

<b>SITE</b>	2 and 8 Buckingham Street, York		
<b>CLIENT NAME</b>	Yorkshire Water		
<b>YAT PROJECT #</b>	6290	<b>YAT REPORT #</b>	2022/37
<b>MUSEUM ACCESSION #</b>	N/A	<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	SE 60139 51483
<b>PLANNING REFERENCE #</b>	N/A	<b>AAI OPS NOTICE #</b>	21009

## INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was undertaken by York Archaeology (YA) on behalf of Yorkshire Water between 24<sup>th</sup> February and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022 on sewer repair works at 2 and 8 Buckingham Street, York, YO1 6DW, SE 60139 51483 (Figure 1). The ground works were carried out by Sapphire Utilities Solutions. The objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits or structures exposed by the ground works.

## METHODOLOGY

Two rectangular trenches were excavated at Buckingham Street, York. Excavation was carried out with a Takeuchi TB290 compact excavator equipped with either 0.2m, 0.6m or 1m wide flat-bladed ditching buckets, supplemented with hand excavation where appropriate.

The first trench was excavated adjacent to the pavement on the north-western side of the road outside 2 Buckingham Street, close to the junction with Skeldergate. It measured 3.3m north-east/south-west by 1.4m north-west/south-east and was approximately 2.5m deep. At the base of the trench was the existing brick sewer. Work was completed on this trench before York Archaeology was informed of the site works commencing. Consequently, the digging of this trench was not archaeologically monitored. It was, however, possible to inspect the open trench.

The second trench was excavated outside 8 Buckingham Street close to the junction with Lambert Court. This trench measured 4.2m north-east/south-west by 1.8m north-west/south-east and was excavated to a depth of approximately 2.5m. The excavation of this trench was undertaken under archaeological supervision and it was possible to carry out detailed inspection, recording of deposits and artefact recovery.

The majority of the deposits related to the construction backfill of a brick-built culvert at the base of the excavation. Along the north-western side of the trench a narrow strip of in situ deposits was also removed down to the top of the culvert.

Archaeological deposits were recorded in accordance with the standard YA recording system, including plans produced at a scale of 1:20 and sections drawn at 1:10. Digital photographs were taken at a resolution of no less than 10 megapixels and the trench location plotted with a Leica CS20 and GS07 GPS to an accuracy of +/-10cm.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Buckingham Street lies south-west of the River Ouse within the Roman civilian town, which by AD 237 had attained the rank of *colonia* (Ottaway 1993, 64).

The earliest evidence for development close to the location of Buckingham Street comes from an excavation carried out by YAT at 58–59 Skeldergate. Following ‘slash and burn’ land clearance a riverside road was established here in the mid to late 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Carver et al. 1978, 11–13), and remained in use throughout the rest of the Roman period (McComish 2015, 10). A timber lined well, in use from the late 2<sup>nd</sup> to late 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, was also encountered at the same site (Carver et al. 1978,

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15).

A major building campaign appears to have been undertaken south-west of the River Ouse in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> to mid-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries (McComish 2015, 14). Extensive re-organisation and development of the settlement at this time has been linked to the granting of *colonia* status (Wyman 2001, 199–202). The archaeological evidence for this re-organisation includes widespread evidence of terracing, an activity intended to increase available building land. Excavation at Bishophill in 1978, for example, revealed an extensive terrace onto which masonry buildings had been constructed in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century, these structures then remained in use through the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries (Carver et al. 1978, 30–39).

A change in the character of late Roman activity in this part of the *colonia* can be seen in the backfilling of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century well mentioned above. Here, during the 4<sup>th</sup> century, rubbish and rubble was deposited in the well (ibid., 15). Both the riverside road and the buildings at Bishophill also appear to have fallen into disuse at a similar time (ibid., 12 and 39–40).

Structures and features of Anglian or Anglo-Scandinavian date have been found at 58–59 Skeldergate and 37 Bishophill Senior (Moulden and Tweddle 1986, 37–48). Notably, an Anglian timber building at Bishophill maintained the same alignment as that of earlier Roman buildings (Carver et al. 1978, 50).

