



Trent & Peak
ARCHAEOLOGY

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION OF THE
BULL'S HEAD INN SITE
HANFORD, STOKE-ON-TRENT,
STAFFORDSHIRE, 2010**



The University of
Nottingham

**An Archaeological Evaluation
at the Bull's Head Inn site,
Hanford, Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire, 2010**

A report for Avery Healthcare Ltd

*by
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SUMMARY

- Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA), University of Nottingham, was commissioned in December 2010 by Avery Healthcare Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site of the Bull's Head Inn, situated at the junction of New Inn Lane and Bankhouse Road at Hanford, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire. It is centred at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SJ 86805 42010.
- Following a desk-based assessment of the site, the Local Planning Archaeologist at Stoke-on-Trent City Council recommended that the proposed development area should be evaluated for its archaeological potential by the excavation of an area approximately 50 square metres in size. In addition, at the request of the client, three test pits were machine excavated adjacent to perimeter walls to ascertain their foundations.
- The site is situated at a crossroads position on the original road between Stone to Newcastle-under-Lyme, a road that probably has Roman origins. A former public house and adjoining buildings once occupied part of the site and these were replaced in 1938 by the present building, an inter-war roadhouse. It is now proposed to demolish the existing building for a new development.
- An area to the north of the building was excavated by machine and hand cleaned. Modern foundation deposits for the tarmac car park were encountered, laid directly onto the underlying natural clay geology. Modern services were the only features present, cut through the clay. Three test pits were machine excavated adjacent to the walls enclosing the car park to ascertain the depth of the wall foundations. These too were found to be devoid of archaeological deposits.
- Although from what is known about the site, it was considered to have the potential to contain buried archaeological deposits, the evaluation trench confirmed that the original public house and most of its associated outbuildings were probably located outside the study area. In addition, extensive landscaping and ground level reduction to the underlying natural during the construction of the Bull's Head Inn in 1938 appears to have removed what structures or associated activities may have once existed under the present car parking area. These findings, together with the sizeable cellarage beneath the existing building, indicate that overall, the site now probably retains little remaining archaeological potential.

The Bull's Head Inn site at Hanford,
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

M. Hurford and R. Sheppard

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1. Introduction

This report is the result of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Trent and Peak Archaeology (TPA), University Nottingham, in December 2010 on the site of the car park of the Bull's Head Inn, situated at the junction of New Inn Lane and Bank House Road at Hanford, to the south of Stoke on Trent in Staffordshire (Fig. 1).

The work was commissioned by DWA Architects on behalf of Avery Health Care Ltd in advance of the site's proposed redevelopment; this will entail the demolition of the Bull's Head Inn and the construction of a new 61 bed residential care home with associated car park and gardens.

A previous archaeological desk-based assessment (Sheppard 2010a) established that the site contained archaeological potential (see below for a brief historical outline of the site). It was considered that buried remains could be disturbed by the ground works.

The Local Planning Authority Archaeologist at Stoke-on-Trent City Council recommended that an area of 50 square metres be evaluated archaeologically in relation to Planning Application No. SOT/51268. This would be carried out in accordance with appropriate professional standards, e.g. as issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). The fieldwork was carried out on the 2-3 December 2010. The TPA code is BHH.2.

2. Historical Background

The site lies about 250m east of the River Trent on a raised area above its floodplain, located immediately down-slope from the 125m O.D. contour line. The underlying geology consists of mudstones, siltstones and sandstone that weathers to clay towards the surface. The geology includes coal that has been mined at depths of 430-1050m.

The original road from Stone to Newcastle-under-Lyme may be of Roman origin and is likely to have passed through the eastern margins of the site.

Hanford is mentioned in Domesday Book in 1086 but the actual position of the early village of Hanford is not clear as no trace of it has been identified. It is assumed to have been on high ground south of the river crossing but 18th century maps suggest that Hanford was situated south-east of the bridge, and probably closer to where a cluster of medieval finds have been recovered, well to the north-east of the study area.

The road Stone to Newcastle road is thought to have been part of the medieval route from London to Carlisle and to have passed through Hanford (and by the site), crossing the Trent at Hanford Bridge. Field pattern evidence suggests that the road

may have once run in a more southerly direction from the study area, and was diverted eastwards when Trentham Park was laid out. This earlier route may have passed through the east part of the site. Part of the route from Stone was diverted westwards in c.1600 but it continued past the study area until the 1830s, when a more direct route to Hanford Bridge was opened. Made a turnpike in 1714, this will have eventually provided a good reason for the founding of a public house to cater for passing traffic on an important routeway.

