



# Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield

Archaeological Watching Brief



Ref: 115920.01  
February 2017



**Former What! Retail Unit,  
Cross Keys, Lichfield**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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## Quality Assurance

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\* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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# Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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## Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

#### Summary

Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake and archaeological watching brief on the site of the former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 411882, 309656.

A previous application for the Site (planning ref: 15/00782/FULM) has been reviewed by Stephen Dean, the Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council (SCC) with a recommendation having been made for archaeological monitoring of any site investigation work. This watching brief is being conducted in accordance with these comments as it is recognised that the site is archaeologically sensitive. The archaeological works relate to a programme of windowless sampling within the footprint of the planned construction works. Ten boreholes were investigated in total to the depth required (where possible) by contractors.

There was limited archaeological material recorded with most of the site covered by compacted material from the demolition of the building that formerly occupied the plot. Average thickness of demolition was between 0.5 – 1.5 m below ground level (bgl) and this sealed two layers of natural, one a mid orangish brown silty sand (on average between 1.5 – 2 m bgl), and the other a lighter mid orangish brown sandy clay which extended, in most areas, from 2 m bgl to the bottom of the cores sampled.

WS08A was the only borehole sampled that showed a significantly different layer of deposits. Below the layer of demolition a dark brownish black silt was encountered at a depth of 0.4 - 1.2 m bgl. This possibly represents a section of the 19th century buried garden layer.

The site archive will be stored at the Sheffield office of Wessex Archaeology under project code 115290. Following the completion of all reporting the archive will be deposited at Potteries Museum, Stoke-on-Trent, with the approval of Tamworth Borough Council.



# **Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield**

## **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

### **Acknowledgements**

The fieldwork was commissioned by CgMs Consulting and monitored by Stephen Dean, Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council.

Fieldwork was conducted by Jack Laverick on 14th February 2017. The report was written by Jack Laverick. Illustrations were produced by Alix Sperr.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Chris Swales.



# Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (hereafter the 'Client') to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the plot of the former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 411882, 309656 (hereafter the 'Site', Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 A previous application for the Site (planning ref: 15/00782/FULM) had been reviewed by Stephen Dean, the Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council (SCC) with a recommendation having been made for archaeological monitoring of any site investigation work. This watching brief was conducted in accordance with these comments as it is recognised that the Site is archaeologically sensitive.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological works reported on here relate to a programme of windowless sampling within the footprint of the planned construction works. Ten boreholes were investigated in total to the depth required (where possible) by contractors.
- 1.1.4 A Project Design (WA 2017) was submitted to SCC and approved prior to the watching brief commencing. The Project Design outlined the scope of works, methodologies and standards to be employed during the archaeological works.

#### 1.2 Scope of this report

- 1.2.1 This document will report on the results of the archaeological watching brief conducted on the 14th of February 2017.
- 1.2.2 In format and content this document conforms with current best practice and to the guidance outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a) and Historic England (Historic England 2015)

### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A summary of the archaeological potential for the Site has been provided by Stephen Dean, the Principal Archaeologist for SCC and is summarised below.

#### 2.2 Summary

- 2.2.1 Both the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) for Lichfield identify that the Site is located within an area of historic





environment potential. The Site also lies within the Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) 3: Lichfield Historic Core; with a high archaeological and historical value.

2.2.2 The earliest evidence for significant settlement within the area of the Site is from the early medieval period onwards. Archaeological evaluation and excavation in the area of Cross Keys has confirmed the presence of medieval plot boundaries, back plot activities and industrial activity. A series of post-Roman and early medieval structures were also identified, comprising of beam slots and substantial post holes. These structures were destroyed by fire and replaced by two phases of sunken floor building dated to the 9th to 10th century AD. The waterlogged conditions in the area led to excellent organic remains being preserved.

### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 General aims and objectives**

3.1.1 The general aims of the archaeological watching brief were:

- *to determine the extent, condition, character, importance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered;*
- *to provide information that will enable the archaeological remains to be placed within their local, regional and national contexts;*
- *to produce a site archive for deposition with a local museum;*
- *to provide information to the local HER to ensure the long-term survival of the data; and*
- *to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and*
- *to prepare a report on the results of the watching brief.*

#### **3.2 Specific Aims**

3.2.1 The specific aims of the archaeological watching brief were:

- *to identify the presence and nature of any early medieval settlement within the development boundary; and*
- *to inform the likely need for additional archaeological works prior to development commencing on the Site.*

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the Project Design (WA 2017) and in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfAa-b) excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.



4.1.2 The watching brief involved the monitoring of site investigation works, specifically boreholes within the development area. Ten boreholes were investigated in total to the depth required (where possible) by contractors.

## **4.2 Site Investigation works**

4.2.1 The location of all boreholes is located on a suitably scaled plan of the Site (Figure 1).

4.2.2 The percussive window or windowless sampling method involves driving cylindrical steel tubes into the ground using a hydraulic hammer.

4.2.3 The boreholes were inspected by the archaeologist attending Site as the cores were collected. The cores were available for inspection on Site, the deposits were then assessed and a written and photographic description was carried out.

## **4.3 Recording**

4.3.1 Written and drawn records were made of the stratigraphy within the areas investigated, even where no archaeological deposits were identified. Full written and drawn records of all excavated contexts have been made in accordance with best archaeological practice.

4.3.2 Records include a GPS survey of the location of the boreholes as well as a drawn and photographic record of the cores. All archaeological features will be related to the Ordnance Survey datum and to the National Grid. Survey was undertaken using a GNSS system to a 3 dimensional accuracy of 0.05 m or better.

4.3.3 All archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system. This written record is hierarchically based and centred on the context record. Each context record fully describes the location, extent, composition and relationship of the subject and will be cross-referenced to all other assigned records. Context numbers used in the excavation will not be repeated.

4.3.4 Each excavated context appears on at least one detailed section at 1:50 or 1:20 scale and one section at 1:10 and co-ordinated on to the overall Site plan.

4.3.5 A full photographic record was maintained comprising of digital images taken with a suitable camera of at least 10 megapixels. The photographic record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features.

## **4.4 Finds**

4.4.1 Due to the nature of the works there were no finds identified.

## **4.5 Environmental**

4.5.1 Due to the nature of the archaeological works no environmental samples were taken.

# **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

## **5.1 Summary**

5.1.1 A total of ten boreholes were excavated during the course of the watching brief. Boreholes were numbered using the same numbering system used by the geologist on site. Boreholes WS06, WS07, and WS08 were unable to penetrate to the depth required by the contractors. It was decided that an additional two boreholes (WS07A and WS08A) would be tested to maintain the representative sample required.



5.1.2 A complete list of recorded contexts is presented in Appendix 1.

## **5.2 WS01-WS07A**

5.2.1 The deposits encountered across boreholes WS01-WS07A were relatively consistent with some minor variations in the depth of deposits (Plates 1-3, Figure 2). The upper layer (e.g. WS101) encountered across all samples was a probable demolition layer that had been compacted to form an area of hardstanding. Inclusions of red-brick, CBM and coarse gravel were recorded within this layer, which extended to a maximum depth of 0.6 m below ground level (bgl).

5.2.2 The second layer encountered was a similar demolition layer consisting of coarse gravel, red-brick, CBM and subangular stone within a mid-greyish brown silty sand (e.g. WS102). This demolition layer was between 0.6 m and 1 m thick.

5.2.3 Natural sands and clays were identified at a depth of between 1.2 m and 2 m bgl. Natural strata was comprised of a mid orangish brown silty sand sat above a slightly lighter mid-orangish brown sandy clay.

5.2.4 Detailed descriptions of all deposits recorded is included in Appendix 1.

## **5.3 WS08A**

5.3.1 WS08A was the only borehole sampled that showed a significantly different layer of deposits (Plate 4, Figure 2). Below the layer of hardstanding/demolition (WS801A) a dark brownish black silt was encountered at a depth of 0.4 - 1.2 m bgl (WS802A). This possibly represents a section of the 19th century buried garden layer described by Stephen Dean during his site visit (*pers. comm.*). The upper natural, encountered at a depth of 1.2 - 1.6 m bgl (WS803A), in this area contained pockets of dark brownish black silt which may have been deposited as a result of bioturbation. These layers sat above the same mid orangish brown natural encountered in all other samples, which extended from 1.6 m to 3 m+ bgl.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

6.1.1 The archaeological watching brief succeeded in recording all deposits encountered during the windowless sampling. With the exception of the possible buried garden deposit in WS08A there were no visible archaeological deposits recorded.

