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**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at 1, Whitefriars,
Conduit Hill, Rye, East Sussex**

RR/2012/1606 & RR/2012/1607

Project No. CBAS0339
TQ 92131 20497

by
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Summary

The watching brief on the reduction of the floor level of the cellar at 1, Whitefriars, Rye produced evidence of three floor levels, and a brick built sump possibly associated with a light industrial purpose, and two earlier drains or conduits. The sump and the earliest drains were dated to the late 16th to 17th centuries by sample bricks taken. A second later drain or conduit was also dated to the 18th century by a brick sample. Artefacts recovered consisted of eight pottery sherds, with six of these being recovered from the deposit directly above the natural silty clay. The earliest sherd was a piece of handle from a Saintonge Jug, the rest being later with a date range between the late 15th to mid 18th centuries. Also recovered from this deposit was a fragment of a boulder that had most likely been used as ships ballast. The evidence suggests that the cellar was rebuilt in the mid 18th century, perhaps at the same time as the house itself was also rebuilt.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) was commissioned by Manning Duffie Architects Ltd, on behalf of Mr and Mrs Kay (The Clients), to carry out an archaeological watching brief during works in the basement and construction of a new conservatory at 1 Whitefriars, Conduit Hill, Rye, East Sussex (TQ 92131 20497) in order to record any archaeological remains that may be damaged or destroyed during the works.
- 1.2 1 Whitefriars is a Grade II Listed building, of the 17th and 18th centuries, that stands in the north half of Rye, south of the A268 and half way up the west side of Conduit Hill (Fig. 1). The house is sited within an Archaeological Notification Area that defines the historic core of the medieval and Post Medieval walled town of Rye. It is also located within Rye Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The cellar is of uncertain date. It lies under the east wing of Whitefriars and comprises a lower stone structure with vaulted brick walls and ceiling. The development proposes to remove an old boiler to one corner of the cellar, where an entrance will be opened up in the cellar wall leading to a new staircase. The renovation works will also include lowering the cellar floor by 500mm.
- 1.4 The geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey (sheet 320/321), is mudstone of the Wadhurst Clay Formation. Slightly further down Conduit Hill is an outcrop of Wadhurst sandstone.
- 1.5 In accordance with a brief prepared by ESCC¹, an archaeological evaluation was carried out on the 1st November 2012. This established that the concrete floor of the cellar overlay a layer of laid brick, and varied layers of made ground were recorded below this, all of which could have been deposited in the 17th century when the house was apparently built².
- 1.6 As a result of the evaluation excavation an archaeological watching brief in accordance with a specification prepared by ESCC, is required during the development. A written scheme of investigation³ which covers the watching brief was submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

¹ ESCC 2012. *Specification for Archaeological Evaluation (Test Pits) in the Cellar at White Friars, Conduit Street, Rye East Sussex.*

² Russell, C. 2012 *An Archaeological Evaluation Excavation at 1 Whitefriars, Conduit Hill, Rye, East Sussex.* CBAS0339

³ Butler, C. 2013 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at One Whitefriars, Rye, East Sussex*

- 1.7** The objectives of the watching brief were to monitor the reduction of the floor level within the cellar and the groundworks connected with the new conservatory, during the development to excavate and record any archaeological features or deposits present, which may provide information about the earlier history of the site, and any building that may have preceded the current house.
- 1.8** The watching brief was maintained on the groundworks for the new conservatory by Dr Caroline Russell on the 4th November 2013, with a further visits being made to the site by the author on the 20th, 21st and 22nd November to monitor the reduction of the floor level in the cellar,. The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler MCIFA.

2.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 2.1 Very few prehistoric finds are known from Rye and its immediate surroundings; a flint sickle (MES2185) is thought to have come from the town. The Roman period is also poorly represented in the archaeological record, with few sites or finds having been discovered in the local area. A group of Roman coins (MES2186) was reputedly found at Rye. It is only in the Late Saxon period that there is evidence for any occupation, when Rye formed part of the manor of Rameslie.
- 2.2 Rye was an important port during the 12th and 13th centuries, and became a Cinque Port in 1197. After being sacked by the French in 1377, a town wall was built, with a gun battery being added in the 15th century. A single gateway of this wall (the Land Gate) survives a short distance to the north of the site, at the northeast end of Tower Street, whilst remains of the wall stand at the base of Conduit Hill, in line with Cinque Ports Street.
- 2.3 An Augustinian Friary was located on Conduit Hill between 1380 and its dissolution in 1538. A former chapel constructed around 1380 survives on the eastern side of Conduit Hill⁴, just to the south of the site.
- 2.4 In the 16th century, Rye was an important port, having prospered after the decline of nearby Winchelsea. The town had a population of some 5000 people between 1550 and 1570, but the silting up of the harbour led to its decline and the population fell to some 1500 people by 1600⁵.
- 2.5 Early maps of Rye are not really detailed enough to show individual houses. However Prowze's map of 1572⁶ and the maps of Jeake 1666/7 (copied 1728)⁷ both suggest that the streets of Rye within the town walls had houses along their sides. 1 Whitefriars is a Grade II Listed building of the 17th and 18th centuries.
- 2.6 Whitefriars is shown on the 1st Edition OS map of 1872 (Fig. 2). The outline of the building is similar to that surviving today, although there is a projection from the north centre of the building which lines up with the hall, and presumably indicates that there was a large porch entrance to the house at this location. The Town Wall is shown running along the north side of the site, and there are formal gardens at the front and back of the house.

⁴ Hall, N. 2008. *Land at the rear of Tower House, Hilders Cliff, Rye, East Sussex: An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*. Development Archaeology Services Ltd, Fig. 10.

⁵ Mayhew, G. 1987 *Tudor Rye*, Falmer, CCE, University of Sussex.

