



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Historic Building Recording

The Norman King Public House

Church Street

Dunstable

Bedfordshire



**Quality Check**

<i>Author</i>	Karin Kaye MA MCifA	<i>Version</i>	105/DCS/2.1	<i>Date</i>	16.02.2016
<i>Editor</i>	David Kaye BA ACifA	<i>Version</i>	105/DCS/2.1	<i>Date</i>	17.02.2016
<i>Revision</i>	Karin Kaye MA MCifA	<i>Version</i>	105/DCS/2.2	<i>Date</i>	07.03.2016
<i>Revision</i>	Karin Kaye MA MCifA	<i>Version</i>	105/DCS/2.3	<i>Date</i>	15.03.2016

© KDK Archaeology Ltd 2016 No part of this document is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort has been made to provide as complete and as accurate a report as possible. However, KDK Archaeology Ltd cannot accept any liability in respect of, or resulting from, errors, inaccuracies, or omissions contained in this document.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the Controller of Her Majesty’s Stationery Office.  
KDK Archaeology Licence No. 100053538

7b High Street Mews Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire LU7 1EA  
Tel: 01525 385443  
Email: office@kdkarchaeology.co.uk  
Website: www.kdkarchaeology.co.uk





## CONTENTS

Summary.....	5
1. Introduction .....	5
2. Aims & Methods .....	9
3. Historical Background .....	10
4. Description .....	21
5. Conclusions .....	36
6. Acknowledgements.....	37
7. References .....	38

### Appendices:

1. List of Photographs .....	40
2. OASIS and Site Data.....	42

### Figures:

1. General location .....	4
2. Site location .....	7
3. The development.....	8
4. Extract from the 1762 plan .....	13
5. 1816 engraving of Kingsbury and the barn .....	13
6. Extract from the 1839 Tithe Map.....	14
7. Extract from the 1880 Ordnance Survey map.....	14
8. Extract from the 1893 sales particulars .....	15
9. The barn in 1917 .....	15
10. The Museum in 1927 .....	16
11. The buildings when is use as stables.....	16
12. Extract from the 1939 Ordnance Survey map.....	17
13. The conversion to the Norman King c. 1961 .....	17
14. The Norman King in 1966.....	18
15. The southeast corner of the Norman King after the fire.....	18
16. The east elevation of the Norman King after the fire.....	19
17. The south elevation of the Norman King after the fire .....	19
18. The eastern end of the south elevation of the Norman King after the fire .....	20
19. The southwest corner of the Norman King after the fire .....	20
20. Main Range and East Range elevations.....	31
21. South wall building fabric.....	32
22. East and west elevations of the western range.....	33
23. Floor plan showing photo views.....	34
24. Phase plan .....	35

### Plates:

1. North & east elevations of East Range.....	24
2. North elevation of Main Range .....	24
3. West elevation of East Range from the NW.....	24
4. West elevation of East Range from the SW .....	24
5. View to north between the two ranges .....	24
6. Detail of the re-used moulded stone .....	24
7. Brick & tile within clunch wall .....	25
8. Interior of Main Range (G4) looking east .....	25
9. Interior of Main Range (G4) looking west .....	25
10. South wall of G4 .....	25



11. Southwest corner of G4 .....	25
12. North wall of G4.....	25
13. View northwards from G4.....	26
14. East wall, Bay 1.....	26
15. East wall, Bay 2.....	26
16. East wall, Bay 3.....	26
17. East wall, Bay 4.....	26
18. East wall, Bay 5.....	26
19. Northeast corner post of East Range .....	27
20. View northwards from Room G3.....	27
21. East wall of G3.....	27
22. West wall of G3.....	27
23. Room G2 looking south.....	27
24. Room G2 looking north .....	27
25. East wall of Room G2 .....	28
26. Internal bracing in east wall of Room G2 .....	28
27. West wall of G2 .....	28
28. Modern leaded window in west wall of G2.....	28
29. Room G1, looking south .....	28
30. Room G1, looking north .....	28
31. Passage G10 .....	29
32. View northwards in G8.....	29
33. View southwards in G8 .....	29
34. Room G9, view to northeast .....	29
35. Northwest corner of Room G5.....	29
36. East wall of Room G6 .....	29
37. Northeast corner of G7 .....	30



Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



---

## Summary

In December 2016 historic building recording was carried out at the former Norman King Public House Church Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

The burnt out remains of the building stand on a site that has been intermittently utilised since the Roman period and is thought to have been within the grounds of a royal residence built by Henry I that was later granted to the priory and became a farmstead. Historic and cartographic evidence along with fabric analysis suggest the stone built section on the street frontage may well have been rebuilt in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when the post-medieval farmhouse, known as Kingsbury, of which this was an outbuilding, underwent major redevelopment. There is late medieval and 18<sup>th</sup> century timberwork in the east range, which was clearly heavily rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Whether the timberwork was introduced as part of the rebuilding is uncertain. The west range is entirely modern.

The surviving building fabric is varied and consists of Totternhoe Stone, late medieval and 18<sup>th</sup> century timberwork, 20<sup>th</sup> century brickwork, reproduction lancet windows and plank and batten doors. There are no medieval features within the building, and the medieval building fabric that survives appears largely to have been re-used in the post-medieval period.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 In December 2016 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out historic building recording of the remains of the fire damaged Norman King Public House, Church Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by MGM Hotels, and was carried out according to a Specification and Method Statement prepared by Robert Ward-Booth (2015), and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Central Bedfordshire Council. The relevant planning application references are CB/14/01924/FULL and CB/14/02263/RDCA.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This building recording has been required under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

### 1.3 *The Site*

#### *Location & Description*

The development site is located on the junction of Kingsway and Church Street in the centre of the town of Dunstable, Bedfordshire (Fig. 1). The site is in the administrative district of Central Bedfordshire and the civil parish of Dunstable, and is centred on National Grid Reference TL 02150 21985.

#### *Description*

The development site as a whole is sub-rectangular, approximately 893 sq. m., and orientated NW-SE (Fig. 2). It is bounded to the south by Church Street, to the east by Kingsway, and to the west by access to the Old Palace Lodge Hotel, and residential development to the north. It lies opposite the remains of Dunstable Priory of which the Grade I listed church and gatehouse survive.

The building was formerly listed (List entry Number: 1411714), but was de-listed following a major fire in 2011. The building description is as follows:



### *Reasons for Designation*

*The Norman King public house, Dunstable, has been removed from the List for the following principal reasons:*

- \* Architectural Interest: the special architectural interest of the building has been irrecoverably diminished as a result of comprehensive fire damage;*
- \* Incompleteness: much of the building, including the upper storey and the roof structure, have been completely destroyed by fire and subsequent collapse.*

### *History*

*The Norman King public house on Church Street in Dunstable was first listed in 1975. It was associated with the nearby Old Palace Lodge and Kingsbury Farm, the public house having previously been a farm outbuilding. From 1927 to 1934 it was used as a library and museum, before being converted for use as riding stables. In 1959, Old Palace Lodge, which by this time had been subdivided to form two dwellings, was converted to form a hotel. At the same time, the former barn, now stables, was again converted to a new use, this time as a public house. The conversion involved extensive alteration and rebuilding, with stone imported for the purpose from demolished buildings in Cambridgeshire. It is claimed by the applicant's agents that the demolished buildings were of considerable antiquity, and that the stone was supplemented by other salvaged masonry which had formed part of the nearby Priory church. The building remained in use as a public house until 2011, when it was extensively damaged by fire as a result of what the applicant's structural engineer refers to as an arson attack. The fire destroyed the roof structure, the thatch roof covering and most of the building's interior. A request to assess the building for de-listing was made in February 2012.*

### *Details*

*The former Norman King public house was severely damaged by the fire which occurred in August 2011. The roof structure and the thatch roof covering were destroyed, collapsing into the building's interior, and causing extensive damage throughout. The historic fabric has been lost above wall plate level, with only the ground floor walls, some bridging beams, parts of the first floor structure and a flat roofed extension having survived. The building had been extensively altered in the 1950's when it was converted to form the public house, and at that time, modern brickwork and structural steel were introduced alongside the surviving structural elements of the original barn. The south wall is the principal surviving historic fabric element of the building, being formed from stone masonry which incorporates a small number of randomly placed, moulded pieces of stone salvaged from another site of early date. The east elevation is constructed of C20 brick, parts of which are painted or rendered. Within this brickwork are incorporated sections of vertical timber framing, truncated in length and seemingly retained as evidence of the building's early origins rather than as structural elements of the building. The remaining areas of external walling are modern brick construction. The interior of the building retains little evidence of the original floor plan, there being almost no surviving fabric above ground-floor ceiling height, and the ground-floor area appears to have been altered as part of the enlargement of the public house area.*

### *The Development*

The overall development comprises the demolition of most of the remains of former Norman King Public House and the removal of plant equipment adjacent to the Old Palace Lodge, followed by the erection of a two storey building to accommodate 12 aparthotel rooms, a thatched covered parking structure, alterations to hotel entrance, introduction of revised access, and associated works (Fig. 3). As part of the works the clunch stone sections of the former front wall of the public house which faces onto Church Street will be protected and retained for incorporation into the new building.



Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1250)



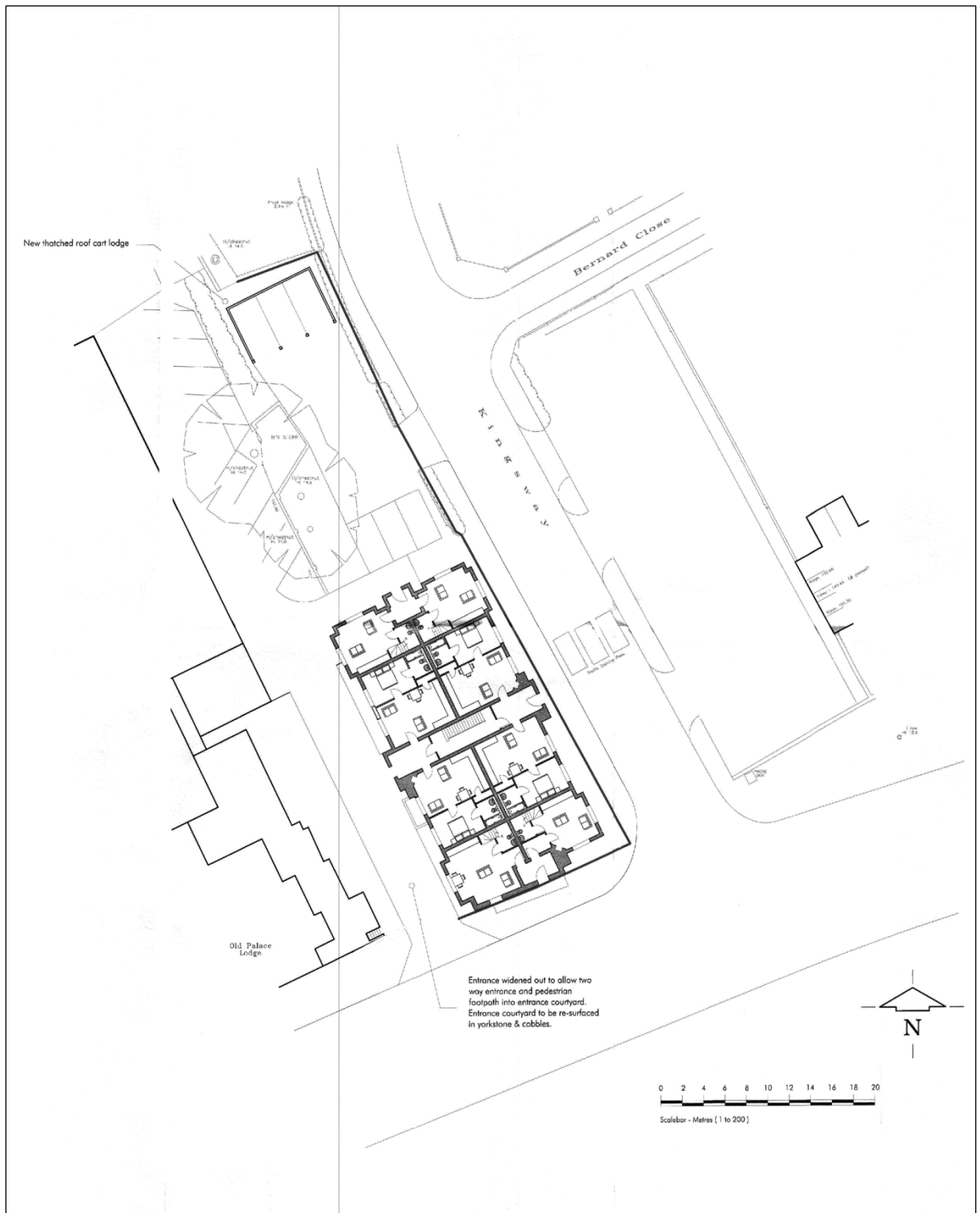


Figure 3: The development (scale as shown)



---

## 2 Aims & Methods

### 2.1 Aims

The aims of the building recording were:

- To compile a record of the building prior to demolition
- To examine the structural history and development of the building in relation to its historical and topographical context
- To provide a report that meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework

### 2.2 Standards

The work conforms to the relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014), and to current Historic England guidelines (EH 2006).

### 2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the Method Statement, which required:

- A historic building appraisal, with recording to Historic England Level 3 (EH 2006).

### 2.4 Constraints

The Norman King suffered a serious fire in August 2011 resulting in the collapse of the roof and its thatched covering into the building and the subsequent loss of much of the interior detail. Since then the building has continued to decay with the loss of the roofing and the chimney stacks that had initially survived the fire. The lack of roof covering has led to low level flooding of the former bar area and complete flooding of the cellars. The cellars were therefore not accessed during this survey. As a result of this and the safety considerations due to the precarious nature of the surviving overhead structure and the flooded timber flooring in the historic core of the building, a slightly less comprehensive photographic survey was undertaken than would otherwise have been the case.



### 3 Historical Background

- 3.1 Dunstable (*Durocobrivae*) began as a Roman settlement, though when the Romans departed Britain in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD the area was largely abandoned until a town was founded there by Henry I c.1119. The Norman King PH lies within the core of the medieval town of Dunstable (HER 16986) and on the periphery of the Roman town (HER 135). Although as yet unproven, there is a possibility that it is on the site of a Royal residence built by King Henry I (CBC 2015).

This section has been compiled with information from the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record (HER), Bedford & Luton Archives and Records Services (BLARS), Leighton Buzzard Library, reliable web sites and KDK's own library.

#### 3.2 *Historical Background*

Dunstable is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 as it was part of the royal manor of Houghton Regis. It remained Crown property until Henry I granted it to Hugh de Gurney having previously granted lands and rights of common in Houghton to his newly-founded priory of St. Peter at Dunstable (VCH online).

The medieval town (HER 16986) was established by Henry I c.1119 using the existing crossroads as a basis for a planned market town. The burgage plots appear to have survived to some extent within the town, particularly along High Street South. By 1123, Henry had built himself a residence at 'Kingsbury' (HER 148) on the north side of Church Street, and 8 years later he founded an Augustinian Priory dedicated to St Peter (HER 131, SM 3). The residence was granted to the Priory in 1204. The priory complex was located between the High Street South and Church Street, the surviving remains of which are the church of St Peter (HER 132, LB 724/2/1), part of the gatehouse (HER 6329, LB 724/2/61 ) and the undercroft at Priory House (HER 6311, LB 1/17). There is evidence of the remnants of significant associated structures below ground in the vicinity of the extant buildings. The remains of a large monastic building, thought to have been the priory itself, were discovered to the rear of the Saracen's Head Hotel in 1983 and the bake house and brew house cellars, which were found approximately 280m south-west of the development site, had been converted for lime production after the priory was dissolved in 1539 (Albion 2003: 10, 27). The location of the medieval cemetery is unknown, but it is possible that it lay to the north of the Priory and close to the King's residence (CBC 2015: 6). In 1994, the remains of at least two skeletons (HER 16165) buried in E-W graves were found in the garden of a property in Kingsway during the construction of an extension (CBC 2015: 6).

Dunstable prospered during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and, particularly, the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a coaching town and numerous inns were established to cater for the travellers (Albion 2003: 35).

The technological advances in the 19<sup>th</sup> century resulted in considerable change in the development of local towns such as Dunstable. Small scale cottage industry, such as straw hat making, was replaced by manufacturing which also went into decline in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nonetheless, the town was extensively re-developed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with increasing residential development taking place alongside the rebuilt commercial core in the north-east quadrant of the town.

