

# The South Terrace Cliveden Taplow Buckinghamshire



## Archaeological Watching Brief



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Signed.....



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Illustrated by Peter Lorimer

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# The South Terrace, Cliveden, Taplow, Buckinghamshire

## *ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*

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## SUMMARY

*In April, May and June 2002, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at The South Terrace, Cliveden, Taplow, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 9103 8515). The work was commissioned by the National Trust in advance of intrusive groundworks on the terrace to inform on the need for maintenance of the structure. The watching brief demonstrated that the vaulted terrace was in a generally sound state. A number of 19th century drains were revealed and a 19th century wall foundation was exposed at the base of the terrace.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In April, May and June 2002, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at The South Terrace, Cliveden, Taplow, Buckinghamshire where the National Trust is proposing to carry out a programme of work to rectify structural problems at this later 17th century terrace. The project involved intrusive groundworks and investigations of parts of the terrace, as part of a long-term strategy for maintaining the structure. Plans for the scheme were prepared by Julian Harrap, Architects of London - (Plan No. 418/01).
- 1.1.2 The National Trust's Archaeologist for the Thames and Solent Region, Gary Marshall prepared a brief for an archaeological recording action during the progress of the works. A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by OA detailing how it would implement the requirements of the brief.

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 Cliveden stands on the wooded heights to the north of the parish of Taplow, South Buckinghamshire, overlooking the river Thames. The site is located at c 60 m OD and at NGR SU 9103 8515. The underlying geology is chalk.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The south terrace at Cliveden is the only surviving structure of the mansion designed for George Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham. The mansion and terrace dates originally to 1674-77, constructed by William Winde, and was evidently mostly complete by 1679 when John Evelyn recorded a visit to Cliveden in his diary (Hitchmough, 1997, 7-9). Additional wings were added to the mansion around 1706 (ibid., 23).
- 1.3.2 The terrace itself lies between the current house and its gardens and is c 75-m long, 8 m wide and 4 m tall. It is of brick construction with 26 vaults carrying the weight of the terrace along its length. The elevation shows as a blind arcade with simple entablature and cornice above. A double flight of stairs is central, partly rendered and partly stone-faced. Beneath is a central chamber with stair leading to the site of the original building and subsequently retained as was the terrace through rebuilding campaigns.

- 1.3.3 The original mansion building was destroyed by fire in 1795 and remained in a ruinous state until a rebuilding campaign initiated by Sir George Warendor, for whom architect William Burn designed a new mansion. No plans survive suggesting that the terrace was to be altered and so it appears to have been incorporated wholesale into the new site layout, evidently complete by 1838 as depicted on a parish plan of Taplow of that year (*ibid.*, 61).
- 1.3.4 Within eleven years the new building was also struck by fire in 1849 and the ruins demolished in 1850. The third rebuilding campaign was by Sir Charles Barry from 1850-52 in the Cinquecento style, maintaining the overall area of the previous buildings on the site (OAU 1994a, 1994b).
- 1.3.5 Barry's design saw the central chamber of the terrace built outwards with rusticated stone to provide a visual link with the rendered facing of the mansion above. It is not known whether the internal chambers of the terrace were altered by Barry at the time of his rebuilding.
- 1.3.6 There has been little change to Cliveden since the mid 19th century. In 1896 Astor purchased a 17th century balustrade, originating from the south forecourt of the Casino at the Villa Borghese in Rome, which was erected above the parterre to the south of the lower terrace.
- 1.3.7 By 1912 the terrace had been resurfaced in stone and the skylights lighting the orangeries below were replaced. The orangery chambers were then utilised as ferneries.
- 1.3.8 In 1942 the estate was donated to the National Trust, and the mansion leased to Stanford University of California in 1966. A period of restoration and repairs took place between 1984-5, carried out by the Trust in collaboration with Cliveden Hotel Ltd who acquired a 100 year lease on the mansion.

#### 1.4 Acknowledgements

Thanks must be extended towards Gary Marshall and Charlie Mates and all the National Trust employees who assisted in these works.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

## 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:20 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

#### *Area 3: West staircase landing (Fig. 4)*

- 3.1.1 On the western staircase landing an area of paving measuring c 1m x 1m was removed and a trench excavated to reveal the top of the vault. The vault (100) was encountered 0.40 m below ground level (bgl) and was overlain by layers of rubble make-up (108 and 111). A layer of silt (107) overlay 111 and was overlain by a rubble layer (106), which was below a deposit of sand and clay (105). A construction cut (109) truncated these layers, which was filled by a rubble foundation (132) below a brick wall (117). The cut was backfilled with 110, a rubbly sand. Over the wall was a levelling layer (116) below a dump of tile (115). This comprised a layer of tiles laid flat. The tiles varied in length from 0.16 m to 0.58 m and were uniformly 0.02 m thick. The tiles had rough edges and were worn, so are presumably reused as bedding material for the terrace. The tile layer was overlain by a further silty make-up deposit (114). A redundant layer of stone floor slabs (113) overlay 114. These measured 0.4 m in length and were 0.03 m thick with no noticeable bonding material. The layer was only noted in section and did not appear to extend of a wider area. It may represent a further levelling/make-up layer rather than an *in situ* floor. A layer of sand (104) sealed the floor/make-up layer 113, and was overlain by a silty layer (103 and 112). Above this was a mortar layer (102) below the present stone surface (101).

#### *Trench 3 (Fig. 5)*

- 3.1.2 A trench was opened through the top of the terrace to investigate the roof of a vault. The trench was aligned north-south and measured 10 m by 1 m. The top of four east west aligned brick arches were seen 0.30 m bgl (134) in the south of the trench. In the north of the trench the vault sloped down to the north to a depth of 0.90 m bgl (136 and 173). Overlying the brickwork in the centre of the trench was a stepped brick structure (137), this was sealed by layers of puddled clay (175, 124, 149 and 176). The clay was overlain by a rubble layer (123), and truncated by construction cuts 177 and 151. Cut 151 was for a brick drain sealed by a stone cap (135) and backfilled with sandy gravel (150). Cut 177 was for an area of sloping bricks (179), perhaps forming a run off area, to the north of the trench and sealed with sand (178). A narrow limestone drain (161) was seen to run north-south along the edge of the trench. In the east section (Fig 5, Section 106) rubble layer 123 was overlain by a sequence of thin layers of make-up material comprising concrete 122, a layer of sandy gravel (125), in turn overlain by a layer of asphalt/bitumen (121). Above this was a thin layer of sand and gravel mixed with ?lime (120) further overlain by two



more bituminous layers (118 and 119). It was noted that these late deposits did not appear in section, where the upper part of the sequence here comprised a layer of concrete (181).

***Area 5: Sounding chamber floor (Fig. 6)***

- 3.1.3 Broken paving was lifted and a trench measuring approximately 1 m x 1 m was excavated to a depth of 0.6 m bgl. A layer of natural orange sand (158) was sealed by a layer of silty sand make-up (143), which was truncated by a construction cut (147). Within the cut were the brick foundations 145, which had been superseded by the foundations 146 and backfilled with clayey sand (148). A service trench (139) truncated 148 and contained two water pipes (141 and 142) and a sandy silt backfill (140). A stone floor (144) sealed these deposits.

***West of terrace (Fig. 7)***

- 3.1.4 A trench measuring 1 m by 1.2 m was excavated toward the centre of the western half of the terrace. A stone covered drain (152) was seen 1.05 m bgl sealed by a clayey sand dump (153). A small brick drain (156) was seen to the north of the trench and, with 153, was truncated by a service trench (154) containing a pipe and a sandy loam backfill (155).

