

**EXCAVATION OF FOUR TEST PITS AT THE EAGLE TAVERN,  
LEMPRIÈRE STREET, ST HELIER, JERSEY**

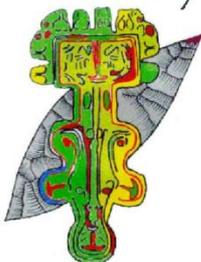
**OCTOBER 2008**

**Report No AA9/08/EVAL**

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October 2008

Commissioned By  
Regal Developments Ltd



**ABSOLUTE ARCHAEOLOGY**

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OCTOBER 2008**

**NGR UTM 6510 4890**

***Summary***

*Absolute Archaeology was commissioned by MS Planning Limited on behalf of Regal Developments Ltd, to excavate a series of archaeological test pits to determine whether any substantial archaeology was present beneath the Eagle Tavern. This was carried out in response to the condition of planning preceding the intended development of the site and in accordance with the project brief submitted by Absolute Archaeology and approved by Oxford Archaeology on behalf of the States of Jersey Planning Department.*

*The test pitting resulted in no significant archaeology being found. All four test pits provided evidence of post AD 1750 layered deposits with test pit 3 revealing a mortared wall **F[303]** running on a N-S alignment. All of the test pits were hand excavated to an average depth of 1.4m from the surface of the concrete. Each of the pits revealed blown very fine sands (loess) at the above depth. A sondage in test pit 2 showed that the blown sand was still present at 0.7m below the base of the excavated pit. The darker deposits **(105)(204)(304)(406)** in the four test pits are likely to represent buried topsoils dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, potentially relating to the enclosed garden shown on Richmond's map of 1795.*

***Acknowledgements***

*Absolute Archaeology would like to thank the following for their assistance to the project: Mr Stuart Fell of MS Planning Limited; Mr Paul Harrison on behalf of Regal Developments Ltd; Ms Jayne Fawdry Historic Buildings Officer, Jersey Planning and Environment Department; Ms Klara Spandl and Mr Hugh Beamish on behalf of Oxford Archaeology; Olga Finch of the Jersey Heritage Trust and Mrs Margaret Finlaison, Mrs Ann Spencer and Mr Daniel Gayet of the Société Jersiaise.*

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## Abbreviations

JD

Jersey Datum; used to express a given height above mean sea level related specifically to Jersey.

UTM

Universal Transverse Mercator (Grid Zone 30 Central Meridian 3°W International Spheroid/European datum).

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the results of archaeological test pitting within the confines of the Eagle Tavern, Lemprière Street, St Helier as part of the planning framework related to the *Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002, the Island Plan 2002 (Policy G12) and the Supplementary Planning Guidance Policy Note 1 : Archaeology and Planning (January 2008)*. The work is intended to assess the archaeological potential beneath the Eagle Tavern prior to its demolition and the construction thereafter of three town houses (Planning Reference P/2008/1594).

## 2. GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The Eagle Tavern is situated above the oldest formation of Jersey Shale (classified as association IV after Helm and Pickering 1985 in British Geological Survey: Jersey 1989). The development site is situated on the boundary between alluvium (to the north) and a recent blown sand deposit (to the south). Excavations proved that blown sand (loess) was present in all four of the test pits and is certainly 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier in date. A sondage into the blown sand layer **(205)** in test pit 2 found that the deposit continued beyond a depth of 0.7m. Bands of blown sand were also recognised in section in test pit 2 **(204)** and appear to date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A number of prehistoric, Gallo-Roman, Norman and Medieval sites and finds have been uncovered in the vicinity of The Eagle Tavern.

Neolithic activity in the form of a dolmen (Les Prés des Lumières – SSI 46) and its associated avenue has been located around 0.6 km to the east of the site, whilst the Megalith of Mont de la Ville was situated 0.5km to the south-south-east of the site. The Megalith was re-positioned at Henley-on-Thames in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Bronze Age activity in the form of deposited objects was found at Lewis Street (Gold torque dating to 1200 BC) and Town Mills (Bronze hoard of Armorican axes) (Driscoll 2008).

Gallo-Roman activity has been recorded at Old Street and the Parade and beneath the Cyril Le Marquand house. Fragments of Gaulish Samian, Dressel 1 Amphorae and Black Burnished Ware were excavated at the site (Woods 1989). This site lies approximately 90m south-southwest of the Eagle Tavern. A coin hoard was found at the General Hospital and dated to c.400AD. Amongst the hoard were coins of Emperors Constans, Constantinius and Theodosius.

Early Medieval activity in the form of an enclosed settlement with attached field systems was found at Cyril Le Marquand House (Old Street/31 the Parade). Animal bone from the site gave a radio carbon date for 778-992 cal. AD.

A 13<sup>th</sup> century Aisled Hall was excavated at Old Street/31 The Parade 'Cyril Le Marquand House' (Finlaison 1986). This is located approximately 90m south-southwest of the Eagle Tavern. Excavations of the Hue Street cottages provided evidence for 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century occupation followed by two centuries of cultivation activity.

Post Medieval activity has been recorded at Aquila Road, Cannon Street, Cyril Le Marquand House, 3 Old Street and 22 and 24 Hue Street.

By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the maps indicate the presence of a structure in the vicinity of the Eagle Tavern and by 1834 the Eagle Tavern had been constructed (Driscoll 2008 : 24-25).

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

**4.1** The four test pits, measuring approximately 1.5m<sup>2</sup> x < 1.4 m deep comprised the hand excavation and removal of soil and aggregate to expose any underlying archaeology. The concrete floor surrounding the test pits was removed prior to excavation.

**4.2** All recording was carried out using Absolute Archaeology's recording system, which includes written, drawn and photographic records.

**4.3** The archive has been prepared using the site code Absolute Archaeology 9.

## **5. RESULTS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Test pits 1, 2 and 3 were situated where the lounge and bar areas were positioned within the Eagle Tavern, with test pit 4 outside in the small eastern yard area. The concrete overburden was removed prior to the excavation of each of the test pits. Test pits 1-3 were excavated and recorded under artificial lighting.