#### 3.3 *Site Specific*

Historical documentation indicates that Henry I had a royal residence (HER 148) built on a 9 acre plot to the north of Church Street by 1109. The precise location of the building is uncertain. Although often referred to as a 'palace', it is more likely to have been a sumptuous house, probably combining masonry and timber framing. Henry I spent Christmas in Dunstable



in 1122 and the Pipe Rolls of 1129-30 show that there was a keeper of the house who was paid one penny a day (CBC 2015: 6). However, it would appear that the royal residence fell out of favour as a 'great chamber' was under construction for royal visits in the priory precinct in 1277. By the time of the Dissolution of the Priory, the royal residence or at least its site, had become a farm known as 'Kingsbury' and the Totternhoe stone, which was the predominant building material of the more significant priory buildings, was clearly robbed from the site for use elsewhere in the town (*ibid.*).

In 1762 Kingsbury appears to have comprised a series of buildings around a courtyard with the barn and a rear range immediately to the east (Fig. 4), which, according to Walpole, had been rebuilt by 1784 (Bagshaw 1969: 238). The sales particulars of 1793 describe Kingsbury as being a 200-acre estate with a farmhouse, outbuildings and several pieces of land, all of which was leased to James Oliver of the Sugar Loaf inn for £160 per annum (BLARS R/4/746/5). The tenancy agreement had allowed a £20 reduction as Oliver was to have improved the estate. The earliest known illustration of Kingsbury and its barn dates from 1816, when the barn is depicted as a stand-alone building (Fig 5). The illustration was published in the Gentleman's Magazine of that year, and the notes accompanying it state that the building had previously been the hall, but was currently a barn. It also notes that the stone used in its construction was Totternhoe Stone (Bagshaw 1969: 241).

The Tithe Award of 1839 records Kingsbury as being owned by the executors of James Hopkin Oliver and occupied by his widow (*ibid.*: 242). The Oliver family put the house on the market in 1893, at which time the farm had only 122 acres and was drawing a rent of £210 per annum from Mr Brown (BLARS BHD/355/10). The plan accompanying the sales particulars shows the buildings in greater detail than the Ordnance Survey map of 1880 had been able to do (Figs 7-8). In 1898 Edward Holloway was recorded as occupying Kingsbury, but three years later it was owned by Henry Brown and leased to Frederick Freeman (Bagshaw 1969: 243).

During the First World War Kingsbury was farmed by Redhead Estates Ltd as part of the war effort. Food shortages resulted in the establishment of the Dunstable Food Control Committee in 1917 (*ibid.*: 353). A photograph taken the same year shows a queue of people waiting outside Kingsbury barn waiting for potatoes (Fig. 9).

It was owned by Arthur Bagshaw shortly after the First World War and in 1927 he restored the barn as a museum (Fig. 10) and the first branch of the Bedfordshire County Library (Bagshaw 1969: 354). The property was sold in 1934 and was split into the Old Palace Lodge, which became a hotel in 1960, Kingsbury Court and Kingsbury Stables (HER 148; Fig. 11). The Ordnance Survey map of 1939 shows a significant amount of redevelopment had taken place with the partial demolition of the western side of the barn and the addition of the buildings parallel to the stable, which has since been extended and become the west range (Fig. 12).

In 1960 Flowers Brewery of Luton bought Kingsbury stable, and the barn was converted to a pub and the stables into a restaurant (Figs 13-14). Dormers were added, the roof was re-thatched using reed rather than wheat straw, and Cambridgeshire clunch from Picot's castle in Bourn and a 12<sup>th</sup> century cottage in Cambridge is said to have been used to restore the stone wall (Bagshaw 1969: 356). In 1984 the pub was gutted and modernised (Buckledee 2014: 306). The building succumbed to an arson attack in 2011.

That the site is on a significant parcel of land is well-attested archaeologically. Archaeological investigations in adjacent properties have revealed evidence for Roman and medieval occupation. Medieval and Roman pottery, as well as the remnants of a large robbed-out buttress, were discovered during the excavation of foundations for an extension to the Old Palace Lodge Hotel in 1981 (Warren 1989).

In 2007, an archaeological field evaluation was undertaken for an additional extension to the Old Palace Lodge Hotel, which demonstrated the presence of archaeological deposits dating



---

to the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. Amongst the finds was some worked Totternhoe stone carved with floral motifs and thought to date from the mid 13th century. Its design suggests it may have originated from a high status building and recent analysis indicates similarities to some of the stonework on the west front of St Peter's Church (Heritage Network 2007 & 2013 and Hall 2014).

In 2012, excavation produced further evidence for Roman and medieval activity, including more worked stone, a quantity of medieval window lead, and evidence for small scale metal working. A large medieval boundary ditch, running parallel with Church Street was also recorded (Heritage Network forthcoming).

Environmental material recovered during the investigation indicated that the site may have been located on the edge of both the Roman and medieval towns within an area that may have been used for small scale industrial working (possibly established as such during the Roman period), these works may have supplied both the Royal residence and the Priory (ibid).

In 2013, ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey was undertaken for both the main Norman King site and its former car park on the opposite side of Kingsway. On the main site the GPR survey was limited and did not identify any clear responses indicative of archaeological remains. However, a shallow layer of reinforced concrete was observed which may be masking weaker anomalies at depth (Marsh 2013). Forthcoming archaeological investigation may help define the date and usage of this plot and possible relationship to the Norman King.

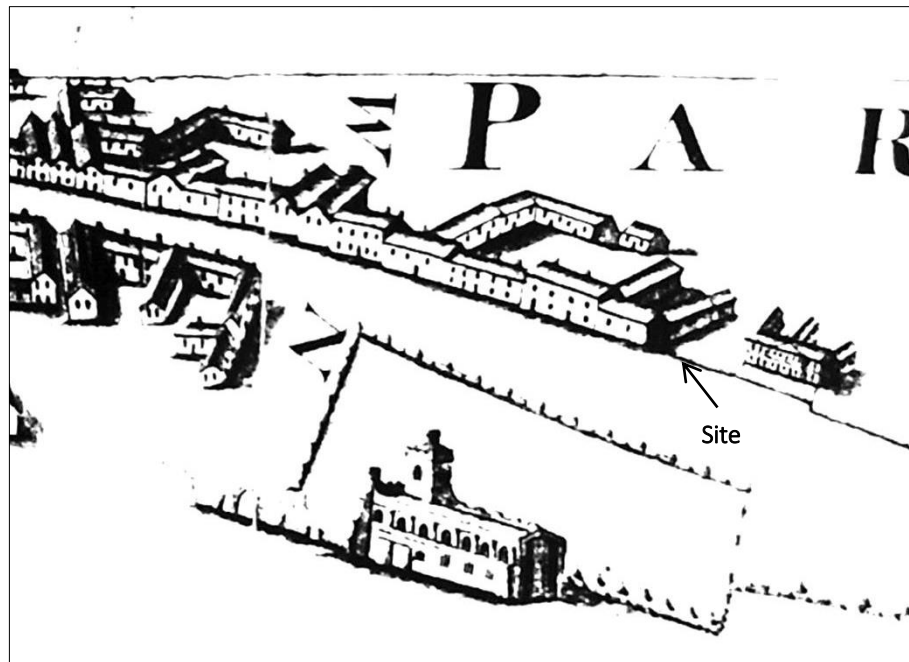


Figure 4: Extract from the 1762 plan (not to scale)



Figure 5: 1816 engraving of Kingsbury and the barn  
(Courtesy of Dunstable History Society)



Figure 6: Extract from the 1839 Tithe Map (scale 1:1000)

