

**PROPOSED FUNCTION ROOM AND LIFT INSTALLATION,  
BEDFORD HOTEL,  
TAVISTOCK,  
DEVON**

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION  
FOR A PROGRAMME OF  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Prepared for

**Stephen Whettem Architects  
The Works  
3 Dolvin Road  
Tavistock  
Devon  
PL19 9EA**

By

**Wessex Archaeology  
Portway House  
Old Sarum Park  
SALISBURY  
Wiltshire  
SP4 6EB**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project Background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by the Stephen Whettem Architects to carry out a programme of archaeological watching brief to record the survival of below ground remains related to Tavistock Abbey, in Tavistock, Devon (hereafter 'the Site'). The remains of the Abbey are a Scheduled Monument (**SM No 29679**). The watching brief is required in order to support an application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) for the erection of a proposed new function room and lift installation for the Bedford Hotel. The Site is centred on Ordnance Survey NGR 248150 75250 (**Figures 1, 2 and 3**).
- 1.1.2 An evaluation was previously carried out on the Site by Wessex Archaeology (WA 2007b) as required by English Heritage (EH) and the Devon County Archaeology Officer (DCAO), for which Class 7 consent was granted by The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).
- 1.1.3 The Bedford Hotel is a Grade II Listed Building situated in the centre of Tavistock. The hotel buildings incorporate significant fragments of buildings by architects Wyattville and Foulston, as well as some medieval fabric remaining from the dissolved Benedictine monastery, Tavistock Abbey. The building elements are variously listed Listed Grades 1 and 2 and the whole hotel complex falls within the boundary of the Tavistock Abbey Scheduled Monument.

- 1.1.4 The hotel proposes a new function room to be constructed within its courtyard. Designs are complete and Town Planning and Listed Building consents have been obtained. As the supporting columns of the function room are founded on six piles and these piles will impact on the Scheduled Monument, Scheduled Monument Consent is also being sought. In a second location, a lift is proposed to create wheelchair access and the foundations of this installation will also break the ground of the Scheduled Monument. English Heritage requires a watching brief on groundworks in order to record any archaeological remains within the impact areas in support of the SMC application.
- 1.1.5 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) sets out in detail the methodology which will be employed by Wessex Archaeology to undertake the archaeological watching brief. In format and content it conforms with current best practice and with the English Heritage guidance outlined in *MoRPHE* (The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment) and the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (as amended in 1994), and will be submitted in support of an application for SMC.

## **1.2 Topography and Geology**

- 1.2.1 The Site is located on the northern bank of the river Tavy, at an approximate height above Ordnance Datum (aOD) of 82m.
- 1.2.2 The British Geological Survey map of the area (Sheet 337, Tavistock) indicates that the Site is underlain by basalt and slate bedrock of the Milton Abbas Formation.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1.1 The archaeological background to the Site has been set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2007a) prepared for the previous evaluation of the Site and the Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2007b) and it is not intended to repeat the information here.
- 2.1.2 In brief, the Site appears to lie between the south range, west range and hall of the former Tavistock Abbey. The Benedictine Abbey, dedicated to St. Mary and St. Rumon was granted its foundation charter by King Ethelred II in AD 981. After destruction by the Danes it was amongst the richest religious houses in Devon by the time of the Domesday survey in 1086. The medieval town of Tavistock grew up around the Abbey, with a market and fair granted by Henry I in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was formally Dissolved in 1539, and the Abbey church and cloisters were demolished shortly thereafter. Other monastic buildings were removed to allow the construction of Abbey House, now part of the Bedford Hotel, in the earlier 18<sup>th</sup> century.

