

Archaeological Watching Brief

at

**NO. 142 NORTH STREET,
BEDMINSTER, BRISTOL.**

for

Fremantle Developments Ltd.



Report No. 2336/2010
BHER No. 24944



Bristol and Region Archaeological Services



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at
**NO. 142 NORTH STREET,
BEDMINSTER, BRISTOL.**

Centred on
N.G.R. ST 57867 71438

Client: Fremantle Developments Ltd.
Agent: David Cahill Design & Build

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<i>Date Issued:</i>	7 October 2010 

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Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	Km	Kilometre
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	m	Metre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	NGR	National Grid Reference
BC	Before Christ	NMR	National Monuments Record
c.	Circa	OS	Ordnance Survey
HER	Historic Environment Record		

NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

October 2010.

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SUMMARY

A watching brief at the site of no. 142 North Street, Bedminster, Bristol centred on NGR ST 57867 71438 recorded the fragmentary remains of a wall, probably associated with a building cartographically depicted on this site since the late 18th century. The building was known as North House in the 1880s and was replaced by terraced properties in the late 19th-century, the footings of which partially survived adjacent to the street frontage. The terraced properties were in turn destroyed by enemy action in World War II. The site had remained undeveloped until 2010.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by David Cahill Design & Build on behalf of Fremantle Developments Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for a residential development at No. 142 North Street, Bedminster, Bristol, centred on NGR ST 57867 71438.
- 1.2 The watching brief was a condition of planning consent (Planning Application reference 10/03272/COND) and was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2010). The site was visited between September 17th and October 4th 2010 by Andy King, who subsequently compiled this report.
- 1.3 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the accession number BRSMG 2010/64, a paper and digital copy of the report will be sent to the National Monuments Record maintained by English Heritage. The project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24944 and in the OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations as: bristola1-82914.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site lies in the Bristol suburb of Bedminster and is roughly 1.86 kilometres south-west of the city centre. It is bounded by No. 2 Exmoor Street to the north, to the east by the new residential development of Nos. 130-140 North Street, to the south by North Street and to the west by Exmoor Street (**Fig.1**).
- 2.2 In plan the site covers a roughly rectangular area of 94 square metres and in altitude lies at an approximate height of 20.1m above Ordnance Datum. Prior to the present development the site formed the westernmost side of a car dealership forecourt that extended between Exmoor Street and Dartmoor Street.
- 2.3 The site is not in a conservation area, there are no listed buildings adjoining or affected by the development and no Scheduled Ancient Monuments exist in the immediate vicinity.
- 2.4 The solid geology of the environs of the site comprises Redcliffe Sandstone of the Jurassic system (British Geological Survey 1962).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The local area has been subject to a number of archaeological assessments. The nearest research projects being a desk-based assessment conducted for No. 201A North Street, roughly 256m west of the site (Burchill 2000) and another at No 49 North Street, 274m to the east (Corcos 2008). No previous archaeological investigation has been dedicated to this site, however the adjoining plot of Nos. 130-140 North Street was subject to an archaeological watching brief in November 2007 (Potter 2008).
- 3.2 The historic background of Bedminster has been covered in the *Avon Extensive Urban Survey* by La Trobe-Bateman (AEUS 1999). From 1605 the manor of Bedminster was owned by the Smythe family.
- 3.3 A building is depicted in the vicinity of the site on a Smythe estate plan of the later 18th century (**Fig.2**). The same indistinct representation of a building is also present on the 2 inch Ordnance Survey plan of 1826.
- 3.4 Plumley & Ashmead's survey of 1828 clearly shows a fairly substantial house with three divisions and a garden adjoining North Street (**Fig.3**). The Bedminster tithe-commutation survey of 1841 depicts the building on this site as a dwelling with two adjoining outbuildings within areal unit 132. The accompanying tithe apportionment lists unit 132 as a *House and Garden* belonging to the Smythe estate in the tenancy of John Smele.
- 3.5 By the time of the 1883 edition O.S. plan the building on the development site is labelled as *North House* and is depicted as having several outbuildings, a glass-roofed porch or conservatory, a detached greenhouse structure, extensive walled gardens and an orchard (**Fig.4**). Part of a garden wall of North House, may have been revealed during the watching brief at 130-140 North Street in 2007.
- 3.6 In the last decade of the 19th-century Dartmoor Street and Exmoor Street were laid out and North House, together with its outbuildings and gardens, were replaced by terraced housing (**Fig.5**).
- 3.7 The Bomb-Plot plans covering this part of Bedminster show both incendiary and high-explosive ordnance impacting on the development site in 1941 (**Fig.6**, BRO 33779/ 7 & 8 (b)). The site was shown as a vacant plot on the 1948 OS plan, and was labelled as a car park on the 1975 revision, it remained as open-space until the present development.

