



# Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn Norwich, Norfolk

Archaeological Watching Brief



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**Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn  
Norwich, Norfolk**

**Archaeological Watching Brief and  
Geoarchaeological Investigation Report**

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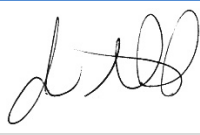
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# Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn Norwich, Norfolk

## Archaeological Watching Brief and Geoarchaeological Investigation Report

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## **Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn Norwich, Norfolk**

### **Archaeological Watching Brief and Geoarchaeological Investigation Report**

#### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Walsingham Planning, on behalf of Whitbread Group Plc, to undertake an archaeological watching brief and geoarchaeological investigation at Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn, Norwich, Norfolk, prior to the construction of an extension to the existing hotel and re-modelling of the car park.

The watching brief confirmed the presence of archaeological remains on site although these were all of late post-medieval/modern date. The character and condition of the surviving structures matches the evidence provided through historic mapping; with industrial structures dominating the site until their demolition in the latter part of the 20th century. Evidence for a 19th century house was also revealed, and which was later replaced by further industrial warehouse in the first quarter of the 20th century.

It is possible that earlier archaeological remains may exist underneath the substantial quantity of made ground and the impact of the development. If any earlier remains are present they most likely survive below the water table.

It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Norfolk Museums and Archive Service. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner. The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield under site code 110240.

An OASIS form ID number wessexar1-253577 has been provisionally completed and will be finalised at the time of deposition.



# **Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn Norwich, Norfolk**

## **Archaeological Watching Brief and Geoarchaeological Investigation Report**

### **Acknowledgements**

The archaeological watching brief and geoarchaeological investigation was commissioned by Walsingham Planning, on behalf of Whitbread Group Plc, and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Simon Millet in this regard.

The watching brief was carried out by Hannah Holbrook, Alexander Cassells and Michael Keech. The report was written by Hannah Holbrook and Alvaro Mora-Ottomano with a contribution by Nicki Mulhall for geoarchaeological sediment description. Finds were assessed by Lorraine Mephram. Illustrations were produced by Joanna Debska and Ian Atkins. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Alexandra Grassam.





# Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn Norwich, Norfolk

## Archaeological Watching Brief and Geoarchaeological Investigation Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Walsingham Planning, on behalf of Whitbread Group Plc (hereafter the 'Client'), to undertake an archaeological watching brief and geoarchaeological investigation at Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn, Norwich, Norfolk (hereafter the 'Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 623735, 308419 Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 This report has been produced to support a planning application for the construction of an extension to the current hotel and re-modelling of the car park. The foundations for the proposed work were designed to be installed through piling operations.

#### 1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located on the western bank of the River Yare approximately 0.5 km east of Norwich Castle, and comprises a regular rectangular parcel of land approximately 500 m<sup>2</sup> in area with a corridor connecting the proposed extension with the existing hotel building.
- 1.2.2 The Site is mainly covered in hard standing with small areas of grass and planters and is currently used as a car park. It lies on flat land at approximately 4 m above Ordnance Datum on a bedrock geology of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, which is overlain by superficial deposits of alluvium (British Geological Survey).

### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background was assessed in detail within an Archaeological Impact Assessment undertaken by Wessex Archaeology (2015a), which considered the recorded historic environment resource within a 250 m Study Area around the Site, in order to place the Site within its historical and archaeological context. The results of this assessment and relevant Norfolk Historic Environmental Records (NHER) and entries from the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) are summarised below.

#### 2.2 Archaeological and historical background

*Prehistoric (4,000 BC – AD 43) and Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)*

- 2.2.1 The area around Norwich has been continually occupied since the prehistoric period. The earliest evidence for human activity within the Study Area comes from excavations carried out approximately 150 m south-east of the Site (NHER 26476) prior to the construction of the Riverside complex. These revealed a range of finds which included early Neolithic worked flints along with Bronze Age pot sherds (Wiltshire and Emery 2000).

- 2.2.2 Also within the Study Area, a number of polished flint axeheads reportedly found with a female skull (NHER 477) were recovered approximately 100 m north-east of the Site. The finds were made before 1875 which casts some doubt over their exact location and provenance; however, the NHER does note they were recovered at Foundry Bridge some 12.8 m below the ground surface.
- 2.2.3 The Site potentially contains superficial deposits of alluvium which may have allowed for the preservation of deeply stratified, early prehistoric remains.
- Saxon and medieval (AD 410 – 1500)*
- 2.2.4 The City of Norwich, Old English for ‘North specialised farm’ (University of Nottingham 2015), is thought to have been established by the mid-7th century AD and was likely the result of the amalgamation of the populations of three smaller settlements located around the current city and the crossing of two major routeways. Excavations undertaken within the city have identified clear evidence for occupation in the Anglo-Saxon period (Medlycott 2011, 51). By 1000 AD Norwich had become an important trade centre and was strongly influenced by Scandinavian populations, not least when the town was raided and burnt in 1004 AD by the King of Denmark.
- 2.2.5 Excavations on the site of Dragon Hall (NHER 449), approximately 200 m south of the Site, have revealed the presence of three adjoining timber-framed buildings of Anglo-Saxon date, two of which were erected along the street with the third set back (Shelley 2005). Also uncovered was an oven, areas of sand and gravel extraction and a refuse pit that contained metalwork, ceramic goods, querns, antler working and perishables (*ibid.*).
- 2.2.6 The Domesday Survey, following the Norman Conquest in 1066, indicates that Norwich was one of the largest cities in England and remained a major centre for trade due to the location of the River Wensum, which provided access to the North Sea via Great Yarmouth. Soon after the Conquest Norwich castle was constructed, which required the demolition of 98 houses as noted with the Domesday Survey.
- 2.2.7 Norwich emerged as an important ecclesiastical centre in the early medieval period. By 1096 work had begun on Norwich Cathedral. The Greyfriars Franciscan friary (NHER 373) was established in c. 1288 approximately 250 m north-west of the Site, while Austin Friary (NHER 374) was established around 1290 to the south-west. The medieval period saw the city expand with numerous other churches constructed within the city.
- 2.2.8 The limits of the city were eventually demarcated by defensive walls constructed between 1280 and 1340. Prior to this the city was demarcated by ditches, banks and a palisade; (Norwich City Walls Survey 1999-2002). The Site lay within the limits of the medieval town walls. After their construction, it became illegal to develop outside the limits of the town. Cartographic evidence from 1821 (not reproduced) mapping the locations of the pre-dissolution monasteries and churches indicates the Church of St Michael in Conisford, sold to Austin Friars in 1360, lay approximately 130 m south-west of the Site.
- 2.2.9 Excavations approximately 95 m south-west of the Site revealed well preserved medieval, and later, archaeological remains (NHER 26593) sealed by substantial deposits of later overburden of 1.5 m to 1.7 m in depth (Gardner *et al.* 2002). A large 15th to 17th century pit was uncovered, as were successive layers of substantial dumping and reclamation deposits alongside a small amount of brushwood tentatively interpreted as a platform or trackway to the water (*ibid.*).

