making sense of heritage

11-17 Mill Lane
Newbury, Berkshire

Historic Building Record

Ref: 108841.02
January 2016

heritage

11-17 Mill Lane
Newbury, Berkshire

Historic Building Record

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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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11-17 Mill Lane
Newbury, Berkshire

Historic Building Record

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Kendall Kingscott Limited on behalf of the Trustees of The Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke, to undertake a programme of Historic Building Recording (HBR) prior to the development of 11-17 Mill Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5SR and adjacent land. Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the existing terrace of four almshouses and replacement with sixteen one and two bedroom flats. A condition of planning permission was that prior to demolition, the building should be recorded to Level 1-2 as defined by Historic England (formerly English Heritage).

The terrace of four two-storey houses is located on the south side of Mill Lane surrounded by front and rear gardens. The houses are arranged in mirrored pairs situated on either side of a central gable which projects forward from both the front and rear elevations. The central gable has an arched passage through the terrace at ground floor level providing access to the rear gardens.

The terrace was constructed in 1926 at which time it was conveyed by Mrs Mabel Luke to be used as Almshouses. This is indicated by a stone plaque which is fixed upon a projecting central gable. The terrace appears for the first time on the 1934 Ordnance Survey map of the area.

The terrace comprises a double-pitch mansard roof clad in tile, projecting over the ground floor on all sides. The first floor of the building is situated within the roof. Together the terraced houses are rectangular in plan of painted brick construction. The terrace measures approximately 30 m in length and 6 m in width. The exterior elevations and internal spaces of the houses are mirrored along the central arched passage. All internal doors, fixtures and fittings appear to be of modern design, although the terrace retains some original features of its late 1920s construction.

The recording exercise involved photography, survey drawings of the existing site plan as well as a brief written description of the almshouses, which has created a record of the structures for posterity. Wessex Archaeology carried out the recording in December 2015.

11-17 Mill Lane
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Historic Building Record

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Kendall Kingscott Limited on behalf of the Trustees of The Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke, and is grateful to Stephen Reed and William Piner in this regard. Thanks are also due to Alex Godden, Archaeological Officer of West Berkshire Council, for his assistance.

The building was documented by Grace Flood and Vijaya Pieterson, who wrote this report. Illustrations were provided by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Matt Rous.

11-17 Mill Lane
Newbury, Berkshire

Historic Building Record

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Kendall Kingscott Limited on behalf of the Trustees of The Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke (hereafter 'the Client'), to undertake a programme of Historic Building Recording prior to the development of 11-17 Mill Lane, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5SR (hereafter 'the Site') and adjacent land. The Site comprises a terrace of four, two-storey almshouses which is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) 447480 167025.

1.1.2 Planning permission has been granted by West Berkshire Council (WBC) (Ref: 15/00170/FUL) for the demolition of the existing four almshouses and replacement with sixteen one and two bedroom flats, subject to condition 17, which states:

17. No demolition/ site works/ development shall take place within the application area until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved statement.

Reason: To ensure that an adequate record is made of these buildings of architectural, historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the NPPF 2012.

1.1.3 Following discussions with Alex Godden, Archaeological Officer at West Berkshire Council (AOWBC), an English Heritage (EH)/Historic England (HE) Level 1-2 survey of the almshouses was required to ensure they were adequately documented prior to their removal. Levels of record are described in the document: *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (EH 2006).

1.1.4 Prior to the commencement of the works, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2015) was submitted to and approved by the AAOWBC.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site is located on the south side of Mill Lane within the town of Newbury, Berkshire. It is on the eastern edge of the historic core of the town and just outside the Conservation Area which encompasses the centre of Newbury and stretches of the Kennet and Avon canal to the east and west (**Figure 1**). The Site comprises a terrace of four almshouses with front and rear gardens.

1.2.2 The Site is bounded to the north by Mill Lane, opposite housing and the Police Station and Magistrates Court beyond. It is bounded to the east by the garden plots of houses on Denmark Road, to the south by properties on the north side of Kings Road and to the west

a modern detached range of flats on Mill Lane set slightly back from the road. The Site is situated at an elevation of approximately 76 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and objectives

2.1.1 The aims of the Historic Building Recording (HBR) excercise were to make a permanent record of the locally important almshouses prior to their demolition and that the results should be made available to interested parties.

