

White Hart Hotel
Chipping Norton
Oxfordshire



Archaeological Excavation Report



Oxford Archaeology

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**White Hart Hotel,
Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire**

NGR: SP 3144 2712

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AND WATCHING BRIEF

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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an excavation and watching brief at the White Hart Hotel, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, on behalf of Chase Homes Ltd. The investigations showed that medieval pits and quarries dating to the 11th-12th centuries were present in the western and central parts of the site, nearest to the hotel building. Meanwhile, a buried soil deposit apparently dating to the 13th century occurred further to the east. The medieval deposits were truncated by ranges of limestone outbuildings, constructed along the northern and southern sides of the property during the 18th-19th centuries. Cobbled floors and gutters within some of these buildings showed that they served as stables. An undated stone-lined well was also recorded.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In 2004 and 2005 OA carried out an excavation and watching brief at the White Hart Hotel, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1), on behalf of Chase Homes Ltd in respect of a planning application for residential and retail development. The work was carried out in accordance with a brief set by, and a WSI agreed with, the Deputy County Archaeological Officer for Oxfordshire County Council.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development area is located between High Street and Albion Street in the centre of Chipping Norton (NGR: SP 3144 2712; Fig. 1). The site occupies an area of 80 m by 17 m to the rear (east) of the main hotel building, and lies at *c* 205 m OD. The geology is loam overlying Chipping Norton limestone.

1.2.2 Prior to excavation, the site was occupied by outbuildings and a car park. Of the four discrete areas excavated, Area 1 lay within a recently demolished 18th-19th century building, Area 2 was the site of a recently demolished row of 1960s bungalows, and Areas 3 and 4 were under tarmac (see Fig. 2).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The site is located within the historic core of Chipping Norton, which is recorded in Domesday and therefore had its origins in the later Anglo-Saxon period. The site occupies one of a series of narrow medieval burgage plots fronting on to the Market Place. When these burgage plots were laid out is unclear, but the market is known to have been established by a charter of 1205. Recent archaeological investigations suggest that medieval development did not extend beyond Albion Street (formerly Back Lane) to the east (OA 2003).

1.3.2 The White Hart Hotel itself is a Grade II* Listed Building dating from at least the 16th century. The hotel served as a coaching inn on the main road from London to

Worcester, and trade tokens bearing the sign of the White Hart were issued in 1666. The Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1880 shows ranges of outbuildings extending down both the northern and southern sides of the property, to the rear of the main hotel building. Parts of these ranges are still extant whilst others have been demolished (Fig. 2). Those parts still upstanding are built of limestone and appear to be of 18th-19th century date.

- 1.3.3 In August 2002 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken within the development area by John Moore Heritage Services. The presence of demolished stone buildings was revealed within three of the evaluation trenches. One of these structures was associated with a cut feature interpreted as a drain, the fill of which contained 12th century pottery. The fourth trench of the evaluation, at the north-east corner of the site, was devoid of archaeological features.

1.4 **Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 Thanks are due to Chase Homes Ltd for their co-operation throughout the work. The project was managed by Andrew Holmes (fieldwork) and Alex Smith (post-excavation). Fieldwork was carried out by Jim Mumford, Bryan Matthews and Dan Bashford.

2 **AIMS**

2.1 **Excavation**

- 2.1.1 To identify, excavate and record the archaeological remains within the area of the proposed buildings.
- 2.1.2 To clarify the nature and extent of any modern disturbance and intrusion on the site.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the investigation.

2.2 **Watching brief**

- 2.2.1 To preserve by record any archaeological remains that the development may expose during invasive groundworks, and to excavate any of these features that may be destroyed or damaged by those works, including those areas within the structures being retained and redeveloped.
- 2.2.2 To signal, before the destruction of the material in question, the discovery of any significant archaeological finds, for which the resources allocated are not sufficient to support the treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.
- 2.2.3 To make available the results of the investigation.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Excavation

3.1.1 Four discrete areas were excavated (Areas 1-4), corresponding to the footprints of proposed buildings (Fig. 2). A total of four test pits (c 0.75 x 0.75 m) were initially dug in Areas 1 and 4, confirming the presence of archaeological deposits. Modern overburden was then stripped from each of the four areas under archaeological supervision, using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket. Stripping proceeded to the first archaeological horizon, with the exposed archaeological features then being excavated by hand.

3.1.2 All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and recorded in line with established OA practices (OA Field Manual, 1992). Finds were collected by context. Site plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50, and section drawings of features at 1:20. Colour transparency and black-and-white negative photographs were taken of all features.

3.2 Watching brief

3.2.1 Works that may have disturbed or destroyed below ground archaeological remains were undertaken under archaeological supervision. This included the excavation of an E-W aligned service trench through the centre of the site, the removal of floors from upstanding outbuildings, and the laying of foundations. Any archaeological features encountered were excavated and recorded as outlined in section 3.1 above. In the event, this was only necessary in a single location, referred to as Area 5 (Fig. 2).

4 FIELDWORK RESULTS

4.1 General

4.1.1 Archaeological remains were revealed within all four excavation areas. A single cut feature was also encountered during the watching brief in Area 5, in the course of construction of an E-W aligned service trench through the centre of the site. The continuation of the service trench eastward from Area 5 revealed no archaeology, the modern tarmac surface being found to directly overlie the natural bedrock. Watching brief monitoring of the groundworks in the upstanding outbuildings along the northern and southern sides of the site meanwhile revealed only an undated well.

4.1.2 The results from Areas 1-5 suggest a sequence of three broad phases of activity across the site:

Phase 1: Medieval pits and quarries

Phase 2: 18th-19th century stables and outbuildings

Phase 3: Late 19th-early 20th century alterations to these buildings

These phases are described in turn below.

4.2 Phase 1: Medieval period

4.2.1 Medieval features consisted of pits or quarries cut through the limestone bedrock within Areas 3 and 4, and possibly also Area 5. A medieval buried soil was also encountered in Area 2.

Area 2

4.2.2 Buried soil deposit 1032 contained a quantity of medieval pottery mainly dating to the 13th century (Fig. 3). This deposit extended across most of Area 2, and consisted of a layer of dark brown silty clay up to 0.20 m thick, directly overlying the natural. It was cut by a series of buildings dated to Phase 2.

Area 3

4.2.3 Pit 1084 was a subcircular feature of about 3.5 m diameter, truncated on its eastern side by an earlier evaluation trench (Fig. 4). It was 0.75 m deep, with a concave profile, and showed a sequence of three back-fill deposits. The lower two deposits consisted of silty clays with frequent charcoal flecks, while the upper deposit was composed of silty sand with a high mortar content. All three fills contained small quantities of 11th-12th century pottery. The pit was sealed by layer 1072, interpreted as a make-up deposit for a Phase 2 cobbled floor.