⁶ PRO MPF 212

⁷ Rye 132/15

- 2.7** The Listed Building entry for 1 Whitefriars describes the house as consisting of two wings and a slight projection to the north. The west wing has a plastered front on the south side which probably dates from the 17th century and may conceal an earlier timber-framed building beneath it. On the north side this wing has an 18th century front of brick on the ground floor, hung with tiles above and a bay window. This wing has two storeys and attic and three windows. To the west of this is an 18th century wing built in two sections with two gables towards Conduit Hill and a mansard roof on the north and south sides. This has three storeys with one window on the south side and two windows on the north side. The ground floor has an arcade on the north side, above, it is hung with tiles. Tiled roof. Wooden eaves cornice. On the south side there is a small two storey addition joining the two wings. The doorway is at the side in Conduit Hill and has a flat hood over it supported on brackets. Massive chimney on west side.
- 2.8** A report on the building by David Martin⁸ has suggested that part of the building dates to the 16th century, but was heavily repaired c1700. The dating of the cellar is uncertain, but Martin suggests that it is earlier than his Phase D (mid to late 18th century), which is situated above it.
- 2.9** A few archaeological interventions have taken place in the immediate vicinity of the site⁹. Human burials and pottery of 13th century date were discovered during the construction of an air raid shelter and during later excavations in the grounds of the Friary. A watching brief undertaken in 1999 in the grounds of Rye Lodge Hotel, to the east of the site, recorded 19th century deposits and residual medieval pottery. An evaluation excavation at Tower House, just to the east of the site, revealed a deep stratigraphy of Post Medieval layers dating from late 19th century through to the late 17th century. Below this were deposits dating from the 14th to 15th century, and a possible ditch that been finally filled-in in the mid 16th to early 17th century. A small trench in the garden also revealed a similar stratigraphy but at a shallower level, whilst a fourth trench encountered a large later 19th century kitchen midden¹⁰.

⁸ Martin, D. & B. 1984 *Whitefriars, Conduit Hill, Rye, Sussex*, Rape Of Hastings Architectural Survey, Architectural Report No:- 0879

⁹ Hall, N. 2008 *Land at the rear of Tower House, Hilders Cliff, Rye, East Sussex: An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*, Development Archaeology Services Ltd, Fig. 10.

¹⁰ Butler, C. 2009 *An Assessment Excavation at Tower House, Rye, East Sussex*. CBAS

3.0 Archaeological Methodology

3.1 By the time of the first visit to the site by Dr Caroline Russell on the 4th November 2014, the former conservatory had been demolished and excavations for the stairwell from the cellar to the new conservatory had been machine and hand dug. Externally, outside the house (**Plate 1**), the trench for the stairwell measured 1.85m by 1.74m and was up to 2.02m deep. A 1.9m high gap had been created below the brick foundations of the wall of the house, and opened up to the brick cellar wall, set 0.93m back (**Plate 2**). The floorboards of the ground floor rested over the cellar wall. Above the gap, a jagged hole, up to 0.52m wide, had been knocked through the foundations. Underpinning had taken place along the northeast side of the trench, below both the side wall of the house and the stone rubble footing underlying the brick garden wall, as well as to the rear wall of the house outside the trench.



Plate 1: External excavations for the stairwell **Plate 2:** Internal excavations for the stairwell

3.2 The reduction of the floor level in the cellar of the building was carried out by the contractor using hand tools, under archaeological supervision. During the excavation there was a constant ingress of water (**Plate 3**), this was pumped out of the cellar using a small electric pump. This combined with the very poor lighting available made the recording of the archaeological features discovered in the cellar difficult.

3.3 The access point for the stairwell was located at the eastern end of the southern wall of the cellar. This was used to provide access to the rear garden of the property for the removal of the spoil from the reduction. The spoil was exported from the cellar by wheelbarrow, and was piled up in the rear garden. The spoil was visually inspected for artefacts, and also scanned with a Garrett ACE150 metal detector.



Plate 3: Ingress of water in cellar

- 3.4** Due to the location, and conditions of the reduction in the cellar of the building, it was not possible to transfer levels out of the cellar to a temporary bench mark. A floor plan of the cellar was drawn at a scale of 1:20.
- 3.5** All archaeological deposits, features and finds were excavated and recorded according to accepted professional standards. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart
- 3.6** A full photographic record of the work was kept as appropriate and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd. A site reference of WFR13 has been allocated.

4.0 Results

- 4.1 Three deposits were recorded in the trench excavated for the stairwell (Contexts **001-003**), and were seen in the most fully exposed northwest-facing section of the trench. Context **001** comprised the concrete footings of the former conservatory, which measured 160mm - 190mm thick and was reinforced with steel rods.
- 4.2 Context **002** rested below Context **001**, and was a mixed deposit of made ground, 150mm - 400mm thick, comprising a mid to dark brown clayey silt, which is the probable remnants of a topsoil / subsoil overburden, and a mid orangey brown clay, which may be redeposited natural. The deposit contained frequent charcoal flecks within the clayey silt, occasional oyster shell and small stones (under several 10mm³), and sparse fragments of Ceramic Building Material (CBM). According to the contractors, this deposit also contained lots of brick rubble.
- 4.3 Context **003** lay below Context **002** and was the assumed natural deposit. It was a firm sterile clay, mottled pale whitish brown and pale yellowy/orangey brown, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.7m.



Plate 4: Garden wall with brick rubble footing

- 4.4 The garden wall (**Plate 4**) beside the trench was built of handmade red bricks, of varying size and butts against the house, with no bonding. It is of probable 18th century date. The trench revealed that the bricks were laid over a stone rubble footing, 1.05m deep. Ground reduction in the garden showed this wall footing to extend outside the trench. The red bricks of the house, in the area of the trench, looked less worn and of better quality than those used in the garden wall, but are also of 18th century date.

