



*Archaeological Recording
at
25 Church Walk, Areley Kings,
Worcestershire*

A Report for Barnett Taylor Architects

April 2008

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Project: PJ 210

WSM 38568



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1. Project Background

1.1. Location of the Site

Areley Kings is located around 1-kilometre to the south-west of Stourport-on-Severn. The village, which predominantly dates from the 20th century, with interceding buildings from earlier periods, sits on a sandstone ridge overlooking the River Severn to the north-east. Church Walk is located off the A541 Dunley Road, close to the parish church (NGR SO 8026 7071: Figure 1)

Number 25 Church Walk is a late 1930's or early 1940's detached house similar to several others in Church Walk, which appear to have been built using some salvaged material following the demolition of Areley Court, which stood to the north-west of the site until its decline.

1.2. Project Details

A planning application was presented to Wyre Forest District Council for the erection of a replacement dwelling on the site of 25 Church Walk (WF/1244/FUL). The planning process determined that the proposed development site lies within an archaeologically sensitive area, which may contain remains relating to Areley Court, including an ice house, which would be of local historic interest. It was determined that the groundwork associated with the proposed development may disturb any buried remains of the ice house. As a result, the Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council, placed a watching brief planning condition on the application, for which a brief of work was written (WHEAS 2008) and a written scheme of investigation (Mercian Archaeology 2008) for the work was subsequently approved.

1.3. Reasons for the Proposed Watching Brief

The archaeological watching brief was suggested by the Planning Archaeologist as the appropriate response to the threat posed to the potential archaeological site by the development process. A watching brief is defined as:

A formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be in a specified area on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed (IFA 2001).

A watching brief at the site was proposed in order that a record of any archaeological remains or deposits encountered during excavations associated with the development may be made and placed into context.

1.4. Variation to the Proposed Watching Brief

During the preparation work for the watching brief, it was suggested by a local resident that the ice house, which is the subject of the watching brief, was located to the rear of the garden of 25 Church Street. Subsequently, it was suggested by builders at the site that the ice house was visible at ground level and would not be disturbed by the development works. Therefore, it was agreed with the Planning Archaeologist that a programme of recording of the visible remains would replace the watching brief.

2. Methods and Process

2.1. Project Specification

- ❑ The archaeological project conforms to the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (IFA 2001).
- ❑ The project conforms to a brief prepared by The Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council (WHEAS, 2008), for which a project proposal and detailed specification was produced (Mercian Archaeology 2008).
- ❑ Mercian Archaeology adhere to the service practice and health and safety policy as contained within the *Mercian Archaeology Service Manual* (Williams 2003)
- ❑ The record archive will be offered to the appropriate museum after discussion with the client and / or archaeological curator.
- ❑ *The Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists* (1997) will be adhered to.
- ❑ *The Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*, Institute of Field Archaeologists (1997) will also be followed
- ❑ *Guidelines for Finds Work*, Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001) will be followed.
- ❑ The project and any recommendations will conform to the government advice contained in *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE, PPG 16 1990).
- ❑ The documentary research will follow the guidelines contained within the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (2001)
- ❑ *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archives for Long-Term Storage* (Walker 1990) and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*, Museum and Galleries Commission (1992) will be followed.
- ❑ *Conservation Guidelines No 2*, United Kingdom Institute of Conservation.
- ❑ *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*, English Heritage 1991
- ❑ Environmental Archaeology and Archaeological Evaluations: Recommendation Regarding the Environmental Archaeology Component of *Archaeological Evaluations in England*, Association for Environmental Archaeology Working Paper Number 2 (1995)

2.2. Aims of the Project

The archaeological project aimed to:

- Use the results of the archaeological work to produce a report highlighting: -
 1. The historic background of the site
 2. A record of the physical remains of the structure

3. The Documentary Research

3.1. The Background

Areley Kings is located some 12 kilometres to the north of Worcester close to Stourport-on-Severn and on the edge of the Wyre Forest. The village is mainly of modern development, but there is also a scatter of 16th to 19th century historic buildings; The Rectory dates from the 17th century, Areley Hall is probably 16th century, Redstone Farm and Walshe Farm both date from the 17th century and Areley House is 18th century. The Parish Church of St Bartholomew is a Norman foundation.

