

Archaeological Watching Brief

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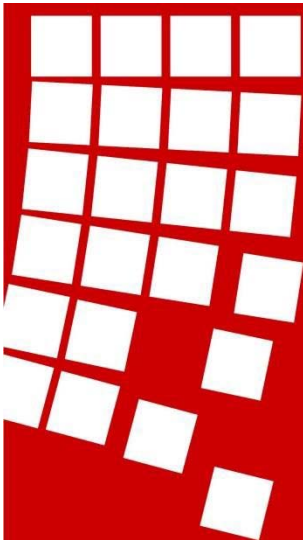
The Queen's Hotel

489 Etruria Road

Hanley

Staffordshire

NGR SJ 86262 46694



STOKE-ON-TRENT
Archaeology Service

Report No. 442

January 2020



City of
Stoke-on-Trent

**Archaeological Watching Brief at
The Queen's Hotel
489 Etruria Road
Hanley
Staffordshire
NGR SJ 86262 46694**

Planning Ref.: SOT/56109

Site Code: QHH16

Museum Accession No: STKMG: 2016.LH.1

Produced for

Wood Goldstraw Yorath on behalf of
BB Staffordshire Developments Ltd.

by

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Non-technical summary

Stoke-on-Trent Archaeology Service carried out an archaeological watching brief on the site of the Queen's Hotel, 489 Etruria Road, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent (NGR SJ 86262 46694). The project took place between April 2016 and September 2017 during ground-works for the construction of nine residential units. The site is located on or close to the possible route of Rykniold Street Roman road, but has also been in constant occupation since 1769, with an inn established by at least 1795. The present building on site dates to 1881, with later extensions added between 1937 and 1970.

The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation and drainage trenches at the site, the only archaeological features observed were a series of land drains.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Planning permission (planning ref. SOT/56109) for a residential development, including the demolition of the single-storey elements of the Queen's Hotel, 489 Etruria Road, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent (NGR SJ 86262 46694) (Fig. 1) was granted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Stoke-on-Trent City Council, on the 4th March 2014. As a condition of permission, the LPA, acting on the advice of the Planning Archaeologist (PA) required that an archaeological watching brief take place on site during all ground-works necessitated by the development. Stoke-on-Trent Archaeology Service (SOTARCH) was subsequently appointed to undertake the work by Wood Goldstraw Yorath on behalf of BB Staffordshire Developments Ltd. (hereafter the client).

1.2 The site is bordered to the north by Etruria Road, running on a north-east to south-west alignment. To the west is a lane which provides access to the rear of the houses on Newton Lane. To the south and east is a wooded area (Fig.2).

1.3 Geologically the area is part of the Halesowen Formation – formed of Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone, which indicates that the local environment was previously dominated by rivers. (British Geological Survey 2019).

2.0 Scope and aims of the project

2.1 A watching brief is defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standards and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (December 2014) as a formal programme of observation and investigation that will define as far as reasonably possible the nature, depth and preservation of archaeological materials encountered during any operation conducted for non-archaeological reasons.

2.2 The broad aims of the project as set out in the PA's brief (Goodwin 2016) were to:

- Preserve by record any archaeological deposits encountered.
- Notify all interested parties of the presence of any archaeological deposits which cannot be satisfactorily recorded within the scope of a watching brief.

3.0 Archaeological and historical background

3.1 The site of the Queen's Hotel is located along the possible route of Rykniel Street Roman road. The road followed the approximate line of the A50 from Longton to Stoke, before potentially heading north west through Basford, and out towards Wolstanton and Chesterton. The precise route of this section of the road is, however, unknown.

3.2 The earliest documented building on site was erected in 1769 by Robert Emery, a Derbyshire farmer. Charles Coxon was the tenant between c.1784 and 1805. In 1795 the copyhold comprised 16 acres of land and a three-storey brick building known as the *Queens Arms*. In addition, there were stables, hogsties, a ballyard, garden and bowling green (Dobraszczyk 2001, 1). The earliest map, Hargreaves' survey of 1832, shows an L-shaped building on the site (Fig. 3).

3.3 Henry Platt became the tenant in 1861, renaming the pub *The Bowling Green Inn*. He developed the business, attracting a respectable clientele for his dining, including regular dinners and teas and an annual bowling season dinner held each annually in May (Dobraszczyk 2001, 2). In 1864 he changed the name again to *The Belle View Inn*. In that same year the first proper running track in the Potteries was laid out next to the pub and a meeting organised for August consisting of a one-mile handicap open to All England. (Dobraszczyk 2001, 2).