- 4.5** In the reduction of the ground level in the cellar of the building there were seven layers and deposits apparent. Context **100** was a layer of mid grey concrete, which had a depth of 20mm to 30mm. The concrete covered the complete floor area and had a gully running around the entire perimeter of the floor of the cellar, and across the floor to the east of centre on a north to south alignment. The gully was constructed of half orange-red ceramic drain pipes.
- 4.6** Below Context **100** was Context **101**, which was an earlier floor of the cellar, which was constructed of red frogless bricks. The brick's dimensions were: stretcher measuring 220mm, the header measurement being 110mm and a thickness of 60mm. The bricks were laid flat and had no bonding material.
- 4.7** Below Context **101** was Context **103**, which was a deposit of mid brown sandy silty loam which had a friable consistence. This deposit was up to 70mm thick and had inclusions of chalk flecking and pieces up to 10mm (10%) and ceramic building material (1%). This deposit appeared to be a levelling layer for the brick built floor above this deposit. A single piece of pottery dated 1550-1750AD was recovered from this layer.
- 4.8** Below Context **103** was Context **104**, which was a deposit of dark brown silty clay, with a friable consistence. This deposit was up to 140mm thick and had inclusions of ceramic building material (<1%). The deposit had an uneven interface with the deposit above (Context **103**). A few artefacts were recovered from this deposit, the pottery being dated to c.1725 and 1775, and the deposit was interpreted as made ground to increase the height of the cellar floor due to the flooding of the cellar.
- 4.9** Below Context **104** was Context **105**, which was a deposit of dark bluish grey clayey sand with a loose consistence. This deposit had a variable thickness of between 60mm and 90mm. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit, but in a few places at the interface with the deposit above (Context **104**), were a few sandstone slabs which although broken appeared to be *in-situ* (**Plate 5**). These were interpreted as an earlier floor layer with an associated levelling layer of the blue grey silty clayey sand. A sample of one of the sandstone slabs was taken (**Plate 6**).



Plate 5: *In-situ* Sandstone Slab
(Context **105**)



Plate 6: Sandstone Slabs from Context **105**

- 4.10** Below Context **105** was Context **106**, which was a deposit of dark brown silty clay with a very similar matrix to Context **104**. This deposit had a loose consistence and a thickness of up to 150mm, and was interpreted as a deposit of made ground evidenced by the inclusions of ceramic building material (<1%) and pieces of wood (<1%). The pieces of wood appeared to be wall or ceiling lathes. A larger piece of wood was recovered and photographed but not retained (**Plate 7**). The piece of wood had a length of 1.08m, and was square in section measuring 130mm. The end of the wood was heavily rotted. Artefacts recovered from this deposit consisted of c. 1550-1750AD pottery, bone, ceramic building material and wood (pieces of the possible ceiling or wall lathes).
- 4.11** Below Context **106** was Context **107**, which was the assumed natural. This was a mid orange-brown sandy clay with inclusions of sandstone pieces up to 70mm (2%). This deposit had an uneven interface with the deposit above (Context **106**) and was revealed to a depth of up to 50mm to the limit of excavation. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit.



Plate 7: Length of Wood (Context **106**)

- 4.12** Three archaeological features were noted during the course of the excavation (**Fig. 4**), Context **102** was a drain or conduit (**Plate 8**). The drain or conduit cut Contexts **103** and **104**, and consisted of a floor of clay tiles with a single course of bricks either side. The bricks supported a sandstone slab, which has possibly been re-used from the floor at the interface between Contexts **104** and **105**. There were two courses of bricks under the clay tiled floor of the drain, on its outer edge. The frogless bricks had the dimensions of 220mm for the stretchers, 110mm for the headers and a thickness of 60mm. There was no bonding material apparent in the brick work. This drain or conduit followed the same course as the modern gully in the concrete floor (Context **100**) around the perimeter of the cellar including the run across the cellar on a north to south alignment to the east of centre. A sample of brick was taken from this feature, which was dated to between the late 17th to 18th centuries.

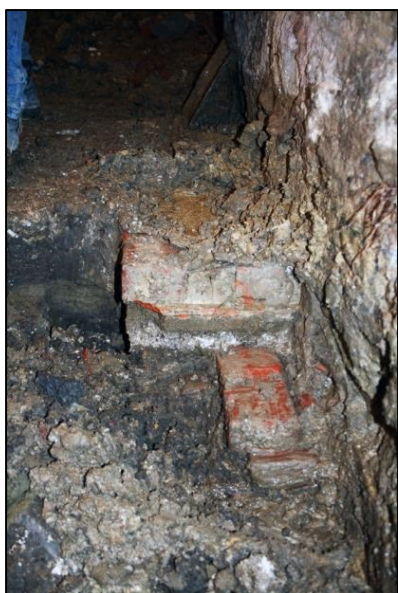


Plate 8: Drain or Conduit (Context 102)

- 4.13** The second feature (Context 109) was located in the centre of the cellar. This consisted of a square brick built structure which measured 900mm north south by 840mm east west (**Plates 9 and 10**). The bricks used in the construction of this structure measured 225mm (stretchers) by 102mm (headers) and had a thickness of 55mm. The bricks were laid in stretcher bond except for those in the southern side of the feature which were laid in header bond. There was no bonding material apparent in the construction of the feature. The base of the structure is also of brick construction. The structure stood to a height of three courses of brick, with those bricks in the third course showing heavy wear on the inner top edge. A sample brick was taken, and when analysed was dated to the late 16th to the 17th century. The structure appears to have been some sort of sump possible associated with a light industrial use. The wear on the internal faces of the bricks on the eastern and western sides, suggest fairly heavy use.



Plate 9: Context 109 Before being Pumped Out



Plate 10: Brick Built Structure (Context 109)

- 4.14** The third feature (Context 108) is the remains of a second drain (**Plates 11 and 12**) or conduit located to the east of the sump (Context 109), and between 1.1m and 1.5m from the eastern wall of the cellar. This drain was on a north to south alignment, with the northern end slightly curving to the west. The base of the drain

was constructed of bricks laid flat on an east to west alignment forming the base of the drain, with a single course of bricks to the side laid lengthways either side of the brick base. There was a gap of between 60mm and 130mm between the bricks making up the sides of the drain. A sample brick was taken and this returned a date of between the late 16th to 17th centuries, making the drain contemporary with the sump like feature in the middle of the cellar (Context 109).



Plate 11: Drain or Conduit Context 108



Plate 12: Construction of Context 108

Table 1: Context Register

Context	Physical Relationship	Artefacts
001	Concrete Footings	None
002	Made ground/subsoil Below 001 and above 003	Pot.CBM Glass & Oyster shell
003	Natural Clay below 002	None
100	Concrete Cellar Floor	None
101	Brick Floor below 100	None
102	Drain Below 101 cutting 103 and 104	None
103	Below 101 and above 104	Pot.
104	Below 103 and above 105	None
105	Below 104 and above 106	Pot.
106	Below 105 and above 107	Pot.Bone. CBM & Wood
107	Assumed Natural below 106	None
108	Drain cut into 107	None
109	Sump cut into 107	None

5.0 The Finds

- 5.0.1** During the watching brief a small quantity of artefacts were recovered from the excavations. These are listed in Table 2 where they are quantified by number and weight.
- 5.0.2** The current assemblage of finds is small and has no corroborative dating and appears to be residual. The ceramic types represented are already well known from Rye and as such is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis.

