

WELLBAR HOUSE  
GALLOWGATE  
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

APRIL 2008

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Prepared for: <i>Moonglade Holdings Ltd</i>	By: <i>The Archaeological Practice Ltd.</i>
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# WELLBAR HOUSE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION BY WATCHING BRIEF

*Prepared by*

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.



***Frontispiece:*** *The removal of the red shale in July 2007, which acted as a leveling dump as part of the foundations of Wellbar House*

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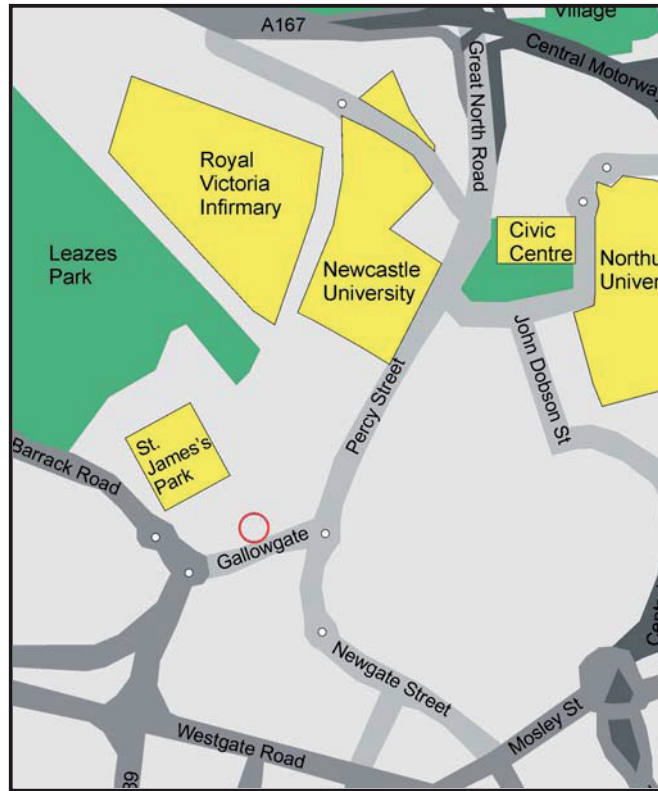
## SUMMARY

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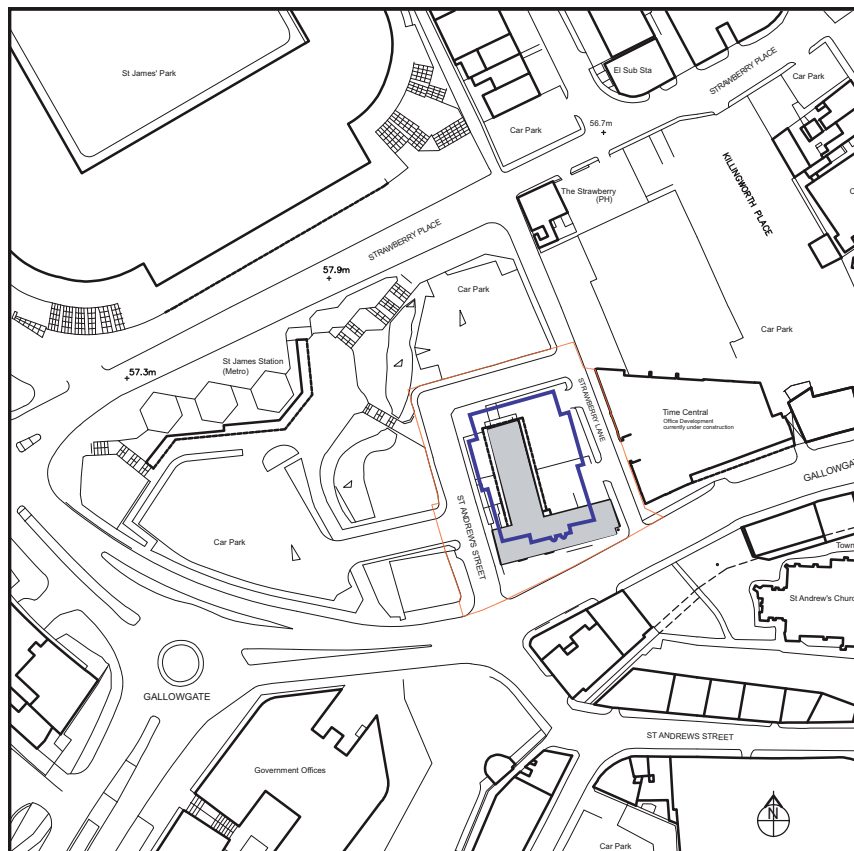
*This report details observations made during an archaeological watching brief carried out on the site of Wellbar House, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne. The work was carried out in two phases during July 2007 and January-February 2008. The works commenced after the demolition of the 1960s building and involved the monitoring of associated groundworks in advance of the construction of a ten-storey office and retail development with basement car park.*

