



Archaeological  
Research  
Services Ltd

New Road, Darley Abbey, Derby  
Watching Brief and Building Recording



The Hollies, Darley Abbey, Derbyshire

**ARS Ltd Report 2008/56**  
July 2008

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## ***Executive Summary***

*An archaeological watching brief and building recording was undertaken on behalf of Phil and Jenny Eades by Archaeological Research Services Ltd from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2008 at New Road, Darley Abbey, Derby. The watching brief was required during the excavation of footings for the construction of an extension to a domestic dwelling at 1 New Road. A red brick culvert probably dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the remains of the footings for an outbuilding of unknown date were revealed during excavation work. No other archaeological features or deposits were discovered during the watching brief.*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief and building recording was undertaken on the excavation of footings for an extension to the property at 1 New Road in Darley Abbey. The intention of the project was to record any historically relevant architectural features of the house which had been exposed during the demolition of the modern utility room and subsequently provide a watching brief on the excavations of the footings for the extension.

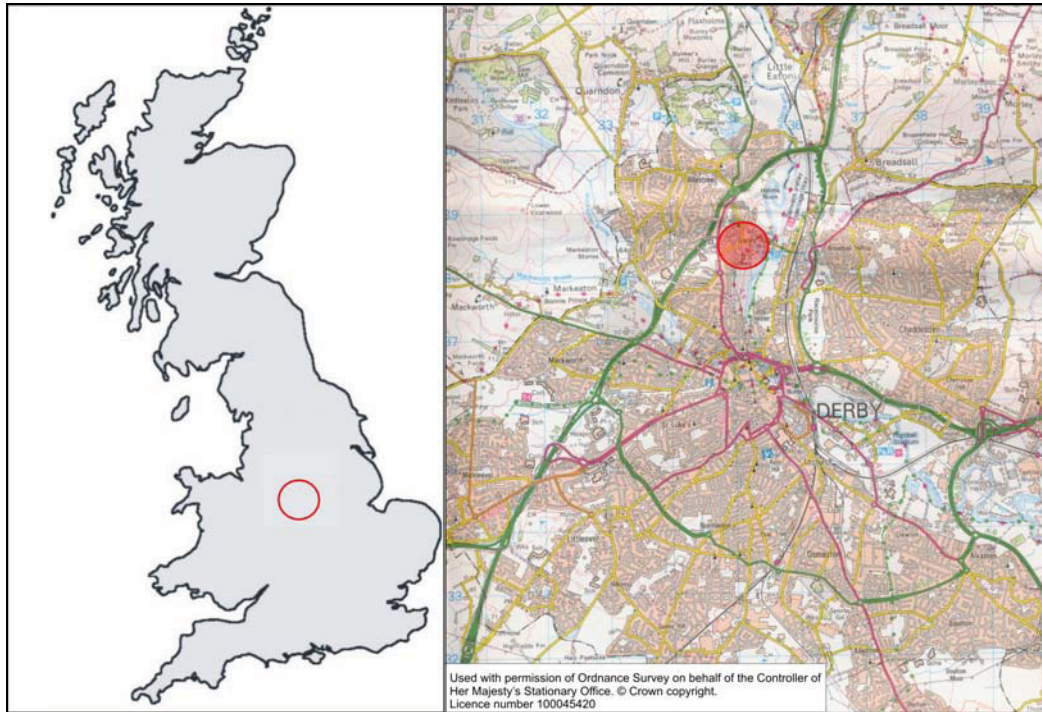


Fig. 1 Location map of New Road, Darley Abbey.

## 2 Location and Geology

- 2.1 The site is centred at NGR SK 3516 3849 and is located off Abbey Lane and 'The Old Abbey' public house, the last standing remains associated with the medieval abbey, is located approximately 200m east of the site (Fig. 2).
- 2.2 The soild geology of the area consists of the Permo-Triassic Sandstone laid down around 250 million years ago. The site is situated 200m west of the river Derwent above an alluvial river terrace scarp and is elevated above the modern flood plain (BGS 1987).

