

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION  
AT 31-35 PORT STREET,  
BENGOWORTH, EVESHAM

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Project 2708  
Report 1330  
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# **Archaeological evaluation at 31-35 Port Street, Bengeworth, Evesham**

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**With contributions by Alan J Jacobs and Jon Milward**

## **Part 1: Project summary**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 31-35 Port Street, Bengeworth, Evesham (NGR SP 0418 4364; WSM 34264). The aim of the evaluation was to characterise, date, and establish the significance of archaeological remains in the area of a proposed development, and to make an architectural and historical assessment of several buildings proposed for demolition. The site consists of two adjacent plots extending from Port Street to Lower Leys. These plots are thought to have been laid out in the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century as part of a wider suburban development, and remains of medieval and later date were anticipated.

Two 15×1.8m trenches were excavated behind the buildings in each plot. The trench behind 31 Port Street exposed two pits containing medieval pottery. No artefacts indicating particular crafts or trades were recovered, but the date of the pottery supports suggestions that the plot was laid out around the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous postholes and a possible beam slot of 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century date were found in the same trench, suggesting intensive building activity in this period. No evidence of late medieval or early post-medieval activity was found. A lack of evidence for activity in these periods has been noted in similar contexts elsewhere, and has been taken to indicate a protracted phase of abandonment or non-urban land-use. The cellar and surface of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century building was also found. This building is likely to have been the factory or store of Brearleys Mineral Waters Manufacturers between c1904 and 1949. Numerous bottles with Brearley stamps were found in the fill of the cellar along with other bottles produced by local manufacturers.

No 14<sup>th</sup> century features were found in the trench excavated behind 35 Port Street, though such features would appear to be sparsely distributed and may exist elsewhere in the plot. There was, however, a similar lack of evidence for late medieval and early post-medieval activity. An increase in activity between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was represented by a well, two rubbish pits and several postholes, although, as before, this activity seems to have been less intensive, and for this period there is documentary evidence for arrangements of a semi-rural character.

Of the buildings proposed for demolition, 31 Port Street has the most architectural and historical interest with regard to its surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric and frontage. However, the building has no discernable features that give it any considerable merit and its integrity has been significantly compromised by extensive 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations.

## **Part 2: Detailed report**

### **1. Background**

#### **1.1 Reasons for the project**

The project was undertaken on behalf of Mr and Mrs Cohen and Messrs Goodwin, who intend to develop the site, and have submitted a planning application to Wychavon District Council (reference W/05/0091). The Planning Advisor of the Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeological Service considered that the proposed development might affect significant archaeological remains, and made an evaluation a condition of planning consent. This requirement was consistent with district and county council policies relating to archaeology and development (HEAS 2005a, 2).

#### **1.2 Project parameters**

The project conforms to a brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeological Service (the Curator; HEAS 2005a) and to a detailed specification prepared by the Field Section of the Service (HEAS 2005b). The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IFA 1999).

#### **1.3 Aims**

The evaluation had three aims:

- to determine the presence and significance of archaeological remains in the area of the proposed development,
- to make an historical and architectural assessment of the buildings proposed for demolition,
- to advance historical knowledge of Bengeworth and contribute to wider research frameworks.

### **2. Methods**

#### **2.1 Documentary research**

A considerable amount of documentary research was undertaken during the project in order to inform interpretations of the archaeological and architectural evidence. A wide range of sources were consulted including modern records of archaeological sites and listed buildings, the 1996 assessment of Evesham and Bengeworth undertaken as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey (Dalwood 1996), and various archives and historic maps. Other information was obtained from the Internet. The main sources are cited below, and a full list is given in the bibliography.

#### **2.2 Fieldwork**

Fieldwork was undertaken on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2005. The Historic Environment Record reference number for the field evaluation is WSM 34264.

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### 2.2.1 Sample trenching

The brief required the excavation of two sample trenches, each c15 long by 1.8m wide, towards the rear of the site, where the construction of 14 flats and associated hard and soft landscaping are envisaged (ADS 2004, drawing 784-02).

Following the advice of the Curator, and taking into account restrictions posed by buried services, one trench was excavated in the car park behind number 31 Port Street, and another trench was excavated in the grassed area behind number 35 Port Street (Fig 2).

Both trenches were excavated by a JCB excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Exposed surfaces were cleaned to allow deposits to be defined and interpreted in terms of natural and cultural formation processes. Selected deposits were excavated by hand to recover artefacts, and plant and animal remains. Drawn, written and photographic records were made according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995).

### 2.2.2 Building recording

The brief also required a summary historical and architectural assessment of the buildings proposed for demolition which comprise number 31 Port Street, the building to the rear, and several buildings behind number 35 Port Street (Fig 6).

The buildings were examined and extensively photographed using a high-resolution digital camera and 2m scale. The position from which each photograph was taken, and the direction of each view were recorded on a large-scale plan (based on ADS 2004, drawing 784-02).

### 2.3 Artefact study, by Alan J Jacobs

All hand retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period and quantified in Table 1. A *terminus post quem* (baseline) 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. Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

### 2.4 The methods in retrospect

The methods are thought to have been appropriate to the aims of the project, and the circumstances of the site.

The trenches were located in areas where deposits would be affected by the proposed development, and the levels of sampling, recording, artefact study, and documentary research were sufficient to establish the character, date and significance of these deposits.

Unfortunately, the first floor of 31 Port Street was not accessible as the floor is presently unsafe. Also, it was not possible to arrange access inside the buildings behind 35 Port Street. The record of the buildings is therefore not comprehensive, although it is thought that enough information was gained to allow a reasonable assessment of them to be made.

On the basis of this assessment, a high degree of confidence to be attached to the accuracy of the evidence presented in this report, and the conclusions drawn from it.

## 3. Topographical, archaeological, and historical background

The site is in the suburb of Bengeworth on the east side of the River Avon (Fig 1). The origins of the suburb of Bengeworth are obscure, although an estate of that name existed by the mid 9<sup>th</sup> century at least (Curtis 1906, 397), and a motte and bailey castle stood next to the bridge in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century (WCM 4566). The long narrow plots shown along both sides of Port Street on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891 (Fig 2) are thought to have been laid out as a single

development in the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century (WSM 12683; Dalwood 1996, 16). St Peters Church, on the east side of this development, may have been founded around the same time (WSM 4566).

The site occupies two relatively well-preserved plots that may originally have been separated by a lane, although the frontage was evidently built-up and any passage closed off by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Fig 2). Of the buildings on the frontage, number 35 may contain some 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century timber framing, but has evidently been much altered in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Number 31 is of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, but has been even more extensively altered, as discussed below. The buildings behind the frontage are a mixture of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century date, although the north wall of the building behind number 35 incorporates the timber-framed gable end of an earlier barn. The remaining area of both plots is largely open and surfaced with tarmac.

Opportunities for the archaeological investigation of medieval plots in Bengeworth have been limited, although excavations in such contexts elsewhere has shown that many contain deposits reflecting various aspects of medieval life, including rubbish disposal, industrial activity, horticulture and livestock management (Schofield and Vince 1994). It was therefore considered that similar remains might be present on the site, although it was acknowledged that later development would have resulted in some truncation or re-working of earlier deposits.

