls steeply towards Terrell Street below. The study area is located on steeply shelving land that falls to the southeast - part of the northern and eastern sides of the lower Avon valley. Horfield Road, which forms the western boundary of the study area, falls steeply from a point above the study area at 53.3m aOD. to 33.5m aOD. at the junction of St Michaels Hill with Upper Maudlin Street

## **2. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY**

- 2.1 A desk based heritage assessment of the study area was undertaken in 2011 (Etheridge 2011) and a summary is provided below.
- 2.2 Horfield Road was in existence during the later Middle Ages, but although the study area lay within the 14th century boundary of the city, there was no known development here until the latter half of the 18th century.
- 2.3 The earliest detailed map to show the study area dates from the later 17th century. It shows the study area was enclosed grazing fields, with a lane from Upper Maudlin Street to Horfield Road passing through it. In the later 18th century land north of this lane was known as Culver Close, while the lane itself was known as Red Coat Lane. Between 1750 and 1773 a house or houses were constructed on the south side of this lane, fronting Horfield Road. This house may have been a merchant's summerhouse with attached gardens, typical of early development in the Kingsdown area of Bristol. Culver Close was charitable land, donated in the late 17th century to the Broadmead Baptist Church by Edward Terrill, the income from which was to be given to the poor members of the church. Subsequently Red Coat Lane became known as Terrill, later Terrell Street.
- 2.4 By the beginning of the 19th century most of the study area was still undeveloped for housing, but by 1824 parts had been divided into lots for building. By 1855 there were terraced houses fronting Horfield Road and Terrell Street. Surviving photographs show these were two or three storeys high, in a late Georgian style typical of Bristol at that time. Subsequently more houses were built along Terrell Street, but by 1903 development had largely ceased.
- 2.5 Terrell Street was a steep and narrow paved lane, unsuitable for vehicles as it had steps at either end. The study area did not incur serious damage during enemy aerial bombardment of the city during the Second World War. In 1963 proposals were submitted to construct the present Bristol Oncology Centre and associated car parking. In preparation for this the study area and adjacent land was purchased. By 1969 the study area was cleared of all standing structures.
- 2.6 A review of the archaeological evidence showed that little was known about this area until the 18th century. There was a medieval nunnery on Upper Maudlin Street, at the foot of St Michaels Hill and a small Roman farmstead was also found on Upper Maudlin Street.
- 2.7 A watching brief in 1996/97 beneath the former Seahorse Public House and rear patio garden (site of Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children) revealed substantial deposits of disturbed ground dating from the 18th/19th century, but no significant archaeological remains. A recent watching brief undertaken during construction of the New Wards site immediately adjacent to the current Oncology Centre development revealed the remains of modern basements and elements of 18th -century cellars connected with the former Beaufort House (Ducker 2012).

## **3. OBJECTIVES AND RECORDING METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 The key objective of the evaluation was to excavate a trench across the supposed line of Terrell Street to (1) establish the date and method of its construction and (2) look for any evidence of the parish boundary that was followed by the street. The watching brief was to record all archaeological remains revealed or disturbed during development groundworks, to add to our knowledge of settlement in this part of central Bristol



- 3.2 Both evaluation and watching brief followed the methodology outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (BWA 2012).

#### 4. RESULTS

##### Evaluation (Figure 2 and Plate 2)

- 4.1 A trench was dug across the projected line of Terrell Street on 25 September 2012 utilising a 24 ton mechanical excavator. Owing to site constraints however, the size of the trench had to be reduced (see Fig. 2). It was excavated through the surface of a tarmacadam car park to a depth of approximately 3.4m, revealing deposits of made-ground up to 3.15m thick overlying a probable buried topsoil.
- 4.2 Owing to the depth of the trench, for health and safety reasons it was not possible to enter the excavation to continue excavation by hand, but it was agreed with the Senior Archaeological Officer for Bristol City Council that further work to satisfy the objective of the evaluation would have to be conducted during the watching brief phase of development groundworks.

