19 St Martins Lane, Wareham Dorset

Observations and Recording, January 2014

Report No. 53404/3/1

June 2014

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Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
OASIS Reference	terraina1-177134		
Project Title	19 St Martins Lane, Wareham, Dorset		
Short Description of Project	Terrain Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological observations and recording at 19 St Martins Lane, Wareham, Dorset. Characteristically for this part of Wareham, a thick late medieval or post-medieval topsoil overlay a 0.3-0.4m thick reworked medieval soil containing pottery dating from the 10th/11th to at least the late 13th century. Of uncertain relationship with this soil, but probably originally cutting at least part of its thickness, were the remains of three small truncated 11th-12th century pits. All three appear to be broadly domestic in character, producing pottery and animal bone, as well as small quantities of smithing slag and hammer scale in two of them. Late medieval finds were absent and only small quantities of pre 18th-19th century post-medieval material were found from the topsoil. The findings from 19 St Martins Lane support a widely held view that Wareham saw sporadic urban expansion from its Late Saxon core throughout the 11th-13th centuries, before suffering significant economic stagnation and urban contraction after the 13th century.		
Project Dates	Start: 23-01-2014	End: 30-01-2014	
Previous/Future Work	No/No		
Project Code	53404		
Monument Type and Period	Burh, (early medieval);Town (medieval); Rubbish pit (medieval)		
Significant Finds	Sherd (medieval)		
Project Location			
County/District/ Parish	Dorset/ Purbeck District Council/ Wareham Town		
Site Address	19 St Martins Lane, Wareham, BH20 4HF		
Site Coordinates	SY 9218 8773		
Site Area	*c.* 140 m^2		
Height OD	*c.* 8,8 m aOD		
Project Creators			
Organisation	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Brief Originator			
Project Design Originator	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Supervisor	Mike Trevarthen		
Project Manager	Peter Bellamy		
Sponsor or Funding Body	Client		
Project Archive			
Archive Type	**Physical**	**Digital**	**Paper**
Location/Accession No	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the receiving museum.	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the receiving museum.	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the receiving museum.
Contents	Ceramics animal bone, stone, iron, copper-alloy, metalworking residues, charcoal & charred plant remains.	Digital photography	context sheets, miscellaneous records, photographs, plans, report

19 St Martins Lane, Wareham, Dorset Archaeological Observations and Recording, March 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Project introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Mr R. Parry to undertake a programme of archaeological observations and recording during groundworks for the creation of a new detached dwelling and garage at 19 St Martins Lane, Wareham, Dorset (Figure 1). The site lies within the Wareham Conservation Area, and is in close proximity to the Grade 1 Listed Saxon and Norman St Martin's Church (National Heritage List entry number 1153149), visible from the site along Lady's Walk.

The archaeological work was carried out in fulfilment of condition 5 of the grant of planning consent for the scheme by Purbeck District Council (application reference 6/2013/0267), which stated: "*The applicant shall make arrangements for archaeological observation and recording to take place during the groundworks. Details of these arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council, at least one month before any work commences on the development site. Reason: The area is of archaeological potential and it is important that any archaeological features are preserved by record".*

'Archaeological observations and recording', also more colloquially known as an archaeological watching brief, is defined by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) as "*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive*" (IfA 2008). Its purposes are: "*to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works* " and "*to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard*."

Fieldwork was carried out between the 23rd and 30th January 2014 by Mike Trevarthen.

Terrain Archaeology wishes to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of the site's developer, Mr R. Parry, and the staff of Kingren Groundworks Limited. Pottery from the site was assessed by Lorraine Mepham (Wessex Archaeology) and advice on the reporting of the animal bone assemblage was provided by Dr Claire Randall. The project was managed for Terrain Archaeology by Peter Bellamy and monitored on behalf of the local planning authority by Steve Wallis, Senior Archaeologist (Advice and Management), Dorset County Council.

1.2 Brief

No written brief was issued by, or on behalf of, the Local Planning Authority.

1.3 Site Location and Topography

The site lies on the east side of St Martins Lane, Wareham, at Ordnance Survey NGR SY 9218 8773 (Figures 1-2). It is an approximately rectangular plot with an estimated area of about 0.051 hectare. The topography of the immediate site area is approximately level, at about 8.8 m aOD.

1.4 Geology

Bedrock geology is mapped as Broadstone Sand member of the Poole Formation, overlain by River Terrace sands and gravel (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies in the north eastern quadrant of Wareham, within the area of the late Saxon burh. Pre-burh activity is known at Wareham: Roman pottery has come from excavations within the town (see for example Hinton & Hodges 1977, Hinton & Horsey 1978, Hinton & Webster 1987) and several samian ware bowls were found at Folly, somewhat northwest of the site (Dorset Historic Environment Record reference MDO 8128). At further remove, extensive Roman activity including a major pottery production centre has been excavated at Bestwall Quarry, just east of Wareham on the fringes of Poole Harbour. Bestwall Quarry has also yielded evidence for large-scale iron working in the form of numerous charcoal-filled pits, radiocarbon dated to the Middle Saxon period (Ladle 2012).

There may have been an ecclesiastical centre at Wareham between the 5th and 7th centuries, and a minster church was founded after the 7th century (Bellamy & Davey 2011, 25). Hinton & Webster (1978, 47) have argued that Wareham and its surroundings were "an important bloc of Royal Estate in the ninth century, of special significance to the Wessex Kings". The town was formalized as a burh, defended by extensive earthen ramparts, under Alfred in the 9th century

A castle was built in the south west part of the town after the Norman Conquest, and the focus of settlement at this time may have been in the southern part of the town, around the castle, the quayside and the two main churches (Bellamy & Davey 2011, 30). During the first English civil war, Stephen is thought to have burnt the town in 1137 for its support of his rival Matilda and plundered it again in 1142, recapturing the castle. The castle itself may have been demolished by the end of the 12th century (*ibid*., 29) and its outer bailey ditch was filled in the early 13th century (*ibid*., 36).

Wareham appears to have recovered only slowly and incompletely through the 12th and 13th centuries, before declining and stagnating in the later medieval period. The Lay Subsidy of 1322 suggests only 27 taxpayers in the town, most paying relatively small amounts of tax, and presents a far-from-prosperous picture by comparison with Dorset's other main urban centres. Further blows to Wareham's fortunes came from the loss of cross-channel trade to nearby Poole as its river channel silted up (the last mention of Wareham as a major port is in 1347), and from the local- and national socio-economic effects of the Black Death in the mid-14th century (Bellamy & Davey 2011, 29-33). The deep black soils reported from many parts of the town are of late medieval or post-medieval date, sometimes interpreted as horticultural or garden soils (possibly introduced), as reported by Hutchins in the 18th century (Hinton & Horsey 1987, 126). John Leland, writing in the 16th century noted of the town "*Wareham is now within the waulles faulen down, made into gardens for garlike*" (cited in Davis 1997, 26)

In the immediate vicinity of the site, St Martin's parish church (to the west) has pre-Conquest origins (Newman & Pevsner 1997, 437) and St Martins Lane itself was probably originally established in the Late Saxon period as a back lane to North Street. Hutchins map of Wareham, published in 1774 (reproduced in Davis 1997, 8), indicates that the north east quarter of the former burh area was open fields or gardens, with development restricted to the immediate North Street frontage. It was gradually infilled only in the 19th century and the site itself appears to have remained open until the inter-war period, when the former (now demolished) house at 19 St Martins Lane was built. The north and south boundaries to the site were depicted on historic maps and are likely to be represent garden plot boundaries or 18th century or earlier date.