HER number	Location	Information	Date	NGR
Not numbered	Regal Cinema, Port Street	Cinema on street frontage of medieval burgage plot. Grade 2 listed building.	Mid 20 <sup>th</sup> century	SO 04200 43630
WSM 277	Rear of 11 Port Street	Site of motte and bailey castle. Demolished c1150 and site consecrated a cemetery.	Mid 12 <sup>th</sup> century	SO 04124 43710
WSM 3413	16 Port Street	Previously grade 3 listed building with painted stucco front on medieval tenement plot.	Late 17 <sup>th</sup> / early 18 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04142 43618
WSM 3415	27 Port Street	Previously grade 3 listed building on street frontage of medieval burgage plot.	Mid 17 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04158 43630
WSM 3416	27A Port Street	Previously grade 3 listed building on street medieval burgage plot.	19 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04164 43628
WSM 3417	29 Port Street	Previously grade 3 listed building on street frontage of medieval burgage plot.	19 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04172 43626
WSM 3418	31 Port Street	Previously grade 3 listed building on frontage of medieval tenement plot.	19 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04179 43624
Not numbered	35 Port Street	Unlisted building on street frontage medieval burgage plot.	?17 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04195 43625
WSM 4566	Church Street	Site of St. Peter's church. Surviving tower a Grade 2 listed building.	Late 13 <sup>th</sup> / early 14 <sup>th</sup> century	SO 04326 43483
WSM 12683	South side of Port Street.	Area of medieval burgage plots and 14 <sup>th</sup> century manor house.	13 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04200 4340
WSM 4164	Rear of 6A Port Street	Human burial.	Unknown	SO 04100 43610
WSM 19952	North side of Port street.	Medieval burgage plots.	13 <sup>th</sup> century+	SO 04250 43650
WSM 20732	The Leys	Baptist chapel.	1704+	SO 04370 43610
WSM 20726	Castle Street	Find-spot of medieval sword	1410-1510	SO 04096 43619
WSM 20733	Northwick Arms Hotel	Quaker burial ground.	1675-1838	SO 04070 43500
WSM 20770	Church Street	Cemetery of St. Peter's church.	13 <sup>th</sup> /14 <sup>th</sup> century	SO 04320 43480

*Table 1: Worcestershire HER records of sites, monuments, and buildings in the area of the site, with additional information on unrecorded buildings.*

HER number	Location	Information	Date	NGR
WSM 20154	9 Port Street	Salvage recording carried out on foundation trenches for an extension. 12 <sup>th</sup> century worked stones (probably from the castle) and 13 <sup>th</sup> /14 <sup>th</sup> century pottery recovered.	12 <sup>th</sup> century – modern	SO 0410 4367
WSM 28777	St Peter's churchyard	Watching brief on the construction of a footpath. An early 19 <sup>th</sup> century grave slab in position of the nave was exposed and recorded.	18 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> century	SO 0433 3480

Table 2: Worcestershire HER records of previous archaeological fieldwork in the area of the site

## 4. Results

The locations of trenches and existing buildings are shown on Fig 2. Deposits and features are described in Table 4 and illustrated on Figures 4 and 5. Photographs are reproduced as Plates 1-18.

### 4.1 Sample trenching

The following summary of deposits and features is offered primarily as archaeological evidence, but it may also be useful in assessing ground conditions for engineering purposes. Depths are given in relation to existing ground surfaces, as no Ordnance Survey benchmark could be found in the vicinity of the site.

Trench number	Context number	Description	Interpretation	Depth below ground surface
1	100	Unstratified finds from spoil.	n/a	n/a
	101	Tarmac.	Tarmac car park surface.	0.07-0.10m
	102	Roadstone.	Made ground.	0.07-0.17m
	103	Soft dark greyish brown sandy silt with common small gavels, some brick rubble and tarmac shavings present.	Made ground.	0.17-0.47m
	104	Loose mid-dark brown sandy silt with brick fragments, corroded metal objects and glass.	Dump of refuse material filling cellar 104.	0.30m+
	105	Large pit feature adjacent to brick surface 146.	Cellar.	0.30m+
	106	"Ghost" context.	Robbed-out cellar walls.	N/A
	107	Surface comprising large Cotswold stone flagstones.	Possible floor of building or external yard surface.	0.33m
	108	Abundant small gravels in mid brown silty sand.	Gravel surface.	0.33m
	109	Feature on a N-S alignment associated with cellar 105. Unexcavated.	Foundation trench for north cellar wall and perpendicular N-S wall.	0.90m+
	110	0.15m mortar over broken glass.	Fill of 111. Glass dump.	0.90m+
	111	Circular feature containing 108.	Disposal pit.	0.90m+
	112	Bricks laid on edge, 4½ inches wide	Brick surface contemporary with 107 and 146.	0.33m
	113	Firm yellowish grey silty clay	Fluvioglacial deposit	0.4-0.6m
	114	Corner of large feature with steep sides sloping towards a central flat base.	Rubbish pit	1.2-1.77m
	115	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay containing abundant small-medium flat sandstones with some pottery animal bone.	Fill of 114. Refuse deposit.	0.90m+
	116	Oval shaped feature with near vertical sides and a flat base lined with a large flat stone.	Post-hole.	1.18-1.96m
	117	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay with abundant medium-large sandstones.	Fill of 117. Post packing.	1.18-1.96m
	118	Pit feature ovoid in plan with a bowl-shaped profile.	Rubbish pit.	0.93-1.38m

	119	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal, some medium-large sandstones and some pot and bone.	Fill of 118. Refuse deposit.	0.93-1.38m
	120	Large sub-oval pit feature with gradual sloping sides and steep sloping west side towards a central flat base.	Rubbish pit.	0.90-0.26m
	121	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay with charcoal and some flat roof tile type stones.	Fill of 120. Refuse deposit.	0.90-0.26m
	122	Small circular feature with steeply sloping sides and a rounded base.	Post-hole.	0.80-1.2m
	123	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal and some medium sized stones present.	Fill of 122. Infill after removal of post.	0.80-1.2m
	124	Narrow shallow gully on a NNE to SSW axis. Concave profile.	Possible beam slot	0.80m+
	125	Loose mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal.	Fill of 124.	0.80m+
	126	Small ovoid feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	0.90m+
	127	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 127.	0.90m+
	128	Small round feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	0.80m+
	129	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 128.	0.80m+
	130	Small round feature. Unexcavated.	Probable stake-hole.	0.80m+
	131	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 130.	0.80m+
	132	Small round feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	0.83+
	133	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 132.	0.83+
	134	Small round feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	0.83+
	135	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 134.	0.83+
	136	Small oval feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	0.85m+
	137	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 136.	0.85m+
	138	Small ovoid feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	0.90m+
	139	Mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 138.	0.90m+
	140	Medium-sized irregularly shaped feature. Unexcavated.	Probable rubbish pit.	0.90m+
	141	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 140.	0.90m+
	142	Medium-sized ovoid feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	1.12m+
	143	Soft mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 142.	1.12m+
	144	Small oval feature. Unexcavated.	Probable post-hole.	1.14m+
	145	Mid grey-brown silty clay.	Fill of 144.	1.14m+
	146	Bricks laid on side 9.25 x 2.5 x 4.5 forming surface with 107 and 112.	Building floor or yard surface.	0.33m
	147	Soft mid -dark greyish brown silty loam with frequent charcoal fragments, some brick and tile fragments, animal bone and pot.	Reworked topsoil	0.47-0.73m
	149	Soft dark greyish brown silt loam with abundant small roots and a few small gravels	Reworked subsoil	0.73-1.07m
2	200	Unstratified finds from excavated spoil.	n/a.	n/a
	201	Soft dark greyish brown silt loam with abundant small roots and a few small gravels.	Reworked topsoil	0.26m
	202	Soft mid greyish-brown sandy loam with occasional charcoal fragments.	Reworked subsoil	0.15m
	203	Soft pale greyish-brown sandy loam with occasional charcoal fragments.	Reworked subsoil	0.19m
	204	Firm light-mid reddish brown fine sandy silt	Fluvioglacial deposit	0.33m
	205	Soft dark greyish brown silt loam with abundant clinker fragments over loose mid-brown sandy silt with abundant brick and mortar fragments.	Fill of 206.	0.33-1.1+
	206	Large pit feature, north and south sides are gradually sloping. Not bottomed	Post-medieval pit.	0.33m