3.4 In 1869 the public house was described as follows:

‘The Premises are situated in a most healthy neighbourhood, on an elevation, commanding a large and beautiful view. The House contains two vaults, one 90 feet long, smoke room, tap room, large kitchen, two cellars, and room for storage of 200 barrels of ale, a large club room upstairs, and seven bedrooms. There is close to the house a boarded recreation ground, bowling green, about six acres of pasture land, a large banqueting hall, dancing platform and orchestra. Good stabling. (Dobraszczyk 2001, 2)’.

The Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1878 (Fig. 4) shows this complex of buildings along with the bowling green to the south.

3.5 Henry Platt left in 1873 and five years later the public house and adjacent property were bought by Henry Parker for £8,500. His company, Parkers Burslem Brewery Company, rebuilt the pub in c.1881 and renamed it *The Queen's Hotel* (Dobraszczyk 2001, 2). The new building is first shown on the 1900 OS map (Fig. 5).

3.6 The first of the flat-roofed extensions added to the south and east of the building appear on the OS map of 1937 (Fig. 6) and the building had achieved its current form by 1970 (Fig. 7).

3.7 Prior to its recent alteration, the Queen's Hotel was the subject of a historic building recording and photographic survey (Nicholls & Sutherland 2016).

4.0 Methodology

4.1 The watching brief was carried out between the 27th April 2016 and 27th September 2017. It was undertaken in accordance with the brief produced by the PA (Goodwin 2016) and the Written Scheme of Investigation produced by SOTARCH (Sutherland 2016). The project was undertaken in accordance with current best archaeological practice, now embodied in the by-laws, codes of professional conduct, and standards and guidance (specifically that for archaeological watching brief) of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).

4.2 The project monitored all ground-works undertaken by mechanical excavators using toothless ditching buckets, and followed this with inspection of the exposed sub-soils for archaeological features. Written records in the form of site notes and annotated sketches were made, and digital photographs taken showing the extent of the ground-works and the various features encountered. The project archive will be stored at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Bethesda Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent (site code: **QHH 16**; museum accession number: **2016.LH.1**).

4.3 The foundation trenches dug for the individual plots and drainage features outside the former pub have been labelled A-G (Fig. 9) in order to aid their identification during the discussion.

5.0 Results of the watching brief

5.1 The watching brief observed the excavation of foundation, drainage and service trenches associated with the new residential development. Some of these trenches were located within an area that was formerly occupied by the single-storey extension of the public house (Fig. 8) which had already been demolished and the floors removed when the watching brief began. These trenches were 0.70m wide and ranged between 0.70m and 0.90m in depth (Plates 1-3). No archaeological features were observed in any of these trenches. The soil profile within the footprint of the former building comprised two layers. The uppermost (112), was a grey brown fine ashy silt containing occasional brick and tile fragments c.0.50m thick. Underneath this was (113), a greyish yellow clay, probably the natural clay, visible to the base of the trench.

5.2 The trenches dug for the remaining residential units yielded little archaeological material (Fig.9). It was not possible to see into the trenches in group A as they had already been filled with concrete without the monitoring archaeologist being present (Plate 4).

5.3 The trenches in group B had been filled to a depth of 0.40m with concrete but at least some of the soil profile was observable above this level (Plate 5) and comprised (100) a tarmac hardstanding layer of around 0.06m deep which overlaid a made ground layer (101) consisting of silty crushed brick and brick fragments around 0.50m thick. The lowest layer observed was (102), a sticky yellow-grey clay, possibly natural.

5.4 The above-mentioned soil profile was similar in the trenches of group C (Plates 6 & 7). This comprised (101) to a depth of 0.60m and (102) to a depth of 0.15m-0.20m thick, possibly representing an interface layer. The lowest horizon was (103), a reddish-brown clay which appeared to be the natural subsoil. The trenches in group C were dug a little deeper (a maximum of c.1.50m) than elsewhere on site, due to the presence of tree roots. The western trench was a little siltier than elsewhere, possibly due to the tree roots. A saggar-filled linear feature (104) was observed in the south-facing section of the southern trench. This was c.0.20m in depth and sat just below (102). When this feature was cut through in the course of digging the north-south aligned trenches it was revealed to be c.0.20m wide. This is most likely to be a French drain.

5.5 The trenches in group D were c.1.20m deep and exhibited a similar soil profile as seen elsewhere on site (Plate 8), with (101) to a depth of c.0.30m and (102) to a depth of c.0.20m. Underneath this was (110), a layer of yellowish-brown clay although this was observed at the base of the trenches and could represent a variation of the natural clay. Towards the south and east of the plot (102) petered out and (101) was directly above (110).