The structural remains of Roman and later buildings in the area were impacted upon by pit digging and robbing in the post-Roman and medieval periods (Moulden and Tweddle 1986, 37). Pottery dating to the 10<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> century was, for example, recovered from robber trenches at Bishophill (Carver et al. 1978, 40).

Excavations carried out by YAT in 2000 at 64–67 Skeldergate included three trenches located to the rear of properties fronting onto the north-western side of Buckingham Street. The vast majority of archaeological deposits excavated at this site were of medieval date and were often found directly below modern ground surfaces. A considerable depth of often waterlogged, well-stratified complex medieval deposits were present, including evidence of buildings, and refuse disposal (YAT 2000, 117).

Peter Chassereau's map of 1750 depicts the area around Bishophill as largely open ground. In contrast Skeldergate, including the area now occupied by the north-east end of Buckingham Street, was lined with buildings at this time.

The 1852 edition Ordnance Survey map of York predates the construction of Buckingham Street. However, later mapping does show it being in existence by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## RESULTS

The first trench was opened prior to York Archaeology attending the site. No deposits were recorded and no finds were recovered. However, it is likely that excavated material mainly consisted of backfill within the sewer, and as such, there would have been minimal impact to any in situ archaeological deposits present at this location.

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In the second trench, a south-east and a south-west facing section were observed and recorded. In the south-east facing section, the earliest context observed was a soft dark-brownish grey silty clay with frequent flecks of charcoal and small fragments of CBM (Context 1015). The upper surface was at 10.23m AOD. It was roughly 0.85m thick, reaching a depth of 9.39m AOD, which was the limit of excavation. One piece of late 11<sup>th</sup> century white gritty ware jar was recovered, which was small in size.

The next deposit in the sequence was a layer of soft white mortar with occasional small fragments of CBM (Context 1009). The highest point of the deposit was 11.07m AOD and it was roughly 0.87m thick. Some animal bone was found: one piece of sheep or goat bone and one piece of large mammal bone.

Overlying Context 1009 was a soft mid-grey brown clayey silt with orange flecks (Context 1008). It contained frequent flecks of charcoal. The top of the deposit was recorded at 11.17m AOD and it was 0.28m thick. One piece of cattle bone was found in the deposit.

The next deposit (Context 1006) was a soft dark-brownish grey clayey silt, the top of which was recorded at 11.42m AOD and was 0.3m thick. This deposit was truncated by a service cut containing two lead water pipes that ran north-west/south-east across the trench. The fill of this cut (Context 1004) varied in depth, reaching 11.10m AOD at its maximum depth. The top of the deposit was observed at 11.57m AOD. It was a soft mid-brownish grey silt with frequent flecks of white mortar and small-medium flecks of CBM.

Context 1004 was sealed by a soft light-greyish brown sandy silt with frequent fragments of CBM and small irregular shaped stones (Context 1003). The top of the deposit was at 11.75m AOD and it was 0.15m thick. In this context a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century pot sherds were found: one transfer printed bowl with pedestal base, medium in size and one post-medieval moderately gritted oxidised piece of earthenware with ochre glaze and white and red clay concretions, large in size.

The next deposit in the sequence was a soft light-greyish brown silt (Context 1002) with frequent large rounded cobbles. The average size of the cobbles was 0.14mm x 0.06mm. The deposit was evident from 12.11m AOD and was 0.36m thick. It is likely that the cobbles were remnants of a cobbled road surface that had previously been disturbed when the cut for the original sewer was excavated and later backfilled. One piece of 18<sup>th</sup> century transfer printed bone china cup rim was found in this context.

The latest deposit observed was a modern tarmac road surface laid at 12.17m AOD that was 0.06m thick.

In the south-western facing section the earliest context present was Context 1012, a soft mid-brown clayey silt with occasional small fragments of CBM and frequent flecks of mortar and charcoal. One piece of sheep bone was found in the context. The top of the context was evident at 9.4m AOD and extended down to the limit of excavation at 8.35m AOD. It was approximately 1.28m thick. This fill was truncated by the sewer cut (Context 1013) which was filled by Context 1014. This deposit was a very dark blackish grey clayey silt with frequent small flecks of mortar, and the upper surface of this deposit

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was at 9.4m AOD. It was 1.05m thick.