207	Firm mid greyish-brown and light yellowish brown sandy silt with a few charcoal fragments and common small-medium subangular stones.	Fill of 213. Backfill of well.	0.60-1.15m+
208	As 207. Unexcavated	Probable post-hole.	0.60m
209	Soft dark greyish brown silt loam with abundant clinker fragments. Unexcavated	Post-hole.	0.60m+
210	As 202.	Bioturbation.	0.60m+
211	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt with c. 10% redeposited 204 and Common small-medium gravels.	Fill of 212.	0.60m+
212	Large pit feature. Unexcavated.	Rubbish pit.	0.60m
213	Large circular feature with near vertical sides. Not bottomed.	Well.	0.60m+

*Table 3: Descriptions of deposits and features*

#### 4.1.1 Natural deposits and reworked soils

Natural deposits in both trenches consisted of firm light-mid reddish brown fine sandy silts. These are evidently fluvioglacial deposits of late Devensian date, as mapped by The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1974). The soils above these deposits (silt loams over sandy silts) originated in the early part of the postglacial period, but have since been intensively reworked by a combination of natural and cultural processes.

#### 4.1.2 Medieval pits

The earliest archaeological features encountered in the sample trenches were two intercutting pits near the south end of Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5, contexts 118 and 120 and Plates 1 and 2). The fills of these features contained pottery of 14<sup>th</sup> century date. The pits can be assumed to have been excavated either for rubbish disposal or to extract the natural fine sandy silt for building or flooring material.

#### 4.1.3 Post-medieval deposits and features

The majority of the archaeological remains in both trenches were apparently of post-medieval (17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century) date. The greatest concentration of features was in Trench 1 where two definite and eight probable postholes were exposed (Figs 4 and 5, contexts 115, 122, 126, 130, 132, 136, 138, 140, 142 and 144), together with a possible beam slot (context 124) and a pit (context 114). All but the last feature are likely to represent the foundations of timber buildings, although the trench was too narrow to allow any coherent plan to be discerned.

The post-medieval features in Trench 2 consisted of a large pit towards the north end of the trench (Fig 4, context 206 and Plate 3), and a circular well (originally stone-lined, but since robbed) near the centre (Fig 4, context 207 and Plate 4). An unexcavated pit at the south end of this trench (context 212) may be contemporary or later.

#### 4.1.4 Modern features

Features of modern date were exposed above the reworked soils in the northern half of Trench 1. These consisted of a well-laid surface of Cotswold stone slabs and bricks (Fig 4, contexts 107, 112, and 146; Plate 5), a robbed-out and backfilled cellar immediately to the north (contexts 104-106; Plate 6), and a pit filled with densely packed glass at the far north end of the trench (context 110-110; Plate 7). The fill of the cellar contained common fragments of glass bottles, and a few many complete and near-complete bottles, together with other debris including brick fragments and metal objects.

## 4.2 Artefacts, by Alan J Jacobs

The total artefact assemblage is summarised in Table 4. The medieval, post-medieval, and modern pottery is summarised in Tables 5-7 and discussed by period. The rest of the assemblage is discussed by type.

Material	Total	Weight (g)
Medieval pottery	4	110
Post Medieval pottery	7	159
Modern Pottery	28	4728
Oyster	2	54
Iron object	2	25
Copper alloy object	1	6
Glass object	3	22
Glass vessel	94	9122
Glass window	1	1
Brick and Tile	14	2187
Bone	21	792
Stone	7	1456
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>18662</b>

Table 4: Quantification of material

### 4.2.1 Medieval pottery

The medieval pottery consisted of four sherds weighing 110g, consisting of 10% by count and 2% by weight, of the overall pottery assemblage and is quantified in Table 2. Three sherds came from the two medieval contexts (119 and 121) and have a *terminus post quem* (baseline) date of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. A single sherd of Malvernian Glazed ware (fabric 69) was residual in a later context. There were too few sherds for more effective characterisation or any meaningful comparison to be drawn with other local sites.

Fabric number	Fabric name	Total sherds	Weight (g)
55	Worcester type unglazed ware	1	73
64.2	Buff type glazed sandy ware	1	15
69	Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware	2	22
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>110</b>

Table 5: Quantification of medieval pottery

### 4.2.2 Post-medieval pottery

The post-medieval pottery consisted of just 6 sherds weighing 152g, just 15% by count and 3% by weight of the overall pottery assemblage, and is quantified in Table 3. All sherds came from the three post-medieval contexts indicating a low level of residual material. The fabrics consist entirely of post-medieval red sandy ware (fabric 78 and 78.1), that in context 115 giving a *terminus post quem* date of the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The other two post-medieval contexts have a more general 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century *terminus post quem* date. There were too few sherds for more effective characterisation or any meaningful comparison to be drawn with other local sites, however the lack of post-medieval fabrics in more modern contexts is significant, again suggesting little modern disturbance of earlier deposits.

Fabric number	Fabric name	Total sherds	Weight (g)
78.1	Post-medieval red sandy ware	5	150
78.3	Post-medieval fine red sandy ware	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>152</b>

Table 6: *Quantification of post-medieval pottery*4.2.3 **Modern pottery**

The modern pottery dominated the assemblage, and consisted of 29 sherds weighing 4.735kg, 95% by count and 95% by weight, and quantified in Table 4. The assemblage is dominated by miscellaneous modern stoneware (81.4) primarily in the form of ginger beer bottles or large storage jars (contexts 104 and 110). An example of 1 ginger beer bottle with Read and Sons Royal Sutton stone ginger and stamped with *Nulli Secundus* around a K stamped on the side was present. Another complete ginger beer bottle with “George Brearley and Evesham” stamped on the side and two conical flasks, one with a Lambeth stoneware stamp and indecipherable company stamp (Figure 1). This gives a close *terminus post quem* date of the context (104) as the Brearleys started ownership of the premises between 1901-4 and this form of jar falls out of use by 1920.

The association of this material with considerable amounts of early 20<sup>th</sup> century glass would indicate industrial/retail activity rather than domestic. By contrast modern stone china (fabric 85) was primarily concentrated in context 205, with a *terminus post quem* date of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The balance of forms from this context including bowls, a teapot handle and a variety of plates, would seem to indicate domestic rather than industrial activity. The single sherd of creamware (fabric 84) was located in 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century context. There were too few sherds for any meaningful comparison to be drawn with other local sites.

