

# Chopes and Bridge Street Car Parks, Bideford, Devon

Centred on NGR SS45362651

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

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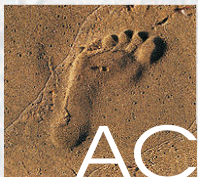
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AC archaeology

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# CHOPES AND BRIDGE STREET CAR PARKS, BIDEFORD, DEVON (CENTRED ON SS45362651)

## Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

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### CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Archaeological and historical background.....	1
3. Aims.....	2
4. Methodology.....	2
5. Results.....	2
6. The finds.....	7
7. Discussion.....	9
8. Archaeological potential and impact of development.....	10
9. Archive and OASIS.....	11
10. Acknowledgements.....	11
11. References.....	11

### List of figures

- Fig. 1: Site and trench locations  
Fig. 2: Plans and sections, Trenches 1-3  
Fig. 3: Plans and sections, Trenches 4-6  
Fig. 4: Plans and sections, Trenches 7-8  
Fig. 5: Plan and section, Trench 9  
Fig. 6: Plan and section, Trench 10  
Fig. 7: Plans and sections, Trenches 11, 12 & 14  
Fig.8: Location of Phase 1 features and 19th century graves

### List of plates

- Plate 1: Excavations in Chopes car park, Trench 4 in foreground. Looking north  
Plate 2: Excavations in Bridge Street car park. Looking northeast  
Plate 3: Trench 1 showing brick grave vault 106. Looking southeast  
Plate 4: General view of Trench 2 from west  
Plate 5: General view of Trench 3 showing grave vault 310. Looking south  
Plate 6: The general layer sequence Trench 6. Looking south  
Plate 7: Ditch F808, Trench 8. Looking north  
Plate 8: Ditch F908 and wall footing 907, Trench 9. Looking south  
Plate 9: General view of Trench 11. Looking north  
Plate 10: Flagstone floor 1403, Trench 14. View from east

### **Appendix 1:** Historic map extracts

## Summary

*An archaeological trench evaluation, carried out to inform masterplan proposals for a development on land at Chopes and Bridge Street Car Parks, Bideford, Devon (NGR SS45362651), was undertaken by AC archaeology during February 2010. The site covers an area of approximately 3.2 hectares and is located in the historic core of the town, where evidence for medieval settlement alongside Bridge Street and Allhalland Street might be expected. To the rear of these streets, terraced houses were constructed in the Victorian period, and a Baptist chapel and graveyard were also present at this time. All buildings were demolished by the early 1970s and the car parks constructed.*

*The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of 14 trenches, with each 1.6m wide and totalling 100m in length. These were positioned in areas of highest potential, for example along the street frontage and where burials associated with the early chapel might be present. In many of the trenches structures and deposits associated with the 19th century buildings were identified, with these potentially having removed some of the earlier remains that might have been present. A possible medieval pit and ditch were present in Bridge Street Car Park, while in other trenches post-medieval linear features were recorded, which are likely to represent evidence for early property division. Foundations for the Wesleyan chapel were present in Chopes Car Park, as were three associated graves, including two with brick-lined vaults. While human remains were not identified in these as part of the present work, it is likely that they are still in situ.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation carried out to inform a masterplan for future development of Chopes and Bridge Street Car Parks, Bideford, Devon, was undertaken by AC archaeology during February 2010. The work was commissioned by North Devon Plus and was undertaken following consultation with Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES).
- 1.2 The site occupies two adjoining tarmac covered car parks (Fig. 1; Plates 1 and 2) facing onto Bridge Street on ground that slopes moderately down to the east towards the River Torridge. It lies between approximately 16m OD and 9m OD, with the underlying solid geology comprises sandstones and siltstones of the Bideford Formation.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located within the historic core of the town, at the junction of Bridge Street and Allhalland Street, with both these roads likely to have been present during the medieval period. A settlement at Bideford was present at the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, when it was known as *Bediforda*. The town was granted Borough status in the late 12th or early 13th-century (DCHER ref. 18918).
- 2.2 The earliest map found which depicts the site dates to c. 1717 (Appendix 1, Map 1) and this shows properties alongside Bridge Street and Allhalland Street, but nothing to the rear of these where the present car parks are located. In the early part of the 19th century a Wesleyan chapel was constructed in the northern part of Chopes Street Car Park, with an associated burial ground immediately to the east of this but not within the area of the present car parks. The c. 1840 Bideford tithe map show little detail concerning the site, but John Wood's map of Bideford of 1842 (Map 2) shows the chapel and burial ground, as well as depicting that by this time a number of tenements had 'infilled' the area to the rear of Bridge Street and Allhalland Street, which were reached via small roads called Union Place and Hind Court. The layout is similar in the 1880s and the first part of the 20th century (Maps 3 and 4). It is likely that the buildings were cleared to make way for the car parks in the early 1970s.

2.3 There have been few archaeological investigations carried out in the historic part of the town, although excavations at New Street, to the north of the site, revealed limited evidence for medieval occupation (Lovatt 1989).

### 3. AIMS

3.1 The aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site. The results as set out in this report will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent requirement for a second stage of archaeological work if planning permission is granted.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief prepared by DCHES (Dick 2009). It comprised the machine excavation of 14 trenches, with these positioned to provide representative coverage across the site, as well as targeting some of the features identified during the initial desk-based assessment and in the higher potential areas, such as adjacent to the street frontages. The total trench length was 100m, with all trenches 1.6m wide.

4.2 The site was recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. All plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50 and sections at 1:10 or 1:20. All levels have been related to Ordnance Datum. Following excavation of the trenches the spoilheaps were scanned for finds both manually and using a metal detector.

### 5. RESULTS

#### 5.1 Trench 1 (Plan and section Fig. 2a and 2b; Plate 3)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (104), which was present at a depth of 0.9m and comprised a firm yellow clay. Overlying the natural subsoil was a dark grey mixed sandy silty clay made ground layer (103) that was cut by an east to west aligned grave (F105). The grave cut was 2.26m long, 0.67m wide and contained a brick-constructed vault lining (106). The brick lined vault was lime mortared with a further lime mortar render on the inner face. Within this was a dark grey silty clay fill (107), with the presence of *in situ* human remains not established. One sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from layer 103, while two were found in grave fill 107.

The grave was overlain by a layer of structural demolition material (102), which was in turn below a levelling layer (101) for the current tarmac surface (100).

#### 5.2 Trench 2 (Plan and sections Fig. 2c to 2f; Plate 4)

This trench was excavated to a depth of 0.74m into natural subsoil (210) that was present at 0.62m below ground level. Overlying the natural subsoil was a thin yellow clay interface layer (212) that was in turn sealed by a dark grey silty clay buried soil layer (211). One sherd of medieval courseware pottery was recovered from layer 212 and three sherds of post-medieval date from layer 211. Layer 212 was cut by two postholes (F209 and F207).

Posthole F209 was 0.18m wide, 0.4m deep and had steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a dark brownish-grey silty clay fill (208). Sub-squared posthole F207 was 0.36m wide and 0.22m deep, with vertical sides and a concave base. It contained a dark brownish-grey silty clay fill (206) which was cut by a construction cut (F205) to the east.

Construction cut F205 was aligned north to south, then returning on to an east to west alignment. It was composed of a 0.75m wide roughly-faced and random-coursed stone wall

footing (203) that was lime mortared. The construction cut, which widened out at the return, was backfilled with a dark brownish-grey silt clay (204), containing post-medieval pottery and clay tobacco pipe fragments. Extending along the east side of wall 203 was a header-bonded brick wall (202).

Sealing the two walls and postholes was a thick structural demolition layer (201), which was overlain by the present tarmac surface (200).

### **5.3 Trench 3** (Plan and sections Fig. 2g and 2h; Plate 5)

This trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.96m into a mixed made ground layer of mid yellowish-brown silty clay (302). Cutting through this layer was a footings construction cut (F313) and a probable grave (F311).

Construction cut F313 was 0.46m wide and was orientated east-west, before it returned on a north to south alignment. It contained the remnants of a lime mortar-bonded and randomly-coursed stone wall (312) that was cut by a 0.2m wide service trench (F308) containing an iron pipe.

Probable grave cut F311 was partially exposed towards the north end of the trench and was 0.73m wide. Set within the cut was a brick vault lining (310) that was filled with a mid yellowish-brown silty-clay (309). An iron sickle blade was recovered from fill 309. The grave was truncated by a service trench cut (F306) that contained a ceramic sewer pipe.

The two service trenches, F306 and F308 were cut by a large feature (F304), which extended beyond the trench limits. This feature was filled with a mixed deposit of structural demolition material (303) that was overlain by a further layer of similar material (301) below the present tarmac surface (300).

### **5.4 Trench 4** (Plan and sections Fig. 3a and 3b)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil which was present at a depth of 1.03m below current levels and comprised a mid reddish-brown stony clay (406). The natural subsoil was cut by a footing construction cut (F408), which extended east to west along the south side of the trench before returning on a north to south alignment. The construction cut contained a roughly-faced and randomly-coursed stepped wall footing (407). The footings survived to a height of 0.9m within the trench and were visible as a corresponding scar on the car park retaining wall to the west.

The lower courses of the wall were overlain by a layer of mid yellowish-brown silty clay (405), which contained moderately common inclusions of structural demolition material. Overlying layer 405 was a mortar levelling layer (404) for a 0.2m thick stone floor surface (403). The floor was composed of mortar-bonded stone pieces measuring between 0.2m and 0.4m long and 0.1m and 0.2m wide. Sealing floor surface 403 was a black deposit of mixed coal and clinker (402), which was below structural demolition material (401) then the present car park tarmac surface (400).

### **5.5 Trench 5** (Section Fig. 3c)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (512), which was present at a depth of 1.54m below current level. The natural subsoil was overlain by a 0.86m thick layer of dark grey silty clay buried soil (509) that was cut towards the southeast end of the trench by a north to south aligned footings construction cut (F511). The cut was 0.45m wide and contained a randomly-coursed and roughly-faced limestone wall footing (510) that was lime mortar bonded and extended below the base of the trench. A total of 26 sherds of post-medieval pottery was recovered from layer 509.

Wall footing 510 was overlain by a series of mixed mid grey clayey sand demolition layers (508, 507, 506, 505, 504 and 503) that contained stone rubble, brick and mortar fragments, below a buried tarmac surface (502) then scalplings (501) for the present tarmac car park surface (500).

