

# Kingsmarsh House Gas Mains Replacement Bristol

## *Archaeological Watching Brief*



for  
Grontmij

on behalf of  
Wales and West Utilities  
Limited

CA Project: 5319  
CA Report: 15282

June 2015



# Kingsmarsh House Gas Mains Replacement Bristol

## Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 5319  
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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Kingsmarsh House Gas Mains Replacement  
**Location:** Bristol  
**NGR:** ST 60478 73365  
**Type:** Watching Brief  
**Date:** 10 March 2015  
**Location of Archive:** Bristol's Museums, Galleries & Archives  
**Site Code:** KHB 15

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with gas main replacement within the grounds of Kingsmarsh House, Lawrence Hill, Bristol.

Post-medieval and undated demolition deposits were identified in two separate parts of the trench, probably derived from buildings that once stood within the vicinity of the site. Evidence of pitting or intrusion associated with garden activity in backyard plots of later post-medieval or and/modern houses or landscaping was also recorded.

No other features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks,

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2015 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Grontmij on behalf of Wales and West Utilities at Kingsmarsh House, Bristol (encompassing gas mains replacement works centred on NGR: ST 60478 73365; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken at the request of Bob Jones (Senior Archaeological Officer, Bristol County Council (BCC), that an archaeological watching brief occur during the associated groundworks required to update and rationalise the gas main network (a requirement of the Health and Safety Executive and Ofgem). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The watching brief followed the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The observed intrusive excavation required to facilitate the gas main replacement amounted to one trench intervention situated within the grounds to the western side of Kingsmarsh House, Lawrence Hill, Bristol. The site comprises flat, managed open grass area adjacent to car parking and public footpath that services the property. It lies approximately 20m AOD.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Redcliffe Sandstone Member - Sandstone of the Triassic period. No superficial deposits are mapped (BGS 2015). Natural geological deposits were not observed during the watching brief.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The following is a brief overview of archaeological background relevant to the site and is mostly taken from a desk-based assessment which covered a 200m radius of land centred on the 1960s tower block buildings of Kingsmarsh House and Baynton House (BaRAS 2013).
- 2.2 There has been no previous archaeological work within the bounds of the site and there has been no evidence of prehistoric, Roman or early medieval activity within the study area.
- 2.3 The earliest historical records show that the site lay within the bounds of the Royal forest of Kingswood c. AD 1000, and more specific historical records begin in the later medieval period. During this time, Kingsmarsh house lay within the vicinity of the medieval leper hospital of St Lawrence (BHER 1808) founded in 1208, and it is the leper hospital which gives the district of Lawrence Hill its name. The hospital become an almshouse in 1465, and was dissolved 1544. From 1465 the hospital formed part of the properties of Westbury College which, following its 1544 confiscation by the Crown, was sold to Sir Ralph Sadlier, who re-built the hospital as a mansion house. The house was probably a substantially-sized building, but by the 18th century was in ruins.
- 2.4 The exact location of the hospital remains unknown. The earliest available map of the area, the 1610 *Map of Kingswood* depicts two buildings likely to represent Ralph Sadlier's mansion house; the larger of the two buildings probably represents the church of St. Lawrence that was built into the mansion house and may actually be situated just beyond the study area to the north. The leper hospital is likely to have had an associated burial ground, the location of which also remains unknown. Re-deposited human remains found in a watching brief in 2003 (BHER 21785) approximately 100m to the west of Kingsmarsh House were retrieved from a 20th-century made ground deposit and, although they could have originated from a disturbed medieval burial ground in the vicinity, could equally have originated from a former 19th-century cemetery located approximately 270m west of the site.
- 2.5 The site is on the historic route into Bristol from the east; by the early 18th century there was a significant amount of development along the main east-west road into

Bristol through Lawrence Hill, and by the early 19th century Lawrence Hill had become a suburb of Bristol. The earlier post-medieval maps show the area mostly as farmland and occasional buildings. Cartographic evidence shows that the central part of the study area that encompasses Kingsmarsh House itself had been developed by the early 19th century, and the remaining open areas were in-filled with streets and houses between 1854 and 1874, with the final most recent re-development taking place during the 1960s which included the construction of Kingsmarsh House and Baynton House.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

4.1 An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising excavation of new gas mains service trench measuring approximately 60m long x 0.3m wide, to interlink existing gas services (Fig. 2).

