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The Falcon Hotel, Chapel Street, Stratford- Upon-Avon: Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. MK064/16

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SUMMARY

CFA Archaeology Ltd carried out an archaeological watching brief on geological test-pitting at the Falcon Hotel in Stratford-Upon-Avon (SP 20040 54770) between the 14th and 21st of September 2016. The hotel is located in the historic centre of the town on the north-west corner of the crossroads between Church Street, Chapel Lane, Chapel Street and Scholars Lane. Eight test pits and one borehole were excavated to assess the hotel foundations and underlying geology in preparation for extensions and alterations to the hotel. The test pits revealed Georgian and Victorian deposits containing ceramic building material, pottery and animal bone but no earlier remains were found.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General

This document presents the results of an archaeological watching brief on a series of small engineering test pits at the Falcon Hotel, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire which is centred on NGR SP 20040 54770. The work (site code FHSW) was carried out over three days between the 14th and 21st of September 2016.

The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated September 2016 covering this programme of works produced by Orion Heritage Ltd (Smith, 2016).

1.2. Background

The Falcon Hotel is listed complex of buildings on the north-west corner of the crossroads between Church Street, Chapel Lane, Chapel Street and Scholars Lane at the south end of the planned medieval town. Diagonally across from the hotel are two historic buildings: the Guildhall (15th Century), and the 13th Century Guild Chapel. The Site of New Place, Shakespeare's house lies opposite in which an archaeological excavation took place in 2014-15. A medieval boundary ditch was found during archaeological work in Church Street opposite the hotel.

The hotel group comprises 1-3 Chapel Street which mainly dates to the late 16th and early 17th centuries (Grade II* listed) and 4 Chapel Street (Grade II listed) which was rebuilt in 1810. Earlier 16th century elements within the former have also been identified. No 1 Chapel street became an Inn in the 1650s but no's 2 and 3 were separate residential dwellings until their incorporation into the hotel in the 1930 and 1950s. No. 4 was acquired by the hotel in 2007.

In February 2016 a Historic Building Survey of the Hotel was carried out by McLaughlin Ross LLP (Ross, 2016). The earliest elements of the hotel are two buildings to the rear of No 1: Lounge C and the adjacent ground floor Gents and toilets on the 1st floor. These were external buildings opening onto the rear courtyard. Another building abutting the Merlin Room that was demolished in the 1960s may have been contemporary. Most of 1 Chapel Street rebuilt in the 1670s when it incorporated 2 and 3 Chapel Street and the jettied front was built. The long range of buildings along Scholar's Lane was probably also incorporated into 1 Chapel Street during the 1670 rebuild. This range of buildings was used as stables into the 20th century; an arched entrance led from this into the courtyard at the rear of the property.

1.3. Objectives

The Objectives were to:

- Ensure the recording of archaeological assets discovered during the works
- Ensure that any below-ground archaeological deposits exposed were promptly identified
- Ensure the recording of archaeological remains, to place this record in its local context and to make this record available.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1. General

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance.

2.2. Watching Brief

The watching brief monitored all ground breaking investigations carried out by Applied Geology. This comprised 8 test pits: TPs: 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and a borehole, DCS101 (Figs 2-3). Most of the pits (8, 9, 11, 12-15) were hand excavated with post-hole diggers and were very small; test pit 16 was larger and excavated with a small tracked machine fitted with a toothless bucket. The upper deposits of the borehole were recorded after excavation with a pneumatic drill and a post-hole digger.

2.3. Monitoring and Recording Strategy

The test pits and all non-natural deposits were recorded by means of photographs, drawings and written records conforming to Cifa standards (2015) and CFA's quality manuals. All test pits and boreholes were related to

a scaled plan of the building which was tied in with the OS grid. The photographic record comprised high resolution digital photographs supplemented by 35mm B&W film.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1. General

A summary of all test pits are contained in Appendix 1. Illustrations and photos referred to in the text can be found at the back of the report.

3.2. Test Pit 8 (Fig. 4 and 13)

Concrete paving slabs next to the carpark entrance (**035**) overlay a layer of red brick and mortar for the wall foundation of No 38 Scholars Lane (**038**). Beneath this was a 0.15m thick layer of stone rubble and dark brown silt (**039**). Below was a medium compact, dark-mid reddish brown sand and clay with stone rubble, flecks of charcoal and coal (**036**), 0.5m thick overlying a natural loose red sandy gravel. A 19th century / early 20th potted meat jar was retrieved from **068**.