Area 4

4.2.4 Two successive cut features were evident in Area 4 (Figs 5 and 6). Pit 1115 was partially exposed at the eastern edge of the excavated area, measuring 1.5 m in diameter. It had steep sides and was excavated to a depth of 0.80 m, further investigation being prevented by safety concerns. Two clay fills were encountered (1116 and 1117; Fig. 6), the lower of which contained a single sherd of probable 11th century pottery.

4.2.5 The upper fill of this pit was cut on its western side by quarry pit 1110. This was a large feature, with an area of 3.8 x 3.8 m being exposed within the excavated area. It was 0.50 m deep with gently sloping sides and a fairly flat base (Fig. 6). It contained a sequence of three backfill deposits of silty clay (1107-9), the uppermost of which contained a large number of limestone fragments. No datable finds were recovered. The feature was sealed by layer 1106, interpreted as a make-up deposit for a Phase 2 floor.

Area 5

4.2.6 The eastern edge of a further quarry pit (1120) was encountered in Area 5 (Fig. 2). The pit was 1.65 m deep with steep sides and a fairly flat base, and contained a back-fill deposit of silty clay. It was directly sealed by the 'made ground' for the modern tarmac yard surface. No datable finds were recovered, and the feature is only tentatively placed in the medieval period by analogy with the quarrying in Areas 3 and 4.

4.3 Phase 2: 18th-19th centuries

4.3.1 Phase 2 saw the construction of stables and other outbuildings along both the northern and southern sides of the site. These buildings were characterised by walls constructed of rough-cut limestone blocks and mortar, and floors of limestone cobbles or slabs set in mortar bases. No direct dating evidence for these buildings was recovered. However, they clearly formed an integral part of the same building ranges as the upstanding 18th-19th century outbuildings on the property.

Area 1

4.3.2 The present boundary wall running along the southern side of Area 1 was found to overlie an earlier limestone foundation (1010; Fig. 2). Keyed into this was the foundation to a demolished limestone wall running north-south along the eastern edge of the excavated area (1002). The full extent northwards of 1002 was unclear due to truncation by a modern pit. Butting up to wall foundations 1002 and 1010 in the eastern part of Area 1 was the remains of a limestone-cobbled floor surface (1004), directly overlying the natural. This stretched across the full width (5 m) of the excavated area north-south, and survived for 5 m westwards from wall 1002. It thus seems likely that, prior to the building of the boundary wall in its present form, wall foundations 1002 and 1010 formed the eastern and southern sides of a building with an internal cobbled floor.

Area 2

4.3.3 Most of Area 2 was occupied by the foundations of a row of rectangular limestone buildings, cutting buried soil 1032 and the natural subsoil (Fig. 3). The walls were keyed into the original foundations of the present southern boundary wall in a similar manner to that seen in Area 1. Indeed, the building foundations seen in Areas 1 and 2 are likely to have formed part of the same range. The part of the range exposed within Area 2 was 5 m wide N-S and 23.2 m long E-W. The eastern end of the range lay beyond the limit of excavation, but is probably marked by the upstanding wall at the eastern edge of the property.

4.3.4 Partition walls running between the northern external wall (1036) and the southern boundary wall (1057) divided the range into six rooms. In most cases, the entrances to these rooms could not be located. The westernmost room measured 5 m N-S by 3 m E-W internally, and had no surviving floor. To the east of this was a pair of small rooms, the northern measuring 1.6 m N-S by 1.5 m E-W, and the southern 3 m N-S by 1.5 m E-W. Both had floors of limestone paving slabs and cobbles, and a small quantity of 18th-19th pottery and glass was found apparently trodden into the floor of the southern room. The western wall of the southern room incorporated a limestone slab 'step' (1049) that appeared to mark a doorway, while the shared eastern wall of both rooms (1052) contained two square structural postholes (1060 and 1061). The next room to the east measured 5 m N-S by 2.5 m E-W and had no surviving floor. To the east of this was the largest of the rooms, measuring 5 m N-S by 8.8 m E-W. The remnants of a cobbled floor (1028) butted up to the eastern wall of this room,

and a shallow oval pit (1033) was present in the western half of the room, cutting the medieval buried soil 1032. This pit contained late 18th-19th century bottle glass and pottery. The easternmost room of the range was only partially exposed within the confines of the excavated area, and had no surviving floor.

Area 3

- 4.3.5 Wall foundations representing the northern and southern sides of a rectangular limestone building (1069 and 1071) were uncovered within Area 3 (Fig. 4). These appeared to be keyed into the foundations of the upstanding 18th-19th century buildings to the east and west. The demolished building in Area 3 thus measured 4 m wide (N-S) by 8.5 m long (E-W). Remnants of flooring survived in the eastern half of the building, consisting of limestone slabs and cobbles (1067) set into a mortar base (1068). This floor was built over a possible levelling layer of redeposited subsoil (1072), 0.05 m thick, which overlay medieval pit 1084 and the natural bedrock (1076).

Area 4

- 4.3.6 The foundations of a limestone wall (1089) were uncovered running along the southern edge of Area 4 (Fig. 5). This appeared to have been keyed into the foundations of the upstanding 18th-19th century buildings to the east and west. It must represent the southern side of a building, the northern side of which lay beyond the limit of excavation. There was evidence for a doorway placed roughly midway along the wall. Butting up to the wall was a fragmentary limestone-paved floor (1104) set on a mortar base (1105), overlying make-up deposit 1106. This paved floor had a central, E-W aligned gutter (1098), lying in construction cut 1099, suggesting that the building functioned as a stable.

4.4 Phase 3: Late 19th-early 20th centuries

- 4.4.1 Subsequent alterations to the Phase 2 stables and outbuildings were largely carried out in brick, and included the re-laying of floors and the insertion of drains. The character of the bricks places these alterations in the late 19th-early 20th century (see Cotter below).

Area 1

- 4.4.2 The remnants of a grey brick floor set on a mortar base were found at the western end of Area 1, butting up to the upstanding wall marking the southern boundary of the property (1008). The bricks were laid on a N-S alignment. This floor directly overlay the natural subsoil, and there was no stratigraphic relationship to the cobbled floor in the eastern part of Area 1 discussed above.

Area 2

- 4.4.3 Two square drains or soakaways were added to the stable block in Area 2, one (1040) adjacent to the west side of partition wall 1038 and the other (1030) adjacent to the west side of partition wall 1027 (Fig. 3). Each drain measured 0.6 x 0.6 m in size, and

was built of red bricks, with up to four courses surviving. The construction cut for drain 1030 (1029) was stratigraphically later than that for wall 1027.

