

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 906

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
St Andrew's Car Park, Duke Street,
Norwich**

37652N

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March 2004

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Local Authority No.100019340

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Location: St Andrew's and Duke Street car park, Norwich, Norfolk
Grid Ref: TG 2300 0873
HER No.: 37652N
Date of fieldwork: 19th January 2004 to 2nd February 2004

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at St. Andrew's car park, Norwich in order to monitor pile-proving trenches. A total of twenty trenches were observed. A single trench (TP18) revealed a remnant of a wall related to the former Palace of the Dukes of Norfolk, whilst the remainder revealed nothing of archaeological significance.

1.0 Introduction

(Fig. 1)

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit to monitor a programme of twenty trenches opened across the site (600m²) of the former St. Andrew's multi-storey car park, Duke Street, Norwich. The trenches were opened to test the existing concrete piles to establish if they are in a suitable condition for re-use in the proposed new development (a replacement multi-storey car park).

This archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: AH/24/04/03) and a Method Statement for watching briefs prepared by Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU Ref: JB/1692). The work was funded by Norwich City Council Property Services. The work was commissioned by Buro Four Project Services.

The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

2.0 Geology and Topography

(Fig. 1)

The site lies within the city of Norwich, to the immediate south of the River Wensum. It overlies a solid geology of upper chalk (East Anglia Sheet 52N 00, Solid Geology, British Geological Survey). The deposits overlying this chalk consist of riverine silts and muds. The site is located at the base of a gentle slope from south-to-north towards the river and is broadly level, lying between an elevation of 4.30m to the south and 4.70m to the north.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies within the medieval city walls which define the historic core of Norwich. Previous historic and archaeological work in the vicinity of the site has focussed on the Palace complex constructed by the Dukes of Norfolk. Historical records suggest the Palace was originally built in 1561, subsequently modified in 1672 and demolished in 1711 after a period of dereliction.

Excavation by the Norwich Survey in 1974 (Donaldson *et al* 1982) to the west of the present works uncovered elements of the Palace foundations and evidence that dumped soils were used to reclaim the southern margins of the River Wensum. The nature of the reclaimed ground on which the northern extent of the Palace was built appears to have been partly responsible for the demise of the building. Surviving elements of the Dukes Palace were incorporated into later buildings, most notably a bowling alley first recorded in 1640. Following the demise of the Palace in the early 1700s the bowling alley was converted into a workhouse, then subsequently into a public house named the 'Duke's Palace Inn'.

The Duke Street bridge and road were constructed in 1821. The site was cleared of buildings prior to use as a surface car park in 1968. The archaeological excavation by the Norwich Survey was carried out before construction of a multi-storey car park in 1974. This multi-storey car park was demolished in the autumn of 2002.

During November and December 2003 a series of excavation trenches were opened, along the Duke Street frontage, by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (Adams 2003). The scope of these excavations was limited to recording the extant fabric of the Dukes Palace and related structures. Substantial wall remnants relating to the Palace, the bowling alley, and the Duke's Palace Inn were recorded.

4.0 Methodology

(Fig. 2)

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed during excavation of trenches around concrete piles at various points within the site of the former St. Andrew's multi-storey car park.

The Brief required that all groundworks in the car-park area were monitored by an archaeologist.

The pile-proving trenches were excavated by wheeled mechanical excavator with the excavated material stored adjacently to the trench. Pile-proving is the examination of the existing concrete piles to establish if they are in a suitable condition for re-use. The trenches varied in size according to the precise location and dimensions of the piles. In general the trenches measured approximately 3m by 3m and were 1.5m deep. One trench, identified as TP17, was not excavated, but an additional trench was opened between TP7 and TP8. This was given the identifier TP8A.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector where appropriate

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Norfolk Archaeological Unit *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.

A level was transferred from an Ordnance Survey benchmark of 4.08m on the Norwich School of Art and Design, St. Georges Street and a temporary benchmark was established with a value of 5.31m.

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

Site access was good, with easy access to all trenches. Weather conditions during the watching brief were poor, with heavy snowfall during the second week.

5.0 Results (Appendix 1)

The pile-proving trenches were, generally, quite discrete and tightly machined around the piles. Consequently, in nineteen of the trenches, the only deposits encountered were modern, sandy backfill directly associated with the pile construction. A single trench (TP18) located towards the Duke Street frontage, however, revealed a section of wall interpreted as belonging to the former palace of the Dukes of Norfolk.

