



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
132-144 Highcross Street, Leicester.**

NGR: SK 58189 04445

By Dr Gavin Speed



ULAS Report No 2018-047

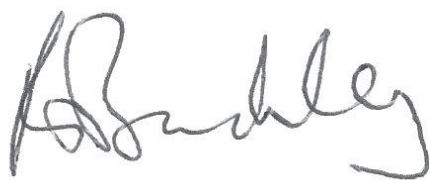
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Leicester**

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Dr Gavin Speed

For: Living Choice Investments Ltd

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2018-047	 Richard Buckley	13/04/2018

University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH

Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

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An Archaeological Evaluation at 132-144 Highcross Street, Leicester.

Dr Gavin Speed

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching on part of a site at 132-144 Highcross Street, Leicester (SK 58189 04445).

The investigation revealed significant archaeological evidence, consisting of a Roman street, along with at least two large Roman buildings. The one on the north of the street contained two rooms with remarkably well preserved opus signinum floors and painted quarter-round mortar mouldings at the wall/floor junction. Another Roman building to the south of the street contained a sunken-floored room, perhaps evidence for a hypocaust. Medieval evidence consisted largely of garden soils and backyard pits. Elsewhere Victorian brick cellars removed most of the street frontage remains, with the exception of some stone walls behind the brick walls in places.

The site archive will be held by Leicester Arts and Museums Service, under accession number YA.3.2018.

1. Introduction

This report provides details of the results of an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching of part of a site at 132-144 Highcross Street, Leicester (SK 58189 04445) in February 2018. Planning permission is to be sought for the construction of a mixed use 6-8 storey building, mainly shops at street level with apartments above (Figure 45). In view of the fact that the proposed development lies in an area of high archaeological potential for remains of the Roman and medieval period in particular, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*, the Planning Authority required trial trenching initially to provide preliminary indications of the character and extent of any heritage assets present. This information would then enable an assessment to be made of the impact of the development on such remains and determine the need for any further archaeological work. The methodology for the evaluation was detailed in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Speed 2018) which was approved by the planning authority before work commenced.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The Site lies on the western side of Highcross Street, on the opposite side of the road to the church and churchyard of All Saints'. The currently unoccupied (but under redevelopment) site of the former Maxim and Stibbe building lies directly to the south surrounded by timber hoardings. To the north is a small rectangular area currently in use to house site cabins for the nearby development at the former All Saints Brewery site, which lies opposite the site to the south-east. The Site contains a small garage building and another adjacent structure at the southern end of the site. To the north is a temporary structure and an area of hard standing used as a car wash. The northern part of the site is a car park. The area is open to the street frontage although the car park and car wash sites are bordered by metal fencing. The rear of the site, to the west, is partially surrounded by a brick wall, which may be Victorian. The Site area is 1648 m². The northern half of the site (the car park) is the only area currently available for archaeological evaluation by trial trenches (868m²), the southern half (unavailable) is 780m².

The Site lies at a geological interface between glaciofluvial deposits of Bytham sands and gravels in (British Geological Survey, 2013). The land lies at a height of *c.*59 metres OD, Highcross Street slopes downwards from south to north (59.18-58.65 metres OD).

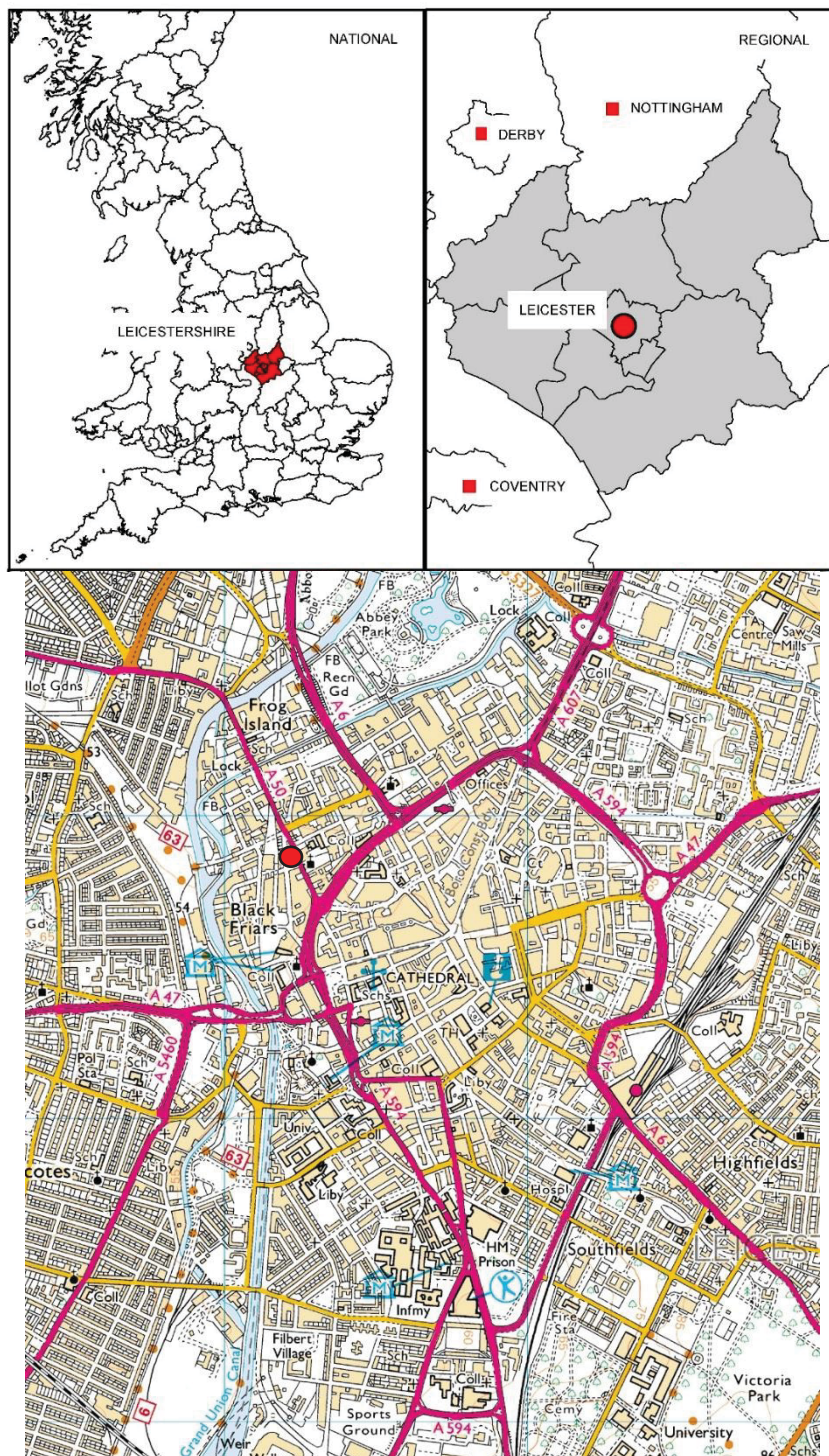


Figure 1: Site location within the UK, county of Leicestershire.