Area 3

- 4.4.4 Radical changes occurred in Area 3 with the demolition of the Phase 2 stable building. The wall foundations and cobbled floor of this building were overlain by a cinder make-up layer 0.03 m thick (1064), upon which was constructed a grey brick floor (1063), butting up to the present boundary wall along the southern side of the property (not shown on plan). The floor and cinder layer lay above the phase 2 surface (1067). The bricks from the floor were identical to those from Area 1, and were similarly laid on a N-S alignment, except at the northern edge of the excavated area where they formed an E-W aligned gutter. This floor lay directly beneath the modern tarmac.

Area 4

- 4.4.5 Three square brick drains identical to those in Area 2 were constructed cutting through the cobbled floor 1104/1105 in the northern half of Area 4 (1098, 1102 and 1112; Figs 5-6). The drains and cobbled floor were subsequently overlain by a thin make-up layer of redeposited natural (1095), over which was constructed a new limestone-cobbled floor (1088) set on a mortar base (1093). The floor was laid in a similar pattern to the earlier one, the main difference being that the central E-W aligned gutter was constructed from grey bricks which had an integral channel (1090). Layers 1093 and 1095 both contained 19th century pottery and clay pipe fragments. Floor 1088 was directly overlain by the modern tarmac (1094).

4.5 Undated features

- 4.5.1 Groundworks within one of the upstanding 18th-19th outbuildings along the northern side of the site revealed the presence of a well (Fig. 2). This was placed only 0.5 m from the rear (northern) wall of the building and was lined with dry-stone walling constructed from unfaced limestone blocks. The feature was rectangular in plan, measuring 1 x 1 m internally, and its depth was measured at 10.5 m to the surface of the water. It had been capped with large limestone blocks resting on inserted iron bars. Unfortunately, no artefacts were recovered in association with the well, and it showed no stratigraphic relationship to the original features of the outbuilding within which it was found. It seems intrinsically more likely that the well preceded the outbuilding rather than being constructed within it, not least due to its closeness to a structural wall. Nevertheless, on the available evidence the well must be categorised as undated.

5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Pottery

by Paul Blinkhorn

5.1.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 67 sherds with a total weight of 2278 g. It consisted of a mixture of early medieval (11th-13th century) and post-medieval (mainly 19th century) material. The bulk of the medieval material dated to the 11th-12th centuries. It was recorded utilising the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

OXAC: Cotswold-type ware, AD 975-1350.

OXY: Medieval Oxford ware, AD 1075-1350.

OXBB: Minety ware, early 12th-15th century.

OXAM: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD 1200-1600.

OXEST: English Stoneware, late 17th-19th century.

WHEW: Mass-produced white earthenwares, mid 19th-20th century.

5.1.2 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*. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region, with the majority of the medieval material originating from Cotswolds sources.

Feature	Context	OXAC		OXY		OXBB		OXAM		OXEST		WHEW		Date
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
-	1011											20	1595	19thC
-	1032	1	6	1	26	1	7	8	141					13thC
103	1034							5	195	2	23	7	20	19thC
-	1055											4	8	19thC
1084	1085	7	92											11thC?
1084	1086	6	66			1	23							M12thC
1084	1087	1	39											11thC?
-	1092									1	23			19thC
-	1095											1	2	19thC
1115	1116	1	12											11thC?
Total		16	215	1	26	2	30	13	336	3	46	32	1625	

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

5.2 Clay pipe

by John Cotter

5.2.1 Two pieces of clay pipe stem were recovered. These consisted of one piece (2 g) from context 1092 and one piece (4 g) from context 1095. Both date to the 19th century.

5.3 Ceramic building material

by John Cotter

5.3.1 A total of 12 pieces of ceramic building materials (CBM) weighing 4435 g were identified from the contexts listed below. The assemblage consists of types of

domestic brick including ordinary building brick, paving brick and a refractory fireback, the latter probably from a fireplace. All the material appears to be of 19th to early 20th century date.

- 5.3.2 *1008*: One complete brick weighing 3948 g (225 mm long x 110 mm wide x 75 mm thick) and two joining fragments weighing 32 g from a second identical brick. Very dense (near-stoneware), dark grey fabric. Plain, unfrogged. Traces of mortar on sides and underside. Industrial hard-wearing character and marked smoothing or wear on 'upper' surface corresponds with use as paving brick. Date: Late 19th or early 20th century.
- 5.3.3 *1011*: One tile-like fragment weighing 299 g. Edge and corner fragment probably from a fireback or furnace/boiler lining in refractory cream-coloured clay, with evidence of scorching. Thickness 30 mm. Flat 'base' or lower edge and one surviving curved/tapered edge. Industrial. Date: 19th or 20th century.
- 5.3.4 *1055*: Eight brick fragments weighing 156 g. Smallish fragments, including some edges, from 3-4 separate bricks in fairly soft red-firing clay. Date probably 19th to 20th century.

5.4 **Mortar**

by Jon Gill

- 5.4.1 Five mortar samples were examined, listed by context below.
- 5.4.2 *1002*: Soft, dark brown crumbly sample which appears to be almost entirely soil but with a few small lumps of light beige lime mortar mixed in.
- 5.4.3 *1006*: Light grey/beige lime mortar. Some larger inclusions, coal flecks and small stones. Slightly harder and less friable than other samples.
- 5.4.4 *1007*: Light beige/ochre colour lime mortar with moderately friable texture. Sandy and with a few small stone and charcoal inclusions. Apparently identical to 1016.
- 5.4.5 *1008*: Dark beige colour sandy lime mortar with moderately friable texture. Sandy and with a few small inclusions stones and specks of coal.
- 5.4.6 *1016*: Light beige/ochre colour lime mortar with moderately friable texture. Sandy and with a few small stone and charcoal inclusions. Apparently identical to 1007.

5.5 **Glass**

by Hugh Willmott

- 5.5.1 A small assemblage of glass, totalling eighty fragments from a minimum number of nineteen vessels and one fragment of window glass, was recovered (summarised below). All is stable, and none merits further specialist treatment or conservation.
- 5.5.2 With the exception of three very small fragments of wine bottle from (1055) and a recent piece of window glass from (1095), all the glass comes from just two contexts. The first, (1011), is a recent topsoil deposit overlying cobbled floor 1004. All the glass can be dated to the first half of the 20th century. Vessels present include at least two sherry or port glasses, and interestingly at least one of these has an incised capacity line suggesting it was used in a commercial environment, hardly surprising

given its location. Fragments from two wine glasses were also found and these are very plain and utilitarian in character. All the other vessels are ordinary domestic types, and include hexagonal, cylindrical and oval bottles as well as a jar. This group of glass can clearly be related to the White Hart Hotel and its use in the first half of the last century.

