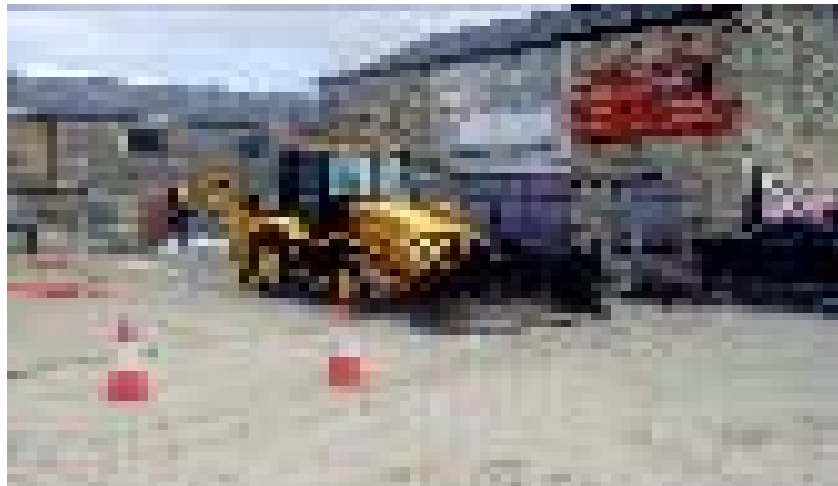




**Northamptonshire
County Council**

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation in
College Place and Market House Courtyard
Brackley
Northamptonshire
April 2006



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May 2006

Report 06/80

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QUALITY CONTROL

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(Front page illustration: Excavation of Trench 1 using breaker, facing north)

COLLEGE PLACE AND MARKET HOUSE COURTYARD, BRACKLEY

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological Evaluation in College Place and Market House Courtyard, Brackley, Northamptonshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	The earliest feature encountered was a 12 th century ditch with a possible bank, which probably predates the development of the planned medieval town. Close to the eastern edge of the site there were a number of pits, probably cess pits, which broadly date to the 13 th century and are probably related to the burgrave plots associated with the development of the new town. The ground level in College Place appears to have been raised by at least half a metre in the late 15 th century. Until the mid 20th century the area was occupied by gardens and orchards, before being cleared for industrial and agricultural buildings and yards.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Desk-Based Assessment, Northamptonshire Archaeology 2002	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown	
Monument type and period	N/A	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address (including postcode)	College Place and Market House Courtyard, Brackley	
Easting (use numerical 100km grid square no.)	45854	
Northing	23684	
Height OD	122m OD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Anthony Maull, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Simon Carlyle, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	The Raven Group and Mr JM Green	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	10/4/06	
End date	13/4/06	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no. ECB 2175)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Digital		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation in College Place and Market House Courtyard, Brackley, Northamptonshire	
Serial title and volume	06/80	
Author(s)	Simon Carlyle	
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
IN COLLEGE PLACE AND MARKET HOUSE COURTYARD
BRACKLEY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in College Place and Market House Courtyard, Brackley, Northamptonshire. Due to constraints, the street frontage and the area immediately to the rear of the street frontage could not be investigated, and the evaluation could only be undertaken in the central and eastern part of the site. The earliest feature encountered was a medieval ditch with a possible bank, which probably predates the expansion of the planned medieval town in the late 12th/early 13th century. Close to the eastern edge of the site there were a number of pits, probably cess pits, which broadly date to the 13th century and are probably related to the burgage plots associated with the expansion of the new town. The ground level in College Place appears to have been raised by at least half a metre in the late 15th century. Until the mid 20th century the area was occupied by gardens and orchards, before being cleared for industrial and agricultural buildings and yards.

1 INTRODUCTION

In April 2006, an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) in College Place and Market House Courtyard, Brackley, Northamptonshire (site centred on NGR SP 5854 3684; Fig 1). The evaluation comprised the excavation of five trial trenches (80 linear metres) in the two adjacent plots of land to the rear of Market Place.

The work was commissioned separately by The Raven Group and Mr JM Green, who have sought planning permission (planning application nos. S/2005/1412/P and S/2005/1404/P respectively) from South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) for the residential development of the site.

The evaluation formed part of a programme of archaeological investigation initiated by Northamptonshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (NCCHET), in response to the submission of the planning proposals. The programme was designed and implemented to mitigate against the impact of the development on buried archaeological remains. Previously, an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) had been prepared by NA (2002).

The main objective of the evaluation was to assess the archaeological potential and significance of the site, in order to inform the planning process and to assist in developing a suitable mitigation strategy. The specific aims of the evaluation were to:

- Determine the location, date, extent, character and state of preservation of any archaeological remains
- Obtain a chronological sequence for human activity on the site and to place it within its regional context

- To assess the environmental potential of the site through an examination of suitable deposits.

The work was carried out in accordance with the project design prepared by NA (2006) to the requirements of the brief issued by NCCHEP (2006). The project design also complied with Appendix 2 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (EH 1991). This report details the results of the trial trench evaluation.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The site, which covers an area of approximately 0.63ha, consists of two adjacent plots of land, College Place and Market House Courtyard. The plots were separated by a semi-derelict boundary wall and there was a drop in ground level of approximately 1m to the south of the wall, in Market House Courtyard. To the north and west the site is bounded by buildings fronting on to Market Place, to the east by playing fields and to the south by new residential properties. The ground slopes gradually from north-west to south-east. At the time of the evaluation, College Place was being used as a works compound by SNC contractors and Market House Courtyard, which is in private ownership, was being used as a dump for building material and demolition debris.

