

11 -12 HIGH STREET, WISBECH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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Abstract

From the 7th September to the 26th November 2020 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological evaluation at 11 – 12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire (TL 46135 09635) on behalf of Whitfield Property Investments Ltd. This was be achieved by excavating three test pits, measuring 3.00m x 3.00m

The site had a high potential for features and finds relating to the medieval and post medieval periods (in particular the castle/palace remains). There was a high potential for encountering alluvial flood deposits dating to the early castle formation and onwards, with a possibility of features associated with the periphery of the castle defences and associated medieval town. The potential for features and finds relating to the Saxon period was considered to be low. There was a negligible potential for features and finds relating to all other dates.

The evaluation revealed two phases of activity within the sites bounds.

The earliest phase can be related to the before mentioned alluvial flood deposits dating from the medieval period. This is represented by an alluvial silt layer which contained 13th century pottery, medieval CBM and Oyster shells. This layer was encountered in both test pit 1 and 3.

The second phase of activity relates to the post medieval redevelopment of the site. 5 features were identified across the site relating to the post medieval period. The wall footings all appear to have been for internal structures within numbers 11-12 High street that were demolished following the modern internal development of the buildings in the 20th century.

Overall, the evaluation was successful in identifying alluvial deposits dating to the inundation of the area in the medieval period. While other nearby archaeological interventions (ECB5446) have encountered the same deposits, no dating has been recovered from them. While the sample size of the site was small it has allowed a consistent deposit model to be built allowing a better understanding of the medieval context in this area of the high street to be formed.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

From the 7th September to the 26th November 2020 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological evaluation at 11 – 12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire (TL 46135 09635) on behalf of Whitfield Property Investments Ltd. The archaeological work was undertaken as a condition of planning applications F/YR19/0509/F and F/YR19/0510/LB, for the re-development of the site occupied by two adjoining properties, Nos 11 and 12 High Street, which both represent former town houses dating back to the 18th century, and are afforded statutory protection by virtue of their Grade II listed status. (Fig. 1).

The evaluation was undertaken in response to a design brief issued by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET) (Robinson Zeki, L. 26th June 2020) requires a programme of test pitting to sample the area threatened by developments. This was be achieved by excavating three test pits, measuring 3.00m x 3.00m with an additional test pit held in contingency. The test pits will be excavated using a 3600 tracked, mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.



2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION (Fig. 1)

The site is located on the south side of the High Street, Wisbech, 29km north- east of Peterborough. The site lies at approximately 5.50m AOD.

2.1 Site Geology

The natural bedrock geology is described as Ampthill Clay Formation - Mudstone. This sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 157 to 164 million years ago in the Jurassic Period when the local environment was previously dominated by shallow seas, (BGS, 2020).

The superficial geology is described as Tidal Flat Deposits - Clay and Silt. These superficial deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period when the local environment was previously dominated by shorelines, (BGS, 2020).



3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

The archaeological investigation is to be carried out on the recommendation of the local planning authority, following guidance laid down by the National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF, DCLD 2019). The relevant local planning policy is the Fenland Local Plan (adopted May 2014).



4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (Figs. 2 & 3)

The following archaeological background draws on the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) (1km search centred on the site, reduced to a more relevant smaller area due to the large amount of data and the nature of the site), English Heritage PastScape (www.pastscape.org.uk), and the Archaeological Data Service (www.ads.ahds.ac.uk) (ADS) (Fig. 2, 3 and 4).

4.1 Saxon

The earliest record (04012) returned by the CHER search relates to the Saxon period. Located approximately 500m to the north-west of the evaluation site the record refers to the recovery of two T-headed brooches found in the foundations of Wisbech Corn Exchange in 1858. The presence of the two brooches was interpreted that it is likely Saxon burials are located nearby.

4.2 Medieval

The medieval period is well represented in the data. The closest and most significant monument record to the evaluation site relates to Wisbech Castle (01926). The evaluation site lies just 90m north west of the keep of Wisbech Castle. The first fortification of this site was built in c. 1072 on the orders of William I and was likely a timber structure; a typical construction methodology for very early post-conquest castles (although no evidence has been discovered for this earlier castle). In 1086 the castle was rebuilt in stone, the buildings covered 2 acres, the whole area of the castle being 4 acres. In 1236 the castle was badly damaged by a sea flood inundation and was rebuilt only to be dismantled before the close of Henry III's reign. During the 15th century, repairs were becoming too costly to maintain the structure and a new building was started in 1478, conducted by John Morton (the then Bishop of Ely) and renamed as the Bishops Palace. Further construction and demolition occurred during the 15th, 17th and 19th centuries (including its use as a prison), removing nearly all trace of the earthworks of the original castle. A sketch plan of the castle/Bishops Palace, made in 1794 when the site was finally cleared, shows that it was nearly circular in form and probably belonged to the motte and bailey type. It is said to have had a moat 40ft wide towards the town, and this is clearly



shown on the 1794 plan round the northern side of the enclosure fronting the market place.

Excavations 118m north of the current site at New Yard Inn (ECB2878) uncovered deep alluvial deposits (caused by flood inundation) resting over the top of a possible rodden. The site was later occupied (in the latter half of the 16th century) by a possible inn, with associated waste pits and post-holes hinting at timber structures.

Some 166m north east of the site excavation occurred at Market Mews (ECB436). This revealed deep medieval deposits with the earliest dating to the 13th century. Eight distinct building phases were present on the site, interrupted by episodic alluvial flooding deposits. The deposit model at this site extends beyond 3m in depth. The Market Mews site represents a typical stratigraphic glimpse of Wisbech – occupation followed by flooding, followed by reclamation and re-occupation.

100m to the east of the current site is Wisbech Library. During evaluation and further investigations (ECB2970/3101) medieval deposits were unearthed possibly relating to the adjacent castle. One large feature (not fully excavated due to depth) has been interpreted as relating to the castle moat, with pottery recovered from its fills dating to the 11th to 12th centuries.

During community investigations within the castles bounds in 2009 (ECB3252) directly to the current sites south various test-pits, trenching and geophysical survey were undertaken. This revealed many demolition deposits, ditches and pits and an alluvial deposit possibly dating to around the time of the Bishops Palace.

Some 250m to the current sites south east, at 14 Church Terrace (ECB2143) an excavation uncovered peripheral medieval settlement of the area with midden deposits dating to the 13th to 15th centuries. Again, as is typical of the area, these reclamation dumping deposits were interrupted by sporadic flooding, setting down alluvial deposition in the area.

Finally, a significant record is the Saint Peter and Saint Paul's Church (14828) some 175m to the current sites south east. This was the main parish church of Wisbech dating originally to the 12th century, with further additions in the 15th and 16th centuries. The original tower lay to the west. The church has typical associated burial grounds, but these are highly unlikely to extend into the current investigation areas bounds.



The evaluation sites proximity to the medieval core of the town and castle bounds represents a high potential for archaeological deposits. Indeed, when coupled with the location of the nearby Town Bridge (MCB19789) (which from its earliest documented reference in the medieval period) the area can be considered a focal point of medieval activity. It is highly likely that alluvial flooding deposition will be encountered on the site, with probable activity associated with the castle and later Bishops Palace being encountered, be this core castle deposits or associated medieval occupation of the site.

4.3 Post-medieval and modern

During the New Yard Inn investigations mentioned above (ECB2878), industrial and domestic waste deposition occurred on the site from the 16th through 17th centuries. Any earlier structures were removed in the 18th century, with development occurring on the site during this and the 19th century, typical of post-medieval settlement expansion.

Some 135m to the north east of the current site, during a watching brief (ECB1969) at 27 Hill Street, post-medieval floor surfaces were found, including a brick-built hearth place.

The Market Place investigations (ECB435) 80m to the northeast produced post-hole evidence associated with the pre 1811 market stalls located within the sites bounds.

As was unearthed in the New Yard Inn investigations, the Library (ECB3101) evaluation 100m east of the current site unearthed evidence of later post-medieval (probably Georgian) settlement expansion in the form of terraced cellaring.

There is a high density of post-medieval buildings in the area surrounding the current site, all of which carry a Grade II listing. Examples of these are DCB1171, DCB1876, DCB1965 and DCB2070. Both numbers 11 and 12 High Street carry Grade II listings.

Number 11 (DCB2049) is an early 18th century shop. Built from Reddened local brown brick the building is made up from four storeys, two 'bays'. There are Brick bands between floors and a parapet with stone coping. Flush-framed hung sash windows without glazing bars are set in cambered gauged brick arches.



Number 12 (DCB1966) is of later design but still 18th century. Built from painted local brown brick it is also four storeys, with two 'bays'. It has the same parapet as number 11, with stone coping and features recessed hung sash windows in cambered gauged brick arches with stone cills, first and second floor windows without glazing bars, nine-paned hung sash windows at third floor.

4.4 Archaeological Potential

Given the above records the site had a high potential for features and finds relating to the medieval and post medieval periods (in particular the castle/palace remains), should modern truncation not have been removed from those features. There was a high potential for encountering alluvial flood deposits (of up to and over 3.0m depth) dating to the early castle formation and onwards, with a possibility of features associated with the periphery of the castle defences and associated medieval town. The potential for features and finds relating to the Saxon period was considered to be low. There was a negligible potential for features and finds relating to all other dates.



5.0 PROJECT AIMS

The CHET brief stated that the evaluation should aim to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. An adequate representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains are potentially threatened was to be studied (Robinson Zeki, L. 2020, Brief, Section 3.1). Due to the unsafe nature of the site was necessary for the internal demolition to occur before the test pits are excavated. Once this has been undertaken the pits can be excavated. This comprised of three test pits, measuring 3.00m x 3.00m with an additional test pit held in contingency.

Both the WSI, fieldwork and resulting report/archiving will be undertaken in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation, 2020.

All aspects of the trial trenching will be undertaken in accordance with the *CIfA Standard* and *Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, 2020 and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, 2003.



6.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Research objectives for the project were in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24 (Medlycott, 2011).

Specific objectives outlined in the brief (section 3.4) stated that a particular importance be placed on:

- Presence /absence of palaeosols and old land surface soils/deposits
- The character of deposits and their contents within negative features
- palaeochannels
- site formation processes.

