ABBEY GATE,
MERSTOW GREEN, EVESHAM

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Project 2596
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Abbey Gate, Merstow Green, Evesham

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Part 1 Project summary

Building recording and a watching brief were undertaken at Abbey Gate, Merstow Green (NGR SP 0360 4365), Evesham. It was undertaken on behalf of D A Cook (Builders) Ltd, who were undertaking a programme of alterations to convert the main building, demolish out buildings and construct two new buildings for which a planning application has been submitted. The project aimed to determine if any significant archaeological site was present and if so to indicate what its location, date and nature were.

An extensive programme of building recording elucidated the medieval structure and the history of alterations to the buildings between the 16th and the 20th century. Abbey Gate is a very substantial stone built structure that has been shown to have a long history. It was first constructed as the Great Gate of Evesham Abbey around 1330 by Abbot William de Cherington. It was a large building with a central gate tower and flanking ranges to each side. Following the Dissolution, the structure was one of the few conventual buildings that survived demolition. In the 17th century it was still intact and was described by Habington in 1640 as being' as large and as stately as any at this time in England'. It was used partly as a barn in the late 17th century when it was bought by Edward Rudge. He then re-roofed the building and tenanted it out. The tenant converted the building to a house and blocked up the main gate passage. Part of the south flanking range was demolished and new brick outbuildings were created in its place. The house was richly decorated in 18th century style with panelling, china cupboards, cornicing, shuttered tall windows and plaster ceilings. In the 19th century the house was converted into two properties and partly redecorated with unusual wallpaper. In the early 20th century, the first part of the building was bought the Cox family who used the outbuildings to run a timber yard. Gradually they possessed more and more of the structure, finally acquiring the whole building in the 1990s, when it was being used for offices for a timber yard and construction company. The Cox company carried out numerous alterations to the building, including the removal of internal walls and historic fabric. A watching brief on the groundworks on the site revealed evidence of demolished walls of medieval and 18th and 19th century date some of which can be traced through documentary evidence to the constructions of the 18th century.

Part 2 Detailed report

1. Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

Building recording and a watching brief were undertaken at Abbey Gate (NGR SP 0360 4365), Merstow Green, Evesham, Worcestershire (Fig 1), on behalf of D A Cook (Builders) Ltd. They intended to carry out 'conversion of and alterations to existing building from offices to ten residential apartments and two houses, including office suites to front of building, erection of two houses, demolition of outbuilding and provision of 26 car parking spaces'. A planning application was submitted to Wychavon District Council (reference 06/00013-4), who considered that a site of archaeological interest may be affected (WSM 4558 and 4567 and SAM 253).

1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IFA 1999) and *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IFA 2001).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service Planning Advisory Section (HEAS 2006a) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2006b).

1.3 Aims

The aims of the project were to 'identify and illustrate the principle phases of development and, based on the available evidence, provide an objective interpretation of how the building looked and related to the Abbey complex' (HEAS 2006a, 3).

2. Methods

2.1 Documentary search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER). In addition to the sources listed in the bibliography the following were also consulted:

Cartographic sources

- 1891 Ordnance Survey 1st edition

Documentary sources

- Buildings (Brooks and Pevsner) 2007
- Town survey (Dalwood 1996)
- County histories (VCH 1906).
- Abbey history (Tindal 1794; Dugdale 1819; Cox 1964 and 1990)
- Abbey Gate history (Palmer and Alcock 2003)

2.2 Fieldwork methodology

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (HEAS 2006b).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th May 2006 and 23rd October 2007. The site reference numbers and site codes are WSM 37558 (building recording), 37559 (finds handed in by the contractors) and 37560 (watching brief).

2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

Building recording was carried out prior to and during the development. Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the building, drawn survey, REDM survey and building analysis. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot. The photographic survey was carried out with Nikon D70, Nikon D50, Fujifilm S602zoom and Bronica ETRSi cameras. All photographs were recorded on a pro-forma Photographic Record Sheet. Drawn records were produced on permatrace drawing film at 1:50 and 1:20 scales.

The entire roof structure of the building was recorded. These records are reproduced as Figures 2 –11. Elevation drawings were produced of the main building and the Abbot's Stables. These records are reproduced as Figures 12 – 14 for the main building and 15 – 19 for the Abbot's Stables. A photographic survey was also produced prior to any alterations, during the clearing of the building and as work on the restoration and conversion was being carried out.

During the course of the development, 25 trenches were excavated across the site. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 20. The trenches were excavated along lines of services and foundations required for the development of the site. Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a wheeled excavator under archaeological supervision. Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during and after machine excavation. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995).

2.2.2 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources. The results this are presented in Appendix 1.

2.3 Building recording methodology

The project conformed to the specification for a level 4 survey as defined by the English Heritage guidelines *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good working practice* (EH 2006). This is defined as a 'comprehensive analytical record' that will 'discuss the building's significance in terms of architectural, social, regional or economic history'. As well as the elements required for a level 4 survey, the project also included the following elements as required by the brief:

- Rectified photography to produce stone by stone drawings
- Dendrochronological sampling of primary phase timbers

2.4 Artefact methodology, by Angus Crawford

2.4.1 Artefact recovery policy

All artefacts from the area of recording were retrieved by hand and retained in accordance with the service manual (CAS 1995 as amended).

2.4.2 **Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined and a primary record was made on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. Artefacts were identified, quantified and dated and a *terminus post quem* date produced for each stratified context.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992; Hurst 1994).

2.5 The methods in retrospect

Having undertaken the project the following comments may be made with regard to the methods adopted. The proposed level of building recording was completed successfully, resulting in a comprehensive record of the fabric of the building. The dendrochronological survey revealed that the timbers were not suitable for sampling due to them being elm, which cannot be dated (Appendix 2). The Brief required that primary phase timbers be sampled only if they were suitable for producing a date.

The entire roof structure was recorded with the exception of the north hip end, which had already been stripped of its tiles and battens and was in the process of being re-battened. Internal access was not possible due to a chimneystack taking up the roof space at that end of the building. Photographs were taken of the exterior of the hip end where it was possible to see the timbers, including details of visible carpenter's marks. Also in the roof space, only three of the roof trusses were recorded due to the difficulty in accessing these from within the roof space. The principal rafters of the trusses were recorded as part of the entire roof structure. These difficulties were discussed with the Curator who agreed that an adequate record would be achieved by recording the main part of the roof structure.

The watching brief recorded demolished medieval structures and made important contributions to understanding the building complex.

3. Topographical and archaeological context

Abbey Gate lies in the centre of the historic town of Evesham (Fig 1). Its frontage faces Merstow Green and Vine Street. It was an integral part of Evesham Abbey, a Benedictine house. Evesham itself lies in a meander of the River Avon at a height of 25-40m OD. The underlying topography consists of terraces along both sides of the river. The soils are 'clayey alluvial soils of Uffington, Fladbury and Drayton series' and 'stagnogleyic argillic brown earths of the Bishampton series. The underlying drift geology consists of gravels of the Third Terrace of the River Avon' (Dalwood 1996).

Evesham has been the subject of a survey undertaken as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey (Dalwood 1996). This contains a history of the town and the abbey, with a list of monuments and a summary of archaeological work in the town prior to 1995. Since then a number of fieldwork activities have taken place around and on the Abbey Gate building (Table 1). This has revealed deposits relating to the medieval phases of the Almonry, the Abbey and Abbey Gate.

Table 1: Summary of post 1995 activities around Abbey Gate.

WSM No	NGR	Site Name	Date	Description
22092	SP 03582 43645	Salvage recording at The Almonry, Evesham	13/14th C	Partial remains of the monastic almonry. Survived as the lower courses of a stone wall.
26367	SP 03822 43551	Watching brief at Evesham Abbey	13th – 18th C	Undertaken during groundworks for installation of display panels. Decorated floor tiles and roof tile.
29816	SP 03686 43674	Building recording in St Lawrence's Church, Evesham	18th C	Recording during repair of chancel roof. Fabric of 18th century recorded.
29921	SP 03580 43643	Evaluation at The Almonry, Evesham	13th – 19th C	Evidence of Medieval and Post-medieval deposits relating to the Abbey and its conventual buildings.
30073	SP 03653 43658	Recording, Abbot Reginald's Wall, Evesham	14th C	Recording prior to remedial works. Site is misnamed as it dates to later period than Abbot Reginald.

32629	SP 03612 43645	Heritage audit of Abbey Gate, Evesham	13th – 20th C	Non-intrusive survey. House constructed in 18th century from remains of abbey gatehouse. Became house in 18th century and was divided into two houses *c*1840. Includes remains of Abbot's Stables and a barn.
32741	SP 03601 43649	Photos of Abbey Gate & cloister arch, Evesham	Med – 19th C	Three photographs taken of the rear of Abbey Gate, Abbey Gate gardens and the cloister arch
32766	SP 03622 43602	Evaluation at Abbey Gate, Evesham	Roman – 20th C	Three trenches and two test pits excavated. Roman pit found. Med glazed floor tiles found and large amount post-med deposits, mainly 18th century.
32957	SP 03604 43652	Building recording at Abbey House, Abbey Road, Evesham.	18th – 20th C	Recording of holes inserted in the floors ceiling and walls of Abbey Gate. Number of timbers possibly part of original phase of gate house and its use as a dwelling following dissolution.
34019	SP 03598 43635	Photographic survey of Abbey Gate, Merstow Green, Evesham	16th C – 20th C	A number of digital images taken by Eastabrooke Architects of Abbey Gate and its surroundings.

A number of buildings have been recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER) in the area around Abbey Gate. These date from the Medieval period to the 19th century (Table 2). These buildings are all listed buildings, the information for which has been recorded by English Heritage (previously the Department of the Environment).

Table 2: Summary of buildings recorded on HER around Abbey Gate.

WSM No	NGR	Site Name	Date	Description
392	SP 03571 43649	The Almonry, Abbey Road, Evesham	14th – 17th C	Building of Benedictine Abbey. Partly rubble built, partly timber frame. Left hand portion of 14th C origin with 17th century mullioned window. Right hand timber-framed with jetty, carved bargeboards and oriel window. Well restored throughout. Now Almonry Museum.
564	SP 03685 43673	St Lawrence's Church, Evesham	14th – 19th C	Mainly 14th C but much restored 1836 and 1887. Nave with aisles, chancel and west tower, with spire added 1856. Chantry of St Clement of circa 1520
2821	SP 03164 43657	Abbot Chryton's Wall, Boat Lane, Evesham	14th C	Remains of medieval wall, approximately 300ft long and averaging 3ft high. Part of abbey precinct wall, dividing precinct from Merstow Green.
3444	SP 03588 43708	Old Red Horse Inn, 17 Vine Street, Evesham	16th C	Timber-framed building with close set vertical members. Two-storeys with left-hand portion on stone foundation. Jettied building.
3446	SP 03628 43691	18 Vine Street, Evesham	19th C	Early 19th C building with two storeys and chamfered long and short quoins.
3447	SP 03630 43695	19 Vine Street, Evesham	19th C	Early 19th C building with two storeys and chamfered long and short quoins.
3448	SP 03632 43698	20 Vine Street, Evesham	19th C	Early 19th C building with two storeys and chamfered long and short quoins.
3458	SP 03582 43703	1 Merstow Green, Evesham	16th C	Timber-framed building of two storeys with jetty.
3459	SP 03578 43705	2 Merstow Green, Evesham	18th/19th C	Late 18th or early 19th C with later alterations. Two storey building with modern casement windows.
3460	SP 03572 43704	3, Merstow Green, Evesham	18th/19th C	Late 18th or early 19th C with later alterations. Two storey building with modern casement windows.
4558	SP 03596 43625	Abbey Stables, 1-3 Abbey Gardens, Evesham	14th C	Rubble and stone north wall. Blocked arches and blocked 15th C window with blocked trefoil lights. Converted to domestic use about 1800.
4567	SP 03601 43649	Abbey Gate, 53-54 Merstow Green, Evesham	18th – 20th C	House constructed from remains of abbey gatehouse in the early 18th C. Modernisation took place in late 18th C and then in 19th C when it was divided

				into two dwellings. Further alterations took place in 20th C. Changes to fabric and décor were substantial when it became offices in late 20th C. Gardens contain large amount of stones from abbey or gatehouse.
4570	SP 03621 43687	Gateway, Abbey Churchyard, Vine Street, Evesham	19th C	Early 19th C pair of rusticated gate piers with cornice caps and urn finials.

The HER also holds a number of other records that are related to the Abbey Gate site. These have been detailed below in Table 3.

Table 3: Detail of related HER records

HER No	Record type	Name	Date	Description
WSM 28993	Town Survey	Central Marches Historic Town Survey of Evesham	Med – Modern	Historic town of Evesham was surveyed during the CMHTS, a desk based assessment of 64 smaller historic towns in Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Archaeological and documentary evidence relating to the historic core of Evesham was analysed.
WSM 32750	Monument	Possible site of Barn, Abbey Gate, Merstow Green, Evesham	11th – 16th C	Most of the primary structure of Abbey Gate is medieval. Range to the north of the gateway (central block) is believed to be the barn.
WSM 36362	Town Survey	Evesham Conservation Area		Area of historic importance as assessed by a Conservation Area Appraisal.
SAM 253	Scheduled Ancient Monument	Evesham Abbey	Medieval	Remains of the precinct of Evesham Abbey. Little survives above ground.

4. Historical context

Evesham Abbey was, supposedly, founded in the early 8th century by St Ecgwin (Cox, 1990, 123). His church collapsed *c*960 and was rebuilt thereafter. This may be the building built *c*1045 and consecrated in 1054. More rebuilding took place after the conquest under Abbot's Walter and Foliot (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 287). The urban settlement was also laid out at this time concentrating on the funnel shaped market place stretching from the abbey precinct northwards (Dalwood 1996, 2-3). More remodelling took place in the early 13th century under Abbot Thomas de Marlborough after the central tower fell down, with more additions in the 14th century under John de Brokehampton and William de Cherington and in the 15th century by Clement Lichfield.

At the Dissolution in January 1540, demolition of the Abbey buildings was carried out rapidly by direction of the king's commissioners. Within a year much of the stone had been sold or stolen prior to the site being bought for its remaining building material (Cox 1990, 134). Habington states that by the 1640s the abbey church was 'so absolutely overthrown as there remaineth nothing but a huge deal of rubbish overgrown with grass' (*ibid* 1990, 134).

However a few of the Abbey buildings were not demolished, comprising the bell tower (which had only been completed a few years prior to the Dissolution), the Almonry and the Great Gate. The Almonry with its garden and great courtyard had been granted to the last Abbot, Philip Ballard, as a life grant, by the crown (Cox 1990, 131) and was therefore being used as a house. The Great Gate was also left and was described by Habington as 'though deformed with age' it was 'as large and stately as any at this time in England' (Cox 1990, 134).

Abbey Gate was subject to a 'heritage audit' that contains information about the history of the gate structure (Palmer and Alcock 2003). This and the other documents detailed above have allowed a history of the abbey Great Gate to be discerned.

A 'great gate' was mentioned first *c*1100 in a memorandum that records the numbers of lay servants employed in various of the Abbey conventual buildings (Cox 1990, 129). During the time of Thomas de Marlborough, 1218-1229, the abbey gate is described as being in High Street (which Vine Street is now a part of) and near the graveyard wall (Cox 1990, 133). Abbot William de Cherington, 1316-44, 'built the noble gateway in the courtyard facing the town, complete with vaults, chapels and

chambers, finely embattled above, and splendidly adorned with stone statues of the Blessed Virgin, St Ecgwin and our royal founders' in 1332-33 (Cox 1964, 53). It was mentioned in the 'Chronicon abbatiae de Evesham' (Chronicle of Evesham Abbey) as being built around 1333. A licence to crenellate 'the chapel and other buildings adjoining the great gatehouse' was received in 1332 (Cox 1990, 134) therefore the gate must have been built by this time. This 'great gate' was still intact in 1540 at the Dissolution. It was described in the grant of the Almonry to the last abbot, Philip Hawford. The Almonry was bounded on the south by the Abbot's Stables, the west by the Barton Gate and the east by the base court. The great gate tower was to the north of a storehouse that was bounded on the south by the garner (granary) (Cox 1990, 131).

Sir Philip Hoby acquired the abbey site in 1542 and proceeded to demolish the buildings, but still left the Great Gate intact. The Abbey site was sold to Edward Grevill of Milcote in 1596 and then to John Woodward in 1603. In 1624 the site was mortgaged, and later sold, to Sir William Courten. In 1664, it was from his grandson that Edward Rudge of London bought the Abbey site. In 1711, John Rudge granted tenancy of the house, on a 200-year lease, to Francis Rogers. It was described as 'All that Bell Barne, now occupied by William Clarke, bell founder. All the Abbey gatehouse and way and passage through the same adjoining to the south end of the said barn, commonly called or known as the High Leads'. Rogers was given permission to demolish any parts of the buildings he wanted and could stop up the gateway but had to make a new passage in its place away from the gatehouse. After Francis Rogers died, the lease was reassigned to Thomas Harvey and was assigned to William Philips in 1733. In 1801 Edward Rudge sold the property to the Philips family. The Philips family sold the house to William Welch in 1828 and it was bought back by the Rudge family in 1833. Following this the property was divided and from 1868 onwards two residents are listed for the property, both still tenants. The Rudge family sold the property again in 1923 to W A Cox who used the buildings attached to the south of the gate tower as a timber yard and construction company. In the 1980s, the southern house was taken over for use by the construction company and in the 1990s, Cox's expanded into the north house also (Palmer and Alcock 2003, 9-11).

5. Building recording

Abbey Gate (Plate 1, Fig 1) is a long L-shaped building aligned roughly north-south. The main structure consists of the projecting bay of the gateway and a range attached to the north side of this. The building is constructed of coursed lias, of varying sizes, with occasional limestones. These are interspersed with the lias but larger blocks have also been used for architectural features. From the front the building looks typically 18th century in date, with its large doorways and tall windows. At the rear it has a large garden that is part of Evesham Abbey Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 253). Attached to this rear elevation is a large 18th century portico with columns and pediment.

Abbey Gate, Nos 53 and 54 Merstow Green, is a Grade I listed building, described as follows in the listing description:

> 'Fine L-shaped house which incorporates the remains of the early C14 Abbey Gate, or Great Gate, built by Abbot Chyryton. House of stone and rubble; 2 storeys; 6 rush windows; 2 later C18 doorways with fanlights, 3/4 fluted Doric columns and cornices; wood modillion eaves cornice; hipped tile roof. Good moulded lead rainwater head on east side (of No 54), which is largely of medieval origin and has numerous blocked openings including large semi-circular arches, that at rear of No 53 being part of Abbey Gate and incorporating one original jamb. Interior: No 54 largely altered, but No 53 has late C17 staircase and panelling. Bay on right-hand side projecting towards Merstow Green has a modern upper storey built above the gateway passage with an archway on north return side. To south of this bay, adjoining the Abbey Stables (qv) is the remains of a vaulted passage of early C14' (DoE 1952 SP 0343 NE 1/15).

It also incorporates Grade I listed railings 'Good wrought iron gate and railings fronting No 53, which is the right-hand portion of Abbey Gate House. The gate is set in the return to north' (DoE 1977 SP 0343 NE 1/230) and a grade II* structure (Plate 2) called the Abbot's Stables to the immediate south of the main part of the house: 'C14. Rubble and stone north wall. Blocked arches and a C15 window with blocked trefoil lights' (DoE 1952 SP 0343 NE 1/231).

5.1 Results

Building recording consisted of producing a drawn record of the entire roof structure, photographic survey and drawn records of previously covered architectural elements. The drawings have been

reproduced as Figures 2 – 19. A number of the photographs have been reproduced as Plates 1 – 69. Analysis of the building and research has allowed a phasing of the building to be drawn up. Room numbers are shown on Figure 10.

5.1.1 14th century: construction of the Great Gate and associated buildings

As detailed above in the historical discussion, Abbot William de Cherington constructed the Evesham Abbey Great Gate around 1330. This structure had a central gate tower with flanking ranges containing storerooms, chambers and chapels. The tower projected forward and was taller than the flanking ranges. To the rear, the end of the southern range projected and this was the boundary of the abbey precinct. The entire structure was embattled and would have provided an impressive entrance from the Merstow Green for processional traffic and also had a smaller foot passage incorporated in the south range.

The Great Gate

The listing description for Abbey Gate describes it as incorporating the remains of the Great Gate, but it is now clear that an extensive quantity of medieval fabric survives. Recording of the building showed that all walls of the main building, to their full height, consisted of early 14th century fabric. This fabric is mainly blue lias stone in alternate wide and narrow courses (Plate 3) with yellow Cotswold limestone used for detailing. The rear elevation of the building has the majority of the surviving limestone architectural detail (Fig 12), including the original gateway arch (Plate 4). The possible blind arcading (Plate 5) and window openings (Plate 6) may have formed niches for the decorative statues. The Great Gate consisted of a main gateway with flanking buildings on either side. It is described as being richly decorated with statues of the Virgin Mary, St Egwin and the Royal founders (Cox 1964, 53). The current main building consists of the surviving fabric of the gate tower and northern flanking range.

Gate tower

The gate tower is shown by the original gateway arch and projecting bay on the front elevation. This structure may have been taller than it is now, as can be seen by the partial limestone arch springer revealed close to the top of the south elevation (Plate 7). The gate tower was flanked on each side by a lower structure creating a symmetrical gatehouse building providing an impressive entrance into the abbey precincts. These flanking ranges housed storehouses and 'vaults, chapels and chambers' (Cox 1964, 53).

Northern range

The range to the north of the tower was probably divided into two areas with chambers near to the gate and a chapel north of this. Evidence of matching openings in both elevations of the building may have been a doorway (Fig 14, Plate 8) and a window (Fig 12, Plate 9) next to a small door opening from within the abbey precincts (Plate 10).

The 'Abbot's Stables'

Close to the south elevation of the main building is the building known as the 'Abbot's Stables'. The listing description for this structure describes it as 14th century with a rubble and stone north wall. Recording of this structure revealed that it was constructed in the same style as the main Abbey Gate building, including the alternate narrow and deep lias stone coursing that can be seen in most detail on the west gable of the stables (Fig 17, Plate 11). Its construction at the same time as the main building around 1330, shows that it was built as part of the Great Gate series of buildings that are described in the Chronicle of Evesham as being built by Abbot William de Cherington - 'He also built the noble abbey gateway … complete with vaults, chapels, and chambers, finely embattled above' (Cox 1964, 53). The interior walls of the 'Abbot's Stables' showed that it was a three-bay building with a vaulted ceiling. (Figs 15 and 16). This vaulting has been removed but the scars of the arches and columns still survived on the interior north face (Plate 12). The function of this building is not certain, but it can be identified as the documented monastic 'garner'.

Southern range

Building recording revealed fabric from the southern flanking range of the gateway between Abbey Gate and the 'Abbot's Stables'. The rear elevation of Abbey Gate shows that this range adjoined the

gate tower at the time of construction. The arch springer shown in Plate 7 is curving away from the gate tower and into the fabric of the range and parts of the continuation of the wall are still surviving where the range and tower meet (Plate 13). The surviving medieval fabric of the Great Gate is shown on Figure 11 and consists of the western wall of the range and small eastern gateway and another gateway passage joining the range to the 'Abbot's Stables'. The main feature surviving from the flanking range is a passageway with external gateway. The gate arch (Plate 14) is still in place and the south elevation of the gate tower has the vault columns and springers for a narrow passage (Plate 15) leading through the range from the arch. This passage seems to have allowed access into the storage chambers of the southern range adjoining the 'Great Gate'.

Between the southern flanking range and the 'Abbot's Stables' was another passageway. This was wide enough to allow foot passage into and out of the Abbey precincts. The precinct exterior gateway still exists to its full height (Fig 19, Plate 16). The vault columns and springers also survived on the north external face of the 'Abbot's Stables' (Fig 17, Plate 17). This shows that the passage had four sections of vault before another gate arch. Of this arch only the southern jamb still exists but it does show that there was a door at this point (Fig 17, Plate 18). The evidence that this is a passageway attached to the southern wall of the flanking range of the gate tower can be seen next to the surviving gate arch. Plate 19 shows the cut off masonry of the southern wall of the range and Plate 20 shows the vault arch from the internal space within the range (Fig 19). This passageway is described in Tindal as 'In one at present used as a straw-house are to be seen in the walls (which are about fifteen feet from each other in breadth, and about thirty length,) arches of very considerable dimensions, and of remarkably light architecture. There are four discernable on each side, and one, somewhat wider, at each end' (Tindal 1794, 137-8).

5.1.2 Late 14th to 16th century

Between the construction of the gate around 1330 and the Dissolution in 1540, very little is known of the abbey Great Gate and its component structures. It appears that at some time in the late 14th century the precinct boundary wall was moved to take in part of the Merstow Green. This allowed the precinct to be extended but effectively divorced the southern range and 'Abbot's Stables the gate tower and northern range. It is probably at this time that the Almonry and Barton Gate were also rebuilt, they are described in their current position in 1540. Soon after the construction of the Great Gate, Abbot Cherington is documented as constructing the Barton Gate adjoining the Almonry, but their position was further south than that of the present day.

Little evidence for the fabric of the Great Gate itself at this time still exists. From the surviving fabric we can show that the structure changed very little at all. The late 14th century saw the addition of a number of walls to the west side of the structure, including a substantial wall continuing the line of the south wall of the gate tower. This was revealed in trench 17 (see below) and was a very well made lias structure. It is likely that this became the boundary wall of the abbey precinct and joined the Great Gate to the Almonry, which has a late 14th century first floor hall at its core.

The realignment and reconstruction of the precinct wall to the south end of the gate tower blocked off the foot passageway in the south range. This required a new footway to be incorporated into the main gateway. In the 15th century an arched entrance (Plates 21 and 22) was added into the north wall of the projecting part of the gate tower. It is probable that this formed a small gate for foot passage while still keeping the main gateway for processional traffic.