*No features, deposits or finds of any archaeological or historical significance were encountered during the works. In the southern part of the site, the composition of the clay deposit revealed beneath the leveling dumps associated with Wellbar House, suggested the clay might have been redeposited in that area. However no cultural features or deposits were identified beneath or in association with that clay. It may be concluded that the construction of Wellbar House during the 1960s was responsible for the removal of all the remaining archaeological features and deposits.*

*Accordingly no further archaeological work is required.*



**Illus. 01:** The location of the Wellbar House site on Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne.



**Illus. 02:** Site location plan showing the proposed building footprint in green while the development site is indicated by the red outline. The now demolished Wellbar House is shaded in grey.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### **1.1 Location and topography**

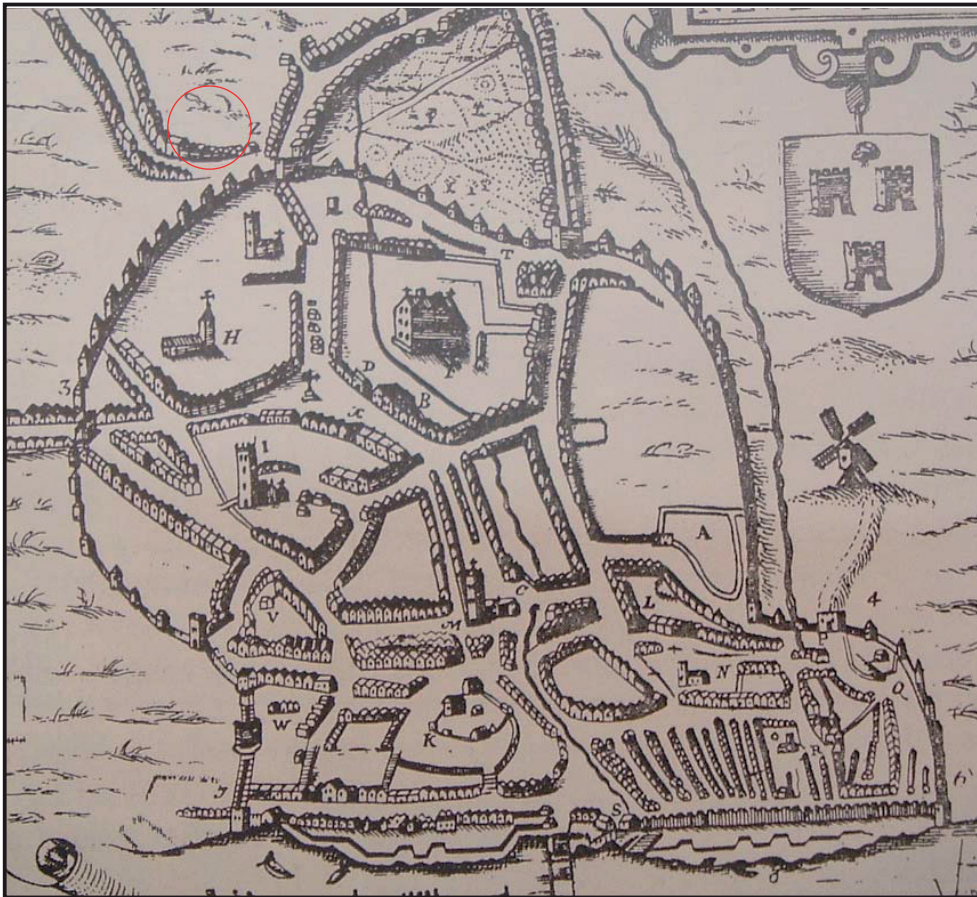
The watching brief was carried out at the site of Wellbar House, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne (NZ 2450 6445) (Illus. 01-02).