3.3. Test Pit 9 (Fig. 5 and 13)

This was excavated in a garden bed on the west side of the carpark entrance to assess the foundations of a 19th century boundary wall. A soft-friable light brown silt 0.1m thick (**018**) lay above a light brown silt containing brick, 0.1m thick (**019**). This overlay a layer of light brown silt with a medium compaction which contained small lumps of mortar (**020**), a layer that extended under the boundary wall. The test pit ended 0.2m into this layer.

3.4. Test Pit 11 (Fig. 6 and 13)

This was situated near to the hotel entrance in the foyer area. Below the brick surface and tarmac surface (**040**) was a 0.17m deep layer of grey-white concrete (**027**). Beneath this was a 0.07m deep layer of black tarmac (**028**), covering a layer of modern brick (**029**). The brick was built on top of the pale grey concrete for the foundations of the 1960s car park (0.24m thick **030**). This in turn was set on a natural loose red sandy gravel (**031**).

3.5. Test Pit 12 (Fig. 7 and 13)

This was dug in a flower bed in the garden area of the hotel yard to assess the foundations for a glass walled corridor. A loose black silty topsoil, 0.16m thick (**001**) overlay the brick footing for the hotel which was mortared with Portland Cement (**002**), 0.09m thick. Below this was a layer of grey concrete

(003) 0.16m thick. A firm grey-brown former cultivation soil (004), 0.21m thick lay below this containing fragments of coke. Beneath 004 was a firm grey silt with flat limestone fragments (005), 0.05m thick and below was natural loose red sandy gravel (006).

3.6. Test Pit 13 (Fig. 8 and 13)

This was excavated in the yard at the rear of the hotel close to modern bedrooms infilling gaps in the older hotel building to test the load bearing capacity of the modern walls. A 0.2m thick grey sandstone slab (007) overlay a 0.6m thick layer of loose black silty loam topsoil (008) with a worked stone fragment. This lay directly on the natural red sandy gravel (009).

3.7. Test Pit 14 (Fig. 9 and 13)

This test pit was dug next to TP13 beside a mid 19th-century workshop now a modified extension to the hotel to test the strength of the older wall. Below a 0.22m thick concrete slab and layer of pea grit (010) was a 0.5m deep loose silty black loam topsoil (011) containing 18th- and 19th-century finds. Below were the concrete foundations of the wall of the hotel extension (013), the concrete probably dating to the 1950s, and set on mortared limestone and sandstone rubble, the foundation for the Victorian wall. The mortar bond was identical to the southern boundary wall of the former property which was made of Georgian bricks. Below the black topsoil was natural red sandy gravel (012).

3.8. Test Pit 15 (Fig. 10 and 13)

This was located close to borehole DCS101 at the rear of the hotel. Brick and concrete, 0.5m deep (014) formed the foundation for the hotel extension. At right angles to the hotel extension was a brick wall which was mortared with Portland cement (015), which was 1.06m deep and abutted by wall 014. Below 014 was a 0.45m thick loose silty loam with no inclusions (016). At the base of this deposit was loose red sandy gravel natural (017). Brick wall 015 was not a part of the current cellars of the hotel. A brief examination of 6'' OS maps from 1885 to 1938 did not reveal an obvious building to which the wall might belong. There is a range of buildings shown on the mapping but the wall lay in the middle of the range (Fig. 13) and it would seem unlikely that a wall would be built, postdating the structure and right in the centre of it. No trace of these buildings was detected in the small test pit presumably they had been removed when the area was lowered as evidenced by the exposed foundations of the former boundary wall to the north and the higher ground level to the north of it.

3.9. Test Pit 16 (Fig. 11 and 13)

This pit measured 0.8m by 1.8m and was excavated by a tracked machine on a lawn on a terraced part of the courtyard behind the hotel. The turf and topsoil, a thin dark brown sandy loam (**023**), was 0.22m thick above a layer of made ground (**024**). This deposit, a mid-dark-grey loose fine sand 0.65m thick, contained stones and gravel with crushed mortar, frequent pottery, charcoal and coal. The made ground lay above a dark brown silty loamy sand with a moderate compaction containing with frequent brick, ceramic building material and bone (**033**). This deposit filled an undulating cut (**032**) into the natural red sands and gravels (**026**) representing general rear-plot disturbance of 19th century date. The fill contained a lens of loosely packed tile and mortar (**034**).