Deeds for the site exist going back to 1738 when it was owned by the Corbett family. The site was probably occupied by a farm for much of the 18th century and the farmhouse converted into the Bull's Head Inn, possibly in the 1790s. Other buildings were used for stabling for a possible coaching inn. The site was sold to the Marquis of Stafford in c.1811, and again to Samuel Allsopp & Sons Ltd in 1914.

After the demolition of the old public house, a new building was opened on the 2nd September 1938, to the south of the earlier building, whose former position now lies beneath the widened crossroad. Designed in Tudor style by Ind Coupe and Allsopp's architect W. Blair, the *Newcastle Times* described the new building as being 'the most remarkable hotel for miles around.' Locals apparently referred to it as 'Ye Old Coaching House No. 3.' It has since been extended to the rear and original leaded windows only survive in the east gable end. The rest of the exterior and most of the ground floor area are as originally built and decorated. Although not listed the building was deemed to be a good example of its type and to be a building of local interest. In the light of this an historic building report and photographic record were produced in conjunction with the desk-based site assessment (Sheppard 2010b).

The desk-based assessment concluded that although the footprint of the earlier public house now lies outside the study area, other buildings and yards associated with the public house (and former farm) may still lay in the north and east parts of the site, within the present car parking area. Traces of post-medieval archaeology may remain, along with likely demolition material.

3. Results

Evaluation Trench

An evaluation trench measuring 10m x 5m was machine excavated under archaeological supervision to the north of the Bull's Head Inn, within the current car park (Figs 2-4). Beneath the tarmac of the car park (0001) there were two foundation layers, an intermittent layer comprising tile and brick (0002) c.0.10m thick, beneath which there was a layer extending over the entirety of the excavated area consisting of brick and concrete (0003). The base of this was c. 0.30m below the surface of the tarmac. These layers formed the foundation for the car park. Layer (0003) rested upon the underlying natural light red sandy clay geology (0004). The nature of this material was checked by the excavation of a deep sondage or test-pit in the north-

east corner of the trench. Modern services and a manhole were also present within the trench, cutting through the natural. There was no surviving subsoil layer above the natural.

Test Pits

Three test pits measuring 1m x 1m were machine excavated under archaeological supervision (Figs 2, 5). Test Pit 01 was located in the car park to the east of the Bull's Head Inn and Test Pits 2 and 3 to the south and south--west. The test pits were excavated to assess the foundation depth of the walls enclosing the car park.

The test pits revealed that the tarmac of the car park rested upon the foundation layer of brick and concrete rubble (0003) present in the evaluation trench to a depth of between 0.32m to 0.36m below the surface. Test pits 01 and 03 both had a reddish brown shale layer (0005) between 0.06m and 0.10m in thickness, beneath the rubble foundation layer, which rested on yellow brown silty clay; the latter contained coal and charcoal fragments (0006). The clay layer (0006) was below the rubble foundation layer (0003) in Test Pit 02. The presence of coal fragments and charcoal flecks in layer (0006) indicates that this deposit is a layer of disturbed material, most probably natural clay that was excavated and then re-deposited during the construction of the brick wall.

List of contexts

- 0001 Car park tarmac
- 0002 Brick and tile foundation for car park
- 0003 Brick and concrete foundation for car park
- 0004 Natural sandy clay geology
- 0005 Shale
- 0006 Re-deposited natural sandy clay geology

4. Conclusions

Although from what is known about the site, it was considered to have the potential to contain buried archaeological deposits, the evaluation trench confirmed that the original public house and most of its associated outbuildings were probably located outside the study area. In addition, extensive landscaping and ground level reduction to the underlying natural during the construction of the Bull's Head Inn in 1938 appears to have removed what structures or associated activities may have once existed under the present car parking area. These findings, together with the sizeable cellarage beneath the existing building, indicate that overall, the site now probably retains little remaining archaeological potential.

