



**The Queen's School, City Walls Road,
Chester.**

August 2014

V 1.0

aeon archaeology



Archaeological Evaluation Test Pits and Watching Brief

Project Code: A0044.1

Report no. 0045



aeon archaeology

The Queen's School, City Walls Road, Chester. August 2014

Report no. 0045 v1.0

Archaeological Evaluation Test pits
and Watching Brief

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Client: The Trustland Group

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Figures

Figure 01: Location of The Queen's School, Chester. Scale 1:10,000 at A4.

Figure 02: Location of extension footprint and test pits. Scale 1:1,250 at A4.

Figure 03: South facing section of test pit 01 showing wall (1003) and wall cut [1002]. Scale 1:10 at A4.

Figure 04: West facing elevation of wall (1003). Scale 1:10 at A4.

Figure 05: Plan of test pit 01 showing wall (1003). Scale 1:20 at A4.

Figure 06: Location of extension footprint. Scale 1:1,250 at A4.

Figure 07: West facing section of trench 04 showing gaol foundation wall (4013). Scale 1:10 at A4.

Figure 08: Plan of trench 04. Scale 1:20 at A4.

Figure 09: Harris Matrix of trench 04.

Figure 10: Town Map of 1833, approximate location of trench 04 shaded blue.

Figure 11: Town Plan of 1874, approximate location of trench 04 shaded blue.

Plates

Plate 01: Test pit 01, from the south. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 02: Test pit 01 showing wall (1003), from the west. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 03: Test pit 01 showing foundation/robbers cut [1002], from the south. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 04: Test pit 02, from the north. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 05: North facing section of test pit 02, from the north. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 06: Test pit 03 showing wall (3002), from the east. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 07: North facing section of test pit 03, from the north. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 08: Location of extension footprint to side of Gym, from the south.

Plate 09: Location of extension footprint to front of Gym, from the east.

Plate 10: Foundation trench 01, from the west. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 11: Foundation trench 02, from the west. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 12: Foundation trench 03, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 13: Foundation trench 04 showing former school footpath (4006), from the southwest.

Plate 14: Foundation trench 04 showing former school footpath (4006), school yard cobbles (4007), and remains of former Gaol (4013) (4016) and (4017), from the west. Scale 2 x 1.0m.

Plate 15: Foundation trench 04 showing remains of former Gaol (4013) (4016) and (4017), sandstone slabs (4015), later rebuild (4024), and in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.

Plate 16: Foundation trench 04 showing remains of former Gaol (4013) (4016) and (4017), sandstone slabs (4015), later rebuild (4024), and in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.

Plate 17: North facing section of foundation trench 04 showing former cobbled school yard (4007), in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), and sandstone slabs (4015). Scale 2 x 1.0m.

Plate 18: East facing section of foundation trench 04 showing in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), and former gaol foundations (4016) and (4017). Scale 2 x 1.0m.

Plate 19: Reused stone lintel (4025). Scale 1.0m.

Plate 20: Reused stone lintel (4025). Scale 1.0m.

Contents

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| 1.0 | NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY | 2 |
| 2.0 | INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| 3.0 | HISTORICAL BACKGROUND..... | 4 |
| 4.0 | PROJECT AIMS..... | 5 |
| 5.0 | METHODOLOGY – EVALUATION TRIAL PITS..... | 6 |
| 5.1 | Evaluation trenches..... | 6 |
| 5.2 | Data Collection from Site Records | 6 |
| 5.3 | Artefact Methodology | 6 |
| 5.4 | Environmental Samples Methodology | 7 |
| 5.5 | Report and dissemination..... | 7 |
| 6.0 | QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS – EVALUATION TRIAL PITS | 8 |
| 6.1 | The Documentary Archive..... | 8 |
| 6.2 | Environmental Samples | 8 |
| 6.3 | Artefacts..... | 8 |
| 7.0 | SPECIALIST ANALYSIS – ARTEFACTS..... | 9 |
| 8.0 | RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TEST PITS | 12 |
| 9.0 | CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – EVALUATION TEST PITS | 14 |
| 10.0 | METHODOLOGY – WATCHING BRIEF..... | 15 |
| 10.1 | Watching Brief..... | 15 |
| 10.2 | Data Collection from Site Records | 15 |
| 10.3 | Artefact Methodology | 15 |
| 10.4 | Environmental Samples Methodology | 15 |
| 10.5 | Report and dissemination..... | 16 |
| 11.0 | QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS – WATCHING BRIEF | 17 |
| 11.1 | The Documentary Archive..... | 17 |
| 11.2 | Environmental Samples | 17 |
| 11.3 | Artefacts..... | 17 |
| 12.0 | RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF..... | 18 |
| 13.0 | CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – WATCHING BRIEF..... | 20 |
| 14.0 | SOURCES..... | 21 |
| | APPENDIX I – DETAILS OF RECORDED CONTEXTS | 23 |

1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by The Trustland Group to undertake a phase of archaeological evaluation test pits and watching brief at The Queen's School, Chester in advance of, and during the construction of an extension to the gymnasium.

The phase of evaluation work included the controlled excavation of three test pits measuring 1.5m by 1.0m. Test pits 01 and 02 were located to the side of the current gym building and ascertained that the ground had been heavily disturbed, most likely during the excavation of the gym building. Both trenches produced Roman tile and trench 01 produced a sherd of Roman ceramic within the same context as post-medieval ceramic, glass and clay pipe. Within trench 01 a dry bonded sandstone wall was uncovered and recorded which lay at the base of the current upstanding red-brick boundary wall between the school and the former graveyard. This wall followed the same alignment as the brick one and had been utilised as a foundation for it, suggesting that it was in fact an earlier version of the same boundary wall, possibly dating to the time of the former Gaol.

Test pit 03 was located at the front of the gym adjacent to the entrance and uncovered the red-brick and sandstone foundations of a building. It was suspected that these foundations may be that of the former Chester City Gaol and House of Correction which occupied the site prior to the construction of the school and as such arrangements were made for a watching brief to be maintained during the excavation of foundation trenches.

The watching brief of the foundation trenches 01-03 at the side of the gym building confirmed that the ground was highly disturbed, again presumably from the construction of the current gym building and no further archaeological remains were identified.

The watching brief of the controlled strip of the foundation trench 04 to the front of the gym uncovered a former cobbled school yard, drain, kerb and red-brick wall orientated north to south. These features were recorded and removed to uncover the substantial red-brick and sandstone foundations of part of the former prison. These were recorded and overlaid with historical mapping to show that the foundations were in fact the eastern gable of the House of Correction and the projecting perimeter walls of one of the airing yards associated with it.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by The Trustland Group to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation and watching brief of a c.50m² extension to the current gymnasium building at the Queen's School, City Walls Road, Chester (centred on NGR **SJ 40179 66383**) as a condition of full planning permission (**13/05345/FUL**). The evaluation consisted of the archaeological excavation of 3 trial pits, measuring 1.0m by 1.5m to evaluate the potential of the site to have preserved unknown buried archaeological remains. In addition a watching brief was maintained during the excavation of foundation trenches to the side and front of the current Gym building (figure 1 and 2).

A design specification was not produced by the Cheshire West and Chester Archaeological Planning Service, but the following statement was made a condition of full planning permission:

No development shall take place within the area indicated until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation has been secured by the applicant, or their agents or successors in title and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme (Condition 4; Ref: 13/05345/FUL).

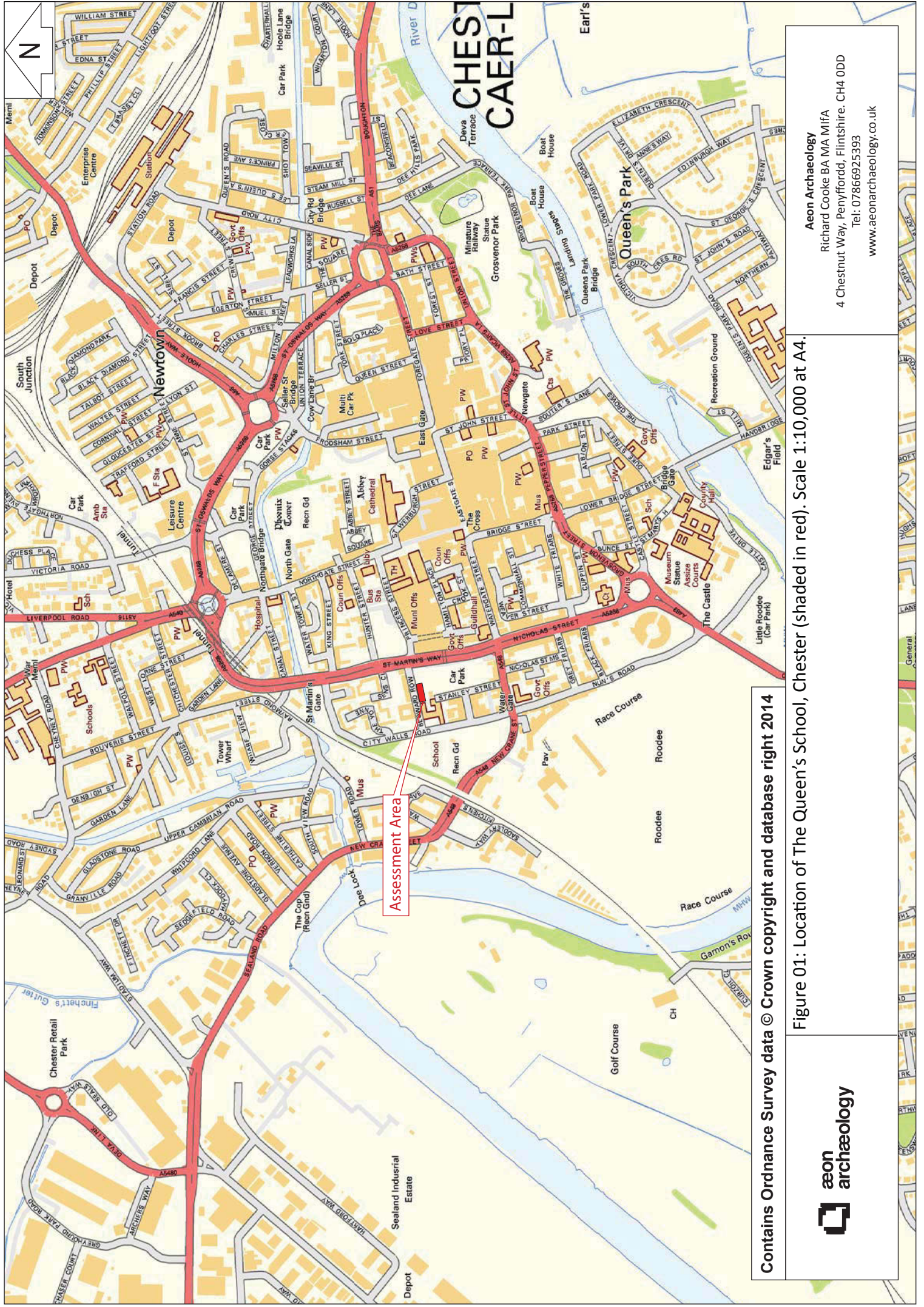
The reason for this condition is:

The site is in an area of archaeological significance, in accordance with the provisions of Policy ENV32 of the Chester District Local Plan.