3.10. Borehole DCS101 (Fig. 12 and 13)

A layer of grey stony concrete 0.1-0.6m thick (**021**) overlay a layer of friable light brown sandy silt containing some lumps of concrete (**022**), 0.24-0.3m deep. Below this was loose red sandy natural gravel (**025**).

4. FINDS

Rebekah Pressler, September 2016.

4.1. Introduction

A total of 120 finds were recovered from 9 contexts. The assemblage has been characterised and assessed for the potential in further analysis in the commentary below the table.

OP	Pottery		CBM		Stone		Animal bone			Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
U/S	1	16.9	1	665.8			3	81.4	Glass x1, 47.6g	Mid to late C19 th
004									Coke x1, 1.9g	Undiagnostic
008					1	351				Undiagnostic
011	2	11	1	24.4						C18-19 th
023	44	717	4	191.3			3	18	Glass x7, 75.6g Iron x2, 23g Slate x1, 1.5g	C19 th -20 th
024	6	73	18	2571.8	2	31.3	4	81	Glass x2, 132g Slate x6, 118g Shell x1, <0.1g	C17-19 th
034			12	2489.3			1	6.5		C 17 th - 19 th
036									Glass x1, 143g	Late C19 th -20 th
038			1	2235.5						C18 th -19 th
Total	53	806.9	37	8178.1	3	382.3	11	186.9	Glass x11, 393.2g Shell x1, < 0.1g Slate x1, 31.3g Iron x2, 23g Coke x1, 1.9g	

4.2. Pottery

Post-Medieval

A total of 53 sherds of pottery weighing 817.9 grams were recovered from four contexts. The earliest dated material is comprised of a rim sherd of an 17th or 18th century glazed red earthenware pancheon or bowl (Jenning, S. 1981) deriving from deposit **023**. Two sherds of black glazed red earthenware from the same context are probably similarly dated.

Part of a moulded handle from a white salt glazed stoneware from deposit **011** (Edwards, D.2005) tea-cup dates to around the 1760s. A rim sherd of refined black glazed red earthenware or Jackfield type ware (<http://www.millersantiquesguide.com/a-to-z/jackfield-pottery>) - most likely a drinking vessel - is probably similarly dated to the 18th or perhaps 19th century.

The later dated pottery mostly comprises domestic ware typical of the 19th to early 20th century. Sherds of a transfer printed whiteware wash bowl from deposit **023** and part of a vessel transfer printed with Asiatic Pheasants both probably date to around the second half of the 19th century (Coysh, A.W & Henrywood, R.K. 1982). Sherds of a pearlware bowl or basin sherds with either blue or red annular banding (19th century - Rickard, J. Mocha and Related Dipped Ware. 2006), a whiteware jar (19th or 20th century) and a bone china jar (probably either a cold cream jar or some type of similar cosmetic). A rare and unusual white glazed refined red earthenware body sherd with an art nouveau transfer print, in filled hand painted detail and gilding dates from around c1890-1910.

Condition

The condition of the material varies from fair or good to abraded. Some burning is apparent on a few of the sherds.

4.3. Ceramic building material

A total of 37 fragments of CBM weighing 8178.1g were retrieved from seven contexts in total. The CBM was examined both visually and beneath a x20 microscope. At least two fabrics were noted amongst the assemblage.

The majority of the CBM consists of handmade 18th to perhaps early 19th century pantile in a sand-tempered mid pinkish-orange fabric with macroscopic sub-rounded inclusions and was noted in a number of the deposits – particularly in **024** and **034**. The remnants of a paw print (presumably from a small dog) embedded in one of the pantiles was also noted within **034**.

A tile sherd with external sooting from layer **034** was most likely derived from near a hearth.

A near complete brick from a wall **038** is possibly wire cut and thus post 1850 in date.