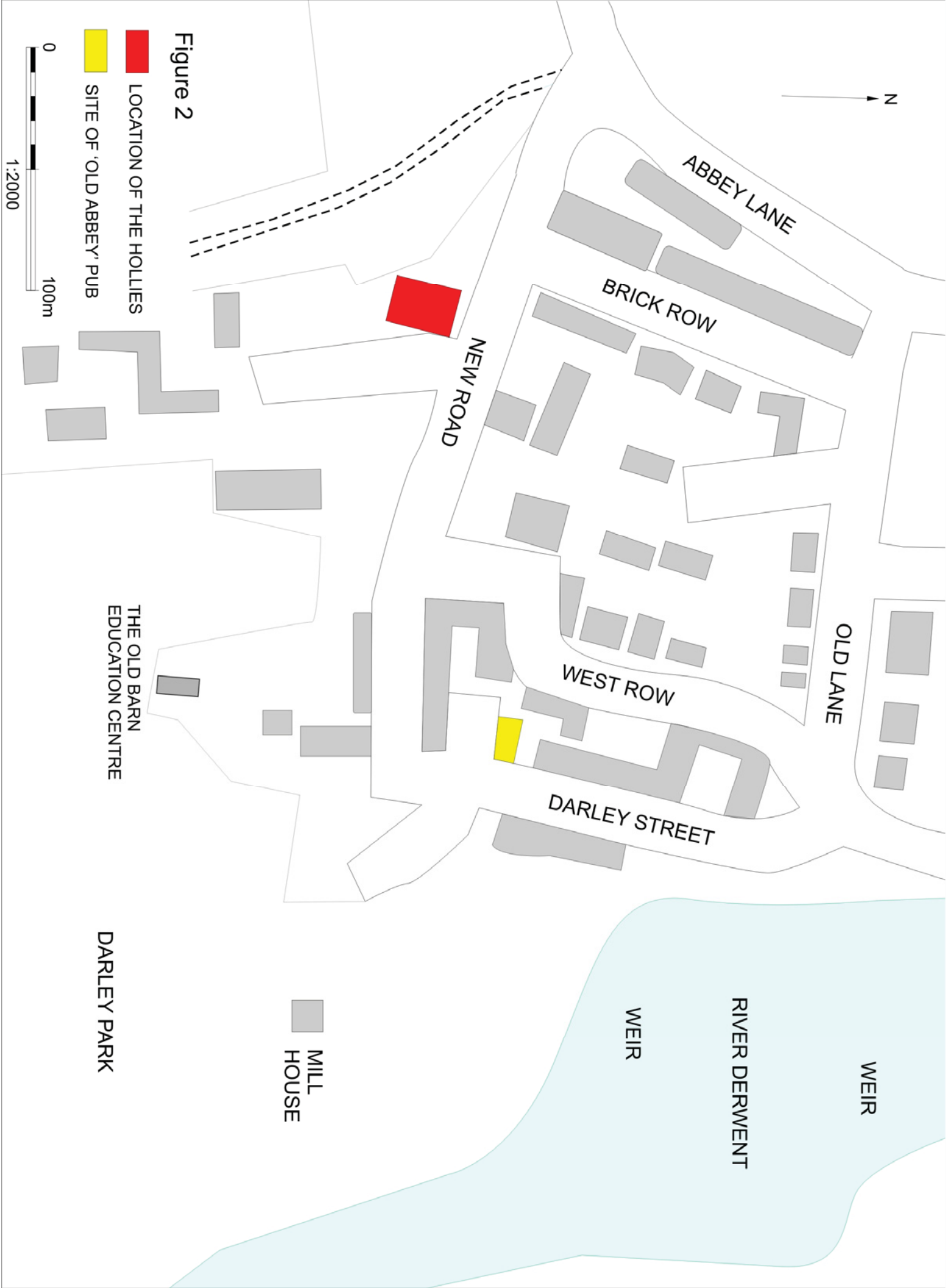


Figure 2

- LOCATION OF THE HOLLIES
- SITE OF 'OLD ABBEY' PUB

0  
100m  
1:2000

THE OLD BARN  
EDUCATION CENTRE

DARLEY PARK

MILL  
HOUSE

WEIR

RIVER DERWENT

WEIR

ABBAY LANE

BRICK ROW

NEW ROAD

WEST ROW

DARLEY STREET

OLD LANE

N

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Darley Abbey lies a little over 2km north of Derby city centre within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. By the 17<sup>th</sup> Century the village was a thriving industrial hamlet, eventually home to a large complex of mills. The Evans family, who were keen industrialists, oversaw the development of the Darley Abbey area we see today. The family built much of the housing which consists for the most part of three storey red brick residences and also landscaped the area that is now Darley Park and restored the property known as Darley Hall (Robinson 2001, 11) located on the high ground overlooking the river Derwent.
- 3.2 Darley Abbey was originally an Augustinian priory, founded by Robert de Ferrers, second Earl of Derby, around 1146 (Robinson 2001, 8). The Abbey, situated next to the river Derwent, became one of the most important in Derbyshire. It was surrendered as part of the Dissolution of Monasteries in 1538 and almost completely destroyed. After the dissolution, the land was asset stripped and sold to Sir William West (Robinson 2001, 10). A significant amount of monastic buildings survive because they were converted into capital mansions by their new owners. In some cases the Abbot's private dwellings were re-used with little alteration to the original structure as suitable residences for new owners, such as those built by the Abbots of Battle and Ford (Dorset) and the prior at Watten (East Yorkshire) (Coppack 2006, 176). This has led to the belief that Darley Hall, erected 1727, was originally part of the Darley Abbey complex, possibly the Abbot's private residence, although no proof of this has yet been forthcoming.
