



KDK Archaeology Ltd

Archaeological Evaluation Report

St Benet's House
High Street
Abbots Bromley
Staffordshire



Quality Check

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CONTENTS

Summary	1
.....	
.....	
.....	
1. Introduction	1
2. Aims & Methods	7
3. Archaeological & Historical Background	10
4. Results.....	13
5. Conclusions.....	36
6. Acknowledgements.....	37
7. Archive.....	38
8. References.....	39

Appendices:

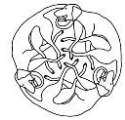
1. List of Photographs	41
2. Finds Concordances	43
3. Specialist Reports.....	44
4. OASIS and Site Data.....	48

Figures:

1. General location	3
2. Site location.....	4
3. Current site plan.....	5
4. Proposed development plan	6
5. Trench locations.....	9
6. Archaeology plan.....	28
7. Trench 1, plan and sections.....	29
8. Trench 2, stratigraphy section.....	30
9. Trench 3, plan and sections.....	31
10. Trench 3, sections	32
11. Trench 4, plan and sections.....	33
12. Trench 5, plan and sections.....	34
13. Trench 5, sections	35

Plates:

1. Trench 1, looking NNE	14
2. Trench 2, stratigraphy, looking NNE	14
3. Trench 1, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NNE.....	14
4. Trench 1, brick well [104], looking WNW	14
5. Trench 2, looking ESE.....	15
6. Trench 2, stratigraphy, looking SSE.....	15
7. Trench 3, looking WNW.....	18
8. Trench 3, stratigraphy at WNW end of trench.....	18
9. Trench 3, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NW	18
10. Trench 3, prior to extending, foundation/cellar [304], pit [308] & gully [313], looking NE.....	18
11. Trench 3, pit [308], looking ESE.....	19
12. Trench 3, after extending, foundation/cellar [304], pit [308] & gully [313], looking NNE.....	19
13. Trench 4, looking NE	21
14. Trench 4, stratigraphy post-ground reduction to the area, looking NNW.....	21
15. Trench 4, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NNE.....	21



16. Trench 4, pit [403], looking S.....	21
.....	
17. Trench 4, brick wall [405], looking S	21
18. Trench 5, looking ESE.....	25
19. Trench 5, looking WSW.....	25
20. Trench 5, stratigraphy at ESE end of the trench, looking SSW	25
21. Trench 5, stratigraphy at the WNW end of the trench, looking SSW	25
22. Trench 5 & 4, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NE.....	25
23. Trench 5, brick wall [508], gully [G527] & pit [522], looking ESE	25
24. Trench 5, gully terminus [512], looking NNE	26
25. Trench 5, gully terminus [512], 100 % excavated, looking WNW	26
26. Trench 5, gully slot [516], looking W.....	26
27. Trench 5, pit [514] & [525], looking SSW.....	26
28. Trench 5, small pit [520], looking E.....	26
29. Trench 5, post-hole [510], looking NNE.....	26
30. Trench 5, post-hole [518], looking NNE.....	27



Summary

In March 2016 KDK archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire. The works were carried out prior to the conversion of the existing buildings on the site, along with the erection of side and rear extensions and the formation of associated car parking to rear. The evaluation revealed occupational activity dating from the late medieval to modern periods, probably relating to the backyard activity of the houses fronting the High Street. Features consisted of a brick well, brick walls, possible foundation/cellar, gullies, pits and post-holes.

1 Introduction

1.1 In March 2017 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire. The project was commissioned by Architecture Design Development Ltd on behalf of ASD Unlimited, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Shlasko 2016), and approved by the Historic Environment Officer, Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), East Staffordshire Borough Council. The relevant planning application reference is P/2016/00907.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

St. Benet's House lies on the south side of the High Street, in the village and civil parish of Abbots Bromley, and the administrative district of East Staffordshire Borough Council. The National Grid Reference for the site is SK 08258 324452 (Fig. 1).

Description

The development site consists of a row of contiguous small buildings fronting the south side of the High Street, in the south eastern part of the village. On the opposite side of the High Street are the buildings of the Abbots Bromley School. To the south west of the site is an open area, formerly belonging to the school, which also owned the development site and used the buildings as offices and dormitories (ADD 2016: 2). To the northwest and southeast along the High Street are dwellings (Figs. 2 and 3).

Geology & Topography

According to the Abbots Bromley Conservation Area Appraisal, 'The village lies at an elevated position between 80 and 150 metres above sea level on a slight ridge, which provides views to the north and south from different points within the village. At the west and east ends, the landscape dips away slightly, further supporting the notion of the village lying along a ridge' (CAA 2015: 8). The development site is found at approximately 120m AOD.

The solid geology at the development site consists of mudstone of the Mercia Mudstone Group. This is overlain by sands and gravels which formed in Ice Age conditions up to 2 million years ago as glacial moraines of till, sand and gravel (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

Development



The development comprised the conversion of existing buildings to form 10 dwellings, including the erection of single storey, two storey and three storey side and rear extensions, formation of associated car parking to rear, demolition of existing lean-to extensions, and refurbishment and alteration of Low Door Cottage (Fig. 4).



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

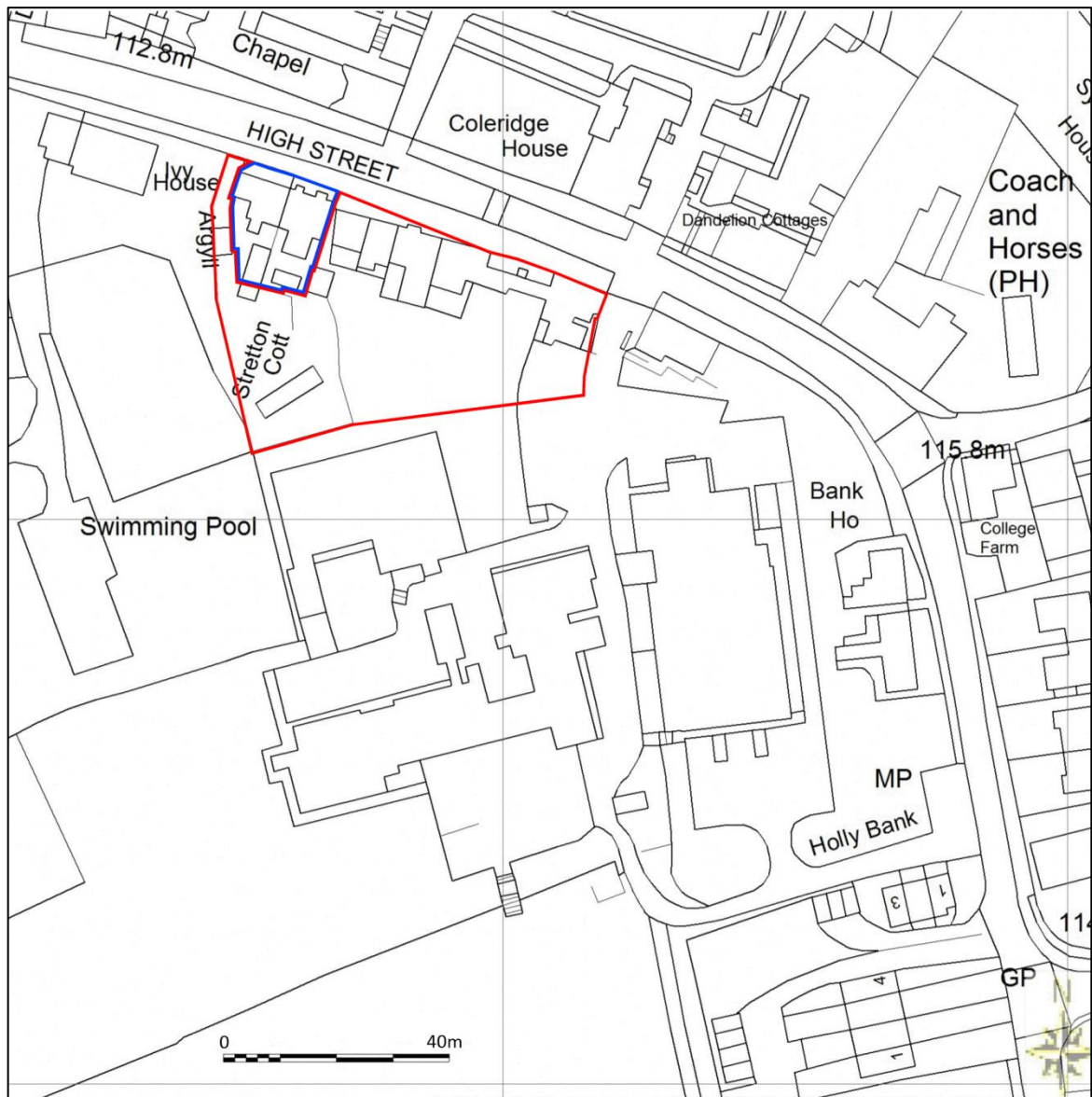


Figure 2: Site location (scale as shown)

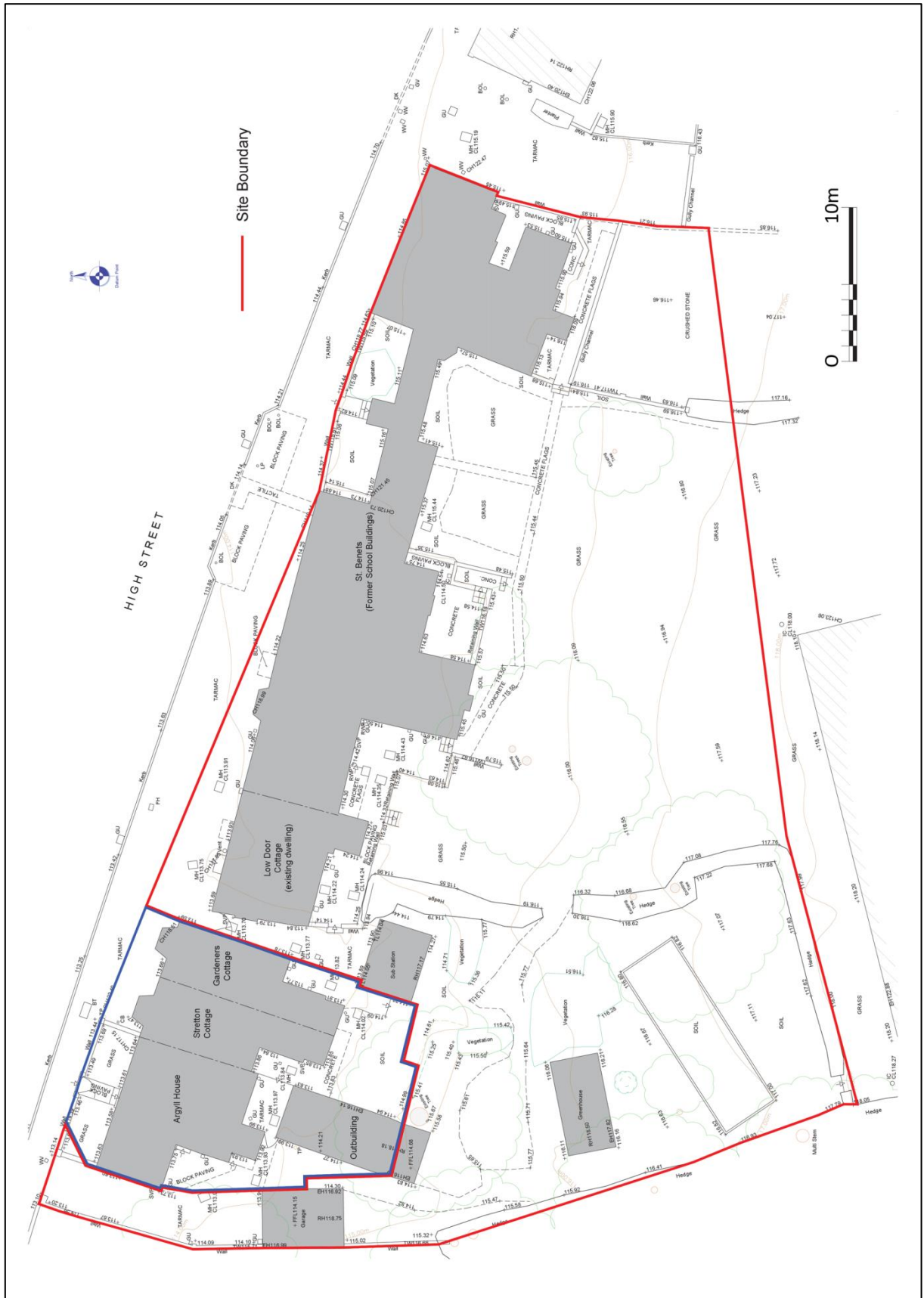


Figure 3: Current site plan (scale as shown)

