
ELDON SQUARE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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Frontispiece: The present Newgate Street frontage south of Blackett Street, viewed from the North

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SUMMARY

The present document provides a report on a baseline cultural heritage assessment undertaken by The Archaeological Practice Ltd as part of the overall environmental impact assessment for the proposed Eldon Square improvement scheme. The report incorporates an audit of both discrete and more extensive historical landscape components and presents a synthesis of the overall chronology of the defined area. Based on this assessment, consideration has been given to providing recommendations for evaluation and mitigation work in advance of development works.

In addition to site visits, the assessment involved consultations with the local authority's Archaeology and Building Conservation Services; an examination of historic maps and documentary records for the area; consultation of published local and regional histories, consideration of the results of previous archaeological investigations pertaining to the area, including cultural heritage assessments and evaluations, and consultation and synthesis of data held by the County Historic Environment Record (HER).

On the basis of the above, conclusions are provided regarding the extent and significance of the archaeological remains in development area, and an outline provided of the consequent cultural heritage impact of the scheme. Finally, the report aims to identify areas or locations where further investigative evaluation is necessary in order to clarify areas of uncertainty regarding the nature and significance of the archaeological resource, and makes recommendations regarding the work required to mitigate the impact of the scheme.

The main findings of the assessment are that a number of successive phases of development have occurred within the bounds of the development area since the Norman period or earlier. However, the majority of potential remains of these periods of development have been removed, in turn, by each succeeding phase, leaving only isolated pockets of potential, principally along relatively undisturbed historic street frontages

Recommendations based on these findings call for the archaeological examination of geotechnical test excavations to be carried out for structural engineering purposes, in order to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains. Any remains of significance revealed during this process should be recorded, for which purpose a reasonable and adequate interval must be allowed. Should complex archaeological remains be encountered and insufficient time available in which to record them, subsequent, more detailed archaeological evaluation may be warranted. Further archaeological evaluation is likely to be required along the Newgate Street frontage and in the area between Newgate Street and Clayton Street.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Assessment

This assessment, prepared by the Archaeological Practice, Department of Archaeology, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, has been commissioned by Nathaniel Lichfield & Co. Its purpose is to inform the planning process regarding the likely impact of development works upon the site, and represents the first stage in a programme of archaeological work which may subsequently include evaluation and mitigation works, aimed to provide a sound basis for a planning application for development work on the site.

1.2 Planning Background

The first major policy-related work on archaeology and development in Newcastle, focussing on the urban core area, was published in 1976 (Harbottle & Clack 1976).

Planning Policy guideline 16: archaeology and planning (1990), gives planning authorities the ability to request assessments of archaeological potential in order to ascertain the nature and extent of any remains likely to be impacted by development, and inform upon appropriate mitigation measures. This guideline has been incorporated into the Newcastle Unitary development Plan (NUDP) (Policy C.4.2-3). The proposed development area is identified in the NUDP as of variable archaeological interest, with large parts designated low in this respect due to the impact of the modern Eldon Square retail development. This report constitutes the results of an archaeological assessment carried out in response to policy C4.2 which requires prospective developers to submit an assessment of the potential impact of development proposals upon the archaeological resource.

1.3 Methodology of Assessment

The assessment will:

- Define the principal sources of information available for archaeological assessment (section 3).
- Present a catalogue (section 4) and chronological synthesis (section 5) of archaeological data derived from various sources. Accompanying base maps will locate established structures and features within, or in close proximity to, the assessment area.
- Provide an assessment of archaeological potential with respect to the development area.
- Provide conclusions with respect to the known and potential archaeological significance of the assessment area (section 7).
- Recommend further work to define more clearly the nature of the archaeological record and facilitate management or mitigation of this resource (section 8).

2. ASSESSMENT CONTEXT

2.1 Location and Extent of the Assessment Area (*Figure 1*).

The assessment focuses on the area covered by the Eldon Square retail complex built in 1970s. The area extends from the circular multi-storey car-park between Percy Street and Prudhoe Street in the north, to the junction between Newgate Street and Clayton Street in the south. Its western border runs along the Percy Street/Newgate Street frontage and it extends eastwards into Grainger's nineteenth century urban layout, bordering his Grainger Market, Nelson Street and Old Eldon Square, with an extension in the north-east corner to Northumberland Street.

The scope of the report extends beyond the immediate area included within the Eldon Square footprint, however, to embrace a wider zone that potentially may be subject to visual impacts. Consideration of this broader zone provides contextual information regarding those individual sites or historic landscape components which might potentially be physically impacted by the proposed scheme. It also ensures that any site or landscape component which might be more indirectly (e.g. visually) affected is incorporated in the site catalogue.

2.2 Geology & Topography

The underlying geology of the area consists of Carboniferous era Middle and Lower Coal Measures, including coal seams, mudstones/siltstone and sandstones. These area overlain by Pleistocene era glacial tills.

2.3 Previous Archaeological Assessment and Investigation

Although a number of discrete episodes of archaeological and cultural heritage work have previously been carried out within the Eldon Square retail complex footprint, this is the first phase of archaeological/cultural heritage work carried out in direct relation to the present, proposed scheme.

2.4 Nature of Proposed Developments

The Eldon Square development proposals cover four, area-specific schemes – Schemes 1-3 & 3b – each comprising a wide range of individual components. However, only a small proportion of the various demolition and construction works involved in the four schemes potentially impact upon known or potential archaeological remains. These are described briefly as follows, and shown on *Figure 2*:

2.4.1 SCHEME 1

Proposals for the area north of Old Eldon Square (OES), including the bus station and northern block facing Old Eldon Square (including OES South façade). There are three areas where any potential archaeological remains would be impacted:

1. ***Prudhoe Street Bus Station, North face.*** Proposals include the provision of a lightweight glazed roof with foundations provided by mini piles. The foundations will involve ground disturbance up to a depth of approximately 1m below present ground level.
2. ***Bus Concourse, Percy Street entrance.*** Proposals include cutting into the west end of the bus concourse in order to remove the present slope and create a flat surface for development as a retail area.

3. ***OES North Elevation (S-facing)***. The building façade is to be brought forward by some 5-6 metres, involving ground disturbance to the depth of the proposed mini-pile foundations.

2.4.2 SCHEME 2

Proposals for the area of Old Eldon Square (excepting its north elevation) and the area between OES and Percy Street, on the north side of Blakett Street. There are two areas where potential archaeological remains may be impacted:

1. ***OES West Elevation (E-facing)***. Proposals include plans for the building façade to be brought forward by some 5-6 metres, involving ground disturbance to the depth of the proposed mini-pile foundations.
2. ***South-Western corner OES***. The proposed provision of a new staircase will involve some excavation work on the Blakett Street frontage.

2.4.3 SCHEME 3A

Proposals for the ‘Southern Gateway’ area, comprising the area south of Blakett Street, south-west of OES, including the present Greenmarket, multi-storey car-park and various retail outlets. Two extensive areas can be identified within the scope of this scheme where potential archaeological remains may be impacted:

1. ***Retail and leisure complex***. It is proposed to demolish and rebuild all parts of this area presently occupied by standing structures. This is likely to involve ground disturbance over large parts of the area concerned.
2. ***Newgate Street frontage***. It is proposed to narrow Newgate Street in order to extend the street frontage outwards between its junction with Clayton Street and the north end of the present multi-storey car-park. This will involve considerable ground disturbance to the depth required by site preparation and foundation works.

2.4.4 SCHEME 3B

This scheme covers proposals for the ‘Sidgate Link’ in the area between Blakett Street and Clayton Street/Nelson Street, south of OES. There are no apparent potential archaeological implications attached to this scheme.

2.4.5 OTHER WORKS

In advance of development works it is proposed to carry out exploratory excavations to determine the precise nature and location of service pipes and cables within and around the area of proposed development. The locations of exploratory geotechnical trenches are shown on *Figure 2*. Although the trenches will all be invasive, not all will be in areas of significant archaeological potential.

3. SOURCES FOR ASSESSMENT

3.1 Archival Material and Secondary Sources

The report collates evidence from a wide range of published, documentary and cartographic sources consulted in the following archival repositories:

- *City Library, Local Studies Section, Newcastle upon Tyne (NL)*
- *Museum of Antiquities Records Room, University of Newcastle upon Tyne (MA)*
- *The Archaeological Practice archive (AP)*
- *Tyne & Wear County HER, Cemetery Gates, Jesmond (HER)*
- *Tyne & Wear Archives, Blandford Square, Newcastle (BS)*

3.2 Types of Information

Included amongst the various kinds of information used from each of the above sources to assess the significance of the assessment area are the following:

3.2.1 SMR and Listed Buildings Records

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The Scheduling of a site by the Secretary of State denotes it is of at least national significance and provides statutory protection over a defined area. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the present assessment area, the nearest being the medieval castle which lies out of visible range of the site to the south-west.