- 3.3 The only remaining upstanding building is an upper floor hall house, now a public house built probably c. 1450 (SMR 32468) (Derbyshire SMR Report). The date of this 'Old Abbey' building is based on a consideration of the general architecture and dendrochronological work undertaken on principle floor joists (Derbyshire SMR Report). Other archaeological finds in Darley Abbey are scarce. Apart from 15<sup>th</sup> century remains uncovered at No's 7, 8 and 9 Abbey Lane, no other medieval remains have come to light (Derbyshire SMR Report). Although these houses appeared to have monastic masonry in their fabric it is difficult to tell whether the material was reused or *in situ*. In 1965 an area of open ground next to Brick Row and Old Lane was developed for housing. The Derbyshire Archaeological Research Group of The Derbyshire Archaeological Society carried out excavations in eight areas (1.2m by 1.2m) and opened trenches amounting to almost 61m in length but found no traces of any occupation (Robinson 2002, 13). The lack of medieval pottery was thought to rule out this area as a location for the abbey. The only other archaeological discoveries were of several skeletons at Hill Square, a few metres north of the 'Old Abbey' building, during the layout of gas mains in the 1920's (Robinson 2001, 14). A local workman who worked on the service drains on New Road during the 1970's recalled the discovery of large sandstone blocks of a structural nature being uncovered, but they were not recorded.
- 3.4 An archaeological watching brief, undertaken by Archaeological Research Services Ltd for Derby City Council in 2006 during the re-build of The Old Barn, uncovered three walls and a narrow path believed to be associated with the medieval abbey (Shakarjian 2006). Two of the walls were substantial structural walls; the third appeared to be a smaller, internal wall. Medieval pottery was discovered beneath the foundation layer of one of the walls, confirming a mid 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century date. Whilst excavating the service trenches a wall with an



associated flagged floor level was uncovered. The stone was comparable to that of the previous walls discovered but the structures were proven to be of a later date. An arched structure was also discovered in close proximity to The Old Abbey public house. The feature was believed to be a bridge that was located over a previous mill fleam. The bridge appears on a 1708 map of Darley Abbey. The archaeological remains were all preserved *in situ*.