2.1.1 This is a basic visual record of the subject in accordance with the guidelines for Level 1-2 recording as detailed in the document: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (EH 2006). Levels 1-2 are defined as follows:

2.1.2 *'Level 1 is essentially a **basic visual record**, supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type. This is the simplest record…Level 1 surveys will generally be of exteriors only, although they may include superficial interior inspection for significant features.'*

2.1.3 *Level 2 is a '**descriptive record**…Both the exterior and the interior will be viewed, described and photographed. The record will present conclusions regarding the building's development and use, but will not discuss in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project.'* (English Heritage 2006, 14)

2.2 Fieldwork methodology

2.2.1 The historic building record comprises a photographic survey, metric building survey, depicting the 'as existing' site plans, and brief written descriptions of the almshouses.

Photographic Survey

2.2.2 High quality digital images were taken with a Canon EOS 5D Mark II full frame digital camera (with 21 megapixel capability). A photographic scale of appropriate size was included in all general and specific detailed views, except where considered inappropriate or prevented by on-site conditions or health and safety concerns.

2.2.3 A selection of the photographs is included in this report.

Drawn record

2.2.4 The drawn record comprised the production of measured and drawn floor plans of the almshouses which were surveyed in real time onto a Tablet PC running AutoCAD software. Measurements were taken with a Leica Distometer and traditional hand measuring techniques. Floor plans of the terrace are included in this report (Figures 2-3).

Documentary research

2.2.5 A brief background history of the site and historic mapping is reproduced from the previous report: 11-17 Mill Lane, Newbury, Berkshire: Heritage Impact Assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2015).

Site visit

2.2.6 The site was recorded on the 7th and 8th of December, 2015. The weather was overcast at the time, offering sufficient light and few shadows, with occasional outbreaks of rain. At

the time of the survey, internal access was not granted for 17 Mill Lane as the tenants, while still occupying the property, were not at home and alternative access was not possible.

3 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

3.1 Site development mid-19th century – early 20th century

3.1.1 Prior to the construction of the almshouses, the Greenham parish Tithe map and apportionment dated 1840 (**Figure 2**) shows the Site location was then part of a large plot (no. 386), devoid of structures, which extended between Mill Lane and what is now King's Road. The plot was owned and occupied by gardener Thomas Smith and described as a garden. Smith also owned and occupied plot 385 on the north side of Mill Lane, which comprised a house, garden, yard and outbuildings as well as other garden plots including 389 to the south of King's Road.

3.1.2 On the 1880 Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 2**), the area bounded by Mill Lane, Greenham Lane (now Kings Road) and Boundary Road is depicted as system of fields that vary in size and shape. The site location was then occupied by a series of tree-lined tracks including one between Mill Lane and Greenham Lane, which suggests the area was used as a public garden or park.

3.1.3 By 1900, the area bounded by Mill Lane, Kings Road and Boundary Road had been partially infilled with housing developments. This included the establishment of Denmark Road with its series of terraced houses and other terraces accessed from King's Road and Boundary Road. A semi-detached structure had also been built at the junction of King's Road and Mill Lane, to the west of the site. The 1900 Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 2**) shows the Site itself as empty at this time.

3.1.4 The 1911 Ordnance Survey map (not reproduced) shows no changes to the Site since 1900. To the east of the Site there had been more development with Connaught Road and more terraced housing being constructed off of Mill Lane.

3.2 Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke

3.2.1 On January 13th 1928 the Site was conveyed to Mrs Mabel Luke as freehold land. On the 24th October 1928 Mrs Mabel Luke conveyed the freehold land and a terrace of four cottages "to be used for housing of the working classes with preference to those living in the borough of Newbury or Greenham" (Tubb, 2011). This places the date of the Almhouses construction as 1928. This charitable act is commemorated by the date stone above the central passage in the terrace inscribed 'M. L. 1928'.

