

**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey and
Trial Trench Evaluation of the Former King William IV
Public House, Barsby, Leicestershire.**

(NGR SP 695 114)

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Planning Application: 05/01833/6

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Darian Homes to undertake an archaeological standing building survey and trial trench evaluation of the former King William IV Public House, Barsby prior to demolition and redevelopment. An initial archaeological desk-based assessment identified the building as possibly eighteenth century in date and of some historical interest and close to known archaeological sites. The Leicestershire County Council Senior Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to the planning authority requested that a standing building survey and trial trench evaluation be carried out.

The building was in poor state of repair have suffered fire damage and been subsequently stripped of fixtures and fittings. The building survey suggests that the building is a twentieth century rebuild within the footprint of the earlier building.

Despite its promising location on the fringe of the historic village core, nothing of archaeological significance was located during the archaeological evaluation.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Darian Homes to undertake an archaeological standing building survey and trial trench evaluation of the former King William IV Public house, Main Street, Barsby, Leicestershire (SP 695 114). Outline planning permission has been granted for the partial demolition and conversion to residential use of the existing building and the construction of 13 new dwellings and associated parking (Planning Application 05/01833/6).

The Senior Planning Archaeologist, Historic and Natural Environment Team, Leicestershire County Council (HNET, LCC) as advisor to Melton Borough Council advised that the building, as it appears on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map may be of some historical and architectural interest and that the works would impact significantly upon the historic building. As a result it was recommended that a standing building survey be undertaken prior to work commencing.

All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Code of Conduct* and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures* and *Archaeological Field Evaluations*. In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in*

Leicestershire and Rutland was adhered to while the English Heritage guidelines (2006) have been used as a basis for defining levels of recording.

An archaeological desk based assessment carried out on behalf of Darian Home by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (Hunt 2006) highlighted the potential for archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development area. In view of this the Senior Planning Archaeologist of HNET, LCC as advisor to Melton Borough Council requested a programme of intrusive investigation through trial trenching to be carried out to establish the possible extent of archaeological remains. A c. 5% sample was requested, equating to four 10 metre trial trenches (*Figure 3*), approximately 50 square metres in total to be excavated under archaeological supervision to the top of archaeologically significant deposits or undisturbed substratum.



Figure 1 Site Location Plan (1:50,000)
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2. Aims and Methodology

The objective of the standing building survey as required by Leicestershire County Council was as follows:

- To seek to understand the history and development of a building or site.
- To compile a lasting record of the building ahead of demolition or alteration.
- To disseminate the results of the recording and analysis

The standing building survey was undertaken by Gerwyn Richards. Photographs, in 35mm monochrome negative and colour transparency formats covered items 1-6 of the English Heritage guidelines (2006, 4; Appendix 4.1.2). The site visits were carried out on September 12th and 13th 2007.

There is only one building covered by this survey and a letter suffix is used where internal sub-division is indicated. The terms 'left', 'right', 'rear' and 'back' are used in relation to the front elevation facing Gaddesby Road.

The trial trench evaluation was also carried out, directed by the author on October 17th 2007. In view of on-site constraints only three of the four proposed evaluation trenches could be excavated, covering approximately 38 square metres. A JCB with a ditching bucket carried out the excavation under archaeological supervision.

3. Standing Building Survey

The King William, also known as the William IV public house stands towards the north-westernmost edge of the village core, on the junction of Main Street, The Lane and Gaddesby Road. The building consists of two distinct phases; the first is a three-storied wing fronting Gaddesby Road (A) and is almost certainly the earliest, while the second and later phase (B) is to the rear and fronts The Lane and is only two stories high.

Externally, there is little visible of architectural or historical interest; with the exception of a limited area on the left-hand gable, which has fallen away, the building is covered in painted cement render, while the roof of (A) is Swithland Slate. The area where the render has fallen away indicates that the front wing (A) at least is brick built, with the exposed 9 ½ inch by 3 inch possibly machine made red bricks in a Flemish Garden Wall bond. The ground floor windows have all been over-boarded to prevent unauthorised entry and cannot be seen externally; the first and second floor windows are late twentieth century timber frames, containing the ubiquitous reproduction Bulls eyes. There are two large bay windows on the ground floor along with a smaller central window, which in all likelihood, was originally the location of a door but has since been turned into a window. This absence of a door on the village side makes the pub appear a rather uninviting place.

