

Evaluation Report

on

The Fishing Smack,

92 Abbey Road, Barking,

Essex. IG11

ABI 07: (TQ 4410 8365)

for

Stienbex Ltd



Figure 1

Fishing Smack

Evaluation Report

on

The Fishing Smack,
92 Abbey Road, Barking
Essex, IG11.
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham,
ABI 07: (TQ 4410 8365)

J G PERRY: January 2008

Summary

Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Fishing Smack, 92 Abbey Road, Barking, IG11 between 13th to 17th December, 2007.

The site lay in an area of archaeological importance as defined in London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's Unitary Development Plan. Research by Sutton Archaeological Services for the research design indicated that there was Medieval archaeology and/or activity in the surrounding area.

One trench was excavated across the site revealing concrete above made ground over the natural clays.

There was no evidence for archaeology, other than modern, in the trench and the only finds were modern CBM.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage

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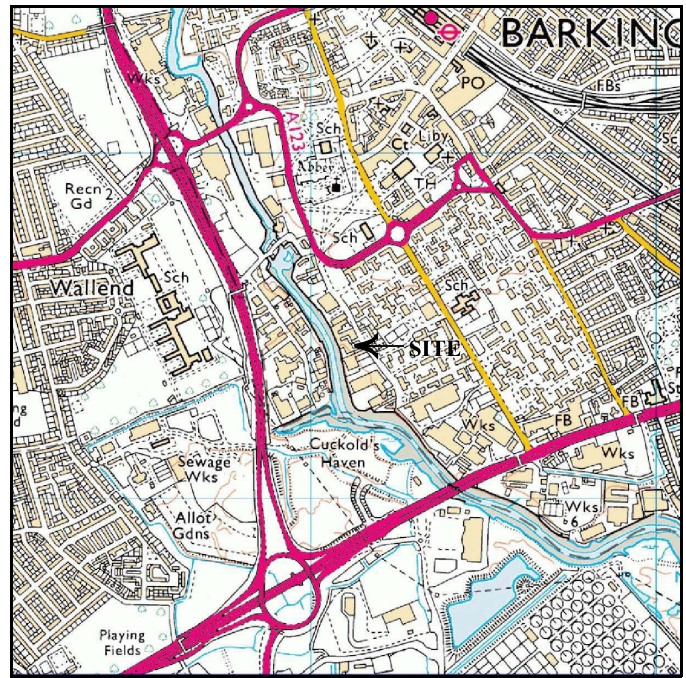
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Introduction

This report relates to the proposed development at The Fishing Smack, 92 Abbey Road, Barking, IG11.

Stienbex Ltd (the developer) commissioned Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) to carry out an archaeological evaluation and any subsequent archaeological work that may have been necessary.



Location: The site lies in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, about 800m south-east of Barking. The town is located on the banks of the River Roding, two miles to the north of its' junction with the River Thames, and two miles south of Ilford. The site lies about half way down Abbey Road on the right hand side. To the north lies the remains of Barking Abbey on Abbey Fields. The River Roding lies to the west of the site.

Figure 2 Site Location © Crown Copyright MC/98/38

Topography: The area of Barking is on a plateau with the land falling away to the west, south and east to the rivers Roding, Thames and Beam respectively. Abbey Road itself, slopes gently downwards from St. Paul's Road to southwards, with the site lying at 9m aOD. The area around the Fishing Smack consists of commercial and industrial premises on the west side of Abbey Road, with domestic housing, mainly the Gascoigne estate, on the east side.

Geology: The underlying geology consist of London Clay, covered by river laid sands and gravels and deposits of alluvial clays.

Planning background

The proposed development site was the site of *The Fishing Smack*, a Edwardian public house with later 20th century additions.

