

Archaeological Evaluation report of

# WEST CHESHIRE COLLEGE, CHESTER

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For AA Projects / West Cheshire College

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Blair Poole BA MSc

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L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY

Archaeological Evaluation report of

# WEST CHESHIRE COLLEGE, CHESTER

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## L~P:ARCHAEOLOGY

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# Abstract

*This report concerns the results of an Archaeological Evaluation at the site of West Cheshire College, Handbridge Campus. The site is located to the south of Chester along Eaton Road, the line of an earlier Roman road (SJ 4075 6517).*

*The fieldwork was carried out during February and March 2006 by Blair Poole and Claire Statter of L – P : Archaeology.*

*The investigation comprised a series of 16 trenches of varying size situated at predefined locations across the site.*

*To the west of the site, 20<sup>th</sup> century landscaping and car parking has removed any archaeological deposits that may have been present.*

*Across the central line of the site, from approximately 10m west of Eaton road to the front of the college buildings, both Roman and Post Medieval agricultural activity has been present.*

*Along the frontage of Eaton road, several phases of Roman activity were identified.*

*Within Trench 7, gravel overspill from the construction of the Roman Road, and a later gravel overspill from a reworking of the road were identified. To the north of the site, within Trench 1, 5 phases of Roman activity were identified.*

*The earliest 2 phases represent agricultural activity dating to between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD. The third phase is represented by a large funerary monument, dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Following the demolition of the monument, phase 4, a final Roman agricultural deposit dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD was identified.*

# 1. Introduction and Scope of Study

1.1. Between the 20<sup>th</sup> February and the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2006 an archaeological evaluation was carried out at the Handbridge Campus of West Cheshire College, Chester.

1.2. The local authority was Cheshire City Council

1.3. The fieldwork was commissioned by AA Projects on behalf of West Cheshire College.

1.4. The site was located at OS grid reference SJ 4075 6517 (Figure 1).

1.5. The archaeological site recording was carried out by Blair Poole and Claire Statter of L – P : Archaeology.

1.6. The investigation comprised a series of 16 trenches of varying size between 60 and 5 m in length by 1.6m in width (Figure 2). The trench locations had been previously agreed with Mike Morris, Chester City Archaeologist.

1.7. The aims of the archaeological evaluation were;

- ? To characterise the nature of archaeological activity on site.

- ? To assess the general nature and quality of deposits, artefact assemblages and environmental evidence.

- ? To gain information on the nature and date of the remains on the site likely to be affected by the development.

- ? To determine the extent, if any, of Roman activity along Eaton Road

## 2. Planning Background

2.1. In November 1990 the Department of the Environment issued PPG 16, "Archaeology and Planning". This document provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the preservation and investigation of archaeological remains.

2.2. In considering any planning application for development the local planning authority, Chester City Council, is bound by the policy frameworks provided by Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16), and the policies within the Local Plan

### *Chester Local Plan*

#### *Policy ENV 32*

*Where development proposals affect sites of known or potential archaeological interest, the City Council will require an archaeological assessment/evaluation to be submitted as part of the planning application. Planning permission will not be granted without the adequate assessment of the nature, extent and significance of the remains and the degree to which the proposed development is likely to affect them.*

#### *Policy ENV 33*

*Development proposals affecting the site or setting of a site of regional or county importance will only be permitted if the integrity of the archaeological remains has been secured.*

#### *Policy ENV 34*

*Development proposals affecting the site or setting of a site of district or local importance will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the particular site or monument can be preserved in situ or, where this is not feasible, by record.*

#### *Policy ENV 45*

*Planning permission will be refused for proposals that fail to have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*

#### *Policy ENV 48*

*Development adversely affecting the appearance, historic characteristics, integrity and setting of historic parks and gardens and historic battlefields on the national register will be refused.*

## 3. Geology and Topography

### 3.1.GEOLOGY

3.1.1. The British Geological Survey indicates that the solid geology along Eaton Road comprises pebble beds of the Sherwood sandstone group dating to the Triassic period, 190 to 136 million years ago.

3.1.2. The drift deposit comprises boulder clay and morainic drift.

### 3.2.TOPOGRAPHY

3.2.1. The proposed development site consists of land contained within the grounds of West Cheshire College, which is located approximately 1.2 km to the south of Chester City Centre.

3.2.2. The site is bound to the west by St Bede's Catholic School and Old Wrexham Road.

3.2.3. To the south the site is bound by Netherleigh House and its grounds. The western boundary is marked by Eaton road, with the northern boundary situated at the rear of residential houses along Eaton Mews. The site is situated to the west of Eaton Road, a known Roman road, with a 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estate to the north boundary, playing fields and a school to the west boundary and playing fields to the south.

3.2.4. The site lies between 20MOD at the northeast corner and 21.35MOD at the southeast corner..

3.2.5. The site area is relatively flat with a shallow gradient sloping up to the south.

## 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

### TIMESCALES USED IN THIS REPORT:

PERIOD	FROM	TO
PREHISTORIC		
PALAEOLITHIC	450,000	12,000 BC
MESOLITHIC	12,000	4,000 BC
NEOLITHIC	4,000	1,800 BC
BRONZE AGE	1,800	600 BC
IRON AGE	600	43 AD
HISTORIC		
ROMAN	43	410 AD
EARLY MEDIEVAL	410	1066 AD
MEDIEVAL	1066	1485 AD
POST MEDIEVAL	1485	PRESENT

4.1. This section is taken from the previous Desk Based Assessment carried out by Blair Poole of L – P : Archaeology in 2005.

4.2. Examination of data from cartographic records, the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (CHER) and various published and unpublished sources suggests that the site lies in an area of Roman activity, related to the nearby legionary fortress of Chester (*Deva*).

4.3. It is not the aim of this assessment to present a complete history of Chester from earliest times, nor is it the intention of this report to examine every artefact found in the local area. Rather, the aim of this assessment is to review the data available and to use this to construct a discursive model of the potential archaeology of the site within the context of its immediate surroundings.

#### 4.4. PREHISTORIC

4.4.1. There are no results for prehistoric activity on or near the study site in the Cheshire HER.

4.4.2. There has been very little evidence to suggest significant prehistoric settlement activity in the vicinity, although flint finds from the area (Poole, 2005) and the known prehistoric landscape in Chester's hinterland means this picture is changing slightly. However, a lack of substantial archaeological evidence means that the archaeological potential for the study site from any of the Prehistoric periods must therefore be considered low.

#### 4.5.ROMAN

- 4.5.1. Recent excavations at the Greenbank centre, approximately 400m to the south of the site on the opposite side of Eaton Road, have revealed Roman plough soils (Poole, 2005).
- 4.5.2. The site lies to the west of a known Roman road exiting Chester to the south. The road leads to the extramural site at Heronbridge and on to industrial sites at Holt (Poole, 2005).
- 4.5.3. Further north, in Handbridge proper, a Roman shrine to Minerva is located at Edgar's cave in Edgar's field (Carrington, 1994). During the Roman period Edgar's field was utilised as a quarry to produce stone for the fort of Deva (Langtree & Commyns, 2001).
- 4.5.4. As is typical of Roman settlements, burials and cremations were deposited outside the settlement boundaries, often running alongside main roads so people could pay their respects (Lewis & Thacker, 2003). A cremation cemetery is known to be located to the south of Edgar's field with an inhumation burial to the east of the Edgar's field (Carrington, 1994). Burials are known to extend along Eaton and have been identified at Netherleigh and Heronbridge (Poole, 2005).
- 4.5.5. With Roman burials located both north and south of the site there is a high potential for the existence of burials at the site along the road frontage, however, these would not be expected to extend a great deal further back from the road.
- 4.5.6. Heronbridge, situated approximately 700m south of the site, is the location of an extensive Roman settlement dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Carrington,



1994). The settlement is thought to have comprised numerous buildings, some of which appear to be of high status, showing evidence of hypocausts. The settlement had a long history, lasting up until the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Carrington, 1004, Langtree & Commyns, 2001).

4.5.7. Of the Roman finds from Heronbridge, one of the most impressive is an inscribed Roman tombstone that depicts a funerary banquet scene (Poole, 2005).

4.5.8. It is reasonable to hypothesise that a settlement of this type would have had associated extramural agricultural areas. This could explain the range of Roman finds identified around the site area.

4.5.9. HER search results indicate that Watling Street (CHER 1700/ 1/ 0) runs along the line of Eaton Road, on the east boundary of the site.

4.5.10. To the immediate northeast of the site a Roman coin find (CHER 3003/ 0/ 15) and a cremation cemetery (CHER 3002/ 1/ 5) have been identified.

4.5.11. Other cremations (CHRE 3003/ 0/ 13, 3002/ 1/ 9 & 3002/ 1/ 8) have been discovered immediately to the north and east of the site with Roman ceramics (CHER 3003/ 0/ 12).

4.5.12. Another cremation has been recovered to the south of the site at Netherleigh House (CHER 3002/ 1/ 10).

4.5.13. As Roman field systems have been identified at Greenbank and between Netherleigh and Heronbridge, there is a high potential for the presence of the agricultural features on the site. It is possible that these extend from the frontage, at Eaton Road, back some distance into the site area.

#### **4.6. SAXON & EARLY MEDIEVAL**

4.6.1. Recent excavation work by Chester Archaeological Society in the area of Heronbridge has revealed a mass burial, most probably relating to the battle of Chester dating to around 613AD (Poole, 2005). C14 dating has further clarified this theory by placing the burial within the 595-645 AD range (Poole, 2005). The battle of Chester heralded the victory of Aethelfrith of

Northumbria over the Welsh forces of Gwynedd and Powys (Carrington, 1994).

- 4.6.2. Chester is thought to have been home to a large Hiberno-Norse community which would have been involved in the Irish trade (Lewis & Thacker, 2003). This group would have been located to the south of the Roman fort in the area next to the early harbour (Lewis & Thacker, 2003) and are thought to have extended out into Handbridge (Harding, 2002). Integration between the Hiberno-Norse and Saxon populations can be seen with the discovery of Scandinavian metalwork and Saxon ceramics within assemblages (Harding, 2002).
- 4.6.3. The size of the Scandinavian settlement at Handbridge can be seen as the Domesday book utilises the *carucate* measurement, a Scandinavian system, rather than the *hide* measurement as seen in most other entries (Harding, 2002).
- 4.6.4. The Scandinavian settlement is located approximately 500m to the north of the site, however, the size of the settlement indicates that a relatively large area would need to be utilised as agricultural land to serve the settlement and Chester itself. It is likely that the site area served as part of this agricultural land.

#### 4.7. LATER MEDIEVAL

- 4.7.1. 1066 - Handbridge is known to be one of Chester's earliest suburbs and can easily be dated back to at least the 11<sup>th</sup> century. This is attested by the fact that Hugh Lupus was granted the suburb of Handbridge around 1077, (Morgan & St John Williams, 2004).
- 4.7.2. During the time of the Domesday survey, Netherleigh was located closer to Saltney, to the west.
- 4.7.3. The lost Medieval village of Claverton is thought to occupy the land around 200m to the southeast of the site, and it is known to lie on the boundary of the City Liberty. City Liberties replaced the older Hundreds in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The City Liberty, and remnants of the Great Ditch are still visible in the forest path opposite the entrance to Greenbank, 200m south of the site.

- 4.7.4. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, both the manor of Handbridge and its open fields extended beyond the liberties into the township of Claverton to the south (Lewis and Thacker, 2003). The associated fields of both Handbridge and Claverton would have occupied the study site area.
- 4.7.5. Between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries Overleigh manor was located to the west of the site until its subsequent demolition in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. A chapel was built to the west of the study site at Overleigh in 1230, when the land was given to the monks of Basingwerk Abbey (Morgan & St John Williams, 2004).
- 4.7.6. The house was demolished during the siege of Chester in 1645 and later rebuilt by Thomas Cowper (Morgan & St John Williams, 2004). Thomas was the son of the royalist mayor of Chester and the hall remained there until 1838 when the Marquess of Westminster ordered it demolished so a new approach to Eaton park could be built (Morgan & St John Williams, 2004).
- 4.7.7. The majority of activity on the site from this period is of agricultural form. Thus, the potential for archaeological features from this period on the site is low.

#### 4.8.POST MEDIEVAL

- 4.8.1. On Braun & Hogenberg's plan of 1581, a substantial suburb can be seen at Handbridge, with buildings lining the road leading south out of Chester. The site area is not shown on the map, as it likely to have been agricultural land and therefore outside the developed area shown.
- 4.8.2. The same applies to Speede's map of 1610. However, the suburb can be seen to have grown somewhat, although the street plan follows that seen in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Carrington, 1994). The settlement appears to cease at the junction of what is now Overleigh Road and Eaton Road (Roman road).
- 4.8.3. This layout is reflected in Hughes map of Chester dated 1643.
- 4.8.4. During the 17<sup>th</sup> Century a Royal fort was established in Handbridge around 1645 (Carrington, 1994). This was located at the junction of Eaton Road and Overleigh Road, which was called Flintshire Road at the time.

- 4.8.5. Although Handbridge had been destroyed by fire many times by the Welsh, there was one occasion where the people of Chester destroyed it themselves. During the civil war Sir Abraham Shipman, Governor of Chester, ordered that the people set fire to Handbridge to stop the parliamentary forces from taking it (Morrill, 1974).
- 4.8.6. By 1658 many Clay-pits had to be established in and around Chester to further the post civil war redevelopment. Many new buildings were constructed in Handbridge to re-develop it after its destruction (Lewis & Thacker, 2004).
- 4.8.7. By the earlier 18th century many of the grander town houses were located in the suburbs to the south and east. In Handbridge, Overleigh Hall was rebuilt following its acquisition by the Cowper family after the Restoration (Lewis & Thacker, 2004).
- 4.8.8. By 1653, Hollar shows the suburb of Handbridge still following the same plan as seen on speeds map of 1610. Again, the site area is not shown, probably due to its agricultural status.
- 4.8.9. An anonymous plan dated 1690 shows Handbridge has recovered and occupies much of the same outline that it had pre civil war.
- 4.8.10. Two anonymous plans of 1745 reiterate the plan of 1690, with the site area just out of the plan area, in the fields to the south.
- 4.8.11. De Lavaux, 1745, shows the location of the rebuilt Overleigh House, belonging to Wm Cowper Esq. Overleigh Road was known as Flintshire Road at that time. It also shows the Handbridge maypole located at the corner, where Overleigh and Eaton road meet. The site is, again, off the map in the agricultural area.
- 4.8.12. By 18<sup>th</sup> century Netherleigh Manor, originally in Saltney, and owned by the Stanleys of Alderley, was sold to John Cotgreave (St John Williams, 2002). The Cotgreaves owned agricultural land between Handbridge and Claverton and John's son, Thomas, was responsible for re-locating Netherleigh to its present position (St John Williams, 2002).

