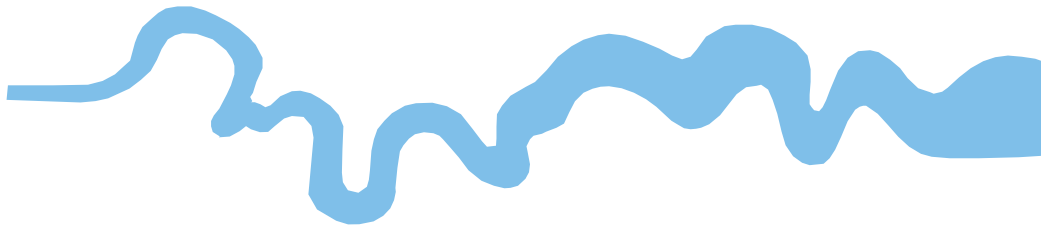


**T V A S**



**NORTH MIDLANDS**

**Stoke Police Station, Boothen Road, Stoke,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Helen Daniel**

**Site Code: BRS21/191**

**(SJ 8772 4489)**

**Stoke Police Station, Boothan Road,  
Stoke, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Abode Residencies**

by Helen Daniel  
TVAS (North Midlands)

Site Code BRS21/191

**November 2021**

## Summary

**Site name:** Stoke Police Station, Boothen Road, Stoke, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

**Grid reference:** SJ 8772 4489

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 14th October 2021

**Project coordinator:** Helen Daniel

**Site supervisor:** Helen Daniel

**Site code:** BRS21/191

**Area of site:** c.0.4 hectares

**Summary of results:** The evaluation established that the remains of a brick base of the firing chamber of a pottery oven were well-preserved just below the present ground surface. The results from Test Pit 1 and Trench 1 show that pottery oven 1000 measures approximately 8m in diameter. The structure was fairly well-preserved with at least six courses of the base still *in situ* below the level of the firing chamber floor, where visible in test pit 1. The oven floor surface has been subject to a number of repairs, and the floor surface has clearly been truncated at some point, evidenced by the addition of concrete with kiln furniture inclusions into a section that would have originally been brick.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent and will be deposited at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in due course, with accession code STKMG.2021.LH.50, and a digital version will be provided to ADS and the Stoke-on-Trent Historic Environment Record.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 07.12.21 Steve Preston✓07.12.21
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# Stoke Police Station, Boothten Road, Stoke, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Helen Daniel

Report 21/191

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at the site of the former Stoke Police Station, Boothten Road, Stoke, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire (SJ 8772 4489) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Helen Martin-Bacon of Avalon Heritage, Dairyhouse Lane, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PW on behalf of Abode Residencies, Ladson House, Oak Green Business Park, Earl Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire, SK8 6QL.

Planning permission (SOT/64851/FUL) has been granted by Stoke-on-Trent City Council for the part demolition, conversion and extension to the former police station on Boothten Road, to form student apartments together with space for ancillary car parking. As the proposals have the potential to impact upon the remains of the former Trent Potteries, established in 1865, this consent was subject to conditions (7 and 8) which required a programme of archaeological work to take place prior to the implementation of any intrusive groundworks. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019), and the City Council's policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification (AH2021) based on a brief provided by Mr Jonathan Goodwin, Senior Planning Officer and Archaeological Advisor to the City Council (Goodwin 2021). The fieldwork was undertaken by Helen Daniel on 14th October 2021 and the site code is BRS21/191. The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent and will be deposited at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in due course, with accession code STKMG.2021.LH.50, and a digital version will be provided to ADS and the Stoke-on-Trent Historic Environment Record.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located on the western side of Boothen Road, just south of Stoke-on-Trent city centre (Fig. 1). The site covers a rectangular area of approximately 0.4ha and as a former police station, features a mixture of hard-standing and extant buildings. The topography is relatively even, lying at an average height of 109m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is mapped as Etruria Formation (mudstone, sandstone and conglomerate) with superficial Glaciofluvial Deposits (Devensian sand and gravel) (BGS 2021).

## **Archaeological background**

The site lies on Boothen Road, which before straightening was known as Boothen Lane and was the original road from the parish church to Penkhull, 0.5km to the south-west. The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location approximately 350m south-west of the parish church dedicated to St Peter ad Vincula, also known as Stoke Minster, as well as its position just beyond the boundary of Stoke Conservation Area. Although now familiar as one of the six towns of Stoke-on-Trent city, for years Stoke-upon-Trent was little more than the location of this church (VCH 1963).

