

**SHANNON'S MILL AND  
SURROUNDING AREA,  
WALSALL: POST-  
EXCAVATION  
ASSESSMENT AND  
RESEARCH DESIGN**

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## SUMMARY

*A programme of archaeological work that included documentary research, watching brief and open excavation ahead of a major redevelopment scheme in the historic centre of Walsall, adjacent to Shannon's Mill, was commissioned by DBK Back on behalf of Norton and Proffitt Developments Ltd. The results of the excavation and watching brief identified an area of historic Walsall, occupied and reoccupied over the post-medieval period with dramatic changes in use, character and fortune, mirrored and enhanced by the documentary evidence collected. The hill itself was determined to comprise layers and deposits relating to limestone quarry backfill, tentatively dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Pits were identified cutting these layers, indicative of industrial activity as the quarrying occurred. After the quarrying had ceased, the area was given over to settlement, in the first instance with large affluent houses along the Upper Rushall Street frontage, and in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century with smaller slum houses crowded in behind these on the hill slopes. These latter properties were demolished in the 1930s.*

## **SHANNON'S MILL AND SURROUNDING AREA, WALSALL: POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH DESIGN.**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the project**

Birmingham Archaeology was commissioned by DBK Back on behalf of Norton and Proffitt Developments Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological work that included documentary research, watching brief and open excavation ahead of a major redevelopment scheme in the historic centre of Walsall, adjacent to Shannon's Mill (Fig. 1). The overall project included archaeological monitoring, evaluation, excavation and standing building recording, parts of which have been reported on elsewhere.

The work conformed to a brief produced by the Black Country Planning Archaeologist (Shaw 2003), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (Birmingham Archaeology 2005 – see Appendix 1), which was approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to implementation, in accordance with guidelines laid down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990).

This report outlines the results of archaeological investigations within Zones I and V of the development (Fig. 2), which were carried out between November 2005 and February 2007, during the construction of a new road joining Ablewell Street and the top of the High Street. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations (IFA 1999).

The layout of this report has been prepared to the guidelines set out by English Heritage in the Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP 2).

#### **1.2 Site Location**

The site lies within the historic centre of Walsall (NGR SP 0135 9832). The overall development area is divided into 5 Zones (Fig. 2).

Zone 1 is located in an area bounded by Bullock's Row, The Ditch, Ablewell Street and Upper Rushall Street (Fig. 3). Land use comprised a combination of mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings fronting onto Ablewell Street, and an area of open ground north of Bullock's Row, through which the proposed road was constructed. Zone V was a carpark situated at the east end of the High Street, and the adjoining section of the High Street itself. The standing buildings affected by the road scheme were recorded and reported on in a separate phase of work (Lobb 2006).

The development area as a whole lies on the southeastern side of a shallow stream valley which runs through Walsall. The land rises from around 125m OD at the valley bottom to 150m OD at the summit of Church Hill. The drift geology is made up of sands and gravel at the valley bottom, with clay on the slopes of Church Hill. The hill itself is a limestone outcrop which has witnessed several quarrying and terracing events in its recent history.

#### **1.3 Aims**

The aims of the archaeological monitoring in Zone 1 and Zone V were to:

- Preserve by record any surviving archaeological features or deposits earlier than 1750
- Preserve by record any remains later than 1750 where these were exceptionally

- well preserved or relate to a specific industrial function.
- Carry out an assessment of cartographic and historic records relating to the properties affected by the development.

## **2 METHOD**

### **2.1 Desk-based Assessment**

An assessment of the cartographic and historic records of the area affected by the development was made using available sources at Walsall Local Studies Centre and the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record. This built upon existing desk-based assessments (Conway 2001, Ramsey 2003).

### **2.2 Fieldwork**

All groundworks relating to the road development scheme in Zone I (Fig. 3) and Zone V (Fig. 2) were monitored archaeologically in accordance with the brief for archaeological works set out by the Black Country Archaeologist on behalf of Walsall Council. The excavation of geotechnical bore-holes and test-pits were monitored through an archaeological watching brief and were reported on in a previous report.

The area impacted by the road scheme (Zone I) was stripped by the contractor under archaeological control. The topsoil and overburden were stripped using a mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket down to the level of the uppermost archaeological horizon. Where significant archaeological deposits were encountered, excavation was undertaken by hand. In areas not requiring full excavation, a watching brief was implemented throughout the full ground reduction exercise (Zones 1 and V).

Recording was by means of pre-printed pro-forma record cards for contexts, features and masonry, supplemented by plans (at 1:20 and 1:50), sections (1:20) and monochrome, colour print and digital photography as appropriate. All stratified finds were collected by context. All features were surveyed using a Total Station EDM and the results mapped into AutoCAD software. Spot levels were taken where appropriate and recorded relative to an Ordnance Survey datum level.

## **3 DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH BY STEVE LITHERLAND**

The underlying geology of the Walsall area is limestone of which there are three productive beds. These are the Upper and Lower Wenlock Limestones and beneath these the Bar or Woolhope Limestone. Historically the Lower Wenlock Limestone was considered to be the most useful bed. This outcrops around Church Hill, the Arboretum and towards Rushall. Further beds also lie very close to the surface in the area around the Town End Bank.

There is documentary evidence that lime was being burnt as early as the 1400s, and this practice was listed as one of the trades of the town c.1494. Limestone was also being used for building by at least the later 1500s and was used in the construction of both Rushall Hall and Rushall Church (VCH Staffs 1976, 190). The earliest exploitation of limestone was probably around Church Hill and old workings were exposed by later building work at the top of High Street and Peal Street (Green 1977, 37). Green further recorded a shaft leading to one of these workings in the 1970s that he accessed via a manhole in the paving close to the Church Steps. The shaft lay beneath 4 Peal Street before it was demolished in the 1930s, and lies less than 100m to the south of the present excavations. This shaft probably lead into the same cavern system that local historian Billy Meikle hid from police down after a raid on the nearby Shakespeare Pub

nearby in the 1930s. Here he found some small clay pipe bowls and a leather pitcher, believed to date from the 1600s (Lewis & Woods 1987, 30).

These early limestone workings were either cut from the surface or dug in long galleries underground (Green 1977 38). In the 1530s Leland mentioned limestone mining along with metal working and bit making as being characteristic of the town (Toulmin Smith 1964, Vol no x, 23), and by 1568/9 it was known as a regional centre of lime production and building materials (The Birmingham Archaeological Society 1918, Vol. XLIV, 18 & 39). In 1686 Robert Plot included a description of the quarrying work around Walsall. He recorded that:

'the stone is broken up with iron wedges knocked in at the partitions with great sledges and prized up with great levers with rings around them to stay the feet of the workmen who get up on them, whereof some weigh at least 150 pounds...Notwithstanding which great force the stones will not rise, unless they are softened by fire, which upon that account they are constrained to make upon it'.  
(Plot 1686, 21)

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century lime was being used in much larger quantities for spreading upon fields to improve their productive capacity and also, following the adoption of coal rather than charcoal for iron making, where it was used as a flux that aided the removal of impurities. An area to the east of Ablewell Street was called Lime Pit Bank from at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century (VCH Staffs 1976, 180-206) and there was a limestone quarry to the south of The Ditch recorded in 1782 on Snape's map of Walsall (Fig. 4). However, from this period onwards, probably as limestone beds on Church Hill started to become exhausted, the focus of large scale limestone mining moved northwards within the town centre. The present Hatherton Lake to the north of Church Hill is a flooded quarry (VCH Staffs 1976, 180-206). Some idea of the extent of this trade is indicated by the fact that wagons loaded with limestone products were specifically exempted from tolls when the local roads were improved following the Turnpike Acts (Blay 1932, 7). Lime was also an important ingredient in the tanning process, although this was not a really important industry in the town until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### The development of Upper Rushall Street, Ablewell Street and The Ditch

There are indirect early 13<sup>th</sup> century references to Rushall Street, and it was first specifically named in a deed of 1339 (Staffs. R.O. D 260/M/T/7/1). There is further evidence that there were buildings on this street by the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century, including one known as 'my lord's inn', which may have been a precursor of the Bull's Head coaching inn (B.M. Eg. Rolls 8529, 8539 & 8542, see below).

The earliest known reference to Ablewell Street is 1309 when it is called Ablewellsych (W.C.L. ACJ XII/14). Many early writers have followed Duignan's fanciful derivation of the name as being from a corruption from the Norman French *aval* meaning below or beneath, and signifying below the wall, and hence referring to suppose defences around Church Hill. (Duignan 1880). The Ditch, which was first mentioned in records in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was also used in Duignan's arguments as deriving from 'the fosse which surrounds the fort'. The reality is more prosaic. Wells and springs are common in the area and there is a reference to Able Well as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century (VCH 1976, 221), while the Ditch actually runs down from the hill rather than around it and its name presumably derives from the fact that it is cut down into the surrounding land, presumably due to a combination of the effects of foot traffic and water run off from the hill. (this paragraph pers comm. Mike Shaw)

Pain's Yard, which connected The Ditch and Rushall Street, was first documented in 1733



(VCH 1976, 147). Figures for the recipients of Moseley's Dole suggest that the inner streets of the town were becoming quite densely occupied by the later 17<sup>th</sup> century. This population expansion was probably accommodated through a mixture of overcrowding and the addition of extra storeys or attics to properties that were still largely confined to the frontages of the main, essentially medieval, streets of the town (see for example Gregory King's map of Walsall of 1679). The figures for Church Hill in 1619 and 1661 were 526 and 746, and those for Rushall Street 580 and 784 respectively (Northants. R.O. I L3192).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Rushall Street was generally considered to be a desirable area of Walsall in which to live with coaching inns and other larger Georgian properties lining the street (Cockayne 1984, 79). However, there were clear signs of decline during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This down turn in the fortune of the street may have been precipitated by the cutting of Bridge Street between The Bridge and Ablewell Street in 1766. This new street provided an alternative, and much less steep, east-west route through the town centre. Consequently, it took away a lot of road traffic from the tortuous upper end of Rushall Street, which in places was only 10 feet wide and also had to be approached via a 1 in 8 incline up High Street (Glew 1856, 35). Cockayne in his account of the Inns of Walsall recounts a tale of the rivalry between the inns on these roads, the Bull's Head on Rushall Street and The George on Bridge Street/High Street. , which became the premier coaching inn in Walsall in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century. While the Bull's Head was still a thriving hostelry then? – doesn't make sense, the guard of the Stonnal to Chester coach, which continued to use the Bull's Head to change horses, would let off his blunderbuss as he thundered down the High Street past The George as a token of defiance (1984, 80). In addition, the area probably also suffered from the typical urban cycle of development and subsequent decline. For example, the construction of Lichfield Street provided a new set of desirable middle class town centre properties after 1830 and started a trend for other middle class housing developments around the outskirts of the historic town.

Late 18<sup>th</sup>-and early 19<sup>th</sup>-century trade directories indicate a large number of buckle makers in Rushall Street. Sketchley's Walsall Directory of 1770, lists several along with chape makers, filers and forgers ('chape' being either the metal tip of a scabbard or, more probably in this case, the tongues of buckles). All of this manufacture, together with a bridle cutter, was an indication of the growing reputation of Walsall as a national supplier of shoe buckles, horse furniture and saddlery at this time. Higher status professions such as an attorney and a surgeon were also listed. In addition, there was a mercer and factor, a clock maker, a distiller and brandy merchant (which was a luxury item during the Napoleonic Wars), and a muffatee maker (which is a kind of hand warmer). Other more traditional trades in Rushall Street included a lime maker, a butcher, and the Bull's Head proprietor William Kendrick. However, the distribution of these trades is difficult to gauge with accuracy as Upper and Lower Rushall Streets were not differentiated at this time. In Pearce's Directory of 1818 a watch and clock maker, a wheelwright, a whip thong maker, a white smith, a wine and spirit merchant, a tailor, a tanner, a turner, a surgeon, a stirrup maker, and a stay maker were again listed. Edward Woollatt was also listed as the proprietor of the Bull's Head, as he had been since at least 1801 (see below).

