

NAU Archaeology

Report No. 1213

**An Archaeological Watching Brief on Lamp Posts on the
North Side of Norwich Cathedral**

45465N

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BAU 1377

Contents

Summary

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Geology and Topography
- 3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background
- 4.0 Methodology
- 5.0 Results
- 6.0 The Finds
- 7.0 Conclusions

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

- Appendix 1a: Context Summary
- Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table
- Appendix 2a: Finds by Context
- Appendix 2b: NHER finds summary table
- Appendix 3: Pottery
- Appendix 4: Human Skeletal Remains

Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location
- Fig. 2 Trench location
- Fig. 3 West facing elevation of wall [001]
- Fig. 4 Plan of wall [001]
- Fig. 5 East facing elevation of wall [001]
- Fig. 6 West facing elevation of wall [002]
- Fig. 7 Plan of wall [002]
- Fig. 8 East facing elevation of wall [002]

Plates

- Plate 1 Photo of west facing elevation of wall [001]
- Plate 2 Photo of plan of wall [001]
- Plate 3 Photo of east facing elevation of wall [001]
- Plate 4 Photo of east facing elevation of wall [002]
- Plate 5 Photo of plan of wall [001]
- Plate 6 Photo of east facing elevation of wall [001]

Location: The Cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Norwich
District: Norwich
Grid Ref: TG 2348, 0895 to 2355, 0896
HER No.: 45465N
Date of fieldwork: 9th to 21st August 2006

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on the excavation of a cable trench and three lamp post holes on the north side of The Cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Norwich. The line of the cable trench predominantly followed that of existing services. This meant that few significant archaeological remains were encountered during this project. However, the footings of two walls were uncovered close to the door of the cathedral's north transept. It is highly likely that these footings represent the foundations of Bishop Wakering's cloister which was built during the 15th century and demolished in the 19th century.

1.0 Introduction

This report discusses an archaeological watching brief which was carried out on the excavation of a cable trench and three lamp post holes on the north side of the Cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Norwich (see Fig 1). The cable trench was c. 81m long, c. 0.35m wide and generally excavated to a depth of 0.45m to 0.50m. This trench was aligned approximately east to west and for the majority of its length followed the line of the gravel road to the north of the east end of the cathedral. The lamp post holes were of the same width as the trench and were excavated to a depth of c. 0.90m.

This watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Dr. Rolland Harris, Norwich Cathedral Archaeologist, and Andy Hutcheson, Head of Archaeological Planning, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: 5/7/2006/RBH/ARJH). The methods of work were outlined in Project Design ref. 1360/DW submitted by NAU Archaeology.

This project was funded by The Norwich School.

2.0 Geology and Topography

The site lies on a meander in the River Wensum which is located to the north and the east and it is in these directions to which the local topography slopes down. No topsoil, subsoil or natural soils were encountered on the site. The underlying geology consists of alluvium derived from the River Wensum itself (BGS 161). The site is situated at approximately 5.00m OD.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site is situated to the north of the east end and north transept of the cathedral. The nearest archaeological excavation to the site was carried out in the exterior corner formed by the north transept and the north side of the nave of the cathedral in 1987 and 1988 and this recovered evidence of medieval masonry structures and of

Late Saxon Christian burials, probably associated with a pre-Conquest church near the site (Bown 1991, 428)

A watching brief in 1989 followed the course of a drainage trench dug along the line of the pathway immediately to the north of the cathedral's north transept. This located a wall, presumed to be the east wall of Bishop Wakering's cloister which dates to the 15th century (Bown 1991).

In 2002 a watching brief was carried out to the north of the Jesus Chapel. This revealed an articulated human skeleton 0.4m below the ground surface. (Warsop and Boghi, 2002)

4.0 Methodology

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed during the excavation of the cable trench and lamp post holes. The Brief required that, as much as possible, the trench followed the line of existing services and previously disturbed deposits.

The trench and lamp post holes were excavated by hand or mini-digger under archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the NAUA *pro forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

The positions of the trench edges and *in situ* masonry were recorded by EDM as specified in the project brief. These positions were integrated into the Norwich Cathedral co-ordinate system. Levels were also gained through the use of an EDM.

Due to the lack of suitable deposits, no environmental samples were taken.