4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation for the watching brief (BaRAS 2010) and adhered to the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive ground-works.
- 4.2 The watching brief involved monitoring the mechanical excavation of ground-works for pile caps for the northern half of the site and strip-foundation trenching for the southern end.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 All ground-works were carried out using a 360° mechanical mini-excavator.
- 5.2 Excavation for pile caps to a depth of approximately 2m across the northern half of the site revealed a layer of disturbed ground (context 100) above firm reddish-brown natural clay. Layer 100 increased in depth from north to south between approximately 200-500mm and contained fragments of brick and Pennant sandstone rubble with traces of grey-ash and black mortar adhering. Historic sewer-pipe trenches and also services for the adjoining premises of 140 North Street had been cut into the natural clay (**Plate 1**).
- 5.3 Strip-foundation trenches were excavated across the southern half of the site, layer 100 extended to the southern edge of the site where the remains of the street-front footings of the late 19th-century terraced housing (103) survived to a depth of 900mm (**Plate 2**). Running parallel with and partially truncated by the 19th-century housing footings and extending beneath the modern pavement of North street, were the remains of a wall footing constructed of limestone (104). It is likely that the limestone pieces of 104 represent part of the garden wall of North House as shown on the 1883 OS plan (see Fig.4).
- 5.4 Just south of the reduced-dig for the pile caps and exposed in the foundation trenches, 300mm below ground level were the remains of a sandstone and limestone wall (**Fig.7**), 600mm in width and bonded with a hard, brown, lime-flecked mortar (102). Wall 102 traversed the site on an east-west alignment but the easternmost extent had been removed during construction of 140 North Street (**Plate 3**). The western end of wall 102 extended beneath the modern pavement (**Plate 4**). It is almost certain that wall 102 was all that survived of the southern wall of North House. No associated deposits or dating evidence were present, wall 102 appeared to have been founded directly into the natural clay.
- 5.5 Overlying the western end of wall 102 on a north-south alignment and immediately beneath the modern pavement of Exmoor Street were the street-front footings of the late 19th-century terraced property that previously stood on this site (101). The footings comprised, a mixture of brick, limestone and Pennant sandstone bonded with black mortar.
- 5.6 No further features or deposits of archaeological interest were found.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The watching brief has revealed that a wall, probably associated with a building depicted on late 18th- and 19th-century plans, and latterly known as North House partially survived on the development site. The truncated remains of the southern garden wall of North House, bordering North Street survived beneath the modern pavement.
- 6.2 The remains of shallow footings of terraced housing, that replaced North House in the later 19th-century were also present along the North Street and Exmoor Street edges of the site.
- 6.3 The presence of limestone within both the footings of North House and its garden wall would be expected as there is a tendency for the oldest buildings along both North Street and West Street in Bedminster to be constructed, or at least faced, predominantly in limestone.

7. PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy King, who also produced this report. The illustrations were prepared by Ann Linge. The archive was compiled for deposition by Andy King. The project was managed by John Bryant.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

Texts

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Maps

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Smythe estate plan, Bedminster BRO AC/PL 107/1, 1827.

Plumley, J and Ashmead, G C. *This Plan of the City of Bristol and its Suburbs*. Commenced in 1813 and completed in 1828, (BRO 04481 [2]a) original scale 1:2400.

Tithe Map and Apportionment, Bedminster 1841, BRO EP/A/32/7.

Bristol Bomb Plot Plans & Index, BRO 33779/ 7 & 8 (b)

Ordnance Survey 1:500 plan, Glouc. Sheet LXXV 4.16, surveyed 1883

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, 1904

Ordnance Survey 1:1250 plan, 1948

Ordnance Survey 1:1250 plan, 1963

Ordnance Survey 1:1250 plan, 1975

British Geological Survey Geological Survey of England & Wales, Solid & Drift (Bristol District), scale 1:63360, published 1962.

