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White Hart Hotel, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Written by Paul Murray, with contributions from Lee Broderick, John Cotter, and Ian Scott. Illustrated by Dave Jamieson and Charles Rousseaux

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology (OA) were commissioned by Tony Herring Associates to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site of a proposed housing development at the White Hart Hotel, Dorchester on Thames, Oxfordshire, centred on NGR SU 578 943. The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: P16/S1833/FUL). The works involved the excavation of a single evaluation trench, 17 metres long within the White Hart Hotel car park.

The evaluation identified two features possibly representing walls which have been robbed of stone. One of these corresponds closely with the conjectured alignment of the northern defences of the Roman small town.

A small number of postholes, a pit and a ditch were revealed, broadly dating to the post-medieval period, although two produced Roman pottery which was almost certainly residual. These appear to represent light-weight structures, possibly associated with horticultural activity within the back garden of properties fronting the High Street to the west.

A sequence of layers were identified containing a significant percentage of mortar. These probably relate to construction, modification or demolition of a building within the vicinity in the 18th and 19th centuries.

A 19th-century cellar was also identified. This probably served as a coal store.

A large modern feature which was not fully defined, but probably relates to reported recent flood alleviation drainage works, was revealed within the north trench.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project details

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) were commissioned by Tony Herring Associates to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site of a proposed housing development at the White Hart Hotel, Dorchester on Thames, Oxfordshire.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: P16/S1833/FUL). Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) prepared a brief for the work in January 2016, on behalf of the local planning authority.
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies (National Planning Policy Framework, 2012).

1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies at NGR SU 578 943.
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of the car park for the White Hart Hotel, which is bounded to the west by the hotel, Lily's Farm Shop and Tea Room and the High Street. To the immediate east lies Queen Street and to the north is a public footpath and Dorchester-on-Thames Village Hall (Fig. 1).
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area comprises superficial deposits of the Northmoor sand and gravel member, Upper Facet sand and gravel which overlies mudstone of the Gault Formation, a sedimentary bedrock (British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The proposed development site lies within the historic core of Dorchester-on-Thames, next to the conjectured northern defences and 35m to the north-east of the main scheduled area of the Roman town. As such it has very high archaeological potential for all periods, in particular for Roman and medieval archaeology. A separate scheduled area, including the Roman extramural settlement, is located immediately to the north of the site, while a further scheduled area is located to the east of the application site. The proposed evaluation trench is within the car park of the White Hart Hotel, which is a Grade 2 listed late 16th-century/early 17th-century timber-framed inn.
- 1.3.2 The principal components of the archaeology of Dorchester have been summarised in a wide variety of publications, including the *Thames Through Time* volumes (Booth *et al.* 2007; Lambrick with Robinson 2009; Hey *et al.* 2011) and are not presented here in detail. Useful recent reviews of the archaeological evidence for the village are presented by Morrison (2009) and particularly Rodwell (2009).

Prehistoric

- 1.3.3 Important prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Dorchester include a major Neolithic and Bronze Age complex to the north and north-east of Dorchester (eg Hey *et al.* 2011, 282-285), the hill fort at Wittenham Clumps (Allen *et al.* 2010) and the substantial earthworks, probably of later Iron Age date, to the south of the town at Dyke Hills (eg Booth *et al.* 2007, 367-368). In the immediate vicinity of the site, Neolithic flint scrapers and flakes were recovered during excavations at Beech House Hotel (Rowley and Brown 1981, 47).



Roman

- 1.3.4 Dorchester during the Roman period lay on the road from Alchester to Silchester and was one of two Romano-British walled towns in Oxfordshire. Numerous excavations within this vicinity has revealed significant finds and features of Roman date (for a concise summary, Henig and Booth 2000, 58-63).
- 1.3.5 Roman settlement evidence and burials in the immediate vicinity include inhumation burials found immediately east of the site in 1979 (PRN 12956). Settlement evidence has been found 70m north of the proposal site (PRN 17492). A Roman pit was excavated to the north of the White Hart Hotel, and Roman ditches and pits have been observed during excavations at 86 High Street, and Hallidays, High Street (Oxfordshire HER nos 17497 and 12955).
- 1.3.6 Limited excavations within the north-western corner of the defences of Roman Dorchester, on the site of the Beech House Hotel, revealed a sequence of occupation horizons dating from the 1st century AD to the 10th century. A Romano-British house, as well as ditches, pits, ovens and hearths, were recorded in this excavation (Oxfordshire HER no. 12577; Rowley and Brown 1981).
- 1.3.7 Excavations just outside the defensive ditch revealed Roman pot sherds, coins and metal work, including a bronze brooch, and suggest evidence of extramural suburbs of the Roman town (Oxfordshire HER no. 4896).
- 1.3.8 Small postholes and pits from which Romano-British pottery were recovered, were observed during a watching brief at 73 High Street (John Moore Heritage Services 2000).
- 1.3.9 An evaluation by Thames Valley Archaeological Service on the site of a former filling station revealed a dense area of archaeological deposits, mostly pits that produced over 200 Roman pottery sherds of 1st to 2nd century AD date (Oxfordshire HER no. 16463).

Anglo Saxon

- 1.3.10 The central part of the Roman walled town has produced significant evidence for very late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon settlement-related activity, including structures (eg Frere 1962; 1984; Bradley 1978; Booth *et al.* 2010). Evidence from outside the walls includes indications of further settlement and small groups of burials. For examples, potential Anglo-Saxon inhumations and an early Saxon potsherd were recovered during an evaluation at 25 Bridge End (TVAS 2015) whilst Anglo-Saxon pottery, sunken featured buildings and a potential Saxon cemetery were observed to the south-west of Bishops Court (Oxfordshire HER no. D4437).
- 1.3.11 Just west of the present site evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement within Dorchester was uncovered during works at Beech House Hotel just within the north-west corner of the Roman defences. Features included two Grubenhäuser, found dug into Romano-British levels, and an irregularly-shaped pit which, although believed to be associated with the Roman industrial phase, also included a few Saxon pot sherds. Evidence for later Saxon occupation includes remains of limestone building platforms and the remains of hearths, pits and pottery of Saxon date (Oxfordshire HER no. 12577; Rowley and Brown 1981, 10–13).
- 1.3.12 Dorchester was an important centre of Anglo-Saxon settlement from AD 635, when Bishop (later Saint) Birinus was given land by King Cynegils of Wessex as his episcopal seat and built a church there. In the late 7th century the bishopric was transferred to



Winchester. In the late 9th century Dorchester became the seat of a Mercian Bishopric (VCH 1962).

- 1.3.13 The site of Birinus' church is not known, but is very likely to lie beneath the later Abbey (and present parish church), as discussed by Rodwell (2009). Small-scale excavation on the north side of the church in 2001 produced evidence for a range of Anglo-Saxon features (Keevill 2003).

