



HILLINGDON  
LONDON



# Council

## To all Members of the Council

**Date:** THURSDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER  
2021

**Time:** 7.30 PM

**Venue:** COUNCIL CHAMBER -  
CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH  
STREET, UXBRIDGE

**Meeting  
Details:** Members of the Public and  
Press are welcome to attend  
this meeting

View the agenda online at  
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2021

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Putting our residents first

Lloyd White  
Head of Democratic Services  
London Borough of Hillingdon,  
Phase II, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

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# Agenda

## Prayers

To be said by Rabbi Aaron Goldstein of the Ark Synagogue.

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Minutes 1 - 12  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 (*attached*)
- 3 Declarations of Interest  
To note any declarations of interest in any matter before the Council
- 4 Mayor's Announcements  
To receive the Mayoral announcements.
- 5 Report of the Head of Democratic Services 13 - 14
- 6 Proposed Article 4 Direction 15 - 76  
To consider the making of an Article 4 Direction (*attached*)
- 7 Annual Report of the Audit Committee 77 - 88  
To receive the annual report (*attached*)
- 8 Members' Questions 89 - 90  
To take questions submitted by Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11
- 9 Motions 91 - 92  
To consider Motions submitted by Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12
- 10 Adjournment Debate  
In accordance with Council Rule 15, to hold an Adjournment Debate, submitted by Councillor Mathers on the subject of '**Litter**'.

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## Minutes

### COUNCIL

15 July 2021

Meeting held at Council Chamber - Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge

Councillor Roy Chamdal (Mayor)  
Councillor Becky Haggar (Deputy Mayor)

	<p><b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Councillors: Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana</td> <td>Tony Eginton</td> <td>John Morse</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Simon Arnold</td> <td>Scott Farley</td> <td>June Nelson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Teji Barnes</td> <td>Duncan Flynn</td> <td>Susan O'Brien</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jonathan Bianco</td> <td>Janet Gardner</td> <td>John Oswell</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mohinder Birah</td> <td>Martin Goddard</td> <td>Jane Palmer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lindsay Bliss</td> <td>Raymond Graham</td> <td>Kerri Prince</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wayne Bridges</td> <td>John Hensley</td> <td>Sir Ray Puddifoot MBE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nicola Brightman</td> <td>Henry Higgins</td> <td>Devi Radia</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Keith Burrows</td> <td>Allan Kauffman</td> <td>John Riley</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alan Chapman</td> <td>Kuldeep Lakhmana</td> <td>Paula Rodrigues</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Farhad Choubedar</td> <td>Eddie Lavery</td> <td>Raju Sansarpuri</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Judith Cooper</td> <td>Richard Lewis</td> <td>Scott Seaman-Digby</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Philip Corthorne</td> <td>Michael Markham</td> <td>David Simmonds CBE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Curling</td> <td>Stuart Mathers</td> <td>Jagjit Singh</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Darran Davies</td> <td>Carol Melvin</td> <td>Colleen Sullivan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nick Denys</td> <td>Ali Milani</td> <td>Jan Sweeting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jas Dhot</td> <td>Douglas Mills</td> <td>Steve Tuckwell</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Janet Duncan</td> <td>Richard Mills</td> <td>David Yarrow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ian Edwards</td> <td>John Morgan</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Councillors: Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana	Tony Eginton	John Morse	Simon Arnold	Scott Farley	June Nelson	Teji Barnes	Duncan Flynn	Susan O'Brien	Jonathan Bianco	Janet Gardner	John Oswell	Mohinder Birah	Martin Goddard	Jane Palmer	Lindsay Bliss	Raymond Graham	Kerri Prince	Wayne Bridges	John Hensley	Sir Ray Puddifoot MBE	Nicola Brightman	Henry Higgins	Devi Radia	Keith Burrows	Allan Kauffman	John Riley	Alan Chapman	Kuldeep Lakhmana	Paula Rodrigues	Farhad Choubedar	Eddie Lavery	Raju Sansarpuri	Judith Cooper	Richard Lewis	Scott Seaman-Digby	Philip Corthorne	Michael Markham	David Simmonds CBE	Peter Curling	Stuart Mathers	Jagjit Singh	Darran Davies	Carol Melvin	Colleen Sullivan	Nick Denys	Ali Milani	Jan Sweeting	Jas Dhot	Douglas Mills	Steve Tuckwell	Janet Duncan	Richard Mills	David Yarrow	Ian Edwards	John Morgan	
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<p>12.</p>	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Allen, Deville, Dhillon, Hurhangee, Makwana, Money and Stead.</p>																																																									
<p>13.</p>	<p><b>MINUTES</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meetings held on 25 February 2021 and 20 May 2021 be agreed as correct records.</p>																																																									
<p>14.</p>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>																																																									
<p>15.</p>	<p><b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The Mayor advised that his first six weeks as the first citizen of the Borough had been humbling: he had presided over citizenship ceremonies as the Queen's</p>																																																									

representative, had met residents and attended a number of events. He also thanked Councillor Singh who had already completed two of the twelve marathons that he would be running in twelve months to raise money for the Mayor's charities.

The Mayor encouraged those who had not yet had them to make sure they got their Covid vaccinations, particularly the younger generations who were now eligible to get their jabs.

#### Statement from the Leader of the Council

The Leader stated that the social and economic benefits of the Covid restrictions had been outweighed and would therefore end on Monday 19 July 2021. The rate of infection locally continued to rise with a steady and consistent increase since mid-June. On 14 July 2021, Hillingdon had had an infection rate of 246 per 100,000 residents which had been an increase of 25% on the previous week. Nonetheless, Hillingdon had improved from having one of the top five highest infection rates to being the 15<sup>th</sup> highest in London.

Approximately one third of infections in the Borough had been school-related cases which indicated that the testing regime in schools had been working well to identify asymptomatic students and reduce further transmission. Nonetheless, Hillingdon Hospital currently had 12 inpatients from North West London, none of which were in the ITU. Less than five of these patients had had their second jab administered more than 14 days before admission. Less than five of these patients had needed assisted ventilation and none of these five had had a double vaccination.

The vaccination of residents had been progressing well and, in London, Hillingdon was amongst the best performing for first and second dose vaccinations. Although Hillingdon had been lagging behind the national average, this gap was starting to close.

The Council had been working with health partners to get more jabs into more arms. However, the level of vaccination hesitancy locally remained relatively high, particularly amongst the younger generation as well as for the second dose. It was anticipated that this might change now that travel would be more accessible to those that had been fully vaccinated.

The vaccine was the primary line of defence against Covid. Although the link between infection and serious ill health / death had been significantly weakened, the consequences of high levels of infection locally remained damaging in terms of the number of people who had been having to isolate and staff shortages had been arising in key services.

From Monday 19 July 2021, Council staff would be expected to undertake a phased return to former working practices which would include flexible work. The Council had a duty of care to its staff and steps would be taken to limit the risk of transmission within the workplace. However, the need to wear masks would only be mandatory in enclosed or crowded places. New risk assessments were being undertaken to determine safe office layouts and capacities within the new guidance and new safe limits were being established for the Council's committee rooms with the Council Chamber returning to its former layout.

The Leader joined the Mayor in encouraging all residents to have both doses of the vaccine and asked that all Members pass this message on within their communities.

16. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** (*Agenda Item 5*)

**5.1 QUESTION FROM MR TONY JAMES OF STATION APPROACH, HAYES, ON BEHALF OF THE SIGNAL BUILDING RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION, TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND INFRASTRUCTURE - COUNCILLOR BIANCO:**

*“First time buyers, young families, airport and hospitality workers already hit hard by the COVID pandemic now potentially facing bankruptcy, forfeiture and eviction due to the building safety crisis happening in this borough, need support. Will the Council do the right thing and support the ‘End Our Cladding Scandal’ campaign?”*

Councillor Bianco advised that the Council recognised the difficulties residents had been facing in private, potentially unsafe high-rise buildings. Hillingdon Council had been committed to working with the Government, building owners and residents to ensure that safety standards were met in these buildings. The Council had been actively working with the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and the London Fire Brigade, to do this.

Fire safety in residential buildings was governed by both the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), for which the London Fire Brigade was responsible, and the Housing Act 2004, which the Council's Private Sector Housing Team enforced. The FSO imposed duties on individuals in control of the building, and the Housing Act imposed monitoring duties on local authorities to take enforcement action against those in control of a building. In respect of blocks of flats, the FSO only applied to the common parts and the Housing Act 2004 applied to residential flats and external cladding systems.

The Council had been undertaking remedial works in its own stock. For high rise buildings in the private sector, the Council had dedicated resources to get a better understanding of the scale of the problem. Where specific cladding systems had been identified but had not been removed (or there were other fire safety concerns), building owners would be contacted as a matter of priority. Where there was no prospect of works being carried out by building owners, the Council would use its enforcement powers if necessary. The authority had been actively progressing this work.

In the interim, where the Council had become aware of ‘high rise buildings of concern’, officers had met with the London Fire Brigade and building owners to ensure adequate risk assessments had been undertaken and that steps were being taken to make the sites safe. Building owners had been asked to regularly communicate with residents to keep them updated on progress being made. Residents were entitled to request a copy of the risk assessment for their block for further information.

The Cabinet Member believed that it was likely that the Government would pay the majority of the bill – but, whether the owners or occupiers should pay some or all of the costs, would be a matter for the Government to decide. The Council continued to lobby its local MPs to urge them to press for an early and comprehensive settlement that allowed the works to be carried out without the need to bankrupt the occupiers.

It was thought that the Council's combined approach of taking action whilst also lobbying was the best approach to ensure that residents stayed safe in their homes. Signing a petition would do little to help this.

	<p>It was hoped that this information was helpful and gave some assurance that the Council was taking the matter seriously.</p>
17.	<p><b>REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b> (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p><b>i) URGENT IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS</b></p> <p>The recent urgent decision taken were noted.</p> <p><b>ii) WAIVER OF 6-MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE</b></p> <p>Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the recommendation as set out on the Order of Business. Councillor Curling asked that the Labour Group's best wishes be passed on to Councillor Stead. It was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That, pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Stead's non-attendance at meetings of the authority due to ill health, be approved for a period ending on 5 May 2022.</b></p> <p><b>iii) CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS 2021/22</b></p> <p>Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the recommendation as set out on the Order of Business and it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That, as proposed by the Conservative Group, Councillor Hensley replace Councillor Melvin as a member of the Pensions Committee (with Councillor Melvin to become a substitute member).</b></p> <p><b>iv) AMENDMENT TO TERMS OF REFERENCE - PENSIONS BOARD &amp; HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD</b></p> <p>Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the recommendation as set out on the Order of Business and it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the changes to the Terms of Reference of both the Pensions Board and the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board, as set out in Appendices A&amp;B of the report, be approved.</b></p>
18.	<p><b>LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME</b> (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Lavery moved, and Councillor Edwards seconded, the motion as set out on the Order of Business and it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the revised Local Development Scheme be adopted with effect from 22 July 2021.</b></p>
19.	<p><b>MEMBERS' QUESTIONS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p><b>8.1 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR R.MILLS TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE - COUNCILLOR GODDARD:</b></p> <p><i>"Would the Cabinet Member please advise the progress made in distributing Additional Restrictions Grants to local businesses within the Borough?"</i></p> <p>Councillor Goddard advised that the Council had dealt with twelve different Covid business grant schemes, including the Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG). Since March 2020, the aggregate grants administered and paid out to 4,300 local</p>

businesses in Hillingdon totalled £80.2m. The process had been administered and controlled by two teams within the Council with additional support provided by the Exchequer Team and Liberata.

Between October 2020 and June 2021, £8.9m had been paid out in ARG payments. Hillingdon had achieved full utilisation of the funding allocation made available to the Council by the deadline that had been set. This meant that Hillingdon had met the required conditions to trigger a further allocation of ARG from a Government-created top-up fund. Although the top-up figure had not yet been confirmed, it was anticipated that this would be in excess of £2m.

Councillor Goddard thanked and congratulated the Finance Team, particularly the Revenues Team, for their excellent work, dedication and professionalism in providing such and effective and efficient support to the local business community during a period of unparalleled challenge and difficulty.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor R Mills asked what additional steps the Council planned to take in order to assist the business community in Hillingdon.

Councillor Goddard recognised that local businesses had suffered throughout the pandemic and deserved the Council's support. A vibrant, healthy, successful local business community would be crucial in maintaining the best conditions for residents by creating prosperity and employment opportunities and limiting the funding need from Council Tax.

In order to help businesses, the Council had exercised the maximum amount of discretion in allocating business support grants. The observations of local businesses had been acknowledged and the Council had responded to concerns wherever possible. This same discretion would be applied to the new allocation of ARG when it became available.

The Council would be looking to build on its reputation as an attractive home for businesses and the availability of a suitably skilled workforce would be a key consideration. As such, the Council would continue to work with local institutions (such as Uxbridge College) to facilitate and provide suitable skills training to local residents. Consideration was also being given to funding a skills development programme for the construction industry.

Improvements would be needed in the transport links to the Borough to enhance the attractiveness of the area to new businesses considering moving into Hillingdon. To this end, the Council would continue to make representations to the Mayor of London. The Cabinet Member had also been working with the Procurement Team to maximise opportunities for local businesses to benefit from contracts awarded by the Council

These were all important steps to help provide a supportive and positive partnership with the local business community which would result in benefits to Hillingdon's residents.

## **8.2 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DUNCAN TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND INFRASTRUCTURE - COUNCILLOR BIANCO:**

*"The Council bought Packet Boat House and sold the flats to first time buyers. Following the discovery of major building faults all residents were moved out at Council expense to privately rented properties while remedial work was carried out. Residents have still not been able to move back into their homes. The Council have*

*now approached them offering to buy them out at an enhanced price but one that does not buy them a comparable home as house prices have risen more than the enhanced price offered. Will the Cabinet Member please inform Council if it is the intention to increase the offer to allow these residents to purchase a comparable home or tell us what other options it is considering to compensate them?"*

Councillor Bianco advised that Packet Boat House had originally contained a total of 20 properties for shared ownership. One flat had never been sold which left a total of 19 shared owners. Due to the extent of the remedial works required at Packet Boat House which had been delayed due to the pandemic, the shared owners had been placed in suitable private rented accommodation.

The Council had made two commitments to the shared owners. Firstly, that it would meet the full cost of the essential remedial work and the cost of their suitable alternative accommodation in addition to associated costs such as removals and storage. Secondly, that it would return shared owners to a fully compliant flat and building which met current building regulations and other required legal standards.

The Council had provided a 'buy-back' offer for these shared owners. The initial offer had been the original purchase price plus £10k. However, in recognition of the unavoidable delays in the programme of works and further major work being identified, the Council had increased this offer in April 2021 to the original purchase price plus £25k. In addition, the Council had offered to pay reasonable costs of evidenced early mortgage repayment fees charged by the mortgage provider and up to 12 months rental in the owners' current private sector property to afford residents the time to look for and purchase suitable alternative accommodation. Based upon local market trends the Council believed this to be a fair and competitive offer.

Of the 19 shared owners who had been affected, 12 (63%) had taken up the offer or were in the process of selling their flats back to the Council. For the remaining seven owners, if they chose not to accept the Council's offer, they would return to a fully compliant and refurbished flat and building as soon as the ongoing programme of remedial works had been completed in the early Autumn.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Duncan asked if it would be possible to provide a figure as to the total cost to the Council of this whole exercise.

Councillor Bianco advised that, due to legal issues, he would be happy to talk to Councillor Duncan outside of the meeting at some point in the future.

### **8.3 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR EGINTON TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE - COUNCILLOR GODDARD:**

*"Detailed information related to the financial position of the Council is essential to ensure proper accountability and scrutiny by Members and our residents. This is particularly the case with central Government funding for local government so constrained.*

*"However, the detailed Budget Monitoring report to Cabinet this month has been reduced to only a shadow of previous versions. Can the Cabinet Member ask for future Budget Monitoring reports to Cabinet to provide the detailed information as in earlier months?"*

Councillor Goddard advised that the Budget Monitoring reports needed to make key financial information readable, accessible and understandable to all residents, not just

chartered accountants. This imperative had become more important now that all local authorities had been compelled to address numerous financial challenges, as illustrated in Slough where a Section 114 notice for bankruptcy had been filed two weeks previously.

To ensure transparency, Councillor Goddard believed that less equaled more where sound financial reporting was concerned. The reports had been daunting and inaccessible due to the sheer volume of material provided and had therefore been refined. This had been a work in progress with a more logical and easy to follow structure had already been put in place. Additional changes to further reduce the narrative contained in the report would be introduced.

It was recognised that some individuals might miss details such as the itemised capital budget tables which had provided a lot of detail so these would appear on a quarterly basis going forward. The Section 151 Officer had confirmed that he had no concerns about the changes that had been made thus far and he would continue to be consulted as further changes arose.

Councillor Goddard encouraged Councillor Eginton to offer specific proposals outside of the Council meeting. However, he did not anticipate any return to the previous style of reporting during his period of office.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Eginton asked that, if the Cabinet Member considered that the previous style of reporting had been too daunting, did he consider that he was in the wrong job?

Councillor Goddard had no concerns about being in the right job. He had had over 40 years of experience and restated that volume did not necessarily convey information in the most effective way. He reiterated that he would be happy to work with Councillor Eginton on any constructive proposals that he cared to provide.

20. **MOTIONS** (*Agenda Item 9*)

**9.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MATHERS**

Councillor Mathers moved, and Councillor Farley seconded, the following motion:

“That this Council is concerned at the level of bee colony collapse in the UK over the last 10 years and the threat to our food supply as bees provide over 80% of crop pollination. With this in view and taking into account the Council’s responsibilities for conserving biodiversity, this Council calls on the Cabinet to:

- “i) Establish a ‘Bees and Pollinators’ action plan for the borough. Such a plan could include:
- Using planning powers to protecting habitats that are important to bees and pollinators,
  - Encouraging all new developments to provide for pollinators,
  - Stopping the use of insecticides on local authority land,
  - Continue the use of wildflower meadows on public green spaces and along public highways and continue planting pollinator-friendly plants,
  - Asking public health bodies and social housing partners to support our efforts

- “ii) Establish and fund a ‘Bee Friendly Wildlife Group’ of officers charged with promoting beekeeping in Hillingdon.

- “iii) Establish a team to visit schools to educate children about the relationship between bees and biodiversity and the problems surrounding bee mortality and encouraging schools to help children engage with this agenda.
- “iv) Fund regular marketing campaigns on:
- the use of beehives on municipal land, allotments and in the gardens of volunteers.
  - encourage forms of gardening and land use that support pollinating insects.
  - Asking the public not to use insecticides in their garden and to plant bee-friendly plants
- “v) Add an additional category of awards to Hillingdon in Bloom to compliment the Roome Cup category for gardens that specifically provides recognition for bee-friendly habitats.”

Following debate (Councillors Flynn, Lavery and Sansarpuri), the motion was put to the vote.

The motion was lost.

## **9.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CURLING**

Councillor Curling moved, and Councillor Gardner seconded, the following motion:

“That this Council notes that there is a national issue with regard to unsafe and unsalable homes due to the cladding scandal, and other defects, that has only come to light because of the tragic loss of lives in the Grenfell fire, which was four years ago.

“Council also notes that this scandal has left many leaseholders in severe financial crisis because of developers and management companies placing the cost of repair works on the shoulders of innocent leaseholders, even though leaseholders bear no responsibility for the situation in which they find themselves.

“Council recognise that this is all having a detrimental impact on the mental and physical health of many residents in Hillingdon, who have put considerable, personal and financial, investment into becoming part of the home owning democracy, only to find that the large development companies are demanding bankrupting high repair costs.

“Council also recognises that the cladding & unsafe buildings scandal is the joint responsibility of the developers and the government, as recognised by the Prime Minister, who referred to Ballymore at PMQs and declared that he was “on their case” with regard to this very issue.

“Council further notes that the building safety bill is currently going through parliament, and that whilst this is welcome, there is still an emphasis on individual leaseholders taking legal action and being financially burdened, rather than the developers being made to face up to their responsibilities.

“Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to act in order to put Hillingdon residents first, by:

- Raising these issues with the government.
- Joining forces with other local authorities and the LGA to work with government to explore ways in which local councils can be empowered to support their residents and ensure building regulations are complied with, or retrospectively repaired at no cost to the leaseholder.
- Supporting the aims of the ‘End Our Cladding Scandal’ campaign, especially the 10 steps to end the scandal, which are:
  1. The government must lead an urgent national effort to remove all dangerous cladding from buildings by June 2022.
  2. The Building Safety Fund must cover all buildings, regardless of height, and a range of internal and external fire safety defects, not just cladding.
  3. The government should provide the money up front and then seek to recover it from any responsible parties or via a temporary levy on development.
  4. Social housing providers must have full and equal access to the fund.
  5. The government must compel building owners or managers to be honest with residents about fire safety defects.
  6. The government should cover the cost of interim safety measures.
  7. The government should act as an insurer of last resort and underwrite insurance where premiums have soared.
  8. A fairer, faster process is needed to replace the EWS form and funding is necessary to ensure all buildings requiring a form are surveyed within 12 months.
  9. Mental health support must be offered to affected residents.
  10. Protecting residents from historic and future costs must be a key legislative commitment so that developers, not leaseholders, are held accountable for the repair of all unsafe elements of the buildings they constructed.”

Councillor Bianco moved, and Councillor Edwards seconded, the following amendment:

“That this Council notes that there is a national issue with regard to unsafe and unsalable homes due to the cladding scandal, and other defects, that has only come to light because of the tragic loss of lives in the Grenfell fire, which was four years ago.

“Council also notes that this scandal has left many leaseholders in severe financial crisis ~~because of developers and management companies placing the cost of repair works on the shoulders of innocent leaseholders,~~ even though leaseholders bear no responsibility for the situation in which they find themselves.

“Council recognise that this is all having a detrimental impact on the mental and physical health of many residents in Hillingdon, who have put considerable, personal and financial, investment into becoming part of the home owning democracy., ~~only to find that the large development companies are demanding bankrupting high repair costs.~~

“Council also recognises that the cladding & unsafe buildings scandal is the joint responsibility of the developers and the government, as recognised by the Prime Minister, who referred to Ballymore at PMQs and declared that he was “on their case” with regard to this very issue.

“Council further notes that the building safety bill is currently going through parliament, and that whilst this is welcome, there is still an emphasis on individual leaseholders taking legal action and being financially burdened, rather than the developers being made to face up to their responsibilities.

“Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to act in order to put Hillingdon residents first, by:

- Raising these issues with the government ***and pressing for action to be taken to make these homes safe without cost to the leaseholder***
- ~~Joining forces with other local authorities and the LGA to work with government to explore ways in which local councils can be empowered to support their residents and ensure building regulations are complied with, or retrospectively repaired at no cost to the leaseholder.~~
- Supporting the aims of the ‘End Our Cladding Scandal’ campaign, especially the 10 steps to end the scandal, which are:
  1. ~~The government must lead an urgent national effort to remove all dangerous cladding from buildings by June 2022.~~
  2. ~~The Building Safety Fund must cover all buildings, regardless of height, and a range of internal and external fire safety defects, not just cladding.~~
  3. ~~The government should provide the money up front and then seek to recover it from any responsible parties or via a temporary levy on development.~~
  4. ~~Social housing providers must have full and equal access to the fund.~~
  5. ~~The government must compel building owners or managers to be honest with residents about fire safety defects.~~
  6. ~~The government should cover the cost of interim safety measures.~~
  7. ~~The government should act as an insurer of last resort and underwrite insurance where premiums have soared.~~
  8. ~~A fairer, faster process is needed to replace the EWS form and funding is necessary to ensure all buildings requiring a form are surveyed within 12 months.~~
  9. ~~Mental health support must be offered to affected residents.~~
  10. ~~Protecting residents from historic and future costs must be a key legislative commitment so that developers, not leaseholders, are held accountable for the repair of all unsafe elements of the buildings they constructed.”~~

Following debate (Councillor Morse), the amendment was put to a recorded vote:

Those voting for: The Mayor (Councillor Chamdal), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Haggar), Councillors Ahmad-Wallana, Arnold, Barnes, Bianco, Bridges, Brightman, Burrows, Chapman, Choubedar, Cooper, Corthorne, Davies, Denys, Edwards, Flynn, Goddard, Graham, Hensley, Higgins, Kauffman, Lavery, Lewis, Markham, Melvin, D Mills, R Mills, Morgan, O’Brien, Palmer, Puddifoot, Radia, Riley, Rodrigues, Seaman-Digby, Simmonds, Sullivan, Tuckwell and Yarrow.

Those voting against: Councillors Birah, Bliss, Curling, Dhot, Duncan, Eginton, Farley, Gardner, Lakhmana, Mathers, Milani, Morse, Nelson, Oswald, Prince, Sansarpuri, Singh and Sweeting.

Those abstaining: None.

The amendment was carried.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That this Council notes that there is a national issue with regard to unsafe and unsalable homes due to the cladding scandal, and other defects, that has only come to light because of the tragic loss of lives in the Grenfell fire, which was four years ago.

Council also notes that this scandal has left many leaseholders in severe financial crisis even though leaseholders bear no responsibility for the situation in which they find themselves.

Council recognise that this is all having a detrimental impact on the mental and physical health of many residents in Hillingdon, who have put considerable, personal and financial, investment into becoming part of the home owning democracy.

Council also recognises that the cladding & unsafe buildings scandal is the joint responsibility of the developers and the government, as recognised by the Prime Minister, who referred to Ballymore at PMQs and declared that he was “on their case” with regard to this very issue.

Council further notes that the building safety bill is currently going through parliament, and that whilst this is welcome, there is still an emphasis on individual leaseholders taking legal action and being financially burdened, rather than the developers being made to face up to their responsibilities.

Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to act in order to put Hillingdon residents first, by raising these issues with the government and pressing for action to be taken to make these homes safe without cost to the leaseholder.

21. **ADJOURNMENT DEBATE** (*Agenda Item 10*)

An Adjournment Debate on the subject of ‘rats and other pests’ was conducted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15. Councillors Prince, Arnold, Bridges, Brightman and Nelson spoke on the matter.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.01 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Lloyd White, Head of Democratic Services on 01895 556743. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

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## REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

*Reporting Officer: Head of Democratic Services*

### (i) URGENT IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Urgency decisions detailed below be noted.

#### Information

1. The Constitution allows a Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision to be implemented before the expiry of the 5-day scrutiny call-in period, provided the decision is deemed urgent and agreement is given from the Chairman of the relevant Select Committee to waive the scrutiny call-in period. All such decisions are to be reported for information only to the next full Council meeting.
2. Since those noted at the 15 July 2021 Council meeting, the following decisions have been made using urgency procedures:

Date of Decision	Decision Type / Nature of Decision	Decision-Maker
22 July 2021	Uxbridge Lido Heating Project at Hillingdon Sports & Leisure Complex (Leisure Centre Refurbishment Programme 2021/22)	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Wellbeing and Cabinet Member for Finance
20 July 2021	Installation of modular units, main school building adaption works and other associated works at Hedgewood School: Appointment of Contractor with Capital Release.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Property & Infrastructure and Cabinet Member for Finance

Background Papers: Decision Notices

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## **PROPOSED ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO REMOVE PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHT FOR COMMERCIAL, BUSINESS AND SERVICE USES TO RESIDENTIAL IN SPECIFIC LOCATIONS.**

*Reporting Officer: Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration*

### **Summary**

1. On 1 September 2021, the Government brought into effect a new Permitted Development Right (PDR) to allow the change of use from commercial, business and service uses to residential units, without the need for planning permission. The Council has the capacity to introduce an Article 4 direction to remove such a PDR, where there is robust evidence that the PDR would otherwise have a wholly unacceptable adverse impact. The making of an Article 4 direction is a Non-Executive function under section 13 of the Local Government Act 2000 and it is, therefore, for the full Council to decide whether to make this direction.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS: That:**

- a) **The Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration be instructed to make a non-immediate Article 4 direction (with an indicative implementation date of September 2022) to remove the Part 3 Class MA permitted development right in limited geographical areas, as set out in Paragraph 6 of the report and mapped on Appendix 1.**
- b) **The Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration be authorised to prepare the Article 4 direction and instructed to carry out all necessary consequential arrangements to give effect to the terms of Recommendation 1, which shall include publishing the making of the direction, seeking representations on the making of the direction and notifying affected property owners/occupiers and the Secretary of State, as well as submitting any further evidence if necessary.**

### **Reasons for recommendation**

2. The primary reasons are to protect key employment floorspace in strategic locations and maintain the viability and vitality of key shopping areas in the London Borough of Hillingdon. This expansion of permitted development rights by the Government has the capacity to cause wholly unacceptable adverse impacts in select parts of the Borough if left unregulated. The use of an Article 4 direction is therefore in conformity with national policy. The full rationale for introducing a new Article 4 direction is contained within the 'Supporting Information' section.

### **Alternative options considered / risk management**

3. Officers considered the possibility of a borough-wide Article 4 direction, on the basis that there will be harmful impacts of the PDR which extend beyond the areas show in Appendix 1. These impacts are identified within the 'Additional Considerations' section and are issues that will affect all local planning authorities. However, the Secretary of State has made it clear through public announcements and recent changes to national policy that Article 4 directions must only be taken forward on the smallest geographical area. Therefore, a borough-wide Article 4 direction would likely lead to an objection from the Secretary of State and abortive costs.

4. The Council could choose not to introduce an Article 4 direction. However, this would not address the wholly unacceptable adverse impacts on local residents and businesses that are outlined within the 'Supporting Information' section. This option has therefore been discounted.

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

5. The introduction of an Article 4 direction will mean that a planning application for relevant changes of use will still be required in specific areas. This means the Council will retain its capacity to insist on mitigation where there would otherwise be adverse impacts from development or refuse the scheme completely. This will continue to ensure that local residents and businesses are put first. The Council will continue to meet its strategic housing targets through approving schemes that accord with its Development Plan, whilst a review of the Local Plan will look to identify further strategic sites.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

6. If the decision to proceed with an Article 4 Direction is made, then there would need to be a consultation exercise within the specific areas identified, in accordance with Schedule 3 to the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended).

### **Financial Implications**

7. This report is seeking approval to make an Article 4 Direction to restrict the scope of permitted development rights in specific strategic areas as outlined in Appendix 1. National policy prevents a blanket approach being applied and instead must focus on specific areas. In doing so, it is possible to retain commercial areas throughout the Borough to drive economic development and strengthen business districts. There are limited direct costs associated with the recommendations to this report, an estimated £500 for public notices will be managed within existing Planning and Regeneration revenue budgets.
8. Wider financial implications to note which cannot be quantified at present:
  - The composition of the current tax base is likely to change in response to an increase of commercial to residential conversions, meaning a reduction in Business Rates and an increase in Council Tax. Although the Article 4 Direction aims to prevent such conversion in specific strategic areas, further analysis will be required to evaluate the impact on the tax base over time across the Borough.
  - An increase in conversions will remove the applicability of the Section 106 Contribution (S106) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will have some bearing on the maximisation of the income available to the Local Planning Authority. As there are fewer issues that can be considered with permitted development rights, there is no scope for planning obligations to be used to mitigate their harm. This includes external financial contributions for affordable housing, public open space, air quality, carbon emissions and construction training programmes. S106 and CIL are pivotal funding streams for infrastructure development within the Borough, the cost of which will fall to the local taxpayer if these funding streams are reduced. The Article 4 Direction is therefore instrumental in retaining funding within the identified strategic areas and further analysis will be required to evaluate the impact across the rest of the Borough.

## Legal Implications

9. Under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 the Council or the Secretary of State may withdraw specified permitted development rights either in relation to specific sites or across the Borough. An Article 4 Direction may only be made where it is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. The potential harm that the Direction is intended to address should be clearly identified and the Council must show strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights relating to cases where prior approval powers are available to control permitted development.
10. The right to compensation has been accurately set out in the report.
11. Schedule 3 to the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) sets out the process that must be followed prior to making an Article 4 direction, including a minimum consultation period of 21 days and the placing of notices on affected sites for a 6 week period. In addition, the proposed direction must also be sent to the Secretary of State.
12. As the making of an Article 4 direction is a Non-Executive function under section 13 of the Local Government Act 2000, it is for the Full Council to decide whether to make any Article 4 directions.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

13. The Government is introducing a new Permitted Development Right (PDR) that comes into effect on 1 September 2021. The PDR removes the requirement for a full planning application to be submitted, instead implementing a prior approval process which restricts the matters that the local planning authority can consider.
14. The permitted development allows for the changes of use from all those covered within Use Class E to residential. Use Class E is a new use class that was introduced on the 1st September 2020, with the aim of amalgamating several use classes into one. It covers the following parts of the previous Use Class Order:
  - Class A1 (shops).
  - Class A2 (financial and professional services).
  - Class A3 (food and drink).
  - Class B1 (business).
  - Class D1(a) (non-residential institutions – medical or health services).
  - Class D1(b) (non-residential institutions – crèche, day nursery or day centre).
  - Class D2(e) (assembly and leisure – indoor and outdoor sports), other than use as an indoor swimming pool or skating rink.
15. The PDR has restrictions attached to it, including:
  - A maximum floor area of 1,500m<sup>2</sup>.
  - A vacancy period of 3 months prior to submission. There is no requirement for marketing.
  - Been in a use within Use Class E for at least 2 years.
  - Does not apply to a listed building.
16. The PDR also includes the following conditions attached to it that are assessed as part of the prior approval process:

- If occurring in a conservation area, the impact of converting the ground floor on the character and sustainability of the conservation area.
  - In an industrial area, the impact on intended occupiers of the residential units on being in this type of area.
  - Where a registered nurse or health centre, the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.
  - Other matters typical for PDRs (permitted development rights), including transport, contamination, flooding, noise and now, fire safety, minimum size for the new residential units and adequate natural light.
17. The PDR will come into effect from 1 September 2021. In the case of conversions from B1(a) office floorspace only, if an Article 4 direction is already in place at this date, the PDR will be delayed for a year, to allow for transitional arrangements to be made. The Council does already have such an Article 4 direction in place covering Uxbridge Town Centre and Stockley Park. Consequently, this will be extended for a further 12 months. However, it should be noted that this would not apply to any of the other E class uses listed above which will benefit from the new PDR from 1 September 2021.

### **Scope of Article 4 Direction**

18. The proposed areas to be covered by the Article 4 direction have been mapped and included as Appendix 1. All the areas mapped cover strategic areas only that are designated within the adopted Development Plan. These can be described as:
- Office & Hotel Growth Location (Uxbridge)
  - Locally Significant Employment Locations (Incl. Stockley Park)
  - Hayes Opportunity Area
  - Strategic Industrial Locations
  - Locally Significant Industrial Sites
  - Primary and Secondary Shopping Areas in Town Centres
  - Local Centres
  - Local Parades
19. Please note that, whilst the Local Parades are identified within the Development Plan, their exact extent has not previously been mapped. The Local Parades are included within Appendix 1. The Local Parades have also been mapped separately within Appendix 2 to allow readers of the report to understand the full extent of the proposed Article 4 area. The addresses listed outline where the Local Parade can be found, rather than its extent. The extent of the proposed Article 4 direction is the area covered in orange.

### **Rationale for a New Article 4 Direction**

20. The Council submitted a consultation response to the Government in January 2021 which raised concerns with the proposed PDR. Many of these issues are still apparent in the final published version. Officers are therefore proposing the introduction of an Article 4 direction for the new Class MA, which would restrict the operation of the new PDR in parts of the Borough. It should be noted that the Government made amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework in July 2021 to highlight that this type of Article 4 should be limited to where it is necessary to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts. Paragraph 53 was also amended to clarify that Article 4s must apply to the smallest geographical area possible.

21. The Article 4 is therefore not proposed to be borough-wide and has been limited to certain strategic parts of the Borough. The rationale and evidence for the Article 4 changes slightly for different areas and therefore it has been disaggregated below.

### Office Areas

22. There are three types of protected office areas within the London Borough of Hillingdon, which are designated as Office Growth Locations, Locally Significant Employment Locations, and the Hayes Opportunity Area. These include Uxbridge and Stockley Park. These areas all have policies that support the provision and retention of predominantly office floorspace, but also light industrial buildings and research and development facilities where appropriate.
23. The need for this floorspace is generated by the Borough's distinctive role in the sub-regional and London economies, largely because of the presence of Heathrow Airport and a disproportionately high number of head offices, which operate out of Uxbridge and Stockley Park in particular. The Council already approved the loss of just over 107,000sqm of office floorspace through the existing prior approval process between its introduction in 2014 and March 2020. Most of these approvals came prior to the Council introducing its office to residential Article 4 direction in November 2017. The loss predominantly consisted of low-grade stock to begin with, however increasingly prior approvals were being submitted on higher-grade stock and buildings that were occupied.
24. The loss of office floorspace through prior approvals led to the vacancy rate falling to just 2.6% in 2018. This will likely have fallen further in the period between 2018 and the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, as there were further notable losses of office floorspace through prior approvals in this period. The vacancy rate of 2.6% in 2018 was cited as a potential obstacle to the expansion of businesses and new start-ups in the Borough, in the evidence underpinning the West London Affordable Workspace Study.
25. Much has been written about the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on demand for office floorspace, with working from home becoming the norm for many office workers during this period. To date, different companies have announced different views on working from home moving forward. This includes companies indicating that workers are performing productively at home and will continue to be encouraged to do so, to concerns about social isolation, poor collaboration, and training issues for junior staff. However, the consensus appears to be that offices will be re-shaped rather than removed, with most employers shifting to a balance between home and office working. This will have as big an impact on the size, quality, and locational preferences of office workspace as it will on overall demand, with Grade A office floorspace in attractive locations remaining popular.
26. Notwithstanding the impacts of the pandemic, prime office rents in Uxbridge and business parks in the vicinity of Heathrow were both averaging £35 per square foot in Q3 of 2020. Uxbridge has also recently been ranked 13<sup>th</sup> out of 48 south-eastern office locations in terms of digital and physical connectivity, as part of Knight Frank's connectivity analysis (2021). Uxbridge is therefore well placed to play a part in London's role as a global innovation hub in the future.
27. In the absence of an Article 4 direction, the loss of office floorspace could return to the levels seen prior to November 2017. This would see many existing and new businesses displaced to the wider Thames Valley Area, including to less sustainable out of town centre locations. Furthermore, businesses would be drawn to other areas which did implement a direction and

offer policy to support new and retained office floorspace. This would pose a significant threat to the status of the Stockley Park and Uxbridge office market in particular, which could experience further erosion of their critical mass, despite both being identified as areas of strategic importance in the new London Plan (2021). The implementation of an Article 4 direction would allow the Council to apply its policy criteria for determining which offices should be retained or re-purposed, with the more easily lettable space in sustainable locations retained. The protection of these identified areas would also retain space for those businesses displaced from less sustainable locations in the Borough, which will not be covered by the Article 4 direction.

28. In addition to being a sequentially preferable location for new jobs, the Hayes Opportunity Area has been identified as an area for significant growth due to the introduction of Crossrail and the availability of surplus industrial land. However, as a series of existing industrial areas, the success of the Opportunity Area is reliant on a plan-led approach which allows the Council to incorporate transport, public realm, and other infrastructure improvements within a new development. The Council has identified the extent of these interventions in both the Development Infrastructure Funding Study (2017) and the Hayes Movement Study (2021). Crucially this includes delivering and funding these developments through S106 and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) payments. Under a prior approval application, the matters that can be considered are restricted and would remove the Council's ability to undertake these essential place-making interventions.

### Industrial Areas

29. There are two types of protected industrial areas within the London Borough of Hillingdon, which are designated as Strategic Industrial Land (SIL) and Locally Significance Industrial Sites (LSIS). They are large, designated brownfield sites located near to key roads that accommodate activities which - by virtue of their scale, noise, odours, dust, emissions, hours of operation and/or vehicular movements – would otherwise raise tensions with more sensitive land uses. These are deliberately kept separate from residential units, so that these essential economic activities can operate and grow as required. Whilst the uses here are predominantly heavy industry, there are light industrial and historic offices amongst them which could be converted under the new PDR.
30. The introduction of residential units in these locations would prevent these industrial uses from operating at their full potential and growing into this space when required. It would also create an unhealthy environment for new residents, noting that many of these industrial uses are permitted to operate without restrictions to mitigate their impacts on residential properties, which would not previously have been allowed in such areas. If these protected areas are undermined, these industrial uses will be less likely to expand in their current location and increase the probability of them being displaced to less developed parts of the Borough (including Green Belt) or create new areas for industrial uses.

### Town Centres

31. There are a range of designated town centres in the London Borough of Hillingdon, from the metropolitan town centre of Uxbridge to local centres like Harefield and Ickenham. These areas contain identifiable shop frontages that make up a high street, with a critical mass of footfall to sustain businesses and services. They are supported by public transport and public realm investment, which seeks to decrease the dependence on cars and make them attractive locations for walking and cycling.

32. The Council's consultation response, as well as many others, raised concerns about the potential for the new PDR to create sporadic and unplanned losses to shop fronts along the high street. As well as reducing space for new businesses and services, this would also create undesirable breaks in the active shop frontages and introduce residential units and associated paraphernalia (e.g. bins) in their place. This would then have a knock-on effect on the sustainability of the remaining businesses, with the loss of each individual shop, office or business reducing footfall for the remaining units and eroding their viability. Once these units have been converted and sold as residential units, there are significant barriers to having them restored to the viable commercial and business uses.
33. There is an obvious need to reshape these high streets as the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic gets underway. To a significant extent, this will see changes in how businesses operate on the high street and units being occupied more flexibly between different uses within Use Class E. Without the introduction of an Article 4, the expectation is that existing commercial floorspace will be lost to residential in an uncoordinated and piecemeal manner, ahead of any consideration of the future needs of businesses or the role of such centres in the local economic recovery.
34. It is important to note that for the large town centres, the whole centre will not be covered by the Article 4 direction. The large town centres are split up into three components, the the primary and secondary area and the undesignated remaining periphery. Paragraph 53 of the new NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) indicates that an Article 4 covering the whole of a town centre is unlikely to be supported by the Secretary of State. On this basis, the proposed Article 4 would cover the primary and secondary shopping areas in these larger town centres, omitting the peripheral area. This may facilitate the modest shrinking of the edges of some high streets, with undesignated units at the ends of the town centre targeted, but it will allow the retention of a retail core. However, for the much smaller local centres, the whole area will be designated. This is to reflect the fact that they are already very limited areas and do not have designated primary and shopping areas. They were historically designated without any peripheral area and contain only the area that would be identifiable as 'the high street' to residents.

### Local Parades

35. The Council currently has 51 designated local parades across the Borough, which were reviewed as part of the Local Plan: Part 2 (2020). These are parades of shops that fulfil a convenience shopping function. They are too small to be designated as local town centres but range from 4 to 54 units. These parades are protected to meet the day to day shopping and service needs of local residents, minimise the need to travel by car or public transport and address wider social, inclusion and accessibility objectives. As outlined in the Council's consultation response, the loss of these local shops and facilities would disproportionately impact on those with mobility issues or restricted travel options.
36. In a Borough that is as dispersed as the London Borough of Hillingdon, Local Parades are essential for delivering the concept of a '15-minute neighbourhood'. This is an aspirational model of urban living that has become common in major cities around the world, based on the notion that people should be able to meet most, if not all, of their needs within a 15-minute walk or bike ride from their home. The model promotes health and wellbeing through more active travel and encourages people to engage with their local community. Importantly, it also

reduces the need to travel by private vehicles, which in turn reduces traffic congestion, carbon emissions and air pollution.

37. The rationale for protecting the local parades is therefore similar to that for town centres, as far as they currently provide a sustainable environment for residents to access businesses and services, only at a more localised scale. Officers therefore propose that an Article 4 direction is also prepared for all these local parades.
38. Please note that the Local Parades have been mapped separately within Appendix 2 to allow readers of the report to understand the full extent of the proposed Article 4 area. The addresses listed outline where the Local Parade can be found, rather than its extent. The full extent of the proposed Article 4 direction is the area covered in orange.

### Monitoring Areas

39. The designations referred to above are based on the Local Plan: Part 2 (2020), which was only adopted in January 2020. The Planning Policy Team are undertaking a review of the Local Plan, which may involve changes to these boundaries. Any boundary changes will need to be reflected in the Article 4 direction, either to reduce or expand the area covered accordingly.

### **Additional Considerations**

40. The Council's consultation response to the Government also raised several other concerns that could arise from the new PDR. These are issues that cover the whole Borough, including:
  - No scope to assess the quality of design of such proposals.
  - No requirement for affordable housing provision.
  - Poorer quality residential environments.
  - Dominance of one-bedroom units.
  - No access to amenity space.
  - No improvements to air quality or carbon emissions.
41. The only way to address these concerns would be to opt for a borough wide Article 4 direction. However, national policy is clear that Article 4 directions must apply to the smallest geographical area possible and should cover matters specific to the area. It is therefore highly unlikely that a blanket Article 4 direction across the London Borough of Hillingdon on any or all these grounds would be permitted by the Secretary of State. This approach is therefore not being advocated.

### **Next Steps**

42. Officers are proposing to introduce a non-immediate Article 4 direction, which requires a 12-month notification period from when it is made until it can come into effect. This period is required to avoid the possibility of compensation claims being made against the Council. The procedure for implementing a non-immediate Article 4 direction includes a four-week consultation period. The responses to this consultation will then be presented to the Council, who can then confirm that they wish for Officers to proceed with implementing the Article 4 direction. An indicative timeline of the full process is outlined below:

## September 2021

Stage 1 - The Council decides whether to introduce a Direction setting a date in the Notice for when it will come into force, which must be at least 28 days and no more than 2 years after representations can first be made. The Article 4 Directions are then duly sealed. The Council must give a minimum of 12 months' notice of its intention to introduce or modify an Article 4 Direction and consequently the Direction cannot be confirmed or implemented until September 2022 (Stage 3).

## September/October 2021

Stage 2 – Publication/Consultation stage - The Council:

- 1) Publishes the notice of the Direction.
- 2) Formally consults with general members of the public and the owners and occupiers of every part of the land within the area or site to which the Direction relates over a period of at least 21 days (four weeks preferable).
- 3) Places notices up on the relevant sites for 6 weeks.
- 4) The Council refers its decision to the Secretary of State who has wide powers to modify or cancel a Direction.

## September/October 2022

Stage 3 – Confirmation Stage - The Council cannot confirm the Direction until after a period of at least 12 months from publication/service of the Notice. Once a Direction has been confirmed, the council must give notice of the confirmation in the same way as it gave notice of the initial Direction. A copy of the Direction as confirmed must also be sent to the Secretary of State.