An assessment of the environmental potential of the site through examination of suitable deposits was also to be arranged with a suitably qualified specialist (Robinson Zeki, L. 2020, Brief, section 3.6). Specific attention was to be paid to:

- to the retrieval of charred plant macrofossils and land molluscs from former dryland palaeosols and cut features, and to soil pollen analysis;
- to the retrieval of plant macrofossils, insect, faunal remains, molluscs, pollen and other biological remains from waterlogged deposits located.
- provision for the absolute dating of critical contacts should be made: *eg* the basal contacts of peats over former dryland surfaces; distinct landuse or landmark change in urban contexts

The evaluation will also carefully consider the retrieval, characterisation and dating (including absolute dating) of artefact, burial or economic evidence to assist in the characterisation of the site's evidence and in the development of future mitigation strategies (Robinson Zeki, L. 2020, Brief, section 3.7).



7.0 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

The CHET brief required a programme of evaluation trenching to sample the site ahead of the re-development. Following a site visit and discussions with the developer and structural engineer it had been deemed that the only way to achieve this will be to carry out the evaluation subsequent to the internal demolition of numbers 11 and 12 High Street. This was initially to have to be undertaken in two phases (see Fig. 5). Phase 1 would allow test pits 1 and 2 to be excavated at the rear of the properties (once the remaining standing walls are suitably braced). Once these were been completed and the internal demolition at the front of the properties was complete Test Pit 3 could then be be excavated in Phase 2. However due to on site constraints it was necessary for all three pits to be excavated at separate times. Test pit 2 was excavated first, followed by Test pit 1 then finally Test pit 3.

All three test pits measured 3.00m x 3.00m, there was scope for an additional test pit to be held in contingency if required but ultimately it was not.

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation, 2020 and Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, 2003.

A 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket was used to machine down to the first archaeological horizon, thereafter all excavation work was undertaken by hand (Fig. 4).

The archaeology was recorded using pro-forma record sheets, drawn plans and section drawings and appropriate photographs were also taken.



8.0 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Fig. 5 - 11)

Bucket sampling was undertaken whereby a total of 90 litres of spoil from the topsoil was hand sorted at 2 points from each test pit. Only demonstrably modern finds were present, which were not retained.

8.1 Test Pit 1 (Figs. 6 - 7)

Test pit 1 was located in the south east of the site close to the entrance. It measured 3.00m x3.00m and was a maximum depth of 0.90m. The total depth could not be ascertained safely so a hand auger was used. The auger was used successfully to a depth of over 2.50m before the presence of the water table made it impossible to auger any further. The test pit contained a number of archaeological features; Wall footing 1003, Wall Footing 1006, a 19th Century Well 1009, and a pot medieval pit 1012.

Wall footing 1003 was located in the south east portion of the test pit and consisted of brick-and-mortar wall 1004 and Wall Cut 1005. The brick and mortar make up consisted of a light greyish brown, compact, silty sand mortar mix that was holding post medieval, unfrogged brick foundations. The bricks themselves are fully oxidised and of the two brick samples taken the measurements are very similar with depths of 65mm, widths of 110/115mm and lengths of 240/220mm+. The combination of fabric, measurement and lack the of frogging, indicates that they fall into Drury's LB6/9 category (1993, 165), which suggests that they are dated from around the 17th to early 19th century (Fawcett, 2020). Wall cut 1005 was rectangular in plan (2.40m x 0.16m x 0.38m) on a NE – SW orientation with steep near vertical sides and a flat base. This cut into alluvial layer 1014.

Wall footing 1006 was located in the south western portion of the test pit and consisted of brick-and-mortar wall 1007 and wall cut 1008. The brick and mortar make up consisted of a light greyish brown, compact, silty sand mortar mix that was holding post medieval, unfrogged brick foundations like those seen in Wall footing 1003. Two brick samples were also taken. The first brick sampled is oxidised (purple to red) and contains abundant fairly fine calcite (Msc). One flat surface and one face exhibit mortar traces and the bricks dimensions are depth 55, width 105 and length 235mm, which makes it compatible with Drury's LB5 (1993, 165) which is dated to the 17th/18th century, (Fawcett, 2020). The second brick sample actually consisted of two partial bricks joined together by a very coarse and additional mortar. One of the bricks is abraded and fully oxidised (Msg) and



has an earlier white mortar covering, it has clearly been reused. It has a depth of 60mm and a width of 120mm and is similar to Drury type LB4 and is dated from the 17th to 18th century. The second partial brick is only slightly abraded and is fully oxidised, with a fabric that contains abundant ill-sorted calcite and quartz (Msc). It has a depth of 65mm and a width of 110mm and is close to Drury types LB6/9 (1993, 165), which is dates it from the 17th to early 19th century. There are three different types of mortar on this brick representing its continual reuse (Fawcett, 2020). Wall cut 1008 was rectangular in plan (1.28m \times 2.46m \times 0.42m) with steep near vertical sides and a flat base. This cut into alluvial layer 1014.

Well 1009 was located in the northern area of the test pit and consisted of brick Lining 1010, construction cut 1011 and fill of well shaft 1015. The brick lining of the well had a smooth mortar matrix made up of granular silty sand with occasional sub angular flint while the bricks it held were unfrogged and appeared to be localised in origin. For safety reasons brick sample from the well could not be taken. Construction cut 1011, was circular in plan (1.50m x 1.92m x 0.62m) with steep near vertical sides and a flat base. This cut into sterile alluvial layer 1014. The fill of well shaft 1015 comprised a dark greyish brown, compact silty clay with moderately frequent small sub angular rounded stones. This layer represents the upper silting of the well shaft. Given the visual inspection of the bricks and the position of the well relative to the stratigraphic sequence it is believed that the well is no older than 19th century.

The final feature in test pit 1 was post medieval pit 1012. The pit was sub-circular in plan (1.70m x 1.10m x 0.62m) with steep near vertical sides. The pit was cut into alluvial layer 1014. The pit contained a single fill, 1013, which was comprised of dark greyish brown, compact silty clay with occasional, moderately sized sub angular and sub rounded stones. Two slightly abraded roof tile fragments (131g) were recovered from the pit and look likely to be dated up to the 18th century. Also recovered from the fill of the pit were eleven sherds of slightly abraded pottery (393g). The context contained several residual sherds which are dated to the high and later medieval period. These include four base sherds of Late medieval reduced ware, two Late medieval oxidised sandy wares jug sherds, as well as a high medieval unsourced glazed sherd. Also present were three sherds of glazed red earthenware, two of which belong to a dish or bowl base, as well as an English stoneware jug base (Fawcett, 2020). Based on the above it appears evident that the context is dated from the 17th to 18th century.



Of note in the test pit was the remains of a single infilled cellar, the context 1017 has been assigned. The remains of the cellar did not extend into the test pit however the edge of the structure was exposed at the south western edge of the test pit, (Fig. 10) due to its proximity to a standing loadbearing wall and scaffolding no further excavation was undertaken.

8.2 Test Pit 2 (Fig. 8)

Test pit 2 was located in northern area of the site. It measured 3.00m x3.00m and was a maximum depth of 0.30m in sample section 1. While the test pit was being excavated Well 1001 was encountered. The well was still extant with standing water in. once the well was revealed the sides started to collapse and it was deemed to unsafe for the machine to site next to the test pit and excavate without risking subsistence. With the agreement of the CHET monitoring archaeologist, excavation was ceased at this level and the well recorded.

Well 1001 was circular in plan (0.70m \times 0.75m), the brick lining of the well had a smooth mortar matrix made up of granular silty sand with occasional sub angular flint while the bricks it held were unfrogged and appeared to be localised in origin. For safety reasons brick sample from the well could not be taken as the risk of subsistence was too high. The construction cut for the well 1002 was clearly evident in the test pit. It was sub circular in plan (1.50m \times 1.30m). the well was cut by a modern pipe on both sides evidently showing that it had been reused in the 20th century.

8.3 Test Pit 3 (Fig. 9)

Test pit 3 was located in the north east of the site close to the wall fronting the high street. It measured 3.00m x3.00m and was a maximum depth of 2.00 in sample section 2. No archaeological features were encountered, and excavation was ceased at 2.00m for safety.

The test pit contained Demolition layer 1001 to a depth of 0.41m. underlying this was demolition layer 1016 to a maximum depth of 0.84m with a overall thickness of 0.65m. finally this overlay alluvial layer 1014 which was 1.16m thick to a depth of 2.00m.



9.0 DEPOSIT MODEL (Fig. 6 - 9)

The deposit model was consistent across the site except in Test Pit 3 where an additional layer of demolition was present.

At the top of the stratigraphic sequence was modern demolition layer 1000. It comprised a dark grey/brown, loose, silty clay with frequent pieces of rubble and brick inclusions. This layer was present to a maximum depth of 0.40mm in sample section 5. The layer represents the recent demolition of internal structures undertaken so the archaeological works could proceed.

Beneath demolition layer 1000 in Test pit 3 was demolition layer 1016. This layer was comprised of a mid-orange, brown silty clay with frequent rubble inclusions. This layer relates to an earlier period of demolition within the structure most likely late 20th century.

At the base of the stratigraphic sequence in both Test pits 1 and 3 was Alluvial Layer 1014 comprising a mid-greyish brown, compact silty clay. Where this layer was present in test pit 3 a single sherd of pottery, one piece of CBM, one fragment of animal bone and five oyster shells were recovered. The pottery was a slightly abraded body sherd from a jug fragment of Grimston ware, dated from the late 12th to 14th century, (Fawcett, 2020). The CBM was a single slightly abraded roof tile fragment, likely dated from around the medieval to early post-medieval period, (Fawcett, 2020) The animal bone was a single cattle rib showing signs of butchery (Curl, 2020) and finally the shells were all identified as Oyster. It seems likely that this layer is contemporary with the flooding event that took place in the 13th century on the north side of the castle and the subsequent inundation that occurred, (See Section 4.2).



