

Heritage Statement

Land at 30/32 Longbrook Street and the King Billy public house, Exeter



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CONTENTS

1. Site Description
2. Summary
3. National and Local Designations
4. Mapping and Historic Development
5. Archaeological Assessment
6. Fabric Assessment
7. Statement of Significance
8. Proposal and Justification
9. References

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The site is that of Nos 30-32 Longbrook Street (Photo 1) and the adjoining King Billy public house (Photo 2). The site lies approximately 100m north-west of the old city wall of Exeter and about 0.5km from the centre of the city (NGR SX 9232 9296).



Photo 1: The site at Nos 30-32 Longbrook Street looking east (The King Billy public house is to the right; the white building in the background is John Lewis).

Demolition of the property occupying the site of 30-32 Longbrook Street (which operated as a garage for the greater part of the 20th century) resulted in a vacant trapezoidal-shaped plot with maximum dimensions of approximately 15.6m x 10.2m (Photo 1). This part of the site is bounded on the south side by a modern brick wall which is a property boundary of The King Billy public house. On the west (front) the site is open to the paved frontage of Longbrook Street. On the north side it is bounded by the standing property walls of Nos 34 (and 34a) Longbrook Street and to the east (rear) by a standing boundary wall (described in greater detail below – see Part 6 fabric assessment). The King Billy stands on the site of the previously demolished properties of Nos 22-28 Longbrook Street to the south-east of Nos 30-32 and at the top end of Longbrook Street where it meets New North Road (Photo 2). The building, constructed in the late 1960s, still stands at the time of writing (June 2017)

but is due for demolition if a future planning application is approved and its plot now forms part of the proposal.



Photo 2: The King Billy public house looking south-east from New North Road.

- 1.2 The former use of the site of 30-32 Longbrook Street as a garage for many decades may suggest the likely presence of vehicle inspection pits (possibly infilled at the time of demolition). A doorway in the rear wall of No 32 at one time gave out onto an area (currently a service car park) which is approximately 1.5m higher than the interior ground level at the site of 30-32. Little is known of the buildings which occupied the plot where the King Billy now stands although earlier plans (see below) show that Numbers 22-28 Longbrook Street were a series of four buildings in different ownership in the 19th century; these were swept away as part of the post-WWII redevelopment of this area where only the Savoy Cinema remained standing following intense bomb damage. Longbrook Street once stretched further into the heart of the city as the pre-War aerial photo testifies (see Photo 3 below).



Photo 3: Pre-War (1928) aerial view of the city showing Longbrook Street reaching into the city as far as the Old London Square. The proposal site is indicated by a red rectangle. (Britain from above image © Historic England)

2. Summary

- 2.1 The excavation of test pits within the interior of No. 30/32 Longbrook St in 1994 (see Part 5 below) has demonstrated that no early floor levels are likely to survive, and that archaeological deposits to a depth of approximately 0.5m below the 1994 floor levels will have been removed by terracing in the 19th or earlier 20th century. As a result, only deeper cut archaeological features might survive at a depth below the level of terracing. The same may be said of the King Billy footprint where a visual inspection of the basement cellars (in June 2017) suggests that terracing will have removed all but very deeply cut archaeological features.
- 2.2 Map regression and research (Part 4) has demonstrated that the 19th century Cathedral water supply almost certainly ran along Longbrook Street forward (to the west) of any the buildings which stood at 30-32 Longbrook Street and on the site of The King Billy (and is thus outside the boundaries of the plot).
- 2.3 Based on the evidence in this document (Part 6) it is considered that some historic significance may be afforded to the fabric of a previously identified medieval (boundary) wall at the rear of Nos 30-32 Longbrook Street.

- 2.4 Based on the evidence in this document (Part 6) it is considered that the King Billy has some architectural interest being a good example of a purpose built public house from the mid 1960's by a well-respected Architectural practice recognized for their work in this category of buildings. Aesthetic significance may be afforded to the fabric of the King Billy.

As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises at paragraph 129.

'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'

National and Local Designations

- 3.1 Listed Buildings are those designated by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) as those buildings worthy of statutory protection by reason of their national importance as buildings of special architectural or historic interest. There are no listed buildings adjacent to the site. Longbrook Street does possess however a number of Listed Buildings at Grade II. These are:

Nos 23, 25 and 27 (Black Horse Public House), 29, 31, 33, 49, 51, 53, 55 and 57 (West side)

Nos 52, 54, 56, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 82 and 86 (Harry Hems) on the East side.