The development site is situated on a south facing slope, while Gallowgate dips eastwards to Newgate Street where it levels out.

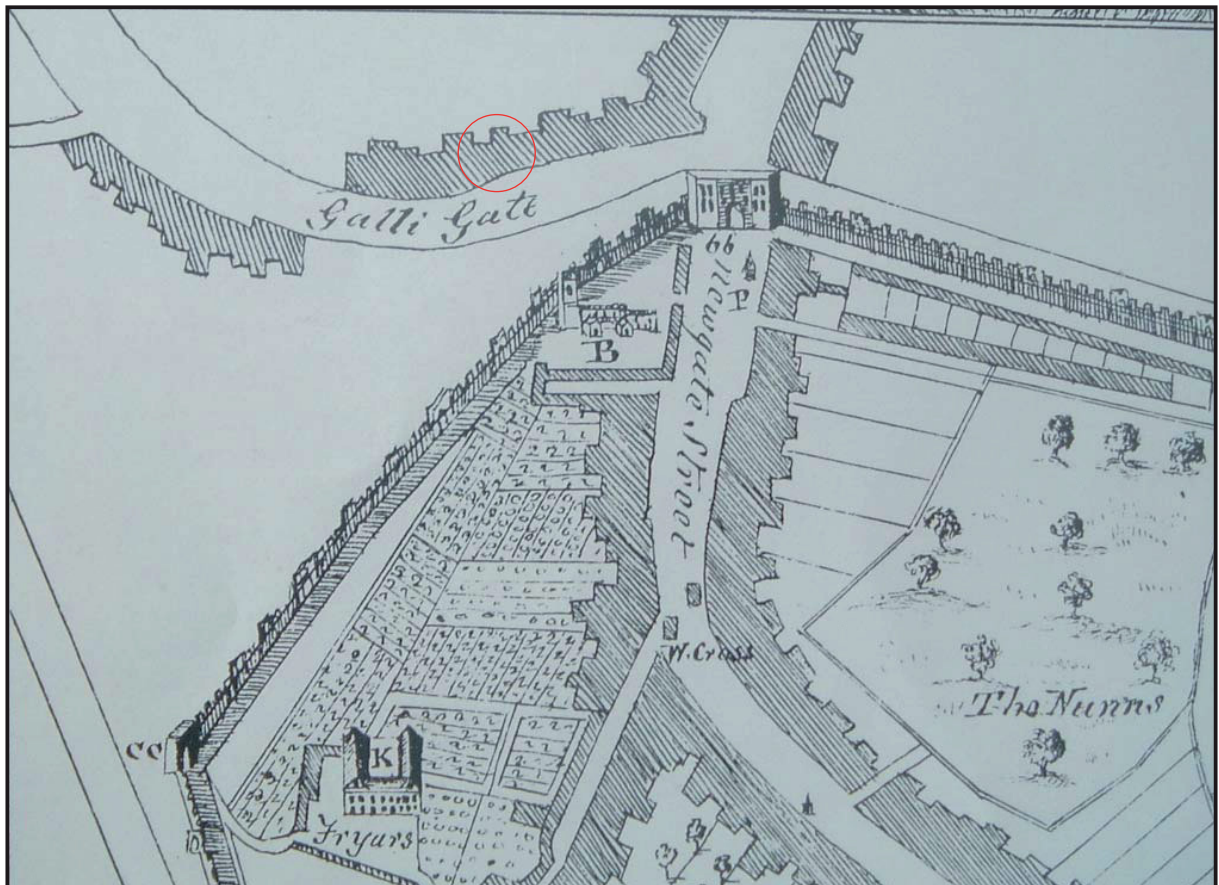
### **1.2 Planning background**

The Archaeological Practice Ltd submitted an archaeological desk top assessment on the Wellbar House site, on behalf of Moonglade Holdings Ltd in September 2006 (AP 06/52). Following the submission of the assessment, which reported on the potential impacts on archaeology in advance of the construction of a ten storey office and retail block with basement car park, a requirement for a watching brief was imposed by the planning authority. This was designed to enable the examination and recording of the character of any remains discovered during development works, thereby mitigating by record the impact of the scheme. In this case, the watching