5. References

Sheppard, R., 2010a. 'An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment of the Bull's Head Inn Site at Hanford, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire'. Unpublished report by Trent and Peak Archaeology, Nottingham

Sheppard, R., 2010b. 'An Historic Building Record of the Bull's Head Inn at Hanford, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire'. Unpublished report by Trent and Peak Archaeology, Nottingham

6. Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Martin Smith of DWA Architects for his assistance in providing necessary documentation and for liaising with the client, Avery Health Care Ltd, and other organisations involved in the project. Also, thanks to colleagues Jamie Patrick and Rob Barnett for their assistance during the evaluation. Thanks are also due to also to Paul Boulton for providing a machine and driver at such short notice, and the landlord of the Bull's Head Inn for his co-operation during the undertaking.

ILLUSTRATIONS

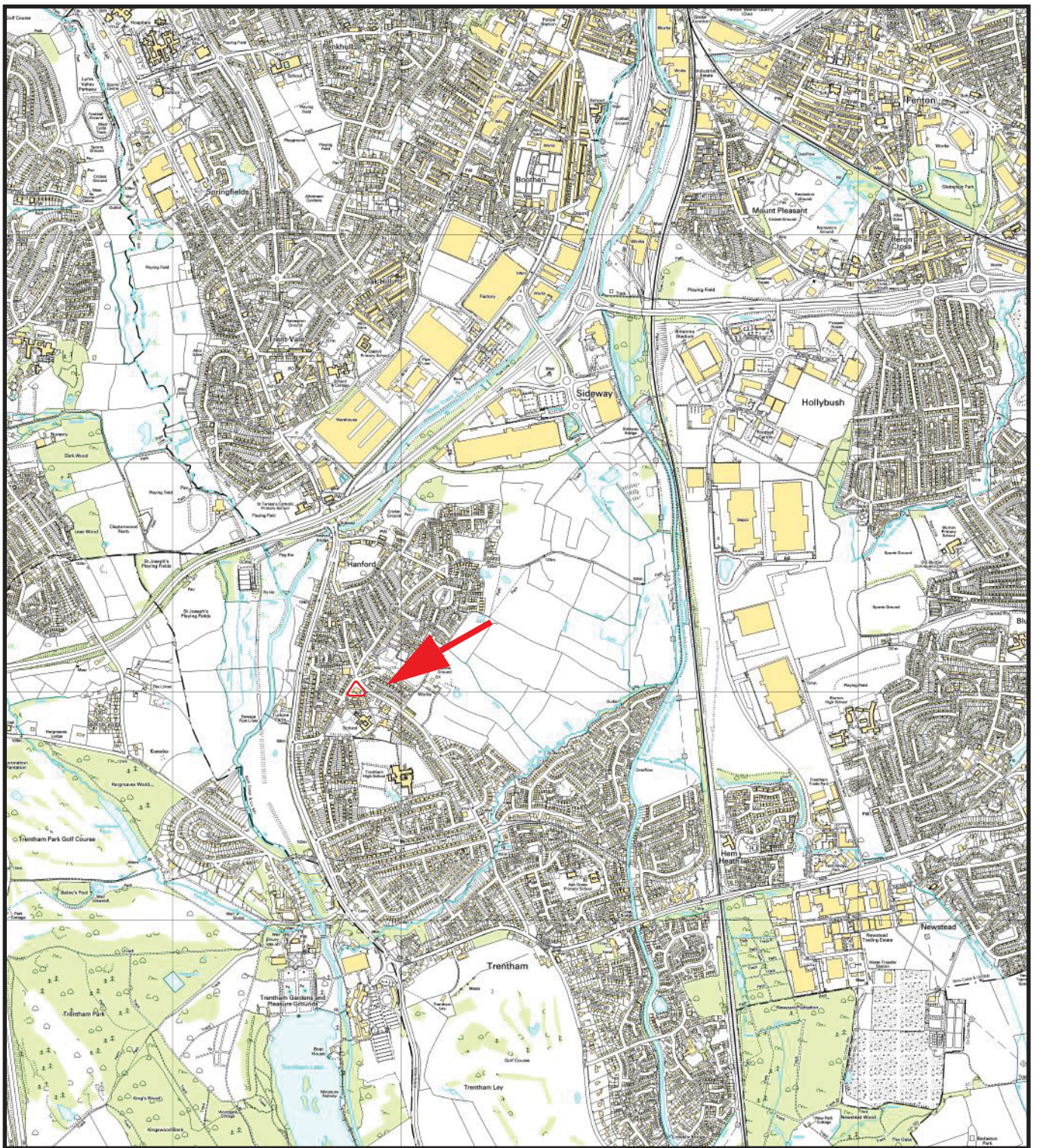


Figure 1: Location of the Bull's Head Public House site in Hanford, south of Stoke-on-Trent in Staffordshire. Scale 1:25,000. (Ordnance Survey map reproduced with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright Licence No. AL 100020618).