##### Watching Brief (Figures 3-4, Plates 1, 2 - 13)

- 4.3 The watching brief commenced on 1 May 2013 and monitored excavations for a basement (bunker) to a depth of 9m. Excavations below this depth were not monitored as bedrock had already been reached.
- 4.4 A simple stratigraphic sequence was revealed comprising modern surfaces and structures (500) overlying up to 3m of very mixed made-ground/demolition material (501). Underlying this was topsoil (504), subsoil (505) and natural deposits of clay, sand (508) and bedrock (524). Several walls and other masonry structures were also revealed, most cutting the topsoil, but one wall (509), appeared to be sealed by it.
- 4.5 During bulk excavation Wall 509, roughly oriented E-W became visible in section and appeared to comprise un-mortared limestone lying beneath topsoil 504. To the east lay two parallel walls (502 & 503) 2.5m apart that crossed the site on a roughly NNW-SSE orientation. Both walls cut topsoil 504 and had been truncated by previous hospital developments. Running between the two walls ran a large diameter (12 inch) ceramic pipe.
- 4.6 In the southeast corner of the excavation lay a cellar (Room 6, Wall 515) which had been largely removed by earlier hospital developments leaving only the north end wall, returns at both ends and part of a Pennant sandstone slab floor. Just north of this was a shallow well (Context 523) lined with un-mortared masonry.
- 4.7 In the north-eastern part of the basement excavation lay several Pennant sandstone walls and other features that possibly represented two or more broadly contemporary phases of a building built into the slope of the hillside (Structure 528). As exposed, five rooms (Rooms 1-5) arranged over two floors (basement and first-floor storey) were found lying beneath up to 4m of modern made ground.
- 4.8 The basement storey contained at least four rooms (Rooms 1-4). The first room revealed (Room 1, Structure 506) appeared to be intact and had a brick, barrel-vaulted roof and floor of Pennant sandstone slabs. A doorway in the east wall, complete with wooden frame and door, led to Room 2.
- 4.9 Room 2 was partially truncated by earlier hospital developments. It had a floor of Pennant sandstone slabs, but with a much larger slab positioned in a threshold in the east wall (512)

connecting to Room 3. The north and east walls in Room 2 were lined with thin slabs of Bath stone.

- 4.10 Room 3 was heavily truncated and had a Pennant slab floor (514).
- 4.11 Northwest of Room 2 lay Room 4. Walls in this room were lined with lime-based-mortar which was either stained pale brown through burial or had been painted. The floor was Pennant sandstone slabs. An area of bricks in the west wall (516) formed the opening for a fireplace which still had its iron grate; the chimney flu was lined with thin ashlar slabs.
- 4.12 Located partially above Room 1 and extending northwards into the hillside lay heavily truncated Room 5, defined by walls 516, 521 and brick wall 522.
- 4.13 Upon the removal of Room 4, a short length of E-W oriented wall (525) was found that contained the possible remains of a fireplace, the fireplace opening formed from bricks. Against the north side of the wall and apparently running parallel with it, but only visible in section, was a drain (526) having limestone walls and a roof of sandstone slabs.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Although the evaluation trench didn't locate Terrell Street, the course of it was later revealed during the watching brief together with the remains of a building located behind Terrell Street, and other structures. Both sides of Terrell Street were found to be fossilised in plan form by the walls of properties that would have faced on to it, but no street surfaces survived, although a large ceramic pipe was seen to run down the centre of it.
- 5.2 The building located to the rear of Terrell Street appears to correspond with a building first depicted on the first edition 19th-century OS plan and labelled on the 1945 OS as 'Terrell Cottage'. Wright's Bristol Directory for 1905 lists Terrell Cottage under No35 Terrell Street, occupied by one Ernest Howard. In 1907 it was occupied by a Mr John Randall and was listed as Terrell Cottage, Terrell Street, St. James. Kelly's Bristol Directory for 1927 lists Mrs Elizabeth Pitman as the then occupier under the heading 'apartments', Terrell Cottage. The cottage is again listed in 1934 but is absent from Kelly's 1944 Directory.
- 5.3 It is possible that the stone-lined well may have been connected with a pump that is depicted close by on several ordnance survey maps, whilst cellar wall (515) appears to lie within a block of building located between Bedford Road and Terrell Street.
- 5.4 The survival of the archaeology at this site is broadly attributed to the natural topography where deposits and structures lower down the escarpment were buried when ground levels were raised to form a landscaped bank, whilst further up the escarpment, ground levels were lowered and more destruction of archaeology occurred.

## **6. THE FINDS**

- 6.1 A small number of artefacts were collected during the watching brief but none were retained for the archive as they came from 1960's made-ground deposits. Finds included sherds of Blue Transfer Printed Ware, North Somerset Glazed Red Earthenware, Bristol/Staffordshire Ware, English Brown Stoneware and Porcelain. In addition, a small number of metal artefacts were observed in the backfill of the rooms within Terrell Cottage, including a meat grinder, scales, tin bath and a copper vessel of unknown purpose (see plate 1).



