

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION AT
THE LONDES,
MOLINEUX STREET,
WOVERHAMPTON



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An archaeological evaluation at The Londes, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton

Richard Bradley and Andrew Walsh

With contributions by Rob Hedge and Shona Robson Glyde

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at The Londes, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton (NGR 9145 9924). It was commissioned by Gardiner & Theobald LLP on behalf of their client, the University of Wolverhampton, who intends to redevelop the site.

Fieldwork was undertaken in April 2014 and four small trenches of varying size and orientation were excavated across the site area. The length, orientation and position of the trenches was heavily restricted due to a significant number of services (including fibre optic and electricity cables) on the site, obstructions in the form of tree stumps, and steeply sloping ground. Nevertheless, the evaluation trenches demonstrated that numerous structural remains and associated deposits of post-medieval and later date are present on the site. The earliest identified archaeological remains date from the later 18th and early 19th centuries and comprised brick built foundations and structures. This supports the conclusions of a previous desk-based assessment and indicates the preservation of part of this urban area that remained standing, in various forms, until the 1960s. The occupation of the site appears to have been largely domestic in character, but some finds were also suggestive of light commercial and small-scale industrial activity.

No artefacts were recovered that pre-date this post-medieval and modern activity and the assemblage was considered to be of limited significance, particularly as the finds mainly relate to the 20th century disuse of the structures. This suggests that there was either little significant previous occupation within the areas evaluated, or that earlier remains have been heavily disturbed and truncated by the 19th century development on the site. The surviving features were also truncated and disturbed by modern demolition but where this was not the case they could be well-defined and correlated with historic map evidence.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at The Londes, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton (NGR 9145 9924). It was commissioned by Gardiner & Theobald LLP on behalf of their client, the University of Wolverhampton, who intends to redevelop the site.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the redevelopment (HER ref. BCSMR 9103). Map evidence has indicated that buildings were present on this site by 1750 and that the street frontage was occupied by domestic and small-scale industrial or commercial premises until the 1960s. Molineux Street, formerly known as North Street, was previously a major thoroughfare out of Wolverhampton, alongside which earlier properties may have been developed.

The project conforms to a brief (WCC 2013) prepared by Mike Shaw, City Archaeologist for Wolverhampton City Council, and for which a written scheme of investigation was produced (WA 2014). The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008). The Worcestershire Archaeology project reference for this work is P4243.

2 Aims

The overall aims of this evaluation are:

- to establish the nature, importance and extent of the archaeological site;
- to assess the impact of the application on the archaeological site.

More specifically, the project was required by the brief (WCC 2013) to address a number of research priorities:

- the earliest date of occupation of the site and its nature (domestic, commercial, industrial, etc.), state of survival and importance
- the date, nature, state of survival and importance of later occupation of the site
- to attempt to identify property boundaries and the extent to which these have changed (by division or amalgamation of properties) over time
- to establish whether it is possible to follow the history of a single property through time.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Richard Bradley (BA (hons.); MA; AlfA), who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2008 and has been practicing archaeology since 2005, and Andrew Walsh (BSc; MSc; AlfA; FSA Scot), who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004. Fieldwork assistance was provided by Michael Nicholson (BSc (hons.)) and Peter Lovett (BSc (hons.)). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (BA (hons.); MA; AlfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt. Rob Hedge and Shona Robson-Glyde contributed the finds information.

3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a desk-based assessment (DBA) of the site was undertaken by Hislop Heritage Services (HHS 2013). This report contained the results of an HER search, a search of available documentary sources and photographs and a map regression analysis. It presented, in detail, the archaeological background to the site and concluded that there was potential for post-medieval activity to exist within the proposed development area. Following the

completion of fieldwork, the Wolverhampton Historic Environment Record (WOHER) online resource and the Media Archive for Central England (MACE) were also consulted.

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2014). Initial site works were undertaken on 28 January 2014. This identified a significant number of services (including fibre optic and electricity cables) on the site, obstructions in the form of tree stumps, and heavily saturated ground which made it difficult to manoeuvre a machine into position for the trenching on steeply sloping ground. At a meeting between the client, the curator and WA it was agreed that the evaluation should be postponed until the services were re-routed and the tree stumps reduced to ground level.

Fieldwork was subsequently undertaken between 1 and 4 April 2014, although a number of the restrictions previously encountered remained. All services were present and were yet to be re-routed. This restricted the length, orientation and position of the trenches which was demonstrated to the curator during site monitoring. As a result, four small trenches of varying size and orientation, amounting to just over 47m², were excavated across the site area of 935m², representing a sample of 5%. This was less than the 72m² sample required in the brief (WCC 2013), but was unavoidable due to the site circumstances. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under constant archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand and in places, deeper sondages were excavated by machine after agreement with the curator. 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 Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012) and the trenches were located using a differential GPS (Leica NetRover) with an accuracy limit set at <0.04m. On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacement of the excavated material.

3.4 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.

3.5 Artefact methodology, by Rob Hedge

3.5.1 Recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012; appendix 2).

3.5.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on *pro forma* sheets.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.5.3 Discard policy

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of 6 months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- where unstratified, including fieldwalked material;
- post-medieval pottery, and;
- generally where material has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

See the environmental section for other discard where appropriate.

3.6 Environmental archaeology methodology

3.6.1 Sampling policy

Sample policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

3.7 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

Despite the on-site limitations, it is considered that the methods adopted allow a moderately high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. The levels, extent and complexity of the archaeological remains were characterised as far as was reasonably possible.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and current land-use

The evaluated area is located on a narrow 12m wide strip of grass on the University of Wolverhampton City Campus, to the north of Wolverhampton city centre. The ground level is steeply sloping from 142m AOD, along the eastern edge of the site, to 138m AOD in the west. The area is bounded by the corner of Camp Street to the north, a retaining wall below campus buildings and car parking to the east, and Molineux Street (formerly North Street) to the west. The grassy bank continues to the south of the site alongside Molineux Street. The underlying geology of the site is mapped as mudstone and sandstone of the Clent Formation and Enville Formation, overlain by superficial deposits of Devensian till (BGS 2014). The predominant soils of the area are not mapped due to the urban location of the site (Ragg *et al* 1984).

The site is currently a vacant grassed area, with a path and steps running through it to facilitate access to the university buildings. Previously it was planted with numerous mature trees.

4.2 Archaeological context

As highlighted in the detailed desk-based assessment carried out in advance of evaluation (HHS 2013), no evidence of prehistoric, Anglo-Saxon, Roman, and medieval activity on the site has been identified. This follows the general trend of Wolverhampton itself, of which little is known from earlier periods. There is no prehistoric or Roman settlement attested in the city or its environs, but it was part of the Mercian kingdom in the post-Roman period and several routeways converged on its centre. There is a suggestion that a minster was located at Wolverhampton in the later Saxon period and by the 12th century it had emerged as a market town, and was noted for the wool trade in the 14th and 15^h centuries. The textile industry was important into the 18th century while from the 16th century onwards Wolverhampton specialised in various aspects of metal working. Industrial development and commercial prosperity fuelled by the arrival of the canal and railway characterised the area from the 19th century onwards and the expansion of the town was directly resultant from this. Between 1840 and 1871, the population of Wolverhampton doubled to 70,000.