brief was requested in view of the site's location alongside the medieval route of Gallowgate, which according to historical map data (Illus.03-04) was lined by buildings at least from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The map evidence suggested that the site might contain archaeological remains relating to late medieval and post-medieval development along Gallowgate, surviving in pockets between areas of 19th- and 20th-century disturbance.



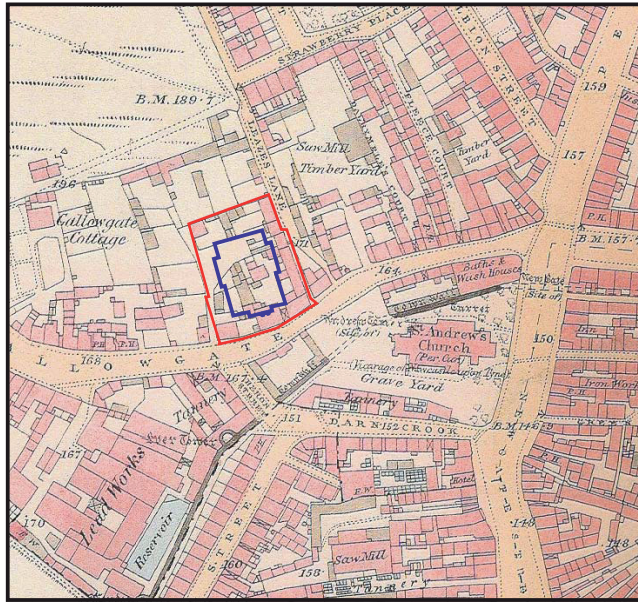


**Illus. 03:** Extract from Speed's plan of Newcastle, 1611, (reproduced from Foster 1995) , the approximate area of the development site is circled in red.

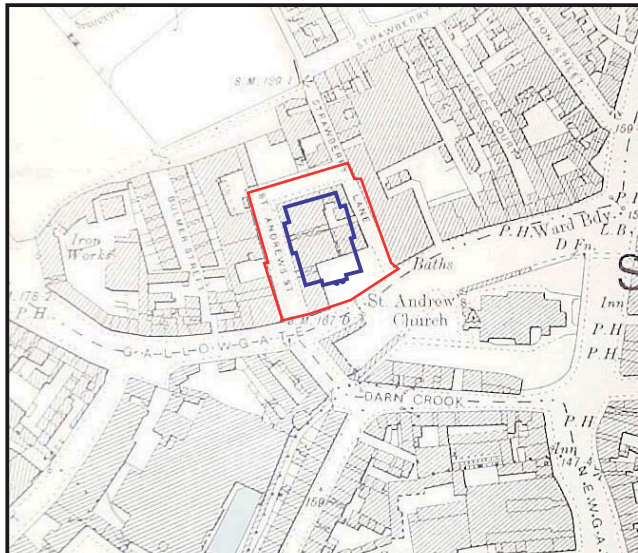


**Illus. 04:** Extract from Corbridge's plan of Newcastle 1723, (T&W D/NCP/2/2), the approximate area of the development site is circled in red.