Plate 1 Copper alloy object from the backfill of Room 4.

## 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Etheridge, D 2011. *Bristol Oncology Centre, Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment Report*. Bristol & West Archaeology privately circulated report No11/2388.

**Tables**

No	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Date
500	n.a.	Structures of the current building work	-	-	-	
501	Deposit	Generic modern made-ground deposit, very loose and mixed.	Whole site		Up to 3.0	C20
502	Wall	Limestone rubble bonded with pale grey lime mortar with frequent lime and charcoal fleck inclusions.	Detailed Recording 4.50 x 0.50 later x 28.0.		1.50	C19
503	Wall	Same construction as Wall 502 but at its S end utilises bricks for upper courses	c.28.0	0.50	1.50	C19
504	Deposit	Firm, very dark, greyish-brown, sandy, clayey silt containing frequent charcoal and lime mortar, occasional brick and sandstone rubble. Much more rubble in area of Structure (528).	Visible over most of site except where cut by features		0.30	-
505	Subsoil	Firm, strong brown – red brown, silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and occasional small weathered sandstone inclusions	Whole site except adjacent modern buildings		Avg 0.50	-
506	Room 1	Sandstone rubble walls and a barrel-vaulted brick roof. Floor of Pennant sandstone slabs.	Overall dimensions 4.50 x 2.22		1.65	C19
507		Not used				
508	Natural	Stiff, hard, red-brown clay with outcrops of sandstone and bands of yellow sand	Whole site		c.7.0	
509	Wall	Linear structure of unworked limestone rubble, no bonding material apparent. Recorded in section only.	-	0.40	0.80	C18
510	Wall	Linear brick wall faced with ashlar on both sides and bonded with grey lime mortar. Only one course remains.	1.80	0.23	0.20	C19
511	Wall	Sandstone rubble forming southwest part of Room 2.	1.30	0.50	-	C19

512	Wall	Brick (stretcher bond) and ashlar wall bonded with grey lime mortar containing an opening with a Pennant sandstone threshold slab.	3.0	0.28	0.12	C19
513	Floor	Pennant sandstone slabs bedded on grey lime mortar. Room 2.	3.0	1.8	0.13	C19
514	Floor	Pennant sandstone slabs bedded on grey lime mortar. Room 3.	3.0	1.10	0.13	C19
515	Room 6	Unworked, random coursed sandstone rubble bonded with grey lime mortar. Traces of barrel vaulting as well as a floor of Pennant sandstone slabs.	3.20	0.40	1.70	C19
516	Wall	Unworked, random coursed sandstone rubble bonded with grey lime mortar.	10.0	0.50	c.4.0	C19
517	Wall	Unworked, random coursed, sandstone rubble bonded with grey lime mortar. Rendered with pale brown lime mortar on inner face.	3.0	0.40	1.10+	C19
518	Wall	Return to wall 517.	c1.50	0.45	1.10	C19
519	Floor	Pennants sandstone slabs bedded on grey lime mortar.	3.0	5.50	0.13	C19
520	Structure	Brick and ashlar fireplace within Wall.			1.0 high as exc.	C19
521	Wall	Brick faced sandstone rubble. Bricks: 0.23 x 0.11 x 0.07.				
522	Wall	Brick wall return abutting Wall 521. Bricks: 0.23 x 0.11 x 0.7. Room 5.	3.50	0.25	1.0	C19
523	Well	Sandstone construction filled with rubble.	c 1.0 diameter		2.40	C19
524	Natural	Sandstone bedrock	Whole building footprint area			
525	Wall	Random coursed sandstone rubble. bonded with grey lime mortar		0.55	1.0+	C19
526	Drain	Uncoursed, mixed limestone and sandstone rubble walls with occasional bricks, roof of flat slabs.	In section only 0.35 wide		0.35	C19

527	Structure	Brick opening for a fireplace having a slate base within wall 525.	0.70	0.50	1.35	C19
528	Structure	Overall number for building represented by Rooms 1 – 5, Contexts 506, 510 – 514, 516 – 522.	10.0+	6.0	c.4.0	C19