5.6 The excavation of a large man hole (c.2.00m square and c.1.30m deep) at the north-west corner of the site, labelled E on Figure 9, revealed a similar soil profile as encountered across the rest of the site, with (100) being 0.35m deep, the interface layer (102) being 0.30m deep, (103) the natural clay persisting to the base of the trench. Two cuts were evident in this trench: cut (107) was an east-west cut central to the trench, 0.55m wide and at least 1.00m deep. This had a lower fill of very dark brown silt at least 0.40m thick (108) and an upper fill of silty brick rubble (109). This feature contained a ceramic drain of c.0.20m in diameter (Plate 9). (105) was a north-south aligned cut c.0.40m wide and 0.35m deep. This cut was encountered immediately below the interface layer at 1.04m east of the west side of the trench (Plate 10). This was filled with fragments of saggars and is probably another French drain (106).

5.7 The footings for the garage, labelled F (Fig.9), were trenches 0.70m wide and 0.80m deep. They revealed the same soil profile as seen across the site and contained no archaeological features.

5.8 The excavations for the main drainage run, labelled G on Figure 9, comprised trenches of 1.20m in width and c.1.60m deep. They revealed a soil profile (Plate 11) comprising (101) to a depth of c.0.20m, (102) to a depth of c.0.15m, overlying the natural clay which was observed to the base of the trench (110). Feature (111) comprised a layer of crushed saggars (Plate 12), presumably the base of a further French drain, c.0.35m thick. This feature was observed between (102) and the natural clay (110). As seen elsewhere on site where there were many tree roots present, in this case in the east-facing section of the trench, the soil was noticeably siltier.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The only archaeological features observed during the watching brief were several French drains, all filled with fragments of saggar. This leads to the conclusion that the activity on site during the 18th and 19th centuries, namely the construction of the pub, bowling green and associated outbuildings, has obliterated almost all traces of any previous land use or occupation.

7.0 Acknowledgments

This report was written and illustrated by Sarah Weston of Stoke-on-Trent Archaeology Services. Fieldwork was undertaken by Zoe Sutherland of SOTARCH. Thanks are due to Wood Goldstraw Yorath, BB Staffordshire Developments Ltd and Jon Goodwin, Stoke-on-Trent City Council Planning Archaeologist.