- 2.2.10 Excavations at St Anne's Wharf (NHER 37411) approximately 200 m south of the Site revealed an extensive programme of land reclamation probably undertaken by the Austin Friars in the 16th century.
- 2.2.11 Also within the Study Area, approximately 125 m north-west of the Site, excavations uncovered a large quantity of cattle bones and horn cores (NHER 26520) dating to the medieval period, this site has been interpreted as a parchment manufacturing site (Gurney and Penn 2000).
- 2.2.12 Despite lying within the town walls, the evidence suggests the Site was not developed at this time, although it lay close to the main Late-Saxon road 'Conesford' (now King Street), located approximately 250 m south-west of the Site. The Site may have been within open land upstream of the Austin Friary and the River Wensum, though the potential for the Site to have been used for industrial purposes cannot be discounted.

*Post-medieval, 19th century and modern (AD 1500 – present day)*

- 2.2.13 Norwich remained one of the largest cities in the country throughout the post-medieval period with the wool industry helping to draw in substantial numbers of workers, including those from the Netherlands and Belgium (Ketton-Cramer 1957).
- 2.2.14 The first contemporary cartographic evidence depicting the Site was drafted in the post-medieval period. Blomefield's 1741 map (not reproduced) shows the Site to be within an open area noted as being within 'The Seats of the Friere Hermites of St Austin'. Hochstetter's 1789 map (not reproduced), which is generally seen as the first accurate survey of the area, shows the Site to be within a formal garden possibly associated with a building lying immediately adjacent to the northern edge of the Site. Additionally, Hochstetter's map shows the location of an 'Iron Foundry' approximately 30 m north of the Site. Hochstetter's map also indicates more buildings have been constructed within the immediate vicinity of the Site highlighting the general increase in population at this time.
- 2.2.15 Features from the former garden of Howard House, laid out in 1664, were uncovered during excavations at St Anne's Wharf approximately 200 m south of the Site (NHER 37411).
- 2.2.16 During construction work for a previous extension to the Premier Inn, traces of a gravel yard surface (NHER 363) were uncovered which may date to the post-medieval period, although no buildings were encountered. The NHER also reports the foundation trenches were cut through approximately 1.5 m of overburden consisting of made ground.
- 2.2.17 Like most of the country Norwich expanded significantly during the 19th century, particularly after the introduction of the railway in 1844. Thorpe Station (NHLE 1051837/NHER 332) which lies approximately 60 m east of the Site was opened by the Yarmouth and Norwich Railway company in 1844, which became part of the Great Eastern Railway in 1862.
- 2.2.18 Cartographic evidence from Longman's 1819 map (not reproduced) indicates the Site was still part of a formal garden at this time, with a small building lying immediately adjacent to its western edge. The Archaeological Impact Assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2015a) found some discrepancy between the location of the Iron Foundry and possible house building visible on Hochstetter's 1789 map, and the corresponding buildings visible on Longman's map.
- 2.2.19 By the 1880-1886 Ordnance Survey (OS) map (not reproduced) the Site and the Study Area has been extensively developed. Three buildings have been constructed within the Site with the remainder seemingly within parkland adjacent to the river. To the south of the Site the area is noted as a 'Timber Yard', whilst industrial buildings and terraced houses have been

constructed to the north. The map also notes the presence of the now Grade II Listed 'Foundry Bridge' (NHLE 1051908) located approximately 80 m north of the Site, which was presumably named after the former Iron Foundry visible on earlier maps.

- 2.2.20 By the 1928 OS map (not reproduced) the majority of the Site has been built on with the buildings within the western section of the Site expanding and an additional small building constructed within the L-Shaped connecting section.
- 2.2.21 By the 1956 OS (not reproduced) map the Site is noted as being within a 'Timber Yard' with a 'Saw Mill' contained within the north-west corner. Several other buildings, which may be sheds or similar structures given their drafting with a dotted line, also encroach into the Site. By the 1973-1976 OS map (not reproduced) a large building/shed has been constructed within the eastern section of the Site. These buildings have been removed by 1995 and replaced with the current hotel, the Site itself is contained within an area of hardstanding.
- 2.2.22 Evidence from these periods indicates that the Site remained relatively undeveloped until the 19th century when several phases of construction appear to have taken place. In some instances, it seems these buildings may have been shed-like structures probably for storing timber which have since been demolished with the Site now lying under hardstanding.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The Archaeological Impact Assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2015a) concluded that there was a high potential for archaeological remains dating from the post-medieval to modern periods of local significance to be encountered within the Site, while there was a moderate potential for medieval remains of regional significance to be encountered.
- 3.1.2 Research questions included the following:
- *To what extent to medieval remains of regional significance survive in this area of the medieval city?*
  - *To what extent to post-medieval remains of local significance survive within the Site?*
- 3.1.3 The aims and objectives of the archaeological works were to:
- *Examine the archaeological resource within the Site, including clarifying the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains, particularly those of medieval date;*
  - *Model the subsurface deposits of archaeological interest;*
  - *Identify, within the constraints of the works, the date, character and condition of any surviving remains within the Site;*
  - *Establish the level of made ground present at the Site and determine whether archaeological layers may survive at depth;*
  - *Assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits;*
  - *Analyse and interpret the results; and*



