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SUMMARY

In October 2004 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at South Street, Newport, Isle of Wight at NGR: SZ 5015 8908. The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of two trenches respectively measuring 16.5m by 1.6m and 20.5m by 1.6m, across the proposed development area (Figure 2).

Excavation of these trenches revealed a significant level of Medieval/early post Medieval activity. This included two large pits, which yielded a substantial assemblage of Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD, two stone walls; one of which was associated with a pottery sherd dated to 1250 to 1400AD and a brick wall. A number of small pits were also revealed, which may also be of Medieval origin, but will be fully investigated during further works.

The evidence revealed during this evaluation suggest that the study area was in the vicinity of a short lived pottery production site, dated to around 1400AD. Further works could reveal important evidence for the development of pottery production in Newport and the Isle of Wight.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum)

OS

Ordnance Survey

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in October 2004 on land at South Street, Newport, Isle of Wight at NGR: SZ 5015 8909. The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.
- 1.2 It is proposed to redevelop the site for residential uses (TCP/24809/C and TCP/24809/D). A programme of archaeological works was required prior to the determination of planning permission, in accordance with the principals of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16): Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990) and the archaeological policies of the Isle of Wight Council's County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service. The evaluation, along with a desk-based assessment by CgMs Consulting, constituted the first phase of this work and should be read in conjunction with this report.
- 1.3 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works. The project was undertaken in accordance with the Specification prepared by CgMs Consulting (2004) and agreed by the Isle of Wight Council's County Archaeology and Historic Environment Service. The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (1994, revised 2001).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A desk based assessment of the site has been prepared by CgMs Consulting (2004), which should be read in conjunction with this report. The results of the assessment are, however, summarised below.
- 2.2 The study area is bounded to the north by houses fronting on to Pyle Street and the NHS clinic, to the east by East Street, to the south by South Street and to the west by the County Fire Station. However the total area of proposed redevelopment will also include the houses and warehouses fronting on to Pyle Street, as well as the garage to the west of the Fire Station. These areas will be subject to archaeological investigation when the sites become available.
- 2.3 The site is designated as an Area of Archaeological Potential in the Newport Extended Urban Survey. Newport was not mentioned in the Domesday Book but was granted a charter in *circa* 1180 AD. The grid pattern of streets is Medieval in origin. The study area is within the core of the Medieval town, but there are few records relating to Medieval remains within the town itself and no records within the immediate vicinity of the site. The earliest map of the site is Speed's map dated 1611, which shows buildings along the street frontage with parcels of land to the rear. Later maps appear to show that the site has been subject to little subsequent redevelopment since the early post-Medieval period.
- 2.4 There are no SMR records for the immediate study area but there are a number

of findspots close to the site. A number of Palaeolithic artefacts (SMR 877) have been recovered from a patch of river gravels between 50m and 500m south of the site, however this gravel band does not extend as far as the study area. A Mesolithic and a Neolithic flint pick (SMR 878) have also been found in the same area as the Palaeolithic artefacts. A late Iron Age farmstead (SMR 852) is recorded 500m south of the study area, which was later replaced by a corridor type Roman villa (SMR 855). No remains of a Roman settlement in Newport have been found, but the discovery of a small cemetery east of Hunny Hill (to the north of the site), along with a large number of stray finds in the form of coins and pottery in and around the town, would suggest the possibility of a settlement.

- 2.5 The study area therefore contained the potential for the preservation of archaeological features and deposits, predominately associated with the prehistoric, Roman, Medieval and post-Medieval periods. This in no way prejudiced the evaluation works against the recovery of finds or features relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits, in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) To define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) To attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The project required the excavation of two evaluation trenches respectively measuring 16.5m by 1.6m and 20.5m by 1.6m; these areas were CAT scanned prior to excavation. The trench locations are shown on Figure 2.
- 4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of the archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved with the use of a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter the trenches were cleaned and all additional excavation was conducted by hand.
- 4.3 During the course of the evaluation it was decided that the study area should be subject to full excavation. As a result the small complex of structural evidence present in Trench 1 and the small partial feature present in Trench 2 were recorded in plan only, then protected prior to backfilling in order that these features could be investigated fully during the excavation.
- 4.4 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the Specification prepared by CgMs Consulting (2004) and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 **Trench 1** (16.5m long) was aligned approximately east–west and was excavated onto natural clay and river gravels at the western end at a depth of 0.20m (3.685m OD) and at the eastern end at a depth of 0.71m (2.82m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed beneath (101), a mid grey/brown yellow sandy clay layer, up to 0.12m thick. This was only present at the eastern end of the trench for a length of 2.50m. This and part of the natural deposits were in turn sealed by (102), a stiff mid brown sandy clay, up to 0.10m thick, which contained frequent subangular flint nodules and occasional small CBM fragments throughout. This layer was present at the eastern end of the trench for a length of 4.40m. Layer (102) and part of the natural deposits were then overlaid by (106), a mid orange brown clay silt, up to 0.29m thick, which contained occasional sub-angular flint inclusions. This was present at the eastern end of the trench for a length of 7m. Layer (106) and the rest of the trench were in turn overlaid by (103), a mid yellow brown sand/silt sand subsoil, up to 0.16m thick. This was sealed by (104), a mixed late post-Medieval demolition layer, up to 0.10m thick, which consisted of sand and brick rubble. This was present at the eastern end of the trench for a length of 6m. Layers (103) and (104) were then in turn sealed by (105), a dark brown grey clay/sand/silt topsoil, up to 0.12m thick. Archaeological features and deposits were present in this trench.
- 5.2 Present at the eastern end of Trench 1 was a clay-lined cesspit [122]. The feature was only partly contained within the trench for a width of 0.80m. The machining revealed late post-Medieval/modern material. No excavation was undertaken of this feature due to Health and Safety concerns.