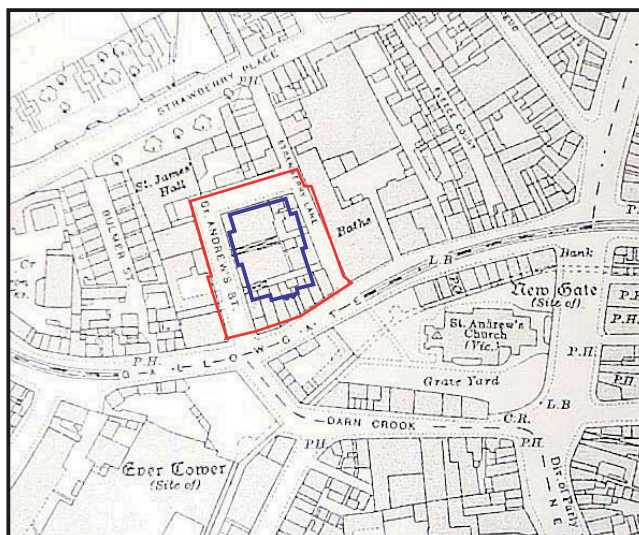




**Illus. 05:** Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey plan, c. 1860, 1:2500, XCVII.7. The site of the watching brief is outlined in red with the building footprint in blue.



**Illus. 06:** Extract from Second Edition Ordnance Survey plan, 1898, 1:2500, sheet II. The site of the watching brief is outlined in red with the building footprint in blue.



**Illus. 07:** Extract from Third Edition Ordnance Survey plan, 1919, 1:2500, NCIV.12. The site of the watching brief is outlined as above.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

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### 2.1 Description of works

The groundworks which required an archaeological watching brief were carried out in July 2007 and January-February 2008.

The first phase of works, in July 2007, involved the removal of concrete surface and demolition rubble, digging out of the foundations of the 1960s Wellbar House tower block and the digging of test pits to locate piles.

The second phase of works during January and February 2008 entailed a watching brief during the groundworks in advance of the construction of the new development; this involved the removal of all modern overburden and leveling of site prior to construction of the new foundations.

This work was observed by the archaeologist appointed to the project. A photographic record was made as the excavations progressed, and features of potential interest were examined more closely.

