

Albion Mill Mill Street Worcester Worcestershire



Archaeological Evaluation Report and Historic Buildings Assessment



Oxford Archaeology

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ALBION MILL, MILL STREET, WORCESTER***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT AND HISTORIC BUILDING
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Fig.1: Site location

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Assessment

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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at the site of the former Albion Mill, Mill Street, Worcester on behalf of Chase Homes. The evaluation revealed ditches and pits dated to the early medieval period. The remains of buildings associated with the mill were uncovered, as well as evidence of the deliberate dumping of building debris. A rapid assessment of the Albion Mill buildings was also carried out, which revealed a number of phases of development of the mill.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In March 2003 OA carried out a field evaluation and historic building assessment at the former Albion Mill, Mill Street, Worcester, on behalf of Chase Midland PLC in respect of a planning application (ref P02L0705) for the redevelopment of the site, comprising the conversion of existing buildings to form 39 apartments including 18 new build apartments and 10 affordable dwellings and car parking. In addition an application has also been made for Conservation Area consent for the demolition of ancillary structures (ref:L0210098).

1.1.2 The evaluation and assessment was carried out in accordance with a Brief set by Worcester City Museum Archaeology Section and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by OA and agreed with Worcester City Museum Archaeology Section.

1.1.3 The development site is situated at Mill Street, Worcester and is a total of 0.4 hectares in area. The mill buildings are at present in use by Porcelain and Fine China Companies (Royal Worcester), the surrounding tarmac areas are used for car parking and storage.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.1.4 The site lies to the south of Worcester city centre, on the west bank of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal (fig.1) on either side of Portland Street.

1.1.5 The site lies at between approximately 14 m and 16 m above OD. The site is situated on alluvial deposits overlying a general geology of Mercia Mudstone.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.1.6 The archaeological background to the evaluation was the subject of an investigation into the surrounding archaeology and history of the area in order to inform the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the evaluation (OA 2003). A radius search was requested from Worcester City Historic Environment Record (WCHER), and historic maps of the area were studied. The results of this are summarised below. The site itself

has produced limited archaeological evidence. There are however several known sites with archaeological remains adjacent to the development site.

- 1.1.7 The site lies within an area dominated by 19th and 20th century industrial and suburban development, and incorporates land formerly used by the Albion Mill. Nos 76-86 Portland Street are built over one of two massive 19th century reservoirs which probably fed steam engines within the mill complex. These were filled with porcelain waste in 1884-5.
- 1.1.8 The waterway formerly known as Frog Brook was canalised and basins constructed in the 19th century.
- 1.1.9 Approximately 40 m to the west of the site, the site of the Ceramic Art Colour Works has been recorded, presumably associated with the porcelain factory (WCHER 98185). 50 m to the west of the site, an approximate findspot of late 18th century pottery wasters was recorded (WCHER 100375 & 100732).
- 1.1.10 A watching brief undertaken in 1985 (WCHER 10598) at the rear of no. 82 Portland Street (within the current site area) disturbed deposits including large quantities of ceramic material. The finds included kiln furniture. They were apparently dumped in a single episode and could be closely dated to 1884.
- 1.1.11 Although the site lies outside of the Roman town, approximately 150 m north of the proposed development site, a Roman cemetery has been recorded, possibly contained by a ditch up to 3 m wide (WCHER 100379 & 100380). Roman burials have been found elsewhere in Worcester, however this is the only site, which has produced evidence for a Roman cemetery. Also recorded was a ditch of early medieval origin, 23 sherds of early medieval pottery and various medieval features including three ovens, a pit and occupation deposits.
- 1.1.12 Roughly 250 m south of the site, the discovery of a Roman pottery kiln was recorded in 1860. Later examination of the archive suggests that the kiln may have been a medieval tile kiln, built over a Roman cremation cemetery.
- 1.1.13 The medieval hermitage of St Ursula is thought to have existed in the Diglis area, although its exact site has not been located (WCHER 96091).
- 1.1.14 Civil War siege works or defensive features may be present in this area, although map and documentary sources suggest that the main focus of this activity may have taken place further north, in the area of St. Albans School (WCHER 96155).
- 1.1.15 The Mill itself was established in 1843, and was extended through the 19th century. The tallest structure on the site was demolished in 1982.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1 General evaluation aims

Assessment

- 1.1.16 To determine or confirm the nature, date, extent, preservation and complexity of the stratigraphy of any archaeological remains uncovered
- 1.1.17 To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeo-environmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present
- 1.1.18 To make available the results of the investigation.

2.2 Specific evaluation aims

- 1.1.19 To determine, if possible, the extent, character and layout of the Roman cemeteries
- 1.1.20 To determine, where possible, the presence and extent of any potential harbour or other structures associated with the Roman period
- 1.1.21 To determine, if possible, the location of St Ursula's hermitage
- 1.1.22 To determine, if possible, the location and character of features associated with the Medieval pottery and tile industries
- 1.1.23 To determine, if possible, the location of Civil War siege works or defensive features
- 1.1.24 To determine, if possible, the extent of the survival of significant structural and other features associated with the Albion Mill
- 1.1.25 To determine, if possible, the location and survival of palaeo-environmental remains associated with the Frog Brook and its valley.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 1.1.26 The evaluation consisted of four trenches. Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were located in the open areas, away from standing buildings services and access routes. Trench 4 was located in the car park on the opposite side of Portland Street (Fig.2).

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 1.1.27 The trenches were opened using a 360° mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. They were then cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sample excavated to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples where appropriate. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. Where required, the edges of the trenches were stepped in order to allow deeper excavation.
- 1.1.28 All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OA Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3.3 Finds

1.1.29 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.

3.4 Environmental Samples

1.1.30 No deposits of that exhibited environmental potential and contained artefactual dating material were revealed by the evaluation.

3.5 Presentation of results

1.1.31 The evaluation trenches have been described in turn, after which the finds are summarised. This is followed by a discussion, which brings together the stratigraphic, artefactual and topographical evidence, as well as the information gained from the surrounding archaeological and historical evidence.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

1.1.32 The soils consisted of silty clays and silty sands, overlying the natural, which consisted of red clay silt, and sandy clay probably derived from the underlying Mercia Mudstone.

4.2 Distribution of Archaeological Deposits

1.1.33 Early medieval cut features were revealed in trenches 1 and 4. An alluvial sequence probably related to the former Frogs Brook was revealed in Trench 4.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1 (figure 3)

1.1.34 Trench 1 was orientated south-west - north-east and was 11 m in length and 1.5 m wide. The natural horizon (111) was recorded as consisting of a red silt and silty sand, at a depth of approximately 1.8 m below existing ground level.

1.1.35 In the south-west of the trench, three features were noted. Feature 110 was recorded as a pit, and was seen to continue under the northern baulk. It was a circular feature, with a flat base, 50° sides and a sharp top profile. The feature was 0.25m deep and 1m wide and cut the natural. It was filled by a silty clay (109) which contained bone and stone. No datable artefacts were retrieved from this feature.