- 5.3 Feature [107] was located west of cesspit [122]. This was an ephemeral sub-oval pit, with shallow sloping sides and rounded base, which cut the natural substrates and was sealed by (106). The pit was only partly contained within the trench for a minimum length of 1.60m, minimum width of 1.05m and depth of 0.25m. The pit contained two distinct fills. The primary fill (108), was a light grey brown clay silt, up to 0.18m thick, with occasional flint inclusions. Three small fragments of undiagnostic animal bone were recovered from this context. Fill (108) was overlaid by (109), a dark grey brown silty clay, up to 0.08m thick, which did not contain any inclusions or artefactual evidence.
- 5.4 Wall cut [114] was present to the west of [107]. The wall cut was aligned north-south and was present for the full width of the trench. It had a width of 0.50m and depth of 0.37m. The feature cut layer (106) and the natural substrates, but was sealed by (103). The cut had straight, vertical sides, a flat base and contained stone walling. The wall fabric (110) was comprised of rough blocks of locally sourced igneous stone of mixed sizes, from 0.12m x 0.11m x 0.12m to 0.24m x 0.18m x 0.18m. The wall survived to a height of 0.33m and contained three separate courses, the top course had a width of up to 0.12m, the second had a width of up to 22m and the base course had a width of up to 0.30m. The wall was bonded with a friable mid grey sandy mortar (111), which did not include any charcoal or other artefactual evidence but did yield occasional slate fragments. The rest of the wall cut was backfilled by (115), a mixed wall fill of dark brown clay silts. This was only present to the eastern side of the wall for a width of up to 0.40m and depth of 0.37m. The backfill overlaid the base wall stones and contained frequent small CBM fragments, one undiagnostic fragment of animal bone, two oyster shells, one piece of clay pipe and one sherd of Medieval pottery with a date range of 1250 to 1400AD, along with occasional chalk and rare charcoal fleck inclusions. A section was cut through the wall and was subsequently extended to reveal its relationship with deposit (106) and the natural substrates. A single fragment of Medieval pottery with a date range of 1250 to 1350 AD was recovered from (106).
- 5.5 A small complex of features was present to the west of wall [114]. These were not investigated in order that they could be examined under full excavation conditions. The features were hand-cleaned and then recorded in plan. A north-south aligned stone and brick wall [116], which was abutted by a thin east-west aligned brick wall [117] were present within the complex of features. The bricks in both of the walls were similar cherry red hand-made bricks with dimensions of 0.23m x 0.11m x 0.07m. The stones from the wall were a similar material to those in (110). The east-west brick wall [117] cut a north-south aligned linear [120], a rectangular shaped cut [118] and a possible pit [119], which had in turn been cut by the linear [120]. No dating evidence was yielded during the surface cleaning of these features, but the bricks from the two walls were most likely late Medieval to early post-Medieval in date. Part of a pit [121] was also contained within this complex, immediately east of the brick and stone wall, however this feature was most likely modern due to

the small quantity of plastic recovered during hand-cleaning. All the features cut the natural substrates and were sealed by layer (103).

- 5.6 **Trench 2** (20.5m long) was aligned approximately north-south and was excavated onto natural clay and river gravels at the northern end at a depth of 0.25m (6.08m OD) and at the southern end at a depth of 0.78m (4.18m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed beneath (202), a dark brown silty sand fill, up to 0.60m thick, which contained occasional sub-angular flint nodules, frequent late post-Medieval/modern pottery sherds and CBM fragments. This was present at the southern end of the trench for a length of 8.7m. Layer (202) was sealed by (203), a dark brown/black compacted sandy clay, up to 0.32m thick, which contained frequent flint inclusions, as well as late post-Medieval/modern CBM and pottery, including blue and white transfer print china. This was present at the southern end of the trench for a length of 7.4m. At the northern end of the trench the natural deposits were overlaid by (201), a compacted layer of chalk and sub-angular flint nodules, up to 0.18m thick. This was present for a length of 14m and partly overlaid both (202) and (203). It was then in turn sealed by (204), a thin layer of compacted redeposited flint gravels and clay, 0.05m thick. This was present at the northern end of the trench and continued for a length of 9.9m. The northern 2.5m of layer (204) was itself sealed by a layer of grass and leaf litter (205), which was 0.02m thick. The trench appeared to have been recently stripped down to the natural substrates and then made-up, most probably to produce a hardstanding surface for a pub carpark. Although the area had clearly been truncated, intact archaeological features were still present.
- 5.7 Pit [206] was present at the northern end of the trench. This was a sub-square pit, with steep sides and a flat base, which cut the natural substrates and was sealed by (201). The pit was only partly contained within the trench for a minimum diameter of 1.55m and depth of 0.40m. The pit contained two distinct fills. The primary fill (207), was a mid yellow grey/brown sandy clay, becoming a mid brown sandy clay at the base. This fill was up to 0.15m thick, with frequent flint inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks. Finds recovered from this fill include five fragments of undiagnostic animal bone, one fragment of highly degraded oyster shells and a quantity of locally made Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD. Fill (207) was overlaid by (208), a dark grey brown silt/sandy clay, up to 0.25m thick, which contained occasional flint and charcoal inclusions, as well as two small fragments of animal bone and a substantial quantity of locally made Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD.
- 5.8 Feature [209] was present to the south of feature [206] and consisted of a straight-sided cut with a flat base, which was only partly contained within the trench. The feature was cut into the natural substrates and was sealed by (201). Due to the small sample of the feature within the trench it was not possible to determine the nature of this feature. The trench section was extended slightly to attempt to clarify its nature, but revealed only that the feature was substantial, with a length of over 1.90m and depth of 0.50m. The feature had sharp edges and vertical sides which were undercut slightly near the base,

