

HERITAGE NETWORK



QUEENS COURT **Downing Close, Bottisham, Cambridgeshire**

HN564

Archaeological Monitoring Report



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

QUEENS COURT Downing Close, Bottisham, Cambridgeshire

HN564

Archaeological Monitoring Report

Prepared on behalf of Hereward Housing Ltd.

by

David Kaye, BA PIFA

Report no. 420

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The cover illustration shows the main bedroom block under construction, looking west

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by David Kaye and Geoff Saunders under the supervision of Chris Turner. The report text and illustrations were prepared by David Kaye. The report was edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Mark Osborne, Herewood Housing Association Ltd; Jason Starling, Farrans (Construction) Ltd; Kasia Gdaniec and the staff of Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Queens Court, Downing Close, Bottisham, Cambs		
County:	Cambridgeshire	District:	East Cambridgeshire
Village/town:	Bottisham	Parish:	Bottisham
Planning reference:	E/05/00548/FUL	NGR:	TL 5450 6060
Client name and address:	Hereward Housing, St. Mary's Lodge, St. Mary's Street, Ely, Cambs, CB7 4EY		
Nature of work:	New Bedroom blocks	Former land use:	Garden & bungalow
Site status:	None	Reason for investigation:	Direction of local planning authority (PPG 16)
Position in planning process:	After full determination (as a condition)	Project brief originator:	Local authority
Size of affected area:	c.534m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.534m ²
Site Code:	HN564	Other reference:	ECB2134
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.:	Archaeological monitoring	Archive recipient:	Cambs Council Heritage Services
Start of work	22/06/2006	Finish of work	17/04/2007
Related SMR Nos:	n/a	Periods represented:	n/a
Oasis UID	heritage1-30370	Significant finds:	No significant finds
Monument types:	n/a		
Physical archive:	n/a		
Previous summaries/reports:	n/a		

In response to a condition on the planning permission for the demolition of the existing workshops and construction of 21 residential units with associated parking spaces, access, a new footpath and landscaping at Queens Court, Bottisham, Cambridgeshire. the Heritage Network was commissioned by Hereward Housing Association Ltd to undertake the archaeological monitoring of the development groundworks.

The site appears to have been heavily truncated and landscaped, probably during the construction of the existing buildings. Despite the site's proximity to known medieval archaeology within 1000m of the site, and evidence of earlier settlement from the prehistoric, Iron Age and Roman periods, no cut features, deposits or artefacts were encountered from any period during this project, and no unstratified artefacts were recovered from the spoil.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on the behalf of *Hereward Housing Ltd*, as part of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording of development works at Queens Court, Downing Close, Bottisham, Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The investigation was a requirement of the planning consent granted by the East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC), under the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990), for the development (planning ref. E/05/00548/FUL). The extent of the work was defined in an *Archaeological Brief* prepared by the *Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice* (CAPCA) section of Cambridge County Council (ref. KG 02/11/2005), acting as archaeological advisers to the ECDC. The work followed the specification set out in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design dated December 2005.

1.3 The site lies in the historic core of Bottisham, on the west side of the Downing Close centred on NGR TL 5450 6060 (Figure 1). The site is occupied by care home facilities, which consisted of a large courtyard building, with a bungalow in the south eastern corner. The development included the demolition of the bungalow and the extension of the main building, together with associated car parking and landscaping (Figure 2).

1.4 The aim of the monitoring programme has been to identify and record any archaeological features and deposits which might have been uncovered, and to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual elements which would allow the date, character, and significance of the site to be assessed in accordance with current regional research agenda (Brown and Glazebrook, 2000), and subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

1.5 The present report describes the findings of the monitoring programme and is intended, together with the deposition of the site archive with Cambridgeshire County Archaeological Store, to complete the requirements of the planning condition.

2. Fieldwork

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The site lies on level ground bounded by Downing Close to the east and residential properties on all other sides. The site area covers approximately 4968m², of which approximately 534m² required archaeological monitoring.

2.2 The soils of the area belong to the Swaffham Priory association (511e) which are described as being “well drained calcareous coarse, and fine loamy” in constituency. The underlying natural geology of the area is chalk. (SSEW 1983).

