

TRIAL TRENCHES EVALUATION



LS Archaeology

Hudson House

York



February 2017

Site	Hudson House, York
Site Codes	HHY17
County	North Yorkshire
NGR	SE 59739 51628
Planning Application No	Pre planning
Development	Offices / Residential
Date of Issue	17/02/17
Site Dates	28 th 29 th 30 th January 2017
Project by	 LS Archaeology
Contributors	L.Signorelli D.McCallay
Client	Palace Capital (Developments) Limited
<p>Non Technical Summary</p> <p>This report summarises the findings of archaeological trial trenching, as part of the initial site evaluation for a pre planning application at Hudson House, York.</p> <p>Two trial trenches measuring 2m by 2m were excavated within the northeast car park of Hudson House, adjacent to the main building. Evidence of 18th-19th to 20th century drainage systems were observed and recorded.</p> <p>In trial trench 1 three features were observed: a drain/flue which containing fine burned sediment, a possible large pit and the remains of a standing structure. Stratigraphic evidence indicates that these features appear be associated with the Old Railway York 1845.</p> <p>The earliest structure in trial trench 2 was a brick lined linear with wooden planks set at 45 degrees. This was initially thought to belong to the period of the Old Railway York 1845. However, after consultation it appears that this may be a structure associated with a Georgian culvert/drain/flue system, contemporary to the areas period as a garden nursery.</p>	

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Neil Burton (Architectural History Practice)

Bill Woodsmason (Workman Facilities Management LTD)

Palace Capital (Developments) Limited

Lichfields



INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the findings of archaeological trial trenching, as part of the initial site evaluation for a pre planning application at of Hudson House, York.



Figure 1: Proposed development area (in red). Image from Google Earth

The following report has been prepared for Palace Capital (Development) Limited in accordance with the advice set by the York City Council Archaeologist John Oxley.

The aim of the two trial trenches was to establish the extent and conditions of any archaeological remains within the footings of the proposed development area (block 2).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located, between George Stephenson House and the City Council's West Offices. The city walls lay to the north west of the site with Toft Green and Tanner Row to its southeast. The site is centered at SE 59739 51628.

Hudson House consists of four large offices blocks , central court with garden and pond with a car parking area to its east, access to the front of the building is to the north east. For a more detailed evaluation of the building Hudson House refer to the Heritage Statement as produced by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners.

The ground measures circa 13.27m AOD.

GEOLOGY

The underlying geology consists of Sherwood Sandstone Group- Sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed 229 to 271 million years ago in the Triassic and Permian Periods, with the local environment previously dominated by rivers.

These rocks were formed from rivers depositing mainly sand and gravel detrital material in channels to form river terrace deposits, with fine silt and clay from overbank floods forming floodplain estuarine and coastal plain deposits mapped as alluvium.

The superficial deposits around the site are characterized as the Vale Of York Formation - clay, Sandy, Gravel, formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period, with the local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions (British Geology Survey).



Figure 2 Geological Map of York (from the British Geological Survey Map).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The development site lies within the conservation area known as York's Historic Core in an area of 20th to 21st century development. Three types of building character surround it:

1. North and north west is Medieval, Tudor Civic and religious
2. North and North East is 19th century railway development
3. South and South East are Georgian shops and houses

Character Area grouping: Grand institutions and monuments set in green space

Character Area 22: Railway Area

Monument ID	Description
MY03614	House with three mosaics
MY04169	Site of Royal House
MYO4168	Dominican Friary
MYO3718	Merchandise Station (Merchandise Station (York & North Midland Railway and Great North of England Railway, 1841) (DEMOLISHED)
MY03723	2nd York & North Midland Engine Shed (demolished)
MYO3719	Stables (DEMOLISHED)
MY03810	Hudson House (offices for British railways technical departments) 1968

Table indicating monuments and their type within the existing footprint of Hudson House

Archaeological investigations within proximity to Hudson House have reported potential Roman deposits at depths ranging from 0.4m to 1.3m below ground (EYO 427 1, EYO 2580-2581, EYO 431).

Some of these Roman deposits were found underneath the old railway station indicating that in some locations early deposits may exist. This is likely to within areas located over parts of the railway that did not require substantial ground level reduction such as platforms.

The development site is located well within the area that was once the main railway line for York. The site name 'Hudson House' refers to George Hudson, 'The Railway King' who was instrumental in establishing the York and North Midland Railway (YNMR) including the primary works on the new railway station 1837. The terminus of this railway was located where the development site now stands. Substantial ground reduction would have occurred during the construction of the tracks.

Ground works involved with the construction of this railway is well documented and cartographic evidence indicates that any potential archaeological remains from the early historical and

archaeological chapters of this area- the Roman Colonia and the Kings Toft- the Norman administrative seat for the whole country- are likely to be absent.

DEVELOPMENT

The planned development is for the demolition of the existing Hudson House office blocks, to be replaced by four distinct blocks, three of which would accommodate apartments for residential use, and the fourth block will house offices.

In total the scheme will consist of 130 residential units, 37,000 sq. ft of office space and further 5,000sq.ft of commercial space (either restaurant/café or studio/office). In addition, new pedestrian routes will be created, providing easy flow between the City Wall entrance and Toft Green, through the site and its new landscaped ground.



Figure 3: Plan of the new proposed development

MITIGATION STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

The impact on the ground of the new development appears to be minimal since three of the new blocks (Block 1, 3 and 4) are to be positioned mostly within the footings of the existing building- Hudson House.

Block 2 will be positioned mostly outside the Hudson House footings, therefore John Oxley, the principal archaeologist for the City of York Council, requested that the ground impacted by Block 2 is investigated by two trial trenches in order to establish the presence or absence and character of any archaeological remains within that area.

