

An Archaeological Watching Brief at The Old Barn Darley Abbey, Derby.



ARS Ltd Report 2007/02

January 2007

Compiled By:

Jessika Shakarian
Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Angel House
Bakewell
Derbyshire
DE45 1HB

Checked By:

Dr. Clive Waddington
Tel: 01629 814540
Fax: 01629 814657
admin@archaeologicalresearchservices.com
www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com

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Executive Summary

In November 2006 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Derby City Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the site of The Old Barn, Darley Abbey, Derby. The aim of the project was to restore the barn using original building materials for development as an outdoor education resource.

The site is of historical interest due to the 'missing' remains of the Augustinian Abbey believed to have been established c. 1146. The abbey was demolished during the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538 leaving only one upstanding building surviving, The Old Abbey Pub.

During the watching brief three walls and a narrow path were uncovered believed to be associated with the abbey. Two of the walls were substantial structural walls; the third appeared to be a smaller, internal wall. Medieval pottery was discovered beneath the foundation layer of one of the walls, confirming a mid 13th to 14th century date. The archaeological remains were all accurately recorded and preserved in situ. The only disturbance to the new build was that the new barn building had to be moved three metres to the east to avoid one of the walls.

The discoveries are of particular significance as no buried archaeological remains relating to the Abbey complex have ever been found before.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) were commissioned by Derby City Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief on all ground work carried out at the site of The Old Barn, Darley Abbey by the contractor, Henry Boot. This aimed to ensure the recording of any archaeological deposits or finds and, where possible, to preserve these finds *in situ*. The aim of the project was to restore the 19th century barn using the barn's original hand-made bricks and structural beams. The project aims to use the new building as an outdoor education resource. A modern lean-to structure will be added to the back of the barn to provide shower and changing room facilities. The aim was to rebuild the new barn in the exact footprint of the original building but due to the exposure of a wall during the watching brief the building had to be moved three metres to the east, effectively protecting the remains *in situ*.

2. Location and Geology

- 2.1 The site is situated on an alluvial river terrace scarp elevated approximately 2m above the modern flood plain overlooking the river Derwent.
- 2.2 The 17th century Darley Hall is located at the top of the hill to the south west of the site. 'The Abbey' public house, the last standing remains associated with the abbey itself, is located 60m north of the site (Fig. 1).

3. Background

- 3.1 Darley Abbey lies a little over 2km north of Derby city centre within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. By the 17th century the village was a thriving industrial hamlet, eventually home to a large complex of mills. The Evans family, who were keen industrialists, oversaw the development of the Darley Abbey area we see today. The family built much of the housing which consists for the most part of three storey red brick residences, landscaped the area that is now Darley Park and restored the property known as Darley Hall (Robinson 2001, 11) located on the high ground overlooking the river Derwent.
- 3.2 Darley Abbey was originally an Augustinian priory, founded by Robert de Ferrers, second Earl of Derby, around 1146 (Robinson 2001, 8). The Abbey, ideally situated next to the River Derwent, became one of the most important in Derbyshire. It was surrendered as part of the Dissolution of Monasteries in 1538 and almost totally obliterated. After the dissolution, the land was asset stripped and sold to Sir William West (Robinson, D. 2001, 10). A significant amount of monastic buildings survive because they were converted into capital mansions by their new owners. In some cases the abbot's private dwellings were reused with little alteration to the original structure as suitable residences for new owners, such as those built by the abbots of Battle and Ford (Dorset) and the prior at Watten (East Yorkshire) (Coppack 2006, 176). This has led to the belief that Darley Hall, erected 1727, was originally part of the Darley Abbey complex, possibly the abbot's private residence, although no proof of this has yet been forthcoming.

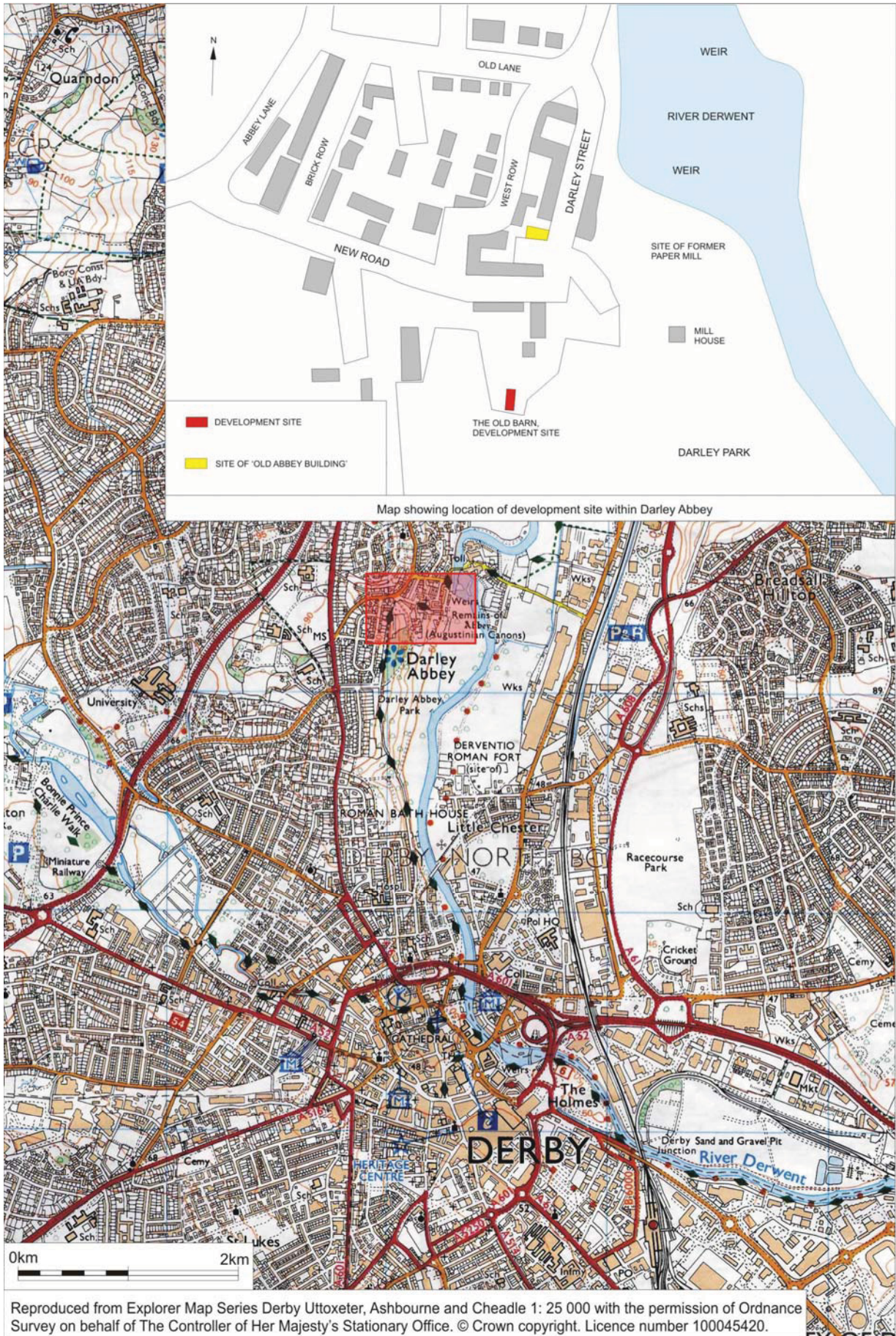


Fig 1 Location map showing Darley Abbey and the location of The Old Barn development

- 3.3 The only remaining upstanding building is an upper floor hall house, now a pub, built probably *c.* 1450 (SMR 32468) (Derbyshire SMR Report). The date of this ‘Old Abbey’ building is based on a consideration of the general architecture and dendrochronological work undertaken on principle floor joists (Derbyshire SMR Report). Other archaeological finds in Darely Abbey are scarce. Apart from 15th century remains uncovered at No’s 7, 8 and 9 Abbey Lane, no other medieval remains have come to light (Derbyshire SMR Report). Although these houses appeared to have monastic masonry in their fabric it is difficult to tell whether the material was reused or *in situ*. In 1965 an area of open ground next to Brick Row and Old Lane was developed for housing. The Derbyshire Archaeological Research Group of The Derbyshire Archaeological Society carried out excavations in eight areas (1.2m by 1.2m), along with trenches amounting to almost 61m in length and found no traces of any occupation (Robinson, D. 2002, 13). The lack of medieval pottery was thought to rule out this area as a location for the abbey. The only other archaeological discoveries were of several skeletons at Hill Square, a few meters north of the ‘Old Abbey’ building, during the layout of gas mains in the 1920’s (Robinson 2001, 14). A local workman who worked on the service drains on New Road during the 1970’s recalled the discovery of large sandstone blocks of a structural nature being uncovered, but they were not recorded.
- 3.4 The original barn (12m x 6m) which was a timber framed structure with brickwork infill panels first appeared on the 2nd Ordnance Survey map of 1881 and was probably built at the same time as Home Farm, which also appears on maps at the same time (Appendix 2).



