

**20-26 College Street,  
Southampton, Hampshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Crest Nicholson (South) Limited**

by James Lewis  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SOU 1465

**January 2008**

## Summary

**Site name:** 20-26 College Street, Southampton, Hampshire

**Grid reference:** SU 4248 1132

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 28th -29th January 2008

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James Lewis

**Site code:** SOU 1465

**Area of site:** 0.25 ha

**Summary of results:** Remains of 19th-century buildings and the terminal of a pre-19th century ditch were found.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Southampton City Museum in due course, with accession code SOU1465.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 07.02.08 Steve Preston ✓ 07.02.08
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# 20-26 College Street, Southampton, Hampshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James Lewis

**Report 07/129b**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out 20-26 College Street, Southampton (SU 4245 1130) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Malcolm Kirk for Crest Nicholson (South) Limited, Crest House, Pycroft Road, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 9GN.

Planning permission (06/00246/FUL) has been granted by Southampton City Council for redevelopment of the site for residential use. The consent includes a condition (7) relating to archaeology, requiring a the implementation of programme of archaeological works to mitigate the potential impact of the development on archaeological remains. A recent desk based survey concluded that the archaeological potential for the area is moderate to high (Hopkins 2007).

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and Southampton City Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Alan Morton, City Archaeological Officer. The fieldwork was undertaken by James Lewis and Natasha Bennett, on the 27th and 28th January 2008 and the site code is SOU1465. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Southampton Museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located within the urban environment of Southampton city (Fig. 1). It occupies roughly 0.25ha at the junctions of College Street and Richmond Street with Three Field Lane. To the north of the site, urban development which stretches for some 5km. To the east of the site flows the River Itchen, south is the River Test and the Town Quay, the west is Lansdowne Hill and docks. The site formerly consisted of three buildings fronting both College Street and Richmond Street.

The underlying geology is River Terrace deposits (mainly loam and clay) resting on gravel (BGS, 1987). The natural geology observed on the site was an orange-brown brickearth. It is at approximately 3m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The background for the site has been presented in the earlier desk-based assessment (Hopkins 2007). In summary a range of sites and finds have been discovered. Bronze Age and Iron Age activity represented by ditches and postholes with Roman coins, tiles and pottery discovered on Chapel Road to the west. Saxon occupation was also revealed at the same location. Numerous finds from the medieval period have been recovered and these include a building, ditches and pits. The majority of finds from the area however date to the post-medieval period.

Cartographic evidence for the post-medieval period shows that the site was located on undeveloped farm land defined by small fields adjacent to a marsh in the 18th century but by the mid 19th century development had expanded up to the western edge of the site and by 1866 the Ordnance Survey map depicts the site as being fully developed with housing and a school. This layout of the buildings remained virtually unchanged until in the 1950s when the site was redeveloped and was occupied by a garage and two depots. These buildings were demolished prior to the evaluation taking place.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. This was carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits that might warrant preservation *in situ* or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if any relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present
- to determine if any prehistoric or Saxon features are present on the site.

Four trenches were to be excavated, each 16m long and 1.6m wide under constant archaeological supervision using a JCB-type mechanical excavator fitted with a grading bucket. A contingency was allowed for a further 5m of trench if required to elucidate the results of the initial trenches.

## Results

Five trenches were eventually excavated which ranged in length between 8.8m and 16.8m: all were 1.6m wide and their depths varied between 0.65m to 0.90m. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1

Trench 1 (Fig. 3) was aligned north–south and was 15.8m in length and was 0.9m deep. The trench displayed a simple stratigraphic sequence (Fig. 4). The top layer consisted of made ground from the rubble of the demolished 18th and 19th century buildings. This contained red brick and sand and the thickness varied from 0.2m to 0.05m. Below this was a compact sticky yellow clay layer *c.*0.2m thick. This overlay a thick layer of dark brown silty clay (56) which was *c.*0.24m thick. Layer 56 was found directly overlying the natural brickearth in every trench that was dug. Within this layer was found occasional pieces of tile, clay tobacco pipe, pottery and glass. This layer may have been deposited in the 19th century or as early as the 18th century.