Fabric number	Fabric name	Total sherds	Weight (g)
81.5	Miscellaneous modern stone ware	13	4116
84	Creamware	1	7
85	Modern stone china	15	612
<b>Total</b>		29	4733

Table 7: *Quantification of modern pottery*

Context	TPQ Date
104	1904-1920
110	1880-1918
114	19 <sup>th</sup> century
115	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> –early 19 <sup>th</sup> century
117	17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> century
119	11 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> century
121	14 <sup>th</sup> century
125	17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> century
205	late 19 <sup>th</sup> century
208	19 <sup>th</sup> century

Table 8: *Context terminus post quem dates*4.2.4 **Ceramic building materials**

The ceramic building material recovered consisted of four fragments of brick weighing 838g, nine fragments of tile weighing 1.325kg (see Table 4). The presence of a single medieval glazed floor tile re-used in a post-medieval wall (context 207) is interesting as this may originate from Evesham Abbey (Hurst pers comm.). A number of fragments of brick dating most probably to the 18<sup>th</sup> century are also present in this context. An example of Malvernian glazed ridge tile of medieval date was present (context 115) as well as fragments of tile of more general medieval to post-medieval date range.

#### 4.2.5 **Stone**

A total of seven fragments of stone weighing 1.456kg were present in medieval (119) and post-medieval (115) contexts. These consisted of fragments of Blue Lias tiles with one near-complete form and an example of a nearly complete limestone tile. Such tiles have been found in medieval contexts elsewhere in Evesham, for example at 26 Cowl Street (Griffin 2000), although they may have been produced well into the post-medieval period.

#### 4.2.6 **Metalwork**

The single copper alloy object was identified as a small purse clasp from a modern context (104), the two iron objects were identified as nails and located in post-medieval or undated contexts (117 and 127).

#### 4.2.7 **Glass**

Only a single shard of window glass weighing 1g was present. From context 104 three marbles from codd bottles dating from 1880-1918 were recovered weighing in addition to a single example of a near complete form. A number of clear glass bottles, mould-made by an automatic bottle machine labelled with G Brearley of Evesham between 20 and 22cm in height, were present (Figure 2); as well as a less complete heavy based blue, blown glass soda fountain bottle 22cm in height. These must date from between 1901/1904-1949 when this company was in production on this site. An example of an Pumpherey & Son, Chemists, Evesham, heavy based blown glass soda fountain bottle 22cm in height was also present within context 204, as was a medicine bottle, furniture cream (Figure 3), beer bottle, and a large squared wide-mouthed sweet jar. A number of broken beer bottles were recovered from context 110 in addition to fragments of soda bottles, all dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 4.2.8 **Molluscs**

Two fragments of oyster shell were present in medieval (115) and post-medieval contexts (119) and were indicative of domestic waste.

#### 4.2.9 **Bone**

A total of 21 fragments of bone weighing 792g were present in medieval and post-medieval contexts (See Table 4). The medieval context 119 included examples of cow and sheep metacarpal, metatarsal, ulna and phalange bones (A Mann pers comm.). A similar pattern was indicated for the post-medieval context 115. The bones were fairly well preserved and can be seen as evidence of domestic activity and waste disposal during the medieval and post-medieval phases of this site. No bone was recovered from modern context, supporting indications of an industrial/retail use of these premises during this period as apposed to domestic activity.

#### 4.2.10 **Conclusions**

The assemblage does not indicate any prehistoric or Roman activity as has been recorded at other sites in Evesham. Medieval activity on the site is represented by two pits that date to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The small amount of pottery is problematical but the associated bone assemblage indicates domestic activity at this period. A similar pattern is indicated for the post-medieval period with an assemblage again indicating domestic activity. However, the bulk of the pottery is modern, dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is associated with considerable numbers of glass bottles which can be connected to industrial activity on this site. This indicates a change of use of this area in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that is very closely datable through a combination of archaeological artefacts and documentary sources.

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## 4.3 Building assessment

### 4.3.1 31 Port Street

31 Port Street consists of two elements: a much-altered 19<sup>th</sup> century house on the street frontage, and a 20<sup>th</sup> century extension to the rear (Fig 6). The older building is two storeys high with a gabled roof (Plates 11-13) which has slate on the front pitch and corrugated iron on the rear pitch (Plate 16). It seems originally to have been built with hand-made bricks in Flemish bond (Plates 14 and 15), although more modern bricks and irregular bonding have been used in at least one wall on the first floor and in the rear elevation (Plates 15 and 16), while the east side has been substantially rebuilt with concrete blocks. The original ground floor plan has been completely changed by modern conversion to retail use, and the original staircase, fireplace, and chimney have all been removed. The only original surviving original features are the front door, first floor windows, and dogstooth brickwork below the eaves.

The extension to the rear of the house is built of concrete blocks and is one storey high with a single pitched roof made of corrugated metal. It consists of two rooms and a toilet and bathroom.

### 4.3.2 Building to rear of 31 Port Street

Beyond the small yard or passage behind the extension to 31 Port Street is a large modern building built of concrete blocks and roofed in a gently sloping pitch with corrugated metal (Plate 17). There is an upper floor of four rooms in the rear of the building, but the front has only one storey. A large room open to the roof is accessed from the south via a metal sliding door.

### 4.3.3 Buildings to rear of 35 Port Street

The buildings to the rear of 35 Port Street consist of a large brick building and a small wooden extension attached to its north gable end (Plate 18). The large building is made of modern machine-made brick laid in stretcher bond with dogstooth brickwork below the eaves. The roof is pitched, tiled, and obviously modern, without a chimney (but with a weather vane). The windows and doors also appear to be modern. The area between this building and an obviously earlier two-storey brick building to the east is covered by a flat roof, but no other walls or structural elements exist.

## 5. Synthesis

Taken together, the archaeological, architectural, and documentary evidence encountered during the evaluation allows something of the history of the two plots to be understood and placed in appropriate contexts.

The suggested late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century origins of the plan-unit to which the plots belong is supported by the presence in Trench 1 of two intercutting pits of 14<sup>th</sup> century date. Such features are commonly found towards the rear of medieval plots, and their contents sometimes represent the standards of living and the trades or crafts practiced by the inhabitants. In this case, the artefacts from the pits in Trench 1 were too few and commonplace to bear such interpretations, although they clearly indicate that typical patterns of rubbish disposal took place on the plot. It is perhaps significant that no medieval features or pottery were found in Trench 2: while allowing that such features might exist outside the trench, it is possible that the nature of land-use in this plot was different, representing an owner with different trade or occupation.

No evidence was recovered of any activity on the site between the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century. Here again, it must be allowed that features of this period might exist elsewhere on the site. However, the lack of evidence for late medieval and post-medieval activity within early medieval plots is a recognised phenomena on investigated plots in Evesham, Pershore, and elsewhere in Worcestershire, and has been taken to indicate that both towns shrunk significantly in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, with plots becoming abandoned or used merely as gardens for as much as three or

four hundred years (Bryant 2003, 4). It is therefore possible that the archaeological evidence from the evaluation represent the same general trend of late medieval urban decline leading to abandonment or at least less intensive land-use.