The next deposit in the sequence was Context 1011, a soft dark blackish brown silt 0.23m thick with frequent small pieces of charcoal, brick rubble and small fragments of CBM and encountered 9.62m AOD. Context 1011 was sealed below by Context (1012) and (1014), and above by Context 1010. This deposit (Context 1010) was a soft mid-brown sandy silt with frequent small CBM and small flecks of mortar, similar to Context 1003 found in south-east section, although it is hard to determine if they are indeed the same deposit given the limited capacity to fully excavate in a single context strategy. Various animal bones were recovered from Context 1014: three cattle, two sheep, four sheep or goat, 1 pig and 4 large mammal bones. Also found were pieces of medieval and post-medieval pottery: one splashed coarsely gritted with reduced core and oxidised surfaces, medium in size, one post-medieval earthenware with lightly oxidised body and brown glaze over break, small in size and one splashed ware lightly oxidised with spot of yellow glaze, also small in size.

The highest point of this deposit was 10.52m AOD and the whole deposit measured just less than 1.00m thick, an estimated 0.90m in total thickness. Both 1010 and 1011 comprised a series of lenses, mostly being redeposited material that were recorded and observed with the excavation of Trench B.

The next two deposits recorded in the south-western section were recorded as Context 1002 (cobbled surface) and Context 1001 (modern tarmac), the same two deposits recorded in the south-eastern section. They were recorded at 10.75m AOD (Context 1001) and 10.60m AOD (Context 1002), and measured 0.12m and 0.15m in thickness respectively.

## SPECIALIST REPORTS

### ***Building Materials***

By J. M. McComish

The CBM was recorded to a standard YAT methodology (McComish 2020).

A single sherd of CBM weighing 5g was recovered from Context 2015. No original exterior surfaces were preserved on the sherd. The sherd was too small to identify by form or fabric and cannot therefore help with dating the context. The sherd was not retained.

### ***The Animal Remains***

By Dr Kris Poole

## Introduction

A small assemblage of animal remains (Table 1) was recovered during a watching brief on sewer repairs at 2 and 8 Buckingham Street, York. The bones were all recovered from Trench 1, which had been opened prior to York Archaeology's attendance at the site. As such, all bones were recovered

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from observed sections, which themselves are likely to all represent backfill of the sewer. Given this, and the lack of securely-dated deposits, the assemblage has no interpretative value and it is recommended they be discarded.

**Table 1:** number of Identified Specimens (NISP) by context

Context	Cattle	Sheep	Sheep/Goat	Pig	Dog	Large mammal	TOTAL
1000	1		1		1		3
1008	1						1
1009			1			1	2
1012		1					1
1014	1	1	2	1		4	9
TOTAL	3	2	4	1	1	5	16

## Pottery Assessment

By Anne Jenner

### Introduction

Eleven sherds of pottery were retrieved during archaeological interventions at Buckingham Street. They ranged in date from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and were probably used in a domestic context.

There is little abrasion and the sherds are mainly medium sized. This suggests that they have not moved from where they were initially deposited.

### Methodology

Visual analysis involved separating fabric and form groups by date and type. The numbers of sherds of each type of pottery are recorded in tabular form (see Table 2 below). Decorative schemas, stamps and other significant features are also noted. Assemblages from each relevant period are outlined briefly under 'Discussion' below. Interesting items and assemblages are also considered in the 'Discussion' section. Any additional research and/or scientific analysis is outlined under the heading of 'Recommendations for further work'.

### SPOT Dating

SPOT dates are given for each context containing the most significant pottery fabric types. This is because pottery is often the most common and most datable find on urban excavations, and can consequently help the excavation staff to interpret any given stratigraphic sequence, as well as shed

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light on the lives of those who made and used it. The SPOT date is normally the latest date of any pottery type within the given context.

### Date Range

Calculation of the date range is the earliest date from the earliest pottery type and the latest date from the latest pottery type. When there are two very distinct date ranges, these will be included in the text, e.g. Roman and medieval. Sherds that can be identified as intrusive or residual will be noted (Barclay, et al. 2016, Appendix 1).