Medieval/Post-Medieval

- 1.3.14 Medieval and post-medieval remains were observed during the excavations at Hallidays, High Street in the form of a pit and a cellar. A medieval well and pit were recorded during the excavations at Beech House Hotel. The pit contained 12th–15th-century Oxford Medieval Ware, as well as Tudor Green Ware and 15th-century glazed ware. Pottery from the well included Oxford Late Saxon Ware (8th-9th century) and Oxford Late Medieval Ware (late 13th-15th century) (Oxfordshire HER no. 12577; Rowley and Brown 1981, 22).
- 1.3.15 Dorchester's historic core also contains a number of late medieval and early post-medieval buildings that are still upstanding, including the White Hart Hotel itself. For example the George Hotel, High Street, is a late 15th- to early 16th-century inn, one of a rare group of medieval buildings and an intact example of a courtyard inn (Oxfordshire HER nos 9831 and 12955).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The evaluation was managed by Stuart Foreman and supervised by James Mumford with the assistance of Chris Richardson.



2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation were to:

- Determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
 - Determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
 - Determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
 - Determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
 - Determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
 - Assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic townscape.
 - Determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
 - Determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity.
- Determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.

2.1.2 The specific aims and objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Identify and record any significant archaeological remains affected by the proposed development that could further knowledge and understanding of prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement in Dorchester-on-Thames.
- Establish the potential of the site to contribute to research objectives defined in the Solent-Thames Regional Research Framework (Hey and Hind 2014).

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in the area of the car park of the White Hart Hotel. It consisted of a single L-shaped trench 17m long (10m north-south, 7m east-west) and 1.8m wide. The trench was excavated by a JCB fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under constant archaeological supervision.

2.2.2 The trench was divided into north-south and east-west sections to avoid an identified underground electric cable.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trench. The L-shaped trench was divided by a modern service trench which was not excavated, essentially forming two trenches; a southern trench aligned east-west and a northern trench aligned north-south. For ease the trenches have been described separately.
- 3.1.2 The full details of the trench, including dimensions and depths of all deposits, can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.2 Southern trench description (Figs 3 and 4)

- 3.2.1 The geological horizon (102) was identified at a depth of 0.54m (c 48.0m aOD) below the current ground level and comprised firm, orange brown silty clay. The upper horizon of deposit 102 was recorded as being heavily disturbed with ceramic building material (CBM) fragments and rare lumps of coal and limestone inclusions. Three small pits/postholes (106, 108, 112), a ditch (110), a posthole (114) and the construction cut (104) for a brick wall (103) were identified as cutting the geology.
- 3.2.2 Ditch terminal 110 (Figs 3 and 4, section 1) was partially revealed at the western end of the trench, with its southern and western extents beyond the limits of the excavation. The ditch was aligned east-west with just 1.74m of its length exposed. It measured 0.5m in width and 0.55m in depth. The ditch profile was relatively distinct with near vertical sides and a flat base, perhaps suggestive of a beam slot. It contained a single fill (109) comprising friable mid grey brown sandy silt with rare charcoal flecks. Fill 109 produced a single sherd of Roman pottery (7g) of 1st-2nd-century date. The animal bone assemblage was dominated by mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), comprising 11 of the 14 specimens from at least 3 different individuals. Unusually, two carpometacarpals were present; most of the specimens were from bills (maxilla and mandibles). It is possible that this may represent kitchen waste, preparing the carcass for cooking.
- 3.2.3 A further feature (112), c 0.6m east of 110, was partially exposed (Figs 3 and 4, section 1), with its southern extent beyond the limits of the excavation. The feature measured 0.45m in width and was 0.3m in depth, and extended into the excavation by 0.24m. It had near vertical sides and a flat base, a profile similar in character to 110. The feature contained a single fill (111) comprising friable, light brown (with dark patches) sandy clay. This deposit produced two sherds of Roman pottery (16g), probably of 1st-2nd-century date, though a broader date range is possible. The excavator interpreted this feature as a small pit or posthole, although the possibility that it represents the terminus of a ditch or a beam slot should be considered.
- 3.2.4 Adjacent, and to the north of 112, was a small round posthole (114). This had a diameter of 0.28m and was 0.12m deep, with near vertical sides and a flat based profile (Fig. 4, section 4). It contained a single fill (113) comprising firm, light brown silty clay with few limestone fragments. Remains of a decayed post were evident, with limestone used as packing. The fill produced a single fragment of worn peg tile, dated 15th-17th centuries.
- 3.2.5 A further possible posthole (106) was partially exposed on the north side of the trench (Figs. 3, 4, section 2). This feature appeared circular in plan and measured 0.62m in width, 0.23m in depth, extending into the trench by 0.3m. It had near vertical sides and



a flat based profile. It had a single fill (105) comprising firm, light orange brown silty clay which produced fragments of CBM and clay pipe dated to the 17th–19th centuries.

- 3.2.6 A sub-rectangular pit (108) aligned north-south was recorded in the middle of the trench (Figs 3, 4, section 3). This feature measured 0.78m x 0.45m and was 0.4m deep. The feature had vertical sides and a flat base, similar in character to ditch 110 and pit 112. It contained a single fill (107) comprising friable, light greyish brown sandy silt. This deposit produced a single sherd of Roman pottery (7g), dated 2nd-4th centuries and two fairly fresh fragments (271g) of peg tiles broadly dated to the 15th-17th centuries.
- 3.2.7 A layer (117) sealed four of the features (106, 108, 112, 114) within the eastern part of the trench (Fig. 5). The layer was 2.0m wide and 0.1m thick at its western extent, thickening to 0.3m to the east where it was cut by the construction cut (104) for structure 103. It comprised compact, dark grey brown clay silt with 1% coal lumps.
- 3.2.8 Layer 117 was overlain by a 0.18m thick layer (101) of compact, yellow sand gravel with 60% brick and limestone rubble. This was interpreted as a make up layer for the current tarmac surface (100) forming the car park.
- 3.2.9 To the east, Layers 117 and 101 were cut by the construction cut (104) for a brick structure (103). Cut 104 was near vertical and recorded to a depth of 0.4m, although clearly deeper. Structure 103 was recorded to a depth of 0.42m (five courses). The walls of the structure were constructed with red frogged bricks measuring 0.2m x 0.105m x 0.065m laid in an English Bond style. The structure appears to represent the north-east corner of a tank or cellar (full extent was not defined) and it started to fill with water at a depth of 0.7m. There was some evidence that the internal face of the structure had been rendered with a hard white mortar. A short length (0.5m) of wall perpendicular to the north face of the structure possibly forms the south-western corner of another cellar, although it was not investigated. The structure had been backfilled with a deposit largely comprising ash and cinders with some brick rubble.
- 3.2.10 The current tarmac surface (100), 0.08m thick, overlaid layer 101 and structure 103.

