

**1a Market Street
Ashby de la Zouch
Leicestershire**

Archaeological Watching Brief



for:
Murray Environmental

on behalf of:
Design Project Management Ltd

CA Project: MK0284
CA Report: MK0284_2

June 2021



1a Market Street Ashby de la Zouch Leicestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	6
4. METHODOLOGY	6
5. RESULTS	7
6. DISCUSSION.....	7
7. CA PROJECT TEAM	8
8. REFERENCES.....	8
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	10
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	11
APPENDIX C: DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS	12

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 Rear extension area showing sub-basement

Fig. 3 Rear extension area showing foundation trench with natural clay substrate exposed

Fig. 4 Rear car park area – ground reduction in progress (looking east)

Fig. 5 Rear car park area following reduction of ground levels (looking west)

SUMMARY

Project name:	1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch
Location:	1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire
NGR:	435624 316709
Type:	Watching brief
Date:	7th & 10th December 2020
Planning reference:	19/00855/FUL
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museum and the Archaeological Data Services (ADS)

In December 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with development at 1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, including the construction of a rear extension and the creation of a new parking area.

Within the footprint of the extension a previously unrecorded sub-basement was exposed, indicating that the area had been disturbed in the past, while the narrow width of the excavation for the foundation trenches likely means that the excavations were not extensive enough to expose any archaeological features/deposits.

In the new rear carpark area it is again likely that excavation did not go deep enough to expose any archaeological remains that may have been present, with only small patches of natural substrate having been revealed, overlain by made ground deposits most likely representing a former garden soil.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In December 2020, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire (centred at NGR: 435624 316709 ; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken for Design Project Management Ltd.

1.2. North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) has granted outline planning permission for change of use to mixed retail (A1), flats (C3), and offices (B1) including demolition of existing single storey rear extensions and garage, erection of a two storey rear extension and car parking area and window and door and shop front alterations at 1A Market Street Ashby De La Zouch Leicestershire (planning ref: 19/00855/FUL). Condition 6 of this planning permission states:

“No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and

a) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works b) The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material.

b) This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation and recording”

1.3. The scope of the works required under the WSI was defined by the Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council (SPALCC), in their capacity as archaeological advisor to NWLDC as comprising an archaeological watching brief. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2020) and approved by the SPALCC.

1.4. The watching brief was also undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020),

Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.5. The site currently comprises a former disused shop and living space with a rear garden, and is bounded to the east, west and north by retail premises and to the south by Market Street. The site lies at approximately 124m AOD,
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation - Mudstone, siltstone and sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 319 and 318 million years ago during the Carboniferous period. There are no recorded superficial deposit (BGS 2019)

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The origins of Ashby de la Zouch can be traced back to the late saxon era, the settlement is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 as “Asceb7” and the site is located within the original medieval settlement core (HER MLE4295). The town contains many listed buildings dating to the early medieval and post medieval periods including the adjacent property, currently the “Shoulder of Mutton” restaurant
- 2.2. Ashby Castle (HER MLE15050) lies to the east of site. The C12th manor house buildings were probably originally wood, replaced c.1150 by stone. It was converted into a 'castle' in the 1470s, partly destroyed in the Civil War, after which it was only partially lived in until 1724, when it was superseded by Ashby Place.
- 2.3. An evaluation in 2011 at Church Hall produced evidence of medieval occupation, including stone wall foundations, a stone lined cesspit and finds including pottery and roof tile fragments (HER MLE20178). An evaluation in 2015 by Wessex archaeology also unearthed evidence of medieval and post medieval enclosures at land south of Kilwardby Street.
- 2.4. Very little evidence exists for activity outside of the medieval and post medieval periods. A few Roman pottery sherds were found by Wessex in their aforementioned 2015 evaluation, and from the rear of 3 Kilwardby Street (HER

MLE23216). A quern stone was unearthed in the C19th near Prior Park which was attributed to the Iron Age (HER MLE8291).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1. The general objectives of the watching brief were:

- to monitor the development groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits/features thus revealed;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce a report setting out the watching brief results and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data;
- at the conclusion of the project, to compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive (see Section 6).