The site lies within an area of great archaeological significance where Roman remains are known to exist. The agent confirmed that the construction would not require foundations more than 1.0m in depth and previous investigations in the vicinity suggest that significant remains were not likely to be present in the top 1.0m. However, there may be less significant remains within the top 1.0m. It is therefore considered reasonable and necessary to secure a groundworks method statement and archaeological programme of work.

The aim of this programme of archaeological evaluation was to establish the archaeological significance of the site, to assess the impact of the development proposals on surviving monuments or remains, and to help inform future decision making, design solutions and potential mitigation strategies. This report includes an assessment of the potential for further investigative work if required, and where relevant gives recommendations for an appropriate mitigation strategy.

This report conforms to the guidelines specified in the *IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (Institute for Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001 & 2008) and *IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (Institute for Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001 & 2008).



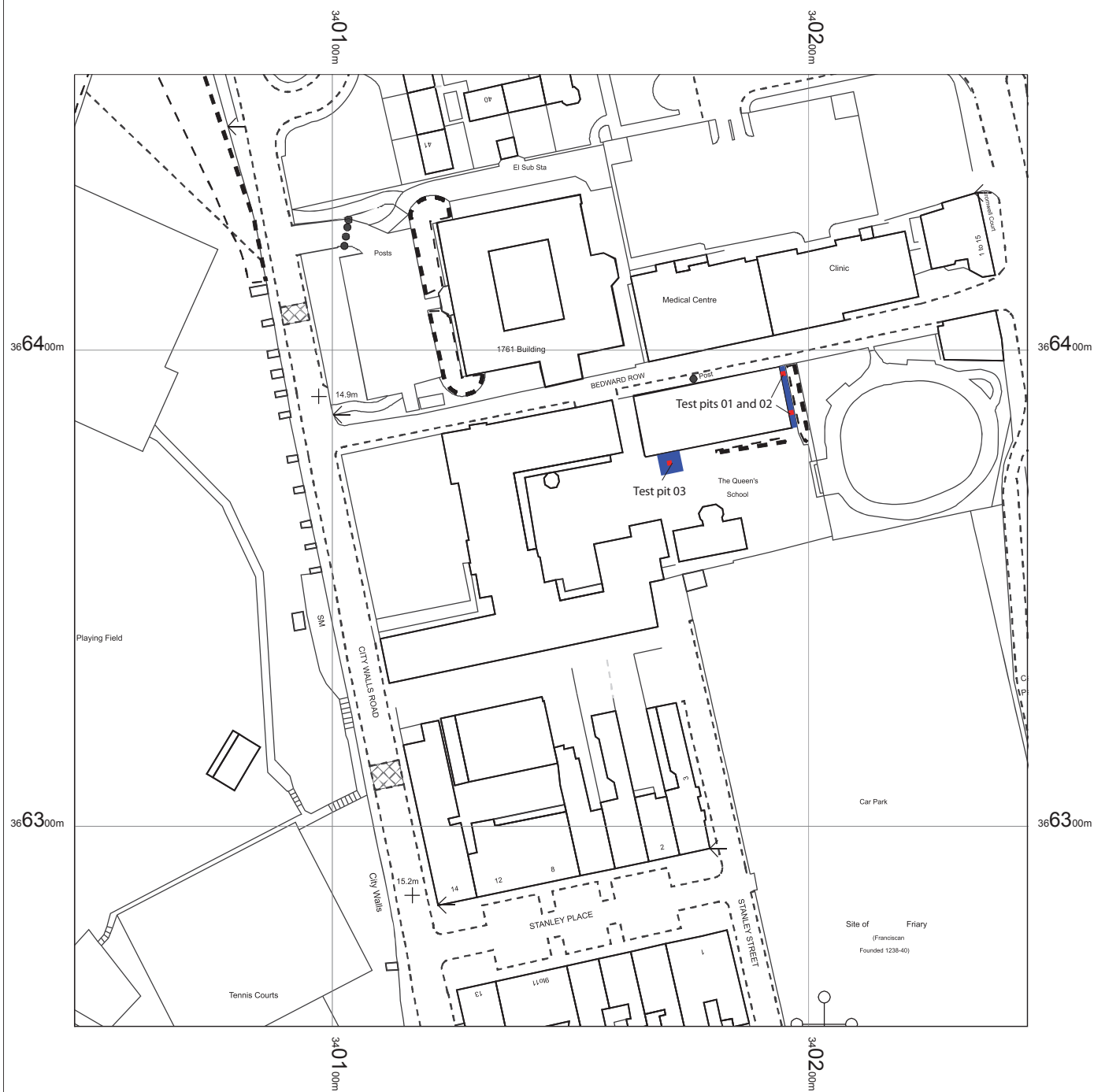
Assessment Area

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Figure 01: Location of The Queen's School, Chester (shaded in red). Scale 1:10,000 at A4.



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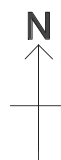
Figure 02: Location of extension footprint
(outlined blue) and test pits (outlined red)

OS MasterMap 1250/2500/10000 scale
24 June 2014, ID: BW1-00337372
www.blackwellmapping.co.uk

1:1250 scale print at A4, Centre: 340146 E, 366358 N

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100041040

Mapping
sourced from



BLACKWELL'S
www.blackwellmapping.co.uk

TEL: 0151 709 6512
maps.liverpool@blackwell.co.uk

3.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Queen's School occupies part of the site of the Greyfriars Franciscan Friary precinct which was founded in 1238-40 and dissolved in 1538. The precinct measured approximately 7 acres running from Watergate Street in the south, the City Walls in the west, the backs of the houses in Linen Hall Street in the east, to slightly south of Bedward Road in the north (Pastscape). The church had an aisles quire with a nave with north and south aisles.

The Queen's School also occupies the site of the former Chester City Gaol and House of Correction. The former Gaol was constructed in 1807 with the prisoners from the old Northgate Gaol being moved there one year later (Hemingway, 1831). The City Gaol and the House of Correction were situated side by side within one single brick building, with an entrance of stone on the west side providing access to the former and an entrance on the north side from Bedward Row into the latter. The building consisted of two stories comprising forty-five male and twenty-five female cells, ten wards, ten airing yards, and eighteen rooms (Bagshaw, 1850).

In the centre of the building was a chapel which served both prisons, each accessing it from their respective sides. In 1831 Hemingway records that the Chaplain was the Rev. William Clarke who provided a service every Wednesday, Friday, and twice on the Sabbath. He records the governor of the Gaol as Mr. Jepson, and the Keeper of the House of Correction as Mr. Woolley.

By 1831 the Gaol had undergone major redesign and alteration, partly through Acts of Parliament concerning the classification of prisoners and partly to help keep the facility more secure and to stop the frequent escape of prisoners (Hemingway, 1831). This included the complete division of the Gaol and House of Correction, as well as the establishment of a outer perimeter wall with a space between that and the walls of the prisons. Furthermore, the eastern boundary was moved further to the east with eight workshops being constructed for prisoners sentenced to hard labour. To the north of this parcel of land a lodge for the Turnkey was constructed which contained two lock-ups, one for males and for females (Bagshaw, 1850).

In 1856 the western entrance into the Gaol is described by Hughes as having a handsome Doric entrance with iron railing above which suspended the hanging noose for the execution of prisoners. Hughes records that through *some ante-diluvian charter* the authorities of Chester were compelled to publically display every execution carried out (Hughes, 1856).

4.0 PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the evaluation and watching brief works was to characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains uncovered during the excavation of the archaeological trial pits.

The broad aims of the archaeological evaluation test pits and watching brief were to:

- To determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains on the site, the integrity of which may be threatened by development at the site.
- To establish the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion to sub-surface deposits and, where the data allows, assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits of archaeological significance.
- To enable the owners to establish a schedule for archaeological risks.
- To allow Cheshire West and Chester Council to make an informed decision on the need for and scope of any further evaluative works that may be required.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological evaluation test pits and watching brief were to:

- Insofar as possible within methodological constraints, to explain any temporal, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and any relationships between these and the archaeological and historic elements of the wider landscape.
- Where the data allows, identify the research implications of the site with reference to the regional research agenda and recent work in Chester.

An Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was written by Aeon Archaeology and submitted to The Trustland Group and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service in June 2014. This formed the basis of a method statement submitted for the work. The archaeological evaluation test pits and watching brief were executed in accordance with this WSI.

The management of this project has followed the procedures laid out in the standard professional guidance *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006), and in the Institute for Archaeologists *Archaeological Evaluation* (Institute for Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001 & 2008). Five stages are specified:

Phase 1: project planning

Phase 2: fieldwork

Phase 3: assessment of potential for analysis and revised project design

Phase 4: analysis and report preparation

Phase 5: dissemination

The current document reports on the phase 4 analysis and states the means to be used to disseminate the results. The purpose of this phase is to carry out the analysis identified in phase 3 (the assessment of potential phase), to amalgamate the results of the specialist studies, if required, with the detailed site narrative and provide both specific and overall interpretations. The site is to be set in its landscape context so that its full character and importance can be understood. All the information is to be presented in a report that will be held by the Cheshire Historic Environment Record and the OASIS database so that it can be accessible to the public and future researchers. This phase of work also includes archiving the material and documentary records from the project.

5.0 METHODOLOGY – EVALUATION TRIAL PITS

Before the excavation of the evaluation trial pits commenced an agreed programme of excavation timing, siting, duration, surface re-instatement and health and safety protection measures were agreed with the Client and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service. In total 3 trial pits measuring 1.0m by 1.5m were excavated at the 50m² site.

The evaluation trial pit array investigated the areas to the side and front of the gym which would be affected by groundworks associated with the foundations for the new extension (figures 1 and 2).