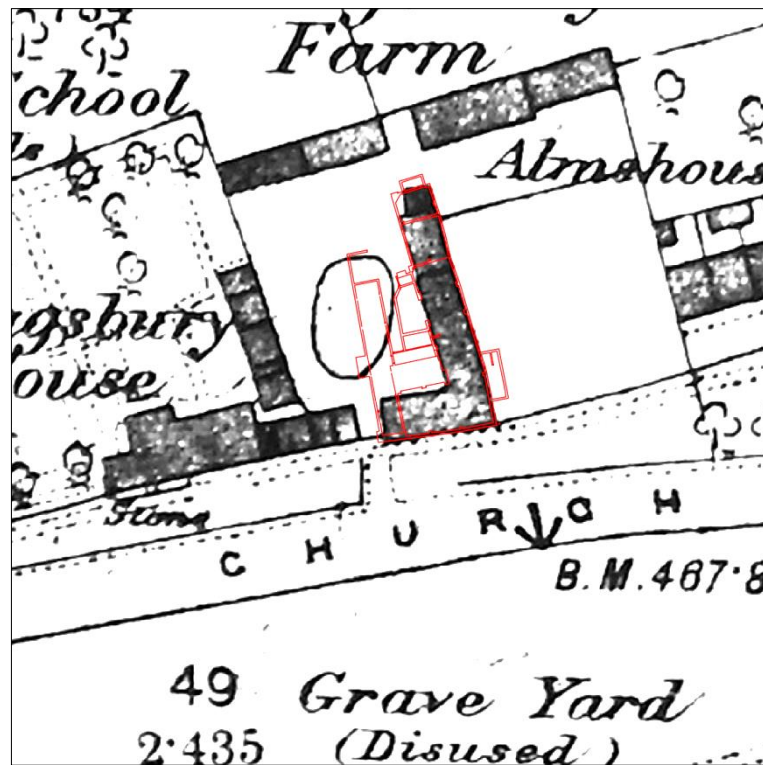


Figure 7: Extract from the 1880 Ordnance Survey map (scale 1:1000)

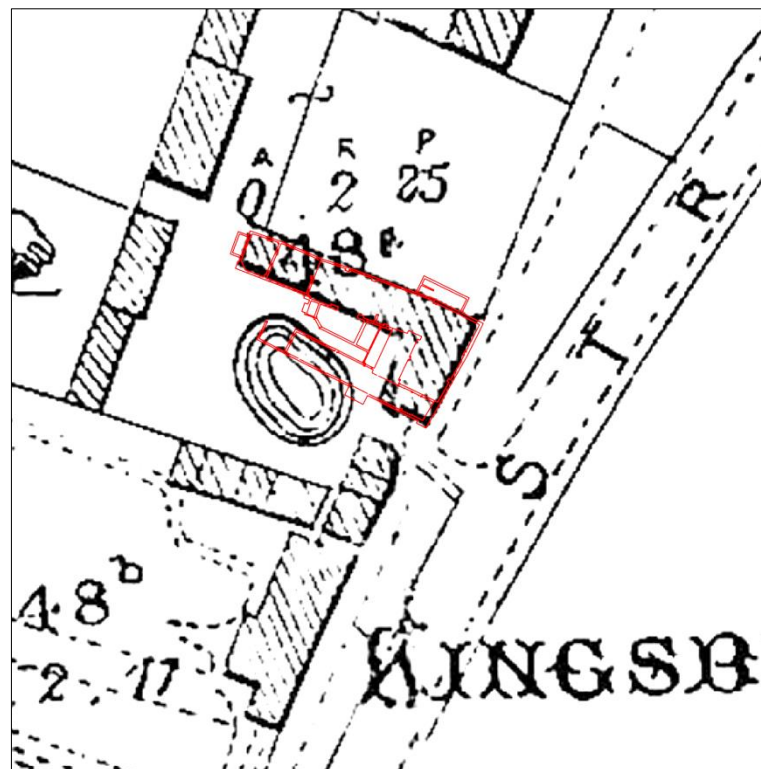


Figure 8: Extract from the 1893 sales particulars (scale 1:1000)



Figure 9: The barn in 1917  
(from Bedfordshire Magazine No. 11)





**Figure 10:** The Museum in 1927  
(from Bedfordshire Magazine No. 11)



**Figure 11:** The buildings when is use as stables  
(Courtesy of Dunstable History Society)

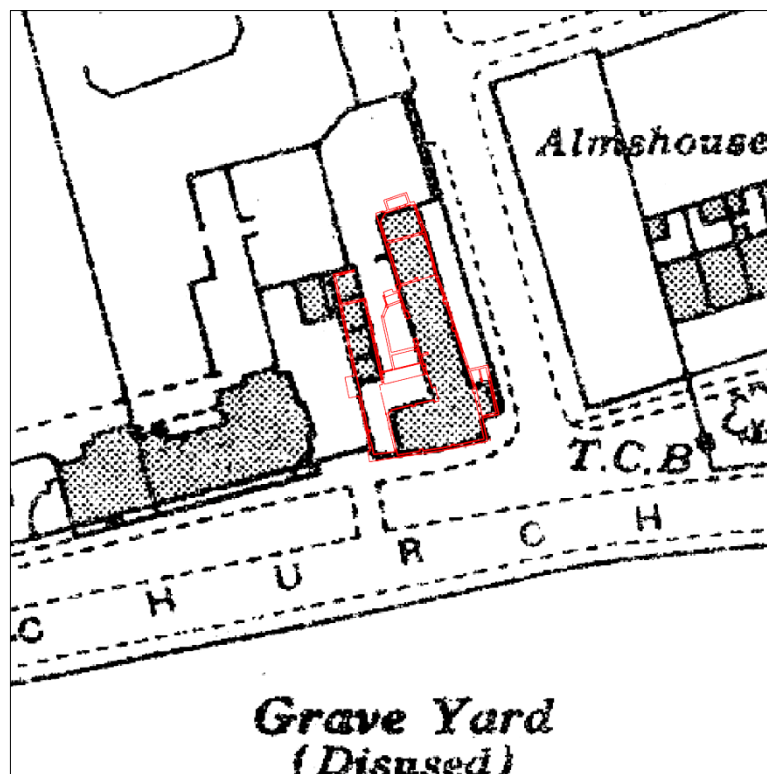
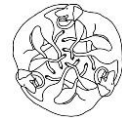


Figure 12: Extract from the 1939 Ordnance Survey map (scale 1:1000)



Figure 13: The conversion to the Norman King c. 1961  
(Courtesy of Dunstable History Society)



**Figure 14:** The Norman King in 1966  
(from Bedfordshire Magazine No. 11)



**Figure 15:** The southeast corner of the Norman King after the fire  
(Courtesy of [www.closedpubs.co.uk](http://www.closedpubs.co.uk))



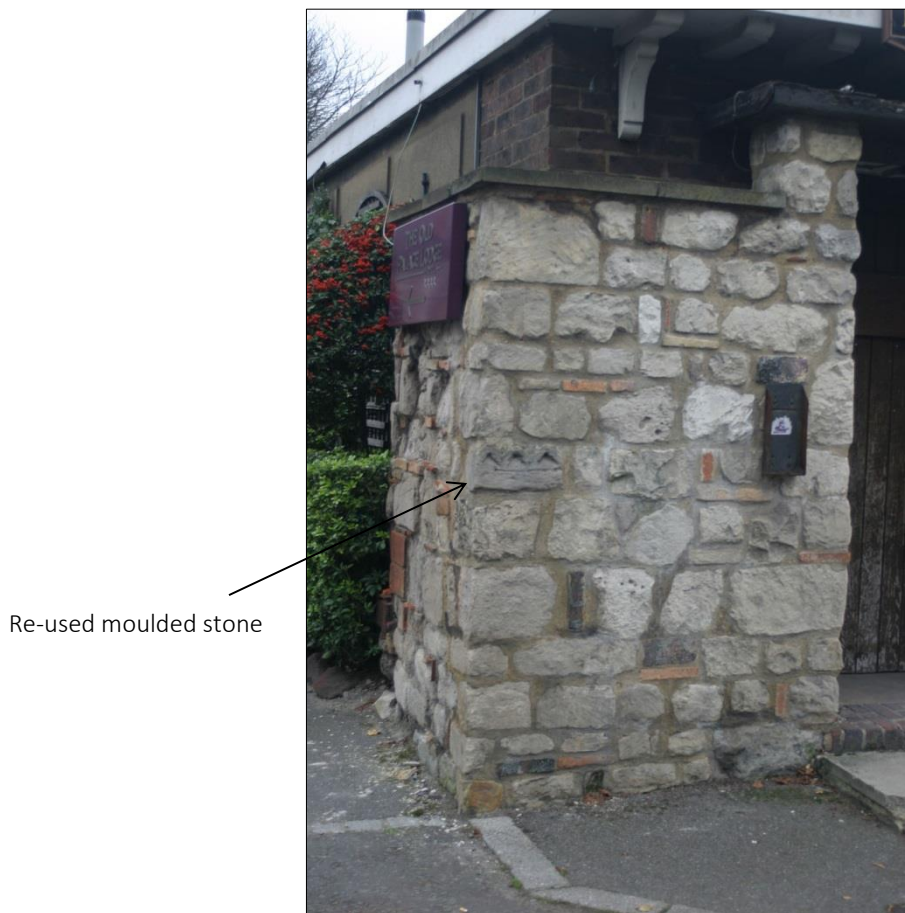
**Figure 16:** The east elevation of the Norman King after the fire  
(Courtesy of [www.hrnd.co.uk](http://www.hrnd.co.uk))



