



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	71 Acomb Road		
CLIENT NAME	Mass Architecture		
YAT PROJECT #	6040	YAT REPORT #	2018/27
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	NGR SE 5844 5138
PLANNING REFERENCE #	17/01603/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

INTRODUCTION

A watching brief on a series of ground works for extensions and alterations was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Mass Architecture between the 13th February and 18th May 2018 at 71 Acomb Road, NGR SE 5844 5138 (Figure 1). The objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits or structures exposed by the ground works. The report will be split into three distinct sections: the underpinning works, the extension to standing building and the new building at the south end of the garden.

METHODOLOGY

The scheme of works involved hand-excavated underpinning pits, area strip and foundations adjacent to the house for an extension and another area strip and strip foundations at the south end of the garden furthest from the house for a new single story building (Figure 2, Plate 1). The work on site was undertaken by Kent Development. The machine strip was done using a 600mm toothed general purpose bucket by a rubber tracked excavator.

The site was recorded using digital photographs throughout the process, and then measured sketches and notes of the excavations were also made in a note book with appropriate measurements for locating and section drawings.

RESULTS

Underpinning works

The total dimensions of the underpinning trench, that ran N-S along the eastern and western most side of the area, were 3.50m long, 0.80m wide and 0.85m deep. These were hand-excavated by the contractors.

The earliest deposits found in the underpinning trench on the eastern and western side of the conservatory/yard area was the natural orange sandy clay in the lowest 30-50mm of the intervention. This was followed by a dark silty deposit of possible horticultural/ garden soils, through which was the cut for the standing buildings foundations (Figure 6, Plate 8).

Extension

The entire site was stripped to varying depths. Closest to the house the site was stripped to its deepest point, 750mm BGL. This was for the extension to the existing building that will have a floor level below the existing ground level. The area stripped was roughly 4.00m by 3.80m between the underpinning trenches. Two sections were recorded. One showed the foundation of the standing building, which consisted of large cobbles and rough stone blocks. This was cut through the makeup deposit and possible garden soils and into the orange sandy clay natural, recorded to a depth of 800mm (Figure 3, Plate 5).

The sequence of deposits found during the strip (Figure 4, Plate 6) started with the firm, brownish orange, sandy clay with moderate cobbles interpreted as a natural glacial deposit (c110). This was followed by an interface layer of friable, brownish grey, clayey sand (c107). Over this was a deposit most likely to be makeup (c106). This was a friable, grayish brown, clayey sand, and was overlain by a garden soil (c105) of friable to soft, brownish dark grey, clayey silt. This was sealed by a thin deposit (c104) that could be a construction/demolition spread that consisted of friable, light grey,

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mortar and small stones. The most recent deposit was the modern garden soil (c103), which was a friable, dark grey, clayey silt.

During this strip a small brick-built chamber was found and recorded (Figure 7, Plate 3). It had been partially truncated by a modern drain to the north, and entered the limit of excavation to the west. It was cut through c106 and c107 and covered by c105. It consisted of a brick and cobble floor bonded with a light yellowish grey, lime mortar (c100), and on two sides the foundation of a wall still stood (c101), made of large cobbles, large rough stone and some re-used stone, one of which was retained (see Appendix 1). This was interpreted as an outhouse or coal shed dating from when the now-demolished standing building was constructed. The reused stone is probably ecclesiastical but its origin is unknown (Plate 9).

New Building

At the southern end of the garden furthest from the standing building a small strip took place of roughly 300mm before strip-foundations were excavated, roughly 4.80m square to a depth of 350mm by 600mm wide (Figure 5, Plate 4 & 7).

The sequence of deposits at this end were quite different to that seen elsewhere, due to a large concrete pad having been built at this end of the site that used to have a shed built upon it. The earliest deposit encountered was the same natural found in other works (c110), on top of which was a makeup deposit interpreted as rubble placed as hardcore for the concrete. The makeup consisted of friable, dark brownish grey, silty clay with frequent CBM (c109), and directly on top of this was the concrete pad (c108). This strip showed that natural deposits possibly slope up to the south or that some of it was cleared at the northern end close to the house.

CONCLUSIONS

No evidence of significant archaeology was encountered during these works.