3.3 Northern trench description (Figs 3 and 5)

- 3.3.1 The geological horizon (116) was identified in two places at the northern and southern ends of the trench within machine excavated slots. To the north it was identified within a sondage at a depth of 1.6m (47.22m aOD) below the current ground level. At the southern end it was identified at a depth of 0.92m (47.9m aOD) below the current ground level. The geology comprised loose, yellow sand.
- 3.3.2 At the southern end of the trench the geology (116) was partly exposed in section (Fig. 5), and was cut to the south by a partially exposed feature (122). Only the northern side of this feature was revealed, its southern edge extending beyond the trench limits. Cut 122 was revealed to a depth of 0.22m and 0.3m of its width was visible. The upper part of the cut sloped at 45°, becoming near-vertical towards the base of the excavation. It contained a single fill (123) comprising compact, dark brown silty sandy loam with rare charcoal, gravel and occasional mortar inclusions.
- 3.3.3 Overlying both the geological horizon (116) and the fill (123) of cut 122 was a thin layer (124). Layer 124 was 0.88m wide, 0.1m thick and comprised compact, dark brown silty clay with rare charcoal inclusions.
- 3.3.4 Layer 124 was cut by a square feature (130) partially exposed in the east section of the trench. The exposed part of cut 130 measured 1.5m x 0.03m and was vertical-sided. The feature was filled with tabular fragments of limestones (0.28m average size) set on

edge in a matrix of compact, light brown silty clay and is interpreted as a soak-away or drain of 19th-century date.

- 3.3.5 Deposit 124 was overlain by three distinct and stratified layers (125, 126, 127), all of which were cut by two large features to the north and south, 118 and 128 respectively.
- 3.3.6 Layer 125 directly overlaid 124 and the fill (131) of cut 130. The layer was 1.0m wide, 0.3m thick. The deposit comprised compact, light brown silty sand with 5% mortar and rare gravels. Eight pieces of glass from three wine bottles, dated late 18th-19th centuries, were recovered from this context. Deposit 125 was interpreted as dumped construction material that has possibly been levelled.
- 3.3.7 Layer 125 was overlain by layer 126, which was 1.5m wide, 0.3m deep and comprised friable, light yellowish brown sand with patches of mortar. Again, this deposit appeared to be a dump of construction material, perhaps used as a levelling deposit.
- 3.3.8 The final layer in the sequence, 127, was 0.8m wide, 0.3m deep and comprised dark brown, silty sandy loam. This deposit may represent a buried soil horizon.
- 3.3.9 Deposits 125, 126 and 127 were truncated to the south by a partially revealed feature (128). Cut 128 was at least 1.4m wide, extending beyond the southern limit of the excavation and 0.5m deep. It was not identified in the southern arm of the trench which limits its width to c 3m. The cut was slightly irregular, although generally its sides sloped at an angle of 40°. The feature contained a single fill (129) which comprised dark brown silty clay loam with rare charcoal, mortar and limestone fragments. This feature has been interpreted by the recorder as either a robber or service trench.
- 3.3.10 Towards the northern end of the trench a sondage was excavated to a depth of 1.6m below the current ground level. The section (Fig. 5) revealed a 0.9m wide, 0.4m thick layer (134) of light reddish brown silty clay loam with 20% gravels, rare charcoal flecks and manganese particles above the natural subsoil (116). The layer was interpreted as an old cultivated soil, but in view of the disparity in the levels of the top of the subsoil at the north and south ends of the trench it is perhaps more likely that 134 was the fill of a cut feature. Two fragments (34g) of Roman pottery, broadly dated 1st-4th century (but most likely of early Roman date), were recovered from this deposit. The northern side of the layer was cut by an east-west aligned feature 133.
- 3.3.11 Feature 133 was only partially revealed within the base of the machine excavated sondage at a depth of 1.2m. The feature, as seen, was at least 0.6m wide and 0.4m deep, although it clearly extended further north and its full depth was not established. The upper part of the cut (133) was very steep, becoming near vertical lower down. It was filled with friable, dark brown silty sand loam (132) with 1% limestone rubble (0.23m average) with rare mortar particles and charcoal flecks. This deposit produced six fairly fresh (some worn and including three joining pieces) fragments of pegtiles broadly dating from the 15th–17th centuries. A sherd of a bowl or dish with internal glaze dated after 1650 was also recovered. Although this feature was not fully revealed the character of the fill, which contained mortar and large stones, and the vertical-sided cut, perhaps suggest that it represents a robbed wall.

3.4 Finds summary

- 3.4.1 Six sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from four contexts (107, 109, 111, 134), although context 107 also produced medieval tile, so the Roman material there was clearly residual. The sherds were all reduced wares in a variety of mostly local fabrics.
- 3.4.2 A total of ten fragments of medieval peg tile were recovered from four contexts (107, 113, 119, 132).



- 3.4.3 Eight sherds of glass, representing three late 18th-19th-century wine bottles, were recovered from context 125.
- 3.4.4 A total of 21 animal bones was recovered from three contexts, 105, 107 and 109. Fourteen of the specimens come from a single context (109) which was dominated by mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*).
- 3.4.5 The 19th century is represented by a fragments of transfer-printed ware from context 113, English stoneware and clay pipe fragment from context 119.



4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 Two features (122, 133) were partially revealed at the base of the machine-excavated sondage in the northern trench. It was not possible to investigate these features in any detail, so it is difficult to interpret these features with high confidence.
- 4.1.2 Within the southern part of the trench the features were recorded as cutting into the geological horizon (102), although this was disturbed and contained lumps of coal and CBM fragments.
- 4.1.3 The evaluation was conducted in dry, bright conditions. The general stratigraphy and stratigraphic relationships were well defined.

4.2 Evaluation aims, objectives and results

- 4.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the evaluation were to:
- Identify and record any significant archaeological remains affected by the proposed development that could further knowledge and understanding of prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement in Dorchester-on-Thames.
 - Establish the potential of the site to contribute to research objectives defined in the Solent-Thames Regional Research Framework (Hey and Hind 2014).
- 4.2.2 The evaluation identified a possible robbed wall that may relate to the conjectured northern defences of the Roman small town. The Solent-Thames Regional Research Framework (Hey and Hind 2014) describes Roman small towns as a category which includes both defended and undefended settlements that typically lie on provincial roads. Generally the character and function of small walled towns is poorly understood, specifically why some merit defences whilst others are open settlements.

4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 The earliest deposit in the stratigraphic sequence was context 134. This may represent a cultivated soil and contained pottery probably of 1st-2nd-century date, but as noted above the contrasting depths of subsoil at the north and south ends of this part of the trench might indicate that this deposit was the fill of a feature cut into the subsoil. Deposit 134 was cut by a vertical sided feature (133) filled with limestone rubble (132) with mortar inclusions. Although not investigated in any detail due to health and safety constraints the feature was strongly suggestive of a robber trench.
- 4.3.2 A similar feature (122) was partially revealed c 5m to the south of cut 133. This feature cut the geological horizon (116), had a vertical cut and its fill contained mortar fragments, although no limestone. This has been interpreted as representing a robbed foundation trench or service cut.
- 4.3.3 A ditch (110), two postholes (114, 106) and two pits (108, 112) were recorded as cutting a disturbed geological horizon (116) containing CBM and coal. Two of the features (110, 112) produced Roman pottery, although this is likely to have been residual. The two post holes (106, 114) both had in-situ evidence of rotted wooden posts. Posthole 114 was dated to the 15th-17th centuries, whilst posthole 106 and pit 112 were dated to the 17th-18th centuries. The features all had profiles with vertical sides and flat bases. The coal and CBM within the disturbed geological horizon (116) perhaps suggest an 18th- or 19th-century date for this layer, strongly suggesting that the earlier finds are residual and that the features represent the same phase of activity. The features are difficult to



interpret within the confines of an evaluation trench, although their character suggests that they might relate to horticultural activity or light-weight structures.

