

**WELLOW HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL,  
NEWARK ROAD, WELLOW, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT**

Site code: WHSM 14  
NGR: SK 66825 66212  
LPA: Newark and Sherwood District Council  
Planning Ref: 13/01749/FUL  
Accession number: NEKMS : 2015.39  
PCA Ref: 1310

Report prepared for

Guy Taylor Associates  
on behalf of Wellow House School

by

J. Payne

December 2015



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## Contents

	Summary	1
<b>1.0</b>	Introduction	2
<b>2.0</b>	Site location and description	2
<b>3.0</b>	Geology and topography	2
<b>4.0</b>	Planning background	3
<b>5.0</b>	Archaeological and historical background	4
<b>6.0</b>	Methodology	5
<b>7.0</b>	Results	5
<b>8.0</b>	Conclusion	7
<b>9.0</b>	Effectiveness of methodology	8
<b>10.0</b>	Acknowledgements	8
<b>11.0</b>	Site Archive	8
<b>12.0</b>	References/Bibliography	8
<b>Appendix 1:</b> Colour Plates		
<b>Appendix 2:</b> Context Register		
<b>Appendix 3:</b> Ceramic analysis		
<b>Appendix 4:</b> OASIS summary		

## Figures

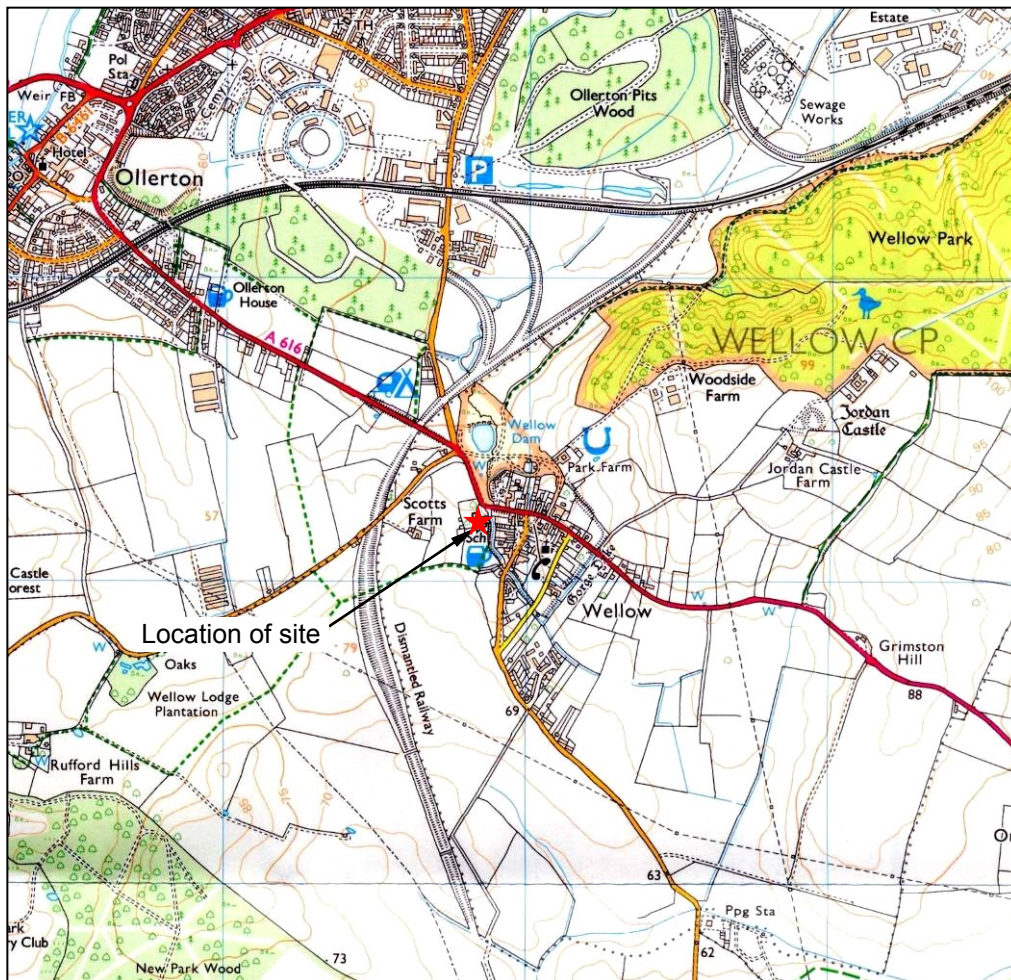
- Fig. 1:** Site location plan at scale 1:25,000
- Fig. 2:** Plan of the school at scale 1:1250
- Fig. 3:** 1:100 scale plan of foundation trench layout showing section locations
- Fig. 4:** Section 7, scale 1:100
- Fig. 5:** Section 1, south facing representative section from southern-most foundation trench, scale: 1:20
- Fig. 6:** Section 2, north facing representative section from southern-most foundation trench, scale: 1:20
- Fig. 7:** Section 3, west facing section of possible cut [104]
- Fig. 8:** Section 4, east facing section of brick structure <108>
- Fig. 9:** Section 5, east facing section of pit cut [110]
- Fig. 10:** Section 6, west facing section of pit cut [112]

## Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording took place during the construction of new classrooms and alterations to facilities at Wellow House Preparatory School in the district of Newark and Sherwood in Nottinghamshire.