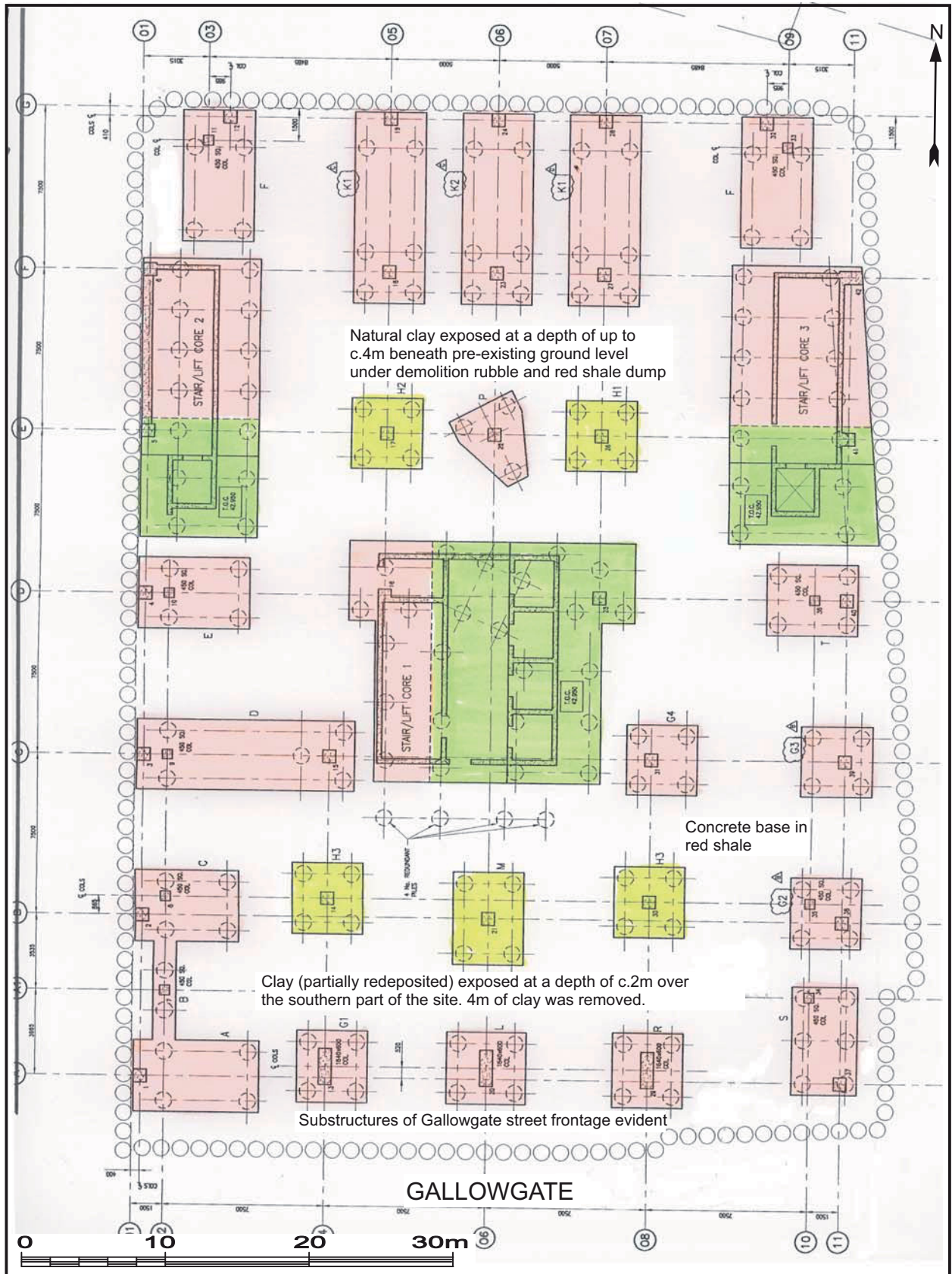
### 2.2 Results of Investigation

#### 2.2.1 Phase 1 Construction works

During July 2007 the existing foundations of Wellbar House were removed in sections daily and backfilled immediately as were the test pits. A permanent presence was maintained on site during this time. After the removal of the demolition rubble, a low-level toxic red shale was unexpectedly exposed. Approximately 2 metres deep, it had been used as a foundation for the 1960s office block. In the south east corner the red shale was mixed with a large amount of broken red brick; as this was the deepest corner of the site, it appears the red brick was mixed in to give a more solid foundation to Wellbar House. The red shale was cleared from the site in two halves, starting in the south-east corner and working westwards. The red shale was then replaced with stone fragments. This process was repeated at the northern end of the development site. A modern concrete base, 2.5m in diameter and of unknown function, was uncovered within the red shale in the south-eastern part of the site and was also removed, as were various red brick and concrete walls forming part of the substructure of Wellbar House and the Gallowgate street frontage along the southern and eastern sides of the site. The red brick rubble incorporated in the red shale may derive from the demolition of earlier brick walls on the site.

A firm, medium to dark brown coloured clay was revealed across the site during pile proving. Towards the southern end of the site, where the ground surface sloped downwards, the clay contained stone fragments suggesting it was re-deposited. This might therefore represent made ground which had been dumped as part of earlier leveling operations to counteract the unevenness of the ground surface. It is conceivable, therefore, that earlier archaeological deposits may be concealed beneath the clay in this area, though no such levels were identified. However, across the majority of the site was covered by clean, apparently natural, clay containing no inclusions.





**KEY**

Deposits removed to level of 44.350m O.D over entire site

Further 1.25m removed below site level

Further 1.85m removed

Further 2.65m removed

**Illus. 08:** Construction plan of basement formation levels adapted to provide summary of deposits removed.



*Illus. 09: The removal of rubble after the demolition of Wellbar House, looking north-west.*



*Illus. 10: The foundations of Gallowgate street frontage and the red shale levelling dump, looking south-west.*



*Illus. 11: The concrete base, of unknown function, in the south-east corner of the development site, taken from the north-east.*





**Illus. 12:** Cut showing section of re-deposited clay in the south-eastern part of the development site.



**Illus. 13:** Brick and concrete wall exposed at the southern end of the development site, forming part of the substructure of the Gallowgate street frontage.



**Illus. 14:** A brick clad concrete, wall forming part of the substructure of Wellbar House along the eastern side of the development site.

No features, deposits or finds of any cultural heritage significance were encountered during this phase of the groundworks. The absence of any features cut into the top of the natural clay where the latter was exposed points to the truncation of cultural levels.

