

Archaeological Watching Brief
of land to the east of
**THE VAULTED CHAMBERS,
CASTLE PARK, BRISTOL.**

for
Bristol Parks, Bristol City Council



Report No. 2172/2009
BHER No. 24808



Bristol and Region Archaeological Services

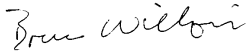

St. Nicholas Church, St. Nicholas Street, Bristol, BS1 1UE. Tel: (0117) 903 9010 Fax: (0117) 903 9011



Archaeological Watching Brief
of land to the east of
**THE VAULTED CHAMBERS,
CASTLE PARK, BRISTOL.**

Centred on
N.G.R. ST 59377 73139

Client: Bristol Parks, Bristol City Council

<i>Author:</i>	Heather Hirons
<i>Approved by:</i>	Bruce Williams
<i>Signature:</i>	
<i>Date Issued:</i>	20th August 2009 

CONTENTS

	List of Illustrations	
1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Historical Context.....	1
3.	Results.....	1
4.	Conclusion.....	2
5.	Bibliography and Sources Consulted.....	2
6.	Acknowledgements.....	2
	Appendix 1: Policy Statement	
	Appendix 2: Context Descriptions	
	Illustrations and Plates	

NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

August, 2009.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE:-

Bristol and Region Archaeological Services retain copyright of this report under the *Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act*, 1988, and have granted a licence to Bristol Parks, Bristol City Council and their agents to use and reproduce the material contained within, once settlement of our account has been received.

Plans reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Bristol City Council Licence Number LA000551 2009

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

- Figure 1 Site location plan, scale 1:1250
- Figure 2 Plan showing study area in detail, scale 1:100

Plates

- Cover View of the site before excavation, looking north
- Plate 1 The cable trench after excavation, from the south
- Plate 2 Detailed view of the south end of the trench showing the red sandy silt deposit (005),
from the south

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by Bristol Parks, Bristol City Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the ground works associated with the repair of an electric cable running beneath the path to the east of the Vaulted Chambers, Castle Park, Castle Street, Bristol.
- 1.2 The fieldwork followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute for Field Archaeologists (1999). The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2009) with the aim of recording any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundworks.
- 1.3 The site (**Fig. 1**) is centred on NGR ST 59377 73139, and is situated at the south end of a concrete slab footpath running north to south across the east end of Castle Park. The Vaulted Chambers, which form the west side of the site, are a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 116), and are thought to be the entrance porch to the King's Hall, dating from about 1320. The footpath lies to the north and south of the site, where it slopes down to join with Castle Street, and a grassy bank lies to the east of the site, beneath which a crypt is situated. The site lies at the height of approximately 17m aOD and according to the 1:50,000 geological map, the underlying geology comprises Redcliffe Sandstone of the Triassic Period.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number BRSMG 2009/58 and a copy of the report will be made available to the National Monuments Record maintained by English Heritage. The project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24808 and in the OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations as: bristol1-62255.
- 1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken on 30th July 2009 under the supervision of Heather Hirons who also wrote this report. Ann Linge (Design & Production Officer) compiled the report and prepared illustrations and Bruce Williams (BaRAS Manager) managed the project.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There have been numerous archaeological investigations in the Castle Park area, including several excavations and watching briefs on the remains of Bristol Castle itself. A brief summary of the area follows.
- 2.2 Castle Park occupies part of the area of late Saxon settlement in the centre of Bristol. The Park includes some surviving remains of the fortifications of Bristol Castle, notably the Keep, south curtain wall and Vaulted Chambers, thought to be the entrance porch to the King's Hall, dating from about 1320(SAM 116).
- 2.3 The Castle was largely demolished in the mid 17th century and the area was then densely built up. During World War 2 the area was heavily damaged by bombing. By the 1970s Castle Park was being created.

3. RESULTS

- 3.1 The groundworks consisted of a single hand excavated trench measuring 2.46m long by 0.60m wide and 0.47m deep (**Fig. 2**).
- 3.2 As the groundworks reopened a previous electric trench the only archaeological deposit visible that was not associated with the previous electric trench or the footpath overlying it was a red sandy deposit (005) (**Plate 1**). The deposit (**Plate 2**) was only visible in the south-eastern corner about 0.50m by 0.25m was visible to a depth of 0.15m and contained no visible dating evidence.
- 3.3 Full details of all the deposits uncovered can be found in **Appendix 2**.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The lack of archaeological remains is due to the constraints of the trench excavated. The only deposit predating the 20th century was visible in one corner and no finds were recovered.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

Published Works

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.

Unpublished Material

BaRAS, 2009, *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief next to the Vaulted Chambers, Castle Park, Bristol*.

King, A, 2003, *Castle Park (CCTV Camera Installation), Bristol*, (BaRAS report 1146/2003).