which was probably the result of the edge collapsing during the initial excavation. No redeposited clays were present in the base of the cut, suggesting that any collapse material would have been removed prior to back filling. The feature contained a minimum of four fills, The base fill was (210), a dark brown grey silty clay fill, up to 0.10m thick, which contained occasional sub-angular flint nodules and gravels, as well as frequent charcoal flecks. A large assemblage of locally made Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD was present within this fill. The edge of the fill was well-defined against the natural deposits and there were no signs of weathering within the base. A dark black/brown/red mottled lense of clay silts (211) was present within (210). This was present in the northern edge of the feature for a width of 0.15m and depth of 0.06m. It contained frequent red flecks of burnt clay and frequent charcoal flecks. A sample of this fill was retained for analysis. Fills (210) and (211) were overlaid by (212), a mid to dark brown grey silty clay fill, up to 0.23m thick, which contained occasional flint inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks. A substantial assemblage of Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD was recovered from this fill. Fill (212) was overlaid by (213), a yellow clay, with occasional flint nodules, which contained patches of a mid brown yellow silty clay throughout. A small assemblage of Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD was present within the pockets of material within (213). This feature was cut by [214].

- 5.9 Feature [214] was only partly contained within the trench, it cut feature [209] and was sealed by (201). It was present for a minimum length of 0.90m, minimum width of 0.35m and minimum depth of 0.24m. The edge of the cut was steeply sloping, with a slight mixing of fills at the interface of the fill and natural substrates. The cut contained (215), a mid to dark grey fill, with frequent small flint and gravel inclusions. The fill also contained occasional charcoal flecks and a substantial assemblage of locally made Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD.
- 5.10 Feature [216] was present to the south of feature [214]. It extended beyond the western limit of excavation and was sealed by (201). The feature was a minimum of 0.45m wide and contained a mixed dark grey black silt clay (217), with redeposited natural clay throughout. A large quantity of pottery was visible on the surface of the feature and it was decided that this cut should be examined under full excavation conditions. However a sample of pottery was collected, which confirmed it was locally made Medieval pottery with a date range of 1350 to 1450AD.
- 5.11 Feature [218] was located at the southern end of the trench. It was only partly contained within the trench and was either a pit or a linear terminus. The cut measured a minimum length of 1.20m, a minimum width of 0.60m and depth of 0.20m. It was sealed by (202) and cut the natural substrates. The feature was an irregularly shaped cut, with sharp edges, which was sub-square in plan, with sloping sides and an uneven base. The cut contained (219), a mid to dark brown grey silty clay fill, with occasional flint nodules and occasional to frequent charcoal flecks. Two undiagnostic fragments of animal bone and one small sherd of green-glazed Medieval pottery with a date range of 1250 to

1400AD were recovered from the fill. This feature appeared to have been highly truncated.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Trench 1 contained structural evidence of either Medieval/early post-Medieval date or undated. All the structural evidence respected the same grid pattern, so it cannot be ruled out that the structures are contemporary. As Newport was a planned Medieval town with a grid pattern of streets, a Medieval date for these structures is suggested. Further works should either prove or disprove this statement.
- 6.2 Layers (101), (102) and (106) were alluvial deposits. During any further works care should be taken to avoid alluvial layers masking archaeological deposits.
- 6.3 A substantial assemblage of Medieval pottery was recovered from features [206], [209], [214] and [216]. Little or no other domestic waste, such as animal bones and edible seafood shells, were recovered from these features. This would suggest that either the pottery was not deposited in domestic rubbish pits, or that conditions are acidic and do not allow for the preservation of bone/shell. However, the small quantity of domestic material recovered from [206] suggests that preservation conditions for this feature at least were favourable.
- 6.4 As stated in the pottery report, the artefacts recovered from features [206], [209], [214] and [216] were a single ceramic product, which is not typical of domestic pottery consumption and so it is possible that this material represents kiln waste. It should also be noted, that the location of the site at the periphery of the Medieval town would make it a likely area for industrial processes such as pottery production.
- 6.5 The results of the evaluation have proved that there was very good survival of archaeological deposits within the study area. There was a degree of truncation along the frontage of South Street and there is also evidence of minor site stripping to the west of the pub, but any deep-cut archaeological features would still survive in these areas, as is shown by [218]. The chance of further archaeological deposits surviving within the study area is therefore very high.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1 - POTTERY REPORT

SCAN OF POTTERY FROM SOUTH STREET, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT

Duncan H. Brown

The pottery assemblage was recovered from ten contexts, numbers 773 sherds and weighs a total of 8,240 grams. The finds from each context have been scanned to establish the range of ware and vessel types present, but these have not been quantified separately, although all sherds in each context have been weighed together. No formal record of the assemblage has been compiled, and this report is the only documentation relating to the scanning process. The scan was carried out by the author on the 16th of November 2004.