1.6 Previous Archaeological fieldwork

There has been no prior archaeological investigation of the site or its immediate environs. However, there have been a number of investigations in the north east quadrant, which have indicated a similar stratigraphic sequence across the area with extensive deep dark soil accumulation containing medieval material in its lower part and a number of features cut through the lower dark soil or sealed by it. At Howard's Lane to the SSE of the site, excavations revealed a coherent group of undisturbed features of late 12th-early 14th century date, including post-built structure(s) with

associated boundary and rubbish pits buried beneath 1.4 m of dark soil (Crockett 1994; Harding 1994). Other small scale investigations at 29 Bells Orchard, Bonnett's Lane, and to the rear of 36 North Street have revealed medieval pits and postholes beneath dark soil between 0.8 m and 1.6 m deep, containing late 11th to 14th century pottery in its lower part (Cox 1986; Evans 2005; Valentin 1998).

Excavations at the site of St Martins House on the North Street frontage at the junction with Dollins Lane revealed a mass of features including pits, postholes, possible beam slots, wells, gullies and an oven dating from the 10th to the 13th centuries (Hinton and Hodges 1977). Minor ground investigations were carried out during drainage- and other internal works at St Martin's Church in 1985-86 (Hinton & Webster 1989) but the results are of limited relevance to the results reported on here

1.7 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the archaeological programme was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

Its objectives were:

- To observe and record the all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate archaeological standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

1.8 Groundworks

The groundworks for the new house comprised the mechanical excavation of strip footings trenches and pits to a depth of *c.* 1.5 m below ground level and the deep mechanical bulk-excavation (into natural outwash gravels) of a new basement area measuring 10-11 m by 11m (*c.* 115.5 m^2). A new service trench was excavated by machine along part of the street frontage and a stepped soil-percolation test pit was dug at the eastern end of the site (Figure 3). The groundworks for the new garage were not observed.

1.9 Methods

The methodology, scope, aims and objectives of the works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Terrain Archaeology in January 2014 (Terrain Archaeology document no. 3404/0/1) and approved prior to commencement of work by the local planning authority's archaeological advisor.

All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 2008).

The observation and recording of the groundworks was i*ntensive*, as defined by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008), with a qualified, experienced archaeologist was present on site during topsoil stripping and all sensitive groundworks. Spoil arising from the strip was visually scanned for artefacts and the stripped surface was inspected and sample-excavated to recover artefacts as safe site-working considerations allowed.

Bulk soil removal and foundation trenching were carried out using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothed bucket, with removal of soils from site. A flat ditching blade was used for final clearance and trimming of the basement area.

All features and deposits (other than manifestly modern intrusions) were recorded using components of Terrain Archaeology's system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records, regardless of their perceived date and archaeological significance. These records have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current guidelines (AAF 2007; IfA 2009) and the requirements of the receiving museum. A photographic record of the works was maintained in digital format, and includes aspects of their setting, conduct and technical detail.

To augment the manually collected finds assemblages from pits 108, 111 and 113, small (1.5-3 litre) soil samples (Samples 1-3) were recovered. These have been wet sieved to 1 mm, and the residues dried and sorted. The results are discussed below.

1.10 Archive and Dissemination

1.10.1 Paper Archive

The project archive, comprising retrieved artefacts, written, graphic and photographic records, and appropriate background documentation, is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 53404. In due course, and assuming appropriate transfer of title from the landowner, the archive will be accessioned for long-term curation and storage by the Dorset County Museum, Dorchester. Deposition of the archive will place it in the public domain.

1.10.2 Material Archive

There have been few excavations undertaken in the northern part of Wareham's Saxon burh, mostly small or modest in scale. Therefore, any controlled investigation in this area assumes an enhanced significance because of its potential to contribute to our understanding of the town's historical development, of its archaeological significance, and of its ability to enhance and augment the interpretative value of previous and future works. On this basis it is recommended that the artefactual archive from 19 St Martins Lane is retained and accessioned in full by the receiving museum; excepting the following materials which, being of negligible archival, analytical, interpretative or intrinsic value, have already been discarded:

- Modern industrially produced pottery
- Marine (oyster) shell from all contexts
- Plain post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stems.

1.10.3 Report

A paper copy of this report will be lodged with Dorset County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a publicly funded and accessible resource, and deposition of the report will place it, and the project results, in the public domain.

A digital summary of the archive will be placed with the OASIS project (www.oasis.ac.uk) under the reference code *terraina1-177134*. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

A brief summary report of the project and its key findings will be published by Terrain Archaeology in the *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*. Given the archaeological importance of the site results, the necessity (or otherwise) and scope of a more detailed site report presenting the results of the archaeological programme will be considered in discussion with the local planning authority's archaeological advisor, and will (if necessary) form the basis of a separate agreement.

2. Results

2.1 Natural Deposits

Natural deposits were encountered at a depth of *c.* 1.4 m below ground level (BGL) at the street frontage and *c.* 1.5 m BGL in the test pit near the east end of the site (Plate 1), and comprised loose light orange-brown sandy clay-loam with common small gravel clasts (103), giving way rapidly with depth to free-draining pale yellow brown fluvial sand and fine gravels (104).

2.2 Dark Soil Layer

The presence of a significant soil layer below topsoil 101 was first identified during mechanical excavation of the soil-percolation test pit (102) where it produced small quantities of exclusively medieval pottery. It was noted again in the deepest part of a new service trench adjacent to the street frontage (105), but was exposed most extensively in the strip-foundations and in the basement area (107) (Figure 3; Plates 2-3). The layer ranges between 0.3 m–0.4 m in thickness and was composed of moderately loose, friable mid-dark orange-brown sandy loam with occasional gravel clasts. Considerable quantities of physically- and chronologically mixed medieval pottery spanning the 10th-11th to late 13th/early 14th centuries were recovered from layer 107 by opportunistic digging during its removal from the

basement area, but the material collected there represents only part of a larger assemblage which could not be recovered.