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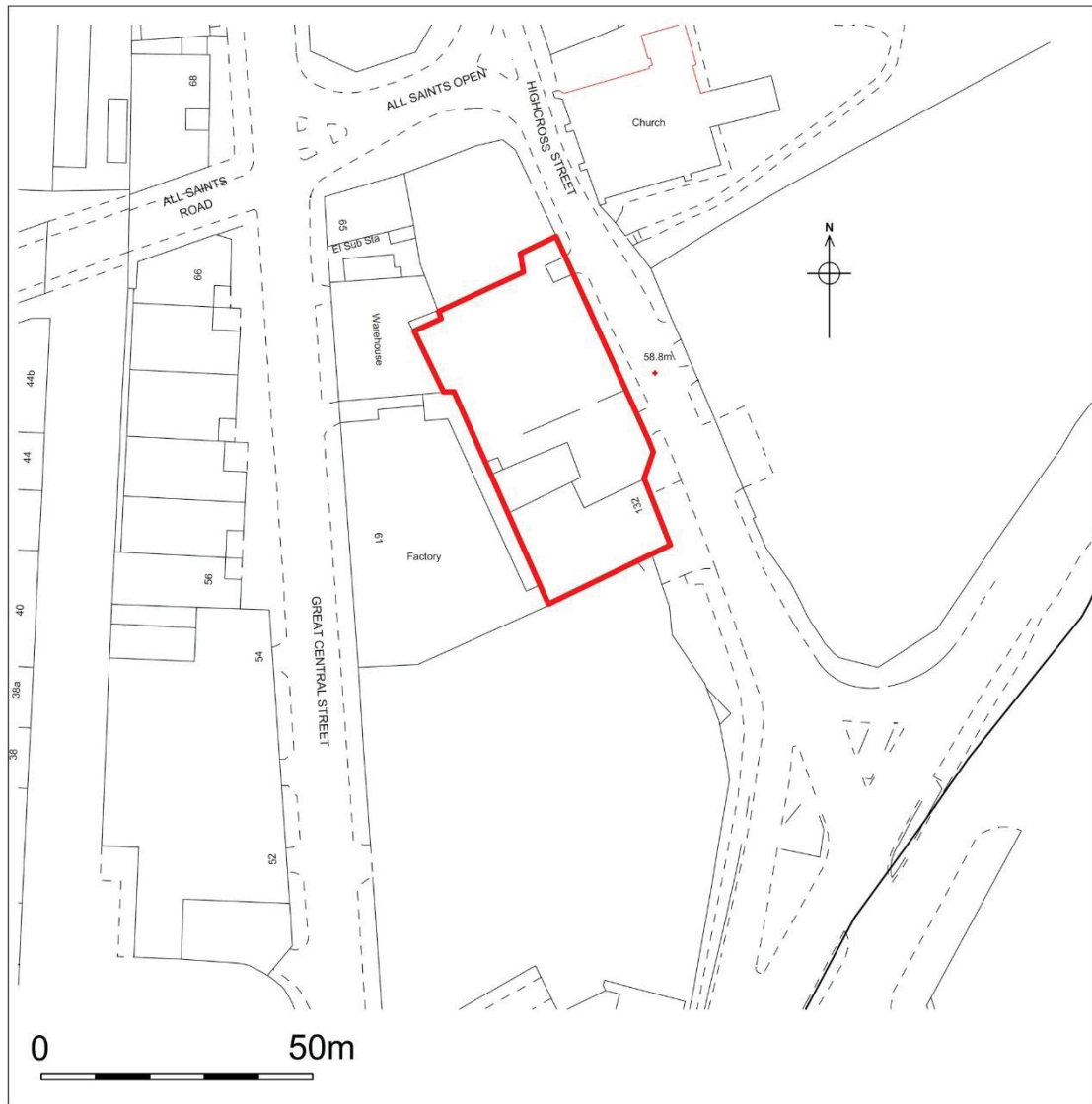


Figure 2: Detailed Site location (plan provided by client).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

The site is located within the walls of Roman and medieval Leicester, on the western side of Highcross Street, once one of the main thoroughfares of the town, and is close to the site of the former north gate. There have been many archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity, ranging from small watching briefs and evaluations to large, open area-excavations. An evaluation by trial trenching of the former Pretty Legs factory at 71 Great Central Street, just to the north of the assessment area, identified areas of well-preserved Roman and medieval archaeology despite extensive deep cellaring (Thomas 2006). Similarly a small watching brief at 61a Great Central Street identified possible late medieval/early post-medieval deposits (Derrick & Warren 2001). Most importantly in the context of the proposed development, are the large excavations at the former Maxim and Stibbe Buildings, immediately to the south. Trial trenching here in 2001 revealed significant Roman remains surviving between the factory basements (Meek 2001). An open-area excavation was subsequently undertaken in 2016-2017 and revealed some of the most important archaeological remains discovered in this part of the city in recent years including large portions of Roman streets, town houses and other buildings, including walls and highly decorated mosaics, which were lifted and preserved. Medieval activity was also recorded, including evidence for medieval properties fronting on to what is now Highcross Street (Speed 2017, forthcoming).

To the east of the Site, recent excavations of the former All Saints' Brewery site recorded significant survival of Roman archaeology across the site, including parts of a street, evidence of stone and timber buildings, a mosaic pavement, pits and yard surfaces. Medieval archaeology survived to a lesser extent, predominantly in the form of pits and garden soils but close to the Highcross Street frontage was a considerable depth of medieval and post-medieval archaeology including stone boundary walls, a stone cellar and a potential medieval building (Morris 2012 & forthcoming).

Further afield, to the east, were the extensive excavations of the Highcross Retail Quarter: Vine Street, Vaughan Way and Freeschool Lane (Higgins *et. al* 2009; Gnanaratnam 2009; Coward & Speed 2009) and excavations on Blue Boar Lane and Highcross Street (Cooper & Wachter *forthcoming*; Derrick 2005). South of the assessment area is the Jewry Wall site. Seminal excavations here by Kathleen Kenyon in the late 1930s recorded an extensive, very well preserved Roman public bathing complex (Kenyon 1948). To the west, numerous excavations have taken place in the Bath Lane area since the 1950s (Clay & Mellor 1985), the most recent being excavations by ULAS on the former Merlin Works site (Kipling 2008) and at Westbridge Wharf (Cooper 2010); and excavations on Bath Lane and Blackfriars Lane by Birmingham Archaeology (Paul & Mann 2010). There are currently excavations underway at Alexander St (Wardell Armstrong / ULAS). These have all recorded significant Iron Age, Roman and medieval archaeology.

3.1 Prehistoric

The later development of the Roman and medieval town of Leicester has meant that much of the evidence of the prehistoric settlement of the area has been lost or at least severely truncated. There is some evidence for circular Iron Age buildings south of the application area at St. Nicholas Circle (Clay & Pollard 1994; Clay & Mellor 1985). For the most part, evidence for the earlier settlement of the town comes from the discovery of findspots for artefacts, including pre-Roman pottery fragments, metalwork and flan trays found on Blackfriars Street and Bath Lane to the south of the site that may indicate coin manufacture from the Iron Age period (Gnanaratnam 2003; Kipling 2008). The distribution of Iron Age artefacts throughout the town suggests a lowland settlement of around 8 hectares, with high-status settlement and contact with the Roman world before the Roman conquest of Britain in AD 43. Recent archaeological excavations on Bath Lane suggest that the settlement was enclosed with substantial ditches. It would be this settlement that would later become the Civitas Capital (*Ratae Corieltavorum*) during the Roman period (MLC72). There is evidence for Iron Age activity in the vicinity of the assessment area from the excavations beneath a Roman mosaic at Blackfriars and around the Great Central Street area, to the south-west of the assessment area which suggests occupation, metal working and a burial. Within the 150m radius of the site there are two findspots for prehistoric artefacts. These are for two stone axes found in the area round the Great Central Station 120m south-west of the assessment area (MLC618 & MLC870). However, their provenance is unreliable.

3.2 Roman

There is some evidence that a small fortlet was established at Leicester after the Roman conquest (Clay & Pollard 1994). By the early 2nd century A.D, a more formal street pattern appears and this may have been when the Roman town Ratae was established as local tribal capital. Timber buildings have been discovered beneath the later defences of the town suggesting a rapid expansion (Buckley & Lucas 1987; Priest 2005). The town was laid out in rectangular blocks (*insulae*). Evidence for the road system has been found throughout the recent excavations, and 130m to the east of the assessment area. Later in the 2nd century, a major scheme of public and private building was undertaken including the construction of the Forum, the Basilica, the Jewry Wall Baths, the Market Hall (*macellum*), plus a variety of domestic, commercial and industrial premises, including palatial townhouses (e.g. Clay & Mellor 1985; Clay & Pollard 1994; Higgins 2009). There are several town houses recorded from the Blackfriars area to the south-west of the current assessment area indicated by the discovery of mosaic fragments, wall fragments and tessellated floors.

During construction of the Bryant Hosiery factory, opposite Great Central Street Station in 1913, the remains of a Roman pavement were found whilst digging the foundations (SMR ref. LC35 and 708). It was made of brick and stone tesserae bedded on concrete, c.5.5m² in size and lay at a depth of 1.83m beneath the ground surface. The factory was situated within the rear gardens of Nos. 130 and 132 Highcross Street, and fronted onto Great Central Street. (ELC156, Haverfield 1918 Archaeological Journal 75).

In 1923 a chance discovery of a heavily disturbed tessellated pavement led to a small archaeological investigation in 1928 prior to the construction of the garage at 132 Highcross Street. A very disturbed pavement, along with evidence of two possible buildings of Roman date were discovered. It is unclear how much archaeology was investigated and/or destroyed. A plan held in the archives at Jewry Wall (A141 1960), shows an architect's plan of the site dated 1928, that includes the building of No.132 Highcross Street, with what appear to be archaeological findspots indicated on it (see section 8 for full discussion on this).

The recent excavations at the former Maxim and Stibbe building here have revealed very significant Roman remains (Speed 2017). There are also further reports of Roman mosaics at All Saints' Open, 40m north of the site (MLC177), another 110m south-west of the site (MLC175), and 65m south and south-west of the site (MLC157 & MLC160).

The evaluations at the Pretty Legs factory to the north of the site revealed significant evidence for Roman remains including walls, floors, pits, ovens and other features (MLC2471). There is also a report of a large mosaic (the 'Cyparissus Pavement') to have been found on Highcross Street in 1675, although the exact location is contested (MLC1047), and seems likely to have lain further south. Another mosaic was found in 2012 south of All Saints' Church (MLC2429). Further evidence for houses, including tessellated floors were found during the recent excavations at Highcross Street, 50m to the south-east of the assessment area (Morris 2012 and forthcoming).