3.2. If significant archaeological remains had been identified this report would have sought to place those remains in their local and regional context with reference to: *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006). However, given the absence of any archaeological remains then the results of the investigation will not contribute to any research objectives.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. The watching brief comprised the observation by a competent archaeologist of all intrusive groundworks associated with the proposed development. These works comprised the excavation of foundation trenches and the reduction of ground levels in the new rear carpark area (Fig. 2).

4.2. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.3. Deposits were assessed for their Palaeoenvironmental potential. No deposits were identified that required sampling and no artefactual material was recovered.

4.4. CA will make arrangements with Leicester County Council Museum for the deposition of the project archive. A digital archive will also be prepared and

deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).

- 4.5. A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix B will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the watching brief results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.

- 5.2. The footprint of the rear extension had been partially disturbed by a previously unrecorded sub-basement, 1.2m deep, that had been backfilled with brick rubble (photo 1). The natural geological substrate was exposed in the base of the foundation trenches for the rear extension and comprised a dark brown-gray plastic clay (photo 2). The trenches were machine excavated to 0.3m below present ground level (bpgl), where context 102, consisting of dark brown loam with frequent concrete and modern debris inclusions, was exposed, sealing the natural substrate (103). Overlying 102 was another layer of modern made ground, 101, consisting of a dark black brown loam containing modern plastic and other modern debris (photo 2).

- 5.3. In the carpark area the natural substrate was encountered, but only partially revealed, at 0.5m bpgl. The natural geology in this area, 201, comprised a compact mid-yellow brown silt clay. Sealing the natural geology was a layer of made ground, 200, consisting of a mix of mid-grey brown sandy clay with modern brick and rubble (photo 3)

- 5.4. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see section 2, above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. Within the footprint of the rear extension, it is clear from the presence

of the previously unrecorded sub-basement that the area had been disturbed in the past, while the narrow width of the excavation for the foundation trenches likely means that the excavations were not extensive enough to expose any archaeological features/deposits that may have been present in less disturbed areas adjacent to the sub-basement.

In the new rear carpark area it is again likely that excavation did not go deep enough to expose any archaeological remains that may have been present, with only small patches of natural substrate having been revealed, overlain by made ground deposits most likely representing former garden soils

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Jake Streatfield-James and Jonathan Orellana. The report was written by Bethany Hardcastle. The report illustrations were prepared by Keighley Wasenczuk. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Adrian Scruby.

8. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer*. Accessed 24 July 2020 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Cotswold Archaeology 2020, *1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire*
Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

ClfA 2017 *Updated Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains*.
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

ClfA 2020 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*. Chartered
Institute for Archaeologists

Cooper, N. (ed) 2006 *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological
Resource Assessment and Research Agenda*. Leicester Archaeology Monograph

No. 13HE (2015a) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment
and MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Excavation* (Historic England)

HE (2015b) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The
MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*. (Historic England)

Knight, D, Vyner, B and Allen, C. 2012 *East Midlands Heritage: An updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*