Trench 18

(Figs 3 and 4 and Plate 1)

Trench 18 measured 3.5m by 3.0m by 1.2m deep.

In Trench 18 (TP18) one of the piles being investigated was constructed directly on the line of a wall belonging to the former palace of the Dukes of Norfolk. During the piling operation the wall had been breached in order to allow the insertion of the pile. Being of solid construction the size of the breach in the wall was narrow, only being as wide as was necessary to accommodate the pile. Consequently a cross-section of the wall and the later deposits associated with it were visible in the side of the trench (Fig.3).

The wall [482] was constructed from flint and brick and aligned from north-to-south. It closely matches observations made during excavations in this area in 1974.

Against wall [482] was a mid-grey clayey make-up deposit [483]. No finds were recovered from this deposit but a post-medieval date can be directly inferred from a similar sequence of deposits excavated to the north of this trench. Sealing deposit [483] was a substantial deposit of lime-mortar demolition rubble [484]. This deposit is almost certainly the same as the extensive dump of 18th-century demolition rubble identified in the excavations of 1973 and 2003.

The final two deposits [485] and [486] were associated with the construction of the multi storey car park in 1974.

6.0 Conclusions

The impact of the pile-proving trenches on archaeological deposits associated with the medieval and post-medieval development of the site proved to be very limited. The pile-proving trenches were, by definition, focussed on the 20th-century development of the multi-storey car park.

The single trench which revealed an archaeological sequence enabled further confirmation of the projected layout of the former Palace of the Dukes of Norfolk to the south of Donaldson's excavations in 1974.

Any future groundworks on the site that are not so focussed upon the 20th-century development may provide further evidence to support the projections of the Palace, in particular the east wing which was not revealed during these works.

Acknowledgements

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The report was illustrated and produced by Maggie Foottit and edited by Alice Lyons.

Bibliography

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Upper level (m OD)	Period
477	Deposit	Make-up	3.70m	20th century
478	Masonry	Red-brick wall	3.90m	19th century
479	Deposit	Make-up	4.00m	20th century
480	Deposit	Make-up	4.00m	20th century
481	Deposit	Make-up	4.40m	20th century
482	Masonry	Flint and brick wall	3.65m	16th century
483	Deposit	Make-up	3.65m	17th century
484	Deposit	Demolition debris	3.65m	18th century
485	Deposit	Make-up	4.00m	20th century
486	Deposit	Concrete slab	4.30m	20th century



River Wensum

Duke Street

2003 Excavations

TP 17
Not excavated

1973 Excavations

Projected east wing of Palace

Art School
Norwich

TP 19

TP 18

TP 14

TP 15

TP 16

TP 13

TP 12

TP 11

TP 10

TP 7

TP 8A

TP 8

TP 9

TP 20

TP 6

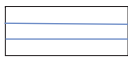
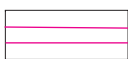