- 4.8.13. Thomas built the new Netherleigh house in 1780 at their land in Handbridge, adjoining the southern boundary of the site area. This was done as Eaton road was becoming a fashionable suburb, which Thomas Cotgreave wanted to be part of (St John Williams, 2002).
- 4.8.14. During renovation work for the cellar in Netherleigh house, around 1813, a series of Cremation urns, lamps and Roman ceramics were found (St John Williams, 2002).
- 4.8.15. Stockdale's plan of 1796 shows Handbridge as seen on De Lavaux's plan of 1745. The site area is south of the suburb, still not shown, probably through lack of development.
- 4.8.16. Roberts' 19<sup>th</sup> century illustration only shows large, important buildings. However, Eccleston is shown and the road layout continues to follow the original medieval route.
- 4.8.17. Between 1805 and 1821, a series of plans by Cole, Ormerod, Neele and Batenham show Handbridge developing along Overleigh Road and not spreading onto Eaton road until 1821. It is with the construction of the Grade II listed buildings along the start of Eaton road around 1820 that some development is seen.
- 4.8.18. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Handbridge contained mostly working-class housing, though still including Netherleigh house and Greenbank on Eaton Road. Despite these two high status houses, Hemmingway refers to Handbridge in 1831 as almost exclusively inhabited by the lower orders (Lewis & Thacker, 2004).
- 4.8.19. Cole's maps of 1836, 1843 and 1851 show development around Handbridge; however, only fields are shown heading towards Netherleigh. This is repeated on Thomas's plan of 1853 and Gresty's plan of 1870.
- 4.8.20. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1873 shows Netherleigh house in place, with fields occupying the site area. This is repeated on both 1881 and 1938 Ordnance Survey maps.

4.8.21. There are no results in the immediate vicinity for this time period on the Cheshire HER.

4.8.22. Although a great deal of activity and development of the area can be seen through the Post Medieval period, apart from Netherleigh house, it appears that the site area was devoid of development. It is clear that this land was used for agricultural purposes during this time frame. There is limited potential for archaeological remains on the site from this period.

#### 4.9. POST WAR

4.9.1. Post 1945 public spending focused on Health and education. St Bede's Catholic Secondary School (now Overleigh Middle School) and what was to become West Cheshire College were both built around this time.

4.9.2. The college building was constructed at some point between 1945 and 1948, although the educational institute itself can claim its origins to date to around 1812.

4.9.3. By 1958 the Ordnance survey map shows the main footprint of the college as it is today. By 1970 all outbuildings had been integrated under a single construction, as seen on the 1970 Ordnance Survey map.

4.9.4. No development can be seen on the site outside the footprint on the 1970, 1993 or 2005 Ordnance Survey maps.

## 5. Methodology

- 5.1. The evaluation consisted of a combination of machine trenching and hand excavation to maximise information recovery.
- 5.2. The modern topsoil and any made-up surface were removed by machine under the supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist.
- 5.3. Recent make-up deposits and bulk deposits were removed by machine after identification by hand cleaning.
- 5.4. All features were recorded stratigraphically.
- 5.5. For trenches where hand digging was not required the trench sides were cleaned and recorded.
- 5.6. Hand excavation by context was utilised where walls, floors or other features were encountered. Including:
  - 5.6.1. Ditch or linear feature termini and inter-sections
  - 5.6.2. Clusters of cuts and re-cut features
  - 5.6.3. Any structural evidence
  - 5.6.4. Areas of organic potential
- 5.7. A minimum number of features, within each significant archaeological horizon, were hand excavated to meet the research requirements of the evaluation:
  - 5.7.1. Pits and postholes were sampled by half-sectioning.
  - 5.7.2. Linear features were sectioned where appropriate.
  - 5.7.3. Excavated material was examined in order to retrieve artefacts to assist in the analysis of the spatial distribution of artefacts.
- 5.8. Examination and cleaning of all archaeological deposits was carried out by hand using appropriate hand tools. Any archaeological deposits were examined and recorded both in plan and section. The objective was to define remains rather than totally remove them.

5.9.All finds, artefacts, industrial remains and faunal remains were collected.

5.10.Finds included 19<sup>th</sup> century material and unstratified artefacts from the spoil.

5.11.All trenches and excavated spoil was be examined by an experienced metal detectorist, approved by the Chester City Archaeologist.



## 6. Results

6.1. A series of 16 trenches of varying length were excavated across the site area (Figure 2). This section will discuss the results of the investigation by trench.

### 6.2. TRENCH 1.

6.2.1. Trench 1 was located to the northeast corner of the site, 4.2m south of the main exit with its eastern edge butting the college fence line.



*Plate 1. Plan of Trench 1*

6.2.2. The trench measured 11m east west by 1.6m north south, with an elevation of 20.34 mod at the top of the north east corner (Figure 3). The base of the trench was recorded at 18.80 mod, 1.54m below the ground level.

6.2.3. The uppermost deposit comprised a topsoil, (100), and sub soil, (101). These were identified as 20<sup>th</sup> century deposits from plastic and ceramic inclusions recovered during excavation.

6.2.4. Underlying the modern subsoil were a series of three 20<sup>th</sup> century make up deposits associated with the construction of the college campus (Figure 4). Deposits (102), (103) and (104) could be seen to form a single event, forming the base of the car park for the north section of the college. Mixing between deposits of the main context components was visible.



*Plate 2. South facing section of Trench 1*

- 6.2.5. Context (102) comprised loose red shale which measured 0.08m deep. This shale overlay a 0.10m thick dump of grey coloured slag, (103). The base layer of the three deposits, (104), underlay (103) and consisted of 0.20m of black coloured cinder and ash. Within (104) a number of modern glazed ceramic finds and plastic fragments were recovered.
- 6.2.6. To the west end of the trench, a deposit, 0.46m deep, was identified underlying context (104). This deposit (118) comprised a friable red silt loam with a spread of small sandstone fragments within it. A number of coarse and fine Roman ceramic sherds were recovered from this deposit.
- 6.2.7. It appears that context (118) dates to the Roman period. The top of this deposit was identified at a depth of 19.74 mod, 0.6m below present ground level.
- 6.2.8. Underlying context (118) were two thin layers of Roman date, (119) and (120) respectively. Context (119) measured 0.15m in depth and comprised a dark grey to black clay which also revealed Roman ceramic sherds. The colour of the deposit may relate to rotting root matter within it which would have leached out minerals into the surrounding soil.

- 6.2.9. This group of deposits, (118) to (121), appear to be of Roman date and possibly represent the final phase of Roman activity within trench 1.
- 6.2.10. Context [122], the cut for the base of the Roman deposits, cut context (105) to the east, and could be seen to physically sit over (112), the natural red clay.
- 6.2.11. Context (105) had been truncated by the 20<sup>th</sup> century college make up (104), however, the bottom 0.3m had survived. The top of (105) was recorded at an elevation of 19.69 mod, 0.65m below present ground level.
- 6.2.12. (105) comprised friable mid brown clay loam which contained fragments of Roman ceramics. This context sealed in a series of lower, earlier, Roman deposits.
- 6.2.13. A large Roman structure, 106, was sealed in by context (105) at an elevation of 19.62 mod, 0.72m below present ground level. This structure was located 3.4m to the west of the eastern edge of trench 1 and comprised the south east corner of what appears to be a Roman funerary monument. The first section of the wall 106 ran in a north south orientation across the trench. At its southern edge a return wall could be seen to run towards the west.



*Plate 3. Plan of wall 106 with return, facing north*



6.2.14. This return was keyed into the north south section of the wall giving a contemporaneous date for both sections. The wall had been constructed of large sandstone blocks, 600 x 300 x 250mm, on both outer faces with sandstone rubble of a smaller size packing the void between both outer skins.



*Plate 4. Wall 106, looking east*

6.2.15. Within the sandstone packing material, Roman ceramics were recovered comprising coarse red-orange ceramic sherds with large silica temper. No mortar had been used in the construction of the wall.

6.2.16. The rough nature combined with the backfill surrounding it indicates that this part of the wall formed a foundation for a large funerary monument. The lack of any associated floor may result from the truncation of the upper deposits by context (105), a possible demolition layer.

6.2.17. A cut for wall 106 could, [111], could be seen in both north and south facing sections. This cut had a shallow gradient on the east edge with a sharper slope to the west. This possibly relates to the construction method, with access given from the east.

6.2.18. A series of 4 backfills had been dumped in cut [111] against wall 106. These contexts, (107), (108), (109) & (110) respectively, comprised loose soils which contained Roman building material, CBM, tile and tegula.

- 6.2.19. As with the wall 106, these deposits were sealed in by context (105).
- 6.2.20. The cut for these deposits, [111], could be seen to cut through an earlier Roman deposit, (114). Context (114) was identified at an elevation of 19.53 mod, 0.81m below present ground level.
- 6.2.21. (114) comprised a friable dark brown silt loam with Roman ceramic sherds within the matrix. The form of the deposit and the small nature of the Roman ceramic sherds may demonstrate that this context is part of an agricultural layer. A small amount of burnt bone was recovered from deposit (114).
- 6.2.22. The size and nature of the bone made it unidentifiable, however, from the nature of the deposit there is a high possibility that this is burnt animal bone. This is common within agricultural soils of numerous periods.
- 6.2.23. (114) overlay an earlier Roman deposit, (113), which lay at an elevation of 19.54 mod, 0.80m below present ground level, (113) comprised a friable dark brown silt loam which contained small fragments of Roman ceramics.
- 6.2.24. Several archaeological deposits were encountered within Trench 1. These are outlined below from earliest to latest;
- ? *Roman I* – The earliest of the Roman deposits within Trench 1 comprises context (113), a possible agricultural soil located at a depth of 19.54 mod, 0.80m below present ground level. Ceramic evidence detailed in section 7 dates this feature to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. An earlier date is though more convincing for this phase as context later layers, (105) for example, can be more accurately dated to the late 1<sup>st</sup> early 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries. It is most probable that this deposit dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.
  - ? *Roman II* – This comprises context (114), a possible agricultural soil located at a depth of, 19.53 mod, 0.81m below present ground level. This phase is thought to date to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD by association to surrounding deposits.
  - ? *Roman III* – This was the most substantial of the Roman phases of activity comprising wall 106 and its associated fills. It is probable that this is the foundation for a large Roman funerary monument. Roadside graves and monuments were known around Chester, however, the size of the monument means that whoever this monument was associated with must have been an important individual. This was located at a depth of 19.62 mod, 0.72m below present ground level. Section 7 discussed the finds from this phase, which is thought to date to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.
  - ? *Roman IV* – This phase represents the demolition and sealing in of the earlier funerary monument. The top of context (105) was identified at a

depth of 19.69 mod, 0.65m below present ground level. This deposit could be dated though ceramic finds discussed in section 7 to the late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

- ? *Roman V* – The latest of the Roman deposit within Trench 1 was recorded from the top of context (118), at 19.74 mod, 0.6m below present ground level. This appears to be a late agricultural deposit dating to the late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

6.2.25. The above series of Roman deposits begin at a depth of 0.6m below present ground level with the most significant structural feature, 106, at a depth of 0.72m below present ground level.

6.2.26. Discussion of the finds from this trench can be seen in section 7 of this report.

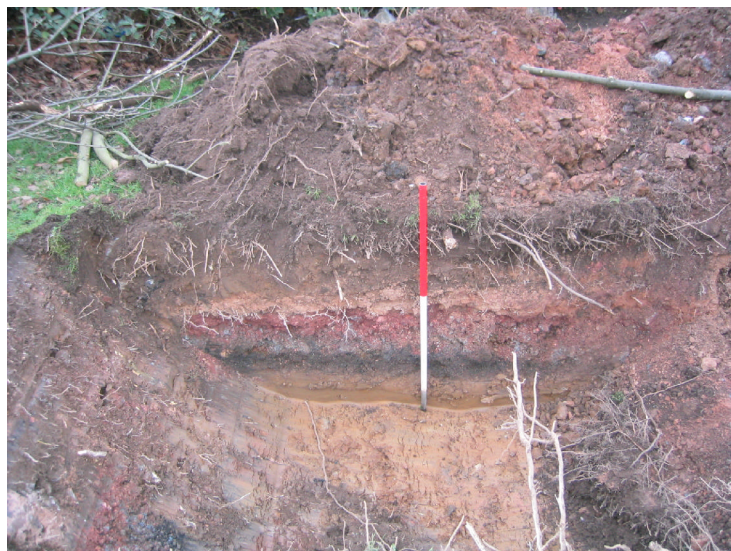
## 6.3. TRENCH 2

6.3.1. Trench 2 was located 10m to the north of the main college entrance and measured 9.5m by 1.6m on an northeast southwest orientation.

6.3.2. The height at the top of the northeast corner of the trench was 20.10mod with the trench being bottomed at a depth of 19.15mod, 0.95m below present ground level.

6.3.3. The uppermost deposit comprised a dark brown humid loam topsoil (200), 0.1m deep, which overlay a lighter coloured loose brown subsoil (201), 0.2m deep (Figure 5).

6.3.4. This subsoil sealed in a series of three 20<sup>th</sup> century construction layers, base for the college campus, (202), (203), and (204) respectively. (202) comprised sand and mortar loosely mixed and extended 0.1m below context (201). Underlying this sand matrix was a 0.15m deep deposit of red shale fragments. The base of the 20<sup>th</sup> century make up measured 0.21m in depth and comprised the same shotton slag seen in Trench 1 (103).



*Plate 5. Southwest facing section of Trench 2*



6.3.5. The base of the trench, underlying (204) was context (205), the natural red clay.

6.3.6. No other archaeological features were identified within Trench 2.

#### 6.4.TRENCH 3

6.4.1. Trench 3 measured 22m by 1.6m on an east west orientation and was located 26m to the north east of the main reception of the college. The height at top of the trench at its eastern edge was at an elevation of 19.91 mod. The trench was bottomed at a depth of 1.31m below, 18.60 mod.

6.4.2. 2 distinct archaeological deposits were encountered within Trench 3. The uppermost deposit, a possible Post medieval plough soil was located at a depth of 19.23mod, 0.72m below the present ground level. With a lower deposit, a Roman plough soil at a depth of 19.00mod, 0.95m below present ground level (Figure 6).

6.4.3. The upper two deposits comprised modern topsoil of dark brown to black humic loam (300), measuring 0.1m deep, which overlay a lighter coloured loose brown subsoil, (301), which measured 0.15m in depth.



*Plate 6. South facing section of Trench 3*

6.4.4. The subsoil sealed in a series of three 20<sup>th</sup> century construction layers, which appear to be a base for the college campus, (302), (303), and (304) respectively.

6.4.5. These deposits are the same as those identified in Trench 2, (202) to (204). The highest deposit, (302), comprised 0.2m of red shale. This overlay (303), with a grey angular gravel matrix 0.1m in depth, which in turn overlay (304). (304) comprised the Shotton slag, a porous slag waste from Shotton steel works, which extended 0.18m below context (303).

6.4.6. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century college make up was context (305), a mid brown silt clay with charcoal flecks and post medieval ceramic inclusions. This appears to

be an agricultural soil with a post medieval domestic ceramic spread. 0.14m in depth, it was identified at an elevation of 19.23mod, 0.72 below ground surface.

6.4.7. Context (305) seals in a light brown clay loam, (306), which produced roman ceramic sherds of rough/ coarse red pot with gritty temper. These are discussed more in the specialist report in Appendix 2. The deposit measured 0.2 in depth at an elevation of 19.0mod, 0.95m below present ground level.