**Figure 17:** The south elevation of the Norman King after the fire  
(Courtesy of Will Riley)



**Figure 18:** The eastern end of the south elevation of the Norman King after the fire  
(Courtesy of Will Riley)



**Figure 19:** The southwest corner of the Norman King after the fire  
(Courtesy of Will Riley)



## 4 Description

### 4.1 *General description*

The former Norman King PH comprises an east-west aligned building on the street frontage with a north-south aligned range to either side separated by a gangway only wide enough for barrels to be brought up to the cellar from the rear yard (Fig. 23). The historic core of the building is the former barn on the street frontage, the south elevation of which is largely built of Totternhoe Stone. The side facing the street was obscured by hoarding during the survey and the description below is largely informed by what was visible internally and recent external photographic and laser recording. This part of the building is flanked by the ranges on either side, the western one of which is also behind a stone wall. The eastern range is brick built and provided the main entrance to the pub from Kingsway.

### 4.2 *Main Range* (Figures 20-21 & 23-24)

The stonework in the south elevation is painted internally, but photographs of the exterior show moulded stone having been re-used (Plate 6) alongside worked and unworked stone of various sizes and in various degrees of degradation. Some of the stones bear bolster marks, and others chisel marks though most have no tool marks whatsoever. Amongst the stone blocks are occasional tiles and bricks, all set in what appears to be lime mortar (Plate 7). The stonework to the west of the door, where a moulded stone fragment survives, appears to be 20th century. The available photographs appear to show the wall to the east of the door to be of at least two phases (Figs 17-19). The basal courses are rather distinct in both colour and structural form, and may be all that survives of a medieval wall. The stonework above is post-medieval but re-using medieval and later stone fragments. Later repairs and repointing are also evident in the photograph, and the wall was clearly breached to install the window.

The east end and the west wall of the structure are brick built (Fig. 15) the brickwork in the east wall being early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The west wall was exposed above the wallplate and is built of Fletton bricks that appear to be later 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Internally little of the historic building fabric survives other than two north-south aligned binding beams and the wall plates (Plates 8-12). The eastern beam is supported by brick built pillars at either end, as is the east-west aligned beam above the bar (Plates 11-13). The present north wall has late 20<sup>th</sup> century Fletton brickwork above the wallplate (Plate 12) and either early 20<sup>th</sup> or possibly 19<sup>th</sup> century brickwork below. However, only a small area of the latter was exposed during the survey making identification difficult. A post medieval iron tie was observed at the western end of the northern wallplate.

There are two 8/8 timber sash windows in the east and north walls, with a smaller timber window which recent photographs show to have been a 4/4 sliding sash. Door frames survive in the east and west wall, but not the doors themselves.

The north, west and south walls are painted white above half height matchboard panelling. A modern herringbone timber floor was partially exposed beneath the standing water and a makeshift carpet of cut back vegetation

To the west of the south range is a lobby entry from Church Street and ladies and gents WCs. All appear to have been built in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The eastern end opens directly into Room G3, part of the East Range.

### 4.3 *East Range* (Figures 20 & 23)

The southern end of the east range is brick built and has a small extension to the east housing the former main entrance (Fig. 14). Recent photographs show this, as well as the south range,



as having been thatched (Fig. 12). The west elevation is brick built, plastered and painted white and has modern timber windows and doors (Plates 3-5). The east elevation of the east range has 5 bays, which for the purposes of this report are numbered from south to north. It is built of timber and brick on a substantial plinth of indeterminate material some 40cm high (Plates 14-19). The bricks are machine made but intended to appear old with spanish, inclusions formerly added to improve the firing process, and horizontal skintlings, which were formed when the bricks were stacked for drying before firing. The wall is built in a Flemish bond with lime mortar and is clearly early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The timberwork in the southern part of the wall is fairly substantial with the posts to north and south of a reproduction plank and batten door measuring 24 and 26cm wide respectively (Plate 14). Both posts are re-used; the southern one has redundant stave holes and appears to have been cut to lean. Because the timberwork leans inwards, the lower part of the studs to the north of the door can only be seen on the outside and the upper part on the inside, where the internal bracing is also exposed along with the wooden pegs and redundant mortices (Plates 15-16 & 24). The wall itself is 27cm thick and is breached by 4 lancet windows, which are clearly a later insertion (Plate 15-16). The timberwork at this end of the range has internal bracing, which would suggest a date of c.1500, whereas that to the north of it is likely to be of 18<sup>th</sup> century date (Plates 17-18).

To either side of the main entrance in G3, the bar area, are two east-west aligned beams. Both are braced and the southern one is supported on brick pillars (Plate 20). This is a modern insertion, but the northern one appears to have a modern brace on an earlier post and beam. To the north of this is a substantial timber post with a redundant mortice for a brace (Plate 21). Both the brace and beam have been replaced by steelwork. Fletton brickwork is evident in the west wall of G3 and is indicative of late 20<sup>th</sup> century work (Plate 22).

To the north of G3 was the lounge bar (G2) with the lancet windows in the east wall (Plates 23-28). The early 20<sup>th</sup> century brickwork to the west has been breached to create a more open space between G2 and G1, which is a late 20th century addition. The different building events are clear in the exposed brickwork with late 20<sup>th</sup> century Fletton bricks above the steel in opening to G2 and in the south wall of G1. A modern 2-light window with leaded panes survives within this wall (Plate 28). The main structural supports within G1 and G2 are steel beams. A timber wallplate survives above a steel in the west wall of G2, and this is tied to the truss by a traditional iron tie.

Room G1 is a late 20<sup>th</sup> century addition with no historical features (Plates 29-30).

No historical building fabric, architectural or structural detail was observed in the passage to the cellar (G10) or the service rooms (G8 & G9) to the north of the former lounge (Plates 31-33). The bricks are late 20<sup>th</sup> century Flettons and the walls are either plastered or tiled. Modern steelwork is also evident, which was presumably installed during the 1960s conversion programme.

At the northern end of the range is a modern extension with a reproduction plank and batten door (Plate 1).

### *First floor*

Although photographic evidence attests to an upper floor, this has not survived the fire and subsequent degradation. Dormer windows were added in the 1960s conversion programme (Figs 13- 14)



---

4.5 **West Range** (Figures 22 & 23)

The west range is entirely mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The west elevation is brownish-red brick, partially plastered, and the interior walls are of Fletton bricks. Doors and windows are all of timber. There are no architectural details of interest (Plates 33-36).