Areley Kings was included in the manor of Martley until 1654, when the lord of the manor, William Mucklow sold Martley but retained Areley Kings. William died in 1686 and was succeeded by his son, also named William. On his death in 1713, William was succeeded by his son Selby, who held the manor until he died in 1746. The estate later passed to the sister of Selby Mucklow, who was married to Thomas Zachary of London. Their son and heir Daniel Zachary is recorded as holding the manor in 1772, and it later passed to his son John, who owned the manor in 1780. The Zacharys' retained the estate well into the 20th century, following marriage into the Lloyd family (Zachary-Lloyd) (VCH IV, 227-30). The Zachary-Lloyd family were incumbent at Areley House, which lies to the north-east of the site on the slope overlooking the River Severn.

The Tithe Apportionment Map of Areley Kings dating from 1838 shows that the land upon which Areley Court was later built was owned by Daniel Zachary and farmed by Margaret Beaman.

Areley Court was built around 1870 for Charles Harrison, and it is described in 1879 as 'a new mansion' (Littlebury's Directory 1879). Harrison was a carpet manufacturer with a manufactory in Kidderminster, and a Justice of the Peace; he later became the Member of Parliament for Bewdley.

The 1871 census identifies nineteen people at Areley Court in 1871; Charles Harrison was head of the household with his wife Elizabeth, three sons and four daughters, one relative, one visitor, seven servants and the Governess also present.

The 1881 census returns show that Charles and Elizabeth were still at the head of the household, though the numbers present had reduced from 1871, with only one son, two daughters, one relative and four servants recorded at the house.

The 1891 census relates that by this time Charles Harrison had died and Elizabeth was head of the household. There were also two sons, three daughters, three relatives, five visitors and four servants present, one a servant to a visitor.

By 1901, the census shows that the Harrisons' had left Areley Court, to be replaced by the Broome family. Edward Broome was head of the household. He is described as a 'Worsted Manufacturer and Justice of the Peace'. Also present were his wife Charlotte, one son, one daughter, one visitor and four servants.

The Broome family stayed at Areley Court until it was sold at auction in 1923 after the death of Edward.R.Broome. The auction prospectus lists the house as having a dining room, drawing room, library, study, billiard room and domestic offices on the ground floor, with 6 bedrooms and a basement with four cellars. Externally there was a walled garden with outbuildings, 6 loose boxes, a 3-stall stable with harness room, 2 cow houses for six, a cart shed, piggeries, foal yard and other permanent buildings. In the grounds there were 3 glasshouses and a forcing frame (WRO BA4788/1, 899:31). There is no reference to the icehouse.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map scaled at 25" to 1 mile and dating from 1889 (Figure 2) shows the layout of Areley Court and associated buildings at that time. The later 1927 edition of the map (Figure 3) shows minimal change to the layout. Plates 7 and 8 show the house as it stood in 1923, unfortunately there were no images available of the icehouse or garden features.

Cartographic Sources Consulted

Source	Reference Number
Tithe Map of Areley Kings (1838)	Worcester Records Office BA 1572, s760/16
Ordnance Survey 1 st edition Worcestershire Sheet XIV.14 (1896)	Worcester Records Office. (Figure 2)
Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping based on 3 rd edition (1927)	Worcestershire Records Office (Figure 3)

Other sources used are referenced within the report.

Sources Consulted of Little Direct Use

Source	Reference Number
Plan of property at Areley Kings	Worcester Rcds Office BA 4600/124, 705:550
Sale particulars of property at Areley Kings	Worcester Records Office BA 9526/34-81, 705:1041

Survey of Areley Kings	Worcester Records Office BA 5351/8, 705:550
Revised Tithe Map and Apportionment (1850)	Worcester Records Office BA 1572, s760/17
Revised Tithe Map and Apportionment (1852)	Worcester Records Office BA 1572, s760/18
Revised Tithe Map and Apportionment (1874)	Worcester Records Office BA 1572, s760/19
Revised Tithe Map and Apportionment (1881)	Worcester Records Office BA 1572, s760/20

4. The Recording

4.1. Recording: The Fieldwork Methodology

Paul Williams of Mercian Archaeology undertook the recording in April 2008, assisted by Della Lawrence.

The site photography was carried out using digital format. A 1-metre or 2-metre scale was used where possible.