Archaeology was limited to a series of garden deposits, mixed dumping deposits and horticultural deposits. The only feature of interest was the small chamber and the reused stone placed in its foundation.

Many thanks to the client and groundwork contractor staff onsite for their co-operation and assistance during these works.

APPENDIX 1: ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENT

By J.M. McComish May 2018

A single architectural fragment (AF1) was recovered. This is of magnesian limestone and measures 380 x 370 x 280mm in size. There are four original faces surviving (F1-4) of which F1 is the side of a window with external vertical chamfer, centrally placed socket for a glazing panel and an internal rebate and vertical chamfer, F2 is the original exterior elevation and F3-4 are the top and base. The other two sides are broken off. Both F1 and F3 are heavily eroded, and in the case of F3 there is a 140mm long crack and a series of pockmarks on the upper surface, presumably caused by erosion. The style of the block is suggestive of perpendicular architecture of the period c. 1350 to the

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Dissolution. The block is of poor quality and is recommended for discard.

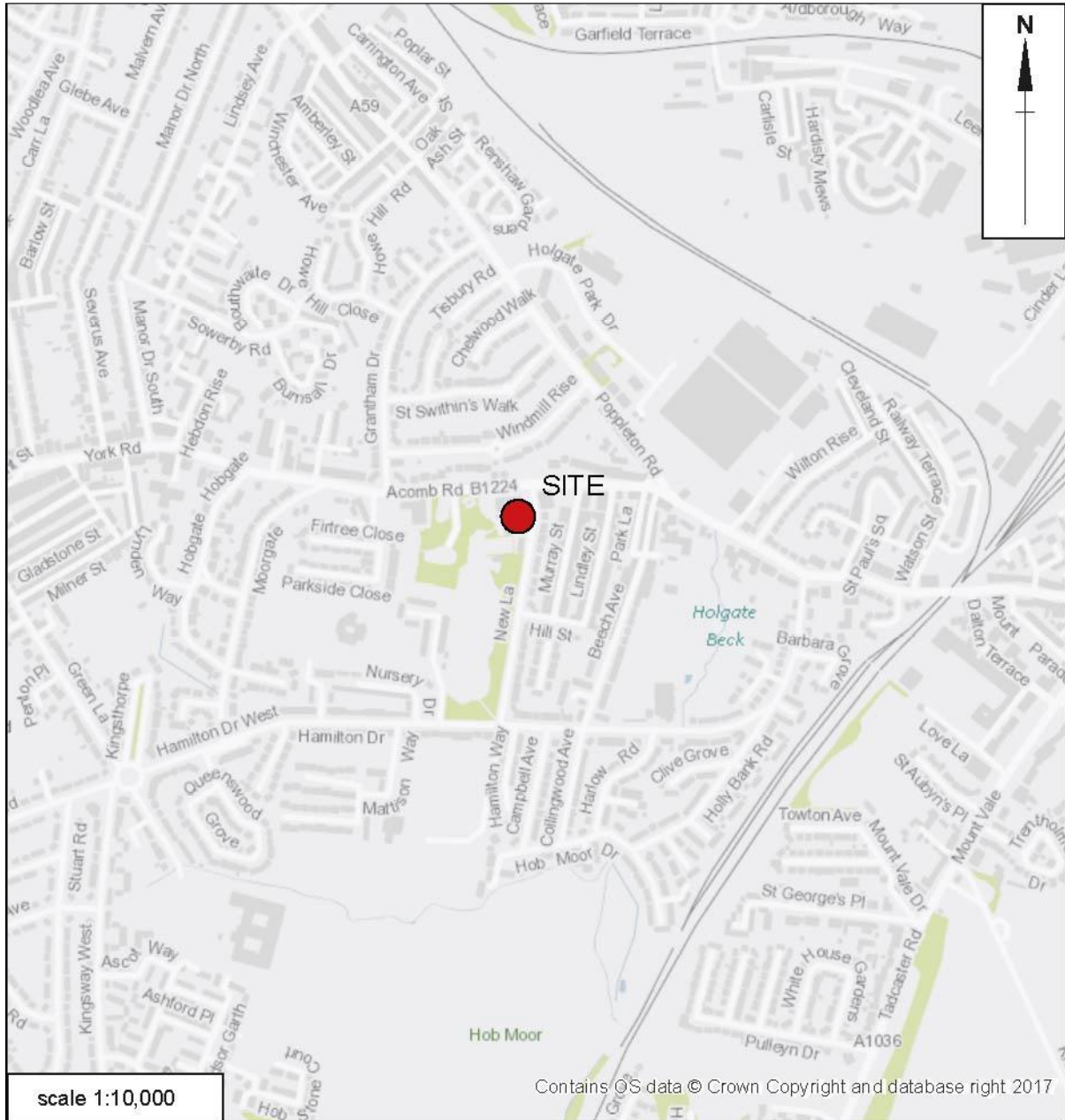


Figure 1 Site Location

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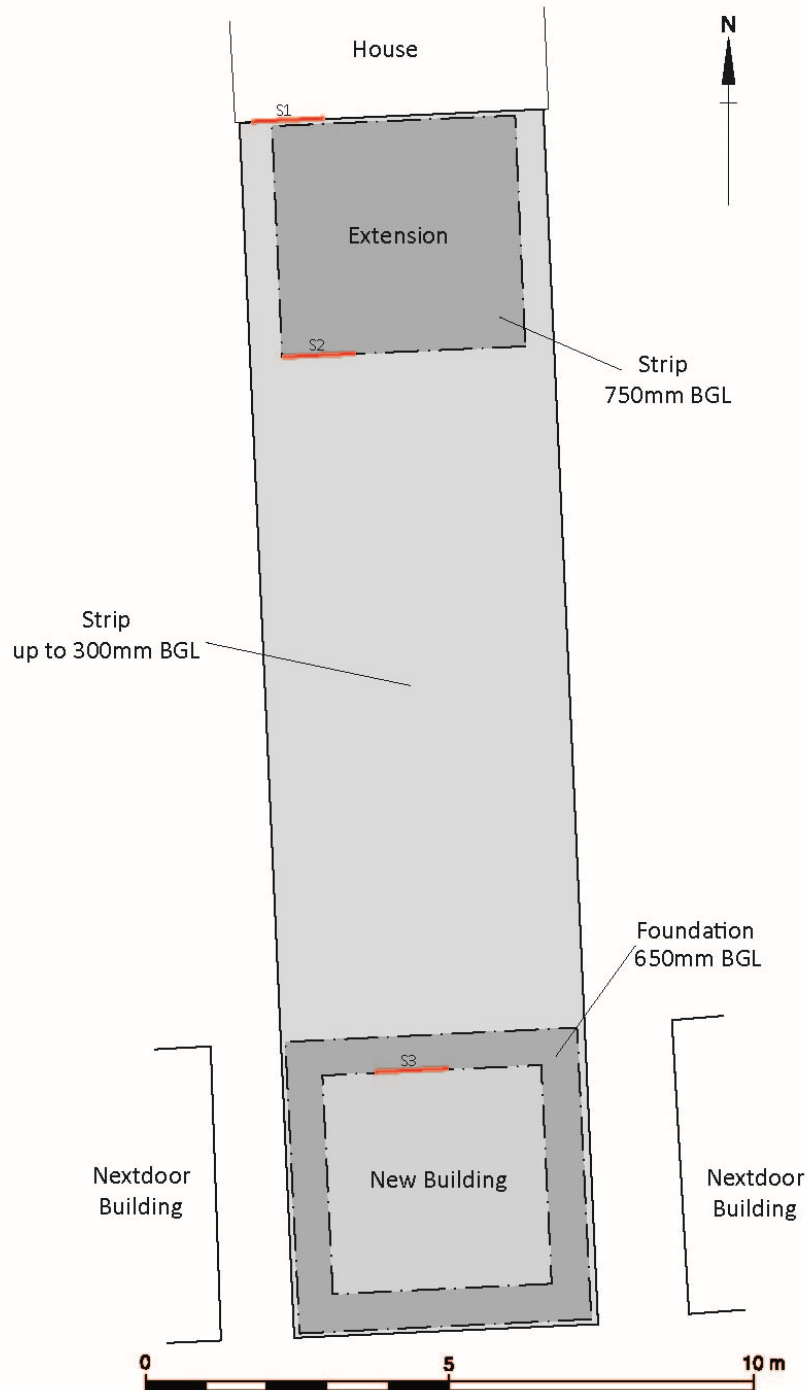