The closest listed building to the site is No. 23 Longbrook Street, which is to the NW of the site but there are no clear views to the north due to the height of the extant buildings of No 34 Longbrook Street. No listed buildings are visible from the site.

- 3.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments are those designated by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) as those monuments worthy of statutory protection by reason of their national importance as an archaeological site or monument (and/or historic building). There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) either on or immediately adjacent

to the site. However, the below ground Scheduled Ancient Monuments of Exeter's Underground Passages are known and recorded at the top of Longbrook Street extending from St Sidwell into the city beneath the city walls (see Part 5 below).

- 3.3 The site at 30-32 Longbrook Street and The King Billy is not located within a Conservation Area, being just outside and to the south-east of the Longbrook Conservation Area designated by Exeter City Council.
- 3.4 There are a number of Locally Listed Buildings in Longbrook Street. This is a non-statutory designation and comprises buildings that the Local Planning Authority feels are of importance to the historic fabric and social history of the city. In Exeter, these include Nos 58-64 on the east side of Longbrook Street. Longbrook Terrace (Nos 1-10) is also Locally Listed.

4. Mapping and Historic Development

- 4.1 Houses on the upper end of Longbrook Street just outside the East Gate of the city are shown on the Hogenberg map of Exeter of 1618 although it is impossible to pinpoint the position of the site on this map as it is a representation only and not to scale.
- 4.2 The earliest clear reference to No 30 Longbrook Street dates from 1642 when the Dean and Chapter granted a lease of it to Jonathan Wood, a cordwainer (shoemaker). Although this document seems not to have survived, it is referred to in a deed of 1667, when the property was leased for thirty-one years to William Hooper of St Sidwell's. In 1753 a lease for 32 Longbrook Street was granted to Thomas Granger, woolcomber, of St Sidwell's since the tenement was then 'totally demolished' (Collings and Matthews 1994, 3-4).
- 4.3 The site is shown on John Coldridge's plan of 1819 where buildings appear to be fronting Longbrook Street and against the rear boundary wall possibly with a courtyard between them.
- 4.4 The site appears on the St Sidwell's Tithe map of 1842. Tithe maps, as the name suggests, were produced for the purposes of recording Land Taxation and most date from the period of 1838-1842. Accompanying the tithe maps are apportionments often detailing ownership, the presence of houses or gardens and, in the case of fields, the

agricultural regime. However, in this case the site at Longbrook Street is incorporated within a generic plot number (177) which simply indicates that there are houses standing within the larger plot boundary.

- 4.5 A plan of the Cathedral Aqueduct system was drawn up by William Dawson in 1858 (Stoyle, 161, Fig. 97). This plan shows the line of the aqueduct (actually a below-ground water-pipe) which brought water from the well and spring at St Sidwell to the residences of the Cathedral Dean and Chapter. It ran parallel to the City supply along the length of Longbrook Street from the spring head near the present-day St James' Park football ground before entering the underground passage system at the East Gate of the city (Fig. 1 below).
- 4.6 Three standing buildings immediately adjacent to the north-east of the site were constructed as a single build in 1858. An extant plaque reads: *Speculation Place - Grant and Son Builders 1858*. The date of 1858 is significant as the Speculation buildings would not have been constructed above the Cathedral pipe-trench where access would have been needed at all times to effect any repairs necessary. The three buildings (34-38) are shown side-by-side to the north of the proposal site on Fig.1. There appear to have been built in a similar pattern, each with a yard area to the rear as seen on a plan of 1876. In addition to encompassing the former properties of Nos. 30-32 Longbrook St., the development proposal includes the King Billy public house which was built in the late 1960s and the site of four former premises fronting Longbrook Street (these being Nos 22-28).

