

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex**

NGR 574900 115700

Scheduled Monument Consent Reference SMCC6: S00031130

**ASE Project No: 5335
Site Code: BAW12**

**ASE Report No: 2012063
OASIS ID: archaeol6-120348**

**By
Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

**With contributions by
Luke Barber, Sarah Porteus and Trista Clifford**

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological evaluation of two separate areas within the Battle Abbey complex; in the Walled Garden, and adjacent to Battle Abbey School's tennis courts.

Two trenches were mechanically excavated in order to establish the alignment of the buried western wall of Battle Abbey precinct as it passed to the south of the existing Battle Abbey School tennis courts. It is proposed that a path will be constructed leading from the car-park to the school, necessitating groundworks in the area. Sandstone masonry forming a 1.2m wide wall was encountered. The top of the masonry was found at depths between 180mm and 300mm below the current ground surface. It consisted of sandstone facings with a sandstone rubble and lime mortar core and ran from north to south across the trench.

Elsewhere in the Abbey complex, three trenches were mechanically excavated in the Walled Garden in advance of replanting of the area as an orchard. Several post-medieval garden features were encountered and a possible medieval or early post-medieval pond. Two elevations of the western wall of the enclosure were completed showing that the presently visible brick wall is built on stone and brick foundations. It could not be clarified whether the foundations are contemporary with the upper brick wall.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 The Finds**
- 6.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Bibliography
Acknowledgements

HER Summary Sheet
OASIS Form

TABLES

- Table 1: Quantification of site archive
- Table 2: Quantification of finds
- Table 3: Provisional CBM fabric series

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site location
- Figure 2: Trench location
- Figure 3: Trench 1 - plan, section and photos
- Figure 4: Other known locations of precinct wall
- Figure 5: Trench 3 – plan, sections and photos
- Figure 6: Trench 4 - plan, section and photos
- Figure 7: Trenches 3, 4 and 5 with section and photos of Trench 5
- Figure 8: Historic images of the precinct wall
- Figure 9: Historic image of walled garden

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological evaluation of two separate areas within the Battle Abbey complex; in the Walled Garden, and adjacent to Battle Abbey School's tennis courts. The site is centred at NGR 574900 115700 and shown on Fig. 1.

1.2 Topography and Geology

1.2.1 Battle Abbey was built on the hilltop site of the Battle of Hastings (the position of the High Altar is said to mark the exact site of King Harold's death). Although the topography has been much altered by the construction of the Abbey complex, in essence the site occupies a lofty position with extensive views to the south. The tennis courts lie to the west of the main claustral buildings of the Abbey, while the Walled Garden is located to the east of the upstanding remains.

1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock is the Wadhurst Clay Formation of mudstone. There is no recorded superficial geology (BGS 2012).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 English Heritage is considering the feasibility of restoring the Walled Garden, including the planting of fruit trees. As the Walled Garden is situated within the precinct of the medieval abbey (and consequently on the battlefield) it is considered to have high potential for the survival of archaeological remains. As planting and/or landscaping might have a negative impact on any underlying archaeological remains, English Heritage considered an archaeological evaluation of the affected area to be prudent in order to provide an indication of the seriousness of any such impact.

1.3.2 Consideration is also being given to the installation of a new footpath to lead from the existing car park to the school. It is likely to traverse the West Precinct Wall in the vicinity of Battle Abbey School's tennis courts, and consequently the location and depth of this feature was also investigated as part of the current project.

1.3.3 Archaeology South-East prepared a *Written Scheme of Investigation* for both elements of the work which was approved by English Heritage in advance of the commencement of work (ASE 2012). This document outlined the techniques to be used in the field, and in the production of a report and an archive.

1.3.4 Scheduled Monument Consent was granted for both pieces of work under the same certification on 16th February 2012 (ref. SMCC6; S00031130).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The aims stated in the *Written Scheme of Investigation (ibid.)* were to ascertain:

GENERAL

Whether archaeological remains are present on the site and if so assess the date, survival and condition of said remains
The character date and quality of ancient remains and deposits
How they might be affected by the proposed works on the site
To enable English Heritage to make an informed decision as to the feasibility of the proposed works in light of the potential damage to the archaeological resource

SPECIFIC

Walled Garden

Determine whether there is archaeological evidence for the relationship between the existing west wall and any predecessor. To this end Trenches 3 and 5 will butt up against the west wall
Identify and characterise battlefield remains
Identify and characterise post-medieval garden remains
Identify and leave in-situ human remains
Inform the decision regarding the design of the new orchard

West Precinct Wall

Establish the depth of the wall below ground level
Identify and leave in situ structural remains associated with the precinct wall
Identify and characterise battlefield remains
Inform English Heritage as to the potential impact of the new footpath upon the west precinct wall remains

The final aim is to make public the results of the archaeological evaluation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 The current report provides the results of the archaeological evaluation of the two areas, carried out in late February and early March 2012. The on-site work was undertaken by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist), Liz Chambers (Assistant Archaeologist) and by John Cook (Archaeological Surveyor). The project was managed by Andy Leonard (Project Manager) and by Dan Swift (Post-Excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The known history and recorded archaeology of the site of Battle Abbey have been given full coverage elsewhere (e.g. Hare 1985; Coad 1994). In summary the Abbey was founded in 1070 on the site of the Battle of Hastings as an act of penance for the bloodshed during the battle and the subsequent Norman Conquest of England. The Abbey was consecrated in 1094 and became one of the richest Benedictine houses in the country. It was dissolved on the orders of Henry VIII in 1538 and the buildings passed into the ownership of the King's Master of Horse, Sir Anthony Browne. The church and other buildings were demolished and the west range was converted into a country house. This building was leased to Battle Abbey School in the 1920s.
- 2.1.2 Owing to the historical and archaeological significance of Battle Abbey and the town that grew up at its gate, numerous archaeological projects have been undertaken within the Abbey precinct and within the town as a whole (a list is provided in Harris (2009).
- 2.1.3 The following information relating specifically to the two areas of site which were evaluated is principally drawn from the Brief prepared by English Heritage (English Heritage, 2012)

2.2 The Walled Garden

- 2.2.1 The Walled Garden encloses an area of 0.6 acres and is located at the east end of the abbey precinct. Previous evaluation (ASE 1998) in the east part of the Garden established that the existing, post-medieval, wall stands directly on top of the medieval precinct wall. No archaeological features were found within the open area, however, other than building debris.
- 2.2.2 The documentary evidence cited in the Brief (English Heritage 2012) suggests the Walled Garden may be the location of previous ancillary buildings, an orchard or, less likely, a cemetery.

2.3 The West Precinct Wall

- 2.3.1 The boundary of the Abbey's outer court was probably demarcated at an early stage in the establishment's history but the earliest documentary reference to a period of construction for a precinct wall appears in the late 12th century *Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, where Abbot Ralph is credited with enlarging the area of the abbey and completing the wall's circuit.
- 2.3.2 The character of the surviving stretch of precinct wall on the northern boundary suggests that it was rebuilt in the 14th century, probably around the same time as the gatehouse was constructed. It is not known if the west precinct wall received the same treatment, however. The wall ran southwest from the west side of the gatehouse.
- 2.3.3 The west precinct wall was demolished in the mid- 18th century and the precise route of the wall is not known. However, the stub by the gatehouse

and the results of previous archaeological investigations give an indication of the northern section's route; the footpath running southwest from the gatehouse probably follows an extra-mural route that follows the line of the wall.