Mason's plan of 1824 (Fig. 5) is the first of sufficiently large scale and accuracy to be able to depict individual buildings and plot boundaries. Several of the buildings fronting onto the east side of the upper end of Rushall Street have relatively large footprints in comparison to those further down the street, and these were probably the premises of the higher status trades and professions mentioned above, including The Bull's Head. It is also noticeable that the set of property boundaries that ran up the eastern side of the street were terraced and deliberately aligned so that each had access to Rushall Street and The Ditch. They are also generally larger than the more sinuous plot patterns seen elsewhere, which are characteristic of medieval development (Baker 1989, 14).

The area to the south of the Ditch was beginning to be developed for housing along the Ablewell Street frontage by 1824. Before this as we have seen a large limestone quarry occupied the area immediately to the south of The Ditch now occupied by a Lidl Supermarket. To the south of the Lidl site, by Bullock's Row, archaeological work during housing development in 2004 uncovered a large oak trough dated to the late 15th to early 16th centuries. Other hollowed out timbers nearby appeared to be from a conduit and the trough may have served the same function. Below the conduit were two cut features. The earliest (309) may have been a boundary ditch, a pool or a pond. Environmental deposits within it suggested that it was part of a rural landscape that was largely wooded and grassy. Environmental evidence from the later feature, a pond (106), contained evidence of both arable and pastoral land uses. An unusually high level of cereal types suggests either cultivation or crop processing in close proximity. Woodland taxa may represent hedge banks or field boundary trees. The insect remains suggested that the area may have been in use as an orchard. A late medieval sherd was recovered from the fill of the later feature. Pebbly sandy layers filling the feature may represent hill wash down slope into the feature as a result of clearance of the land above (Stone and Nash 2004). The limited evidence would suggest that this area did not form part of the town in the late medieval period but was given over to rural activities. The conduit and pipes may be part of the water scheme referred to in 1637 when the mayor paid a man 'for opening the pipes to let the water to the well in Rushall Street.' (VCH 1976, 221).

The Mason plan does not depict many back-plot buildings, with the notable exception of the cluster behind the Bull's Head that would probably have included stables and stores. Therefore, it may be the case that the majority of the back-plot workshops, or 'shoppings' as they are locally called, together with court housing, were a slightly later 19<sup>th</sup>-century development, although several of the yards in this area are named in 18<sup>th</sup>-century or early 19<sup>th</sup>-century documents. These densely packed types of structure were certainly characteristic of the area by the time the Ordnance Survey mapped the area in the 1880s (Fig. 6).

By 1847 Upper Rushall Street was considered to be a third-rate street where it was difficult to lease houses and shops (Staffs. R.O. D 1287/colliery box 2, correspondence of the Bradford Estate 1843-53, letter dated 23 April 1847). However, this view can be contrasted with that of Glew who in 1856 observed that it still contained some 'good old-fashioned houses and shops and was a fair business street' (Glew 1856, 35). This apparent variance may have been the result of the increasing congestion of the courts behind the commercial frontages. Here, evidence from the census returns between 1841 and 1901 indicate that large numbers of working class families and trades were packed. Following several cholera outbreaks in the mid 1800s concerns about the sanitary condition of these properties was such that later in the Victorian period court housing in Upper Rushall Street together with Church Hill was considered for slum clearance after the passing of the Artisans Dwelling Act of 1875. However, it was decided that these cases could be dealt on a piecemeal basis under the Public Health Acts (Lewis and Woods 1987, 73) and only some limited clearance, mainly to the north of Bull's Head Yard, had taken place before the First World War (OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1:2500 1902-3 Fig. 7, OS 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1:2500 1914-17, Fig. 8).

The majority of the clearance of Church Hill was eventually carried out in the later 1930s (Fig. 9) and this disappearing street life was recorded in the memoirs of Billy Meikle, who used to frequent many of the local pubs. We are also fortunate in that the unique character of the area was captured by local photographers such as Douglas Gilbert before it was swept away, although he did compare its 'squalor unfavourably to 'the stench of a Moroccan souk'. After the clearances were completed the area around the church was landscaped and laid out as public gardens.

## The Bull's Head and Bull's Head Yard

This yard appears on maps of Walsall from 1763 to 1938. It took its name from the coaching inn called the Bull's Head, which occupied the frontage onto Rushall Street from at least the 1600s, and may have been the 'lord's inn' referred to in 15<sup>th</sup>-century documents (see above). In the 17<sup>th</sup> century John Walton was the proprietor of the inn. He was quite a prominent figure in the town being a churchwarden in 1633, and a constable in 1637; not surprisingly, therefore, the inn was sometimes patronised by the Town Corporation (Cockayne 1984, 80). After the restoration of Charles II many ale houses and inns were reopened or extended following their Puritan-backed repression, and the numbers of coaching inns in particular expanded greatly. The Bull's Head was in a prime location for a coaching inn being situated on a major thoroughfare, close to, but not constrained by the traffic on the High Street. It also had rear egress via The Ditch, which was an important feature as the coaches were able to drive straight through rather than turn around, which was difficult. In the 1700s the inn was still commonly referred to as 'Walton's', and there are records of sums paid by the mayor of Walsall for hospitality from 1701/2.

There was a post office listed at the Bull's Head in the late 1790s, and an excise office run by Edward Woollatt, the licensee, was listed in 1801. The business continued in this family, for in 1835 Joseph Woollatt was listed in Pigot's Directory at the Bull's Head. However, a combination of the increasing crowding of the yards off Upper Rushall Street, poor sanitary provision in these older houses, and the arrival of railway at the other end of the town centre, probably hastened the decline of the Bull's Head as a coaching inn. The passing of the Beerhouse Act in 1830 would also have provided further competition. For example, in the 1851 census there were 11 inns and 4 beerhouses listed on Rushall Street, including one unnamed establishment actually in Bull's Head Yard. In 1851 William Hope was listed as the operator of this beerhouse and later, in 1861, it was William Kyte. In 1858, when John Elmer was the proprietor of the Bull's Head, it had its licence removed for allowing prostitutes to assemble on the premises and the Walsall Free Press reported that in the Bull's Head Yard adjacent to the inn there were 8 brothels, 13 thieves and 30 prostitutes. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century The Greyhound pub was recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:500 plan situated at 55 Upper Rushall Street at the head of the Bull's Head Yard (Fig. 10). George Johnson was the proprietor of The Greyhound in 1851 although this may have been situated in a different building as the names of pubs were moveable. Alternatively, the Bull's Head may already have been subdivided by this time. John Johnson and Joseph Matthews were listed as proprietors of The Greyhound in 1861, Daniel Partridge in 1870, and George Somers in 1880. It was finally closed in 1902 following a national trend towards downsizing and concentration in the drinks industry. Certainly, by this time the Bull's Head had closed down and probably been broken up into smaller units, although the name of the yard still lived on.

The Ordnance Survey 1:500 plan (Fig. 10) shows four yards in the Rushall Street/Ablewell Street/The Ditch triangle, that included the Bull's Head Yard, Pain's Yard and Carver's Yard (Carver was a whip manufacturer who had premises here) – but Pain's Yard and Carver's Yard not shown on Fig 10. Mention Court shown on plan – presumably low-class housing set around a yard? .

## 4 RESULTS (FIGS 10, 11 AND 12)

Detailed context descriptions are presented in Appendix 2

## 4.1 Geology

The natural subsoil (**1050**, Fig 11) was a greenish limestone with clay seams between blocks. It was partially exposed in areas beneath the cellars fronting Upper Rushall Street and in discrete places along the line of the road route at the very base of the ground reduction.

## 4.2 Phasing

The archaeological features, deposits and structures can be grouped into four main phases. The earliest phase after the quarrying out of the limestone is the backfilling of the hill (Phase 1). It is unclear when the original quarrying occurred, though with dating evidence and with comparison with other dated quarries in the area, the backfilling is likely to be post-medieval in date. It was not ascertained whether the quarrying at the street frontage and of the hill were contemporary, however, again, the backfilling was postmedieval in both instances.

The hill itself was determined to comprise almost entirely quarry backfill with later rubble deposits associated with the demolition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century housing overlying it. Seams of burnt lime, limestone rubble, and sand were identified, cut at various intervals by large lime slaking pits, filled with similar material. These deposits were mostly sterile, although 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery was recovered from some of the layers, and later pottery dated from the 18<sup>th</sup> century was recovered from some of the upper layers.

Overlying the exposed bedrock underneath the cellars at the street frontage levelling layers were identified in places, which pre-dated some of the walls. These layers again were dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The earliest limestone walls identified forming the cellars fronting Upper Rushall Street (Phase 2, Fig. 11) appeared to be constructed immediately over the base of a quarry pit. It was unclear whether this particular quarrying was part of the overall quarrying in the area, or if this was a discrete phase of quarrying, intended to create the cellars in the first place. Other walls and cellars were constructed from limestone along Upper Rushall Street (Phase 3, Fig. 11).

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the hill behind the Upper Rushall Street frontage was witness to terraces of small industrial housing, built in yards that covered the whole of the hill (Phase 4, Fig. 12). A boundary wall demarking one of the terraces and possibly associated with an earlier phase of development along the Upper Rushall Street frontage (Phase 3, Fig. 12), was identified as being buttressed and reused as the southern wall for a series of small buildings in this area. These buildings were slum housing, reflecting the downturn in fortunes of the area.

The properties along the street frontage also underwent many phases of alterations and additions, with new 19<sup>th</sup> century cellaring in areas (Phase 4, Fig. 12).

The Bulls Head Yard ran roughly parallel to the new road development, to the south, and is likely to have been constructed after the quarry had been backfilled. The Ditch, that appears to define the eastern limit of the hill the quarry backfill created, was potentially earlier.

### ***Phase 1 17<sup>th</sup> Century Quarry Backfill***

Plate 1 – Pit cut through layers of quarry backfill    Plate 2 – Layers of quarry backfill

Plate 3 – Layers of quarry backfill

Plate 4 – Upper layers of quarry backfill

The watching brief identified substantial depths of limestone quarry backfill. These comprised layers of red and orange sand, burnt lime, fragmented limestone and grey brown silt. Cutting these layers were large pits, which appeared to be simple lime-burning pits or clamp kilns, suggesting that the whole area was witness to ongoing industrial activity even as it was being backfilled.

These layers were also sampled in a sondage beneath the later buildings on Church Hill (1087).

***Phase 2 18<sup>th</sup> Century Buildings on Upper Rushall Street frontage (Fig. 11)***

The natural limestone bedrock (**1050**) was identified underneath the earliest walls. It comprised greenish limestone with clay seams running between the blocks, and was uneven in depth across the site. Layers of clay were identified in places as overlying the bedrock (**1072** and **1073**) though these are also likely to be natural in origin. A series of limestone walls were identified as constructed directly above the bedrock (**1016**, **1018** and **1053**), with partial evidence of a construction cut in places **1070**.

Plate 5 – Properties fronting Upper Rushall Street looking SE (**1016** in foreground)

Wall **1053** ran parallel to Upper Rushall Street and represented the front wall of the building. It appeared to be constructed in two phases, as the lower courses were wider than the upper ones. Wall **1018** to the southeast was constructed in a similar fashion and represented the back wall of the property. A recess was constructed within its build. These two walls were joined by the foundations of a third wall, **1016**. This wall represented the northern wall of the earliest cellar, and had a possible doorway within its build where the wall narrowed. Where wall 1016 narrowed, a return was present internal to the building (**1052**). A robbed out wall was present further to the south (**1046**) which may represent the continuation of this wall, and to the east of this were the remains of another possibly robbed out limestone wall **1026**.

