The Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick, West Midlands

An Historic Landscape Appraisal 2004

Project No. 1153 February 2004

The Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick, West Midlands An Historic Landscape Appraisal, 2004 (SMWSC04)

Ву Malcolm Hislop

For Modus Properties

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The Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick, West Midlands An Historic Landscape Appraisal 2004

Summary

In January 2004 Birmingham Archaeology carried out an historic landscape appraisal of the Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick, West Midlands (NGR SP 02758790) for Modus Properties Ltd. The work was prompted by plans to redevelop the centre, a project that would involve demolition of most of the buildings. The appraisal revealed that the study area comprised open fields in 1842 and that it was gradually developed during the late 19th and early 20th century, though few buildings of interest survived within the redevelopment area. It was recommended that some targeted monitoring of ground breaking activities be undertaken. Recommendations were made for archaeological recording of six buildings at RCHME Level 1, one building at Level 2 and two buildings at Level 3.

1.0 Introduction

In January 2004 Birmingham Archaeology carried out an historic landscape appraisal of the Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick. The work, which was commissioned by Modus Properties Limited was occasioned by an archaeological condition attached to the planning permission for the forthcoming redevelopment of the site, during which most of the existing buildings within the street block are to be demolished. The intention is that Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council will use the appraisal as the basis for preparing further briefs for recording the historic resource, and in assisting in the provision of an historical context for the public art that is to be included within the design scheme. The appraisal was carried out according to a written scheme of investigation prepared by Birmingham Archaeology (Hislop 2004) which was itself based on a brief supplied by Sandwell Council (Gould 2001).

2.0 Site Location and Present Character

Smethwick is located on the South Staffordshire plateau, at the southeastern tip of the pre-1974 county with Warwickshire. The underlying geology is mainly sandstone and drifted boulder clay. The study area is located within the centre of Smethwick, Sandwell MBC, West Midlands, centred on NGR SP 02758790. It comprises most of the street block formed by Suffrage Street (north), High Street (south), Windmill Lane (east) and Corbett Street (west).

From Hume Street, which extends north through the study area from High Street the land slopes away to the west. The northern part of the study area is covered by a large car park, immediately to the south of which are late 20th-century retail premises. On the west side of the block the southern part of the Windmill Lane frontage is largely of 1920s and 1930s character, and includes the covered markets and a former cinema. Although some demolition has taken place along the High Street/ Cape Hill frontage, it retains a largely 19th and early 20th century personality.

3.0 Objectives

- To provide further information on the origins and evolution of the development area and its immediate environs.
- To identify areas of archaeological potential within the development area.
- To assess the significance of the surviving built heritage.
- To formulate a research strategy for evaluating areas of archaeological potential and the recording of the standing buildings.
- To identify appropriate sources of information, maps and images that may provide an historical context/basis for the proposed public art.

4.0 Methods

A documentary survey of all relevant and readily available published and non-published sources including historic maps and photographs was carried out in the Local Studies section of Smethwick Library, Staffordshire Record Office, and the Library of the University of Birmingham. The Black Country Sites and Monuments Record was also consulted.

A rapid survey of all standing buildings of any historic or architectural interest was undertaken consisting in each case of a written description and a black and white photograph.

5.0 Building Descriptions

Cape Hill

1. *Nos 1-13* (Plate 1)

Row of shops of two main phases comprising Nos 1-7 and Nos 9-13. Painted brick, slate roof and brick off-ridge stacks. Nos 1-7 – Mid-late 19th century with later alterations. Two storeys with large 20th-century shop fronts, and 20th century upper windows within 19th-century segmental-arched openings. Nos 9-13 – Mid to late 19th century with later alterations. Two storeys with corbelled eaves cornice and slightly higher roofline than Nos 1-7. 20th-century ground floor shop fronts. Segmental-arched window openings to first floor, the left hand one of which retains its 19th-century sash window with side borders.

2. *No.15* (Plate 1)

Shop. Mid to late 19th century with later alterations. Two storeys, one bay. 20th-century large shop front. Corrugated iron facing and large 20th-century first-floor window.

High Street

3. Nos 355-369 (Plate 2)

Row of shops. Mid to late 19th century. Roughcast brick, slate roof and brick stacks. Two storeys with cogged brick eaves. Large 20th-century shop fronts to ground floor, late 20th-century windows to first floor within 19th-century segmental-arched openings.

4. Electricity Service Station (Plate 3)

Former Midland Electricity Board building of c.1930. Dark red brick with some blue brick headers laid in English bond, and reconstituted stone dressings. Two storeys, 3:1:2 articulated bays, with rusticated pilasters defining the corners and entrance bay, the latter faced entirely in reconstituted stone. Doorway with triglyphs beneath a cornice hood. Late 20^{th} -century ground floor shop fronts to each side. Upper small-pane casement windows with aprons, raised and chamfered surrounds and cornice hoods. To the rear, a contemporary orange brick electricity sub-station, much altered and not of special interest.

5. Sunday School (Plate 4)

Sunday school. Early 20th century with later alterations and additions. Orange brick with red brick additions laid in Flemish bond. The High Street (south) front has a wide orange brick gabled block to the left with two large (east and centre) and one small (west) segmental-arched windows blocked with red brick. Attached to the right is a much altered addition comprising a gabled wing with a large blocked ground-floor opening with moulded cornice over. Above is a stone panel with ramped sides and moulded cornice inscribed 'SUNDAY SCHOOL'. The west elevation of the main building has five main window bays, the windows with chamfered lintels. Above are two blocked dormer windows with mock timber-framed gables. In front of this elevation is a late 20th-century fence, probably replacing a brick wall, a length of which survives to the north. The north elevation comprises an early 20th-century red-brick front probably contemporary with the southeast wing. Blocked round arch doors to left and right labelled 'BOYS' and 'GIRLS' respectively in surmounting panels. Blocked segmental arched windows, five between the doors and one each to left and right. To the far left at the junction with the earlier Gospel Hall, is a blocked segmental-arched doorway.

Hume Street

6. Smethwick Gospel Hall (Plate 5)

Church. Dated 1901 and built in a 13th-century Gothic style. Red brick laid in Flemish bond with slate roof and crested ridge tiles. Main (east) front has five bays of sunken panels containing paired lancet windows with roll-moulded surrounds and hood moulds with stiff leaf stops. Moulded corbels to slightly oversailing eaves. Elaborate entrance bay to the left with two-leaved door and a garlanded terracotta panel above mounted with

the legend '1901/SMETHWICK/GOSPEL/HALL'. The buttress-like divisions to each side of the bay are carried up above the roofline and capped with ball finials. Between them the parapet is arched to suggest a pediment. North window of four lancet lights. Projecting from the north end, and part of the original build, a low building with moulded parapet coping. South gable rebuilt or encased in late 20th-century brick. The map evidence shows that the building originally extended as far as the High Street frontage.

Windmill Lane

7. The Market

Covered market of c.1930 with later alterations. Red brick sides and corrugated asbestos cladding to steel frame with corrugated asbestos roof.

8. Nos 114-115 (Plate 6)

Mid to late 19^{th} century with front of c.1930. Red brick, concrete tile roof. Two storeys, four bays. 20^{th} -century shop front and steel-framed casements to first floor.