#### **4. Aims of the Project**

4.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief and building recording were as follows:

- To observe and record, where appropriate, all historically important architectural features exposed during the demolition work.
- To observe all groundwork for the presence of archaeology.
- To alert all interested parties to the possible destruction of archaeological features.
- To fully record and excavate any archaeological features encountered.

#### **5. Method Statement**

5.1 All machine excavation on the site was observed by an archaeologist to ensure that no archaeological remains were disturbed. Any features or structures were fully cleaned and recorded in accordance with the standards stipulated by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and the guidance provided in 'Archaeological Science at PPG16 Interventions' (English Heritage 2003).

5.2 Any features or structures were photographed, recorded and, where possible, fully-excavated. All the contexts were recorded on pro-forma sheets and a context register was maintained.

5.3 Photographs were taken using a 35mm SLR camera with black and white print film, and colour transparency, as well as with a digital camera (7.1 megapixel resolution).

5.4 All work was carried out wearing appropriate safety equipment.

#### **6. Description of Archaeological Investigations**

6.1 The dismantled kitchen, utility room and bedroom (Fig. 3) had been built of modern red bricks measuring 229mm x 60mm x 115mm. Observation of the walls which remained after demolition of the rooms revealed part of a early 19<sup>th</sup> century red brick arch which had been previously demolished at an unknown date (Fig. 4). It had probably been an arched doorway leading to the back of the house. After the rooms were dismantled, a modern wall constructed of breeze blocks had been built to enclose the house (Fig. 3). Other than the arch, no architectural features of archaeological interest were exposed.





Fig. 3 Evidence of the demolished kitchen, utility room and bedroom (facing east)



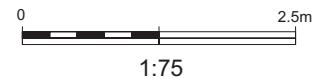
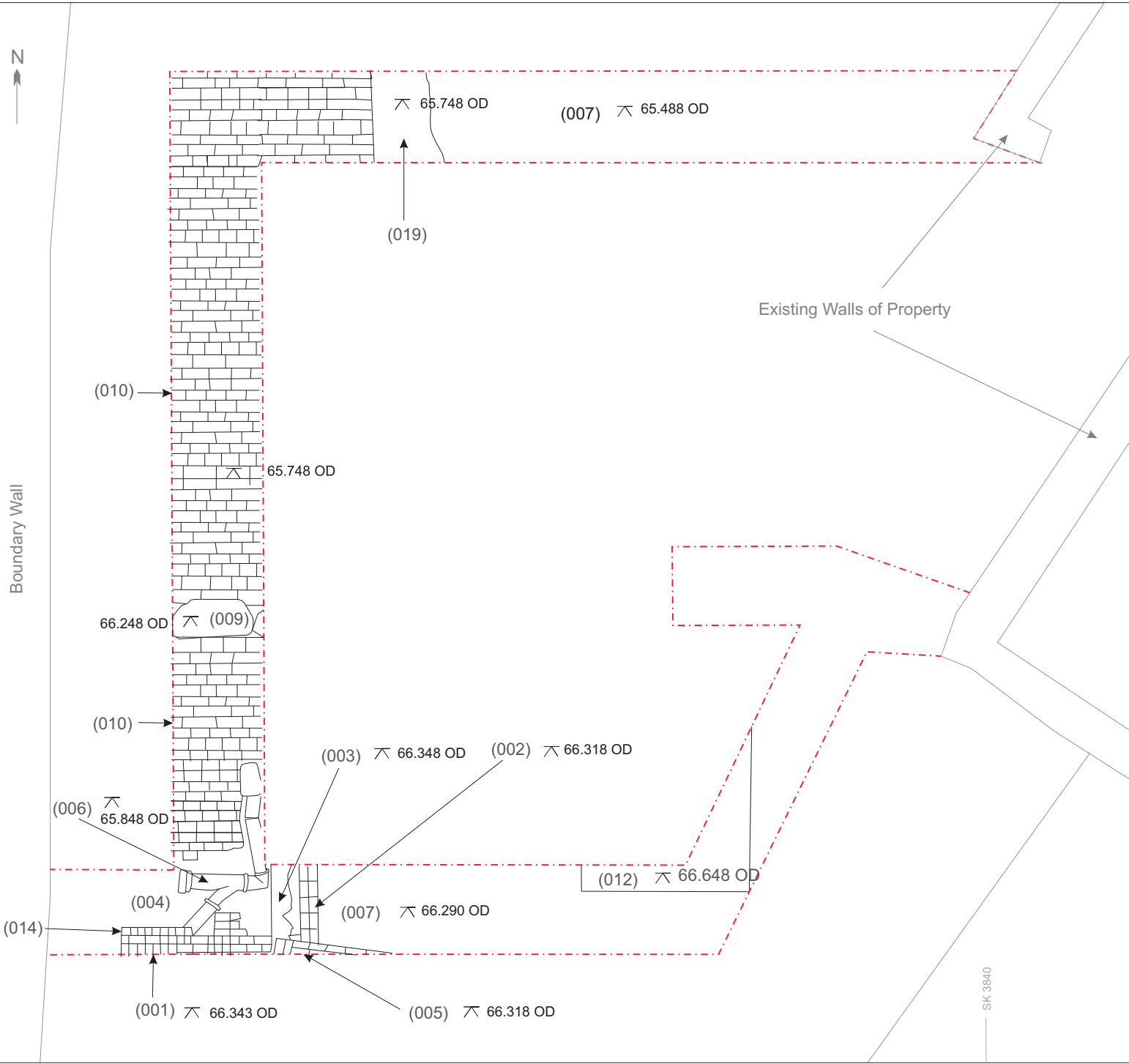
Fig. 4 Arch revealed after the demolition of the modern kitchen, utility and bedroom (facing south)

