



Sherwood Hotel, Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria.

Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology North

May 2013

**Carlisle Estates Company
Ltd**

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SHERWOOD HOTEL, BOTCHERGATE, CARLISLE, CUMBRIA: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A planning application (12/0431) was made by Carlisle Estates Company Ltd for the extension to the Sherwood Hotel, Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria (NGR SE 27123 20789; Fig 1). As the site lies within the historic centre of Carlisle, Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) attached a condition to the planning application, stipulating that a archaeological watching brief should be conducted during intrusive ground works. These requirements were conveyed to Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) and a Written Scheme of Investigation was provided, see *Appendix 1*. OA North were subsequently commissioned to provide the watching brief.



Plate 1: the development area before the start of groundworks

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The watching brief was undertaken by Jon Onraet, in accordance with OA North standards (which in turn meet those of English Heritage and the Institute

of Field Archaeologists) on the 7th of February and the 1st of May 2013. The groundworks undertaken on the first visit involved the removal of the existing concrete slab (Plate 1) and excavation of rubble (Fig 2), using a 8.5 tonne 360 excavator with a toothless ditching bucket. On the second visit, a foundation trench was excavated, 0.70m wide by 0.70m deep, around the edge of the rectangular plot, using a 8.5 tonne 360 excavator with a 0.45m wide toothed bucket (Fig 2).



Plate 2: the excavated trench, through the centre of the site, showing the buried soil horizon

3 RESULTS

- 3.1 The deposits across the plot consisted of a concrete slab overlying a modern levelling deposit and garden soil. The levelling deposit comprised a reddish brown sandy silt, with a large amount of mortar, brick and stone rubble mixed in to it. This deposit varied in depth from 0.20m to 0.60m and overlay a buried soil horizon (Plate 2). The soil horizon comprised a dark brown sandy silt with infrequent inclusions of small sub-rounded and angular stones and charcoal. Along the southern edge of the plot, the levelling deposits was much shallower than over the rest of the area (Plate 3). There, it consisted of fine rubble and mortar, measuring 0.10m in depth, over the buried soil, which was excavated to a depth of 0.60m within the foundation, and appeared to be continuing downwards.
- 3.2 No finds or features of archaeological significance were encountered within any of the trenches (Plate 4).



Plate 3: section of the foundation trench at the southern end of the plot



Plate 4: the fully excavated foundation trench

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Foundation trench and area strip location plan

