



**2014**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
AT  
BULMORE HOUSE, BULMORE ROAD,  
CAERLEON, NEWPORT**



**Cardiff Archaeological Consultants  
Report 2014-11**

**Jean-Yves Robic  
July 2014**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
AT  
BULMORE HOUSE, BULMORE ROAD,  
CAERLEON, NEWPORT**

**PLANNING APPLICATION No: 14/0121**

**Report 2014/08**

**Prepared by J.-Y. Robic**

**for**

**Mr & Mrs Thompson  
Agent: Oriel Design Limited**

**July 2014**

## **CONTENTS**

1. *Summary*
2. *Site location and description*
3. *Summary of archaeological potential*
4. *Aims and objectives of the investigation*
5. *Methodology*
6. *The watching brief results*
7. *The finds*
8. *Conclusions*
9. *Acknowledgements*
10. *References*
11. *Appendices*
- 11.1 *Summary list of contexts*
- 11.2 *Monitoring report (Judith Doyle, GGAT)*
- 11.3 *Metallic finds treatment report (Phil Parkes, Cardiff University)*

## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

### **Figures**

- Figure 1: Location plan  
Figure 2: Location plan of the proposed development and of the evaluation area  
Figure 3: Plan of the Roman remains excavated at Great Bulmore Farm (Zienkiewicz 1985, 9)  
Figure 4: Great Bulmore Roman site: proposed landscape interpretation (Yates 2000, 99)  
Figure 5: 2006 evaluations around Great Bulmore Farm (Tuck 2006, 199)  
Figure 6: Proposed development site, 1980s excavation (After Zienkiewicz 1985, fig 7) and 2010 excavation  
Figure 7: Plan of the proposed development and location of the evaluation area  
Figure 8: Plan of the watching brief area  
Figure 9: Sections 01 to 03  
Figure 10: Section 04 to 06  
Figure 11: Plan of the watching brief area, level 2  
Figure 12: Foundation design for the proposed conservatory

### **Plates**

Front cover: The evaluation area from the east

- Plate 1: The evaluation area from the east  
Plate 2: The drain 12 from the west  
Plate 3: The drains 05 and 19 from the east  
Plate 4: The cut feature 07 and upper stone fill 09 (background) from the east  
Plate 5: Detail of the upper stone layer 09 from the west  
Plate 6: Black-burnished ware jar on the edge of context 09 from the west  
Plate 7: Cut feature 03 with drain 05 from the west  
Plate 8: Detail of the stone fill (Drain 05) in context 04 from the west

- Plate 9: The Black-burnished ware jar in context 04 from the south
- Plate 10: Context 16 and 20 in feature 03 from the north
- Plate 11: Section in feature 03 from the west
- Plate 12: Sondage 02 from the north
- Plate 13: The silver coin from context 04
- Plate 14: The Black-burnished ware jar from context 04
- Plate15: Copper-alloy female head (front)
- Plate16: Copper-alloy female head (side)
- Plate17: Copper-alloy female head (back)
- Plate 18: Folded lead sheet from context 08
- Plate 19: Decorated samian ware from context 08
- Plate 20: Rubbing from the decorated samian ware from context 08

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Cardiff Archaeological Consultants, Cardiff Archaeological Consultants  
27 Fair Oak Road, Cardiff CF23 5HH, tel 02920-404 795, [bookmark@ntlworld.com](mailto:bookmark@ntlworld.com);  
12 Seymour Road, Bristol BS7 9HR, tel.0117-9858 109, [m.ponsford@ipresent.co.uk](mailto:m.ponsford@ipresent.co.uk)

## **1. Summary**

*An excavation was conducted in July 2014 in accordance with a written specification for archaeological evaluation at Bulmore House, Bulmore Road, Caerleon, Newport. The entire footprint of the proposed new conservatory was excavated to the top of the archaeological resource and revealed important Roman remains dated to the late 2nd century AD to the early 3rd century AD. The features recorded comprise two drains and two large pits that were only partially excavated. On the basis of the results of the evaluation and of the foundation design, it is concluded and recommended that this evaluation is sufficient to support a positive determination of the proposed planning application.*

## **2. Site location and description**

**2.1** The proposed development site is located at The Bulmore, Bulmore Road, Caerleon, Newport (NGR ST 35996 91491, Figure 1). The application area is located on the south side of Bulmore Road, which at this point follows the line of the Roman road from Usk to Caerleon (RR62a (variant), Sherman and Evans 2004, 38-9, fig.13). It occupies the slopes descending toward the flood plain of the east side of the River Usk to the west of The Forge, Great Bulmore Farm Cottages. The footprint of the proposed development area covers some 65 square metres and is adjacent to the west of Bulmore House at an altitude of 15m (Figure 2). The site is located in the immediate vicinity of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM MM 176) of the Great Bulmore Roman settlement identified since the early 19th century.

**2.2** Cardiff Archaeological Consultants was commissioned to carry out an archaeological evaluation for Mr & Mrs Thompson, following the submission of planning application No. 14/0121 to Newport City Council for alteration and refurbishment works to the existing dwelling including replacing the flat roof with a dual pitch and provision of a timber-framed conservatory.

**2.3** The evaluation was requested to satisfy the requirements of Welsh Office Circular 60/96 and of Planning Policy Wales Fifth Edition 2011. Section 6.5.1 notes:

*"The needs of archaeology and development can be reconciled, and potential conflict very much reduced, if developers discuss their proposals for development with the local planning authority at an early stage. Archaeological assessments commissioned by developers (sometimes as part of a wider Environmental Impact Assessment) can help to provide information on the archaeological sensitivity of a site before submitting a planning application. If important remains are thought to exist at a development site, the planning authority should request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before any decision on the planning application is taken."*

*The results of any assessment and/or field evaluation should be provided as part of a planning application. If this information is not provided, authorities should consider whether*

*it is appropriate to direct the applicant to supply further information, or whether to refuse permission for inadequately documented proposals."*

**2.4** An ordered archive will be deposited with the National Roman Legion Museum, Caerleon.

### **3. Summary of archaeological potential**

#### **3.1 The Fortress**

The legionary fortress was founded by the governor of Britannia, Julius Frontinus in AD 74–5 (Knight 1994). *Legio II Augusta* was probably moved from a fortress at Exeter to construct the new fortress, while a legionary unit may also have been moved from Usk, leaving that site abandoned. Caerleon was nearer the sea and easier to supply, possibly from the military base which probably existed at Sea Mills (*Abone*; Ellis 1987, 100). Caerleon (*Isca*) was the military headquarters for the conquest and subjugation of the Welsh tribes which was completed during the next few years. It was the headquarters of *Legio II Augusta* for a large part of the Roman period.

The fortress occupied a site some 50 acres in extent, which dwarfed the later town of Caerleon until recently. Even now the fortress lies to a large extent outside the town and makes this arguably one of the most important, by being well preserved, of the Roman Empire's legionary fortresses. Originally built of earth and timber, it was rebuilt in stone some 30 years later. Excavations have taken place almost continuously since the 1920s and rescue excavations have become an essential annual event. The Fortress Baths, the amphitheatre and Prysg Field barracks have formed the main focus of excavations but large areas of the fort are now on plan and the layout substantially complete (Wheeler and Wheeler 1928; Nash-Williams 1931; 1932; Boon 1972; 1987; Zienkiewicz 1986). The defences are also well defined and visible to the west and south-west.

After the subjugation of the Welsh tribes, the legion was probably broken up and drafted to other trouble spots or for construction duties, such as the building of Hadrian's Wall from AD 122. Occupation continued in part at *Isca* as shown by excavation of the barracks in the Prysg Field. The continuing importance of the fortress is indicated by the restoration of the headquarters building under the Emperor Severus before AD 211. For much of the second and third centuries, the legion was largely located on the northern frontier of Britain. Works continued at Caerleon, however, including restoration of the south-west gate, remodelling of the amphitheatre and repair of barrack blocks. Roofing tiles were made nearby stamped LEG II AUG ANTO - the 'ANTO' referring to the Emperor Caracalla who granted the title 'Caracalla's Own' to the legion.

A period of political and economic unrest in the mid-3rd century AD meant the withdrawal of most of the troops from the fortress. Nevertheless the fine baths were maintained and other main buildings were at least kept in repair. The seventh cohort was posted back there in AD 253-8. There was further building under the Emperor Aurelian.

The end of the fortress seems to have come when the pirate and usurper Carausius, now in control of Britannia, or his successor Allectus, may have demolished the main buildings to provide materials for a new but smaller fort at Cardiff and the conversion of Caerwent into a fortified settlement. Military occupation may have continued on a much smaller and less formal scale at Caerleon into the 4th century. The late Roman army is often thought to consist mainly of Germanic mercenaries. This may account for the use of the baths as a cattle pen and construction of unmilitary-looking dwellings in the former portico.

The fortress continued to be a visible feature into medieval times. Whether there was continuity between the Roman and later town as an administrative centre is difficult to say (Courtney 1994, 114) but the road system and the existing bridge over the Usk must have played a significant part in later decisions. The church of St Cadoc may have had a pre-Conquest origin. Retaken by the Welsh in Stephen's reign(?), Caerleon served as the centre of a Welsh lordship until captured by William Marshall in 1217. It had a charter by 1290. Given the strength of the Roman defences, there would have been no need to erect town walls. No trace has, however, been found to date of repair or reconstruction in the medieval period. A motte and bailey castle was erected outside the south-east corner of the fortress, probably later partly rebuilt in stone. A 13th-century tower stands adjacent to the Hanbury Arms in Castle Street (Knight 1994).

Extensive rescue excavations were conducted from 1984 in the area to the east and south-east of Tram Road, since developed for housing (ST 34109094; Frere *et al.* 1985, 259; 1986, 366-369 and Figs 3 and 4; 1987, 307 and Fig 4; 1988, 421-2; Frere and Tomlin 1991, 226; Burnham *et al.* 1997, 403; 1998, 372; Evans 2000). This was the civilian settlement (*canabae*) of *Isca*. The main eastern road of the fortress (*via principalis dextra*) led north-eastwards from the fortress gate and its external continuation was lined with 22 civilian buildings of stone and timber.

Channel Archaeology conducted watching briefs at 7 and 12 Broadwell Court, west of the known *canabae*, in 2000 (Channel Archaeology 2000a and b) and Cardiff Archaeological Consultants carried out a watching brief at Caerleon Endowed Infants School in 2004 (Cardiff Archaeological Consultants 2004). No archaeological structures or features were found. An evaluation conducted in 2006 at No 35 High Street confirms that the preserved buried Roman deposits are at a depth of 1.5m (Cardiff Archaeological Consultants 2006). A watching brief carried out at 12 Broadwell Court in 2007 revealed no traces of archaeological deposits although these are likely to be preserved at a lower level (Cardiff Archaeological Consultants 2008a). Cardiff Archaeological Consultants conducted a watching brief and limited excavations during a phased programme of improvements of the driving range area of the Caerleon Municipal Golf Course carried out between April and June 2007. The golf course occupies the low land from the south-west of the *canabae* west wall to the bank of the river Usk. It confirmed the presence of important buried Roman remains along the line of the prolongation of the *via principalis* towards the quays excavated by Boon in the early 1960s (Boon 1978). Evidence for a more sporadic occupation of the land toward the north were also discovered (Cardiff Archaeological Consultants 2008b). A series of 65 postholes were hand excavated for the erection of a fence and gates within the grounds of the Caerleon Endowed Junior School to the north of the Golf course. The new fence is located inside the fortress on the edge of substantial Roman buildings recorded

during a recent Cadw-funded geophysical survey. Evidence for wall lines and floor surfaces and numerous finds was recovered to complement the existing data for the Roman barrack blocks and the industrial workshop complex of the *fabrica* (Cardiff Archaeological Consultants 2008c).

### **3.2 Great Bulmore**

The Roman roadside settlement and associated cemeteries, have been explored through excavation and geophysical survey at Great Bulmore, about 2.0km north-east of Caerleon (NPRN 95647, 301891). The settlement extended about 500-600m along an irregular axial street. It originated, probably as a planned plantation, in the later first century AD and is thought to have been abandoned by the fourth century. Cemeteries are clustered about the settlement, particularly above the road leading to Caerleon. Burials are also known around Abernant to the east (NPRN 275997, 222553)' (RCAHMW a).