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BaRAS would like to thank Bristol City Council and Western Power Distribution for their assistance.

APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

NATIONAL POLICIES

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work which would affect a SAM.

ODPM PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

The Planning Policy Guidance of Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) consolidates advice to planning authorities. The Guidance stresses the non-renewable nature of the archaeological resource, details the role of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), encourages early consultation with county and district archaeological officers and sets out the requirement for developers to provide sufficient information on the archaeological impact of development to enable a reasonable planning decision to be made.

PPG 16 also indicates the circumstances where further work would be necessary and outlines the use of agreements and conditions to protect the archaeological resource.

DISTRICT POLICY

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Description
001	Slab path surface - concrete slabs laid on a cement and sand bed, dating to the 1970s.
002	Fill of electric trench (003) - stone scalplings and silty sand.
003	Cut for electric trench filled by (002) - linier, only visible in the south east corner as the limits of excavation did not reach the edge of the trench in most places.
004	Disturbed layer of ground - sandy silt, greyish brown in colour, with occasional Pennant sandstone pieces and frequent mortar flecks and charcoal fragments, only 0.27m thick and only visible in the south east corner where it was cut by (003). Probably disturbance from the landscaping of the park.
005	Probable made ground layer below (004) - red, sandy silt, only visible in the south eastern corner, containing a single piece of Pennant sandstone and moderate flecks of mortar, 0.15m deep by 0.50m north to south by 0.25m east to west.