Unpublished Material

Documents in Bristol Record Office

Entries in the Bristol Urban Archaeological Database

BaRAS Reports

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BaRAS would like to thank the staff of Ian James Projects for their assistance and co-operation during the fieldwork.

APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

NATIONAL POLICIES

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work that would affect a SAM.

GOVERNMENT POLICY GUIDANCE

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990) have been replaced (23 March 2010) by Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) which sets out the Government's national policies on conservation of the historic environment. Those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets.

Of particular relevance within the Planning Policy Statement are:

Policy HE6: Information Requirements for Applications for Consent Affecting Heritage Assets

HE6.1 Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets themselves should have been assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary given the application's impact. Where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.

Policy HE9: Additional Policy Principles Guiding the Consideration of Applications for Consent Relating to Designated Heritage Assets

HE9.1 There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I or II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Policy HE12: Policy Principles Guiding the Recording of Information Related to Heritage Assets

HE12.3 Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance. Developers should publish this evidence and deposit copies of the reports with the relevant historic environment record. Local planning authorities should require any archive generated to be deposited with a local museum or other public depository willing to receive it. Local planning authorities should impose planning conditions or obligations to ensure such work is carried out in a timely manner and that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.

DISTRICT POLICY

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

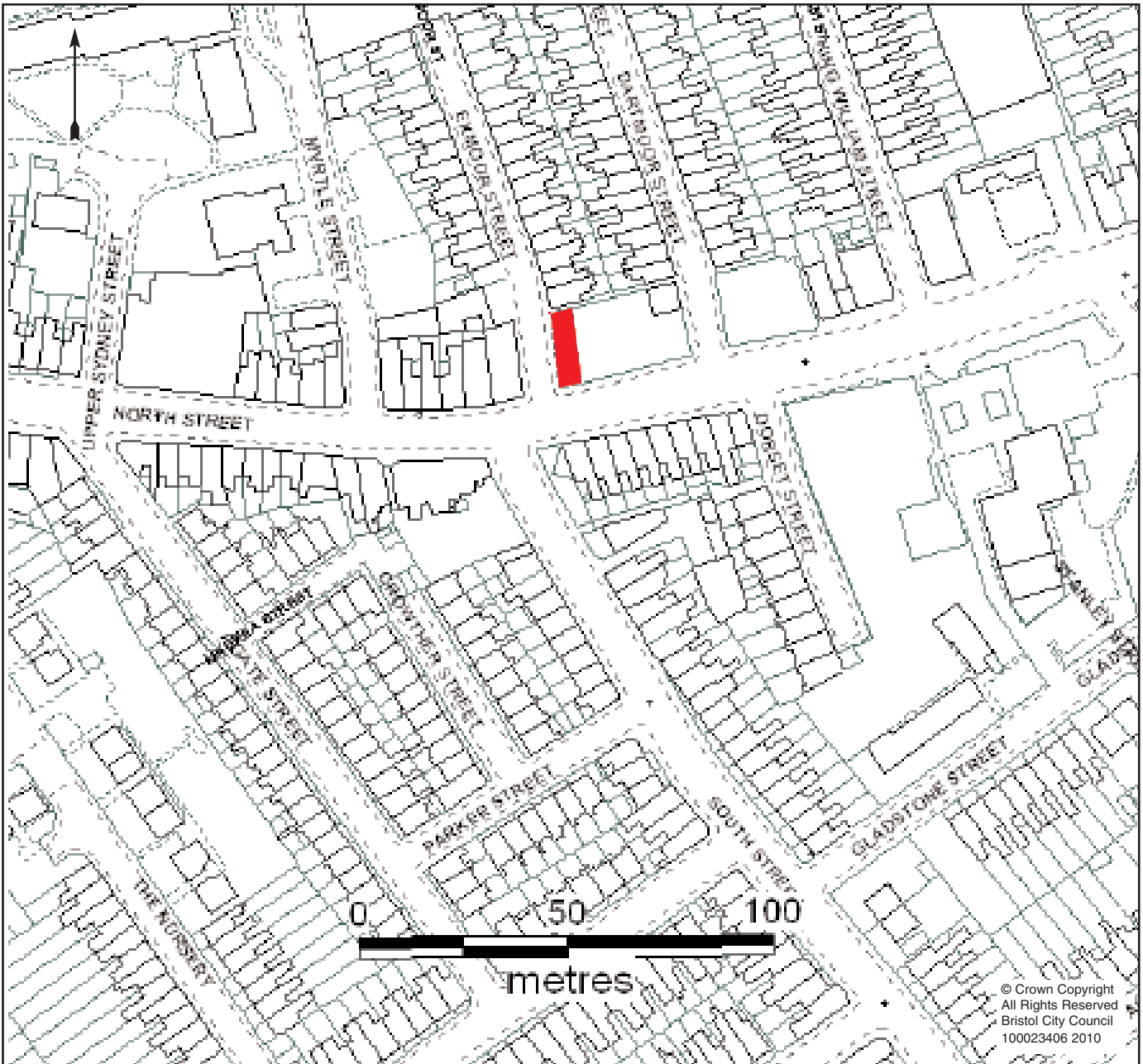


Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:1500



Fig.2 Detail from late 18th-century Smythe family estate plan depicting a building in the location of the site (not to scale)



Fig.3 Plumley & Ashmead's survey showing site area



Fig.4 Extract from 1883 published edition 1:500 scale Ordnance Survey plan depicting North House and its grounds