Since the discovery of Roman funerary structures in the field immediately west of the Great Bulmore Farm (Lee 1845, 6-7) and the subsequent finds of several cremations and tombstones (Lee 1862, 131), it was though that the area was occupied by one of the fortress cemeteries. In the mid 1970s, the excavation of a water trench in a field some 150 east of the 1815 discovery spot revealed an eroded sculptured fragment of tombstone (Boon 1975, 48). In advance of further work a limited excavation was carried out by GGAT on the same site. It revealed the metalled surface of a Roman road and at Great Bulmore Farm the remains of a building of the 2nd century AD flanking the road. In a later phase the substantial building expanded over the road (Vyner 1976, 36, Vyner 1978, 25-54). The early funerary interpretation of the Roman occupation at Great Bulmore was now revised and Vyner suggested that it was in fact 'a settlement of some size connected to the fortress' (Vyner 1978, 30).

New evidence for a settlement were uncovered in the early 1980s on the site of the new farm of Ysgubor Newydd Farm located some 350m east of the 1976 site, on the south side of Bulmore Road. Five rectangular buildings set at 90° flanked the Roman road that underlies the modern one. A stone sarcophagus was also found to the south of the group of buildings. The occupation was dated from the early 2nd century to the late 3rd century AD (Zienkiewicz 1983, 48-9). Further work on the new farm site partially recorded the plan of three more buildings and four graves. Excavations at Great Bulmore Farm to the east revealed five buildings on the north side of the road (Figure 3). A section of the Roman road was also excavated and shown to have three phases, of which the latest metalling layer sealed a *denarius* of Hadrian (Zienkiewicz 1984, 57). The artefacts indicated that both sites were occupied from the early 2nd century to the late 3rd century. Evidence for industrial activities (iron, bronze and glass working) was found and the finds assemblage suggested a civilian rather than military occupation (Zienkiewicz 1984, 57-8). A watching brief carried out during excavations for two septic tanks at Great Bulmore farm in 1987 exposed pits containing domestic and industrial artefacts probably associated with the Roman settlement (Marvell and Maylan 1987, 48). In 1988, a water trench to the east of Great Bulmore Farm uncovered more evidence of the Roman road buried 1m below the modern road. In front of the farmhouse, the remains of a stone building, sandstone stone slabbing with associated domestic artefacts and a new section of Roman road metalling were recorded (Maynard

1988, 62-3). Two more substantial Roman stone buildings were also identified in an evaluation commissioned by Cadw at Great Bulmore Farm in 1993 (Maynard 1993, 60).

The development in the early 1990s of the Celtic Manor Golf Course toward the river Usk was the beginning of a new series of systematic investigations of the land around Great Bulmore. In 1996 a large field evaluation and geophysical survey confirmed the Roman deposits lay at a depth of 1m below existing ground level but that the Roman settlement of Great Bulmore did not extend into the proposed development. Further east from Great Bulmore a Roman pottery kiln with other attendant activities was excavated on the hill slope overlooking Abernant Farm (Marvell 1996, 74-5).

The topographic and geophysical survey of three fields extending 350m south-west of the Ysgubor Newydd Farm detected probable land boundaries associated with a large stone building. It was tentatively interpreted as a possible Romano-Celtic temple. No further simple strip buildings of the type recorded in the 1983 and 1984 excavations (Zienkiewicz 1983 and 1984) were found. This seems to indicate that the settlement was more dispersed along the Roman road than previously thought and that there were undeveloped areas within the settlement (Young and MacDonald 1999, 103).

Following the field survey to the west of Ysgubor Newydd Farm a large programme of intrusive investigations was carried out on land at Little Bulmore Farm. It confirmed that the Roman occupation was limited to the north and south of Bulmore Road with no features detected on the flood plain to the north or on the steep slopes above the farm to the south. Further sections of the Roman road with associated ditch on its northern side were recorded together with the remains of several stone and timber buildings. To the south and west of the buildings a series of simple cremations were found. Within the cemetery boundaries the remains of a possible Romano-Celtic temple were excavated together with the remains of a mortuary house and a funerary monument on a slab base with fragments of carved tombstone (Yates 2000, 98-99). This new body of evidence prompted an initial interpretation of the possible Roman landscape around Great Bulmore (Figure 4) and also confirmed that the occupation commenced in the mid-2nd century and finished in the early 4th century AD (Yates 2000, 99). Prior to the redevelopment of the farm buildings, a Roman cemetery was partly excavated at Abernant Farm to the east of Great Bulmore during 1997 and 1998 (Mein 1997, 71, Mein 1998, 120). Further excavation in 2003 and 2006 with geophysical survey exposed another nine graves and a boundary ditch. The Roman attribution of the cemetery was confirmed by AMS dating to 20 - 240 AD (Tuck, Leaver and Sorrell 2003, 120-3, Tuck *et al* 2006, 195-8). To the north-east of Abernant Farm the remains of an early medieval forge and a small assemblage of over 100 flints dating from the Mesolithic to the early Bronze Age were discovered (Tuck, Leaver and Sorrell 2001, 123, 151-4). It shows that this part of the eastern side of the Usk Valley was occupied from early prehistoric times to the medieval period. The prehistoric occupation around Abernant Farm was confirmed by the discovery of Bronze Age pottery and prehistoric flint during a field evaluation (Yates 2001, 124).

Three more series of evaluation trenches were excavated to the south of The Bulmore opposite Great Bulmore Farm, to the north-east of Abernant Farm and at Usk road on the Usk floodplain where the only Roman remains (cremation) were found (Yates 2001, 136-7).

A post-medieval artificial platform was recorded on the hill slope above The Bulmore (Yates 2001, 164).

The latest phase of extension of the Celtic Manor resort necessitated the excavations of eight separate areas located around Great Bulmore Farm (Figure 5). All areas produced occupation or structural evidence. These included a pottery kiln (Area 2), a rectangular building with associated paved terrace (Area 3), a drying kiln (Area 4), cremation burials (Area 6), stone-lined cist burial and masonry buildings (Area 8). The foundations of a rectangular building and associated walling probably of post-medieval date were discovered south of Little Bulmore Farm. Area 7, located immediately north of Great Bulmore Farm, revealed a spread of Roman pottery and stratified industrial workings under the alluvial deposits (Tuck 2006, 198-201, 222).

In 2007, Monmouthshire Archaeology carried out a limited evaluation in the footprint of the proposed new development at The Forge, Great Bulmore Farm Cottages, Bulmore Road, Caerleon for Mr T. Barrett (Figure 6). The evaluations uncovered a Roman 'charcoal layer' over the natural and the edge of a pit of which the fill produced Roman Black-burnished ware (Figure 7). Over the Roman layer a sandstone tumble was identified and this was overlain by re-deposited hard clay (Monmouth Archaeology 2007).

The 2007 evaluation of The Forge was completed by Cardiff Archaeological Consultants in 2010. Observation of the preparatory work for the foundation of the proposed extension, revealed undisturbed Roman archaeological levels and walling. Hand excavations that were carried out on the footprint of the extension exposed an occupation layer dated from the 2nd/3rd century AD with a later Roman industrial structure. The west wall of a large building partly recorded in 1983-4 was uncovered and a second north-south building is interpreted as part of a post-Roman structure. A large pit cut through the Roman levels contained the remains of a horse buried in the 17th or 18th century (Cardiff Archaeological Consultants 2010, Robic 2013).

### **3.3 The Bulmore, Bulmore House**

The proposed development site lies to the south of the Roman road and of the Roman buildings excavated at Great Bulmore Farm (Figure 6) in the civil settlement (Figure 4). It is located directly to the south-east of the area marked 13 on Figures 6 and 9 on the map published by Vyner (1978, fig. 2). The precise nature and date of the remains uncovered is vague. The only description is from Vyner in the legend to his Figure 2 (*ibid*, p. VI) and reads '*9, walling in the garden of Great Bulmore House.*'

## **4. Aims and objectives of the investigation**

**4.1** The work should elucidate the character, distribution, extent and importance of the known and potential archaeological remains which exist in the development area (Figure 3) and in particular the mapped remains of a building.

**4.2** On the basis of its contents the evaluation report will provide information which is sufficiently detailed to allow informed decisions to be taken to safeguard the archaeological resource or to propose a mitigation strategy to preserve it by record.

**4.3** The archaeology of the application area as a whole, locally or regionally, will be considered although the evaluation trenches will be confined to the areas that will be directly affected by the new buildings and their services or some aspect of it. Any remains of potential interest should be considered, whatever their date.

**4.4** The excavation and recording will examine and record the archaeological resource within the specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project and comply with the *Code of conduct, Code of approved practice for the regulation for contractual arrangements in field archaeology* and other relevant by-laws of the Institute for Archaeologists. It will result in appropriate published accounts and an ordered, accessible archive.

**4.5** The excavation and its record will provide sufficient information by which to determine the level of importance of surviving archaeological features and place them in an interpretative framework.

**4.6** It is intended to recover artefactual, environmental and technological evidence from the excavated deposits providing cultural and chronological data towards an interpretation of the evaluated site.

## **5. Methodology**

**5.1** The evaluation consisted of the mechanical and hand excavation of the entire footprint of the proposed new conservatory (Figures 2 and 7) to the top of the archaeological resource and limited excavation in the features recorded to ascertain their date and nature. The work was conducted by trained archaeological professionals to the standards set by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994-2008).

**5.2** The evaluation area was positioned to retrieve the maximum archaeological information and to ensure that the archaeological resource is understood. The precise location of the evaluation area is indicated in Figure 7.

**5.3** Written, drawn and photographic records to an appropriate level of detail were made including context sheets, a site diary, three-dimensional field drawings and survey data. Plans and section drawings were at a scale of 1:20. The drawings were cross-referenced to fixed boundaries on the relevant OS plan.

## **6 The evaluation results**

**6.1** The evaluation was carried out by Jean-Yves Robic and Louis Stafford between the 2nd and the 9th of July 2014 under generally dry weather conditions but progress was halted on

several occasions due to flash flooding of the site after thunderstorms. The excavation was monitored on Monday 7th of July by Judith Doyle of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (See report in Appendix 11.2)

**6.2** The evaluation area spanned a concrete slab to the east and the edge of the garden to the west and measured 18m by 15m. The concrete slab (10), its compacted building rubble sub-base (02), top soil (01) and subsoil (14) were mechanically excavated to the top of the archaeological resource. Two small sondages (SD01 and 02) were hand excavated along the northern edge of the evaluation area to try to ascertain the depth of the archaeological resource. Both were stopped when organised remains were uncovered. The whole evaluation area was then hand excavated to defined the archaeological features (Figure 8, Plate 1).

The natural sandy clayey horizon (17) was exposed in three-quarter of the evaluation area and it was overlain by the remains of an occupation layer (15) in the north-west quarter of the area. Two stone built drains (05 and 12) running south-north with the natural slope and three cut features (03, 07 and 23) were indentified and all dated to the Roman period. A modern drain pipe for the evacuation of the rainwater and its brick surround was recorded in the north-east corner and left *in situ* (Figure 8).

**6.3** The drain 12 was exposed in the north-western corner of the evaluation area and in the sondage SD01. A linear section measuring 5.50m long and orientated south-west to north-east was exposed and recorded (Figure 8, Plate 2). The drain was a narrow channel 0.50m wide with sides build of small flat sandstones, brick fragments and large amphora sherds (Figure 9, sections 2 and 3). Its base was formed by a compacted layer of yellowish mortar with charcoal and broken up pottery sherd. No evidence of an upper cover for the drain was found but it is likely that it was formed by flat sandstone caps resting on the side walls. The sandstone tumble (22) to the west of the drain may also be the remains of the upper course of the side walls.

To the east of drain 12 and in the centre of the evaluation area another drain (05) was recorded and partly excavated (Figure 8, Plate 3). It was of similar construction and size to 12 but had retained its capping stones. It runs from the south-east to the north and was 10m long. The drain channel was covered with the building rubble 02 of the concrete slab sub-base (Figure 10, section 6). It is likely that the drain had been uncovered during the preparatory ground works before the installation of the concrete slab and purposely filled at this time to avoid subsidence.

**6.4** Three cut features (03, 07, 23) were uncovered in the southern part of the area. The sub-rectangular feature 07 was the largest, measuring 5.50m east-west by 7.50 north-south and was cut in the natural ground 17 (Figure 8). The feature was not excavated and only superficially cleaned. It revealed a brown fill (08) with abundant sherds of pottery topped by a layer of sandstone (09) and large fragment of amphora (Figure 9, section 01 and 02, Plates 4 and 5). No visible organisation could be seen in the upper stone layer 09. On the north-western edge of the feature the sherds of a small complete Black-burnished ware jar were recovered. The jar may have been part of the upper stone layer 09 and was embedded in the fill 08 rim first (Figure 8, SF 4, Plate 6).

