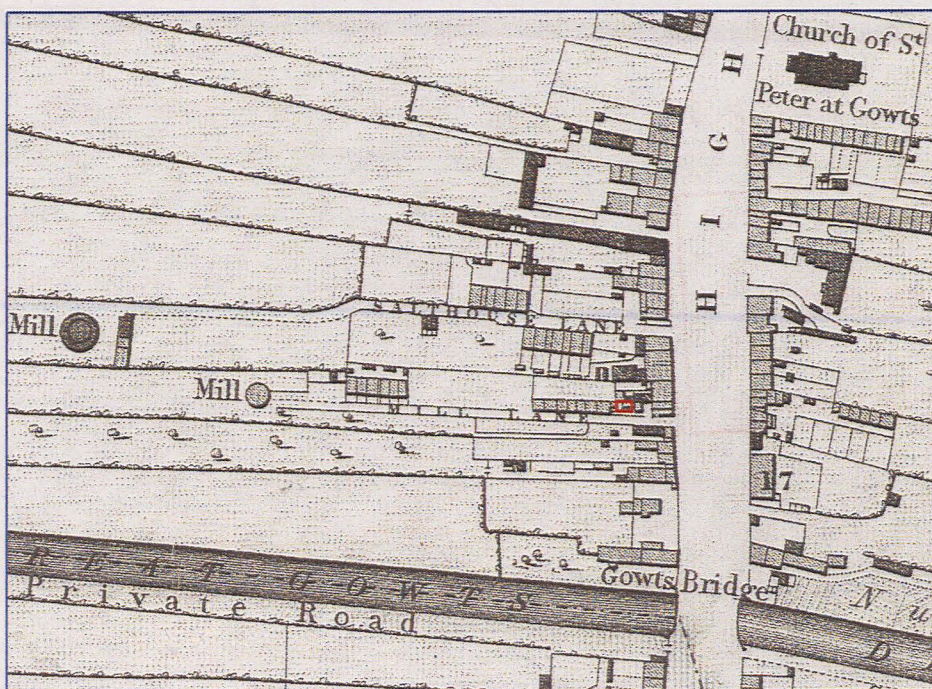


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:
LAND TO THE REAR OF 90 HIGH STREET, LINCOLN**

SK Planning Reference: 2006/0736/F
NGR: 97225 70292
AAA Site Code: HSLI 09
LCCM Accession Number: 2009.058
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-59642



Report prepared for Quaybronze Limited

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Report Number 2009/020

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Summary

- Allen Archaeological Associates was commissioned by Quaybronze Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a new development on land to the rear of 90 High Street in the city of Lincoln.
- The site lies in an area of some archaeological potential, in the southern suburbs of the Roman and medieval city. A preceding evaluation exposed a former cellar in the middle of the site.
- The watching brief indicated that much of the site had been subject to significant disturbance of the archaeological deposits, from the previously identified cellar and robber pits associated with the removal of previous structures from the site. Several undated pits were also identified, cutting through a former soil horizon. The soil horizon sealed a series of naturally-formed windblown and/or alluvial sand layers of unknown date.