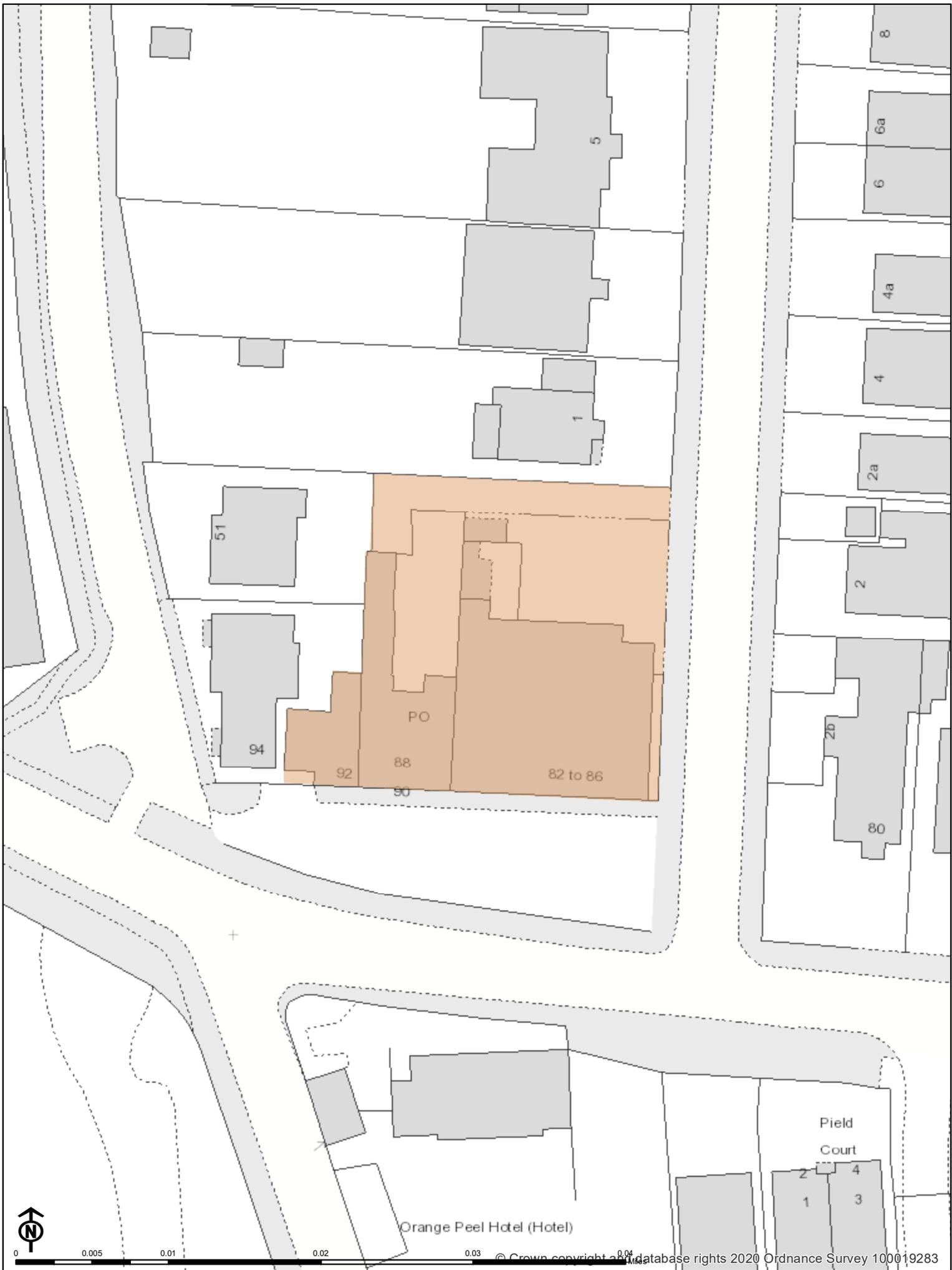
### **Appendices (available on-line and in Group Offices):**

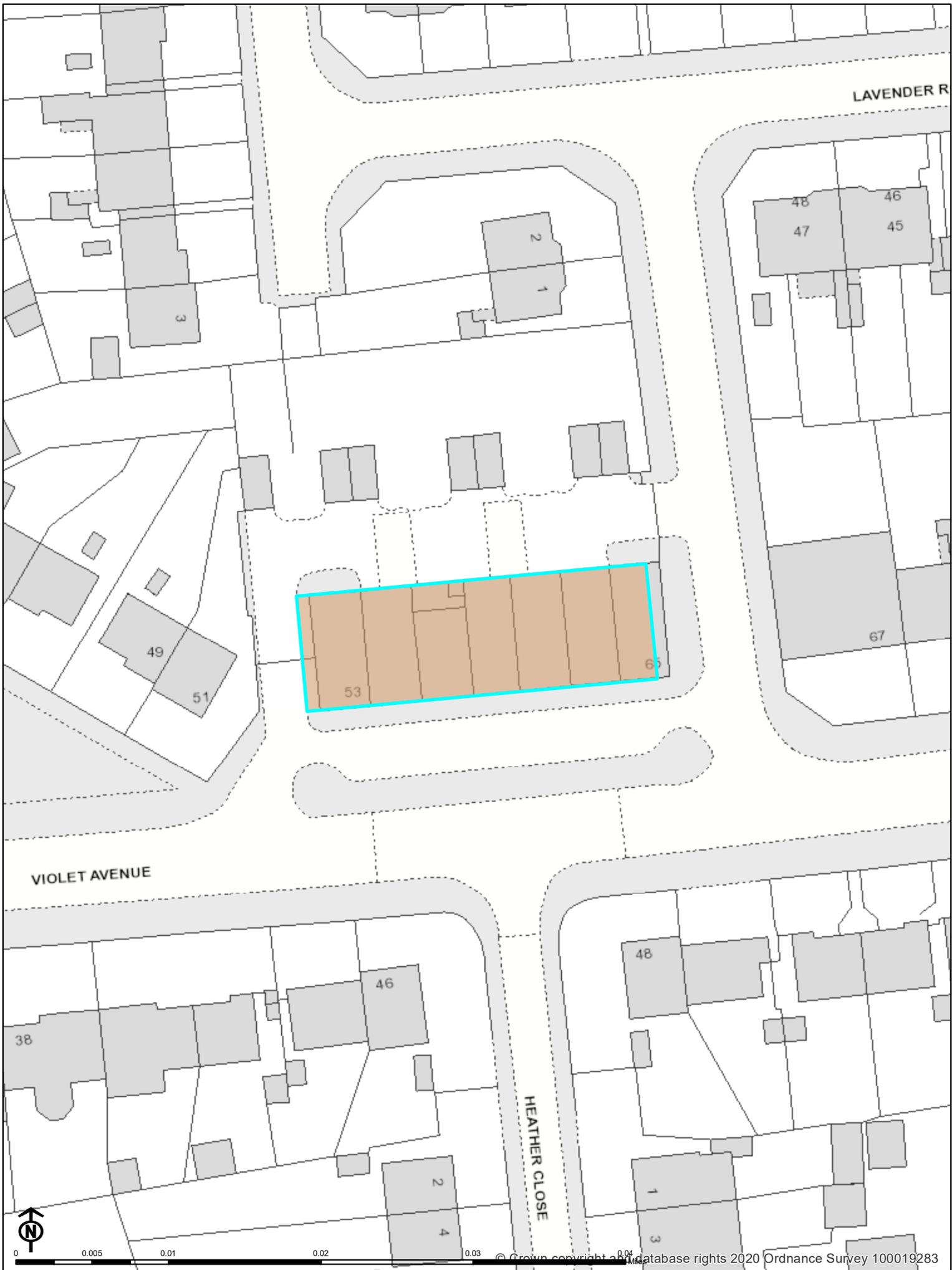
- Appendix 1 – Whole Borough Map of Areas to be Covered by Class MA Article 4 Direction
- Appendix 2 – Local Parade Maps Only Showing Areas to be Covered by Class MA Article 4 Direction

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DELLFIELD

Dellfield Parade

DELLFIELD CRESCENT

The Grand Union (PH)

The Parade

Orchard Place

STREET



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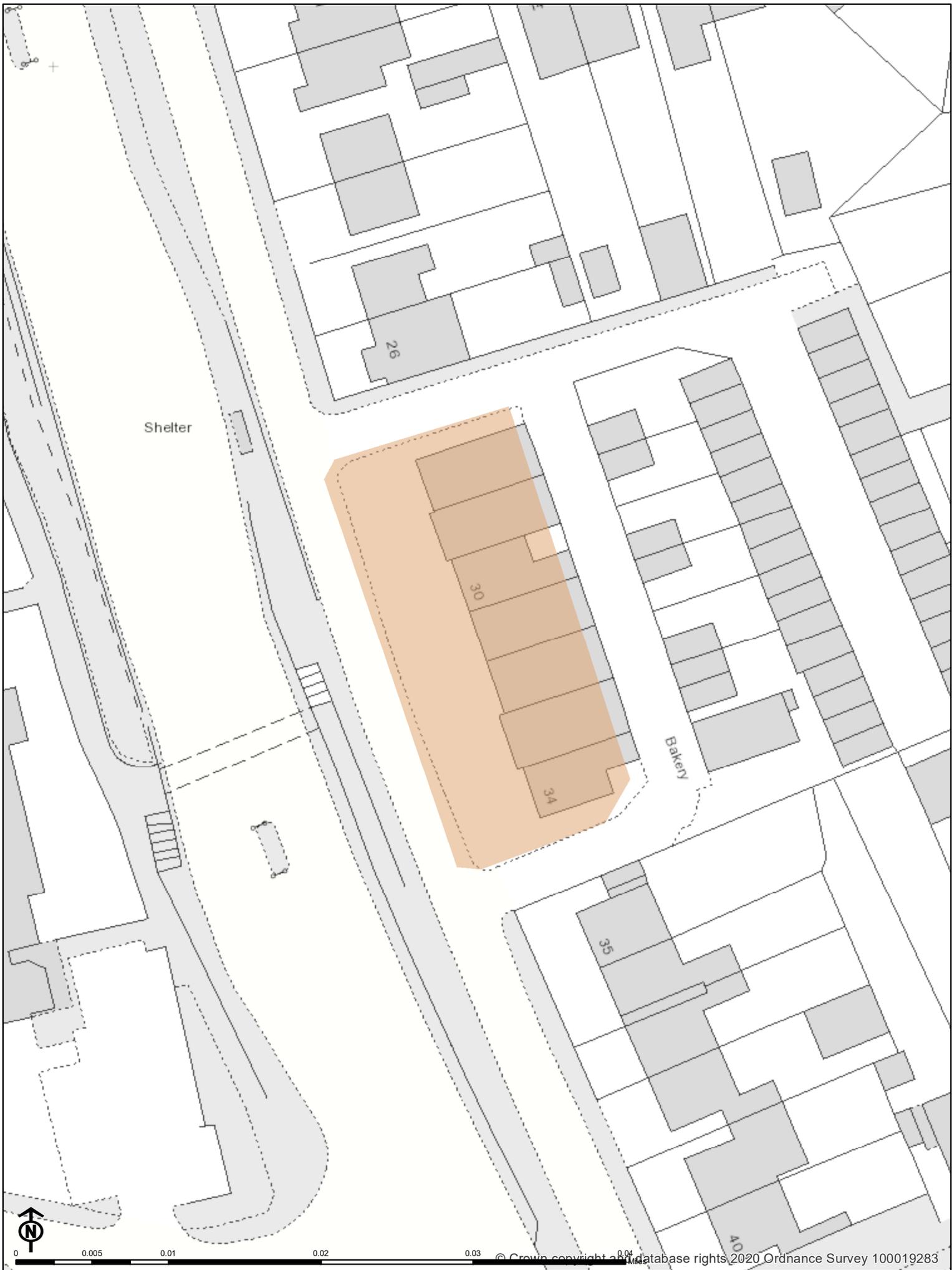
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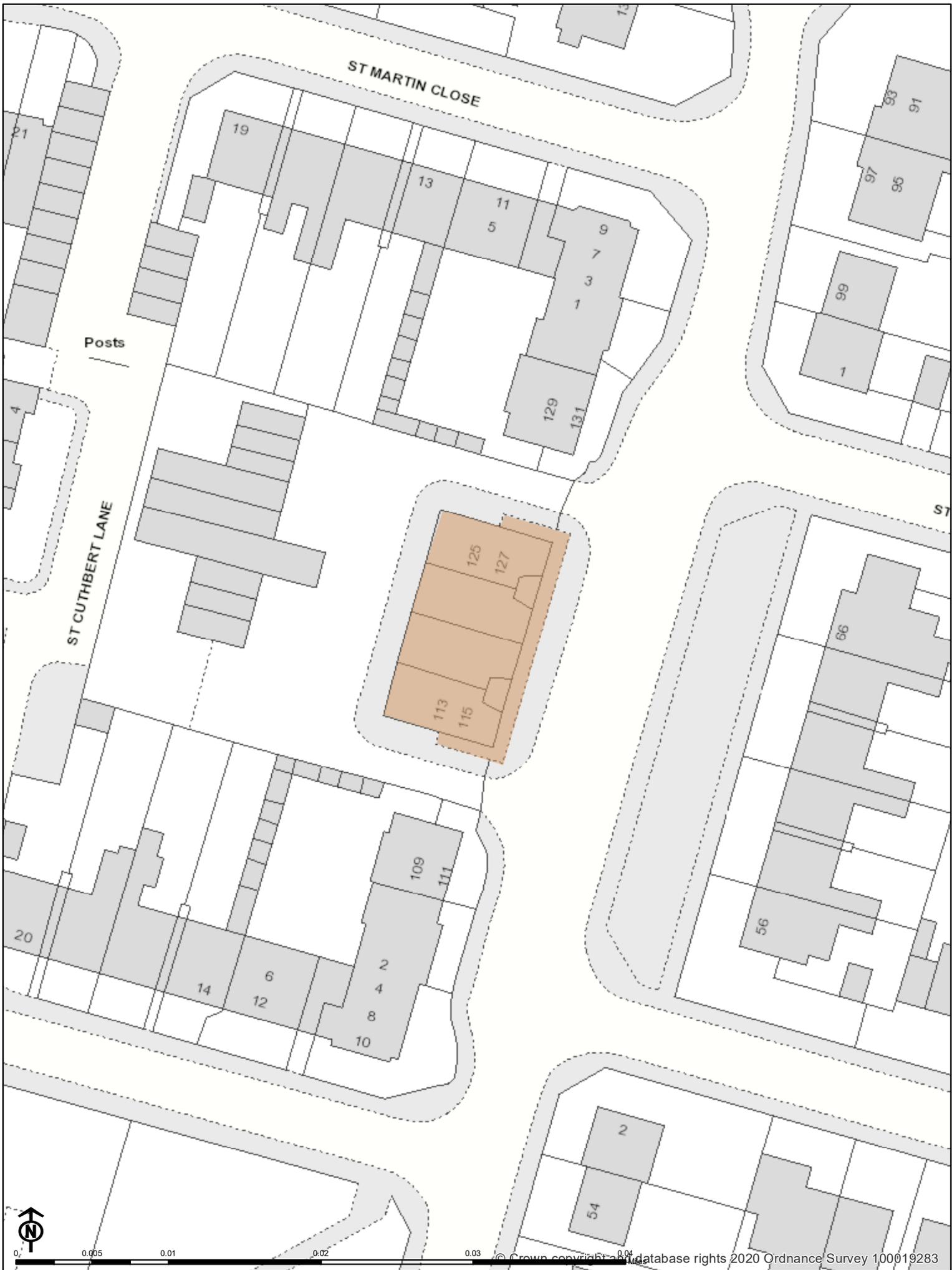
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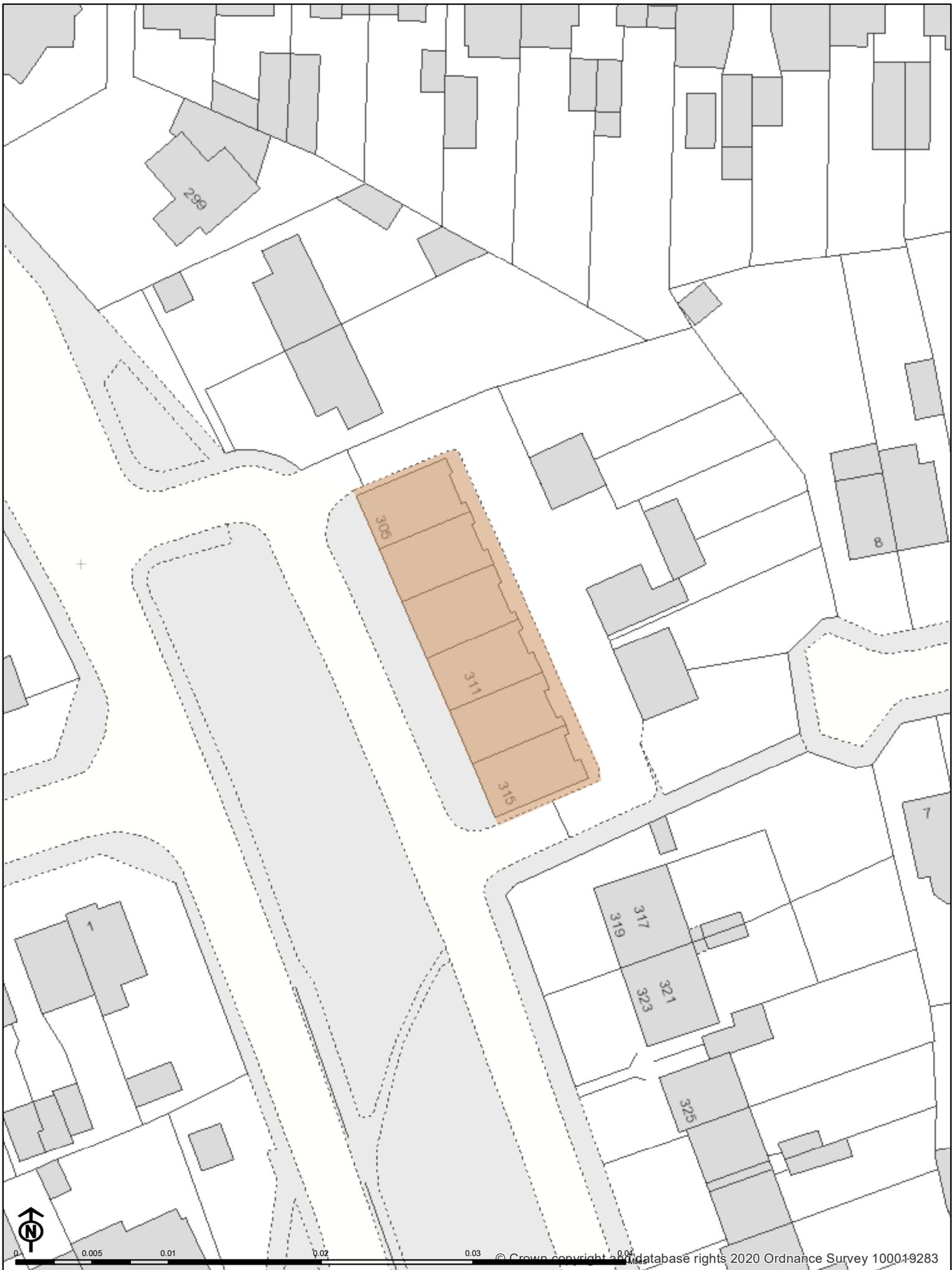