It is possible that wall **1023** represents the southern wall of this building, though the wall along the frontage extended further south. Wall **1022** also abutted wall **1053**, and had two recesses constructed within it, one of which was blocked with bricks (**1034**).

Part of another limestone wall was partially exposed further to the north, **1010**, though this was not excavated.

Plate 6 – Wall **1010** and unexcavated infill

The ground level was subsequently raised on either side of wall **1016**. Internal to the building the floor was raised by the deposition of a mixed orange sand with yellow clay,

that was very dirty in places (**1051**). A similar deposit, **1045**, was identified to the south of wall **1022**. External to the building, to the north of wall **1016**, the uneven bedrock was overlain by an orange yellow clay sand (**1049**), similar to **1051**, but cleaner. It is possible that this deposit represents re-levelling of the area after quarrying and the construction of the original cellar.

***Phase 3 Early 19<sup>th</sup> century sandstone buildings fronting Upper Rushall Street (Fig. 11)***

Wall **1016** was then truncated down to the ground level created by the levelling episode, and the cellar was extended to the north by the construction of wall **1011**. It is possible that internal wall **1022** relates to this phase of construction. Another limestone wall was identified to the east which also may relate to the expansion of the buildings (**1030**). At its base, **1030** was constructed by backfilled earth covered by plaster. Above the render limestone is visible, suggesting that this was possibly an original boundary wall which was reused as a cellar wall. Wall **1080** was a limestone rubble boundary wall that continued in places throughout the road corridor running to the east (**1080** Fig. 12).

Plate 7 – Wall **1016** and abutting floor surfaces

***Phase 4 19<sup>th</sup> Century Buildings on hill (Fig 12) and additions and alterations to Upper Rushall Street frontage (Fig. 11)***

Several phases of rebuilding and alteration were also evident in the structures fronting Upper Rushall Street (Fig. 11), which are likely to be contemporary with the construction of new properties on the hill (Fig. 12).

A discrete area of mortar, **1058**, was identified over layer **1051**, and a small square brick drain, **1055**, was cut through it, respecting the truncated remains of wall **1016**. Another phase of alteration was represented by a wall **1021** constructed against the northern face of wall **1022**, and a shelf comprising bricks **1019** and quarry tiles **1056**, which extended over the recess in wall **1022**. **1019**, **1021** and **1056** were all contemporary, and dated to the remodelling of the cellar. The alcove was later blocked up by the addition of **1024** to the southern face of wall **1022**. A crumbly brick floor **1017** with a grey ash and sand levelling deposit **1071**, overlay the layer **1051**, and abutted walls **1016**, **1018** and **1021**. A partition wall, **1020**, was bonded to **1011**.

To the north of wall **1016**, a curved brick wall, **1012**, was constructed over the eastern extent of wall **1011**, and may be a holder for a boiler. A second curved brick wall **1015/1054** was built over the truncated remains of the corner of **1016** and **1018**. This wall was truncated by modern demolition to the east. The floor surface in this area overlay levelling layer **1049** and comprised a combination of brick and flagstone (**1014**). A shelf was present in the northern corner of this cellar constructed from bricks and quarry tiles (**1013**).

Plate 8 – Curving wall **1012** and **1015/1054**

The cellaring was extended to the south by brick walls **1032**, **1029**, **1028**. A small internal wall was aligned between **1029** and **1032** (**1033**), and a large brick shelf or step

was present to the east of this abutting **1030 (1031)**. A stone stairway was also present with steps leading down both to the northwest and southeast (**1027**), and brick facing, similar to **1021** to the north was present on the southern face of wall **1022 (1024)**. Small brick structures identified as likely drains were present adjacent to the frontage wall **1009** (fill 1007) and **1047**. These were sealed by a brick floor surface **1025** which was bedded into a layer of sand **1043**, which in turn overlay a layer of yellow clay **1044**. A layer of mortar, **1059**, served as a foundation for the stairs **1027** and the dividing wall **1033**, and a layer of clay, **1060**, served as a foundation layer for wall **1028**. Between walls **1028** and **1023** was a bricked up door way **1061**. This was bricked up with 2 ½ " thick bricks laid in rat-trap bond, perhaps indicating the low status of the above building at the time. The brick foundation course of a second dividing wall **1048** was identified to the west of **1033**.

Plate 9 – Cellar extension with steps **1027**      Plate 10 – Cellar extension with steps **1027**

Further to the south along the Upper Rushall Street frontage, a separate cellar was identified. The front wall was also constructed from limestone, **1035**, and the rear walls were brick, **1036**, **1037** and **1038**. Contained within wall **1036** was an opening originally linking this cellar to a cellar to the south. This was blocked off by the insertion of the staircase in the latter cellar. An alcove or stairwell was constructed into the back wall **1037**, and an annexe was present to the north, **1039**. The floors of the main cellar and the annexe were constructed from bricks, **1040** and **1042**. **1039** and **1042** were constructed at a slightly later date, and were separated by a large straight joint.

Plate 11 – Cellar (front wall **1035**)

A rough limestone wall constructed predominantly from rubble with brick courses on top was identified running approximately through the centre of the road corridor. It survived in places to a depth of 2-3 courses, though in others it had been truncated entirely (**1080**). It is possible that this wall is contemporary with the earlier phases of building.

At the southern extent of the road easement fronting Upper Rushall Street a series later cellars were identified. These were constructed entirely from brick, and had vaulted roofs. No evidence of earlier structures was identified in this area, the Victorian cellaring having truncated all potentially earlier deposits.

Plate 12 – Walls and part of vaulted roofs of later cellars along Upper Rushall Street

To the centre of the road corridor, the remains of standing walls, floors, and internal features were identified (Fig. 12). These were constructed against the east face of the limestone rubble and brick wall (**1080**), using this wall as the western wall of the properties with later brick facing and buttresses at various places. These buildings were all essentially of the same phase, and had similar construction. Five distinct properties were identified.

Plate 13 – Properties 2, 3 and 4 (looking S)

Plate 14 – Property 1 (looking E)

Property 1 (Fig. 12) was defined by brick walls **1114**, **1115** and **1116**. The northernmost wall had been demolished. The floor comprised quarry tiles (**1113**).

Property 2 was defined by walls **1076** which abutted boundary wall **1080**, wall **1079**, wall **1093**, and shared wall **1115** with Property 2. The floor comprised quarry tiles (**1077**). A partition wall, **1084**, was aligned parallel to the boundary wall, with a doorway roughly central to it. To the west of this wall, there was a brick floor **1124**. The foundations for a chimney were constructed within wall **1079**.

Property 3 was defined by walls **1086** and **1075** to the east and west, and shared wall **1079** with Property 2, and wall **1088** with Property 4. It possessed two partition walls **1090** and **1125**, and had a quarry tile floor **1078** on the east side of these partitions and a brick floor **1085** on the west. An oven **1092** was constructed within wall **1088**.

Plate 15 – Oven **1092** within wall **1088**

Property 4 was defined by walls **1127**, **1111**, **1091** and **1082**. It had a part brick, part quarry tile floor (**1089**), within which a structure constructed from bricks and quarry tiles that contained quantities of ash within it **1083**. A dividing wall **1126** contained a doorway and a burnt out fireplace, and a shelf or settle, and a brick buttress **1081** was constructed against the western wall.

The boundary wall **1080** changed alignment in this area and continued as a brick wall **1105**. Brick wall **1106** was built against boundary wall **1080**, and a brick buttress was constructed against brick wall **1105** in the southwestern corner of Property 5 **1108**. This property was also defined by walls **1103**, **1102**, **1091** and **1111**, and had a dividing wall **1107** aligned northwest-southeast. The floor on the eastern side of this dividing wall comprised quarry tile **1104**, and to the west was constructed from brick **1112**.

To the northeast of properties 1-3 was a brick pathway with a gutter or kerb present on its northern edge **1095**. To the northeast again was a cobbled surface **1096** which was set into a layer of compacted ash **1098**. Only a small area of the original cobbled surface survived.

The **1080/1105** boundary wall continued to the south as a stone rubble wall **1110** with brick courses above it **1109**. To the east of this wall, the remains of a series of brick structures were identified **1117**. A curtain wall comprising a lower course of stone **1119** and a course of bricks **1118** was identified abutting the boundary wall **1110**. The boundary wall continued to the south of this as a stone and brick rubble wall **1121**,

A long boundary wall was present to the east of the stripped area **1100**, which had a return that ran to the east into the section. Partially exposed to the east of this was a brick floor **1101**.

The demolition of the properties on Church Hill and of those that fronted Upper Rushall Street created much disturbance, and much of the site was covered with a mixed brick rubble that contained domestic rubbish (**1074**), which was overlain in turn by rubble and topsoil layers (**1000**, **1001** and **1002** not illustrated).



Archaeological monitoring during the ground reduction and construction of new planters at the top of the High Street in **Zone 5** (Fig. 3) identified no archaeological features or deposits that pre-dated the late Post-medieval period. The ground reduction exposed the tops of Victorian cellaring, and a suspected mine shaft was identified in the car park area. The mine shaft was constructed as a half brick thick wall which was cut through a deposit of mid brown silt with small stones and charcoal fragments, which was overlain by deposits of black silt sand with fragments of brick and mortar. Neither layer contained dating evidence. At the top of the High Street itself, excavation in this area identified layers of redeposited natural and rubble layers, with large brick drains running parallel to the road.

Plate 16 – Mine shaft identified in car park Zone V    Plate 17 – Brick culvert identified at top of High Street Zone V

The area to the east of Upper Rushall Street was covered by substantial demolition deposits relating to the demolition of the housing once covering the hill. These deposits contained a range of pottery that included fragments of residual medieval pottery and a waster fragment that might have been bought/used as a second (Ratkai pers comm.).

At the eastern extent of the road, as it adjoined Ablewell Street adjacent to The Ditch, the cellars of a property fronting Ablewell Street were uncovered. This structure was built entirely from bricks, and was possibly constructed in two phases. The bricks used were of varying sizes, possibly indicating a reuse of earlier bricks. It measured approximately 4m x 6m, and displayed evidence of a vaulted roof. The cellar, however, had been partially demolished, backfilled, and concreted over prior to these works, and as such it was difficult to ascertain specifics.

Plate 18 – Cellaring fronting Ablewell Street

Monitoring of ground reduction of The Ditch exposed ceramic drains cut through dark silt sand with brick and mortar rubble, and an older road surface comprising grey bricks and cobbles. These services were overlain by a surface comprising hard yellow half bricks, which in turn was cut by new services.

## 5 DISCUSSION

The results of the excavation and watching brief identified an area of historic Walsall, occupied and reoccupied over time with dramatic changes in use, character and fortune. Although the area lies immediately below the parish church the evidence appears to suggest that this area was largely devoid of medieval settlement.

The earliest datable evidence from the archaeological works was of the quarry backfill, dating the industrial use and subsequent reclamation of the hill to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The landscape model (Figs 13-16, vertical exaggeration x 2) shows a dip in the hill to the north of the church –mark where the dip is on one of the plans?, and it is possible that this is indicative of the extent of the quarrying and backfilling activity. To quarry much further south of this dip would have undermined the church. It can be suggested that The

Ditch also defines the eastern limit of the hill – I don't understand this – do you mean of the quarrying – but there was a quarry to the south in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Fig 16).

