

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report	Evaluation Report
Project	Upper English Street, Armagh
Planning Ref	LA08/2019/0154/F
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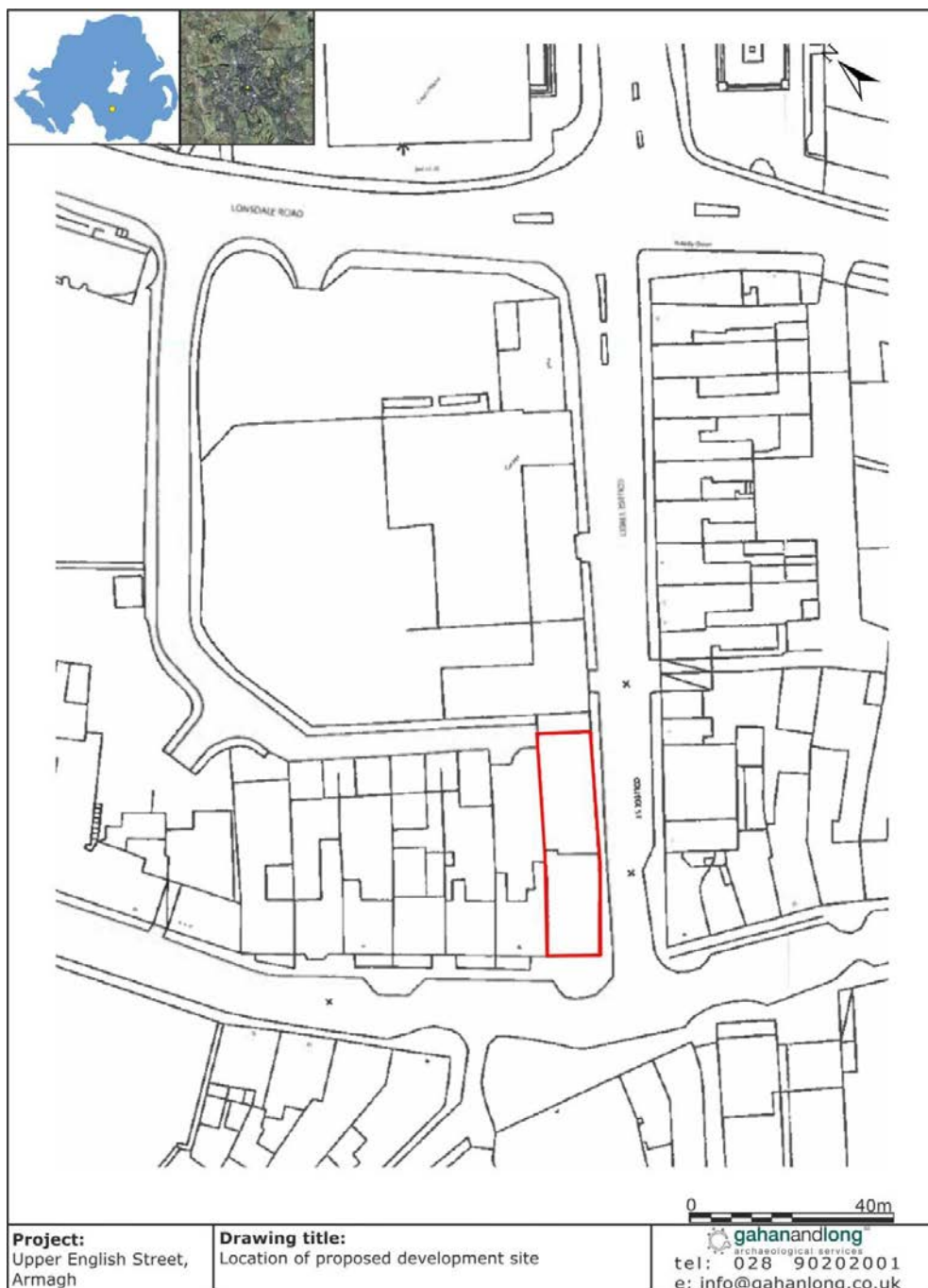
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1 Introduction

It is proposed to construct a restaurant at basement and ground floor level, a two bedroom apartment at first floor level and a two bedroom apartment at second floor level on a site adjacent to 45 Upper English Street, Armagh (figure 1).

This report deals with the implementation of the archaeological programme of works for the development site. The programme of works was implemented by means of an archaeological evaluation of the site. This evaluation was carried out under licence to DfC:HED, no. AE/21/124.