5.5.3 The remaining glass all comes from the fill (1034) of pit 1033, and all the fragments are from between seven and thirteen different wine bottles. There are some slight variations in form, suggesting that some belong to the later 18th century, whilst others are clearly early 19th century in date. However, given the longevity of their use having a context that contains a mixture of dated wine bottles is not unusual. Wine bottles are common finds on most domestic sites, and it is uncertain whether they can be directly related to activities at the White Hart hotel

5.5.4 The assemblage is relatively small in size, and primarily comes from two fairly recent contexts.

<i>Context</i>	<i>No Frags</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
1011	4	base, stem and bowl from sherry/port glass, fluted bowl with incised capacity mark (2/3 gill?)	early-mid 20th century
1011	1	base from a sherry or port glass	early-mid 20th century
1011	3	stem and lower bowl from a plain wine glass	early-mid 20th century
1011	2	stem and lower bowl from a plain wine glass	early-mid 20th century
1011	1	complete small clear narrow cylindrical phial	early-mid 20th century
1011	1	rim from a clear ribbed jar	early-mid 20th century
1011	3	shoulder from a clear hexagonal bottle	early-mid 20th century
1011	14	base and body from an oval spirit bottle, with unidentifiable trade mark	early-mid 20th century
1011	2	neck and base from a blue/green bottle	early 20th century
1011	1	neck from a blue/green bottle	early 20th century
1011	1	neck from a clear sauce bottle	early-mid 20th century
1011	1	neck from a clear sauce bottle	early-mid 20th century
1011	7	miscellaneous clear body fragments	20th century
1034	1	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	late 18th-early 19th century
1034	2	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	late 18th-early 19th century
1034	1	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	late 18th-early 19th century
1034	1	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	1	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	2	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	4	base from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	1	rim and neck from a cylindrical wine bottle	late 18th-early 19th century
1034	1	rim from a cylindrical wine bottle	late 18th-early 19th century
1034	1	rim and neck from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	1	rim and neck from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	1	rim from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	4	rim and neck from a cylindrical wine bottle	early 19th century
1034	14	miscellaneous wine bottle fragments	late 18th-early 19th century
1055	3	small body fragments from a wine bottle	18th century?
1095	1	clear window glass	19th-20th century

Table 2. Summary of glass assemblage

5.6 **Metalwork**

by Leigh Allen

- 5.6.1 Three metal objects were recovered, comprising two nails (from 1092 and 1095) and an irregular fragment of lead (from 1086). Only one of the nails is complete (from 1092); it has a rectangular-sectioned tapering shank and a triangular head of the same thickness as the shank. The advantage of this form of nail is that if the head was aligned with the grain of the timber it could be driven completely into the wood making it invisible from a distance.

5.7 **Worked flint**

by Rebecca Devaney

- 5.7.1 One fragment of worked flint was recovered from context 1032. It is a flake of gravel flint with trimming to its side (heavily corticated).

5.8 **Animal bone**

by Emma-Jane Evans

- 5.8.1 A total of 23 bones (526 g) were recovered from this site, with the bones surviving in good condition. Seven bones were identified to species, the majority of which were bird bones (Table 3 below).

<i>Context</i>	<i>Domestic fowl</i>	<i>Chicken</i>	<i>Swan</i>	<i>Sheep/goat</i>	<i>Horse</i>	<i>Unidentified</i>	<i>Total</i>
1011	1	2	2	-	-	12	17
1032	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
1055	-	-	-	1	-	2	3
Total	3	2	2	1	1	16	25

Table 3. Total number of bones identified to species

- 5.8.2 It is very difficult to draw any firm conclusions as to the nature of the site from such a small sample of animal bones, but it is possible that the remains represent domestic waste. Butchery marks on a number of rib bones and two large (probably cattle) vertebrae suggest that animals were processed nearby, and the presence of swan may indicate that the site was quite high status. However, more animal remains are needed to confirm that this waste is from a high status site.

5.9 **Palaeo-environmental remains**

- 5.9.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1.1 Excavation has confirmed the presence of medieval features on the site, in the form of pits and quarries dating to the 11th-12th centuries. These pits were confined to the western and central parts of the site, nearest to the hotel building. Meanwhile, a buried soil deposit apparently dating to the 13th century occurred further east in Area 2.
- 6.1.2 Beyond the fact that small-scale limestone quarrying was occurring, little can be said as to the nature of the medieval activity. The only finds datable to this period consisted of a modest quantity of pottery, the assemblage being typical of the region and shedding no light on site function or status. The medieval deposits had suffered from truncation by the post-medieval building foundations, and any shallower features contemporary with the quarry pits may well have been obliterated.
- 6.1.3 Truncation may also explain the absence of clear evidence for activity on the site between the 14th and 17th centuries, given the fact that the White Hart Inn is known to have been flourishing from at least the 16th century. The stone-lined well found at the northern edge of the site could perhaps belong to the late medieval or earlier post-medieval periods, as logic would suggest that it was constructed prior to the upstanding building within which it was found. The date of this feature remains unproven, however.
- 6.1.4 The post-medieval limestone foundations encountered in all four excavation areas confirm the cartographic evidence that rows of outbuildings formerly extended along the whole length of both the northern and southern sides of the property. Although no direct dating evidence was recovered for these foundations, they could be seen to form integral parts of the same ranges as the upstanding outbuildings on the site, which date to the 18th-19th centuries. The cobbled floors with central gutters found within the demolished buildings in Areas 2 and 4 indicate that these served as stables at a time when the White Hart was an important coaching inn. A continued use as stables into the late 19th or early 20th centuries is shown by the laying of new floors at that time.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Area	Context Number	Archaeological Type	Length	Width	Depth	Interpretation	Description	Finds	No.	Wt. (g)
Area 1	1000	Layer				Natural	Natural brown-yellow silty clay with 70% limestone fragments			
Area 1	1001	Layer				Aggregate layer	Pinkish-red aggregate for car park, mostly removed by machine			
Area 1	1002	Masonry	2	0.83	0.3	Wall	N-S aligned rubble limestone and mortar wall, faced on W. Overlies cobbles 1004.	Mortar	1	721
Area 1	1003	Fill			0.18	Garden feature fill	Fill of 1015			
Area 1	1004	Layer	5.2	4.6	0.05	Cobbled surface	Cobbled floor.			
Area 1	1005	Layer	2.3	2	0.05	Burnt layer	Layer/lens of burnt silty sand, probably lay beneath floor 1006/1007			
Area 1	1006	Layer	1.6	1.3	0.03	Mortar floor	Mortar floor remnant, same as 1007	Mortar	1	1222
Area 1	1007	Layer	1.1	0.78	0.03	Mortar floor	Mortar floor remnant, same as 1006	Mortar	1	1226
Area 1	1008	Structure	2.94	1.94	0.76	Brick floor	Remnant of brick floor of stables. Stretchers, running N-S. Bricks measure 228 x 102 x 76mm (9 x 4 x 3"). Overlies mortar floor remnant 1006.			
Area 1	1009	Layer	2.2	1.7	0.01	Burnt layer	Burnt sandy silt lens, similar to 1005			
Area 1	1010	Structure				Wall	Foundation of boundary wall, running E-W across site. Limestone, brick and mortar. N-S wall 1002 is keyed into 1010, with wall proper a rebuild over 1002.			
Area 1	1011	Layer			0.25	Layer	Layer of loam and rubble overlying cobbled surface 1004 at the extreme east of the site	Glass Iron Clay Pipe CBM Pottery Pottery Animal Bone	19 2 3 1 1 19 18	334 0 5 299 259 1334 471
Area 1	1012	Wood				Post	Post driven through cobbled surface 1004			
Area 1	1013	Cut	1.3	1.1	0.25	Pit	Pit cut through brick floor 1008			
Area 1	1014	Fill			0.25	Pit fill	Sole fill of pit 1013. Material similar to 1011.			