- 4.3.4 Two layers, 125 and 126, contained a significant percentage of mortar and limestone, with the lower (125) dated to the 19th century. Although only a small part of these layers was visible due to later truncation they are possibly related to the construction of or modifications to buildings in the vicinity.
- 4.3.5 The brick structure (103) was not fully exposed, although it appeared to be rectangular and aligned east-west. The eastern end of the structure, although not confirmed, logically extends to the eastern boundary wall of the hotel car park. It has been largely filled with cinders and ash. The structure possibly represents a coal store or cellar of 19th- or 20th-century date. It was noted that the feature started to fill with water at a depth of 0.7m, perhaps indicating the reason for its abandonment and backfilling.
- 4.3.6 A large modern feature (118) appears to be related to flood alleviation drainage works conducted by Oxfordshire County Council in recent years.

4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The site lies in close proximity to the conjectured northern defences of the Roman small town of Dorchester on Thames (Fig. 4) and to the east of the probable course of the Roman road into the town from the north. The possible robber trench (133) is certainly within the general area of the town's conjectured northern defences and corresponds to its alignment, although it was not sufficiently exposed for a confident interpretation. The robber trench produced material dated to the 15th-17th and 17th-20th centuries, although the feature was cut into a deposit (possible soil horizon (134)) which produced two sherds of Roman pottery probably of 1st-2nd-century date. The late Roman town wall of Dorchester was probably robbed of stone at various times from the medieval period onwards. That some of this robbing took place at least as late as the 17th century is therefore possible, but the interpretation of this feature must remain tentative at present.
- 4.4.2 A second possible robber trench (122) was c 5m to the south of, and parallel to 133. Again, this feature was not sufficiently exposed for a confident interpretation. Although undated, it has potential to relate to a development within the Roman town or later Saxon, medieval or post-medieval development of Dorchester on Thames.
- 4.4.3 The five discrete features (106, 108, 110, 112, 114) were cut into a geological horizon that was heavily disturbed and contained fragmented CBM and lumps of coal, thought most likely to be material infilling the reported recent flood alleviation drainage works, which were partly located within the Hotel carpark. Two of the features (110, 112) produced Roman pottery broadly dated to the 1st-4th centuries, which are highly likely to be residual. The small posthole (114) and the sub-rectangular pit (108) produced pottery broadly dated to the 15th-17th centuries. Pit 106 produced pottery broadly dated to the 17th-19th centuries. All the features were identified within an area measuring 1.8m x 3.8m, with only two of the being fully exposed. All of the features were described as being relatively shallow (0.33m average), having near vertical sides and flat bases and generally filled with mid grey brown, sandy silt. The posthole (114) contained the remains of a rotted post, and rotted wood was noted within pit 106. The linear feature (110) appears to be a ditch terminus, although its profile perhaps suggests that it represents a beam slot. In general the features appear to represent light-weight structures.
- 4.4.4 Brick structure 103 is certainly a cellar of 19th-20th-century date, likely to have been used for storing coal.



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APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

General description							Orientation	E-W & N-S
Three pits, a ditch and a posthole. Modern brick wall and associated truncation towards the east end of the trench. (as)=As seen							Avg. depth (m)	0.55
							Width (m)	1.8
							Length (m)	17
Contexts								
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Findings	Date		
100	Layer	-	0.08	Tarmac surface	-	Modern		
101	Layer	-	0.18	Rubble make up for 100	-	Modern		
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-		
103	Structure	0.22		Brick wall	-	19th-20th C		
104	Cut	1.1	0.4	Construction cut for 103	-	19th-20th C		
105	Fill		0.23	Fill of 106	Tile, bone, clay pipe	17th-19th C		
106	Cut	0.62×0.3	0.23	Small pit/post-hole?	-	17th-18th C		
107	Fill		0.4	Fill of 108	Pot, bone, CBM	15th-17th C		
108	Cut	0.78×0.45	0.4	Small rectangular pit	-	-		
109	Fill		0.55	Fill of 110	Pot, bone	L 1st-2nd C		
110	Cut	1.4×0.5	0.55	Linear	-	Roman		
111	Fill		0.3	Fill of 112	Pottery	1st-4th C		
112	Cut	0.45×0.24	0.3	Small pit	-	1st-4th C		
113	Fill		0.12	Fill of 114	CBM	1840-1880		
114	Cut	0.28×0.28	0.12	Post-hole with decayed post insitu	-	19th C		
115	Layer	-	0.09	Thin layer of brick-earth geology	-	-		
116	Layer	-	-	Sand geology	-	-		
117	Layer	-	0.17	Dark layer with 1% coal pieces	-	-		
118	Cut	6.5×2	1.1	landscaping?	-	-		
119	Fill		0.56	Fill of 118	Pot, CBM	1800 – 1900		
120	Fill		0.3	Fill of 118	Pot, CBM	Post-med		
121	Fill		0.44	Fill of 118	Pot, CBM	c 1750 – 1850		



122	Cut	0.9	0.5	Foundation or service trench – only partially observed	-	
123	Layer		0.5	Fill of 122	-	
124	Layer	0.9	0.08	Dark brown silty clay	-	
125	Layer	1.88	0.3	Layer of construction material	CBM	Undatable fragment
126	Layer	1.5	0.2	Redeposited sand or building material	-	
127	Layer	0.8	0.3	Buried soil horizon?	-	
128	Cut	2×0.4	0.6	Possible robber trench or service cut	-	
129	Fill		0.6	Fill of 128	-	
130	Cut	1.5×0.03 (as)	0.28	Soak-away or drain	-	
131	Fill		0.28	Fill of 130	-	
132	Fill		0.46	Fill of 133	CBM, pottery	1650 – 1900
133	Cut	0.6 (as)	0.46	Construction or robber trench	-	1650 – 1900
134	Layer	0.9 (as)	0.4	Cultivated soil horizon	Pottery	1st-4nd C

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery By John Cotter

A very small pottery assemblage was recovered during the evaluation, including Roman and post-medieval material, as tabulated below:

Table 1: Pottery quantities and spot dates by context

Context	Spot-date	Rom Sherds	Rom weight	PRom sherds	PRom weight	Comments
107	2-4C	1	7			Roman. Misc greyware (Fabric R30). Body sherd from lower wall of ?jar
109	L1-2C	1	17			Roman. Fine Oxford greyware (Fabric R11). Footring base from shallow dish/platter. Fairly fresh
111	1-4C	2	16			Roman. 1x worn body sherd (12g) coarse grog-tempered ware (Fabric R90). 1x rim (4g) coarse sandy greyware (R20) everted rim from jar/bowl (L1-2C), fairly fresh
113	c1840-1880			1	46	Transfer-printed ware (TPW). Dish rim with watery-blue floral ?dog rose dec. Similar to 'Asiatic Pheasants' pattern
119	c1800-1900			1	73	English stoneware (ENGS). Modern. Fresh bodysherd from large grey-brown salt-glazed cylindrical spirits flagon
121	c1750-1850?			3	176	2x fresh joining sherds from unusual dark brown/black-glazed globular jug or flagon fired to low-grade stoneware hardness - made from yellowish-grey Coal Measures fabric, probably Staffordshire-type mottled brown glazed ware (STMO, c1680-1800, or a little later in this case?), the glaze (int and ext) appears to be a lead glaze containing much added iron oxide or manganese. 1x post-medieval red earthenware (PMR) rim from large storage jar/bowl with ext beaded rim and int glaze
132	c1650-1900			1	19	PMR. Flat base from large ?bowl or ?dish with int glaze. Poss 18-19C?
134	1-4C	2	34			Roman. Body sherds from two vessels. Smaller sherd (6g) in Misc greyware (R30) with very prominent glauconitic inclusions (1-2C, south Oxon or further afield). Larger sherd (28g) in coarse grog-tempered ware (Fabric R90) from lower wall large jar
TOTALS		6	74	6	314	

B.2 Glass By Ian Scott

Introduction

There are eight pieces of glass from three wine bottles together with a few slivers and chips presumably from the same bottles. All the glass comes from context 125:

(1) **Wine bottle.** Base of cylindrical dip-moulded wine bottle with deep domed kick or push-up and slight basal sag. Six sherds. Dark green glass. D: 90mm



(2) **Wine bottle.** Single sherd from the base of a cylindrical dip-moulded wine bottle with low domed kick and slight basal sag. Dark green glass. D: c 94mm

(3) **Wine bottle.** Very small sherd from the heel of moulded wine bottle. The heel is abrupt with no basal sag. Not measured.

Broadly these bottles can be dated to late 18th- or early 19th century. Bottle no. 3 with its abrupt heel is more likely to date to the early 19th century, rather than the late 18th century.

B.3 Animal bone *By Lee G Broderick*

B.3.1 Introduction

A total of 21 animal bones were recovered from the site, with 3 specimens coming from features preliminarily dated to the post-medieval period (Table 2). All of the material was hand-collected.

The specimens were in moderate condition and represent each of the three principal domesticates (domestic cattle [*Bos taurus taurus*], caprines [sheep – *Ovis aries* and goats – *Capra hircus*] and pigs [*Sus scrofa domestica*]). The domestic cattle specimen was an unfused diaphysis from a right distal radius, suggesting that the animal died before four years of age. The caprine specimen was an unfused epiphysis from a right proximal tibia, suggesting that the animal died before 3½ years of age (Silver 1969). The latter was also sawn-through mid-shaft, which may have been due to tool production.

The undated specimens in the assemblage also included caprines as well as two pieces of a neonatal pig skull. The greatest proportion of the assemblage, however (14 specimens) came from linear feature (110), tentatively dated to the Roman period (109). The assemblage from this context was dominated by mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), being 11 of the 14 specimens, from at least 3 different individuals. Unusually, although 2 carpometacarpals were present, most of the specimens were from bills (maxilla and mandibles). It is possible that this may represent kitchen waste, preparing the carcass for cooking.

No further information can be gained from such a small sample of bones. However, if further excavations take place on the site, the bones should be included in the full excavation report.



Table 2: Total NISP and NSP figures per period from the site.

				Roman?	Post-medieval	Undated
small mammals*				1		
Mammalia	Artiodactyla	Bovidae	cf. <i>Bos taurus taurus</i>		1	
Mammalia	Artiodactyla	Bovidae	<i>Ovis aries/Capra hircus</i>		1	2
Mammalia	Artiodactyla	Suidae	<i>Sus scrofa domestica</i>		1	1
Mammalia	Artiodactyla	Suidae	cf. <i>Sus scrofa domestica</i>			1
Total Mammal				1	3	4
birds*				1		
Aves	Anseriformes	Anatidae	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	11		
Total Birds				12		
Total NISP				13	3	4
Total NSP				14	3	4



APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	White Hart Hotel, Dorchester on Thames
Site code:	DOWH 16
Grid reference:	NGR SU 578 943
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	27-28th October 2016
Area of site:	30.6m ²

Summary of results:

The evaluation identified two features possibly representing walls which have been robbed of stone. One of these corresponds closely with the conjectured alignment of the northern defences of the Roman small town.

A small number of postholes, a pit and a ditch were revealed, broadly dating to the post-medieval period, although two produced Roman pottery which was almost certainly residual. These appear to represent light-weight structures, possibly associated with horticultural activity within the back garden of properties fronting the High Street to the west.

A sequence of layers were identified containing a significant percentage of mortar. These probably relate to construction, modification or demolition of a building in the vicinity in the 18th and 19th centuries.

A 19th-century cellar was also identified. This probably served as a coal store.

A large modern feature revealed in the north trench is probably connected with reported recent flood alleviation drainage works conducted by Oxfordshire County Council, partly within the hotel carpark.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Oxford County Museum in due course, under the accession number OCMS 2016:184.