6.1.2 Evidence recovered from all boreholes suggests that the former building occupying the plot was demolished and the rubble appears to have been compacted to form the hardstanding car park currently on Site. The watching brief did not identify and features or recover any artefacts suggestive of any medieval settlement on Site. The lack of archaeological evidence predating the demolition of the 20th structures on Site is likely to be a function of the limited nature of the ground investigation works coupled with the possible truncation of the Site during demolition.

6.1.3 No artefacts were recovered from any of the layers within the excavated boreholes.



## 7 THE ARCHIVE

### 7.1 Summary

7.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (ADS 2013, UKIC 2001, ClfA 2015b, SMA 1995). Wessex Archaeology will retain the Archive until further notice.

7.1.2 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery. The museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the accession code 2017.LH.11. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

7.1.3 All archive elements will be marked with the accession code 2017.LH.11 and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- *01 files/document cases of paper records & A3/A4 graphics*

7.1.4 Deposition of the archive will normally take place within six months of completion of all fieldwork. A summary of the archive contents and details of archive deposition will be submitted to the recipient museum and to the Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council.

### 7.2 Security copy

7.2.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

### 7.3 Copyright

7.3.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by the contractor under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.



## 8 REFERENCES

- ADS, 2013, Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice.
- Brown, D.H., 2011, *Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised ed.)
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), 2014a, Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief.
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- Historic England, 2015, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide*
- SMA, 1995, *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*, Society of Museum Archaeologists
- United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC), 2001, *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage*.
- Wessex Archaeology, 2017, *Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield. Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief*. Document ref: T22996.01



## 9 APPENDICES

### 9.1 Appendix 1: Context descriptions

WS01			
Context	Type	Description	Depth bgl (m)
Ground Height aOD: 79.417			
WS101	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt.	0.5
WS102	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM, coarse gravel and subangular stone (<0.15m). Mid-greyish brown sandy silt.	0.5-1.5
WS103	Layer	Upper natural. Mid orangish brown silty sand	1.5-2
WS104	Layer	Natural. Slightly darker mid-orangish brown sandy clay	2+

WS02			
Context	Type	Description	Depth bgl (m)
Ground Height aOD: 80.727			
WS201	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt.	0.5
WS202	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM, coarse gravel and subangular stone (<0.15m). Mid-greyish brown sandy silt.	0.5-1.3
WS203	Layer	Upper natural. Mid orangish brown silty sand	1.3-2
WS204	Layer	Natural. Slightly darker mid-orangish brown sandy clay	2+

WS03			
Context	Type	Description	Depth bgl (m)
Ground Height aOD: 80.804			
WS301	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt.	0.6
WS302	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM, coarse gravel and subangular stone (<0.15m). Mid-greyish brown sandy silt.	0.6-1.4
WS303	Layer	Natural. Mid orangish brown silty sand. Had to stop investigations at this depth as machine was unable to penetrate further	1.4+

WS04			
Context	Type	Description	Depth bgl (m)
Ground Height aOD: 80.705			
WS401	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid greyish brown sandy silt.	0.4
WS402	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM, coarse gravel and subangular stone (<0.15m). Mid-greyish brown silty sand. Some finer yellow gravel towards bottom of deposit	0.4-1.5
WS403	Layer	Natural. Mid reddish brown sandy clay. Mudstone.	1.5-2

WS05			
Context	Type	Description	Depth bgl (m)
Ground Height aOD: 80.715			
WS501	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt.	0.4
WS502	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM, coarse gravel and subangular stone	0.5-1.5



