



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

## Medieval and post-medieval remains at Angel Street Car Park, Northampton



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**Northamptonshire  
County Council**

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## OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Medieval and post-medieval remains at Angel Street Car Park, Northampton	
Short description	Trial excavations at Angel Street Car Park, Northampton, confirmed the survival of archaeological remains in parts of the site, whilst in other areas remains have been completely obliterated by modern cellars and foundations. Saxo-Norman features, perhaps belonging to timber structures lay in the south and east of the site. Undisturbed medieval soil layers were identified in the south and south-east of the site, including deposits abutting a possible 12th-century stone wall foundation with 15th-century modifications. The building would have fronted St Johns Street. There was a 13th-century stone building in the south-east of the site along the same frontage. A 17th-century stone building stood along Fetter Street. Buried soil layers of the 17th-18th centuries were present, cut by 19th-century features and wall foundations. Remains of the 19th-century buildings survived along St Johns Street and Fetter Street. Deep cellars of 20th-century date precluded excavation of trenches along the Angel Street frontage.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	Trial trench evaluation (Shaw 1993)	
Current Land use	Car Park	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/period	Medieval and post-medieval	
Significant finds	Pottery, animal bone and brick	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Angel Street Car Park, Town Centre, Northampton	
Study area	c0.7ha	
OS Easting & Northing	Centred on SP 7548 6028	
Height OD	c62-66m above Ordnance Datum	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Lesley-Ann Mather, Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Iain Soden, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Jim Brown, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	Iain Soden, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	Property Services, Northamptonshire County Council	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	April 2010	
End date	April 2010	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		Pottery, animal bone and brick
Paper		Context sheets, permatace plans & sections, site registers, photographic archive, background documents
Digital		Client PDF report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report
Title	Medieval and post-medieval remains at Angel Street Car Park, Northampton	
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## MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL REMAINS AT ANGEL STREET CAR PARK, NORTHAMPTON

April 2010

### *Abstract*

*Trial excavations at Angel Street Car Park, Northampton, confirmed the survival of archaeological remains in parts of the site, whilst in other areas remains have been completely obliterated by modern cellars and foundations. Saxo-Norman features, perhaps belonging to timber structures lay in the south and east of the site. Undisturbed medieval soil layers were identified in the south and south-east of the site, including deposits abutting a possible 12th-century stone wall foundation with 15th-century modifications. The building would have fronted St Johns Street. There was a 13th-century stone building in the south-east of the site along the same frontage. A 17th-century stone building stood along Fetter Street. Buried soil layers of the 17th-18th centuries were present, cut by 19th-century features and wall foundations. Remains of the 19th-century buildings survived along St Johns Street and Fetter Street. Deep cellars of 20th-century date precluded excavation of trenches along the Angel Street frontage.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

During April 2010 Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) carried out an archaeological trial excavation at Angel Street Car Park, Northampton (Fig 1; Centred on SP 7548 6028). The work was carried out for Property Services, Northamptonshire County Council in advance of plans to develop the car park for new offices.

Trial trench excavations were carried out previously in 1990 at the request of the County Archaeologist at that time. The work revealed the potential for extensive archaeological remains likely to be affected by construction works (Shaw 1993). A brief was issued for further work in 2000, attached to a new planning proposal, but this subsequently fell into abeyance (Flitcroft 2000). Prior to the present application the County Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council issued a requirement for further work in 2010 to obtain detailed information in other parts of the site to inform decisions for a revised planning proposal (Mather 2009). Northamptonshire Archaeology compiled a Project Design to define and agree the scope of works which identified five new trenches positioned to assess the archaeological significance of the site (Soden 2010). The Project Design was approved by the County Archaeological Advisor who monitored the subsequent work.

Following examination of the exposed archaeology during monitoring, it was agreed that post-excavation reporting would include summary information collated from the 1990 report and records. This document comprises the sum of that work and the recent evaluation.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Archaeological background

The site under investigation lies within the southern portion of the medieval town of Northampton, outside the defended circuit of the Saxon town. Evaluation in 1990 showed that medieval frontage remains survived along both the Fetter Street and St Johns Street

pavements, while the Angel Street frontage was believed to be primarily cellared with the buried archaeology largely destroyed (Shaw 1993). Behind the two frontages were likely to remain the yards and back-plots, which in Northampton usually contain numerous rubbish pits and buried soils, often above the backfill of quarry pits. The evaluation in 1990 suggested that remains might survive which indicate a potentially Saxo-Norman medieval timber phase of construction on Fetter Street, while on St Johns Street this was apparently succeeded by a stone-founded set of buildings, probably in the 12th-13th centuries, when Northampton reached its medieval heyday under the Plantagenet kings. This pattern of activity is not unlike that exhibited on sites excavated nearby at Black Lion Hill (Shaw 1985), St James End (Shaw and Soden 1996), Woolmonger Street (Soden 1998-9) and Kingswell Street (Brown 2008).

The site incorporates a massive, brick- and concrete-retained terrace and the land bears all the hallmarks of intensive earthmoving and levelling during more recent development. This has significantly reduced the potential of the central portion of the site to retain archaeology.

Much of the central and north-west parts of the site, including the larger part of the Angel Street frontage are known to contain cellars (Fig 1). The cellars are of modern origin and relate to former structural configurations of the site since the 1st edition Ordnance Survey was mapped in 1885.

## 2.2 Historic map evidence

All four streets which surround the site are shown on the earliest map of Northampton, Speed's map of 1610, and are likely to have formed part of the medieval town street pattern. Bridge Street was a major thoroughfare leading from South Bridge to the town centre and was probably densely occupied from at least the 11th century. The other streets represent minor thoroughfares that probably had densely occupied frontages during the 12th to 13th centuries. At this time the town lay before the gates of a royal castle, and benefited from considerable patronage. During the reign of King John the town was foremost amongst the urban centres of England, rising in royal favour almost to that of the capital (King 1988, 178). The town was successively mapped from 1610, showing development on the site.

### *The maps*

- |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1610 Speed map          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Five properties front onto Bridge Street, the northernmost at the corner of Angel Street may depict a larger building.</li><li>• A single building is depicted within the block, parallel alongside Fetter Street.</li><li>• A boundary, probably a wall, is shown along St Johns Street.</li><li>• An entrance road opens into the block from Angel Street at its west end.</li><li>• There is no internal detail to the block.</li></ul>                                                                                     |
| 1746 Noble & Butlin map | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are five principal groups of properties within the block; the Bridge Street frontage, properties along Angel Street, a block in the north-east containing buildings and two large areas of trees, possibly orchards.</li><li>• Bridge Street is fully built up and depicts a large courtyard property at the northern end with five other properties to the south.</li><li>• Angel Street and the northern part of Fetter Street are built up. Five properties extend to the rear of Angel Street. There is an</li></ul> |

- opening to a rear court at the north-east corner of the plot from Angel Street and to the rear of buildings fronting Fetter Street.
- Three further properties lie south of the court along Fetter Street. A narrow plot lies immediately south of the court, adjacent to a plot showing trees, a further plot showing trees lies south of this at the corner of Fetter Street and St Johns Street, without frontage buildings.
  - There is a single building mid-way along St Johns Street, which is labelled Three Pots Lane. The building lies in the corner of a property containing trees between the rear boundary of Bridge Street and the plots on Fetter Street. A small building also appears in its north-west corner and to the rear of the southernmost property on Bridge Street.
  - There is an area of ground towards the centre of the block that is not immediately associated with any of the frontages, but which may have been accessed from Angel Street.
- 1807 Roper & Cole map
- The five principal groups of properties remain with minor changes.
  - The arrangement of the rear property divisions is more clearly depicted than on the earlier maps.
  - Some minor changes indicate that the principal divisions are likely to have been relics.
  - Rear property boundaries have been rearranged along Angel Street with the accretion of an outbuilding.
  - The court within the north-east of the block is now clearly divided depicting an empty plot along the Angel Street frontage from the rear of properties fronting Fetter Street.
  - The two plots containing trees along Fetter Street have been combined.
  - The plot containing trees along St Johns Street now extends fully to the rear of the properties on Angel Street with no dead ground between.
  - St Johns Street is still called Three Pots Lane.
- 1847 Wood & Law map
- The five principal groups of properties remain but are perhaps less distinct without the benefit of the other maps.
  - All of the frontages depict buildings. The block is fairly heavily occupied and no trees are present. Most of the buildings appear to surround small plots of open ground giving the impression of courtyard areas. There are many outbuildings depicted to the rear of Angel Street.
  - Bridge Street and Fetter Street are fully built up.
  - Angel Street is almost fully built up with an entrance via an alleyway along its eastern end into a court in the centre of the block.
  - St Johns Street, now renamed such, has five breaks along its frontage, each entering into small courtyards or providing access to rear yards.
- 1885 1:500 scale Ordnance Survey map
- The five principal groups of properties are still distinct, although alterations to the rear of Angel Street and Fetter Street make their original divisions less easy to pick out.
  - The level of detail is a good deal higher than previous maps but properties along St Johns Street and the majority of Fetter Street are of a very different arrangement to those depicted by Wood & Law. The East Midlands Electricity

Board premises occupy the south-east corner of the block, with terraced residences along Fetter Street to its north side. All of these rear plots have been reorganised.

- Properties fronting Bridge Street and Angel Street appear largely unchanged, although the rear yard areas have minor changes and there are considerably more outbuildings and rear extensions than in 1847.
- The larger open area to the rear of Angel Street now depicts an access from the west end of the street, which may or may not have been covered previously. This is marked as a smithy with ancillary buildings.
- The centre of the block, formerly accessible from the east end of Angel Street, now depicts gardens, cut off from their original access. There are a few scattered trees.

### **The street names**

*Table 1: Street names*

Bridge Street	First mentioned in 1323, the name is derived from its topographical relationship with the river crossing (Gover <i>et al</i> 1975, 7).
Angel Street	Previously known as Knyghtstrete, in 1499 (Gover <i>et al</i> 1975, 7). Angel Lane was mentioned in 1504 and purportedly took its name from the Angel Inn at its west end, depicted by Noble & Butlin on the north side of the street.
Fetter Street	Ascribed to the 13th century by Cox (1898, 520). An orchard and garden in Felterstrete were mentioned in a document of 1545 (Gairdner and Brodie 1905, 308).
St Johns Street	Named for St Johns Hospital, south of the street. It was also called Three Potts Lane in the 18th-19th centuries, derived from a cheap beer shop on the corner of Bridge Street (Cox 1898, 527).

### **2.3 Historic Environment Record (HER) data**

At the time of the 1990 trial excavations and desk-based study, little archaeological fieldwork had taken place and only two sites were recorded in the, then, Northamptonshire Sites and Monuments Record (Shaw 1993, 7). Since then the level of information has been greatly increased to the degree that even a small radius search brings up a considerable number of references. Figure 2 shows the location of all known references for the 2010 HER data within 75m radius of the centre of the site, the data is summarised in Table 2 below. Much of the data refers to one of four categories; the street network and road routes, the 1990 trial excavations at St Johns Street on the site of the demolished East Midlands Electricity Board, the Hospital of St John across the road to the south-west and the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings that stand in various modified forms around the vicinity of the site.

Table 2: Historic Environment Record (HER) data

<b>HER number</b>	<b>Period(s)</b>	<b>Brief description</b>
1160/0/52	M	19th-century stucco building, 36 Bridge Street
1160/0/145	Med	Possible medieval metalworking site
1160/0/168	PM-M	Line of All Saints and St Giles parish boundary
1160/0/194	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 7 Bridge Street
1160/0/195	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 17 Bridge Street
1160/0/196	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 19 Bridge Street
1160/0/410	M	WW2 Armaments depot, Old Midland Station RAOC relief depot
1160/0/44	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 16 Bridge Street
1160/0/49	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 20-22 Bridge Street
1160/0/51	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 24 Bridge Street
1160/0/53	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 56 Bridge Street
1160/0/55	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 58 Bridge Street
1160/0/708	PM-M	Building, possible former chapel, rear of 36 Bridge Street
1160/0/709	M	Building, fast food outlet, 38 Bridge Street
1160/0/711	M	Building, nightclub, 40 Bridge Street
1160/2	Sax	Northampton's Saxon defences
1160/3/28	Med	Postern gate, near to Cow Lane
1160/7	Med-PM	St Johns Hospital
1160/7/1	Med-M	St Johns Roman Catholic Church, former chapel of the Hospital of St John, founded c1137
1160/7/2	Med	The Master's House, Hospital of St John
1160/7/3	Med-M	St Johns Church Hall, former infirmary of the Hospital of St John
1160/7/4	E Med	Yard surface?
1160/7/5	Med	Possible church, Hospital of St John
1160/7/6	Med	The cemetery, Hospital of St John
1160/7/7	Med	Courtyard, Hospital of St John
1160/7/9	Med-PM	Garden, Hospital of St John
1160/7/10	Med-PM	Master's Garden, Hospital of St John
1160/7/11	Med	Barrel-vaulted cellar (Moore and Giggins 1977)
1160/85/1	Med-PM	The George Hotel
1160/89	M	The Angel Hotel
1160/89/1	M	19th-century stucco building with welsh slate roof
1160/89/2	PM-M	18th-century ironstone well
1160/90	M	County Hall, formerly the County Gaol
1160/90/1	PM-M	County Hall, George Row frontage (west wing)
1160/90/2	M	County Council Offices, formerly the Gaol
1160/102	Med-PM	Tenements, east of Bridge Street and south of George Row
1160/102/0	Med	Finds, unspecified
1160/102/1	PM-M	Early 19th-century shop front, 9-11 Bridge Street
1160/103	Med	Tenements, south of George Row
1160/103/1	L Med-M	8-9a George Row, formerly 15th-century Talbot Inn and 18th-19th-century infirmary
1160/103/2	PM-M	The Sessions House
1160/104	Med-PM	Tenements, north of Angel Street
1160/105	Med-PM	Tenements, south and west end of Angel Street
1160/106	Med-PM	Tenements, north of St Johns Street, between Bridge Street and Fetter Street
1160/106/0	Med	Finds from St Johns Street trial excavations (Shaw 1993)
1160/106/1	E Med	12th-century timber building, St Johns Street and Fetter Street
1160/106/2	Med	13th-century stone building, St Johns Street and Fetter Street
1160/106/3	PM-M	Possible post-medieval building, St Johns Street and Fetter Street
1160/109	Med-PM	Tenements, east of Fetter street
1160/110	Med-PM	Tenements, west of Fetter Street
1160/110/0	Med-PM	Finds from St Johns Street trial excavations (Shaw 1993)
1160/110/1	Med	Foundations of medieval stone building, St Johns Street
1160/110/2	Med	Probable medieval quarry pits, St Johns Street
1160/110/3	Med	Features and deposits excavated in 1990 (Shaw 1993)