To the right there is a two storied addition to (A), a very limited view of the damp proof bricks at ground level indicating that this is a later extension. The front roof is Swithland Slate while the rear roof is of flat concrete tiles in blue. The limited use of Swithland Slates suggests the re-use of existing slates, indicating that this extension may have replaced an earlier building.

There is little of architectural merit visible externally on the rear wing (B). Again, it is externally rendered, and where the render has fallen away breeze blocks can be seen, suggesting a very recent construction date. The roof is of flat cement tiles in blue, being modern copies of Staffordshire Blues. As with (A) the windows have all been over boarded, the first floor windows being dormer windows. The main entrance is on the right-hand elevation of (B) facing the car park.

Internally there is very little of architectural or historical interest surviving. The ground floor of (A) has suffered extensive fire damage and has subsequently been stripped of all fixtures and fittings. There are two gable fireplaces, apparently of modern brick; the original line of the back wall can be seen as a stub projecting from the left hand wall

and damaged plaster work here revealed Fletton bricks beneath. These bricks indicate a twentieth century date. The collapsed ceiling panels also revealed modern timbers. This along with the Fletton bricks suggests extensive structural work, if not rebuilding was carried out in the later part of the twentieth century.

The first floor level shows a similar situation with considerable twentieth century alteration, although it is still possible to trace the original layout of this floor. There are two gable fireplaces and a central staircase to the second floor along with a partition wall, probably in its original position, if not itself original. Once again, the exposed ceiling timbers are all modern, suggesting rebuilding work has been carried out.

The second floor appears to be the least altered of all the floors. With the exception of an inserted central bathroom the layout appears largely original. Both gable fireplaces have been blocked up. There is a limited view of the roof structure through the loft hatch in the bathroom; the timbers are again modern, providing further evidence of the extensive rebuilding which has apparently taken place.

The rear of the building (B) is of very limited interest, both architecturally and historically. As with (A), the ground floor has suffered considerable fire damage and is now devoid of any fixtures and fittings. The walls are breeze blocks, there is a concrete floor and all timbers are new. The left hand part of the wing is an open plan area accessed via an arched entrance through what was originally the rear wall of (A). The right hand part has been extensively subdivided into storage and service areas.

The first floor level is again only of limited interest, the left hand part having been subdivided into a number of small rooms off a central corridor, probably bedrooms for non-residential use. The right-hand side is a large open area, complete with dance floor, fake fireplace and exposed modern roof timbers, no doubt to create a rustic country pub feeling. The forward most rooms on the right-hand side of (B) are service rooms and a kitchen.

4. Conclusion

On the whole the building is of very limited architectural and historical interest. The desk-based assessment identified it as possibly being an eighteenth century farm house which appears on an Enclosure Map of 1798. This standing building survey failed to find any evidence that any part of that building having been incorporated into the existing building and remains on site.

Later cartographic evidence raises the possibility that the public house has been extensively altered, if not completely rebuilt. There is a discrepancy in the location of the building between the 1952 and 1972 Ordnance Survey; the earlier map shows the building directly on Gaddesby Road while the later map has a much smaller building a number of metres from the road. It is possible, therefore, that all of the building was demolished, not just the right-hand wing and only what we see now was rebuilt. Nothing was observed during this building survey to suggest otherwise, indeed, most of the evidence suggests that it is a mid to late twentieth century building.