Area 1	1015	Cut	3	2.4	0.18	Garden feature	Modern cut, with kerb stones on W side. Filled by 1003			
Area 1	1016	Layer	0.9	0.6	0.05	Mortar floor	Remnant of floor	Mortar	1	943
	1017	Void								
	1018	Void								
	1019	Void								
Area 2	1020	Layer				Subsoil				
Area 2	1021	Layer			0.18	Demolition layer	Late C20 demolition layer over site			
Area 2	1022	Cut		0.15	0.25	Post hole	Modern posthole predating 1960s building			
Area 2	1023	Fill			0.25	Post hole fill	Fill of 1022			
Area 2	1024	Cut	4.4	0.38	0.3	Foundation cut	Construction cut for wall foundation 1026			
Area 2	1025	Fill				Foundation cut fill	Material filling in between cut 1024 and wall 1026			
Area 2	1026	Masonry	4.4	0.26	0.3	Wall	Foundations for wall 1027, or an earlier stone wall predating 1027. Consists of 2 courses of limestone blocks, bonded with mortar			
Area 2	1027	Masonry	2.2	0.11	0.08	Wall	Brick wall of old stable block, demolished in late C20 for construction of bungalows.			
Area 2	1028	Layer	4.4	1.2		Cobbled surface	Cobbled floor			
Area 2	1029	Cut	0.8	0.76	0.11	Construction cut	Construction hole for brick-lined drain 1030			
Area 2	1030	Structure	0.6	0.6	0.15	Drain	Brick-lined drain for stable block, 2 courses exposed. Filled with construction rubble same as 1021			
Area 2	1031	Fill				Backfill	Infill between construction cut 1029 and brick drain 1030. Dark reddish brown silty clay			
Area 2	1032	Layer			0.2	Buried soil	Buried soil, overlying 1020, cut by 1042.	Flint Stone Pottery Animal Bone	1 2 11 3	4 18 184 35
Area 2	1033	Cut	2.6	1	0.2	Pit	Shallow oval pit			
Area 2	1034	Fill			0.2	Pit fill	Sole fill of 1033	Pottery Glass	15 18	248 1750
Area 2	1035	Structure				Building	Stable block			
Area 2	1036	Masonry	12.8	0.5	0.65	Wall	N wall of stable block 1035. Limestone blocks 6-7 courses high, mortar bond.			

Area 2	1037	Masonry	5.5	0.5	0.2	Wall	W wall of stable block 1035, only one course exposed.			
Area 2	1038	Masonry	5.3	0.48	0.28	Wall	Internal wall of stable block 1035. Three courses of limestone blocks.			
Area 2	1039	Cut	0.83	0.82	0.36	Construction cut	Cut for brick-lined drain 1041			
Area 2	1040	Structure	0.65	0.65	0.3	Drain	Brick-lined drain within stable block 1035. Bricks 0.23 x 0.11 x 0.08m.			
Area 2	1041	Fill				Backfill	Infill between cut 1039 and drain 1040. Reddish brown silty clay			
Area 2	1042	Cut	5.3	0.55	0.2	Construction cut	Construction cut for wall 1038			
Area 2	1043	Fill				Backfill	Infill between construction cut 1042 and wall 1038			
Area 2	1044	Cut	18	0.6	0.65	Construction cut	Construction cut for outer walls 1036 and 1037 of stable block 1035			
Area 2	1045	Fill				Backfill	Material between construction cut 1044 and walls 1036 and 1037. Dark grey-brown silty clay			
Area 2	1046	Cut	23	0.5	0.3	Construction cut	Construction cut for wall 1048			
Area 2	1047	Fill				Backfill	Infill between construction cut 1046 and wall 1048. Dark reddish brown silty clay			
Area 2	1048	Masonry	2.3	0.4	0.7	Wall	Wall of outbuilding 1050			
Area 2	1049	Masonry	0.97	0.5		Step	Step of doorway in wall 1048, building 1050			
Area 2	1050	Structure				Building	Small outbuilding with 2 rooms			
Area 2	1051	Masonry	3.6	0.49	0.45	Wall	Wall of building 1050, forming part of W side of the building, and the internal division between N and S rooms			
Area 2	1052	Masonry	5.1	0.78	0.4	Wall	E wall of building 1050			
Area 2	1053	Cut	5.1	0.8	0.42	Construction cut	Construction cut for wall 1052			
Area 2	1054	Fill				Backfilling of structure	Fill between construction cut 1053 and wall 1052			