- *Produce a report which will present the results of the works in sufficient detail, including the information to allow an informed decision to be made concerning further mitigation strategies.*

### **3.2 Watching Brief and Geoarchaeological Investigation methodology**

- 3.2.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2015b) which was submitted to and approved by the Senior Historic Environment Officer for Norfolk County Council (NCC). All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the WSI and in compliance with the standards outlined in the ClfA's Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief (ClfA 2014a) excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 3.2.2 The Client established the presence of any below/above ground services. Where identified the Client ensured all necessary personnel were aware and that proper Health and Safety procedures were followed.
- 3.2.3 The watching brief was undertaken by at least one experienced archaeologist. The mechanical excavation was, where possible, undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket and under constant supervision by Wessex Archaeology. Machine excavation proceeded to the required construction levels or the top of archaeological levels, whichever was the higher. Where practicable, within Health and Safety constraints and without causing unreasonable delay to the development programme, groundwork was temporarily halted whilst investigations were carried out by Wessex Archaeology staff. Once these investigations had taken place the importance of the archaeological remains was assessed after recording and the remains were excavated to the level required for construction.
- 3.2.4 The watching brief was conducted on all works where the removal or overburden could expose archaeological deposits or features. This comprised piling operations, including the excavation of the pile caps and any areas of deep excavation beyond the extent of any made ground deposits, although not the drilling of the piles themselves due to the concrete injection method employed preventing observation of any buried features.
- 3.2.5 The watching brief was maintained throughout initial excavations as specified above and was concluded when, in consultation with the Senior Historic Environment Officer for NCC, it was clear that the potential for archaeological remains to be exposed has been exhausted.

### **3.3 Hand excavation and recording of archaeological remains**

- 3.3.1 Where archaeological features and deposits were encountered, excavation was carried out by hand. A sufficient sample of each layer/feature type was excavated in order to establish the date, nature, extent and condition of the archaeological remains.
- 3.3.2 Archaeological features and deposits were investigated and stratigraphically excavated by hand. The percentage of any feature or group of features excavated depended on a number of factors. These included the achievement of the aims and objectives, the significance or potential of the archaeological features/deposits, the stratigraphic record, Health and Safety considerations, and the requirements of the local planning archaeologist.

### **3.4 Standard methodologies**

- 3.4.1 All excavation and recording was undertaken by qualified archaeologists employed by Wessex Archaeology. Any archaeological remains encountered were recorded, and where necessary excavated in accordance with current industry best practice (ClfA 2014a). Features of whatever origin requiring clarification were cleaned by hand and recorded in

plan at an appropriate scale. Any significant artefacts/ecofacts were collected and environmental samples retrieved as appropriate.

### **3.5 Borehole survey**

3.5.1 Boreholes were returned to the Wessex Archaeology laboratory in Salisbury for detailed sediment description, following Hodgson (1997), including information such as depth, texture, composition, inclusions and contact between deposits.

### **3.6 Recording**

3.6.1 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.

3.6.2 Due to Health and Safety constraints regarding contamination and very wet conditions on Site the majority of features were not hand drawn. Moreover, archaeological survey was also limited. Any survey data from the Site was supplied by the Client, who also assumed responsibility for its accuracy.

3.6.3 A photographic record was maintained during the archaeological investigations using black and white film and digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images were subject to managed quality control and curation processes. A complete digital photographic record was created.

### **3.7 Specialist strategies**

#### *Artefacts*

3.7.1 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date. No finds were recovered which required specialist conservation.

3.7.2 All retained artefacts were, as a minimum, washed, weighed, counted and identified. All artefacts recovered during the excavations on the Site are the property of the landowner. After specialist analysis, the finds were not deemed to be useful for further study and have been recommended for discard.

#### *Environmental*

3.7.3 No environmental samples were taken as no deposits of sufficient potential were present.

## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 A total of six trenches were monitored during the groundworks associated with the proposed extension of the present hotel and re-modelling of the car park (Figures 1 and 2). Due to Health and Safety constraints, the archaeological monitoring and recording were limited in some areas where land contamination and boggy condition were present.

4.1.2 The undisturbed natural substratum was not exposed within the areas excavated as it lay beneath the depth required for the ground works. The general stratigraphy of the Site consisted of a tarmac surface overlying a hardcore sub-base which in turn overlay a series of made ground layers excavated to an overall depth of 0.7 m to 0.9 m below ground level (bgl), although these layers extended further down the base of the excavation.

4.1.3 A series of archaeological features were uncovered consisting mainly of brick structures dating from the 19th century through to the 20th century. Some of these structural remains were substantially truncated and only partially exposed so were not recorded in detail. Given

the extent of the made ground on Site, it is possible that further archaeological remains survive at a greater depth.