The monitoring revealed no significant archaeological deposits, although three pits and the remains of a brick structure, all believed to be of post medieval date, were revealed.

This document describes the results of archaeological monitoring in accordance with the subject planning conditions and forms part of the archaeological mitigation associated with the scheme of development.



**Figure 1:** Site location plan at scale 1:25,000. The area of the development site is marked in red. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS Licence No. 100049278.

## **1.0 Introduction**

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd, were commissioned by Guy Taylor Associates, to undertake archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Wellow House Preparatory School, off Newark Road in the village of Wellow in Nottinghamshire. The aims of this were to preserve by record any archaeological remains discovered on the site, which were impacted by development.

The archaeological monitoring and recording followed current best practice and appropriate national guidance, which at the time comprised:

NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework, 2012;

IFA Code of Conduct (2008 as revised);

IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2008);

Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE v1.1, 2009, English Heritage).

The archaeological works fulfilled a planning condition attached to the development as part of the planning conditions.

## **2.0 Site Location and Description (fig:- 1)**

The village of Wellow is situated in the district of Newark and Sherwood in the county of Nottinghamshire. It lies on the A616, approximately 1.5km south-east of Ollerton and 11km east-north-east of the outskirts of Mansfield.

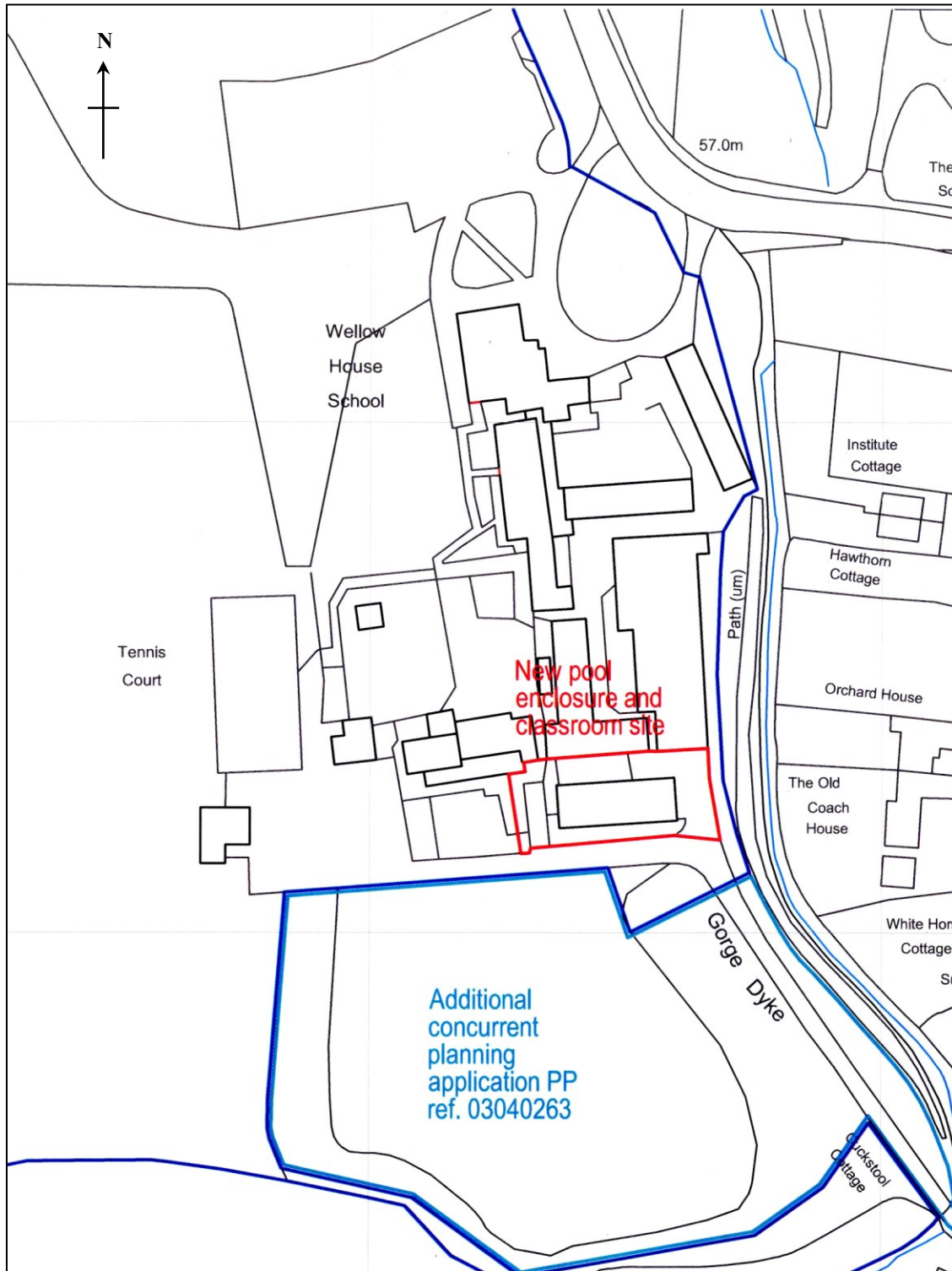
Wellow House Preparatory School is on the west side of Wellow village and within the Wellow Conservation Area. The eastern edge of the school site is occupied by a number of both single and two-storey buildings which form the classrooms and boarding facilities for the school, whilst the remaining area is predominantly a mixture of parkland and playing fields (GTA, 2013). The site is bordered on its eastern side by a stream, which forms a part of the Gorge Dyke earthwork, which surrounds the historic core of the village of Wellow.