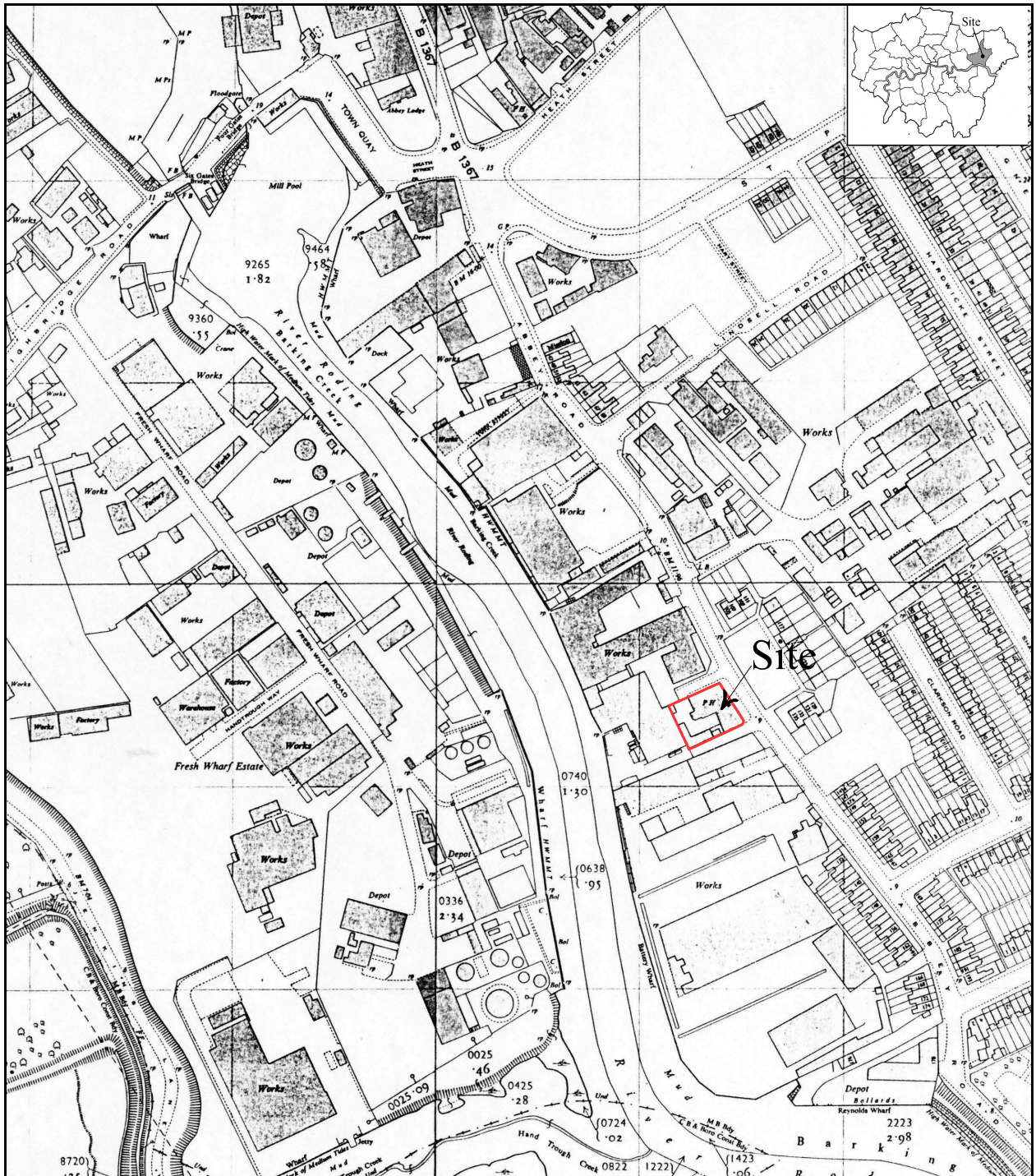


Figure 3

Site Location Plan

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The proposed work involved the demolition of the building and the construction of 3, 4 and 5 storey building comprising restaurant and bar/cafe on ground floor, 14 flats and 1 live-work unit above and car parking and exhibition space in basement.

Planning permission was approved by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and an archaeological condition under PPG 16¹ was included in the planning approval 06/00389/FUL dated

¹ Department of the Environment: *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning*, HMSO, 1990.

19th July 2006:

8. *The development shall not commence until a written scheme and programme of archaeological investigation has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and the development shall not be carried out except consistently with and in conformity with such approved scheme and programme*

Archaeological and Historical Background

Although there is a lack of any detailed archaeological evidence in the immediate area of the site, there are a number of find spots and activity in the surrounding area that provide evidence of human occupation and activity.