### Sherd size

Sherd sizes are based on the following range of sizes and are measured across the widest dimension of the sherd. Small is anything less than 5cm, medium is anything above 5cm and below 10cm. Large is above 10cm. Sometimes very small (<1cm) and very large (>20cm) are used. These measurements are taken when there is no time to use weight as a corroborative measure.

### Discussion

An initial assessment of this small assemblage of domestic wares suggests that there was some sort of activity in the area in the medieval and post-medieval periods. As indicated above, the wares are probably in situ, as they show no signs of wear or weathering.

## THE WARES

### Medieval

For these purposes the medieval period is defined as starting in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, after the Norman conquest and finishing in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century after the Battle of Bosworth. These dates are fairly arbitrary when looking at pottery which may or may not bear any relation to historic events.

### White Gritty Ware 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century

These wares are coloured white and have coarse quartz grains within their temper. They are described in more detail elsewhere (Mainman and Jenner 2013, 1184). There is some evidence that the white, as opposed to the buff gritty fabric has a short horizon in the 11<sup>th</sup> century in York, but this hypothesis needs confirming.

Only one sherd of this ware type is present amongst the assemblage from Buckingham Street.

### Splashed Wares – late 11<sup>th</sup> / mid-13<sup>th</sup> century

Three main types of Splashed ware were present in York (oxidised, reduced and white wares) dating from the late 11<sup>th</sup> –13<sup>th</sup> century (Mainman and Jenner 2013, 1185). Although Mainman and Jenner outline the different fabrics and forms noted on several excavations in York, it is not clear where many of them were produced.

Two sherds of Splashed ware were retrieved from intervention at Buckingham Street. They include

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one with a yellowish spot of glaze and one with a darker glaze. They are both fairly coarsely gritted.

### Post-medieval

#### Post-medieval Wares – late 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century

##### Cistercian – late 15<sup>th</sup> to late 16<sup>th</sup> century

Cistercian wares have a red firing body and dark glaze and occasionally a white firing body with a yellowish glaze. They are frequently decorated with applied motifs in the opposite colour to their body. These are thought to have religious significance for followers of the Catholic faith. It is likely that they were mainly used during religious feasts and celebrations (Spavold 2010, 35). Their short-lived currency is thought to be due to Henry VIII and his son Edwards decree making the use of religious iconography treasonable. It is thought that at this time they were discarded.

The one sherd from Buckingham Street is part of an undecorated drinking vessel. Vessels used for drinking are the most common forms.

##### Post-medieval earthenwares – late 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century

Several post-medieval earthenwares were produced locally and used in the kitchen and parlour. They are functional utilitarian vessels used perhaps for storing and preparing foods rather than at table.

The post-medieval earthenwares from Buckingham Street are all oxidized. They vary in the colour of glaze used. These include Purple Glazed, Brown and ochre glazed which were no doubt used for different purposes.

##### English Brown Stoneware

German stonewares flooded the English market from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, peaking in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was shortly after this that potters attempted to make these durable, high fired wares. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century stonewares were being made across the country, although generally supplying relatively local markets.

The bottle base from Buckingham Street was most probably made in Yorkshire or Derbyshire, but as it has no stamp on it, it is impossible to be certain of its provenance. Such bottles were used to contain blacking for fire grates, ink, ale and many other commodities. They were popular due to their durability.

##### Transfer printed ware – 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> century

The body of the transfer printed vessel can vary from white to a faintly light blue colour. The decoration is achieved by making a print from an engraved copper or steel plate and then transferring it by pressing it onto the vessel.

Three sherds from Buckingham Street have blue transfer prints on them. They include a bone china cup and a bowl. The cup is rather fine and has a simple floral design along the inner edge of the rim as well as part of the 'Willow' pattern on its external surface.