HER number	Period(s)	Brief description
1160/110/4	Med	Possible timber building excavated in 1990 (Shaw 1993)
1160/110/5	Med	Possible terrace boundary identified in 1990 (Shaw 1993)
1160/110/6	Med	Ditch on lower terrace excavated in 1990 (Shaw 1993)
1160/110/7	L Med-M	Post-medieval building excavated in 1990 (Shaw 1993)
1160/110/8	Med	Possible property boundary identified in 1990 (Shaw 1993)
1160/136	Med-PM	Tenements, east of Bridge Street and south of Angel Street
1160/136/0	Med	Pottery finds from East Midlands Electricity Board buildings
1160/138	M	Corporation Charity School, Bridge Street
1160/138/1	M	School hall, 60a-b Bridge Street
1160/138/2	M	School house, 1811 brick-built, 60 Bridge Street
1160/139	M	The Eagle & Child, public house
1160/139/1	M	Building, The Eagle & Child, public house
1160/140	PM-M	The Waggon & Horses, public house
1160/140/1	PM-M	Building, The Waggon & Horses, public house since Charles II
1160/204	L Med-PM	Tenements, south end and west side of Kingswell Street
1160/205	Med-PM	Tenements, middle and west side of Bridge Street
1160/205/1	Med	Occupation deposits and pottery
1160/205/2	Med	Possible hearth and ironworking site, occupation deposits
1160/205/3	Med	Possible building, postholes and occupation deposits
1160/206	Med-PM	Tenements, north and west side of Bridge Street
1160/206/0	Med	Unstratified medieval finds
1160/206/1	Med	Possible medieval ironworking site
1160/206/2	PM-M	Possible garden, 22 Bridge Street
1160/206/3	PM-M	The Saddlers Arms, public house, 26-28 Bridge Street
1160/211/1	Med-PM	Kingswell Street
1160/212	Med-PM	Possible road route
1160/212/1	Med-PM	Frances Jetty
1160/233	Med-PM	Tenements, north of St Johns Street and west of Swan Street
1160/233/0	Med-M	Pottery finds, mixed assemblage
1160/234	Med-M	The Bell Inn
1160/237	Med-PM	Tenements, south of Angel Street and west of Swan Street
1160/239	U	Road route
1160/239/0	U	Unassigned
1160/239/1	Med-PM	Angel Street
1160/240/1	Med-PM	Fetter Street
1160/241/1	Med-PM	St John Street, aka Three Pots Lane
1160/304/1	PM-M	Building, The Bell Inn, 18 Bridge Street
1160/305	Med-M	Terraced house, 30-32 Bridge Street
1160/305/1	PM-M	18th-19th-century shop front, 30-32b Bridge Street
1160/307	M	Terraced house, 42-48 Bridge Street
1160/307/1	M	Early 19th-century shop front, 42-48 Bridge Street
1160/342	Med-M	North to south road route through centre of town via Bridge Street
1160/342/1	Med-PM	Bridge Street
1160/342/2	Med	Finds from water board trench (Moore and Giggins 1977)
1160/342/3	Med	Metalled road surfaces of Bridge Street
1160/377	L Sax-M	Bridge Street
1160/464	M	Henry Mobbs Engineers & Vulcan Ironworks, later Phipps & Son Co-operative Society, ironworks, leatherworks and store
1160/464/1	M	Building, engineering works, leather warehouse and shop, 34-38 Guildhall Road
1160/471	M	Basset-Lowke Model Railway Engineers, model and toy factory
1160/471/1	M	Building, formerly used by Basset-Lowke, rear of 38 Bridge Street
5187	RB	Possible Romano-British activity
5187/0/0	RB	Pottery, unstratified
6677/0/0	U	Residual flint scraper and flake, found 1990 (Shaw 1993)
6745/1	L Sax-PM	London to Derby road route
9279/1	M	Hardingstone to Stony Stratford turnpike

Key: RB = Romano-British, Sax = Saxon, Med = Medieval, PM = Post-medieval, M = Modern, U = Undated

## 2.4 Topography and geology

The site comprises c0.7ha of land occupied by a car park on two levels, split between north and south, terraced where the former hillside sloped downwards to the south. The site lies between c62-66m above Ordnance Datum on its north and south sides. It is bounded to the north by Angel Street, to the east by Fetter Street, to the south by St Johns Street and to the west by the rear boundary of properties fronting Bridge Street.

The geology of the site comprises sedimentary Jurassic Ironstone and Northampton Sand with ironstone ([www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm)).

## 2.5 Borehole data

A borehole survey was conducted prior to the trial excavations in 1990 (Fig 1). The borehole logs, which were found in the Northampton Borough Museum archive, indicate that the boreholes were excavated to 25m depth. The following table summarises this information:

*Table 3: Borehole data*

Strata	Top of strata (m above OD)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Modern brick and concrete deposits	65.60	67.50	63.50	63.40	62.40
Made ground (includes archaeology)	65.20	66.20	62.50	63.10	60.60
Northampton Sand with Ironstone	64.60	65.55	61.70	62.70	58.40
Upper Lias Clay	61.20	61.50	59.80	61.40	57.90

## 3 EXCAVATION STRATEGY

### 3.1 Aims and objectives

Some areas of the site, because of the terrace and known cellarage, have little or no remaining archaeological potential. However, the repeated re-development of the two main frontages lacking cellars on Fetter Street and St Johns Street has created a sequence of domestic occupation that may be as long as 1000 years. Whilst the 1990 evaluation was able to suggest this as a likelihood, it was clear that the percentage of the site was not sufficiently reliable for current planning requirements.

The overall aim of the project was to gain a better appreciation of the archaeological remains preserved within the site in light of more recent work in the town. Particular objectives allowing this to be achieved were:

- to further examine the extent, thickness, depth of burial, date, character and significance of the structural and artefactual remains in areas that were not examined by the 1990 evaluation or were inadequately covered by current standards.
- to collect further information with particular attention to the frontages along Fetter Street and St Johns Street where the 1990 work recorded preserved archaeological remains
- to correlate the information of the 1990 and 2010 fieldwork as a single document, producing a synthesis of the combined results

- to confirm or refute the received wisdom about the likely effects of terracing across the current site and provide a wider topographical context for the trial excavations.

### 3.2 Methodology

#### ***Updated desk-based assessment***

Previous desk-based research was undertaken for the site prior to trial excavations in 1990 (Shaw 1993). This has been summarised for the purposes of setting the new works into an updated context.

Sites on which excavation has taken place within a radius of 75m of the current site were mapped, together with an indication of the contours of the medieval archaeology beyond the current site, complimenting the assessment and synthesis of data from the 1990 works.

#### ***Trial excavations***

The results of the 1990 trial excavations are integrated into the excavated evidence for the 2010 works, providing analysis by comparison of deposits and enabling an interpretation that allows for the more fluid synthesis of the archaeology as a whole.

The 2010 trial excavations were divided between five trenches (Figs 1 and 3):

- Trench 1 was c22m by 2.0m and located to investigate the north half of the Fetter Street frontage. The northern end of this trench tested for the presence of a purported cellar at Fetter Street's junction with Angel Street.
- Trench 2 was c10.5m by 2.0m and located to investigate the southern half of the Fetter Street frontage in an attempt to link up with the stratification encountered in the 1990 evaluation Trench E.
- Trench 3 was c16.5m by 2.0m and located to investigate the eastern portion of the St Johns Street frontage. This trench also attempted to examine archaeological remains between the stratification encountered in the 1990 evaluation Trench E and that of Trench D.
- Trench 4 was c14.5m x 2.0m and located to investigate the potential back-plot extending from the western portion of the St Johns Street frontage into the site.
- Trench 5 was originally planned as a c20m by 1.8m, L-shaped trench, to look at an area which is recorded as partly cellared but lies closest to the historic Angel Hotel. The trench sought to investigate whether historic yards and back-plots survived which related to the Angel Hotel. The true extent of cellarage present made this impossible and the trench was abandoned.

The trenches were set out to make the best use of the available areas without causing undue damage to tarmac surfaces. Their locations were measured into extant site boundaries that have known positions on the modern Ordnance Survey. Modern deposits were removed to the surface of the archaeological horizon as defined by dark soils containing post-medieval pottery fabrics immediately below brick demolition and levelling deposits. Machine excavation was carried out by a tracked 360° mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and operating under archaeological supervision. Movement of machinery during site preparation was conducted in such a manner as to avoid impact on the car park.

The excavated trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features or deposits, and hand excavation was employed where practicable to examine their sequence and relationships. A hand drawn site plan of all archaeological features was made at a scale of 1:50, related to the Ordnance Survey. All archaeological deposits and artefacts encountered during the course of excavation were fully recorded. The recording methodology followed the standard NA context recording system with context sheets, cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs, both in 35mm monochrome film and on colour slides (NA 2006). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. The record was supplemented by direct annotations of the site general plan as required. All levels were related to Ordnance Survey datum. Sections of sampled features were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate, and related to Ordnance Survey datum. No deposits were encountered that were considered suitable for environmental sampling, since all layers largely comprised gradual soil accumulations rather than discrete single event deposits (EH 2002).

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (1994, revised 2008) and the *Code of Conduct* (1985, revised 2009).

#### ***Limitations of the evidence***

Archaeological remains were buried at great depth and survived within a thick stratigraphic sequence. Effective retrieval of more extensive and detailed information than is presented by this report was impractical for the size of the trenches agreed and the scope of the project. This was made more difficult by the discovery of asbestos in the modern brick rubble layers, which curtailed field excavation at an early stage.

## **4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

### **4.1 Summary of excavations from 2010**

*Table 4: Principal archaeological features and deposits, 2010*

<b>Period</b>	<b>Nature of activity</b>
Saxo-Norman ( <i>terminus post quem</i> c1100)	No evidence
Norman (c1100-1200)	Buried soil deposits overlying natural substrate abut a possible early stone wall foundation in Trench 4
High medieval (c1200-1400)	Buried soil layers in Trench 2 Possible stone wall in Trench 3
Late medieval to early post-medieval (c1400-1550)	Possible stone wall (unconfirmed date) in Trench 1 Stone-lined well (unconfirmed date) in Trench 1 Buried soil layers in Trench 2 Possible rebuild of upper wall in Trench 4 Stone slabs and posthole in Trench 4 Possible occupation layer in Trench 4
Post-medieval (c1550-1680)	Buried soil layers in Trenches 1 and 2 Possible demolition layer in Trench 4

<b>Period</b>	<b>Nature of activity</b>
Late post-medieval to modern (c1680-1900)	Brick floor and subfloor layer in Trench 2 Brick industrial features in Trench 2 Brick wall foundations in Trenches 2-3 Brick and stone cellar in Trench 3 Latrine pit in Trench 3 Buried soil layers in Trenches 3 and 4
Modern (since 1900)	Salt glazed ceramic foul water pipe in Trench 1 Brick wall foundations in Trench 1 Concrete foundations in Trenches 1 and 4 Brick cellars in Trenches 1 and 4 Post-demolition levelling layers in Trenches 1-4 Car park surfacing layers in Trenches 1-4

#### 4.2 Summary of excavations from 1990

The information for 1990 trench features and deposits is drawn from the original planning report (Shaw 1993). Detailed information on the thickness of deposits and their relationships was not included in the original planning report, which also omits much of the information for more recent developments, their make-up and the relationships of late post-medieval to modern features and deposits.

Table 5: Principal archaeological features and deposits, 1990

<b>Period</b>	<b>Nature of activity</b>
Saxo-Norman ( <i>terminus post quem</i> c1100)	Two features (ditch terminals or pits) in Trench A Three postholes in Trench B Quarry pit in Trench C Two slots and eight postholes in Trench D Possible occupation horizon in Trench D Later posthole and two pits in Trench D
Norman (c1100-1200)	Buried soil layers in Trench A Possible destruction layer of burning in Trench D Possible early stone wall foundation in Trench D Floor occupation layers abutting the wall in Trench D
High medieval (c1200-1400)	Stone wall foundation in Trench A Buried soil layers in Trench A Terracing of the natural hill slope in Trench B Two features (ditch terminals or pits) in Trench B Posthole in Trench B Large quarry pit or earthen cellar in Trench C Stone wall foundation in Trench C Robbing of the stone wall foundation in Trench C Shallow ditch and recut in Trench C Stone-lined pit in Trench C Hearth pit and two postholes in Trench D Occupation layers in Trench D Second hearth pit with two postholes in Trench D Quarry pits in Trench E Stone walls in Trench E Abandonment and robbing activity in Trench E
Late medieval to early post-medieval (c1400-1550)	Ditch in Trench B Buried soil layers in Trench C Stone wall additions and buried soil layers in Trench D

<b>Period</b>	<b>Nature of activity</b>
Post-medieval (c1550-1680)	Stone wall, clay floor and occupation layers in Trench B Possible abandonment layer in Trench B Shallow gully in Trench E
Late post-medieval to modern (c1680-1900)	Buried soil layers in Trenches A-E Shallow pit in Trench B Five postholes in Trench D Stone wall foundation in Trench D
Modern (since 1900)	Post-demolition levelling layers in Trench B Ceramic drain pipe and brick foundation in Trench B Service trench cut in Trench C Post-demolition levelling layers in Trenches D and E Brick store for oil storage tank in Trench E

#### 4.3 Trench 1, 2010

The earliest feature in Trench 1 was a circular stone-lined well [120] where it cut the natural substrate in the south end of the trench at 65.29m above Ordnance Datum (Fig 3). The well was c1.4-1.8m in diameter and was exposed for a matter of minutes before the eastern trench side collapsed covering it from view. The stone structure appeared to be local Northampton Sand with Ironstone blocks (hereafter referred to as “the local stone”), roughly hewn and laid in a dry-stone fashion, very similar to those excavated at Kingswell Street (Brown 2008). Its fill comprised greenish-grey silty clay, but there was no obvious visible pottery from the side of the trench. Dark greenish-brown silty clay (118) with mottled orange-grey-brown variations overlay the well, merging gradually towards darker soft friable blackish-brown silty loam (117). This garden soil lay at around the same level as the base course of a possible stone wall foundation [116], also in local stone, which lay east to west and comprised dry-stone blocks roughly 480mm by 350mm by 280mm in size. The wall was overlain by light greenish-grey and brown silty clay (115) with frequent charcoal flecks and small stones up to 45mm in size. The wall and deposits were too deep to be examined safely by hand, but their combined depth was 2.2m, approximately 2.7m in total from the ground surface. They were stratigraphically earlier than anything else in the trench and are likely to have been late medieval or early post-medieval in date. No finds could be retrieved to confirm this.

Further along the trench, 10m to the north, a buried soil surviving between foundations was examined in a sondage (Fig 4). The thickness of the entire sequence was 2.2m deep, with no other obstructions or features above the natural. The soils comprised dark greyish-brown silty clay (113), mixed with occasional charcoal flecks, red tile flecks and moderate small stones. They merged gradually towards lighter greyish-brown silt clay (112) with less stone, closer to the surface, but there were no distinct changes of horizon between. The lower layer produced three sherds of pottery, two residual late medieval sherds and one sherd of 16th-century Midland Blackware. Due to the depth, the sondage was filled in immediately thereafter.