- 6.2 The trenches excavated for the footings measured approximately 1m in width and 5m in length (Fig. 5a and 5b). Each footing was to be excavated to a depth of at least 1m until the natural clay was reached, resulting in the trenches varying in depth from approximately 1m to 2.5m.
- 6.3 The ground surface consisted of rubble associated with the demolition of the kitchen, utility room and bedroom. Underneath this, whilst excavating the southern footing, a red brick wall (001) running east to west was revealed (Fig. 6). The bricks measured 204mm in length x 109mm in width x 65mm in height. These bricks approximate to the Stature size of 1770 (8½ x 4 x 2½ inches) (Hammond 1998). Brick size cannot be used as a reliable indicator of age in isolation from other characteristics. However, due to the uniform nature of the wall, the uneven bonding and the use of lime-mortar, the most likely date for this wall is between 1770 and 1820. The wall possibly formed the boundary between two properties. Alternatively, it may have been a wall of an outbuilding associated with the property.

Beneath this wall (001) were dressed sandstone blocks (008) which provided the base for (001) (Fig. 7). Abutting (001) and running north to south is a wall constructed of sandstone blocks (003). (Fig. 6). The wall was approximately 1.1m in height. The sandstone blocks were approximately 350mm in length x 250mm in width x 220mm in height. Abutting this wall and aligned on south-east to north-west direction was a red brick wall (005), very similar in construction to (001) with bricks of the same size and probably the same date (Fig. 6). This wall may be an extension to the boundary wall of context (001). At a right angle to (005) was a red brick wall (002) aligned on a north-east to south-west direction (Fig. 6). The wall was constructed in the same way as (001) and (005), with the same type of bricks.

# New Road, Darley Abbey

## Fig. 5a Trench Location Plan



# New Road, Darley Abbey

## Fig. 5b Trench Location Plan Lower Levels



Boundary Wall

Existing Walls of Property

(007)

65.348 OD

(017)

(015)

65.168 OD

(017)

(007)

65.348 OD

(007)

65.168 OD

65.348 OD

(007)

SK 3840



1:75



Fig. 6 Section of (001), showing locations of (002), (003), (004) and (005) (facing south)