- 2.3.4 An evaluation to the south-west of the gatehouse in 2004 uncovered masonry forming part of the precinct wall (ASE 2004) and during a subsequent watching brief on the groundworks associated with the construction of the new Battle Abbey Visitor Centre, a further stretch of precinct wall (with an associated possible buttress) and a stone-lined well were recorded (ASE 2008).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 A location plan of the evaluation trenches was produced by English Heritage; Trenches 1 and 2 positioned near the tennis courts and Trenches, 3, 4 and 5 located within the Walled Garden
- 3.2 The evaluation was executed following the methodology specified in the WSI (ASE 2012). The location of each of the trenches was scanned prior to excavation using a CAT scanner. Trench 1 was excavated by Yanmar SV16 mini-excavator fitted with a 1m wide toothless ditching bucket. Trenches 2, 3, 4 and 5 were excavated by a Yanmar VI075 excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket, all under the supervision of staff from Archaeology South-East.
- 3.3 The mechanical excavation was taken down to the top of 'natural' geological deposits, or to the top of any recognisable archaeological deposits, whichever was the higher in Trenches 3, 4 and 5. Trenches 1 and 2 were excavated to a maximum depth of 450mm, reflecting the depth of disturbance from the proposed pathway.
- 3.4 Care was taken not to damage archaeological deposits through excessive use of mechanical excavation. Revealed surfaces of the 'natural' were manually cleaned in an attempt to identify individual archaeological features. Spoil was scanned for the presence of artefacts, both visually and with a metal detector.
- 3.5 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.6 A full photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive which is currently held by Archaeology South-East at the offices in Portslade, and will be deposited at the English Heritage store at Dover Castle in due course. The archive consists of the following material:

Number of Contexts	33
Trench Record Forms	5
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	2
Bulk Samples	-
Photographs	45 digital photos
Bulk finds	2 boxes

Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive

4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2)

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The trial trenching was undertaken during late February and early March 2012. Weather conditions were good, and despite early morning mist, there was near-ideal light for the identification and recording of archaeological features later in the day.

4.1.2 Trenches 1 and 2 were excavated either side of a substantial hedge with trees, and were not excavated under their canopy, and were therefore shorter than originally envisaged. Both of the trenches were limited to a depth of 450mm. It was envisaged that Trench 1 would be excavated first and if the precinct wall was encountered that Trench 2 would not be excavated. However, owing to problems with machine access Trench 2 was excavated before Trench 1

4.1.3 There were no such limitations in the Walled Garden, and Trenches 3, 4 and 5 were excavated in the planned locations, to full length and greater depth.

4.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
1/001	Deposit	Topsoil	310mm
1/002	Deposit	Rubble	220mm
1/003	Masonry	Wall	-

- 4.2.1 Trench T1 was excavated to a length of 5m and to a depth of 450mm. At the western end this was 79.66m OD, at the eastern end 80.40m OD. The encountered stratigraphic sequence was straightforward and consisted of a mid-brown humic silty-clay topsoil, context [1/001], which overlay a mixed deposit of mid-greyish-brown silty-clay topsoil and local sandstone rubble, context [1/002], which extended to the base of the trench. A small assemblage of material was recovered from the overburden.
- 4.2.2 A stretch of wall, masonry [1/003] was encountered running north to south across the trench. It was 1.2m wide and consisted of roughly hewn local yellow sandstone blocks bonded with a creamy yellow lime mortar. Although the masonry was somewhat fragmentary owing to the extensive of root disturbance, it appeared that both faces, eastern and western, had facing stones (typically measuring 330mm by 170mm by 140mm), with a core of sandstone rubble and lime mortar. The uppermost surface of the masonry was sealed by the topsoil, context [1/001] and was encountered at a minimum depth of 180mm below the current ground surface (80.22m OD). There was no obvious construction cut at the stipulated maximum depth of the trench.
- 4.2.3 Given the orientation and thickness of the masonry, and the similar alignment of other stretches of masonry encountered in previous ASE work (ASE 2004; 2008) at the site (Fig. 4), the masonry was undoubtedly part of the western precinct wall. No other archaeological features were encountered. A small assemblage of later medieval and post-medieval artefacts was recovered from the overburden.

4.3 Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
2/001	Deposit	Topsoil	>450mm
2/002	Deposit	'Natural'	-

4.3.1 Trench 2 was excavated to a length of 8m and to a depth of 450mm. At the western end this was 78.14m OD, at the eastern end 78.35m OD. The encountered stratigraphic sequence was straight forward and consisted of a mid-brown humic silty-clay topsoil, context [2/001], which overlay the orangey yellow sandstone and clay 'natural', context [2/002]. The topsoil was thickest at the western end, and occupied the entire stipulated depth, but thinned to 230mm at the eastern end.

4.3.2 No archaeological deposits or features were encountered. A small assemblage of later medieval and post-medieval material was recovered from the overburden.

4.4 Trench 3 (Fig. 5)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
3/001	Deposit	Topsoil	480mm
3/002	Deposit	Subsoil	380mm
3/003	Deposit	'Natural'	-
3/004	Cut	Garden Feature	170mm
3/005	Fill	Garden Feature	170mm
3/006	Cut	Garden Feature	450mm
3/007	Fill	Garden Feature	450mm
3/008	Cut	Service	-
3/009	Fill	Service	-
3/010	Masonry	Brick Wall	-
3/011	Masonry	Stone Footing	-

- 4.4.1 Trench 3 was positioned close to the north-western corner of the Walled Garden. It was excavated to a length of 20m and to a depth of 460mm (79.33m OD) the north-western end and to 620mm (78.04m OD) at the south-eastern end at which the 'natural' was encountered and mechanical excavation ceased.
- 4.4.2 The stratigraphic sequence was uncomplicated and consisted of a humic mid-brown silty-clay topsoil, context [3/001], which overlay a deposit of subsoil of similar texture but lighter colour, context [3/002], which in turn overlay the orangey-yellow sandstone and clay 'natural', context [3/003]. Topsoil [3/001] contained one piece of late post-medieval pottery, some late medieval and/or post-medieval CBM and a small piece of 19th- century Welsh roofing slate.
- 4.4.3 Two features apparently dating from the use of the area as a post-medieval garden were identified, one of which was excavated. Pit [3/004] was a sub-rectangular feature which lay partly under the northern baulk of the trench. It was 1.13m wide and 170mm deep. The single fill was a brownish-grey silty-clay, context [3/005], from which later medieval and/or post-medieval CBM was recovered.
- 4.4.4 The other garden feature was flat-bottomed feature [3/006] which ran broadly north to south across the trench. It was 4.4m wide and 450mm deep in the examined section. The mid-greyish silty-clay fill, context [3/007] contained later medieval and/or post-medieval tile and a single post-medieval pottery sherd of probable 17th century date. It was truncated by 1.2m wide service trench [3/008], which ran between two taps located against the garden walls. The fill, context [3/009] was a mixture of topsoil and sandstone rubble and was not investigated.
- 4.4.5 At the western end of the trench an elevation of the western garden wall was exposed. The upper part of the wall, forming the current above ground element, context [3/010] consisted of plain red and vitrified bricks (measuring 110mm by 220mm by 65mm) set in a strong yellow mortar, arranged in English Bond (header stretcher). The wall stands 38 courses high, to c. 2.5m.
- 4.4.6 The foundation of the wall, context [3/011] consisted of 3 courses (680mm) of roughly hewn, but faced, sandstone blocks set in a thick cream-coloured

mortar. The upper course forms the above-ground plinth which protrudes c. 140mm from the wall.

- 4.4.7 The foundation masonry was directly on surface of the 'natural', context [3/003] with no evidence of a construction cut.

4.5 Trench 4 (Fig. 6)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
4/001	Deposit	Topsoil	310mm
4/002	Deposit	Subsoil	300mm
4/003	Deposit	'Natural'	-
4/004	Deposit	Make-Up	300mm
4/005	Cut	Garden Feature	150mm
4/006	Fill	Garden Feature	150mm
4/007	Cut	Tree Throw	-
4/008	Fill	Tree Throw	-
4/009	Cut	Tree Throw	-
4/010	Fill	Tree Throw	-

- 4.5.1 Trench 4 was positioned between Trenches 3 and 5. It was excavated to a length of 20m and to a depth of 340mm (78.18mOD) at the north-eastern end and to 610mm (75.64mOD) the south-western end at which the 'natural' was encountered and mechanical excavation ceased. The stratigraphic sequence was the same as that encountered in adjacent Trench 3; topsoil Context [4/001], subsoil context [4/002] and 'natural' context [4/003]. Topsoil [4/001] also contained a thick lens of redeposited 'natural' stone and clay near the south-western end of the trench, context [4/004]. A small assemblage of medieval and post-medieval pottery and CBM was recovered from the topsoil [4/001].
- 4.5.2 A feature was encountered at the north-eastern end of the trench. Feature [4/005] was of uncertain extent and form as it lay partially under the three baulks. It may pertain to feature [3/006] in Trench 4. The examined part was 150mm in depth and contained a single mid-greyish brown silty clay fill, context [4/006] in which later medieval and/or post-medieval tile was found.
- 4.5.3 Two other, irregular features were encountered near to the south-western end of the trench; cuts [4/007] and [4/009]. Both contained loose fills formed of a mixture of topsoil and 'natural' sandstone and clay; contexts [[4/008] and 4/010] respectively. After initial investigation, both were interpreted as tree throws and were not more fully excavated and are not illustrated.