***West staircase (Fig. 8)***

- 3.1.5 On the western staircase a stone step was removed and a trench measuring 2.20 m by 0.30 m was excavated. Three brick supports (162) were seen extending to over 0.30 m bgl and were sealed by a silty clay make-up level (163). The stone step (164) sealed these deposits.

***West of terrace (Fig. 9)***

- 3.1.6 To the far west of the terrace a trench measuring 0.80 m by 0.70 m was excavated. The brick vaulted roof (167) was seen at 0.20 m bgl and was 0.30 m thick. It was sealed by a concrete layer (166) and a bitumen deposit (168), the paving slabs (165) sealed these deposits.

***“Side Inspection”: Side wall to western half landing (Fig. 10)***

- 3.1.7 The existing rendered brick to the landing was removed and a hole measuring approximately 1 m by 1 m was cut into the brickwork. The wall was seen to be 0.70 m thick with a void beyond it. The void (157) measured 2.0 m by 1.70 m and was 0.80 m high. Stalactites were observed within the void.

***Area 4: Corner of eastern staircase (Fig. 11 and Fig. 12)***

- 3.1.8 Two pits were excavated at the base of the south-east and south-west corners of the eastern landing to assess the wall foundations supporting the landings. The south-east pit measured 0.80 m by 1.0 m and a reddy brown clayey silt subsoil (172) was seen at 0.20 m bgl. This was truncated by a construction cut (171), over 0.40 m wide and more than 0.20 m deep. Within the cut was a concrete foundation with a yellow concrete mortar (170), which was sealed by a topsoil (169).

- 3.1.9 The south-west pit measured 0.80 m by 1.0 m and natural sand (184) was seen at 0.80 m bgl. The natural was truncated by a root hole (185), which was filled with subsoil (186), to the south and by a construction cut (183) to the north. Within 183 was the terrace wall (182) extending to over 1 m bgl, and a silty sand backfill (190). Sealing these deposits were two silty sand make-up layers (187 and 188) below a buried topsoil (189) and the staircase.

***Area 1: Inspection of cast iron capitals, West fernery (Fig. 13)***

- 3.1.10 The existing brick vaulting was removed from an area measuring 0.40 m x 0.40 m, to a depth of one brick, to access the cast iron T section girder, on either side of the fernery, for inspection. The access hole to the east of the fernery revealed a void extending 1 m to the vault roof. On the west side a concrete drain (160) was observed behind the single skin of bricks.

**4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

***Area 3: West staircase landings***

- 4.1.1 The trench revealed the top of the vault structure 0.40 m bgl, which was seen to be in a good condition. The vault was sealed by make-up for the landing, which was truncated by a cut for a small wall (117). This would appear to be part of a brick drain to aid run off from the stairway, probably dating from the 1850 rebuild of the mansion. A sealed stone surface (113) is probably an indication of the terrace surface prior to the 1912 resurfacing.

***Trench 3***

- 4.1.2 The top of the vaulted terrace was encountered between 0.30 and 0.90 m bgl, and was seen to be in a sound condition. Puddled clay had been deposited over the brickwork to act as a waterproof sealant. The clay had been disturbed in places where later drainage facilities had been added. The north of the trench contained a sloping area of brickwork (179), which would have acted as a run off channel for rain water, and the centre of the trench contained a sealed brick drain (135). The brick structure towards the south of the trench (137) did not appear to have a drainage function, but may have added structural support to the vaults. The masonry may have represented the top of the arched entrance into the sounding room below. These features may all date from the mid-19th century rebuilding of the mansion. The numerous layers of make-up for the stone terrace surface suggests that the stone paving may have been replaced periodically.

***Area 5: Sounding chamber floor***

- 4.1.3 The trench in the sounding chamber revealed two water pipes, which would have supplied water to, and taken water from the fountain to the south. The foundations of the vault were seen to be sound and appeared to have been repaired in the 19th century, although it is not known whether Barry altered the internal chambers of the terrace this may be an indication of work he may have undertaken.



***West of terrace trenches***

- 4.1.4 The easterly of the two trenches did not reveal the vault roof, but did reveal a stone covered drain (152) assumed to be the same as drain 135 in Trench 3. This was seen at 1.0 m bgl and demonstrated that the drain was dropping off to the west. A curb side drain (156) was also noted which was contemporary with the stone surface of the terrace (post 1912) and used to drain off rain water. The western trench revealed the vault to be 0.20 m bgl and in a good condition.

***West staircase***

- 4.1.5 The trench revealed three brick plinths supporting the step, all of good order, and possibly dating to the mid-19th century building campaign by Barry.

***“Side Inspection”: Side walls to half landings***

- 4.1.6 The works revealed a brick chamber beneath the stairs acting as a load bearing structure, which was in a structurally sound state. The vault may have been a result of Barry extending the central chamber outwardly.

***Area 4: Corner of staircase***

- 4.1.7 The eastern pit revealed the staircase foundations, and also revealed a concrete footing (170). This may be the remains of garden wall possibly predating the late 19th century balustrade purchased for the property by Astor in 1896 (see 1.3.6 above).

***Area 1: Inspection of cast iron capitals, West fernery***

- 4.1.8 The inspection holes into the fernery roof revealed the cast iron to be corroded. The vault roof was in a sound state and a concrete drain (160) was revealed to have been added to the western side, perhaps an addition from Barry’s rebuilding of the mansion.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

CONTEXT	TYPE	COMMENTS
100	Masonry	Brick vault
101	Masonry	Paving slabs
102	Layer	Mortar
103	Layer	Makeup
104	Layer	Makeup
105	Layer	Makeup
106	Layer	Makeup
107	Layer	Makeup
108	Layer	Dump
109	Cut	Construction cut
110	Layer	Construction backfill
111	Layer	Makeup
112	Layer	Makeup
113	Layer	Floor tiles
114	Layer	Makeup
115	Layer	Makeup
116	Layer	Makeup
117	Masonry	Wall with drainage usage
118	Layer	Waterproofing
119	Layer	Waterproofing
120	Layer	Waterproofing
121	Layer	Waterproofing
122	Layer	Dump
123	Layer	Dump
124	Layer	Clay waterproofing
125	Layer	Makeup
126	Structure	Wall
127	Masonry	Wall
128	Layer	Bonding material
129	Layer	Dump
130	Masonry	Wall with drainage usage
131	Masonry	Mortar
132	Layer	Makeup
133	Layer	Makeup
134	Masonry	Brick vault
135	Masonry	Drain
136	Masonry	Brick vault
137	Masonry	Wall
138	Cut	Construction cut
139	Cut	Service trench
140	Fill	Service backfill
141	Pipe	Water pipe
142	Pipe	Water pipe
143	Layer	Makeup
144	Surface	Stone floor
145	Masonry	Brick footing
146	Masonry	Brick footing
147	Cut	Construction cut

148	Fill	Construction backfill
149	Layer	Clay waterproofing
150	Fill	Drain cut backfill
151	Cut	Drain cut
152	Masonry	Drain
153	Layer	Makeup
154	Cut	Service trench
155	Fill	Pipe
156	Masonry	Drain
157	Masonry	Steps
158	Layer	Natural
159	Masonry	Brick vault
160	Masonry	Brick vault
161	Masonry	Stone drain
162	Layer	Brick steps
163	Layer	Makeup
164	Masonry	Paving slabs
165	Masonry	Paving slabs
166	Masonry	Concrete
167	Masonry	Brick vault
168	Surface	Tarmac
169	Layer	Topsoil
170	Masonry	Concrete footing
171	Cut	Construction cut
172	Layer	Subsoil
173	Masonry	Brick vault
174	Masonry	Brick drain
175	Layer	Clay waterproofing
176	Layer	Clay waterproofing
177	Cut	Construction cut
178	Layer	Makeup
179	Masonry	Drain
180	Masonry	Brick foundations
181	Layer	Concrete
182	Masonry	Brick terrace
183	Cut	Construction cut
184	Layer	Natural
185	Cut	Root hole
186	Fill	Root hole fill
187	Layer	Makeup
188	Layer	Makeup
189	Layer	Topsoil
190	Fill	Construction backfill

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Hitchborough, W 1997 Cliveden, *the South Terrace, Historical Documentation*. Conservation Plan.

