

# Archaeological evaluation at Wolverhampton Civic and Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

Worcestershire Archaeology  
*for Shaylor Group*

January 2019



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# WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC AND WULFRUN HALLS WOLVERHAMPTON

Archaeological evaluation report

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## SITE INFORMATION

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Site name: Wolverhampton Civic and Wulfrun Halls  
Local planning authority: City of Wolverhampton Council  
Planning reference: 15/00785/FUL  
Central NGR: SO 91217 98754  
Commissioning client: Richard Routley of Shaylor Group  
WA project number: P5460  
WA report number: 2665  
HER reference: EBL 969  
Oasis reference: fieldsec1-340929

<b>DOCUMENT CONTROL PANEL</b>				
Version	Date	Author	Details	Approved by
1	29/01/2019	Peter Lovett	Draft for comment	Tom Rogers

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# Archaeological Evaluation at Wolverhampton Civic and Wulfrun Halls, Wolverhampton

By Peter Lovett

With contributions by Rob Hedge and Elizabeth Pearson

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

## Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in Wolverhampton Civic and Wulfrun Halls, Wolverhampton (NGR SO 91217 98754). It was commissioned by Richard Routley of Shaylor Group, in advance of proposed renovations and alterations to the existing buildings. A planning application will be submitted to City of Wolverhampton Council.

The halls which were built in the 1930s are located on the western edge of the historic medieval core of Wolverhampton. Three test pits were excavated within the Halls, each measuring 2m by 2m. They were located to test potential survival within differing parts of the buildings that may be affected by the proposed development.

One test pit revealed the remains of a brick wall, being part of a probable prebendary house and later a Liberal Club, and deposits associated with the courtyard of the Old Mitre Inn which is depicted on historic maps. A second test pit identified garden soils of the 18th to 19th century in the middle of the Hall, whilst the third test pit at the western end of the site showed the complete truncation of all archaeological deposits by the construction of the Wulfrun Hall. The good survival of the post-medieval street at the eastern end of the site hints at the possibility of medieval remains surviving beneath them.

# Report

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background to the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA) in December 2018 at Wolverhampton Civic and Wulfrun Halls, Wolverhampton (NGR SO 91217 98754). This comprised three evaluation trenches. The project was commissioned by Richard Routley of Shaylor Group, in advance of proposed renovations and alterations to the existing buildings. A planning application will be submitted to City of Wolverhampton Council.

The project conforms to a brief (Appendix 4) prepared by City of Wolverhampton Council (COW 2018). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018) and approved by Eleanor Ramsey, Archaeology and Historic Environment Officer for City of Wolverhampton Council. The evaluation also conforms to the industry guidelines and standards set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in Standard and guidance: for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2014a)

### 1.2 Site location, topography and geology

The application site is located on the north-west side of central Wolverhampton, within the inner ring road. The site comprises a rectangular area of approximately 3,300m<sup>2</sup>, and is bounded on all sides by roads, with Red Lion Street on the west, Mitre Fold to the north, and North Street to the east. Corporation Street to the south is pedestrianised. To the north is the Telephone Exchange, in the east the Civic Centre and St Peter's Square, to the south is the Town Hall and Magistrates Court, whilst to the west are the backyard plots of buildings fronting on to Waterloo Road.

The site is entirely occupied by the Civic and Wulfrun Halls, being parts of one development constructed in the 1930s. Both halls are undergoing renovation, with all three test pits to be excavated through existing concrete slabs.

The site slopes down from c 156m AOD on the eastern side to 153m AOD in the west (Plate 2). It sits on Chester Formation Sandstone and Conglomerate, Interbedded (BGS 2019).

## 2 Archaeological and historical background

### 2.1 Introduction

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) of the site was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (Lovett 2018), on behalf of Shaylor Group. The findings presented in the DBA are summarised below.

### 2.2 Prehistoric

No prehistoric finds or sites are recorded, though a Bronze Age palstave was discovered at St Peter's Church in 1907, some 140m to the east. Analysis of historic mapping has suggested that Wolverhampton originated as an Iron Age hillfort, with the study site lying immediately to the west of this possible early settlement.

### 2.3 Saxon and early medieval

The first mention of Wolverhampton in the historic record is in AD 985, when the estate of Hampton is granted to a Mercian noblewoman called Wulfrana. She later endowed some of this land to found a church, which in turn may have been a replacement of a 7th century minster church. A Saxon cross is located in St Peter's churchyard.

### 2.4 Medieval



Wolverhampton held one manor in 1086, and was the confluence of several important roads, facilitating trade. It had a market from at least the late 12th century and was granted a market charter in the mid-13th century, whilst the booming wool trade in the 14th and 15th centuries increased its prosperity further.

One of the six prebendary properties known to have existed within the settlement was located within the development site, on North (formerly Goat) Street. A fire approximately 330m south of the site destroyed over 100 houses in 1590, and whilst it is not known how far the conflagration spread, it may have affected properties within the study site.

A number of excavations have been undertaken close to the development site, though rarely have medieval deposits been identified. It is thought that post-mediaeval activity has removed the earlier material.

## 2.5 Post-medieval

Cartographic evidence for the eastern side of the site, fronting on to North Street shows little change from the earliest map of 1750 until the demolition of the block in the 1930s prior to the construction of the Halls. The only difference is likely to be in function, with the central plot thought to be the prebendary house in 1750, but marked as a club by the time of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map in 1886. Adjacent to this to the north is by 1886 the Old Mitre Inn. To the rear of these buildings the land was initially ornamental gardens. The northern side of the plot was the first to be developed, when by 1842 there was a row of small buildings, before the southern and to a lesser extent the western ends were built upon by 1886.

The Civic and Wulfrun Halls were constructed between 1936 and 1938.

## 3 Project aims

- To establish whether archaeological deposits survive and to assess their condition and significance

## 4 Project methodology

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018). Fieldwork was undertaken between 10th December and 19th December 2018.

Three trenches, each measuring 2m x 2m, were excavated over the site, representing a sample of 1.6% on the 750m<sup>2</sup> of applicable land. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

The trenches were located to target areas of potential future excavation.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed by hand, as there was not sufficient access for mechanical plant. Archaeologically significant deposits were then investigated. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). Context data was also recorded using the digital Archaeological Recording Kit (ARK) developed by L-P Archaeology and adapted for use for WA. Trench and feature locations were surveyed using a differential GPS with an accuracy limit set at 0.04m.

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

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology. Subject to the agreement of the landowner it is anticipated that it will be deposited at Wolverhampton City Archives.

## 5 Archaeological results

### 5.1 Introduction

The features recorded in the trenches are shown in Figures 3-9. The trench and context inventory is presented in Appendix 1.

### 5.2 Trench descriptions

#### 5.2.1 Natural deposits across the site

The natural substrate was observed only in Test Pit 3, where it was a firm mid reddish brown silty sand with flecks of green sand within it. It was observed 0.37m below the concrete slab.

#### 5.2.2 Test Pit 1

The earliest observed deposit in Test Pit 1 was wall 108 (Figs 3, 6, 7: Plates 1-4), which ran east to west along the southern edge of the test pit. It was constructed of red bricks measuring 9.5" x 5" x 2.5", in English bond. It stood at least 1.05m high, and was 0.52m below the concrete slab. The northern face that was revealed within the test pit was pitted by weathering, suggesting it was an external face. This corresponds with the cartographic evidence.

A small sondage was excavated against the face of wall 108. Abutting the wall was 113, a dark grey soil with frequent brick fragments. Upon this was constructed a curved brick structure 112 (Plate 4). This consisted of red bricks laid with a curve to the north-east. It was two bricks deep, with the bricks measuring 8.5" x 4.5" x 2.5", and it abutted the north face of wall 108 1.37m below ground level. This was covered by further deposits of dark silty sands, starting with 111 which contained material dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century. These deposits had brick and coal fragments throughout, before a thin mortar spread (106) sealed them. This material was the final deposit laid down before the block was demolished to make way for the Civic Hall in the 1930s. It was observed at 149.14m AOD or 1.05m below the concrete slab.

Overlying this mortar layer were a series of demolition dumps that were clearly tipped from the south to the north, as evidenced by the varying thickness (Plates 2-3). Two layers of compacted clay were laid down to level the site prior to the excavation of the foundation trench for the walls of the Civic Hall. The depth of these demolition deposits, along with the height of wall 108, suggests that the area to the north of the wall was considerably lower than the floor level of the building to which the wall belonged, else the wall would presumably not have survived as a standing structure.

A bed of brick rubble was laid upon which the concrete slab sat.

