



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Observation, Investigation & Recording Report

The Old Town Hall

St Albans

Hertfordshire



Quality Check

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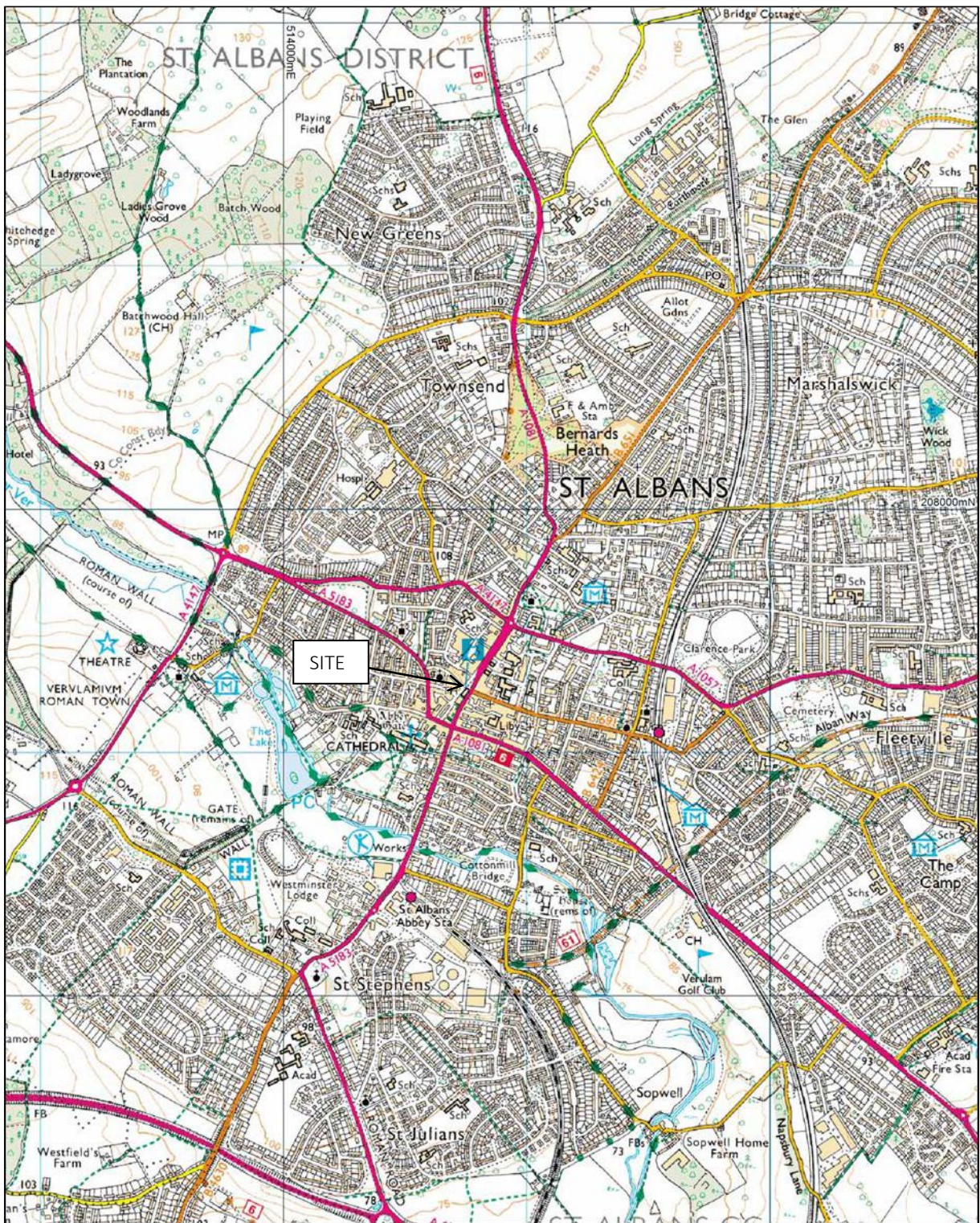


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



Summary

During April and May 2015 an archaeological observation and recording project was undertaken during investigative works at The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire, in order to inform development proposals for the conversion of the café within the Town Hall to a museum and the construction of an art gallery. The investigative works entailed the excavation of five test pits within the northern end of the building, which was constructed on a previously occupied site in 1829, and the drilling of two boreholes outside. The test pits revealed the brick foundations for the town hall, a series of backfill/made-ground deposits and a possible Victorian brick culvert. One of the test pits also revealed a section of medieval clunch walling forming part of the foundations along with two pieces of architectural stone. Whether the stonework may have been associated with the medieval Moot Hall that is thought to have stood on the site before it was granted to John Clarke to construct a row of almshouses in 1605 is uncertain. Despite archaeological and documentary evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity in the area, no archaeological finds, feature or deposits were encountered during the borehole drilling.

1 Introduction

1.1 In April and May 2015 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of geophysics and observation and recording of The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by St Albans City and District Council, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Kaye 2014), and approved by the District Archaeologist for St Albans City and District Council, archaeological advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), St Albans City and District Council.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order to inform development proposals, and is a Heritage Lottery Funded Project.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

The Old Town Hall is located in the historic centre of St Albans on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 14754 07247 (Fig. 1). It falls within the administrative district of St Albans City and District Council and lies within area AS.R.25 on the Local Plan which includes Saxon Kingsbury, the Saxon and medieval town of St Albans and Sopwell Nunnery.

Description

The Old Town Hall, which is a Grade II* building (EH Building ID: 163363; SADC Listed Building number 9/59), is bounded by St Peter's Street to the north, Chequer Street to the east, Queens Lane to the south and Market Place to the west (Fig. 2). It is described by English Heritage as follows:

Facing north up St Peter's Street. Large, classical building of 1826 by George Smith. 2 storeys, the upper a piano nobile with central portico of 4 fluted, Ionic columns, entablature and pediment with acroterion. This rests on projecting, ground floor podium, with 3 sash windows with glazing bars framed by flat pilasters. Broader pilasters at angles also support entablature behind which a low pitched, leaded roof ends in a pediment on each return.



Geology & Topography

Superficial deposits are from the Kesgrave catchment subgroup of sand and gravel formed up to 3 million years ago. The solid geology is Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation formed approximately 84 to 94 million years ago (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the conversion of the existing café into a museum and the construction of an art gallery at basement level immediately northeast of the extant building (Fig. 3 & 4).

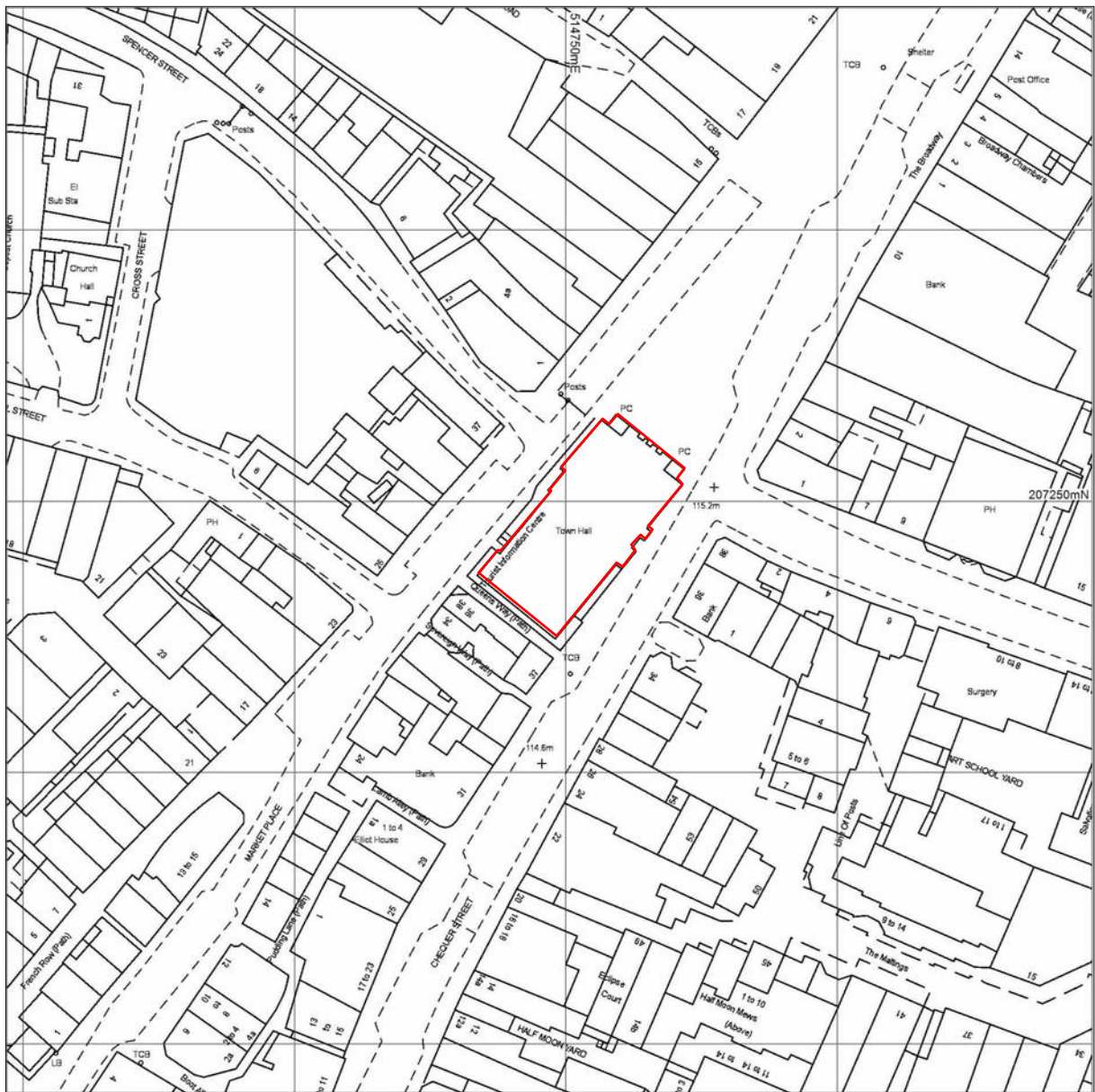


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1: 1250)

