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SNY	11740
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CNY	6040
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ABBHEY HILL HALL, JERVAULX

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Planning Reference 1/90/28A/FULL

Scheduled Monument Number 26940

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



JB Archaeological Services

On behalf of

Mr R Baker

November 2007

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NORTH YORKSHIRE**

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Summary

As the site lay within the Scheduled Monument area for Jervaulx Abbey (Monument Number 26940), a condition on the planning application (1/90/28A/FULL) for an Archaeological Watching Brief was placed on the ground disturbance works for a new driveway within the grounds of Abbey Hill Hall, Jervaulx, North Yorkshire (SE 1739 8542).

The ground work for the driveway consisted of two parallel trenches running across an area of pasture to the south of the hall and ran from the northern end of the existing drive to the A6108 running between Masham and East Witton. The ground works were undertaken between the 29th and 31st October 2007.

The results of the watching brief were that the partial remains of two walls were recorded in the trenches for the new drive; one was aligned north to south in front of the hall whilst the other was located near the existing driveway. Neither structure contained any dating material and only a very small amount of late post medieval material was observed during the rest of the ground works.

A piece of worked and dressed stone was recovered by the contractors during building works on part of a small extension to the hall. The stone appears to be a roll moulded jamb for a window from the nearby abbey.

No other archaeological finds or features were recorded during the ground works.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief on the ground works for a new driveway in the grounds of Abbey Hill Hall, North Yorkshire (SE 1739 8542). The Watching Brief was a condition on the planning application (1/90/28A/FULL) as the site lay within the Scheduled Monument area for Jervaulx Abbey (Monument Number 26940).
- 1.2 The watching brief was conducted by JB Archaeological Services (JBAS) for Mr Richard Baker and was carried out between 29th and 31st October 2007.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Historic Background

- 2.1 The current hall was built post dissolution and can be seen to have undergone several alterations and extensions over a number of years. The hall complex contains not only the main hall itself but a well preserved stable block with largely intact fixtures and fittings along with Second World War structures in the grounds of the hall.
- 2.2 The landscape to the north contains major and nationally significant archaeological remains of Jervaulx Abbey and its associated buildings (see Jecock, 1999 for details).
- 2.3 The place name for Jervaulx is first recorded in c.1145 as *Jorvalle* meaning 'valley of the River Ure'. The name is derived from a pre English name for the river of uncertain origin and the Old French *val* for valley (Mills, 1998, 199).

Geology and Soils

- 2.4 The site lies on the eastern edge of the Yorkshire Dales in an area of Carboniferous limestones (Butlin, 2003, 10 and British Geological Survey, 2001). Overlying this, the quaternary geology is of alluvium deposited by the river Ure (British Geological Survey 1977). The soils that have weathered from this are the Wick 1 association which are deep, well drained coarse loamy/sandy soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).

Topography and Land-use

- 2.5 The hall is situated part way down a north facing slope at a height of c.105mOD. The hall itself has been built on an area of level ground which has been partially modified out of the hillside. The area of the watching brief lay to the south of the hall on a moderate north facing slope between the hall and the A6108 which runs between East Witton and Masham.
- 2.6 The land around the hall is primarily used for grazing livestock.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objective of the watching brief was to identify and record any features of archaeological interest revealed or damaged during the ground works for the construction of the new driveway. The specific aims were to:

- archaeologically record (graphically and photographically) any archaeological features revealed by the ground works
- recover any archaeological artefacts and environmental material exposed by the ground works

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The stripping of the turf and topsoil was carried out by contractors using a wheeled mechanical digger with a toothless bucket under direct archaeological supervision.

4.2 During all of the topsoil stripping the exposed ground surfaces were inspected for archaeological features and the resulting topsoil stockpiles were monitored for archaeological artefacts.

4.3 Drawings were produced of the archaeological features encountered, and these were also recorded photographically, on 35mm colour slide and black and white print film and digitally at 5m pixel resolution. 0.5m, 1m and 2m bi-coloured poles were used as scales and a north pointer for orientation. For the detailed photography a 0.4m bi-coloured scale was used.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 The twin trenches for the drive were relatively narrow and shallow (c.0.6m wide and 0.5m deep) which meant that there was a low potential for recording any features encountered in detail. In the text below the context numbers for each archaeological deposit or feature are given in [] brackets.

