

2006/38

Land off Church Road North, Portishead, North Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Project

NSSMR 42401, Accession Number 2001.224



**On behalf of
The Kellett Payne Partnership**

Avon Archaeological Unit

Bristol. July 2001

Archaeological Evaluation Exercise
Land off Church Road North, Portishead,
North Somerset

North Somerset Site and Monuments Record 42401

Accession Number 2001.224

for the Kellett Payne Partnership

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July 2001

Summary

The following report summarises the results of an archaeological assessment undertaken by Avon Archaeological Unit on behalf of the Kellett Payne Partnership of Wells, Somerset. The archaeological project, involving trial excavation, was designed to examine the archaeological potential of land located off Church Road North, Portishead, North Somerset, centred at national Grid Reference ST 46857605.

At the time of assessment the Study Area (totalling some 3500 square metres) consisted predominately of rough grassland and disused orchards.

The four evaluation trenches (Trenches 1-4) were opened in order to establish the potential for the preservation of archaeological deposits on the site associated with the Romano-British, medieval and later development of the area.

Each of the trenches revealed archaeological deposits and features of varying significance and importance. The principal remains were revealed in Trenches 1 and 2 in the northern half of the site and were represented by a series of negative soil features including a beam-slot and two associated postholes plus a series of shallow gullies and a deeper ditch. No clear pattern was evident from the layout of the features but dating evidence provided by a small collection of stratified pottery indicated that the majority were of Romano-British or medieval date. A small collection of prehistoric pottery sherds raises the possibility that a minority of the features recorded may be of Bronze Age or Iron Age date.

It is concluded that archaeological evidence of varying importance is preserved on the site reflecting human activity during the late prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval periods. Modern activity was represented by the 19th century levelling of the northern part of the site to form a tennis court.

On the basis of evidence recorded during the fieldwork, it is advised that future archaeological work should be undertaken in the area of Trenches 1 and 2 in order to characterise the sequence of activity and cultural deposits represented and to ensure the preservation and understanding of significant archaeological remains *By Record* (PPG 16, DoE 1990) in advance of their destruction during development. It is advised that no further archaeological work is justified in the portion of the site evaluated by Trenches 3 and 4.

The project was commissioned by the site owner and developer via the Kellett and Payne Partnership of Wells Somerset in advance of development and was allocated North Somerset Sites and Monuments record Number 42401 (NSSMR 42401).

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Appendix 1: Stratigraphic Matrices of the Trenches

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* the following abbreviations are used throughout the report:

a.O.D	above Ordnance Datum
c	circa
m	metres
mm	millimetres
NSSMR	North Somerset Sites and Monuments Record
<	less than
>	greater than

Acknowledgements

Avon Archaeological Unit would like to thank Mr Kilby for funding the project and Paul Kellett of Kellett Payne Partnership for providing survey drawing and plans of the proposed development. Thanks are also extended to Field Archaeologists: Raymond Ducker, David Etheridge and Sarah Newns. Sarah Newns and Andrew Young prepared the illustrations and the pottery report (respectively) included in this report.

Note

Whilst Avon Archaeological Unit has taken all care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omission of fact or opinion, however caused.

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Figure 1

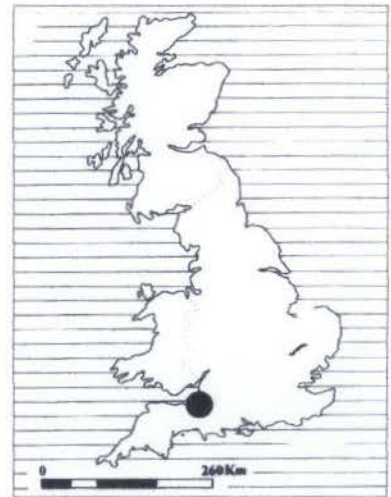
Site Location

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● Site Location



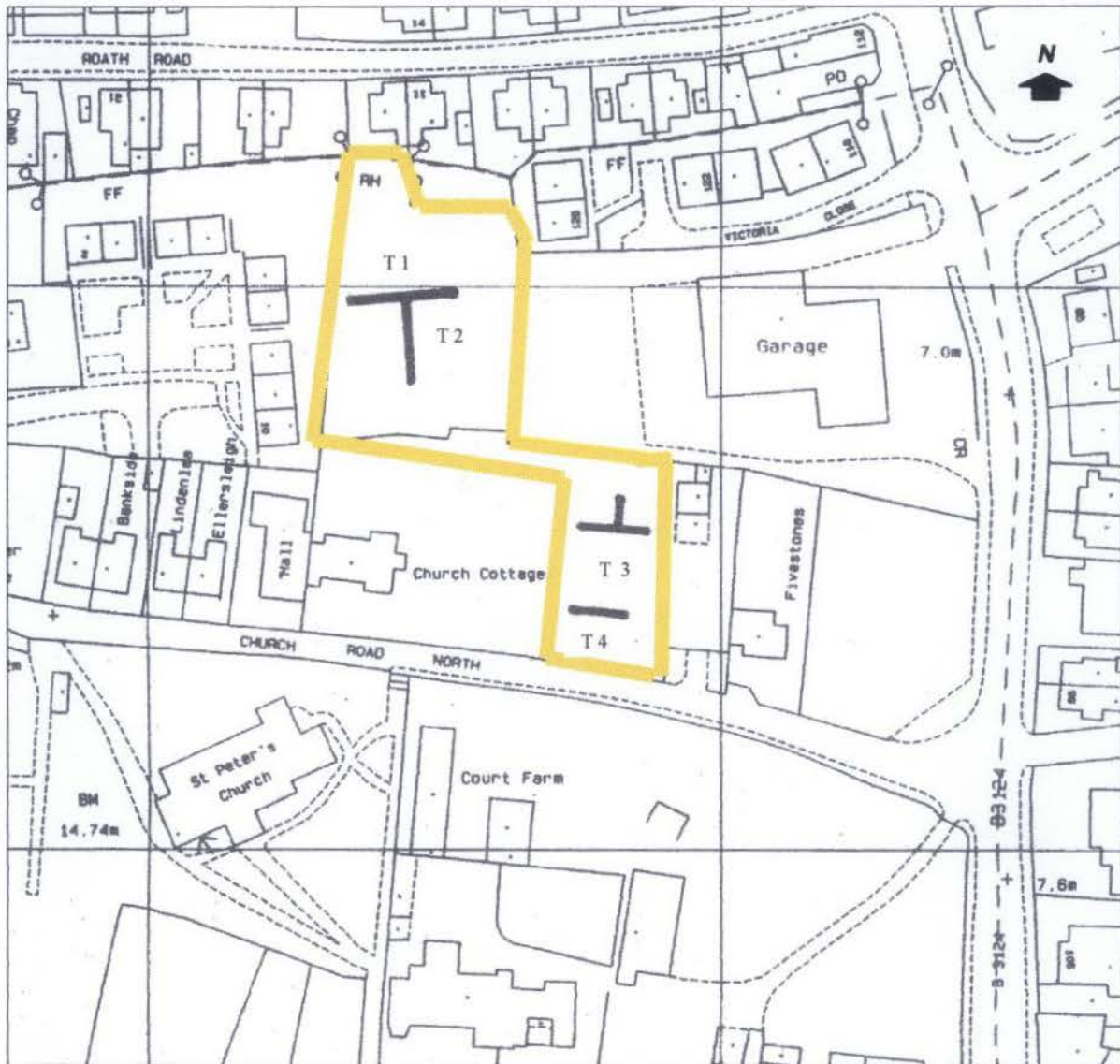
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Figure 2