Further to the south-west of the application area is the site of Blackfriars mosaic (MLC50), which lay at the southern end of the Great Central Railway platform. This was lifted in 1977 for display in the Jewry Wall Museum. Archaeological excavation beneath the mosaic identified evidence for the town house it came from as well as earlier phases of timber buildings dating back to the mid-1st century AD. The mosaic, and therefore the Roman floor level inside the townhouse, was recorded at c.56.65m aOD (Clay & Mellor 1985). Further north, near the former Great Central Railway engine turntable, fragments of stone columns, gravel surfaces, stake holes and numerous Roman finds were discovered in c.1900 (MLC1111).

There are many archaeological artefact findspots in the vicinity of the assessment area. These include metalwork including brooches, hooks, needles and pins (MLC1041 & MLC1058). Further metalwork includes coins, keys, rings and a seal box (MLC1038) and a linchpin (MLC1098). A pot full of Roman coins was found in 1718 at Northgate Street/ Highcross Street, 100m north of the assessment area (MLC1076 & MLC2687). Another coin hoard was found 100m south-east of the assessment area in 1805 (MLC1037). Other Roman finds include spindle whorls (MLC1089), pottery vessels (MLC1043), and other artefacts (MLC1072, MLC2583).

3.2 Anglo-Saxon to medieval

Until comparatively recently there was a dearth of evidence for the nature of occupation in Leicester immediately after the end of Roman administration in AD 410. Archaeological excavations have now produced evidence for post-Roman Anglo-Saxon sunken-featured buildings (*Grubenhäuser*) to the south of the town, (outside the South Gate) and within the north-east quarter of the walled area at Vaughan Way and Freeschool Lane. At Sanvey Gate and Vine Street to the south-east of the assessment area, post-built structures from this period have also been suggested (Jarvis 2012, Higgins et. al. 2009).

The dating of Saxon finds from both intra- and extra-mural excavations suggests Early Anglo-Saxon occupation within the town during the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries. In the Middle Saxon Period, *c.* 7th and 8th centuries, there is as yet no archaeological evidence for settlement within the town walls (there are indications activity immediately to the south of the south gate could be mid-Saxon (Speed 2014, 81), although the town is known to have been the seat of a Saxon bishop from the 670s, suggesting it was a centre of some importance. The Domesday Book indicates that by 1086, Leicester was a flourishing borough with six churches and 320 houses (Ellis 1978) suggesting significant growth in the late Anglo-Saxon period, *c.* 9th-10th century. That the town was definitely occupied during the latter period has been confirmed by archaeological finds of timber buildings on plots fronting the medieval High Street (modern Highcross Street). It has been suggested that the line of this street – including its extra-mural continuation to both the north and south, is the most likely focus for activity of this period (Courtney 1998).

By AD 877 the town had fallen under Danish control, becoming one of the five Burhs of the Danelaw until it was recaptured by Lady Aethelflaed in AD 918. Archaeological evidence for settlement in Leicester between the late 7th and mid-9th century is sparse and the Danish interlude appears to have left little trace, apart from a few residual Scandinavian-style artefacts and a number of street names ending in ‘gate’ – from the Danish *gata* meaning ‘street’. There are two Anglo-Saxon findspots in the area. Two annular brooches were found on a site 45m south-east of the assessment area (MLC992), and an Anglo-Scandinavian style alloy pendant was found nearby (MLC993).

By the 13th century the town consisted of a core of occupation broadly corresponding to the area within the Roman walls with suburbs outside each of the gates, including the North Suburb which lies 150m to the north of the assessment area lies (MLC33). Billson notes that in the 13th and 14th centuries, the district was occupied mainly by dyers and fullers and was known as ‘Walkercrofts’, land divided into plots by ditches and dykes or raised paths (‘Benacre’ and ‘Acedyke’) (Billson 1920). Nearby Soar Lane was also known as Fullers Street or Walker Lane, a ‘Walker’ being another name for a fuller, a person who cleansed cloth (*Ibid* 17).

The Friaries were established in Leicester in the 13th century and included the Friary of the Dominicans (Black Friars), which would have lain to the south-west of the assessment area (MLC64). The church of the Black Friars was possibly constructed on the site of the earlier parish church of St. Clements. St Clement’s had been a very poor parish and its church was in the ownership of the Canons of Leicester Abbey until 1291, when it was possibly given by them to the Friars Preachers or Black Friars (Billson 1920). The exact nature of the friary is unknown but would have comprised the church, cloister, dormitories and a refectory. By the 14th century it housed 30 friars. The friary was dissolved by Henry VIII and the church demolished soon after 1538. Little of the friary has been found, except for a section of its southern precinct wall recently excavated on the Merlin Works site (Kipling 2008), but it is thought to have covered approximately 16 acres of the quarter (Billson 1920).

The Domesday Book (1086) records six churches in Leicester. St. Margaret’s lies outside the town walls, with the other five inside the walls. All Saints’ Church lies 40m to the north-east of the assessment area on the opposite side of Highcross Street. This is possibly Norman in date, but may be earlier (MLC40). The adjacent cemetery may be earlier than the church (MLC1800). St. Peter’s Church was located 110m south-east of the assessment area on the southern side of Vaughan Way and was dismantled in 1573 (MLC61), where the modern Highcross shopping centre now stands. In 2005-6 a substantial part of the graveyard was excavated, along with the church and what was believed to be a medieval hall. Some 1340 burials were recovered, 25 coffined burials from the church, the remainder outside (Gnanaratnam 2003 & Cooper 2006) (MLC171). Some burials date from the 10th-11th century indicating that the church is probably a pre-Conquest foundation.

Highcross Street was, during the medieval period, Leicester’s main thoroughfare. As well as the extant 12th-century All Saint’s Church (MLC40) the street contains, at 107-9 Highcross Street, the former

Cross Keys Inn (MLC71), a Grade II listed building, parts of which have been dated to the 14th century. Whilst on the opposite side of Highcross Street, 30m to the north of the assessment area, excavations on Great Central Street have found evidence of a stone building which may be the vicarage for All Saints' Church (MLC2013) (Thomas 2006). Further north is the site of the town's medieval north gate (MLC129), demolished in the late 18th century.

South of All Saints' Church, opposite the assessment area are the sites of the St John's Hospital (MLC149), a 12th-century complex including a hospital, cemetery and chapel (MLC148) last recorded in the 16th century; and the 14th century Shirehall (MLC153) and County Gaol (MLC154). Recent archaeological investigation on these sites has found evidence of occupation dating back to the 10th century with extensive evidence of medieval activity close to the Highcross Street frontage including a stone wall which might be part of St John's Hospital and a small stone building of probably medieval date (Morris 2012). The archaeological survival along this site's street frontage is remarkably similar to that excavated *c.*100m to the south during excavations on Freeschool Lane (Coward & Speed 2009), which uncovered extensive evidence for well-developed street properties from the late Anglo-Saxon period through to the present day. In places, medieval archaeology was only *c.*0.4m below present street level.

Medieval findspots in the area include a monastic seal, found 100m west of the assessment area (MLC735), tiles, mouldings and window glass 35m to the north-east (MLC713), pottery 130m to the south-west (MLC2586), a coin 40m to the west (MLC2566) and 30m to the south-east (MLC1750). A metal crucible found 100m to the north of the site may suggest a metal working site (MLC120).

Leicester's south suburb has produced considerable evidence for earthen defences or bulwarks thrown up around the town during the Civil War, when it was besieged twice in 1645. The eastern suburb seems to have been similarly protected, but whether this was also the case for the north suburb is by no means clear. There is a reference from 1645-46 when payment was made for paving part of the street in the North Gate where the bulwark was (Courtney and Courtney 1992). Certainly, the defenders during the first siege deliberately burned down many properties to open up areas surrounding the town to render them more defensible. This may have included property around the northern limits of the north suburb. Here also, there was destruction from the siege itself, when St Leonard's church was destroyed together with property at north bridge (Courtney and Courtney 1992).

3.3 Post-medieval (AD 1475-1799)

By the end of the medieval period, Highcross Street was replaced as the main street through Leicester by the present High Street (formerly Swinesmarket) but remained fairly densely occupied throughout the post-medieval period with a number of important buildings on its frontages including: St John's and Bent's Hospitals (MLC150), the Town Gaol (MLC151), the All Saints' Brewery (MLC1377) and All Saints' Vicarage (MLC2013).

3.4 19th century to present

In the late 19th century, the area immediately east of the Great Central Railway saw alterations to the street grid with the construction of Great Central Street to replace Charlotte Street (now beneath the station). Wright's Directory of 1891 shows that within the assessment area numbers 132 and 134 were both houses owned by Miss Vaughan and William Bramley respectively. Numbers 136-8 were occupied by John Jeays, a broker, George Barden, bootmaker was at 140. Number 142 was occupied by Edward Thurlby, and a builder, Jason Widdowson, was at 144.