5.2 A uniform topsoil [1] (c.0.14m thick) was noted along the entire length of the trenches which overlay a similarly uniform subsoil [4] which was noticeably sandier in composition with more frequent stones. Within the topsoil there were very occasional finds of late 19/20th ceramics (e.g. a blue and white transfer printed rim sherd, a fragment of marmalade jar etc.) along with a single fragment of late 19th century clay pipe stem and a body sherd of late 18th century black coarse-ware. At the bottom end of the new drive a small quantity of 20th century building rubble was encountered where it had been dumped in the earlier gateway to the field.

5.3 Approximately halfway down the length of the new drive the remains of a once substantial wall were encountered [2] (Figures 1, 2 and 3; Plates 2 and 3). The remains were 2.70m wide and ran the width of each trench. The wall appeared to have been built of small, un-worked stones without any apparent

coursing or bonding. However, it is possible that the remains encountered were only the core of the structure and the outer facing blocks had been removed in the past. Otherwise it is difficult to see how the wall would have stood to any reasonable height.

5.4 The wall was orientated north-south and had been constructed directly onto the subsoil [4]. The northern end of the wall appeared to join the remains of a wall which ran along the edge of an area of quarrying (Figure 1). It was not possible to determine a relationship between the two structures as they were both under pasture. To the south the wall ran directly towards the hall but stopped at the edge of the shallow ha-ha ditch on the southern edge of the gardens. Unfortunately as the area is pasture it was not possible to investigate if the wall was truncated by the construction of the ha-ha or whether it had continued towards, or even beyond the hall. A rapid examination of the grounds around the hall did not reveal any evidence for its continuation but there had been several changes of ground level which may mask any remains.

5.5 A second wall [3] was recorded near the end of the new driveway (Figures 1, 2 and 4; Plates 4 and 5) which initially appeared to be up to 4m wide. However, when it was removed to lay the new electricity cable it became apparent that the western portion was the remains from its earlier collapse and it was actually only 2.3m wide. This wall was built in a similar manner to [2] but with larger, water rounded cobbles which possibly suggests a different date for construction. Unfortunately no dating material was recovered from either structure and, like wall [2], it had been constructed directly onto the subsoil [4].

5.6 The northern end of this wall appeared to end at an earlier gateway to the pasture, whilst to the south the wall ran along the edge of a possible area of quarrying until it joined the boundary wall of the A6108.

5.7 No other archaeological finds or features were encountered during the excavation of the new driveway.

6.0 Finds

6.1 The very small amount of material recovered from the topsoil was all late post medieval ceramics which suggests that there had been some limited manuring to improve the pasture in the past.

6.2 During the various building works that were being undertaken on the hall, a piece of dressed stonework was recovered when part of a small extension on the north side of the hall was being rebuilt. The stone appears to be part of a roll moulded window from the abbey (Plate 6).

7.0 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 From the results described above it can be seen that there has apparently been little in the way of human activity along the line of the new driveway. A recent topographic survey by English Heritage (Jecock, pers comm) records a possible quarry site to the north of the route which appears to have led to the building of the wall [3] along its top or northern edge. This survey also recorded other slight earthwork features (Appendix II) but no evidence for their deliberate construction was observed below ground where the new driveway passed through them.
- 7.2 The location of wall [2] running north to south and meeting wall [3] at the edge of the quarry area and stopping at the ha-ha is more interesting and less easy to interpret. As already mentioned above, it is possible that the ha-ha has truncated wall [2] in which case [2] predates the construction of the ha-ha. Similarly where wall [2] appears to join wall [3], it is possible that wall [3], and the quarrying that it delimits, also truncates wall [2]. If these situations were both true then it could be possible to determine an approximate date for the various walls if it were known when the other features were created.
- 7.3 It is also possible that the wall is of medieval date as it runs on the same alignment as the faint traces of ridge and furrow cultivation that were recorded in the more recent English Heritage survey given in Appendix II.
- 7.4 An examination of the various cartographic sources given in Jecock (1999) shows one plan (page 31) dated 1807 which appears to have a wall running north-south from the road towards the hall in a similar position to wall [2]. However, a more detailed rectification would have to be undertaken to prove this.