Location of Trenches

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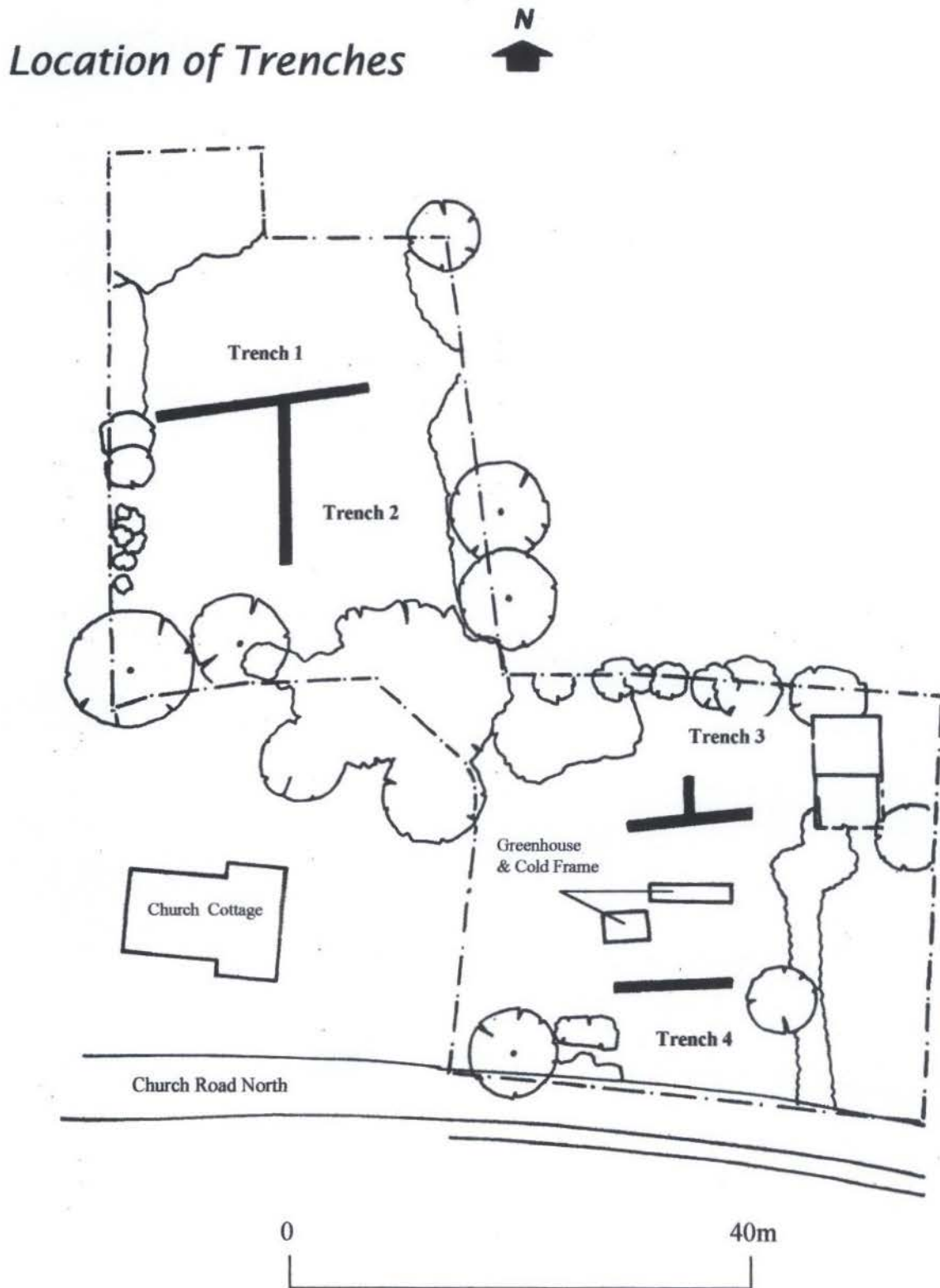
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 Boundary of Study Area

Scale: 1:1250

Figure 3



1 Introduction

1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological project designed to evaluate the potential impact of the construction of seven residential buildings and associated infra-structure on land adjacent to Church Road North, Portishead, North Somerset (NGR ST 46857605, figures 1-3). The evaluation was undertaken as part of the Planning Process and in accordance with a brief provided by the Archaeological Officer of North Somerset Council. The project was assigned North Somerset Sites and Monuments Record Number 42401 (NSSMR 42401) and undertaken during July 2001. The project was commissioned and wholly funded by the proposed developer, Mr S Kilby, via the Kellett Payne Partnership of Wells, Somerset.

1.2 The Study Area faces onto Church Road North to the south and is bounded to the north, west and east by established residential housing (figures 2-3). It lies within an area of relatively level ground at approximately 10 m above Ordnance Datum (a.O.D) where the Dolomitic Conglomerate dominates the underlying solid geology.

1.3 The key objective of the archaeological exercise was to determine whether significant archaeological remains were preserved as subterranean features or deposits within the proposed development footprint, and, if so, to characterise their archaeological extent and significance.

1.4 A total of four trenches, covering an area of some 75 sq. m were opened by machine over the development area (Trenches 1-4, figures 2 and 3). Once opened all subsequent excavation and cleaning was undertaken by hand. Each trench was then recorded using standard context based record sheets, plans and sections at appropriate scales (complying with MAP2 standards – *English Heritage, 1991*). The site was also recorded photographically.

1.5 The project involved two weeks of fieldwork during July 2001 (often in adverse weather conditions), followed by two weeks of post-site analysis and report preparation.

1.6 At the completion of the site work the trenches were backfilled and the site left tidy but not otherwise consolidated or restored.

1.7 The project archive (including documentary, photographic details and finds) is temporarily stored at the premises of Avon Archaeological Unit, 325, Fishponds Road, Bristol, will ultimately be deposited with North Somerset Museum Service at Burlington Street, Weston-super-Mare for long term storage and curation under Accession Number 2001.224.

2 Historical and Archaeological Background

Note: The following account has been summarised from 'The Book of Portishead' by Brown and Loosley

2.1 The parish of Portishead or 'Portshead' lies within the hundreds of Portbury approximately 10 miles north west of Bristol City Centre.

2.2 Although Portishead is known to have had a transient population during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods (evidenced by a small number of artefacts including polished stone axes), the first real evidence of a settled population begins from the Iron Age and by the end of the 1st century A.D, the area was under Roman control.

2.3 The Domesday book records that by 1066 all of the Portbury Hundred, of which Portishead was a part, was under the control of the Godwin family. Following the defeat at Hastings these royal lands became Norman Royal demesne and King William gave the whole of Gordano to Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances. The Bishop then sub-let Portishead to William de Moncels. The Domesday survey showed that in 1086, Portishead was worth 70 shillings and had thirteen men – 9 villeins holding 30 acres each and 4 'bordars' with 5 acres each. From 1095, after the Bishops unsuccessful revolt against the King, the land passed to Robert Fitzhamon and after his death in 1106 the land passed through his daughter into the ownership of Robert Fitzroy, Earl of Gloucester.