6.4.8. The base of trench 3, underlying the Roman plough soil (306) is context (307), the natural red clay of the area.

## 6.5.TRENCH 4

6.5.1. Trench 4 measured 27m by 1.6m on a north south orientation, with dog legs at north and south ends. This was to avoid a planted area in the college car park. The northern end of the trench was located 40m to the east of the college entrance. The height at the north end of trench 4 was 20.00 mod. The trench base was located at a depth of 18.88 mod, 1.12m below present ground level.

6.5.2. As with trench 3, 2 archaeological deposits were encountered (Figure 7). The upper deposit, a post medieval plough soil was identified at a depth of 19.39mod, 0.61m below present ground level. The lower deposit, a Roman plough soil was seen at a depth of 19.24mod, 0.76m below present ground level.



*Plate 7. West facing section of Trench 4*

6.5.3. A dark humic loam topsoil (400), 0.1m deep, overlay a lighter coloured loose brown subsoil (401), which measured 0.12m in depth. The subsoil (401) sealed in a series of three 20<sup>th</sup> century construction layers, as seen in trenches 2 and 3. These appear to be the base for the college campus, (402), (403), and (404) respectively.

6.5.4. The top layer, (402), comprised 0.15m of red shale, overlying (403), a grey angular gravel 0.15m in depth. This gravel overlay, (404), a dump of Shotton slag, a porous slag waste from Shotton steel works 0.18m in depth.



- 6.5.5. The 20<sup>th</sup> century make up is only present in northern 5.2m of the trench, from this point on, moving south, only the subsoil (401) covers the post med plough soil (405).
- 6.5.6. Below 20<sup>th</sup> century college make up is (405), a mid brown silt clay with charcoal flecks and post med ceramic inclusions. This is likely to be an agricultural soil with domestic ceramic spread. It measured 0.18m in depth at an elevation of 19.39mod, 0.61m below the present ground surface.
- 6.5.7. (405), in turn, sealed in a light brown clay loam, (406), which revealed roman ceramic sherds. These were of a coarse red ceramic with gritty temper. The depth of this deposit measured 0.28 at an elevation of 19.24mod, 0.76m below present ground level.
- 6.5.8. The base of the trench, underlying the Roman plough soil (406) was (407), the natural red clay of the area.

## 6.6.TRENCH 5

- 6.6.1. Trench 5 measured 12m by 1.6m on a north south orientation, 28 m from the south eastern corner of the front block of the college within the car park. The height at the top of trench 5 was 20.18 mod, with the base at 0.91m below present ground level, 19.27 mod.
- 6.6.2. The plough soils seen in trenches 3 and 4 continue through into trench 5, with the post medieval plough soil at an elevation of 19.98mod, 0.20m below present ground level, and the Roman plough soil at an elevation of 19.68 mod, 0.50m below present ground level.



*Plate 8. West facing section of Trench 5*

- 6.6.3. As trench 5 was located within the car park of the college the upper deposits comprised Tarmac (500), 0.1m deep, and its associated hardcore base (501), 0.1m deep (Figure 8).

- 6.6.4. This modern surface overlay, (502), a gravel fill 0.3m deep, dumped in from the north, and could be seen slumping towards the south.
- 6.6.5. A thin layer of black silt and cinder (508) sits below (501) and also appears to have been dumped above (502) in areas. These all can be seen to be 20<sup>th</sup> century deposits utilised for the car park of the college.
- 6.6.6. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century college make up was context (503), a mid brown silt clay with charcoal flecks and post medieval ceramic inclusions. This appears to be an agricultural soil with domestic spread. Context (503) measured 0.30m in depth, with its uppermost level at an elevation of 19.98mod, 0.20 below the present ground surface.
- 6.6.7. (503) seals in a light brown clay loam (504) which revealed roman ceramic sherds of a coarse red pot with gritty temper. This deposit was identified at a depth of 19.68mod, 0.50m below present ground level and extended 0.3m below this.
- 6.6.8. Context (507) was located at the base of trench 5 underlying context (504). (507) comprised the natural red clay, with blue mottled areas, raising up to the south. Cut into the natural, (507) was a shallow ditch running east west, 2.3m from the northern edge of the trench. This u-shaped ditch, [506], was filled with a light brown clay loam (505), similar to context (504). It is possible that this is a Roman ditch, however, no finds were recovered from this fill and modern truncation makes this hard to prove.

## 6.7. TRENCH 6

- 6.7.1. Trench 6 measured 5m by 1.6m along an east west orientation and was located 28m west of the main Eaton road entrance south gate. The height at the top of the east end of the trench was 21.25 mod, with its base at 20.12 mod, 1.13m below present ground level.
- 6.7.2. As with the previous trenches, 3, 4 and 5, two distinct archaeological deposits were encountered. A post medieval plough soil at 21.00 mod, 0.25m below present ground level and a Roman plough soil at 20.60 mod, 0.65m below present ground level (Figure 9).
- 6.7.3. The upper layers comprised the car park tarmac surface and its associated base layers. The tarmac (600) measured 0.1m deep and overlay two 20<sup>th</sup> century construction layers, base for the college campus, (601) a red shale and (602) comprising black cinder. These extend 0.1 and 0.05m in depth respectively.
- 6.7.4. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century college make up was context (603), a mid brown silt clay with charcoal flecks and post medieval ceramic inclusions. This is probably an agricultural soil with a domestic ceramic spread. It measured 0.40m in depth, from an elevation of 21.00mod, 0.25 below ground surface.
- 6.7.5. Context (603) sealed a light brown clay loam, (604), which produced roman ceramic sherds. The depth of this deposit measured 0.4m from an elevation of 20.60mod, 0.65m below present ground level.



*Plate 9. South facing section of Trench 6*

- 6.7.6. Underlying context (604) and extending to the base of the trench was context (605), the natural red clay of the area.

## 6.8.TRENCH 7

- 6.8.1. Trench 7 was divided into two sections due to a combination of access difficulties and an array of modern services (Figure 10).
- 6.8.2. Section 1, the eastern section, measured 18.3m by 1.6m on an east west orientation and was located 1.2m to the west of the hedgerow fronting onto Eaton Road and 5m to the south of the lodge building. The height at the top of the eastern edge of trench 7 was 21.25m OD, with the base at an elevation of 19.60m OD, 1.65m below the present ground level.
- 6.8.3. Section two was located 2.4m to the west of section 1 and measured 11.25m by 1.6m in an east west orientation. Due to a mass of services, this trench could not be fully investigated.
- 6.8.4. Section 2 was stripped to a depth of 0.42m below present ground level, where an array of services running both north south and east west were identified. This meant that further excavation of this section was impossible.
- 6.8.5. Section 1, however, revealed a series of Roman deposits underlying modern truncation. The depth of the top of Roman deposits was recorded at the top of context (704), a possible Roman sealing layer. This was located at an elevation of 20.30m OD, 0.96m below present ground level (Figure 11).
- 6.8.6. A dark humic loam topsoil (700), 0.15m deep, overlay a dark brown coloured loose silt subsoil (701). Context (701) measured 0.25m in depth and both these deposits contained 20<sup>th</sup> century metal, plastic and glass as well as ceramics.
- 6.8.7. The subsoil (701) sealed in a series of two 20<sup>th</sup> century layers. These appear to represent dumping events, possibly following the construction of the lodge



building to the north of the trench. Context (702) comprised a 0.25m deep deposit of dark brown loose silt loam. (703) extend 0.31m in depth and comprised a very dark brown to black loose silt and sand mix. As with the upper two deposits, both (702) and (703) contained 20<sup>th</sup> century metal, plastic and ceramic fragments.



*Plate 10. Plan of Trench 7, looking east*

- 6.8.8. Underlying (703) was context (704), a dark to mid red silt loam which contained small fragments of Roman ceramics. The deposit appears to have been cut into during construction of the Lodge and is much deeper in the southern section, 0.4m as opposed to 0.16 in the north section. Fragments of Roman roof tiles, both tegula and imbrex, were recovered from this deposit.
- 6.8.9. Context (704) sealed in a distinct gravel deposit, (707), at a depth of 0.83m below present ground level. This deposit was very similar in form to another context, (706), located to the east end of the trench. However, a yellow clay base, (705), sealed in (706), giving two phases of gravel spill, in essence separating (707) and (706) into two events.
- 6.8.10. Both (706) and 707) were made up of small rounded pebble and both contained Roman ceramic finds of similar date, between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. These appear to be overspill or a skirt for the Roman Road that ran along the present line of Eaton Road.
- 6.8.11. (706) measured 0.1m in depth and underlay (705) in turn overlaying (710) the natural red clay.

6.8.12. (707) measured 0.1m in depth and underlay (704), with (705), the 0.12m thick yellow clay deposit as a base.

6.8.13. Within (705) was a thin lens of black silt, (708). This contained fragments of burnt bone and Roman ceramic, however, this appears to be a small spread, rather than a cut feature.

## 6.9. TRENCH 8

6.9.1. Trench 8 measured 8.1 by 1.6m on an east west orientation and was located 6m south west of the southeastern corner of the front block of the college. The elevation at the top of the trench was 20.21 mod. Trench 8 was excavated to a depth of 19.06 mod, 1.15m below car park level.

6.9.2. As with trenches 3,4 and 5, the two main plough soils were identified within trench 8. The top of the post medieval plough soil was located at 19.81mod, 0.40m below present ground level, with the Roman plough soil at 19.61mod, 0.60m below present ground level (Figure 12).

6.9.3. The uppermost surface of the trench was a tarmac layer, (800), which was 0.1m deep. This overlay a yellow angular gravel (801), 0.05m deep. Under this gravel was a hardcore lens, (802), 0.15m in depth which in turn lay above a cinder deposit (803), 0.1m in depth. These all appear to relate to the construction of the car park during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



*Plate 11. North facing section of Trench 8*

6.9.4. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century car park make up was context (804), a mid brown silt clay with charcoal flecks and post medieval ceramic inclusions. This is likely to represent an agricultural soil with domestic ceramic spread. It measured 0.20 m in depth, from an elevation of 19.81 mod, 0.40m below ground surface.

6.9.5. Context (804) sealed in a light blue grey clay, (805), which revealed no finds. However, this was similar to other deposits on the site, such as (604), which have produced Roman ceramic finds. The depth of deposit (805) was 0.2m from an elevation of 19.61 mod, 0.60m below present ground level.

6.9.6. Context (805) overlay the natural red clay, (806), which extended to the base of the trench.

## 6.10.TRENCH 9

6.10.1.Trench 9 measured 5.8 by 1.6m along an east west orientation. And was located 25m to the south west of the south eastern corner of the front block of the college.

6.10.2.The height at the top of the western corner of the trench was 20.18 mod. The base of the trench was located at 19.29 mod, 0.89m below present ground level.

6.10.3. A possible post medieval plough soil was identified at 19.83mod, 0.35m below present ground level, with a possible Roman plough soil at 19.68 mod, 0.50m below present ground level (Figure 13).

6.10.4. The upper surface comprised 0.15m of tarmac (900), which overlay an angular yellow gravel deposit (901). Context (901) measured 0.2m in depth and both (900) and (901) appear to form the construction layers for the existing car park.



*Plate 12. North facing section of Trench 9*

6.10.5. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century car park make up was context (902), a mid brown coloured silt clay with charcoal flecks and post medieval ceramic inclusions. This appears to be an agricultural soil with domestic ceramic fragments, which measured 0.15 m in depth. The top of this layer was identified at an elevation of 19.83 mod, 0.35m below ground surface.

6.10.6.Context (902) sealed in a light brown silt loam, (903), which revealed no finds. Although no finds were recovered from this context, its similarity to surrounding deposits, which revealed Roman ceramic fragments, could indicate a Roman date.



6.10.7. Context (903) measured 0.25 in depth, with its upper surface at an elevation of 19.68 mod, 0.50m below present ground level.

6.10.8. Underlying context (903) was a deposit of natural red lay, (904), which extended to the base of the trench.

## 6.11. TRENCH 10

6.11.1. Trench 10 measured 10.6m by 1.6m on a north south orientation and was located 20 m to the east of the western boundary, within the west car park. The elevation at the top of the trench was recorded as 19.56 mod, with the base at a depth of 19.01 mod, 0.55m below present ground level.

6.11.2. The upper surface comprised tarmac (1001), 0.15m deep, with a black silt & gravel base (1002), 0.1m deep (Figure 14).

6.11.3. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century car park make up was context (1003), a light blue clay 0.10 m in depth. This appears to be a waterlogged part of the natural clay deposit (1004), which underlay (1003). Context (1004), the natural clay extended to the base of the trench.



*Plate 13. East facing section of Trench 10*

6.11.4. No features were identified within trench 10.

## 6.12. TRENCH 11

6.12.1. Trench 11 measured 12.6m by 1.6m on a north south orientation. This trench was located 7m east of the western boundary and 40.5 m south of the north boundary. The height at the top of trench 11 was recorded as 19.48 mod. The trench was excavated to a depth of 18.47 mod, 1.01m below present ground level.

6.12.2. The top surface was made up of tarmac (1101), 0.1m deep, with a black silt & gravel base (1102), 0.2m deep (Figure 15).

6.12.3. Below the 20<sup>th</sup> century car park make up was (1103), the natural red clay of the area, which extended to the base of the trench.

6.12.4. No features were identified within Trench 1.

### 6.13. TRENCH 12

6.13.1. Trench 12 was excavated to 10m by 1.6m along a north south orientation. The top of trench 12 was identified at 20.13 mod with its base at a depth of 18.98mod, 1.15m below present ground level.

6.13.2. Trench 12 was located 17m to the northeast of the southeast corner of the college within the east car park (Figure 16).

6.13.3. The car park surface comprised tarmac (1200), 0.03m deep, with a yellow gravel base, (1201), 0.3m deep.



*Plate 14. East facing section of Trench 12*

6.13.4. 0.6m below present ground level was a possible post medieval plough soil (1202), identified at 19.53mod. This was seen below the 20<sup>th</sup> century car park make up.

6.13.5. (1202) is formed from a mid brown silt loam, 0.25m deep and contained post medieval ceramic fragments.

6.13.6. Underlying (1202) was context (1203), the natural red clay which extended to the base of the trench.

### 6.14. TRENCH 13

6.14.1. Trench 13 was located 60m to the south of the front block of the college and 52m to the west of the eastern boundary. The trench measured 18.20m by 1.6m on a north south orientation. The surface level at this point was recorded as 20.95 mod, with the base of the trench at 20.10 mod, 0.85m below present ground level.



6.14.2. The surface comprised tarmac (1300), 0.05m deep, with a yellow gravel bed (1301), 0.25m deep.

6.14.3. 0.3m below present ground level was a possible post medieval plough soil recorded at 20.65mod (Figure 17). This context (1302) underly (1301) and revealed post medieval ceramic inclusions.

6.14.4. Underlying (1302) was natural red clay deposits (1303) which extended to the base of the trench.

#### **6.15. TRENCH 14**

6.15.1. Due to constraints within the south east car park trench 14 was divided into 2 sections. The south section measured 10m by 1.6m with the north section measuring 5m by 1.m, both on a north south orientation. They were located 25m west of the eastern boundary in the centre of the south east car park. The north section was divided from the south section by a gap of 3m.