#### 5.2.3 Test Pit 2

Test Pit 2 revealed mainly garden soils. A sondage was excavated in the north-west quadrant of the test pit to a depth of 1.2m from the concrete slab (Figs 4, 8, 9: Plates 5, 8, 10). This revealed three silty sand layers. At the base of the sondage was layer 212; a distinct horizon from 211 above was discerned, suggesting a possible earlier surface. These two deposits returned artefacts of 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. The uppermost of these three deposits, 210, was cut by a small gully 213. This gully ran roughly north-south. It was sealed by 206, a thin layer of crushed brick and mortar that was presumably laid as a yard surface (Plate 9). This was observed beyond the sondage, running up to the eastern and northern sides of the test pit. It had a relationship with a compacted surface layer 205 to the south, though this relationship was not tested by excavation. Above 205, emerging from the south-eastern corner of the test pit was a single course of bricks, laid on bed and header, with a single large stone at the southern end (Plate 11). The brick dimensions were 9.5" x 4.5" x 3". It was probably the remains of a path, though as its full extent was not revealed an interpretation cannot be certain.

Brick dust surface 206 was partially covered by a dark silty sand layer that increased in thickness as it sloped down to the west. It was present only in the western half of the test pit, and was probably

derived from a slow accumulation of wind and waterborne material. Sealing both 204 and structure 203 was a dark soil 0.19m thick (202), that contained large lumps of slag, as well as voids created by rotting wood, suggesting it had been derived at least partially from dumped material. It too sloped down to the west. Sealing it was a 0.5m thick layer of material (201) associated with the demolition of the block in the 1930s for the construction of the Civic Hall (Plates 6-7). Some post-1850s architectural pieces were recovered from this deposit, presumably from the buildings there present prior to 1936. Once more, this deposit was thicker at the western end, mirroring the general topography of the area. A concrete slab sealed the demolition material.

### 5.2.4 Test Pit 3

The construction of the Wulfrun Hall had completely removed any archaeological deposits, so that the removal of the concrete slab and brick rubble revealed the natural substrate 0.37m below the slab (Plate 12).

### 5.2.5 Trial Holes

Six trial holes were excavated by the construction team prior to archaeological works, in order to ascertain the depths of the existing Civic Hall foundations (Plates 13-18). Whilst these were excavated through the backfill of construction trenches from the 1930s, some archaeological deposits were occasionally visible in section. These trial holes were rapidly surveyed, and there follows a brief gazetteer:

Trial Hole	Brief description	Length	Width	Depth
TH1	No archaeology clearly visible, but the trial hole is located on the frontage of the prebendary house/ Liberal Club.	1.8m	0.65m	1.2m
TH2	No archaeology visible. Trial hole sat within the footprint of the Old Mitre Inn	1.3m	0.8m	1.1m
TH3	A probable wall is visible in the southern section, approximately 0.7m below the ground level. A possible brick wall is seen in the base of the hole running NE-SW, approximately 1.3m below ground level. The trial hole sits within the footprint of the Old Mitre Inn	1.8m	1.2m	1.4m
TH4	No archaeology visible. The base of the foundations was not reached, despite a depth of 2.7m being reached. It is within the footprint of the Old Mitre Inn so may be evidence of a cellar.	2.4m	1.2m	2.7m
TH5	No archaeology visible. The trial hole is located within backyards of plots facing onto Mitre Fold.	2.7m	0.8m	1.5m
TH6	A wall is visible in the eastern section, running NW-SE, surviving approximately 0.6m below the current ground level, to a depth of 1.1m below ground level. Beneath that is a possible garden soil then natural at around 1.65m below ground level. The wall may be part of a building fronting onto Corporation Street, though the alignment with the mapping isn't perfect.	2.6m	1.3m	2.3m

Table 1: A gazetteer of Trial Holes

## 6 Artefactual evidence

### 6.1 Artefact methodology by Rob Hedge

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for finds work by ClfA (2014b), for pottery analysis by PCRG/SGRP/MPRG (2016), for archive creation by AAF (2011), and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

#### 6.1.1 Recovery policy

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

#### 6.1.2 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 Microsoft Access database.

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 Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and [www.worcestershireceramics.org](http://www.worcestershireceramics.org)).

#### 6.1.3 Discard policy

Artefacts from topsoil and subsoil and unstratified contexts will normally be noted but not retained, unless they are of intrinsic interest (eg worked flint or flint debitage, featured pottery sherds, and other potential 'registered artefacts'). Discard of finds from post-medieval and earlier deposits will only be instituted with reference to museum collection policy and/or with agreement of the local museum.

### 6.2 Artefactual analysis

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2.

The assemblage came from 11 stratified contexts and could be dated from the medieval period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally poor, with the majority of sherds displaying high levels of abrasion. At 6.9g, the mean sherd size was below average, reflecting the fact that the pottery was largely recovered from disturbed contexts such as yard soils.

period	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)
medieval/post-medieval	ceramic	roof tile	1	424
	slag(fe)	slag	1	223
post-medieval	ceramic	clay pipe	4	9
		pot	10	79
	glass	vessel	6	434
	iron	nail	1	46
post-medieval/modern	carbon	Arc-lamp rod	1	45
	ceramic	engineering brick	2	7000
		pot	8	89

period	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)
		washer	1	6
		window mullion	1	5000
	glass	molten fused glass	1	26
		vessel	1	24
		window	1	8
	copper alloy	brass knob	1	38
	fuel ash slag	slag	1	11
	slag(fe)	slag	6	16,491
modern	ceramic	airbrick	1	1389
		brick	1	3320
undated	animal bone	misc. fragments	6	14
		horse humerus	1	207
<b>Totals</b>			<b>56</b>	<b>34,883</b>

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

broad period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	4	35
Post-medieval	91	Post-medieval buff wares	3	33
Post-medieval	100	Manganese mottled ware	1	3
Post-medieval	82	Tin-glazed ware	1	5
Post-medieval	84	Pearlware	1	7
Post-medieval/Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	11
Post-medieval/Modern	85	Modern whiteware	3	6
Modern	101	Unglazed earthenware	2	11
<b>Totals</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>111</b>

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

## 6.2.1 Summary artefactual evidence by period

### Medieval/early post-medieval

The oldest artefact in the assemblage was a roof tile from deposit (111). A hand-made nibbed tile with a sanded upper edge, it bore a cat's paw-print on the smooth lower edge (Plate 19). This is a common

feature of medieval and early post-medieval tiles, which were laid to dry in the open on a bed of sand. Nationally, pegged tiles are generally thought to supersede nibbed tiles by the 16th century (Drury 1981, 131); however, pegged tiles are still common in 16th and 17th century assemblages in the Severn Valley (eg. Fagan 2004, 360), and it seems likely that this trend extended to Wolverhampton. A date range of the 15th to 17th century is likely for this example.

Within the same deposit, a clay pipe stem and sherd of tin-glazed earthenware suggest a *terminus post quem* date of 17th to early 18th century.

A dense piece of iron slag from (206) is likely to be of medieval or early post-medieval date, but is not conclusively diagnostic.

#### Later post-medieval: 18th/19th century

Deposits (211) and (212) both contain a typical range of 18th and early 19th century domestic refuse, including buff earthenwares, black-glazed redware, and shell-edge pearlware.

Elsewhere, 19th century whitewares and stoneware are present within later deposits associated with the construction of the Civic Hall.

#### Modern: 20th century

Made ground and levelling deposits associated with the construction of the Civic Hall in the late 1930s (especially 201 and 202) contained large quantities of rubble: it cannot be securely provenanced, but included engineering brick of later 19th or early 20th century date, and a brick stamped 'WASHBOURNE', probably a product of the Premier Brickworks, located on Parkfield Road, Wolverhampton, and owned by Washbourne and Co. It is listed as trading between 1932 and 1940 (Sallery 2019).

Other material includes large, heterogeneous blocks of slag, weighing between 0.9kg and 8.2kg. Some are glassy and extremely dense, others bubbly and with a sulphurous odour. Their size and composition suggest they are slag products from steel production in blast furnaces, and are likely to have been imported to the site for use as hardcore.

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
106	glass	vessel	6	434	1800	1900	AD 1870 - 1940
	glass	window	1	8	1800	1940	
	ceramic	pot	2	57	1850	1940	
	carbon	arc-lamp rod	1	45	1870	1940	
107	ceramic	pot	2	11	1800	1940	AD 1850 - 1940
	ceramic	pot	1	2	1800	1940	
	ceramic	pot	1	11	1850	1940	
109	ceramic	pot	1	3	1800	1940	AD 1800 - 1940
111	ceramic	roof tile	1	424	1400	1700	AD 1600 - 1730
	ceramic	pot	1	5	1590	1730	
	ceramic	clay pipe	3	6	1600	1910	

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
201	ceramic	brick	1	3320	1932	1940	AD 1932 - 1940
	ceramic	airbrick	1	1389	1900	1940	
	ceramic	window mullion	1	5000	1850	1940	
	ceramic	engineering brick	2	7000	1850	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	8200	1710	1940	
202	slag(fe)	slag	1	2820	1710	1940	AD 1880 - 1940
	animal bone	animal bone	6	14	undated		
	copper alloy	brass knob	1	38	1800	1940	
	ceramic	clay pipe	1	3	1600	1910	
	glass	vessel	1	24	1880	1940	
	glass	molten fused glass	1	26	1800	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	922	1710	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	2080	1710	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	2230	1710	1940	
	iron	nail	1	46	1600	1900	
ceramic	washer	1	6	1880	1940		
204	fuel ash slag	slag	1	11	1600	1940	AD 1600 - 1940
	slag(fe)	slag	1	239	1600	1940	
206	slag(fe)	slag	1	223	1200	1900	AD 1200 - 1900
209	ceramic	pot	1	1	1800	1900	AD 1800 - 1900
	ceramic	pot	1	3	1670	1750	
211	ceramic	pot	3	33	1700	1800	AD 1700 - 1800
	ceramic	pot	2	9	1700	1800	
212	animal bone	horse humerus	1	207	undated		AD 1775 - 1830
	ceramic	pot	2	26	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	1	7	1775	1830	

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

## 6.3 Recommendations

### 6.3.1 Further analysis and reporting

The following recommendations are made with regard to further work on the artefacts considered as part of this report.