5.1 Evaluation trenches

A tracked excavator with toothless ditching bucket was used to open the trenches under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and overburden were removed by machine in spits down to archaeological deposits or natural sub-soils. All subsequent features were excavated by hand. A written record of the deposits and all identified features in each test pit was completed via Aeon Archaeology pro-formas. All subsurface remains were recorded photographically, with detailed notations. The photographic record was completed using a digital SLR camera (Canon Eos 550D) set to maximum resolution.

Contingency provision was made for the following:

- Additional excavation of up to 100% of any given feature should the excavated sample prove to be insufficient to provide information on the character and date of the feature.
- Expansion of trench limits, to clarify the extent of features equivalent to an additional 20% of the core area.

The archaeological works were surveyed with respect to the nearest Ordnance Survey datum point and with reference to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The trenches and archaeological features within them were accurately located on a site plan prepared at the most appropriate and largest scale. All excavations were backfilled with the material excavated and upon departure the site was left in a safe and tidy condition.

5.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

5.3 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. They would be bagged and labelled as well as any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the evaluation trenching. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service. There

was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

5.4 Environmental Samples Methodology

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

5.5 Report and dissemination

A full archive including plans, photographs and written material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced. Upon approval from the client copies of the report will be sent to the Cheshire HER, the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service, and the OASIS online database.

6.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS – EVALUATION TRIAL PITS

6.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological evaluation:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Context sheets | 10 |
| Trench sheets | 3 |
| Drawings | 3 on 2 sheets |
| Digital photographs | 44 |

6.2 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken as part of the evaluation trenching as no suitable deposits or fills were encountered.

6.3 Artefacts

| | |
|--|------------|
| Roman Pottery: | 1 |
| Roman Ceramic Building Material (CBM): | 8 |
| Post-medieval Pottery: | 52 |
| Clay Tobacco Pipe: | 86 |
| Post-medieval Glass: | 5 |
| Total: | 152 |

7.0 SPECIALIST ANALYSIS – ARTEFACTS

By Dodd, L.

Summary

This report summarises the Roman pottery and ceramic building materials, post-medieval pottery, clay tobacco pipe and glass, recovered from an archaeological evaluation undertaken at the Queens School, Chester. The finds were recovered from three trenches.

1. The Roman Pottery

A single sherd of Roman pottery (weighing 55g) was recovered from trench 1 (1005). The sherd was from the rim of a carinated bowl, with reeded rim, in Holt oxidised ware (*NRFRC* fabric code: HOL OX). The form is traditionally dated to the late 1st to early 2nd century (c. AD 80–120) but was recovered from a context that produced ceramic finds of post-medieval date (*see below*).

2. The Roman Ceramic Building Materials (CBM)

The evaluation produced a small assemblage of Roman period ceramic building materials (CBM); this material was recovered from demonstrably later contexts. The nomenclature used here follows that used by Warry (2006).

Two fragments of roof tile or *tegula* (weighing 1568g) and two fragments of *imbrex* or ridge tile (weighing 747g) were recovered from context (1005) in trench 1. The *tegulae* comprised a fragment from the flanged side of a tile, and a fragment from the upper cutaway to a second tile.

Four fragments of CBM (weighing 2269g) were recovered from context (2002) in trench 2. These fragments comprised the flanges from three *tegulae*, including one that had been modified through the removal of material from the underside in an attempt, it would seem, to form a cutaway. The fourth fragment was from the lower end of a *tegula* complete with a signature (*signum*) mark on the upper surface comprising two semi-circles (Warry type: S2).

3. The Post-Medieval Pottery

Quantification

The post-medieval pottery was quantified by sherd count, weight, and estimated maximum number of vessels (MNV), according to ware names commonly in use by archaeological ceramic specialists across the North West and West Midlands regions.

| Trench | 1 | | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | Total | | |
|-------------|--------|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|--------|------|-----|--------|-----|-----|-------|------|-----|
| Context | (1001) | | | (1005) | | | (2002) | | | (3002) | | | | | |
| Ware/Quant. | No. | Wt. | MNV | No. | Wt. | MNV | No. | Wt. | MNV | No. | Wt. | MNV | No. | Wt. | MNV |
| BLACK | | | | 3 | 210 | 3 | 15 | 1960 | 5 | | | | 18 | 2170 | 8 |
| CREA | 1 | 7 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 7 | 1 |
| PEAR TR | 1 | 5 | 1 | | | | | | | 2 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 17 | 3 |
| SLRE | | | | | | | 1 | 28 | 1 | | | | 1 | 28 | 1 |
| STMO | | | | | | | 3 | 144 | 1 | | | | 3 | 144 | 1 |
| Total | 2 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 210 | 3 | 19 | 2132 | 7 | 2 | 12 | 2 | 26 | 2366 | 14 |

Table 1: Post-medieval pottery quantification by: count (No.), weight (Wt. in grams), maximum number of vessels (MNV)

Wares and Forms

Blackware (BLACK)

The blackware forms were limited to jars including at least one handled-type recovered from trench 2, context (2002). The jars from this particular context could be considered typical of those produced in Staffordshire, the West Midlands and North Wales during the second half of the 17th century and the early 18th century.

Creamware (CREA)

A single, plain sherd from the body of a vessel of indeterminate form was recovered from context (1001) in trench 1.

Pearlware: underglaze blue transfer-printed (PEARL TR)

Sherds from three underglaze blue transfer-printed vessels were recovered. Context (1001) in trench 1 produced a body sherd from a bowl, or similar vessel, decorated internally and externally, the exterior with a diaper pattern. The two sherds recovered from context (3002) in trench 3 comprised the rim from a plate or shallow dish, and a body sherd from an open vessel decorated on both surfaces.

Staffordshire-type slip-trailed redware (SLRE)

A sherd from the base of a dish was recovered from context (2002) in trench 2. The interior of the sherd retains part of a slip-trailed design, probably of geometric form, executed in cream slip directly onto the red fabric of the body. The dish, which may have been made elsewhere other than Staffordshire, probably dates to the second half of the 17th century.

Staffordshire-type mottled ware (STMO)

Three sherds from the body and base of a single jug or bottle were recovered from context (2002) in trench 2. This vessel is similar to a jug recovered from a post-Civil War deposit excavated at Beeston Castle, Cheshire (Noake, 208, fig. 144 no. 235) dated to the late 17th to early 18th century.

4. Clay Tobacco Pipe

Quantification

| | | Stems | | Decorated stems | | Mouthpieces | | Bowls | | Bowl types | Date | Total | |
|--------|--------|-------|-----|-----------------|-----|-------------|-----|-------|-----|-------------------------------------|------------|-------|-----|
| Trench | Cont. | No. | Wt. | No. | Wt. | No. | Wt. | No. | Wt. | | | No. | Wt. |
| 1 | (1005) | 3 | 7 | | | | | | | | 17th-18th | 3 | 7 |
| 2 | (2002) | 68 | 272 | 3 | 18 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 66 | 1x72 spur 3x77 spur 2x81 heel | c. 1700-20 | 82 | 364 |
| 3 | (3001) | 1 | 3 | | | | | | | | 17th-18th | 1 | 3 |
| Total | | 72 | 282 | 3 | 18 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 66 | | | 86 | 374 |

Table 2: Clay tobacco pipe quantification by: count (No.), weight (Wt. in grams) (NB. bowl types refer to: Rutter & Davey's (1980) Chester bowl form typology)

Context (2002) in trench 2 produced a considerable assemblage of clay tobacco pipe, including decorated stems, amounting to some 82 fragments including six bowls. The bowls comprised plain spurred types in the styles of nos. 72 and 77, and plain heeled type 81, in the Chester bowl typology (*see* Rutter & Davey 1980, 220–21, figs. 80–1), all dating to the period c. 1700–20. The three decorated stems included one fragment with a simple rouletted band around the circumference of the stem, a stem with a simple border (probably the finishing border to a more intricate design), and a stem with a lozenge stamp. The lozenge stamp comprised a central design of a crown with a pellet beneath surmounted by the initials 'TF' and a star, bordered by twelve small lozenge divisions each containing a fleur-de-lis. This particular lozenge stamp has been recorded previously from a number of find-spots within the City, the initials attributed to one of the Thomas Fletchers of Chester working in the last decades of the 17th century and the early part of the 18th century (Rutter & Davey 1980, 143–45, fig. 52, no. 1).

Trenches 1 and 3 produced a paucity of clay tobacco pipe stems that date broadly to the second half of the 17th century through to the early 18th century.

None of the clay tobacco pipe stems recovered during the evaluation appear to have been modified in any way. At least one of the bowls from trench 2 showed signs of having been smoked, whilst the surface of another bowl was blackened and marked probably during firing. Other than this particular

bowl, the finish of the bowls was good and burnish marks were noted on the surface of the remaining bowls.

5. Post-Medieval Glass

Context (1005) in trench 1 produced a fragment (weighing 71g) from the base of a thick-walled, green glass cylindrical bottle dating, probably, to no earlier than the later 18th century and, probably, later. Context (2002) in trench 2 produced fragments from the bases of two green glass bottles (totalling 434g), one of onion-shape and the second of either onion or mallet form. These bottles share a similar late 17th to early 18th century date as the pottery and clay tobacco pipe recovered from this context. Contexts (3001) and (3002) in trench 3 produced a base (88g) and a neck/rim (16g) respectively. Both of these vessels were in clear green glass and both date to no earlier than the late 19th century.

Conclusions

The finds assemblage comprised a mix of Roman and post-medieval artefacts typical of urban archaeological deposits excavated in Chester. The Roman pottery and CBM was clearly residual and incorporated into demonstrably later contexts dated to the post-medieval period or later. Of particular note was the collection of clay tobacco pipe, pottery and glass recovered from context (2002) in trench 2. This assemblage can be closely dated to the period c. 1700–20 based largely on the clay tobacco pipe evidence but supported, nonetheless, by the accompanying pottery and glass.

8.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TEST PITS

The evaluation trenches were designed to evaluate and characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains. Each test pit is described and discussed separately; details of the contexts are provided in brackets and are included in appendix I. The location of the evaluation trenches can be found on figure 2.