METHODOLOGY

2.3 The timetable for the fieldwork followed the client’s groundwork schedule. A number of site visits were made to supervise the demolition of an existing bungalow, areas of ground reduction, and the excavation of footings, drainage trenches, a lift shaft and a soakaway.

2.4 A 21 tonne, 360° tracked excavator was used to demolish the bungalow and grub up the footings. A tracked mini-digger, fitted with a variety of buckets, was used for the ground reduction and other groundworks.

2.5 Spoil from the various stages of the groundwork was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

2.6 The project was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the *Design Brief*, current health and safety legislation, IFA and ALGAO standards, and with the Heritage Network’s approved *Project Design*.

MONITORING AND RECORDING

Site Stratigraphy

2.7 The stratigraphy on the site consisted of 0.1m-1.2m of very dark grey (10YR 3/1) silty clay topsoil, overlying up to 0.3m of strong brown (7.5YR 4/6) sandy subsoil. The underlying natural geology was chalk.

Demolition

2.8 The demolition and grubbing up of the foundations of a late 20th century bungalow was monitored (Figure 2). The existing concrete was approximately 0.8m deep and cut the natural geology by 0.2m. No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Ground reduction

2.9 An area approximately 432m² was reduced by 0.3m-0.5m within the footprints of the small bedroom extension, the kitchen extension and the main bedroom block (Figure 2). The overburden, which consisted largely of topsoil, was not breached in any of these areas during this process.

Footings trenches

2.10 The footings trenches were excavated to a depth between 0.7m and 1.2m. The trenches associated with structural walls were 0.6m wide, and those for internal walls were 0.45m wide. All trenches were cut through the overburden into the natural chalk geology.

2.11 The stratigraphy of the trenches excavated for the small bedroom block varied. To the north of the footprint, closest to the existing building, it consisted of 0.6m to 0.7m of topsoil overlying 0.5m of made ground. At the southern end of the footprint, between 0.4m and 0.9m of topsoil overlay 0.3m of subsoil and the natural chalk geology. An existing soakaway was exposed during this phase of the ground works (Figure 3)

2.12 The stratigraphy of the trenches for the kitchen extension was identical to that encountered at the northern end of the bedroom block.

2.13 The overburden at the eastern side of the site, nearest to the Downing Close road surface, was 1.2m in depth. There was no subsoil between the silty clay topsoil and the natural chalk.

Drainage Trenches

2.14 The drainage trenches associated with the small bedroom block were monitored. They varied in depth between 1.0m and 1.7m, cutting through 1.0m of overburden into the natural chalk geology (Figure 4).

2.15 None of the trenching associated with the remaining drainage was of a sufficient depth to breach the overburden. It was therefore considered unnecessary to monitor this phase of the works.

Soakaway

2.16 A soakaway was excavated in the northeast corner of the site. It measured 3m square and was 2m in depth (Figure 4). The natural chalk geology was overlain by 1.0m to 1.2m of silty clay topsoil.

Lift Shaft

2.17 A 3m square lift shaft base was excavated close to the footprint of the demolished bungalow. Chalky sand was encountered at a depth of 0.8m. The area was heavily disturbed by modern service pipes associated with the bungalow (Figure 4).

2.18 No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during any of the groundworks. No unstratified finds were recovered from any of the spoil.

3. Discussion & Conclusion

3.1 The site lies within the historic core of the village, 50m to the north of the medieval Holy Trinity Church which has its origins in the 12/13th century (CHER 6730), and in a documented archaeological landscape. Evidence of occupation, dating from at least 10th century AD, has been recovered from the vicinity of the study area. Two scheduled ancient monuments (SAM) lie within a 1km radius of the site: a medieval moated site (SAM 33269), approximately 200m to the southwest, and the remains of a deserted medieval village (SAM CB71), c.1km to the north in Bottisham Park.