There is little evidence of Roman activity within the vicinity, although Stoke is situated on a small road which departs for Ryknild Street, and there was a fort at Trent Vale, 1.5km to the south. The early Saxon church was situated adjacent to a ford which crossed the River Trent, near the point where the Fowlhay Brook flows into it. The site featured a moated site upon which the later rectory was constructed and this combined with the fact that it controlled a large parish which included Burslem and Newcastle-under-Lyme, provides evidence that the church originated as a Minster or ‘Mother’ church. The fabric of the church was at least 13th century in date, possibly older in parts. Following the construction and consecration of a replacement, the Saxon church was demolished in 1830, however both the font and the altar are pre-conquest in date and a 10th century Mercian cross still stands in the churchyard (SCAA 2014).

Stoke itself is not referred to in Domesday Book but the church and a carucate of land is included in the Penkhull entry, under the holdings of Robert de Stafford in Caverswall Manor, of which he owned half with the other half held by the King (Williams and Martin 2002). There was little change to the area for centuries; documentary references mention only a church and a rectory until the construction of three pot-works in the mid-18th century and Yates map of 1775 shows a ribbon development along the road next to the church.

Further development followed two major changes to the local geography in the 1790s; firstly the opening of the turnpike road to Hanford (now the London Road), followed by the arrival of the Trent and Mersey canal. These two improvements to the transport network began the rapid process of industrialization which followed in

Stoke-upon-Trent and the surrounding villages, and provided the opportunity for the likes of Minton to set up works on London Road. Another local entrepreneur was George Jones, after completing an apprenticeship with the Minton factory and years working as a travelling salesman for Wedgwood, he purchased a plot of land from the Minton works in 1864 and set up his own pot-works.

The proposed development was considered to have the potential to impact upon the remains of the former Trent Potteries, which was established in 1865 by George Jones, to a design by Charles Lynam. The works were renamed as the Crescent Potteries in 1907 and continued in business until around 1959. The factory buildings remained on the site until at least 1963 (Goodwin 2021).

The location of the pottery works is provided by mapping evidence; the 1879 Ordnance Survey map shows a large tile and china manufactory, east of the present site but extending into its southern area. The map also shows a row of kilns and an associated building in the south west of the site area, but with little change by the time of the following edition in 1889. The straightening of Boothen Road had taken place by the time of the 1900 Ordnance Survey revision along with the construction of the existing housing on that street (Sladen Assoc. 2019).

Between 1924 and 1937, some small additions were made along the site's eastern boundary and further extension of the main factory building had occurred by the mid-20th century. At some time in the 1970s the factory buildings were replaced by the police station and little change is apparent on later mapping. A limited excavation of two circular kilns belonging to the factory was undertaken in 2002, but further investigation of the site was felt likely be of value in furthering the understanding of the historical development and repertoire of this sizeable works (Goodwin 2021).

## **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. The general aims of the project were:

- to verify the presence or absence of archaeological remains;
- to determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological remains and their potential significance in accordance with *NPPF*;
- to ensure that any archaeological remains which may be disturbed by groundworks can be appropriately sampled and recorded;
- to produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded;
- to establish the character of these features and deposits in order to define functional areas and spatial relationships between differing zones of activity;
- to disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of publication; and
- to inform upon appropriate mitigation measures should significant archaeological remains which require further investigation and/or preservation *in situ* are uncovered.

The specific research aims of the project were:

- to determine whether the site contains archaeological deposits and features associated with the 19th century Trent Potteries;
- to determine whether the site contains structural remains associated with the former pottery for example in the form of kiln bases, workshops and ancillary buildings;
- to determine whether evidence of the pottery making process are present in the form of waste ceramics, kiln furniture, saggars, oven bricks in addition to evidence of colouring and glazing; and
- to set the results of the fieldwork within both a local and wider, regional and global context from the 17th century onwards.

In addition, the West Midlands Research Framework (Watt 2016) provides a region-specific agenda; relevant local research themes were considered during the course of the project.

It was proposed to excavate two trial trenches; one measuring 12m long by 5m wide and the other measuring 6m long by 2m wide. Topsoil and any other overburden were to be removed by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to expose archaeologically sensitive levels, under constant archaeological supervision. Once any archaeological features or deposits were exposed, they were then to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project, without compromising the integrity of any features that might warrant preservation *in situ* or might better be investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation. All spoil heaps were metal detected and monitored for finds.

Due to its location over an extant fuel tank, the larger of the trenches, was abandoned for safety reasons. The remaining trench, was increased to 10m long by 2m wide. In addition, two test pits were excavated to provide information to the structural engineer; the recording of these test pits and the features they contained has been incorporated into this report.

## **Results**

Only one of the original trenches was dug as intended, and as detailed above this was slightly increased in size to compensate for the abandonment of the other trench. There were also two small test pits excavated to provide information to the structural engineer, the results of which are incorporated below (Fig. 3).