To the east of 07 a smaller circular pit (23) was indentified (Figure 8). It was 2.50m diameter and had been re-cut by the drain 05 and another large feature (03). This feature was not excavated and its upper fill (24) was similar to that of feature 07.

To the east of 23 another large sub-rectangular cut feature was recorded. It measured 6.50m east-west and 7m north-south. The feature was partially excavated (Figure 8, Plate 7). The excavation of the upper brown fill (04) revealed in its centre and in the same alignment as the drain 05 a number of medium to large sandstone laid flat forming a platform with vertical sandstones to the north (Plate 8). Close to the south-west corner of the feature a large un-broken Black-burnished ware jar with the base missing was recorded (Figure 8, SF 2, Plate 9). A silver coin of Faustina II (under Marcus Aurelius) struck between 161 and 175 AD was found just below the sandstone platform (Figure 8, SF 1). Further limited excavation was carried out to the south of the sandstone platform to try to ascertain the stratigraphy of the feature and its total depth (Figure 10, section 05, Figure 11 and Plate 10). The section clearly shows a tipping line of a thin layer of charcoal rich soil (16) overlaying a dark brown deposit of sandy clay (20). The excavation was terminated without reaching the base of the feature (Plate 11). The charcoal rich layer 16 produced a small copper alloy hollow-cast female head, probably part of a small statue (Figure 10, SF 03).

**6.5** The sondage SD02 was excavated to try to ascertain the depth of the occupation layer 15 located the north-west quarter of the excavation area (Figure 8, Plate 12). The section show a minimum depth of 0.30m but the excavation was stopped when possible organised Roman remains were reached. It consisted of a spread of sandstones (22) with a larger one located on the south edge of the sondage (Figure 10, section 04). A large fragment of amphora was also recovered from this layer. It is likely that the horizon 15 covered the whole of the evaluation area but was totally removed for the installation of the concrete slab 10 and may have been eroded below the subsoil 14.

**6.6** The relative chronology of the features was clear and three phases of occupation could be defined. The earlier feature was the sub-circular pit 23. In phase 2 the large sub-rectangular pit 03 re-cut the pit 23. The western pit 07 may also have been cut at this time. The two drains 05 and 12 were built during phase 3. The interpretation of the feature is difficult due to the limited extent of the watching brief area and the limited excavation in the features except for the drains. The pit 03 had the typical multi-layered fills with tip lines usually associated with a rapid backfilling event. Its primary function is unknown. The features 07 and 23 were not excavated.

## **7 The finds**

All pottery sherds and other artefacts recovered have been cleaned and marked. The pottery sherds have been sorted and quantified by broad categories using an assessment table (See Table 1 below ) and diagnostic fragments studied to provide possible dates for relevant contexts. Specialist reporting on the pottery was not necessary for this report but could be carried out at a later stage.

All other artefacts were also quantified and all finds of iron, lead, copper alloy and silver were sent to Cardiff Conservation Services, Cardiff University under the care of Phil Parkes. All objects were X-rayed and assessed (See Treatment Record in appendix 11.3). The silver coin and copper alloy female head were cleaned to allow identification.

A rapid overview of the type of artefacts and quantities recovered by contexts is given in table 1.

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context:

Context	01	02	04	08	09	14	15	16	22	Total
<b>Pottery (sherds)</b>										
Black-burnished ware			20	22	3	2	4	3		54
Other reduced fabric			16	17	3	4	2	1		43
Oxydised fabric			9	7	7	11	4			38
Samian ware			3	4			1			8
Mortaria				1						1
Tile / Brick / Fired Clay			9		12		5			26
Amphora			16	12	9		8		1	46
Post-medieval	1	5								6
Total:	1	5	73	63	34	17	24	4	1	222
<b>Iron</b>										
Long nail			3	2	1					6
Short nail			7	4				4		15
slag				2	1					3
Object object			3	1			1			5
Total:	0	0	13	9	2	0	1	4	0	29
<b>Lead</b>										
Sheet				1						1
Other object										0
Total:	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Copper alloy</b>										
Coin										0
Other object								1		1
Total:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Silver</b>										
Coin			1							1
Other object										0
Total:	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Glass</b>										
Vessel			1	2		1		1		5
Window Glass								1		1
Total:	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	6
<b>Bones</b>										
Animal			5							5
Human										0
Total:	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

## 7.1 The pottery

The assemblage was relatively small and fragmented with 222 sherds recovered from 9 contexts. The pottery consisted largely of reduced fabrics with Black-burnished ware (BB1) predominating .. Two almost complete small jars were recovered from contexts 04 and 08

(Plate 13). The Other Reduced Fabric category formed the second largest group but it was not possible to distinguish South Wales grey ware due to the fragmentation of the sherds and the lack of large diagnostic pieces. The oxidized fabric was the third most important group with 38 sherds mostly from water jug. A few fragments retained remains of an external white slip. Amphorae were also well represented and nearly all fragments were from Dressel 20 type vessels with one characteristic 2nd- century rim in context 04 (Tyers 1996, 88). One large fragment of a complete profile of a Caerleon ware *mortarium* was recovered from context 08. It was similar to the Type 3 published by Evans from excavations in the Caerleon *canabae* (Evans 2000, 269-270) and dates from 50 to 180 AD. The samian ware and other fine wares were poorly represented in the assemblage with only eight fragments, of which only two can be identified as form Drag. 37. One badly abraded sherd of possibly South Gaulish fabric was decorated with a hunting scene under the traditional ovolo frieze below the rim from context 08 (Plates 14 and 15). Two stamps were tentatively identified as a boar galloping to right (Oswald 1981, no 1668) and a nude man running to the right (Oswald 1981, no 688) pursued by an un-identified animal (dog?). Both stamps may have been used during the 2nd century AD. Two fragments of Nene Valley Ware beaker with under-slip barbotine decoration probably from the late 2nd to early 3rd century AD. (Tyers 1996, 173-175) comes from context 04.

A number of fragments of bricks and roof tiles were also recovered together with fragments of fired clay probably belonging to the walls or floor of oven or kiln. From the rapid study of some diagnostic pieces from the pottery assemblage it seems possible to date the pottery globally from the 2nd half of the 2nd century to the first half of the 3rd century AD. As the features were either not or only partially excavated it is not possible to offer a date for individual features or contexts. Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil layer 01 and late 19th- to early 20th-century coarse and fine wares were found in the demolition rubble 02 used to build the concrete slab.

## **7.2 The metalwork (See appendix 11.3 for details of treatment)**

Metal finds were abundant and varied in relation to the limited surface excavated. Iron finds were most frequent and are present in the form of short or long construction nails in nearly all the contexts. Two fragments of iron sheet and an object in the shape of a tapering metal strip with a rectangular tang at 90° to the strip at the narrower end were uncovered in context 04. Two iron slag fragments were recovered from context 08 and one from context 09.

The only coin recovered from the excavation came from context 04 (Plate 16). After cleaning it was identified by Alex Fallow of Cardiff University as:

'Denomination: AR Denarius  
Issuer: Faustina II (Under Marcus Aurelius)  
Issue Date: 161-175 AD (Reece Period 8 161-180)  
Weight: 1.9grams  
Diameter: 19mm  
Die Axis: 12 o'Clock'

Obverse Inscription: FAVSTINA AVGVSTA Draped Bust facing Right  
Reverse Inscription: HILARITAS (Personification of Rejoice) Standing Left Holding Long Palm and Cornucopia

RIC No. (Roman Imperial Coins Volume III): 686 P.269  
BMCRE No. (Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum Volume IV): 100

TPQ is 161 as that is the earliest the coin was supposedly struck. In theory the coin could have circulated realistically up to around about c. 270 AD by which time silver debasement meant that silver *denarii* were too intrinsically valuable to circulate (the closer to that date the less likely especially after the debasement of the 250s and 60s). Anything after that would be highly unlikely. The most likely date for deposition being the 160s-230s. The coin is slightly underweight too which may be because it started to crystallise in the ground or the copper content has seeped out of the coin due to soil conditions. That being said this coin would have been of decent purity when struck (approximately 70-80%).<sup>1</sup>

The only copper alloy object was recovered from the charcoal rich deposit 16 below context 04 in pit 03. It is a 21mm long, hollow-cast, small female head. The facial features are crudely modelled but well defined. The hair on the back of the head is represented by intersecting lines. The frequency of the lines decrease from the neck to the top of the head (Plates 17 to 19). Parallels have not yet been found but it is likely that it was part of a small statue representing a household deity or *lar*. It is difficult to date it but it is stratigraphically from a deposit preceding that which produced the silver coin. They could both belong to the same backfilling event, however, possibly dated to the second half of the 2nd to the first half of the 3rd century AD.

A folded piece of lead with the remains of small holes was found in context 08 (Plate 20). It was interpreted after cleaning as a piece of lead covering that had been fixed with iron nails or tacks to another object (probably made of wood).

### 7.3 The glass

Only six fragments of blue or pale green glass were found. Most of them were fragments of glass vessels with a single fragment of window glass with grozed edge in context 16. Also in context 16 was the circular rim with 10mm aperture of a perfume or unguent bottle. None could be dated due to the their extreme fragmentation

### 7.4 The bones

Bones is surprisingly absent from the all contexts save for five small burnt fragments recovered from context 04. As shell is also totally absent, it is likely that the soil conditions are inimical to the preservation of organic material.

## **8 Conclusions**

**8.1** The evaluation not only confirmed the presumption of a Roman occupation of the proposed development site but also that the installation of a modern concrete slab had impacted on the buried archaeological resource. The Roman cut features could be interpreted as pits probably associated with domestic settlement or as industrial features associated with a workshop or industry. The interpretation of the features is affected by the limited extent of the excavation but the work confirmed that the Roman occupation extended to the south of the area studied in the 1980s.

**8.2** To allow for the preservation *in situ* of the archaeological resource and to minimise the impact of the groundworks for the proposed conservatory, it is proposed to suspend the new floor slab on five concrete piers (Figure 12).

**8.3** On the basis of the results of the evaluation and of the design of the foundations for the floor slab (Figure 12), it is concluded and recommended that this evaluation is sufficient to support a positive determination of the proposed planning application and that the proposed suspended floor slab will be adequate to mitigate the impact of the proposed new development on the buried archaeological resource.

**8.4** It is recommended that the four foundation piers be excavated by trained archaeologists in order to mitigate the impact on the buried archaeological resource and to record that resource.

## **9 Acknowledgements**

The author is pleased to acknowledge the help and assistance of Steve Price of Oriel Design Limited in providing information and plans, of Louis Stafford during the watching brief, of Judith Doyle from the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust for monitoring the excavation, of Phil Parkes and Alex Fallow for their contributions and of Mike Ponsford, CAC, for editing the report.

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#### **Digital resources:**

RCAHMW a, Coflein database, <http://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/307884/details>.

## 11 Appendices

### 11.1 Summary list of contexts

No.	Location	Brief description	Relationship	Notes
01		Topsoil	Over 14	21th C
02		Sub-base for concrete slab	Under 10	20th C
03		Cut for pit	Over 01	2nd/3rd C. AD
04		Upper fill of 03	Over 16	2nd/3rd C. AD
05		Cut for drain	In 17	2nd/3rd C. AD
06		Stone drain	In 05	2nd/3rd C. AD
07		Cut for pit	In 17	2nd/3rd C. AD
08		Lower fill of 07	Under 09	2nd/3rd C. AD
09		Upper fill of 07	Over 08	2nd/3rd C. AD
10		Concrete slab	Over 02	20th C
11		Pipe trench	In 17	20th C
12		Cut for drain	In 15	2nd/3rd C. AD
13		Stone drain	In 12	2nd/3rd C. AD
14		Subsoil	Under 01	
15		Occupation layer	Under 14	2nd/3rd C. AD
16		Fill of 03	Under 04	2nd/3rd C. AD
17		Natural ground	Under 02, 15	Geology
18		Aggregate around pipe	In 11	20th C
19		Plastic drain pipe	In 11	20th C
20		Lower fill of 03	Under 16	2nd/3rd C. AD
21	SD 01	Stone tumble	Under 14	2nd/3rd C. AD
22	SD 02	Occupation layer (floor ?)	Under 15	2nd/3rd C. AD
23		Cut for pit	In 17	2nd/3rd C. AD
24		Fill of 23	In 23	2nd/3rd C. AD

## 11.2 Monitoring report (Judith Doyle, GGAT)

Our Ref: NEW 1252/JBHD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PLANNING

Head of Planning Services  
Newport City Council  
Civic Centre  
Newport  
NP9 4UR

8<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Dear Sir

### Archaeological Evaluation: The Bulmore, Bulmore Road, Caerleon.

The Curatorial Division of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, on behalf of Newport City Council carried out a monitoring inspection of the archaeological evaluation being undertaken at the above on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014. Following this inspection we make the following short report to you. A copy of this report has also been forwarded to Cardiff Archaeological Consultants.