6.15.2. The elevation at the top of the north end of the trench was 21.15 mod. The trench was excavated to a depth of 20.25mod, 0.9m below ground level (Figure 18).

6.15.3. The surface layers comprised tarmac (1400), measuring 0.05m deep, overlying a yellow gravel bed, (1401), 0.3m deep. Sealed in by the 20<sup>th</sup> century car park make, 0.35m below present ground level, was a possible post medieval plough soil, (1402), a mid brown silt loam, 0.3m deep.

6.15.4. Underlying (1402) was context (1403) the natural red clay which extended to the base of the trench.

#### **6.16. TRENCH 15**

6.16.1. Trench 15 was located at the south east corner of the college car park, 9m west of the eastern boundary. The trench measured 18.7m by 1.6m, on a north south orientation, with an elevation at its top of 21.35 mod. The trench was excavated to a depth of 19.65 mod, 1.7m below present ground level.

6.16.2. The modern car park make up of tarmac (1500), 0.08m deep, overlying yellow gravel (1501), 0.3m deep sealed in a loose dump of mid brown silt (1502) which contained 20<sup>th</sup> century plastics. Context (1502) measured 0.3m deep and appears to be make up to raise the car park level.

6.16.3. 0.68m below present ground level, sealed in by context (1502), was an earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century turf layer (1503). This was identified at an elevation of 20.67 mod. Matted grass on the upper surface marked the start of the deposit, and plastic flapjack wrappers and ribena cartons give a recent 20<sup>th</sup> century date for this deposit.



*Plate 15. East facing section of Trench 15*

6.16.4. Context (1503) measured 0.1m in depth and overlay (1504), a mid brown loose silt loam, 0.92m deep. This appeared to be the loose backfill of a roadside ditch (Figure 19). 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics indicated a backfilling date.

6.16.5. The top of context (1504) was identified at a depth of 20.57 mod, 0.78m below present ground level.

6.16.6. Context (1504) was cut into the natural red clay, (1505), which extended to the base of the trench.

#### **6.17. TRENCH 16**

6.17.1. Trench 16 was located in the rough grassy area to the south of the college. Its northeast corner was set at a distance of 29.5m to the east of the south east corner of the college.

6.17.2. Trench 16 measured 61.3m by 1.6m, on an east west orientation, with its eastern end at an elevation of 21.92mod. The base was recorded at 20.62 mod, 1.3m below ground level.



*Plate 16. South facing section of Trench 16*

- 6.17.3. Topsoil, (1600), of trench 16 comprised, 0.14m of dark brown humic loam. This overlay a loose mid brown silt subsoil (1601), which measured 0.12m in depth (Figure 20).
- 6.17.4. Below the subsoil was a loose light brown silt (1602) which contained post medieval ceramics and clay pipe. (1602) measured 0.2m in depth and overlay the natural red clay of the area (1603). Context (1603) extended to the base of the trench.
- 6.17.5. To the west of the trench, a plough mark, (1604), could be seen in the base, cut into the natural (1603). This measured 0.42m in width and was cut from context (1602). The plough depth measured 0.25m.
- 6.17.6. Context (1604) was identified at 21.11 mod, 0.46m below the present ground level at the edges of the trench. This appears to be a possible post medieval plough mark.
- 6.18. The results indicate that along the frontage of Eaton Road there is evidence of Roman activity approximately ?? m below the present ground surface. Both Roman and post medieval agricultural deposits can be seen to occupy the area to the east and south of the college at an approximate depth of ?? and ?? respectively.
- 6.19. The area to the west of the college appears to have been landscaped during the construction of the college, school or car park. This has removed any archaeological deposits that may have been present in the past.
- 6.20. The following section details the finds recovered from the above trenches.

## 7. Finds

7.1. The following section addresses the finds recovered from the evaluation at West Cheshire College.

7.2. Several contexts revealed Roman and post Roman finds across the site. The bulk of these were of undiagnostic CBM/building material and sherds of Cheshire plains ware, the local Roman ceramic. However, several sherds of black burnished ware and 2 fragments of Spanish Amphora were also identified.

7.3. A number of the ceramics sherds of Cheshire plains ware showed evidence of burning. As this area is known to have been utilised as a burial ground, especially along the frontage of Eaton Road, it is possible that some of this burnt ceramic comes from cremation activity. It has also been postulated that some of the sherds are similar to wasters in appearance. Wasters often form part of assemblages seen in association with ceramic manufacture.

7.4. As no kilns are known of in the immediate vicinity, whereas burials have been recorded along the west perimeter of Eaton Road, both north and south of the site, it is likely that these burnt ceramics are associated with cremation activity.

### 7.5. Trench 1

#### 7.5.1. Ceramic

7.5.2. Context (105), the Roman deposit sealing in the Roman structure 106, only contained Roman ceramic and metal finds. Fragments of Imbrex and tegula, Roman roof tile, were recovered from (105) along with Romano British ceramics and Flavian-Trajanic sherds. This tends to suggest a date of late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

7.5.3. Context (106), revealed fragments of Roman brick and tile as well as sherds of Cheshire Plains ware dating to between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.

7.5.4. Context (110) produced limited finds, however, these sherds of ceramic were Romano British in date and form.

7.5.5. Context (113) contained a number of Roman and Romano British finds, including Spanish Amphorae fragments and burnt Romano British beaker

sherds.

7.5.6. Context (116) produced Roman ceramic sherds dating to between the late 1<sup>st</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD, along with Romano British ceramic fragments.

7.5.7. Context (119) also produced finds within the same date range, late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and Romano British ceramic sherds.

7.5.8. Metal

7.5.9. 2 small, square section, metal pins were also recovered from (105) and (106), which were identified during metal detecting sweeps of the deposits. These also appears to be Roman in date.

7.5.10. Bone

7.5.11. Context (114) produced a small amount of undiagnostic fragments of burnt bone. These could not be identified due to their small size and fragmentary nature.

7.6. Trench 3

7.6.1. Ceramic

7.6.2. Context (305) produced fragments of late medieval green glaze and 17<sup>th</sup> century glazed ceramic fragments.

7.6.3. Context (306) contained 3 sherds of a coarse local ceramic which appears to be medieval in date

7.7. Trench 4

7.7.1. Ceramic

7.7.2. Context (405) revealed a mixture of Roman and post medieval ceramics. This appears to be a re-deposited layer.

7.7.3. Context (406) contained several Roman ceramic sherds. These appear to be tile fragments and building material/ CBM.

## 7.8.Trench 5

### 7.8.1. Ceramic

7.8.2. Context (503) produced sherds of post medieval ceramics, with a brown glaze and coarse fabric.

7.8.3. Context (504) produced 2 sherds of coarse Roman building material/ CBM.

## 7.9.Trench 6

### 7.9.1. Ceramic

7.9.2. Context (603) contained numerous post medieval ceramic fragments including Buckley ware and yellow glazed ceramics.

### 7.9.3. Glass

7.9.4. Context (603) also contained a small fragments of clear flat glass, possibly from a window pane.

## 7.10.Trench 7

7.10.1.Trench 7 contained an apparent overspill from the Roman road which ran north south, along the eastern boundary of the site.

### 7.10.2.Ceramic

7.10.3.Context (705) produced Roman ceramic fragments of tegula and imbrex as well as other building materials. These were all dated by a specialist to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

7.10.4.Context (706) contained a number of sherds of Roman CBM/ building material and tile fragments.

7.10.5.Context (708) revealed a series of ceramic sherds thought to be Romano British body sherds from a jar. These were dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

### 7.10.6.Bone

7.10.7.Context (708) also contained several fragments of burnt bone. As with the bone from trench 1, this was undiagnostic and fragile.



## 7.11.Trench 10

### 7.11.1.Ceramic

7.11.2.Context (1003) comprised several sherds of Roman ceramics, thought to be from the Holt area. These were dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.

## 7.12.Trench 15

7.12.1.Context (1504) was the fill of an old roadside ditch. The majority of these finds are of 20<sup>th</sup> century date, with the exception of a number of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics.

### 7.12.2.Ceramic

7.12.3.The assemblage comprised a number of Buckley ware sherds as well as white glazed ceramic and terracotta flower pot fragments. The most dateable item from the assemblage was a white glazed ceramic telegraph insulator.

7.12.4.The telegraph insulator was a relatively large item that would have been located on top of a telegraph pole. These items isolated the telegraph cable from the stanchion and any other possible short that could cause current loss.

7.12.5.The cross section is visible due to its damaged state and the words “Bullars Ltd” and “London” are embossed on the upper end of the item. This information can be used to determine a date on manufacture, as the deep recess and screw thread show it to be of a late type, which Bullars record as being produced post 1943 AD.

### 7.12.6.Bone

7.12.7.Several whole cattle bones were uncovered within context (1504). These included a metatarsal, metacarpal and scapula as well as a humerus. These were clearly bovine in origin and their preservation indicates a relatively recent date, possibly mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 7.12.8.Glass

7.12.9.Context (1504) produced several fragments of a large green glass wine bottle.

## 8. Summary and Conclusions

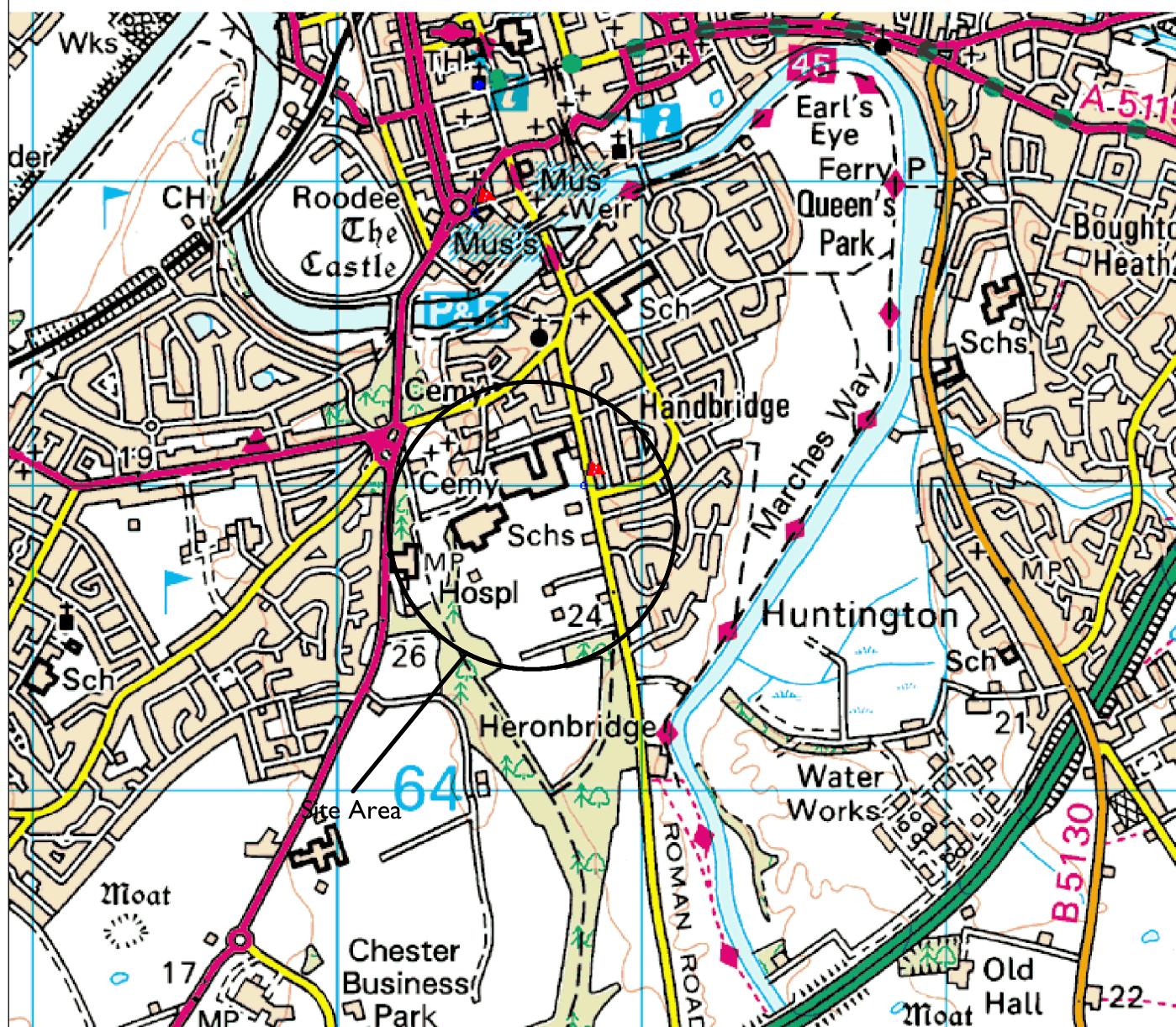
- 8.1. The site of West Cheshire College, Handbridge campus, is proposed for future residential development. The site underwent an archaeological evaluation during February and March 2006.
- 8.2. The site could be divided into three distinct areas, (Figure 2). The western section, within the rear car park to the west of the main college building, the central section directly to the east of the college building and the east section, along the Eaton Road frontage.
- 8.3. The West section revealed that the area to the west of the main college building has undergone 20<sup>th</sup> century landscaping, which has destroyed any archaeological deposits that may have been present within this area of the site. 20<sup>th</sup> century car park construction layers overlie the natural clay deposit.
- 8.4. The central section, including trenches 2 through 6, 8 and 9 as well as 12 through 16, revealed that two well defined agricultural layers were present on the site. It appears that the area was used during the Roman period for agricultural purposes. These deposits are located set back several meters from the frontage for Eaton Road.
- 8.5. The site lies between the Roman fort at Chester and the Roman settlement of Heronbridge along the main southern route of Chester. As such is in an ideal location for supplying part of the agricultural needs for Chester and Heronbridge.
- 8.6. Overlying the Roman agricultural deposits was a later, medieval, agricultural deposit. It is likely that the area was utilised for agricultural purposes during the medieval period.
- 8.7. The East section, running parallel to Eaton Road revealed the earliest deposits on the site.
- 8.7.1. These deposits can be divided into 5 phases of activity within trench 1, located to the south of the main exit of the college car park, and 2 phases of activity in trench 7, to the south of the lodge building.
- 8.7.2. The five phases of Roman activity can be seen below.