### Recommendations for further work with pottery from the site

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There are no recommendations for further work

**Table 2.** Pottery Quantification

Context	Find	Quantity	Dating	Details
1000	BF9	4	16th to 18/19th century	1 English Brown Stoneware bottle base, medium 1 Purple Glazed post-medieval oxidised earthenware with applied thumbed horizontal strip and applied oblique strip, medium 1 Transfer printed, small 1 Cistercian, medium
1002	BF10	1	18th century	1 Transfer printed bone china cup rim, medium
1003	BF11	2	18th century	1 Transfer printed bowl with pedestal base, medium 1 Post-medieval moderately gritted oxidised earthenware with ochre glaze and white and red clay concretions, large
1014	BF12	3	Post-medieval and medieval	1 Splashed coarsely gritted with reduced core and oxidised surfaces, medium 1 Post-medieval earthenware with lightly oxidised body and brown glaze over break, small 1 Splashed ware lightly oxidised with spot of yellow glaze, small
1015	BF13	1	Late 11th century	1 White Gritty ware jar, small

## Shell Assessment

By Alison Wilson

A total of 4 fragments of shell weighing approximately 65g were collected from 2 contexts. The

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assemblage consisted solely of Native Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), which was present in contexts (1014) and (1015). These are edible oysters and could represent kitchen waste.

**Table 3:** List of the complete shell assemblage from all contexts.

Context	Quantity	Weight (g)	Description
1014	3	61	Large complete Native Oyster ( <i>Ostrea edulis</i> ) + 2 smaller incomplete shells
1015	1	4	Small complete Native Oyster ( <i>Ostrea edulis</i> )

### Clay tobacco pipe

By Alison Wilson

A small assemblage of 2 clay tobacco pipe fragments was recovered from 2 contexts during archaeological work carried out at Buckingham Street, York.

In the absence of any identifying features such as makers stamps or decoration, the pipe stems have been dated using bore hole diameter (early clay pipes have a bore diameter of 3mm, decreasing over time until stems by the middle of the 18th century had a bore of 2mm or less).

The stem fragments were found in contexts [1003] and [1014], and both had a bore diameter of 2mm, placing their date of manufacture in the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century.

The small size of the assemblage would suggest that the pipe fragments are residual, no further work is necessary, and discard is recommended.

**Table 4:** List of clay tobacco pipes from all contexts

Context and fill	Description	Weight	Date
[1003]	Stem fragment with 2mm bore diameter	3g	18 <sup>th</sup> –19 <sup>th</sup> century
[1014]	1 stem fragment with 2mm bore diameter	2g	18 <sup>th</sup> –19 <sup>th</sup> century

### Glass

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By Alison Wilson

A single fragment of glass was recovered from context [1002]. This was a well-preserved piece of an 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century green bottle with a kick up base, weighing 21g.

It is likely to be residual domestic waste and discard is recommended.

## CONCLUSIONS

No pre-modern features were identified during the archaeological watching brief, although the deposits that were revealed stratigraphically beneath the modern sewer and water pipes may pre-date the modern period. Evidence of disturbance through these earlier layers is present in the form of lead water pipes and a previous cut made for the sewers that revealed cobblestones. It is likely that this is evidence for a cobbled road surface disturbed when the cut for the original sewer was excavated and later backfilled. The dating evidence described above, particularly the pottery, indicates there was activity in this area from at least the medieval period until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which is unsurprising given the site's location within the historical area of the city. However, even though the general sherd size suggests a minimal degree of residuality, the stratigraphic sequence suggests that most sherds are likely to have been redeposited during post-medieval or modern ground disturbance. One possible exception to this is the sherd of 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery from Context 1015, which was a deposit that did not appear to be made ground. This was revealed at a depth of 850mm, suggesting that in less disturbed ground, that this could be an guide depth for the start of medieval archaeology in the immediate vicinity. However, as only a small area of this deposit was uncovered, it is not possible to confirm if this is the case and further excavation would be required. Otherwise no significant archaeological activity was present.

## REFERENCES

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<b>FINDS</b>	32	<b>SAMPLES</b>	0	<b>PHOTOS</b>	yes
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### Appendix 1 Table of contexts

Context No	Type	Description	Inclusions	Interpretation	Depth
1000	Deposit	Unstratified		Unstratified	
1001	Structure	Tar Mac		Modern rd surface	60mm
1002	Deposit	Soft, light greyish brown silt	Frequent large rounded cobbles.	Compacted silt containing cobbles, possibly part of road foundation.	360mm
1003	Deposit	Soft, light greyish brown sandy silt.	Frequent CBM, frequent small irregular stones.	Sandy silty layer containing CBM, stone and pot sherds.	150mm
1004	Fill	Soft, mid brownish grey, white flecks, silt.	Frequent flecks of cream/white limestone mortar.	Back fill, covering the cuts for two lead water	360mm