Taking the evidence as a whole, before the evaluation, the potential for Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Post-Medieval, settlement in the area of the site seems low, though stray finds may turn up. The potential for Medieval settlement and activity in the area of the site seems low to medium.

Prehistoric

There is little evidence for Prehistoric occupation or activity in the immediate area of the site. What finds there are, have been made well to the north, west and east of the site. The area of the site is in the flood plain of the River Roding and it is unlikely, though not impossible, for there to be Prehistoric occupation on the site.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Prehistoric archaeology on this site.

Roman

The nearest evidence of Roman occupation is in Uphall Camp, again well to the north. The signs of Roman activity in the immediate area of the Fishing Smack point to some form of activity in the vicinity.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Roman archaeology on this site.

Saxon

The main focus of Saxon occupation was around the abbey site. There is very little evidence for

Saxon occupation or activity in the area of the Fishing Smack, so the pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Saxon occupation on the site.

Medieval

The main focus of Medieval occupation was, like the Saxon period, around the abbey site and also at the northern end of Abbey Road. These areas are all to the north of the pub. The find of Medieval pottery, a wide ditch and a well constructed timber footbridge to the south of the Fishing Smack pose interest questions about the use of the land in the southern part of Abbey Road. The ditch contained food debris and seeds from both domestic grown cereals and 'waterlogged' plant material. This suggests the ditch was for drainage purposes, probably from the Medieval occupation at the northern end of Abbey Road, into a marshy area. If this was the case it would have been more advantageous to cross the ditch at the northern end, presumably on dryer ground. The position of a bridge so far from the settlement may have implications for property boundaries or activities associated with marshes or river.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low to medium potential for Medieval occupation and activity on the site.

Post-Medieval

The main focus of Post-Medieval occupation was, like the Saxon and Medieval periods, around the abbey site and also at the northern end of Abbey Road. These areas are again all to the north of the Fishing Smack. From the cartographic evidence, there appears to be little development in the area until the 19th century.

The Commissioners of Sewers map of 1858 shows houses along Fisher Street (Abbey Road) and this probably represents the first development of the Fishing Smack site. By 1863 The houses fronting Fisher Street have gone, to be replaced by the Fishing Smack. The original building had no rear yard or outhouses. This original pub seems to have been replaced, or rebuilt, because it bears little resemblance to the one shown in 1897. Looking at the surrounding area there have also been changes, suggesting major redevelopment between 1863 and 1897.

The Fishing Smack was burnt down in 1901 and rebuilt. It is this building that forms the major part of the present structure. Sometime after 1920, a gabled addition was made to the northern side of the pub. An examination of the building shows several more 20th century additions at the rear of the main building. The rear outbuildings shown in 1897 were still present before the demolition. There

is extensive cellarage under the pub, covering the whole of the frontage and along the southern edge, below one of the outbuildings.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Post-Medieval occupation and activity on the site.

Research objectives

In November 2007 Sutton Archaeological Services produced its research design. Based on our brief assessment of the evidence, we formed the objectives to look for signs of Medieval occupation and activity on the site, and if found to determine their extent, date, condition and significance.

The Institute of Field Archaeologists has defined the purpose of a field evaluation as follows.

“The purpose of field evaluation is to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including its presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy to initiate a threat to the archaeological resource
- the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.”

Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, IFA, 2001

Archaeological Proposals

Usually, where development may destroy archaeology, an evaluation is undertaken to identify the presence or absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened deposits and, where necessary, to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy.

SAS proposed to excavate 1 stepped trench reducing to 15m x 2m.