Fig. 2. View of The Old Barn, in November 2006 before it was demolished.

4. Aims of the Project

4.1 The project is an archaeological watching brief as stipulated by the local planning authority. The aims were as follows:

- To observe all groundwork for the presence of archaeology.
- To alert all interested parties to the possible destruction of archaeological features.
- To fully record and excavate any archaeological features encountered.

5. Methodology

5.1 All machine excavation on the site was observed by an archaeologist to ensure that no archaeological remains were disturbed. Any features or structures were to be fully cleaned and recorded in accordance with the standards stipulated by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and the guidance provided in 'Archaeological Science at PPG16 Interventions' (English Heritage 2003).

5.2 Any features or structures were to be sectioned, photographed, recorded and where possible, fully-excavated. Feature plans were made at 1:20 scale and sections at 1:10 scale. All the contexts were recorded on pro-forma sheets, and a context register, along with a finds, levels and photographic register, were all produced for inclusion in the archive.

5.3 Photographs were taken using a 35mm SLR camera with black and white print film, and colour transparency, as well as with a digital camera (5 megapixel resolution). All finds were given an individual number and stored appropriately.

5.4 All work was carried out wearing appropriate safety equipment. A system of hand signals was agreed before work commenced to allow for easy communication and a safe environment for examining the potential archaeological remains while supervising machine excavation.

6. Results

6.1 Whilst clearing back the topsoil to make way for an access path a paved area with sandstone setts (003) was uncovered on the north of the site (Fig. 3). The floor level was heavily disturbed and covered an area of 1.88m x 1.56m. The paved area consisted of sandstone flagstones edged with sandstone setts. The flags measured between 0.45m x 0.5m and were laid next to sandstone setts which ran east-west for a length of 2.6m and was 0.12m wide. The paved area is shown on the 1886 map of Darley Abbey and are probably a part of outbuildings related to Home Farm (Appendix 2) which was located directly to the south of the development area.



Fig. 3 View of paved floor (003) looking east.

- 6.2 An extensive layer of red bricks (004) was uncovered directly under the topsoil, south of the flag stone floor (003). The layer was heavily disturbed, probably due to the demolition of the barn, but was probably an exterior floor level that surrounded the barn, a style that is seen elsewhere in Darley Abbey. The floor had been laid in a simple pattern comprising of two bricks laid flat with their long sides next to each other with a further two bricks laid flat next to them but aligned at 90° to the first two (Fig. 4). This pattern, although not continuous across the floor level, was the prevalent design.



Fig. 4 Brick floor (004) looking north (Scale: 2m)

The brick floor abutted the sandstone footings of (003) so could be contemporary or later than the paved floor (003). The bricks vary in size and age; some are clearly more recent than others and perhaps represent repairs made to the floor (Fig. 5). The floor level was recorded, and where possible preserved, by covering it with Type 2 gravel and topsoil.



Fig. 5 Repair to floor layer (004) (Scale: 0.5m)

- 6.3 The development area is located on a slope which meant a considerable amount of overburden had to be removed before the foundation level could be achieved. The foundation level on the south side of the site was 0.8m below the original ground level. Once the foundation level was achieved over the whole site the footings for the barn were dug. The footings were approximately 0.8m wide by 1m deep. The first footing ran south-east along the back of the barn. A wall was uncovered at the south end of the footing for the rear wall of the new building, 1.1m below the modern ground level (Fig. 6). The wall ran on the same alignment as the footing and obstructed any further digging in that area.
- 6.3.1 The east face of the wall was exposed and cleaned by hand. The exposed area measured 4.54m x 0.3m with a maximum surviving height of 0.5m although the wall was later found to extend to a length of 5.53m. The wall survived to a single course wide and was two courses high. It was constructed from sandstone ashlar blocks that were skilfully dressed. Some of the stone blocks at the north end of the wall appeared to have tumbled. Mortar was located between the stones but no finds were found in connection with this wall.



Fig. 6 View of sandstone wall (006) looking south (Scale: 2m)

- 6.3.2 The deposits found banked up against the wall (006) suggest a period of industrial use, after the wall's construction (Fig. 7). Further investigation found that the deposits continued on the other side of the wall. The layers were made up of deposits of a black, coal-rich material which had a maximum thickness of 0.27m (007, 009 and 011) and that appeared to have been sealed with thin layers of redeposited clay which had a maximum thickness of 0.1m (008 and 010). The large pieces of coal within the layers had not been burnt which suggests it was a waste deposit. These deposits must be associated with an industrial function as coal measures do not occur across the site. The redeposited clay layers may be interpreted as floor levels although a lack of finds suggests this is unlikely. It is also possible they acted as levelling/sealing layers to stabilise the ground after the coal waste had been discarded.
- 6.3.3 Map evidence shows that before the construction of the barn in the 19th century the site was an area of enclosed wooded parkland. There is no map evidence to suggest any structures on the site, indicating the wall is possibly of medieval date. Due to the walls' potential significance, the position of the barn was moved three metres to the east, enabling preservation of the wall *in situ*.
- 6.4 During the excavation of the footing that ran east-west along the north side of the barn a path was uncovered 2.3m below the modern ground level (Fig. 8). The unstable nature of the trench meant that shoring had to be put up in order to investigate the feature. The area exposed revealed a flagged path measuring 0.87m wide that ran for 3.88m before continuing under the baulk. The path was laid over the natural alluvial clay (012) (10 YR 4/4) and was constructed from flagstones ranging in size from 0.29m x 0.15m to 0.41m x 0.59m.



Fig. 7 North facing section of banked-up material associated with wall (006)
(Scale: 0.2m graduations).



Fig. 8 View of path (014) looking west (Scale: 2m).

- 6.4.1 The path was sloping downhill to the east where it became obstructed by a large quantity of irregularly shaped sandstone blocks (015). The drop along the length of path exposed was 0.43m. No finds were found relating to this feature.
- 6.4.2 A large quantity of irregular sandstone blocks (015) uncovered towards the eastern area of the path are very likely to be the collapse remains of a wall (Fig. 9 and 10). The stone spread which was exposed for a length of 2.37m and 0.9m, has been heavily disturbed leaving little idea about the walls original structure. The stones were irregular in shape and size apart from three that appeared to have been faced. The sandstone was extremely degraded causing it to break easily. According to local workmen, previous work undertaken in the 1970's just outside the perimeter of the site came across a similar wall on the same alignment to (015). This reinforced the suggestion that the sandstone tumble was the remains of a wall. Removal of (015) confirmed the path (014) continued underneath the tumble, although the full extent of the path was not determined. The fact that the stone spread was evidently tumble from a structure, and that it overlay the path, indicates that the wall was not constructed over the path. It is therefore possible that the path was wall were contemporary.
- 6.4.3 Features (014) and (015) were both located below the layer of redeposited material (002) found elsewhere on the site. The deposit (002) was found across the north upper area of the site and reached a depth of 1.5m in places. It was reddish brown in colour (2.5YR 4/4) and contained pieces of brick, small blocks of sandstone and modern debris.
- 6.4.4 The path was situated below the level of the footing base which meant it could be covered with a layer of terram and sand to protect it then was further covered by concrete, so as to preserve the remains *in situ*.



Fig. 9 View of wall tumble (015) looking east (Scale: 0.25m).



Fig. 10 View showing continuation of path after removal of wall tumble (015) looking east (Scale: 2m).