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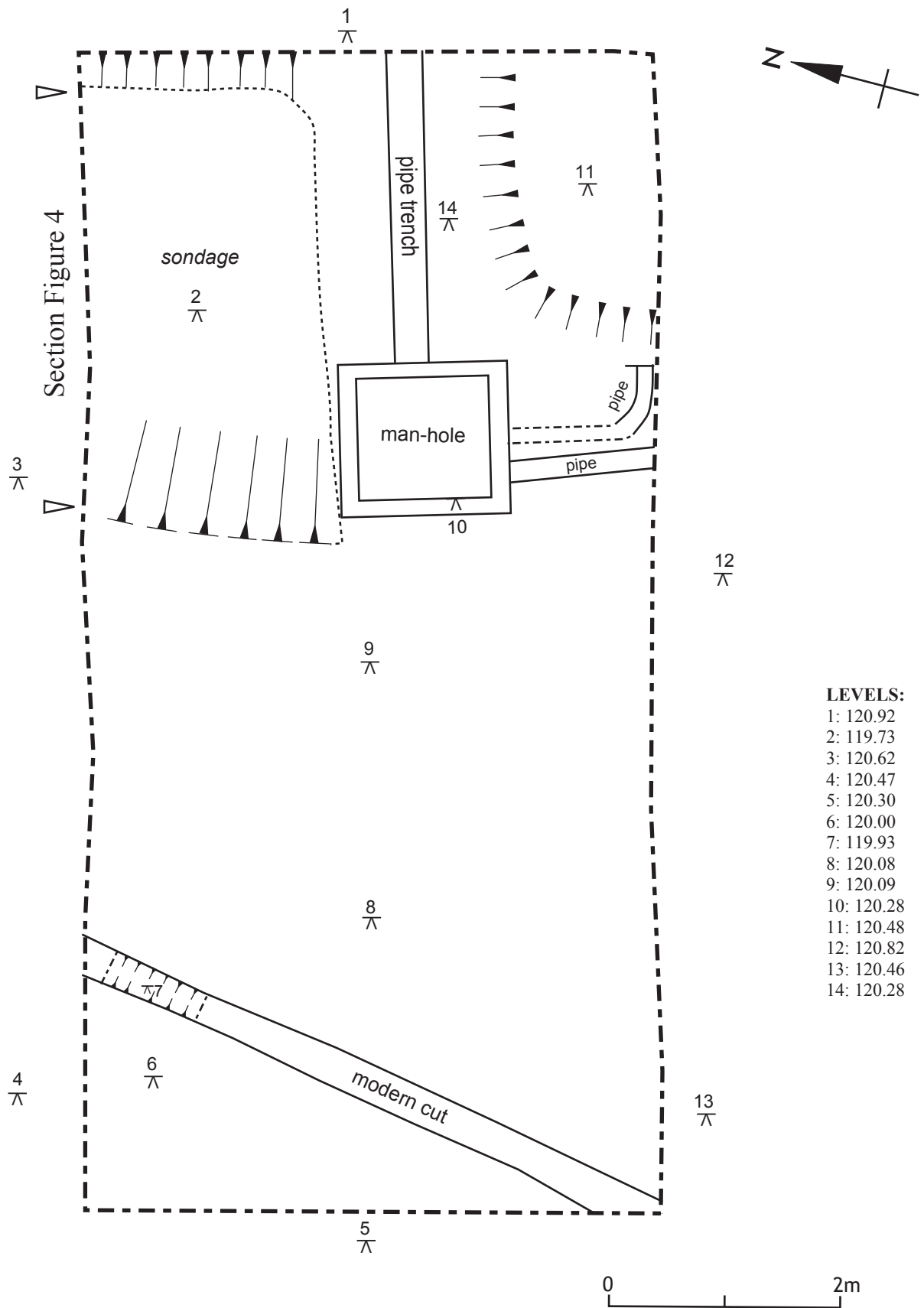


Figure 3: Plan of the evaluation trench in the car park of the Bull's Head Inn, Hanford, Staffordshire, excavated in December 2010. Scale 1:50.