4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.3 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives, along with the site

archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 5.1 Natural geological substrate was not revealed within the trench. The earliest deposits identified were probable demolition deposits and comprised brick rubble deposit 107, overlain by cement mortar deposit 106 (Fig. 3), and a limestone rubble deposit 113 (Fig. 4) situated within the central and northern parts of the trench respectively (Fig. 2). Deposit 107 contained 17th to 18th-century brick fragments (see 6.4 below) as well as rare fragments of peg (roof) tile of 17th to 19th-century date, and pottery dating to the 18th century. Deposit 113 was undated. It is notable that modern finds were absent from all the aforementioned deposits.
- 5.2 Deposits 107 and 106 were both heavily truncated by cut features 103 and 105, which may be later pits or intrusions associated with garden activity in the backyards of later post-medieval houses, or they could be intrusions associated with modern landscaping and demolition such as occurred during the 1960s. All deposits and later cut features were overlain by modern made ground deposits, which were in turn overlain by modern topsoil.

## 6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Artefactual material from the watching brief was hand-recovered from six deposits (pit fills, landscaping/demolition layers and topsoil). The recovered material dates to the post-medieval/modern periods. Quantities of the artefact types recovered are given in Appendix B. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. Pottery fabric codes are equated to the Bristol Pottery Type (BPT) series (Ponsford 1988: 1991).

### ***Pottery: post-medieval/modern***

- 6.2 A total of eight sherds (243g) of pottery were recorded in topsoil 100, and demolition deposit 107. Condition is good, with minimal edge abrasion and well-preserved glaze. Glazed red earthenwares of post-medieval type are represented by four



sherds from layer 107, including a rimsherd from a bowl with a clear glaze. This type of pottery typically dates to the 18th century. Topsoil 100 produced two sherds of transfer-printed refined whiteware (BPT278b), dateable to the late 18th to 19th centuries, and two sherds from a bottle in 'Late' English stoneware (BPT200b), of mid-19th to mid-20th century date (Jarrett 2013, 180–3).

### ***Ceramic Building Material (CBM)***

- 6.3 A total of six fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material, comprising two fragments of flat roof tile and four of brick, were retrieved from fill 104 of pit 105 and demolition deposit 107.
- 6.4 The bricks within deposit 107 were all un-frogged and comprised generally poorly-preserved fragments. They mostly consisted of two types; about 10% were a slightly pinkish/grey yellow type brick of non-standard mix that measured 55-57mm (2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" ) thick and dated broadly to the 17th century, but most were a pinkish/orange red type brick measuring 64mm (2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" ) high and dated to the 18th to early 19th century. Both brick types were of poor quality mix and may have been 'commons bricks' of the sort you may expect to find within the interior parts of walls (the parts that would not be seen). They were hand-made, indicated by their slightly imprecise shape, and with evidence of a clamp or moulding present on one of the reddish ones. One fragment of a third brick type was also retrieved which was well mixed and measured 59mm (2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" ) thick and dated to the 18th century. It was of better quality mix and had a prominent yellow tinge to its face which, given the neat appearance of the brick, may have been an intentional effect produced during firing. It is probably a fragment of a 'face' brick, the sort you may expect to find on the exterior part of the wall (the part that would be seen).

## **8. DISCUSSION**

- 8.1 The gas route replacement works were situated within an area of archaeological potential for finding remains of the medieval leper hospital of St. Lawrence. Despite this potential, no archaeological remains of this date were identified within the area of observed groundworks. The archaeological deposits identified during the watching brief consisted of post-medieval (or later) demolition material situated in two separate areas of the trench. The deposits appear to evidence the demolition of structures, presumably buildings that once stood on or within the vicinity of the site.