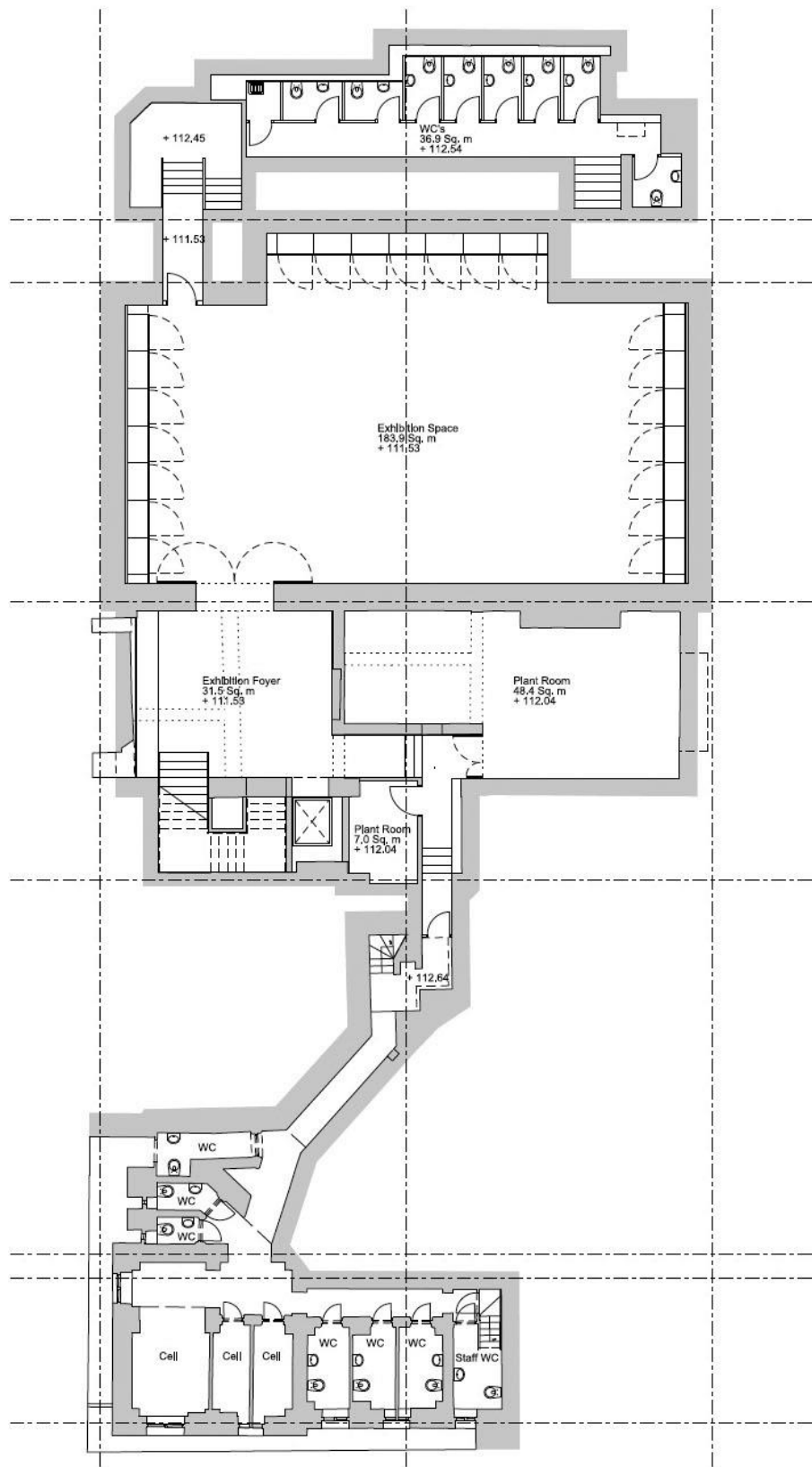


Figure 3: Proposed basement (not to scale)

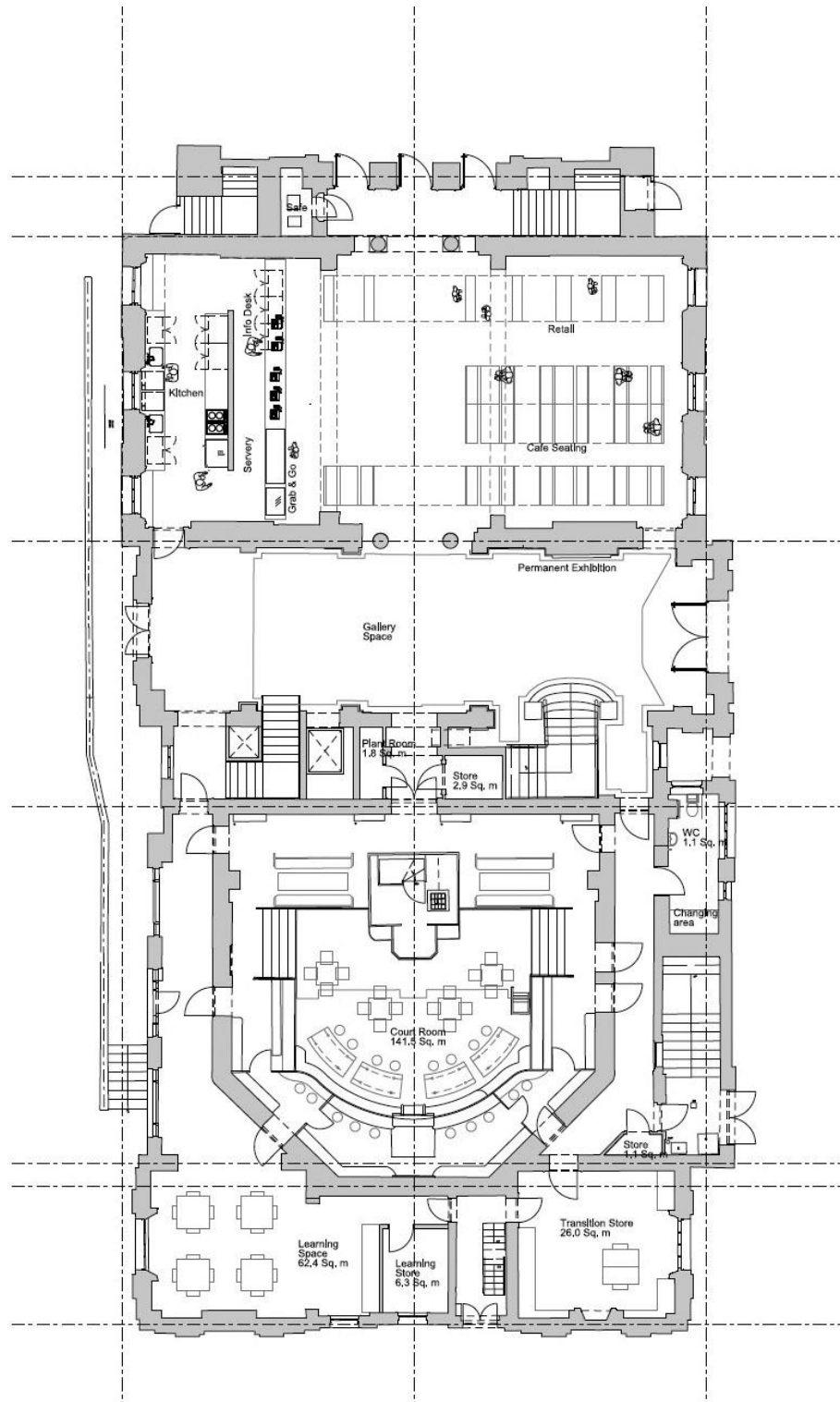


Figure 4: Proposed ground floor (not to scale)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Kaye 2014) were:

- To define and characterise the buried archaeological remains.

2.2 *Methods*

The original requirements as set out in the brief and the approved WSI were for archaeological evaluation comprising geophysical survey and the cutting of one or more trial Pits within the current café area. However, as the café has a suspended timber floor and radar is unable to penetrate large cavities as exists here, the results of the GPR survey was disappointing and no archaeological features or deposits were revealed. As a result a different programme of works was agreed with the DAO and LPA, which consisted of the archaeological monitoring of the test pits and boreholes that were to be dug for other purposes.

- The hand excavation of three test pits in the current café area and two test pits in the basement under archaeological supervision (Fig. 5).
- The drilling of two boreholes outside the town hall under archaeological supervision (Fig. 6).