Table 2: The Finds

Context	Pottery (by date group)	Ceramic Building Material	Other	Deposit Date
102	-	Brick 1/2800g Peg tile 1/748g	-	Late C17th-18th
103	1550-1750: 1/6g	-	-	c. 1700-1750
104	1550-1750: 1/8g	Brick 1/216g	Stone 1/3100g	c. 1725-1775
106	1225-1350: 1/46g 1350-1550: 1/18g 1550-1750: 4/120g	Peg tile 2/298g	Stone 3/2685g Mortar 1/78g	c. 1550-1750
108	-	Brick 1/2175g	-	Late C16th – 17th
109	-	Brick 1/2330g	-	Late C16th – 17th

5.1 Pottery by Luke Barber

- 5.1.1** The archaeological work recovered just eight sherds of pottery from the site. The earliest material was recovered from Context **106**, where part of the handle from a green glazed Saintonge jug of mid 13th to mid 14th century date was found. Although relatively unabraded the sherd is clearly residual as the same deposit produced part of a late 15th to mid 16th century Raeren stoneware mug/jug, two sandy glazed redware sherds of 16th to 17th century date (12g) and two tin-glazed sherds (104g). The latter include a body-sherd from a later 17th to mid 18th century vessel and the base of a blue decorated drug jar of 17th century type.
- 5.1.2** A further sherd of tin-glazed ware was recovered from Context **103**. This is from another hollow ware vessel decorated with polychrome foliage on a late blue-tinged glaze indicative of a probable date in the first half of the 18th century. The sherd

from Context **104** consists of a fragment of bowl in white Staffordshire-type salt-glazed stoneware that can be placed between c.1725 and 1775. Despite the small quantities involved, none of the pottery is notably abraded suggesting any reworking has not been extensive.

5.2 Ceramic Building Materials by Luke Barber

5.2.1 A relatively small collection of building materials was recovered from the site. The building material appears to essentially span the later 16th to mid/late 18th centuries. Dating ceramic building materials is notoriously difficult even when good sealed deposits are present. The current assemblage has very little associated pottery dating which emphasises the problem.

5.2.2 The crudest brick was recovered from Context **105**. This consists of a fragment from a 50mm thick crudely-made brick tempered with moderate fine sand and common iron oxides to 2mm. A later 16th to 17th century date range is probable. Two further bricks of probable similar date, both complete, were recovered from Context **108** and **109**. Both are quite crudely formed, medium-fired and tempered with sparse fine/medium sand with moderate/abundant iron oxides to 5mm. Dimensions consist of 230 x 100 x 47-51mm and 225 x 102 x 55mm respectively and both have notably smoothed upper surfaces (in comparison to the other faces). Although a trait of used pavers the current examples do not appear worn. This, in addition with the example from Context **109**, which has traces of adhering buff sandy lime mortar on all faces, suggests simple surface smoothing by hand while in the mould. The brick from Context **102** is also complete (222 x 110 x 60mm) but is better formed even though still only medium fired. The brick, tempered with moderate fine sand and common iron oxides to 3mm, is probably of 18th century date.

5.2.3 Only peg tile fragments were recovered from the site. The earliest piece is from a quite crudely formed and hard-fired 13mm thick example, tempered with sparse fine sand and common iron oxides to 1mm Context **106**. The piece, which is green glazed on its smooth side, is probably of later 16th to 17th century date. The other piece of tile from Context **106** is from a quite well formed and fired 10mm thick tile tempered with sparse fine sand and moderate marl pellets to 2mm. An 18th century date is probable. Context **102** produced a complete peg tile measuring 230 x 145 x 11mm with two diamond peg holes. The tile is again quite well formed and fired, tempered with sparse fine sand and some iron oxides to 1mm and of probable 18th century date.

5.3 Stone by Luke Barber

5.3.1 Context **105** produced a large fragment from a 45mm thick slab in a light grey fine calcareous Wealden sandstone, possibly the remains of an unworn paving slab. Another piece of the same stone, this time just 20mm thick but with notable wear on

one face, was recovered from Context **106** (440g). The same deposit produced a 2175g fragment from a well-worn streaked quartz boulder, almost certainly derived from ship's ballast, and a 54g fragment of West Country medieval roofing slate.

5.4 Animal Bone by Jan Oldham

5.4.1 A quantity of animal bone was recovered from two contexts during the archaeological watching brief. The bones have been recorded by species, bone type, length and weight.

5.4.2 From Context **104** came a partial sheep (*Ovis aries*) radius, proximal end present. Length 130mm to break and weight 27g, a partial sheep ulna, proximal end present. Length 78mm to break and weight 5g, and the mid part of a cow (*Bos*) rib bone, cut marks visible. Length 90mm and weight 18g.

5.4.3 The majority of the bone from Context **106** was sheep and comprised a partial jawbone with three molars intact, bone broken and degraded, weight 53g, a further partial jawbone, very degraded, the bone is split and no teeth are present, weight 52g, a single molar, very worn, roots intact, weight 8g, a metatarsal, length 140mm, weight 32g, a radius, length 160mm, weight 37g, and a partial scapula, broken and degraded, weight 13g.

5.4.4 Also from Context 106 were a partial cow tibia, broken at both ends and split laterally, length 170mm, weight 58g, part of a cow rib bone, broken at both ends, length 250mm, weight 55g, and a further partial cow rib bone, proximal end damaged but present, length 130mm, weight 39g.

5.4.5 In summary, the animal bone appears to have been disposed of on the site as domestic refuse, with butchery marks suggesting food waste. No further analysis is required.