### **5.2 Test pit 1 (Fig 4)**

Test pit 1 measuring 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in width x 1.4m in depth was positioned to the north of the west lounge. The upper layer **(100)** comprised 100mm of solid concrete (removed prior to excavation). Layer **(101)** comprised a 200mm hardcore makeup for the above concrete floor, consisting of broken brick, ceramic tile and the remains of two sets of wooden planking. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery was found throughout. Layer **(102)** comprised <240mm of a fine light grey (10YR 7/2) humic sand with occasional coke/clinker fragments. Layer **(103)** comprised of a surface measuring <100mm in depth. The makeup of the surface contained crushed red brick and tile within a matrix of lime mortar. A 19<sup>th</sup> century date can be given for this layer. Layer **(104)** comprised <350mm of mixed crushed brick and tile hardcore with granite shale and coke/clinker residing in a mid yellowish grey fine sand. Layer **(105)** comprised <450mm of a fine greyish brown (10YR 5/2) compact humic sand with mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramic finds. Layer **(106)** comprised a light grey (10YR 7/2) very fine compact blown sand (loess) that was not bottomed.

### 5.3 Test pit 2 (Fig 5)

Test pit 2 measuring 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in width x 1.4m in depth was positioned to the north of the bar area. The upper layer **(200)** comprised 200mm of solid concrete (removed prior to excavation). Layer **(201)** comprised a loose hardcore makeup <300mm for the above concrete floor, consisting of broken brick and angular granite shale. A horizontal course of 2 mortared red bricks **[202]** located at the base of layer **(201)** are probably the remnants of some form of conduit. The bricks were recognised in both the south and north facing sections and are probably late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century in date. Layer **(203)** comprised a 300mm deep layer of loose angular shale within a sandy matrix at the base, and would appear to represent the base of an earlier floor surface. Layer **(204)** comprised a <550mm deep greyish brown (10YR 5/2) compact humic sand deposit with lenses of blown sand (loess). Finds from this layer indicate a late 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The deposit appears to represent a buried topsoil, probably derived from garden material. Layer **(205)** comprised of a light grey (10YR 7/2) very fine compact blown sand (loess). A sondage in this layer found the deposit continuing to a depth greater than 0.7m from the base of test pit 2.

### 5.4 Test pit 3 (Fig 6)

Test pit 3 measuring 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in width x 1.2m in depth was positioned to the SW area of the main lounge. Modern service pipes had cut through the upper deposits in this test pit. The upper layer **(300)** comprised 200mm of a solid concrete (removed prior to excavation). Layer **(301)** comprised <300mm of loose aggregate makeup of angular granite shale, broken brick and tile. Layer **(302)** comprised <300mm of friable dark greyish brown humic sand with common crushed clinker/coke. Construction **F[303]** consists of a mortared wall forming the east facing side of the test pit on a N-S alignment. The feature comprises a double leaf, fair faced, random coursed granite wall, surviving to a recorded depth of 700mm x 450mm in width **(Fig 8)**. The structure lies directly on top of buried topsoil **(304)** with no obvious underlying structural support. Layer **(304)** comprised a brown (10YR 5/3) compact humic sand with occasional coke/clinker fragments, recorded to a depth of 430mm in section. This layer is in all probability a buried topsoil derived from garden material. Layer **(305)**

comprised a light grey (10YR 7/2) very fine compact sand (loess) with no inclusions, recorded to a depth of <45mm.

## 5.5 Test pit 4 (Fig 7)

Test pit 4 was located outside in the small eastern yard. Measuring 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in width x 1.3m in depth, the test pit revealed a modern 130mm diameter ceramic service pipe cut into the western baulk section. The northern baulk section was also disturbed by a deep/wide deposit of modern partially consolidated concrete and hardcore resulting in a reduced area of excavation. Layer **(400)** comprised 200mm of solid concrete (removed prior to excavation). Layer **(401)** comprised 100mm of loose aggregate material acting as a base for the above concrete. Cut **[403]** runs moderately from the E-W (as recorded in the north facing section) and is filled by deposit **(402)**, comprising 600mm of loose dark humic soil with a high frequency of domestic waste consisting of broken glazed ceramic and glass, oyster shells, clinker, nails, broken brick and tile, representing a waste deposit of late Victorian date. Cut **[405]** is a moderate/steep sloping pit running S-N (as recorded in the west facing section) and is filled by deposit **(404)** representing an earlier phase of the Victorian rubbish pit, containing broken brick and tile within a loose dark humic soil. Common clinker was noted throughout the deposit. Layer **(406)** measuring <550mm in depth represents a disturbed buried topsoil containing occasional broken red brick of a late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Feature **[407]** comprised a single layer of water worn pebbles (<200mm in length) and sub-angular granite (<150mm in length) one of which has an Iron fixture inserted into it, indicating that the material has been reused. The feature was only partially exposed to the east of test pit 4 and appears to run in a N-S direction **(Fig 9)**. The raised uneven nature of the layer means that is unlikely to be a surface. Margaret Finlaison (Société Jersiaise) has offered the suggestion that the feature may represent the remnants of a property division marker. The layer is probably late 18<sup>th</sup> century, datable by a single sherd of green glazed pancheon from within the matrix of the layered stone. Layer **(408)** comprised a compact light grey (10YR 7/2) very fine sand (loess) with no inclusions. Almost certainly a blown sand and pre 18<sup>th</sup> century in date. Not bottomed.

## 6. COMMENTS

The excavation of the four test pits resolved that no substantial archaeology is present to a depth of 1.4m below the current concrete surface. Test pit 1 revealed a rough mortared surface **F[103]** dating to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the extent of which could not be determined within the parameters of this evaluation. Other deposits represent buried topsoil **(105)** and blown sand (loess) **(106)**. It is observed that although layer **(106)** may be masking earlier archaeology it is unlikely to be disturbed by shallow building foundations. Test pit 2 did not contain any archaeological features. The buried topsoil **(204)** suggests that the area was under garden cultivation in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. As with the other test pits the basal deposit **(205)** of blown sand (loess) could potentially be covering earlier archaeological features. A substantial granite wall **F[303]** formed the east facing section of test pit 3. It is observed that this is aligned with the N-S support wall, now knocked through to accommodate the eastern extension to the Eagle Tavern. It is therefore considered that **F[303]** may represent the truncated foundation of the original 19<sup>th</sup> century building. Test pit 3 contains basal fill **(305)**, matching deposits **(106)** and **(205)** comprising compact loess potentially masking earlier archaeology. Test pit 4 revealed a combination of 20<sup>th</sup> century service trenches and 19<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pits. Below this, a layer of placed granite and water worn pebbles **F[407]** may represent a boundary marker of late 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The base of test pit 4 comprised a similar layer of loess **(408)** as evident in the test pits 1-3.