10.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The site had a high potential for features and finds relating to the medieval and post medieval periods (in particular the castle/palace remains). There was a high potential for encountering alluvial flood deposits dating to the early castle formation and onwards, with a possibility of features associated with the periphery of the castle defences and associated medieval town. The potential for features and finds relating to the Saxon period was considered to be low. There was a negligible potential for features and finds relating to all other dates.

The evaluation revealed two phases of activity within the sites bounds.

The earliest phase can be related to before mentioned alluvial flood deposits dating from the medieval period. This is represented by alluvial silt layer 1014 which contained 13th century pottery, medieval CBM and Oyster shells (a common food type for the medieval period). This layer was encountered in both test pit 1 and 3 (test pit 2's excavation having to be ceased due to the presence of well 1001). Work also undertaken along the high street at number 24 (ECB5446) revealed similar deposits recorded to a minimum depth of 2.0m below basement level, (Meckseper, 2019).

The second phase of activity relates to the post medieval redevelopment of the site. 5 features were identified across the site relating to the post medieval period; Well 1001, wall footing 1003, wall footing 1006, well 1009 and post medieval pit 1012. The wall footings all appear to have been for internal structures within numbers 11-12 High street that were demolished following the modern internal development of the buildings in the 20th century. The wells likely represent simple internal utilities for either water withdrawal or waste water.

Overall, the evaluation was successful in identifying alluvial deposits dating to the inundation of the area in the medieval period. While other nearby archaeological interventions (ECB5446) have encountered the same deposits, no dating has been recovered from them. While the sample size of the site was small it has allowed a consistent deposit model to be built allowing a better understanding of the medieval context in this area of the high street to be formed.



11.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The final archive will be deposited following the acquisition of the transfer of title. The deposition will be made with **Cambridgeshire County Council's Archaeological Archive** Storage Facility – Deep Store, subject to agreement with the legal landowner where finds are concerned. An appropriate accession number will be obtained in advance of deposition. The digital archive will be stored with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).



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Archaeological Data Service (ADS) www.ads.ahds.ac.uk

English Heritage National List for England www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england

DEFRA Magic http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic



APPENDIX 1 - DEPOSIT TABLES

Test Pit 1

Trench No	Orienta	ition		Height AOD		Shot ID	
1		n/a		23.21m		6	
Sample Section No		Locatio	n		Facing		
2			SE	side		NW	
Context No	Depth		Deposi	t Description			
1014	0.00-1	.80m+	Alluvial	Layer - comprising	a mid-gr	eyish brown, compact silty	
			clay				

Trench No	Orientation			Height AOD		Shot ID	
1		n/a		19.45m		7	
Sample Section No	Location				Facing		
3				side	SE		
Context No	Depth Depos			sit Description			
1000	0.00-0.04m Demol			olition Layer - dark grey/brown, loose, silty clay with			
	freque			frequent pieces of rubble and brick inclusions			
1015				Fill of well shaft 1015 - dark greyish brown, compact silty clay			
			with mo	th moderately frequent small sub angular rounded stones			

Trench No	Orientation			Height AOD		Shot ID	
1		n/a		19.60m		5	
Sample Section No		Locatio	n		Facing		
4		Α(gainst 10	006 SW Side		NE	
Context No	Depth		Deposi	t Description			
1007	0.00-0	0.41m	Brick ar	Brick and Mortar Wall 1007			
1014	0.4	lm+	Alluvial Layer - comprising a mid-greyish brown, compact silty				
			clay				

Context Descriptions

Feature Context	Feature Type & Description (m)	Layer/Fill Context	Layer/Fill Description
1005	Construction cut of Wall 1003 (2.40m x 0.16m x 0.38m) NE - SW Alignment, Steep Near Vertical Sides, Flat Base	1004	Brick-and-Mortar Make-up - a light greyish brown, compact, silty sand mortar mix that was holding post medieval, unfrogged brick foundations
1008	Construction cut of Wall 1006 (1.28m x 2.46m x 0.42m) Alignment, Steep Near Vertical Sides, Flat Base	1007	Brick-and-Mortar Make-up - a light greyish brown, compact, silty sand mortar mix that was holding post medieval, unfrogged brick foundations
1011	Construction cut of Well 1009 (1.50m x 1.92m x 0.62m) circular in plan with steep near vertical sides	1015	Fill of Well Shaft – dark greyish brown, compact silty clay with occasional, moderately sized sub angular rounded stones
1012	Cut of Pit (1.70m x 1.10m x 0.62m)	1013	Upper fill of pit – dark greyish brown, compact silty clay with occasional moderately sized sub angular and sub rounded stones.



Test Pit 2

Trench No	Orienta	ition		Height AOD		Shot ID		
1		n/a		15.42m		3		
Sample Section No		Locatio	n		Facing			
1			NE	side		Е		
Context No	Depth		Deposi	t Description				
1000	0.00-	0.30m	Demolit	ion Layer - dark	grey/brov	wn, loose,	silty c	lay with
			frequen	requent pieces of rubble and brick inclusions				

Feature Context	Feature Type & Description (m)	Layer/Fill Context	Layer/Fill Description
1002	Construction cut of Well 1001 (1.50mx 1.30m) circular in plan.	n/a	unexcavated

Test Pit 3

Trench No	Orientation			Height AOD		Shot ID		
3		n/a		15.19m		3		
Sample Section No		Locatio	n		Facing			
5			SW	side	E			
Context No	Depth Depo			Deposit Description				
1000	0.00-0	0.41m	Demolition Layer - dark grey/brown, loose, silty clay with					
			frequent pieces of rubble and brick inclusions					
1016	0.41 -	0.83m	Demolition Layer - mid-orange, brown silty clay with frequent rubble inclusions					
1014	0.83	3m+	Alluvial Layer - comprising a mid-greyish brown, compact silty clay					



APPENDIX - 2 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

			pech, C	ambridgeshire							RATANNIA.
P. NUMBER:	P 1289										PACHAFOLOGY E
Context	Cut	Туре	Test	Spot	Pot		СВМ		Animal	Bone	Other
			Pit	Date	No	Wgt/g	No	Wgt/g	No	Wgt/g	
1000	None	Demo Layer		15th-M16th	2	488	1	105			
1004	1003	Footing					2	5763			
1007	1006	Footing					2	6096			
None	1012	Pit	1				3	2306			
1013	1012	Pit	1	17th-18th	11	393	2	131			Coal 1@51g
1014	None	Layer	3	L12th-14th	1	49	1	168	1	27	Shell 5@50g
Totals					14	930	11	14569	1	27	



APPENDIX - 3 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The medieval and post-medieval pottery from 11-12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire (ECB 6280): An assessment report

Andy Fawcett

Introduction

A total of fourteen sherds of pottery (930g) were recovered from three different fills as a result of the archaeological evaluation at Wisbech.

This report firstly describes the methodology used in the recording of the pottery, and then goes on to describe the individual assemblages. This is then followed by an overall conclusion, and any recommendations that might be required for further work on the pottery group.

Methodology

The pottery has been rapidly scanned at x20 vision, and the principle fabrics in each context have been identified and allocated fabric codes.

The post-Roman codes are based upon those utilised by Suffolk County Council Archaeology (which are in use across east Anglia as a whole), as well as those registered by Spoerry in his *corpus* of medieval pottery production in Cambridgeshire (2016).

Wherever pottery forms are encountered within the assemblage, regardless of which period they belong to, they have been simply described for example, jar, dish, jug and so on.

The entire recorded pottery assemblage can be seen in Appendix 1, whereas both the fabric and abrasion codes can be observed in Appendix 2.



The assemblage

Two large and slightly abraded sherds of wheel-thrown pottery, with a weight of 488g were recorded in Demolition Layer 1000. The first of these is a base fragment in a reduced transitional fabric (LMR), that is hard and sandy and contains common ill-sorted calcite. The second is body sherd which has an oxidised, and variably white slipped surface (sporadic traces of green glaze can be observed on top of this slip) and a thick grey core. The fabric is similar to the previous sherd, although also present are common irregular shaped fragments of red iron ore. The sherds within this context indicate that it is dated between the 15th and mid 16th century.

Pit fill 1013 in Test Pit 1, contained eleven sherds of slightly abraded pottery (393g). The context contained several residual sherds which are dated to the high and later medieval period. These include four base sherds in fabric LMR, two OSW jug sherds (this fabric is very similar to the one noted in Layer 1000), as well as a high medieval unsourced glazed sherd (UPG). This latter fabric is fully oxidised and contains abundant ill-sorted quartz alongside common brown/red iron rich fragments and displays a pale green glaze on its outer surface.

Also present within the fill are three sherds of glazed red earthenware (GRE), two of which belong to a dish or bowl base, as well as an English stoneware jug base (ESW).

The context is dated from the 17th to 18th century.

Layer 1014 in Test Pit 3 contained a single slightly abraded body sherd of pottery. This is a jug fragment of Grimston ware (GRIM), that is dated from the late 12th to 14th century. It is in a reduced fabric with a dark green glaze, that also displays vertical brown stripes, as well as 'tear' shaped décor.

Conclusion

The single sherd of Grimston ware (recorded in Layer 1014) represents the only high medieval sherd that is not of a residual nature.



Later medieval/transitional pottery has also been identified as being residual within Pit fill 1013, however it is unsure if the sherds recorded in Demolition Layer 1000 (also dated to this period) are of a residual nature.

It is not surprising to encounter a small quantity of domestic medieval pottery, given the extent and intensity of the nearby occupation that is dated to this period (for example, Wisbech Castle 01926, New Yard Inn ECB 2970 and Market Mews ECB436).

Although most of the pottery in Pit fill 1013 is residual, five sherds are dated from the 17th to 18th century. The forms (a jug as well as bowl or dish) represent the remains of domestic household waste, whose date complements the known dates of the house numbers associated with the current site, No11 dated to the early 18th century (DCB 2049) and No 12 dated to the 18th century (DCB 1966).

Recommendations for further work

The pottery has been identified and described to the required level of analysis; it is therefore recommended that no further work on the assemblages will be required. However, should a further stage of archaeological intervention take place on the site and finds are recovered, then reference to these current groups should be undertaken.