Soils in the area belong to the Aberford (511a) soil association, consisting of shallow, locally brashy, well-drained calcareous fine loamy soils (SSEW 1983). However, on the site these have been extensively modified by centuries of horticultural activity and redeposition. The underlying solid geology comprises Middle Jurassic strata of the Great Oolite Group (BGS 2002). These consist of shelly, ooidal limestone of the Taynton Limestone Formation on the upper slope, and sand and sandstone of the Horsehay Formation on the lower slope. The site lies at approximately 122m aOD.

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The historical and archaeological background of the general area is presented in detail in the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) of Brackley (Foard 1996; Ballinger 2000) and in the desk-based assessment prepared by NA (2002). The DBA identified sites of historical and archaeological interest in and around the site, the majority of records relating to listed buildings dating to the post-medieval period or later, although the medieval origins of the town were highlighted.

In brief, Brackley probably originated in the Saxon period, its name deriving from either a personal name, such as Bracca, or the Saxon word *braecen*, meaning bracken or fern, combined with *leah*, a woodland clearing (Whyne-Hammond 1994). In 1086 Brackley was recorded in the Domesday Book as a village of two hides with a recorded population of 24 (RCHME 1982); it was probably the centre of an estate, focused on the church of St. Peter.

In the early 12th century a planned town, one of only two in the county, was built to the south-west of the original village of Brackley. This new development was known as the New Town, to distinguish it from the village, which was referred to as the Old Town. The new town, which was founded by the de Beaumont Earls of Leicester, was laid out around a broad market place situated on the principal route between Northampton and

Oxford; it is possible that this road was diverted to serve the new town at this time. The town was probably preceded by a short-lived castle which was built in the late 11th century by the first Earl of Leicester, Robert de Beaumont (d 1118), and may have served as the original focus for the new development (Murray 2002).

The town expanded rapidly in the late 12th/early 13th century, with much of its wealth deriving from the wool trade. Burgage plots were laid out along the main road in the first half of the 13th century, extending the town northwards along High Street. Brackley received borough status in a charter of 1260.

The collapse of the wool trade in the 14th and 15th centuries led to a rapid decline in the town's fortunes and Leland, writing in the 16th century, reported that the town was in a ruinous state, with many streets abandoned and derelict. Between the 17th and early 19th centuries the town became a major coaching centre, due to its favourable position on the Oxford to Northampton and Banbury to Buckingham turnpike roads, and it witnessed a period of recovery. The street plan and much of the fabric of the town dates to this period. With the advent of the railways in the mid 19th century and the demise of the old coaching routes, Brackley reverted to a relatively unimportant market town and avoided the process of large-scale urbanisation that transformed many of the towns in the central part of the county.

In relation to the proposed development site, historical map evidence dating to the late 18th and 19th centuries shows a number of narrow plots extending from Market Place to the south-east, with orchards and gardens to the rear of buildings fronting on to the street. The buildings currently occupying the site are of mid 19th century date or later, the earliest possibly dating back to c 1830.

With the exception of the DBA (NA 2002), the proposed development site has not been subject to previous archaeological investigation. However, an archaeological evaluation was carried out in the area immediately to the south of the site in the mid 1990s (NA 1996a and b), prior to the development of housing (Old Brewery Walk). The remains of a late medieval building and associated floor levels were identified, c 80m to the south-west of Market Place Courtyard.

3 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The original trench location plan provided in the brief issued by NCCHET proposed the excavation of eight evaluation trenches (215 linear metres) within the application area. The location of the proposed trenches is shown in Figure 2. However, the continued use of the car park to the rear of 31 Market Place and the works compound in College Place meant that access had to be maintained, in accordance with the requirements of the Council Licence prepared by SNC. Therefore, Trenches 2, 4 and 8 had to be dropped from the proposed scheme of works and only five trial trenches could be opened.

3.2 Constraints

In addition to the requirement for continued access to the site, there were a number of other constraints that limited and hampered the programme of evaluation. The foremost amongst these was the presence of numerous functioning drains and sewers running

down slope from Market Place to a main sewer running along the foot of the slope, immediately to the east of the proposed development site. The approximate location of these services is shown in Figure 2. Care had to be taken so as not to damage the services, so Trenches 3 and 6 were moved to avoid them altogether and baulks were left in place in Trench 5 at the points where the drains crossed the trench. It was also necessary to shorten the length of the trenches to avoid manholes and mains water stopcocks.

The second major constraint was encountered in Market House Courtyard where much of the site was covered in large mounds of building debris and rubbish (Plate 1). To avoid this obstacle and the drains running down the centre of the plot, Trench 7 had to be reduced in size to a small test pit.

Other constraints included the presence of containers in the area of Trench 2 and piles of sand and stone used by SNC road contractors in the area of Trench 4. These were only cleared from the site on the 13th April, the last day of the evaluation. Flooding by groundwater and torrential rain were also an issue.

3.3 Excavation methodology

The trenches were excavated using a JCB-type mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching blade. A breaker and bolt cutters were used to penetrate the reinforced concrete in Trench 1. All overburden was stripped under archaeological supervision, with the topsoil and subsoil stacked separately and adjacent to the trenches. Mechanical excavation proceeded to the top of the archaeological deposits, to the limits of safe working practice or to the natural substrate where no archaeology was encountered. Due to the limited space available for stacking the spoil and the compaction of the yard surface, it was not feasible to step the trenches, although baulks were left in place to support the sides.

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in the NA *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2003). Trenches containing archaeological remains were cleaned by hand, sufficient to define the features. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual context number (e.g. 1302, Trench 13, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets. The trenches were planned (scale 1:50) and section drawings were made at an appropriate scale (1:10 or 1:20). Levels, which were related to Ordnance Datum, were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features. Trench locations were related to the OS National Grid. A photographic record was made of the excavation, using both 35mm colour transparency and black and white negative film. The spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval. Environmental samples were taken from suitable dated deposits.