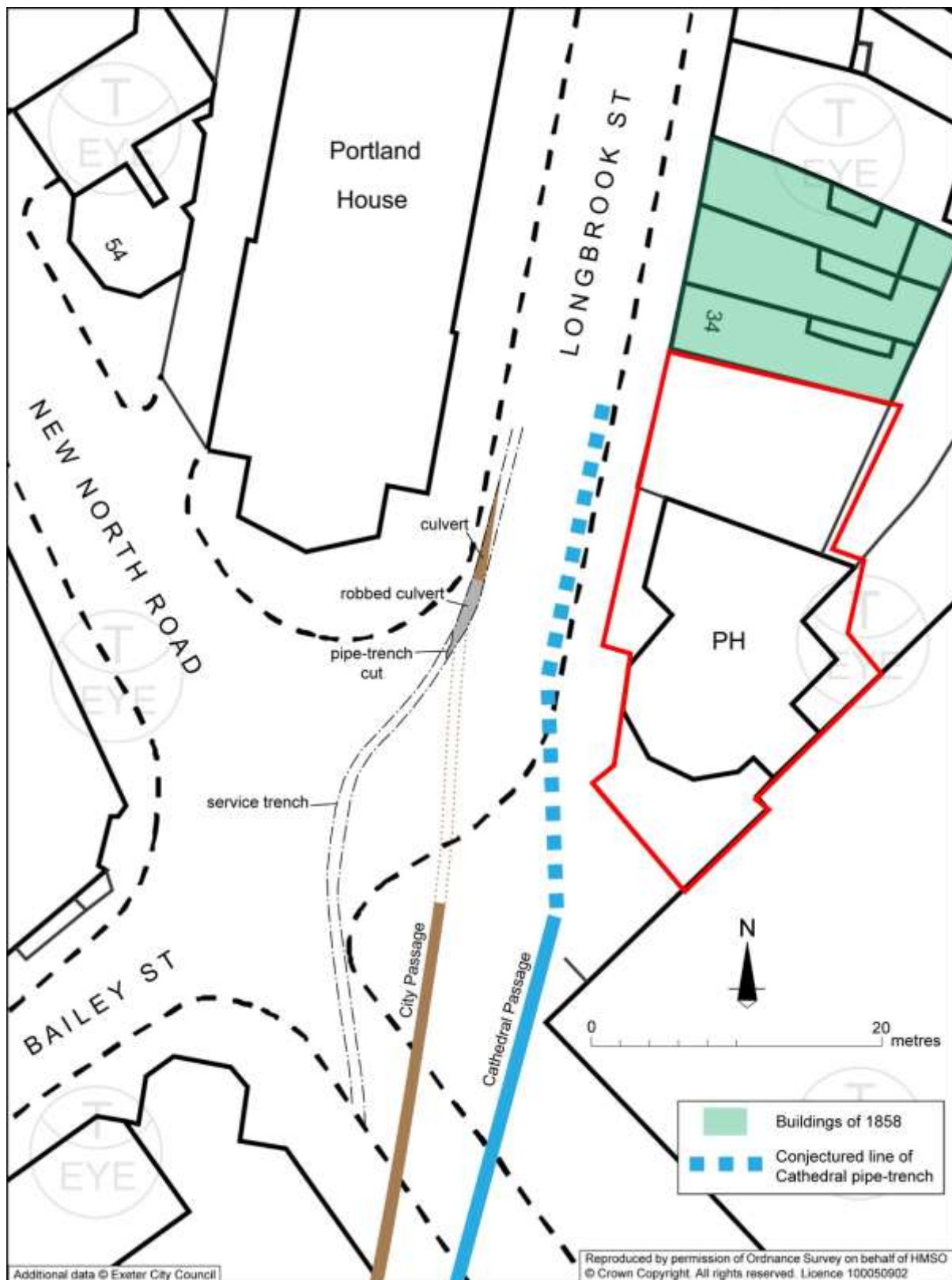


Fig. 1: Known and conjectured line of the Cathedral water-pipe trench (and the City supply). Based on information provided by Exeter Archaeology and the plan of 1858 by William Dawson. Illustration by T.Eye Illustrations, thanks to Exeter City Council.

- 4.7 By the time of the OS 1st edition plan of 1876 any building fronting onto Longbrook at Nos 30-32 had evidently been demolished leaving one building on the plot tight against the rear wall (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: OS Plan of 1876 showing the individual building plots along Longbrook St. The King Billy PH overlies some four former properties which fronted onto Longbrook Street (these are assumed to be Numbers 22-28).