2.4 By the 13th century Portishead had been divided into two rival manors. The larger of the two manors, comprising the eastern half of the present Parish, was held by William Le Bret and the smaller manor, centred on the southern end of the High Street by John Tylly (Tilly). The division of the Parish into two separate manors did not mean a complete division of landholdings, in fact Portishead was split into a number of large common fields (which survived in part until the enclosure act of 1809), within which tenants of both manors would have held strips of unfenced land for cultivation.

2.5 In 1300 the Le Bret manor was sold to William de la Salles (or Halles) of Bradford on Avon for a sum of £20 sterling. The de la Salle's family preceded to then hold the largest of the Portishead manors for the next three hundred years. At this time the Tilly manor was divided into two, with a new manorial centre developed at Capenor Court. This new manor was clearly associated with the de Capenor family, who appear in Portishead's records for only three generations. Neither of the manors remained in their original owners families for long. By the 14th century the Tilly's had leased much of their land to Everard le Frensh, a Bristol merchant, reputed to have financed the construction of the Parish Church. In 1370 the Capenor manor was sold for '100 silver marks' to Walter Laurence, a member of a prominent local Somerset family of sheep masters and wool merchants. Following the Black Death in the mid 14th century, most of the manor lands of the Parish were let to rent paying tenants.

2.6 By the turn of the 15th century, the Capenor manor was owned by a group of rising sheep farmers, William Wolley (Rector of Portishead), Roger Aubyn, Robert Northover (another cleric) and John Bailey of Clevedon. They later sold out to Messrs Choke and White, the Chokes being another wealthy Somerset family, although the lands were farmed by tenants. The Tilly manor was occupied by the Parson family who remained tenant after the manor itself was sold in 1459 to Richard Kayton.

2.7 Further changes took place in the ownership of both the Tilly and Capenor manors during the 16th and 17th centuries, notably the rise to local prominence of the Chappell family. John Chappell of Capenor had already risen to the status of free tenant by the middle of the 14th century and through the next 300 years the family rose from 'husbandsmen' through 'yeoman' to 'gentlemen'. In 1614 Thomas Chappell acquired the manor of Capenor for the sum of £478 from Alexander Chock of Wiltshire. However by 1665 Arthur Chappell was forced to mortgage Capenor to pay off debts. In 1675 the situation deteriorated and Capenor Court and 90 acres of land were sold for £1,200 to William Mohun of Wraxall. The manor later passed to the Fust family who retained its ownership until the 19th century. Meanwhile, in 1616 the City of Bristol purchased the Tilly manor and in 1619 added the le Bret manor to their holdings.

2.8 Prehistoric Archaeology

There is little physical evidence for prehistoric settlement within the environs of the Study Area as much of the land surrounding the town is pasture and therefore very few artefacts have been recovered as a result of ploughing. However, the alluvial gravels in nearby Portbury have been found to contain large numbers of hand-axes, larger flint tools of Lower Palaeolithic date. Gravel beds of the same date have been recorded in the centre of the parish, as revealed by excavation at the rear of 115, High Street and at Gordano School (SMR 442, NGR ST 46587522).

2.8.1 Romano-British Archaeology (1st –5th centuries A.D)

Romano-British occupation evidence is well attested within the parish and represented by an extensive number of finds recovered in the vicinity of the High Street, adjacent to the present Study Area. A quantity of Romano-British finds were retrieved during excavation groundwork for a supermarket in the mid 1960s ((SMR 433, ST NGR 46687629) these comprised pottery including some imitation Samian wares, querns and mortars. Other finds within the locality of the High Street included a stone lined well, worked bone, an iron sickle and a number of 2nd and 4th century mortarium sherds, revealed during excavations for a new telephone exchange in 1971 (NGR ST 467762).

2.8.2 Post Roman and Saxon Archaeology (5th-12th centuries)

As in most areas the period between the mid 5th century and the late Saxon is unclear. Portishead was almost certainly a port in the Roman Period and there seems no reason why such a convenient harbour should not have continued to serve local trade during the period of 5th to 11th centuries A.D. The present Study Area lies immediately adjacent to St Peter's Church and its burial ground of pre-Norman origin (SMR 436).

2.8.3 Medieval Archaeology

The present Study Area is included within SMR 2523 (NGR ST 467761), 100 m north-east of the parish church between Church Road North and Roath Road, an area where extensive medieval occupation features (including postholes attributed to a timber longhouse) were recorded during pipe trenching in 1974.

3 Summary of the Excavated Evidence

3.1 Trench 1

19 m x 1.30 m x 1.05 m (max)

figures 2, 3 and 4.1, photographs a-c

This trench formed the longer arm of a T-shaped evaluation cutting (subdivided into Trenches 1 and 2) and was aligned approximately east-west at the extreme northern end of the site (figure 2, 3 and 4.1).

3.1.1 The general stratigraphy of the trench comprised 240 mm of brown humic topsoil and turf (100/101) above a thinner deposit of buried soil (102) and subsoil (103) which in turn exposed the underlying natural reddish-brown clay substrate (104). Several features were revealed at this level including two roughly parallel gullies (Cuts 114/119 and 122), a linear soil feature (Cut 105), two postholes (Cuts 107 and 109) and the remnants of a circular hearth (Cut 112).

3.1.2 A narrow gully or beam slot (Cut 105) cut the natural substrata (104) in the west of the trench and lay on an east-west alignment (figure 4.1). The broadly linear cut was investigated in a single archaeological cutting which revealed a steep sided concave profile (250 mm wide and 200 mm deep) culminating in rounded terminals at either end. No finds were retrieved from its homogeneous silty sand and gravel fill (106) that appeared to reflect part of an earthfast timber structure. A small circular posthole (Cut 107) cut the clay substratum (104) adjacent to the northeastern end of the beam-slot and appeared to be associated with it. Finds retrieved from the mottled silty gravel filled posthole (108) included two sherds of prehistoric pottery (see Section 4 and 4.1).

3.1.3 Located a short distance from Posthole 107 was a further sub-rounded posthole (Cut 109, figure 4.1). No dating evidence was retrieved from the closely compacted fill (110) which was identical in composition and colour to Fill 108 (above Section 3.1.2).

3.1.4 Sited to the east of the evaluation trench, and extending beyond its confines, was Gully 114 (figures 4.1 and 4.3, photographs a-c). The feature was investigated in three archaeological cutting (Sections 1-3) which revealed a steeply sided, concave profile that deepened at its eastern end. The upper and primary fills of the gully (115 and 116 respectively) comprised a charcoal smeared brownish silty clay with inclusions of sandstone rubble and rare chert and yielded a small assemblage of pottery including several sherds of Romano-British earthenware (see Section 4 and 4.1).

3.1.5 A second linear cut (122) flanked northern side of Gully 114 and was only partially exposed within Sections 1-3 (figure 4.1, photograph c). No finds were retrieved from the silty clay fill (123). In the absence of secure dating from Cut 122, the close spatial relationship and roughly parallel alignments of this and Gully 114 would suggest that they were contemporaneous. Although the function of the gullies remained uncertain, it is considered *possible* that they formed part of an ephemeral timber structure.