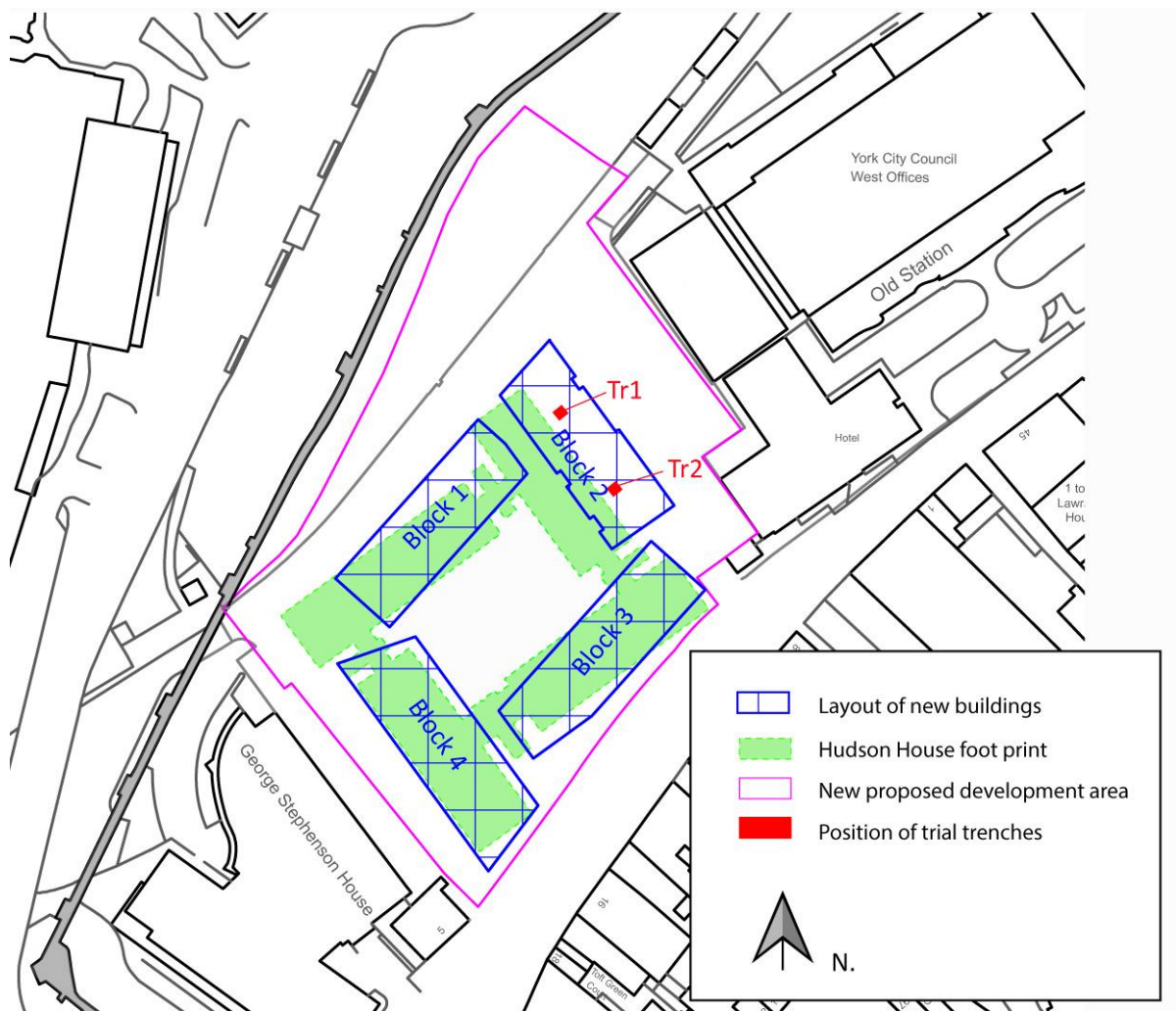


Figure 4: Plan of the proposed development and the position of the trial trenches.

METHODOLOGY REPORT

To fulfill the archaeological evaluation of the site, two trenches each measuring 2m in length and 2m in width respectively, investigated an area of approximately 9 cubic meters.

The supervising archaeologist was Luigi Signorelli from LS Archaeology.

The guidelines for archaeological excavation issued by the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists* (2014) was adhered to throughout.

In accordance with the advice of CYC Archaeology Unit, and archaeological best practice, the over-riding aim of the archaeological mitigation strategy will be one of preservation *in situ* and achieving preservation by record of the archaeology, wherever feasible.

The client/developer acknowledges that it is their responsibility to fully fund all necessary archaeological work relating to their development, including all necessary fieldwork, post-excavation requirements, specialist analyses, reporting, archiving and museum deposition fees, and if necessary publication, as well as costs relating to the administration of the aforementioned.

A two-week notice period of the start of works was given to both the archaeological contractor and to the City of York Council Authority.

The excavation of the trial trenches was fulfilled in accordance with the following criteria: all ground works that intrude below the level of the topsoil (or other 'modern' made ground layers) have been completed; all necessary archaeological recording has been completed; it is apparent that the site is archaeologically sterile.

A back-acting mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket was used for all excavations, to assist the identification of archaeology. The hard standing surface was initial cut with a mechanical saw and was further broken with a mechanical pecker.

The three days allocated for the excavation and recording was suitable and work was completed on time.

No human remains are expected and none were encountered.

A standard electronic single context recording system was used to keep a document record of all archaeology encountered.

All archaeological features were sample excavated to the following criteria: ditches 5%; pits 50%; post-holes 100%; burials 100%; linear structures (walls etc.) 5%;

All archaeological features were drawn in plan and section to either 1:10 or 1:20 scales on an archive stable *permatrace*.

All archaeological features were photographed as appropriate using a minimum of 10-megapixel digital colour camera.

FINDS METHODOLOGY

All archaeological finds pre-dating c.AD1980 were collected. The number of finds encountered was small. Some 9 fragments of ceramic building material and two pieces of machine cut marble were collected during the excavation of both trenches.

Bulk soil samples will be taken from sealed deposits, where a potential is identified for the survival of palaeo-environmental ecofacts or industrial residues. These will be assessed and analysed as necessary in the post-excavation phase. All costs pertaining to this are the responsibility of the client/developer. No bulk samples were taken as no deposits fitted the criteria. However a medium finds bag size amount of fine black silty material (Context 15) was collected from feature 14 (possible Georgian horticultural related flue).

No significant archaeology was encountered.

On completion of work, all records, photographs, finds and samples were processed, cleaned, conserved, suitably stored and catalogued, in accordance with the *Institute for Archaeologists* guidance (2008) and the *First Aid For Finds* manual (Watkinson and Neal 2001).

Finds will be subject to specialist assessment as appropriate and where statistically significant. In this case advice regarding the identification of finds was taken at the York Archaeological Trust. Jane McComish was consulted with regard to the age of the ceramic building material (found in context 8) as well as the identification of the machine cut marble (found in context 3). A report was not justified in the case of the very small assemblage and a verbal discussion was sufficed for this initial investigation. The ceramic building material was medieval in date and the marble was machine cut similar to that used in decoration around a fireplace (Georgian/Victorian). These finds have been retained to be included in any further report involving a larger assemblage of finds from this site.

Advice was also sought with regard to the identification of feature 26 (a potential elaborate drain/flue/gully structure). The similarity to a capped drain similar to feature 26 uncovered during the 100 Minorities Project in London suggested that it may be Georgian in date. Further information regarding this feature was sought at the National Railway Museum to help eliminate other potential use. No one at the museum was able to suggest a connection with the railways.

As the site had known horticultural activity during the Georgian period and some structures are identified in the cartographic evidence (LS Archaeology 2017) consultation with Oliver Jessop (Jessop Consultancy) was sought due to his experience with Historic Buildings and gardens. He agreed that the evidence suggested feature 26 was likely to be structurally Georgian and supportive of horticultural activities.

No finds identified as treasure trove were encountered.

RESULTS

An archaeological trial trenching investigation, within the footings of the new proposed development Block 2 which occupies part of the northeast car park of Hudson House, York, took place between the 28th and 30th January 2017. This is part of a pre planning archaeological programme to evaluate the potential of the archaeology within the proposed development in order to facilitate an understanding of the potential impact of the development upon any archaeological remains.