The pits identified during the archaeological monitoring, cutting the layers of backfill, burnt lime and rubble, are likely to be simple lime-burning pits, or clamp kilns. These represent the simplest type of lime kiln. Up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century most lime kilns (in the county – do we need this?) were temporary structures set up to burn the lime on site. After they had served their purpose many were simply left to decay, whilst others were usually dismantled and rebuilt elsewhere. Sufficient rock (limestone or chalk) and fuel (usually charcoal) was loaded into the kiln and set alight. Broken limestone (calcium carbonate) was burned in the kiln at over 900c, which could take anything up to four days. The heating process drove off carbon dioxide from the limestone and quicklime (calcium oxide) was produced.

[http://www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk/agriculture%20 industry/lime\\_industry.htm](http://www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk/agriculture%20industry/lime_industry.htm)

Quicklime was used for a range of purposes in the post-medieval period. Most commonly it was valued for its properties as a soil improver, and liming of fields was common throughout England from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Quicklime was spread over the fields where it neutralized acidic soils and broke down heavy clays. Two tons of limestone had to be burnt to produce 1 ton of quicklime, and a days yield might be 10-15 tons, only enough to lime 2-5 acres, which explains why the industry thrived. After the Enclosure Awards of 1851 there was initially a huge demand for lime to spread on the newly enclosed commons.

<http://www.blackdown-hills.net/parishchests/otterford/lime/index.htm>

The other common use of quicklime was in the building industry, where it was first 'slaked' (mixed with water) to produce hydrated lime (calcium hydroxide). This was used in the building industry as lime putty, and mixed with sand to form mortar and plaster. Lime was also used in the production of lime-wash and whitewash, and possessed natural disinfectant properties.

Lime was also used in the smelting of iron, pottery making, plastering (a mix of lime and gypsum), for making distemper (lime and linseed oil) and in the tanning process. Animal skins were soaked in lime to remove the hair and to enable the skins to absorb the tan more easily.

The pits encountered on site may alternatively represent slaking pits, where the quicklime was mixed with water or 'slaked' to form hydrated lime. This process produces a great deal of heat, which may explain the reddening of the soil around the pits. However, the fact that the site was a limestone quarry most likely points towards the pits being basic clamp kilns for the processing of limestone for transportation off site.

The archaeological evidence correlates well with Robert Plot's 17<sup>th</sup> century description of lime working around Walsall, with evidence of the fires needed to heat the limestone.

As layers dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century were identified directly overlying the bedrock on the Upper Rushall Street frontage, the cellars identified are likely to date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The documentary evidence from this time suggests that Upper Rushall Street was well appointed with large houses, and generally considered a popular place to live. As such, it is highly likely that the quarrying phase of land use was completed by this point, as the quarrying activity itself would have been dirty and smelly and generally very unpleasant. The mapping evidence also suggests that the area was a planned development, reclaiming the land after the quarry had been backfilled. The stone built cellars, however, do not correlate well with the cartographic evidence of the Ordnance Survey mapping, and are likely to relate to earlier properties along the frontage than those depicted on the

later maps. The archaeological remains of the Greyhound Inn, suggested to be the location of the original Bulls Head were determined to be 19<sup>th</sup> century brick built vaulted cellars, suggesting that they had been rebuilt, or that the pub was not as first thought, the location of the original inn.

The Bulls Head Yard, identified as being to the south of the new road easement and following the line of the modern path, is also likely to have post-dated the quarry backfill. The landscape model shows the yard (as depicted on the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1:500, Figs 13, 14 and 16) as running over the crest of the hill, again indicating that the hill had been completely reclaimed by this point.

The archaeological evidence also points to a lowering of status during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the properties along Upper Rushall Street were altered and extended. The cellars had been extended and subdivided with poorly constructed brick walls, certainly not in keeping with the original workmanship of the stone built cellaring. This downturn in fortunes is again indicated by the documentary evidence, stating that by 1843 it was difficult to lease properties along the road (Litherland above).

The structural remains identified further to the east of Upper Rushall Street were defined by small properties along a yard, and correlated exactly with the properties depicted on the Ordnance Survey mapping. It is highly likely that these properties dated from the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and were also representative of the down turn in affluence and fortune of the inhabitants of the area. The stone rubble and brick wall identified as having been buttressed and reused may have originally been a boundary wall defining the northern edge of the Bulls Head Yard area that is feasibly earlier, delineating a terrace in this area. The recovery of waster pottery from this area of the site which may have actually been bought and used as seconds further highlights the impoverished character of this area of 19<sup>th</sup> century Walsall.

Plate 19 – Rear of houses on east side of  
Upper Rushall Street

Plate 20 – View from St Mathews  
Church

Photos courtesy of Walsall Local History Centre

The properties were slums, and demolished during the 1930s. The exceptional state of preservation of these properties suggests that the demolition involved pulling them in on themselves, and then grassing over the rubble remains.

Plate 21- Demolition of properties on Church Hill

Photo courtesy of Walsall Local History Centre

## ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 The Paper Archive

Material	Quantity
Context Record Sheets	130
Plans and Section Drawings	15
Colour Slides	120
Colour Prints	220
Black and White Prints	4
Digital Images	yes
Survey Information	yes
Index Sheets	yes
Database	yes
Assemblage Summaries	15

Table1 Excavation/Watching Brief Archive

Material	Quantity
Misc. Documentary Research	yes
Misc. Developer's Plans	yes
Service Locations Plans	1
Geotechnical Report	yes

Table 2 Documentary Archive

### 5.2 Stratigraphic Data

As described above, the features and deposits on site have largely been dated through ceramic spot dating. Presently undated features may be phased through further analysis and definition of the stratigraphic sequence and their morphology. This will contribute to the research aims laid out in Section 1.3 above, and revised in Section 6 below.

### 5.3 Artefactual Data

Material	Quantity
Tile	6
Brick	4
Building Stone	-
Mortar	9
Pottery	81
Clay Pipe	11
Iron Nails	-
Other Iron	-
Copper/Alloy	-
Lead	-
Other Metal	-
Slag	-
Bottle Glass	1
Window Glass	-
Flint	-

Animal Bone	83g
Shell	2
Leather	-
Wood	-
Charcoal	-

Table 3 Finds Quantification

#### 5.4 The Pottery by Stephanie Rátkai

The pottery recovered from the site was predominantly 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a few fragments of residual earlier pottery, and some dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The creamware/porcelain waster from 5009 is possibly evidence of importing hardcore onto the site. The blackware waster from 1002 was possibly bought/sold as a second.

Context	Spot Date	Description
1000	17 <sup>th</sup> c	3 x blackware mug sherds represented two or three vessels 17 <sup>th</sup> c
1001	19 <sup>th</sup> c or possibly later	1 x red-painted whiteware strap handle with deep central groove mid 13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x olive glazed whiteware jug sherd mid 13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x Midlands Purple ware sherd 15 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> c 2 x blue transfer printed sherds 19 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x black transfer-printed faceted foot-ring bowl or jug 19 <sup>th</sup> c
1002	17 <sup>th</sup> c?	1 x large blackware mug sherd, unusual becuase glaze has completely covered the handle scars for the attachment of one handle. Waster? 17 <sup>th</sup> -early 18 <sup>th</sup> c? 1 x late redware sherd 15 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> c
1007	late 19 <sup>th</sup> c-e 20 <sup>th</sup> c	1 x complete brown salt-glazed stoneware ink well later 19 <sup>th</sup> -e 20 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x lustre ware sherd 19 <sup>th</sup> c 3 x blue transfer printed sherds 19 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x utilitarian whiteware sherd 19 <sup>th</sup> c
1019	19 <sup>th</sup> c or later	2 (joining) x flowerpot sherds 19 <sup>th</sup> c or later
1045	17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c	10 x coarseware sherds with treacly red-brown glaze 17 <sup>th</sup> c? 1 x coarseware sherd 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x blackware sherd 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x blackware mug sherd. 17 <sup>th</sup> c? 2 x coarseware sherds 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c
1051	17 <sup>th</sup> c	1 x blackware jug sherd 17 <sup>th</sup> c

1074	late 19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> c	1 x ceramic ?jam jar 1 x ceramic milk bottle stopper 1 x industrial slipware sherd early 19 <sup>th</sup> c 18 <sup>th</sup> -e 19 <sup>th</sup> c? Clay pipe bowl
1087	17 <sup>th</sup> c	1 x blackware jug sherd 17 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x blackware mug handle 17 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x coarseware jar sherd 17 <sup>th</sup> c
5009	19 <sup>th</sup> c?	1 x brown salt-glazed stoneware mug sherd with band of rouletting above base 18 <sup>th</sup> c 8 x coarseware sherds 1 x utilitarian whiteware sherd 1 x badly burnt sherd with glaze over breaks, waster. Difficult to determine fabric, could be a creamware but could conceivably be porcelain, although rather thick-walled
u/s		1 x coarseware sherd, sooted 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c 1 x brown salt-glazed stoneware sherd 19 <sup>th</sup> c 10 x early-late 19 <sup>th</sup> c glazed ware sherds.

Table 4 – Pottery spot dates

Can any of the pottery be provenanced/ Might any of it be from Wednesbury?

### 5.5 The Animal Bone *by David Brown*

The small amount of bone collected during the excavation was very degraded, and further analysis was not possible.

## 6 UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

It is possible to redefine and enhance the research aims as to

- Compare the stone cellar foundations with those identified further along Upper Rushall Street to aim to determine date of earliest phases of building
- Further documentary research into the later owners/occupiers/industries of the 'slum' housing on the hill, and the properties along Upper Rushall Street, to further enhance the understanding of this phase of occupation.
- Comparison and mapping of all phases of quarrying in the area to put this phase of quarrying and industry into a wider area context.

## 7 PUBLICATION SYNOPSIS

### Archaeological Excavations at Upper Rushall Street, Walsall 2005-7

By Eleanor Ramsey  
With a contribution Stephanie Rátkai  
Illustrations by Nigel Dodds

Introduction by Eleanor Ramsey  
500 words    1 figure

Aims and Method by Eleanor Ramsey  
300 Words

The Site and its Context by Eleanor Ramsey  
1000 words

Description of Results by Eleanor Ramsey  
500 words    2 figures

Documentary Research by Eleanor Ramsey  
1000 words

Post-Medieval Pottery by Stephanie Rátkai  
500 words    1 figure    1 table

Discussion and Conclusions by Eleanor Ramsey  
2000 words

Bibliography

TOTAL 5500 words    4 figures    1 table

It is proposed that the report will be published in Staffordshire Transactions

## 8 TASK LIST

The tasks below give the initials of the individuals responsible for the completion of the task and number of days allocated.

<b>Task List</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Days</b>
Overall project management	KSC	3
Integrate archives/check phasing	ER	1
Phasing database	ER	0.5
Figure roughs for site narrative	ER	0.5
Draft figures for site narrative-plans	ND	1
Preparation of first draft of introduction and results	ER	3
<b>Pottery</b>		
Research-comparanda/parallels	SR	0.5
Report writing	SR	1
Sorting vessels for illustration	SR	0.25
Checking pottery drawings and final edit/emendations	SR	0.25
Illustration of pottery	ND	1
<b>Other Finds</b>		
Identification of clay pipe	TBA	0.5
Writing of report	TBA	1
<b>Documentary Research</b>		
Enhanced documentary research	ER	3
Library visit	ER	1
<b>GIS</b>		
Update GIS model to produce illustrations	ER/ND	2
<b>Publication</b>		
Editing/correction to specialist reports	ER	1
Preparation of first draft of discussion	ER/KSC	2
Editing of first draft (BA)	KSC	1
Correction to illustrations	ND	0.5
Final proof reading	AF	1
Final corrections to text/illustrations	KSC/AF	0.5
Submission of text	AF	0.5
Preparation of excavation and research archives	ER	1
Deposition of archive	EMB	0.5
Preparation of report for Oasis	ER	0.25

Table 5

## 9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was commissioned by DBK Back, on behalf of Norton and Proffitt Developments Ltd. Thanks are due to David Ashe for his co-operation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks also go to Mike Shaw, the Black Country Archaeologist, who monitored the project on behalf of Walsall Council. The background documentary research was conducted by Steve Litherland, and thanks are also due to Michael Lobb for the background information on the lime industry. The watching brief and excavation was undertaken by Mark Charles, Mary Duncan, Andy Gittens, Emily Hamilton, Shane Kelleher, Kristina Krawiec, Michael Lobb, Erica Macey-Bracken, Phil Mann, Eleanor Ramsey and Jenny White. Eleanor Ramsey produced the written report which was illustrated by Nigel Dodds, and edited by Kevin Colls. The project was monitored for Birmingham Archaeology by Steve Litherland and Kevin Colls.