9. No. 116 (Plate 7)

Market Hall. Circa 1920. Projecting from the main building is a single-storey stuccoed portico with moulded cornice. 1:1:1 bays articulated by Ionic pilasters decorated with swags. Central door with 3-centred rusticated arch. To each side a tripartite window arrangement, the large central lights with raised ogee-moulded surrounds and the small flanking loops with small aprons, cyma recta moulded sills and drops to either side. Set back behind the portico is the taller gable of the main building with semi-circular apex and tripartite arrangement of loops.

6.0 Previous Archaeological Work

There has been no previous archaeological work in the study area itself, and work that has been done within the vicinity has been unrewarding.

In 1989 a watching brief was held during the excavation of trenches for a house extension at Beck Close, to the west of the study area. 'Recent' dumping and levelling was recorded for the whole depth of the trenches (BCSMR 5719).

A watching brief carried out in 1992 during the excavation of trenches at the rear of 43 Waterloo Road, to the southwest of the study area, recorded c. 30cm of mixed dump over buried topsoil represented by loam with charcoal flecks (BCSMR 6438).

7.0 Historical Development

Pre-19thCentury

Smethwick was formerly a township within the ancient parish of Harborne. In 1086 it formed part of the episcopal manor of Lichfield, having at that time enough arable land for two ploughs. In 1166, Smethwick, together with Harborne, was held of the bishop by Henry FitzGerold for ½ knight's fee, but some time before 1229 the manor was given by Henry's granddaughter, Margaret de Breauté, to Halesowen Abbey which held it until 1538. Around 1275 there were thirty-nine tenants within the manor of Smethwick, and the main centre of population was at Bearwood Hill, which is situated approximately 250m to the west of the study area at the junction of the Birmingham-Dudley road (now High Street) and the road from Harborne (now Bearwood Road). Smethwick Cross, first mentioned in the 17th century, was located at this junction, though it is not known whether this was a wayside cross or simply a name for the road junction. The hearth tax returns of 1666, which show that forty-nine people were assessed, suggest there had been little population growth by the 17th century, and in 1675 Smethwick was described as 'a discontinued village' situated along the Birmingham-Dudley road.

19th Century

The tithe map of 1842 for the parish of Harborne shows that in the mid-19th century the study area was farmland being given over to a series of moderate-sized fields. The greater area of the study area was built on fields 1011 (Drity Lake), 1012 (Stumps Field) and 1013 (Nursery Field). The northern end was built on the southern portions of fields 958 (Round Leasow) and 959 (Pit Leasow). All five fields were owned by Edwin Bullock and tenanted by William Collins. Windmill Lane was in existence, being named after a windmill built in 1803 by and dismantled in 1949-50, which lay to the north of the study area (VCH, 109; BCSMR 2860). None of the other streets that currently define or extend through the site had yet been constructed. A small concentration of houses is shown at the early settlement of Bearwood Hill ('Bearward Hill' on the map). On the southeast periphery of this hamlet a few houses were strung along what is now the High Street, but they did not extend as far as the study area. There were a few buildings opposite the study area on Bearward Hill (High Street) and Windmill Lane, but none in the study area itself. Approximately 150m to the north of Bearwood Hill was Pool Farm named after a large pool that lay on its south side. It has been mooted that Pool Farm, might have occupied the site of a manor house (BCSMR 2825).

Development of the study area began around the middle of the 19th century (VCH, 95). Corbett Street and Hume Street were laid out, and built up gradually over the next fifty years. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows that by 1886 considerable changes had been effected. The study area no longer contained any agricultural land. With the setting out of Corbett Street, Hume Street and Suffrage Street the area had begun to take on an urban character. As yet there were no signs of industrial premises, but there were patches of mixed housing ranging from large villas in spacious grounds to tightly packed

court housing. Along Bearwood Hill (now High Street) and Cape Hill a tramway had been built.

Along the current High Street Nos 355-369 (formerly 217-224 Bearwood Hill) were in existence, being occupied by various small tradespeople including two shopkeepers, a tobacconist, a painter and a dressmaker. To the east of these properties, on the site of the former MEB building, was a large house with views over the fields to the south of the High Street, called 'Altona Villa', occupied by one Jas. Morgan. Behind these properties, linking Corbett Street and Hume Street, was a narrow lane (Pink Passage). Nos 1-15 Cape Hill (formerly 233-240 Bearwood Hill) had also been built, and were also occupied by small tradespeople. On the west corner of Cape Hill and Windmill Lane was a post office, a large square building, described in 1890 as 'Post & Money Order Office & Savings Bank & Annuity & Insurance Office', the receiver being one Edwin Goodwin (Kelly's Directory).

There were concentrations of terraced and court housing on the east side of Hume Street and at the southeast corner of the Corbett Street/Suffrage Street intersection, and isolated groups of terraced housing elsewhere. Most of these houses were inhabited by small tradespeople or craftsmen (Kelly's Directory 1890). On the west side of Windmill Lane the current nos 114-115, had been erected, set back from the street and with a passage between them leading to some court housing. Further to the north was a large house called 'Larkfield'. Like Altona Villa it had a rural (eastern) aspect.

20th Century

By 1902 (Ordnance Survey 2nd edition) a good deal more development had taken place. Victoria Park was in existence; it had been laid out to the west of the study area in 1887-8, on land attached to Pool Farm, and extended in 1894 (VCH, 89). Generally, there had been an expansion of terraced housing along Hume Street, Corbett Street and Suffrage Street, and also some on the west side of Windmill Lane. There was now a tramway depot immediately to the east of Altona Villa, and on the corner of Bearwood Hill (High Street) and Hume Street the Gospel Hall had appeared, extending from Bearwood Road (High Street) to Pink Passage.

The current nos 17- 37 Cape Hill (formerly 241-249) and nos 110-111 Windmill Lane had been built. This development involved the partial demolition of two rows of north-south aligned terraced houses that existed in 1886 as well as the Post Office. The Post Office was rebuilt as No. 248 Bearwood Road, but the corner plot, which it had formerly occupied, was reserved for the centrepiece of the composition, the Universal Tea Co. building. The change appears to have occurred by 1900, by which time many of the properties were occupied. There was no continuity of occupancy, except perhaps at the Post Office which was presided over by the Misses Della and Ida Goodwin, perhaps relations of Edwin.

On the west side of Windmill Lane, a large building, possibly a warehouse or factory, had been erected on a hitherto undeveloped plot of land, immediately south of Larkfield. By

1918 (Ordnance Survey 3rd edition) this building had been replaced by a cinema described on the map as the 'Picture Theatre'. Some alterations to the Gospel Hall appear to have been undertaken, whereby the hall itself had been confined to the northern half of the building shown on the 1902 map, thereby taking on its current dimensions. To the west of the Gospel Hall a Sunday School had been built. This was linked to the Gospel Hall at its south end by the existing porch. A row of terraced properties screened it from the street, but a passage led through these into a small courtyard in front of the porch. The other principal change within the study area was a large L-shaped building that had been erected on the east side of Corbett Street, probably a factory.