Two trenches measuring 2m by 2m were placed within the boundary of the proposed development (Figure 5) in order to investigate the potential archaeological deposits that may have survived the ground disturbance associated with the Old Railway York 1845.

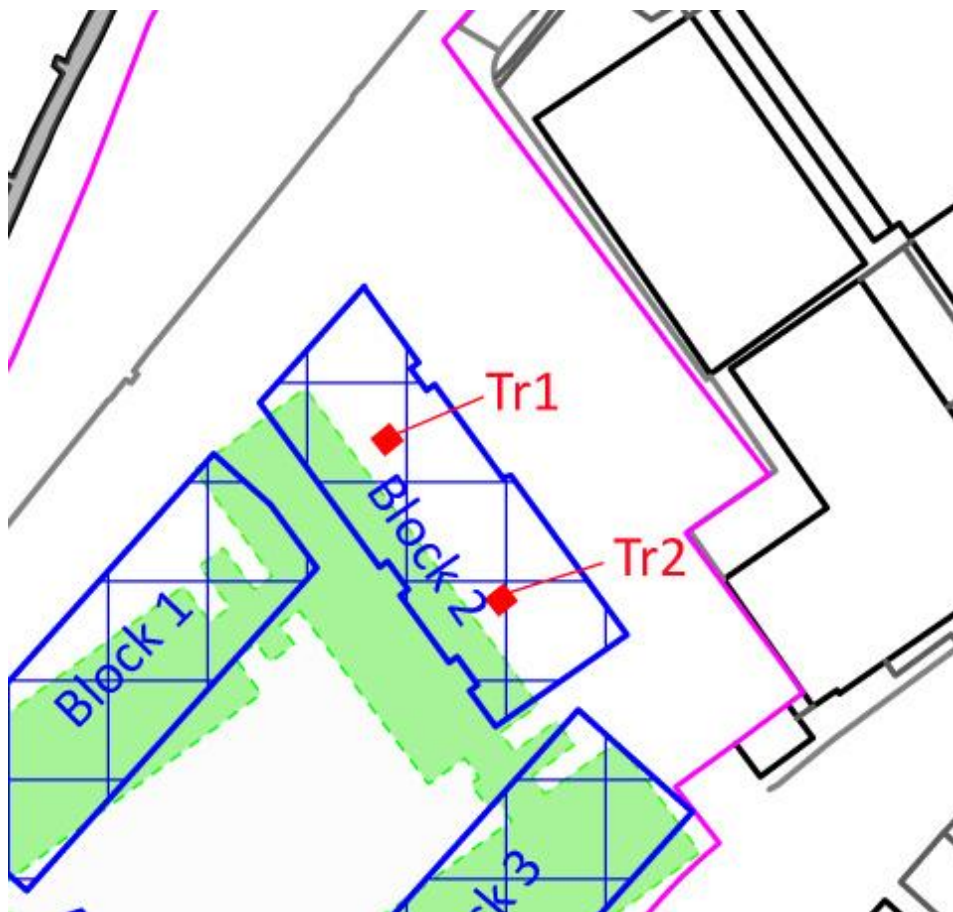


Figure 5: Location of the trial trenches

Within the two trenches, deposits from modern built up ground and a total of three service drainage systems were observed and recorded. These ranged in date from 18-19th century to 20th century.

In trial trench 1 a drain/flue was observed containing fine burned sediment. Stratigraphic evidence indicates that this feature may be associated with the Old Railway York 1845.

The earliest structure in trial trench 2 was a brick lined linear with wooden planks set at 45 degrees. This was initially thought to belong to the period of the Old Railway York 1845. However, after consultation it appears that this may be a structure associated with a Georgian culvert/drain/flue

system, contemporary to the areas period as a garden nursery. A modern clay service drain was also present in this trench.

TRENCH 1

Orientated on a northwest to southeast direction Trench 1 was excavated to an average depth of 1.15m. The removal of the tarmac layer (context 1) revealed the presence of a light grey sandy silty and gravel deposit (context 2) measuring in depth 0.3m, this layer functioned as the preparation layer for the deposition of the tarmac (Figure 7 - Figure 10).

Buried under context 2 was reddish brown clay and sand deposits (contexts 8 and 17) measuring in average 0.2m in depth. Sealed by both these deposits was a thick layer of a brown clay silt material (context 9) mixed with large angular stones, cobbles, gravel and fragmented ceramic building material (CBM) measuring 0.3m in depth. The natural sand deposit (context 10) was observed immediately beneath context 9.

No dating material was present within these deposits.