National Grid Reference: SK 66825 66212.

## **3.0 Topography and Geology**

The village of Wellow is situated at the eastern edge of the valleys of the River Maun and the Rainworth Water, at whose confluence Ollerton lies in the valley base. The local topography is undulating, but in general the land rises to the north and east of the village, and falls away to the south and west. The school grounds are at an approximate elevation of 65m OD.

No drift geology is recorded within the vicinity of Wellow, and the exposed solid geology consists of Tarpoley Siltstone Formation siltstone, mudstone and sandstone (BGS, 1966; bgs.ac.uk).



**Figure 2:** Plan of the school at scale 1:1250, showing the current application area outlined in red. Plan supplied by client.

#### 4.0 Planning Background (fig:- 2)

Full planning permission was granted in March 2014 (planning application ref. 13/01749/FUL) for the construction of new and improved sports facilities and classrooms.

This work also included the demolition of an existing Portakabin, swimming pool cover, as well as an attached covered walkway, plus a plant shed and concrete structure.

In accordance with the aims of Core Policy 14 of the Newark and Sherwood Core Strategy, permission was granted subject to the implementation of a scheme of archaeological mitigation in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority (Condition No. 4).

## 5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Within the neighbourhood of Wellow House School, little evidence exists for any activity which pre-dates the early medieval period.

The English Heritage PastScape records show only one find; a Neolithic to Bronze Age flint scraper retrieved within the general vicinity of the site, although even this is not accurately located (PastScape ref. 320360).

Any evidence of either Iron Age or Roman activity within the area is absent.

A settlement recorded as *Creilege* in the Domesday Survey of AD 1086 has been identified as Wellow. The early medieval settlement was an outlying holding of Gilbert de Ghent's manor of Kneesall, and had a population of 24 households farming arable land, meadow and woodland pasture; it had no church at the time (Williams and Martin, 1992, p.778).

The place-name 'Wellow' appears in documentation c. 1278 as *Welhagh* or *Welhah*, meaning 'a piece of ground enclosed with a fence or hedge'. The 'new village' of Wellow, with houses laid out round a large triangular green and surrounded by a bank and ditch, appears to have been founded by people who had been displaced when the monks of Rufford Abbey (which lies to the south-west of Wellow) disposed of land holdings at Cratley and Inkersall: since Rufford Abbey was founded in 1146, the redevelopment of Wellow must date to the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century or later. The earthwork enclosing the village has been known as the George or Gorge Dyke since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The remains of this earthwork comprise, in the main, a broad ditch, plus the partial remains, in places, of an inner bank. Breaks through the earthwork can be attributed to a combination of road cuttings, some of which are likely to be modern, ground levelling in garden areas, plus natural erosional processes that have resulted in the both the deflation of the earth banks and silting up of the associated ditches. On the north, north-east and south-east sides the feature is entirely man made, whilst on the west side a stream course has been utilised and probably deepened (PastScape ref. 320335). Part of the Gorge Dyke is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, although this only extends to the south-east and north-east sides of the earthwork, with the addition of a small amount of the south-west return, from the south corner. The scheduled area does not include the part adjacent to the Wellow School (NHLfE ref. 1003486).

The Grade II\* listed St. Swithin's parish church was constructed between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and includes 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century restorations (NHLfE ref. 1370185).

The original building on the Wellow House School site, which now accommodates the school's reception and offices, was formerly a dwelling, whilst the surrounding area was utilised as a smallholding. A school was established on the site approximately 40 years ago and since that period many small-scale detached and extended structures have accreted to it (GTA, 2013).

Monitoring of groundworks for a new water main in Billet Lane and Potter Lane, adjacent to the Gorge Dyke, was carried out in 1994 but recorded only modern deposits (NMR ref. 13211703).

## **6.0 Methodology**

The archaeological monitoring covered by this report comprised the excavation of a series of linear foundation trenches, with associated deeper stanchion pits that represent the footprint of the new development. These were excavated to depths of between 0.70 to 2.40m and measured approximately 0.60m in width. All trenches were machine excavated using a 360° excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket.

All deposits seen were recorded on standard PCAS context recording sheets, and the progress of the groundworks noted on a standard PCAS site diary sheet. Sample sections were drawn at intervals at a scale of 1:20, and plotted on a base plan. A digital photographic record was maintained: a selection from this is reproduced as Appendix 1.

The monitoring took place periodically between 17/06/2015 until the 20/07/2015 and comprised eight separate site visits. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Ben Hobbs, Simon Savage, Rachel Savage and Ben Wheeliker.

## **7.0 Results (Fig:- 3-10)**

Solid geology was revealed only within the southern foundation trench of the main east-west orientated, central building (see figures 5 and 6). The deposit, allocated context (103), comprised a mid to light reddish-brown concreted silt, which is believed to equate to either the identified solid geological horizon of the Tarporley Siltstone Formation, or possibly another unidentified mudstone of similar composition. The top of the deposit was reached at between 1.30 to 1.50m below the pre excavation ground surface and although its base was not revealed, it was seen to reach a maximum thickness of at least 0.60m. This solid geological horizon was not witnessed within any or the remaining areas of excavation, which is slightly surprising, as many of the remaining excavations were excavated to similar depths. The reason for this shallower area of solid geology is not well understood, although it is possible that it may preserve evidence of the sites original topographical profile, as was, prior to an extensive landscaping episode, which was probably associated with the construction of the adjacent playing fields.