#### **5.6 Trench 6** (Plan and section Fig. 3d and 3e; Plate 6)

This trench was excavated to a depth of 1.04m into natural subsoil (624), which was present at 0.88m below current levels. The natural subsoil was cut by a north to south aligned probable ditch cut (F622), which extended under a later wall footing towards the west end of the trench. The probable ditch was 0.63m deep and had moderately steep sloping sides. It contained a single mid brownish-grey fill (623) with occasional charcoal fleck inclusions. One sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered.

The natural subsoil was partially sealed towards the east end of the trench by a 0.18m thick layer of mixed mid grey clay (621), which was below a mid grey silty sand demolition layer (620), containing abundant inclusions of crushed mortar, slate fragments and lenses of yellow clay. Layer 620 was overlain by a layer of coarse sand (619) and was cut by a wall footing construction cut (F625), which contained a north to south aligned, lime mortared and mixed brick, stone and timber wall footing (626).

Layer 619 was cut to the west by a 0.43m wide and 0.36m deep construction cut (F610). The construction cut contained a roughly faced and random coursed wall footing (611) in a lime mortar bond. Layer 619 was also cut to the east by a partially exposed probable grave cut (F617). This was 0.63m wide and exceeded 0.96m in depth, with vertical sides and it contained a mid reddish-brown redeposited natural subsoil clay fill (618), with inclusions of occasional brick fragments, charcoal and crushed mortar.

To the north of possible grave cut F617 was a partially exposed possible pit (F615), which was cut into the natural subsoil and contained a mid grey silty clay fill (616) with common crushed mortar inclusions. This feature was cut by a further partially exposed steep sided and concave based possible pit (F613), which also cut into the fill of possible grave 617. Possible pit F613 was 0.53m wide and 0.45m deep and contained a dark grey silty-clay fill (614) with common crushed mortar, brick fragment and stone rubble inclusions.

Overlying the fill of pit F615 was a light grey sand levelling layer (612) containing abundant crushed mortar and stone rubble inclusions. The mixed levelling layer, which extended into a void above possible grave 617, abutted wall footing 611 and was overlain by a roughly-faced cobble stone surface on a coarse sand bed (607). Overlying stone surface 607 and abutting wall footing 611 was a sequence of layers comprising a tarmac surface (606), sealed by a thin light grey sandy demolition layer (605) under a further tarmac surface (604).

Abutting wall footing 626 and to the west of wall footing 611 was a stone floor surface (609) composed of roughly-faced cobbles in a coarse sand base. The stone surface was below a mortar floor surface (608), which in turn was under a fragmentary concrete surface (603).

Sealing tarmac surface 604 and concrete surface 603 was a mid grey silty sand demolition layer (602), which was overlain by stone chippings (601) for the current tarmac car park surface (600).

#### **5.7 Trench 7** (Plan and sections Fig. 4a and 4b)

This trench was excavated onto natural clay subsoil (710) present at a depth of 1.06m below ground level. The natural subsoil was overlain by a dark grey silty clay buried soil (708), containing occasional slate fragments, crushed mortar and stone rubble. Layer 708 was cut towards the south end of the trench by a footings construction cut (F712), which was 0.27m wide and contained a roughly-faced and randomly-coursed stone wall footing (709) in a lime

mortar bond. Two pieces of animal bone, a clay tobacco pipe fragment and three sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from layer 708.

Towards the north end of the trench was a further wall footing (704) within a construction cut (F711). The wall footing was 0.48m wide and was composed of roughly-faced and randomly-coursed limestone in a lime mortar bond. Abutting wall 704 to the north and sealing the natural subsoil was a 0.65m thick mixed dark grey clay makeup layer (703). Abutting footings 704 and 709 was a redeposited mid yellow clay levelling layer (707), which sealed buried soil 708.

Cutting through layers 703 and 707, as well as truncating walls 704 and 709, was a 0.48m wide sewer pipe trench (F705). This was below an industrial brick surface (713) to the north of wall 704. The brick surface was sealed by a mid grey mixed demolition layer (702), which in turn was below stone chippings (701) and then the tarmac car park surface (700). A total of three fragments of clay tobacco pipe and five sherds of post-medieval pottery was recovered from layer 703.

### **5.8 Trench 8** (Plan and sections Fig. 4c to 4e; Plate 7)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (813) present at a depth of 0.5m below ground level. The natural subsoil was cut towards the northern end of the trench by a ditch (F808) and a pit (F810).

Northeast to southwest aligned ditch F808 was 1.4m wide and 0.53m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. The ditch contained a series of three yellowish-brown clay fills (807, 806 and 805), with no finds recovered. To the north of ditch F808 was pit F810 which had a diameter of 0.61m wide and was 0.06m deep, with moderately sloping sides and a flat base. The pit contained a mid yellowish-brown clay fill (809), which was cut by a later footings construction cut (F817). Two sherds of medieval courseware pottery was recovered from fill 810.

Construction cut F817 was 0.5m wide and contained an east to west aligned roughly-faced and randomly-coursed limestone wall footing (811) in a lime mortar bond. To the north of wall footing 811 was a squared, brick-lined with slate cap cistern or well (F812) which had a diameter of 0.75m. The cistern or well was abutted by a mixed dark grey clay probable made ground layer (816), which was overlain by a flag stone surface (818).

Wall 811 was abutted by a thin dark grey clay layer of mixed demolition material (804), which was cut by a sewer pipe trench (F815), which was in turn overlain by flagstone floor slab surface (803). Floor surfaces 803 and 818 were below a mixed demolition layer (802) that was under stone chippings (801) for the car park tarmac surface (800).

### **5.9 Trench 9** (Plan and section Fig. 5a and 5b; Plate 8)

This trench was excavated to a depth of 0.52 into natural subsoil (910), which was present at 0.44m below ground level. The natural subsoil was cut across the centre of the trench by a north to south aligned ditch (F908). This was 0.33m deep and had moderately steep sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a single mid greenish-grey silty clay fill (909) with common medium sub-angular stone and slate fragment inclusions. The ditch was heavily truncated to the east by a footings construction cut (F906). Finds recovered from the fill of the ditch comprised 34 pieces of animal bone, an oyster shell, two floor tile fragments and 85 sherds of post-medieval pottery.

Construction cut F906 was 0.6m wide and contained a roughly-faced and randomly-coursed limestone wall footing (907) in a lime mortar bond. There were two construction cuts abutting the wall to the east (F902 and F914), with these extending beyond the trench edge.

Extending beyond the east end of the trench and overlying the natural subsoil was a water-worn pebble surface (911).

Cut into the natural subsoil to the west of ditch F908 was a 0.47m wide service trench (F904) containing a sewer pipe and fill (905), as well as a 0.39m wide terraced construction cut (F912) containing the lime mortar base of some fragmentary wall footings (913).

Footings 903, 915 and 913, surface 911 and sewer fill 905 were overlain by a demolition layer (901), which was sealed by the car park tarmac surface (900).

#### **5.10 Trench 10** (Plan and section Fig. 6a and 6b)

This trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.66m into natural subsoil (913), which was present at 0.58m below ground level. Cutting through the natural subsoil towards the south end of the trench was a linear feature (F1011) and subsequent recut (F1007).

East to west aligned probable ditch F1011 was 1.17m wide and 0.79m deep with steeply sloping sides and a slightly stepped concave base. The ditch contained a series of three fills, comprising a basal fill of redeposited natural subsoil (1013), below a dumped deposit of mid yellowish-brown clay fill (1012) containing abundant roughly-faced limestone blocks. This was below a greenish-yellow silty clay accumulation deposit (1014), cut by ditch re-cut F1007.

Ditch F1007 was on the same alignment as F1011 and was 0.81m wide and 0.39m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. The ditch contained a series of three fills comprising a mid brownish-red redeposited weathered stone and clay (1009), between two similar greenish-brown silty clay accumulation fills (1008 and 1010). No datable material was recovered from the fills of ditches F1007 or F1011.

Along the western edge of the trench was a footings construction cut (F1015). This was 0.38m wide and was aligned east to west towards the north end of the trench before returning and extended to the south. The cut contained a roughly-faced and randomly-coursed limestone wall footing (1004) in a lime mortar bond. Abutting the wall to the south was a painted concrete floor surface (1003) and to the north was a former stone street surface (1005). The surface comprised vertically bedded limestone cobbles. Overlying surfaces 1003 and 1005 was a mid grey mixed demolition layer that extended throughout the trench and was sealed by stone chippings (1001) for the car park tarmac surface (1000).

#### **5.11 Trench 11** (Plan and section Fig. 7a and 7b; Plate 9)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil that was present at a depth of 0.61m below ground level. This was cut by a footings construction cut (F1107), which was 0.5m wide and contained a roughly-faced and randomly-coursed wall footing (1102) in a lime mortar bond. Wall 1102 was cut below the exposed surface by a sewer pipe trench (F1108) that was stone lined (1105).

At the south end of the trench and overlying the natural subsoil was a flagstone floor with metal drain cover (1103). Surface 1103 and sewer F1108 were overlain by a mid grey mixed demolition layer (1109) that extended throughout the trench. This was below stone chippings (1101) for the tarmac car park surface (1100).

#### **5.12 Trench 12** (Section Fig. 7c)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (1204) that was present at a depth of 0.97m below ground level. The natural subsoil was overlain by a 0.8m thick demolition layer (1203), comprising mixed stone rubble, brick fragments mortar pieces and slate. Layer 1203 was below the stone chippings (1202) for the current tarmac car park surface. The trench contained no pre-modern archaeological features or deposits.



### 5.13 Trench 13

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (1303) which was present at a depth of 0.4m below ground level. The overlying layer sequence comprised mixed structural demolition (1302), a stone chipping levelling layer (1301) and tarmac (1300). The trench contained no pre-modern archaeological features or deposits.

### 5.14 Trench 14 (Plan and section Fig. 7d and 7e; Plate 10)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (1408), which was present at a minimum depth of 0.39m below ground level. The natural subsoil was cut across the middle of the trench by a 0.84m deep combined footings and terrace cut (F1407). The construction cut contained a 0.49m wide roughly-faced and randomly coursed wall that was lime mortared and rendered on the east side. Overlying the natural subsoil to the east of the wall was a thin dark brown sandy silt remnant soil layer (1405) that was overlain by a mortar bed (1404) for a flagstone floor surface (1403). Surface 1403 comprised 0.04m thick mixed limestone and slate flagstones measuring up to 0.65m long that abutted wall 1406. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from layer 1405.

Overlying surface 1403 was a thick mixed demolition deposit (1402), composed of stone rubble, mortar pieces, timber and slate. A number of modern bicycle parts were amongst the deposit. Layer 1402 was overlain by a final sequence of a stone chipping levelling layer (1401) for the present car park surface (1400).