Condition

The condition of the brick and tile is overall fair, with little abrasion apparent on the fragments

4.4. Animal bone

A total of 11 fragments of animal bone weighing 186.9g were recovered from the watching brief, with only 8 of the fragments identifiable; 4 as sheep, 3 as cow and 1 as pig. A sawn sheep femur, a sheep humerus with an irregular break and a broken sheep atlas fragment were all recovered unstratified and a lamb scapula found in layer **023**. Two cow molars and a cow rib were all noted within layer **024** and part of a pig or piglet maxilla with the teeth erupting was noted in deposit **034**.

Condition

The condition of the material was relatively fair, although the pig maxilla appeared to crumbling slightly.

4.5. Glass

A total of 11 sherds of glass weighing approximately 393.2g were recovered from four contexts. The glass generally dates to the 19th century or later, the earliest diagnostic fragment recovered was unstratified and comprised the lip and neck of a bottle dating to around c1850 (possibly part of the same bottle from **024**). A complete jar (possibly a potted meat jar or something similar) was recovered from deposit **036**.

4.6. Stone

A mortared piece of ashlar limestone was noted within layer **008**, presumably reused within the base of a building.

4.7. Slate

Seven roof tile fragments and a slate pencil with incised decoration (presumably 18th or 19th century) were noted within the assemblage.

4.8. Iron

Two encrusted iron nails were noted within deposit **023**.

4.9. Discussion

The pottery and brick provide 19th to 20th century dates for all of the primary contexts. The eighteenth-century pottery is derived from topsoil deposits and is residual. The assemblage as a whole represents waste materials associated with the hotel and redeposited building materials from rear-yard alterations to the hotel yard which may have involved the demolition of earlier buildings. No further analysis will be necessary on the assemblage

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The watching brief revealed a lack of early deposits around the hotel gardens in any of the test trenches suggesting that rear-yard activity may have been restricted and that no medieval rubbish pits or structures were present. The absence of activity may have been due to the presence of buildings now removed. There had been some levelling for the current gardens. To the west of the hotel, levelling associated with the 1960s hotel extension and car park has removed any pre-19th century features.

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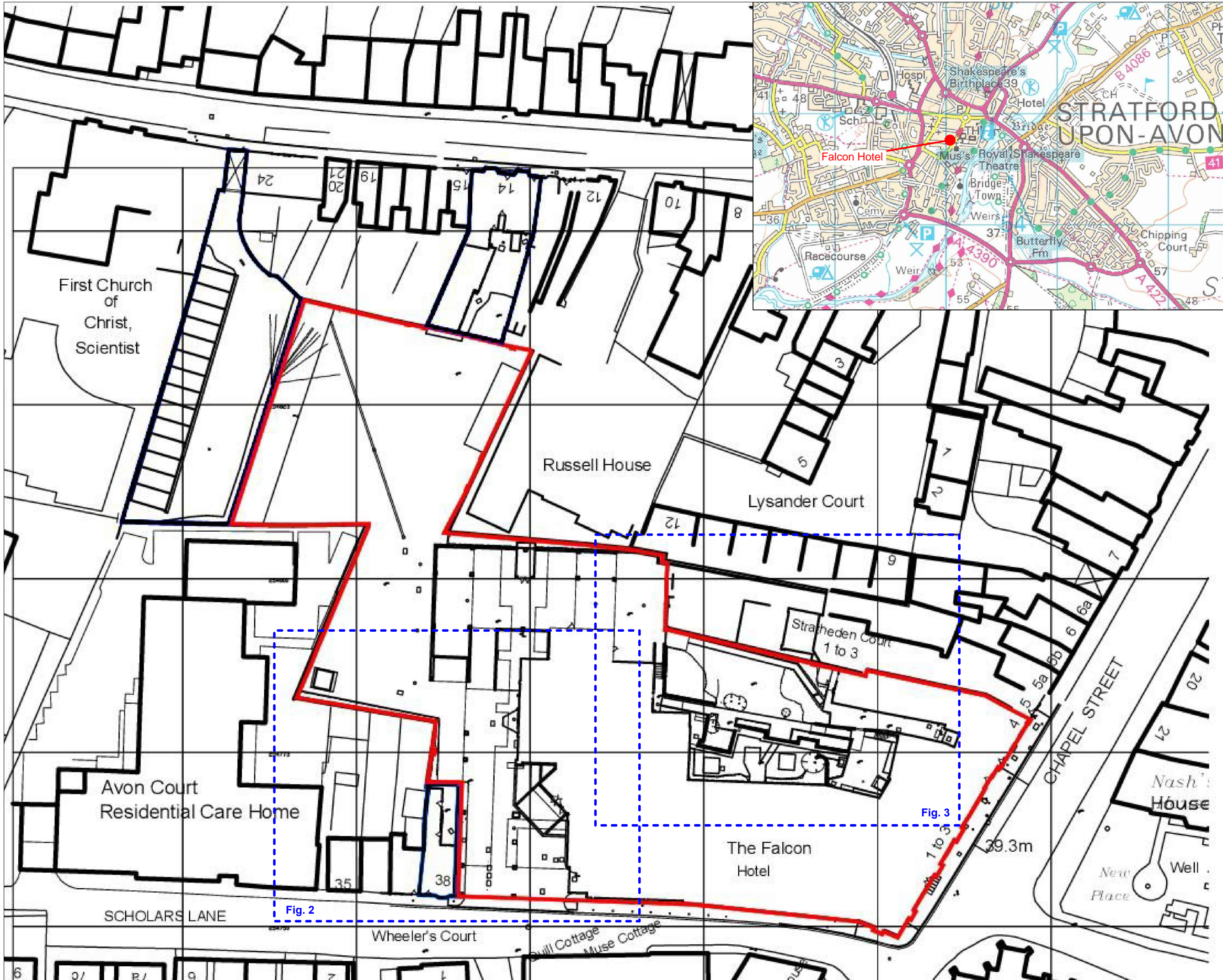
http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/advanced_search.aspx (Accessed, 29th September, 2016)