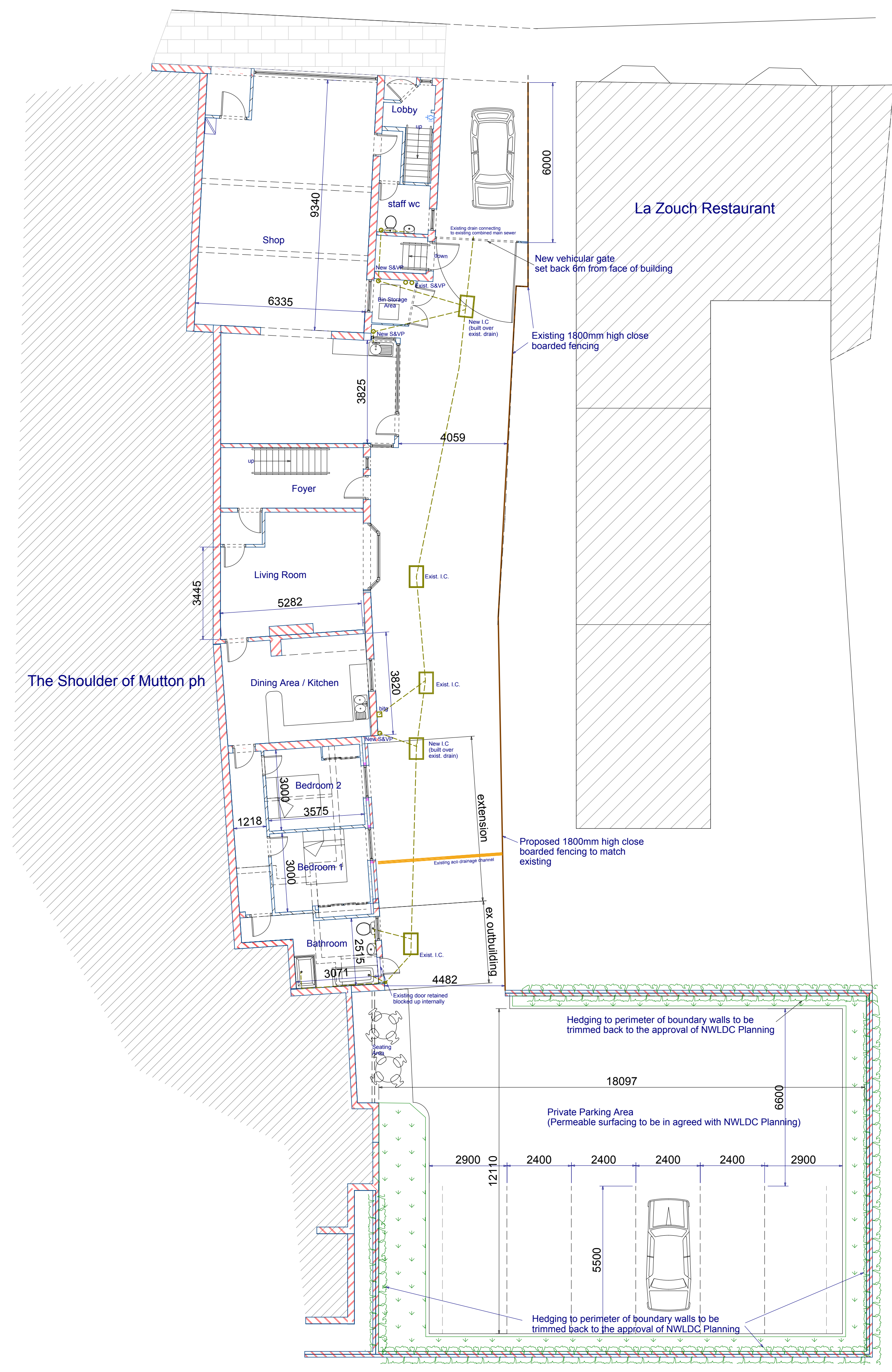
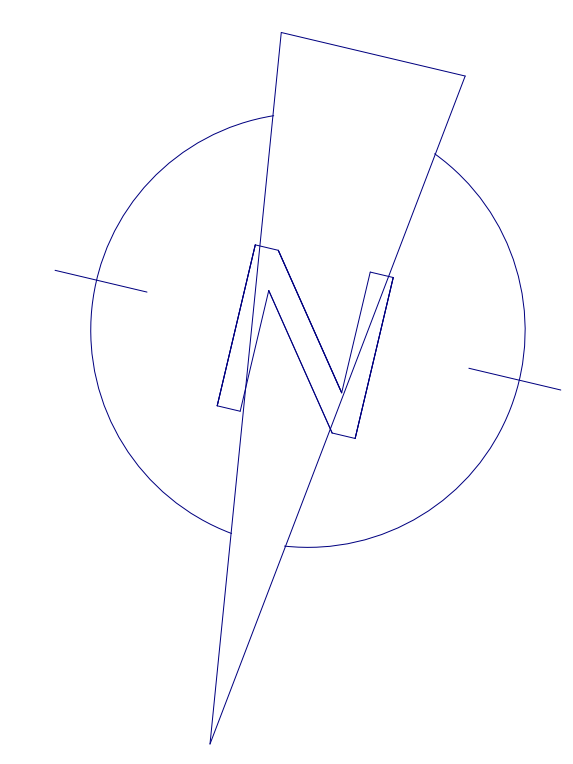
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Area	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	101	Layer		Topsoil/made-ground	Dark black brown loam with significant modern debris inclusions	12.5	12.5	0.3
1	102	Layer		Made-ground	Dark black brown loam with significant modern debris inclusions	12.5	12.5	0.3
1	103	Layer		Natural	Brown-grey plastic clay	-	-	-
2	200	Layer		Made-ground	Mid-grey brown sandy clay with rubble and modern brick inclusions	8.0	0.8	0.5
2	201	Layer		Natural	Mid-yellow brown, compact silt clay	8.0	0.8	-