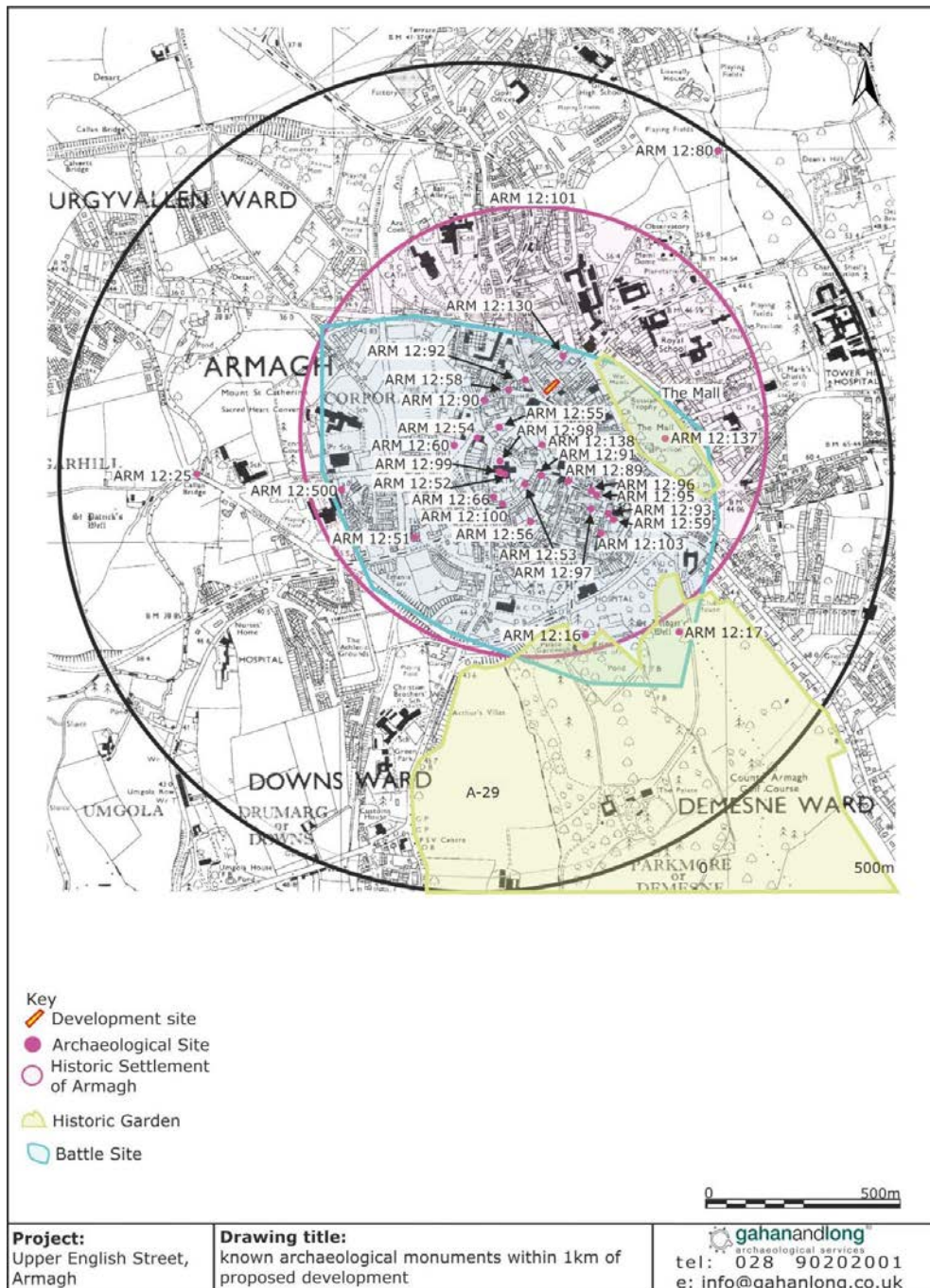
Figure 1: location of proposed development site



2 Archaeological Baseline

The desk-top survey has indicated that there are no known archaeological sites within the development area. The development site is situated within three known battle sites, and the historic settlement of Armagh, **ARM 12:101** (figure 2).

Figure 2: Known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed development.



The historic settlement of Armagh **ARM 12:101** is an area of archaeological and historical significance within the town of Armagh. It incorporates a number of known archaeological sites

including St Patrick's Cathedral, various Early Christian, medieval and post-medieval religious establishments, an Early Christian cemetery and also evidence of occupation from the Neolithic and the Early Christian periods right through to modern times. Several excavations have been carried out within the town.

The area of proposed development is situated within the site of three known battles. The first known battle took place in 1103 when the Ulidians, supported by Munster, Leinster and Osraighe, laid siege to Armagh, which was defended by the forces of Cinel Eoghain. The besieging army was defeated.