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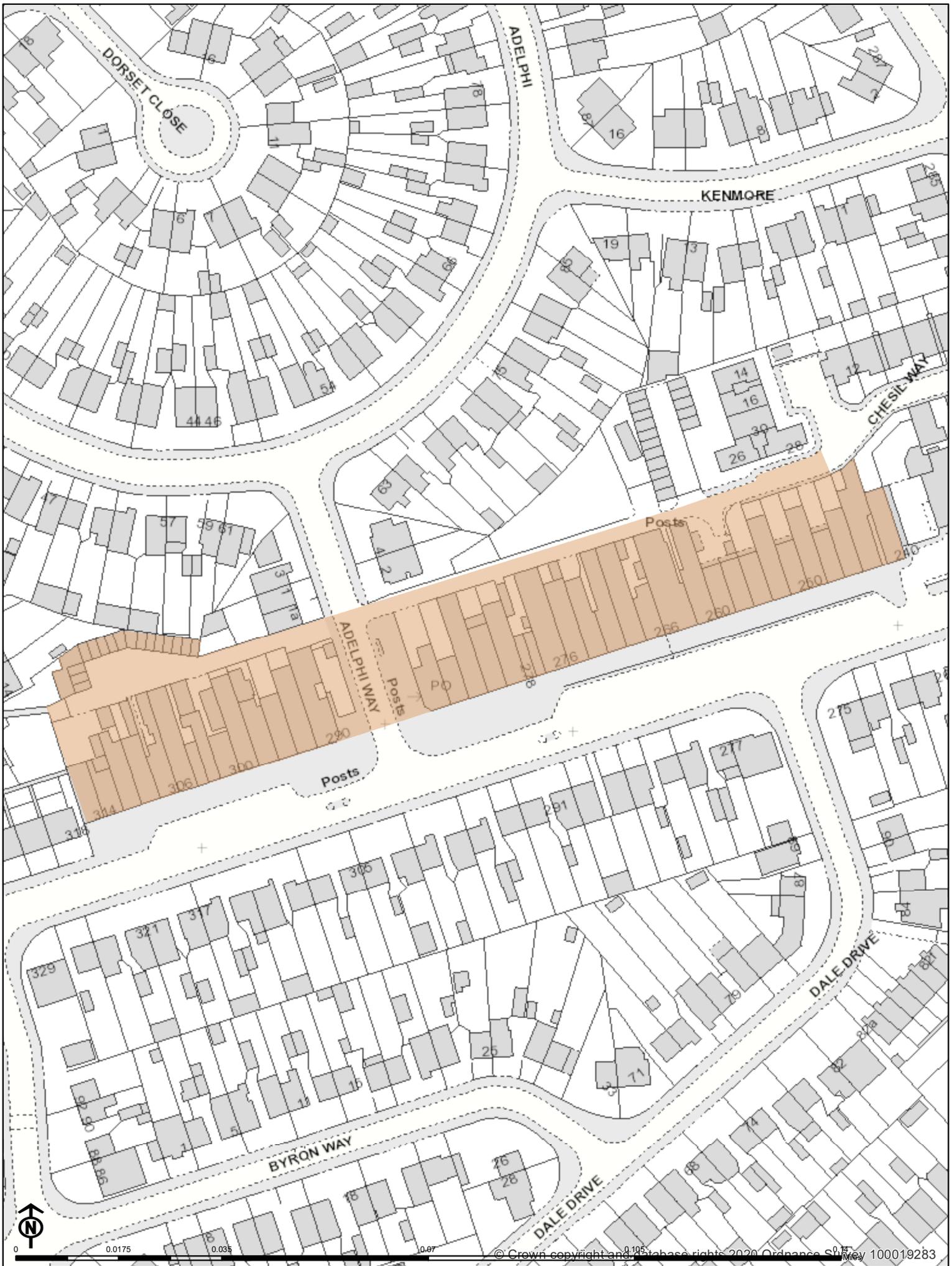
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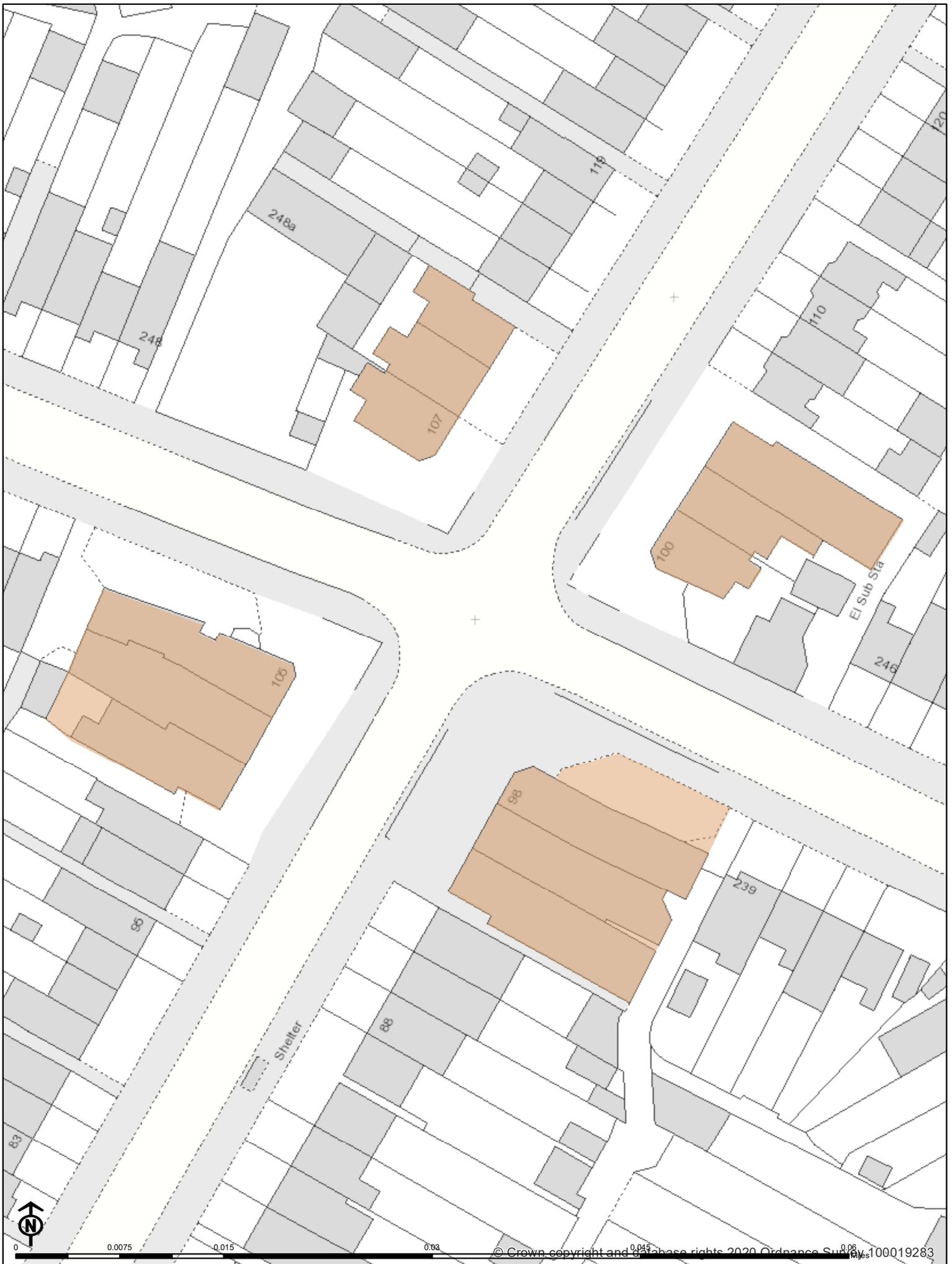




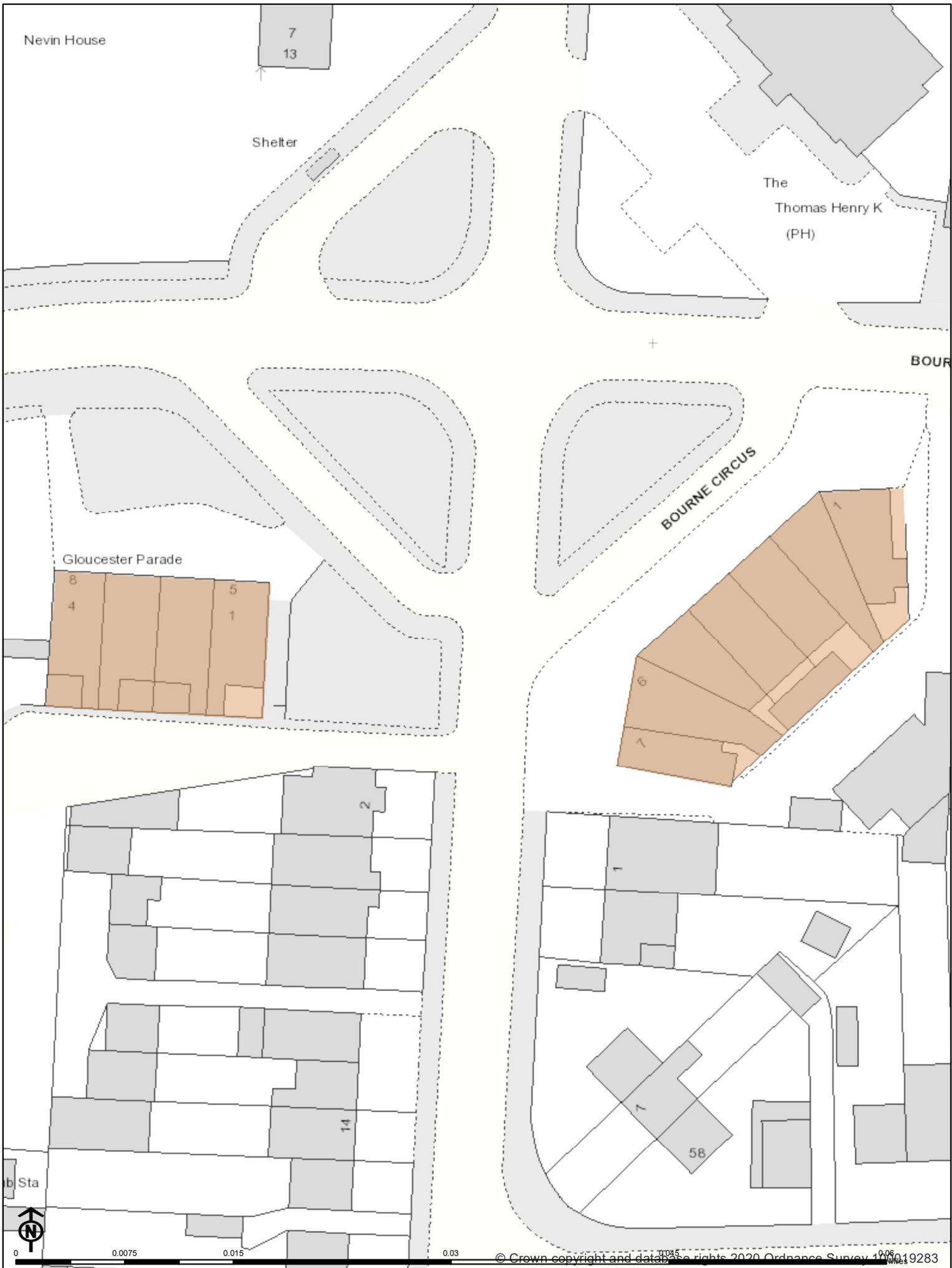
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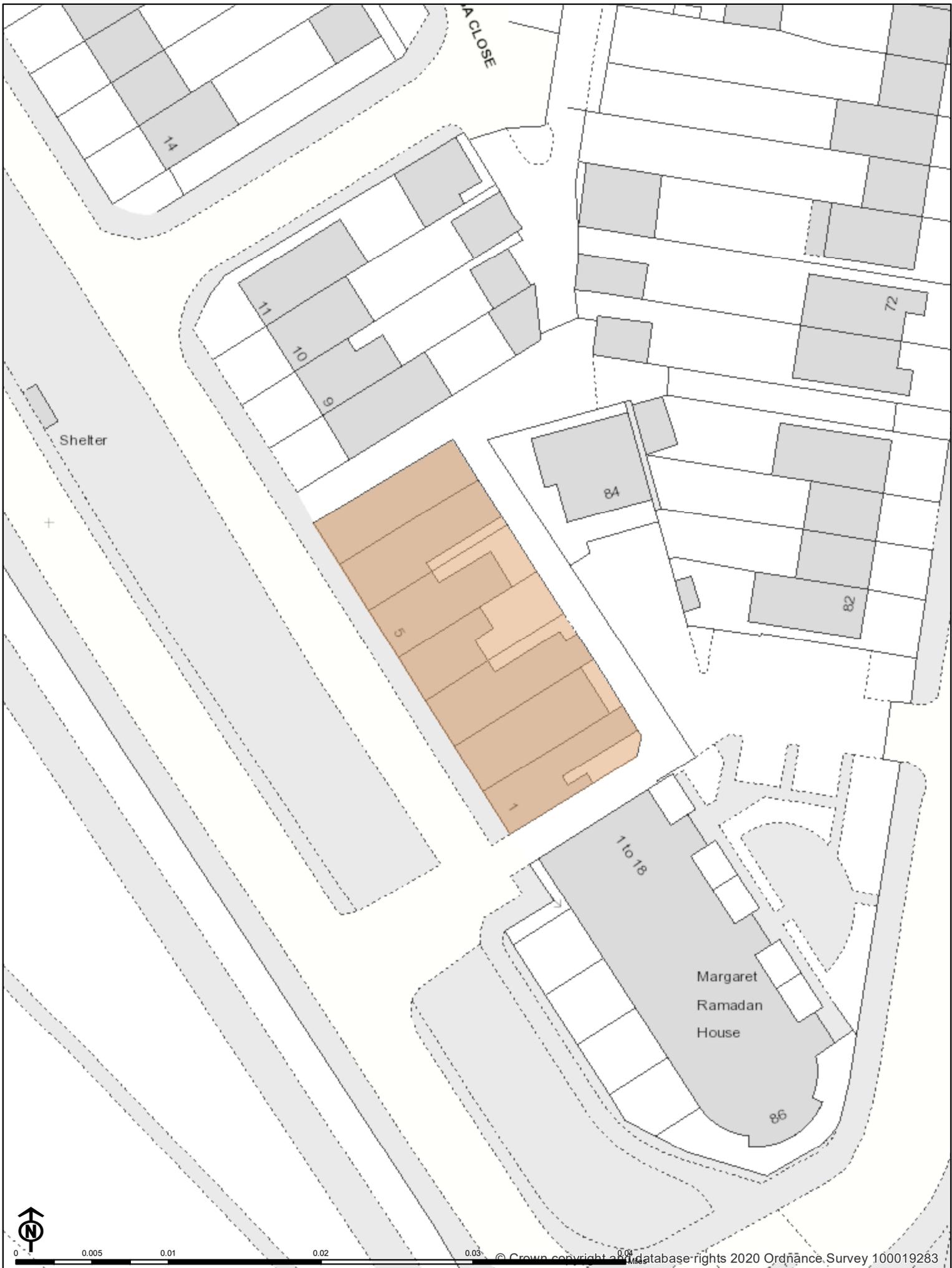
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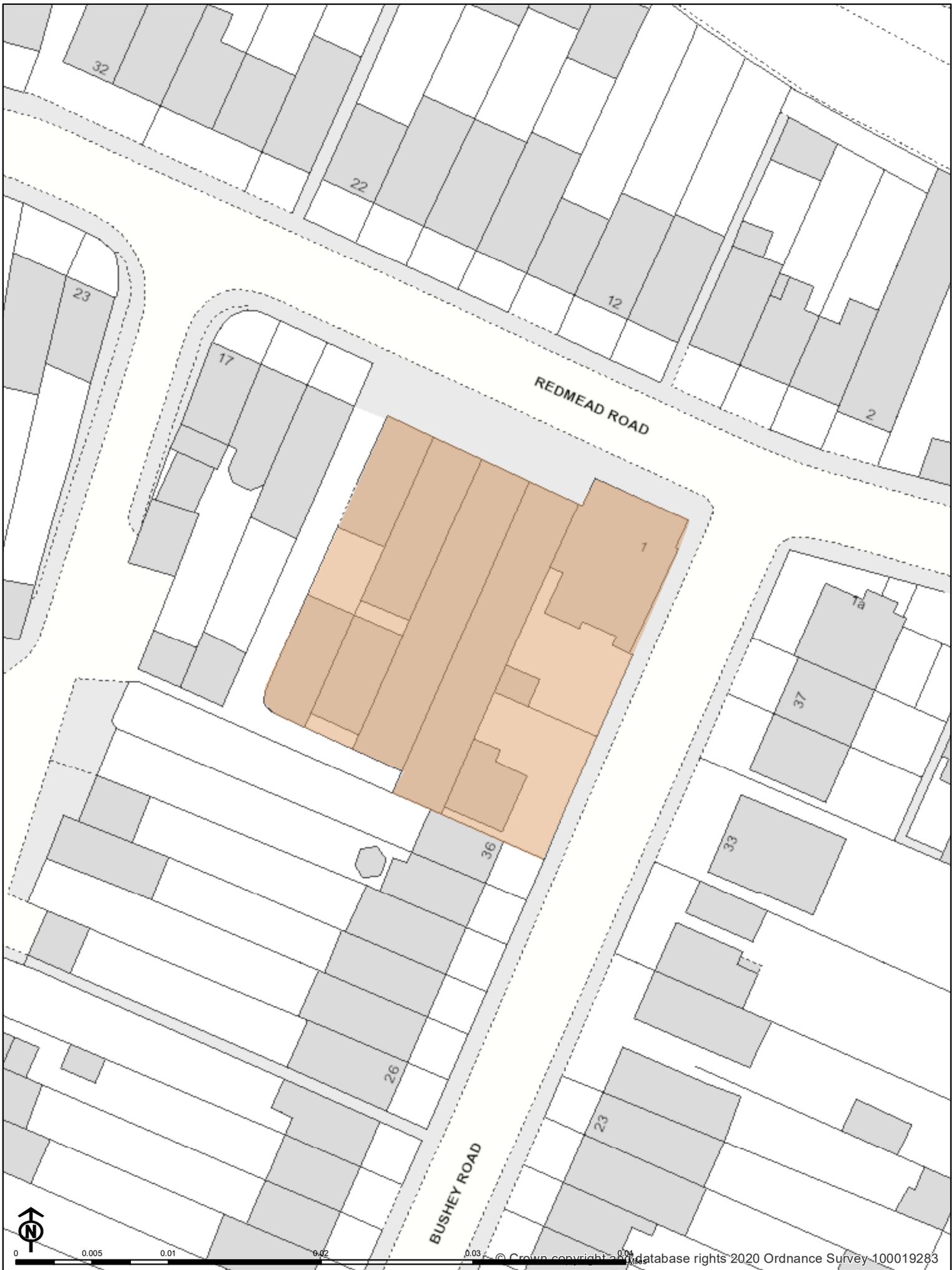
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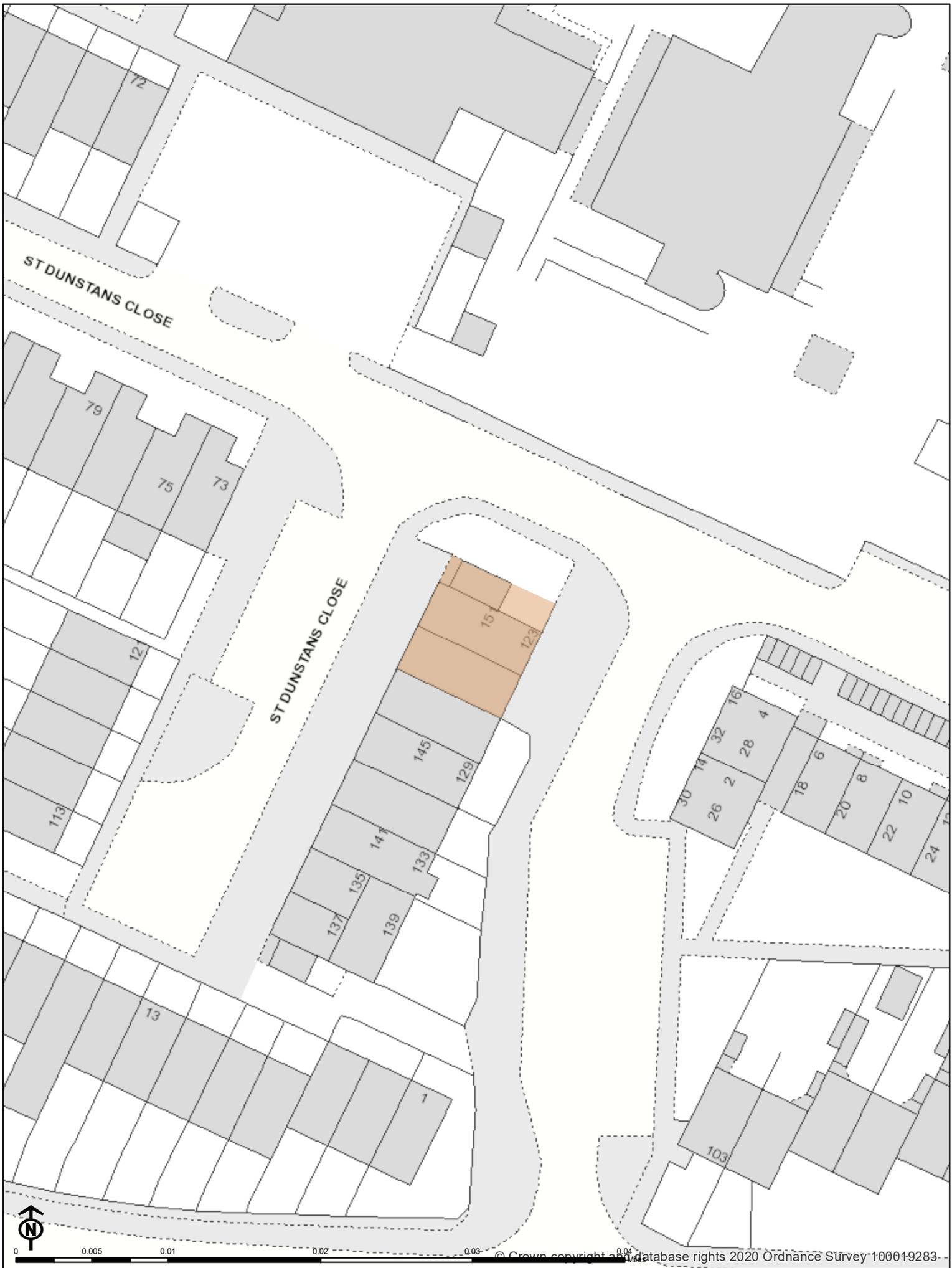












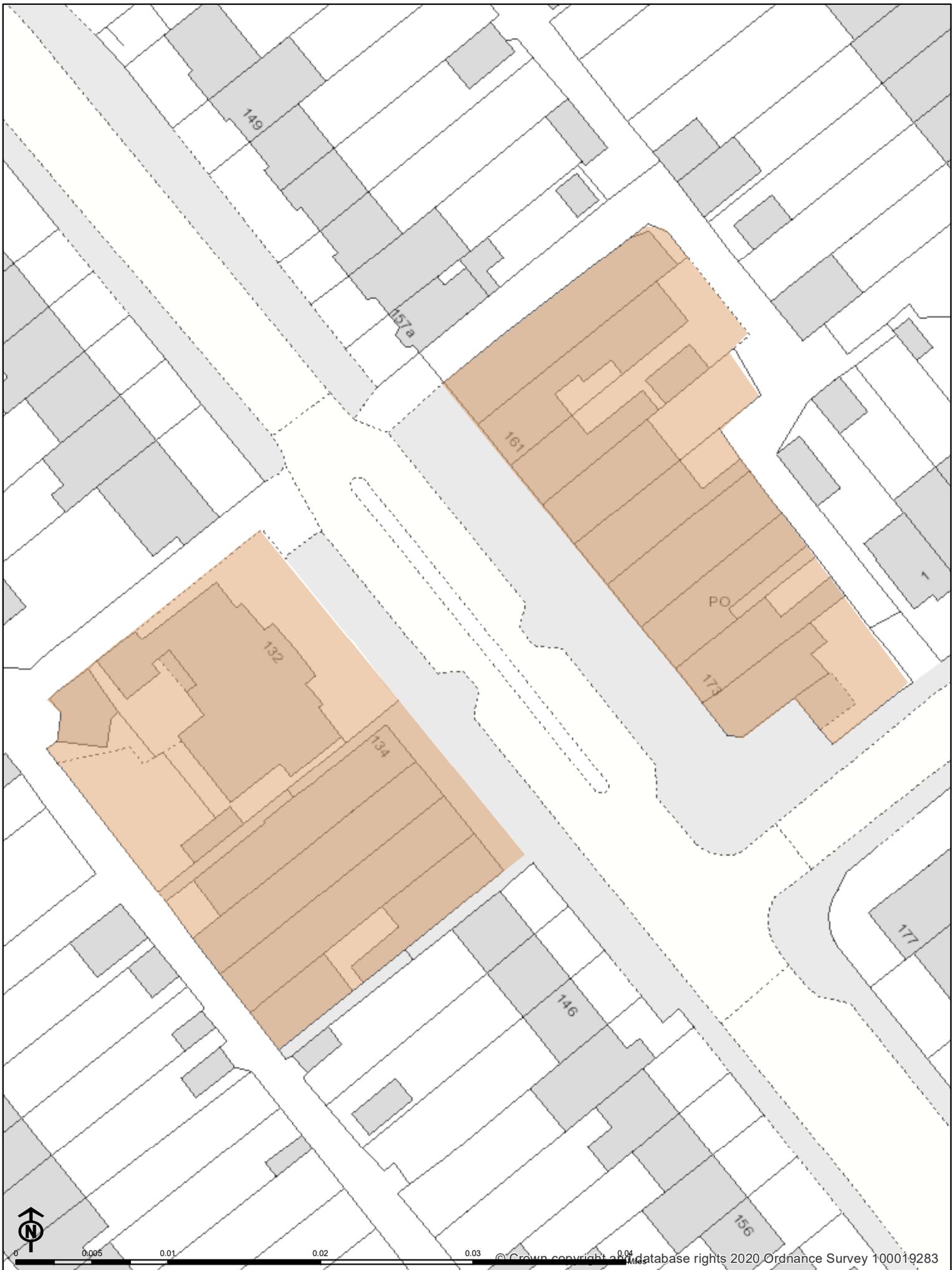
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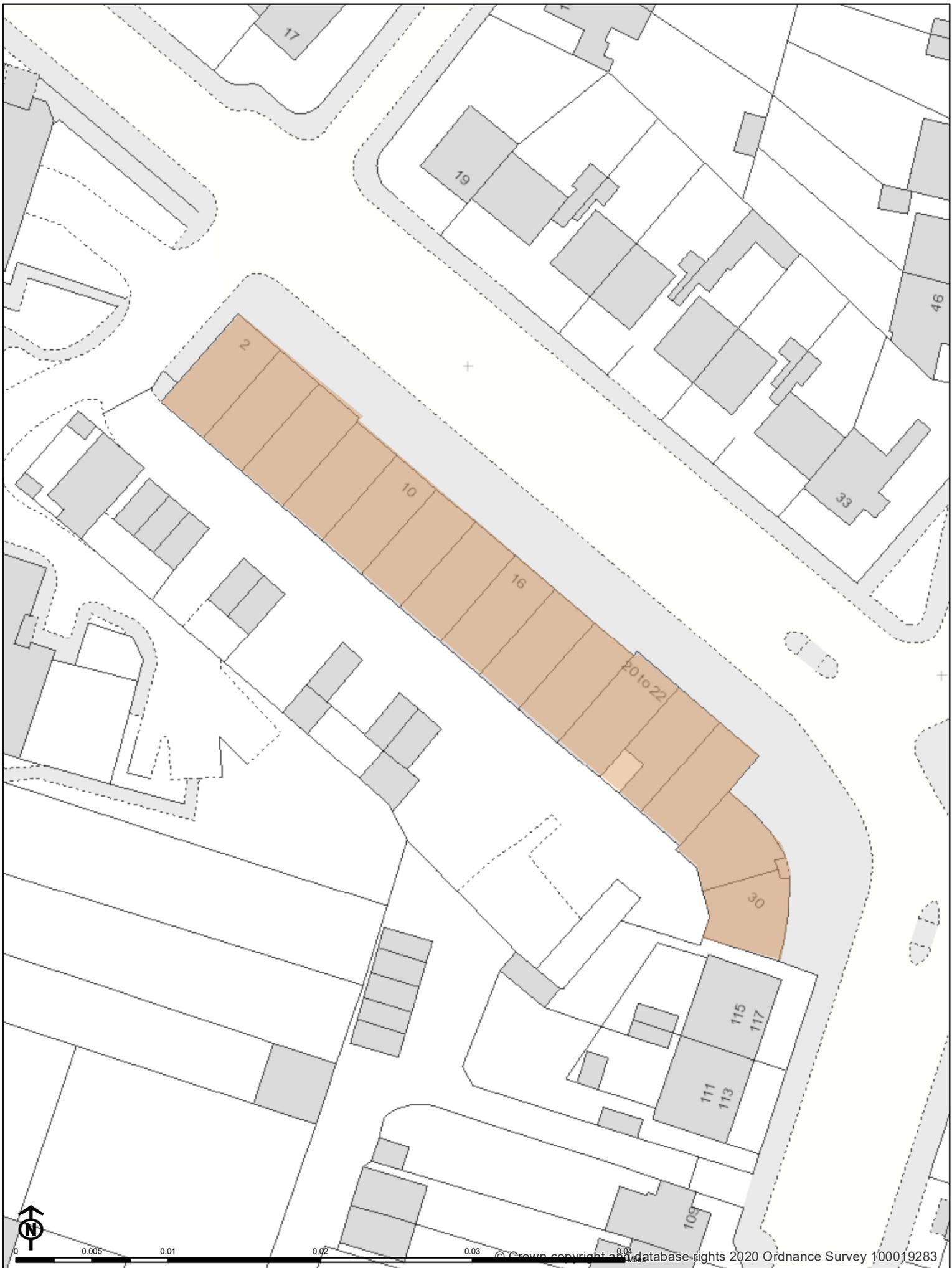


