

WALL REPLACEMENT AT TORRE ABBEY, TORQUAY

NGR SU 32769 82248

Results of an archaeological watching brief

Prepared by:
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On behalf of:
Tor2

Document No: ACD1301/1/0

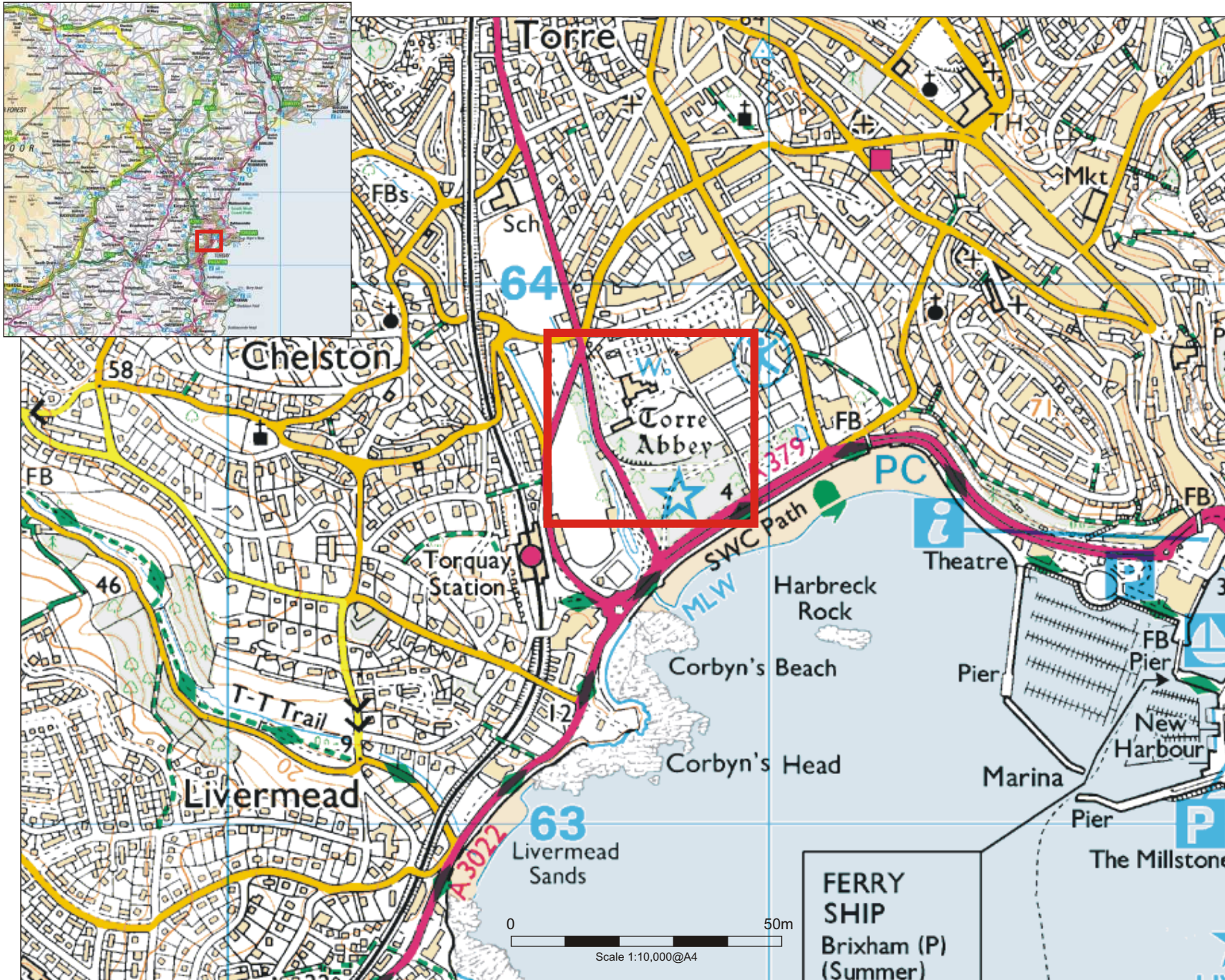
Date: July 2016



AC archaeology

Torbay Council Historic Environment Record

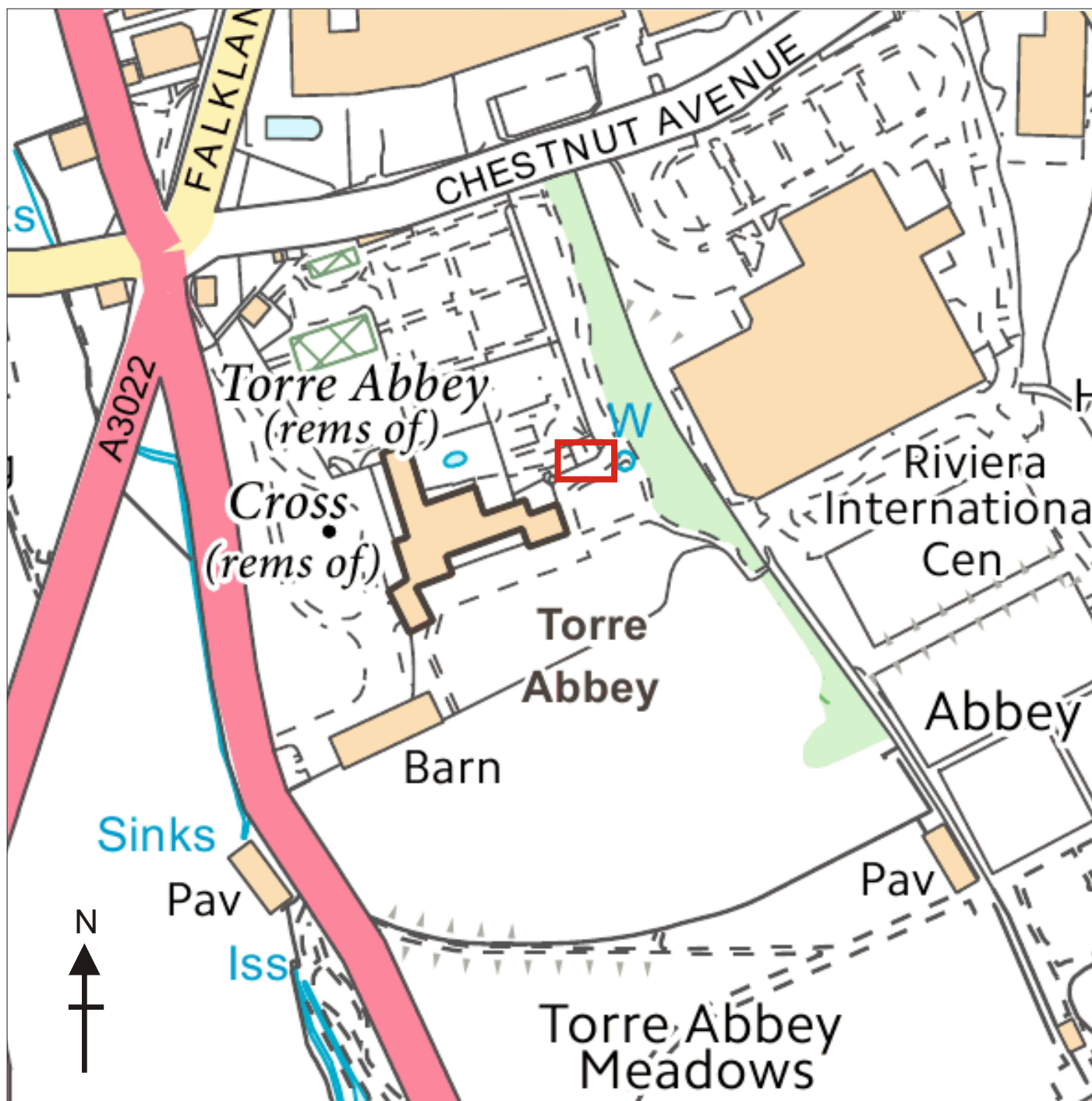
Civil Parish & District: Torquay	National Grid Reference SX9079 6383	Number:
Subject: Wall replacement at Torre Abbey, Torquay: Results of an archaeological watching brief		Photo attached? Y
Planning Application no: N/A	Recipient museum: Torquay Museum	
OASIS ID: 258042	Museum Accession no:	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD1301	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 13.01.2016	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Introduction An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AC Archaeology on 13 January 2016 during the replacement of a 19th-century garden wall forming the south side of the gardens at Torre Abbey, Torquay, Torbay (Figs 1-2). The work was commissioned by Tor2. The 19th-century garden wall was structurally unsafe and was taken down to ground level and rebuilt. As part of these works pits were excavated adjacent to the south side of the wall to contain the concrete foundations of buttresses to the rebuilt wall. The wall itself was removed without archaeological supervision but the pits were excavated under archaeological control.</p> <p>Archaeological Background Torre Abbey (founded 1196, dissolved 1539) was the wealthiest Premonstratensian abbey in England. The history of the abbey is well documented and excavation has shown that the abbey church had a complex development. The abbey ruins are the most complete surviving example of a medieval monastic complex in Devon and Cornwall. The abbey complex, including grounds to the south, is designated as a Scheduled Monument, whilst the main buildings are also listed at grade I.