Cartographic analysis identifies that buildings were present along Molineux Street (formerly North Street) from at least 1750, the date of the earliest detailed map of the area. This frontage developed during the 19th century into a built up area between North Street to the west and a back lane, known as 'The Londes', to the east. The buildings were demolished in the 1960s and the site has not been redeveloped. The HER record (Black Country SMR 9103) for the site indicates that these properties were 'squatter-type' buildings with no gardens, and census information suggests that the inhabitants were engaged in industrial pursuits, probably small-scale 'cottage industry'

(HHS 2013). Historic photographs show a run-down and derelict area by the mid 20th century and that 'The Londes' lane was on a higher level, with North Street below. The paving and edging of this is still visible on the upper, eastern part, of the current site, although it is no longer in use and is partly grassed over.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figures 2-7. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

Natural deposits were identified in Trenches 1 and 3 where it was safe to excavate deeper sondages. These comprised light pinkish-brown sandy clays (contexts 113, 320) at a depth of 1.34m and 1.86m respectively.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Post-medieval deposits

The earliest identified archaeological remains were found to be of post-medieval date, and are dominated by brick built foundations and structures probably originating in the later 18th and early 19th century.

Trench 1

In Trench 1, positioned at the northern end of the site, two brick walls (104 and 112) were partially observed beneath a later concrete surface (107) (Fig 3). These are likely to have been contemporary and potentially formed the corner of a property at the end of the previously existing urban development along 'The Londes' (see Figure 7). Adjacent to wall (104), and thought to have once been linked to (104) by mortar backfill deposit (105) but for later disturbance, was a floor surface built with engineering bricks (103). This was probably an outside yard space or an alleyway along the northern edge of the property. The bricks used would suggest that these structures are of mid-19th century origin and they correlate with buildings mapped in this location from 1842 until 1914 (HHS 2013, figs 13-20). Modern deposits had sealed and disturbed much of the remains observed here (Section 5.1.3). Further investigations were limited by existing services. However, a small machine sondage could be excavated at the northern end of the trench. This revealed that these remains were the earliest archaeological deposits in this part of the site and that the footings were dug into the underlying natural substrate (113) at 1.34m depth.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located in the area where the Blue Bell Inn/Colonel Vernon Public House was historically mapped (Figure 7). Due to the topography of the site and the position of services, this trench could not be safely excavated for any substantial distance or into deeper deposits (Fig 4). At least 2m of made ground sealed the archaeology for the majority of the trench. However, later post-medieval archaeological remains could be observed and recorded at the western end of the trench and it is thought that these represent elements of that property. This included part of a brick building, identified by a series of walls that had been constructed in a number of additions or extensions. The first of these may have once formed a corner or doorway and was aligned broadly east to west before turning to the south at its eastern end (206). At the western end, it had been partially truncated and abutted by a north to south orientated wall (205). Both walls were constructed of comparable bricks, had been whitewashed with lime plaster on multiple occasions and could be dated to the later 18th or early 19th century by their size and form. A later addition to this sequence, (204), abutted wall (205) and continued to the west. This had been built with mid to late 18th century bricks, probably reused from previous structures, and included one that had a finger impressed frog groove on its base.

Abutting the wall sequence was a demolition deposit comprised of ceramic building material (CBM) rubble (208) that had infilled a cellar within the building (which was not explored for safety

reasons). This had been overlain with a floor surface consisting of large square quarry tiles (207), which also abutted the walls, defining an internal room or corridor. Given the location of this trench, these remains are likely to be the surviving elements of the main corridor and internal walls of the Blue Bell Inn/Colonel Vernon Public House, dating from the 1850s onwards. The date of the brickwork here would support the interpretation from the DBA and the map evidence that the building was a large structure, in existence before it became a named public house, and that it was a substantial household, potentially a lodging house (HHS 2013, 9). The structural remains were sealed by modern demolition deposits that contained material hinting at the commercial use of this street frontage (Section 5.1.3 below).

Trench 3

Trench 3 was particularly abundant in structural features and exhibited an extensive sequence of construction activity (Fig 5). It was located in the centre of 'The Londes' area, and its position on the sloping ground was such that it was possible to safely excavate into deeper deposits. The earliest remains encountered were found in a sondage at the north of the trench and comprised a roughly built sandstone wall (319) built on a north-east to south-west alignment directly above natural clays (320). It had been bonded, or perhaps re-pointed, with a creamy mortar, but the date of later structures in this trench that overlay and truncated it would suggest it was of 18th or perhaps early 19th century origin. It is possible that the sandstone blocks had been reused from elsewhere as the western face of one was very smooth and well finished. This sandstone was covered by a dumped deposit (318) of make-up material used as bedding for a later property wall (308 and 310), constructed from bricks dating to the early or mid 19th century. This wall was centrally divided by a slate threshold (309) which undoubtedly marked the doorway into the building, probably at the rear of the property as it led out onto a yard or alleyway surface (316). This was constructed from blue engineering bricks and appeared well worn and fractured in places. Later structural additions were observed at the south-east corner of the property, with a small 0.85m wide outbuilding (306) extending from this. The location of these structures correlates with buildings mapped from the mid 19th century until the 1950's and they appear to have been closely packed terraced houses fronting onto North Street (HHS 2013, 8). A staircase shown to have run down from The Londes back lane would have provided access to the rear of the buildings (HHS 2013, figs 14-21).

In the southern part of the trench, the outbuilding walls and the outside yard surface associated with this property were observed to post-date a large wall built in two phases. A brick foundation in stretcher bond (305) was overlain with roughly hewn sandstone blocks (304) with a smooth finish on the northern side. The sandstone had a thick mortar and plaster skim on the southern face, filling in the gaps created by the irregular blocks, and is thought to have been reused from an earlier substantial structure as the brick sizes in (305) would indicate a mid 19th century date for the construction of the wall. A boundary division is visible close to this location on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (see Figure 7), but this wall appears too far away and is more likely to be an boundary noted on an earlier 1871 map (HHS 2013, fig 15). However, this could also be an issue with map alignment between editions and is probably representative of a change from earlier cramped terraced housing to a more regulated courtyard style development of the area following the 1848 Public Health Act (HHS 2013, 9). As with Trenches 1 and 2, later infill deposits and intrusions sealed and had disturbed the structural remains in this trench (Section 5.1.3 below).

Trench 4

The extent of Trench 4 was severely limited by the on-site restrictions, particularly modern services, but it was possible to open a small area to a safe depth (Fig 6). This revealed a boundary wall feature at the eastern end, constructed in a similar form to that seen in Trench 3 with a brick built foundation (404) supporting a layer of roughly hewn sandstone blocks (403) above. Part of the wall had been whitewashed on the western face and therefore this is thought to have been visible above ground. The location of the wall suggests that it acted as a retaining wall along the edge of The Londes lane, positioned slightly above this structure (see Figure 7). The wall also aligns with

partly upstanding structural remains visible outside the development area, just to the south and parallel to the current Molineux Street.

5.1.3 Phase 3: Modern deposits

Modern deposits were abundant across the areas and consisted of numerous services, intrusions and demolition deposits.

Trench 1

Sealing the 19th century structures at the northern end of Trench 1 was a infill deposit (106) that provided bedding material for the construction of a concrete surface and a metal drain access (107, 108, 109) (Fig 3). This construction phase post-dates the demolition of the properties here and probably occurred after 1914 when this part of the site is shown to no longer be occupied by buildings. Further modern features in Trench 1 included a plastic water pipe and a cut for an electricity service trench [111].