5. Photographic Index of Standing Building Survey

Colour Slide	Black & White	Room Identification	Description	Dir
001	001		Front Elevation, General	NW
002	002		Front Elevation, General	NW
003	003		Left Elevation, Oblique.	WNW
004	004		Left Elevation, Oblique.	WNW
005	005		Left Elevation, Rear Wing.	NNE
006	006		Left Elevation, Rear Wing.	NNE
007	007		Rear Elevation General.	NE
008	008		Rear Elevation General.	NE
009	009		Front Elevation, Detail of Eaves Corbelling.	
010	010		Front Elevation, Detail of Eaves Corbelling.	
011	011		External Roof Detail.	
012	012		External Roof Detail.	
013	013		Exposed Brickwork, Left Elevation.	
014	014		Exposed Brickwork, Left Elevation.	
015	015		Right Elevation, General.	SSW
016	016		Right Elevation, General.	SSW
	017		Front Elevation, Again.	NW
	018		Front Elevation, Again.	NW
019	019	A	2nd Floor, General.	
020	020	A	2nd Floor, General.	
021	021	B	2nd Floor, General.	
022	022	B	2nd Floor, General.	
023	023	B	1st Floor General.	
024	024	B	1st Floor General.	
025	025	A	1st Floor General.	
026	026	A	1st Floor General.	
027	027	A	1st Floor, Front to Back.	
028	028	A	1st Floor, Front to Back.	
029	029		1st Floor Exposed Timbers.	
030	030		1st Floor Exposed Timbers.	
031	031		1st Floor, Rear Right.	
032	032		1st Floor, Rear Right.	
033	033		Ground Floor Left, Front to Back General.	
034	034		Ground Floor Left, Front to Back General.	
035	035		Ground Floor Left, Back to Front General.	
036	036		Ground Floor Left, Back to Front General.	
037	037		Exposed Timbers, Ground Floor.	
038	038		Exposed Timbers, Ground Floor.	
039	039		Ground Floor, Front Left to Right.	
040	040		Ground Floor, Front Left to Right.	
041	041		Ground Floor, Front Right to Left.	
042	042		Ground Floor, Front Right to Left.	

6. Trial Trench Evaluation

An archaeological desk-based assessment carried out on the proposed development area (Hunt 2006) highlighted the potential for archaeological remains to be present. The Planning Archaeologist of LCC HNET as advisor to Melton Borough Council, therefore, requested a programme of intrusive investigation through trial trenching be carried out. Initially four ten metre trenches were to be excavated; however on site examination indicated that ground reduction caused by the earlier building was greater than was anticipated so it was decided, therefore, only to excavate one trench within the footprint of the earlier building.

6.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was excavated towards the north-easternmost corner of the proposed development area (*Figure 3*), aligned west north-west to east south-east, ten metres long by 1200mm wide, approximately perpendicular to Gaddesby Road. The area had recently been used as car parking and approximately 150mm to 200mm of tarmac and roadstone was excavated before an horizon of grey green weathered clay bedrock was exposed. A further 100mm to 150mm of this bedrock was removed to ensure it was undisturbed.

Towards the western edge of the trench a deposit of demolition debris was encountered immediately below the roadstone. No structural elements were visible and the material probably relates to the northern part of the existing building which had been demolished during the mid-twentieth century. A number of twentieth century ceramic fragments were observed, but not retained which confirmed the date of this deposit.

Nothing of archaeological significance was observed within the trench and after a photographic record was made the trench was released for backfilling.

6.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was excavated in the north-westernmost corner of the proposed development area (*Figure 3*), aligned west northwest east southeast, ten metres long by 1200mm wide, approximately perpendicular to Gaddesby Road. Again, an area formerly used as car parking revealed a similar depth of tarmac and roadstone as trench 1 with again the same grey green weathered clay substratum. Towards the eastern edge of the trench another deposit of demolition material was exposed; unlike that within trench 1, this deposit appeared more recent (including fibreglass insulation) and may, therefore, be considerably later in date and relate to the extensive rebuilding which took place in recent decades.

Nothing of archaeological significance was observed within the trench and after a photographic record was made the trench was released for backfilling.

6.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the south-westernmost corner of the proposed development area (*Figure 3*), aligned north-east to south-west, ten metres long by 1200mm wide, approximately perpendicular to The Lane, towards the western edge of the footprint of the recently demolished building. Extensive ground reduction during the initial building work and more recent ground disturbance during demolition and grubbing out (*Colour Plate 3*) suggested that preservation would be limited within this part of the proposed development area.