Bibliography

McCarthy, M. R. and Brooks, C. M., 1988, Medieval pottery in Britain AD900-1600, Leicester University Press

Spoerry, P., 2016, *The production and distribution of medieval pottery in Cambridgeshire*, East Anglian Archaeology Report No 159

Appendix 2: Fabric and abrasion codes

Fabrics

UPG Unsourced medieval glazed ware

GRIM Grimston type ware

LMR Late medieval reduced ware

OSW Late medieval oxidised sandy wares

GRE Glazed red earthenware



ESW

Brown English stoneware

Abrasion

Very = very abraded, Abr = abraded, Abr/sli = variably abraded, Sli = slightly abraded, Gd = good condition



The medieval and post-medieval CBM (Ceramic Building Materials) from 11 to 12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire (ECB 6280): An assessment report

Andy Fawcett

Introduction

A total of eleven fragments of CBM were recovered (14569g) from six different contexts as a result of the archaeological evaluation at Wisbech.

This report firstly defines the methodology used in the recording of the CBM, and then goes on to describe the pieces by context. This is then followed by an overall conclusion, and any recommendations that might be required for further work on the material.

Methodology

The CBM has been recorded by fragment count and weight. The principle fabrics in each context have been identified by rapid scanning at x20 vision, and these have been allocated codes using simple letter combinations, based upon those developed by Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Services, and used within East Anglia as a whole.

Form types have been allocated plain descriptions, such as roof tile or brick and so on, and where present measurements of depth, width and length have also been undertaken. The recorded CBM assemblage can be seen in Appendix 3, and a full list of fabric and abrasion codes can be seen in Appendix 4.

The assemblage

The demolition layer (1000) contained a single fragment of roof tile that displays some minor curving (105g). The fragment exhibits only slight abrasion and is fully oxidised, containing just medium quartz sand (Ms). The tile has a depth of 13mm and is likely the remains of a pan tile, dated from the early/mid 17th century onwards.

A total of two bricks were noted within the footing fill 1004 (5763g). One of the bricks is complete, whilst the other is partially complete. The bricks are fully oxidised, one



containing solely medium quartz sand (Ms), while the other also includes ferrous material; the faces of both examples are liberally covered with mortar. The measurements of the bricks are very similar with depths of 65mm, widths of 110/115mm and lengths of 240/220mm+, neither of the bricks is frogged. The combination of fabric, measurement and lack the of frogging, indicates that they fall into Drury's LB6/9 category (1993, 165), which suggests that they are dated from around the 17th to early 19th century.

Another footing context (1007) also contained a single complete brick, as well as two joined partial bricks (6096g).

The complete brick is oxidised (purple to red) and contains abundant fairly fine calcite (Msc). One flat surface and one face exhibit mortar traces and the bricks dimensions are depth 55, width 105 and length 235mm, which makes it compatible with Drury's LB5 (1993, 165) which is dated to the 17th/18th century.

The two partial bricks (one of which is abraded) are joined together by a very coarse and additional mortar that contains abundant angular ferrous inclusions.

The abraded fragment is fully oxidised (Msg) and has an earlier white mortar covering, it has clearly been reused. It has a depth of 60mm and a width of 120mm and is similar to Drury type LB4 and is dated from the 17th to 18th century.

The second partial brick is only slightly abraded and is fully oxidised, with a fabric that contains abundant ill-sorted calcite and quartz (Msc). It has a depth of 65mm and a width of 110mm and is close to Drury types LB6/9 (1993, 165), which is dates it from the 17th to early 19th century. There are three different types of mortar on this brick representing its continual reuse.

Pit 1012 contained a single complete brick (2306g). This example is patchily oxidised (pink, red with patches of yellow) and has a thin light grey core. It is hard and sandy (but has a light overall weight) and contains abundant ill-sorted, but fairly fine calcite alongside sparse grog (Msc). Its dimensions are d=60/w=110/l=240mm, and it is comparable in these to Drury type LB9 (1993, 165) which is dated from the 17^{th} to 18^{th} century.

Two slightly abraded roof tile fragments (131g) were recorded in Pit fill 1013. These have a depth of 13mm and are in a yellow to buff coloured fabric (one of which has a pink/purple



core) that contains calcite (some of which is vaguely streaked), quartz and some grog (Msc); one of the tiles displays mortar traces on its flat surfaces.

The fabrics are similar in many ways to Fabric 4 at Isleham which was thought to be dated at least from the 17th century (Fawcett 2018), these however look a little more consistent in style and likely to be dated up to the 18th century.

Layer 1014 contained a single slightly abraded roof tile fragment (168g). This is in a hard sandy fabric (which is light in weight) that exhibits a patchy cream surface on top of an oxidised fabric (purple/pink). Its contents are coarse and appear very disorganised, amounting to abundant calcite (much of which is streaked), quartz, grog and some large irregular clumps of iron ore. It shares some similar traits to fabrics 1 and 2 at Isleham but without the grey core, and indeed fabric 3 at this site too bears some resemblance to it (Fawcett 2018). It is likely dated from around the medieval to early post-medieval period.

Conclusion

The larger part of the CBM assemblage, which is made up of a small quantity of brick and roof tile, is dated between the 17th and 18th century. The only fragment that is potentially dated to the medieval period was noted in Layer 1014.

The date of this assemblage is entirely consistent with the dates allocated to the construction of the buildings at No's 11 and 12 High Street. However, it is also quite obvious that some of these have been reused from elsewhere, before they were bought together for either a total, or partial re-build of No's 11 and 12. Nevertheless, no matter where they were derived from, the measurements that pertain to the brick in particular, exclude a date prior to the 17^{th} century for the majority of this group.

Recommendations for further work

The CBM has been identified and described to the required level of analysis; it is therefore recommended that no further work on the assemblages will be required. However, should a further stage of archaeological intervention take place on the site and finds are recovered, then reference to this current group should be undertaken.



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Fawcett, A. R., 2018, 'The medieval and post-medieval CBM' in Brook, M. *An archaeological excavation at West Road, Isleham, Cambridgeshire*, Britannia Report ECB 4999

Appendix 4: Fabric and abrasion codes

Fabrics

Ms Medium sandy fabric

Msc Medium sandy fabric with calcite and quartz
Msg Medium sandy fabric with grog and quartz

Msfe Medium sandy fabric with quartz and ferrous inclusions

Abrasion

Very = very abraded, Abr = abraded, Abr/sli = variably abraded, Sli = slightly abraded, Gd = good condition



ECB6280, Wisbech

The faunal remains and molluscs

by Julie Curl -Sylvanus - Archaeological, Natural History & Illustration Services for Britannia Archaeology.

THE ANIMAL BONE (Appendix1, Tables 1 and 2)

Methodology

A summary assessment was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis, 1992) and Baker and Worley, 2014. All of the bone was examined to determine range of species and elements present. A record was also made of butchering and any indications of skinning, hornworking and other modifications. When possible ages were estimated along with any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Measurements were considered where appropriate following Von Den Driesch, 1976. As this is a small assemblage, information was recorded directly into the appendix in this report

The bone assemblage

Quantification, provenance and preservation

A total of 27g of bone, consisting of a single element was recovered, with the totals quantified in Table 1. The bone is in very good condition. No gnawing or invertebrate (insect, isopod, mollusc) damage

Context	Test pit	Туре	Date	Ctxt Qty	Wt (g)	Species	NISP
1014	3	Layer	Medieval	1	27g	Cattle	1

Table 1. Quantification of the faunal remains

A single species was positively identified in the assemblage, with an adult cattle rib from the Layer 1014, which was found with Medieval pottery of a L12th – 14th date. the rib had been chopped into a length of 115mm and shows a small cut.



Discussion and conclusions

The butchered rib shows use of the cattle meat at this site, the butchering suggests it is preparation for cooking and perhaps used in a stew for extraction of the marrow.

Recommendations for further work

This is a very small assemblage that shows good bone preservation but has limited potential for further study and no further work is recommended on this particular assemblage. If further work is carried out at this site it is recommended that samples are taken for sieving to maximise chances of recovery for small bones. If further work produces bone, then this assemblage can be included in the analysis.

THE MOLLUSC ASSEMBLAGE (Appendix 2, Table 2)

Methodology

The molluscs were identified to species using a variety of reference material. Shells were catalogued by species and where appropriate, counts were made of the number of individual species present (NISP), counts of top and base shells and an estimate of the minimum number of individuals (MNI). Bivalve shells are known to be used as painter's palettes and the remains are examined for any traces of pigments. Shells are also examined for any cut marks that would confirm their use for food from the prising apart of the shells or removal of meat with a knife. Information was recorded directly into an appendix with this report.

The assemblage

A total of 50g of shell, consisting of 5 elements, was recovered from this excavation, which is quantified in Table 2, from the Layer 1014, which was found with Medieval pottery of a $L12th - 14^{th}$ date.



Context	Test pit	Туре	Period	Ctxt Qty	Weight	Freshwater	Marine	Land	Fossil	Species	NISP
1014	3	Layer	Medieval	5	50g		5			Oyster	5

Table 2. Quantification of the mollusc assemblage.

All of the remains in the mollusc assemblage are from the common marine oyster, *Ostrea edulis*. None of the shells showed any cuts from the butchering process, but this is a small assemblage and the eroded surfaces of some shells could mean some evidence is lost. There are traces of marine worms and sponges on the shells, attesting to their collection from a marine environment rather than estuary, freshwater or even farmed stock. A small juvenile shell attached was noted further indicating wild oyster.

Discussion and conclusions

This is a small shell assemblage; it is dominated by the remains of the most frequent food species on archaeological sites. Common Oyster are found all around the British coast, even in quite shallow waters. Such molluscs could be collected by individuals, but are perhaps more likely to be sold at local markets. The shells clearly provided variety to the diet at this site.

Recommendations for further work

Sufficient recording has been made and no further work is required on this assemblage.

Bibliography (for bone/shell reports)

Baker, P. and Worley, F. 2014. *Animal Bones and Archaeology, Guidelines for best practice*. English Heritage.

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Teeble, N. 1966. *British Bivalve shells: Handbook for identification*. British Museum (Natural History), London.