4.6 Trench 5 (Fig. 7)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
5/001	Deposit	Topsoil	580mm
5/002	Deposit	Make-Up	100mm
5/003	Deposit	'Natural'	-
5/004	Deposit	Make-Up	100mm
5/005	Deposit	Subsoil	610mm
5/006	Masonry	Brick Wall	-
5/007	Masonry	Stone Footing	-

4.6.1 Trench 5 was positioned close to the south-western corner of the Walled Garden. It was excavated to a length of 20m and to a depth of 680mm (74.62mOD) at the north-western end and to 1.29m (73.15mOD) at the south-eastern end at which the 'natural' was encountered and mechanical excavation ceased. The encountered stratigraphic sequence was slightly more complex than in the other trenches, reflecting the use of this part of the Walled Garden as a works compound in recent years.

4.6.2 Topsoil layer context [5/001] extended for the entire length of the trench. It overlay deposits of builder's sand, context [5/004] and Type 1, context [5/002] from the former works compound, which overlay a deposit of subsoil, context [5/005], which thickened notably to the south-east, and in turn overlay the 'natural', context [5/003]. A small assemblage of material, including medieval pottery and late medieval and/or post-medieval CBM was recovered from the topsoil [5/001].

4.6.3 No archaeological features were encountered in the trench but a second elevation of the western wall was recorded. Both elements of the wall were similar to those seen in Trench 3, with the upper wall, context [5/006] built onto foundation, context [5/007]. The brick element was similar in character and build type, but the foundation element contained fragments of red brick, suggesting that it is contemporary with the brick wall rather than an earlier feature upon which the brick wall was built, or possibly that it had been repaired when the brick wall was built.

4.6.4 Again there was no apparent construction cut and the masonry rested directly on the 'natural', context [5/003].

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Finds Quantification

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Shell	Wt (g)	Fe	Wt (g)	Stone	Wt (g)	CTP	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)
1/002	1	0	18	1324					1	12						
2/001	1	6	5	228											1	26
3/001	3	12	10	440							2	0			5	862
3/005			15	684												
3/007	1	6	25	1324	4	64							1	0		
4/001	6	42	12	440			1	0			1	8			3	18
4/006			7	386												
5/001	2	10	9	1216												
Total	14	76	101	6042	4	64	1	0	1	12	3	8	1	0	9	906

Table 2: Quantification of finds

5.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

- 5.2.1 The evaluation recovered a small quantity of pottery from the site. On the whole the assemblage is composed of small residual sherds with varying degrees of abrasion. As such the majority appears to have seen at least a moderate degree of reworking.
- 5.2.2 The earliest pottery is of the high medieval period, all dating to between c. 1250 and 1350. Context [4/001] produced a single club rim from a light grey cooking pot tempered with medium sand and rare flint while [5/001] contained two sherds. The first of these consists of another cooking pot sherd tempered with sand and rare flint while the other is from a reduced fine/medium sand tempered jug. The latter is decorated with an applied red clay strip under a dull green glaze.
- 5.2.3 Context [3/007] produced the only early post-medieval pottery from the site – a single sherd of plain white tin-glazed earthenware of probable 17th- century date.
- 5.2.4 More pottery of the late post-medieval period was recovered, most of which can be placed in the late 18th- to early/mid 19th centuries. The shoulder of a creamware jar was recovered from [1/002] with a further piece coming from [3/001]. This same context produced two small chips (2g) of early pearlware. Context [2/001] produced a piece of English porcelain eggcup while [4/001] produced two pieces of unglazed earthenware flower pots and a scrap (1g) of transfer-printed pearlware.

5.3 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

5.3.1 A total of 98 fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) with a combined weight of 6182g were recovered from eight contexts. The assemblage comprises medieval and post-medieval material, predominantly peg tile with a small quantity of floor tile.

Methodology

5.3.2 The assemblage has been examined with the aid of a X10 binocular microscope and a provisional fabric series has been drawn up (Table 1). The assemblage has been recorded on pro-forma record forms and Excel database for archive. Fabric samples and items of interest have been retained, the remainder of the assemblage, approximately 2/3rds, has been discarded.

Fabric	Description	Date	Contexts
T1	hard orange fabric with moderate fine quartz and sparse coarse iron rich inclusions	C17th-C18th	1/ 002, 2/001, 3/001, 3/005, 4/001, 4/006
T2	Brownish orange fabric with coarse chunky angular cream and red silt with moderate poorly sorted quartz, often with reduced core.	C15th-C17th	3/001, 3/005, 4/006, 5/001
T3	Orange brown fabric with moderate to medium size quartz and very sparse iron rich inclusions	C15th-C17th	1/003, 3/005, 3/007, 4/001, 5/001
B1	Orange fabric with moderate fine to coarse black iron rich inclusions with some sparse fine silt streaking.	C15th-C17th	2/001, 3/005, 4/001, 5/001
Nr T3	Floor tile fabric of fabric similar to T3	C15th-C16th	1/ 002, 4/001
T1 nr T3	Hard fired, fabric similar to T3	C15th-C17th	3/007

Table 3: Provisional CBM fabric series

Ceramic Building Material by Context

5.3.3 Context [1/002] contained abraded fragments of plain glazed floor tile with knife cut chamfered edges. The floor tile was in fabric near T3, thickness and glaze of tile varied. One fragment of 35mm thickness had a cream slip with clear glaze, one of 30mm thickness had a clear glaze, the third fragment of 26mm thickness was heavily abraded and only a small amount of clear glaze remained on the surface. The floor tile is probably of 15th to 16th century date. Within context [1/002] were abraded fragments of peg tile in fabric T1, T3 and highly calcareous fabric in Canterbury Archaeological Trust fabric CAT32. Peg tile in CAT32 and T1 are of 17th to 18th century date with peg tile in T3 of later medieval or early post-medieval date, C15th to C17th.

5.3.4 Context [2/001] contained fragments of brick in fabric T1 and brick in fabric B1, both heavily abraded and a relatively unabraded fragment of 20th century plain glazed wall tile. Context [3/001] contained fragments of peg tile in fabrics T1 and T2 of post-medieval date and late medieval to early post-medieval date respectively.

5.3.5 Context [3/005] contained abraded fragments of peg tile in fabric T2 and T3

of 15th to 17th century date and fragments of peg tile and pantile in fabric T1 of 18th to 19th century date. Also present were abraded fragments of brick in fabric B1 and also a fragment in fabric similar to T3, both broadly of later medieval to early post-medieval date. Context [3/007] contained abraded fragments of peg tile in later medieval to early post-medieval date (15th to 17th century, fabrics T3 and T1 nr T3).

5.3.6 Context [4/001] contained a fragment of abraded 15th to 16th century plain glazed floor tile in fabric T3 with knife cut chamfered edge and heat affected underside. A fragment of brick in fabric B1 and peg tile in fabric T1 of probable 15th to 17th century date were also recovered. Later material was also recovered with a fragment of T1 peg tile and a vitrified fragment both of probable post-medieval date.

5.3.7 Context [4/006] contained abraded fragments of peg tile in fabrics T2 of 15th to 17th century date and fabric T1 of probable 17th to 18th century date. Context [5/001] contained fragments of peg tile in fabric T2 and T3 of 15th to 17th century date and a large fragment of brick in fabric B1. The brick was unfrosted with thickness of 70mm and rounded arises of probable 15th to 17th century.

Summary

5.3.8 The assemblage largely consisted of abraded residual medieval material in post-medieval contexts. Fragments of glazed floor tile and peg tile are similar to those recovered during previous works at battle abbey and probably of local production. The post-medieval material is mostly of 17th to 18th century date with a small amount of 19th and early 20th century date.