Figure 2 Overview of works

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South facing section, Section 1

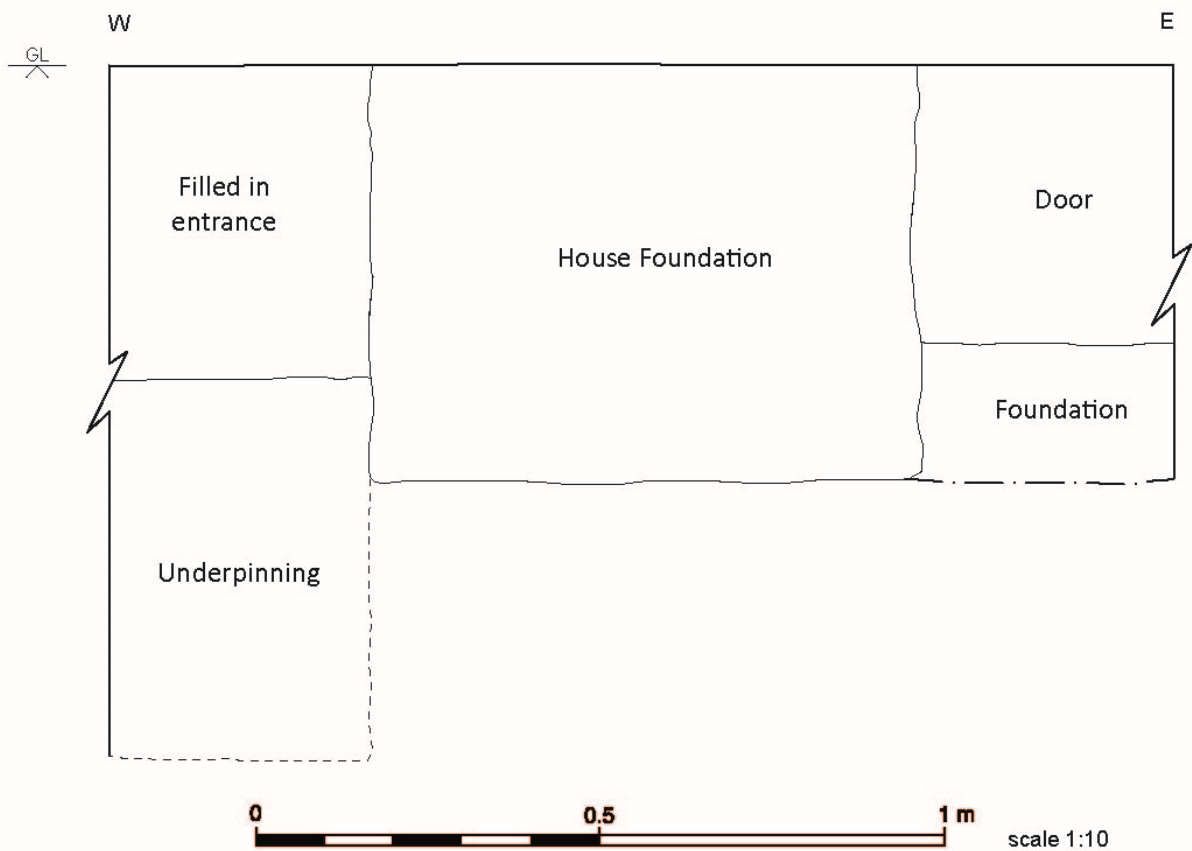


Figure 3 Section 1

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North facing section, Section 2