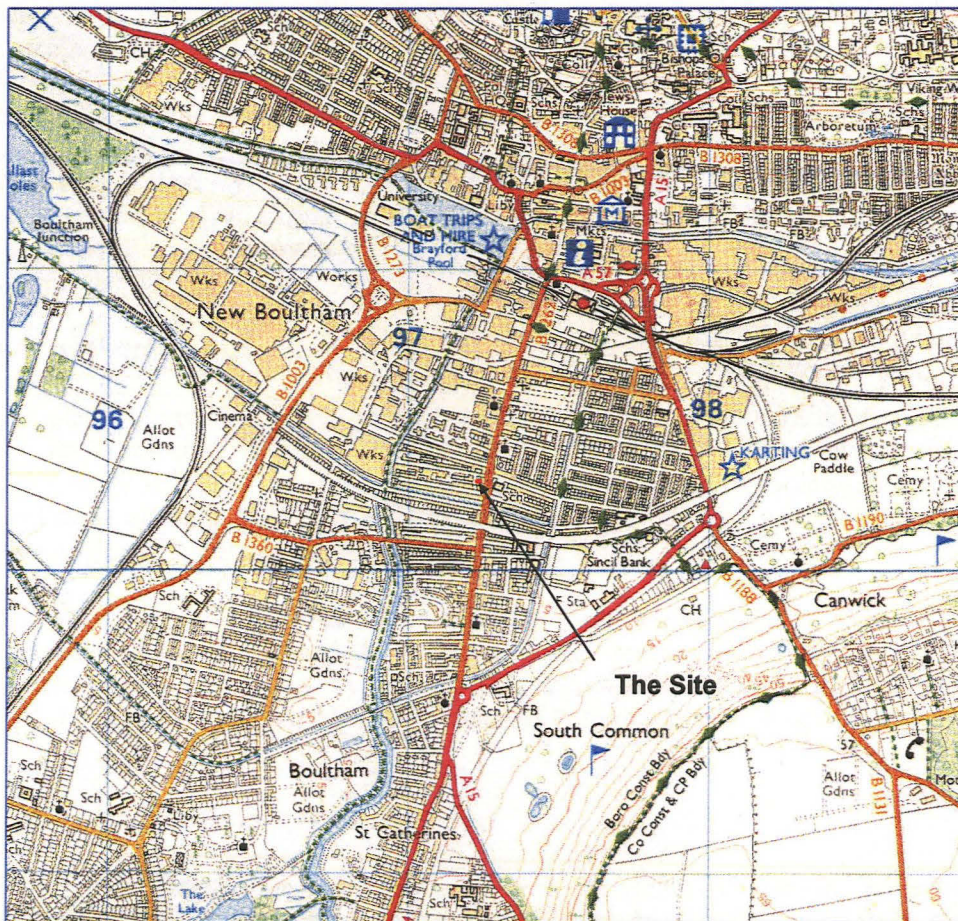


Figure 1: Site location in red at scale 1:25,000

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeological Associates (hereafter AAA) was commissioned by Quaybronze Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a new development on land to the rear of 90 High Street in Lincoln, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists 'Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs' (IfA 1999), procedures that are set out in the Lincolnshire County Council publication 'Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice' (LCC 1998), and a specification prepared by this company (Clay 2009).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to The Collection in Lincoln, within six months of the completion of the report, where it will be stored under the global accession number 2009.058.

2.0 Site location and description

- 2.1 The site is situated approximately 1km south-south-west of the modern centre of the city of Lincoln, on the west side of High Street. It is bounded by Mill Lane to the south and Princess Mews to the west. The central National Grid Reference is SK 97225 70292. Prior to the undertaking of the groundworks a brick garage that occupied the site was demolished.
- 2.2 The site is flat, lying at approximately c.7.0m OD. The geology of the area is drift undifferentiated river terrace sand and gravel, overlying solid Lower Lias clay, shale and rare limestone (British Geological Survey 1973).

3.0 Planning background

- 3.1 Full planning permission was granted for the demolition of the existing garage and construction of a single two storey dwelling (Planning Application 2006/0736/F), subject to the undertaking an archaeological evaluation of the site, which was completed in February 2007 (Clay 2007). As a final stage of mitigation, the City Archaeologist requested the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for the new development.
- 3.2 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of all groundworks for the scheme by a suitably competent archaeologist, and the recording of any archaeological remains exposed, effectively 'preserving the archaeology by record'. This approach is consistent with the guidelines that are set out in *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (1990).

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

- 4.1 There is no evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site. Recent discoveries of worked lithic material during commercial developments at St Catherine's Road, some 800m to the south of the development, and at the Brayford Pool (c.800m to the north), indicates that there was early prehistoric activity in the area of Lincoln however (Field forthcoming). Excavations in 1972 at 181-183 High Street, approximately 700m to the north of the site exposed the remains of a late Iron Age structure, attesting to pre-Roman activity in the Lincoln area (Jones and Stocker 2003).
- 4.2 Romano-British activity in the region began with the imposition of a possible fort in the area of South Common, pre-dating the legionary fortress on the north side of the Witham Valley. The possibility of an early fort has been postulated due to the presence of a number of legionary

tombstones of an early date found in this part of the city, largely around Monson Street, just to the north of the site (Jones 2002).