Trench 2

Demolition material had infilled the remains of the building found within Trench 2 (Fig 4). One of these deposits, (203), included a number of bottles dated to the early 20th century and a sheet metal sign advertising 'Nestles Swiss Milk [Chocolate] The Richest in Cream'. This supports the inference of the street being one of small-scale commercial enterprises.

Trench 3

A layer of ashy clinker material was observed within the building space defined by walls (308) and (310) and this, as well as the yard surface (316), had been truncated by a service trench [314] containing a cast iron pipe (Fig 5). This is indicative of the property and yard becoming disused when this was installed, probably in the mid 20th century. Demolition deposits and rubble layers (302 and 303) containing everyday detritus and household objects from the 20th century overlay the structural remains, evidence of the clearance of the area in the 1960s.

Trench 4

Substantial layers of made ground material (401 and 402) were at least 1m in depth and butted the boundary wall found at the eastern end of the trench (Fig 6)). These were abundant in occupational detritus and demolition rubble from the former structures existing in the area.

5.2 Artefactual analysis, by Rob Hedge and Shona Robson-Glyde

period	material class	material subtype	object type	count	weight(g)
	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	1	106
post-medieval	ceramic		bottle	3	162
post-medieval	ceramic		brick	6	17550
post-medieval	ceramic		clay pipe	1	4
post-medieval	ceramic		crucible	2	478
post-medieval	ceramic		plate	2	80
post-medieval	ceramic		pot	5	124
post-medieval	metal	copper alloy	keyhole plate	1	8
post-medieval	metal	tin plate	sign	1	9500
modern	ceramic		jar	1	38
modern	ceramic		tile	1	98
modern	glass		bottle	6	1124
modern	metal	copper alloy	coin	1	6
modern	plastic		bottle stopper	1	6
			Total	32	29284

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1–3.

The assemblage came from eleven stratified contexts and could be dated from the post-medieval period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying little or no abrasion. The average sherd size was considerably above average, reflecting the relatively recent deposition of the assemblage and the absence of significant disturbance to the site subsequent to mid-20th century demolition.

5.2.1 Summary of artefactual evidence by period

For the finds from individual features, including specific types of pottery, see Tables 3 and 2 in that order and in combination.

The discussion below is a summary of the finds, and associated location or contexts by period. Where possible, dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

broad period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	4	200
Modern	85	Modern china	7	204
		Total	11	404

Table 2 Quantification of the pottery by fabric

Post-medieval and modern

The ceramic building material recovered is consistent with construction activity taking place between the mid-18th and mid-19th centuries. A brick sample from (204) of 9½ x 4½ x 2½" size suggests a date of mid-late 18th century (Lloyd 1925, 100), with the presence of a thumb-scraped frog pointing to the earlier part of this date range (Brunskill 1997, 24-5). Samples from (205) and (206) of 9½ x 4¾ x 2¾" size, with traces of lime mortar and lime plaster, are indicative of a late 18th to early 19th century date. A complete brick of 9½ x 4¾ x 3 ⅛" size and a vitrified fragment

measuring $4\frac{3}{8} \times 2\frac{5}{8}$ suggest a mid-19th century date for (305), and from (310) a sample with dimensions of $8\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{5}{8} \times 2\frac{3}{4}$ is likely to be early to mid-19th century in date.

The pottery is a typical domestic assemblage of transfer-printed 19^h–20th century white china (fabric 85) and late 19th/early 20th century stoneware. The glass bottles recovered are all 20th century machine-made examples. Of note is a rectangular clear-glass bottle from (203), which bears the oval 'suction scar' on the base indicative of production by an automatic bottle machine (ABM) probably indicating a 1920s or early 1930s date (Lindsey 2010). A small clear-glass screw-top bottle from (401) showed evidence of having been partially melted by heat.

Evidence for nearby industrial activity was present in the form of several fragments of heavily-vitrified ceramic crucible material from deposit (318), including a portion of the base of a large, tall free-standing circular form typical of post-medieval crucibles (English Heritage 2001, 16) which exhibited vitrification on both inner and outer surfaces, with the outer being more extensively affected. This is likely to be indicative of smaller scale (i.e. workshop) metalworking on, or near, the site.

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	tpq date range
101	plastic		bottle stopper	1	6	1900	1980	1900-1980
	glass		bottle	1	286	1900	1980	
102	ceramic		pot	1	74	1800	2000	1800-2000
	ceramic		pot	1	10	1800	2000	
203	glass		bottle	1	238	1900	1950	1900-1980
	glass		bottle	1	200	1900	1940	
	ceramic		tile	1	98	1900	1980	
	metal	tin plate	sign	1	9500	1880	1910	
204	ceramic		brick	1	2960	1730	1800	1730-1800
205	ceramic		brick	1	1380	1770	1830	1770-1830
206	ceramic		brick	1	3220	1770	1830	1770-1830
303	metal	copper alloy	keyhole plate	1	8	1850	1950	1870-2000
	ceramic		pot	2	30	1800	2000	
	ceramic		pot	1	10	1800	2000	
	ceramic		jar	1	38	1870	1930	
	ceramic		plate	2	80	1800	2000	
305	ceramic		brick	2	6660	1830	1870	1830-1870
310	ceramic		brick	1	3330	1800	1870	1800-1870
318	ceramic		roof tile(flat)	1	106	1200	1800	1800-1950
	ceramic		clay pipe	1	4	1700	1910	
	ceramic		bottle	3	162	1800	1950	
	ceramic		crucible	1	310			
	ceramic		crucible	1	168			
401	metal	copper alloy	coin	1	6	1947	1967	1947-2000
	glass		bottle	1	244	1900	2000	
	glass		bottle	1	96	1900	2000	
	glass		bottle	1	60	1900	2000	

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

6 Synthesis

The archaeological potential of this site, as highlighted by the desk-based assessment (HHS 2013), has been demonstrated and supported by the evaluation trenches excavated. The earliest archaeological remains on the site appear to date from the late 18th or early 19th centuries and no artefacts were recovered that pre-date this. This suggests that there was either little significant previous activity within the areas evaluated, or that earlier remains have been heavily disturbed and truncated by the late 18th-early 19th century development on the site.

Archaeological remains found across the site area are in a variable state of preservation, but have mainly survived as surfaces and below-ground foundations. These represented structures that can be identified as properties at 'The Londes' in a number of forms, mainly of mid 19^h century date, but also in existence from the late 18th century onwards. Much had been heavily disturbed by later activity, including demolition in the mid 20th century, and modern services were common and had truncated a number of features. The level of disturbance would suggest, as far as can reasonably be identified in the limited area of the trenching undertaken, that it is likely that only portions of properties will have survived, rather than their full extent. However, the presence of a cellar and the corridor or internal space identified in Trench 2 may indicate that if structures have survived major disturbance and demolition, then they will be present to a substantial depth.

The majority of structural elements observed appear to correlate well with historic map evidence and can be readily identified or interpreted using this information. At the northern end of the site, the walls and yard surfaces partly surviving later activity in Trench 1 are likely to represent the remains of a group of clustered properties, probably closely packed terraced housing, mapped here between 1842 and 1914. These were adjacent to The Londes back lane and were accessed via steps leading down into an area marked 'Court no. 8' in 1886 (HHS 2013, fig 17).