Listed Buildings

Listing of structures by the Secretary of State denotes historical or architectural interest but does not necessarily include all buildings of significance or local importance. There are a number of listed buildings within the site itself and several in the wider vicinity that may be affected, visually or otherwise, by the proposed development works (see NLP separate report).

Sites Appearing on the Tyne & Wear Historic Environment Record (HER)

The County HER has been accessed for entries within and in close proximity to the assessment area that may be impacted by proposed developments. Consideration of sites outside the defined area enables better evaluation of its archaeological and historical context, highlighting the nature of potential remains within the assessment area. There are 10 entries within the detailed assessment area and four additional sites in close proximity.

3.2.2 Primary and archival documentary sources

The majority of documents relating to the medieval and post-medieval history of the site have been incorporated in synthetic accounts of the history of the city. No additional relevant documents for the medieval or later periods were encountered in the county archives.

3.2.3 Secondary and Published Information

Published works which shed general contextual light upon the assessment area or upon particular aspects of its archaeology or history were consulted, and cited where relevant in the synthesis included in the full assessment report. Pevsner's Buildings of England series (Pevsner et. al. 1992) was consulted for additional information on buildings of note and their urban context. Although the construction of the Eldon Square retail complex pre-dated the mandatory requirement for archaeological investigations as part of the planning process, a number of such investigations have subsequently taken place in this part of the town in recent years. These shed light upon, or may be used to assess the depth, character and degree of preservation of archaeological deposits. The following have been consulted for the purposes of the present study:

Newcastle City Archaeology Unit, 1995, 6-11 Haymarket, Newcastle upon Tyne: Archaeological evaluation.

- A single evaluation trench in advance of M&S redevelopment. Some medieval remains discovered, but insufficient to allow interpretation.
- *Newcastle City Archaeology Unit, 1995, 10-16 Haymarket, Newcastle upon Tyne: Archaeological assessment.*

Newcastle U3A Local History Group, 2001, A Brief History of Eldon Square South, Newcastle upon Tyne. Unpublished document.

The Archaeological Practice, 1995, 111-117 Northumberland Street: Archaeological excavation.

- A single evaluation trench revealed a deep pit, possibly associated with textile industry, but nothing structural.

Archaeological services University of Durham, 2000, Eldon Square shopping Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne: Archaeological Desk-top Assessment.

- No major conclusions presented: the presence or absence of archaeological remains could not be demonstrated from the documentary evidence.

City of Newcastle upon Tyne Archaeology Unit, 1995, Farnons, Nun Street: Archaeological Assessment.

3.2.3 Map Evidence

Newcastle is comparatively rich in both the quantity and quality of map evidence surviving from as early as the early 17th century, the bulk of it held by Tyne & Wear Archive Services, Newcastle Central Library and published synthetically by Graham (1984). Together these provide invaluable evidence for understanding the history of the area and compiling the catalogue of sites and monuments. The following were examined as part of the assessment:

Speed's Map of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1610 (Figure 3)

Corbridge's Survey of Newcastle upon Tyne, from Bourne's History of Newcastle, 1723 (Figure 4).

Hutton's Map of Newcastle, 1772 (Figure 5).

Wood's Map of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1827 (Figure 6)

Oliver's Map of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1831 (Figure 7)

First Edition Ordnance Survey, 1859, Northumberland, 25” (Figure 8)

Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 1898, Northumberland, 25” (Figure 9)

Third Edition Ordnance Survey, 1940, Northumberland, 25” (Figure 10)

Aerial Photographs:

In view of the extensive modern build-up within the area, it was not considered that the sourcing and examination of aerial photographs would be of value at this stage.

3.2.4 Site Inspection and Local Information

Several visits were made to the site in order to assess the current condition of visible remains within and around the defined assessment area and to view the location, accessibility and current state of sites considered most likely to preserve sub-surface remains of archaeological significance. During these visits a range of features of interest, as well as sites of potential archaeological significance, were observed and photographically recorded. Due note was taken of the depth to which the Eldon Square complex cuts into the ground surface, particularly apparent in open areas such as south and east of the circular multi-storey car park on Percy Street.

4. CATALOGUE

The course of investigation outlined above has resulted in the identification of a total of 11 sites of known or potential cultural heritage significance within the defined assessment area, of these 10 were previously recorded on the Tyne & Wear County HER. Particularly well-represented in the surrounding area are remains of medieval sacral and medieval and later domestic settlement and its associated infrastructure.

Archaeological assessment requires consideration both of the area likely to be materially affected by developments and sites in the immediate vicinity which may be visually affected. Catalogue numbers are keyed to *Figure 11*.

4.1 Monuments and features within the development site.

[1] Cemetery of St. Bartholomew's nunnery. HER ref. 1432; NGR NZ 2476 6419

Stone coffins found during Grainger's redevelopment work in 1834-5 may have been part of the nunnery's cemetery.

[2] Newcastle town wall ditch. HER ref. 1567; NGR NZ 24 64

Where excavated, the town wall ditch was 9.5m in front of the wall, 11.3m wide and 4.5m deep.

[3] City War Memorial. HER ref. 5201; NGR NZ 2472 6448

War memorial dating from 1920, set in Old Eldon Square.

[4] Monboucher tower, Newcastle town wall. HER ref.1545; NGR NZ 2470 6443

[5] Town wall curtain east of Monobucher tower. HER ref. 1546; NGR NZ 2470 6443

[6] Town wall curtain east of New Gate. HER ref. 1544; NGR NZ 2459 6445

[7] 146-48 Newgate Street. HER ref. 1874; NGR NZ 2460 6439

Medieval property reconstructed as a public house in the eighteenth century and demolished in 1972.

[8] St. Bartholomew's nunnery. HER ref. 1431; NGR NZ 2474 6428

[9] Intra-mural lane, Newcastle town wall. HER ref. 1568; NGR NZ 24 64.

[10] Ficket tower. HER ref. 1547; NGR NZ 2484 6443

[11] Remains (and putative remains) of Newgate Street Frontage and back-plots. HER ref. N/A; NGR NZ 24 64.

Medieval and later deposits were recovered in an excavation conducted in 1995 in an uncellared pocket of the former Farnon's site behind lower Newgate Street. Newgate Street is a medieval thoroughfare and additional pockets of medieval deposits may be preserved to the rear of the former street line, particularly where its former back plots border Grainger's development, and along the present frontage.

4.2 Monuments and features bordering the development area

[12] The New Gate, Newcastle town wall. HER ref. 1543; NGR NZ 2459 6445

[13] The White Cross. HER ref. 230; NGR NZ 2459 6405

Medieval market cross in place by the early fifteenth century and removed in 1625

[14] Burials. HER ref. 1435; NGR NZ 246 642

Skeletons found in 1829, interpreted as possibly from the Blackfriar's cemetery

[15] Grey's Monument. HER ref. 5188; NGR NZ 24 64

Statue of Earl Grey on a 41 metre high column, designed by Benjamin Green in 1838

5. SYNTHESIS

5.1 Prehistoric and Roman periods

The nature and density of landholding within this lowland area during the prehistoric and Roman periods is unknown and no direct evidence can be presented for human activity within the bounds of the assessment area from these periods, although it may be assumed that the immediate locality, as an agriculturally resource-rich environment, was farmed. Although little evidence has been recovered for prehistoric settlement or land-use in the urban core area,¹ it is likely that the denes running southwards into the Tyne would have been exploited as sheltered, resource-rich environments. This view is supported by discoveries of archaeological remains in similar contexts in the region.

The evidence for a Roman military and civilian presence in Newcastle is well known and includes Hadrian's Wall, a Roman fort, bridge and *vicus* (civilian settlement). However, these remains are almost entirely restricted to the southern part of the urban core and are not expected to extend into the present area of investigation.