5.0 Results

In the entire length of the trench only previously disturbed deposits or recently made-up ground was encountered.

The only two structures encountered in the trench were wall footings [001] and [002] (see Fig. 2). Wall footing [001] (Figs. 3 to 5 and Plates 1 to 3) was aligned north-to-south and was located approximately 3.70m north of the north transept of the cathedral. This footing was c. 0.70m wide and a height of 0.42m of it was visible in the trench. The materials of this footing consisted of Portland cement and cream mortar mixed with grey silt and moderately abundant inclusions of sub-rounded flints and angular red brick. The red brick was fragmentary and appeared to be post-medieval in date. Given this, and the abundance of grey cement in this structure, it is suggested that this footing mainly represents a 19th century rebuilding or repair of an earlier wall. It is highly likely that footing [001] is the foundation of the west wall of Bishop Wakering's cloister which was built in the 15th century and demolished in the 19th century (NLA Ref: 5/7/2006/RBH/ARJH).

Wall footing [002] (Figs. 6 to 8 and Plates 4 to 6) was located c. 3.50m to the east of wall footing [001] and was also aligned north-to-south. Footing [002] was c. 1.70m wide and a height of 0.37m of it was visible in the trench. This footing consisted, in the most part, of unconsolidated yellow mortar mixed with grey silt and occasional inclusions of sub-angular flints and fragments of red brick. The brick fragments appeared to be post-medieval in date. The width and ad-hoc nature of the construction of this footing suggests it represents the foundations of a wall. Given the position of this foundation it is likely that it supported the east wall of Bishop Wakering's cloister.

Deposits located to the immediate east and west of wall footings [001] and [002] consisted mainly of garden clay-silts and dumps of mortar. It is possible that mortar layers [004] and [011] (not illustrated) represent the 19th century demolition of footings [001] and [002].

6.0 The Finds

Pottery

The site produced three fragments of post-Roman pottery, weighing (0.141kg).

The assemblage was quantified (counted and weighed) by form and fabric (see **Appendix 3**). Identification of the fabrics was helped by Dr Andrew Rogerson and research based on the typology of Norwich ceramics established by Jennings (Jennings 1981).

A single medieval unglazed bowl rim of 13th-to-14th century date was recovered. Notably this fragment was re-fired or burnt post fracture.

Also collected were two examples of Late Medieval and transitional wares. This group consists of a thickly green glazed body sherd, probably from a jug, and an unglazed handle.

Human Remains

Disarticulated human remains were retained and examined, see **Appendix 4**.

7.0 Conclusions

This watching brief confirmed the conjectural position of the walls of Bishop Wakering's cloister. It would appear, due to the presence of Portland cement, that the footing of the west wall found here represents the foundations of the cloister prior to its destruction in the 19th century. The foundations of the east wall found during this project were fairly substantial and may have been earlier than those of the west wall.

As the line of the trench of this watching brief predominantly followed that of existing services the likelihood of finding other remains was very low.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Charlie, Ed and Peter of the Cathedral Works team for their co-operation during this project. Thanks are also due to John Percival, for carrying out the survey work, Julie Curl for examining the human remains, Dr Andrew Rogerson for examining the pottery and Lucy Talbot for processing the other finds.

Bibliography

- Bown, J. 1991 "Excavations on the North Side of Norwich Cathedral", *Norfolk Archaeol.*, XLII Part IV, 428-452
- Jennings, S 1981 Eighteen centuries of pottery from Norwich, *East Anglian Archaeol.* 13
- Warsop, P and Boghi, F. 2002 Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief at Lifes Green, Norwich Cathedral Close

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
001	Masonry	Wall foundation	Post-medieval
002	Masonry	Wall foundation	Post-medieval
003	Deposit	Clay-silt make-up	Post-medieval
004	Deposit	Mortar dump	Post-medieval
005	Deposit	Clay-silt make-up	Post-medieval
006	Deposit	Clayey silt make-up	Post-medieval
007	Deposit	Rubble	Post-medieval
008	Finds	Unstratified finds	
009	Deposit	Clay-silt make-up	Post-medieval
010	Deposit	Clay-silt make-up	Post-medieval
011	Deposit	Mortar dump	Post-medieval
012	Deposit	Clay-silt make-up	Post-medieval
013	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 8m from east end of trench	Undated
014	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 10m from east end of trench	Undated
015	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 11m from east end of trench	Undated
016	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 12m from east end of trench	Undated
017	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 14m from east end of trench	Undated
018	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 15m from east end of trench	Undated
019	Finds	Disarticulated HSR from 52m from east end of trench	Undated

Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	Walls	2

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
08	Pottery	3	0.141	Medieval/ Post-medieval
08	Iron nails	6	-	Post-medieval

Appendix 2b: NHER finds summary table

Period	Material	Quantity
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	MPOT	3
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	IRON NAILS	6

Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Total by context of sherd count	Total by context of sherd weight (kg)	Fabric	Form	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Ceramic date
08	1	0.027	Medieval unglazed	Bowl rim	1	0.027	13th – 14th century
08	1	0.101	Late Medieval and Transitional	Body sherd	1	0.101	mid 15th – late 16th century
08	1	0.013	Late Medieval and Transitional	Handle	1	0.013	mid 15th – late 16th century
Total					3	0.141	

Appendix 4: Human Skeletal Remains

Context	Contextual information	Description
013	Disarticulated HSR from 8m from east end of trench	HSR: includes femur, radius, ulna, metapodial.
014	Disarticulated HSR from 10m from east end of trench	2 x humerus, proximal femur, phalanges, metapodials, rib fragments. Adult.
015	Disarticulated HSR from 11m from east end of trench	Rib (?pathology) and phalange
016	Disarticulated HSR from 12m from east end of trench	Calcaeneus, metapodials x 2
017	Disarticulated HSR from 14m from east end of trench	Carpal
018	Disarticulated HSR from 15m from east end of trench	5 x fragments, probably HSR
019	Disarticulated HSR from 52m from east end of trench	Complete adult tibia & distal femur. Three other long bone shaft fragments, probably HSR