3.2 The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) details evidence of earlier occupation to the north, south and east of the present village. These include chance finds of prehistoric flint implements, including Neolithic axes (CHER 06610; 06556; 06531); an extensive Bronze Age barrow cemetery at Hare Park and Allington Hill (CHER 06757; SAM 33341; SAM 33342; SAM 33346) to the north and south of the village; and evidence for Roman occupation at the southern limits of Bottisham, comprising a series of enclosures and a villa site (SAM 374383).

3.3 The approved project design considered that this investigation had the potential to contribute to an understanding of a number of research themes for the region:

- the nature and extent of prehistoric activity in Bottisham, which may extend from the north and east onto the present site;
- the origins, development and growth of Iron Age and Roman occupation, and the economic influences on them;
- the transition from the Roman to the sub-Roman and early Medieval periods;
- the development, growth and decline of occupation through the Medieval and post-medieval periods.

3.4 The stratigraphy suggests that the site has undergone a considerable amount of landscaping, probably during the construction of the existing buildings and of Downing Close. A large amount of material appears to have been imported as levelling material, in the form of a mixture of chalk and clay, and up to 1.2m of topsoil. With the exception of the southern side of the small bedroom block, all of the footprints of the new buildings were located within areas of the site which had been effected by this process.

3.5 During the programme of groundworks no archaeological cut features or deposits were encountered, and no unstratified artefacts were recovered.

Conclusion

3.6 The monitoring carried out over the duration of the groundworks programme has demonstrated that the site has been significantly built up through the redepositing of natural chalk and clay and the importing of topsoil. This process created a raised ground level which formed the base for the construction of the existing buildings and Downing Close.

Confidence Rating

3.7 The conditions were generally good for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. There were no circumstances that would lead to a confidence rating for the work that was less than High.

4. Schedule of Site Visits

Date	Staff	Hours	Comments
22/06/06	DGK	6	Introduction & monitor ground reduction
26/06/06	DGK	6	Monitor footings trenches for small bedroom block
27/06/06	DGK	8	Monitor footings trenches for small bedroom block
29/06/06	DGK	2	Monitor footings trenches for small bedroom block
3/07/06	DGK	6	Monitor footings trenches for kitchen
4/07/06	DGK	3	Monitor footings trenches for kitchen
20/07/06	GIS	5	Monitor lift shaft
24/07/06	GIS	3	Monitor footings trenches for large bedroom block
25/07/06	CT	3	Inspect footings trenches for large bedroom block
27/07/06	CT	3	Inspect footings trenches for large bedroom block
28/07/06	DGK	4	Inspect footings trenches for large bedroom block
17/04/07	GIS	6	Monitor drainage trenches