5.2 Early Medieval

The nature, location and extent of any Saxon presence in Newcastle remains unknown, but is assumed on the grounds of the advantageous situation of Newcastle at a bridging point, and the known early medieval occupation in the wider region. A strong body of opinion places the Anglian settlement of Monkchester along the length of Newgate Street. However, there remains no direct documentary evidence for the pre-conquest settlement of the area

5.3 The Medieval Period

The medieval town developed following the construction in 1080 of a motte & bailey castle with a wooden keep, subsequently reconstructed in stone, on the site of the Roman fort. Protective walls were built around the castle but the area enclosed was rather small and settlement very soon spilled outside the protected area. Sometime in the later eleventh or, more likely, early or middle part of the twelfth century, perhaps during the reign of Henry I (1100-1135) or during the reign over Northumberland of David I of Scotland, the Benedictine Nunnery of St Bartholomew was founded to the north of the early town walls. but there were at this time few private dwellings not associated with the religious houses. The nunnery was founded to provide a convent for devout daughters of the local gentry and was the first religious house in the town. It occupied the area covered by much of the Eldon Square shopping centre, the Grainger market and part of Market Street, but the location of its principal buildings within that general area is unknown. Heslop's assessment of scant evidence available (CNAU 1995) places the church and cloisters on the site of the former Nuns Field between modern Grainger Street (near its junction with Nun Street) and the infilled Lam Burn.

The Franciscans (or 'Greyfriars' - named after the colour of their cloaks) had been founded by 1214 to work in the urban community as teachers, doctors and social workers, and arrived in Newcastle in 1274, settling on land to the east of St Bartholomew's. The location and arrangement of monastic buildings in this area is unknown.

On the accession of King Stephen in 1135 the government of Northumberland was transferred to King David of Scotland, allowing settlement to spread rapidly outside the town walls. At the same time King David presented the religious houses with the land between the town walls and the new development, covering the present Cloth, Groat and Bigg Markets. The accession of Henry 2nd to the throne of England led to the immediate revocation of the agreement with Scotland, however, and

¹ Amongst prehistoric finds closest to the present site is a perforated stone axe-hammer from Barras bridge (Miket 1984, 34)

hostile incursions by the Scots began again. This led to the construction of a new town wall enclosing the area of the new settlements as well as the religious houses. This wall, including the New Gate, was begun in the reign of King John and continued into the reign of Edward II. Large contributors to its cost were the religious houses, of which there were by this time five within the town.

The northern section of the town wall ran through St Andrew's churchyard and east along the modern line of Gallowgate and Blakett Street. Although nominally defining the boundary of the medieval town, archaeological evidence indicates that it cut through existing property boundaries and does not delimit the extent of the medieval city.

By 1175 Westgate was the main street in the town but Newgate Street was also developing, and during a period of rapid development, a continuous line of properties developed by the end of the 13th century between St Andrew's church and St. Nicholas's. Newgate Street may have originated as a Roman route northwards from the fort, and certainly grew in importance following the construction of the Norman castle (there is also a strong body of opinion that places the Anglian settlement of Monkchester upon Newgate Street). This wide street accommodated open markets for many centuries (it was known as Market Street until the early fifteenth century), with areas of specific trading demarcated along its length – the 'bere' or 'bigg' (i.e. barley) market, the 'cloth' and 'flesh' markets, etc. Tradesmen & craftsmen also moved permanently to Newgate Street to service the religious establishments there (the Benedictine Nunnery and Franciscan Friary), as well as the visitors attracted to them. Residential development followed, along with inns and taverns to service the retinues of visitors, including nobles such as King David who probably entered Newcastle by that route on his visits to the city. At least part of the Newgate Street frontages are known to have been in the possession of St. Bartholomew nunnery. Despite its somewhat turbulent subsequent history, Newgate Street seems to have retained something of its medieval character in later centuries, specifically in the variety of trades carried out in its back alleys and courtyards until well into the nineteenth century, and in the quantity of inns that survived there even more recently, particularly before its redevelopment in the 1970s. Two large inns, the Manor and the King's Lodgings, appear along Newgate Street on Speed's early map of the city.

Between Newgate Street and Pilgrim Street, the other main thoroughfare leading from the north, was the medieval street of High friar Street (or Chare), which ran for a distance of 236 metres between Newgate Street, opposite St Andrew's church, and Pilgrim Street. This narrow street probably came into being as a result of the foundation of the nunnery, perhaps as a street of poor residences and small scale industry serving the religious establishment, and became the effective northern boundary of the town. However, in the fourteenth century the town wall replaced it in this role and it came to languish somewhat in the shadow of the wall. The growth in importance of Newcastle as a residential and commercial centre led, in 1400, to it being granted the status of an independent county with its own sheriff (rather than the king's sheriff, as had previously been the case).

5.3 Post Medieval and Modern Periods

When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries in Newcastle, followed by the nunnery of St Bartholomew at the end of 1539, large tracts of land became available for redevelopment. The amalgamated site of the Nunnery of St Bartholomew and its neighbour, the Franciscan monastery (or Grey Friars) was acquired sometime in or after 1563 by Robert Anderson for his magnificent New House, completed with its extensive gardens in 1580. Virtually all remaining structural components of the nunnery and monastery were removed at this time, although some remains apparently remained visible into the mid-eighteenth century (CNAU 1995c, 6). Contemporary development elsewhere in Newcastle was primarily concentrated closer to the riverside, and all development was interrupted by the plague of 1636 and then the Civil War. The Newe house passed through several hands before being bought by the architect, George Anderson, in 1782, whose son renamed it Anderson Place, "having been at two distinct periods in the possession of different families of the same name" (*ibid.*).

The earliest graphic indication of urbanisation over the area of the present assessment is represented on Speed's map of 1610 (*Figure 3*), which shows development, presumably mainly residential in character, spreading along Newgate Street to the New Gate and beyond the walls to the north. It may be assumed that the continual threat of warfare with Scotland limited this development somewhat; indeed, there are a number of records to this effect, including a record in 1649 of the suburbs of Newgate and Pilgrim Street being '*ruinated in these late warres*' (Graham 1970). Also a reference from the period of the Civil War siege of Newcastle that the defenders of the town, '*set on fire and burnt down al the streets and houses lying within the walls on the north side of the town*' (Terry 1899, 157). Following Speed, Corbridge's map (*Figure 4*) produced over a century later in 1723 shows the Nunns as a discrete area of meadow or parkland clearly demarcated from the adjoining grounds of the Newe House (by this time owned by the Blackett family) and from the back plots of Newgate Street and High Friar Street to the north. Roughly contemporary with this is Kip's oblique view from c.1702 of Baronet Blackett's Anderson Place (*Figure 12*) which also shows the boundary of the Nuns Field clearly demarcated, apparently by a wall, visible most clearly along the south-west side of the field. The earliest detailed maps of the area is by Hutton's more detailed map of 1770 (*Figure 5*) suggests that encroachments had begun to be made on the Nuns Field, notably due to the expansion of the Newgate Street back plots north-eastwards and eastwards, and the apparent extension to the Newe House gardens along the north side of the field.

Subsequent development of the city, including Georgian construction projects such as the Assembly hall and Literary and Philosophical Building of 1793, left largely untouched the 12 acres of land around the Newe house and the adjoining Nuns field. Wood's map of 1827 shows a slight increase in the level of encroachment, particularly from the direction of Newgate Street, although the boundaries of the field remained visible and apparently largely intact until this time, just prior to Grainger's redevelopment. This situation began to change, however, with the development of Blackett Street by Richard Grainger in the mid-1820s and of Carliol Square, Blackett Street and (Old) Eldon Square in the mid 1830s, soon followed by Clayton Street, Grainger Street, three new markets and Grey Street. Some destruction of existing medieval and later buildings took place at this time, including parts of the town wall, along with the infilling of the Lort burn with '250,000 cartloads' of earth from the Nuns Field.

As noted above, the medieval character and, to some extent, appearance of Newgate Street remained well into the modern period and even survived Grainger's redevelopment of the area, lying just beyond the area of his redevelopment. In the eighteenth century, for example, the first Newcastle Directory of 1778 lists merchants as well as coopers, tanners and millwrights in the area - much of this small-scale industrial activity was undertaken in the courts, or yards, that punctuated the whole length of Newgate Street – and even after 1850 leather workers, tinnerns, bakers, dressmakers, and basket makers, amongst other crafts and trades, are mentioned. These small tradesmen had largely disappeared by the 1930s, however, but the public houses for which the street was particularly well-known survived until its wholesale redevelopment in the early 1970s.

Until 1824 the northern boundary of Newcastle was the town wall from Newgate Street to Pilgrim Street, but the New gate was demolished in 1823 and the wall began to fall into disrepair. South of the wall lay High Friar Street and to the north, sheds and stables within an area that had become something of a dumping ground for rubbish. Grainger removed the remains of the town wall in 1824 and replaced it with Blackett Street, a street of 31 houses, naming it after a three-times mayor of the city. From around the middle of the century the character of the street changed from residential to commercial, a process that was virtually complete by the end of the century. Further south, Nelson Street, built on land purchased by Grainger in 1834, links its contemporaries, Clayton Street and Grainger Street.