Twenty years later (Ordnance Survey 4th edition) this building had disappeared in a major redevelopment of the centre of the block between Hume Street and Corbett Street. This took the form of a confectionery works (Scribbans & Co., cake makers) that occupied the entire width of the block between the two streets, its erection having been preceded by large scale demolition, including that of large numbers of terraced houses. The area to the south, between the works building and Pink Passage, had also been subjected to a good deal of change, involving the construction of two large new L-shaped buildings, although most of the terraced housing remained. The area to the north of the confectionery works up to Suffrage Street was largely unchanged.

Along the High Street Altona Villa had been demolished by 1935 and replaced by the current MEB buildings, which were built for the Shropshire, Worcsetershire and Staffordshire Electric Power Co (Kelly's Directory 1935). The Sunday School had been extended as far as Pink Passage to the north, and to join up with the Gospel Hall to the east.

The Picture Theatre on Windmill Lane had been rebuilt (in 1929/30) to its present ground plan with a curved front, and a large building now extended from the rear (west) as far as Hume Street, involving the demolition of a number of smaller structures fronting Hume Street. The area to the south of the Picture Theatre had also been redeveloped. Between the Picture Theatre and Nos 114-115 Windmill Lane a market hall (No.116) had been built, whereas Nos 114-115 themselves had been extended towards the street front. To the south of these properties was another covered market. Larkfield, to the north of the Picture Theatre had been demolished and a new rectangular structure erected against the western boundary of the plot. The rest of this Hume Street/Windmill Lane block remained unchanged.

8.0 Areas of Archaeological Potential

The study area appears to have been devoid of structures until after 1842, and there is no definite evidence to suppose that any earlier below-ground archaeology, other than field boundaries, is likely to be encountered. There were two field boundaries within the study area. One roughly defined the western side of Hume Street veering slightly to the east of the northern half of the street, whereas the other extended west from Hume Street Both are likely to have been obliterated by the confectionery factory.

The possibility should be considered that buildings may have existed and disappeared before 1842, in which case the most likely sites would be along the High Street, as this would conform with the early pattern of development suggested by the tithe map. A lesser possibility would be along Windmill Lane. On the High Street, most of these potential sites were built on during the late 19th or early 20th century, and traces of earlier structures are unlikely to have survived. An exception, however, may be the former Altona Villa premises, immediately to the east of No.369 High Street, where pockets of relatively undisturbed land probably remain. On Windmill Lane parts of the former grounds of Larkfield, immediately north of the Mecca Bingo Hall remain undeveloped, as perhaps does much of the area within the Market Hall. These are the areas that have the greatest potential for archaeological survival.

9.0 Assessment of the Built Heritage

The architectural personality of this area is dominated by the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the most important period being c.1900 to 1930. The opportunities provided by the staggered crossroads at the junction of High Street/Cape Hill have been enthusiastically seized upon and made good use of. The result is that a series of imposing edifices now graces the corners of Waterloo Road/Cape Hill (the Grade II listed former Lloyds Bank building of 1907, Plate 8), Shireland Road/Waterloo Road (The Grade II* listed Waterloo Hotel of 1907, Plate 9), Windmill Lane/Cape Hill (Goose on Cape Hill [formerly the Seven Stars] Public House, Plate 10). These buildings form an attractive group with the corner development of c.1900 opposite comprising Nos 17-37 Cape Hill and Nos110-111 Windmill Lane (Plate 11), and form the most important historical collection of buildings in this part of Smethwick. Only slightly earlier in date are the terraced houses that flank the study area to east and west along Windmill Lane (Plate 12) and Corbett Street. Close by is another significant structure, the Grade II listed Mecca Bingo Hall (formerly the Rink Cinema, Plate 13), which adds a touch of Art Deco élan to the historic building stock.

None of these structures falls inside the development area, but the group of buildings between the former cinema and Nos 110-111 Windmill Lane is scheduled for demolition. This includes Nos 114-115 Windmill Lane and the two market buildings. The former, a pair of mid to late 19^{th} -century houses, refronted c.1930 as shops, are not of particular interest, nor is the covered market, also of c.1930, but No.116, the older market hall of c.1920, with its neo-Baroque portico, has a certain architectural merit that makes a significant contribution to the street frontage.

Another significant early 20th century building is the Smethwick Gospel Hall on Hume Street. However, although it is attractive, competently designed, and makes a considerable impact on its immediate locality, it is not particularly rare or distinguished, nor does it seem to be complete, its southward extension having been demolished. Its main spatial function within the historic streetscape is to define the course of Hume Street and Pink Passage. The early 20th-century Sunday school, which lies adjacent to it, has no particular architectural merit, and its main interest lies in its relationship with the Gospel Hall.

The former Electricity Service Centre of c.1930, which lies immediately to the west of the Sunday School has some architectural merit but is not rare, is in a poor state of repair and has been altered at ground level. The former sub station to the rear is not of special interest and has been very considerably altered.

The two groups of 19th-century buildings to be affected by the scheme, Nos 355-369 High Street and Nos 1-15 Cape Hill are typical of the undistinguished low status commercial street front properties that were erected in their thousands during the urban developments of the mid to late 19th. These particular buildings have been considerably altered and are of limited local interest only.

10.0 Research Strategy

Below-Ground Archaeology

It is recommended that archaeological monitoring of ground breaking activities be undertaken in the areas on High Street and Windmill Lane described in section 8 above.

Above-Ground Archaeology

While it is not considered that any of the buildings affected by the proposed redevelopment scheme is of sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant statutory protection, they nevertheless make contributions at varying levels of significance to the historic and architectural character of the locality. All the buildings singled out by this study have some degree of local interest and are worthy of preservation by record. Varying RCHME levels of record, are recommended for these buildings according to their significance (RCHME 1996).

Level 1 Record

- 355-369 High Street
- Electricity Service Centre & former sub station
- 1-13 Cape Hill
- 15 Cape Hill
- Covered market, Windmill Lane
- 114-115 Windmill Lane

Level 2 Record

• Sunday School, High Street

Level 3 Record

- Smethwick Gospel Hall
- 116 Windmill Lane (Market Hall)

11.0 Historical Contexts for Public Art

The study area was undeveloped until the mid 19th century, and then built up with domestic and small-scale commercial properties, a character that was maintained until comparatively recently. There is nothing particularly striking or typical about the area that one would wish to commemorate or recall in a display of public art, and it would be better to seek inspiration from outside the immediate area.

The only obvious candidate is the windmill of 1803 that was located approximately 150m to the north of Suffrage Street, and which survived until 1949. Although the mill has gone, at least one photograph exists (Fig. 8), and the sails and part of its mechanism are said to be displayed in the Science Museum in South Kensington (BCSMR 2860). It was from this building that Windmill Lane and the Windmill Shopping Centre took their names, so an historical link already exists. The windmill was for a long time part of the Windmill Brewery, a commercial concern important to the local economy, which was housed in an architecturally significant group of buildings, now demolished (Fig. 9). It may be that the brewery could also be commemorated in a display of public art.