1.1.36 South of pit 110, root-hole 108 cut the natural. It was a circular feature, with a sharp top profile and irregular sides and base. It measured 0.1m deep and 0.4m wide, and was filled by a grey brown silty clay (107) which did not contain any finds. Cutting this was possible ditch 106. The feature was seen to extend across the width of the

trench. It had a flat base, 45° sides and a sharp top profile, and was 0.2m deep and 0.7m wide. It was filled by a grey brown silty clay (105) containing animal bone - but no datable artefacts.

- 1.1.37 These features were sealed by a number of layers. Layer 104 represented a buried soil, and consisted of a grey brown silty clay, 0.3m thick. This was overlain by a redeposited dark blue grey clay/make-up layer (?) which was 0.4m thick (103). This was then overlain by a make-up layer (102) consisting of red-orange silt, which was 0.6m thick. This was further overlain by a blue-grey clay make-up layer (101), 0.15m thick. Lastly, this was overlain by a tarmac surface over grey rubble make-up (100), 0.5m thick. No finds were retrieved from these layers.

Trench 2 (figure 4)

- 1.1.38 This trench was orientated north-west - south-east, and measured 10 m in length and was 1.75 m wide. A short return (0.5 m long) was excavated at the south eastern end of the trench.
- 1.1.39 The trench contained a number of features relating to the mid 19th century mill reservoir (see 1.3.2). At the northern end of the trench, layer 204 was interpreted as a make up layer of crushed brick in a silty sand concrete bond. This layer was not fully excavated. This was overlain by a 0.02 m thick late 19th or 20th century floor surface (203). At the northern end of the trench, layer 203 was seen to butt structure 202, which was made of engineering brick and cement, and was interpreted as an exterior or load-bearing north east - south west orientated wall.
- 1.1.40 Situated towards the middle of the trench, and cutting in to layer 204 was structure 205, a stanchion base for a supporting column.
- 1.1.41 Further south, structure 206 was uncovered, which was made up of sandstone and concentrations of crushed brick. This was interpreted as a possible wall foundation, similar to structure 202. This was abutted by layer 207, a compact to loose silty sand including building debris which was interpreted as rubble infill. This layer in turn butted structure 208 to the south, interpreted as another possible stanchion base. This, along with structures 206, 205 and 202 was aligned east-west.
- 1.1.42 All the structures revealed in this trench are likely to relate to one of the 19th century reservoirs (see section 1.3.2).
- 1.1.43 Overlying all four structures was layer 201, which consisted of silty sand containing 60% inclusions of building debris. This was in turn overlain by 200, the tarmac surface of the car park.

Trench 3 (figure 5)

- 1.1.44 This trench was orientated north-east - south-west, and was 10m long and 1.5m wide, although it was stepped to allow deeper excavation at the south west end. The natural consisted of tenacious to friable clayey silt, at a depth of over 3.5m.

- 1.1.45 Excavation of the trench revealed a number of different layers, many of which were the result of deliberate dumping. Layer 306 overlay the natural (308), and consisted of a tenacious to friable light grey brown silty clay, which was 1m thick, and was interpreted as an alluvial silt. Above this lay a loose dumped deposit of orange red silt and clay silt (305). Overlying this was a tenacious dark brown grey silty clay (304), 0.4m thick.
- 1.1.46 Overlying 304 were layers 303 and 307. The relationship between the two layers was uncertain. Layer 303 consisted of masonry blocks of green sandstone, on average 0.3m³ in size. This was limited to the central part of the trench only. Layer 307 was made up of fragments of bricks and mortar in a grey silt matrix and contained 19th century pottery and fragments of clay pipe. The layer was approximately 0.3m thick.
- 1.1.47 Above layers 303 and 307 lay layer 302, a loose to friable reddy orange silt, thought to be a backfill or dumping/levelling deposit, which contained 19th century pottery. Overlying this was a friable brown/black ashy silt make-up layer (301). Lastly, layer 300 overlay this, and was the tarmac, overlying crushed limestone, and was 0.4m thick.

Trench 4 (figure 6)

- 1.1.48 Trench 4 was orientated north-east - south-west, and was 15m long and 3.5m wide; the edges of the trench were stepped. The natural (403) consisted of compact dark red sandy clay, and lay at a depth of approximately 1.5m.
- 1.1.49 Cutting in to the natural (403) were three distinct features. At the south of the trench was feature 405, a linear cut crossing the trench in an east-west orientation. It measured 1.3m wide (within the limits of the trench) and was 0.5m deep. It was filled by a compact dark brown clay silt (406). A possible cobbled surface remnant was revealed in the base of the feature together with animal bone and late 11th-14th century pottery. South of this was pit 407, extending from the eastern baulk. It was oval in shape, with 85° sides, a flattish base and sharp top profile. It was 0.44m deep, and measured 0.95m north-south and 0.85m east-west. It was filled by a compact/tenacious red and dark brown clay loam (408) but was undated. Further to the south of the trench was 409, interpreted as a ditch or possible boundary marker. This feature ran east-west across the width of the trench. The feature measured 1.2m north-south and 0.6m deep. It was filled by a compact/tenacious dark brown clay loam (410) containing Late 11th -14th century pottery.
- 1.1.50 Sealing these features was a compact dark brown silty clay (402) containing pottery, which was interpreted as a buried soil. Above this lay a dump of darkish brown sandy loam with building debris (401). This layer abutted 404. This was a group number assigned to represent the remains of 19th century tenements and outbuildings uncovered (shown on 1884 and 1886 OS see OA2003). The structures comprised two partition cross walls running across the width of the trench, a corridor or passageway, a fireplace and a basement with a brick floor and alcove with a brick arch, which may have been a second fireplace.

- 1.1.51 Sealing this was 400, a layer of building debris, predominantly consisting of brick, which was 0.5m thick.

5.2 Finds

Pottery

*by Paul Blinkhorn
(Full report Appendix2)*

- 1.1.52 The pottery assemblage comprised 5 sherds with a total weight of 103 g. It comprised two fairly large and apparently stratified rim fragments from jars of Saxo-Norman or early medieval date, and three sherds of modern material. The former were in generally good condition, although the calcareous inclusions in the surfaces had been leached out.
- 1.1.53 The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Context	Cotswolds		White		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	
302			1	9	19thC
307			1	2	19thC
402			1	8	19thC
406	1	49			L11thC?
410	1	35			L11thC?
Total	2	84	3	19	

Animal Bone by Emma-Jayne Evans

- 1.1.54 A total of 21 bones were analysed (see Appendix 1 for finds/context inventory) . The bone survived in good condition, but due to the small sample size only three elements could be identified to species, all of which were identified as sheep/goat.
- 1.1.55 The assemblage recovered from the evaluation demonstrates the good preservation of the bone from the site.

Other finds

- 1.1.56 Six fragments of clay pipe were recovered from a possible 19th century (dated by pottery) dumped deposit in trench 3 (307). All were fragments of pipe stems.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

1.1.57 The integrity of the stratigraphic evidence encountered during the evaluation is believed to be good. Weather conditions and visibility were good during the investigation. The level of potential surviving archaeological deposits was reached in all trenches with the exception of trench 2 where this level is likely to have been truncated. The character of the archaeology of the site indicated by the evaluation - areas of surviving geological horizons with early medieval cut features but with much of the site impacted by 19th century construction - is likely to be broadly indicative of the character of the site as a whole given the known history of development.