		(<0.15m). Mid-greyish brown silty sand.	
WS503	Layer	Upper natural. Mid orangish brown silty sand	1.5-2
WS504	Layer	Natural. Slightly lighter mid-orangish brown sandy clay	2+

<b>WS06</b>			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>
Ground Height aOD: 80.762			
WS601	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt. Machine unable to penetrate further.	0.7

<b>WS07</b>			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>
Ground Height aOD: 80.696			
WS701	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt. Unable to penetrate further.	0.6

<b>WS08</b>			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>
Ground Height aOD: 80.603			
WS801	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt. Unable to penetrate further.	0.3

<b>WS07A</b>			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>
Ground Height aOD: 80.733			
WS701A	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt.	0.6
WS702A	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM, coarse gravel and subangular stone (<0.15m). Mid-greyish brown silty sand.	0.6-1.2
WS703A	Layer	Upper natural. Mid orangish brown silty sand	1.2-2
WS704A	Layer	Natural. Slightly lighter mid-orangish brown silty sand. Mudstone.	2-3+

<b>WS08A</b>			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>
Ground Height aOD: 80.580			
WS801A	Layer	Demolition layer. CBM and coarse gravel. Mid orangish brown sandy silt.	0.4
WS802A	Layer	Dark brownish black silt. Possible buried garden layer	0.4-1.2
WS803A	Layer	Mid-greyish brown sandy silt with packets of dark brownish black silt.	1.2-1.6
WS804A	Layer	Natural. Mid-orangish brown silty sand. Weathered natural. Waterlogged towards bottom	1.6-3+



## 9.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

### OASIS ID: wessexar1-277110

#### Project details

Project name	Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield
Short description of the project	<p>Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake and archaeological watching brief on the site of the former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 411882, 309656. A previous application for the Site (planning ref: 15/00782/FULM) has been reviewed by Stephen Dean, the Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council (SCC) with a recommendation having been made for archaeological monitoring of any site investigation work. This watching brief is being conducted in accordance with these comments as it is recognised that the site is archaeologically sensitive. The archaeological works relate to a programme of windowless sampling within the footprint of the planned construction works. Ten boreholes were investigated in total to the depth required (where possible) by contractors. There was limited archaeological material recorded with most of the site covered by compacted material from the demolition of the building that formerly occupied the plot. Average thickness of demolition was between 0.5 - 1.5 m below ground level (bgl) and this sealed two layers of natural, one a mid orangish brown silty sand (on average between 1.5 - 2 m bgl), and the other a lighter mid orangish brown sandy clay which extended, in most areas, from 2 m bgl to the bottom of the cores sampled. WS08A was the only borehole sampled that showed a significantly different layer of deposits. Below the layer of demolition a dark brownish black silt was encountered at a depth of 0.4 - 1.2 m bgl. This possibly represents a section of the 19th century buried garden layer.</p>
Project dates	Start: 14-02-2017 End: 15-02-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	115920 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	2017.LH.11 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	15/00782/FULM - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	BURIED LAYER Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Test Pits", "Visual Inspection"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the	Not known / Not recorded





planning process

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	STAFFORDSHIRE LICHFIELD LICHFIELD Former What! Retail Unit, Cross Keys, Lichfield
Postcode	WS13 6DP
Study area	0 Hectares
Site coordinates	SK 11882 09656 52.684121758109 -1.824211524643 52 41 02 N 001 49 27 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0.5m Max: 2m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Chris Swales
Project supervisor	Jack Laverick
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Potteries Museum and Art Gallery
Digital Archive ID	2017.LH.11
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Potteries Museum
Paper Archive ID	2017.LH.11
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Diary", "Photograph", "Report", "Unpublished Text"