Table 1 shows the results of the scan, including quantities and the range of types present.

Context	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	Description
112/106	1	4	Body sherd of Fabric 1, 1250 – 1350
115	1	42	Body sherd of Fabric 2, 1250 – 1400
207	52	368	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
208	246	1,882	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
210	43	662	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
212	230	3,741	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
213	15	89	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
215	145	1,239	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
217	39	210	All sherds of Fabric 3, 1350 – 1450
219	1	3	Body sherd of Fabric 2, 1250 – 1400
Totals	773	8,240	

Three different fabrics have been identified.

Fabric 1 is a coarseware with medium and fine inclusions of quartz sand, flint, chalk, shell and red iron. This is probably a wheelthrown type, which dates to the high medieval period (c.1250 – 1350). There is only one sherd of this in the whole assemblage.

Fabric 2 is a wheelthrown sandy ware with abundant fine quartz and moderate fine iron. Both sherds of this fabric have an external green glaze and are probably from jugs. This fabric is comparable to South Hampshire Redware, a type recognised at Southampton, Winchester, Portsmouth and Romsey (Brown, 2002, 14). These finds may be a local example of a product derived from similar clays, or they may have been brought over from the mainland. This is a high medieval ware, dating from c.1250 to 1400.

Fabric 3 is the most common type present. This is a wheelthrown, coarse sandy ware with abundant, medium-sized, angular/sub-angular quartz, some angular flint and red iron. The range of vessels includes jar/cooking pots with slightly everted rims, bowls with flat bases that have an internal glaze, and unglazed jugs with thick strap handles.

This is likely to be a very locally produced ware, which probably dates to the period of recession after the black death and before the introduction locally of better made later medieval sandy wares. This suggests a date between 1350 and 1450, although this may be refined to some time around 1400.

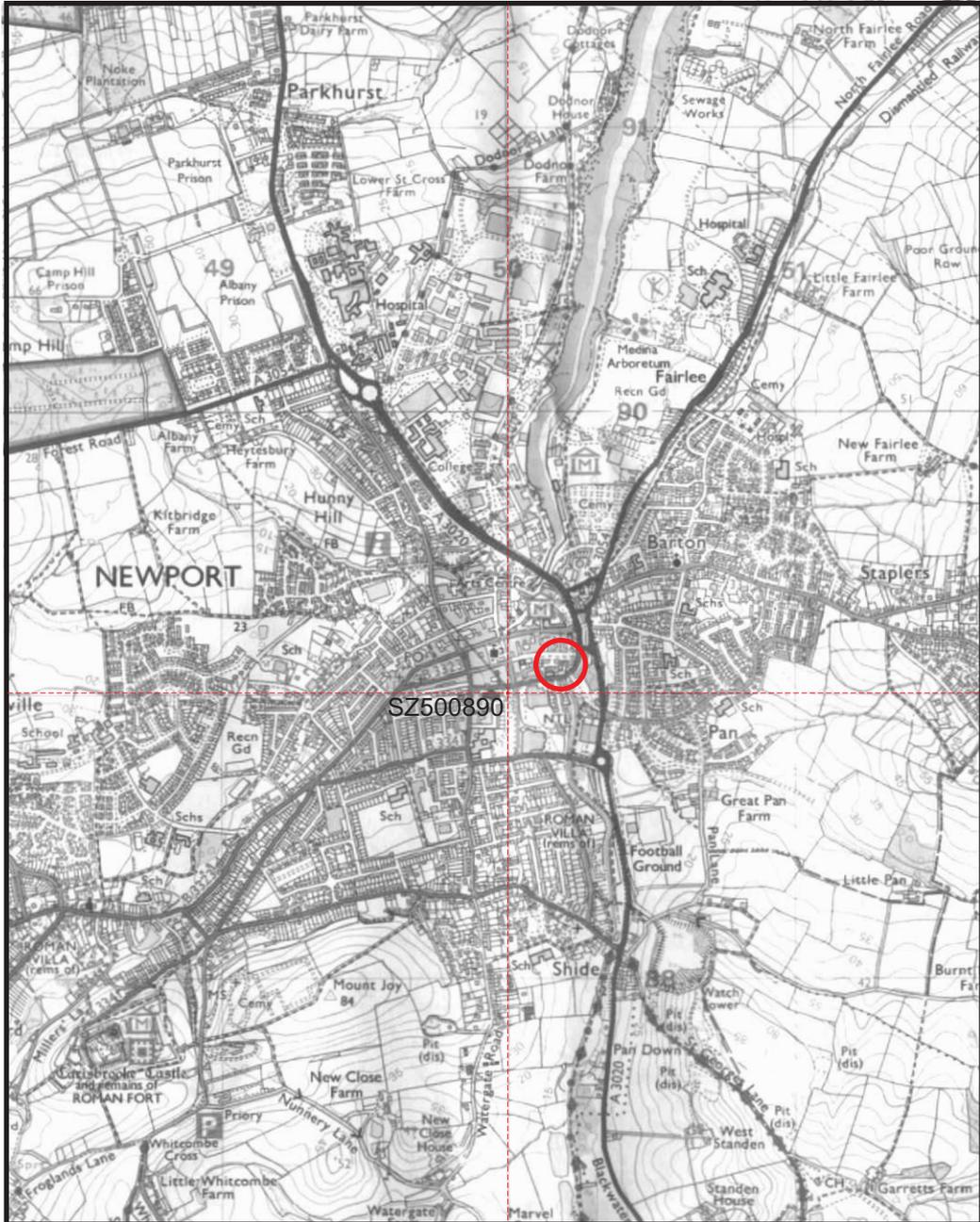
The overwhelming presence of a single ceramic product is not typical of domestic pottery consumption and it is possible that this material represents kiln waste. This is supported by the quantities of charcoal in associated contexts. Although there is no clear evidence of kiln wastage, in the form of spalling, melting or glaze runs, there is considerable colour variation over some sherd surfaces, and evidence of over-, and under-firing. If this material does represent a pottery-production site, then it was probably short-lived, and its products are likely to have been distributed very locally. The period between the end of the high medieval tradition and the introduction of later medieval wares is characterised by the introduction of 'stop-gap' pottery-making, and Fabric 3 might be such a product. The minimal use of glaze, the lack of decoration and the unsophisticated quality of potting are all typical of this level of production. No published parallels for this ware can be found in the assemblage from Carisbrooke Castle, the nearest excavated medieval assemblage, and this may be indicative of a very localised demand for this product.