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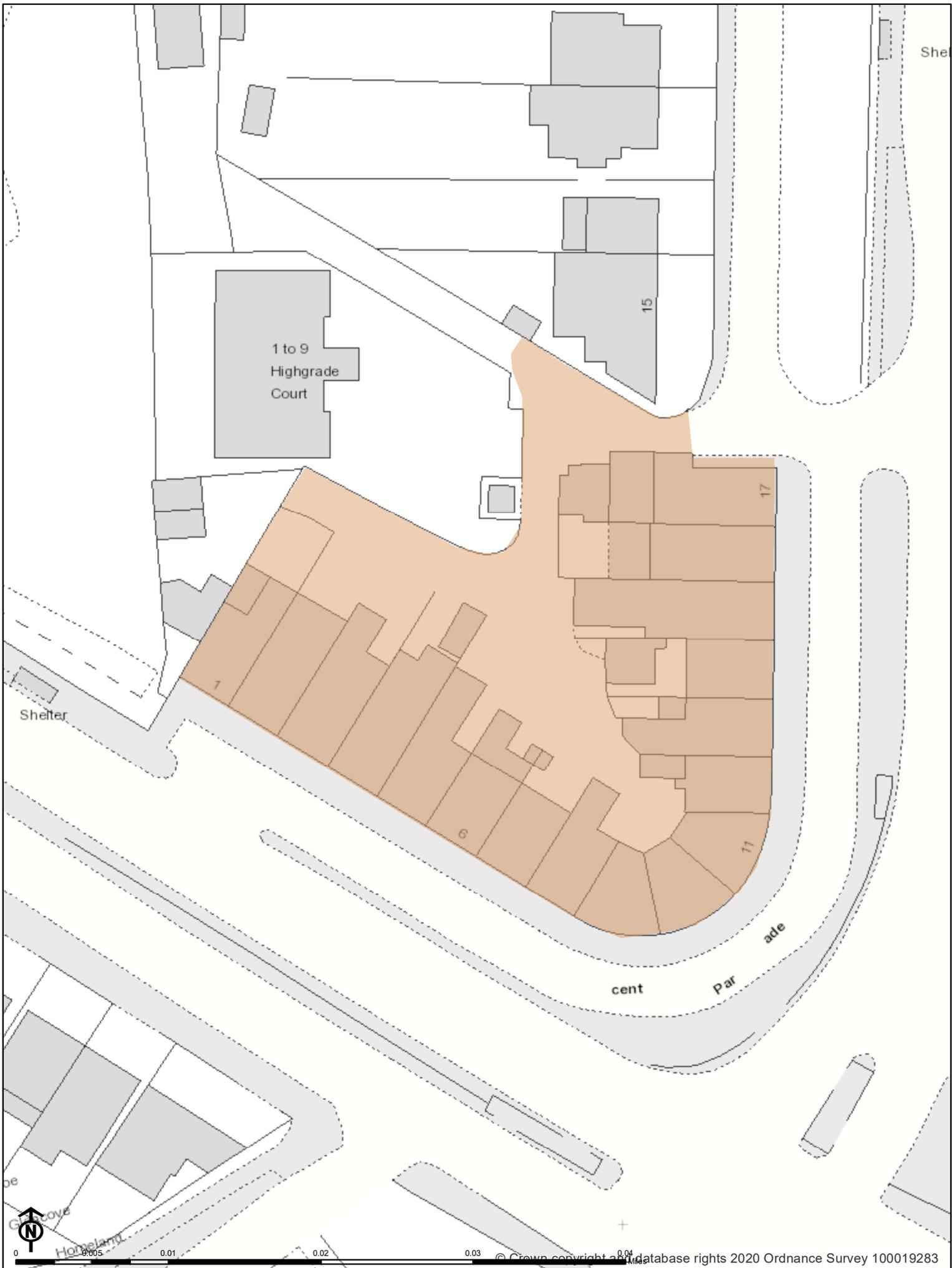
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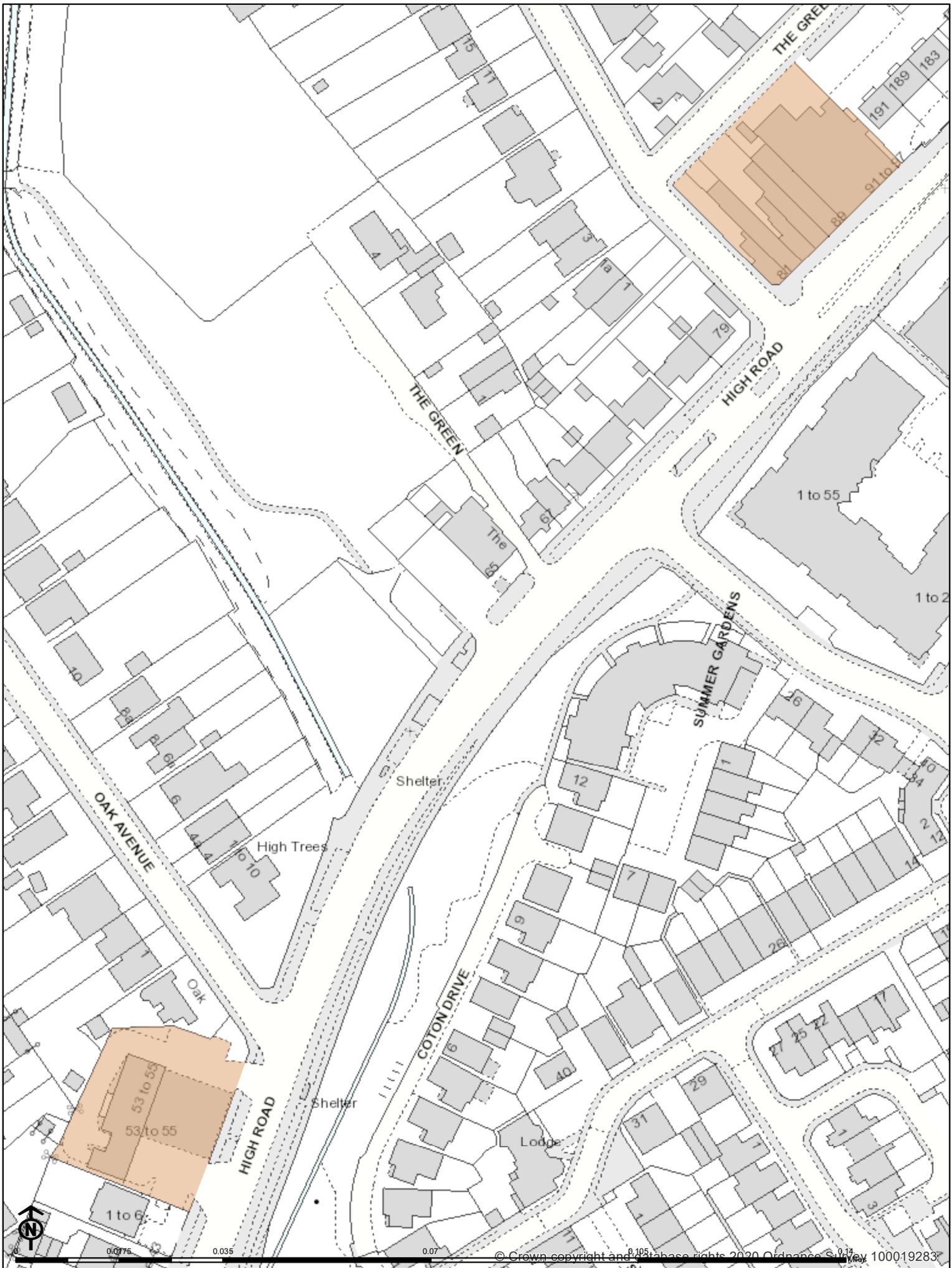


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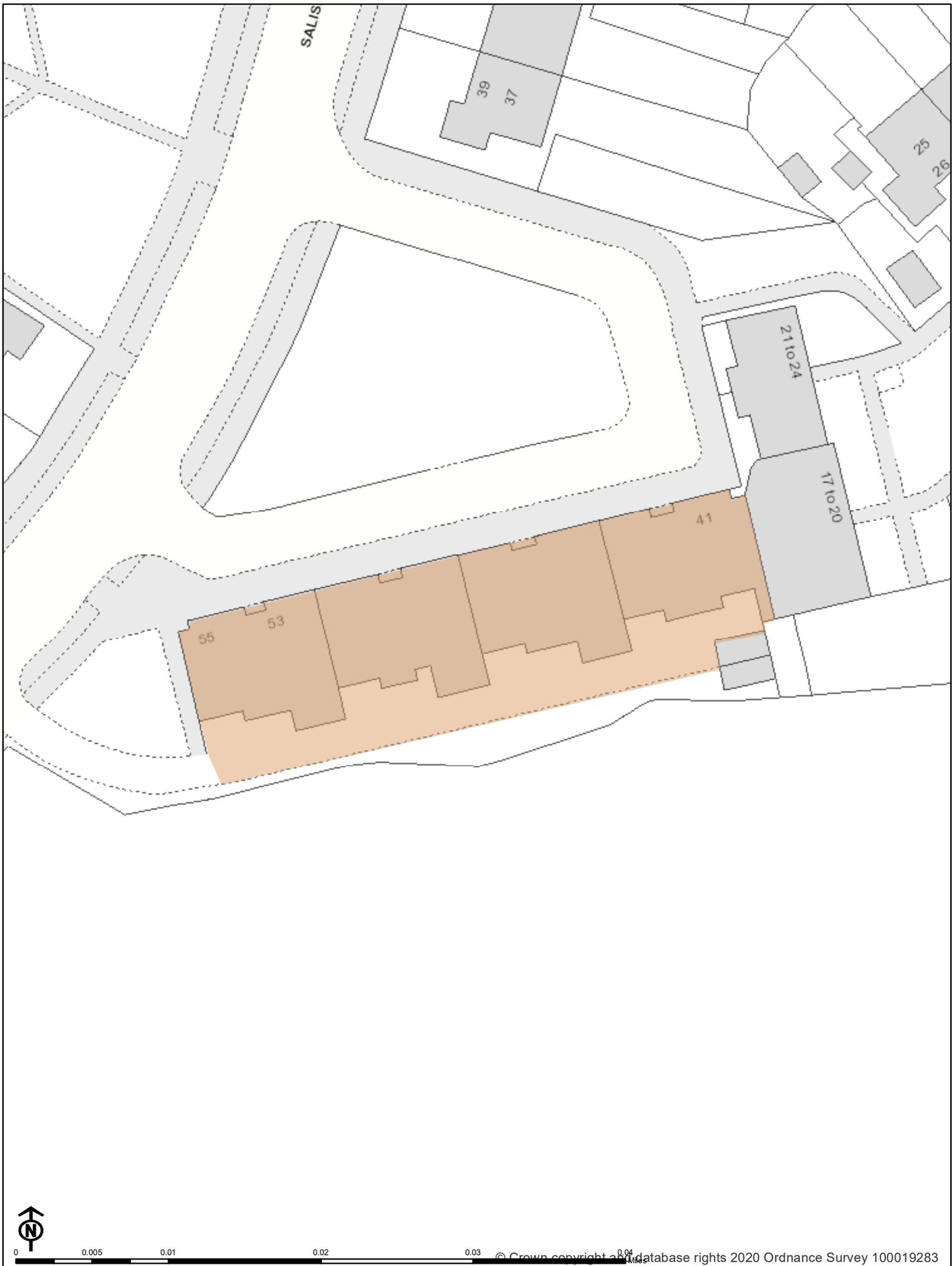


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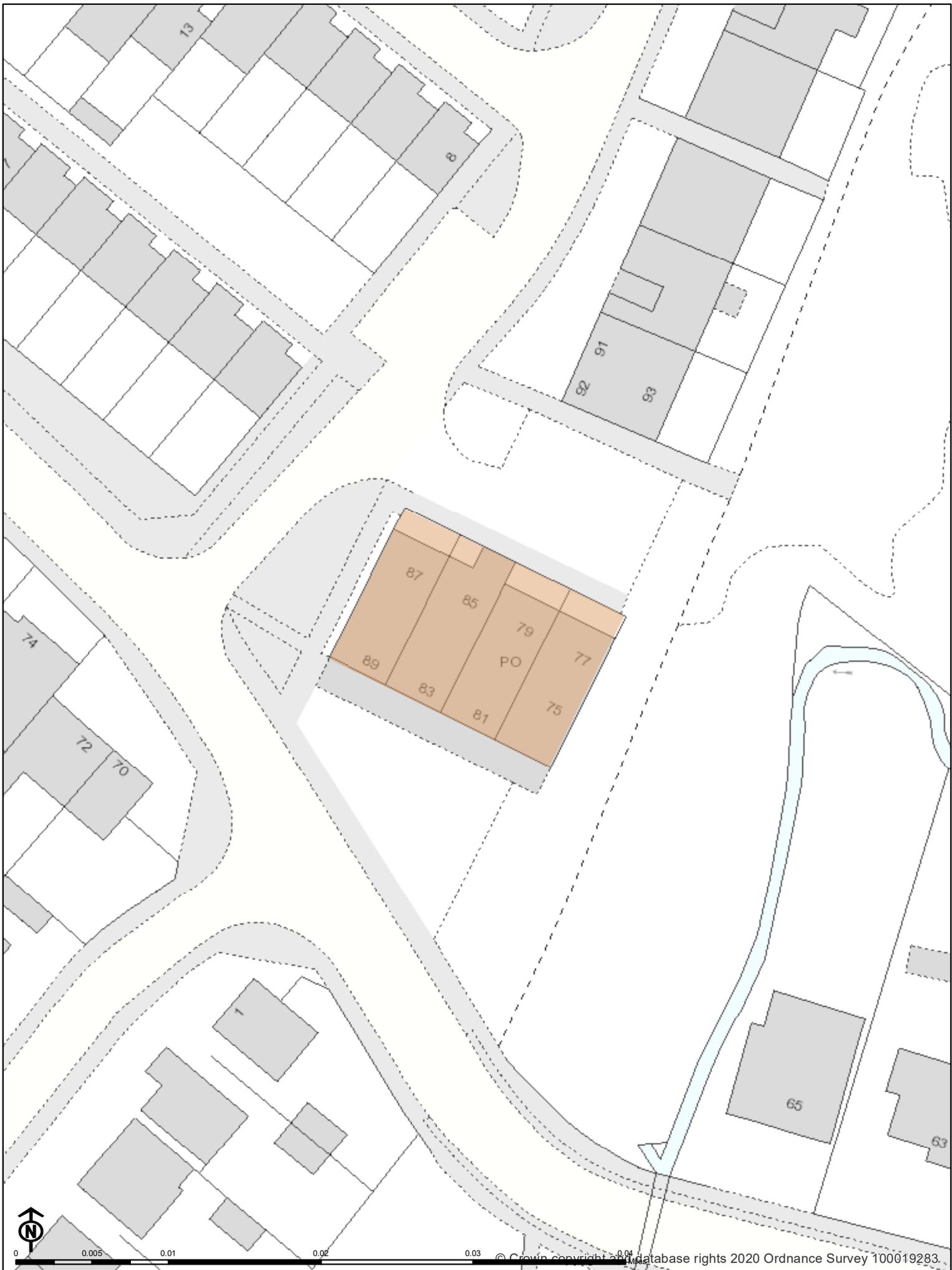
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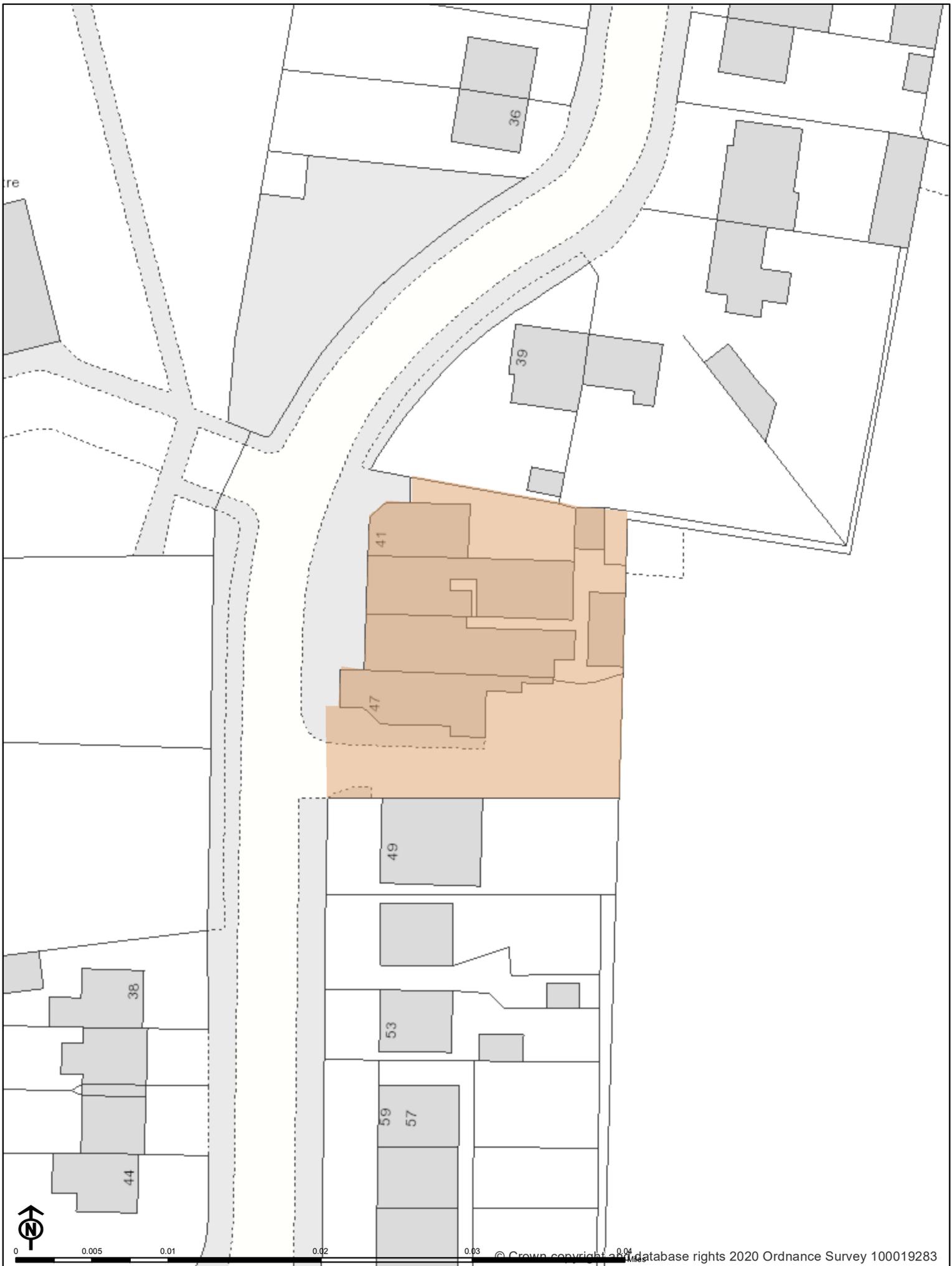