All works were carried out accordance with the IFA *Code of Conduct* (1995, revised 2002) and the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IFA 1994, revised 2001). All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

The relevant officers from NCHET and SNC were contacted prior to and during the evaluation but were unavailable for monitoring. Arrangements will be made for the deposition of the site archive and finds. The guidelines of the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA 1993) will be followed in the preparation of the archive.

4 EXCAVATION RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Due to constraints (see 3.1 and 3.2 above), only five of the proposed eight trenches were opened; Trenches 1, 3 and 5 were located in College Place and Trenches 6 and 7 in Market House Courtyard. All of the trenches were 1.6m wide (with the exception of Trench 1 which was 3m wide) and of varying lengths (Fig 2).

The natural substrate was mid brownish orange clayey silt with a variable sand content, and contained moderate to frequent, fine to coarse, angular limestone pebbles and small cobbles. In Trench 3 the natural substrate consisted of light yellow/yellowish white silty sand at the western end of the trench, changing to orangey yellow silty sand at the eastern end. These deposits probably represent the weathered surface (regolith) of the Middle Jurassic Formations.

The subsoil was up to *c* 0.3m thick and comprised mid brown, occasionally sandy, slightly clayey silt with brashy inclusions. The accumulation of topsoil on both plots, in places up to 1m thick, is consistent with their past use as gardens and orchards. There was a clear distinction between the modern, organic topsoil at the surface (typically *c* 0.3m thick) and the lower topsoil, referred to as garden soil, which was slightly mineralized.

Plans of Trenches 3 and 5 are given in Figure 3, with the relevant sections. Summaries of the features in each trench and the heights above OD of archaeological features and the natural substrate below ground level are given in Appendix 1.

4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the car park to the rear of 31 Market Place (Plate 2). The trench, which was aligned from north-east to south-west, was 11.5m long and 3m wide. The width of the trench was increased so that it could have been stepped, should this have been necessary. Due to a drain passing through the centre of the trench, it was divided into two parts.

The car park surface was formed from reinforced concrete (101) lying over a sub-base of crushed building rubble (102), and had a combined thickness of *c* 0.4m. In the north-eastern part of the trench several drains were encountered immediately below the concrete, the main drain flowing into a manhole chamber immediately to the east of the trench. As the drains were still in use, this part of the trench could not be excavated further.

In the south-western part of the trench the sub-base overlay light to mid greyish blue clay (103). The clay, which had the appearance of Oxford Clay, was at least 0.8m thick and was probably redeposited. The clay contained black smears and patches of diesel oil, which began to seep out and formed a slick on the water pooling in the bottom of the trench. Due to this contamination, further excavation was abandoned and the trench was immediately back-filled, after basic recording.

Close to the south-western end of the trench the clay was mixed with brownish orange sandy silt and sub-angular limestone pebbles and small cobbles, which more closely

resembles the type of strata to be expected in this area. It was not clear if this too was redeposited, or whether the original land surface had been truncated.

4.3 Trench 3

This trench was 23m long and was aligned from east-south-east to west-north-west. It was situated close to the southern boundary of College Place, and was roughly parallel with the boundary wall. The natural substrate (309) lay at approximately 1.9m below the modern ground surface.

At the western end of the trench there was a linear ditch [308], aligned from north-east to south-west (Fig 3, section 1; Plate 3). It measured *c* 2.3m wide, 0.39m deep and had relatively steep concave sides and a shallow concave base. The primary fill (307) was 0.21m thick and comprised mid brownish grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks. The upper fill (306), which was 0.18m thick, was light to mid grey sandy silt with frequent olive green mottles, suggestive of cess, and occasional charcoal flecks. A sherd of pottery, which probably dates to the 12th century, was recovered from this deposit.

The upper fill of the ditch was sealed by a layer of subsoil (305), which was *c* 0.3m thick and comprised mid brown sandy clayey silt with occasional to moderate brashy inclusions. This layer extended in section down the full length of the trench, although it stopped abruptly at the western edge of the ditch, suggesting a possible bank on this side, constructed from redeposited natural silty sand excavated from the ditch. Due to the proximity of a boundary wall it was not possible to extend the trench to clarify this.

The following deposits were recorded in section along the full length of the trench. Overlying the subsoil (305) there was a buried soil horizon (304), probably representing the original medieval land surface. It comprised dark brownish grey slightly clayey silt and varied in thickness between 0.3m and 0.4m. It was sealed by a second layer of subsoil (303), which was approximately 0.3m thick and had no appreciable sand content, unlike the lower subsoil. This layer was probably redeposited and contained sherds of late 15th century pottery. Overlying the upper subsoil was a developed garden soil (302) that was up to 0.6m thick and contained 19th and 20th century pottery sherds and fragments of vessel glass. In places it was interspersed with intermittent layers (up to 60mm thick) of sandy mortar, gravel and crushed brick. The surface deposit (301) was a compacted layer, approximately 0.55m thick, of crushed brick, concrete and other demolition debris, covered with a thin spread of soil.

4.4 Trench 5

Trench 5 (Fig 4) was 26m long and was aligned from north-north-east to south-south-west. It was situated close to and parallel with the eastern boundary of College Place. The natural substrate (309) lay at approximately 1.5m below the modern ground surface.

At the southern end of the trench there was a large pit [508] (Fig 3, section 3; Plate 4). It extended across the full width of the trench and was at least 3.6m long; its full length could not be determined as its northern edge was covered by the baulk left in to protect a sewer pipe. Its southern edge sloped steeply and it was at least 1.2m deep; due to flooding its base could not be attained. The pit contained a sequence of gleyed, water-logged deposits, several of which had frequent olive green mottles (506, 507, 509),

indicating its likely function as a cess pit. Animal bone, oyster shells, tile and pottery dating to the mid 13th century were recovered from these deposits.