Also in the 15th century a trefoil-lighted window (Plate 23) was added into the north wall of the 'Abbot's Stables' (Fig 19). This was probably added because the ground floor of the building had changed use. The function of the building is unknown but the quality of the original stonework (Plate 24) and of this window shows that it was used for something of high status and not as a barn or stable. It is possible that it was used for storage of something that needed protection, like grain, as incised into the internal stonework of the trefoil-lighted window-surround is a six-petal daisy wheel (Plate 25) apotropaic mark (see '5.1.7 Ritual marks' below).

By the 16th century the 'Abbot's Stables' was being used as a granary. It is described in the grant of the site of Evesham Abbey to Sir Philip Hoby in 1541. This states 'the store-house, abutting on the tower … upon the granary toward the south and upon the almery on the east' (Tindal 1794, 131). This description can only be the 'Abbot's Stables'. The strong walls and high status of the structure would

allow it to have such a function. Its construction and its position on the edge of the Abbey precinct and close to the farm lands of the abbey would be perfect for its use as a granary.

5.1.3 17th century

Early in the 17th century Habingdon described the Great Gate as ' though deformed with age [is] as large and as stately as any at this time in England'. Late on in the century, around 1664, the abbey site was bought by Edward Rudge. The building must have been in a partially derelict state as, at this time, the building was re-roofed with an elm roof-structure (Plate 26). This is the roof still in place on the building. Recording of this structure showed that the cross-beams of the trusses projected beyond the ends of the principal rafters (Figs 7 and 8) which is a technique typical of 17th century construction. The timbers of the trusses and rafters have Roman numeral carpenter's marks on them that are of typical 17th century style (Figs 2 - 8, Plate 27). Many of these timbers still also had the vestiges of white lime wash on them (Plate 28), which shows that the roof timbers were originally visible from the inside of the building.

Although we have no evidence for when the internal divisions and vaulting of the Great Gate structure were removed, it was likely done between the 1540s and the time Edward Rudge bought the gate and the rest of the abbey site in 1664. This lack of internal structure may have been why the north range was occupied by a bell founder, and known as Bell Barn, by 1701 and the 'Abbot's Stables' was the former Lime House Barn (Cox 1990, 134).

5.1.4 18th century

In the early 18th century the Bell Barn and High Leads (Abbey Gate), was leased from the Rudge family by Mr Francis Rogers. As part of the lease he was allowed to demolish any buildings on the premises and had permission to block up the arch and passageway through the building (Cox 1990, 136 and Palmer and Alcock, 2003, 11) with the provision that if he did so, he had to make a 14ft wide way to the south of the building to replace it.

At this time, in the early 18th century, the Bell Barn and High Leads were converted into a house. This involved creating rooms inside with new partitions formed from laths and horsehair lime plaster (Plate 29), creating new windows (Plate 30) with window shutters (Plate 31) and fitting out the interior in the style of the time. The recording revealed that a large amount of these 18th century fittings still survived in the building. Two rooms and a corridor are still panelled (Plates 32 - 34) and a number still have tall narrow doors (Plate 35). Two rooms also still contained their shell head display cupboards (Plates 36 and 37) that were used to display the household's china. When the late 20th century non-permanent alterations had been removed from the building, this revealed the original 18th century cornicing in many rooms (Plate 38) and in one room a very beautiful 18th century decorated ceiling (Plate 39). The main staircase (Plate 40) is also of this date and is a very elegant open-string dogleg-with-winder design (Plate 41). The balusters are vase-shaped (Plate 40) and the open-string is decorated with rosette brackets (Plate 41).

It is probably at this time of conversion of the building into a house, that the fireplace, revealed during the recording of the building was added in a ground floor room formed from the gate tower (Plate 42). The house was designed so that its emphasis was to the rear (east) of the current structure over looking the garden and the abbey remains. This elevation was designed symmetrically (Fig 12, Plate 43) with a central portico (Plate 44) that was added in the late 18th century and has a good fanlight.

In the 18th century, the 15th century trefoil-light window in the north wall of the 'Abbot's Stables' (Figs 16 and 17, Plate 23) was blocked up. During the recording of the building a void was revealed immediately behind one of the internal facing stones, exactly opposite the daisy wheel mark on the right jamb. This void had been left against the internal west jamb at the time of blocking this window and into this void was placed a rat. The rat was already dead, was put into the hole and was placed looking out of the hole into the building (Plate 45). The rat was placed as an apotropaic symbol for protection of the goods stored within the building (see '5.1.7 Ritual marks' below). At the time of blocking this window the central stone mullion was removed and replaced with narrow bricks that were then lime plastered over to make them resemble the removed stones (Fig 17, Plate 23). Above the window there appears to have been a pitching opening added into the fabric (Fig 17, Plate 46), which gives more evidence for the building being used for a farming function, and a door and

window were also inserted into the same wall causing the removal of the line of the vault from the interior and exterior of the structure (Figs 16 and 17).

The conversion of Abbey Gate into a house included the construction of a brick outbuilding on the site of the south flanking range between the gate tower and the 'Abbot's Stables' (Plate 47). This involved copying in brick the surviving stone arch from the south range arch passageway (Plate 48). It is probable that this part of the building was already in a partially ruinous state at this time, as the construction of the brick building involved the removal, or replacement, of some of the walls of the south range. One of these was revealed in Trench 1 (context (101) see below). The positions of the others have already been discussed above.

The late 18th century saw the function of the 'Abbot's Stables' change from being a barn to part of the house. At some point in the late 18th century, the structure became a 'Music Room' (Palmer and Alcock 2003, 10) and was plastered and decorated on the internal face (Plate 49). This decoration was revealed during recording of the structure beneath layers of 20th century wallpaper and 19th century white lime paint. Analysis of the paint allowed a date of the late 1700s to be assigned to the paintwork due to the linseed oil as a fixing agent for the paint colour. As part of the conversion of the building, the early 18th century window was blocked on the external face and internally it became an alcove (Fig 16, Plate 50) that was plastered and painted.

5.1.5 19th century

In the 19th century the house was divided into two dwellings. This involved the insertion of two identical new front doors with fluted columns and decorative rectangular fanlights (Plates 51 and 52). As a result the frontage of the building was also moved to the west elevation. Internally the building required another staircase at the northern end of the structure. This was a very elegant Regency-style curved staircase with stick balusters (Plate 53) that originally continued into the cellar where the curved shape of the stairs was visible in the wall next to the stairs down to the north cellar. The east elevation portico door was at this time converted into window. During the conversion Abbey Gate, this door was reinstated and the original frame was found to still exist encased within the blocking of the opening. French windows were also added into this rear elevation by converting one of the 18th century windows into a door (Plate 54). The large garden was divided in two by a brick wall added to the north side of the portico, effectively cutting the impressive symmetrical elevation in half.

Both houses were probably completely redecorated and there are a few surviving examples of the 19th century decoration, including an unusual fragment of a painted willow-pattern wallpaper (Plate 55) and blue flower printed-wallpaper (Plate 56).

Early in the 19th century, the 'Abbot's Stables' were converted into two separate cottages by rebuilding the south elevation in brick (Plate 57) whilst still using the medieval stone foundations as the brick wall foundations as revealed in Trenches 3, 5 and 6 (see below). The internal arrangements of these cottages have been lost due to later alterations but it was revealed during recording that they had lias stone floors at ground level and the dividing wall also contained the fireplaces for the buildings.

5.1.6 20th century

Much of the 18th and 19th century fabric of Abbey Gate and the 'Abbot's Stables' was lost due to 20th century alterations to the buildings.

The first change occurred around 1900 when the coach house adjoining the north of the building was converted and incorporated into the north house. This coach house is described in Tindal in 1794 as containing (part of the north wall of Abbey Gate) a niche surmounted by a 'Gothic canopy of wonderful richness and beauty' (Tindal 1794, 138). This canopy was removed by the Edward Rudge in the 19th century and is now in the porch of Abbey Manor (the house built by Edward Rudge).

The conversion of the coach house involved putting a staircase in to join up with the Regency-style staircase on the first floor. The new staircase is mock Jacobean in style with closed-string, splat balusters and very simple newel posts (Plate 58). Evidence of the wallpaper used in this extension was found behind late 20th century toilet partitions (Plate 59).

Around the same time as the coach house was converted, the garden was landscaped and incorporated numerous architectural fragments that were found around the site, including a carved corbel of a woman, probably the Virgin Mary, that must have come from the Abbey gatehouse (Plate 60).

In the middle of the 20th century, an air raid shelter (Fig 14) was constructed in the south house of Abbey Gate. This used the 15th century small gate (Plates 21 and 22) as an entranceway and incorporated fragments of medieval fabric into its construction, such as part of a quatrefoil frieze (Plate 61) and fragments of stained glass (Plate 62)

When the south part of Abbey Gate was sold in the 1920s to W A Cox it was first used as a house with the outbuildings being used as a timber yard. At this time, the cottages formed from the 'Abbot's Stables' had different ownership. Cox's gradually expanded their timber business and eventually bought the north house for domestic use and the south house and cottages were then used as offices. In the late 20th century Cox's also expanded their business into the north house and returned Abbey Gate to one structure. The changes they made to the building caused the removal of large amounts of 18th and 19th century fabric and probably some medieval fabric as well. For example, the cottages had their internal divisions removed on the ground and first floors creating large open working spaces (Plate 63) the 18th century stone floors on the ground floor were covered in layers of varnish, paint, resin, glue and carpet (Plate 64).

5.1.7 Ritual marks

The recording and watching brief at Abbey Gate revealed a number of interesting features that all have a ritual nature. Apotropaic marks and symbols have been recorded all over the country and date from the medieval to the 18th century (Easton 1999). The word 'apotropaic' is derived from the Ancient Greek meaning 'evil averting'. They range from inter-cutting circles representing the Holy Trinity, to carved 'VM's invoking the Virgin Mary, to shoes placed beneath fireplaces to entice a witch's spirit in place of the house occupants. It is believed that ritual marks came about in the 16th century following the repression of Catholicism and were used as symbols of protection that could not be recognised by Protestants or later Puritans. The majority of marks were made at this time in the 16th and 17th centuries along with the placing of apotropaic symbols, such as shoes, that were placed particularly during the 17th century witch trials.

At Abbey Gate ritual marks and symbols were found dating from the 15th century through to the 18th century. The first mark added to the fabric of the building was a six petal 'daisy wheel' (Fig 15 and Plate 25) incised into the stonework of the 15th century window inserted into the north wall of the 'Abbot's Stables'. This symbol was hidden from view by being lime-plastered over and therefore can only have been created by the mason constructing the window of the building. A daisy wheel is a compass drawn figure within a circle and the number of petals can vary but it usually has three or six, a triquetra or hexafoil. They originally were meant to invoke the Holy Trinity and the hexafoil was an ecclesiastical symbol until the 15th century when it was phased out. By the time of the 16th and 17th centuries the symbols were being used in clusters to represent the sun or stars and went with the widespread interest in matters astrological. At Abbey Gate, the symbol was used in its original form to invoke protection of the Trinity for the contents of the building. In ecclesiastical contexts the daisy wheel is most often found on the jambs of blocked windows (Easton 1999).

In the 17th century, Abbey Gate was re-roofed with a well-constructed elm roof-structure. It was traditionally put together and probably used local timber, from the elm forests in the south of the county, and local carpenters. On two of the timbers have been carved unusual symbols (Plate 65). Rubbings were taken and these have been reproduced as Figure 9. These symbols are similar to 'baltic timber markings' but this practice of marking imported timber before it was brought into the country would not need to be used with local elm. This was also a technique of identification that only became common in the 19th century when the English timber supplies where low. The symbols are also very similar to domestic apotropaic marks that are incised on timbers in the 17th century. These marks have been found mainly in the Suffolk area although a few are now being recorded in Worcestershire. The symbols of inter-cutting lines to form Vs and Ms (and sometimes Ws) represent the Virgin Mary and are known as Marian marks. They are used to invoke her protection from witches or a witch's spirit (Easton 1999).

In the late 17th and early 18th century it was common practice to use a witch bottle to deter a witch. This practice involved taking a bottle, filling it with urine collected from the 'witch' and putting pins, thorns or nails inside. When the witch then tried to pass urine she would do 'grievous harm' to herself (Massey and Edmonds 2000, 169). At Abbey Gate, a complete utility bottle (Plate 66) was found in trench 19 that was identical to one found in Reigate still containing urine. The bottle from trench 19 had unfortunately partly filled with soil because the cork had disintegrated. This bottle had been deliberately placed within the foundations of an early 18th century wall and was mortared onto the medieval wall it was abutting. Whilst the Abbey Gate bottle did not contain any urine due to the soil leaking into bottle, it did contain damson pips. These would not have the same effect as pins or thorns, but it would still make life uncomfortable for the witch.

The 15th century trefoil lighted window in the north wall of the 'Abbot's Stables' was blocked in the 18th century. As discussed above, during this blocking a rat was placed within a void in the wall (Plate 45). This deliberate placing of the rat shows prior knowledge of the daisy wheel symbol, on the opposite jamb if the window, and suggests that it was uncovered at this point. It is not uncommon to find mummified animals and sometimes even still-born babies under hearths or lintels in buildings. They were used as protection symbols. In Pershore, a mummified cat was found chasing a mummified mouse. In that case the spirit of the cat was being invoked to chase the mice from the building. At Abbey Gate we have a rat looking out of the blocked wall into the building. As the last usage of the building, as part of Evesham Abbey, had been as a granary it is possible that this use or some similar function continued into the 18th century and the dead rat was meant as protection for the grain from other rats.

6. Watching brief

6.1 Structural analysis

The watching brief consisted of the excavation and recording of 25 trenches for services and building foundations. The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figures 21 – 26. Photographs of relevant features have been included as Plates 67 – 84. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

6.1.1 Phase 1 Natural deposits

Natural deposits were only recorded in two trenches, trench 16 (context 1603) and trench 17 (context 1709). In trench 16 it was described as firm mid yellow brown sandy silt with frequent stones occurring at 1.3m below the current ground surface. In trench 17 it was described as mid-orange silty-sand and gravels. Natural deposits were not revealed in other trenches due to the limited depth and the build up of intrusive deposits and features.

6.1.2 Phase 2 Roman deposits

Although no Roman deposits were encountered, two pieces of Roman pottery were recovered from contexts in trench 17. One sherd of Oxfordshire White Mortarium (fabric 33.1) was recovered from a modern make up layer (context 1701) and one shed of Oxidised Severn Valley Ware was recovered from re-deposited natural fill of a cut for a medieval wall (context 1706). This residual pottery suggests that a Roman site may be situated in the area around Abbey Gate. Residual Roman deposits have been found in excavations around the Evesham Abbey although no structural evidence has been discovered. It has been suggested that a Roman site lies beneath the site of the abbey.

A single large pit was discovered at the base of trench 21 (Fig 21). This was not excavated, as the required trench depth was reached, but its plan and fill were revealed. The pit (context 2115) was circular and filled with red sandy silt and rounded stones (Plate 67). It is possible that this is a Roman pit, due to the depth of the feature (1.5m) and the fact that it was not visible at a higher level.

6.1.3 **Phase 3 Medieval deposits**

Medieval deposits were discovered in trenches 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 17, 19, 22 and 24. These consisted mainly of walls and construction cuts for walls. However, only one sherd of medieval pottery was recovered.

Trench 1 (Fig 22) was excavated to the top surviving courses of a partially demolished medieval wall (context 101) (Plate 68). This wall consisted of large and small pieces of lias bonded with pale lime mortar. The larger pieces formed sides and were filled with the smaller pieces as packing. This wall had been heavily truncated by a 20th century concrete footing for a circular saw (context 106), an early 18th century brick wall (context 102) and a 19th century tile drain (context 104). The rest of the wall was still standing in the existing structure (Plate 69). The whole structure dated to the early 14th century construction of the Abbey 'great gate' by Abbot William Cherington.

Trench 3 (Fig 20) was excavated to the top of the surviving courses of the demolished medieval south wall (context 301) of the 'Abbot's Stables' (Plate 70) on the interior of the building. This wall was also seen in trench 5 and trench 6 on the exterior of the building (Plate 71). The wall was constructed with large lias stones set together and aligned roughly east to west. It was reused as a foundation wall for the brick frontage of the cottages (Plate 57) that were constructed from the fabric of the 'Abbot's Stables'. The east wall of the 'Abbot's Stables' was seen in trench 14. The foundation courses and construction cut (Plate 72) were revealed in context (1401), the fill of which contained the only medieval pottery recovered from the site, a single piece of Worcester-type sandy glazed ware (Fabric 64.1) dating to the 11th to 14th centuries. This ties in perfectly with the construction date of the 'Abbot's Stables'. It was built at the same time as the 'great gate', by Abbot Cherington, in the early 14th century.

Trench 4 (Fig 20) was a test pit excavated by the developers, presumably to discover the original ground surface within the archway. It revealed the vault-springer column base of the archway (Plate 73), which is dated to the early 14th century.

Trench 12 (Fig 20) was excavated across the old reception area of Abbey Gate. This 'T'-shaped trench revealed the top of a lias stonewall (1204) with cream lime mortar aligned roughly north south (Plate 74). It had a later brick wall attached to its south face. This stonewall may have been part of a building built against the west wall of the original gate structure. It was also parallel to another wall in this trench, context (1208). This appeared to be a wall continuing from the south wall of the gatehouse tower. It was constructed of lias and limestone (Plate 75) in the same style as the Abbey 'great gate' although it post-dates it by at least 50 years. This wall also continued in Trench 17 (Fig 23). That trench was excavated through the former reception doors towards the doorway into the courtyard. The wall in this trench, context (1708, Plate 76) was revealed in plan and then completely removed to reveal a section through it. This was a very a substantial lias and limestone built wall on the same alignment as the south wall of the gatehouse tower and the continuation of wall (1208).

Trench 19 (Fig 24) revealed a lias wall that was being used as a footing for a brick wall. The lias wall (1905) was a substantial structure 1.2m wide, constructed of flat lias stones with occasional large limestone blocks (Plate 77). The construction cut (1907) was 0.2m wide away from the wall at the top but sloped steeply inward toward the wall until it becomes almost a trench cut and is filled with an orange sandy matrix with pebbles and mortar (1911). On the north side the wall had been partially removed in antiquity, revealing its construction (Plate 78). It is aligned north south and runs parallel to the wall revealed in trenches 12 and 17. It is possible that these two walls formed a corridor or cloister walk from the Great Gate to the Almonry buildings.

Trench 22 (Fig 25) also contained a stonewall (2202). This structure was constructed of limestone and mortar and was partially curved (Plate 79). It occurred at 0.4m below the surface and continued below the depth of the trench. The construction cut was not visible at this height therefore the subsoil against the wall had been built up against the structure. Inserted inside the curve of the structure was a later brick well, it is therefore possible that the medieval wall may have been an earlier well. It is also possible that it may have been part of spiral staircase structure as such a structure was described by Tindal as surviving in this area in 1794 (Tindal 1794, 138).

Trench 24 (Fig 20) revealed a wall (2404) constructed of lias worked into blocks forming a large wide structure (Plate 80). The stones of this wall were bonded with crumbing buff coloured mortar. It had

been reused as a foundation for a brick wall. The wall was a possible continuation to the west of the north wall of the 'Abbot's Stables' and appears to have joined with another structure (2406) in the trench to create a room against the west gable of the 'Abbot's Stables'. This structure was also constructed of lias and was reused as the foundation for a brick wall.

6.1.4 Phase 4 18th century deposits

Post-medieval deposits were revealed in trenches 1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 15, 19, 22 and 24.

Trench 1 (Figs 22), whilst it was virtually filled with a medieval wall (101), also contained an early 18th century brick wall (102) that was attached to the side of wall (101) and at a right angle to it. The bricks measured 9" by 2 ½" by 4 ¼" (23 x 6.5 x 11cm). The trench also contained a drain (105) consisting of two parallel roof tiles narrowly set horizontally on edge into the ground and aligned east-west. The cut for the drain (103) was a very irregular feature aligned roughly east-west across the width of the trench and was cut into the medieval wall (101). A dark, charcoaly, material (104) containing fragments of mortar, ceramic and bone filled the cut and surrounded the tiles of the drain.

Trench 2 (Figs 26) contained a cobbled yard surface that was contemporary with the conversion of the Great Gate into a house in the early 18th century. This yard surface (Plates 81) was constructed of small lias stones laid on edge (203) and appeared to have wheel tracks in places within it where the stones were set at right angles to the rest of the surface.

Trench 8 (Fig 20) revealed very little in the way of post-medieval deposits. Context (804) was a paving layer that was only seen properly in the section of the trench after it was machined away. The paving was formed of flat, angular and sub-angular stones of irregular size and shape and probably lias. Above this surface was a very small section of degraded stone paving (803) that was only revealed in the section and may have been a repair to the lias surface (804).

Trench 12 contained a late 18th century brick wall (1205). This reddish-orange brick structure was two bricks wide (26cm, 10 ¼") and was aligned north south across the trench. It appears to have had a green and red stripe render, or it may have been later, that was found loose in spoil from beside this wall. Another wall of similar date was also found in this trench (1204). The medieval lias built structure had a brick wall attached to its south face, which was aligned roughly east-west. The bricks measured 9" by 2 ¾" by 5" (23 x 7 x 13cm). It is possible that the two walls were part of the same structure. There is documentary evidence for buildings being constructed in this area of the site, including one which is shown in roughly the same place on a purchase deed of 1836 (Palmer and Alcock 2003, 10).

Trench 15 was excavated without archaeological supervision but a cobbled surface (1501) was observed by the ground workers at 0.35 – 0.40m below ground level. This surface was probably an extension of the surface (203) within the yard in trench 2.

Trench 19 (Figs 24) contained part of an early 18th century surface (1918) in a section of the trench. This was formed from flat lias stones and pieces of flat limestone loosely mortared with cream lime mortar containing black and orange inclusions of broken brick or tile and charcoal. An early 18th century wall foundation butting against the medieval wall (1905) was also revealed in this trench. The foundation was in two parts (1909 and 1910) with a brick wall constructed on the top (1904). The lowest part of the foundation (1910) was a very mixed deposit containing a large amount of finds including the deliberately place, and mortared in place, complete late 17th century English utility bottle (see section 7.1.4 below). This bottle had been sealed as the cork was found disintegrated within the soil packed in the neck of the bottle. At the bottom of the bottle, it contained damson pips. The deliberate placing of bottles in holes and trenches was a 17th and 18th century custom to ward off evil spirits. This is further discussed above in section '5.1.7 Ritual marks'. The upper part of the wall foundation (1909) was formed of two courses of large lias blocks. The brick wall (1904) was formed from irregular bricks bonded with white mortar. In the later 18th century a brick structure (Plate 82) was created in this area that may have been a small cellar.

Trench 22 (Fig 25) contained the possible medieval well or spiral staircase (2202). Sitting within this wall was a circular brick structure of late 18th century date (2204). This structure was most probably a well (Plate 83). It was well constructed and had been lined with a thin coating of hard mortar.

In trench 24 was a late 18th century lias wall (2403) that was bonded with bright white lime mortar and was butting the medieval wall (2404). The 18th century wall may have been a strengthening of the earlier wall. The garden soil (2402) immediately below the later wall contained a large amount of pottery and tile all dating to the late 18th century.

6.1.5 Phase 5 Modern deposits

19th, 20th and 21st century deposits were encountered in 21 of the 25 trenches recorded. Of these, most of the deposits consisted of garden soils, drainage and demolition or levelling layers including demolition rubble from the current development of the site. 20th century wall foundations from Cox's usage of the site were revealed in trench 18. For details see Appendix 1.

In the 19th century, the brick well (2204) in trench 22 was capped. The capping consisted of a brick dome (2208). A square brick structure (2207) was built sitting above the well that was probably a pump enclosure for the well. Within the well structure a lead pipe was still in place leading out of the well toward the house.

Also in the 19th century, at the same time as the 'Abbot's Stables' cottages were created, a well (Plate 84) was dug exactly on the boundary of the cottages in order to service both houses. This was uncovered in trench 25. The well was constructed in the early 19th century. It had not been backfilled and the top of the water was 3m below the lead. This structure was of red brick with a domed top and the bricks measured 8 ⅝" by 3 ⅛" by 4 ¼" (22 x 8 x 11cm). The well probably had a pump on the top of the dome. Later in the 19th century a boundary wall (2503) was built across the top of the well and the well had a lead pipe (2511) inserted that ran directly to the cottages. This was sealed at its egress from the well by a layer of grey green clay and lias (2506) and a small brick and lias structure was built under and around the pipe to hold it in place.

7. Artefact analysis, by Angus Crawford

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 4 and 5.

The pottery assemblage retrieved from the excavated area consisted of 188 sherds of pottery weighing 5.439 kg. In addition, a bone toothbrush, complete and partial glass vessels, cigarette packets, roof, floor and wall tiles, clay pipe fragments, iron and copper alloy objects, oyster shells and animal bones were recovered. The group came from 27 stratified contexts and could be dated from the Roman period onwards (see Table 4). Level of preservation was generally fair with the majority of sherds displaying only low levels of abrasion.