</p> <p>Aims and Methodology The aim of the investigation was to record any archaeological deposits exposed during the works. The recording was carried out in accordance with guidance provided by the Torbay Council Senior Historic Environment Officer, and in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' <i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (revised 2014), and AC archaeology's <i>General Site Recording Manual, Version 2</i>.</p> <p>Results (Fig. 3; Plates 1-8) A total of six pits was excavated, each measuring approximately 0.60m square and excavated to depths of between 0.60m and 0.90m. No archaeological deposits or features were observed in the pits. The soil deposit encountered consisted of a medium red-brown sandy loam garden soil which was identified to the south of and below the footings of the wall. It was clear that the wall footing had been cut through this deposit.</p> <p>The footing of the wall was constructed of lime mortar bonded sub-angular limestone blocks measuring between 0.20m x 0.20m x 0.10m to 0.90m x 0.80m x 0.25m. In the area of pit 1 there had been a doorway in the wall. Surviving evidence for this takes the form of rebate in the return wall to the east. The top of the footing here was slightly stepped (as exposed following removal of the wall above), which may indicate that there were steps down to the doorway from the garden but the stonework was laid at random heights and there was no conclusive evidence for such a feature.</p> <p>In summary, no archaeological features were exposed and no finds recovered.</p>		
<p>A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.</p>		
Recorder: Stella De-Villiers, AC Archaeology	Date sent to HER: 20 July 2016	