5.5 Metal by Jan Oldham

5.5.1 A single piece of ferrous metal was retrieved from Context **106**, comprising a flat edged knife or tool blade, heavily corroded, a tang suggested beneath the corrosion and the point probably broken at the tip. The iron blade tapers from a 16mm width to a 2mm point, 98mm in length and has a weight of 24g. This was probably discarded as a broken implement and is likely to be of 18th century date. No further analysis is necessary.

5.6 Marine Shell by Jan Oldham

5.6.1 A quantity of marine mollusc shell was recovered from two contexts, these have been recorded by species and weight where whole valves exist and fragments are recorded by total weight.

5.6.2 From Context **104** were two left valve oyster shells (*Ostrea edulis*): weighing 64g and 70g respectively, and from Context **106** were five left valve oyster shells, total weight 168g and five right valves weighing 376g, together with eight incomplete oyster shell fragments, weight 94g, and two cockle shell fragments (*Cardium edule*), combined weight 3g.

5.6.3 The marine molluscs are edible species common to the shores of Britain and it is likely that the shells are present as a result of food waste disposed of on the site. No further scrutiny is required.

5.7 Wood by Jan Oldham

5.7.1 Waterlogged wood was recovered from two contexts. From Context **104** were five fragments from a lath and plaster ceiling, total weight 28g. Where a complete width is discernible, this is 25mm and similarly an 8mm thickness to all. Only one of these fragments shows a sawn edge, the other pieces are split and damaged. A complete lath, which is evidenced by the presence of both sawn ends. Length 198mm, 8mm thick, width 25mm and weight 29g.

5.7.2 From Context **106** were two partial laths from a lath and plaster ceiling - one measures 170mm in length from the sawn (slightly stepped) edge to a break/split, 8mm thick, with a width of 30mm, weight 24g. The second measures 170mm from the sawn (unstepped) edge to a break/split, 5mm thick, with a width of 28mm, weight 15g.

5.7.3 Also from Context **106** were four fragments of wood, all from the same sample from the large piece of wood found in this context, total weight 32g. The largest of these fragments shows a sawn edge to both sides through the grain, while the remaining three pieces are small and fairly undiagnostic.

5.7.4 In summary, the lath support remains are likely to be present as the result of a ceiling collapse in situ and as such may represent part of the original fabric of the building. A further analysis may be able to identify the wood species but is unlikely to offer much more information relating to the construction.

5.8 Other Material by Luke Barber

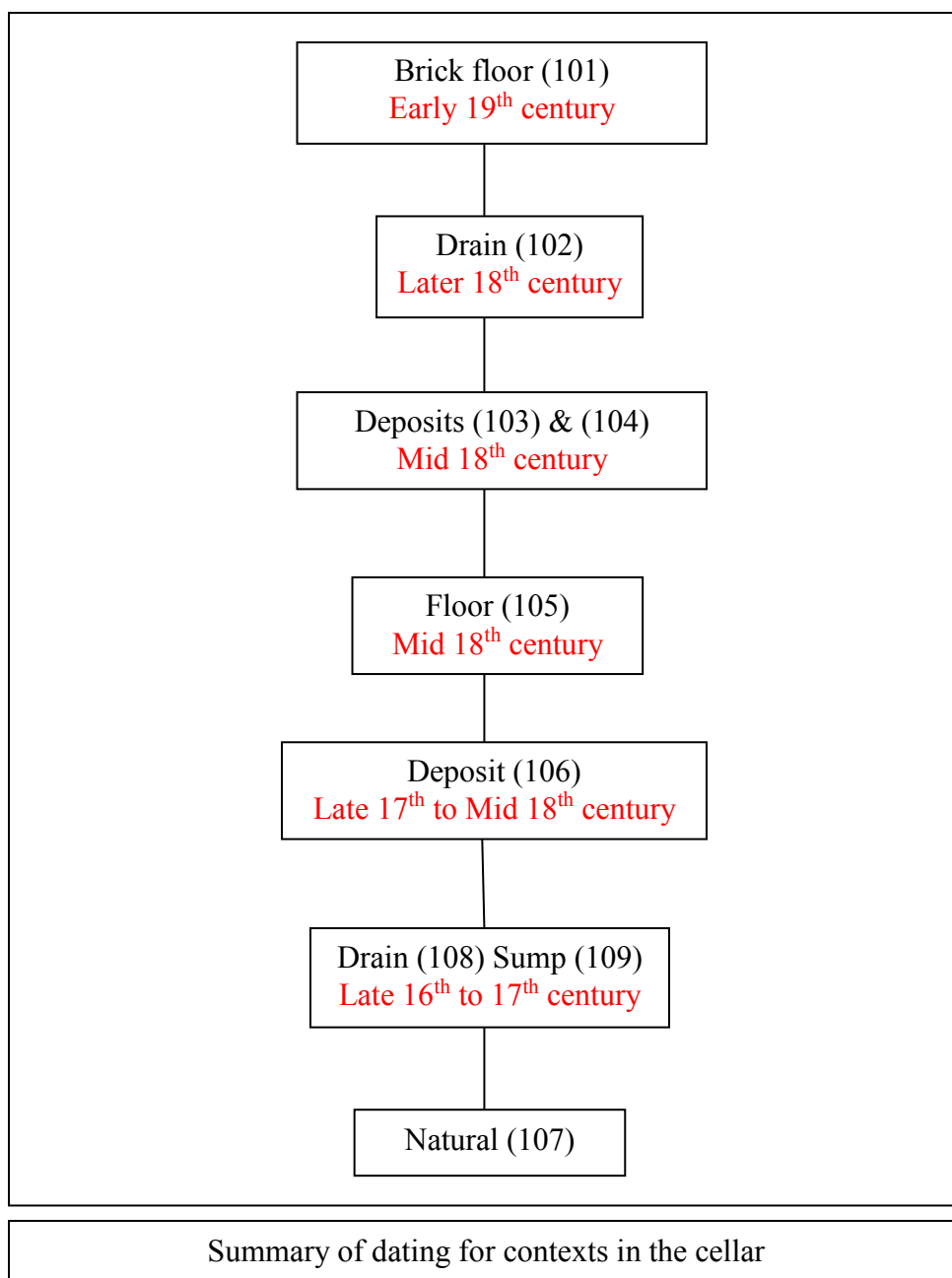
- 5.8.1** Context **106** produced a 78g fragment of 18mm thick hard sandy grey mortar of probable 18th to 19th century date.