The remainder of the trench was heavily disturbed by modern structural features. A salt glazed foul water pipe [108] was laid in 0.68m long sections across the northern end of the trench and was encased in a protective brick shell. There were four large foundations. Foundation [103] lay north to south along the southern 11m of the trench and was 2.2m deep, directly overlying well [120] (Fig 5). It was constructed using a stretcher bond from modern frogged bricks, stamped LBC PHORPRES (four-times pressed clay), denoting the London Brick Company. Crossing the trench perpendicular to this, on its north side, was concrete foundation [104], 0.54m wide, providing the base for two courses of a 0.36m wide brick wall. To the north of this lay concrete foundation [105], aligned east to west, it

lay 0.9m below the surface. This formed the base for a disused drain which met with its former brick built inspection pit and manhole cover in the east side of the trench. A concrete stanchion [107] measured 1.05m wide by 0.7m deep and was located in the west side of the trench section towards the north end.

At the northernmost end of the trench lay a brick cellar [106] (Fig 1). The cellar wall was two courses thick and lay upon a rough-hewn ironstone foundation base. Eight courses survived to a height of 0.9m, using a cross bond to tie the bricks together. The brick was unmortared, each brick of regular size; 225mm by 115mm by 90mm and perforated in the style of bricks c1880-1900. The cellar was filled with dark black-grey sandy loam and grit (111) with frequent charcoal, modern glass, brick and tile. Above this was a dump of mixed rubble comprising mainly greyish-brown sandy loam (110) containing slate, brick and stone. The surface was sealed by a 210mm thick concrete floor (109) that extended as far as the stanchion base [107]. Surface layers elsewhere along the trench largely comprised mixed demolition rubble levelling layers (102) to a maximum thickness of 0.74m, capped with up to 140mm of orange-brown surface gravel (101).

#### 4.4 Trenches A and B, 1990

##### **Trench A**

The natural substrate was located at 64.24m above Ordnance Datum, c1.4m below ground level. Two ditch terminals or pits cut the natural substrate in Trench A (Fig 6). Ditch/pit [9] was 0.60m wide by 0.30m deep, whilst ditch/pit [10] was 0.75m wide by 0.30m deep. Both had steep sloping sides and rounded bases. They produced pottery with a *terminus post quem* date around cAD1100, suggesting that they were of Saxon-Norman origin.

A stone wall [5] was uncovered parallel to Fetter Street comprising faced Local stone blocks with a rubble core, 0.60m wide (Fig 7). Its foundation trench contained pottery of late 13th-century date. Both the wall and pits were overlain by dark brown clay loam (4) which produced 12th-century pottery, at least some of which was residual, but it is also likely that an accumulation of material up to 1.0m thick probably comprised several merging layers of soil that were not clearly identifiable in 1990. The earliest of these would have been 12th-century, with the upper portion post-dating the demise of wall [5] prior to the 17th-century, perhaps in the late medieval period.

Loamy soil layer (3) overlay the late medieval deposits and was c400-600mm thick, containing some 17th-century pottery and a piece of painted medieval window glass. It was in turn overlain by loamy soil layer (2), c400mm thick. These deep buried soils were probably associated with long periods of horticulture, possibly orchards, denoted on the early map evidence in 1746 and 1807. Building rubble (1) and modern car parking layers completed the sequence, the full extent and detail of which was not recorded at that time.

##### **Trench B**

The natural substrate in Trench B lay at 65.00m above Ordnance Datum, c1.3m below ground level. There were three postholes [41, 43, 45] cut into the substrate which may have been part of a structure (Fig 8). One of the postholes produced Saxon-Norman pottery. Ditch terminals or pits [37] and [53] were of probable 13th-century origin. The former was 0.15m deep and the latter was 0.55m deep.

On the south side of the trench a substantial cut [23] that indicated a sudden drop in the natural by up to 0.4m (Fig 9). The terrace could not be earlier than the late medieval period, as only features and deposits of later date were preserved within it. One of these was posthole [57], which produced late 13th-century pottery; the other was a possible shallow ditch [55], 0.25m deep, which produced 15th-century pottery. Given that the

current county ceramic type series had not been formally established at this time it may be that some late medieval wares with long periods of production such as Brill Boarstall and Potterspury ware could easily carry the date into the 15th-century and argue for a later rather than earlier terracing of the hillside.

A stone wall, [30], lay along the line of the earlier terrace, perhaps preserving a property boundary and could have been the southern wall of a building upon the upper terrace. Layers of clay (39) and loam (29, 35) immediately abutted its north side that may have represented floor and occupation layers. Pottery from these layers provided a 17th-18th-century date and may correspond to a mapped boundary from that period, although the lack of detail on the early maps means that the specific boundary cannot be identified.

A shallow pit [49] cut through the layers at their northern edge and all were overlain by a post-abandonment layer of clay loam (28), 200mm thick, which abutted the side of wall [30]. The buried soil produced pottery of 17th-century date. Further buried soil layers (27, 26) overlay the first and an extended period of horticultural activity such as the orchards suggested on the 17th to 18th-century maps was a likely source. Pit [47] was a shallow, 0.14m deep, disturbance in the top of the buried soil.

On the lower terrace features [55] and [57] were overlain by 0.80m of demolition material (38) including clay, brick and tile within its make-up. The associated pottery was of 18th to 19th-century date. The layer was cut by a recent ceramic drain [34] and at the northern end of the trench a brick foundation [25] was cut from the same level. Both features were overlain by a modern buried soil (21), 0.4m thick, which was not identified in Trench 1 and is probably limited in extent, and a layer of sand and brick rubble (20) that formed the base of the car park surface.

#### 4.5 Trench 2, 2010

Excavation to 62.17m above Ordnance Datum did not expose the natural substrate horizon. The lower 1.0m of excavated deposits comprised buried soil layers that gradually merged from slightly more clayey soils towards a loamy upper horizon (Fig 10). Colouration remained consistent and indistinguishable. Light brown sandy clay (210) with moderate well sorted small rounded pebbles up to 50mm in diameter lay at the base, over 0.2m thick, and produced pottery consistent with a potential 13th-century date. Above this was c.0.4m of slightly less clayey soil (209), which produced 15th-century pottery. Its uppermost horizon merged towards a loose sandy loam (208) in the top c.0.4m of soil, which produced pottery of 16th-century date.

A brick wall foundation [205] was aligned north to south (Fig 10), 0.6m deep, cutting the top of the buried soils, with deposit (207) filling the foundation cut and abutting it. It lay in the west side of the trench and its full width was not exposed, but is probably two courses thick. The bricks were of a mould-made type, which were poorly mortared together in a stretcher bond, with the top course laid cross-wise and on edge.

Overlying the buried soils was a layer of black gritty sandy loam (207), speckled with patches of orange sandstone, brick flecks and rich in charcoal throughout. The layer was 0.18m thick and contained a high level of coarse burnt residue, probably industrial waste, used as a levelling layer for the brick floor above it. Cut into this deposit was a small rectangular brick structure [206], over 1.05m long by 0.8m wide, and containing a central rectangular slot that was 0.33m wide (Fig 11). The bricks were one course thick and heavily mortared together using coarse hard greyish-white cement. The feature was probably of 19th-century industrial origin, but was not further investigated due to concerns over trench stability.

Brick bat floor (203) was laid across the whole of the trench and was 65mm thick. The individual bricks were of uniform size, 215mm by 110mm by 65mm, laid flat in a stretcher pattern and worn smooth at the surface from constant use. There were no signs of apertures, beam slots or holes cut into the surface, although it had been damaged in antiquity.

Above the brick floor was 0.7m of demolition rubble (202) comprising large chunks of brick wall, still mortared together, loose brick, a traffic cone, shattered asbestos roofing tiles, coarse orange sand, wood soaked in creosote and degraded ironwork. The sequence was completed by 70mm of compacted orange sandy clay gravel (201) at the surface.

#### 4.6 Trench 3, 2010

The stratigraphic sequence is best understood through reference to the illustrated drawings (Figs 3 and 12), which show the trench plan and part of the south section (Fig 13). The natural substrate horizon was not reached at the base of the trench, c1.7m below the car park surface and excavation ceased at 61.95m above Ordnance Datum

A possible wall [320], built from local stone was aligned north to south, and comprising roughly hewn blocks of 240mm by 220mm by 90mm size or larger arranged in a row. Only the top of the wall was exposed and its full depth was not investigated due to safety constraints of working at depth. The wall produced a single sherd of Potterspury ware and is of 13th to 17th-century date. Blinkhorn (below) feels that this is likely to be an earlier piece within that range. Abutting the west side of the wall was dark greyish-black silty clay loam (318) with infrequent yellowish sandy flecks, over 0.35m thick.

The layer of soil above this sealed both the wall [320] and soil layer (318). It comprised dark blackish-grey silty clay loam (307/311) with occasional charcoal flecks and moderate small stones, 0.37m thick. The layer produced a clay tobacco-pipe bowl that dates to c1690-1730.

Cutting both wall [320] and the buried soils (318, 307/311) was a foundation trench [321], which was 4.1m long by 0.5m wide by 0.96m deep where it was exposed. The sides were near vertical, with a slight ragged slope, probably cut very wide from the top, but now no longer visible. The base of the trench was probably not far below the trench depth as disturbed stones from the top of wall [320] were visible in the fill. The foundation trench was cut for a substantial stone wall [305] which was aligned east to west in the south side of the trench section. It was probably the outside of a cellar wall. The wall was built from Local stone cut into roughly hewn blocks of similar size, 230mm by 150mm by 110mm, and cemented with yellowish-orange sandy mortar up to nine courses deep. The fill (322) cast back into the foundation cut comprised coarse mixed dirty orange-yellow sand with yellowish-white mortar flecks, red brick flecks and dark black rotten wood residues, charcoal and fragmented sandstone. Layer (306/310), which was spread across the trench above the darker soil (307/311), was probably created around the time the cellar wall [305] was built. It comprised a mixed soil and rubble layer of orange-yellow sandy clay in bands with dark greyish-brown silty clay horizons, fragmented ironstone scattered throughout, along with mortar patches and slate. Notably there was no brick or tile in the layer. It also produced a clay tobacco-pipe bowl dated c1690-1730, although this may be residual. The upper four courses of brick [304], were laid in stretcher bond above a line of headers and seem to have been added much later above the stone cellar. Plain red brick of uniform size, 230mm by 111mm by 71mm, were cemented together with soft yellowish sandy mortar.

After the cellar was built a stone-lined pit, [319], was added on its west side, probably a latrine pit abutting a property boundary. The pit was cut vertically through the fill of the cellar construction trench and the surrounding layers. It was 1.28m wide by 0.88m deep. The stone lining packed the sides of the pit, loosely, in a rough rectangle. The stone was generally squared off, but arranged in a rough non-uniform dry-stone fashion to prevent the sides of the pit collapsing. The contents provided a stratified sequence of six fills described in Table 6 below (contexts listed with basal fill at the bottom of the table). Fill (316) produced two sherds of 19th-century pottery.

*Table 6: Stratified fills of latrine pit [319]*

Context	Description	Thickness
<i>Top</i>		
326	Soft sandy yellowish-cream powdered mortar with pieces of crushed brick < 40mm diameter (backfill)	60mm
327	Compact orange gravelly clay with frequent small rounded pebbles and sandstone < 20mm in diameter (backfill)	150mm
314	Compact dark orange-brown gravelly clay with frequent crushed Local stone fragments < 80mm in diameter (backfill)	120mm
315	Compact yellowish-white sandy mortar with infrequent brick fragments < 60mm in diameter (backfill)	90mm
316	Soft dark blackish-brown silty loam with occasional charcoal flecks and small pebbles < 30mm in diameter (abandonment)	190mm
317	Yellowish-white sand with thin horizontal bands of greyish-brown silty loam, few pieces of sandstone < 80mm in diameter (use)	110mm
<i>Bottom</i>		

A stone wall foundation [324] was aligned east to west in the south side of the trench, 0.2m deep. The local stone blocks were roughly hewn and squared off, up to 160mm by 140mm by 110mm in size, and bonded together into two courses using orange sandy mortar. This foundation base truncated the top of latrine pit [119] but did not abut the neighbouring cellar wall [305] or its upper brick courses [304]. Laid upon the top of the foundation were three courses of brick wall [323] using the exact same technique as wall [304] and at the same level. The brick courses were probably contemporary, although foundation [324] and the cellar were probably not.

Overlying walls [323] and [304] was stiff orange-brown sandy clay (325), compacted with occasional fragmented brick, stone and with frequent white flecks up to 0.31m thick. This appeared to be some form of demolition layer. Above this was 0.15m thickness of loose orange gravel (312) formed of coarse sandstone nodules up to 30mm in diameter, which formed a surface.

At the west end of the trench was a large brick cellar [303] with a concrete base at 2.4m depth. The wall was two courses thick and built from red bricks of uniform size, 225mm by 105mm by 74mm, with cross ties and cemented crudely together with whitish-grey coarse sandy mortar. It was filled with brick demolition rubble, much like the layer above it and was probably filled when the last standing building was demolished (302).

At the east end of the trench was a substantial concrete foundation [308] that was 0.6m wide by 0.28m thick and L-shaped within the end of the trench. It was built at the east end of cellar wall [305] and probably denoted a former boundary, as well as a building foundation.

Both cellar [303] and foundation [308] were buried beneath mixed demolition rubble identical to that observed in Trench 2, which was 0.24m thick, and sealed by the car park surface gravel (301).

#### 4.7 Trenches C and E, 1990

##### **Trench C**

Excavated evidence suggested that this part of the site was heavily disturbed by medieval quarry pits (Figs 14-15). The natural substrate was only identified at the east end of the trench at 62.6m above Ordnance Datum, 0.7m below the ground surface.

In the north-east of the trench a substantial quarry pit [74] cut to a depth of 0.95m and produced pottery of Saxo-Norman date. To its west there was a larger quarry pit [96] that was over 8.5m in length, which could also be interpreted as an earthen cellar, the base of which lay beyond 1.2m deep. Quarry pit [96] was significantly later, producing pottery of late 13th-century date.

A foundation trench, [91], was cut into the top of the quarry fill that lay from north to south across the trench, 0.8m wide by 0.5m deep. Built within the trench was a wall, built in local stone and faced on both sides, with a rubble core. The wall had been robbed of stone at its northern end [95], probably during the late medieval period. All of the pottery associated with the wall was clearly residual.

A shallow ditch [103] and its recut [81] lay roughly parallel to the east side of the wall, probably perpetuating the same boundary. None of the material from this was later than the 13th-century. On its east side was a rough sandstone wall [77], thought to be the remains of a stone-lined pit, which was not excavated.

The features were all overlain by grey loam (80) that contained distinctly late medieval, probably 14th-century pottery. Further buried soils (82, 76, 75, 72, 71) raised the depth of the deposits up to c1.2m. A single modern trench [79] was identified, 0.8m wide by 0.9m deep, cutting the soil layers from the ground surface and there was no record of further sealing layers (Shaw 1993).

##### **Trench E**

The natural substrate was identified at 61.80m above Ordnance Datum, 1.4m below the ground surface.

A large quarry pit [23] was 6m long by 2.5m wide with a depth of over 0.85m (Fig 16). The fill was a mixture of clay loam and fragmented sandstone from which early 13th-century pottery was recovered. It was cut by a second quarry pit, [34]. Adjacent were further intercutting quarry pits (12, 14, 16) which varied between 0.35m to over 0.85m deep. The pits collectively produced late 13th and 14th-century pottery.