Test Pit 01 (plates 1 – 3, figures 2 - 5)

Test pit 01 was located to the immediate east of the current gym building centred on NGR SJ 40196 66395. It measured 1.0m by 1.5m orientated north to south, and was excavated through a 0.39m deep dark grey-black with mottled light-grey lenses silt-clay-loam (1001) which contained occasional modern red-brick and tile fragments. This deposit had clearly been redeposited, possibly during the construction of the current gym building, and produced two sherds of post-medieval pottery. This deposit overlaid a >0.7m deep soft dark grey-black silt-clay deposit (1005) which produced frequent fragments of modern brick and tile, as well as stone fragments, a single sherd of Holt oxidised Roman pottery, two fragments of Roman roof tile (tegula), two fragments of Roman ridge tile (imbrex), three sherds of post-medieval pottery, three fragments of clay pipe, and one sherd of post-medieval glass.

Deposit (1005) was particularly mixed and displayed no clear soil stratigraphy, clearly having been highly disturbed and almost certainly redeposited. The base limit of the horizon was not reached as the test pit was limited to 1.0m in depth, however a small exploratory sondage towards the centre of the test pit revealed that the naturally occurring red sandstone bedrock lay approximately 0.2m beneath the base of the trench.

Deposit (1005) had been cut on the eastern side of the test pit by a foundation trench [1002] with vertical sides and measuring 0.36m in width by 0.22m in depth. This foundation cut contained a dry-bonded sandstone wall (1003) surviving to two courses in height and orientated north to south along the eastern limit of the test pit. The wall measured >0.37m in width by 0.22m in height and had been used as a foundation for the construction of the current red-brick boundary wall and almost certainly represents an earlier version of the same boundary. The sandstone wall was constructed from angular sandstone blocks measuring on average 0.26m length x 0.2m width x 0.12m depth. No dating evidence was obtained from the wall and the artefacts recovered from the stratigraphically earlier deposit (1005) could not be relied upon due to the high level of disturbance. However, the wall lies upon the same orientation as the current boundary and is therefore almost certainly post-medieval in date.

A friable light-grey gritty silt-sand (1004) which contained occasional red-brick fragments and mortar lay directly above wall (1003) and is likely to represent a backfill episode probably deposited when the wall had been robbed out to enable the construction of the red-brick boundary wall.

Test Pit 02 (plates 4 and 5, figure 2)

Test pit 02 was located to the immediate east of the current gym building centred on NGR SJ 40196 66393. It measured 1.0m by 1.5m orientated north to south, and was excavated through a soft mid brown-grey silt-clay topsoil (2001) with occasional sand lenses. The deposit measured 0.15m in depth and produced occasional fragments of modern brick and slate.

The topsoil overlaid a reasonably soft dark grey-black silt-clay-loam deposit (2002) which measured 0.83m in depth and produced frequent fragments of modern brick, glass, and tile as well as four fragments of Roman roof tile (tegula), nineteen sherds of post-medieval ceramic, eighty-two fragments of clay pipe, and the sherds of two post-medieval green glass bottles. The base limit of deposit (2002) was not reached as the test-pit was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.0m.

The deposits in test pit 02 had clearly been highly disturbed and no clear stratigraphy could be identified. The discovery of Roman tile alongside post-medieval ceramic and glass within the same context shows how mixed the deposit was and is likely to have occurred during the construction of the current gym building.

Test Pit 03 (plates 6 and 7, figure 2)

Test pit 03 was located to the immediate south of the current gym building centred on NGR SJ 40169 66379. It measured 1.0m by 1.5m orientated east to west, and was excavated through a soft dark grey-black silt-clay topsoil (3001). The deposit measured 0.25m in depth and produced occasional fragments of modern brick and rubble, as well as a single post-medieval clay pipe stem sherd.

The topsoil deposit overlaid a series of red-brick and sandstone block foundations (3002) which appeared to run north-south across the test pit. The red-bricks measured 0.18m x 0.12m x 0.07m and were unfrogged and bonded by mortar with concrete cladding in places. An exploratory sondage showed that the foundations exceeded beyond 0.75m and lay alongside large slabs of red sandstone (3003) which appeared to have red-brick walling above and below it. Immediately above the wall foundations two sherds of post-medieval pearlware ceramic were found as well as a neck fragment of green glass dating to the 19th Century.

The limited size of the test pit meant that the foundations could not be fully explored or recorded, however it is probable that they represent part of the 19th Century Gaol which occupied the site prior to the construction of the school.



Plate 01: Test pit 01, from the south. Scale 1.0m.

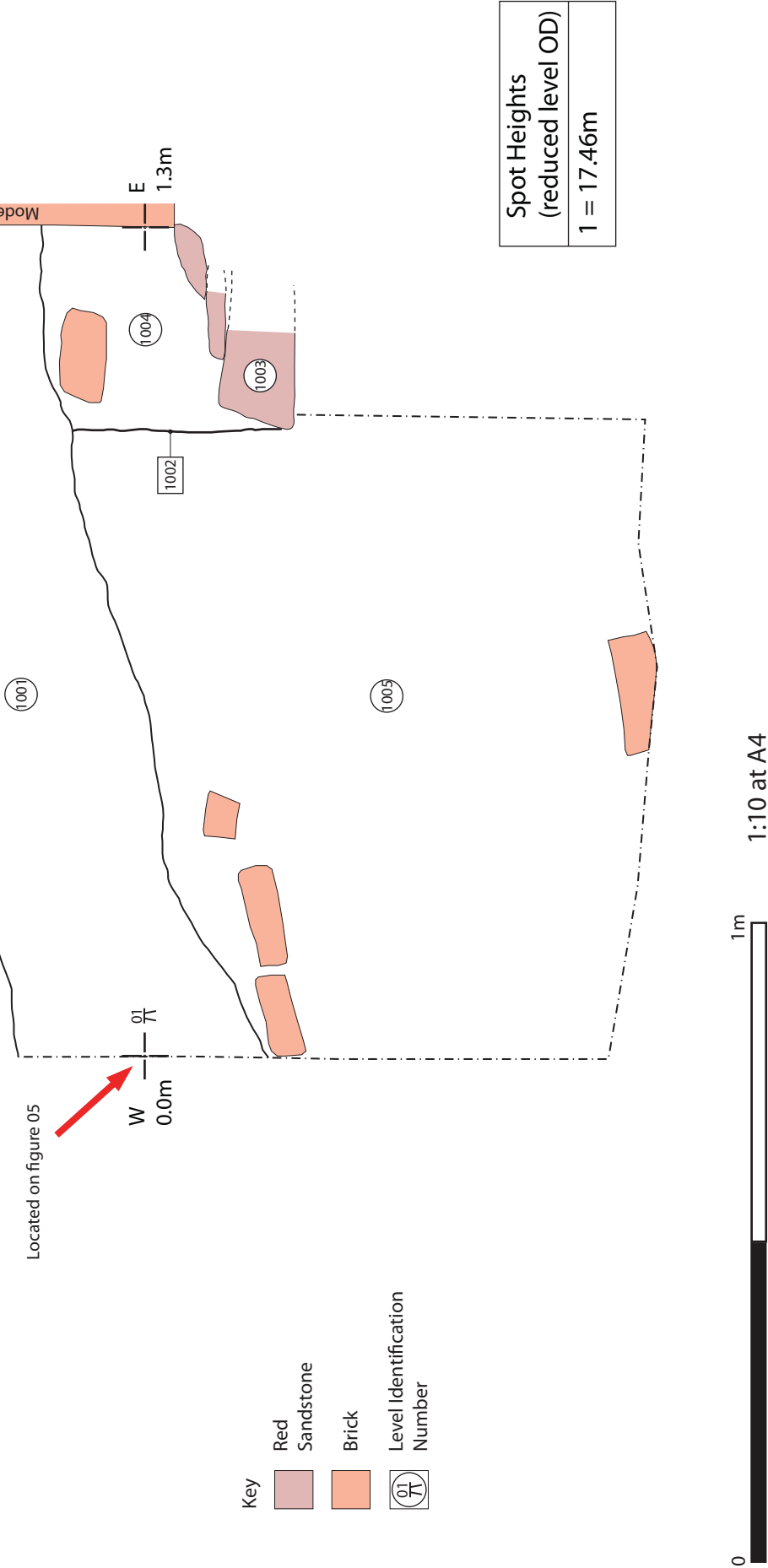


Plate 02: Test pit 01 showing wall (1003), from the west. Scale 0.5m.



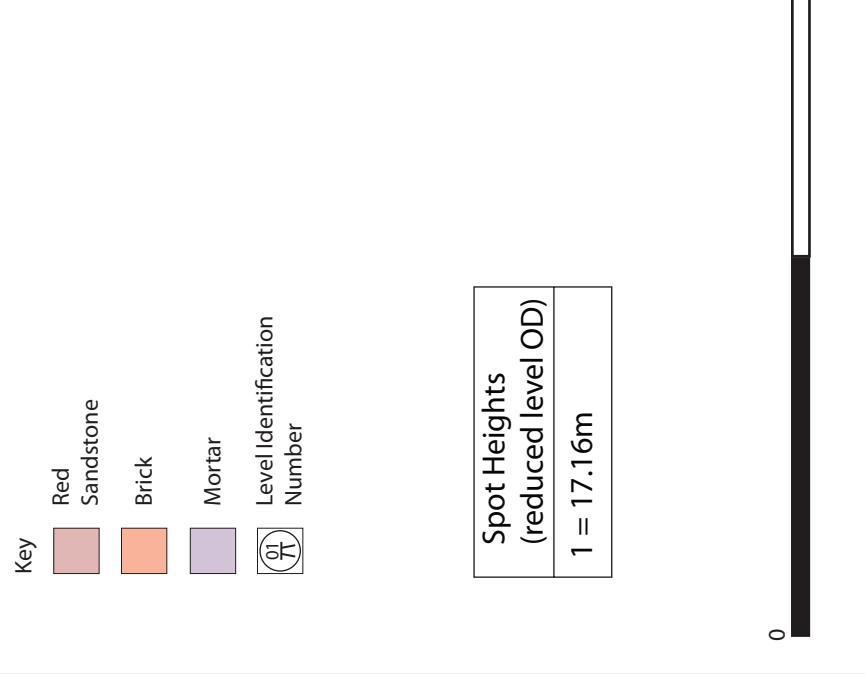
Plate 03: Test pit 01 showing foundation/robbers cut [1002], from the south. Scale 0.5m.

| Contexts | |
|--|--|
| 1001: Modern topsoil layer | |
| 1002: Foundation/robbers cut for wall (1003) | |
| 1003: Sandstone wall | |
| 1004: Backfill light grey gritty silt-sand | |
| 1005: Dark grey black silt-clay | |