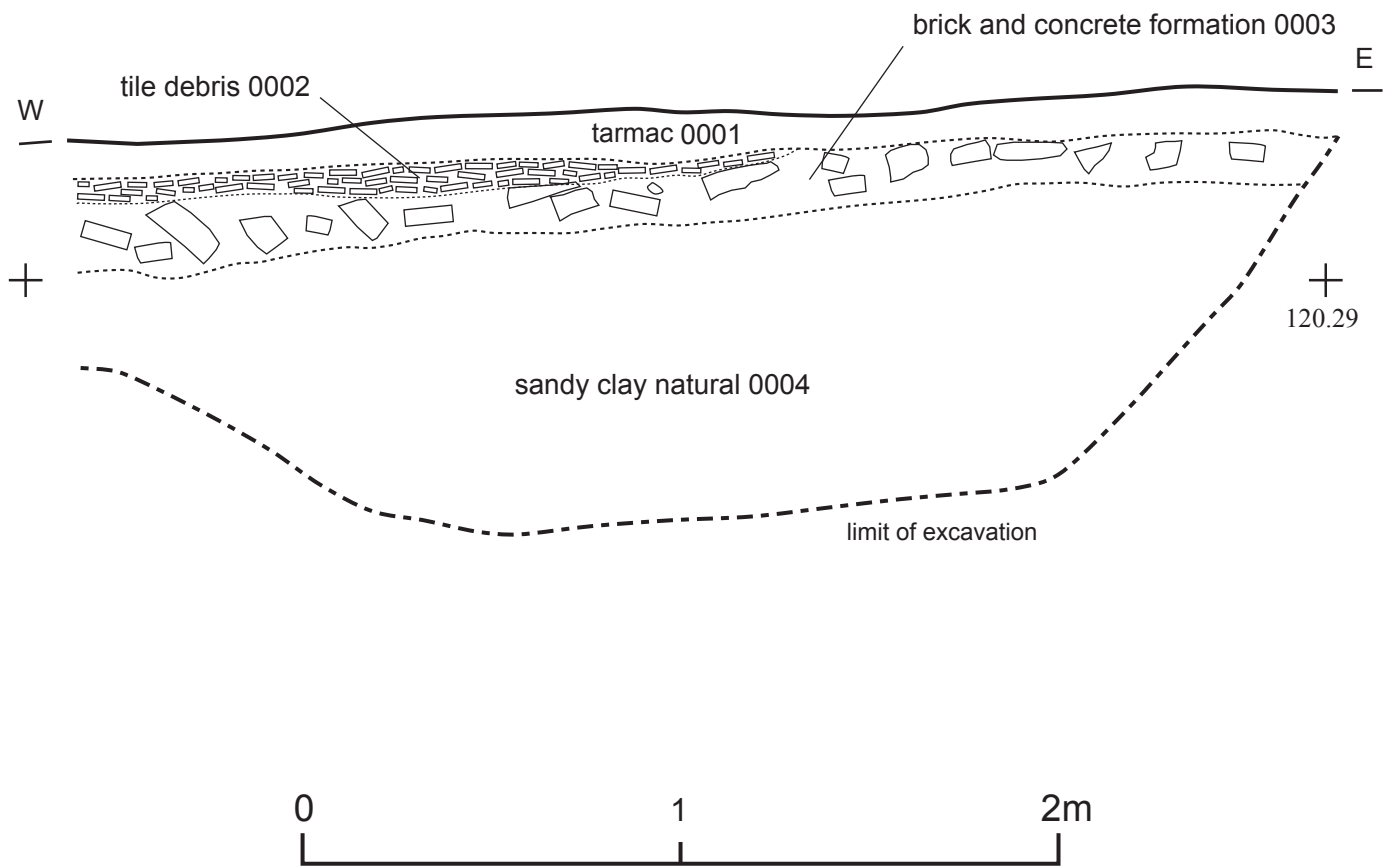


Figure 4: South-facing section of the sondage in the archaeological evaluation trench in the car park of the Bull's Head Inn, Hanford, Staffordshire. Scale 1:20.