The walls and floor surface found in Trench 2 are located in an area likely to be the central part of the property latterly identified as the Blue Bell Inn/Colonel Vernon Public House. This was certainly a public house in the mid 19th century, although the map and documentary evidence suggests that it was a large dwelling or lodging house from the 18th century onwards. The archaeological results are supportive of this, with the brickwork suggestive of a later 18th century date for construction and the repeated layering of lime plaster on the walls would appear to indicate longevity of use. It would not be unusual if the lodging house included a small front parlour bar and that it naturally evolved into a more officially defined public house in the mid 19th century. According to the census, Joseph Horobin lived here in 1851, described as a 'retail brewer', just before the building was mapped as the Blue Bell Inn (HHS 2013, 10). As a constant structure on the site from the 18^h century into the 1960's, the Blue Bell Inn/Colonel Vernon appears as a focus of settlement in this area. It may be the case that the lodging or public house acted as an anchor to the development of The Londes, a practice common in the Victorian period where a terraced street would be established alongside a pub in a corner or central street location (Haydon 1994, 199-200).

To the south of this was a further area of terraced housing in the 19th century, fronting onto North Street, and the back wall and yard associated with one of these structures was identified in Trench 3. As with the property recorded in Trench 1, access from The Londes lane was provided by a staircase to the rear of the buildings. Perhaps of more archaeological interest in this part of the site was the presence of sandstone wall remains. The most substantial of these was an addition in the mid 19th century to create a boundary wall that may have divided up the properties here from cramped terracing into more spacious courtyard form. This represents clear evidence of changing boundaries on the site. A small stretch of earlier sandstone walling at the northern end of the trench predated the 19^h century terracing and could be of 18th century origin, although this was not definitive due to the small extent surviving. Both walls have the potential to indicate that earlier sandstone buildings of extensive size existed either on the site or in close proximity to it, and that this building material was reused in later construction. The brick and sandstone wall found in Trench 4 clearly aligns with the edge of The Londes lane, and probably acted as a revetment to support the higher ground above.

All archaeological features were representative of the domestic conurbation of Wolverhampton in the later 18th and through to the 20th century and illustrate the nature of structural archaeology surviving on the site. The finds are consistent with mid-18th to mid-20th century domestic occupation and industrial activity in the area. There was no clear primary evidence of industrial working on the site, but ashy material and finds in dumped deposits could potentially be secondary indications of working nearby. Notably, the presence of crucible fragments within deposit (318) is indicative of smaller scale metalworking industry in close proximity. The tin-metal advertising sign within (203) is suggestive of commercial activity along the street frontage, or perhaps in the general vicinity overall.

7 Significance

7.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

The evaluation trenches have demonstrated that numerous structural remains and associated deposits of post-medieval and later date are present on the site. This supports the conclusions of the DBA and indicates the preservation of part of this urban area at The Londes that survived in various forms until the 1960s.

The structural remains were often truncated and disturbed by later activity but where this was not the case could be well-defined and correlated with historic map evidence. There remains the possibility that earlier features could survive in isolated areas of the site, but no earlier features were identified in the limited investigations undertaken to date.

7.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

The survival of structures representative of the domestic occupation in Wolverhampton during the later 18th and through to the 20th century is of limited archaeological interest, but is still a useful indicator of urban development and social conditions during this period. The extant remains of the later 18th century building that became known as the Blue Bell Inn/Colonel Vernon Public House is potentially of the most archaeological interest. The presence of sandstone walling that may date to the 18th century could also be of significance, although the survival of features of this date is likely to be limited due to the later occupation and development on the site.

The artefactual assemblage is considered to be of limited archaeological significance, particularly as the finds mainly relate to the disuse of the structures found across the site. The finds were largely domestic in character, but also suggestive of light commercial and small-scale industrial activity here.

7.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

Structural remains, in varying degrees of survival, were revealed in all trenches across the site and were seen to extend beyond the trench limits. Given the correlation of many of the buildings identified with cartographic evidence, it is possible to infer that, if not truncated or destroyed by later activity, further buildings will extend across the site area in locations as mapped between the mid 19th century and the mid 20th century. The majority of features were encountered at between 0.70m and 1.20m below the ground service, but extended much deeper in places. Higher up the sloping ground, the archaeology appears to have been protected by a substantial block of made ground deposits, in some cases over 2m in depth, that is was not possible to remove safely in the restricted area available for investigation.

8 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology 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 evaluation was undertaken at The Londes, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton (NGR 9145 9924). It was commissioned by Gardiner & Theobald LLP on behalf of their client, the University of Wolverhampton, who intends to redevelop the site.

Fieldwork was undertaken in April 2014 and four small trenches of varying size and orientation were excavated across the site area. The length, orientation and position of the trenches was heavily restricted due to a significant number of services (including fibre optic and electricity cables) on the site, obstructions in the form of tree stumps, and steeply sloping ground. Nevertheless, the evaluation trenches demonstrated that numerous structural remains and associated deposits of post-medieval and later date are present on the site. The earliest identified archaeological remains date from the later 18th and early 19th centuries and comprised brick built foundations and structures. This supports the conclusions of a previous desk-based assessment and indicates the preservation of part of this urban area that remained standing, in various forms, until the 1960s. The occupation of the site appears to have been largely domestic in character, but some finds were also suggestive of light commercial and small-scale industrial activity.

No artefacts were recovered that pre-date this post-medieval and modern activity and the assemblage was considered to be of limited significance, particularly as the finds mainly relate to the 20th century disuse of the structures. This suggests that there was either little significant previous occupation within the areas evaluated, or that earlier remains have been heavily disturbed and truncated by the 19th century development on the site. The surviving features were also truncated and disturbed by modern demolition but where this was not the case they could be well-defined and correlated with historic map evidence.

9 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project: Steve Baker (Project Manager, Gardiner & Theobald LLP), Claire Watkins and Paul Davis (Estates Management, University of Wolverhampton), and Mike Shaw (City Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council).