High Friar Street survived into the modern era in the form of a narrow back street, a medieval survival along with parts of the had , however, the birthplace of Richard Grainger who, ironically, built parallel Blackett Street parallel with it and thereby condemned it to remain somewhat of a backwater.

From this time it was mainly occupied by warehouses and small workshops, although a few residences persisted. Within the present Eldon Square 'High Friars' closely follows the path of its 800 year old predecessor, High friar Street

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

6.1 Impacts on the Survival of Archaeological Remains

Previous archaeological work in the city centre of Newcastle suggests that medieval and Roman deposits survive well, potentially up to a considerable depth, in areas that have not been subject to extensive modern development. However, in areas subject to modern development, the likelihood of survival of archaeological deposits is much reduced. The area currently under examination lies within the medieval town walls and, as indicated above, was subject to intensive settlement from at least the medieval period. However, since the medieval period it has been subject to successive programmes of redevelopment, beginning in the sixteenth century when virtually all traces of monastic buildings were removed and Anderson's 'Newe House' constructed to the east of the present development area. Subsequently, in the early nineteenth century Grainger, in turn, flattened Anderson Place, landscaped its grounds (including excavation of the Nuns Field and infilling of the Lam and Lort burns) and completed a large-scale construction programme. Finally, part of Grainger's redevelopment was demolished along with surviving elements of the medieval town, including the Newgate Street frontage and High friar Street, culminating in the modern Eldon Square retail complex, now itself subject to plans for partial redevelopment. While all of these developments are likely to have impacted considerably on the archaeological potential of the area, the construction in the 1970s of the Eldon Square retail complex is of particular note. Detailed consideration of the impact of this development, specifically the depth of excavations within the areas concerned, is critical in assessing the likelihood of survival of archaeological remains.

6.2 Sources of Evidence

6.2.1 Eldon Square Engineering Plans

The main source of information on the nature and scale of the Eldon Square retail complex is provided by original building plans produced in 1973-4 by Felix J Samuely and Partners of London, copies of which are held by the consulting structural engineers for the present development proposals, Cundall Johnston and Partners LLP. These indicate that excavations were carried out to below sub-soil level (i.e. well below the depth of surviving archaeological deposits) in order to prepare foundations, service tunnels, conduits and ancillary services for most parts of the site presently covered by the Eldon Square retail complex. In support of this, *Figure 13* shows the foundation levels of the southern part of the proposed development site (Scheme 3A), while *Figures 14 and 15* show them transposed onto plans of the area from a modern survey² and mid-nineteenth century plan, respectively. On the basis of this evidence it is reasonable to suggest that the potential for surviving remains is minimal in the area south of Blackett Street presently covered by The Green Market and the multi-story car park.

In the area between the Greenmarket/multi-story and the junction between Newgate Street and Clayton Street the potential for surviving remains is higher, since the nature of foundations appears less destructive.

The potential for surviving remains is also higher in parts of the proposed development area where Eldon Square foundations do not occur, as along the Newgate Street frontage south of the entrance to the multi-story car park.

Regarding the north part of the proposed development area (Scheme 1), the Eldon Square foundation plans again suggest that the potential for surviving remains is low. *Figure 16*, for example, shows the west side of the bus concourse and its sloping entrance from Percy Street. The plan shows that underlying the main concourse area (i.e. at the foot of the slope from Percy Street) are substantial

² Plan provided by Cundall Johnston and Partners LLP

foundation blocks and a major E-W conduit which branches northwards into an extensive underground storage area. The excavations required to construct these facilities will have removed most traces of any surviving medieval or earlier ground levels, except perhaps for small areas towards the top of the entrance slope. Strips of relatively undisturbed ground may lie between foundation strips and blocks throughout the complex, but the extent, if any, of any surviving deposits is not possible to determine from the plans alone.

Again, the potential for surviving remains is higher in proposed development areas where Eldon Square foundations do not occur, as along parts of Blakett Street and Percy Street, and within Old Eldon Square.

6.2.2 Evidence from Archaeology, Boreholes and Building Plans

There is little archaeological evidence with which to shed light on the potential preservation of ancient deposits or surfaces in the present development area. Most significant were finds of medieval and later deposits, including glass and other debris from St. Bartholomew's nunnery, recovered from an excavation conducted in 1995 in an uncellared pocket of the former Farnon's site behind lower Newgate Street (Heslop, *pers. com.*), immediately to the south-east of the present development area. The intact medieval deposits (*Plate 1*) sat in a ribbon of land at the rear of the Newgate Street back-plot where it abutted the incised foundations of Grainger's development to the rear of his Nun Street. This evidence suggests that additional pockets of medieval deposits may be preserved to the rear of the former Newgate street line, particularly where its former back plots border Grainger's development, and along the former street frontage within the present roadway. Elsewhere, a single evaluation trench excavated north of the assessment area, outside the limits of Grainger's redevelopment at the Haymarket, also revealed some medieval remains (NCAU 1995a). There have otherwise been few opportunities to evaluate the archaeological potential of the Newgate Street/Percy Street frontages.

Borehole evidence quoted by Heslop (NCAU 1995c, 8) suggests that the depth of deposits in parts of Newgate Street is very shallow, probably as a result of Grainger's landscaping work (see above). Heslop further suggests that similar results might be expected from elsewhere in the area of Grainger's development work. Other borehole logs from the Market Street area, quoted in the same report (*ibid.*), show much deeper deposits up to 12 metres, which are interpreted as the channels of the Lam and Lort burns infilled during 1834-5.

The extent of historic cellaring is not known, although large parts of the former Newgate Street frontage is known to have been cellared. Also of relevance in the present context is the existence of modern understoreys within Eldon Square and along the north side of Blakett Street, most poignantly on the south-west corner of Old Eldon Square (where excavations for new steps are planned). Further evidence on historic cellaring and modern understoreys could be uncovered through detailed research should this at any stage be considered desirable in the present development context, specifically through examination of archived building plans and Goads Insurance index & plans.

6.3 Summary outline of archaeological potential

Based on the above evidence, the development area has been assessed for archaeological potential and the following conclusions derived:

1. The potential for surviving remains is very low in areas where substantial foundations support modern developments. *Figure 18* shows areas of minimal or low archaeological potential.
2. The potential for surviving remains is moderate in the following contexts (*Figure 18*):

where foundations of a less invasive nature support modern developments in locations thought likely to have been subject to medieval settlement or where specific sites of archaeological interest have been recorded.

in areas not occupied by modern developments where specific sites of archaeological interest are not known to occur, such as the interior of Old Eldon Square.

3. The potential for surviving remains in areas not occupied by modern developments is regarded as high where specific sites of archaeological interest are known to occur. Sites of high archaeological potential principally border present street frontages. *Figure 18* shows areas of high archaeological potential.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Little is known about the nature or density of human settlement in the assessment area during prehistory or in the Roman period.

The area has been subject to intensive settlement and land-use since at least the twelfth century, since when the history of landholding for the area is fairly well documented. Early monastic developments are followed by the construction of a defensive town wall and the expansion of ribbon development along Newgate Street, a major thoroughfare to the north. Subsequent developments include the construction of a grand sixteenth century residence after the closure and destruction of the religious houses, followed in the nineteenth century by landscaping of the area and large-scale urban redevelopment.

The successive waves of development, destruction and landscaping outlined above have removed much of the original ground surface, including most remains of medieval and earlier date.

7.1 Significance of known or potential Extant Archaeological Remains

10 of the 11 sites located within the development area, noted above (Section 4.1) have been substantially damaged by post-medieval and/or modern development activity. None of these 10 sites are likely to be sufficiently well preserved or of sufficient cultural heritage significance to warrant mitigation by avoidance and preservation *in situ*, but it is possible that some may warrant mitigation by recording following appropriate evaluation.

7.2 Direct Impacts

7.2.1 Scheme 1

None of the sites catalogued during the assessment work will potentially be directly impacted by construction work. The only invasive work of any potential archaeological interest is the cut to be made into the west side of the Percy Street bus concourse, but the likelihood is that this will occur in an area too far from the historic frontage for remains of significance to be revealed, should any pockets of pre-modern ground surface survive. Furthermore, the point at which the cut is to be made is substantially lower than the level of Percy Street and the current Percy street frontage.