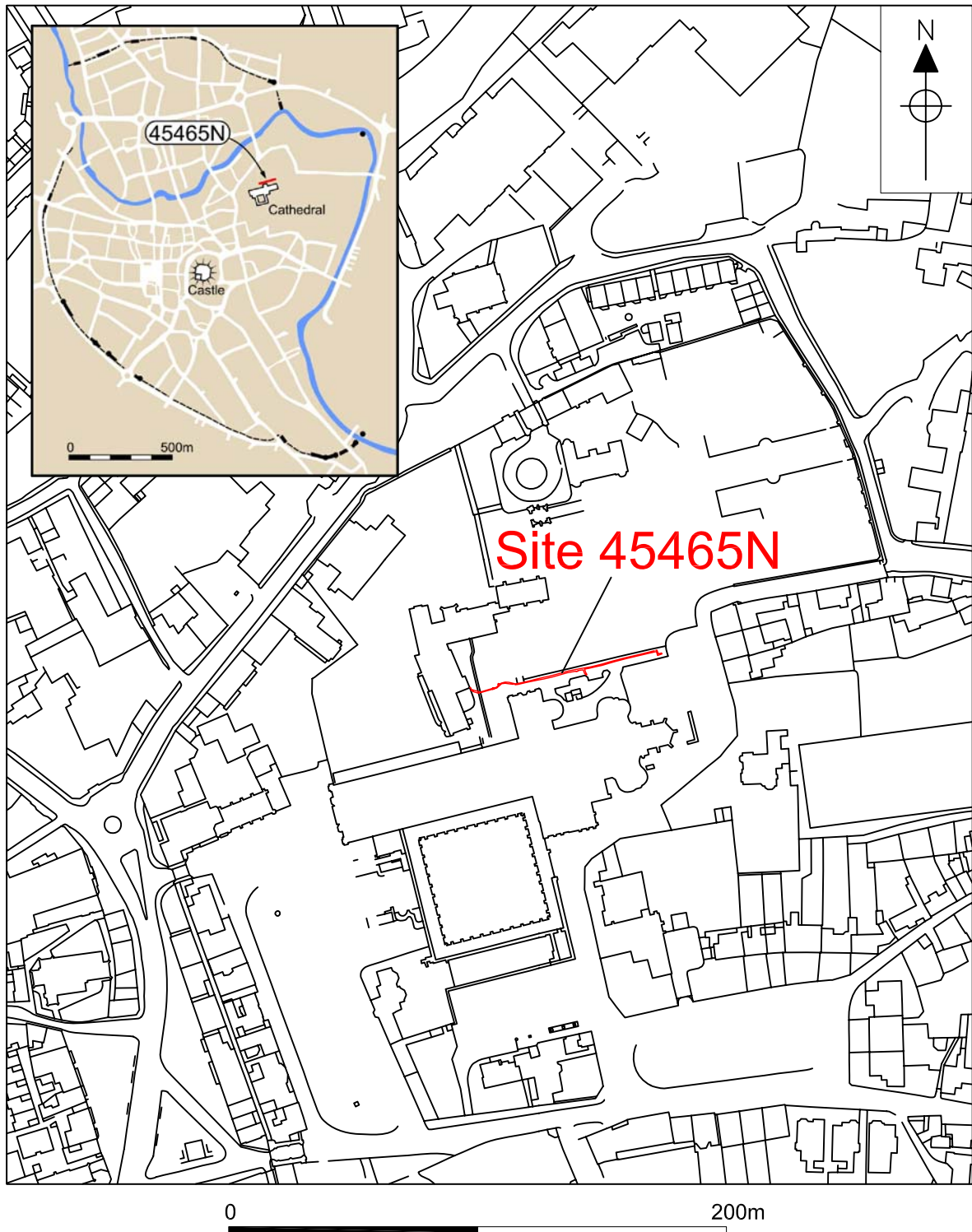


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2500

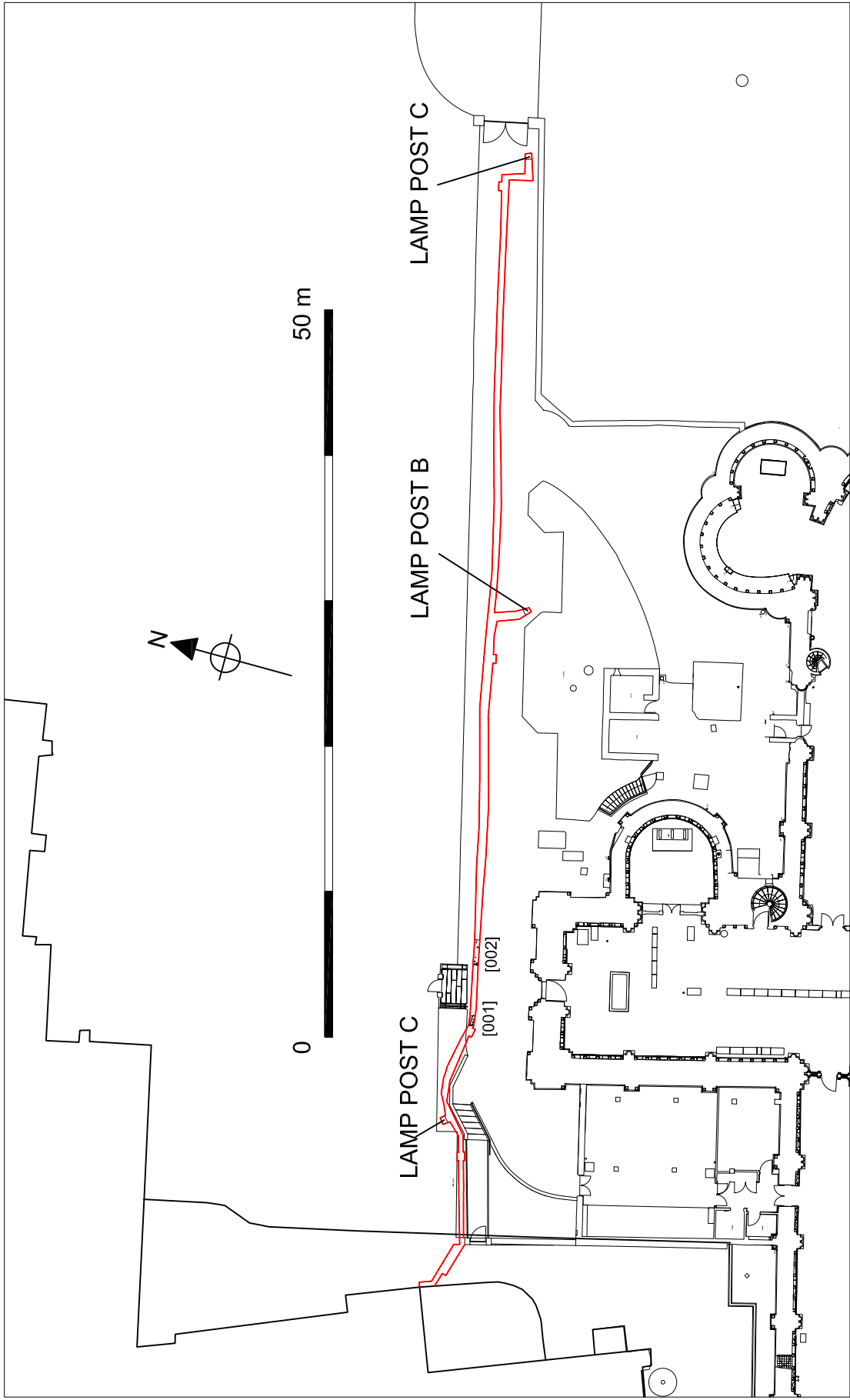


Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:400

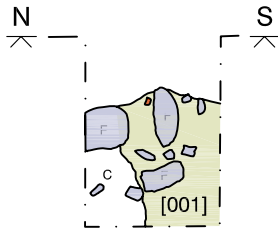


Figure 3. West facing elevation of wall [001]. Scale 1:20

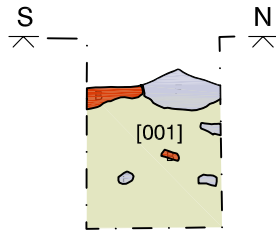


Figure 5. East facing elevation of wall [001]. Scale 1:20