Towards the northern end of the trench there was a large pit [524] and at least two inter-cutting pits [519 and 521] immediately to the north of this (Fig 3, section 2; Plate 5). The presence of a sewer pipe and flooding in this area prevented the excavation of pit [524] and only the northern edge of [519] and [521] could be investigated.

Pit [524], which was 2.4m long and at least 0.7m wide, extended beyond the western limits of the trench. It was filled with mid grey clayey silt (523) and contained occasional charcoal flecks and limestone pebbles.

Due to the constraints mentioned above, it was not possible to determine the exact dimensions and form of pits [519] and [521]; it is possible that the straight southern edge of this combined feature, which does not appear to relate to the pits, may in fact be the edge of a ditch. Both pits, as excavated, had very steep, sloping sides and were at least 0.5m deep. The fills of both pits were cessy, with characteristic olive green mottles, and they both produced pottery dating to the mid 13th century.

The medieval features at the northern end of this trench cut through the primary subsoil (527), which was *c* 0.3m thick and comprised mid brown clayey silt with occasional to moderate brashy inclusions. This deposit was absent at the southern end of the trench. Otherwise, the sequence of deposits overlying the medieval features was broadly similar to that recorded in Trench 3, although they were disturbed by the insertion of sewers, a stone lined drain [512] (Plate 6), and 19th century rubbish pits.

Two walls of coursed rubble were revealed [513 and 516], one of which [513] was set in a foundation trench [515] (Plate 7). They were aligned roughly from north-west to south-east, were cut into the garden soil (503) and probably date to the late 18th or 19th century. A possible third wall was identified at the northern end of the trench, but it had been entirely demolished and appeared only as a spread of loose stones immediately below the rubble surface layer (501).

4.5 Trench 6

Trench 6, which was 17m long and was aligned from east to west, was situated in the eastern half of Market House Courtyard. At the eastern end of the trench the natural substrate was encountered at *c* 1.3m below the modern ground surface and at the western end at *c* 1.1m. The base of the trench sloped slightly from west to east, consistent with the topography of the general area. Overlying the natural substrate (604) there was a layer of subsoil (603), which was *c* 0.3m thick and comprised mid brown clayey silt with occasional brashy inclusions. Above the subsoil there was mid greyish brown slightly sandy silt (602), which contained occasional charcoal flecks, sherds of 19th century pottery and fragments of vessel glass. This layer, which was *c* 0.7m thick at the eastern end of the trench and thinned to *c* 0.5m thick at the western end, has been interpreted as a partly mineralized garden soil. The surface layer (601), the modern topsoil horizon, was dark brownish grey, organic, slightly sandy silt and was approximately 0.3m thick.

4.6 Trench 7

Due to constraints, this trench, which was located near the centre of Market House Courtyard, was reduced in size to a 2.5m square test pit (Plate 8). The sequence of deposits in this test pit was similar to that recorded in Trench 6.

Above the natural substrate (706), which occurred at a depth of 1.3m below the modern ground surface, there was a layer of subsoil (705) approximately 0.3m thick. Over this there had developed a thick, now slightly mineralized garden soil (704 and 702), which contained a layer of 19th century brick rubble (703). The uppermost layer was dark, organic modern topsoil (701).

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 17 sherds with a total weight of 222g. It was all of medieval date. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1.

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

F303: *Sandy Coarseware*, ?AD1100-1400. 7 sherds, 75g.

F324: *Brill/Boarstall ware*, 1200-1600. 3 sherds, 23g.

F329: *Potterspury ware*, AD1250-1600. 4 sherds, 73g.

F345: *Oxford ware*, L11th – 14thC. 1 sherd, 6g.

F369: *Brill/Boarstall 'Tudor Green' wares*, AD1475 – 1600. 1 sherd, 18g.

F403: *Midland Purple ware*, AD1450-1600. 1 sherd, 27g.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Context	F303	F345	F324	F329	F403	F369	Date
303					1 (27)	1 (18)	Late 15thC
306	1 (4)						12thC?
505	1 (3)						12thC?
506				1 (44)			Mid 13thC
517	3 (50)	1 (6)	2 (20)	2 (22)			Mid 13thC
518			1 (3)				13thC
520	2 (18)			1 (7)			Mid 13thC
Total	7 (75)	1 (6)	3 (23)	4 (73)	1 (27)	1 (18)	

The range of ware types present is typical of medieval sites in Brackley, and indicates that there was activity at the site throughout the medieval period.

5.2 Ceramic roof tile *by Pat Chapman*

Three small fragments of roof tile (252g) were recovered. Two fragments came from the fill (506) of a large cess pit [508]. One is a fragment of a nib tile (the nib itself has been broken) in an orange fine sandy clay fabric; the other fragment, in the same fabric, is from a corner that has been painted with black slip for decorative purposes. A corner fragment from the fill (520) of pit [521] is in a brown shelly ware. The tile fragments are between 13-15mm thick. All of the fragments are likely to be medieval in date, although the tile from pit [508] may be slightly later and could date to the early post-medieval period.

5.3 Animal bone and shell *by Karen Deighton*

A small quantity (221g) of animal bone and shell was collected from medieval deposits during the excavation. This material was assessed to establish the species present, the level of preservation and the potential for further analysis. Fragmentation was moderate and surface condition was good, with little evidence of weathering or abrasion. A single instance of canid gnawing was observed. The species present by context are presented in Table 2 below. Little can be concluded about the animal economy of the site other than the fact that a range of species were present or utilised here. The value of further work would be severely limited by the small size of the assemblage.