Table 4: Quantification of the assemblage

Context	Material	Type	Total	Weight (g)	Context *tpq*
Developer find	Bone	Toothbrush	1	unknown	Within building
Developer find	Cigarette	Packet	2	11	Within building
801	Claypipe	Stem	1	5	19th to 20th century
801	Slate	Roofing	1	55	
801	Stone	Oolitic	1	157	
1000	Bone	Animal	1	5	20th century
1000	Bone	Animal	11	67	
1000	Coal		5	66	
1000	Glass	Modern	2	12	
1000	Glass	Various	11	36	
1000	Glass	Vessel	81	2556	
1000	Iron	Nail	1	8	
1000	Pipe	Drain	1	393	
1000	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	44	
1000	Shell	Oyster	3	86	
1000	Tile	Roof	3	215	
1004	Glass	Vessel	1	7	20th century
1004	Pottery	Domestic	2	138	
1004	Tile	Various	2	160	
1102	Bone	Animal	6	454	19th to 20th century
1102	Bone	Animal	23	743	

1102	Glass	Various	2	22	
1102	Glass	Vessel	3	265	
1102	Iron	Hardware	5	105	
1102	Pottery	Post-medieval	5	130	
1102	Shell	Oyster	2	75	
1102	Tile	Decorative	1	15	
1200	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	27	Late 18th to early 19th century
1200	Pottery	Post-medieval	4	29	
1200	Shell	Oyster	1	19	
1203	Bone	Animal	1	30	Late 18th to early 19th century
1203	Bone	Animal	1	15	
1203	Claypipe	Various	2	9	
1203	Glass	Various	3	58	
1203	Pottery	Post-medieval	70	8588	
1203	Shell	Oyster	3	30	
1401	Bone	Animal	3	4	Medieval
1401	Pottery	Medieval	1	2	
1402	Alloy	Copper?	4	163	19th century
1403	Brick	Post-medieval to modern	1	215	20th century
1404	Pottery	Post-medieval	1	14	18th century
1404	Tile	Floor	1	22	
1600	Bone	Animal	1	64	Late 18th century
1600	Glass	Vessel	3	284	
1600	Iron	Hook	1	102	
1600	Pottery	Medieval	3	150	
1600	Pottery	Post-medieval	25	501	
1600	Shell	Oyster	3	51	
1701	Pottery	Roman	1	67	20th century
1706	Pottery	Roman	1	4	Medieval
1906	Claypipe	Stem	1	11	Late 18th to early 19th century
1906	Battery	Modern	1	83	
1906	Bone	Animal	8	31	
1906	Glass	Vessel	15	3117	
1906	Pottery	Modern	1	126	
1906	Pottery	Post-medieval	40	1214	
1906	Pottery	Post-medieval	6	209	
1906	Shell	Oyster	4	54	
1906	Tile	Roof	4	1070	
1910	Bone	Animal	3	33	Late 17th to early 18th century
1910	Claypipe	Bowl	5	83	
1910	Claypipe	Stems	13	86	
1910	Glass	Vessel	1	Unknown	
1910	Glass	Window	7	20	
1910	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	65	
1910	Seeds	Damson	6	1	
1910	Shell	Oyster	29	216	
1917	Bone	Animal	2	85	Late 17th to early 18th century
1917	Bone	Animal	1	31	
1917	Claypipe	Various	4	53	
1917	Glass	Vessel	2	433	
1917	Pottery	Post-medieval	6	506	
1917	Shell	Oyster	3	43	
1917	Stone	Flag?	1	389	
2100	Stone	Mullion window frame	1	1310	Unstratified
2105	Bone	Animal	1	30	Unstratified
2108	Glass	Vessel	6	284	17th to 18th century
2109	Glass	Vessel	2	147	Unknown
2110	Pottery	Post-medieval	1	1	17th to 18th century
2110	Tile	Roof	1	13	
2111	Ceramic building material	Brick or tile	4	14	18th century
2111	Glass	Vessel	4	439	
2111	Iron	Nail	1	23	
2111	Pottery	Post-medieval	1	63	
2111	Pottery	Post-medieval -modern	1	4	
2200	Bone	Animal	3	175	Unstratified
2200	Claypipe	Various	2	12	
2200	Pipe	Drain	2	30	
2200	Tile	Roof	1	141	
2201	Bone	Animal	5	175	17th to 18th century
2201	Pottery	Post-medieval	2	302	
2201	Roof	Tile	1	49	

2201	Shell	Oyster	1	6	
2201	Shell	Snail	2	3	
2401	Pottery	Post-medieval	4	108	Late 18th to early 19th century
2401	Tile	Decorative	2	65	
2402	Bone	Animal	2	77	Late 18th century
2402	Glass	Vessel	1	53	
2402	Pottery	Post-medieval	9	139	
2402	Tile	Roof	9	434	

7.1 Discussion of the artefacts

All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (see Table 5). All sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span.

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and associated location or contexts by period. Where possible, *terminus post quem* dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

Table 5: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

Context	Fabric	Fabric common name	Total	Weight (g)
1000	78	Post-medieval red wares	1	11
1000	81.5	White salt-glazed stoneware	1	33
1102	78	Post-medieval red wares	2	117
1102	82	Tin-glazed ware	1	1
1102	83	Porcelain	2	12
1200	78	Post-medieval red wares	1	15
1200	83	Porcelain	3	33
1200	85	Modern china	1	2
1200	91	Post-medieval buff wares	1	6
1203	78	Post-medieval red wares	39	1326
1203	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	6
1203	83	Porcelain	17	291
1203	85	Modern china	13	67
1401	64.1	Worcester-type sandy glazed ware	1	2
1404	78	Post-medieval red wares	1	14
1600	78	Post-medieval red wares	3	150
1600	81.3	Nottingham stoneware	1	65
1600	81.5	White salt-glazed stoneware	2	33
1600	84	Creamware	22	403
1701	33.1	Oxfordshire white mortaria	1	67
1706	12	Severn Valley ware	1	4
1906	78	Post-medieval red wares	5	64
1906	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	126
1906	81.5	White salt-glazed stoneware	1	47
1906	83	Porcelain	7	48
1906	84	Creamware	7	206
1906	85	Modern china	26	1058
1910	78	Post-medieval red wares	2	65
1917	78	Post-medieval red wares	2	408
1917	82	Tin-glazed ware	4	98
2110	78	Post-medieval red wares	1	1
2111	78	Post-medieval red wares	1	63
2111	85	Modern china	1	4
2201	78	Post-medieval red wares	2	302
2401	83	Porcelain	1	48
2401	85	Modern china	3	60
2402	84	Creamware	9	139

7.1.1 Roman period

Two sherds of Roman pottery were identified within the assemblage and consisted of a single sherd of Oxfordshire white mortaria (fabric 33.1; context 1701) and a sherd of oxidised Severn valley ware (fabric 12; context 1706). The mortaria sherd consisted of a large base fragment with two lines as concentric circles incised into the inner base. These concentric circles also contain traces of an orange-brown residue that may signify that the mortaria was probably slipped in this colour. The sherd also had been burnt after breakage, which is a common but as yet unexplained phenomenon (D. Hurst pers comm). The sherd was dated to the 2nd to 4th century, the general production span of the fabric.

The remaining sherd of Severn Valley also displayed two parallel lines which would suggest that the sherd originated from the shoulder of a storage jar however it could only be dated to a general production span of mid 1st to 4th century.

7.1.2 Medieval period

The medieval assemblage consisted of a single sherd of Worcester-type sandy glazed ware (fabric 64.1; context 1401) and a small fragment of decorated floor tile (context 1404). The sherd of Worcester-type sandy glazed ware with a typical deep green external glaze had roller stamping and could be dated from the late 11th to 14th century.

The decorated floor tile exhibited a high degree of surface wear making identification of the original design for dating purposes problematic. Therefore the medieval floor tile could only be dated to a general date of 13th to 14th century.

7.1.3 Post-medieval pottery

The majority of the finds assemblage could be dated to this period with a total of 185 sherds (98.4%) of the total pottery assemblage. The dominant fabric was post-medieval red ware with 60 sherds dating from the 17th to 18th century. While no distinct forms were present, the sherds being typical of those encountered within post-medieval assemblages from Worcestershire, with a range of dark brown to black glazes over, or partially covering, distinct red slips. The majority of forms produced within this fabric would have consisted of general domestic wares that included pancheons, various jars and drinking cups.

A large quantity of modern china (fabric 85) was also present within the assemblage with 40 sherds present from three contexts groups (1200, 1203 and 1906). The sherds were representative of general tablewares such as plates and bowls as well as more specific items such as chamber pots. Surface finishes varied and included plain white glazes and various blue floral designs. Several sherds were also identified as being those commonly referred to as 'pearl wares', which have a distinct bluish tinge to the overall finish of the white glaze. The 'pearl ware' sherds were present in the majority of the stone china contexts and could be dated to a general production span of late 18th to early 19th Century date.

Creamware sherds (fabric 84) were also largely represented with 38 sherds from contexts 1600, 1906 and 2402. The few forms that were present were indicative of the production of fine tablewares and included a range of plates and bowls. Creamware, as a production type, was generally more dominant in the period of 1760-90 when it replaced white salt glazed stone wares (discussed below) and was in turn superseded by the increasing demand for stone china and fine porcelain in the late 18th century.

Of thirty sherds of porcelain identified within the assemblage ten were of Chinese export porcelain of late 18th century date; with further analysis by Harry Frost resulting in more specific dating of the porcelain sherds, as well as the identification of a large rim of Japanese Imari. The Chinese forms identified included five sherds of a hand painted bowl (Plate 85) of 1770 to 1780 date (context 1203) with a further sherd from the same vessel in context (1906). Context 1200 contained a hand painted deep-footed tea bowl of 18th or possibly 19th century date (Plate 86), while context 2401 contained almost half of a gilded saucer of 1770 – 1780 date (Plate 87**).** A final sherd of Chinese porcelain from context 1102 could be dated to c.1760 (Plate 88**).** The Japanese Imari sherd is from a large jar or umbrella stand of c.1885 to 1900 (Plate 89) and was hand painted in red and blue glazes with areas of overlaid gilding, which has during deposition become detached from the surface (context 1203). Further sherds of porcelain were identified as Worcester production during the latter 18th century with a range of decoration imitating those of contempory Chinese porcelain (contexts 1102, 1200, 1203 and 1906). The forms are also similar and included shallow fine tableware bowls.

Further fabrics include five sherds of tin glazed ware (fabric 82; contexts 1102 and 1917) generally dated to the 17th to 18th. White salt glazed stoneware (contexts 1000, 1600 and 1906) was more specifically dated to the mid to late 18th century date. Three sherds were of stonewares were identified with one of Nottingham stoneware (fabric 81.3; context 1600) and two of miscellaneous late stoneware (fabric 81.4; contexts 1203 and 1906). Both sherds of the miscellaneous late stoneware are of probable 19th century date while the sherd of Nottingham stoneware is of 18th century date. A

single sherd of post medieval buff ware (fabric 91; 1200) was identified as a 'pie crust' rim sherd from a slip decorated pressed-platter of 18th century date.

A large quantity of modern china (fabric 85) was also present within the assemblage with 40 sherds present from three contexts groups (1200, 1203 and 1906). The sherds were representative of general tablewares such as plates and bowls as well as more specific items such as chamber pots. Surface finishes varied and included plain white glazes and various blue floral designs. Several sherds were also identified as being those commonly referred to as 'pearl wares', which have a distinct bluish tinge to the overall finish of the white glaze. The 'pearl ware' sherds were present in the majority of the stone china contexts and could be dated to a general production span of late 18th to early 19th century date. The remaining modern china sherds are typical of 19th to early 20th century production.

7.1.4 Other post-medieval artefacts

A large quantity of post-medieval vessel glass was recovered with a total count of 119 sherds. The material, which survived best was thick, such as the bottle bases, or structurally strong, as at the bottlenecks. While a large number of sherds could only be generally classified to a broad production period, a few could be more closely dated through Van Den Bossche's catalogue of antique glass bottles (Van den Bossche 2001). This included an intact English utility bottle from context 1910, similar to shaft and globe types, that was dated to c1690 (Plate 66). Interestingly the bottle also contained the remains of Damson stones (A. Clapham pers. com.). A partial bottle profile from context 1917 was also similar to shaft and globe types and is also probably of late 17th century production. Bottlenecks, with string rims, were present in contexts 2108 and 2111 but could only be generally dated from the 17th to 18th century.

A total of 28 fragments from clay tobacco pipes were identified as dating from the 17th to 18th century with only a single large stem fragment being of probable 18th to 19th century date (context 1906). Based on comparison with Adrian Oswald's clay tobacco pipe typology, more specific dates could be allocated to the following (Oswald 1975). Five pipe bowls from context 1910 were produced during the period of 1680-1710 while fragments of bowls (context 1203 and 2200) were of probable late 17th century date. Various bowl and stems (contexts 1917 and 801) could only be dated to the late 17th to early 18th century.

Further post-medieval artefacts included a bone toothbrush found beneath one of the floors in the house. It is similar to that from a pit dated to 1780s or 1790's recovered in the excavations at Greyhound Yard in Dorchester (Woodward *et al*, 1993, p 195; Plate 90). Previously only 20th century plastic toothbrushes have been recovered from excavations in the county. This bone toothbrush is a rare and important example of historic dental practices. Toothbrushes were invented in the 1780s by William Wisdom. Previous to this a formal 'toothbrush' had not been used, but toothpicks and metal or wooden sticks were chewed upon.

A number of fragments of roof tile, wall tile and brick fragments were quantified. However, the material examined was fairly generic with the roof tile being typical of those produced from the 13th to 18th century. The brick fragments were indicative of 20th century date and the wall tiles of Victorian or later production. As such these materials are of limited significance and not discussed further. Further building material also included a fragment of window mullion (context 2100) worked from oolitic limestone and of probable 15th century date (Shona Robson-Glyde pers comm).

7.1.5 Significance

Overall, the assemblage is of some significance. While the Roman pottery is stratigraphically proven to be residual, it is representative of potential archaeological deposits surviving in or around the vicinity of the Abbey Gate site where Roman material has frequently been excavated. While the medieval artefacts consisted of a single pottery sherd and a fragment of decorated floor tile they are also indicative of the medieval history of the site.

The post-medieval assemblage is significant as reflecting the dynamics of pottery industries and improved transportation during the later half of the 18th century. The evidence from the Abbey Gate assemblage indicates that general local coarse wares, typified by post-medieval red sandy ware, were

used for common domestic kitchen wares while there was a prevalence for fine and costly national and imported table wares. Interestingly there is a lack of ceramic platter and cup sherds within the assemblage, which may indicate that more expensive vessels, such as pewter or silver were being used in their place. These vessels would not normally enter the archaeological record due to the intrinsic value and potential for recycling.

8. Synthesis

8.1 The Great Gate

The construction of the Great Gate of Evesham Abbey in the early 14th century is well documented. For many years the Abbey Gate building has been believed to be the 14th century Great Gate although the possibility of the structure being the Barton Gate has been discussed (Palmer and Alcock, 2003). The Barton Gate was also constructed in the 14th century by Abbot William de Cherington, but has also been located to the west of the Almonry. It has also been widely written that Abbey Gate was constructed on the remains of the Great Gate of Evesham Abbey. Even the latest Pevsner states 'The remains of the Great Gateway…lie…embedded in a beautiful L-plan house of 1711 facing Merstow Green' (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 289). The recording of the building, however, has revealed that Abbey gate is essentially a medieval structure: all four walls of the standing building are medieval fabric to full height. The 18th century conversion of the house, inserted windows and doors into a still substantial structure. Whilst the internal layout had gone by this time, the gate way was still intact as was the vaulting of the passageways to the south and the structure known the 'Abbot's Stables'.

Analysis of the remaining medieval fabric and that revealed in the trenches, has enabled a layout of the original gate house to be drawn up. In the centre was the gatehouse tower, projecting forward, that was flanked to north and south by symmetrical ranges. The tower was vaulted within its passageway using ribbed vaulting and columns with simple capitals as vault springers. The outside of the structure was decorated with statues and was embattled. The flanking range to the north probably housed chambers and a chapel. The south flanking range, with its vaulted room and passage may have housed storage. Attached to the south range was the monastic garner, probably with storage below. This structure, the 'Abbot's Stables', has been wrongly named since the 18th century, even to it being named as such on Ordnance Survey maps. There is no evidence for the building to be a stable, architecturally the building is of high status. It was vaulted internally and was adjoined by a beautifully vaulted passageway also with ribbed vaulting and Doric capitals as vault springers. The 'Abbot's Stables' were wrongly assigned the name following a misreading of *'The site and demesnes of the Abby of Evesham',* by Sir Philip Hoby, in which, at the Dissolution, the life-grant of the Almonry to the last Abbot, Philip Ballard, was described as being 'bounded on the north by the abbey gateway, on the south by the abbot's stable and the west by the barton gateway' (Cox 1993, 131).

8.2 Other medieval evidence

The excavation of the trenches to the immediate west of the south wall of the gate tower (Trenches 12, 17 and 19) showed that the south wall of the gate tower was extended to the west, probably to join up with the Almonry building. This occurred in the 14th century but sometime after the gate was constructed and effectively separated the south flanking range from the gate tower. It is likely that this wall was a new Abbey precinct boundary, which had previously run west from the south wall of the monastic garner. A parallel wall created a walkway between the Almonry and the south flanking range, which was now inside the Abbey precincts along with the Almonry and monastic garner. The walkway may have been similar to a cloister, in that was open and airy and more than likely was vaulted.

8.3 Post-Dissolution

It seems there was very little change to the layout and arrangement of the structures of Abbey Gate prior to the Dissolution. At this time the building changed hands a number of times, while surviving being demolished for its building stone and for the limestone for the limekilns, which was the fate of the Abbey Church and most of the other conventual buildings. A bell founder eventually used the building as a barn, although there is no available evidence to tell if it was used for making bells.

It was only when Edward Rudge bought the structure, that it was brought back to life. It was re-roofed very well in a very traditional style, using pegged joints and with chiselled Roman numeral carpenter's marks but keeping with the 17th century tradition of extending the tie-beam beyond the ends of the principal rafters. The re-roofing of the structure caused it to become known as 'High Leads', in reference to the roof, by the early 18th century when it was converted into a house. This use of the building as a house was seen in the artefacts recovered from the watching brief trenches in the yard where domestic rubbish was recovered.

Of particular importance in showing the status of the occupiers of the property was the finding of Chinese porcelain. The dating of the Chinese porcelain to the late 18th century shows that the owners of the time where the Philips family, also occupiers of the building. They were importing porcelain from London to the area, which suggests they were a high status family within the county or even the country.

Brick walls recorded in the trenches shows that the documentary evidence of buildings being constructed in the 18th century can be born out by the archaeological evidence. There are detailed descriptions of stables being built for John Rudge to use when visiting Evesham from London and it is this structure that seems to have been recorded in Trench 12.

With the division of the house into two properties in the mid-19th century, Edward Rudge also carried out demolition of 18th century structures including the possible stable described above. This structure is not shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map but archaeological evidence in the area of these walls showed demolition layers dating from the 19th century (contexts 1203 and 1206).

8.4 Conclusions

The importance of Abbey Gate has already been established by its status as a grade I listed building and by the protection of the surrounding grounds as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The recording and watching brief at Abbey Gate provided a very detailed archive of a Grade I listed structure prior to and during its conversion, ensuring such evidence as the 18th century plaster ceiling has survived in the record. The story of Abbey Gate has been extended to show that much of the original fabric still survives and that the series of buildings associated with the structure can be extended to include the newly located monastic garner and the south flanking range. It has also revealed a local tradition of using apotropaic marks and symbols that started very early and continued for 300 years. The recording of this building and its below ground remains, became a major project to preserve as much of this important building as was possible and it has become a comprehensive study of a surviving, but living, abbey building that is not a church.

8.5 Research frameworks

Evesham has already been a subject of study through the Central Marches historic towns survey (Dalwood 1996). The study of Abbey Gate has allowed new evidence for the layout of the gatehouse and surrounding structures to be added to this already important study.

Whilst abbeys in general have been the subject of numerous books and studies, the recording of an abbey gatehouse that has changed use over the centuries since it became redundant, has not previously taken place. This record has allowed this take place and can be used alongside the national studies of monastic precincts.

A study of the use of apotropaic marks has been carried out by Ralph Merrifield in his book 'The archaeology of ritual and magic'. Other information has been gathered on the website 'Apotropaios' by Brian Hoggard (www.apotropaios.co.uk). The foremost authority on ritual marks on timber is Timothy Easton (eg Easton, 1999), and while he has written articles he has not produced a comprehensive study.

9. Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for

publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

Building recording and a watching brief on the conversion of the building and associated ground works was undertaken on behalf of D A Cook (Builders Limited) at Abbey Gate, Merstow Green, Evesham (NGR ref SP 0360 4365; HER refs WSM 35758, 35759 and 35760). An extensive programme of building recording elucidated the medieval structure and the history of alterations to the buildings between the 16th and the 20th century. Abbey Gate is a very substantial stone built structure that has been shown to have a long history. It was first constructed as the Great Gate of Evesham Abbey around 1330 by Abbot William de Cherington. It was a large building with a central gate tower and flanking ranges to each side. Following the Dissolution, the structure was one of the few conventual buildings that survived demolition. In the 17th century it was still intact and was described by Habington in 1640 as being' as large and as stately as any at this time in England'. It was used partly as a barn in the late 17th century when it was bought by Edward Rudge. He then re-roofed the building and tenanted it out. The tenant converted the building to a house and blocked up the main gate passage. Part of the south flanking range was demolished and new brick outbuildings were created in its place. The house was richly decorated in 18th century style with panelling, china cupboards, cornicing, shuttered tall windows and plaster ceilings. In the 19th century the house was converted into two properties and partly redecorated with unusual wallpaper. In the early 20th century, the first part of the building was bought the Cox family who used the outbuildings to run a timber yard. Gradually they possess more and more of the structure, finally acquiring the whole building in the 1990s, when it was being used for offices for a timber yard and construction company. The Cox company carried out numerous alterations to the building, including the removal of internal walls and historic fabric. A watching brief on the groundworks on the site revealed evidence of demolished walls of medieval and 18th and 19th century date some of which can be traced through documentary evidence to the constructions of the 18th century.

10. Acknowledgements

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11. Personnel

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Shona Robson-Glyde. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Simon Woodiwiss. Fieldwork was undertaken by Shona Robson-Glyde with Georgina MacHugh, Tegan Cole, Justin Hughes, Adam Lee, Alvaro Mora-Ottomanno and Jo Wainwright. Finds analysis was undertaken by Angus Crawford and illustration by Carolyn Hunt and Shona Robson-Glyde. Photo preparation was carried out by Shona Robson-Glyde. Mark Harris of Worcestershire County Council Property Services contributed the REDM survey.