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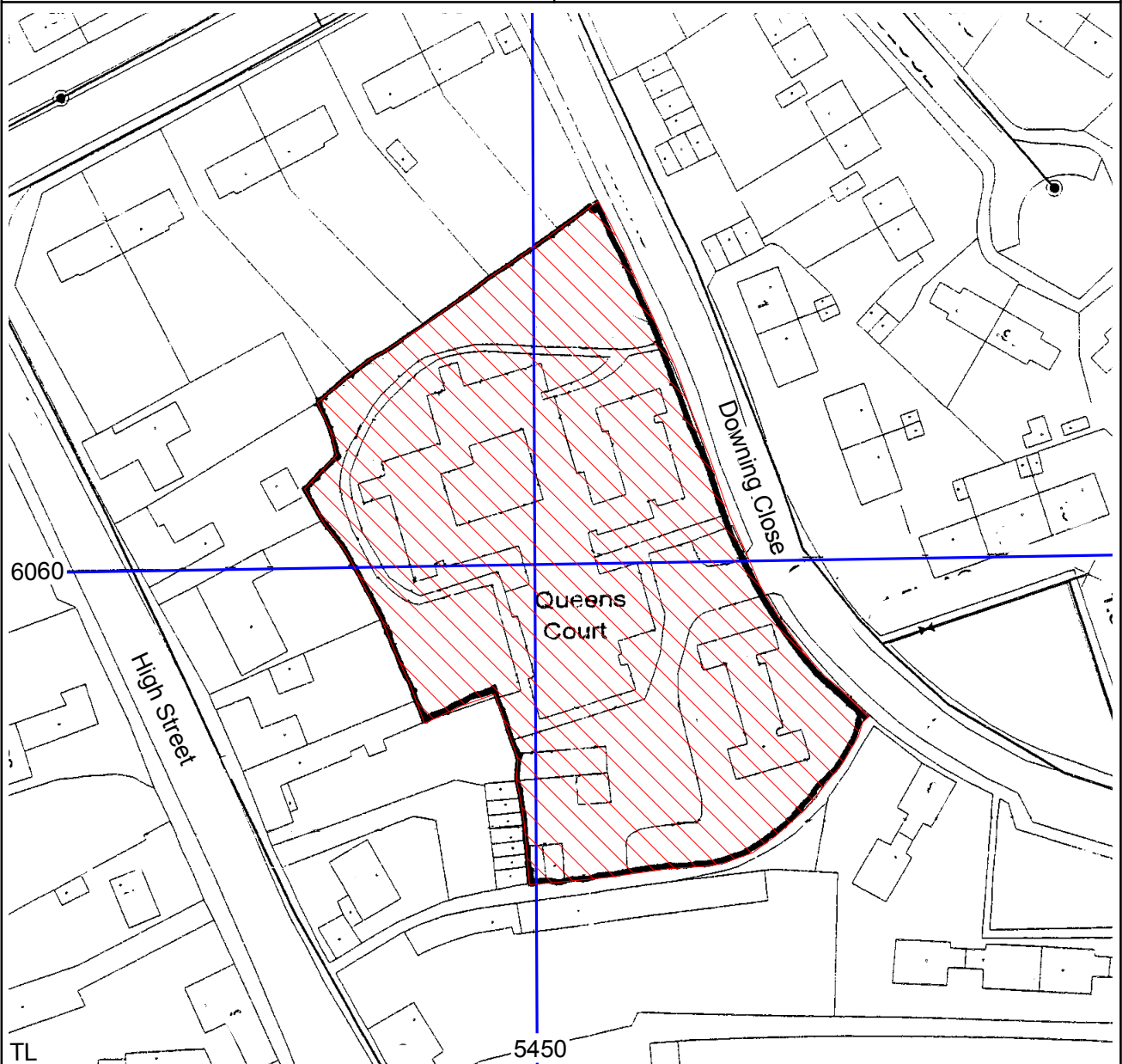
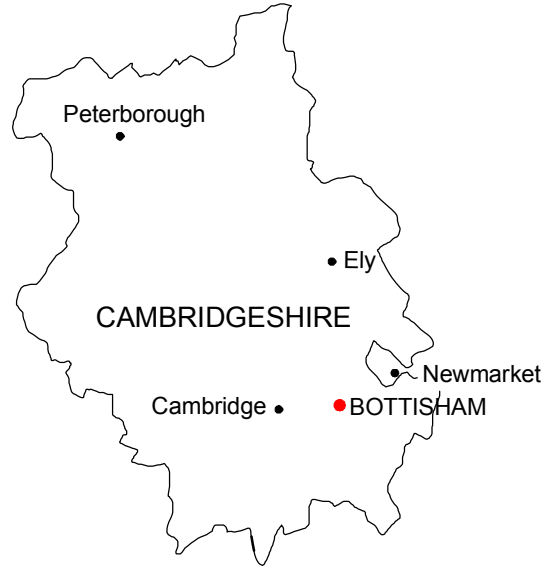
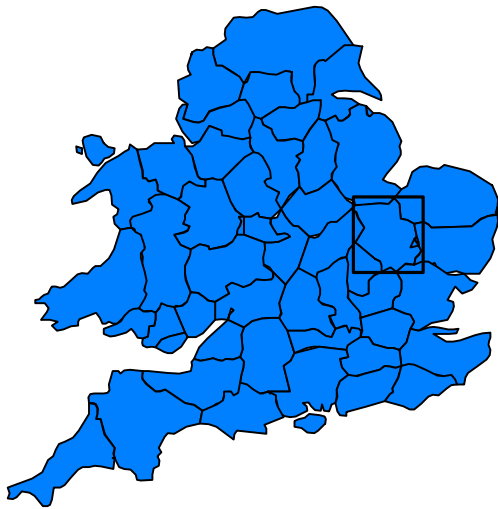
6. Illustrations