Directly overlying the previously described deposit and also forming the earliest deposit encountered within the remaining areas of excavation was a deposit of mid orange-brown silty clay which contained occasional areas of greyish mottling (context (101)). This deposit was revealed at depths of between 0.08 and 1.20m below the pre excavation ground surface where it was seen to be between 0.30 to 2.20m thick, although even at the greater thicknesses the base of the deposit was not revealed. Although visually this deposit appeared fairly sterile, ceramics of post medieval date were retrieved, which attest to the deposits fairly recent deposition. However, the thickness of the deposit and the absence of any drift geology with the stratigraphic sequence, does suggest that although this was recorded as single depositional event, it may in fact represent both drift geology as well as an overlying subsoil deposit. If this hypothesis is correct the depositional processes for this deposit are likely to represent both naturally derived glacial deposition plus an overlying subsoil, which may have been altered through anthropogenic activity. This activity may have formed a part of the same extensive landscaping episode associated with the adjacent playing fields, mentioned previously. Additionally, if we assume that the quantity of material that comprises the subsoil fraction of this deposit is substantial, it would be reasonable to

assume that the material was sourced locally. This factor, combined with the denuded condition of the bank that is associated with the adjacent stretch of the Gorge Dyke, may indicate the most probable source for the bulk of this deposit.

Directly overlying deposit (101) to the eastern side of the development was what appeared to be a second, more localised area of levelling. This deposit, allocated context (102) was revealed in a single section and appeared as a 0.24m thick layer of mixed light and mid orange-brown sand, with no visible inclusions (figure 7, section 3). The limited extent of the deposit revealed makes any meaningful interpretation difficult, although it seems probable that it represents a part of the same landscaping episode as previously described. Its differing composition may reflect either some variation in a single source material, or possibly even a different source for some of the material which comprises the levelling episode. This deposit may have been partly truncated by a shallow pit cut, described below.

Possible pit cut [104] was revealed only within the west facing section of the foundation trench and comprised a shallow, 0.64m wide cut with a concave base that survived to a depth of 0.24m. The single fill, context (105) comprised a mixed soil which contained concentrated charcoal towards the base. However, as the base of this cut coincided exactly with the base of deposit (102), it is possible that it does in fact represent localised lenses of differing material preserved within deposit (102). If however we assume that the original interpretation is correct its function remains uncertain (figure 7, section 3).

To the western side of the development, anthropogenic activity was more widespread, with a series of features that comprised levelling deposits, brick structures and pit cuts being recognised. These are described in stratigraphic sequence below.

Towards the western limit of excavation and also directly overlying deposit (101), was a second localised area of levelling. However, here the deposit comprised a 0.06m thick layer of compacted and crushed coal fragments (context (109)). The deposit extended for at least 2.00m, north-south, or along the length of the foundation trench, whilst the east-west extent of 0.60m represents only the revealed extent of the deposit as seen. This context seems likely to represent the remains of an area or exterior surfacing, which to judge by stratigraphic evidence must post date the substantial levelling deposits that contained post medieval ceramics. Approximately 0.50m from its northern end, but only within the east facing side of the trench section the deposit was seen to be truncated by the remains of narrow brick structure <108>, which does suggest that this deposit represents the earliest phase of post medieval activity (figure 8, section 4).

Brick structure <108>, was a mentioned previously only revealed within the east facing section a single foundation trench. The structure as seen comprised three courses of red bricks, surviving to a height of 0.28m, whilst the north-south width measured 0.60m, which equated to four bricks with headers lain consecutively. The bricks themselves appeared to have been lain un-bonded into a 0.50m deep construction cut (not allocated a context number), whilst areas of mortar adhering to the bricks themselves, suggest that they may have been reused. The function of this structure is not known, although some ephemeral but functional garden feature seems the most probable.

Pit cut [110] was located approximately 5 metres to the east of the previously described brick structure and was revealed only within the west facing section of the foundation trench (figure 9, section 5). The cut comprised a steep to vertical, straight sided cut with a concave base that survived to a depth of 1.60m below overlying demolition deposit (100). The north-south width of 1.12m represents only the extent revealed, whilst the east-west extent as seen measured no more than 0.60m. The single fill, context (111) comprised a mid greyish-brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of pebble inclusions. The function of this cut and the



associated fill is uncertain, although it is possible that it represents a small soakaway pit of recent date.

Pit cut [112] was located approximately 3 metres to the southeast of the brick structure and was revealed within both the east and west facing sections of the foundation trench. The cut comprised a steep to undercutting irregular sided cut with a flattish base that survived to a depth of 1.04m below overlying demolition deposit (100). The north-south width measured 1.20m, whilst the excavated east-west extent measured approximately 0.60m, which equates to the width of the foundation trench. The single fill, context (113) also comprised a mid greyish-brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of pebble inclusions. The function of this cut is also believed to be as a soakaway pit, which again is also likely to be of recent date (figure 10, section 6).

Context (100) overlay all of the previously described features and sealed levelling deposit (101). It comprised an extensive area mixed clay and demolition material that varied in thickness from between 0.08 to 0.40m. Although this did in general represent the existing ground level at the time the site works were in progress, in some areas it was seen to have been sealed an extant asphalt trackway (context (107)). Context (100) is likely to represent a disturbed demolition and levelling horizon that is probably associated with a previous phase of building development.