1.1.58 A surviving early alluvial sequence was recorded in Trench 3. The complete absence of related structural archaeology (quays, revetments etc) cannot be inferred from the results of this investigation.

6.2 Overall interpretation

Summary of results

1.1.59 The results from the evaluation have uncovered features consisting of ditches and pits found in trenches 1 and 4 and dated to the early medieval period. The low artefact content of these features does not indicate dense occupation. These features are generally sealed/truncated by what appears to be an historic plough soil.

1.1.60 The upper part of the sequences is suggestive of made ground/levelling that has probably occurred in association with the canalisation of Frogs Brook and 19th century structural development.

1.1.61 Trench 3 revealed a deeper sequence of deposits, which probably reflect the incline of geological deposits toward the former Frogs Brook and part of its alluvial fill. No insitu archaeological features or structures were revealed here (deposit 303 appears to be ex-situ dumping of structural material) however the complete absence of localised structures associated with the brook (quays, revetments etc) cannot be inferred from the results of the evaluation.

Results in relation to the archaeological and historical background

1.1.62 No evidence of archaeological deposits or remains associated with the Roman period were revealed by the evaluation.

1.1.63 The discovery of early medieval features during the evaluation are perhaps similar to the discovery of various early medieval features 150m to the north (WCHER 100379).

7 IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

1.1.64 The early medieval features uncovered during the excavation lie at a depth of 1.5m -2m below the ground surface at the horizon of natural deposits. It is likely that this depth of archaeological stratigraphy will increase and the character of any surviving archaeological remains will change closer to the canal frontage as the geology slopes down towards the profile of the former Frogs Brook and its alluvial fills. At the present it is uncertain as to whether strip foundations only, or a combination of strip foundations and pile and raft foundations (possibly more suitable to the canal frontage) will be used on site. Therefore the impact of the development is uncertain.

8 HISTORIC BUILDING ANALYSIS

8.1 Introduction

1.1.65 Albion Mill was established on this site after 1843 and was used as a flour mill until the site was purchased by Royal Worcester and was used primarily for storage. The site was visited by OA Buildings Department on 25th March 2003 and a rapid assessment was made of the historic buildings to determine the historic significance of each of the buildings affected by the proposed development and in particular the main Albion Mill building.

1.1.66 Some building interiors were unavailable for inspection either due to safety or security concerns.

1.1.67 Albion Mill is made up of a number of individual blocks; the main mill consists of 11 blocks (A-K see figure 2) whilst three substantial detached buildings lie to the south (L-N). Almost all the buildings to the east of the main mill complex were damaged during the disastrous fire in the 1960s or 70s? (oral sources differ). This appears to have damaged large areas of roof and entirely destroyed a block which lay to the south of block A. The most impressive buildings sit along the canal front and here the relative phasing of the buildings is clearly visible. To the east the buildings front onto an open yard and to the south a small yard is enclosed by a 19th century brick wall.

1.1.68 It is outside the scope of this evaluation to discuss the dates and phasing of these buildings in any detail although they all appear to range from the early 19th to the early 20th century although older (and later) elements may be present.

8.2 Description

Block A

Exterior

1.1.69 A four storey rectangular brick built building oriented north south (see plate 1). To the west it adjoins other blocks and to the south lay (a now missing) block which was demolished after fire. The block has a very low-pitched roof, this is a replacement however for a missing floor destroyed by fire. The shallow red brick pilasters which

Assessment

divide bays and details (voussoirs projecting strips etc) are in a contrasting blue engineering brick.

- 1.1.70 The windows are all rectangular with shallow arches above although on the north side facing the canal are two rounded headed arched windows set in blue brick arches with a round window in the spandrels. Many window retain their glazing although in places these have been replaced by modern plate glass. Iron fire escapes are sited on the centre of the east elevation.

Interior

- 1.1.71 Only the ground floor was accessible during the site visit. This has modern concrete and steel roofing and no original features were noted.

Significance

- 1.1.72 The building appears to be earlier than many of the other mill structures. The fire has caused extensive damage and the loss of an entire floor detracts somewhat from its significance. The presence of many original windows however and the architectural elegance of the building add to its importance.

Block B*Exterior*

- 1.1.73 This block is almost encased by other buildings although one elevation, which fronts the canal, is visible. This elevation is almost entirely covered by corrugated iron and has long continuous windows, which appear to be late 19th or 20th century in origin.

Interior

- 1.1.74 The interior was largely inaccessible during the visit although the first and third floors were accessed and no significant features were observed. Iron clad sliding fire doors connect the block with the adjoining block A. A king post roof with bolted posts supports a modern glazed roof covering.

Significance

- 1.1.75 Seemingly a later addition or a major alteration of an earlier building. The visible elevation is of little architectural merit and no features relating to the use of the mill were noted.

Block C*Exterior*

Assessment

1.1.76 A brick built block with a somewhat plain elevation fronting the canal. The glazed roof covering and part of the upper brickwork have evidently been replaced in the later 20th century as have most of the windows. The windows are rectangular with stone cills. A pair of earlier sash windows remains on the first floor level. The iron supports of a winch balcony project over the canal and the bricked up access door is visible above.

Interior

1.1.77 A rather plain interior with girder supported ceilings on each floor. This is a queen post roof with fittings for line shafting or machinery visible as scars on the trusses. The roof gives the appearance of being dressed with an adze but on inspection this affect appears to be the result of the wood being cut back after either decay or a fire.

Significance

1.1.78 The building is probably of later 19th century date and seems to be part of the expansion of the mill in this period. It also retains a number of early features (winch supports, windows etc).

Block D*Exterior*

1.1.79 A tall narrow brick built block, again oriented north-south and built of pale pinkish brick. This block and the adjoining block E are clearly of one build although E is lower. The roof is quite steeply pitched and appears to be tiled. Windows vary from arched on the lower floors to rectangular on the top floor with straight stone lintels. The third floor also has a row of shallow arched windows looking out over the roof of block E.

Interior

1.1.80 The interior was not entirely accessible, the floors appear to have been rebuilt with faced girders.

Significance

1.1.81 A late 19th (or early 20th) century block represents the expansion of the mill in this period. Few early features remain.

Block E*Exterior*

1.1.82 A three storey brick built block adjoining and contemporary with block D. The lower floor is obscured by block I and the remaining windows are set in brick arches. The original iron windows are retained on the top floor whilst those below are modern. A brick dentil course runs along the top of the exterior wall.

Interior

- 1.1.83 Partly accessible during the site visit the rooms are again floored with cased girders and are devoid of obvious features relating to the working of the mill.

Significance

- 1.1.84 The building is probably of later 19th century date and seems to be part of the expansion of the mill in this period. It also retains two early iron window frames.

Block F*Exterior*

- 1.1.85 This building is oriented north-south. It fronts Mill Street on the west and the canal to the north. It is built of a dark red brick and is similar in construction to the house to the south (Block H). The building is a two storied structure with a brick dentil course and window set in shallow brick arches (red brick on the ground floor, engineering on the first). The ground floor windows are modern whilst the first floor are original and includes an iron framed example. On the upper floor facing the street are two doors allowing the loading of wagons. Beneath one of these is a drawbridge with winch (see below). The roof is covered by blue Welsh slate.