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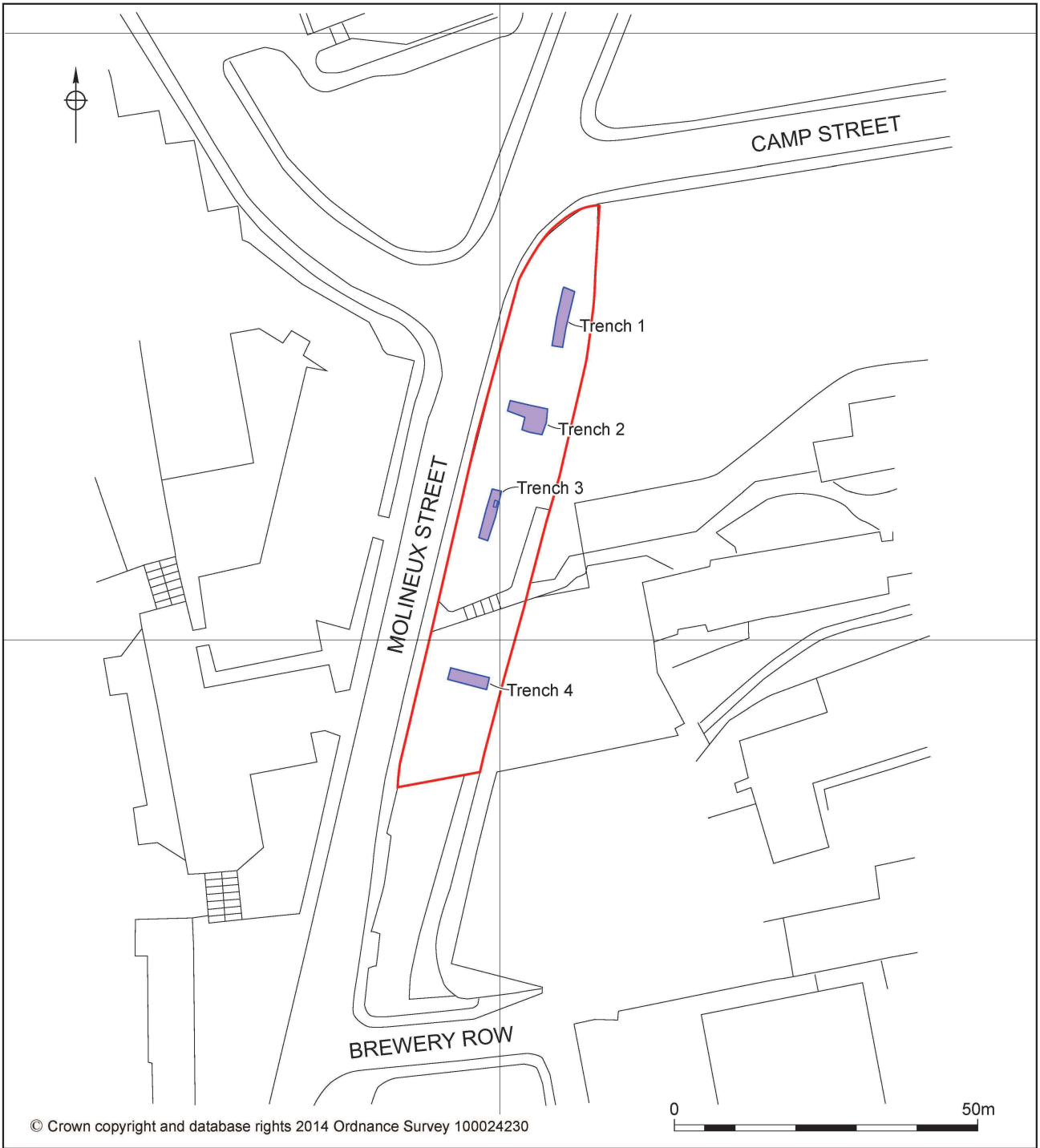
Figures



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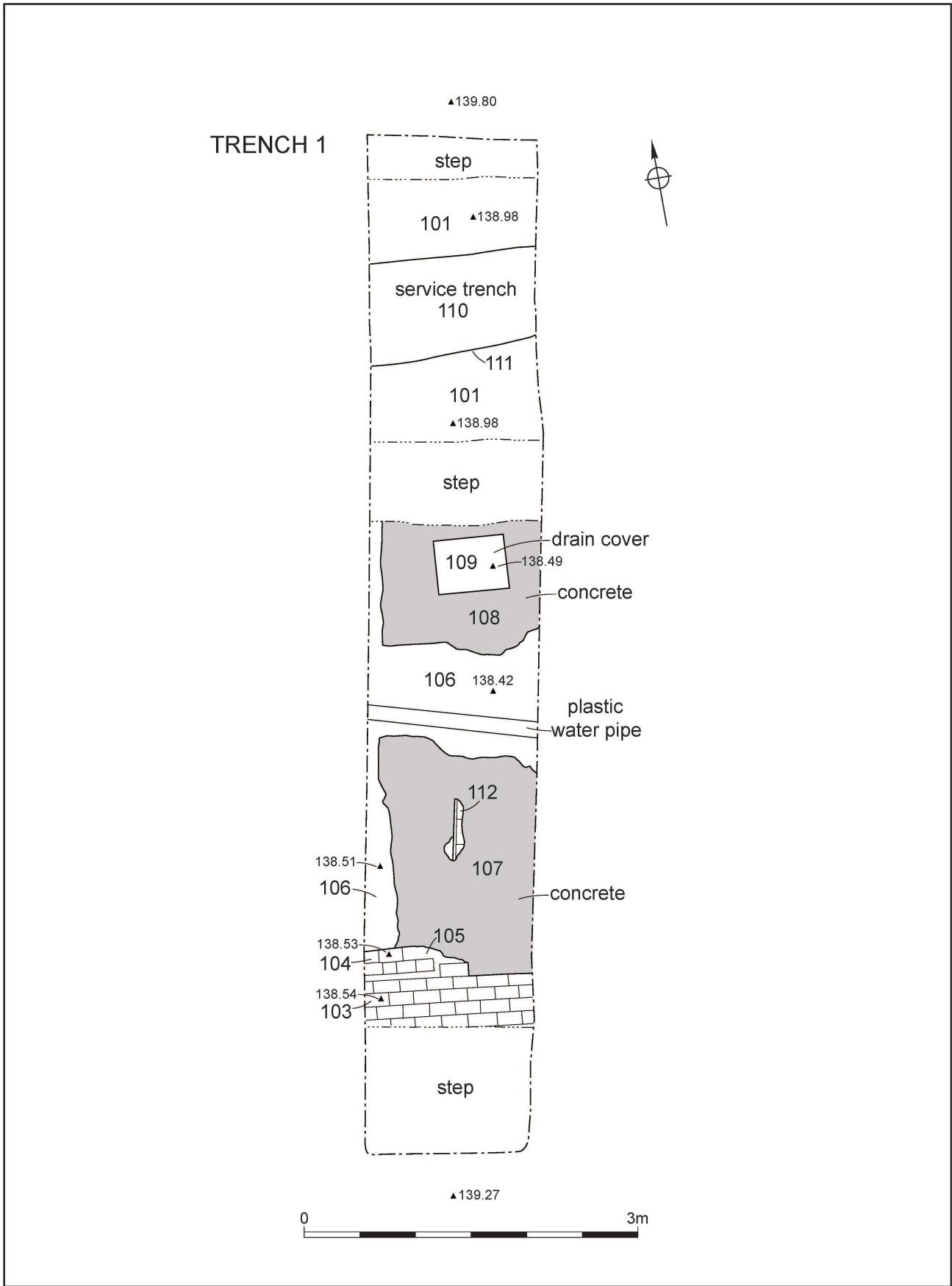
Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan

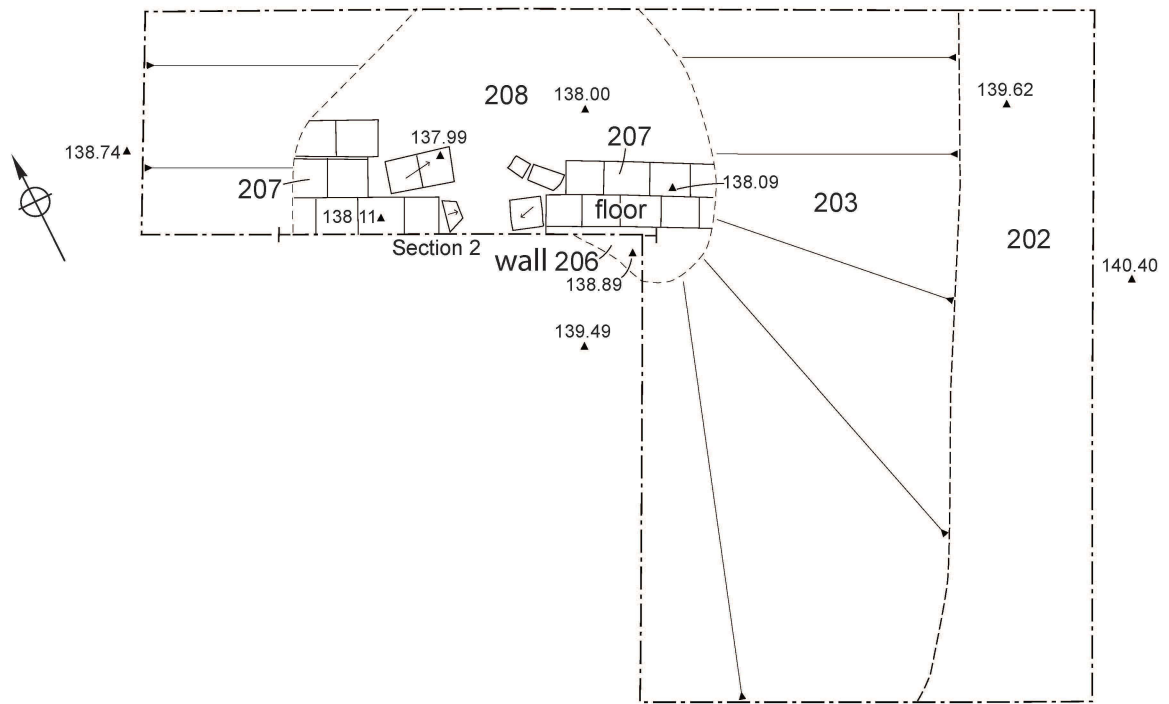
Figure 2



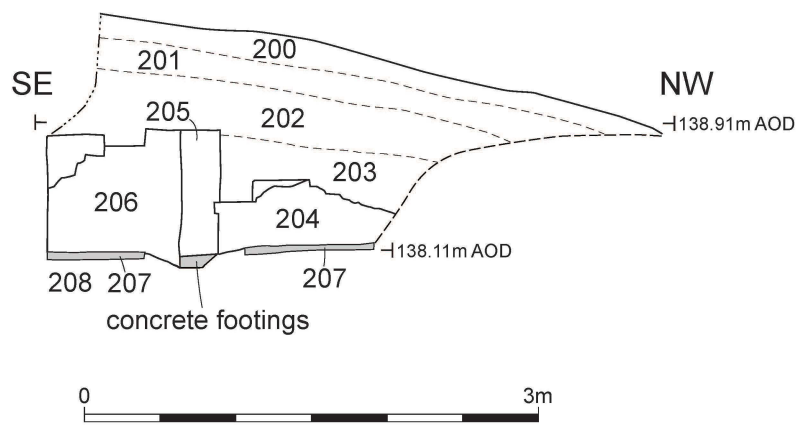
Trench 1 plan

Figure 3

TRENCH 2: PLAN



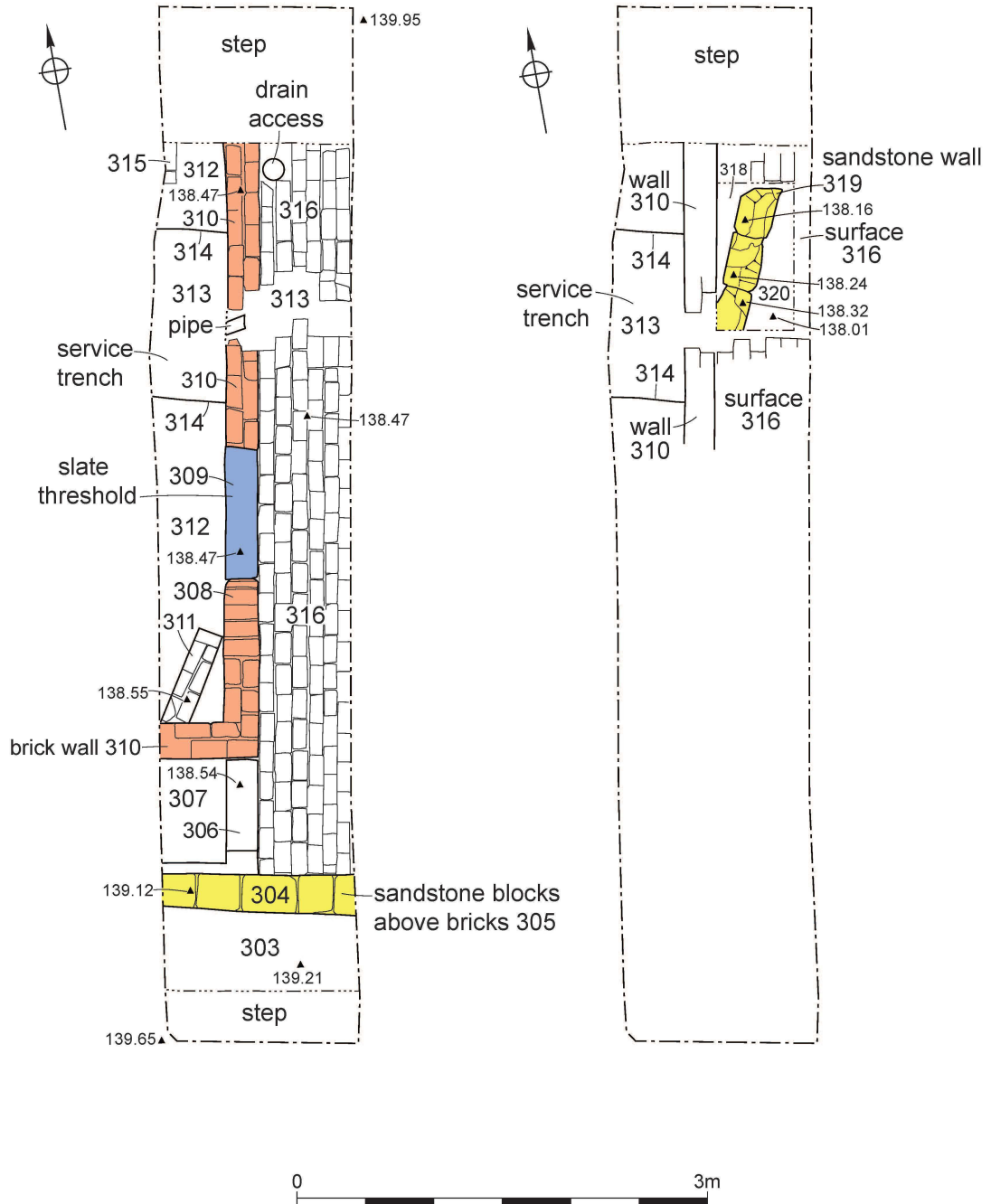
TRENCH 2: NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION



Trench 2 plan and section

Figure 4

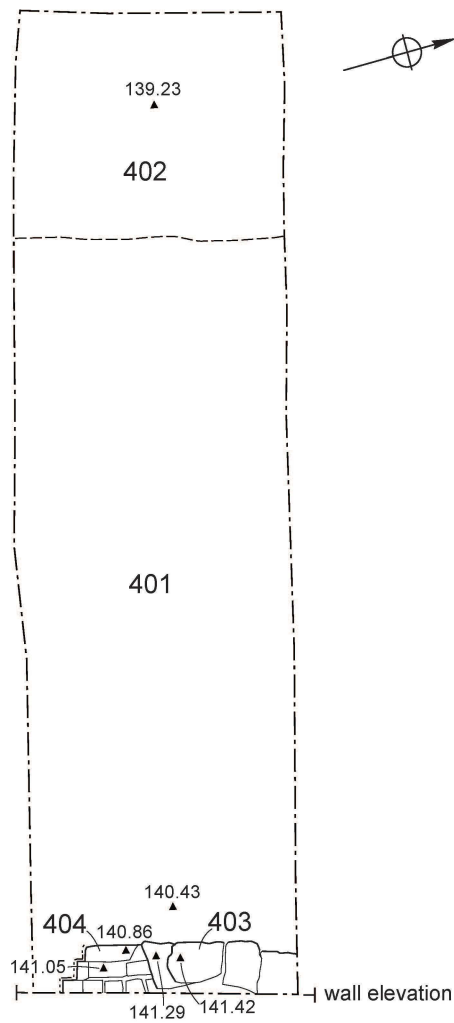
TRENCH 3: PLAN



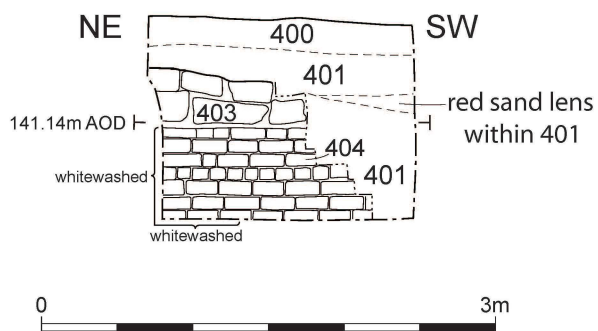
Trench 3 plan with earlier wall in sondage shown on right

Figure 5

TRENCH 4: PLAN



NORTH-WEST FACING ELEVATION



Trench 4 plan and elevation

Figure 6



Trenches shown on 1886 OS

Figure 7

Plates



Plate 1: General view of the site facing north



Plate 2: Brick (103) and concrete (107) surfaces in Trench 1



Plate 3: Walls (204), (205), (206) and floor (207) in Trench 2



Plate 4: General view of Trench 3, facing south



Plate 5: Detail of boundary wall (304), (305) in Trench 3



Plate 6: Sondage through yard surface (316) showing sandstone wall (319) in Trench 3



Plate 7: Boundary wall (403), (404) in Trench 5

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 9.10m Width: 1.60m Depth: 1.09m

Orientation: NE-SW

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s)
100	Topsoil	Dark grey brown loam with frequent rooting, CBM and occasional small sub-angular stones.	0.00-0.16m
101	Made ground	Dark grey brown loam and CBM mix, with frequent rooting, plastics, glass and demolition material.	0.16-0.59m
102	Made ground	Dark grey brown loam with hardcore crush mix. Demolition layer above archaeological deposits containing CBM, glass, metal and concrete fence posts.	0.59-1.05m
103	Structure	Early 19 th century brick floor surface, possibly a yard or pathway. Constructed from greyish blue engineering bricks.	1.05m+
104	Structure	Truncated remains of a wall, sealed by concrete (107). Modern orange red bricks.	1.05m+
105	Fill	Light creamy brown sandy mortar backfill around wall (104).	1.05m+
106	Deposit	Dark grey orange brown mortar and clinker with CBM mixed deposit. Made ground infill predating concrete surface (107). Removed in machine sondage and seen to post date wall (112).	1.05-1.45m+
107	Structure	Indurated light grey concrete surface overlying earlier walls and surfaces. Thin layer and relatively uneven. Probably of same phase as (108) but truncated by modern service pipe.	1.05m+
108	Structure	Indurated light grey concrete surface surrounding and contemporary with drain access (109). Modern in date.	1.05m+
109	Structure	Metal cover for access to modern drain – not removed or disturbed.	1.05m+
110	Fill	Light blue grey clay backfill within trench cut [111]. Contains modern CBM, metal wiring and concrete fence posts, as well as yellow electricity warning tape. Not disturbed.	0.16m+
111	Cut	Cut for modern service trench, potentially electric cable route.	0.16m+
112	Structure	Partially exposed orange red brick wall below concrete (107) and mixed deposit (106).	1.05m+
113	Natural	Firm light pinkish brown sandy clays exposed in machine sondage at northern end of trench.	1.34-1.74m+

Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 6.20m Width: 1.60-4.40m Depth: 1.60m

Orientation: SE-NW

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s)
200	Topsoil	Soft, dark grey brown loam with frequent rooting, occasional CBM fragments and medium sub-rounded stones.	0.00-0.20m
201	Made ground	Dark grey brown loam and CBM mix, with frequent concrete and demolition material.	0.20-0.40m
202	Made ground	Dark brown loam with CBM mix. Demolition layer containing building rubble, concrete, metal and charcoal.	0.40-0.90m
203	Deposit	Loose orange brown CBM demolition and backfill deposit inside building. Contains general household detritus and large sheet metal advert sign.	0.80-1.22m
204	Structure	Brick wall formed of mould made red bricks 236mm x 110mm x 60mm in size, 4 courses high. Whitewashed with lime plaster on north (internal) side. Latest construction phase of wall of building.	0.70m+
205	Structure	Brick wall formed of mould made red bricks 236mm x 105mm x 65mm in size, 10 courses in height. Internal wall, not load bearing, abutts wall (206) and has similar lime plaster material on north (internal) face.	0.70m+
206	Structure	Brick wall, visible as corner section and the earliest construction of the building here, but full extent unknown. 9 courses high, formed of red bricks 236mm x 105mm x 65mm in size. Roughly hewn on western side where (205) butts against it.	0.70m+
207	Structure	Internal floor surface made from large regular square flag stone tiles 230mm x 230mm x 30mm. Butts and is later than walls (204), (205) and (206).	1.40m+
208	Deposit	Moderately compact light grey brown sandy loam and CBM mix. Demolition backfill with frequent brick and building materials infill into cellar and used as bedding material under floor surface (207).	1.60m+

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 7.60m Width: 1.60m Depth: 1.44m

Orientation: NE-SW

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s)
300	Topsoil	Dark grey brown loam with frequent rooting, CBM and occasional small sub-angular stones.	0.00-0.10m
301	Made ground	Dark grey brown loam and CBM mix, with frequent concrete and demolition material.	0.10-1.26m
302	Deposit	Thin deposit of CBM demolition material above structures. Contains general household detritus including plastic, glass, metal etc.	1.26-1.44m
303	Deposit	Soft dark brownish black clinker and ash deposit with CBM, mortar, glass, pottery etc. Backfilled against the southern face of wall (304) and above (317).	0.86m+
304	Structure	Roughly hewn sandstone blocks 2 courses high with a smooth finish on the north facing side, upper courses above brick wall (305). Potentially reused from earlier large building and utilised here.	0.86m+
305	Structure	Brick wall at least 3 courses high as foundations below sandstone blocks (304). Stretcher bond, reddish colour, 235mm x 107mm x 73mm in size. Butted by floor (316) and later brick wall (306).	1.22m+
306	Structure	Brick wall, small corner section abutting wall (305) and back wall (308). Creates internal space for use as small storage area or toilet block perhaps.	1.20m+
307	Deposit	Moderately compact dark greyish black clinker and ash deposit infilling space between walls (306) and (308).	1.20m+
308	Structure	Brick wall, forming corner of back wall to property, same building as (310). Constructed with dark orange bricks 246mm x 116mm x 66mm in size.	1.15m+
309	Structure	Slate threshold forming edging at doorway entrance to property. Links walls (308) and (310). Partially overlies outside yard (316) so later than this, but could be repair to original doorway.	1.20m+
310	Structure	Brick wall forming back wall to property, constructed of dark orange bricks 220mm x 110mm x 66mm in size. Same building as (308), joined by later threshold (309).	1.20m+
311	Structure	Small brick wall at 45° angle to corner of property defined by wall (308). Only visible in plan. Forms internal structure of unknown function.	1.20m+
312	Deposit	Moderately compact dark grey black clinker deposit containing frequent CBM, mortar and glass fragments. Found within building defined by walls (308) and (310). Likely to be made ground underlying floor surface no longer in existence.	1.20m+