Fig.5 1904 published edition 1:2500 scale OS plan showing terraced housing



Fig.6 WWII Bomb Plot plan showing high-explosive hits across site area

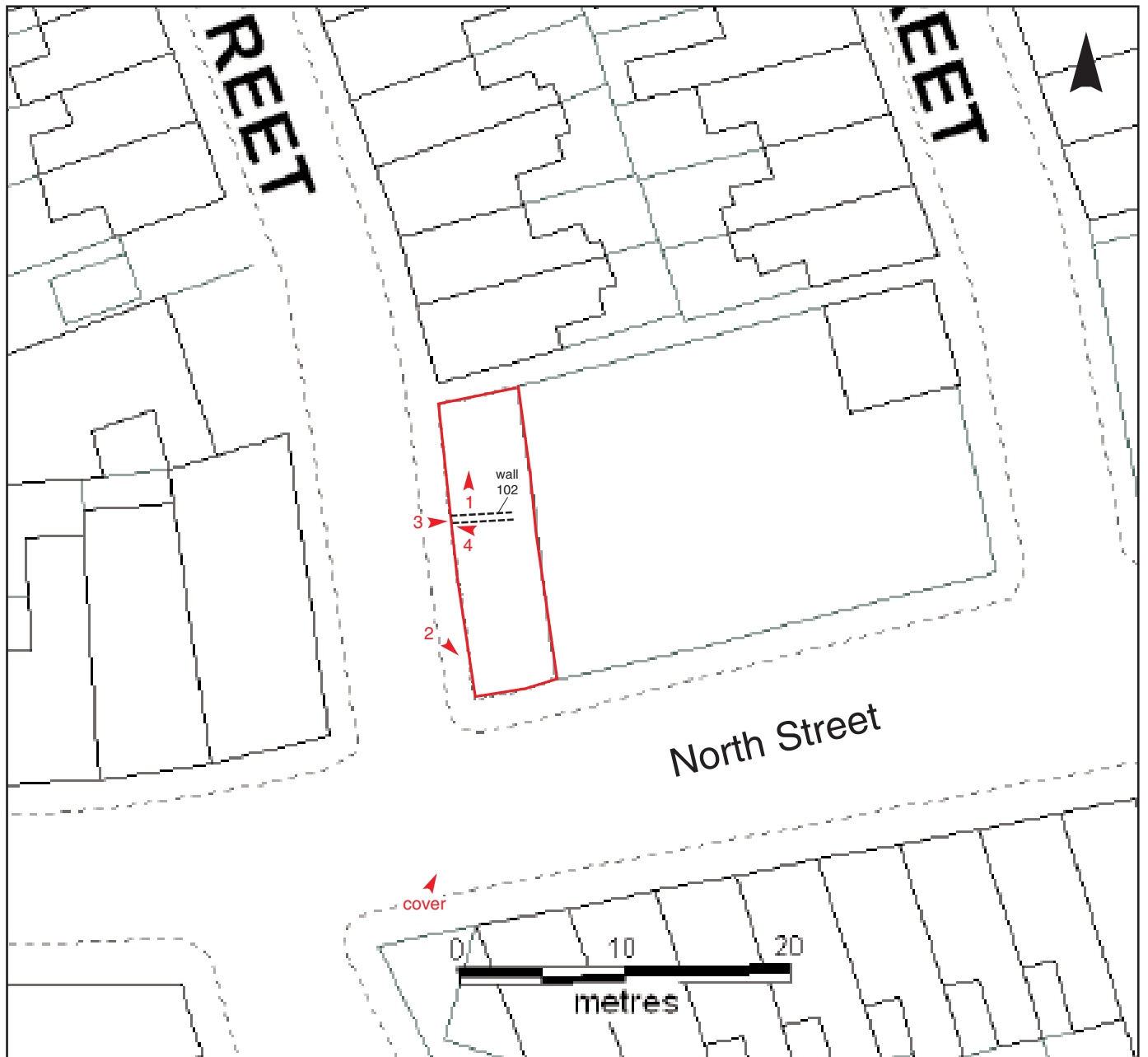


Fig.7 Plan of site showing location of possible 18th-century wall 102



Plate 1 Northern half of site after ground reduction, looking north