- 4.3 Following the abandonment of the legionary fortress in Lincoln in the latter part of the first century AD, the site was developed as a *colonia*, a settlement of retired legionary soldiers and their dependents, and an administrative centre. The city expanded rapidly beyond the confines of the former legionary fortress, and the area along the High Street, which follows the line of the Roman Ermine Street, developed as an industrial and residential suburb. The area of the current site was cut off from the suburbs to the north by a low-lying marshy area, until major landfill operations raised the ground surface in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, forming a continuous suburb of a kilometre or more from the river (Jones 2003). As with the suburbs to the east, west and north of the city, a number of burial areas have been identified in the lower suburb (*ibid.*).
- 4.4 Recent fieldwork along Mill Lane, to the west of the site (AAA 2008a and 2008b, Allen 2007 and Chavasse 2007), has identified a soil horizon of 2nd/3rd century date, formed by the dumping of domestic waste and repeated re-working as agricultural land or garden plots. A small number of pits of probable Roman date were observed cutting through this horizon. This activity appears to have been followed by a period of abandonment, defined by a thin layer of alluvial or windblown material.
- 4.5 Lincoln as a whole appears to have suffered a gradual decline in population and prosperity towards the end of the Roman period, leading to widespread abandonment and decay of much of the Roman city by the 5th century AD. In the area of the proposed development, there is little evidence of revival until the 9th or 10th century, with small quantities of pottery having been recovered from a number of sites across the lower city (Vince 2003a), including several sherds recovered from a cultivation horizon exposed in an evaluation trench off Mill Lane, c.20m to the west-south-west of the site (Allen 2007). From this period onwards, the area along the High Street developed as the medieval suburb of Wigford, principally as an industrial quarter. The Witham ran along the west side of the suburb, with an extensive quayside developing along the riverside, probably for traffic from the Fossedyke. The area to the east of the suburb was gradually reclaimed throughout the middle ages (Vince 2003b).
- 4.6 Lincoln suffered widespread population decline and a downturn in commercial activity from the 13th century onwards, due to the effects of the loss of the cloth trade, followed by the Black Death in the mid 14th century. Revival of the fortunes of the city did not begin until the later 18th century, when the city developed an extensive heavy manufacturing industry. Rapid expansion of the urban area took place during the 19th century as rows of terraced houses were built to provide accommodation for the workers, as was the case within the area of the proposed development (Stocker 2003).
- 4.7 Historical mapping for Lincoln shows housing along the High Street in 1817, with strip plots to the rear of the properties, including the area of the development (Mills and Wheeler 2004). This early map shows no evidence for Mill Lane at this time. By 1820 windmills had appeared on open ground to the west of the High Street, and although Mill Lane still did not appear on contemporary plans, it is likely that a track led past the site from the High Street westwards to the nearest mill. A further map dated to 1839 does show a narrow strip that may be interpreted as a lane or track, however this is far from clear, with the first formal mention of Mill Lane to be found on a map dated 1842.
- 4.8 The proposed development area was subject to an archaeological evaluation in February 2007, comprising a single 2m by 2m test pit. The test pit exposed the east and west walls of a former brick cellar that had been backfilled with demolition material. The cellar extended to the north and south beyond the excavated area (Clay 2007).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The monitoring of groundworks was carried out by Maria Piirainen and the author over two days; Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th April 2009. Machine excavation was carried out using a tracked mini digger fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket, to a maximum depth of 1.9m below the modern ground surface.
- 5.2 Due to the depth of the groundworks it was not safe to enter the excavated foundation trenches, so exposed plan and section surfaces were not hand cleaned. All observations of the deposits were therefore undertaken from the ground surface on health and safety grounds. A full written record of the work was completed with plans and sections drawn at appropriate scales (1:20 and 1:50) and pro-forma AAA context recording sheets were used to record each individual archaeological context.
- 5.3 A photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief, including general site shots and photographs of the sequence of deposits with appropriate scales and a north arrow. A selection of the photographs is included as an appendix (Appendix 1).