Construction trenches containing walls [8, 20, 22] were cut directly into the top of the quarry backfill (Fig 17). The walls comprised Local stone blocks, faced on both sides, with rubble at the core. Wall [8] was 0.80m wide, whilst walls [20, 22] were only 0.40m wide and appeared to be an addition of the principal wall. Pottery of late 13th-century date was recovered from the interstices, but no floor levels were identified. The walls were instead abutted by layers of sandy clay loam (28), charcoal (27) and sandstone rubble (21). A robber trench [7] had removed part of the principal wall and contained late 13th-century pottery. The smaller walls were overlain by separate layers of dark brown sandy loam (25, 29). The majority of the pottery from these was late 13th century, but a single 16th to 17th-century sherd suggests that much of this was residual. The buried soils were overlain by a further accumulation of dark greyish-brown sandy clay loam (26), taking the total thickness of deposits to c0.5m.

A poorly defined linear gully [18], less than 0.1m deep, cut this buried soil and contained 16th to 17th-century pottery. It was buried beneath 0.7m of dark brown sandy clay loam (5), containing pottery of 18th-century origin. The dark buried soil was cut by brick-built foundations [4] that housed an oil storage tank and was overlain by the demolition rubble (1) and material forming the surface the surface for the car park. Further detail on the surface layers was absent from the report (Shaw 1993, 19).

#### 4.8 Trench 4, 2010

The weathered surface of the natural substrate lay at 61.35m above Ordnance Datum. Founded upon this was wall [414], its relationship to the abutting deposits were examined at two points (Figs 3 and 18, cover photographs). Since the natural ground surface arose gradually towards the north of the trench, it is likely that the base of the wall was not found in the southernmost section (Section 2) simply because the quantity of sealing material is that much greater. The base of the wall lay c1.5m deep and over 1.8m deep in the two sections. Where it was exposed, the wall comprised between 10-14 courses of rough hewn and squared-off local stone blocks, arranged in an interlocking drystone fashion to form a substantial wall with a height of between 0.5-1.1m (Fig 19). The width of the wall could not be examined within the confines of the trench, but it would seem that in plan it was probably over 0.8m wide since the opposite face was not exposed. Individual stone blocks varied in size considerably, although many of the smaller blocks were 170-420mm long by 60-180mm thick. Thinner slabs often formed locking stones between courses and were visible at the surface as large flat slabs up to 490mm long by 470mm wide by 80mm thick. One very large foundation stone was visible in the northern-most section that was over 600mm long by 160mm thick. This stone kicked out at the base of the wall upon a slight ridge of natural, but was not repeated consistently along the foundation.

Abutting the lower section of the wall were buried soil layers that were generally slumped against its foundation. The nature of the layers in the two sections was not identical and there was probably a depositional reason for this that is not clear from the present work. The base layer in Section 1 was 60mm of dark brown, slightly orange, sandy loam (421), flecked with occasional charcoal and contained the larger part of a complete 12th-century pottery vessel (53 sherds). It was overlain by darker brown, slightly orange, sandy loam (421) which was flecked with occasional charcoal, 160mm thick. By comparison the lowest layer that was exposed in Section 2 comprised dark rich orange-brown sandy loam (428), which produced 12th-century pottery. Upon this was a very large block of stone, presumably fallen masonry, which lay within a 120mm layer of rich dark brown sandy loam (426) with moderate charcoal and small grit that also produced 12th-century pottery and on top of which lay 190mm of dark orange-brown silty sand (427) that merged gradually between the buried soil and a 50mm thick lens of dark brown sand (424) above it.

On top of layer (424) were two large flat stone slabs, (416) (front cover). The larger of the slabs was 580mm long by 440mm wide by 50mm thick. They appeared to have been laid as flagstones contemporary to a change in the construction of the abutting wall, [414]. Roughly 100mm above the surface of the flagstones was a course of stone in wall [414] that kicked out 30mm further than the rest of the stonework. This course also appeared to mark a slight change in the pattern of the construction and size of blocks used, although not the technique, and was only visible in Section 2. The part of the wall visible in Section 1 was consistent with the stonework below this course, using generally smaller blocks. It probably demonstrated a rebuild or renovation of the earlier stone wall foundation.

Mottled orange-brown and greyish-brown sandy clay (419) overlay the slabs in Section 2, 170mm thick, containing charcoal flecks, chalky flecks and occasional larger stones, together with sherds of 15th-century pottery. It probably equated with the hard orange-

brown sandy clay (413) in Section 1, which was up to 210mm thick and contained varying degrees of fragmented stone. A stone-packed posthole [418] lay adjacent to the wall, cut into the layers below to a depth of 0.38m (front, Fig 20). It was roughly square and heavily packed with stone to a maximum of 120mm in diameter. It had vertical sides and a flat base with an internal width of 0.17m. Dark blackish-brown silty loam (417) filled the posthole, containing moderate charcoal flecks and small stone fragments.

Above the posthole, and only identifiable in Section 2, was mottled bluish-grey clay (429), mixed with greyish-brown silty clay and frequent stones in an uneven dump 60-180mm thick. This may represent a discrete demolition deposit for a structure towards the St Johns frontage, as it did not occur in Section 1. The dirty mottled bluish-grey silty clay (415) above it was 100-180mm thick. It was smeared with red, orange and black flecks, and raised the ground towards an even layer. Its pottery content was of 13th-century date and suggested redeposition of earlier soils in a post-15th-century context.

Hard orange-brown sandy clay (412) was present in the upper horizons of both sections, between 270-380mm thick. The buried soil contained frequent sandstone fragments, considerable residual medieval pottery and a few fragments of iron-glazed earthenware, which was in production from the late 17th-century onwards. The thickness, content and nature of this buried soil suggests that it has been turned over considerably during antiquity and may have accumulated stray artefacts over a considerable period. The layer above this was soft orange-brown sandy loam (411) containing moderate charcoal flecks, small stones and iron salt flecks, c400mm thick. The boundary between the two soil layers was diffuse and hard to define. Layer (411) produced distinctly 19th-century pottery fabrics and represented the top of the archaeological horizon, between 0.67-0.80m below the ground surface. The thickness of post-19th-century deposits appeared thinner towards the north of the trench.

At the north end of the trench was a small brick-built cellar [404] that cut into the earlier deposits c1.25m wide by c1.10m deep (Fig 21). The base at its west end abutted the medieval wall [414]. It had been filled during the 20th century with loose sandy charcoal-rich blackish-grey burnt waste (405), including occasional stone and fragments of salt-glazed ceramic pipe. Modern demolition layers were visible above the cellar fill. There was orange-grey clayey gravel (425) extending from the north end of the trench in a layer c160mm thick. This was overlain by a dump of shattered asbestos roofing material (406), mixed with glass, up to 100mm thick. Above this was a 210mm thick layer of brick rubble (407), including pieces of modern plastic rubbish. Coarse greyish-pink aggregate (402) up to 60mm in diameter was loosely scattered at the surface, up to 200mm thick.

Towards the middle of the trench, above Section 2, the top of buried soil (411) was marked by an uneven arrangement of brick and stone (432) at the edge of a substantial concrete foundation [401] (Fig 22). The foundation extended along the length of the south and west side of the trench beneath the adjacent tarmac. It was 0.4m thick at the base, with a further 0.35m of cemented breeze blocks forming a wall above it. Abutting the north edge of this foundation above the brick and stone (432), was coarse black charcoal and coal dust (431), 260mm thick, overlain by a 110mm thick concrete slab (430). The surface layer comprised coarse greyish-pink aggregate (402), 70-80mm thick, at the edge of the tarmac.

#### 4.9 Trench D, 1990

Features were present cut into the natural that suggested a possible timber structure at the beginning of a sequence of buildings, latterly constructed in stone (Fig 23). The natural substrate was identified at 61.3m above Ordnance Datum, 1.6m below the car park surface.

There were two shallow slots [63, 65] and eight postholes [49, 56, 60, 61, 62, 69, 71, 77] (Fig 24). With the exception of a single sherd of Potterspury ware, considered at the time to be a contaminant, the rest of the pottery from these features was potentially Saxon-Norman in origin. They were sealed by dark brown silty clay loam (59), considered to be an occupation horizon. The layer was subsequently cut by a posthole [70] and two pits [50, 51], which were 0.3m and 0.5m deep respectively, and produced pottery of similar date. Above all of these features a layer of soil containing burnt residues (53) had accumulated, which produced 12th-century pottery.

A stone wall [27] was identified at the south end of the trench orientated east to west, 0.8m wide, at a height of 61.7m above Ordnance Datum (Fig 25). This was actually 0.3m lower than the north to south wall identified in 2010. The wall comprised two courses of local stone, faced on each side with a rubble core and bonded with reddish brown clay loam mortar. It produced 12th-century pottery during cleaning. Occupation deposits and floor levels lay south of the wall, abutting it and suggesting that it was the rear wall of a building fronting St Johns Street. The sequence of layers were briefly examined, but not fully excavated, they comprised:

*Table 7: Stratified floor and occupation layers in Trench D*

Context	Description
	<i>Top</i>
39	Orange-brown silty clay loam
43	Yellowish-brown silty clay loam flecked with charcoal
45	Yellowish-brown clay
42	Dark greyish-brown silty clay loam flecked with charcoal and burnt clay
46	Yellowish-brown loamy sand
37	Burnt deposits containing loamy sand and charcoal
47	Dark grey loamy sand and charcoal
	<i>Bottom</i>

Two sherds of late Saxon pottery emerged from layer (37), whilst the pottery from layer (43) was Saxon-Norman and the sherds from layer (39) dated to the 12th-century.

Cut into the top of the building layers was a small bowl-shaped hearth pit [29], 0.1m deep, and two postholes [38, 44]. Pottery for this phase of activity was distinctly late 13th-century in date. They were overlain by further floor levels comprising light grey clay loam (32), yellowish-brown loamy sand (30) and yellowish-brown clay (16). Cut into these was a second hearth [41], this time containing burnt sandstone as well as clay and charcoal, and a further two postholes (33, 40).

On the north side of the building were later accumulations and additions. A layer of dark brown silty clay loam (31) abutted wall [27], which appeared to be contemporary with layer (39) inside the building. On top of this was a stone footing, [26], composed of a single course of sandstone bonded with silty clay loam. This was overlain by dark brown silty clay loam (28), yellowish-brown silty clay loam (25) and surface sandstone rubble (24). These later layers produced late 13th-century pottery.

The whole of the trench was subsequently covered by dark yellowish-brown silty clay loam (10), 150mm thick, which was a buried soil containing 17th to 18th-century pottery. Five postholes (19, 20, 21, 22, 23) cut the buried soil at the southern end of the trench, and one was located at the north end, posthole (18). Greyish-brown silty clay (7) lay roughly evenly, 200mm thick, above these features and was cut by a ditch, [11], on a north to south alignment. It was sealed beneath dark yellowish-brown silty clay loam (3). All of these deposits produced 17th to 18th-century pottery, as well as residual medieval

material. A stone wall foundation [2] cut the top of the buried soil (3) and was overlain by layers of stone and rubble (1). There was no record of 19th-century to modern features and deposits (Shaw 1993, 17).

#### 4.10 Trench 5, 2010

It was originally intended to locate a trench in the north-west of the site to investigate the Angel Street frontage. This strategy was soon abandoned after breaking through the surface concrete to discover substantial and extensive cellars beneath, complete with modern fibre optic cables pinned to the upper level of the cellar walls. It is likely that there are no surviving remains along this section of the street frontage whatsoever.

### 5 THE FINDS

#### 5.1 Medieval finds by Tora Hylton

The 2010 trial excavations produced three metal finds from buried soil layers (208, 210) in Trench 2. There are two undiagnostic fragments of iron and an iron nail with a flat sub-circular head, measuring 65mm in length.

#### 5.2 Medieval and post-medieval pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage that was recovered in 2010 comprised 193 sherds with a total weight of 34.15kg. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) by summation of surviving rimsherd circumference was 1.70. The assemblage is entirely of medieval and later date, with the range of fabric types present indicating that there was intense activity in the earlier part of the medieval period, dropping off in the mid- to late 14th century, with little significant re-occupation until the post-medieval era.

##### **Fabric**

The medieval pottery was quantified using the chronology and coding system of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS), as follows:

- F330: Shelly coarseware, AD1100-1400. 100 sherds, 1741g, EVE = 1.52.
- F360: Misc. sandy coarsewares, AD1100-1400. 3 sherds, 34g, EVE = 0.
- F319: Lyveden/Staniion 'A' ware, AD1150-1400. 1 sherds, 18g, EVE = 0.05.
- F324: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD1200-1500. 5 sherds, 80g, EVE = 0.
- F329: Potterspury ware, AD1275-1600. 33 sherds, 452g, EVE = 0.04.
- F346: Bourne ware, 13th-14th century. 1 sherd, 14g, EVE = 0.
- F365: Late medieval reduced ware, AD1400-?1500. 1 sherd, 17g, EVE = 0.
- F369: Brill/Boarstall 'Tudor Green' type, 1475 – 1600. 2 sherds, 7g, EVE = 0.09.
- F401: Late medieval oxidized ware, ?AD1450-?1550. 3 sherds, 31g, EVE = 0.
- F403: Midland Purple ware, AD1450-1600. 1 sherd, 8g, EVE = 0.
- F404: Cistercian ware, AD1470-1700. 1 sherd, 13g, EVE = 0.
- F405: Tudor Green ware, AD1400-1600. 1 sherd, 1g, EVE = 0.
- F406: Midland Yellow wares, AD1550-1700. 1 sherd, 3g.
- F407: Red earthenwares, AD1550+. 1 sherd, 29g.
- F409: Staffordshire slipwares, AD1680-1750. 1 sherd, 77g.
- F411: Midland Blackware, 1550 – 1700. 1 sherd, 6g.
- F413: Staffs. manganese glazed wares, late 17th-18th century. 2 sherds, 88g.
- F426: Iron-glazed earthenware, late 17th-19th century. 9 sherds, 464g.
- F438: English stoneware, late 17th century onwards. 1 sherd, 11g.
- F1000: Misc. 19th-century wares. 25 sherd, 321g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Tables 9-10. All of the contexts were stratified buried soil layers. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is fairly typical of other sites of the period in the town. The earlier medieval assemblage, cAD1100-1200, is broadly similar to that from the earlier trial excavations in 1990 (Blinkhorn 1993). The earlier excavations also produced evidence of pre-Conquest activity in the form of T1(2) St. Neots ware, Northampton ware, Thetford ware and Stamford ware, all of which were absent from the 2010 assemblage. Lyveden/Stanion 'B' ware, a common 13th-century pottery type in the town, is also absent from the 2010 assemblage, although it was present amongst pottery recovered in 1990. This may be due to the relatively small 2010 assemblage size.

Some of the more common late medieval wares from the town are also scarce or absent, and the same was true in 1990. This may be indicative of a general dereliction of the area following late medieval economic decline punctuated by episodes of plague. The same pattern is seen across the whole southern area of the town.

#### ***Chronological and qualitative analysis***

Each context specific assemblage was given a ceramic phase date base on the range of pottery fabrics present, as shown in Table 8, along with the occurrence by number and weight of sherds. The data shows that activity at the site began soon after the Norman Conquest, in the first half of the 12th century, although the rest of the medieval period appears to show a repeated pattern of use and abandonment from the 13th century onwards. Perhaps the most striking aspect of this is the complete lack of Lyveden/Stanion 'B' ware and low quantity of Brill/Boarstall ware. Such pottery is almost ubiquitous in 13th-century deposits in Northampton, and of the five sherds present, two are late medieval types.

