ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AT BUSHBURY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL, OLD FALLINGS LANE, BUSHBURY, WOLVERHAMPTON

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26 October 2010 Revised 22 November 2010

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Project 3482 Report 1799

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Archaeological excavation at Bushbury Hill Primary School, Old Fallings Lane, Bushbury, Wolverhampton

Simon Sworn

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Part 1 Project summary

An archaeological excavation was undertaken at Bushbury Hill Primary School (NGR SJ 9268 0213), Old Fallings Lane, Bushbury, Wolverhampton (Fig 1), on behalf of Jacobs Engineering UK Limited, whose client, Wolverhampton City Council intends to demolish the existing school buildings and to erect a new school building on unoccupied ground to the south-west.

The excavation followed on from two previous phases of trial trenching, a geophysical survey, and a single watching brief.

The previous projects revealed the presence of two large buildings; one was the known Bushbury Hill farmhouse, built by the 1780s and demolished in 1948, with associated outbuildings (to the south-west of the excavation area). Here the cellars below Bushbury Hill House were found to survive from c 0.20m below the current ground surface. A second building lay to the north (located within the excavation area) and was a large sandstone structure that initially appeared to represent an earlier phase of the farm.

The excavation concentrated on the second building located to the north of the Georgian farmhouse. This other building consisted of a north-west to south-east aligned range of five separate rooms, constructed from roughly hewn sandstone foundations topped with brick and ashlar sandstone walls. Within the building remnant floor surfaces of brick and cobbles were present. This building was dated to the mid - late 18th century from the bricks used in the construction and from material associated with underlying deposits. The building appeared to have been used primarily as an agricultural building, with the south-eastern extent having substantially deeper foundations (up to 1.60m deep) which were capped by precisely sawn ashlar blocks. This southern end of the building was possibly used as a double floored threshing barn. Threshing barns were generally considered to be the most important structures on a farm. They are over two stories in height in order to accommodate hand flail threshing, along with storage for the un-threshed grain and threshed straw. These were often converted for stock or other use in the late 19th century once machine threshing became common. The rest of the early sandstone structure to the north-west may have been used as cattle sheds, stables or for general storage. The floor surfaces that remain seem to support the suggestion of stable use. The level of detail and its substantial nature indicates that the building was built to a high level specification and likely to have been seen as a high quality farm building.

The original sandstone structure was subsequently altered and extended. Towards the latter part of the 19th century a single room extension at the south-eastern end was added. This was dated from finds recovered from the deposits that the wall truncated. The foundation trench for the later wall clearly cut the backfill of the earlier structure. The southern sandstone wall was constructed on sandstone piers, an unusual technique.

This later room contained a rectangular slate drain, extant flagstone floor, a brick channel and wall. The wall may have either supported a cattle feeding trough or other water related features. The slate drain may have formed drainage for cattle waste possibly as part of a milking/dairy room. However the room appeared small for this practice and no large entrance was identified. A wash room may be a possibility for this room's later use. Although some of the bricks used for this internal structure dated from 1725 onwards, the deposit on which it was built contained material from the late 19th century.

This sandstone structure was demolished by 1948 and the area landscaped. Between 1950 and 1952 two concrete footed buildings were constructed for the new school. These were subsequently demolished by 2001 and the area landscaped for a second time into its present state.

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Part 2 Detailed report

1. Planning background

An archaeological excavation was undertaken at Bushbury Hill Primary School (NGR SJ 9268 0213), Bushbury, Wolverhampton (Fig 1), on behalf of Jacobs Engineering UK Limited, whose client, Wolverhampton City Council intends to demolish the existing school buildings and to erect a new school building on unoccupied ground to the south-west.

The proposed development site is considered to include a heritage asset with archaeological interest, the significance of which may be affected by the application (BCSMR ref. MBL 1835).

The project conforms to the Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation (IfA 2008).

The project also conforms to instructions contained in emails from Mike Shaw (Black Country Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council, dated March 2010) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2010).

2. Aims

The particular aims of this archaeological excavation are:

• To clarify the date, nature and extent of the structures and deposits identified during the evaluation trenching to the north of the Bushbury Hill House Georgian farmhouse.

3. **Methods**

3.1 **Documentary search**

Prior to fieldwork commencing a desk based assessment was undertaken which contains detailed archaeological information (Vaughan 2009).

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

Prior to the excavation, two phases of evaluation and a watching brief were undertaken in the summer of 2009 (Webster 2009; Vaughan and Arnold 2009).

Fieldwork for the excavation was undertaken between 26 July and 16 August 2010. The site reference number and site code has yet to be assigned.

An area of 858m² (22m x 39m) was opened. The area was reduced slightly from the proposed area of 1064m² (28m x 38m), with the consent of Mike Shaw, due to the presence of buried services to the south-western edge of the site. A small area to the north-west corner was only excavated to just below the topsoil, due to the presence of buried electrical cables.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995).

On completion of the excavation, the area was reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

3.2.2 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural and artefactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources (i.e. cartographic).

3.3 Artefact methodology, by Angus Crawford

3.3.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995, appendix 4).

3.3.2 **Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined and a primary record was made on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A terminus post quem date was produced for each stratified context where possible. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992; Hurst 1994; and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.4 Environmental methodology

No environmental samples were taken during the excavation due to the absence of any material deemed to have had any environment significance.

4. Topographical and archaeological context

A topographical and historical background to the site is given in the desk based assessment (Vaughan 2009) which includes a map regression as well as the results of the geophysical survey.

Previous fieldwork on site has involved geophysical survey (Smalley 2009), two phases of trial trench evaluation and a watching brief around the former Georgian farmhouse (Webster 2009; Vaughan and Arnold 2009) by the Service of those areas of interest identified during the survey. Two of these trenches (Trenches 1 and 8) were located within the present excavation area. Locations of the previous trial trenches are shown in Fig 2.

The previous investigations revealed the presence of two large buildings; one was the known Bushbury Hill farmhouse, built by the 1780s and demolished by 1948, with associated outbuildings (to the south-west of the excavation area). Here the cellars below Bushbury Hill House were found to survive from c 0.20m below the current ground surface. They were constructed of hand made red bricks throughout, with arch ceilings and appeared to be of a single phase of construction. They comprised four compartments accessed via a central corridor with an extant staircase. Features included an ancillary spiral staircase, light wells with sandstone mullioned windows, a coal shute, bases for three chimney stacks in the external walls and brick storage benches.