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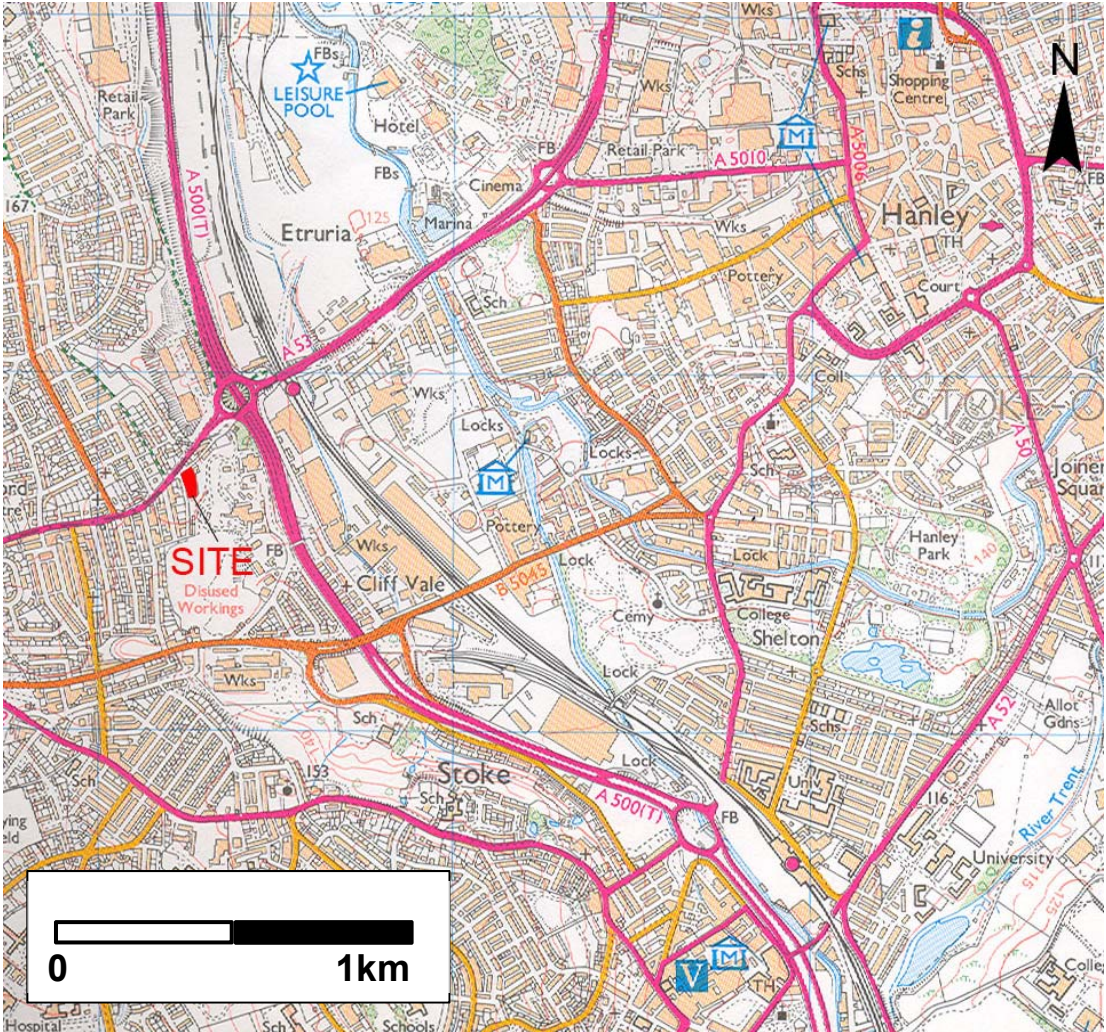
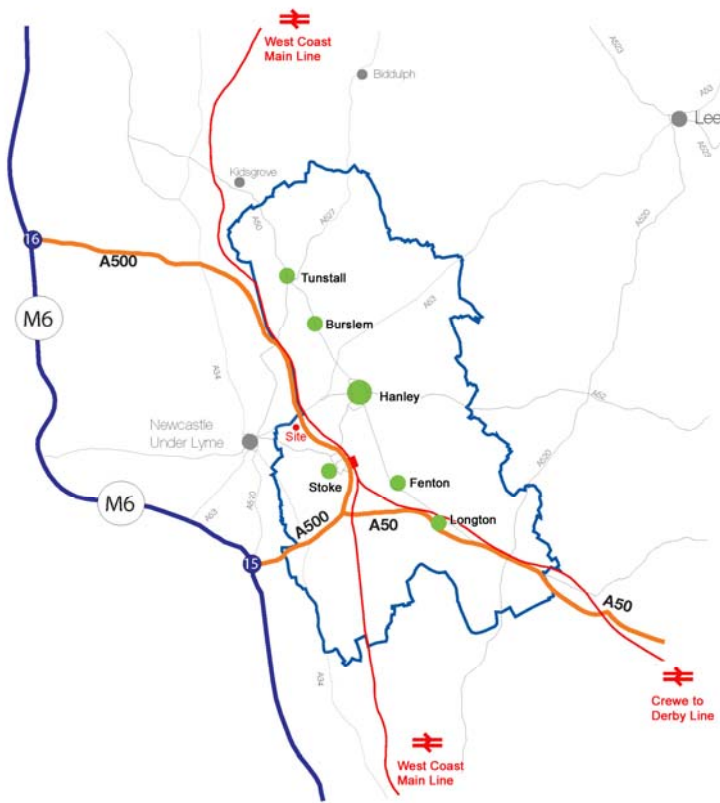


FIG. 1
Site location.



FIG. 2

Map showing the Queen's Hotel with the site boundary outlined in red. The dashed line represents the altered structure of the building after demolition of the single storey extension.