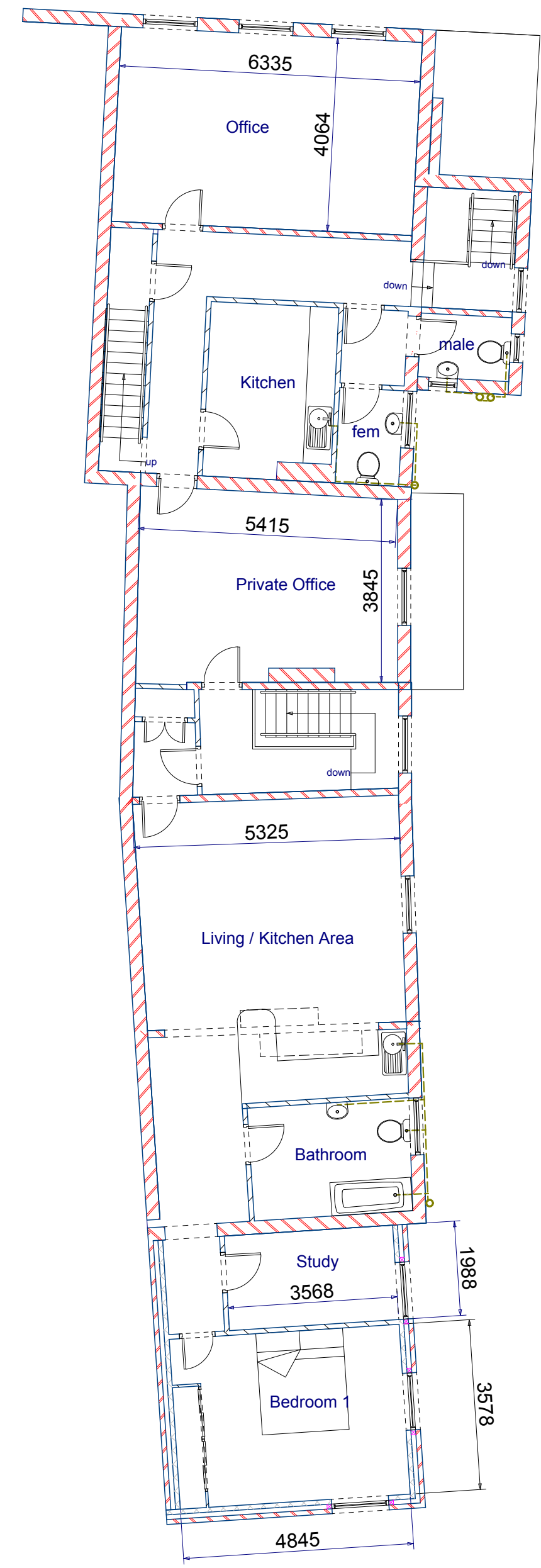
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch	
Short description	<p>In December 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with development at 1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire</p> <p>Two areas were archaeologically monitored, foundation trenches for an extension to the rear of the property and an area at the rear of the plot that was reduced in level to create a new carpark.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	7 th and 10 th of December 2020	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	No	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire	
Site co-ordinates	435624 316709	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Adrian Scruby	
Project Supervisor	Jake Streatfield-James and Jonathan Orellana	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Leicestershire County Council Museum	-
Paper	Leicestershire County Council Museum	Trench sheets, sketches, photo registers, report
Digital	ADS	Report and photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2021. <i>1a Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA typescript report MK0288_1		