Plate 2 Southern edge of site showing remains of terraced housing footings, looking south-east towards North Street



Plate 3 Wall 102 - remains of North House, looking east towards 140 North Street

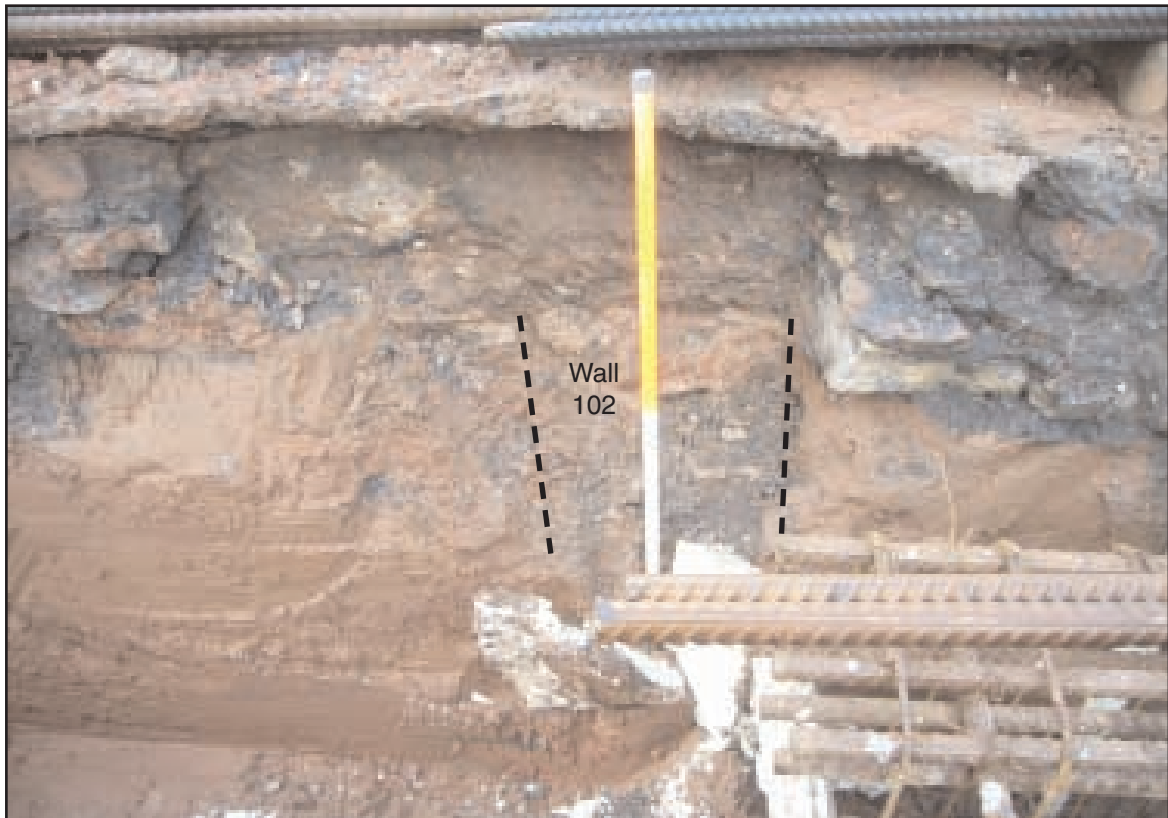


Plate 4 Western edge of site, walls 102 and terraced house footings 101 extending beneath pavement of Exmoor Street, looking west