2.3 *Standards*

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014)
- Current Historic England guidelines (HE 2015; EH 2006,2008)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)

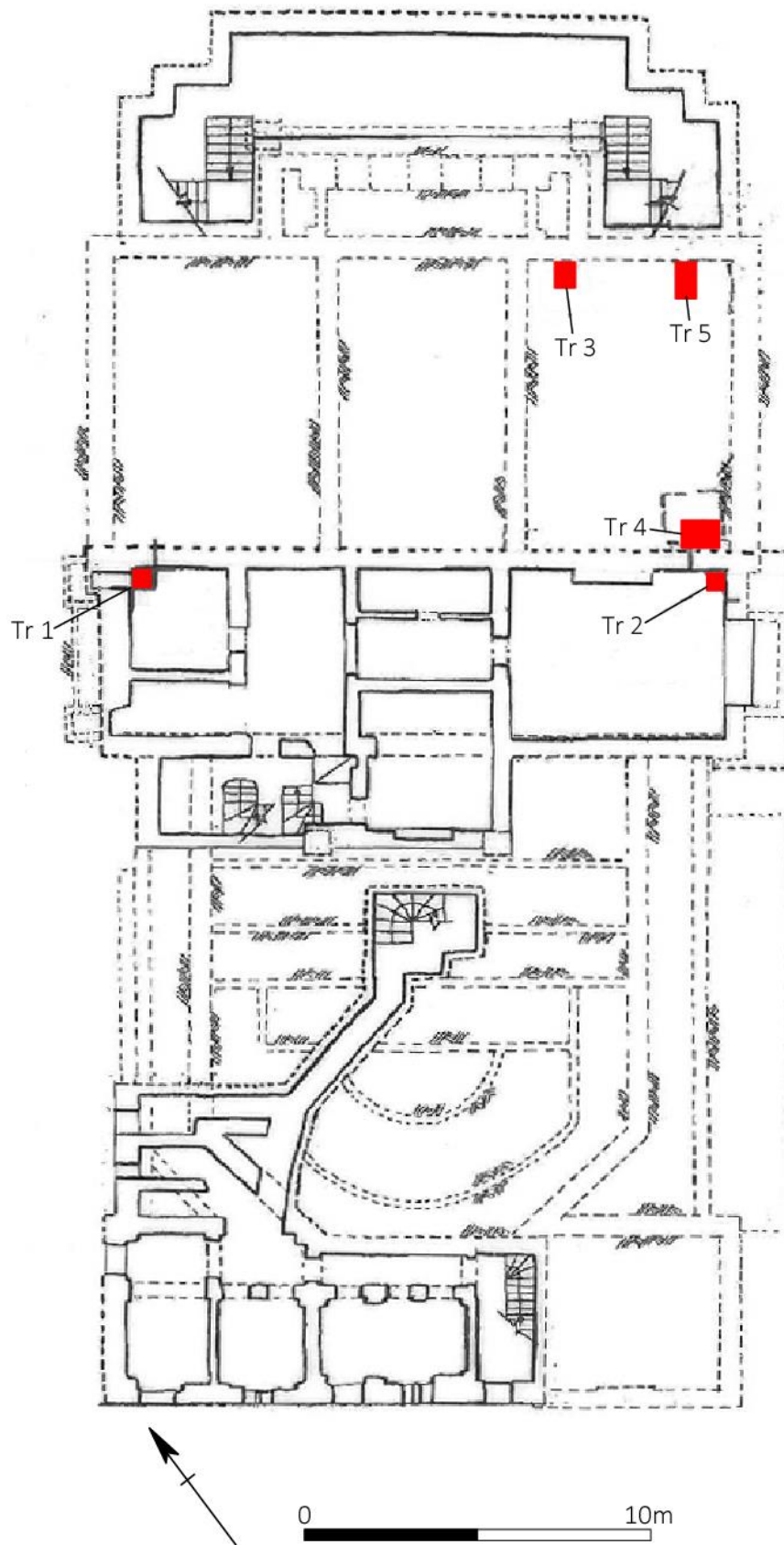


Figure 5: Test Pit Locations (scale 1:200)

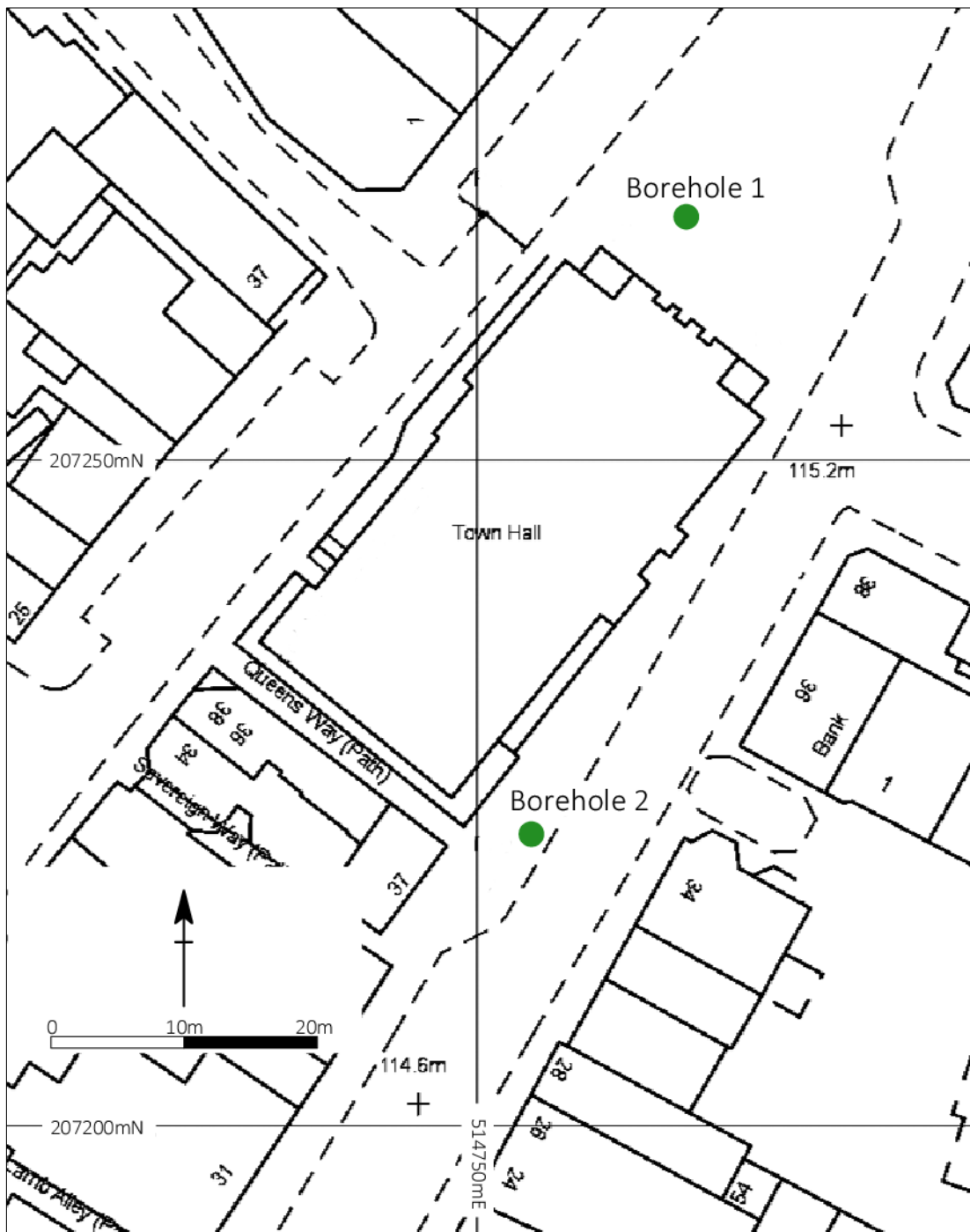


Figure 6: Borehole Locations (scale 1:500)



3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 St Albans has been an area of prominent settlement from as early as the Iron Age period, and there is evidence for the development and growth of the town through the subsequent Roman, Saxon, medieval and Post medieval periods. During this time, the focus of settlement has shifted several times, eventually concentrating on the area within which the Town Hall is located during the medieval period. The Town Hall itself is located on the former medieval marketplace, and is a Grade II* Listed Building.

This section has been compiled with information from readily available sources, including the St Albans City and District Council website, the National Heritage List for England, Heritage Gateway for local Historic Environment Record (HER) data and KDK's own library.

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before 600BC-AD43)

The earliest evidence for human activity in the vicinity of the town of St Albans is represented by flint artefacts, which have been found in the valley of the river Ver. The area went on to become of considerable importance during the late Iron Age and a number of major sites of this period are located in the vicinity. Late Iron Age occupation was dominated by a settlement at Prae Wood, c.3km southwest of the site (Wheeler & Wheeler 1936). Further settlement dating to this period has been found at a variety of locations in this area, for example at Gorhambury (Neal et al 1990). Further evidence of this period has been found north of the river, notably at Folly Lane, where an important Late Iron Age high-status burial has been recorded (Niblett 1999). The Iron Age settlement of Verulamion, the forerunner to the Roman Verulamium, was established to the south west of the present town, on the south side of the River Ver.

3.3 **Roman** (AD43- c.450)

Following the Roman invasion in AD43, the town became known as Verulamium, and was situated on Watling Street, one of the most important roads in Roman Britain (http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/St%20Albans%20Conservation%20Area%20Character%20Statement%20Key%20List%20and%20Map_tcm15-13996.pdf). The Roman settlement was focussed to the south and west of the development site, away from the current town centre. During the Boudiccan revolt of AD61 it was burnt to the ground, but its status as an important administrative town in Roman Britain meant it was subsequently rebuilt, and continued to grow and prosper until the Romans left Britain in c.AD450. It was also during this period that perhaps the most important event in the history of the town took place. In the year AD209, the execution of the first Christian martyr, a man named Alban, took place on a hill to the east of the Roman town (*ibid*). As discussed below, the site of his execution was to have great significance in the birth of the town we know today.