Interior

- 1.1.86 The ground floor was inaccessible. The first floor is a single open room floored with wooden boards and with a queen post roof. The most unusual feature is the mechanism for the drawbridge, which includes a chain winch, frame, gearing and handle.

Significance

- 1.1.87 One of the earliest buildings on the site which appears to have been used for storage, vehicle loading etc. The building may even represent the earliest use of the mill in the 1840s. The winch, doors and iron window are all interesting and significant survivals.

Block G*Exterior*

- 1.1.88 A late 19th or early 20th century brick facade built of the pinkish brick seen in many of the later mill buildings. The buildings have a facade with pediment (facing Mill Street with an almost square building behind). The facade has an (inserted) girder running along the front forming a wide opening of a loading bay. A tunnel lies beneath the block and connects the rear yard with the blocks fronting the canal.

Assessment

- 1.1.89 On the first floor are three iron framed windows with shallow arches in blue engineering brick. A pediment with round window, (weathered and illegible) plaque and dentil courses lie above.

Interior

- 1.1.90 The ground floor retains areas of blue cobbling although much else has been obscured by later partitions. The first floor retains its timber floor, which seems to have a number of traps and scars relating to its original use. The second floor was inaccessible.

Significance

- 1.1.91 The building is probably of later 19th century date and seems to be part of the expansion of the mill in this period. The floor surfaces are interesting on each floor and may hold evidence as to the former use of this part of the mill. Oral evidence suggests this was always used as a loading bay and the cobbled floor seems to confirm this.

Block H*Exterior*

- 1.1.92 A red brick building fronting Mill Street and almost certainly contemporaneous with Block F (see plate 4). This building is far more domestic in nature and consists of two houses built in dark red brick and roofed with slate. The houses are terraced beneath the road and have a basement level in the yard behind the facade. The main elevation facing the street has neat rectangular window, which are shuttered on the ground floor and have sashes on the first. The shutters have been partly restored but the retaining iron catches survive on the exterior wall. There are two tall doors on the ground floor. Each is set in a tall elegant classical doorcase with light above and decorated pilasters. A dentil course runs along the top of the facade.

- 1.1.93 On the south end a small lean to building with separate chimney and curving yard wall may be the remains of a scullery or washhouse.

Interior

- 1.1.94 The interior was unsafe and was not inspected

Significance

- 1.1.95 Externally this building seems to be well preserved and retains a number of original features including doors and windows. According to Royal Worcester staff at least part of this building was used as a management dining and boardroom and the rest served as a caretakers house.

Block I

Exterior

- 1.1.96 A modern (mid-late 20th century) lean-to, perhaps lying over a similar earlier structure. This is made up of a modern brick exterior wall with large windows and a corrugated plastic roof.

Interior

- 1.1.97 The iron columns beneath blocks D and E are the only features of interest and imply an earlier predecessor to this modern lean to.

Significance

- 1.1.98 An entirely modern utilitarian building.

Block J*Exterior*

- 1.1.99 A fascinating group of timber offices raised over the entrance to the tunnel running under block G and supported on cast iron columns (see plate 4). The offices are made of timber boarding with tall glazed timber windows and have access to the loading bay and a view over the yard area.

Interior

- 1.1.100 Somewhat dilapidated but features relating to the original arrangement may survive.

Significance

- 1.1.101 These offices must relate to the late expansion of the mill and seem always to have been used as office accommodation. They are almost complete and despite their precarious siting are in reasonable condition.

Block K*Exterior*

- 1.1.102 This massive brick built block (made of the pinkish brick seen so frequently in the mill) forms the core of the later mill and all the other mill buildings are connected to it (see plate 4). The block is four stories tall and is a massive rectangular structure with a shallow pitched roof. The roof itself is mostly glazed although this is a later modification. The main elevation faces the yard to the south and is rather plain. All the windows have been replaced and a number of doors on all levels have been blocked and replaced by windows.

Interior

1.1.103 A mixture of iron and timber columns supports the internal floors and there is ample evidence for phases of alteration, strengthening and reordering. There is also much modern alteration including lifts, cased and uncased girders and modern stairs. At the west end a semicircular cut into a wall may represent the former position of a mill wheel or other machinery, similarly scars on both roof timbers and ceilings may relate to vanished machinery or line shafting. The roof is a massive but simple queen post with large iron fittings. A mezzanine has been partially inserted into the roof space. Rough dressing of the timbers in the roof may represent areas of decay or burned areas being cut back rather than the original dressing of the timbers.

Significance

1.1.104 This massive block is the heart of the historic mill. Although many elements have been altered or destroyed the scars of mill machinery and equipment are still visible on many of the roof and ceiling timbers.

8.3 Ancillary buildings

1.1.105 Three 19th century buildings remain on the east side of the mill yard to the south of the main mill block. The (now missing) southern extension of Block A would have probably almost filled the gap between these and the main buildings.

Block L*Exterior*

1.1.106 A rectangular two storey brick built block made of red brick with details picked out in blue engineering bricks. On the west (gable) end a loading door on the first floor and a pulley bar above indicate that this was formally used as storage space. The roof is covered by slate.

Interior

1.1.107 The ground floor has been much altered to accommodate a modern workshop. The upper floor is still used for storage.

Significance

1.1.108 The external appearance of the building has undergone almost no alteration and is surprisingly pristine. This building must relate to the later 19th century mill and its quality and detailing has more in common with block A than the later 19th century infill blocks.

Block M

Exterior

1.1.109 A three storied timber building with weather boarded exterior walls and an asbestos and slate roof. The upper floors retain their original fenestration whilst the lower floor has been almost destroyed by the addition of a modern breeze block external wall.

Interior

1.1.110 Not available for inspection.

Significance

1.1.111 Although the ground floor is heavily altered the building is an interesting survival of a utilitarian mill building. It is most probably late 19th century in date.

Block N*Exterior*

1.1.112 A low shed (perhaps a garage or wagon shed) with slate and asbestos sheet roof and timber frame. The front (facing west into the yard) is covered with corrugated iron with wooden doors beneath.

Interior

1.1.113 Not inspected.

Significance

1.1.114 The date and significance of this building is not fully known but it appears to be a late addition.

Walls and gates

1.1.115 The yard to the south of the mill is bounded by a brick wall, which seems to exhibit several phases of repair and alteration. The yard is entered from Mill Street via iron gates lying to the south of block H. Despite being damaged the gates (plate 3) are fine examples of the blacksmiths art and include hand forged spearheads set in drifted bars.

Significance

1.1.116 The gates in particular are a significant and important part of the site and although they have clearly suffered from vehicle impacts they are still of great interest.

8.4 Conclusions and recommendations

1.1.117 After its establishment in the 1840s the mill seems to have undergone several periods of growth and development. The earliest buildings are almost certainly F and H, A

and L may be somewhat later. The large later buildings (including K, G and B) appear to be stylistically and constructionally similar and it is important that the development of the site should be further understood by far more detailed recording work and historical research. The exact use of the buildings and the machinery used therein is also unknown and may be better understood with further research.