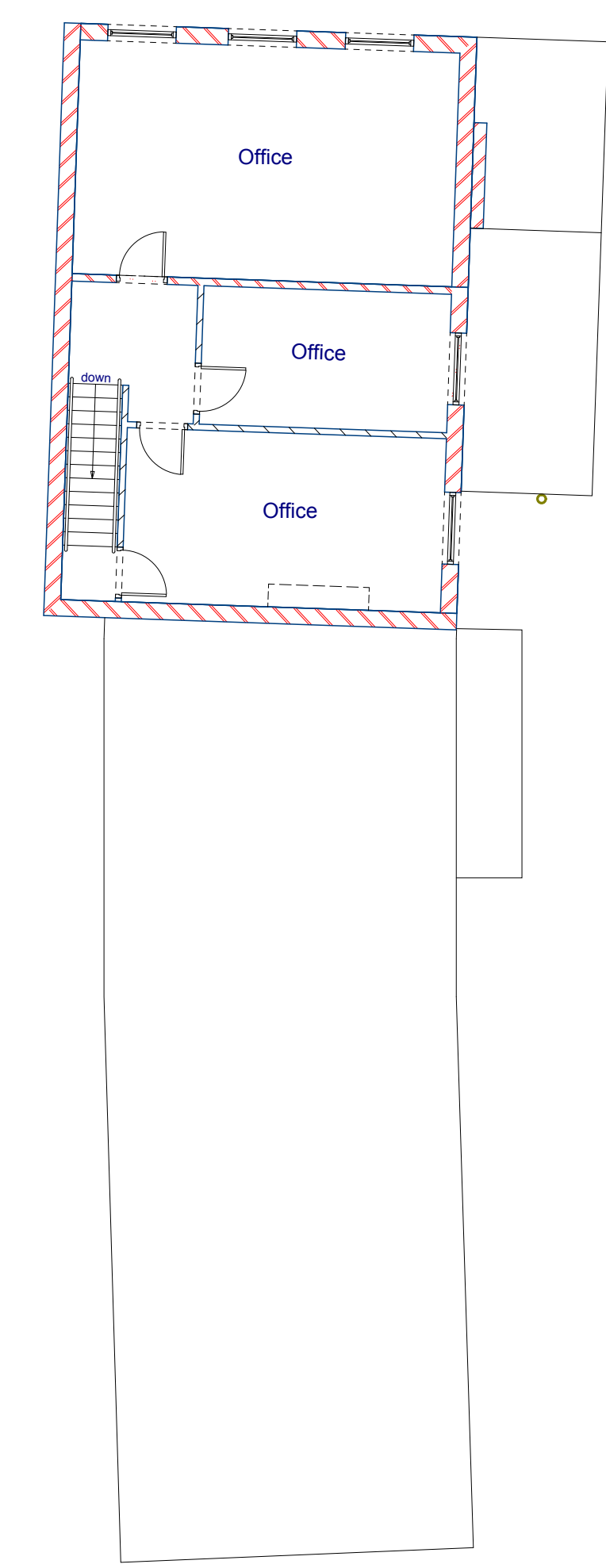
APPENDIX C: DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS



Proposed Ground Floor / Site Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor Plan