Area 2	1055	Layer				Floor surface	Floor of S room of building 1050. Limestone slabs and smaller limestone fragments set on edge, into layer 1032	CBM Pottery Animal Bone Clay Pipe Glass	8 4 3 1 3	156 10 20 4 6
Area 2	1056	Layer				Floor surface	Floor of N room of building 1050, identical to 1055			
Area 2	1057	Masonry	11.1	0.52	0.36	Wall	Remnant of S boundary wall, which has been demolished and rebuilt; present wall of C19 stable block/boundary			
Area 2	1058	Masonry		0.6	3	Wall	Present boundary wall and S wall of bungalows, was S wall to stable block 1035			
Area 2	1059	Layer				Layer	Patch of demolition material from C20 construction of bungalow			
Area 2	1060	Cut	0.12	0.12	0.23	Post hole	Square posthole set into rubble core of wall 1052.			
Area 2	1061	Cut	0.12	0.12	0.22	Post hole	Posthole, matches 1060			
Area 2	1062	Cut	4.3	0.62	0.25	Service trench	C20 service trench, cutting 1038			
Area 3	1063	Layer				Floor surface	Floor consisting of grey bricks laid on faces end to end. Bricks 0.23 x 0.10 x 0.08m			
Area 3	1064	Layer			0.03	Makeup	Cinder/ash make up layer beneath brick yard surface 1063, laid across whole excavated area			
Area 3	1065	Masonry				Wall	Remnant of W wall of stable block, reduced to ground level and rebuilt anew. Rough limestone blocks and mortar.			
Area 3	1066	Masonry				Wall	Extant limestone boundary wall to S side of property			
Area 3	1067	Layer	2.95	2.2	0.13	Floor surface	Limestone cobbled and flagged floor			
Area 3	1068	Layer			0.03	Mortar layer	Hard mortar base for limestone yard floor 1067; extends 1.4m further W than 1067			
Area 3	1069	Masonry			0.08	Wall	Robbed out wall, within cut 1077. Runs along N side of limestone yard. Probably marks the front of an earlier building.			
Area 3	1070	Masonry	0.37	0.16	0.07	Wall	2 large rough limestone blocks jutting out from the side of the house. Footing for a buttress?			

Area 3	1071	Masonry				Wall	Robbed out wall marking S side of limestone yard. Butts extant wall 1066 to the S.			
Area 3	1072	Layer			0.5	Subsoil	Disturbed subsoil overlying the natural. Dark reddish brown silty clay			
Area 3	1073	Cut	0.21	0.21	0.16	Post hole	Square posthole, probably for a gate			
Area 3	1074	Cut		0.23	0.29	Drain	Probable cut for a drain or soakaway			
Area 3	1075	Fill			0.03	Drain	Small, rough limestone blocks lain over rectangular drain cut 1074. The space beneath the stones remained unblocked. Stones up to 0.25m long, 0.07m wide, 0.03m thick			
Area 3	1076	Layer				Natural	Natural limestone bedrock			
Area 3	1077	Cut		0.5	0.1	Construction cut	Cut for wall 1069.			
Area 3	1078	Fill			0.25	Drain fill	Fill of drain cut 1079, sandy mortar containing ceramic pipe 1.5m long.			
Area 3	1079	Cut	1.5	0.2	0.25	Drain	Cut for drain pipe, cuts robbed out wall trench 1077			
Area 3	1080	Structure				Building	Base for small outbuilding attached to building forming W boundary of excavated area. Soft sandy mortar surface, covered with layer of reused blue bricks, covered with layer of concrete. Cut through brick floor 1063			
Area 3	1081	Cut	3.24	0.97	0.25	Construction cut	Cut for 1080			
Area 3	1082	Fill			0.3	Underpinning	Modern breezeblock and rubble underpinning, constructed from inside of building to W of excavated area, thus beneath brick yard 1063 although later			
Area 3	1083	Cut			0.3	Construction cut	Cut for modern underpinning 1082			
Area 3	1084	Cut			0.75	Pit	Pit. Probably circular, only a small part excavated; truncated to E by earlier evaluation trench			

Area 3	1085	Fill			0.09	Pit fill	Lower fill of 1084. Dark grey silty clay with charcoal inclusions	Pottery	7	92
Area 3	1086	Fill			0.26	Pit fill	Mid fill of 1084. Dark grey brown silty clay	Pottery Lead	7 1	89 1
Area 3	1087	Fill			0.45	Pit fill	Upper fill of 1084. Dark brown mortar with limestone fragments	Pottery	1	39
Area 4	1088	Layer			0.12	Floor surface	Cobbled floor of stable block. Limestone blocks up to 0.39 x 0.18 x 0.12m, laid flat or on edge.			
Area 4	1089	Masonry	7.4	0.48	0.08	Wall	S wall of stable block. Limestone faced stones on inner and outer faces, rubble core. Bonded with light yellow-brown sandy mortar.			
Area 4	1090	Masonry	5.25	0.16	0.08	Drain	Drain in floor surface 1088. Grey bricks 0.28 x 0.16 x 0.08m, with a 0.09m diameter channel cast in top. Ran into 4" pipe at W end, which ran S along wall and out through wall 1089.			
Area 4	1091	Structure	3.1	1.04		Stair base	Rectangular stair base, edged by floor 1088			
Area 4	1092	Layer			0.08	Dump	Deposit of construction material overlying 1093. Light brown sandy mortar with limestone fragments	Pottery Iron	1 1	23 1
Area 4	1093	Layer			0.12	Layer	Mortar base for 1091. Yellow-brown silty sand with gravel, limestone chips and mortar			
Area 4	1094	Layer			0.1	Tarmac surface	Modern car park surface. 0.04m thick tarmac over 0.06m thick stone chip and tarmac base			
Area 4	1095	Layer			0.1	Layer	Material forming base for cobbled surface 1088 and mortar bed 1093. Red brown silty clay.	Pottery Iron	1 1	2 1
Area 4	1096	Fill				Backfill	Material infilling brick-lined soakaway. Light red brown silty sand			
Area 4	1097	Fill				Backfill	Material infilling between cut 1099 and structure 1098			
Area 4	1098	Structure	0.53	0.53	0.3	Drain	Brick-lined soakaway. 3 courses high, bricks 0.23 x 0.11 x 0.07m.-			
Area 4	1099	Cut	1	0.7	0.3	Construction cut	Cut for construction of 1098			

Area 4	1100	Fill				Backfill	Infilling of 1102. Brick and limestone fragments.			
Area 4	1101	Fill				Backfill	Limestone/brick infilling between 1103 and 1102			
Area 4	1102	Structure				Drain	Brick-lined soakaway			
Area 4	1103	Cut	0.84	0.74		Construction cut	Cut for 1102. Cuts cobbled surface 1104			
Area 4	1104	Layer				Floor surface	Limestone cobbled floor. Stones set on edge (up to 0.28 x 0.08 x 0.12m) with larger pieces running E-W forming drain. Original stable floor, partly lifted and relaid as 1088			
Area 4	1105	Layer			0.1	Mortar layer	Mortar base for floor 1104, disturbed by removal of floor. Light yellow brown coarse sandy mortar.			
Area 4	1106	Layer			0.16	Dump	Final dump of material to level up quarry/terrace 1110. Sealed by mortar layer 1105			
Area 4	1107	Fill			0.18	Dump	Light orange brown silty clay with limestone fragments. Upper fill			
Area 4	1108	Fill			0.1	Dump	Light reddish brown silty clay with limestone fragments. Mid fill			
Area 4	1109	Fill			0.28	Dump	Light yellow brown silty clay with limestone fragments. Primary deposit.			
Area 4	1110	Cut			0.54	Terrace cut	Terrace cut into slope at the rear of the White Hart, or possible quarry. Cuts pit 1115			
Area 4	1111	Cut	0.7	0.5	0.3	Construction cut	Cut for 1112, cuts though cobbled surface 1104 into natural			
Area 4	1112	Structure	0.5	0.5	0.3	Drain	Brick-lined soakaway. Three courses high. Bricks 0.22 x 0.11 x 0.07			
Area 4	1113	Fill				Backfill	Infill between 1111 and 1112. Dark brown silty loam			
Area 4	1114	Fill				Backfill	Material infilling soakaway. Light red brown silty sand with cobble and brick fragments.			
Area 4	1115	Cut	1.5	1.06		Pit	Quarry pit cut by 1110. Not fully excavated due to safety concerns.			