1.1.118 The buildings at Albion Mill represent a significant group of related structures whose purpose and development are only poorly understood. Although only a relatively small number of features relating to the mill's original function survive these are still significant and should not be removed or altered without further recording. Future work should include:

- Phased ground plan of the mill complex
- Full photographic recording of the interiors and exteriors of the buildings
- Drawn recording of selected details
- A programme of limited historical research

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./wt(g)</i>	<i>Date</i>
001								
	100	Layer		0.53	Tarmac road and road make-up			
	101	Layer		0.15	Make-up layer			
	102	Layer		0.6	Redeposited natural - make-up layer			
	103	Layer		0.4	Make-up layer or buried soil			
	104	Layer		0.3	Buried soil			
	105	Fill		0.2	Ditch fill, as a result of silting up	Animal bone	2 (15g)	
	106	Cut	0.7		Cut of ditch			
	107	Fill		0.1	Fill of root hole			
	108	Cut	0.4		Root hole 107			
	109	Fill		0.25	Fill of pit 110	Animal bone stone	8 (66g) 1(55g)	
	110	Cut	1		Pit (or ditch terminus)			
	111	Layer			Natural			
002								
	200	Layer			Tarmac			
	201	Layer		0.56	Make-up layer for car park surface			
	202	Structure			Exterior or load bearing N-S wall			
	203	Layer		0.02	Concrete surface			
	204	Layer			Floor surface			
	205	Structure			Stanchion base for column			
	206	Structure			Wall foundation			
	207	Layer			Rubble infill			
	208	Structure			Stanchion			
003								
	300	Layer			Tarmac layer			
	301	Layer		0.3	Make-up layer			

Assessment

	302	Layer		0.8	Backfill or dumping level	Pottery	1(10g)	19thC
	303	Layer			Masonry dump			
	304	Layer		0.4	Soil layer or dump into void			
	305	Layer		1.0	Dumped deposit			
	306	Layer		1.0	Dumped deposit			
	307	Layer		0.3	Dumped deposit	Clay pipe pottery	6(11g) 1(4g)	19thC
	308	Layer			Natural			
004								
	400	Layer		0.5	Building debris			
	401	Layer		0.55	Building debris			
	402	Layer		0.6	Buried soil	Pottery	1(10g)	19thC
	403	Layer			Natural clay			
	404	Group			Group number for tenement structures			
	405	Cut	1.3		Linear feature			
	406	Fill		0.5	Fill of 405, with possible cobbled surface remnant	Animal bone BM Pottery stone	11 (56g) 1 (9g) 2(51g) 1(77g)	L11thC?
	407	Cut	0.95 N-S, 0.85 E-W		Pit			
	408	Fill		0.44	Fill of 407	Stone	1(16g)	
	409	Cut	1.2		Ditch			
	410	Fill		0.6	Fill of 409	Pottery	1(37g)	L11thC?

APPENDIX 2 POTTERY ASSESSMENT/ SPOT-DATING***By Paul Blinkhorn***

The pottery assemblage comprised 5 sherds with a total weight of 103 g. It comprised two fairly large and apparently stratified rim fragments from jars of Saxo-Norman or early medieval date, and three sherds of modern material. The former were in generally good condition, although the calcareous inclusions in the surfaces had been leached out. The following fabrics were noted:

Cotswolds-type ware, late 11th – 14th century (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 202 and 357-8). Oolitic limestone tempered wares, mainly wheel-finished cylindrical jars with simple club rims. 2 sherds, 84 g.

Mass-produced White Earthenwares, 19th – 20th century. 3 sherds, 19 g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Context	Cotswolds		White		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	
302			1	9	19thC
307			1	2	19thC
402			1	8	19thC
406	1	49			L11thC?
410	1	35			L11thC?
Total	2	84	3	19	

APPENDIX 3

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OAU 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (1st edition, ed D. Wilkinson)

McCarthy, MR and Brooks, CM, 1988 *Medieval Pottery in Britain AD900-1600* Leicester University Press

APPENDIX 4**SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**

Site name: Albion Mill, Mill Street, Worcester

Site code: WCM101088

Grid reference: NGR SO 8508 5412

Type of evaluation: Four trenches

Date and duration of project: 25th-28th March 2003

Area of site: 0.4 hectares

Summary of results: Features dated to the early Medieval period were uncovered, as well as the remains of 19th century tenements and mill buildings.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Worcester City Museum in due course, under the accession number WCM101088.

Plates



Plate 1: Block A from the east



Plate 2: The River Frontage (from foreground) blocks I, E,D,C,B,A



Plate 3: The Iron Gates
(detail)