**Plate 1:** North & east elevations of East Range



**Plate 2:** North elevation of Main Range



**Plate 3:** West elevation of East Range from the NW



**Plate 4:** West elevation of East Range from the SW



**Plate 5:** View to north between the two ranges



**Plate 6:** Detail of the re-used moulded stone



**Plate 7:** Brick & tile within clunch wall



**Plate 8:** Interior of Main Range (G4) looking east



**Plate 9:** Interior of Main Range (G4) looking west



**Plate 10:** South wall of G4



**Plate 11:** Southwest corner of G4



**Plate 12:** North wall of G4



**Plate 13:** View northwards from G4



**Plate 14:** East wall, Bay 1



**Plate 15:** East wall, Bay 2



**Plate 16:** East wall, Bay 3



**Plate 17:** East wall, Bay 4



**Plate 18:** East wall, Bay 5



Plate 19: Northeast corner post of East Range



Plate 20: View northwards from Room G3



Plate 21: East wall of G3



Plate 22: West wall of G3



Plate 23: Room G2 looking south

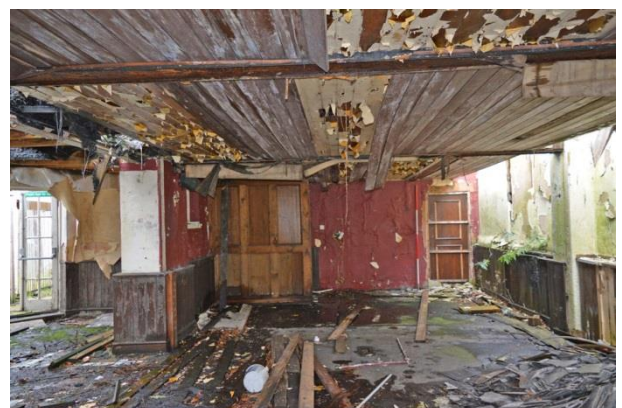


Plate 24: Room G2 looking north



**Plate 25:** East wall of Room G2



**Plate 26:** Internal bracing in east wall of Room G2



**Plate 27:** West wall of G2



**Plate 28:** Modern leaded window in west wall of G2



**Plate 29:** Room G1, looking south



**Plate 30:** Room G1, looking north



**Plate 31:** Passage G10



**Plate 32:** View northwards in G8



**Plate 33:** View southwards in G8



**Plate 34:** Room G9, view to northeast



**Plate 35:** Northwest corner of Room G5



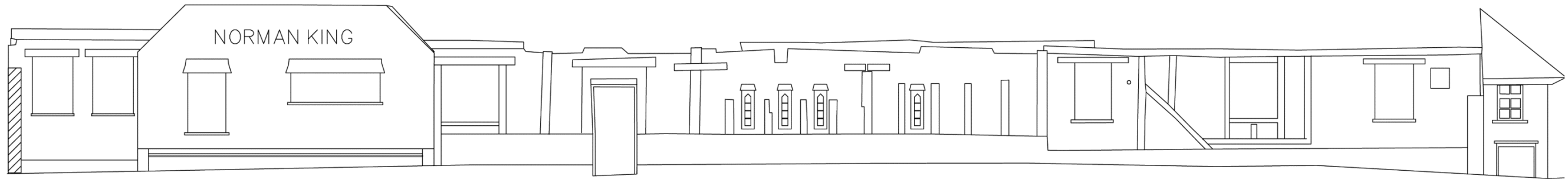
**Plate 36** East wall of Room G6



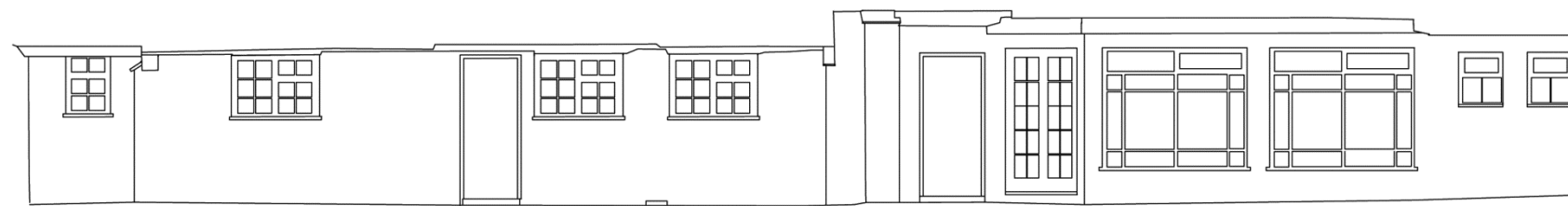
**Plate 37:** Northeast corner of G7



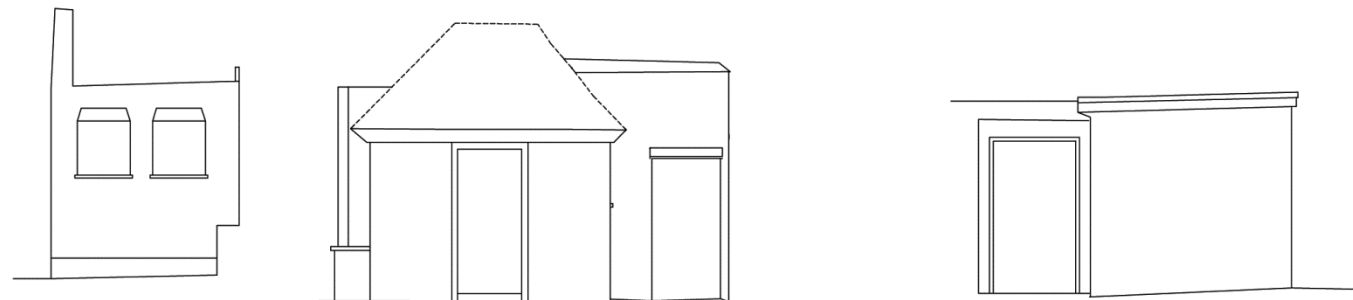
East elevation



West elevation



North elevations



South elevation

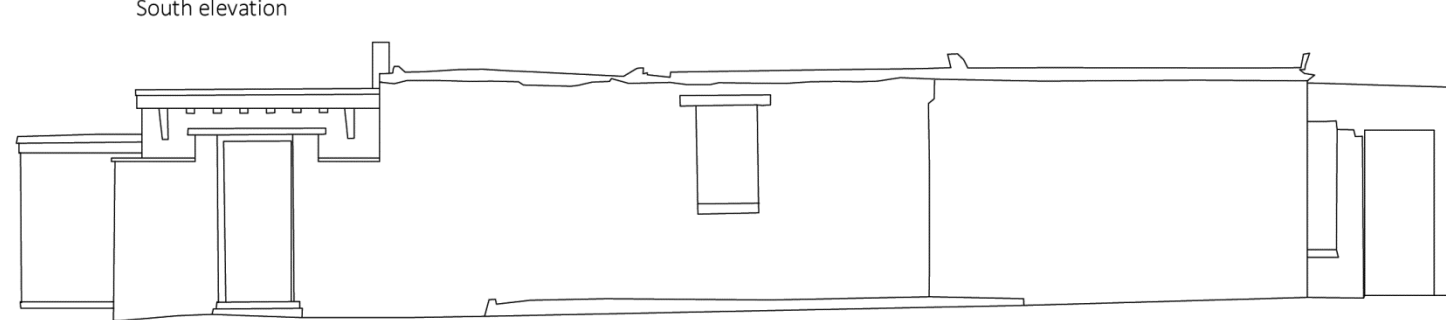
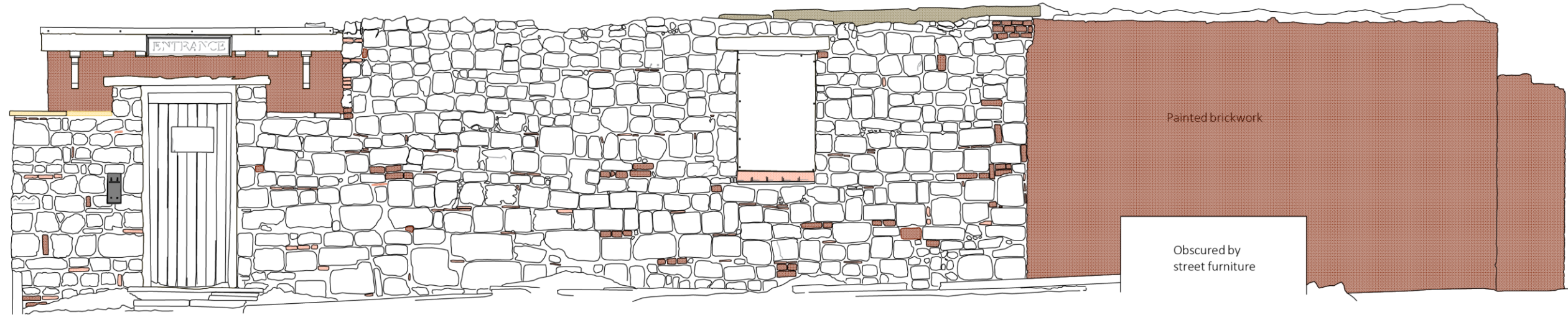


Figure 20: Main Range and East Range elevations (scale 1:100)