132 Highcross Street was an early 18th-century town house in red brick (MLC2068), No 132 was a building demolished in the 1970s (reference in Transactions 1977-1978). Miss Emily Elisabeth Vaughan lived at 132 Highcross Street in 1891. Listed as 'gentry' in The Kelly's Directory of Leicester

for 1888. Sketch by John Flower identified by Neil Finn (Leicestershire Historian 2008 p.42). Shows a “double pile, wide-frontage house... and beyond that a boundary wall with gate and trees behind”. The construction of Great Central Street, and the erection of the Bryant’s factory decreased the size of the garden of No.132 considerably. This residence had ceased to be the residence of Ms. Vaughan by 1902 and was turned into a children’s receiving home by 1906 and by 1920 was the Leicester Working Boys Home.

The same John Flower sketch shows a jettied building between 132 and 134 (this had had been demolished by the 1st edition OS in 1887 and replaced by a covered archway giving access to a pair of properties erected at the back of the plot). An 1848 sketch shows a crown-post and collar purlin roof structure (roofs of this type were common in the later 13th and 14th centuries in this region – similar seen at 107 Highcross St see Hartley in Transactions 1988, 83-5). The building on right of the 14th century building is no.134, with sign showing ‘Sharp Builder Garden Chair Maker’.



Figure 2: View of mid 19th century buildings at 132-134 Highcross Street (sketch by John Flower c.1850).

From the end of the 19th century through to the present day, domestic occupation throughout the wider area was gradually replaced by factories, foundries and hosiery works. There is a former hosiery factory, which incorporated the firm of H.E Allsopp Ltd, adjacent to the site, most likely dating from 1917 (MLC1447).

Through the rest of the 19th and 20th century the area saw mixed development, with residential premises slowly giving way to predominantly commercial and industrial sites. In the late 1950s-mid 1960s, Vaughan Way was constructed dividing the north-west quarter from the rest of the city. In recent years, the prosperity of the area has diminished. Commercial and industrial premises have become empty and in many cases demolished in advance of prospective development.

4. Aims and Objectives

The broad aims of the archaeological investigation were:

The purpose of the archaeological work may be summarised as follows:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.

- To establish the character, extent, date range and significance for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The project has the potential to contribute to the following research themes outlined as regional research priorities in the East Midlands Archaeological Research Framework (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/>)

Roman

5.1 Chronology

1. How can we enhance our knowledge of developing pottery industries, particularly during the Conquest period and 3rd to 4th centuries?
2. How may information on temporal and regional variations in pottery typology and vessel fabrics best be disseminated?
3. How may our understanding of sites known only from metal-detected and fieldwalking finds be enhanced?
4. How can we advance our knowledge of the chronology of metal finds, particularly brooches?

5. What are the priorities for scientific dating, particularly radiocarbon, and how may targeted dating programmes be developed?

5.2 The military impact

1. How far was the military conquest a motor of social and economic change?
- 2. To what extent is** the pivotal location of the region between civil south and military north reflected in the archaeological record?
- 3.** Can we define more closely the distribution of early military sites and their periods of use?
4. How did the supply needs of military garrisons and armies along the northern frontier affect the economy and transport infrastructure?
5. How did the withdrawal of Roman political and financial support impact upon the established society and economy?

5.3 Growth of urban centres

1. What spurred the foundation of extramural settlements (vici) next to early forts and how was the development of vici and forts related?
2. How does the distribution of towns correlate with Iron Age foci, and how far may their social, political and economic roles have overlapped?
3. What processes drove the growth of secondary urban centres?
4. How were towns organised, what roles did they perform and how may their morphology and functions have varied over time?
- 5. How and why did the urban landscape** change in the late Roman period, and what roles may fortifications have played in this period?

5.4 Rural settlement patterns and landscapes

1. How did the Conquest impact upon rural settlements and landscapes?
2. How and why did settlement forms and building traditions vary within the region and over time?
3. How did rural settlements relate to each other and to towns and military sites, and how may this have varied regionally and over time?

4. How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time?
5. What patterns can be discerned in the location of settlements in the landscape?
6. Can we elucidate further the daily life of settlements and their role in the processing and marketing of agricultural products?

5.5 The agricultural economy

1. How is the upland-lowland divide manifested in the regional agricultural economy and other aspects of the archaeological record?
2. How did integration into the Roman Empire impact upon the agrarian economy, including the introduction of new crops, herbs and fruits?
3. What is the evidence for the diet of people of high and low status in urban and rural settlements, especially those close to military sites?
4. Can we chart more closely the processes of agricultural intensification and expansion and the development of field systems?
5. Can we define more precisely the networks developed for the trade and exchange of agricultural produce and fish?

5.6 Artefacts: production, distribution and social identity

1. What resources moved in and out of the region during this period?
2. How can we add to our understanding of the nationally important iron and lead industries?
3. How may studies of the production, movement and consumption of pottery contribute to understanding of the regional economy?
4. What production techniques and exchange networks were involved in the manufacture and marketing of salt and building materials?
5. How can we utilise most effectively the regional coin resource as evidence for the transition to a monetary economy?
6. What can artefact research contribute to studies of eating, drinking and other manifestations of social identity?

5.7 Roads and waterways

1. Can the chronology of road construction and links between road building and campaigns of conquest be clarified?
2. How were roads, rivers and artificial waterways integrated?
3. To what extent may communication routes have been influenced by Late Iron Age settlement patterns and routes of movement?
4. How may roads and waterways have impacted upon established communities and how may roads have influenced urban morphology?

5.8 Ritual and religion

1. How far is the location of religious sites related to Late Iron Age activity and to what extent may structured deposition of human/animal bones in settlement/boundary features have continued?
2. How far may data from surveys and the Portable Antiquities Scheme assist in locating religious or ritual sites?
3. Can we elucidate the beliefs and practices associated with religious or ritual foci and may certain classes of site have been associated with particular activities?
4. Why have so few early Roman burials been found, and may practices have varied regionally and between different communities?
5. What may studies of later Roman inhumation cemeteries teach us about changing burial practices and demography?

Early Medieval

6.1 Demography and the identification of political and social groups

2. What was the relationship between indigenous communities and Germanic populations, and how may this have varied spatially and over time?

3. How may studies of sites yielding late Roman metalwork elucidate further the relationship between indigenous and Germanic populations?

5. How can we refine our understanding of the chronology and process of Scandinavian immigration during the ninth and tenth centuries?

6.3 Roads and rivers: transport routes and cultural boundaries

1. To what extent were Roman roads used and maintained from the fifth century, and may some have acted as social or political boundaries?

6.4 Rural settlement patterns

1. What impact may Germanic and Scandinavian immigration have had upon established rural settlement patterns, and how may place-name evidence contribute to studies of settlement evolution?

3. Can spatial and temporal variations in the morphology, functions and status of settlements be defined more precisely?

6.5 Inland Towns, 'central places' and burhs

1. How may Anglo-Saxon and British communities have utilised late Roman towns and their immediate environs?

3. What was the impact of the Danish occupation upon urban development and what were the differences between Danish and non-Danish burhs and other urban settlements?

6.6 Industry, trade and the emergence of a monetary economy

6. Can additional fabric analyses clarify further the production and distribution of Anglo-Saxon pottery, particularly that produced in Charnwood Forest?

High Medieval

7.1 Urbanism

1. How did the major towns and smaller market towns of the region develop after the Norman Conquest, both within the urban core and in suburban and extra-mural areas?

2. Can we define more closely the industrial and trading activities associated with towns and the nature and extent of urban influence upon the countryside?

1. How and where was post-Conquest pottery manufactured and distributed, and what communication systems were employed?

2. By what means were the extractive mineral industries controlled or organised by royal, monastic or lay lords?

3. Can we identify, investigate and date sites associated with the region's key extractive industries (especially iron, coal, lead and alabaster), the production and distribution of cloth and leather-work, and freshwater or marine fishing?

4. Can we develop a typological classification of buildings associated with medieval industrial and commercial activities and can we identify sub-regional and chronological patterning?

7.7 The agrarian landscape and food-producing economy

5. What may fish bones and other environmental data contribute to studies of the exploitation and distribution of freshwater and marine fish?

Post-medieval

8.1 Urbanism: morphology, functions and buildings

1. Can we elucidate the roles of towns as social, administrative, industrial and commercial centres, their integration within regional marketing systems and their relationship to communication routes?
2. How were towns organised and planned, and how did population growth impact upon their internal spatial organisation?
3. What was the impact of religion, urban government, civic pride and class structures upon town planning and architecture (e.g. public buildings such as town halls or prisons and water management structures)?
4. What can studies of environmental data, artefacts and structural remains tell us about variations in diet, living conditions and status?
5. Can we recognise the emergence of the poorer classes in the developing suburbs?
6. How can we advance studies of building plans and standing remains, especially where hidden inside later buildings, and of caves and cellars?

8.3 Agricultural landscapes and the food-producing economy

3. What changes and improvements occurred in animal husbandry and the use of animals (e.g. new breeds, traction and traded animal products)?
4. What garden plants and crops were grown in the countryside and urban market gardens, and what new types were introduced?
5. How did the diet, living conditions and status of rural and urban communities compare?