## 6. THE FINDS

by Emma Firth

### 6.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. They have been quantified according to material type within each context, then the assemblage was scanned by context to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. The metal object will be x-rayed. Finds are summarised by context and material type in Table 1.

The assemblage consists mainly of post-medieval pottery, with the largest concentration of finds being recovered from Trench 9. Other finds types were recovered in small quantities from across the site.

Table 1. Quantification of finds by trench and context (weight is in grams)

Trench	Feature	Fill/Layer	animal bone		ceramic building material		clay pipe		Iron Object		Medieval Pottery		post medieval pottery		shell	
			no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	Wt		
1	Made ground	103											1	42		
	grave fill	107											2	20		
2	F205	204					6	14					13	287		
	Buried soil	211											3	52		
	Clay layer	212									1	7				
3	F311	309							1	1						
5	Buried soil	509											26	947		
6	F622	623											1	55		
7	Layer	703					3	18					5	153		
	Buried soil	708	2	35			1	2					3	103		
8	F810	809									2	1				
9	F908	909	34	301	2	126							85	1574	1	2
14	Buried soil	1405											2	17		
<b>Total</b>			<b>36</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>3250</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

## 6.2 Iron objects

A single iron object was recovered from Trench 3 (grave F311, fill 309). The object is a sickle and is of probable post-medieval date. No other finds are associated with this object.

## 6.3 Clay tobacco pipe

A total of ten fragments (34g) of clay pipe was recovered from Trenches 2 and 7. The majority of these fragments are plain stems, although a single bowl was recovered from layer 703 in Trench 7. The bowl is of 17th century date and has a flat foot and slightly bulbous bowl with poorly executed rouletting around its rim. The pipe bowl is probably locally-made, although there is no evidence of any maker's marks.

## 6.4 Ceramic building material

A single fragment of ceramic building material was recovered from Trench 9 (ditch 908, fill 909). Though featureless, the fragment is likely to derive from a brick of post-medieval date and it is likely that this fragment derives from the nearby brick footings (902). The fragment has traces of lime mortar and a patch of charcoal on its surface. A single tile, in a hard-fired, grit-tempered fabric (North Devon) with chamfered edges and thick olive glaze was also recovered from this context. The tile is incomplete and, other than thickness (20mm), no complete dimension survives. There is a roughly square scoop cut out from the back of the tile which is filled with a lime mortar.

## 6.5 Pottery

A total of 145 sherds (3,258g) of pottery was recovered. The pottery is predominately of post-medieval or modern date (142 sherds, 3,250g), although three medieval sherds were also recovered.

The medieval pottery comprises small, undiagnostic sherds of unglazed North Devon coarsewares. A single sherd (7g) was recovered from Trench 2 (clay layer 212) and two sherds (1g) were recovered from Trench 8 (pit F810, fill 809). No other finds were associated with either of these contexts.

The post-medieval pottery has a broad date range mainly from the early 18th century through to the 20th century and includes a range of mainly locally produced wares. North Devon wares dominate the assemblage, with examples of the heavily quartz-tempered fabrics being present. These wares are likely to derive from the nearby kilns operating at this time in Bideford. Many examples are glazed; some have a white slip with clear glaze over the top. No sgraffito wares are present. A range of forms is present including a pipkin and large storage jars with thick rolled rims and dishes. A thin large sherd with straight edges and olive glaze over white slip is rather unusual. The object is in a poorly made, very hard-fired coarse quartz-tempered fabric and is not a recognised vessel, but could be described as being more similar to a thin distorted tile, although it is possibly a very crude form of simple dripping dish or a lid. It is possibly of late 16th or early 17th century date and was recovered from ditch F908, fill 909, Trench 9.

Other post-medieval wares include finer variants of the North Devon wares as well as red fired earthenwares. Two conjoining sherds from a Bristol/Staffordshire marbled slipware cup were also noted. Imports include sherds from stoneware jars, including a large stoneware strap handle from a Raeren stoneware jar (Trench 5, buried soil 509) and several sherds from a Siegburg stoneware jar. A sherd of tin-glazed ware with hand-painted blue decoration was present in Trench 2 (F205, fill 204) and is imported.

The bulk of the post medieval pottery was recovered from Trench 9 (F908, fill 909) which yielded 48% by weight of the total pottery of this period and 29% by weight was recovered

from Trench 5 (buried soil layer 509). The remaining pottery was distributed in much smaller quantities in most of the remaining trenches.

#### **6.6 Animal bone**

A total of 36 fragments (336g) was recovered, with the majority (34 fragments, 301g) recovered from Trench 9 (ditch F908, fill 909). Most of the fragments are sheep and show evidence of butchery. A further two undiagnostic fragments (35g) were recovered from Trench 7 (buried soil 708).

#### **6.7 Shell**

A single fragment of oyster shell was recovered from Trench 9 (ditch F908, fill 909).

### **7. DISCUSSION**

**7.1** The evaluation has established that the 19th century and later land use of the site has had a significant impact on the potential for survival of earlier archaeological remains. Based on map and documentary evidence it appears that there were buildings along the Bridge Street and Allhalland street frontages at least as early as the beginning of the 18th century, with probable open areas behind. In the first half of the 19th century the area to the rear was infilled with a Baptist chapel and tenement housing. The site was cleared to make way for the car park in 1971, and evidence for these former structures and/or their demolition deposits was recorded in all of the trenches.

**7.2** There were, however, a small number of features and deposits that pre-date the 19th century development, indicating possible occupation of the site in the medieval and early post-medieval periods. The results of the evaluation can therefore be divided into two phases, features and deposits pre-dating the 19th century and those related to its 19th century development.

#### **7.3 Phase 1: Pre 19th century development (Fig. 8)**

The only feature tentatively dated to the medieval period was pit F810 in Trench 8, which contained to small sherds of medieval pottery. The pit was located adjacent to ditch F808, which although was undated, was stratigraphically positioned to have also been from this phase. The fill compositions of this ditch were similar to pit F810 suggesting that it was perhaps of a similar date.

Layer 212 in Trench 2 is also probably of medieval date and is likely to be a remnant cultivation soil layer overlying the natural subsoil that has survived the later development of this part of the site.

There were two ditches present on the site that were dated to the pre 19th century development. The first of these, F622, was partially exposed in Trench 6 and was a north to south aligned feature along the gradient, suggesting that it functioned as a plot boundary. The second ditch, F908, was exposed in Trench 9. This small ditch was on the same north to south alignment and is also likely to relate to plot divisions. This ditch contained a large quantity of finds of different material types including pottery, animal bone, shell and floor tile, which is indicative of domestic refuse.

The undated two phase ditch F1007 and F1011 recorded in Trench 10 represents the re-establishment of a further probable boundary feature. Although it was undated, based upon its stratigraphic position it is also likely to date from this period.

The final deposit allocated to this phase was a dark buried soil recorded in Trenches 2, 5 and 7 as layers 211, 509 and 708. These layers are likely to represent remnants of soil horizons that immediately predate the 19th century development of the site.

#### **7.4 Phase 2: 19th century and later**

The features and deposits from this period principally comprise remains related to structures that formerly occupied the site. These comprise former locations of the Methodist Chapel in the northwest of the site, the late 19th century former Bridge Street Chapel/Sunday School fronting Bridge Street in the southwest part and the largely domestic buildings present throughout the remainder of the site.

Remains of the walls of the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel were exposed in Trenches 2 and 3. The postholes in Trench 2 (F207 and F209) are also likely to relate to this building.

The grave recorded in Trench 6 and the brick-lined vaults present in Trenches 1 and 3 are likely to be burials associated with the former Methodist chapel (Fig. 8). The burial ground as depicted on John Wood's map of 1842 (Appendix 1, Map 2), is shown to the east and mainly outside the site, with the burials identified located to the west, as well as two inside the footprint of the former chapel. There is therefore the potential for further graves in these areas.

The sequence of features, levelling layers and surfaces overlying grave F617 in Trench 6 indicates the encroachment of dwellings fronting Union Street during the late 19th century into the grounds of the former chapel. It was not ascertained during this phase of work if human remains are still present in the three graves, but the presence of *in situ* structural remains overlying the grave in Trench 6 suggests that they have not been exhumed, unless they were removed as part of the 19th century construction works.

Structural remains exposed in the location of the Bridge Street Chapel/Sunday School were present in Trenches 3 and 4. Masonry F408 is likely to be part of the basement of this structure, while masonry 312 was of less substantial composition and perhaps relates to structures depicted on Wood's 1842 map that pre-date the later chapel.

The structural remains of dwellings that would have fronted onto the former Union Street were present in Trenches 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, with associated interior and exterior surfaces, sewers and a cistern (F812). Pebble surface 911 in Trench 9 was undated and pressed into the natural subsoil and is also likely to relate to this phase of use.

The structural remains exposed in Trench 14 represent the rear of a former property that was terraced into the gradient and would have fronted onto Allhalland Street. This structure, which has been dated to the late post-medieval period based on pottery recovered from buried layer 1405 below floor levelling layer 1404, contained many bicycle parts within the overlying demolition deposit. This relates to the buildings final use as a bicycle shop prior to the site clearance in 1971.

### **8. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 8.1** There was only limited evidence on the site for archaeological activity pre-dating the 19th century. The Phase 1 features relate to mainly early property division, rather than settlement, with a single pit the only non linear feature identified. While the later development will have clearly impacted on any other earlier evidence that might have been present, the earliest historic map evidence from the beginning of the 18th century indicates that at this time the area was undeveloped land to the rear of properties fronting the main streets. Based on the general paucity of earlier features and finds, it is likely that the areas away from the street frontage were not developed until the 19th century.

- 8.2 The foundations for the former chapels were identified in Chopes Car Park, as were a number of *in situ* graves, at least two of which were brick-lined vaults. There is clearly the potential elsewhere in the northwest portion of the site for further burials to be present.
- 8.3 Current proposals for the redevelopment of the site show buildings along the Bridge Street frontage, with a further building along a central north-south spine. There is car-parking to the west and an open area to the east. If there are to be groundworks for the construction of the car park on the west side, there is likely to be an impact on the three burials identified, as well as potentially others. If this was the case, the burials would need to be recorded and exhumed in accordance with a licence and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Justice.
- 8.4 Groundworks in all areas of the site could potentially expose further evidence for archaeological activity pre-dating the 19th century development. Based on the results of the evaluation, such remains appear to be highly localised and mainly of non-settlement type. The main findings on the site relate to the 19th century chapels and houses. These were occupied or in use probably until the second half of the 20th century and their remains would be considered of only low or negligible importance.