APPENDIX 1: Test Pit Summary

Test-Pit 12		Trench Size 0.24m x 0.24m	
Trench Depth 0.66m	Topsoil Depth 0.16m	Built Remains Depth 0.45m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
001	A loose black silty topsoil. Deposit 0.16m thick.	20 th century	-
002	A single course of brick footing, with Portland Cement. Deposit 0.09m thick.	20 th century	-
003	A grey concrete, 0.1m thick.	20 th century	-
004	A firm grey-brown sandy silt former cultivation soil. Deposit 0.21m thick.	19 th century	undiagnostic
005	A firm grey silt with flat limestone fragments. Deposit 0.05m thick.	19 th century	-
006	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
Test-Pit 13		Trench Size 0.34m x 0.6m	
Trench Depth 0.6m	Topsoil Depth 0.34m	Subsoil Depth 0.2m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
007	A grey sandstone slab. Deposit 0.2m thick.	20 th century	-
008	A loose black silty loam. Deposit 0.6m thick.	20 th century	undiagnostic
009	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
Test-Pit 14		Borehole Diameter 0.3m	
Trench Depth 0.82m	Concrete Depth 0.22m	Garden Soil Depth 0.6m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
010	Slab and pea-grit. Deposit 0.22m thick.	20 th century	-
011	A loose black silty loam. Deposit 0.5m thick.	20 th century	18 th -19 th century
012	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
013	Concrete foundation for the wall. Concrete set on limestone and sandstone rubble.	20 th century	-
Test-Pit 15		Trench Size 0.3m x 0.3m	
Trench Depth 1.06m	Rubble Depth 0.5m	Garden Soil Depth 0.43m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
014	Brick and concrete footing for wall. 0.5m deep.	20 th century	-
015	Brick wall with Portland cement. 1.06 deep.	20 th century	-
016	A loose grey brown silty loam with no inclusions. Deposit 0.45m thick.	20 th century	-
017	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the	-	-