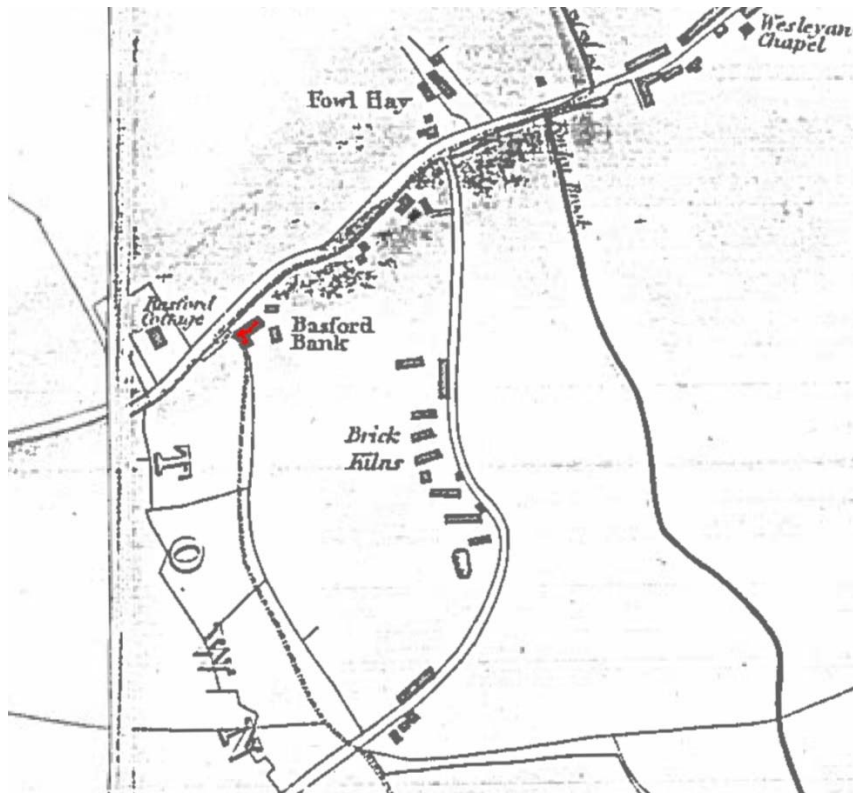


FIG. 3

Extract from Hargreaves' map of 1832. The *Queen's Arms* is probably the L-shaped building highlighted red.

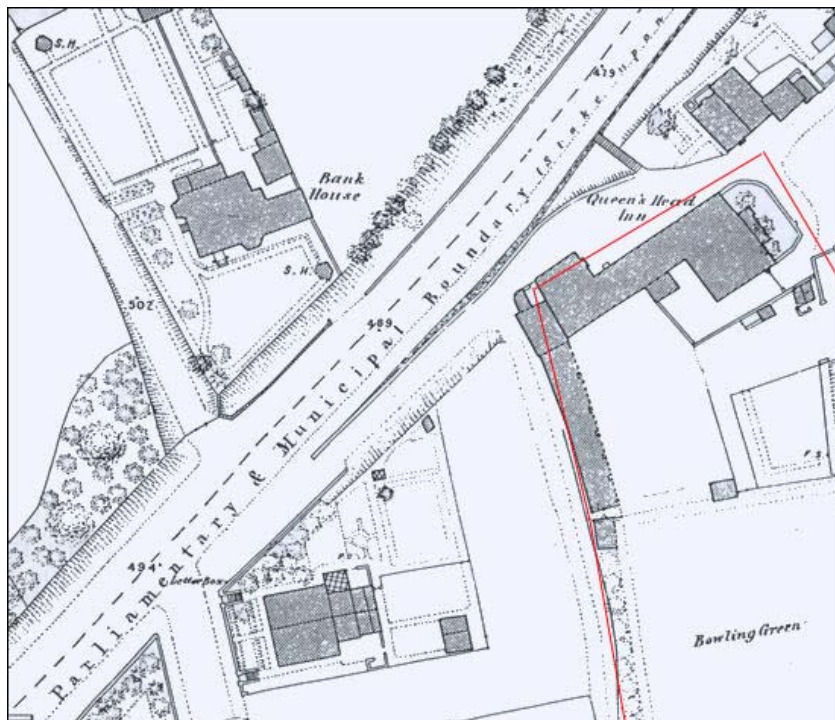


FIG. 4

Extract from the 1878 OS map (1:500 scale) with the site boundary outlined in red.

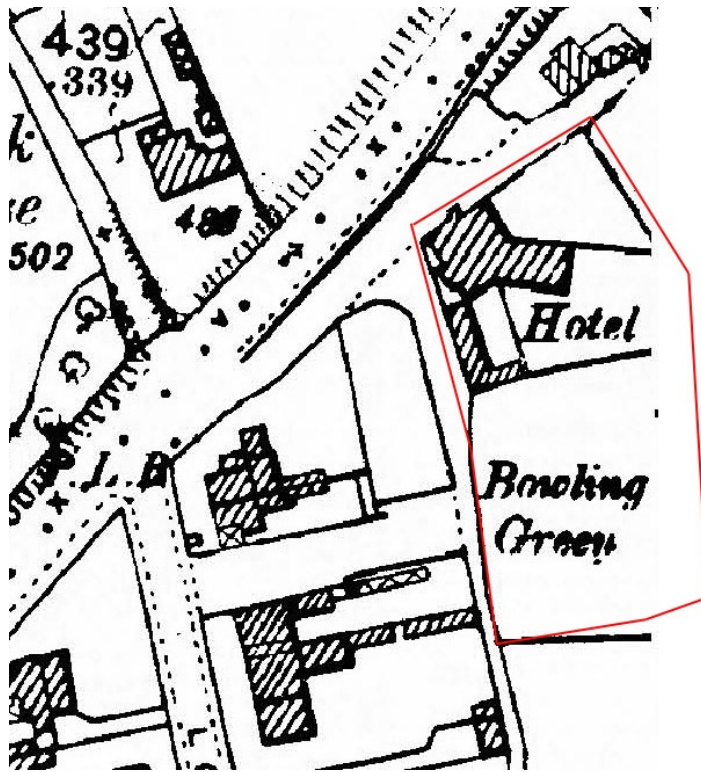


FIG. 5

Extract from the 1900 OS map (1:2500 scale) with the site boundary outlined in red.