A complete list of trenches and test pits giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features, with dating evidence, are summarized in Appendix 2.

### Test Pit 1 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pls. 1-3)

Test pit 1 was situated near Trench 1 in the north-western corner of the small car park abutting the northern end of the eastern wall of the most southerly building on the site (Pl. 1). The test pit was 2.2m long by 1m wide and *c.*1m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of Tarmac and hardcore overlying a pottery oven floor (1000).

On the northern side of the trench, at 1.3m from the west end and at 1.62m on the southern side, the circular brick floor (51) of pottery oven 1000 was recorded extending for a further 0.7m east to the edge of the trench (Pl. 2). Beneath the floor, six courses of red brick (110mm x 72mm x 250mm) were recorded, measuring a total height of 0.52m, making up the base (52) of the oven and supporting the floor surface above (Pl. 3). A single blue/black brick was partially visible *in situ*, marked 'STAFFORD'. A range of ceramic sherds and kiln furniture were recovered. The natural geology was not reached.

#### Test Pit 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 1 and 4)

Test pit 2 was situated in the south-western corner of the small car park abutting the southern end of the eastern wall of the most southerly building on the site (Pl. 1). The test pit was approximately 1.5m long by 1.1m wide and 0.44m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of Tarmac and hardcore overlying 0.16m of greyish-black ash, rubble and coal deposit (55) overlying two adjacent brick floor surfaces (Pl. 4).

Brick floor surfaces 53 and 54 were present for the entire length of the trench. Floor surface 53 was of red brick (112mm x    mm x 230mm) laid face up with their lengths east to west. Abutting 53 was floor surface 54, of yellow/orange brick (   mm x 70mm x 230mm) but instead laid side-up and east to west. A range of ceramic sherds and kiln furniture were recovered. The natural geology was not reached.

#### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 5-8)

Trench 1 was situated in the south-east corner of the site and aligned NE – SW (Pl. 1). It was 10.1m long and 0.33m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of tarmac and hardcore overlying a pottery oven (1000) floor, working surfaces and wall foundations (Pl. 5).

At the south-west end of the trench, circular brick oven floor (51), the base of the firing chamber of pottery oven 1000 was recorded extending for 3.3m into the trench. The floor was constructed mostly of red brick (110mm x 75mm x 230mm), but also featured some yellow refractory bricks of the same size, one of which was stamped 'DOUGALL' (Pl. 8). The majority of the bricks were un-frogged, but with later repairs using frogged; all were laid in concentric rings, radiating from the centre. Abutting the oven floor was a c.2-3m wide concrete incorporating kiln furniture (59). There were two partially visible ash pits (61, 62) excavation was attempted but they were found to contain concreted rubble material and only a small outline of the most northerly ash-pit (61) was visible clearly after partial excavation (Pls 6, 7 and 8).

At 4.4m from the south end, on the SE side of the trench, N-S orientated wall foundation 56 was recorded. This two-skin thick, red-brick, single-course foundation extended to 7m on the NW side of the trench.



Immediately north-east of 56 was a layer of demolition rubble (60) and 6m from the SE side of the trench, a floor of grey York stone slabs (57) was recorded (Pl. 5), comprising at least seven separate slabs, each measuring 0.6m square, laid on a N-S orientation and extending for 2m. Abutting the slabbed area a further red-brick single-course wall foundation (58) was recorded; this foundation was only a single skin, again on a N-S alignment. Beyond this, the final metre of trench contained further demolition rubble (60). A range of ceramic sherds and kiln furniture were recovered. The natural geology was not reached.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery by David Barker*

#### Test Pit 1 – Fill above (51): 12 sherds (112g)

Four vessel sherds, four tiles and four pieces of kiln furniture. The last includes three pieces (two joining) of saddles and one small die-pressed stilt with the numbers '3' and '0' and the letter 'T' moulded in relief. The vessel sherds are all of white earthenware and comprise two joining base sherds of a serving dish or similar rectangular form and a glazed plate or serving dish rim with a lobed edge. Another vessel of cylindrical form is in a coarse cream-coloured fabric, with a cream-coloured glaze to the interior and underside and a thin glaze sheen to the exterior; it is probably an industrial vessel, but its precise function is uncertain. Two tiles with a thickness of 9mm are glazed, one in a mottled brown, the other a speckled blue; they have flat edges. A biscuit tile of the same thickness has a rounded edge, while a thinner wall tile of 4mm thick has a moulded outer face with a white and light yellow glaze. Date range: late 19 – mid 20th century.