A second building lay to the north (located within the excavation area) and was a large sandstone structure that initially appeared to represent an earlier phase of the farm which had been previously unknown. During the second evaluation phase (Vaughan and Arnold 2009, figure 2) it was discovered that these walls form part of a substantial building, located to the north of and on the same alignment as Bushbury Hill House (ibid). They appeared to form part of the north-east corner of the buildings which contained the farmyard and are recorded on cartographic sources (Vaughan 2009, figures 5-10, 13 and 15). The most substantial building, of ashlar sandstone blocks, has foundations over 1m deep and walls 0.50m wide, indicating that it may well have been two storeys in height. Material within the made ground butting the walls is of 18^{th} and 19^{th} century date. It was therefore conjectured that the majority of the buildings date from the 18^{th} century, probably c 1780 when Bushbury Hill House itself was built although the scale of the ashlar wall might suggest an earlier date for this building.

Whilst the site as a whole had been subject to at least two large scale landscaping episodes in the last hundred years, in-situ deposits were noted to survive under an average depth of 0.45m of overburden.



Plate 1: General view of site, facing north-west. Showing main sandstone building with the later southern extension sandstone wall on piers in the foreground. Scales at 2m.

5. **Results**

5.1 Structural analysis

The features recorded are shown in Figs 3-6. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 **Period 1: Natural deposits**

Natural deposits consist of undifferentiated strata of the Triassic Kidderminster Formation of the Sherwood Sandstone Group consisting of coarse brownish-red sandstones and conglomerates (Bunter Pebble Beds), and drift material comprising Triassic pebble beds of pebbly red sandstone and conglomerate (Litherland 1990, Cockin, 2006). The natural deposits were observed across the entire site.

5.1.2 Period 2: Medieval deposits (13th – 14th century)

No features on the site appeared to date from this period, although a single residual sherd of pottery dated to the $13^{th} - 14^{th}$ centuries was recovered from a clearly later context (1054).

5.1.3 Period 3: Post-medieval deposits (late 18th – late 19th century)

The earliest evidence of usage on the site was indicated by a dark buried soil (1063), dated to the 18^{th} century. This soil horizon was truncated by a building, constructed from roughly hewn sandstone foundations with brick walls overlying the substantial sandstone footings. This building was constructed in two phases (Phases 1-2). The first phase of building consisted of three external walls (the northern extent of the building was not visible as it continued beyond the limit of the excavation) and four internal walls, dividing the structure into five separate rooms (Rooms 1-5, Fig 3), with a later sandstone wall extension (Phase 2) to the south-east corner (Plates 1, 6 and 9).

All the walls of this structure that lay within the excavation area were exposed, however the far north-west corner of Room 1 was not fully revealed due to the presence of at least three electric cables. This area had been subjected to high levels of truncation and most of the sandstone walls had been removed.

Main sandstone structure (Phase 1 – late 18th century)

The first phase of construction (Phase 1) is indicated by the main sandstone walls. The building, aligned north-west to south-east, consisted of two external walls with four contemporary internal walls. The main outer walls (1005 and 1006) ran parallel to each other in a north-west to south-east direction. These walls extended beyond the limits of the excavation to the north-west, although the southern extent of the building was recorded in the excavation area. These external walls, constructed from roughly hewn sandstone blocks (c 0.3 m x 0.2 m x 0.1 m) were roughly 0.5 m wide (Plate 2). The stones were bonded with a very hard dark yellow mortar. To the north-west the footing were 0.8 m deep and at the southern extent of the building they were up to 1.6 m deep. To the far south-east corner the sandstone footings with very occasional 18^{th} century brick fragments were topped with mortared ashlar sandstone blocks. The ashlar blocks were visible on the western, eastern and southern walls of Room 5. These blocks, carefully laid on the underlying foundations measured roughly 0.50 m x 0.25 m x 0.25 m (Plates 2 and 8; Figs 4-6) and bonded with a soft yellow lime mortar. There were up to two courses remaining.



Plate 2: Foundations of the Phase 1 sandstone wall at the southern extent, capped with a single course of ashlar blocks. Here showing the internal face. Scale at 1m, facing south-west

The two external walls were connected by four internal walls (1036, 1007, 1009 and 1048), and an external wall (1049) to the south-west, forming five separate room spaces (numbered 1-5, Figs 3 and 6, Plates 1 and 3). These internal walls were also constructed from roughly hewn sandstone blocks and the walls were keyed into the outer external walls, showing that the entire sandstone structure was built in a single phase. These walls were roughly 0.6m deep. The walls were 6m long, defining the internal room width. All the walls of this structure were constructed within vertical sided, flat based foundation trenches. The walls were quite flush with the edges of the cuts, leaving little room for any backfill with dateable material. There was no sign of any variations in the construction of the walls or the cuts, bar the deeper footing to the south, again suggesting that this first phase was constructed at the same time.

A number of contexts (1058, 1059 and 1060) containing large quantities of brick and stone rubble, associated with the demolition phase of the building overlay and butted the foundations and the brick and ashlar walls.



Plate 3: Detail of one of the sandstone internal walls (1009). Scale at 1m, facing north.

Within Rooms 2 and 5 were the remnants of existing floor surfaces. In Room 2 the floor surfaces consisted of both brick (1012) and cobbles (1013 and 1014) of varying sizes (Figs 3 and 5). The cobbles were rounded and both showed considerable signs of wear. The floor was roughly 0.15m thick and was bedded on a levelling deposit of clean sand (1015). This floor had been truncated heavily to both the north-west and the south-east. The bricks from this floor (1012) were dated to the late 18^{th} – early 19^{th} century.

Another brick floor surface survived in Room 5 (Plate 4). This floor (1050) was constructed solely of bricks which were dated to the late 18^{th} – early 19^{th} century (c 1784 – 1803). This floor surface was also bedded on a thin clean sand layer. The brick floor was cut to the southeast by a modern ceramic waste pipe with internal electric cable (1066) and to the north-west it partially overlaid the sandstone wall footing (1048).

Although heavily truncated, a small number of brick walls (1017, 1073 and 1074) were observed overlying the sandstone footings. The bricks constituting the make-up of these walls also dated to the late 18th century, although wall 1074 contained a single re-used brick dating from the 17th century. Both the remnant walls and floor surfaces had been heavily truncated by later services and structures.



Plate 4: Brick and cobble internal floor surfaces in Room 2(1012, 1013 and 1014) with associated brick wall (1017) in the foreground. Scale at 1m, facing west.

To the east of the main range, but not attached to it, was a single roughly hewn sandstone wall (1039, Plate 5, Fig 5), which had been heavily truncated by later cast iron and plastic water pipes. The wall was aligned north-east to south-west. This wall appeared to have been constructed in two parts, similar to the main sandstone structure. The lower part of the wall was constructed primarily of sandstone (1039), and then the upper part of the wall was constructed of sandstone and bricks, with a harder mortar (1041).



Plate 5: External sandstone garden wall (1039, 1041) cut by later service pipe. Scale at 1m, facing southwest.