- 8.7.3. *Roman I* – The earliest of the Roman deposits within Trench 1 comprises context an agricultural soil located at a depth of 19.54 mod, 0.80m below present ground level. Ceramic evidence detailed in section 7 dates this feature to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. An earlier date is though more convincing for this phase as later layers, (105) for example, can be more accurately dated to the late 1<sup>st</sup> early 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries. It is most probable that this deposit dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.
- 8.7.4. *Roman II* – This comprises context (114), another agricultural soil located at a depth of, 19.53 mod, 0.81m below present ground level. This phase is thought to date to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD by association to surrounding deposits.
- 8.7.5. *Roman III* – This was the most substantial of the Roman phases of activity comprising wall 106 and its associated fills. It is probable that this is the foundation for a large Roman funerary monument. Roadside graves and monuments were known around Chester, however, the size of the monument means that whoever this monument was associated with must have been an important individual. This was located at a depth of 19.62 mod, 0.72m below present ground level. Section 7 discussed the finds from this phase, which is thought to date to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.
- 8.7.6. *Roman IV* – This phase represents the demolition and sealing in of the earlier funerary monument. The top of context (105) was identified at a depth of 19.69 mod, 0.65m below present ground level. This deposit could be dated though ceramic finds discussed in section 7 to the late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.
- 8.7.7. *Roman V* – The latest of the Roman deposits within Trench 1 was recorded from the top of context (118), at 19.74 mod, 0.6m below present ground level. This appears to be a late agricultural deposit dating to the late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

- 8.7.8. Within Trench 7, overspill of gravel from the Roman Road which lies along the same line as the present Eaton Road were identified. These were recorded at a depth of 20.30m, 0.96m below present ground level. Finds date this phase of activity to between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.
- 8.7.9. It can be clearly seen that the main focus of Roman activity runs along the west boundary of Eaton Road. It appears that the site was utilised for agricultural purposes for a period. Following this, a large funerary monument was erected along the side of the main southerly road out of Chester. In time this monument went out of use and the site returned to an agricultural function.
- 8.7.10. From the results, it can be said that there is a high potential for Roman archaeological remains being present along the frontage for Eaton Road at an approximate depth of 0.6m below the present ground level.
- 8.7.11. Post Roman activity, prior to the construction of the college, appears to be restricted to post medieval agricultural activities.
- 8.7.12. The results of this evaluation indicate that agricultural deposits from the Roman and Post Medieval periods cover a great deal of the site.
- 8.7.13. As much of the archaeological deposits identified on the site are agricultural soils, it is thought that these should not require preservation in situ, however, some form of monitoring may be advisable during intrusive groundworks.
- 8.7.14. To the east of the site, along the Eaton Road frontage, minimal works should be carried out here in order to preserve any Roman remains that may be present. If intrusive groundworks are required within this area, some form of archaeological investigation may be prudent.

FIGURE 1 // Site location general



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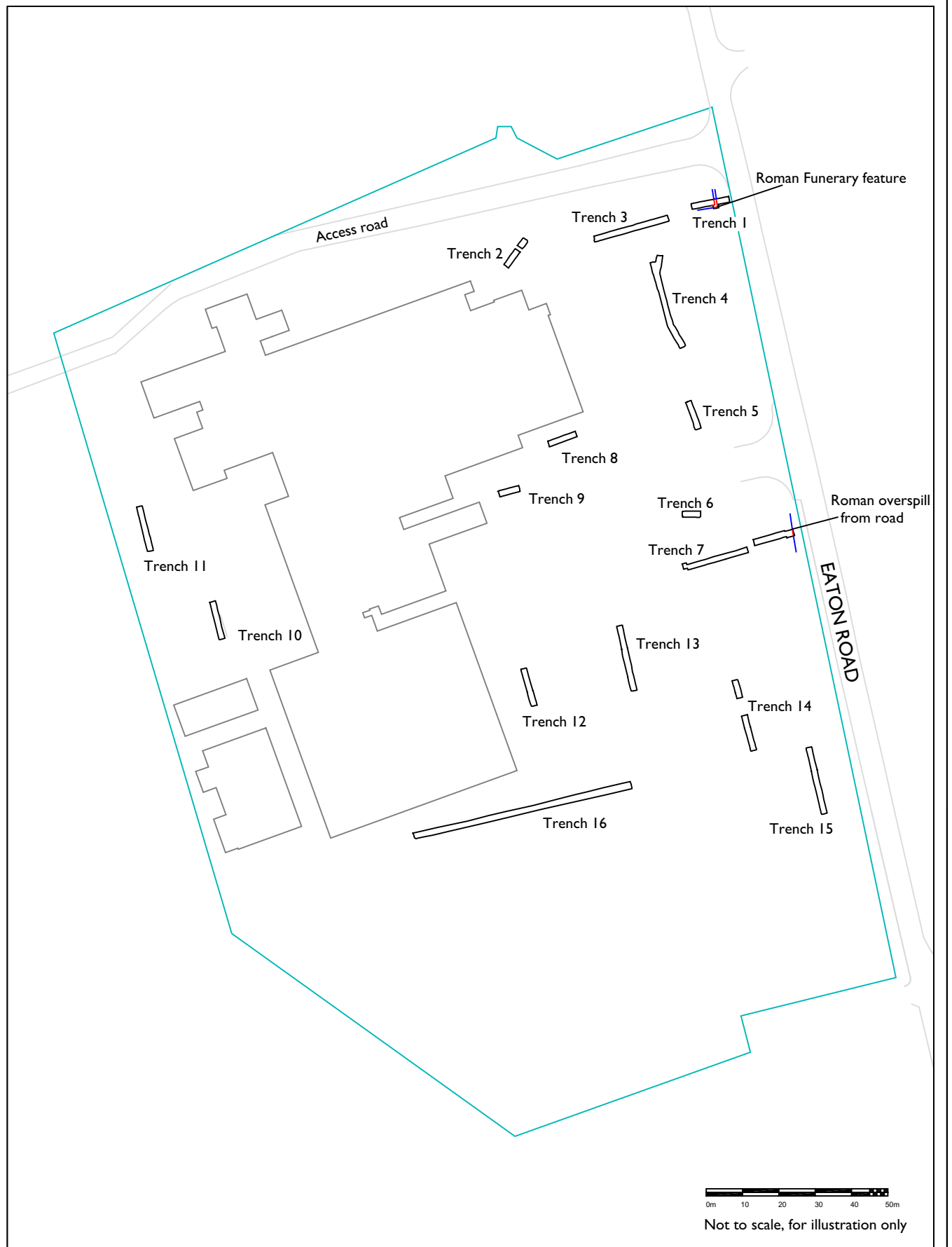
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // Site location general

DOC REF: LP0435C-AER-v1.5

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 2 // Site Location Detailed



Trench 1 contains a large Roman funerary monument, shown in red  
 The blue lines indicate proposed extension of the recorded feature  
 Trench 7 shows overspill of gravel from the Roman road  
 Blue lines indicate proposed extension of the overspill  
 Trenches 2 to 6, 8 & 9 and 12 to 15 mark the central area of the site  
 These show Roman and Post Medieval agricultural activity  
 Trenches 10 & 11 mark west extent of site  
 showing 20th century landscaping with no archaeological features



CLIENT // AA Projects

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // Site Location Detailed

DOC REF // LP0435c-AER-v1.5 **L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY**

FIGURE 3 // Plan of Trench I



Scale 1:50 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

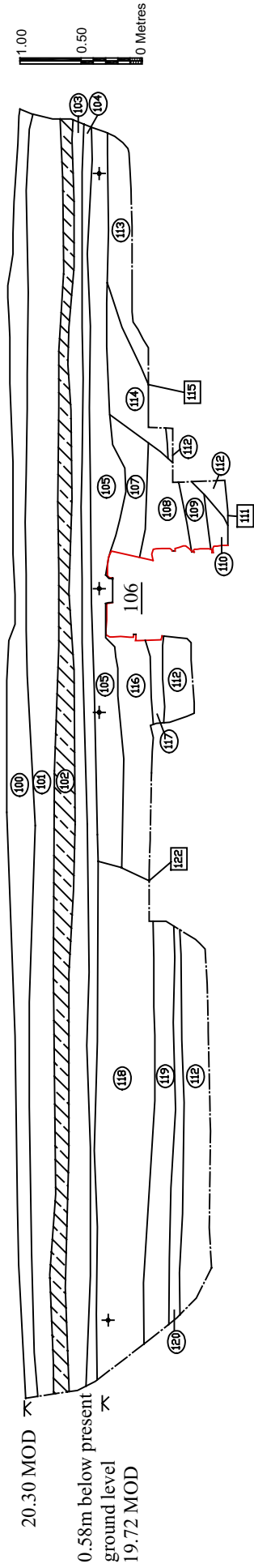
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // Plan of Trench I

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

FIGURE 4 // South facing section Trench I



Scale 1:50 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

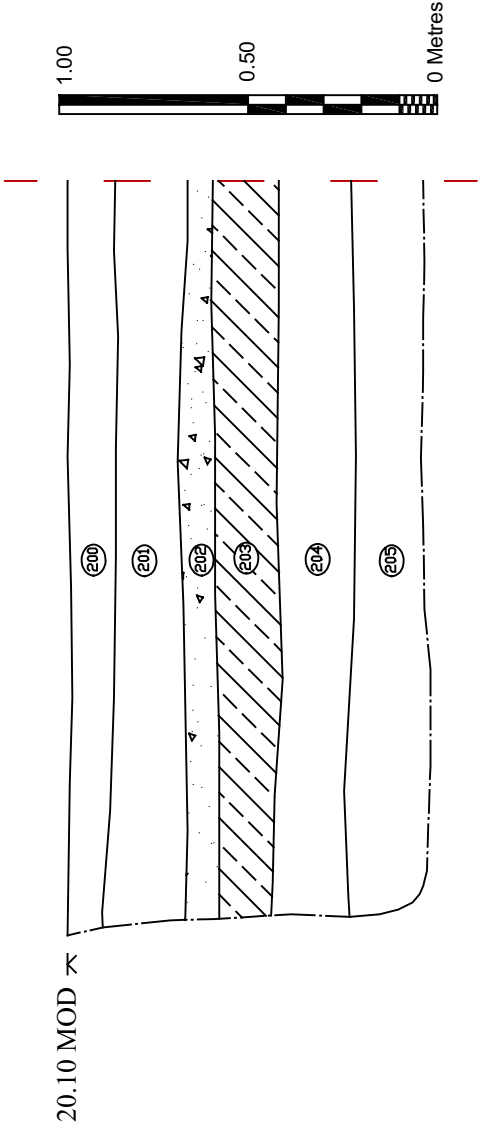
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // South facing section of Trench I

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

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FIGURE 5 // South facing section Trench 2



Scale 1:20 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

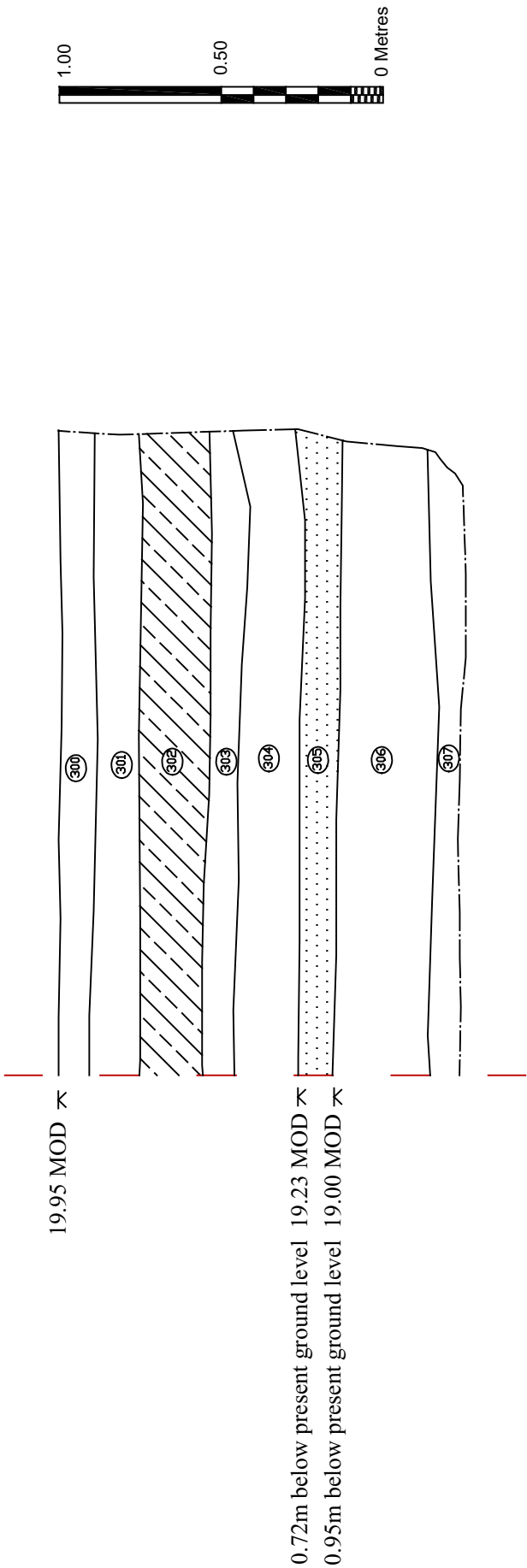
DESCRIPTION // South facing section of Trench 2

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

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FIGURE 6 // South facing section Trench 3



Scale 1:20 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

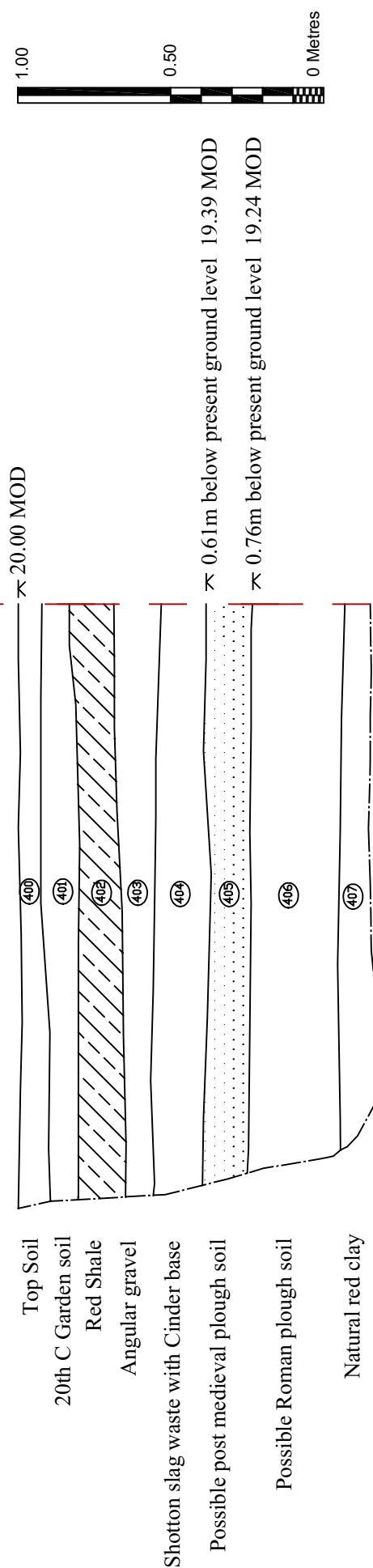
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // South facing section of Trench 3

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

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FIGURE 7 // West facing section Trench 4