## **4.2 Trench 1**

4.2.1 Trench 1 measured 30 m in length, 8.3 m in width and 0.8 m in depth. It was excavated in the southern area of the existing hotel in order to provide new car parking spaces. The excavation revealed a brick-lined drain (105) at 0.5 m bgl (Figure 2, Plate 1). The drain was aligned north-west to south-east and built with two courses of parallel standard-size machine-made bricks bonded with ashy clay and laid to stretcher bond. It was capped with bricks, roof slate tiles and reused sandstone slabs and the base was created with roof slate tiles. The drain appeared to have been built in the late post-medial period or more likely in the 20th century as the character of its construction indicates. It was completely silted up by an ashy clay deposit (104) and thus it had become obsolete.

## **4.3 Trench 2**

4.3.1 Trench 2 was the northernmost excavated area measuring 8 m in length, 4 m in width and reached up to 1.7 m in depth. A 2 m long extension was subsequently excavated at a right angle creating an 'L'-shaped configuration. It was excavated to facilitate modification to the existing retaining wall and planter area which contained a small artificial pond.

4.3.2 A paved surface (203) was uncovered at 0.5 bgl which measured 3 m x 2.6 m although its full extent was truncated by a series of later service trenches (Figure 2, Plate 2). The paved surface mainly composed sub-round cobbles within a silty clay matrix used as a bedding. Few reused sandstone architectural fragments were also present within the fabric.

4.3.3 Cartographic records indicate that the paved surface might have been the floor of an open-fronted shed and/or an external alleyway dating from the late 19th century through to the early 20th century.

## **4.4 Trench 3**

4.4.1 Trench 3 was the largest trench of the project measuring 33 m in length and 24.5 m in width. Although some slit trenches were excavated down to 2.6 m bgl, the natural sub-stratum was not identified. A series of structural remains were uncovered at approximately 0.45 m bgl although some of them were severely truncated.

4.4.2 The main structure uncovered consisted of a distinctive canted brick wall (310), composed of three skins of hand-made orangey bricks bonded with white lime mortar and laid in English Garden Wall bond. Up to seven courses were exposed facing south-east down to the remnants of a garden soil/topsoil layer (326) composed of dark greyish brown silty clay (Figure 2, Plate 3). Consultation of late 19th century OS maps (Wessex Archaeology 2015a) indicates that this structure corresponded to a retaining garden wall, which supported a raised platform along the south-east elevation of a house that contained two canted bay-windows. The 1885 OS Town Plan of Norwich (not reproduced) shows that the raised platform was accessed from a short flight of stairs located to the south-west, which would have led to a front pathway of the house. The retaining wall of the platform was constructed with a comparable arrangement to the front façade of the house including two canted bays.

4.4.3 A short brick wall (331) aligned north-west south-east was also identified adjoining the southernmost end of the canted retaining structure (310; Figure 2, Plate 4). The construction of this wall was equivalent to (310) and may represent the side wall of a former staircase depicted on the 1885 OS Town Plan of Norwich (not reproduced).

- 4.4.4 Evidence of the actual south-east wall of the house, located parallel to the raised platform, was not fully established, although a faint line of crushed bricks was noticed which might have been part of the former wall (Plate 4).
- 4.4.5 Remnants of internal partition walls and sub-divisions of the house were largely absent, however, a zigzag brick wall (332) to the north-west of (310) was identified whose fabric was comparable to the retaining wall (Figure 2, Plate 4).
- 4.4.6 Cartographic records indicate that the house was demolished between the production of the 1907 and 1928 OS maps (not reproduced), when large warehouses of a saw mill complex were built.
- 4.4.7 A short section of a brick wall (314) aligned north-east south-west was partly recorded (Plate 5, Fig. 2). The wall was built with standard-size orangey bricks bonded with white lime mortar and laid in English bond. The remains were uncovered at 0.3 m bgl and comprised seven brick courses including two step-out foundation courses. This wall appeared to have originally been the southern boundary wall of a former saw mill complex dating to the late 19th century.

#### **4.5 Trench 4**

- 4.5.1 Trench 4 measured 10 m in length, 0.8 m in width and reached a depth of 0.8 m. The trench was excavated to access the services that lie to the north of the existing hotel entrance and to the south of the restaurant building to the north of the Site. No significant archaeological remains were encountered.

#### **4.6 Trench 5**

- 4.6.1 Trench 5 measured 10 m in length, 4 m in width and 0.7 m in depth. No archaeology was encountered in this trench and the exposed stratigraphy comprised modern aggregate (501) and made ground (502) layers.

#### **4.7 Trench 6**

- 4.7.1 Trench 6 measured 40 m in length, 10 m in width and reached a depth of 0.6 m. The excavation comprised of made ground layers (601 – 603) and no significant archaeological remains were identified.

### **5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE**

#### **5.1 Summary**

- 5.1.1 The only finds recovered from the Site comprised two sherds of English stoneware (Nottingham/Derby-type) and a fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem, all found in made ground 330 in Trench 3. The pottery is of 18th or 19th century, and the pipe stem probably of similar date. These finds have not been retained.

### **6 GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

#### **6.1 Geoarchaeological borehole survey**

- 6.1.1 Three boreholes were taken across the Site (Boreholes BH2, BH3 and BH4; Fig. 1) and analysed at the Wessex Archaeology labs.



#### *Borehole BH2*

- 6.1.2 The deposits recorded in borehole BH2 comprised 2.46 m of made ground overlying a sequence of Holocene peat (2.46-3.00 m) and organic alluvium (3.48-3.69 m), in turn resting on olive grey sands (3.69-3.82 m and 4.33-4.48 m) and sand and gravel (4.48-5 m) of probably late Pleistocene/early Holocene date. Voids due to compression during coring were present from 3-3.48 m and 3.82-4.2 m.

#### *Borehole BH3*

- 6.1.3 The deposits recorded in borehole BH3 included 1.79 m of made ground overlying organic sandy-clay alluvium to a depth of 3 m, with a void from 2.0-2.25 m. The base of the alluvium becomes sandier with depth and includes occasional wood fragments and frequent freshwater molluscan remains.