Table 2: Number of bone elements per species by context

Species	Context	
	506	517
<i>Bos</i> (cattle)		
<i>Ovicaprid</i> (sheep/goat)	1	1
<i>Sus</i> (pig)	1	
<i>Avis</i> (bird)		
Large ungulate (large hoofed)	1	1
Small ungulate (small hoofed)		
<i>Myletus edulis</i> (oyster)	8 (valves)	
Total	11	2

5.4 Environmental indicators *by Karen Deighton*

Two 20 litre samples were collected by hand during the evaluation. Both samples were taken from deposits contained within a medieval cess pit [508]. These were processed using a siraf tank fitted with a 500 micron mesh and flot sieve. The resulting flots were examined using a microscope (10x magnification). Although the results of the environmental assessment were poor, in terms of the range of ecofacts present in the samples, preservation was good and there remains a potential for a more diverse range of ecofacts in waterlogged deposits.

Sample 1 (context 507)

This sample produced 20-30 small unidentifiable charcoal fragments and a single abraded wheat/barley (*Triticum/Hordeum*) type cereal grain. Fragmented, uncharred elder seeds were also present.

Sample 2 (context 509)

Although this sample appeared cassy, on processing it produced only fragmented uncharred elder seeds.

6 DISCUSSION

Despite a number of constraints, the evaluation was successful in identifying medieval remains dating to the 12th and 13th centuries. However, the street frontage and the area immediately to the rear of the buildings facing on to Market Place could not be included in the evaluation; only the central and eastern part of the site could be investigated, and even in these areas the evaluation was restricted in its scope.

In College Place the earliest feature encountered was a probable 12th century ditch at the western end of Trench 3. The ditch had a possible bank on its north-western (upslope) side. The alignment of the ditch (north-east to south-west) cut across the general east to west alignment of the burgage plots, suggesting that it predates the laying out of the planned medieval town in this area. The ditch, which roughly follows the contour of the slope, may be the boundary of a field or enclosure; the cassy appearance of the upper fill indicates habitation nearby.

Other medieval activity, broadly dating to the 13th century, was recorded in Trench 5 and comprised a number of large pits, probably cess pits. These were located close to the eastern edge of the site and some distance from the street frontage. A possible drainage or plot boundary ditch was also located, but could not be investigated due to the proximity of a modern sewer.

The ground level across the eastern part of College Place appeared to have been raised by approximately half a metre, possibly in the late 15th century. This was evident as a layer of redeposited subsoil and presumably topsoil over the medieval land surface. The area then appears to have been divided into orchards and gardens until at least the mid 20th century, when industrial or agricultural buildings and yards were built on the site.

The walls revealed in Trench 5 are probably the remains of the boundary walls shown on the first edition OS map (NA 2002; fig 5), which also appear on the earlier map of 1760. The upper brick courses are built on stone courses, indicating that the walls have been rebuilt.

No archaeological remains were encountered in Market House Courtyard and the deposits, characterized by a thick garden soil, were consistent with the plot having been used as a garden from the later post-medieval period onwards. There was no evidence for the raising of ground level identified to the north of the boundary wall in College Place, which suggests that the boundary probably dates back to the medieval period and may relate to a burgage plot.

7 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

As detailed above (Section 6), medieval remains dating to the 12th and 13th centuries were identified in the eastern and southern part of College Place. The type of features are typical of 'backyard' activity, which is generally characterized by cess and refuse pits, boundary ditches, outbuildings and occasionally features associated with industrial activity. Such remains would be of importance in reconstructing the social, built and economic development of the medieval town. It is likely that the medieval remains extend into the central area of College Place, although this could not be confirmed by the evaluation due to constraints. Any archaeological remains in the area of the street frontage are likely to have been heavily truncated by 19th and 20th century development, although the survival of pockets of archaeology cannot be precluded.

The proposed plans for the development of residential properties on the site will impact on the medieval remains in the central and eastern part of College Place (Blocks D and E, as shown on the proposed development plan). The formation level for the lower basement car park beneath Block E (118.33 aOD) lies below the upper surface of the archaeology (118.5m aOD); the upper basement car park (formation level 119.73m aOD) lies approximately 1m above the archaeology at its southern extent, but due to the slope, is likely to impact on archaeological remains further to the north.

A likely scenario for archaeological mitigation, which will be determined by SNC, may be for a watching brief with ample contingencies for the area of Blocks D and E, and a standard watching brief for the remainder of the site. As the formation level for the basement area lies close to the level of the archaeology and the ground level will need to be reduced as part of the construction process, a strategy of strip, map and record may be opted for, with the area of the basement footprint reduced to archaeological levels.

No archaeological remains were encountered in Market Place Courtyard and it is unlikely that further work in this area will be requested.