Winder, J.M. 2011. Oyster shells from archaeological sites. A brief guide to basic processing and recording.



APPENDIX - 3 OASIS FORM

OASIS FORM - Print view

https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Manage Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

Printable version

OASIS ID: britanni1-400125

Project details

Project name

11-12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambs

Short description of the project

From the 7th September to the 26th November 2020 Britannia Archaeology Ltd (BA) undertook an archaeological evaluation at 11 - 12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. The site had a high potential for features and finds relating to the medieval and post medieval periods (in particular the castle/palace remains). The evaluation revealed two phases of activity within the sites bounds. The earliest phase can be related to alluvial flood deposits dating from the medieval period. This is represented by an alluvial silt layer which contained 13th century pottery, medieval CBM and Oyster shells. This layer was encountered in both test pit 1 and 3. The second phase of activity relates to the post medieval redevelopment of the site. 5 features were identified across the site relating to the post medieval period. The wall footings all appear to have been for internal structures within numbers 11-12 High street that were demolished following the modern internal development of the buildings in the 20th century. Overall, the evaluation was successful in identifying alluvial deposits dating to the inundation of the area in the medieval period. While other nearby archaeological interventions (ECB5446) have encountered the same deposits, no dating has been recovered from them.

Project dates

Start: 17-08-2020 End: 19-08-2020

Previous/future work

No / Not known

Any associated

ECB6280 - Sitecode

project reference codes

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing

Monument type STRUCTURE Post Medieval

Monument type WELL Post Medieval Significant Finds CERAMICS Post Medieval Significant Finds CFRAMICS Medieval Significant Finds ANIMAL BONE Medieval

Methods & techniques "Test Pits"

Prompt

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.) National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

1 of 3 15/01/2021, 13:59



OASIS FORM - Print view

https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm

Project location

Country England

CAMBRIDGESHIRE FENLAND WISBECH 11-12 High Street, Wisbech, Cambs Site location

Postcode PE13 1DB Study area 0 Hectares

Site coordinates TL 46135 09635 51.765819614504 0.117965040103 51 45 56 N 000 07 04 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Britannia Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator

Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)

Project design originator

Dan McConnell

Project

Martin Brook

director/manager

Project supervisor Martin Brook

Type of

Developer

sponsor/funding

body

Name of

sponsor/funding

body

Whitfield Property Investments Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient

Cambridgeshire HER

Physical Archive

ECB6280

Physical Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics" Digital Archive Cambridgeshire HER

recipient

Digital Archive ID ECB6280

Digital Contents

"Animal Bones", "Ceramics"

Digital Media

available

"Database", "GIS", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text"

Paper Archive

recipient

Cambridgeshire HER

Paper Archive ID ECB6280

Paper Contents

"Animal Bones", "Ceramics"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey"

Project

bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title 11 - 12 High Street, Wisbeoh, Cambridgeshire

Author(s)/Editor(s) M. Brook

2 of 3 15/01/2021. 13:59



OASIS FORM - Print view

https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm

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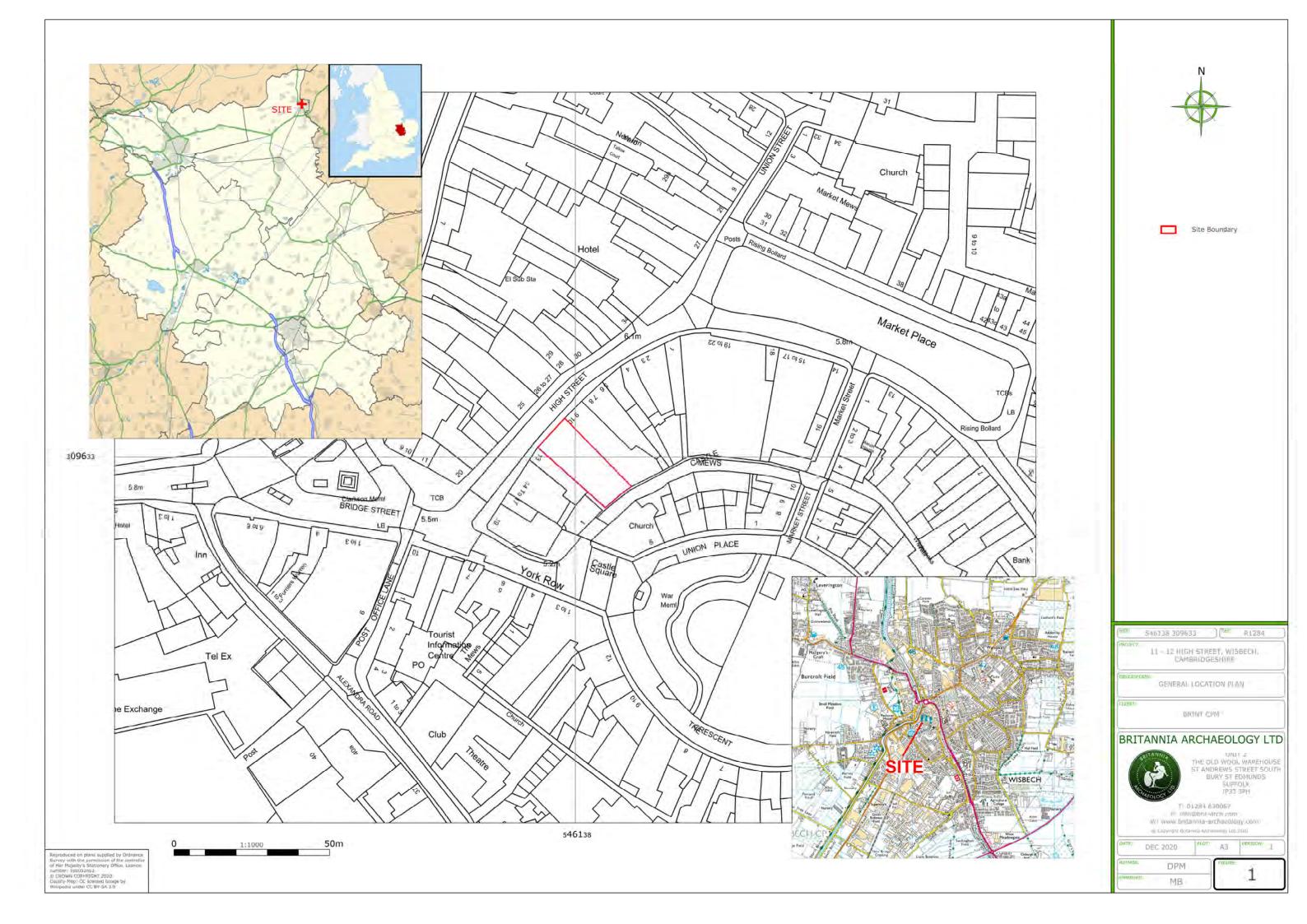
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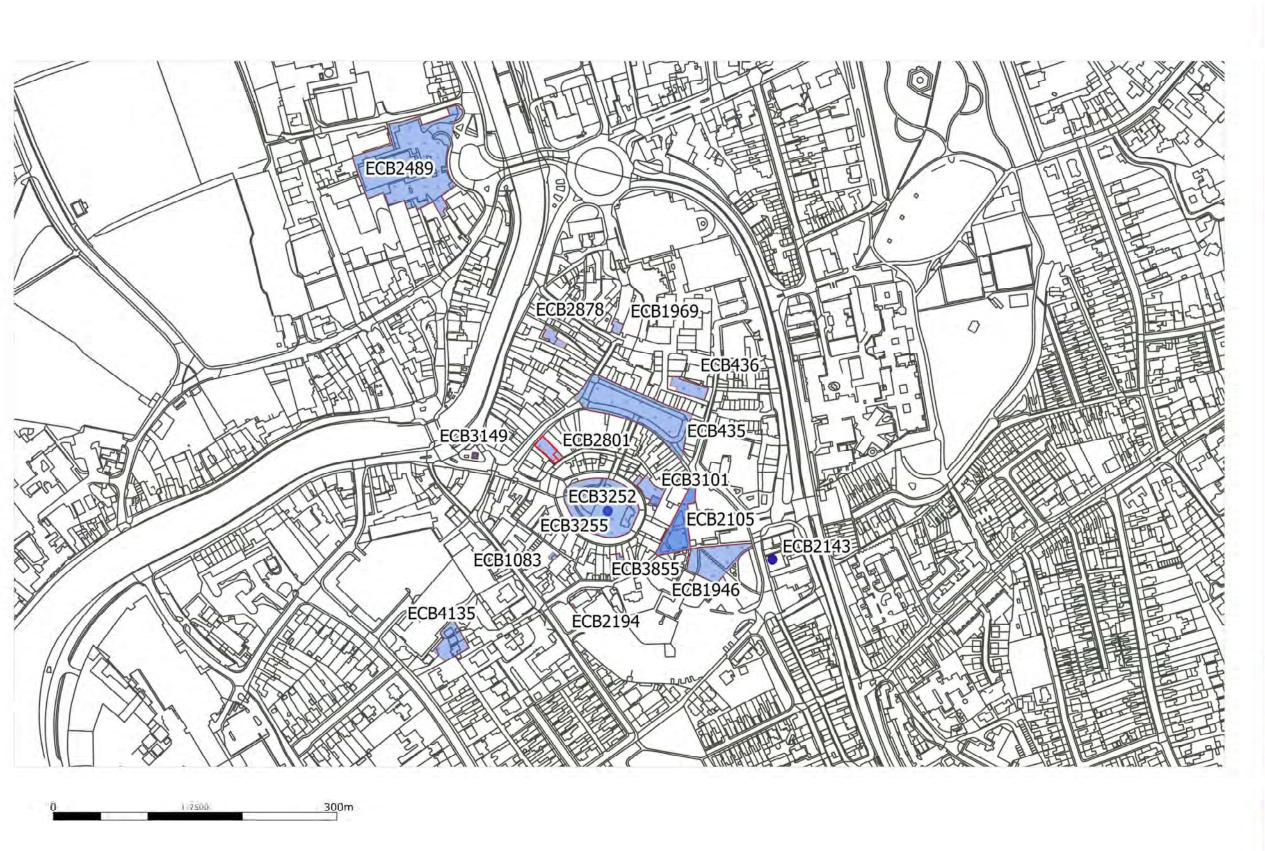