## 7. CONCLUSION

As discussed above, the basal layers evident in all four test pits have the potential to seal earlier archaeological features and deposits. The sondage excavated in test pit 2 confirmed that the loess deposit continues to a depth exceeding 0.7m in this area and it is considered that any archaeology sealed below this depth would not be disturbed by shallow building foundations, should they not exceed 1.2m in depth. The buried topsoils located in each of the test pits are probably associated with soil from the enclosed garden areas shown on the Richmond map of 1795 (Driscoll 2008, 34; Fig 6). The banding of the blown sands within the topsoils could relate to periods of diversity (grassland) where the loess sands would naturally accumulate. In conclusion, the above evaluation established as far as possible that any

future development within the confines of the depths excavated as a result of the archaeological test pitting (detailed above) would have no impact on any pre 18<sup>th</sup> century archaeological features.

## 8. FINDS

All finds were found to be post AD 1750 in date and were not confined to significant archaeological features. Finds were summarised on site to determine an accurate date range for the deposits and will not be retained for further examination.

### 8.1 TEST PIT No 1

CONTEXT NUMBER	CERAMICS 18 <sup>TH</sup> /19 <sup>TH</sup> C	GLASS SHARDS	METAL	CLAY PIPE	ANIMAL BONE/TEETH	OTHER
102	GLAZED= 5			PIPE BOWL		GEORGE IV HALF PENNY (1821-1830) (WORN) MOTHER OF PEARL BUTTON
103	GLAZED = 36	BOTTLE =1	MISCELLANEOUS =1		CATTLE = 1	
104	GLAZED = 1		NAIL = 1		TOOTH =1 BONE =2	
105	GLAZED = 14	BOTTLE = 1 WINDOW = 1		STEMS = 3	BONE = 4	

### 8.2 TEST PIT No 2

CONTEXT NUMBER	CERAMICS 18 <sup>TH</sup> /19 <sup>TH</sup> C	GLASS SHARDS	METAL	CLAY PIPE	ANIMAL BONE/TEETH	OTHER
203	GLAZED = 5				BONE = 1	Napoleon III (1853/56) COPPER COIN (WORN)
204	GLAZED = 20	BOTTLE = 1	MISCELLANEOUS = 1	STEMS = 6	BONE = 1	

### 8.3 TEST PIT No 3

CONTEXT NUMBER	CERAMICS 18 <sup>TH</sup> /19 <sup>TH</sup> C	GLASS SHARDS	METAL	CLAY PIPE	ANIMAL BONE/TEETH	OTHER
301	DECORATED HANDLE = 1 GLAZED = 4				BONE = 2	
302	GLAZED = 1	BOTTLE = 1		STEMS = 3	SAWN CATTLE RIB	
304	GLAZED = 4	BOTTLE = 1			BONE = 2 TOOTH = 1	

### 8.4 TEST PIT No 4

CONTEXT NUMBER	CERAMICS 18 <sup>TH</sup> /19 <sup>TH</sup> C	GLASS SHARDS	METAL	CLAY PIPE	ANIMAL BONE/TEETH	OTHER
402	GLAZED = 31			BOWL = 1 STEM = 1		
406	GLAZED = 4				BONE = 4	
407	GLAZED = 1					

## 9. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey. Jersey: *Description of 1:25000 Channel Islands, Sheet 2*. 1989.

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Finlaison, M., 1986, A thirteenth- Century Aisled Hall from St Helier, Jersey. In: P. Johnston (ed) *The Archaeology of the Channel islands*. Sussex: Phillimore Press: 148-150.

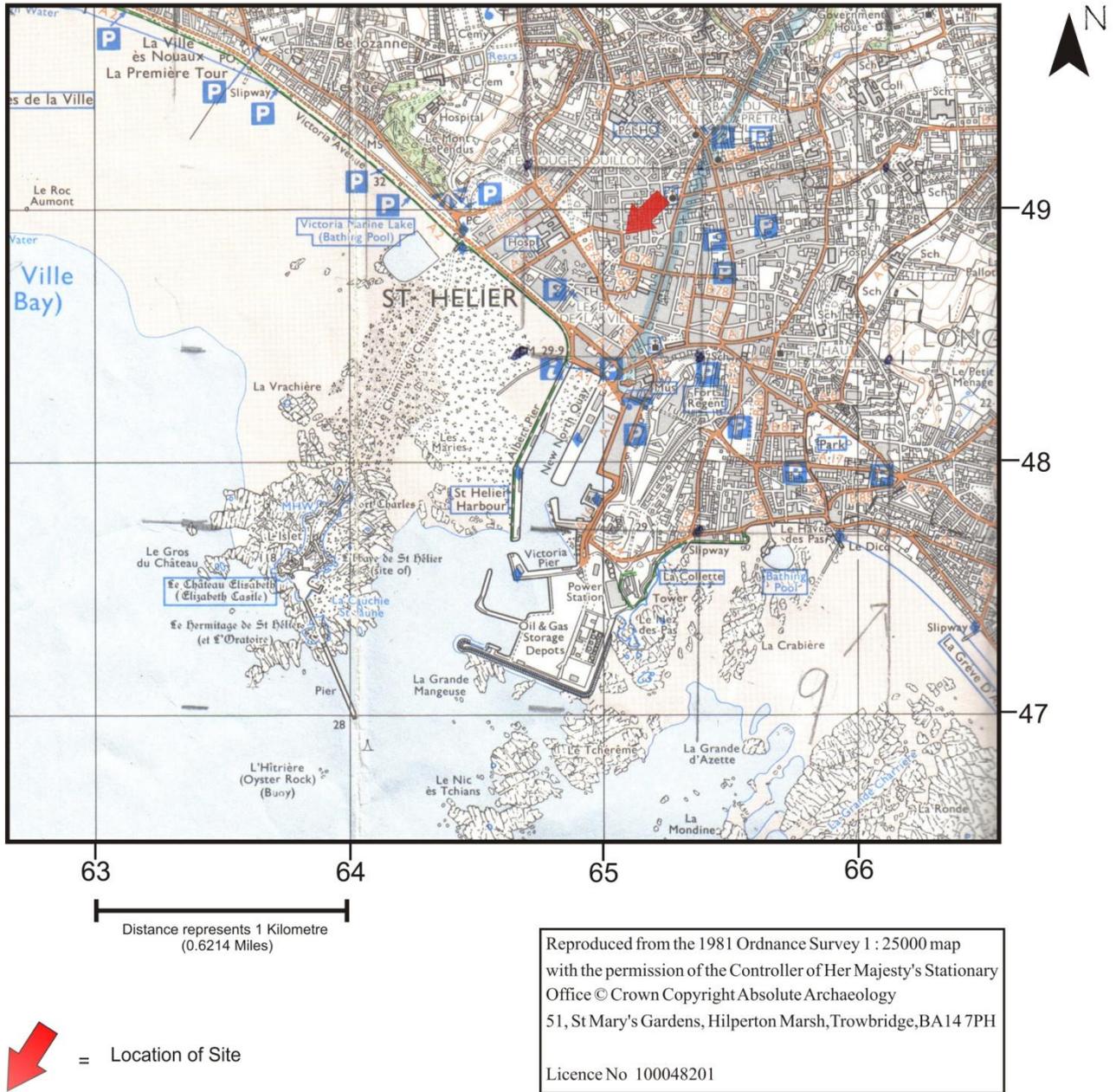
Wood, M., 1989, Romano-British and Roman Pottery from Jersey. *Annual Bulletin Société Jersiaise*: 175-178.