The dating and distribution of this pottery suggests the layer saw significant deposition of domestic waste and was extensively re-worked in the medieval period. However, the largely unabraded condition and commonly relatively large sherd size noted for material ceramics from 107 is atypical of residual, reworked assemblages and requires further explanation. It is possible that reworking of the layer disturbed a number of shallow pits or dumps, but equally possible that surviving features of lower archaeological visibility were present, but were not identified during rapid machining of the layer: The close spatial association of several distinctive refitting pieces of glazed Poole whiteware supports the latter possibility. Small and ephemeral features such as structural alignments of postholes or stake holes would not have been recognised under the circumstances of the site-clearance.

The layer as a whole is interpreted here as a medieval backland soil, (discussed below), created over an extended timescale up to the late 13th or early 14th century, and possibly somewhat later than this as a hiatus deposit after later medieval urban retrenchment.

2.3 Archaeological Features

Three shallow, truncated pits were identified where they cut below the base of layer 107 in the basement area (Figure 4; Plates 4-6). All three pits probably originally cut part- if not all of the thickness of layer 107, albeit that they may afterwards have been partially reworked into the layer by later activity. All three features were fully excavated and were sampled to maximise recovery of dating- and other evidence.

None of the pits can be dated closely, but ceramic evidence suggests they broadly date to the 11th-12th centuries. All three appear to be primarily domestic, rather than industrial in origin, although traces of industrial (metalworking) residues were present.

2.3.1 Pit 108

Pit 108 was sub-oval, measuring 1.10 m by 0.8 m across, and aligned approximately North-South. It was 0.3 m deep with moderately sloping sides and a narrow concave base (Figure 4; Plate 4). A main upper fill (109) was of loose, uncompacted dark grey-brown slightly humic sandy loam, with occasional pottery and animal bone, badly decayed oyster shell, small gravel clasts and wood charcoal flecks. An asymmetric lower deposit (110) of loose mixed pale yellow-brown sand and dark brown loamy sand was recorded as a possible fill deposit, but could equally represent post-depositional discolouration and contamination of natural deposits. No finds were recovered from 110.

2.3.2 Pit 111

Pit 111 was irregular sub-oval in plan, measuring 0.90 m by 0.80 m across and 0.2 m deep, with moderately sloping sides and a broad concave – to flattish base (Figure 4; Plate 5). A single fill (112) was of loose mottled mid grey-brown loamy sand with occasional white pipeclay lumps, pottery (Figure 5.3), animal bone, occasional wood charcoal flecks, and scarce gravel clasts. Trace amounts of hammer scale (a characteristic by-product of iron-smithing) were recovered from sample 2, but need only indicate metalworking in the wider area, rather than within, or around the site. An inclined piece of tabular limestone within the fill indicates that the true depth of the feature is under-represented by at least 0.1- 0.15m.

2.3.3 Pit 113

Pit 113 was sub-oval, measuring 1.5 m by 1.1 m across, and aligned ENE-WSW. It was 0.27 m deep with irregularly concave sides and base (Figure 4; Plate 6). A single fill deposit (114) comprised loose, mottled mid-dark greyish-brown sandy loam with occasional limestone up to 0.15 m, and occasional gravel clasts and charcoal flecks. Finds included pottery (see Figure 5.2), animal bone and three items of metalwork; iron object (SF1), iron nail (SF2) and broken round-section copper alloy rod or pin SF3. Two pieces of vitreous metalworking slag are probably originally from a blacksmith's hearth, and trace amounts of hammer scale were noted from sample 3.

2.4 Garden Soil

Topsoil within the site comprised about 0.3 m of dark, very humic garden soil (100) often containing modern materials and demolition debris, above a *c.* 0.8-0.9 m thickness of friable dark greyish-brown humic- to faintly humic loam (101), with sporadic gravel clasts, residual medieval pottery, and minor amounts of post-medieval and modern material. This layer became slightly paler grey (less humic) with depth. It is probably the result of late- and/or post-medieval agriculture and horticulture, and its depth may indicate a degree of augmentation by imported material (cf. Hinton & Horsey 1987, 126).

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

A moderately sized assemblage of artefacts was recovered during the investigation. This is summarised in Table 1 and discussed in detail below.

Context	metal	Roman pottery	Medieval Pottery	Post-medieval pottery	Clay tobacco pipe	Slag	Animal bone	Marine Shell
101	--	--	10/229g	6/121g	8/21g	--	1/2g	2/21g
102/105/107	--	3/5g	136/2887g	2/26g	--	--	8/43g	3/26g
109	--	--	19/199g	--	--	--	7/27g	3/42g
112	--	1/60g	25/422g	--	--	--	2/5g	--
114	3/29g	--	49/714g	--	--	1/107g	26/106g	--
Total	*3/29g*	*4/65g*	*239/4451g*	*8/147g*	*8/21g*	*1/107g*	*57/507g*	*8/89g*

Table 1: Quantification of finds by broad category and context (count/weight). Quantifications other than for metal omit material from Samples 1-3 (see below).

3.2 Metal

Three metal objects were recovered; all from 11th-12th century fill 114 (pit 113).

SF1: an iron rod or spike, bent slightly along its length. One end is obscured by corrosion, the other end tapers to a blunt point. The item has a triangular cross-section along almost its full length. 180 mm by *c.* 6-7 mm, weight 27 g. Of uncertain function, the object could be a rake tine or similar.

SF2: a bent, tapering iron spike with a rectangular cross-section, possibly the shank of a small nail or tack. Length 28 mm, weight 1.5 g. Recovered from Sample 3.

SF3: a short, gently curving broken length of round-section copper-alloy wire or pin. Length 17 mm, diameter 1.5 mm, weight 0.2 g. Recovered from Sample 3.

3.3 Pottery

Lorraine Mepham

3.3.1 Introduction

The pottery assemblage recovered from Wareham amounts to 251 sherds (4663 g). Of this total, four sherds (65g) are Romano-British (all found residually in later contexts) and eight (147 g) are post-medieval; these groups are not discussed further here. The remaining 239 sherds (4451 g) are medieval. In addition to the material described and discussed below a few small sherds were recovered from soil samples 1-3 from pits 108, 111 and 113, but these are not included in the quantification and analysis.

Sherds were recovered from five contexts: topsoil (layer 101), site-wide 'backland soil' layer 102/105/107 (most sherds coming from layer 107, the basement and adjacent foundation trenches), pit 109 (fill 108), pit 112 (fill 111) and pit 114 (fill 113). Post-medieval sherds were found in the topsoil (six sherds, the latest dating to the 19th/20th century), and layer 102/105/107 (two sherds, probably dating no later than the 18th century, and possibly representing contamination of this layer by later disturbance). The relationship of layer 102/105/107 to the three pits

is somewhat ambiguous, although the pits were almost certainly cut during long-term formation of the layer and partially re-worked into it, rather than pre-dating it.

3.3.2 Medieval Pottery

Detailed fabric analysis has not been undertaken on the medieval assemblage, but the 239 sherds fall into six ware groups (discussed below), based on the range of inclusion types – five coarsewares and one fineware. Totals by context are given in Table 2.