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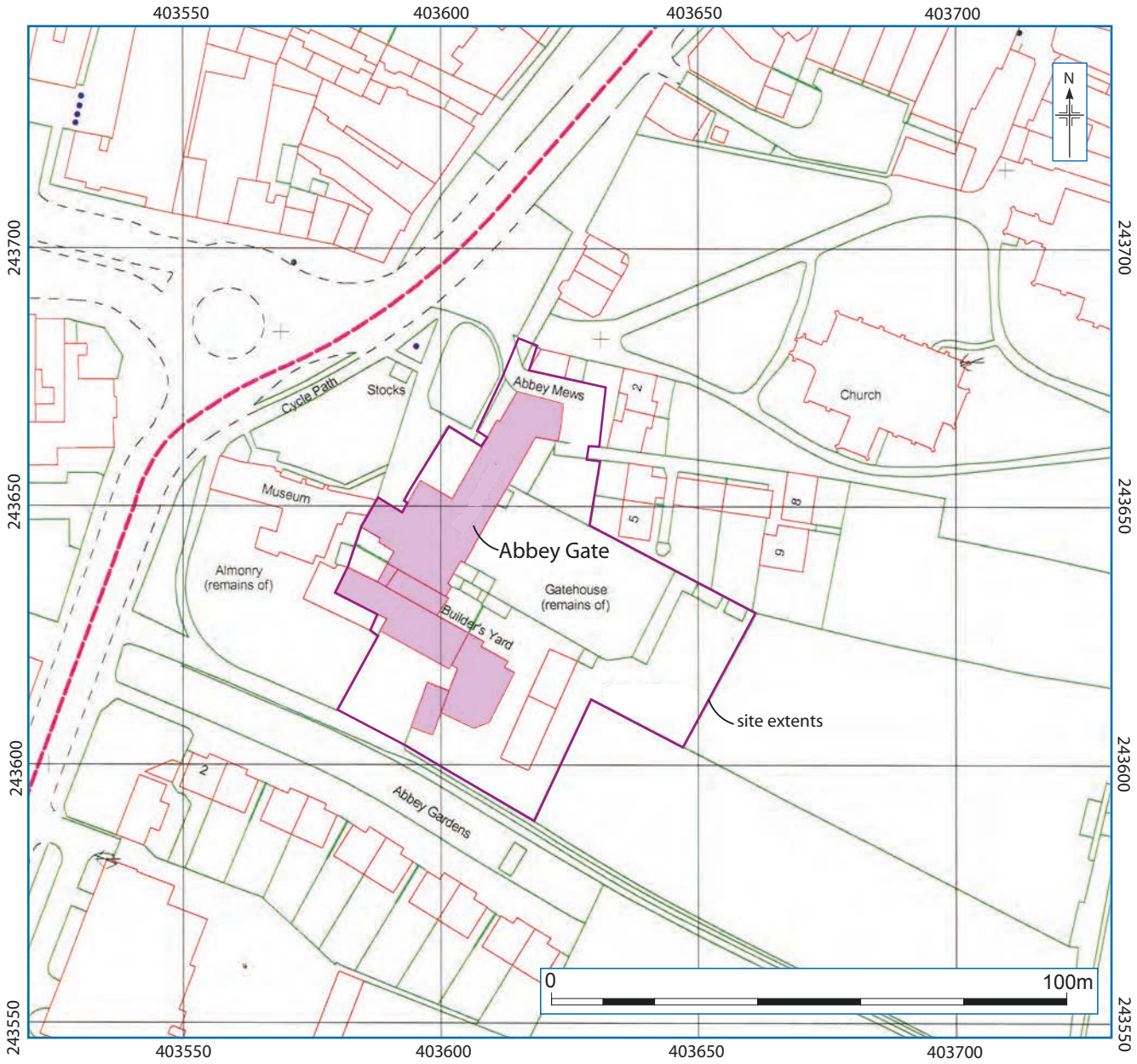

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Location of Abbey Gate *Figure 1*

S

N

TRUSS 6

TRUSS 5

TRUSS 4

TRUSS 3

TRUSS 2

TRUSS 1

brick chimney stack

modern timber

dormer pediment

position of dormer

dormer base

nails

replacement

replacement modern timber

addition

nail

bolt

joist

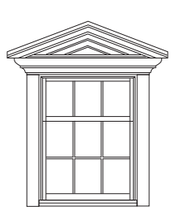
former mortice

modern timber

on underneath face of purlin

replaced purlin

detail of dormer windows trusses 5-6 and 5-4

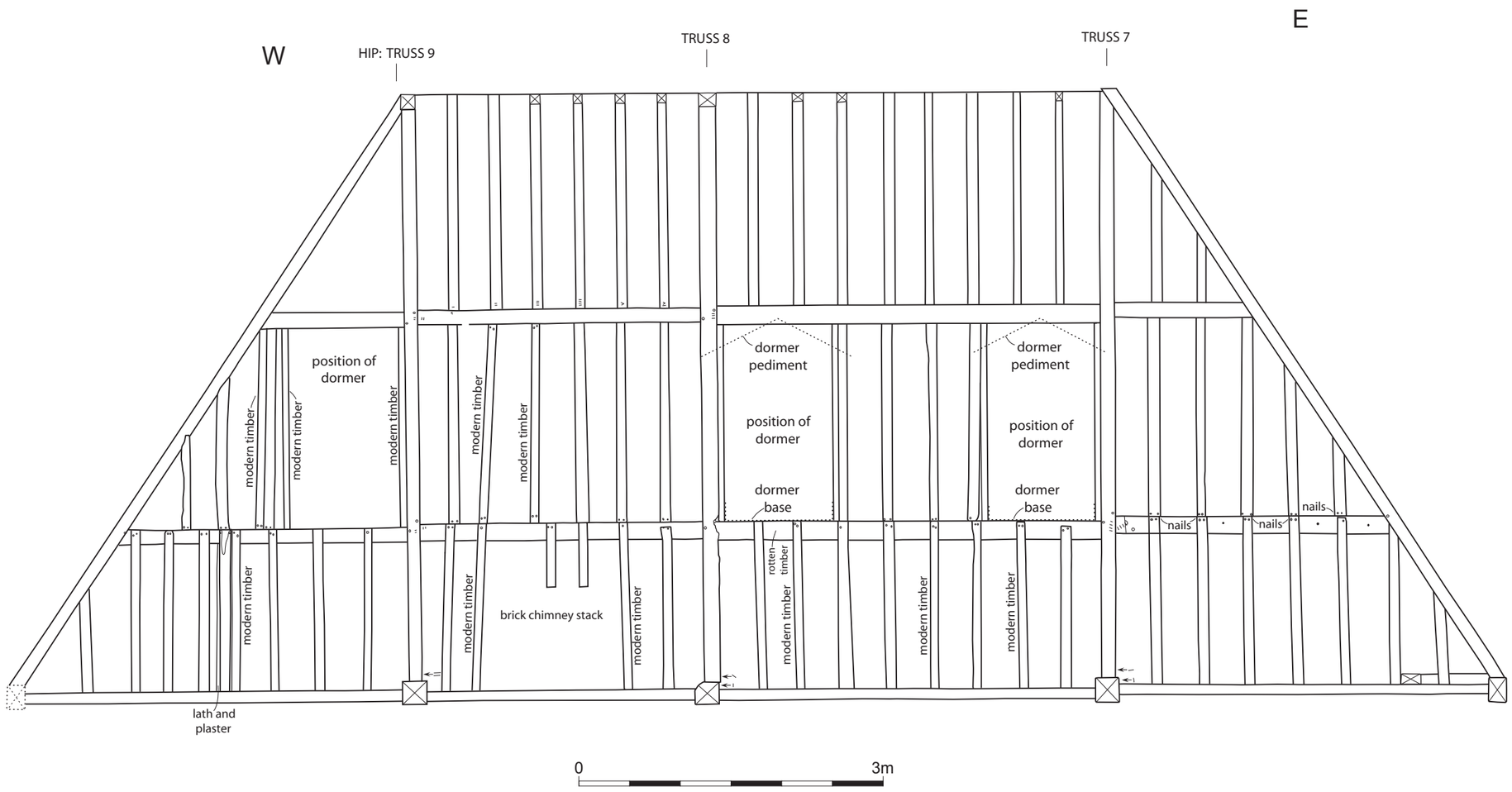


detail of dormer window truss 3-2: east side

0 3m

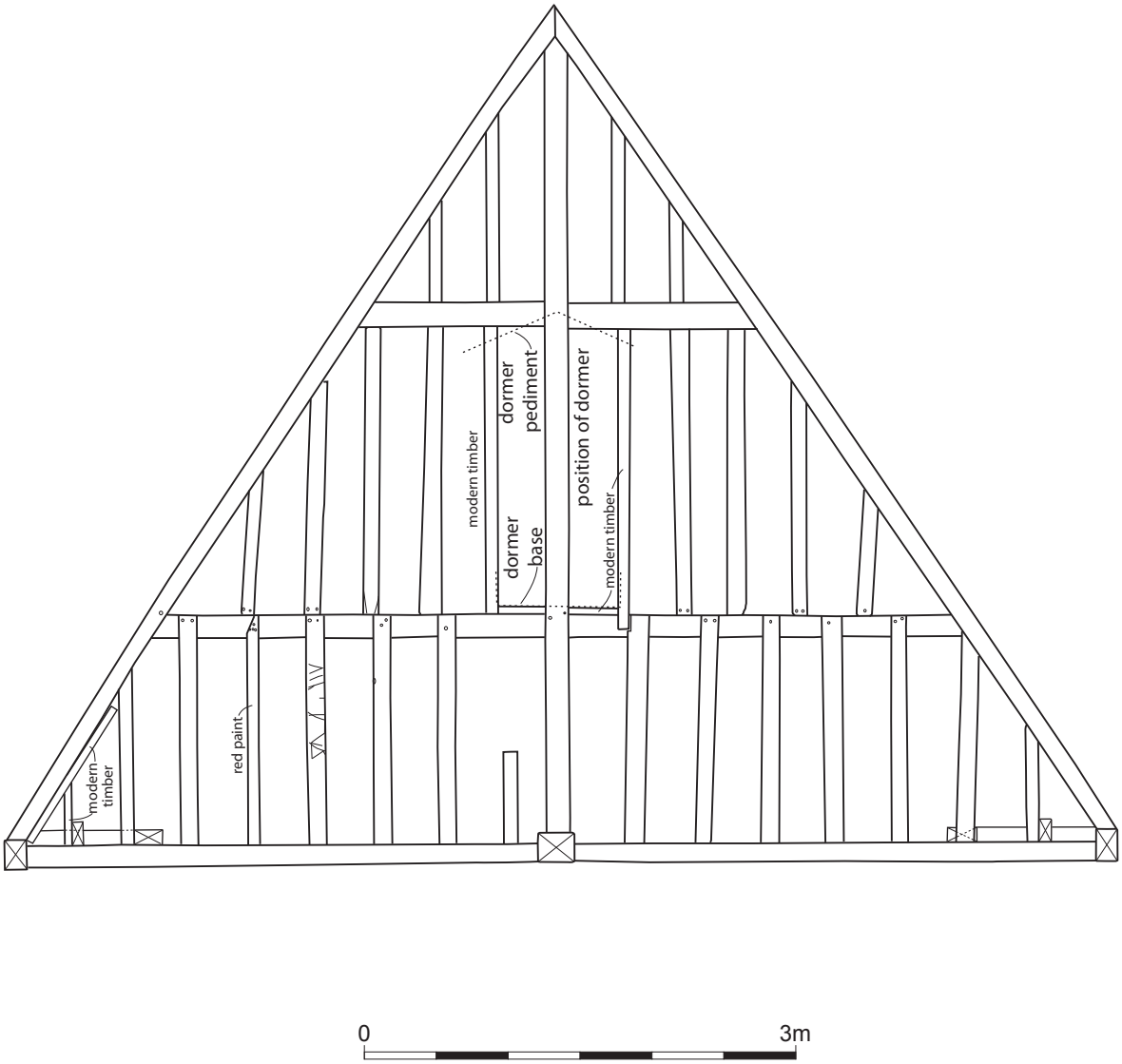
Abbey Gate roof: east side: Trusses 6 to 1

Figure 2

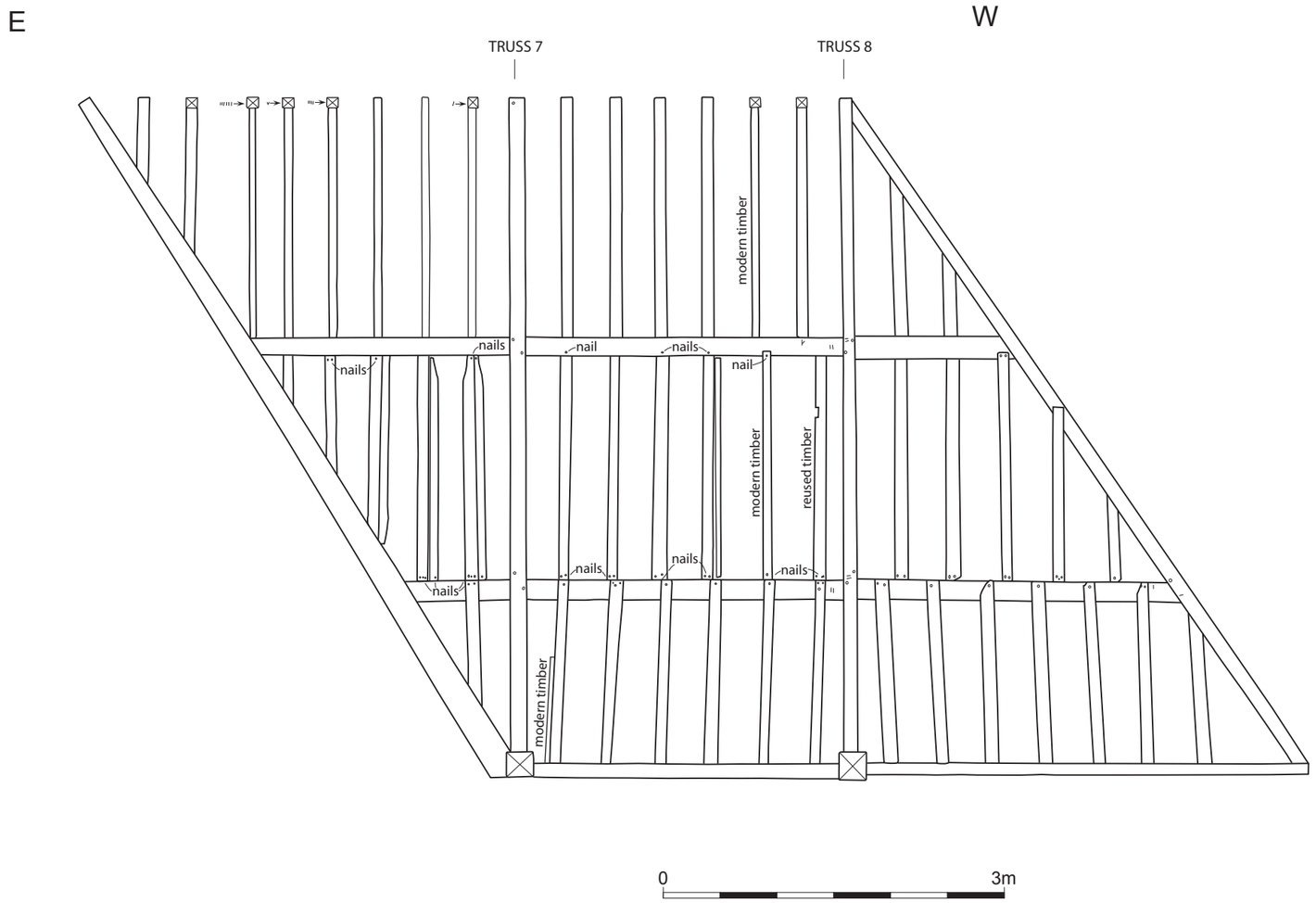


Abbey Gate roof: Trusses 7 to 9: rear, south-facing

Figure 3



Abbey gate roof: hip end, west-facing front (wing) *Figure 4*

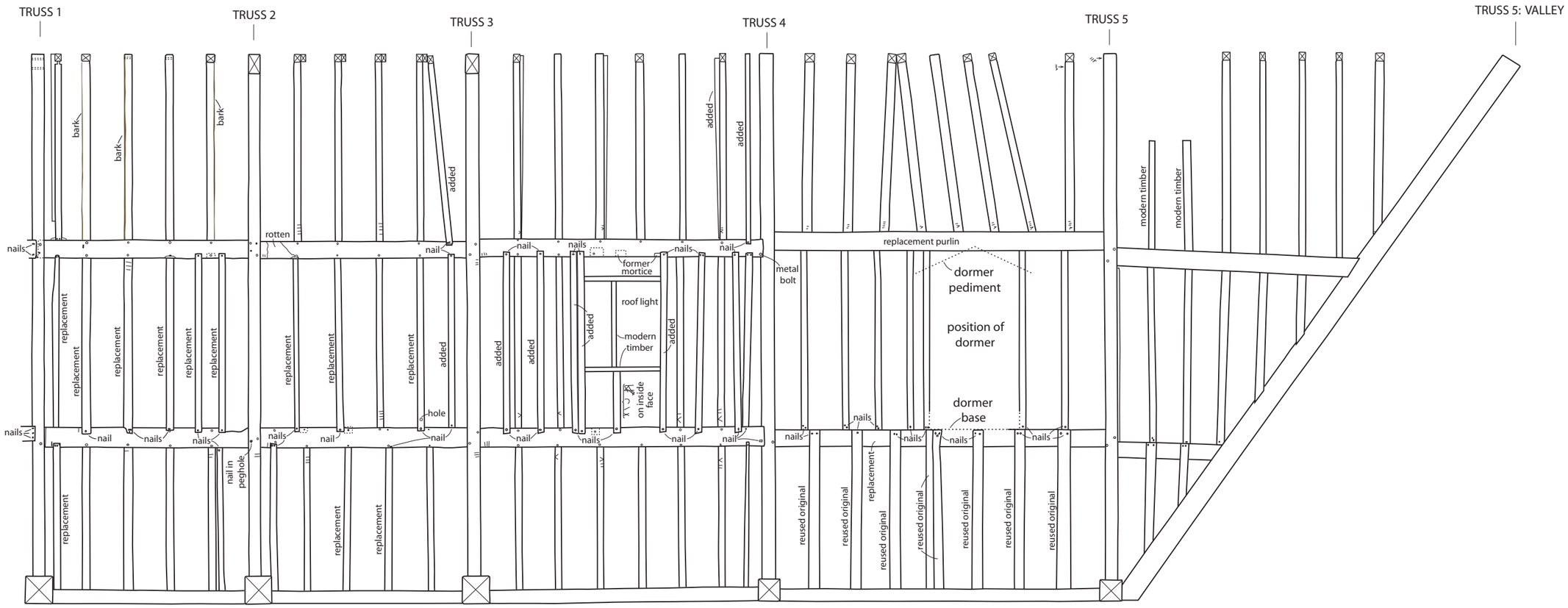


Abbey Gate roof: Trusses 7 to 9: front, north-facing

Figure 5

N

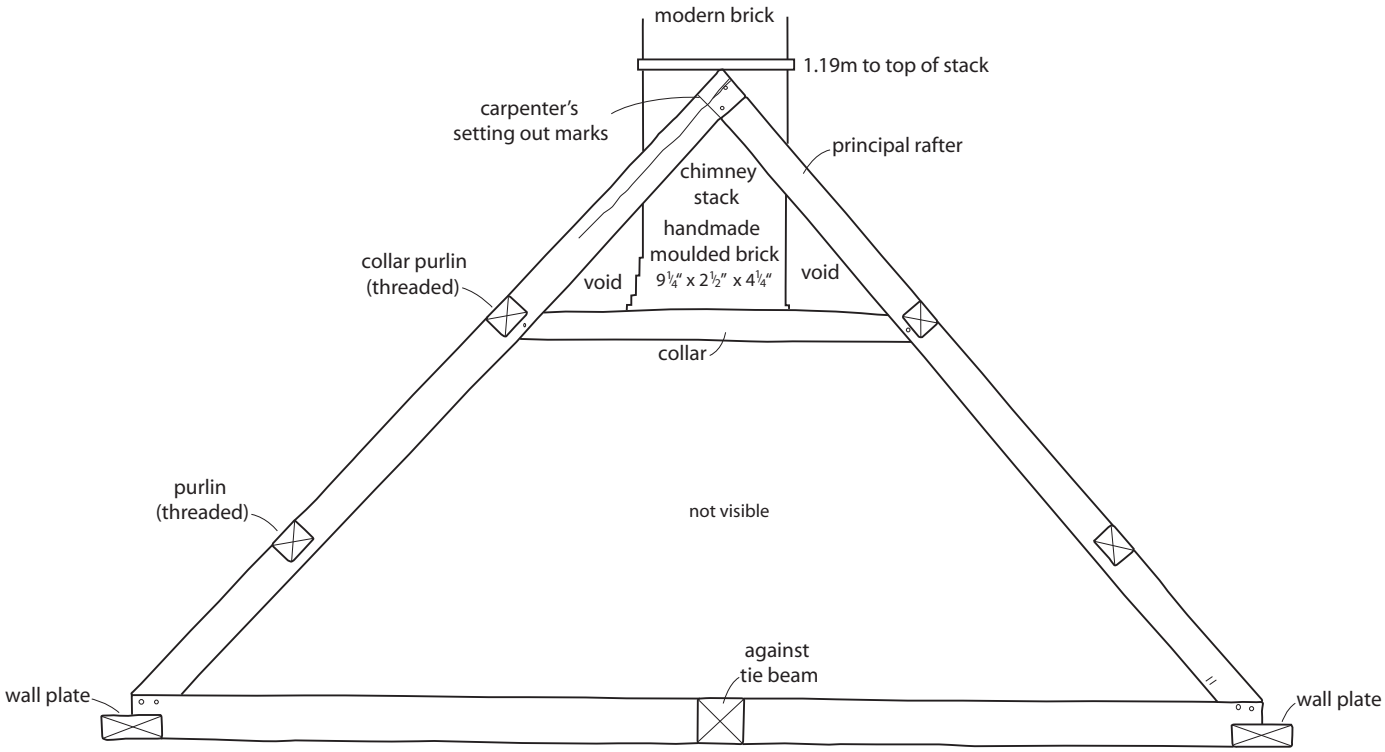
S



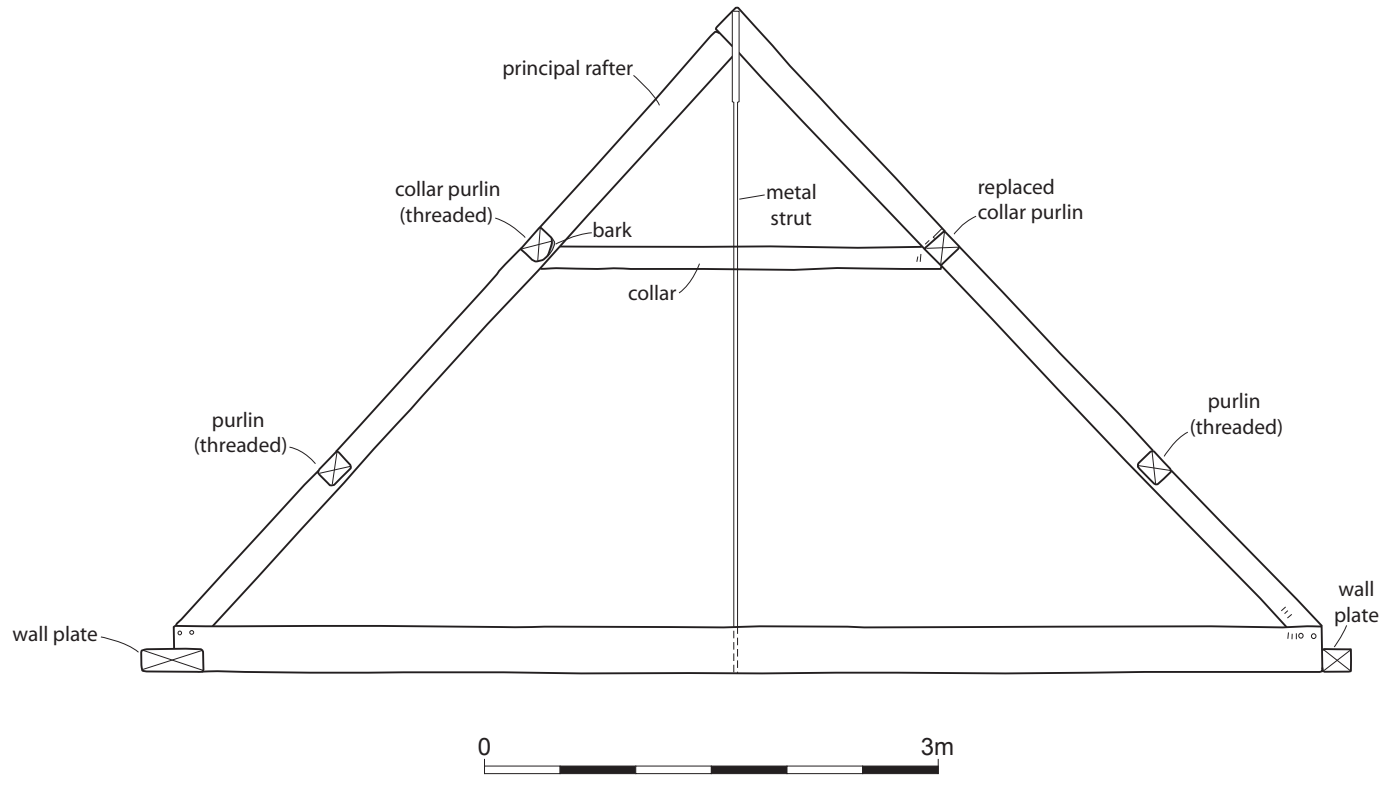
Abbey Gate roof: west side: Trusses 1 to 5

Figure 6

TRUSS 1: SOUTH-FACING

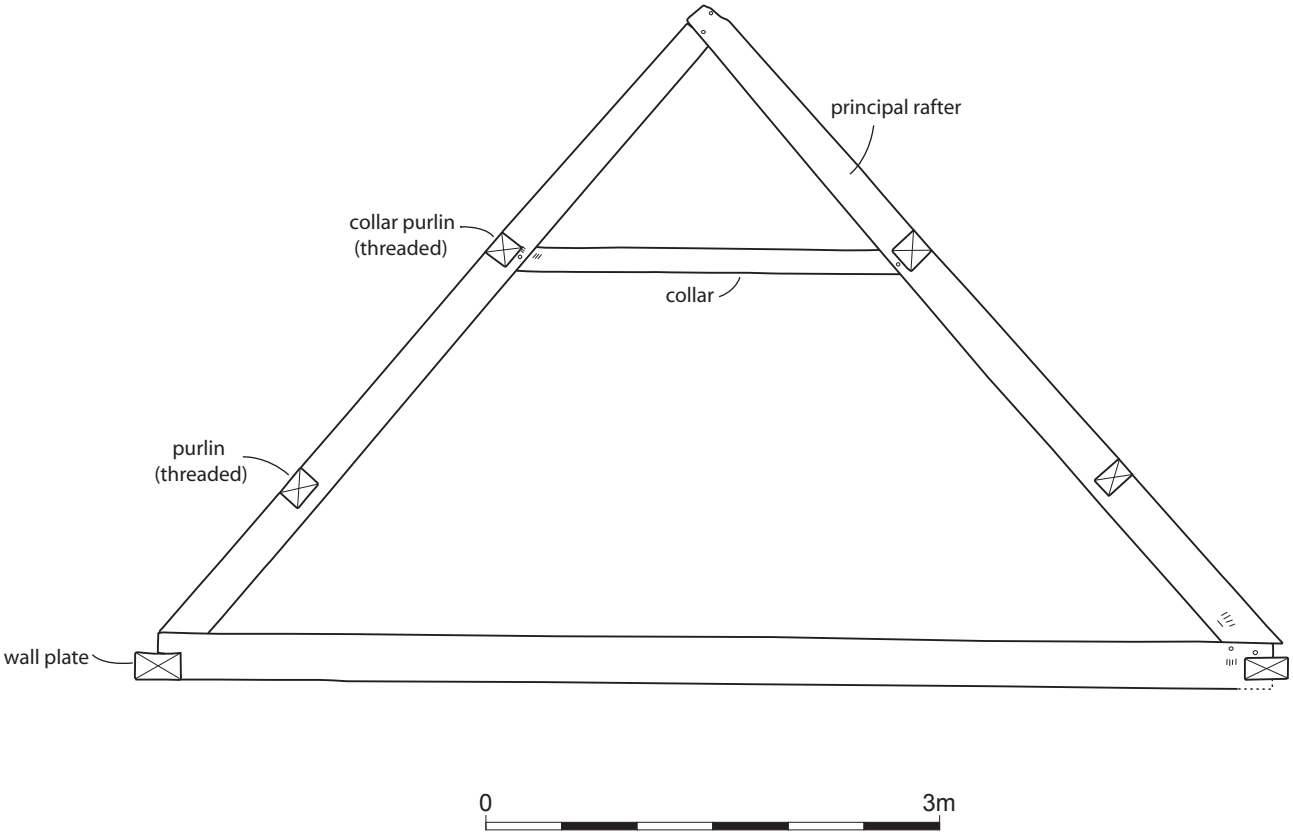


TRUSS 2: SOUTH-FACING



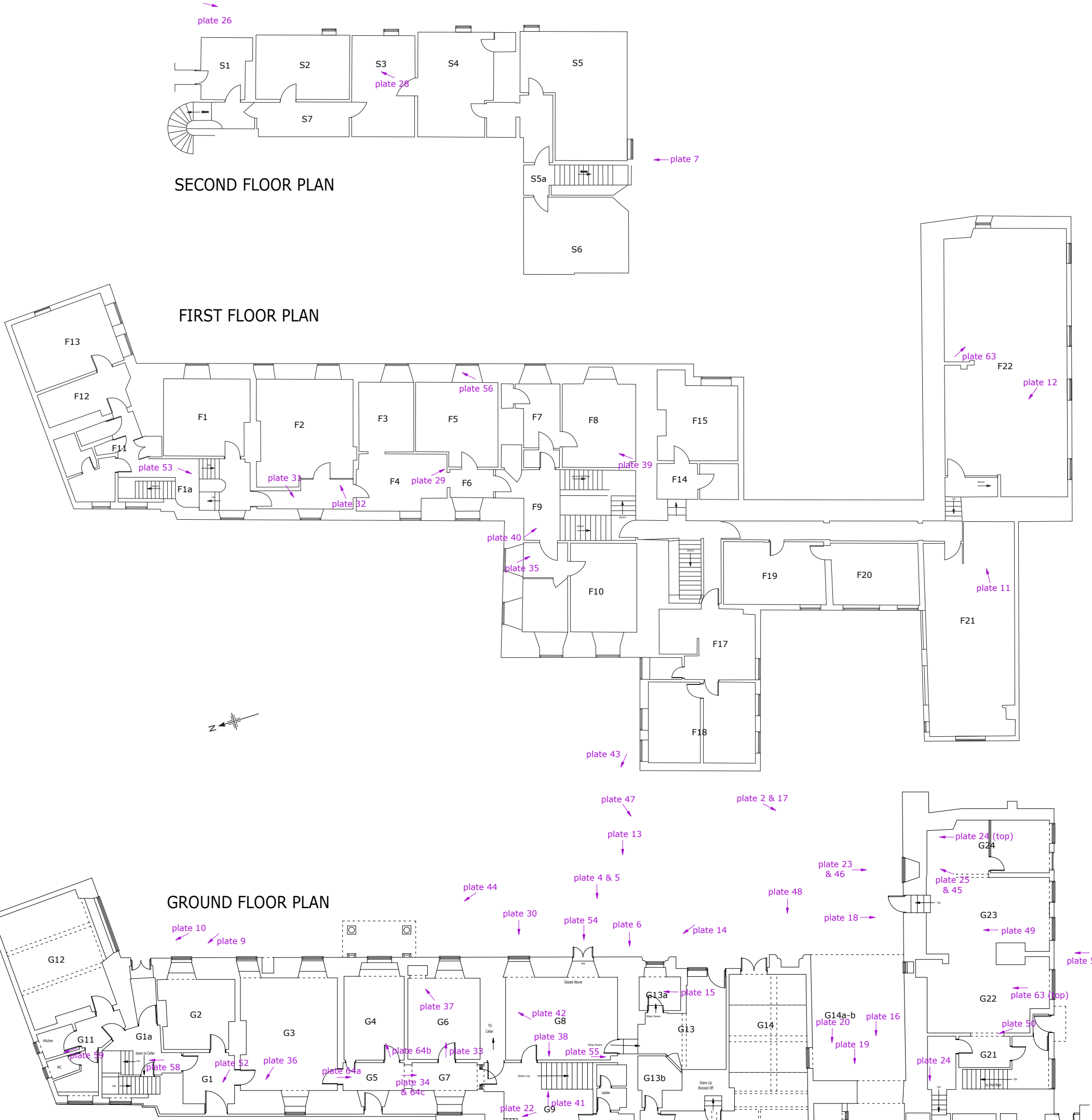
Trusses 1 and 2: south-facing *Figure 7*