References

- Jecock M (1999) *Jervaulx Abbey, North Yorkshire*. Archaeological Investigation Report Series AI/4/1999. English Heritage.
- Mills AD (1998) *Dictionary of English Place-Names*. Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- 1977 Geological Survey Ten Mile Map South Sheet Quaternary. British Geological Survey
- 1983 Soils of England and Wales. Sheet 1 Northern England. Soil Survey of England and Wales. Lawes Agricultural Trust, Harpenden
- 2001 Geological Survey 1:625,000 Map South Sheet Solid Geology. British Geological Survey

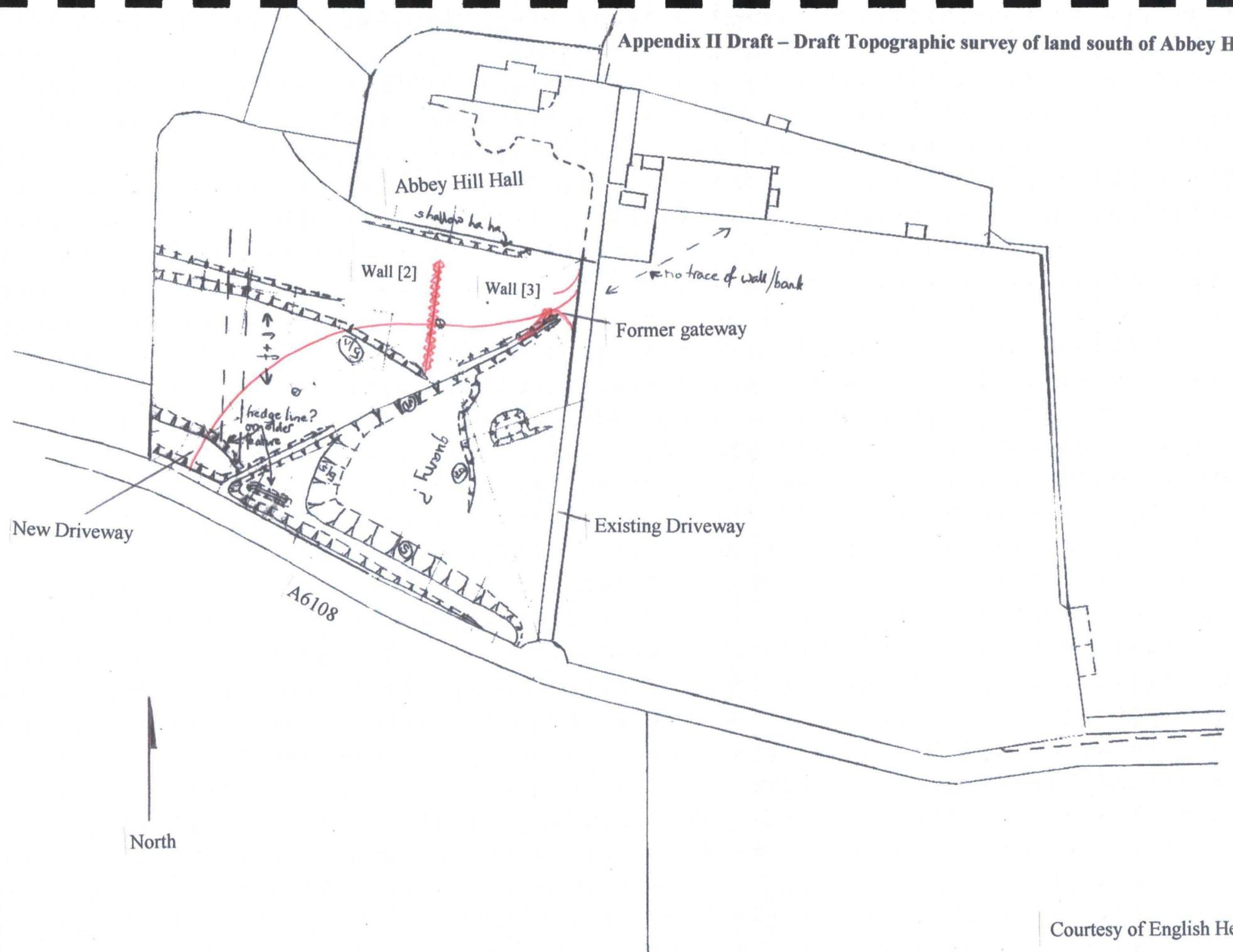
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mr R Baker for inviting me to undertake the project and the lone of background material and Marcus Jecock of English Heritage for supplying drafts of the topographic survey data for the land around Abbey Hill Hall.

