

Report 2195



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## An Archaeological Assessment of 197 Queens Road, Norwich

ENF128378



Prepared for  
Mr. Declan Lohan



NPS Archaeology

January 2012



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Location:	197 Queens Road, Norwich
District:	Norwich
Planning ref.:	07/00521/F
Grid Ref.:	TG 2338 0769
OASIS Ref.:	117357
Client:	Mr. Declan Lohan

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was to have been conducted for Mr Declan Lohan during the early phases of construction at 197 Queens Road, Norwich. However, the works were carried out without any archaeological involvement, so this report has been prepared to try to determine as far as is possible the archaeological potential of the site and the likely impacts the development may have had on that potential.*

*The site sits outside the line of the medieval city walls in an area of the modern city that was developed in the early- to mid-19th century as part of a row of buildings, most of which are now protected as Listed Buildings. Prior to its development the site was located on open, probably agricultural, land and is unlikely to have experienced much significant past activity, so its archaeological potential was fairly low. The only archaeological works to have taken place close to the site (and also outside the city walls) was a watching brief carried out during the excavation of new foundations a short distance to the south of the site that revealed the foundations were cut through modern made ground.*

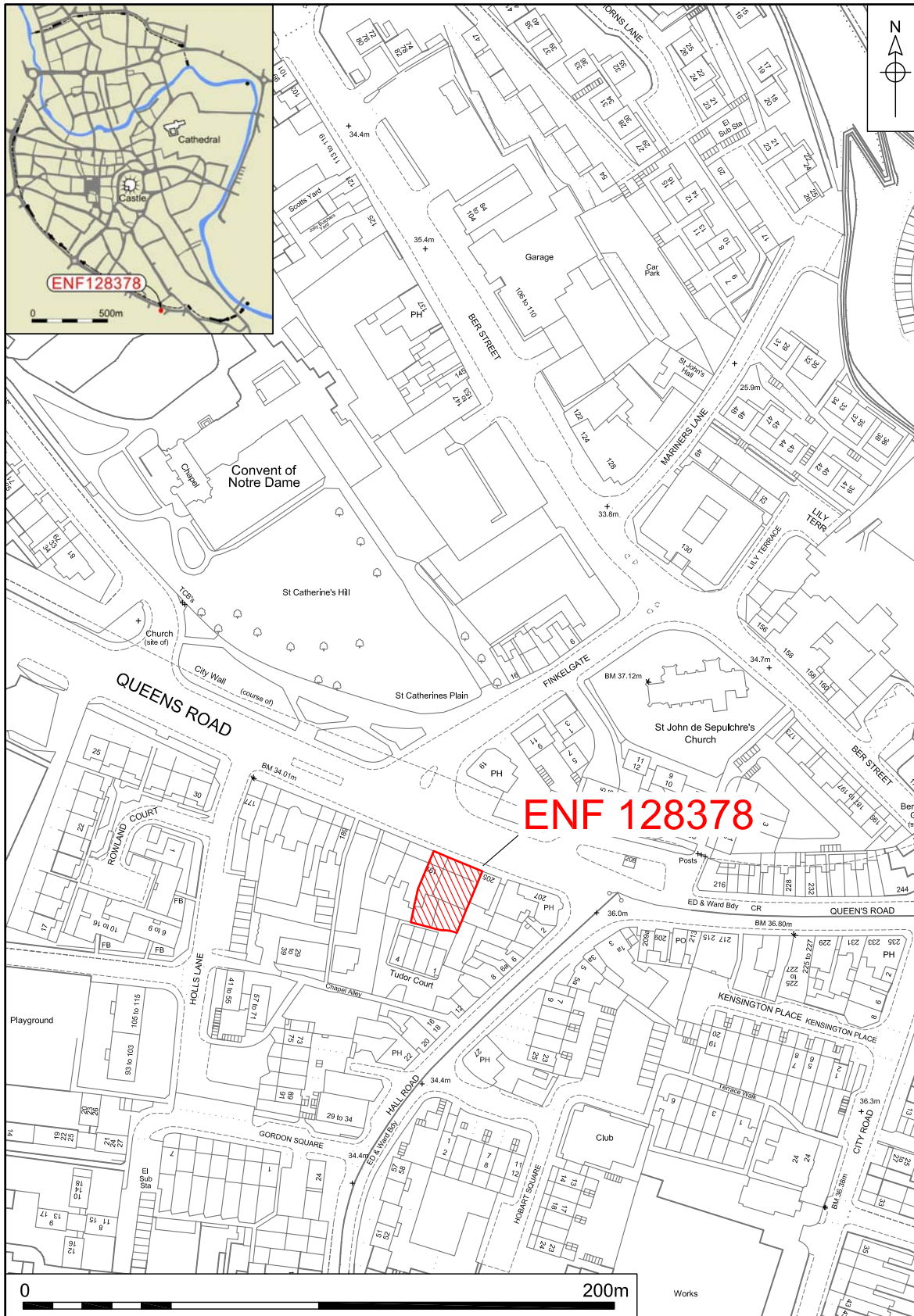
*The borehole log for the current development site demonstrates that there is around 1m of rubble soil, which seems to be similar to that recorded during the earlier watching brief, suggesting that the area around Hall Road – Queens Road was made up and levelled prior to its development in the 19th century.*