The density of 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> features in Trench 1 suggest a renewal of urban activity in this period. Several buildings seem to be represented, and while nothing can be said of their plan or function, they suggest that the plot was being intensively used. By contrast, the only feature that is certainly of this date in Trench 2 is a well. Here again, it is possible that land-use within this plot was less intensive, and of a different nature. This suggestion is given some support by a description of the property in 1784, which refer to a malthouse, barn, stables, yard and gardens, and “the piece of ground at the bottom of the garden whereupon a barn formerly stood” (Indenture dated 24<sup>th</sup> November 1784, held at Almonry Heritage Centre Evesham). This description suggests a property with a distinctly suburban as opposed to urban character, and implies that this had existed for some time. No contemporary deeds could be traced for 31 Port Street during the project, but it would be interesting if some could be found at a later date, and if the description happened to be consistent with the character of the archaeological remains.

Some of the modern features in both trenches are of considerable interest in themselves, and more especially when viewed alongside documentary sources, and the contemporary buildings on the street frontage. The cellar found in Trench 1 is most likely to have belonged to a building which can be shown from Ordnance Survey maps to have stood sometime between 1891 and 1938. This building seems to have occupied the footprint of the present building behind 31 Port Street, plus a roughly equivalent area to the north. The cellar found in Trench 1 probably lay just inside the north wall of this building, and the stone and brick surfaces found to the south of the cellar probably represents its floor. This mapped size of the building and the nature of its remains would ordinarily suggest an industrial building, and in this case, abundant confirmation was found in the form of the bottles with which the cellar was filled, and the documentation associated with them. The bottles probably represent the products that were manufactured or at least stored in the building, and were themselves probably surplus stock that was discarded after the building was demolished. The industrial use of the rear of the plot in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it therefore an established fact. It is uncertain, however (at least to this author) whether the building on the frontage was the outlet for this industry. If so, then it may have been substantially converted to retail use around 1901, and indeed some of the surviving brickwork might date to this period.

The modern pits and postholes found in Trench 2 are much less diagnostic, and are not associated with documentary evidence. However, they clearly represent some kind of building or fencing in timber and some demolition of brick buildings, as well as the disposal of household rubbish. This all suggests a much higher level of activity than is evidenced in earlier periods. Intensive activity is also suggested by the architecture of the standing buildings, including number 35 Port Street, and by changes in the descriptions contained in 19<sup>th</sup> century deeds (eg Indentures dated 1835 and 1872 and mortgage dated 1887 held at the Almonry Heritage Centre, Evesham).

## 6. Significance

The significance of the deposits and features recorded in the evaluation can be assessed in terms of their character and date, how representative they are likely to be of other features in their vicinity, and what the known and potential archaeological resource can contribute to historical knowledge. In these terms, the medieval pits in Trench 1 must be regarded as moderately significant. In themselves, they provide valuable evidence for local and regional urban history, and they are probably reliable indicators of other features in the vicinity. Further medieval features are likely to exist within both plots at a depth of approximately 0.60-0.90m below the present surface. The area closer to the street frontage was not available for testing and it is possible that medieval deposits and features have survived later phases of building activity, though they are unlikely to be in a good state of preservation.

The rest of the deposits and features are less significant, as although they illustrate the later development and diversification of the suburb, their value as evidence is less than that of existing

buildings and documentary sources. The remains of the Brearley factory in the area of Trench 1 might be considered more significant, it is questionable whether associated remains would add very much to existing knowledge of the firm and its products.

The significance of the buildings can be assessed in similar terms, but must also take into account previous assessments. On this basis, it can be stated that only 31 Port Street (less its modern extension) has any architectural or historical value in view of its surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric and features, and its former status as a Grade III listed building (undated though c1960s list held by the Service). However, the building has been extensively rebuilt and extended since this assessment was made (current list available online at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>) and this has significantly compromised its integrity. The rest of the buildings have little or no architectural or historical value, with the possible exception of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brick building behind 35 Port Street, which could only be summarily assessed.

## 7. 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 asked to approve the content of the summary for such publication, or to raise any objections with the Service.

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 31-35 Port Street, Bengeworth, Evesham (NGR SP 0418 4364; WSM 34264). The aim of the evaluation was to characterise, date, and establish the significance of archaeological remains in the area of a proposed development, and to make an architectural and historical assessment of several buildings proposed for demolition. The site consists of two adjacent plots extending from Port Street to Lower Leys. These plots are thought to have been laid out in the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century as part of a wider suburban development, and remains of medieval and later date were anticipated.*

*Two 15×1.8m trenches were excavated behind the buildings in each plot. The trench behind 31 Port Street exposed two pits containing medieval pottery. No artefacts indicating particular crafts or trades were recovered, but the date of the pottery supports suggestions that the plot was laid out around the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous postholes and a possible beam slot of 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century date were found in the same trench, suggesting intensive building activity in this period. No evidence of late medieval or early post-medieval activity was found. A lack of evidence for activity in these periods has been noted in similar contexts elsewhere, and has been taken to indicate a protracted phase of abandonment or non-urban land-use. The cellar and surface of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century building was also found. This building is likely to have been the factory or store of Brearleys Mineral Waters Manufacturers between c1904 and 1949. Numerous bottles with Brearley stamps were found in the fill of the cellar along with other bottles produced by local manufacturers.*

*No 14<sup>th</sup> century features were found in the trench excavated behind 35 Port Street, though such features would appear to be sparsely distributed and may exist elsewhere in the plot. There was, however, a similar lack of evidence for late medieval and early post-medieval activity. An increase in activity between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was represented by a well, two rubbish pits and several postholes, although, as before, this activity seems to have been less intensive, and for this period there is documentary evidence for arrangements of a semi-rural character.*

*Of the buildings proposed for demolition, 31 Port Street has the most architectural and historical interest with regard to its surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric and frontage. However, the building has no discernable features that give it any considerable merit and its integrity has been significantly compromised by extensive 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations.*

8. **The archive**

The archive consists of:

2	Fieldwork progress records AS2
4	A3 Drawing sheets AS34
3	Trench records AS41
6	Abbreviated context sheets AS40
2	Boxes of finds
1	Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum  
Hartlebury Castle  
Hartlebury  
Near Kidderminster  
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ  
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

9. **Acknowledgements**

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10. **Personnel**

The project was led by Darren Miller. The fieldwork was undertaken by Darren Miller and Jon Milward. The report was written by Darren Miller, with contributions from Alan J Jacobs and Jon Milward. Carolyn Hunt produced the illustrations. The report was edited by Simon Woodiwiss.