Area 4	1116	Fill			0.58	Pit fill	Lower fill of 1115, not excavated to full depth. Yellow brown clay with limestone fragments	Pottery	1	12
Area 4	1117	Fill			0.28	Pit fill	Upper fill of 1115. Red brown clay with limestone fragments			
Area 4	1118	Layer			0.12	Layer	Deposit of material on edge of 1110, possible disturbed subsoil from construction of building. Overlies 1106. Dark red brown silty clay			
Area 4	1119	Cut				Construction cut	Construction cut for wall 1089			
Area 5	1120	Cut			1.65	Quarry cut	Steep-sided and flat based quarry cut			
Area 5	1121	Fill			1.65	Quarry fill	Fill of 1120, light brown silty clay containing limestone fragments			

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mellor, M, 1984 A summary of the key assemblages. A study of pottery, clay pipes, glass and other finds from fourteen pits, dating from the 16th to the 19th century, in TG Hassall, CE Halpin and M Mellor 'Excavations at St Ebbe's', *Oxoniensia* **49**, 181-219.

Mellor, M, 1994 Oxford Pottery: A Synthesis of middle and late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval pottery in the Oxford Region. *Oxoniensia* **59**, 17-217

OA 2003 White Hart Hotel, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: White Hart Hotel, Chipping Norton

Site code: CHIPW 03

Grid reference: SP 3144 2712

Type of project: Excavation and watching brief

Date and duration of project: March 2004-May 2005

Summary of results: Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an excavation and watching brief at the White Hart Hotel, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, on behalf of Chase Homes Ltd. The investigations showed that medieval pits and quarries dating to the 11th-12th centuries were present in the western and central parts of the site, nearest to the hotel building. Meanwhile, a buried soil deposit apparently dating to the 13th century occurred further to the east. The medieval deposits were truncated by ranges of limestone outbuildings, constructed along the northern and southern sides of the property during the 18th-19th centuries. Cobbled floors and gutters within some of these buildings showed that they served as stables. An undated stone-lined well was also recorded.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.



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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Site plan showing Excavation and Watching Brief Area