5.4 The Glass by Luke Barber

5.4.1 Three contexts produced glass from the site. Context [2/001] contained a moulded fragment from a colourless decanter-type vessel of later 19th- to 20th- century date. Context [3/001] produced the largest, and most chronologically mixed, assemblage. This includes part of a kicked base from a wine bottle of late 17th- to mid 18th- century type and the central 'bull's-eye' from a spun piece of green crown glass of similar date. The three fragments of colourless window glass from the same context are of late 19th- to 20th- century type. Context [4/001] produced a further piece of similar window glass together with a fragment from a green wine/beer bottle of later 19th- to 20th- century date.

5.5 Clay Tobacco Pipe by Luke Barber

5.5.1 A single small fresh stem fragment of probably mid 18th- century date was recovered from [3/007].

5.6 Geological Material by Luke Barber

5.6.1 A small piece of 19th- century Welsh roofing slate was recovered from [3/001] while [4/001] produced a tiny piece of coal and a gravel-sized (9g) piece of abraded chert.

5.7 The Metalwork by Trista Clifford

5.7.1 A single complete iron nail, measuring 55mm long with square sectioned stem and circular head (diam. 20mm) came from [1/002]. The nail is of late medieval date.

5.8 The Shell by Luke Barber

5.8.1 Context [4/001] produced a small abraded piece of oyster shell.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

West Precinct Wall

- 6.1 Trench 1, close to the tennis courts, revealed a large masonry wall. In combination with other elements of masonry encountered in previous fieldwork to the north (ASE 2004; 2008), the alignment of the precinct wall forming the westernmost part of the monastic enclosure has now been clearly established.
- 6.2 Historic depictions of the wall (Fig. 8) show that the western part of the precinct wall was curved. This curved form fits well when the masonry remains discovered in the various excavations are conjectured to adjoin one another (Fig. 4).
- 6.3 Clearly the shallow depth of the remains of the precinct wall found in Trench 1 may have implications for the alignment of the new footpath. At its shallowest, the top of the masonry lies only 180mm below the current ground surface, and would be highly vulnerable to damage during groundworks for the new footpath.

Walled Garden

- 6.4 Examination of the foundations of the western wall of the Walled Garden could not 100% guarantee that the existing brick wall was not built on top of an earlier wall -as was previously suggested for the southern and eastern walls (ASE 1998).
- 6.5 The foundations recorded in Trench 5 did contain some brick; however, no brick was recorded in the foundations in Trench 3. Therefore, the brick in Trench 5 could represent part of the original build of the foundation (and wall); or a repair of the foundation which may, or may not, be contemporary with the construction of the brick wall. Further exposure of the wall and foundation may not be able to answer this question without removal of brick samples from the structure and detailed analysis.
- 6.6 A plan of 1811 (not included in this report) shows the wall and a further plan of 1859 (Fig. 9) shows the internal layout of the Walled Garden, which was at that time sub-divided into nine sections of trees by straight paths.
- 6.7 The features encountered in Trenches 3 and 4 may be the remains of part of this scheme of planting and/or garden management, however, the large feature [3/006] may be part of the same feature as [4/005] and if so could represent a very large feature, potentially some 20m x 8m. If this were the case, it is far more likely to represent a backfilled pond. The material infilling the feature contained later medieval and/or post-medieval tile and a single post-medieval pottery sherd of probable 17th century date. The feature therefore may be medieval or early post-medieval in origin and was backfilled by the 17th century.

Finds

- 6.8 In terms of the artefacts found at both locations, the presence of residual medieval material is not surprising given the context of the two locations, and the proximity of standing medieval buildings. Equally the continued occupation of the site after the Dissolution explains the presence of the later material. The use of the southern part of the Walled Garden as a works compound, with a Type 1 surface is attested in a picture taken in 1998 (reproduced in English Heritage *op. cit.*). No battlefield remains were encountered at either of the locations.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank English Heritage for commissioning and monitoring the archaeological work at the site. Thanks are also due to the on-site staff from English Heritage, especially Dawn Champion and from Battle Abbey School for their understanding and hospitality.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	BAW12					
Identification Name and Address	Battle Abbey, Battle					
County, District &/or Borough	Rother District, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	574900 115700					
Geology	Wadhurst Clay					
ASE Project Number	5335					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other <i>Scheduled Monument</i>		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 27.02.12 - 01.03.12	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	English Heritage					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard/Dan Swift					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED ✓	PM ✓	Other		
<p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological evaluation of two separate areas within the Battle Abbey complex; in the Walled Garden, and adjacent to Battle Abbey School's tennis courts.</i></p> <p><i>Two trenches were mechanically excavated in order to establish the alignment of the buried western wall of Battle Abbey precinct as it passed to the south of the existing Battle Abbey School tennis courts. It is proposed that a path will be constructed leading from the car-park to the school, necessitating groundworks in the area. Sandstone masonry forming a 1.2m wide wall was encountered. The top of the masonry was found at depths between 180mm and 300mm below the current ground surface. It consisted of sandstone facings with a sandstone rubble and lime mortar core and ran from north to south across the trench.</i></p> <p><i>Elsewhere in the Abbey complex, three trenches were mechanically excavated in the Walled Garden in advance of replanting of the area as an orchard. Several post-medieval garden features were encountered and a possible medieval or early post-medieval pond. Two elevations of the western wall of the enclosure were completed showing that the presently visible brick wall is built on stone and brick foundations. It could not be clarified whether the foundations are contemporary with the upper brick wall.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-120348

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological evaluation of two separate areas within the Battle Abbey complex; in the Walled Garden, and adjacent to Battle Abbey School's tennis courts. Two trenches were mechanically excavated in order to establish the alignment of the buried western wall of Battle Abbey precinct as it passed to the south of the existing Battle Abbey School tennis courts. It is proposed that a path will be constructed leading from the car-park to the school, necessitating groundworks in the area. Sandstone masonry forming a 1.2m wide wall was encountered. The top of the masonry was found at depths between 180mm and 300mm below the current ground surface. It consisted of sandstone facings with a sandstone rubble and lime mortar core and ran from north to south across the trench. Elsewhere in the Abbey complex, three trenches were mechanically excavated in the Walled Garden in advance of replanting of the area as an orchard. Several post-medieval garden features were encountered and a possible medieval or early post-medieval pond. Two elevations of the western wall of the enclosure were completed showing that the presently visible brick wall is built on stone and brick foundations. It could not be clarified whether the foundations are contemporary with the upper brick wall.
Project dates	Start: 27-02-2012 End: 01-03-2012
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	5335 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	BAW12 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	SMCC6: S0003130 - SM No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	BEDDING TRENCH Post Medieval
Monument type	PRECINCT WALL Medieval
Significant Finds	TILE Medieval

Significant Finds	STONWORK Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	New Path network
Development type	Woodland planting (e.g. lowland broadleaf woodland)
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX ROTHER BATTLE Battle Abbey
Postcode	TN33 0AD
Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 7490 1570 50.9136295323 0.488318180414 50 54 49 N 000 29 17 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 75.00m Max: 80.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	English Heritage
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard/Jim Stevenson
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	English Heritage