OAU 1994a *Cliveden, Taplow, Buckinghamshire. Notes on watching briefs during enabling work, April-May 1994.*

OAU 1994b Cliveden House, Buckinghamshire. The South Terrace.

Wilkinson, D, 1992 Field Manual (Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd)

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** The South Terrace, Cliveden, Taplow, Buckinghamshire

**Site code:** CLIST02

**Grid reference:** SU 9103 8515

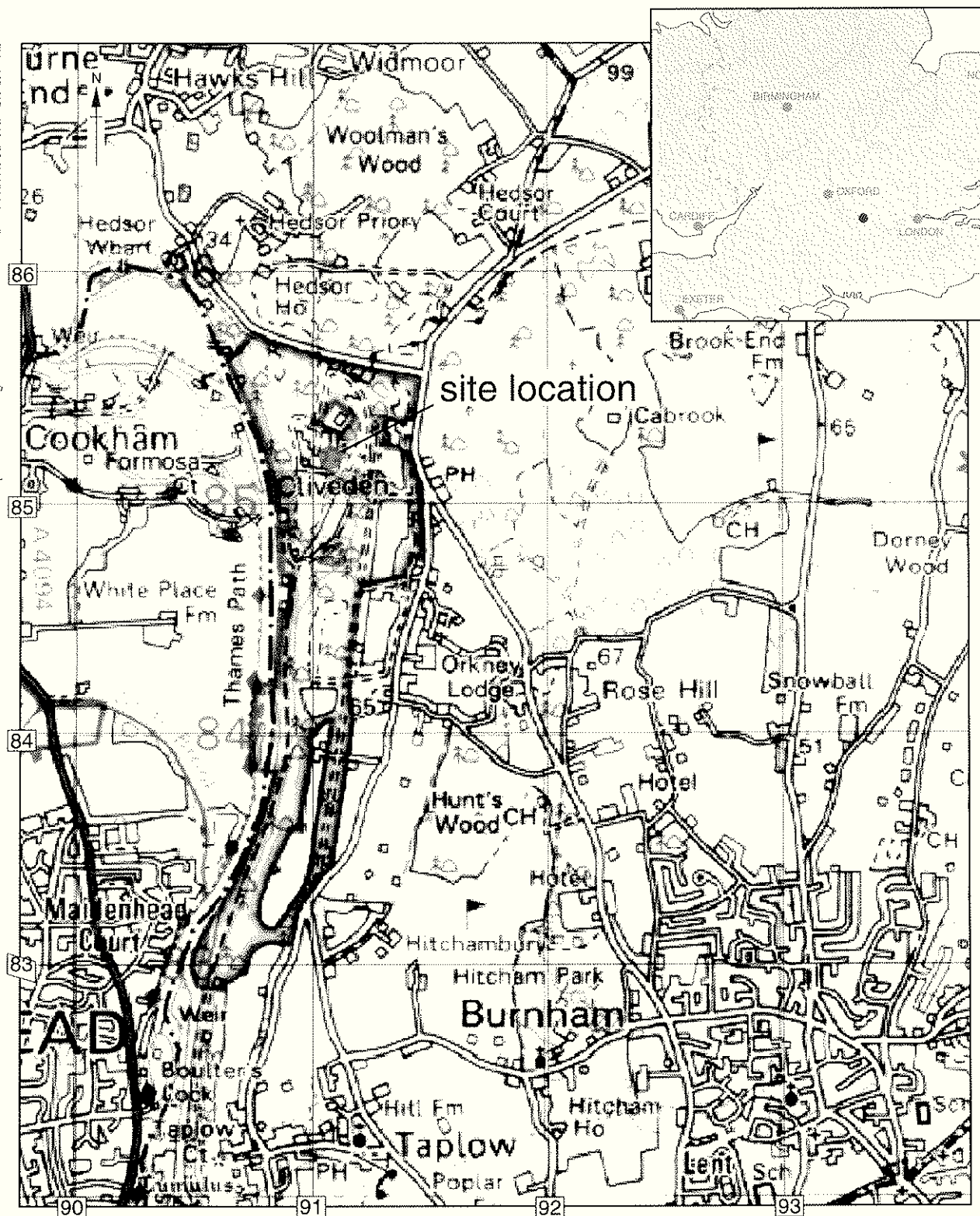
**Type of watching brief:** A series of inspection trenches dug in and around the south terrace

**Date and duration of project:** April to June 2002

**Area of site:** c 0.10 ha

**Summary of results:** A sound vault structure, a series of drains and a wall foundation

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with The National Trust Archaeological Archive at Stowe Gardens in due course.