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APPENDIX 1

Summary of features

Abbreviations

P pottery; T tile; B bone; S shell

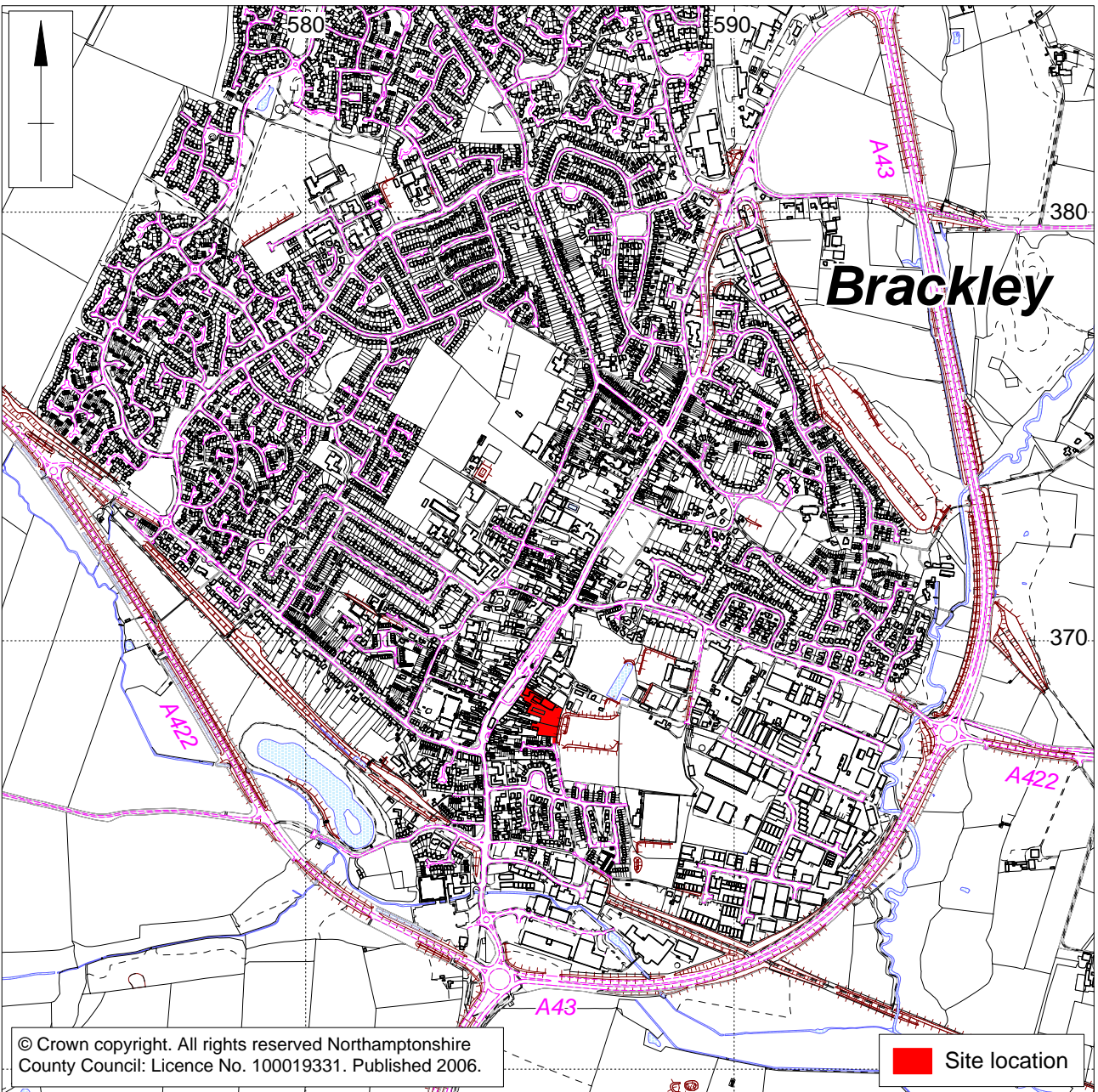
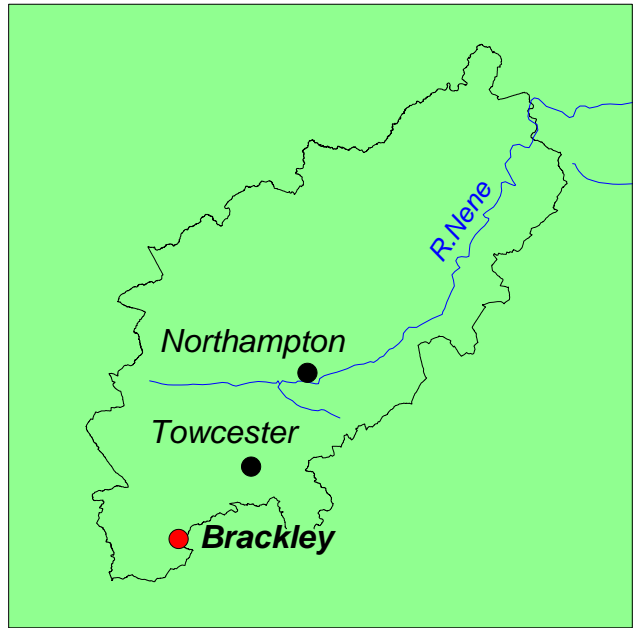
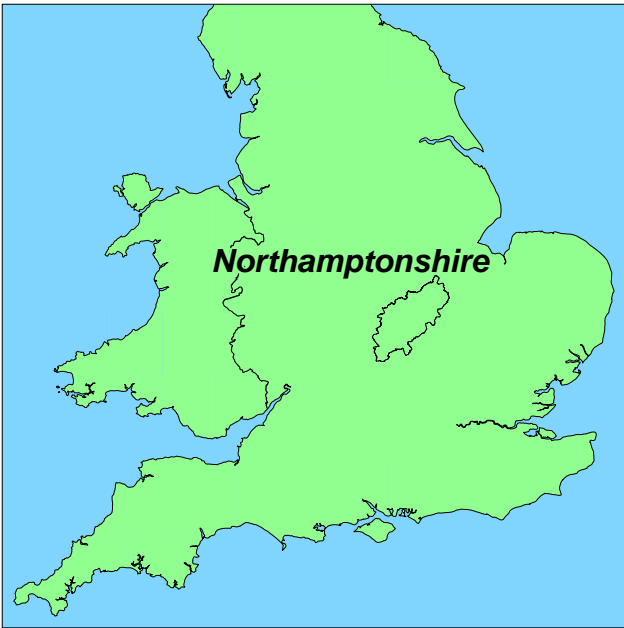
Trench no.	Context no.	Feature type	Date	Finds	
1	101	Concrete	Modern, 20 th century		
	102	Rubble sub-base	Modern, 20 th century		
	103	Layer	Modern, 20 th century		
	104	Natural substrate	-		
2	Not excavated				
3	301	Rubble layer	Modern, 20 th century		
	302	Topsoil	Modern		
	303	Subsoil	Late medieval, late 15 th century	P	
	304	Buried soil	Medieval		
	305	Subsoil	Medieval		
	306 307 [308]	Ditch	Medieval, 12 th century	P	
	309	Natural substrate	-		
4	Not excavated				
5	501	Rubble layer	Modern, 20 th century		
	502	Topsoil	Modern		
	503	Subsoil	-		
	504	Layer	-		
	505 506 507 509 [508]	Cess pit	Medieval, 13 th century	P P B T S P	
	510 [511]	Trench for [512]	Post-medieval or later		
	[512]	Stone drain	Post-medieval or later		
	[513]	Wall	18 th /19 th century		
	514 [515]	Trench for [513]	18 th /19 th century		
	516	Wall	18 th /19 th century		
	517 518 [519]	Pit	Medieval, 13 th century	P B P	
	520 [521]	Pit	Medieval, 13 th century	P T	
	522	Natural substrate	-		
	523 [524]	Pit	Medieval		
	525 [526]	Pit	19 th century		
	6	601	Topsoil	Modern	
		602	Garden soil	Modern	
603		Subsoil	-		
604		Natural substrate	-		