#### Test Pit 1 – Fill above (51): 15 sherds (240g)

Eight sherds of white earthenware, one tile and six pieces of kiln furniture. The kiln furniture comprises the arm and point of a die-pressed stilt, and saggar pin, two thimbles (one with moulded letters in relief which may be 'G / F' or 'G / P') and two pieces of wad clay. Two joining glazed sherds are from a hemispherical bowl with banded slip decoration in pink and blue while the biscuit sherds are a large plate or serving dish, a teapot rim, two handles and two rim/bases of a saucer. This last has an impressed script mark 'Imperia[l]' to its underside. The tile, 9mm thick, and a speckled blue glaze. Date range: late 19 – early 20th century.

#### Test Pit 2 – (55): 12 sherds (148g)

Five white earthenware vessel sherds and seven floor tile sherds. Just one of the former is glazed, and all are undiagnostic. The tiles are plain white, mottled blue, green and grey and are 9mm thick, apart from one with a pronounced shoulder which is 11mm; this last also has a moulded mark 'Johnson' in low relief on its underside. A number of the tiles are clearly wasters. Date range: early to mid 20th century.

#### Trench 1 – Over (51): 3 sherds (33g)

Two sherds of white earthenware, glazed, comprising a jug rim and a plate body, together with a small thimble with mortar adhering. Date range: mid 19th to early 20.

#### Discussion

The finds from all contexts are broadly similar, comprising familiar items of kiln furniture, tiles and a limited range of nondescript white earthenware vessels. All of the white earthenwares, whether biscuit or glazed, appear to be wasters. Only one vessel is decorated – a bowl with banded slip decoration in an unusual pink and blue colour combination, and only one is marked. The impressed ‘Imperial’ mark on a saucer base cannot be attributed to a manufacturer. A single marked tile is clearly the product of the company H & R Johnson founded in 1901 in Cobridge, but manufacturing tiles for much of the 20th century in Tunstall. Unusually, the kiln furniture items recovered cannot be attributed to a manufacturer, but the types are consistent with a late 19th to mid 20th century date. This date range is suggested by the ceramics, although none are especially diagnostic.

This range of ceramic material is typical of the production waste encountered across the Staffordshire Potteries and a larger sample would be required for any firm conclusions to be drawn on its significance to this site, or its wider relevance within the region.

#### *Bricks* by Helen Daniel

##### STAFFORD C. I. Co. Ltd

A single blue brick with the stamp “STAFFORD C. I. Co. LD” set within a rectangle with circles at the centre of each end. The Stafford Coal and Iron Co. Ltd. operated extensive collieries just south of Stoke-on-Trent. Stafford was one of the collieries which the company established in 1873 to obtain blackstone ironstone and coal in the upper seams. The brickworks was situated north-east of the colliery towards Great Fenton and produced some very hard bricks. The bricks are very common in the Potteries in several slightly differing designs of lettering and pressing. The brickworks was in operation from at least 1900 as part of the Great Fenton Collieries and Ironworks complex. The bricks were of a high quality and are still very prevalent over North Staffordshire.

##### DOUGALL

Pottery oven 1000 featured at least one yellow refractory brick with the stamp “DOUGALL”. James Dougall & Sons Ltd operated a refractory brickworks in High Bonnybridge, Scotland which was established by 1874 and incorporated in 1886. The company was re-incorporated in 1907. It was then re-organised in 1953 and became a subsidiary of Ceramic Holdings Ltd. It was bought by J & J Dyson Ltd in 1962. This company’s bricks are very often found within the structures of pottery kilns and ovens,

### Potteries Brick Company

The majority of the named bricks observed in the rubble fill were red bricks stamped with the lettering “P B Co LTD” ‘K’ within a recessed rectangle with rounded ends; one such brick was also observed *in situ* in ash-pit 62 but this looked like a later repair. The Potteries Brick Company was a marketing and sales merchant for a group of around eleven of the area’s brick producers. The companies known to have been involved were: Berry Hill, Birchenwood, Bean's, Cobridge, D Duddell, Fenton Collieries, J Hewitt & Son Fenton, Leigh & Sons, J Noden, Wm. Palmer, Patent Hydraulic Sagger Brick & Marl (1927), Stafford Coal & Iron, Staffordshire Brick Co. Wall Grange, Sneyd Collieries, Stephens Bros. Fenton, T E Walley, Thos W Ward Apedale. The company itself did not have a manufacturing site but must have had arrangements with respective producers for them to press their wares with the company’s stamp. Their office were in Albion Street, Hanley but the date of commencement of business is unclear, although P B Co bricks can be found in many late-19th/early-20th century buildings, suggesting they had a sustained history through to the company’s dissolution in 1966. The letters pressed into the bricks below the company name, possibly relate to each individual manufacturer. Various examples have been found but which letters were used by each producer remains unclear.