The only features identified in this trench were a brick-lined pit and a brick wall, both from the 19th century.

### Trench 2 (Plate 1)

Trench 2 was aligned NW–SE and measured 14.3m in length and the depth was 0.8m. This trench displayed a simple stratigraphic sequence, similar to Trench 1. The top layer consisted of made ground comprising of demolition rubble and was 0.65m thick. This overlay dark brown silty clay and this varied in thickness between 0.2m to 0.3m. The dark brown silty clay was found to contain pieces of glass, tile and brick. Underneath this was found the natural brickearth at 0.95m deep.

Four walls were aligned north-south across the trench. All were constructed from red brick and bonded with mortar. A small modern brick-lined pit was located 2m from the north-west end of the trench, and a approximately 4m to the south-east a modern pipe trench was located.

Approximately 2m from the south-east end of the trench was found a ditch terminal. The ditch (1) was aligned north-south, was only exposed for 1.15m, continuing out of the trench to the north. It was 1.2m wide and 0.75m deep. It contained two fills: the top fill (50) was soft yellow-brown re-deposited natural brickearth and this was 0.4m thick. This overlay a sandy-silt (51) that was dark grey and was 0.25m thick. In section it is shown on the western side of the cut, however, during excavation it was found throughout the terminal. Unfortunately

no dating evidence was found within the feature but the ditch was sealed by the dark brown layer (56) so it seems possible that it was dug prior to the 19th century.

#### Trench 3 (Plate 2)

Trench 3 was aligned NW–SE. It measured 15.6m in length and was 0.65m deep. Similar to the other trenches the top layer comprised of made ground consisting of demolition rubble and this was 0.2m thick. Below this was the dark brown silty clay, 0.16m thick and this contained the occasional inclusions of pottery, brick and tile. Underneath this layer at 0.56m was found the natural brickearth. Only a modern wall and modern and pipe trenches were found in this trench.

#### Trench 4

Trench 4 was 16.7m in length and between 0.8m and 1.1m deep. The top layer comprised of made ground that consisted of demolition rubble and this was 0.6m thick. Below this was the dark brown silty clay which was 0.4m thick. This layer contained occasional pieces of brick, pottery and tile inclusions. Underneath this at 1m below present ground level was found the natural brickearth.

Four walls were found: two walls were aligned north-south and the other two were aligned NE–SW and NW–SE respectively. All were constructed of red brick and all were bonded with mortar. All the walls have been interpreted as belonging to the 19th century and it was probably the demolition rubble from these walls that was used to make the top layer of made up ground.

#### Trench 5

Trench 5 was 8.8m in length and was 0.7m deep. The top layer comprised of made ground that consisted of demolition rubble and this was 0.45m thick. Below this was the dark brown silty clay which was 0.2m thick. This layer contained occasional pieces of brick, pottery and tile inclusions. Underneath this at 0.65m below present ground level was found the natural brickearth. At approximately 4m from the south-west end was found a large modern pit containing gravel and sand.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Jamie Lewis

Just seven sherds of pottery were recovered during the evaluation. All of these finds were recovered from the dark brown silty clay layer (56). This deposit was completely sealed by the made ground and was identified in all of the test trenches. The pottery collection consisted of:

- 2 sherds of post-medieval redware: which had a period of currency from the 16th to the 19th centuries
- 1 sherd of salt-glazed stone ware: *c.* late 17th century and later
- 2 sherds of cream ware: mid 18th or 19th century
- 1 sherd of Pearl Ware: late 18th century onwards
- 1 sherd of possible white glazed stone ware (late English stoneware): mid 18th century onwards.

This group could date from any point from the last quarter of the 18th century to quite late in the 19th.

### *Clay pipe* by Jamie Lewis

Six clay tobacco pipe stems were recovered from the from the dark brown silty clay layer (56). None of these can be closely dated other than to the post-medieval period. One pipe bowl is of a form that probably dates to the 18th century.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has revealed just one feature of possible archaeological interest. The earliest feature on the site was a ditch terminal identified in trench 2. The fills within this feature were very different from the overlying deposits but no finds were recovered from it. It was sealed by layer 56, which contained finds possibly as early as the 18th century. However, when cartographic sources are consulted, it seems more probable that this layer relates to land reclamation and development that took place from the mid 19th century onwards. Other deposits and features on the site date from this 19th century and later development. On the basis of these results, the archaeological potential of the site is considered to be low.