Scale 1:20 @ A4

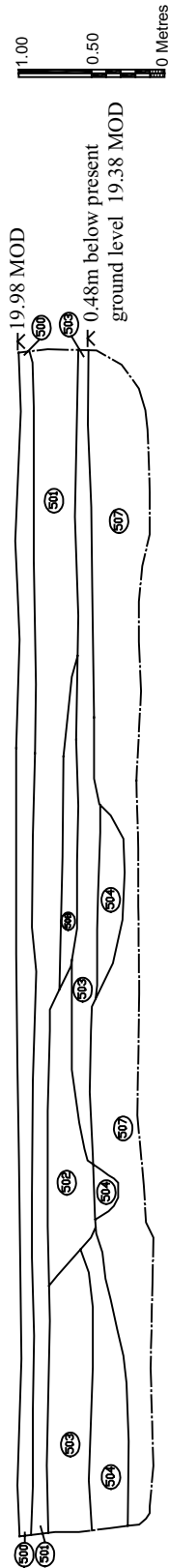
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // West facing section of Trench 4 (North end)

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 8 // West facing section of Trench 5



Scale 1:50 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

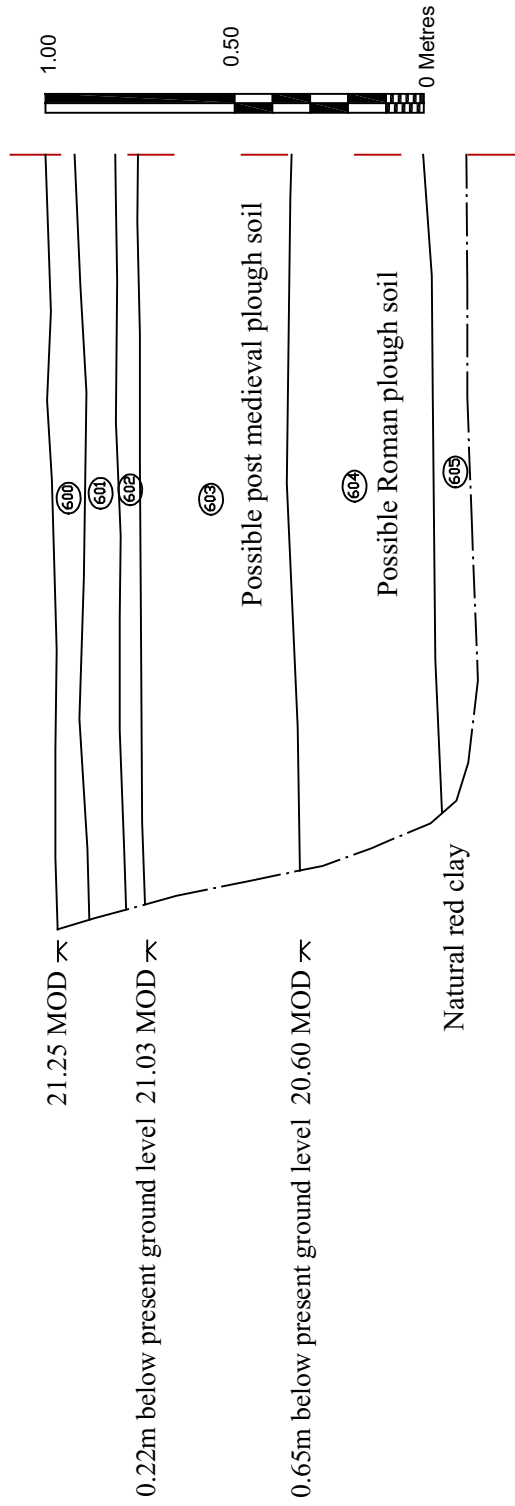
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // West facing section of Trench 5

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

FIGURE 9 // East facing section Trench 6



Scale 1:20 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

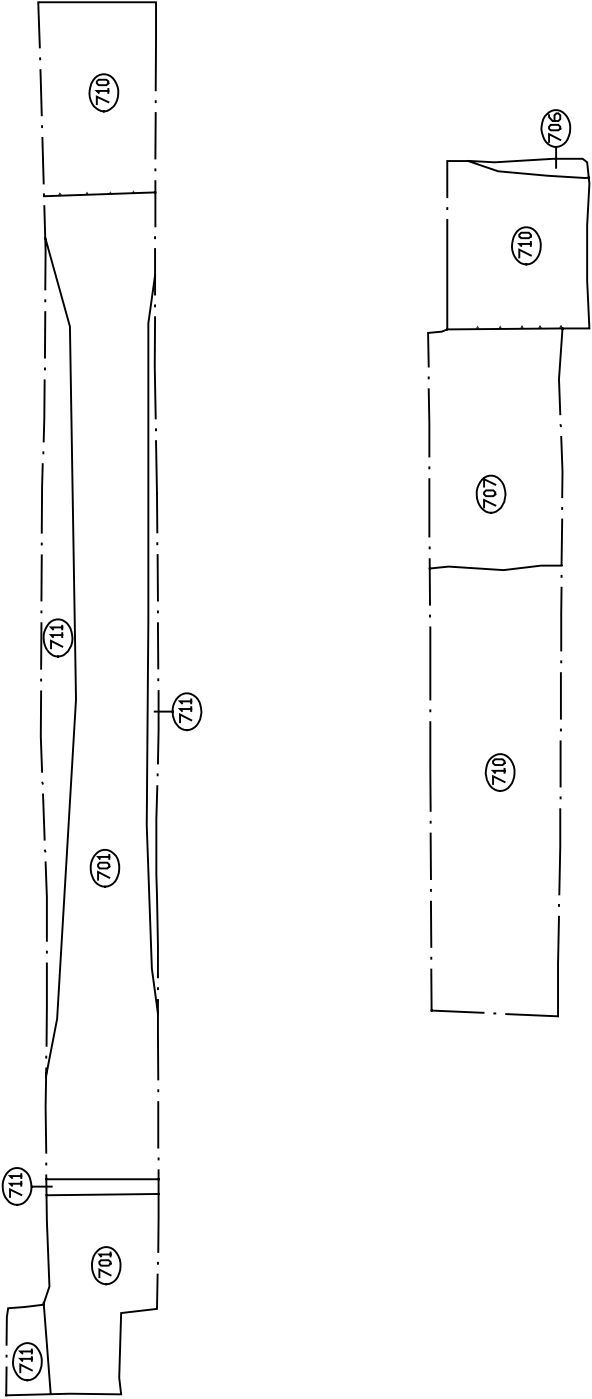
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench 6

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

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FIGURE 10 // Plan of Trench 7



Scale 1:100 @ A4

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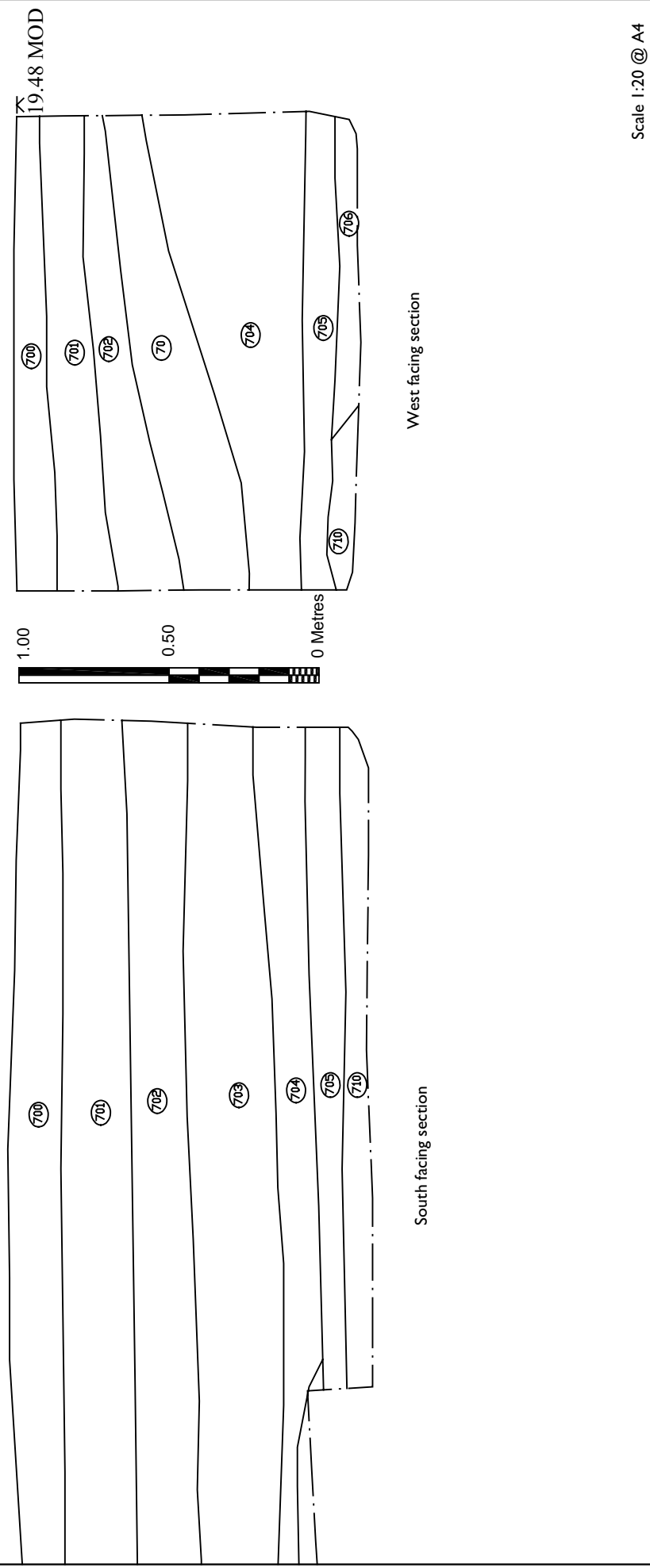
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // Plan of Trench 7

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

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FIGURE 11 // South facing section Trench 7



This section highlights the west end of Trench 7.  
The section drawing on the left shows the south facing section of the trench.  
The section drawing on the right shows the west facing section of the trench  
The sloping nature of the deposits can be clearly seen in the west facing section  
The continuation of the south facing section that is not shown comprises the same make up as shown above.

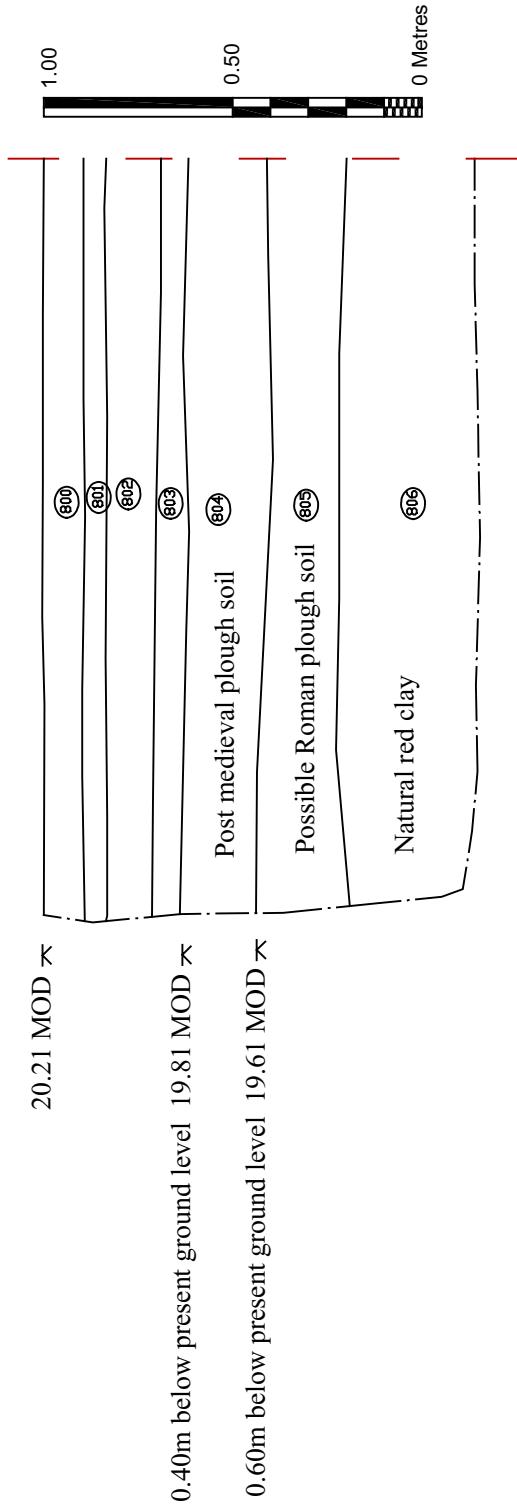
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West CheshireCollege LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // South facing section of Trench 7, west end

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 12 // North facing section Trench 8

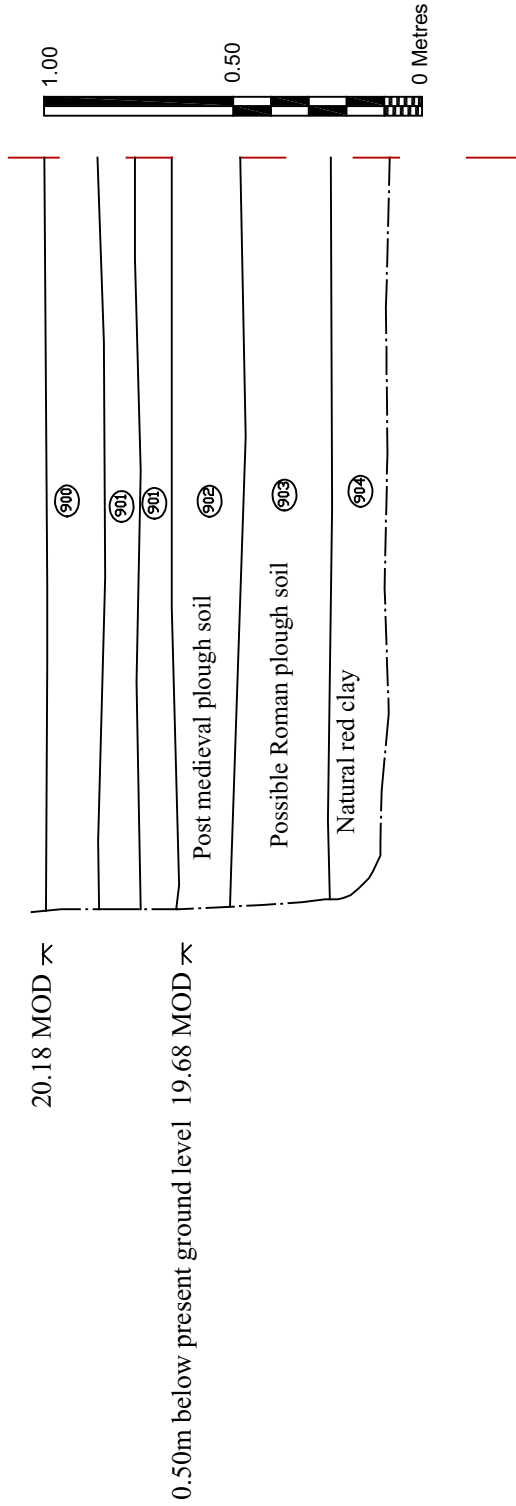


Scale 1:20 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College  
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C  
DESCRIPTION // North facing section of Trench 8  
DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5