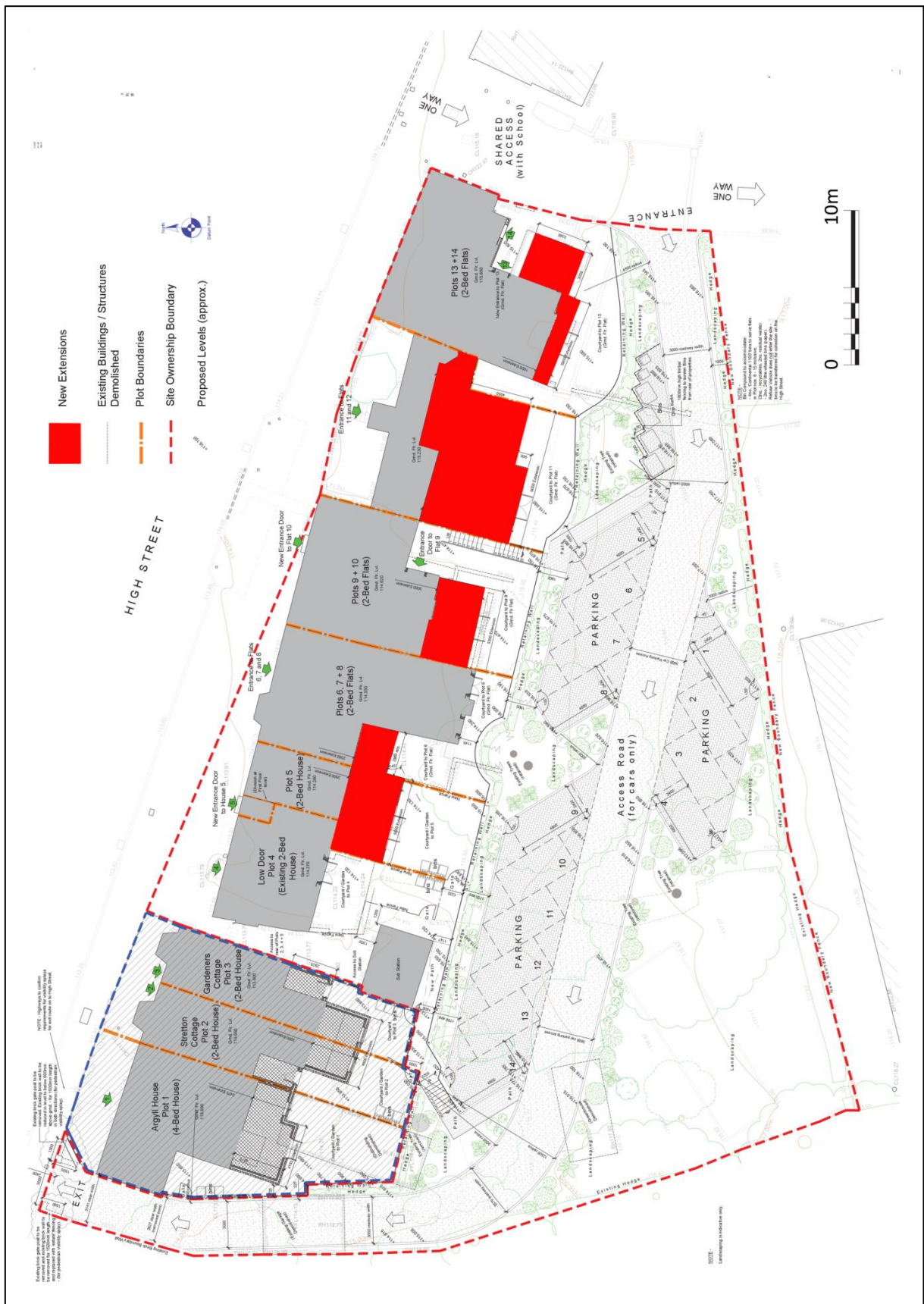


Figure 4: Proposed development plan, with extensions highlighted in green (scale as shown)



Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The West Midlands regional framework for archaeology (Watt 2011) identifies the development of small towns and town planning as two themes of interest in the archaeology of the medieval period in the region (Hunt 2011: 185). Of particular interest are the diversity of small towns, their origins, rates of expansion and contraction and the factors that impacted development (*ibid*: 186).

The development site lies within Abbots Bromley Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) 7, which encompasses the eastern end of the High Street. It appears to represent two distinct settlement patterns; medieval planned burgage plots to the north of High Street and irregular historic plots south of High Street, suggesting that the two adjacent areas had different development histories. The south side of High Street, the location of the development site, seems to have experienced a pattern of “irregular development and possibly later expansion” (EUS 2011: 65). Did the irregular historic plots south of High Street develop because this area was settled later than the northern burgage plots or are they a secondary development that obscures earlier medieval settlement patterns?

HUCA 7 has been determined to have a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits, as well as high historic and aesthetic value (EUS 2011: 66). It was hoped that archaeological investigations might help increase the understanding of the development of the area, including the chronological relationship between development north and south of the High Street and the origins and functions of the extant historic buildings.

With these factors in mind, the aims of the project as defined in the approved WSI (Shlasko 2016) were:

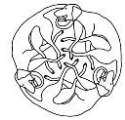
- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area, with particular emphasis on the chronology and pattern of settlement within the Historic Urban Character Area
- To establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions
- To inform discussions regarding the need for, extent and form of any subsequent archaeological mitigation across the site
- To provide an adequately detailed project report that will place the findings of the investigations in their local and regional context, with reference to the relevant regional research agendas.

2.2 Methods

In line with the requirements of the Brief, this was to be the first part of a staged investigation whereby the results of this stage would be assessed to determine the need and extent of further stages of archaeological investigation. In this case, no further work was deemed necessary.

The methods used were as follows:

- The excavation of five trenches within the footprint of the proposed construction, including the parking area (Fig. 5)
- Originally two of these were to measure 5 x 1.8m and three trenches were to measure 10 x 1.8m, however due to constraints the trenches altered in size (see below).



- A contingency of up to 3.6 sq m (5% of the overall total of the trial trenching) was deployed following discussions with the County Archaeologist. The contingency was carried out to extend trench 3 in order to understand more fully foundation/cellar [314] and Pit [308].

2.3 *Standards*

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The design brief
- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (HE 2015, EH 2008)

2.4 *Constraints*

Due to the discovery of a brick lined water storage tank and existing services, Trench 1 was relocated further to the west and had to be reduced in size from 5 x 1.8m to 3.5 x 2.8m. Trench 2 also had to be reduced in size from 10 x 1.8m to 4.5 x 1.8m due to services and an existing tree. In the area of Trench 3 the ground had been reduced prior to the evaluation exposing the natural geology, it was therefore decided that this trench would be extended to strip an area that had not already been machined. This trench was subsequently further extended to understand more fully foundation/cellar [304] and Pit [308] making it finished size 8.9 x 2m. Trench 5 was relocated further east due to services and extended to compensate for Trench 2 being reduced.

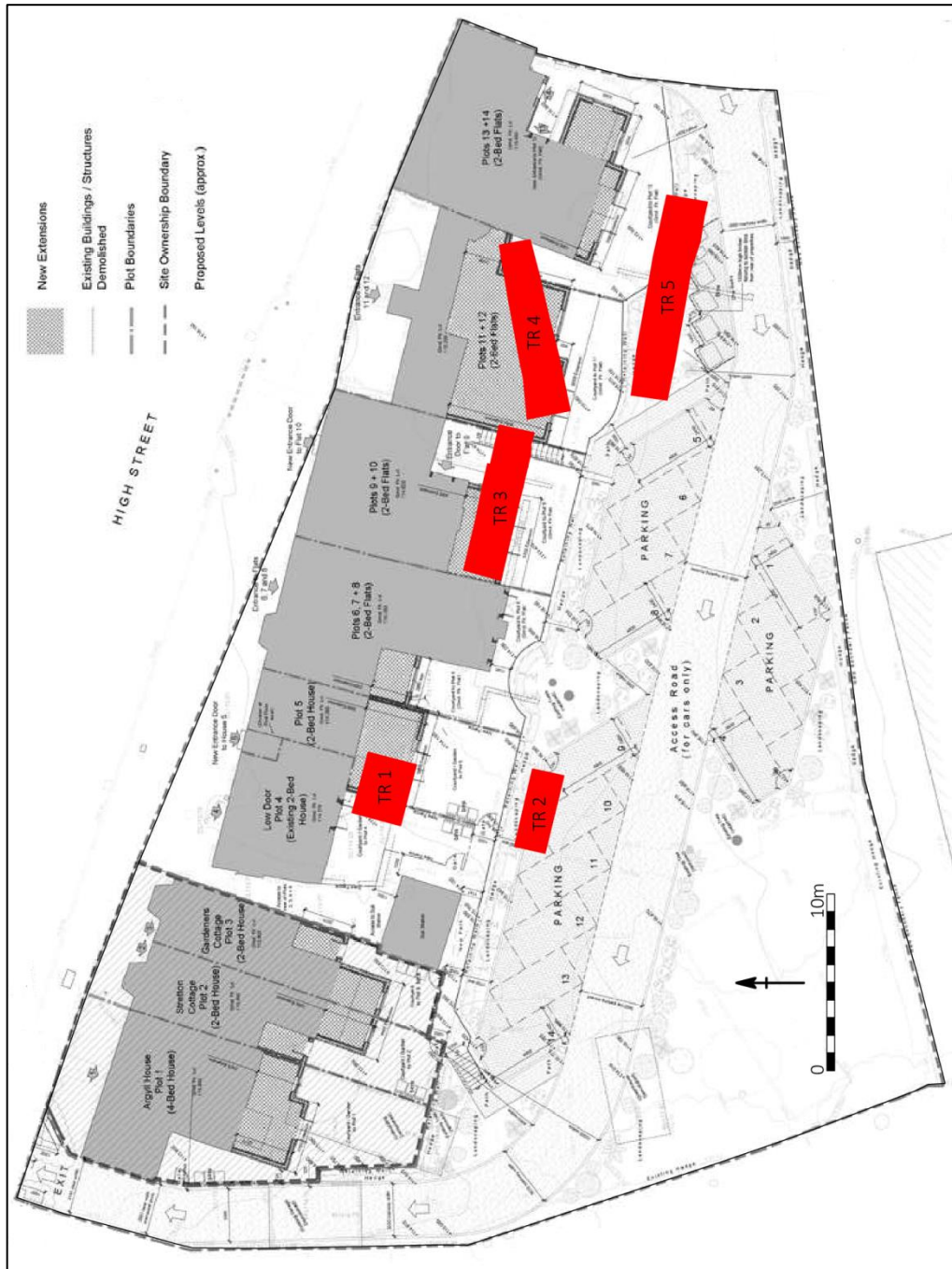


Figure 5: Trench locations (scale 1:400)



3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The village of Abbots Bromley was a flourishing medieval market town, serving as a trading centre for the surrounding countryside. Belonging to Burton Abbey from the early 11th through the 16th centuries, Abbots Bromley was declared a free borough in the 13th century. Surviving as a long, narrow development along the High Street, the village retains evidence of its medieval origins in the street patterns around the marketplace and traces of burgage plots and older 'irregular historic plots' (EUS 2011: 5).

This section has been compiled with information from the Extensive Urban Survey for Abbots Bromley (EUS), the Staffordshire HER, the Abbots Bromley Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), the Victoria County History (VCH) and other sources as cited.

3.2 *Prehistoric - Medieval* (pre 1066)

Prior to the medieval period, evidence for occupation in Abbots Bromley is limited to a few isolated finds, including some Neolithic flints and Roman coins (CAA 2015: 18). Cropmarks near Pur Brook, southeast of the village, were observed in aerial photographs but never investigated. They may be of early date, but there is currently no chronological information available.

The earliest definite information about settlement at Abbots Bromley comes in 942, when a charter of King Edmund granted the manor to Wulfsige the Black (www.abbotsbromley.com/history). In 996, a grant of King Aethelred gives the manor to Wulfric Spot, when it was described as having boundaries (Pur Brook, the River Blithe and Tad Brook) that match the modern parish boundaries. In his will of 1004, Wulfric left the manor of *Bromleag* to the Benedictines to support the re-foundation of the Abbey of Burton (www.achurchnearyou.com and EUS 2011:15). The Abbey retained the manor until the Dissolution in 1545 (CAA 2015: 11).

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Bromley was a small settlement, consisting of three households: a villager, a small holder and a priest (<http://opendomesday.org/place/SK0824/abbots-bromley/>). Since a survey by the Abbey in 1126 suggests that there were about 70 inhabitants in Bromley (EUS 2011: 17), it is thought that local residents who paid a money rent to the Abbey may have gone uncounted in the Domesday Survey (*ibid*: 16). The presence of a priest in the survey supports the belief that a church was founded in 1002 (www.achurchnearyou.com), possibly on the site of the later church of St Nicholas.

3.3 *Medieval* (1066 - 1500)

Although it began as a small settlement, by 1221 it had a market charter for a weekly market and an annual fair on St Bartholomew's Day (www.abbotsbromley.com/history). The market almost certainly predates the charter (EUS 2011: 22). The core of the early medieval settlement was probably in the area around the market and the church, where so-called 'irregular historic plots' survived into modern times (CAA 2015: 12). There is evidence that the growth of the town in the 13th century was at least partly controlled by the Abbey. Bromley was declared a 'free borough', with regular burgage plots laid out to the north of the High Street (*ibid*: 11). A new church was also built in the 13th century; the current Church of St Nicholas, a Grade II* listed structure (HER 08684).