TRUSS 3: SOUTH-FACING

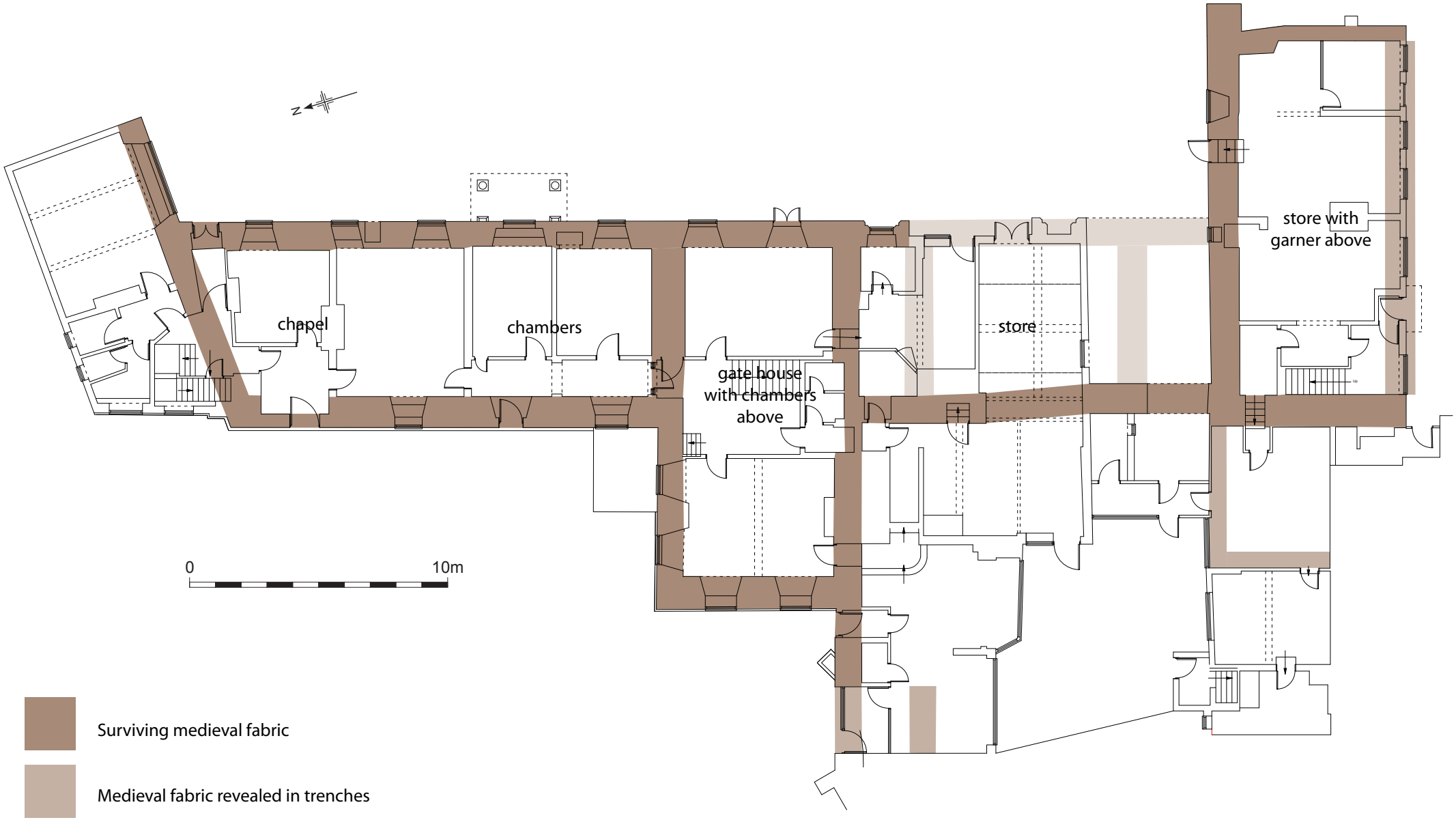


Truss 3: south-facing *Figure 8*

Rubbings of ritual marks *Figure 9*



Abbey Gate floor plan with plate locations and room numbers *Figure 10*



Abbey Gate medieval fabric and possible medieval functions

Figure 11

vegetation

brick

timber lintel

original fabric lias

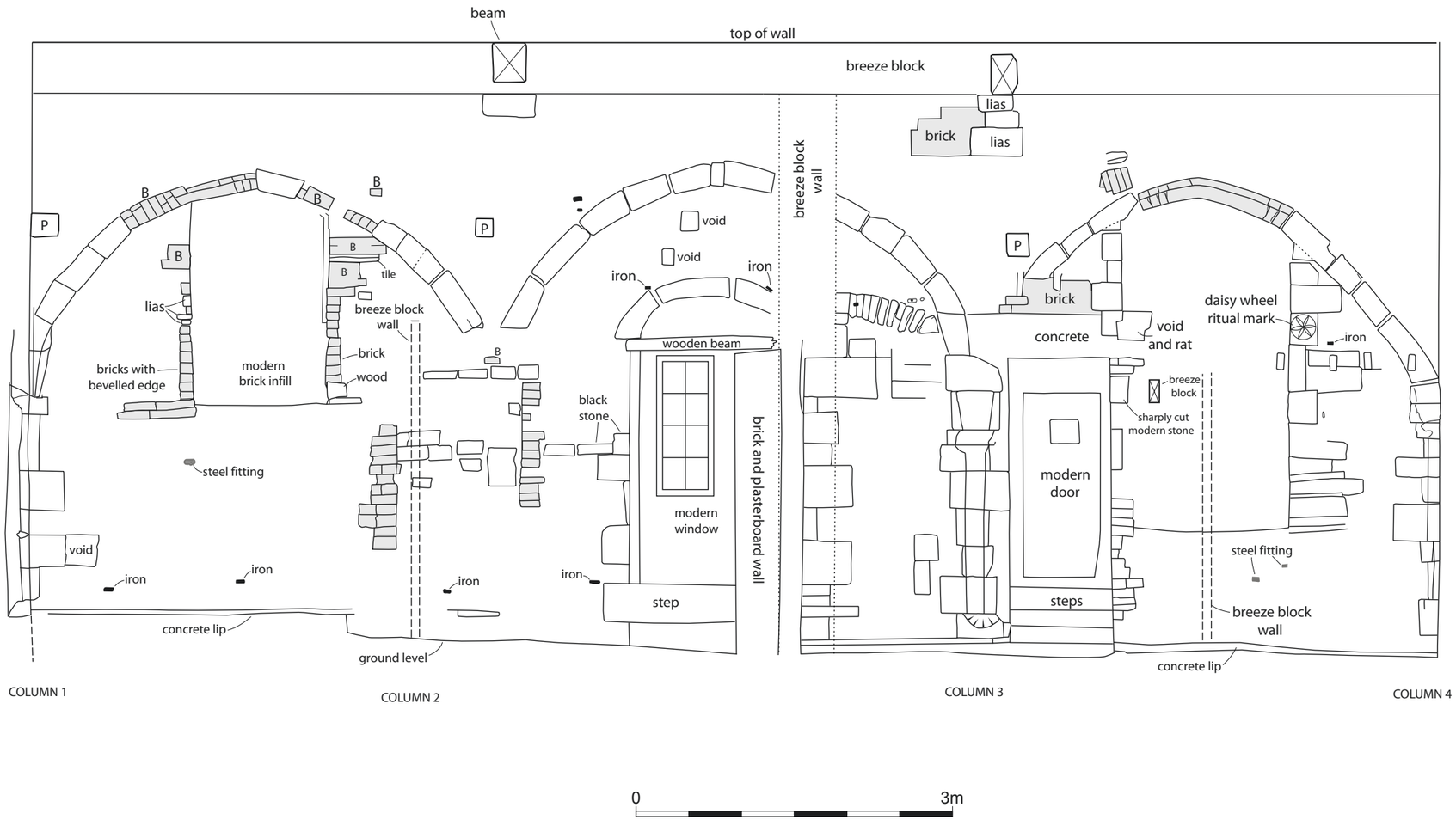
reused original limestone

original fabric limestone

Abbey Gate (east) rear elevation

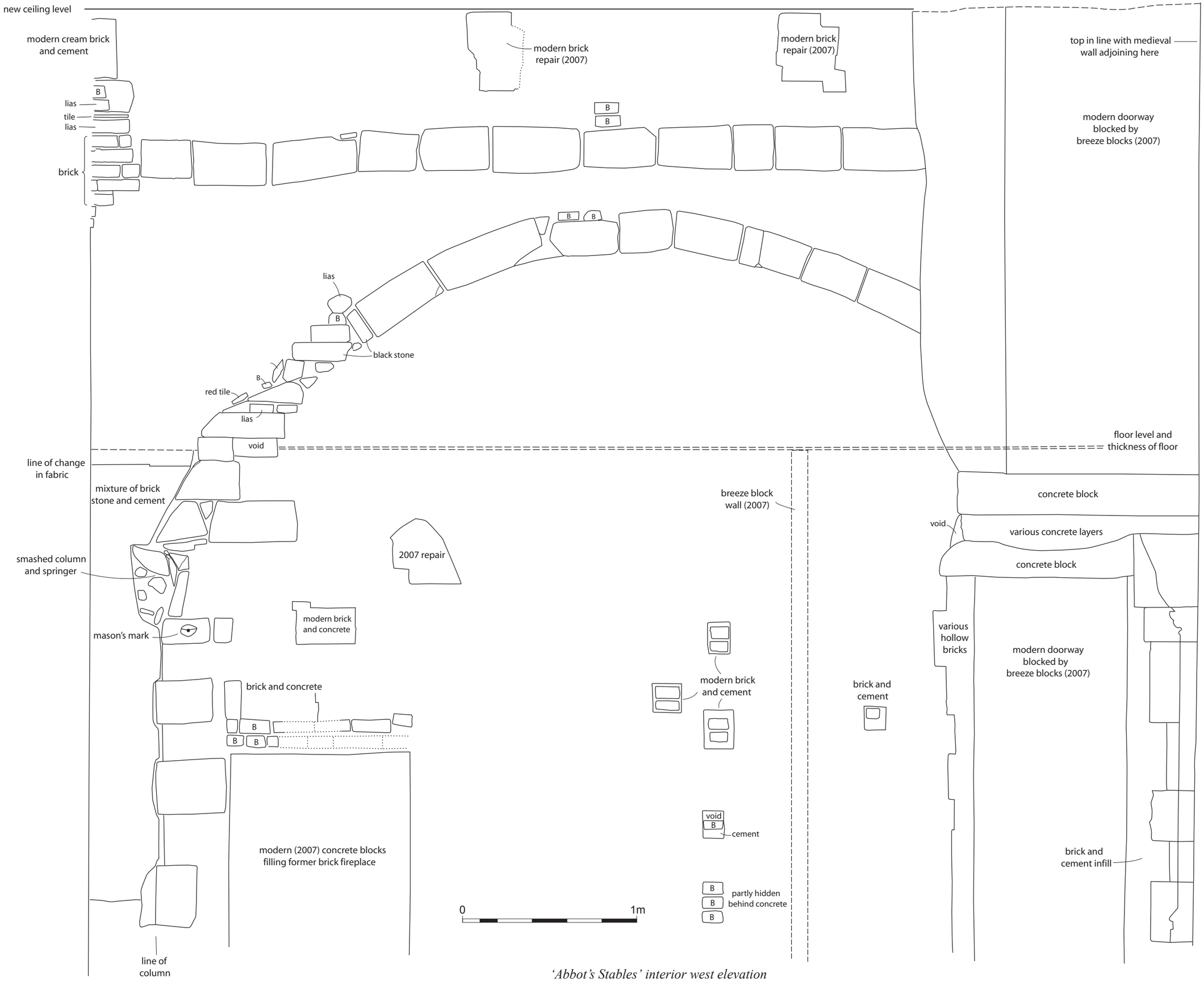
Figure 12

Abbey Gate (north) front elevation *Figure 14*



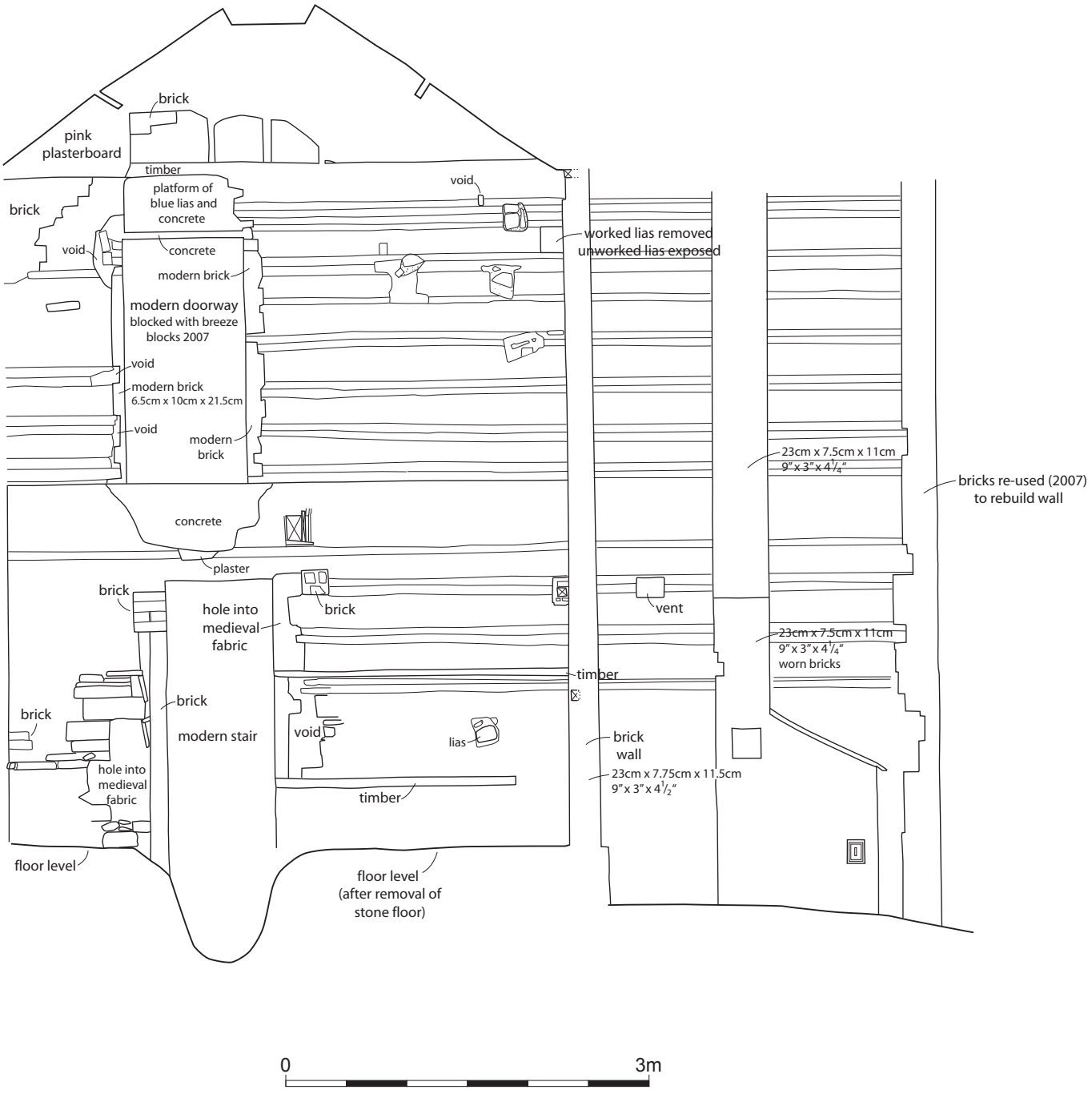
Interior elevation of 'Abbot's Stables'

Figure 15

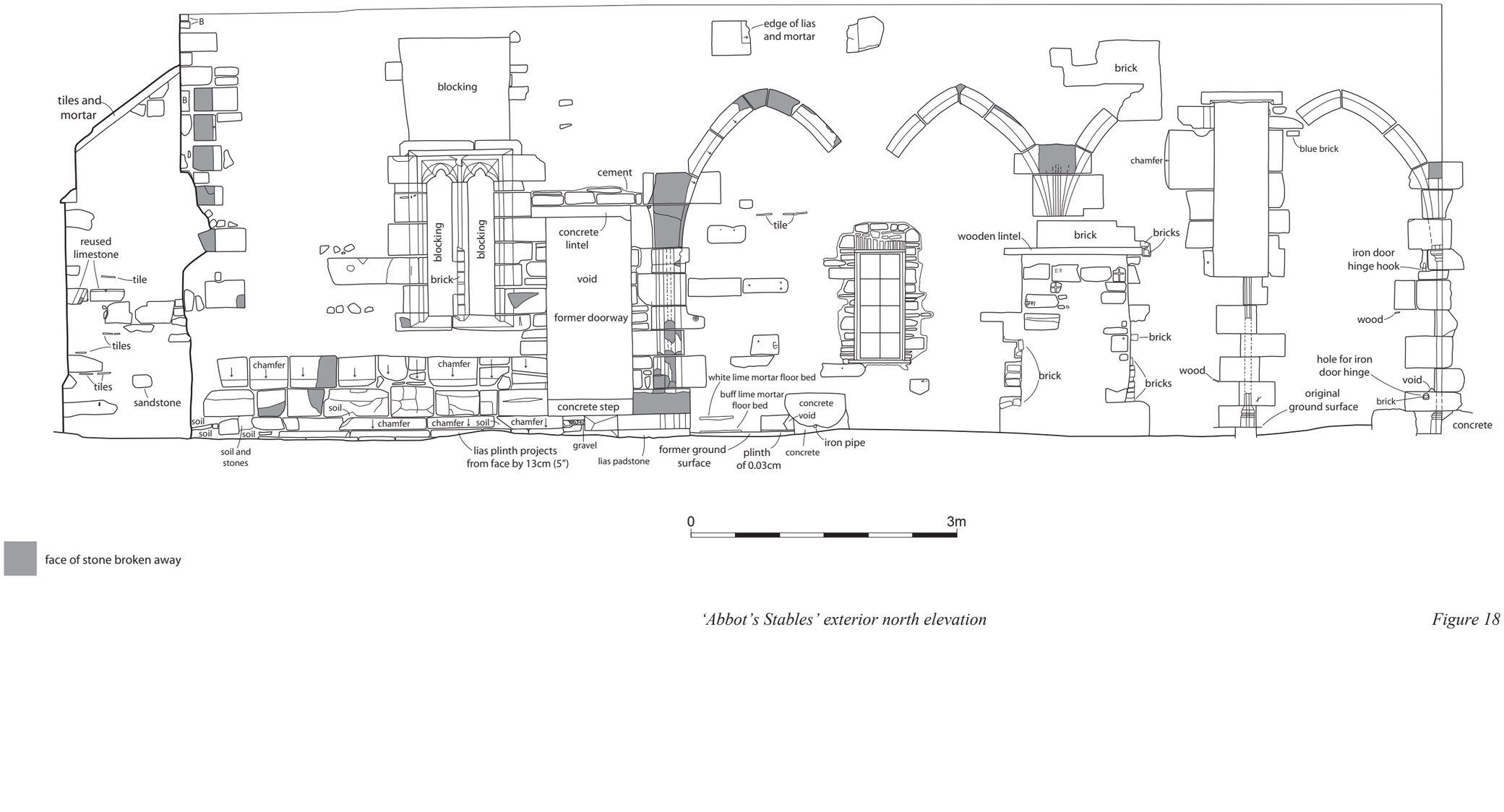


'Abbot's Stables' interior west elevation

Figure 16

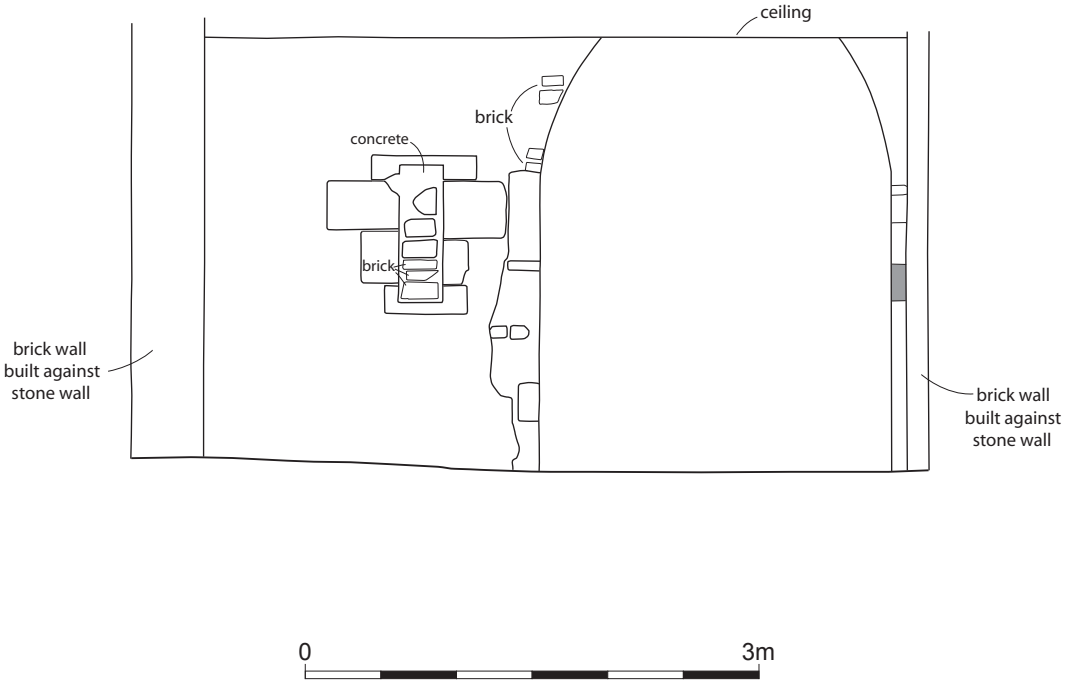


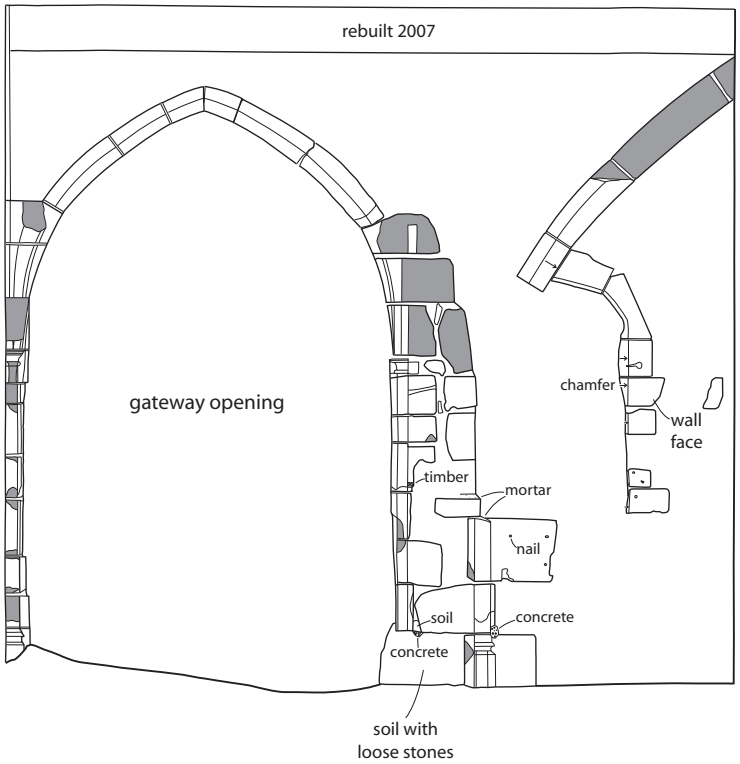
Exterior west wall of 'Abbot's Stables' *Figure 17*