12.0 Acknowledgements

This appraisal was carried out by Malcolm Hislop and edited by Steve Litherland. Thanks are due to the staff of the Staffordshire and Smethwick Record Offices. The illustrations were prepared by Nigel Dodds.

13.0 Sources

Primary Sources

Harborne parish tithe apportionment

Kelly's Post Office Directory of Staffordshire 1872

Kelly's Directory of Birmingham and Smethwick 1890

Kelly's Directory of Birmingham and Smethwick 1900

Kelly's Directory of Birmingham and Smethwick 1921

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Cartographic Sources

1842 Harborne Parish Tithe Map

1890 Ordnance Survey 1:2500

1904 Ordnance Survey 1:2500

1918 Ordnance Survey 1:2500

1938 Ordnance Survey 1:2500

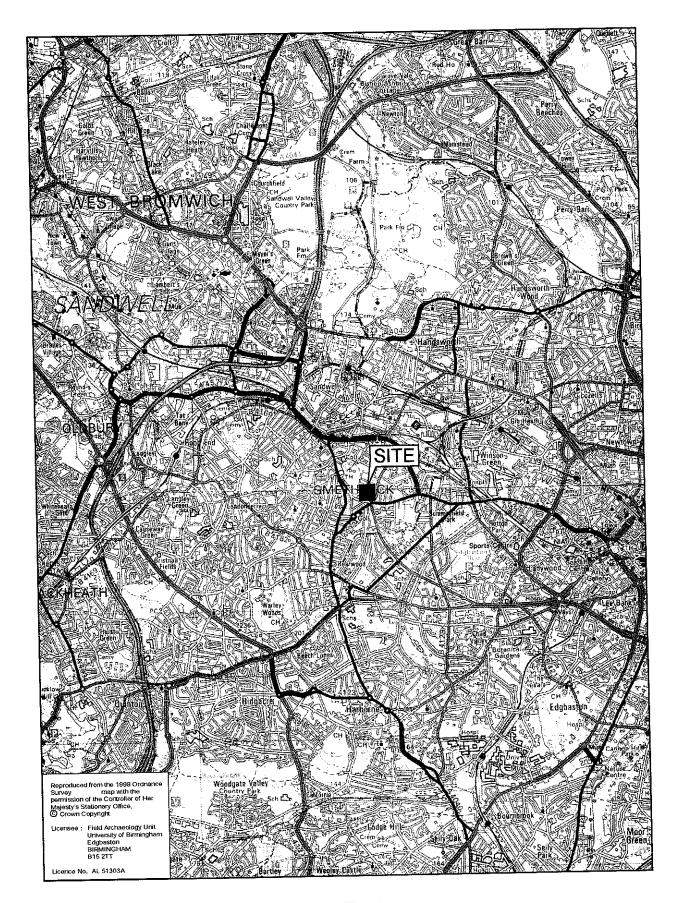


Fig.1

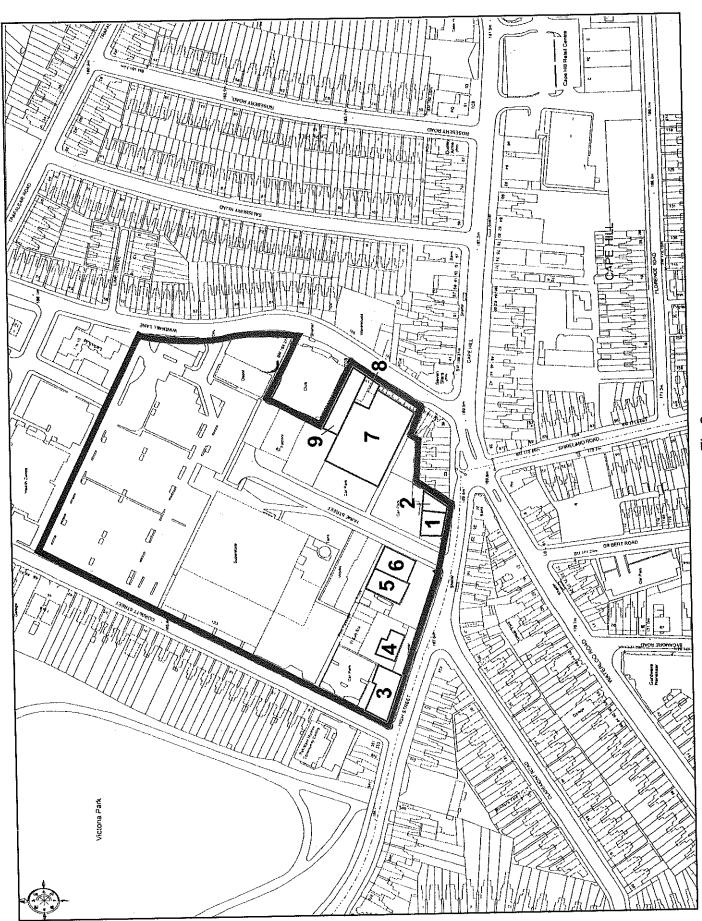


Fig.3 (1842)

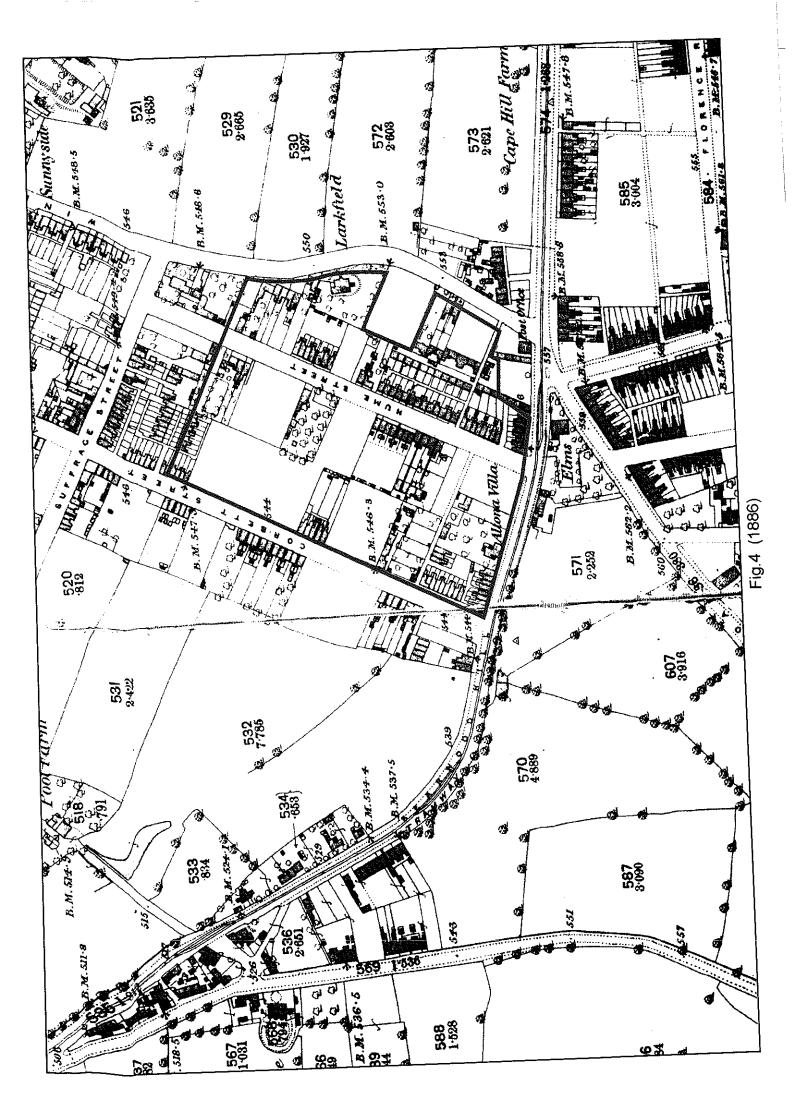


Fig.5 (1902)