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<http://www.blackdown-hills.net/parishchests/otterford/lime/index.htm>

<http://www.aclickintime.co.uk/>

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1000	Topsoil	Brown sandy silt with stone pebbles	Turf & dusty dry topsoil. Very thin in middle of/area over hill. Plastic, rubbish, rubble, some pot.
1001	Treeroot Soil		Generic number for soil brought up with treeroots. (See plan). No floors/walls encountered
1002	Dumping layers	Brown silt sand, mixed, some stones	Assorted layers of dumped material. Redeposited soils and natural with some ash and coal. Overall quite clean, very little building rubble or assorted rubbish
1003	Building rubble	Grey silt and rubble with brick and tile	Rubble dump to north of wall 1004 only.
1004	Wall	Brick	Aligned east-west, probably three or four different walls. Fully recorded when excavated
1005	Structure	Red handmade brick 4.25"x9"x2.75". Mortar, Buff with chalk inclusions. Floor tiles, 8.25"x8.25"x1.5"	Brick built structure, small and square at top of slope 0.7m below the modern ground level. Only four courses at the most of brick remaining. Floor surface mostly gone, a couple of quarry tiles left infilled with rubble 1003
1006	Brick structure	Bricks	Brick structure
1007	Backfill	Black coal slack, rounded pebbles, flecks of lime mortar, brick fragments.	Backfill upto level of top of brick floor. Deliberate backfilling of ( ) when this had ceased to function. 0.22m thick
1008	Fill	Dark grey/brown organic silt. Small lumps of coal, pebbles, brick fragments, lime mortar	Gradual silting in sump 1009. Brick flecks presumably erosion/deposition from brick wall surrounding and above 1009 though not much erosion re(?) bricks of 1009. 0.07 maximum thickness.
1009	Drain sump	Red machine-cut brick 9.5"x4.5"x3.25"	Consists of 8 bricks set upright but slightly slanted inwards from top to bottom so bottom of sump is of lesser dimensions than top. NW side is formed by inner face of stone cellar wall. Dimensions - L.0.31 x W.0.27 x H.0.24m 1 course
1010	Wall	Limestone	L-shaped limestone wall 0.35m wide. Not excavated
1011	Wall	Limestone	Front east facing wall. 0.40m wide, 1.35m high. Rubble construction
1012	Wall	red brick, 9.5"x4.5"x3"	Curved wall. Possibly contained water heater
1013	Step	red bricks 6.5"x4.5"x3", red quarry tile 8.5"x8.5"x1.5"	Quarry tile and brick step 0.48m high. Filled with loose brick and mortar rubble.

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1014	Cellar Floor	Red machine-cut brick & limestone	Brick and limestone flag cellar floor. Various brick sizes
1015	Wall	red brick 9.5"x4.5"x3"	truncated curved brick wall with lime render
1016	Wall	White/grey limestone, 2 courses	Limestone wall sealed by modern cellar floor. Bedrock forms foundation in nw corner. Relationship with 1011 obscured by mortar. Possibly north external wall of earliest cellar
1017	Floor	Red machine-cut brick of various sizes	N-S brick floor, very crumbly. Evidence of burning in sw corner adjacent to 1018 & 1021
1018	Wall		Back west facing wall of cellar with large recess, lime render
1019	Step	Brick 9.5"x4.5"x3.5", quarry tile 9"x9"x1.5"	Brick and quarry tile step same as 1013.. Tiled by 1056 into recess possibly created for this.
1020	Wall	Red machine-cut brick, various sizes	2 phases of wall, 1st well built and bonded to 1011. 2nd phase not well built may be storing (?) or original wall. Possibly facing for wall 1016.
1021	Wall	Red faced brick	Brick wall, not originally continuous, built over tiles 1056. Insertion of 1019 visible into 1021
1022	Wall	Limestone	Limestone wall covered by 1 skin of bricks 1024, irregular blocks. Abutts 1053 possibly built with deliberate gaps and recesses or entrances. Later faced with bricks on both sides.
1023	Wall	Limestone	Limestone north facing wall with brick corner
1024	Wall, top layer	bricks 9"x4.5"x2"	Skin of bricks = to 1021 but contains additional features (see elevation)
1025	Floor	Bricks 9.5"x4.5"x3"	Brick floor of cellar
1026	Wall	Limestone	Limestone wall beneath cellar floor 1025 and returns to north 1022?
1027	Steps/Stairs	Brick and limestone	Brick and limestone pier for stairs, limestone flag steps with lime render, corner brick 10"x4"x3" above mortar layer
1028	Wall and doorway	Bricks 9.5"x4"x2.5"	Brick doorway and north facing wall, has been bricked up with 9"x4.5"x3" sized bricks
1029	Wall	Bricks 9"x4.5"x3"	North facing brick wall, truncated where it meets 1028. Possibly contemporary with 1032
1030	Wall	Limestone	West facing limestone wall, lime render.
1031	Shelf/step	Bricks 9.5"x5"x2.5"	Large brick shelf/step
1032	Wall	Bricks 9"x4"x2.5"	South facing brick wall possibly contemporary with 1029

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1033	Wall	Bricks 9.5"x5"x2.5"	Small internal wall above mortar layer 1059
1034	Brick insection	Bricks 9"x4.5"x3"	Brick insection into limestone wall 1022, possibly bricked up recess
1035	Wall	Limestone	Limestone wall
1036	Wall	Brick	North facing brick wall
1037	Wall	brick	west facing brick wall
1038	Wall	brick	South facing brick wall
1039	Annexe	Brick	Brick annexe
1040	Floor	Broick	Brick floor
1041	Step	Brick	Brick step
1042	Floor annexe	Brick	Brick floor annexe
1043	Layer base for floor	Red sand with fragments of coal	Sand bedding for floor 1025 over layer of clay 1044
1044	Layer	Yellow clay	Clay layer below bedding layer 1043 for floor 1025
1045	Fill of pit	Yellow/brown silty clay with mudstone, brick fragment inclusions	Possible fill of large quarry pit or deeper cellar floor.
1046	Wall (Robbed)		Robbed out wall, may appear in cellar to the north
1047	Drain	Bricks	Brick drain feature below floor 1025 cuts 1045
1048	Wall	Bricks?	Foundation course of wall over bedrock which slopes to the west
1049	Redeposited natural	Orange/yellow clay sand	Redeposited natural sand
1050	Bedrock	Greenish limestone	Limestone bedrock with clay seams running bewteen blocks. Possibly quarried. Uneven varied depths across area
1051	Layer	Mixed orange/yellow clay	South of wall 1016, relationship unclear. Possibly levelling layer over bedrock
1052	Wall	Limestone, off white	N-S wall, possibly continues under wall 1022, depth similar to wall 1053. Stone robbed from wall.
1053	Wall	Hand-made limestone	N-S wall with possibly 2 phases as lower courses wider than upper. Possibly coaching inn? Front wall of building, likely earlier than 1011
1054	Wall	Red machine-cut brick	Curving brick wall built on foundations of 1011 and 1018. Possibly 2 phases truncated by modern development
1055	Drain	Red machine-cut bricks	N-S brick wall structure possibly a drain

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1056	Tile floor	Tiles	Quarry tiles laid over shelf/step 1019 to provide floor
1057	Levelling Layer	Grey silt sand, ash coke? Brick fragments	Thin levelling layer
1058	Layer	Cream/off white mortar	Mortar layer
1059	Layer	Off white mortar	Lime mortar layer used for bedding in limestone steps 1027 and internal wall 1033 0.1m thick
1060	Layer	Cream/off white clay 0.55 thick	Foundation layer for wall 1028. Texture very similar to dried rubber, quite dry & dusty but still had some plasticity.
1061	Wall	Red machine-cut bricks	Bricked up doorway in 19th century cellar, english bond pattern
1062	Quarry Pit		Quarry pit
1063	Layer	Red sand with rounded pebbles	Backfill of wall cut
1064	Layer	Red silty sand 0.4m thick	Backfill material in foundation cut for wall 1028
1065	Fill	dark brown sandy clay 0.1m thick	Infill material at base of wall 1028
1066	Layer	Pink/brown sand clay 0.3m thick	Layer near base of wall 1028, may be related to construction of this wall
1067	Fill	mottled grey brown gravel, sand, stone 0.5m thick	Redeposited material from cut 1062
1068	fill	redeposited grey gravel and sand 1.04m wide and 0.4m thickness	Redeposit material fill of 1062
1069	fill	brown grey sand/silt with large stone inclusions	Fissure in natural bedrock with the silt material falling into it.
1070	cellar cut		Original cut for stone built cellar. Not excavated due to electricity cable. Fronts onto rushall street. Possibly dug deeper than floor level to quarry stone for the structure. 7.75m long by 5.2m wide
1071	layer	grey ash, sand and mortar with some stones throughout, 0.1m thick	levelling layer for brick floor, incorporating earlier features.
1072	layer	orange brown sandy clay 0.08m thickness	Layer above the natural clay, probably naturally occuring

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1073	layer	yellow/blue/green clay	Clay layer formed immediately above the bedrock. 2.6m long by 0.04m deep
1074	fill	brick rubble with some domestic rubbish	rubble backfill covering half of site
1075	wall	orange brown handmade bricks	Handmade bricks, rendered and secured with lime mortar. Brick dimensions 0.23m x 0.11m x 0.07m. Wall dimensions 3.8m x 0.24m x 0.99m. 15 courses, orientated E-W. north wall of undercroft, possible continuation of wall 1088 at right angle.
1076	wall	orange red handmade bricks, brick wall	W-E wall of cellar/undercroft, 6.5m long by 0.8m high. Brick dimensions 0.23 x 0.11 x 0.06m
1077	floor	orange red tile	Square quarry tile floor 3.9m x 3.15m x 0.03m. Tile dimensions 0.21m x 0.21m x 0.03m.
1078	floor	red orange quarry tiles	Quarry tile floor, 3.6m x 3.1m x 0.03m. Tiles 0.21 x 0.21 x 0.03m
1079	wall	handmade red bricks	Internal wall (possibly chimney) in cellar. Width 0.15m height 0.7m. North - south orientated.
1080	wall	red brick	Boundary wall incorporated into cellar wall. Width 0.6m height 1.2m. Approx 10 courses.
1081	wall	red machine cut bricks	Buttress support against northern wall. 0.47m x 0.65m x 1.35m
1082	wall	red bricks	2 courses of red bricks making up north wall of undercroft/cellar. 3.65m x 0.25m x 1.05m. Brick size 0.22m x 0.11m x 0.07m
1083	well/drain?	red brick and tile	possible ash catcher (?) 3.1m x 0.5m x 0.13m
1084	floor	handmade orange red bricks	Internal wall. Possibly remains of staircase or steps. 3.9m x 0.11m x 0.05m
1085	floor	handmade orange red bricks	L shaped area of floor in cellar 3. could be a partitioned area?
1086	wall	handmade orange red bricks	E-W wall of dwelling buttressing earlier stone wall 1080.
1087	fill	mixed brown redeposited natural material with stone inclusions	Probably part of larger dump of material or quarry infill. Produced post med pottery
1088	wall	handmade orange red bricks	4.16m x 0.27m x 1.18m, 14 courses of N-S aligned wall. West wall of cellar 4. Bonded at right angle to wall 1075. iron stove bricked into wall on west facing side.