Trench no.	Context no.	Feature type	Date	Finds
7	701	Topsoil	Modern	
	702	Garden soil	Modern	
	703	Demolition rubble	Modern	
	704	Garden soil	Modern	
	705	Subsoil	-	
	706	Natural substrate	-	
8	Not excavated			

Trench no.	Height above OD (m)	
	Archaeological features	Natural substrate
1	-	*
3	118.8	118.7 > 117.9
5	118.5	118.7 > 117.9
6	-	117.6 > 117.2
7	-	118.9

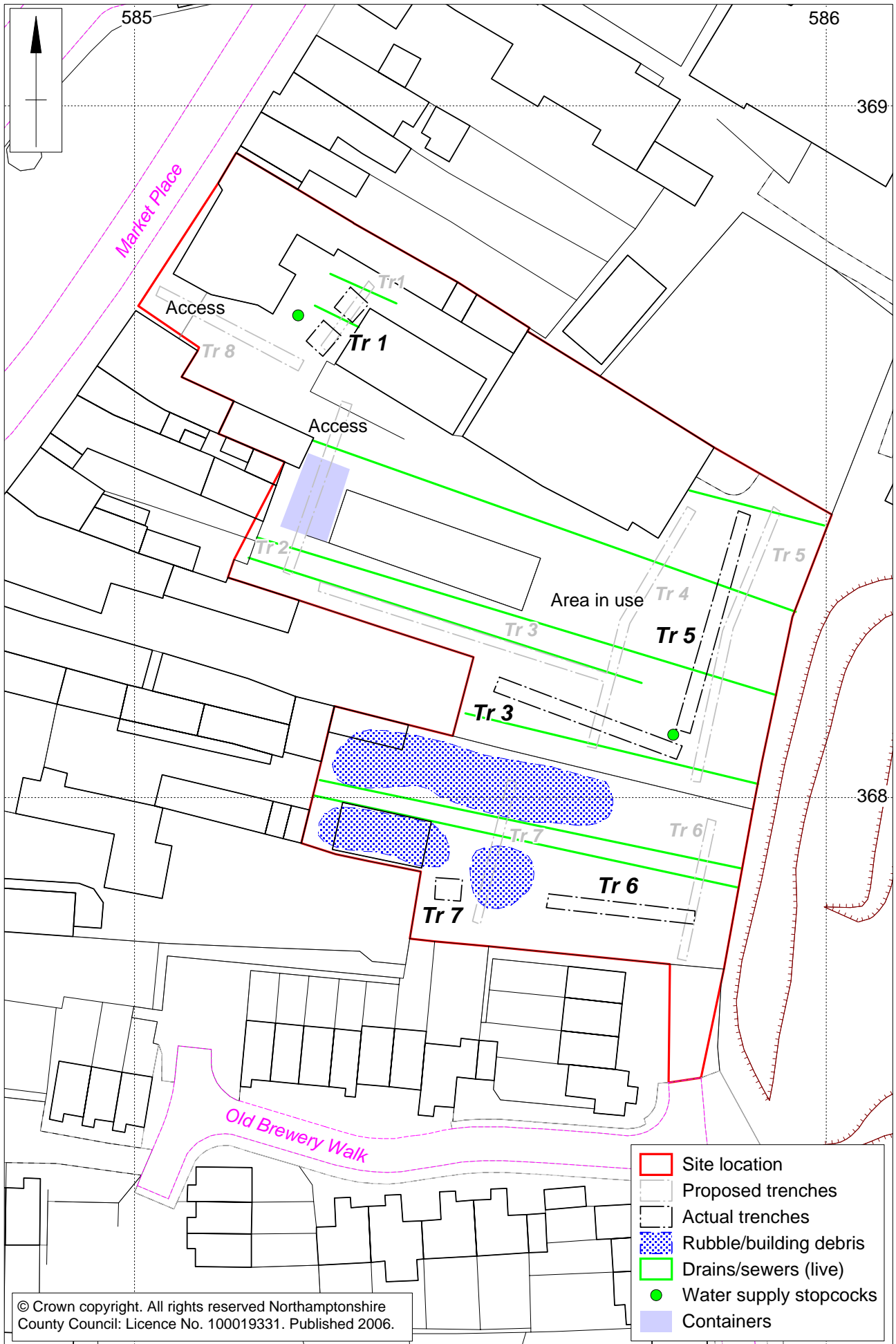
* Excavation abandoned at c 0.6m due to contamination