- 8.2 Episodes of construction and re-development of the Lawrence Hill area is documented in cartographic evidence that begins with the 1610 *Map of Kingswood*, but the first buildings that can be accurately identified to have stood within the area of the gas route itself were private dwelling houses constructed between 1854 and 1874. The cement mortar suggests a post-medieval or later date for deposit 106, whilst the bricks retrieved from deposit 107 give a broad 17th to 19th-century date. Other artefactual material retrieved comprises pottery sherds and roof tile also conforming to this date range. The lack of modern finds from the deposits may also be of note and again points to a post-medieval, rather than modern date for the material.
- 8.3 In conclusion, observations regarding the extent of the demolition deposits were severely restricted by the dimensions and depth of the trench, and this makes it hard to give a specific interpretation for the deposits. Whilst it is possible that some of the brick and stone rubble forming the demolition deposits could have originated from a medieval structure (such as the leper hospital), or from a post-medieval mansion house and its ancillary buildings (such as belonged to Sir Ralph Sadlier), given the general spread of post-medieval development (and to a lesser extent medieval development) within the vicinity of the gas route, it is not possible to identify any specific buildings from which the deposits could have derived.

## 9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Greg Crees. The report was written by Greg Crees. The finds evidence report was written by Jacky Sommerville, assisted by Peter Davenport. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled by Greg Crees, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

## 10. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 27 May 2015

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**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

Trench No	Context	Type	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/thickness	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		modern topsoil	Topsoil and turf; dark grey brown sand silt with poorly sorted small to medium sub-angular inclusions up to 80mm, and occasional large roughly squared limestone up to 250mm			0.2 - 0.45	MC19-MC20
1	101	Layer		modern made ground	Reddish clay sand with poorly sorted red brick fragments			0.3 - 0.35	
1	102	Fill	103	soil backfill deposits	Mid to dark yellow grey brown silt sand with small sub-angular and sub-rounded stone inclusions, occasional slag/clinker up to 30mm			0.43	Post-medieval
1	103	Cut		pit or landscaping truncation	Northern edge of cut observed; steep sided, stepped			0.43	

1	104	Fill	105	soil backfill deposits	Mid to dark black brown sand silt with poorly sorted red brick fragments			0.3	Post-medieval
1	105	Fill		pit or landscaping truncation	Southern edge of cut observed; steep sided			0.3	
1	106	Deposit		derived from landscaping or demolition	White cement mortar with stone inclusions (incl. quartz)			0.1	Post-medieval
1	107	Deposit		Demolition deposit	Brick fragments: (L)length (W)idth (T)hickness  (80%) Mid pinkish/orange red fragments measuring >150mm L x 106mm W x 64mm/ (2 3/4"), hand made in clamp kiln, non-standard mix, poorly mixed, 'commons' brick  (10%) Mid pinkish/grey yellow fragments measuring >100mm L x 103mm W x 55-57mm/(2 1/4"), imprecise shape, hand made in clamp kiln, non-standard mix, poorly mixed, 'commons' brick  (10%) Clay sand  (<10%) inclusions: One light pinkish orange red fragment, well mixed with yellow firing tinge c. 80mm thick to its face, possibly a special 'face' brick >100mm L x >50mm W x 59mm T  Roof tile fragments  (<10%) Dark red sandstone fragments, unworked	>1.6	>0.35	>0.33	C18-early C19  C17  C18  C17-C19
1	108	Deposit		modern backfill deposits	Soil deposits forming modern made ground; mid to dark reddish grey brown and blackish brown sand silt with small to medium stone inclusions	0.5	0.5	0.3 - >0.5	
1	109	Deposit		Modern made ground, derived from landscaping, or possible surface hardstanding	Modern blue grey stoney concrete adjoining pedestrian walkway at northern end of trench at 0.5m bpgl	0.5	0.5	0.32	
1	110	Masonry		Modern paving slab	Current ground surface			0.14	
1	111	Deposit		Modern made ground	Reddish pink angular stone			0.22	
1	112	Deposit		modern backfill deposits	Same as 108	50	1.8	0.25	
1	113	Deposit		derived from landscaping or demolition	Limestone rubble (90-95%) incl. roughly hewn/squared, range between minimum size of >100 x 70 x 35mm (L/B/H) to >150 x 100 x 60mm (L/B/H)	>2.16	>0.8	>0.32	
1	114	Fill	115	modern backfill deposits	Soil deposits forming modern made ground; blackish grey brown sand silt with small to medium stone inclusions and modern brick and concrete	>3	>1.1	0.63	
1	115	Cut		Modern service trenching	Vertical cut	>3	>1.1	0.63	