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1089	floor	red machine cut brick and tile	Tile and brick floor with possible internal wall remains. Tile area 3.75m x 4m, brick area 1.25m x 3.4m
1090	wall	orange red handmade bricks. Lime mortared and rendered	E-W internal wall with plaster on both faces. 0.98m x 0.24m x 1.33m
1091	wall	red brick	4.25m x 0.25m x 1m N-S dividing wall, up to 14 courses high and 2 courses thick. Terminated at southern end by brick and stone work of unknown association
1092	Oven		
1093	wall	orange red handmade brick	E-W orientated north wall of cellar 2. lime plaster on inner face. 2.28m x 0.24m x 0.78m
1094	floor	red handmade bricks	Brick surface 3.2m x 4.44m. Square.
1095	floor	dark grey bricks	E-W brick path north of cellars. 10.27m x 1.85m
1096	surface/floor	grey stone/cobbles	Cobbled stone surface on outer side of wall 1082.
1097	Surface	Brick	Brick surface
1098	Surface	Mud	Mud surface
1099	Drain		
1100	wall	red brick	Red brick wall, possibly back wall to 18th/19th cent dwellings. W-E orientation. Brick dimensions 0.22 x 0.1 x 0.07m. Wall dimensions 16.8m x 0.23m x 0.65m. 8 courses remaining in situ. Turns right angle (north) and continues for a further 2.7m
1101	floor	orange red brick floor	Floor surface north of wall 1100. 3m x 2m x 0.07m
1102	wall	orange red handmade bricks	North wall of cellar 5. 2.88m x 0.23m x 0.86m
1103	wall	orange red handmade bricks	N-S aligned wall of cellar 5 with doorway in the centre. 5.05m x 0.23m x 0.81m
1104	floor	orange red handmade tile	Tile floor of cellar 5. 3.25 x 3.25 x 0.03m
1105	wall	handmade red brick	E-W south wall of cellar 5. butts against wall 1080 at right angle. 1.92 x 0.72 x 1.43m



CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1106	wall	orange red handmade bricks	Brick facing on stone wall 1080. 1.25 x 0.1 x 1.07m
1107	wall	orange red handmade bricks	Internal wall, mostly damaged. 3.25 x 0.11 x 0.06m. Opening for doorway
1108	wall	orange red handmade bricks	Brick buttress butting 1103 and 1105. 0.35 x 0.44 x 0.73m
1109	wall	orange red handmade bricks	South wall of yard area. Built on top of stone foundation 1110. 5.77 x 0.57 x 0.53m
1110	wall	light grey limestone	Stone foundations of wall 1109. 5.77 x 0.57 x 0.55m
1111	wall	orange red handmade bricks	North south aligned wall in cellar 4. possibly bonded to 1106. 1.89 x 0.26m.
1112	floor	red brick	Brick floor in cellar 5. 3.15 x 1.77 x 0.06m. Square
1113	floor	red pink tiles	3.1 x 3.5 x 0.03m square tile floor surface in cellar 1.
1114	wall	orangey red bricks	Handmade bricks, 7 visible courses (others obscured). 2.6m long and 0.6m high
1115	wall	orangey red bricks	Internal brick wall of dwelling. 3.9 x 0.4 x 0.15m. Divides dwelling between tile surfaces 1077 and 1113. wall runs N-S
1116	wall	orangey red brick	External wall of 18th/19th century dwelling. 0.57 x 0.23 x 0.06m
1117	wall	red brick	remains of outhouses and ash pits associated with the 18/19th cent dwellings
1118	wall	red brick	Curtain wall built against limestone retaining wall and also over stone wall 1119. 5.7 x 0.58 x 0.54m
1119	wall	grey roughcut limestone	5.7m long by 0.56m high. Stone wall used as foundation for wall 1118
1120	wall	red brick	Part of curtain wall, possibly to strengthen it.. Formed wall of courtyard. 2.65 x 0.16 x 0.6m
1121	wall	brick and stone	E-W wall consisting of brick and stone. 6.1 x 0.65 x 0.95m
1122	floor	red brick	brick floor, 2 x 2.3m
1123	wall	red brick	Courtyard wall, 6.4 x 0.2 x 0.23m. 2 courses.
1124	floor	red brick	Floor surface. Lower than surrounding features by 0.1m. 4.1m x 0.7m
1125	wall	red brick	Remains of partition wall. 2.5 x 0.12m. 1 course
1126	wall	red brick	Internal wall of property 4 incorporating fire place. Parallel with 1082. 3.6m x 0.25m.

CONTEXT NUMBER	CONTEXT TYPE	MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION
1127	wall	brick and tile	Part of curtain wall/buttress to 1080. 1.0 x 0.15 x 0.9m. 6 courses. Top course consists of tile adhered to NE face of bricks.

