

**ST PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, BEDFORD,
BEDFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

Document: 2004/82
Project: SP1025

Issue Date: 8th September 2004

Produced for:
Bedford Design Group



Contents

List of Figures2

Preface3

Structure of this Report3

Key Terms3

Non-Technical Summary4

1. INTRODUCTION 5

 1.1 Planning Background5

 1.2 Site Location and Description5

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 6

 2.1 Method Statement6

 2.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations.....6

 2.3 Sites and Monuments Records (SMR)6

3. TRIAL TRENCH EXCAVATION 9

 3.1 Introduction.....9

 3.2 Aims and Method Statement.....9

 3.3 Results9

4. SYNTHESIS 12

 4.1 Significance of Results12

 4.2 Summary.....13

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY 14

6. APPENDIX 16

 6.1 Trench And Context Summaries16

 6.2 Artefact Assemblage19

 Table 1: Artefact Summary19

 Table 2: Pottery fabric types and contexts.....20

 6.3 HER and Cartographic sources22



List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location plan

Figure 2: Trench 1, the mound

Figure 3: Trench 2, the churchyard

The figures are bound at the back of the report.



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

This report has been prepared by James Pixley (Project Officer) and Wesley Keir (Archaeological Supervisor). The text was edited by Joe Abrams (Project Manager). Trial trenching, excavation and recording was undertaken by James Pixley and Wesley Keir. The figures were prepared by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). The project was under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

*Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford, MK42 0AS
☎: 01234 294001
Fax: 01234 294008
e-mail: office@albion-arch.com
Website: www.albion-arch.com*

8th September 2004

Structure of this Report

Section 1 serves as an introduction to the site, describing its location, archaeological background and the aims of the project. The methodology and results of the of the trial trenching are discussed in section 2, while section 3 provides a synthesis of the results, and states their significance within the surrounding landscape. Section 4 is a bibliography and Appendix 1 contains summary information for all the trenches. Appendix 2 lists and discusses the artefact assemblage recovered from the site and Appendix 3 lists the cartographic and historic environment records consulted as part of the preparation for this project.

Key Terms

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

<i>BCC's CAO</i>	Bedfordshire County Council's County Archaeological Officer
<i>Client</i>	Bedford Design Group
<i>HER</i>	Historic Environment Record [Bedfordshire's sites and monuments record]
<i>BLARS</i>	Bedfordshire and Luton Records and Archives Service
<i>IFA</i>	Institute of Field Archaeologists
<i>Procedures Manual</i>	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> , 2 nd edn, 2001 Albion Archaeology



Non-Technical Summary

A pre-application enquiry was made by Bedford Borough Council regarding construction of a new access route into St Paul's Churchyard, St Paul's Square, Bedford. This will involve works in and adjacent to the churchyard including the removal of a large mound of unknown origin.

A brief was issued by Bedfordshire County Council's County Archaeological Officer (BCC's CAO), recognising that further information on the mound and the stratigraphy of the churchyard was required. Albion Archaeology was subsequently commissioned by Bedford Design Group to undertake the evaluation of the site, and to prepare a report on the results.

St Paul's Churchyard is located in the middle of St Paul's Square in the centre of the historic core of Bedford c.100m north of the river Great Ouse. The development area is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 0498 4970. Numerous excavations and discoveries of archaeological material have been made within the immediate vicinity spanning the prehistoric to post-medieval periods.

Two trenches were excavated: one across the mound and one within the footprint of the proposed new access route into the churchyard.

Trench 1 revealed several deposits which collectively made up the mound. Artefactual material recovered from these indicated that the mound was formed during the 19th century. A large limestone slab was also observed beneath the mound.

Five graves thought to date to the 18th and 19th centuries were observed in Trench 2. These were sealed by a topsoil layer and truncated a relatively thick layer of overburden. The evaluation demonstrated the nature, depth and condition of these features. It also indicated the potential for multiple burials at various depths within the development area.

Most archaeological investigations within the vicinity of the churchyard have revealed partially truncated archaeological remains. This investigation has revealed graves that have not been subject to the same level of modern truncation, due to the depth at which they occur. This indicates that the development area retains a high archaeological potential.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

A pre-application enquiry was made by Bedford Borough Council regarding construction of a new access route into St Paul's Churchyard, St Paul's Square, Bedford. This will involve works in, and adjacent to, the churchyard. A brief was issued by Bedfordshire County Council's County Archaeological Officer (BCC's CAO), recognising that further information on the archaeological impact of the proposed work was required (BCC 2004).

BCC's CAO advised that the area being considered for the development is archaeologically sensitive; in particular there are concerns regarding the significance of a mound which will be removed as part of the development. An archaeological evaluation was required to establish the nature and origin of the mound and to provide information on the potential archaeological deposits surviving in the churchyard area.

Albion Archaeology was subsequently commissioned by Bedford Design Group to undertake the evaluation of the site, and to prepare this report on the results.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

St Paul's Churchyard is located in the middle of St Paul's Square in the centre of the town of Bedford, and c.100m north of the river Great Ouse. The development area is c.350m² and is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 0498 4970.

The proposed development area lies at approximately c.27m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) within the floodplain of the river Great Ouse. The soils of the area are derived from the underlying geology of alluvial deposits and fluvial gravel and sands.



2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Method Statement

This section reviews the available documentary, cartographic and archaeological evidence for land within the immediate vicinity of the study area.

The historical and archaeological background to Bedford has been summarised in the extensive urban survey, undertaken by English Heritage and Bedfordshire County Council (Albion Archaeology 2002). A desk based study of the Magistrates Courts has also been conducted (Albion 2001a). In addition, relevant HER and BLARS references were also consulted.

2.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations

Previous investigations within St Paul's Church (BCAS 1981 and BCAS 1919) have revealed little of archaeological significance. Instead, most significant remains have been recorded outside the existing churchyard boundaries. These have been revealed during various stages of town centre redevelopment and keyhole development during the latter part of the twentieth century. The results of these investigations are briefly summarised in chronological order below.