- A brief macroscopic analysis of the slag by a historical metallurgist could be usefully incorporated into any further mitigation work on the site.

### 6.3.2 Discard and retention

The material will be retained pending discussion with the Archaeology Officer for City of Wolverhampton Council. The majority of the assemblage is not considered a priority for retention. However, some elements, including the roof tile, are of local interest and should at least be considered for handling collections or educational purposes.

## 7 Environmental evidence

### 7.1 Animal bone by Elizabeth Pearson

#### 7.1.1 Project parameters

The environmental project conforms to guidance by ClfA (2014a) on archaeological evaluation and guidance by English Heritage (2011) and Association for Environmental Archaeology (1995).

#### 7.1.2 Aims

The aims of the assessment were to determine the state of preservation, type, and quantity of environmental remains recovered, from the samples and information provided. This information will be used to assess the importance of the environmental remains.

#### 7.1.3 Methods

Animal bone was hand-collected during fieldwork.

#### 7.1.4 Report

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from modern layers of 18th century to early 20th century date (Table 4). Bird bones were noted in layer (202) and a single butchered distal horse humerus. This is likely to be the remains of kitchen and agricultural waste. Little interpretation could be made of this material.

context	material class	material subtype	count	weight(g)	feature type	period	phase	comments
202	bone	animal bone	6	16	Layer	Modern	Late 19th to early 20th century	Includes bird bones
212	bone	animal bone	1	208	Layer (yard soil)	Modern	Late 18th to early 20th century	Horse humerus, butchered

Table 4: Hand-collected animal bone

## 8 Discussion

The three test pits reveal the level of preservation of archaeological deposits across the site.



The brick wall revealed in Test Pit 1 aligns perfectly with the cartographic evidence, being the northern wall of what was the prebendary house and later the Liberal Club. A prebendary house was known to exist on North Street from the medieval period through to the post-medieval period, after which it became the Liberal Club (as identified on the 1886 Ordnance Survey). Whilst the brick wall identified in Test Pit 1 was probably of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date, replacing a medieval building, it does offer the potential for the survival of deposits relating to the earlier building.

The thickness of the demolition material to the north of this wall suggests that the small courtyard depicted on the 1886 Ordnance Survey map was substantially lower than the floor levels of the Liberal Club. The first archaeological deposits were encountered 1.2m below the concrete slab, yet the top of the wall survived just 0.52m below the slab. Whether this change in height was restricted to the courtyard, or if the Old Mitre Inn was also significantly lower than its neighbouring building is unknown. The deposits encountered in this courtyard are as expected, heavy with fragments of glass, coal and brick. The curved brick structure that abuts wall 108 is a later addition to the space, and may be part of some steps into the pub.

The deposits identified in Test Pit 2 are similarly well preserved, with demolition deposits sealing the archaeology rather than the construction of the Civic Hall truncating it greatly. These deposits begin at 0.5m below the concrete slab, and were excavated in a sondage to a depth of 1.2m. The material is all indicative of backyard activity, being mainly garden soils and surfaces dating to the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. The brick structure that is present was likely a basic path within a backyard plot.

The construction of the Wulfrun Hall, along with the natural slope down to the west of the ground, has resulted in a complete truncation of any archaeological deposits in Test Pit 3.

The evidence from the trial holes, though not obtained through archaeological methods, does provide further information on the levels and depths of preservation in more of the Civic Hall, as well as hinting at a cellar for the Old Mitre Inn.

## 9 Significance

The site has the potential to inform a number of research questions, as outlined in Watt (2011). Whilst this evaluation did not identify any medieval deposits, the potential for their survival still exists, and some consideration should be given to the relevant research objectives. The most pressing research aim which the site has the potential to inform is of the general scarcity of frontage excavations in urban medieval towns, which needs to be addressed by identifying potential for excavation (Watt 2011, 184). The presence of a prebendary house that functioned from the medieval into the later post-medieval period offers the potential for the preservation of at least some fabric dating from the medieval period, even with the building having undergone some level of reconstruction in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Post-medieval research aims include the evidence of leisure activities including formalised leisure like pubs (ibid, 221-222), and investigating the emergence of technologies, for example the progression of the installation of gas lighting (ibid, 222-223). The survival of the post-medieval street frontage, with its pubs and clubs, could inform both of these questions.

Such potential for the answering of research aims should give the site regional significance.

## 10 Conclusions

Three test pits measuring 2m by 2m were excavated across the footprint of the Civic and Wulfrun Halls. Test Pits 1 and 2 revealed the survival of archaeological remains of post-medieval date, whilst Test Pit 3 demonstrated the complete truncation of archaeological deposits during the construction of the Wulfrun Hall.

The potential of the site suggests a regional significance for the medieval and post-medieval remains.

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. Conditions were suitable in all of the trenches to identify the presence or absence of archaeological features. Future work would however benefit from consideration of more extensive lighting, as no natural light could reach the test pits. The electric lighting available bathed everything in a yellow glow, and this could potentially mask less obvious stratigraphic evidence if more extensive investigation it undertaken. It is considered that the nature, density and distribution of archaeological features provide an accurate characterisation of the development site as a whole.

## 11 Project personnel

The fieldwork was led by Peter Lovett, assisted by Elspeth Iliff and Hazel Whitefoot.

The project was managed by Tom Rogers. The report was produced and collated by Peter Lovett. Specialist contributions and individual sections of the report are attributed to the relevant authors throughout the text.

## 12 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following: Richard Routley and Steve McGuigan of Shaylor Group for commissioning the project, and for their help during the fieldwork. The project was monitored by Eleanor Ramsey, Archaeology and Historic Environment Officer for City of Wolverhampton Council and Worcestershire Archaeology would also like to thank them for their advice.