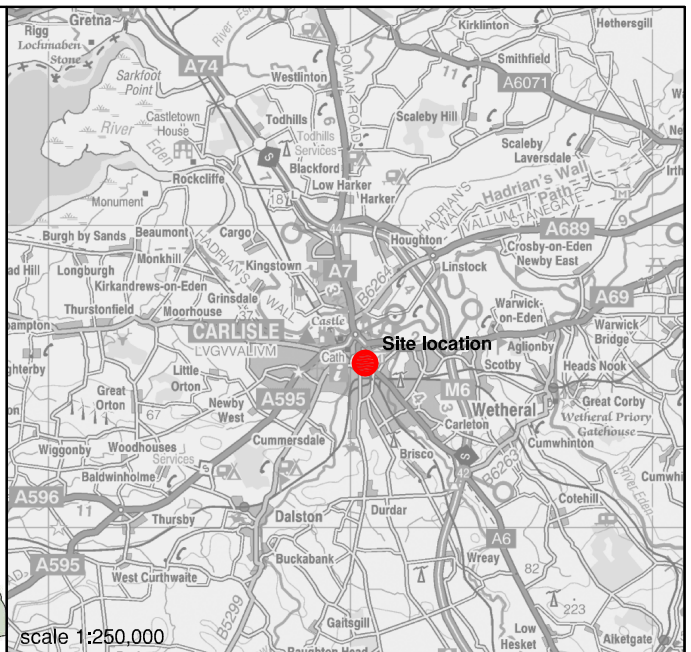
PLATES

Plate 1: the development area before the start of groundworks

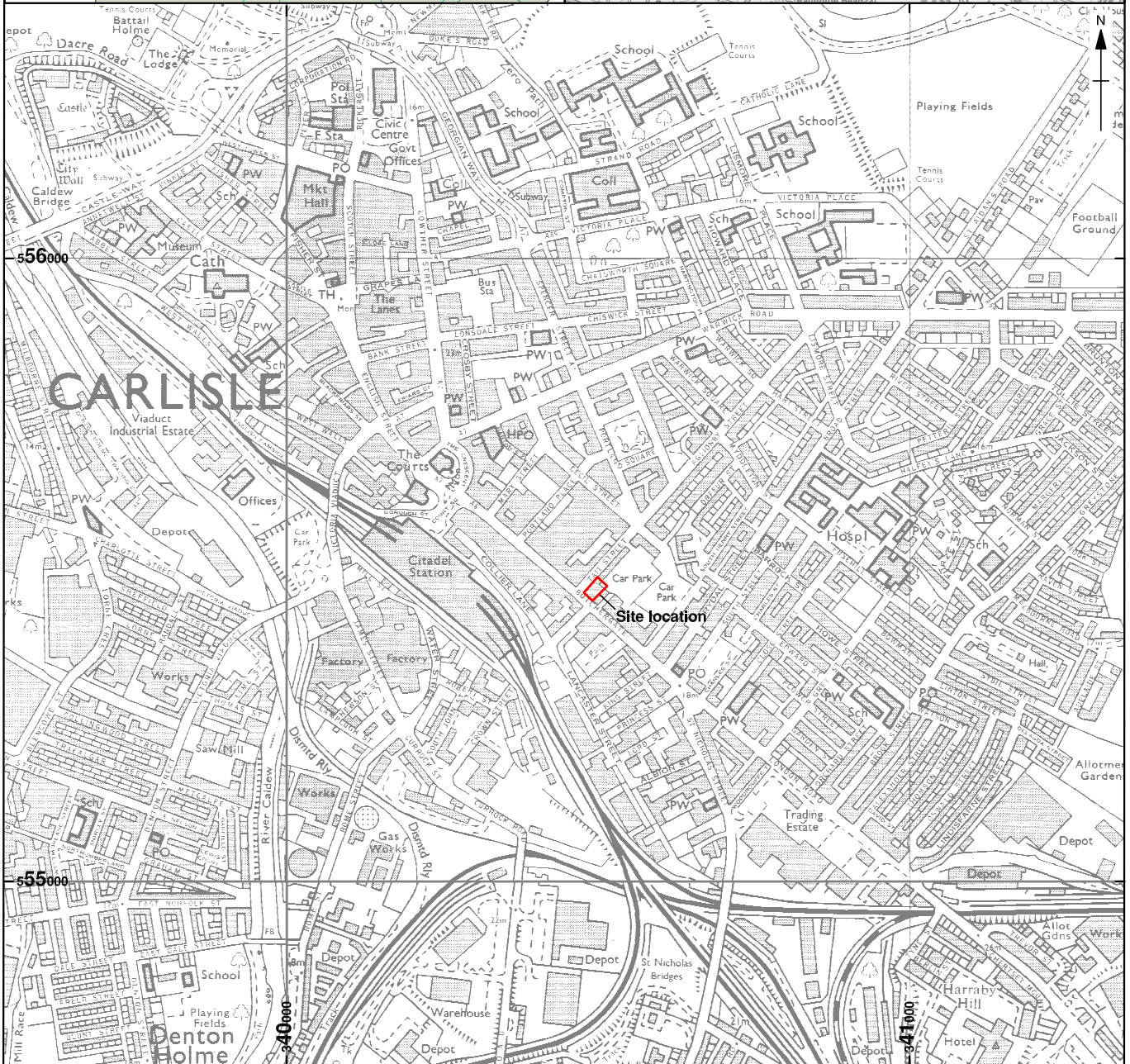
Plate 2: the excavated trench, through the centre of the site, showing the buried soil horizon