FIGURE 13 // North facing section Trench 9



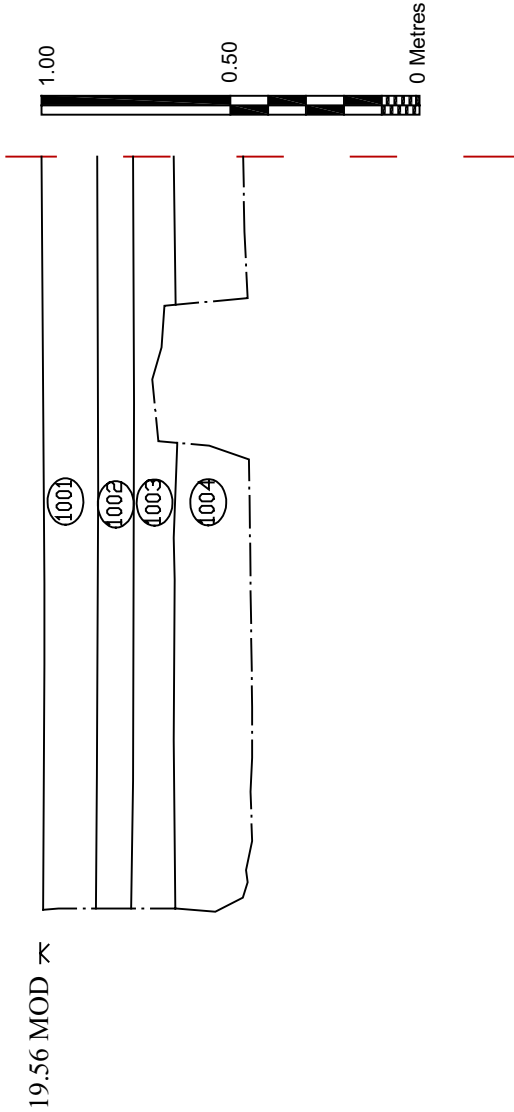
Scale 1:20 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

Description // North facing section of Trench 9

FIGURE 14 // East facing section Trench 10



Scale 1:20 @ A4

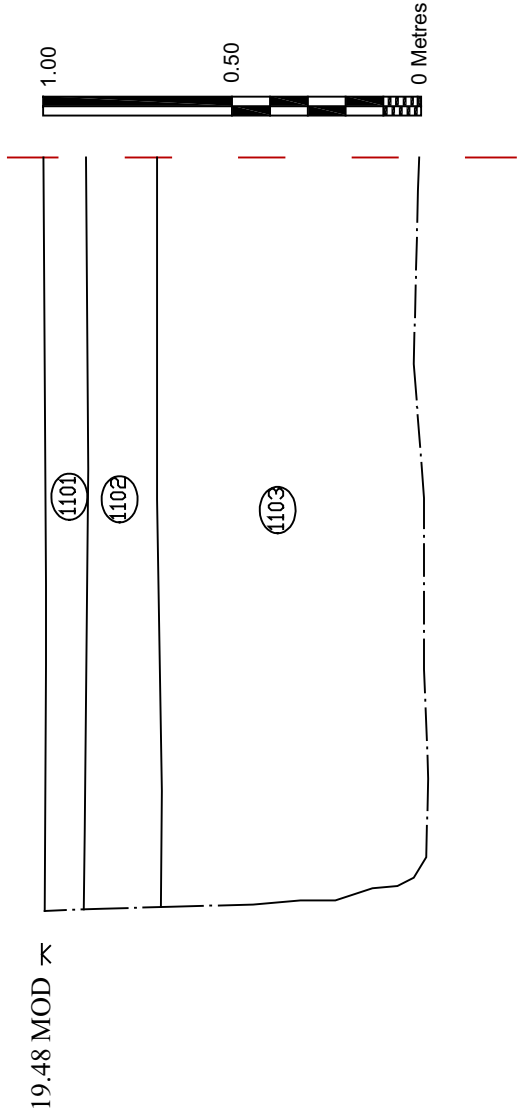
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench 10

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 15 // East facing section Trench II



Scale 1:20 @ A4

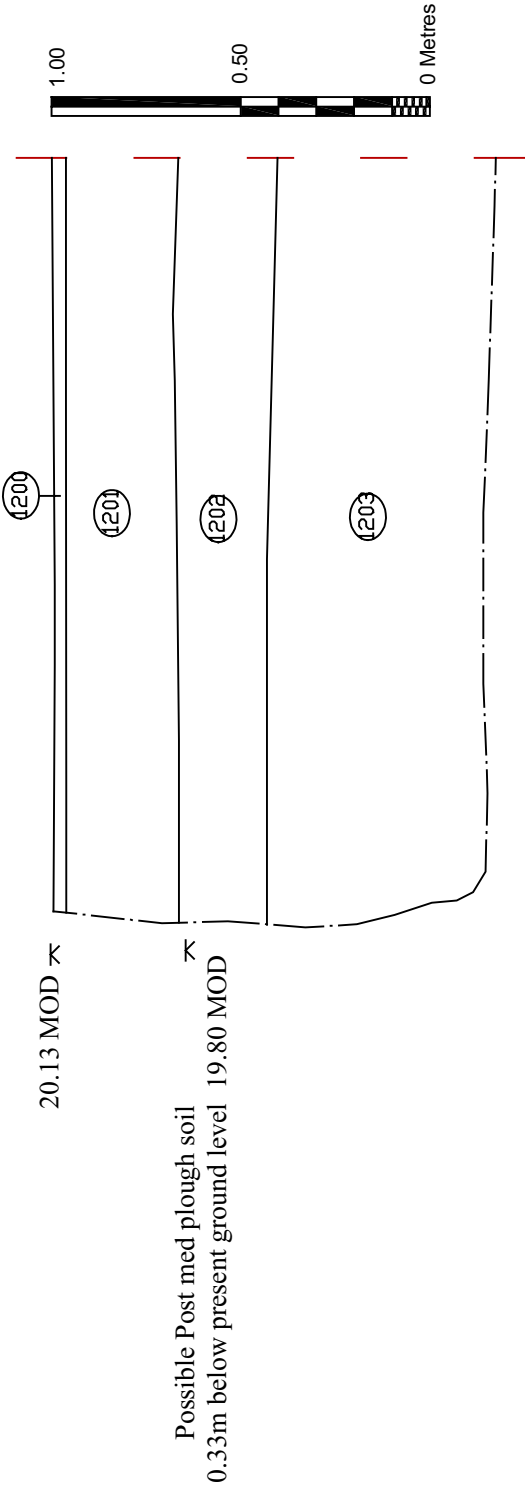
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench II

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 16 // East facing section Trench 12



Scale 1:20 @ A4

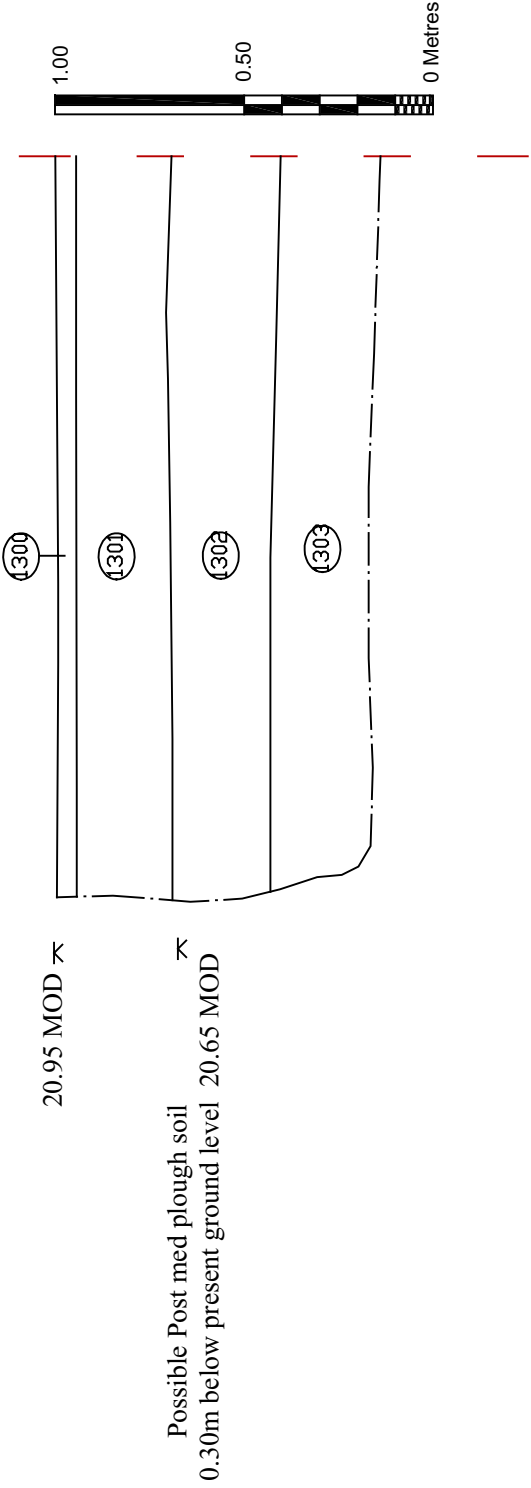
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench 12

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 17 // East facing section Trench I3



Scale 1:20 @ A4

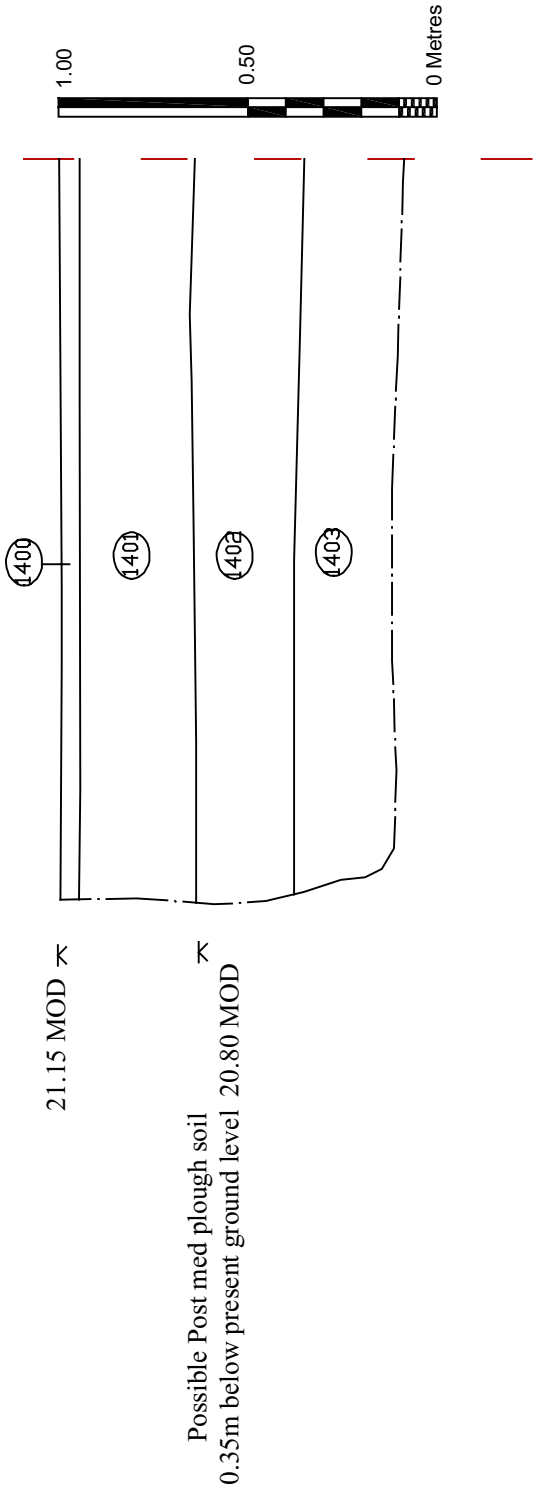
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench I3

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 18 // East facing section Trench 14



Scale 1:20 @ A4

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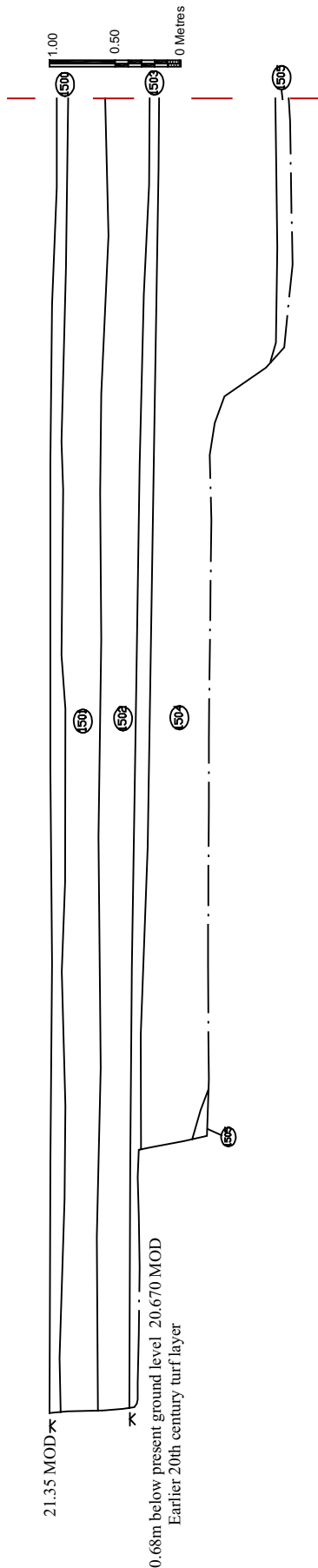
PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench 14

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5



FIGURE 19 // East facing section Trench I5



Scale 1:50 @ A4

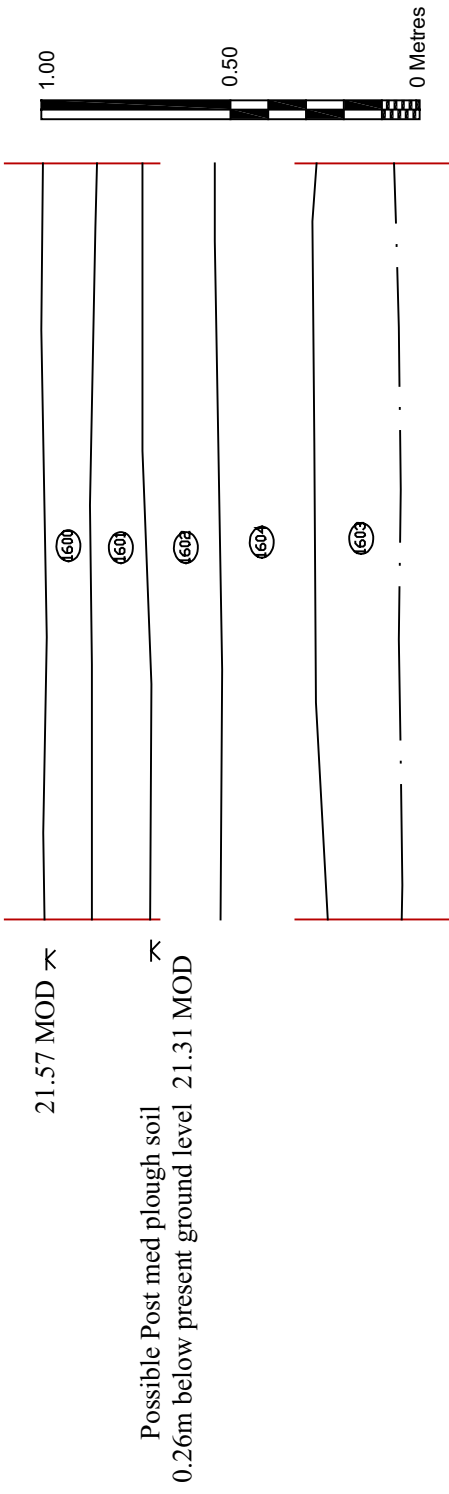
CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // East facing section of Trench I5

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

FIGURE 20 // South facing section Trench 16



Scale 1:20 @ A4

CLIENT // AA Projects/West Cheshire College

PROJECT // West Cheshire College LP0435C

DESCRIPTION // South facing section of Trench 16

DOC REF // LP0435C-AER-v1.5

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## APPENDIX 1

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# R o m a n C e r a m i c s

## APPENDIX 2

## Assessment report on pottery and ceramic building material from excavations at West Cheshire College for L-P Archaeology

R.S.Leary

### 1. Factual Data

The pottery was examined in context groups and catalogued according to the Guidelines of the Study Group for Romano-British Pottery for basic archiving (Darling 2004). The fabrics were recorded in broad groups and source suggested where appropriate. Forms were described.