*It is considered likely that the pile and ground beam foundation design of the new build (which extended some 600-900mm below ground level) was located within an area of modern rubble, sand and gravel make-up that extended to approximately 1m below the surface.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This project was originally intended to be a watching brief on groundworks associated with redevelopment of the site of 197 Queens Road, Norwich (TG 2338 0769). In the event the development went ahead without any archaeological monitoring taking place, so this report outlines the scope of the works and discusses the likely impacts they may have had on any archaeological remains on the site.

The information presented in this report will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about discharging the archaeological condition applied to the planning application.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2000

## **2.0 LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

Number 197 Queens Road is part of a terrace of early- and mid-19th century buildings located on the south side of the inner ring road system of Norwich (Fig. 1).

The development site was recently an open plot between two standing buildings formerly occupied by a tree and shrubs.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this assessment was to determine as far as reasonably possible the pre-construction survival of historic assets on the site and the likely impacts of the construction on those assets.

This report includes a rapid review of information about the known archaeological resource of the area and the position of the site within Norwich as well as an assessment of the construction methods employed.

## **4.0 RESULTS**

### **4.1 The development of the site**

Queens Road runs along the outer edge of the medieval city walls and is shown as part of a route that runs around the outside of the city walls on town plans from the 16th century, but it only became fully developed during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The site appears to have been shown as open ground on Hochstetter's map of 1789, but it is part of a terrace of buildings on a plan of Norwich by Millard and Manning published in 1830.

Number 197 Queens Road is part of a small terrace of early- to mid-19th century buildings, most of which are designated as Listed Buildings. Prior to this the site was open ground outside of the city walls and away from any city gates (the nearest gate was Ber Street Gate, c.170m to the east) so it was unlikely to have attracted settlement or much in the way of activity other than horticulture/agriculture.

### **4.2 The archaeological potential of the site**

#### **4.2.1 *Known heritage assets within 500m***

The site lies within an area of Norwich, which has seen little archaeological intervention, with only one piece of fieldwork recorded close to the site. That was the monitoring of new foundations dug on properties in Hall Road, c.100m to the south of the site, which revealed no archaeological features. It was noted that the foundations were dug to almost 1m depth and were dug through '*modern brick rubble sand and soil*' (NHER 26218). Archaeological work has taken place inside the line of the city walls, but the very different character of the areas inside and outside the walls makes this of limited value in assessing the Queens Road site.

A set of stairs, a tunnel and shafts (NHER 692) recorded just over 100m to the west in the area now occupied by Rowland Court are thought to relate to a former brickworks that was slightly further west, on the site of what is now Scarles Yard.