Two battles took place at the end of the 16th century. In October 1597 the defending English garrison of Lord Burgh sustained a series of harassing attacks by the Irish forces under the command of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone. The outcome of these attacks was inconclusive. Between the 12th and 15th of August the following year, Irish forces, again commanded by Hugh O'Neill laid siege to the defending English garrison of Colonel Caithness at Armagh. The siege ended when the English surrendered on terms.

2.1 Building Survey

The Upper English Street frontage of the site contains a basement relating to earlier properties located here. An inspection of the 1st edition OS map shows the proposed development to contain structures along its Upper English Street and College Street frontages and to the rear of the property (figure 3). These buildings are shown on the available OS maps up to the 4th edition (1905). By the time of the 1:10,000 scale OS map (1957-1986) the Upper English Street frontage has been demolished to ground floor level.

The Griffiths Valuation maps (2nd edition OS, c1860) have been patched at for the area of the development site and as such there is no visual indication as to the nature of the site at this time. The Griffith Valuation records that the property consists of a house, office, yard and small garden with a value of £40. At this time it is occupied by Thomas Lewis Wilkinson who leases the property from Thomas A Prentice. The revision books 9VAL/12/B/10/4B, D, F and G) for the period covering 164-1899 show that Thomas A Prentice has taken over the occupation of the property and that it retains a value of £40.

The basement area of the Upper English Street frontage was retained following the historic demolition on the site. At the time of the initial site inspection, it was not possible to enter this part of the site for safety reasons. Inspection of the site from street level revealed it to consist of an open area defined by two stone and brick walls extending across the width of the site (parallel to Upper English Street) and which were in turn divided by a mostly demolished, red brick internal wall, extending perpendicular the street frontage (plate 1). Both the end walls were capped with modern concrete beams/ block work. Two of the openings within the rear wall of the property have been infilled with red brick while the third has been blocked off by the construction of a modern development, constructed under an earlier planning permission (plate 2). The openings of the front wall of the property remain open and lead into surviving basement areas which extend towards Upper English Street (plate 3).

Figure 3: 1st edition OS map showing location of the development site.





Plate 1: open section of basement area looking south.



Plate 2: rear wall of basement area showing bricked up openings and modern construction beyond.



Plate 3: front wall of basement area showing opening into surviving basements.

As more complete assessment of the basement area was possible following the demolition of the modern elements and the removal of modern in-fill. As the site continues towards Upper English Street, an additional wall was identified extending across the width of the site. This wall was previously sealed by concrete slabs. It is of the same stone and brick construction and retains three openings matching up with those previously exposed as the frontage of the property (plate 4).



Plate 4: looking north across the Upper English Street frontage of the site.

Beyond the frontage wall, the openings lead into three basements which consist of stone walls with arched red brick roofs (plate 5). These small rooms appear to have been utilised as part of the heating system for the former property and elements of this, including piping and spaces for boilers survive (plate 6).



Plate 5: arched basement with heating pipe extending across it.