## 9. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

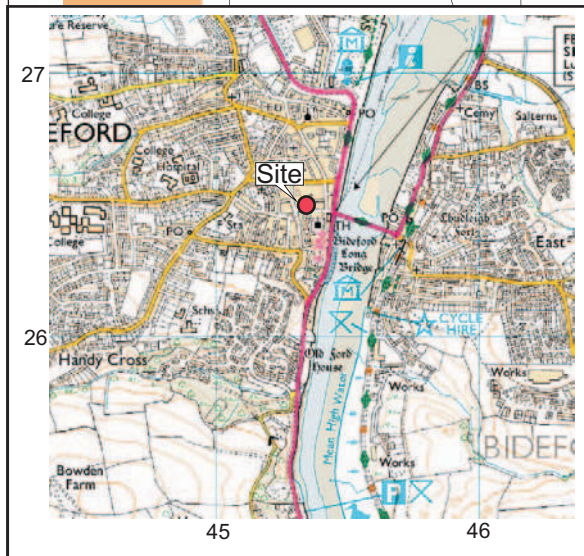
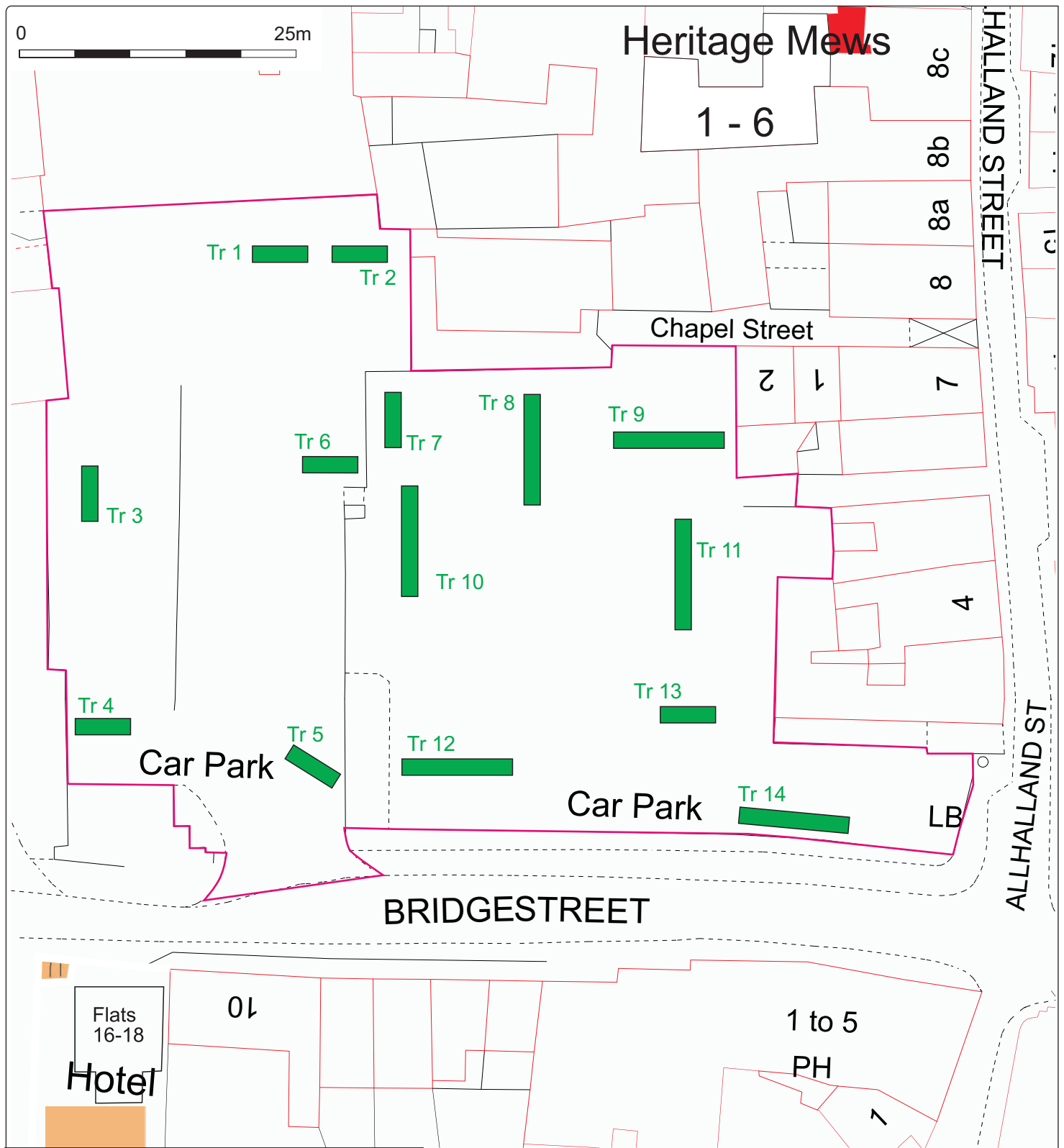
- 9.1 The paper and digital archive and finds are currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. They will be deposited at the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon under the accession number NDDMS 2009.88, along with any archive generated by any subsequent work on the site.
- 9.2 The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 76119.

## 10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned on behalf of North Devon Plus by Peter Quincey. The initial assessment work was undertaken by Peter Weddell and the site trial-trenching carried out by Simon Hughes, Kerry Dean, Chris Caine and Jerry Austin. The illustrations for this report were prepared by Sarah Cottam. The advice and collaboration of Ann Dick, DCHES Archaeology Officer is duly acknowledged.

## 11. REFERENCES

- Dick, A.M., 2009, *Brief for archaeological evaluation undertaken in support of a planning application: Bridge Street, Bideford*. DCHES document, ref. ARCH.DC.TO.15583
- Lovatt, A., 1989, 'The excavation of medieval and later features at New Street, Bideford', in *Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society* **47**, 127-35
- NDRO 2379A/Z7 'A Plan of So much of the Town of Bideford as to be adjacent to the key', 1717
- NDRO John Wood's town plan of Bideford, 1842
- WCSL Ordnance Survey first-edition 1:500 map sheet 19.6.9
- WCSL Ordnance Survey 25-inch map sheet 19.6, published 1889, 1902 and 1932



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PROJECT

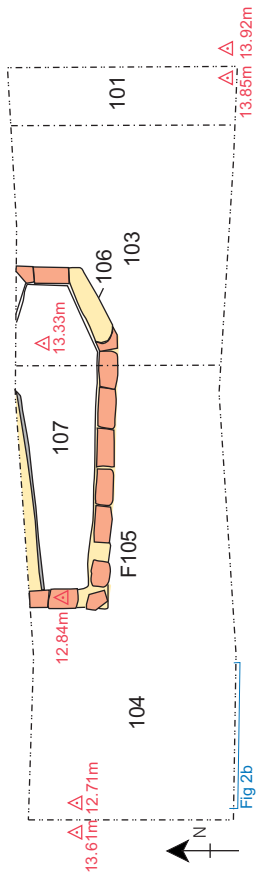
Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
Bideford

TITLE

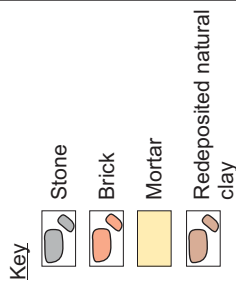
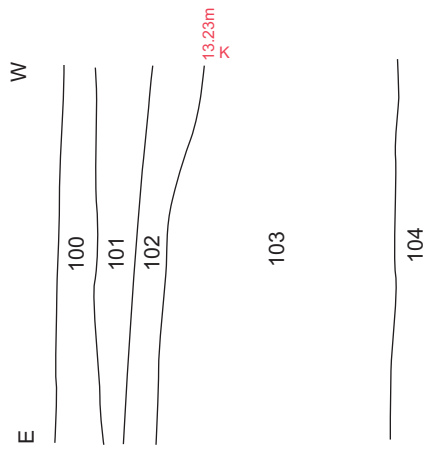
Fig. 1: Site and trench locations

### Trench 1

a) Plan

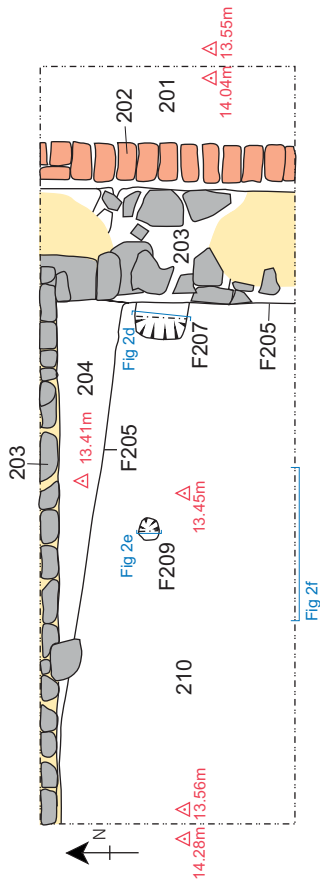


b) Representative section



### Trench 2

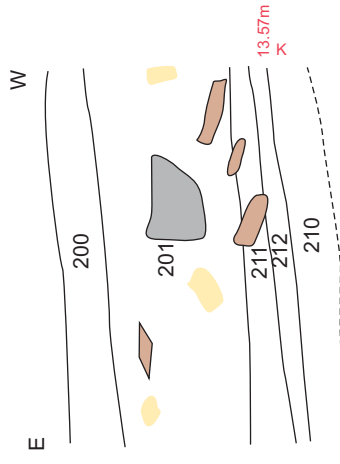
c) Plan



d) Section, F207

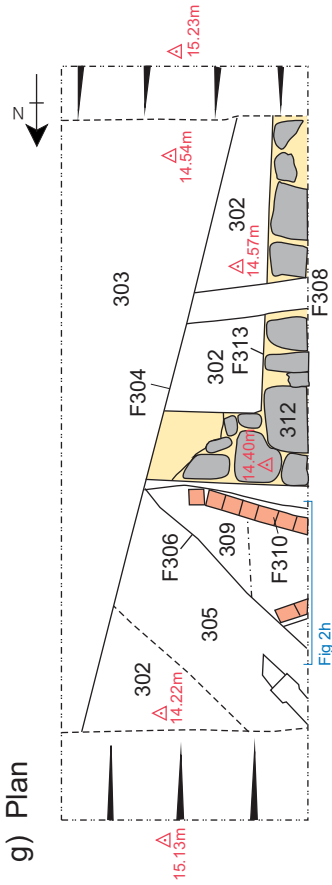


e) Section, F209

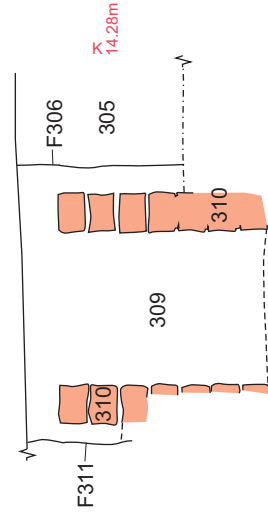
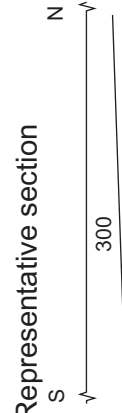