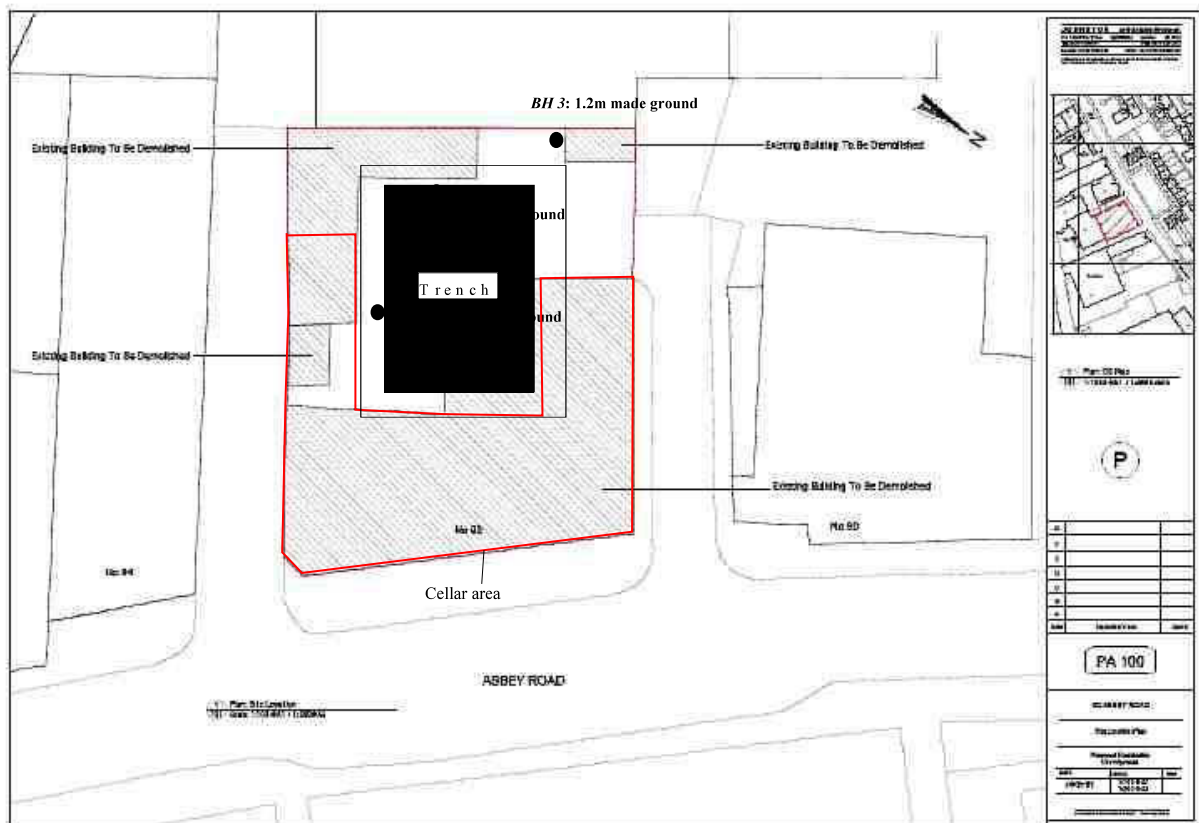


Figure 4 Trench Location Plan

Archaeological methodology

Standards: SAS carried out the archaeological evaluation in accordance with

- our research design dated November 2007. Due to site constraints the dimensions of the trench were changed 15m x 2m to 6m x 5m, still enabling an area of 30sqm to be examined
- the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangement in Field Archaeology, Standards and Guidance for Field Evaluations
- the archaeological guidance papers issued by English Heritage.

Control: All excavation work was done under the control of the archaeologists on site.

Trenches: We dug 1 stepped trench as shown on fig 4.

We broke open the trenches with a JCB 3CX excavator, using a smooth-edged ditching bucket.

Non-archaeological deposits: In each trench we removed by machine, in level spits of no more than 10-15 cm, the concrete, made ground and demolition deposits. Work continued removing all

overburden until we reached the first significant archaeological layer (or the natural deposits), at which point all machine work ceased in that trench. (We excavated up to 30cm into the natural to make sure we had reached true natural and not re-deposited material.) In this way we excavated the trench without finding any archaeological deposits.

Site records: We recorded all features as we proceeded, by written records, plans, sections and photographs. In all, we recorded 6 contexts - numbered [001] to [006] - in a single context recording system. The site was recorded in accordance with the Fieldwork Methodology in our research design, and using the Museum of London's recording system.

