

CPAT Report No. 1663




2 Severn Street, Welshpool, Powys

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS
CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Client name: Heart of Wales Property Services Ltd
 CPAT Project No: 2351
 Project Name: TSB, Welshpool
 Grid Reference: SJ 22540747
 County/LPA: Powys
 Planning Application: P/2017/1249
 CPAT Report No: 1663
 Event PRN: 140295
 Report status: Final
 Confidential until: N/A

Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
		
Sophie Watson Project Archaeologist	Nigel Jones Principal Archaeologist	Nigel Jones Principal Archaeologist
23/07/2019	23/07/2019	23/07/2019

Bibliographic reference: Watson, S., 2019. *2 Severn Street, Welshpool, Powys. Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished report. CPAT No 1663.



YMDDIRIEDOLAETH ARCHAEOLEGOL CLWYD-POWYS
 CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 1938 553 670

trust@cpat.org.uk

www.cpat.org.uk

©CPAT 2019



The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust is a Registered Organisation
 with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	ii
CRYNODEB.....	ii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	2
3 WATCHING BRIEF	3
4 CONCLUSIONS.....	5
5 SOURCES	5
6 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION STATEMENT	5

Summary

Between May and July 2019, the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Heart of Wales Property Services Ltd during the excavation of foundation and drainage trenches for a new extension located to the rear of 2 Severn Street, Welshpool, Powys. The building is grade II listed and was formerly the Welshpool and Montgomery Bank (and later TSB). The site lies within the historic medieval core of Welshpool.

Groundworks exposed the footings of three small buildings with an associated cobbled yard surface. Two of the buildings were depicted on 19th-century mapping and were likely to be contemporary with the construction of the bank in 1863. One of these buildings contained a small cellar.

No finds or features predating the mid to late 19th century were identified.

Crynodeb

Rhwng mis Mai a mis Gorffennaf 2019, bu Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd Powys yn cynnal briff gwyllo archaeolegol ar ran Heart of Wales Property Services Ltd yn ystod gwaith cloddio sylfaen a rhychau draenio ar gyfer estyniad newydd at gefn 2 Stryd Hafren, y Trallwng, Powys. Mae'r adeilad yn adeilad rhestredig gradd II ac roedd gynt yn Fanc y Trallwng a Threfaldwyn (a TSB yn ddiweddarach). Mae'r safle o fewn craidd canoloesol hanesyddol y Trallwng.

Datgelodd y gwaith paratoi tir sylfeini tri adeilad bach gydag arwyneb iard goblog gysylltiedig. Roedd dau o'r adeiladau i'w gweld ar fap o'r 19^{eg}-ganrif ac mae'n debygol iddyn nhw gael eu hadeiladu yn yr un cyfnod â'r banc ym 1863. Roedd un o'r adeiladau hyn yn cynnwys seler fach.