- 6.5 During the excavation of the footing that ran north-south on the east side of the building a substantial sandstone wall was uncovered (Figs. 11 and 12). A significant amount of the wall was exposed by hand and although the wall terminated to the south, it continued north into the baulk. The remains consisted of a wall two courses deep with two outer faces of larger, faced blocks with an inner core of smaller stone. The exposed wall was 2.1m long and 0.5m wide with a maximum depth of 0.29m. The sandstone blocks ranged in size from 0.64m x 0.38m to 0.3m x 0.26m while the stones from the inner core measured on average 0.1m x 0.08m. The stones had been faced but not to as high a standard as the wall first wall uncovered (006). The stones were larger and more roughly arranged suggesting this was the foundation layer of a substantial, structural wall. The bottom course was, in places, 0.18m wider than the course above, implying the bottom course may have been beneath ground level for added stability. The fact that these courses may have lay beneath ground level may be the reason they are not as well constructed as (006).
- 6.5.1 Whilst excavating the wall two pieces of medieval pottery were found beneath the bottom core of stones (Fig. 23). Examination by a pottery expert concluded that both shards probably came from a jug. The handle piece was identified as a rod handled jug (Cumberpatch 2006 Pottery Report, Appendix 3). Both sherds appear to be of the Burley Hill type, manufactured at the site of Burley Hill near

Duffield (Cumberpatch 2006 Pottery Report, Appendix 3). An accurate date for Burley Hill Ware has not yet been resolved but considering the use of suspension glaze on the fragments found, a date range between the mid 13th and the later 14th to 15th centuries can be attributed (Cumberpatch 2006 Pottery Report, Appendix 3). This date would correspond with a medieval date for the walls as building work would have continued on site until the 15th century.

- 6.5.2 The edge of the wall was abutted by a deposit of orange (2.5 YR 4/6), redeposited natural clay (017) that appeared to have been packed around the wall to stabilise it within the foundation trench that had been cut for it. The sherds of pottery were located within this context suggesting it had been become incorporated with the clay at the time of the wall's construction. The clay also contained animal bone, some of which had been butchered. The top of the wall had been covered by a layer of rubble (020) associated with the barn which contained modern debris such as bricks, glass and wire. The fact that the rubble directly overlay the wall indicates that the upper courses of the wall had been truncated either before or at the time of the barns' construction. Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine a date for the rubble layer.
- 6.5.3 The wall was located on the outer extent of the modern footing trench which meant that it could be covered with a layer of terram and sand, so as to preserve it *in situ*.



Fig. 11 View of wall (016) looking east (Scale: 2m).



Fig. 12 View of wall (016) looking north-east (Scale: 2m).

- 6.6 During the digging of a service trench on the south side of the barn a substantial sandstone wall was uncovered (Figs. 13, 14, 24 and 26). It was exposed over a length of 6.72m before continuing under the baulk and averaged 0.64m wide. The wall survived to two courses deep and consisted of two outer faces with an inner core of smaller stone. The wall was well-built using well-dressed ashlar sandstone blocks. The outer faces ranged in size from 0.3m x 0.25m to 0.45m x 0.25m. A large key stone (0.45 x 0.41) was located 4.5m east from the western end of the wall (Fig. 15). From the position of the key stone another wall runs south into the baulk, indicating the remains of the structure extend further than the area already excavated. The west end of the wall continued into the bank but the wall stopped to the east where it had been disturbed (indicated by the prevalence of broken sandstone in that area).



Fig. 13 View of wall (018) looking east (Scale: 2m).



Fig. 14 View of wall looking east (Scale 2m).



Fig. 15 View of large key stone on wall (018) looking south (Scale: 0.25m).

6.6.1 The wall sloped downhill on a similar gradient to the path located on the other side of the barn. It appeared both had been built following the natural gradient, as the wall showed no sign of damage caused by previous ground movement. A small area of the wall was three courses high due to a footing made up of rough sandstone (Fig. 16) The area of extra footing was 1.37m in length and started 1.98m west of the east end of the wall, stopping just before the large key stone. It is possible that this area of wall was deliberately levelled to allow for the uneven gradient of the foundation trench on which it was built.



Fig. 16 View of wall showing area of extra footing looking south-east (Scale: 2m).

- 6.6.2 Further excavation revealed a junction between walls (018) and (006). The smaller wall (006), which was partially excavated to the north, abutted the larger wall (018) and is therefore structurally later (Figs. 17, 18 and 26). The sandstone block that linked the two walls was carefully moulded on one corner so that it neatly rested on the other wall. The attention to detail suggests a high level of workmanship.
- 6.6.3 The wall (018) had the same orange, redeposited clay (012) packed against the base so as to fill the void of the foundation trench and the wall foundations themselves. The top of the wall was covered with a layer of clay (008). The same deposits, consisting of the coal-rich material and the redeposited clay layers found when excavating (006), were present on the excavated side of (018). The remains were covered with a layer of terram and sand enabling preservation *in situ*.



Fig. 17 View of wall showing where (006) adjoins looking west (Scale: 2m).



Fig. 18 View of walls (018) and (006) showing wall intersection in detail.
Looking west (Scale: 0.25m).