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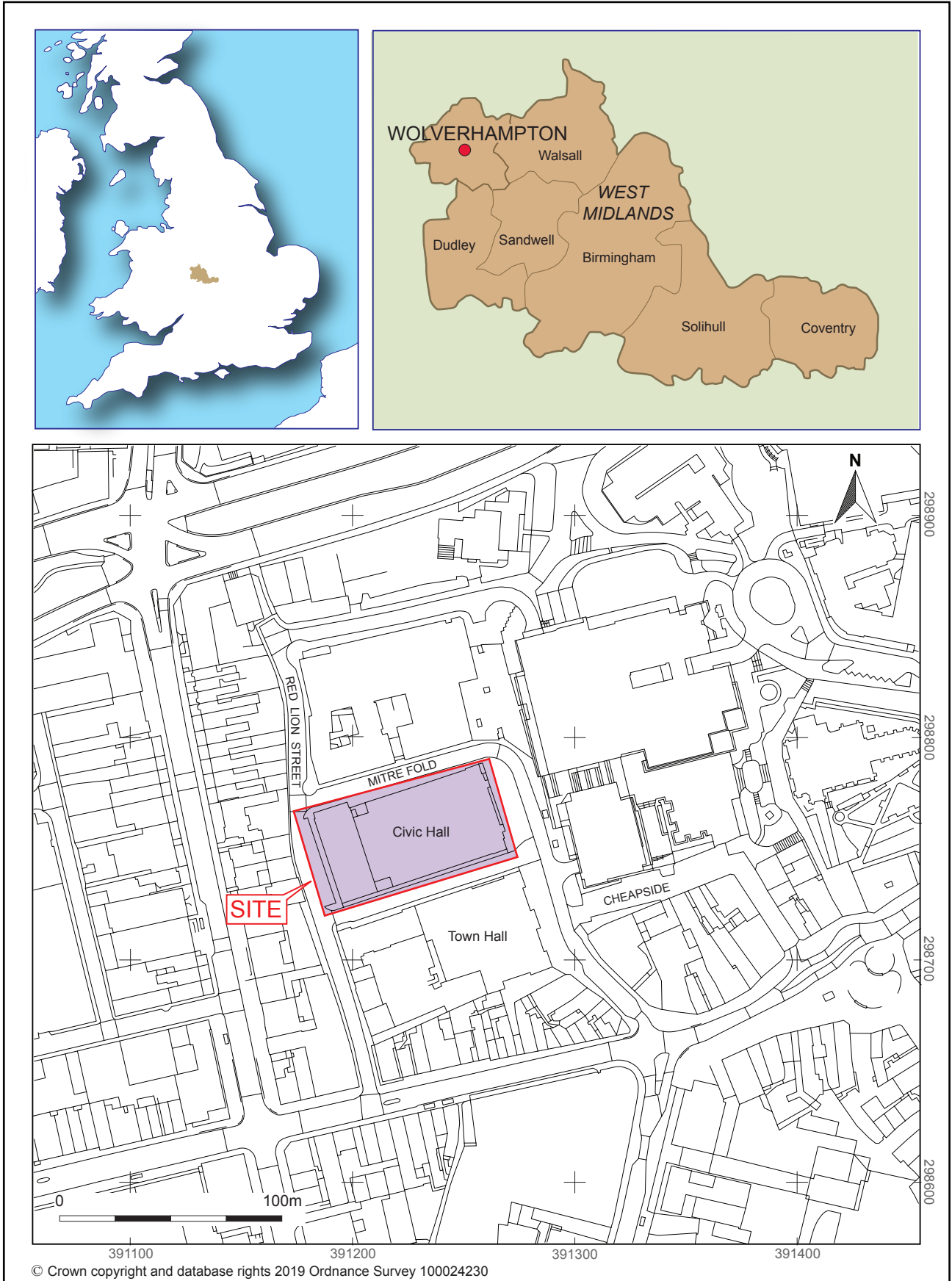
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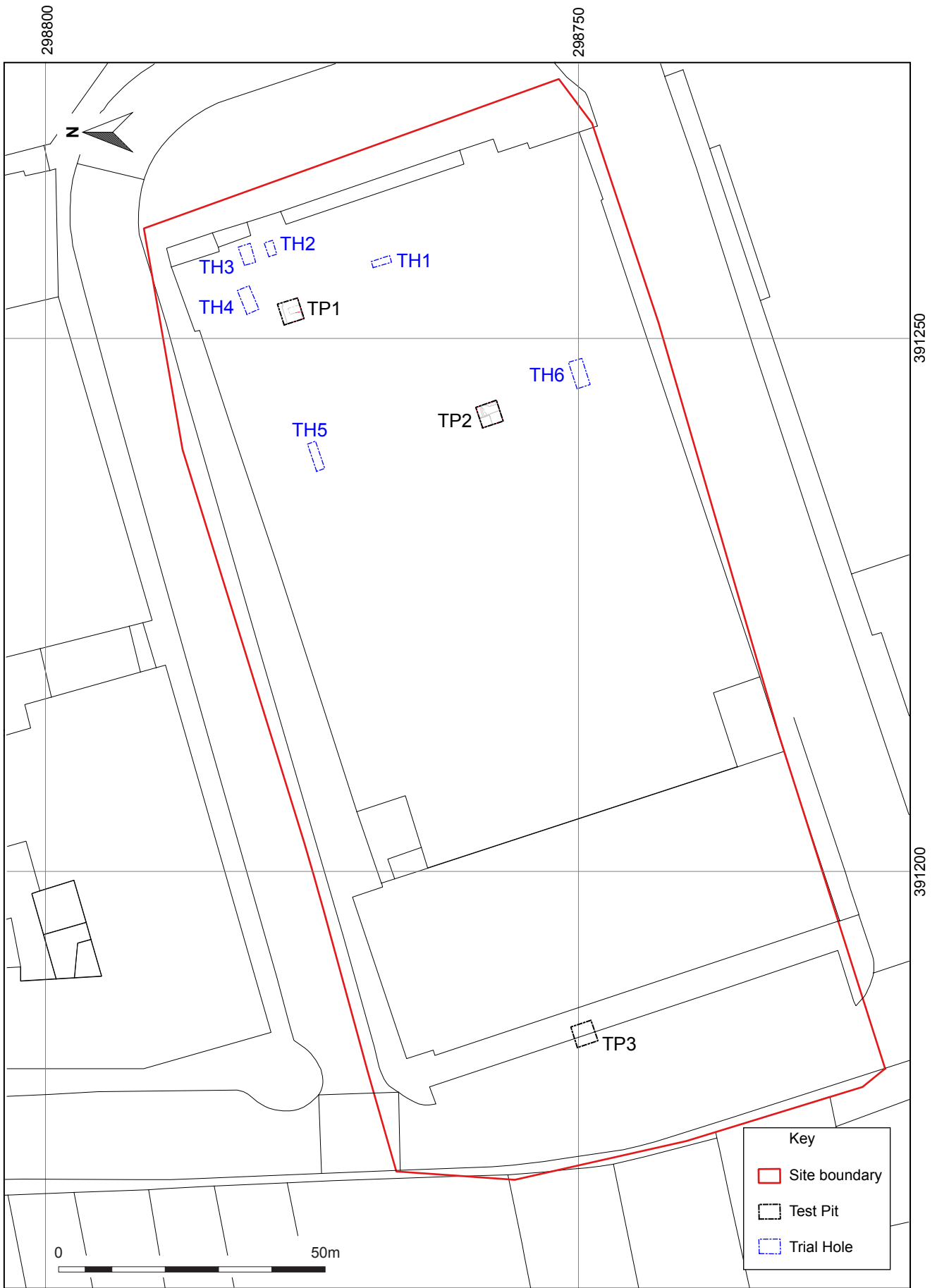


## Figures



Location of the site

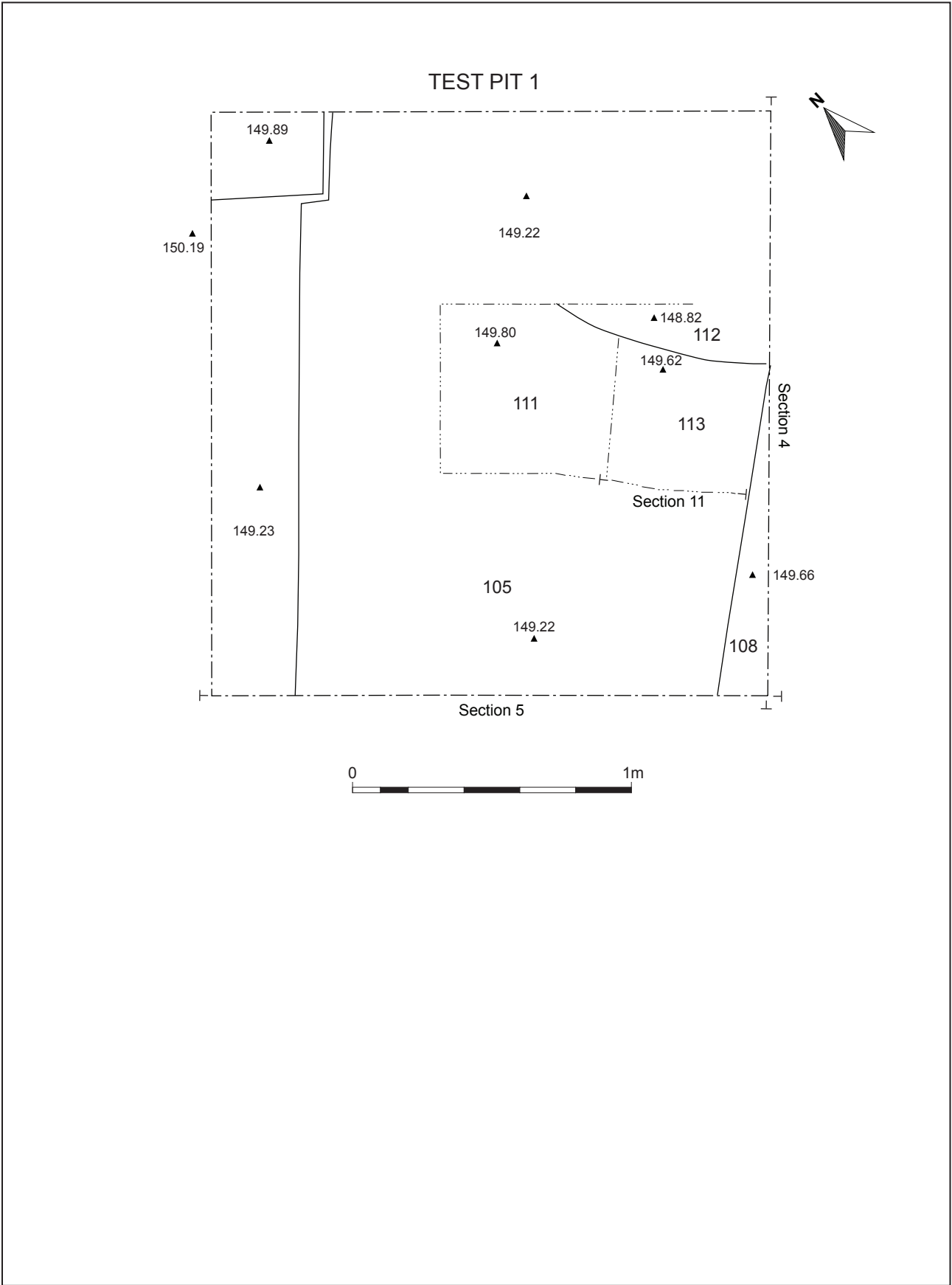
Figure 1



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Location of Test Pits and Trial Holes