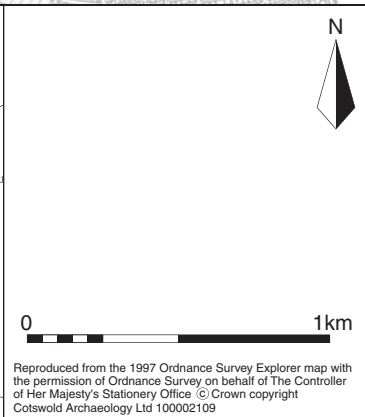
## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS


Context	Category	Fabric Code	Description	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
100	Post-medieval/ modern pottery	BPT278b	Transfer-printed refined whiteware	2	9	MC19-MC20
	Modern pottery	BPT200b	'Late' English stoneware	2	190	
102	Coal			1	15	Post-medieval
102	Industrial waste			1	3	-
104	Post-medieval ceramic building material		Flat roof tile	1	18	Post-medieval
	Industrial waste			1	16	
106	Lime mortar			2	85	Post-medieval
107	Post-medieval pottery	-	Unknown red earthenwares	4	144	C18
	Post-medieval ceramic building material		flat roof tile	1	1543	C17-C19
			Bricks: (Slightly pinkish)	1	X	C17
			Yellow non - Standard mix	1	X	C18
			Pinkish orange-red with yellow tinge to its face (a 'special' face brick?)	1	X	C18
	Unworked stone		Red Sandstone (discarded)	2 1	X 1181	C18-early C19
113	Unworked stone		Limestone (discarded)	1	405	-

## APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Kingsmarsh House Gas Mains Replacement, Bristol: Archaeological Watching Brief	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with gas main replacement within the grounds of Kingsmarsh House, Lawrence Hill, Bristol.</p> <p>Post-medieval and undated demolition deposits were identified in two separate parts of the trench that probably derive from buildings that once stood within the vicinity of the site. Evidence of pitting or intrusion associated with garden activity in backyard plots of later post-medieval or and/modern houses or landscaping was also recorded.</p> <p>No other features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks</p>	
Project dates		
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Kingsmarsh House, Lawrence Hill, Bristol	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	60m <sup>2</sup>	
Site co-ordinates	ST 60478 73365	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	n/a	
Project Design (WSI) originator	n/a	
Project Manager	Simon Cox	
Project Supervisor	Greg Crees	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives	Ceramics
Paper	Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives	Pro forma field recording sheets, permatrace drawings, matrices
Digital	Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives	Digital photographs
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 <i>Kingsmarsh House Gas Mains Replacement, Bristol: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report <b>09158</b>		






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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Kingsmarsh House, Bristol