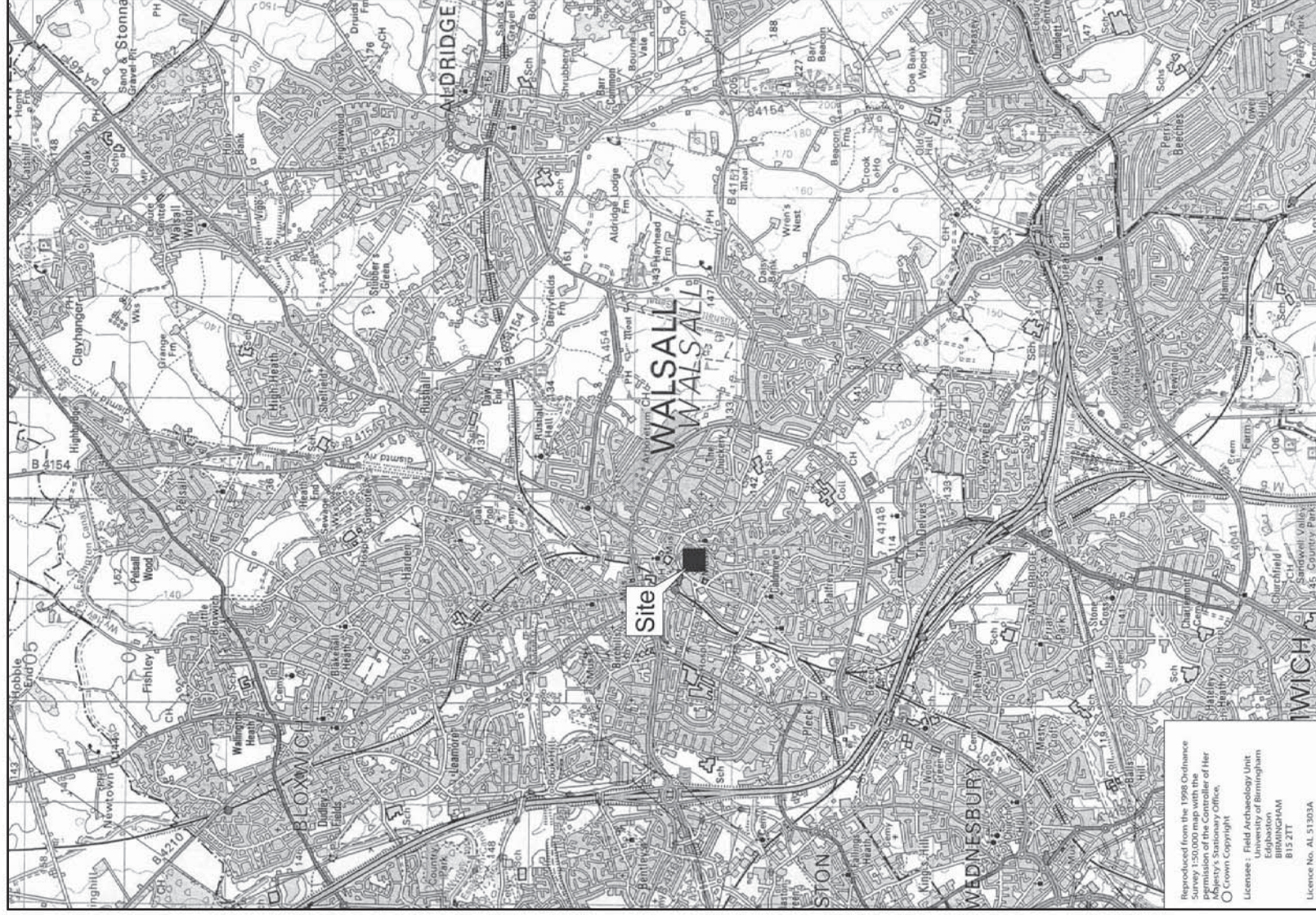


Fig.1



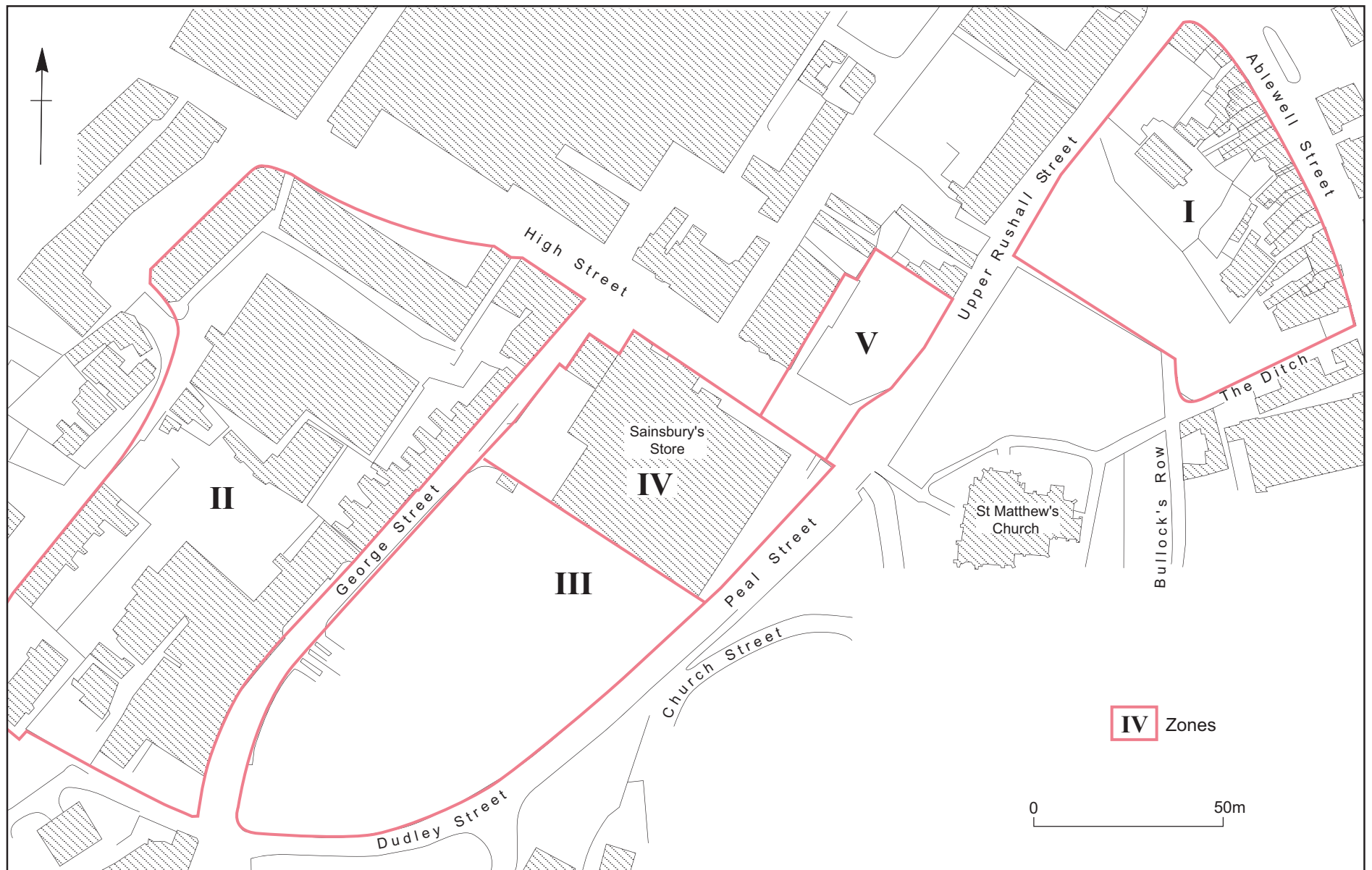


Fig.2

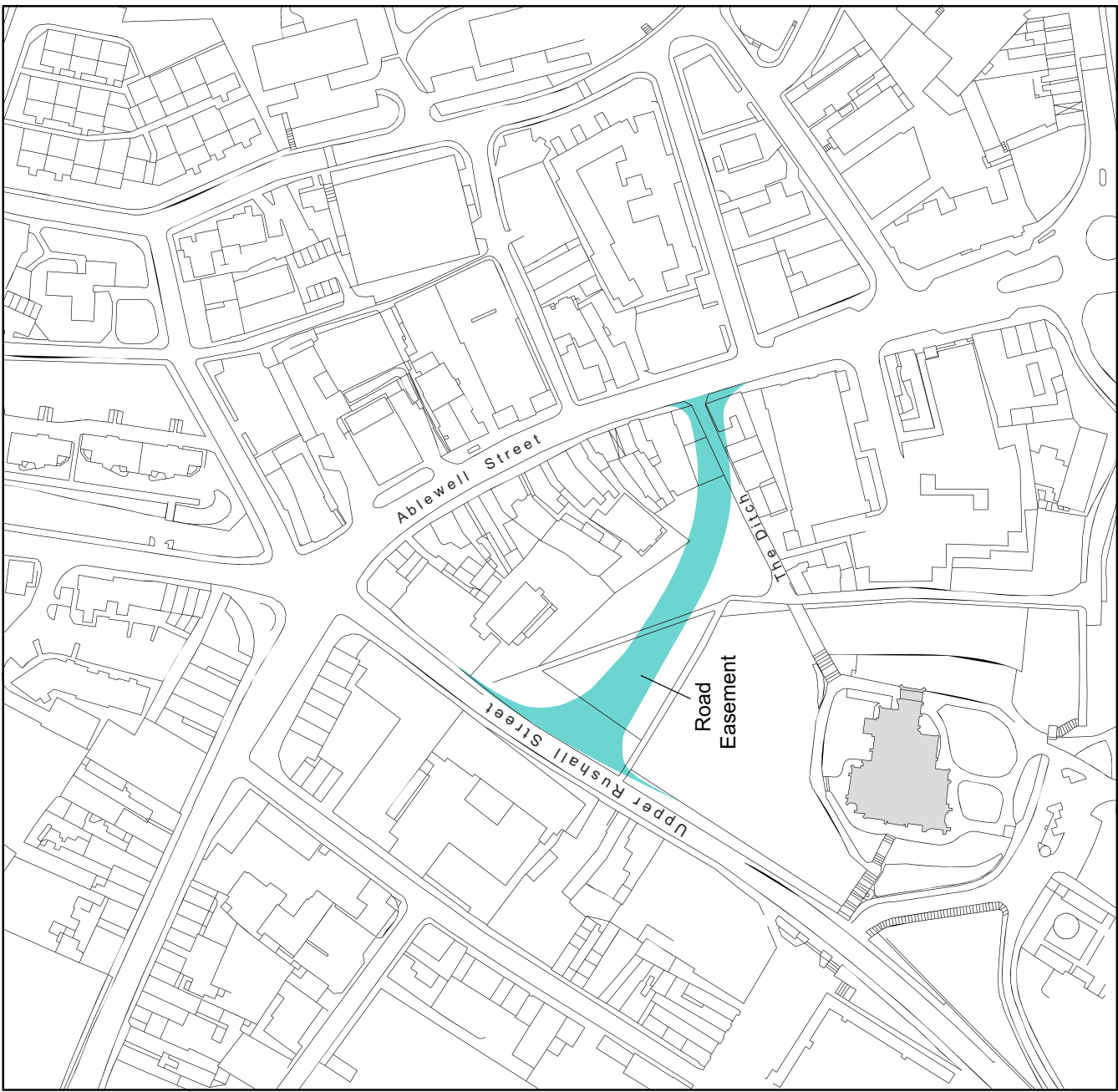


Fig.3

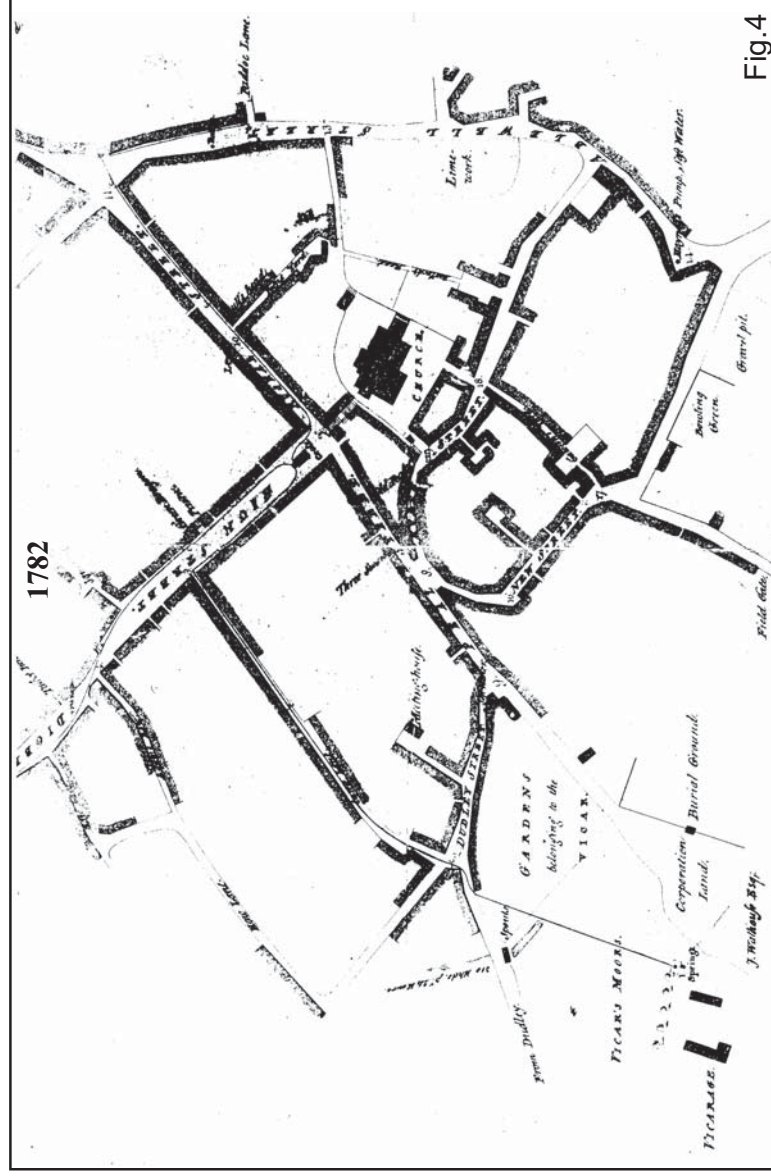






Fig. 7

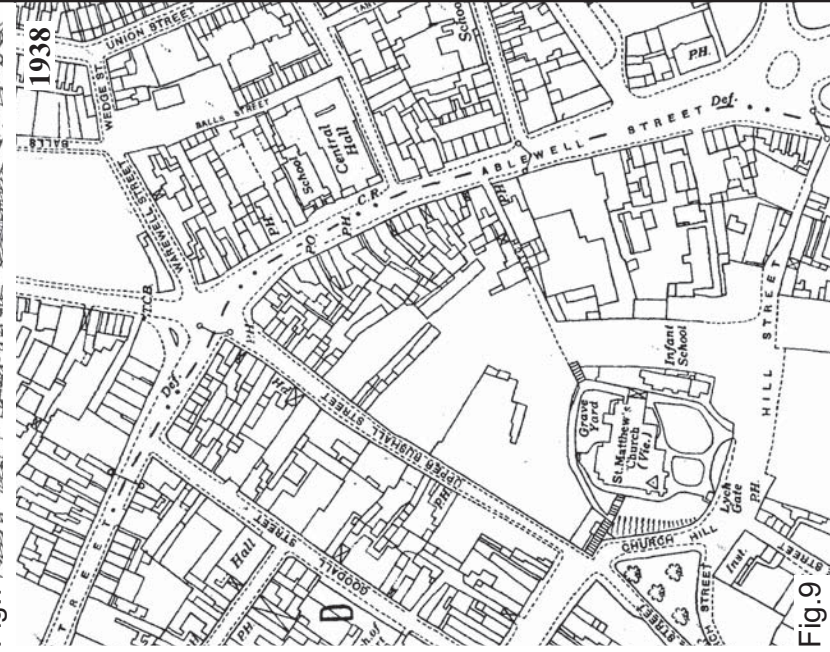


Fig. 9



Fig. 6



Fig. 8







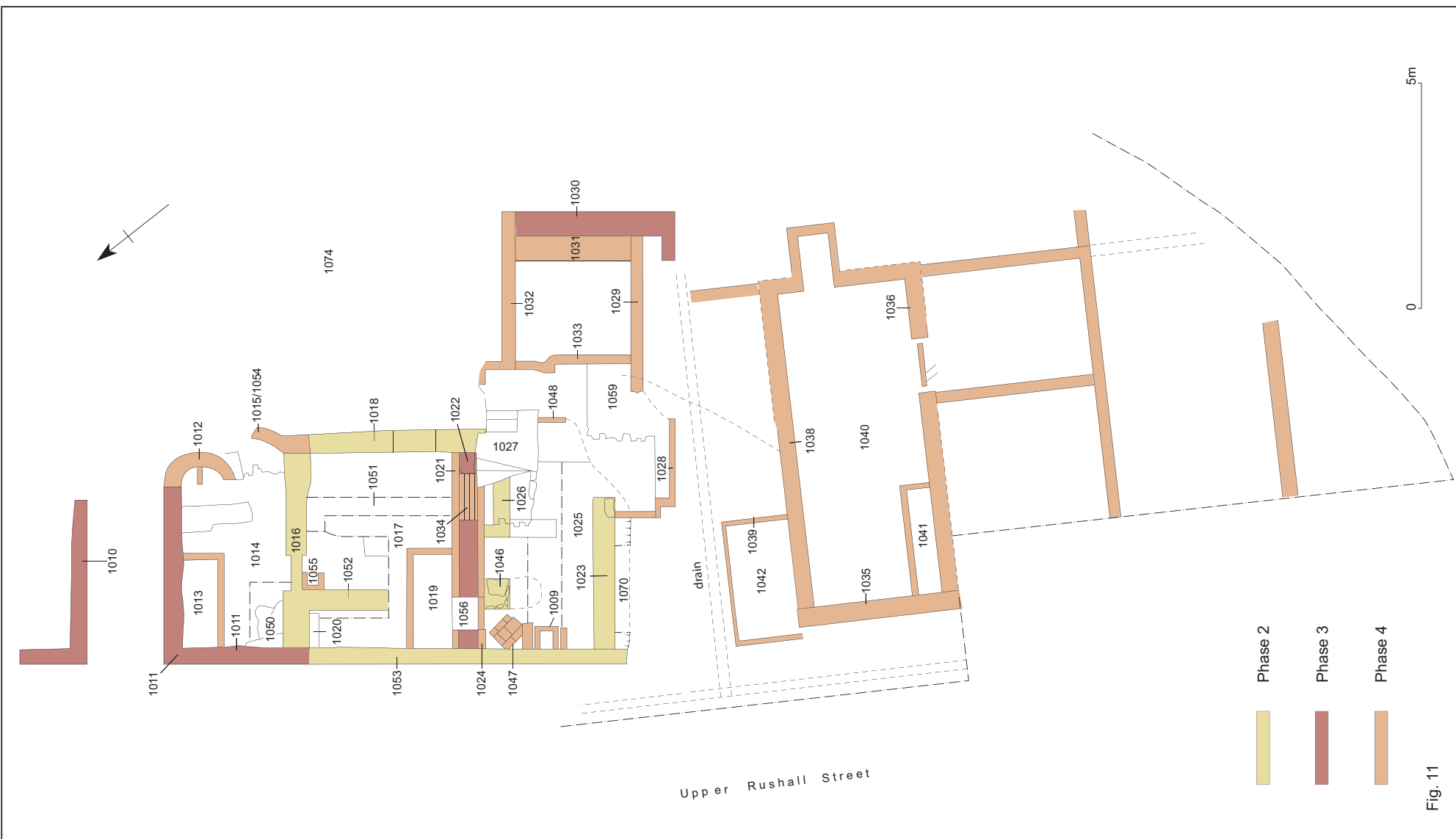


Fig. 11