3.1.6 The removal of a thin skin of remnant subsoil (103) to the east of Cut 114 exposed Gully 119 (figure 4.1). Despite rigorous cleaning, the precise orientation of the gully (which was identical in profile to Gully 114) was difficult to ascertain and it remained unclear whether the gully (119) represented a continuation of Gully 114 or a completely separate gully. Located at the juncture of the two gullies (114 and 119) and partially obscuring the relationship of the two lay the truncated remains of a circular hearth (112, figure 4.1). No finds were recovered from the feature although a small sample of the charcoal rich fill (113) was taken for later specialist analysis.

3.1.7 Pit 117 was observed within the northern facing section of the trench only. The broad U-shaped profile contained two fills which comprised an upper shallow capping of clay (121, maximum depth 70 mm) above a darker deposit comprising mainly spent coal (118, maximum depth 340 mm). Although no finds were retrieved from the pit, it is *probable* that it (117) and buried soil Layer 102 were contemporaneous.

3.2 Trench 2
15.30 m x 1.30 m x 600 mm (max)
figures 2, 3 and 4.2

This archaeological cutting was aligned at right angles to Trench 1 and formed the shorter arm of the T-shaped evaluation trench (figures 2, 3 and 4.2).

3.2.1 The stratigraphy revealed was similar to that recorded within adjacent Trench 1 (Section 3.1, above) and comprised topsoil (200/201), buried topsoil (202) over a thinner deposit of subsoil (203). Where archaeology was not present the natural clay substratum (204) was exposed. Two parallel ditches with integral gullies (Cuts 209 and 215), a smaller linear arrangement of postholes (206) and three postholes (Cuts 208, 211 and 219) were observed cutting the natural clay substrate of the trench.

3.2.2 Linear Cuts 209 and 215 were located at the southern end of the evaluation cutting and were preserved at a maximum depth of 440 mm below the present ground surface (11.15 m a.O.D).

3.2.3 Cut 209 and 215 were of a similar size (approximately 1 m) in plan and each culminated in a broadly flat uneven base (figure 4.2). Excavation demonstrated that each was filled with an identical charcoal smeared stony deposit (Fills 210 and 216 respectively). Located at the northern side of each ditch, and dug as an integral part of it, was a smaller, slightly deeper channel (c. 300 mm wide, figure 4.2). Although only partially exposed, these channels retained concave depressions at their base which possibly represented the remnants of an earth-fast structure such as a fence or brush paling. Finds recovered from the ditches (210 and 216 respectively) included residual sherds of Romano-British Black Burnished wares and medieval earthenwares dated to the 12th–14th centuries (see Section 4 and 4.1). Two subcircular postholes (208 and 211) were recorded either side of Ditch 209 (figure 4.2) and although no finds were retrieved from the reddish-brown silty clay fill (209 and 212 respectively) their proximity to the ditch was indicative of a contemporaneous phase of activity.

2.3.4 Sited centrally to the two ditches was a row of postholes (Cut 205, figure 4.2). Again the postholes appeared to be within a shallow gully and filled with identical soil (206) to that observed within Ditches 209 and 215. Finds retrieved from Fill 206 were restricted to a small assemblage of medieval earthenware (see Section 4 and 4.1).

2.3.5 Linear soil feature 218 was sited at the southern baulk of the evaluation cutting and was identical in composition and colour to the fills of Ditches 209 and 215. Too little of the feature was exposed fully to characterise it.

2.3.6 Gully 213 was recorded at the junction of Trenches 1 and 2 and appeared to represent a continuation of Cut 114/119 (Section 3.1, above). A small area of stony gravel located at the western side of the evaluation cutting adjacent to Cut 213 was considered to represent a further posthole although this was not demonstrated through excavation. No finds were retrieved from the surface cleaning.

2.3.7 The buried topsoil layer observed in Trenches 1 and 2 (102 and 202 respectively) represented the 19th century levelling of the site in order to create a tennis court.

3.3 Trench 3
11.30 m x 1.30 m x 1.20 m (max)
figures 2, 3 and 5.2, photograph f

The longer arm of this T-shaped trench was oriented on a roughly east-west axis and located at the southern end of the site (figures 2, 3 and 5.2).

3.3.1 Trench 3 revealed a simple sequence of deposits comprising 440 mm of turf and topsoil (300) above a slightly lighter brown subsoil (301). Underlying these layers was a deep deposit of archaeologically sterile silted sand (302, maximum depth 250 mm). A small archaeological sondage (figure 5.2), opened adjacent to the southern face of the evaluation trench, demonstrated that Deposit 302 lay directly above the natural clay substratum (303) and represented a further subdivision of it.

3.3.2 Archaeological activity recorded within the trench was restricted to a small quantity of randomly strewn sandstone rubble (304, figure 5.2) which presented no coherent pattern in plan, but could possibly have represented the remains of a drystone masonry construction.

3.3.3 No evidence of the buried topsoil layer, observed in both Trenches 1 and 2, was recorded within the trench.

3.4 Trench 4
10 m x 1.40 m x 1.50 m (max)
figures 2, 3 and 5.1, photographs d-e

Trench 4 was located roughly parallel with Trench 3 and perpendicular to Church Road North (figures 2, 3 and 5.1). The following simple stratigraphic sequence was revealed:

- i) 370 mm of humic topsoil and turf (400) above
- ii) 600 mm of slightly lighter subsoil (401) which in turn sealed
- iii) 440 mm of archaeologically sterile silted sand (402) which partially covered the naturally occurring red clay (403) at the west of the trench and dived off to the east where a small sondage demonstrated that it lay above a compacted layer of archaeologically sterile weak mudstone and manganese (404).

3.4.1 A roughly linear gully (Cut 405) sited at the western end of the evaluation cutting extended 1.90 m into the trench prior to terminating in a rounded face. The gully was steeply cut from the southern side whilst the northern side was gently sloping. No finds were retrieved from the single gravel rich fill (406).

3.4.2 Cut 408 was only partially exposed within the southern baulk of the evaluation trench and comprised a linear feature which terminated to the west in a rounded face. No dating evidence was retrieved from the single fill (409) which comprised stiff red clay very similar in composition to the natural substrata (403) located at the west of the trench. This feature cut sandy deposit 402.

3.4.3 A small area of randomly strewn sandstone rubble (407, figure 5.1) was sited at the western end of the evaluation cutting, immediately below the subsoil (401) and was considered to represent a continuation of Structure 304 observed within Trench 3.

3.4.4 No evidence of the buried soil layer observed in Trenches 1 and 2 was recorded within this trench.

3.4.5 Finds retrieved from Trench 4 were restricted to a small assemblage of medieval and late post-medieval pottery sherds (see Section 4 and 4.1).