The origins of an iconic local custom are also believed to lie in the 13th century growth of the market. Every year, the village hosts the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, in which dancers carrying antlers, a Hobby Horse, Maid Marian, a Fool, a Bow man, a triangle player and a musician, walk around the parish performing ritual dances in each neighbourhood. The antlers, which spend



the rest of the year mounted in St. Nicholas' Church, are Scandinavian reindeer horn carbon dated to 1065 ± 80 years (<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095343181>). There is some evidence that this custom is as old as the market.

The market and church we're the centre of the medieval town. The Butter Cross, a 14th century market cross, survives as a Grade II* listed structure that is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 1012672) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1012672>). In addition to the Butter Cross and the Church of St Nicholas, Abbots Bromley boasts a third Grade II* listed structure. Church House was built in two phases beginning in 1619 and 1659 (HER 11180).

3.4 *Post-medieval* (1500 - 1900)

Burton Abbey was dissolved in 1545 and Abbots Bromley was granted to Sir William Paget. Much of the townscape that gives the village its special character, described in the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2015, dates to the post-medieval period. Some 48 Grade II listed structures are found within the village, in addition to the three Grade II* listed structures already discussed. According to the Conservation Area Appraisal:

Abbots Bromley Conservation Area is characterised by a linear, softly-curving street, the vernacular construction of its older buildings and the attractive frontages lining the main through road of Bagot Street/High Street. The combination of the tightly clustered houses lining the road frontage with their locally manufactured building fabric of brick and clay tile (hence their homogeneity) and the predominantly two-story scale of the houses, lends the village its distinctive and attractive vernacular character. In particular the warm surroundings generated by the deep orange-red-brown colouring of the brick and tile throughout the Conservation Area lends the village a characterful appearance (CAA 2015: 6).

The development site lies slightly to the east of the historic centre of the village. The immediate area is dominated by the Abbots Bromley School. This was originally two separate schools, St Mary's and St Anne's. St Anne's was founded in 1874 as the first girls' school in the Woodard Group, a charity founded by Nathaniel Woodard to provide education to middle-class children. The school opened in what is now a Grade II listed, 18th century house (HER 11197) to the north of the High Street, opposite the development site. In 1882, St Mary's School was founded in Bagot Street (CAA 2015: 16). It moved to premises just south of the development site in 1893 (HER 54434) and amalgamated with St Anne's in 1921 (<http://www.abbotsbromleyschool.com/2200/about-us/history/>). In addition to the first building, the school also has a late 19th century, Grade II listed chapel on the High Street and Coleridge House, a 17th century, Grade II listed residence.

Prior to the founding of St Anne's and St Mary's, Abbots Bromley was bequeathed a school by Richard Clarke in the 17th century. Clarke's Free Grammar School remained the village school until the 19th century (CAA 2015: 16). The Old Schoolhouse (HER 11225) still stands, a 17th century, Grade II listed building.

3.5 *Modern* (1900 - present)

The site lies within the Historic Urban Character Area No. 7 (EUS 2011: 64). This area incorporates the school, along with other historic properties, including the 18th-19th century Dandelion Cottages (HER 11200), whose Grade II listing incorporates the garden walls and iron railings that form part of the streetscape. The Coach & Horses, an 18th century, Grade II listed public house, is situated east of the development site (HER 11194).



The buildings that make up the proposed development are dated to the 19th century and were used by the Abbots Bromley School as offices and dormitories until approximately ten years ago (ADD 2016: 2).



4 Results

4.1 Introduction

A total of five trenches were mechanically excavated with an 8 tonne machine fitted with a 1.5m toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were placed within the footprint of the proposed new extensions and parking area and as such were in close proximity to the existing buildings on the site that were formerly used by Abbot Bromley School.

The stratigraphy varied across the site so is described as part of the findings of individual trenches, and a full description of the recorded contexts is presented in Appendix 3.

4.2 Trench 1 (Figs. 6 & 7; Plates 1-4)

Trench 1 was situated at the western end of the site adjacent to Plot 4 and 5. It was orientated NW-SE. It measured 3.5m in length, 2.8m in width and 0.68m in depth (Plate 1-3).

The stratigraphy comprised made-ground (105) overlying sub-soil (106), overlying the natural stratum (107), (Fig. 7; Plate 2).

Brick Well [104] was found in the NW corner of the trench. It consisted of an outer construction cut [101], packing material (103) and the well itself [104] which had been backfilled with (102). The well was constructed of unfrosted, red bricks, which measured 200 x 100mm (8x4 inches). They were laid in a stretcher bond pattern with no mortar used (Figs. 6 & 7; Plate 4).

Trench 1 Context Table

Context no.	Type	Dimensions (max)	Description
101	Cut	W: >1m L: >1.6m D: >0.40m	Construction cut of well [104]: sub-circular in plan with sheer sides. It contained packing material (103), brick well [104] that had been backfilled with (102).
102	Fill	W: >0.8m L: >1.36m D: >0.40m	Backfill of well [104]: consisting of mottled brown, orange, grey, fairly gravelly sand, very soft with frequent rounded stones <20mm.
103	Fill	W: 0.1m L: - D: -	Packing material around well [104]: consisting of dark grey, fairly sandy gravel, very friable with frequent rounded stones <50mm.
104	Structure	W: >0.9m L: >1.4m D: >0.4m	Brick well: found in the NW corner of the trench. It was constructed of red brick, each of which measured 200mm in length and 100mm in width (8x4 inches), and had no frog. They were laid in a regular coursing pattern with no bonding material used. A construction cut [101] and surrounding packing material (103) was associated with the well. The well was backfilled by (102).
105	Deposit	W: >3.5m L: >2.8m D: 0.34m	Made-ground: consisting of dark brownish grey, very gravelly sand, very friable, with frequent fragments of brick >100mm, moderate rounded stones <100mm.
106	Layer	W: >2.5m L: >2.8m D: 0.24m	Sub-soil: light yellowish orange, slightly gravelly sand, very friable with occasional rounded stones <10mm. Sub-soil was not observed anywhere else on the site due to truncation and made-ground build-up.
107	Layer	W: >3.5m L: >2.8m D: -	Natural stratum: mid brownish orange, fairly gravelly sand, very friable with frequent rounded stones <10mm & <50mm, and frequent sub-rounded stones <50mm.



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking NNE (2x1m scale)



Plate 2: Trench 2, stratigraphy, looking NNE (2x1m scale)



Plate 3: Trench 1, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NNE (2m scale)



Plate 4: Trench 1, brick well [104], looking WNW (1m scale)



4.3 **Trench 2** (Figs. 6 & 8; Plates 5-6)

Trench 2 was situated at the western end of the site, in the proposed parking area. It was orientated NW-SE, and measured 4.5m in length, 1.8m in width and 1.04m in depth (Plate 5).

The stratigraphy comprised a series of made-ground deposits (201-203) overlying the natural stratum. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed (Fig. 8; Plate 6).

Trench 2 Context Table

Context no.	Type	Dimensions (max)	Description
201	Deposit	W: >1.8m L: >4.5m D: 0.3m	Made-ground: crushed bricks used as hard core.
202	Deposit	W: >1.8m L: >4.5m D: 0.256m	Made-ground: dark black, silty sand, very friable with occasional rounded stones <20mm.
203	Deposit	W: >1.8m L: >4.5m D: 0.46m	Made-ground: mid brown, silty clay, fairly sticky consistency.
204	Layer	W: >1.8m L: >4.5m D: -	Natural stratum: yellow clay in the eastern side of the trench and orangey sand towards the west.



Plate 5: Trench 2, looking ESE (2x1m scale)



Plate 6: Trench 2, stratigraphy, looking SSE (2x1m scale)



4.4 **Trench 3** (Figs. 6, 9 & 10; Plates 7-12)

Trench 3 was situated in the central part of the site, adjacent to Plots 9 and 10. It was orientated WNW-ESE and measured 8.9m in length, 2m maximum width and 0.5m in depth at its WNW end and 0.78m in depth at its ESE (Plate 7 & 9).

The stratigraphy varied across the trench. At the WNW end it comprised a concrete slab (300) overlying the natural stratum (302). At the ESE end a deposit of made-ground (301) that rose up to a higher platform was observed, underlying which was the natural stratum (302) (Fig. 9; Plate 8).

Foundation/cellar [304] was situated towards the ESE end of the trench. It consisted of a rectangular cut with sheer sides that extended beyond the limit of excavation. Due to the depth of this feature it was not bottomed. It contained a series of gravelly backfilled deposits (303, 305-309). Fragments of Glazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, dating from the 11th – 14th century and Midland Purple Ware, from the late 14th – 15th century were recovered from the upper fill (307). Due to its shape and sheer sides this feature was thought to have been either a foundation cut or possibly a cellar. It was cut by pit [308] and by gully [313], (Figs. 6, 9 & 10; Plate 10 & 12).

Pit [308] was also found at the ESE end of the trench. It was sub-circular in plan and extended beyond the limit of excavation. It had steep sides and a U-shaped base and contained a series of backfilled deposits (310-312). Fill (310) contained fragments of Midland Purple Ware, Frechen/Cologne Stoneware, dating from 1550-1700, Midland Blackware, from 1580-1700 and a tile fragments possible medieval in date. Fill (312) also contained finds of Midland Purple Ware, and Midland Blackware, along with Cistercian Ware, dated to the late 15th – 17th century. The pit cut through foundation/cellar [304], (Figs. 6, 9 & 10; Plates 10-12).

Gully [313] was again found towards the ESE end of the trench. It was linear in plan, orientated N-S and had steep sloping sides with a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled by (314) and contained no finds. The gully cut through foundation/cellar [304] (Figs. 6, 9 & 10; Plates 10 & 12).

Trench 3 Context Table

Context no.	Type	Dimensions (max)	Description
300	Deposit	W: 3m L: 5m D: 0.1m	Concrete slab formed a patio area associated with the existing buildings on the site.
301	Deposit	W: >2m L: >4m D: 0.8m	Made-ground: seen at the ESE end of the trench that raises up to a high platform. It consists of dark greyish brown/black, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with moderate rounded stones <100mm.
302	Layer	W: >2m L: >8.9m D: -	Natural stratum: light orange, clay, soft with moderate sub-angular stones <100mm.
303	Fill	W: >0.7m L: >0.6m D: >0.35m	Fill of foundation/cellar [304]: backfill consisting of mid reddish pink, fairly gravelly clay, fairly soft with frequent rounded stones <50mm, thought to be the same as fill (307). Fill was cut by Pit [308].



304	Cut	W: 3.34m L: >2m D: >0.8m	Foundation/cellar: Rectangular cut found at the ESE end of the trench extending beyond the limit of excavation so full shape in plan and profile not seen. It had been backfilled by (303, 305-309) and its sheer sides may indicate that it was a foundation cut or possibly a cellar. This feature was cut by post-medieval Pit [308], and by Gully [313].
305	Fill	W: >1.5m L: >1.2m D: >0.25m	Backfill of foundation/cellar [304]: consisting of mid brownish pink, fairly silty gravelly clay, fairly soft with frequent rounded stones <50mm. Fill cut by Pit [308].
306	Fill	W: 1.3m L: >1.2m D: 0.17m	Backfill of foundation/cellar [304]: consisting of mid greyish brown, fairly silty gravelly clay, fairly soft with frequent rounded stones <50mm. Fill cut by Gully [313].
307	Fill	W: 1.4m L: >1.2m D: 0.35m	Backfill of foundation/cellar [304]: consisting of light brownish, pink, fairly silty gravelly clay, fairly soft with frequent rounded stones <50mm and finds of Glazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, 11 th – 14 th century and Midland Purple ware, late 14 th – 15 th century. Fill cut by Pit [308] and by Gully [313].
308	Cut	W: 1.8m L: 2.4m D: 1.4m	Pit: situated at the ESE end of the trench consisting of a sub-circular cut with steep sides and a U-shaped base. It contained a series of backfill deposits (310-312). The Pit cut through backfill (309, 305, 306 & 307) found in foundation/cellar [304].
309	Fill	W: 1.2m L: >0.3m D: >0.15m	Backfill of foundation/cellar [304]: consisting of mid reddish, brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with moderate rounded stones <20mm.
310	Fill	W: 2.1m L: 2.4m D: 0.25m	Backfill of Pit [308]: consisting of dark brownish black, clay, fairly soft, with frequent flecks of charcoal and moderate rounded stones <500mm. It contained finds of Midland Purple ware, late 14 th – 15 th century, Frechen/Cologne Stoneware, 1550-1700, Midland Blackware, AD 1580-1700 and a tile fragments possible medieval in date.
311	Fill	W: 1.4m L: 2.4m D: 0.25m	Backfill of Pit [308]: mixture of light orange/brown and whitish grey, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with moderate rounded stones <100mm.
312	Fill	W: 1.3m L: 2.4m D: 0.9m	Backfill of Pit [308]: mid greyish brown, clay, fairly soft with moderate inclusions of rounded stones <50mm, and finds of Midland Purple ware, late 14 th – 15 th century, Midland Blackware, AD 1580-1700 and Cistercian Ware, late 15 th – 17 th century.
313	Cut	W: 0.33m L: >2.4m D: 0.35m	Gully: found towards the ESE end of the trench. It was linear in plan, orientated N-S and had steep sloping sides with a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled by (314). The gully cut through foundation/cellar [304].
314	Fill	W: 0.33m L: >2.4m D: 0.35m	Backfill of Gully [313]: consisting of mid greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft, with moderate rounded stones <50mm and no finds.