# FIGURES

## Figure 1: Location of Study Area

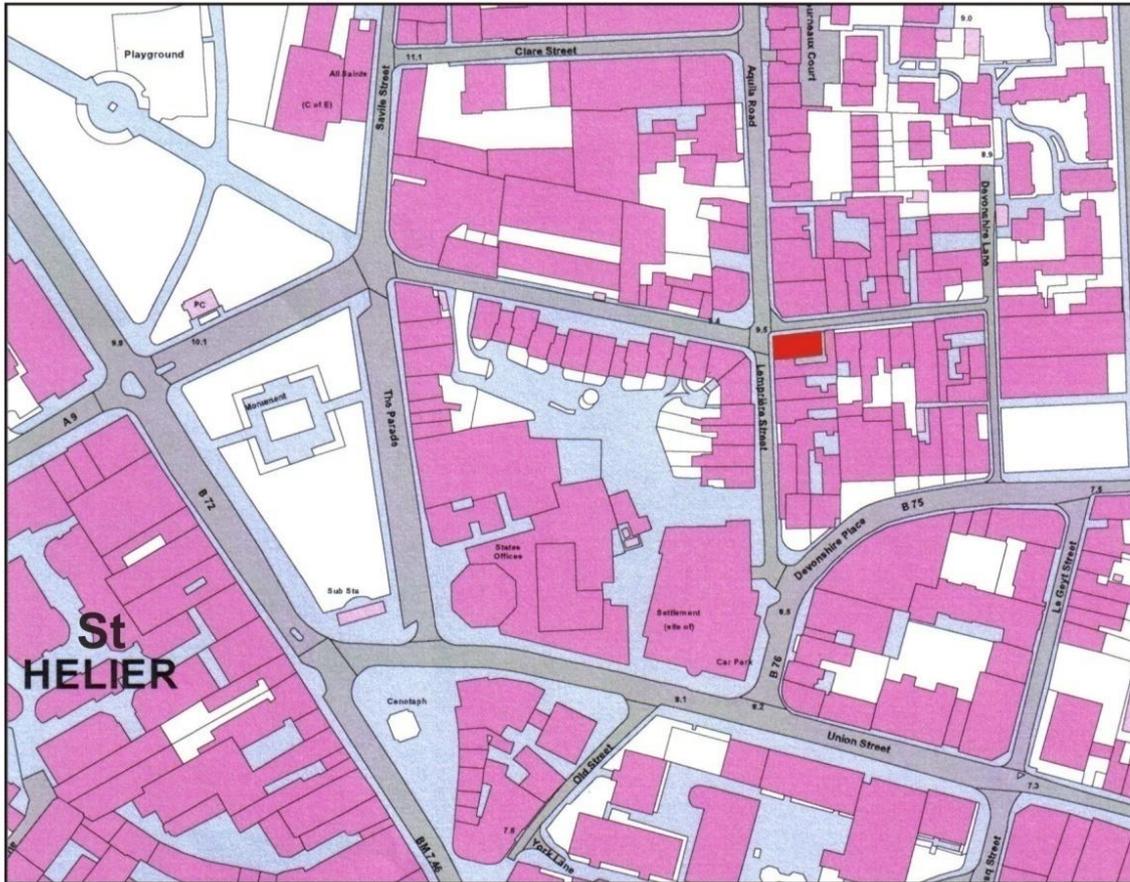
**Centred On \*UTM 6510 4890**

\*Universal Transverse Mercator Grid Zone 30 Central Meridian 3°W International Spheroid/European datum.



**Figure 2: Site Plan**  
**Scale 1:3000**  
**Centred On \*UTM 6510 4890**

\*Universal Transverse Mercator Grid Zone 30 Central Meridian 3°W International Spheroid/European datum.