APPENDIX I

CONTEXT CATALOGUE

<i>Context Number</i>	<i>Description</i>
01	Turf and topsoil, covers whole site.
02	Stone wall.
03	Stone wall.
04	Subsoil.



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ILLUSTRATIONS



Plate 1. General view of site with southern drive trench partially cut.



Plate 2 Wall [2]. Looking east in southern drive trench. Scales 2m & 0.5m.



Plate 3. Wall [2] in northern drive trench, looking NE. Scales 2m & 0.5m.



Plate 4. Wall [3] in southern drive trench. Scales 2m, 1m & 0.5m.

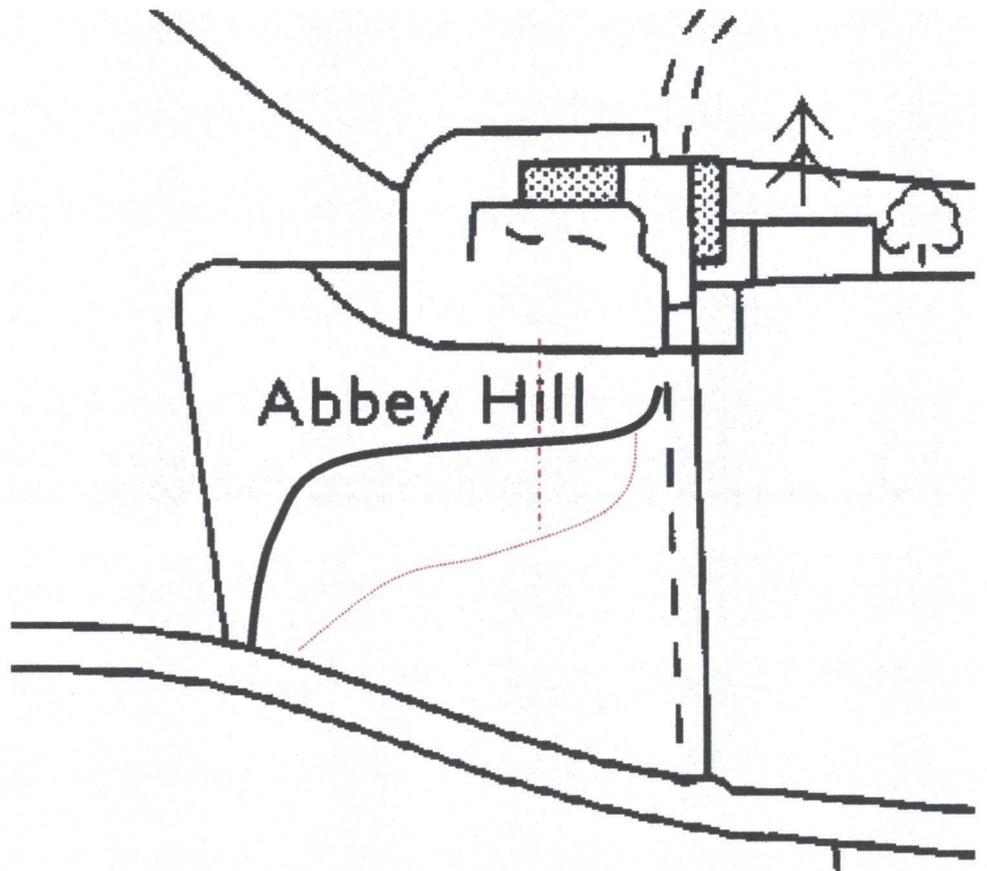


Plate 5. Detail of wall [3], in northern trench. Scales 1m & 0.5m.