Flint-tempered coarsewares

Eight sherds, all from layer 102/105/107, are in coarse fabrics containing prominent inclusions of sub-angular, patinated flint (Hinton and Hodges 1977, fabric A). This small group includes two jar rims; both are thick-walled, with short, everted rims with a simple profile. One vessel carries stamped rosettes around the shoulder (Figure 5.1).

Calcareous coarsewares

Thirty sherds are in coarse fabrics containing rare patinated flint inclusions, but characterised by irregular voids, marking leached-out calcareous (limestone) inclusions (Hinton and Hodges 1977, fabric B). Diagnostic sherds include three everted jar rims, all slightly thickened in profile, and one partial profile from a small jar (rim diameter 100 mm) from pit 113 with a very short, stubby, everted rim decorated with small 'nicks' (possibly executed with a fingertip) (Figure 5.2). Another sherd, from layer 102/105/107, appears to belong to a spouted pitcher.

Sandy/flint-tempered coarsewares

A similar proportion of the assemblage (29 sherds) is made up of sandy wares with sparse patinated flint. The two diagnostic rims belong to jars with simple, everted rims.

SE Wilts/East Dorset coarsewares

By far the most dominant ware group is made up of sherds in coarse sandy fabrics, with a relatively wide variation in the size of the rounded quartz inclusions. These wares are found widely across east Dorset and into south-east Wiltshire; they are comparable to products of the later 13th/early 14th century kilns at Laverstock just outside Salisbury (Musty *et al.* 1969; Musty *et al.* 2001), but also constitute the dominant coarseware type in Wareham, where they are assumed to be of local manufacture (Hinton and Hodges 1977, fabric C).

Two sherds from layer 102/105/107 are scratchmarked. Scratchmarked wares were classified separately by Hinton and Hodges (1977, fabric E), despite their similarity to other sandy coarsewares (fabric C), a distinction supported by heavy mineral analysis, but not by subsequent chemical analysis (Spoerry 1990, 14).

The repertoire of vessel forms is wider than that in the other coarsewares, but still limited. Most common are jar forms (14 examples), with rims of varying profiles, from simple everted through externally thickened to almost bifid. Three jar rims are decorated with finger impressions, including the most complete profile, a round-based form from pit 111 (Figure 5.3). There are seven dish rims, their profiles either externally thickened, or both externally and internally thickened ('hammerhead' rims). These are from shallow vessels; one example from layer 102/105/107 is knife-cut, and has a horizontal applied, thumbed strip below the rim.

As well as kitchen vessels, the sandy coarsewares supplied glazed tablewares in the form of tripod pitchers. They are represented here by a handful of sherds with a patchy external glaze (two with horizontal rilling or grooving and one with roller stamping), and two rim sherds, possibly from the same vessel, one with a strap handle.

West Dorset sandy ware

Two sherds are in fine, smooth-textured sandy fabrics of a type found across West Dorset, and for which one 13th century source is known at Hermitage (Field 1966). Their currency extends into the late medieval period, but these two sherds are undiagnostic and cannot be closely dated.

Poole Harbour whiteware

All nine sherds of Poole Harbour whiteware recovered came from layer 102/105/107. These are in fine sandy, pale-firing fabrics (cream to pale salmon pink) with mottled yellow-green glazes. One sherd has applied manganese pellets.

All of these wares are likely to be of relatively local origin. Heavy mineral analysis has suggested a source in the environs of Wareham for the sandy coarsewares, despite their visual similarity to the Laverstock products of south-east Wiltshire (other sources are also likely within the wide distribution area), and sources in the Isle of Purbeck for the flint-tempered, calcareous and scratch-marked sandy wares (Hinton and Hodges 1977, 60). The Poole Harbour whitewares are so named because of their prevalence in the area; their pale-firing clays could also have been sourced in the Isle of Purbeck.

Fabric	Topsoil 101	Layer 102/105/107	Pit 108	Pit 111	Pit 113	Total
Flint-tempered coarseware		8/434				*8/434*
Calcareous coarseware	1/3	5/83	2/15	3/31	19/366	*30/498*
Sandy/flint-tempered coarse-ware		12/329	1/	1/52	15/133	*29/518*
SE Wilts/E Dorset coarseware	8/164	101/1826	16/180	21/339	15/215	*161/2724*
West Dorset sandy ware	1/62	1/5				*2/67*
Poole Harbour whiteware		9/210				*9/210*
Total	*10/229*	*136/2887*	*19/199*	*25/422*	*49/714*	*239/4451*

Table 2: Pottery by context

3.3.3 Discussion of Pottery

A number of assemblages from sites previously excavated in Wareham provide parallels for the wares described here, particularly the nearby site at St Martin's House, excavated in 1974 (Hinton and Hodges 1977). The latter assemblage, together with small groups from elsewhere in Dorset, suggests a date range for St Martin's Lane beginning in 10th or 11th century, and extending through to the later 13th, possibly the early 14th century. There appears to be no overlap with the small group of 8th/9th century vessels from Wareham West Walls (RCHME 1959, 131-3, fig. 48).

The flint-tempered and calcareous wares are the earliest here. These coarsewares, used for jars with sharply everted rims with simple profiles, occurred in the earliest (10th/11th century) levels at St Martin's House; production of the flint-tempered wares seems to have ceased by the late 11th or early 12th century, while that of the calcareous wares continued slightly later (Hinton and Hodges 1977, 62). The SE Wiltshire/E Dorset sandy coarse-wares were established as the major ware type by the late 11th century, and the earliest glazed wares appeared at this point. These three ware groups, as well as sandy/flint-tempered wares, were also identified at Winterbourne Stickland, where they were dated as 10th/11th century (Mepham 2003). The latter site also provides parallels for the stamped decoration seen here on the flint-tempered jar from layer 102/105/107 (this could conceivably be a spouted pitcher). This decorative technique is rarely recorded in Dorset; two other instances are recorded from Shaftesbury, again dated to the Late Saxon/pre-conquest period (Keen 1977, Whittingham 2008, 78, fig.14.11).

The sandy coarsewares of SE Wiltshire/E Dorset type had a lengthy currency through much of the medieval period, and it is virtually impossible here to distinguish any sequence, but there are at least two jar rims from layer 102/105/107 that are of 13th/early 14th century style. Other jars and dishes could date anywhere between the 11th and 13th centuries, while the tripod pitchers (sherds from pit 108 and layer 107) date to the late 11th and 12th centuries.

There is insufficient ceramic evidence to establish the relationships between layer 102/105/107 and the three pits 108, 111 and 113. All that can be said is that the pits contained no material that could be definitively dated earlier than 11th century, or later than 12th century, while layer 102/105/107 produced a more chronologically mixed assemblage (possibly resulting from layer disturbance), ranging from 10th/11th century through to at least the late 13th century, with two (possibly intrusive) post-medieval sherds.