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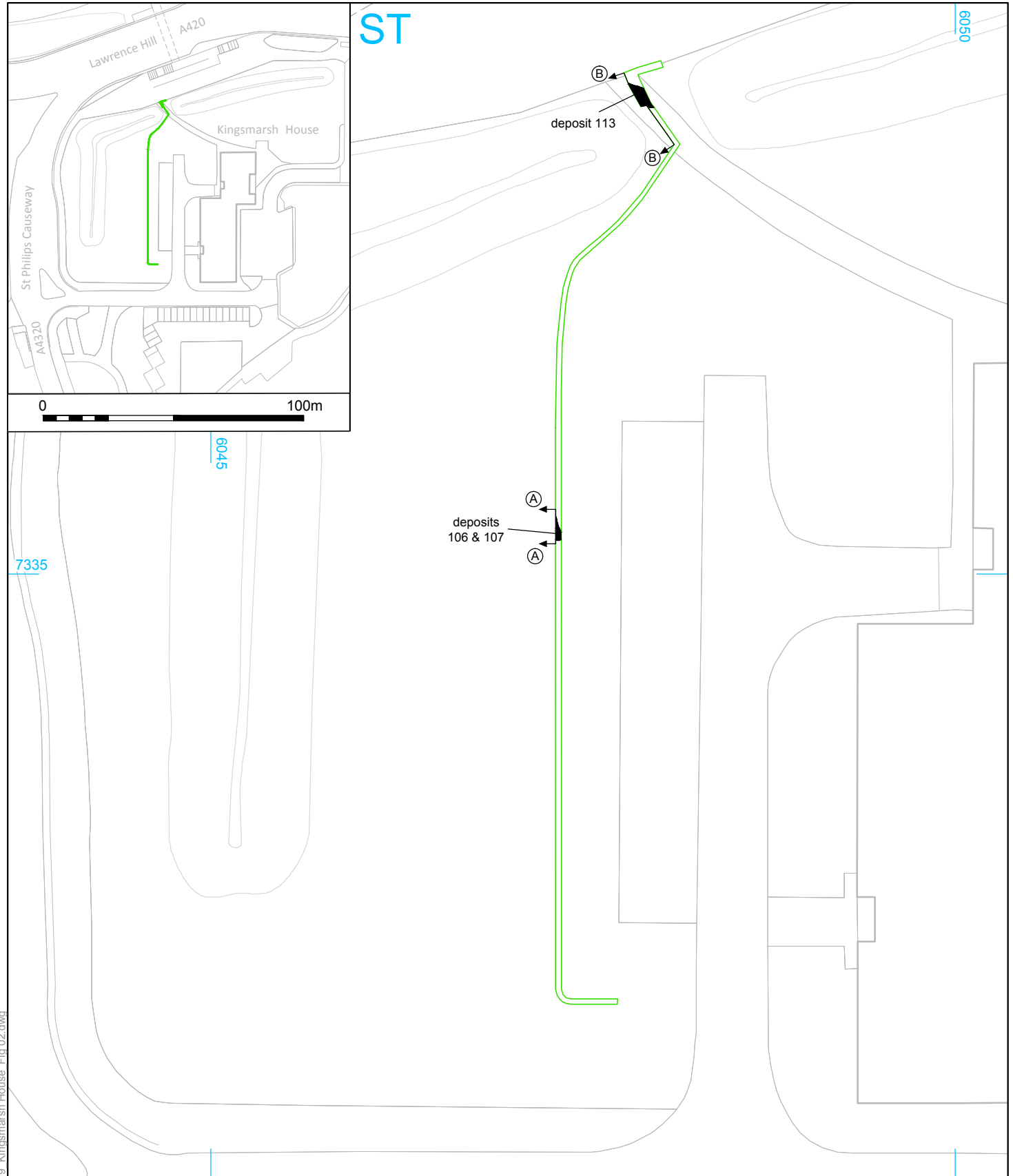
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 Site location plan




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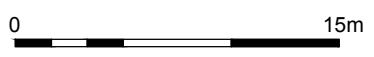
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-  observed groundworks
-  archaeological deposit
-  section location