6.0 Discussion

- 6.1 During the reduction of the ground surface in the cellar of 1 Whitefriars, there was a constant ingress of water, which hampered the groundworks and required the water in the cellar to be pumped out at times during the ground works. This ingress of water into the cellar today is also apparent in the archaeological record.
- 6.2 Three archaeological features were noted during the reduction, with the earliest being a drain or a conduit (Context **108**) and a sump type structure (Context **109**). Both these features appeared to be contemporary, evidenced by the dating of the bricks used in their construction (late 16th to 17th century). There was no bonding material apparently used in the construction of the two structures, which in the case of the sump would imply that this was only a temporary construction, although given the wet conditions any bonding material may have leached away over time. The inner faces of the bricks of the upper course on the eastern and western side showed quite heavy wear, suggesting that the structure was in use for a long period of time.
- 6.3 The brick and tile drain or conduit (Context **102**) which was located directly below the modern concrete floor, was again dated by a brick sample, which returned a date of between the late 17th to the 18th century. This drain or conduit had the same layout as the gully in the modern concrete floor, and was possibly in association with the brick built floor (Context **101**). Floor **101**, can be dated to the early 19th century by the uniform brick size and lack of any 19th century artefacts below the floor level.
- 6.4 The reduction of the floor level in the cellar produced evidence for the floor having been raised on three occasions. The earliest floor level appears to have been the natural silty clay evidenced by the drain or conduit (Context **108**) and the sump (Context **109**), both of which were slightly cut into the natural (Context **107**). The floor of the cellar was then raised by brought-in soil (Context **106**) and a thin layer of dark bluish clayey sand (**105**) which was used as bedding for sandstone stone slabs which were located at the interface between Contexts **104** and **105**. Later more soil was brought into the cellar to raise the height of the floor again (Context **103**) and a brick built floor was laid on this, which was later concreted over.
- 6.5 The largest amount and earliest pottery was recovered from the deposit which lay directly above the assumed natural (Context **106**). The pottery from this deposit was of a mixed date ranging from a part of a handle of Saintonge jug dating to the mid 13th to the mid 14th centuries. The remainder of the pottery having a date range between late 15th to the mid 18th century. A single sherd of pottery was produced from both Context **103** and **104**. The varied dates of the sherds recovered from Contexts **106** would also suggest that the soil was imported into the cellar. This is also suggested by the fragment of a boulder which almost certainly derived from ship ballast and pieces of wooden ceiling or wall lathes.

6.6 The report on the building by David Martin suggests that part of the building may date to the 16th century¹¹, and that the cellar is possibly of an earlier date than the part of the building which is located above it, which he dated to the mid to late 18th century. The dating of the drain and sump like feature discovered in this watching brief supports this theory. But both these features were dated from brick samples which as Luke Barber points out are notoriously difficult to date when not in a sealed context with other artefacts to help with the dating. However the presence of the pottery in the intervening layers has helped to assign dates to these events (see below).

6.7



¹¹ Martin, D. & B. 1984 *Whitefriars, Conduit Hill, Rye, Sussex*, Rape Of Hastings Architectural Survey, Architectural Report No:- 0879

- 6.8** The excavations outside revealed no archaeological features or deposits. It is unfortunate that CBAS Ltd were not notified of the works commencing and were only able to visit after the underpinning work had taken place, which meant that the original foundations of the house around the cellar were not seen. However from the limited observations that could be made, it appears that the 18th century house (and cellar) brick walls probably sat on a similar stone rubble foundation to the garden wall
- 6.9** From the evidence derived from the monitoring work it seems likely that although the cellar appears to have an earlier origin, probably in the 16th century when the house was first built, it was rebuilt in the mid 18th century, probably at the same time as the house above was being rebuilt¹².

7.0 Acknowledgements

- 7.1** I would like to thank Mr and Mrs Kay for commissioning this archaeological watching brief and their on-site contractors for their assistance and co-operation during the ground works. I would also like to thank Luke Barber and Jan Oldham for reporting on the artefacts, and Andrew Bradshaw for preparing the drawings for this report.
- 7.2** The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler MCIFA.

¹² Martin, D. & B. 1984 *Whitefriars, Conduit Hill, Rye, Sussex*, Rape Of Hastings Architectural Survey, Architectural Report No:- 0879