Table 1 List of contexts

BWA Project  
12/2416

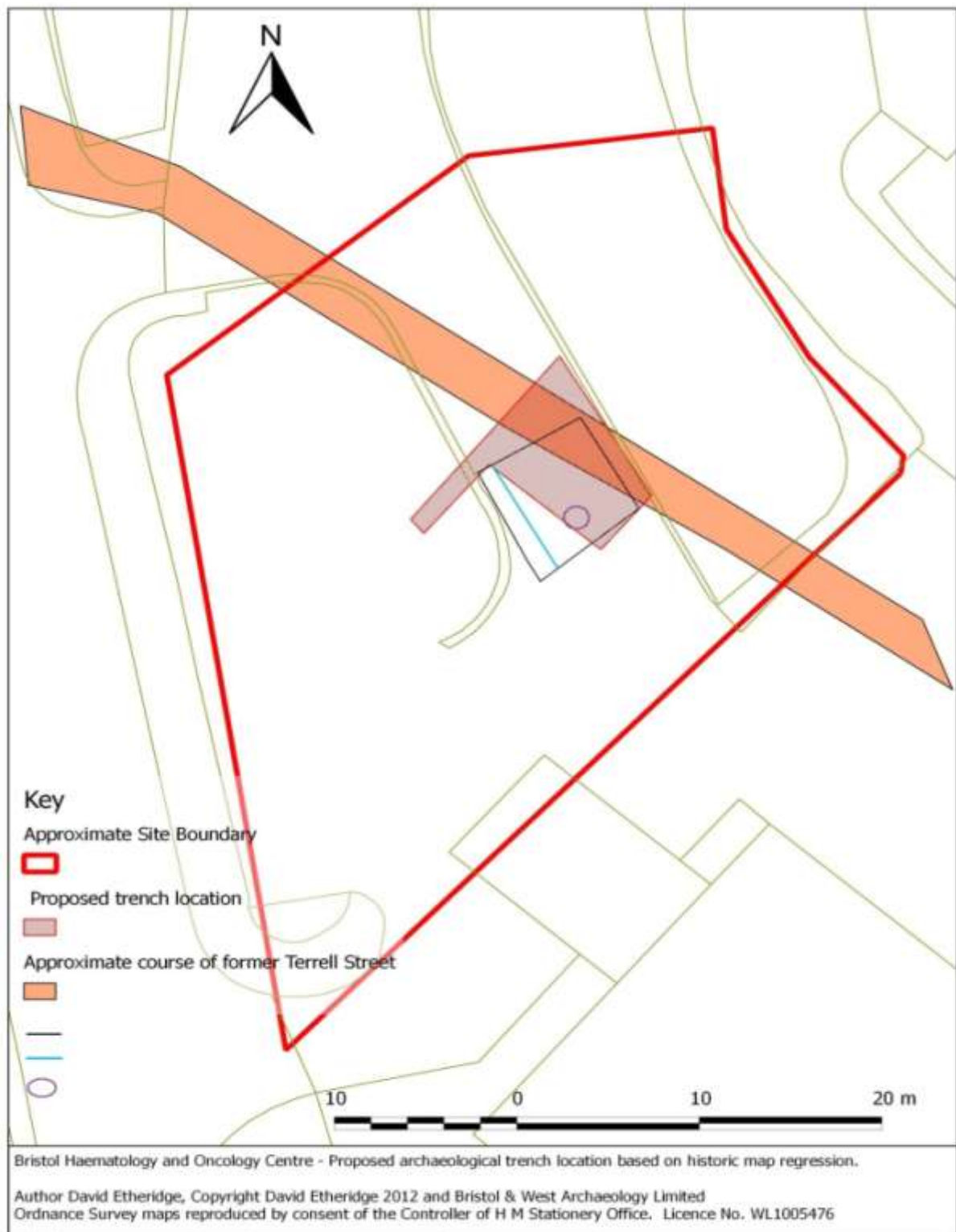
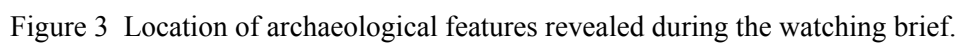


Figure 2 Location of the evaluation trench outlined in black.