## **References**

- BGS, 1987, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 315, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Hopkins H, 2007, 20-26 College Street, Southampton, Hampshire, an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeology Services rep 07/129, Reading
- PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

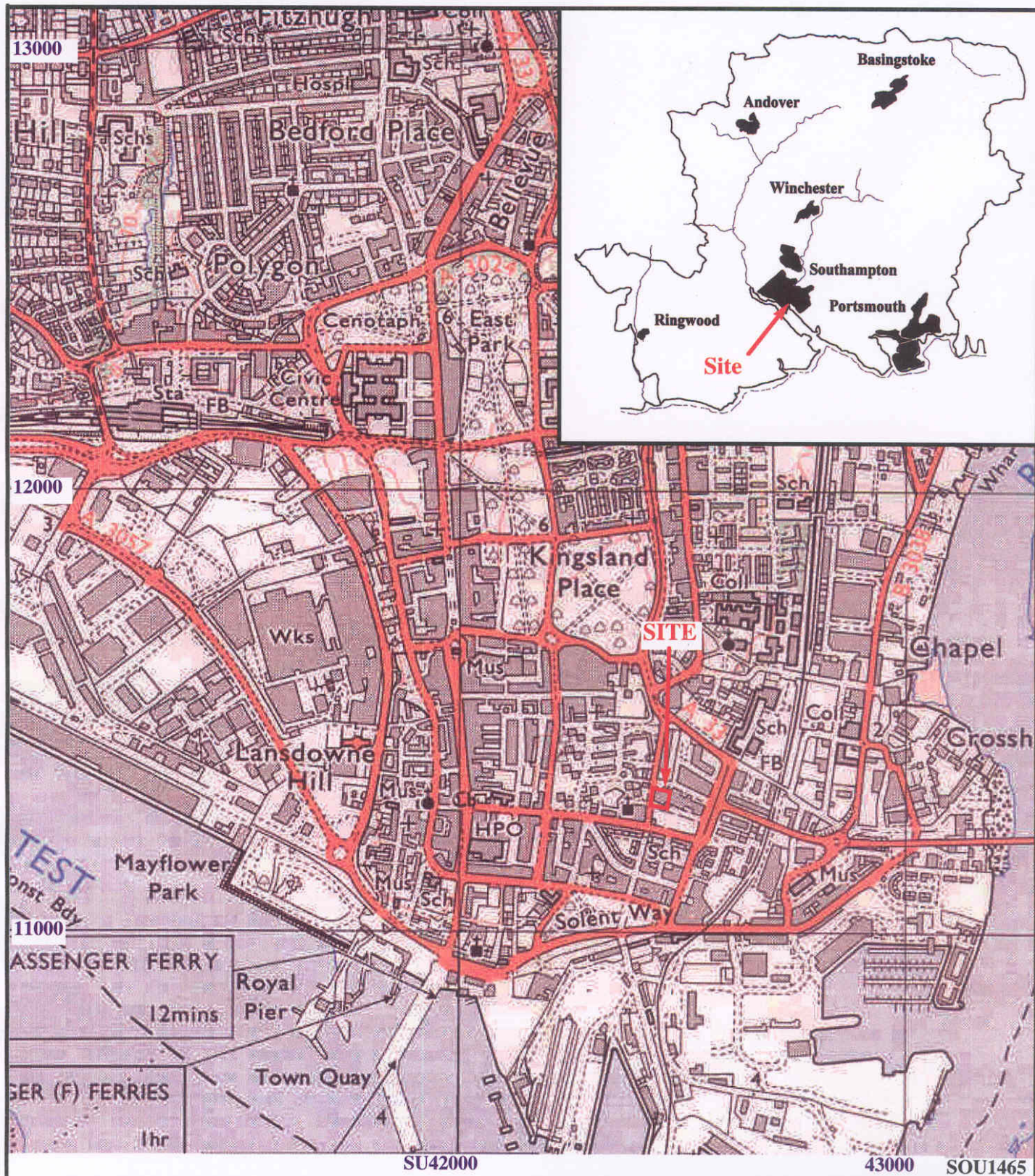
## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	15.8	1.6	0.94	0.0-0.5 made ground, 0.5-0.7m yellow clay, 0.7-0.94m dark brown silty clay, 0.94m+ natural geology (brickearth)
2	14.3	1.6	1.1	0-0.65m made ground, 0.65-0.75m dark brown silty clay, 0.75m+ natural geology <b>[Plate 1]</b>
3	15.6	1.6	0.65	0-0.4 made ground, 0.4-0.56m dark brown silty clay, 0.56m+ natural geology <b>[Plate 2]</b>
4	16.7	1.6	1.1	0-0.6m made ground, 0.6-1.0m dark brown silty clay, 0.6m+ natural geology
5	8.8	1.6	0.7	0-0.45m made ground, 0.45-0.65m dark silty clay, 0.65m+ natural geology