Proforma Record Forms were used to record the site stratigraphy in tandem with site notes to produce the final record contained within this report.

The recording was carried out on an area of exposed brickwork to the rear of the garden of 25 Church Walk (Plate 1). The area was cleared of overburden and the structure cleaned up for the purpose of scale drawing and photography (the recording). Slots were excavated into the structure to investigate its foundations.

Further trial holes were excavated by hand in an attempt to locate the entrance to the ice house for recording purposes.

4.2. The Results of the Recording

Initial inspection of the site had noted an area of exposed brickwork to the rear of the site (north) within overgrown vegetation and discarded building rubble. This area was cleared by

hand in order to expose and define the structure, so that it could be recorded and an interpretation made.

The clearance exposed the base of a brick structure, which measured some 9.60 metres in length by 4.80 metres wide (Plates 3 to 5), only the visible western portion was cleared. At this stage it was thought that the structure represented the base of one of the glasshouses shown on the early mapping (Figures 2 & 3) and referred to in the sales particulars of 1923 (WRO BA 4788/1, 899:31). However, certain components made little sense and suggested that the missing icehouse may lie below the structure: the floor of the structure had a distinct arched profile across the width; a centrally located rectangular feature was in a position that may suggest it covered a set of steps down below the arched camber, and the front (south) wall of the structure contained an 'arch', which suggested there may also be an entrance here.

Further cleaning revealed that the structure was built of solid 9" plinth walls made from 3" thick brick (typically Victorian). The floor was mainly of brick, but there were areas of 6" square quarry tile, concrete tiles and stone blocks. The rear wall of the structure, which also demarcated the northern garden boundary, was formed by the remaining Victorian garden wall from Areley Court (Plate 2), which stood over 3.50 metres high. Planting borders containing mature shrubs lay over the structure at the rear of the site, and a gravel garden path led to further garden planters, which probably dated from the 1940's.

A slot was dug against the southernmost plinth wall of the structure adjacent to the arch, which sprang from the top of the wall. This was to determine if an entrance was located against the outer wall of the structure and therefore, indicate that the ice house chamber lay below. The trial-excavation revealed the orange sandy natural glacial deposits 55-centimetres below the top of the plinth wall, indicating that there was no entrance in this position (Plate 6). It was also confirmed that the natural was not re-deposited from elsewhere (i.e. the backfill of the disused entranceway), by the observation of the foundation cut for the wall; this was filled with greyish-brown silty clay against the wall construction. The purpose of the arch cannot be determined from the evidence and it may well have been a decorative feature with no further function.

A further test-pit was excavated into the fill of the central rectangular brick feature. This proved to be a very compact dump of orange sandy-clay containing ash, clinker and some building rubble. There were no steps visible and it was concluded that this was probably the base for a 20th century shed, which post-dated the glasshouse structure. The gravel path butted the northern side of the base, which adds weight to this theory.

Two 1-metre square test pits were excavated to some 70-centimetres deep in a location suggested by a local person to be the entrance to the ice house, which he also suggested was filled in during the 1950's as it was unsafe. Neither test-pit identified any material associated with the ice house construction.

5. Comment on the Physical and Documentary Evidence

Both the map evidence and confirmation by one of the neighbours of 25 Church Walk, indicate that the structure recorded was the remains of a Victorian glasshouse within the Areley Court kitchen garden. The local man (name not recorded) remembers the lean-to glasshouse stood against the garden wall, with its roof at the same level (over 3.50 metres high). He recalls that the roof vents were opened and closed via a series of pulleys and an iron control wheel. The camber of the floor of the structure and the arch within the plinth wall cannot be explained, but the excavated trial-holes indicate that the ice house chamber was entered from elsewhere.

Further information from a local person, suggested a location of the entrance to the icehouse. Unfortunately, trial-pits in this location proved negative, but it maybe that the entrance is deeper than the level excavated down to. If this is the case, which seems likely, the icehouse will be preserved from any intrusion by the present development works.

6. Conclusion

The results of the archaeological recording demonstrate that the structure recorded at 25 Church Walk is the base of a Victorian glasshouse from within the kitchen garden of Areley Court. The glasshouse is one of a pair shown on early mapping and referred to in sales particulars of 1923. Local residents confirmed the presence of a former ice house on the site, although the entrance to the structure remained unlocated. The depth of soil over the suggested area of the entrance suggests that the present development will not affect any remains of the building that may survive.

7. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the Julian Barnett of Barnett Taylor Associates. Thanks are also due to Della Lawrence for her on-site assistance, Mike Glyde, Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council and the staff of Worcester Records Office.

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Plate 1: 25 Church Walk looking south



Plate 2: Victorian garden wall to rear (north) of site



Plate 3: Glasshouse base looking north-west



Plate 4: Glasshouse base looking west



Plate 5: Glasshouse base looking north-east



Plate 6: Glasshouse plinth wall foundation trench against the arch



Plate 7: Image of Areley Court dating from 1923 (courtesy of Worcester Records Office, from BA 4788/1, 899:31)

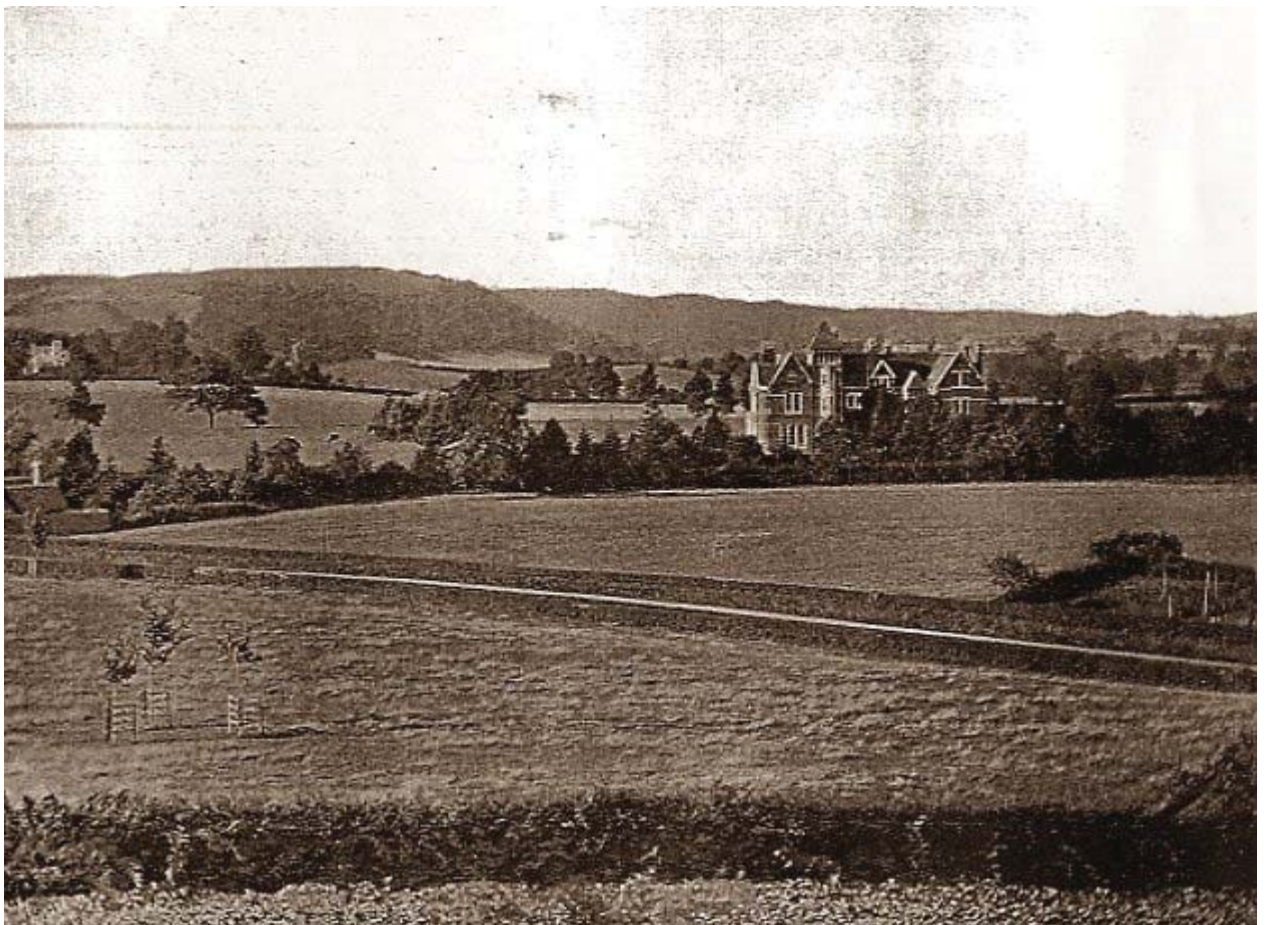
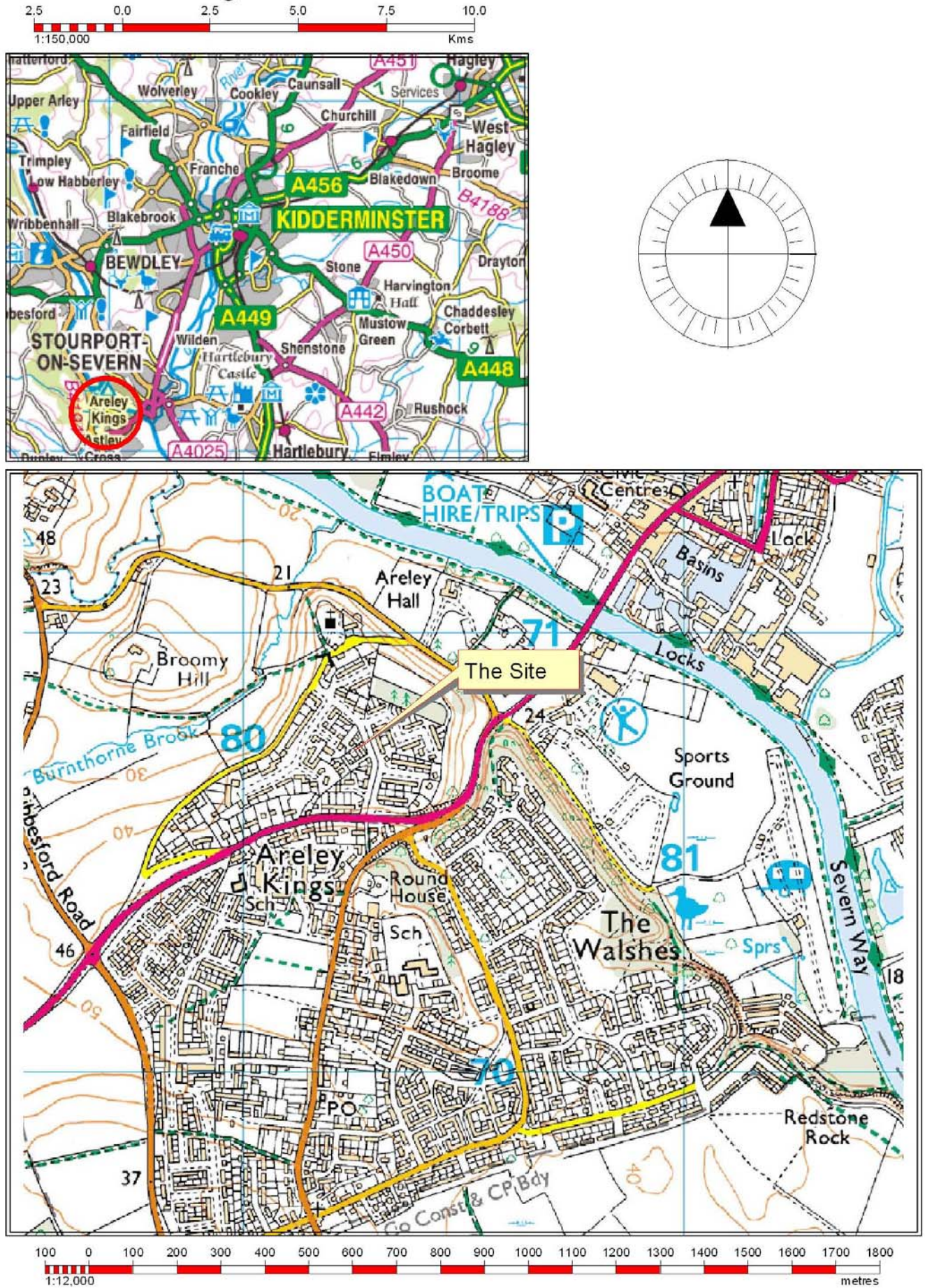