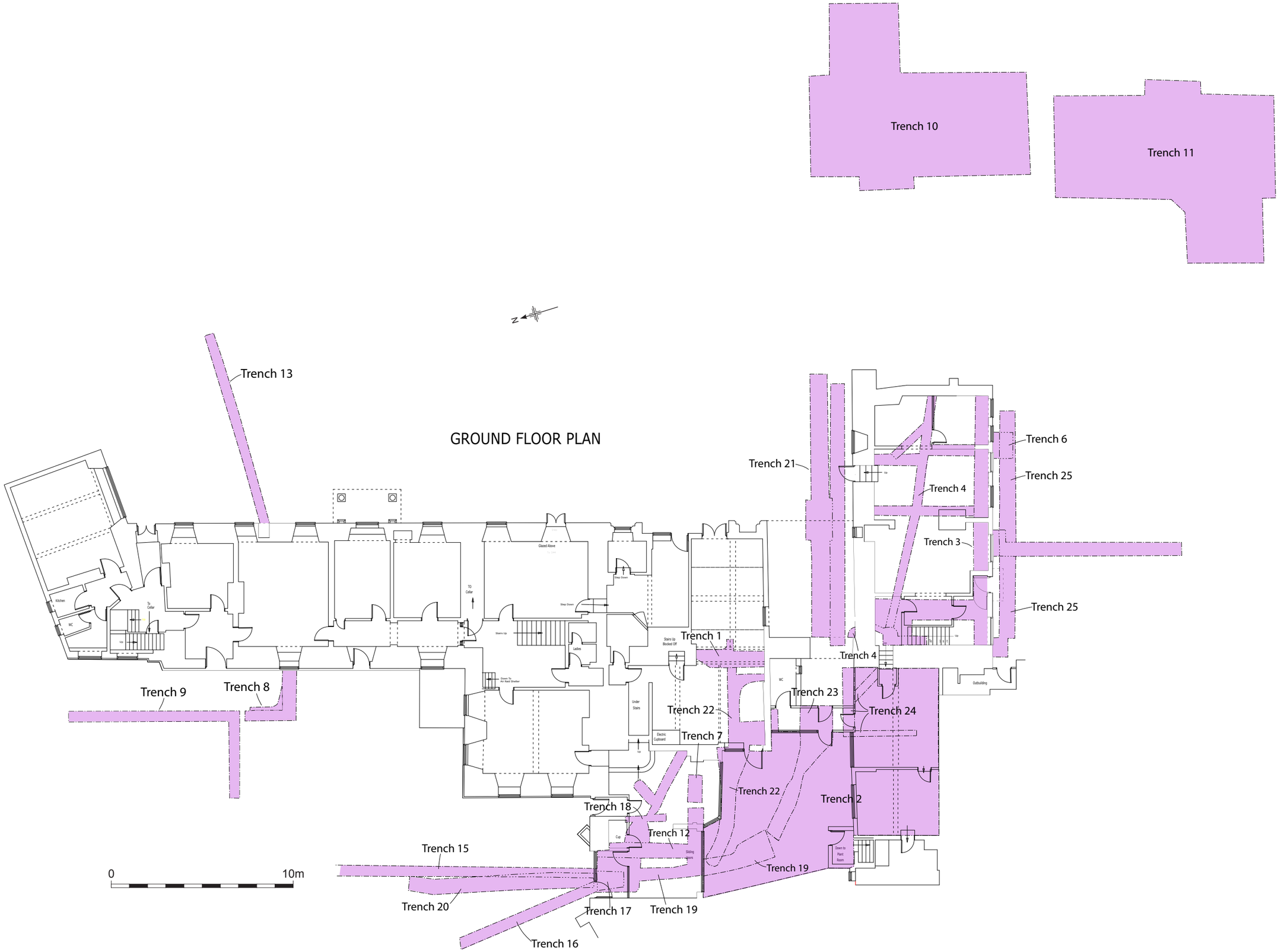
'Abbot's Stables' exterior north elevation

Figure 18





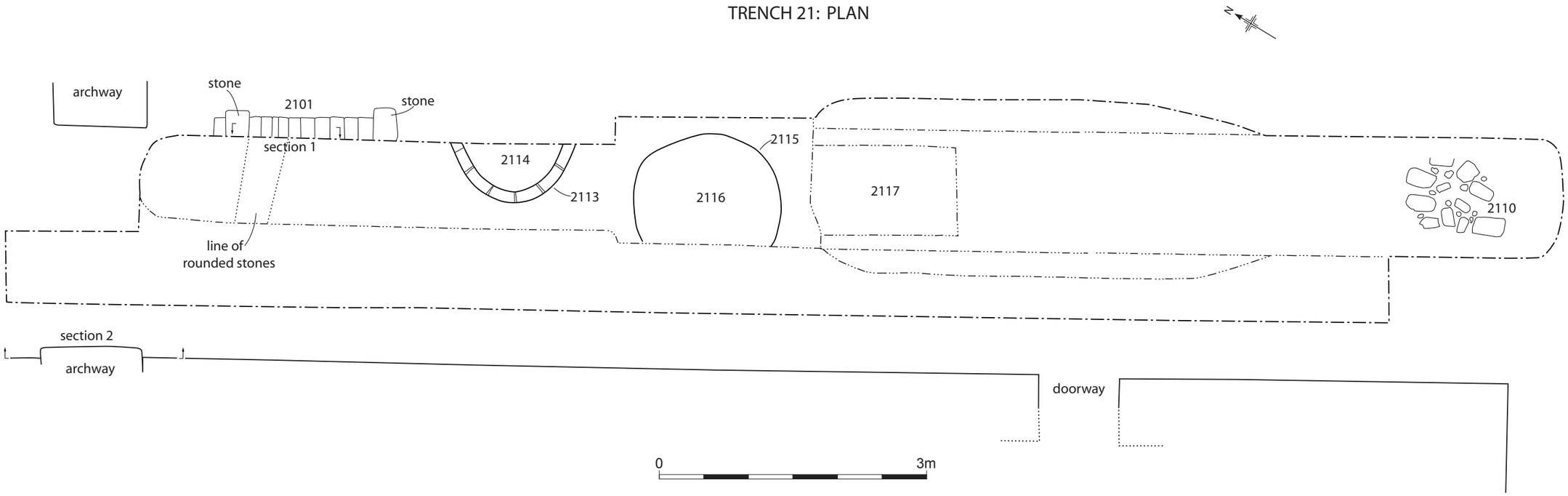
'Abbot's Stables' towards Abbey Gate House *Figure 19*



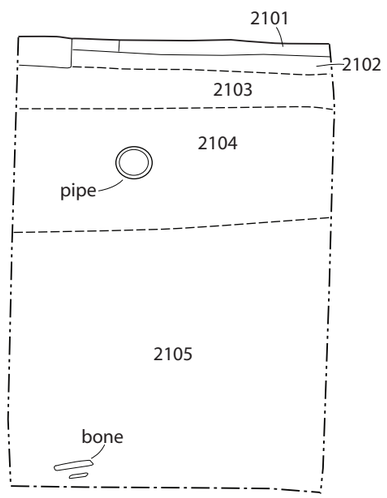
Abbey Gate ground plan with trench locations

Figure 20

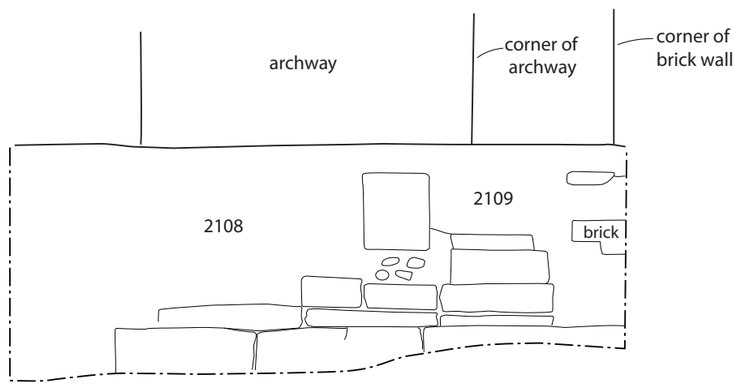
TRENCH 21: PLAN



SECTION 1

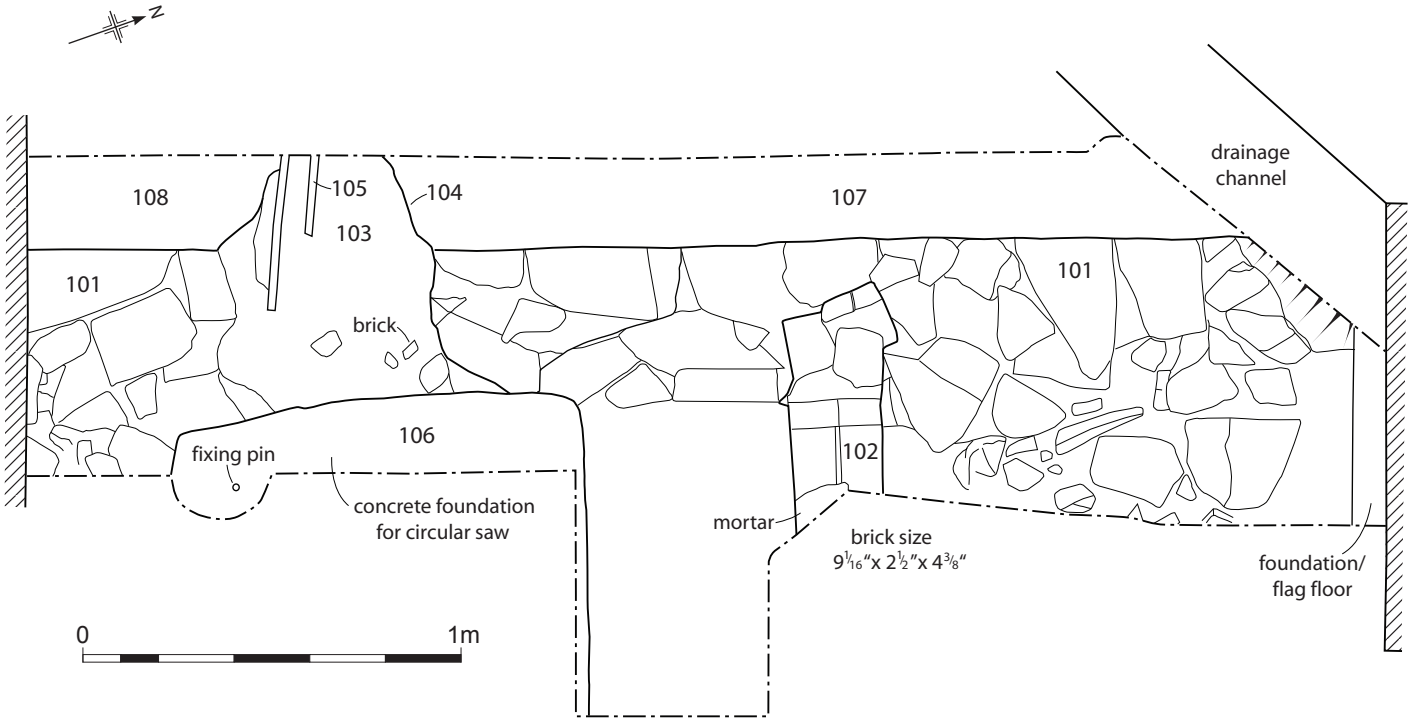


SECTION 2



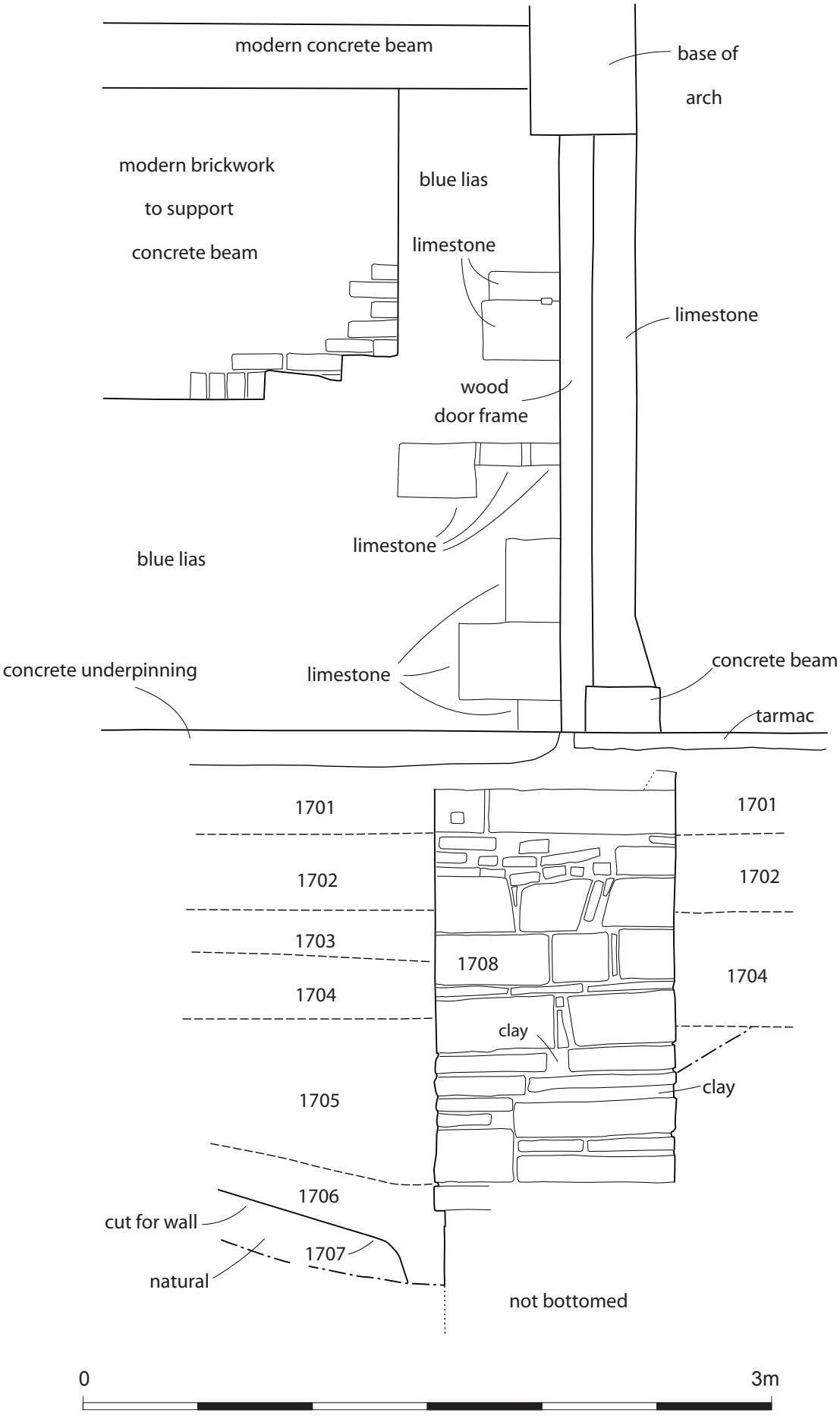
Trench 21: plan and sections

Figure 21



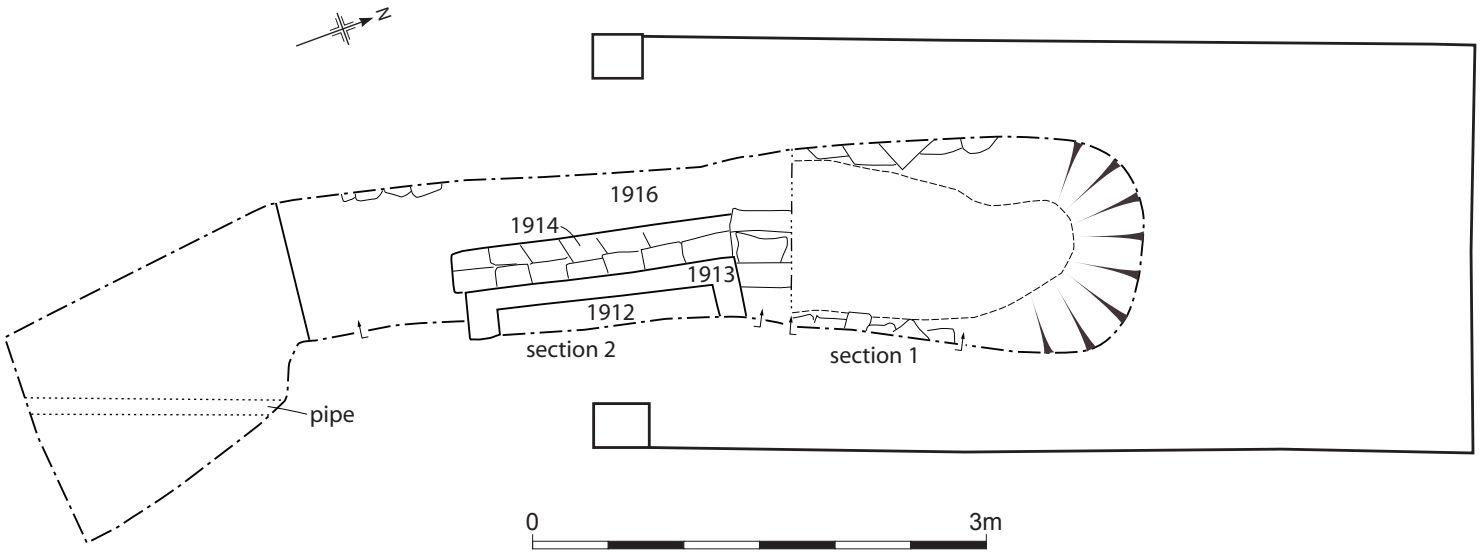
Plan of Trench 1

Figure 22

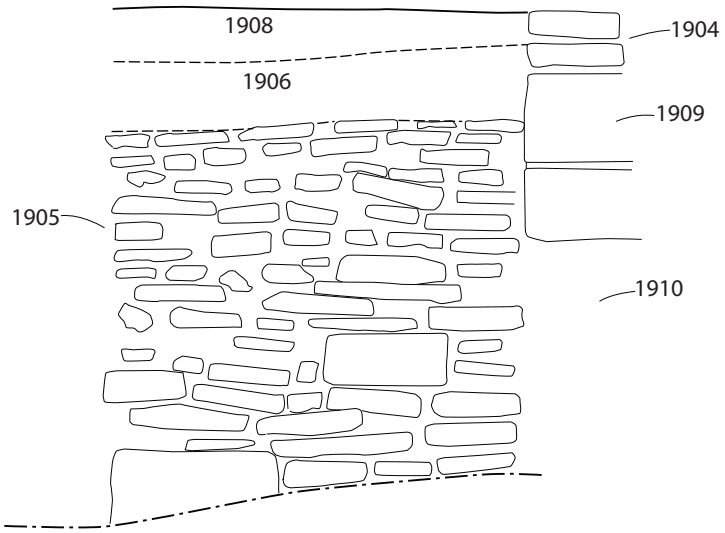


Trench 17 section showing medieval wall *Figure 23*

TRENCH 19: PLAN



SECTION 1



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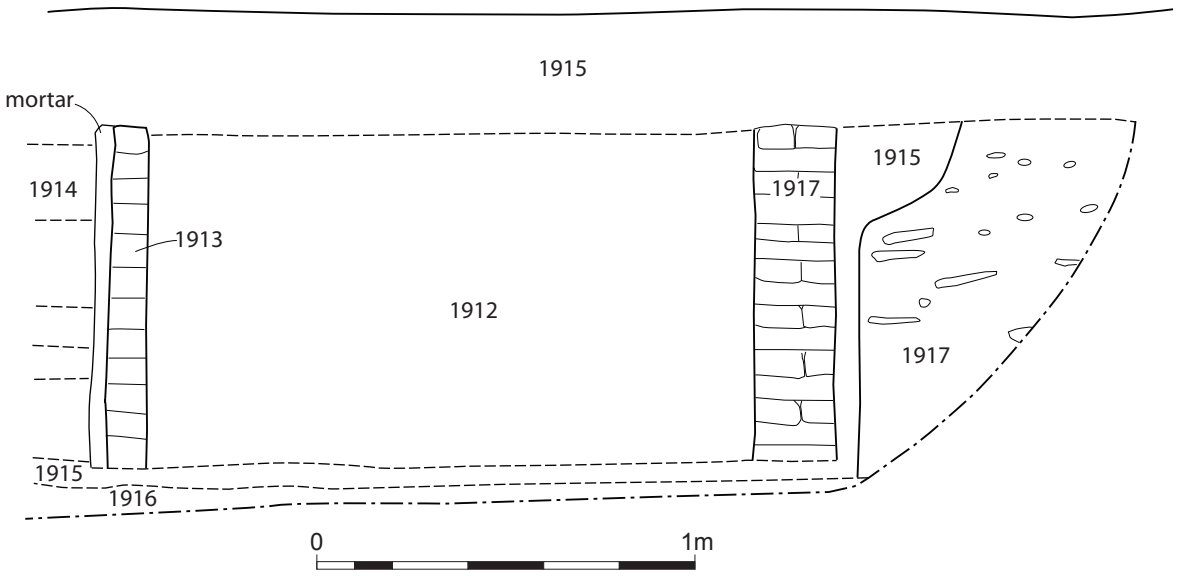
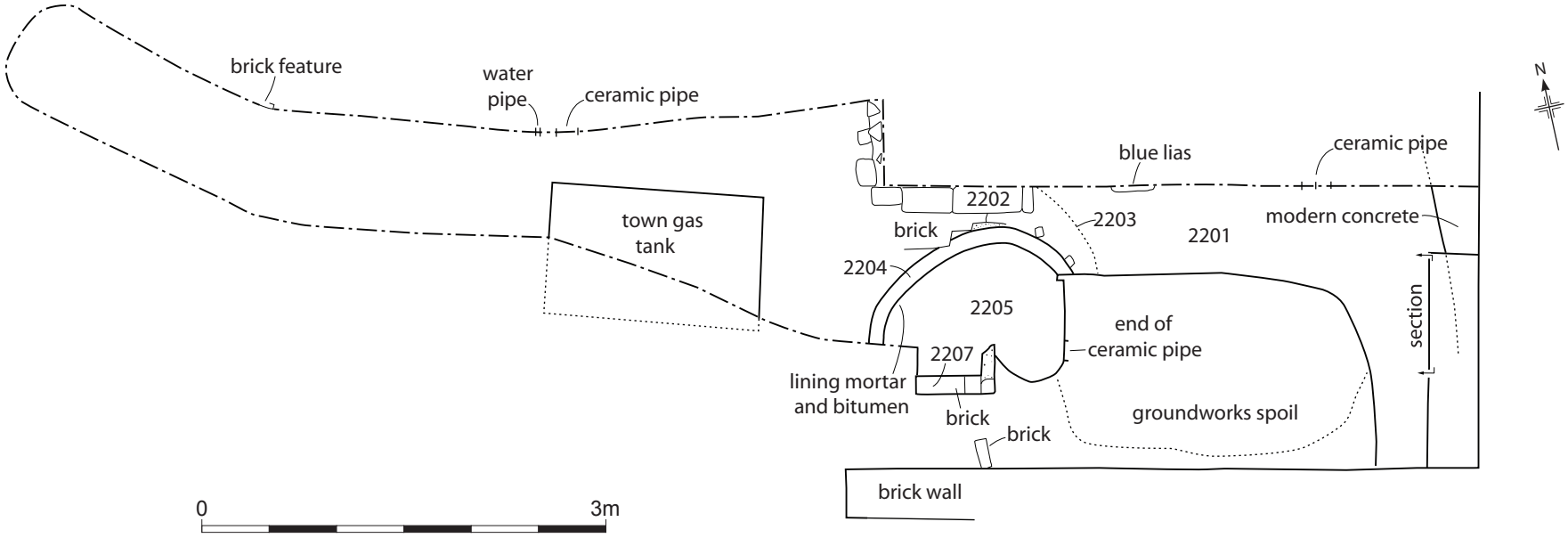
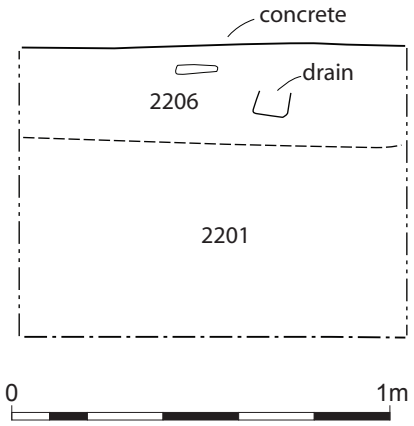