Project archives

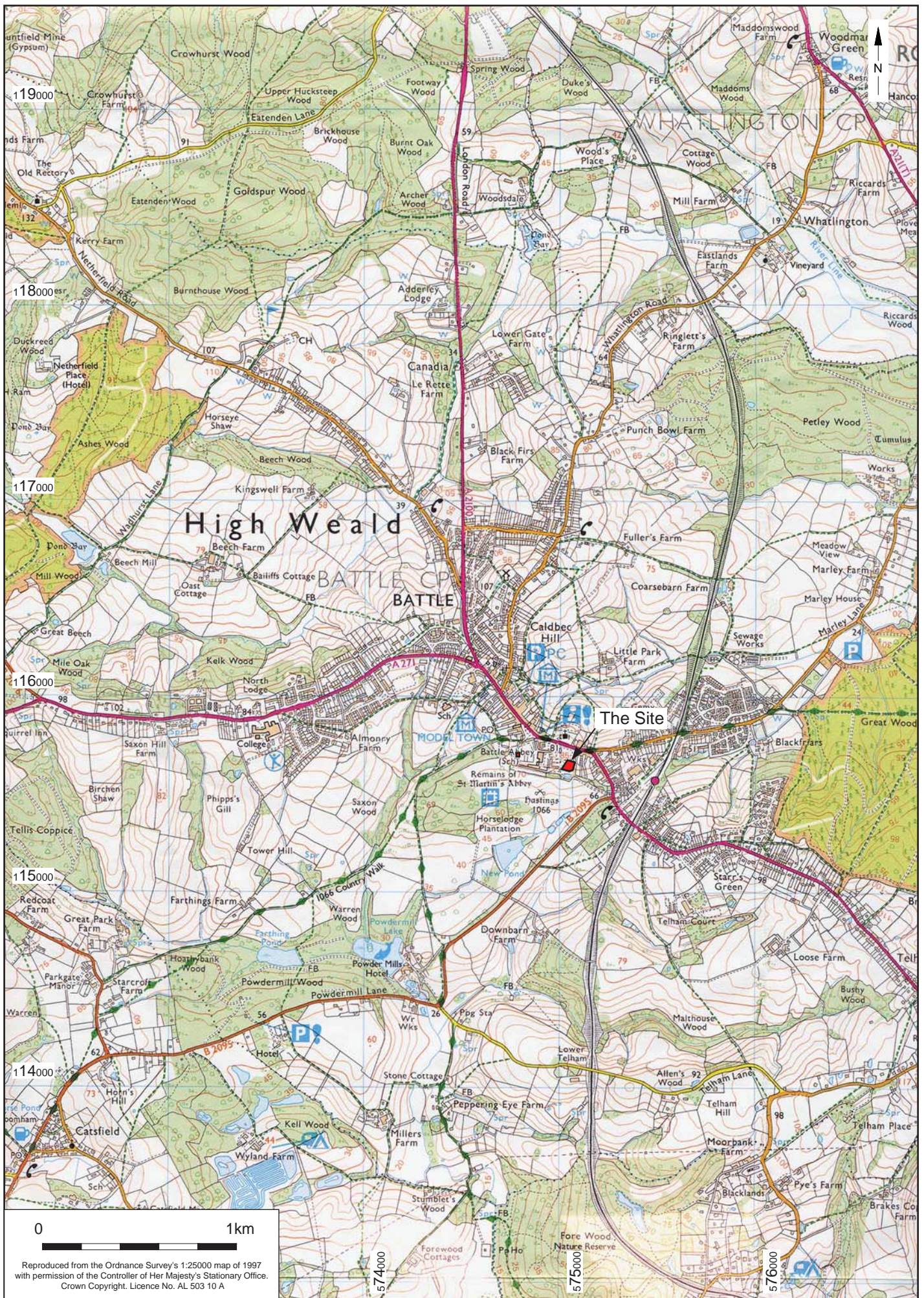
Physical Archive recipient	English Heritage
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Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	English Heritage
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	English Heritage
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Report', 'Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

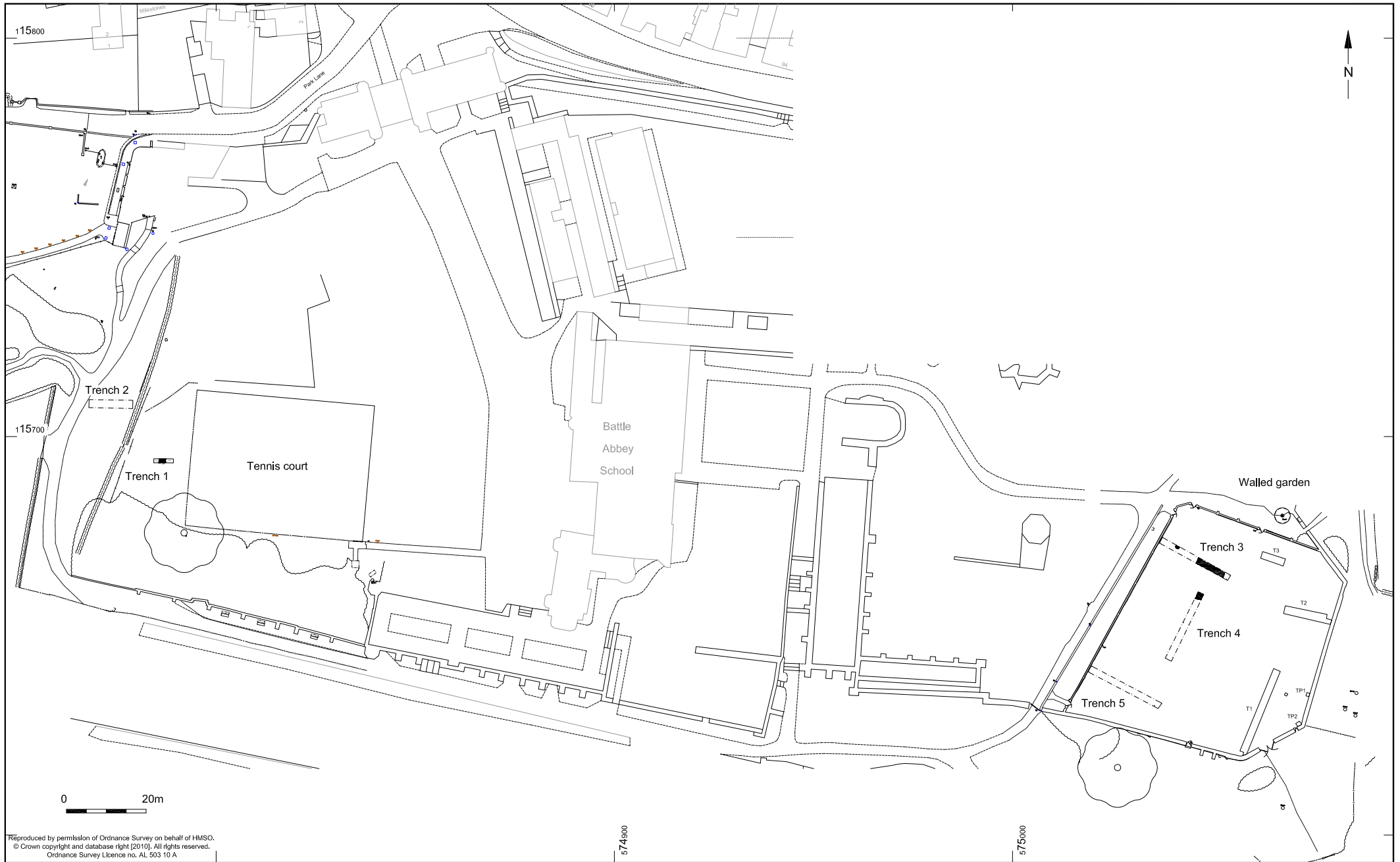
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at Battle Abbey, Battle, East Sussex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Stevens, S.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No. 2012063
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade, East Sussex
Description	ASE client report. A4-sized with cover logos.

Entered by	Dan Swift (d.swift@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	28 March 2012



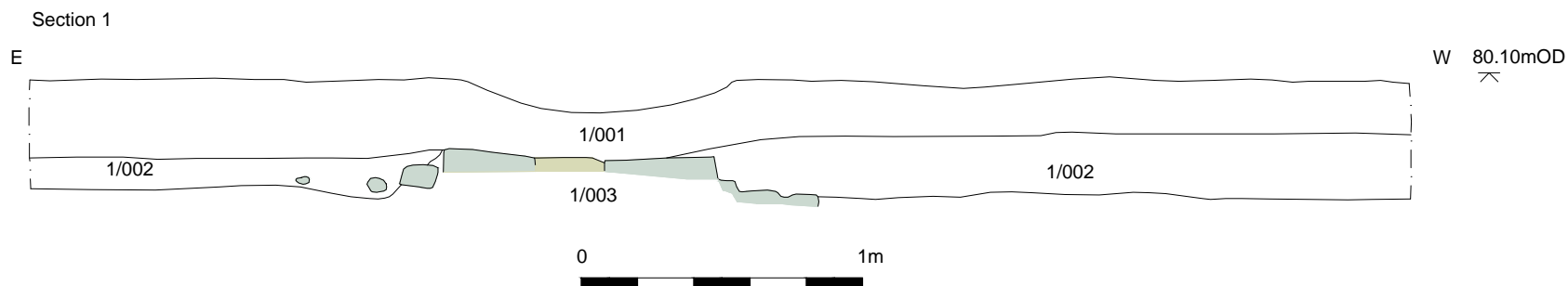
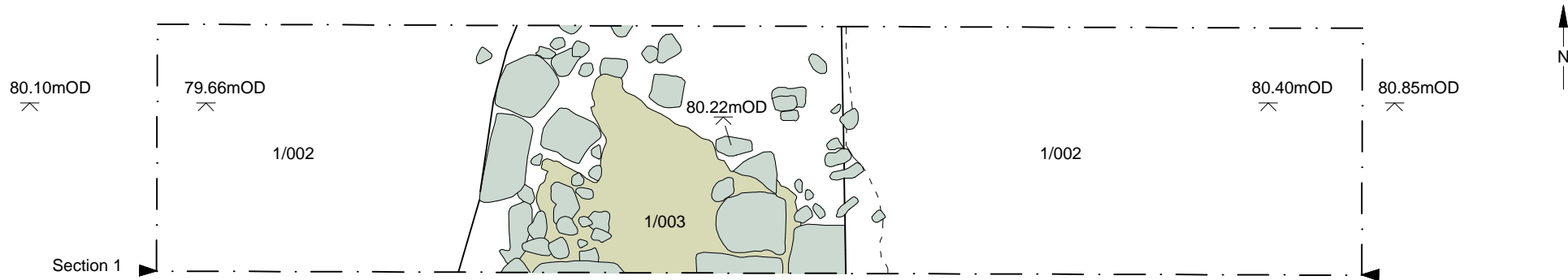
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© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: JLR		