The remaining deposits encountered during this monitoring exercise comprised the pre-existing surfaces associated directly with current use phase of the property. These deposits comprised a compacted levelling deposit with asphalt capping (107), which had a combined thickness of approximately 1.00m, plus a dark 0.28m thick organic topsoil (106), revealed in the southernmost section and representing the edge of the extensive grassed area located to the south of the development area.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

The results of the archaeological monitoring identified a stratigraphic sequence, which appeared to indicate that the majority of the site only became actively occupied in the post-medieval period and continued until the present time.

## **9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology**

Within the parameters set by the monitoring exercise the results achieved must be judged as successful, as these identified and recorded the archaeological sequence, prior to its destruction. Additionally, the methodology employed resulted in little or no delay to the planned sequence of construction works.

## **10.0 Acknowledgements**

PCAS Ltd would like to thank Guy Taylor Associates, who on behalf of Wellow House School, commissioned the work.

## **11.0 Site Archive**

The project archive is currently held at the offices of PCAS Ltd. in Saxilby, Lincolnshire while being prepared for deposition, and will remain there until transference to the Newark and Sherwood Museums Service can be arranged, with the exception of the finds, which are to be discarded.

## 12.0 References/Bibliography

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## **Appendix 1: Colour Plates**



Plate 1: Remains of the bank adjacent to Gorge Dyke, looking NNW.



Plate 2: Levelled grounds to south of main school buildings, looking N



Plate 3: Gorge dyke, looking south



Plate 4: Partly excavated foundation trenches, looking east



Plate 5: East facing trench section showing brick structure <108>



Plate 6: West facing section showing pit [110].

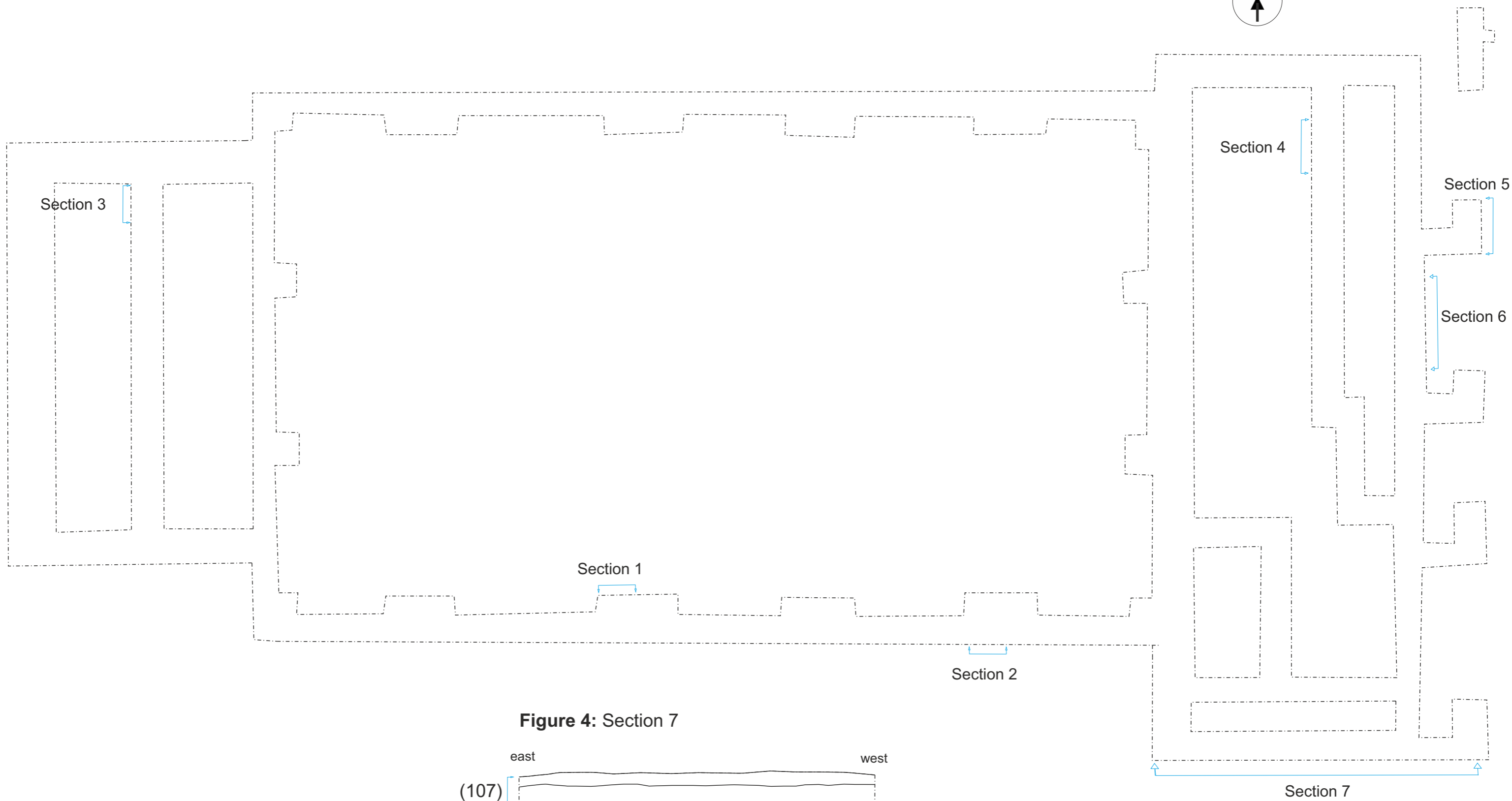


Plate 7: West facing section showing soakaway feature [112].