Various archaeological investigations have occurred ranging from watching briefs with small scale development to larger open area investigation with the advent of town centre improvement schemes.

Most significant remains have been found with development and refurbishing of buildings outside the present church boundaries.

These are summarised below in chronological order.

2.3 Sites and Monuments Records (SMR)

2.3.1 Prehistoric (before AD43)

The gravel terraces of the river Great Ouse have produced many prehistoric artefacts dating from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age. The majority of these finds have been made outside the historic core of Bedford (Albion 2001b). Therefore remains dating to the prehistoric periods were not considered to be particularly likely within the development area.

2.3.2 Roman (AD43 – c.AD450)

In the 1840s a Roman cremation urn containing charred bone and ashes was found during the construction of a cellar. This was located a short distance from the development area on the corner of St Paul's Square and High Street (HER 284). Apart from stray finds of pottery and coins in the town (HER 286) little else has been found which dates to this period.



2.3.3 Anglo Saxon (AD 410 – 1066)

The existing structure called St Paul's Church is located immediately south of the development area. It is believed that this replaced several earlier structures which had served the same purpose. The earliest church was probably built in the mid—late Saxon period. There is a suggestion that the 10th century Minster referred to in the Domesday Book (Haslam 1986) may also have been on this site. There has even been a suggestion that St Paul's Church was founded as early as the 6th - 7th century (Haslam 1986).

Remains from this period have been encountered and documented since the 19th century when the construction of the Corn Exchange, in 1872, uncovered probable Saxon graves (Benson 1995). Further evidence of graves has also been observed in the area of 32 High Street in 1967 (BLARS co/ing3/2/12, Appendix 3).

The most well known, and probably the largest excavation in Bedford, was conducted in the centre of St Paul's Square (approximately 70 metres to the east of the study area) around the area of the statue of John Howard (Baker 1987). Extensive archaeological remains dating to the Saxon period were uncovered. These included a substantial burnt layer which contained a copper alloy strap end and a coin of King Alfred.

Refurbishment works on buildings to the north of St Paul's Square have been subject to archaeological observation and recording. These include an investigation on footing trenches at the Saracens Head public house, 50m to the north-east of the study area. In this case no archaeological finds or deposits were recorded (BCAS 1985, WB28 and HER 4110). A separate investigation at 14 - 15a St Paul's Square, only 10m east of the study area, revealed a churchyard of probable mid Saxon date. Several east-west aligned graves were arranged in parallel rows. These graves had been truncated by a series of early medieval refuse pits (BCAS 1997, HER 16858).

Land to the rear of 29 – 41 High Street approximately 100m east of the study area, uncovered several phases of Saxon activity including rubbish and cess pits and timber structures. These were sealed by the western limit of the bailey associated with Bedford Castle (Steadman 1999).

2.3.4 Medieval (AD1066 – AD1550)

The upstanding fabric of St Paul's Church is medieval in date. The original Saxon church is thought to have been destroyed by Faulkes de Breaute to provide building material for the Bedford Castle refortifications. This took place during the early part of the 13th century. The structure was rebuilt in 1224 but the majority of the building is largely 15th century in date (Albion 2001b).

Excavations to the east of St Paul's Square revealed burials from the medieval cemetery which were associated with the church. This suggests that the medieval cemetery may have been much larger than the existing churchyard boundaries (Baker 1987). A further investigation conducted 30m to the east of the study area during road re-surfacing work recorded the existence of a human burial. It was suggested that this was very likely to have been medieval in date (BCAS 1986a).



St Paul's Square has been proposed as the most likely place in which the 13th century market would have been located (Albion 2001b). By the 15th century the square had been filled with a network of small streets and shambles (Crawley and Freeman 1988). These were known as Butchers Row and Fish Row, located in the north-east and east of the present day square. In the southern part was the Poultry Market. Excavations in 1987 provided physical evidence for the above in the form of a series of cobbled road ways and surfaces, a 13th century cellar and several refuse pits.

A watching brief in 1996 at No 1 St Paul's Square (approximately 85m to the south east of the study area) investigated a single narrow trench adjacent to the east wall of the building. During the course of these investigations a limestone wall footing and an associated sherd of St Neots type pottery were revealed. These suggest the possibility of medieval structural features having existed within this area (BCAS 1996, HER 403).

Further development work behind the Magistrates Court, approximately 90m to the south of the study area, led to the discovery of a substantial timber pile. Due to the proximity of this timber to the river, it has been suggested that this may represent a riverside structure of some sort, possibly a revetment. If this were true then the river must previously have been located 20m to the north of its present course (HER 558). Similar remains were also found in the basement of the town hall (BCAS 1986b).

A late medieval seal die and a large 13th century cooking pot handle were also found within the churchyard. It is possible these were disturbed during grave-digging in the medieval or post-medieval periods (HER 16050, HER 8857).

2.3.5 Post Medieval (AD1550 – AD1900)

In this period, the northern part of St Paul's Square is indicated as Stonehouse Lane on cartographic sources. Records indicate that a cattle, sheep and pig market was held here up until 1865. A public house known as The Coach and Horses (probably built in the 18th Century) stood roughly where the public conveniences stand today (approximately 15m to the east of the study area).

The original Corn Exchange or Floral Hall (built in 1849) stood immediately east of the study area and excavations have revealed the foundations for both the Coach and Horses and the first Corn Exchange (Baker 1987, BCAS 1985). The locations are clearly visible on cartographic sources.

The Bedford Improvement Act of 1803 saw the demolition of some 82 houses within the St Paul's Square area and changes in street names and layout. This occurred over a period of 100 years and included The Coach and Horses in 1895 and the old Corn Exchange in 1901 (Albion 2001b).

St Paul's Church was also subject to extensive restoration in the 19th and 20th centuries including the construction of the north aisle.