3.4 **Saxon** (c.450-1066)

St Albans Abbey was founded in 793 by King Offa of Mercia, on the site of Alban's execution, and prospered during the Saxon period (*ibid*). A small town was established within the Abbey walls, supplying the needs of the monks and their visitors (<https://www.stalbanscathedral.org/history/monastic-site>). However, during this period, the main settlement was located at Kingsbury, to the north of the former focus of Roman settlement. Kingsbury was of some considerable size, and was protected by significant earthworks. The exact date of its foundation is unknown, but it has been postulated that it was established by King Offa at the same time as the Abbey, an opinion supported by the fact that Kingsbury was governed by officers of the king, independently of the Abbey itself (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/herts/vol2/pp469-477>). It was not until the latter part of the 10th century that the sixth abbot of St Albans, Abbot Wulsin, decided to enlarge the



town surrounding the Abbey, establishing a market and attracting inhabitants by providing assistance with money and building materials to those who came. It was also Wulsin who built the churches of St Stephen, St Michael and St Peter, along the main routes into the town, and eventually the town of St Albans eclipsed Kingsbury as the focus of local settlement (*ibid*).

3.5 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

During this period, St Albans continued to prosper as the influx of pilgrims to the town necessitated its further development (*ibid*). The site of the Town Hall is located within the medieval core of St Albans, and as a result is surrounded by a large amount of evidence of activity dating to this period, such as several medieval ovens (HER14598, 14600, 14599), and a boundary ditch (HER14553) on Chequer Street, to the south of the Town Hall, pits and a well on Upper Dagnall Street, to the west of the Town Hall (HER16408), and remains of numerous medieval buildings along Chequer Street and Christopher Place (e.g. HER14573, 14585, 14583, 14556). The Town Hall lies within what was the site of the medieval marketplace, a large triangular space bounded by French Row/Market Place, Chequer Street and High Street (http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/Area%20The%20City%20Centre_tcm15-13980.pdf). By the latter part of the medieval period, permanent buildings had sprung up within the marketplace, resulting in the pattern of streets and lanes that can still be seen today (*ibid*). There is a growing body of archaeological evidence for medieval activity in the area, including some possible medieval deposits on the east side of the Town Hall, nearby wells and a 15th century doorway beneath 4a Chequer Street (Niblett & Thompson 2005: 283-5).

Despite earlier belief that the medieval town hall (known as the Moot Hall) stood on the corner of Market Place and Dagnell St (eg Lansberry 1960: 92-7), more recent research has concluded that it stood on the site of the present Town Hall (HER 6175). As McSweeney elaborates in his paper on the early topography of St Alban's (1996: 90), the evidence for the location comes from a Deed of Trust dated 22nd January 1745 but re-iterating the details of a grant of land from the Mayor and Burgesses of the town to John Clarke in 1605 to build almshouses (see below).

3.6 **Post-Medieval** (1500-1900)

Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539, the Abbey fell to ruins and building materials were robbed for use elsewhere in the town and beyond, with the present abbey church being all that remains of what was once one of the most important monasteries in the country (<https://www.stalbanscathedral.org/history/monastic-site>).

St Albans continued to prosper as a stopping point on the journey from London to the north west, proliferating the development of inns within the town. By the early part of the 19th century a major turnpike road from London had been established, creating the current Peahen junction, to the south of the Town Hall (http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/Area%20The%20City%20Centre_tcm15-13980.pdf).

In 1605 the mayor and burgesses granted a plot of land at the head of the marketplace to John Clarke, who built a number of timber-framed almshouses to house six poor people (HER 16377). The almshouses were drawn in 1829, shortly before being demolished (Fig. 7), and if shown correctly appear to have stood a little to the rear of the façade of the Old Town Hall. It was not certain that the Town Hall was to be constructed on the Market Place; another site had been identified in Romeland, which was the preferred option for the Liberty magistrates who were to share the new building alongside the Borough officials (cf Lansberry 1968: 92). After considerable discussion the almshouses were relocated to Catherine Lane, the barn and



other property on the site belonging to Thomas Kinder were finally acquired and the construction of the Old Town Hall finally commenced in 1829 (*ibid*: 93; Levitt 2009: 113).

The Town Hall (Fig. 8) was designed and built by George Smith (HER 16380), who had been born and raised in Aldenham. It is a Grade II* Listed Building, and is described as follows:

Facing north up St Peter's Street. Large, classical building of 1826 by George Smith. 2 storeys, the upper a piano nobile with central portico of 4 fluted, Ionic columns, entablature and pediment with acroterion. This rests on projecting, ground floor podium, with 3 sash windows. The side bays on ground floor are blank. On first floor 3 large windows with glazing bars framed by flat pilasters. Broader pilasters at angles also support entablature behind which a low pitched, leaded roof ends in a pediment on each return (NHL 1296135).

The Town Hall is considered a prominent example of the Georgian development of the town, and would have helped formalise the wider layout of St Peter's Street, hiding the more haphazard medieval streets behind (<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk>). In addition, it provided a well presented focal point for the social, administrative and judicial needs of the town, providing as it did a court house and cells, (Levitt 2003: 113)

3.7 **Modern** (1900-present)

During the 20th century, cartographic evidence shows that St Albans continued to prosper, and the more open areas were filled by both residential and industrial development, notably to the north of the Town Hall, either side of St Peter's Street. The Town Hall falls within the St Albans City and District Council Conservation Area: Area 4 - The City Centre, which describes the area as one of complex special interest, as it encompasses the heart of the old town, and contains many important historic and cultural layers (<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk>). The Town Hall is now used as a wedding venue, exhibition space, café and art gallery.



Figure 7: Clarke's Almshouses with 1 St Peter's Street in the background
(From H E Ashdown's *St Albans Historical and Picturesque* (1893) as reproduced in *Herts Archaeology* 13)



Figure 8: The Old Town Hall c. 1903
(Sourced from <http://www.hertfordshire-genealogy.co.uk>)



4 Results

Introduction

A total of five test pits were hand excavated; two in the basement and three in the café area. Monitoring also took place during the borehole drilling to the SE and NE of the Town Hall.

Test Pits 1 & 2 (Fig. 5 & 9; Plates 1-2)

Test pits 1 and 2 were located in the basement, each Pit measured 0.5m sq. and 0.65m deep.

The following contexts were encountered:

| <i>Context no.</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Dimensions (max)</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------|--|
| 100/200 | Structural | 0.1m D | Concrete floor |
| 101/201 | Structural | 0.54m D | Brick foundation to Town Hall |
| 102/202 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar associated with brick foundations [101]/[201]: light yellowy beige, compacted, gritty/sandy mortar |
| 103/203 | Deposit | >0.1m D | Natural Strata: light-mid browny orange, soft sandy clay |
| 104/204 | Deposit | 0.65m D | Backfill material throughout the pits: mid beige brown, loose sandy clay with brick rubble and frequent small-medium sub-angular/rounded stones/flint and fragments of chalk |

The Pits exposed the brick foundations of the east and west walls of the Old Town Hall [101] & [201], constructed of red bricks set in stretcher bond with lime mortar. The bricks measured 230 x 105 x 60mm (9¹/₈" x 4¹/₈" x 2³/₈"). A backfill material associated with the buildings construction was also encountered (104) & (204), (see above for description).

Test Pit 3 (Fig. 5 & 10; Plates 3-5)

Test Pit 3 was located towards the café front at 4.5m from the northeast corner of the cafe. The Pit measured 0.75 x 0.6 x 1.57m deep.

The following contexts were encountered:

| <i>Context no.</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Dimensions (max)</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---|
| 300 | Structural | 0.17m D | Suspended timber floor |
| 301 | Structural | 1.18m D | Brick foundations to Town Hall |
| 302 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar associated with brick foundations [301]: light yellowy beige, compacted, gritty/sandy mortar |
| 303 | Structural | 0.22m D | Dwarf wall on which floor boards rest |
| 304 | Deposit | 0.22m D | Compacted chalk deposit: light/grey white compacted chalk with frequent small-medium pebbles |
| 305 | Deposit | 0.46m D, 0.16m W | Chalk |



| | | | |
|-----|------------|---------|--|
| 306 | Deposit | 0.5m D | Backfill material: mid beige brown, compacted sandy clay with frequent small-medium sub-angular/rounded stones, chalk, tile and brick |
| 307 | Deposit | 0.42m D | Backfill material: light beige brown, friable sandy material with frequent chalk, tile, brick and sub-angular/rounded stones |
| 308 | Deposit | >0.5m D | Backfill material: mid beige brown, loose sandy clay with brick rubble and frequent small-medium sub-angular/rounded stones/flint and fragments of chalk |
| 309 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar for wall [303]: light yellowy beige, compacted gritty/sandy lime mortar |

The brick foundations for the north wall of the Town Hall were revealed [301] (as described above). A compacted chalk deposit containing frequent small-medium pebbles (304) that was most likely backfill material was also exposed. Underlying this was a concentrated area of chalk (305), which was probably a dumped deposit. It was visible in both in the NW and SE facing sections of the Pit. A series of backfill deposits were also observed within the Pit (306) (307) and (308), all associated with the Town Hall's construction (see above).