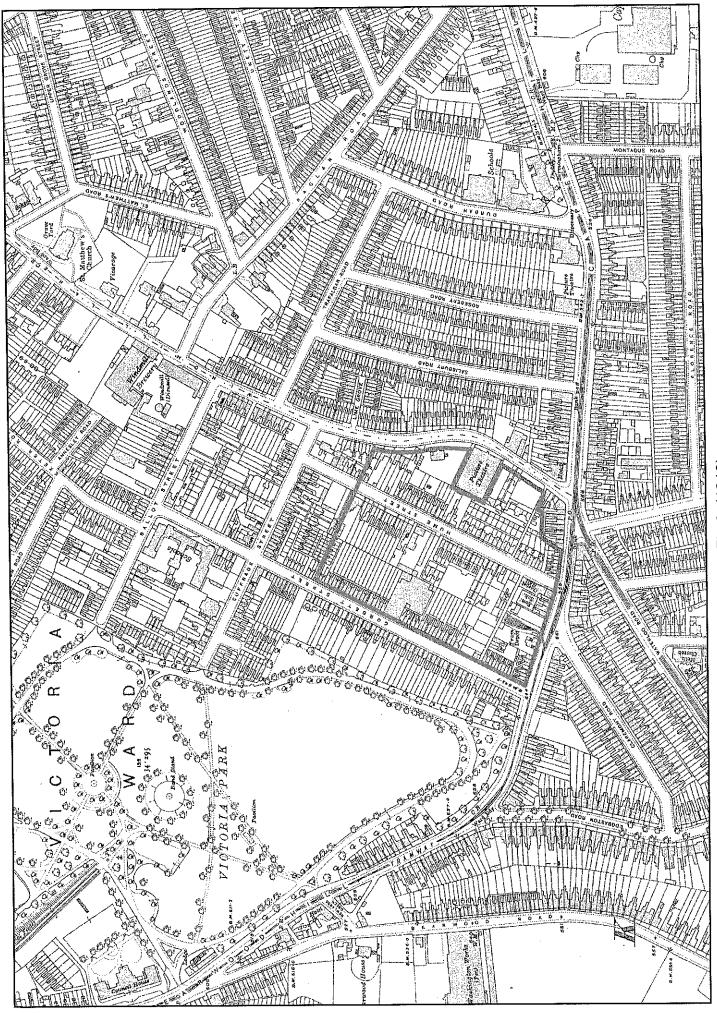


Fig.7 (1938)



Plate 1



Plate 2

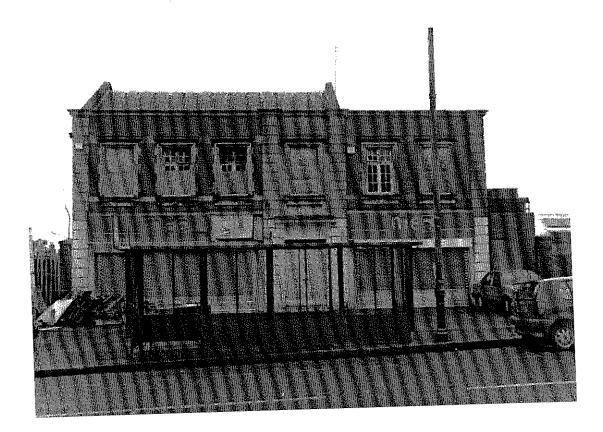


Plate 3

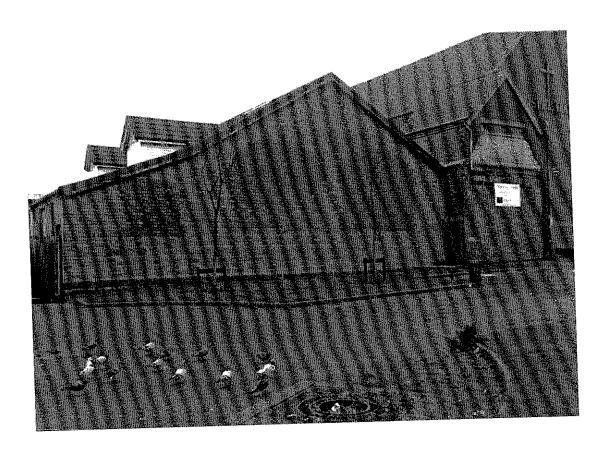


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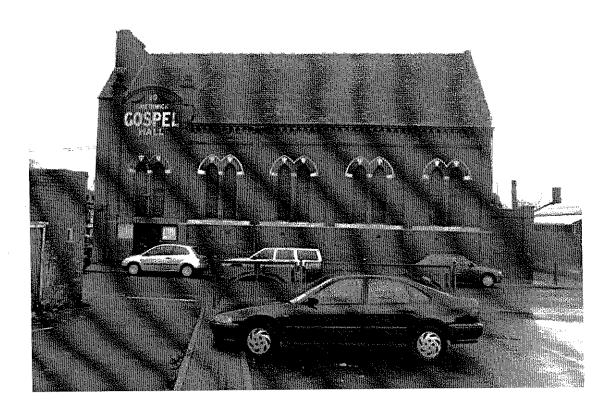