3. TRIAL TRENCH EXCAVATION

3.1 Introduction

The trial trenching took place on the 16th – 17th August 2004. A total of two trenches were opened. Both were located within the churchyard, one across the mound (Trench 1) and the second within the footprint of the proposed new access route into the churchyard (Trench 2)

3.2 Aims and Method Statement

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

- IFA's *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation*;
- Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork and the Analysis of Fieldwork Records* (1996);
- IFA's *Code of Conduct*;
- English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991).

The trench plan (Figure 1) was discussed with, and approved by, BCC's CAO prior to any trial trenching taking place. Trench 1 was 1.50m in width and 3.70m in length. It was hoped that this would determine the full depth and character of the mound. Trench 2 was 1.50m in width and 5.40m in length and was designed to determine the location, depth, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that were present. It would also obtain information on the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits.

The location of all trenches was marked out on the ground in advance of machine excavation. Topsoil and modern overburden were mechanically removed by a tracked mini-excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. This was conducted under close archaeological supervision. In Trench 1, mound deposits were removed down to current ground surface while in Trench 2, overburden was removed until human burials were encountered. The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts.

The bases and sections of all trenches were cleaned by hand. The deposits and any potential archaeological features were noted, cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. Grave cuts were cleaned and recorded but unexcavated. The trenches were subsequently drawn, and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique recording number sequence commencing at 100 for Trench 1, 200 for Trench 2 etc.

The trenches were inspected by BCC's CAO prior to being backfilled.

3.3 Results

Trenches 1 and 2 are discussed below; detailed technical information on each trench can be found in Appendix 1.



3.3.1 Trench 1 (Figure 2)

The following sections describe the archaeological features and deposits encountered within trench 1. These have been arranged in chronological order.

Phase 1: Pre-mound surface

The earliest archaeological remains consisted of a large limestone slab (104). This was sealed by a series of later deposits, which collectively formed a mound (Figure 2). The slab had been truncated by wall foundation cut [101]. A further piece of limestone slab (111) was partially revealed just beyond the mound, to the west of trench 1; this may have been associated with (104).

Phase 2: Mound retaining wall (construction I)

A foundation trench [101] orientated north-south was revealed, and truncated the limestone slab associated with the pre-mound ground surface. The trench contained gravestones (106) placed side by side in order to contain the spoil mound. A mid brown/grey sandy silt (102) was packed around the gravestones for support. Additional gravestones were visible beyond the confines of the trench. It is thought these had been used to retain the earth mound in this part of the churchyard.

Finds from the trench backfill (102) consisted of a wine bottle fragment, pottery sherds, window glass and a 17th century jetton, dating to around 1750AD (Appendix 2). However, a gravestone dated 1810 indicated that this feature was constructed no earlier than the 19th century.

Phase 3: Initial mound creation

Deposit (105) represented the first phase of dumping onto slab (104). This dumping ultimately led to the creation of the mound. Deposit (105) consisted of a dark brown/grey sandy silt that was probably formed as a result of several episodes of tipping. It contained substantial amounts of disarticulated human bone with several glass and pottery sherd fragments (Appendix 2). These indicated a similar date to Phase 2 of the mound. This deposit had accumulated against wall (106) constructed in Phase 2.

Phase 4: Mound retaining wall (construction II)

Retaining wall (106) [101], constructed in Phase 1, was modified by the addition of wall (110) made up largely of demolition rubble. This consisted of limestone blocks probably representing railing piers from the demolished north churchyard boundary. These had been placed against the westward side of the Phase 1 gravestones (106) in order to increase the height of the retaining wall which bounded the mound.

Phase 5: Additional mound deposits

Further distinct episodes of spoil tipping (107) and (108) were observed overlying deposit (105). They were retained by wall (110), observed in Phase 4, and consisted of a dark brown sandy silt (107) and a mid brown-orange clay silt (108). Deposit (108) is likely to have been re-deposited subsoil.



Phase 6: Present day mound surface

Deposit (109) was the latest episode of tipping onto the mound and overlay deposits (107) and (108) as well as the retaining wall (110). It consisted of a dark grey/brown sandy silt similar to the existing topsoil layer which surrounds the development area. Finds from this deposit consisted of modern pottery, glass bottle fragments and seafood waste.

3.3.2 Trench 2 (Figure 3)

Trench 2 revealed the presence of five graves containing human burials and a stratigraphically later pit. These features are described below in chronological order.

Overburden within the Churchyard

Layer (214) was sealed by topsoil (200) and truncated by graves [201], [203], [205], [207] and [209]. It consisted of a mid brown/grey sandy silt very similar in nature to the backfill of the above graves. The only substantive difference being that the grave fills were of a generally loose compaction and slightly darker nearer the top of each grave cut.

Finds from this layer consisted of a large amount of disarticulated human bone. However, some coffin furniture, modern pottery sherds and a 17th century traders token were also recovered.

Layer (214) appears to have been a mixture of re-deposited topsoil and subsoil. It is suggested that this may have been formed as a result of repeated grave digging within the churchyard.

Graves

Five graves aligned E-W were observed within the trench. They were sealed by topsoil (200) and truncated layer (214). The backfill of all the graves consisted of a friable mid grey/brown sandy silt. The graves varied between 0.5m and 0.6m in width and were spaced between 0.1m and 0.25m apart.

Graves [203], [205] and [207] contained inhumations at *c.*26.40m AOD; whilst the inhumation within grave [209] was buried at 26.70m AOD. It is possible that this grave slot contains more than one burial, hence the slightly higher position of these human remains. Grave [201] was only excavated to 26.77m OD and no inhumation was revealed. None of the inhumations were fully excavated.

The only artefactual evidence from these graves was recovered from grave [209]. This contained a post-medieval button, a residual sherd of medieval pottery and a 18th/19th century coffin handle (Appendix 2).

Modern Pit

A modern pit [211] was observed towards the north end of the trench and truncated graves [201], [203], [205] and [207]. It was concave in profile and contained 19th century red brick.