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Plate 2	Lift shaft, large bedroom block, looking west
Plate 3	Footings trenches, large bedroom block, looking east
Plate 4	Detail of footings trench, looking east

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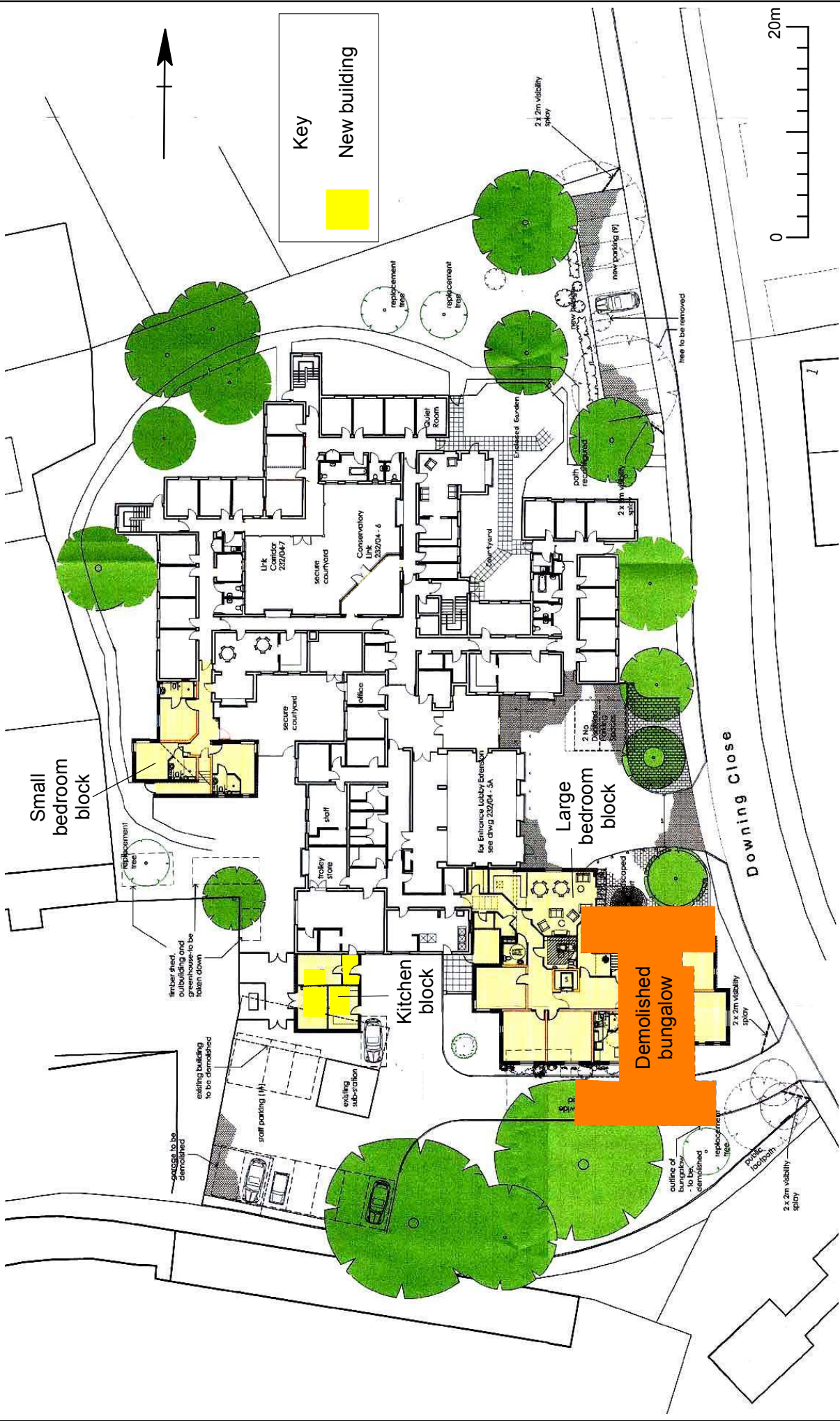