### Trench 3

g) Plan



h) Representative section



PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
Bideford

TITLE

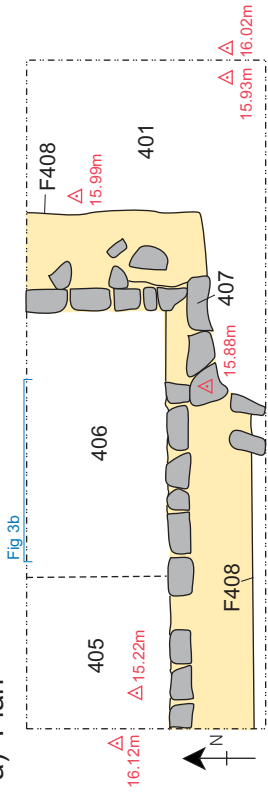
Fig. 2  
Plans and sections, Trenches 1-3



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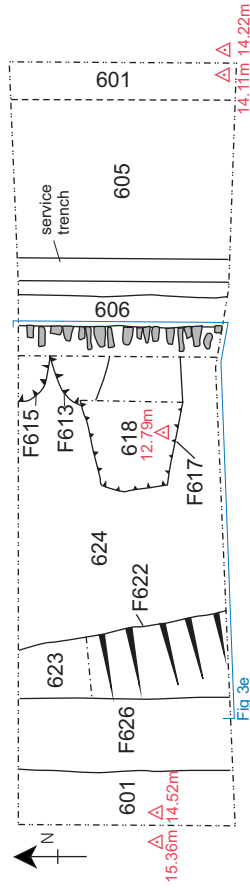
**Trench 4**