4. SYNTHESIS

4.1 Significance of Results

Trench 1

This evaluation has permitted a full understanding of the formation processes which led to the creation of the mound.

It remains unclear *why* it was constructed over such a large limestone slab, an action which effectively buried what must have been a valuable piece of masonry. However, the relationship of gravestone wall ([101], Phase 2) to the slab indicates that this slab had already been partially cut away, and therefore damaged, prior to the mound's construction.

It is considered possible that this may have been a large fragment of table tomb. These were a relatively common type of tomb construction dating to the 18th - 19th centuries. Two examples can be seen several metres to the south-west. Alternatively, it is possible that such a large fragment of stone represented masonry perhaps re-used from an earlier construction within the town centre.

The recovery of a gravestone (dated 1810) from Phase 2 of the mound's construction has allowed an approximate date to be established for one of the earliest phases of the mound. The presence of this gravestone in a spoil layer within the mound suggests that it was in fact constructed long after 1810, on the basis that gravestones could not be uprooted and re-deposited until a suitable period had elapsed between the original burial and the re-use of the gravestones.

It should also be noted that the mound was constructed against the western wall of the now demolished Coach and Horses public house. This was constructed during the 18th century and a remnant of its walls can still be seen between the mound and the present day public toilets to the east.

The main phase of dumping (Phase 3) is likely to represent multiple tips of material over a considerable period of time, rather than one single episode. The formation of this deposit against the gravestone wall (Phase 2) indicates that this wall was constructed prior to the main dumping episodes.

The large amount of disarticulated human bone recovered from this phase could indicate that the dumps of material were derived from the churchyard. Although the documented existence of numerous inhumations outside the present day churchyard boundaries may indicate that it was from within the general vicinity of St Paul's Church. If these deposits were from the churchyard, the material could have been derived from excess grave digging spoil, or even from spoil created by the construction of the Victorian north aisle.

The mound area was further modified in order to contain more spoil with the addition of a makeshift wall (Phase 5). This appears to have been constructed using railing piers, perhaps from the churchyard's demolished northern boundary wall. The large amount of relatively modern occupational debris suggests that



following Phase 5 the mound was predominantly used as an informal dumping area.

Trench 2

The presence of human burials in recognisable grave cuts was to be expected at this site. More significant than the mere presence of these graves was the information which this evaluation has been able to provide on their extent and various heights above ordnance datum (section 3.3.2). This information will be useful when considering any potential development work at the site.

The evaluation has also indicated the *potential* for multiple burials (section 3.3.2) at the site, suggesting that inhumations could be encountered at various depths.

The graves were of probable 18th-19th century date. However, they were not clearly visible cutting through the subsoil layer (214) recorded within the churchyard. It is likely that deposit (214) has formed during centuries of disturbance and accumulation of soil within the boundaries of the churchyard. The presence of disarticulated human bone, coffin furniture and other stray finds further indicates that this layer has seen considerable disturbance.

4.2 Summary

The evaluation was successful in increasing our knowledge of the nature and likely date of construction of the mound. It has also provided useful information on the heights above ordnance datum of at least five inhumations which lie beneath the proposed new access route into the churchyard.

The presence of a large limestone slab was noted beneath the mound. It is considered likely that this is the remains of a table tomb. However, its complete proportions and character could not be observed within the confines of the trial trench, and this interpretation remains tentative.

Finally, it is significant to note that while most archaeological investigations within the vicinity of the churchyard have revealed partially truncated archaeological remains, this investigation has revealed graves that have not been subject to the same level of modern truncation, due to the depth at which they occur. This indicates that the development area retains a high archaeological potential.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albion Archaeology, 2000. *Procedures Manual, Volume 1: Fieldwork*. 2nd Edition
- Albion Archaeology, 2001a. *Bedfordshire Magistrates' Courts, Bedford Shire Hall: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*. Document 2001/10.
- Albion Archaeology, 2001b. *Extensive Urban Survey for Bedfordshire: Bedford Archaeological Assessment*. Document 2001/42.
- Albion Archaeology 2001c 'St. Peter's Church, Pavenham, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Mitigation' (Albion Archaeology client report 2001/26)
- Albion Archaeology, 2004. *St Paul's Churchyard, Bedford, Bedfordshire: Project Design For Field Evaluation*. Report 2004/69.
- Baker, E, 1987, St Paul's Square, Bedford in *South Midlands Archaeology* 17, 7-9
- BCAS 1985, St Paul's Square, Bedford. WB28
- BCAS 1986a, St Paul's Square. SPS86 and 307
- BCAS 1986b, Town Hall, Bedford. WB25
- BCAS 1996, No. 1 St Paul's Square. 403
- BCAS 1997, 14 – 15a St Paul's Square. SP451
- Bedfordshire County Council, 2004a. *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Evaluation at St Paul's Churchyard, Bedford, Bedfordshire*.
- Benson, M, 1995, *Bedford's Corn Exchanges*. *Bedfordshire Magazine* 25, 58-64
- Crawley, A, and Freeman, I, 1988, *Bedford's Oldest Streets*. *Bedford Archaeology* 18, 99-108.
- Harding, CJ 1987 'Post-Medieval coffin furniture' in Bell, RD, Beresford, MW *et al*
- Haslam, J, 1986, *The Ecclesiastical Topography of Early Medieval Bedford*. *Bedford Archaeological Journal* 17, 41-51
- Margeson, S 1993 *Norwich Households: Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-78*. *East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 58*
- Steadman, S, 1999, *Archaeological Recording to the rear of 29-41 High Street, Bedford*. *Bedford Archaeology* 23. 138-163



Wade, K. 1997 *Anglo Saxon and Medieval (Rural)*. In Glazebrook, J, 1997, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 1 Resource Assessment (East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 3)*

Hurst JG. 1987. *Wharram: A Study of Settlement in the Yorkshire Wolds, III: Wharram Percy: The Church of St Martin*. Society of Medieval Archaeology Monograph No. 11, 150-3



6. APPENDIX

6.1 Trench And Context Summaries



Trench 1



Trench 2



6.2 Artefact Assemblage

6.2.1 Introduction

The investigation produced an assemblage comprising mainly pottery, ceramic building material and vessel glass, with smaller quantities of metalwork. The material was scanned to ascertain its nature, condition and, for the artefacts, date range.