*Table 8: Ceramic phase definition and pottery occurrence per ceramic phase*

Phase	Date range	Defining wares	Number of sherds	Weight (g)	Mean sherd weight (g)
MED1	1100-1150	F330, F360	66	742	11.2
MED2	1150-1200	F319	23	909	39.5
MED3	1200-1250	F324	0	0	0
MED4	1250-1400	F329	36	418	11.6
MED5	1400-1450	F365, F405	0	0	0
MED6	1450-1550	F369, F403, F404	9	171	19.0
PM1	1550-1680	F406, F407, F411	8	91	11.4
PM2	1680-1900	F409, F413, F426, F438	6	85	14.2
<b>Total</b>			<b>148</b>	<b>2416</b>	

The dearth of otherwise common earlier 13th-century wares at this site contrasts with the pottery profile at a number of nearby excavations. At St. Peter's Walk, c150m to the west, both Lyveden/Stanion 'B' ware and Brill/Boarstall ware were present, with the latter particularly well represented (Soden 1998-9, 88). At Derngate, c150m to the east, these fabrics again comprised a fairly significant portion of the 13th-century assemblage (Blinkhorn 2002, 47). Furthermore, the bulk of the pottery from Derngate dated to the early to mid-13th century, represented by 4.31kg out of the 7.97kg of pottery. Both wares were also fairly well represented at Swan Street, just to the south of these excavations, although 13th-century pottery did not appear plentiful (Denham and Shaw 1989).

It would appear likely that the dearth of these fabrics is due to the vagaries of small-scale archaeological sampling. The evidence from the 1990 trial excavations, produced both pottery types, with earlier medieval pottery plentiful (Blinkhorn 1993).

Activity appeared to increase in the period cAD1250-1400, a typical pattern for the town. However, there are no contexts which can be dated to the period cAD1400-1450, suggesting that the area of the town may have been all but abandoned and pottery is generally scarce from this time onwards. The pottery types which define the period AD1400-1450, Late medieval reduced ware and Surrey 'Tudor Green' wares, are very rare here, with just one sherd of each type present, in later contexts, probably deposited after the mid-15th century. Pottery of the mid-15th to mid-16th centuries is scarce, with just three sherds of late medieval oxidised ware, one of Midland Purple, two of Brill/Boarstall "Tudor Green" and one of Cistercian ware. Of these, only a single sherd of Brill/Boarstall "Tudor Green" and another of late medieval oxidised ware occur in medieval contexts, although at least some of the Potterspury ware from the same contexts is likely to be contemporary.

The pottery from 1990 reflects this pattern, with just three sherds of late medieval reduced ware present, and one of late medieval oxidised ware, with all the other well-known later medieval pottery types completely absent, suggesting a similar pattern of occupation and desertion. The St. Peter's Walk site appeared to have been abandoned in the earlier decades of the 15th century, with little pottery dating to the later 15th century or beyond, other than that associated with episodes of stone-robbing. The pattern was repeated at Derngate. Activity dropped off sharply at the beginning of the 15th century, with three-quarters of the material dated to AD1400-1450, comprising residual early medieval material, and very little pottery dateable to AD1450-1500, with nearly two-thirds of this material residual to later deposits. Brill/Boarstall "Tudor Green" and late medieval oxidised ware were scarce, and Midland Purple, Cistercian ware and Midland Yellow were entirely absent.

The range of vessel types present is fairly restricted, but conforms to the pattern of activity suggested by the fabric types present. It consists entirely of fragments of jars, bowls and jugs, the staples of the earlier medieval period, with the more developed vessel forms of the late medieval period, particularly those associated with the storage, preparation, transportation and consumption of food entirely absent, and just a few sherds of drinking vessels, in the form of Brill/Boarstall "Tudor Green" and Cistercian ware the only other types present. This may be indicative of the late medieval activity being related to demolition and robbing of earlier medieval structures at the site, and drinking pottery tends to be plentiful on late medieval sites where the activity is primarily of an industrial nature, or involves hard physical work. For example, drinking pottery dominated the late medieval and early post-medieval assemblages at the tannery excavated at The Green in Northampton (Shaw 1996).

It would appear that the pottery, the lack of 13th-century wares aside, shows a similar pattern to a number of nearby sites in the south of the town, with large assemblages from the period spanning the immediate post-Conquest period to around the time of the Black Death, and then virtual abandonment thereafter until the end of the medieval period.

The assemblage is in good condition, with moderate to large sherds, and two Shelly coarseware vessels are reconstructable to full profiles, indicating that the medieval deposits are generally undisturbed and of a primary nature. Around one-quarter of the post-medieval pottery is residual, and much of the mid-16th to 18th-century pottery is redeposited in features dating to the 19th century. This may represent some disturbance of earlier strata at the time of Victorian town development.

Table 9: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (g) of sherds per context by fabric type, medieval contexts

Soil layer context	F330		F360		F319		F324		F346		F329		F365		F369		F401		Century date
	No	Wt (g)																	
209	1	4									7	162					1	5	Mid-15th
210	5	48	1	13			3	62	1	14	21	250							Mid-13th
320											1	6							Mid-13th
413	1	9																	12th
415	2	3	1	19							1	3							Mid-13th
419	2	3											1	17	1	3			Mid-15th
421	53	581																	12th
426	21	889	1	2	1	18													Mid-12th
428	12	152																	12th
Total	97	1689	3	34	1	18	3	62	1	14	30	421	1	17	1	3	1	5	

Table 10: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (g) of sherds per context by fabric type, post-medieval contexts

Soil layer context	Residual med		F406		F407		F411		F413		F409		F426		F438		F1000		Century date
	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	
113	2	19					1	6											Mid-16th
208	3	34	1	3	1	29													Mid-16th
306																	1	14	19th
316																	2	12	19th
410																	7	52	19th
411	4	37							2	88	1	77	8	442	1	11	15	243	19th
412	5	63											1	22					Late 17th
Total	14	153	1	3	1	29	1	6	2	88	1	77	9	464	1	11	25	321	

### 5.3 Ceramic building materials by Pat Chapman

This collection comprises one sherd of ceramic roof tile, four sherds of limestone roof tile, and a brick.

The roof tile sherd, from buried soil layer (411), is 13mm thick and made from hard fine orange-brown clay. On the top edge there is a remnant of a nib used for suspending the tile from the roof battens. White lime mortar still survives on both surfaces from where it overlapped with the other tiles.

The four fissile limestone tile sherds, from clay layer (415), are 15-20mm thick, each has a nail hole that is 8mm in diameter. The surviving dimensions are c70mm by c85mm and c110mm by c120mm, so there is no indication of their original size.

The complete brick comes from floor (203). It measures 225mm by 110mm by 68mm (8% x 4% x 2% inches). It is unfrogged, mould-made from hard fine red clay with some small grog. There is white mortar on the headers, stretchers and the rough surface, the other surface is smooth with no mortar. One header and part of the top surface is blackened.

The ceramic and limestone roof tiles could date from the 14th-19th centuries. The brick, however, most likely dates from the late 19th century.

#### 5.4 Post-medieval finds by Tora Hylton

Trial excavations in 2010 produced sixteen post-medieval metal finds in copper alloy (5) and iron (11). The majority were recovered from buried garden soils (411, 412) in Trench 4.

There is a small group of copper alloy dress accessories that include a double-looped buckle frame, dated c1550-1650 (Margeson 1993, fig 17, 174) and a copper alloy lace chape which may be of similar date. The lace chape is manufactured from rolled sheet and would have been put on the ends of laces, not only to protect the ends but also to facilitate threading through eyelets (Oakley 1979, fig 113, 288). In addition there are two discoidal buttons dating to the 18th-19th centuries. The remaining finds comprise incomplete nails, undiagnostic fragments of iron, two pieces of glass and clay-tobacco pipe fragments.

##### **Glass**

The glass was recovered from buried garden soil (411). It comprises a base sherd with large kick from a cylindrical wine bottle in green glass and part of a wine glass with round funnel cup. The wine glass was manufactured in three pieces, it has a short stem with a collar at the junction of the stem and cup. Both pieces may be of 18th-19th century date.

##### **Clay tobacco-pipe**

Fragments of clay tobacco-pipe were recovered from buried garden soils (207, 306, 307) in Trenches 2-3. There are four pieces represented by two stem fragments and two bowls. The bowls have been classified according to Oswald simplified typology (1975, 37-40) and stylistically they provide a date of c1690-1730. One is complete and equates to an Oswald type G8. The other is incomplete with part of the rim missing and it is therefore difficult to be sure if it represents an Oswald type G19 or G20, which date c1690-1710 and c1690-1730 respectively.

### **6 THE ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS**

#### 6.1 Animal bone by Karen Deighton

There was 2.85kg of animal bone, which was recovered from the 2010 trial excavations. This was scanned to determine the species present, state of preservation and to assess the potential for future work and to inform on future collection strategies.

##### **Method**

Identifiable bones were noted by taxa. The presence of ageing and metrical data was also noted (Von Den Driesch 1976). Ageable elements included cheek tooth rows showing the eruption and wear of teeth, bones where the state of epiphyseal fusion is apparent and neonatal bones (Silver 1969; Amorosi 1989).

##### **Preservation**

A moderate level of fragmentation was present, some whole bones were observed, and largely the result of old breaks. The level of surface abrasion was low. Seven examples of chopping were noted and there were two instances of canid gnawing. Green staining was noted on one bone from buried soil layer (428) that is consistent with contact with metal. No evidence for burning was noted. All of the animal bone was retrieved from stratified buried soil layers.

*Table 11: Animal bone taxa by context*

<b>Soil layer context</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>428</b>
Cattle	1		2	2	2	1	1	1		13	3
Sheep/goat		6	7	7		4		3	1	15	5
Pig			1	2						5	
Chicken		1	3	4				1		1	
Bird							1	1			
Large ungulate			1	1	2			2	1		
Small ungulate	1			1				4		7	2
Cod										1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>

*Table 12: Availability of ageing and metrical data by taxa*

	<b>Cattle</b>	<b>Sheep/goat</b>	<b>Pig</b>	<b>Dog</b>
Fusion	12		6	1
Neonatal elements	3	24		
Tooth eruption and wear		4		
Number of measurements	16	12		1

### **Discussion**

The assemblage consists largely of common domesticates, which is not unexpected for an urban site. A typical pattern of common butchered stock meats and backyard pig or poultry is likely to emerge with occasional less common observations appearing in the assemblages. The presence of cod vertebrae would suggest that evidence of fairly wide and varied dietary habits may be held within the archaeological record and that sieving material may increase the chance of recovering such evidence. The site is likely to reflect similarities in its medieval domestic food waste patterns to that recorded at Kingswell Street (Armitage 2008) and Woolmonger Street (Armitage; Locker 1998-9).

Most of the material recovered could be identified to taxa and sufficient ageing and metrical data is available that statements may be possible for a larger assemblage. Suitable dateable contexts during the course of any subsequent excavations statements could refine this information to reveal aspects of the site's economy.

### **6.2 Shell by Karen Deighton**

Marine shell was collected from stratified contexts during the 2010 trial excavation, comprising a total of 72g. The shells were analysed to discern the environmental conditions in which they lived and whether they were wild or cultivated. Shells were identified and quantified, and observations made of size, shape, condition, modification, and preservation (Claassen 1998). The level of preservation was moderate as most shells were fragmented and flaking.

*Table 13: Marine shell by context*

<b>Soil layer context</b>	<b>Upper valve</b>	<b>Lower valve</b>	<b>Fragments</b>	<b>Total</b>
208	1		2	3
210		4		4
411	1			1
413	1			1
419	1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>

### **Conclusion**

The shells were all marine oysters (*Ostrea edulis*). A total of four upper valves and four lower valves were noted. Their distribution was predominantly within medieval garden soil layers, with one shells occurring in post-medieval layer (411).

The presence of marine species inland suggests regular trade with coastal areas. Most shells were not well rounded or were of irregular shapes and of a moderate size. Two examples had ornamentation in the form of ribbing, which can be indicative of a shallow water environment. Evidence of a young oyster was present, attached to one example, which suggests wild, as opposed to cultivated, oysters. All of these observations indicate wild oysters as would be expected for the medieval period. It is likely that the taxon originally formed part of the diet, although a number of medicinal uses have been recorded for both the meat and the shell.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

### **Levels**

The site levels, depths of deposits and thicknesses have been used in combination with the borehole data from 1990 to produce a deposit model interpreting the distribution of material across the site (Fig 26).

The substrate in Trench A was probably c1.05m lower than the top of well [120] in Trench 1, although this could not be confirmed because of the collapsed trench section. The top of the brick wall foundation [103] was at 67.49m above Ordnance Datum, 2.2m above the natural substrate, so it would appear there is a terrace step or a sharp drop of the natural substrate between the two points that accentuates a natural south-west drop in the contour. When the Trench B levels were compared with those from Trench 1, the difference in height between the approximate top of well [120] and the substrate in Trench B was 0.29m, a figure proportional to the natural slope of the hillside. Trench B did, however, demonstrate by excavation that medieval terracing of the hillside had cut into the natural substrate at its southern end (HER 1160/110/5).

The 1990 excavations exposed the natural substrate in Trench C at 62.6m above Ordnance Datum. The lowest level of excavation in Trench 2 was 0.43m, and in Trench 3 was 0.65m, below that level. In Trench E the natural substrate was identified at 61.8m below Ordnance Datum, only 0.15m lower than the base of excavation in Trench 3. Since Trench D and Trench 4 were in very close proximity, it is unsurprising that the level of the substrate was almost the same in each of them, to within 50mm. However, the drop in level from Trench C was c1.3m. On this basis it is conclusive that there is an overall drop in the natural substrate towards the south and west of the site, possibly the result a steep natural hill slope, accentuated by medieval and post-medieval terracing episodes and with soils mounded towards its foot.

### **Pre-Conquest activity**

There were no prehistoric or Roman finds. Although a small assemblage of late Saxon pottery was recovered from the 1990 excavations there were no features that produced exclusively early finds and almost all examples were found alongside fabric examples more commonly associated with the immediate post-Conquest period.

### **Medieval quarrying**

The central and south-east area was subjected to quarrying activity from the Saxon-Norman period well into the 13th-century (HER 1160/110/0). Such activity has previously

been identified in the town at Derngate (Shaw 1984, 72, 74), Black Lion Hill (Shaw 1985, 122) and at Kingswell Street (Brown 2008, 188, fig 9), where later quarry positions indicated the possible relic plot divisions along the ridges of natural geology between them. However, they were notably absent at Woolmonger Street (Soden 1998-9), where continuity in land use may have meant that land was not open and available for quarrying purposes. Shaw (1993, 24) felt that the stone was not of sufficient quality for building and probably had other uses.