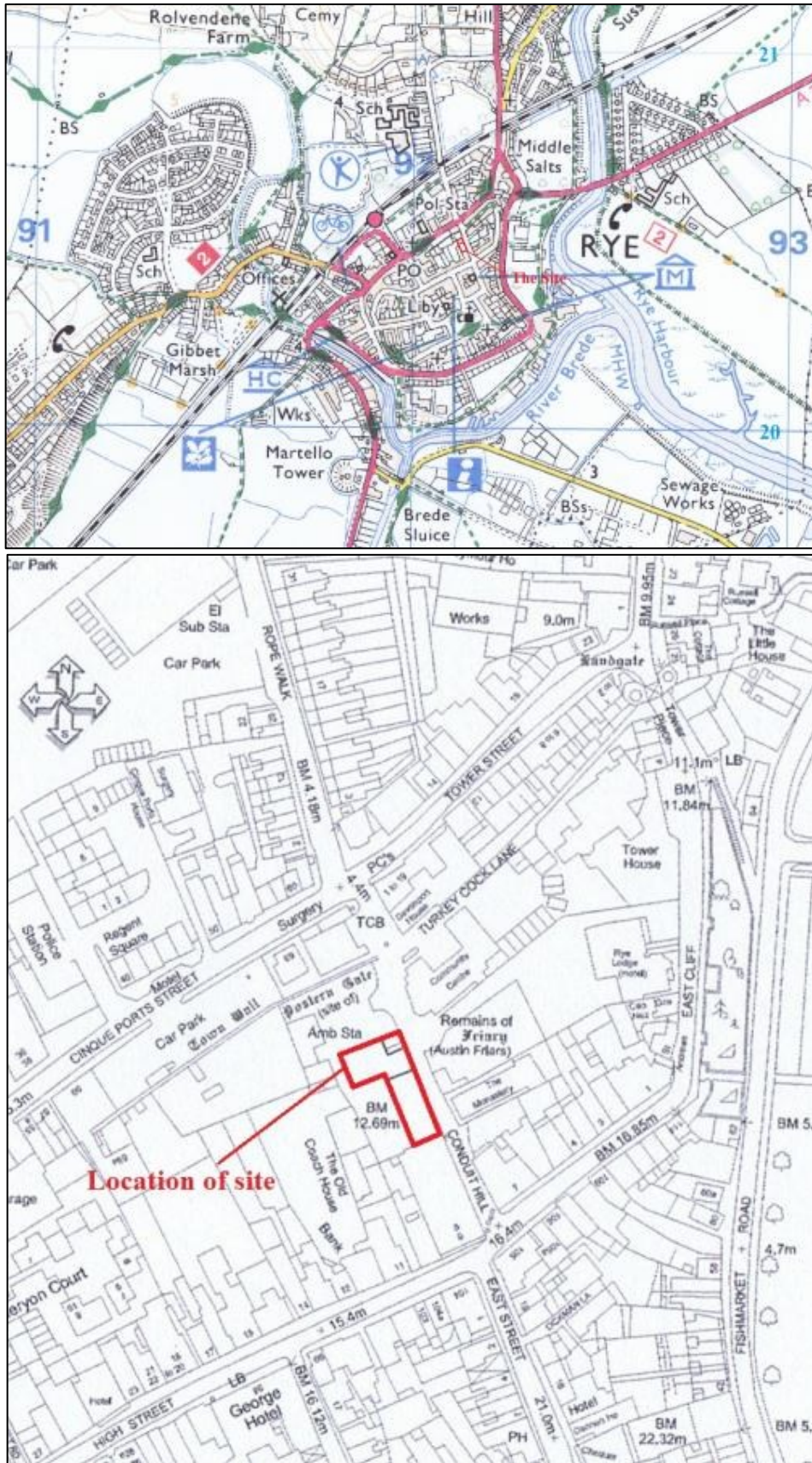


Fig. 1: 1 Whitefriars, Rye: Location Map
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Fig. 2: 1 Whitefriars, Rye: 1st Edition OS map 1872

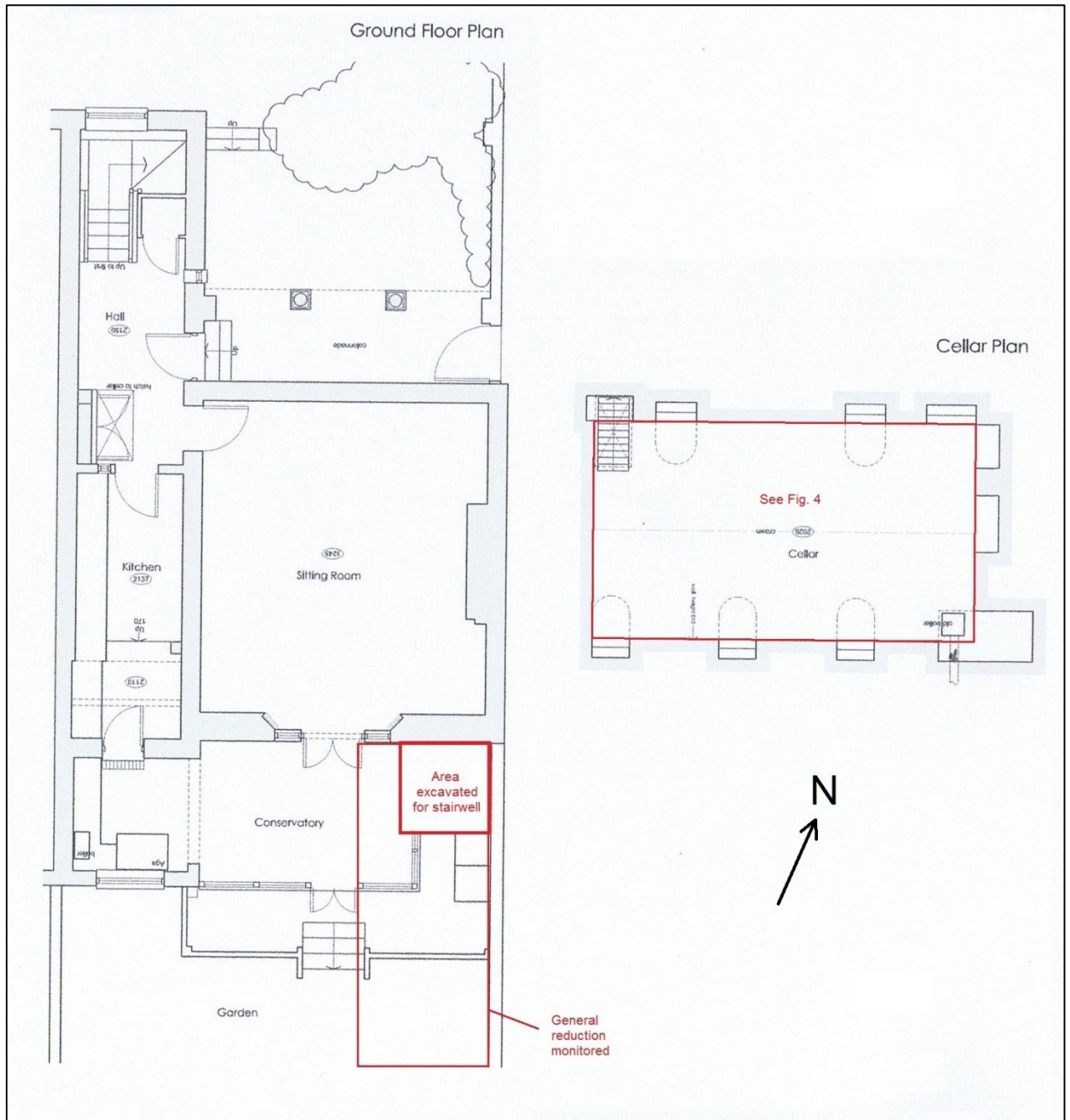


Fig. 3: 1 Whitefriars, Rye: Plan of ground floor and cellar showing areas monitored during the watching brief
(Adapted from plan provided by Manning Duffie Architects Ltd)