Context	Feature	Feature Type	Spotdate*	Pottery Sherd/g	CBM Frag/g	Animal Bone Frag/g	Other Finds
100 102	100 101	Topsoil Structural cut	1750 +	16/258	5/283		RA3 cast leaded bronze RA2 copper alloy jetton; Wine bottle Window glass (plain) x2 Window glass (painted) x1 Oyster shell fragments Glass bottles x2
105	105	Structural dump	1750 +	6/344			
107	107	Structural dump	1875-1897	6/354	1/401		Glass bottles x6 Glass frit Scallop shell Common whelk shells x5
110	110	Wall	1880s +		1/576		Glass bottle
200	200	Topsoil	1700 +	1/5	3/644	2/35	Wine bottle sherd
210	209	Grave	1700 +	1/2	1/2		RA5 copper alloy button RA4 iron coffin handle Iron nail Wine bottle sherd
214	214	Layer	1750 +	8/164	10/1886		RA1 copper alloy trade token RA6 iron coffin handle RA7 iron coffin handle RA8 iron coffin handle Iron nails x14 Glass phial Wine bottle sherds x3 Glass vessel x1 Slate tile Limestone paviour

* Spotdates are based on the latest date of all artefacts from the context
 CBM – ceramic building material RA – registered artefact

Table 1: Artefact Summary



6.2.2 Pottery

Thirty-eight sherds weighing 1.127kg were recovered. These were examined by context and quantified using sherd count and weight. Sherds are of moderate size (average weight 30g) and largely unabraded, surviving in good condition.

Thirteen fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, held by Albion Archaeology. Fabrics are listed below in approximate chronological order.

Fabric Type	Common name	Sherd No.	Context/Sherd No.
Saxo-Norman (950-1150)			
Type B01	St Neots-type ware	1	(210):1
Post-medieval (1500-1750)			
Type P12	Cistercian ware	1	(214):1
Type P01	Glazed red earthenware	2	(102):1, (200):1
Type P03	Black-glazed earthenware	4	(102):3, (214):1
Type P04	Black-glazed with limestone inclusions	4	(102):4
Type P33	Tin-glazed ware	3	(214):3
Modern (1750+)			
Type P36B	Nottingham stoneware	1	(214):1
Type P38	Creamware	5	(102):4, (214):1
Type P43	Pearlware	4	(102):3, (214):1
Type P45	Transfer-printed ware	3	(105):3
Type P50	Miscellaneous stoneware	4	(107):4
Type P55	White earthenware	5	(102):1, (105):2, (107):2
Type P	Miscellaneous post-medieval wares	1	(105):1

Table 2: Pottery fabric types and contexts

The pottery dates predominantly to the post-medieval and modern periods. However, a single sherd of St Neots ware was recovered from grave fill (210), and although residual, it is not abraded and confirms activity in the area in the 10th-11th centuries.

The post-medieval pottery ranges in date from the 16th century to the 20th century. The 16th-century pottery was recovered from the lowest deposit (214) and includes a single fragment from a Cistercian ware cup, which may be contemporary with the Potterspury roof tile found in the same deposit (see below). Late seventeenth- to eighteenth-century pottery includes fragments of black-glazed earthenware.

The later, largely 18th century, assemblage comprises mainly domestic tablewares, among which are sherds from three tin-glazed dishes, of English origin, tea cups and plates in pearlware and transfer-printed wares, and bowls in Nottingham stoneware and creamware.

6.2.3 Ceramic Building Material

A total of twenty-one brick and tile fragments, weighing 3.792kg was recovered. The majority of tile fragments are flat roof tiles, probably peg tiles although no



holes survived. With the exception of a single example in late medieval Potterspury fabric from (214), all others are in an unglazed orange sandy fabric, and modern in date. Potterspury in Northamptonshire was primarily a pottery manufacturing site but roof tiles were also produced there and examples have been found previously within the town (eg Midland Road). Two floor tiles were found: a hexagonal tile from (110), inlaid with white slip decoration, characteristic of the Victorian gothic revival, and a rectangular floor tile from (214), decorated with a rich brown glaze which has worn away completely on the upper surface. This latter tile is likely to be late medieval in date.

The bricks are fragmentary and few dimensions could be measured: one has a characteristic 'Tudor' thickness of 2ins (214), the other has a thickness of 2.5ins (200). All appear to have been made without frogs, which became common from the mid-18th century, but by no means universal.

6.2.4 Other Artefacts

With a few exceptions, the non-ceramic artefact assemblage was typologically datable. There is some evidence for late medieval and post-medieval activity, including a piece of painted window glass and a 16th-17th century jetton (for reckoning accounts) from the fill (102) of structural cut [101], and a trade token of 1694 from layer 214. However, these items were found in association with objects of 18th and 19th centuries.

The jetton and painted window glass were found with a wine bottle of 1800-1820, while the trade token was recovered from the same deposit (layer [214]) as three iron coffin handles (RA6-8). The coffin handles can be readily paralleled by a range of early modern coffin furniture from St Martin's Church, Wharram Percy (Harding 1987, 150-3), Norwich (Margeson 1993, 82 and fig. 46) and more locally from the churchyard at St Peters Pavenham Churchyard (Albion Archaeology 2001c/26). Coffin handle (RA4), from the fill of grave [209], was of the same form as those from layer [214], suggesting a similar date. Also accompanying this burial was a hollow, cast button (RA5), a form in use in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Embossed beverage bottles, including a 'Codd' bottle from A Richardson of Potton, dating to between 1875-1897, and other bottles from beverage purveyors in Leighton Buzzard, Biggleswade (Wells & Winch Ltd) and possibly Bedford, were particularly prevalent in context (107), a structural dump.