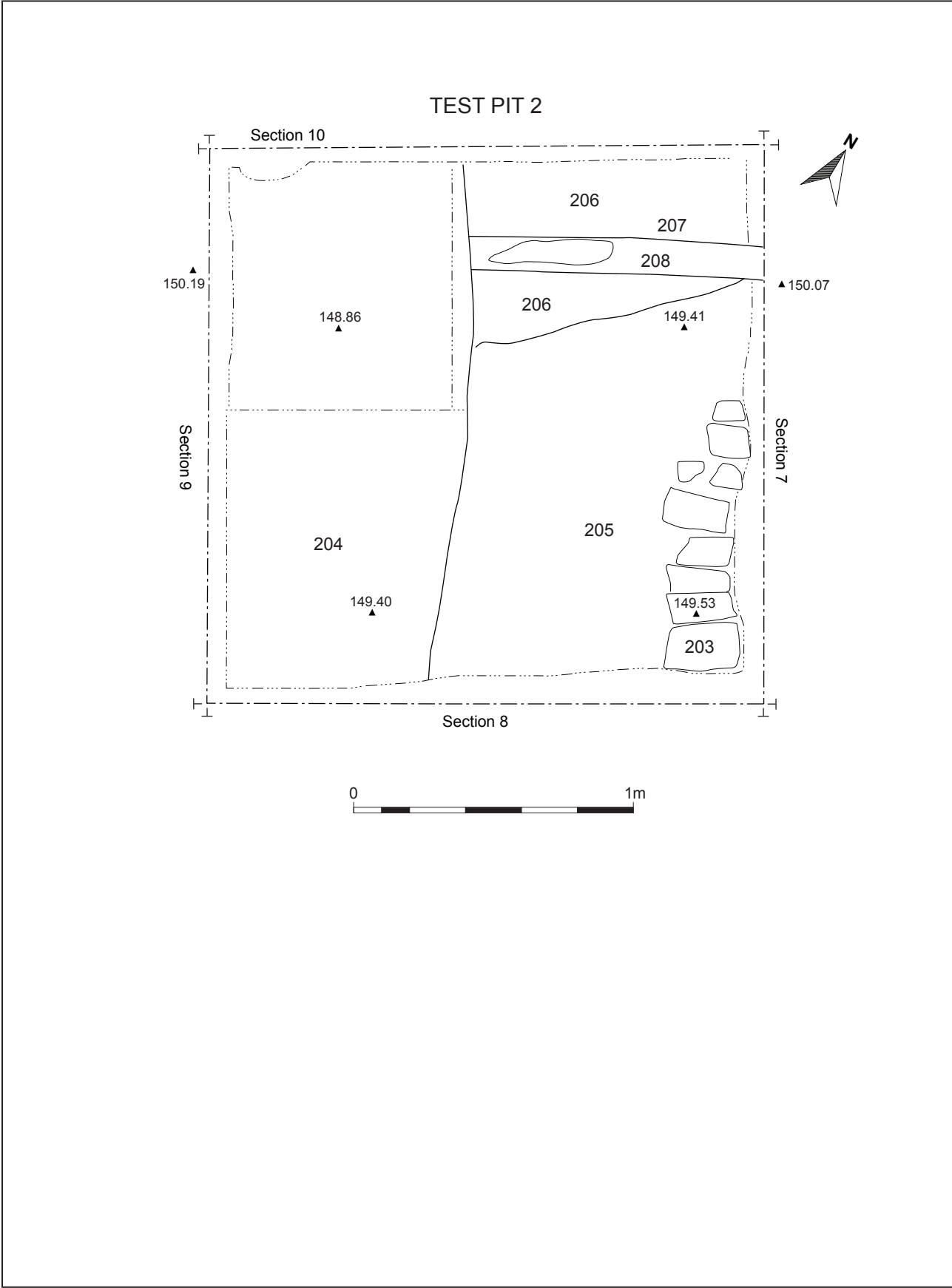
Figure 2



Plan of Test Pit 1

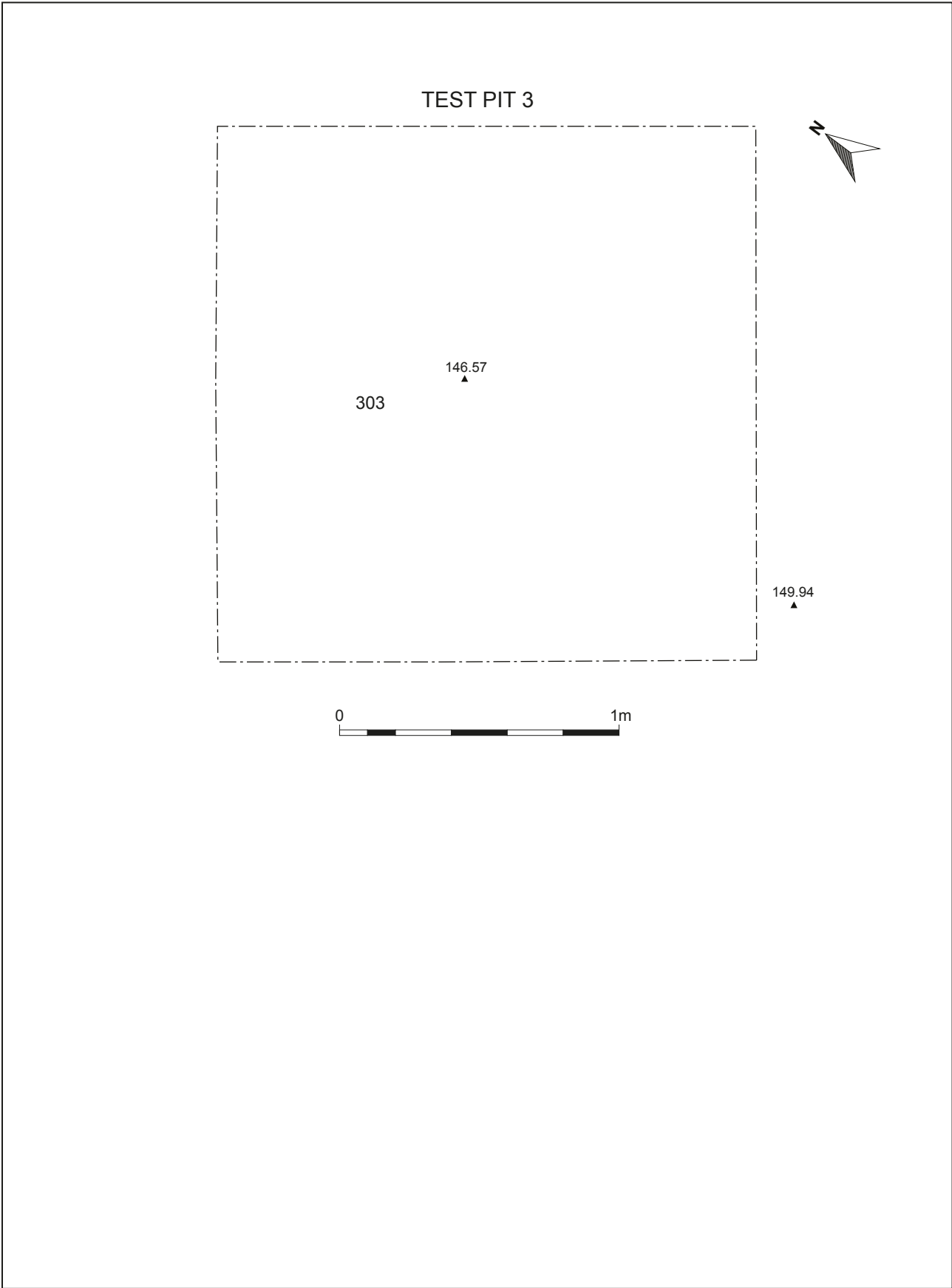
Figure 3





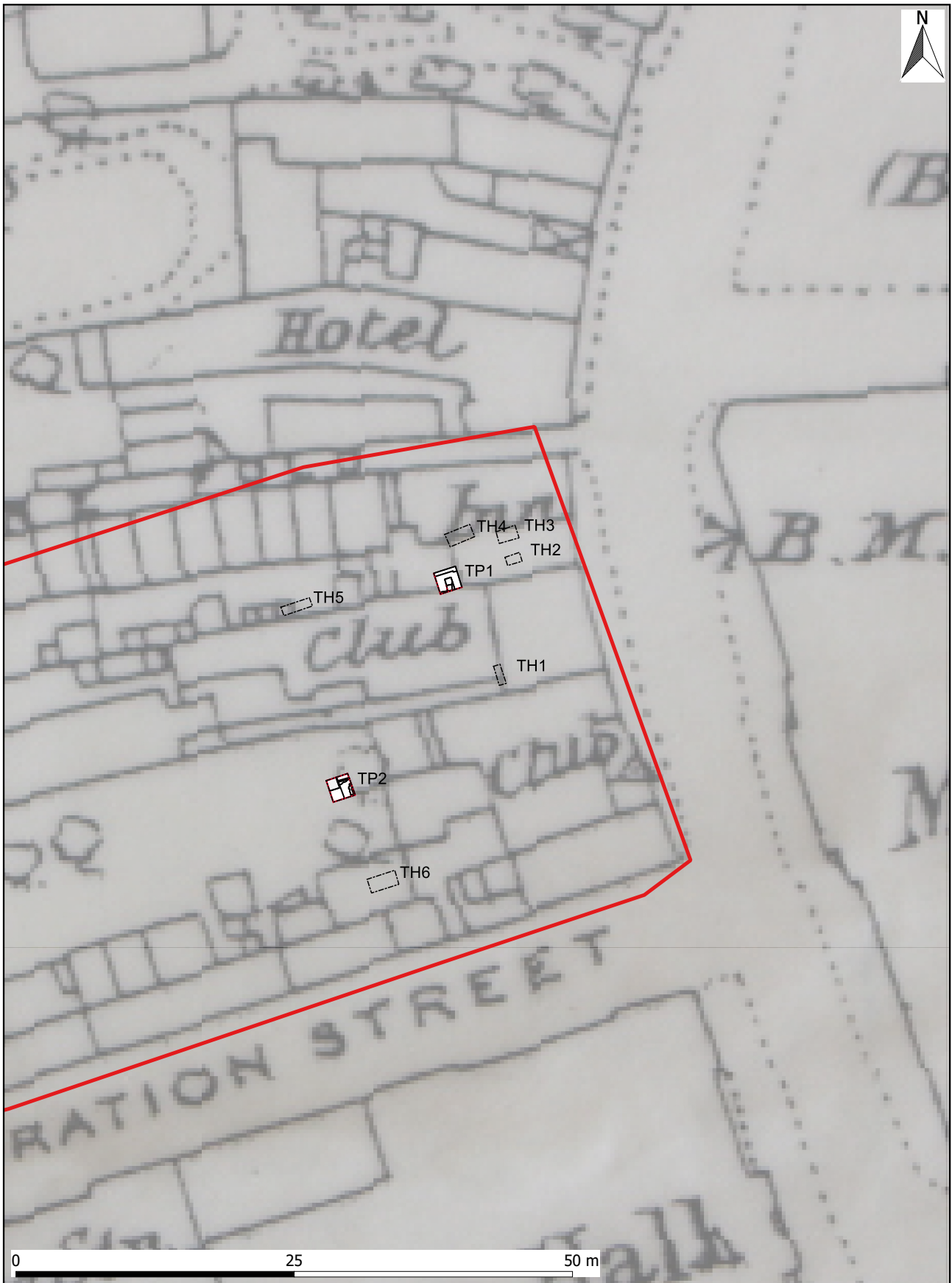
Plan of Test Pit 2

Figure 4



Plan of Test Pit 3

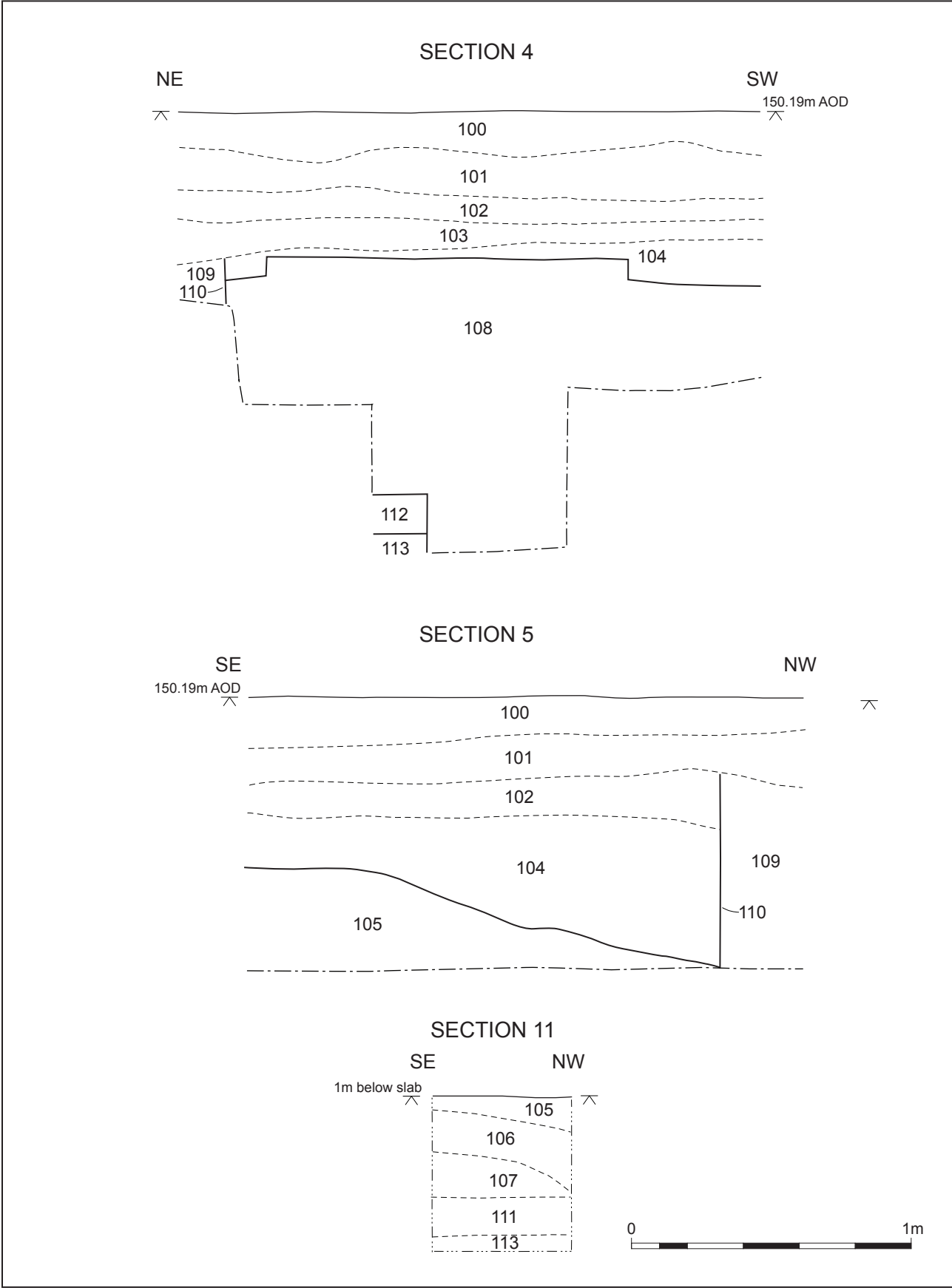
Figure 5



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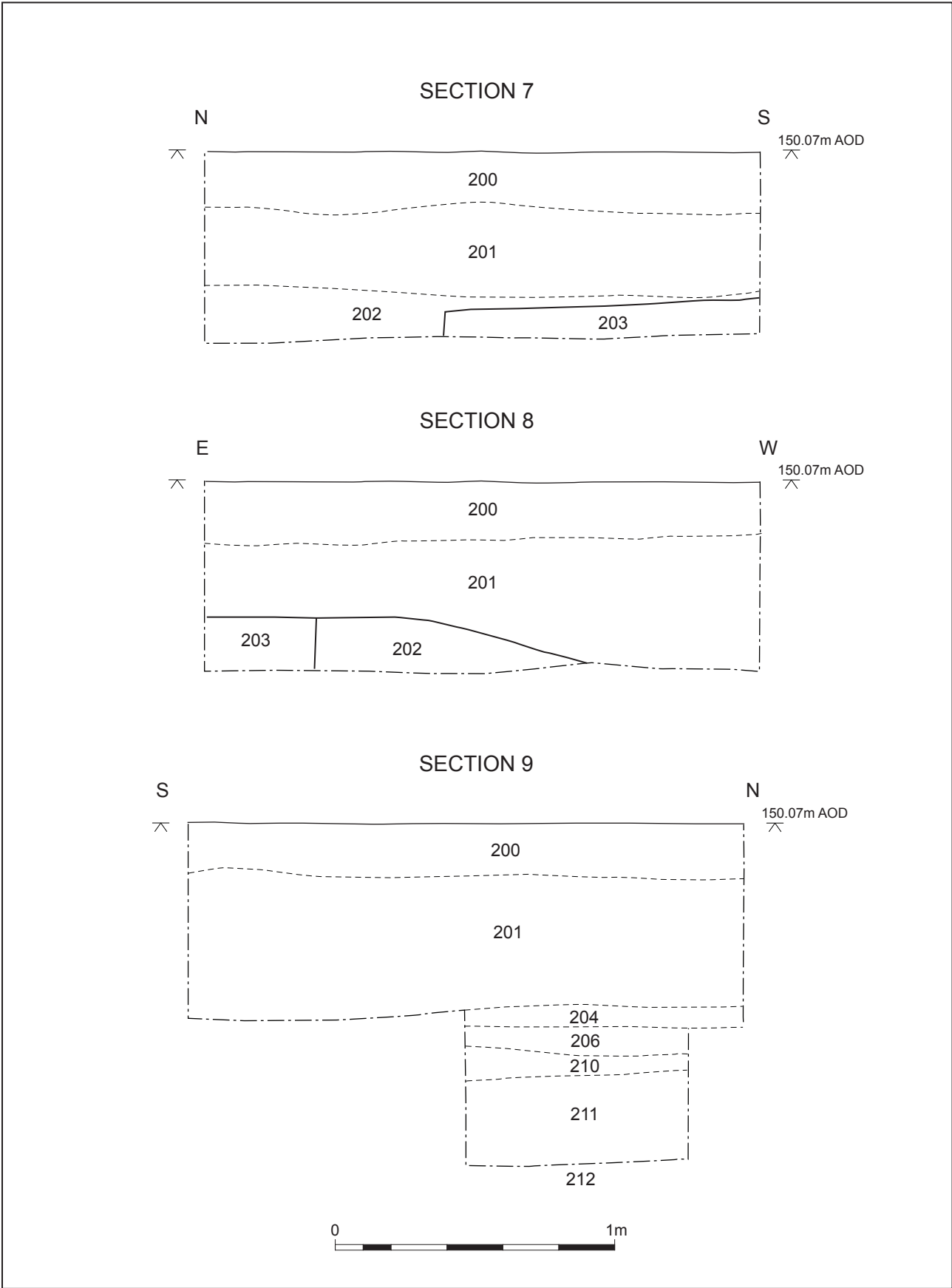
1st edition Ordnance Survey with Test Pit 1 overlaid

Figure 6



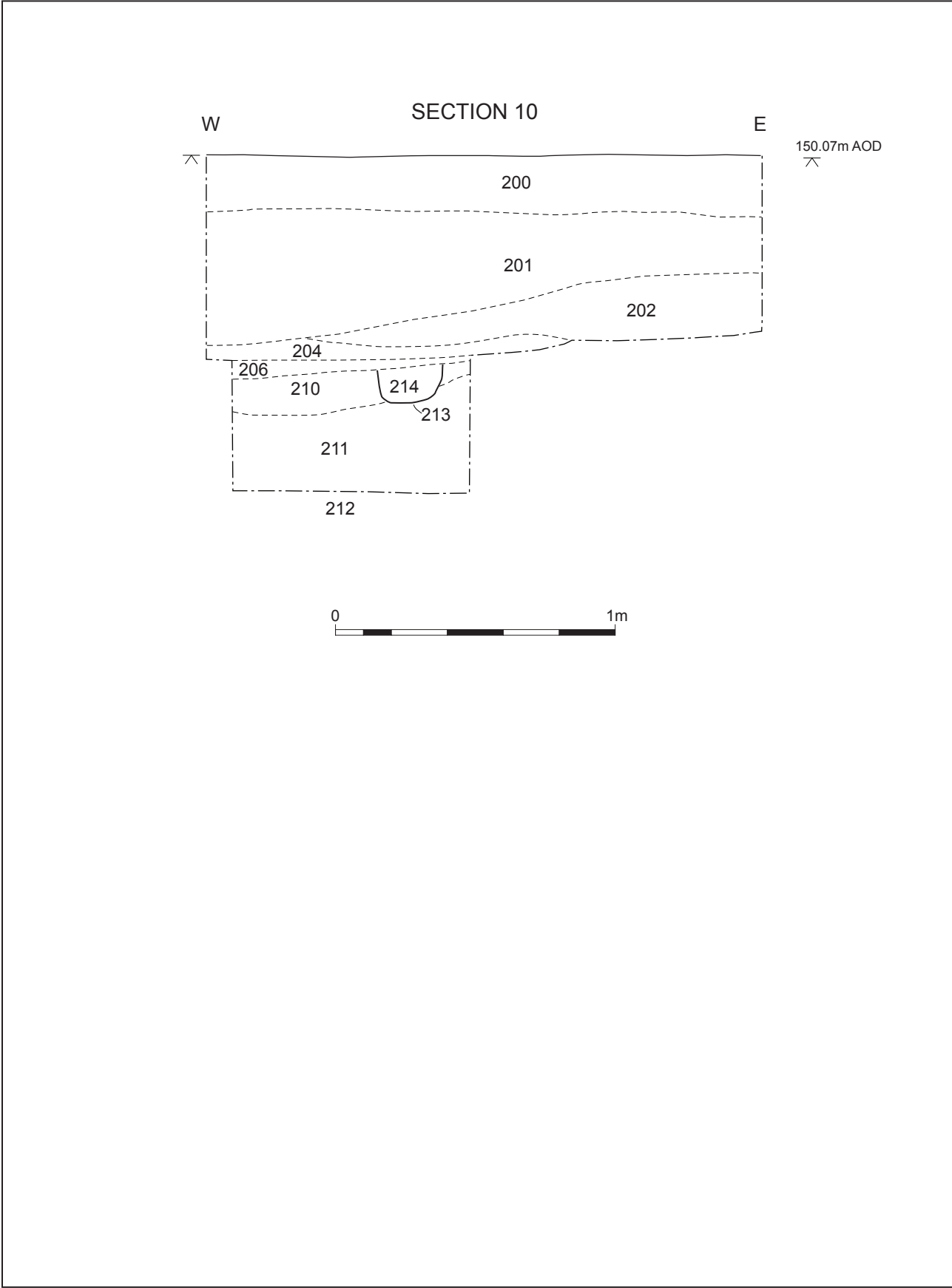
Test Pit 1 sections

Figure 7



Test Pit 2 sections

Figure 8



Test Pit 2 section 10

Figure 9

## Plates



*Plate 1: North-west facing section of Test Pit 1, showing Wall 108, (1m scales)*



*Plate 2: North-east facing section of Test Pit 1 (1m scales)*



*Plate 3: South-west facing section of Test Pit 1 (1m scales)*



*Plate 4: Wall 108 in Test Pit 1, looking south-east (1m and 0.5m scales)*





*Plate 5: Test Pit 2, looking north-west (1m scales)*



*Plate 6: North facing section of Test Pit 2 (1m scale)*