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location

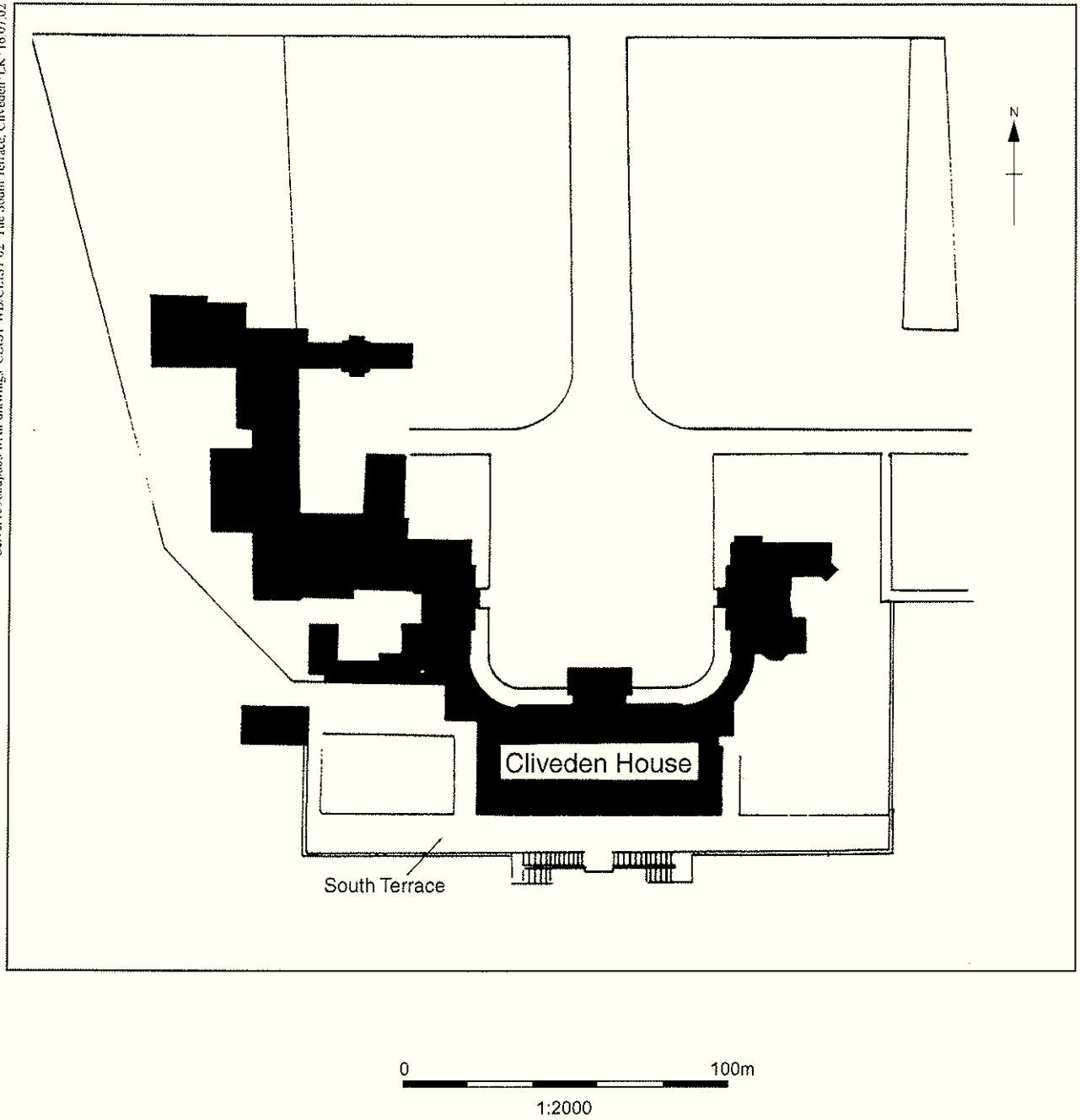


Figure 2: Plan of Cliveden House



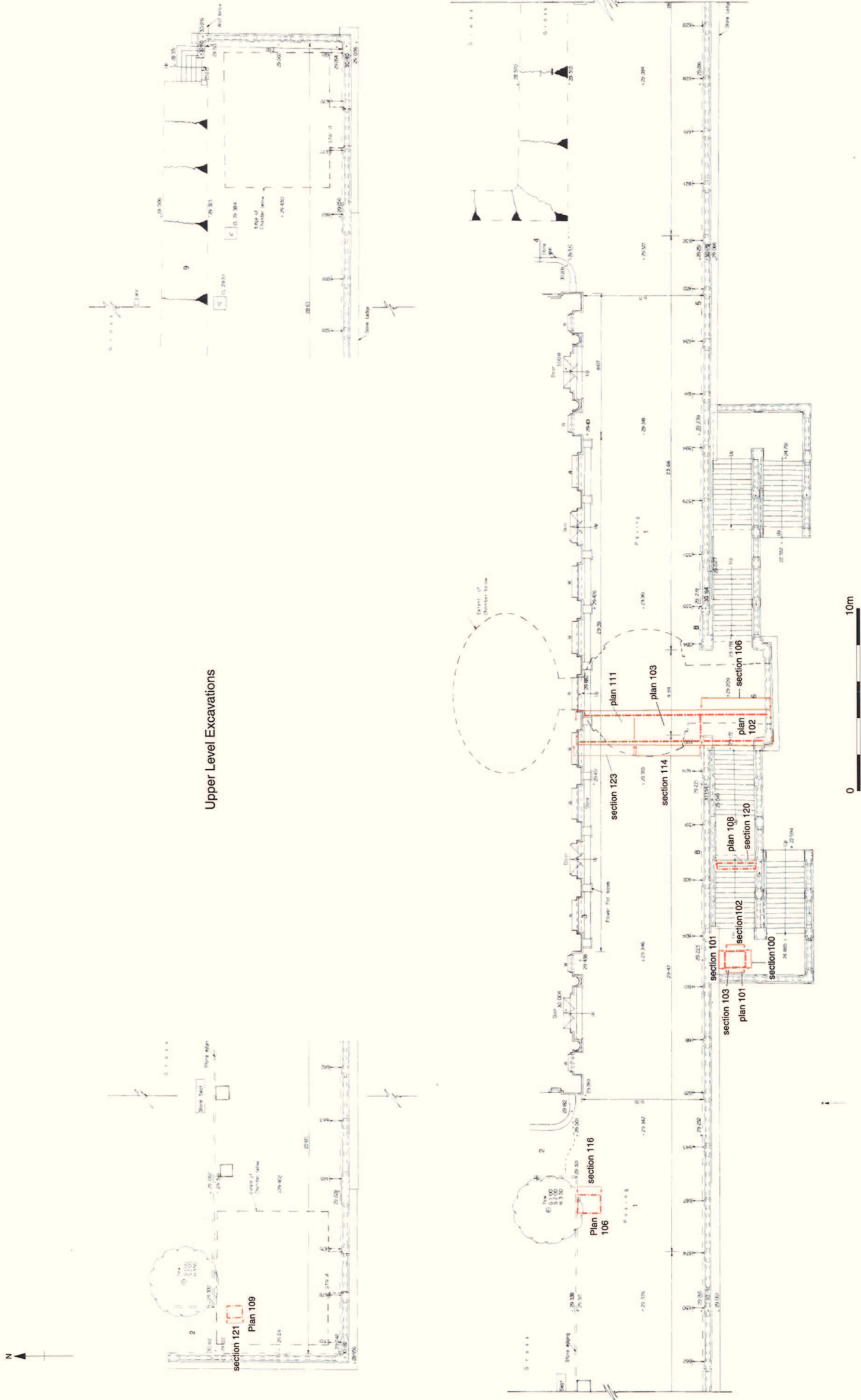
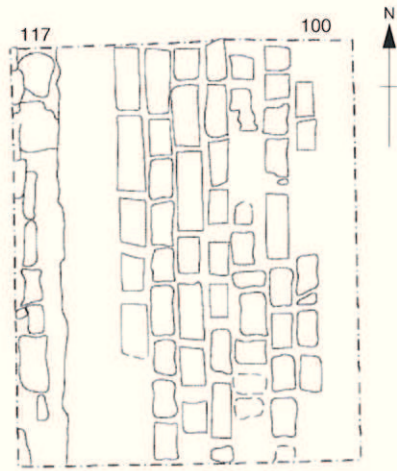