#### *Borehole BH4*

- 6.1.4 The deposits recorded in borehole BH4 comprise 2 m of made ground overlying a sequence of Holocene grey sandy-silt alluvium (2.25-2.45 m), dark brown organic alluvium (2.45-2.66 m), dark brown fibrous peat (2.66-2.80 m) and dark grey organic alluvial clay (2.80-2.90 m). These sediments in turn seal olive-grey fluvial sand and gravel (2.90-3.0 m).

## **7 DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 Summary**

- 7.1.1 An archaeological watching brief and geoarchaeological investigation were undertaken at Hotel Nelson, Premier Inn, Norwich, Norfolk, prior to the construction of an extension for the existing hotel and re-modelling of the car park.
- 7.1.2 Earlier investigations near to the Site uncovered well-preserved medieval archaeological remains beneath a substantial layer of overburden/made ground. It was thought that similar significant archaeological remains may be found beneath the made ground within the Site. The depth of the made ground encountered was deeper than anticipated, therefore the stratigraphy that lies beneath the made ground was not seen, so could not be evaluated for its archaeological potential.
- 7.1.3 A limited number of archaeological structures were uncovered during the excavation, which broadly align with structures shown on the 1880-1886 OS map. On some OS maps the building forms part of a complex labelled 'timber yard' whereas other editions label the buildings as 'saw mill'. The largest structure (310) in trench 3 (Fig. 2) comprised a brick-built wall with canted sides that acted as a revetment for a raised platform. The wall mirrored the outline of a house that contained bay windows along the south-east wall. This structure and the associated house are depicted on late 19th century OS maps, prior to its demolition in the early 20th century and the construction of warehouses for a saw mill.

### **7.2 Holocene sediments**

- 7.2.1 The sequence of alluvium and peat in boreholes BH2, BH3 and BH4 represent fine-grained sediments of the River Wensum laid down during the Holocene. The molluscan remains observed in the organic estuarine alluvium suggest a freshwater rather than estuarine origin for these deposits. Peat deposits in coastal/estuarine settings are an exclusively mid-Holocene phenomenon (broadly dating from c. 6500-100 cal. BC), although a more precise date for the peat in boreholes BH2 and BH4 is not possible without radiocarbon dating.
- 7.2.2 Together the peat and alluvium formed under the background influence of fluctuating but rising post-glacial sea-levels, with the peat developing during periods of stable or lower

groundwater/sea-levels. They represent the landward extension of the Breydon Formation of Holocene peat and silts (Arthurton *et al.* 1994) mapped by the British Geological Survey (BGS) along the River Yare and its tributaries (including the River Bure that flows through the Norfolk Broads the north-east of Norwich). The Breydon Formation include a clear estuarine-tidal component, whilst on the present limited evidence the alluvium and peat on Site accumulated beyond direct estuarine/tidal influence.

- 7.2.3 The fluvial sands and sand and gravel form part of the Pleistocene river terrace deposits mapped by the BGS along the floodplain edge, likely of Devensian or early age. Glaciogenic deposits are also recorded in wider vicinity of the site to the north-east of the River Wensum where they are mapped by the BGS as the Sheringham cliff Formation. Their age is contentious but they are thought to date to the Anglian glaciation (Ehlers *et al.* 2011).

### **7.3 Conclusions**

- 7.3.1 The watching brief confirmed the presence of archaeological remains on Site although these were all of late post-medieval date. The character and condition of the surviving structures matches the evidence provided through historic mapping; with industrial structures dominating the Site until their demolition in the latter part of the 20th century, as well as evidence for a 19th century house which was later replaced by further industrial warehouse in the first quarter of the 20th century.
- 7.3.2 It is possible that earlier archaeological remains may exist underneath the substantial quantity of made ground. Due to the depth of these remains, should they exist, they are likely to survive below the water table.

## **8 STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **8.1 Archive**

- 8.1.1 A cross-referenced and internally consistent archive has been produced. The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Norfolk Museums Service, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; Brown 2011; ADS 2013; ClfA 2014b).

### **8.2 Museum**

- 8.2.1 Norfolk Museums and Archive Service will be consulted over the deposition of the archive. It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Norfolk Museums and Archive Service, though it should be noted that this is currently a closed repository. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.
- 8.2.2 A copy of this report will be supplied to the Norfolk HER and uploaded to OASIS. An OASIS form, (ID number wessexar1-253577: see Appendix 2) has been provisionally prepared and will be completed at the time of deposition.

### **8.3 Preparation of archive**

- 8.3.1 The fieldwork archive (comprising paper records, drawings, photographic records and digital data), will be prepared for long term storage following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013) and those of the recipient museum.

8.3.2 The physical archive comprises the following:

- 1 A4 file of paper records

## 8.4 Discard policy

8.4.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, given the very small quantity of finds recovered, their nature and date range (commonly occurring and well documented types of relatively recent date), retention for long-term curation is not warranted.