Test Pit 4 (Fig. 5 & 11; Plates 6-11)

Test Pit 4, which measured 0.8 x 1.1 x 2.2m deep, was located in the southeast corner of the café.

The following contexts were encountered:

| Context no. | Type | Dimensions (max) | Description |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---|
| 400 | Structural | 0.17m D | Suspended timber floor |
| 401 | Structural | 1.33m D | Brick foundations to Town Hall |
| 402 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar associated with brick foundation [401]: light yellowy beige, compacted, gritty/sandy mortar |
| 403 | Structural | 0.5m D | Re-used clunch footing |
| 404 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar associated with re-used clunch foundations: light yellowy beige, compacted, gritty/sandy mortar |
| 405 | Deposit | - | Natural strata: light-mid browny orange, soft sandy clay |
| 406 | Cut | 0.34m W, 0.28m D | Cellar wall construction cut: linear in plan with a vertical side |
| 407 | Fill | 0.34m W, 0.07m D | Backfill of construction cut [406];, soft chalk and brown/beige clay with frequent chalk fragments |
| 408 | Fill | 0.34m W, 0.27m D | Backfill of construction cut [406]: mid beige orangey brown, soft silty clay with frequent small chalk small sub-angular stone inclusions, and fragments of tile, flint and animal bone |
| 409 | Deposit | 1.82m D | Backfill material throughout Pit: mid beige brown, loose silty clay with frequent small sub-angular stones, brick rubble and chalk |

The brick foundations for the east wall of the Town Hall [401] were exposed under which were three courses of roughly finished ashlarred Tottenham Clunch blocks [403]. The clunch walling, which was 0.5m deep, was bonded with lime mortar similar to that used for the brick foundations [401]. The clunch foundations were abutted by the Town Hall's cellar wall to the SW, and did not appear to



extend beyond the Pit towards the NE. Two pieces of architectural stone (see App. 3) had been dumped at the base of the test pit, at 1.8m below floor level along with a large piece of unworked puddingstone measuring 320 x 200 x 180mm. Puddingstone was valued for its magical properties and was thought to ward off evil spirits. It can often be found as a building block within the wall of important buildings such as churches (www.chilternarchaeology.com/sarsens.htm).

Below the dumped stone pieces was a linear cut, orientated NW-SE, which was related to the cellar wall construction, and contained backfilled deposits **(407)** & **(408)**. Deposit **(408)** contained a fragment of animal bone and an undiagnostic post-medieval tile fragment. Seen throughout the pit was backfill deposit **(409)** associated with the Town Hall's construction, and the natural stratum was also observed towards the base of the Pit.

Test Pit 5 *(Fig. 5 & 12; Plates 12-13)*

Test Pit 5 was located in the northeast corner of the café and measured 1.2 x 1.0 x 1.75m deep.

The following contexts were encountered:

| <i>Context no.</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Dimensions</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------|---|
| 500 | Structural | 0.17m D | Suspended timber floor floor |
| 501 | Structural | 1m D | Brick foundations to Old Town Hall |
| 502 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar associated with brick foundations [501]: light yellowy beige, compacted, gritty/sandy mortar |
| 503 | Structural | 0.6m D | Possible Victorian brick culvert |
| 503 | Structural | 0.02m D | Mortar associated with brick culvert [503]: light yellowy beige, compacted, gritty/sandy mortar |
| 504 | Deposit | 1.2m D | Backfill material: mid beige brown, loose silty clay with frequent small sub-angular stones, brick rubble and chalk |
| 505 | Deposit | 0.15m D | Natural strata: light-mid browny orange, soft sandy clay |

The brick foundations of the northern wall of the Old Town Hall and a possible Victorian brick culvert were revealed. The Pit also contained backfill material **(504)** associated with the Town Hall's construction. The natural strata were also observed within the Pit **(505)** (see above).

Borehole Drilling *(Fig. 6; Plates 14-15)*

Borehole drilling was undertaken to the NE (borehole 1) and SE (borehole 2) of the building for ground investigative purposes in relation to the proposed development. The drilling revealed the following stratigraphy (RSK Borehole Log):

Borehole 1

The upper layers consisted of brick paving over sand, below which was a layer of concrete. Below this was an 80cm layer of made ground consisting of brown clayey slightly sandy gravel. The natural strata comprised firm brown mottled orangey brown and yellowy brown slightly sandy, slightly gravelly clay with low cobble content (Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup).

Borehole 2

A slight variation is shown here as the brick paving overlay a layer of sand, which in turn overlay concrete below which was another layer of concrete and Macadam. A possible made ground deposit underlying these surfaces comprised orangey brown clayey sandy gravel. Sand was fine to coarse. Gravel was sub-angular to rounded fine to coarse of flint and chalk with occasional brick and ash. The



natural strata consisted of soft orangey brown gravelly very sandy clay (Kesgrave catchment subgroup).

The bore drilling revealed no evidence for archaeological finds, features or deposits.



Plate 1: Test Pit 1, looking NE



Plate 2: Test Pit 2, looking NE

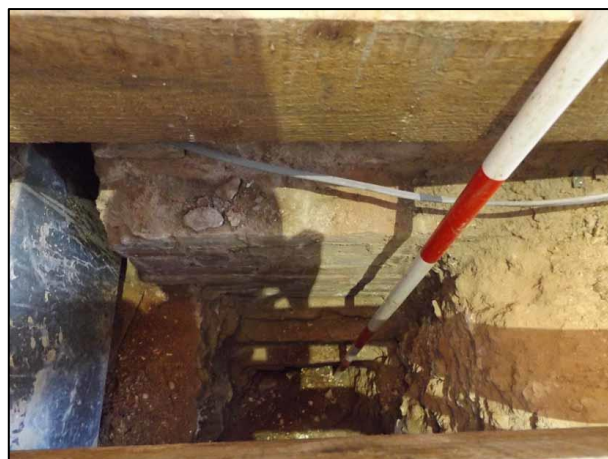


Plate 3: Test Pit 3, Town Hall brick foundations [301], looking NE (2m scale)



Plate 4: Test Pit 3, Town Hall brick foundations [301], looking NE (2m scale)



Plate 5: Test Pit 3, chalk deposit (305) and backfill (306-308), looking SE (1m scale)



Plate 6: Test Pit 4, Town Hall foundations, looking SE



Plate 7: Test Pit 4, brick foundations [401], looking SE (1m scale)



Plate 8: Test Pit 4, clunch foundations [403], looking SE (1m scale)



Plate 9: Test Pit 4, clunch foundations [403], and dumped stone, looking SE



Plate 10: Test Pit 4, foundations [401 & 403] and cellar construction cut [406], looking SE



Plate 11: Test Pit 4, full extent of clunch footings [403], looking SE



Plate 12: Test Pit 5, looking SE (2m scale)



Plate 13: Test Pit 5, possible Victorian brick culvert [503], and backfill material (504), looking SE (1m scale)



Plate 14: Borehole drilling to the SE of the Town Hall, looking NE



Plate 15: Borehole drilling to the NE of the Town Hall, looking S

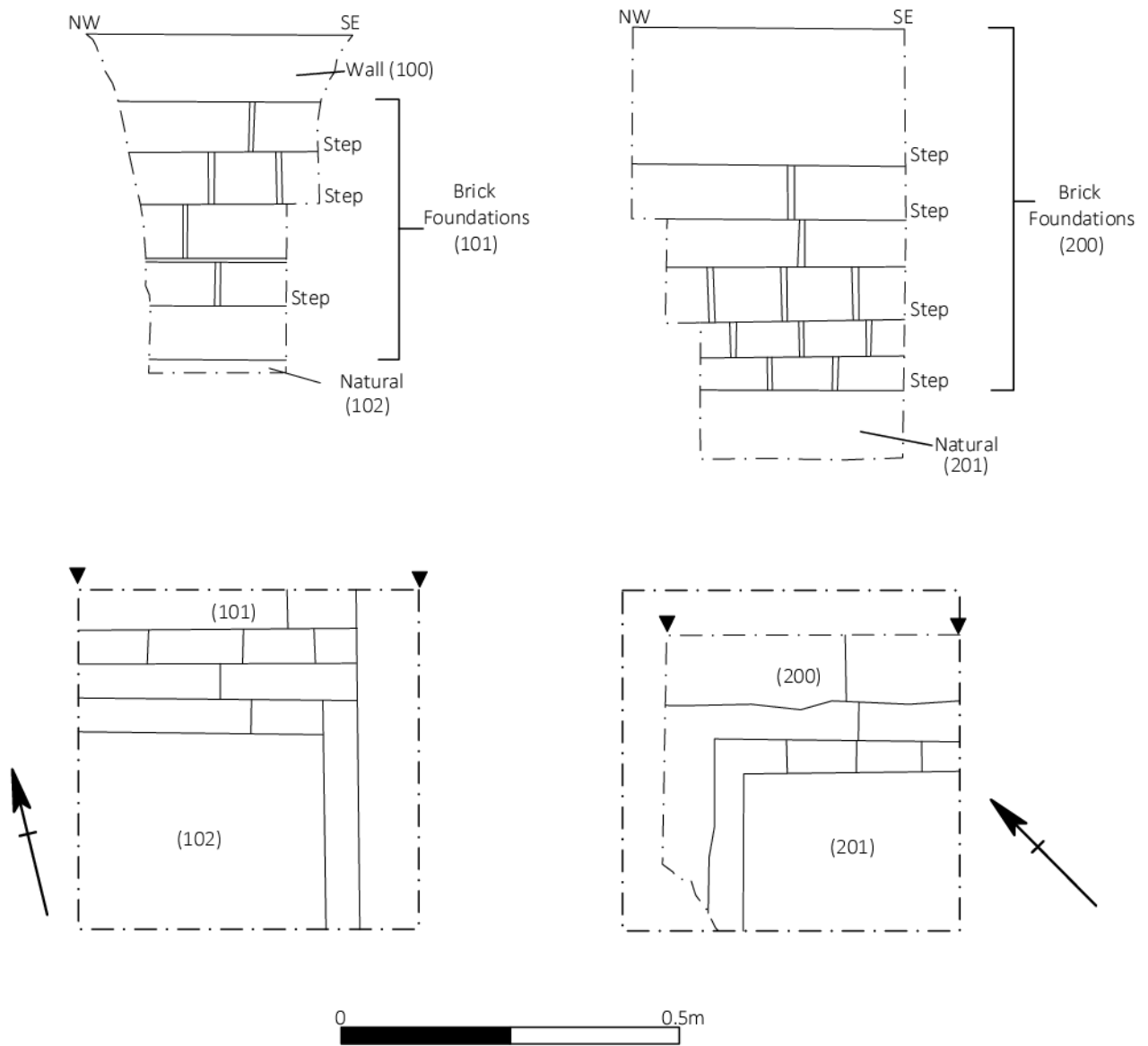


Figure 9: Test Pits 1 & 2 (scale 1:10)