The purposes of monitoring may be summarised as follows

To ensure the maintenance of high archaeological standards and best practice based on the Standards in British Archaeology issued by the Institute for Archaeologists

To ensure compliance with planning regulations and requirements

To ensure compliance to the agreed specifications

To ensure the relevance of the further information gained by the work to the ongoing planning process

To ensure that any recommendations made by the archaeological contractor are reasonable in planning terms

To ensure that any further recommendations resulting from the work that are made by the Local Planning Authority (based on the advice of their curatorial archaeological advisers) are founded on detailed knowledge and are reasonable in planning terms.

To help formulate, where required, an archaeological mitigation strategy, which could protect the archaeological resource whilst enabling the permitted development.

If you require clarification about any of the matters raised in this report, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

Judith Doyle BA MIfA  
Acting Archaeological Planning Manager

cc. Jean-Yves Robic, Cardiff Archaeological Consultants



Glamorgan-Gwent  
Archaeological Trust  
Limited  
Heathfield House  
Heathfield  
Swansea SA1 6EL  
Tel: (01792) 655208  
Fax: (01792) 471469  
[www.gpat.org.uk](http://www.gpat.org.uk)  
email: [curatorial@gpat.org.uk](mailto:curatorial@gpat.org.uk)

Registered Office: As above  
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A Company Limited by Guarantee  
without Share Capital  
Registered Charity No. 505609

MONITORING REPORT

Site: The Bulmore, Bulmore Road, Caerleon

LPA: Newport City Council

Pl. App. No. 14/0121 & 14/0122

Contractor: Cardiff Archaeological Consultants

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Weather: Overcast & drizzle

A visit was made to the above site by Judith Doyle, Acting Archaeological Planning Manager, of the Curatorial Division, Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust to monitor the archaeological evaluation. Jean-Yves Robic of Cardiff Archaeological Consultants the archaeological contractor was present during all aspects of the monitoring visit; Steve Price of Oriel Design, the architect, and Mike Boucher, the engineer were also present.

Following the approval of the Specification for Archaeological Evaluation, an area the footprint of the proposed conservatory adjoining the house was opened which showed that the ground had been cut way along the valley orientation probably to create a terrace for the construction of the house in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The western part, covered by colluvium, was less disturbed although archaeological deposits were encountered across the site, the highest at 0.3m below the ground level, with two drains and a centrally located stone spread being visible. There was a darker matrix around the spread and at the south western corner, from which Roman pottery including part of a mortaria, fragments of folded lead and other finds were recovered. Potentially, the spread and drains may relate to a previous structure possibly a kiln. In discussion with the engineer and architect, it is their view that the archaeological work has reached a depth from which the identified archaeological resource can be protected in the central area by geotextile matting and, and four pits dug in the corners to provide a sound base for the foundation. This work will have an impact on the archaeology but as the evaluation has identified existing archaeological features has provided sufficient information so that the archaeological remains in part of the site can be preserved in situ, work on the foundation pits can be conditioned to enable preservation by record.

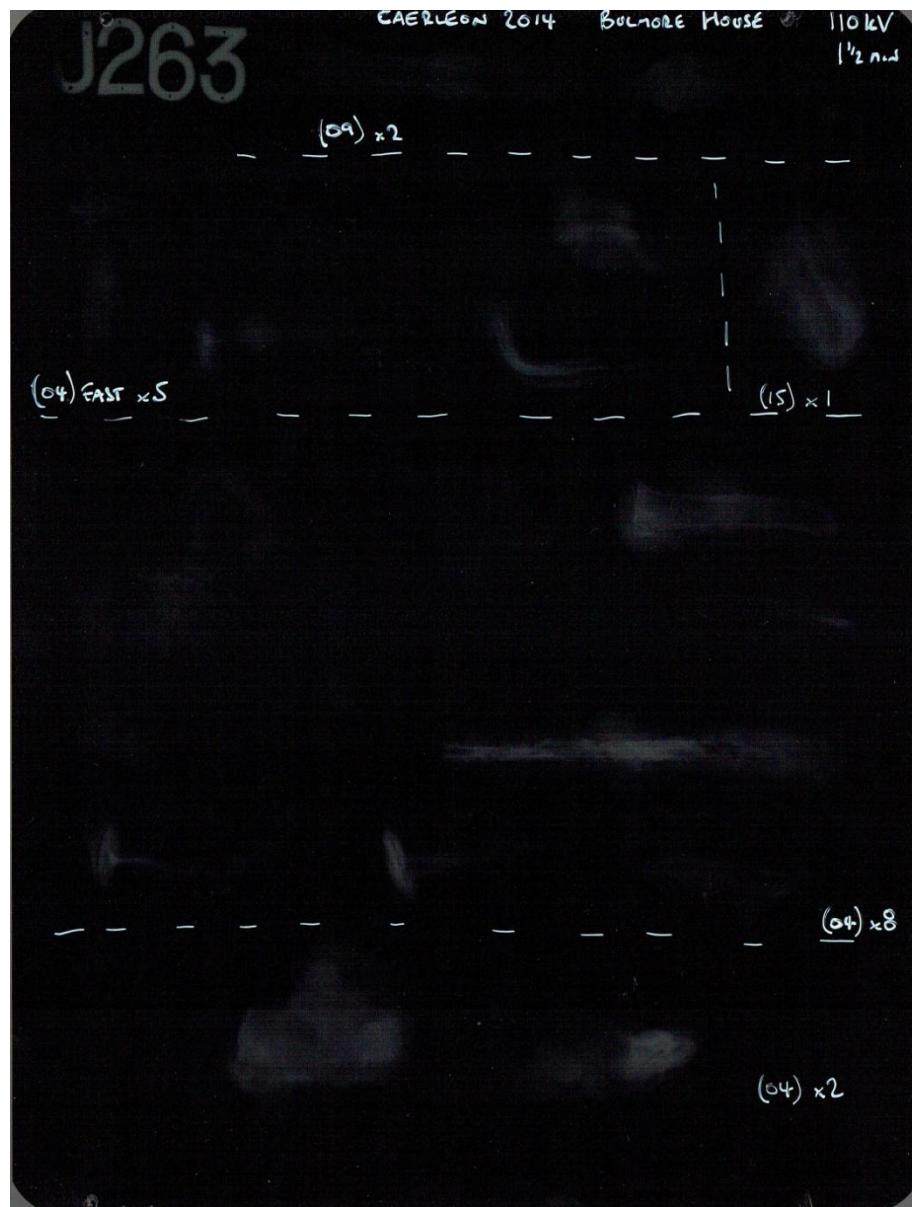
The evaluation work is being carried out to the agreed standards by the archaeological contractor. Adverse weather conditions held up the recording but this will proceed this week.

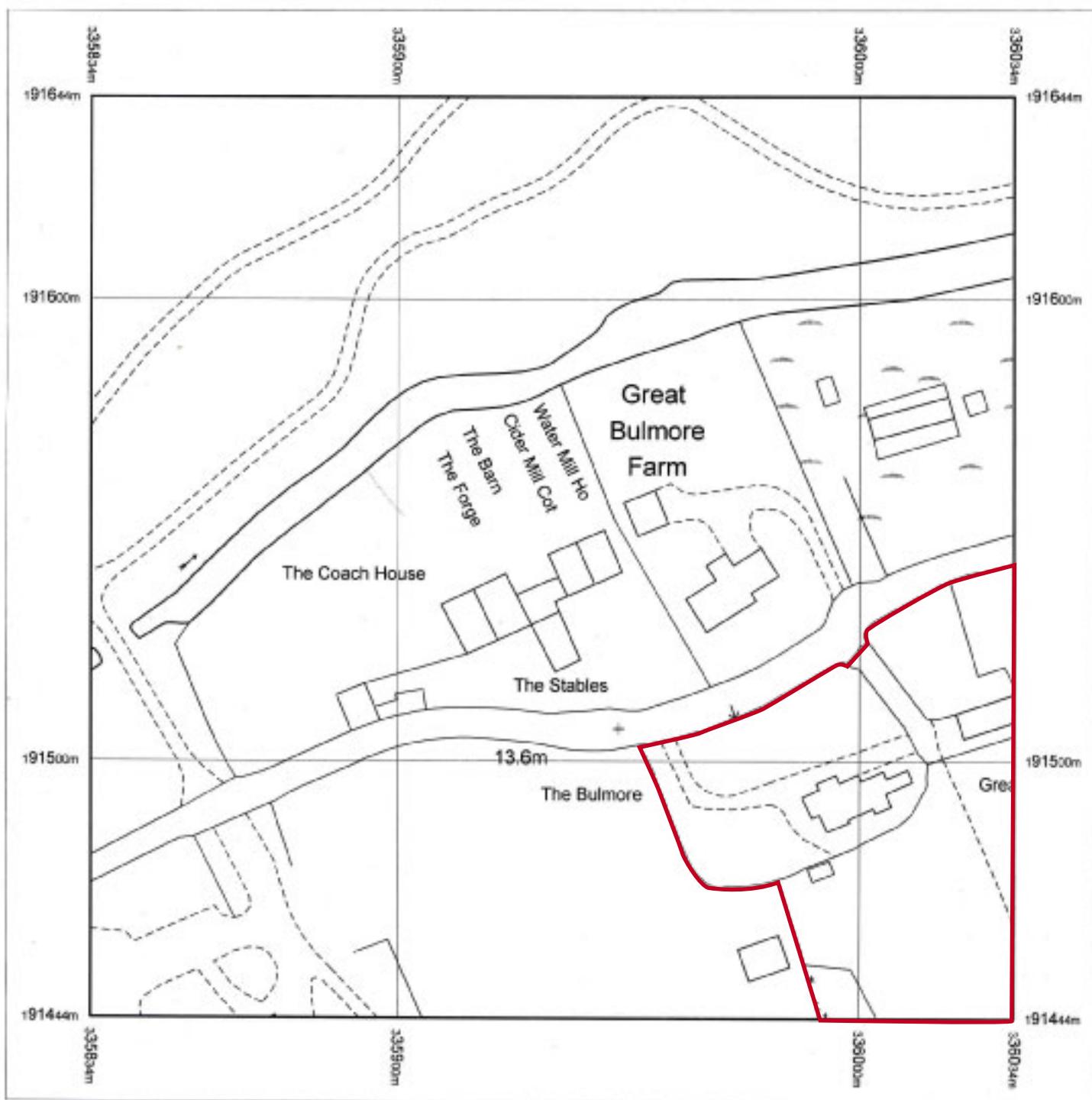
JBHD 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014

11.3 Metallic finds treatment report (Phil Parkes, Cardiff University)

<b>University of Wales Cardiff — HISAR</b>	Name of conservator <i>Phil Parkes</i>		Date Received Y / M / D <i>14 / 7 / 11</i>	Suggested Completion Date Y / M / D	Laboratory Number UWC 6276			
Material CuA, Ag, Pb, Fe	Owner, Site Markings		Work approved by.....	Removed from UWCC by.....	Treatment Start Date Y / M / D			
Drawing Scale.....	Contract	Dev / 654	Date.....	of.....	Treatment Complete Date Y / M / D			
	Excavator	J.Y. Rosic						
	Excavator Unit	C.A.C.						
	Owner			Date Y / M / D				
	Site Code.....	Caerleon 2014 Bulmore House		Date Y / M / D	Numbers			
	X-Ray	/ /						
		/ /						
	Photos B & W	/ /						
		/ /						
	Colour	/ /						
Sub No.	Layer Number	Small Find Number	Museum Accession No.	Primary Material	Secondary Material	Period	Dimensions	Description
Single /00								
Multiple /01	16	[003]		CuA				"Pomme" of handle?
/02	04	[004]		Ag				Coin
/03	08			Pb				FOLDED SHEET
/04	04			Fe				OBJECT
/05								
/06								
/07								
/08								
/09								
/10								
Other								