Plate 5



Plate 6

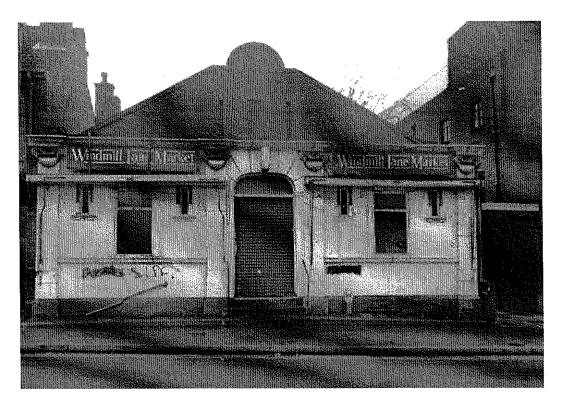


Plate 7

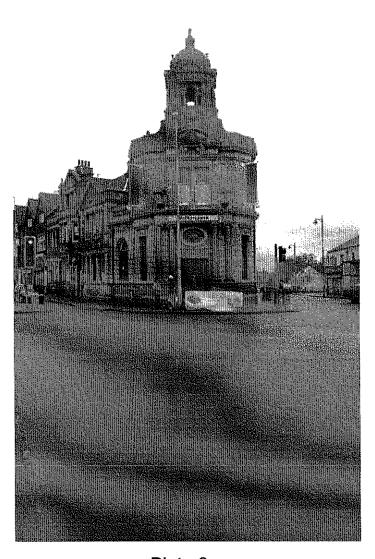


Plate 8



Plate 9



Plate 10

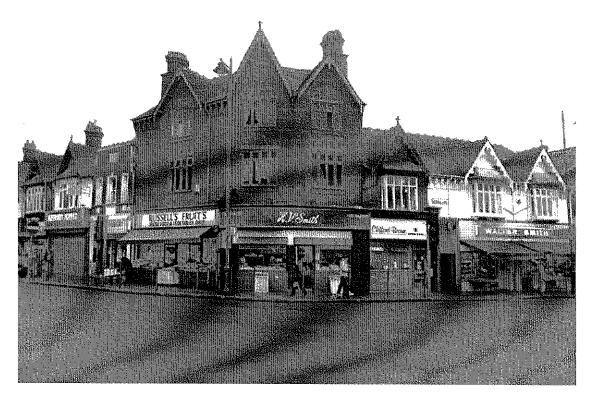


Plate 11



Plate 12



Plate 13

APPENDIX 1

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL WINDMILL SHOPPING CENTRE, SMETHWICK SANDWELL MBC

SPETEMBER 2001

PHASE I



Site: Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick

Borough Archaeologist: Shane Gould (0121 569 4025)

Historic Buildings Conservation Officer: Nigel Haynes (0121 569 4022)

Principal Planner: Richard Williams (0121 569 4088)

This brief is only valid for six months. After this period the Borough Archaeologist should be contacted. Any written scheme of investigation resulting from this brief shall only be considered for the same period.

The contractor is strongly advised to visit the site before completing their written scheme of investigation as there may be implications for accurately costing the project.

Introduction 1.0

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The Borough Archaeologist for Sandwell MBC has prepared this brief for an historic landscape appraisal as part of the re-development strategy for the Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick. An archaeological condition has been attached to the permission and this Phase I Assessment will be used as the basis for preparing further briefs for the detailed recording of the surviving historic resource. It is intended that the resulting report may also assist in providing an historical context for the public art which has to be included within the design scheme.

Site Location and Description

The site occupies a substantial plot of land within Smethwick town centre (Fig. 1. SP 0275 8790). A range of modern retail premises stand within the centre of the site with car parks to the north. Nineteenth century terraced housing, a Sunday school, covered market and an inter-war cinema lie beside the street frontage.

Planning Background

Consent for the redevelopment of the Windmill Shopping centre, Smethwick (DC/99/35793) was granted to 3.0 Modus Properties Limited on 14/09/00. Most of the buildings within the development area are to be demolished with the exception of the inter-war cinema, a Grade II listed building. This brief aims to address the first phase of Condition 32 and provide additional information which may help in fulfilling Condition 5. The Conditions are

Condition 5 - In connection with Condition 1(c) of this permission before the development is commenced a detailed landscaping and planting scheme to include an element of public art within the development shall be submitted and approved by the local planning authority.

Condition 32 - No development involving any ground disturbance shall take place following the demolition of any existing buildings until an archaeological investigation of the site has been carried out in accordance with a specification to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing.

Historical Overview

Originally an Anglo-Saxon settlement, the population of Smethwick continued to live in small farms and cottages 4.0 during the medieval and post-medieval period. Metal working was present from at least the sixteenth century onwards, with many residents maintaining a small plot of land and a few animals whilst also producing nails. During the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries it was a popular location for the country residences of Birmingham bankers and lawyers, before the Industrial Revolution transformed Smethwick into a boom-town specialising in engineering.

James Brindley's canal cut of 1768/9 from Birmingham to the Black Country was the initial catalyst. The canal architecture created by the requirements of taking the waterway over the rising ground here remains largely intact. Most notable are the 70 foot deep cutting created by Thomas Telford in 1827-29, the 154 foot long Galton Bridge (listed Grade I), engine arm aqueduct (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and the Smethwick Engine House (a Scheduled Ancient Monument). In 1852 the first railway opened between Birmingham and Wolverhampton, using the same Galton Valley route, but rail often struggled to get close to canal-side industry as it was costly to acquire lines through and over the canal.

The presence of the canal attracted manufacturing industry. Foremost was Boulton, Watt and Co's Soho Foundry of 1796 (listed Grade II*), the worlds first integrated factory for engineering products. Other prominent engineering companies, collectively employing thousands of people, were Tangye's (hydraulic pumps and engines); Guest Keen and Nettlefolds (screws, nuts and bolts); the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Co (premier quality rolling stock); and the Birmingham Aluminium Casting Co Ltd, later part of the Birmid Qualcast group. There were also numerous ironworks.

Glassmaking was the second most important industry, most notably Chance's, who made all the glass for the Crystal Palace in 1851 and provided lighthouse equipment for every maritime power in the world. Craftmanship of the highest order was achieved by T W Camm's stained glass works, and at William Howson Taylor's Ruskin ware art pottery studio.

Sites within the immediate vicinity of the development area include the nineteenth century Victoria Park and the Cape Hill Brewery. The former possibly contains the buried remains of a medieval moated site, whilst a tower mill once stood to the west of Windmill Lane; its name being commemorated in the modern shopping centre. A cursory glance at the Ordnance Survey historic map editions appears to show the development of suburban Victorian terraced dwellings interspersed with detached villas. By 1904/18 a tramshed depot and gospel hall had been established beside the High Street, whilst a picture theatre and covered market hall stood along Windmill Lane. Although the gospel hall and market hall survive, the theatre was replaced by a modern (Grade II listed) 'art-deco' cinema during the inter-war period. Most of the suburban structures were swept away during the 1970/80s in order to make way for a modern shopping complex. This is to be demolished as part of the current proposal.

Research Strategy 5.0

The objectives of the Phase I historic landscape appraisal are as follows:

- To provide further information on the origins and evolution of the development area and its immediate environs
- To identify areas of archaeological potential within the development area
- To assess the significance of the surviving built heritage
- To formulate a research strategy for evaluating areas of archaeological potential and the recording of the
- To identify appropriate sources of information, maps and images which may provide an historical context/basis for the proposed public art. Those that are likely to be particularly relevant are to be included within the report

Methodology 6.0

- 6.1 All survey works shall be undertaken by a professional contractor with proven expertise and qualifications in the recording and investigation of archaeological remains and historic buildings. Details including the name, qualifications, and experience of the contractor and all other project personnel together with a proposed timetable shall be included within the written scheme of investigation. CV's, previous examples of work and references from heritage curators may be requested prior to approving any resulting written scheme of investigation (WSI).
 - 6.2 The contractor will operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations. Those who wish to undertake the work should ensure they are adequately insured, to cover all eventualities, including risks to third parties. Sandwell MBC cannot be held responsible for any accidents which may occur to contractors engaged to undertake this survey while attempting to confirm to this WSI.
 - 6.3 The contractor is expected to follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
 - 6.4 A site code must be obtained from the Borough Archaeologist.