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3 of 3







Archaeological Event

(NOR: 546138 309633 (REF R1284)

PROJECT: 11 - 12 HIGH STREET, WISBECH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

HER DATA - EVENTS

BRINT CPM

BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD



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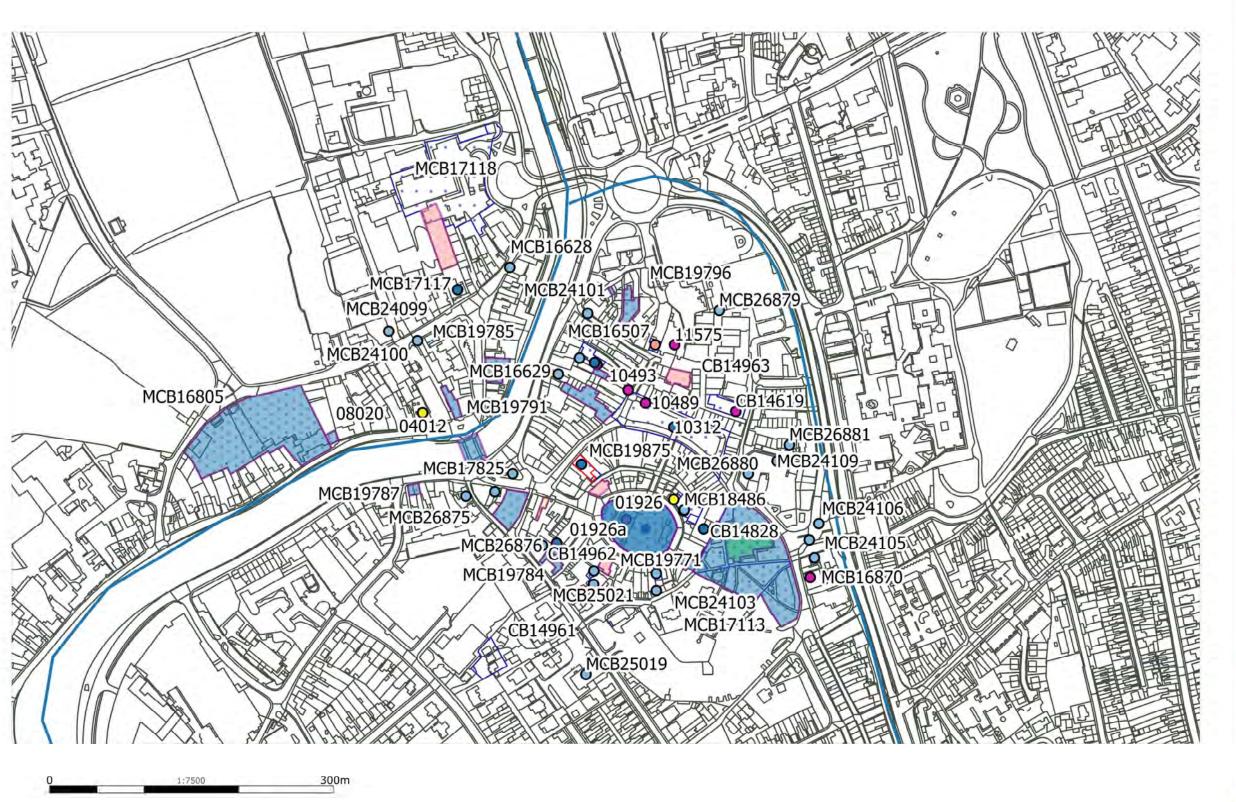
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11 - 12 HIGH STREET, WISBECH,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION:
HER DATA - MONUMENTS

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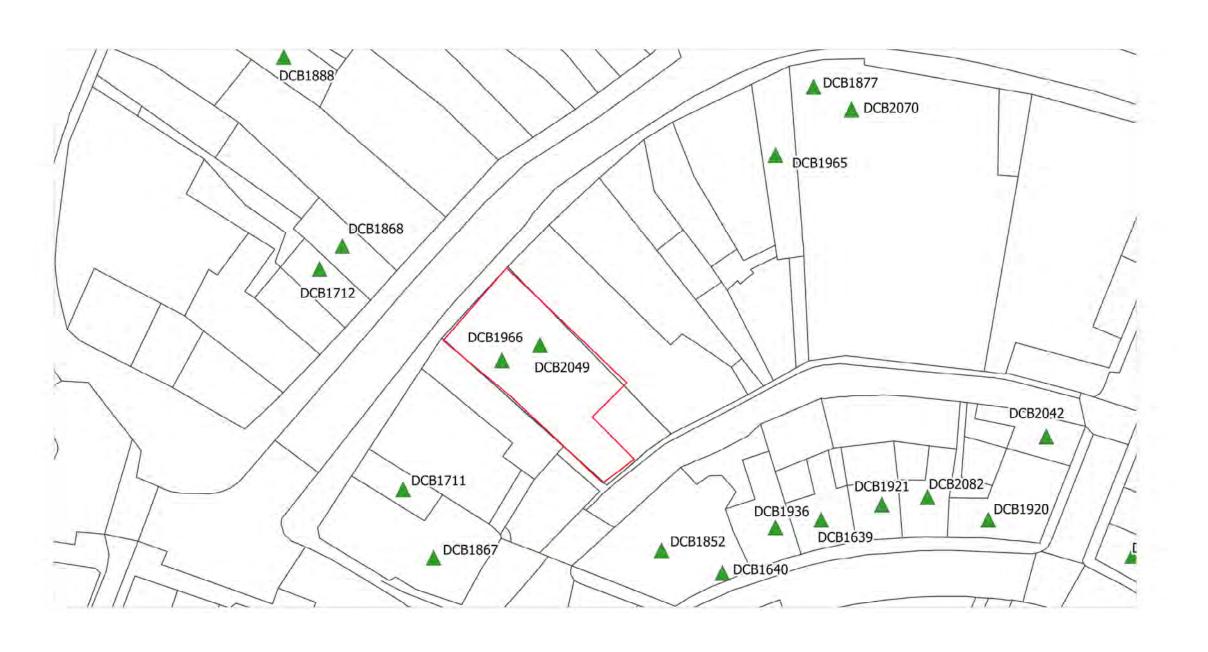
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THE OLD WOOL WAREHOUSE
ST ANDREWS STREET SOUTH
BURY ST EDMUNDS
SUPFOL®

E: info@brit-arch.com W: www.britannia-archaeology.com

DEC 2020 PLOT: A3 VERSION: 1

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Site Boundary

▲ Grade I

Grade II*

Grade II

NGR: 546138 309633 (REF: R1284

11 - 12 HIGH STREET, WISBECH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DESCRIPTION:

HER DATA - LISTED BUILDINGS

Daniel

BRINT CPM

BRITANNIA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

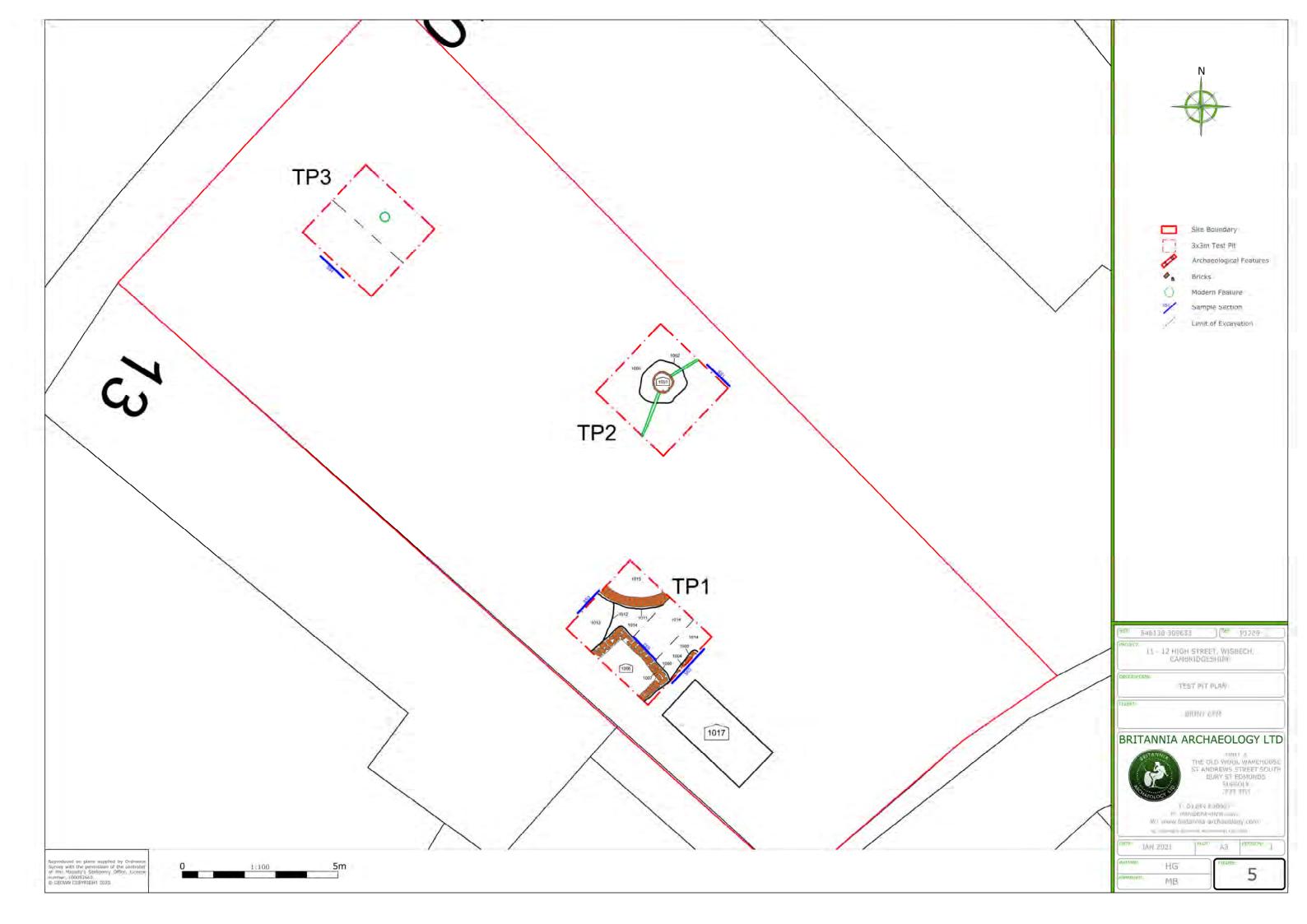


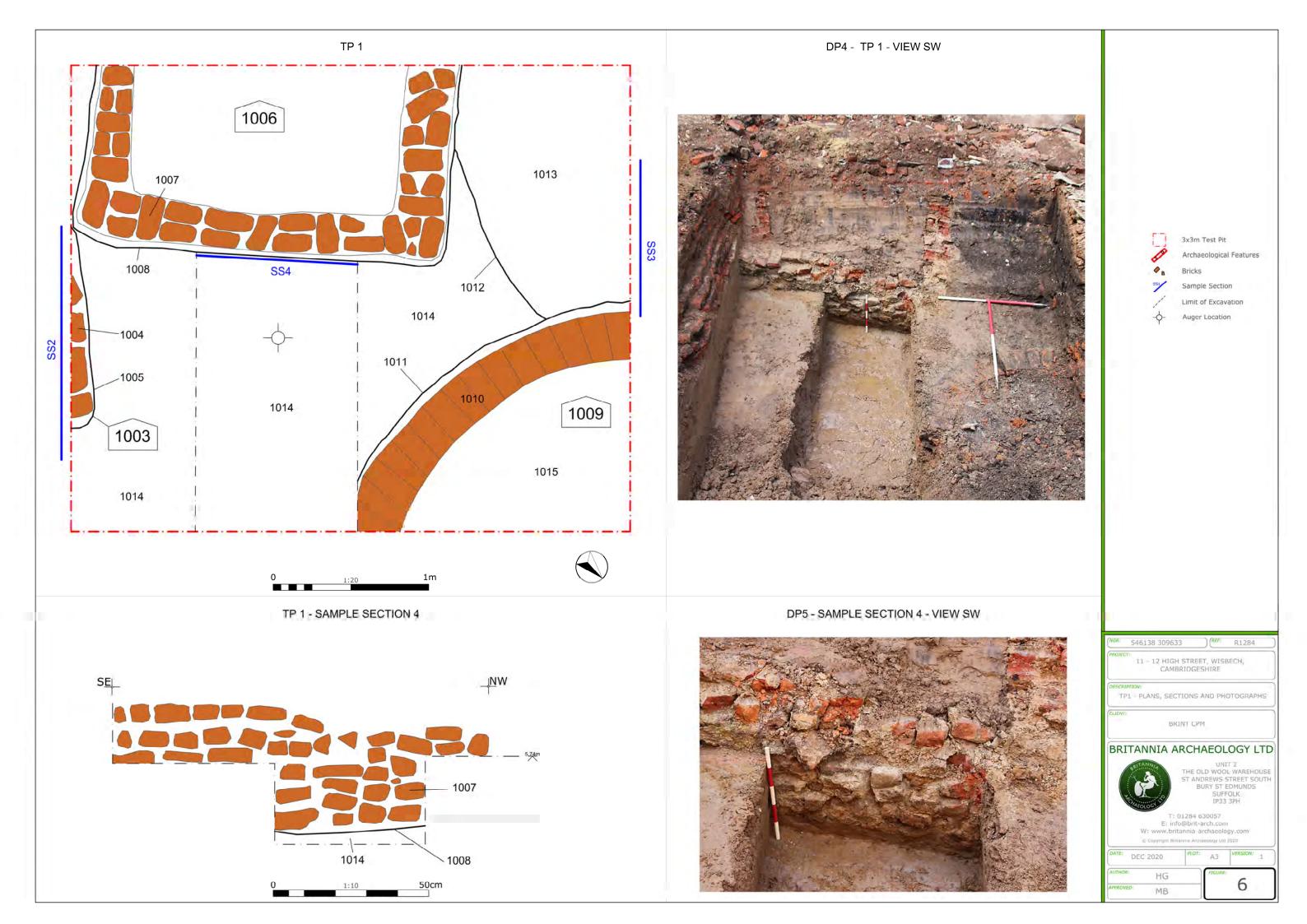
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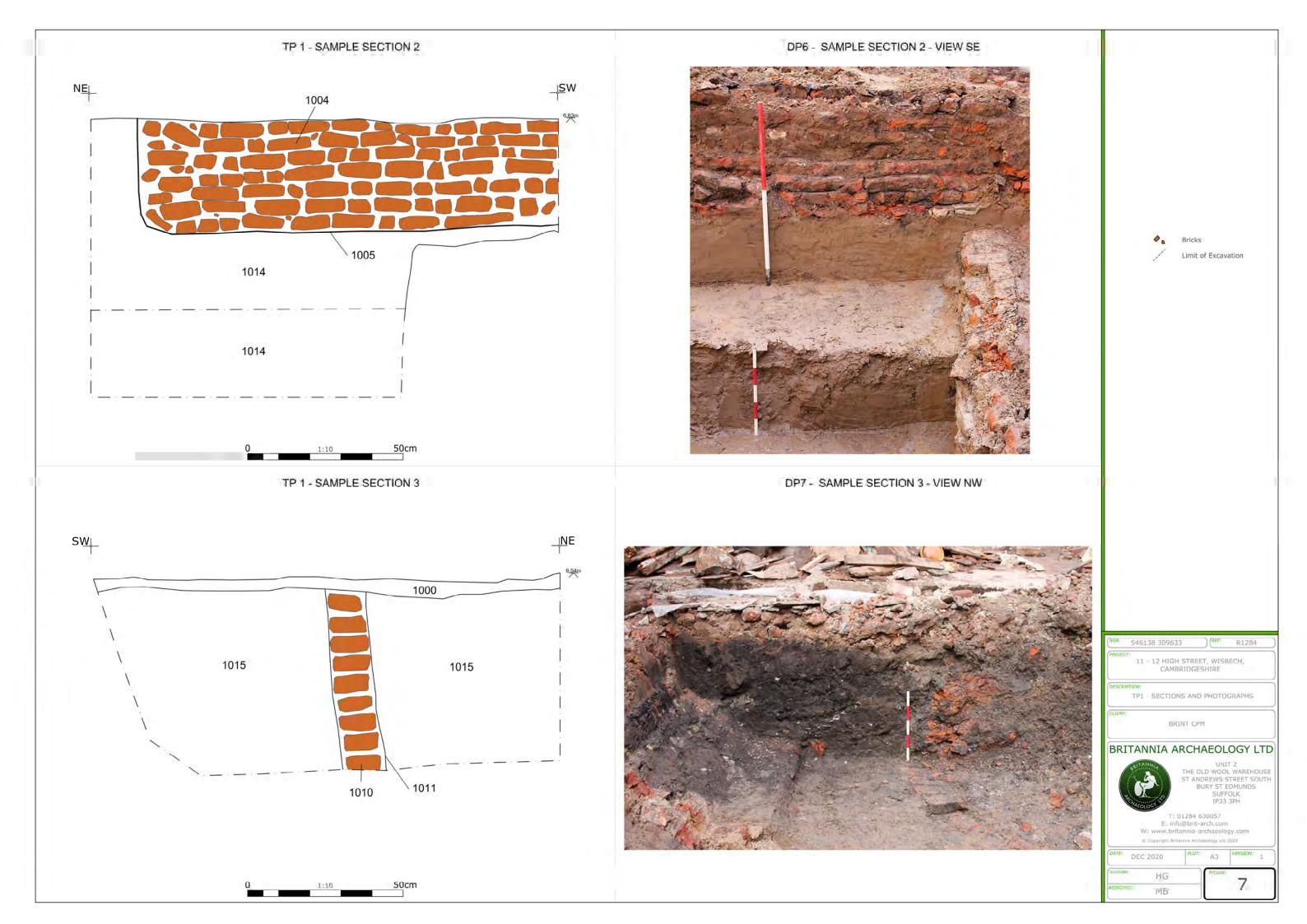
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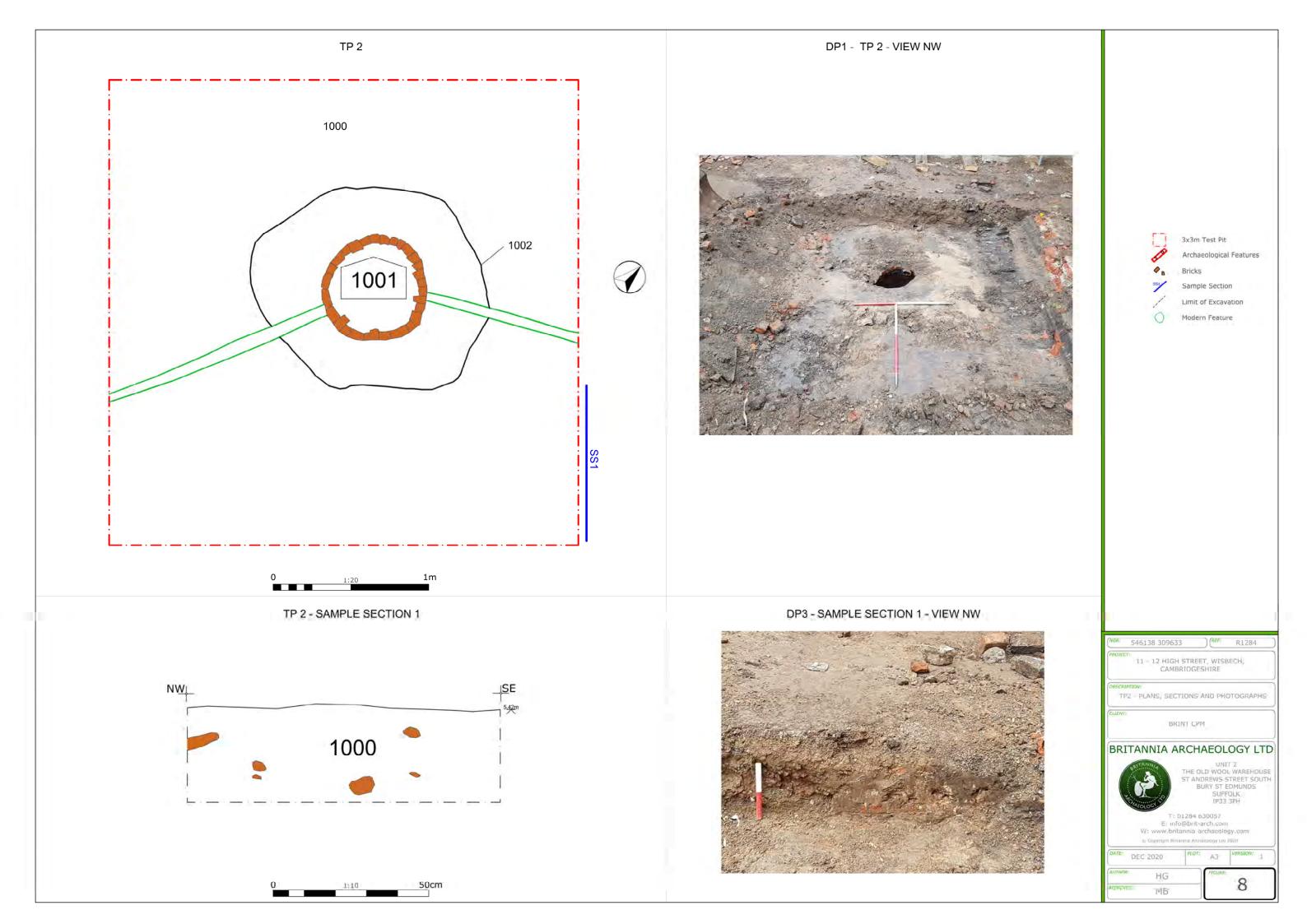
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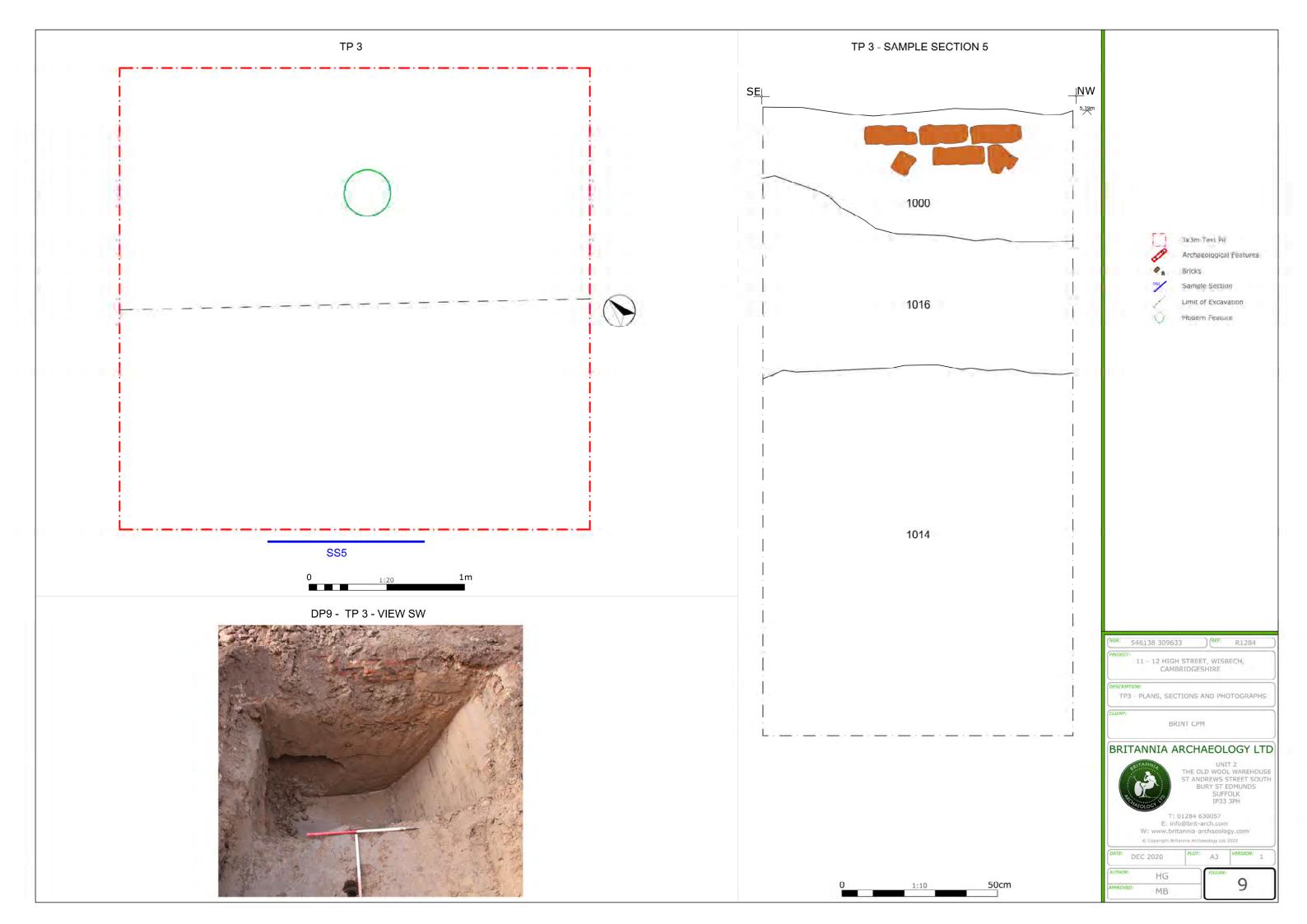
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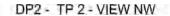