### ***Buildings***

The site may contain evidence for early timber structures, possibly of Saxo-Norman date, in both the eastern and southern areas of the site, although it is uncertain that these will be set upon the frontages as the date of the street layout of Fetter Street and St Johns Street is considered to be a product of the Norman Borough (Foard 1995, 113-115). However, this presupposes that the pattern of growth for the town followed that of a defended Saxon *burh* located around St Peters. This has not been satisfactorily demonstrated and has been challenged in recent years (Welsh 1996-7, 166-176). Early structures may lie in a completely different arrangement to anything anticipated by the present configuration of the plot and its historic property boundaries. At Woolmonger Street pre-Conquest buildings were on slightly eccentric alignments to the road (Soden 1989-9).

#### **St Johns Street**

There may be a succession of occupation from a possible Saxo-Norman timber building into one built from stone around the 12th-century in the middle of the south frontage (HER 1160/106/1). It is also possible that the building may include evidence for late medieval decay and 15th-century reuse (HER 1160/106/2). A similar pattern has been noted previously at St James End (Shaw and Soden 1996, 11) and at Black Lion Hill (Shaw 1985, 122). In these instances a wholly stone building superstructure, possibly in a state of decay, may have been replaced with a timber superstructure set upon a dwarf stone wall and using the previous building foundation as its base.

Evidence of substantial stone walls for a building of high medieval and later medieval date occupied the south-east corner of the site, fronting St Johns Street (HER 1160/110/1). It was probably founded at the end of the 13th-century following earlier quarrying activity and would likely have been the same date as its neighbour. It also bears the potential to examine the relationship of the corner plot where St Johns Street and Fetter Street meet as at the present time it is not known which street was established first, or whether they were established together. It is not known if the building was modified in the 15th-century, the probability is perhaps less likely as the pottery discussion noted the drop in fabrics of the period.

A post-medieval building may survive, perhaps built partially in timber and partially in stone, and identified towards the middle of the frontage during the 1990 excavations (HER 1160/106/3). This structure was probable of 17th to 18th-century origin and its position was consistent with the mapped structure on Noble and Butlin's map of 1746 (Shaw 1993, 25).

#### **Fetter Street**

The report issued in 1990 suggested that postholes of potentially Saxo-Norman date may have supported a timber building (Shaw 1993, 24; HER 1160/110/4)). No firm evidence was present for later medieval structures along this frontage. However, the 1990 excavations identified a stone building of 17th to 18th-century date occupying a position in the middle of the frontage, consistent with a building depicted upon Speed's map of 1610 (Shaw 1993, 25; HER 1160/110/7).

## Angel Street

Most of the frontage has been lost to modern cellars for some distance to the rear (Fig 1; Shaw 1993, fig 10). Any possible surviving deposits lay beyond the scope of trial excavation beneath the standing buildings upon the site and the current north entrance to the car park.

### ***Property boundaries***

Stone walls, cellar edges, building arrangements, possible ditches, quarry pits and sharp changes in ground level all have the potential to indicate the positions of former plot divisions (HER 1160/110/6, 1160/110/8). It is anticipated that the earliest divisions are likely to be of late 13th to 14th-century date. However, it is uncertain if these will bear relation to the post-medieval divisions, particularly those perpetuated in the late post-medieval period, that appear on map evidence. At present none of the identified features definitely demonstrate historic boundary divisions and the morphology of the site is likely to have been considerably developed in the interim period by innumerable small alterations as at Kingswell Street (Brown 2008, 210-211). Some similarities may arise between the medieval and modern patterns, but the nature of development is likely to be complex and the overall changes considerable.

### ***Conclusion***

Possible Saxo-Norman activity and later medieval developments are well preserved within the southern portion of the site, together with the post-medieval succession of deposits and later buildings. Demolition layers from the former 19th to 20th-century structures overlie the archaeological level up to 0.80m thick and the quantity of modern cellars and foundations disturbances is significantly less than in the north of the site. The 19th-20th-century material presence serves to protect more deeply stratified deposits, but would be better understood through documentary sources than excavation, given its near complete destruction and levelling. The north of the site has been severely affected by the construction of cellars and building foundations, its surviving islands of deposits are not dissimilar to the deep stratified sequences in the south of the site, but are truncated both vertically and horizontally at frequent intervals.

The site as a whole contains an excellent stratigraphic matrix below the modern overburden. The larger portion of the early structures probably lay beyond the extent of the site, partially beneath the pavements where they have become subject to disturbance by utility trenches. It is unlikely that it would be possible to examine a whole building. The rear of the buildings and their property boundaries may more easily be revealed as rear yards and paddocks.

The extent to which the street frontages were built up is uncertain. The evidence suggests that activity took place upon the site from the post-Conquest period and that the first buildings may have been established in this period, although whether they occupied the frontage as perceived in the modern street plan is uncertain. It is probable that Bridge Street, a major thoroughfare, was built up at an early stage and occupied continuously with formalised plots from the 11th to 12th centuries onwards. Minor streets may have experienced a more fragmentary development with intermittent periods, as suggested by the late post-medieval map evidence, where land plots were vacant, used for dumping and spreading soil from elsewhere in the town or where put to horticultural uses such as orchards or allotments.

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25 June 2010

**APPENDIX – INDEX OF CONTEXTS AND FINDS***Table 14: Contexts and finds from 2010*

<b>Context</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Pottery</b>	<b>Bone</b>	<b>Other finds</b>
<b>Trench 1</b>				
101	Gravel surface			
102	Brick demolition rubble			
103	Brick wall foundation			
104	Brick wall foundation			
105	Concrete and brick wall			
106	Brick cellar wall			
107	Concrete stantion			
108	Sewer pipe			
109	Concrete floor			
110	Fill of cellar 106			
111	Fill of cellar 106			
112	Post-medieval buried soil (upper layers)	✓		
113	Post-medieval buried soil (lower layers)	✓	✓	
114	Fill of wall trench alongside 103			
115	Buried soil below 114			
116	?Northampton Sand with Ironstone wall			
117	Buried soil abutting 116			
118	Buried soil below 117			
119	Fill within the top of well 120			
120	Stone lined well, ?medieval			
<b>Trench 2</b>				
201	Surface gravel			
202	Brick demolition rubble			
203	Brick bat floor		brick	
204	Not used			
205	Brick wall foundation			
206	Brick ?industrial feature			
207	19th-century black soil layer			
208	Medieval buried soil layer (upper layer)	✓	✓	shell, Fe object
209	Medieval buried soil layer (middle layer)	✓	✓	Fe object
210	Medieval buried soil layer (lower layer)	✓	✓	shell, Fe nail
<b>Trench 3</b>				
301	Surface gravel			
302	Brick demolition rubble			
303	Cellar			
304	Brick wall foundation			
305	Stone wall			

Context	Brief description	Pottery	Bone	Other finds
306	Redeposited construction/demolition layers	✓		clay tobacco-pipe
307	Post-medieval buried soil			clay tobacco-pipe
308	Concrete and brick wall foundation			
309	20th-century levelling layer			
310	Redeposited construction/demolition layers			
311	Post-medieval buried soil			
312	Orange gravel layer			
313	Stone lining of pit 319			
314	Fill of pit 319			
315	Fill of pit 319			
316	Fill of pit 319	✓		
317	Fill of pit 319			
318	Fill of pit 319			
319	Stone-lined latrine pit			
320	?Northampton Sand with Ironstone wall	✓		
321	Wall trench cut for 305			
322	Fill of 321			
323	Brick wall foundation			
324	Base of stone wall			
325	Post-medieval soil layer between 304 and 324			
326	Post-medieval soil layer between 304 and 325			
327	Post-medieval soil layer between 304 and 326			

**Trench 4**

401	Brick wall foundation			
402	Surface gravel			
403	Redeposited construction/demolition layers			
404	Cellar			
405	Mixed 20th-century fill of 404			
406	Asbestos			
407	Brick demolition rubble			
408	Brick wall of 404			
409	Stone wall of 404 (possibly reused)			
410	Scattered mortar layer	✓		
411	Buried soil layer	✓	✓	shell, buttons, glass, buckle & lace chape
412	Buried soil layer below 411	✓	✓	Fe nails
413	Crushed ironstone layer	✓	✓	
414	Stone wall			
415	Bluish-grey silty clay layer	✓	✓	stone tile

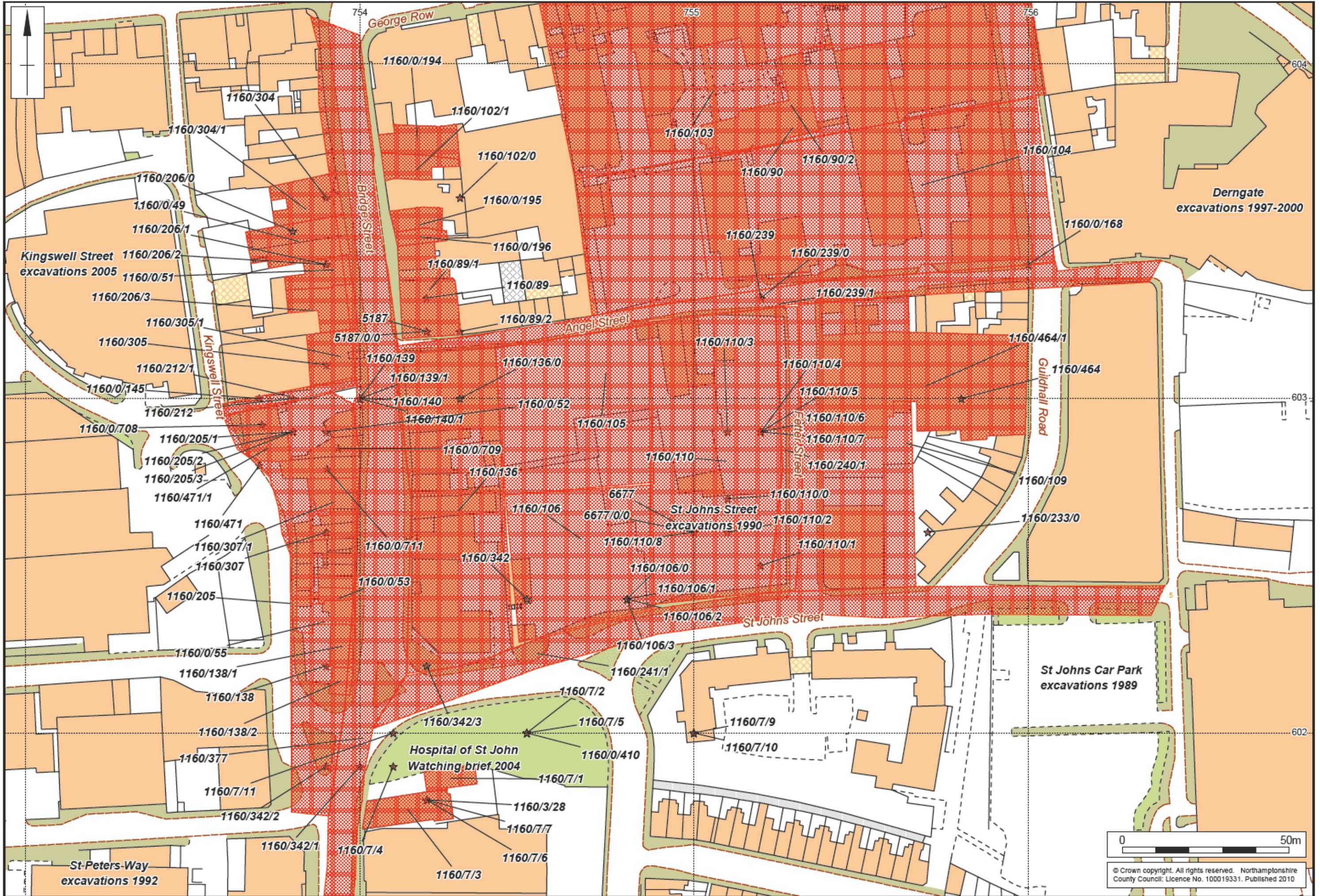
Context	Brief description	Pottery	Bone	Other finds
416	Stone slabs			
417	Fill of posthole 418			
418	Stone-packed posthole			
419	Buried soil layer	✓	✓	
420	Buried soil layer			
421	Buried soil layer	✓		
422	Weathered surface of substrate			
423	Group number for possible structural elements			
424	Buried soil layer			
425	Orange clayey-gravel layer			
426	Buried soil layer	✓	✓	shell
427	Buried soil layer			
428	Buried soil layer	✓	✓	
429	Buried soil layer			
430	Concrete slab			
431	Coal dust and charcoal layer			
432	Brick layer, possible disturbed base/floor			