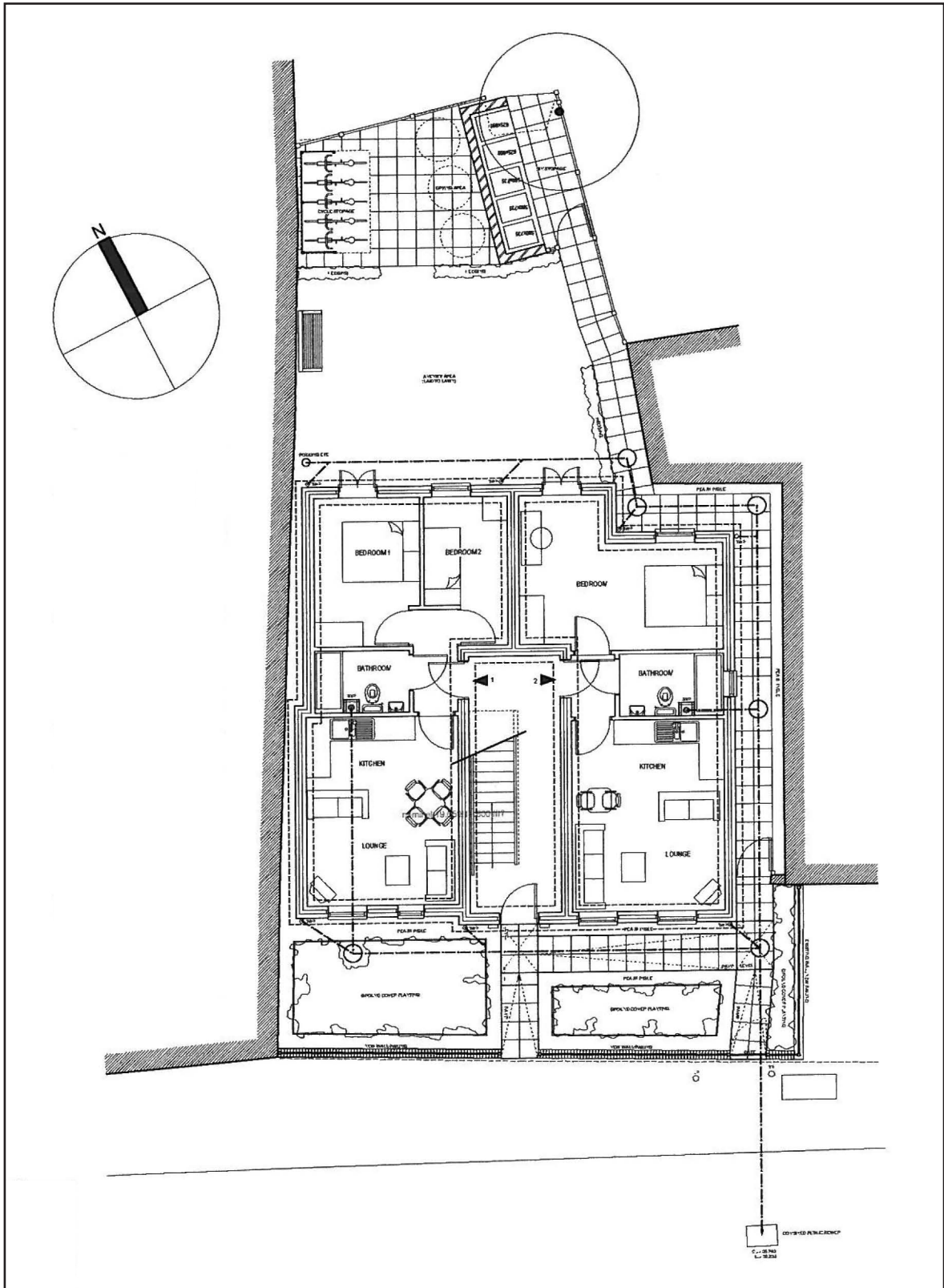


Figure 2. Plan of the new build showing foundation design (plan supplied by the developer).  
Not to scale.



A borehole excavated on the development site prior to construction works commencing recorded approximately 1m of rubble and sand and gravel fill, which seems to be very similar material to that recorded at NHER 26218. This suggests that this area has been made up and levelled prior to development in the 19th century.

## **5.0 LIKELY IMPACT OF THE CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

### **5.1 Method of construction**

The new building was constructed using a pile and ring beam foundation (Fig. 2). Piles were excavated using the continuous flight auger method, with the ring beams dug out by mechanical excavator.

New drainage runs were also excavated along the south and west sides.



Plate 1. General view south-west across the site following the construction of the new foundations

#### **5.1.1 Foundation design**

The foundation consisted of 18 piles linked by ring beams. The piles were 300mm diameter and the ring beams 450mm square. There are no details of the depth of excavation required for the new drains.

#### **5.1.2 Construction depths**

Perhaps the most crucial element in trying to assess the likely impact of the construction is the excavation depths for the ring beams and new services. There is little available detail of the finished levels, although a total excavation depth to the base of the ring beams of between 600mm and 900mm from existing ground level would seem reasonable.

Photographs of the site show that the tops of some of the ground beams were above the ground surface (Plate 1) and so were possibly only excavated to c.300mm below ground level. It seems likely that the ground level across parts of the site had been reduced slightly prior to works starting, presumably when the site was cleared and the tree that formerly stood there was removed.

## **5.2 Potential impacts of the construction on the archaeological resource**

It is reasonable to suggest, based on the rapid review, that the site did not contain any significant heritage assets, in this case buried archaeological remains.

Therefore, it is unlikely that the development of the site had any impact on the archaeological resource.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

This rapid review of the known archaeological information for this part of Norwich and an assessment of the construction methods did not reveal any evidence that would suggest that significant archaeological remains were present on the site. The development site was outside the medieval city walls and in an area that was being rapidly developed in the early- to mid-19th century, with the railway, industry and housing all being built in the area in that period. Prior to that the site had apparently been open ground, presumably with an agricultural or horticultural function.

Archaeological monitoring of a development (NHER 26218) to the south of the site revealed that foundations were being dug through rubbly soil and sand and the borehole logs for the development site recorded approximately 1m of rubbly soil fill. It appears that this area around the junction of Queens Road and Hall Road in Norwich was made up and levelled prior to its development in the 19th century.

With presumed excavation depths of between 600mm and 900mm from existing ground level, it is probable that the new foundations for the development of 197 Queens Road were luckily confined to a layer of modern make up and would have had little or no impact on any heritage assets.

Decisions on whether this report fulfils the planning requirement will be made by Norfolk Historic Environment service.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank Mr Lohan for commissioning and funding this work.

David Dobson produced the illustration (Fig. 2 supplied by the client) and report which was edited by Jayne Bown.

## **Bibliography**

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