### **2.2.2 Phase 2 works**

The second stage, during January and February 2008, involved the removal by machine of modern overburden and exposing of existing piles. Once the modern overburden had been removed, the site was then excavated in the same manner as before. Starting in the south-east corner, the stone fragments were removed to expose the top of the natural or redeposited clay. The clay was exposed at a depth c. 2m towards the southern end of the site, and removed to a depth of a further 4 metres. A steep incline in the pre-existing ground level as the excavations progressed northwards meant that, at the northern end of the site, the clay was exposed at a depth up to 4m with as much as 6m of clay being removed. There was a greater depth of demolition rubble over that part of the site, but the red shale deposit was much shallower there. The existing piles from Wellbar House were uncovered and removed, and the exposed natural clay was concreted over.

In the southern part of the site, the ground excavations did not reveal a clear interface between the possibly redeposited clay and underlying natural clay and no features of deposits of cultural heritage significance were encountered during this phase of groundworks.





**Illus. 15:** A view of the development site showing the removed 1960s pile foundations in the foreground with the foundations for the new build in the background, facing south-east.



**Illus. 16:** The development site facing north showing the 1960s pile foundations of Wellbar House in-situ.



**Illus. 17:** The development site looking north-west during removal of clay to exposing the 1960s pile foundations of Wellbar House in-situ.



**Illus. 18:** The removal of the clay surrounding the 1960s pile foundations, facing east.





*Illus. 19: The removal of the clay in the western area of the site, with the Wellbar House piles exposed in the background, taken from the east.*



*Illus. 20: The removal of the clay in the north-eastern area of the site, taken from the south-west.*



*Illus. 21: A general view of the development site facing south-east showing the level down to which deposits have been excavated with the modern foundations in place.*

### 3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

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No structures, features or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed during the groundworks associated with the demolition of Wellbar House, Gallowgate, and the preparatory work for the construction of the new office and retail building on the site.

No features were seen cut into the top of the natural clay which extended in the northern half of the site, although the manner of excavation which often involved simultaneous removal of overburden and clay made it difficult to be certain that such features were nowhere present. If valid, however this observation would suggest that cultural deposits across the site had been truncated by more recent activity. It may be concluded that the construction of Wellbar House during the 1960s was responsible for the removal of all the remaining archaeological features and deposits.

The only structures exposed along the southern and eastern sides of the site formed part of the substructure of Wellbar House or the 20th-century street frontage of Gallowgate. The clay present in this southern part of the site, contained stone inclusions, suggesting that it may have been redeposited, and thus might potentially overlie earlier archaeological deposits. However the ground excavations did not reveal a clear interface between this possibly redeposited clay and any underlying natural clay and no features or deposits of cultural heritage significance were identified either cut into or covered by the clay in this area.

Accordingly no further archaeological work is recommended with respect to the development site.

## APPENDIX 1:

### TYNE AND WEAR SPECIALIST CONSERVATION TEAM

#### **Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Wellbar House, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne**

##### ***Introduction***

Planning permission has been granted for a ten storey office development with two storey basement car park and ground floor retail unit and café.

An archaeological assessment has been submitted (The Archaeological Practice, 2006). This report must be consulted by the appointed archaeologist. The commissioning client will provide a copy.

The report concludes that Gallowgate is an ancient access route, its present course postdates the construction of the town wall c. 1280 AD. Speed's 1611 map of Newcastle shows buildings lining the street. Some of these buildings could have survived Civil War destruction into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The current layout of St. Andrew's Street and Strawberry Lane was established in the late nineteenth century. Wellbar House was built in the 1960s.

The site could potentially preserve evidence relating to late medieval and post medieval development along Gallowgate. Nineteenth century developments and the construction of Wellbar House will have destroyed much archaeological information. The latter building is not thought to be basemented but it will have substantial foundations. Archaeological remains could survive in pockets in-between disturbed areas.

Ground-disturbing work must therefore be monitored by an archaeologist as a Watching Brief, in order that any archaeological remains can be recorded.

The watching brief must be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeological organisation.

All work must be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and must follow the IFA Standard and Guidance for Watching Briefs (revised 2001).

The work will record (by photograph and scale drawing where necessary) and environmentally sample (if necessary) any archaeological deposits of importance found on the plot. The purpose of this brief is to obtain tenders for this work. The report must be the definitive record for deposition in the Tyne and Wear HER.