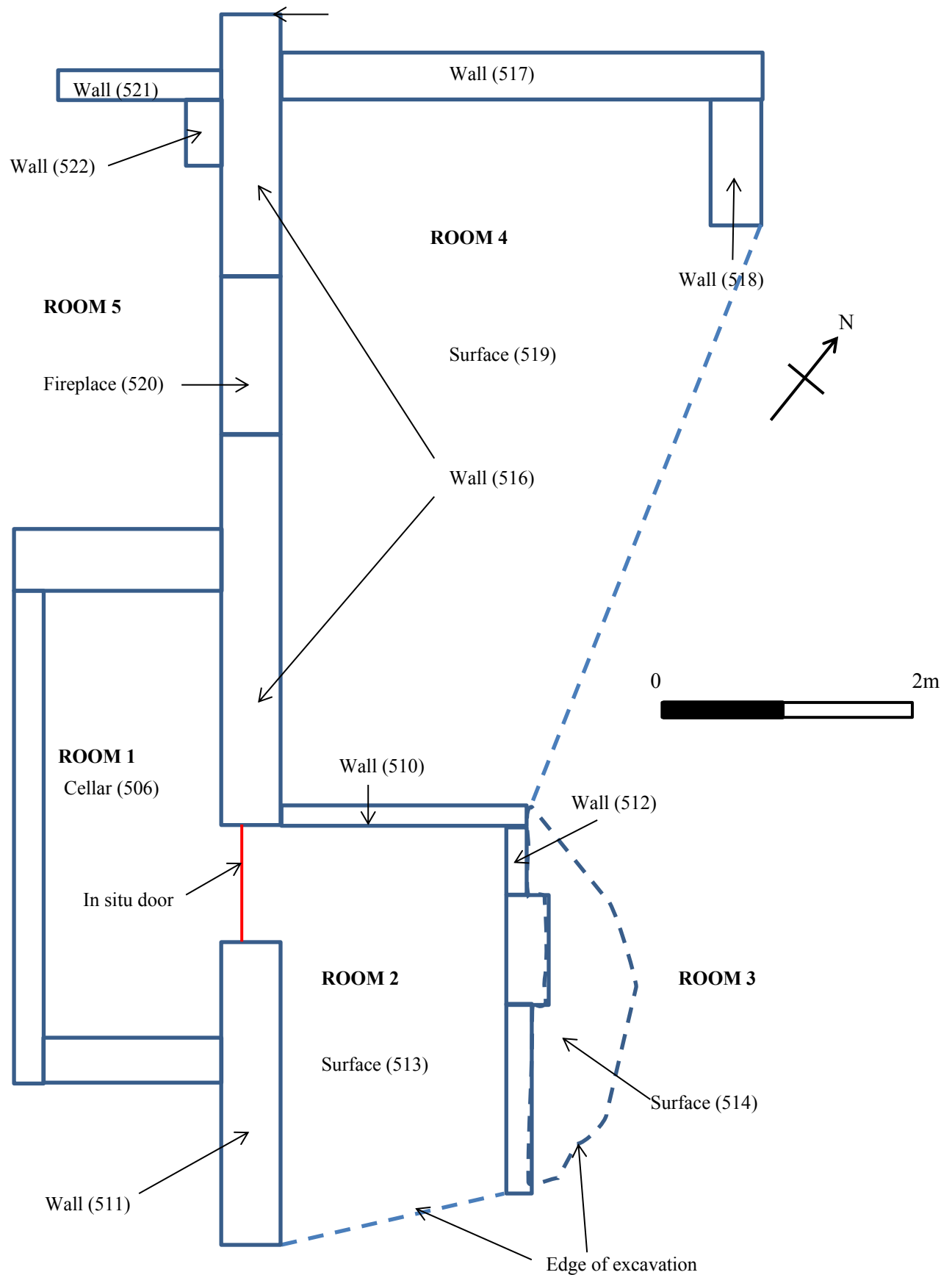


Figure 4 Schematic drawing of Structure 528 showing Rooms 1 – 5.