Figure 3a: Trench and Section Locations

Figure 3b: Trench and Section Locations

Plan 101

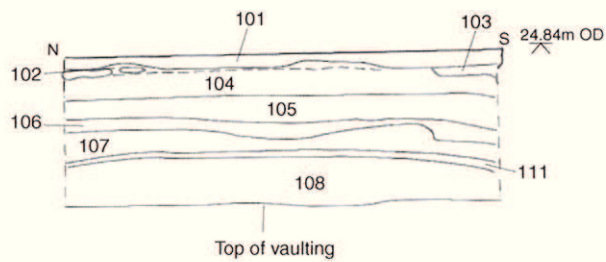


Line of brick wall exposed in section

Plan 101

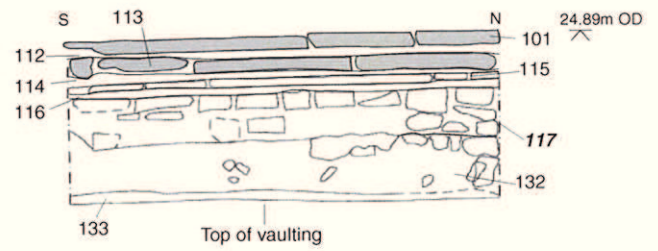


Section 102



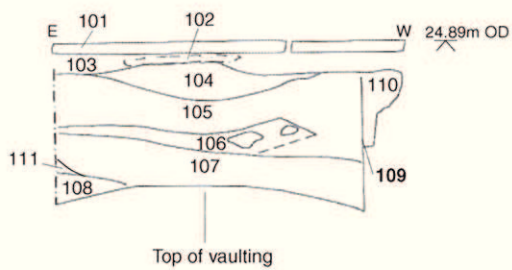
Top of vaulting

Section 103



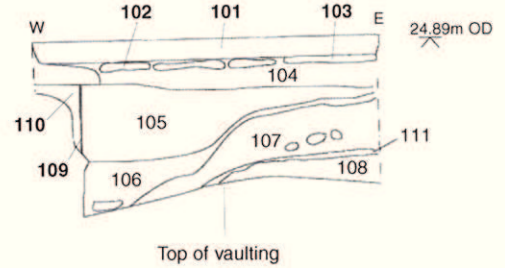
Top of vaulting

Section 100



Top of vaulting

Section 101



Top of vaulting

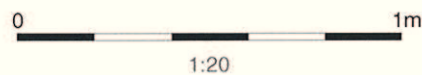
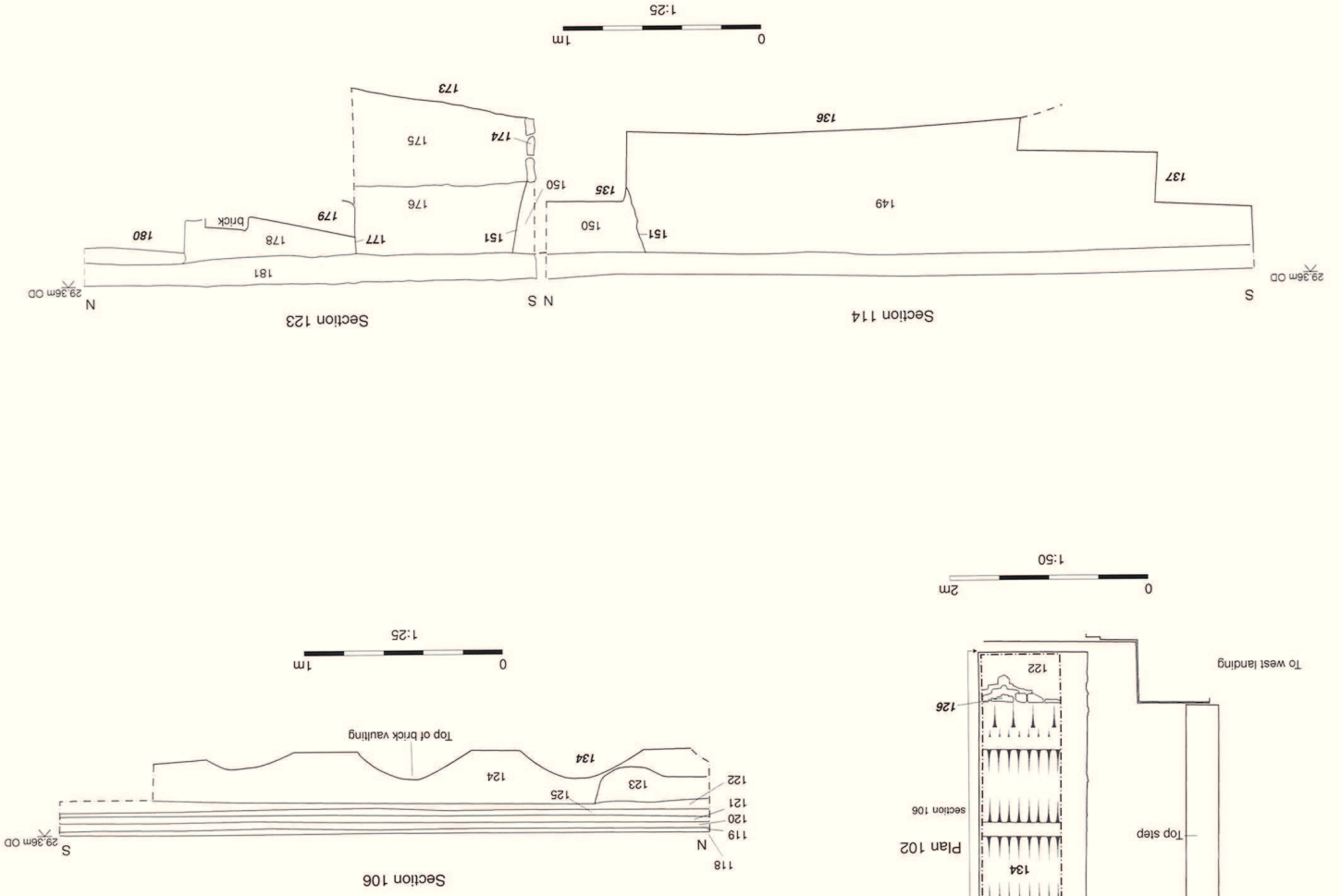
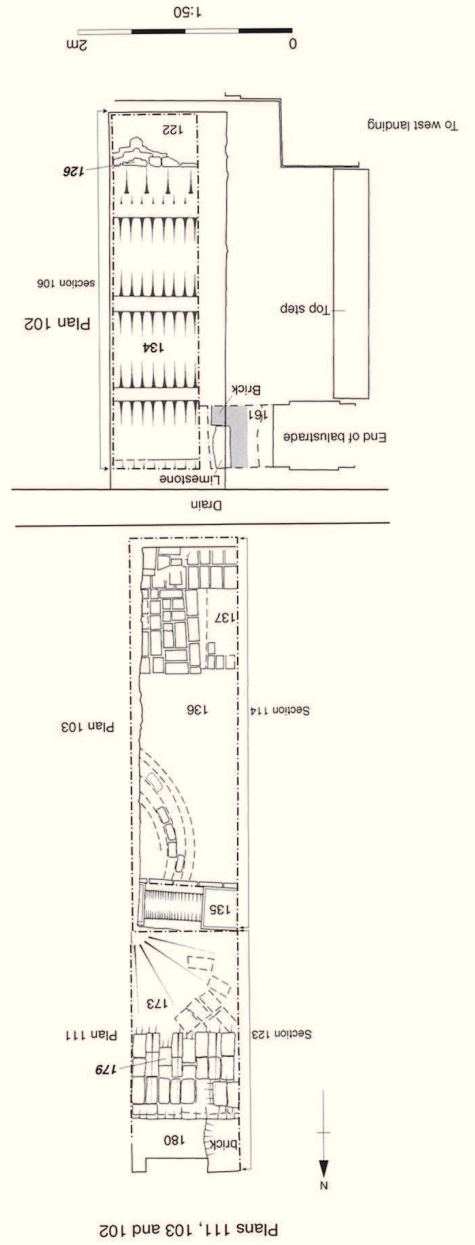