- 2.1.3 The Bedford Hotel comprises some remaining abbey fabric, the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Abbey House, and early 19<sup>th</sup> century extensions by Sir Jeffrey Wyatville and John Foulston, as well as later 20<sup>th</sup> century additions.
- 2.1.4 Little archaeological excavation or historic recording has been undertaken in the area of the Site. However archaeological monitoring and recording of sewer improvement works and subsequent improvements to Bedford Square during 1997-1999, identified the medieval ground-surface of the Abbey's Great Court beneath Abbey Place (immediately north-east of the Site) at 2m below the existing ground surface (c. 79.00m aOD). In addition, up to 0.60m of dumped demolition material, mostly mortar and rubble waste derived from robbing of masonry from monastic buildings was found to seal the remains of 18<sup>th</sup> century, possibly earlier, industrial buildings. The demolition layer was, in turn, sealed by up to 0.50m of fine sandy clay onto which had been laid a fine metalled surface, presumably the original southward extension of the former Bedford Street (now Abbey Place) to service the new Abbey Bridge. (Stead 1999).
- 2.1.5 A recent test pit evaluation was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology during October and November 2007 (WA 2007c). Of the seven test pits excavated within the impact areas, none were found to contain surviving archaeological remains pertaining to Tavistock Abbey. Results reveal that a substantial degree of demolition and levelling occurred during the post-medieval-modern period. It was concluded that any concrete capping associated with the proposed construction piles would have no impact below the level reached within the six test pits located in these areas (**Figure 2**). A seventh test pit was excavated below the level of the proposed lift shaft foundation and the proposed construction will have no further below ground impact (**Figure 3**).

### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1.1 The aim of the watching brief is to identify, during construction, any archaeological and historical remains and to elucidate the character, distribution, extent, importance and state of preservation of these within the Site, particularly those forming part of the medieval monastery of Tavistock Abbey.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1.1 Subject to further discussions on Site with the Client it is intended for the areas which form the foundations for the lift shaft structure to be dug down to foundation formation level using a 360 deg mechanical excavator prior to being backfilled with concrete. The excavation of the foundation area will be monitored by suitably qualified staff of Wessex Archaeology. This will include the inspection of the stripped surface for archaeological features and deposits.
- 4.1.2 In the event archaeological deposits and features, including human remains are revealed, these will be identified and made clear to the Client and their ground work contractor who will allow reasonable access to Wessex Archaeology staff facilitating the excavation and recording of the archaeology present. Areas of archaeological interest will be marked up and suitably protected to prevent trampling in advance of their investigation and clearance.
- 4.1.3 The watching brief will be maintained throughout the excavations required to formation level of the lift shaft in order to record any archaeological remains revealed and will be concluded when it is clear that the potential for archaeological remains to be revealed has been exhausted.
- 4.1.4 Wessex Archaeology staff will investigate archaeological deposits and features by excavation and recording commensurate with the scale of work and using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system. Where practical, and toward meeting the aims of the watching brief, excavation will include sampling of features and deposits in order to recover artefacts, ecofacts and dating evidence, and in order to determine stratigraphic relationships. Recording will include written, drawn, and photographic elements as conditions allow.
- 4.1.5 Archaeological features and deposits will be surveyed using a Total Station/GPS and related to Ordnance Survey.
- 4.1.6 The watching brief will be carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 1999).
- 4.1.7 Arrangements will be put in place with the Client in order for the Inspector of Ancient Monuments South West Region and for Devon County Council's Archaeological Officer to monitor progress of the watching brief in site visits.

- 4.1.8 Should extensive and well preserved remains be found requiring a contingent excavation it will be necessary to agree with the Client, the Inspector of Ancient Monuments South West Region and Devon County Council's Archaeological Officer a programme for this, extending the scope of archaeological works.

## **5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING**

### **5.1 Finds**

- 5.1.1 Finds will be treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 1999), the UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines *Conservation Guideline No 2* and the Museums and Galleries Commissions *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (1991) excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 5.1.2 All artefacts from excavated contexts will be retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date. No finds will, however, be discarded without the prior approval of the local authority's Archaeological Advisor. In such circumstances, sufficient artefacts will be retained in order to elucidate the date and/or function of the feature or deposit.
- 5.1.3 All retained artefacts will, as a minimum, be washed, weighed, counted and identified. Any artefacts requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with immediately in line with *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neal 1998). Ironwork from stratified contexts will be X-rayed and stored in a stable environment along with other fragile and delicate material. The X-raying of objects and other conservation needs will be undertaken by the staff of the Wiltshire Museums and Library Service Conservation Consortium, Chippenham or other appropriate approved conservation centre.
- 5.1.4 Information will be obtained from Devon County Council concerning conditions and arrangements for the deposition of finds.