Plate 8: Image of Areley Court dating from 1923 (courtesy of Worcester Records Office, from BA 4788/1, 899:31)

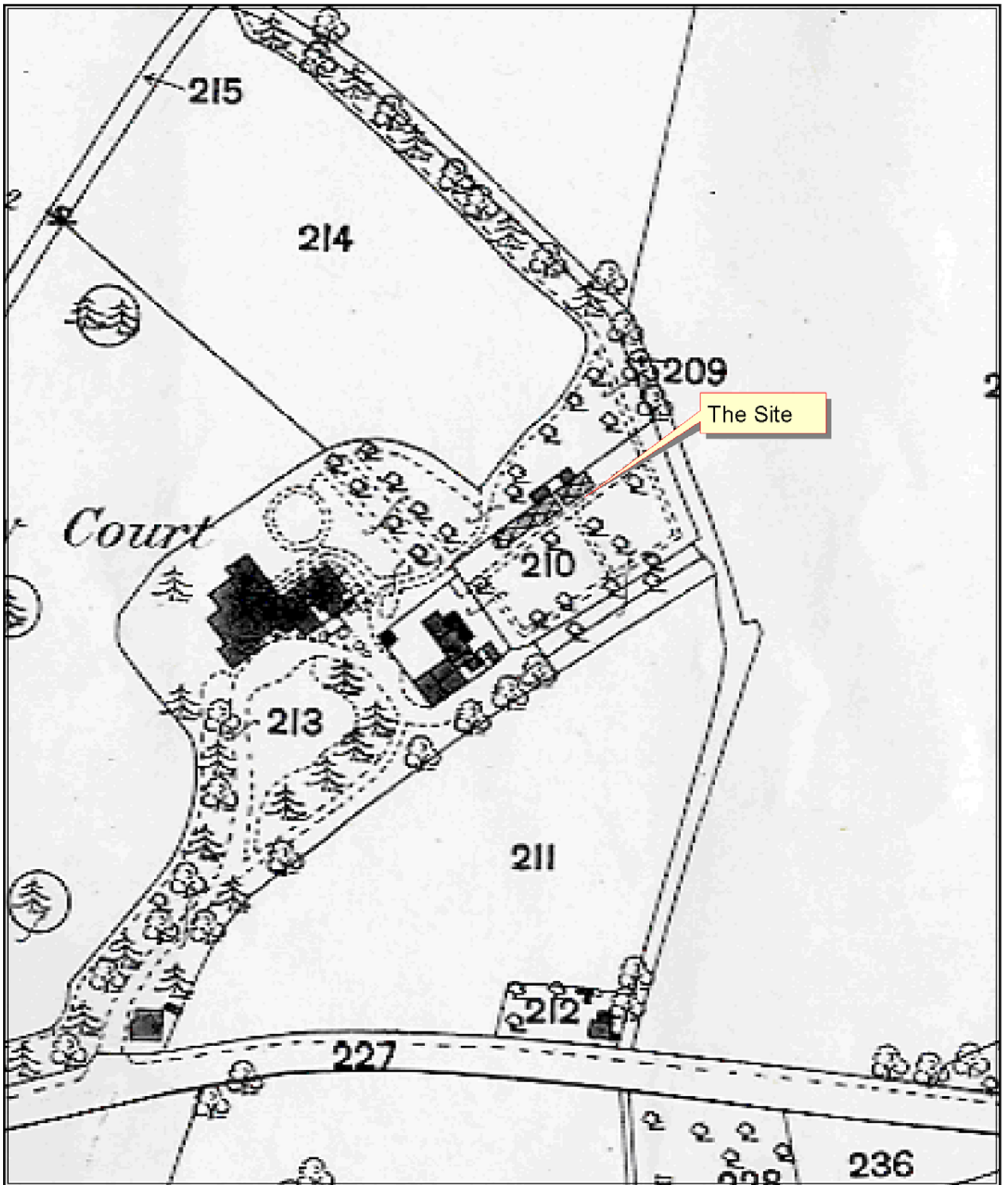
Figure 1: Location of the Site



Location of the site at Areley Kings,
Worcestershire

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Figure 2: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1889)