Plate 3: section of the foundation trench at the southern end of the plot

Plate 4: the fully excavated foundation trench



scale 1:250,000

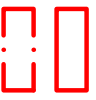
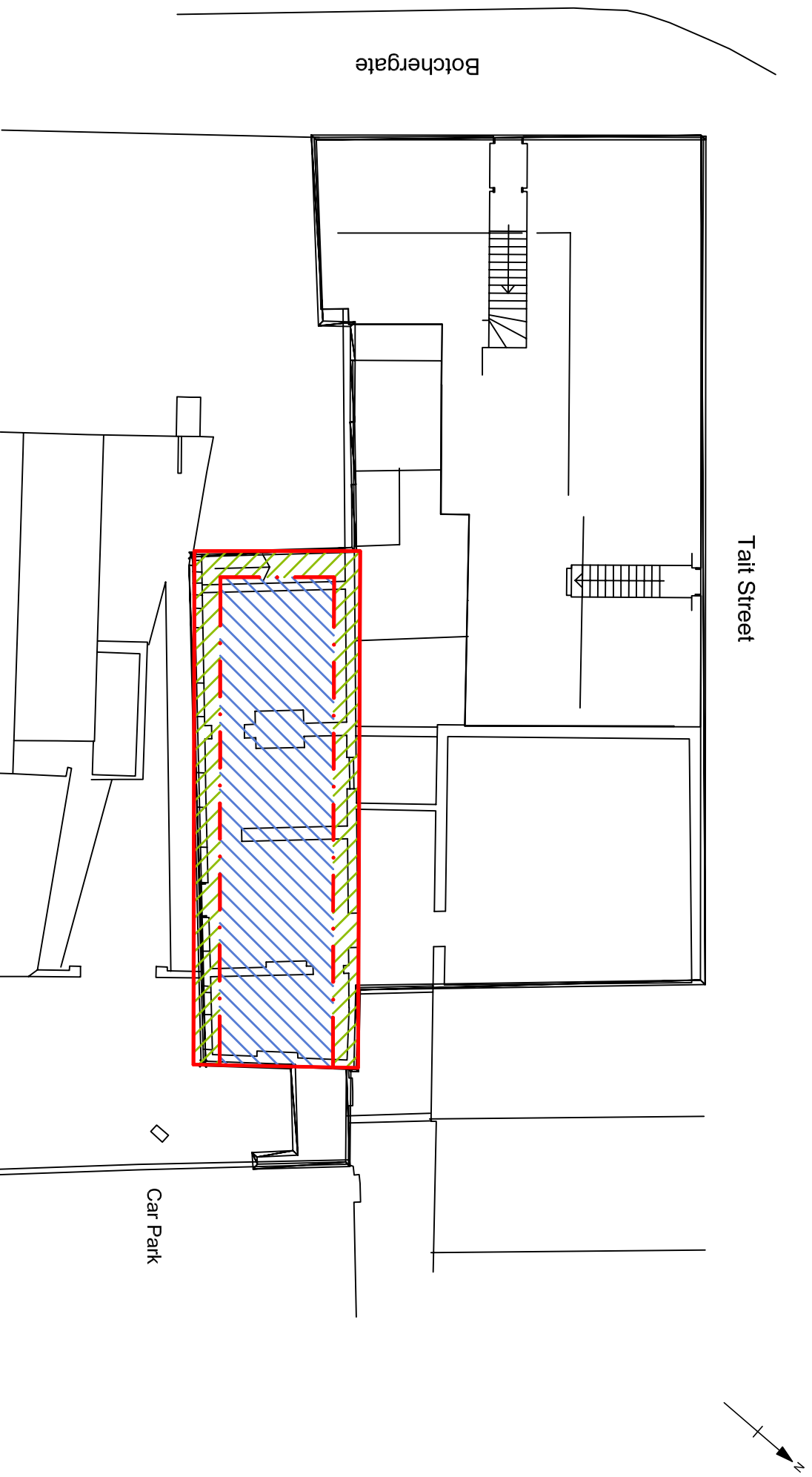


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Figure 1: Site location

FB*L10573*AKH*07-05-2013



Limit of excavation

Foundation trench outline



Area reduced by 0.5m

Foundation trench



Figure 2: Foundation trench and area stripped

APPENDIX 1: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

February 2013

**Oxford
Archaeology
North**

SHERWOOD HOTEL

BOTCHERGATE,

**CARLISLE,
CUMBRIA**

CA1 1RX

Written Scheme of Investigation for:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Proposals

The following project design is offered in response to a verbal brief for a proposed archaeological watching brief at Sherwood Hotel issued by Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service.