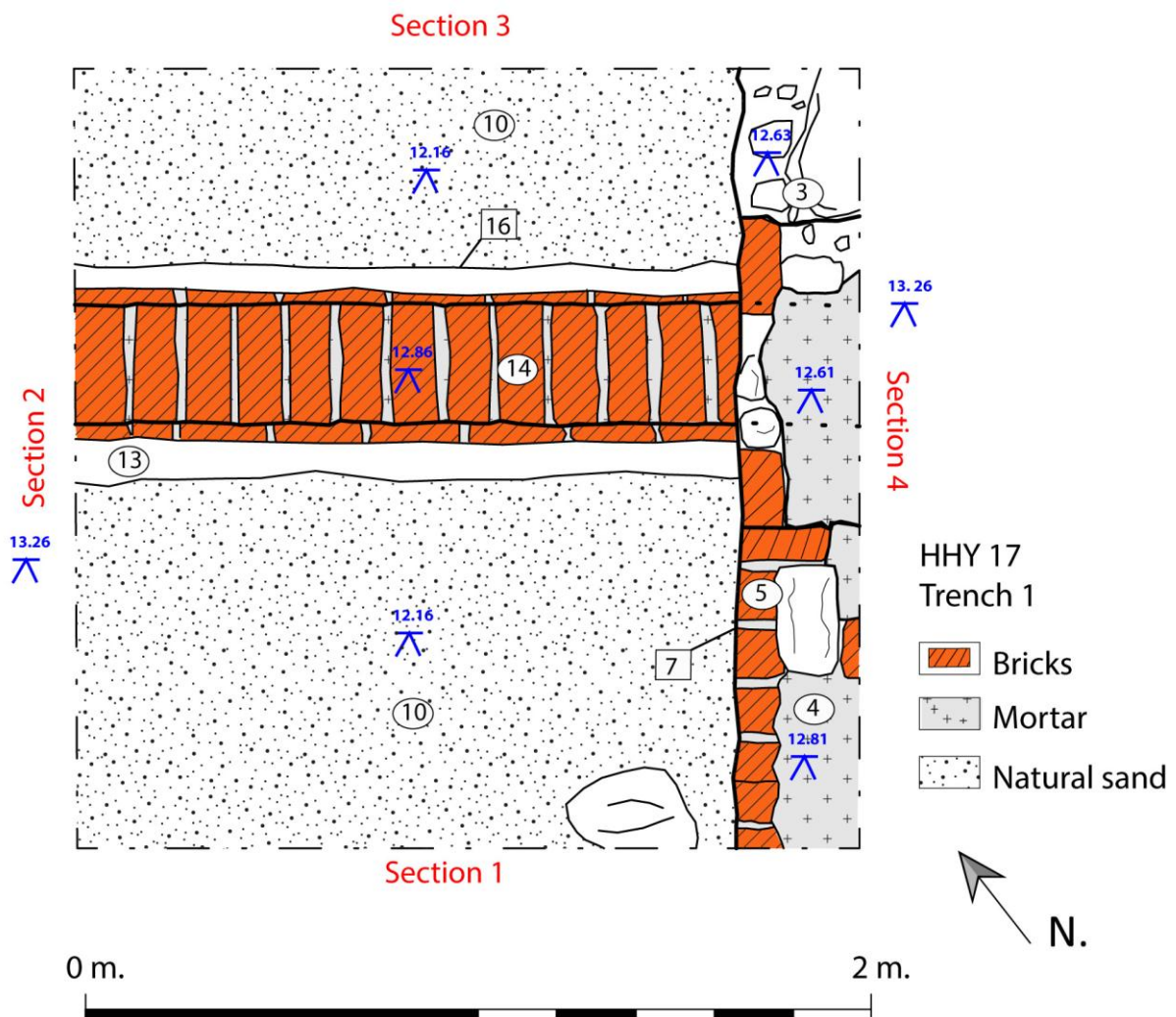


Figure 6: Plan of trench 1

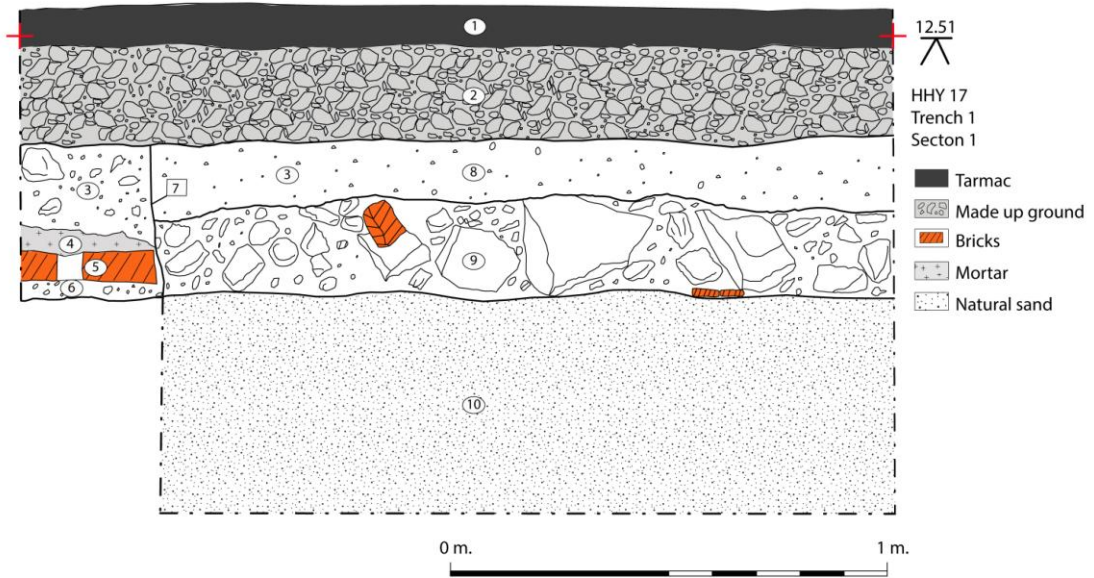


Figure 7: Section 1 facing northeast



Plate 1: Photograph of Section 1 in Trench 1

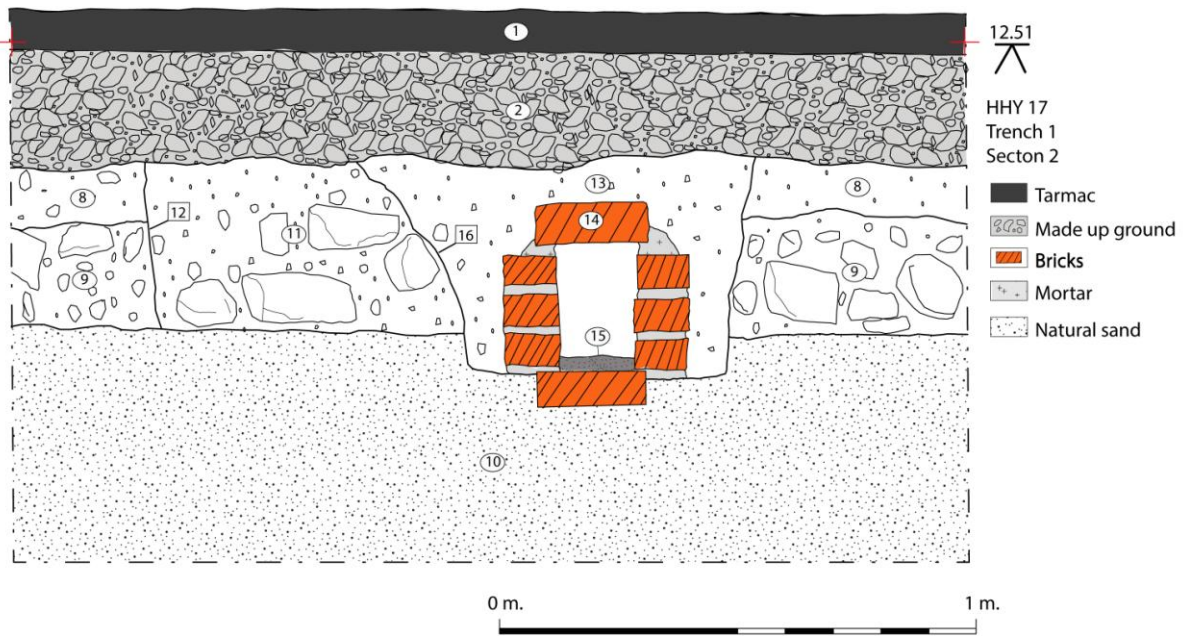


Figure 8: Section 2 facing southeast



Plate 2: Photograph of Section 2 in Trench1

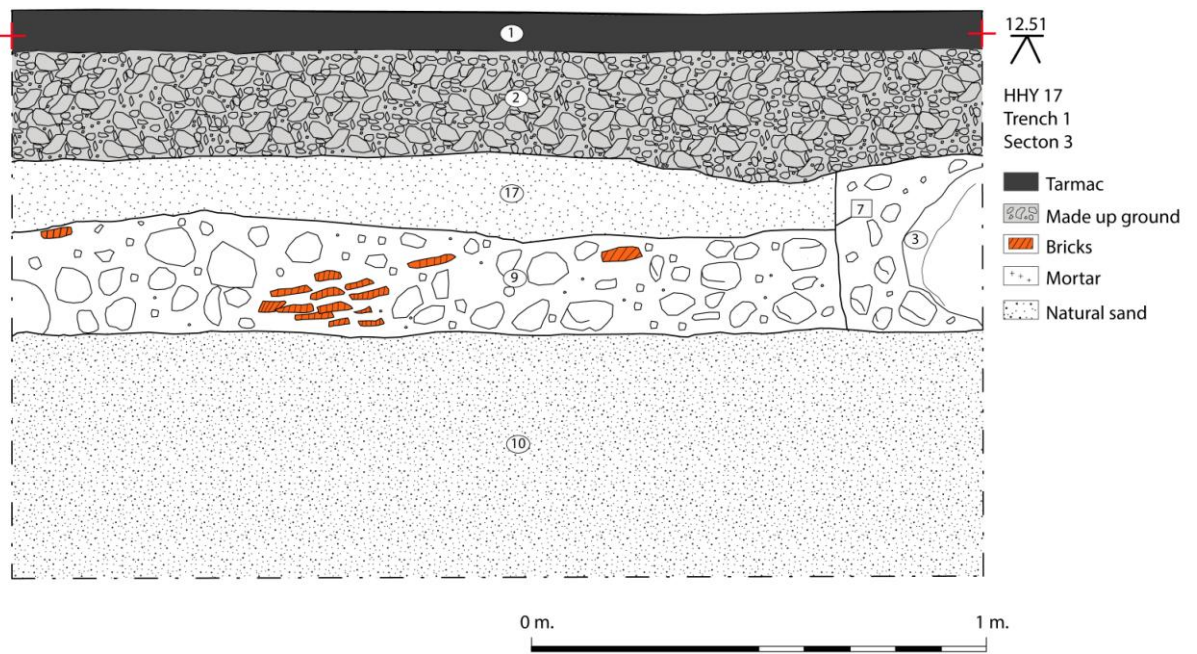


Figure 9: Section 3 facing southwest



Plate 3: Photograph of Section 3 in Trench 1

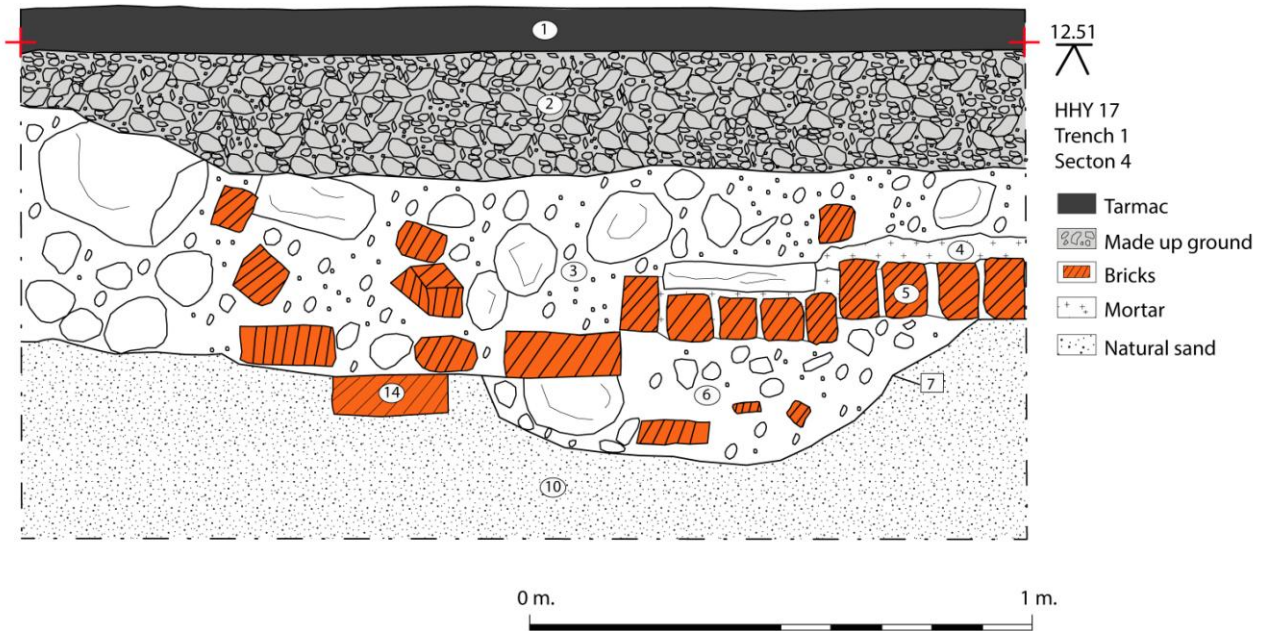


Figure 10: Section 4 facing northwest



Plate 4: Photograph of Section 4 in Trench 1

Within the limits of Trench 1, three features were observed, all cutting through deposits 8 and 9.

These features consisted of, a southeast to northwest orientated brick drain/flue, a possible large pit and the remains of a standing structure.

The only remains related to the standing structure (Contexts 4, 5, 6 and 7) are the foundation cut (context 7) a grey sandy gravel mortar layer (Context 4) measuring 0.5m thick laid above a flat surface (context 5) made of bricks and flat stones. Each brick measures respectively, 0.23m in length 0.11m wide and 0.07m thick.

Covering the remains of this structure was a rubble deposit (context 3) most likely associated with the removal of the structure. Within this context late medieval tiles and two pieces of machine cut marble (possibly associated with fireplace decoration of the Georgian / Victorian period) were found.

The foundation cut context 7 was observed truncating the Southeast to Northwest orientated brick drain/flue Context 14.

The drain is entirely built with bricks, bonded with a light grey sandy gravel mortar, the whole feature measures 0.38m in width and 0.42m in depth. The internal side of the drain measures 0.15m in width and it contained a thin layer of a black silty sand deposit measuring in depth 0.05m deep.

Along section 2 it was visible that the drain foundation context 16 was cutting through an early feature (Context 11 and 12), interpreted as a possible large pit, measuring 0.65m in width and 0.37m in depth.

This pit was filled by a single deposit (context 11), made of a black gravelly sand and silt mixed with angular rocks gravel and occasional fragmented CBM. The fill context 11 appeared to be very similar in character to the fills (context 19 and 28) of the 20th century drains found in trench 2.

TRENCH 2

Trench 2, located towards the southeast end of the car park, orientated on an Northeast to Southwest direction, was excavated to an average depth of 0.85m where the removal of the tarmac and associated deposit (context 1 and 2) revealed the presence of three linear features (context 21, 26 and 30).