Sandstone structure extension to the south-east corner (Phase 2 – late 19th century)

To the southern extent of the early range, a later extension had been added (Fig 3). This extension consisted of a sandstone wall (1052), constructed on integrated sandstone piers (Plates 1, 6 and 9) built within a continuous construction trench. The foundations for this extension were cut through deposits (1054 and, 1055) which contained late 19th – 20th century material. This extension, contained an internal structure, of 6.30m x 4.25m, constructed from brick and slate (1038) consisting of a narrow brick wall with a shallow brick channel around the outside. Adjacent to the internal brick wall were the remains of a flagstone floor, consisting of blue lias stones. Inside this brick structure was a slate lined feature. The slates were bonded with a hard yellow mortar but were only partially exposed during the excavation. This has been interpreted as a drain. It lay along the north-west side of the square internal brick structure. The drain was up to 0.45m deep and sealed by a silty layer (1037) which contained a high proportion of building rubble. The bricks from the surrounding channel dated to 1725 onwards, although the made ground below (1054) contained material from the late 19th century. The internal features in this later southern extension were heavily truncated by a later electric cable and the concrete footings (1008) for a later 20th century building.



Plate 6: The southern (phase 2, 1052), extension possibly used as a dairy, showing internal brick wall and slate lined drain. Scale at 2m, facing north-east.

5.1.4 Period 4: Modern deposits (mid – late 20th century)

A varied sequence of deposits relating to both construction and demolition could be assigned to this period.

To the south-east of the original range, a later, separate brick building sat on concrete beam footings and stanchion bases (1008) which cut through the demolished earlier sandstone structure (Fig 3). The beam footings overlay the earlier building, where the made ground was deeper. The stanchion bases were located to the east, where the ground was slightly higher.

Across the entire site, and sealing the archaeology, was a layer (1003), roughly 0.3m thick that contained a large amount of building rubble. Sealing this was a 0.2m thick humic soil (1002) that in turn was overlain by further rubble material (1001), up to 0.6m thick. The present surface was a very thin layer, 0.08m, of turfed topsoil that extended across the entire site (Plate 7).



Plate 7: Buried soil horizon and demolition layers (1000-1003) seen here in the northern corner of site. The dark soil horizon (1002) can be seen as a dark band towards the base of the section. Scale at 1m, facing north.

The site contained a large number of both live and redundant services which criss-crossed the site. These included electric, ceramic waste water pipes, cast iron water pipes and plastic gas and water pipes.

A small group of pits (1020, 1024, 1026 and 1030), to the east of the main building (Fig 3) again contained no artefacts and were not stratigraphically dateable. However the fills of these pits and the vertical sides and flat bases were very similar to the clearly modern stanchion base pits nearby, and have accordingly been given a modern date.

5.1.5 **Period 5: Undated deposits**

Within Room 3, a square posthole (1043) containing the heavily rotted remains of a timber post provided no dateable material. Stratigraphically the posthole was cut into the underlying natural deposits (1004) and sealed by the later demolition deposit (1001).

6. Artefact analysis, by Angus Crawford

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 - 3. The pottery assemblage retrieved from the excavated area consisted of 23 sherds of pottery weighing 920g. In addition fragments of tile, slate, brick, clay tobacco pipe, glass and ironware were recovered. The group came from 17 stratified contexts and could be dated from the medieval period onwards (see Table 1). Level of preservation was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying negligible levels of abrasion.

Period	Material class	Count	Weight(g)
	bone	2	150
	organic	1	30
medieval	ceramic	1	12
medieval to post-medieval	ceramic	7	452
post-medieval	ceramic	47	29679
post-medieval to modern	ceramic	22	2356
post-medieval to modern	metal	4	936
post-medieval to modern	stone	3	168
modern	ceramic	5	292
modern	glass	17	84
modern	metal	1	10

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

6.1 **The pottery**

All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). All sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span.

Period	Fabric code	Fabric common name	Count	Weight(g)
medieval	99	Miscellaneous medieval wares	1	12
post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red wares	5	76
post-medieval	91	Post-medieval buff wares	1	136
post-medieval	100	Miscellaneous post-medieval wares	2	176
post-medieval	85	Porcelain	1	112
post-medieval to modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	4	118
post-medieval to modern	101	Miscellaneous modern wares	5	110
modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	2	114
modern	85	Modern china	2	66
Total			23	920

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type

Medieval

A single sherd of residual medieval pottery was present within the assemblage (recorded under general medieval fabric code 99 and from context 1054). This was identified as a potential body sherd of green glazed buff ware produced within the Shrewsbury region (Bryant 2002; fabric 67). While the fabric contains grog inclusions these were previously misidentified as iron particles in the published pottery report (Victoria Bryant *pers comm.)* The sherd was probably from a jug dating from the late 13th to 14th century.

Post-medieval and modern

The remaining pottery assemblage consisted of 22 sherds all dating from the post-medieval period onwards. The dominant fabric was miscellaneous late stoneware (fabric 81.4) with six sherds that were consistent with late 19th to early 20th century flagons and storage jars. Postmedieval red sandy ware (fabric 78) was the second most dominant fabric with four sherds of general 17th to 18th century date (context 1063) and a single sherd of a paler fabric more typical of 18th century production (context 1060). All sherds were decorated with black glaze of varying quality. Two sherds of modern china (fabric 85, context 1002) were decorated with the 'Asiatic Pheasants' pattern introduced in 1837. Two sherds of miscellaneous post-medieval wares joined to make a small jam jar with a fabric type and glaze similar to post-medieval pearl ware (context 1002). While pearl wares were produced from the late 18th century to the 1820's this particular vessel had been re-utilized as a paint pot and was recovered from a 20th century context. A single sherd of post-medieval buff ware from context 1063 was dated to the 18th century. Five sherds of flowerpot, generally categorised as miscellaneous modern ware (fabric 101), were dated to the later 19th to mid 20th century and are probably more indicative of the agricultural nature of the site. The only porcelain material consisted of a near complete ceiling rose with electrical terminals most probably produced during the early 20th century.