### **5.2 Environmental Sampling**

- 5.2.1 Bulk environmental soil samples for plant macro fossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts will be taken from appropriate archaeological contexts.
- 5.2.2 Bulk environmental soil samples will be processed by flotation and scanned to assess the environmental potential of deposits, but will not be fully analysed. The residues and sieved fractions will be recorded and retained with the project archive. A statement on the environmental potential of excavated deposits will be appended to the watching brief report

- 5.2.3 If water logging should occur an appropriate environmental sampling strategy will be undertaken.

### **5.3 Human Remains**

- 5.3.1 Wessex Archaeology has been advised as of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007 that the requirement for, issuing and conditions' attached to licences for the excavation of human remains is subject to legal review.
- 5.3.2 Until such time as the legal position has been clarified by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Wessex Archaeology will, in the event of discovery of any human remains, inform the Client, Local Authority's Archaeological Advisor, the Coroner, the Police and the MOJ via submission of an application form for the 'Archaeological / Accidental / Site Investigation Licence regarding the disturbance of human remains'.
- 5.3.3 The human remains will initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected. Where a licence for their excavation is issued by the MOJ, the requirements of that licence will be followed.
- 5.3.4 Where the MOJ is unable to issue a licence and it is reasonably determined that the remains are likely to be subject to further unavoidable disturbance or deterioration, Wessex Archaeology will advise the Client and the MOJ of their intention to excavate the remains with due decency and in accordance with the general conditions formerly attached licences issued for excavation of human remains under similar circumstances.

### **5.4 Treasure**

- 5.4.1 In the event of discovery of artefacts covered or potentially covered by The Treasure Act 1996, their excavation and removal will be undertaken following notification of the Client, the Inspector of Ancient Monuments South West Region and Devon County Council's Archaeological Officer.

## **6 POST-EXCAVATION AND REPORTING**

### **6.1 Watching Brief Report**

- 6.1.1 It is intended to include the results of the watching brief as an addendum to the evaluation report (WA2007c).
- 6.1.2 The results of the Desk Based Assessment (WA 2007b) are to be included as an Appendix to the report.
- 6.1.3 A short note on the results of the archaeological works will be prepared and published in the relevant local journal.



- 6.1.4 Details of the Site will be submitted online to the ADS (Archaeological Data Service) via the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.

## **7 ARCHIVE**

### **7.1 Preparation and Deposition**

- 7.1.1 Arrangements have been made with Plymouth City Museum for the deposition of the archive.
- 7.1.2 On completion of the report a cross-referenced and internally consistent archive, including all phases of work, will be produced. The primary archive, including copies of all photographs, will be deposited with Plymouth City Museum, under accession number AR.2007.415, no later than six months after completion of the work.
- 7.1.3 The completed project archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990).

## **8 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

### **8.1 Personnel**

- 8.1.1 The fieldwork will be directed and supervised by an experienced archaeologist from Wessex Archaeology's core staff, who will be on site at all times, for the length of archaeological watching brief. The overall responsibility for the conduct and management of the project will be held by one of Wessex Archaeology's Project Managers, who will visit the fieldwork as appropriate to monitor progress and to ensure that the scope of works is adhered to. The appointed Project Manager and experienced archaeologist will be involved in all phases of the watching brief through to its completion.

8.1.2 The analysis of the finds and environmental data will be undertaken by Wessex Archaeology core staff or external specialists using Wessex Archaeology's standard *pro forma* recording system. The work will be carried out under the supervision of the following departmental managers under the overall direction of the Project Manager. The following staff are proposed:

Caroline Budd	Project Manager
T.B.C.	Project Officer
Andy Crockett	Finds and Environmental Team Leader

8.1.3 Overall responsibility for the project lies with Jonathan Nowell MIFA, Head of General Development.

8.1.4 Information on other specialists can be provided on request.

## **9 STANDARDS**

### **9.1 Quality and Code of Practice**

9.1.1 Wessex Archaeology is an archaeological organisation registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists

9.1.2 Wessex Archaeology endorses the Code of Practice and the Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology of The Institute of Field Archaeologists

9.1.3 All core staff would be of a standard approved by Wessex Archaeology, be employed in line with The Institute of Field Archaeologists Codes of Practice and be members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists or equivalent professional experience.

9.1.4 Wessex Archaeology operates a Project Management System. All projects are undertaken under the direction of the Project Manager who is responsible to a Section Head, who ensures the maintenance of quality standards within the organisation. The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for all of the Company's work.