BACKGROUND

CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) have produced the following Written Scheme of Investigations for an archaeological Watching Brief on demolition work involving the lifting of existing flags and make-up, at Sherwood Hotel, Botchergate, Carlisle, CA1 1RX (below the footprint of the southern extension of the building shown by green box on Fig 1). This has been produced at the request of Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) and is in accordance with a stipulation in the Application for Planning Permission Notice of Approval (Application Number 12/0431) which states:

An archaeological watching brief shall be undertaken by a qualified archaeologist during the course of the ground works of the permitted development. The archaeological watching brief shall be in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority in advance of the permitted development. Within two month of the completion of the permitted development, 3 copies of the report shall be furnished to the Local Planning Authority.

The purposes of the watching brief are specified as being in order to afford a reasonable opportunity for an examination to be made to determine the existence of any remains of archaeological interest within the site and for the investigation and recording of such remains in accordance with Policy LE9 of the Carlisle District Area.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies within the historic centre of Carlisle, just to the south of the core area of the Roman and medieval towns (Zant *et al* 2011). Previous work in very close proximity to the site at 53-55 Botchergate (*ibid*) and adjacent areas (Gieko *et al* 2001) has located significant archaeological remains including human burials and Roman industrial features (*ibid*). Assuming that the ground has not previously been truncated, on which there is no available information, the potential exists for similar remains to exist immediately below the level of the flooring associated with the structure presently occupying the plot.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH

OA North has considerable experience of the evaluation and excavation of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large-scale projects throughout Northern England, including Cumbria, during the past 35 years. In the past OA North has undertaken archaeological work at numerous sites within Carlisle. OA North is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation, number 17, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IfA Code of Conduct. A rigorous approach is taken towards health and safety and our staff are CSCS accredited. OA North are insured for third party liability and carry Public, Employers and Professional indemnity.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

PROJECT AIMS

The watching brief will aim to establish the nature of deposits surviving immediately below the level of the flooring and within the potential horizontal and vertical extent of any development impact. It will inform on the potential survival of any archaeological remains within the construction footprint, to enable a design solution to be enacted to preserve the archaeological remains *in situ*, or, if this is not practicable, to enable preservation of the archaeology by record. Should any archaeological remains potentially survive below the flooring, a methodology for mitigation will be produced as an addendum to this document.

REPORT AND ARCHIVE PRODUCTION

If the results of the watching brief are negative, a very brief report to this effect will be produced for the client and will be supplied to CCCHES. If any significant archaeology is identified a suitable level of analysis/reporting will be agreed with the client and CCCHES. Such a report will as a minimum include:

- A site location plan, related to the national grid;
- A front cover/frontispiece which includes the planning application number and the national grid reference of the site;
- The dates on which the fieldwork was undertaken;
- A concise, non-technical summary of the results;
- An explanation of any agreed variations to the brief, including justification for any analyses not undertaken;
- A description of the methodology employed, work undertaken and the results obtained;
- Plans and sections at an appropriate scale, showing the location and position of deposits and finds located, and absolute heights above Ordnance Datum;
- A list of, and dates for, any finds recovered and a description and interpretation of the deposits identified;
- A description of any environmental or other specialist work undertaken and the results obtained.

Two copies of the report will be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record (CHER) within a reasonable period following the completion of fieldwork. This will be on the understanding that the report will be made available as a public document through the CHER.

The results of the evaluation will be made available for inclusion in a summary report to a suitable regional or national archaeological publication if further archaeological fieldwork is expected.