Plate 7: Trench 3, looking WNW (2x1m scale)



Plate 8: Trench 3, stratigraphy at WNW end of trench (2x1m scale)



Plate 9: Trench 3, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NW (2m scale)



Plate 10: Trench 3, prior to extending, foundation/cellar [304], pit [308] & gully [313], looking NE (2x1m scale)



Plate 11: Trench 3, Pit [308], looking ESE (1m scale)



Plate 12: Trench 3, after extending, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308] & Gully [313], looking NNE (2x1m scale)



4.5 **Trench 4** (Figs. 6 & 11; Plates 13-17)

Trench 4 was situated in the central part of the site, in Plot 11 and 12. It was orientated WSW-ENE and measured 10m in length, 2m maximum width and 0.43-0.91m in depth (Plates 13 & 15).

This area had been mechanically stripped by c.300mm prior to the evaluation, as a result the topsoil was only visible at the ENE end of the trench. Here the stratigraphy comprised topsoil (400) overlying made-ground (401) overlying the natural stratum (402) (Fig. 11; Plate 14).

Pit [403] was at the western end of the trench. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a U-shaped base. The fill (404) contained fragments of Midland Purple Ware, and Midland Yellow Ware, dating to 1550 – 1700 and a fragment of post-medieval tile (Figs. 6 & 11; Plate 16).

Brick Wall [405] was revealed at the southern side of the trench. It was orientated NW-SE with a return that orientated N-S. It was constructed of red bricks that measured 240 x 110 x 70mm (9x4x3 Inches) that were laid in a regular coursing pattern and bonded with a pinkish lime mortar (Figs. 6 & 11; Plate 17).

Trench 4 Context Table

Context no.	Type	Dimensions (max)	Description
400	Layer	W: >2m L: >10m D: 0.33m	Topsoil: was observed at the ENE end of the trench due to the majority of the area being ground reduced prior to the evaluation. It consisted of dark greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with occasional sub-angular stones <50mm.
401	Layer	W: >2m L: >10m D: 0.4m	Made-ground: dark greyish brown/black, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with frequent rounded stones <100mm and moderate fragments of brick and tile >100mm.
402	Layer	W: >2m L: >10m D: -	Natural stratum: light orange, clay, fairly soft with moderate rounded stones <100mm.
403	Cut	W: 0.9m L: 0.8m D: 0.15m	Pit: found towards the west end of the trench. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled (404).
404	Fill	W: 0.9m L: 0.8m D: 0.15m	Backfill of Pit [403]: mid greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with moderate stones <50mm and finds of Midland Purple ware, late 14 th – 15 th century and Midland Yellow Ware, 1550 – 1700 and a fragment of post-medieval tile.
405	Structure	W: 0.18m L: >0.8m H: >0.42m	Brick wall: was found at the southern side of the trench and continued beyond the limit of excavation. It was orientated NW-SE with a return that orientated N-S. It was constructed of red brick, laid in a regular coursing pattern and bonded with a pinkish lime mortar. The bricks each measured 240mm (L) x 110mm (W) x 70mm (D) (9x4 x3 Inches).



Plate 13: Trench 4, looking NE (2x1m scale)



Plate 14: Trench 4, stratigraphy post-ground reduction to the area, looking NNW (1m scale)



Plate 15: Trench 4, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NNE (2m scale)



Plate 16: Trench 4, pit [403], looking S (500mm scale)



Plate 17: Trench 4, brick wall [405], looking S (1m scale)



4.6 **Trench 5** (Figs. 6, 12 & 13; Plates 18-30)

Trench 5 was situated towards the eastern end of the site in the proposed car parking area. It was orientated WNW-ESE and measured 11.5m in length, 2m maximum width and 1.3m maximum depth (Plate 18-19, 22).

The trench stratigraphy consisted of a series of made-ground deposits (501-504, 506-509) overlying the natural stratum (505) (Fig. 12 & 13; Plate 20-21).

Brick Wall [508] was observed towards the ENE end of the trench. It was orientated N-S and was constructed of unfrosted red bricks. The lower two courses consisted of headers, above which were three courses of stretcher bond. The wall was bonded with a sandy lime mortar mainly used on the upper courses. Each brick measured 230 x 100 x 80mm (9x4x3 inches). The wall overlay gully [GN 527] and pit [522] (Figs. 6 & 12; Plate 23).

Gully Group [527] was found orientated E-W along the length of the trench, into which two slots were excavated [512] and [516]. It was linear in plan with a steep sided V-shaped profile in some parts and a flat base in others. At the eastern end a terminus was excavated, whilst at the western end it continued beyond the limit of excavation. The gully had been backfilled and contained a single sherd of modern pottery, from fill (517). The gully underlay wall [508] and also cut pit [514], (Figs. 6, 12 & 13, Plates 23-26).

Pit [514] was located in the central part of the trench and extended beyond the limit of excavation, so the full shape in plan was not visible. It appeared to be sub-circular with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled (515) with minor evidence of more natural silting at the base (524). It contained Unglazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, from the 11th – 14th century, Midland Purple Ware, Iron-glazed Earthenware, 18th – 19th century and a sherd of possibly medieval tile. The pit was cut by gully slot [516], (Figs. 6 & 13; Plate 27).

Pit [520] was found towards the WNW end of the trench. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It was backfilled by (521) that contained Iron-glazed Earthenware, modern pottery, and post-medieval brick and tile fragments (Figs. 6 & 13; Plate 28).

Pit [522] was only observed in section, underlying wall [508]. It had concave sides and a flat base. It was backfilled by (523) and contained Cistercian Ware, Iron-glazed Earthenware, Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware, from 1720-1780 and post-medieval brick and tile, clay pipe stem and a fragment of a glass bottle (Figs. 6 & 12; Plate 23).

Pit [525] was seen in section only, cutting Pit [514]. It had sheer sides and a flat base and had been backfilled by (526) which contained no finds (Figs. 6 & 13; Plate 27).

Post-Hole [510] was found in the bulk of the northern side of the trench towards the WSW end. It was circular in plan with concave sides and U-shaped base. It had been backfilled by (511) and contained no finds. The post-hole was in close proximity to post-hole [518] and the two features may be associated to one another (Figs. 6 & 13; Plate 29).

Post-Hole [518] was located at the WNW end of the trench in close proximity to post-hole [510], to which it may have been associated. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled by (519) and contained Unglazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware (Figs. 6 & 13; Plate 30).



Trench 5 Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
501	Deposit	W: - L: - D: 0.1m	Tarmac: observed at the ENE end of the trench.
502	Deposit	W: >2m L: >4m D: 0.33m	Made-ground: observed at the ENE end of the trench made-up of gravel hard core underlying tarmac. It was mid reddish orange, very gravelly and loose with frequent angular stones <50mm.
503	Deposit	W: >2m L: >4m D: 0.26m	Made-ground: observed at the ENE end of the trench consisting of dark grey, fairly silty clay, fairly friable with occasional brick fragments <100mm.
504	Deposit	W: >2m L: >4m D: 0.23m	Made-ground: observed at the ENE of the trench consisting of mid greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly friable with occasional rounded stones <20mm
505	Layer	W: >2m L: >11.5m D: -	Natural stratum: mid orangey yellow, sand, very compact with occasional rounded stones <20mm.
506	Deposit	W: >2m L: >6.6m D: 0.32	Made-ground: observed in the central and WNW end of the trench consisting of mixed brown/grey, gravel, very loose with frequent inclusions of sub-angular stones <50mm and frequent fragments of brick and tile <100mm. It appears to have been used to bring up the ground level to that of the tarmac towards the eastern end of the trench.
507	Deposit	W: >2m L: >6.6m D: >0.3m	Made-ground: observed in the central and WNW end of the trench consisting of dark brownish/black, fairly silty sand, very friable with moderate rounded stones <20mm and moderate flecks of charcoal.
508	Structure	W: 0.42m L: >2m D: 0.41m	Brick wall: found towards the ENE end of the trench, orientated N-S. It was constructed of red bricks with no frog. The lower two courses consisted of header, above which were three courses of regular coursing. The wall was bonded with an orange sand based lime mortar mainly used on the upper courses. Each brick measured 230mm in length, 100mm in width and 80mm in depth (9x4x3 inches). The wall overlay Gully [G527] and Pit [522].
509	Deposit	W: >2m L: >6.6m D: 0.08m	Made-ground: observed in the central and WSW end of the trench consisting of mid brownish orange, fairly gravelly sand, fairly compact with frequent rounded stones <10mm. Deposit overlay archaeological features found in the central and WSW end of the trench.
510	Cut	W: 0.45m L: >0.25m D: 0.13m	Post-hole: found in the bulk of the northern side of the trench towards the trenches WSW end. It was circular in plan with concave sides and U-shaped base. It had been y backfilled by (511).
511	Fill	W: 0.45m L: >0.25m D: 0.13m	backfill of Post-hole [510]: light greenish yellow, fairly gravelly sand, fairly firm with occasional inclusions of rounded stones <20mm.
512	Cut	W: 0.4m L: >0.8m D: 0.35m	Cut of gully terminus part of Gully [G527]: found towards the ENE end of the trench, orientated E-W. It was linear in plan with steep sides and a V-shaped base. It appeared to be more naturally silted by (513). Brick wall [508] overlay the gully terminus slot.
513	Fill	W: 0.4m L: >0.8m D: 0.35m	Backfill of gully terminus [512]: dark brownish grey, fairly silty sandy clay, fairly friable with moderate rounded stones <20mm.
514	Cut	W: 2.4m L: >1.7m D: 0.88m	Pit: found in the central part of the trench and extended beyond the limit of excavation so the full shape in plan was not visible. It appeared to be sub-circular with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled (515) with minor evidence of more natural silting at the base (524). The pit was cut by gully slot [516].



<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
515	Fill	W: 2.4m L: >1.7m D: 0.88m	Backfill of Pit [514]: mid greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with moderate rounded stones <50mm. It contained Unglazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, 11 th – 14 th century, Midland Purple ware, late 14 th – 15 th century, Iron-glazed Earthenware, 18 th – 19 th century and a sherd of possibly medieval tile.
516	Cut	W: 0.4m L: >1.6m D: 0.18	Gully: part of Gully [G527], this slot excavated in the central part of the trench. The gully was linear in plan and orientated E-W. It had <45 degree sides and a U-shaped base and appeared to have been more naturally silted by (517). The gully slot cut Pit [514].
517	Fill	W: 0.4m L: >1.6m D: 0.18	Backfill of Gully [516]: mid-darker greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with moderate rounded stones <20mm. It contained a single sherd of modern pottery, 19 th and 20 th century.
518	Cut	W: 0.24m L: 0.2m D: 0.09m	Post-hole: found at the WNW end of the trench in close proximity to Post-hole [510]. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It had been backfilled by (519).
519	Fill	W: 0.24m L: 0.2m D: 0.09m	Backfill of Post-hole [518]: dark greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly friable with moderate rounded stones <50mm and flecks of charcoal. It contained finds of Unglazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, 11 th – 14 th century.
520	Cut	W: 0.45m L: 0.4m D: 0.11m	Small pit: found towards the WNW end of the trench. It was circular in plan with concave sides and a U-shaped base. It was backfilled by (521).
521	Fill	W: 0.45m L: 0.4m D: 0.11m	Backfill of small Pit [520]: dark greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly friable with moderate rounded stones <50mm and occasional flecks of charcoal. It contained finds of Iron-glazed Earthenware, 18 th – 19 th century, modern pottery, 19 th -20 th century and post-medieval brick and tile fragments.
522	Cut	W: 0.39m L: - D: 0.4m	Cut of pit: was only observed in section, underlying brick wall [508]. It had concave sides and a flat base. It had been backfilled by (523).
523	Fill	W: 0.39m L: - D: 0.4m	Backfill of Pit [522]: dark bluish grey, very silty clay, very friable with moderate rounded stones <50mm and finds of Cistercian Ware, late 15 th – 17 th century, Iron-glazed Earthenware, 18 th – 19 th century, Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware, AD1720-1780 and post-medieval brick and tile, clay pipe stem and a fragment of glass bottle.
524	Fill	W: 0.4m L: - D: 0.05m	Natural silted fill of Pit [514]: found at the base of the pit consisting of mid greyish brown, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with occasional rounded stones <20mm.
525	Cut	W: 0.86m L: - D: 0.46m	Cut of pit: was seen in section only, cutting Pit [514]. It had sheer sides and a flat base and had been backfilled by (526).
526	Fill	W: 0.86m L: - D: 0.46m	Backfill of Pit [525]: dark greyish brown/black, fairly silty clay, fairly soft with frequent flecks of charcoal and moderate rounded stones <50mm and fragments of CBM <10mm.
527	Group	W: 0.4m L: >7.75m D: 0.35m max	Gully: found along the length of the trench, orientated E-W. At the gullies eastern end a terminus was present, whilst at its western end it continued beyond the limit of excavation. Two slots were excavated [512] (513) and [516] (517). The gully had been backfilled from which a single sherd of modern pottery, 19 th and 20 th century was recovered. The gully was underlying brick wall [508] and also cut Pit [514].