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Context No	Type	Description	Inclusions	Interpretation	Depth
			Frequent small-medium CBM.	pipes [1005] & [1007].	
1005	Cut	Sharp break of slope at top, vertical sides, base not visible.		Cut for lead water pipe, serving nearby houses.	
1006	Deposit	Dark brown /grey clay silt.			
1007	Cut	Sharp break of slope at top, vertical sides, break of slope at base not visible.		Cut for lead pipe, serving nearby houses.	
1008	Deposit	Soft mid grey/brown with orange flecks, clayey silt.	Frequent flecks of charcoal.	Made up ground	280mm
1009	Deposit	Soft, light creamy white mortar		Layer of mortar, made up ground.	700mm
1010	Deposit	Soft mid brown sandy silt.	Frequent small CBM, Frequent small flecks of mortar.	Made up ground possibly same as [1003].	680mm
1011	Deposit	Soft dark blackish brown silt.	Frequent small pieces of charcoal, frequent brick rubble, frequent small CBM.	Made up ground containing CBM, whole and part bricks.	230mm
1012	Fill	Soft mid brown clayey silt.	Occasional small CBM, frequent charcoal, frequent flecks of mortar	Fill of cut [1013].	1.28m

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Context No	Type	Description	Inclusions	Interpretation	Depth
1013	Cut	Gradual break of slope at top, gradual sloping sides, base not visible.		Cut for sewer or lead pipes.	
1014	Deposit	Soft very dark blackish brown/grey clayey silt.	Frequent small flecks of mortar.	Made up over ground sewer.	1.05m
1015	Deposit	Soft sticky dark brownish grey silty clay.	Frequent flecks of charcoal, frequent small CBM.	Deposit	850mm

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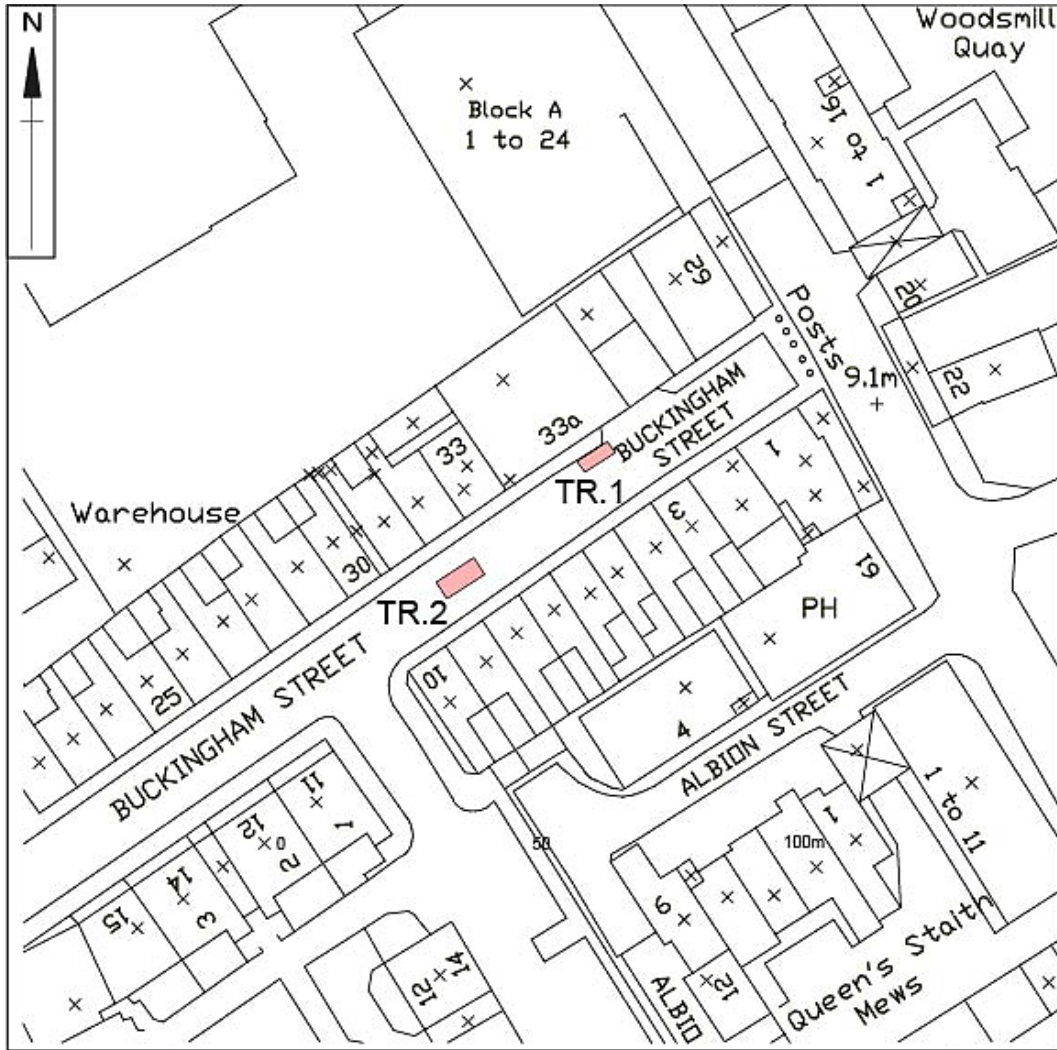
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Figure 1 Site location