Site-Specific Methodology 7.0

- 7.1 All the appropriate secondary sources that are likely to be pertinent to the study area should be consulted. These are likely to include Baugh, Greenslade and Johnson 1987, Bodfish 1994, Cemm 1993 and RCHME 1991. Local history books based on old photographs are likely to be particularly useful for the more recent past.
- 7.2 The following repositories/organisations should be also be consulted:

- National Monuments Record Centre, Swindon
- Black Country Sites and Monuments Record (Mike Shaw 01902 555493)
- Local Studies Section of Smethwick Library
- Pertinent County Record Offices (the key objective being to obtain a series of historic maps: Ordnance Survey, Tithe, Estate maps, etc.)
- Smethwick Local History Society (Ms D Williams, 27 Beechwood Rd., Bearwood B67 5EQ)

7.3 The completion of 7.1 and 7.2 will inform the ground survey of the study area. Zones of archaeological potential will be defined and <u>each</u> building within the development area shall be numbered, described and photographed (one black & white shot only). Based on a pro-forma data sheet, the latter should only include a <u>brief</u> summary of the form, spatial configuration, function and date of each structure. Much of this information will be derived from a rapid external inspection, but the contractor is expected to give a view on the survival of fixtures/fittings, potential significance together with the future recording strategy (the need for further synthesis, measured survey and record photography). Some buildings will inevitably require an internal inspection and once these have been identified the contractor should liaise with the Borough Archaeologist in order to gain internal access. A copy of the proposed data sheet should be appended to the WSI.

8.0 Results

- 8.1 Based on 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3 above, a time depth spatial narrative will be produced of both the study area and its immediate environs. The contractor is expected to provide a <u>brief</u> overview of the surrounding environs (0.5km radius) identifying key sites and monuments together with a more detailed assessment of the application area. Historic and interpretative maps together with historical photographs should be used to support both the text and provide suitable images for the proposed public art.
- 8.2 A full assessment must be made of the surviving historic environment within the application area and the contractor is also expected to produce a research strategy for its future investigation. Areas of archaeological potential should be identified and supported by detailed recommendations for its evaluation, whereas a recording strategy is to be produced for the standing buildings. Having defined the recording level on the data sheets, links will need to be made in this section with the overall research objectives of the project.
- 8.3 Copies of the data sheets, photographs, the recording brief, approved written scheme of investigation and completed summary sheet (copy attached to brief) shall be included as appendices to the final report.
- 8.4 Five copies of the report shall be submitted to the Borough Archaeologist within time-scale defined in 6.1
- 8.4 The proposed format of the report will be described within the written scheme of investigation.

8.5 The contractor is not expected to produce an archive for Phase I of the project.

9.0 Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation

9.1 Because of the complexity of the proposed assessment the contractor is encouraged to discuss the scope of the project and proposed methodology with the Borough Archaeologist before submitting their WSI.

10.0 Monitoring

- 10.1 The Borough Archaeologist will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and should be kept regularly informed of progress.
- 10.2 Notification of the start of work shall be given to the Borough Archaeologist at least one week in advance of its commencement.
- 10.3 Any variations of to the WSI shall be agreed with the Borough Archaeologist preferably in writing prior to them being carried out.

Sandwell MBC

References

Baugh G C, Greenslade M W and Johnson D A 1987 A History of Smethwick (Staffordshire Libraries, Arts and Archives)

Bodfish M 1994 'A Survey of Smethwick in 1828', in the Black Countrymen 31-33

Cemm S 1993 The Growth and Development of Industrial Sites in Smethwick 1842 – 1940 (Unpublished Thesis)

Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England 1991 An Architectural Survey of Urban