**APPENDIX 2:** Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	50, 52	Ditch	Pre 19th century?	Stratigraphy



**College Street, Southampton, Hampshire, 2007.  
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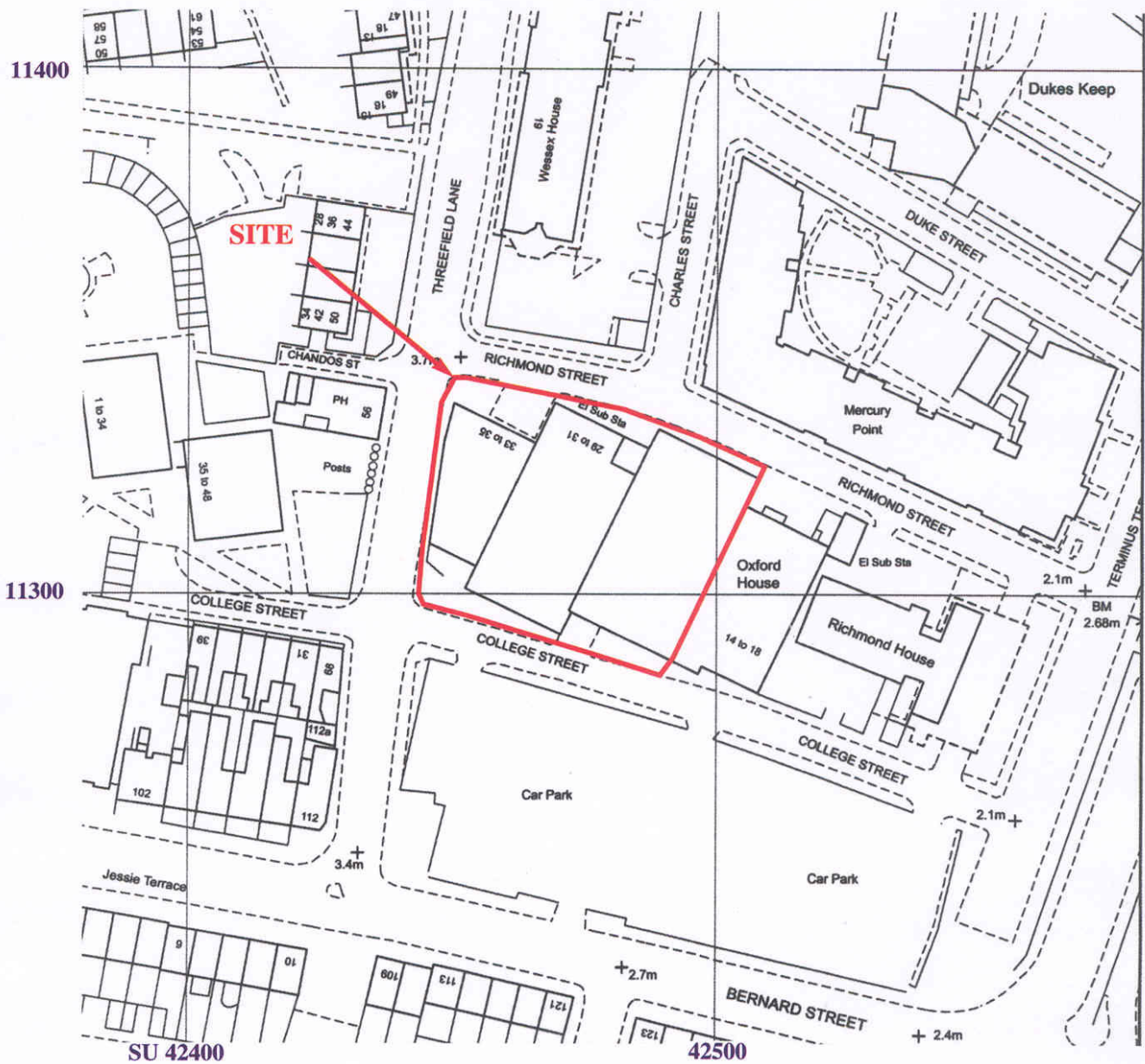
Figure 1. Location of site within Southampton and Hampshire