Contexts

- 1001: Modern topsoil layer
1002: Foundation/robbers cut for wall (1003)
1003: Sandstone wall
1004: Backfill light grey gritty silt-sand
1005: Dark grey black silt-clay



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| Contexts | |
|--|--|
| 1001: Modern topsoil layer | |
| 1002: Foundation/robbers cut for wall (1003) | |
| 1003: Sandstone wall | |
| 1004: Backfill light grey gritty silt-sand | |
| 1005: Dark grey black silt-clay | |

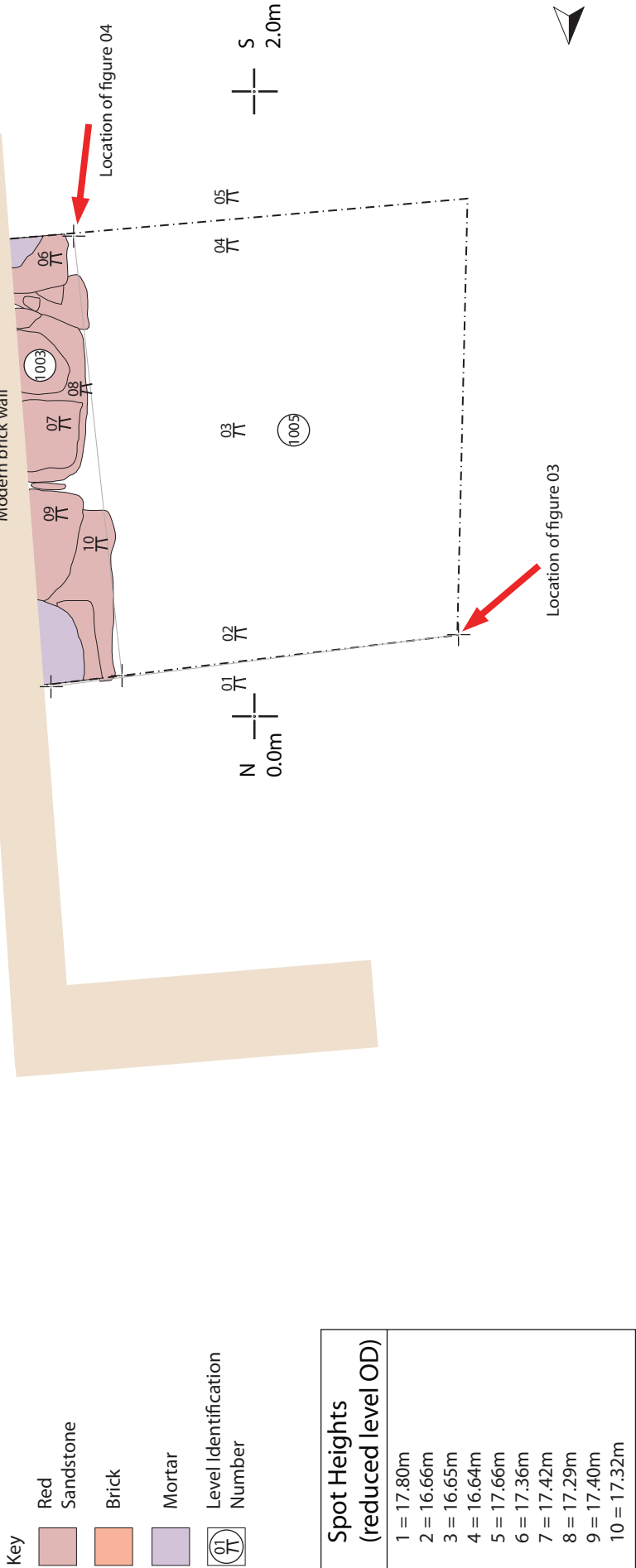


Figure 05: Plan of test pit 01 showing wall (1003).
Scale 1:20 at A4.



Plate 04: Test pit 02, from the north. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 05: North facing section of test pit 02, from the north. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 06: Test pit 03 showing wall (3002), from the east. Scale 0.5m.



Plate 07: North facing section of test pit 03, from the north. Scale 0.5m.

9.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – EVALUATION TEST PITS

The programme of archaeological evaluation at The Queen's School, Chester showed that there had been heavy disturbance to the stratigraphic horizons to the immediate east of the gymnasium. This disturbance had almost certainly occurred during the construction of the gym, if not earlier during the construction of the former Gaol building. This had resulted in Roman pottery and CBM being found stratigraphically higher than post-medieval pottery, clay pipe, and glass. However, as the sandstone wall (1003) located within test pit 01 has shown, the area retains the potential for preserved structural remains.

The exploratory sondage within test pit 01 showed that the naturally occurring red sandstone bedrock only lay 0.2m beneath the limit of the proposed 1.0m deep extension foundations, and as such any surviving structural remains would almost certainly extend into the proposed extension footings. It is therefore recommended that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during groundworks in this area in order to fully record any such remains that may exist.

Test pit 03 has shown that the area to the front of the gym retains the buried red-brick and sandstone foundations, of what is most likely the former 19th Century Gaol, at approximately 0.25m beneath the ground surface. The structural remains of the Gaol have never been archaeologically recorded before and as such it is recommended that the proposed extension footprint be excavated under the control of a suitably qualified archaeologist in order for the foundations to be exposed, cleaned and fully recorded.

The finds assemblage comprised a mix of Roman and post-medieval artefacts typical of urban archaeological deposits excavated in Chester. The Roman pottery and CBM was clearly residual and incorporated into demonstrably later contexts dated to the post-medieval period or later. Of particular note was the collection of clay tobacco pipe, pottery and glass recovered from context (2002) in trench 2. This assemblage can be closely dated to the period c. 1700–20 based largely on the clay tobacco pipe evidence but supported, nonetheless, by the accompanying pottery and glass.

10.0 METHODOLOGY – WATCHING BRIEF

10.1 Watching Brief

The Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) defines an archaeological watching brief as:

‘A formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.’ (IfA 1994, rev. 2008)

The Cheshire West and Chester archaeological planning officer requested (pers. comm) that an **intensive** watching brief be maintained during the excavation of the foundation trenches. This level of watching brief entailed that an appropriately qualified archaeologist was present during all associated ground disturbance.

All soil removal was undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. A photographic record was maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 550D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains were to be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

In the event of archaeological discovery features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded using Aeon Archaeology pro-formas, digital photographs, and plan and section drawings taken at a suitable scale (usually 1:20 for plan drawings and 1:10 for section drawings).

The archive produced is held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0044.2**.

10.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

10.3 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. They would be bagged and labelled as well as any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the evaluation trenching. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

10.4 Environmental Samples Methodology

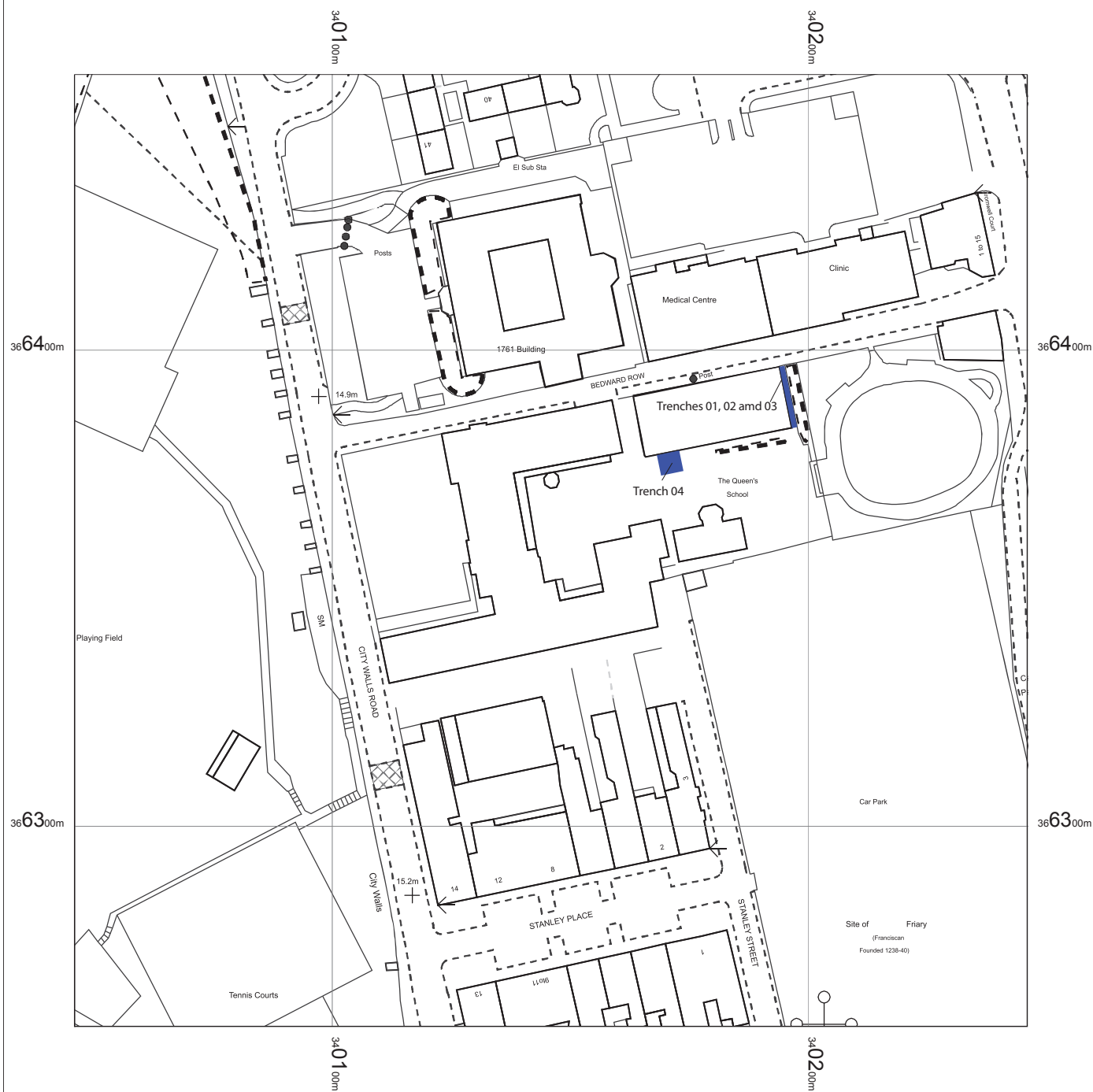
The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This

ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

10.5 Report and dissemination

A full archive including plans, photographs and written material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced. Upon approval from the client copies of the report will be sent to the Cheshire HER, the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service, and the OASIS online database.