TP 5

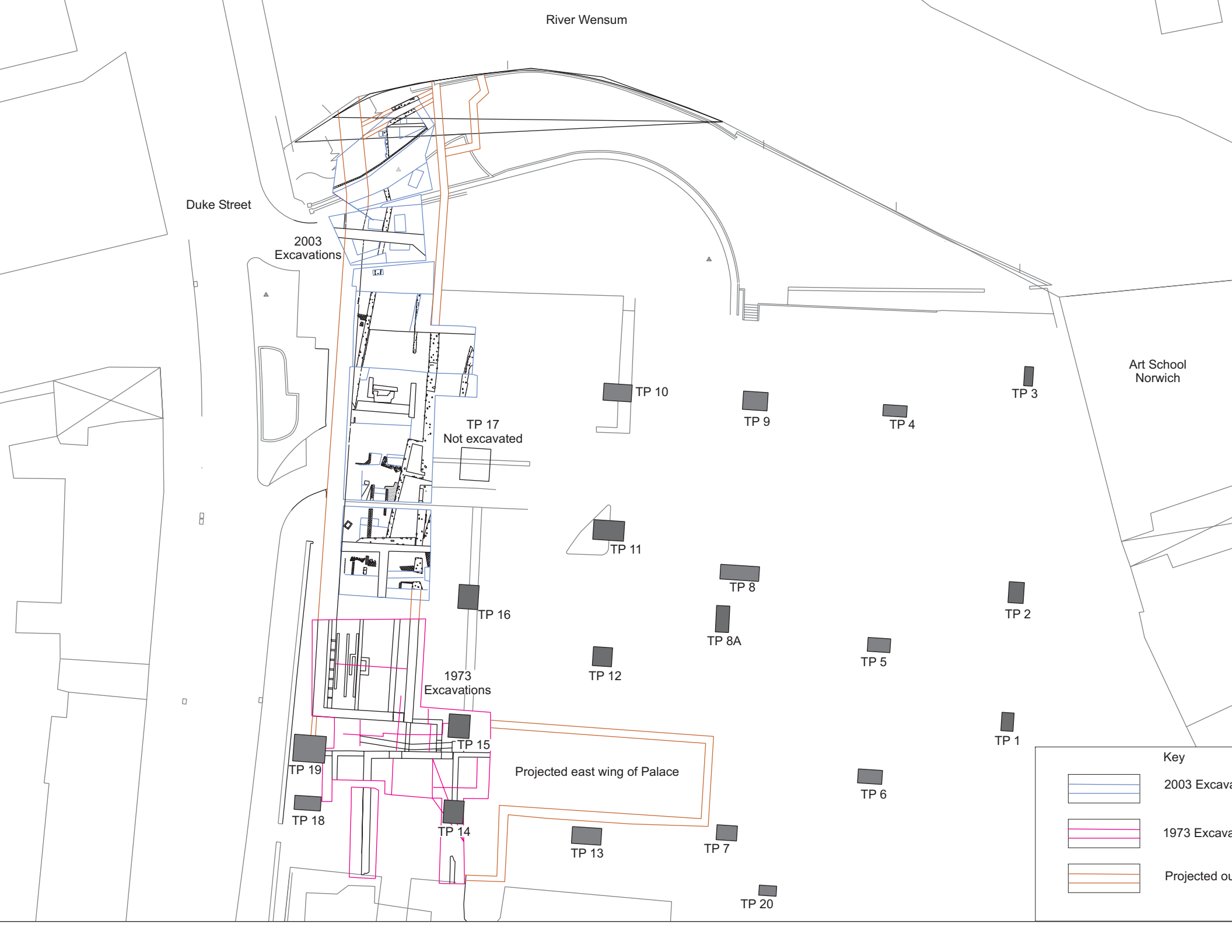
TP 4

TP 1

TP 2

TP 3

Key	
	2003 Excavations
	1973 Excavations
	Projected outline



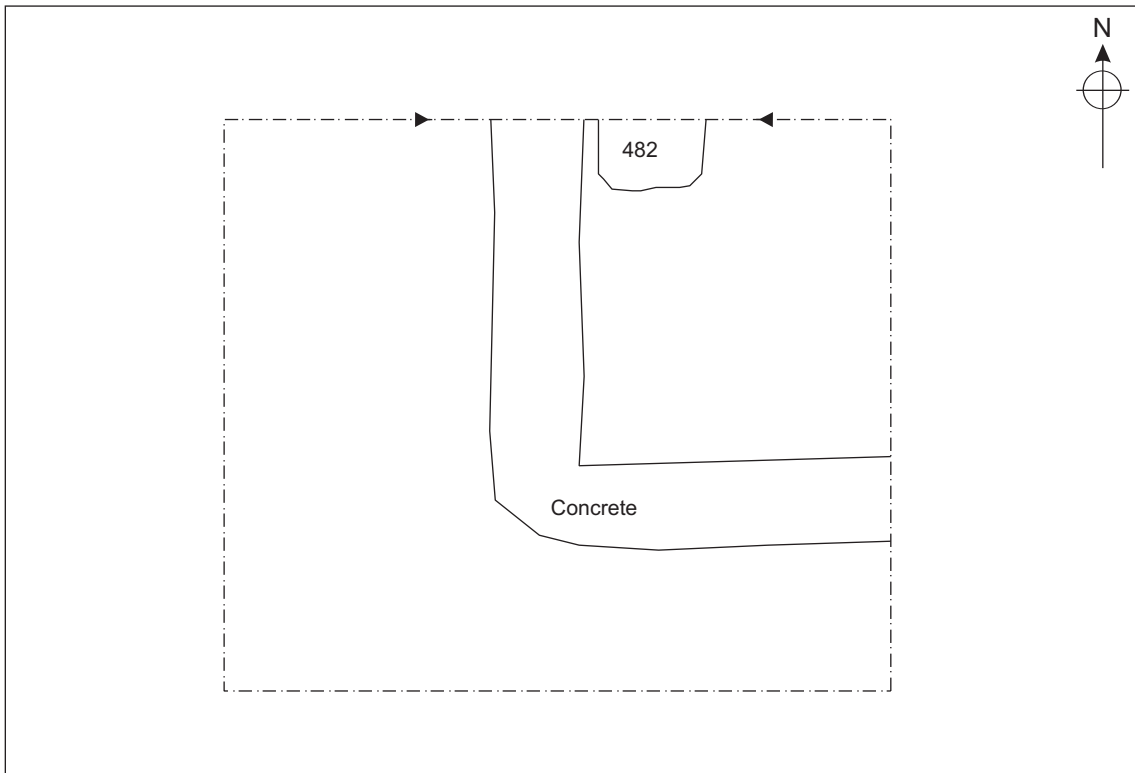