6.2.5 Ecofactual Evidence

Faunal remains were very limited. Two fragments of long bone from a large animal (species unidentifiable), were recovered from topsoil (200). The fragmentary remains of an oyster shell were found in the fill of structural cut [101], while five common whelks and a scallop shell were identified from structural dump [107]. It is possible that the shellfish originated from the market on Fish Row.



6.3 HER and Cartographic sources

6.3.1 Historic Environment Record (HER) data

HER No	Description of site/find	Period
HER 284	Cremation found in mid 1800's during a cellar construction.	Roman
HER 286	Coins found during the town bridge construction in 1811.	Roman
HER 4110	13 St Paul's Square archaeological watching brief	N/A
HER 16858	14 – 15a St Paul's Square	Saxon and medieval
HER 403	Watching brief of small slit trench. Possible wall footing observed. (BCAS WB 403)	medieval
HER 16050	Seal matrix found in St Paul's Churchyard	medieval
HER 8857	Cooking pot handle found in St Paul's Churchyard	medieval
HER 558	Wooden pile found in the area of the magistrates court	medieval
BLARS co/ing3/2/12	Saxon burials	Saxon

**Trench: 1****Max Dimensions: Length: 3.70 m. Width: 1.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0. m. Max: 0. m.****OS Co-ordinates: Ref. 1: TL4980949704 Ref. 2: TL4984649704****Reason for trench: To establish nature, origin and character of earth mound.**

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown sandy silt occasional small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
101	Foundation trench	Sub-rectangular N-S profile: near vertical dimensions: max breadth 0.8m, min depth 0.33m, min length 1.5m Truncates limestone table tomb slab (104).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Packing	Compact mid brown grey sandy silt moderate small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
103	Layer	Compact dark grey brown sandy silt frequent small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Limestone slab	Hard mid grey Limestone table tomb slab. Truncated by foundation cut [101].	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Dump material	Friable dark grey brown sandy silt frequent small-medium stones Layer of spoil mound. Contained a substantial amount of disarticulated human bone.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
106	Wall	Tombstone slabs placed into foundation cut [101] and used as a retaining wall for spoil mound.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Dump material	Friable dark brown sandy silt frequent small-medium stones Layer of spoil mound. Contained disarticulated human bone.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
108	Dump material	Friable mid brown orange clay silt occasional small-medium stones Layer of spoil mound.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Dump material	Friable dark grey brown sandy silt moderate medium stones Latest episode of tipping onto spoil mound.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
110	Wall	Retaining wall for mound, made up of demolition rubble, limestone blocks, piers and parts of iron railings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
111	Limestone slab	Limestone slab. Possible remnant of table tomb similar to (104).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 5.40 m. Width: 1.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.15 m. Max: 0.3 m.

OS Co-ordinates: Ref. 1: TL4971249701 Ref. 2: TL4970849696

Reason for trench: To determine the archaeological potential of new access route into churchyard.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown sandy silt occasional small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
201	Grave	Rectangular E-W profile: vertical dimensions: max breadth 0.5m, min depth 0.5m, min length 1.5m Not fully excavated. Inhumation not revealed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Backfill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Grave	Rectangular E-W profile: vertical dimensions: max breadth 0.6m, min depth 0.92m, min length 1.5m Not fully excavated. Inhumation reached at 26.4m OD - not excavated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Backfill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
205	Grave	Rectangular E-W profile: vertical dimensions: max breadth 0.6m, min depth 0.92m, min length 1.5m Not fully excavated. Inhumation reached at 26.4m OD - not excavated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
206	Backfill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
207	Grave	Rectangular E-W profile: vertical dimensions: max breadth 0.53m, min depth 0.92m, min length 1.5m Not fully excavated. Inhumation reached at 26.35m OD - not excavated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
208	Backfill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
209	Grave	Rectangular E-W profile: vertical dimensions: max breadth 0.6m, min depth 0.65m, min length 1.5m Not fully excavated. Inhumation reached at 26.7m OD - not excavated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
210	Backfill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
211	Pit	Sub-circular profile: concave base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.52m, max depth 1m, min length 2.2m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
212	Fill	Deposit consisting largely of red brick and lime mortar mixed with mid grey sandy silt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
213	Fill	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
214	Layer	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt frequent small-medium stones Redeposited mix of topsoil and subsoil resulting from the successive digging and backfilling of graves. Included a large amount of disarticulated human bone.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
215	Subsoil	Firm mid brown orange sandy silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