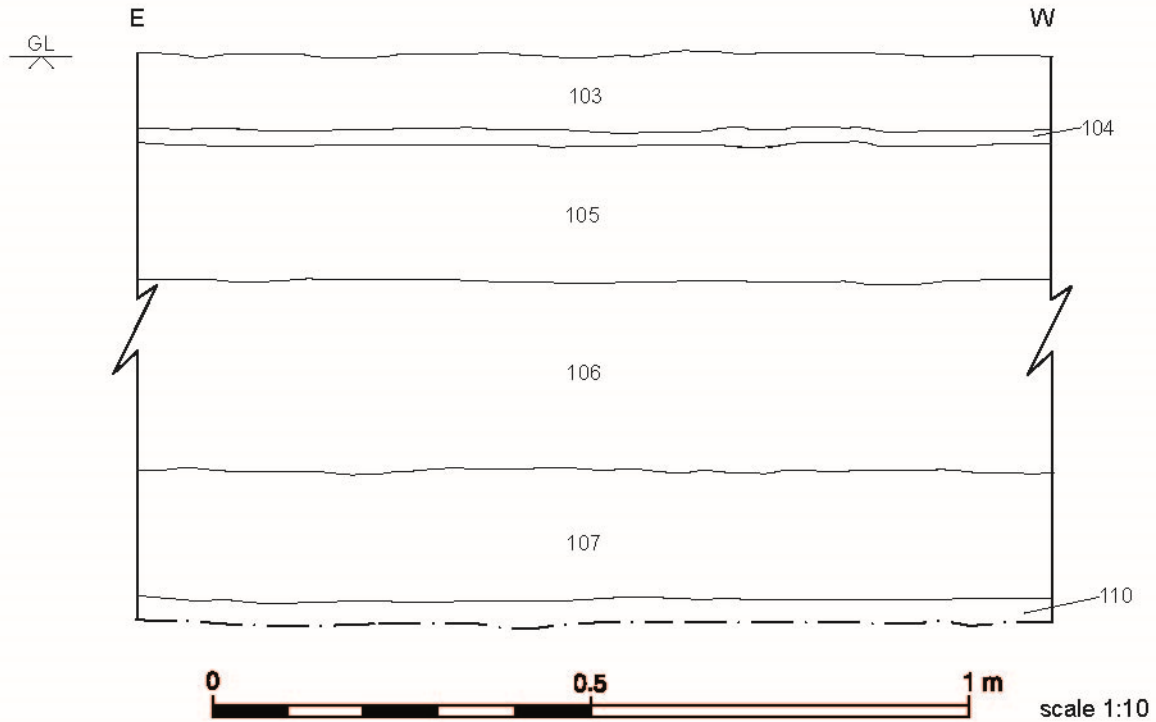


Figure 4 Section 2

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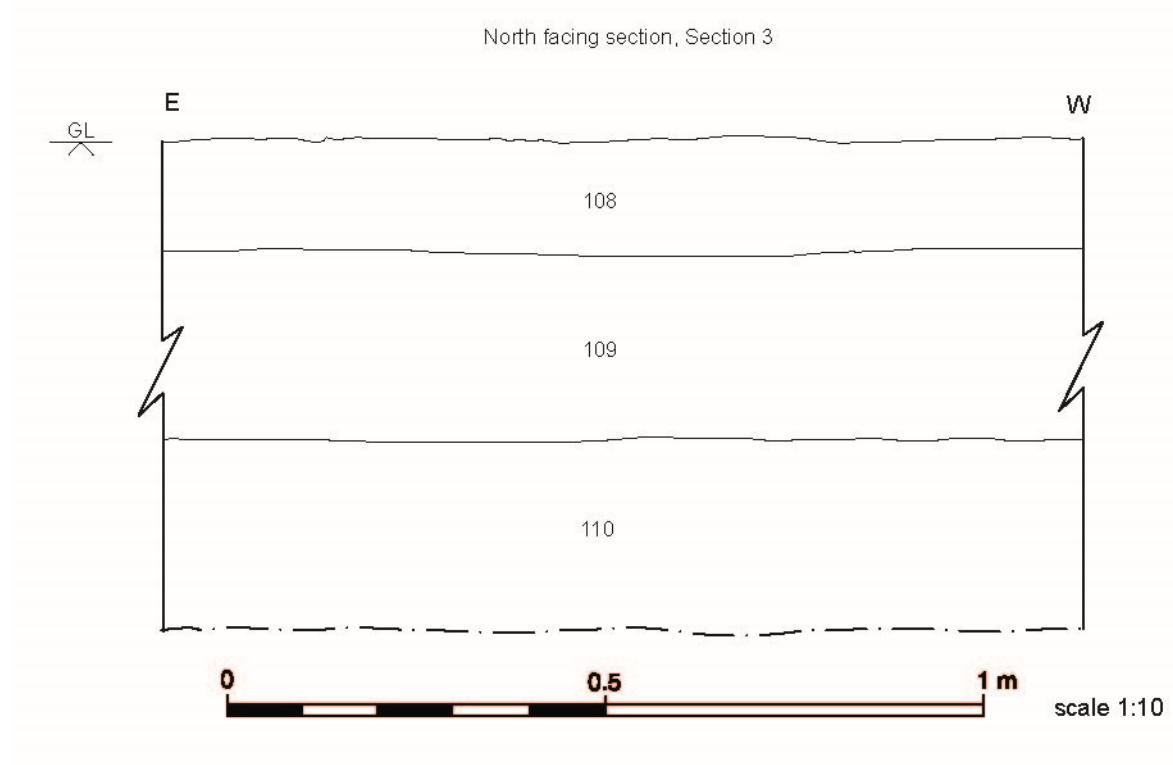