## 8.5 Copyright

8.5.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

## 8.6 Security Copy

8.6.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

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## 9.2 Online resources

- British Geological Survey (BGS) <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed November 2017)
- Norwich City Walls Survey 1999-2002, <http://www.norwich.gov.uk/apps/citywalls/index.html> (accessed November 2017)
- Old maps <http://www.old-maps.co.uk/index.html> (accessed November 2017)



## 10 APPENDICES

### 10.1 Appendix 1: Borehole core description

Location:		BH:2	WABH2	Comments: Norwich Borehole 2		
Level (top):		m OD				
Depth		Context	Samples	Sediment description	Interpretation	
Mono	mOD					
2.00-2.46				GLE Y1 8/ white redeposited chalk rich gravel <0.05m (Made Ground). No apparent sorting or grading. Abrupt lower boundary.	Made Ground.	Made Ground
2.46-3.00				10YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown soft peat becoming firmer with depth. 2.67-2.80m is shell/mollusc rich (60%)	Peat	Peat
3.00-3.48				VOID	VOID	
3.48-3.69				10YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown very soft organic silt becoming slightly firmer with depth. Shell/mollusc rich between 3.48-3.58m, with occasional small wood fragments. Clear lower boundary.	Organic Alluvium	Organic Alluvium
3.69-3.82				2.5 Y 4/2 dark greyish brown firm coarse sand with frequent sub-angular gravel <0.02m.	Sand	Fluvial sands and gravels with fluctuations in water speed
3.82-4.20				VOID	VOID.	
4.20-4.33				Disturbed. Product of coring.		
4.33-4.48				5Y 5/2 olive grey firm coarse sand. Occasional sub-rounded stone <0.005m. Clear lower boundary.	Sand	
4.48-5.00				5Y 4/3 olive firm coarse sandy gravel. Gravel is sub-angular to sub-rounded <0.04m. No apparent sorting or grading. Base at 5.00m.	Sand and Gravel	

#### Recommendations

If further work were to be recommended, 3.48-3.69 m has potential for the survival of palaeo-environmental indicators as it is highly organic, undisturbed and molluscs are evident as well.



Location:		BH:3	WABH3	Comments: Norwich Borehole 3		
Level (top):		m OD				
Depth		Context	Samples	Sediment description	Interpretation	
Mono	mOD					
1.20-1.40				2.5Y 3/2 very dark greyish brown firm coarse gravelly clay. Frequent angular brick inclusions. Sharp lower boundary.	Made Ground	Made Ground – modern soil
1.40-1.79				2.5Y 3/2 very dark greyish brown sandy-gravelly clay. Frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions <0.06m. Sharp lower boundary.	Modern Soil / Made Ground	
1.79-2.00				Disturbed. 10YR 2/2 very dark brown sandy clay. Very humic. Wood fragment (0.05m) present at 1.79-1.84m as well as occasional small wood fragments (<0.002m) and shell/mollusc fragments throughout.	Organic Alluvium	Organic Alluvium with fresh water molluscs indicating the presence of a permanently wet slow moving/flowing body of water
2.00-2.25				VOID	VOID	
2.25-3.00				10YR 2/2 very dark brown soft slightly sandy clay. Very humic. Woody/fibrous band at 2.44-2.45m. Common mollusc/shells throughout. <i>Pisidium cf. Amnicum</i> present at 2.40m and <i>Bithynia Tentaculata</i> at 2.67m. Becomes more sandy and firm with depth (particularly from 2.67m). Occasional sub-angular stones <0.03m. Base at 3.00m.	Organic Alluvium	

### Recommendations

If further work were to be recommended, 2.25-2.80m has potential for the survival of palaeo-environmental indicators. This section is undisturbed and highly organic with a fibrous band between 2.44-2.45m. Molluscs are evident throughout this section as well, with *Pisidium cf. Amnicum* (2.40m) and *Bithynia Tentaculata* (2.67m) assessed as being present. This indicates a permanently wet slow moving/flowing body of water.



Location:		BH:4	WABH4	Comments: Norwich Borehole 4		
Level (top):		m OD				
Depth		Context	Samples	Sediment description	Interpretation	
Mono	mOD					
1.20-1.65				10 YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown sandy-gravelly silt (Made Ground). Frequent angular brick inclusions throughout. Particularly chalk rich 1.40-1.60m. Occasional charcoal inclusions. Gradual lower boundary.	Made Ground	Made Ground – modern soil
1.65-2.00				2.5Y 3/1 very dark grey firm sandy silt. Frequent sub-rounded stone inclusions <0.02m.	Modern Soil / Made Ground	
2.00-2.25				VOID	VOID	
2.25-2.45				2.5Y 3/1 very dark grey soft sandy silt. Occasional sub-rounded stone <0.02m. Gradual lower boundary.	Alluvium	Organic Alluvium with fluctuations in water speed
2.45-2.66				10YR 2/2 very dark brown soft slightly sandy silt. Very organic rich. Becomes sandier with depth (2.64-2.66m sand rich lens). Gradual lower boundary.	Organic Alluvium	
2.66-2.80				7.5YR 2.5/3 very dark brown firm-stiff fibrous peat. Gradual lower boundary.	Peat	
2.80-2.90				10YR 3/2 very dark greyish brown soft humic clay. Gradual lower boundary.	Organic Alluvium	
2.90-3.00				5Y 3/2 dark olive grey firm clayey sand becoming gravelly sand by 2.94m. Frequent sub-angular stones <0.03m. Base at 3.00m.	Sand and Gravel	Fluvial sands and gravels

### Recommendations

If further work were to be recommended, 2.54-2.90m has potential for the survival of palaeo-environmental indicators. It is undisturbed and has a high organic content.