3.2.2 The almshouses on the Site first appear on the Ordnance Survey 1934 edition map (**Figure 2**), which shows no changes to the plot boundaries have occurred since then. Between 1911 and 1934, the majority of the area between Mill Lane, Denmark Road and King's Road was infilled with large detached and semi-detached houses fronting King's Road. Only two plots remained without buildings, one is the vacant plot within the Site and the other is on the west side of Denmark Road. The latter is currently used as allotments.

3.2.3 Mabel Luke purchased the land from the Trustees of the Charity of Miss Martha Smith in the Chapelry of Greenham in the Parish of Thatcham. The land was divided into 16 plots, one being on the north side of Mill Lane, of which Mrs Mabel Luke bought 5 Plots. The 4 houses were built on three plots and the spare land comprised two plots (William Piner pers. comm.).

3.2.4 The plot adjacent to and West of Denmark Road is now sub-divided into Gardens (rather than allotments) owned by houses no.s 6 to 19 Denmark Road and 30 Mill Lane. It is assumed that the residents in Denmark Road collectively bought the building plot (William Piner pers. comm.).

3.2.5 The first almshouse tenants are recorded in Mrs Mabel Luke's Charity minute book (first meeting dated 18th October 1928). Inspection of street directories show the tenancies tended to be longstanding as two of the original tenants still occupied almshouses (nos. 13 and 17) in the 1970s (Kelly's directories of Newbury, various dates).

3.2.6 The minute book also includes annual account statements that list the tenants and various rents due. This indicates that the vacant land at the west end of the site used to be an unoccupied garden containing apple trees. The apples were sold as income for the charity in addition to the various rents (Mrs Mabel Luke's Charity minute book, Statement of accounts dated 1st March 1930).

3.2.7 In 1982, it was reported to the Greenham parish council indicated that the almshouses had become treated as ordinary council houses. Therefore, a new scheme of trusteeship was devised with co-opted members as well as representatives from Newbury District and Greenham Parish Councils.

4 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The descriptions of the four almshouses recorded at Mill Lane, Newbury are complimentary to and should be seen in conjunction with the photographs (**Plates 1-15**) and floor plans (**Figures 3-4**) of the buildings.

4.1.2 In brief, the buildings at 11-17 Mill Lane comprise a two-storey terrace of four houses, constructed in 1928 at which time the terrace was conveyed by Mrs Mabel Luke to be used as almshouses. The appearance of the terrace is one of classic 1920s suburban housing, designed in the Arts and Crafts style, and falls within the later period of development of almshouses in Newbury, when many were built as new or additional housing for existing charities. However, numbers 11-17 Mill Lane were specifically built for the newly established Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke and targeted families with children.

4.2 The Terrace

4.2.1 The terrace is rectangular in plan measuring 30.48 m (100 ft) in length by 5.94 m (19½ ft) in width. The structure is oriented approximately north-east to south-west along its long axis. Construction is of painted brick with a double-pitch mansard roof clad in hung tile that projects over the ground floor on all sides. The first floor of the building is within the roof, with its gables rendered to first floor level (**Plates 1-3**).

4.2.2 The houses are arranged in pairs on either side of a central gable which projects forward from both the front and rear elevations (**Plate 4**). The central gable has an arched passage through the terrace at ground floor level (**Plate 5**). A stone plaque is fixed on the north-west front of the central gable above the passage and below a two-light awning window. The plaque is a shield in relief inscribed 'M.L.1928', depicting the completion of the houses

4.2.3 The terrace has two brick chimney stacks centred between each pair of houses on either side of the arched passage. Each chimney stack contains two flues, one serving each house (**Figures 2 and 3**).

4.2.4 The fenestration is regular and symmetrical, mirrored on the centre of the front elevation. The windows on the ground floor range from four-light casement and awning to single casement types on the front elevation, with four and three-light casement and awning and two-light awning windows on the rear elevation and two-light awning windows on the side elevations.