Cardiff Conservation Services Cardiff University		Treatment Record	Page No. 1	Lab No. 6276
Lab No.			Conservator	Date
6276/01		<p>Finds from excavations at Caerleon, Bulmore House, were received for conservation. All of the metal objects (except lead) were x-rayed. The majority appear to be nails, sheet, or indeterminate lumps of iron. One object from (08) that appeared to have a hooked end is in fact a large nail with another much less dense piece of iron attached to one by corrosion products. One object from (04) was broken in two pieces and was treated (see below).</p> <p>A copper alloy 'head'. The head has a hollow shaft at the neck, possibly for fitting onto a wooden shaft or handle, but which may also be due to a larger figure being hollow cast. There is some organic material around the neck, both inside and out but this appears to be from the context as it is overlying dirt / mud that covers the object. There is no evidence in the hole of any organic remains that may confirm that the head was attached to a wooden dowel, and indeed the neck shows signs of being broken from a larger object and this may be the head of a complete figure which has broken off. The face was covered by a hard corrosion blister which was removed to reveal the detail of the face. Some damage has been caused by corrosion, resulting in pitting in areas. The remainder of the head was generally covered with dirt and corrosion products which were more easily removed to reveal the detail.</p>	P. Parkes	17/7/14
6276/02		A silver coin was received which was covered with a waxy purple layer of silver chloride, which was noted by the archaeologist to change from white to purple on exposure to light, a typical reaction. The silver chloride layer was removed mechanically using a scalpel to reveal a retained silver layer with much of the detail remaining. The right side of the obverse appears more worn / corroded with any inscription being very faint.		
6276/03		A folded sheet of lead was cleaned using a soft brush and water to remove dirt. A break in the sheet was revealed and this was readhered with Devcon 5 minute epoxy resin. A hole in the folded sheet at the fold was noted and inside the fold appeared to be the end of an iron nail or tack. A similar nail may be present further along the fold, as there is a protruding lump that appears to be of iron also. It is assumed that these may have been used to attach the lead sheet to something.		
6276/04		An iron object in two pieces was readhered using Devcon 5 minute epoxy resin. The object is a tapering metal strip with a rectangular tang at 90° to the strip at the narrower end.		





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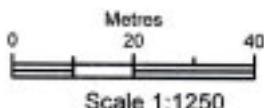
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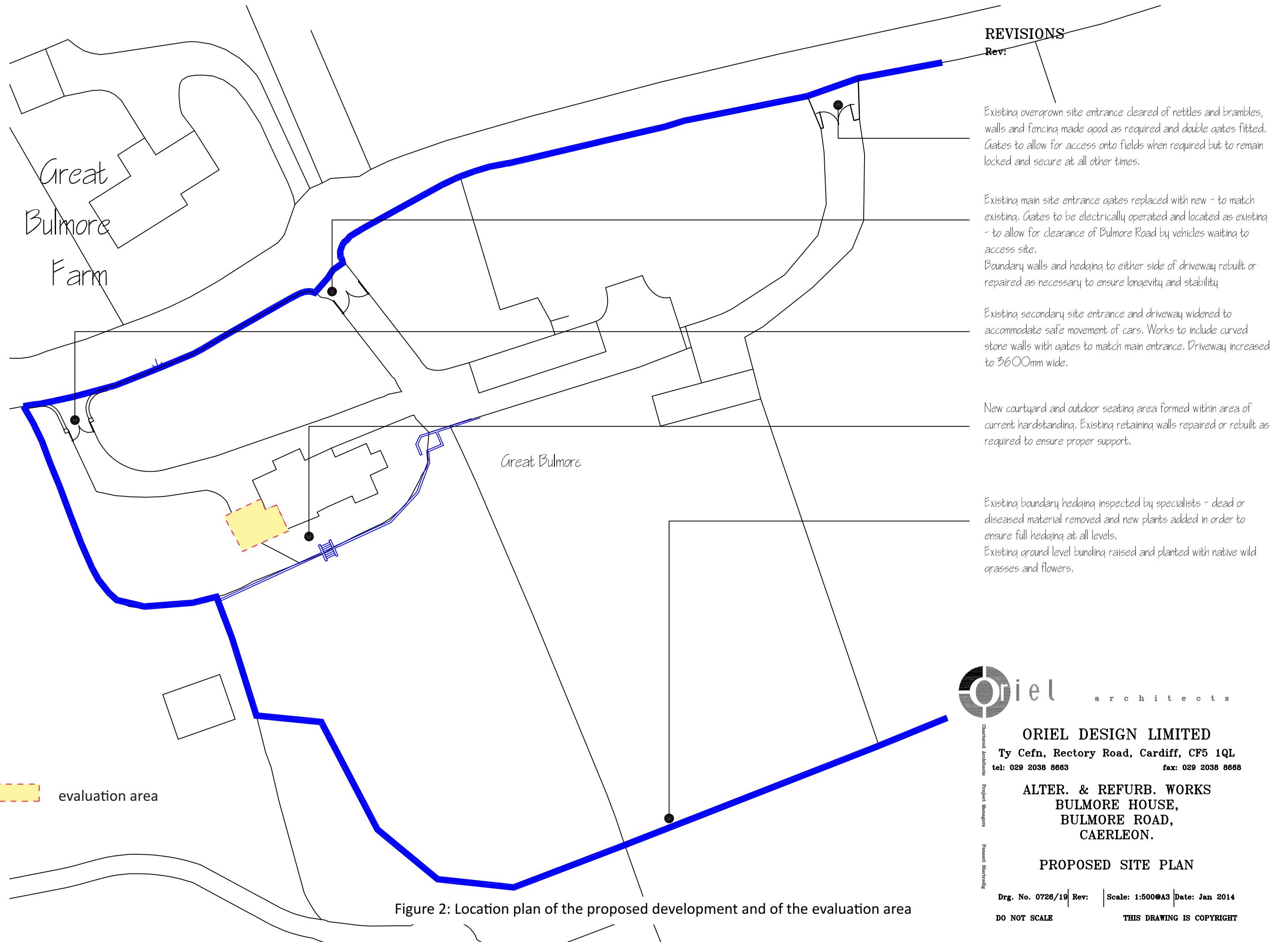
— Proposed development



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Figure 1: Location plan of the proposed development



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**ALTER. & REFURB. WORKS**  
**BULMORE HOUSE,**  
**BULMORE ROAD,**  
**CAERLEON.**

#### PROPOSED SITE PLAN

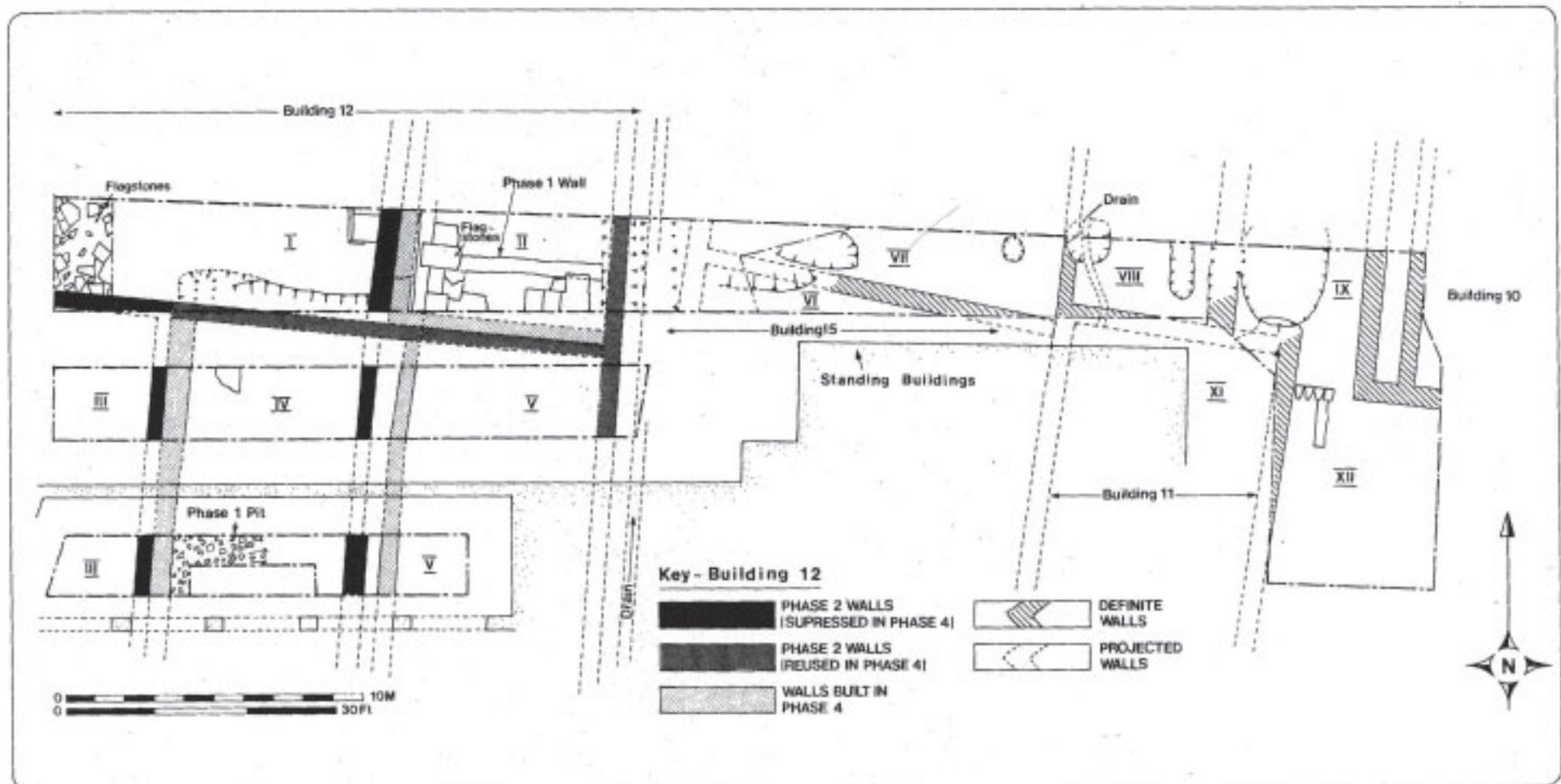
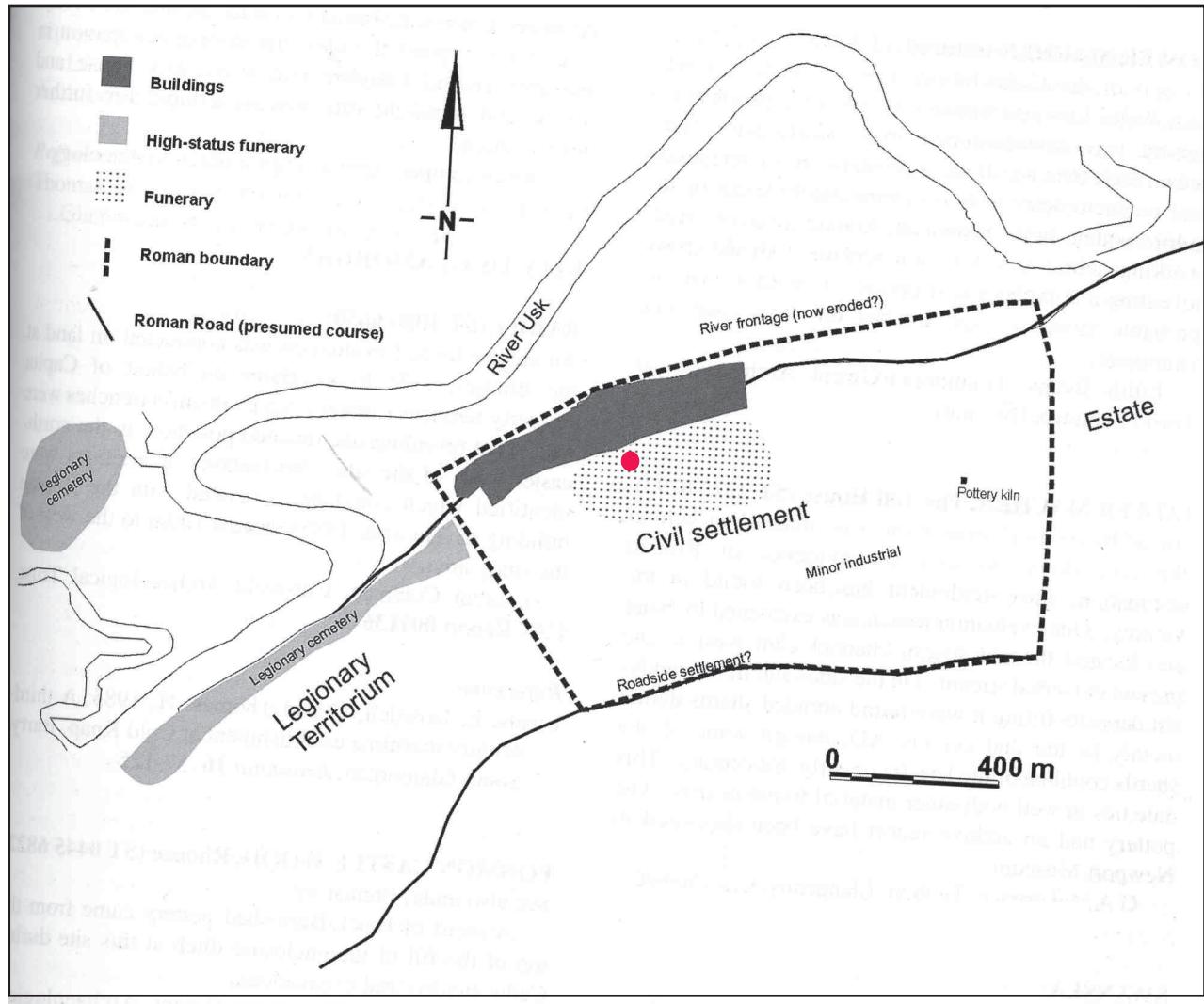
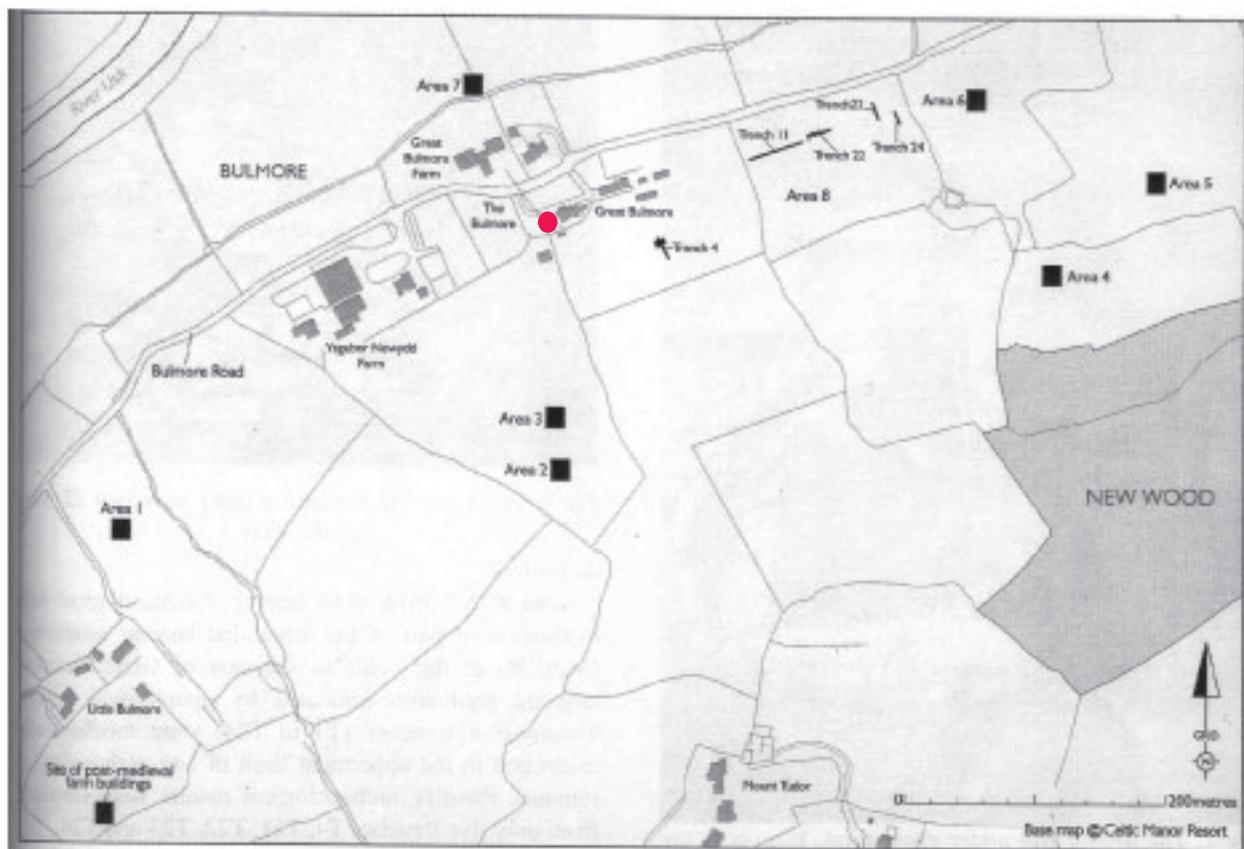