Plate 6. Architectural stone block from building works on the hall. Scale 0.4m.

Figure 1. General Location Plan of New Drive and Walls.



Based on plan supplied by client

Key

-  New Driveway
-  Wall [2]
-  Wall [3]

Figure 2. Detail of Location of Walls.

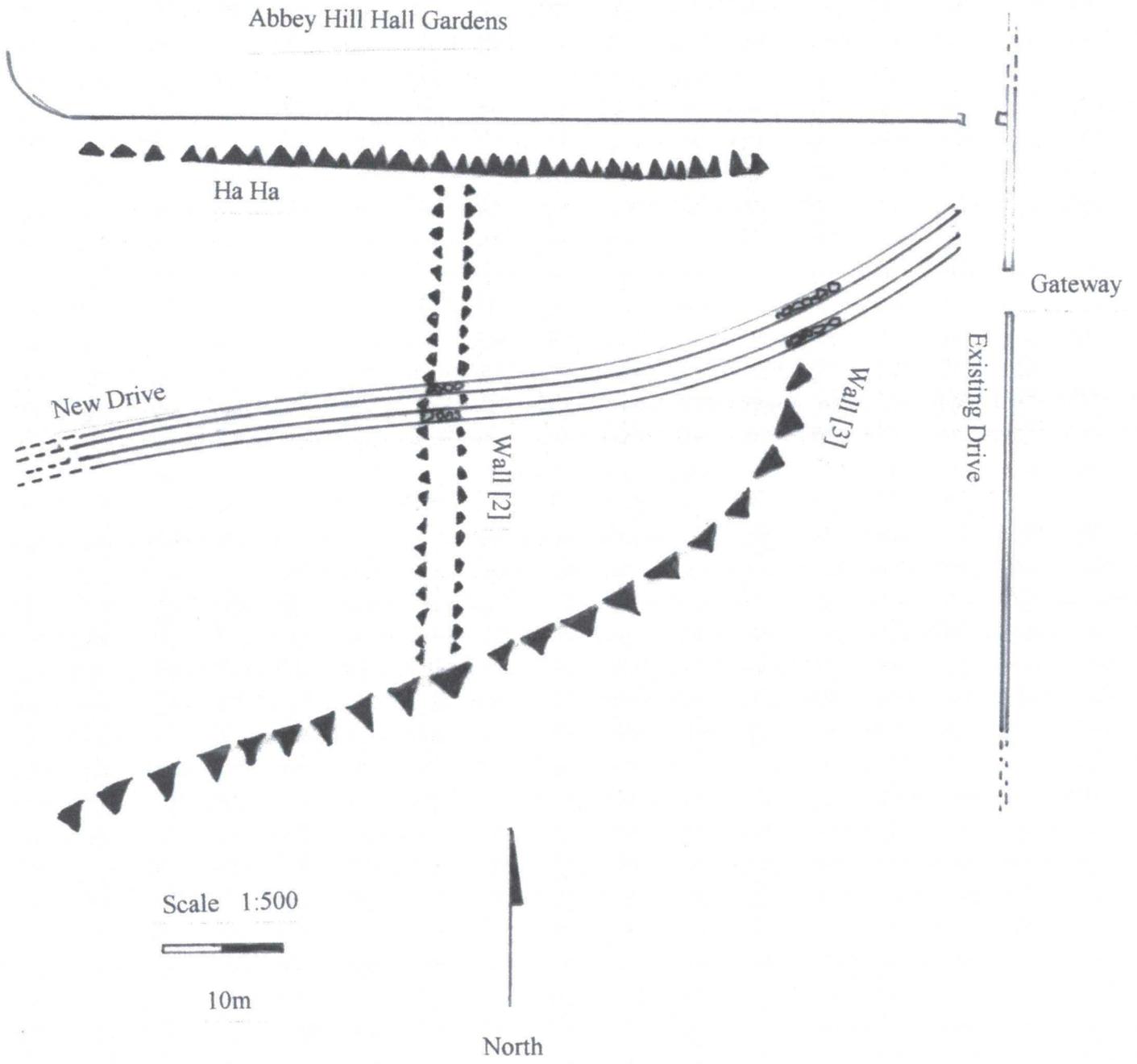
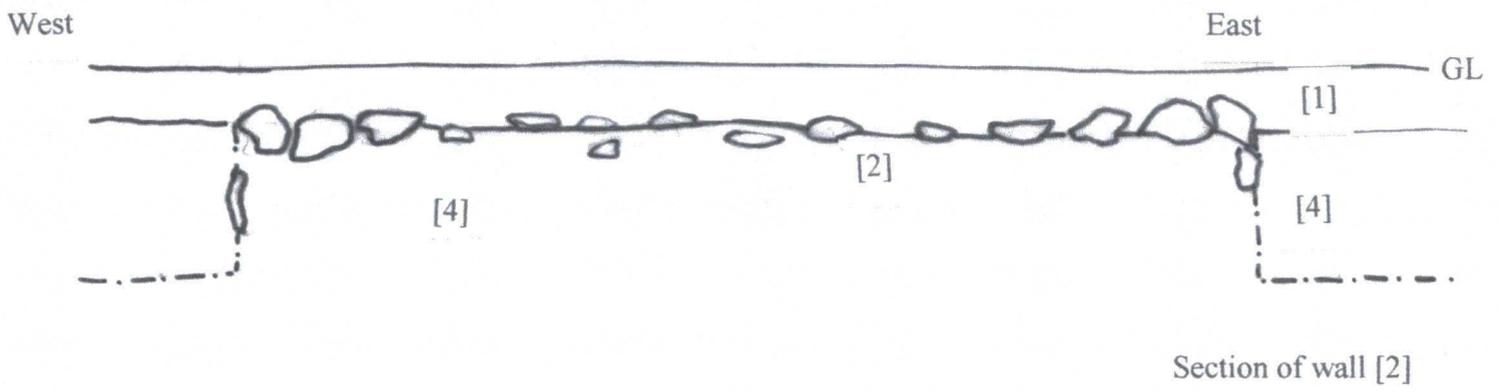
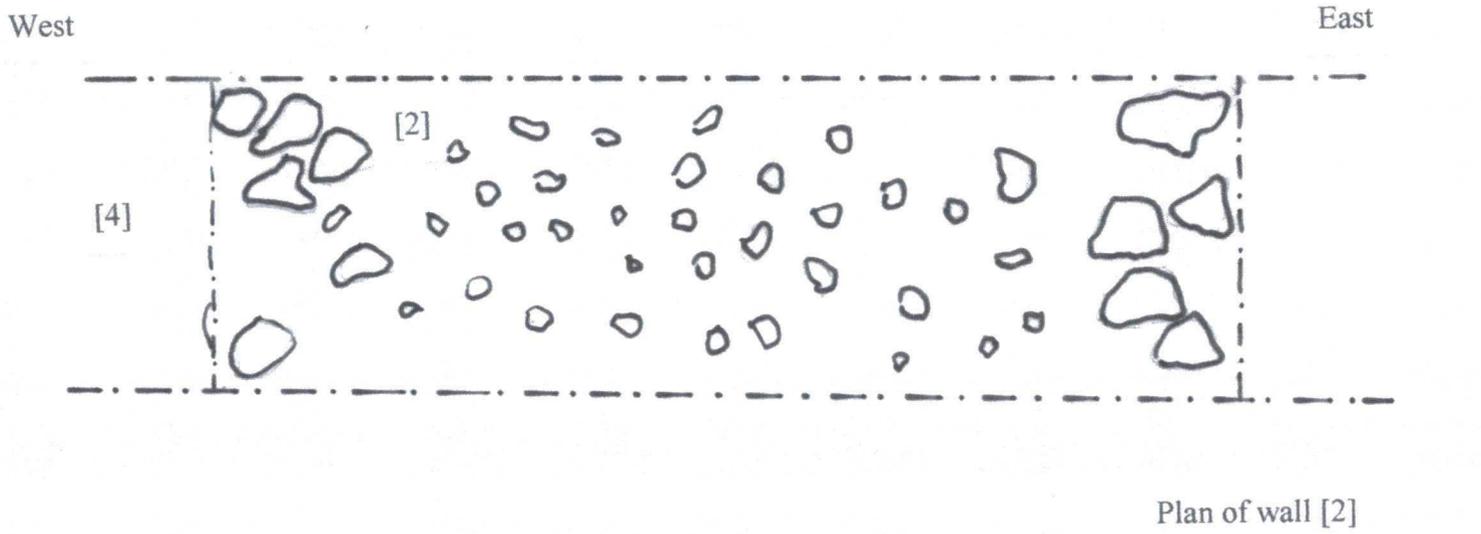
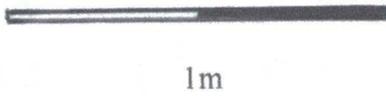