	natural.		
Test-Pit 9		Trench Size 0.26m x 0.3m	
Depth 0.4 m	Topsoil Depth 0.1m	Rubble Depth 0.3m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
018	A soft-friable light brown silt. Deposit 0.1m thick.	20 th century	-
019	A layer of friable light brown silt containing 30% brick. Deposit 0.1m thick.	19 th - 20 th century	-
020	A layer of light brown silt with a medium compaction containing small lumps of mortar. Deposit more than 0.2m thick.	19 th century	-
Borehole 1		Trench Size 0.34m x 0.3m	
Depth 1.22m	Concrete Depth 0.2-0.6m	Soil Depth 0.31m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
021	A grey stony concrete. Deposit 0.1-0.6m thick.	20 th century	-
022	A friable light brown sandy silt containing some concrete. Deposit 0.24-0.3m thick.	20 th century	-
025	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
Test-Pit 16		Trench Size 0.8m x 1.8m (0.8m at base)	
Trench Depth 2m	Topsoil Depth 0.1-0.2m	Subsoil Depth none	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
023	A thin moderate dark brown loamy silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions. Deposit 0.22m thick.	20 th century	19 th and 20 th century
024	A mid-dark-grey loose fine sand containing frequent stones and gravel (0.5-0.7cm diameter) and crushed mortar, with frequent pottery and charcoal mixed in. Deposit 0.65m thick.	Post-Med	17 th - 19 th century
026	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
032	Cut of undulating gardening activity more than 1m deep.	19 th century	-
033	Fill of 32. A dark brown silty loamy sand with a moderate compaction and frequent brick, ceramic building material and bone.	19 th century	-
034	Fill of 32 within 33. A lens of loosely packed red-beige loose tile and mortar.	19 th century	17 th - 19 th century
Test-Pit 11		Trench Size 0.38m x 0.44m	
Depth 0.82m	Concrete Depth 0.24m	Depth 0.39m	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
027	A layer of white concrete with stone mixed in. Deposit 0.17m thick.	20 th century	-
028	A layer of black tarmac with some stones mixed in. Deposit 0.07m deep.	20 th century	-
029	A layer of modern red brick 0.07m thick.	20 th century	-

030	A pale grey layer of concrete 0.24m thick.	20 th century	-
031	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
040	A layer of tarmac outside the hotel car park entrance. A red and black hard tarmac containing small stones.	20 th century	-
Test-Pit 8		Trench Size 0.33m x 0.24m	
Depth 0.88m		Concrete Depth 0.12-0.17m	Built Remains Depth 0.75m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Finds</i>
035	A layer of concrete slabs next to the multi-storey carpark road.	20 th century	-
036	A medium compaction, dark-mid reddish brown sand and clay with occasional large stone rubble, charcoal flecks and coal.	Late 19 th - 20 th century	Late 19 th - 20 th century
037	A loose red sandy gravel that made up the natural.	-	-
038	A layer of red-brick and mortar for the wall foundations for the 19 th Century building to the west of the carpark entrance.	19 th century	18 th - 19 th century
039	A layer of stone rubble with silt. Deposit 0.15m thick.	19 th century	-



Key:

Site Boundary

0 20m

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Title:
 Site Location Plan

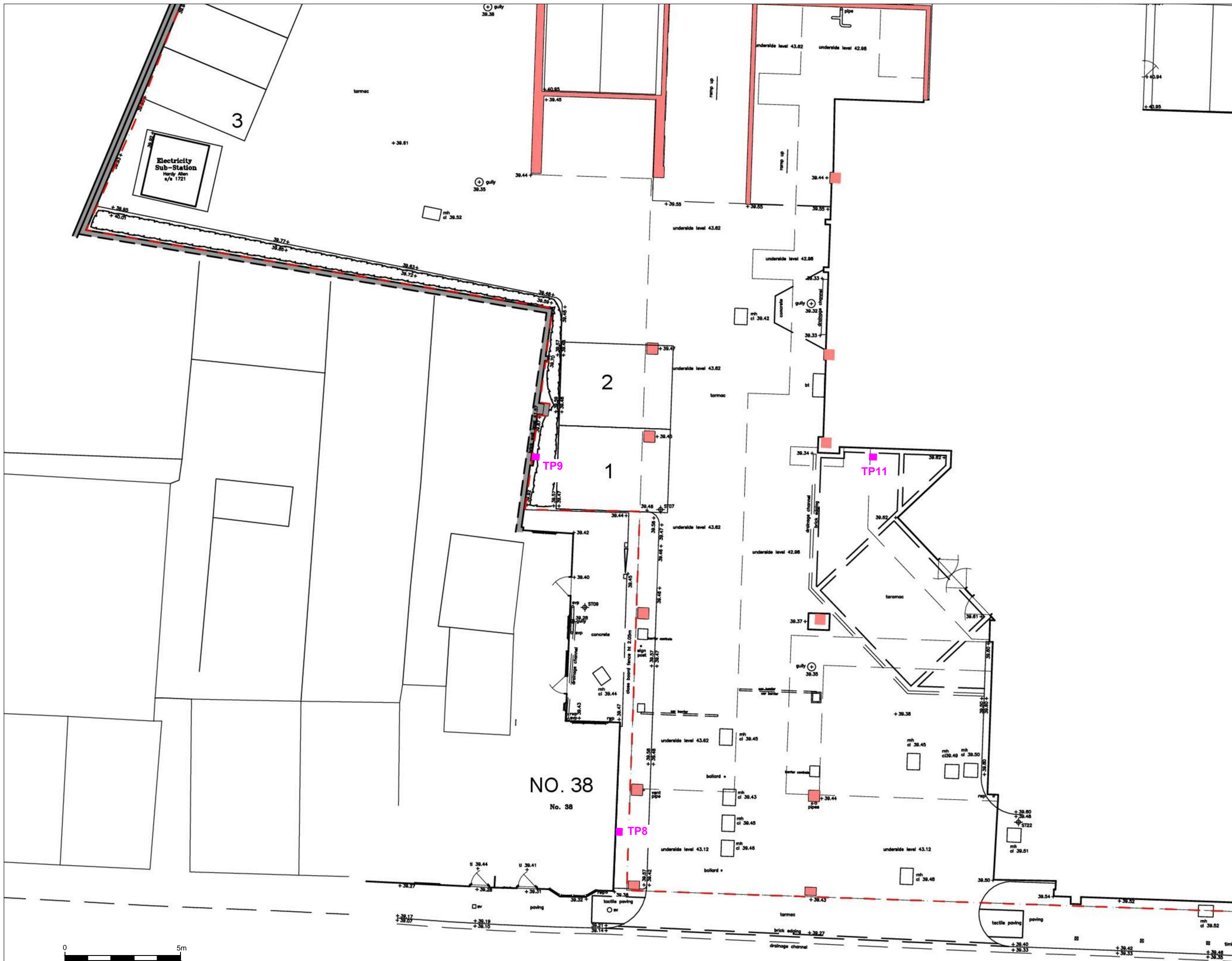
Project:
 The Falcon Hotel, Chapel Street,
 Stratford upon Avon:
 Archaeological Watching Brief

Client:
 Orion Heritage Ltd

Scale at A3:
 1:500

Drawn by: TB	Checked: MR	Date: 23/09/2016
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Report No: MK064/16	Fig. No: 1
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Key:

- Test Pits
- Pillars and walls of 1960s hotel extension



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Title:
 Location of Test Pits monitored,
 eastern area

Project:
 The Falcon Hotel, Chapel Street,
 Stratford upon Avon:
 Archaeological Watching Brief

Client:
 Orion Heritage Ltd

Scale at A3:
 1:150

Drawn by: TB	Checked: MR	Date: 23/09/2016
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Report No: MK064/16	Fig. No: 2
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Key:

- Test Pits
- Pillars and walls of 1960s hotel extension



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Title:
 Location of Test Pits monitored,
 western area

Project:
 The Falcon Hotel, Chapel Street,
 Stratford upon Avon:
 Archaeological Watching Brief

Client:
 Orion Heritage Ltd

Scale at A3:
 1:150

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Report No: MK064/16	Fig. No: 3
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Fig. 4 - Test pit 8, from the E



Fig. 5 - Test pit 9, from the E

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Fig. 6 - Test pit 11, from the S



Fig. 7 - Test pit 12, from the N

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Fig. 8 - Test pit 13, from the S



Fig. 9 - Test pit 14, from the S

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Fig. 10 - Test pit 15, from the W



Fig. 11 - Test pit 16 showing backyard activity cut 32, deposit 33 and roof tile deposit 34, from the N

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Fig. 12 - Borehole DCS101 prior to drilling, from the W

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underside level 43.04

gully
40.91

6

Key:

Test Pits



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Title:
 Test pits shown on the 1887 OS map

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 The Falcon Hotel, Chapel Street, Stratford upon Avon:
 Archaeological Watching Brief

Client:
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Scale at A3:
 1:150

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Report.No: MK064/16	Fig. No: 13
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