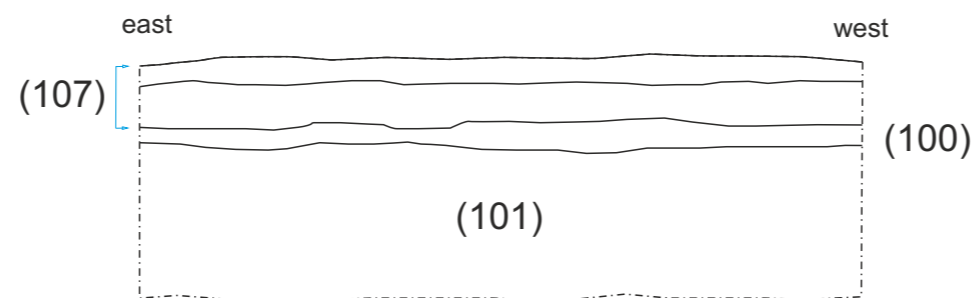
## Appendix 2: Context Summary

Context No.	Type	Description	Finds/Dating
100	Layer	Mixed levelling deposit	Modern
101	Layer	Mid orange-brown silty clay, containing occasional areas of greyish mottling, post-medieval landscaping	Post-medieval
103	Layer	Mid to light reddish-brown concreted silt, solid geological horizon of the Tarporley Siltstone Formation	None
104	Cut	Possible pit cut [104] shallow cut with a concave base, filled by (105)	Post-medieval
105	Fill	Fill of pit cut [104], mixed soil which contained concentrated charcoal towards the base.	Post-medieval
106	Layer	Dark-brown organic topsoil	Modern
107	Layer	Combined asphalt and underlying levelling deposit	Modern
108	structure	Red brick foundation/base, un-bonded brickwork	Post-medieval
109	Layer	Crushed and fragmented coal, levelled surfacing	Post-medieval
110	Cut	Steep to vertical, straight sided cut, filled by (111)	Post-medieval
111	Fill	Fill of pit cut [110], mid greyish-brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of pebble inclusions	Post-medieval
112	Cut	Steep to undercutting irregular sided cut, filled by (113)	Post-medieval
113	Fill	Fill of pit cut [112], mid greyish-brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of pebble inclusions	Post-medieval

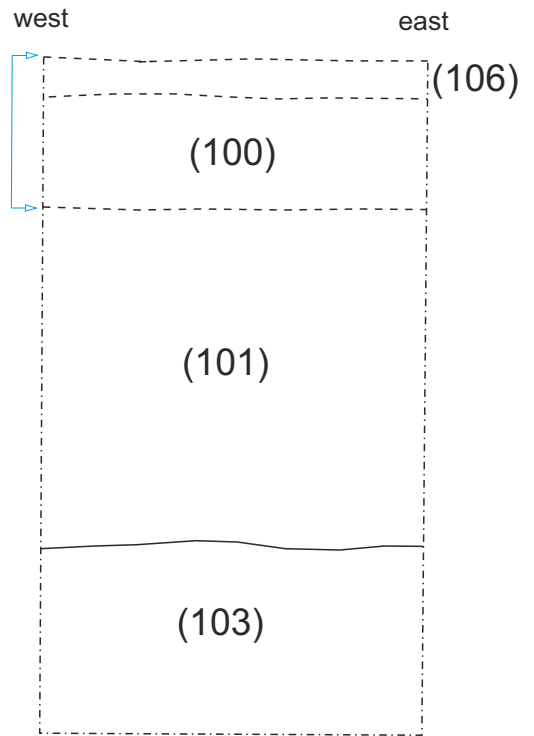
**Figure 3:** Foundation trench plan, with section locations