PROJECT
 Wall replacement at Torre Abbey, Torquay, Devon

TITLE
 Fig. 1: Site location





0 100m
 Scale 1:2000@A4

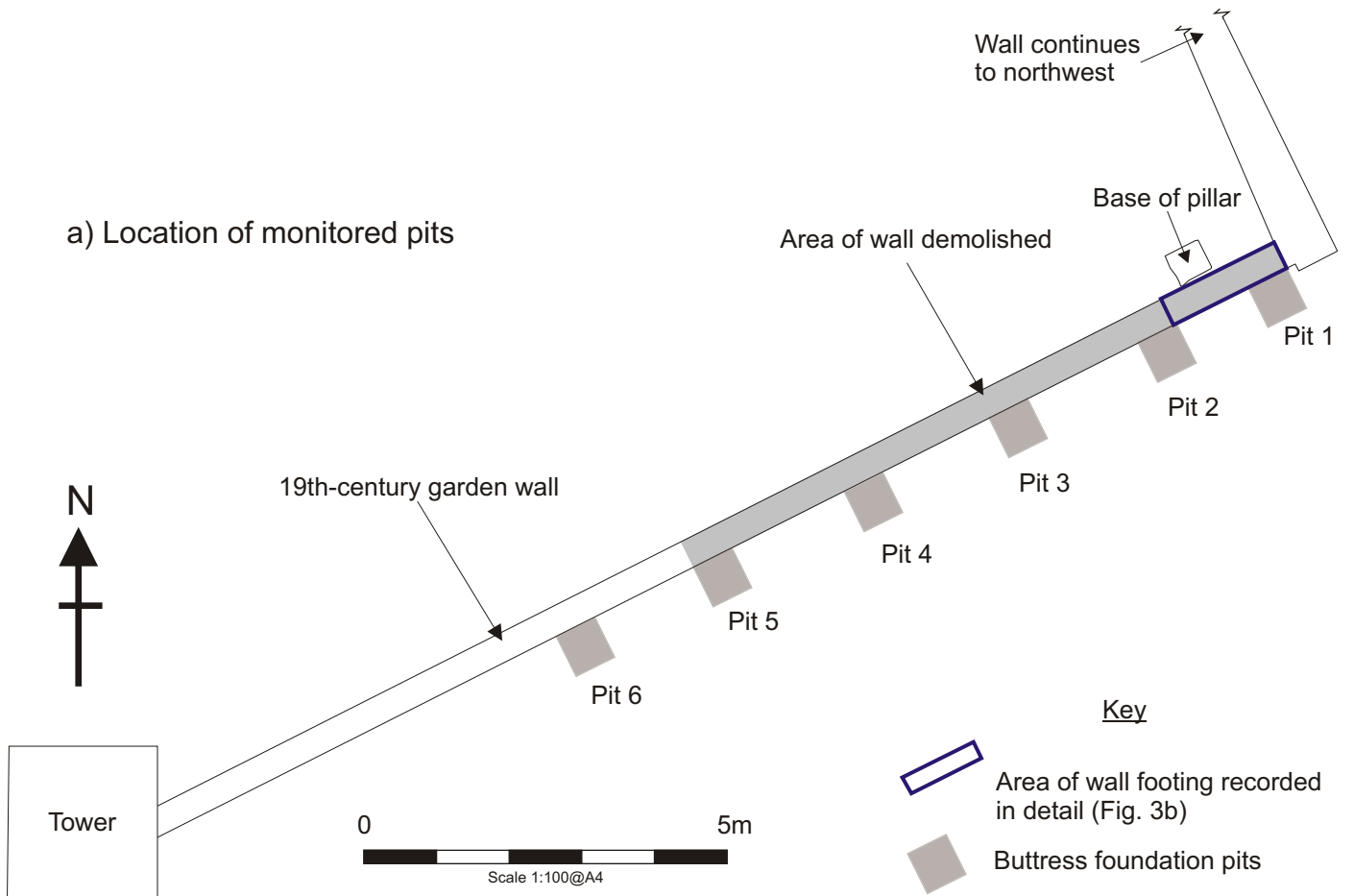
PROJECT

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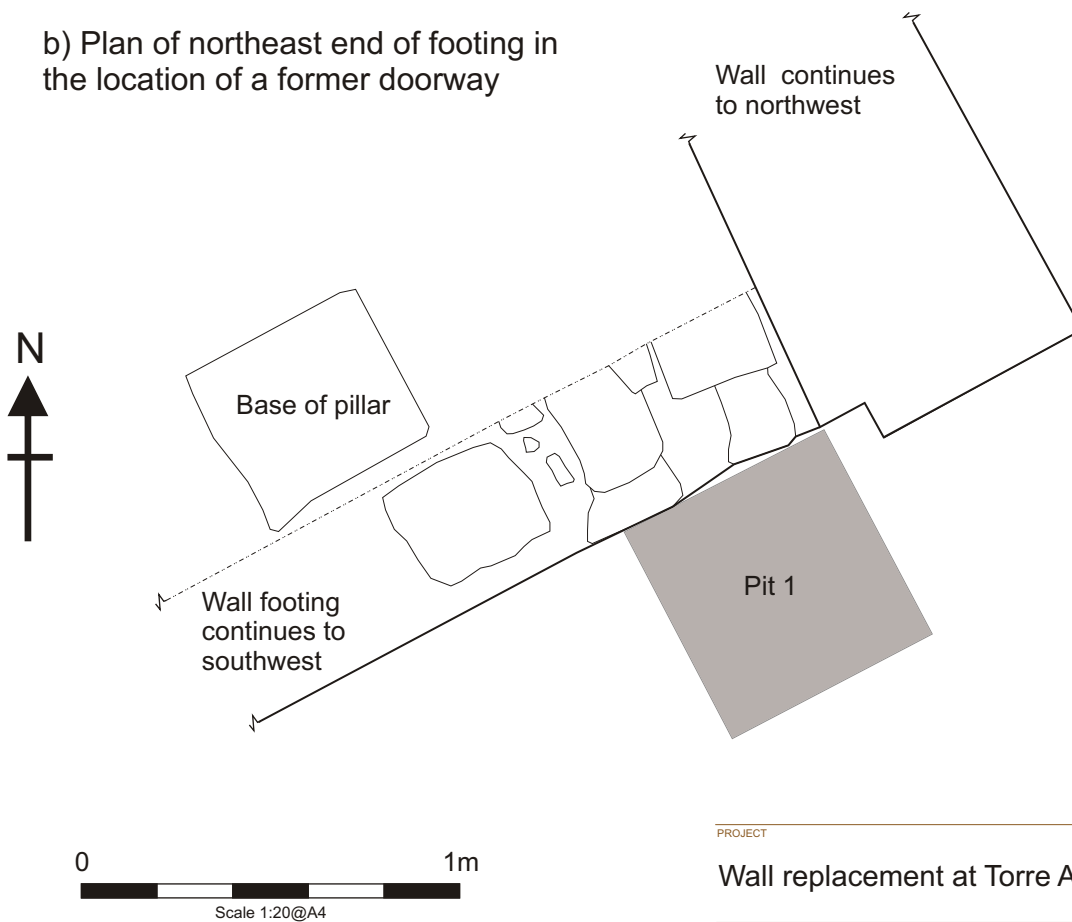
TITLE

Fig. 2: Wall location

a) Location of monitored pits



b) Plan of northeast end of footing in the location of a former doorway



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Fig. 3: Location of monitored pits and plan of northeast end of footing



Plate 1: General view of pits after excavation, looking northeast



Plate 2: General view of pit 1 and wall footing under doorway threshold, looking northwest (1m scale)



Plate 3: General view of pit 1 and area of doorway in the wall with the surviving rebate in the return wall, looking north (1m scale)



Plate 4: General view of pit 2, looking north (1m scale)



Plate 5: General view of pit 3, looking northwest (1m scale)



Plate 6: General view of pit 4 looking northwest (1m scale)



Plate 7: General view of pit 5,
looking northwest (1m scale)



Plate 8: General view of pit 6,
looking northwest (1m scale)

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