7.2.2 Scheme 2

Site 2, the town wall ditch, is the only one of the two sites catalogued in this area that may be impacted by invasive foundation work in Blakett Street or Old Eldon Square (west frontage).

7.2.3 Scheme 3A

Four sites of the nine catalogued in this area may be impacted by invasive work in the ‘Southern Gateway’ area, although the remains of three of these, sites [1], [7] and [8] are not known with certainty to occur within the development area, or are considered unlikely to survive. The fourth site, site [11], encompasses the likely remains of the Newgate Street frontage and the back-plots, alleys and yards to the rear, significant parts of which fall outside the bounds of modern development, or within potentially less invasive modern developments. Invasive excavations associated with the present development proposals will impact negatively on any surviving remains in this area.

7.2.4 Scheme 3B

There are no likely archaeological impacts in this area.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to further evaluate or mitigate the impact of the proposed developments upon known or potential archaeological remains in the assessment area (see *Figure 16*). These recommendations remain subject to consideration by the County Archaeologist.

8.1 Scheme 1:

Location 1. Prudhoe Street Bus Station, North face. Observe geotechnical excavations in order to appraise the need for further evaluation or mitigation. [The need for any further work is considered unlikely, however, in view of the lack of known archaeological potential in that area.]

Location 2. Bus Concourse, Percy Street entrance. The east facing section of the new cut should be observed by a professional archaeologist during or following excavation near the west end of the bus concourse

Location 3. OES North Elevation (S-facing). No further action.

8.2 Scheme 2

Location 1: OES West Elevation (E-facing). Observe geotechnical excavations in order to appraise the need for further evaluation or mitigation.

Location 2: South-Western corner OES. Observe geotechnical excavations in order to appraise the need for further evaluation or mitigation. [The need for any further work is considered unlikely, however, in view of the location of the excavations over/into an understorey.]

8.3 Scheme 3A

Location 1: *Retail and leisure complex.* Archaeological evaluation will be required in the southern part of this area in order to test for the survival of archaeological remains associated with medieval and post-medieval Newgate Street frontage and back-plots. In the first instance, geotechnical excavations in this area should be observed in order to provide a guide to the scale of evaluation required.

Location 2: *Newgate Street frontage.* Archaeological evaluation will be required in the southern part of this area in order to test for the survival of archaeological remains associated with medieval and post-medieval Newgate Street frontage and back-plots. In the first instance, geotechnical excavations in this area should be observed in order to provide a guide to the scale of evaluation required.

8.4 Scheme 3B

No recommendations for archaeological evaluation or mitigation work are warranted by the likely survival of archaeological deposits or by the nature of development proposals in this area.

8.5 Other works

In advance of development works it is proposed to carry out exploratory excavations to determine the precise nature and location of service pipes and cables within and around the area of proposed development. The locations of exploratory trenches to be excavated are shown in *Figure 2*. Although the trenches will all be invasive, not all will be in areas of significant archaeological potential. Accordingly, it is recommended that archaeological monitoring should be carried out during works in the areas indicated on *Figure 16* (see also *Sections 8.1-8.3*).

Should this examination reveal remains of archaeological significance an adequate interval for the investigation and recording of any features will be required. Should complex archaeological remains be encountered, subsequent, more detailed archaeological evaluation may be warranted.

All fieldwork should be carried out to the standard County Council guidelines for archaeological excavation and a report prepared detailing the results of the investigations.

9. REFERENCES

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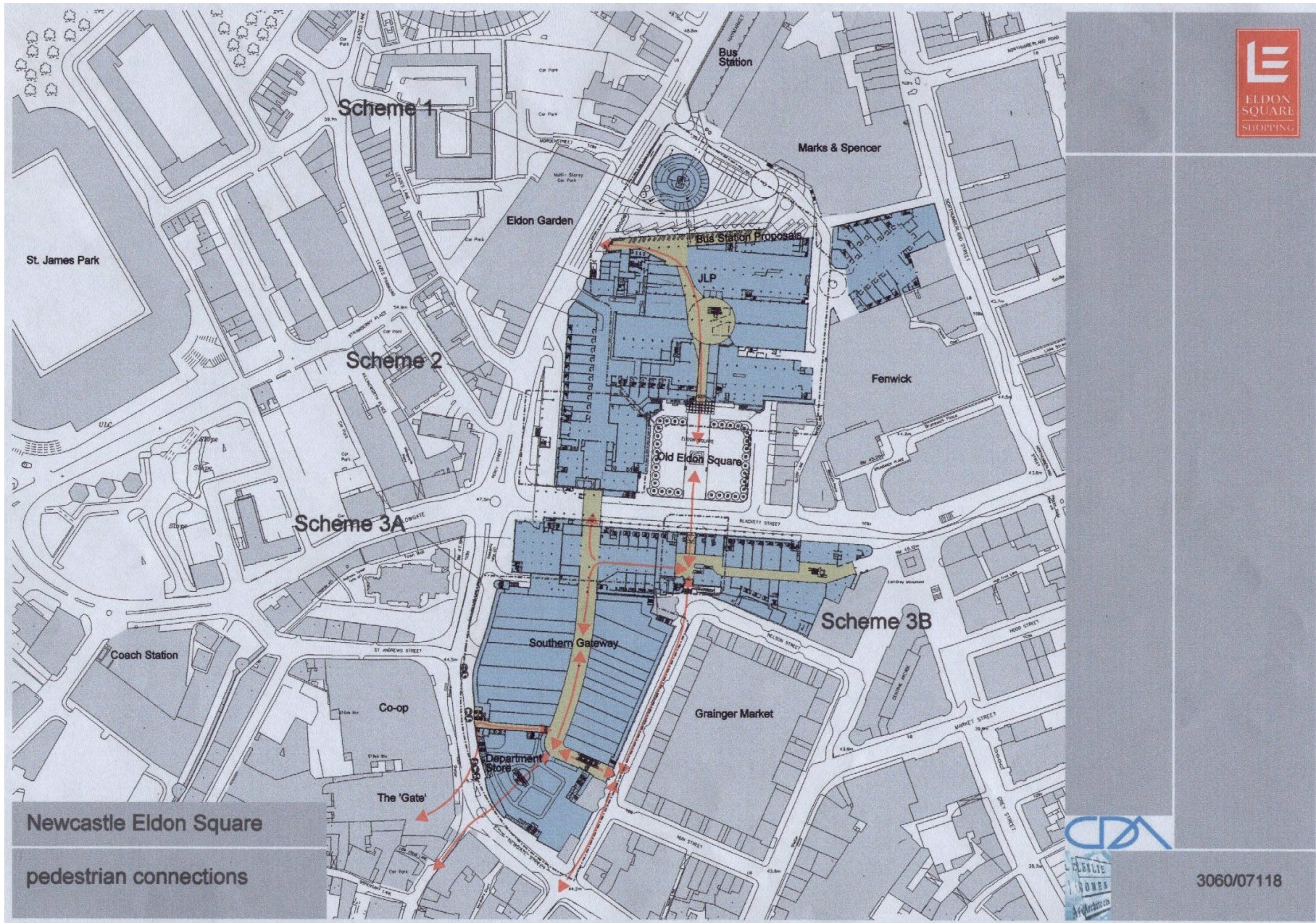