## 10.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-253577

### Project details

Project name	Hotel Nelson Premier Inn, Norwich, Norfolk
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology (WA) has been commissioned by Walsingham Planning on behalf of Whitbread Group Plc for an archaeological watching brief and geoarchaeological coring at Premier Inn, Norwich City Centre (centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 623735, 308419). An Archaeological Impact Assessment was undertaken, which established the likelihood of the presence of buried archaeological remains within the Site, in particular 19th century remains which may be sealed beneath up to 1.7 m of made ground. The Site has been granted planning permission (15/00990/FUL), subject to a number of conditions.
Project dates	Start: 29-03-2016 End: 27-05-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	15/00990/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	T20277 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	110240 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 2 - Other transport infrastructure

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK NORWICH NORWICH Hotel Nelson Premier Inn, Norwich, Norfolk
Postcode	NR1 1DX
Study area	0.1 Hectares
Site coordinates	TG 23735 08419 52.626839947267 1.306222727082 52 37 36 N 001 18 22 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Walsingham Planning
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology





Project director/manager	Caroline Budd
Project supervisor	Alexandra Grassam
Type of sponsor/funding body	Planning Consultants
Name of sponsor/funding body	Walsingham Planning

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### Project archives

Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Media available	"Diary", "Photograph", "Report", "Context sheet"

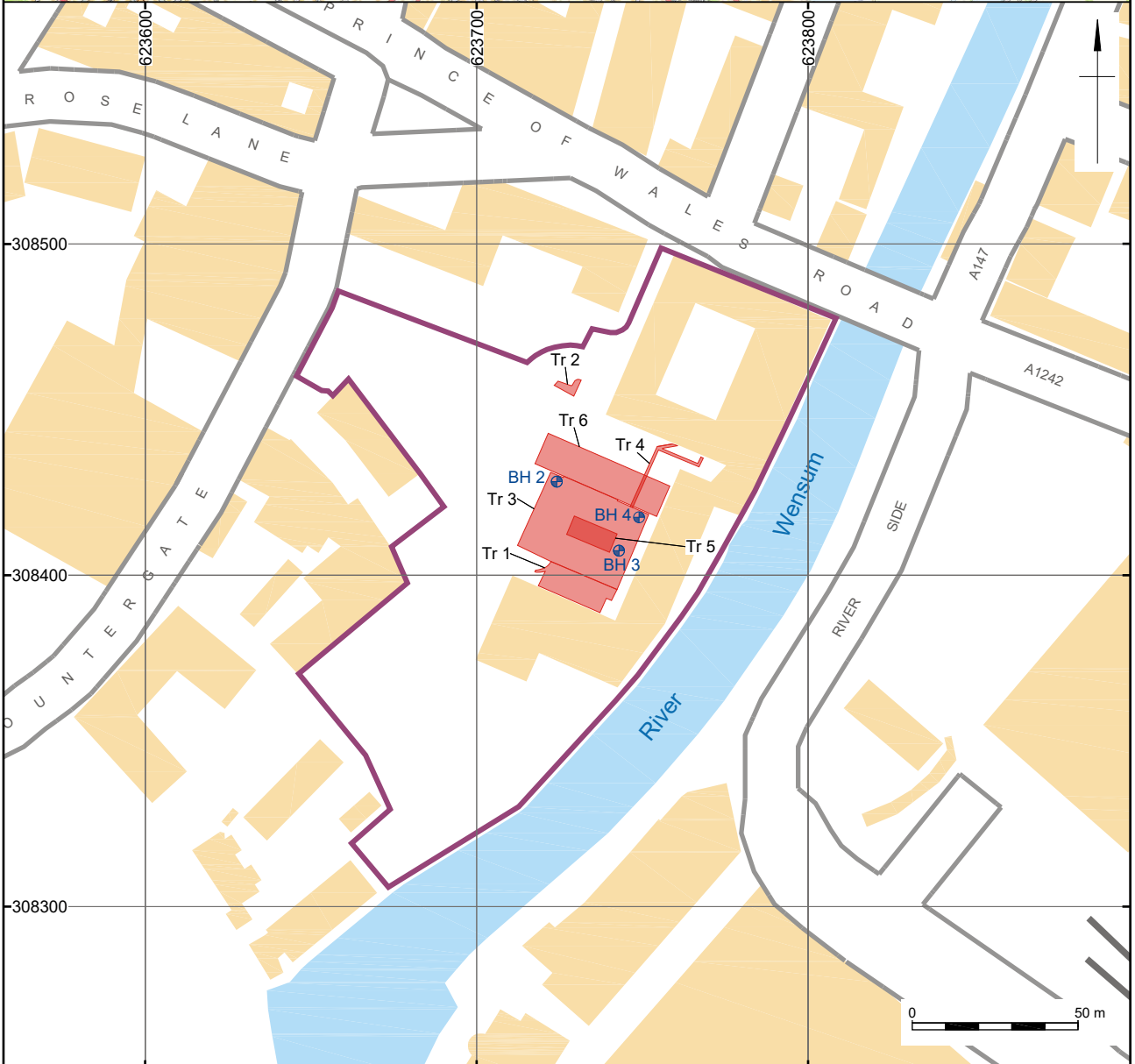
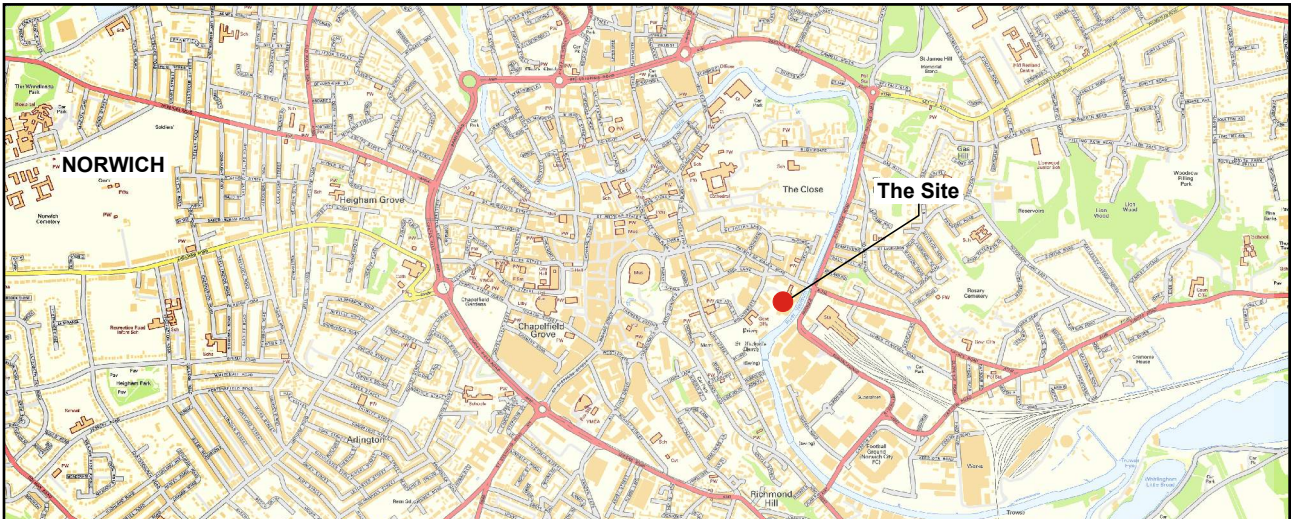
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### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Hotel Nelson Premier Inn, Norwich, Norfolk Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Holbrook, H.
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Sheffield
Description	A4 Comb bound document