#### *1.1. Quantity and provenance*

There were 72 sherds of Romano-British pottery (530g.) and 82 fragments of ceramic building material (4196g.). The quantities of pottery sherds and ceramic building material recovered from the excavated areas and trenches are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Area	Context	Fabric	Count	Weight	Abrasion	Part
1	105	Tile	2	451.7	Very	Imbrex
1	105	Tile	5	403	Very	Tile probably tegula
1	106	Brick or tile	9	161.2	Very	Fragment
1	110	Brick or tile	1	13.8	Very	Fragment
1	113	Brick or tile	6	163.7	Very	Fragment
1	116	Brick or tile	2	11.9	Very	Fragment
3	306	Brick or tile	2	24.5	Very	Fragment
4	406	Brick or tile	3	79.9	Very	Fragment
4	406	Brick or tile	3	56.7	Very	Fragment
4	406	Brick or tile	1	169.8	Very	Fragment
7	705	Brick or tile	34	709.9	Very	Fragment
7	705	Tile	9	1303	Very	Tegula
7	705	Tile	1	486.9	Moderately	Imbrex
7	706	Tile	4	160.4	Very	Fragment
Total			82	4196		

*Table 1 ceramic building material*



Area	Context	Fabric	Count	Weight	Abrasion	Part	Form	Comments	Date
1	105	GRB1	8	24.3	V	Rim and body	Flavian-Trajanic neckless everted-rim jar	Burnt	L1-E2
1	105	OAB1	3	19.4	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd			RB
1	105	OBB1	1	6.1	A	Undiagnostic bodysherd		Burnt?	RB
1	106	OAB1	6	25	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd			RB
1	106	TS	1	1.2	V	Scrap			1-3
1	110	OAB1	1	20.5	V	Bodysherd	jar		RB
1	113	OAB1	6	35.2	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd			RB
1	113	AMP?	1	15.7	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd		Prob S. Spanish	1-3
1	113	GRA/OAA	1	1.9	V	Bodysherd	Beaker?	Burnt	RB
1	116	OAB1	7	23.3	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd			RB
1	116	GRA1	3	19	A	Rim and body	Flavian-Trajanic neckless everted-rim jar		L1-E2
1	116	GRB1	1	13.4	M	Bodysherd	jar	Distorted	RB
1	119	GRB1	3	181.8	A	base and body	simple jar base		RB
1	119	OAB1/FLB2	19	67.7	V	Rim and body	Flaring ring-necked with pronounced upper ring flagon		L1-E2
3	306	OBB1	1	2.1	V	Scrap			Possibly not RB but Med
5	504	OAB1	1	5.8	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd		5 frags recent breaks	RB
7	705	OAB1	1	22.6	V	Base	simple jar or flagon base		RB
7	705	TS	1	7.5	A	rim and body	DR18/31 OR 31		2nd
7	708	GRA1	4	12.7	V	Bodysherd	Jar		RB, PROB 1-2
7	708	OAB1	1	2.4	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd			RB
10	1003	FLB2	1	18.6	V	Base	turned base, probably a flagon	Prob flagon	1-2
10	1003	OBA	1	3.6	V	Undiagnostic bodysherd		Prob Holt	1-2
Total			72	529.8					

*Table 2 quantity of pottery from excavated trenches and contexts*

## **1.2. Range and variety of material**

### **1.2.1. Ceramic building material**

Most of the ceramic building material comprised very abraded fragments of unidentifiable brick or tile. Four fragments of roofing tile were identified, two from imbrices and two from tegulae. All the fragments were in an orange sandy fabric which was badly degraded due to soil conditions. The surfaces were abraded all over.

### **1.2.2. Wares**

The fabric of the pottery was first examined by eye and sorted into ware groups on the basis of colour, hardness, feel, fracture, inclusions and manufacturing technique. If the sherds could not be adequately grouped by eye then they were examined under an x30 binocular microscope and compared with sherds from known sources. The majority of the pottery was in an oxidised medium, quartz-tempered fabric OAB1 (orange) or OBB1 (buff) which fell into the Cheshire Plains ware category. One finer sherd, OBA, may be from the Holt kilns. The grey wares, GRA1, a fine quartz-tempered fabric, and GRB1, a medium, quartz tempered fabric, are likely to be local products belonging to the Cheshire Plains grey ware category. Two sherds of samian were identified, one from 2<sup>nd</sup> century dish and the other two mall to identify, and one possible amphora sherd, probably a south Spanish amphora. Some of the OAB sherds may have been originally white slipped. Only one sherds, from area 10 1003, retains evidence of white slipping (FLB2) but the ring-necked flagon from area 1 119 was probably originally white slipped. Apart from the traded samian and amphora, all the wares are likely to be locally produced.

### **1.2.3. Forms**

Three forms were identified: two neckless, everted-rim jars, a ring-necked flagon and a samian dish form 18/31 or 31. In addition, one thin walled bodysherd probably came from a beaker and an amphora bodysherd was identified. Three vessel bases were present, two simple jar bases and a turned base probably from a flagon. A GRB1 bodysherd was distorted.

## **1.3. Chronology**

The types of fabrics and forms identified in the assemblage date from the Flavian period to the 2nd century. The neckless, everted-rim jars and the ring-necked flagon form suggests activity in the Flavian-Trajanic period. The absence of BB1 vessels supports this dating.

### **1.3.1. Function and site status**

The assemblage is too small to assess the status and function of the area adequately but the distorted grey ware sherd from area 1 116 and the burnt sherds from area 1 105 and 113 may indicate pottery production. The suggestion that the area may have been a roadside cemetery would also explain some of the burnt pottery since such material may be derived from vessels used in the funeral rites and burnt on the funeral pyres. The distorted sherds, however, did not appear to have been burnt in this way and is more likely to be a waster.

## **2. Further work**

### ***1.4. The pottery***

#### **1.4.1. Fabric analysis**

No further fabric analysis need be undertaken at this stage but if further work is done on the site the fabric series should be cross-referenced with the Chester fabric series held by Chester Archaeology.

#### **1.4.2. Specialist analysis**

Further analysis of the samian by a samian specialist would narrow the date ranges.

## **3. Storage and curation**

The pottery is poor and very abraded so should be boxed separately from the ceramic building material. Both categories should be dried thoroughly.

## **4. Bibliography**

Darling, M.J. 2004 Guidelines for the archiving of Roman pottery. *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies* Vol 11, 67-75.

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# Environmental Assessment

## APPENDIX 3

**Charred Plant Remains from  
Roman Chester  
(CHE/ER 06)**

Prepared on behalf of  
**L-P Archaeology**

Studio 35,  
Truman Brewery  
91 Brick Lane  
London E1 6QL

by  
**Wessex Archaeology**

Report reference: 63110.2

**June 2006**

## **Acknowledgements**

The samples were processed at Wessex Archaeology by Hayley F. Clark. The bulk samples were assessed by Dr Chris J. Stevens.

## **Introduction**

Two samples were processed from the excavations for charred plant remains. One came from the possible fill of Roman ditch overlying Roman Garden/agricultural soil (context 114). The other sample came from context (708), a possible ditch or road overspill.

The samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 4 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>4 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded, 2814g from context 114 and 3391g from 708.

The flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified (**Table E1**). Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997).

## **Results**

The samples both produced moderate amounts of wood charcoal. Much of the wood charcoal was ring-porous and so likely to come from oak. No twig wood was seen in the samples.

No charred plant remains were seen within the samples other than two small fragments of hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) from context 114.

## **Discussion**

While some Roman sites in the region have produced abundant evidence for the cultivation and processing of spelt wheat in the form of charred grains and glumes, e.g. Wilderspool (Hillman 1992), the absence of charred remains from Roman Town sites can be commonplace.

While the two samples may not be entirely representative, if grain was arriving at the site in a fully processed condition, as possibly seen at other Roman towns, e.g. Colchester (Murphy 1984) then such remains are likely to be minimal and only from situations where there has been accidental burning, such as burned down granaries.

## **Potential**

There is limited potential to examine the wood charcoal which may yield further information regarding the species burnt and the use of woodland resources for fuel. However, such potential is limited by the small assemblage and that the samples are not related to a specific activity. The charred plant remains have no further potential.



## References

- Hillman G. 1992. Grain processing at 3rd century Wilderspool. 167-9. In: Hinchliffe J and Williams J H. 1992. Roman Warrington, excavations at Wilderspool 1966-9 and 1976. *Brigantia Monographs Series No. 2. Dept. of Archaeology University of Manchester.*
- Murphy P. 1984. Carbonised fruits from building 5.pp. 40 and fiche. In Crummy P. *Excavations at Lion Walk, Balmerne Land and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex. Colchester Archaeological Report 3. Colchester Archaeological Trust.*
- Stace, C., 1997. *New flora of the British Isles*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

**Table E1. Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal**

				Flot							
Feature type/no	Context	Sample	size litres	flot size ml	Roots	Grain	Chaff	seeds	Notes	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other
Ditch	114	1	20	125 <sup>5%</sup>		-	-	C(h)	hazelnut frgs. x2	20/30ml	-
Ditch?	708	2	23	120 <sup>5%</sup>		-	-	-	-	20/20ml	-

KEY: A\*\* = exceptional, A\* = 30+ items, A = ? 10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, (h) = hazelnuts, smb = small mammal bones;

NOTE: <sup>1</sup>flot is total, but flot in superscript = % of rooty material.

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# Finds Index

## APPENDIX 4

# Finds Index

Context	Type	Description	Count	Date	Notes
105	Ceramic	Fragments of Roman tile/CBM	3	Roman	Coarse orange red fabric with large inclusions
	Ceramic	Fragments of Roman roof tile	3	Roman	Imbrex roof tile fragments
	Ceramic	Sherds of coarse orange red ceramic	16	Roman	
	Metal	Fragment of ferrous pin/nail	1	Roman	Square cut nail/pin
106	Ceramic	Sherds of coarse orange red ceramic	10	Roman	
	Ceramic	Fragment of roof tile	1	Roman	Imbrex
	Ceramic	Fragments of CBM	6	Roman	Building material
	Metal	Fragment of ferrous pin/nail	1	Roman	Square cut nail/pin
110	Ceramic	Sherds of coarse orange red ceramic	2	Roman	
113	Ceramic	Fragments CBM	3	Roman	
	Ceramic	Sherds of orange red coarse ceramic	11	Roman	
114	Bone	Fragments of burnt bone	11		
116	Ceramic	Rim sherd, black burnished ware	1	Roman	
	Ceramic	Sherds of black burnished ware	2	Roman	
	Ceramic	Sherds coarse orange red ceramic	8	Roman	
118	Ceramic	Sherds coarse orange red ceramic	8	Roman	
	Ceramic	Rim sherds coarse orange red ceramic with decoration	2	Roman	
	Ceramic	Black burnished ware base sherd	1	Roman	
	Ceramic	Black burnished ware sherds	2	Roman	
305	Ceramic	Sherd coarse orange ceramic with partial green glaze	1	Late Med	

Context	Type	Description	Count	Date	Notes
	Ceramic	Yellow glazed ceramic with decoration	2	17 <sup>th</sup> C	
306	Ceramic	Sherds coarse orange red ceramic	3	Roman	
405	Ceramic	Fragments CBM	8	Roman	
	Ceramic	Sherds of orange red coarse ceramic	2	Roman	
	Ceramic	Terracotta sherd	2	Post Med	Flower pot
	Ceramic	Buckley ware sherds	3	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Fragment of brown glazed ceramic	1	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Fragment of white glazed ceramic	6	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Clay pipe shafts	2	Post 16 <sup>th</sup> C	
406	Ceramic	Sherds coarse orange red ceramic	3	Roman	
503	Ceramic	Sherd of yellow orange ceramic	1	Post Med?	
504	Ceramic	Sherds of coarse orange red ceramic	2	Roman	
603	Ceramic	Buckley ware sherds	2	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Coarse red ceramic fragments	3	Post Med?	
	Ceramic	Fine glazed black ceramic sherd	1	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Yellow glazed ceramic sherd	1	Post Med	
	Glass	Clear glass fragment	1	Post Med	
705	Ceramic	Fragments of CBM	43	Roman	Building material
	Ceramic	Roman roof tile fragment	1	Roman	Tegula
706	Ceramic	Fragment CBM	1	Roman	
	Ceramic	Sherds coarse orange red ceramic	4	Roman	
708	Ceramic	Sherds coarse brown ceramic	4	?	
	Bone	Fragment of burn bone	1	?	Undiagnostic
1003	Ceramic	Sherds of thin yet coarse orange	2	Roman	

Context	Type	Description	Count	Date	Notes
		red ceramic			
	Ceramic	Sherds coarse orange red ceramic	1	Roman	
1504	Bone	Fragments of burnt bone and clay	3	?	Undiagnostic
	Bone	Bovine metatarsal	1	?	
	Bone	Bovine metacarpal	1	?	
	Bone	Bovine scapula	1	?	
	Bone	Bovine humerus	1	?	
	Metal	Large square metal pin	1	Post Med	
	Glass	Green glass bottle base	1	Post Med	
	Glass	Green glass bottle neck	1	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Buckley ware sherds	16	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Terracotta flower pot sherds	8	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Fragments of brown glazed ceramic	6	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Clay pipe stems	4	Post 16 <sup>th</sup> C	
	Ceramic	Fragments of white glazed ceramic	7	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Coarse red roof tile, apex tile	1	Post Med	
	Ceramic	Fragments of glazed brown ceramic	1	Post Med	Base sherd
	Ceramic	Orange brick fragments	3	Post Med	
	Ceramic	White glazed telegraph insulator, broken	1	Post 1943	"Bullers Ltd" "London" Printed on top of item. The deep inner cavity and screw thread place this item as post 1943 AD.