Figure 1: Location of the assessment site in central Newcastle upon Tyne

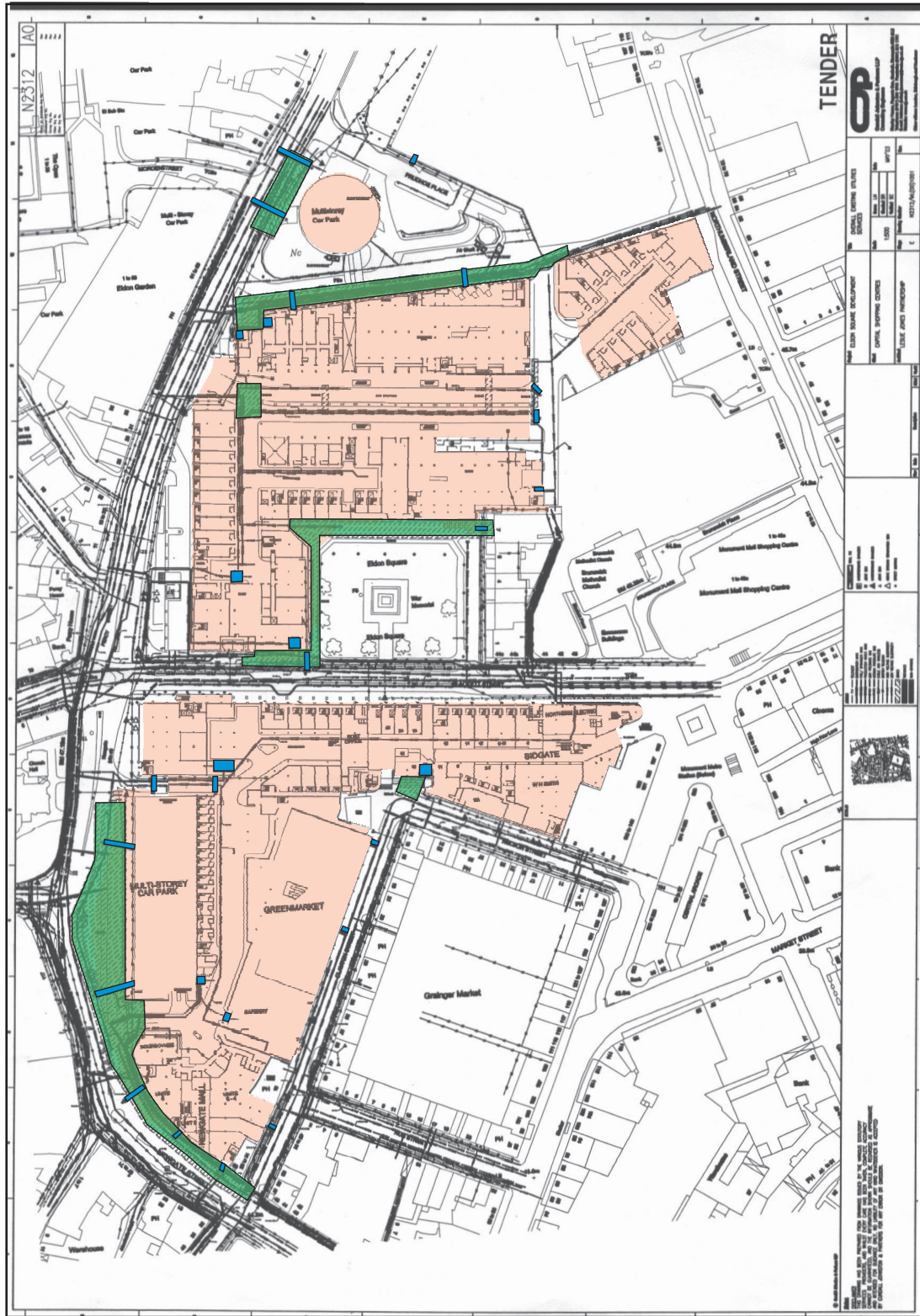


Figure 2: The development area (shaded pink, red outline) showing locations of principal groundworks (shaded green) and geotechnical test trenches (blue)

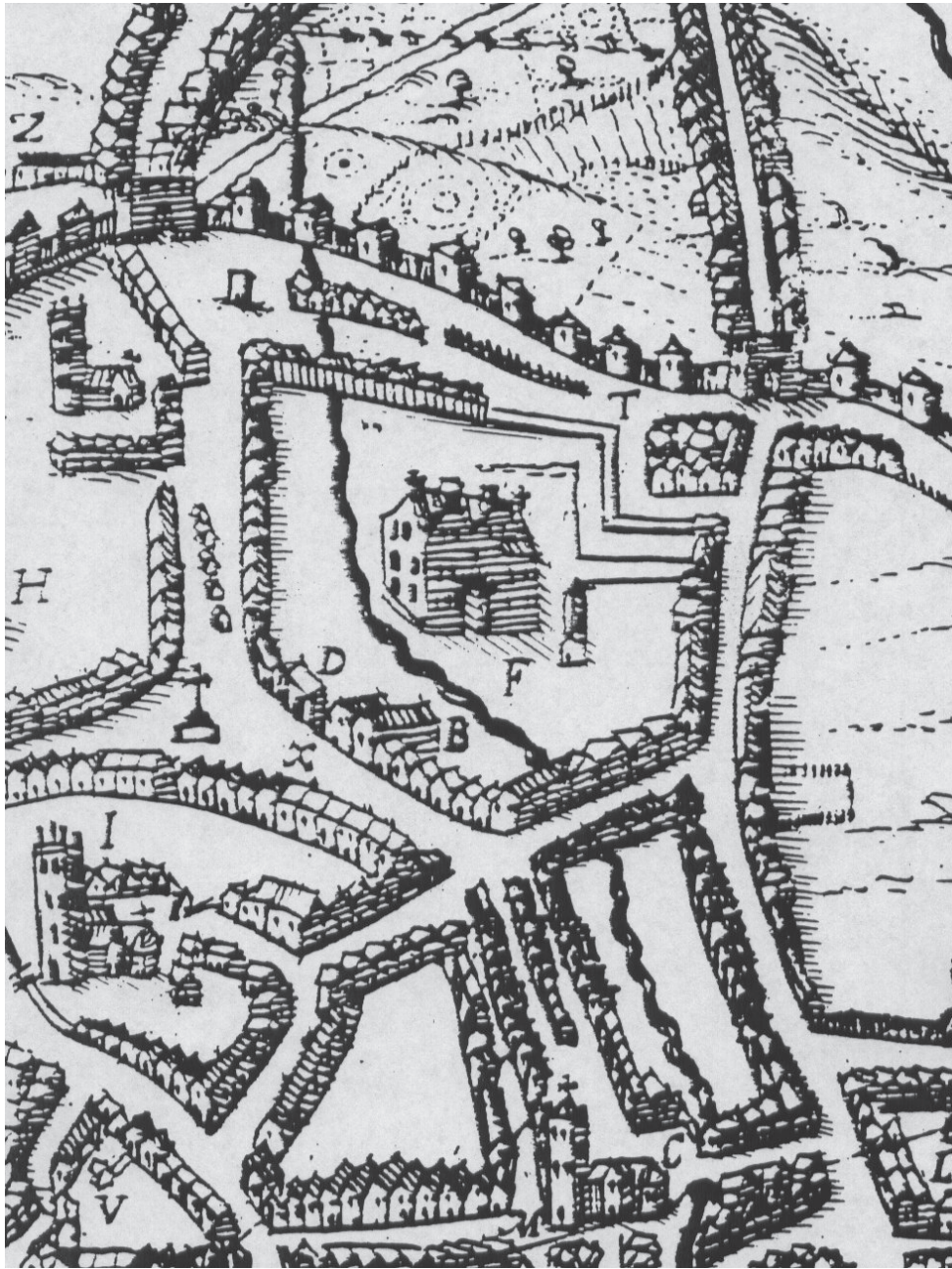


Figure 3: Speed's map of Newcastle, 1610, showing Anderson's Newe House (centre)