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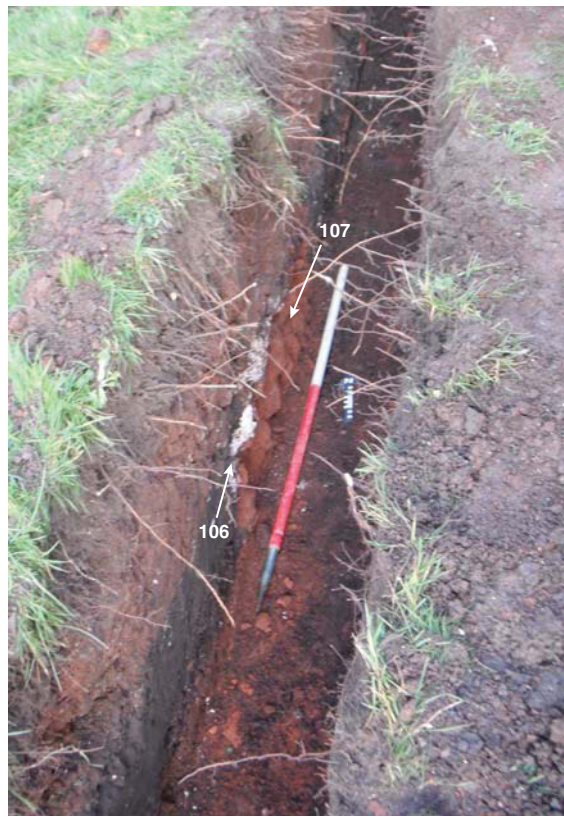
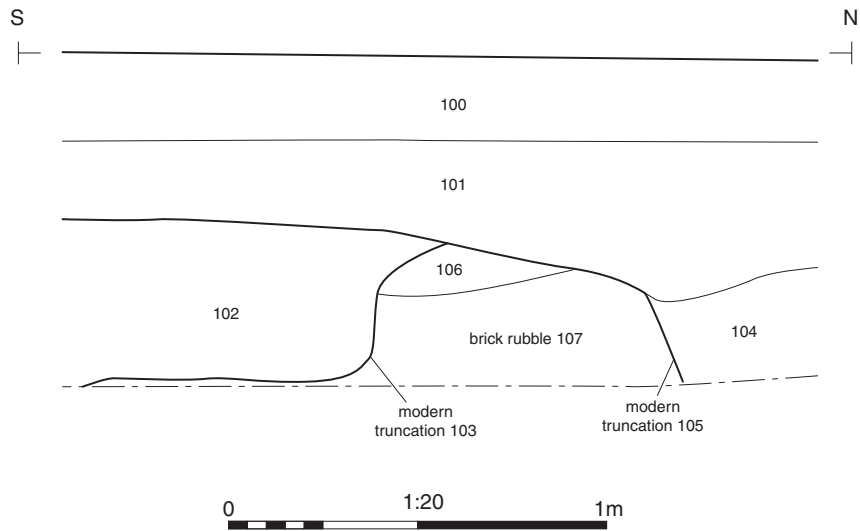
**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Kingmarsh House, Bristol

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan showing observed groundworks

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Section AA



East facing section, showing deposits 106 & 107 (1m scale)



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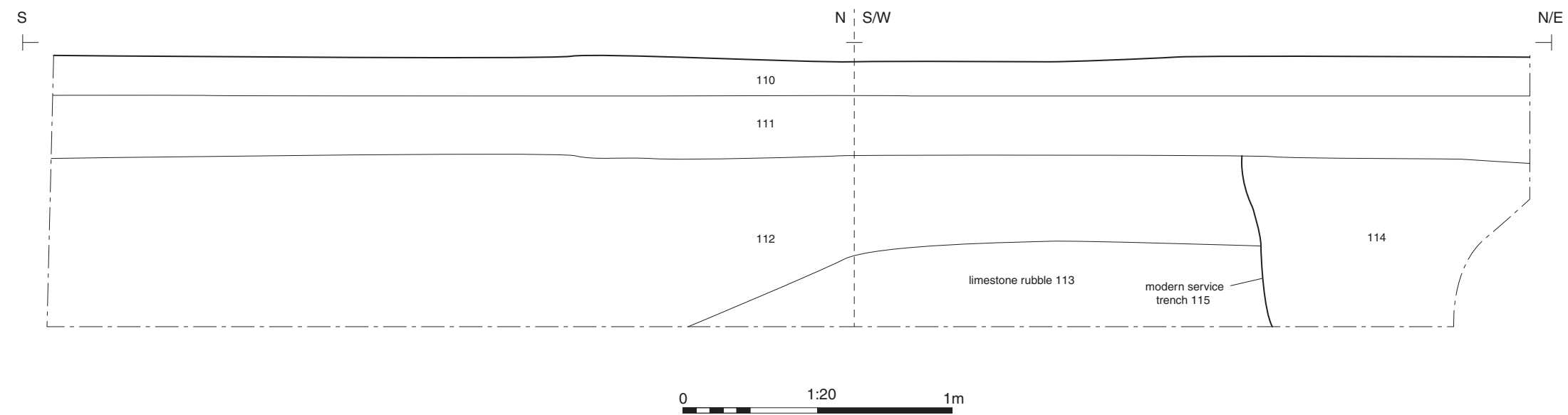
Kingsmarsh House, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE

**Deposits 106 & 107: section and photograph**

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Section BB



North East facing section, showing deposit 113 (1m scale)


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FIGURE TITLE  
**Deposit 113: section and photograph**

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