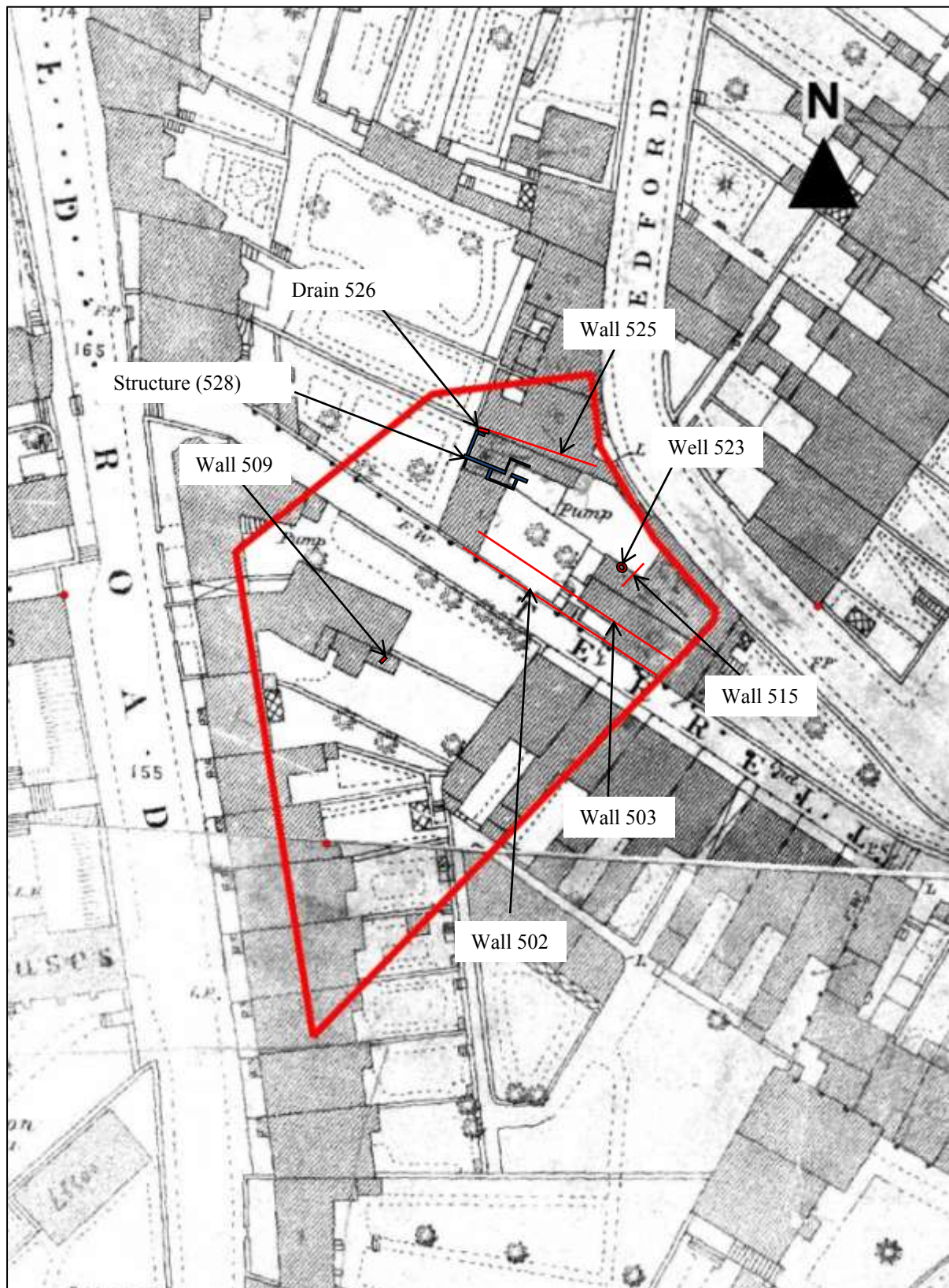


Figure 5 An extract from the OS 1884-85 1:500 Map of Bristol, sheets 71.16.14 and 19. Approximate boundary of the Oncology Centre outlined in red showing some of the recorded archaeological features. Reproduced by courtesy of the Bristol Record Office.