Trench 19: plan and sections *Figure 24*



SECTION



Trench 22: plan and section

Figure 25

Trench 2: sample of cobbled flooring

Figure 26

Plates

Plate 1: Front (west) elevation of Abbey Gate with listed railings

Plate 2: 'Abbots Stables' north elevation

Plate 3: Wide and narrow coursing on front elevation of Abbey Gate

Plate 4: Rear (east) elevation of Abbey Gate showing original gate arch

Plate 5: Abbey Gate rear (east) elevation showing probable blind arcading

Plate 6: Abbey Gate rear (east) elevation showing possible window opening

Plate 7: Abbey Gate south elevation showing arch springer

Plate 8: Abbey Gate front elevation showing blocked opening (change of coursing around door)

Plate 9: Abbey Gate rear (east) elevation showing blocked opening, possible window

Plate 10: Abbey Gate rear (east) elevation small door

Plate 11: 'Abbots Stables' west elevation showing wide and narrow coursing

Plate 12: 'Abbots Stables' interior showing lines of vault

Plate 13: Abbey Gate join of gate tower and south flanking range

Plate 14: South flanking range, passageway arch

Plate 15:Column and vault springer for south flanking range

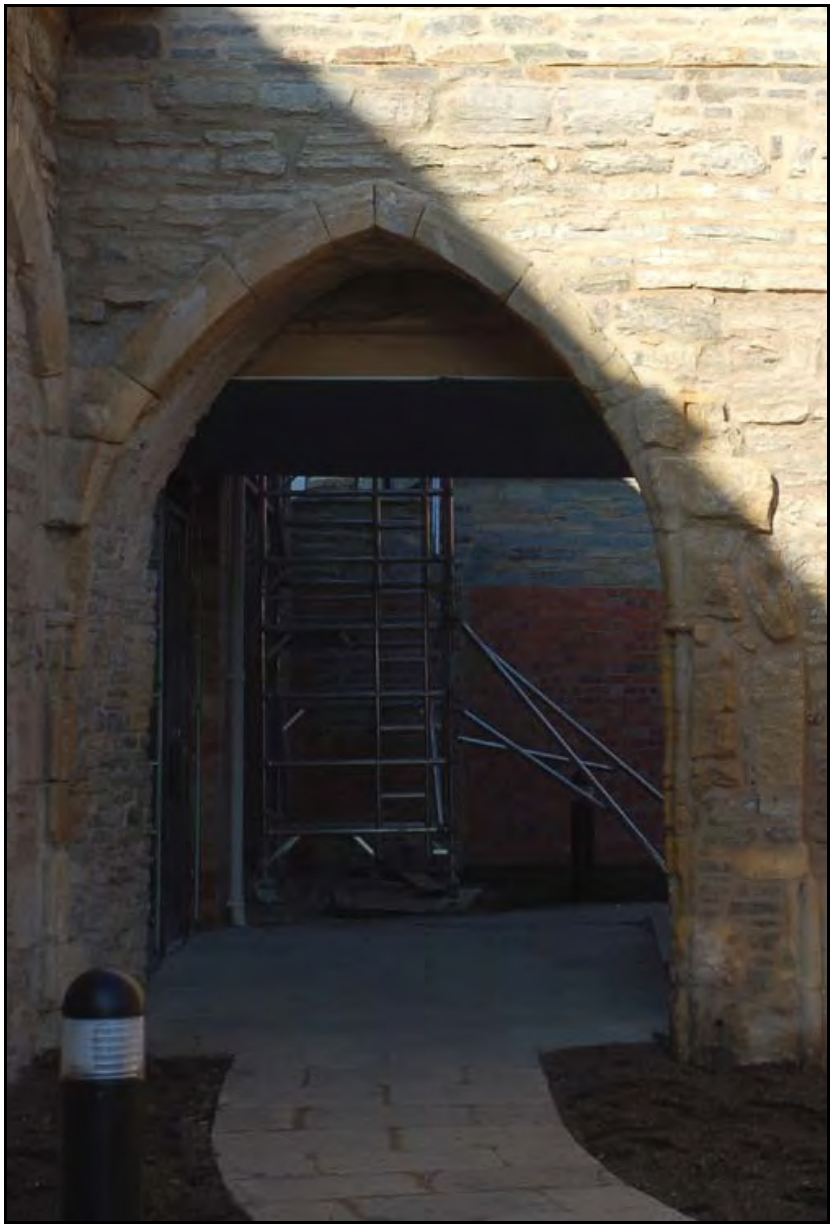


Plate 16: Western passageway arch

Plate 17: North wall of 'Abbots Stables' showing passageway columns and vault springers

Plate 18: Column of vault springer (right) and gate jamb (left)

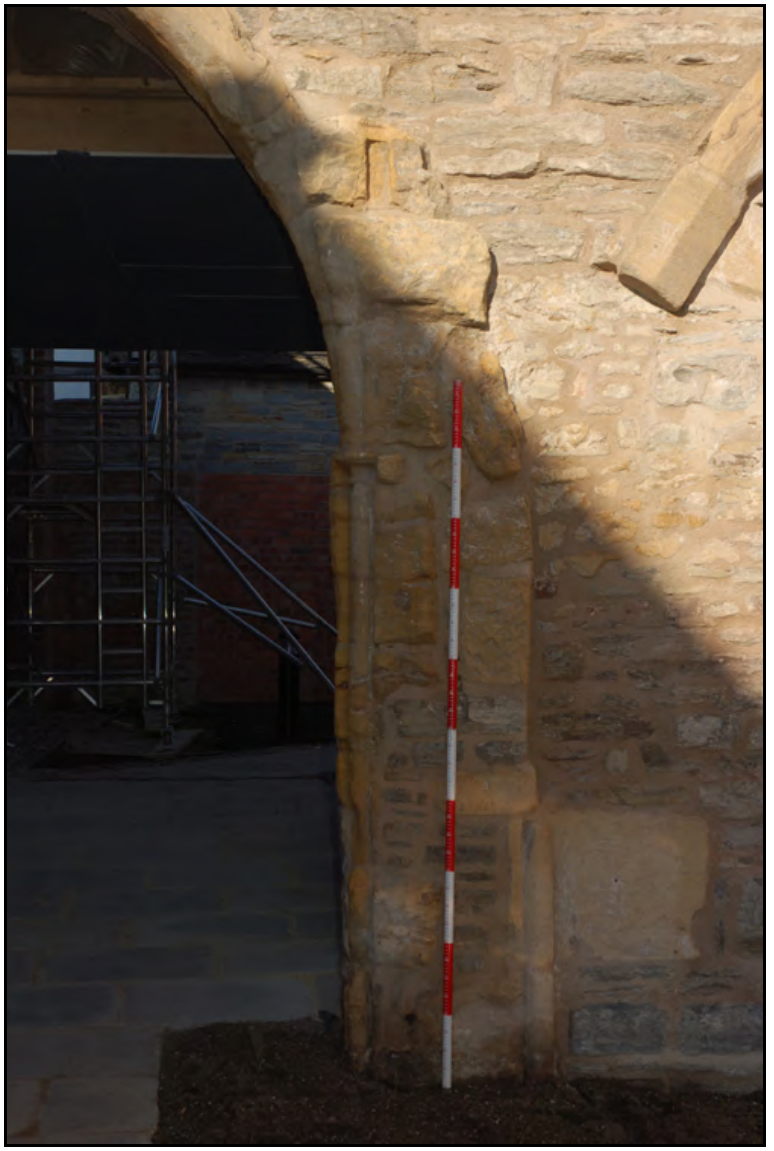


Plate 19: Cut off wall between passageway and south flanking range

Plate 20: Line of vault arch within south flanking range

Plate 21: External part of 15th century possible wicket entrance for foot passage

Plate 22: Internal part of 15th century possible wicket entrance

Plate 23: 15th century inserted window in north wall of 'Abbots Stables'

Plate 24: Column capitals from interior of 'Abbots Stables'

Plate 25: Daisy wheel ritual mark from interior 'Abbots Stables'

Daisy wheel highlighted to show all six petals and circle

Plate 26: Abbey Gate roof structure

Plate 27: Example of 17th century carpenters marks on a purlin and principal rafter

Plate 28: White washed rafters in roof space

Plate 29: Example of lime plaster partition (modern timber on left)

Plate 30: Example of one of the 18th century windows

Plate 31: Example of 18th century window shutters

Plate: 32: First floor 18th century panelled room

Plate 33: Ground floor 18th century panelled room

Plate 34: Corridor with 18th century panelling

Plate 35: Internal 18th century door to match panelling

Plate 36: Shell head cupboard with original sliding door

Plate37: Shell head china cupboard

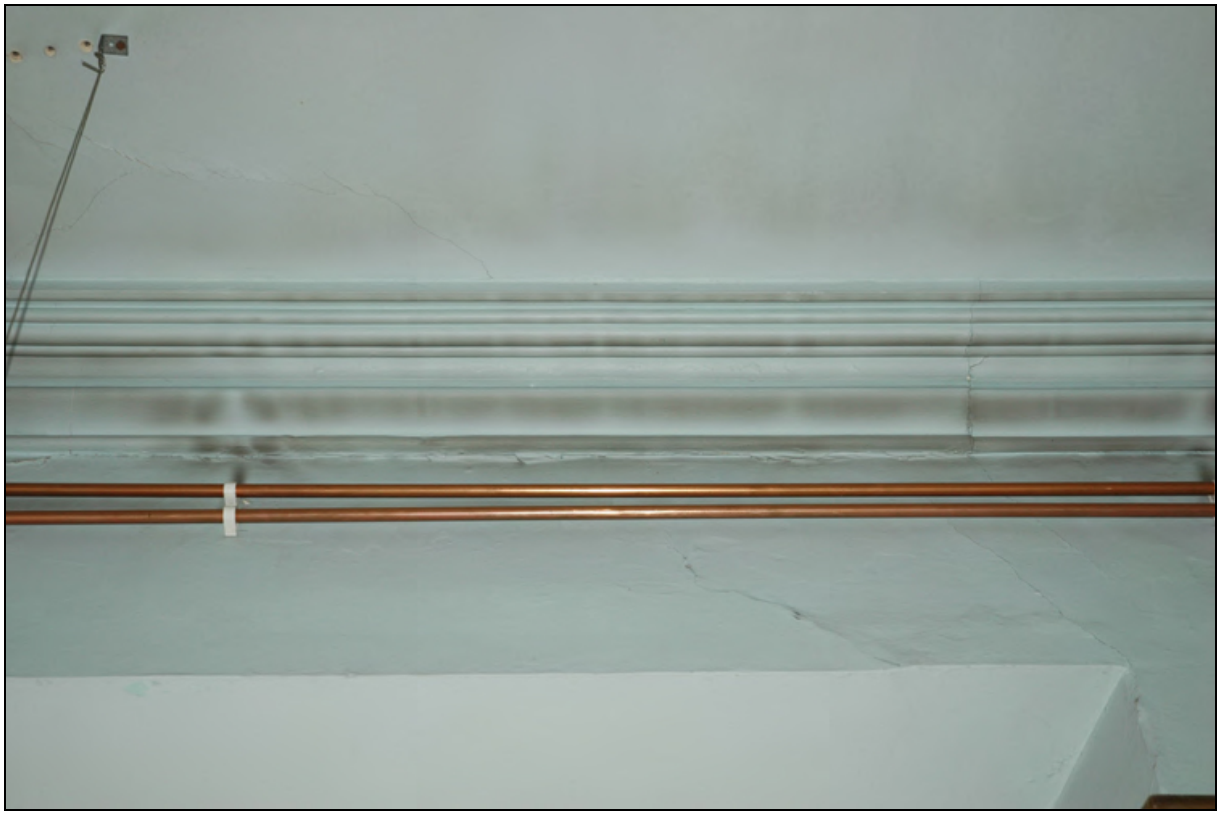


Plate 38: Example of original cornicing

Plate 39: Original 18th century ceiling, previously hidden behind suspended ceiling (now removed)

Plate 40: Early 18th century staircase showing vase-shaped balusters

Plate 41: Early 18th century staircase showing open string and decorated brackets

Plate 42: Early 18th century fireplace (now blocked). The lintel has been covered with laths and the brick sides are visible at each side of the image

Plate43: Symmetrical rear (east) elevation of building

Plate 44: Late 18th century portico

Plate 45: Mummified rat in void of blocked window

Plate46: Pitching opening above 15th century window

Plate 47: 18th century brick range on site of 14th century southern flanking range of gate house

Plate 48: Brick arch copying 14th century arch on opposite side of building

Plate 49: 18th century painted plaster from the interior wall of the 'Abbots Stables' and plaster in place on the wall

Plate 50: Inserted alcove in 'Abbots Stables'

Plate 51:One of the front doors on the west elevation

Plate 52: Fanlight above of one of the front doors

Plate 53: 19th century Regency staircase (newel post from later stairs)

Plate 54: 19th century French-windows in east elevation of Abbey Gate

Plate 55: Unusual 19th century painted wallpaper with 'willow pattern' design

Plate 56: 19th century printed blue flower wallpaper

Plate 57: Front (south) elevation of 'Abbots Stables' cottages

Plate 58: 20th century mock-Jacobean staircase within converted coach house

Plate 59: Wallpaper in converted coach house

Plate 60: Medieval stone corbel decorated with the head of the Virgin Mary

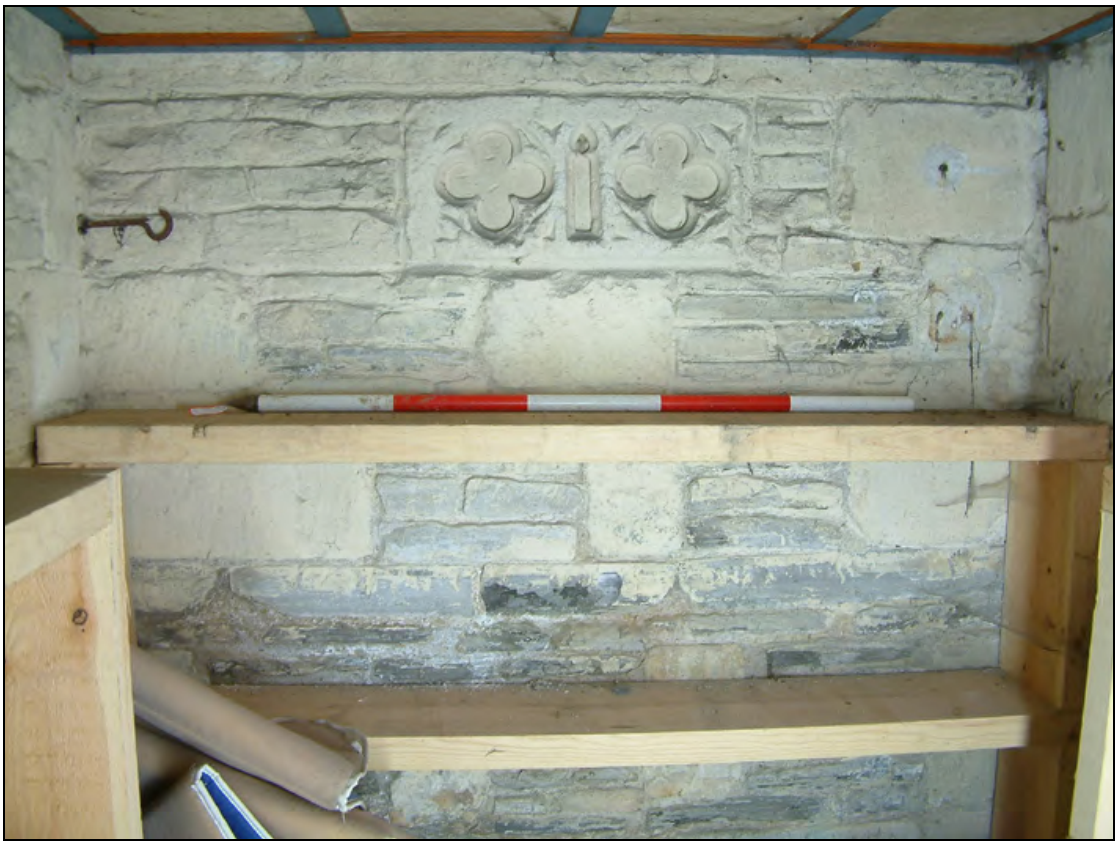


Plate 61: Quatrefoil in air raid shelter

Plate 62: Possible fragments of stained glass in air raid shelter

Plate 63: 20th century alterations to interior of the cottages. Ground floor above, first floor below

Plate 64: 18th century lias and limestone floors, covered and varnished in the 20th century

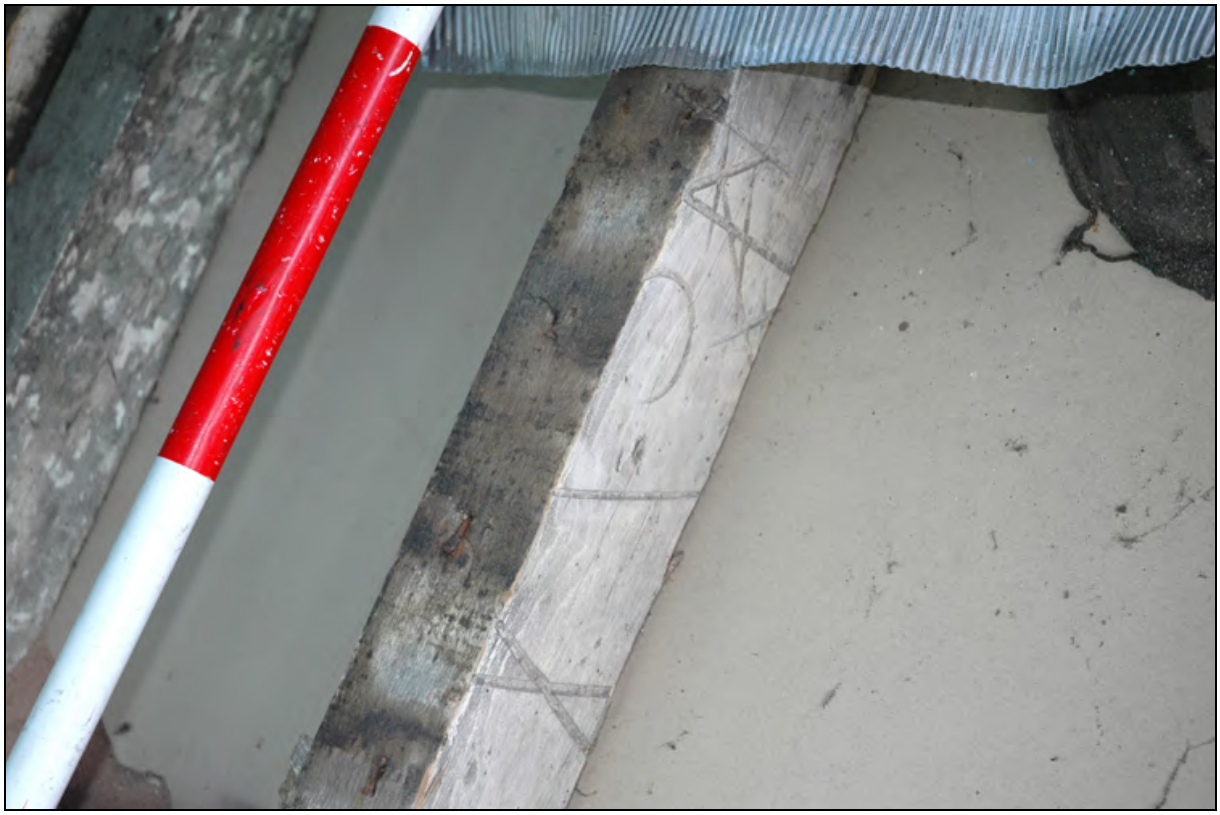


Plate 65: Unusual marks on 17th century rafter

Plate 66: English utility bottle of 1690, possible witch bottle from trench 19

Plate 67: Possible Roman pit (2115) at the base of trench 21

Plate 68: Medieval stone wall (101) in trench 1

Plate 69: Medieval stone arch above trench 1

Plate 70: Medieval stone wall (301) in trench 3

Plate 71: Medieval stonewall (501) in trench 5 (top), Medieval stonewall (601) in trench 6

Plate 72: Foundation of 'Abbots Stables' east wall (1401) in trench 14

Plate 73: Medieval column base in trench 4

Plate 74: Medieval stone wall (1204) in trench 12

Plate 75: Extension of 14th century boundary wall (1208) in trench 12

Plate 76: Section through medieval wall in trench 17

Plate 77: Trench 19 medieval wall

Plate 78: Opposite side of medieval wall in trench 19

Plate 79:Curved medieval wall in trench 22 (pale area)

Plate 80: Medieval lias wall in trench 24

Plate 81: Cobbled yard in trench 2

Plate 82: Possible cellar in trench 19

Plate 83: Trench 22 18th century brick well

Plate 84: Well in trench 25

Plate 85: Chinese hand painted bowl of 1770-1780 (1203)

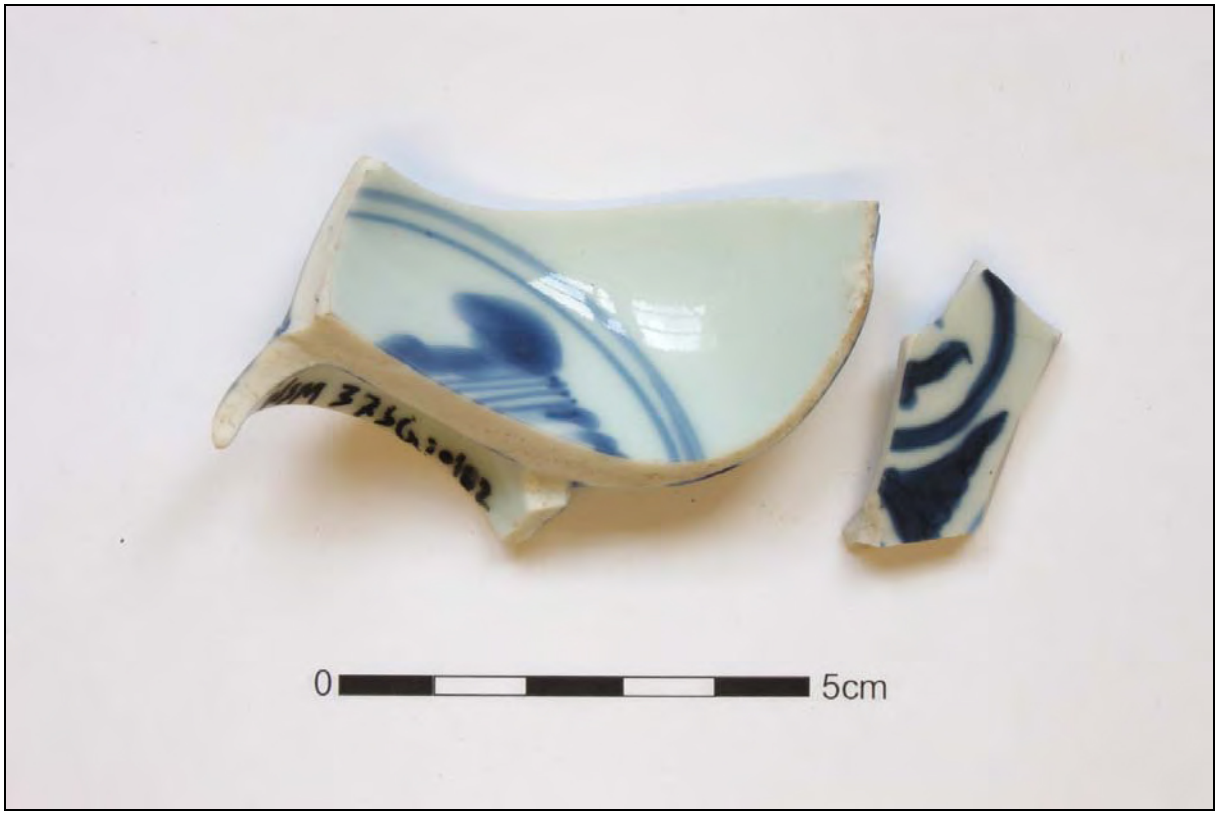


Plate 86: Chinese hand painted deep-footed tea bowl of 18th - 19th century (1200)

Plate 87: Chinese gilded saucer of 1770-1780 (2401)