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Figure 2. Location of site within Southampton

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# College Street, Southampton, Hampshire 2007



Figure 3. Trench Location plan

# College Street, Southampton, Hampshire 2007

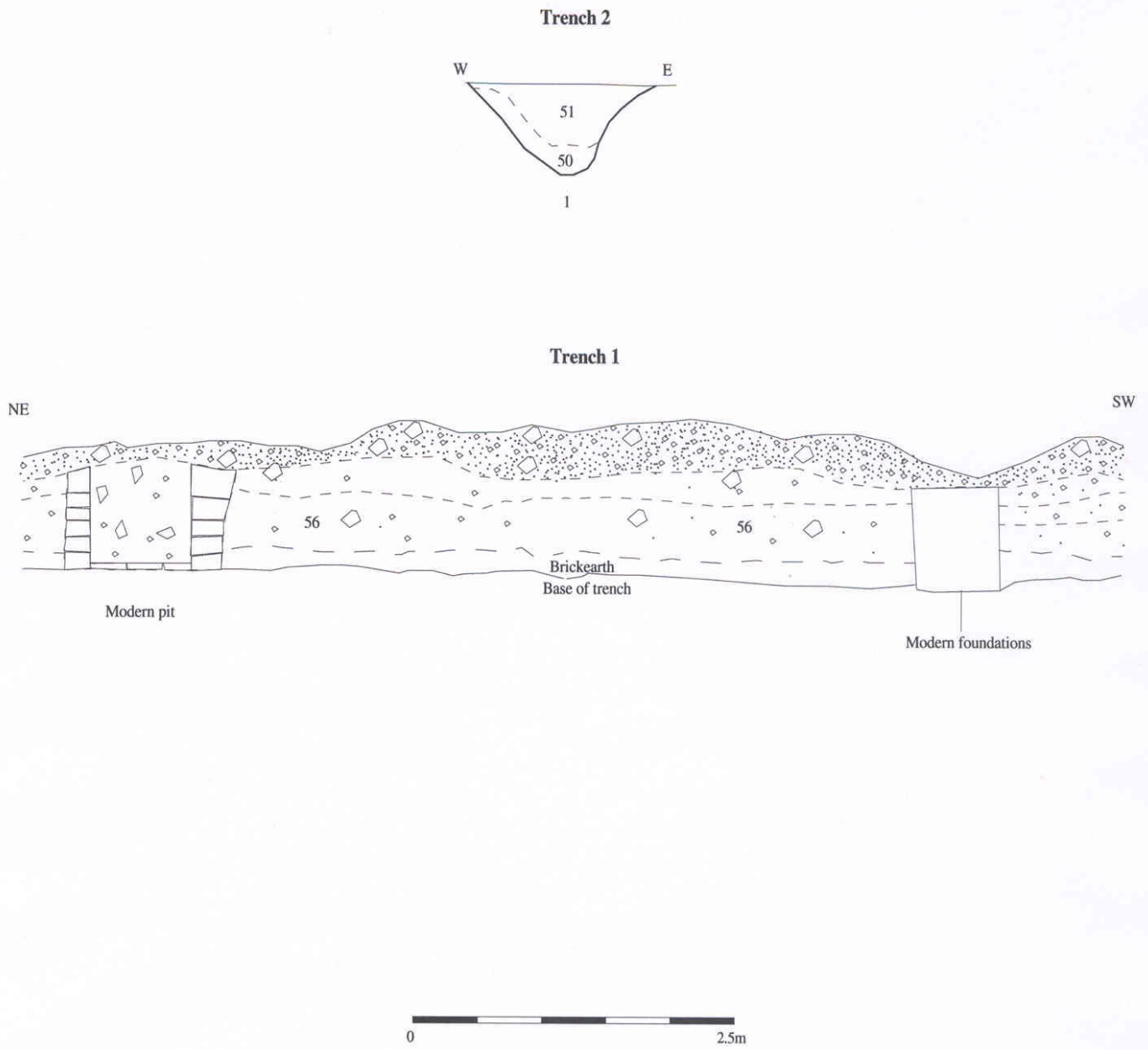