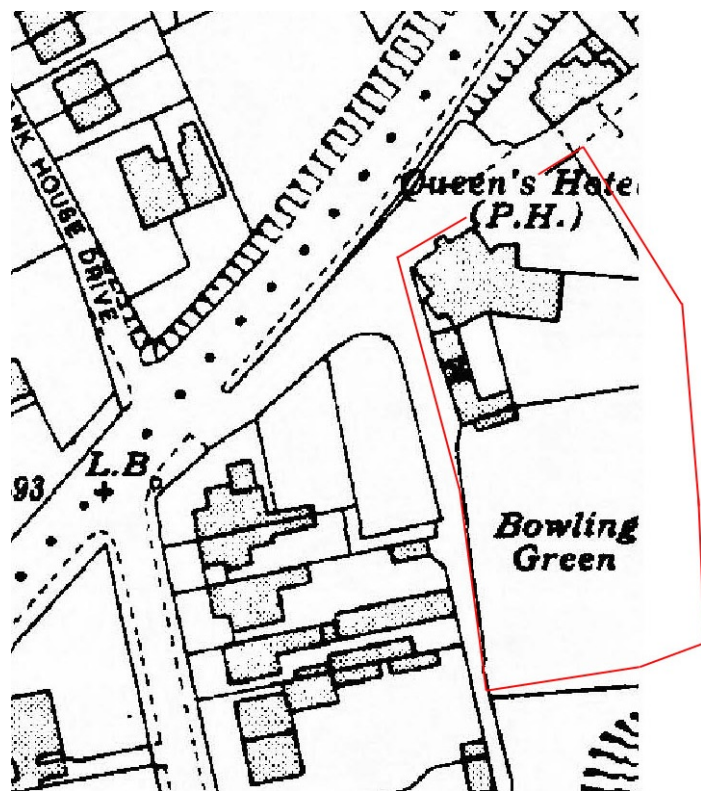


FIG. 6

Extract from the 1937 OS map (1:2500 scale) with the site boundary outlined in red.

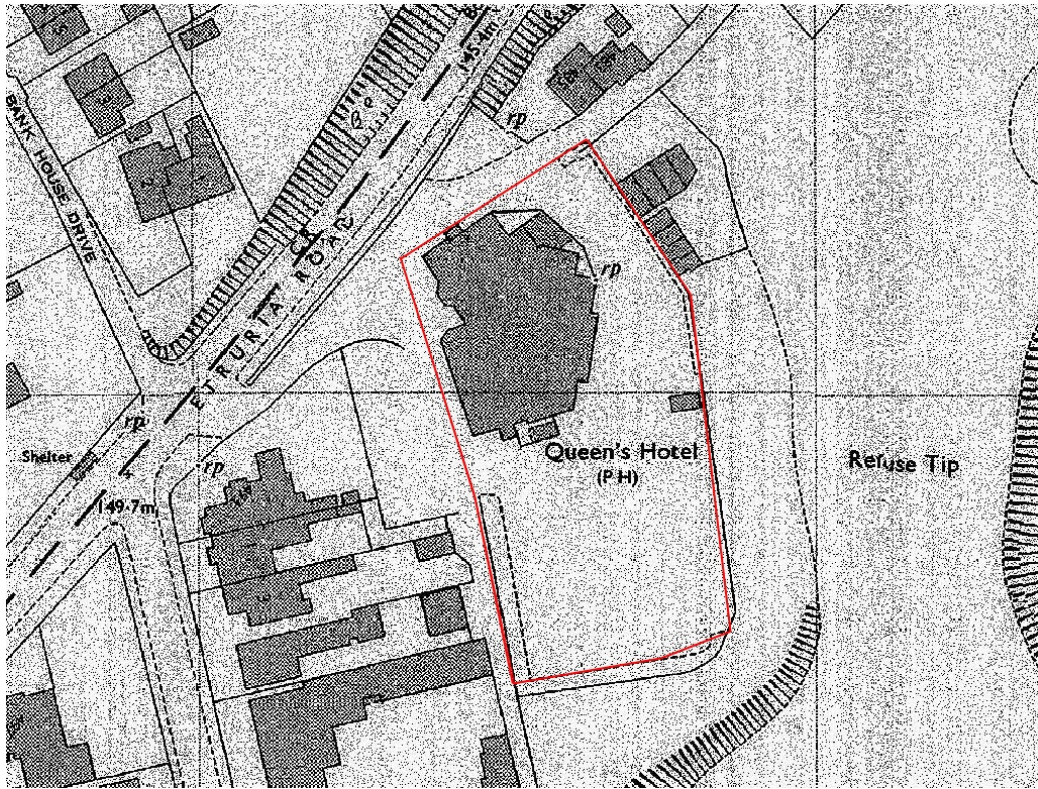


FIG. 7

Extract from the 1970 OS map (1:2500 scale) with the site boundary outlined in red.