Levels: All levels were taken from the spot height located to the north of the site on Abbey Road value 3.30m aOD.

Backfilling: After excavating and recording the trench was backfilled and all spoil left on site.

Evaluation results

Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 8m by 8m, and was stepped down to an excavated area of 6m x 5m. It was located in the centre and towards the west end of the site. The Fishing Smack itself had already been demolished, with the cellar area being infilled with demolition rubble. The first context was a concrete slab [001](south: 2.91m aOD to north: 3.05m aOD) that covered most of the area of the trench to a depth of 9cm. The remaining area of the trench was covered with grass.

Below 001 was a made rubble deposit [002], containing 30-40% brick rubble and 10% fine to medium flint pebbles and occasional fine - small fragments of mortar. The context extended across the whole trench to a depth of about 15cm to 18cm.

Below context 002 was a thin coarse sand deposit [003](south: 2.63m aOD to north: 2.80m aOD), containing 15% very fine flint pebbles. The deposit covered the whole trench to a depth of about 18cm.

A made ground deposit lay below 003. It was a light orangish brown to dark brown silty clay [003](south: 2.45m aOD to north: 2.80m aOD). It containing about 20% brick rubble (concentrated

mainly in the southern part of the trench) and frequent small to large fragments of white mortar and flint pebbles. The deposit covered the whole trench to a depth of between 44cm to 70cm.

A deposit of natural clay [005] lay below context 004 (south: 2.01m aOD to north: 1.93m aOD). It consisted of an orangish brown clay containing 10% to 15% small to large flint pebbles. The deposit covered the whole trench to a depth of between 18cm to 33cm. The interface between context 005 and the underlying context [006] undulated considerably.

Context 006 was also a natural clay (south: 1.68m aOD to north: 1.75m aOD) consisting of a light orangish brown clay containing 30% to 40% small to large flint pebbles.

There were no archaeological features and the only finds were fragments of modern CBM.

Assessment and interpretation

The evidence from the SAS preliminary research indicated that there was Medieval archaeology and/or activity in the surrounding area.

The evaluation only revealed modern concrete, made ground above the natural clays. The concrete represented the back yard to the pubic house at the rear of the building.

There was no evidence for archaeology, other than modern, in the trench and the only finds were modern CBM.

Archaeological Potential

Following the evaluation our revised view is that this site has no potential for archaeological remains of any period.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Our findings set out above lead us to conclude that the proposed development will not threaten to destroy any archaeological remains of national, regional or local importance, deserving further investigation or preservation.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage.

Publications and dissemination

The evidence is not worthy of publication but a note on the evaluation will be placed in the *London Archaeologist's* round-up and a copy of the report lodged in the local library.

Archive

The resulting archive, including all of the finds, will be donated by the developer and deposited with the Museum of London when the final report has been completed.