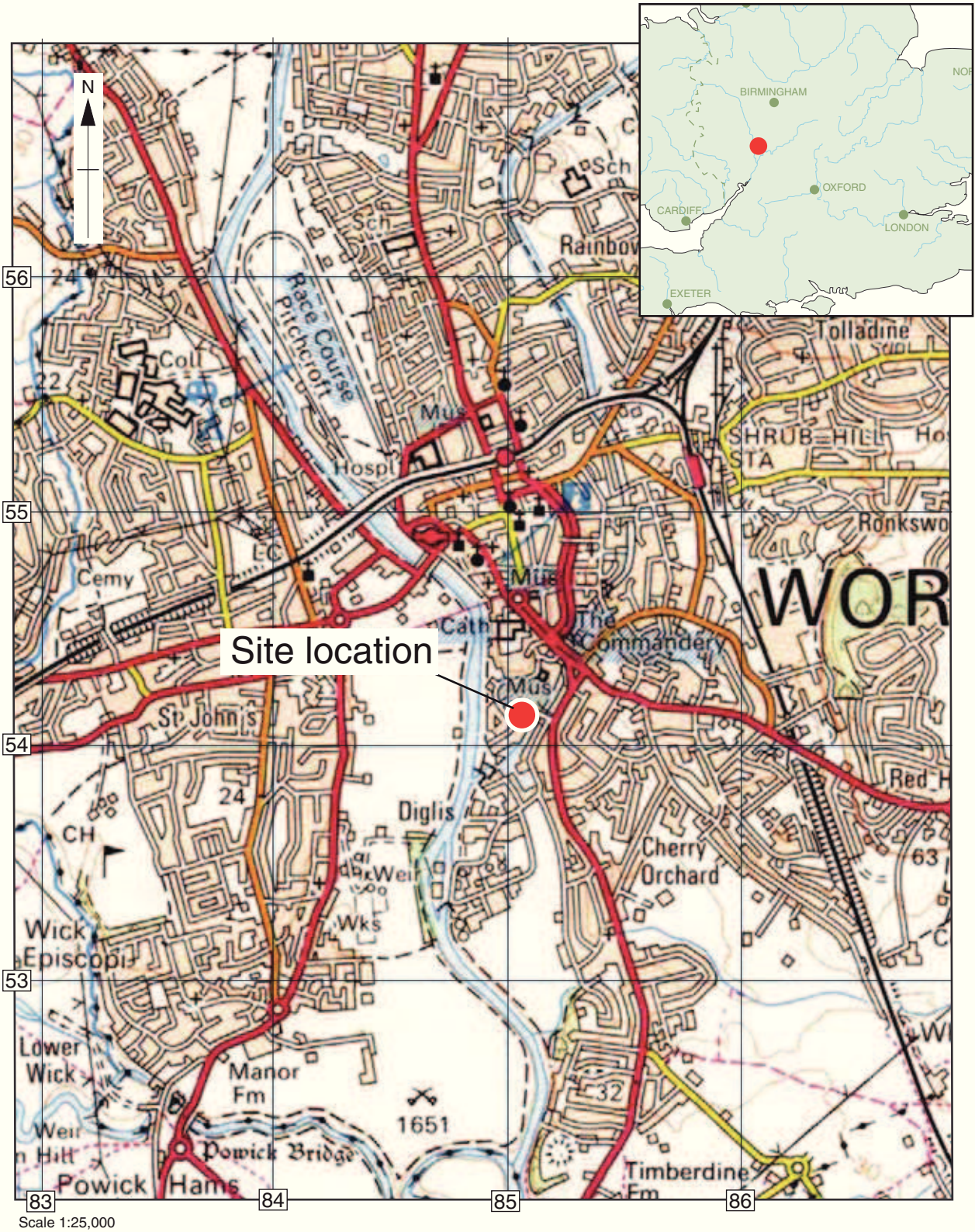
Plate 4: Blocks H, J and K



Plate 5: Blocks H, J and K

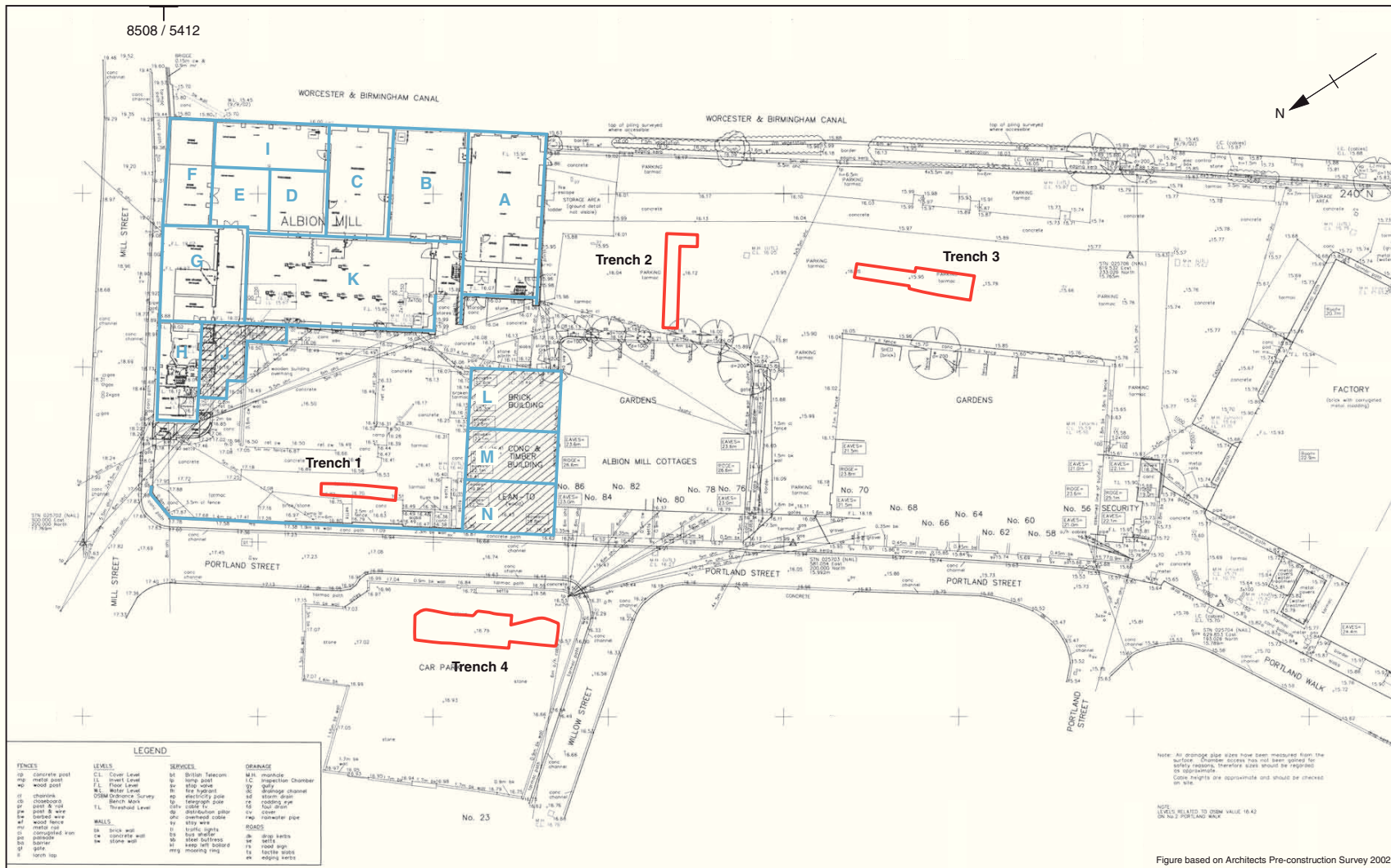


Plate 6: Block K details of
roof timbers



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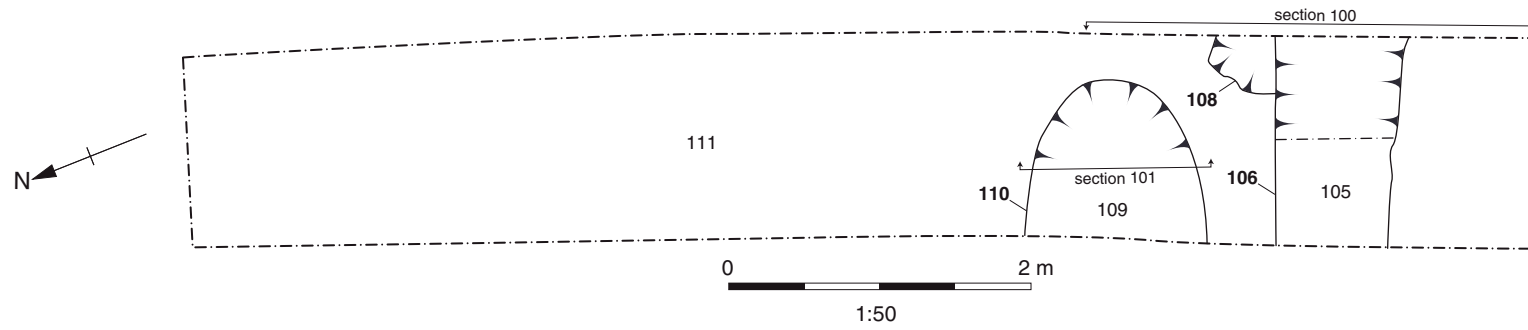
Figure 1: Site location