Exterior elevation



Interior elevation

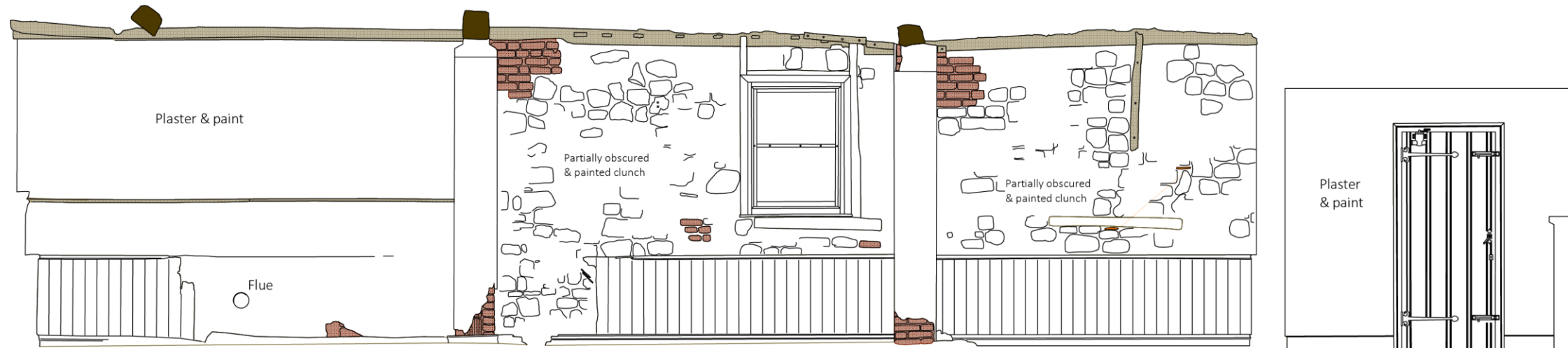


Figure 21: South wall building fabric (scale 1:50)

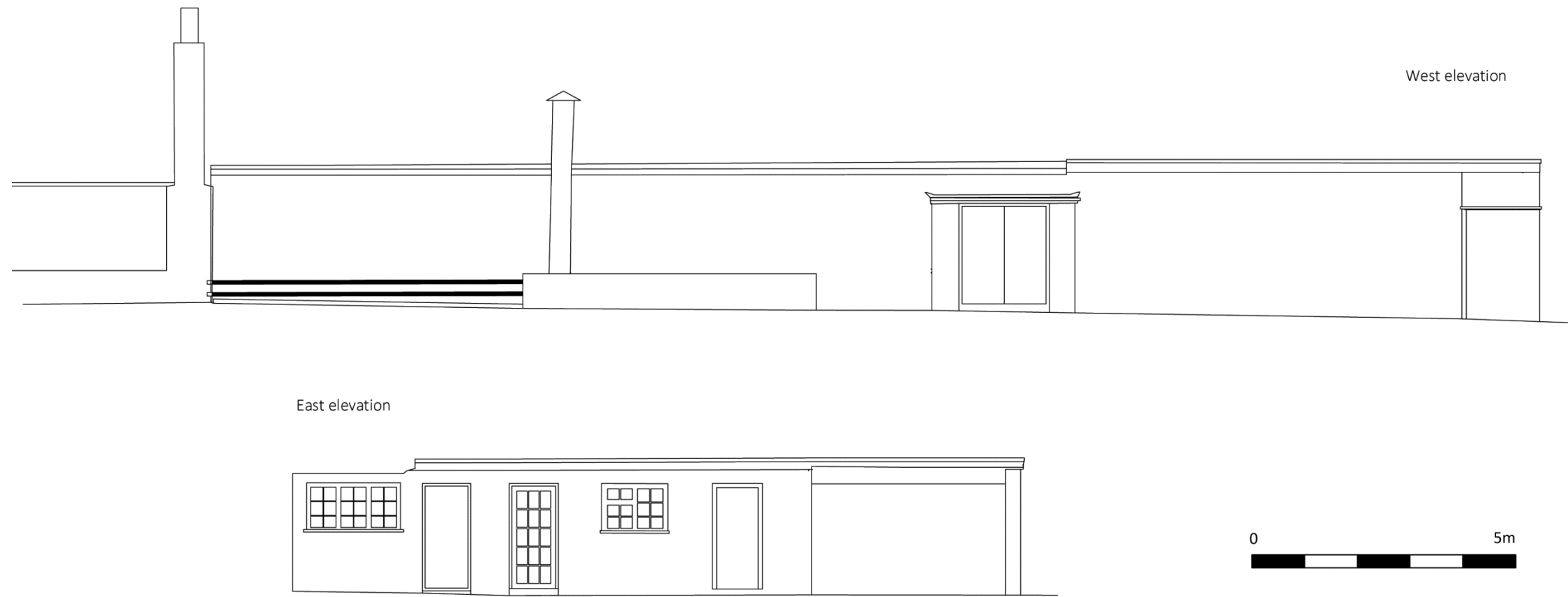


Figure 22: East and west elevations of the western range (scale 1:100)



Figure 23: Floor plan showing photo views (scale 1:100)



Figure 24: Phase plan (scale 1:100)



## 5 Conclusions

The Norman King stands on a site that has been intermittently utilised since the Roman period and is thought to have been part of the grounds of the royal residence built by Henry I. Historic and cartographic evidence suggests it may have been rebuilt in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when the post-medieval farmhouse, known as Kingsbury, of which this was an outbuilding, underwent major redevelopment. This may also be seen in the stonework on the street frontage, where the lowest courses appear to be of an earlier building phase than the upper wall, which has brick and tile interspersed amongst the stone. It has also been suggested that clunch from Picot's 12<sup>th</sup> century castle in Bourn and a clunch built cottage in Cambridge may have been used in 20<sup>th</sup> century work on the building. Whilst this should not be discounted, no evidence was found for this during the survey.

With the brick built addition to the eastern end of the wall, the southern elevation provides an interesting narrative of building events on the site. Apart from the re-used stone at the western end, there is little of architectural significance, and the degradation of the stone has compromised the overall aesthetics of the wall. Nonetheless, the wall has played a significant historical role in the townscape and its retention is to be lauded.

The east range was clearly heavily rebuilt in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two different types of historic timber framing survive in the east wall; that at the southern end has internal bracing, which would suggest a 16<sup>th</sup> century date for the framework, and that to the north is 18<sup>th</sup> century. Whether these frames were part of the range shown on the Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps or introduced to the site for the construction of the present range is uncertain. The east wall was again remodelled in the 1960s with the insertion of features reminiscent of medieval architecture, such as the lancet windows and plank and batten doors. The addition of dormer windows at the same time contributed to the loss of historical integrity of the range, although it must be conceded the building was an attractive feature in this part of Dunstable.

The building was thoroughly rebuilt in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. No medieval features were observed internally and any historical details, other than the timber framing in the east range, were limited to the possible post-medieval iron work used to reinforce the junction of the trusses with the wallplates.

Disregarding the 20<sup>th</sup> century west range, The Norman King was, without doubt, a beautiful building before succumbing to an arson attack. The surviving building fabric is varied and includes Totternhoe Stone, late medieval and 18<sup>th</sup> century timberwork, early and late 20<sup>th</sup> century brickwork and reproduction lancet windows and plank and batten doors. It is the chronological narrative of the building fabric rather than the building itself that is of interest, as the end result is an attractive pastiche of little historical merit or architectural integrity.



---

## 6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Will Riley for commissioning this report on behalf of MGM Hotels. Thanks are also due to Stephen Coleman of Central Bedfordshire Council for providing historic environment records and other relevant documents and the staff of BLARS for their assistance in the historical research. Adrian Webb of David Locke Associates, MK Surveys, Kempston Surveys Ltd and Rob Ward-Booth are also to be thanked for providing the survey data, drawings and other relevant material. KDK is also indebted to Hannah Firth of Central Bedfordshire Council for monitoring the project.

Special thanks are also due to The Dunstable History Society for providing old photographs and other illustrative material, and Russell Judge and Alan Winter for allowing KDK to use their photographs of the Norman King as found on [www.closedpubs.co.uk](http://www.closedpubs.co.uk) and [www.hrnd.co.uk](http://www.hrnd.co.uk) respectively.

The fieldwork was carried out by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA. The report was written by Karin Kaye, and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



## 7 References

### *Standards & Specifications*

ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.

CIjA 2014 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIjA 2014 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Historic England 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*. London: English Heritage

Ward-Booth, R. n.d. Specification and Method Statement for Laser Building Survey and Building Recording of Upstanding Remains: Former Norman King Public House, Church Street Dunstable, Bedfordshire Rev E.