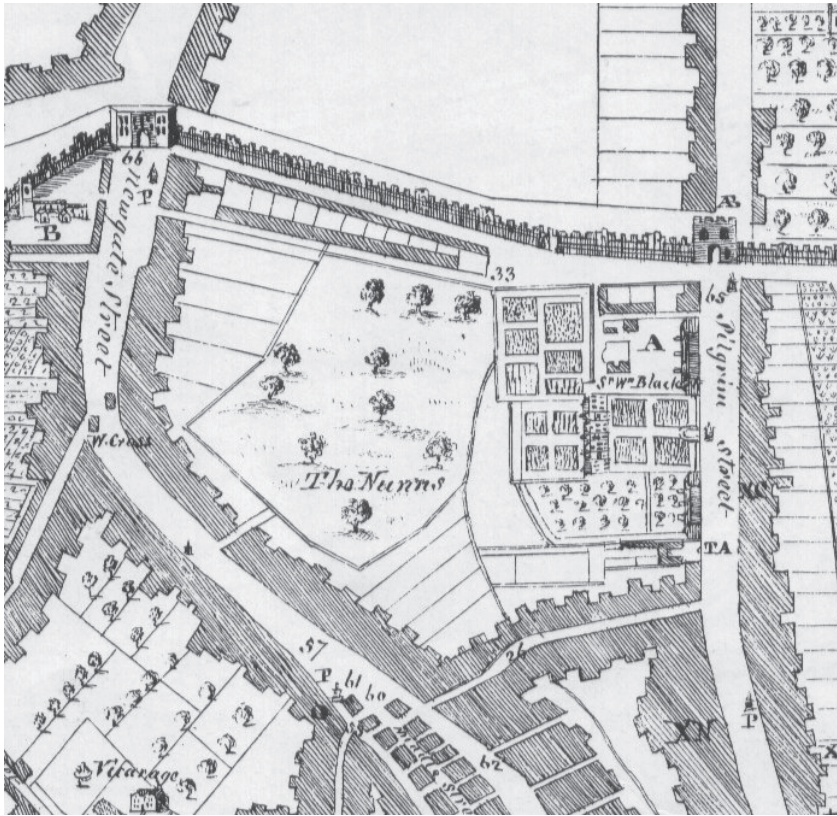


Figure 4: Corbridge's map of Newcastle, 1723



Figure 5: Hutton's map of Newcastle, 1770



Figure 6: Wood's map of Newcastle, 1827



Figure 5: Oliver's map of Newcastle, 1831



Figure 8: First edition Ordnance Survey Series, 1859



Figure 9: Second edition Ordnance Survey Series, 1898



Figure 10: Third edition Ordnance Survey Series, 1940

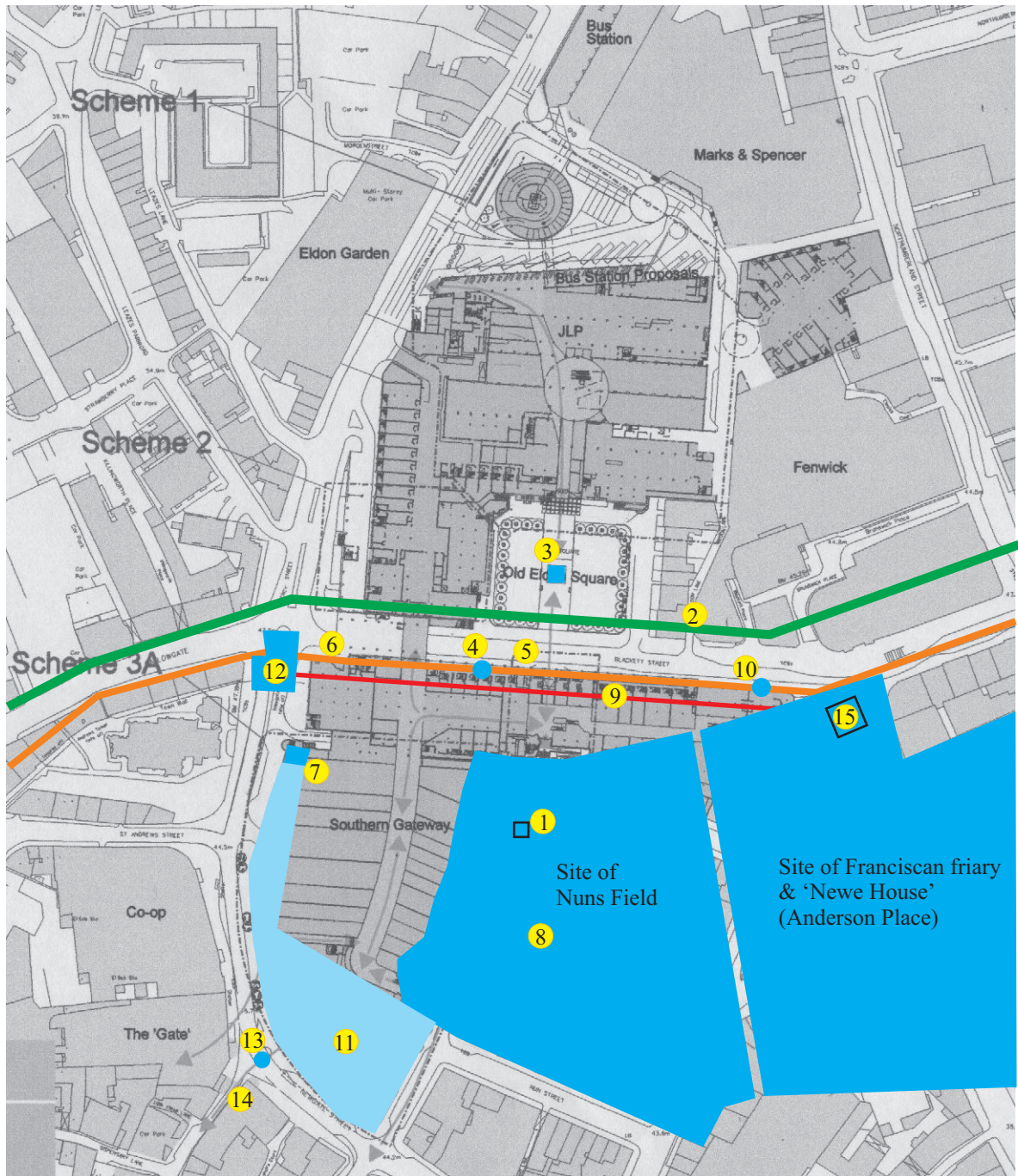


Figure 11: Locations of sites included in the site catalogue (Secitons 4.1. & 4.2)

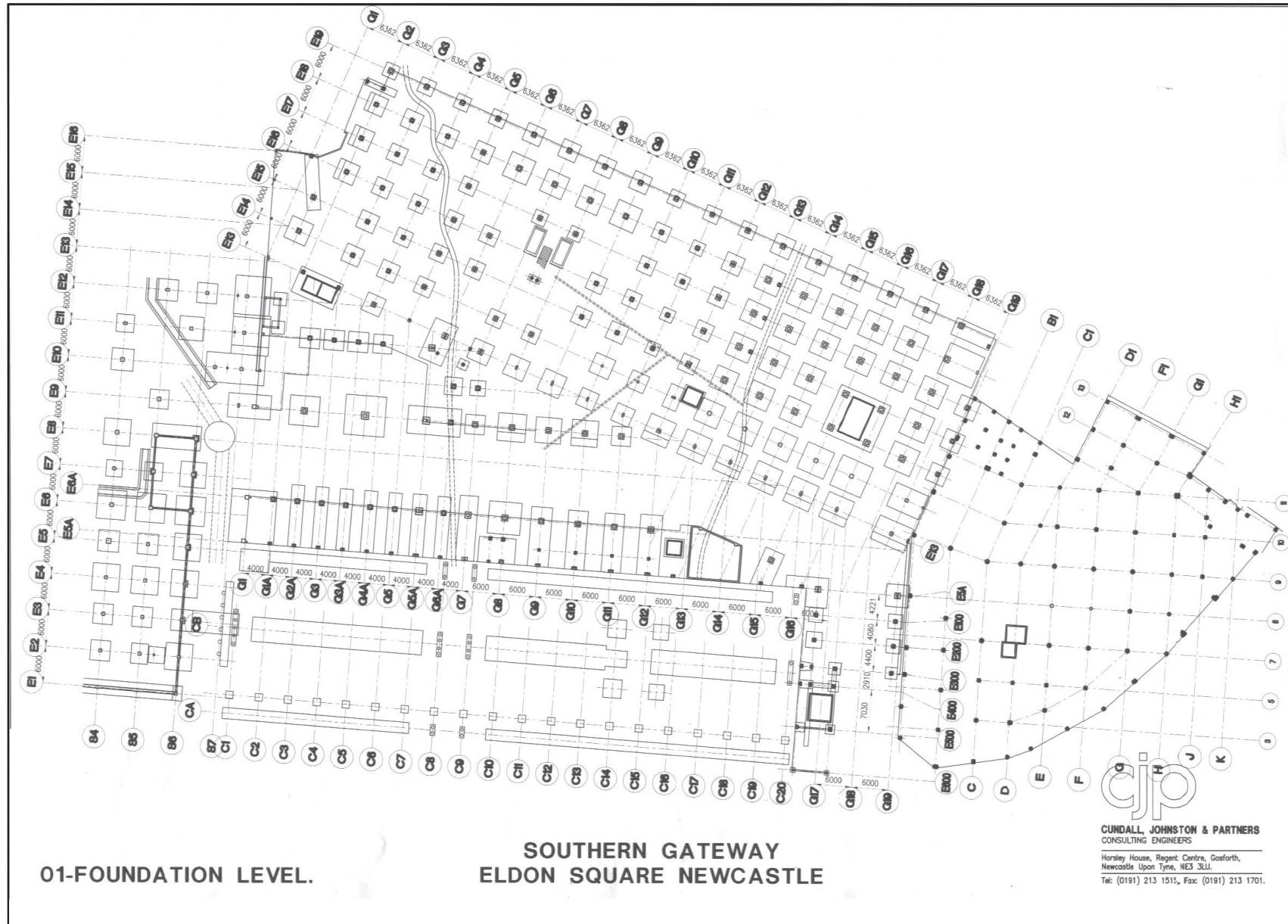


Figure 13: Composite foundation plan of the Southern Gateway area (supplied by Cundall Johnston and Partners LLP)