3.4 Clay tobacco pipe

Eight pieces of plain, unmarked clay tobacco pipe stem were recovered from topsoil 100/101. No bowls or stamp-marked fragments were noted.

3.5 Slag and metalworking debris

One fragment (107 g) of vitreous slag was recovered from pit 113 (context 114). Another small piece of similar slag was recovered from sample 3 (114).

Trace amounts of hammer scale (a characteristic and durable by-product of iron smithing) came from samples 2 (112) and 3 (114). Its presence is not necessarily indicative of on-site smithing – rather greater quantities might be expected if that were the case - but might perhaps point to smithing being undertaken within the wider locality.

3.6 Animal bone

Forty-four pieces of animal bone were manually recovered from six contexts, including the layer 105/107 and fills of all three medieval pits. Additional pieces (usually minute fragments) were recovered from soil samples 1-3. The latter do not materially affect the interpretation of the manually collected assemblage, and are not included in the quantifications.

One fragment of ?sheep long bone (21g) came from topsoil 101, with six indeterminate fragments and two cattle teeth recovered from subsoil layer 105/107 (43g).

Pit 108 (context 109) contained four skull fragments and a sheep tooth, along with two ?sheep longbone fragments (total 27 g), both of which appear to have been deliberately broken, presumably to access marrow.

Pit 111 (context 112) contained two broken fragments from a large long bone (5 g). Two juvenile (deciduous) cattle teeth and several very small calcined bone fragments including a broken fragment of calcined ?rodent bone and two unburnt ?rodent teeth were recovered from Sample 2.

Pit 113 (context 114) contained twenty-six bone fragments including long bone, rib and scapula fragments from several medium-sized and large animals (total 106 g). One ?sheep rib was burnt.

3.7 Marine Shell

Small amounts of degraded oyster shall were recovered, where preservation allowed. Two shells (21 g) came from topsoil 101, with another three (26 g) from layers 105 and 107. Three shells (42 g) came from pit fill 109 (pit 108).

3.8 Charred Plant Remains

Small quantities of wood charcoal, the largest fragments measuring up to about 15 mm across were recovered from soil samples 1-3 taken from pits 108, 111 and 113. These have not been analysed or quantified. Sample 3 (context 114) also contained three small fragments of charred hazelnut (Corylus) shell.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

The fragile and sometimes ephemeral character of important and irreplaceable Saxon and medieval remains in Wareham has been well understood since at least the 1970s, and it has been observed that: "*Towns like Wareham which have not been densely occupied are less likely to acquire the great depths of archaeological deposits seen in bigger centres. The archaeology is therefore more easily destroyed, and because it is less dramatic, is less easily recognised and more easily ignored*" (Hinton & Hodges 1977, 82). Whilst the imposition of a 'watching brief' condition on the scheme's planning consent may, arguably, have been appropriate to monitoring of the development's strip-footings and service-trenches, the suitability and sustainability of the response with regard to deep, open area ground reduction within the historic town (the basement area of the present development ultimately removed all archaeological significance from a single block of approximately 115 m^2) must remain open to question;

the more so in the absence of any requirement for pre-consent assessment and evidence gathering about the scheme's potential heritage impact, as required by both national planning policy and Purbeck District Council's own adopted Local Plan policies (*National Planning Policy Framework* para. 128 (DCLG 2010) and Policy LHH of the adopted Purbeck Local Plan 2012). Whilst important archaeological information has undoubtedly been gained during the work, contributing in broad terms to the understanding of Wareham's medieval development, opportunities for detailed observation and controlled excavation of the site were curtailed by the circumstances of the groundworks. There remains a strong (but unquantifiable) possibility that other equally important and informative, if more ephemeral and less easily discerned, remains were not identified or recorded as a result of the Planning Condition requirement for archaeological observations and recording, viz. to undertake archaeological work during, rather than in advance of, construction works, which arguably the archaeological importance of the site warranted.

The results of the work at 19 St Martins Lane fit the known archaeological character of the north east quadrant of Wareham, as established by a number of small scale archaeological investigations undertaken in this area over the past four decades, which have shown that the area contains a series of early medieval and medieval features and a thick layer of dark soil up to 1.6 m thick that contains exclusively medieval and earlier material in its lower part. It is unfortunate that the majority of these archaeological interventions have been small in scale and mainly watching briefs, which have not provided conditions conducive to the detailed excavation and recording of the exposed features and their relationship with the deep dark soil deposit. The two slightly larger scale excavations at St Martins House (Hinton and Hodges 1977) and Howards Lane (Harding 1994) have revealed a complex array of postholes, pits, and ditches representing the remains of houses, storage pits and property boundaries. Both these excavations lay on or closer to the North Street frontage than 19 St Martins Lane, so the greater density and range of features found on these excavations may be a function of their proximity to the principal N-S street of the burh and the medieval town.

No features relating to the Saxon burh were identified, but small amounts of 10th-11th century pottery (notably the unusual rosette-stamped jar or spouted pitcher (Figure 5.1) from layer 107) were present. St Martin's Church has pre-conquest origins and may have formed a natural focus for activity in this part of the burh. A small number probable 10th century features were excavated at St Martins House some 150 m to the SSW (Hinton and Hodges 1977), indicating that sparse domestic activity did occur in the northern part of the town. The absence of early features at St Martins Lane is not necessarily surprising as ephemeral features may have been lost to later re-working of soils in the medieval period and it has been suggested (again from evidence at St Martin's House) that this part of the burh may still have been "more rural than urban in character" prior to the 11th century (Hinton & Hodges 1977, 58).

All three pits from 19 St Martin's Lane date broadly to the 11th-12th centuries. This period saw a significant increase in the number of pits, postholes and other such features (and also in the quantity of pottery) found at St Martins House (Hinton & Hodges 1977, 53-34, 58), and this has been taken as an indicator of overall urban expansion and population increase from the 10th-11th century (*ibid.,* 82). Similar evidence of gradual urban expansion was seen in two sites excavated along East Street, where the earliest remains were of 12th century date, with more intensive 13th century occupation preceding possible abandonment in the 14th-15th centuries (Hinton & Horsey 1978, 126).

No evidence for turmoil associated with Stephen and Matilda's civil war was identified at St Martins Lane, although this is perhaps less likely to be recognised in the northern and outlying parts of the town which may never historically have been as densely occupied as the south (Bellamy & Davey 2011, 30).