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Figure 2 Works location

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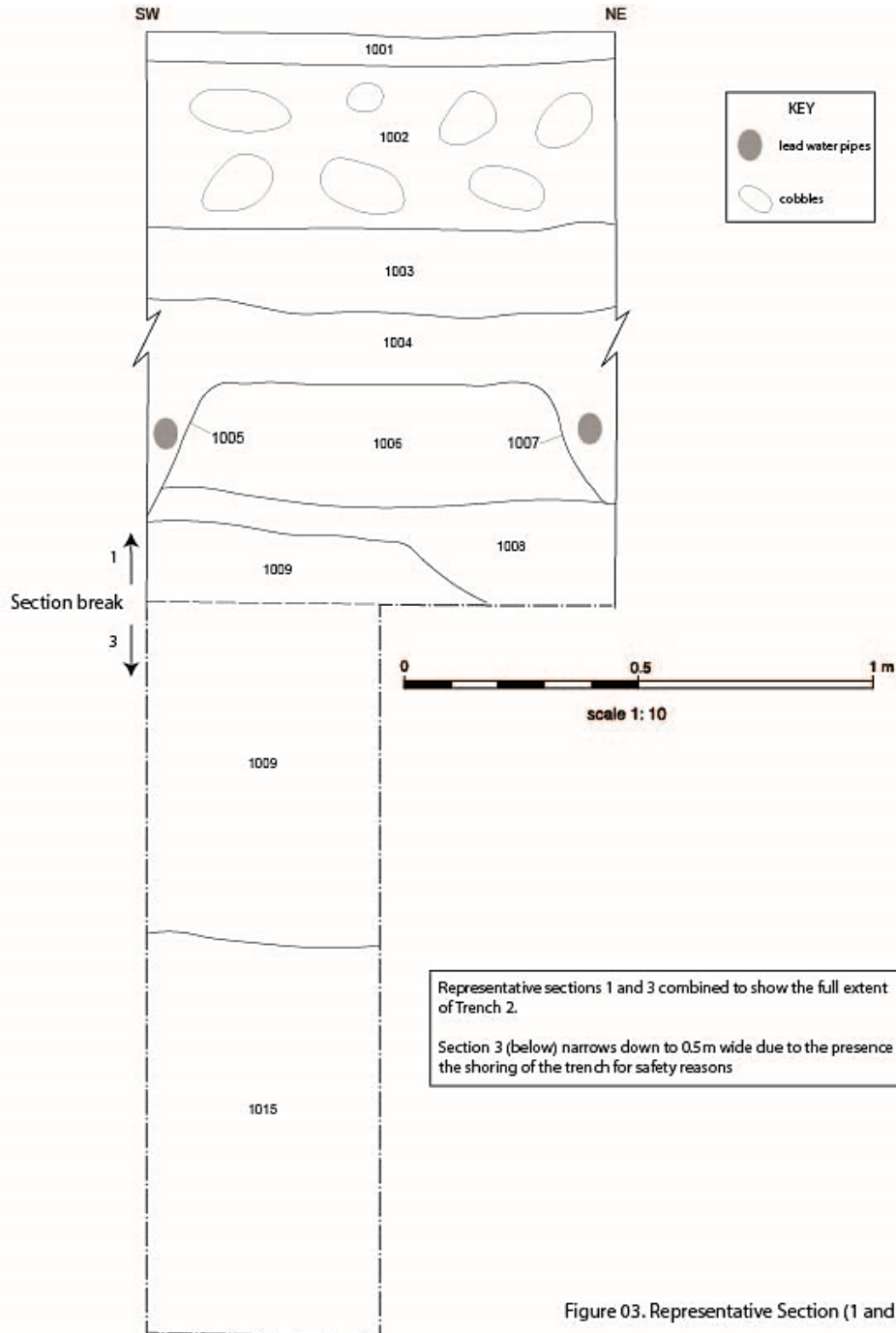