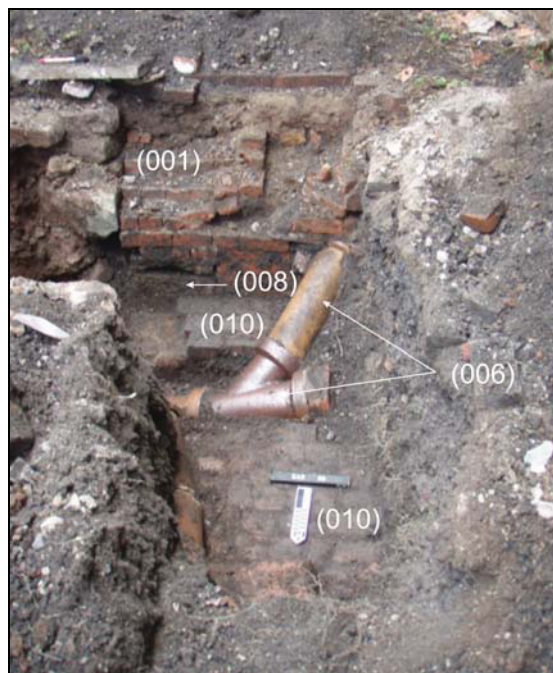


Fig. 7 Photograph showing context (008) below (001) and (006) relating to (010)

- 6.4 A black subsoil (004) 1.1m in depth lay to the south of (001), to the east of (003) and above (006) (Figs. 6 and 7). It contained a large amount of tiny fragments of metal and slag suggesting it was modern industrial backfill. Context (006) was a salt glazed sewer pipe which splits into three at the corner of two footings (Fig. 8). Part of the pipe is of a different colour and glaze suggesting it has been modified at a later date. The southern end of the pipe appeared to continue



through (001) and ran underneath a red brick arch (014) constructed of the same brick type as (001) (Fig. 9). It had been filled in with fragments of red brick.



Fig. 8 Sewer pipe (006) and brick floor (010)



Fig. 9 Sewer pipe (006) and brick arch (014)

- 6.5 Further excavation of the southern footing exposed the eastern extremity of the sewer pipe (006) which extended into a culvert (Fig. 5b). Large sandstone blocks (017) approximately 0.72m in length x 0.52m in width x 0.14m in depth formed the upper layer of the culvert which was 1.3m below ground level. Below the sandstone blocks ran two straight red bricked walls, forming the sides of the culvert and a set of five red bricks which were positioned in a curve to form the base of the drain (Fig. 10). The culvert runs approximately north-west to south-east, although it curves slightly to the east as it continues in a southerly direction. The culvert was exposed in the northern footing at a depth of 1.25m.



Fig. 10 Photograph of the inside of the culvert (facing east)

- 6.6 A red brick layer (010) existed between 0.82m and 1m below the ground surface (Fig. 7). It was two bricks in depth and ran the length of the western footing for approximately 3m. In the northern footing the edge of the brick layer was exposed and abutting this was a thin layer of pebbles (019) which are approximately 100mm x 80mm x 40mm. This feature may have originally been a garden path. (010) had been disturbed in order to position the sewer pipe (006) (Fig. 8). Below this context and deposited across the site was a natural deposit of red clay (007). The clay existed from a depth of approximately 0.62m, although many of the contexts had been cut into the clay.
- 6.7 Within the western footing a dressed sandstone wall (009) was encountered. It was constructed of two sandstone blocks forming a wall 0.42m in depth x 0.63m in width. The wall overlay (010) and was on an east-west alignment. Context (009) was similar to the sandstone wall (003) suggesting that together they may have formed the walls for an outbuilding. Abutting (009) and (010) was a brown sandy fill (011). It existed for 2m in length x 1.2m in height and was located across the width of the footing.
- 6.8 The excavation of the southern footing encountered the footings of the demolished extension (Fig. 3). The footings included a red brick wall (012), six bricks in height from ground level and bonded with concrete mortar. Underneath this was a 0.22m deep concrete base (013) for the wall.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 According to the dimensions of the bricks, the red brick walls and layer (010) date from approximately 1770 to 1820. The sandstone wall (009) abuts (010) suggesting that these walls may also date from this period. The placement of the

sewer pipe required the removal of some of the red brick layer (010) and therefore the sewer pipe must have been constructed later.