Figure 3: Plan of the Roman remains excavated at Great Bulmore Farm (Zienkiewicz 1985, 9)



- Bulmore House, The Bulmore

Figure 4: Great Bulmore Roman site: proposed landscape interpretation (Yates 2000, 99)



- The Forge, Great Bulmore Farm

Figure 5: 2006 evaluations around Great Bulmore Farm (Tuck 2006, 199)

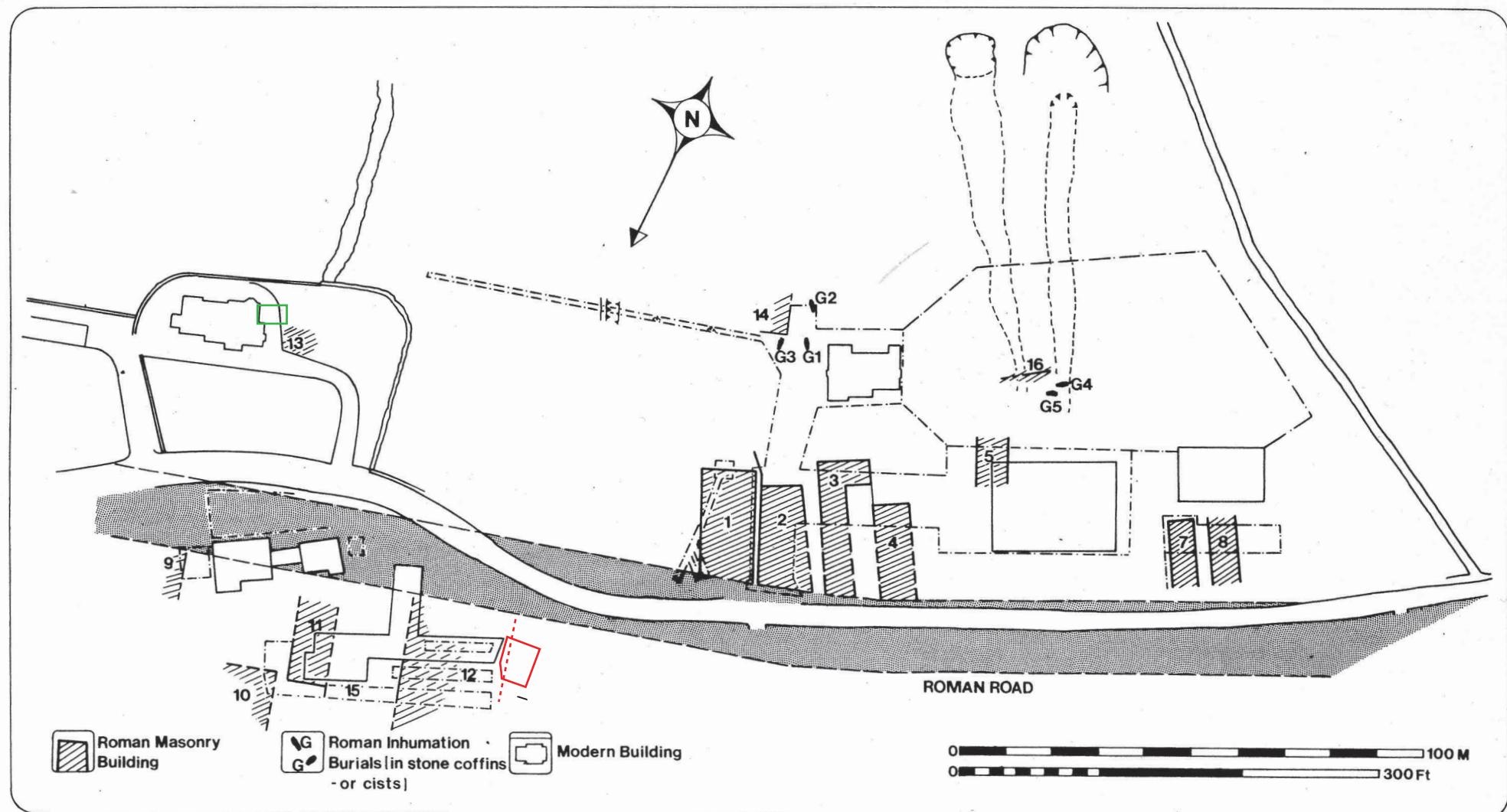


Figure 6: Proposed development site, 1980s excavation (After Zienkiewicz 1985, fig 7) and 2010 excavation



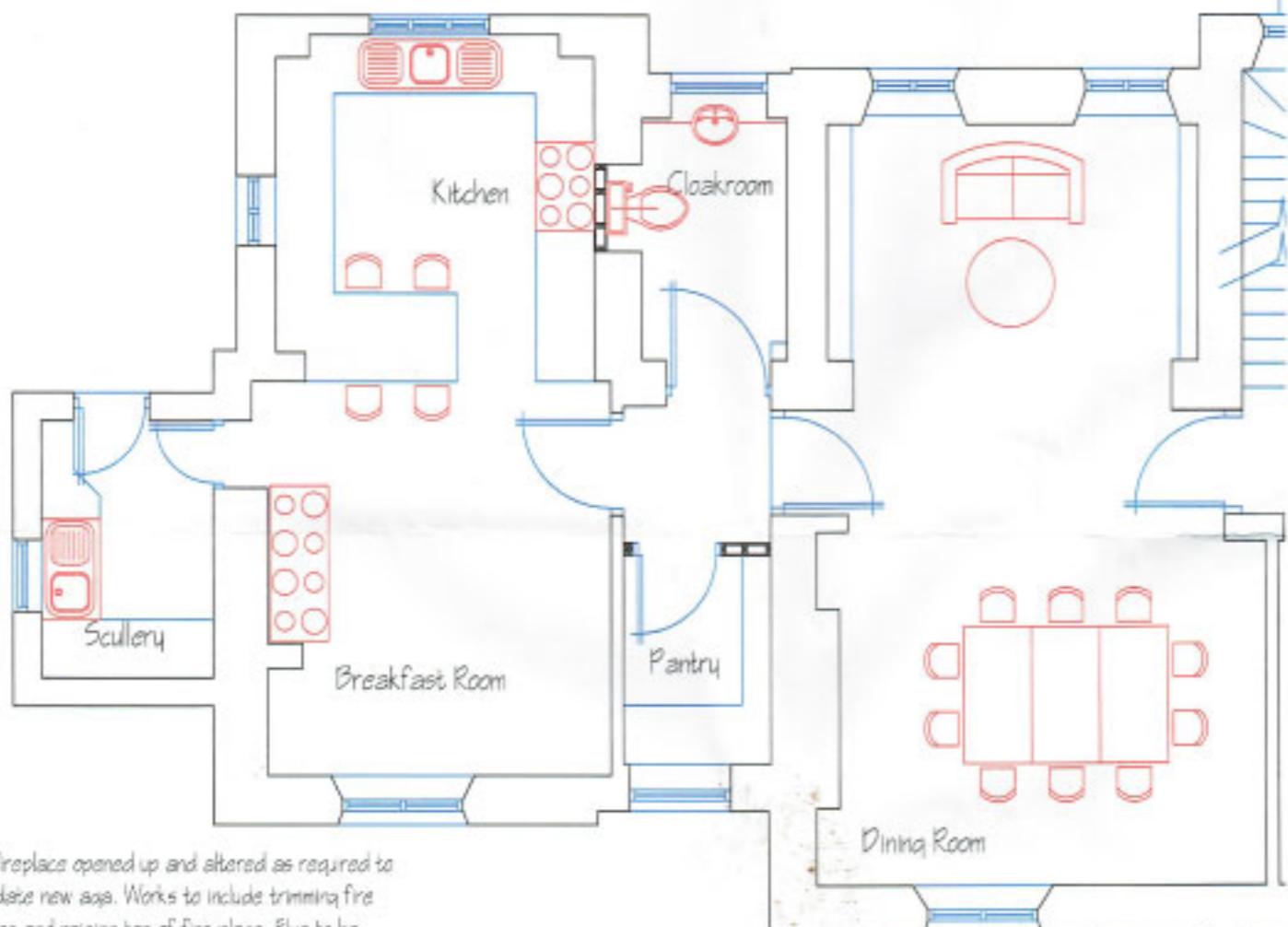
New cloakroom formed with current rear door lobby area.  
Works to include blocking up existing kitchened door,  
changing rear door to window, fitting new internal door  
and sanitaryware.