Context	Materia l class	Object specific type	Start date	End date	Count	Weight (g)	context terminus post quem date
0	glass	toy	1900	2000	1	6	Unstratified material
0	metal	coin	1921	1921	1	10	
1002	ceramic	pottery	1837	1950	2	66	20 th century
1002	ceramic	electrica 1 fitting	1870	1950	1	112	
1002	ceramic	pottery	1850	1950	2	114	1
1002	glass	toy	1901	2000	1	8	1
1002	metal	hardwar e	1801	1950	3	900	
1002	ceramic	pottery	1800	1820	2	176	1

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1005	ceramic	brick	1700	1800	2	2270	18 th century (pre 1784)
1029	ceramic	brick	1700	1784	3	1848	18 th century (pre 1784)
1029	ceramic	brick	1600	1784	2	1372	
1029	ceramic	roof tile	1600	1800	1	200	
1031	bone	animal	0	0	2	150	undatable
		bone					
1047	metal	slag	1850	1950	1	36	1850+
1050	ceramic	brick	1700	1784	2	5924	18 th century (pre 1784)
1051	ceramic	roof tile	1201	1800	1	70	probable post-medieval
1052	ceramic	brick	1600	1750	1	2104	18 th century (pre 1784)
1052	ceramic	brick	1700	1784	1	2526	
1054	ceramic	pottery	1800	1950	4	80	late 19 th to mid 20 th century
1054	ceramic	pottery	1875	1950	4	118	
1054	ceramic	pottery	1275	1400	1	12	
1055	glass	window	1875	1950	7	50	late 19 th to mid 20 th century
		glass					
1060	ceramic	roof tile	1201	1800	2	74	probable post-medieval 18 th century (pre 1784)
1060	ceramic	brick	1600	1800	2	238	18 th century (pre 1784)
1060	ceramic	pottery	1700	1800	1	12	
1061	ceramic	roof tile	1600	1800	2	20	Post-medieval
1061	ceramic	roof tile	1201	1800	4	308	
1063	ceramic	pottery	1601	1800	4	64	18 th century
1063	ceramic	pottery	1701	1800	1	136	
1063	ceramic	brick	1601	1750	2	338	
1063	ceramic	roof tile	1700	1800	6	1102	
1068	ceramic	pottery	1800	1950	1	30	First half of the 20 th
1068	organic	coal	1800	1950	1	30	century
1068	glass	window	1900	1950	8	20	
		& vessel					
1068	stone	roof	1801	2000	2	12	
		slate					
1068	ceramic	brick	1701	2000	10	280	
1068	ceramic	clay	1601	1900	1	1	
		tobacco					
		pipe					
		stem					
1068	ceramic	brick	1700	1800	1	758	
1070	ceramic	pottery	1601	1800	1	46	19 th century
1070	stone	roof	1801	1950	1	156	
		slate					
1070	ceramic	roof tile	1601	1800	3	878	
1070	ceramic	brick	1701	1784	6	1528	
1070	ceramic	brick	1701	1800	3	2338	
1070	ceramic	roof tile	1201	1800	1	152	
1073	ceramic	brick	1701	1784	1	4502	18 th century (pre 1784)
1074	ceramic	brick	1601	1700	1	2994	17 th century

Table 3 Summary of context dating based on artefacts

6.2 Other artefacts

Rricks

The majority of the brick samples could be attributed to a broad production date of 18th century based on general dimensions and colour as defined by the excavated brick assemblage from Newport Street in Worcester (Crawford, forthcoming). Further, they were also identified as predating the introduction of the 1784 brick tax which resulted in brick production thicknesses of three inches or greater. However, a single brick (context 1074) was identified as a type more consistent with 17th century manufacture due to its narrow thickness of 2" to 2 ½" (51 to 55mm).

Roofing material

The roofing material assemblage consisted of fragments of both ceramic and slate roof tile. While ceramic roof tile of this type was produced from the medieval through to the late post-medieval period, the fabric and general appearance of the material would indicate a post-medieval manufacture rather than earlier. The slate roof tile was consistent with material broadly available during the 19th century onwards through the expanding construction, during the period, of the canal, rail and road networks.

Glass

A number of glass artefacts were recovered from site and consisted of shards of window glass, bottle fragments and two gaming marbles. All of the window and vessel glass was either of late 19th or earlier 20th century manufacture. The gaming marbles were typical of types still currently manufactured and are therefore of recent date.

Metal work

The metal work consisted of three items of general hardware (a pulley, a large nail and a 't'-shaped bar), an unstratified penny of 1921 date and a piece of late iron slag.

Clay tobacco pipe

A small fragment of pipe stem (context 1068) was broadly dated from the 17th to 19th century.

7. **Synthesis**

7.1 **Medieval (13th – 14th century)**

While a single sherd of residual medieval pottery was present within the assemblage there was no further evidence for medieval (or earlier) activity on site.

7.2 **Post-medieval (late 18th – late 19th century)**

The earliest evidence of activity on the site was indicated by a turned tillage soil (1054 and 1055). The soil was of a dark, rich humic nature suggesting it had been repeatedly turned as a result of prolonged agricultural activity. Material recovered from these soils indicated a date of at least the 18th century. The material here is important in dating the later structures that were clearly cut through these deposits.

The sandstone building (Phase 1) and the later addition (Phase 2) to the north-east of the main farmhouse indicate substantial outbuildings associated with the original Georgian farmhouse (Bushbury Hill House).

The earliest structure (Phase 1) made from sandstone footings with sandstone ashlar walls, brick walls and floors set within deep foundation trenches, suggests a building of a substantial nature. The early building with its deeper footings to the south, allied with the presence of smooth ashlar stones might indicate a building of at least 2-3 floors high. The square nature of the deeper footings may indicate a former tower structure, possibly a clock tower, though a double floored threshing barn is more likely. Threshing barns were generally considered to be the most important structures on a farm. They are over two stories in height in order to accommodate hand flail threshing, along with storage for the un-threshed grain and threshed straw. These were often converted for stock of other use in the late 19th century once machine threshing became common (Shona Robson-Glyde pers comm). The rest of the early sandstone structure to the north-west may have been used as cattle sheds, stables or for general storage. The floor surfaces that remain seem to support the suggestion of stable use. The level of detail and its substantial nature indicates that the building was built to a high level specification and likely to have been seen as a high quality farm building. Although no secure dating material was recovered from the foundation backfill for the earliest phase of this structure, the building is likely to have been constructed by the later part of the 18th century. The building clearly cut through deposit containing 18th century material, and the wall footings contained an 18th century brick. The dating for this farm outbuilding probably allies with the known date of construction for the main Bushbury Hill farmhouse building by the 1780's (Vaughan 2009), and suggests that the two were contemporary. It is however possible that this range may have slightly pre-dated the Georgian farmhouse as some of the bricks used in its construction are pre

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1784 (Brick Tax). The building could be no earlier than the early part of the 18th century, based on its stratigraphic relationship with the underlying deposits (1063), which were also of 18th century date.

The original sandstone footings were overlaid in places with brick walls. It is possible that the upper brick courses are of the same phase and date as the sandstone footings, just a different form of construction. It is not unusual to use brick for the walls, set within a harder mortar. And sandstone footed buildings are common, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries (Shona Robson-Glyde *pers comm*). A number of the bricks appeared to have been re-used (one was probably 17th century in origin), though the mortar used suggested a late 18th century date, leading more weight to the construction phase of this building being in the latter part of the 18th century.