- 4.8 In 1919 the site of 30-32 (then known as 56) was occupied by William Shepherd Son Automotive Engineers (Kelly's Directory) whilst the site of The King Billy had several properties occupying the plot including another garage (the Wessex Garage) at No. 22.
- 4.9 From at least 1929 to 1953 the property at 30-32 is titled William Shepherd and Son, Motor Garage (Besley's Directory) and sometime during this period No 56 Longbrook Street is renumbered as Nos 30-32. A public house, the Horse and Groom, occupied the site of Nos 26-28 from at least 1928 to the post-WWII demolitions.
- 4.10 In 1963 the property at 30-32 is called Dunn's Motors and in 1973 Longbrook Motors (Kelly's Directory). In 1981, 30-32 is known once again as Dunn's Motors (Bray's Directory).

5. Archaeological Assessment

- 5.1 An archaeological evaluation which included test pitting was undertaken within the then standing building at 30-32 Longbrook St. by Exeter Archaeology in 1994. The excavation of the test pits within the building demonstrated that the interior of Nos. 30-32 Longbrook Street was terraced out to a depth of at least 0.5m in the 19th or earlier 20th century. Natural undisturbed deposits were recorded variously at 0.52m and 0.92m below the 1994 floor levels (Collings and Matthews 1994)
- 5.2 A watching brief and recording exercise was carried out by AC Archaeology in 2011 on land immediately to the east of 30-32 Longbrook St (Kerr-Peterson and Passmore 2012). The investigations were commissioned by Midas Interiors in response to a condition (No. 4) on the planning permission (ECC No 11/0332/03) granted for work on the service yard/customer car-park of the John Lewis department store. The watching brief included the recording of the standing boundary wall (see Part 6 below).
- 5.3 In the 2011 work a pit was recorded in the car-park area which contained one sherd of Saxo-Norman Bedford Garage ware of c.AD950-1100 in a lower fill as well as 10th-13th century pottery in an upper fill.
- 5.4 Further features found on the 2011 site provided evidence of early medieval extra-mural activity on the N/E side of the town (refer to Kerr-Peterson and Passmore 2012 for full report).

6. Fabric Assessment

- 6.1 The interior (west) face of the rear boundary wall of Nos 30-32 was visible for inspection (Photo 4). This wall probably acted as a revetment from the time of its construction, there being a drop in level on the Longbrook Street side of the wall as a result of 19th century terracing. The wall is comprised primarily of clay-bonded sub-rectangular local Heavitree and red sandstone blocks (Photo 4). Whereas the lower courses of the wall were relatively intact to a height of 1.5m over a length of about 8m, the higher courses were badly disturbed by the insertion of a doorway and other brick-built insertions. The wall appeared to continue behind No. 34 (confirmed in the AC Archaeology report) but was cut through and missing where the King Billy public house now stands.



Photo 4: Detail of the rear (boundary) wall at 30-32 Longbrook Street showing the pitched roof 'scar' of the later garage against the brick heightening of the 19th century.

- 6.2 Examination and recording of the rear wall (east) elevation by AC Archaeology revealed stone and brick builds of a number of different periods. The earliest fabric identified was a clay-bonded stone wall, 7.5m in length, which is likely to date from the 14th or 15th century (see Fig. 5 below). The AC Archaeology recording did not extend for the full length of the wall as far as The King Billy although it covered the greater part of it. (see Kerr-Peterson and Passmore, 2012, Fig. 6)

It is clear this wall line represents a property boundary that has been in existence probably since the late medieval period. The clay-bonded section probably formed part of the rear wall of a house which fronted onto Longbrook Street. The AC Archaeology report stated: *the boundary wall between the site (John Lewis car-park) and Longbrook Street was constructed in the 14th-15th century and in part had been constructed on a buried soil of medieval date. It probably formed a boundary between the rear of the (medieval)*

Longbrook properties and open ground behind Sidwell Street (Kerr-Peterson and Passmore, 2012, 9).



Photo 5: Detail of the rear (boundary) wall at 30-32 Longbrook Street showing the Heavitree and red sandstone blocks of the wall fabric.