Plate 18: Trench 5, looking ESE (2x1m scale)



Plate 19: Trench 5, looking WSW (2x1m scale)



Plate 20: Trench 5, stratigraphy at ESE end of the trench, looking SSW (2x1m scale)



Plate 21: Trench 5, stratigraphy at the WNW end of the trench, looking SSW (2x1m scale)



Plate 22: Trench 5 & 4, in relation to existing buildings on the site, looking NE (2m scale)



Plate 23: Trench 5, brick wall [508], gully [G527] & pit [522], looking ESE (2x1m scale)



Plate 24: Trench 5, gully terminus [512], looking NNE (500mm scale)



Plate 25: Trench 5, gully terminus [512], 100% excavated, looking WNW (200mm scale)



Plate 26: Trench 5, gully slot [516], looking W (500mm scale)



Plate 27: Trench 5, pit [514] & [525], looking SSW (2x1m scale)



Plate 28: Trench 5, small pit [520], looking E (500mm scale)

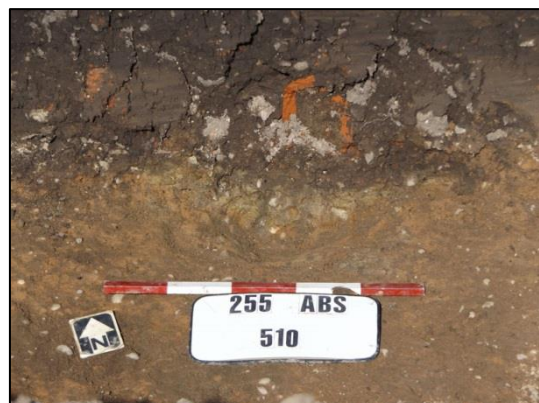


Plate 29: Trench 5, post-hole [510], looking NNE (500mm scale)



Plate 30: Trench 5, post-hole [518], looking NNE (200mm scale)

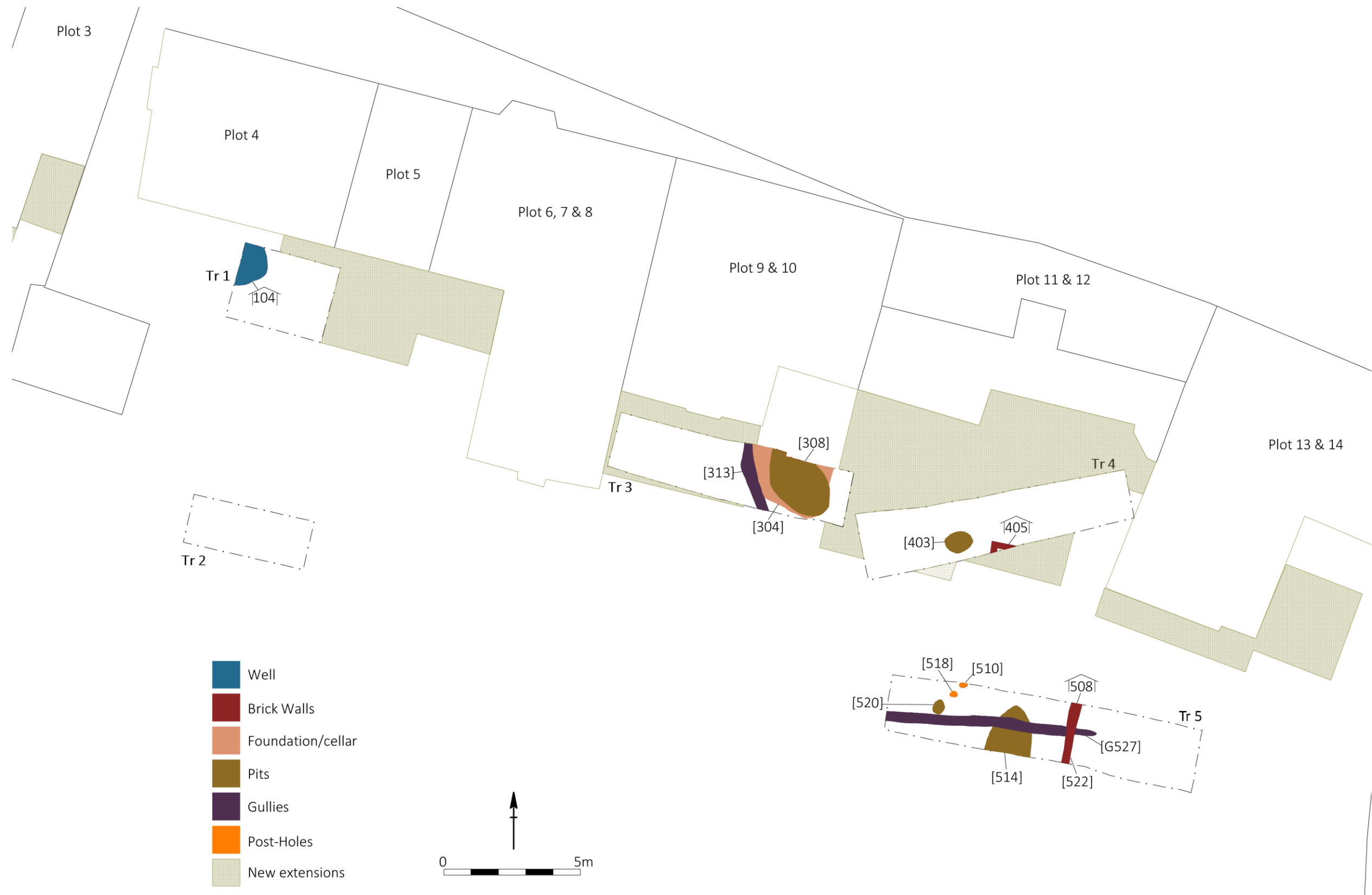
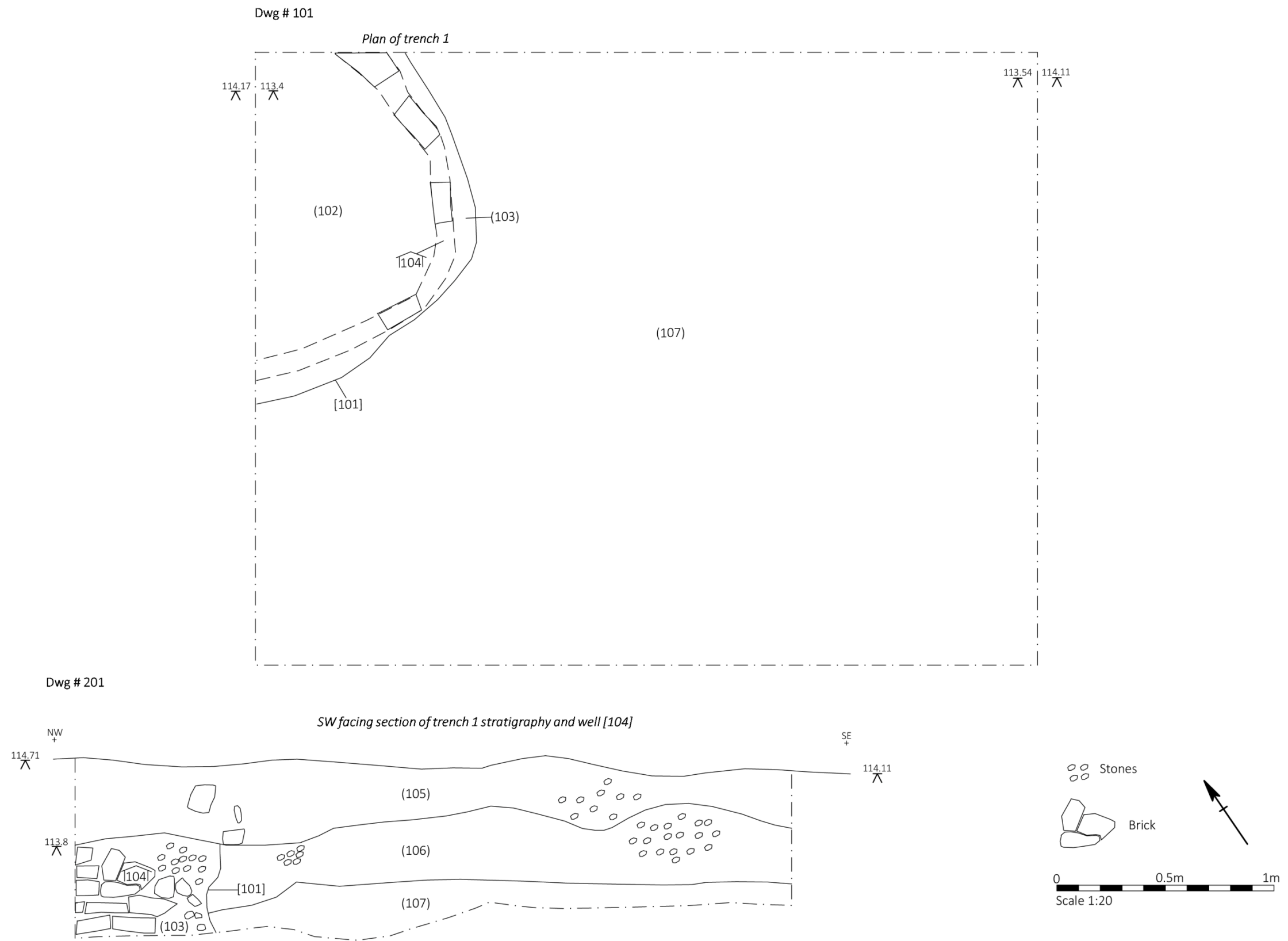


Figure 6: Archaeology plan (scale 1:150)



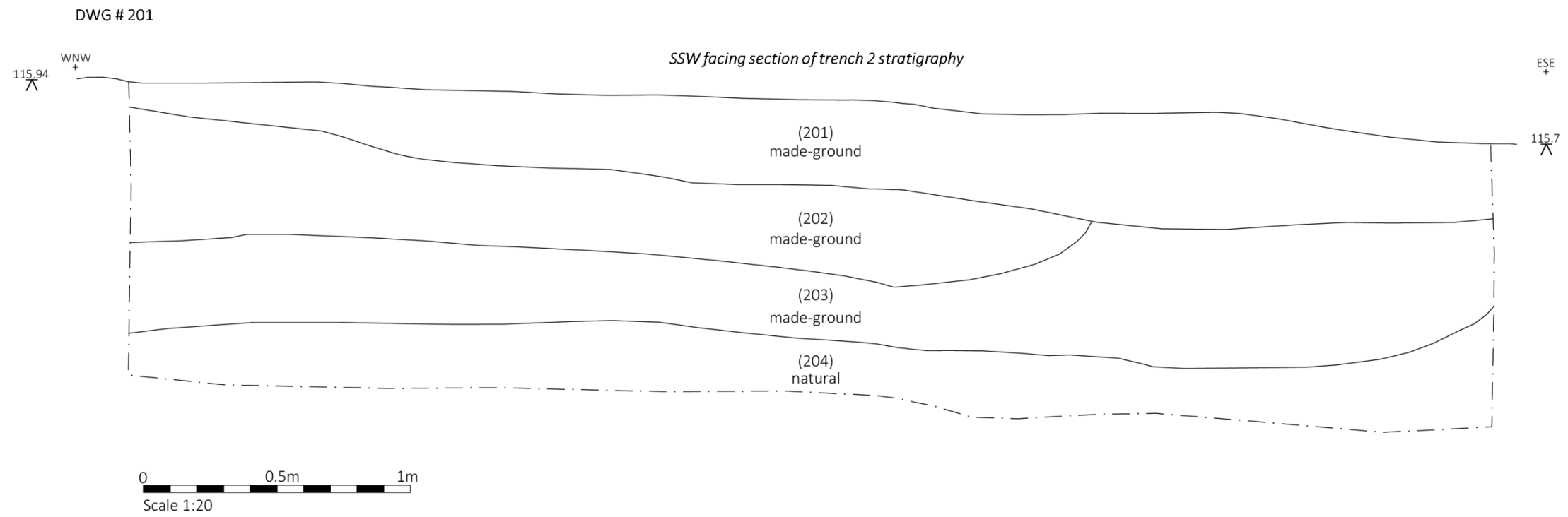


Figure 8: Trench 2, stratigraphy section (scale 1:20)