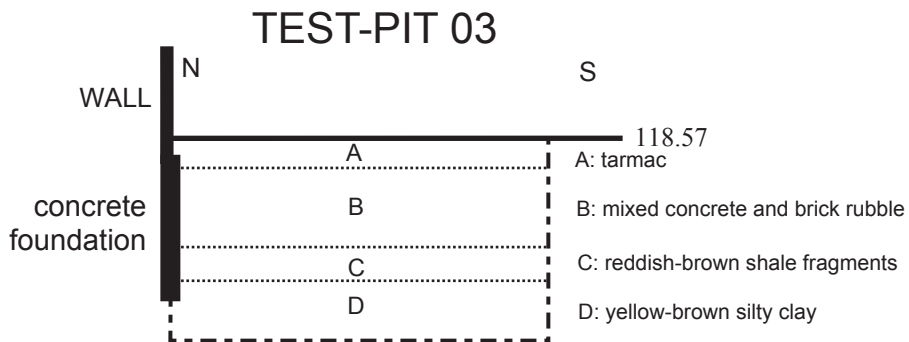
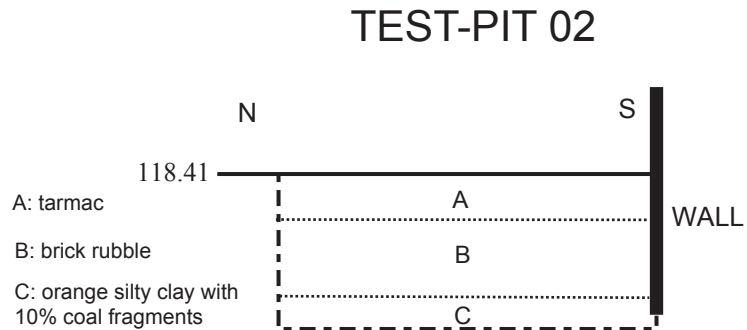
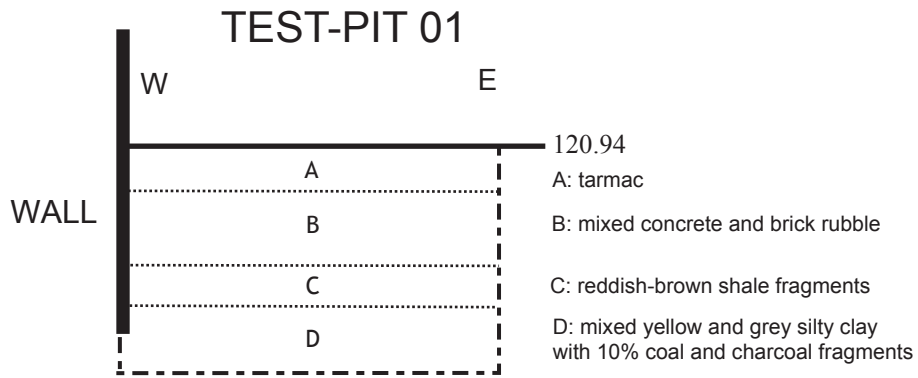


Figure 5: Sections of test-pits dug adjacent to perimeter walls at the Bull's Head Inn site, Hanford, Staffordshire. Scale 1:20.



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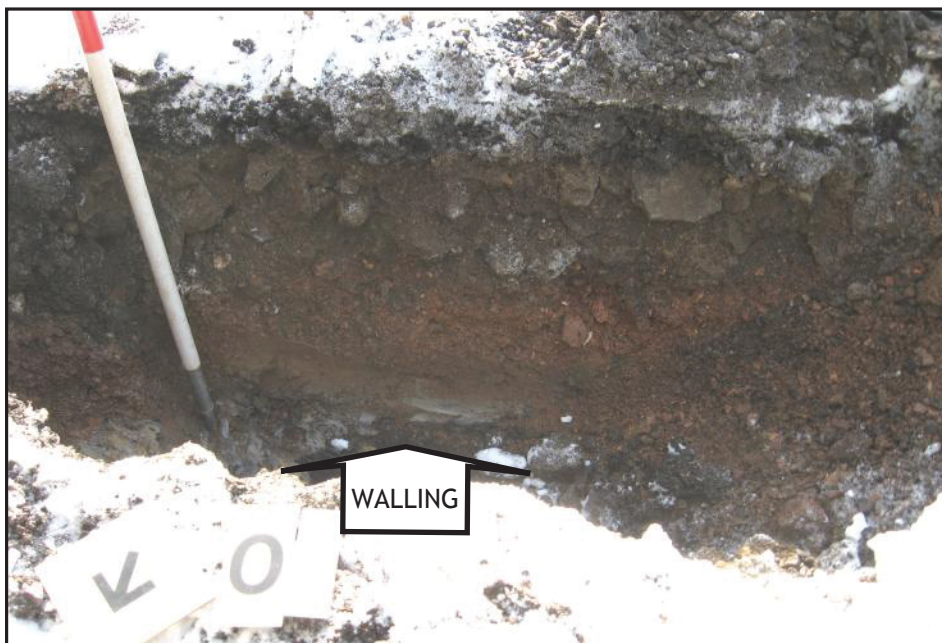


Plate 4: Test-pit 01 at the Bull's Head Inn site.