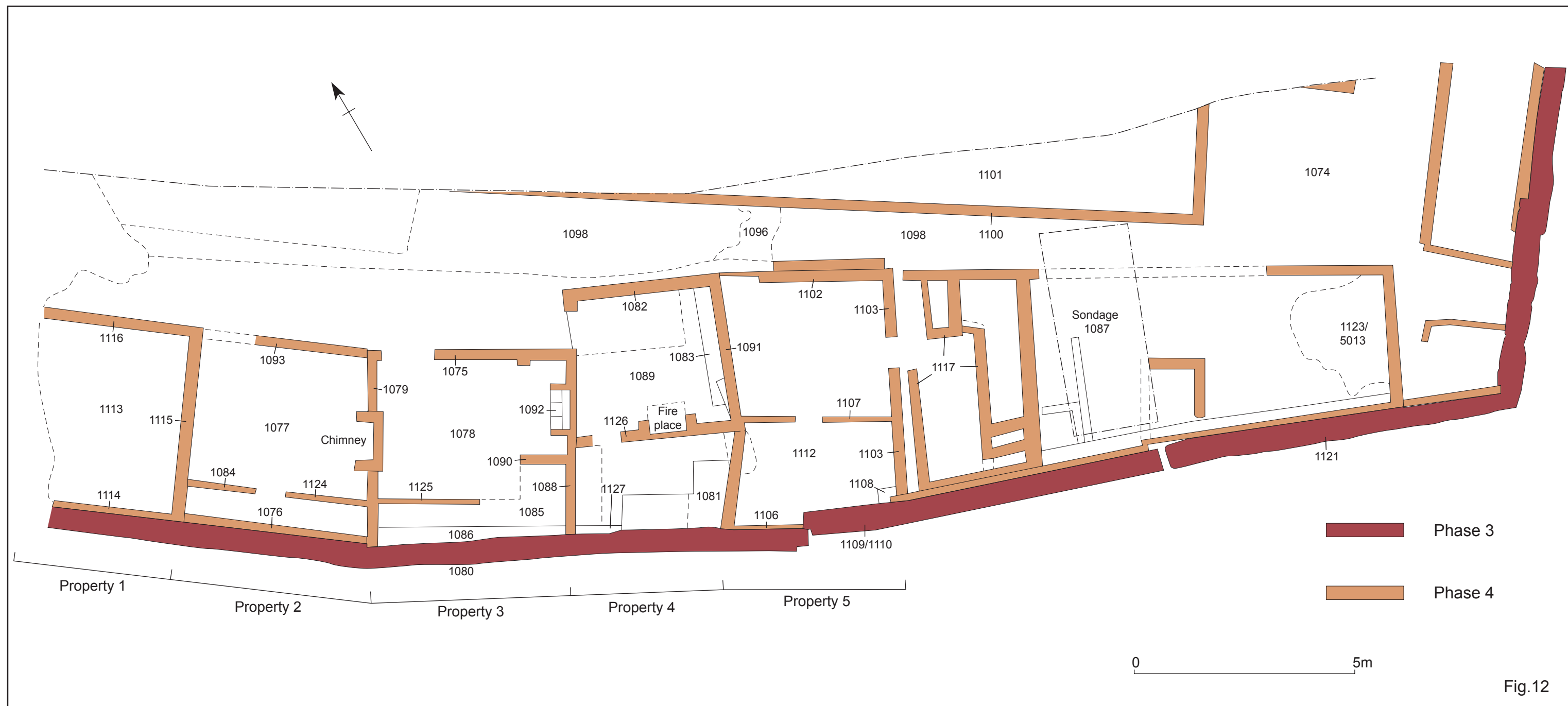




Plate 1



Plate 2

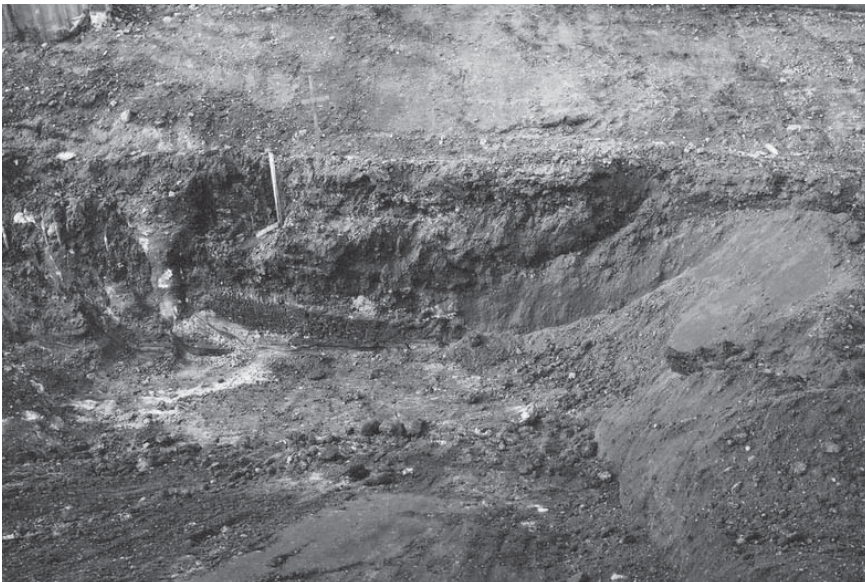


Plate 3





Plate 4



Plate 5



Plate 6





Plate 7



Plate 8



Plate 9





Plate 10



Plate 11



Plate 12





Plate 13



Plate 14



Plate 15

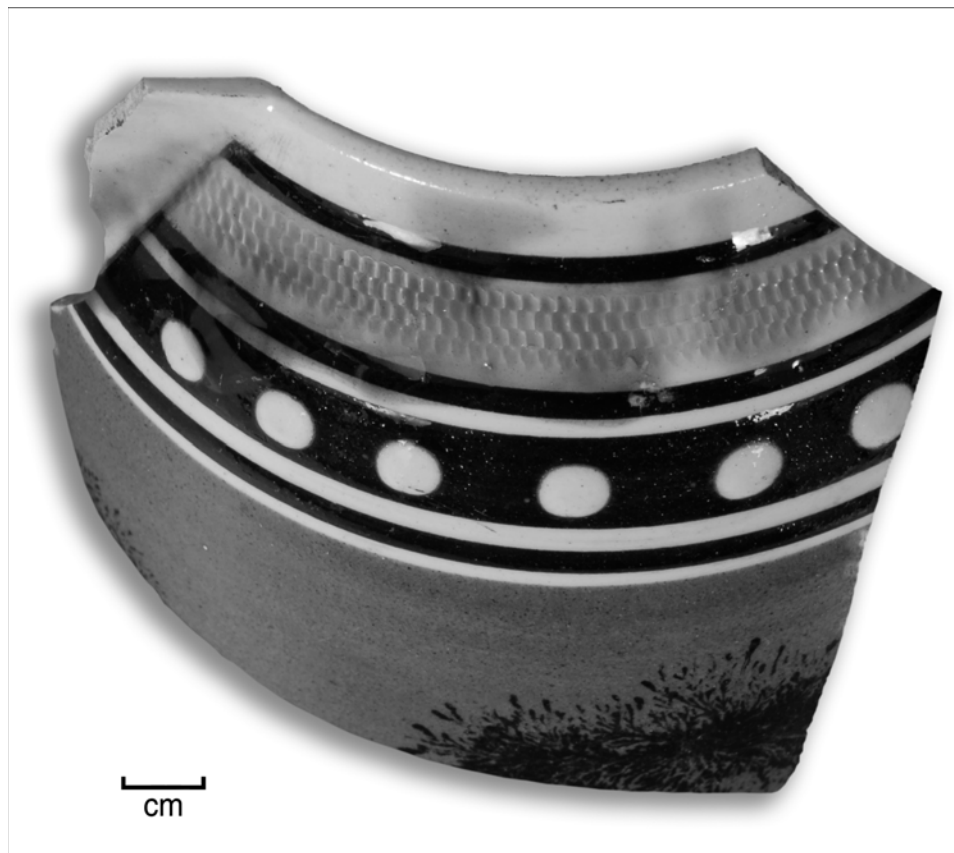


Plate 16



Plate 17

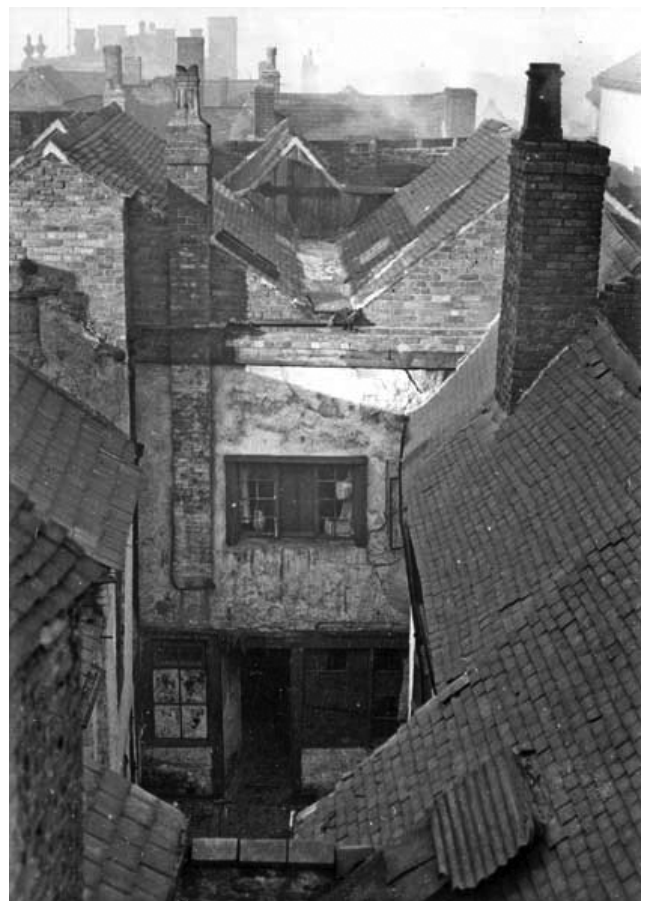


Plate 18