Figure 5 Section 3

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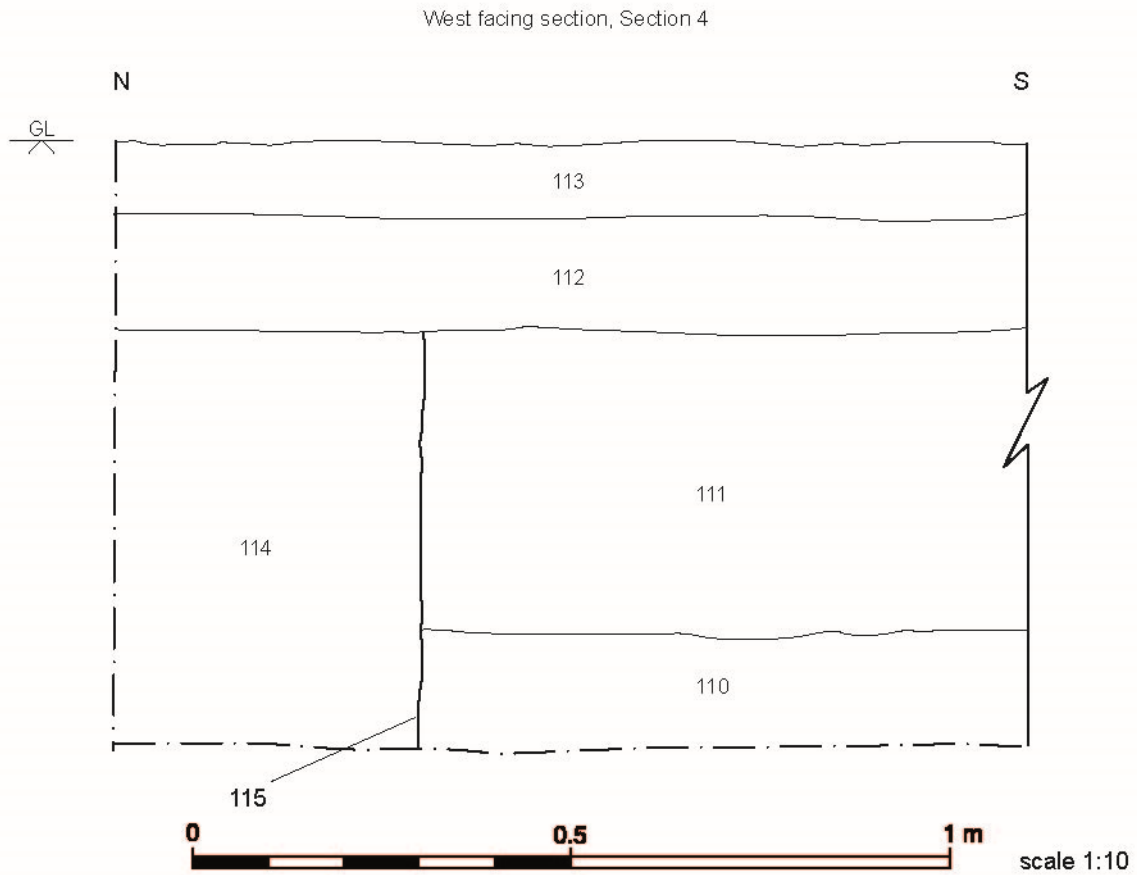