An archive will be prepared in accordance with the recommendations in Brown (2007). Arrangements will be made for its long term storage and deposition with an appropriate repository. A copy shall also be offered to the National Monuments Record.

In the event that any finds are recovered, the transfer of the ownership of finds will be made to a local or relevant specialist museum, assuming the landowner gives their approval. In this case Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery is the most likely repository. The museum's requirements for the transfer and storage of finds will be discussed before the project commences. The CCCHES will be notified of the arrangements made.

Cumbria HER is taking part in the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/> will, therefore, also be completed as part of the project. This will be on the understanding that information on projects undertaken in Cumbria will be made available through the above website, unless otherwise agreed.

METHOD STATEMENT

FIELDWORK

All aspects of the evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (2009).

The archaeological techniques will be selected to cause the minimum amount of destruction and will comply with all relevant health and safety regulations. All of those working on site will be made aware of the significance and history of the site.

An archaeologist will attend the site to observe the removal of the stone floor and any other archaeologically sterile layers that might obscure archaeological horizons within the depth of the development footprint. Records will be maintained during and after the removal of the flooring. The removal of the flooring may be by mechanical means, but this will be undertaken with all due regard to ensuring the integrity of any archaeologically-sensitive deposits.

No archaeological excavation will take place at this stage of the watching brief, apart from, possibly, some limited hand investigation to establish the character and depth of deposits. Excavation may subsequently take place, if archaeological features or deposits are encountered, but this will be in accordance with agreed methodologies made explicit in an addendum to this document.

In any case, human remains will be left *in situ*, covered and protected if discovered. No further investigation will normally proceed beyond that necessary to establish the date and character of the burial, and the CCHES and the local Coroner will be informed immediately if a burial is discovered. If removal is essential, this will only take place under appropriate Department for Constitutional Affairs and environmental health regulations.

All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, using a system, adapted from that used by the Centre for Archaeology Service of English Heritage. Results of all field investigations will be recorded on OA North's *pro forma* context sheets. All features and deposits will be planned at an appropriate scale and representative trench sections will be drawn. Digital photographs will record the trenches and illustrate individual features. The elevation of the underlying natural deposits will be recorded as will the elevation of any archaeological horizons. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.

Finds recovery and sampling programmes will be in accordance with current best practice (following IfA and other specialist guidelines). All artefacts and ecofacts will be treated in accordance with OA North standard practice, which is cognisant of IfA and UKIC Guidelines. In general this will mean that (where appropriate or safe to do so) finds are washed, dried, marked, bagged and packed in stable conditions; no attempt at conservation will be made unless special circumstances require prompt action. In such a case guidance and/or expertise will be sought from a suitably qualified conservator. OA North will assess the finds for conservation after fieldwork has been completed, but the cost of conservation must be born by the client (*Section 7*).

Samples will be collected for artefact retrieval should this prove necessary, for example, in the case of deposits associated with metalworking being identified.

Any gold and silver artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996/7.

The field team will be advised and supported by Oxford Archaeology's in-house environmental specialists. An agreed sampling strategy will be defined, in an addendum to this document, if archaeologically sensitive features or deposits are encountered during the watching brief.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

OA North recognises its responsibilities with regard to health and safety, and will establish safe working practices in accordance with current legislation. OA North provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Health and Safety policy. All site procedures are in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (1991) and OA North's own health and safety guidance documentation. OA North's site staff are CSCS accredited and senior staff are qualified First Aiders. All staff are issued with Personal Protective Equipment and each team with a telephone and a first aid kit. OA North will liaise with all parties to ensure all site-specific health and safety

regulations are met. A risk assessment will be completed in advance of any on-site works, which will be made available with our method statement.

OA North staff will work under the supervision of the principle contractors, with regards to site health and safety procedures and legislation. Site access will be well regulated and notification of hazards such as services and contaminated ground will be obtained from the principle contractor. It will be the principal contractor's responsibility to alert OA North of any such.

RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

STAFF AND TIMETABLE PROPOSALS

The overall management of the project will be undertaken by **Fraser Brown** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

The watching brief will be undertaken by a competent archaeologist. The duration of the work will be dependent on the principle contractor's programme.