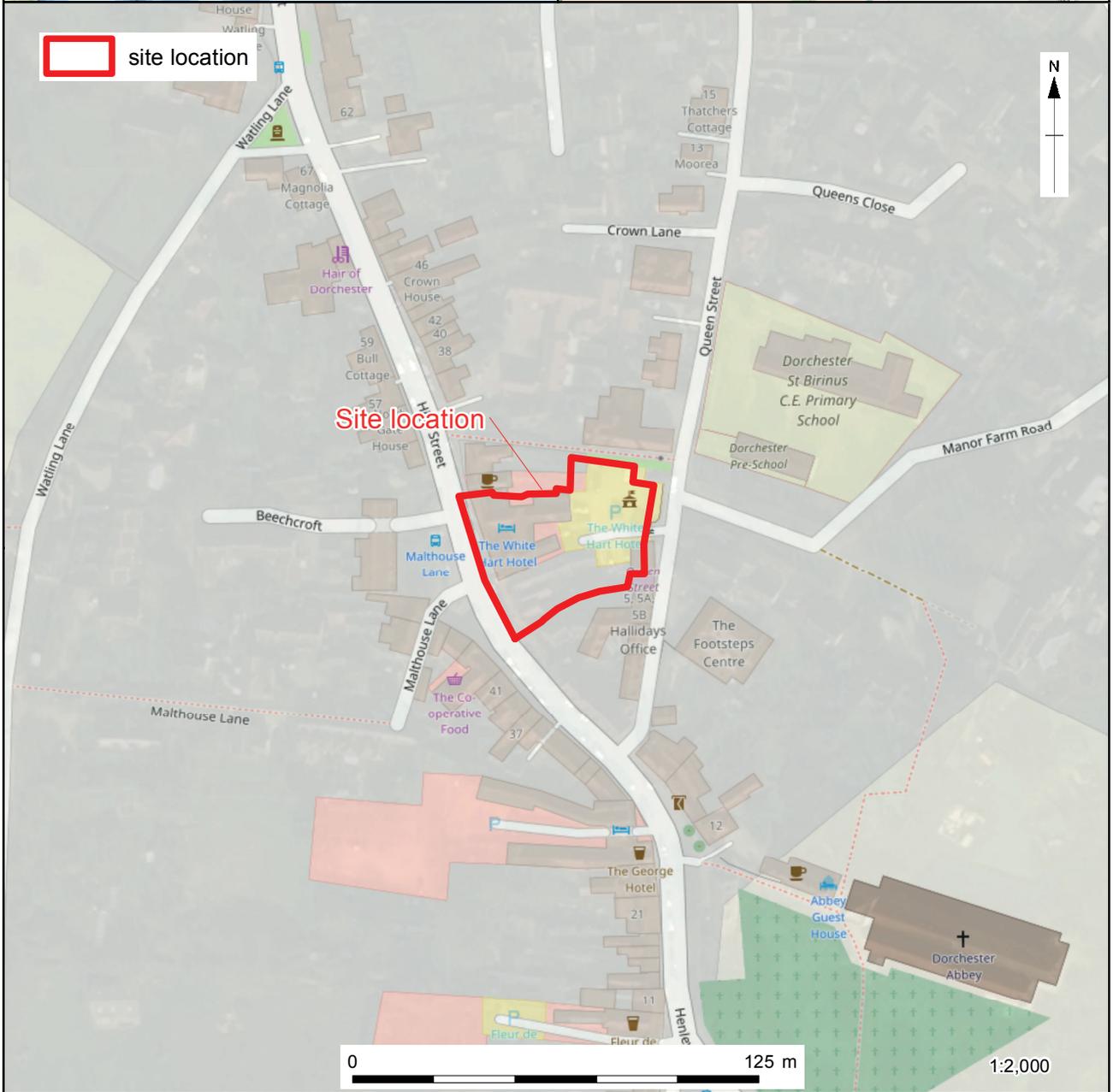
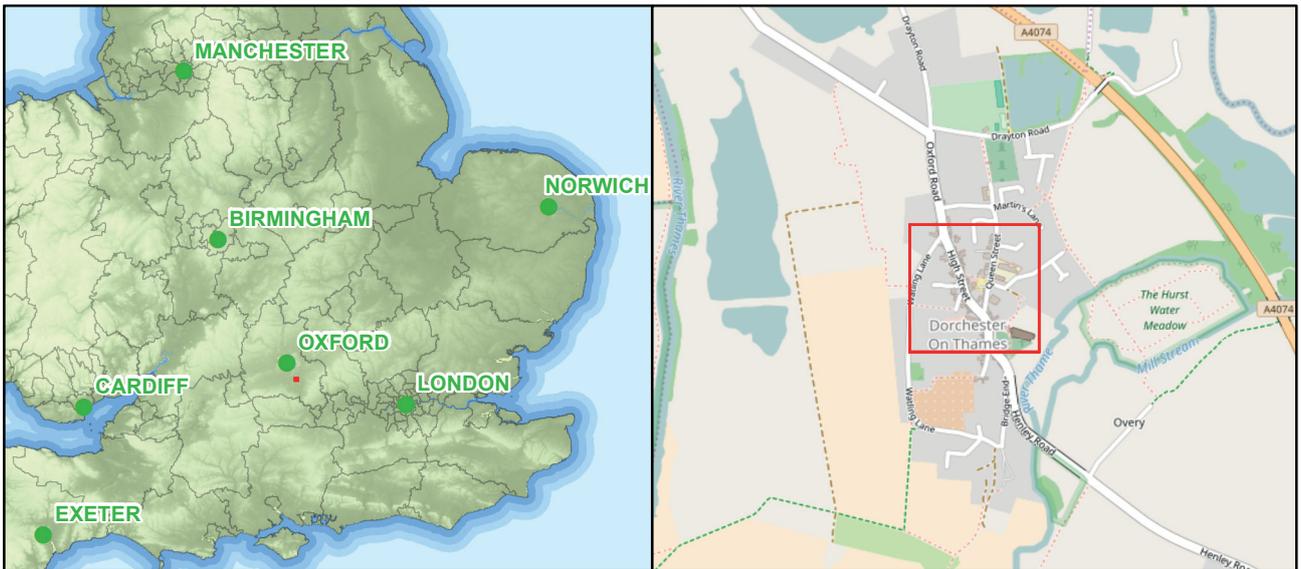
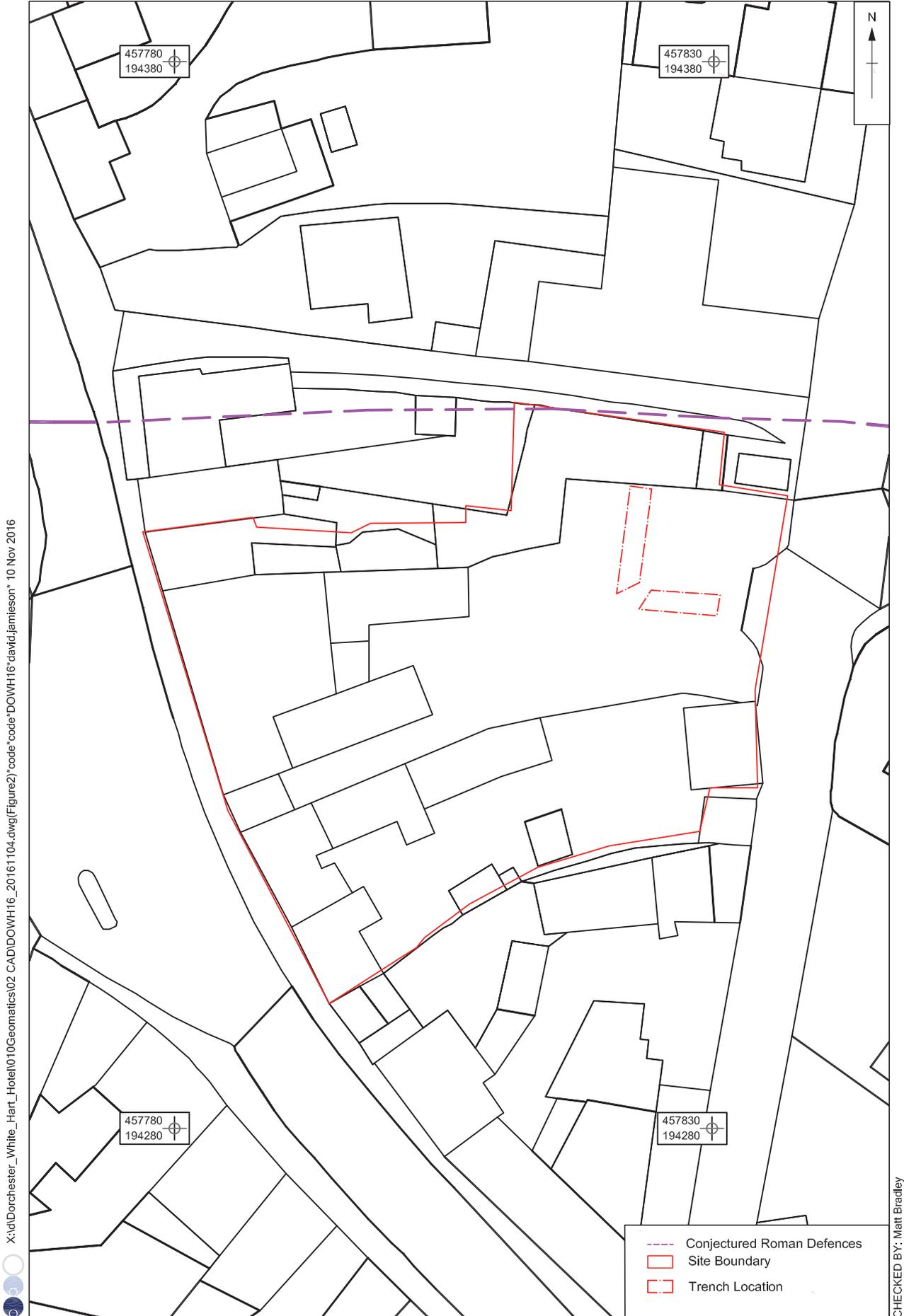