4 The Finds

Abbreviations used: CTP – Clay Tobacco Pipe
Misc.- Miscellaneous Objects

Context	Type	Count	Weight	Description
100	Pottery	1	26g	base sherd of modern flower pot
100	Pottery	12	59g	1 x rim sherd, 11 body sherds – Romano-British
100	Pottery	8	39g	2 x rim sherd, 6 x body sherds – Medieval
103	Pottery	2	10g	2 x body sherds – Romano-British
		8	13g	8 x body sherds – Prehistoric
103	Stone	2	406g	1 x possible pot burnisher, 1 x hone stone
108	Pottery	2	4g	body sherds – Prehistoric
115	Pottery	1	4g	rim sherd – Romano-British
116	Pottery	6	20g	body sherds, 1 x rim sherd – Romano-British
	Bone	6	2g	animal bone, unworked
120	Pottery	2	6g	including 1 x body and 1 x rim sherd – Romano-British
121	Pottery	1	11g	shoulder or neck fragment of stoneware post 1835
200	Pottery	3	14g	whiteware with blue transfer print, including 1 rim sherd
		1	3g	Bristol/Staffordshire ware body sherd
		1	4g	1 x sherd of Seven Valley ware – Romano-British
		3	6g	body sherds including 1 x applied decoration and 1 x incised lines – Medieval
		1	11g	Westerweldt rim sherd
201	Pottery	3	45g	Somerset redware, including 1 x rim
		1	3g	Bristol/Staffordshire ware body sherds
		2	4g	whiteware including 1 rim
		2	4g	Tin glazed earthenware including 1 x rim
		5	17g	body sherds – Medieval
201	Flint	1	16g	possible core
201	CTP	5	43g	including 1 stem
202	Pottery	1	23g	whiteware, fragment of plate
		3	29g	including: 1 x sherd of Ham Green ware with incised body decoration – Medieval
				1 x body sherd of Ham Green jug - Medieval
				1 x unidentified body sherd – Medieval
206	Pottery	2	10g	2 x body sherds of unidentified Medieval ware
210	Pottery	3	20g	2 x rim and 1 x body sherds – Romano-British
		1	23g	1 x rim sherd of a cooking or storage pot - Medieval
214	Pottery	2	20g	including 1 x rim with finger and thumb impression (pie crust) - Medieval
214	Stone	1	8g	water worn pebble
216	Pottery	5	22g	4 x body sherds and 1 x base sherd - Medieval
300	Pottery	4	25g	including: 1 x modern flower pot base
				1 x body sherd of whiteware
				1 x body sherd of hand painted whiteware
				1 x body sherd of unidentified Medieval ware
301	Pottery	2	44g	including: 1 x body sherd of Somerset Redware
				1 x Base sherd of Romano-British ware
302	Pottery	1	14g	base sherd of Romano-British ware
400	Pottery	10	197g	including: 1 x brown stoneware body sherd
				5 x Somerset Redwares
				1 x body sherd of Ham Green cookware with incised line decoration– Medieval
				2 x body sherds of unidentified Medieval ware
				1 x body sherd of tin glazed ware
400	Misc.	2	2g	two slim carbon rods possibly from a dry battery

4.1 The Pottery

by Andrew Young

Introduction

The pottery recovered from each excavated context on the site was examined visually and recorded by fabric type, form, sherd count and total weight. Approximate dates, arrived at from observations of the assemblage were assigned to date broadly the excavated contexts.

General Characteristics

The assemblage of pottery recovered during the excavations consists of 104 sherds weighing 755 g. Approximately 50% of this total assemblage were recovered from stratified contexts.

The pottery ranges in date from the later prehistoric period (c. 1st – 2nd millennium BC) to the 19th and 20th century. Stratified features examined in Trenches 1 and 2 contained only Romano-British and medieval ceramics. All other recorded contexts across the site that yielded ceramic material of 18th century and/or later date.

Catalogue and Description

Terms used in the report

BPT - Bristol Pottery Type number
1650 + - a type of ceramic or archaeological deposit dated to 1650 or later

Both BPT identifications and pottery dates appear in (brackets).

The Types of Pottery Identified

The principal varieties of pottery identified on the site and used for dating purposes included;

a) Prehistoric earthenwares –

Generic friable earthenware with coarse inclusions in an low-fired matrix.

b) Romano-British earthenwares –

A standard range of hard and predominately quartz tempered fabrics recognised regionally; this included examples of Dorset Black Burnished ware.

c) Medieval earthenwares -

Coarse flint and quartz tempered fabrics conforming to a recognised range of medieval earthenwares of mostly unknown provenance. Examples of known source material included the widely recognised reduced Ham Green Cookpot fabric.

d) Post medieval wares – including:

i) *Bristol/Staffordshire wares* (BPT 100/101) – Pale buff fabrics usually decorated with white slip beneath a pale yellow glaze. Forms represented included dishes with combed and feathered slip decoration. These wares first appear towards the end of the 17th century and are common thereafter until the later 18th century.

ii) *Tin- Glazed Earthenware* (BPT 99) - or delft, first produced in Bristol soon after 1650 and common from 1700 onwards. The collection includes examples of plates and bowls most of which have hand painted decoration.

iii) *East Somerset (Wanstrow) wares* (BPT 96-98) – A very common type of 17-18th century glazed red earthenware represented at Wade Street by miscellaneous body sherds plus larger examples from a decorated slipware bowl and a several shallow pancheons.

iv) *Misc. Red Wares* - a proportion of the plain and glazed red earthenware could not be attributed with certainty to any of the above sources. The collection may well therefore include other examples of products made in Somerset and Devon including West Somerset (Nether Stowey) fabrics. Nonetheless, in terms of their general characteristics, principally fabric and glaze, the material is consistent with products of 17-18th century date.

Catalogue of the Excavated Pottery**Trench 1**

- Context 100** 1 sherd post medieval red ware
- 7 sherds of undecorated medieval earthenware including at least six different fabric types
- 13 sherds of undecorated Romano-British earthenware. Including 1 BBW flanged bowl and one sherd of fine micaceous grey ware
- Context 103** 2 body sherds of undecorated Romano-British earthenware.
- 9 small body sherds of late prehistoric fabric with oxidised external surfaces over reduced body. Unknown source.
- Context 108** 2 small sherds of soft earthenware in a largely reduced fabric containing sparse sand grain inclusions. Unknown late prehistoric fabric.
- Context 115** 1 sherd of Romano-British earthenware, a rim sherd from a small bowl in a sandy fabric
- Context 116** (*Section 1*) 4 sherds of undecorated earthenware including 2 sherds Romano-British reduced sandy coarse ware and 2 ?Romano-British earthenware.
- Context 116** (*Section 2*) 2 sherds of Romano-British earthenware in a reduced fabric. Includes a rim sherd from a Black Burnished Ware (BBW) bowl.
- Context 120** 2 sherds of Romano-British earthenware, both undecorated body sherds of generic reduced ware
- Context 121** 1 sherd of modern stoneware (BPT 200; post-1835)

Trench 2

- Context 200** 1 sherd of tin-glazed white ware
- 2 sherds of transfer-printed white ware (post-1780)
- 1 sherd of *Westerwald* stoneware
- 1 sherd of Bristol/Staffordshire yellow slipware (post-1650)
- 1 sherd of post medieval red ware
- 3 sherds of medieval earthenware including sherds with traces of comb and stab decoration
- Context 201** 4 sherds of modern white ware
- 1 sherd of Bristol/Staffordshire yellow slipware (post-1650)
- 11 sherds of post medieval (Somerset) red ware
- 1 sherd of undecorated medieval earthenware
- Context 202** 1 sherd of tin-glazed white ware (post-1835)
- Context 202** 3 sherds of medieval earthenware. Including 1 sherd of reduced fine ware with traces of external lead glaze and one body sherd in oxidised flint tempered fabric with external combed decoration
- Context 206** 2 sherds of medieval earthenware. Including 1 sherd with traces of external lead glaze