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© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Trench location	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: JLR		



Wall 1/003 looking north



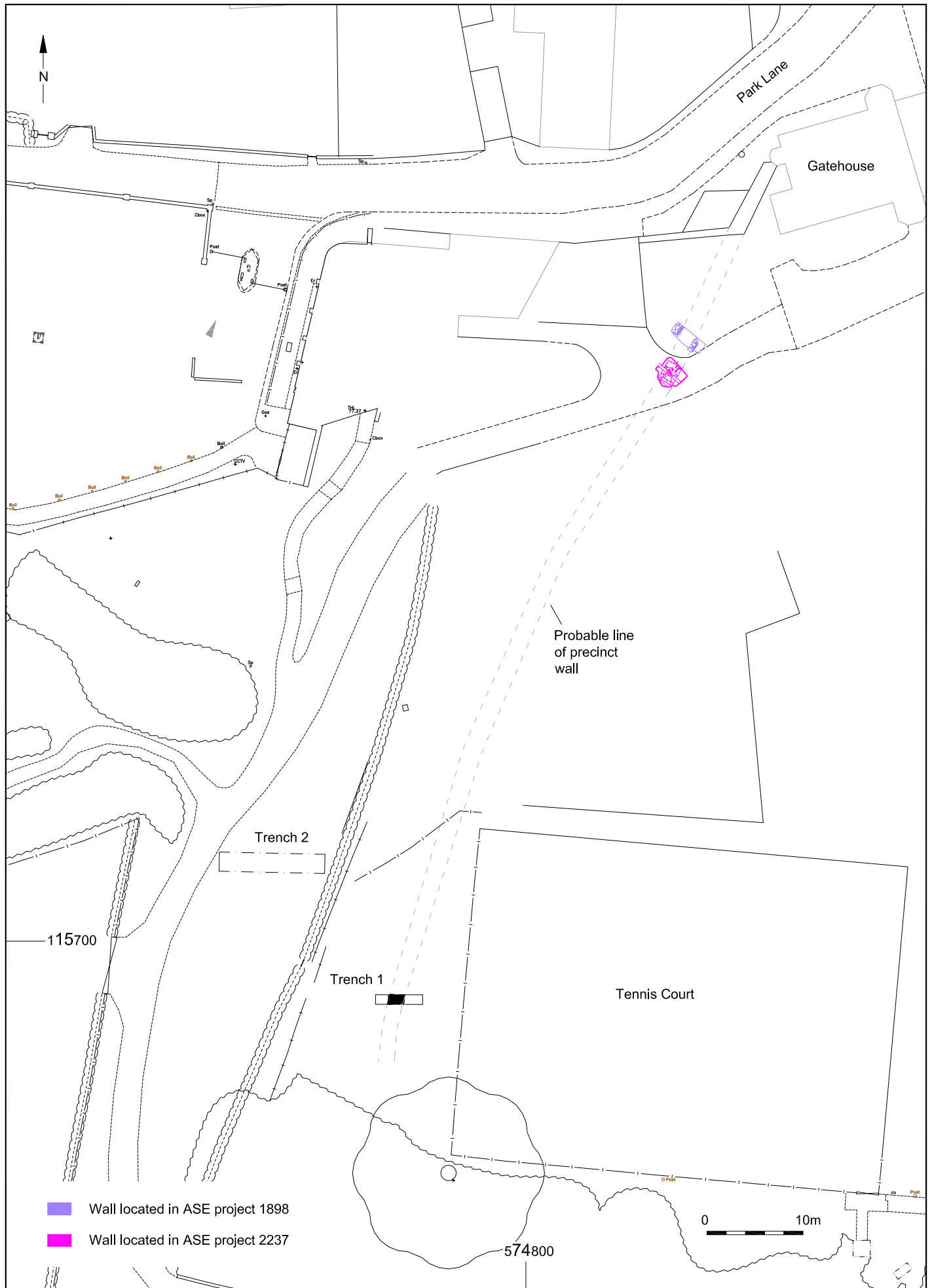
Wall 1/003 looking south



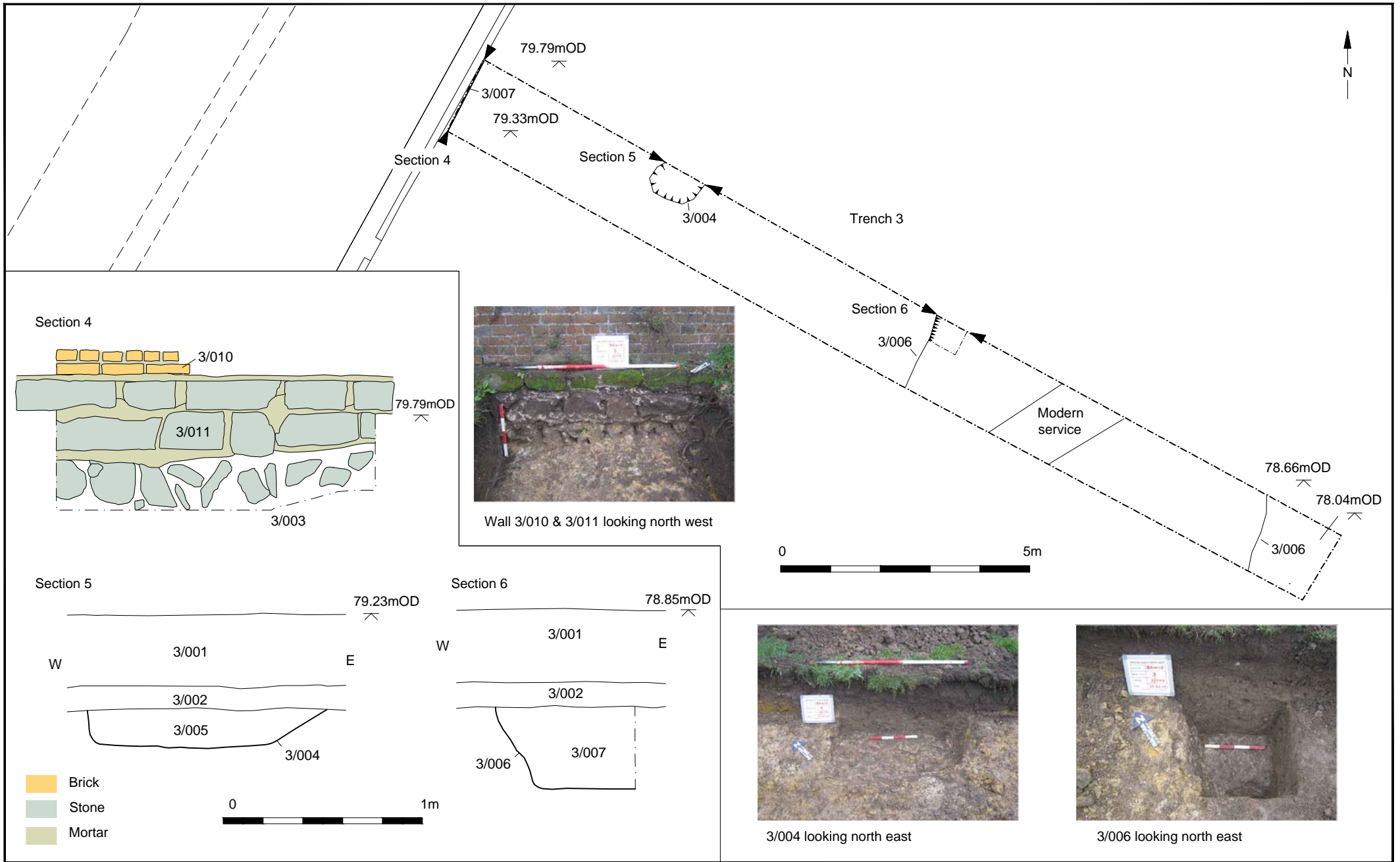
Wall 1/003 looking south east

- Stone
- Mortar

↑ Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Trench 1: Plan, section and photos	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: JR/FG		



© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Other known locations of precinct wall	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: FEG		

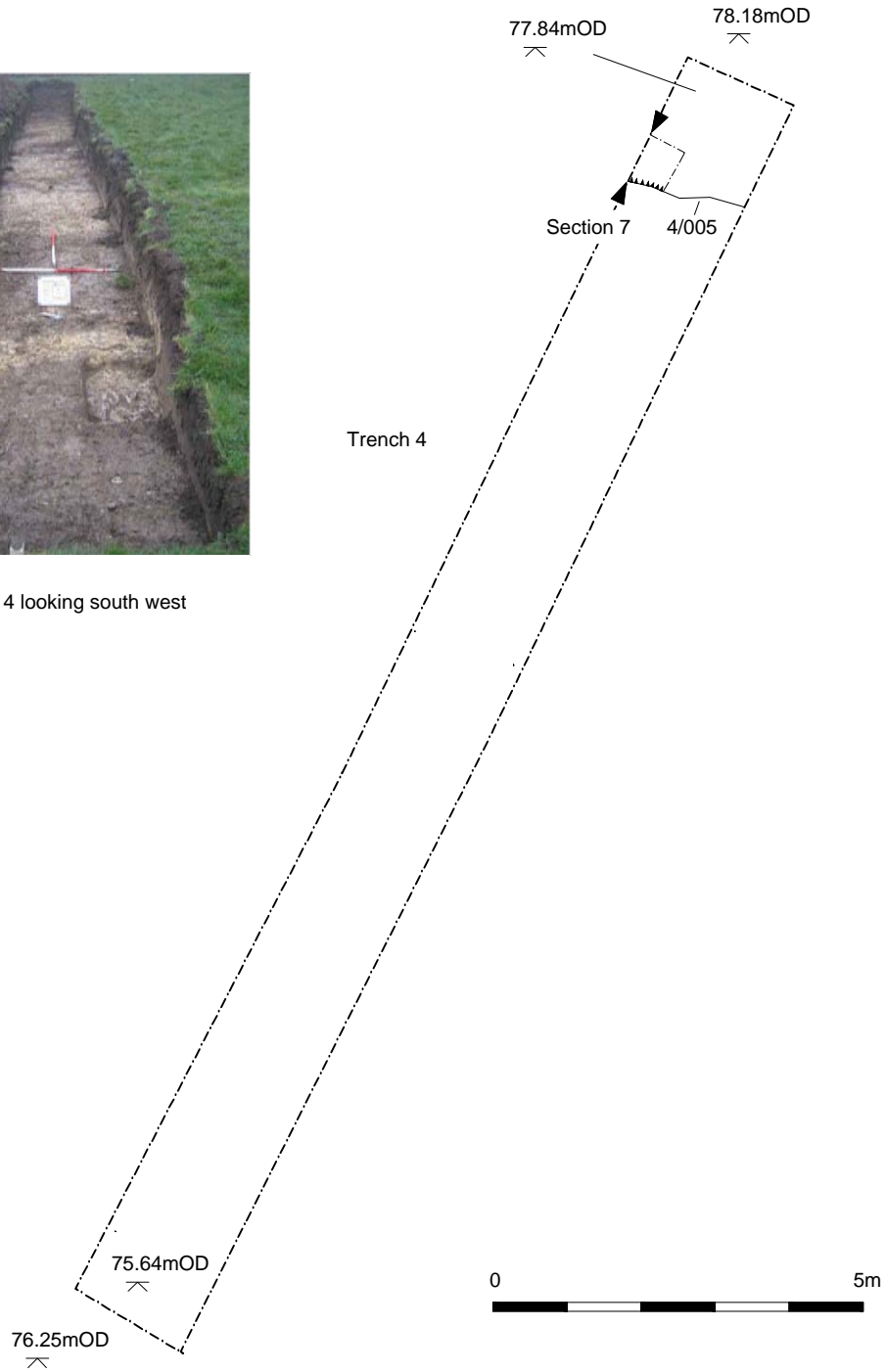


Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Trench 3: Plan, sections and photos	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: JR/FG		