### *Historical Sources*

Albion Archaeology 2003 *Extensive Urban Survey for Bedfordshire, Dunstable Archaeological Assessment*

Bagshaw 1969 Memories of Three Dunstable Houses, Kingsbury *Bedfordshire Magazine* Vol 11, 237-43

Bagshaw 1969 Memories of Three Dunstable Houses, Kingsbury Part 2 *Bedfordshire Magazine* Vol 11, 353-8

Buckledee, J. 2014 Kingsbury in *Dunstable & District Local History Society Newsletter No 41*, 306

Central Bedfordshire Council 2015 *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Investigation: Recording, Analysis, Publication and Community Engagement at the Former Norman King Public House, Church Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire*

Kaye, D. 2007 *Archaeological evaluation: The Old Palace Lodge Hotel, church Street, Dunstable*. *Bedfordshire Heritage Network Report* No. 389

Marsh, B. 2013 *Geophysical Survey: The Norman King, Church Street, Dunstable* Stratascan

VCH online: 'Parishes: Dunstable.' A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 3. Ed. William Page. London: Victoria County History, 1912. 349-368. British History Online. Web. 15 February 2016. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/beds/vol3/pp349-368>.

Ward-Booth, R. n.d. *Norman King, Heritage Statement Rev C*

Warren, D. 1989 Kingsbury Court 1988 *Manshead Archaeological Society*, 12-21

### *Documentary Sources*

1789 Sales Particulars	BLARS R/4/7/46/5
1895 sales Particulars	BLARS R4/746/5
Aerial Photo of 1928	BLARS BG12/9
1993 Plan	BLARS BHD 355/10
1816 Engraving	BLARS Z48/92



### ***Maps***

1762 Plan	CBC HER, CRO B553
1839 Tithe	CBC HER, CRO: MAT 12/1
1880 Ordnance Survey Map	XXXII.NW
1939 Ordnance Survey Map	XXXII.NW

### ***Pictorial Sources***

1816 engraving of Kingsbury and the barn	Dunstable History Society
1893 Sales particulars	BLARS
The Barn in 1917	Bedfordshire Magazine No. 11
The Museum in 1927 B	Bedfordshire Magazine No. 11
The buildings in use as stables	Dunstable History Society
The conversion of the Norman King in 1961	Dunstable History Society
The Norman King in 1966	Bedfordshire Magazine No. 11
The southeast corner of the Norman King after the fire	<a href="http://www.closedpubs.co.uk">www.closedpubs.co.uk</a>
The east elevation of the Norman King after the fire	<a href="http://www.hrnd.co.uk">www.hrnd.co.uk</a>
The south elevation of the Norman King after the fire	Will Riley
The eastern end of the south elevation of the Norman King after the fire	Will Riley
The southwest corner of the Norman King after the fire	Will Riley





## Appendix 1: List of Photographs

SITE NO/CODE: 105/DCS			Site Name: The Norman King
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	x	x	North and west elevations of the East Range from the northeast
2	x	x	North elevation of the East Range
3	x	x	Northeast corner post of the East Range
4	x	x	East elevation of the East Range, Bay 4
5	x	x	East elevation of the East Range, Bay 2/3
6	x	x	Plank & Batten door in Bay 1 of the east elevation of the East Range
7	x	x	East elevation of the East Range, Bay 1
8	x	x	North elevation of the eastern extension to the East Range
9	x	x	East elevation of the Main Range
10	x	x	East elevation of the East Range, Bay 2
11	x	x	View southwards between the East and West Ranges
12	x	x	West elevation of the north end of the East Range
13	x	x	West elevation of the southend of the East Range
14	x	x	View northwards between the East and West Ranges
15	x	x	Room G1: looking south
16	x	x	Room G1: looking north
17	x	x	Room G1: internal window in east wall
18	x	x	Room G2: view to south
19	x	x	Room G2: view to north
20	x	x	Room G2: east wall
21	x	x	Room G2: internal aspect of Bay 2
22	x	x	Room G2: internal aspect of Bay 3
23	x	x	Room G3: view to southwest
24	x	x	Room G3: view to northwest
25	x	x	Room G3: view to north
26	x	x	Room G10: view to west
27	x	x	Room G3: east wall
28	x	x	Rooms G3 & G4: east wall
29	x	x	Room G4: view to east
30	x	x	Room G4: view to west
31	x	x	Room G4: north wall
32	x	x	Room G4:view northwards to G3
33	x	x	Room G4: south wall, western end
34	x	x	Room G4: south wall, eastern end
35	x	x	Room G3: west wall
36	x	x	Room G8: view to north
37	x	x	Room G9: northeast corner
38	x	x	Room G8: view to south
39	x	x	Room G9: northwest corner
40	x	x	Room G10: east wall
41	x	x	Room G11: northeast corner
42	x	x	East range, west wall
Additional photographs supplied by Will Riley			
		x	Moulded stone in the western end of the south wall
		X	Western end of the south wall
		X	Eastern end of the south wall
		X	Detail of the south west corner of the Main Range



		X	East Range, Bay 1
		X	East Range, Bay 2
		X	East Range, Bay 3
		X	East Range, Bay 4
		X	East Range, Bay 5
		X	Detail of the stonework in the south wall



## Appendix 3: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
<b>Project Name &amp; Address</b>	The Former Norman King PH, Church Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire	<b>Project Site Code</b>	105/DCS
<b>OASIS reference</b>	kdkarcha1-242796	<b>Event/Accession no</b>	LTNMG 1142
<b>OS reference</b>	TL 02150 21985	<b>Study area size</b>	c.400sq m
<b>Project Type</b>	Historic Building Recording	<b>Height (mAOD)</b>	140mAOD
<b>Short Description</b>	<p>In December 2016 historic building recording was carried out at the former Norman King Public House Church Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.</p> <p>The burnt out remains of the building stand on a site that was utilised in the Roman period and may once have been part of the grounds of a royal residence built by Henry I in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century.. It is thought that the site may have once been part of a royal residence built by Henry I that was later granted to the priory. Historic and cartographic evidence along with fabric analysis suggest the stone built section on the street frontage may well have been rebuilt in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when the post-medieval farmhouse, known as Kingsbury, of which this was an outbuilding, underwent major redevelopment. There is late medieval and 18<sup>th</sup> century timberwork in the east range, which was clearly heavily rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Whether the timberwork was introduced as part of the rebuilding is uncertain.</p> <p>The surviving building fabric is varied and includes Totternhoe Stone, including a re-used block of moulded stone, late medieval and 18<sup>th</sup> century timberwork, 20<sup>th</sup> century brickwork and reproduction lancet windows and plank and batten doors. There are no medieval features within the building, and the medieval building fabric that survives appears largely to have been re-used in the post-medieval period.</p>		
<b>Previous work</b>	No	<b>Site status</b>	De-listed Grade II
<b>Planning proposal</b>	The demolition of the remains of the building, the erection of a 2 storey building to accommodate 12 aparthotel rooms, a thatched covered parking structure, alterations to the hotel entrance, a revised access and associated works.	<b>Current land use</b>	Former public house
<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire Council	<b>Planning application ref.</b>	CB/14/01924/FULL, CB/14/02263/RDCA and CB/14/01925/LB
<b>Monument type</b>	Public House	<b>Monument period</b>	Post-medieval
<b>Significant finds</b>	N/A	<b>Future work</b>	Yes
PROJECT CREATORS			
<b>Organisation</b>	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
<b>Project Brief originator</b>	Ward-Booth, R.	<b>Project Design originator</b>	KDK Archaeology Ltd
<b>Project Manager</b>	Karin Kaye	<b>Director/Supervisor</b>	Karin Kaye
<b>Sponsor/funding body</b>	MGM Hotels Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
<b>Start date</b>	04.12.2015	<b>End date</b>	16.02.16
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	<b>Location</b>	<b>Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)</b>	
<b>Physical</b>	Luton Museum	N/A	



<b>Paper</b>		Photos, site notes, report	
<b>Digital</b>		1CD	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
<b>Title</b>	Historic Building Recording: The Norman King Public House, Church Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire		
<b>Serial title &amp; volume</b>	KDK Archaeology Report 105/DCS/2		
<b>Author(s)</b>	Karin Kaye MA MCIFA		
<b>Page nos</b>	43	<b>Date</b>	16.02.2016