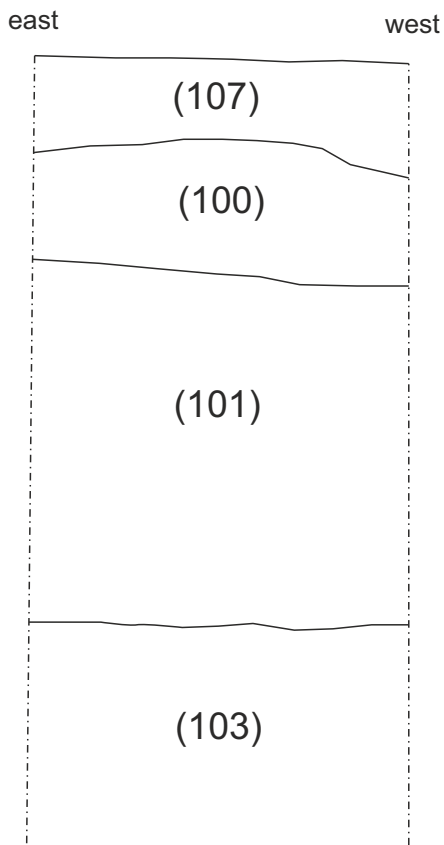
**Figure 4:** Section 7



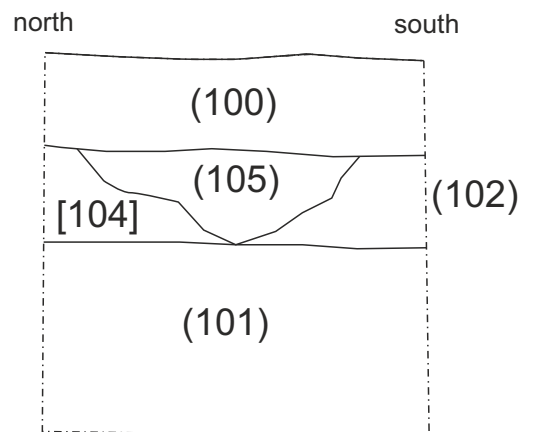
**Figure 5: section 1**



**Figure 6: section 2**



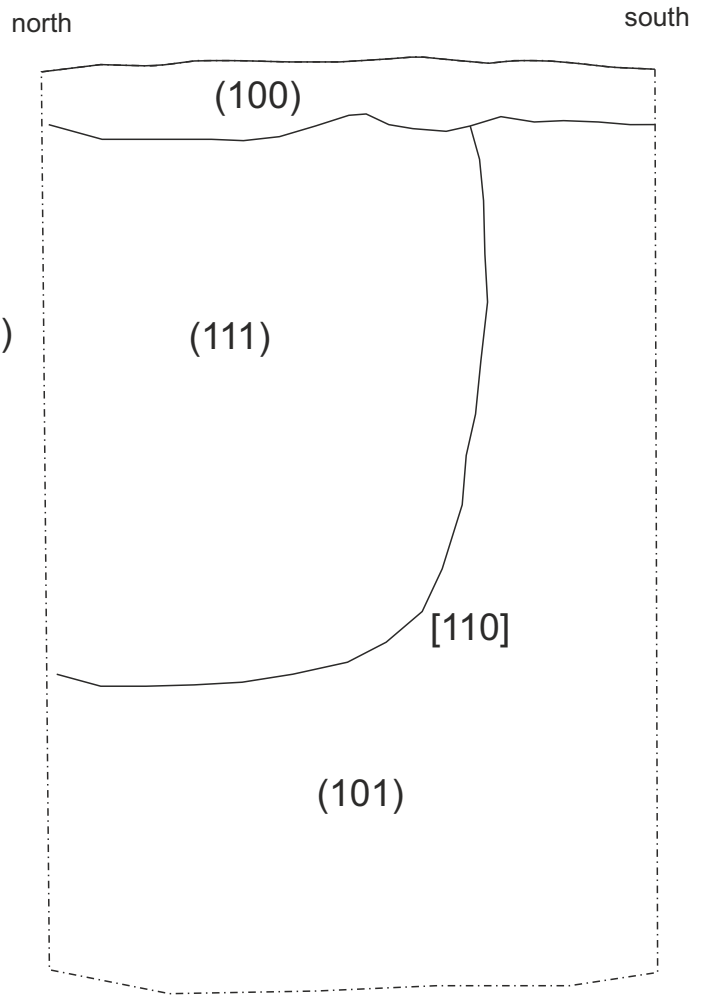
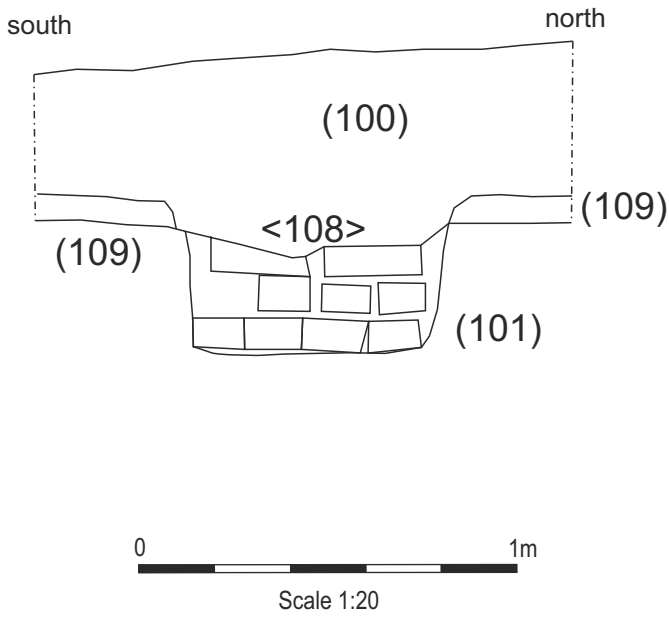
**Figure 7: section 3**