Figure 6 Section 4

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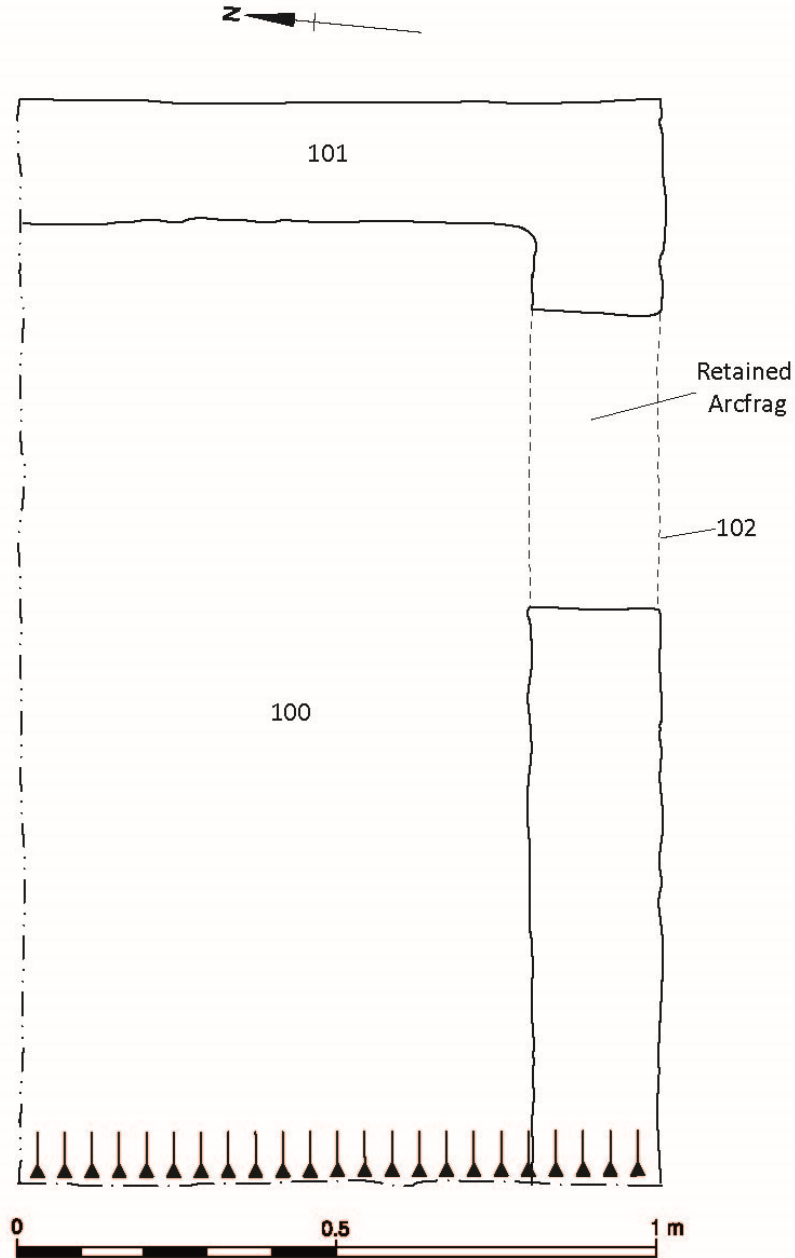


Figure 7 Plan of brick chamber

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Plate 1 Before works begin, looking north



Plate 2 Area strip at northern end of site, looking east

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Plate 3 Brick chamber, looking east



Plate 4 Strip foundation at southern end of site, looking east

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Plate 5 Foundation of standing building, section 1, looking north



Plate 6 Area strip, section 2, looking south

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Plate 7 Strip foundation, section 3, looking south



Plate 8 Underpinning pit, section 4, looking east

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Plate 9 The reused stone

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