Figure 03. Representative Section (1 and 3)

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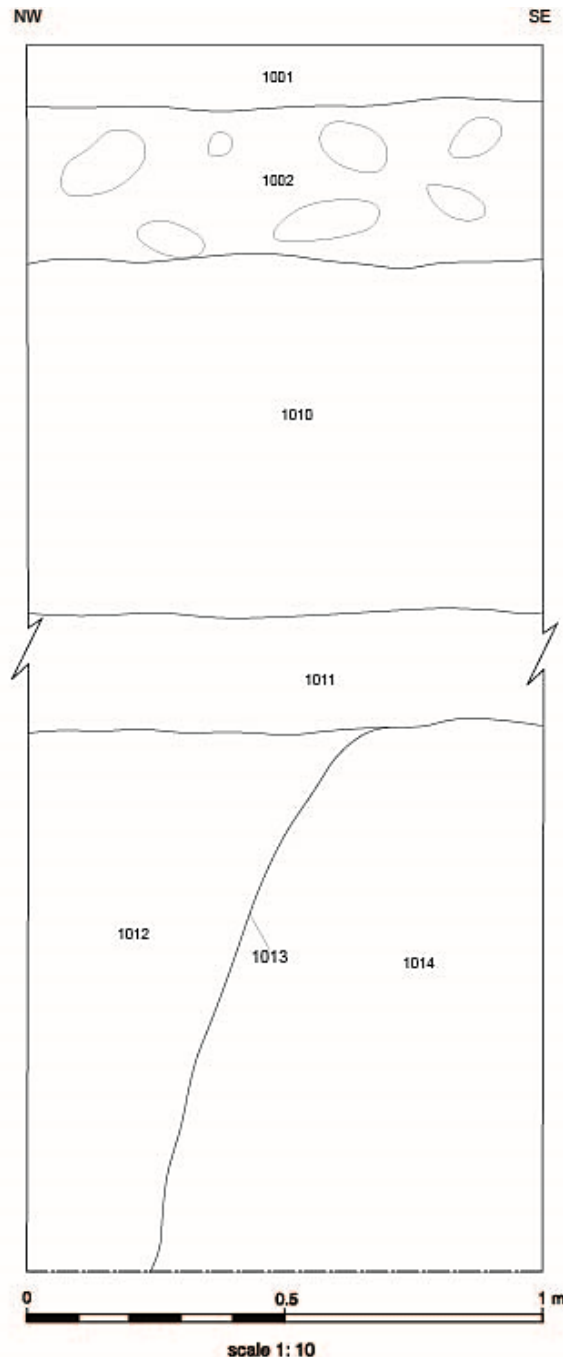


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**Figure 3** Representative section 4

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**Plate 1** View of works, facing south-west

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**Plate 2** Trench 1, where no archaeological deposits were recorded.

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**Plate 3** South-east facing section of Trench 2.

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**Plate 4** South-west facing section of Trench 2

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<b>FINDS</b>	32	<b>SAMPLES</b>	0	<b>PHOTOS</b>	yes
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