If finds or deposits are encountered that require specialist input, OA North will use Oxford Archaeology's in-house specialists out of preference, but external specialists may also be commissioned, subject to the agreement of the CCCHES, should no in house expertise be available.

Normally OA North staff work a 37.5 hours week, Monday to Friday, though adjustments to hours may be made to maximise daylight working time in winter and to meet travel requirements

PROJECT MONITORING

PROCEDURE

Fieldwork will be monitored by the Historic Environment Officer on behalf of the local planning authority. CCCHES will be given prior notification, detailing when the watching brief is going to take place, and will be afforded access to the site at reasonable notice.

The involvement of CCCHES will be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

REFERENCES

Brown, DH, 2007 *Archaeological Archives A Guide to Best Practice in the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum

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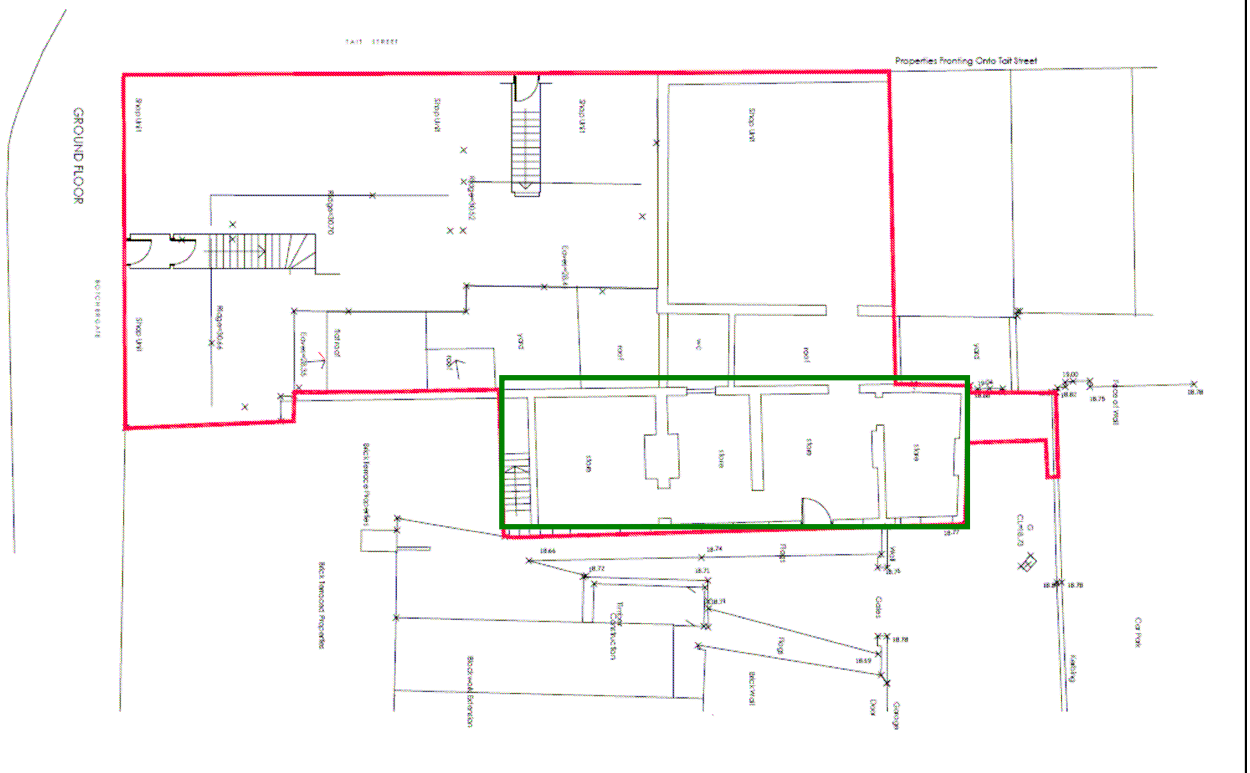


Figure 1: Location of the watching brief (green box)