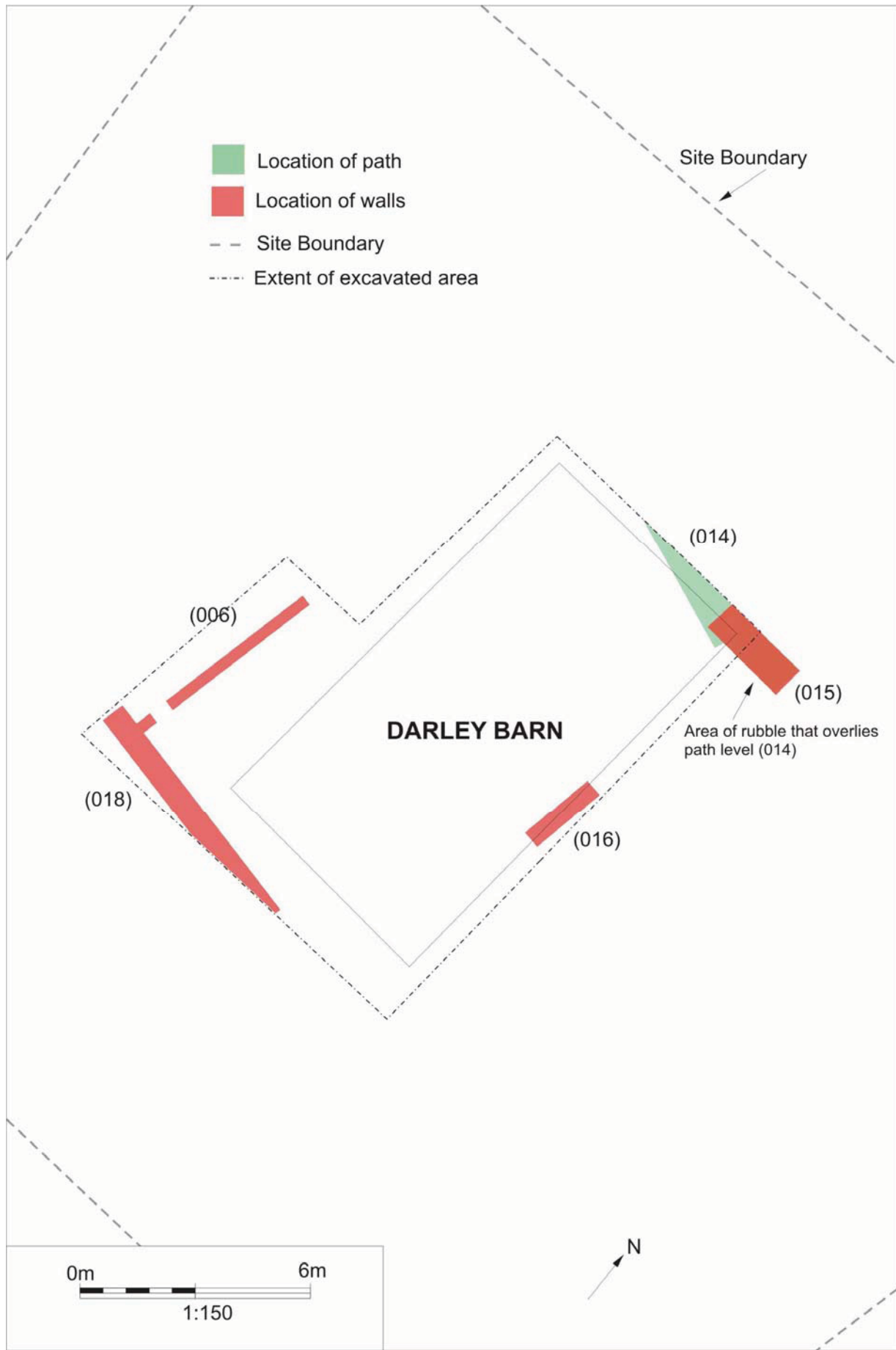


Fig. 19 Plan showing location of archaeological remains found close to the barn building.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The discovery of structural medieval remains are the first of their kind to be unearthed in Darley Abbey. The ashlar walls uncovered during the watching brief are substantial and well-made suggesting a medieval building of some size and importance. Given the proximity of the remains to the last upstanding abbey structure, 'The Abbey Pub', it is probable the walls represent part of the abbey complex. Although Augustinian monasteries follow similar layouts they varied considerably in scale, planning, elevation and architectural detailing (Robinson 2001, 16). It is therefore very difficult to say what building the walls actually represent although it is possible they formed part of the inner court, possibly part of the infirmary or the chapel. The layout of the building is difficult to determine but seems to be rectangular in shape with a narrow path located to the south. The building evidently had internal divisions, as seen where (006) abuts (018).
- 7.2 A 'composite' plan, compiled by David Robinson in his report 'Darley Abbey – Notes on the Lost Buildings of an Augustinian Monastery in Derbyshire' (2001) shows two possible locations for the abbey (Fig. 20). The plan of the abbey, based on other Augustinian monastery plans of a similar size, has taken the most common arrangement to create a projected plan of the Abbey. Careful consideration of map evidence along with other key information, such as the unsubstantiated claim that the Tudor house was built over the abbot's private residence, allowed the projected plan to be placed in two likely places (See Fig. 20). One location is over the later Evans mill complex Robinson states that due to the area being low-lying and presumably subject to flooding this site seems unlikely (Robinson 2001, 26). The second position shows the plan overlying the 1727 Woolley mansion. This area is on higher ground and seems a more suitable position for the abbey. The discovery of the walls in close proximity to this projected location supports the notion of the Abbey as being at the top of the hill. Although nothing can be confirmed the discovery of the walls at the site of The Old Barn helps to narrow the search for the abbey complex.

8. Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright

- 8.1 Any publicity will be handled by the client.
- 8.2 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

9. Statement of Indemnity

- 9.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

10. Acknowledgements

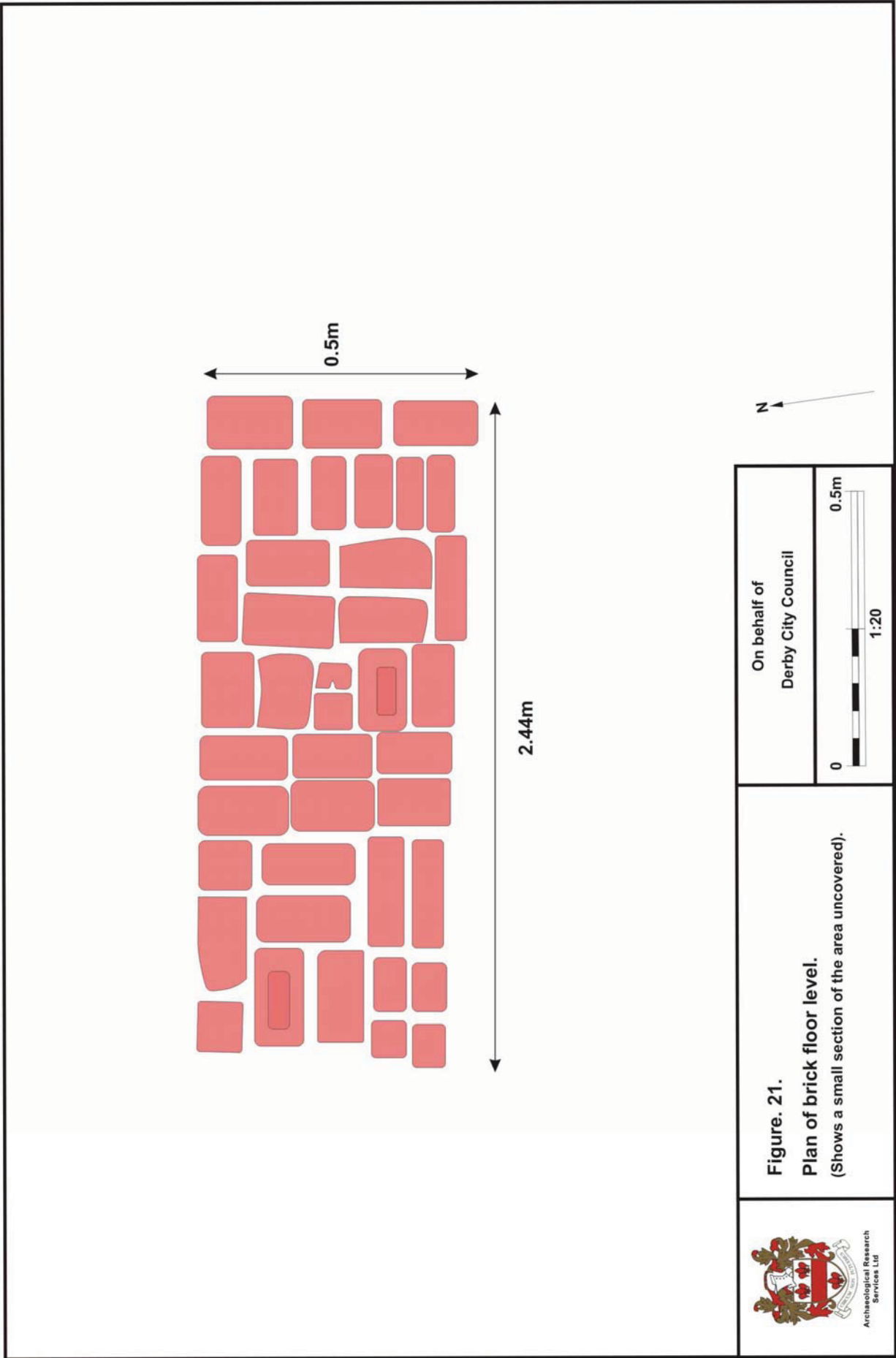
- 10.1 ARS Ltd would like to thank all those involved in the running of the project, in particular Kevin Holmes of Derby City Council, Andy Myers of Derbyshire County Council, Joan D'Arcy of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society, Alan Bradwell of the Darley Abbey Historical Group, Harry Hopkinson of Derby City Council and Henry Boot Ltd.

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Appendix 1.

Illustrations and Historical maps.



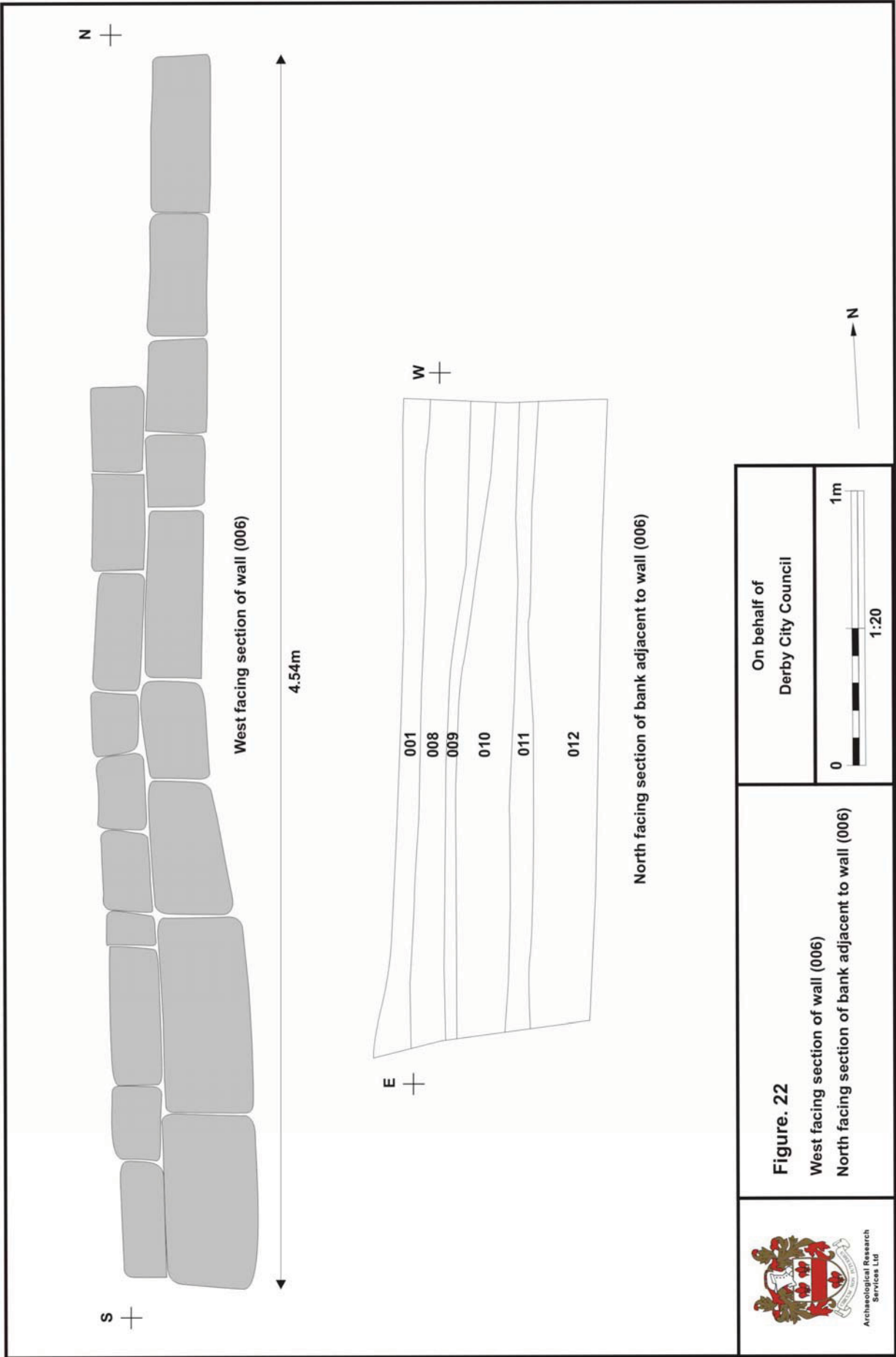


Figure. 22
 West facing section of wall (006)
 North facing section of bank adjacent to wall (006)