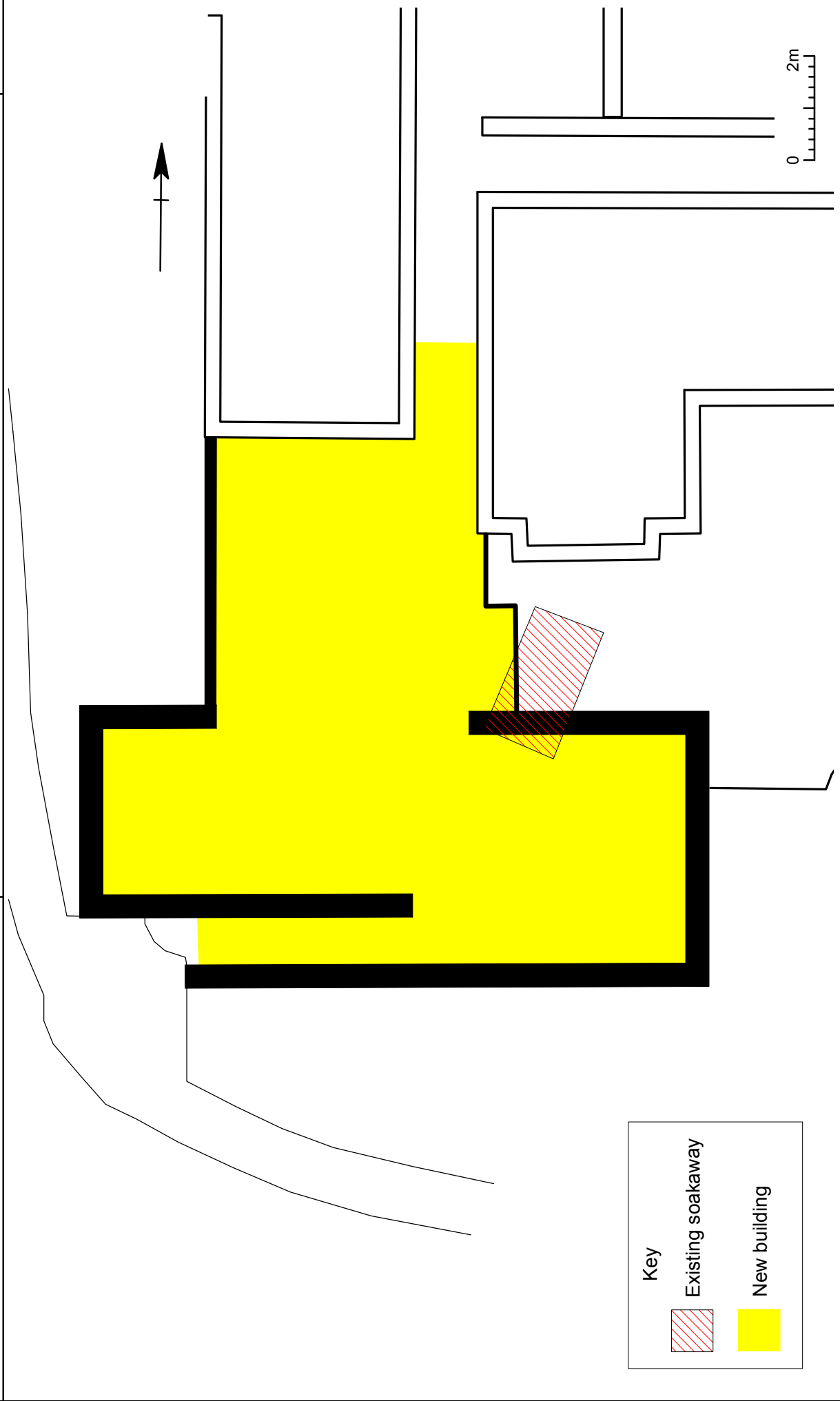
Site Location

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Figure 1

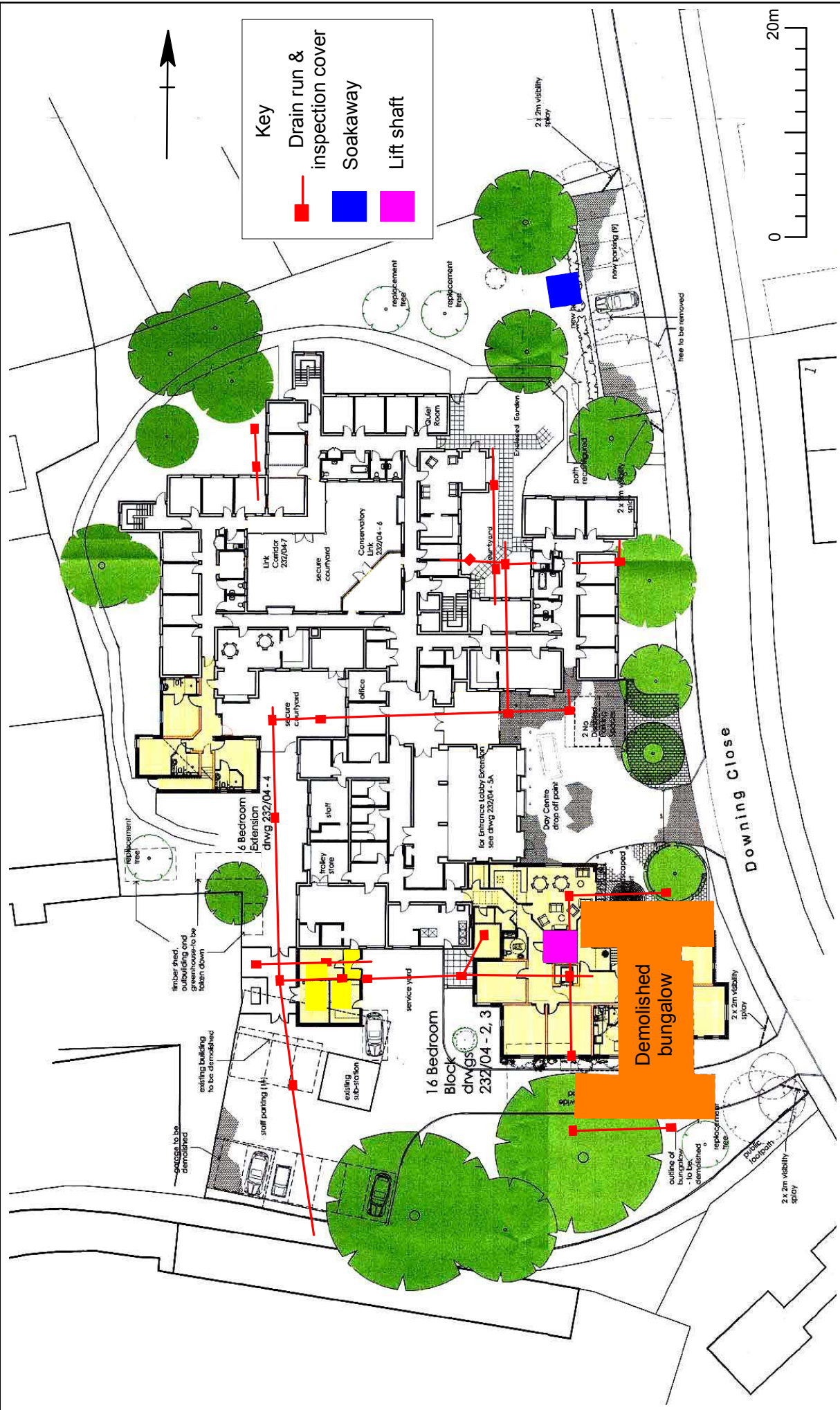




Small bedroom block extension

Scale 1:100

Figure 3



Main drainage runs, soakaway and lift shaft

Scale 1:500

Figure 4



Plate 1: Footings trench, small bedroom block, looking east



Plate 2: Lift shaft, large bedroom block, looking west



Plate 3: Footings trenches, large bedroom block, looking east



Plate 4: Footings trench, large bedroom block, detail, looking east