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**Cowane's Hospital
49 St John Street
Stirling**

Archaeological Test-Pitting

Report No. 3532

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**Cowane's Hospital
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Archaeological Test-Pitting

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological test-pitting carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in March 2017 at the Category A-Listed Cowane's Hospital, 49 St. John Street, Stirling (NGR: NS 79180 93680) (Fig.1). The work was commissioned by Benjamin Tindall Architects on behalf of the Cowane's Hospital Maintenance Trust and was confined to the basement, which is suspected to have been the former hospital kitchen.

The historical significance of the hospital, including its origins, patrons and architectural importance, and the conservation issues and policies relating to its future refurbishment, have been comprehensively described in the Cowane's Hospital Conservation Plan (2015). Previous work carried out by CFA in relation to this project includes a standing building survey (Cressey 2016) and a ground penetrating radar survey (Ovenden and Wilson 2016).

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the programme of archaeological works were:

- To establish if there was an earlier floor surface (cobbled or flagstone) underlying the modern concrete floor.
- To establish the depth of the bedrock below the modern floor surface and determine if the walls of the hospital had been constructed directly on the bedrock.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

CFA follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidelines as appropriate. Recording of all elements was carried out following established methods.

2.2 Test-Pitting

Two test-pits were hand-excavated to bedrock within the basement. These test-pits were located against the walls of the room so that an assessment could be made of the nature of the foundations (Fig.2). Additionally, part of the brick lining of an existing pit (Fig.2) was removed by hand so that an assessment could be made of the deposits behind it.

All excavation and on-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, by photography and by completing standard CFA record forms.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 General

Trench 1 was located against the northern wall of the former kitchen immediately to the east of a doorway leading into a store, and Trench 2 was located against the external western wall, positioned between two blocked up windows.

The existing brick lined was located towards the centre of the southern part of the room. The brick-lining from the western side of this feature was removed in order to expose the deposits behind.

Numbers in bold refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 1.

3.2 Test Pit 1

Test Pit 1 (Fig.3) measured 0.8m ENE to WSW by 0.7m NNW to SSE. The layers (Fig.4) from the top downwards consisted of 0.07m of modern concrete (**1/001**); a thin sheet of damp-proofing material (**1/002**); a 0.1m thick leveling deposit of modern hardcore (**1/003**); and a 0.23m thick earlier leveling deposit of mixed orangey-brown sand and mortar (**1/004**). This last layer directly overlay bedrock (**1/005**), which was situated 0.4m below the current floor surface. The hospital walls (**1/006**) sat directly on top of the bedrock, and there was no evidence of any earlier floor surfaces.

3.3 Test Pit 2

test Pit 2 (Fig.5) measured 0.7m by 0.7m. The layers (Fig.6) from the top downwards consisted of 0.05m of modern concrete (**2/001**); a thin sheet of damp-proofing material (**2/002**); a thin (<0.05m) leveling deposit of modern hardcore (**2/003**); and a c.0.57m thick earlier leveling deposit of orangey-brown sand, rubble and mortar (**2/004**). This last layer directly overlay bedrock (**2/005**), which was situated 0.65m below the current floor surface.

Below the current floor surface, the foundation courses for the hospital wall (**2/006**), were c.0.1m wider than the above ground wall and sat directly on the bedrock. A possible wall stub (**2/007**) at 90° to the main wall (Fig.7) may indicate the location of an earlier internal wall, or it may have been a sleeper wall to support floor joists.

3.4 Existing brick lined pit

A 1.3m wide section was exposed behind the bricks lining the western end of a rectangular pit (Figs. 8 and 9). The layers behind the brick lining from the top downwards (Fig.9) consisted of 0.05m of concrete (**3/001**); a thin (<0.05m) leveling deposit of modern hardcore (**3/002**); and a >0.35m thick (measured to concrete floor of pit at a depth of 0.4m) earlier leveling deposit of mixed orangey-brown sand and mortar (**3/003**). The concrete floor (**3/004**) of the pit was not lifted and bedrock was not exposed.