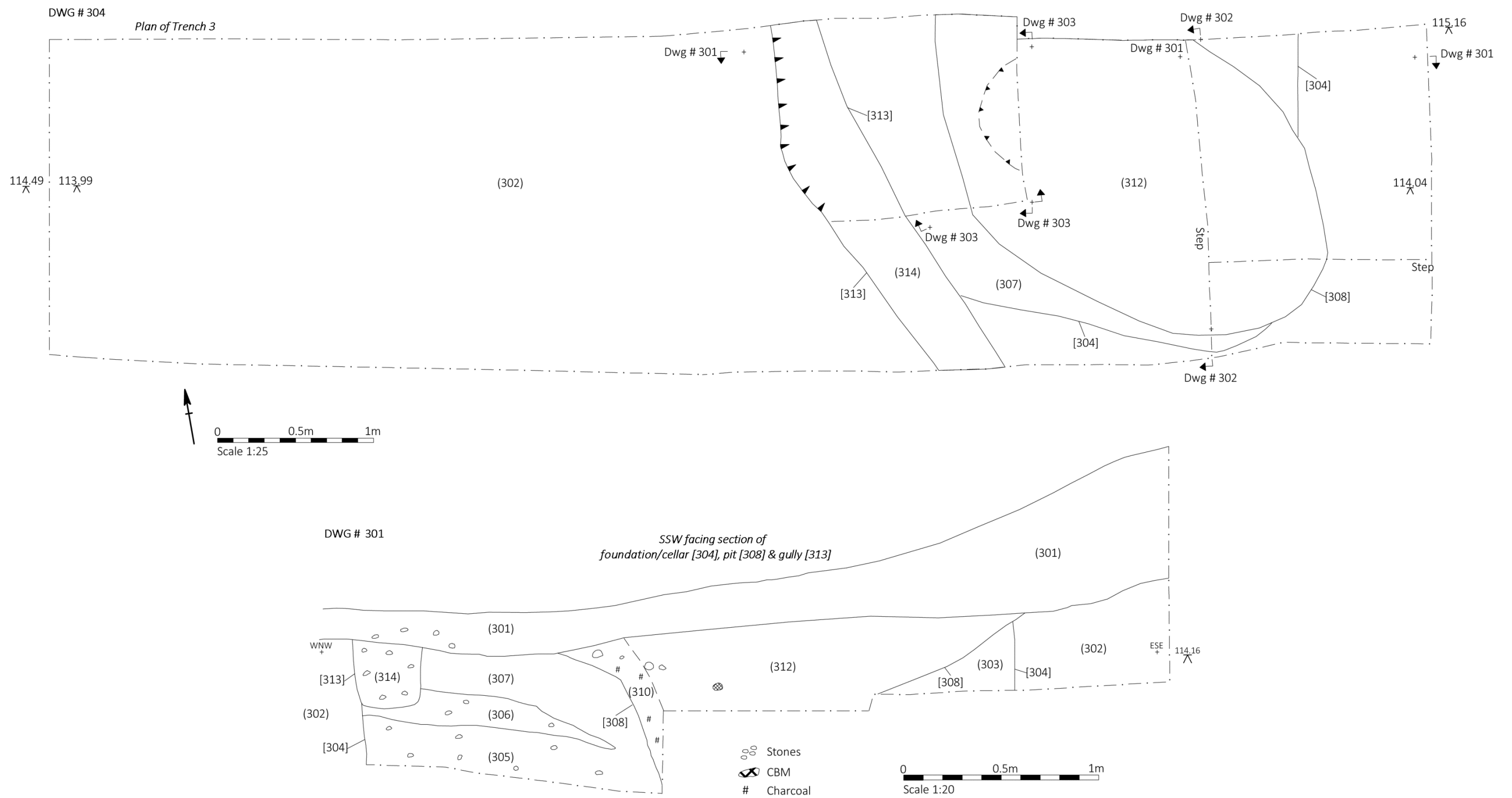


Figure 9: Trench 3, plan and sections (scale as shown)

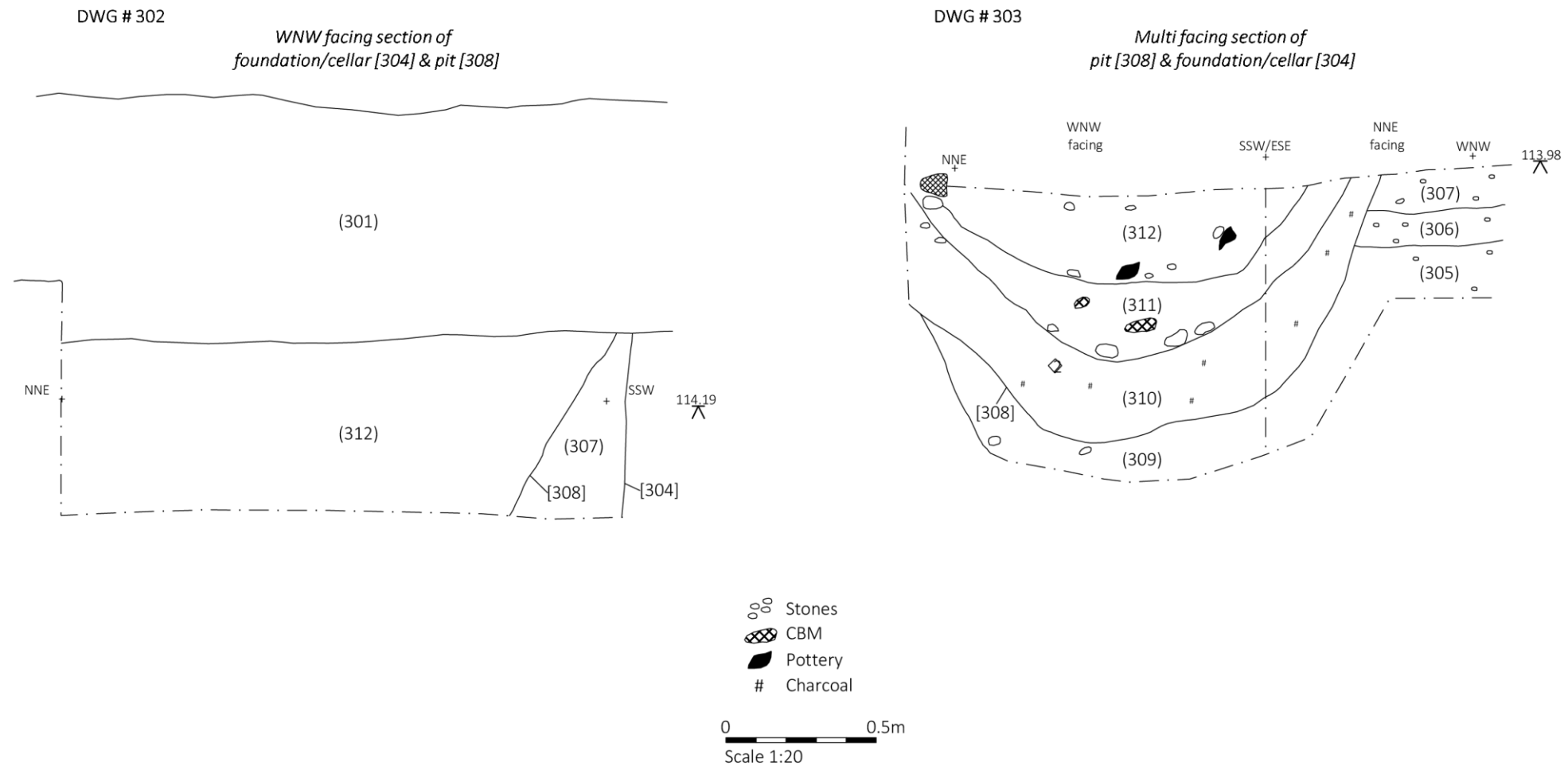


Figure 10: Trench 3, sections (scale 1:20)

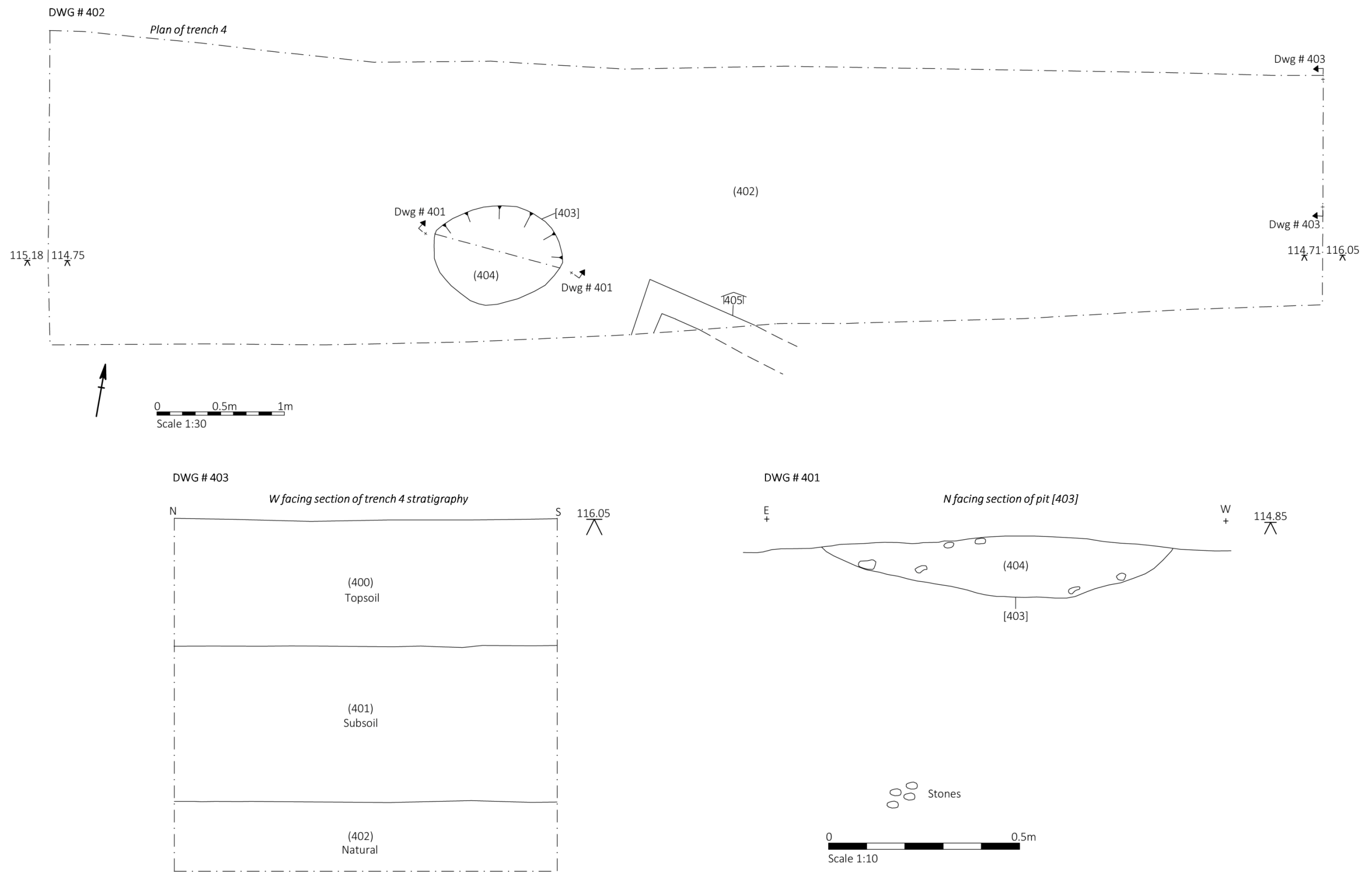


Figure 11: Trench 4, plan and sections (scale as shown)