### Project bibliography 1

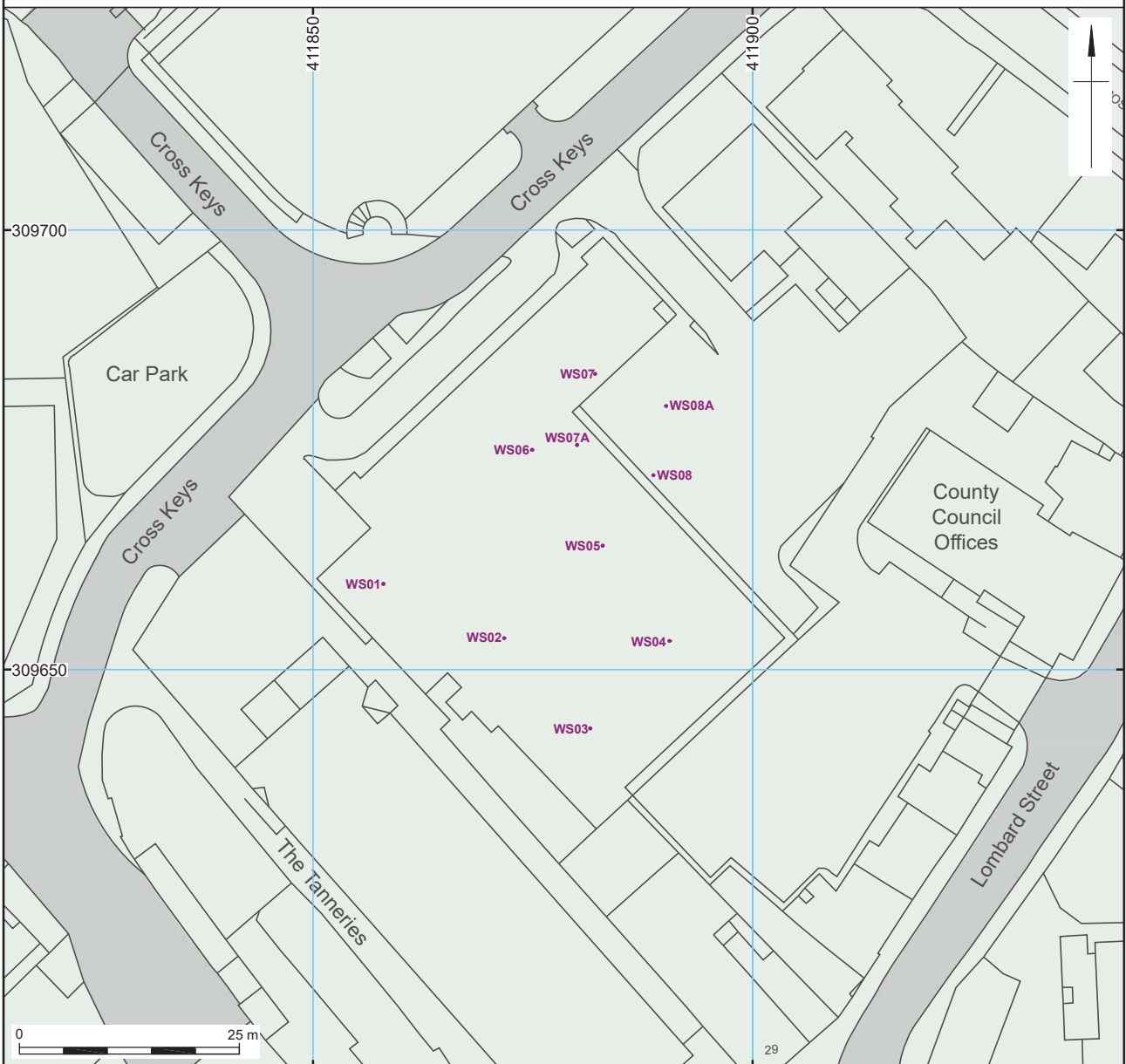
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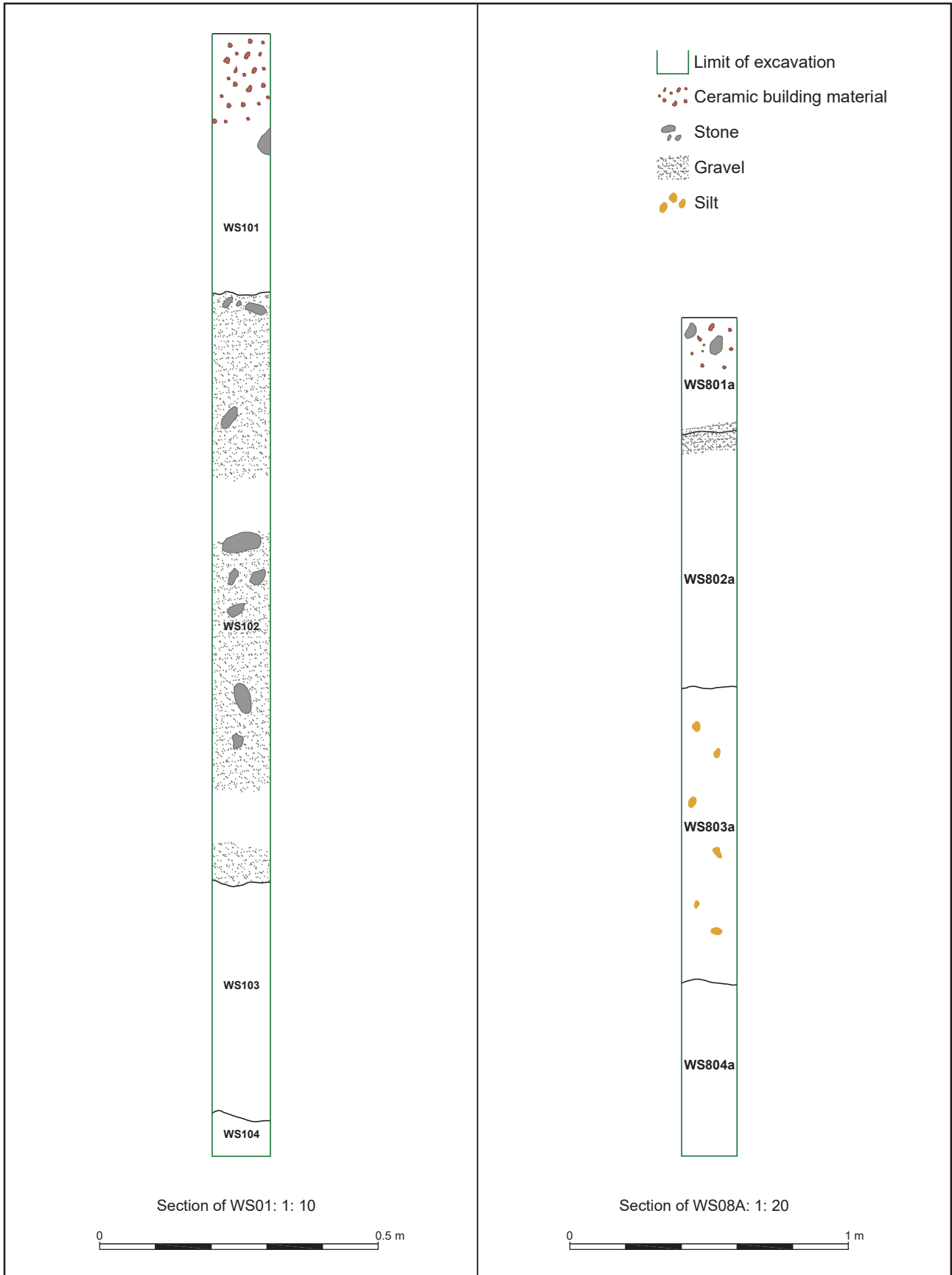
Entered by	Jessica Tibber (j.tibber@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	22 February 2017



Coordinate system: OSGB36 (OSTN15/OSGM15)  	<b>WS1 • Boreholes</b> <small>Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2017.          This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.</small>	
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Site location and location of boreholes

Figure 1



Coordinate system: OSGB36 (OSTN15/OSGM15)	This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
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Section of WS01 and WS08A

Figure 2



Plate 1: WS01 stratigraphy. Stratigraphic sequence runs from right to left



Plate 2: WS04 stratigraphy. Stratigraphic sequence runs from right to left



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Plate 3: WS05 stratigraphy. Stratigraphic sequence runs from right to left



Plate 4: WS08A stratigraphy. Stratigraphic sequence runs from right to left

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