Figure 4. Sections

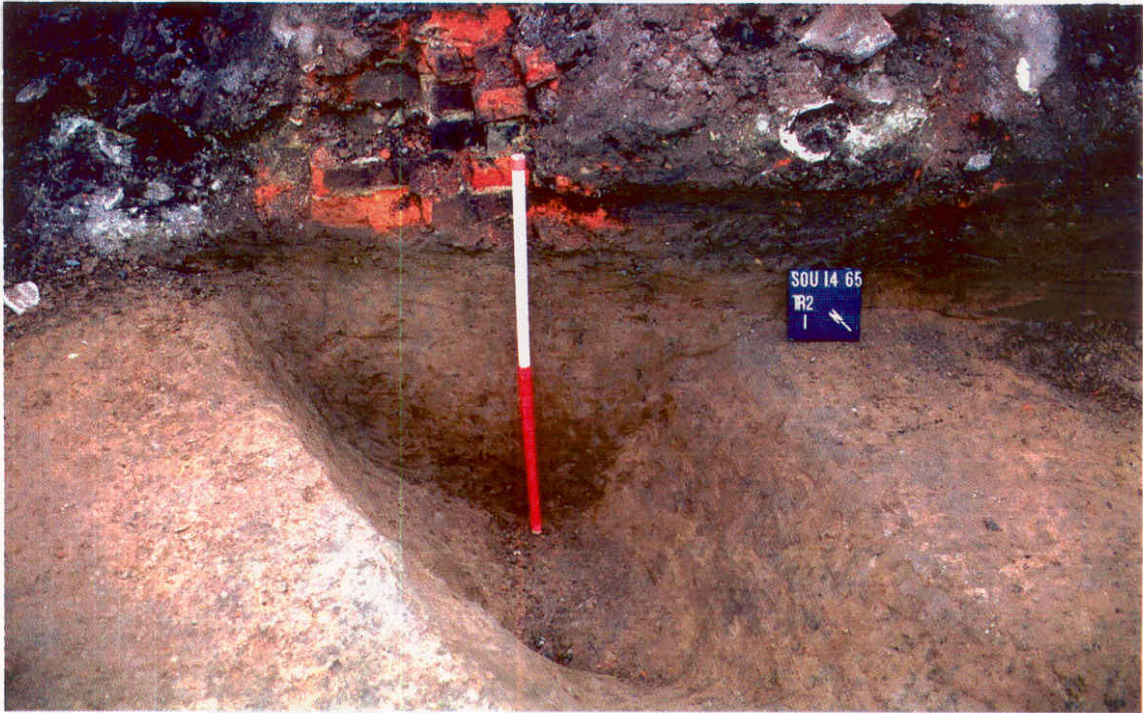


Plate 1. Trench 2 looking north east, vertical scale 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 3 looking north west, horizontal scales 2m and 1m, vertical scale 0.5m.