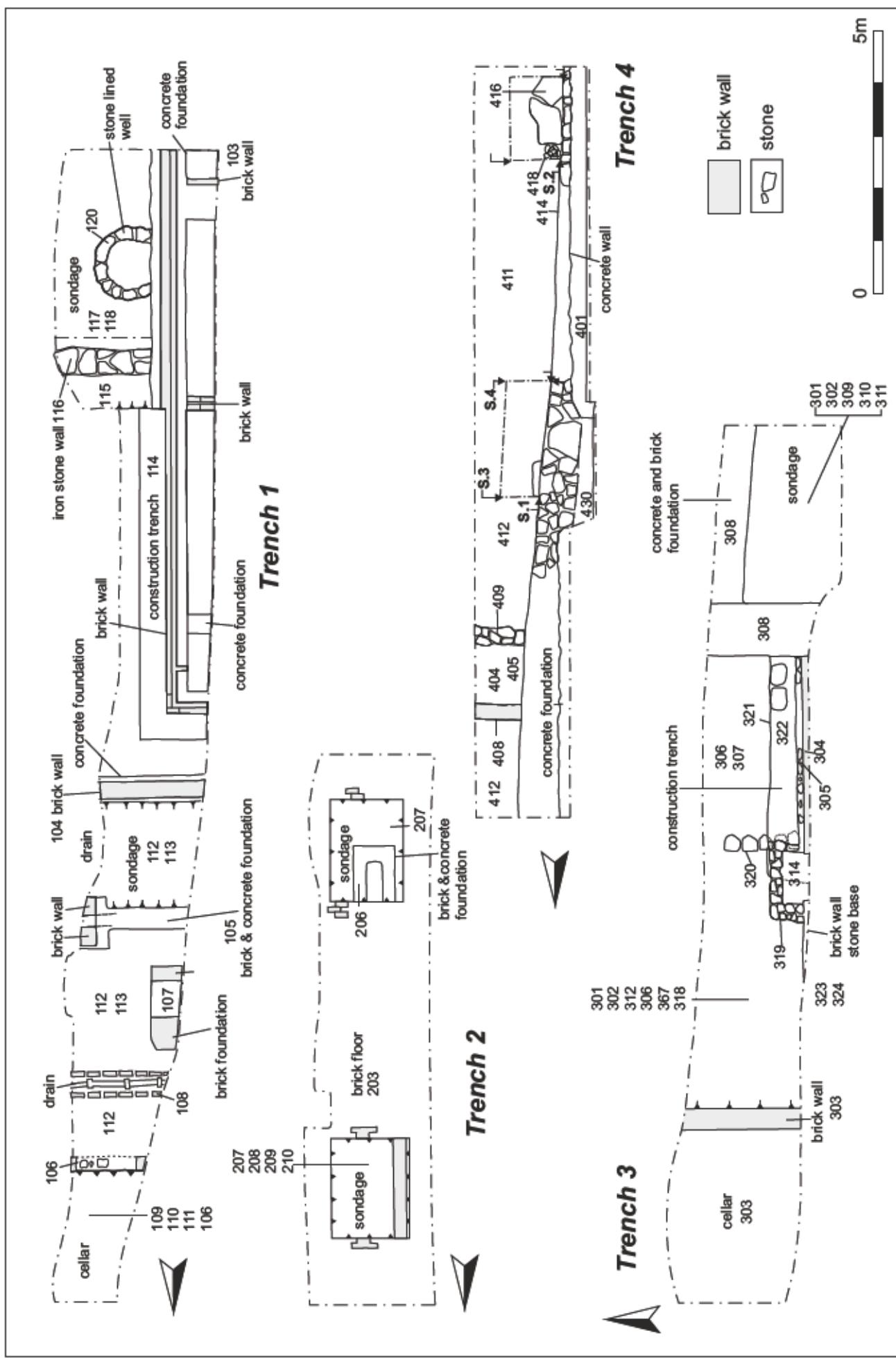




Scale 1:1000

Site location and trench positions Fig 1





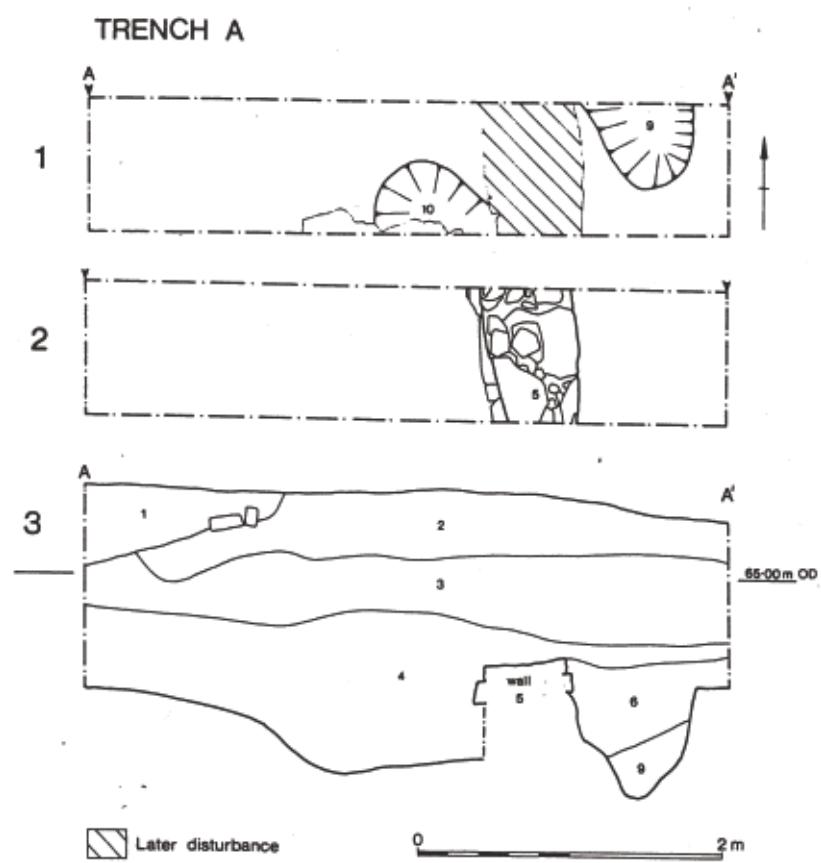
### Trench plans Fig 3



Trench 1, looking south Fig 4



Foundation [103], Trench 1, looking north Fig 5

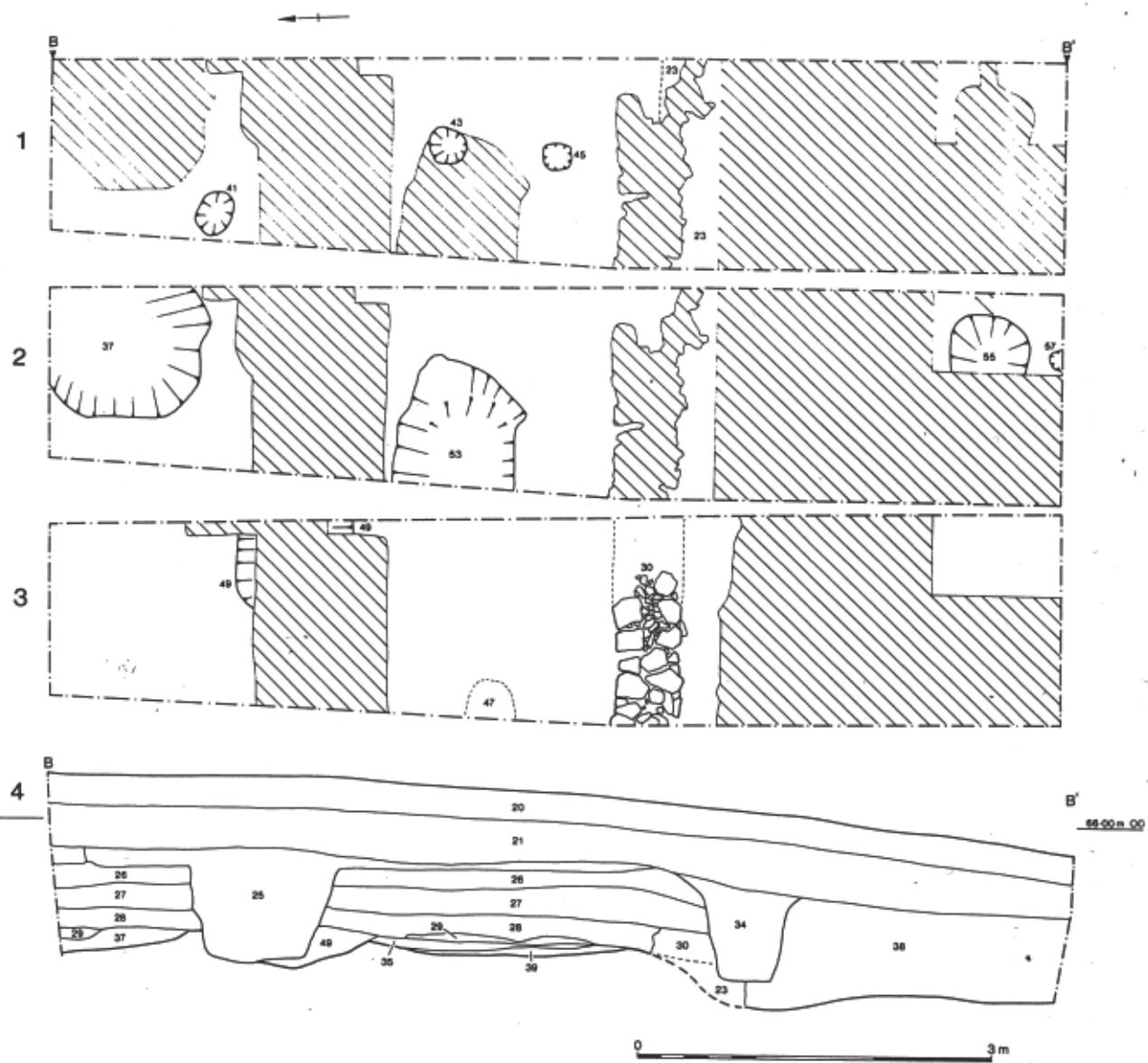


Trench A (Shaw 1993) Fig 6



Stone wall [5], Trench A Fig 7

TRENCH B



Trench B (Shaw 1993) Fig 8



Trench B, looking south Fig 9

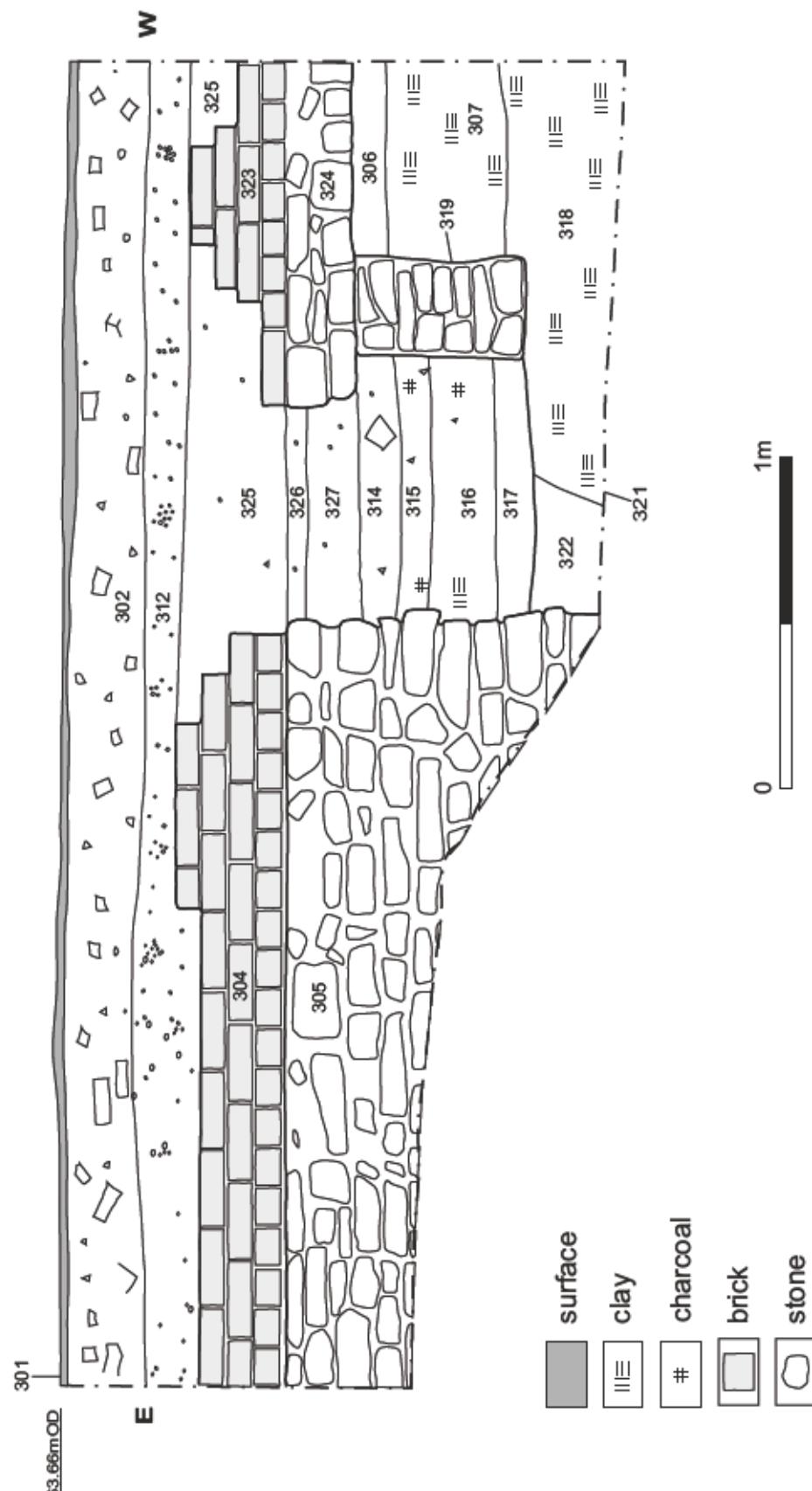


Trench 2, looking south Fig 10



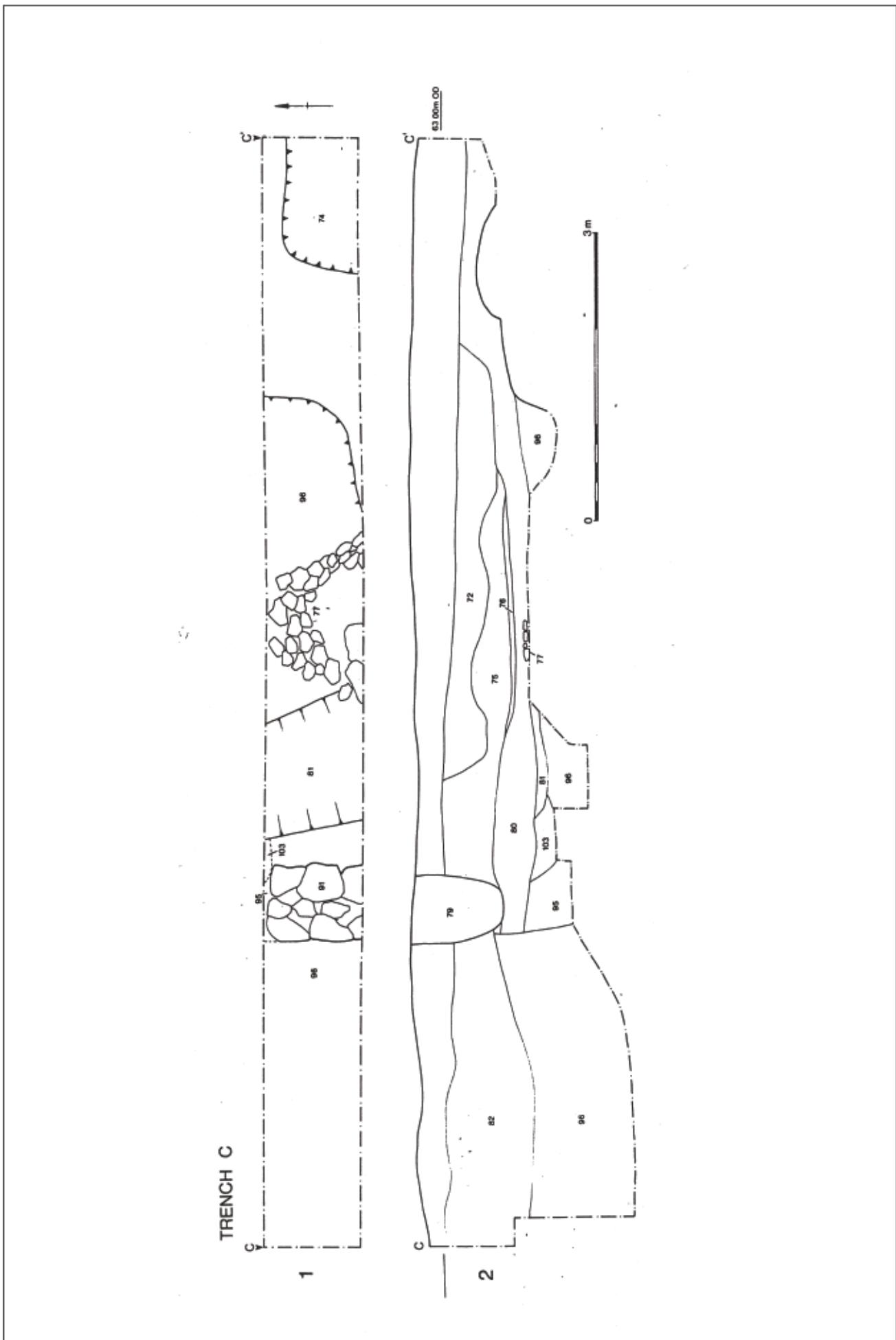
Industrial feature [206], Trench 2, looking south Fig 11