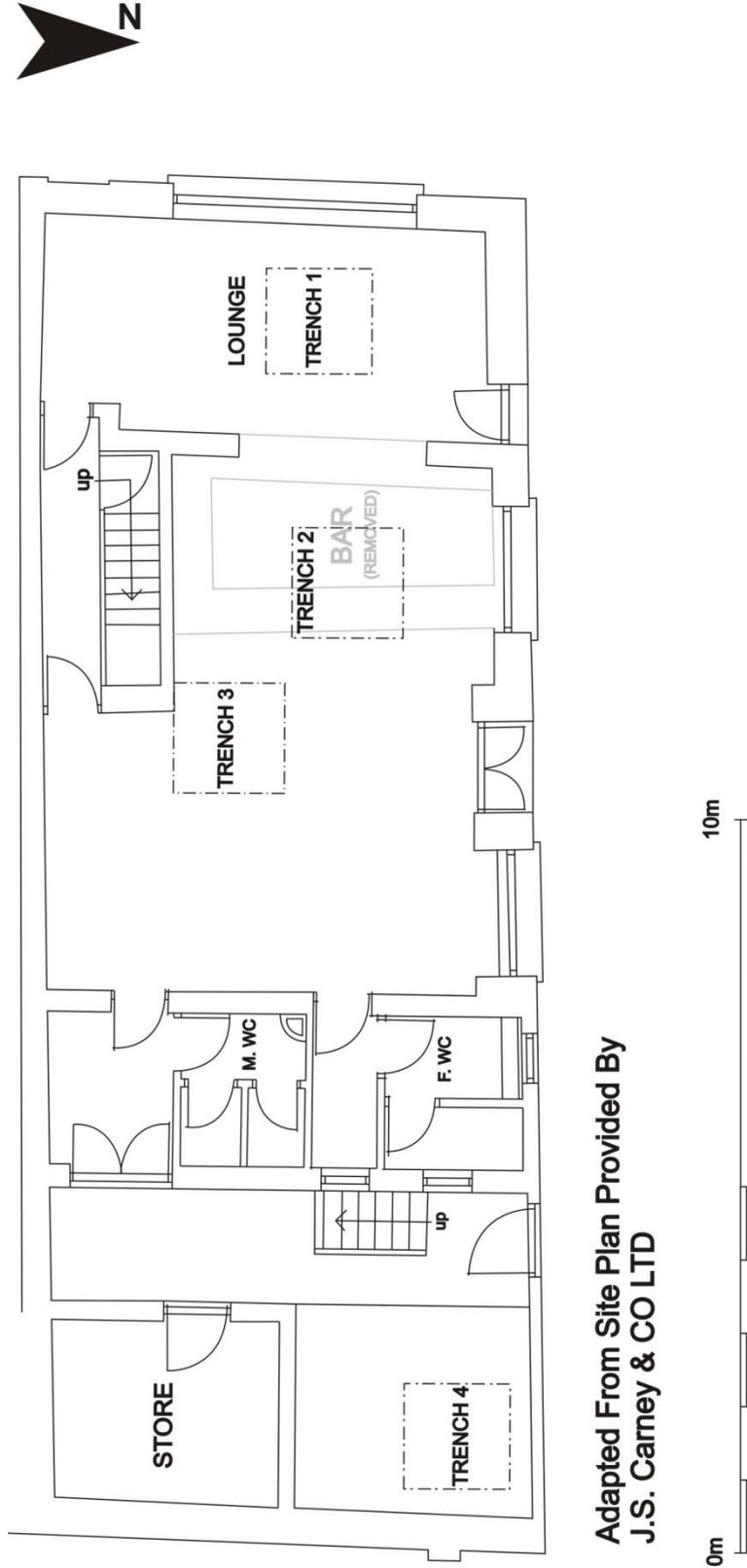


Map supplied by MS Planning & Development Consultancy.