Excavation confirmed this assumption, only 150mm of disturbed and redeposited surface material overlay the weathered clay substratum. Nothing of archaeological significance was observed within the trench and after a photographic record was made the trench was released for backfilling.

6.4 Trench 4

Based upon the results of trench 3, it was decided not to excavate trench 4 as it too was adjacent to the footprint of the demolished building and within the area of reduced ground.

7. Conclusion

Despite its promising location on the fringe of the historic village core, nothing of archaeological significance was observed during this archaeological evaluation. The most likely areas of archaeological interest, the frontages of Gaddesby Road and The Lane had experienced significant disturbance, both historic and recent. Although no evidence was seen of it, trench 1 did suggest that earlier phases of the William IV pub may survive within the former car park.

8. Addenda

8.1 Introduction

As a result of unforeseen structural issues, a further application was submitted by Darian Homes to demolish the remainder of the originally to be retained structure fronting onto Main Street and replace it with an externally identical rebuild, this was granted. Following approval the demolition work was carried out on January 12th 2008 under archaeological supervision. Obviously due to the nature of demolition work the archaeological supervision was limited to distance photography and examination of the debris to further ascertain the origin, date and character of the building.

As mentioned in the initial building survey (above), there was some confusion as to the exact age of the building. Internally there appeared to be no evidence to indicate the building was earlier than twentieth century in date, it was hoped, therefore, that the examination of the main elements of the building, post demolition would confirm the age of the building.

8.2 Results

Demolition began at the rear of the building and progressed inwards using a back actor with a pulveriser. It was possible to examine the building quite closely and as demolition progressed profiles could also be examined.

As demolition progressed it was clear that internally the building was twentieth century in date. All of the internal timbers were machine sawed pine with numerous galvanised joist hangers as opposed to hand carved or pinned joints. All partition walls were modern plaster board or in the case of the few remaining load bearing walls Fletton Bricks. This evidence, along with the observed new copper water pipes and plastic insulated electricity cables indicated the building had been stripped back to the bare shell and completely rebuilt, therefore, confirming the results of the standing building survey.

The main fabric of the building, exterior walls and roof structure on the other hand was not as easy to date. A close examination of the bricks recovered from the right hand gable does provide a cautious date of the early to mid Nineteenth Century (Between 1825 and 1850). The dimensions of the bricks match those established by the Brick Tax in 1803 (Effectively limiting the size of green bricks to 10inch by 5inch by 3inch), thereby confirming the early nineteenth century date. This along with possible indication of the bricks being wire cut suggests a pre 1850 date but certainly post 1803.

It must be clearly stated, however, that dating a building solely by its bricks is far from exact. There would have been considerable variety in the products of local brickworks at the time with a brickworks producing bricks considered obsolete by another for several decades afterwards. There is no record of a brickworks in Barsby itself at the time of construction, the nearest likely brickworks at the time were at South Croxton where there was a field named Brick Kiln Furlong as well as a Brick Kiln Close recorded on a map of about 1790. The balance of evidence does suggest an early nineteenth century date for the shell of the building, if not its interior.

The recovered roof timbers also fail to provide a categorical date, they are simple pit sawn pine in a simple purlin supported roof. No hand carved and pinned joints or carpenters marks were observed. So despite the extensive rebuilding, it appears the roof remained largely *in-situ*.

8.3 Conclusion

Monitoring the demolition of the building helped considerably to clarify the true character of the building. It confirmed that the building had been stripped back to nothing more than four walls and a roof and rebuilt internally during the later part of the twentieth century. It also confirmed the actual fabric of the building was most likely early nineteenth century in date and, therefore, confirms that the building standing until recently was unlikely to be the same as the building recorded on the Enclosure map of 1798.

9. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of

3 A2 permatrace sheet containing building plans and trench plans
50 Black and white negatives contact sheets
42 Colour transparencies
A4 Photo index sheet
1 CD of digital images & contact sheet of the trial trench evaluation
3 Trench recording sheets
2 A1 Paper plans supplied by clients
Unbound copy of this report

The archive will be held at Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X.A196.2007.