The Queens School CH1 2NN

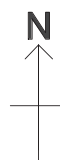
Figure 06: Location of extension footprint
(outlined blue).

OS MasterMap 1250/2500/10000 scale
24 June 2014, ID: BW1-00337372
www.blackwellmapping.co.uk

1:1250 scale print at A4, Centre: 340146 E, 366358 N

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100041040

Mapping
sourced from



BLACKWELL'S
www.blackwellmapping.co.uk

TEL: 0151 709 6512
maps.liverpool@blackwell.co.uk



Plate 08: Location of extension footprint to side of Gym, from the south.

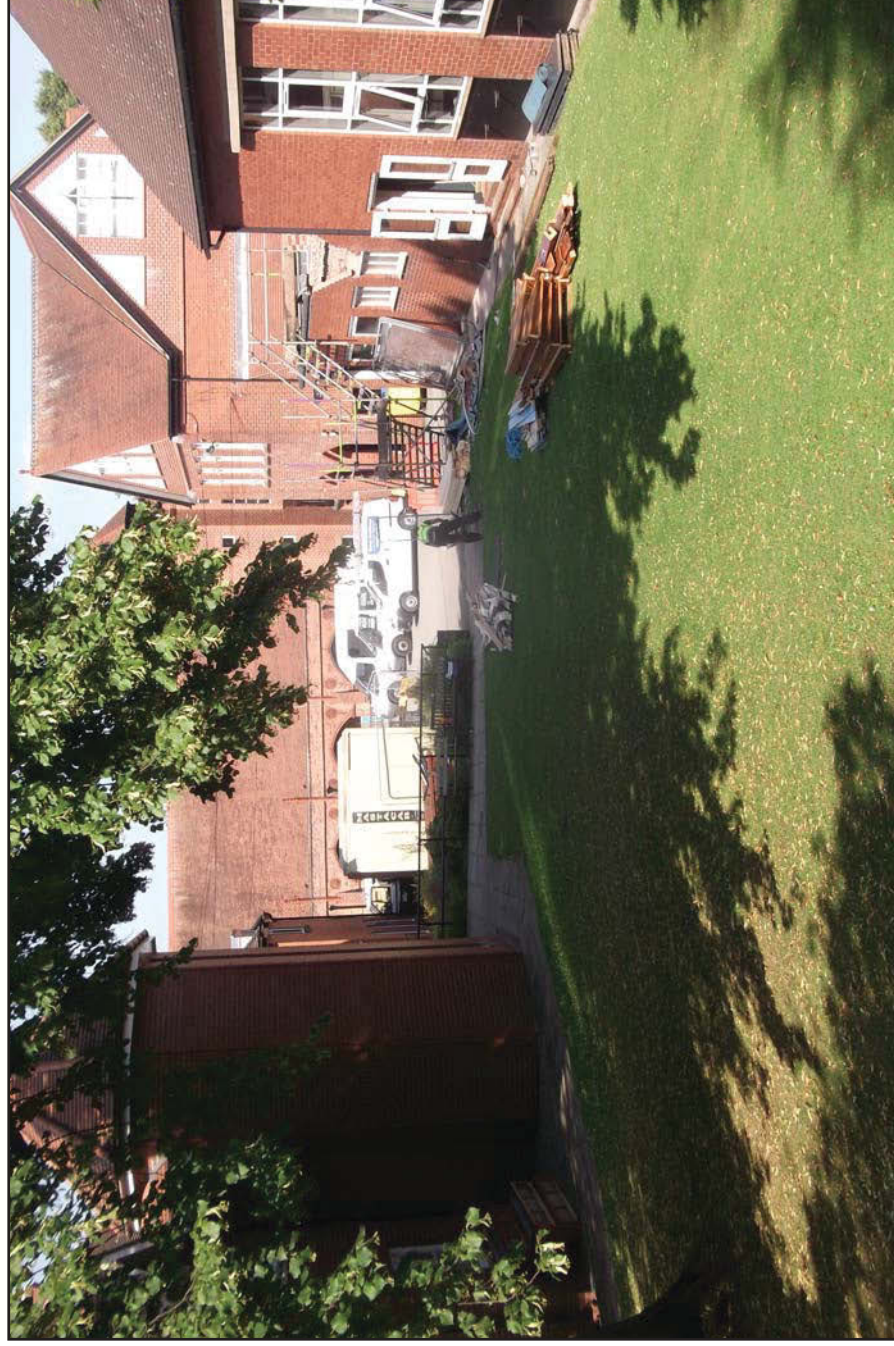


Plate 09: Location of extension footprint to front of Gym, from the east.

11.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS – WATCHING BRIEF

11.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological evaluation:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Context sheets | 26 |
| Trench sheets | 4 |
| Drawings | 4 on 3 sheets |
| Digital photographs | 58 |

11.2 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken as part of the watching brief as no suitable deposits or fills were encountered.

11.3 Artefacts

No artefacts were found during the archaeological watching brief.

12.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of foundation trenches 1-3 to the immediate east of the current gymnasium building, and during the excavation of the foundation footprint to the immediate south of the current gym entrance. Each foundation trench is described and discussed separately; details of the contexts are provided in brackets and are included in appendix I. The location of the foundation trenches can be found on figure 6.

Foundation Trenches 01-03 (plates 10 – 12, figure 6)

Three sets of foundation trenches each comprising three 1.5m² trenches were excavated in turn at the side of the gymnasium between 22nd July 2014 and 31st July 2014. Each trench was excavated through the soil horizons to a depth of between 1.1m and 1.2m on to the naturally occurring sandstone bedrock. Once all of the trenches were excavated it resulted in a north-south strip of foundation trench located to the immediate east of the gym building between SJ 40203 66392 and SJ 40206 66381 .

Each trench was excavated through a mixed and clearly redeposited silt-clay-loam on to the bedrock and then filled with concrete. No archaeological remains were identified within any of the foundation trenches and no artefacts were recovered.

Foundation Trench 04 (plates 13 – 20, figures 6 - 8)

Foundation trench 04 was located to the front of the gym, adjacent to the entrance into the building and centred on NGR SJ 40169 66379. The trench measured 4.7m in length by 3.0m in width orientated east to west, and was excavated under the supervision of an archaeologist at all times as the phase of evaluation test pits had shown the presence of the suspected remains of the former Gaol at this location.

The northern third of the trench location contained the tarmac path (4001) which ran east to west and parallel with the gym, the southern two-thirds of the trench were covered in turf (4002). The tarmac path (4001) measured approximately 0.08m in depth and overlaid a clay-sand hardcore deposit (4004) which contained frequent fragments of modern brick and rubble and had been laid down as a levelling substrata for the tarmac path. This overlaid an earlier version of the tarmac path (4006) constructed from red-bricks laid flat. This appeared to fill a broad foundation cut [4005] for the current gym which ran from east to west approximately 1.1m south of the building and cut through a deposit of brick and sand hardcore (4009). This foundation cut was clearly modern and as such was left unexcavated although it was noted to have a depth of >0.5m.

The turf deposit (4002) measured 0.34m in depth and overlaid a 0.18m deep clay-sand hardcore deposit (4003) which had been laid down as a levelling substrata for the turf and also overlaid brick rubble and sand deposit (4009) which had also been laid down as a building substrata. This in turn overlaid a 0.1m deep layer of building rubble (4010) which contained frequent fragments of red-brick and stone.

Towards the eastern half of the trench the hardcore deposit (4010) directly overlaid a cobbled surface (4007) constructed from small sized rounded and sub-rounded cobbles measuring on average 0.05m-0.15m diameter. The cobbles surface measured >2.4m in length, >1.2m in width, by 0.08m depth and carried on into the east and south limits of the excavation. The deposit almost certainly represents an earlier version of the school yard and appeared to be contemporary with a kerb and drain (4008) which ran from east to west towards the north of the cobbles. Beneath the cobbled surface (4007) was a 0.28m deep layer of hardcore (4012) which comprised crushed sandstone, sand, and brick fragments and clearly been laid as a substrate for laying the cobbles.

Towards the eastern end of the trench the hardcore layer (4012) overlaid a red-brick wall (4024) which measured 0.66m in length by 0.5m in width and orientated north to south. It was constructed

from unfrosted machine cut red-brick bonded by mortar and surviving to a height of 0.13m and one course. This wall clearly predated the school yard (4007) and appeared to have been a part of earlier foundations, most likely associated with the former Gaol building which occupied the site. To the immediate west and also overlaid by hardcore deposit (4012) a second red-brick wall (4022) of single-skin construction and bonded by mortar ran from southeast to northwest for approximately 0.9m. This wall was of a poor construction and utilised fragmentary pieces of unfrosted machine cut red-brick, measuring approximately 0.1m in width. This wall laid within a clear foundation cut [4023] which ran to the immediate south of the wall and cut through deposit (4018) (4019) and (4026) (see below).

The hardcore deposit (4010) also overlaid a red-brick wall (4011) that ran from north to south across the central part of the trench. The wall was constructed from unfrosted machine-cut red-brick bonded by mortar and appeared to have been built onto earlier foundations. The wall measured 1.4m in length, 0.5m in width, by 0.3m in height surviving up to three courses in height. This wall is most likely contemporary with the cobbled school yard (4007) and represents a low yard wall which most likely marked the perimeter of the yard.

Towards the centre of the trench the red-brick wall (4011) overlaid a series of sandstone slabs (4015) which measured a maximum of 1.4m in length, 0.3m in width, by 0.3m in depth. These slabs were not bonded but a thin layer of concrete had been poured over the southernmost stone and against the southern limit of excavation. Also against the southern trench baulk a single slab of sandstone (4025) displayed simple architectural moulding and appeared to be a reused piece of architectural masonry, almost certainly either a lintel or sill. This stone was carefully removed and photographed (plates 18-20) and left within the school grounds. The central sandstone blocks (4015) appeared to lie within a foundation cut [4021] which ran south from an earlier red-brick foundation wall (4013) (see below) before turning southwest and continuing into the southern limit of excavation. This foundation cut was not excavated but appeared to have been backfilled with a dark-grey sand (4020) which contained occasional red-brick fragments and cut through a redeposited layer of crushed sandstone, sand and brick fragments (4018) (4019) and (4026).