On behalf of
 Derby City Council

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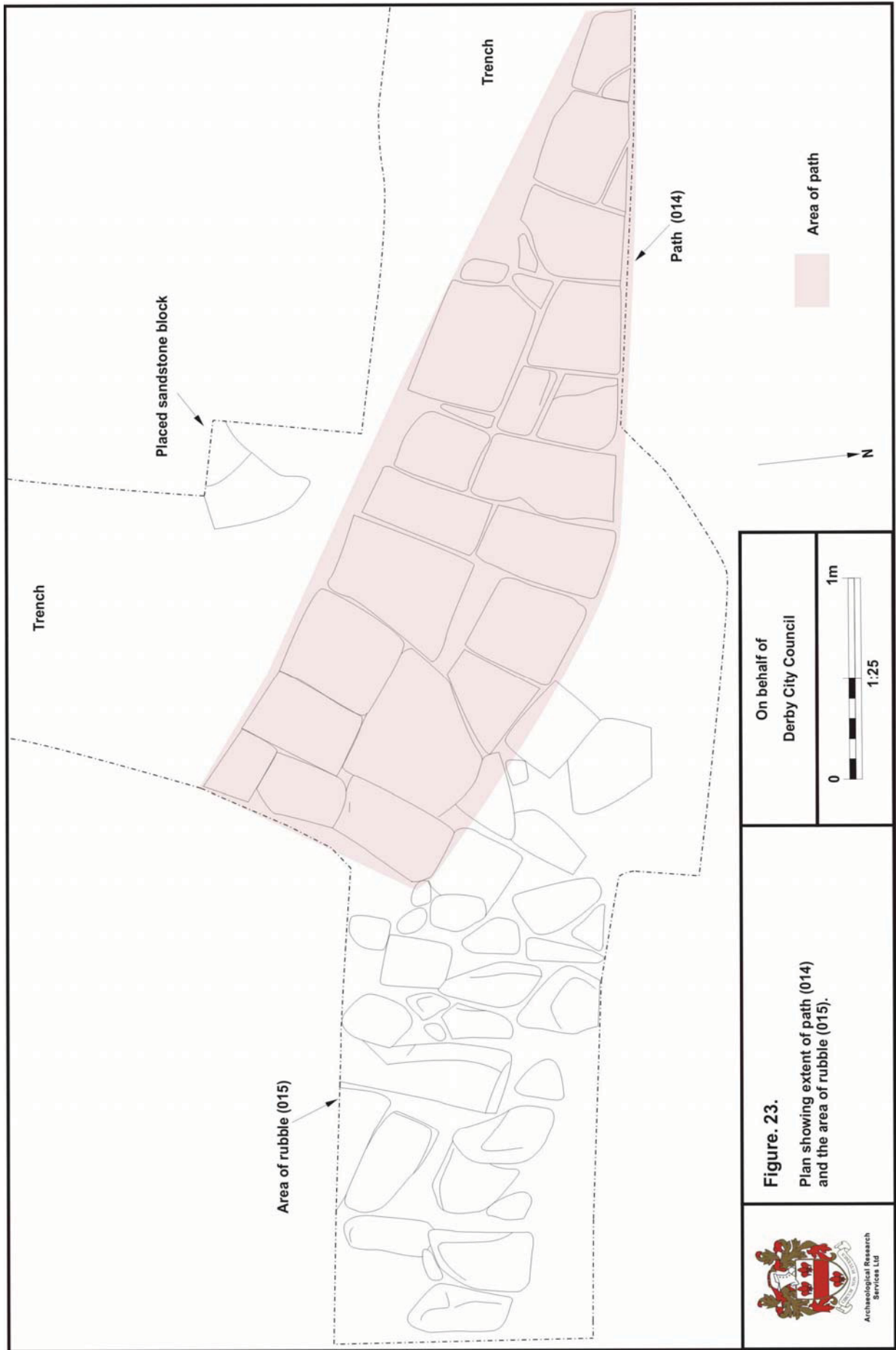


Figure. 23.
Plan showing extent of path (014) and the area of rubble (015).

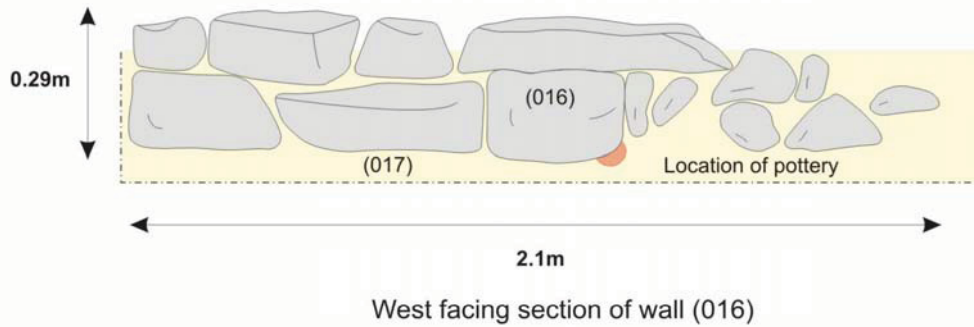
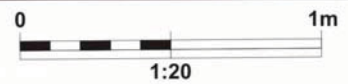
On behalf of
Derby City Council

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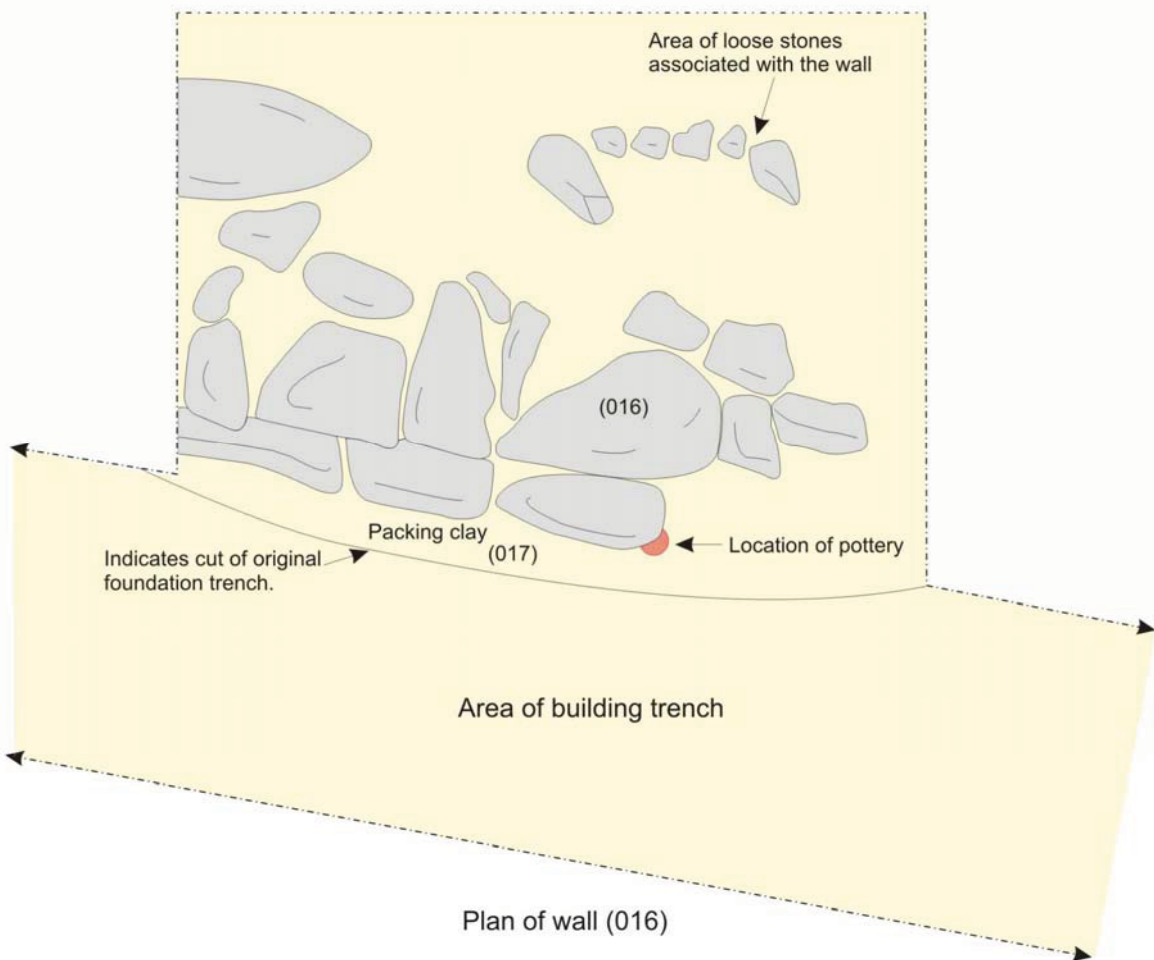