- 6.3 Two major phases of heightening of the boundary wall took place in the 18th and 19th century. In the 19th century the wall was further raised in brick (see Photos 3 and 5). At some stage, almost certainly in the early-mid 20th century a garage with a pitched roof was constructed on the site. The pitched-roof ‘scar’ and lime-washed interior on the rear wall may be clearly seen in Photo 4. The pitched roof extended to the frontage on Longbrook Street as attested in a photo produced in an archaeological note by Dyer and Allan (2004, 183, Fig. 2) taken in 2004 prior to demolition.
- 6.4 The King Billy Public House is proposed to be demolished as part of the redevelopment. It is a distinctive piece of 1960’s architecture, designed as a city centre public house by Austin Smith Salmon Lord Architects as a replacement for the earliest public house on

Longbrook Street the Horse and Groom. The Horse and Groom was attached to the south east boundary of Shepherd's Garage. Dating from 1740, it was probably the oldest inn to survive into the 20th-Century. The Horse and Groom was demolished and rebuilt in June 1967. It is now King Billy.



Photo 6: Shepherd's Garage and Horse and Groom Public House 1930's.
(Source www.exetermemories.co.uk)

- 6.5 Austin-Smith:Lord was founded in 1949 and still has offices in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff and Bristol. Their website includes a brief history and comments: 'In the sixties Austin-Smith:Lordcontinued to attract repeat commissions from its clients – including more than 30 public houses for Finchs'. The planning application described the development as 880 sq. ft. of residential and 3320 sq. ft. of non-residential. A public house with flat above.

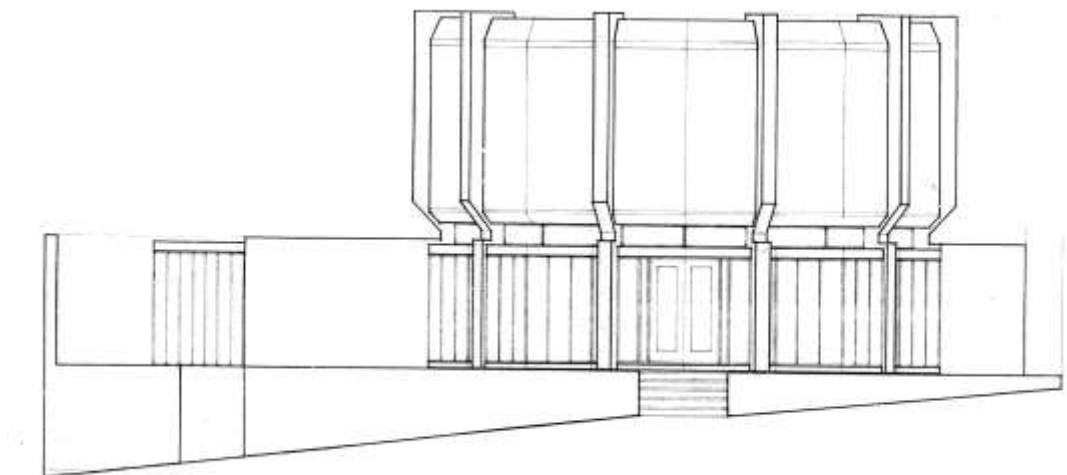


Fig 3. Austin-Smith, Salmon, Lord Architects planning application drawing for the south elevation of the public house (Source: Exeter City Council Planning)