The Londes, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s)
313	Fill	Backfill of pipe trench cut. Moderately compact mid brown clinker, ash and CBM mixed deposit.	1.20m+
314	Cut	Irregular cut for cast iron service pipe. Truncates wall (310) and floor (316).	1.20m+
315	Structure	Internal wall feature, very small area visible, full extent unknown. Butted by deposit (312).	1.20m+
316	Structure	Brick floor surface, probably an outside yard area or pathway. Formed of greyish blue engineering bricks, 220mm x 110mm x unknown size. Butts walls (308) and (310) and worn in places through heavy use.	1.44m+
317	Deposit	Moderately compact light cream brown CBM and sandstone rubble, with metal, concrete and brick fragments. Found below (303). Material deposited to raise ground surface south of wall (305).	0.94m+
318	Deposit	Moderately compact dark brown silty sand with mixed lenses of charcoal, brick rubble and general CBM. Build up deposit above and around sandstone wall (319), below walls (308) and (310).	1.44m+
319	Structure	Sandstone wall built with roughly hewn blocks bonded with a light creamy white mortar. 2 courses high, found in sondage at northern end of trench. Possibly reused sandstone from earlier structure.	1.50m+
320	Natural	Compact light brown sandy clay with occasional disturbance from rooting and later material.	1.86m+

Trench 4

Maximum dimensions: Length: 6.50m Width: 1.65m Depth: 1.20m

Orientation: SE-NW

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s)
400	Topsoil	Soft, dark grey brown loam with frequent rooting, occasional CBM fragments and medium sub-rounded stones.	0.00-0.22m
401	Made ground	Dark grey brown loam and CBM mix, with frequent concrete, glass, plastic and demolition material.	0.22-0.86m
402	Made ground	Demolition layer containing building rubble, concrete, metal, textile etc. Occupational detritus from building demolition.	0.86-1.20m
403	Structure	Sandstone blocks forming upper courses of wall above bricks (404). 2 courses high, roughly hewn blocks, later addition to boundary wall.	0.22-0.62m
404	Structure	Brick wall formed of red bricks 235mm x 120mm x 80mm in size, 7 courses high. Whitewashed on north west side, probable boundary/retaining wall.	0.62-1.20m+

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: P4243)

The archive consists of:

34	Context records AS1
4	Field progress reports AS2
2	Photographic records AS3
98	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
8	Scale drawings
1	Levels records AS19
4	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Box of finds
1	CD-Rom/DVDs
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Wolverhampton Archives and Local Studies Centre
Molineux Hotel Building
Whitmore Hill
Wolverhampton
West Midlands, WV1 1SF

Tel: 01902 552480

Appendix 3 The Brief

The Londes, Wolverhampton

Brief for Archaeological Evaluation

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Proposals for development of an area of land at The Londes, Wolverhampton, by the University of Wolverhampton are at an advanced stage. The site is on steeply sloping ground adjacent to Molineux Street and has been identified as an area of archaeological potential. Accordingly the University commissioned an archaeological desk-based assessment (ADBA). The ADBA (Hislop Heritage Services 2013) confirmed that there were buildings on the site by 1750 and that subsequently the area was occupied by a dense concentration of domestic buildings and small-scale industrial and commercial premises.
- 1.2 There is also the possibility of earlier buildings on the site as it lies beside Molineux Street, formerly North Street, which was until the late 20th century one of the main roads leading out of Wolverhampton. It was common for houses to be built on the roads leading out of major towns from the medieval period onwards. Accordingly there is the possibility of buried archaeological deposits dating from that time onwards.
- 1.3 Hence it is now proposed to dig a series of trial trenches across the site to establish whether archaeological deposits do survive, to assess their condition and significance and to establish how best to deal with them.

2. Detailed Requirements

- 2.1 The trial trenching should comprise the excavation of four trenches around 12m in length and 1.5m in width east-west across the site. A suggested location for these trenches is indicated on Fig 1 but it may be necessary to amend these according to ground conditions, presence of services, tree roots etc.¹ Proposals for any changes in location should be discussed with the City Archaeologist.
- 2.2 Allowance should be made for a further 20m² of trenching to be opened up around the existing trenches, if necessary, to clarify features uncovered or state of survival.
- 2.3 Priorities for the work will be to establish:
 - the earliest date of occupation of the site and its nature (domestic, commercial, industrial etc), state of survival and importance
 - the date, nature, state of survival and importance of later occupation of the site
 - to attempt to identify property boundaries and the extent to which these have changed (by division or amalgamation of properties) over time
 - to establish whether it is possible to follow the history of a single property through time²

¹ The site is currently open and occupied by trees but these are to be removed and fencing erected.

² The property known as the Blue Bell Inn may be of particular interest if remains are well preserved here

2.4 On completion of the work:

- The trenches should be backfilled with the material removed from them and lightly compacted.
- The results of the work and the finds from the excavation should be analysed and a report produced detailing the findings

2.5 Once the report has been completed the necessity for further work will be agreed between the Local Authority and the University.

3. General conditions

3.1 The work should be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced archaeological staff, under the supervision of a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists or a Project Manager with equivalent experience.

3.2 An appropriate recording strategy should be used and the method and justification for this stated in the reports.

3.3 The code of conduct, standards and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists should be adhered to.

3.4 A written scheme of investigation for the work required should be prepared by the contractor and agreed with the sponsor and the local planning authority (LPA) before the work commences.

3.5 On completion of the work the site archive should be deposited with an appropriate museum/public archive. The site owner is encouraged to deposit any finds with the archive. In this case paper archives should be deposited with the Wolverhampton Archives and Local Studies Centre (tel: 01902 552480).

3.6 A digital copy of the report should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, Wolverhampton Archives Service and Wolverhampton Historic Environment Record (WOHER). The report will normally become a publicly accessible part of the WOHER within 6 months of completion.

3.7 Reports should contain the following information:

- Location, aims and methodology
 - A written summary of the findings together with appropriate illustrations, which should be related to the national grid. Levels should be related to the Ordnance Datum.
 - An analytical summary of features and deposits, including an annotated survey plan showing identified geophysical anomalies potentially representative of archaeological features.
 - A copy of the brief
-

3.8 On completion of the work an OASIS record form should be completed and a summary report should be sent for publication in West Midlands Archaeology and any other appropriate local or national archaeological journal.

3.9 Health and Safety

It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with relevant Health and Safety regulations.

Site procedures should be in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual of the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers

3.10 Monitoring

The work will be monitored by Mike Shaw, City Archaeologist, on behalf of the LPA and provisions for monitoring should be agreed with him. At least five working days' notice of commencement of any fieldwork should be given. A draft of any report should be submitted to the City Archaeologist for approval ahead of finalisation.

4. Contacts

Mike Shaw, City Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council, Regeneration and Transportation, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1RP

E-mail: mike.shaw@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Tel: 01902 555493

Prepared on 24th October 2013 by Mike Shaw, City Archaeologist, on behalf of Wolverhampton City Council