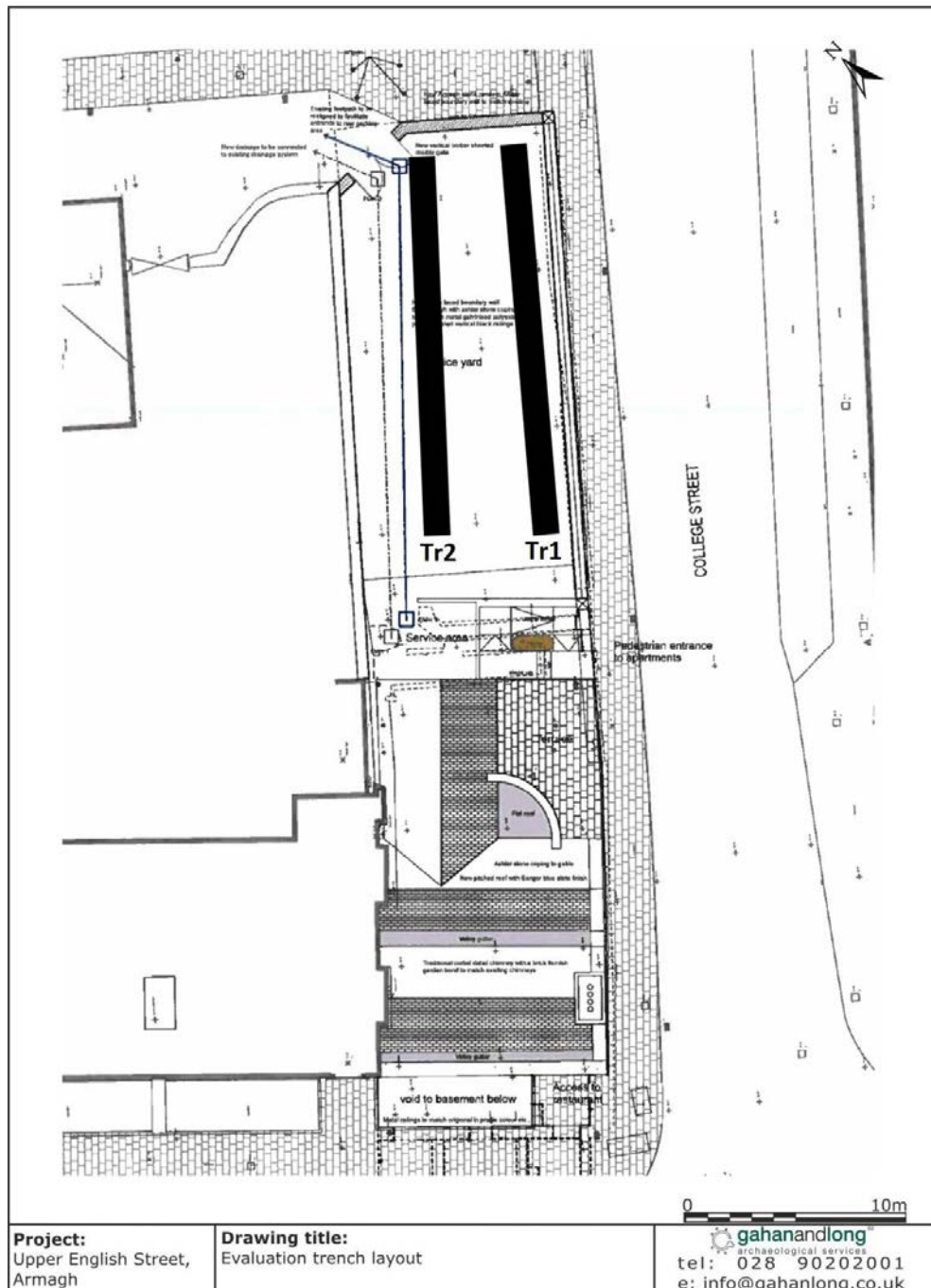


Plate 6: arched basement showing elements of the heating infrastructure.

3 Archaeological Evaluation

The archaeological evaluation consisted of the monitoring of ground reduction at the basement end of the site and the excavation of two test trenches across the rear area of the development (figure 4).

Figure 4: location of evaluation test trenches.



The ground reduction at the front of the site consisted of the removal of modern in-fill material. This gave way to a layer of compacted stone subfloor which will be utilised in the current construction programme. The test trenches were excavated using a back acting machine fitted with

a toothless bucket and under strict archaeological supervision. Surface material consisted of a mid-brown clay/soil across the yard, which was in use for storing material for site including machinery and was therefore very compacted. This surface material was removed onto a construction rubble mixture of brick, ceramic pipes, stone, wood and other materials which appear to have been levelled across the site at some point. This modern material was removed onto reddish/pinkish sticky clay subsoil. The subsoil was highest to the southwest of trench 2 at 0.5m and fell to a depth of 1.2m to the northeast of trench 2 and within all of trench 1 suggesting this is the natural slope of the hill within this area. No evidence of any archaeological deposits was identified during the course of the site evaluation. The findings for each individual trench are contained within Table 1.

4 Conclusions

It is proposed to construct a restaurant at basement and ground floor, a two bedroom apartment at first floor and a two bedroom apartment at second floor on a site adjacent to 45 Upper English Street, Armagh. An archaeological evaluation of the site was conducted under licence to DfC:HED (licence no. AE/21/124). This consisted of the monitoring of ground reduction and the excavation of two test trenches across the development area. No archaeological deposits were identified during the course of the evaluation. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological works are required and as such it is recommended that the archaeological condition for the site can be discharged. All recommendations are made subject to approval of the local planning authority in consultation with DfC:HED.

Table 1: Archaeological test trenches within the proposed development

Trench Number	Length	Depth (m)	Archaeology Identified
1	16m	1.2m	No archaeological deposits identified



Trench 1 looking southwest

Trench Description

Surface material was a mid-brown clay/soil, which was in use for storing and was therefore very compacted. This was removed onto a rubble mixture of brick, ceramic pipes, wood etc. Medium to large roots were removed due to trees/bushes. This was removed onto a reddish/pinkish sticky clay subsoil.

Trench Number	Length	Depth (m)	Archaeology Identified
2	15	0.5 – 1.2m	No archaeological deposits identified



Trench 2 looking northeast

Description

Surface material was a mid-brown clay/soil, which was in use for storing and was therefore very compacted. This was removed onto a rubble mixture of brick, ceramic pipes, wood etc. Medium to large roots were removed due to trees/bushes. This was removed onto a reddish/pinkish sticky clay subsoil.