**a) Plan**

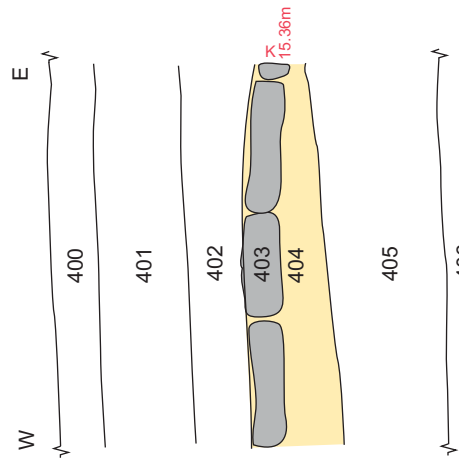


**Trench 6**

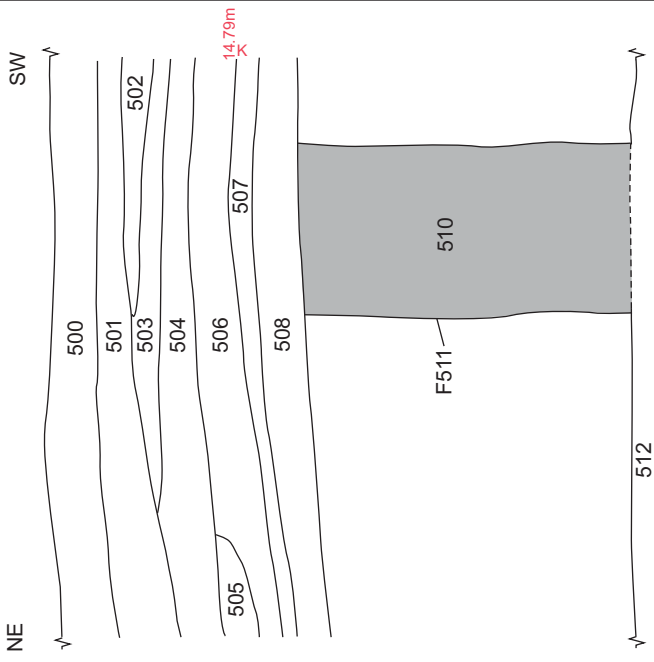
**d) Plan**



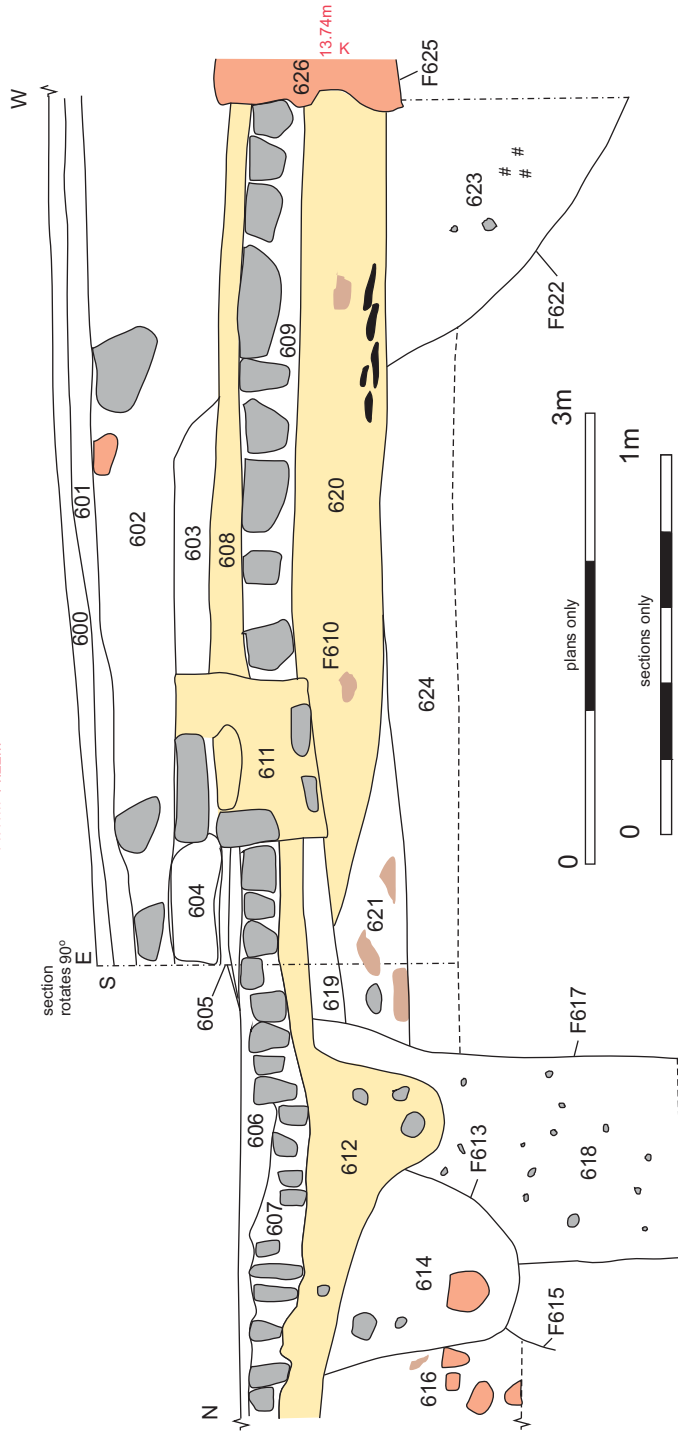
**b) Representative section**



**c) Representative section, Trench 5**



**e) Section**



PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
Bideford

TITLE

**Fig. 3:**

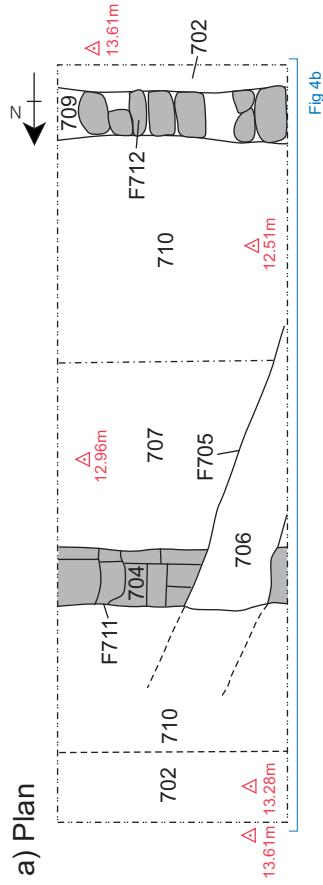
Plans and sections, Trenches 4-6



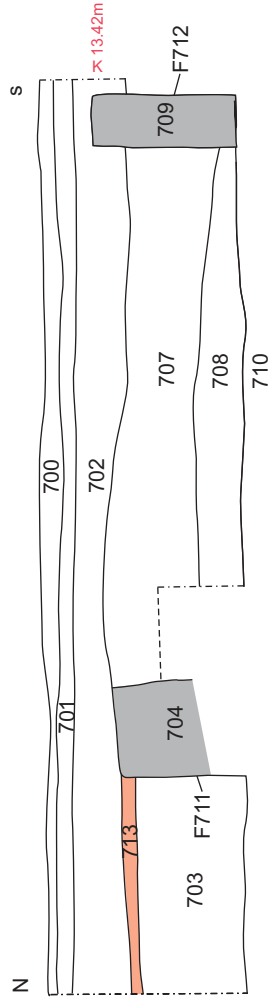


### Trench 7

a) Plan

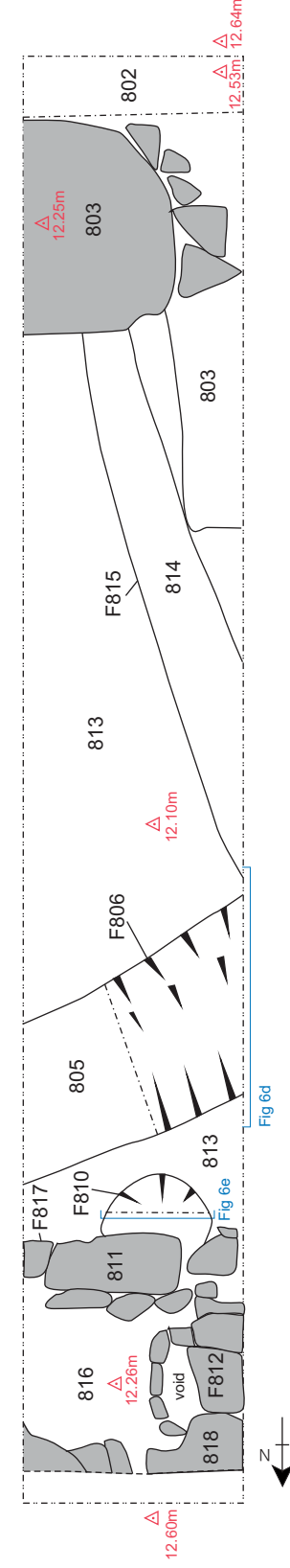


b) Section



### Trench 8

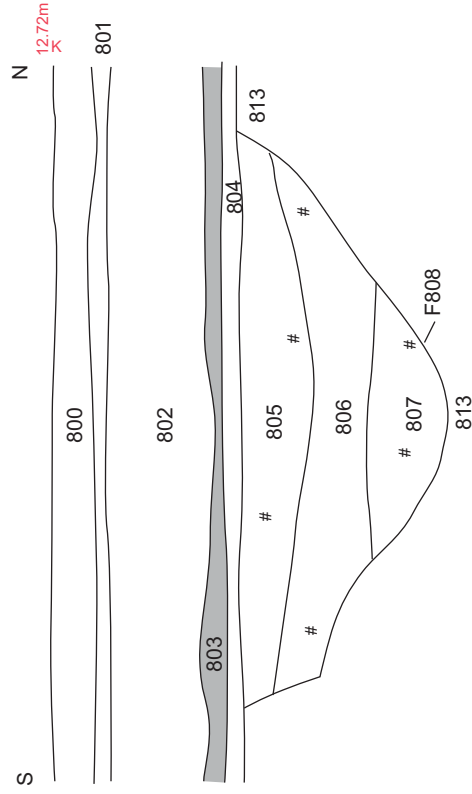
c) Plan



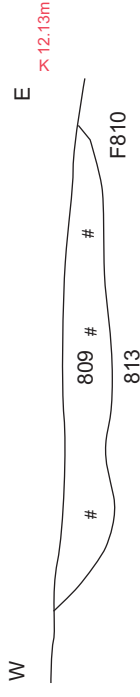
Key



d) Section, F808



e) Section, F810

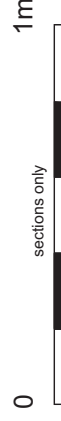


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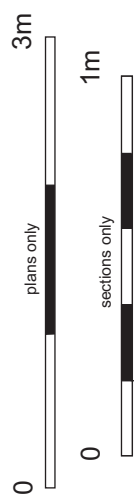
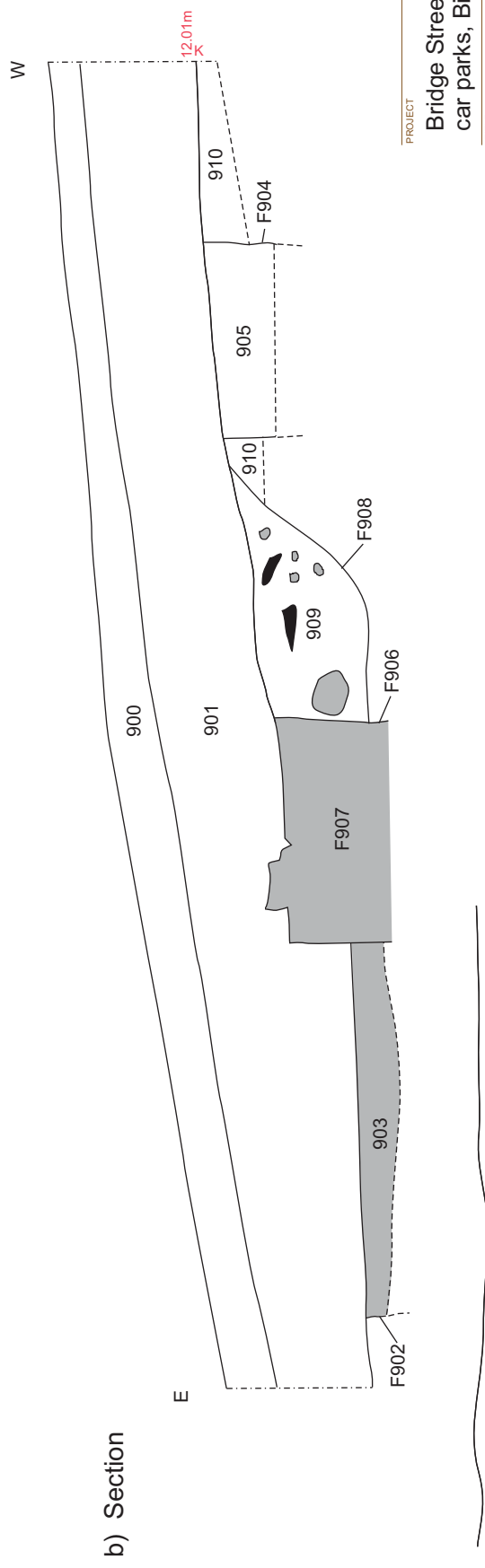
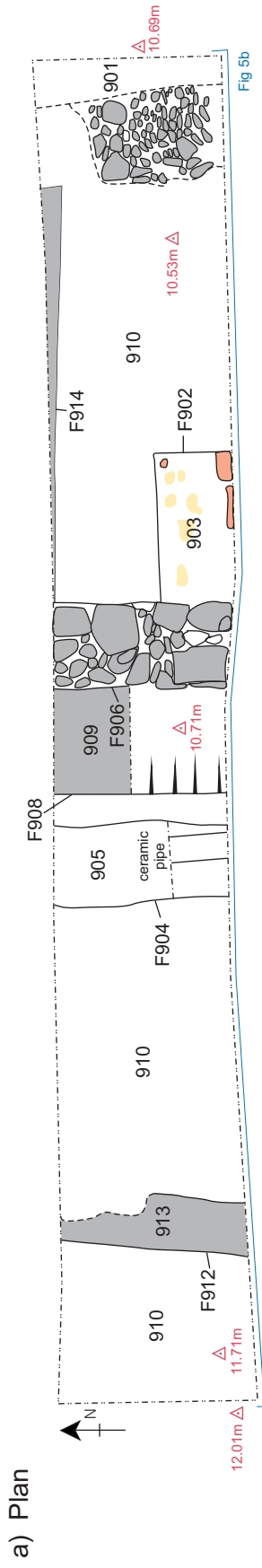
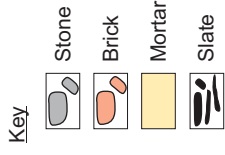
Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
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TITLE

Fig. 4  
Plans and sections, Trenches 7-8



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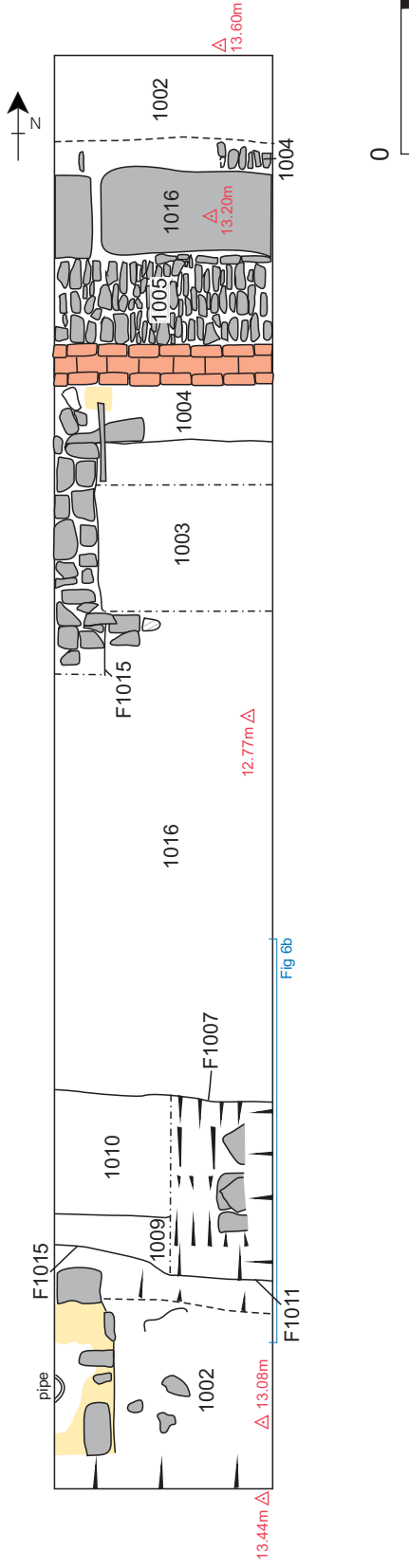
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 Bridge Street and Chopes  
 car parks, Bideford