4.2.5 The first floor has dormer windows that extend from the roof. These include two pairs of projecting gabled dormer windows, each pair set to either side of the central gabled entrance (**Plate 1**). The windows on the first floor range from three and four-light casement and awning types on the front and rear elevations with the inclusion of single casements on the front elevation. The central projecting gable has a single two-light awning window at first floor level on both its front and rear elevations. None of the original window frames survive, they have been replaced throughout by modern uPVC frames.

4.2.6 Pedestrian access into the terrace of houses is via eight external doors, two serving each house: four on the front elevation, two on the rear elevation and one on each side elevation. They are of the same multi-paned glazed types in a timber frame with a timber canopy overhead and matching door furniture (**Plate 4**). Their uniformity suggests they are original to the structure and their style is consistent with the date and style of the terrace.

4.2.7 Each house has a front and rear garden. The front gardens on numbers 11 and 17 are separated from Mill Lane by an approximately 0.7 m high fence which differs in type and the gardens of 13 and 15 are bounded by a hedge roughly 1 to 1.5 m in height. The terrace and gardens are approached from the north-west through a centrally placed gate with brick pillars.

4.3 13 and 15 Mill Lane

4.3.1 Numbers 13 and 15 Mill Lane are centred on Ordnance Survey NGR 47468 67032 and 47475 67035 respectively. **Plates 6-12** provide a basic visual record of the interior of both houses.

4.3.2 The exterior elevations and internal layout of 13 and 15 are mirrored symmetrically along the central arched passage. Both houses are centrally located in the terrace, with one on either side of the passage (**Plate 4)**. Pedestrian access into each house is via a 'front door' on the north-west elevation and a 'back door' on the south-east elevation.

4.3.3 Internally, the ground floors of 13 and 15 Mill Lane have been subdivided into a living room, kitchen, entrance hall/stairwell and W.C. The focal point of the living room is a chimney breast with a sealed fireplace, onto which a radiator has been fixed (**Plate 6**). The chimney breasts of numbers 13 and 15 are on party walls and therefore the fireplaces back onto their neighbouring houses. The first floor has been subdivided into three bedrooms, and a W.C. The rooms are arranged around an axial staircase running parallel to the width of the terrace (**Figure 2 and 3**). A small cupboard containing a water heater is located in Bedroom 1 of both 13 and 15 Mill Lane. Bedroom 1 of number 15 and Bedroom 3 of number 13 are both extended to share the first floor of the projecting central gable (**Plates 9 and 10**).

4.3.4 In keeping with the Arts and Crafts style, exposed and painted ceiling joists span the entire length of the ground floors and are supported by load bearing partition walls (**Plates 6-8**). A number of internal doors appear to be original late 1920s design comprising panelled doors with single high upper panel and three lower vertical panels (**Plate 7**), although the houses retain few other original features.

4.4 11 and 17 Mill Lane

4.4.1 Numbers 11 and 17 Mill Lane are centred on Ordnance Survey NGR 47461 67029 and 47483 67038, respectively. No inspection was made of the interior of 17 Mill Lane due to restricted access. It is assumed that the internal arrangement symmetrically mirrors the interior of number 11 however, this has not been confirmed. **Plates 13-15** provide a basic visual record of the interior of 11 Mill Lane only.

4.4.2 The exterior elevations (and likely the internal layout) of numbers 11 and 17 are mirrored symmetrically, along the central arched passage. Both houses are located on the opposing ends of the terrace with number 11 occupying the south-west end and number 17 occupying the north-east end. Pedestrian access into each house is via a 'front door' on the north-west elevation and a 'back door' on the side elevations.

4.4.3 Internally, the ground floor of 11 Mill Lane has been subdivided into a living room, kitchen, hall/stairwell and W.C. The focal point of the living room is a chimney breast with a sealed fireplace, onto which a radiator has been fixed (**Plate 14**). The chimney breast of number 11 is on a party wall and therefore its sealed fireplace backs onto the fireplace of number 13 Mill Lane. The first floor has been subdivided into three bedrooms and a WC. The rooms are arranged around a staircase fixed centrally against the north-west wall running parallel to the length of the terrace (**Figure 2 and 3**). A small cupboard containing a water heater is located in Bedroom 1.