The sandstone blocks (4015) butted up against, and the red-brick wall (4024) overlaid, a series of earlier red-brick foundation walls (4013), (4016) and (4017). These walls were attributed separate context numbers but were almost certainly part of the same foundations. The walls were constructed from unfrosted machine cut red-brick bonded by mortar and measuring on average 0.4m in width. The walls (4013) and (4016) appeared to represent the north and west facing exterior elevations of a substantial square or rectangular building, with a projecting wall (4017) orientated east to west and running from the western elevation, possibly forming a second set-back building or perimeter wall. Although stratigraphically later the red-brick wall (4024) may well represent the east facing elevation of the same building.

The walls were left in-situ however an exploratory sondage against the east face of wall (4016) determined that at least ten courses measuring >1.2m in depth existed beneath the redeposited layers (4018) (4019) and (4026) which had been added presumably into a broad foundation cut after construction of the walls. It is probable that deposits (4018) (4019) and (4026) represent the made-up but original ground surface associated with the structure and as such the foundations of the building are extremely substantial and almost certainly cut into bedrock.

No artefacts were recovered during the excavation and the remaining foundations were left in-situ with a protective layer of geotextile being added to the trench prior to the pouring of concrete foundations.



Plate 10: Foundation trench 01, from the west. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 11: Foundation trench 02, from the west. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 12: Foundation trench 03, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 13: Foundation trench 04 showing former school footpath (4006), from the southwest.



Plate 14: Foundation trench 04 showing former school footpath (4006), school yard cobbles (4007), and remains of former Gaol (4013) (4016) and (4017), from the west. Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Plate 15: Foundation trench 04 showing remains of former Gaol (4013) (4016) and (4017), sandstone slabs (4015), later rebuild (4024), and in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Plate 16: Foundation trench 04 showing remains of former Gaol (4013) (4016) and (4017), sandstone slabs (4015), later rebuild (4024), and in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), from the west. Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Plate 17: North facing section of foundation trench 04 showing former cobbled school yard (4007), in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), and sandstone slabs (4015). Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Plate 18: East facing section of foundation trench 04 showing in-situ reused stone lintel (4025), and former gaol foundations (4016) and (4017).
Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Plate 19: Reused stone lintel (4025). Scale 1.0m.



Plate 20: Reused stone lintel (4025). Scale 1.0m.

| Contexts | |
|----------|--|
| 4002: | Turf and topsoil |
| 4003: | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit |
| 4007: | Cobbled surface - School yard |
| 4010: | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit |
| 4012: | Building rubble, sandstone frags, and sand |
| 4013: | Gaol brick foundation wall |
| 4024: | Brick foundation wall |

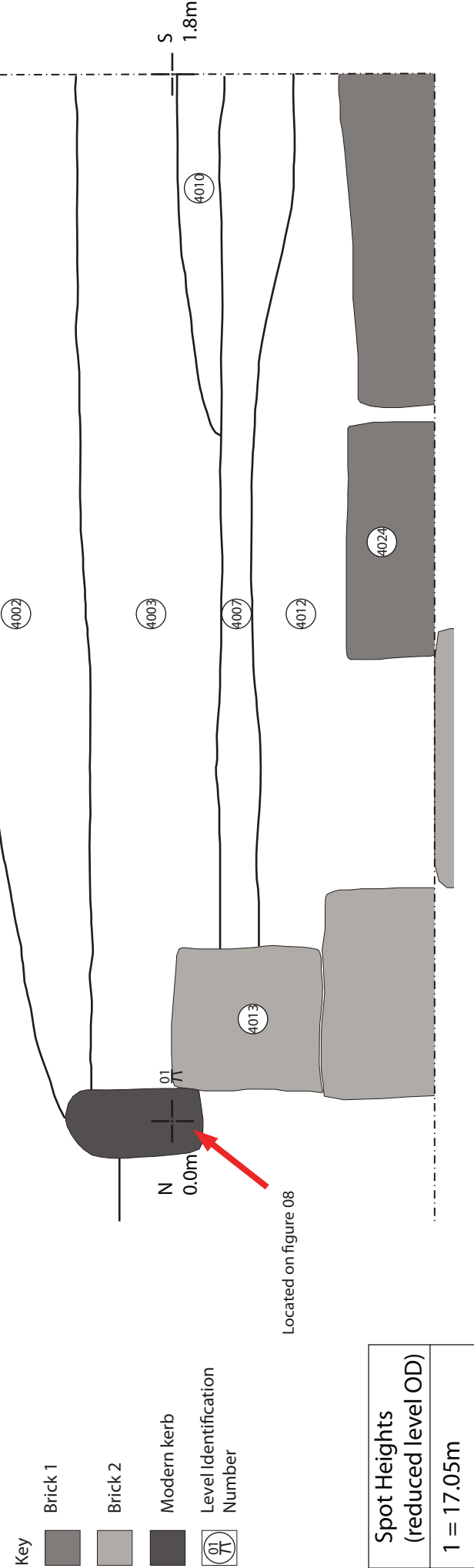


Figure 07: West facing section of trench 04 showing gaol foundation wall (4013).
Scale 1:10 at A4.

Spot Heights
(reduced
level OD)

| |
|-------------|
| 1 = 17.20m |
| 2 = 17.04m |
| 3 = 17.05m |
| 4 = 17.11m |
| 5 = 17.20m |
| 6 = 17.02m |
| 7 = 17.08m |
| 8 = 17.57m |
| 9 = 17.53m |
| 10 = 17.49m |
| 11 = 17.56m |
| 12 = 17.35m |
| 13 = 17.22m |
| 14 = 16.90m |
| 15 = 17.58m |
| 16 = 17.63m |

W —+—
0.0m

- Key
- Red Sandstone (Gaul)
 - Brick 1 (Gaul)
 - Concrete (Gaul-School)
 - Brick 2 (School)
 - Brick 3 (School)

Level
Number



1:20 at A4

Figure 08: Plan of trench 04. Scale 1:20 at A4.

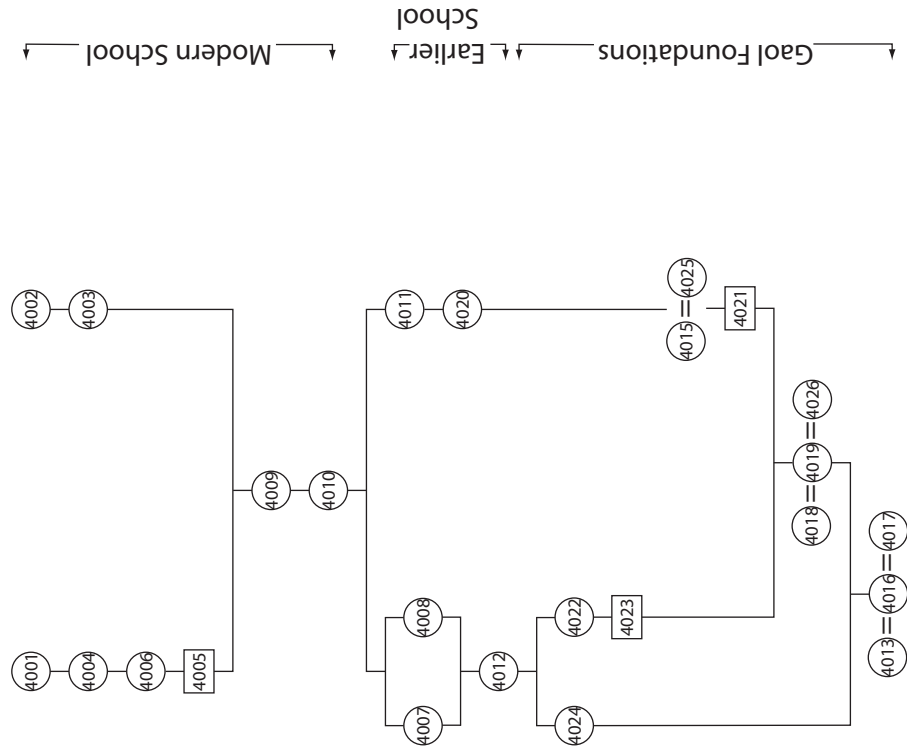


Figure 09: Harris Matrix of trench 04.

13.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – WATCHING BRIEF

The watching brief of the excavation of trench 04 for the gymnasium extension at The Queen's School recorded the brick built and sandstone remains of a series of foundation walls. When the location of trench 04 is overlaid on the town map of 1833 and the detailed town plan of 1874 (figures 10 and 11) the trench lies directly over the intersection of the corner of one of the airing yards and the eastern gable of the House of Correction. It would therefore seem probable that the brick walls (4016) and (4017) (figure 8) represent the gable end of the structure, with brick walls (4013), (4016) and possibly (4024) representing the perimeter wall of the airing yard.

The sandstone blocks (4015) although stratigraphically later than the red brick walling (4016) are likely to also be part of the prison foundations, perhaps being added as repair work. The slabs are laid flat and most likely represent the floor of the airing yard, or perhaps capping for a drain at this location. The reuse of the sandstone sill or lintel (4025) within what is probably the western wall of the airing yard is likely to simply be the opportunistic reuse of an available piece of stone. The architectural fragment itself is rather un-diagnostic in its lack of mouldings and being ex-situ is of limited heritage value. However, there is a possibility that the piece may have been reused from the Greyfriars Friary which stood in close proximity to the southeast.

The watching brief at The Queen's School has for the first time provided the opportunity to record the foundations of the former Chester City Gaol and House of Correction building. Moreover, the high detail of the historic mapping allows what is being recorded within the trenches to be matched with parts of the former structure. It is therefore recommended that if any future opportunities arise where more of the former Gaol can be exposed then a similar record is carried out.