- Context 210** 2 (joining) sherds of Romano-British BBW flanged bowl
- 1 body sherd oxidised earthenware. Possibly Romano-British
- 1 rim sherd from medieval earthenware jar. Rim is everted and clubbed in a coarse flint and sand tempered fabric. c. 12th – 14th century
- Context 214** 1 sherd of medieval earthenware from rim of cooking pot with isolated finger-tip decoration on the inside of the rim. c. 11th – 12th century date
- 1 small sherd of generic medieval earthenware
- Context 216** 3 sherds of Romano-British earthenware, one sherd from basal angle
2 sherds of undecorated medieval earthenware (c. 12th-13th century)

Trench 3

- Context 300** 2 sherds of tin-glazed white ware
- 1 sherd of post medieval red ware
- 1 sherd of undecorated medieval earthenware
- Context 302** 1 sherd of fine reduced ware with basal angle. Possibly Romano-British.
- Context 301** 1 sherd of post medieval glazed red ware
- 1 sherd of Romano-British reduced ware with basal angle, possibly BBW

Trench 4

- Unstratified** 5 sherds of post medieval red ware. Including a Wanstrow type rim sherd
- 1 sherd of English Brown stoneware
- 1 sherd of tin-glazed earthenware with painted blue decoration in the oriental style
- 1 sherd of medieval earthenware. Ham Green Cookpot fabric. c. 12th-13th century
- 2 sherds of undecorated medieval earthenware.

Discussion

A small collection of ceramics was recovered from the site including material dating from the prehistoric period (c. Later Bronze Age to Iron Age) to 19th century tin-glazed white wares.

The collection of Romano-British and medieval sherds from Trenches 1 and 2 is of the greatest significance and indicate a similar date range for the excavated features in those areas. The assemblage itself is very standard but fortunately does appear to include sufficient diagnostic material to enable reliable ceramic dating of archaeological deposits. The pottery collection is not considered to be of sufficient intrinsic merit to justify further detailed analysis.

The collection includes a standard suite of post-medieval ceramics and no further analysis of this element of the collection is justified.

References

- Good, G.L. & Russett, V.E.J.
1987 *Common Types of Earthenware in the Bristol Area. Bristol & Avon Archaeology, 6* pp35-43
- Jackson, R., Jackson, P & Beckey, I.
1991 *Tin-glazed earthenware kiln waste from the Limekiln Lane Potteries, Bristol. Post Medieval Archaeology, 25* pp89-114

5 General Conclusions

5.1 The archaeological evidence gathered during the evaluation programme indicates that archaeology of varying significance and importance was revealed in all four of the trial trenches. The principal features including rectilinear ditches, postholes, beams-slots and a single truncated hearth.

5.2 The group of eroded archaeological features recorded within **Trenches 1 and 2** indicated human activity possibly spanning the prehistoric to modern periods. A discrete group of features including a single beam-slot and associated postholes (Cuts 105, 107 and 109 respectively) observed at the western end of **Trench 1**, although mostly aceramic, possibly had their origin in the late prehistoric period (see Section 4.1) whilst two broadly linear gullies (114/119 and 122) and a single truncated hearth, sited to the east of the evaluation cutting, were dated by pottery to the Romano-British period. The main features recorded in **Trench 2** appeared to be of medieval date (between 12-14th AD) and to represent shallow boundary ditches.

5.3 Limited archaeological deposits were recorded at the southern extent of the site on land fronting Church Road North (**Trenches 3 and 4**). Here activity was represented by a small number of features including two aceramic gullies and a small spread of sandstone rubble. No dating evidence was recovered from the gullies which could be of prehistoric date. The rubble spread in Trench 3 is also undated and considered to be of low importance.

6 Contractor's Advice

6.1 **Trenches 1 and 2** revealed a stratified sequence of structures, deposits and finds between 440 mm and 1.50 m (11.27 and 10.10 m a.O.D) below the present ground surface. These features appear to reflect low intensity activity during the Romano-British and medieval periods and have the potential to elucidate the nature and development of human activity in the area from the prehistoric period onwards. On that basis, the remains are considered to have significant archaeological potential.

6.2 Features revealed in **Trenches 3 and 4** are not considered to be of sufficient importance to justify any further archaeological investigation

6.3 On the basis of the results of the trial-trenching programme, it is firstly advised that *none* of the archaeological remains identified on the site are of sufficient quality or importance to justify *preservation in situ* at the expense of future development.

6.4 However, in view of the potential for the survival of further deposits and structures of Prehistoric, Roman-British and medieval date in the areas of **Trenches 1 and 2**, it is advised that future archaeological work should be undertaken within that area fully to characterise the sequence of activity represented and to ensure the preservation and understanding of the significant archaeological remains in that area are achieved *by record* (PPG 16, DoE 1990) in advance of their destruction during development.

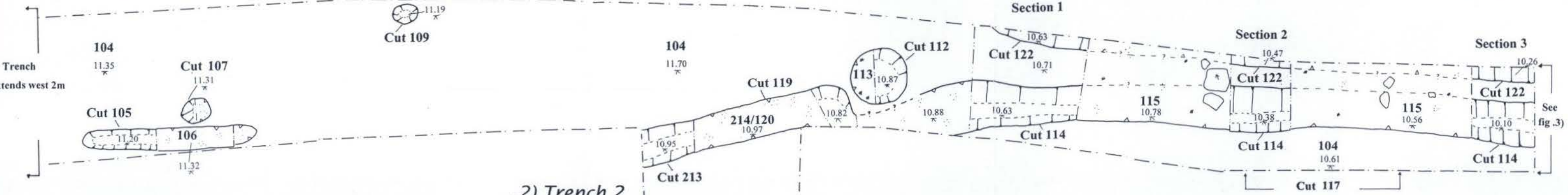
6.5 The archaeological advice above is subject to the approval and final decision of the North Somerset County Archaeological Officer.