4.4.4 Exposed ceiling joists run longitudinally across the ground floor and are supported by load bearing partition walls (**Plate 14**). The joists that span the kitchen are additionally supported by a bressummer set slightly off-centre (**Plate 13**).

4.4.5 All internal doors, fixtures and fittings appear to be of modern design, although the terrace retains some features of its original 1920s construction.

5 STORAGE AND CURATION

5.1 Archive Preparation and Deposition

5.1.1 Following approval of the report by the AOWBC, a copy of the final report will be supplied to the West Berkshire Museum and West Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

5.1.2 The complete site archive includes paper records and digital photographic and drawn records. No other depositable archives were generated during the project.

5.1.3 Details of the Site will be submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.

5.2 Security Copy

5.2.1 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.

5.2.2 For small projects we may retain only digital copy of the records. The digital records will be submitted to the HER, with a copy retained in the Wessex Archaeology security-copied and backed-up digital archive storage facility, under its designated Wessex Archaeology project code 108841.

5.3 Copyright

5.3.1 Wessex Archaeology shall retain full copyright of this report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the Client for the use of the report by the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements may be copied for development control, planning and educational purposes without recourse to the Copyright owner, the copyright owner to be given full acknowledgment in any reproduction of material.

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6 REFERENCES

6.1 Bibliography

Brown, D. H., 2011: *Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)

English Heritage, 2006: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*

Tubb, R. B., 2011: *Newbury Road by Road*, Henwick Worthy Books

Wessex Archaeology, 2015: *11-17 Mill Lane, Newbury, Berkshire: Heritage Impact Assessment.* Wessex Archaeology unpublished client report ref: 108840.

6.2 Cartographic and Documentary Sources

Berkshire Record Office (BRO)

1840 Greenham tithe map (BRO ref. D/D1/130B)

1880 Ordnance Survey 25” (1:2,500)

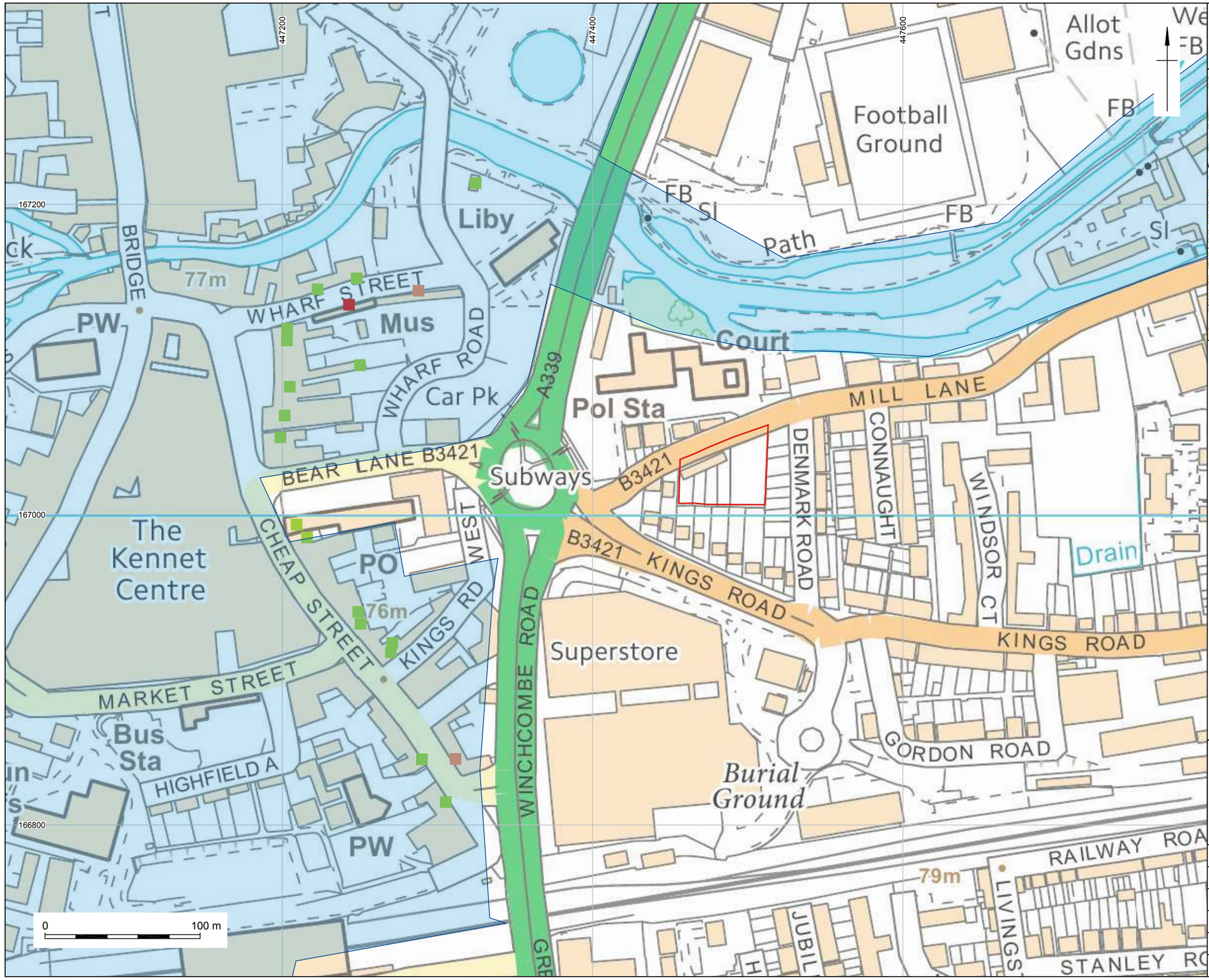
1900 Ordnance Survey 25” (1:2,500)