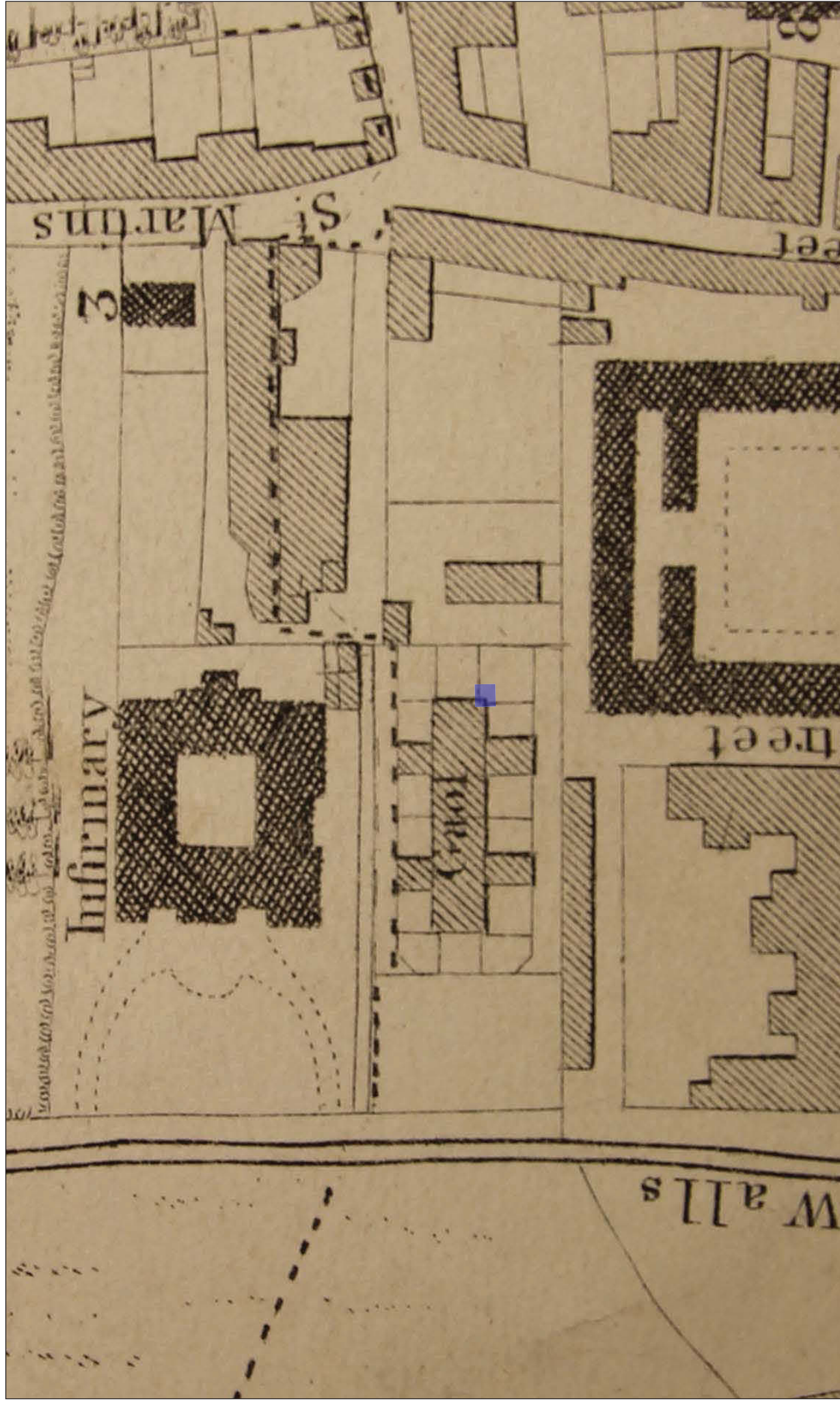


Figure 10: Town Map of 1833, approximate location of trench 04 shaded blue.

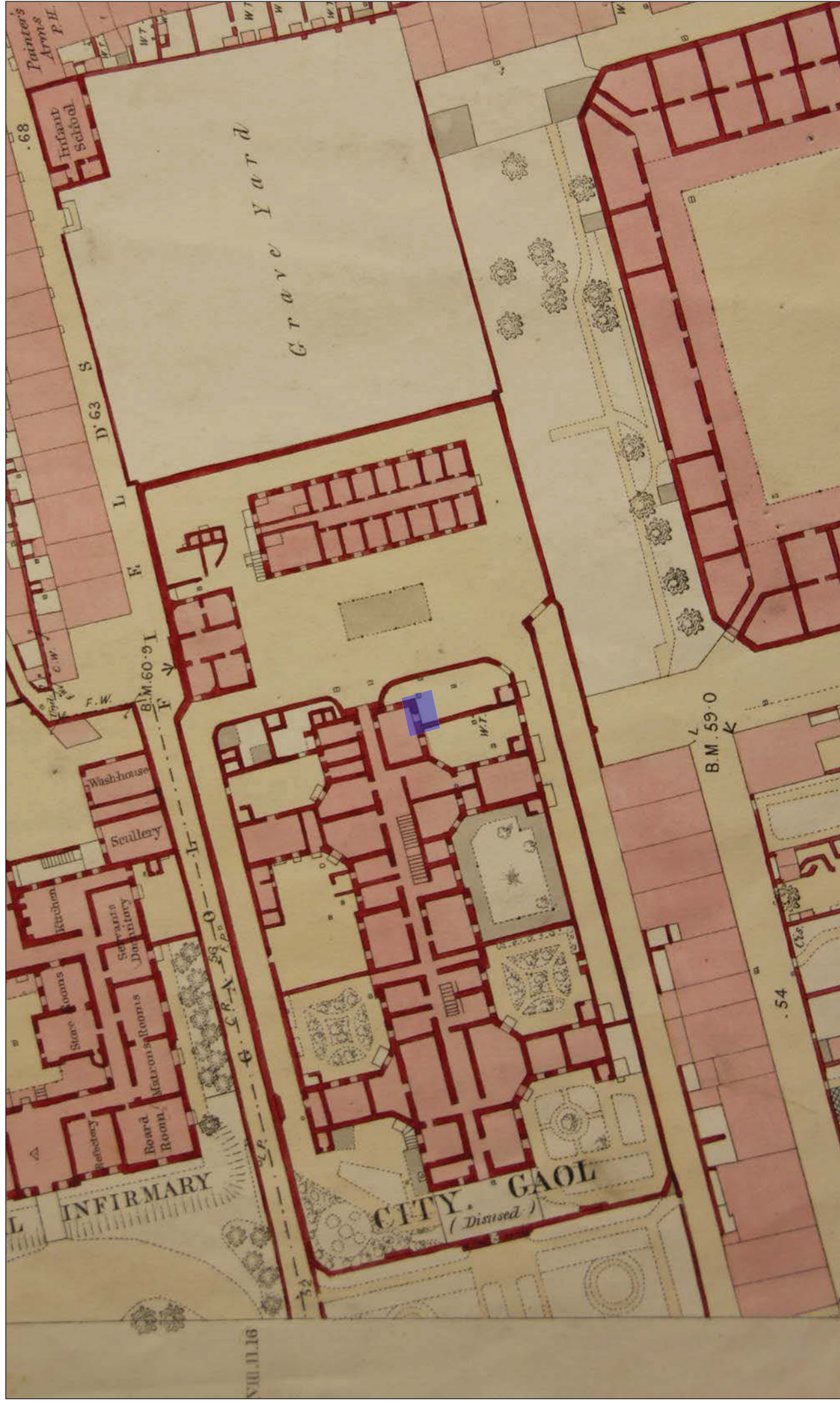


Figure 11: Town Plan of 1874, approximate location of trench 04 shaded blue.

14.0 SOURCES

Maps

OS 1:10 000 Series sheet SJ 46 NE, SJ 46 SE, SJ 46 SW, and SJ 46 NW

1st Edition 25" County Series Ordnance Survey Map XXXVIII.II 1874

Town Plan, Chester 1874

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APPENDIX I – DETAILS OF RECORDED CONTEXTS

| Context Number | Form | Description |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1001 | Topsoil deposit | Soft, dark grey-black silt-clay-loam, 0.39m depth. |
| 1002 | Foundation cut for wall [1003] | Unknown shape in plan, vertical sides, unknown base. 0.36m width by 0.22m depth. |
| 1003 | Sandstone wall | Dry bonded, 2 courses deep measures >0.37m width by >1.4m length by 0.22m height. |
| 1004 | Backfill of cut [1002] | Friable, light grey gritty silt-sand, 0.22m depth. |
| 1005 | Redeposited soil | Soft, dark grey-black silt-clay, 0.7m depth. |
| 2001 | Topsoil deposit | Soft, mid brown-grey silt-clay, 0.15m depth. |
| 2002 | Redeposited soil | Reasonably soft, dark grey-black silt-clay-loam, 0.83m depth. |
| 3001 | Topsoil | Soft, dark grey-black silt-clay, 0.25m depth. |
| 3002 | Red brick Gaol foundations | Red-brick, unfrogged machine cut bonded by mortar. |
| 3003 | Void | Void |
| 4001 | Tarmac | Tarmac |
| 4002 | Turf and topsoil | Soft, dark grey-black silt-clay, 0.34m depth. |
| 4003 | Hardcore deposit | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit. |
| 4004 | Hardcore deposit | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit. |
| 4005 | Foundation cut for Gym | East-west alignment, unexcavated. |
| 4006 | Brick path | Laid red-bricks forming earlier path. |
| 4007 | Cobbled school yard | Small sized rounded and sub-rounded cobbles, 0.08m depth. |
| 4008 | Kerb and drain | Sandstone kerb and drain of school yard. |
| 4009 | Hardcore deposit | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit. |
| 4010 | Hardcore deposit | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit. |
| 4011 | Brick wall of school yard | Unfrogged machine-cut red-brick wall bonded by mortar. |
| 4012 | Hardcore deposit | Mixed brick, mortar, clay and sand deposit. |
| 4013 | Gaol foundations | Unfrogged machine-cut red-brick wall bonded by mortar. |
| 4014 | Void | Void. |
| 4015 | Sandstone blocks - Gaol | Red sandstone, 1.4m length by |

| | | |
|------|--------------------------------|---|
| | | 0.3m width by 0.3m depth. |
| 4016 | Gaol foundations | Unfrogged machine-cut red-brick wall bonded by mortar. |
| 4017 | Gaol foundations | Unfrogged machine-cut red-brick wall bonded by mortar. |
| 4018 | Backfill material | Crushed sandstone, sand and brick fragments. |
| 4019 | Backfill material | Crushed sandstone, sand and brick fragments. |
| 4020 | Fill of foundation cut [4021] | Dark-grey sand. |
| 4021 | Foundation cut | Foundation cut for sandstone blocks (4015) – unexcavated. |
| 4022 | Brick wall | Unfrogged, machine cut, single-skin red-brick wall? |
| 4023 | Foundation cut for wall (4022) | Unexcavated. |
| 4024 | Red-brick wall – Gaol? | Unfrogged, machine cut, red-brick wall bonded by mortar. |
| 4025 | Sandstone – reused block | Reused sandstone lintel or sill. |
| 4026 | Backfill material | Crushed sandstone, sand and brick fragments. |