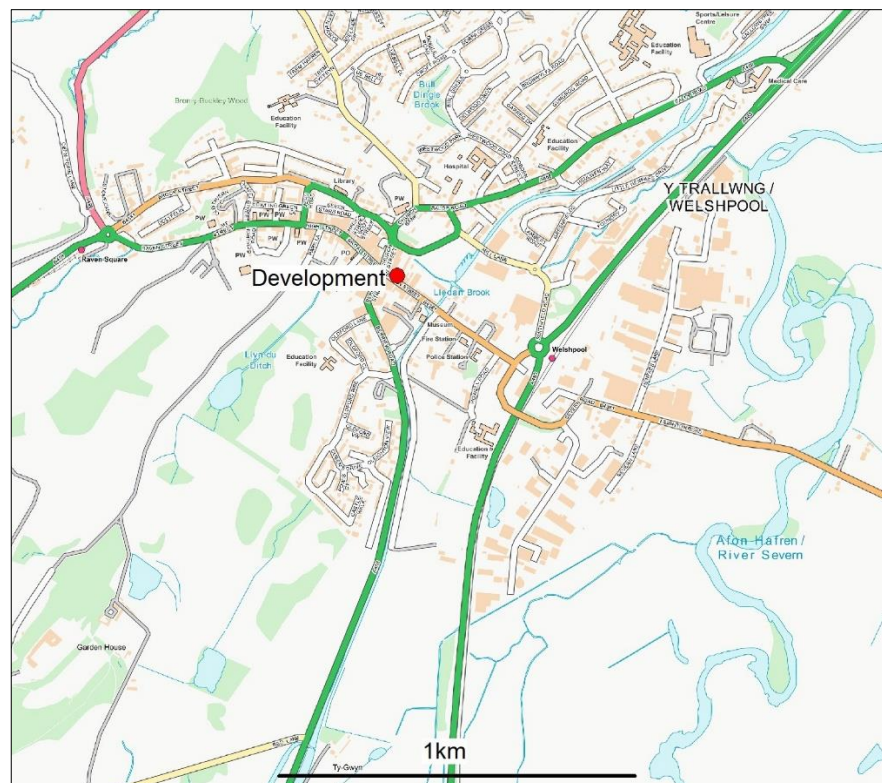
Ni nodwyd unrhyw ddarganfyddiadau neu nodweddion a oedd yn dyddio o gyfnod cyn canol i ddiwedd y 19^{eg} ganrif.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was engaged by Heart of Wales Property Services Ltd, on behalf of Powys County Council, to undertake a watching brief at 2 Severn Street, Welshpool, in response to a condition of planning consent to change the use of the building, refurbish the existing roof and erect an extension to the rear of the property. The building is Grade II listed (7848) and was purpose built in 1863 to house the Welshpool and Montgomery Savings Bank.
- 1.2. Planning permission was granted (P/2017/1249) by Powys County Council, the local planning authority, subject to a number of conditions, which included the following provision for archaeology:

The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeological contractor is present during the undertaking of any ground works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief will be undertaken to the standards laid down by the Institute for Archaeologists. The Local Planning Authority will be informed in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the name of the said archaeological contractor. A copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Development Control Archaeologist, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, 41 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR, within two months of the fieldwork being completed.

Reason: To secure preservation by record of any archaeological remains which may be revealed during the ground excavations for the consented development.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

Fig. 1 Location of the Development

2 Historical Background

- 2.1. The Development falls within the historic medieval core of Welshpool. The present town was established by Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powys, in order to establish a new borough. As such, this was a planned town which owed little to the existing settlement on the other side of the Lledan Brook. The burgesses received a foundation charter in the 1240s and a market was recorded there in 1252. Forty years later there were 106 taxpayers in the town, a total which had risen to 225 by 1322.
- 2.2. The layout of the town is essentially linear with the main axis, Broad Street lying on the southern edge of the Lledan Valley. By 1629, both the town hall and the market house as well as the market cross were located in the centre of this thoroughfare. Several lanes run off Broad Street to north and south with a road intersection (now Berriew Street and Church Street) at its eastern end. Narrow burgage plots remain clearly defined on Broad Street and Berriew Street, and it is evident from the estate map of 1629 that at that time Broad Street was the main focus. A feature of this urban pattern is the numerous narrow alleys, many of them named, which ran off the main street.
- 2.3. The growth of the flannel industry during the late 18th century added fresh impetus to the development of the town, though it has been argued that it failed to become a predominant urban focus in Wales because of competition from towns higher up the Severn Valley. The construction of the Montgomeryshire Canal at the same time added to its importance, and the railway arrived in 1862.
- 2.4. The Development focusses on 2 Severn Street, the building having been purpose built in 1863 to house the Welshpool and Montgomery Savings Bank, which had formerly operated from a room in the town hall. It is a well preserved example of a purpose built bank of two storeys. The building is of brick construction with a smooth rendered lower storey and dressings and a slate roof on boldly projecting eaves.
- 2.5. Facing Severn Street, the central first-floor window is brought forward in an architrave with entablature hood, and with a balustraded balcony projecting on moulded corbels which are lettered 'Savings Bank' on their outer faces. A deep frieze over the first floor is inscribed with fine lettering 'Savings Bank 1863'.
- 2.6. The building is depicted on the 1885 1:500 Ordnance Survey map of Welshpool (Fig. 2), which shows it as being L-shaped in plan with an enclosed yard to the rear (north). Two detached buildings are shown within the yard and a possible pump towards the centre. A further long range projected northwards beyond the yard, an area which is now occupied by the Royal Oak, beer garden.