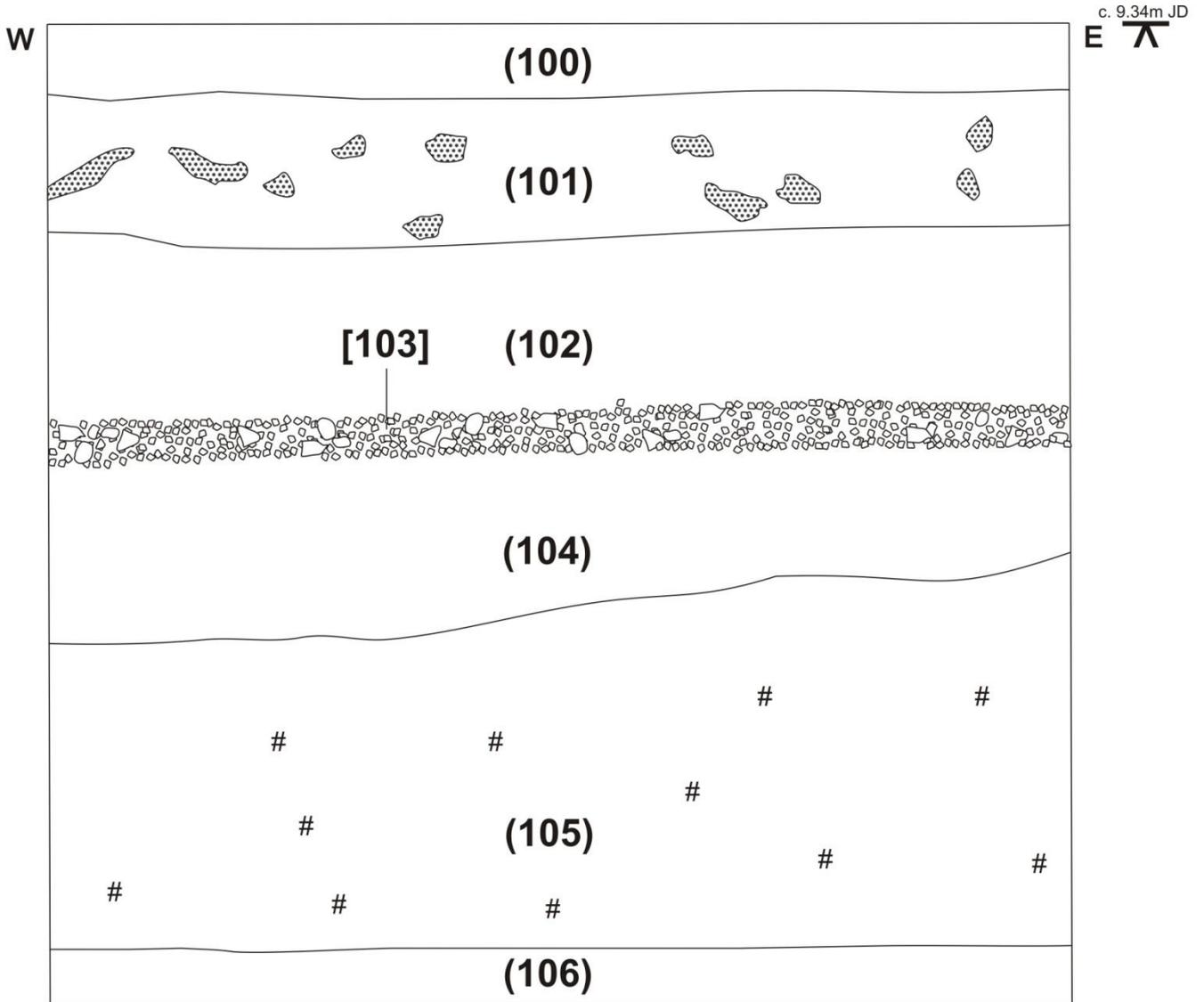


 = Location of Eagle Tavern, Lemprière Street, St Helier

**Figure 3: Trench Location Plan**  
**Scale 1:100**



**Figure 4: Trench 1 South Facing Section**  
**Scale 1:10**

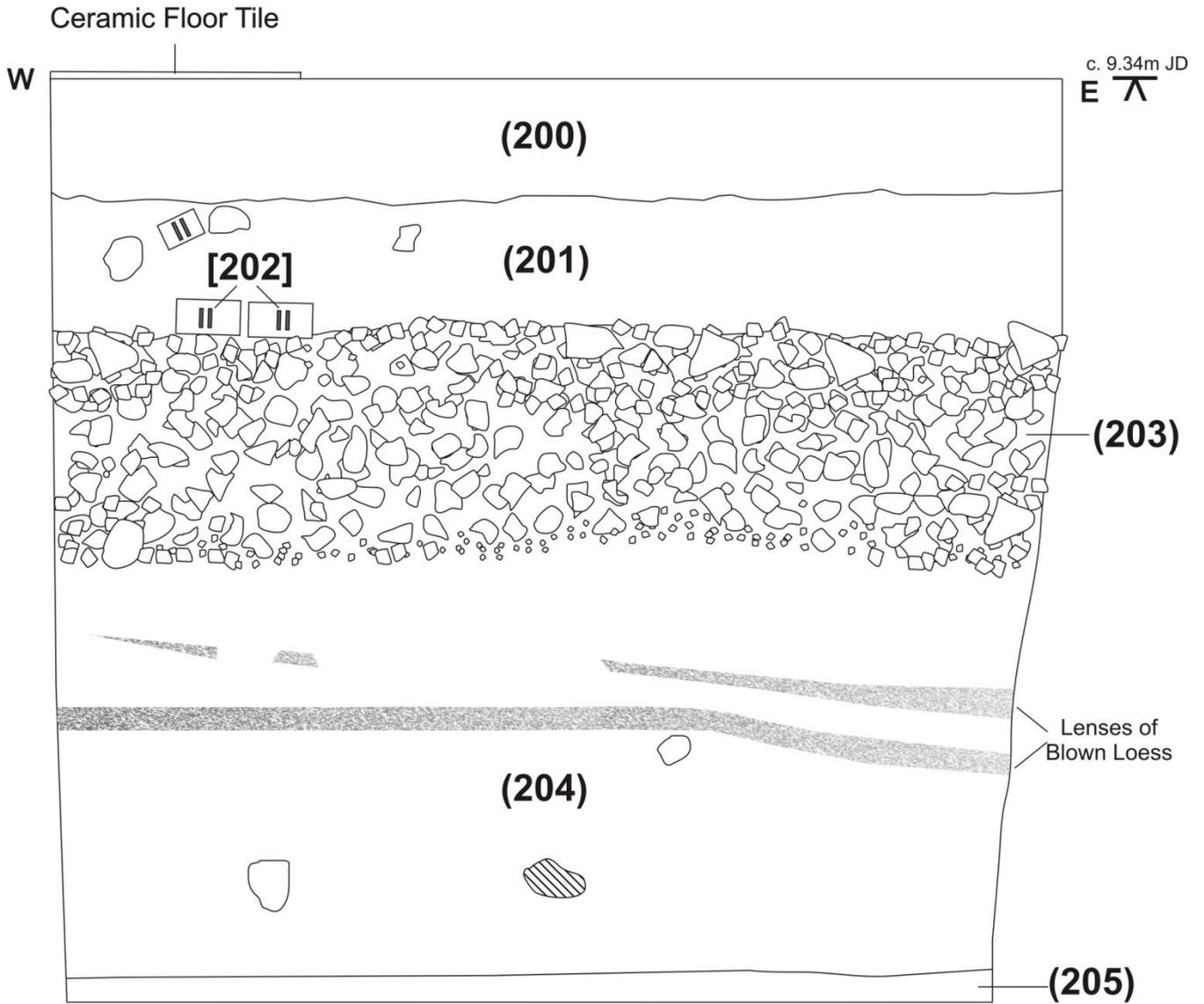


**KEY**

 = Concrete Fragments

 = Charcoal

**Figure 5: Trench 2 South Facing Section**  
**Scale 1:10**



**KEY**



**=** Brick Header

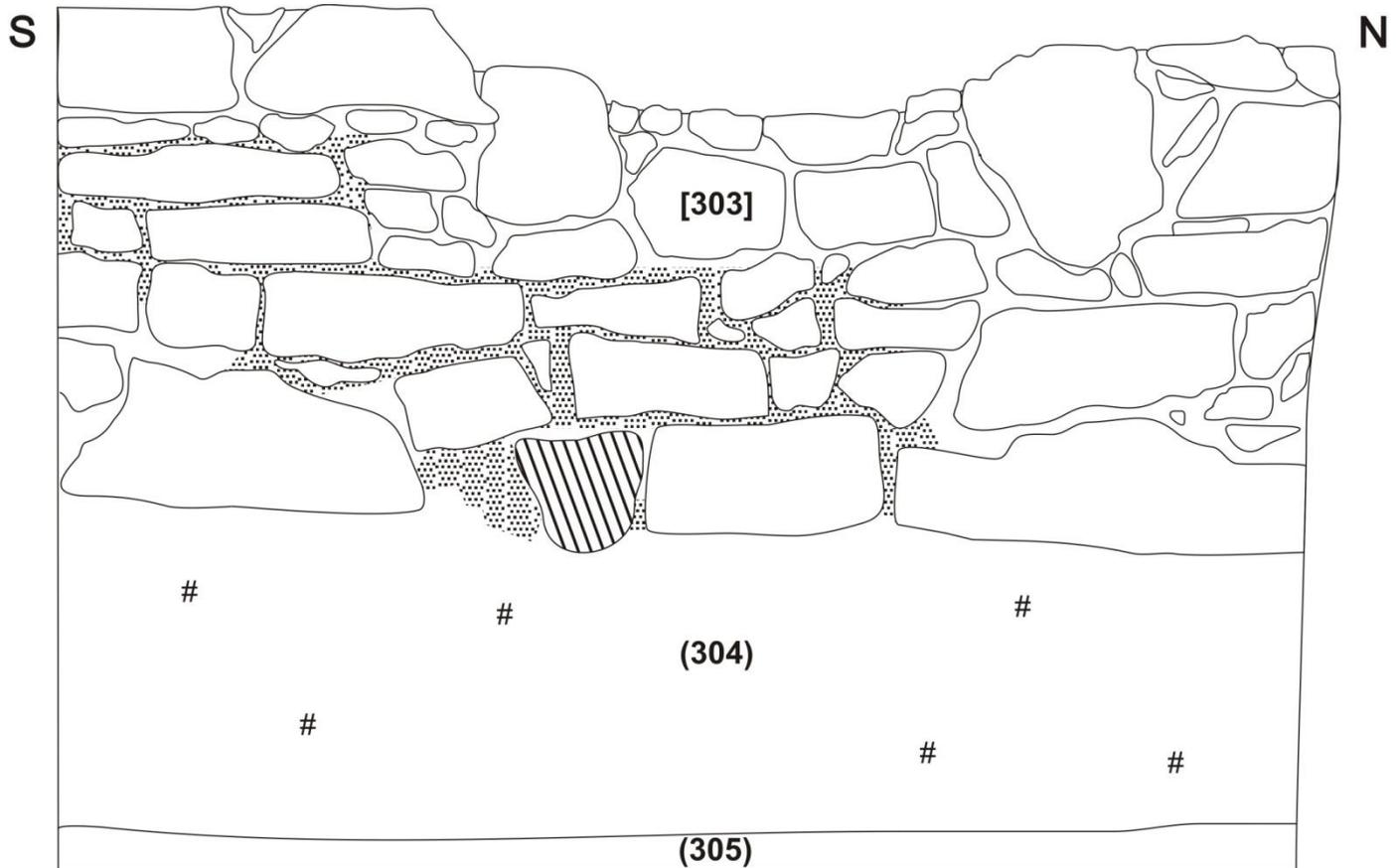