Existing external toilet/bathroom tower rebuilt to  
provide new scullery. Floor level raised to match kitchen.  
window and door head, new opening with doorway formed  
through to main house.

New glass block 'flo' constructed over basement stair  
with perimeter drain & channels used to take away  
rainwater run off from rear bank.

Rear area of existing dining room fitted out as library /  
reading room, with built-in, full height book shelves.

7242



Existing fireplace opened up and altered as required to  
accommodate new aga. Works to include trimming fire  
place sides and raising top of fire place. Flue to be  
opened up and used to extract aga fumes.

Existing toilet area changed to use as new Pantry.  
Existing door replaced with new solid panel and window  
arrangement - replicating door from outside but with  
solid base and opening window above.  
Existing partition removed and new studwork wall  
constructed - providing for increased floor area within  
Pantry.

[ ] Watching brief area

# Ground Floor Plan

Figure 7: Plan of the proposed development and location of the watching brief area

New soil and waste pipe serving new ensuite to run within  
existing porch and be connected to replacement septic  
tank.

Existing Reception Rooms refurbished.

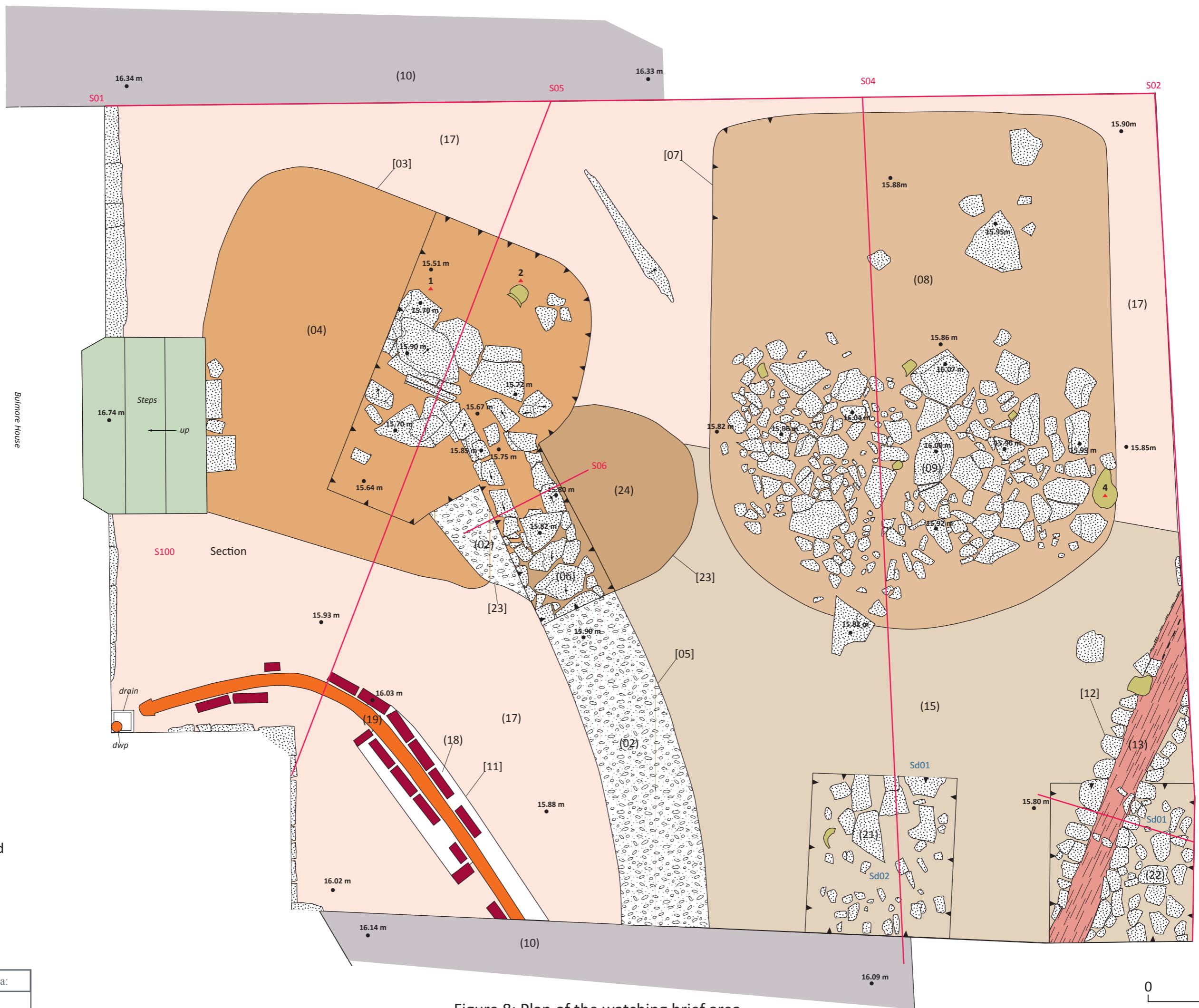
New glass disc inserted into entrance hall floor allowing  
views of basement store below.