The average sherd weight in this assemblage is 10.6 grams, which is not great, and the high number of small sherds might suggest that this material was re-deposited. A number of kiln-related activities could explain the movement of sherds; shovelling out a firing chamber and/or stoke holes, for instance, would lead to the breaking up of pottery fragments and mixing with charcoal; but this remains speculative. Further excavation will hopefully reveal more certain evidence of pottery production, and explain the processes of deposition and/or re-deposition. There is potential here for revealing important evidence for the development of medieval industry in Newport and the Isle of Wight. At this stage it is important simply to be aware of these aspects in advance of further work.

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FIGURE 1: Site Location

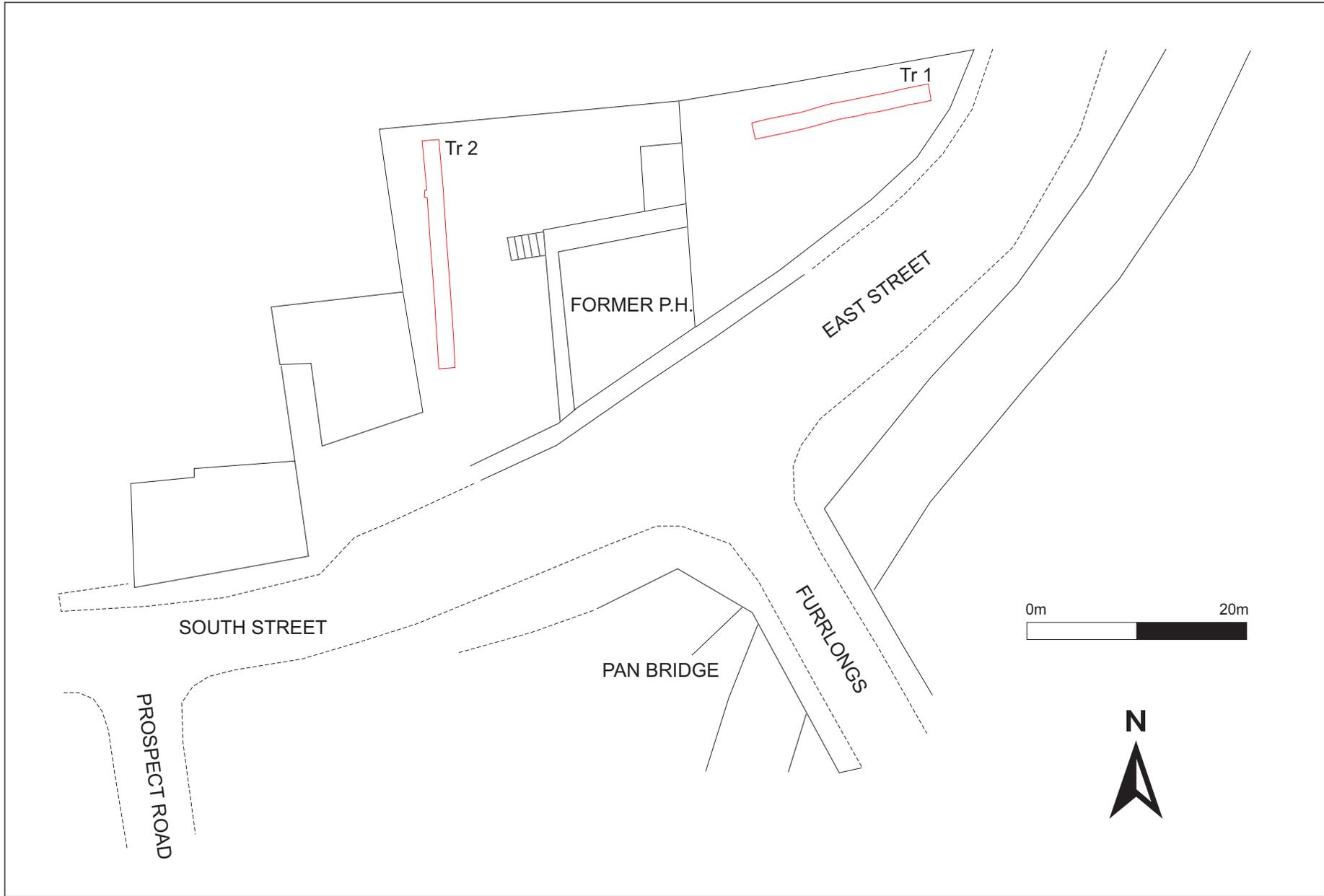


FIGURE 2: Site Plan

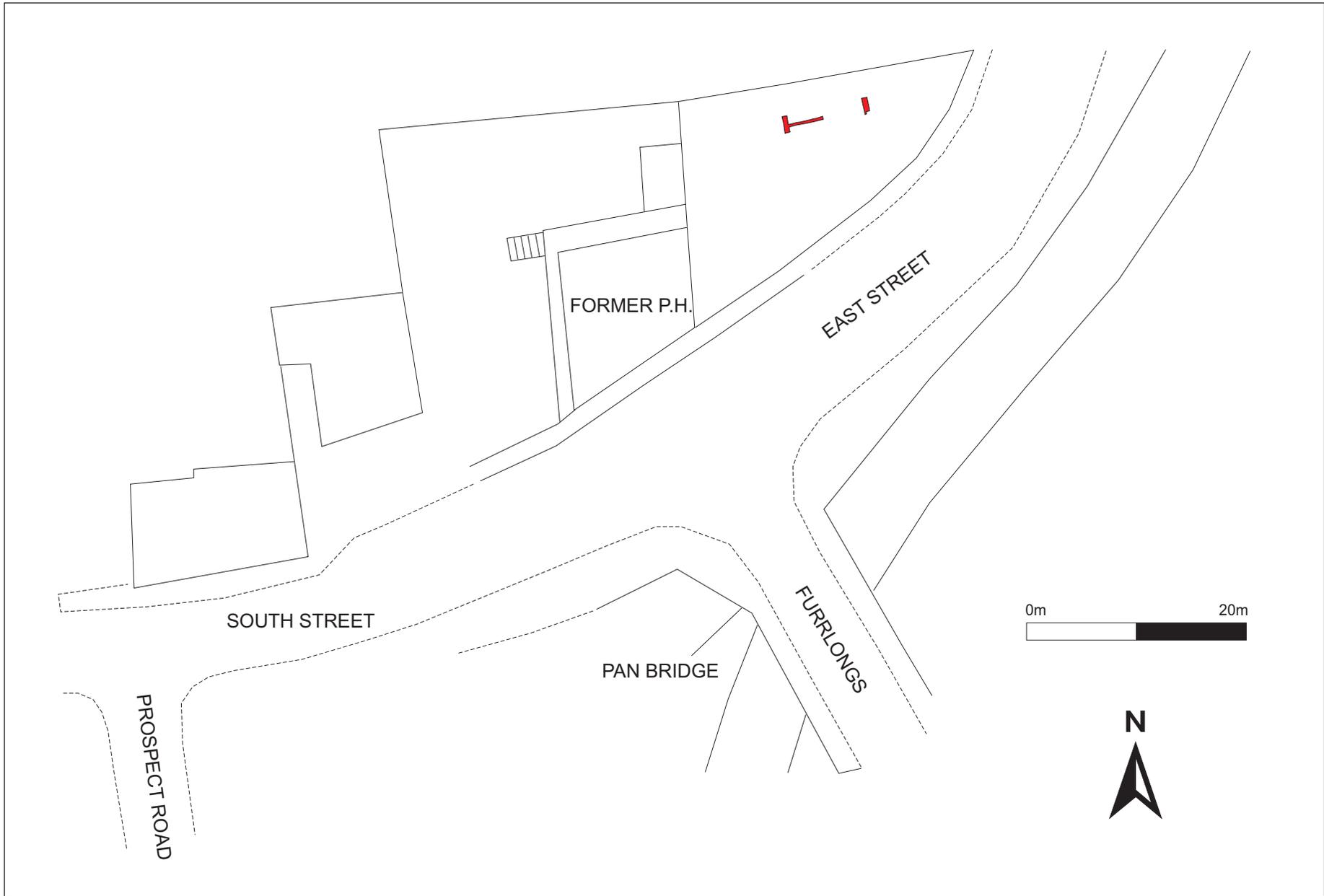
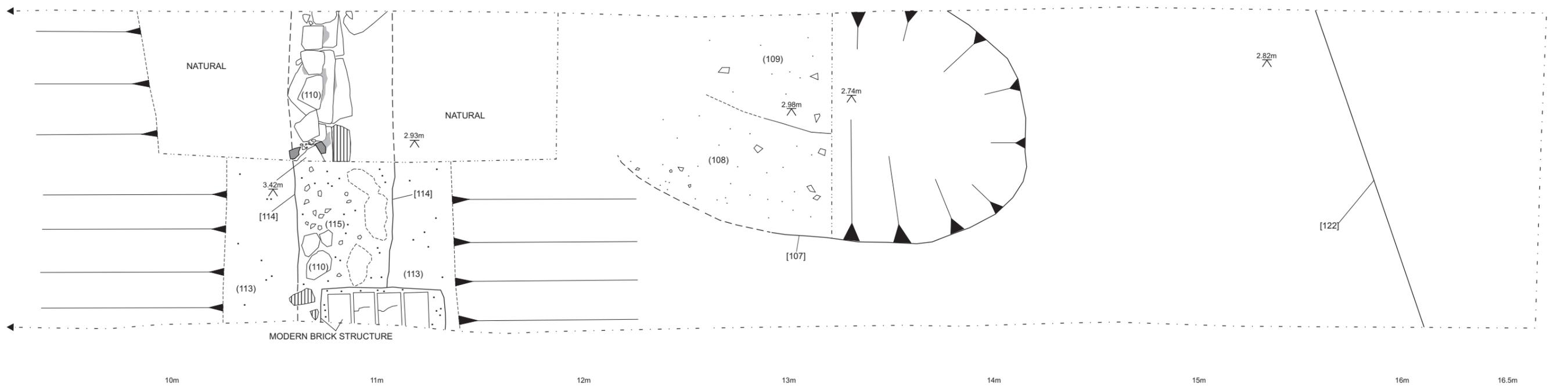