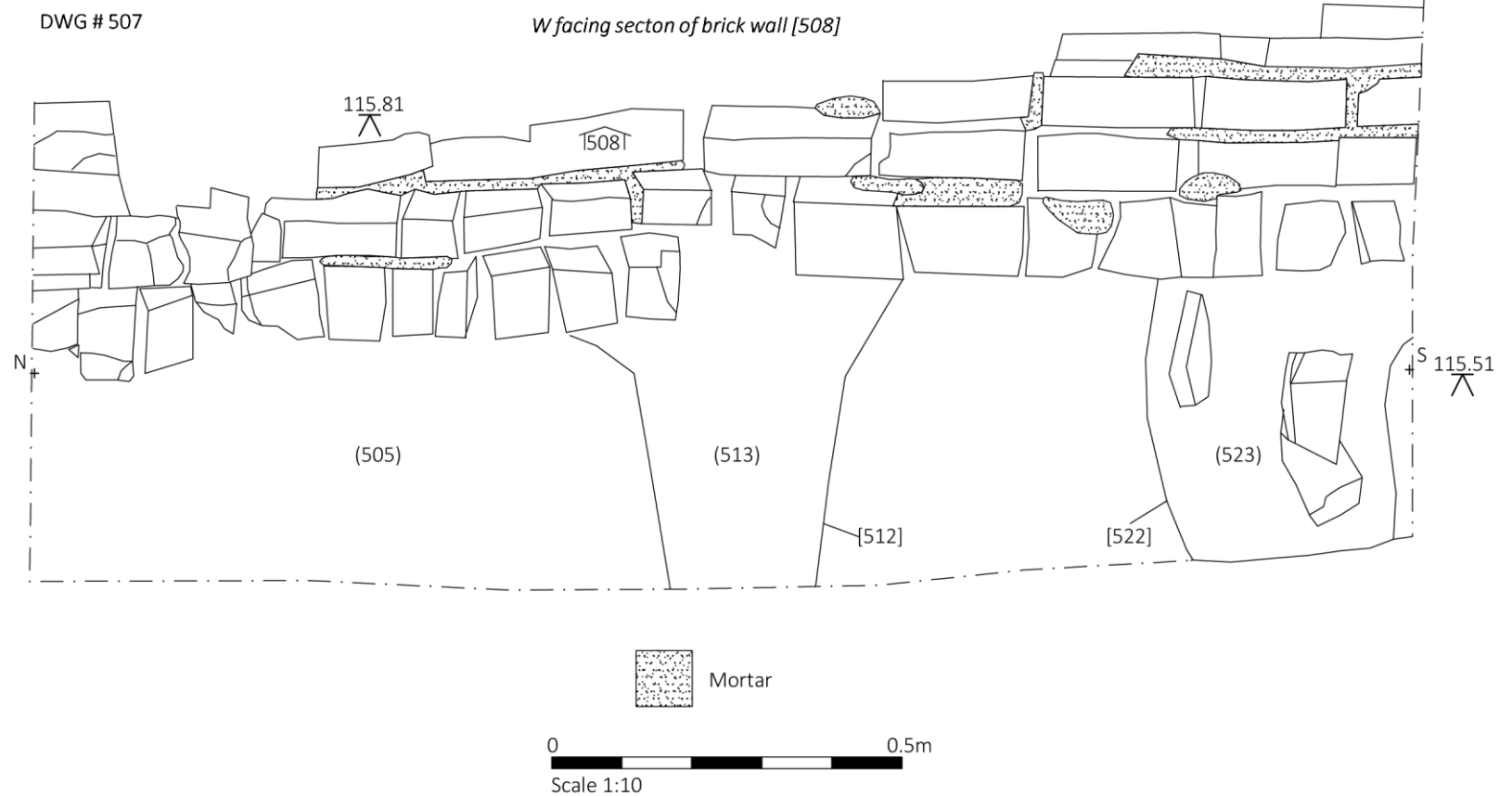
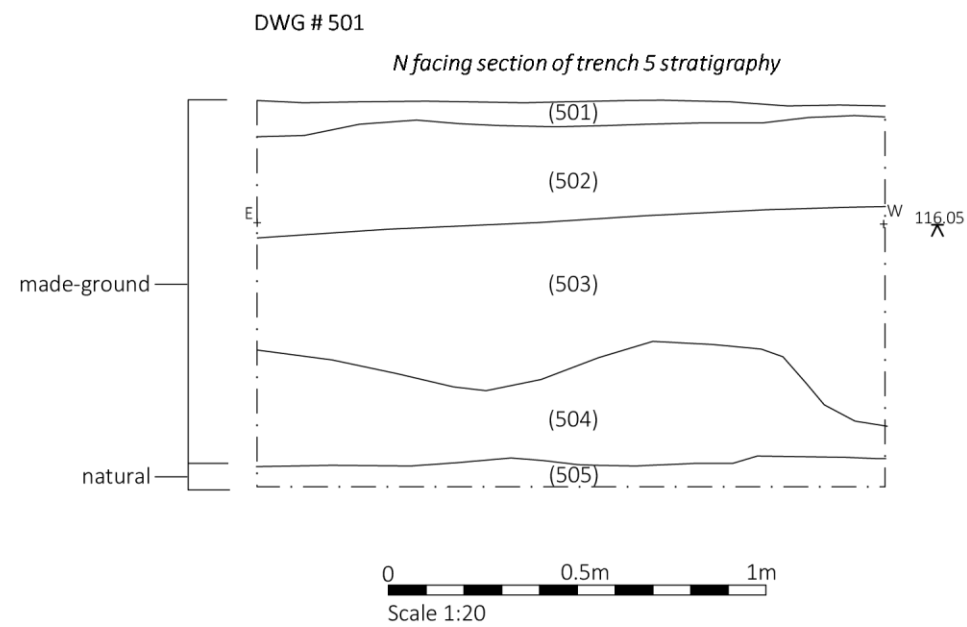
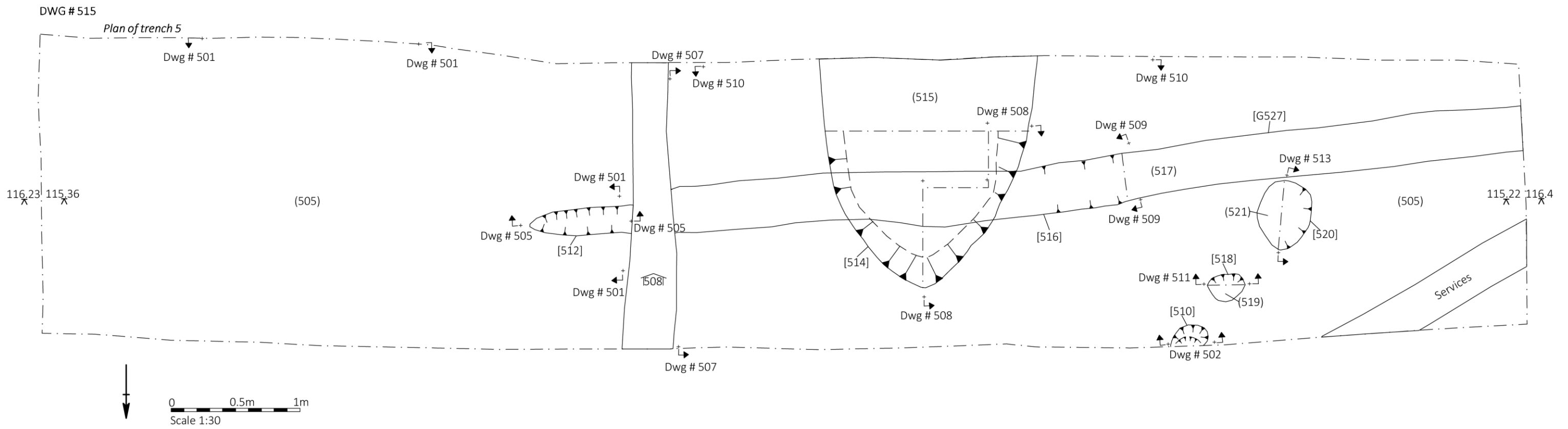


Figure 12: Trench 5, plan and sections (scale as shown)

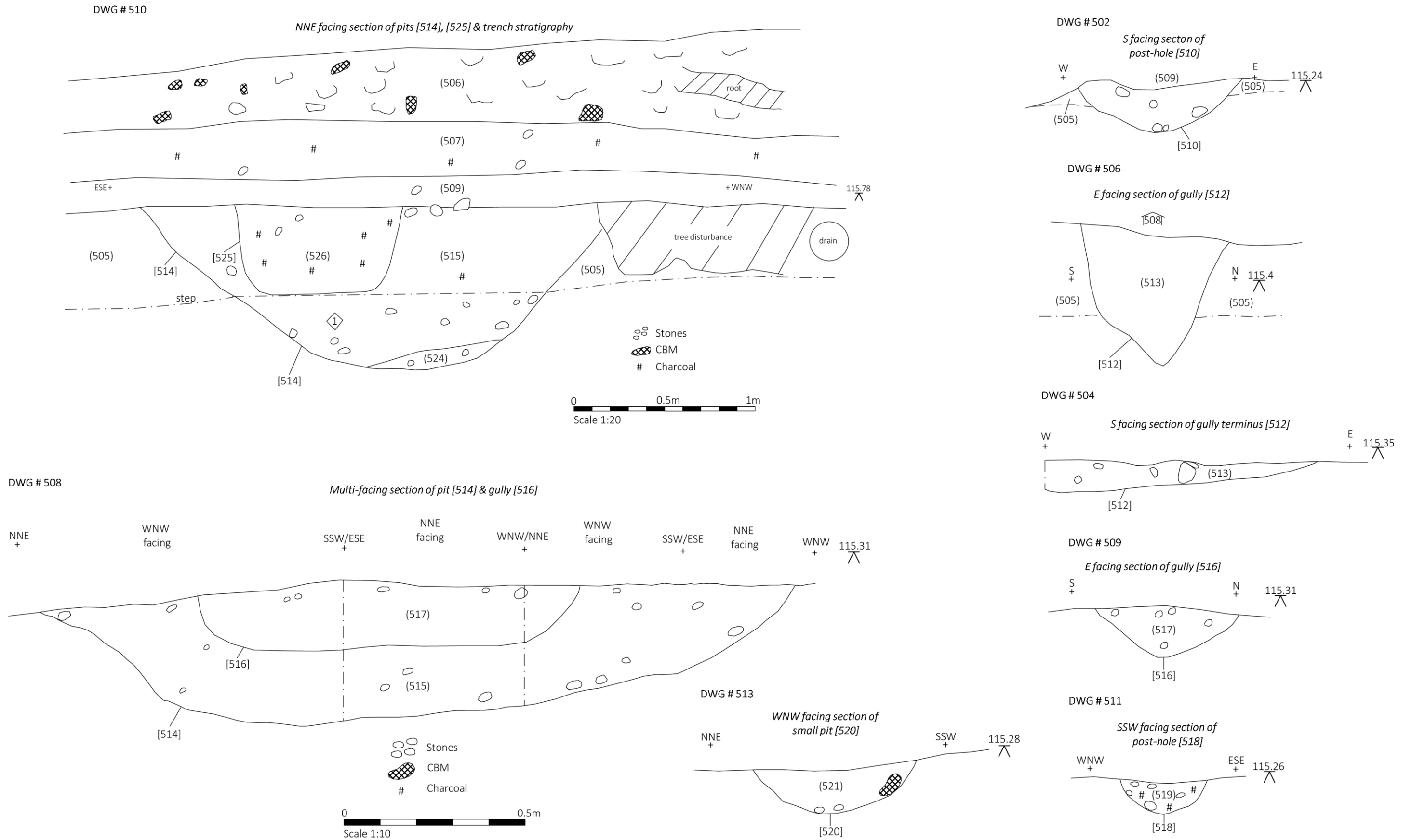


Figure 13: Trench 5, sections (scale as shown)



5 Conclusions

Stratigraphic relationships and finds recovered suggest that potentially the earliest features were the possible foundation cut/cellar [314] and post-hole [518], both of which contained 14th century pottery. However, due to the nature in which these features had been backfilled it is possible that the pottery may have been residual.

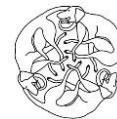
Activity of post-medieval date consisted of rubbish pit [308] dated to the 16th and three brick features; well [104] and walls [405] and [508]. The well was thought to have been associated with buildings fronting the High Street, possibly Argyll House, Stretton Cottage or Gardeners Cottage, rather than St Benet's House as it was situated very close to Plot 4 of St Benet's House. Wall [508] formed part of the boundary wall depicted on OS mapping from at least 1882 (Fig. 2), and Wall [405] was a return that may have formed part of another boundary or outbuilding. Further post-medieval activity consisted of a small pit [403], pits [514] and [522], and gully [GN. 527], which likely represents rubbish pits and possibly drainage associated with backyard activity to St Benet's House.

Modern features and features with no dating evidence consisted of a small pit [520], post-hole [510] and gully [313], again thought to be backyard activity associated with St Benet's House.

The pottery analysis indicated that the fabric types are typical of the sites found in the region. The assemblage was domestic in nature consisting of drinking cups, mugs, jars, bowls and jugs.

The environmental analysis from pit [514] and [308] demonstrated that wood charcoal was present in both samples, in particular from pit [308] which contained larger fragments. Possible cereal grains were present in low numbers in pit [308] which were highly fragmented and thus their species was unidentified. Charred legumes (likely peas) were present, again in low numbers and fragmentary, in pit [515], and likely represent food preparation or domestic refuse.

The evaluation trenches revealed occupational activity dating from the late medieval period onwards, with much of it probably relating to the backyard activity of houses fronting the High Street. There was little that could be definitely ascribed to the demarcation of the plots, but that may be due to the small size and location of the evaluation trenches. Consequently, nothing definitive can be drawn from the results in respect of the developmental sequence of the High Street and the relationship between the Burgage plots to the north and the irregular historic plots to the south, where this site was located.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Mike Nesbitt of Architecture Design Development Ltd for commissioning this report on behalf of ADS Unlimited. Thanks are also due to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record Office for providing historic environment records and other relevant documents; and to Stephen Dean of Staffordshire County Council for monitoring the project.

Thanks are also due to ASD Unlimited site manager Mike Morton and the construction team for their full co-operation throughout the on-site works.

The fieldwork was carried out by Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA and Cameron Kaye BA. The report was written by Carina Summerfield-Hill, and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Written Scheme of Investigation
2. Trench recording sheets
3. Sample records
4. Finds records
5. Finds
6. Site drawings
7. Client's site plans
8. List of photographs
9. B/W prints & negatives
10. Specialist reports
11. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent (Accession no 2016.LH.74).