4. CONCLUSION

Two test pits were excavated by hand and one side of an existing brick-lined pit was exposed by the removal of the bricks on one side of the pit. The excavations demonstrated that no earlier surfaces survive beneath the modern floor. Bedrock was encountered between 0.4m and 0.65m below the current floor suggesting natural variations in the bedrock level. bedrock had been covered by levelling deposits prior to being capped with concrete.

A possible sleeper wall identified against the western wall of the hospital may indicate that the room originally had a suspended wood floor.

The hospital walls were constructed directly on the bedrock.

On completion of this project, the project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and copies of reports will be lodged with the Stirling Council Sites and Monuments Record.

A summary statement will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* and will also be reported on through *OASIS Scotland*.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cowane's Hospital Stirling: Conservation Plan Rev. B 2015. Benjamin Tindall Architect's Unpublished.

Cressey M. 2016 *Cowane's Hospital Stirling: Historic Building Appraisal* CFA Data Structure Report 3490.

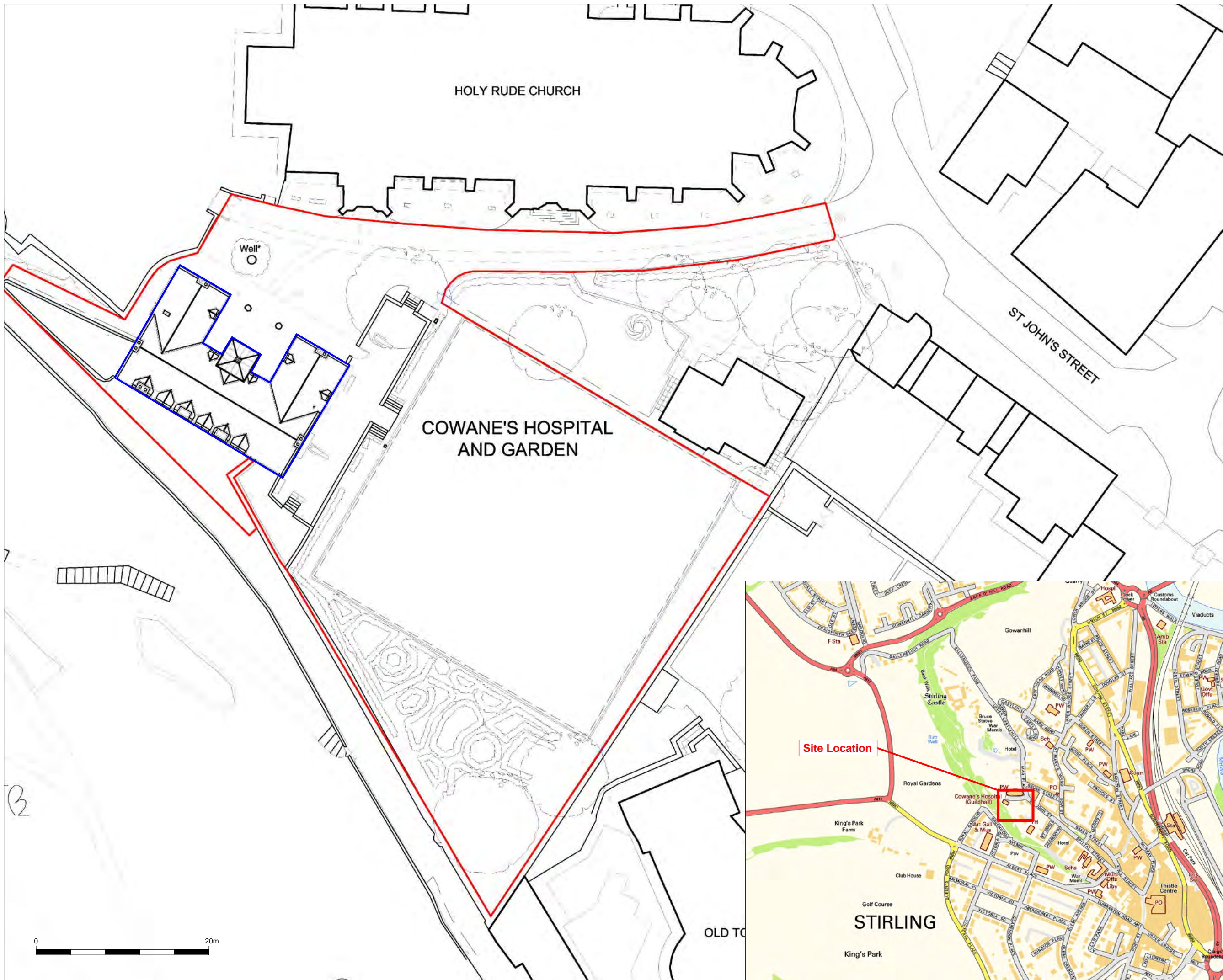
Ovenden S M and Wilson A S 2016 *Geophysical Survey Report, Cowane's Hospital* CFA Data Structure Report 3504.