Figure 1: Site location



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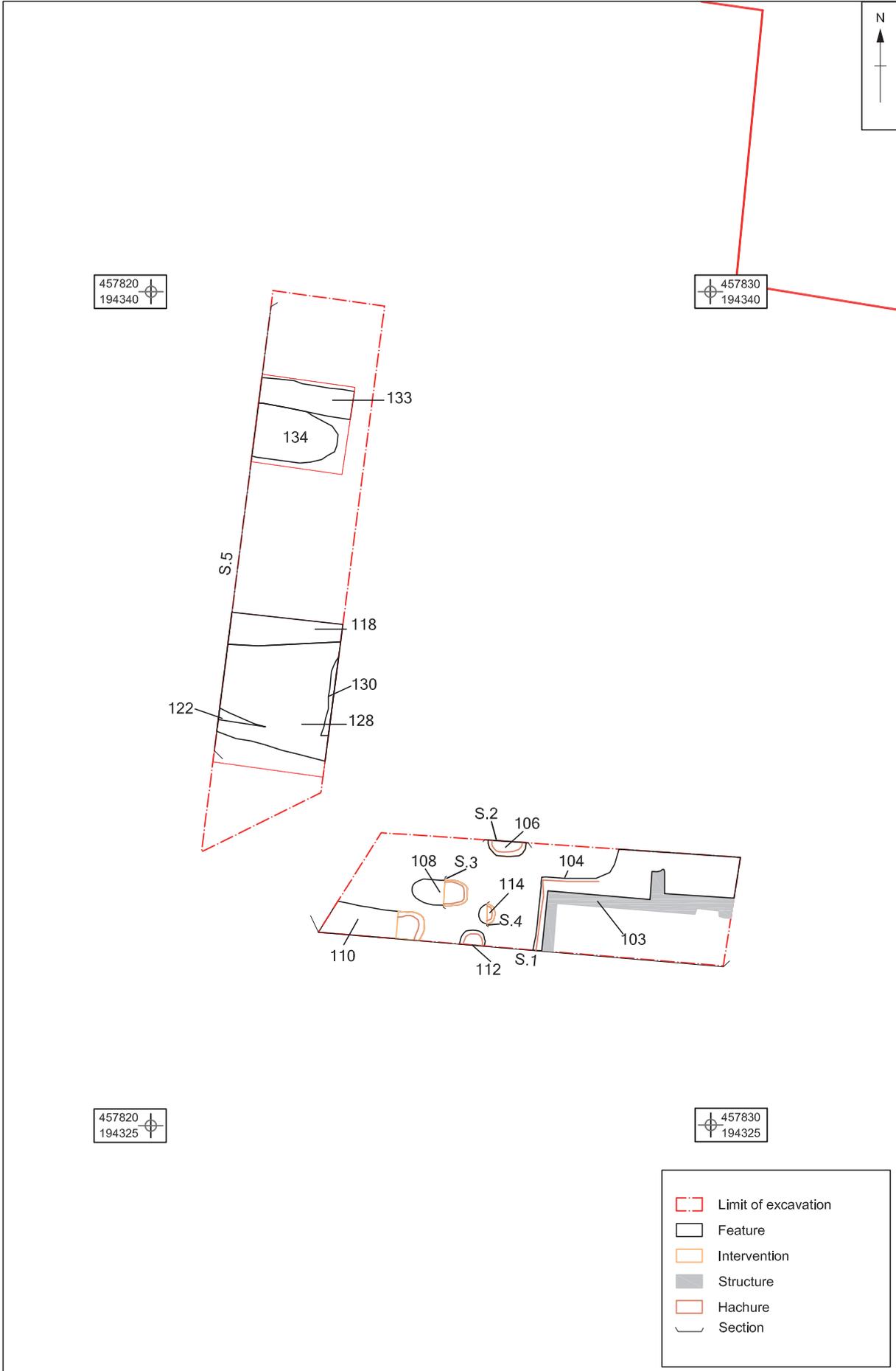
Survey Data supplied by:
David Jamieson

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Figure 2: Trench Location

CHECKED BY: Matt Bradley

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Survey Data supplied by :
David Jamieson