7 Bibliography and References

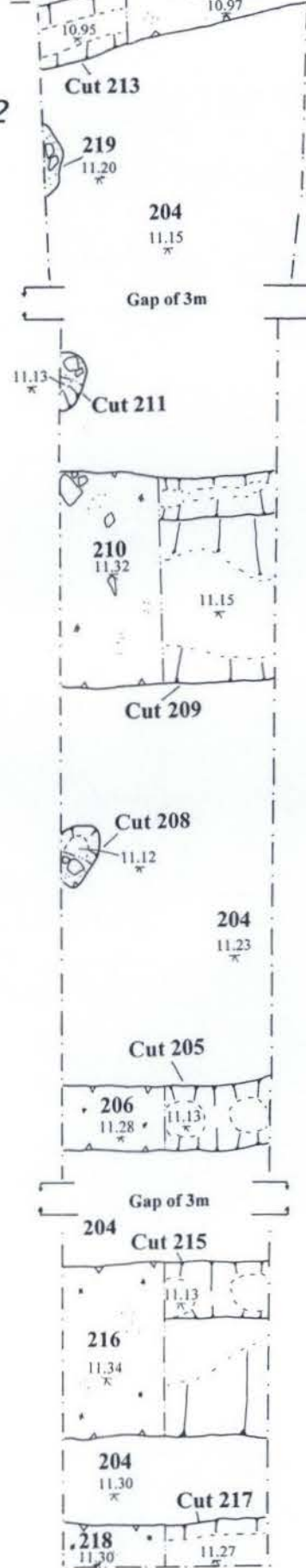
- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Aston and Isles | <i>Archaeology of Avon, Bristol</i> |
| 1987 | |
| Brown and Loosley | <i>The Book of Portishead</i> |
| 1982 | |
| DoE 1990 | <i>Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16)</i> |
| | London (HMSO) 1990 |
| English Heritage | <i>Management of Archaeological Projects</i> |
| 1991 | London (HBMCE) 1991 |

Figure 4

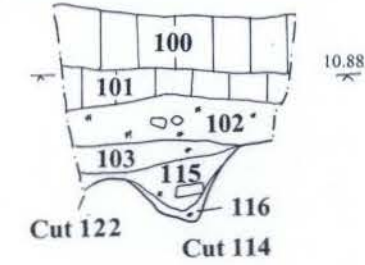
.1) Trench 1



.2) Trench 2



.3) West facing section of Cut 114



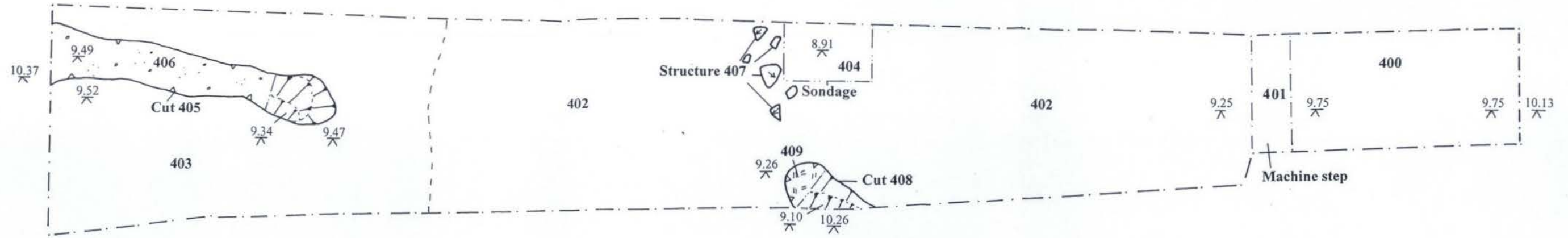
Key

- * * charcoal
- • clay
- ↘ direction of tip
- - - edge of excavation
- ⊘ gravel
- ∇ sealed cut
- || topsoil
- || subsoil