## **10 INSURANCE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **10.1 Policy and Risk Assessment**

- 10.1.1 Health and safety considerations will be of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practises will override archaeological considerations at all times.
- 10.1.2 All work will be carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.
- 10.1.3 Wessex Archaeology will supply a copy of their Health and Safety Policy and a Risk Assessment to the Client before the commencement of any fieldwork. The Risk Assessment will have been read and understood by all staff attending the Site before any groundwork commences.
- 10.1.4 Wessex Archaeology has both public liability (£10,000,000) and professional indemnity insurance (£5,000,000).
- 10.1.5 Wessex Archaeology will ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992.

## **11 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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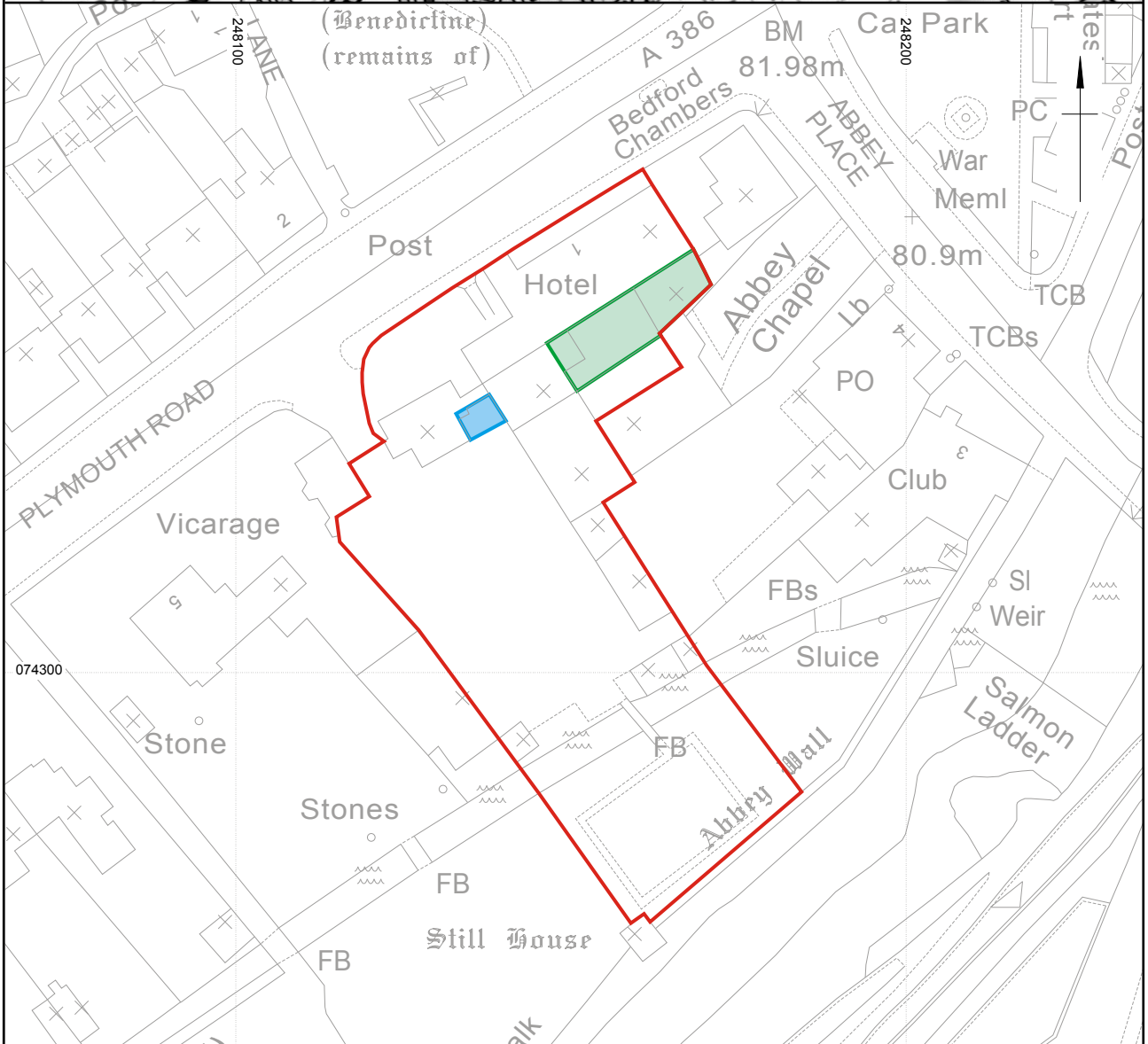
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- The site
- Function room
- Lift