### **Conclusion**

The results from Test Pit 1 and Trench 1 show that the brick base of the firing chamber of pottery oven 1000 measures approximately 8m in diameter. The structure was fairly well preserved with at least six courses of the base still *in situ* below the level of the firing chamber floor, where visible in test pit 1. The oven floor surface has been subject to a number of repairs, but the use of frogged bricks to replaced earlier un-frogged types, probably dates these repairs to more recent times, most likely within the 20th century. The floor has clearly been truncated at some point, evidenced by the addition of concrete with inclusions of kiln furniture (59) into a section that would previously have been brick.

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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

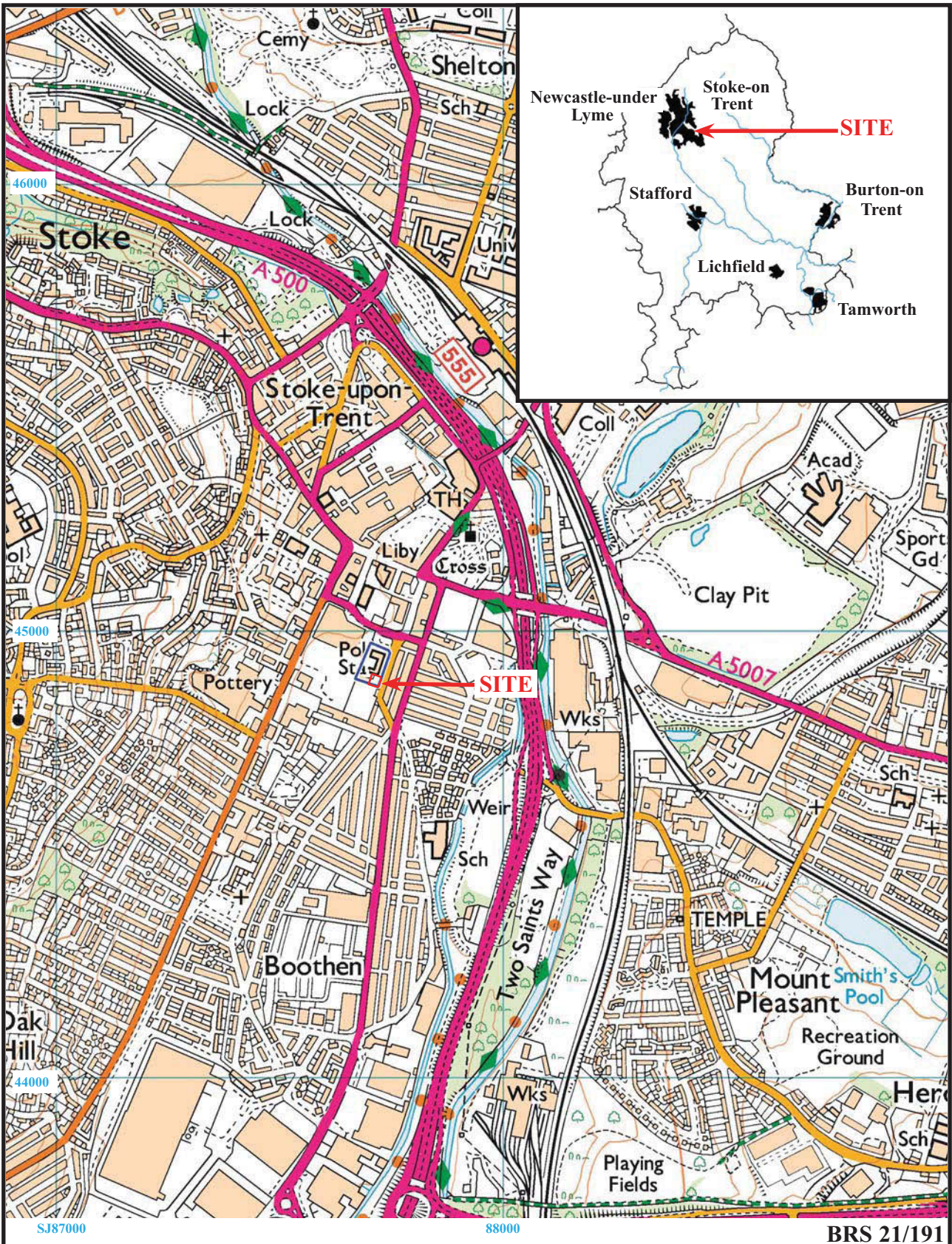
0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.1	1.8	0.33	0–0.22m hardcore, over brick pottery oven base (1000). Natural geology not reached. Features: Oven 1000, floor 57, wall 56 & 58 <b>[Pls 5–8]</b>
Test pit 1	2.2	1	1	0–0.29m hardcore, over brick pottery oven base (1000). Natural geology not reached. Features: Oven 1000 <b>[Pls 2 and 3]</b>
Test pit 2	1.5	1.1	0.44	0–0.28m hardcore, over brick floor surfaces. Natural geology not reached. Features: Floors 53 and 54 <b>[Pl. 4]</b>