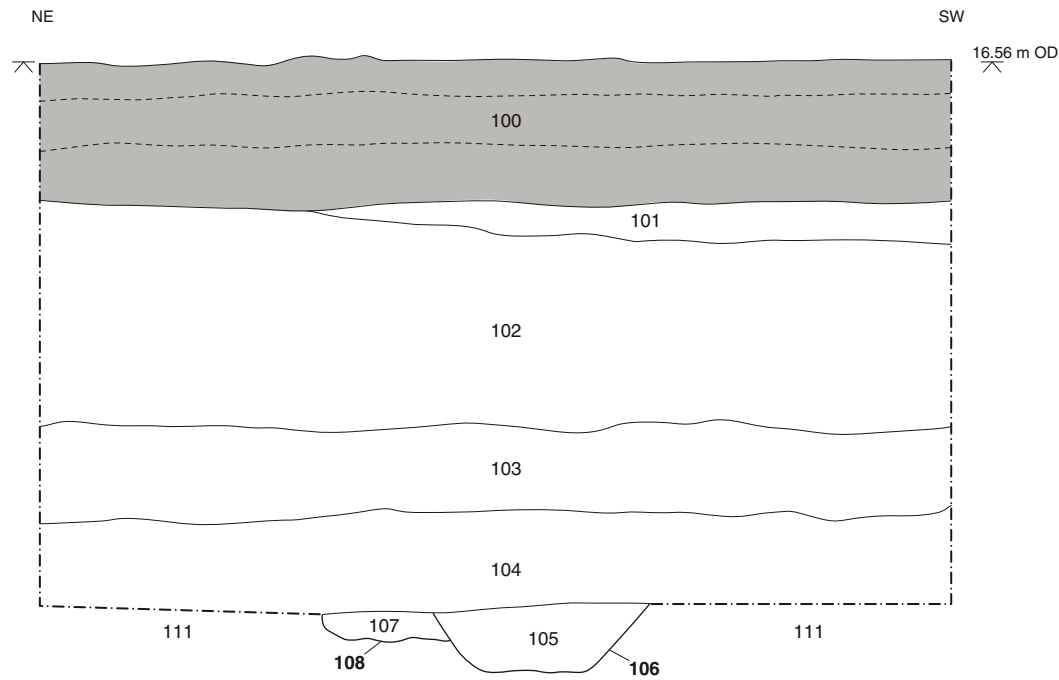
- Archaeological evaluation trench
- Building referenced in Section 8

Figure 2: Trench location

Trench 1: Plan



Trench 1: Section 100



Trench 1: Section 101

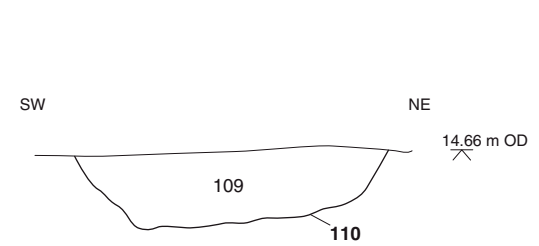
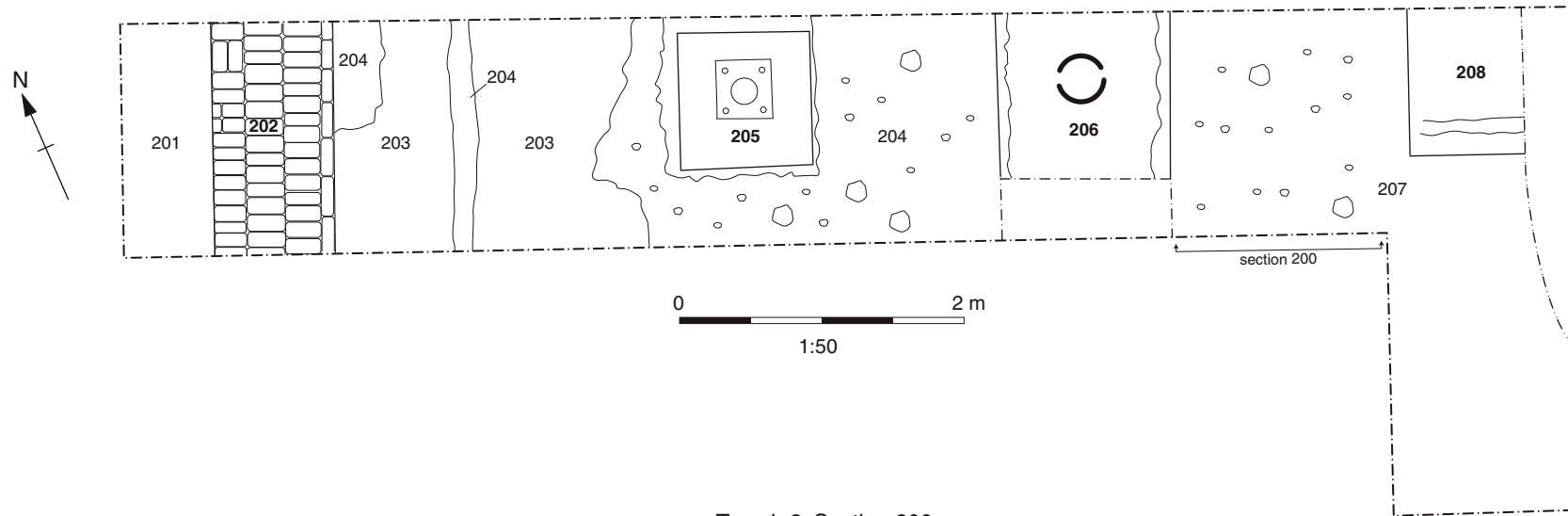