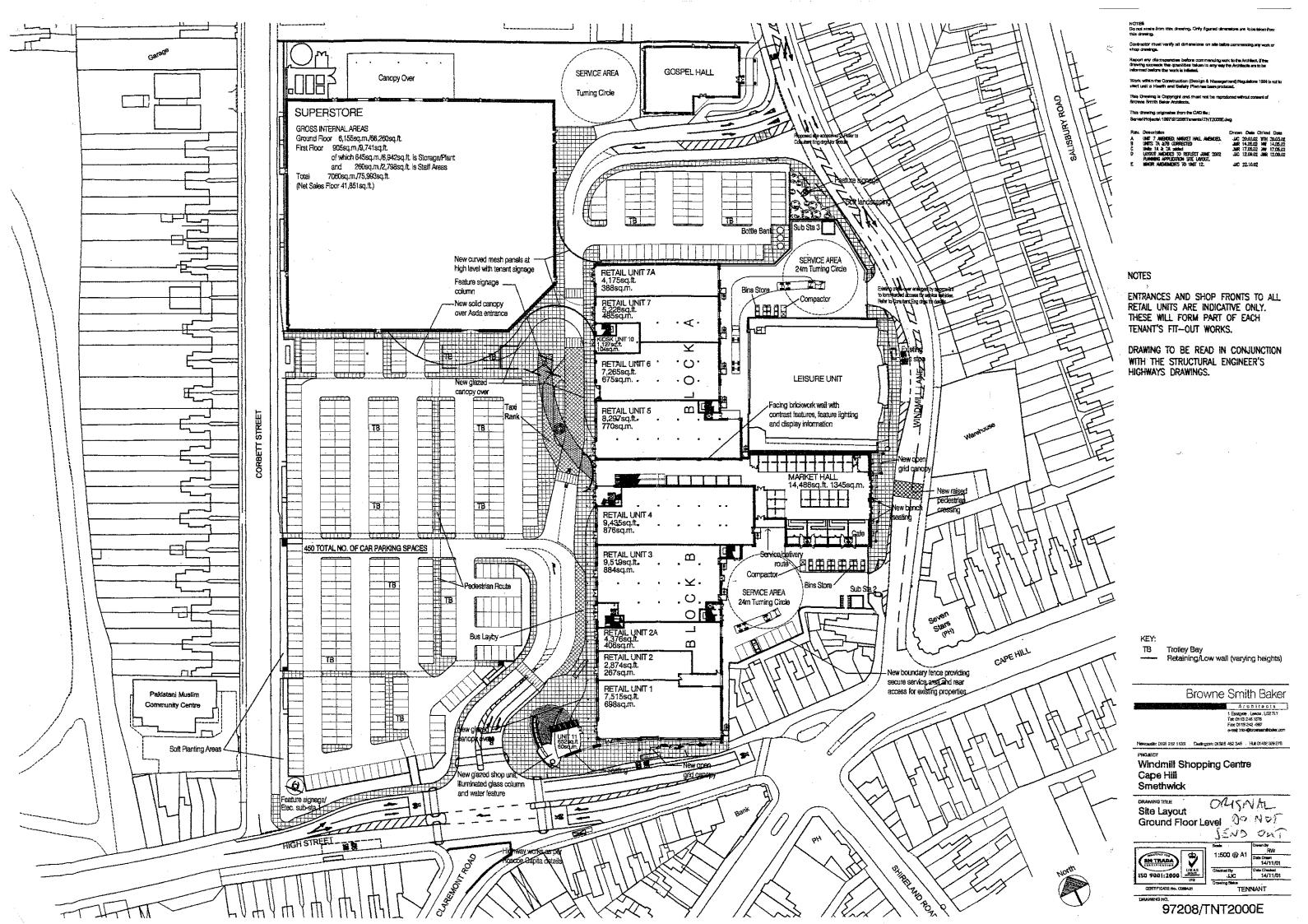
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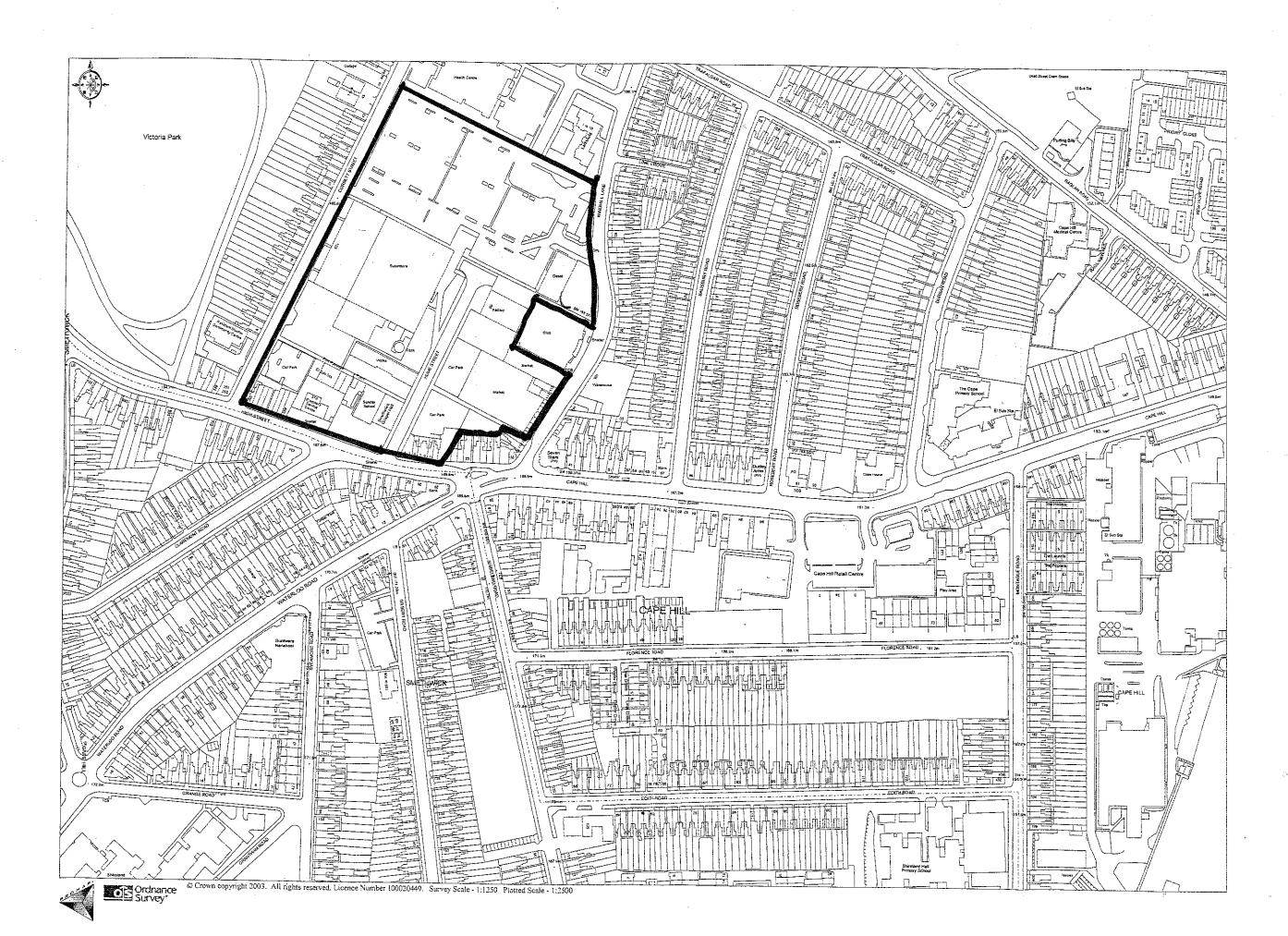
For further information regarding the content of this brief please contact the author at the address below. As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content and presentation of this archaeological brief.

> Shane Gould Borough Archaeologist Sandwell MBC Development House Lombard Street West Bromwich West Midlands B70 8RU

Tel (0121) 569 4025 Fax (0121) 569 4265 E-mail shane gould@sandwell.gov.uk Sandwell MBC

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APPENDIX 2

Historic Landscape Appraisal Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick, Sandwell MBC Phase 1

Written Scheme of Investigation

Birmingham Archaeology

1.0 Introduction

This written scheme of investigation describes a programme of work to be undertaken by Birmingham Archaeology in respect of an historic landscape appraisal of the Windmill Shopping Centre, Smethwick. The work, which has been commissioned by Modus Properties Limited is occasioned by an archaeological condition attached to the planning permission the forthcoming redevelopment of the site during which most of the existing buildings are to be demolished. The intention is Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council will use the appraisal as the basis for preparing further briefs for recording the historic resource, and in assisting in the provision of an historical context for the public art which must be included within the design scheme.

2.0 Site Location

The study area is located within the centre of Smethwick, Sandwell MBC, West Midlands, centred on NGR SP 02758790. It comprises a large part of the street block formed by Suffrage Street (north), High Street (south), Windmill Lane (east) and Corbett Street (west). It is currently occupied by 20th-century retail premises and car parks, a covered market and 19th-century housing. On the west side is an interwar cinema which is to be retained.

3.0 Objectives

- To provide further information on the origins and evolution of the development area and its immediate environs.
- To identify areas of archaeological potential within the development area.
- To assess the significance of the surviving built heritage.
- To formulate a research strategy for evaluating areas of archaeological potential and the recording of the standing buildings.
- To identify appropriate sources of information, maps and images which may provide an historical context/basis for the proposed public art.

4.0 Methods

- A documentary survey of all relevant and readily available published and nonpublished sources including historic maps and photographs will be carried out in relevant record offices, libraries and repositories.
- The Black Country Sites and Monuments Record will be consulted.
- A rapid survey of the standing buildings will be carried out consisting in each case of a written description and black and white photograph.

5.0 Reporting

The results of the appraisal will be presented in a report containing the following information:

- Non-technical summary
- Introduction
- Site location
- Objectives
- Methods
- Archaeological background
- Historical development
- Areas of archaeological potential
- Building assessments
- Potential sources for public art
- Research strategy
- Acknowledgements
- Sources consulted
- A selection of illustrations

In addition a summary of the results will be submitted for publication in *West Midlands Archaeology*.

6.0 Staffing

The appraisal will be carried out by Malcolm Hislop (BA, PhD, MIFA), a specialist in buildings archaeology, with several years experience of undertaking desk-based assessments.

7.0 General

 All project staff will adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. • The project will follow the requirements set down in the appropriate Standard and Guidance notes prepared by the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

Malcolm Hislop Birmingham Archaeology 27.1.04

APPENDIX 3

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