Within two of the rooms brick and cobble floors had been laid. In Room 2, a floor had been laid that consisted of both bricks and large rounded cobbles (1012, 1013, and 1014). This floor related to one of the internal brick walls (1017) and appeared to be of a relatively poor construction. These brick and cobble surfaces appear to be similar to those used in stables in the 19th century (Shona Robson-Glyde *pers comm*). The brick floor in Room 5 (1050), clearly overlaid the sandstone footing (1048), but butted against the ashlar stones that would have existed above ground level. It was unclear as to whether both the floors were contemporary with the original main sandstone structure or were a later addition.



Plate 8: Detail of the ashlar blocks sat on rougher foundations to the south-eastern corner of the Phase 1 structure. Scale at 0.3m

The original sandstone structure was subsequently altered and extended. Towards the later part of the 19th century an extension at the south-eastern end was added (Phase 2, 1052). This was dated from finds recovered from the deposits that the wall truncated. The foundation trench for the later wall (1052) clearly cut the backfill of the earlier structure (1049). This southern sandstone wall, unusually constructed on sandstone piers, provided a single room extension (Plate 9). The footing did not abut the original structure, although was clearly a later addition, added whilst the original building was still in use.

This later room contained a rectangular slate drain, extant flagstone floor, a brick channel and wall. The wall may have either supported a cattle feeding trough or other water related features. The slate drain may have formed drainage for cattle waste possibly as part of a milking/dairy room. However the room appeared small for this practice and no large entrance was identified.

A wash room may be a possibility for this room's later use. Although some of the bricks used for this internal structure dated 1725 onwards, the deposit on which it was built (1054) contained material from the late 19th century. This indicates that the bricks are re-used, and that the drain and flagstone floor adjacent are of late 19th century date and hence post date the early Phase 1 sandstone structure and relate to the construction of the Phase 2 southern extension (1052).



Plate 9: Detail of the sandstone piers supporting wall 1052. Scales at 2m, facing north-west.

All the artefactual material was consistent with 18th century through to the first half of the 20th century. While a single brick could be dated to the 17th century there was no further supporting evidence for occupation or construction during this earlier period and the brick was potentially re-used at a later date. This suggests that all the visible activity on this site belonged to the mid – late 18th century onwards.

The main farm building and all of its associated structures had been demolished by 1948, by which time the site had already become a school.

7.3 **Modern (mid – late 20th century)**

The whole site was subject to demolition and landscaping in two distinct episodes within the last 70 years. The main sandstone and brick building had been demolished and the ground landscaped prior to the construction of the two concrete footed buildings between 1950-52 (recorded on the OS map of 1954, Fig 7), after the destruction of the Georgian farmhouse in 1948. The second, by 2001 when the 1950's building were removed. Remnants of these later 1950's buildings (1008) showed that it was constructed on square concrete stanchion bases on the eastern side where the natural ground surface is raised. The western limit by contrast appears to have been constructed on beams as the ground surface dropped away. A number of the stanchion bases had been removed during the later demolition of the building and during the excavation, though the cuts for these were still clearly visible, truncating the natural geology.

The footprint of the later concrete footed building (1008) to the south-west could be clearly seen cutting through the earlier sandstone and brick building. This later building was on a similar alignment to the earlier structure though the footings were placed to the side of earlier walls rather than sat directly on top. The later building also extended further to the south-east than the earlier structure.

A large number of the observed services, including redundant electric and waste water pipes are associated with the modern, concrete footed building phase of construction. These large rectangular 20th century buildings were demolished by 2001 and the second episode of landscaping appears to have taken place at this point with yet more material being imported from the immediate north during the construction of the present Nursery building. This second phase of landscaping could be seen across the excavation area (1000 and 1001).

The sequence of dumped rubble and subsequent topsoil layers (1000-1003) are the result of these two phases of demolition and landscaping, as discussed above (Fig 7).

A number of modern pits (1020, 1024, 1026 and 1030), to the eastern side of the site are all likely to have related to the later 20th century phase of building and subsequent demolition. Most of the pits are likely to have resulted from the removal of some of the concrete stanchion bases or inspection pits associated with the numerous services.

Live gas and water pipes crossed the site that feed the present school. All services (both live and redundant) were planned in detail to assist the construction team.

7.4 Undated

A single post hole (1043) contained no dateable material, although its profile, vertical sides and flat base, and with remnants of the original timber post would indicate that it is not of any considerable antiquity. The lack of any early artefacts (bar a single $13^{th} - 14^{th}$ pottery sherd) suggests no significant activity on this site prior to the 18^{th} century.

8. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological excavation was undertaken at Bushbury Hill Primary School (NGR SJ 9268 0213), Old Fallings Lane, Bushbury, Wolverhampton, on behalf of Jacobs Engineering UK Limited, whose client, Wolverhampton City Council intends to demolish the existing school buildings and to erect a new school building on unoccupied ground to the south-west.

The excavation followed on from two previous phases of trial trenching, a geophysical survey, and a single watching brief.

The previous projects revealed the presence of two large buildings; one was the known Bushbury Hill farmhouse, built by the 1780s and demolished in 1948, with associated outbuildings (to the south-west of the excavation area). Here the cellars below Bushbury Hill House were found to survive from c 0.20m below the current ground surface. A second building lay to the north (located within the excavation area) and was a large sandstone structure that initially appeared to represent an earlier phase of the farm.

The excavation concentrated on the second building located to the north of the Georgian farmhouse. This other building consisted of a north-west to south-east aligned range of five separate rooms, constructed from roughly hewn sandstone foundations topped with brick and ashlar sandstone walls. Within the building remnant floor surfaces of brick and cobbles were present. This building was dated to the mid - late 18th century from the bricks used in the construction and from material associated with underlying deposits. The building appeared to have been used primarily as an agricultural building, with the south-eastern extent having substantially deeper foundations (up to 1.60m deep) which were capped by precisely sawn ashlar blocks. This southern end of the building was possibly used as a double floored threshing barn. Threshing barns were generally considered to be the most important structures on a farm. They are over two stories in height in order to accommodate hand flail threshing, along with storage for the un-threshed grain and threshed straw. These were often converted for stock or other use in the late 19th century once machine threshing became common. The rest of the early sandstone structure to the north-west may have been used as cattle sheds, stables or for general storage. The floor surfaces that remain seem to support the suggestion of stable

use. The level of detail and its substantial nature indicates that the building was built to a high level specification and likely to have been seen as a high quality farm building.

The original sandstone structure was subsequently altered and extended. Towards the latter part of the 19th century a single room extension at the south-eastern end was added. This was dated from finds recovered from the deposits that the wall truncated. The foundation trench for the later wall clearly cut the backfill of the earlier structure. The southern sandstone wall was constructed on sandstone piers, an unusual technique.