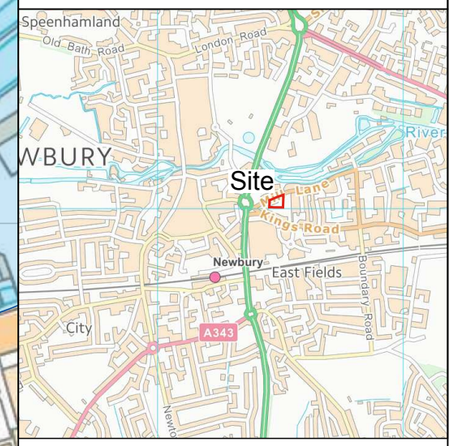
1911 Ordnance Survey 25” (1:2,500)

1934 Ordnance Survey 25” (1:2,500)

British Geological Survey http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html

Mrs Mabel Luke’s Charity minute book, 1928-1968. BRO reference DQ/12/1/1





Site
Conservation Area

Listed buildings
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II

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Revision Number:	0
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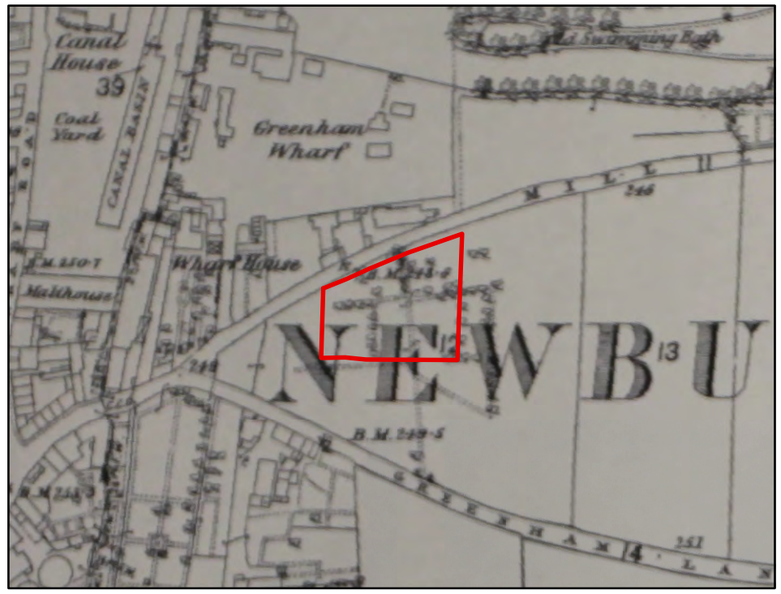
Site location plan