**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Context (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	1000	51, 52, 61, 62	Pottery oven firing chamber base	Post-medieval	Documentary, finds





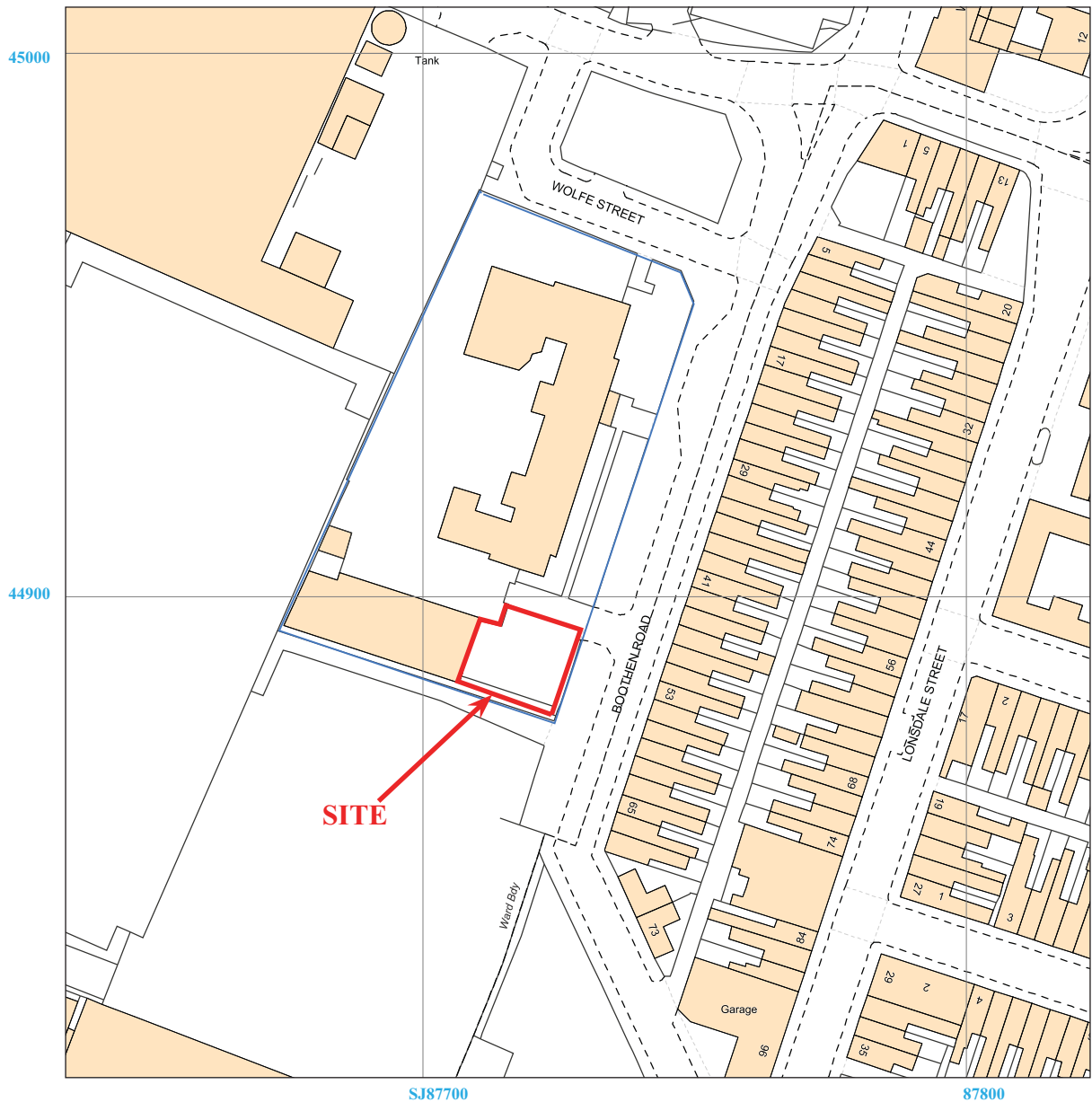
**Former Stoke Police Station, Bothen Road,  
Stoke, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire  
Archaeological Evaluation**