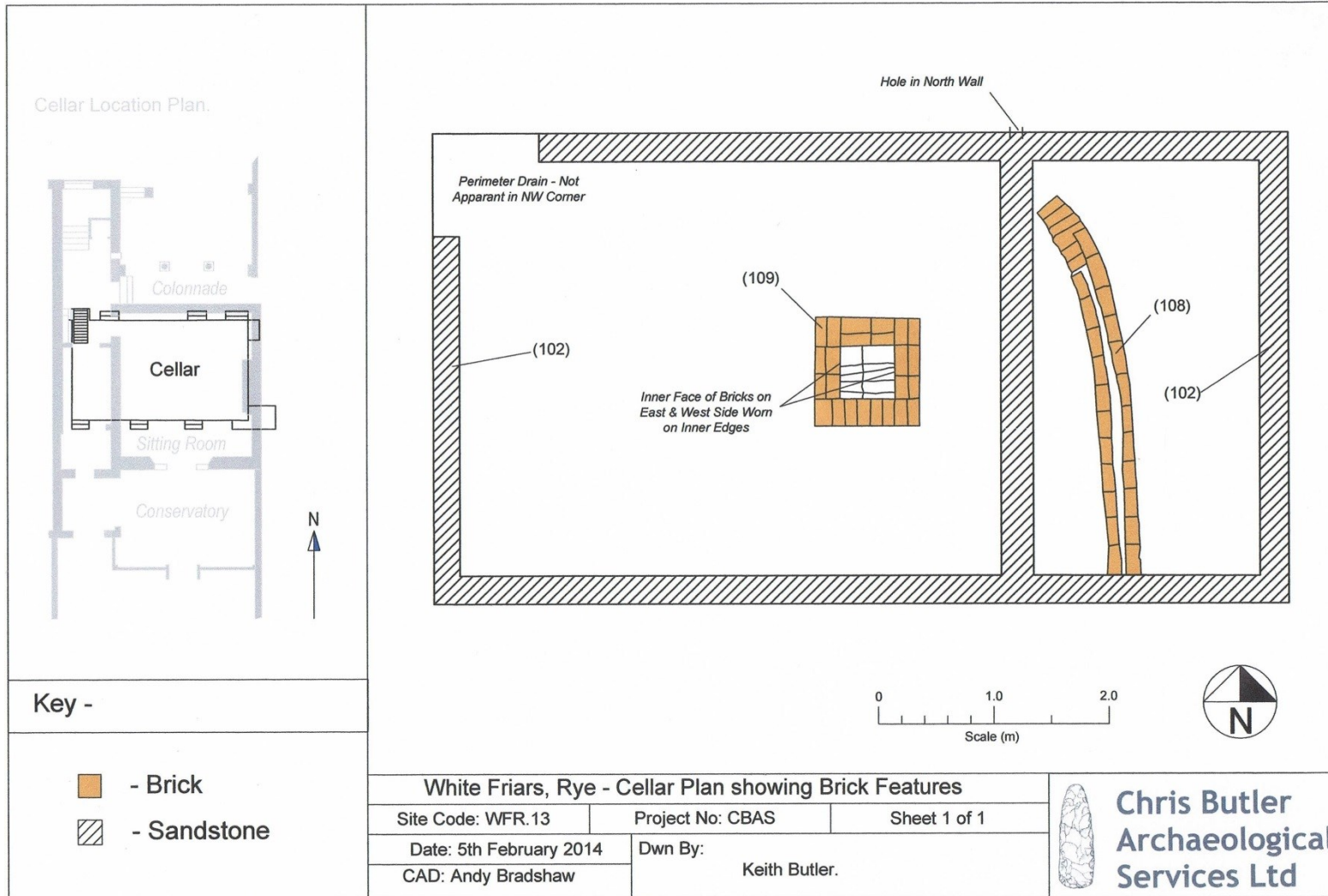


Fig. 4: 1 Whitefriars, Rye. Plan of features in the Cellar

HER Summary Form

Site Code	WFR 13					
Identification Name and Address	1, Whitefriars, Conduit Hill, Rye, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Rother District					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 9213 2049					
Geology	Mudstone of the Wadhurst Clay Formation					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief X	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 20 th -22 nd 11-2013	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Manning Duffie Architects Ltd, on behalf of Mr and Mrs Kay					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MCIfA					
Project Supervisor	Keith Butler PCIfA					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED X	PM X	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>The watching brief on the reduction of the floor level of the cellar at 1, Whitefriars, Rye produced evidence of three floor levels, and a brick built sump possibly associated with a light industrial purpose, and two earlier drains or conduits. The sump and the earliest drains were dated to the late 16th to 17th centuries by sample bricks taken. A second later drain or conduit was also dated to the 18th century by a brick sample. Artefacts recovered consisted of eight pottery sherds, with six of these being recovered from the deposit directly above the natural silty clay. The earliest sherd was a piece of handle from a Saintonge Jug, the rest being later with a date range between the late 15th to mid 18th centuries. Also recovered from this deposit was a fragment of a boulder that had most likely been used as ships ballast. The evidence suggests that the cellar was rebuilt in the mid 18th century, perhaps at the same time as the house itself was also rebuilt.</i></p>						

Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd

Chris Butler has been an archaeologist since 1985, and formed the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in 1987, since when it has carried out numerous fieldwork projects, and was runner up in the Pitt-Rivers Award at the British Archaeological Awards in 1996. Having previously worked as a Pensions Technical Manager and Administration Director in the financial services industry, Chris formed **Chris Butler Archaeological Services** at the beginning of 2002.

Chris is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and was a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex.

Chris specialises in prehistoric flintwork analysis, but has directed excavations, landscape surveys and watching briefs, including the excavation of a Beaker Bowl Barrow, a Saxon cemetery and settlement, Roman pottery kilns, and a Mesolithic hunting camp.

Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd is available for Flintwork Analysis, Project Management, Military Archaeology, Desktop Assessments, Field Evaluations, Excavation work, Watching Briefs, Field Surveys & Fieldwalking, Post Excavation Services and Report Writing.

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