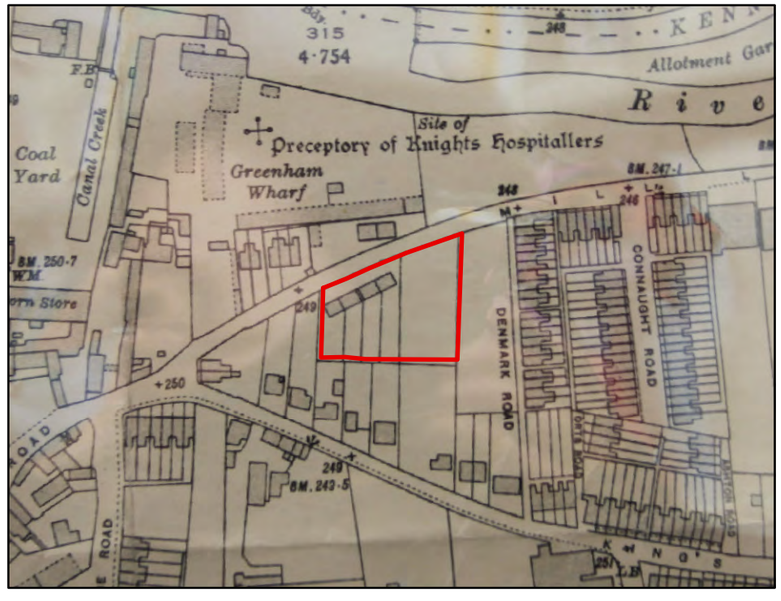
Figure 1

A. 1840 Greenham Tithe map



B. 1880 Ordnance Survey map

C. 1900 Ordnance Survey map



D. 1934 Ordnance Survey map

The Site (approx.)

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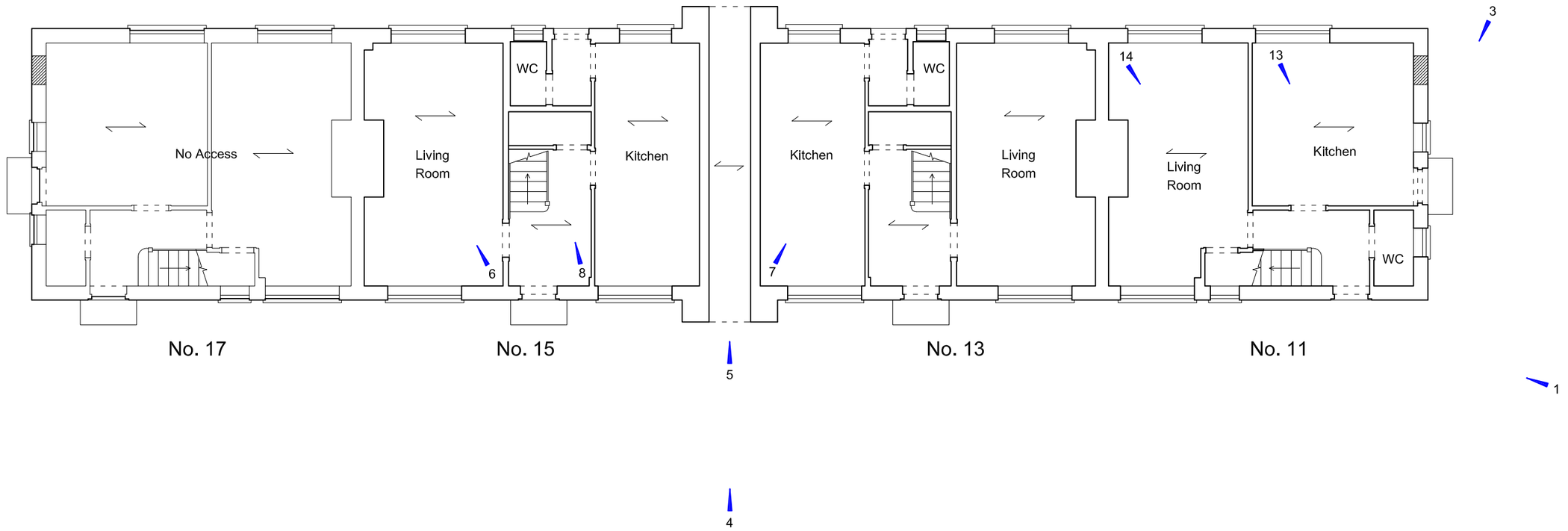
Historic mapping 1840-1934