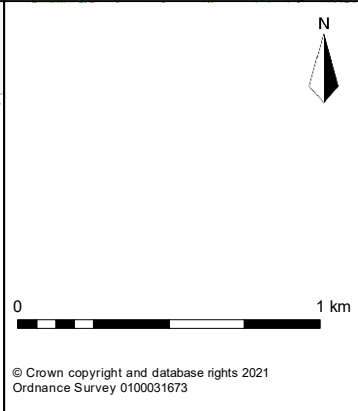
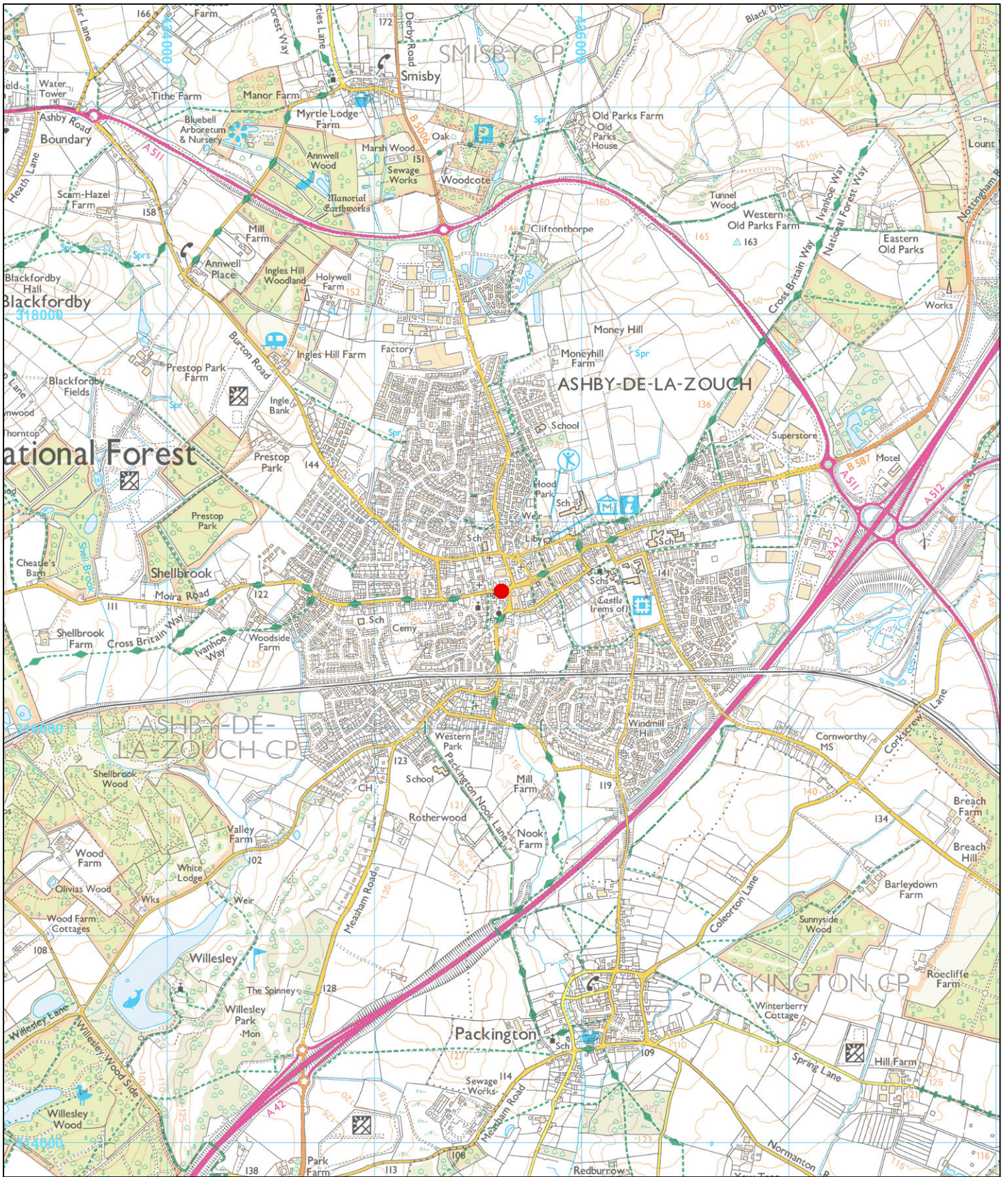
Project
Proposed Floor Plans


1a Market Street
Ashby De La Zouch
LE65 1AF

Client
Ontrax Limited
Drawing No.
DPM194/02 rev B

Date
December 2019
Scale
1:100
Drawn by
D.P.

Page Size - A1 5000 mm





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PROJECT TITLE
 1a Market Street
 Ashby De La Zouch

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	KW	PROJECT NO.	MK0284	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	AS	DATE	25/05/2021	1
APPROVED BY	AS	SCALE @ A4	1:25,000	



Fig. 2: rear extension area showing sub-basement



Fig. 3: rear extension area showing foundation trench with natural clay substrate exposed



Fig. 4: rear car park area – ground reduction in progress (looking east)



Fig. 5: rear car park area following reduction of ground levels (looking west)

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