FIGURE 3: Location of Structural Features

TRENCH 1 PLAN



KEY

	= CHALK BLOCK
	= (111)
	= SLATE
	= LIGHT GREY MORTAR
	= PLASTIC
	= BRICK



FIGURE 4: Trench 1 Plan

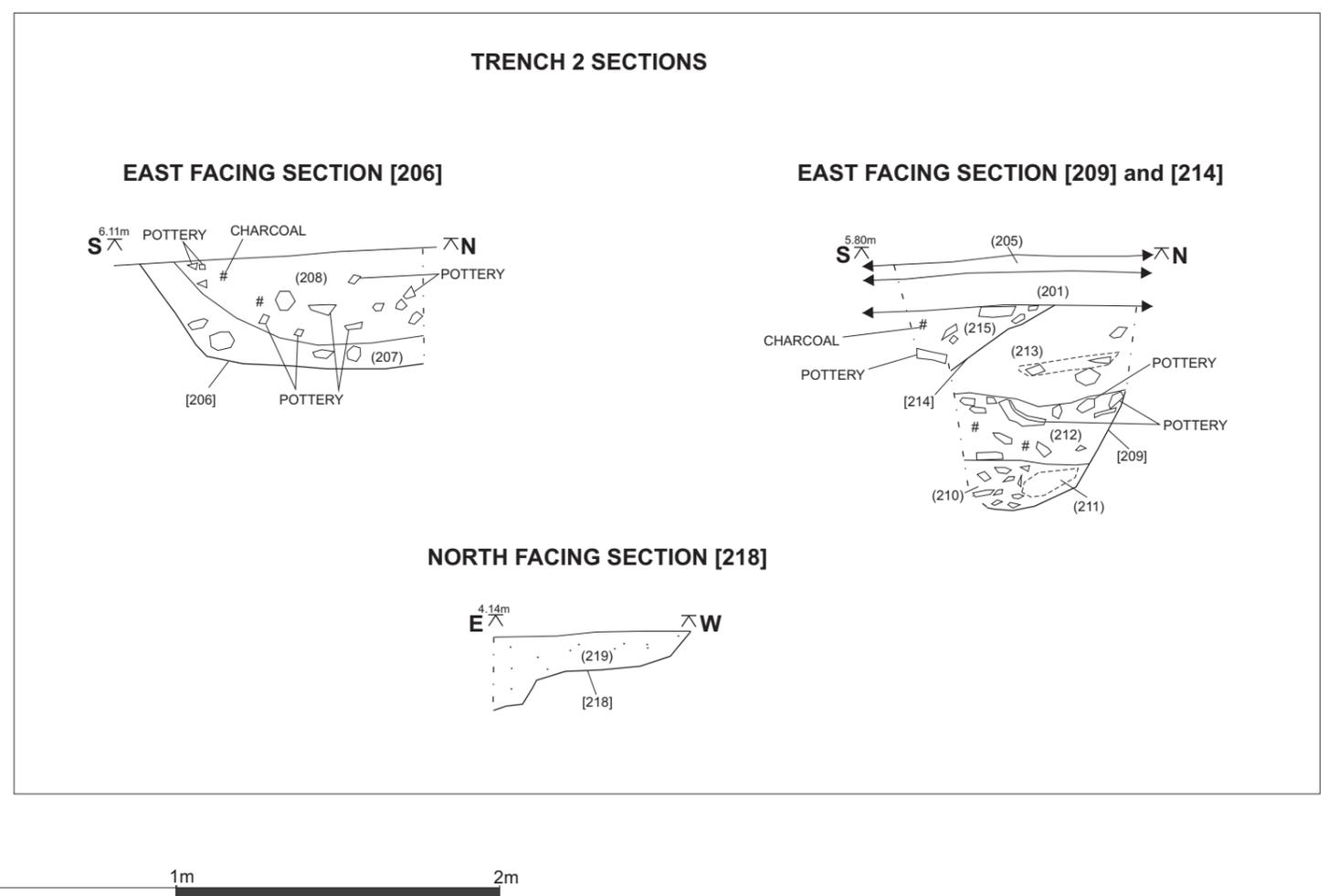
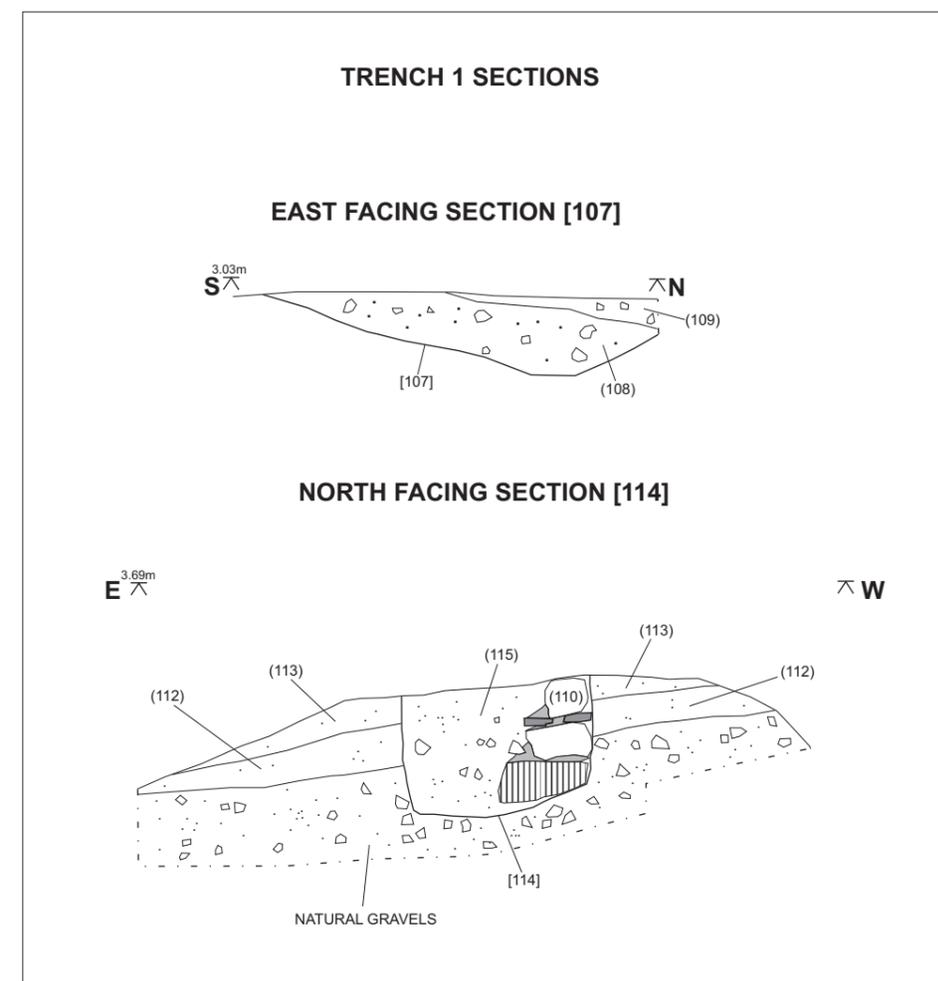
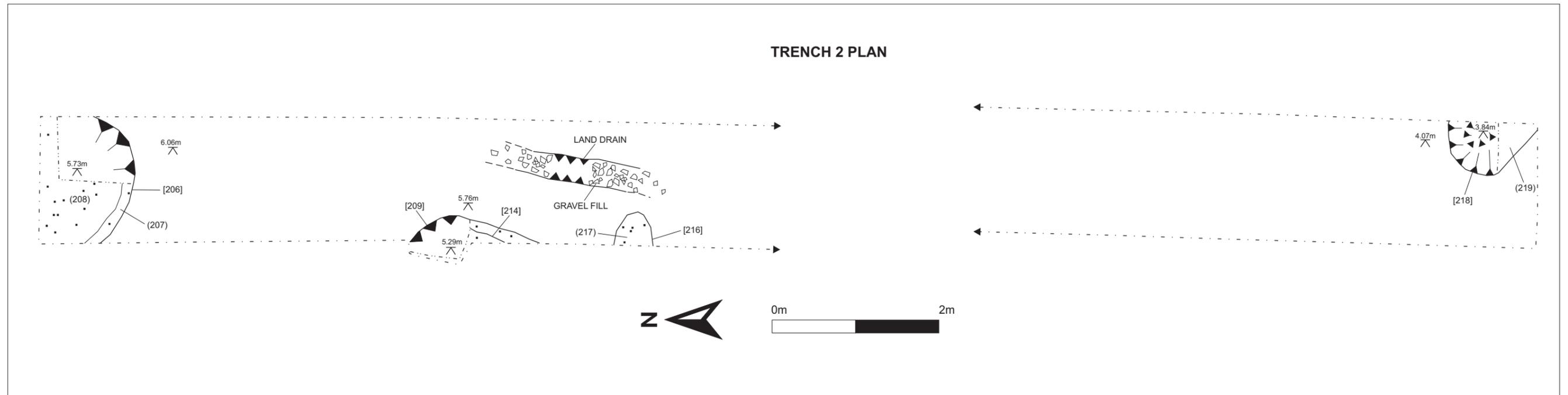


FIGURE 5: Trench 2 Plan and All Sections