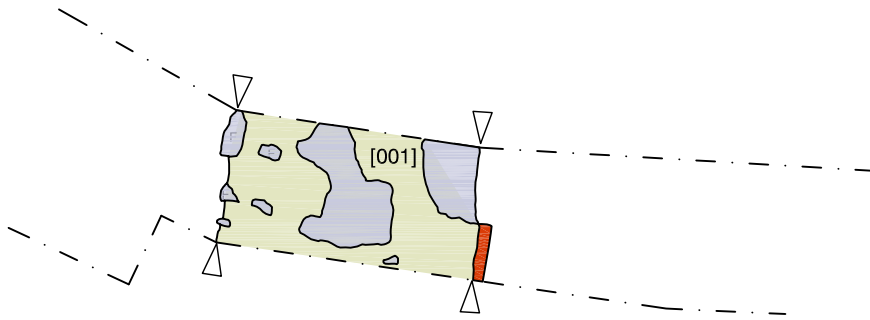


Figure 4. Plan of wall [001]. Scale 1:20

Key:

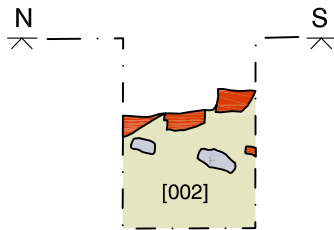


Figure 6. West facing elevation of wall [002]. Scale 1:20

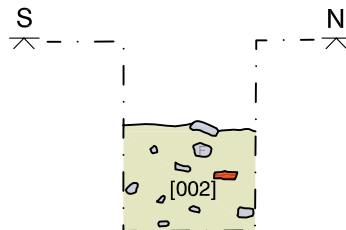


Figure 8. East facing elevation of wall [002]. Scale 1:20

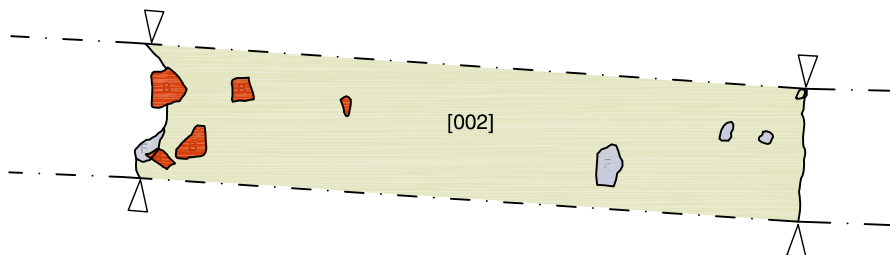


Figure 7. Plan of wall [002]. Scale 1:20