8.5 Industry and communications

1. Can we elucidate the organisation of the workplace, gender differences at work and the development of industrial processes (especially the nationally important lead, coal and tanning industries)?
3. Can we identify domestic buildings adapted for the textile industry?
4. How were transport infrastructures improved and how was this related to the developing urban and market hierarchy?
5. What may be learned of the material culture of industrial workers?
6. What can we deduce from factory/non-factory production data about the changing economy (especially patterns of marketing and consumption)?

8.8 Material culture

1. How was pottery distributed across the region and can we identify competition between regional potteries?
2. Can we establish a dated type series for ceramics (building in particular upon unpublished urban pit and well groups)?
3. Can we identify the changing material culture of the urban and rural poor, the emerging middle classes and the aristocracy?
4. Were there different patterns of consumption between town and countryside and between different agricultural regions?
5. What may be deduced about the symbolic use of material culture (e.g. in social competition)?

5. Methodology

All fieldwork followed a written scheme of investigation for archaeological excavation (Speed & Buckley 2018), agreed with the City Archaeologist at Leicester City Council, as a condition of planning. The work followed the Corporate Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (CIfA 2014b). Internal monitoring procedures were undertaken including visits to the Site by the project manager. These ensured that project targets were met and professional standards were maintained. Provision was made for external monitoring meetings with the City Archaeologist at Leicester City Council, and the Client.

The proposed area to be archaeologically investigated initially covered the car park area to the north (the southern part of the site was still in use by printers and car wash). Four trenches (see Fig.6.) were excavated by 360 machine to the top of archaeological deposits or to natural ground (whichever was reached first). Three further trenches would be examined in the southern half of the site when it became available. Trenches were examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located were planned at an appropriate scale. Archaeological deposits were sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. The ULAS recording manual was used as a guide for all recording. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. Any archaeological deposits located will be planned and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. Where possible, modern intrusions will be initially excavated to provide a 'window' through stratified deposits in order to determine their nature, date and depth.

A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made using a Topcon differential Global Positioning System (dGPS) directly tied to the Ordnance Survey grid (sub-centimetre accuracy). Elevations and sections of individual layers of features will be drawn where required. The OD height of all strata and features are immediately recorded on the dGPS survey. The relative height of all principal strata and features were recorded. Where detailed plans or sections of archaeological features are required these were recorded using Structure-from-Motion photogrammetry [this is a versatile and rapid tool for capturing high-resolution 3D surfaces with complete texture and sub-centimetre accuracy]. It is created using multiple images from a digital SLR camera and processed with Agisoft Photoscan. The resulting models are georeferenced, tied to the above dGPS survey. This is undertaken following ULAS SfM methodology guidelines, with reference to Historic England 'Photogrammetric Applications for Cultural Heritage (2017)'. The OD height of all principal strata and features was calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans. The Site has been given the Leicester Arts and Museums Service accession number: YA.3.2018.

6. Results

The results are presented below in trench order, describing the contextual / stratigraphic detail / evidence for each phase of activity. Four joining trenches were excavated (Figure 3), exposing an area of 265m² (30% of an available 868 m²). Archaeological contexts are assigned as a cut number [***] or fill number (***)).

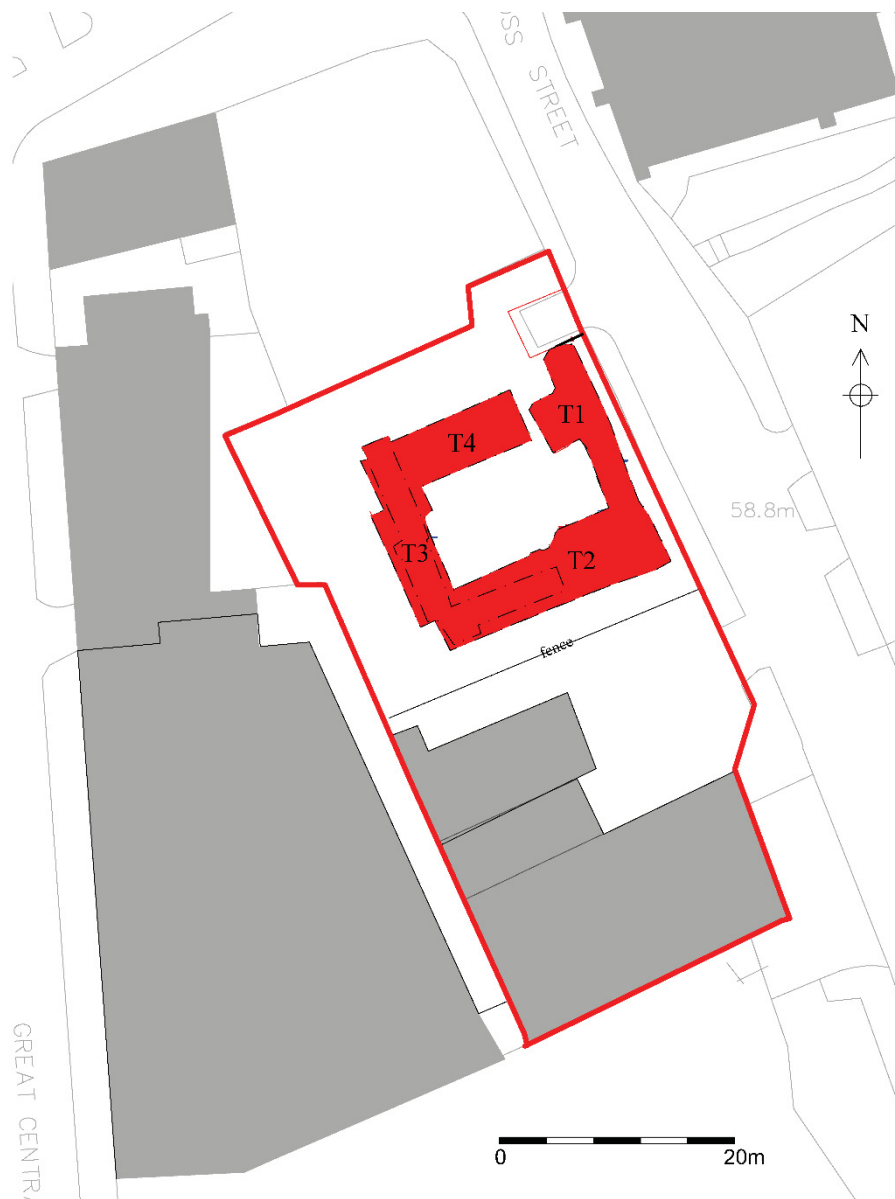


Figure 3 Location of trial trenches

6.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located parallel to Highcross Street (NW-SE orientation), it was 14.6m long, and generally 2.5m wide (Figure 4). It covered plots No.140 and 142 Highcross Street.

Initial machining removed modern tarmac and underlying hardcore. Within the plot of No.142 was a 2.5m deep brick cellar (Figure 8). The brick floor was reached (and removed) on the west-side (leaving cellar backfill in on east-side adjacent to the modern street for safety). Below the floor were natural sands and gravels. The cellar showed evidence for inter-connected doorways.

On the west side, two small doorways led west and further back from the frontage. One was removed to assess the archaeological potential behind the brick cellar walls. This trench extension revealed a stone wall [9], (7) behind the brick wall (on the same NW-SE orientation). The wall consisted of rounded granite blocks, seen at a height of 57.90m OD. This is likely to be a medieval / post-medieval rear wall of a building preceding the 19th century brick building. Worked stone fragments were retrieved from the cellar backfill (Figure 12). Perhaps associated with this wall was a small patch of mortar floor (6), seen at 57.64m OD. Against the west edge of wall (9) was a large pit [11], this contained dark silts (12) and was over 2.25m deep. This was sealed by garden soils (16). Pit [11] cut a series of sand and gravel layers (13) on the north-side of the trench. A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from (13), which dates to c.AD100-120, a single sherd of mid 11th-13th century AD pottery was also recovered. These layers were associated with stone wall [10], (8). Wall [10] was 0.7m+ high and 0.6m wide. It consisted of mortared granite (and one small piece of tile). It was seen at 57.45m OD. The upper part had been robbed ([47], (77)). On its east-side were further sand and gravel compacted layers (14), likely the same as (13). These were also at least 0.6m deep. Overlying these were garden soils (16).

Further south, under the former plot of No.140 Highcross Street, no cellar was encountered. This resulted in good survival of a Roman street (2). The Roman street was cut by a stone wall on its north side [5] (1). This was seen to run across the width of the trench (1.8m+), c.0.35m wide. It consisted of Dane Hills sandstone and some cobbles, bonded by a pale yellow-brown mortar. This wall was behind the brick cellar wall of No.140/142.