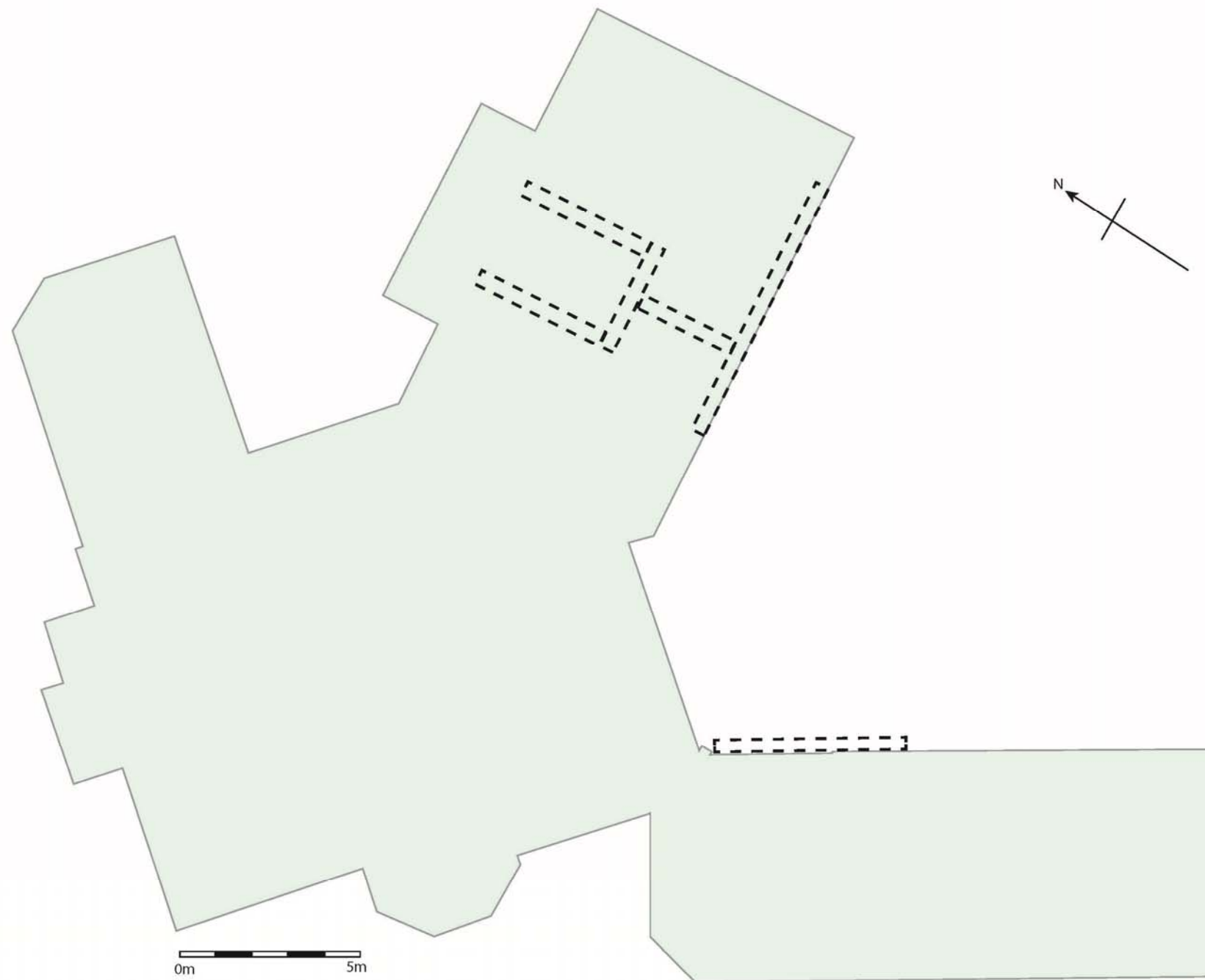


FIG. 8

Footprint of the former pub building with single-storey extension removed, dashed lines show the trench locations