CELLAR 1017 - TP1



CELLAR 1017 - TP1





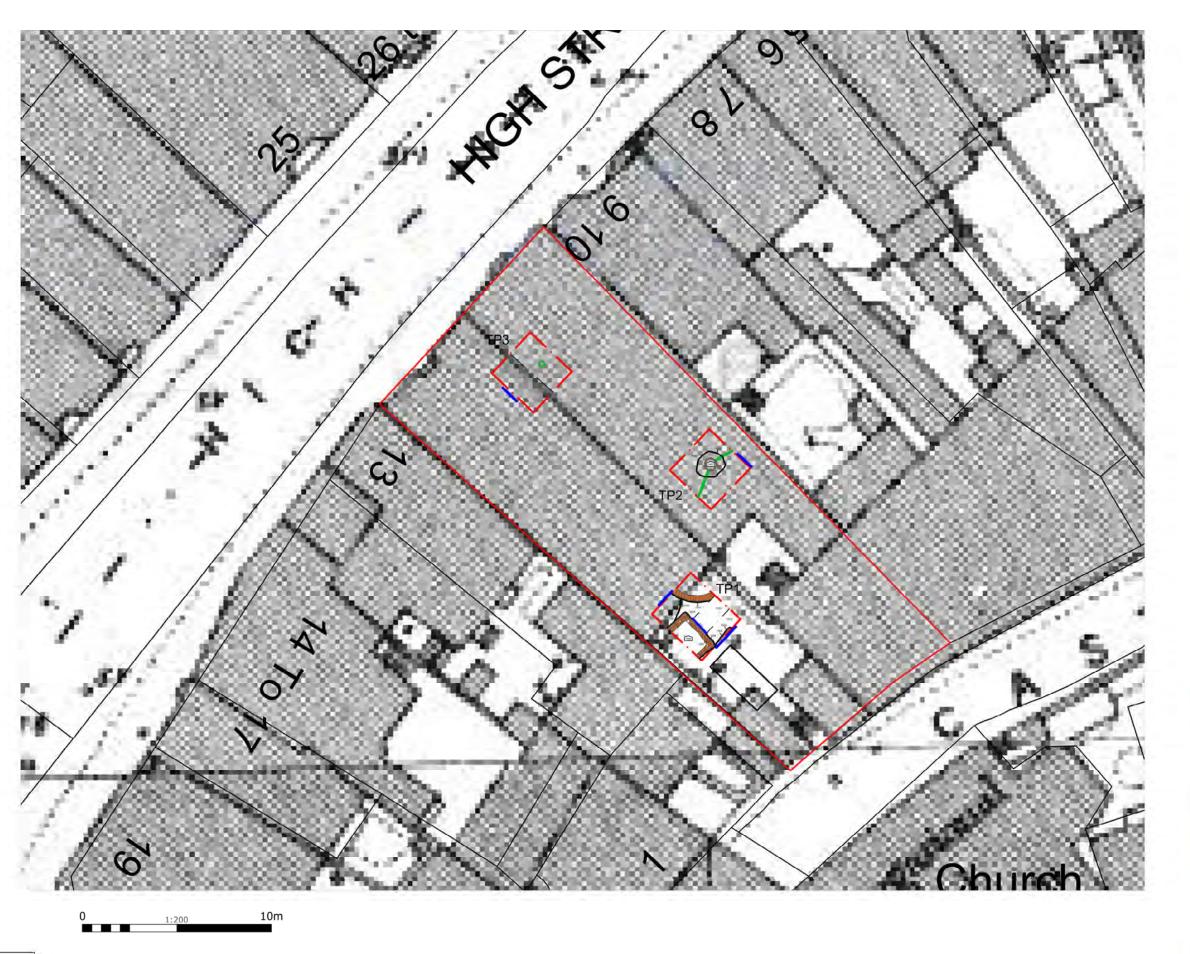
WELL 1001 - TP1

DP12 - TP 2 - VIEW N



OVERALL SITE SHOT DURING TP1 EXCAVATION







Site Boundary



3x3m Test Pit





Modern Feature Sample Section



Limit of Excavation

545138 309633 REF: RI284

11 - 12 HIGH STREET, WISBECH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

TP PLAN OVER 1887 6" OS MAP

BRINT CPM

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