An area c.1.2m by c.1.8m area of compacted orange sand and gravel (2) was uncovered c.1.7m below the modern Highcross Street at 57.80m OD (Figure 13). This is indicative of a Roman street, believed to be the east-west Roman street running between *Insulae* IXb and III. It was cut by Roman walls (and robber trenches) on either side, making the width of the street just 3 metres, much wider than the same street found in Trench 3. Overlying the road gravels was a light grey-brown fine sandy-silt (3). Ranging in thickness from 0.1-0.2m, this may be late Roman (or early post-Roman / 5th century) soil build up over the final street metalling. The road gravels were 0.8-1m thick, with clear evidence for at least 8 sequences of road metallings. The surviving width of the road was 2.2m on the east side and 3.4m on the west side. A camber could clearly be seen on the south side (on the west side of the trench). The projected width of the street from the top of the camber is c.4.5-5m. Below the earliest street gravels was a medium reddish-brown sand (4), (0.18m thick). This was only visible in the trench sections. This could be an early Roman or Iron Age soil.

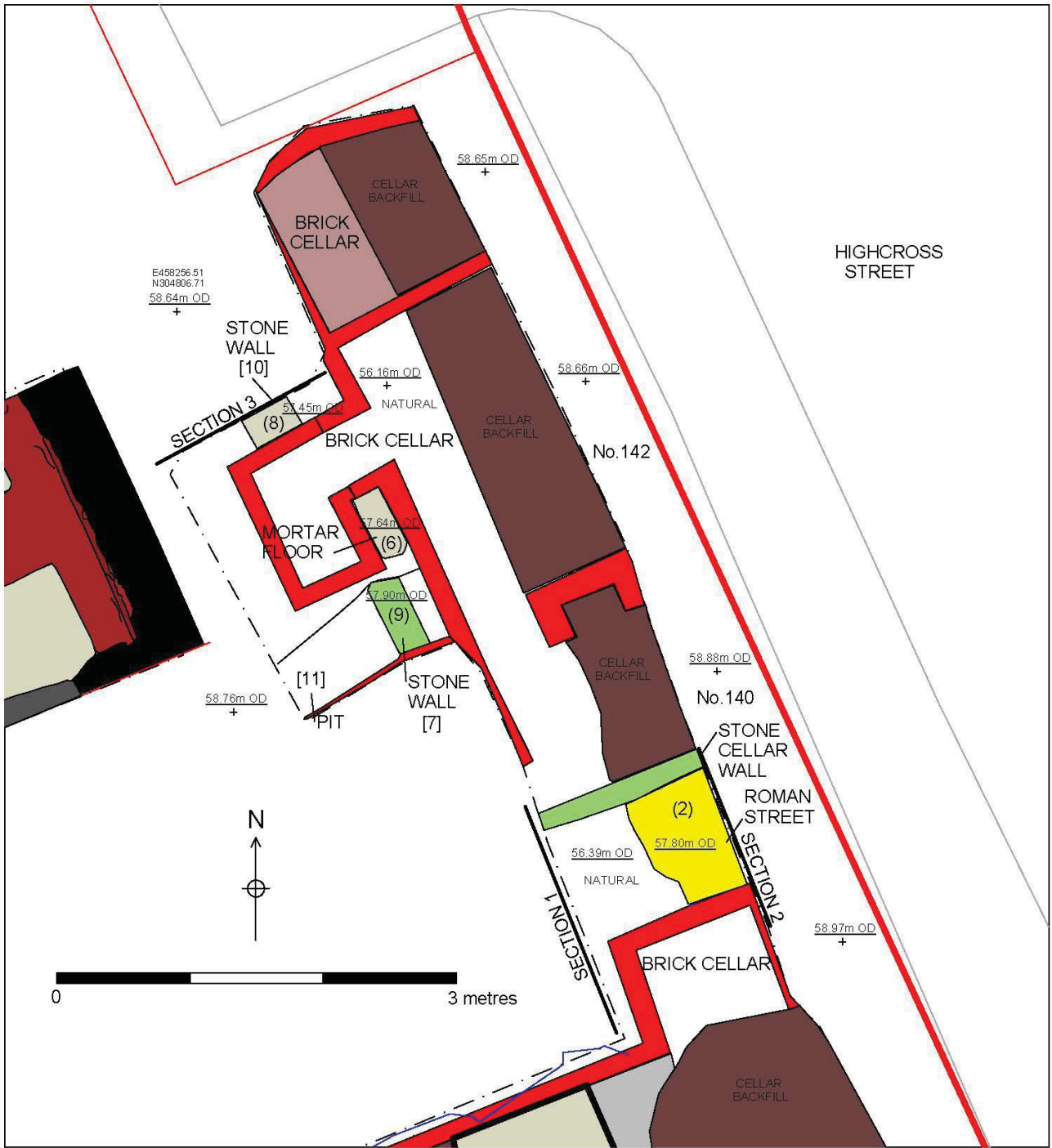


Figure 4: Plan of Trench 1

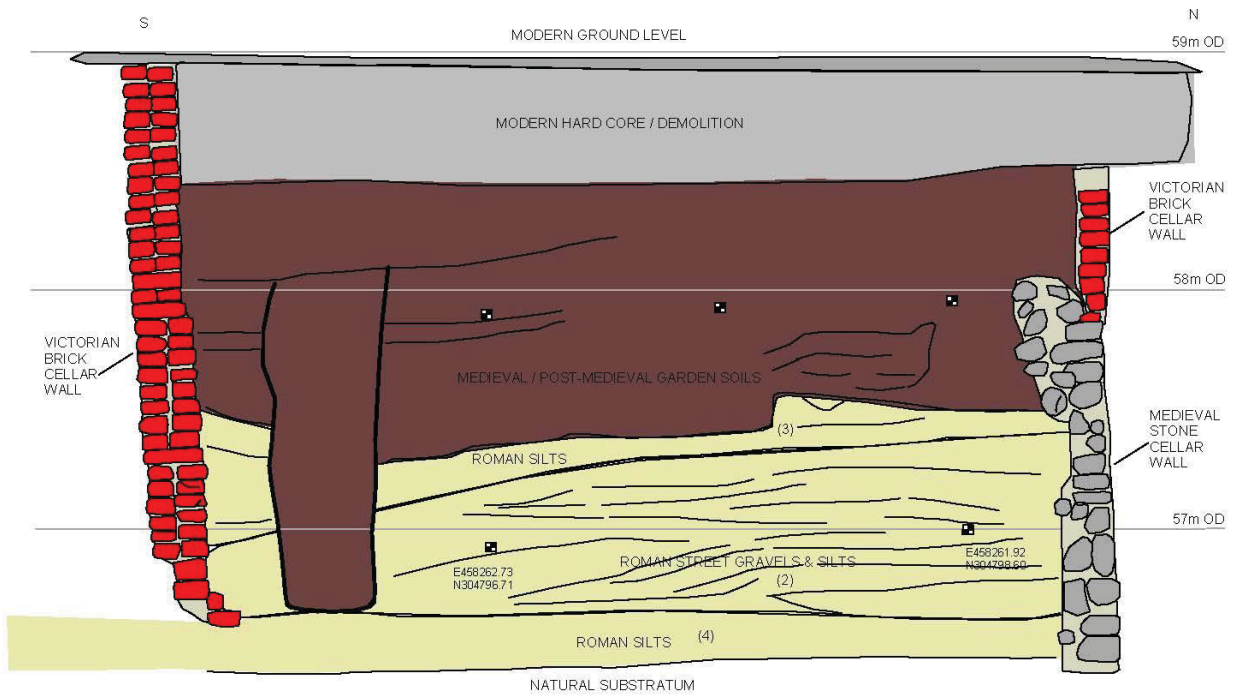


Figure 5: Section 1, Trench 1, showing Roman street, looking west

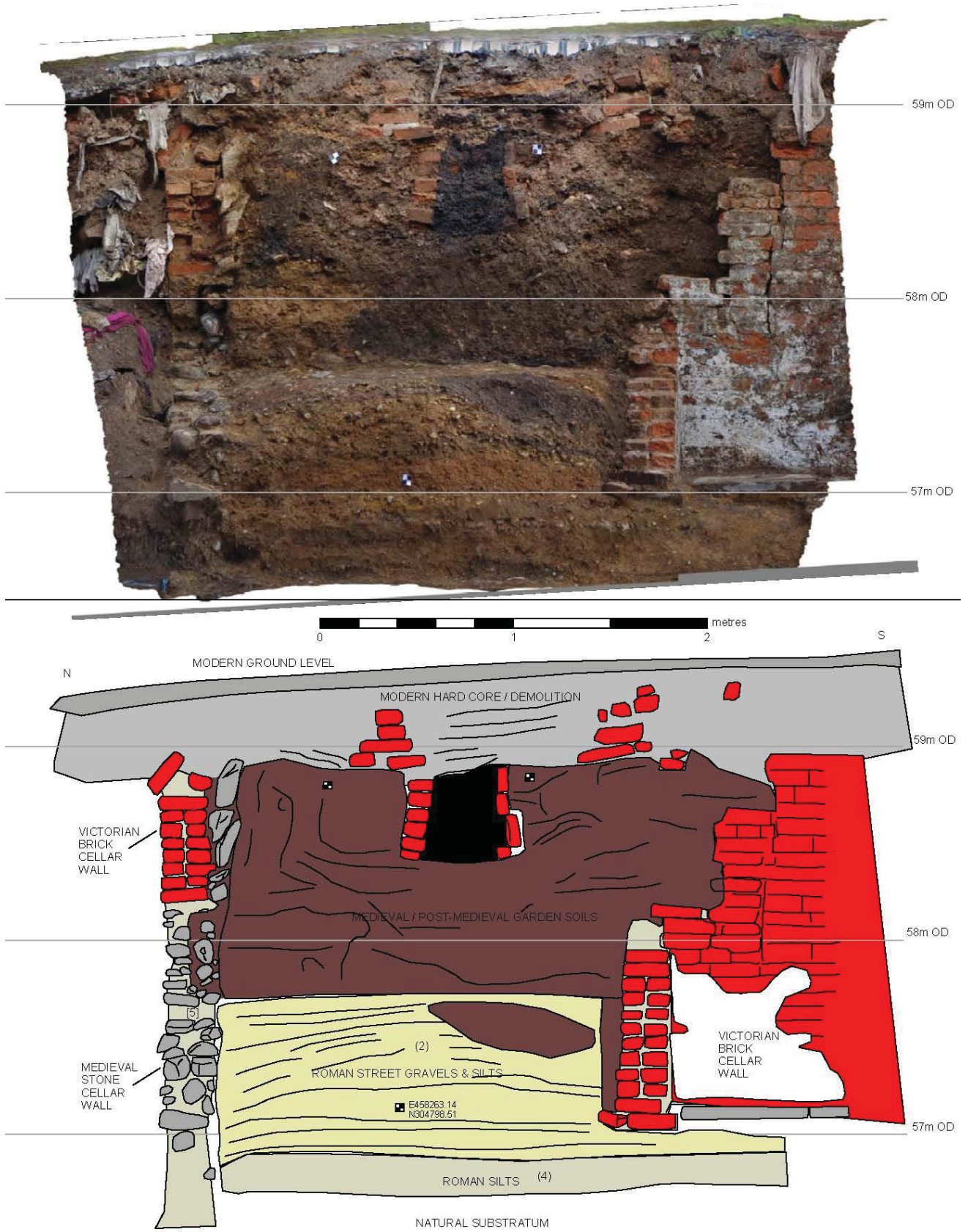


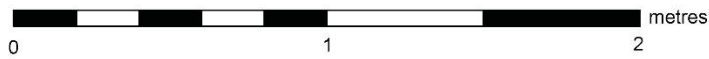
Figure 6: Section 2, Trench 1, showing Roman street, looking east

59m OD



58m OD

57m OD



W

E 59m OD

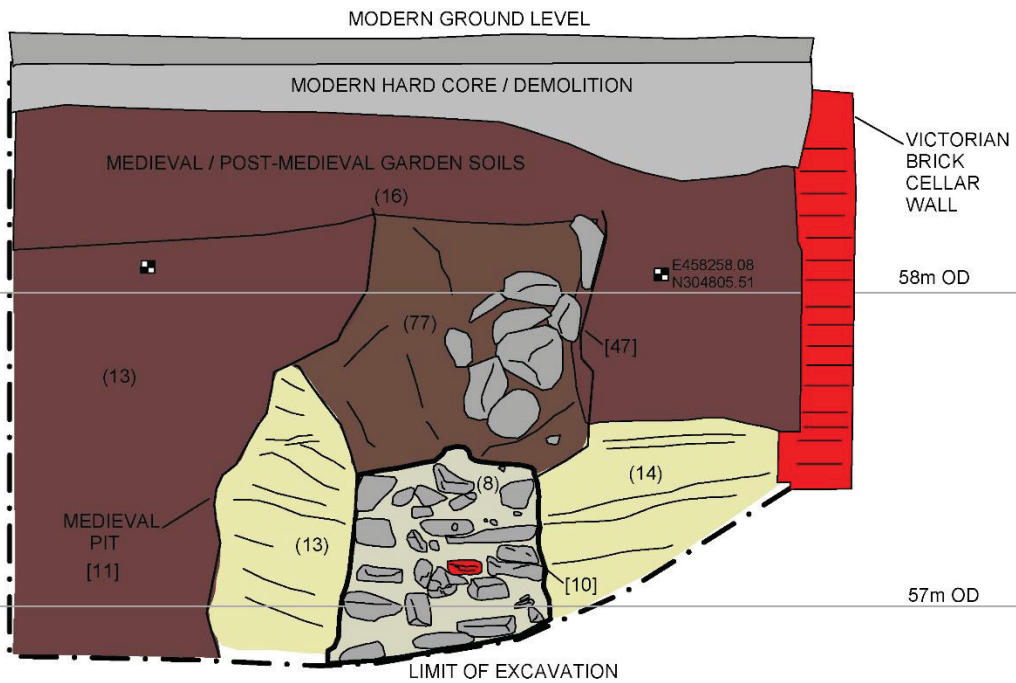


Figure 7: Section 3, Trench 1, showing Roman wall and layers, looking north



Figure 8: View of brick cellar at no.142 Highcross Street, looking NW, 1m scale.



Figure 9: View of brick cellar at no.142 Highcross Street, looking west.



Figure 10: View of stone wall [10], (8), and sand / gravel layers (13) and (14) in trench section. Note removed brick cellar walls visible on right (looking north),



Figure 11: Left: mortar floor (6), and brick wall (17) behind, looking east. Right: mortar floor looking south, note stone wall (7) towards top of section. Both 1m scale.



Figure 12: Worked stone blocks from No.142 Highcross Street (1m scale)



Figure 13: Roman street under No.140 Highcross Street (looking NE and E)



Figure 14: View of Roman street in Trench 1, note camber on left. Gravels truncated by brick and stone cellars on either side. Looking west, 1m scale.