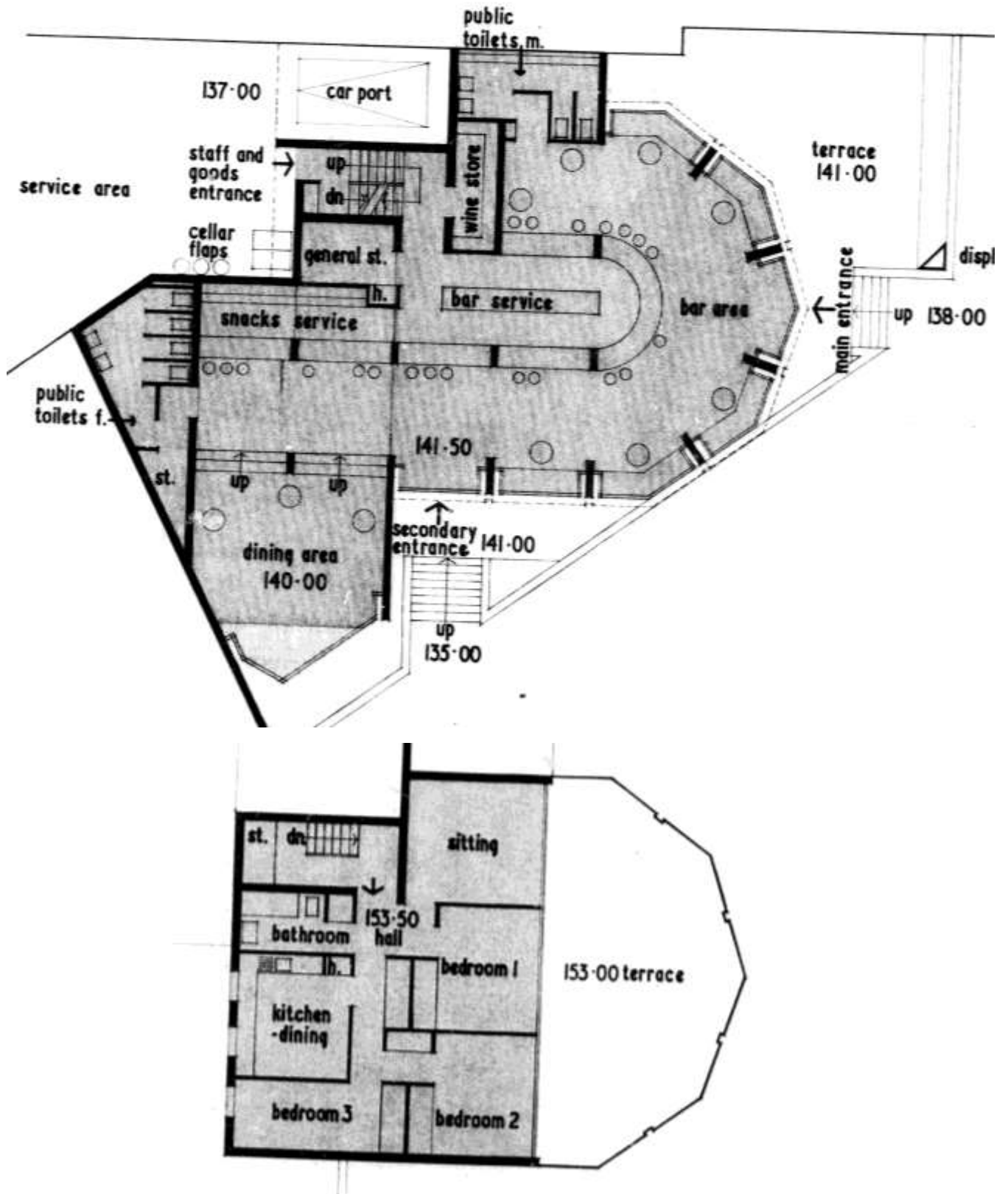


Fig 4. & 5 Austin-Smith, Salmon, Lord Architects planning application drawings for Ground Floor Public House and First Floor Flat. (Source: Exeter City Council Planning)

- 6.6 The architectural form gives a distinctive example of contemporary 1960's brutalist influenced design, softened using a matching brick to reflect the surrounding historic buildings. The multi-faceted form is created from vertical brick piers with brick infill panels to the first floor. To the south the first-floor panels screen a roof terrace for the flat above. Detailing includes exposed concrete pre-cast copings and soffits and brick on edge copings and corbelling to the piers. The ground floor public house is raised on a brick plinth and the brick piers are infilled with full height glazing units in hardwood frames. The doors have hardwood rails and stiles with glazed panels.



Photo 7: The current Public House now called the 'King Billy'.

- 6.7 The plan form of the public house reflects the multi-faceted façade with alcove seating areas to each glazed face. The plan form remains relatively unaltered with a split-level dining area and the curved bar to the faceted south end of the pub with window seating to each facet of the elevation. The flat and terrace were not inspected but are believed to also be in their original arrangement. There is a raised terrace above the pavement to the front of the public house. The building has continued in the use it was built for and without significant physical alteration since 1967.



Photo 8: The current Public House interior with window seating to each facet of the elevation.

7. Statement of Significance

- 7.1 The site at 30-32 Longbrook Street (and that at The King Billy) has a documented history from the 17th century and it is possible that medieval tenements stood on the site before those documented at 30-32. However, 19th century terracing is likely to have removed archaeological deposits associated with any earlier phases of occupation other than deep-cut features into the natural sub-soil.
- 7.2 The lower courses of extant walling at the site, although disturbed by later intrusions, are likely to represent the remains of a medieval boundary wall which has undergone numerous intrusions and later re-builds. Its exterior (eastern elevation), has been partly recorded as part of an historic building recording programme undertaken in 2011 (AC Archaeology report by Kerr-Peterson and Passmore) prior to the construction of a car park for the John Lewis Store which included a new wall which has obscured the medieval wall behind it (Photo 10). This recording did not extend to cover the whole of the wall as far as the King Billy public house. The walling represents the only visible historic asset element surviving on the site.