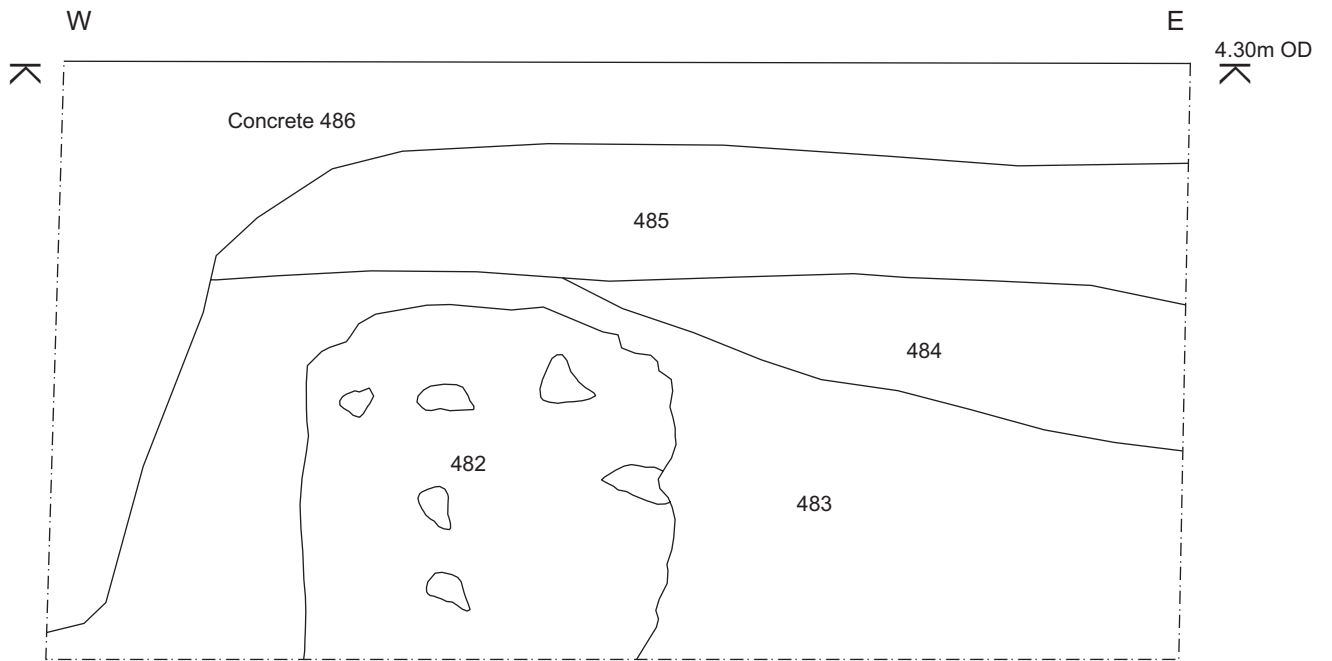


Figure 3. Trench 18, plan. Scale 1:20



South facing section



Figure 4. Trench 18, section. Scale 1:10