6.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was located perpendicular to Highcross Street (E-W orientation), it was 22.2m long, and 4.8-5.5m wide.

Initial machining removed modern tarmac and underlying hardcore. The trench was over plot 136 Highcross Street. At the street frontage a deep cellar (roughly 2.5m deep) had removed virtually all trace of earlier archaeological evidence. The brick cellar belonged to No.136, its backfill consisted of modern brick demolition material and a significant quantities of modern fabric rolls. The brick cellar extended 9.5m back from the street frontage. Part of the concrete slab floor was removed and earlier archaeological features were investigated at a depth of 56.66m OD. A brick well was located in the SW corner of the cellar, this was capped with a piece of large slate. This cut into a dark grey-brown clay silt layer (20). This contained four sherds of mid 13th century AD pottery.

A NE-SW orientated robber trench [18] was located under the cellar floor. It was 0.7m wide, and at least 2.6m long (cut by a medieval pit (20) at its west-end), and continued under the cellar floor at the east-end. The robber trench was only 0.2m deep, clearly severely truncated by the cellar and cut into a orange-brown sand and silt layer (21). This was 0.15m thick and contained a single sherd from a grey ware jar from the late 1st-2nd century AD onwards (not closely datable).

The north side wall of the brick cellar was removed to assess for levels archaeological survival (the south side was left in for safety reasons). The section revealed a series of Roman soils (24) and (25), at 57.75m OD, below the mixed medieval / post-medieval soils (16). The Roman layers were cut by a large pit [26]. The compacted sands and gravels were 1.2-1.4m thick and likely relate to the southern edge of the E-W Roman street seen in Trench 1.

Beyond the cellar to the west was a brick well [28] (29) (30). This cut into numerous garden soils (16). Various medieval / post-medieval pits ([33], [36], [40]) were located across the length of the trench including what appeared to be a stone-lined cess pit ([36]), at 59.96m OD. The pit was constructed with sandstone blocks. Between these pits a mid brown grey silt-sand (39), probably represents a Roman soil layer. Thirteen sherds of pottery were recovered from this layer, comprising a mixture of grey, white and oxidised sandy wares, overall a date towards the middle of the 2nd century, c.AD120-150, can be suggested for this group.