TITLE

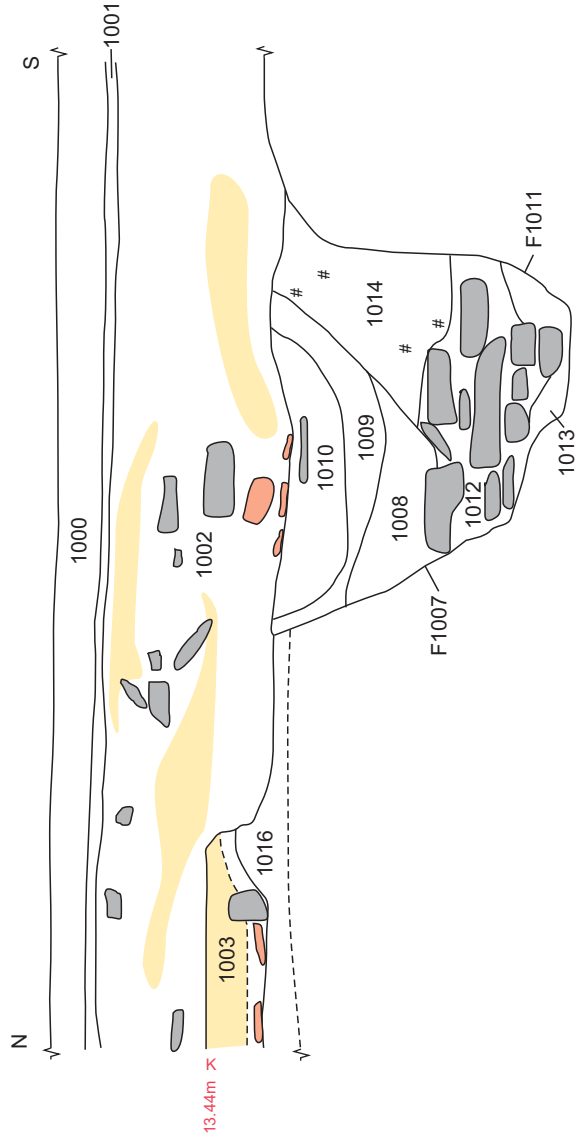
**Fig. 5:**  
 Plan and section, Trench 9



a) Plan



b) Section



PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
Bideford

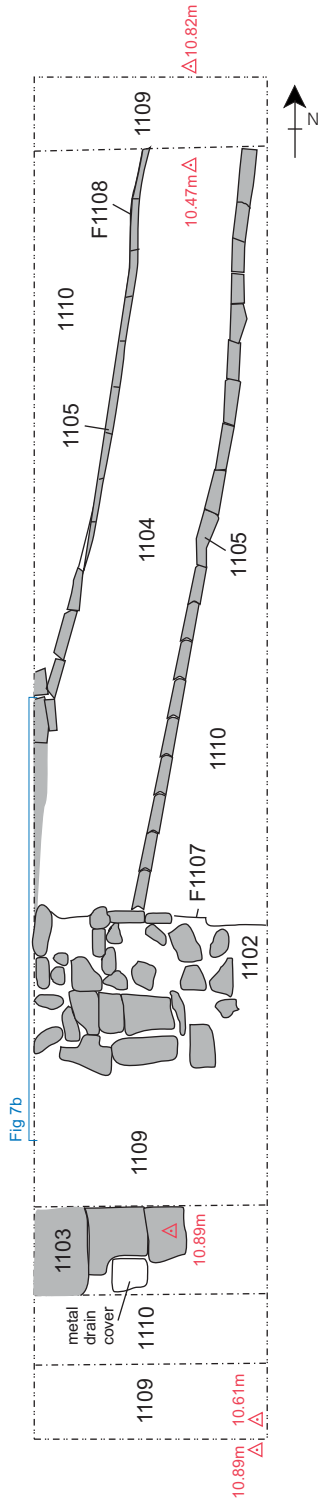
TITLE

Fig. 6:  
Plan and section, Trench 10



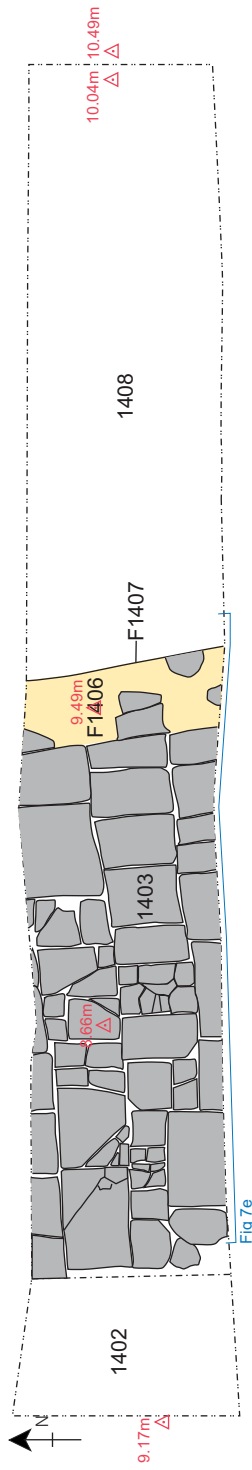
### Trench 11

#### a) Plan

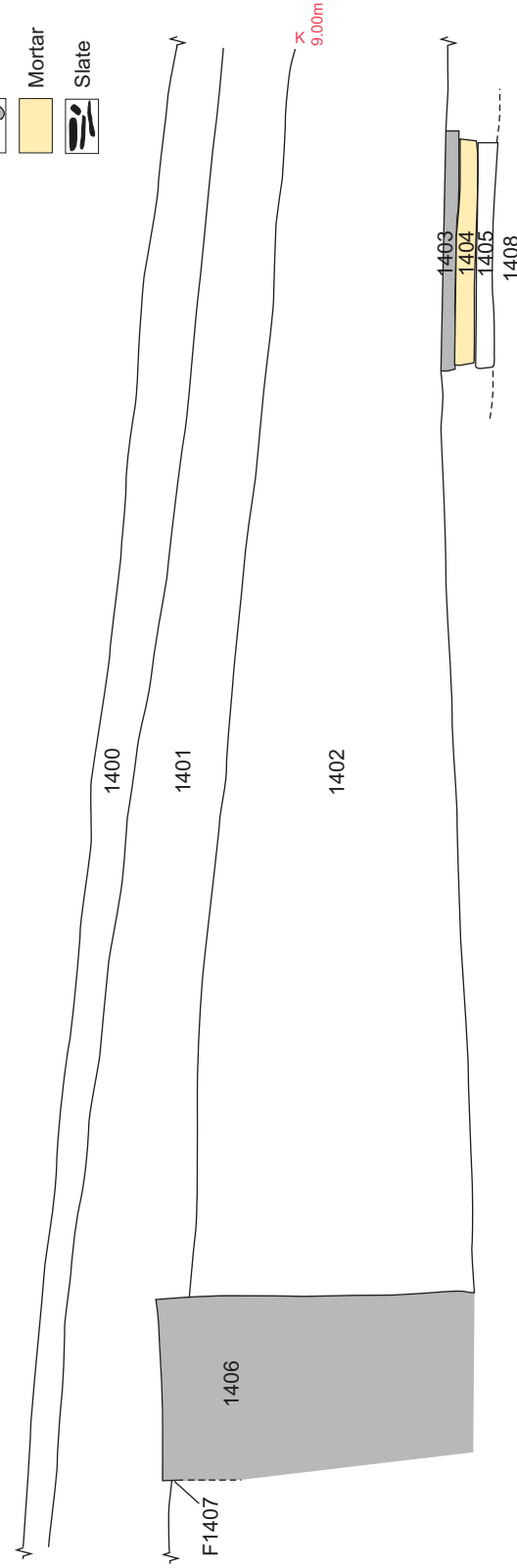


### Trench 14

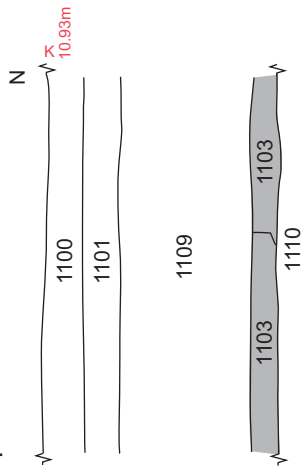
#### d) Plan



### e) Section

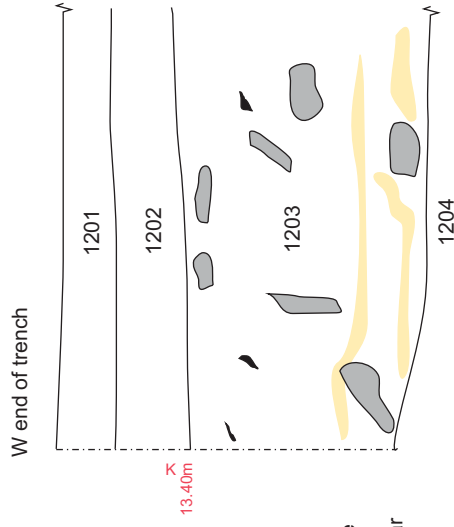


### b) Representative section



### Trench 12

#### c) Representative section



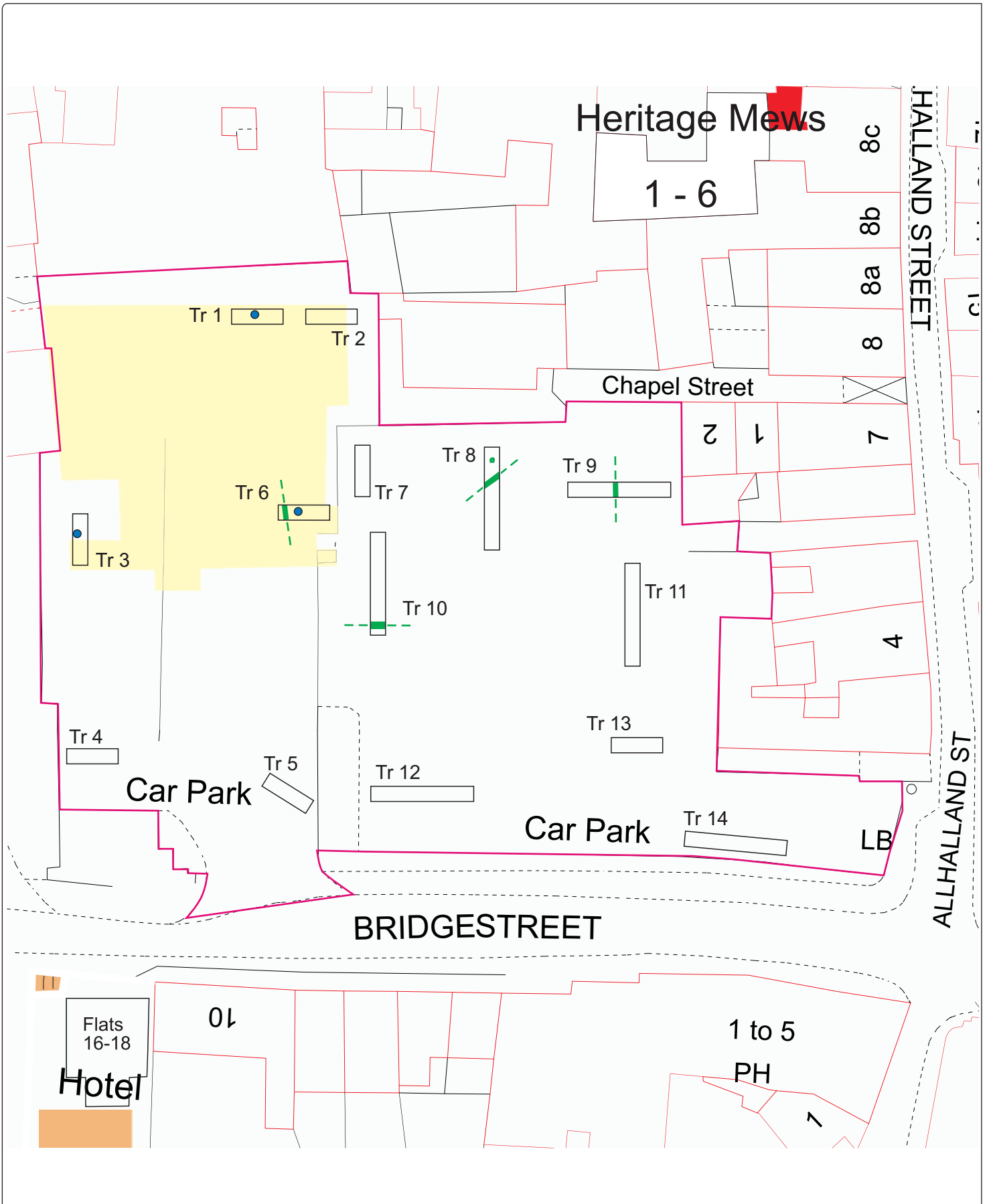
PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
Bideford