**Figure 1. Location of site within Stoke-on-Trent and  
Staffordshire.**

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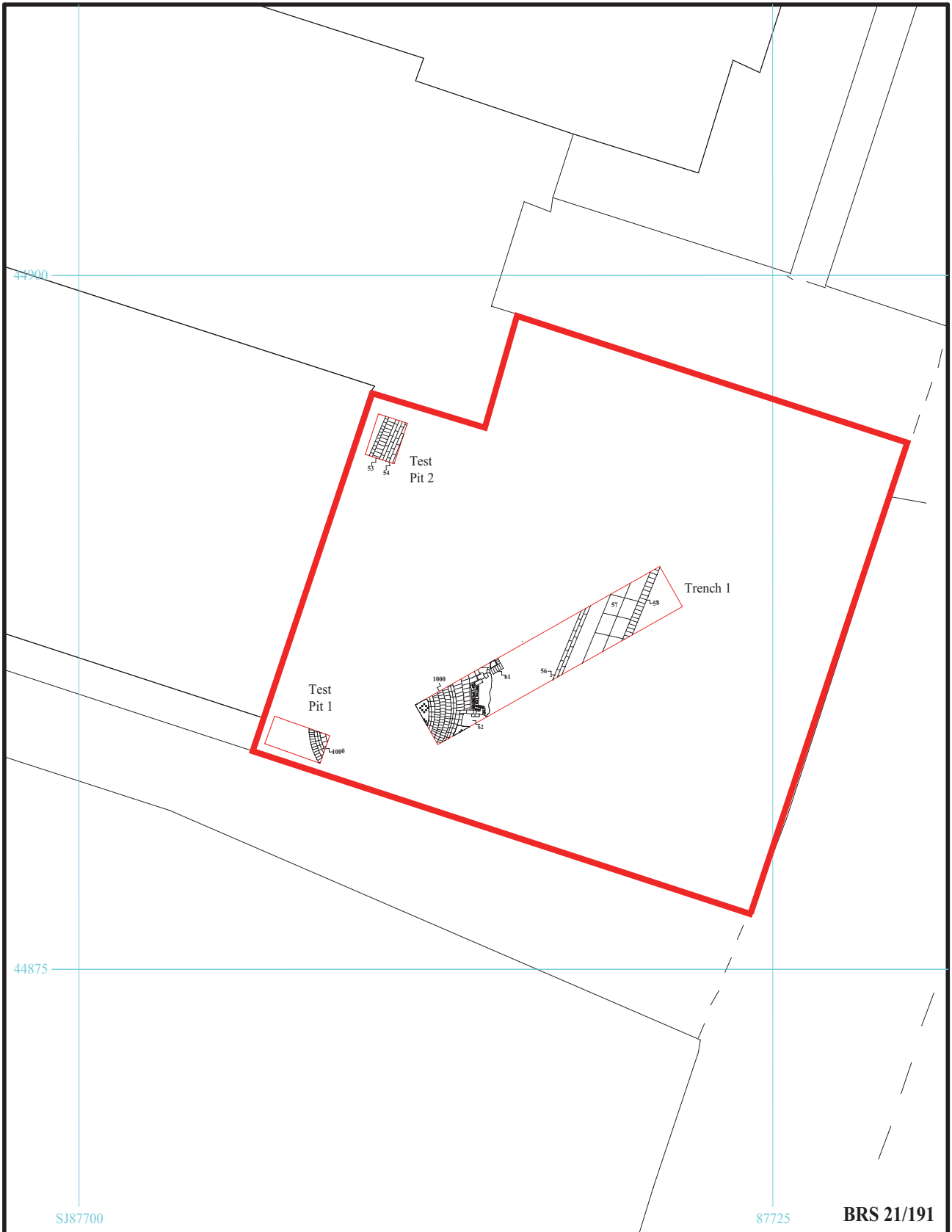
BRS 21/191



**Stoke Police Station, Boothen Road, Stoke,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire**  
**Archaeological Evaluation**  
 Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Boothen Road.

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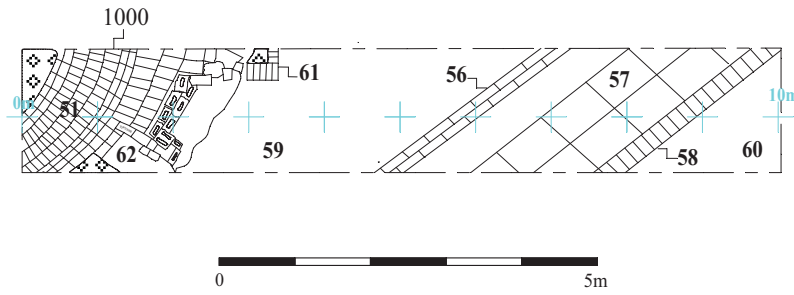
**Stoke Police Station, Boothon Road,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches and features.