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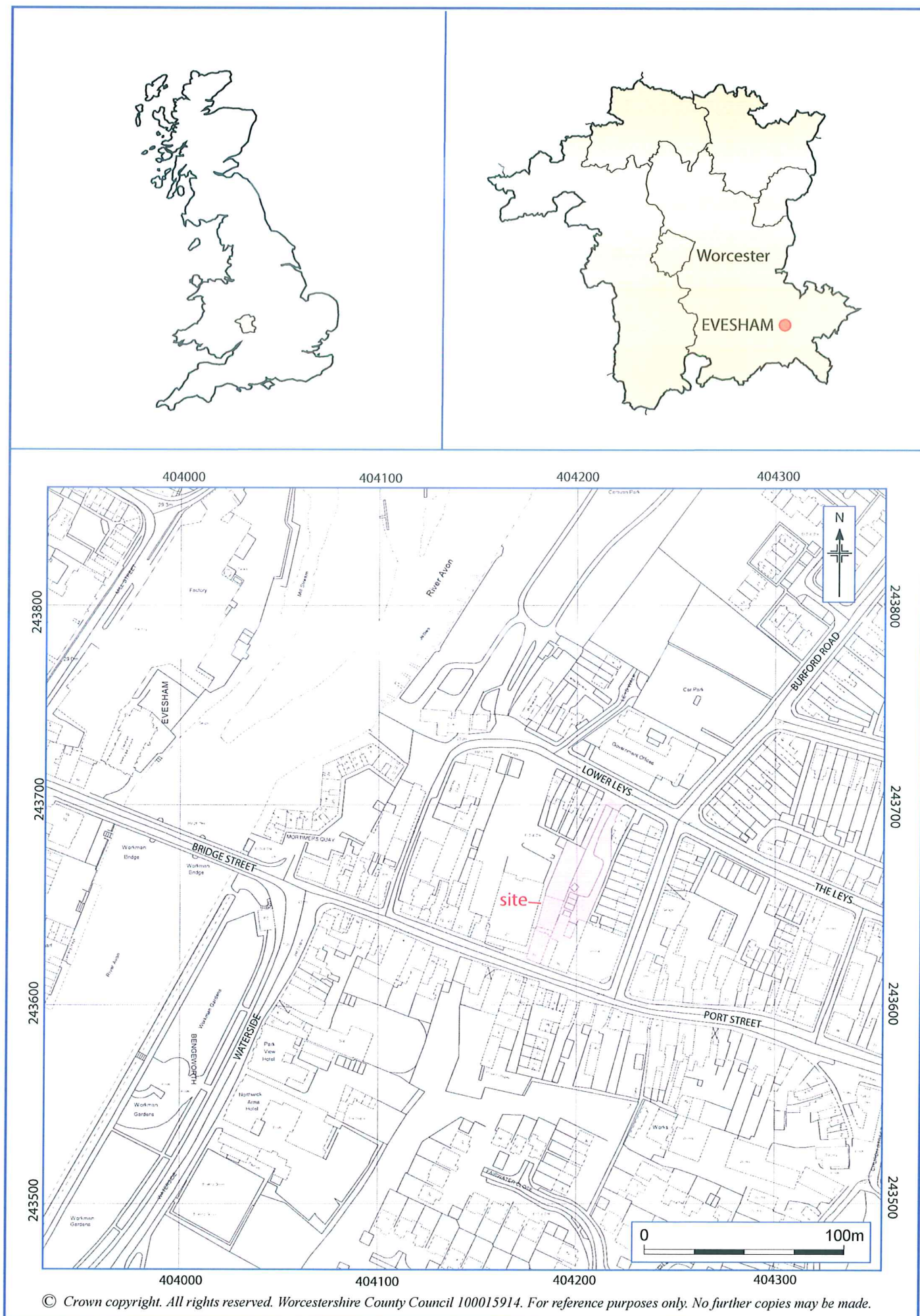
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12. **Appendix 1 Figures**



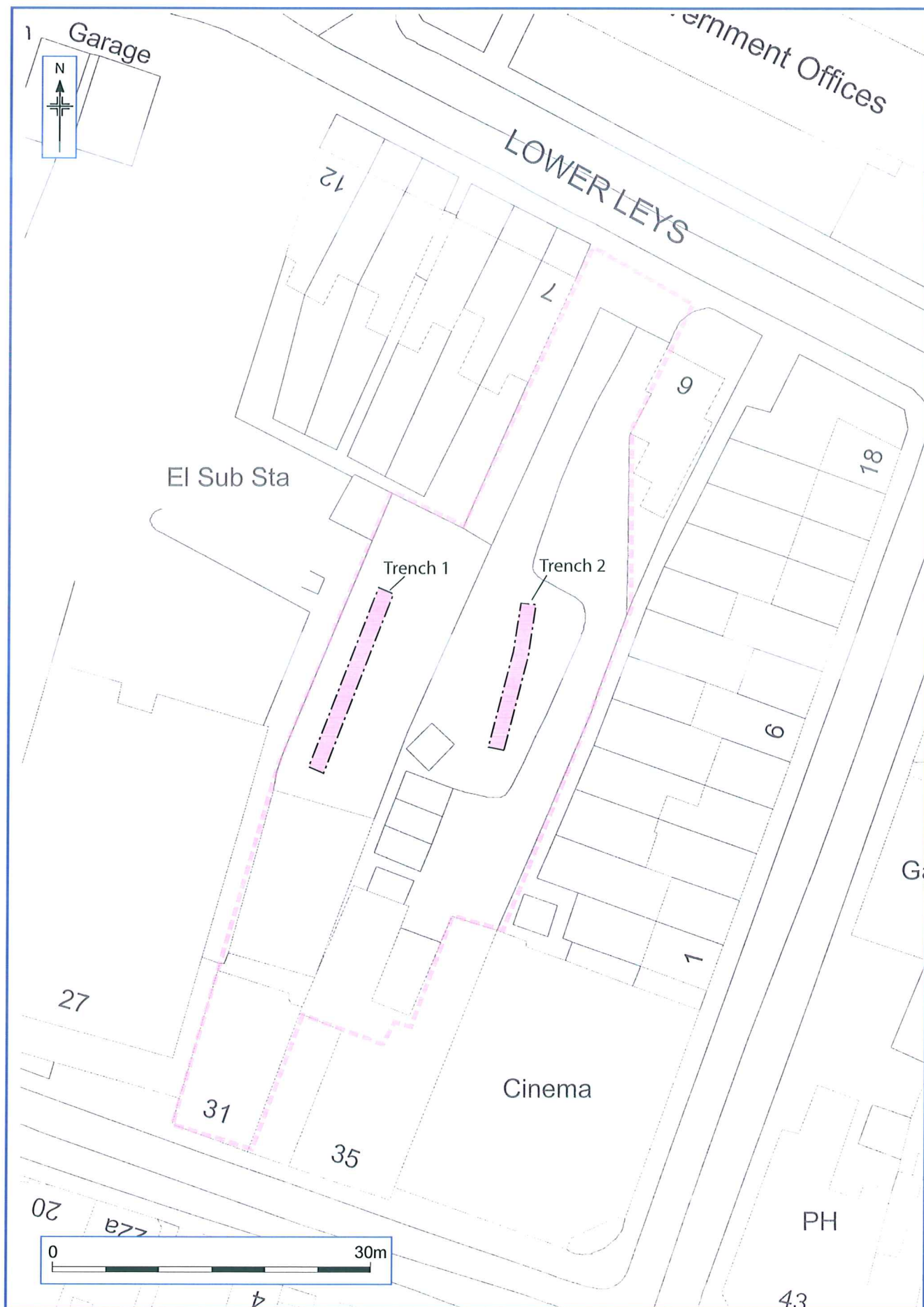
Location of the site.