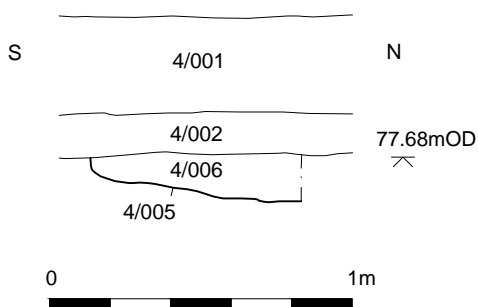
Fig. 5



Trench 4 looking south west

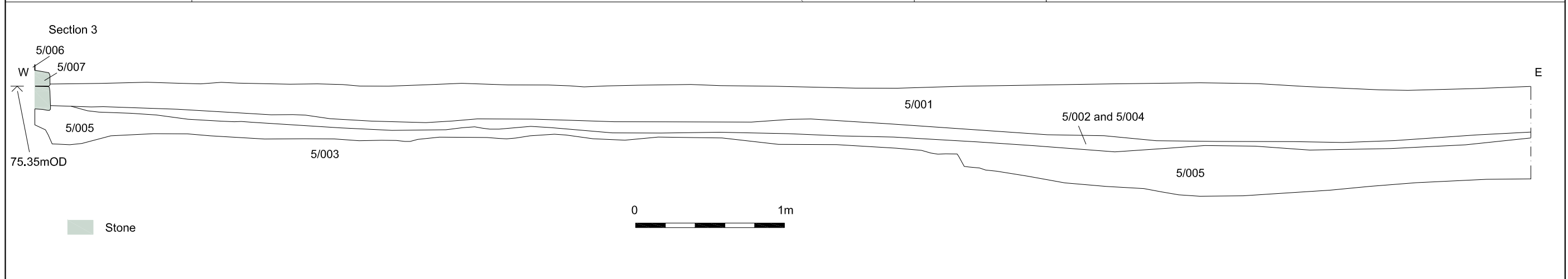


Section 7

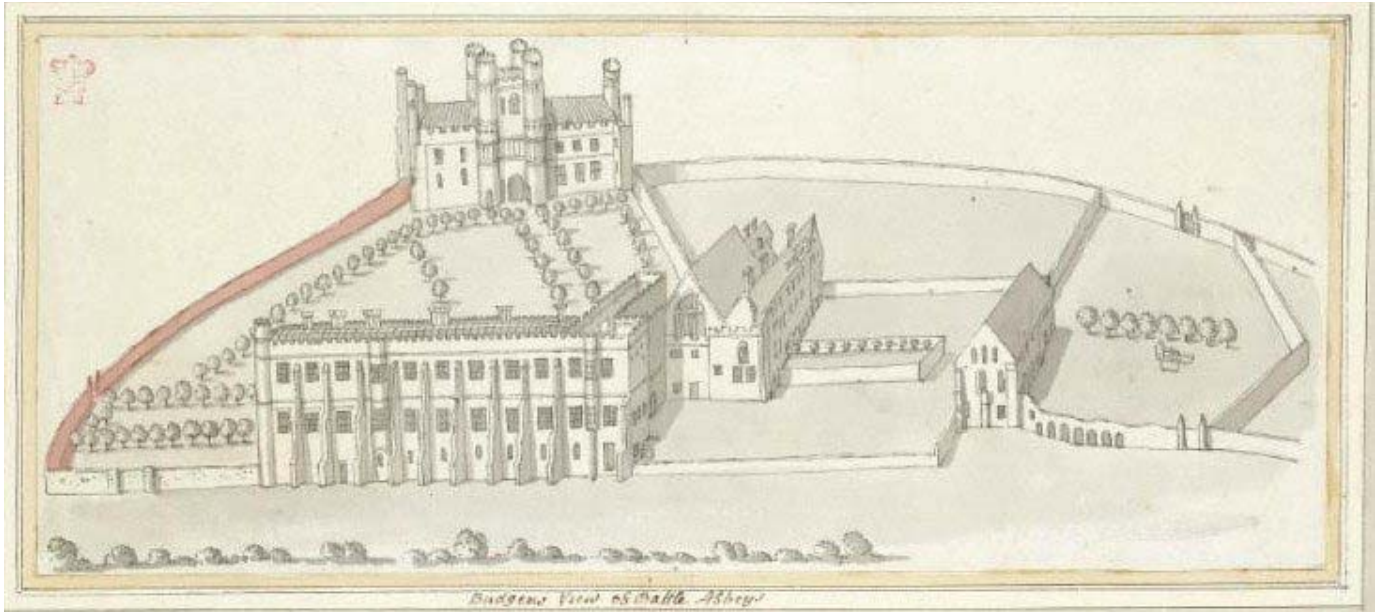


4/005 looking north west

Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey		Fig. 6
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Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: JR/FG			

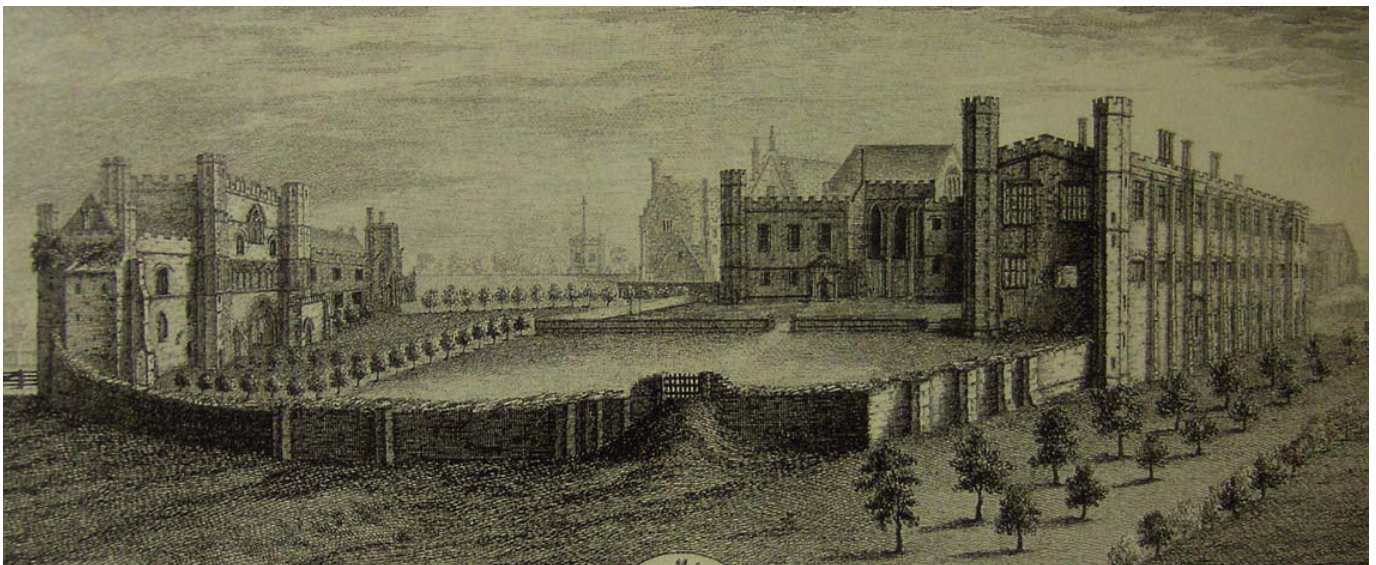


© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 7
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Trenches 3, 4 and 5 with section and photos of trench 5	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: FEG		



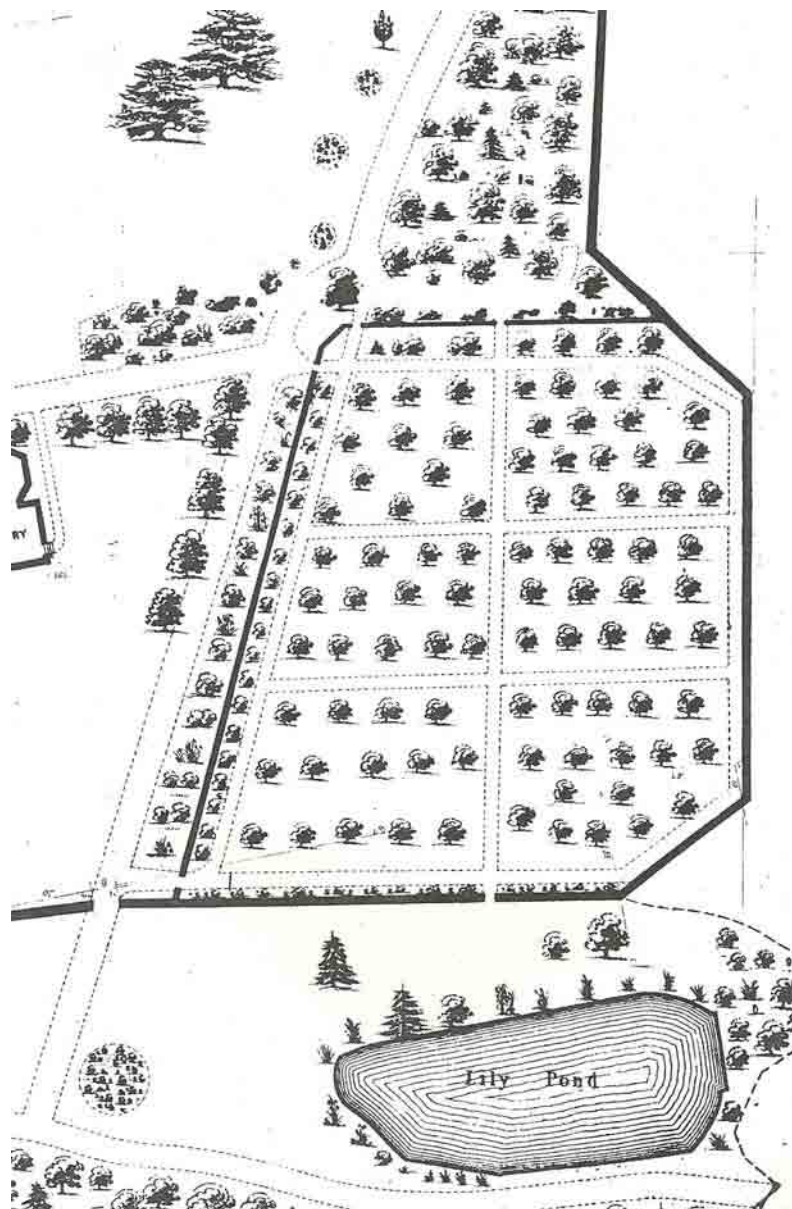
Budgen's View c1700.

The southern half of the western precinct wall highlighted in red.(British Library Add 5670 fol 37 no 72.) from English Heritage's brief for an archaeological evaluation, Jan 2012



Detail from Buck Brothers's engraving of Battle Abbey, 1737 showing the western precinct wall. (from English Heritage's brief for an archaeological evaluation, Jan 2012)

© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 8
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Historic images of the precinct wall	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: FEG		



Detail from an estate plan prepared for the Duke of Cleveland, showing the Walled Garden (from English Heritage's brief for an archaeological evaluation, Jan 2012)

© Archaeology South-East		Battle Abbey	Fig. 9
Project Ref: 5335	March 2012	Historic images of the walled garden	
Report Ref: 2012063	Drawn by: FEG		

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