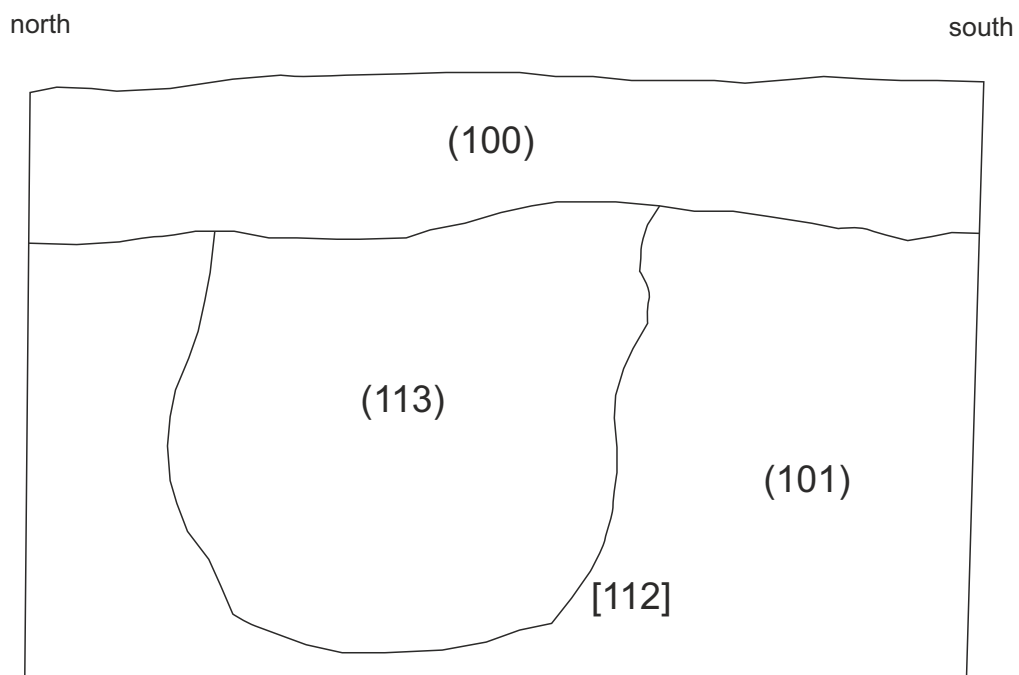


**Figure 9: section 5**

**Figure 8: section 4**



**Figure 10: section 6**



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Plate 7: West facing section showing soakaway feature [112].

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104	Cut	Possible pit cut [104] shallow cut with a concave base, filled by (105)	Post-medieval
105	Fill	Fill of pit cut [104], mixed soil which contained concentrated charcoal towards the base.	Post-medieval
106	Layer	Dark-brown organic topsoil	Modern
107	Layer	Combined asphalt and underlying levelling deposit	Modern
108	structure	Red brick foundation/base, un-bonded brickwork	Post-medieval
109	Layer	Crushed and fragmented coal, levelled surfacing	Post-medieval
110	Cut	Steep to vertical, straight sided cut, filled by (111)	Post-medieval
111	Fill	Fill of pit cut [110], mid greyish-brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of pebble inclusions	Post-medieval
112	Cut	Steep to undercutting irregular sided cut, filled by (113)	Post-medieval
113	Fill	Fill of pit cut [112], mid greyish-brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of pebble inclusions	Post-medieval

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**APPENDIX 3: REPORT ON THE POST-ROMAN POTTERY FROM WELLOW HOUSE  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL, WELLOW, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (WHSM 14)**

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JANE YOUNG

## INTRODUCTION

Two sherds of early modern pottery were recovered during archaeological investigation at Wellow. The material was quantified by three measures: number of sherds, weight and vessel count within each context and has been fully archived to the standards for acceptance to a museum archive and within the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001). Visual fabric identification of the post-medieval pottery was undertaken by x20 binocular microscope. The pottery data was entered on an access database using fabric codenames (see Table 1) developed for the Lincoln Ceramic Type Series (Young, Vince and Nailor 2005) and the preliminary Nottingham Type Series (Nailor and Young 2001)

## CONDITION

The pottery is in a fresh to slightly abraded condition with sherd size varying between 14 grams and 152grams.

## THE POTTERY

Two early modern ware types are represented (Table 2). Both sherds were recovered from subsoil layer 101.

**Table 1 Pottery types with total quantities by sherd and vessel count**

Codename	Full name	Earliest date	Latest date	Total sherds	Total vessels
BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	1550	1950	1	1
CREA	Creamware	1770	1830	1	1

The large Brown-glazed Earthenware bowl (BERTH) is in a medium orange sandy fabric that is likely to have been produced in Nottinghamshire or Derbyshire between the late 18<sup>th</sup> and mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The bowl has an internal and external red slip with an internal very dark brown internal glaze and there is a wear mark around the inner rim edge. The other sherd comes from a small over-glaze decorated Creamware (CREA) plate of probable early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The two recovered sherds are of early modern type. They should be retained for possible future study.

## **REFERENCES**

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- Slowikowski, A. Nenck, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper 2.
- Young, J, Vince A G and Nailor V 2005 *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln*, Lincoln Archaeology Studies 7, Oxbow, Oxford

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: preconst3-235251**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring at Wellow House School, Newark Road, Wellow, Nottinghamshire
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording took place during the construction of new classrooms and alterations to facilities at Wellow House Preparatory School in the district of Newark and Sherwood in Nottinghamshire. The monitoring revealed no significant archaeological deposits, although three pits and the remains of a brick structure, all believed to be of post medieval date, were revealed. This document describes the results of archaeological monitoring in accordance with the subject planning conditions and forms part of the archaeological mitigation associated with the scheme of development.
Project dates	Start: 17-06-2015 End: 20-07-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WHSM 14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NEWARK AND SHERWOOD WELLOW Wellow House School,
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 66825 66212 53.188508538275 -0.999780122369 53 11 18 N 000 59 59 W Point



**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
Project director/manager	Will Munford
Project supervisor	S A Savage
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

**Project archives**

Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Section","Unpublished Text"

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Wellow House Preparatory School, Newark Road, Wellow, Newark and Sherwood: Archaeological Monitoring
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Payne, J
Other bibliographic details	PCAS report no. 1310
Date	2015
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