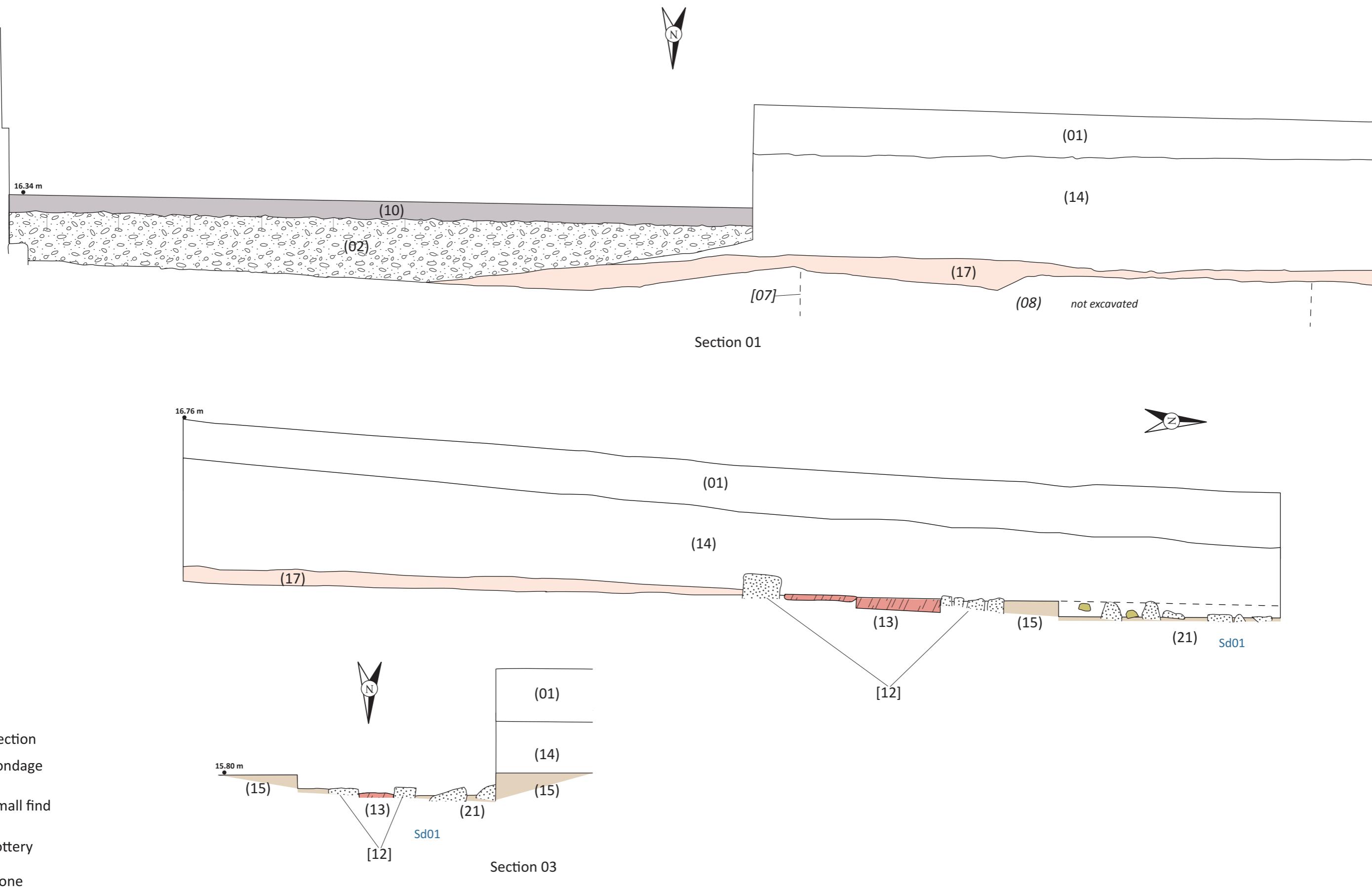


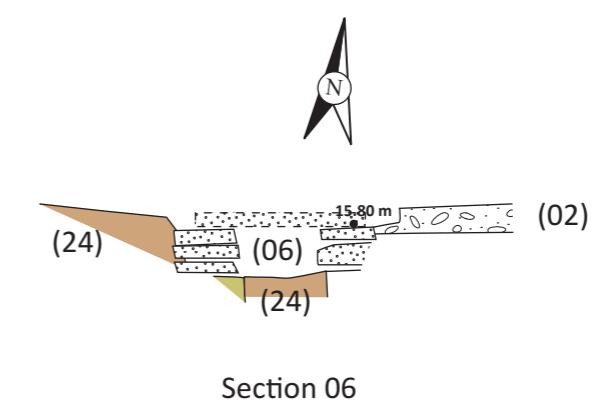
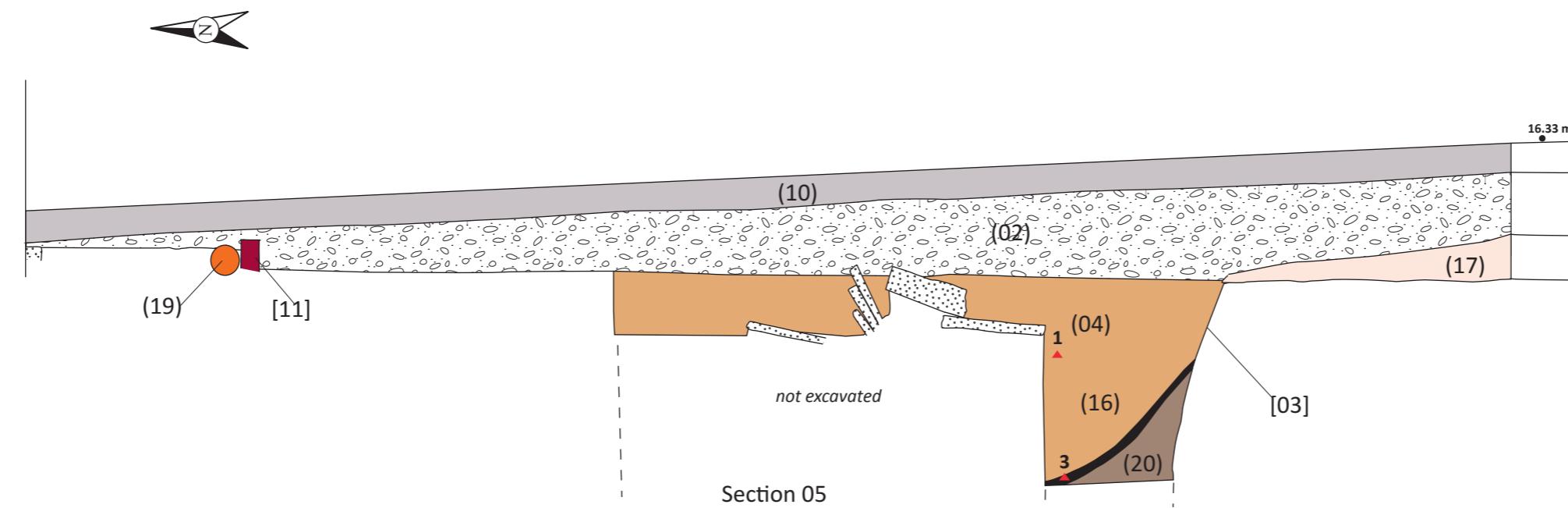
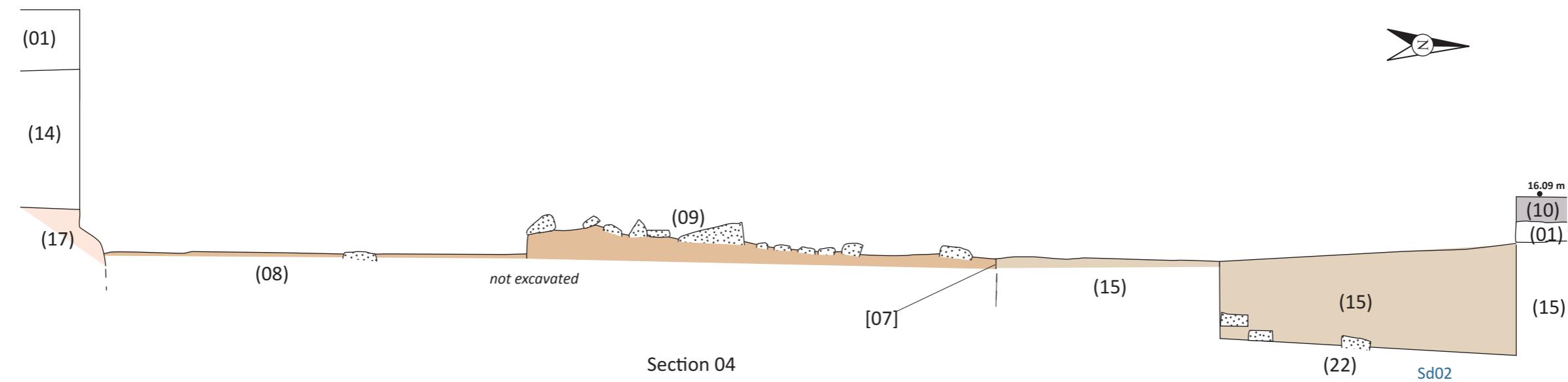
ORIEL DESIGN LIMITED  
Ty Cefn, Rectory Road, Cardiff, CF5 1QL  
tel: 029 2055 8822 fax: 029 2055 8855

ALTER. & REFURB. WORKS  
BULMORE HOUSE,  
BULMORE ROAD,  
CAERLEON.

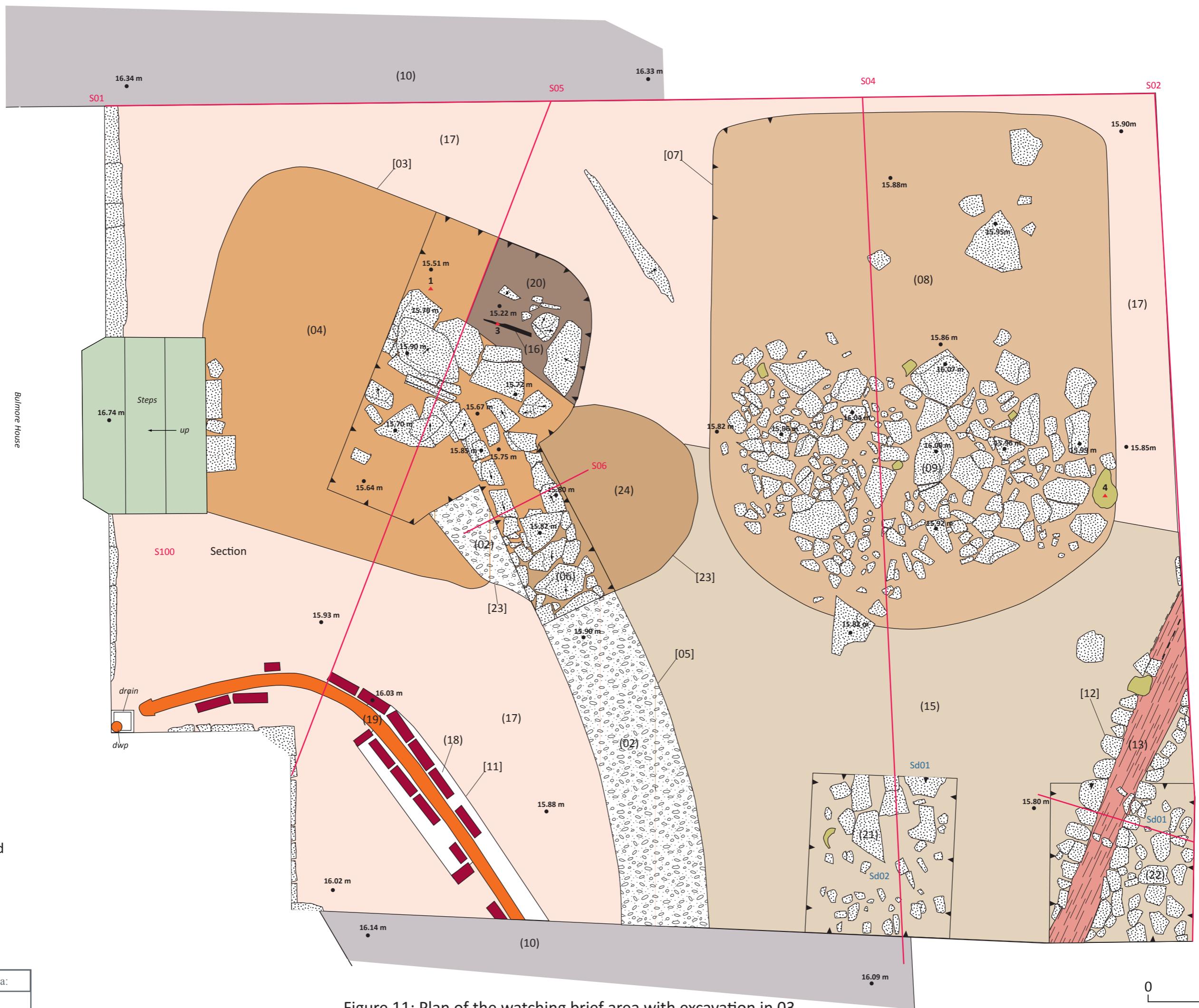
EXISTING HOUSE - GFL PLAN







- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| S100         | Section    |
| Sd01         | Sondage    |
| 01           | Small find |
| [Yellow Box] | Pottery    |
| [Dotted Box] | Stone      |



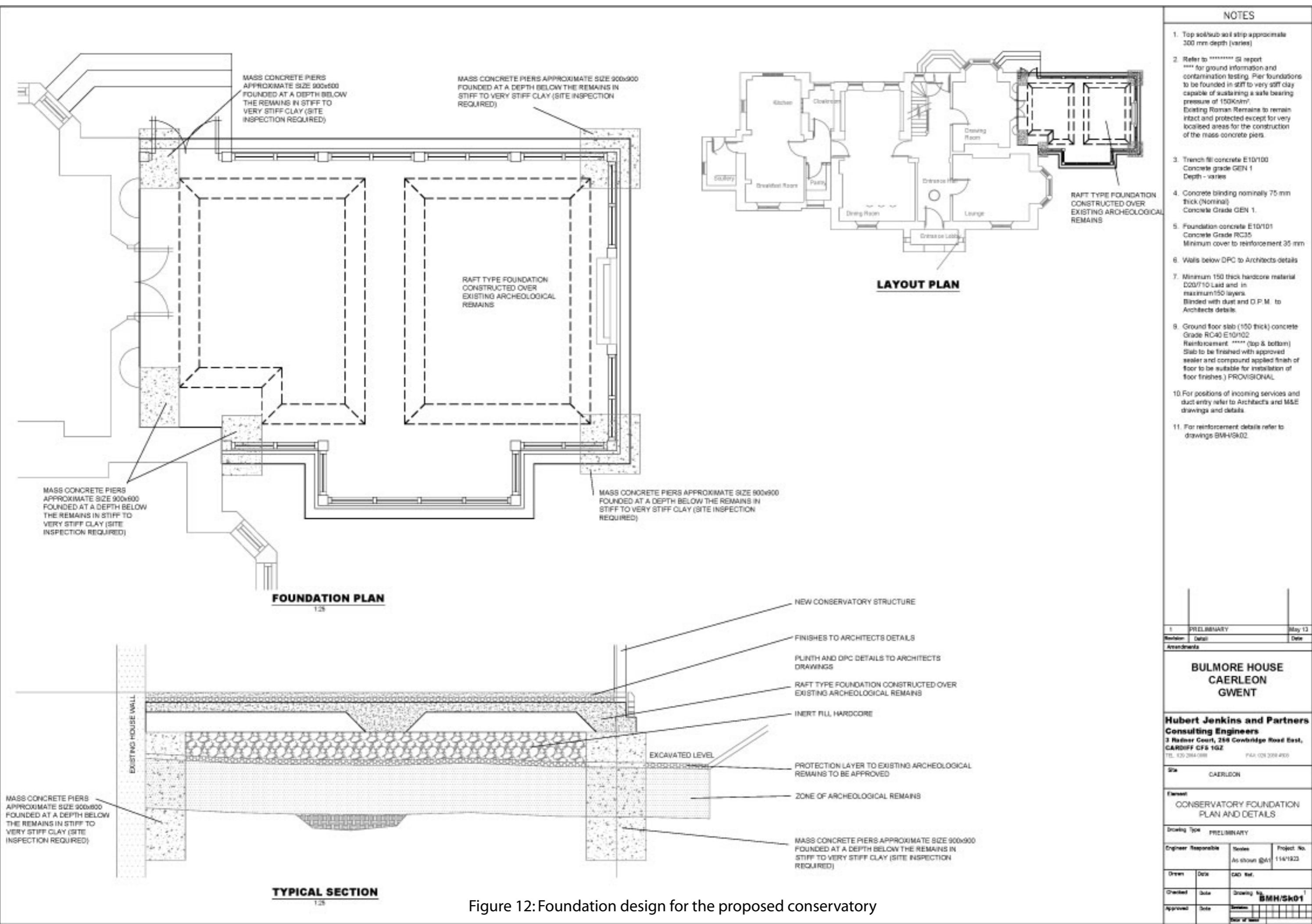


Figure 12: Foundation design for the proposed conservatory



Plate 1: The evaluation area from the east



Plate 2: The drain 12 from the west



Plate 3: The drains 05 and 19 from the east



Plate 4: The cut feature 07 and upper stone fill 09 (background) from the east



Plate 5: Detail of the s upper stone layer 09 from the west



Plate 6: Black-burnished ware jar on the edge of context 09 from the west



Plate 7: Cut feature 03 with drain 05 from the west



Plate 8: Detail of the stone fill (Drain 05) in context 04 from the west



Plate 9: The Black-burnished ware jar in context 04 from the south



Plate 10: Context 16 and 20 in feature 03 from the north



Plate 11: Section in feature 03 from the west



Plate 12: Sondage 02 from the north



Plate 13: The Black-burnished ware jar from context 04



Plate 14: Decorated samian ware from context 08



Plate 15: Rubbing from the decorated samian ware from context 08



Plate 16: The silver coin from context 04



Plate 17: Copper-alloy female head (front)



Plate 18: Copper-alloy female head (side)



Plate 19: Copper-alloy female head (back)



Plate 20: Folded lead sheet from context 08