6.0 Results

- 6.1 The uppermost deposit throughout the site was a c.0.4m deep dark brown silty sand, 01, representing a modern layer of typical urban build up of accumulated refuse and soil. This sealed another similar horizon of dark grey/brown silty sand, 08 that was up to 0.6m deep.
- 6.2 At the north-east corner of the plot, both layers were cut by a large steep-sided pit, [06], containing an undated backfill of very dark grey silty sand with frequent limestone fragments and small brick and tile fragments, 07. This feature was interpreted as evidencing the robbing out of a wall during the demolition of an earlier structure.
- 6.3 Towards the east side of the site, layer 08 sealed a loose greyish/yellow sand, 05, representing a probable naturally formed layer of windblown sand. This horizon was cut by a small shallow pit, [03], as well as a large steep-sided probable robber pit [09], and a further steep-sided possible robber cut, [11]. All the features were undated.
- 6.4 Below layer 05, and extending to the base of the sequence, was a very mixed laminated deposit of mottled light grey and yellow sand, 02, reflecting probable waterborne deposition.
- 6.5 Much of the central part of the plot was taken up by the former cellar identified in the preceding evaluation. The removal of the cellar walls and the loose backfill resulted in unsafe conditions with the foundation trenches collapsing frequently.
- 6.6 To the west of the cellar, there was significantly less disturbance to the stratigraphic sequence, which was slightly different to the sequence recorded to the east. Below layer 08 was a c.0.2 – 0.3m deep brown silty sand, 16, interpreted as a possible former soil horizon. This was cut by a single steep-sided pit, [13]. The feature contained two fills; a primary natural silting deposit of brownish grey silty sand, 14, sealed by a dumped deposit of redeposited natural sand, 15.
- 6.7 Below layer 16, were layers 05 and 02, identified as possible alluvial and windblown derived deposits. These sealed two further similar layers of mottled grey and yellow sands, 17 and 18, probably reflecting windblown or waterborne deposition. The two layers were separated by a thin lens of black sand, 19, with abundant manganese, possibly indicating the accretion of minerals in a wet or waterlogged environment.

7.0 Discussion and conclusions

- 7.1 The watching brief identified significant disturbance across the site, as a result of the robbing out of earlier structures, as well as the cellar of an earlier building in the central part of the site. A number of possible pit-like features were also identified, although their date and function could not be established.
- 7.2 The watching brief also identified a largely natural sequence of windblown or alluvial sand layers forming at an unknown time. These layers were sealed by a possible former soil, and two layers of material typical of the soil accumulation and levelling that occurs in an urban environment. Recent fieldwork along Mill Lane, to the west of the site has identified a broadly similar sequence, with a deep soil horizon producing Roman to post-medieval finds, sealing naturally formed windblown and alluvial layers (AAA 2008a and 2008b, Allen 2007 and Chavasse 2007).
- 7.3 The previous fieldwork along Mill Lane identified a long sequence of soil development creating a layer around 1.5m deep, reflecting continued working and re-working of the soil over a sustained period of time. The soil horizon identified on this site was only 0.3m thick however, and may have been substantially truncated during several episodes of recent building work on the site. Historic map evidence suggests that the site was occupied by buildings from at least 1842 until the present day (Mills and Wheeler 2004).

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

- 8.1 The archaeological watching brief methodology was appropriate to the sale and nature of the development. It has shown that there has been significant disturbance to the archaeological resource on the site, and that the development has had a negligible impact on the remains.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeological Associates would like to thank Quaybronze Limited for this commission and for their cooperation during the fieldwork.

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11.0 Site archive

- 11.1 The documentary archive is currently in the possession of Allen Archaeological Associates. It will be submitted to 'The Collection' in Lincoln within six months of the completion of the project, where it will be stored under the global accession number 2009.058.

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General view of the site during the groundworks, looking east from Mill Lane.