Fig. 2 1885 1:500 map of Welshpool (development outlined in red)

3 Watching Brief

- 3.1. The watching brief was conducted between 22 May and 8 July 2019 in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2014) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. (2017). The watching brief monitored the excavation of footings and drainage trenches for the proposed extension. A plan of features recorded during the watching brief is provided in Fig. 4.
- 3.2. Upon arrival, the yard area had been stripped, removing a layer of gravel and a stone slab surface, below which the footings of two small brick structures had been exposed as well as a series of ceramic drains. Both of the structures exposed appeared to relate to buildings depicted on the 1885 Ordnance Survey plan of Welshpool (Fig. 2). The structures were located around 0.40m below the level of the footpath between the Development and the Royal Oak Hotel.
- 3.3. The brick walling that had enclosed the yard had also been removed prior to arrival on site, but excavation of the foundation trenches for the new extension revealed a stone footing measuring around 0.60m wide and extending to a depth of around 0.94m below the present ground level. The footings were constructed using a distinctive grey/green stone known as trachyte, which is likely to have been derived from the Standard Quarry located to the north of Brook Street in Welshpool. The same stone also appears to have been used as the footings for the bank building.
- 3.4. The small building located at the north-eastern corner of the yard (building 2) measured around 2.50m across by 1.64m wide and was constructed of red brick.

- 3.5. Brick walling located at the north-western corner of the yard defined an additional small building (building 1) measuring around 2.90m across by 1.36m wide with a concreted floor which had been partially cut through to accommodate a later ceramic drain. Removal of the concrete revealed a vaulted brick cellar below, with partially rendered walls. The cellar appears to have been accessed via a set of brick steps at the eastern end, which were only partially exposed by the excavations.



Fig. 3 Partially excavated cellar to Building 1 (CPAT photo 4668-0015)

- 3.6. The cellar had been backfilled with loose material including soil, brick rubble and some large fragments of building stone. Removal of material from within the structure revealed a depth of over 1.50m and a small room with a red brick floor measuring 1.10m by 1.40m.
- 3.7. The identification of the cellared building and the structural implications this had for the design of the new building resulted in the abandonment of the excavation of footings in favour of a raft footing or ground bearing slab, allowing for the cellar of the small building to be infilled with compacted material and left in-situ below the new slab.
- 3.8. Subsequently, the only ground disturbance involved the excavation of a drainage trench extending diagonally from the south-western corner of the yard to the north-eastern corner.
- 3.9. The remnants of an additional small brick structure (building 3) was identified towards the centre of the yard in between the two other buildings, with a small patch of cobbled yard surface visible to the south. A ceramic drain could be seen extending from the south-eastern corner of the building.
- 3.10. The drainage trench was excavated to a depth of 0.72m (a total of 1.12m below the depth of the internal floor of the bank). The deposits encountered included a dark blackish gritty clay soil containing fragments of 19th century pottery, particularly blue patterned tea wares as well as some fragments of clay pipe. A layer of imported yellow clay was visible at the base of the trench and a large quantity of building stone was encountered towards the centre of the yard

within the drainage trench. Original ground was not encountered, with a dark grey silty deposit exposed beneath the clay.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The watching brief revealed the remains of three small brick buildings, two of which are depicted on the 19th-century maps of Welshpool and are likely to be contemporary with the construction of the bank in 1863. One of these buildings housed a small cellar. Building 3 may be a slightly later addition, perhaps providing an external WC. Associated cobbled flooring was also identified. No archaeological features or finds earlier than the mid to late 19th century were identified.

5 Sources

Unpublished sources

Silvester, R.J., Martin, C.H.R. and Watson, S., 2012. *Historic settlements in Montgomeryshire*. Unpublished report. CPAT No 1134.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2014) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. (2017)

Cartographic sources

1888 Ordnance Survey 1:500 map of Welshpool

6 Archive deposition Statement

- 6.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2014). The archive is entirely digital and will be deposited jointly with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the National Monuments Record (RCAHMW).