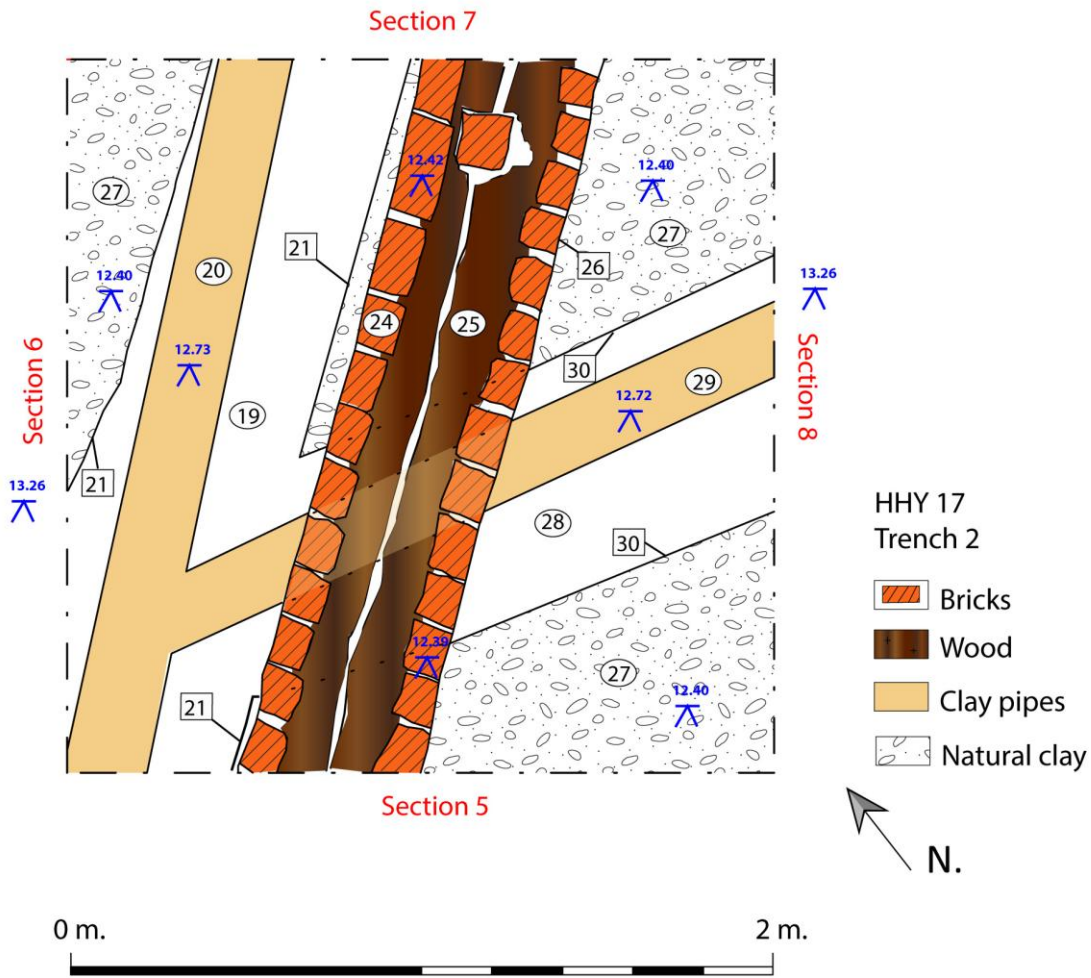


Figure 11: Plan of Trench 2



Plate 5: Photograph of Trench 2 looking northeast

Buried under context 2 was a black sandy gravel deposits (contexts 18) measuring in average 0.1m in depth, most likely to be associated with the former railway occupation. Sealed by these deposit was a thick layer of a brown clay silt material (context 22) mixed with large angular stones, cobbles, gravel and fragmented ceramic building material (CBM) measuring 0.3m in depth, and very similar to context 9 recorded in trench 1. The natural in trench 2 consisted of a clay deposit (context 27) observed immediately beneath context 22.

No dating material was present within these deposits.