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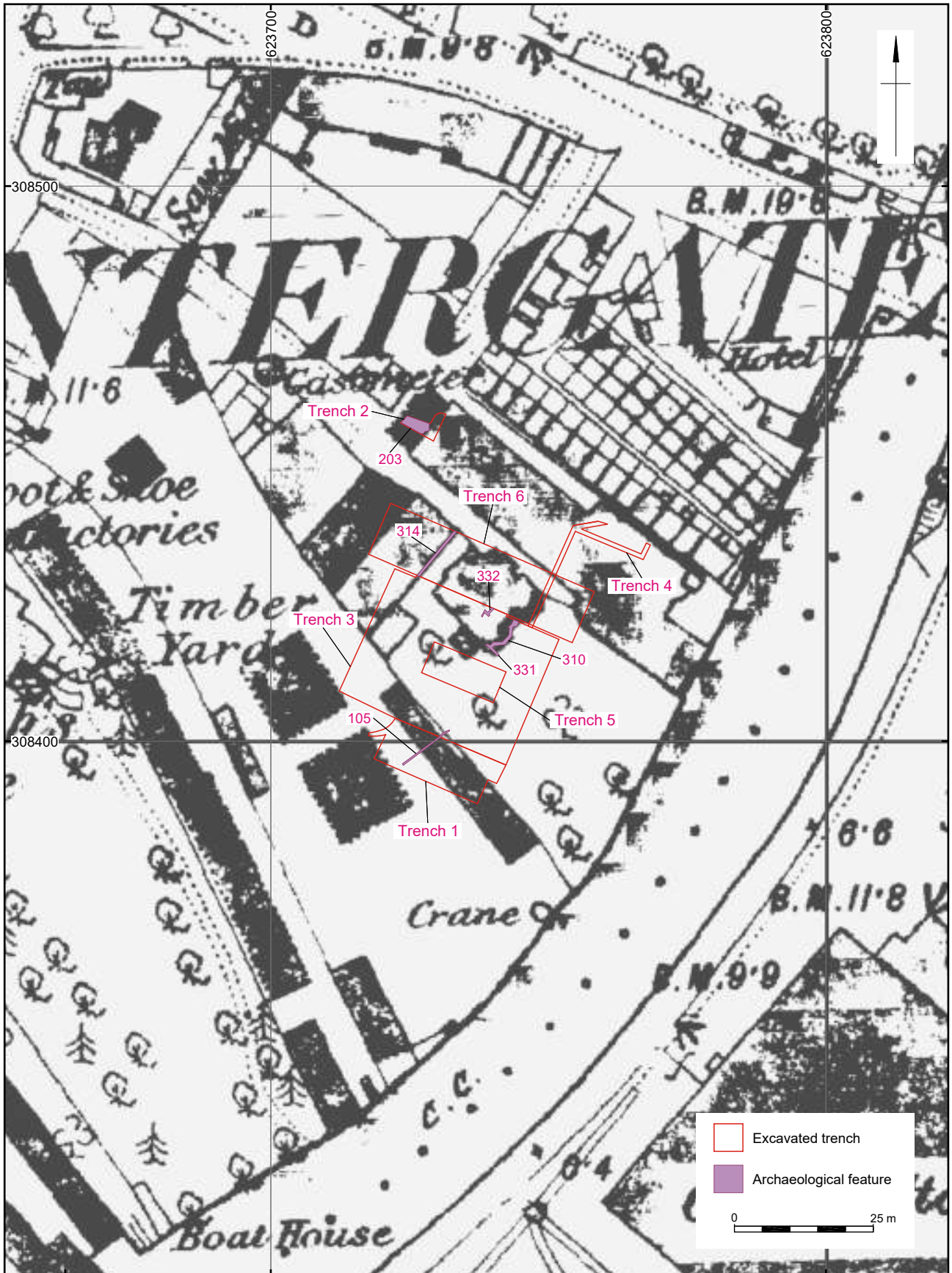
Entered by	Hannah Holbrook (a.tuck@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	16 June 2016



	<span style="color: red;">■</span> Watching brief area <span style="border: 1px solid purple; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Proposed development area <span style="color: blue;">⊕</span> Borehole location		
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Path: Y:\Projects\110240\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\WB\2017_11_08			

Site location

Figure 1



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Date:	27/11/2017	Revision Number:	1
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Path:	Y:\Projects\110240\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\WB\2017_11_08		

Trench location showing archaeological features

Figure 2



Plate 1: Drain 105, viewed from the south-west



Plate 2: Cobbled surface 203, viewed from the north-west


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Plate 3: Structure 310 and garden soil 326, viewed from the east



Plate 4: Structures 310, 331 and 332, viewed from the north-west



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Plate 5: Structure 314, viewed from the north-west

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