> Indicates reduction in level along length of trench



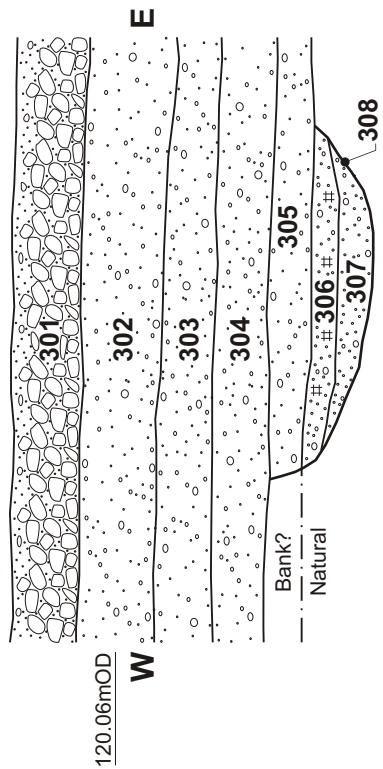
Scale 1:15,000

Site location Fig 1

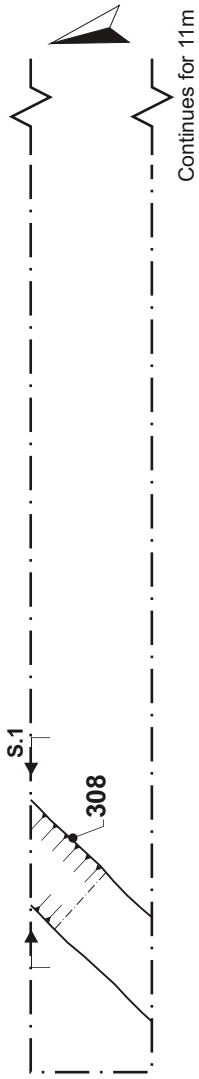


Trench location Fig 2

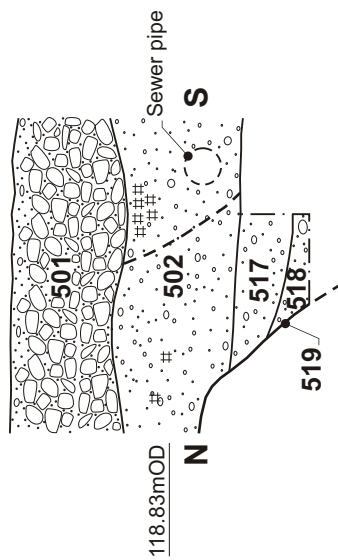
Section 1 - Trench 3



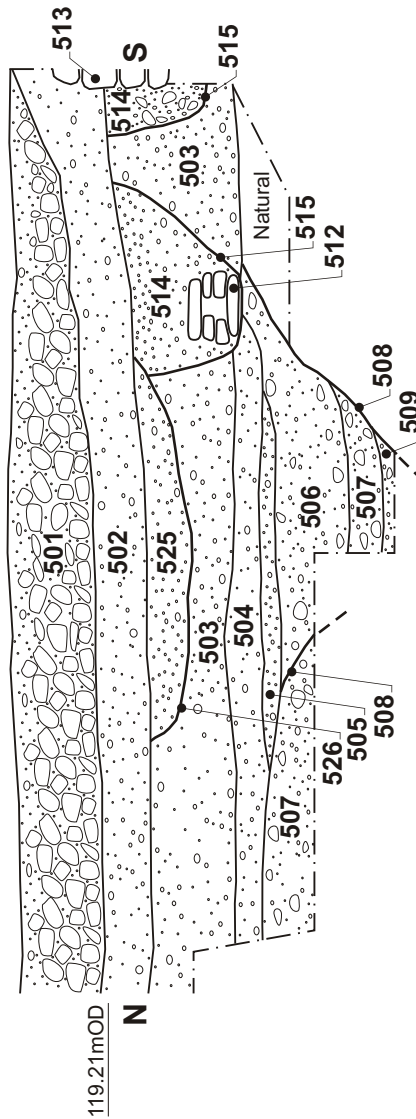
Trench 3



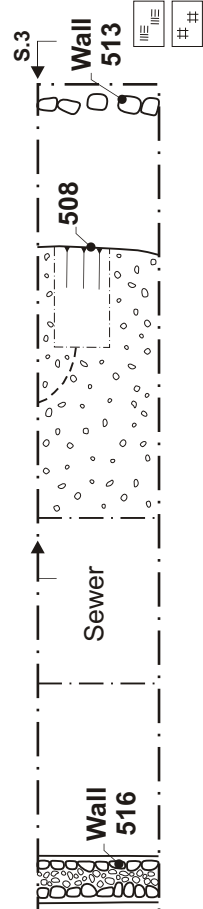
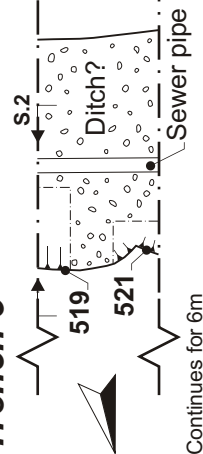
Section 2 - Trench 5



Section 3 - Trench 5



Trench 5



Plans and sections Fig 3



Plate 1: Market Place Courtyard, facing south-east



Plate 2: Trench 1, facing north



Plate 3: Trench 3, ditch [308] in foreground, facing east



Plate 4: Trench 5, pit [508], facing north



Plate 5: Trench 5, pit [519], facing east



Plate 6: Trench 5, stone drain [512], facing east



Plate 7: Trench 5, wall [513], facing south



Plate 8: Trench 7, facing east