- 7.3 Archaeological deposits to the rear of the proposal site (within the John Lewis car-park area) have been investigated and recorded by AC Archaeology (see Kerr-Peterson and Passmore 2012) and remains of features of the early to later medieval period were recorded. Within the proposal site itself it has been established that 19th century terracing (within the plot of Nos 30-32 Longbrook Street) and cellaring (beneath the footprint of the King Billy) will together have reduced the levels at which archaeological deposits are likely to have survived other than very deeply cut features into the underlying natural sub-soils.



Photo 9: The surviving rear wall at 30-32 Longbrook Street where it meets the King Billy public house (partly obscured by a temporary scaffolding store at the time the photo was taken in June 2017). The lower courses of the wall in local Heavitree stone are believed to date from the 14th or 15th centuries. The upper storey of The King Billy public house (with its two adjacent windows) may be seen in the background.



Photo 10: Detail of the rear (boundary) wall behind Nos at 34-38 Longbrook Street (to the north of the proposal site showing the revetment wall of the car-park which has obscured the view of the historic wall behind it.

- 7.4 The 'King Billy' should also be considered to have thematic and period specific interest. It is a good example of specific 1960's public house architecture by a well - respected national architecture practice Austin-Smith, Lord.
- 7.5 This rear wall of the site 30 - 32 Longbrook Street and the King Billy are located outside the Longbrook and City Centre Conservation areas. Both however are considered on their own merits to be non - designated heritage assets, which are viewed to be a material considerations within any planning application for development on the site.

8. Proposal and Justification

- 8.1 The proposal for the site is for a new mixed-use block with student accommodation in 3 stepped blocks of 6, 8 and 9 storey blocks with the tallest adjoining the John Lewis Store. The development will provide 124 bed units and 180 m² of commercial floorspace on the ground floor.

- 8.2 In accordance with Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) this Heritage Statement has informed the proposal development. Paragraph 135 advises that:

'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

- 8.3 The historic wall to the rear eastern boundary of the site is recognised as a non-designated heritage asset and as such its conservation is given due weight in the development of the project. The wall is being retained.
- 8.4 As with the previous scheme (Planning Ref 15/0645/03) The reuse of the site does involve minor alterations to the historic wall. As part of the development it has been necessary to provide an alternative means of escape to the rear of the block to the adjoining car park. This access will involve reuse of the existing door opening in the wall and will also serve a student bike storage area.



Fig. 6 Ground Floor Plan showing alterations to historic wall

- 8.5 A second new door opening is to be formed within a section of the historic walling to provide access to the rear of the commercial floorspace.
- 8.6 The student accommodation will also have access from the area of the John Lewis Car Park and a pick up and drop off facility. This rear access will not impact on the historic wall.
- 8.7 This alteration to the historic wall has been carefully assessed so that it is justified in accordance with the good conservation principles identified in the NPPF paragraph 135.
- 8.8 The demolition of the public house is required as part of the redevelopment of the site. While the architectural and aesthetic significance identified comes from its thematic and period architectural interest which gives it some weight, it is considered balanced against the benefits of the provision of a 124 unit city centre located student accommodation and commercial floorspace, not to be of such significant interest to seek its conservation.
- 8.9 *Paragraph 141. of the NPPF advises that Local Planning Authorities shouldrequire developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.*
- 8.10 Should it be considered appropriate through the addition of a planning condition, the developer would, as a contribution to the understanding of public houses of the mid C20, seek to undertake a proportionate building recording at Level 1 or Level 2 of the Historic England: Understanding Historic Buildings – A Guide To Good Practice (2016), as suitable to record its importance for its thematic and period specific benefits.
- 8.11 It is considered that the proposal is a viable reuse of the site. The alterations to the historic wall, to provide an alternative means of escape and service access, involve minimal harm for which sufficient benefit to the functioning of the student accommodation and the commercial floorspace, justify the works.

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