Figure 4: Area 3, west staircase landing





Plan 102

Figure 5: Trench 3

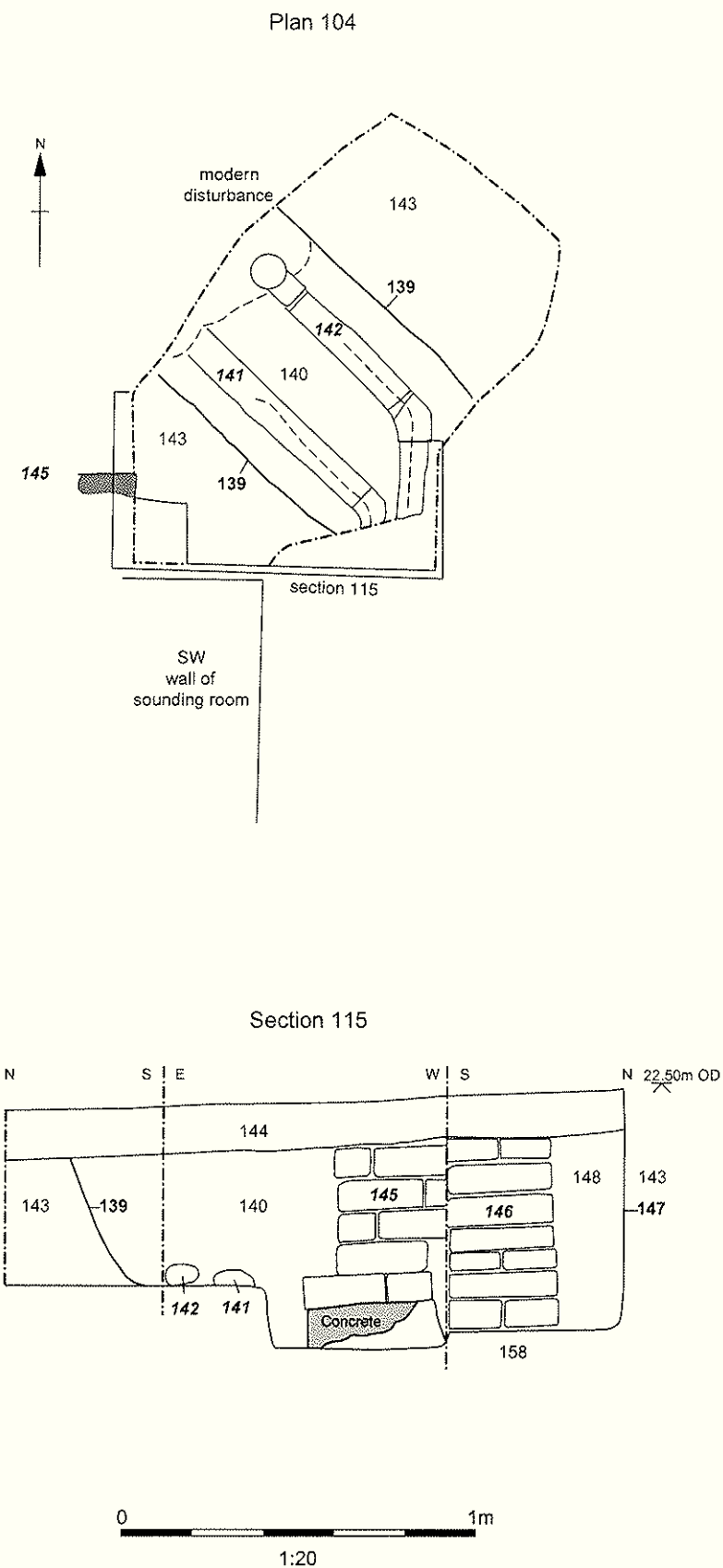
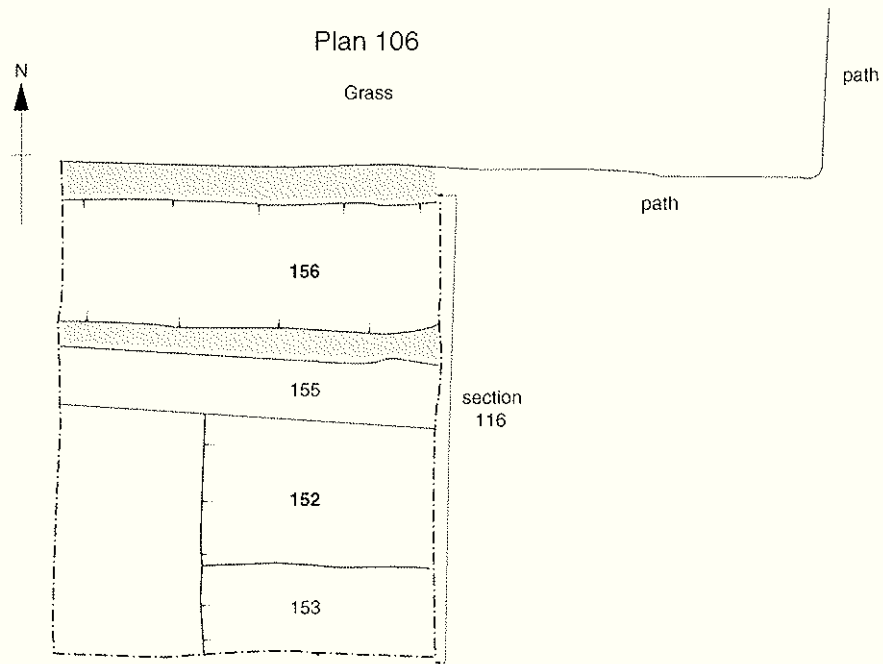
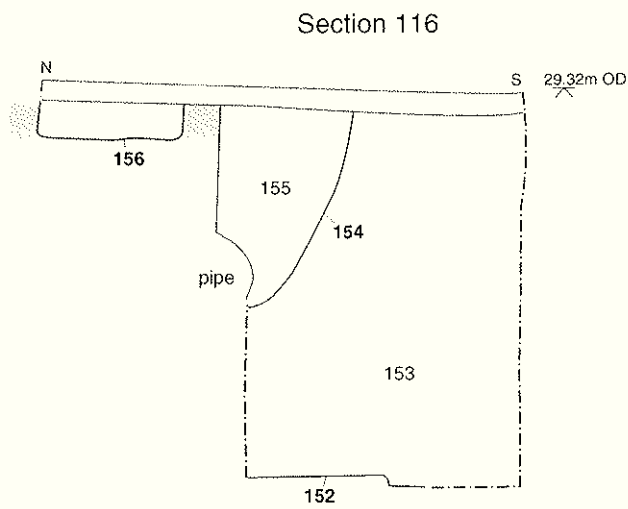


Figure 6: Sounding chamber



Brick



0 1m

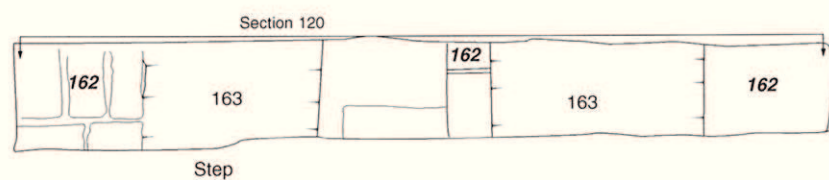
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Figure 7: West of terrace