This later room contained a rectangular slate drain, extant flagstone floor, a brick channel and wall. The wall may have either supported a cattle feeding trough or other water related features. The slate drain may have formed drainage for cattle waste possibly as part of a milking/dairy room. However the room appeared small for this practice and no large entrance was identified. A wash room may be a possibility for this room's later use. Although some of the bricks used for this internal structure dated from 1725 onwards, the deposit on which it was built contained material from the late 19th century.

This sandstone structure was demolished by 1948 and the area landscaped. Between 1950 and 1952 two concrete footed buildings were constructed for the new school. These were subsequently demolished by 2001 and the area landscaped for a second time into its present state.

9. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Sue Cheyne and Tom Evans, (Bushbury Hill Primary School), Bill Mantle (Jacobs Engineering UK Limited), Neil Woolley and Clive Roper (Wolverhampton City Council) and Mike Shaw (Black Country Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council).

10. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Simon Sworn. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. Fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Sworn, Tegan Cole, Tim Cornah, Angus Crawford and Mike Nicholson, finds analysis by Angus Crawford, and illustration by Laura Templeton. Shona Robson-Glyde contributed information on late post-medieval farm buildings.

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Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Context	Feature type	Context type	Context description	Interpretation
1000	Topsoil	Layer	Firm Mid Grey Silty sand	Layer
1001	Modern Layer	Layer	Firm Mid Reddish Orange Sandy clay	Modern made ground
1002	Modern Layer	Layer	Moderately Compact Dark Brown Sandy loam	Buried topsoil
1003	Modern Layer	Layer	Soft Mid Reddish Brown Sand/gravels	Disturbed natural
1004	Natural	Natural	Loose Mid Reddish Orange Sand/gravels	Natural
1005	Wall	Structure		Sandstone wall
1006	Wall	Structure		Sandstone wall
1007	Wall	Structure		Sandstone wall
1008	Foundation trench	Structure		Concrete footing
1009	Wall	Structure		Sandstone wall
1010	Post Hole	Cut		
1011	Post Hole	Fill	Loose Mid Greyish Black Sandy silty clay	
1012	Floor	Layer		Brick floor
1013	Floor	Layer		Cobble floor
1014	Floor	Layer		Cobble floor
1015	Layer	Layer	Loose Light Yellow Sand	Sand bedding layer below 1012, 1013, 1014
1016	Structure	Structure		Group for sandstone building
1017	Wall	Structure		Brick wall
1018	Drain	Cut		Modern drain
1019	Layer	Fill	Compact Mid Reddish Brown Silty sand	Layer
1020	Post Hole	Cut		Modern feature
1021	Post Hole	Fill	Loose Mid Greyish Brown Silt	Modern feature
1022	Pit	Cut		Modern feature
1023	Pit	Fill	Loose Mid Grey Sandy silt loam	Modern feature
1024	Post Hole	Cut		Modern feature
1025	Post Hole	Fill	Loose Mid Greyish Brown Sandy silt loam	Modern feature
1026	Post Hole	Cut		Modern feature
1027	Post Hole	Fill	Loose Mid Greyish Brown Sandy silt loam	Modern feature
1028	Pit/Structure	Cut		Modern feature
1029	Pit/Structure	Fill	Compact Mid Reddish Brown Sandy silt loam	Modern feature
1030	Pit	Cut		Undated pit
1031	Pit	Fill	Firm Mid Grey Sandy silt loam	Pit fill
1032	Foundation trench	Fill	Firm Mid Greyish Brown Sandy silt loam	Con cut backfill for wall 1006
1033	Foundation trench	Cut		Cut for wall 1006
1034	Drain	Fill	Firm Light Brownish Grey Sandy silt loam	Fill of 1018
1035	Service	Cut		Electric cable
1036	Wall	Structure		Sandstone wall
1037	Layer	Layer	Compact Mid Greyish Brown Silty sand	Slate cattle/dairy floor drain
1038	Drain	Structure		Slate cattle/dairy floor drain
1039	Wall	Structure		
1040	Drain	Cut		Modern service
1041	Wall	Structure		Brick wall
1042	Drain	Fill	Friable Mid Brown Sandy silt loam	Modern service
1043	Post Hole	Cut		Undated post hole
1044	Post Hole	Fill	Firm Mid Greyish Brown Sandy silt loam	Fill of post hole
1045	Post Hole	Fill	Loose Black Charcoal	Remains of post
	Foundation trench			Con cut for wall 1039
1047	Foundation trench		Firm Dark Greyish Brown Silty sand	
1048	Wall	Structure		Internal sandstone wall
1049	Wall	Structure		Internal sandstone wall
1050	Floor	Layer		Brick floor surface

Context	Feature type	Context type	Context description	Interpretation
1051	Foundation trench	Fill	Moderately Compact Mid Greyish Brown Silty sand	Con cut backfill for wall 1052
1052	Wall	Structure		Far eastern sandstone wall
1053	Foundation trench	Cut		Con cut for 1052
1054	Layer	Layer	Loose Mid Greyish Brown Sandy silty clay	Levelling layer
1055	Layer	Layer	Soft Mid Brownish Pink Silty sand	Levelling layer
1056	Post Hole	Cut		Levelling layer
1057	Post Hole	Fill		Post within 1056
1058	Layer	Layer	Loose Mid Brownish Black Sandy silt loam	Demolition layer
1059	Layer	Layer	Firm Mid Reddish Brown Silty sand	Demolition layer
1060	Layer	Layer	Firm Mid Yellowish Brown Sandy silt loam	Demolition layer butting 1005
1061	Foundation trench	Fill	Firm Mid Brownish Yellow Sandy silt loam	Con cut backfill for wall 1005
1062	Foundation trench	Cut		Con cut for wall 1005
1063	Layer	Layer	Loose Mid Reddish Brown Silty sand	Mixed natural
1064	Wall	Structure		Brick wall
1065	Service	Fill	Loose Mid Greyish Brown Sandy silt loam	Electric cable
1066	Service	Cut		Electric cable
1067	Post Hole	Fill	Friable Mid Greyish Black Silty sand	Fill of 1056
1068	Layer	Layer	Friable Mid Greyish Black Silty sand	Deposits within eastern wall pillars 1052
1069	Layer	Layer	Loose Mid Reddish Brown Silty sand	Deposits within eastern wall pillars 1052
1070	Layer	Layer	Loose Dark Brownish Black Silty sand	Deposits within eastern wall pillars 1052
1071	Layer	Layer	Friable Light Pinkish Orange Silty sand	Deposits within eastern wall pillars 1052
1072	Foundation trench	Structure		Pillar foundations of 1052
1073	Wall	Structure		Brick wall
1074	Wall	Structure		Brick wall
1075	Wall	Structure		Internal sandstone wall