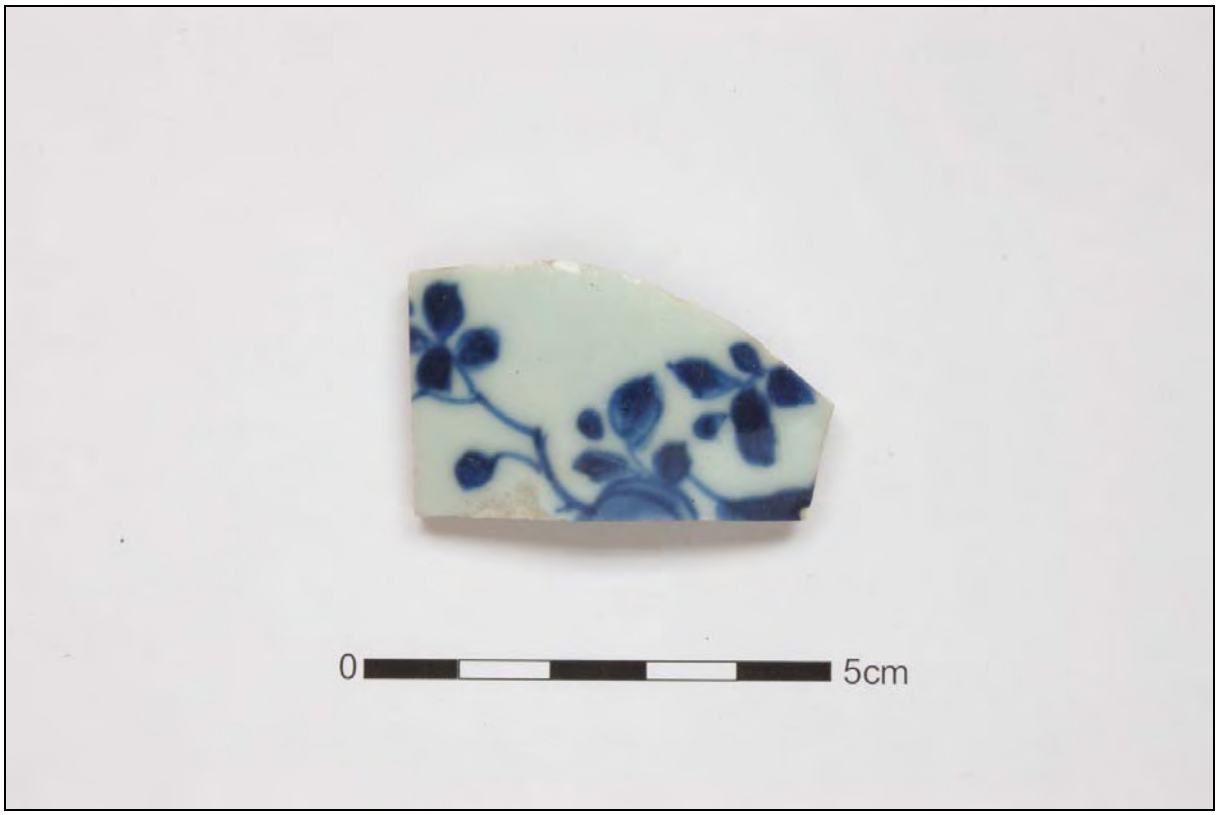


Plate 88: Chinese porcelain dated to c1760 (1102)

Plate 89: Japanese Imari from large jar or umbrella stand of c1885 to 1900 (1203)

Plate 90: Bone toothbrush dated to 1780s or 1790s

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Site area: Excavated across area of room G14, beneath medieval stone arch

Maximum dimensions: Length: 3.65m Width: 0.84m

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
1	101	Large and small pieces of lias bonded with pale lime mortar. Smaller pieces between parallel rows of large pieces. Running north – south along the trench.	14th C stonewall with large lias blocks as facing stones and rubble packing. Foundation of wall, remains of which include arch above.	At surface
	102	Bricks at right angles and attached/on top of (101). Bonded with white mortar.	Later brick wall, probably 18th C.	At surface
	103	Dark charcoal material containing bits of mortar and small amounts of ceramic and bone.	Fill of cut (104) for drain (105).	At surface
	104	Irregular shaped feature roughly aligned east – west across width of trench.	Cut for drain filled with (103) and drain (105).	At surface
	105	Two parallel tiles on end with small gap between aligned east – west.	Drain.	At surface
	106	Large lump of concrete with metal pin inset.	Foundation for circular saw. 20th C	At surface
	107	Dark brown loose soil with charcoal, lime bits of stone, brick and bone.	Levelling layer following demolition of medieval wall.	At surface
	108	Grey brown loose soil.	Levelling layer following demolition of medieval wall.	At surface

Trench 2

Site area: Area of courtyard, room G16a, G19 and G20

Maximum dimensions: Length: 13m Width: 12

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
2	201	Concrete capped breezeblock.	Service junction box.	
	202	Stone structure aligned north – south from north west corner of trench. Same as (203)	Part of cobbled yard surface (203).	0.25m bgs
	203	Small lias stones laid on edge.	Cobbled yard surface, former courtyard for 18th /19th century. Covers all of G16a, G19 and G20.	0.15m bgs
	204	Stones with cobbles. Possibly same as (202). Same alignment as (202)	Lower courses of stonewall.	
	205	Mortar overlying (203) in places.	Mortar layer sealing part of cobble surface. Possible make-up layer for later surface.	

Trench 3

Site area: Interior, south elevation of cottages

Maximum dimensions: Length: 0.8m Width: 0.8mm

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
3	301	Large lias stones set together in roughly east – west alignment.	Remains of 14th C wall reused as foundation for 19th C cottages.	

Trench 4

Site area: Passageway (G14a-b)

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
4	401	Carved limestone set on large lias block.	Lime stone pier base and roll moulded blind column of Cotswolds limestone. Sitting on plinth of blue lias. 14th C date part of doorway to passage and base of vault springer column. North wall of 19th C cottages.	

Trench 5

Site area: South wall of cottages

Maximum dimensions: Length: 1.46m Width: 0.7m

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
5	501	Large lias stones set together in roughly east – west alignment.	Remains of 14th C wall reused as foundation for 19th C cottages.	
	502	Iron pipe running in front (west) of (501)	Service pipe.	

Trench 6

Site area: South wall of cottages

Maximum dimensions: Length:1.42m Width: 1.1m

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
6	601	Large lias stones set together in roughly east – west alignment.	Remains of 14th C wall reused as foundation for 19th C cottages.	
	602	Iron pipe running east – west	Service pipe cutting through brick wall of cottages. Fill of (604).	
	603	Limestone, lias, brick, mortar and soil.	Rebuilding of cottage foundation wall. Fill of drain trench (604)	
	604	Irregular cut running roughly east – west.	Drain trench filled with (602) and (603).	
	605	Ceramic pipe.	Service pipe above (602). Cutting (604).	

Trench 7

Site area: Room G16

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
7	701	Mixed deposit	Made ground	

Trench 8

Site area: Outside door to G5 in enclosed garden.

Maximum dimensions: Length: 2.85m Width: 0.76m Depth: 0.64m

Orientation: L shaped, roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
8	800	Large stone slabs, rectangular in shape of various sizes.	Paving layer. Current garden paths and paving.	0-0.06m
	801	Orangey mid-brown sandy-silt with mortar or deteriorated sandstone throughout. Inclusions pebbles and stones, broken limestone.	Possible earlier paving layer	0.06-0.28m
	802	Orangey mid-brown sandy-silt with deteriorated sandstone throughout. Inclusions pebbles and stones, broken limestone. Same as (801)	Possible earlier paving layer	0.06-0.28m
	803	Creamy sandy mortar layer with sandy granular inclusions of black and orange.	Degraded stone paving.	0.28-0.34m
	804	Flat angular and sub-angular stones of irregular shape and size.	Paving layer.	0.28-0.40m
	805	Medium brown sandy-silt, inclusions of individual pieces of orangey-cream mortar and large rounded stones.	Subsoil.	0.40-0.64m
	806	Dark brown humic soil with large lumps of charcoal.	Garden topsoil.	0-0.64m
	807	Brick structure, 5 courses with 4.5cm pipe. Bricks 22x12x9cm. Covered with black substance and mortared.	Live electric pipe and housing.	0.36-0.64m

Trench 9

Site area: Outside door to G1.

Maximum dimensions: Length: *c*9m Width: 0.76m

Orientation: L shaped, roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
9	901	Mixed deposit	Made ground	0-0.06m

Trench 10

Site area: Rear of Abbot's Stables (G21-24)

Maximum dimensions: Length: *c*12m Width: *c*10m Depth: 0.9m

Orientation: Roughly north - west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
10	1001	Creamy-white granular layer with orange, black and cream sandy inclusions.	Degraded/ broken concrete layer.	0-0.18m
	1002	Clean orange sandy layer	Bedding for concrete (1001)	0.18-0.27m
	1003	Black lumpy bitumen	Tarmac surface	0.27-0.34m
	1004	Blackish brown silty sand with broken orange-red brick inclusions, sub-angular stones.	Made ground disturbed by construction and demolition of timber yard	0-0.62m
	1005	Creamy-white layer. Same as (1001).	Degraded/broken concrete.	0.62-0.66m
	1006	Blackish-dark brown, darker than rest of site. (Same as (1004).	Made ground disturbed by construction and demolition of timber yard	0.66-0.81m

Trench 11

Site area: Rear of Abbot's Stables (G21-24)

Maximum dimensions: Length: *c*12m Width: *c*10m Depth: 0.8m

Orientation: Roughly north - southt

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
11	1101	Concrete, tarmac, orange sand and grey slabs.	Various construction layers and surfaces.	Varies
	1102	Mid-brown sandy silt with broken brick, limestone frags. And lias.	Made up ground disturbed during construction and demolition of timber yard.	Varies
	1103	Reddish brown silty and with rounded pebbles.	Natural	Unknown

Trench 12

Site area: Room G17

Maximum dimensions: Length: 6.15m Width: 2.31m Depth: 0.9m

Orientation: Roughly north - west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
12	1201	Cream sandy context with pea gravel inclusions	Concrete surface	0-0.18m
	1202	Greyish brown compact sandy silt with stones, broken brick, tile, bone and clay pipe and lias slabs.	Possible rubbish pit	0.48m
	1203	Loose dark greyish brown sandy silt with broken brick, ceramic and slate tiles. Large amount broken pottery, porcelain.	Building demolition layer.	
	1204	Lias structure running roughly east – west with brick attached to the south. Brick measures 23x7x13cm.	Lias wall, possibly medieval with late 18th/early 19th C brick attached	0.27-0.48m
	1205	Reddish-orange brick structure 2 bricks width (26cm) running north – south with greyish green clay on east face. Green render with red stripe found in spoil from here.	Brick wall from earlier phase of building. Late 18th/early 19th C.	0-0.48m
	1206	Same as (1203).	Building demolition area	
	1207	Very loose, dark brown silty loam with stones and brick.	Disturbed garden soil.	
	1208	Structure running east from existing wall of building. Consists of pieces of lias and limestone	Lias and limestone wall, possibly continuation of south wall of house. 14th C	0-0.48m

Trench 13

Site area: Rear of house (G3)

Maximum dimensions: Length: 11.5m Width: 0.55m Depth: 0.37m

Orientation: Roughly east - west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
13	1301	Dark brown-black loam	Garden soil	0-0.3m
	1302	Brown silty loam.	Fill of drain trench (drain removed)	0.12-0.3m
	1303	Concrete	Car park surface	0-0.07m
	1304	Yellow gravel	Make up for surface	0.07-0.35m
	1305	Black charcoal deposit. Same as (1306)	Unknown only visible at base	0.35-0.4m
	1306	Same as (1305)	Only visible at base of trench	0.35-0.4m

Trench 14

Site area: Abbot's Stables Rooms G21-24

Maximum dimensions: Length: 14.5m Width: 6.3m Depth: 0.4m

Orientation: North - south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
14	1400	Layer of rubble overlying everything	Demolition and construction work rubble from current onsite work	0-0.10m
	1401	Yellowish brown compact sandy silt with pea gravel and rounded pebbles with small pieces of charcoal and orange brown clay. Bounded by stone structure to south.	Foundation trench for medieval wall of Abbot's Stables	0.1-0.4m
	1402	Blackish brown sandy silt including charcoal, compact pea gravel, stones and large parts of lias stones.	Possibly disturbed original floor layer or demolition rubble.	0.1-0.4m
	1403	Loose mid brown sandy silt with pea gravel, pebbles, lias stones and broken handmade brick	20th C demolition or construction rubble.	
	1404	Reddish orange sand and broken red brick with stone and pebbles.	18th C demolition or construction rubble.	
	1405	Loose mid brown sandy silt with pea gravel, pebbles, and broken handmade brick with large flat lias stones adjacent to brick and rubble below ceramic pipes and concrete.	Possible disturbed floor with modern services cutting.	
	1406	Abundant dump of limestone and lias flooring	Redeposited/disturbed floor	
	1407	Abundant dump of limestone and lias flooring	Redeposited/disturbed floor	
	1408	Abundant dump of limestone and lias with loose brown sandy silt and crushed brick/tile	Redeposited/disturbed floor	
	1409	Not seen		
	1410	Not seen		
	1411	Loose mid brown sandy silt with pea gravel and lias stones.	Demolition/construction rubble	

Trench 15

Site area: Exterior of G17

Maximum dimensions: Length: *c*20m Width: 0.5-0.6m

Orientation: Roughly north - south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
15	1501	Layer of rounded stones	Cobble surface	0.35-0.40m

Trench 16

Site area: Exterior of G17

Maximum dimensions: Length: 6.3m Width: 0.5-0.6m Depth: 1.6m

Orientation: Roughly north - south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
16	1601	Firm dark brown sandy silt with stones	Top soil	0-0.25m
	1602	Mixed deposit with brick, stone and modern pottery	Modern makeup	0.25-1.3m
	1603	Firm mid yellow brown sandy silt, frequent stones	Possibly natural	1.3-1.6m

Trench 17

Site area: G17

Maximum dimensions: Length: 1.7m Width: 1.12m Depth: 2.4m

Orientation: Roughly north - south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
17	1701	Mid orange brown sandy silt. Firm compact mixed deposit with patches of dark ashy material	Modern make up layer	0-0.44m
17	1702	Firm mid brown orange silty sands and gravels. Slightly mixed deposit with rounded stones	Deposit abutting medieval wall (1708)	0.44-0.79m
	1703	Firm mid brown sandy silt frequent stones and lias	Deposit abutting medieval wall	0.79-0.98m
	1704	Firm mid brown clay silt with rounded stones and lias	Deposit abutting medieval wall	0.98-1.25m
	1705	Firm mid brown sandy silt with stones and lias	Deposit abutting medieval wall	1.25-1.97m
	1706	Loose mid orange brown silty sand and gravels	Re-deposited natural, fill of cut (1707) for medieval wall (1708)	1.97-2.4m not bottomed
	1707	Shallow angle cut dropping to steep angle in north	Construction cut for medieval wall (1708)	2.10-2.4m not bottomed
	1708	Very substantial structure. Blue lias blocks mainly oblong in shape of varying size and thickness. No rubble core. Mostly bedded with brown yellow clay, except at the top.	Medieval (14th C) wall contemporary with Abbey Gate.	0.25-2.4m not bottomed
	1709	Mid orange silty and gravels	Natural	2.00m not bottomed

Trench 18

Site area: G16

Maximum dimensions: Length: 5.5m Width: 0.6m Depth: 0.35m

Orientation: Roughly east-west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
18	1801	Coursed blue lias stones, roughly hewn with creamy mortar with black and white inclusions. 0.48m wide with brick wall on top.	Lias foundation for modern brick wall.	0.10-0.4m
	1802	Mixed deposit of rubble, coal and brick in a brown sandy matrix. Surrounds (1801).	General demolition/construction rubble	0-0.35m
	1803	Hard cement/mortar with inclusions of broken orange brick and rounded stones. Includes a metal pipe running along same alignment as (1801) at 0.72m depth.	Foundations for modern brick wall (1801).	0.4-0.82
	1804	Wall foundations within disturbed ground below former floor. Contains broken brick, tile, stones, tile, clay, mortar and charcoal.	Wall foundation	

Trench 19 (continuation of trench 17)

Site area: G17

Maximum dimensions: Length: 5.5m Width: 0.6m Depth: 0.35m

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
19	1901	Concrete and rubble	General rubble and concrete surface	
	1902	Grey clay with pebbles, lenses out to south	Possible surface	
	1903	Grey brown sandy loam with occasional pebbles and occasional lenses of orange sand	Buried soil, cultivation soil	
	1904	Irregular bricks laid on edge on top of (1905). Bonded with white mortar and measure 0.23 x 0.11-0.12 x 0.06-0.07m	Late 18th /early 19th C wall.	0.10-0.17m
	1905	Flat blue lias stones, some squared with occasional large Cotswold limestone blocks. Coursed and bonded with brown sandy clay and yellow sandy clay/ 1.2m wide	Medieval stone wall running parallel to Abbey Gate south wall	0.30-1.76m not bottomed
	1906	Loose orange silty sand with inclusions of charcoal, broken tile/brick stones and pea gravel.	Make up layer	0.14-0.16m
	1907	Linear cut aligned roughly east – west as wall (1905). 0.2m wide at top, narrower lower down wall.	Construction cut for wall (1905)	0.30-1.76m not bottomed
	1908	Grey gravel	Infill by current construction workers	0-0.14m
	1909	Large squared blue lias stones, larger than walling of (1905). Only 2 courses deep.	Wall	0.16-0.60m
	1910	Mixed deposit containing large amount of finds including complete bottle in area of mortar backing directly onto (1905).	Possible wall foundation. Unclear context that formed clear edge against (1905). Bottle dates to late 17th/early 18th C.	0.60m
	1911	Orange sandy matrix with pebbles and bonding material.	Fill of construction cut (1907) for wall (1905)	0.30-1.76m not bottomed
	1912	Mid-brown sandy silt with inclusions of mortar, broken stones, charcoal, pea gravel and large amount of finds.	Infill of brick structure (1913)	0.31-0.75m
	1913	One and two brick width structure. Bricks measure 0.23 x 0.11 x 0.06-0.07m. Mortared with cream mortar against (1914).	Possible small demolished cellar.	0.31-1.20m
	1914	Blue lias blocks of various sizes, roughly hewn and mortared with cream mortar. Possibly the same as (1909).	Wall possibly continuation of (1909).	0.31-1.20m
	1915	Grey-green clay	Relates to construction of (1913)	1.20-1.30m
	1916	Dark brown sandy silt including rounded stones/pebbles	Natural	1.30-1.47m
	1917	Mixed mid brown sandy silt layer with mortar, charcoal, angular stones.	Subsoil	0.31-1.30m
	1918	Layer of flat blue lias and yellow limestone loosely mortared with cream mortar with back and orange inclusions.	Former courtyard surface	0.62-0.72m
	1919	Loose grey brown sandy silt with round stones/pebbles, broken brick and tile	Modern demolition layer from current development	0-0.31m

Trench 20 (extension of trench 17)

Site area: Exterior of G17

Maximum dimensions: Length: 11.9m Width: 0.85m Depth: 0.70m

Orientation: Roughly north – south

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
20	2001	Mid-brown sandy silt with broken and whole bricks, rounded cobbles and broken stones with metal pipe.	Existing service trench backfill.	0-0.70m

Trench 21

Site area: G14a-b

Maximum dimensions: Length: 9.20m Width: 1.0m Depth: 1.50m

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
21	2101	Black brick layer, 1 brick deep (0.05m). Modern bricks with frogs. Also 2 limestone blocks delineating brick edges.	Brick paving for possible path	0-0.15m
	2102	Compact grey sand	Bedding for bricks (2101)	0.05-0.11m
	2103	Mixed loose dark brown sandy silt and black reddish sand with pebbles and gravel		0.11-0.23m
	2104	Loose dark brown sandy silt with cream mortar, stones and a ceramic drainpipe.	Fill of pipe trench (cut not visible)	0.23-0.58m
	2105	Loose dark brown silt with rounded pebbles and small bones and charcoal at base of trench. Cut by (2106)	Subsoil	0.58-1.50m
	2106	Dark brown sandy silt with mortar, broken brick, reddish sand and ceramic drainpipe.	Disturbed ground	0-0.45m
	2107	Dark brown sandy silt with rounded pebbles	Possible cultivation soil	0.45-0.97m
	2108	Mid brown loose sandy silt with pebbles and mortar, rubble and broken bottles.	Mixed deposit, make-up layer for surface.	0-0.46m
	2109	Mid brown loose sandy silt with mortar and gravel.	Mixed deposit, make-up layer for surface.	0-0.46m
	2110	Flattish lias stones of variable sizes and shapes in a 'slump' at base of trench.	Possible paving or earlier surface.	1.42-1.50m
	2111	Mid brown loose sandy silt with pebbles and mortar, rubble and broken bottles. Same as (2108)	Mixed deposit, make-up layer for surface.	0-0.42m
	2112	Loose dark brown sandy silt including broken tile, rounded pebbles and gravel. Including line of large flat blue lias stones.	Modern make up	0-0.46m
	2113	Circular brick structure cutting (2105) and (2111). Bricks measure 0.24 x 0.08 x 0.12m. Broken into shape to make the circle.	Well, cut not visible. Bricks date to mid 19thC.	1.15-1.50m not bottomed
	2114	Loose deposit of broken brick, stones, mortar and gravel	Backfill of well	1.15-1.50m not bottomed
	2115	Circular cut almost completely revealed at base of trench. Cutting (2111), filled with (2110)	Pit (not excavated)	1.50m not bottomed
	2116	Fill of cut (2109). Red sandy silt including round stones.	Backfill of pit	1.50m not bottomed
	2117	Dark sandy silty at base of trench	Not excavated	1.50m not bottomed

Trench 22

Site area: G15-G16a

Maximum dimensions: Length: 10.65m Width: 1.6m Depth: 0.8m

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
22	2201	Dark brown sandy silt with mortar, charcoal, limestone and gravel	Sub soil	0.22-0.80m not bottomed
	2202	Limestone and mortar structure, partially curved.	Wall, possibly medieval but not sure due to nature of trench excavation. Could be well structure or spiral staircase structure	0.40-0.80m not bottomed
	2203	Cut for (2202). Edge of wall visible by mortar line but no separate cut visible. (2201) therefore possibly built up against (2202) and not cut by it.	Cut for wall, not construction cut.	0.40-0.80m not bottomed
	2204	Circular brick structure. Lined with mortar. Dome capped at later date.	Large well.	0.40-0.80m not bottomed
	2205	Fill of (2204). Very loose mix of broken and complete bricks n dark brown sandy and mortary matrix. Lead pipe still in place.	Backfill before capping	0.40-0.80m not bottomed
	2206	Dark brown sandy silt with mortar and charcoal	Topsoil, cultivation soil	0-0.22m
	2207	Square brick structure sitting above well. Due to nature of excavation is not possible to tell if sitting on top of capping to well or if lead to hole through capping.	Possible pump enclosure for well.	0-0.22m
	2208	Domes brick structure on top of (2204) well.	Well capping	0.22

Trench 23

Site area: G14c-d

Maximum dimensions: Length: 7.5m Width: 1.8m Depth: 1.5m

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
23	2301	Mixed mid brown loose sandy silt with mortar, broken brick, charcoal, pebbles and cobbles. Above (2303)	Cultivation soil.	0-0.82m
	2302	Dark brown loose sandy silt with pebbles.	Possible subsoil.	1.04-1.45m
	2303	Row of abraded limestone. More may have been removed by machine.	Possible surface.	0.82-1.04m
	2304	Brick structure. Mostly removed during machining.	Former manhole	0.04-0.90m

Trench 24

Site area: G14c-d/G20

Maximum dimensions: Length: 6.5mm Width: 0.50m

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
24	2401	Dark brown sandy silt containing some pottery and tile. On top of lias walls (2403) and (2404).	Topsoil.	
	2402	Dark black brown sandy silt immediately below later lias wall (2403). Contains large amount of pottery and tile.	Garden/cultivation soil.	
	2403	Unworked lias stones butting against wall (2404). Bonded with hard white mortar.	Late 18th C lias stone wall. Possible strengthening of wall (2404).	
	2404	Lias stone worked into blocks and forming a large wide structure. Bonded with crumbling buff coloured lime mortar. Had brick on top until machined away.	Possible medieval wall reused as foundation for 19th/20th C wall.	
	2405	Modern brick structure.	New manhole constructed during current development.	
	2406	Lias built structure at 90º to lias walls (2403), (2404) and brick wall (2405). Still with one course of brick mortared to the top.	Possible medieval wall reused as foundation for former 19th/20th C partition wall.	

Trench 25

Site area: Exterior west Abbot's Stables (G21-G24)

Maximum dimensions: Length: 10m Width: 0.81m Depth: 0.74m

Orientation: Roughly east – west

Deposit description

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
25	2501	Granular black bitumen	Tarmac	0-0.12m
	2502	Yellow hardcore gravel	Make up for tarmac surface	0.12-0.17m
	2503	Bricks.	Foundations of former boundary wall	0.17-0.24m
	2504	Dark brown clay loam with large amounts of inclusions including broken brick	Soil build-up	0.17-0.36m
	2506	Grey green clay and lias	Sealing of lead pipe (2511) insertion into well	0.36-0.46m
	2507	Red brick circular structure with domed capping. Bricks measure 22 x 7 x 11cm. Filled with water, depth to top of water 3m, and lead pipe (2511).	Circular well. Early 19th C date.	0.46-0.74m not bottomed
	2508	Brick and lias structure surrounding and underneath lead pipe (2511).	Holding lead pipe and for resting lead pipe as it goes into cottages.	0.46-0.71m
	2509	Orange sand and gravel.	Fill of cut for well	0.71-0.74m not bottomed
	2510	Sub circular cut. Only partially revealed.	Construction cut for well.	0.74m not bottomed
	2511	Lead pipe 4.27m long. Mostly within well (2507). Leading from well towards cottages to north. Diameter of 5cm.	Water supply to cottages, later than well.	0.60-0.64m

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive

The archive consists of:

1	Context record sheets AS1
52	Fieldwork progress records AS2
34	Photographic records AS3
38	Medium format photographs
2414	Digital photographs
20	Abbreviated context records AS40
21	Trench record sheets AS41
55	Scale drawings
5	Boxes of finds
1	Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

Appendix 3 Dendrochronology

Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory

Mill Farm, Mapledurham, South Oxfordshire RG4 7TX
Telephone: 0118 972 4074, *Workshop:* 0118 972 3682, *Facsimile:* 0118 972 4404
E-mail: MarBrdg@aol.com *Homepage:* www.dendrochronology.com

10 Windmill Meadows
Aythorpe Roding
Dunmow
Essex CM6 1PX

15th November 2007

Dear Shona,

Abbey Gatehouse: Evesham.

Glad to hear that all is well and that you are back at work. Just to confirm my assessment of the dendrochronological potential of the roof at Abbey Gatehouse, Evesham following my visit to the site back in September of last year. I found that all the major original timbers of the roof were elm (*Ulmus* spp) – and as you are aware, this makes them unsuitable for dendrochronological dating at present.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Martin Bridge FSA