##### **A toothless bucket will be used on the plant employed on site to reduce damage to archaeological remains.**

The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (2006) notes the importance of research as a vital element of development-led archaeological work. It sets out key research priorities for all periods of the past allowing commercial contractors to demonstrate how their fieldwork relates to wider regional and national priorities for the study of archaeology and the historic environment. The aim of NERRF is to ensure that all fieldwork is carried out in a secure research context and that commercial contractors ensure that their investigations ask the right questions.

The commissioning client will provide plans indicating the location of the proposed work.

##### ***The tasks***



1 A construction timetable has yet to be agreed. Tenders for the Watching Brief should therefore be a cost per day including overheads such as travel costs and equipment. Any variation on the agreed timetable will be notified by the client, who will give a minimum of 48 hours notice of a change on the days of site attendance. Close liaison between the parties involved will be needed to co-ordinate this element of the work.

2 The work involves undertaking a structured watching brief to observe and record any archaeological deposits and finds from this locality. The absence of deposits and finds must be recorded as negative evidence. **The Watching Brief will not aim to hinder the construction programme, however should archaeological remains be found, the appointed archaeologist must be allowed sufficient time to fully record and excavate (if necessary) the archaeological deposits.** Within the course of the Watching Brief, it may be possible to record sections through the stratigraphy exposed during the construction work.

### **General Conditions**

3 All staff employed by the Archaeological Contractor shall be professional field archaeologists with appropriate skills and experience to undertake work to the highest professional standards.

4 The Archaeological Contractor must maintain a Site Diary for the benefit of the Client, with full details of Site Staff present, duration of time on site, etc. and contact with third parties.

5 The Archaeological Contractor must be able to provide written proof that the necessary levels of Insurance Cover are in place.

### **The report**

6 The archaeological contractor will provide a report of archaeological operations, including:

- a site location plan and grid reference
- brief description of recording procedures
- plans and sections of stratigraphy recorded (if practical)
- locations of finds collected (if any)
- colour photographs of the site and of any significant archaeological features/finds
- a summary of the results of the work.

The report will form an addition to the *Short Reports* files in the Tyne and Wear Historic Environment Record.

7 Three bound and collated paper copies of the report need to be submitted, one for the commissioning Client, one for Newcastle City Council planning authority and one for deposition in the County HER at the address below. A digital copy of the report on CD is also required by the HER – in a plastic case and not attached to the bound report.

### **Monitoring**

8 The Archaeological Contractor will inform the County Archaeologist of the start and end dates of the Watching Brief to enable the County Archaeologist to monitor the work in progress. The Client will give the County Archaeologist reasonable access to the development to undertake monitoring.

### **OASIS**

The Tyne and Wear County Archaeologist supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index/access

to the large and growing body of archaeological grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded fieldwork.

The archaeological contractor is therefore required to register with OASIS and to complete the online OASIS form for their watching brief at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Please ensure that tenders for this work takes into account the time needed to complete the form.

Once the OASIS record has been completed and signed off by the HER and NMR the information will be incorporated into the English Heritage Excavation Index, hosted online by the Archaeology Data Service.

The ultimate aim of OASIS is for an online virtual library of grey literature to be built up, linked to the index. The unit therefore has the option of uploading their grey literature report as part of their OASIS record, as a Microsoft Word document, rich text format, pdf or html format. The grey literature report will only be mounted by the ADS if both the unit and the HER give their agreement. The grey literature report will be made available through a library catalogue facility.

Please ensure that you and your client understand this procedure. If you choose to upload your grey literature report please ensure that your client agrees to this in writing to the HER at the address below.

For general enquiries about the OASIS project aims and the use of the form please contact: Mark Barratt at the National Monuments Record (tel. 01793 414600 or [oasis@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:oasis@english-heritage.org.uk)). For enquiries of a technical nature please contact: Catherine Hardman at the Archaeology Data Service (tel. 01904 433954 or [oasis@ads.ahds.ac.uk](mailto:oasis@ads.ahds.ac.uk)). Or contact the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer at the address below.

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