APPENDIX 1: Digital Photograph Register

Photo No.	Description	Taken From
1	TP1 re-excavation	SSW
2	Western side of existing brick-lined pit	ESE
3	TP2 with concrete removed	ESE
4	TP1 post-excavation	SSW
5	TP1 post-excavation	SSW
6	TP1, WNW-facing section	WNW
7	TP1, WNW-facing section	WNW
8	Brick lined pit, ESE-facing section	ESE
9	Brick lined pit, ESE-facing section	ESE
10	TP2 post-excavation	ESE
11	TP2 post-excavation	ESE
12	TP2 post-excavation	SE
13	TP2, WSW-facing section	WSW
14	TP2, WSW-facing section	WSW
15	TP2, ENE-facing section	ENE
16	TP2, ENE-facing section	ENE

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context no.	Trench	Description
1/001	1	Modern concrete
1/002	1	Damp-proof material
1/003	1	Modern hardcore
1/004	1	Orange-brown sand and mortar
1/005	1	Bedrock
1/006	1	Hospital wall
2/001	2	Modern concrete
2/002	2	Damp-proof material
2/003	2	Modern hardcore
2/004	2	Mortar, rubble, and orange-brown sand
2/005	2	Bedrock
2/006	2	Hospital wall
2/007	2	Possible wall stub
3/001	3	Concrete floor
3/002	3	Modern hardcore
3/003	3	Orange-brown sand and mortar
3/004	3	Concrete lining base of brick-lined pit



Key:

- Site Boundary
- Cowane's Hospital



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Title:
Location Map

Project:
Cowane's Hospital, 49 St. John Street, Stirling

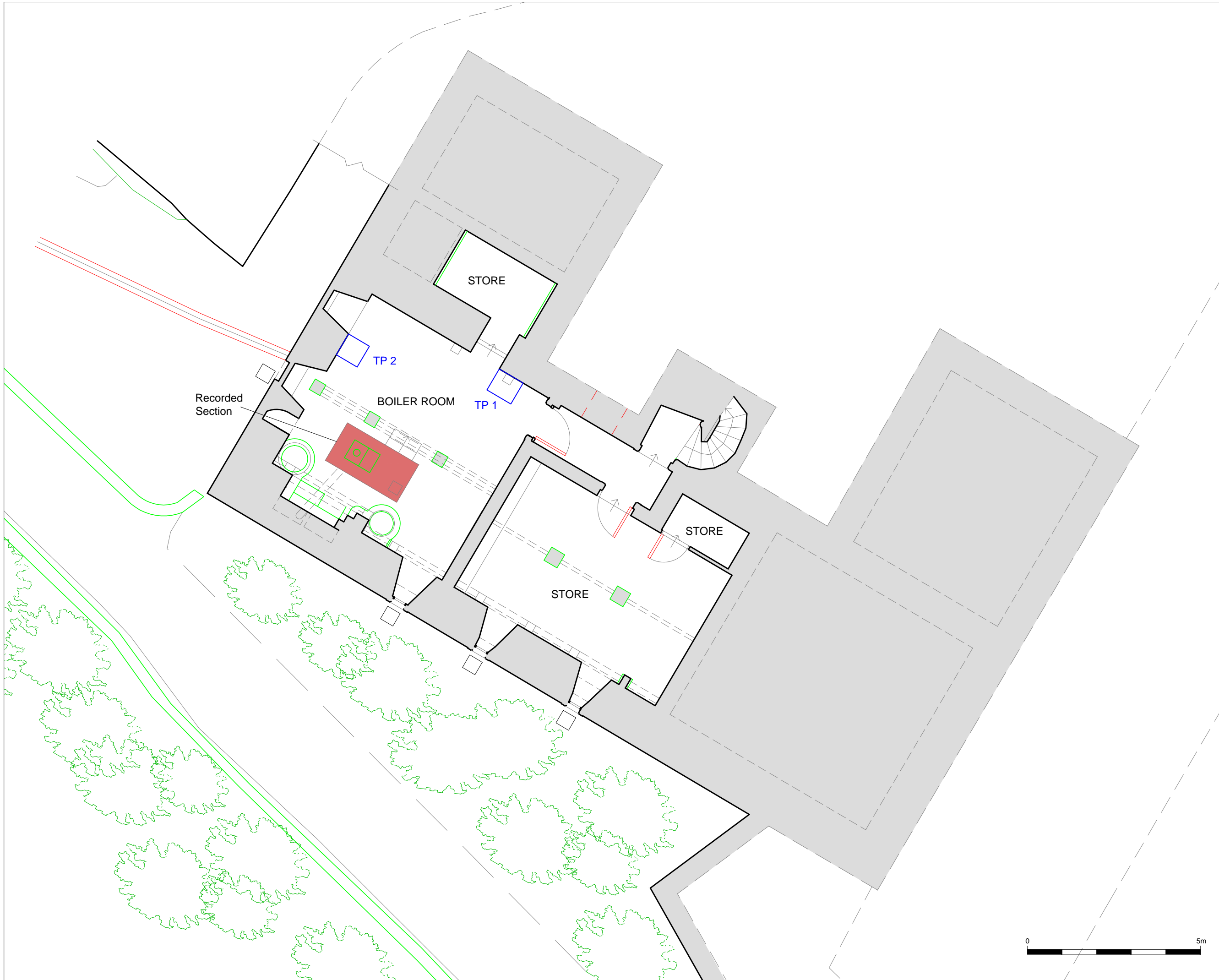
Client:
Ben Tindall Architects' on behalf of the Cowane's Hospital Maintenance Trust

Scale at A3:
1:400

Drawn by:	Checked:	Date:
SW	TN	22/03/2017

Report No:	Fig. No:
3532	1





Key:

- Test Pit Location
- Existing Brick-lined Pit

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Title:
**Plan of Cowane's Hospital
(basement) showing location of
test-pits**

Project:
**Cowane's Hospital, 49 St. John
Street, Stirling**

Client:
**Ben Tindall Architects' on behalf
of the Cowane's Hospital
Maintenance Trust**

Scale at A3:
1:100

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Fig. 3 - TP1, post-excavation



Fig. 4 - TP1 WNW-facing section

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Fig. 5 - TP2, post-excitation



Fig. 6 - TP2, SSW-facing section

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Fig. 7 - TP2, NNE-facing section



Fig. 8 - Existing brick-lined pit (pre-excavation)

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Fig. 9 - Existing brick-lined pit (WSW-facing section)

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Report No: 3532		Fig. No: 9