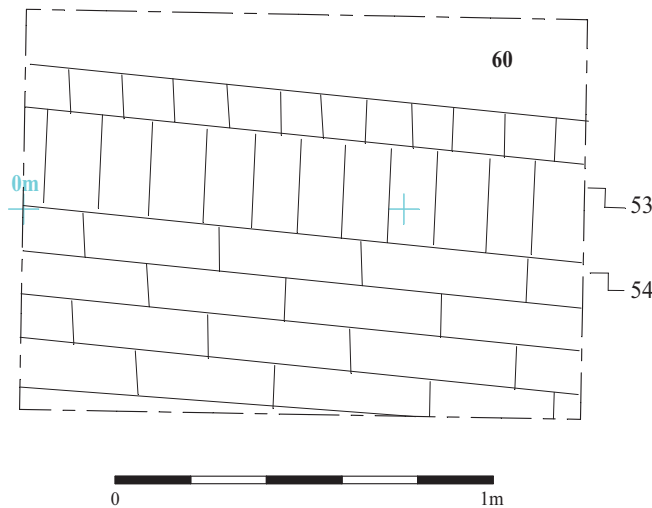
**Trench 1**



**Test Pit 1**



**Test Pit 2**



BRS 21/191

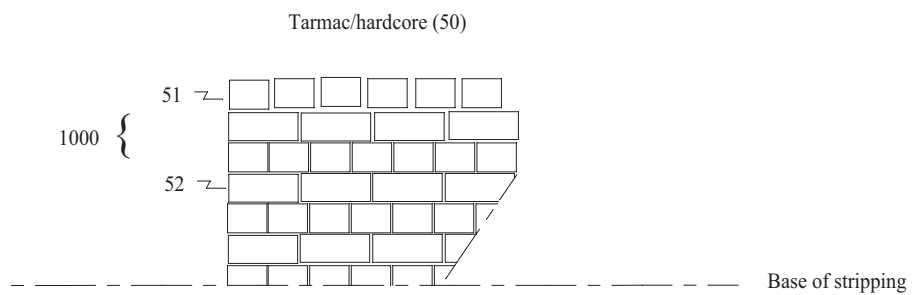
**Stoke Police Station, Boothon Road,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 4. Trench plans.

THAMES VALLEY  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**  
SERVICES

**Test Pit 1 - Oven 1000**

N \_\_\_\_\_ S 109.88m aOD



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**Stoke Police Station, Boothon Road,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 5. Section of oven 1000.





Plate 1. View of site showing trench to right, corner of test pit 1 bottom left and test pit 2 top left, looking north.



Plate 2. Test Pit 1, showing oven floor 51 over base 52, looking east. Scales: 2m, 1m, 0.5m and 0.3m.



Plate 3. Base structure 52 beneath oven floor 51, looking east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m



Plate 4. Test Pit 2 showing brick surfaces 53 and 54, looking north, Scales: 2m, 0.5m and 0.3m.

**BRS 21/191**

**Former Stoke Police Station, Boothan Road, Stoke,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 1 to 4.**







Plate 5. Trench 1 showing oven 1000 to south with wall 56, York stone floor 57 and wall 58 to north, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 6. Oven 1000 showing ash-pits 61 and 62, looking north-east. Scales: 0.5m and 0.5m



Plate 7. Ash-pit 61, looking north-east. Scales: 0.5m and 0.5m



Plate 8. Ash-pit 62 with *in situ* Dougall brick, looking south-east. Scales: 0.5m and 0.5m

BRS 21/191

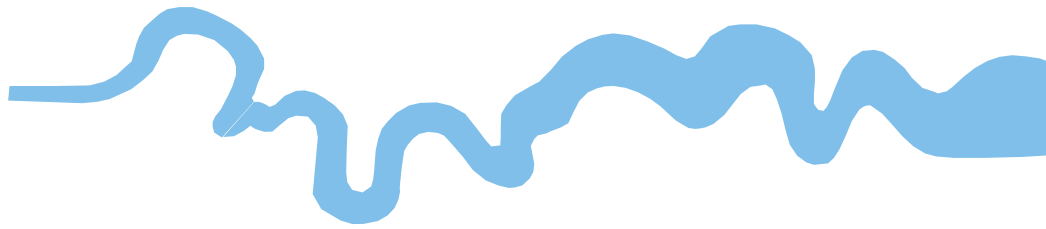
**Former Stoke Police Station, Boothem Road, Stoke,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire**  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 5 to 8.



## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





**TVAS (North Midlands),  
2b Stanton Road, Meir,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 6DD**

**Tel: 01782 595648  
Email: [northmidlands@tvas.co.uk](mailto:northmidlands@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk/northmidlands](http://www.tvas.co.uk/northmidlands)**

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