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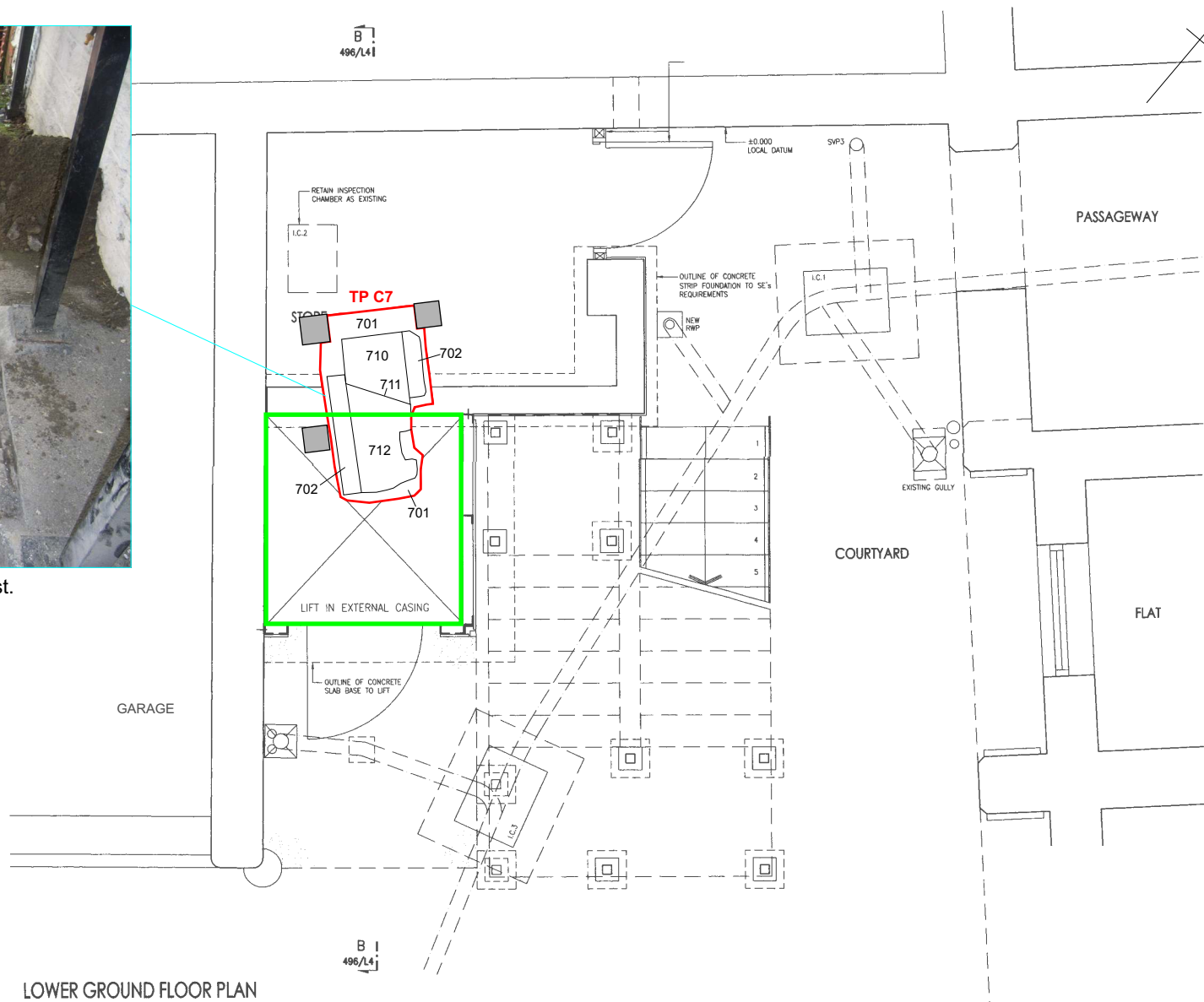
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Site location plan

Figure 1



Plate 1: Test Pit C7. View from north-west.