- 7.2 The sandstone walls found during this watching brief were possibly the walls or footings of an outbuilding shown on a 1975 Land Registry map of Darley Abbey (Fig. 11). An area of white paint existed on the boundary wall of the property which is probably evidence for the location of this outbuilding. The outbuilding is of unknown date.

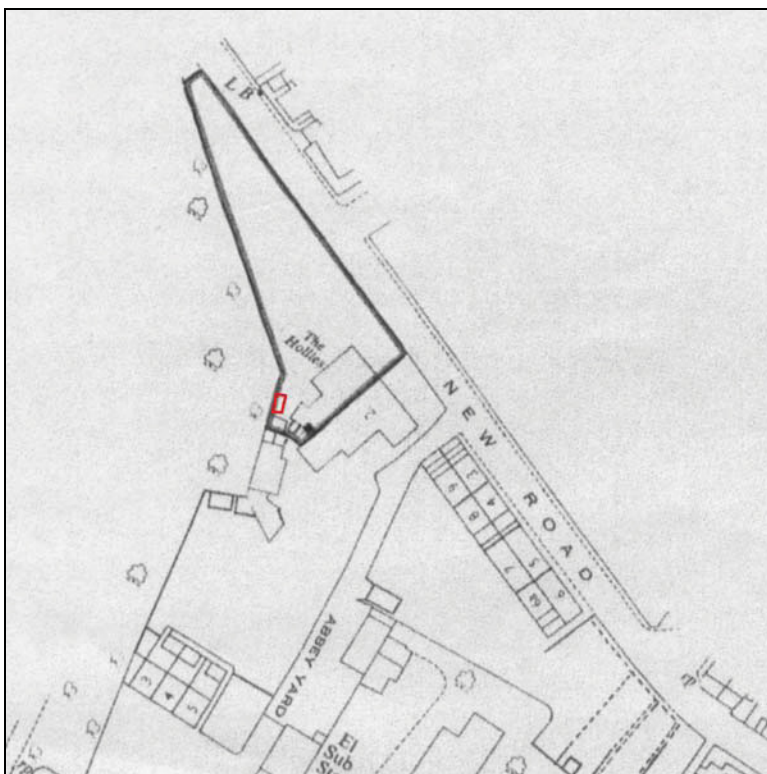


Fig. 11 H.M. land Registry Map dating from 1975 showing an outbuilding highlighted in red

- 7.3 The culvert was constructed of red bricks with similar dimensions to the red brick walls and therefore dates from the later 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 8. Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright

- 8.1 Any Publicity will be handled by the client.
- 8.2 Archaeological Research Services will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act, 1988.

## 9. Statement of Indemnity

- 9.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.



## **10. Acknowledgements**

- 10.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank Philip and Jenny Eades and the Planning and Development Officer at Derbyshire City Council for their support during this work.

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# **APPENDIX ONE**

## Context Register

Context No.	Description
001	Red brick wall, running east to west.
002	Red brick wall running north to south
003	Double layer of sandstone blocks forming a wall running east to west
004	Black loamy soil containing slag and metal lumps – modern industrial backfill
005	Red brick wall running south-east to north-west, partially continuing from (001)
006	Salt glazed sewer pipe running north to south, then separating to lead east to west.
007	Natural red clay
008	Layer of dressed sandstone blocks lying underneath (001)
009	Layer of sandstone blocks forming a wall running east to west
010	Layer of red bricks, two bricks deep creating a flooring
011	Brown sandy fill containing small rocks and pebbles
012	Layer of red brick forming the footing for the modern building (now demolished)
013	Concrete base for red bricks of (012)
014	Red brick arch – infilled with smaller fragments of red brick
015	Re-evaluated as a continuation of (006)
016	Line of red bricks running alongside (015)
017	Large sandstone blocks forming the upper layer of the culvert
018	Red brick walled culvert running approximately north to south
019	Thin layer of beach pebbles abutting (010)