Figure 2



Metres 1 0 10

5 0 30 Feet

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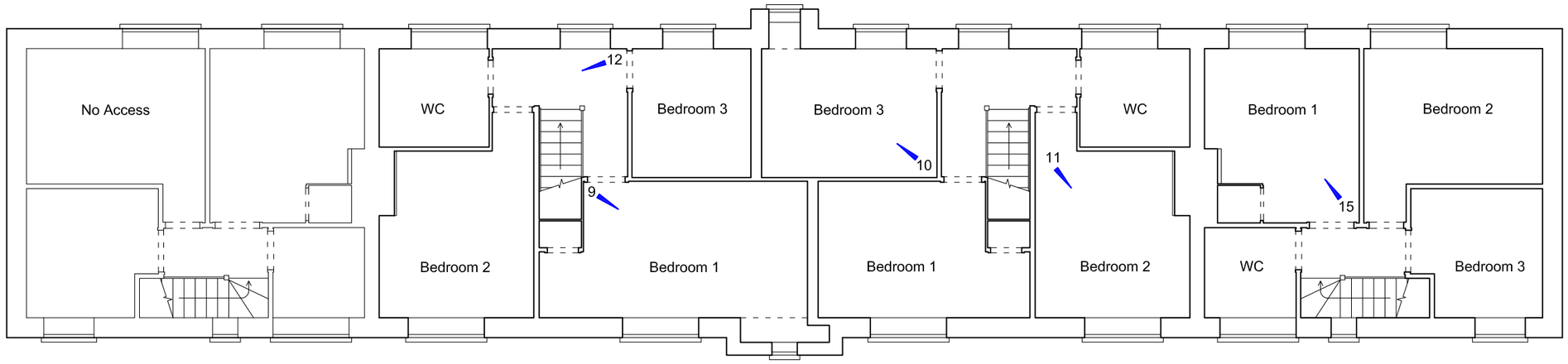
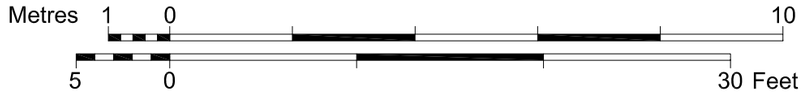
Ground floor plan of 11-17 Mill Lane

Figure 3





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First floor plan of 11-17 Mill Lane

Figure 4

Plate 1: Oblique view of the north-west and south-west elevations from across Mill Lane

Plate 2: Oblique view of the north-west and north-east elevations showing the front gardens and approach to No. 17 Mill Lane

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Plate 3: South-west elevation of No. 11 Mill Lane

Plate 4: North-west elevations of Nos. 13 and 15 showing central gable and arched passage

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Plate 5: View from the north-west of the arched passage

Plate 6: East-facing view of the living room on the ground floor of No. 15

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Plate 7: South-facing view of the kitchen on the ground floor of No. 13

Plate 8: East-facing view of the entrance hall/ stairwell on the ground floor of No. 15

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Plate 9: West-facing view of bedroom 1 on the first floor of No.15, extended over the central arch

Plate 10: East-facing view of bedroom 3 on the first floor of No.13, extended over the central arch

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Plate 11: View from the east of bedroom 1 on the first floor of No. 13

Plate 12: View from the south of the stair landing on the first floor of No. 15

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Plate 13: West-facing view of the kitchen on the ground floor of No. 11 with ceiling joists supported on a summer beam

Plate 14: West facing view of the living room and under-stairs cupboard of No. 11

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Plate 15: View from the south-east of the living room on the ground floor of No. 11

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