Soil layer 102/105/107 could not be investigated in detail, although it is clearly important in understanding the development of this part of medieval Wareham from the late pre-conquest period up to perhaps the 14th century. It was identified as having archaeological significance during the initial soil percolation test pit and was targeted during reduction of the basement area. Here, however, the upper part of the layer was bulk-stripped along with the with overburden deposits using a toothed bucket and pottery was recovered primarily by rapid hand digging through exposures of the layer as they became safely available. It should therefore be recognised that the pottery assemblage reported on here represents a 'grab-sample' of opportunistically salvaged and pro-actively extracted material, rather

than the result of systematic recovery. The formation of the layer was not well understood from the excavation, although variability in its makeup, the quantities of pottery it contained, the chronological range, sherd size and largely unabraded condition of the pottery and (in some cases) its distribution across the site, all circumstantially suggest a complex and long-term palimpsest of intermittent depositional and physical reworking processes. These might, for example, have included periodic refuse or industrial pitting, stalling of livestock, winning of sand or gravel deposits, agricultural ploughing/horticultural use and soil development with biotic sorting during periods of land-use hiatus. It also remains entirely possible that there were ephemeral or small cut features within the layer that were not recognised during its removal.

Like St Martins House (*ibid.*, 58), the site produced very little pre-modern pottery that can confidently be attributed later than the late 13th or earlier 14th century, after which time there must have been a significant and long-term change in land use locally resulting ultimately in the development of a thick mantle of pottery-poor dark topsoil across the site. This deep soil has been noted in many parts of Wareham and has widely been attributed in broadest terms to the post-medieval period (e.g. Cox 2012). However, Wareham's economic fortunes are known to have waned after the 13th century, as a result of factors that probably included loss of significance as a cross-channel trade port and socio-economic changes after the Black Death (Bellamy & Davey 2011, 29-33), and excavations at St Martins House (Hinton & Hodges 1977), East Street (Hinton & Horsey 1978), Howard's Lane (Harding 1994) and now at 19 St Martins Lane show a uniform cessation of significant activity from the 14th century, suggesting settlement within the town contracted southwards toward the river. It may be that, at least in outlying parts of the town, formation of Wareham's 'dark soil' began in the later medieval period as formerly settled land was abandoned or reverted to agricultural use.

4.2 Conclusions

The results of the archaeological investigations at 19 St Martins Lane have added new data to confirm the general character of the archaeology of the north eastern quadrant of Wareham. A group of three small medieval pits of 11th-12th century date were discovered cut into the natural deposits below a medieval soil layer containing pottery dating from the 10th/11th century to the late 13th century. The pits appeared domestic in character and their precise relationship with the medieval soil is uncertain due to the character of the groundworks and the limitations of a watching brief. The large unabraded sherd size of some of the medieval pottery recovered from the soil layer suggests there may have been unidentified cut features within this layer. The date range of the pottery fits within the pattern seen on other sites in this part of Wareham, which appears to suggest that there was significant reduction in activity in the 14th century which can be related to the declining fortunes of the town caused by the silting up of the harbour at Wareham, the rise of the port at Poole and the effects of the Black Death.

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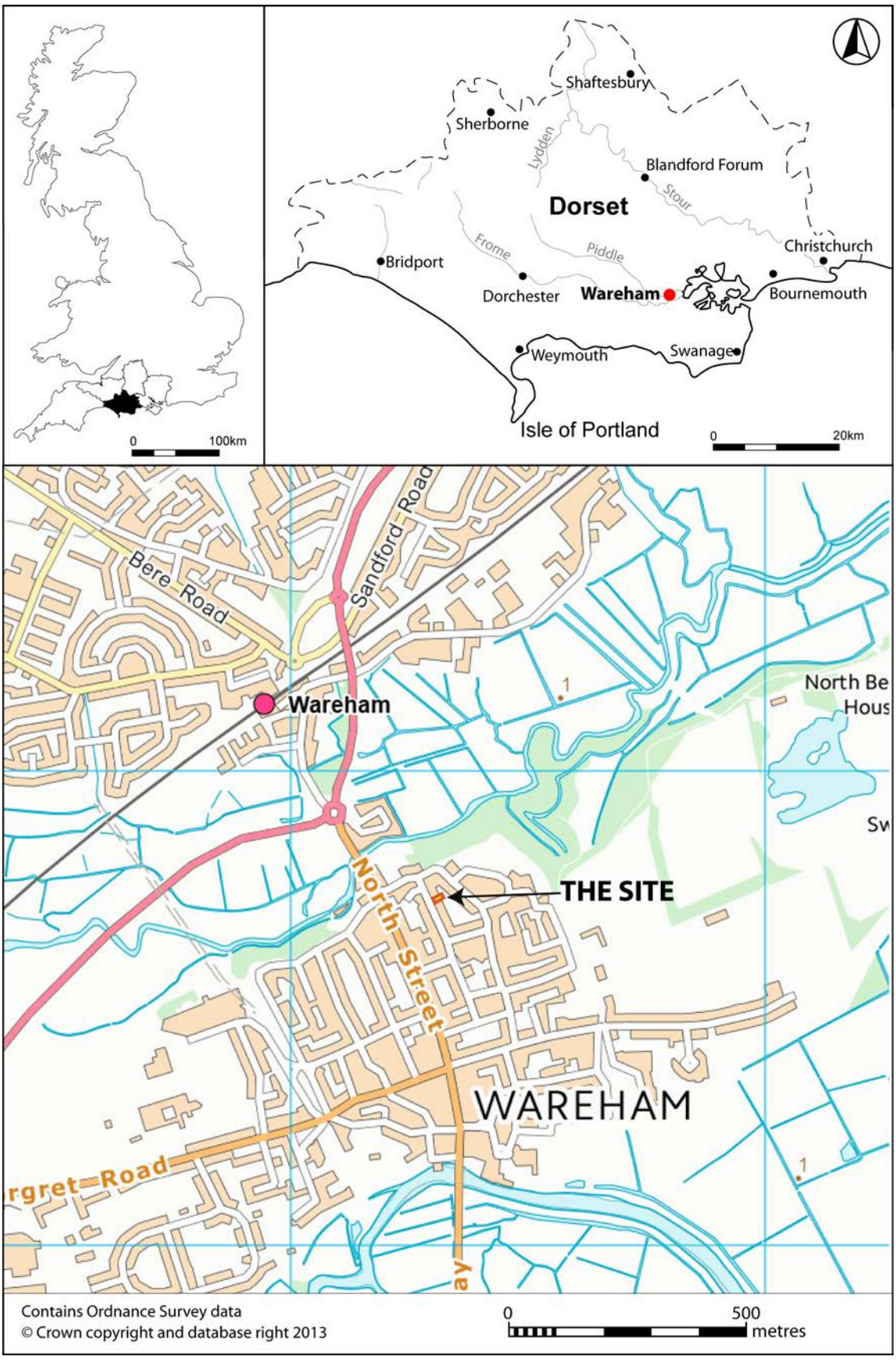

Figure 1 Location map.