Archive summary

CPAT Event PRN: 140295

21 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4668

1 photo catalogue

3 Watching Brief forms

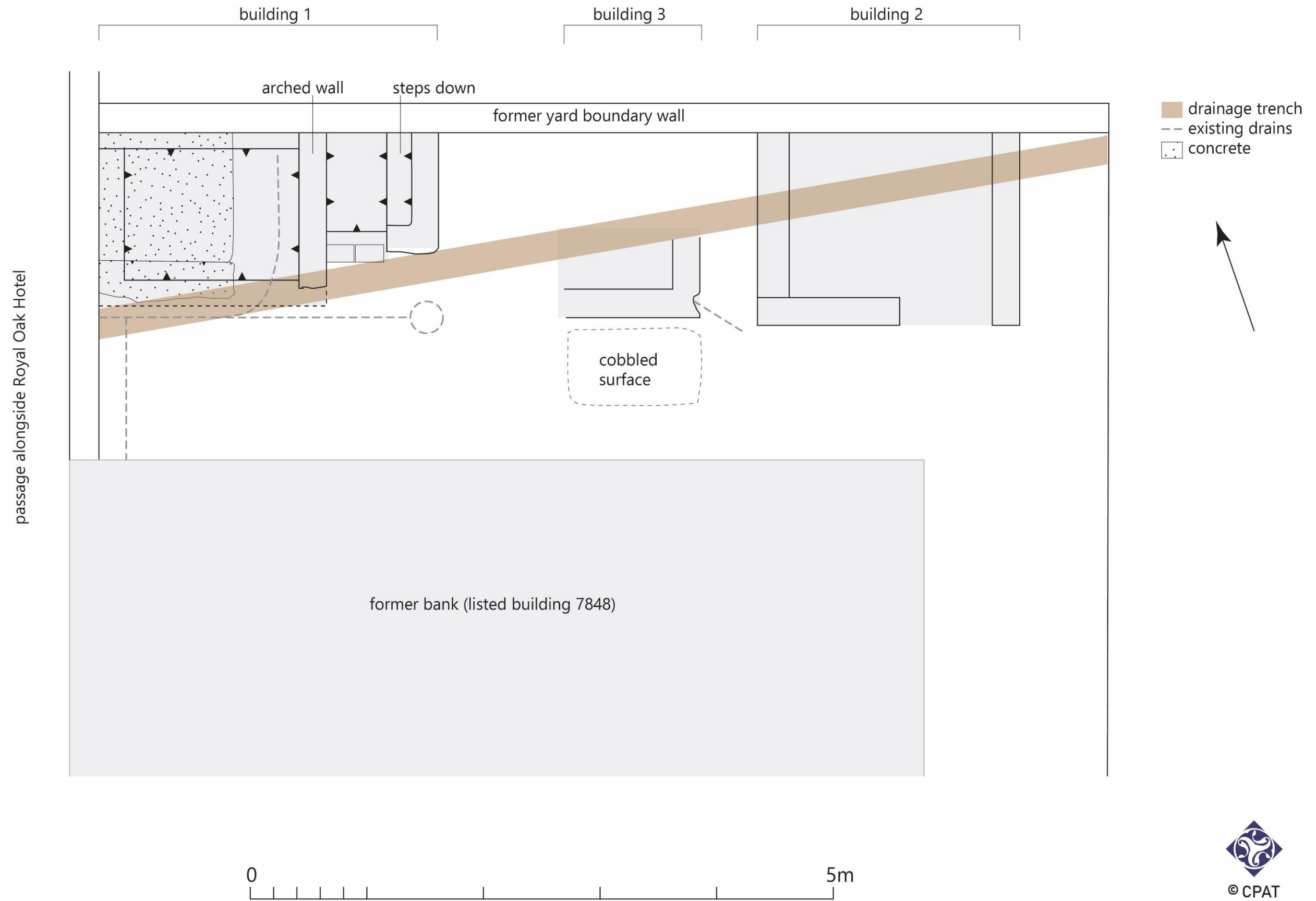


Fig. 4 Plan of the Development showing features identified as part of the watching brief.