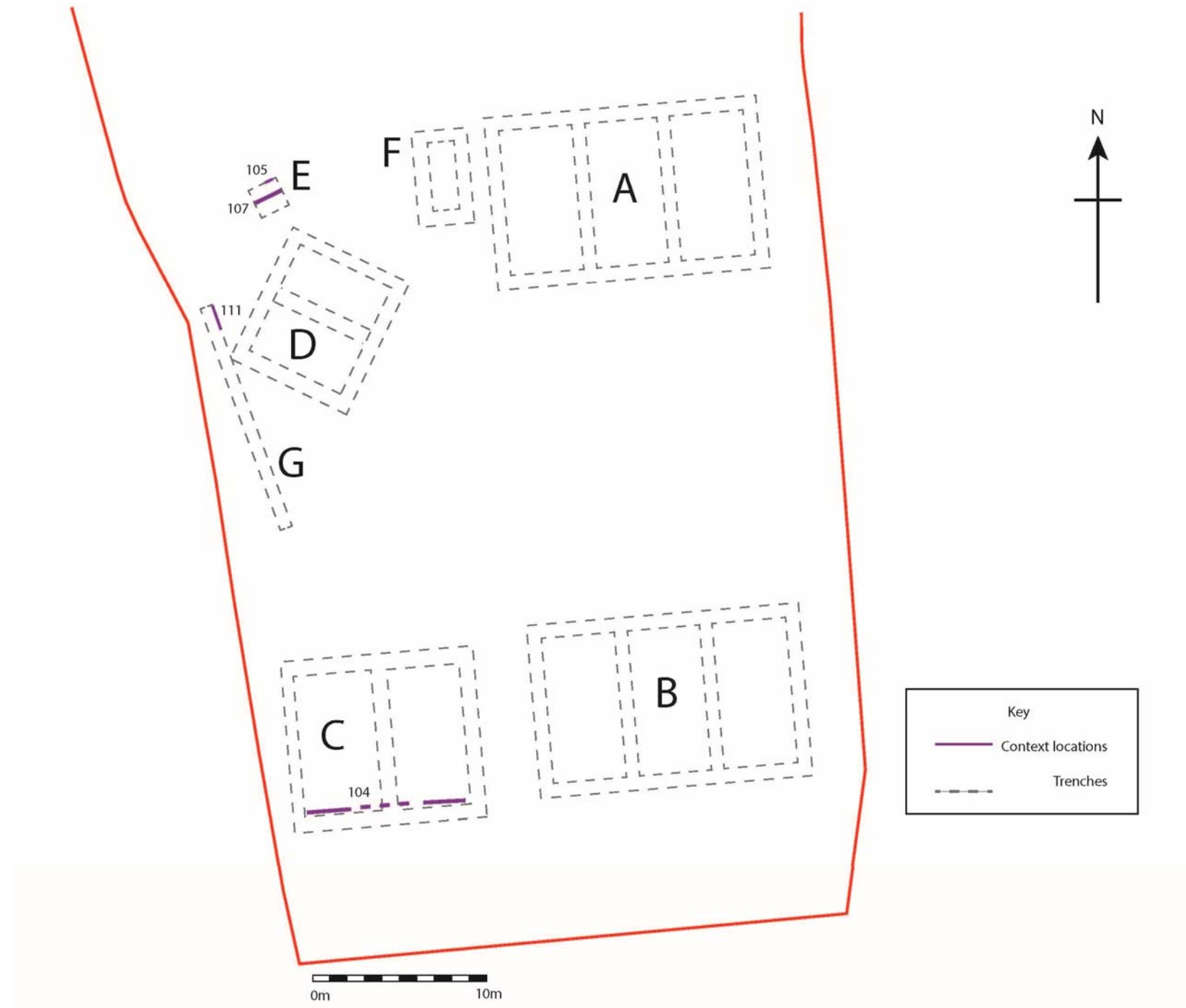


FIG. 9

Location of trenches and features relating to the housing plots to the south of the Queen's Hotel



PLATE 1

Foundation trench within the former single-storey extension, facing south east



PLATE 2

Drainage trench showing the soil profile, facing north west (scales: 1.00m)



PLATE 3

Foundation trench showing the soil profile, facing west (scales: 1.00m)



PLATE 4

Foundation trenches A filled with concrete, facing south west



PLATE 5

Foundation trenches B partially filled with concrete, showing soil profile, facing north



PLATE 6

Foundation trenches C showing soil profile and sagger feature, facing north west (scales:
2.00m)



PLATE 7

Completed foundation trenches C, facing south east (scales: 1.00m & 2.00m)



PLATE 8

Foundation trenches D, facing south west (scales: 1.00m & 2.00m)



PLATE 9

Manhole trench E showing soil profile and drain (109), facing north (scales: 1.00m and 2.00m)



PLATE 10

Manhole trench E showing soil profile and drain (106), facing north west (scales: 1.00m and 2.00m)



PLATE 11

Drainage trench G showing soil profile, facing south west (scales: 1.00m and 2.00m)



PLATE 12

Drainage trench G showing soil profile and drain (111), facing east (scales: 1.00m and 2.00m)