Figure 3: Trench 1, plan and sections

Trench 2: Plan



Trench 2: Section 200

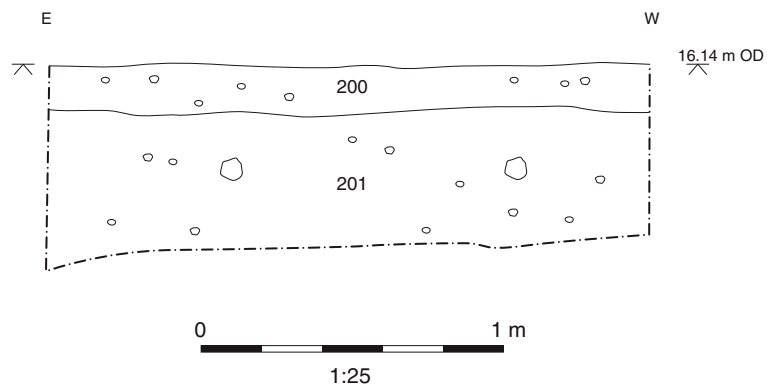


Figure 4: Trench 2, plan and section

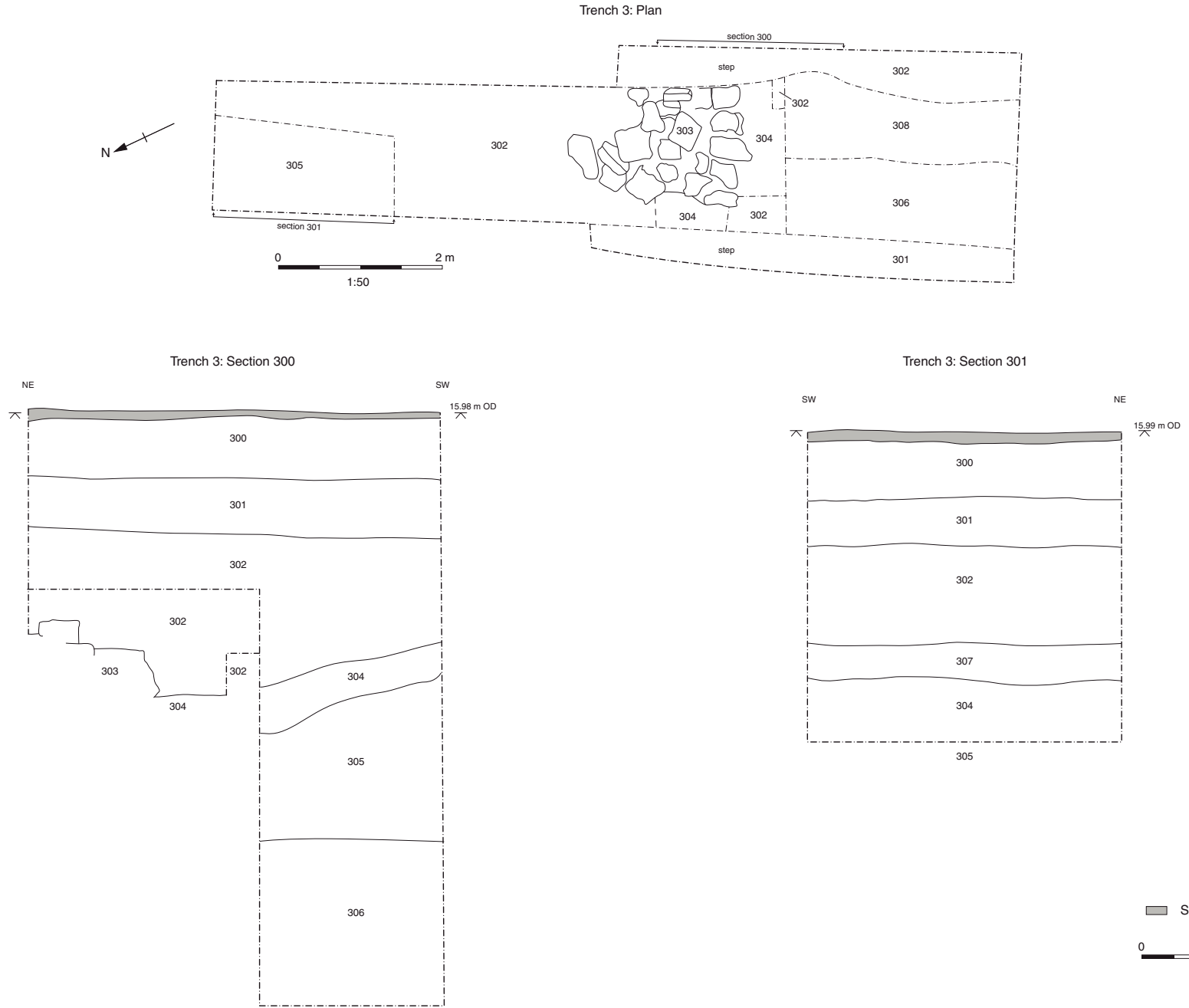
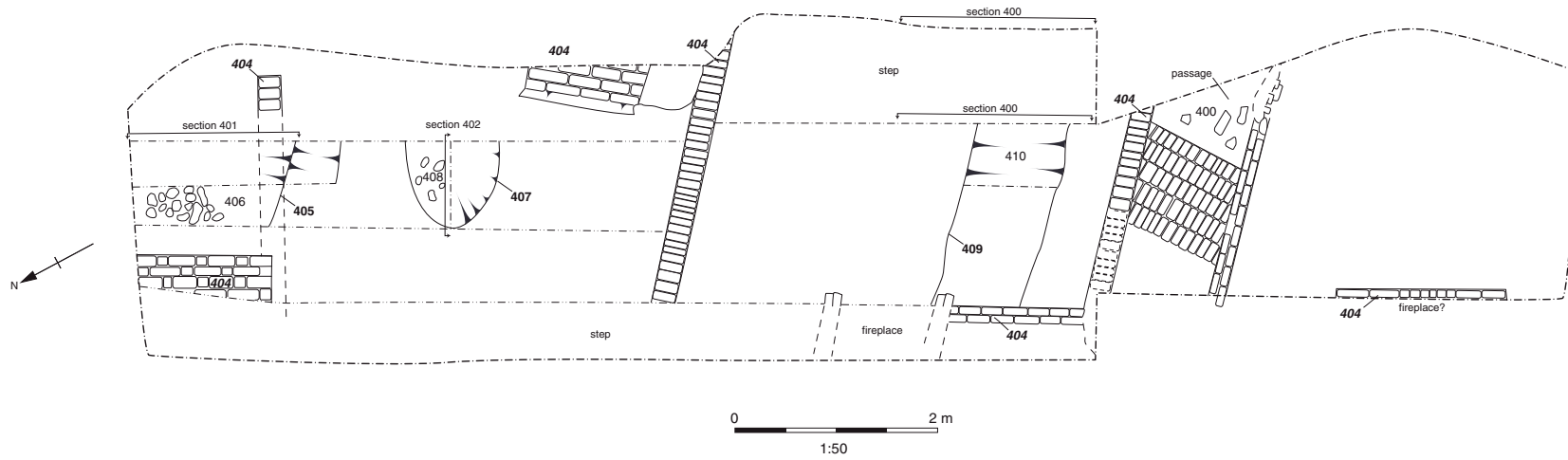
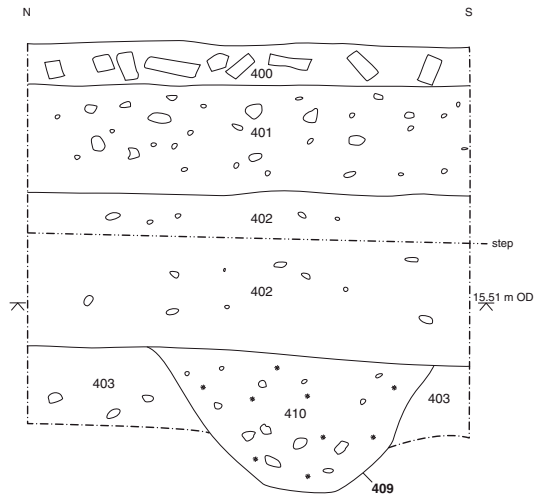


Figure 5: Trench 3, plan and sections

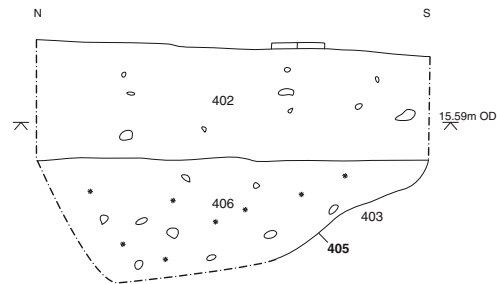
Trench 4: Plan 400



Trench 4: Section 400



Trench 4: Section 401



Trench 4: Section 402

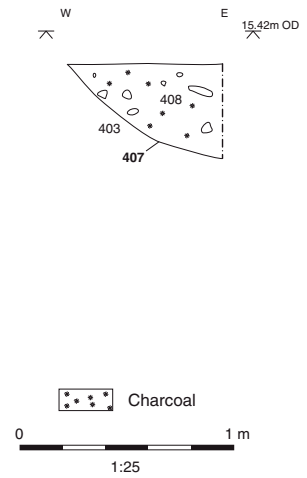


Figure 6: Trench 4, plan and sections



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