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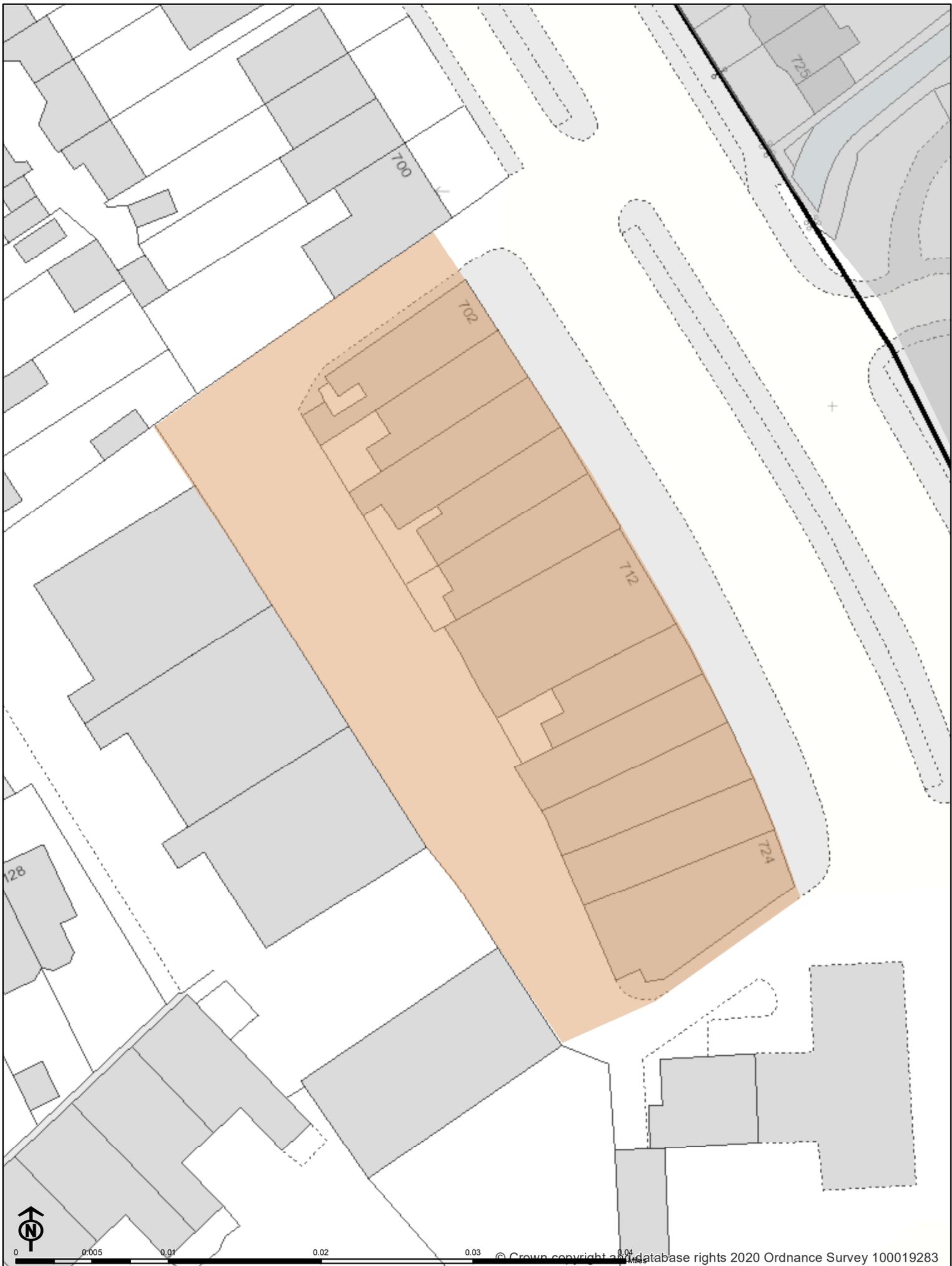






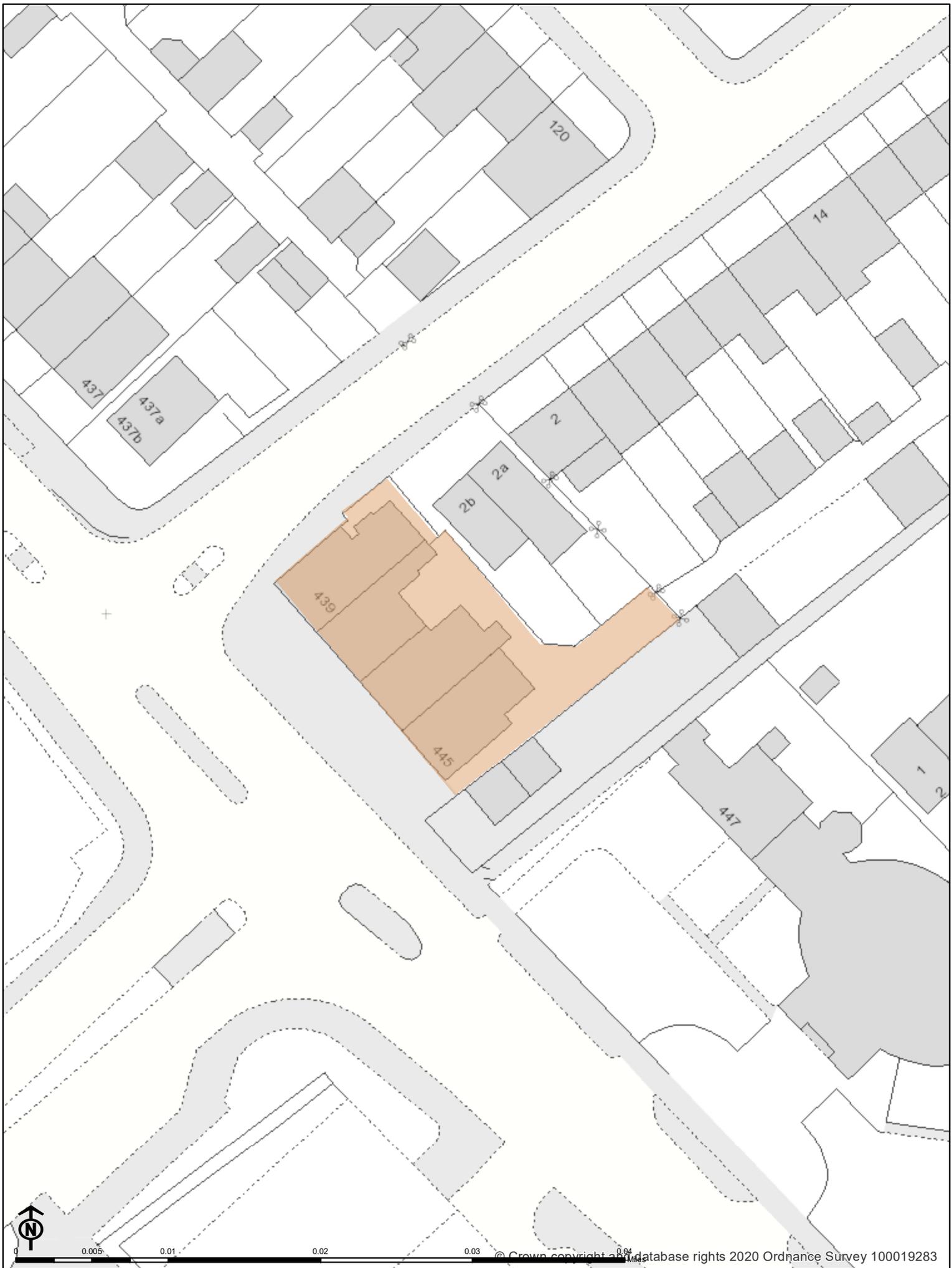
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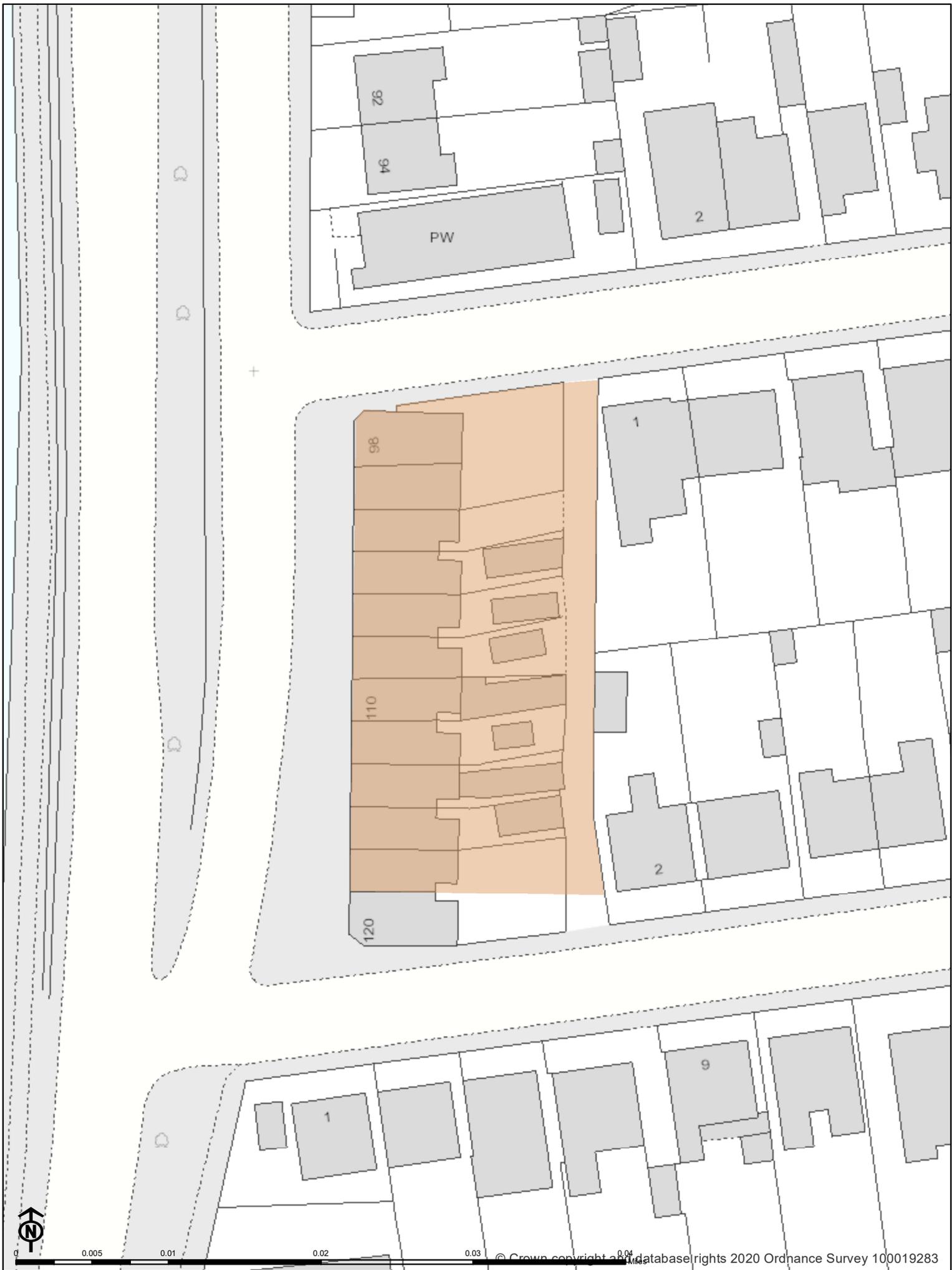


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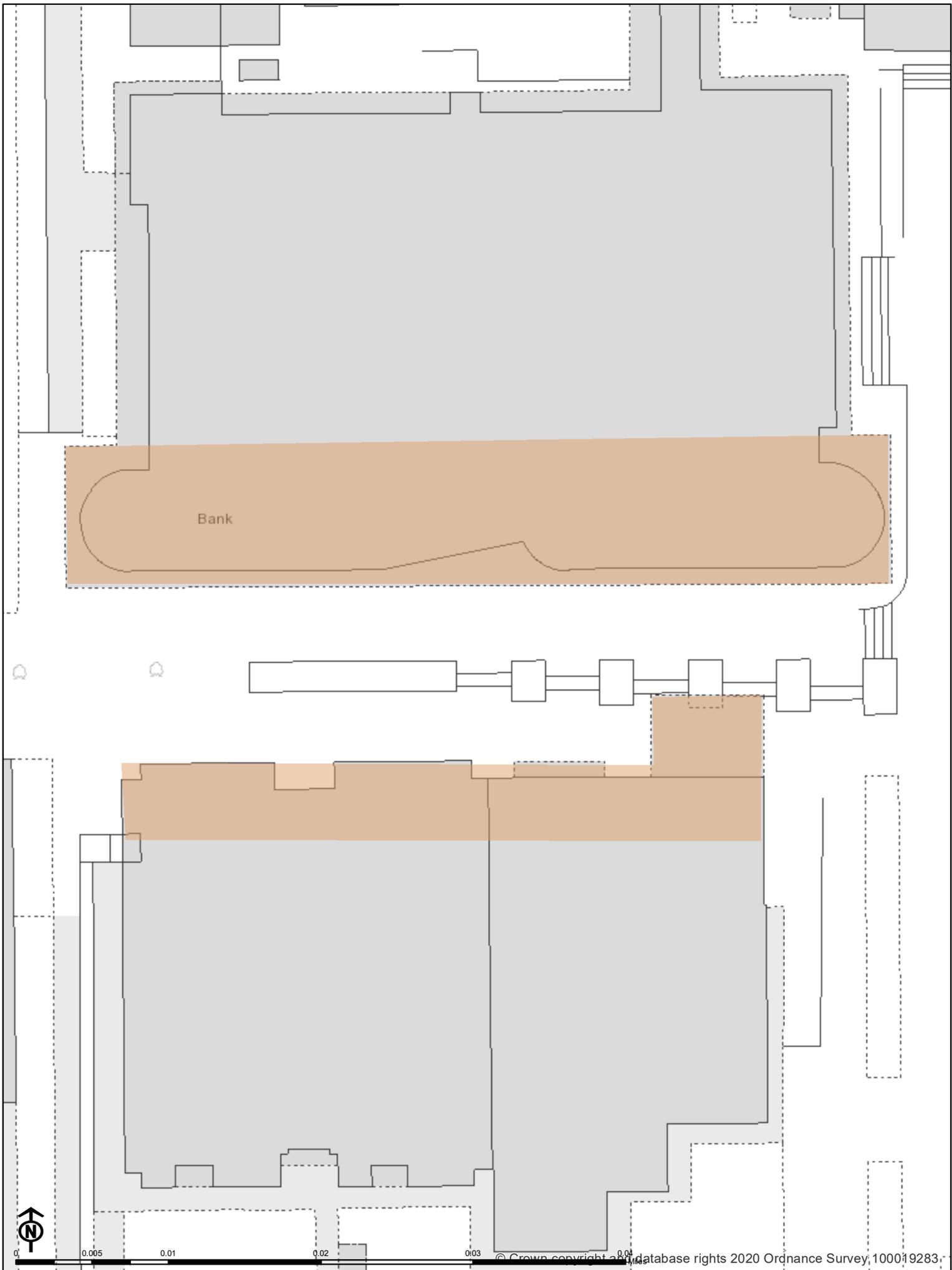


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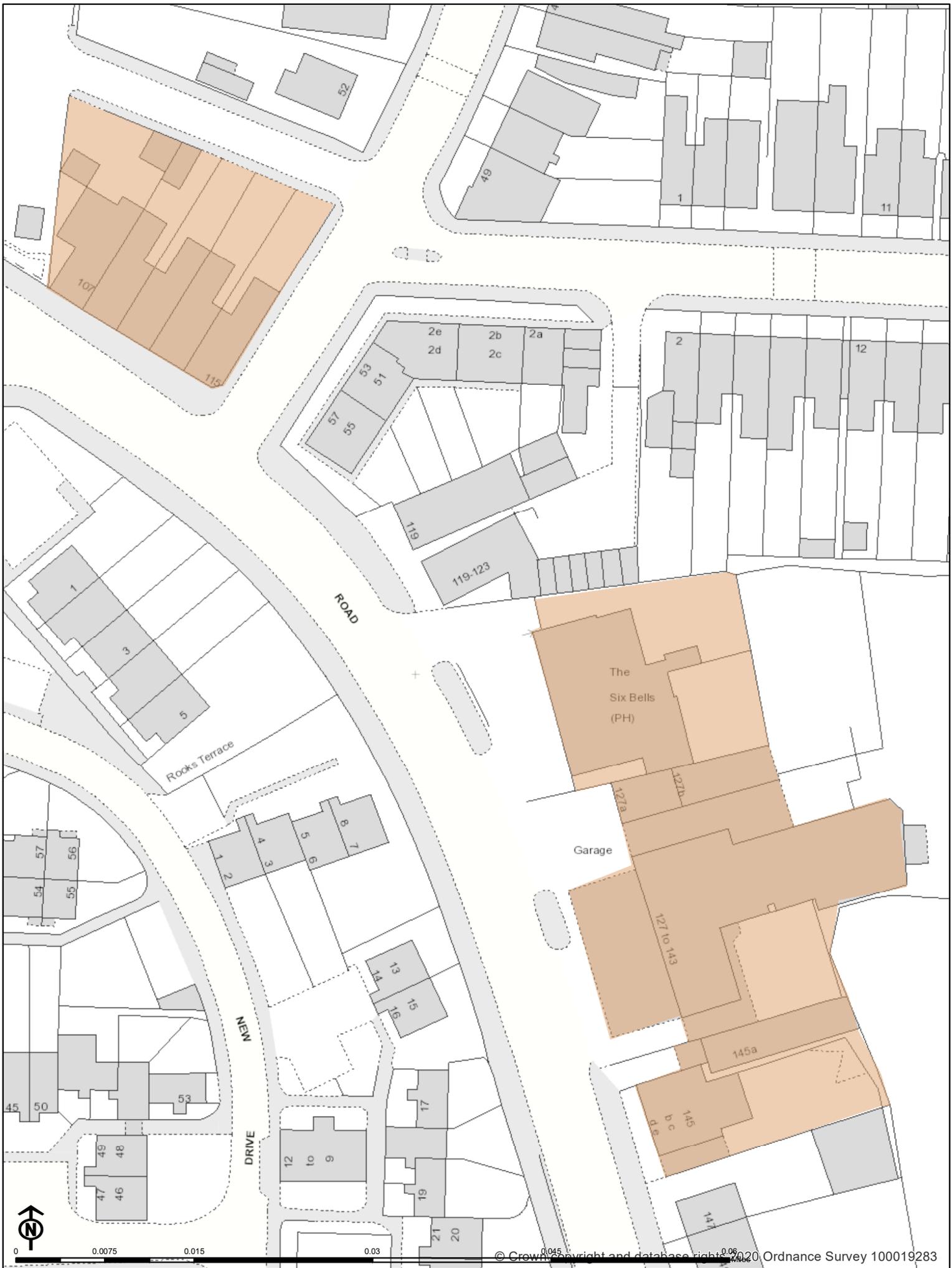


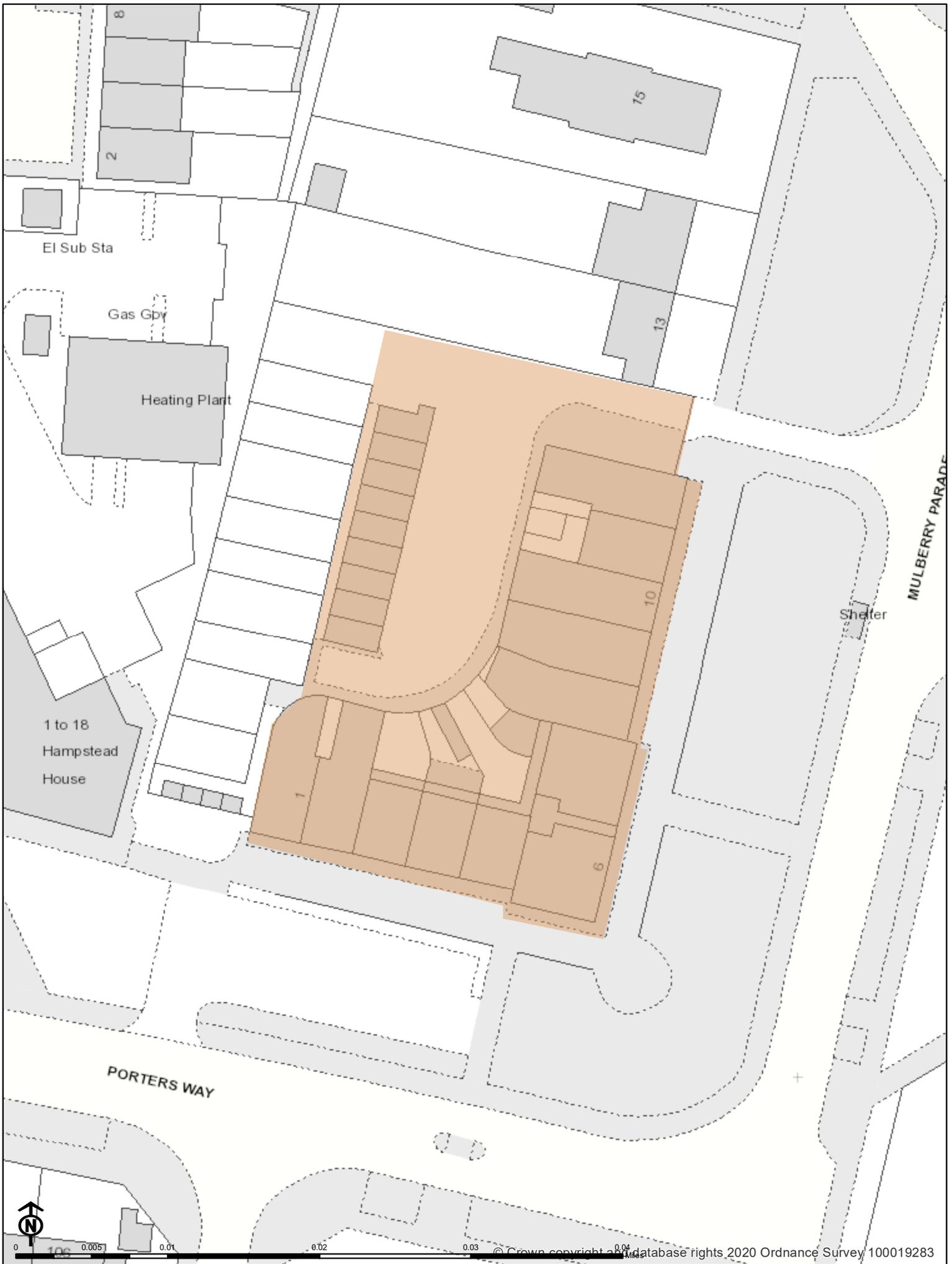
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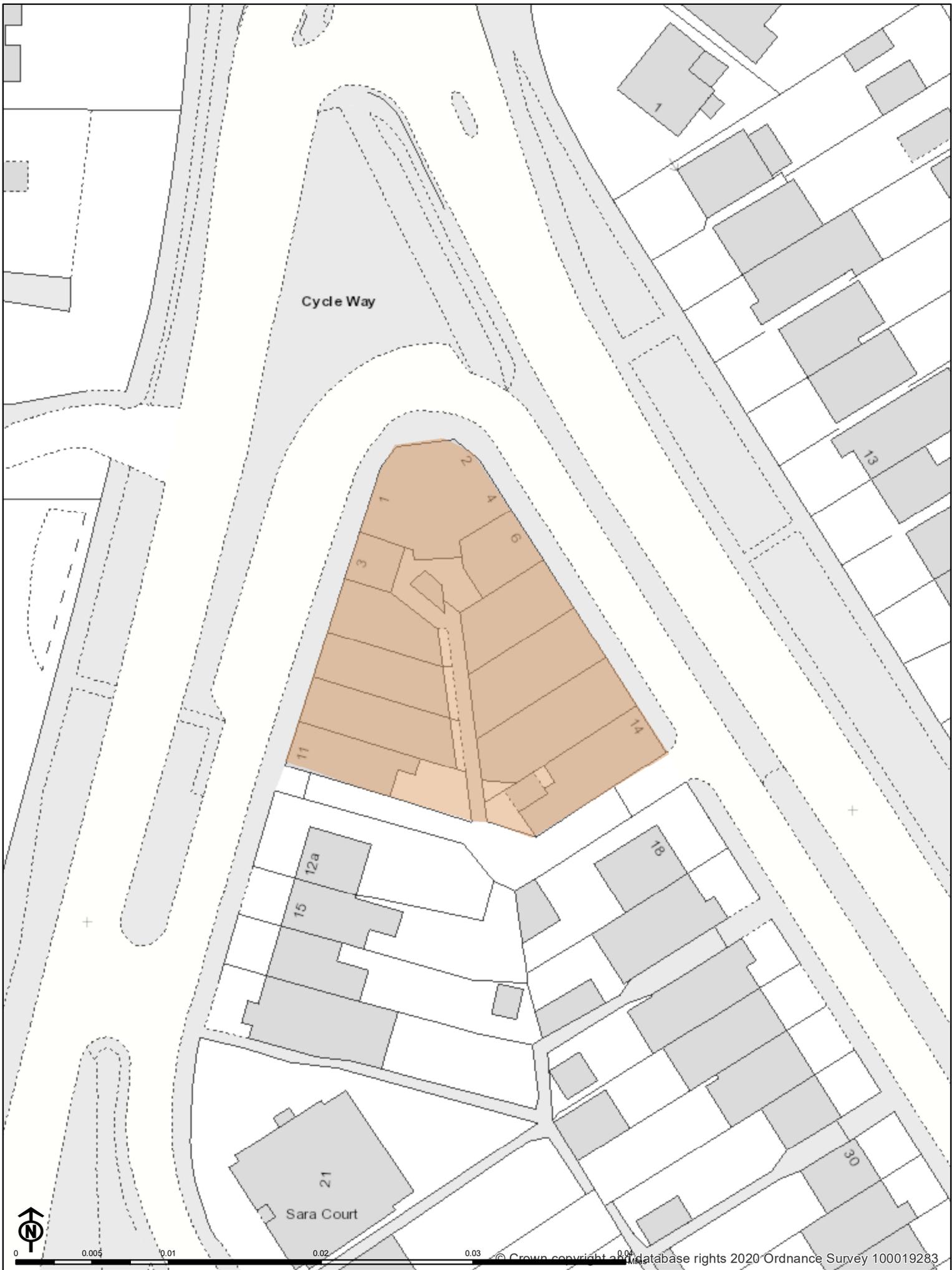