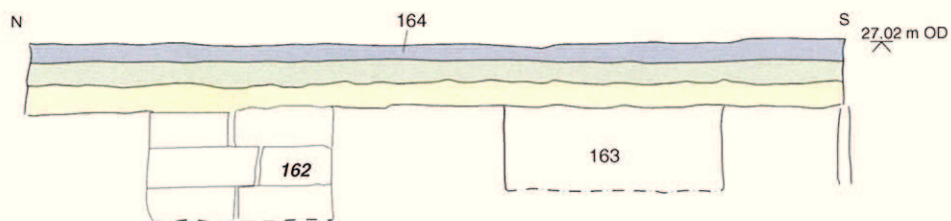




Plan 108



Section 120



Key

- Paving
- Concrete
- Sand

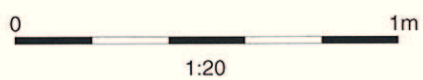


Figure 8: West staircase

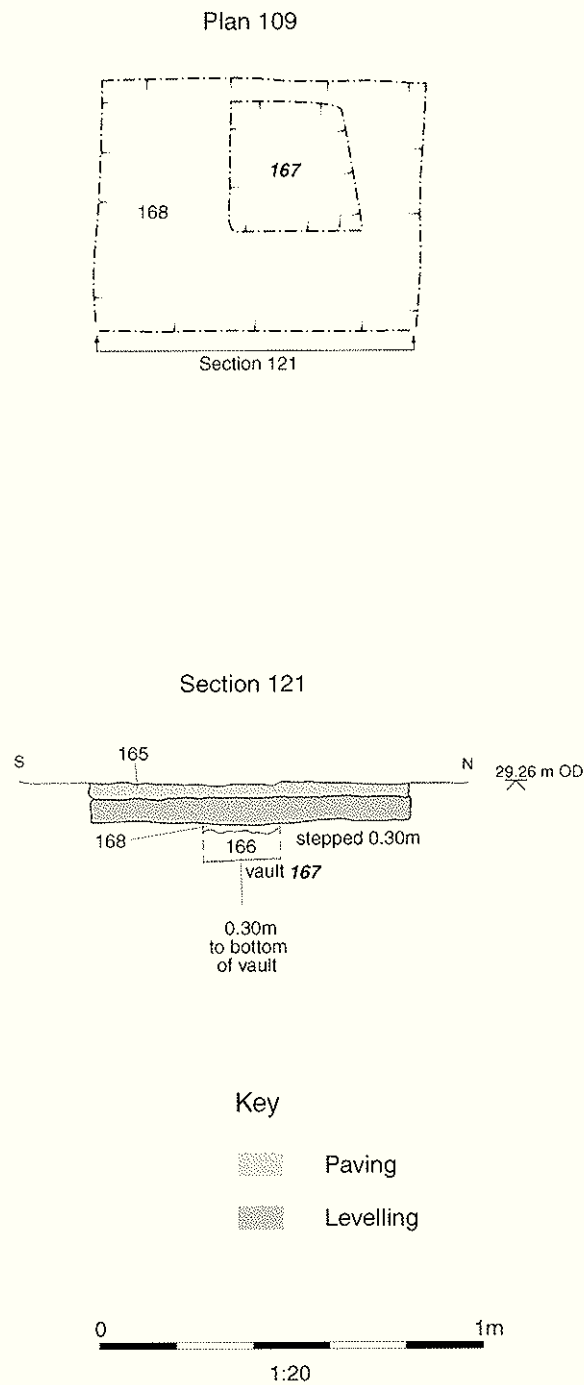


Figure 9: West of terrace



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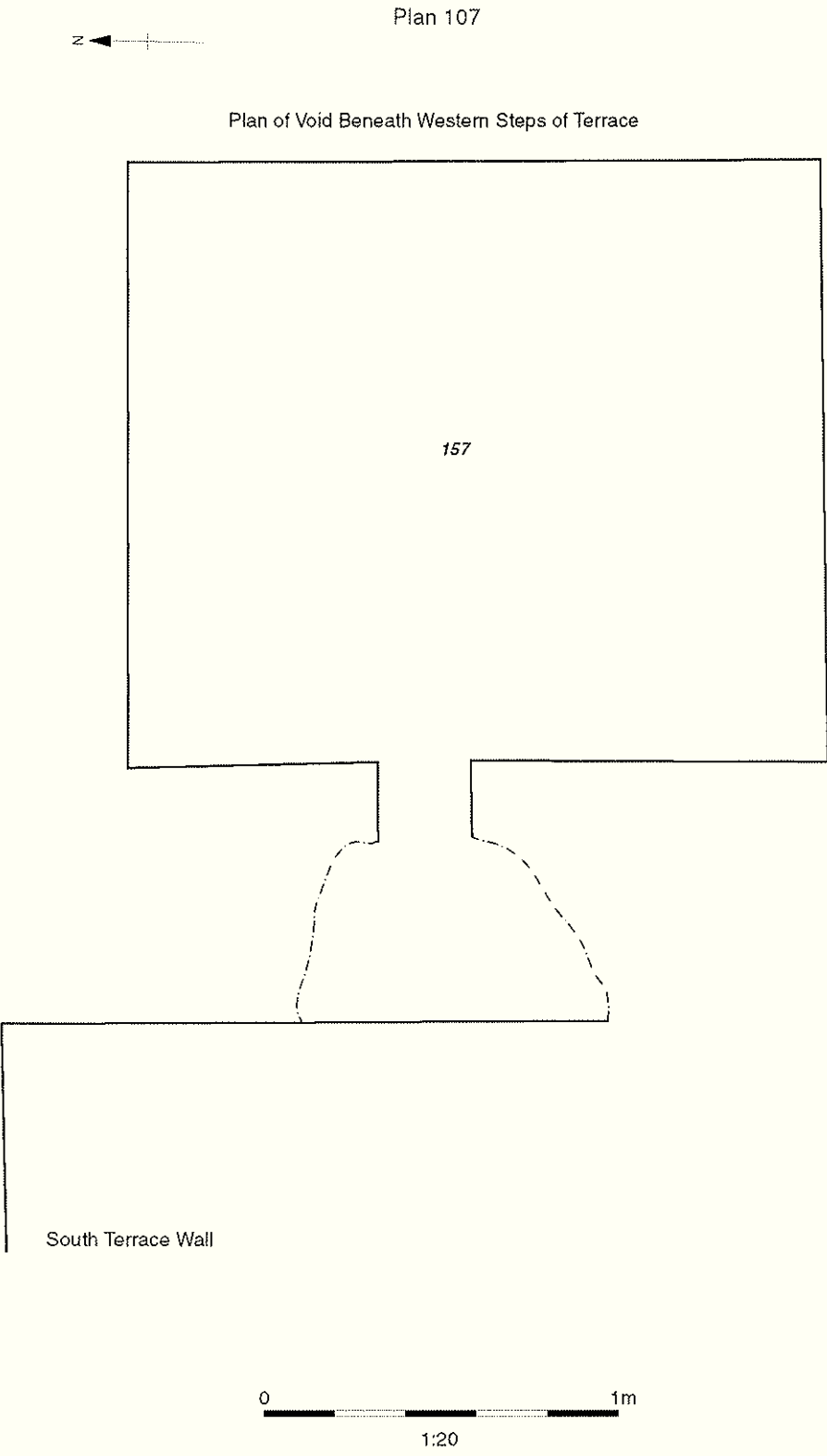
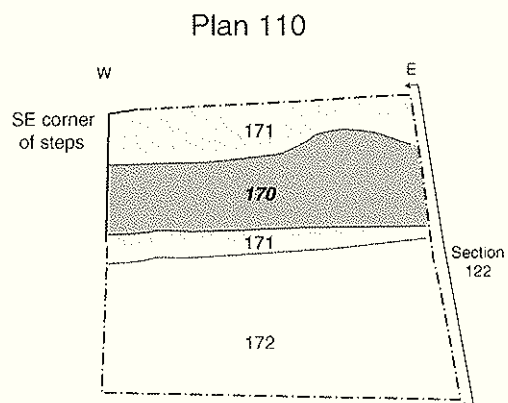
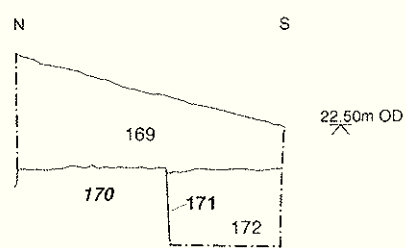