### Section 6





Trench 3, looking east Fig 13

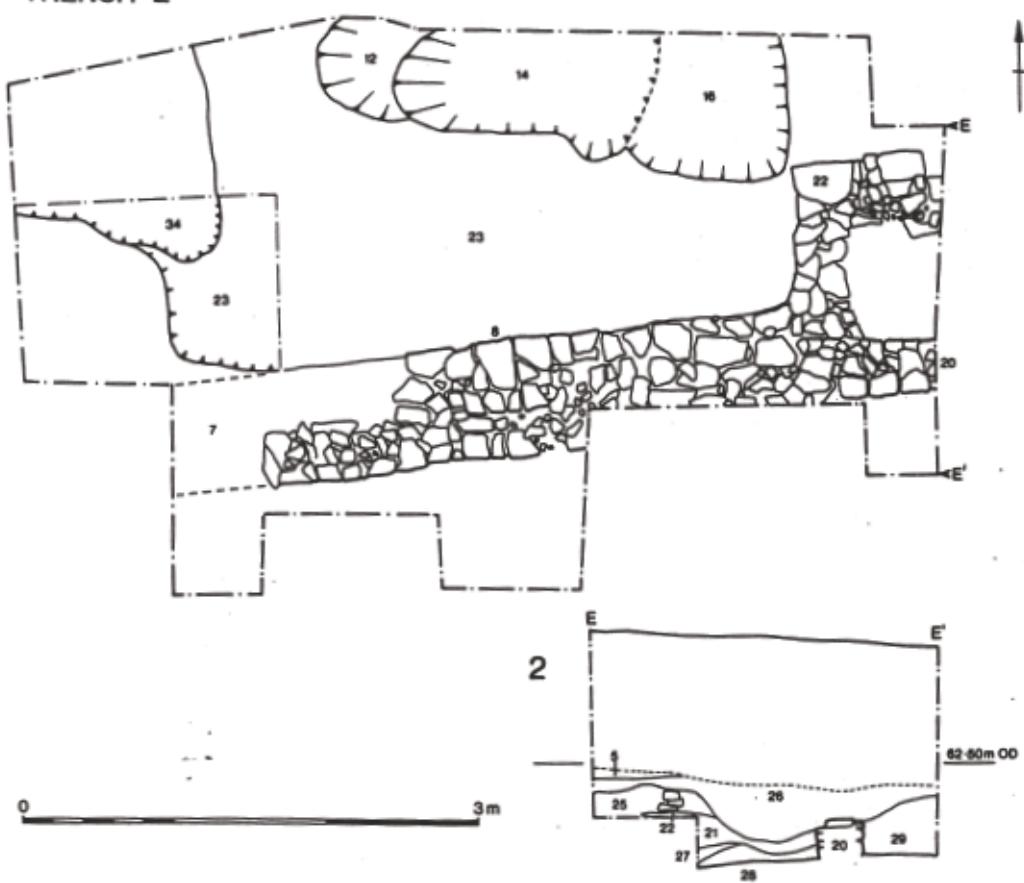


Trench C (Shaw 1993) Fig 14



Trench C, looking west Fig 15

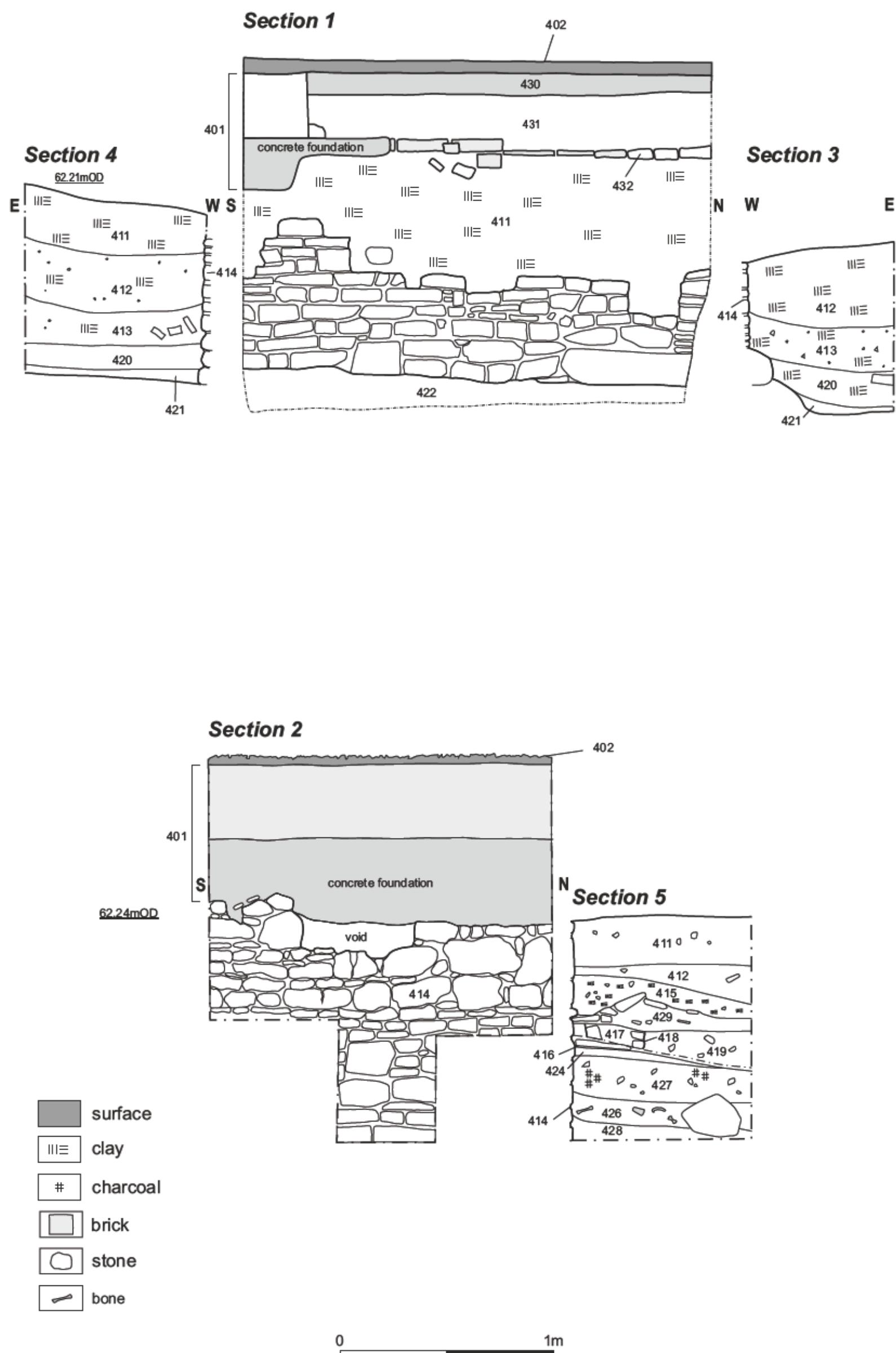
TRENCH E



Trench E (Shaw 1993) Fig 16



Trench E, looking east Fig 17





Wall [414], Trench 4, looking west Fig 19



Posthole [418], Trench 4, looking west Fig 20

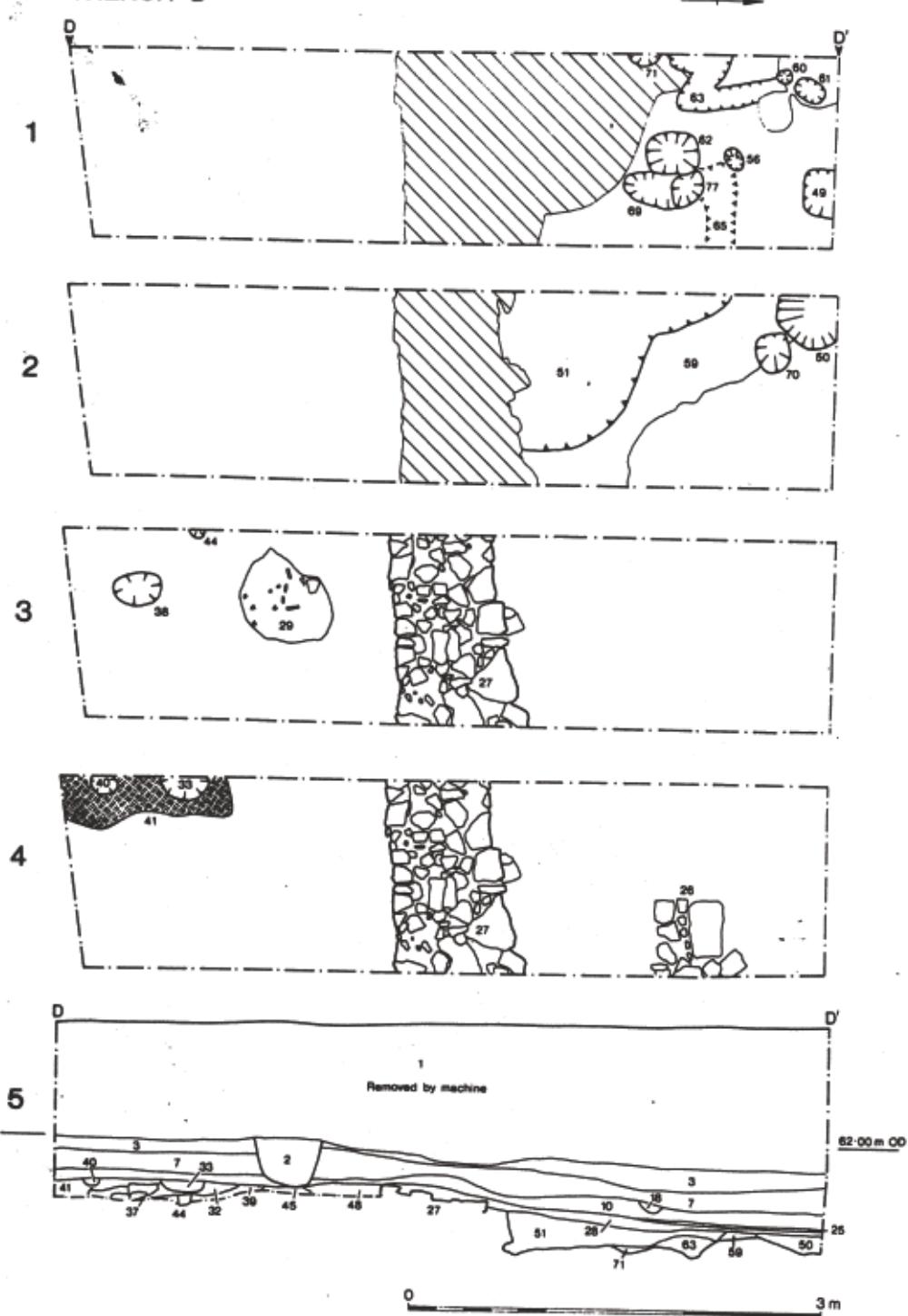


Cellar [404], Trench 4, looking west Fig 21



Trench 4, looking south Fig 22

TRENCH D



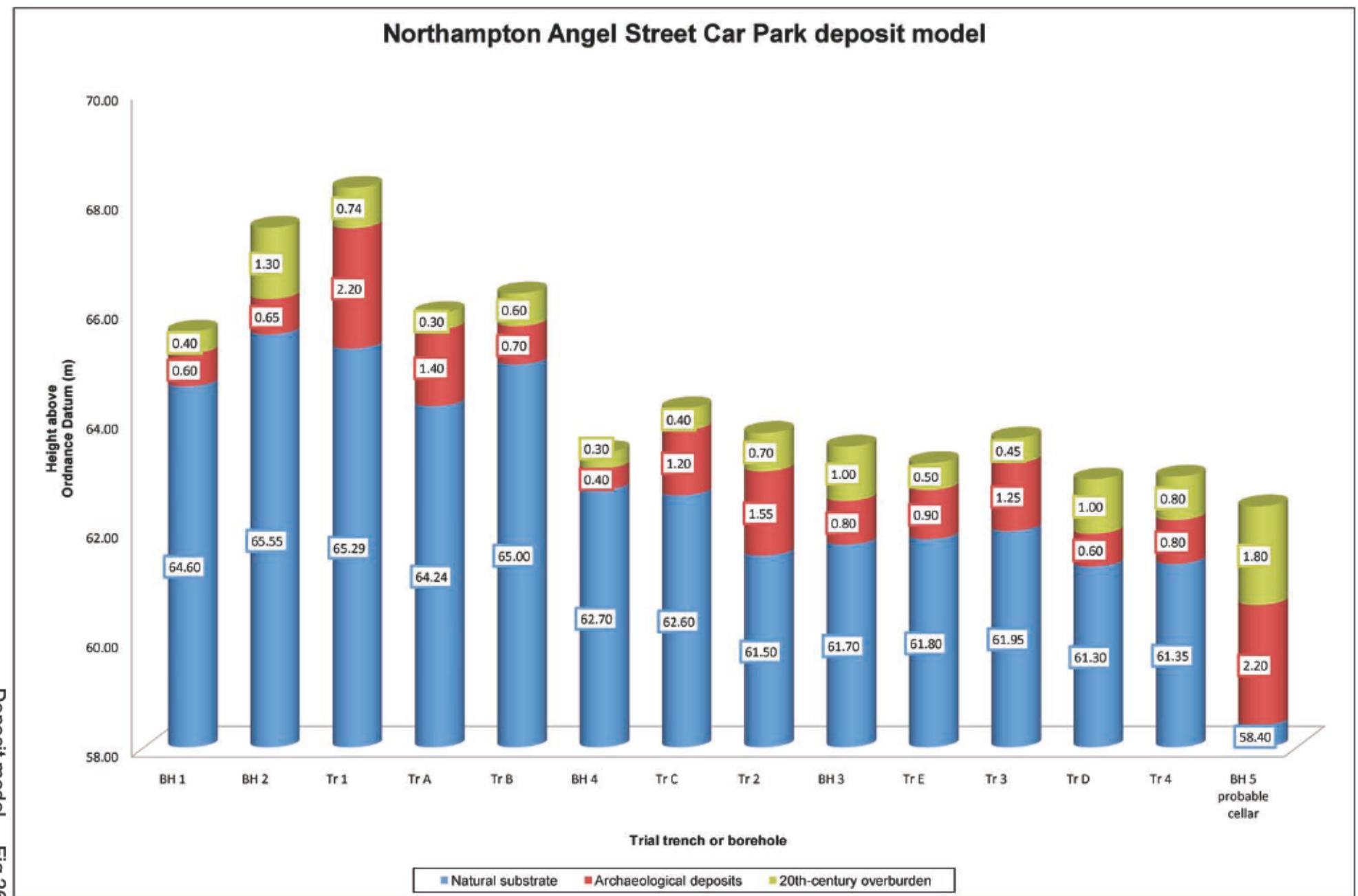
Trench D (Shaw 1993) Fig 23



Postholes and wall [27], Trench D, looking west Fig 24



Wall [27] and hearth deposits, Trench D, looking west Fig 25



Deposit model

Fig 26



Northamptonshire County Council

## Northamptonshire Archaeology



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