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Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE: 255/ABS			Site Name: St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire
Digital Shot	B&W Shot	View	Subject
1	1	NNE	Trench 1 (2x1m scale)
2	2	NNE	Trench 1, stratigraphy (2x1m scale)
3		NNE	Trench 1 (2x1m scale)
4	3	WNW	Trench 1, well [104] (1m scale)
5		NNE	Trench 1, well [104] (500mm scale)
6	4	WNW	Trench 3 (2x1m scale)
7		WNW	Trench 3, stratigraphy at WNW end of trench (2x1m scale)
8	5	ENE	Trench 4 (2x1m scale)
9		NNW	Trench 4, stratigraphy (1m scale)
10	6	ESE	Trench 2 (2x1m scale)
11	7	SSW	Trench 2, stratigraphy (2x1m scale)
12	8	S	Trench 4, Pit [403] (500mm scale)
13	9	S	Trench 4, brick wall [405] (1m scale)
14	10	ESE	Trench 5, brick wall [508] (2x1m scale)
15	11	ESE	Trench 5 (2x1m scale)
16	12	SSW	Trench 5, stratigraphy @ WNW end of trench (2x1m scale)
17	13	SSW	Trench 5, stratigraphy @ ENE end of trench (2x1m scale)
18		NNE	Trench 1 and building elevations (plot 4 & 5); 2m scale)
19		NNE	Trench 1 and building elevations (plot 4 & 5); 2m scale)
20		NW	Trench 1 and building elevations (plot 4 & 5); 2m scale)
21	14	NNE	Trench 3, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308] & Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
22		NNE	Trench 3, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308] & Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
23		NNE	Trench 3, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308] & Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
24	15	ESE	Trench 3, foundation/cellar [304] & Pit [308] (2x1m scale)
25		ESE	Trench 3, Pit [308] (2x1m scale)
26		ESE	Trench 3, foundation/cellar [304] & Pit [308] (2x1m scale)
27		NE	Trench 3, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308] & Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
28	16	WSW	Trench 5 (2x1m scale)
29		NW	Trench 3 and building elevations (plot 9 & 10; 2m scale)
30		NE	Trench 3 & 4 and building elevations (plot 9-12; 2m scale)
31		NNE	Trench 4 and building elevations (plot 11 & 12; 2m scale)
32		NE	Trench 4 & 5 and building elevations (plot 11 & 12; 2m scale)
33		NW	Rear building elevations (plots 4 & 5; 2m scale)
34		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 6-8; 2m scale)
35		NW	Rear building elevations (plot 4; 2m scale)
36		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 3 & 3; 2m scale)
37		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 1; 2m scale)
38		ESE	Rear building elevations (plot 6-8; 2m scale)
39		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 6-8; 2m scale)
40		WNW	Rear building elevations (plot 6-8; 2m scale)
41		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 9 & 10; 2m scale)
42		WNW	Rear building elevations (plot 9 & 10; 2m scale)
43		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 11 & 12; 2m scale)
44		ESE	Rear building elevations (plot 13 & 14; 2m scale)
45		NNE	Rear building elevations (plot 13 & 14; 2m scale)
46		SSW	Front building elevations & high street (plot 13&14)
47		WSW	Front building elevations & high street (plot 4-12)



48		WSW	Front building elevations & high street (plot1-5)
49		SW	Front building elevations & high street (plot 1-3)
50		WSW	Front building elevations & high street (plot 1-3)
51		SE	Front building elevations & high street (plot 13& 14)
52	17	NNE	Trench 3 extended, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308], Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
53		NE	Trench 3 extended, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308], Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
54		NE	Trench 3 extended, foundation/cellar [304], Pit [308], Gully [313] (2x1m scale)
55	18	NNE	Trench 5, Post-hole [510] (500mm scale)
56	19	NNE	Trench 5, gully terminus [512] (500mm scale)
57	20	WNW	Trench 5, gully terminus [512] (200mm scale)
58		WNW	Trench 5, brick wall [508] (2x1m scale)
59		ESE	Trench 5, brick wall [508] (2x1m scale)
60	21	ESE	Trench 5, relationship slot for Pit [514] & Gully [516] (1m scale)
61		SSW	Trench 5, relationship slot for Pit [514] & Gully [516] (1m scale)
62	10	WNW	Trench 5, Gully [516] (500mm scale)
63		SSW	Trench 5, Pit [514] & [525] (2x1m scale)
64	23	NNE	Trench 5, Post-hole [518] (200mm scale)
65	24	E	Trench 5, small Pit [520] (500mm scale)



Appendix 2: Finds Concordance

Context Nos.		Pottery		CBM		Pipe		Glass	
Fill	Cut	No.	Gms	No.	Gms	No.	Gms	No.	Gms
(307)	[304]	2	180						
(310)	[308]	4	167	1	56				
(312)	[308]	6	389						
(404)	[403]	5	125	1	101				
(515)	[514]	6	203	1	6				
(517)	[516]	1	5						
(519)	[518]	1	21						
(521)	[520]	5	86	4	212				
(523)	[522]	4	88	3	274	1	3	1 (bottle frag)	65
Totals		34	1264g	10	649g	1	3g	1	65g



Appendix 3: Specialist Reports

Pottery & Ceramic Building Material

Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 31 sherds with a total weight of 1260g. It was mostly late medieval or early post-medieval. A few sherds of earlier medieval wares were present, but were residual. The following fabric types were noted:

- CIST:** Cistercian Ware, late 15th – 17th century (Ford 1995, 36). 4 sherds, 78g.
FR: Frechen/Cologne Stoneware, 1550-1700 (Gaimster 1997). 1 sherd, 36g
GSW: Glazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, 11th – 14th century (Ford 1995, 36). 1 sherd, 66g.
IGW: Iron-glazed Earthenware, 18th – 19th century. 4 sherds, 156g
MB: Midland Blackware, AD 1580-1700 (Brears 1969). 3 sherds, 293g
MOD: All 19th and 20th century wares. 4 sherds, 11g.
MP: Midland Purple ware, late 14th – 15th century (Ford 1995, 36). 6 sherds, 432g
MY: Midland Yellow Ware, AD1550 – 1700 (Brears 1969). 2 sherds, 79g.
SWSG: Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware, AD1720-1780 (Mountford 1971). 1 sherd, 10g.
USW: Unglazed Iron-rich Sandy Ware, 11th – 14th century (Ford 1995, 32). 5 sherds, 99g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is fairly typical of sites in the region. Most of the sherds are large and in good condition, and appear reliably stratified.

The vessel types are largely common forms. The Cistercian Ware is mostly fragments of drinking cups and tygs, with the Midland Purple and the early post-medieval wares (MY, MB) being fragments of jars, bowls and jugs. The sherd of FR is from a mug with moulded foliage decoration. Such vessels are well-known 16th and 17th century products of the industry (eg. Gaimster 1997, fig. 3.50).

The sherd of USW from context 519 is well-thrown and very hard-fired, and appears to be a late product of the tradition (Ford 1997, 32-3). All the assemblage, that includes a rimsherd, appears to be from jars.

Brick and Tile

A total of four fragments of brick (weight = 252g) and six of tile (395g) were noted. Their occurrence is shown in Table 2. Most of the material is post-medieval, and probably dates to the 17th/18th century or later. The tiles are all in fairly smooth fabrics with few visible inclusions, with the exception of the fragment from context 310, which is quite sandy, and has clear “sanding” on one surface. It is likely to be medieval or early post-medieval in date, and is 14mm thick. The small fragment from context 515 is in a similar fabric and has a trace of a sanded surface left, and may be contemporary.

**Table 1:** Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Cntxt	USW		GSW		MP		CIST		FR		MB		MY		IGW		SWSG		MOD		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
307			1	66	1	116															L14thC
310					2	45			1	36	1	85									L16thC
312					1	109	3	70			2	208									L16thC
404					1	46							2	79							M16thC
515	4	78			1	116									1	8					18thC
517																			1	4	MOD
519	1	21																			14thC
521															1	78			3	7	MOD
523							1	8							2	70	1	10			E18thC
Total	5	99	1	66	6	432	4	78	1	36	3	293	2	79	4	156	1	10	4	11	

Table 2: Brick and tile occurrence by number and weight of fragments

Context	Brick		Tile		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	
310			1	55	MED?
404			1	101	PMED
515			1	5	MED?
521	3	154	1	58	PMED
523	1	98	2	176	PMED
Total	4	252	6	395	



Environmental Report

An assessment of the plant macrofossils from an archaeological evaluation at St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire

Anna West

Introduction and Methods

Two 40 litre bulk samples were taken from archaeological features during the evaluation. The samples were all processed by Suffolk Archaeology CIC in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of the archaeological investigations.

The samples were processed using manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned using a binocular microscope at x10 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or artefacts are noted on Table 1. Identification of plant remains is with reference to New Flora of the British Isles (Stace, 1997).

The non-floating residues were collected in a 1mm mesh and sorted when dry. All retents were scanned with a magnet to retrieve any ferrous material present. All artefacts/ecofacts were retained for inclusion in the finds total.

Quantification

For the purpose of this assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded quantitatively according to the following categories:

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance:

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

Results

Table 1: Plant macrofossils within flots

SS No	Context No	Feature/cut no	Feature type	Approx date of deposit	Flot Contents
1	515	514	Pit	Post-med	charred legumes #, charcoal +, uncharred seeds #
2	310	308	Pit	Post-med	charred cereal grains #, charcoal +++, uncharred seeds #

The preservation was through charring and is generally poor. The flots varied greatly in size between the two samples. Sample 1, pit fill 515 produced 60 ml of flot material and Sample 2, pit fill 310 produced 1100 ml. Due to the volume of material present in Sample 2, a subsample of 200 ml was rapid scanned for the purposes of this report.

Wood charcoal was present in both samples. Within Sample 1 it was highly comminuted and of little use for species identification or radiocarbon dating. In Sample 2 however, wood charcoal made up the majority of the volume present and frequently contained larger fragments, occasionally 30 mm or more, that would be suitable for radiocarbon dating or species identification, if the research aims for this site required such analysis. Ring porous species were clearly present however no further



identification has been attempted for the purposes of this report. Modern rootlet fragments were common and weed seeds, in the form of elder (*Sambucus* sp.) and bramble (*Rubus* sp.) were rare within both samples; these are considered to be intrusive within the archaeological deposits.

Possible cereal grains were present in low numbers within Sample 2. The few caryopses observed were highly fragmented with no diagnostic elements of the grain being present within the scanned portion of flots, making identification to species impossible. No chaff fragments, which would have provided additional information to aid identification of the cereals present, were recovered from either of the samples.

Charred legumes, most likely peas (*Pisum sativa* L.) were present in low numbers within Sample 1, pit fill 515; again their fragmented nature made positive identification difficult. Pulses provide an important source of protein within the diet, however as they do not require processing with heat in the way cereals often do, they are less likely to be exposed to chance preservation through charring and are often under-represented in the archaeological record.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In general the samples were poor in terms of identifiable material. Wood charcoal is common within pit fill 310 and may be suitable for species identification or radiocarbon dating. Possible charred cereal grains were rare and poorly preserved; legumes however were also present, mostly likely representing food preparation or domestic refuse.

The remains recovered from these samples are too sparse to say anything conclusive beyond the fact that agricultural, horticulture and domestic activities were taking place in the vicinity during the post-medieval period. It is possible that the waste material was deposited within the features sampled however material of a fragmented nature could have been moved through the action of wind or water before becoming incorporated into the archaeological deposits.

It is not recommended that any further work is carried out on these samples as they contain insufficient material to quantify, at less than 100 specimens each. The flots should however, be retained as part of the site archive.



Appendix 4: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire	Project Site Code	255/ABS
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-268062	Event/Accession no	2016.LH.74
OS reference	SK 08258 324452	Study area size	2284.14 sq. m
Project Type	Evaluation	Height (mAOD)	115.45
Short Description	In March 2016 KDK archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire. The works were carried out prior to the conversion of the existing buildings on the site, along with the erection of side and rear extensions and the formation of associated car parking to rear. The evaluation revealed occupational activity dating from the late medieval to modern periods, probably relating to the backyard activity of the houses fronting the High Street. Features consisted of a brick well, brick walls, possible foundation/cellar, gullies, pits and post-holes.		
Previous work	None	Site status	-
Planning proposal	Conversion of existing buildings to create 10 dwellings	Current land use	Disused buildings
Local Planning Authority	East Staffordshire Borough Council	Planning application ref.	P/2016/00907
Monument type	Well, brick wall, gullies, foundation/cellar, pits, post-holes	Monument period	Post-medieval
Significant finds	Pottery, cbm, clay pipe	Future work	Unknown
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	Stephen Dean (SCC)	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaya BA ACIfA	Director/Supervisor	Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA
Sponsor/funding body	ASD Unlimited		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	21.03.17	End date	28.03.17
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent (accession no 2016.LH.74)	Pottery, cbm, clay pipe	
Paper		Brief, WSI, report, specialist reports, site records & drawings, b&w film & negatives	
Digital		CD containing reports, site records & drawings, digital photograph	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Evaluation: St Benet's House, High Street, Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire		
Serial title & volume	KDK 255/ADS/2.0		
Author(s)	Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA		
Page no's	48	Date	11.10.17