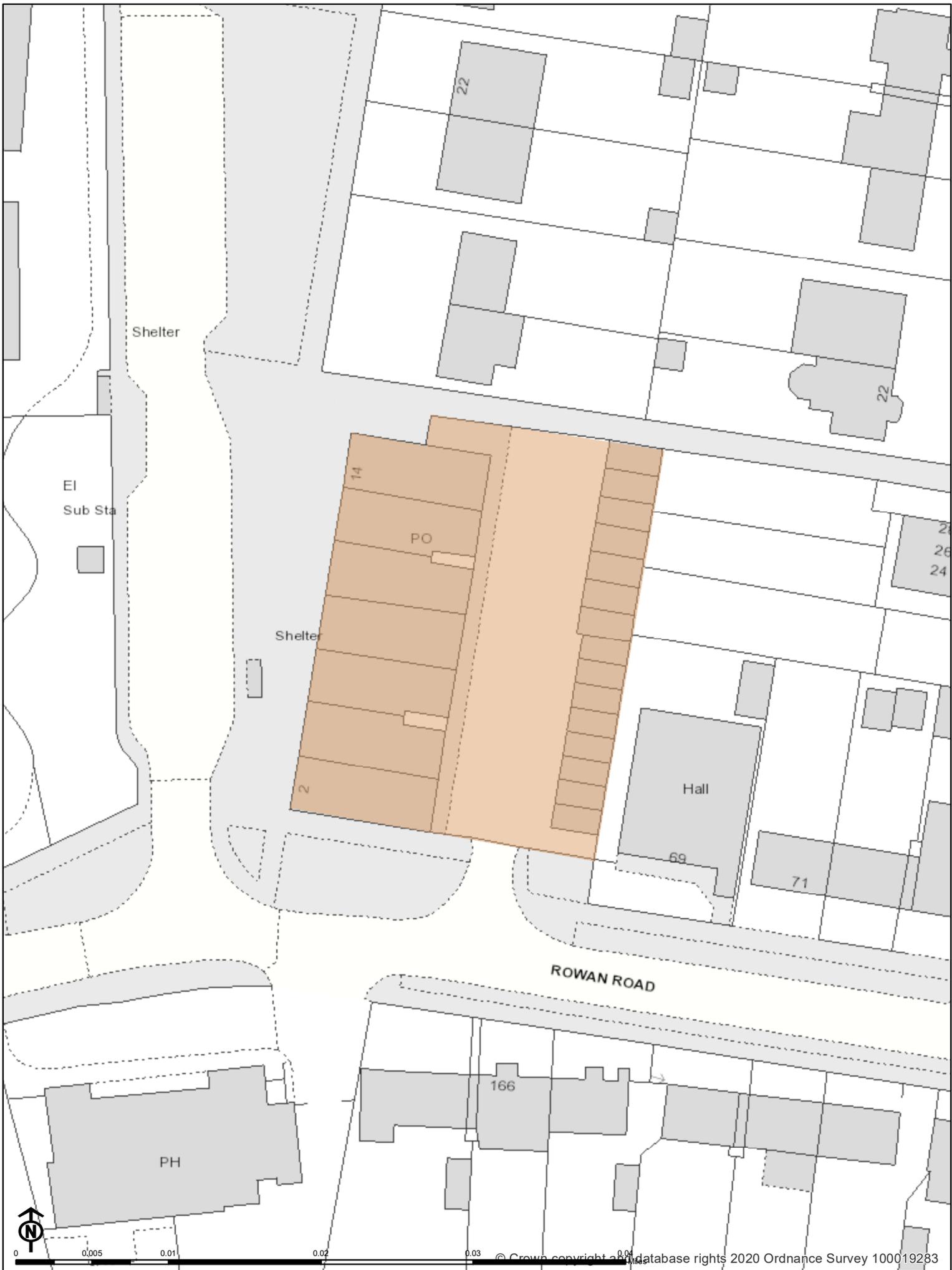




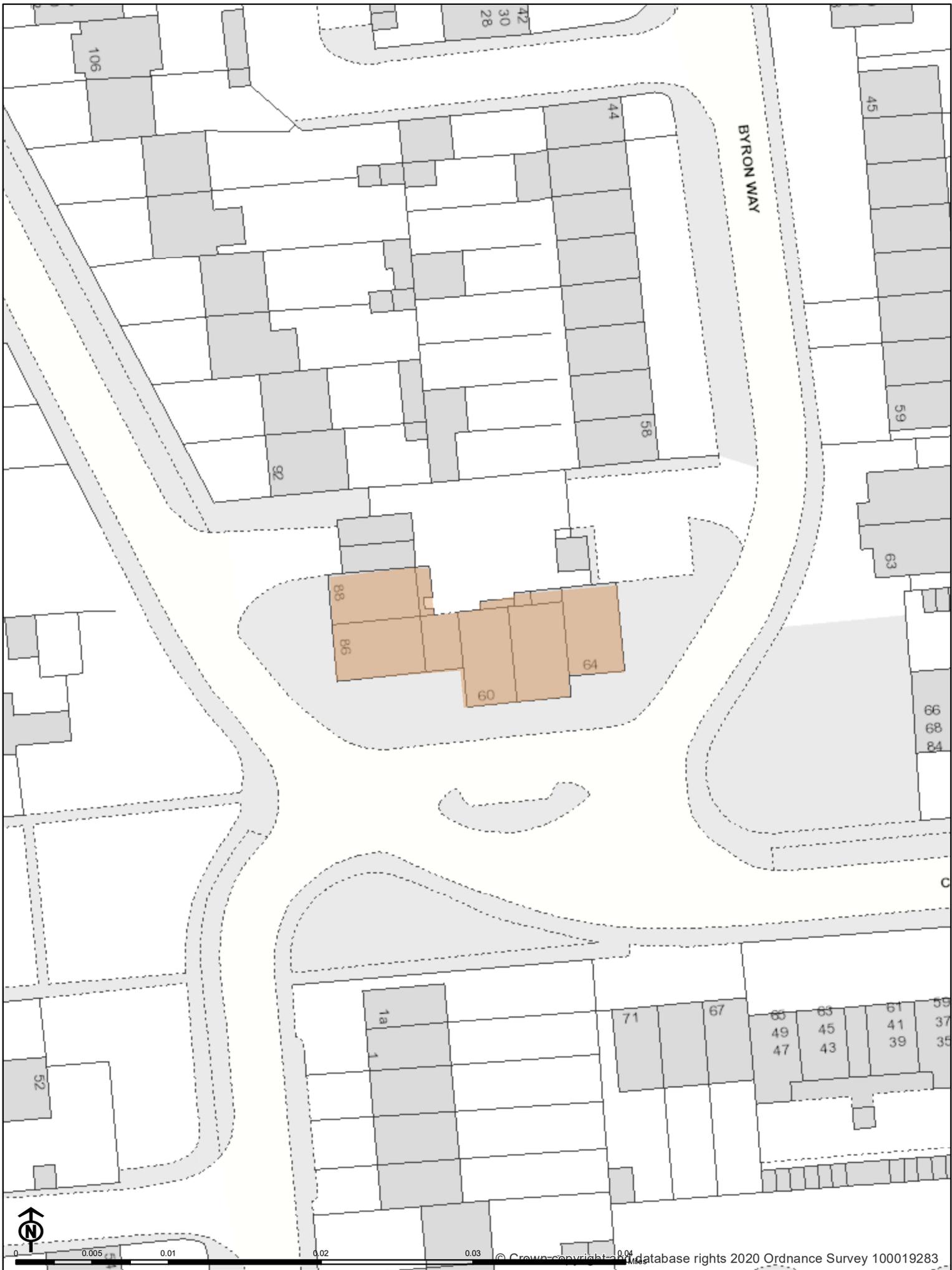


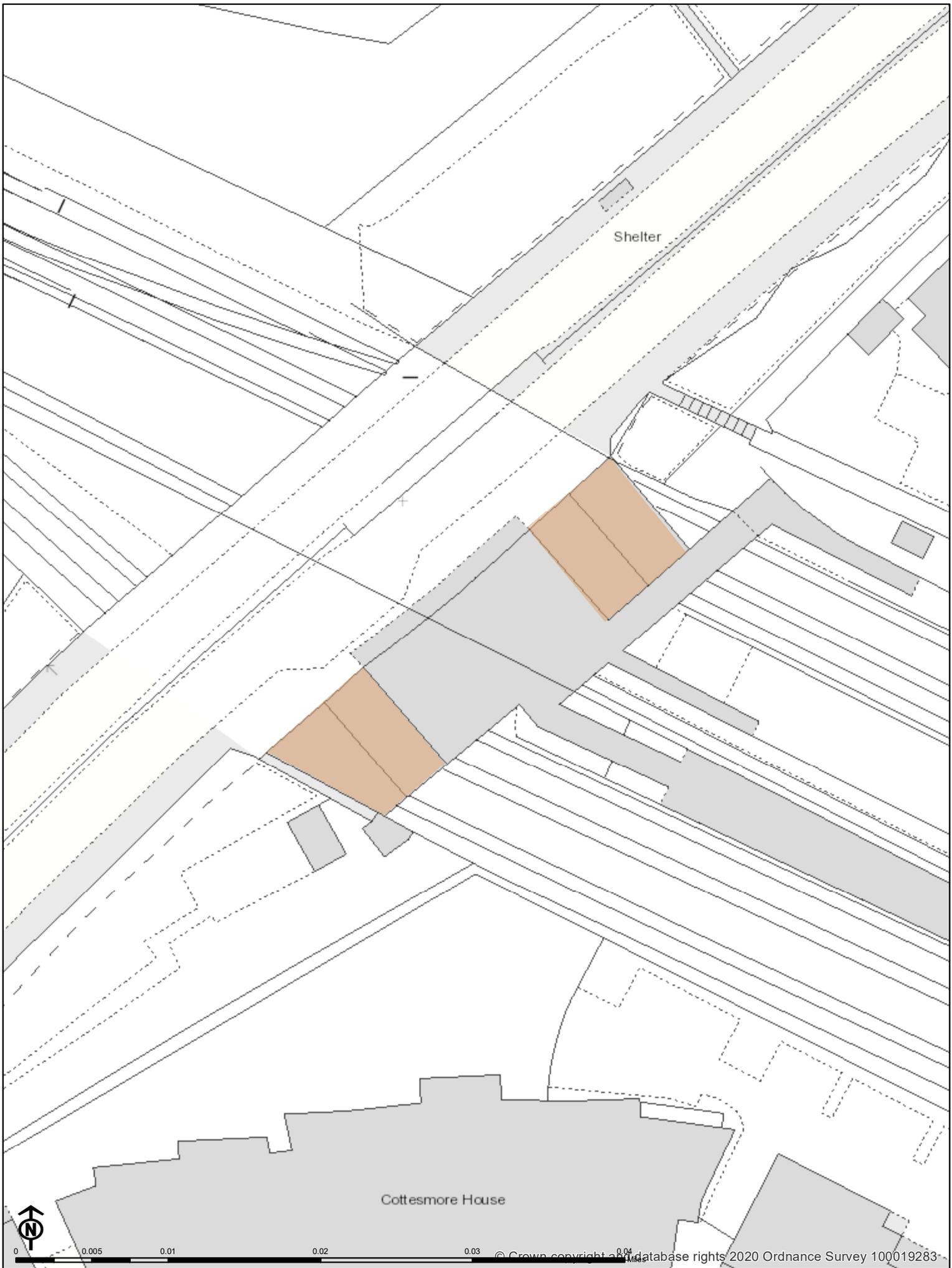
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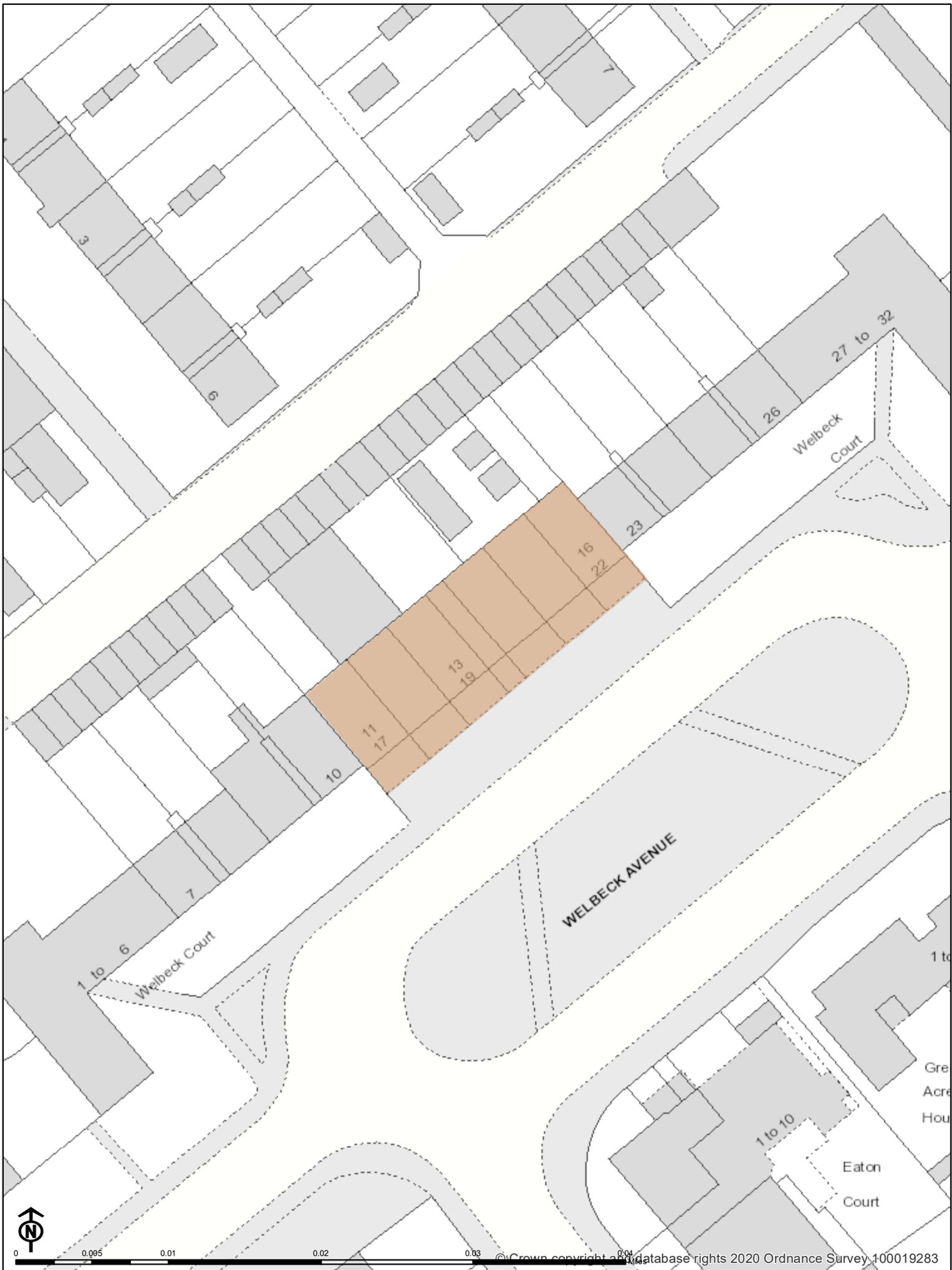




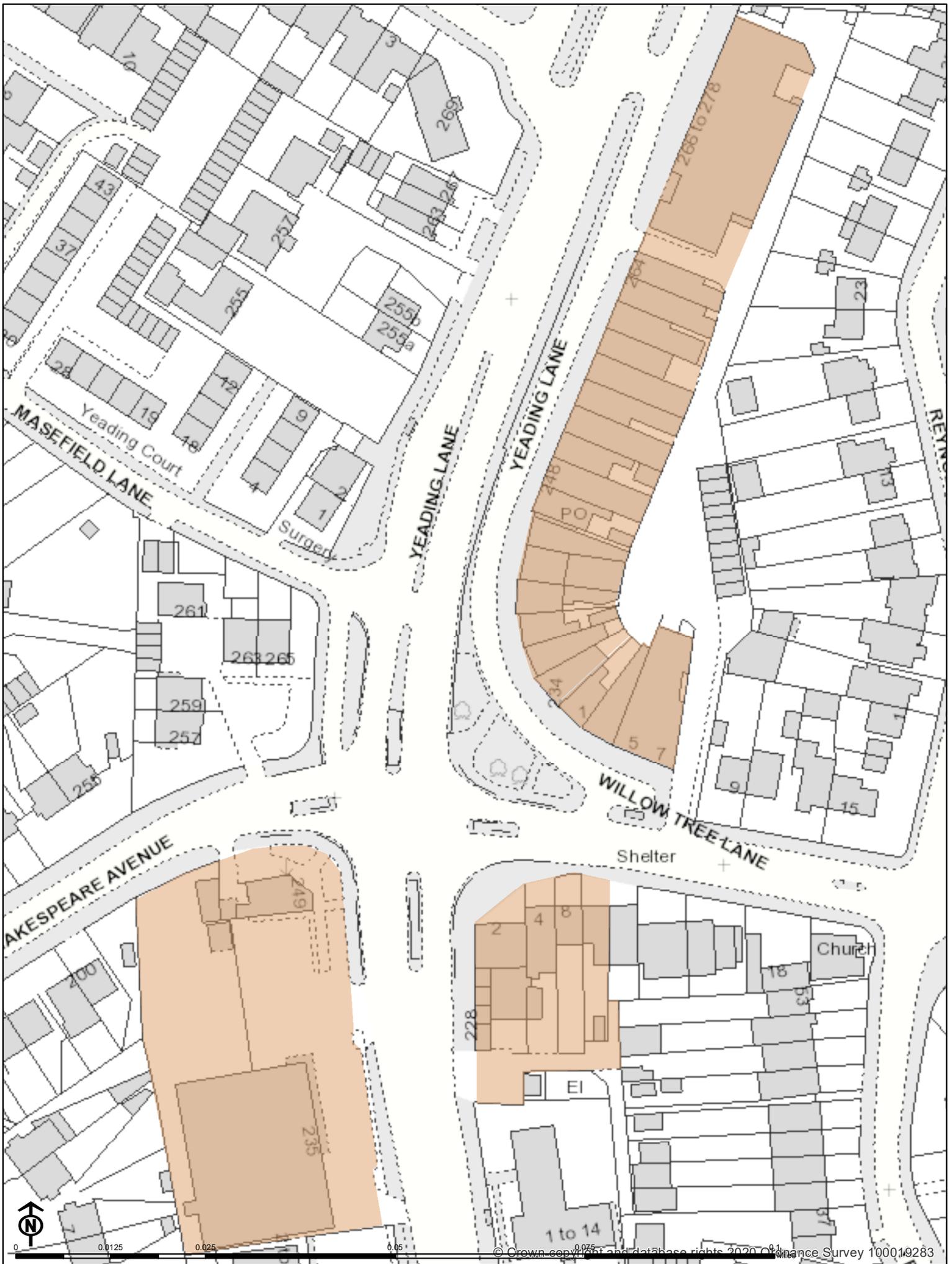


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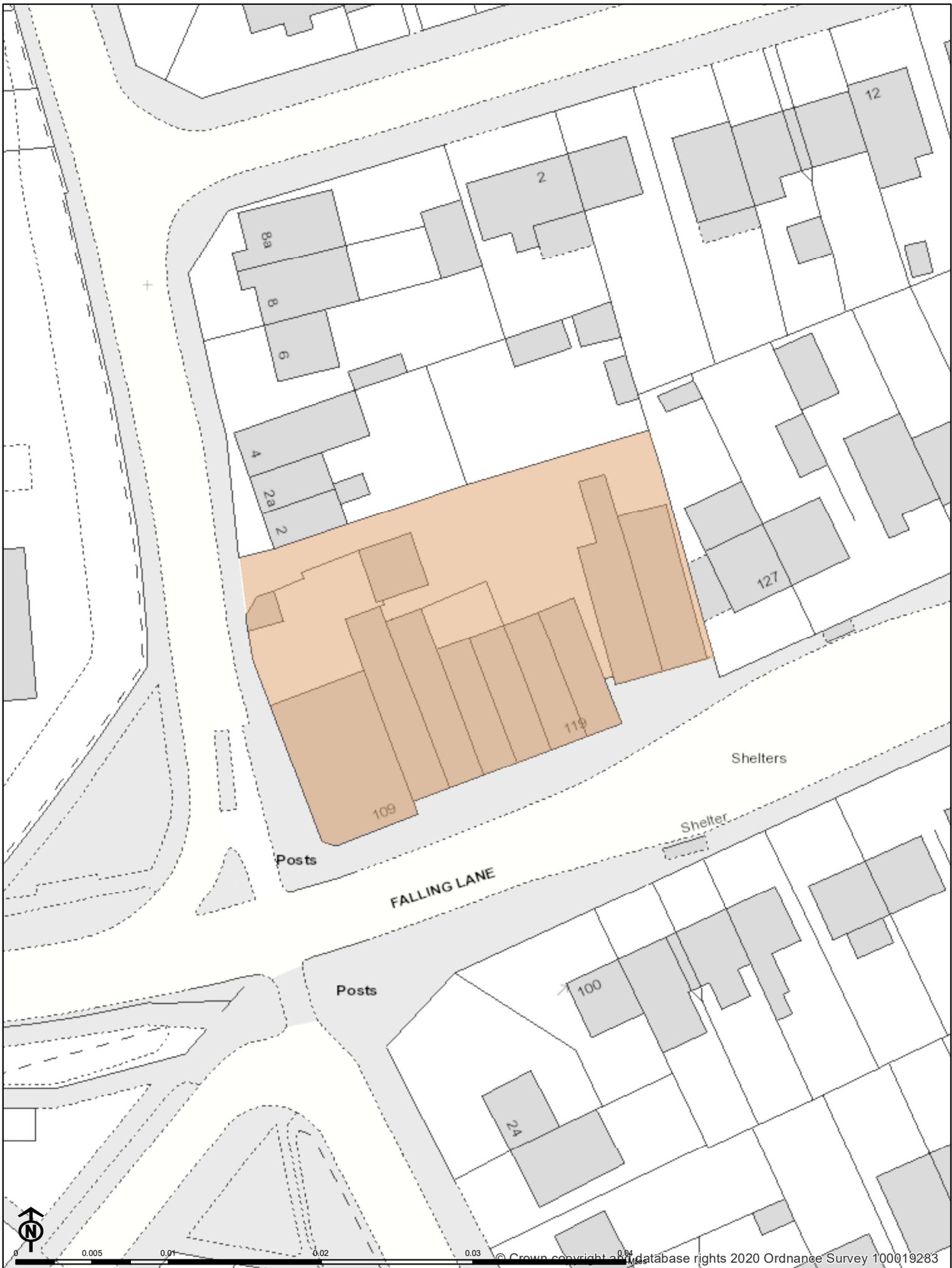


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## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE 2020/2021

*Reporting Officer: Head of Democratic Services*

### INTRODUCTION

In line with good governance, it is essential that the Audit Committee not only meets and considers the reports and information within its remit, but also ensures that the wider Council is aware of the breadth and extent of the work it does on its behalf. The annual report of the Audit Committee 2020/21 contains information to be presented to Council, so that it can be assured that the Audit Committee is acting appropriately on its behalf.