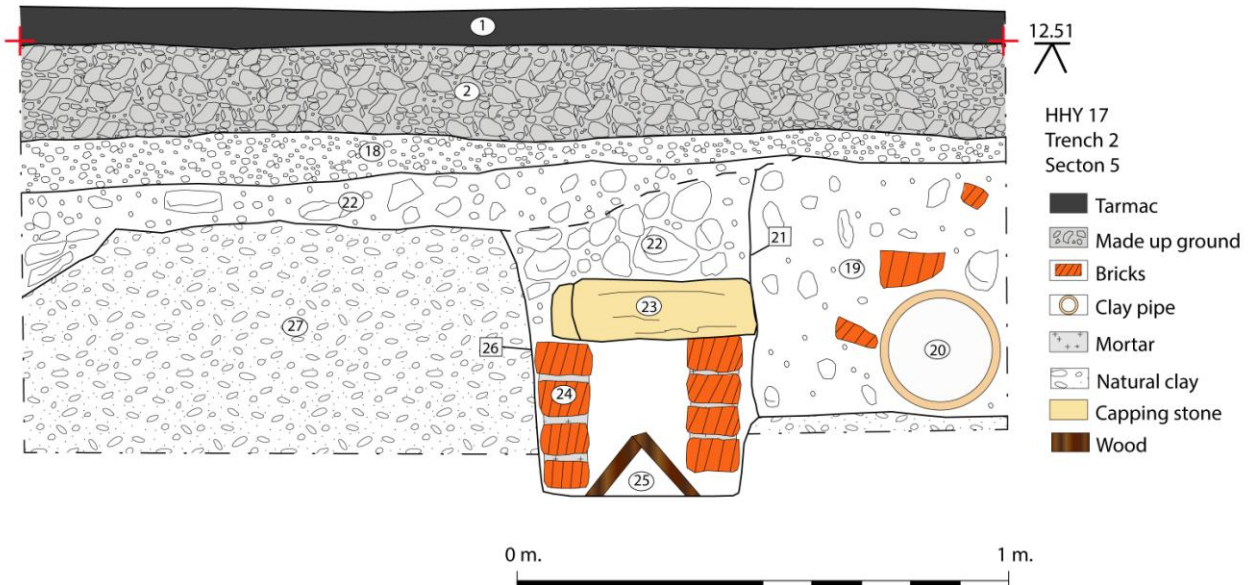


Figure 12: Section 5 facing northeast



Plate 6: Photograph of Section 5 in Trench 2

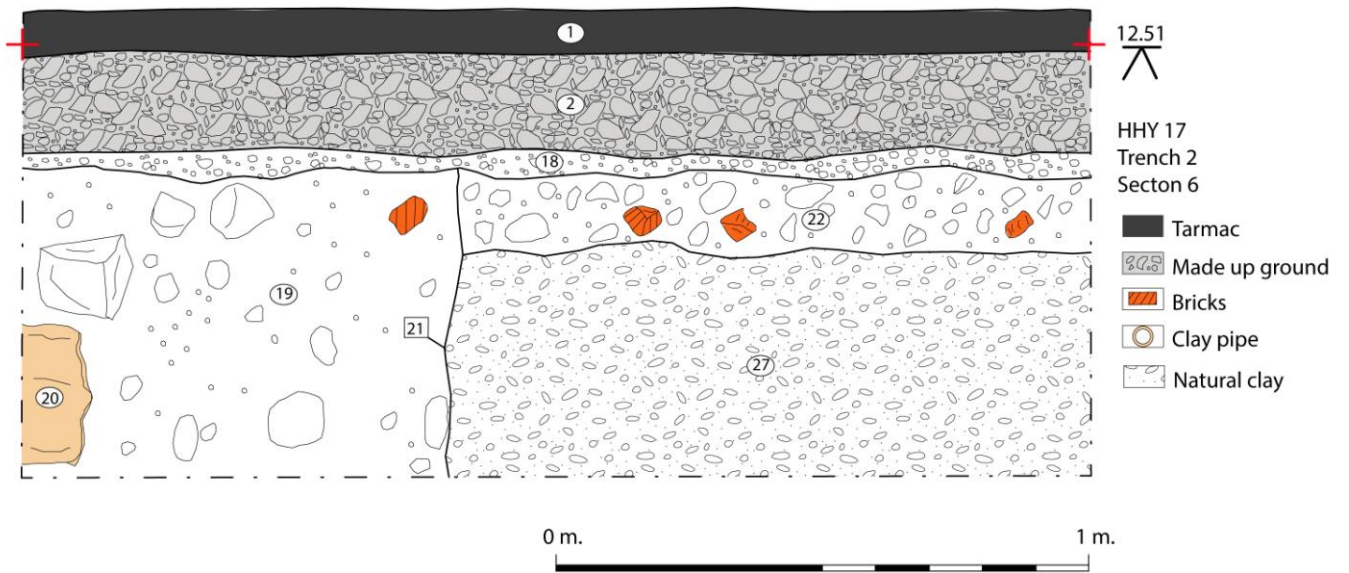


Figure 13: Section 6 facing southeast



Plate 7: Photograph of Section 6 in Trench 2

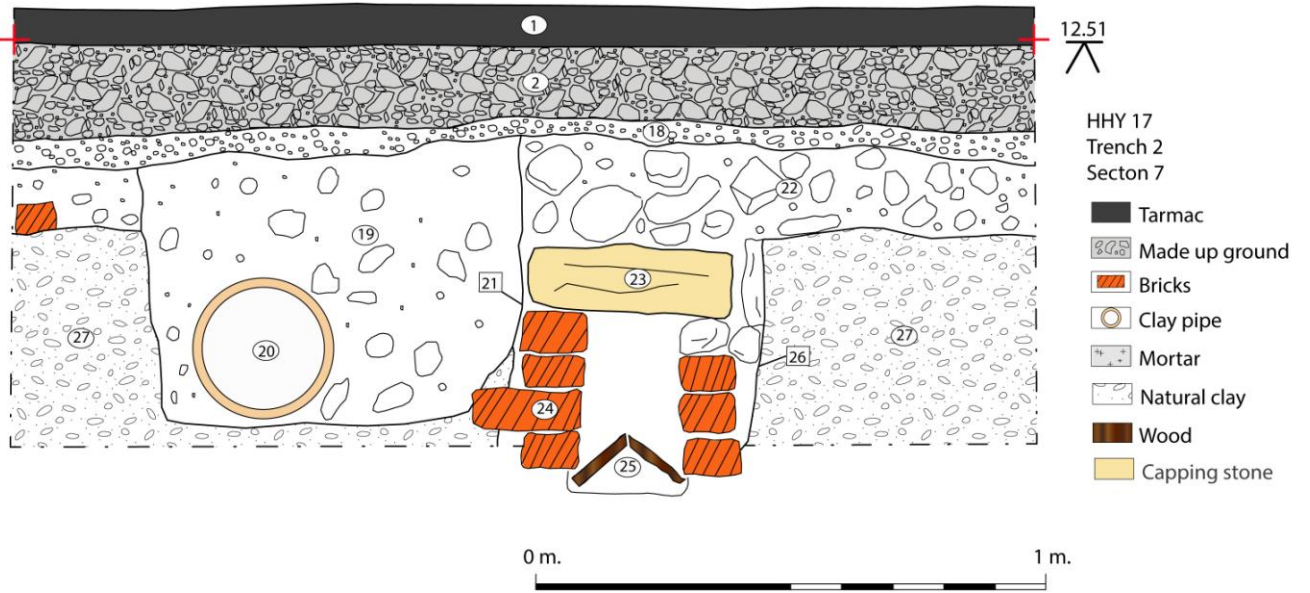


Figure 14: Section 7 facing southwest



Plate 8: Photograph of Section 7 in Trench 2

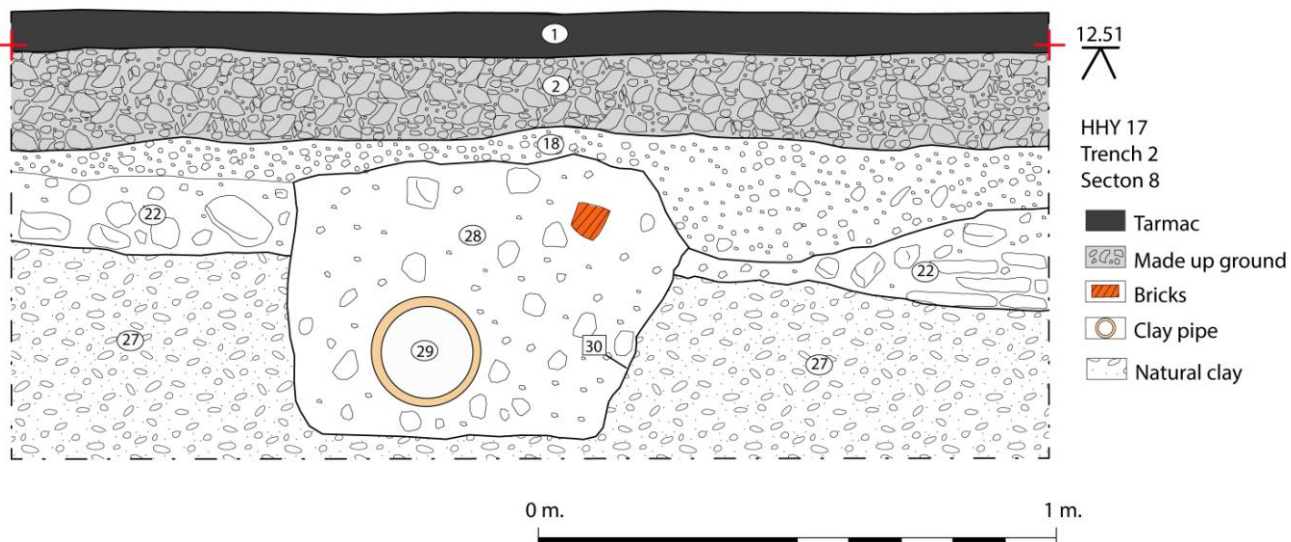


Figure 15: Section 8 facing northwest



Plate 9: Photograph of Section 8 in Trench 2

Three linear features were recorded within the limits of trench 2. Two of these linear features consisted of a 20th century clay drainpipes (context 20 and 29) each respectively measuring 0.25m and 0.21m in diameter.