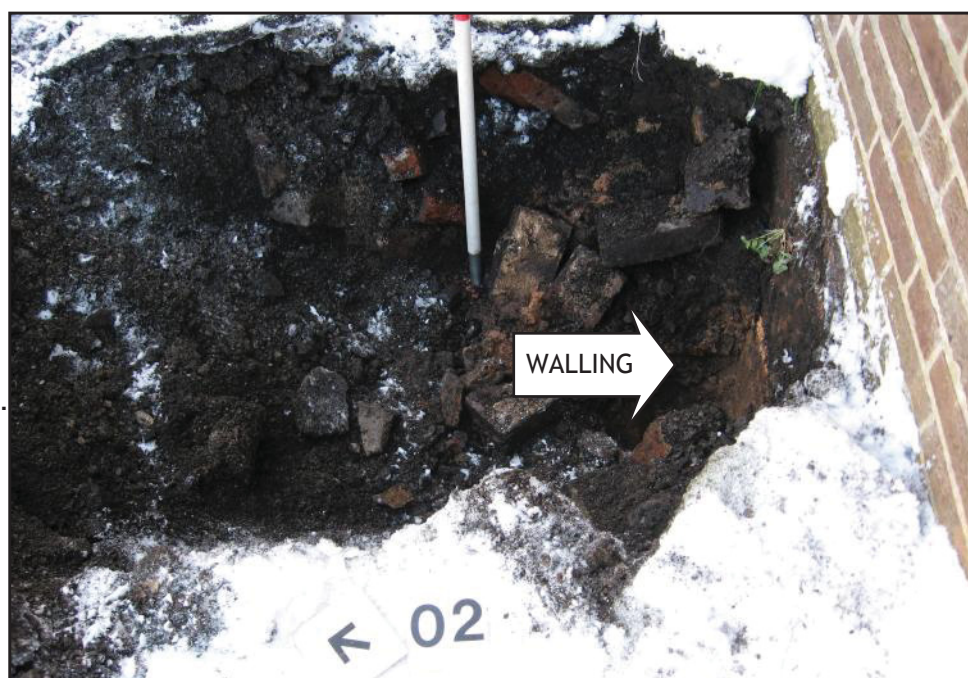


Plate 5: Test-pit 02 at the Bull's Head Inn site.

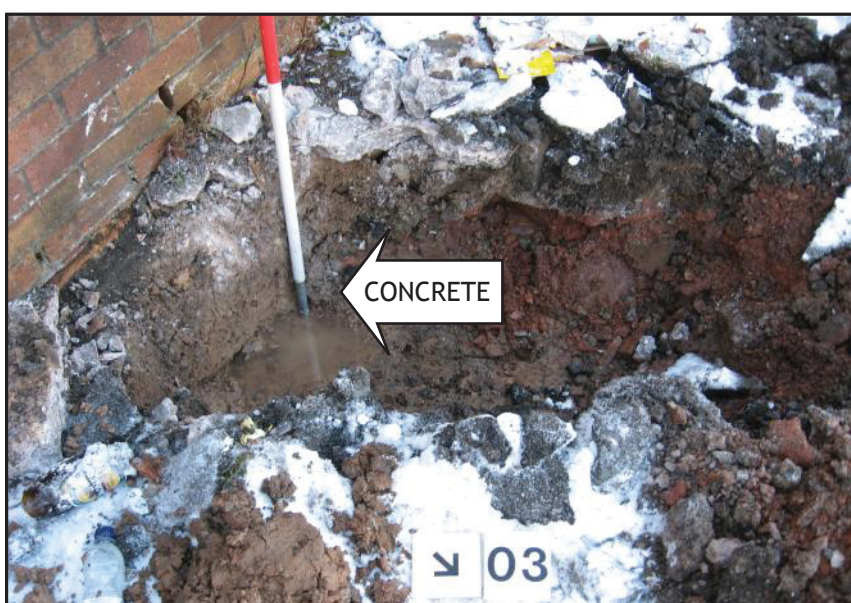


Plate 6: Test-pit 03 at the Bull's Head Inn site.