The annual report also provides an opportunity for Council Members to review the work of the Audit Committee and comment on its contribution and performance. The terms of reference of the Committee are detailed in the report.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the annual report of the Audit Committee 2020/21, attached at Appendix A, be noted.**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This report summarises, for the Council, the work of the Audit Committee during 2020/21 and how it has undertaken its responsibilities for reviewing the key areas within its remit. Specifically, these include:

- Internal Audit (including internal controls);
- Risk Management;
- Corporate Governance;
- External Audit;
- Counter Fraud; and
- Financial reporting process of the Statement of Accounts.

### MEMBERSHIP

The Committee membership is shown below. They have a wide range of skills and bring both technical and professional experience to the role.

- Mr. John Chesshire - Independent Chairman - Appointed 2 November 2017;
- Cllr Duncan Flynn - Vice Chairman
- Cllr John Morgan
- Cllr Tony Eginton
- Cllr Raymond Graham

The current Independent Chairman has approximately 20 years' experience in the public and private sector working in the internal audit, risk management, business improvement and governance fields.

## ACTIVITIES

During the course of meetings Members are briefed on relevant issues in relation to local government accounts, External Audit, Internal Audit, Use of Resources, Anti-Fraud arrangements, and Risk Management.

The role delegated by the Council to the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance over the governance, risk management and the system of internal control in operation at the Council. The Audit Committee has fulfilled this role by undertaking the key activities including:

- Oversight of Internal Audit
- Oversight of External Audit
- Prevention and Detection of Fraud and Corruption
- Risk Management
- Approval of Financial Accounts
- Corporate Governance

Further information about these key activities are detailed in the report.

In line with best practice, an independent review of the Committee's effectiveness has been conducted by Internal Audit. This review provided 'reasonable' assurance that the Committee is operating effectively.

The Audit Committee considers that it has continued to make a significant contribution to ensuring that the key elements of the governance framework are given proper consideration and are appropriately challenged. It will continue to develop this role and contribute to strengthen internal control, risk management and governance throughout the authority.

Accordingly, in compliance with the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2021, the Audit Committee has reviewed the effectiveness of the systems of internal control by receiving regular reports from these areas above that contribute to the control framework.

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None.

# BUSINESS ASSURANCE

## Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2020/21

16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### Report Distribution

#### Meeting / Date

Audit Committee ~ 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Council ~ 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021



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LONDON

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In line with best practice guidance, the Audit Committee is required to submit an annual report to Council, outlining the Audit Committee's activities over the previous year. This report summarises, for the Council, the work of the Audit Committee during 2020/21 and how it has undertaken its responsibilities for reviewing the key areas within its remit. Specifically, these include:
- Internal Audit (including internal controls);
  - Risk Management;
  - Corporate Governance;
  - External Audit;
  - Counter Fraud; and
  - Financial reporting process of the Statement of Accounts.
- 1.2 Accordingly, in compliance with the Accounts and Audit (Amended) (England) Regulations 2021 the Audit Committee has reviewed the effectiveness of the systems of internal control by receiving regular reports from these areas above that contribute to the control framework. This report provides an opportunity for Council Members to review the work of the Audit Committee and comment on its contribution and performance.

## 2. Key Activities of the Audit Committee

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Audit Committee are attached at **Appendix A**. These were **last amended** at the Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017, following an Internal Audit review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee. The updated ToR provides clarity and clearly outlines the different roles and responsibilities that surround the Council's wide-ranging audit and governance activities; strategy and policy (Leader/ Cabinet Members), operational/ service delivery (Officers) and review and monitoring (Audit Committee). There have been no changes required to the ToR since May 2017, but they are reviewed regularly as part of Internal Audit's work on reviewing the effectiveness of the Audit Committee.
- 2.2 **During the 2020/21 municipal year the Audit Committee met on four occasions:** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021, and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Over 2020/21 the Audit Committee continued to be chaired by John Chesshire as the independent member, with Cllr Goddard as Vice-Chairman along with Cllr Eginton as Opposition Lead and Cllr Lavery and Cllr Flynn as other committee members. Following a change to the leadership of the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021, Cllr Goddard and Cllr Lavery stepped down from Audit Committee due to their appointment to the Cabinet and were replaced by Cllr Graham and Cllr R Mills. Additionally, during the year, Cllr Morgan attended a meeting as a substitute member. Further details of 2020/21 membership and attendance of the Committee is included at **Appendix B**.
- 2.3 The current **Independent Chairman has over 20 years' relevant experience** in the public and private sectors working in the internal audit, risk management, business improvement and governance fields.
- 2.4 The role delegated by the Council to the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance over the governance, risk management and the system of internal control in operation at the Council. The Audit Committee has fulfilled this role by undertaking the following key activities:
- a) Oversight of Internal Audit**
- The Audit Committee oversaw the activity of the Council's Internal Audit service to assist it in its role of monitoring the internal control, risk management and governance arrangements of the Council's operations. During 2020/21, the Audit Committee reviewed the 2019/20 Annual Internal Audit Report and Head of Internal Audit Opinion Statement, received quarterly progress reports and operational plans, scrutinised Internal Audit performance and approved the 2020/21 Internal Audit Annual Resources Plan.

- An assessment of the Internal Audit Service is required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) to be completed every five years. Hillingdon's Internal Audit Service was last reviewed in 2017/18 and as reported at the time to Audit Committee, Hillingdon was just one of a few Internal Audit services across London to be issued with a **'FULLY CONFORMS' to the PSIAS'** independent opinion. The next External Quality Assurance review of Internal Audit is due to be carried out in 2022/23.
- The Internal Audit Charter was last reviewed and updated then approved by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 (previously April 2018).
- The Audit Committee also reviewed the key findings from Internal Audit reviews and sought explanations from the Head of Internal Audit about the recommendations emanating from 'Limited' or 'No' assurance audits. It monitored the number of outstanding recommendations and was pleased to note a continued collaborative approach between Internal Audit and Management to manage identified risks appropriately.
- The Committee has continued to play an important role in raising the profile of Internal Audit by supporting it in its role of assisting Management in the Council.
- In keeping with good governance arrangements, Members of the Audit Committee have held a private meeting with the Deputy Director of Exchequer Services & Business Assurance.

*The Audit Committee is satisfied that Internal Audit is effective and adds value to the Council.*

#### **b) Oversight of External Audit**

- The Committee has reviewed the activity of the Council's External Auditors (Ernst & Young) to assist it in its role of monitoring the internal control, risk management and governance arrangements of the Council's operations. The Committee has received and considered the external audit plan, received progress updates and reviewed EY performance.
- In November 2020, an unqualified audit opinion was provided by the external auditors on the Council's 2019/20 financial statements.
- In keeping with good governance arrangements, In November 2020, members of the Audit Committee had a private meeting with External Audit.

#### **c) Prevention and Detection of Fraud and Corruption**

- The Council operates a zero-tolerance policy towards all fraud and corruption. Responsibilities for the Council's anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements were transferred to the Business Assurance Counter Fraud Team (BACFT) in August 2017.
- The BACFT carry out a range of criminal and non-criminal investigations, although during the 2020/21 year the BACFT undertook alternative ways of working and operational activities due to the Covid-19 restrictions in accordance with Government guidance.
- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, officers from the BACFT undertook verification checks on local businesses who applied for one of several Covid-19 business grants, following their introduction in April 2020. By the end of 2020/21 over 7,000 verification checks had been completed in conjunction with Exchequer Services. From those checked, the BACFT has instigated recovery action recouping over £460K to date, with a further 3 verifications still under further formal investigation.
- In October 2020, a restructure was implemented in the BACFT with three new sub-teams, each led by an experienced Counter Fraud Manager: the Housing Investigations Unit, Revenues Investigations Unit and Special Investigations Unit. The new structure creates a stronger skills-mix within the BACFT together with efficiencies in case handling, enabling the service to better adapt to emerging fraud risks from the pandemic.
- The Audit Committee has received consolidated quarterly progress reports from the BACFT. The team has responsibility for the oversight of the effectiveness of the Council's policies and procedures to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.

- The National Fraud Initiative (NFI), is embedded in practice in the BACFT through detecting potential fraud by matching electronic data sets within and between public and private sector bodies. Relevant service areas across the Council review the initial data matches and then refer them to the BACFT for investigation (where appropriate to do so).
- A move to a risk-based approach to counter fraud activities was introduced in 2017/18 and is fully embedded across the BACFT. Counter Fraud Analysts within the team gather intelligence and risk assess any referrals before passing them to the counter fraud officers and investigators in the team for further work (where appropriate to do so).
- In 2020/21 the team achieved total loss preventions of £1.04m, against a £1m target.

*The Audit Committee is satisfied with the effectiveness of the Council's counter fraud arrangements during 2020/21 and is looking forward to seeing more loss prevention work being completed in 2021/22.*

#### **d) Risk Management**

- The Audit Committee reviewed the Annual Risk Management Report in October 2020 as part of the Committee's role to independently assure the Council's corporate risk management arrangements. In addition, the Council's Risk Management Policy and Guidance was updated in August 2020.
- The Committee has monitored and reviewed the Council's risk management arrangements during the year through a quarterly risk management report, including the updated Corporate Risk Register. It also sought assurances that action was being taken on risk related issues.

*The Audit Committee is satisfied that these arrangements enable it to provide sufficient challenge to officers around the identification and management of the key risks to the Council.*

#### **e) Approval of Financial Accounts**

- In November 2020, the Audit Committee approved the Council's annual statement of accounts for 2019/20. This included considering whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the external audit of the financial statements that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
- The Audit Committee scrutinised the accounts in some detail and challenged the officers where appropriate. As part of this process the Committee considered the External Auditor's Annual Report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the external audit of the accounts. An unqualified opinion was provided by Ernst & Young in November 2020.

#### **f) Corporate Governance**

- The Audit Committee successfully oversaw the production of the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20 and approved it as part of the Statement of Accounts in November 2020. As at 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the Audit Committee is in the process of providing oversight in relation to the production of the AGS for 2020/21.

### **3. Improvements in the Audit Committee's Effectiveness**

- 3.1 In line with best practice, an independent review of the Audit Committee's effectiveness has been conducted by Internal Audit. This review provided **REASONABLE** assurance that the Committee is operating effectively. The final report was issued on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and is due to be presented to the Audit Committee at its planned meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021.
- 3.2 The Audit Committee is required to submit an annual report to Council to report its activities and attendance throughout the year. It was noted that for 2019/20 this was scheduled to take place but was not carried out due to Audit Committee meetings being cancelled during the difficulties and restrictions brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 3.3 During the 2020/21 year it was identified there are potential gaps in training despite the development of a skills matrix and training development plan for all Audit Committee members during the 2018/19 year. It has been agreed that the skills matrix will be used to highlight any gaps in knowledge of the Committee's remit and training will be undertaken in 2021/22. These initiatives will enable the Audit Committee to perform its duties even more efficiently moving forward.
- 3.4 Following amendments to the Audit Committee's ToR in 2012, concern was expressed at the deletion of the power the Audit Committee had to require senior managers of Council services to attend meetings. The External Auditors have noted that it is unusual for the Audit Committee of a local authority not to have this power. As a consequence, the ToR do not comply fully with best practice, potentially affecting the effectiveness of the Committee.
- 3.5 However, during the 2020/21 year, the Committee is satisfied that there have been no occasions where it believes that this lack of power has hindered its effectiveness. The Audit Committee will consider its ToR and this position during each of its meetings this year.
- 3.6 It is also noted that despite the deletion of the power of the Audit Committee to require senior managers to attend meetings, Members still have the authority to request senior management attendance at meetings. The Audit Committee will consider whether to review its ToR in the year ahead and propose any changes if required.

#### 4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Audit Committee considers that it has continued to make a significant contribution to ensuring that the key elements of the governance framework are given proper consideration and are appropriately challenged. It will continue to develop this role and contribute to strengthen internal control, risk management and governance throughout the authority.
- 4.2 I would like to thank all Members and officers who have been involved in the work of the Audit Committee throughout the past year.

Mr. John Chesshire

**Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee, London Borough of Hillingdon**

16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**APPENDIX A****AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Constitution defines the Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee as:

The Audit Committee's role will be to:

- Review and monitor the Council's audit, governance, risk management framework and the associated control environment, as an independent assurance mechanism;
- Review and monitor the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and/or weakens the control environment;
- Oversee the financial reporting process of the Statement of Accounts.

Decisions in respect of strategy, policy and service delivery or improvement are reserved to the Cabinet or delegated to Officers.

**Internal Audit**

1. Review and approve (but not direct) the Internal Audit Strategy to ensure that it meets the Council's overall strategic direction.
2. Review, approve and monitor (but not direct) Internal Audit's planned programme of work, paying particular attention to whether there is sufficient and appropriate coverage.
3. Through quarterly Internal Audit summary reports of work done, monitor progress against the Internal Audit Plan and assess whether adequate skills and resources are available to provide an effective Internal Audit function. Monitor the main Internal Audit recommendations and consider whether management responses to the recommendations raised are appropriate, with due regard to risk, materiality and coverage.
4. Make recommendations to the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services on any changes to the Council's Internal Audit Strategy and Internal Audit Plans.
5. Review the Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion Statement and the level of assurance this provides over the Council's corporate governance arrangements, risk management framework and system of internal controls.
6. Consider reports dealing with the activity, management and performance of Internal Audit.
7. Following a request to the Corporate Director of Finance, and in consultation with the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, to request work from Internal Audit.

**External Audit**

8. Receive and consider the External Auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
9. Monitor management action in response to issues raised by External Audit.
10. Receive and consider specific reports as agreed with the External Auditor.
11. Comment on the scope and depth of External Audit work and ensure that it gives value for money, making any recommendations to the Corporate Director of Finance.

**APPENDIX A (cont'd)**

12. Be consulted by the Corporate Director of Finance over the appointment of the Council's External Auditor.
13. Following a request to the Corporate Director of Finance, and in consultation with the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, to commission work from External Audit.
14. Monitor arrangements for ensuring effective liaison between Internal Audit and External Audit, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance.

**Article I. Governance Framework**

15. Maintain an overview of the Council's Constitution in respect of contract procedure rules and financial regulations and where necessary bring proposals to the Leader of the Council or the Cabinet for their development.
16. Review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, any Council body or external assurance providers including Inspection agencies.
17. Monitor and review, but not direct, the authority's risk management arrangements, including regularly reviewing the Corporate Risk Register and seeking assurances that appropriate action is being taken on managing risks.
18. Review and monitor Council strategy and policies on anti-fraud and anti-corruption including the 'Raising Concerns at Work' policy, making any recommendations on changes to the relevant Corporate Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
19. Oversee the production of the authority's Annual Governance Statement and recommend its adoption.
20. Review the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and make recommendations to the Corporate Director of Finance on suggested actions to improve alignment with best practice.
21. Where requested by the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services or Corporate Director of Finance, provide recommendations on the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls.

**Article II. Accounts**

22. Review and approve the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from financial statements or from the external auditor that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
23. Consider the External Auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the external audit of the accounts.

**Review and Reporting**

24. Undertake an annual independent review of the Audit Committee's effectiveness and submit an annual report to Council on the activity of the Audit Committee.

**APPENDIX B****AUDIT COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE IN THE 2020/21 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Audit Committee membership and attendance during the 2020/21 municipal year was as follows:

<b>AC Member Name</b>	<b>AC Tenure</b>	<b>2020/21 Meeting Attendance</b>
Mr John Chesshire (Independent Chairman)	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017 to present	100% (all 4 meetings)
Cllr Tony Eginton	5 <sup>th</sup> June 2014 to present	100% (all 4 meetings)
Cllr Duncan Flynn	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2020 to present (Elected Vice-Chairman on 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021)	75% (3 from 4 meetings): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020;</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (as Vice-Chairman);</li> <li>• 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (as Vice-Chairman).</li> </ul>
Cllr Martin Goddard	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2018 to 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	100% (2 from 2 meetings): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 (as Vice-Chairman);</li> <li>• 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (as Vice-Chairman).</li> </ul>
Cllr Raymond Graham	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 to present	100% (2 from 2 meetings): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021;</li> <li>• 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021;</li> <li>• Also attended 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 (as substitute for Cllr Flynn).</li> </ul>
Cllr Edward Lavery	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2019 to 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	100% (2 from 2 meetings): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020;</li> <li>• 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020.</li> </ul>
Cllr Richard Mills	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 to 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	0% (0 from 2 meetings).
Cllr John Morgan	Substitute during the 2020/21 MY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (as substitute for Cllr Mills).</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX B (cont'd)**

Audit Committee Attendance in 2020/21 Municipal Year by Meeting Date:

<b>AC Meeting Date</b>	<b>AC Members Present</b>	<b>Substitutes Present</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	Mr John Chesshire (Independent Chairman) Cllr Martin Goddard (Vice-Chairman) Cllr Tony Eginton Cllr Edward Lavery	Cllr Raymond Graham (for Cllr Duncan Flynn)
24 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Mr John Chesshire (Independent Chairman) Cllr Martin Goddard (Vice-Chairman) Cllr Tony Eginton Cllr Duncan Flynn Cllr Edward Lavery	Not applicable – all Members present.
4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Mr John Chesshire (Independent Chairman) Cllr Duncan Flynn (Vice-Chairman) Cllr Tony Eginton Cllr Raymond Graham	Cllr John Morgan (for Cllr Richard Mills)
20 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Mr John Chesshire (Independent Chairman) Cllr Duncan Flynn (Vice-Chairman) Cllr Tony Eginton Cllr Raymond Graham	None – apologies received from Cllr Richard Mills; no substitute in attendance.

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## QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

**8.1 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR GARDNER TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FAMILIES, EDUCATION AND WELLBEING- COUNCILLOR O'BRIEN:**

Can the Cabinet member confirm that the Hillingdon Youth Council has continued to be a voice for young people in the Borough despite the pandemic? Can she say how many schools in Hayes are involved in the initiative and if the case is that the young people of Hayes are underrepresented, what steps are planned to increase this number, so that the membership of the Youth Council can effectively represent the whole Borough?

**8.2 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PRINCE TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE - COUNCILLOR PALMER:**

What additional mental health support has the Council provided to residents as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic?

**8.3 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR TUCKWELL TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING & REGENERATION- COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

Can the Cabinet Member please update me on the progress of the rollout of the separate Food Waste Collection Service and how this will contribute to the Council's Climate Change Plan?

**8.4 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MAKWANA TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FAMILIES, EDUCATION AND WELLBEING- COUNCILLOR O'BRIEN:**

Could the Cabinet Member please update Council on the number of school places offered to primary and secondary pupils in Hillingdon this academic year?

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## MOTIONS

### 9.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DUNCAN

That this Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes and other developments and, therefore, calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.

### 9.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DHILLON

That this Council is concerned by the number of cases involving unsafe building practices and standards affecting the safety of Hillingdon residents by private building control operators and their practices.

We therefore call upon the Leader and Cabinet Member to examine the issues in Hillingdon and make them known to the government with a request to strengthen the legislation / regulation and accountability of such private building control operators to be on par with those of our own local authority building control services.

### 9.3 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CURLING

That this Council recognises the growing problem of the recreational use of Nitrous Oxide, as a psychoactive substance, across the borough. This is not only harmful to the individuals inhaling it, but it also contributes to public safety dangers associated with people driving whilst under the influence of a psychoactive substance, as well as, anti-social behaviour and huge amounts of littering of disused gas cannisters and balloons.

Although it is illegal to supply and use Nitrous Oxide for this purpose, it remains a considerable problem for the residents of Hillingdon to endure. Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to take some proactive action to achieve some positive results in the following four areas:

- A campaign to raise awareness and discourage the use of Nitrous Oxide.
- Better enforcement action.
- Investigating Illegal Sales.
- Tackling the littering problem.

### 9.4 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CORTHORNE

That this Council welcomes the establishment of the UK Government's "Operation Warm Welcome" programme to ensure that those refugees from Afghanistan who served alongside and assisted British forces and their families are supported as they look to rebuild their lives in the UK.

This Council notes that the UK and, specifically, the London Borough of Hillingdon has a proud history of providing a safe haven and support to those fleeing persecution. The Council gave an early undertaking to receive Afghan families under the Government's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and it is

continuing to work with the Government in support of the national resettlement programme.

This Council notes the considerable responsibility and continuous commitment of the London Borough of Hillingdon in supporting refugees from across the globe given the local authority's status as a port of entry into the UK through Heathrow Airport.

This Council resolves to:

- Support the Government's "Operation Warm Welcome" programme and assist refugee families from Afghanistan as they resettle in the UK.
- Work with national and local charities and partner agencies to ensure that Afghan refugees settling in the London Borough of Hillingdon have access to appropriate support to develop language skills, gain employment and integrate into the life of the borough.
- Provide the children of Afghan refugees settling in the London Borough of Hillingdon with appropriate educational support.
- Work with Government, London Councils, the Mayor of London and landlords to provide appropriate housing for Afghan refugees in the London Borough of Hillingdon without putting further pressure on the demand for social housing.