Figure 1







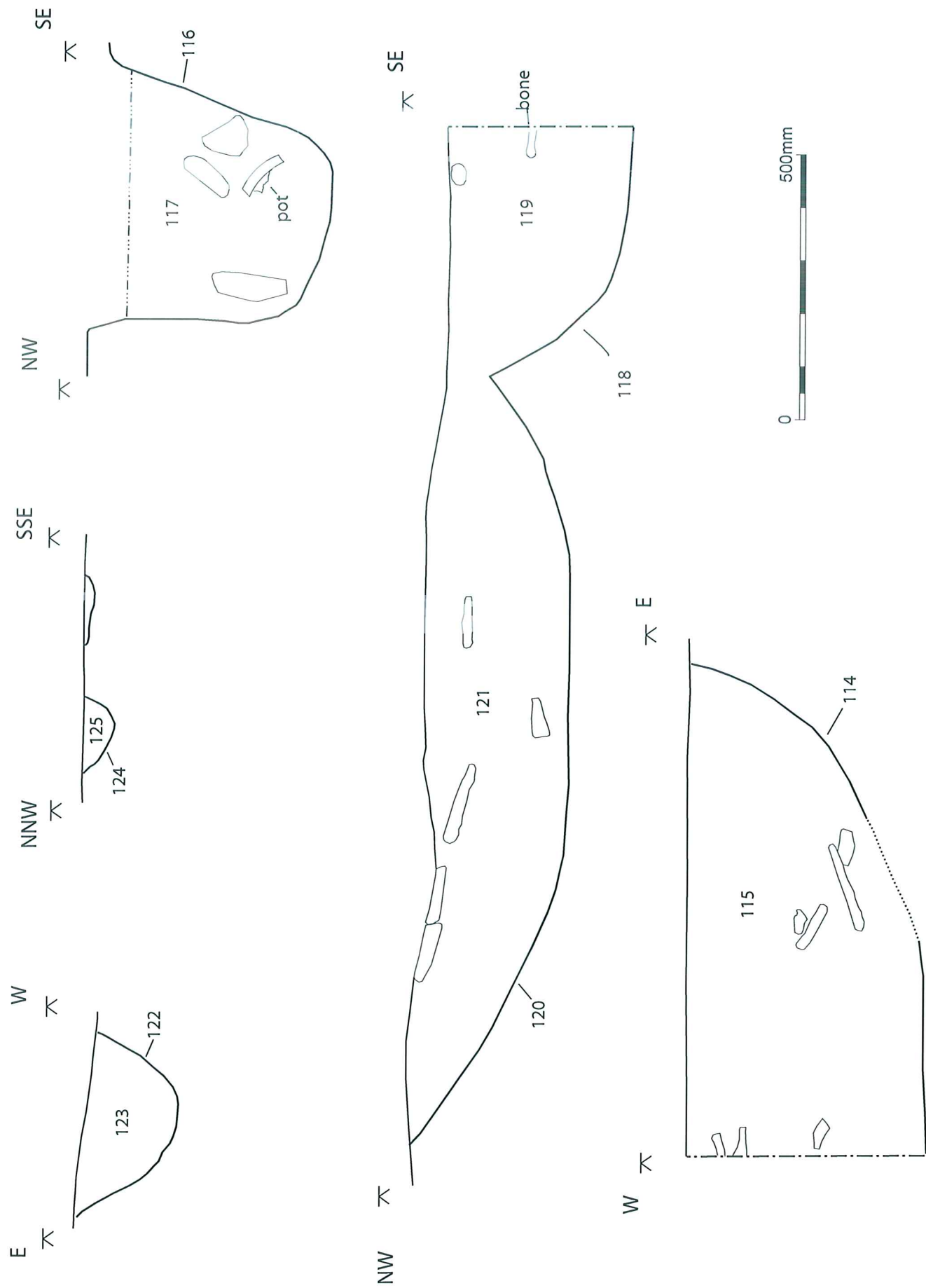


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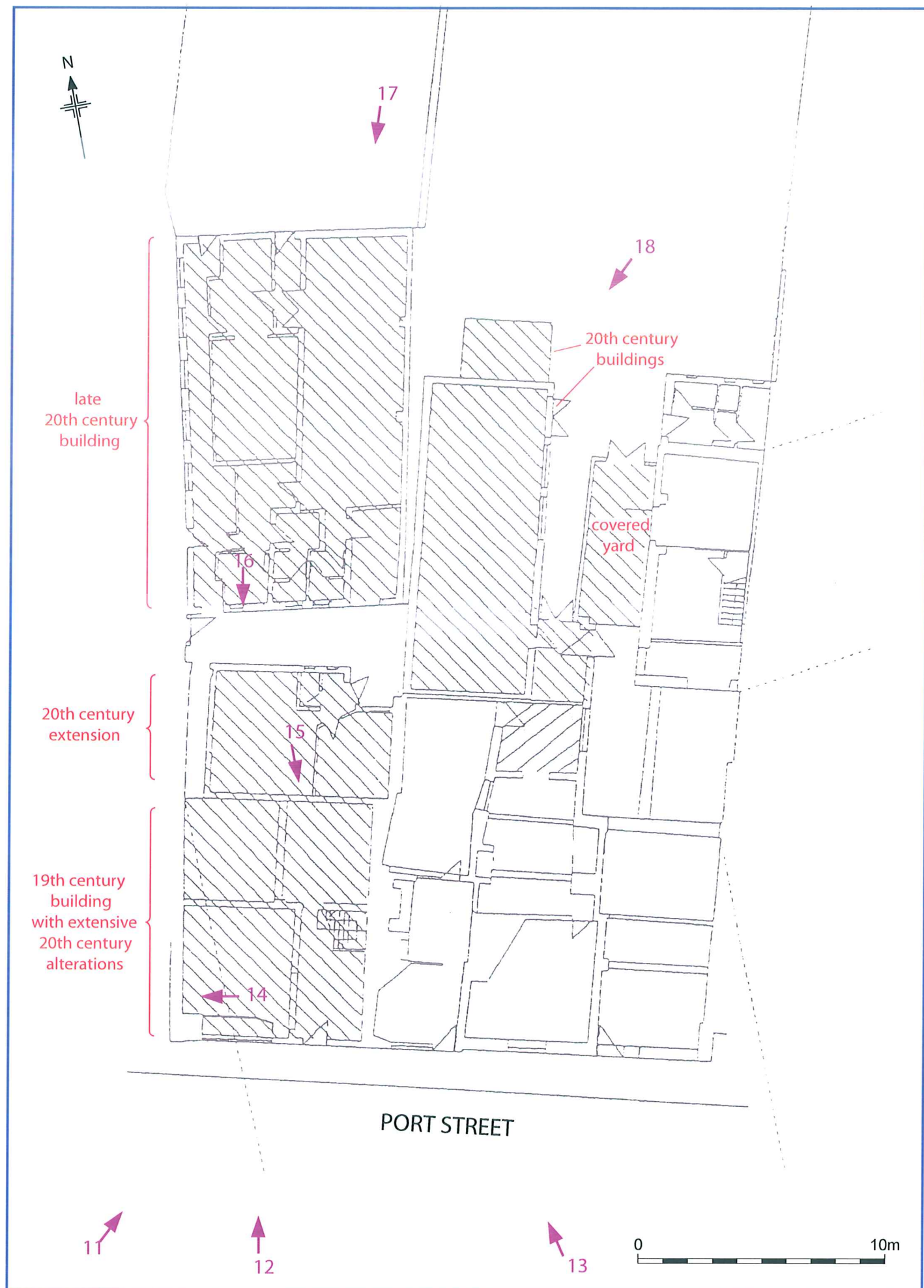
Trench location plan