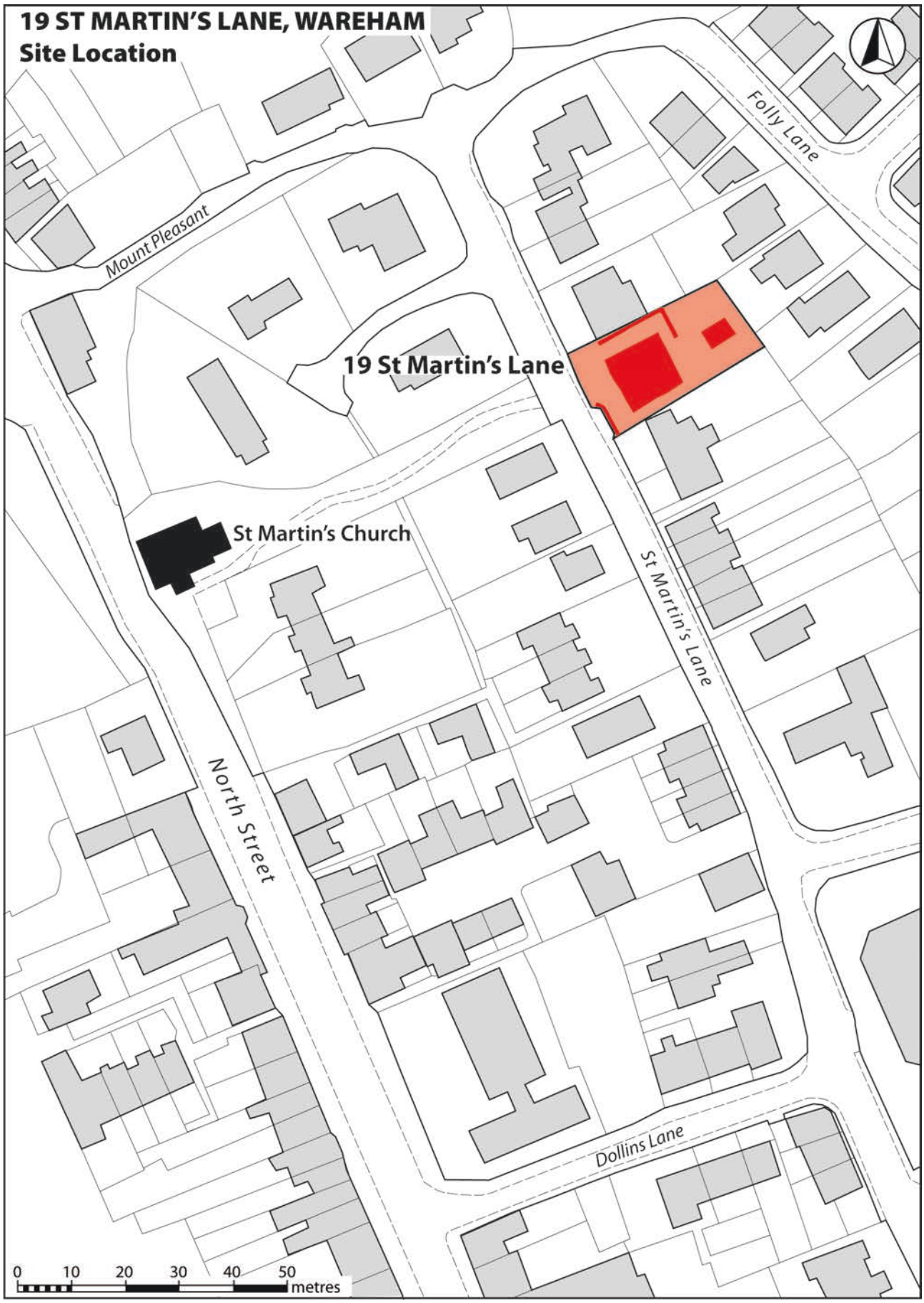

Figure 2: Location of Observations

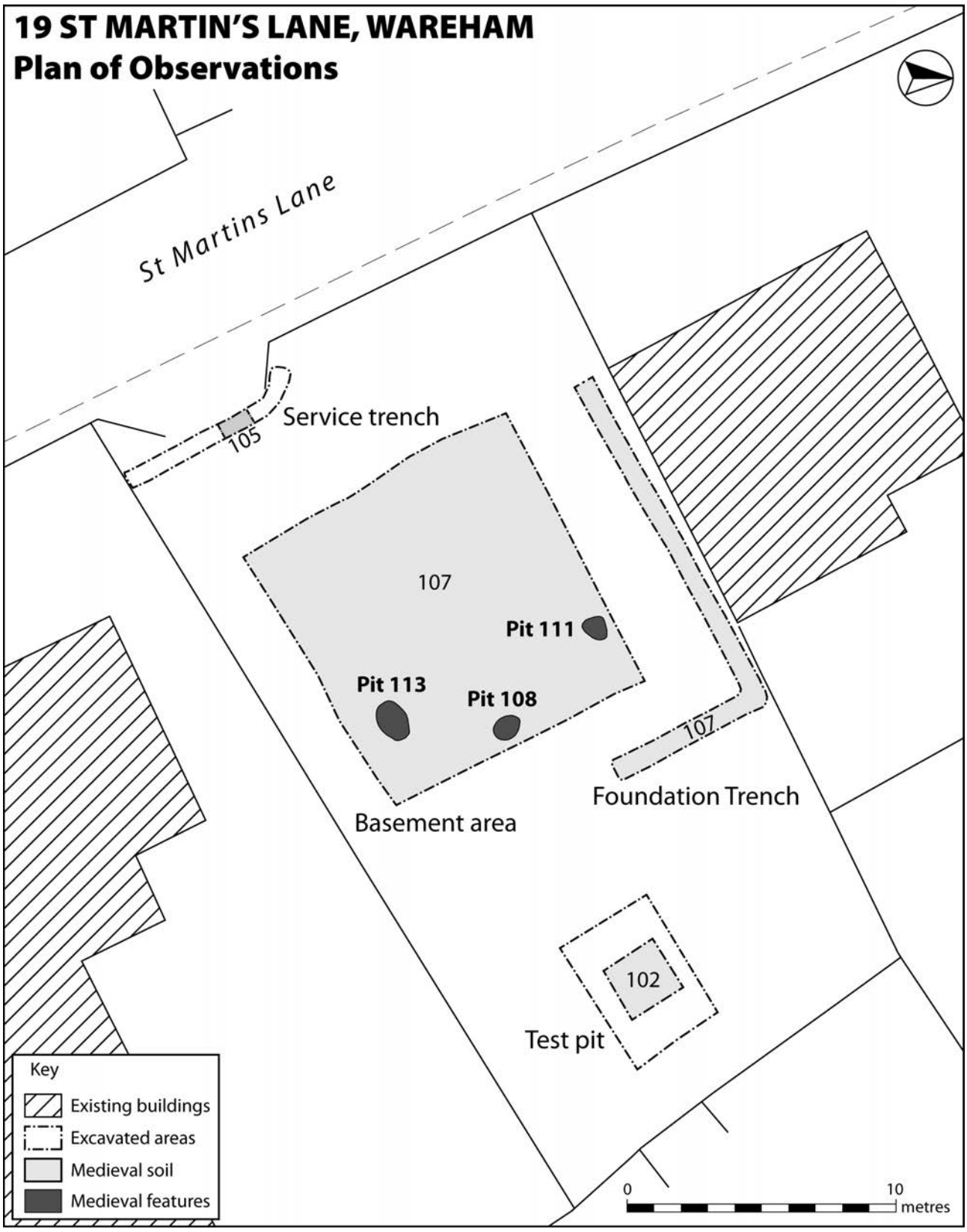

Figure 3: Plan of Observations

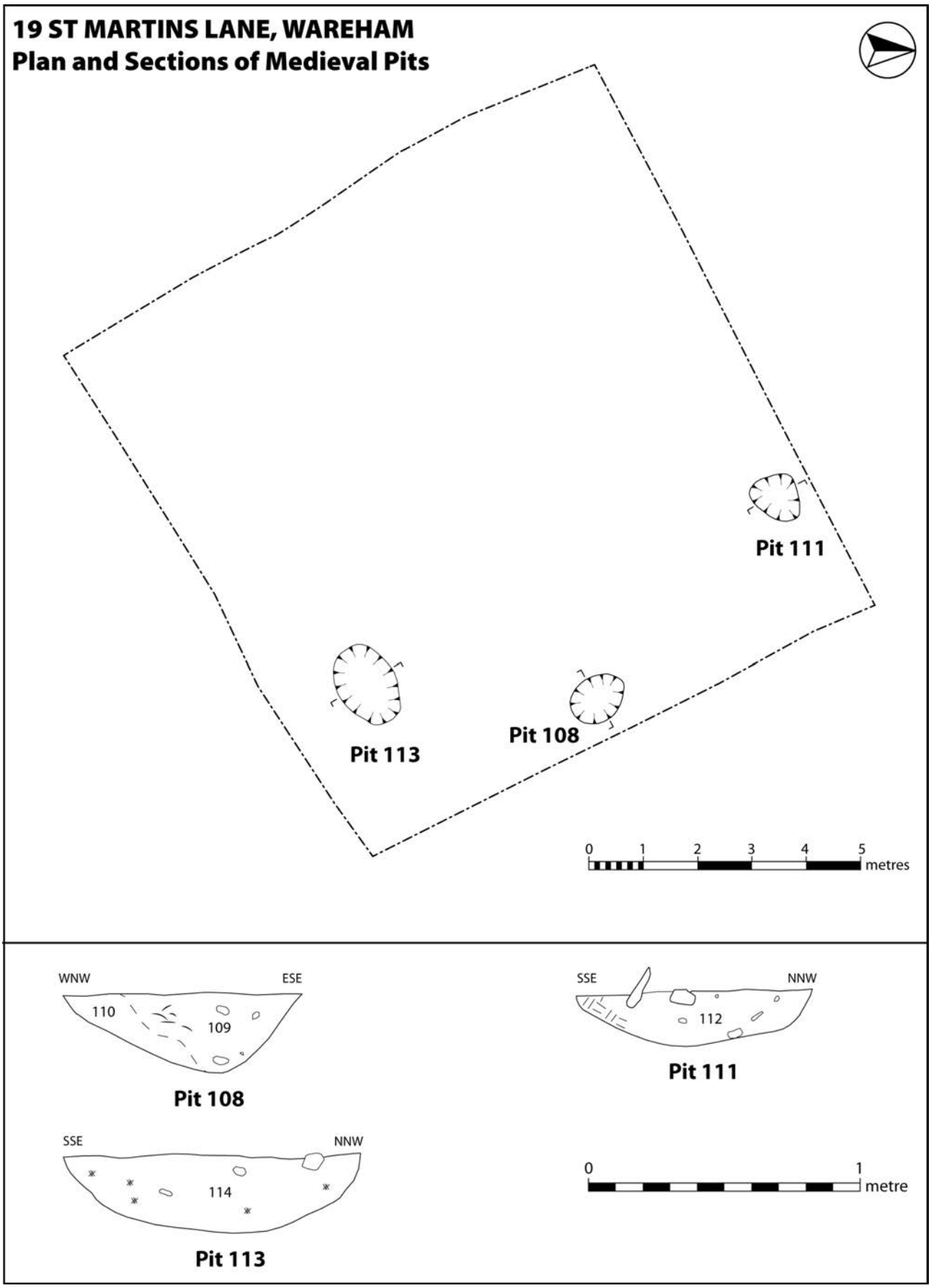

Figure 4: Plan and Sections of Medieval Pits

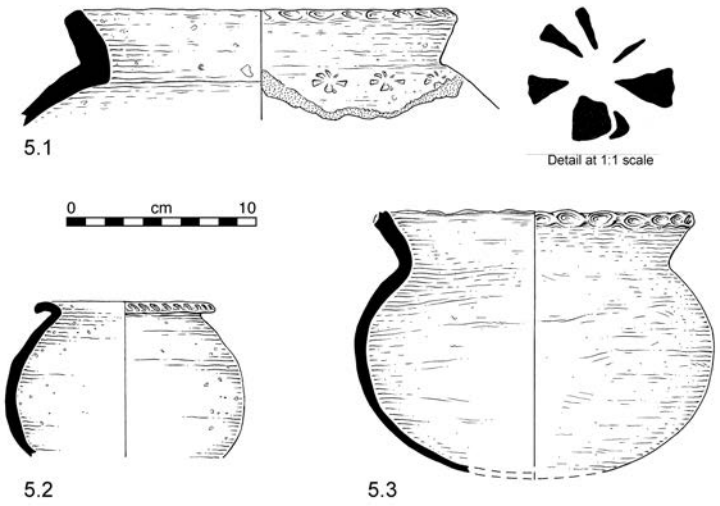

Figure 5: Illustrated medieval pottery. 5.1 Thick-walled jar (or possibly spouted pitcher); coarse flint-tempered fabric; stamped rosettes around shoulder. Layer 102/105/107; 5.2 Small jar with short everted rim; impressed decoration; coarse calcareous fabric. Pit 113 (fill 114); 5.3 Round-based jar with everted rim; coarse sandy fabric. Pit 111 (fill 112).

Plate 1: Stepped excavation of soil-percolation test pit at the east end of the site. View from east.

Plate 2: Excavation of segmented footing pits adjacent to neighbouring property to north. View from SSE.

Plate 3: Excavation of basement area in progress, with remnants of layer 107 exposed. 1m scale. View from west.

Plate 4 South facing section of pit 108. 0.3m scale. View from south.

Plate 5: East facing section of pit 111. 0.3m scale. View from east.

Plate 6: East facing section of pit 113. 0.3m scale. View from east

Plate 7: Mechanical clearance of natural deposits within basement area. View from SSE.