Figure. 24
West facing section of wall (016)
Plan of wall (016)

On behalf of
Derby City Council



West facing section of wall (016)



Plan of wall (016)

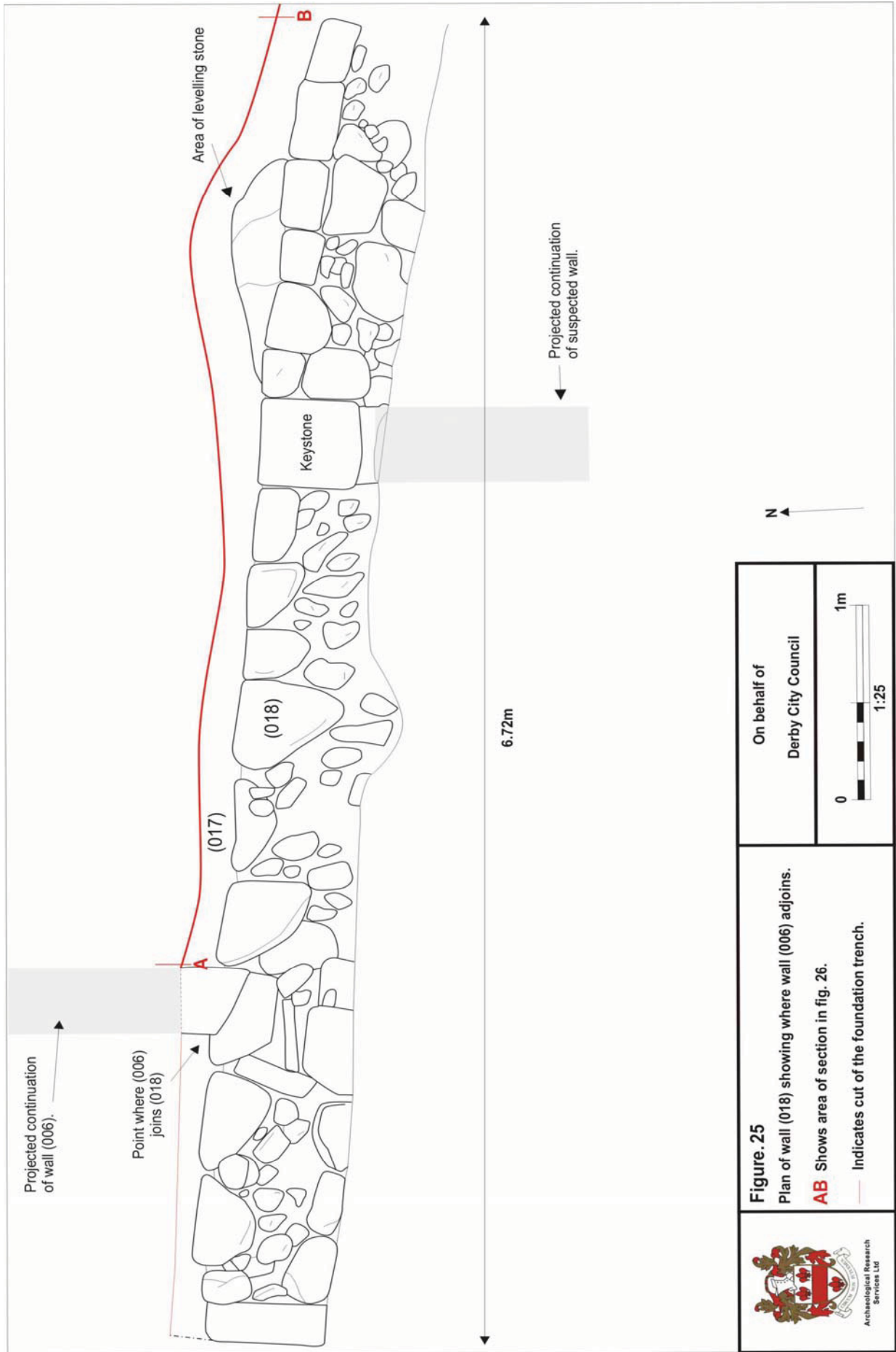


Figure.25
 Plan of wall (018) showing where wall (006) adjoins.
AB Shows area of section in fig. 26.
 — Indicates cut of the foundation trench.

On behalf of
 Derby City Council

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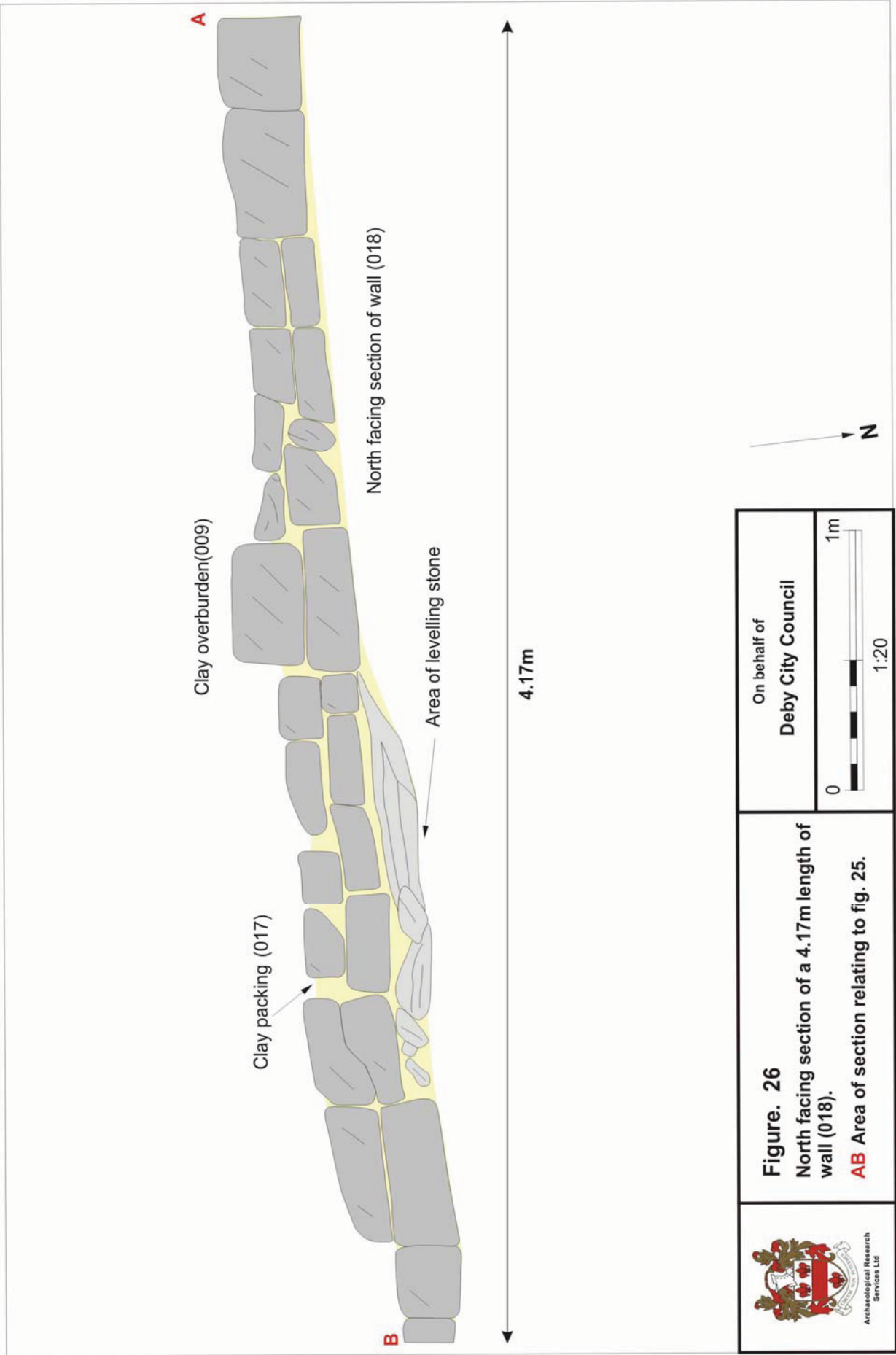
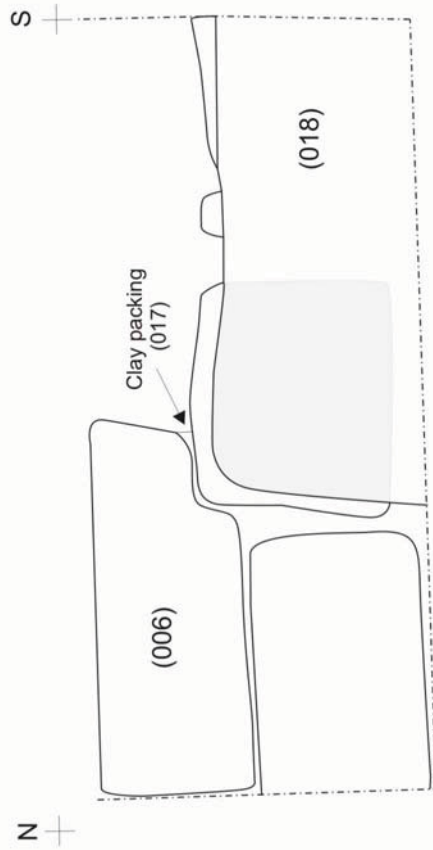