Plate 2: West facing section, showing probable robber cuts [06], [09] and [11]. Looking east-south-east



Plate 3: North-north-east facing section, showing pit [13] cutting possible soil horizon 16. The wall of the former cellar can be seen to the left of shot. Looking south-south-east

Appendix 2: Context summary list and deposit model

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation	OD height (approx)	Deposit model code
01	Layer	Dark brown silty sand, rare CBM fragments. Cut by [06]	Modern urban build up/levelling layer	6.31m	MODT
02	Layer	Mottled light grey and brownish yellow sand. Sealed by 05, seals 18	Possible alluvial sand layer	5.66m	TBD
03	Cut	Shallow sided, concave base pit. Contains 04, cuts 05	Undated pit cut	5.45m	TBD
04	Fill	Dark brownish grey silty sand, rare charcoal flecks	Natural silting of pit [03]	5.45m	TBD
05	Layer	Loose greyish/yellow sand	Possible natural windblown sand	5.45m	TBD
06	Cut	Large irregular pit, steep side to north, moderate to south. Contains 06, cuts 01	Possible robber pit	6.30m	TBD
07	Fill	Very dark grey/black sand, rare stones and CBM fragments	Backfill of [06]	6.30m	TBD
08	Layer	Dark grey/brown silty sand, sealed by 01	Modern urban build up/levelling layer	5.21m (base)	EMODB
09	Cut	Steep sided pit, slightly concave base. Contains 10, cuts 05	Possible robber pit	5.57m	TBD
10	Fill	Very dark grey/brown silty sand, occasional CBM fragments. Sealed by 08	Backfill of pit [09]	5.57m	TBD
11	Cut	Steep sided cut with concave base. Contains 12	Possible robber cut	5.58m	TBD
12	Fill	Very dark brown/grey silty sand, occasional CBM fragments. Sealed by 08	Backfill of robber cut [12]	5.58m	TBD
13	Cut	Pit with steep W side, moderate E side, concave base. Contains 14 and 15, cuts 16	Pit, unknown date/function	5.59m	TBD
14	Fill	Brownish grey silty sand. Sealed by 15	Primary silting of pit [13]	5.55m	TBD
15	Fill	Mixed grey and light yellow brown sand. Seals 14	Secondary backfill of pit [13]	5.59m	TBD
16	Layer	Brown slightly silty sand, cut by [13]	Possible buried soil horizon	5.64m	TBD
17	Layer	Mottled mid grey, pale grey and light yellow/brown laminated sand. Sealed by 18 and 19	Sequence of natural flood events	4.65m	TBD
18	Layer	Mottled yellow, yellow grey sand. Seals 17 and 19	Natural flood horizon	4.92m	TBD
19	Layer	Thin lens of black sand with abundant manganese staining. Sealed by 18	Natural lens of mineral rich sand	4.70m	TBD

CBM: Ceramic building material



Figure 2: Site location plan, with the development area outlined in red at scale 1:1000