**=** Water Worn Pebble



**=** Angular Granite Shale

**Figure 6: Trench 3 East Facing Section**  
**Scale 1:10**



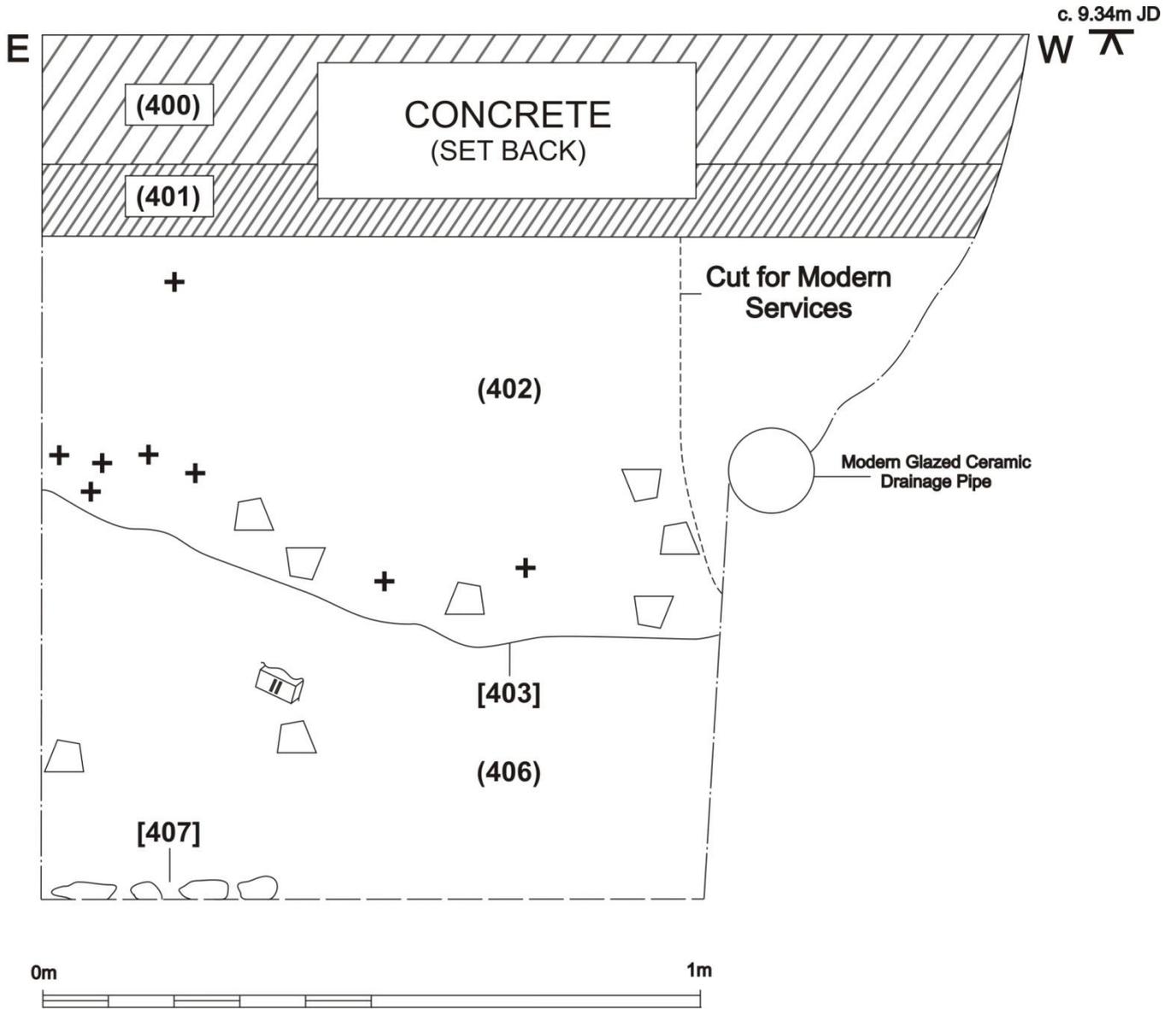
**KEY**

 = Water Worn Pebble

 = Mortar

 = Charcoal

**Figure 7: Trench 4 North Facing Section**  
**Scale 1:10**



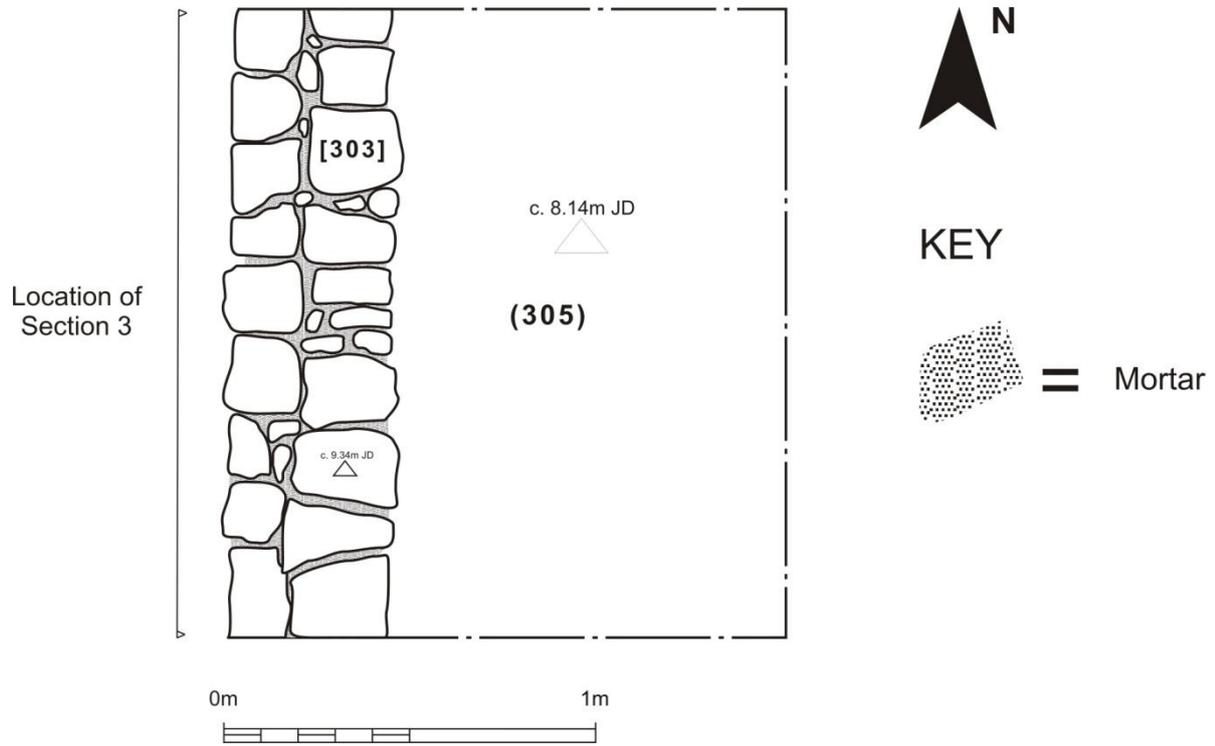
**KEY**

 = Brick Header

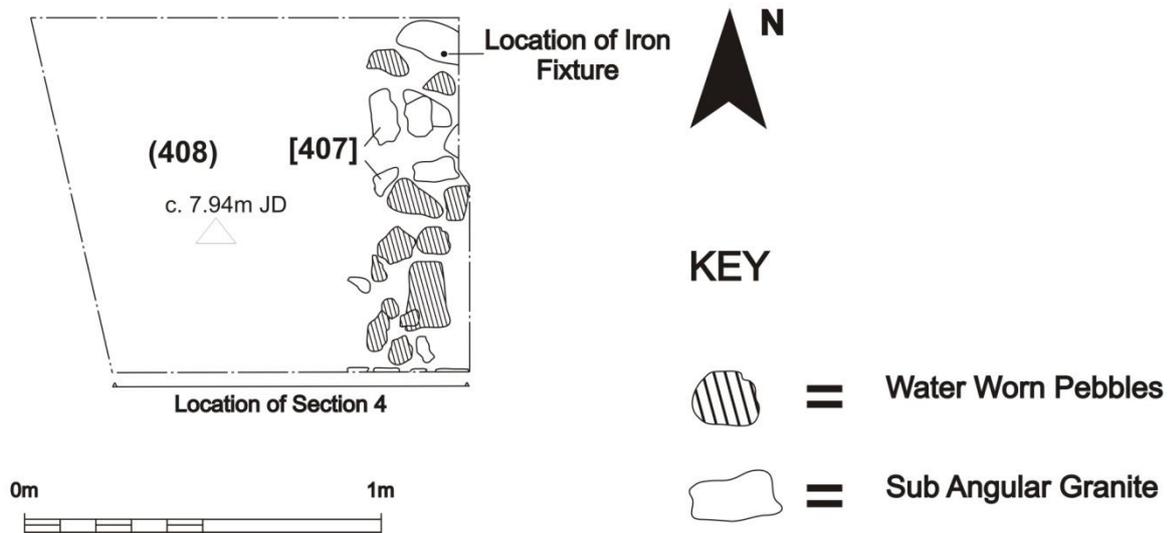
 = Brick Fragments

 = Oyster Shell

**Figure 8: Trench 3, Plan  
Scale 1:20**



**Figure 9: Trench 4, Plan  
Scale 1:20**



## PLATES



Plate 1. Trench 1 showing mortar surface (103).  
Scales 2 x 1m & 1 x 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 1. Section 1. Scales 2 x 1m.



Plate 3. Trench 2. Section 2. Scales 2 x 1m.



Plate 4. Trench 3. Section 3, showing wall [303].  
Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 1m.



Plate 5. Trench 4. Section 4. Scales 2 x 1m.



Plate 6. Trench 4, showing layer (407). Scale 1 x 1m.