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive

76	Context records AS1
5	Fieldwork progress records AS2
3	Photographic records AS3
604	Digital photographs
1	Matrix
31	Scale drawings
1	Box of finds
1	Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Wolverhampton Arts and Museum Service

Wolverhampton City Council

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Lichfield Street

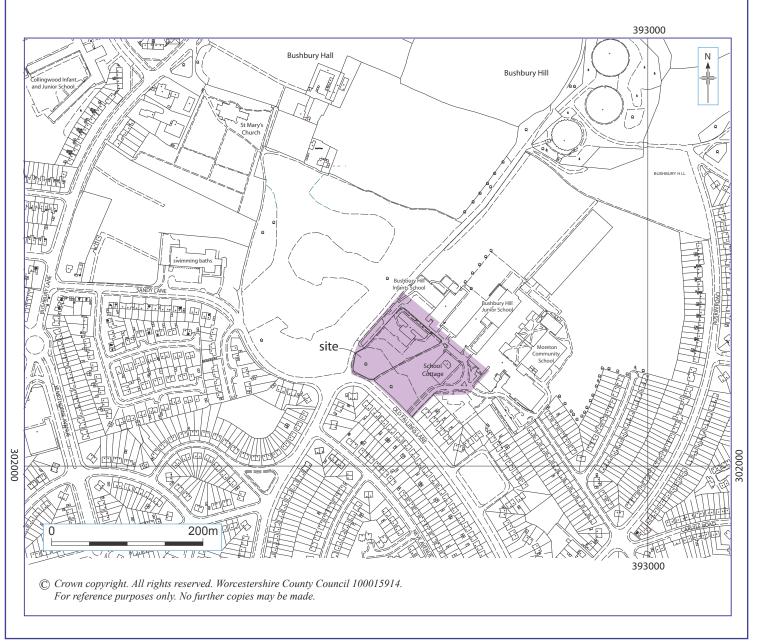
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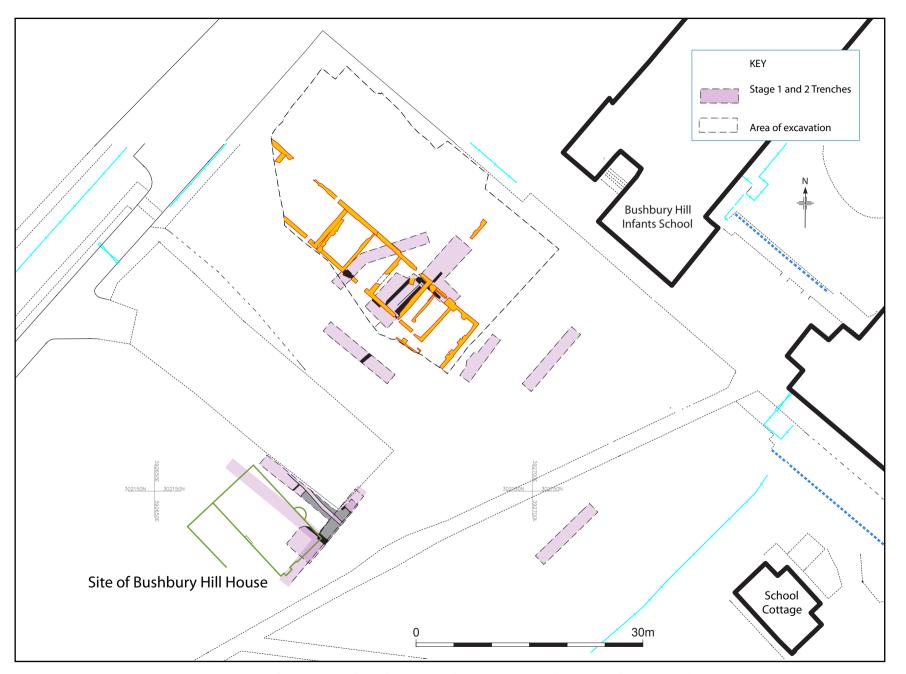
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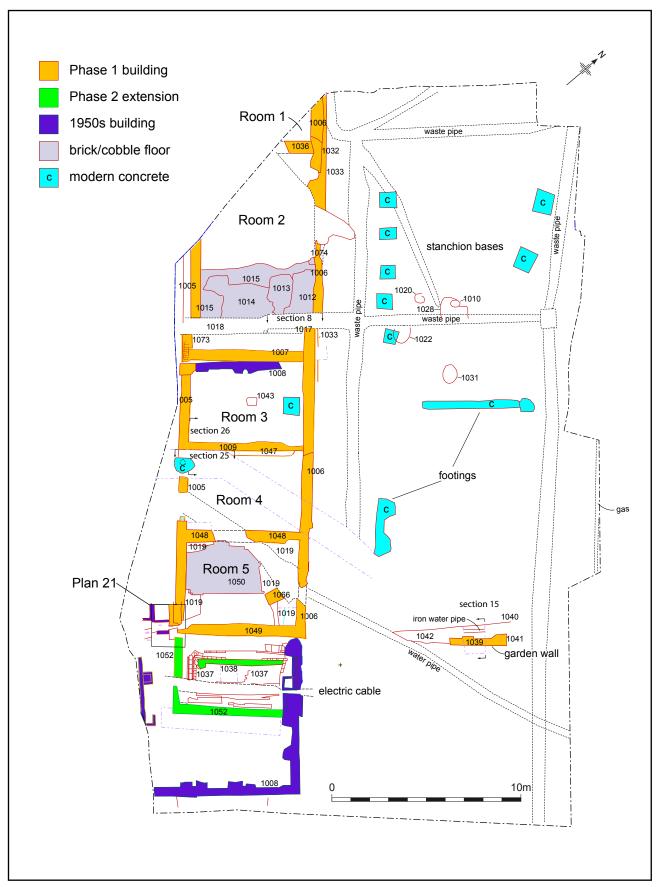