Figure 3: Archaeological features

CHECKED BY: Matt Bradley

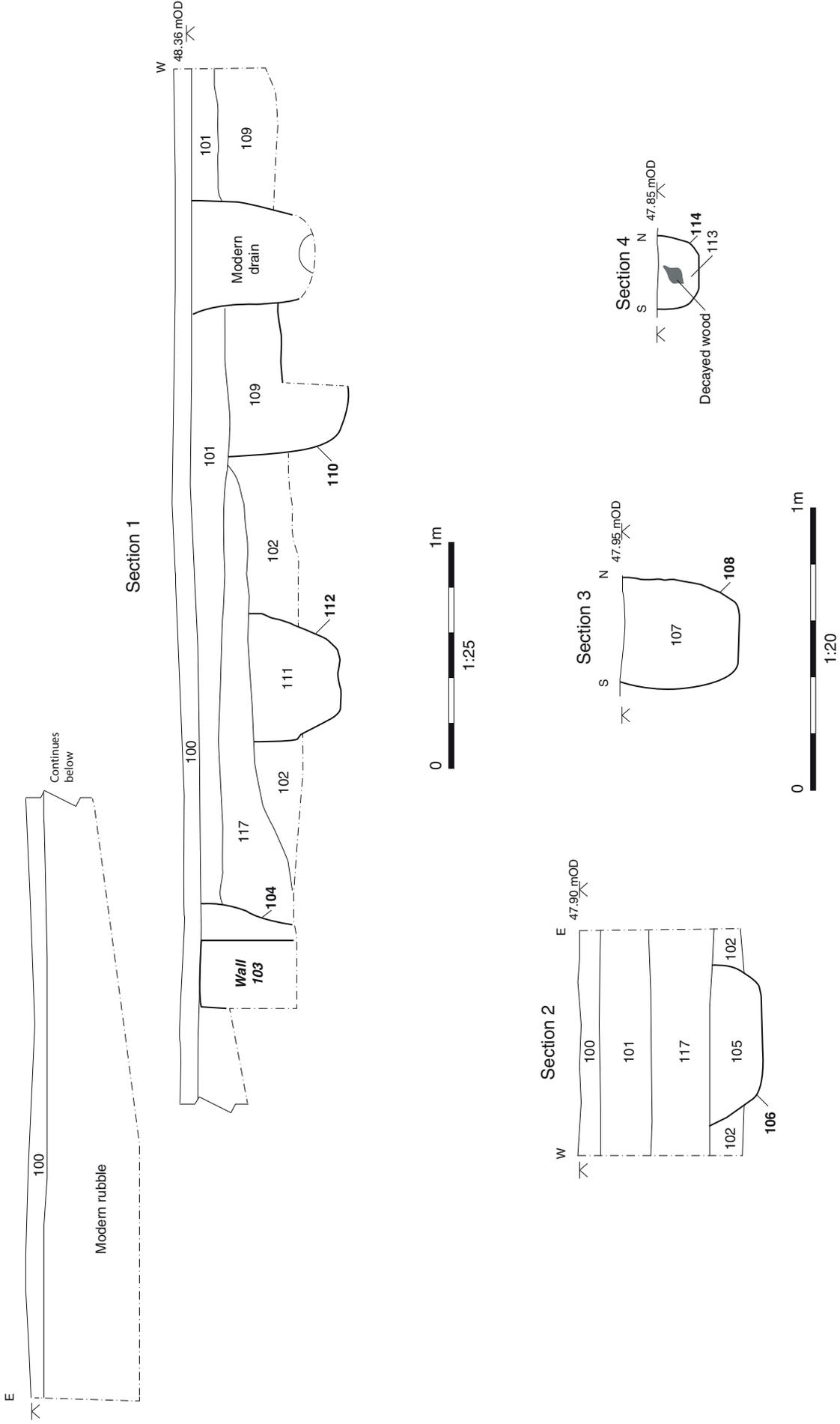


Figure 4: Section 1, 2, 3 and 4

Section 5

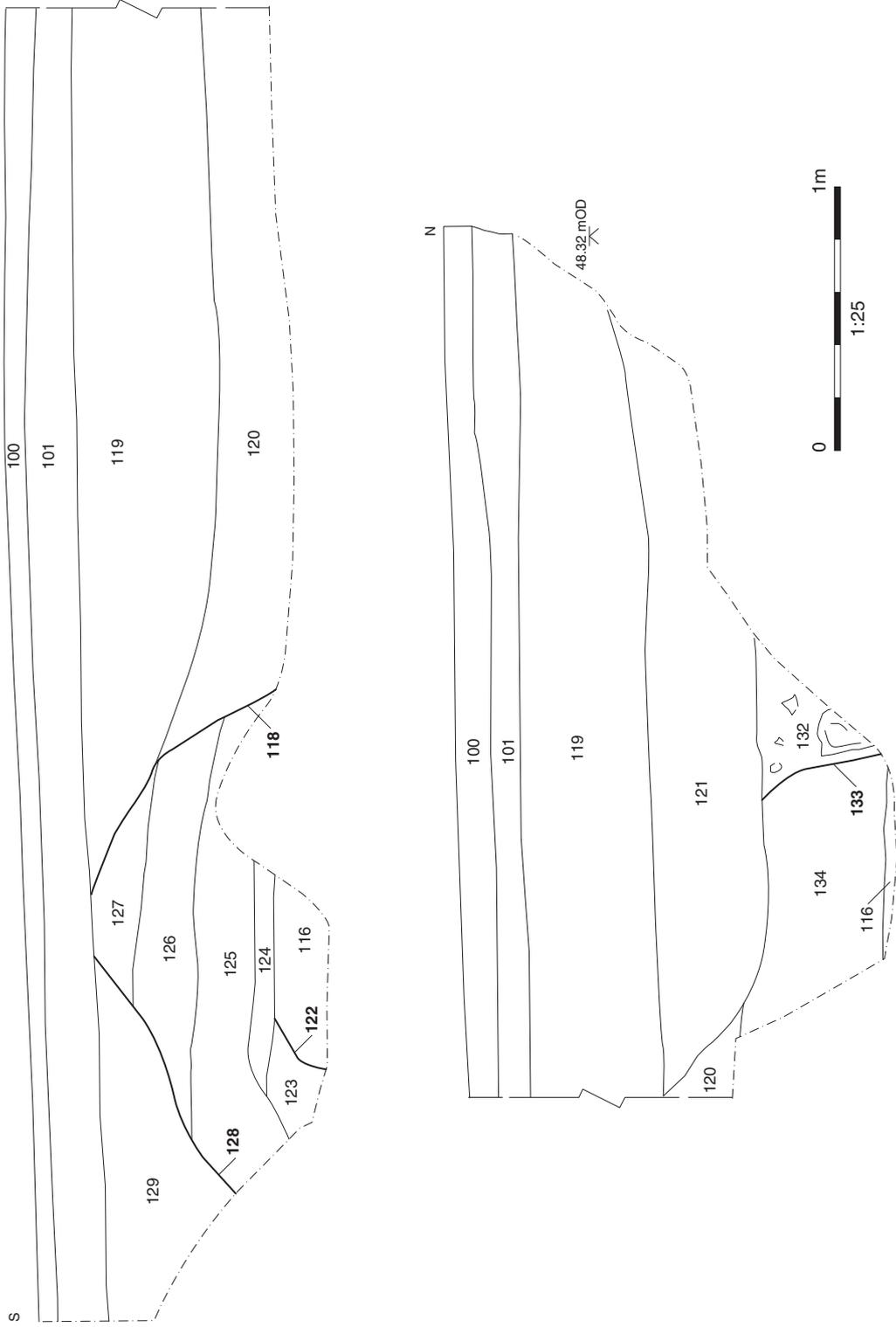


Figure 5: Section 5



Plate 1. General view of south trench (view to east)



Plate 2. General view of north trench (view to north)



Plate 3. Section 5 general view



Plate 4. Section 5, detail of possible robber trench 133 (visible just to the right of the scale). View to west.



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