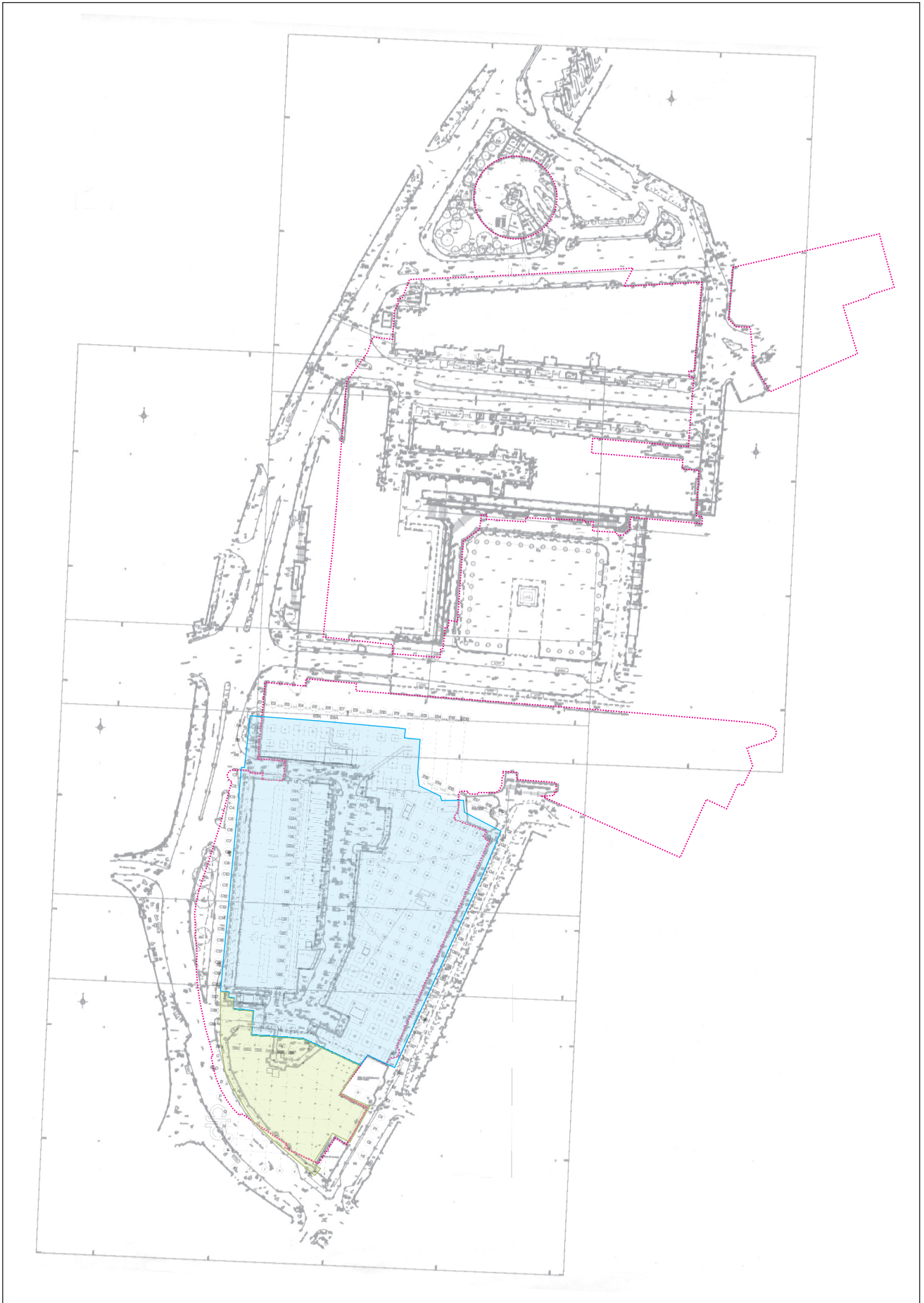


Figure 14: Recently surveyed plan of the development area showing modern foundations within the Southern Gateway area (destructive foundations shaded blue; potentially less destructive foundations shaded green; proposed development area outlined red).



Figure 15: Modern foundations (shaded blue and green) in the southern part of the proposed development area (outlined red), transposed onto first edition Ordnance Survey plan

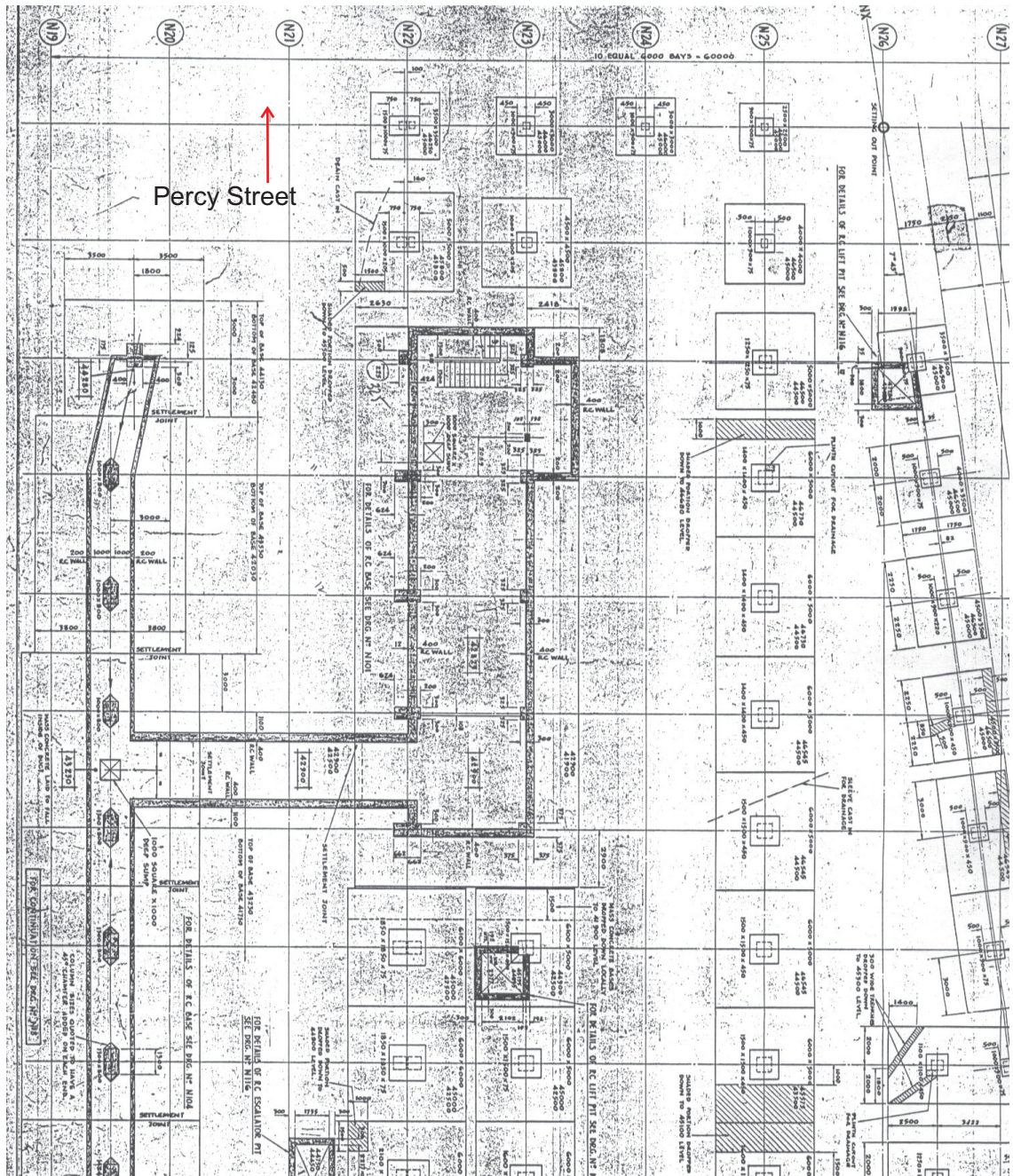


Figure 16: Foundation levels of the bus concourse (west side) off Percy Street



Plate 2: View from Percy Street into the bus concourse, showing sloping levels



Plate 3: Old Eldon Square, west elevation viewed from north side of Blackett Street



Plate 4: *View from ESE of an excavation in 1995 at the Farnon's site off Newgate Street (east of Clayton Street, west of Nuns Lane), showing a ribbon of archaeological deposits bordering the south side of properties on Grainger's Nun Street*