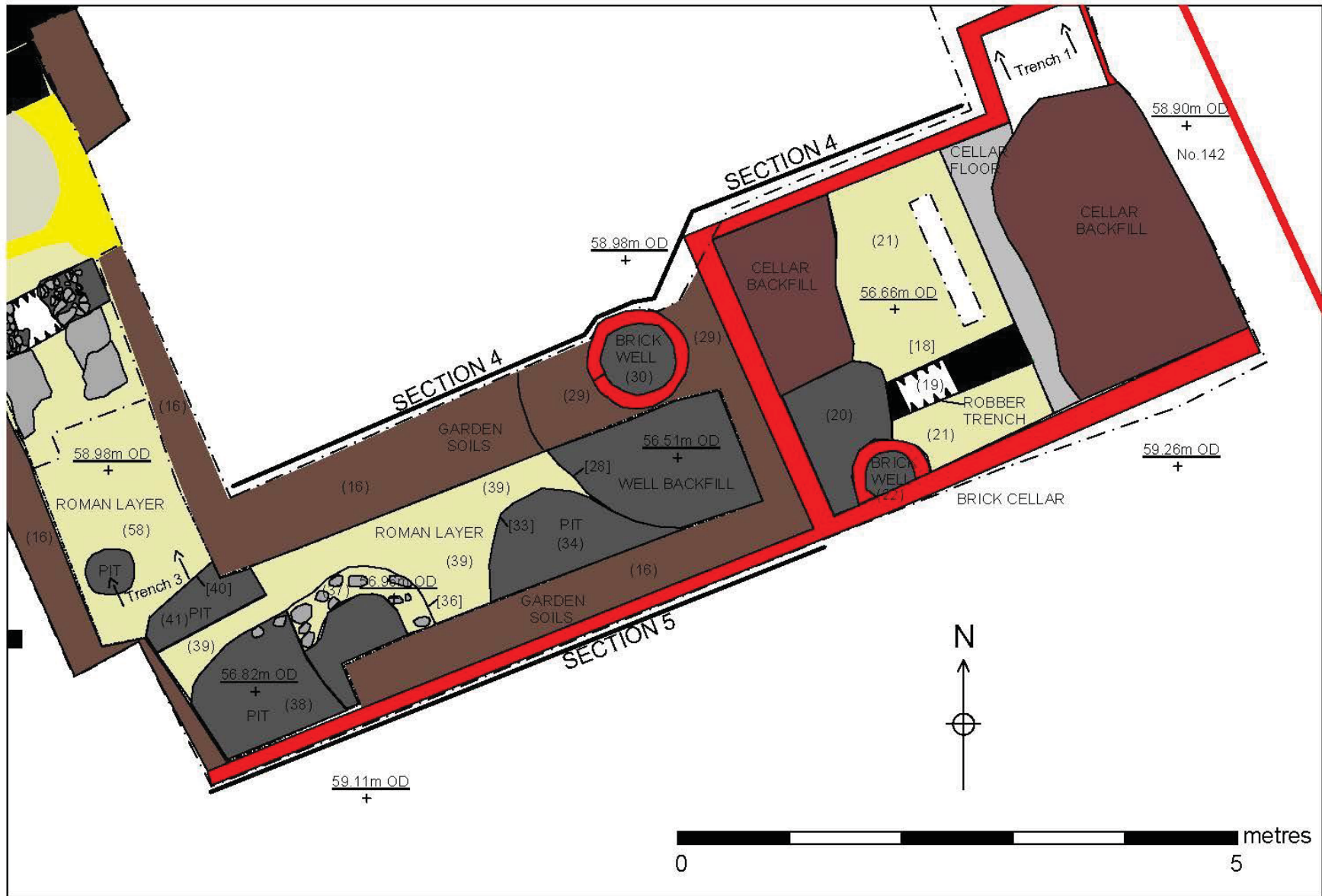


Figure 15: Plan of Trench 2

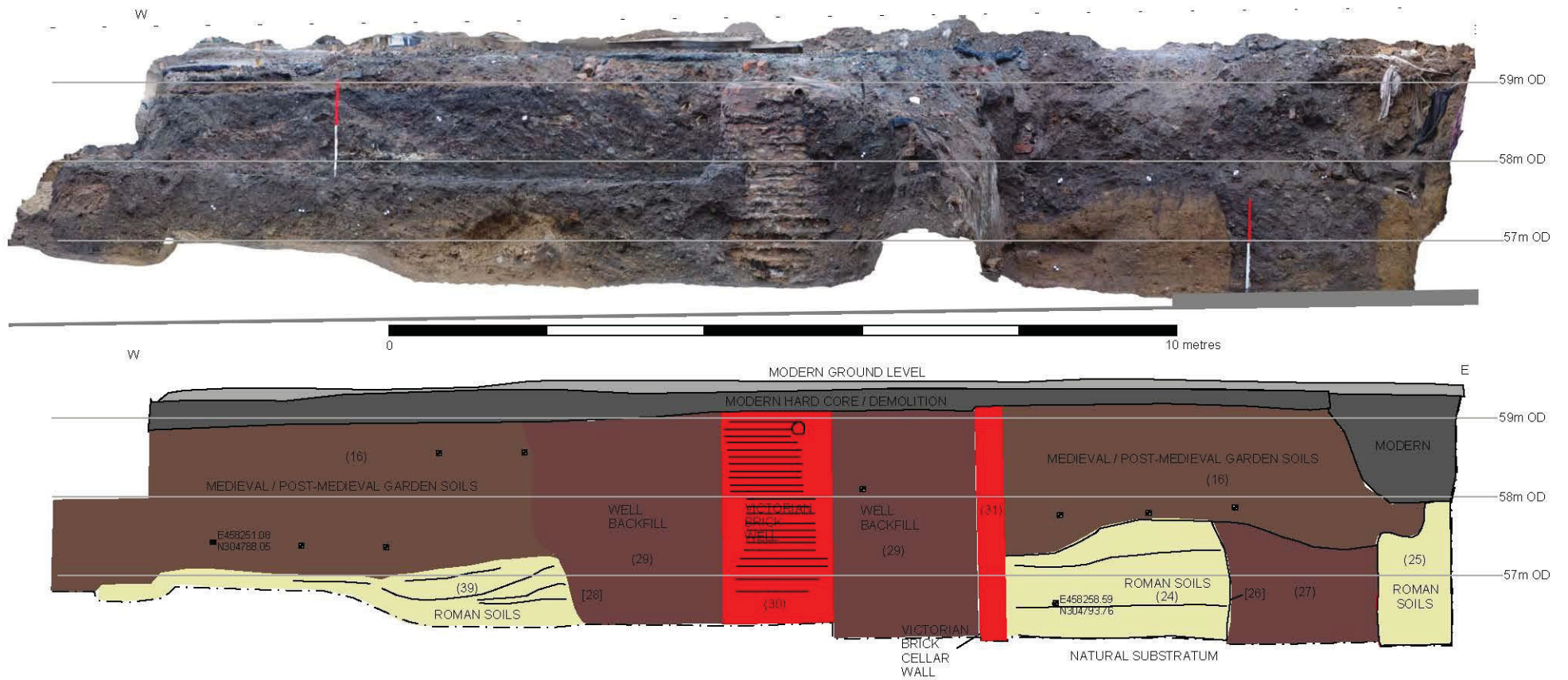


Figure 16: Section 4, Trench 2 north side

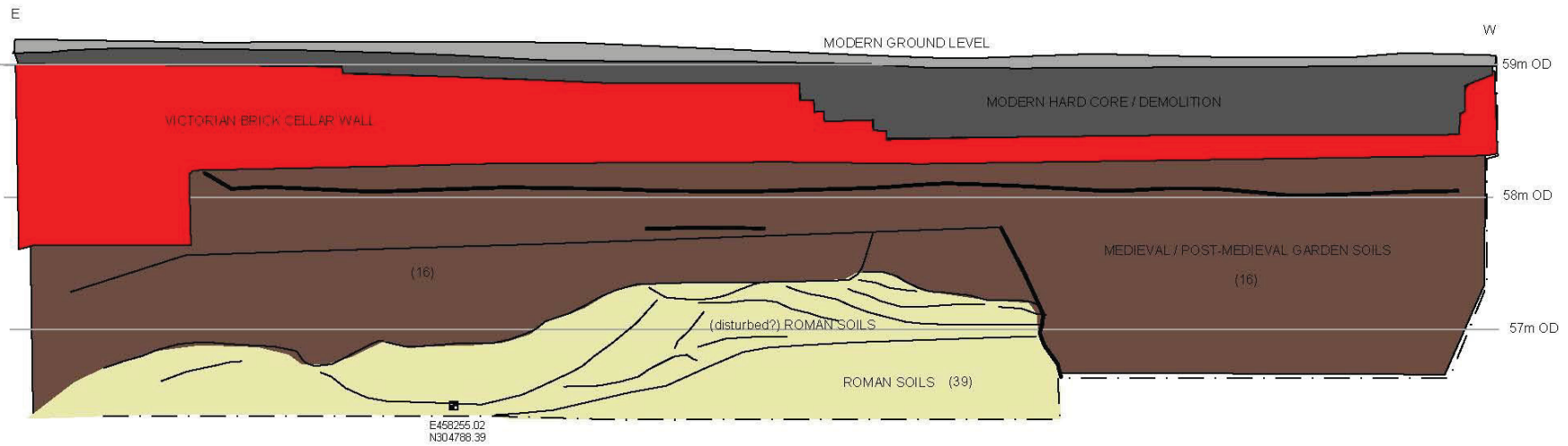


Figure 17: Section 5, Trench 2 south side