A version of the summary (above) will be published in *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

10. Bibliography

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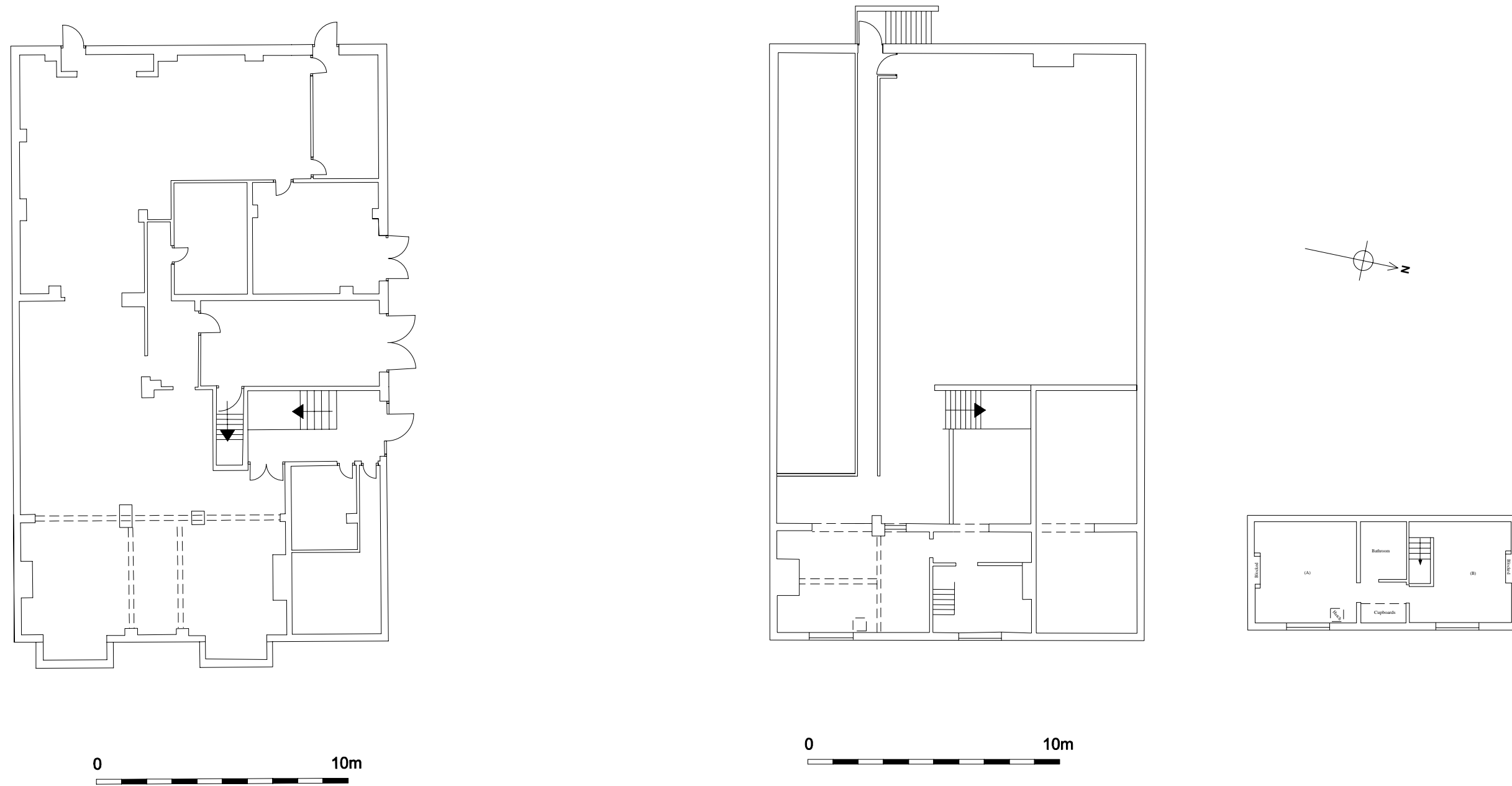


Figure 2 Building Plans (Left to Right) Ground Floor, First Floor & Second Floor.