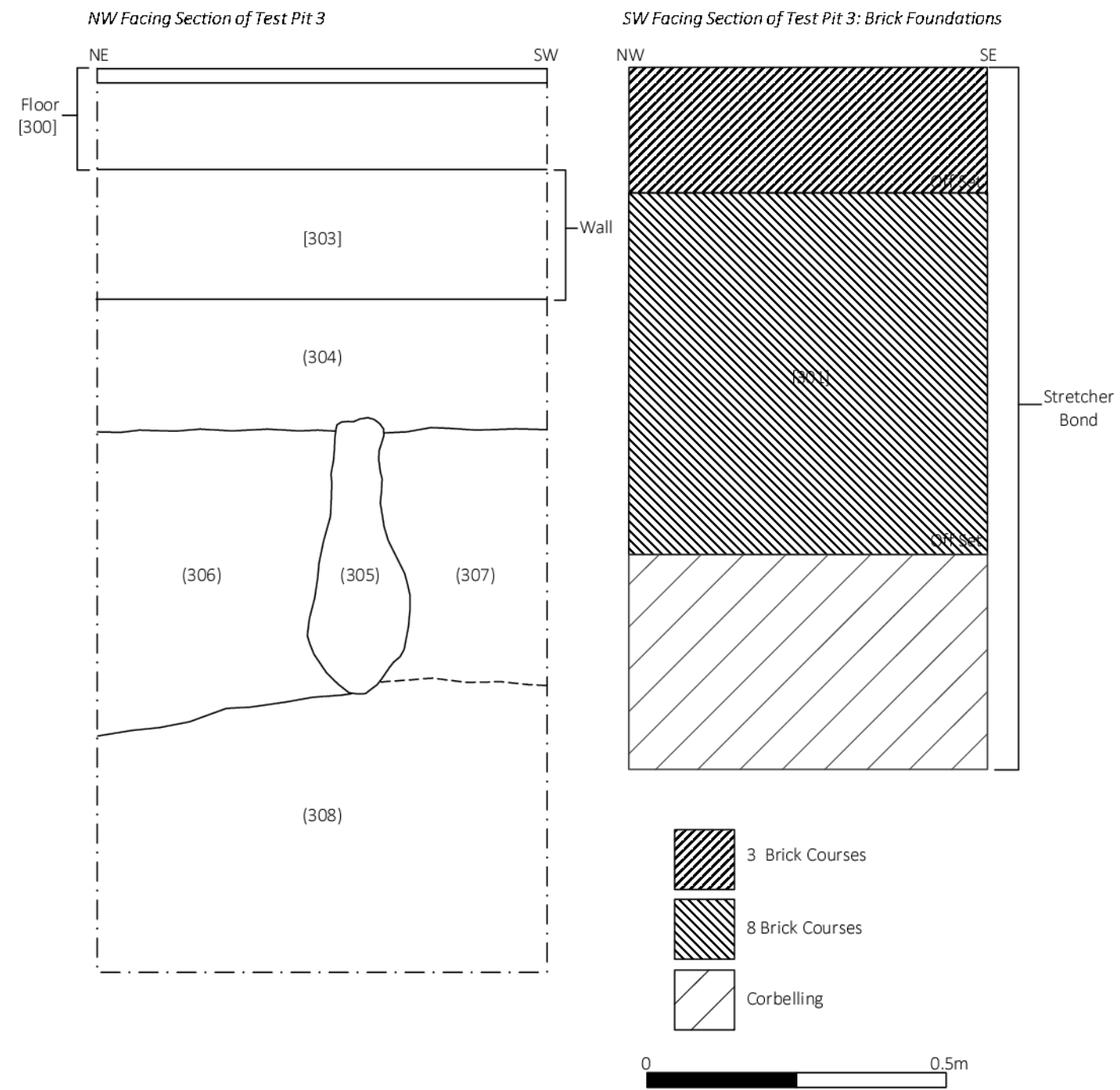


Figure 10: Test Pit 3 (scale 1:10)

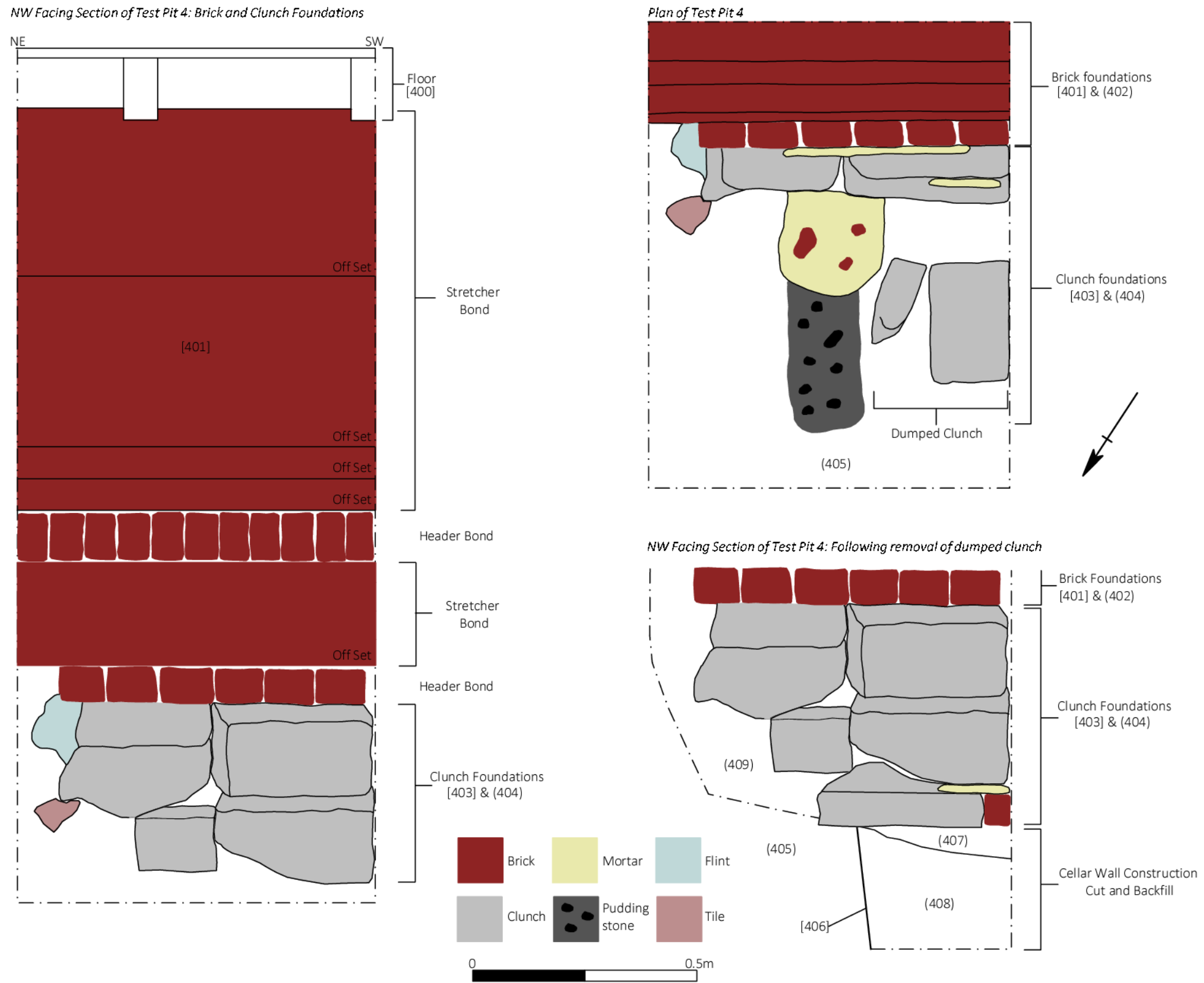


Figure 11: Test Pit 4 (scale 1:10)