*Plate 7: East facing section of Test Pit 2 (1m scale)*



*Plate 8: East facing section of sondage in Test Pit 2 (1m scales)*



*Plate 9: South facing section of Test Pit 2, showing crushed brick layer 206 (1m scale)*



*Plate 10: South facing section of sondage in Test Pit 2 (1m scales)*



*Plate 11: West facing section of Test Pit 2 (1m scale)*



*Plate 12: Test Pit 3, looking east (1m scales)*



*Plate 13: Trial Hole 1, looking west*



*Plate 14: Trial Hole 2, looking north-west*



*Plate 15: Trial Hole 3, with walls in right side of section and in base of hole. Looking south-east*



*Plate 16: Trial Hole 4, looking north-west*



*Plate 17: Trial Hole 5, looking north-east*



*Plate 18: Trial Hole 6 showing wall in section, with garden soils and natural ground beneath, looking east*



*Plate 19 Tile with cat paw print*



## Appendix 1: Trench descriptions

**Trench 1:**  
Length 2m      Width 2m

### Context summary:

Context	Phase	Feature type	Context type	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
100		Floor	Layer	Concrete slab	0.18	
101		Layer	Layer	Rubble layer	0.21	
102		Layer	Layer	Made ground	0.2	Moderately compact Mid grey red brown Silty sand
103		Layer	Layer	Red sand made ground	0.16	Soft Mid brownish red Sand
104		Layer	Layer	Demolition material; black material		Firm Dark grey black Sandy silt
105		Layer	Layer	Demolition material; red sand	0.37	Loose Mid brownish red Silty sand
106		Layer	Layer	Initial demolition material; white mortar?		Loose Light grey white Mortar
107		Layer	Layer	Possible garden soil		Soft Dark grey black Sandy silt
108			Structure	Wall	1.05	
109			Fill	Fill of construction cut 110		
110			Cut	Construction cut for Civic Hall walls		
111		Layer	Layer	Dark material overlying 112	0.14	Soft Dark blue black Silty sand
112		Wall	Structure	Curved brick structure abutting wall 108	0.2	
113		Layer	Layer	Rubble dark layer beneath 112	0.05	Moderately compact Dark grey black Silty sand