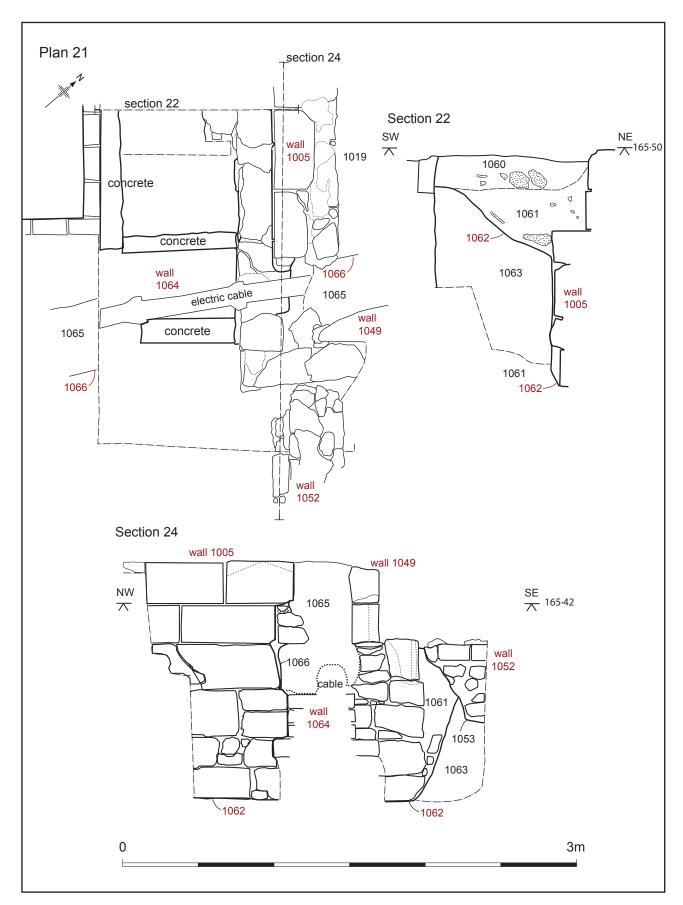


Areas of excavation (based upon Jacobs Dwg No BU 10001T_Bush_Topo_2D)

Figure 2

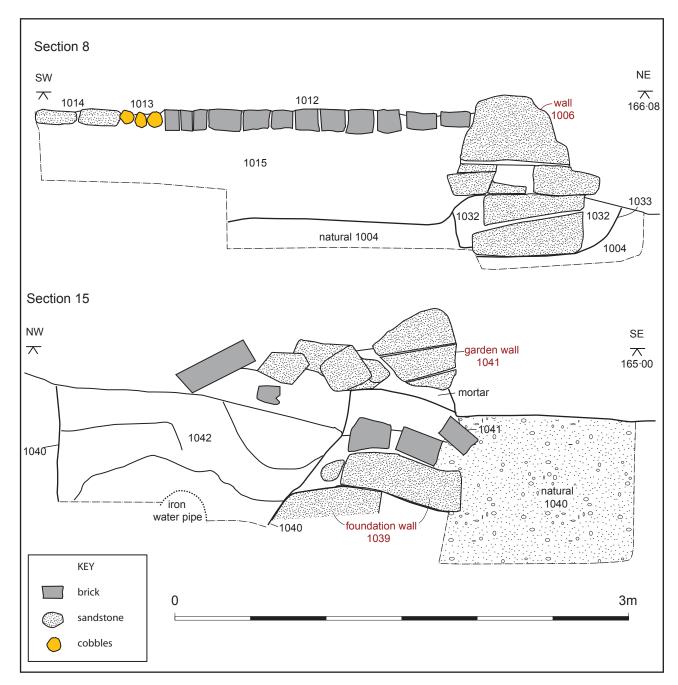


Excavation area

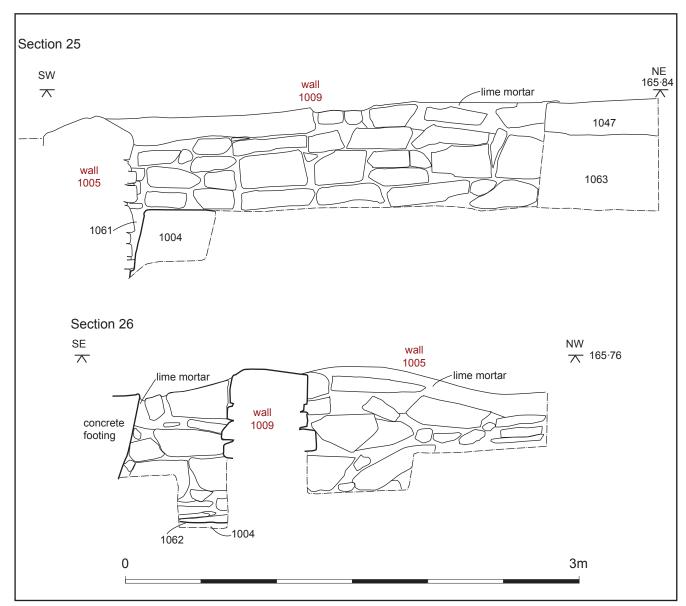


Plan 21, sections 22 and 24

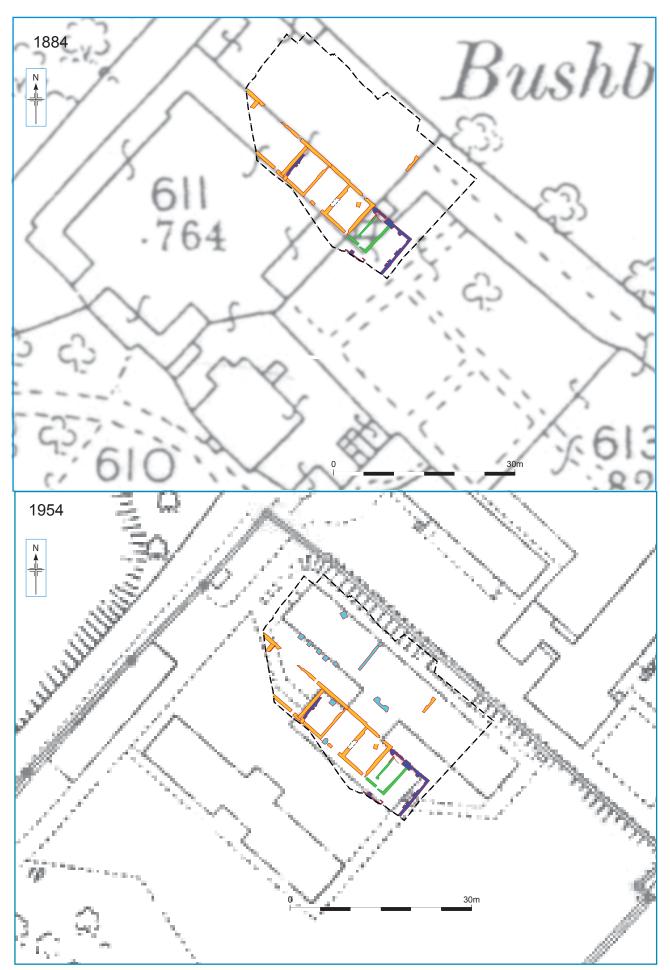
Figure 4



Sections 8 and 15 Figure 5



Sections 25 and 26 Figure 6



The excavated walls shown on the 1884 and the 1954 Ordnance Surveys.

Figure 7