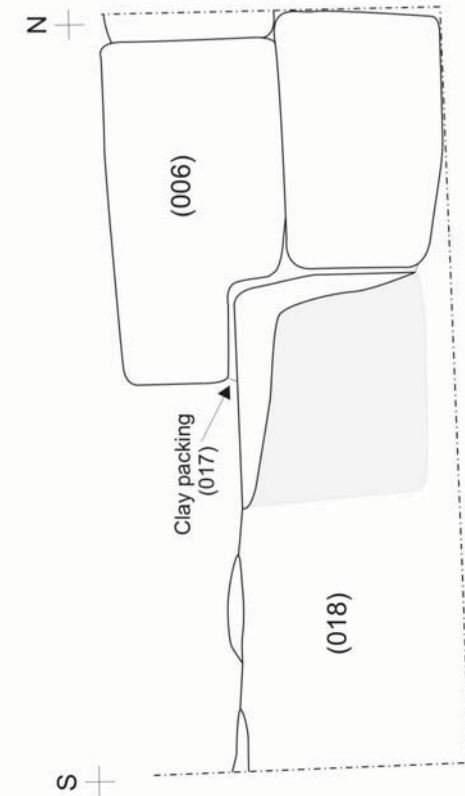
Figure. 26
 North facing section of a 4.17m length of wall (018).
AB Area of section relating to fig. 25.



On behalf of
 Deby City Council



West facing section of (018) and (006).



East facing section of (018) and (006).

 Possible continuation of stone hidden by wall.

 <p>Archaeological Research Services Ltd</p>	<p>Figure. 27. Sections of (018) and (006) showing wall intersection in detail.</p>	<p>On behalf of Derby City Council</p> <p>0 0.5m 1:10</p>
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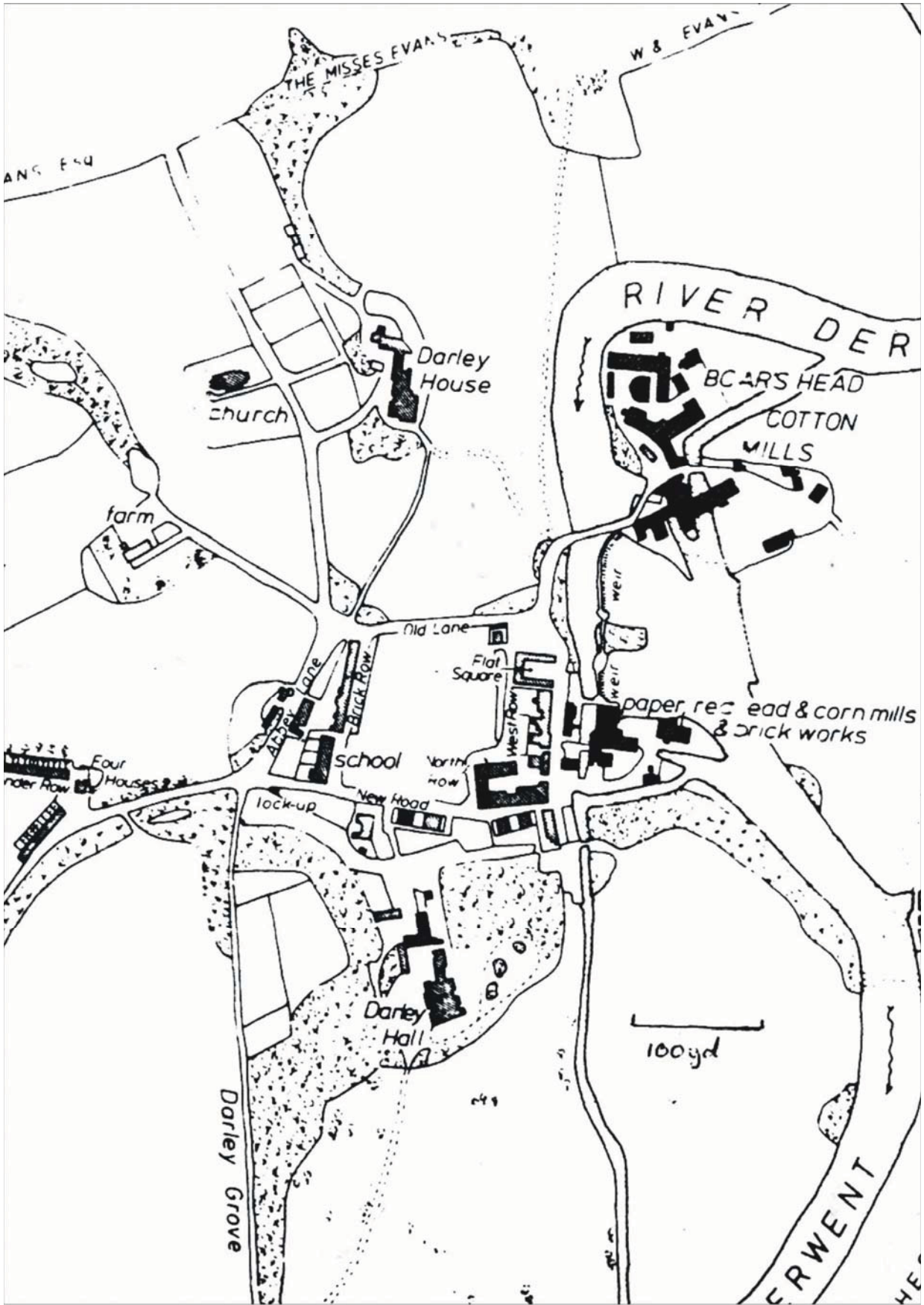


Figure. 28 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map of Darley Abbey.