The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map showing Areley Court

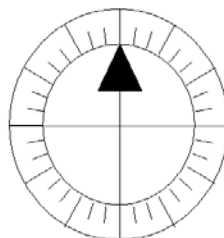
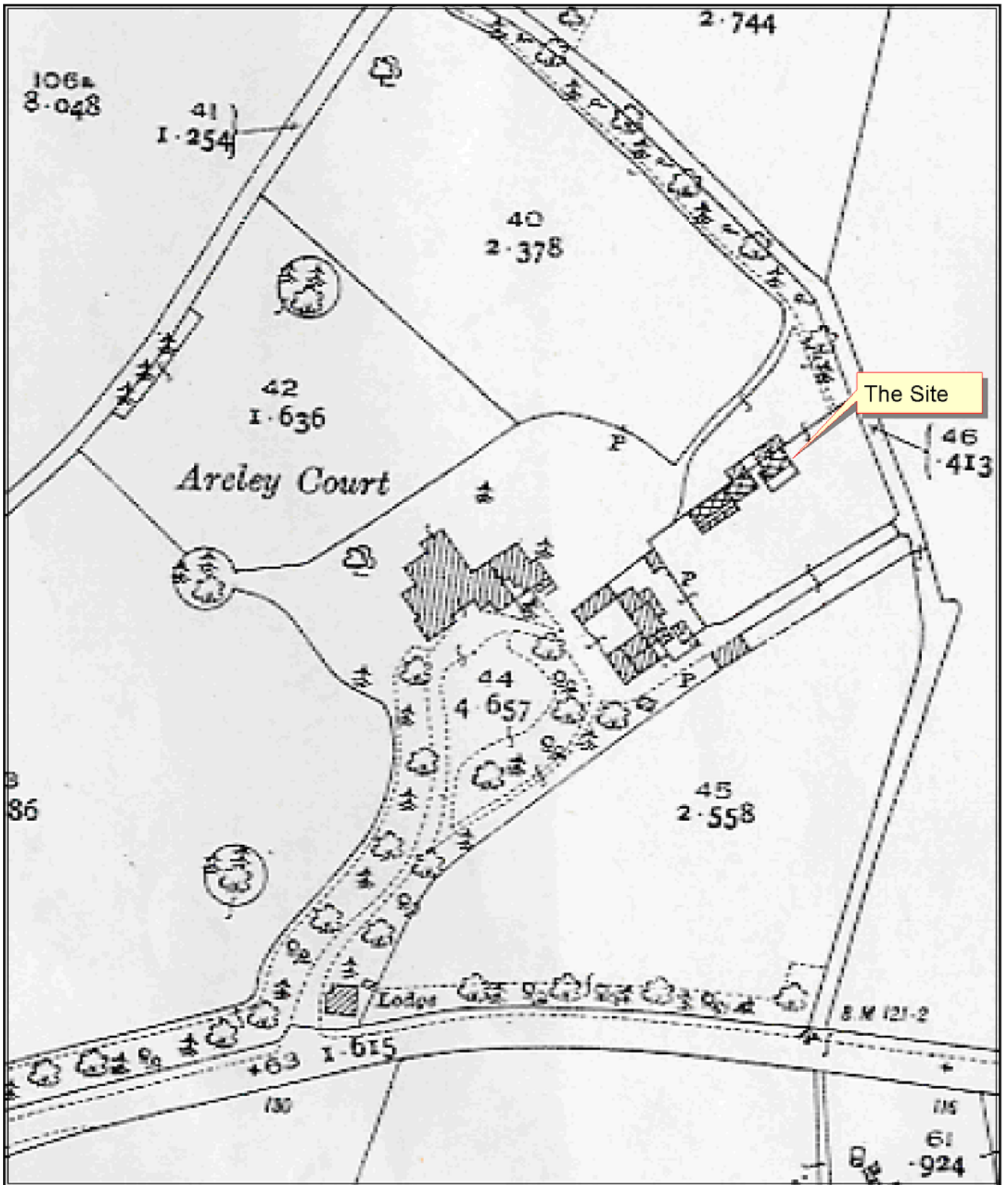
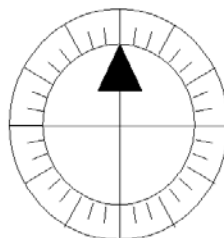