Drain 20 (cut context 21) runs on a north-northeast to south-southwest direction, parallel to an early brick built drain/flue type feature (contexts 24, 25 and cut context 26).

Drain 29 (cut context 30) runs on an east to west alignment and at its western end join drain 20, and on doing so it cuts through the early drain/flue structure 24, removing most of its upper part (Figure 11, Plate 5, Plate 8).

The cut (context 26) for the drain context 24 has vertical edges, a flat base and measures 0.48m in width and 0.5m in depth. The drain edges (context 24) are made with four layers of bricks (each brick measures 0.23m long, 0.11m wide and 0.07m deep).

The drain capping (context 23) consisted of a series of sandstone slabs measuring in average 0.45m long, 0.3m wide and 0.1m thick. At the base of the drain, there were a set of wooden planks measuring circa 0.14m in width and 0.02m deep, laid at 45 degrees (Figure 14).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The archaeological evaluation by trial trenches managed to ascertain that most of the features recorded on site were of 19th or early 20th century with the exception of the linear feature 26, which is likely to be associated with Georgian gardening activity on site. As the bricks used to construct this feature are of imperial dimensions then it may indicate this structure is late Georgian.

No archaeological evidence dating to the Anglo Saxon or early medieval period was identified during the archaeological evaluation. The only medieval / late medieval activity recorded on site was the presence of some ceramic tiles found within context 9.

Within trench 1, the northwest southeast-orientated brick drain/service (Context 14) by cutting through context 9, reveals to be of a much later date most likely to be part of the early 19th century railway.

In conclusion, all the archaeological features recorded within the two trial trenches ascertain activity of the site between the 18th- 20th century of a horticultural and industrial nature.

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APPENDIX 1

HUDSON HOUSE TRIAL TRENCHES CONTEXT INDEX

Trench	Context	Identified As	Sealed by	Cuts into	Description
1	3	Foundation trench fill	2		Fill of foundation Trench for structure 5. Consists of a mixture of black sandy gravel and clinker, and redeposited dark yellow brown clay. Although it fills the upper part of the trench 7 it's more like that context 3 belong to a demolition phase of structure 5.
1	4	Layer	3		Layer of grey sandy mortar used to bond bricks and stones of structure 5.
1	5	Structure	4		Layer of bricks and a small sandstone slab, bonded by a light grey mortar. Appears to be the base of a former wall. It runs along the northeast edge of trench 1 and extends beyond the north east edge of trench 1. Each brick measures (cm.) 23x11x7
1	6	Foundation trench fill	5		Primary fill of foundation Trench 7 made of dark yellowish brown sandy clay, mixed with a small percentage of gravel. Cobbles and fragments of bricks.
1	7	Foundation trench cut	6	8	Recorded from section as a linear cut with vertical edge and concaved base. Not fully excavated, it extends beyond the north east edge of trench 1. Most likely to be the foundation trench for a brick wall.
1	8	Layer	2		Layer of a dark yellowish brown clay mixed with gravel. Appears to be a layer of redeposited natural.
1	9	Layer	8		Layer of large and small angular stones, and fragmented CBM, of which some appears to be fragments of medieval rules although mixed in with 19th to 20th century CBM. Interpreted as preparation levelling surface associated with the building of the railway.
1	10	Layer	9		Natural sterile sand
1	11	Pit fill	2		Identified and recorded from section, as the fill of a possible large pit filled with large stones and gravel. Extend beyond the north west edge of trench 1.
1	12	Pit cut	11		Large pit identified and recorded from section. Extend beyond the north west edge of trench 1. Cut by the drain trench 16.

Trench	Context	Identified As	Sealed by	Cuts into	Description
1	13	Ditch fill	2		Sandy clay fill mixed with gravel. Identify and recorded from section as the fill of a brick structure drain.
1	14	Structure	13		Identify and recorded from section as a linear brick structure/flue. The base and cap consists of a single line of bricks, also the edges are made of three layers of flat layered bricks. Each brick measures (cm) 23x11x7. Truncated by linear feature 7. The brick dimensions were Imperial in size.
1	15	Layer			Black silty material accumulated at the base of drain 14.
1	16	Ditch cut	13 / 15		Cut for a trench for the brick drain 14, north west to south east direction. Nearly vertical edges and flat base.
1	17	Layer	2		Redeposited natural which consists of a strong brown sandy material mixed with occasional small angular gravel. Cut by feature 7.
1 - 2	1	Layer			Car park surface
1 - 2	2	Layer	1		Made up ground consisting of limestone fragment, preparation layer / levelling surface for the layer of tarmac.
2	18	Layer	2		Black deposit made of a mixture of sand, gravel and clinker. Most likely to be associated with the former railway.
2	19	Ditch fill	18		Identified as the fill of a drain service trench, made of a mixture of black sandy gravel and clinker, and redeposited brown clay which contains small angular stones. Same as fill 3.
2	20	Drain pipe	19		20th century large clay pipe. Crossing the trench on a north east to south west direction.
2	21	Ditch cut	19 / 20	26 / 27	Cut for a north east to south west drain pipe. Partially cuts feature 26.
2	22	Layer	18		Layer of large and small angular stones, and fragmented CBM, of which some appears to be fragments of medieval rules although mixed in with CBM. Interpreted as preparation levelling surface associated with the building of the railway??

Trench	Context	Identified As	Sealed by	Cuts into	Description
2	23	Structure	22		Large sandstone slabs measuring 45cm in lengths, circa 20cm in width and 10cm thick. These stones are the capping of a northeast to southwest orientated service brick structure. most likely to be of Georgian date.
2	24	Structure	23		Four layers of half brick laid flat which forms the walls of a northeast to south west orientated drain. The bricks measure each (cm.) 23x11x7 which appears to be Imperial measurements dating from 19th century suggesting late Georgian.
2	25	Structure			Context 25 consist of a set of planks laid in two rows, with the wood positioned at about 45°degree angle at the base of the of the brick slut. The planks measures 14 cm. in width and 2 cm. deep.
2	26	Ditch cut	24 / 25 / 31		Cut for a drain/slut/service structure, running on a North East to southwest direction. With vertical edges and flat base. Truncated by the two clay pipe drain 20 and 29.
2	27	Layer			Clay natural deposit contains occasional small cobbles and gravel.
2	28	Ditch fill	18		Identified as the fill of a drain service trench, made of a mixture of black sandy gravel and clinker, and redeposited brown clay which contains small angular stones. Same as fill 3, and 19.
2	29	Drain pipe	28		20th century large clay pipe. Crossing the trench on an east to west direction to join drain pipe 20. Cuts through structure 26.
2	30	Ditch cut	28		Cut for an east to west drain pipe. Can trough feature 26.
2	31	Ditch fill	18		Identified and recorded for section, as the upper fill of structure/drain cut 26. Context 31 consists of a mixture of large angular stones, gravel and sandy silt material. Although most of the material is darker in colour, it appears very similar to context 22.



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2017