Figure 10: Site inspection Western steps



Section 122



Key

- Concrete
- Mortar

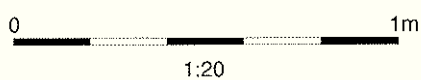


Figure 11: Corner of Eastern staircase

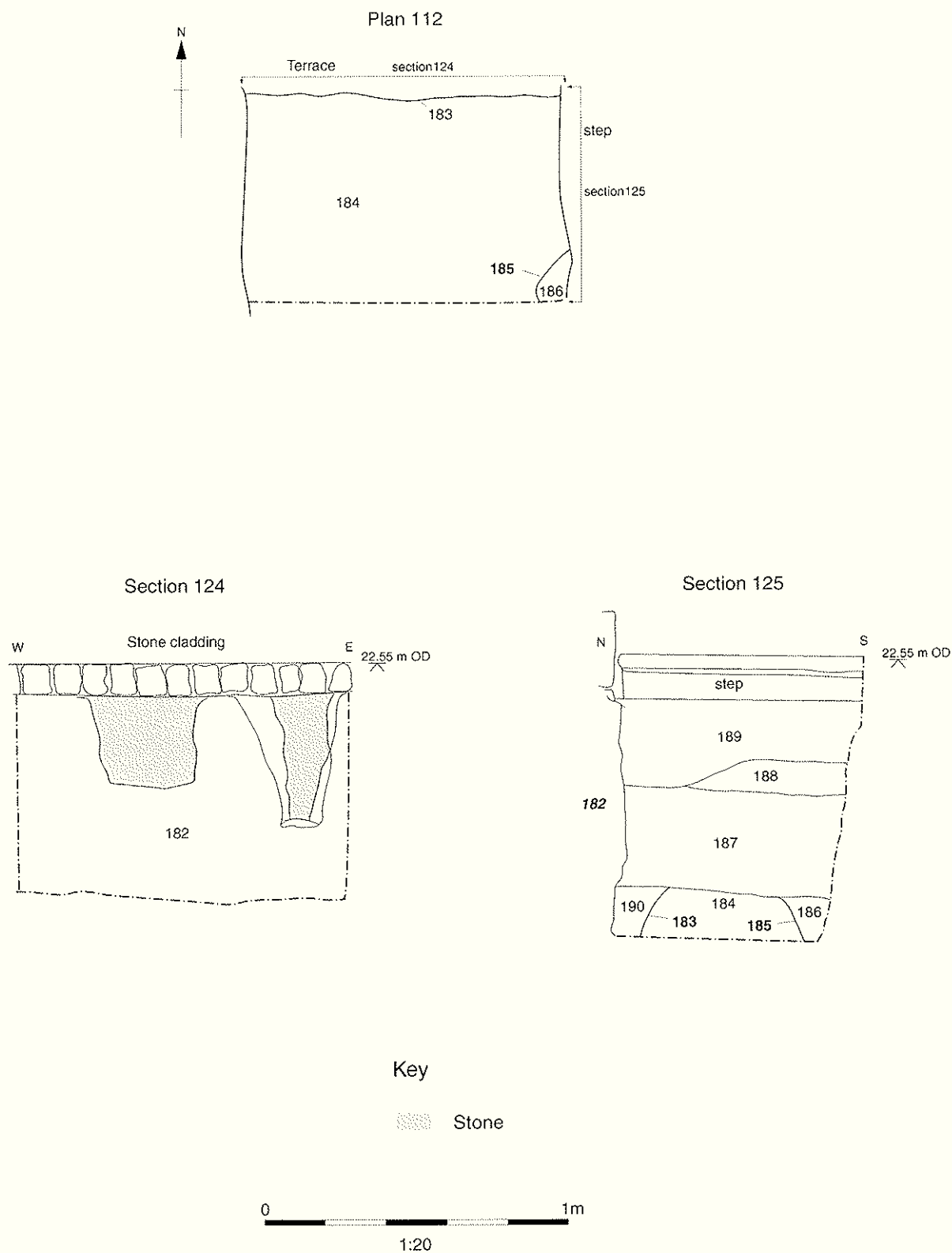


Figure 12: Corner of Eastern staircase

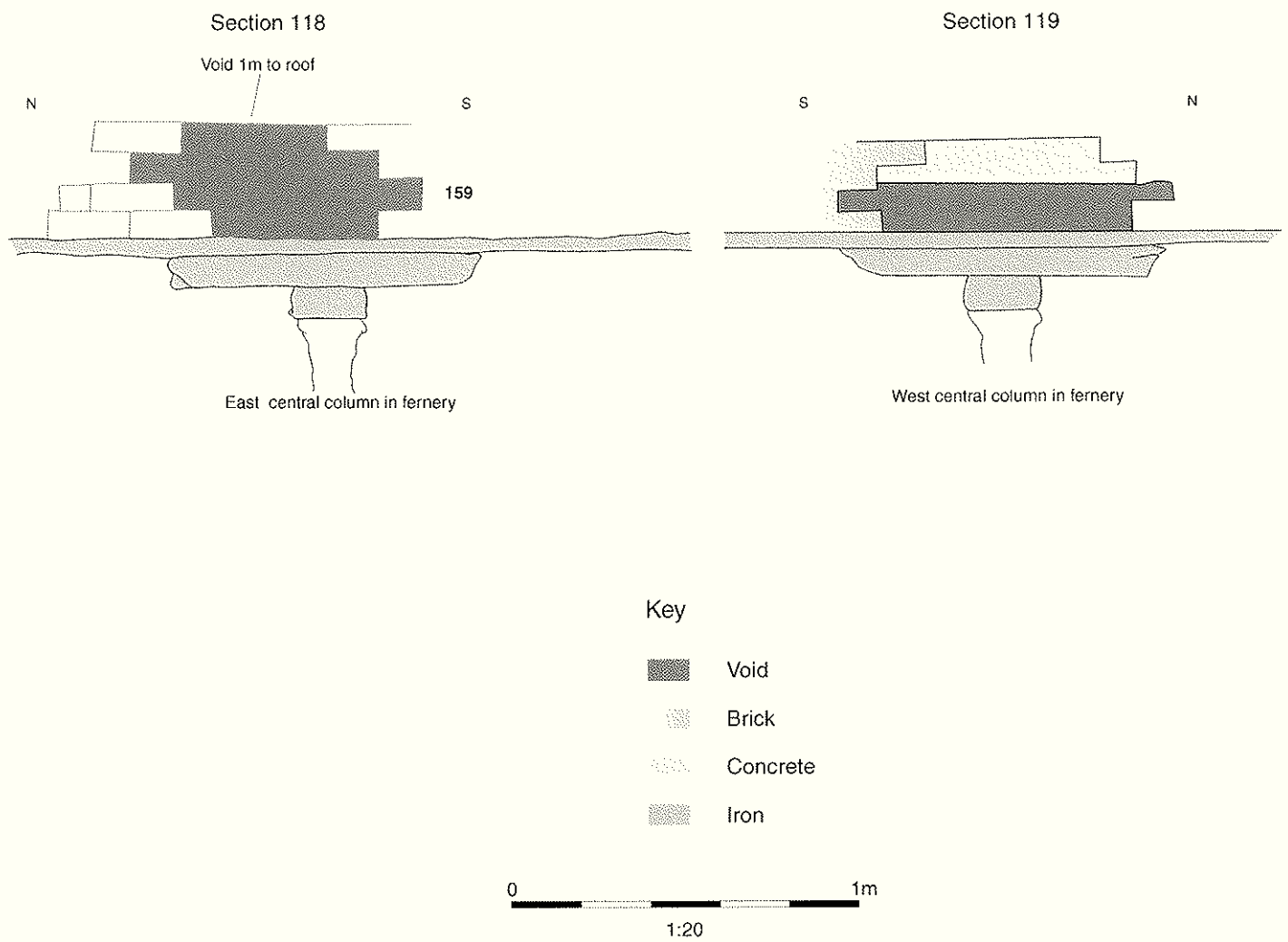


Figure 13: Cast iron capitals in fernery





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