- Proposed lift shaft
- Test pit
- Footing

0 2m

LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN



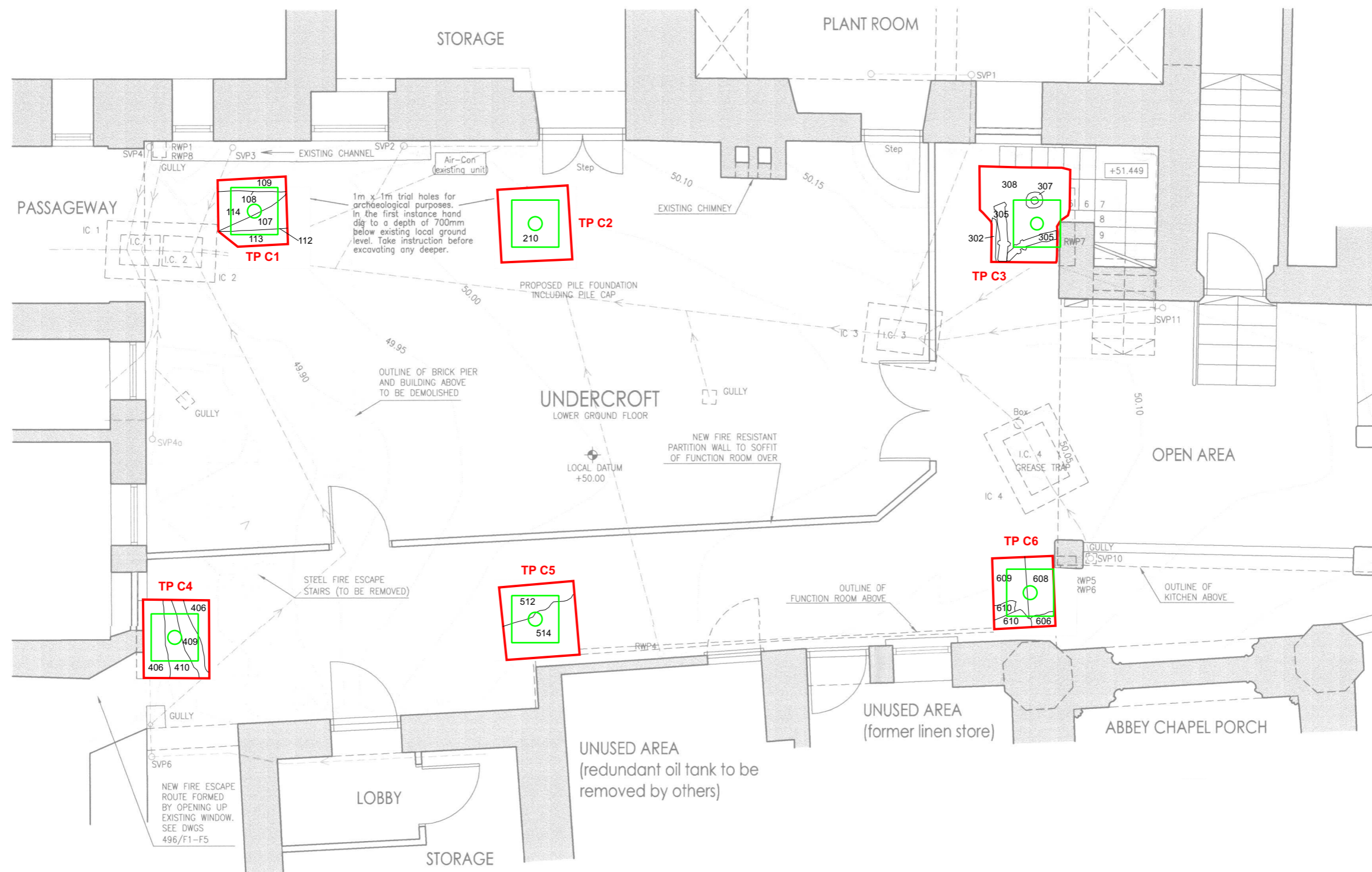
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Location plan of previous archaeological test pit in relation to proposed lift shaft

Figure 3



Lower Ground Floor Plan



- Test pit
- Pile cap

Based on a survey by Stephen Whettem Architects

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