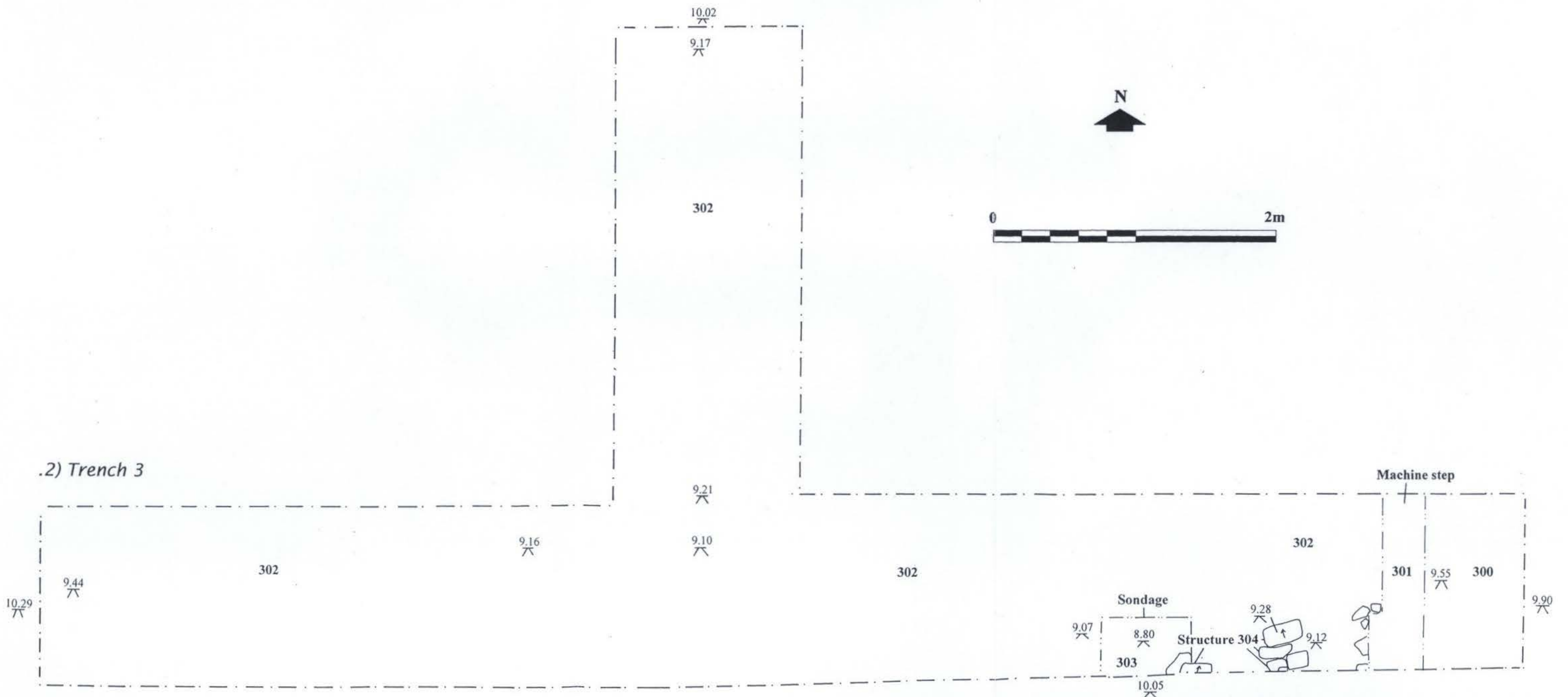


.1) Trench 4

Figure 5



.2) Trench 3



Church Road North, Portishead, North Somerset
NSSMR 42401, 2001.224

Photographs



a) Trench 1, Cut 114



b) Trench 1, Cut 114



c) Trench 1, Detail of Cuts 114 & 122



d) Trench 4, Cut 405



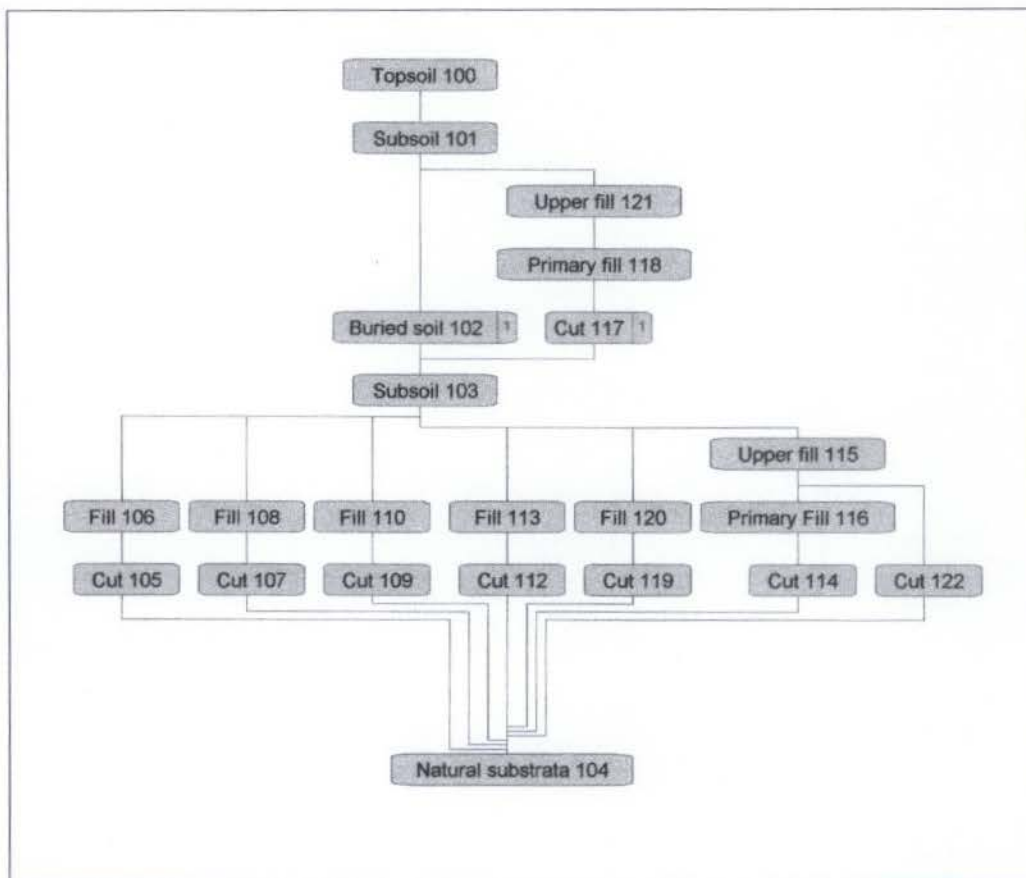
e) Trench 4, Cut 408



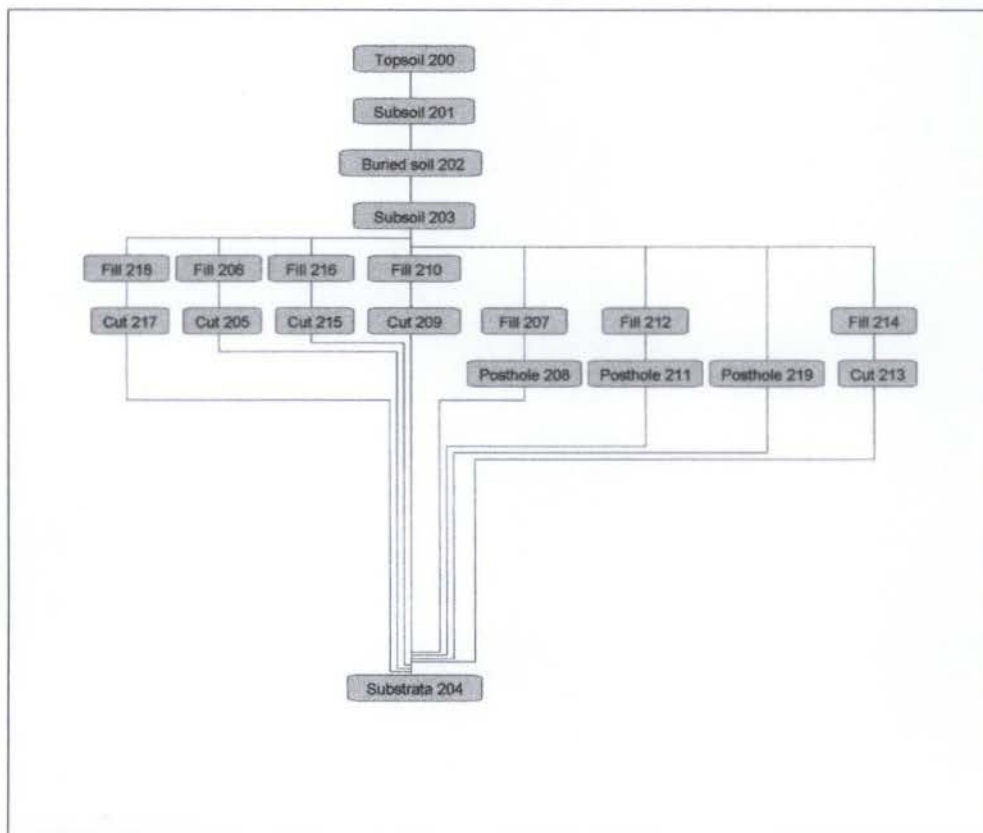
f) Trench 3, Detail of Structure 304

Appendix I

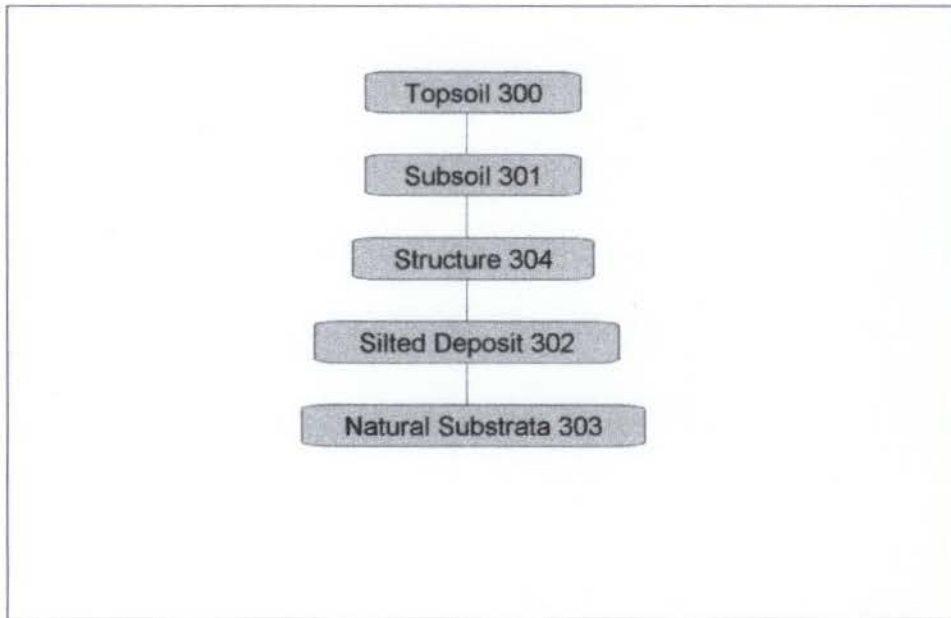
Trench 1 Matrix



Trench 2 Matrix



Trench 3 Matrix



Trench 4 Matrix