TITLE

Fig. 7:  
Plans and sections,  
Trenches 11 and 12





**Key**

- Phase 1 feature
- 19th century grave
- Location of former Methodist Chapel



PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street car parks,  
Bideford

TITLE

Fig. 8: Location of Phase 1 features and 19th century graves



Plate 1:  
Excavations in Chopes car park,  
Trench 4 in foreground. Looking north



Plate 2: Excavations in Bridge Street car park. Looking northeast



Plate 3: Trench 1 showing brick grave vault 106. Looking southeast (scale 1m)



Plate 4:  
General view of Trench 2 from west (scale 1m)



Plate 5: General view of Trench 3 showing grave vault 310. Looking south (scale 1m)



Plate 6: The general layer sequence Trench 6. Looking south (scales 1m and 2m)





Plate 7: Ditch F808, Trench 8. Looking north (scale 1m)



Plate 8: Ditch F908 and wall footing 907, Trench 9. Looking south (scale 1m)



Plate 9:  
General view of Trench 11. Looking north  
(scale 1m)



Plate 10:  
Flagstone floor 1403, Trench 14. View from east  
(scales 2 x 1m)

## APPENDIX 1

### Extracts from historic mapping



PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street  
car parks, Biddeford

TITLE

Map 1:  
Extract from 'A plan of So much of  
the Town of Biddeford as to be  
adjacent to the key', 1717



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PROJECT

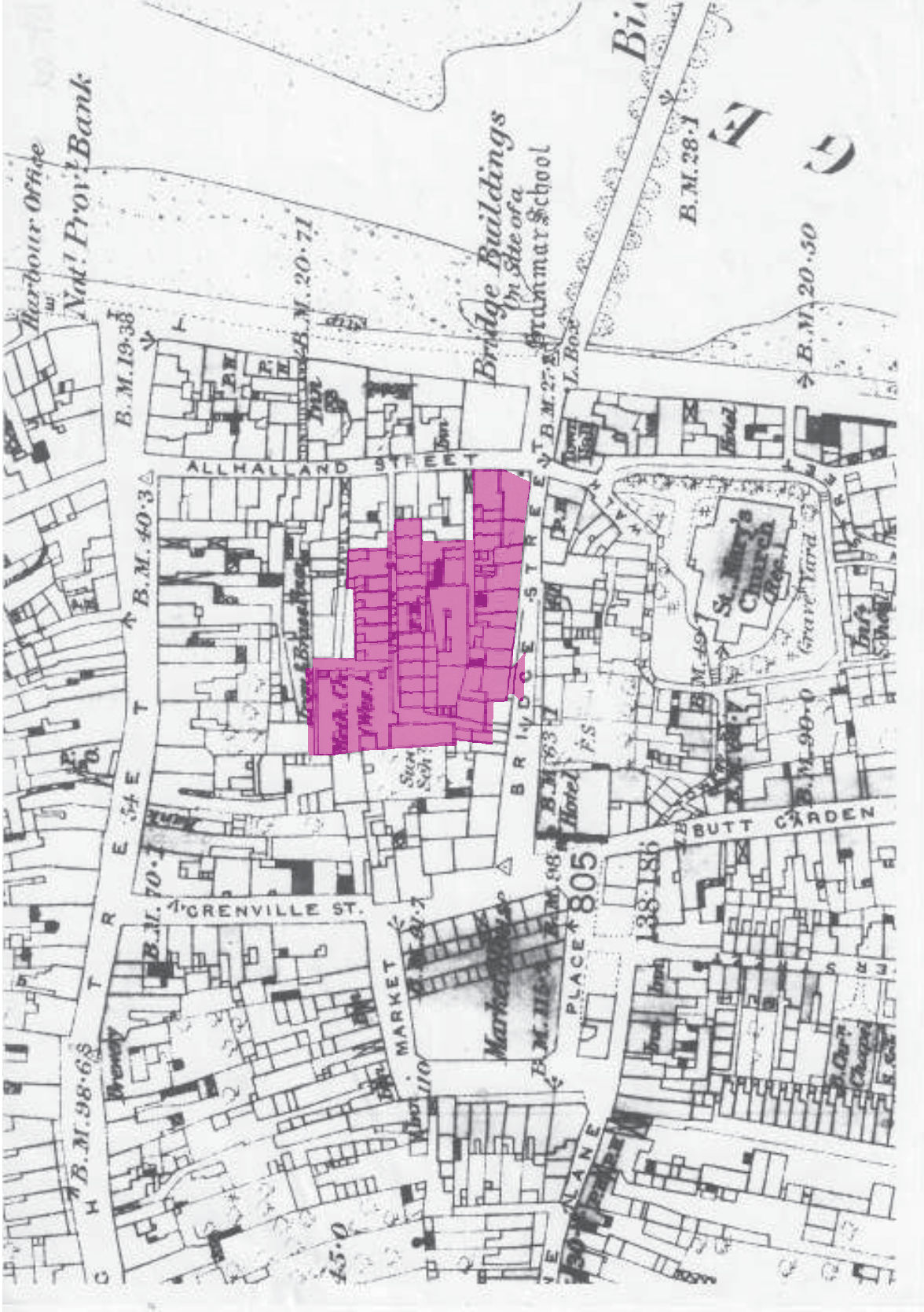
Chopes and Bridge Street  
car parks, Bideford

TITLE

Map 2:  
Extract from John Wood's town plan  
of Bideford, 1842



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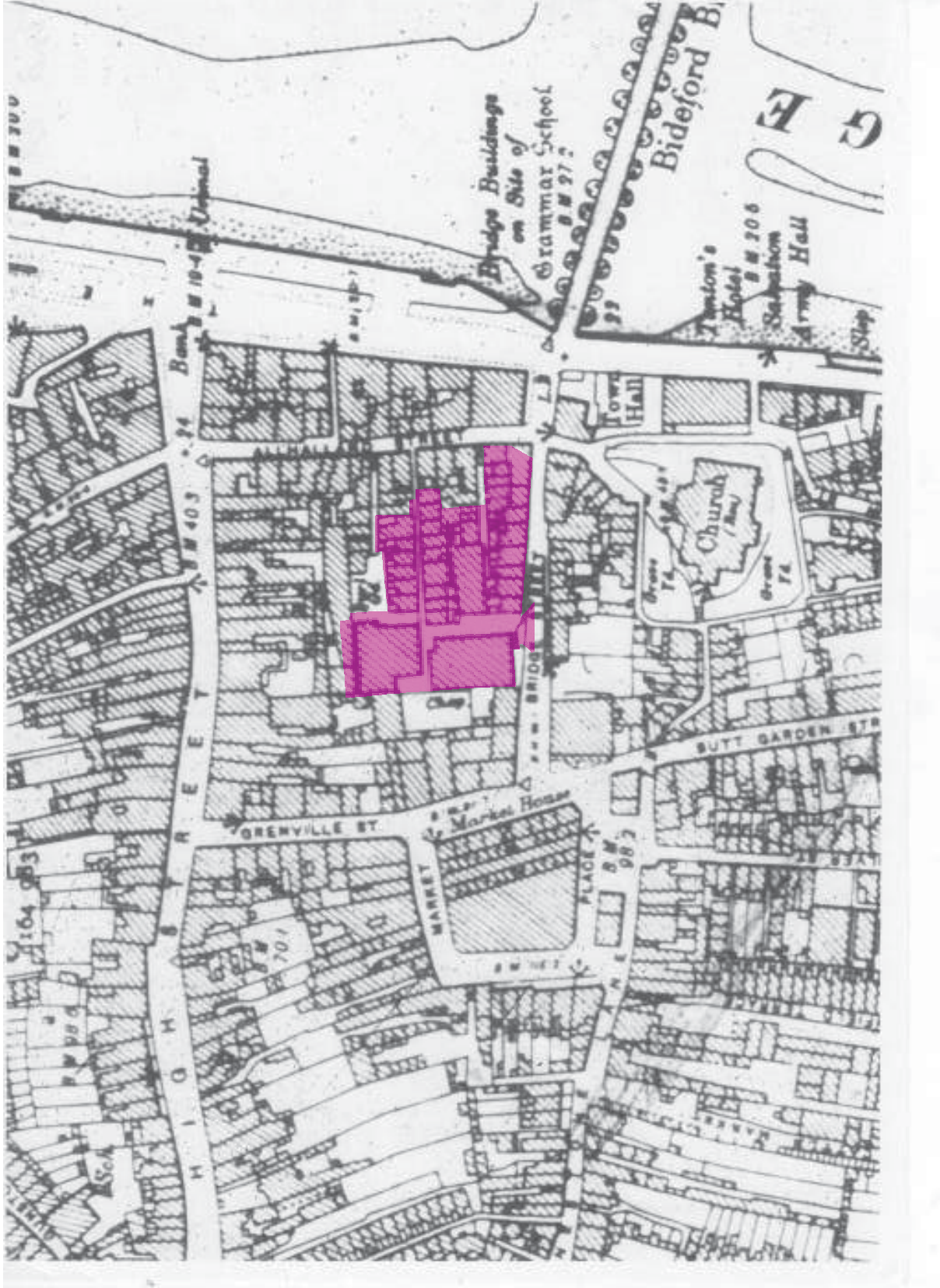
PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street  
car parks, Bideford

TITLE

Map 3:  
Extract from the Ordnance Survey  
first edition 25-inch map,  
published 1889





PROJECT

Chopes and Bridge Street  
car parks, Bideford

TITLE

Map 4:  
Extract from the Ordnance Survey  
second edition 25-inch map,  
published 1902



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