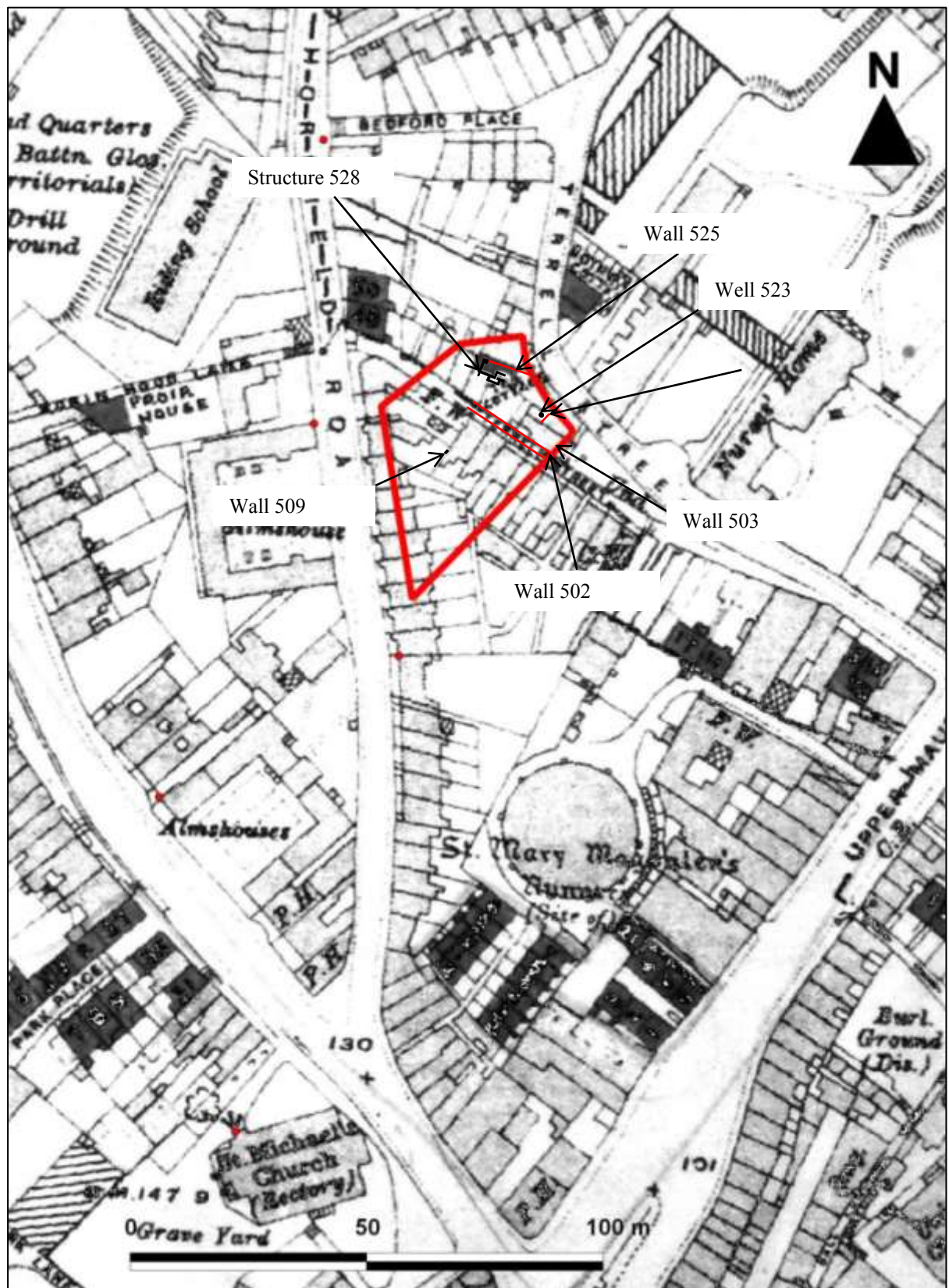


Figure 6. An extract from the OS 1945 Map of Bristol, Gloucestershire sheet 71.16, enlarged to approximately 1:1250. Approximate boundary of the Oncology Centre outlined in red showing some of the recorded archaeological features. Reproduced by courtesy of the Bristol Record Office

## Plates



Plate 2 Evaluation trench showing buried topsoil in base.



Plate 3 General view of the reduced level excavation for the basement. Looking NW.



Plate 4 Wall 509 in section below buried topsoil 504. Scale 2m.



Plate 5 Walls 502 and 503 defining the sides of Terrell Street. Viewed looking NE. Scale 2m.





Plate 6 Northwest end of wall 502 during excavation. Scale 1m.x2m.



Plate 7 Room 1 showing vaulted roof and rooms 1 and 2, looking NW. Scale 1m.x2m.



Plate 8 Room 1 as exposed looking N. Scale 2m.



Plate 9 Room 6, wall 515 looking NW. Scale 1m.x2m.





Plate 10 Wall 525 and drain 526 looking N. Scale 1m.x1m.



Plate 11 Well 523 in section looking N. Scale 2m.



Plate 12 Southeast facing section of the excavation showing layers 504 and 505. Scale 2m.



Plate 13 General view of excavation looking NW showing walls 516, 521 and 522 as exposed.