**Trench 2:**  
Length 2m      Width 2m

200		Floor	Layer	Concrete slab	0.22	Concrete
201			Layer	Rubble made ground under slab		Loose Mid orange brown Silty sand and brick rubble
202		Layer	Layer	Voidy dark soil with slag blocks within it	0.18	Soft Dark grey brown Silty sand
203		Floor	Structure	Row of bricks at eastern side of trench	0.14	
204		Layer	Layer	Dark soil in western half of trench		Moderately compact Dark brown black Sandy silt
205		Layer	Layer	Compacted surface under bricks 203 and in eastern half of trench		Firm Mid greyish brown Silty sand

206	Layer	Layer	Brick frag layer, possible surface		Firm Mid reddish orange Brick fragments
207		Cut	Cut for pipe		
208		Fill	Pipe		
209		Fill	Fill around pipe 208		Mod compact Dark greyish brown Silty sand
210		Layer	Back yard soil	0.16	Moderately compact Dark greyish brown Silty sand
211		Layer	Yard soil	0.43	Moderately compact Mid greyish brown Silty sand
212	Layer	Layer	Yard soil		mid yellow brown silty sand
213	Gully	Cut	Cut of small gully	0.12	
214	Gully	Fill	Fill of gully 213	0.12	Moderately compact Mid reddish brown Silty sand

**Trench 3:  
Length 2m**

**Width 2m**

300		Layer	Concrete slab	0.15	Concrete slab with steel reinforcement
301		Layer	Made ground	0.14	Loose Rubble
302		Layer	Bedding layer	0.11	
303	Natural	Layer	Natural		Firm mid reddish brown silty sand

## Appendix 2: Summary of project archive (EBL 969)

TYPE	DETAILS*
Artefacts and Environmental	Animal bones, Ceramics, Glass, Industrial, Metal, other
Paper	Drawing, Plan, Report, Section,
Digital	Database, GIS, , Images raster/digital photography , Survey, Text

*\*OASIS terminology*

The above terms are from the OASIS Project Archives page (see below) and should be deleted as appropriate. This Appendix should be filled out in conjunction with the OASIS page.

## Appendix 3: Summary of data for HER

period	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)
medieval/post-medieval	ceramic	roof tile	1	424
	slag(fe)	slag	1	223
post-medieval	ceramic	clay pipe	4	9
		pot	10	79
	glass	vessel	6	434
	iron	nail	1	46
post-medieval/modern	carbon	Arc-lamp rod	1	45
	ceramic	engineering brick	2	7000
		pot	8	89
		washer	1	6
		window mullion	1	5000
	glass	molten fused glass	1	26
		vessel	1	24
		window	1	8
	copper alloy	brass knob	1	38
	fuel ash slag	slag	1	11
slag(fe)	slag	6	16,491	
modern	ceramic	airbrick	1	1389
		brick	1	3320
undated	animal bone	misc. fragments	6	14
		horse humerus	1	207
<b>Totals</b>			<b>56</b>	<b>34,883</b>

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

broad period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	4	35
Post-medieval	91	Post-medieval buff wares	3	33
Post-medieval	100	Manganese mottled ware	1	3
Post-medieval	82	Tin-glazed ware	1	5
Post-medieval	84	Pearlware	1	7
Post-medieval/Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	11
Post-medieval/Modern	85	Modern whiteware	3	6
Modern	101	Unglazed earthenware	2	11
<b>Totals</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>111</b>

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
106	glass	vessel	6	434	1800	1900	AD 1870 - 1940
	glass	window	1	8	1800	1940	
	ceramic	pot	2	57	1850	1940	
	carbon	arc-lamp rod	1	45	1870	1940	
107	ceramic	pot	2	11	1800	1940	AD 1850 - 1940
	ceramic	pot	1	2	1800	1940	
	ceramic	pot	1	11	1850	1940	
109	ceramic	pot	1	3	1800	1940	AD 1800 - 1940
111	ceramic	roof tile	1	424	1400	1700	AD 1600 - 1730
	ceramic	pot	1	5	1590	1730	
	ceramic	clay pipe	3	6	1600	1910	
201	ceramic	brick	1	3320	1932	1940	AD 1932 - 1940
	ceramic	airbrick	1	1389	1900	1940	
	ceramic	window mullion	1	5000	1850	1940	
	ceramic	engineering brick	2	7000	1850	1940	

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ date range
	slag(fe)	slag	1	8200	1710	1940	
202	slag(fe)	slag	1	2820	1710	1940	AD 1880 - 1940
	animal bone	animal bone	6	14	undated		
	copper alloy	brass knob	1	38	1800	1940	
	ceramic	clay pipe	1	3	1600	1910	
	glass	vessel	1	24	1880	1940	
	glass	molten fused glass	1	26	1800	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	922	1710	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	2080	1710	1940	
	slag(fe)	slag	1	2230	1710	1940	
	iron	nail	1	46	1600	1900	
	ceramic	washer	1	6	1880	1940	
204	fuel ash slag	slag	1	11	1600	1940	AD 1600 - 1940
	slag(fe)	slag	1	239	1600	1940	
206	slag(fe)	slag	1	223	1200	1900	AD 1200 - 1900
209	ceramic	pot	1	1	1800	1900	AD 1800 - 1900
	ceramic	pot	1	3	1670	1750	
211	ceramic	pot	3	33	1700	1800	AD 1700 - 1800
	ceramic	pot	2	9	1700	1800	
212	animal bone	horse humerus	1	207	undated		AD 1775 - 1830
	ceramic	pot	2	26	1600	1800	
	ceramic	pot	1	7	1775	1830	

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

context	material class	material subtype	count	weight(g)	feature type	period	phase	comments
202	bone	animal bone	6	16	Layer	Modern	Late 19th to early 20th century	Includes bird bones
212	bone	animal bone	1	208	Layer (yard soil)	Modern	Late 18th to early 20th century	Horse humerus, butchered

Table 4: Hand-collected animal bone

**Appendix 3: Brief for the evaluation produced by Eleanor Ramsey, Archaeology and Historic Environment Officer for City of Wolverhampton Council.**



## **Brief for Archaeological Trial Pits at the Civic and Wulfrun Halls, Wolverhampton**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 An ongoing programme of work is being undertaken at the Civic and Wulfrun Halls, Wolverhampton. Part of these works may involve the creation of a new basement and attenuation tank under the existing buildings.
- 1.2 A desk-based assessment by Worcestershire Archaeology in June 2018 identified the potential for archaeological deposits to survive within and beneath the current building footprint. The impact of the proposed development on any heritage assets present would be high.
- 1.3 From the DBA - The site is located on the western edge of the historic town centre. It is known to have been the site of a prebendary house belonging to the church since at least the later medieval period, and that prebendary house existed in some form up until the early 20th century. The first cartographic evidence is the 1750 Isaac Taylor Map, which shows three buildings fronting on to Goat (later North) Street, with ornamental gardens laid out to the rear. Throughout the 19th century, the site was developed, with the gardens being reduced and built on, whilst old roads are realigned and new roads created. The three buildings on the east of the site appear to survive throughout this period, until construction of the Civic Hall in 1936-8 required the demolition of the whole block.
- 1.4 The present document constitutes a brief for an archaeological trial pit exercise to establish whether archaeological deposits survive and to assess their condition and significance. Dependant on the results of the trial pits, should the proposed work go ahead additional archaeological mitigation may be required to ensure that any remains present are recorded ahead of/during future development.

### **2. Specific requirements**

- 2.1 A total of three trial pits (2m x 2m x 2m) should be excavated. An agreed position for these trial pits is included on the plan '3587-140C trial pit locations.pdf', targeting areas of potential future excavation. Should the locations require altering due to unexpected ground conditions (the presence of unknown services etc), this will be done in agreement with the Archaeology and Historic Environment Officer.
- 2.2 The trial pits should be excavated under archaeological supervision, down to the upper archaeological horizon, natural subsoil or the maximum safe depth (whichever is encountered first).
- 2.3 Any features, layers, structures or deposits identified should be defined and where necessary sample excavation undertaken.

2.4 On completion of the work an illustrated report should be produced detailing the results.

### **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 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) or archaeologist with equivalent experience.

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

3.3 The code of conduct, standards and guidance of CIfA 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 LPA prior to work commencing.

3.4 On completion of the work the site archive should be deposited with an appropriate museum/public archive.

3.5 If significant archaeological remains are identified, the digital archive (such as digital photography and associated metadata) will be deposited with the ADS, according to their guidelines.

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 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.

3.8 Reports should contain the following information:

- Location, aims and methodology
- Historical and archaeological background
- 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
- A table showing categories and quantity of finds recovered from each feature/deposit and where finds are dateable, such as pottery, their date
- Finds research to an appropriate level to be agreed with the Wolverhampton City Archaeologist
- A copy of the brief

### 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 the Archaeology and Historic Environment Officer on behalf of the Planning Authority and provisions for monitoring should be agreed with her. Normally five working days notice of commencement of any fieldwork should be given.

Prepared on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018 by Eleanor Ramsey, Archaeology and Historic Environment Officer, on behalf of City of Wolverhampton Council.

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