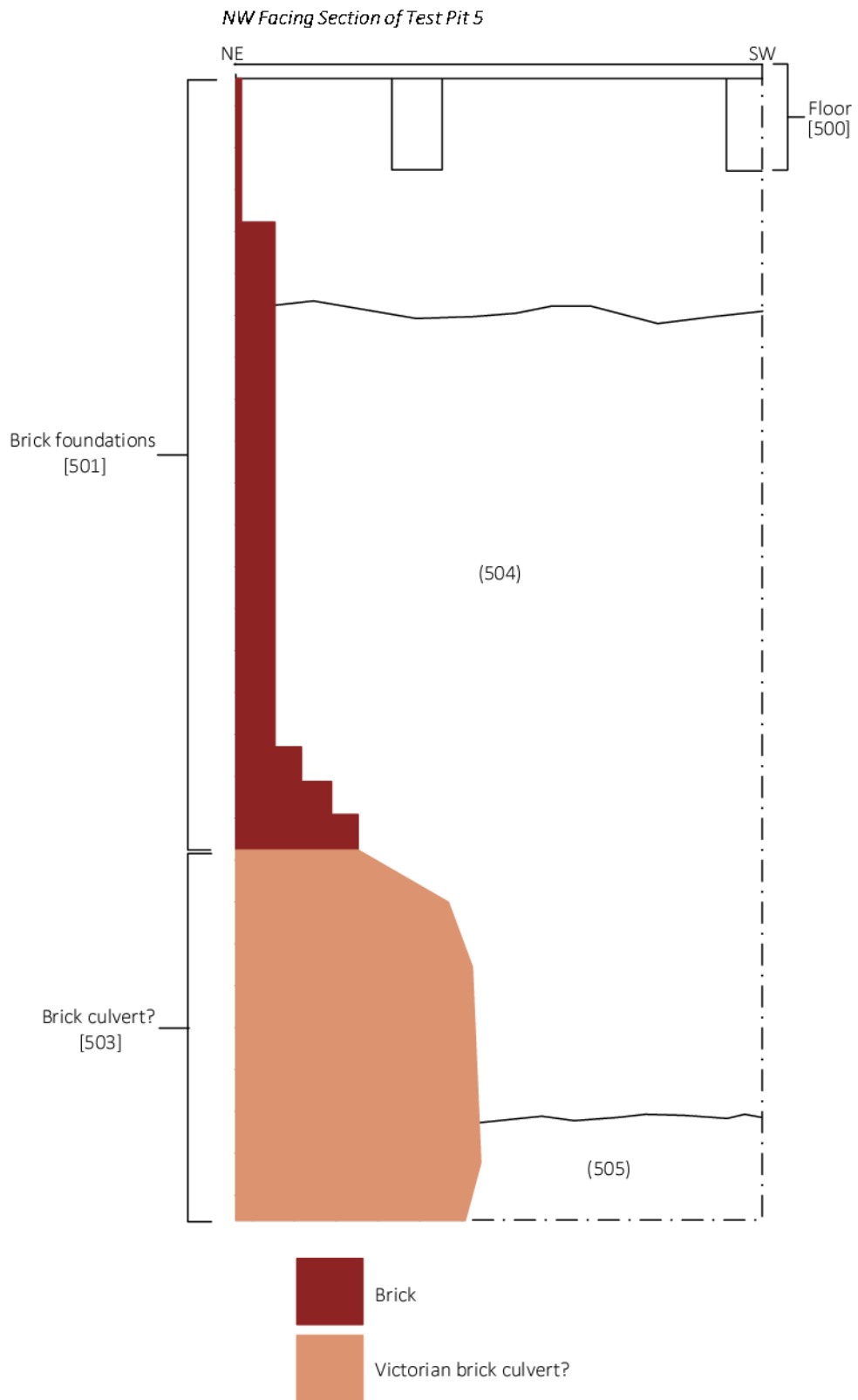


Figure 12: Test Pit 5 (scale 1:10)



5 Conclusions

The Town Hall, which was constructed between 1829 and 1831, is located within the medieval core of St Albans, within what was the site of the medieval market place. The formerly open space was built up by the end of the medieval period and documentary evidence indicates that this was the site of the medieval Moot Hall. This had become derelict by 1605 when the land was granted to John Clarke to build almshouses for 6 people. These, along with other buildings on the site, were demolished in 1829 to make way for the new Town Hall, designed by George Smith to house the Liberty magistrates and the town mayor with his councillors. The Old Town Hall was replaced by modern offices in the late 20th century.

The internal investigations exposed the brick foundations to the Town Hall, a possible Victorian brick culvert and a number of backfilled deposits associated with the buildings construction. Amongst the deposits observed were two chalk deposits (**304 & 305**) that were only found within Test Pit 1 and most likely represent backfill associated with the Town Hall's construction.

Interestingly Totternhoe Clunch pieces forming part of the base of the Town Hall foundations (**403**) were exposed in Test Pit 4, alongside which were dumped pieces of worked clunch and a fragment of unworked Puddingstone. The clunch pieces were clearly architectural and of medieval date and would have formed part of a stone building. The masonry appears to be the *in situ* remains of an earlier building, but the mortar used in the brickwork as well as in the stone masonry is the same, which could suggest that the masonry comprises re-used clunch. However, the masonry wall appears to be abutted by a brick cellar wall and the extent and solidity of the masonry walling would suggest it is original work that has been incorporated wholesale in the Old Town Hall foundations.

The uncertain history of the nature and locations of the building on the site before the construction of the almshouses in 1605 allows considerable conjecture about the provenance of the clunch walling and architectural fragments. It is possible that they were associated with the medieval moot hall, which for reasons unknown failed to survive; it is also possible that this is the remains of an as yet unidentified structure. Whether the stonework was reused to provide part of the supporting dwarf walls for the timber framed almshouses is also open to debate. However, it is clear from the archaeological evidence that this part of St Albans was subject to considerable activity in the medieval and post-medieval periods. Despite this, the archaeological evidence that could have been expected in the trial pits and borehole testing otherwise failed to materialise. Other than the medieval stonework and a Victorian culvert, no archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered. This may be a result of truncation during the construction of the Town Hall and that the boreholes were not located within areas of archaeological survival.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to St Albans City and District Council for commissioning this report, with specific acknowledgement to Robbie Hazlehurst for his assistance, and to Simon West of St Albans City and District council for monitoring the project.

Thanks are also due to site engineer Alex Hughes and his team for their assistance and full co-operation during the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA, David Kaye BA ACIfA and Calli Rouse BA ACIfA. The report was written and illustrated by Carina Summerfield-Hill, and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIIfA.

7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Written Scheme of Investigation
3. Initial report
4. Monitoring sheets
5. Site drawings
6. Client's site plans
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. Specialist reports
10. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with St Albans Museum.



8 References

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Conservation Character Area Statement for St Albans, Area 4 – The City Centre (Draft), 2010: http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/Area%204%20The%20City%20Centre_tcm15-13980.pdf

Hertfordshire Genealogy: <http://www.hertfordshire-genealogy.co.uk/data/places/places-s/st-albans/st-albans-walk-town-hall.htm>

St Albans Cathedral: <https://www.stalbanscathedral.org/history/monastic-site>

Victoria County History: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/herts/vol2/pp469-477>



Appendix 1: Photograph List

| SITE NO/CODE: 093/SAT | | | Site Name: The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|--|
| Shot | B&W | Digital | Subject |
| 1 | X | X | Test Pit3, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 2 | X | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 3 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 4 | | X | Test Pit3, brick foundations, looking NW (1m scale) |
| 5 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NW (1m scale) |
| 6 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NW (1m scale) |
| 7 | | X | Test Pit 3, looking NW |
| 8 | X | X | Test Pit 3, looking E (1m scale) |
| 9 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 10 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 11 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 12 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 13 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 14 | | X | Test Pit 3, brick foundations, corbelling, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 15 | | X | Test Pit 3, dwarf wall, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 16 | | X | Test Pit 3, dwarf wall, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 17 | | X | Test Pit 3, looking N |
| 18 | | X | Test Pit 3, backfill and chalk deposits, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 19 | | X | Test Pit 3, backfill and chalk deposits, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 20 | | X | Test Pit 3, backfill and chalk deposits, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 21 | | X | Test Pit 1, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 22 | | X | Test Pit 1, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 23 | | X | Test Pit 1, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 24 | | X | Test Pit 2, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 25 | | X | Test Pit 2, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 26 | | X | Test Pit 5, looking NE |
| 27 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |
| 28 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |
| 29 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 30 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 31 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 32 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 33 | X | X | Test Pit 4, brick and clunch foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 34 | X | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 35 | X | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 36 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 37 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 38 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 39 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 40 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 41 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 42 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch and pudding stone at Pit base, looking SE |
| 43 | | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |
| 44 | | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |
| 45 | | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |
| 46 | | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |



| SITE NO/CODE: 093/SAT | | | Site Name: The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|--|
| Shot | B&W | Digital | Subject |
| 47 | | X | Test Pit 4, brick foundations, looking SE |
| 48 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, looking SE |
| 49 | | X | Test Pit 4, looking SE |
| 50 | | X | Test Pit 4, looking SE |
| 51 | | X | Test Pit 4, looking SE |
| 52 | | X | Test Pit 4, looking SE |
| 53 | | X | Test Pit 4, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 54 | | X | Test Pit 4, looking SE |
| 55 | | X | Test Pit 4, cellar wall, looking SW (1m scale) |
| 56 | X | X | Test Pit 4, looking NE |
| 57 | | X | Test Pit 4, pudding stone (1m scale) |
| 58 | | X | Test Pit 4, pudding stone (1m scale) |
| 59 | | X | Test Pit 4, worked clunch (1m scale) |
| 60 | | X | Test Pit 4, worked clunch (1m scale) |
| 61 | | X | Test Pit 4, worked clunch (1m scale) |
| 62 | | X | Test Pit 4, worked clunch (1m scale) |
| 63 | | X | Test Pit 4, worked clunch (1m scale) |
| 64 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, dumped stone removed cellar construction cut looking SE |
| 65 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, dumped stone removed and cellar construction cut, looking SE |
| 66 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, dumped stone removed and cellar construction cut, looking SE |
| 67 | | X | Test Pit 4, backfill material, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 68 | | X | Test Pit 4, backfill material, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 69 | | X | Test Pit 4, backfill material, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 70 | | X | Test Pit 4, backfill material, looking NE (1m scale) |
| 71 | | X | Test Pit 4, foundations and cellar construction cut, looking SE |
| 72 | | X | Test Pit 4, clunch foundations, looking SE |
| 73 | | X | Test Pit 4 and cellar wall, looking SW |
| 74 | | X | Test Pit 5, looking SE (2m scale) |
| 75 | | X | Test Pit 5, looking SE (2m scale) |
| 76 | | X | Test Pit 5, looking SE (2m scale) |
| 77 | | X | Test Pit 5, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 78 | | X | Test Pit 5, looking SE (1m scale) |
| 79 | | X | Test Pit 5, brick foundations, looking NE |
| 80 | | X | Test Pit 5, brick foundations, looking NE |
| 81 | | X | Borehole drilling to the SE of the Town Hall, looking NE |
| 82 | | X | Borehole drilling sample: natural strata |
| 83 | | X | Borehole drilling to the NE of the Town Hall, looking S |
| 84 | | X | Borehole drilling to the NE of the Town Hall, looking S |
| 85 | | X | Borehole drilling to the NE of the Town Hall, looking S |
| 86 | | X | Borehole drilling to the NE of the Town Hall, looking S |
| 87 | | X | Borehole drilling to the NE of the Town Hall, looking S |

Appendix 2: Finds Concordance

| Context Numbers | | Worked Stone | |
|-----------------|-----|--------------|-----|
| Fill | Cut | No. | Gms |
| 403 | - | 2 | - |



Appendix 3: Architectural Fragments

Karin Kaye MA MCIfA

Two pieces of Totternhoe Stone were removed from Test Pit 4. The more complete of the two pieces appears to have been part of a door reveal and displayed fine tool marks on the internal face. Some mortar with fine stone inclusions was attached to the stone, whose maximum dimensions was 25 x 30 x 18cm thick.

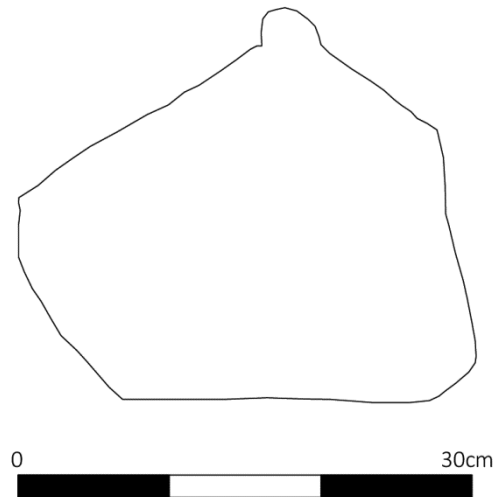


Figure 13: Fragment 1, door reveal (scale 1:5)

The second piece was incomplete, the lower section having broken some time before the test pit was dug. The upper section was sub-rectangular in form and also had mortar attached. Its maximum dimensions were 19 x 22 x 14cm thick. Its form allows it various uses, and this too may have been part of a door or window opening.

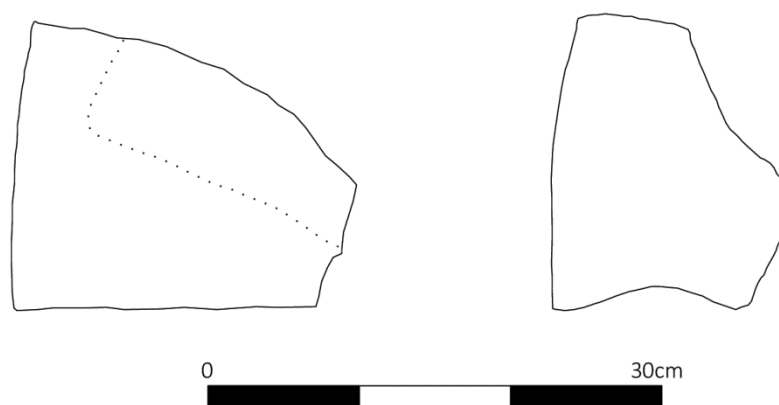


Figure 14: Fragment 2 (scale 1:5)



Both pieces were found close to a masonry foundation for the east wall of the town hall that comprised three courses of worked stone below a course of brickwork. The architectural stone fragments were almost certainly medieval and would have formed part of a stone building. Whether this was originally on the site of the Old Town Hall is impossible to say, but as one of the stone pieces surviving within the wall was also architectural rather than simply walling stone it is possible that the stone had been reused for a building that had stood on the site prior to the construction of the Town Hall.



Plate 16: Fragment 1, door reveal



Plate 17: Fragment 2



Appendix 4: OASIS and Site Data

| PROJECT DETAILS | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Project Name & Address | The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire | Project Site Code | 093/SAT |
| OASIS reference | Kdkarcha1-198141 | Event/Accession no | TBC |
| OS reference | TL 14754 07247 | Study area size | 380 sq. m |
| Project Type | Observation & Recording | Height (mAOD) | 115.2 m |
| Short Description | <p>During April and May 2015 an archaeological observation and recording project was undertaken during investigative works at The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire, in order to inform development proposals for the conversion of the café within the Town Hall to a museum and the construction of an art gallery. The investigative works entailed the excavation of five test pits within the northern end of the building, which was constructed on a previously occupied site in 1829, and the drilling of two boreholes outside. The test pits revealed the brick foundations for the town hall, a series of backfill/made-ground deposits and a possible Victorian brick culvert. One of the test pits also revealed a section of medieval clunch walling forming part of the foundations along with two pieces of architectural stone. Whether the stonework may have been associated with the medieval Moot Hall that is thought to have stood on the site before it was granted to John Clarke to construct a row of almshouses in 1605 is uncertain. Despite archaeological and documentary evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity in the area, no archaeological finds, feature or deposits were encountered during the borehole drilling.</p> | | |
| Previous work | Ground penetrating radar | Site status | Grade II* |
| Planning proposal | Conversion of café to museum and construction of a basement level art gallery | Current land use | Café |
| Local Planning Authority | St Albans City and District Council | Planning application ref. | Pre-planning |
| Monument type | Town Hall | Monument period | Post-Med |
| Significant finds | Architectural Totternhoe Clunch | Future work | Unknown |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | | |
| Organisation | KDK Archaeology Ltd | | |
| Project Brief originator | Simon West | Project Design originator | KDK Archaeology Ltd |
| Project Manager | Karin Kaye MA MCIfA | Director/Supervisor | Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA |
| Sponsor/funding body | St Albans City and District Council | | |
| PROJECT DATE | | | |
| Start date | 20/04/15 | End date | 07/05/15 |
| PROJECT ARCHIVES | | | |
| | Location | Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets) | |
| Physical | St Albans Museum | Totternhoe Clunch x 2 | |
| Paper | | Brief, WSI, Report, site records, b&w photographs | |
| Digital | | CD containing all digital files | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report) | | | |
| Title | Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording Report: The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire | | |
| Serial title & volume | 093/SAT /2 | | |
| Author(s) | Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA | | |
| Page no's | 36 | Date | 01/06/15 |



Appendix 5: Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet

| | |
|--|--|
| Site name and address: The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire | |
| County: Hertfordshire | District: St Albans |
| Village/Town: St Albans | Parish: St Albans |
| Planning application reference: Pre-planning | |
| Client's name, address, & tel. no: St Albans City and District Council | |
| Nature of application: Conversion of café into a museum and a basement level art gallery | |
| Present land use: Café | |
| Size of application area: Approx. 380 sq.m | Size of area investigated: Approx 380 sq.m |
| NGR (to 8 figures): TL 14754 07247 | Site code: 093/SAT |
| Site director: Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA | Organization: KDK Archaeology Ltd |
| Type of work: Observation & Recording | |
| Date of Work: Start: 20/04/15 | Finish: 07/05/15 |
| Curating museum: St Albans | |
| Related HER no's: 16380, 6175, 16377 | Periods represented: Post-med |
| Relevant previous summaries/reports: | |
| <p>Summary of fieldwork results: During April and May 2015 an archaeological observation and recording project was undertaken during investigative works at The Old Town Hall, St Albans, Hertfordshire, in order to inform development proposals for the conversion of the café within the Town Hall to a museum and the construction of an art gallery. The investigative works entailed the excavation of five test pits within the northern end of the building, which was constructed on a previously occupied site in 1829, and the drilling of two boreholes outside. The test pits revealed the brick foundations for the town hall, a series of backfill/made-ground deposits and a possible Victorian brick culvert. One of the test pits also revealed a section of medieval clunch walling forming part of the foundations along with two pieces of architectural stone. Whether the stonework may have been associated with the medieval Moot Hall that is thought to have stood on the site before it was granted to John Clarke to construct a row of almshouses in 1605 is uncertain. Despite archaeological and documentary evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity in the area, no archaeological finds, feature or deposits were encountered during the borehole drilling.</p> | |
| Author: Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA | Date: 01/06/15 |