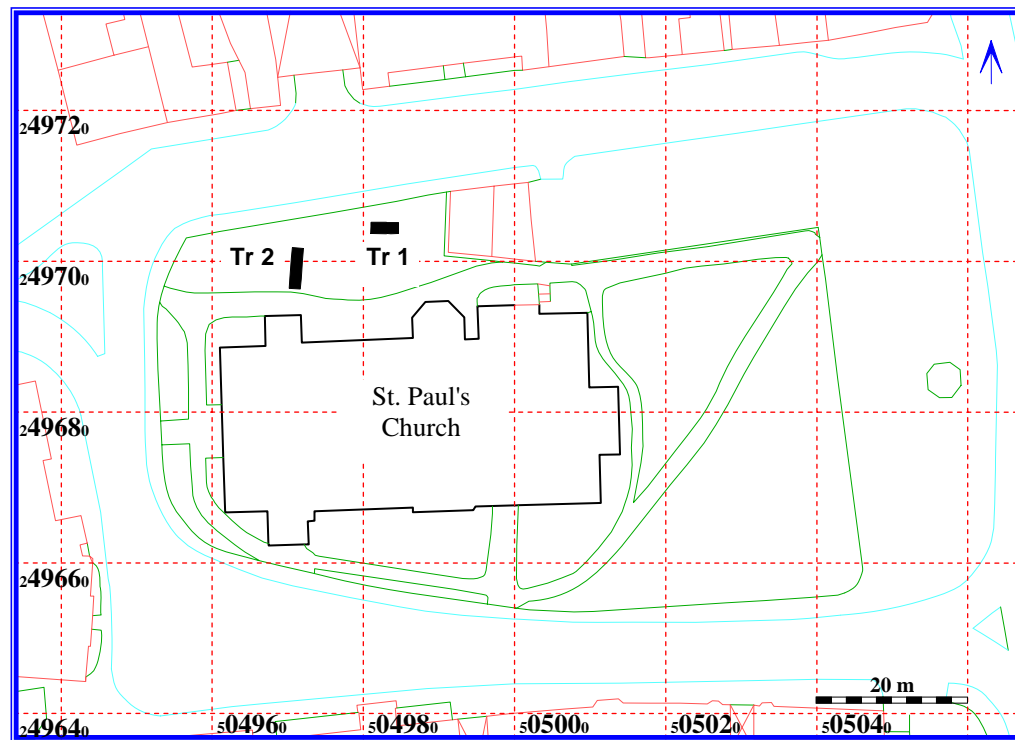
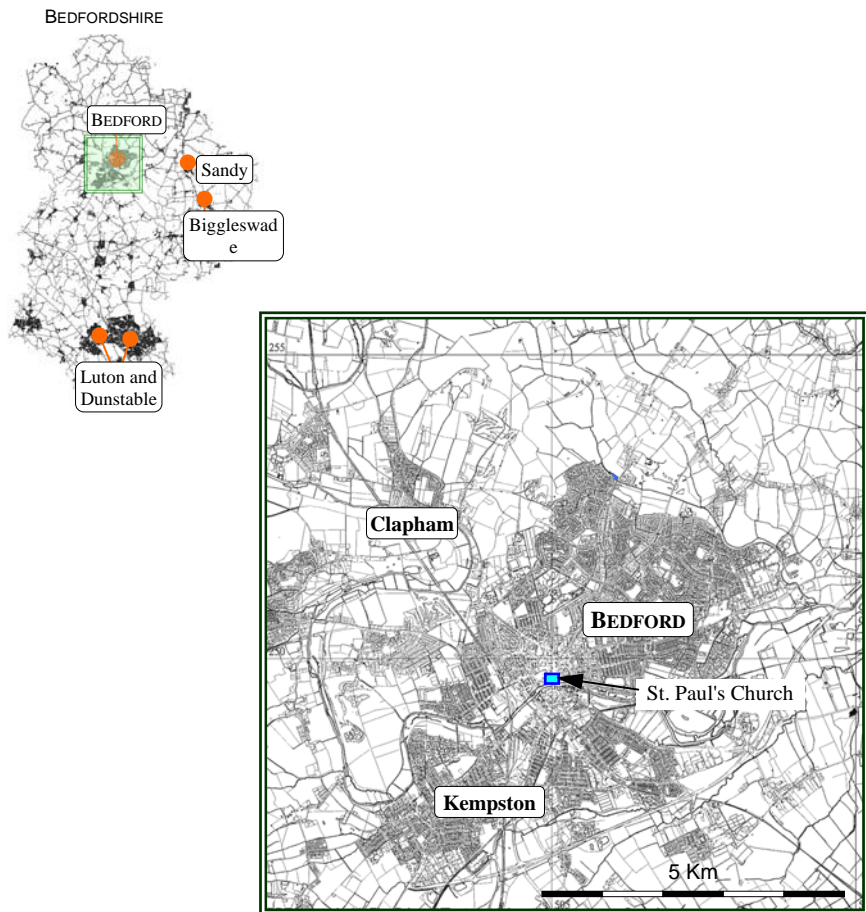
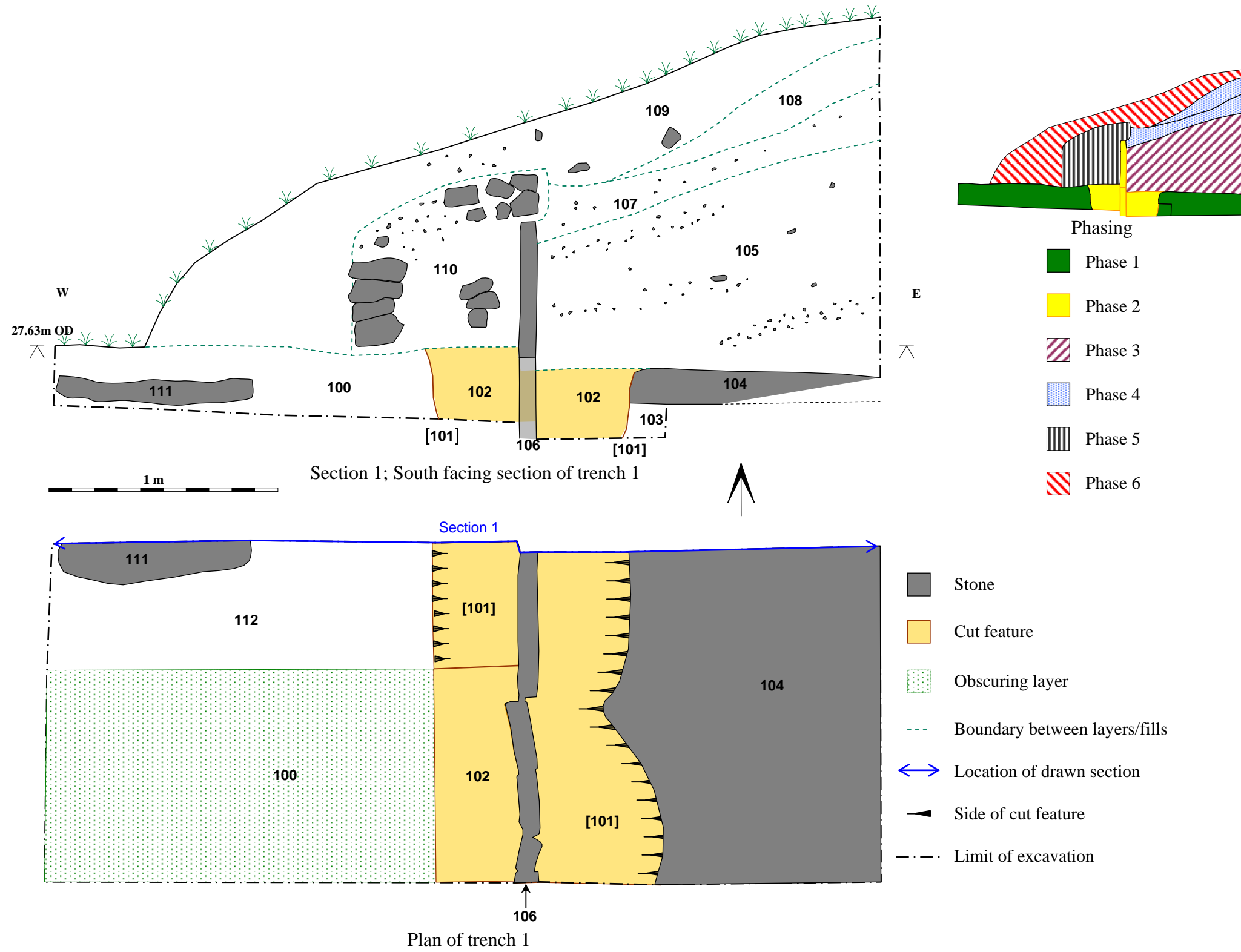