Figure 3. Plan and section of wall [2].



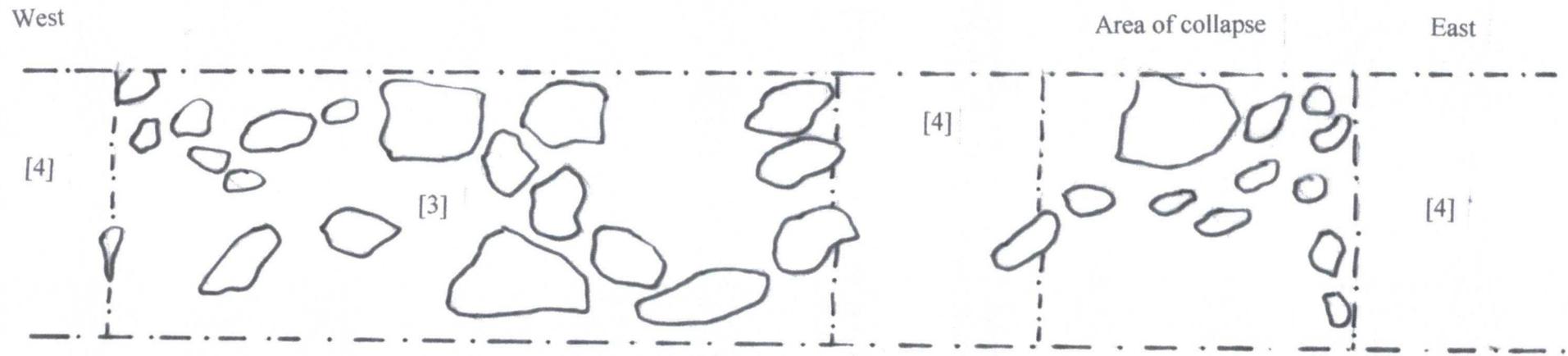
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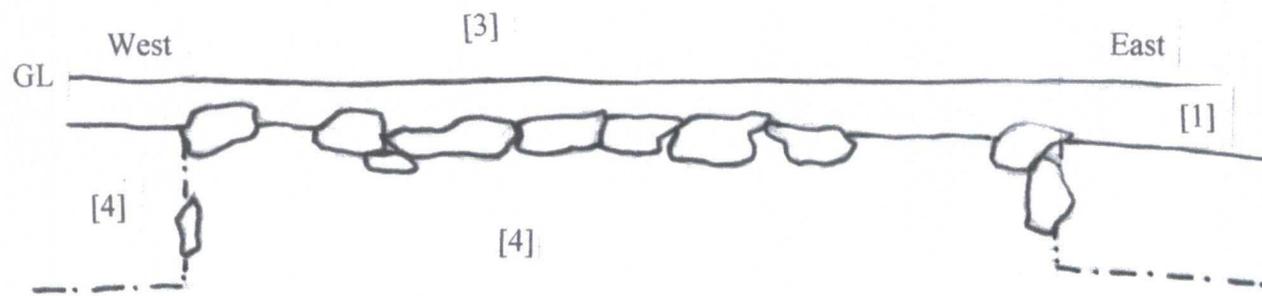
Key

-  Limit of Excavation
- [1] Context Number
- GL Ground Level

Figure 4. Plan and section of wall [3].



Plan of wall [3]



Section of wall [3]

Scale 1:20



1m

Key

-  Limit of Excavation
- [1] Context Number
- GL Ground Level