Figure 3





Sections through features in Trench 1



Plan of buildings scheduled for demolition, with additional information and photopoints  
(after ADS 2004)

Figure 6



13. **Appendix 2 Plates**



*Plate 1: Trench 1 after sample excavation*



*Plate 2: Medieval pits at south end of Trench 1 (contexts 118-121)*

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*Plate 3: Post-medieval pit at north end of Trench 2 (contexts 205 and 206)*

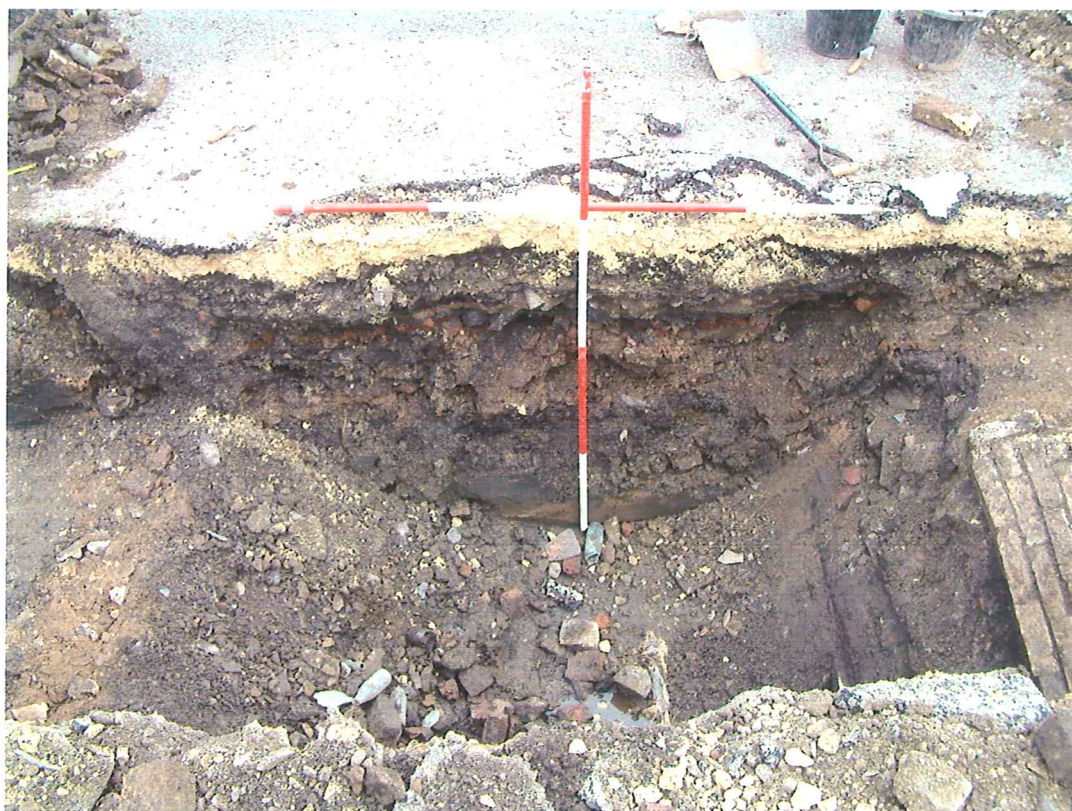


*Plate 4: Post-medieval well near centre of Trench 2 (contexts 207 and 213)*





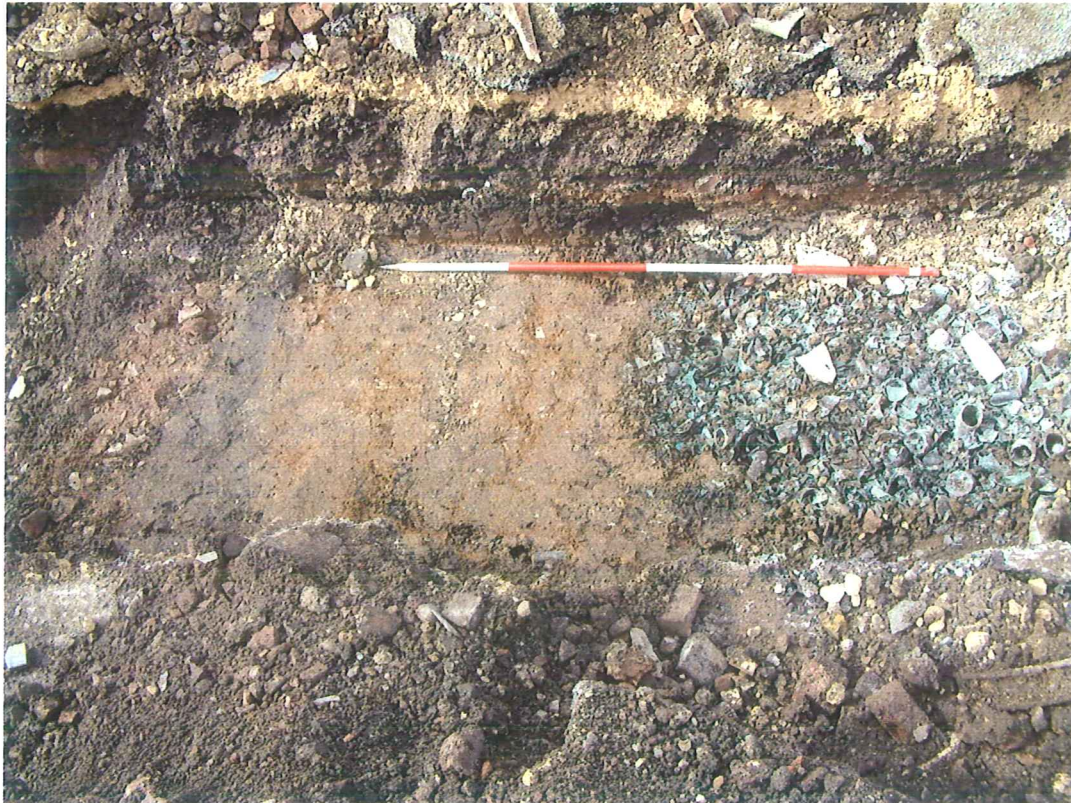
*Plate 5: Modern surface near centre of Trench 1 (contexts 107, 112, and 146)*



*Plate 6: Modern cellar near centre of Trench 1 (contexts 104-106)*

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*Plate 7: Modern rubbish pit at north end of Trench 1 (context 110 and 111)*



*Plate 8: Stoneware jars and bottles*





*Plate 9: A variety of Brearley glass bottles*



*Plate 10: Furniture cream bottle and Pumfrey and Son medicine bottle*

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*Plate 11: frontage of 31-35 Port Street facing north-east*



*Plate 12: front of 31 Port Street*





*Plate 13 Frontage of 31-15 Port Street, facing north*



*Plate 14: Original brickwork of 31 Port Street*

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*Plate 15: Later brickwork in 31 Port Street*



*Plate 16: Rear of 31 Port Street*





*Plate 17: Front of modern building behind 31 Port Street*



*Plate 18: Buildings to rear of 35 Port Street*

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