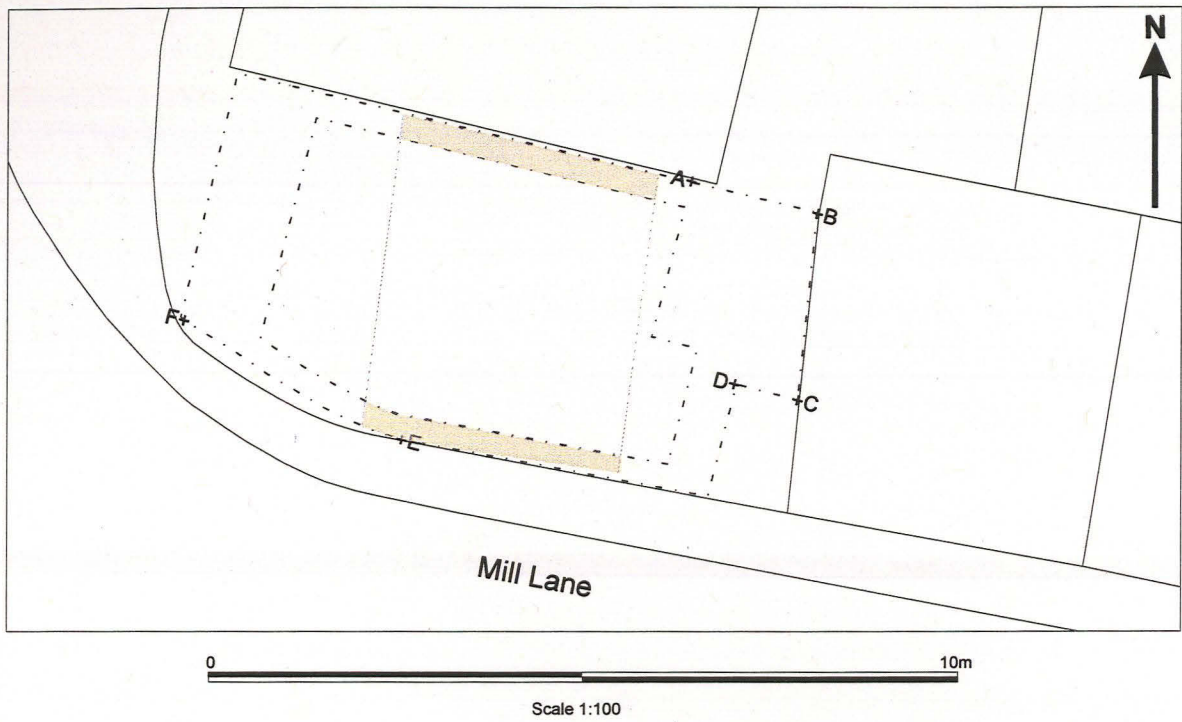


Figure 3: Plan of the foundation trenches at scale 1:100. Approximate extent of former cellar shaded grey

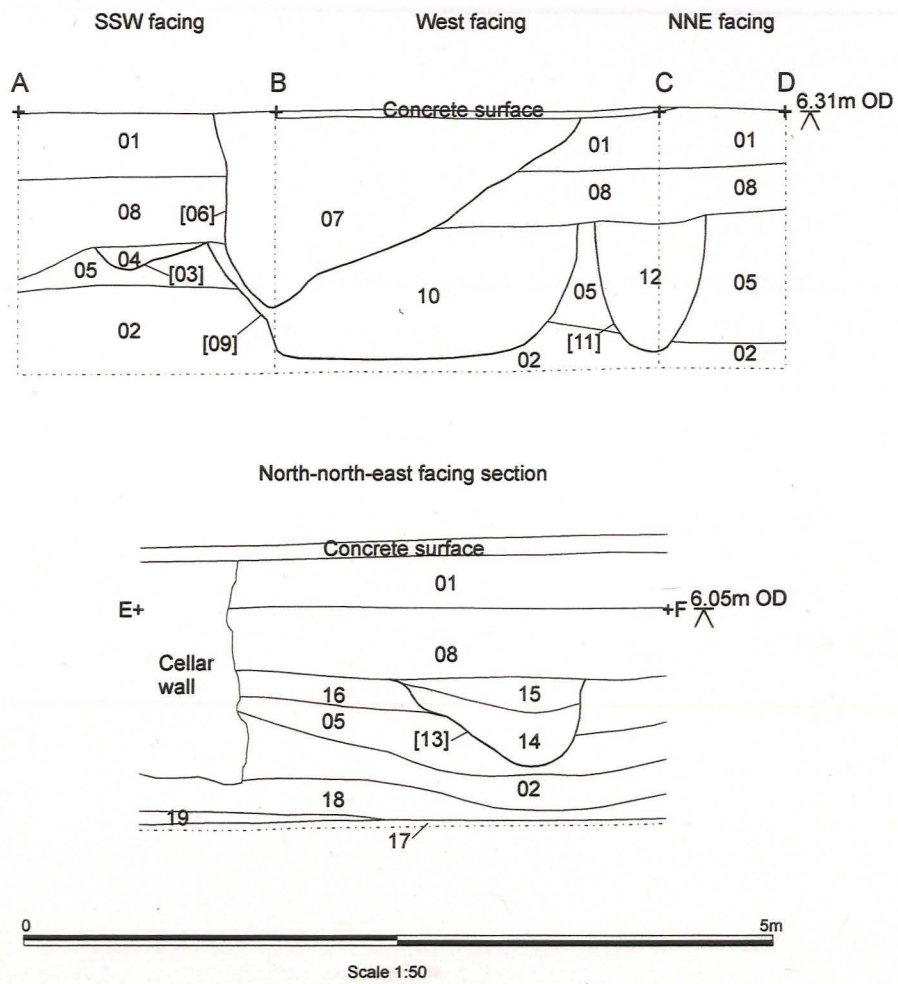


Figure 4: Sections A - D and E - F at scale 1:50