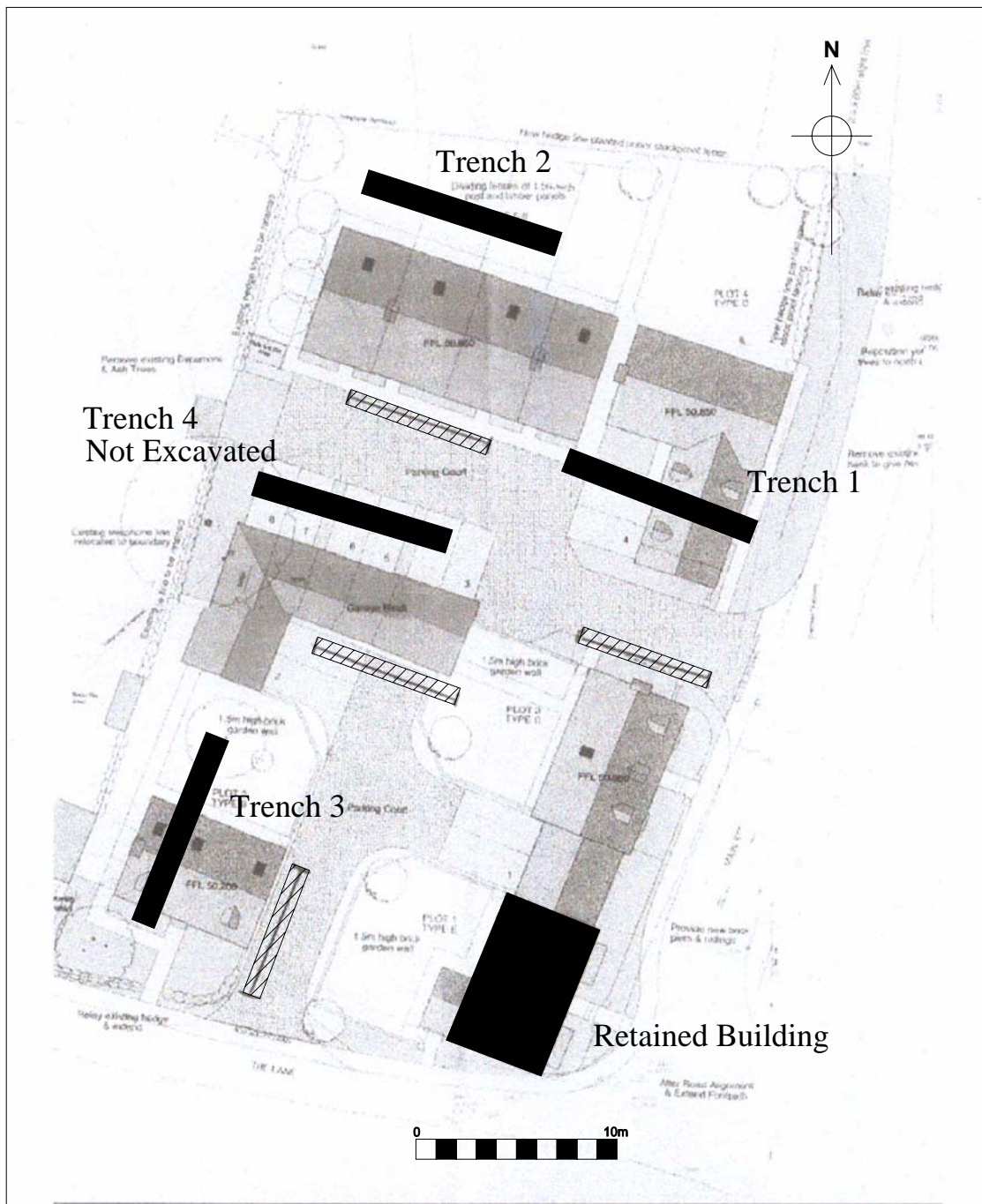


Figure 3 Trench Location Plan Proposed & Actual in Bold.



Colour Plate 1 Front Elevation.



Colour Plate 2 Extent of Damage, Ground Floor.



Colour Plate 3 Extent of Ground Reduction.



Colour Plate 4 Demolition in Progress.