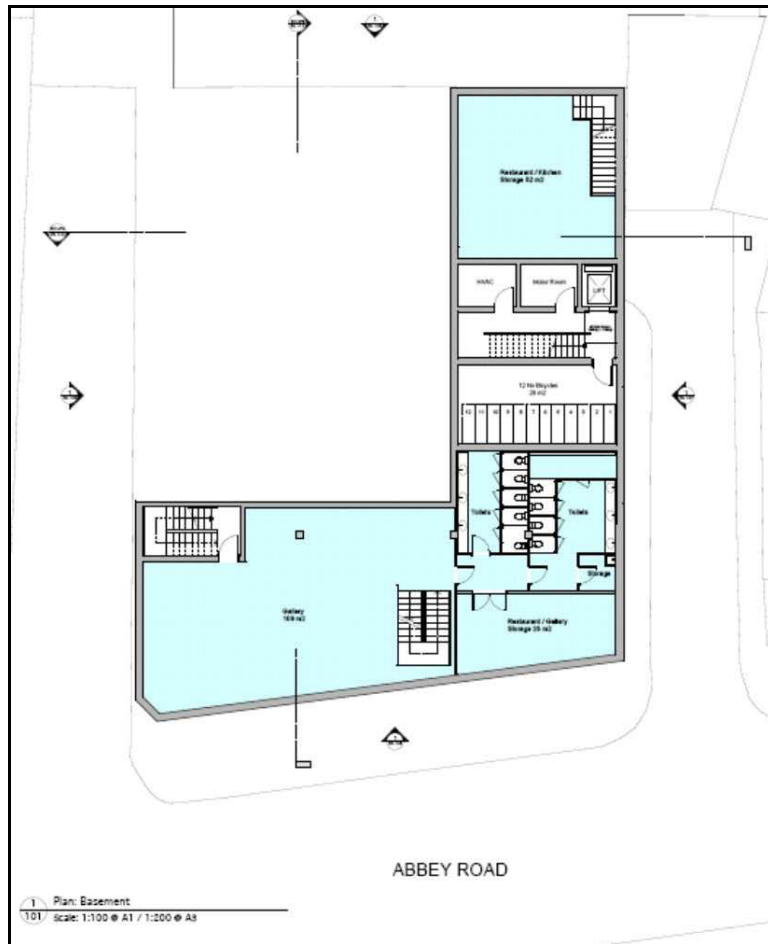


Figure 5 Basement plan

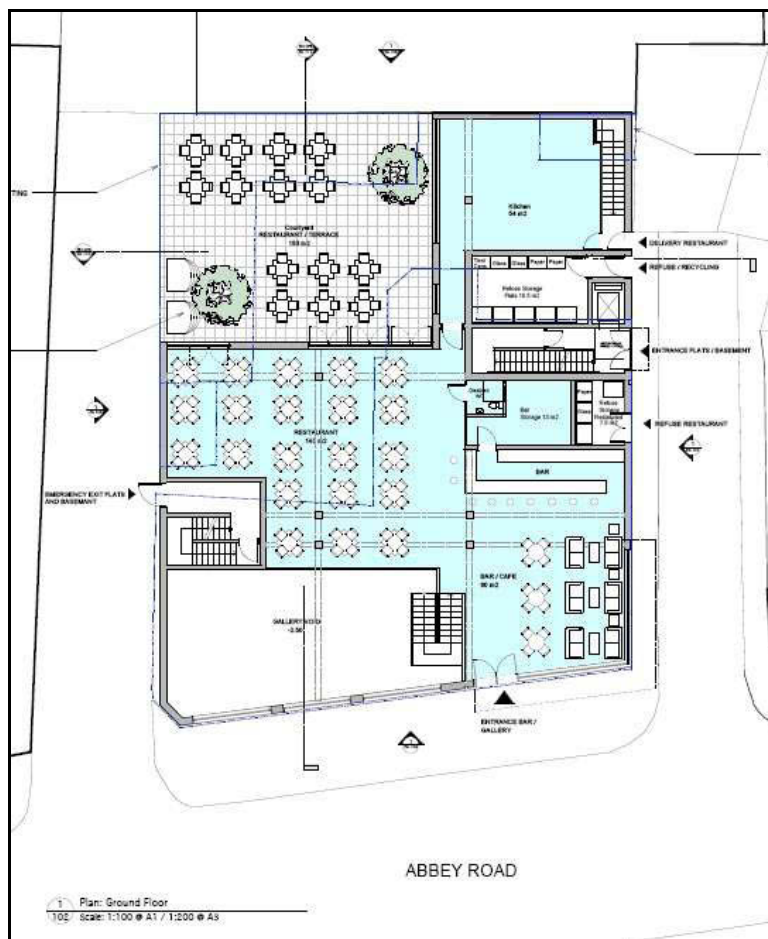
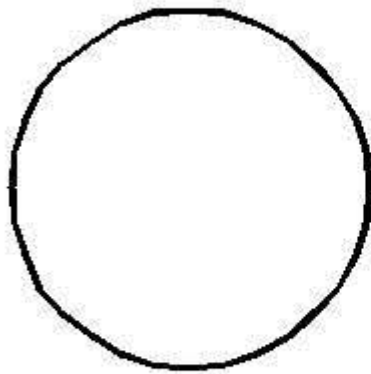


Figure 6 Ground floor plan



Plate 1 Trench looking west



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