Figure 3: Ordnance Survey (1927)



The 1927 edition Ordnance Survey map showing Areley Court



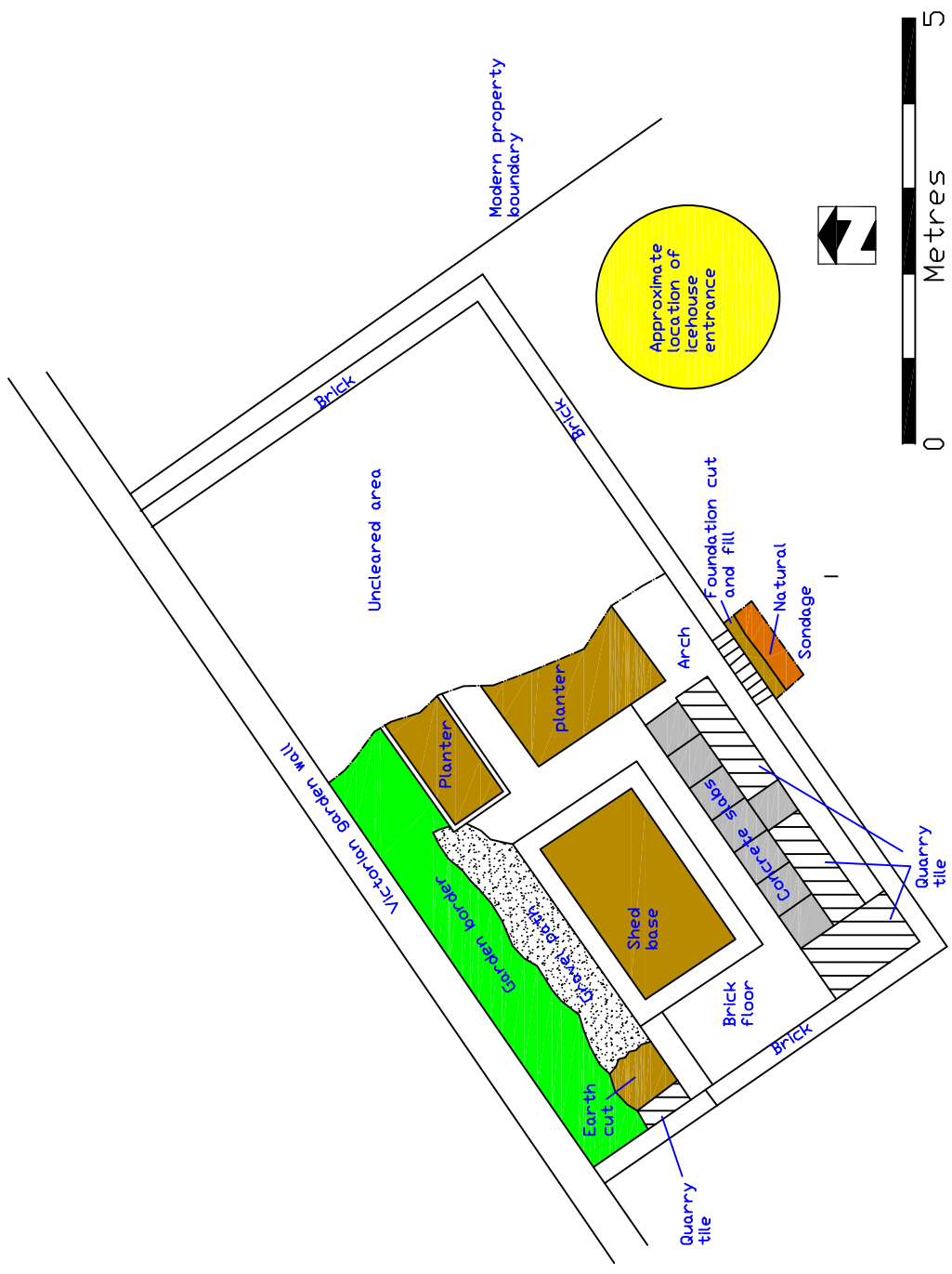


Figure 4: The Recorded Area