Figure 1: Site location plan.

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Bedford. OS Licence No. 076465(LA). © Crown Copyright.



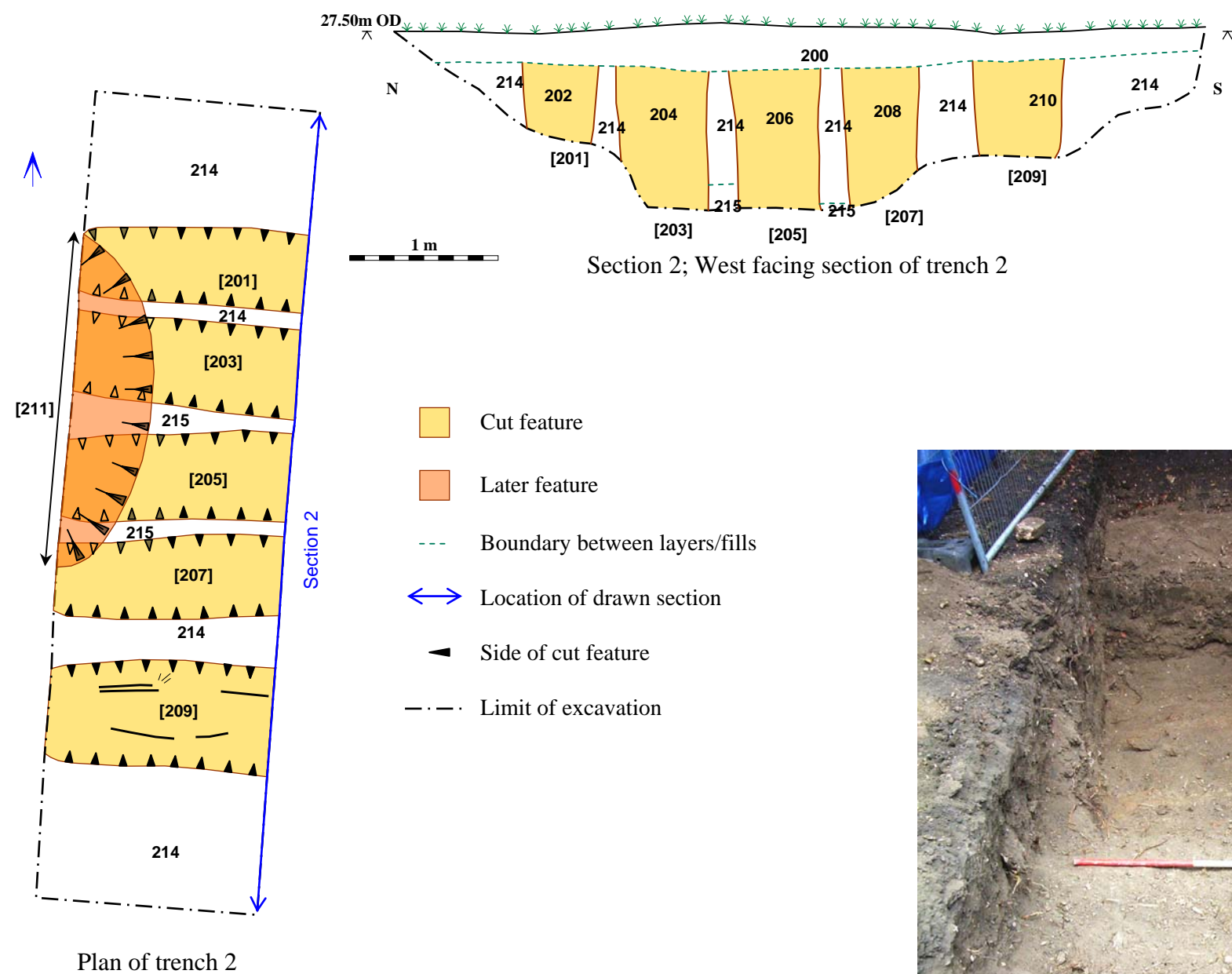
Trench 1, looking north-east. Scale 1m



Wall 110, before removal. Scale 1m

Figure 2: Trench 1

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Bedford. OS Licence No. 076465(LA). © Crown Copyright.



Grave cuts [201], [203], [205], [207], and [209], looking south. Scale 1m



Trench 2, looking north. Scale 1m



Feature [211], looking west. Scale 1m

Figure 3: Trench 2

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Bedford. OS Licence No. 076465(LA). © Crown Copyright.