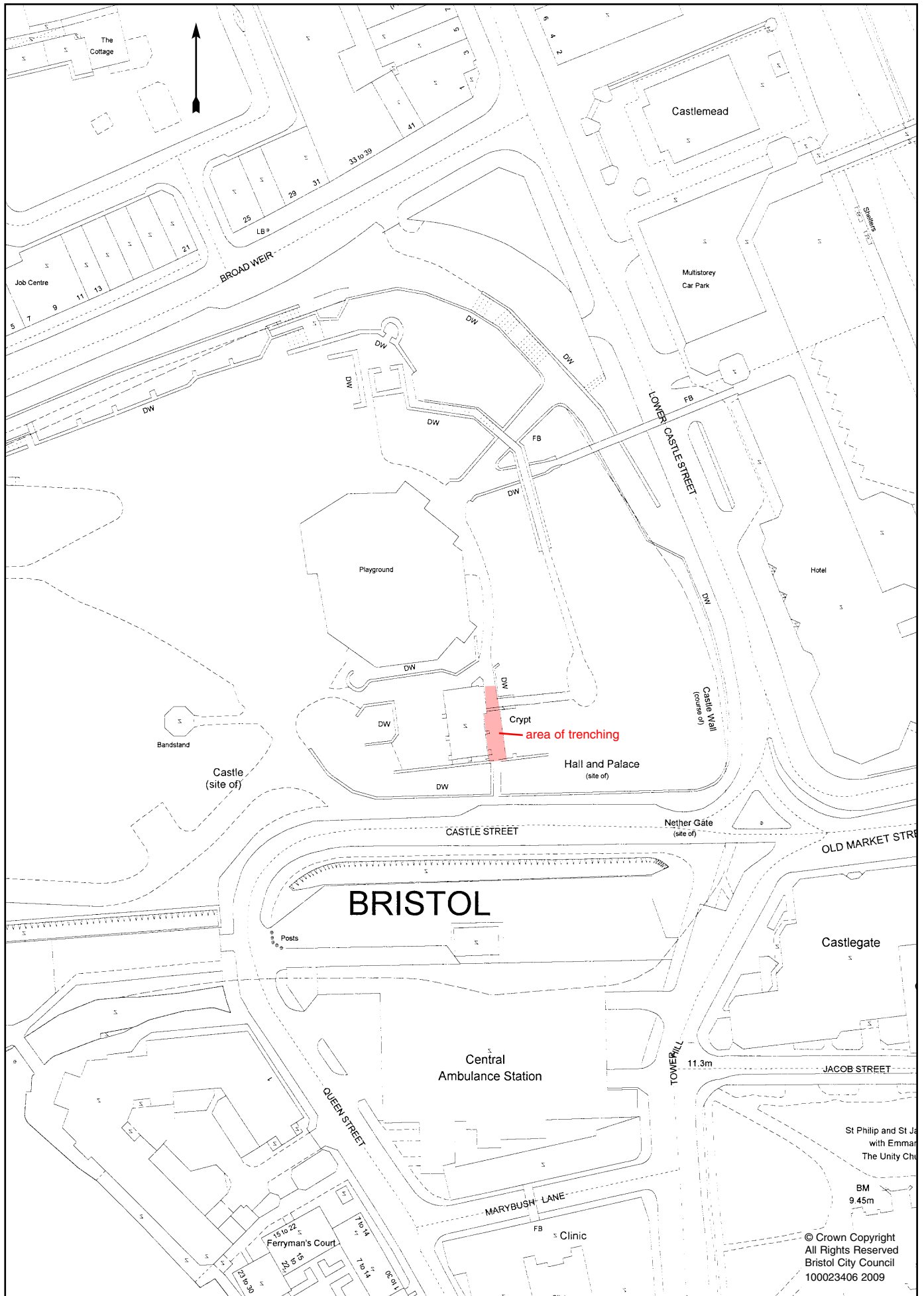


Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:1250

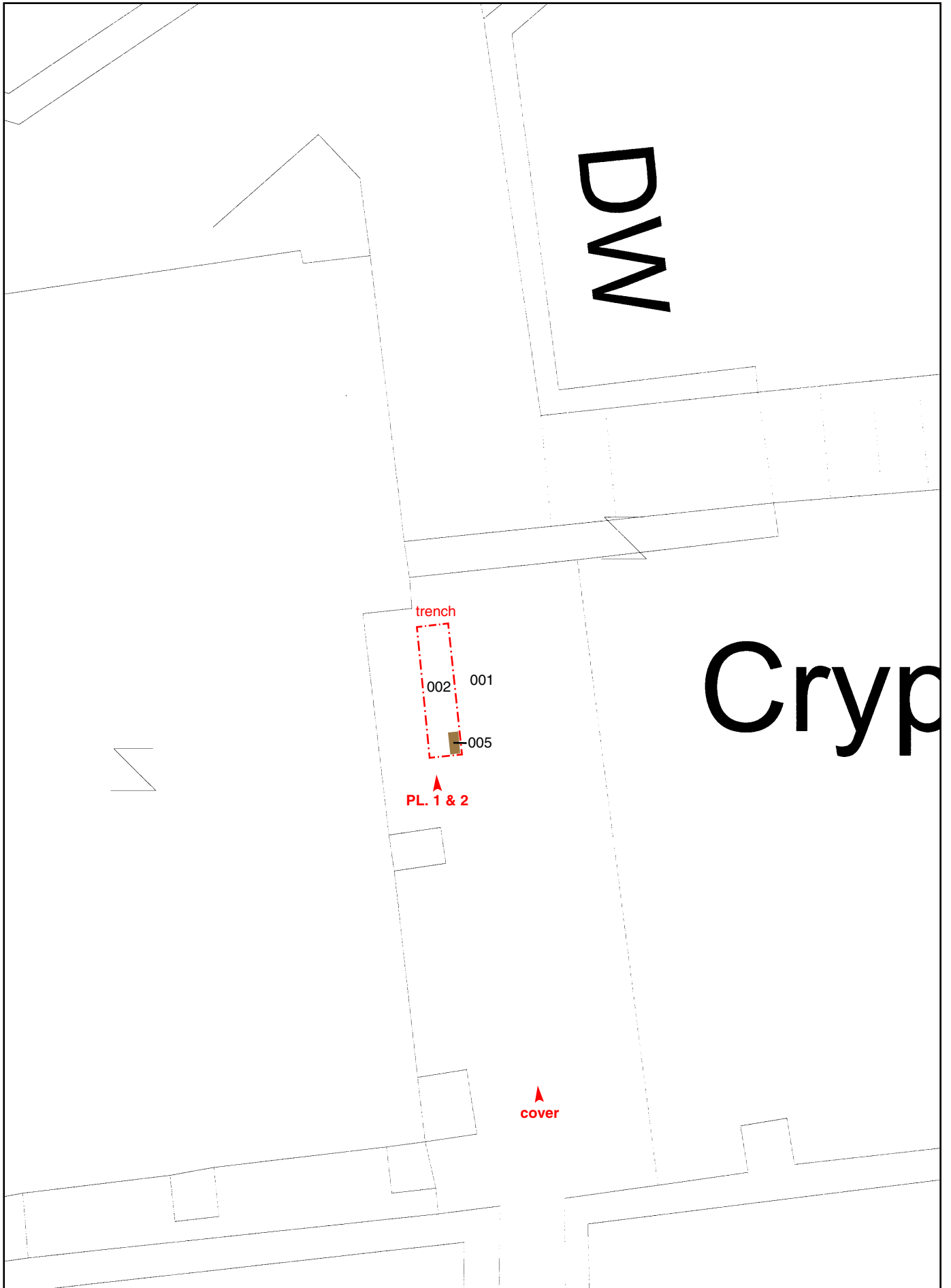


Fig.2 Plan showing study area in detail, scale 1:100



Plate 1
The cable trench after excavation,
from the south



Plate 2
Detailed view of the south end of the
trench showing the red sandy silt
deposit (005), from the south