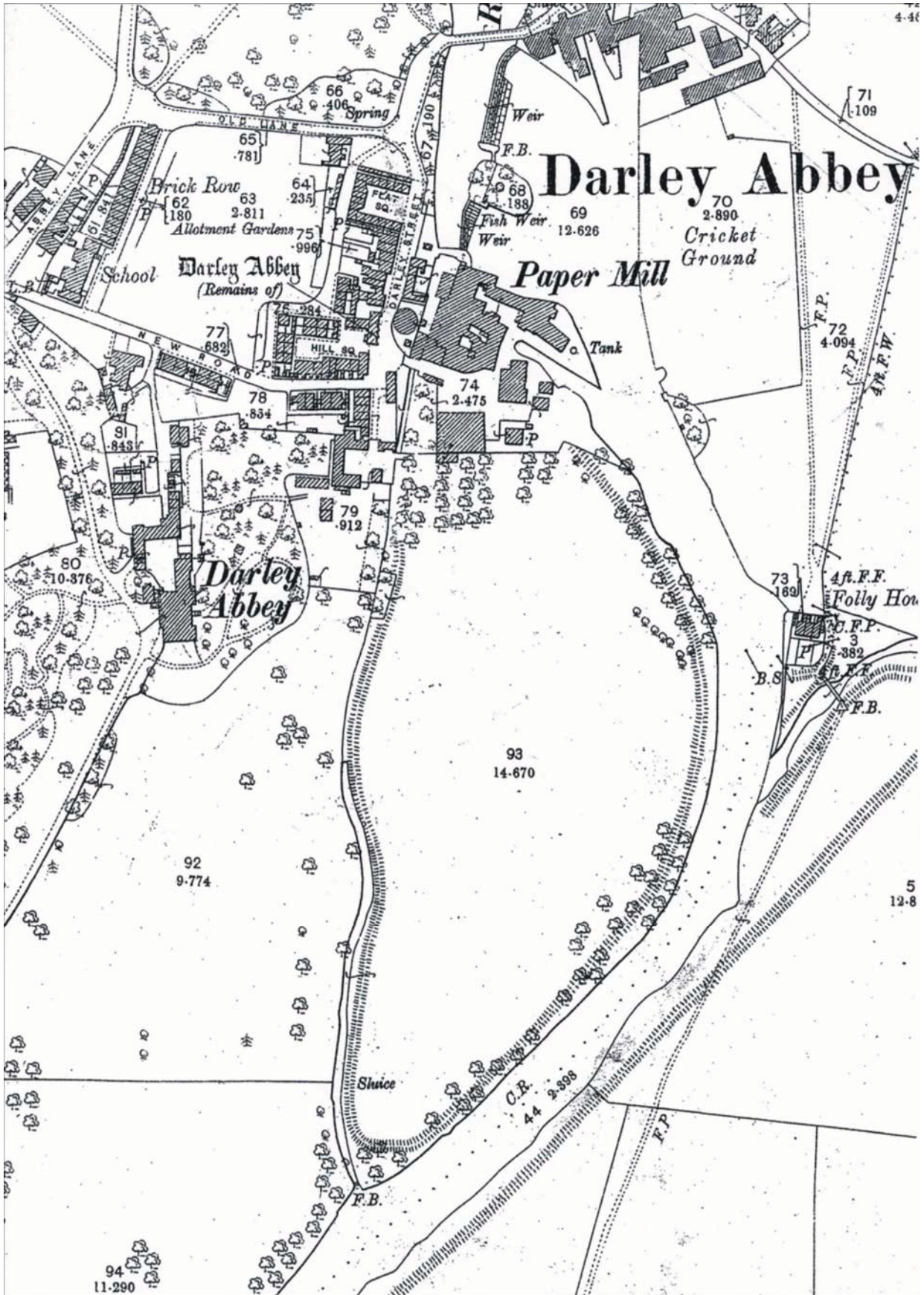


Figure. 29. Second Edition Ordnance survey map of Darley Abbey.

Appendix 2.
Context Register

Context Number	Location	Munsell Number	Description
001	Across site.	10 YR 2/2	Fine, sandy silt containing roots and pebbles. Varies in depth between 0.15m to 0.28m.
002	Across site predominately on the south side.	2.5 YR 4/4	Redeposited clay containing stones, brick, modern debris used perhaps as a levelling layer. Depth of at least 1.5m.
003	North of site near fence line.	–	Paved area measuring 1.88m x 1.56m. Flag floor with sandstone butts associated with Home Farm.
004	North of site.	–	Red brick layer possibly the floor level associated with The Old Barn. Heavily disturbed.
005	Used across site.	–	Grade Two Builders Gravel. Found beneath (004).
006	Top south west corner of site.	–	Single course of sandstone wall. Length of 5.53m, width of 0.3m, maximum depth of 0.5m.
007	South of site – banked up against (006).	GLEY 2.5/1 10BG	Black coal-rich layer found beneath topsoil. Layer 0.28m below topsoil. Layer above thin layer of redeposited clay. Contains large pieces of unburnt coal.
008	South of site– banked up against (006).	7.5 YR 5/6	Redeposited clay found beneath (007). Layer 0.27m deep. Layer above (009).
009	South of site– banked up against (006).	10 YR 2/2	Black coal-rich layer found beneath (008). Layer 0.21m deep. Layer above (010). Contained pieces of coal and topsoil.
010	South of site– banked up against (006).	7.5 YR 5/6	Redeposited clay found beneath (009). Layer 0.1m deep. Layer above (011).
011	South of site– banked up against (006).	GLEY 2 2.5/1 10B	Black coal-rich layer found beneath (010). Layer 0.25m deep. Layer above (012). Contained large pieces of unburnt coal.
012	Across site.	10 YR 4/4	Natural Clay Substrate. Found below (006).
013	Within (006).	7.5 YR 6/3	Mortar found between the sandstone blocks of (006).
014	North of site.	–	Path made up of flag stones running east to west. Exposed area measured 3.88m and was 0.87m wide. Below (002).
015	North west of site.	–	Area of irregular shaped sandstone blocks probably represents tumble of wall. Area measures 2.37m x 0.9m and overlies (014).
016	West of site	–	Sandstone wall two course wide with inner core of rubble. Exposed area measured 2.10m x 1.08m x 0.29m. Base course wider than course above suggesting course would have been buried. Two sheds of pottery located beneath bottom course.

017	Found associated with (016) and (018).	2.5 YR 4/6 – 4/8	Redeposited clay banked up against (016) and (018). Possibly used to fill the foundation trench void and stabilise the walls. Pottery found within this context.
018	Within (016).	7.5 YR 6/3	Mortar found between sandstone blocks of (016).
019	South of site.	–	Sandstone wall two courses wide with inner core of rubble. Exposed area measured 6.27m x 0.64m x 0.5m. (006) abuts (018).
020	Footprint of the demolished barn.	–	Rubble associated with the Old Barn. Contains bricks, stones, metal, sand and modern debris. Possibly represent infill of previous cellars.

Appendix 3.

Pottery Report by C. Cumberpatch.

Pottery from excavations on the site of the Old Barn, Darley Abbey, Derbyshire

C.G. Cumberpatch BA PhD

Freelance Archaeologist

Introduction

Two sherds of pottery from a watching brief on the site of the Old Barn, Darley Abbey were examined by the author on 14th December 2006. Both were of medieval date and of local manufacture. The details are summarised in the catalogue and discussion below.

Catalogue

- Rod handle with a shallow groove and mottled green glaze on the upper surface (80g); part of a jug;
- Body sherd, green glazed externally, undecorated (8g), part of a hollow ware vessel, probably from a jug.

Discussion

Both sherds appear to be of Burley Hill 01 type as defined in by the author elsewhere (Cumberpatch 2002/3, 2004a, 2004b, unpublished), manufactured at the site of Burley Hill near Duffield. A wide variety of vessels were manufactured at the Burley Hill pottery and these included rod handled jugs (Cumberpatch 2002/3: Fig 4:1, 2; Fig 5:2, 4 and 7). The reduced fabric with abundant white quartz temper and finely mottled green glaze are also typical of the pottery from this site.

The date of the Burley Hill potteries has yet to be finally resolved and currently rests upon the insecure foundation of a link between a small number of vessels bearing horseshoe designs and the de Ferrers family who held Duffield Castle from the time of the Conquest until 1278. Archaeological evidence rests upon the results of the excavation in Full Street, Derby (pending the publication of the results of excavations in Queen Street, Derby (Cumberpatch, in prep.) and possibly sites in Nottingham) and here Burley Hill wares occurred in features dating to the period between the later 12th century and the 15th century, although it did not become common before the early years of the 13th century (Coppack 1972:74, Cumberpatch 2002/3:99). Although Burley Hill wares are a relatively common find on rural sites in Derbyshire, the lack of substantial stratified groups from such sites (typically farmyards and associated buildings) means that these assemblages offer little in the way of definite evidence of the chronology of production or use. The size and nature of the excavations at Burley Hill itself were such that no dating evidence was retrieved (Cumberpatch unpublished).

There is some limited evidence of the use of splashed glazes on Burley Hill wares which would suggest a date prior to the early / mid 13th century but the overwhelming majority of material attributable to Burley Hill is suspension glazed (as are the two sherds considered here), indicating a date range between the mid 13th and the later 14th to 15th centuries. Such a broad chronological range is unsatisfactory, but until substantial assemblages are recovered from an urban site or a rural site with stratigraphically reliable deposits, it seems unlikely that it will be possible to suggest a narrower range with any degree of confidence.

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Uncompleted report