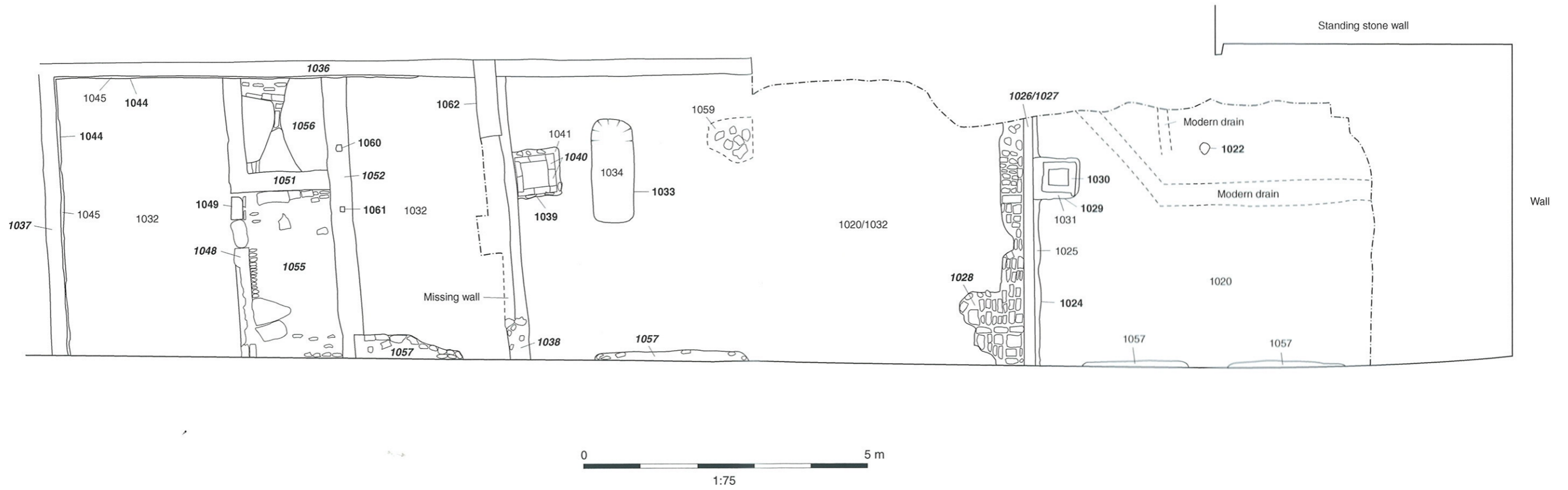


Figure 3: Plan of Area 2

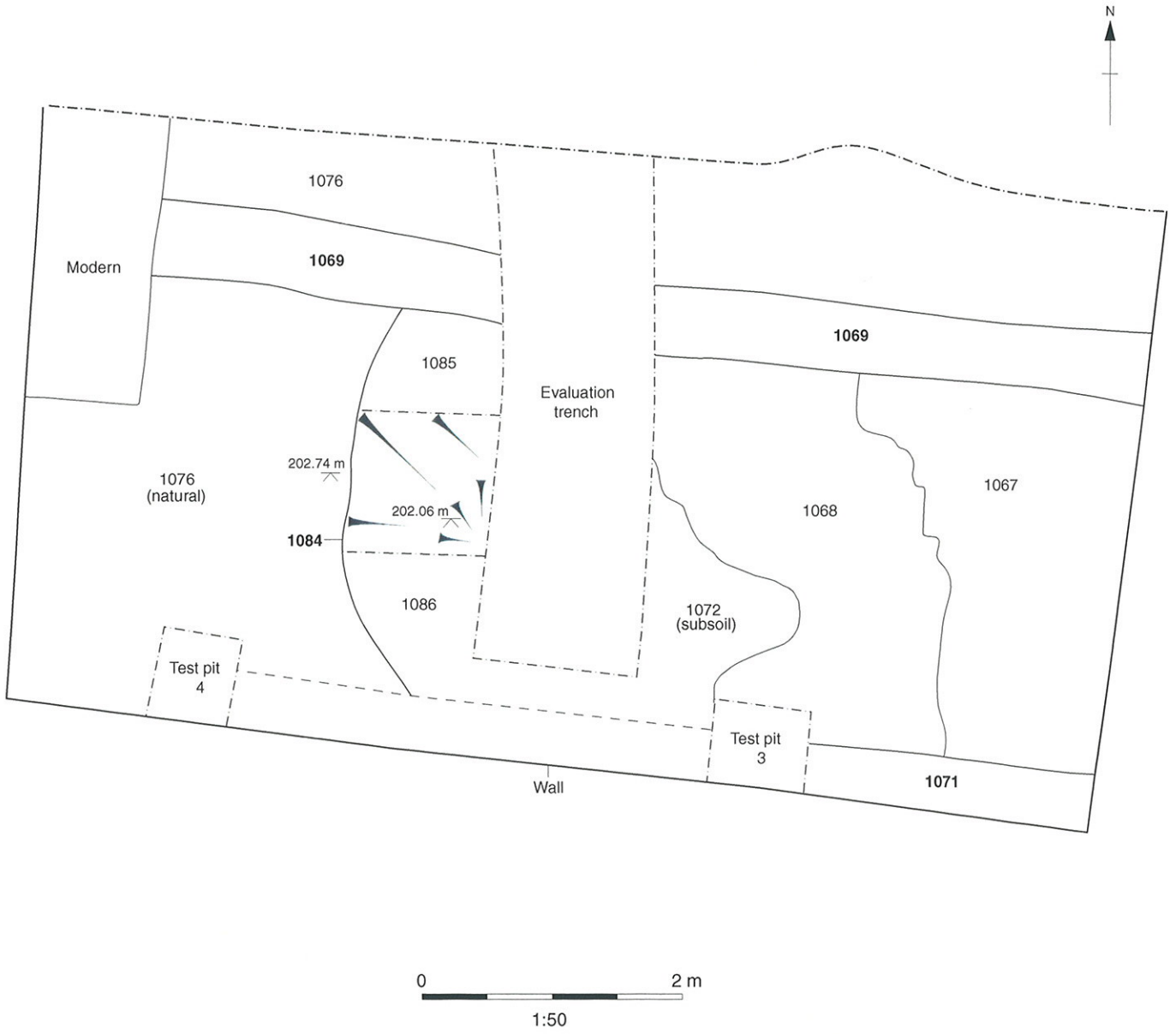


Figure 4: Plan of Area 3 after removal of brick floor 1063

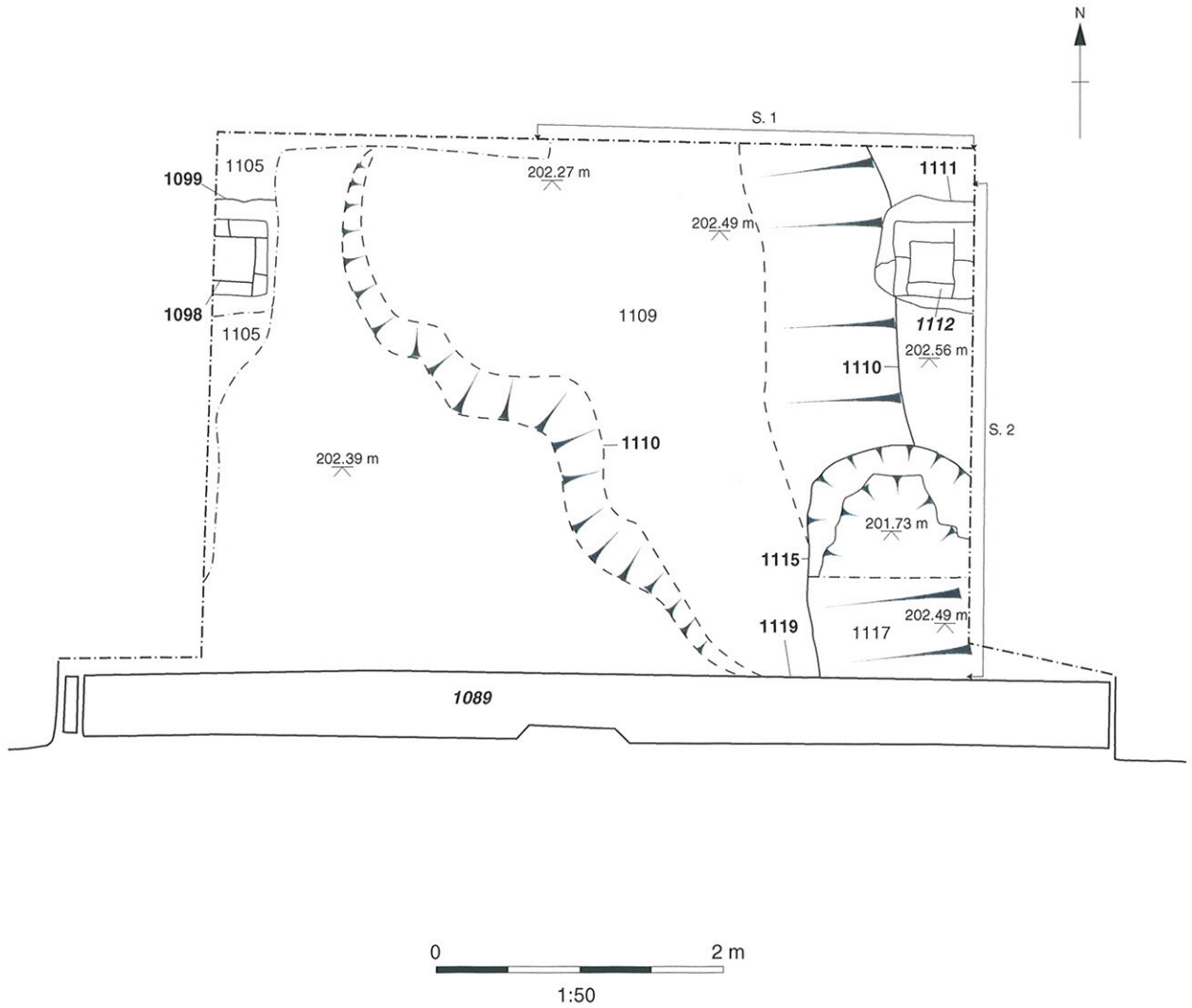
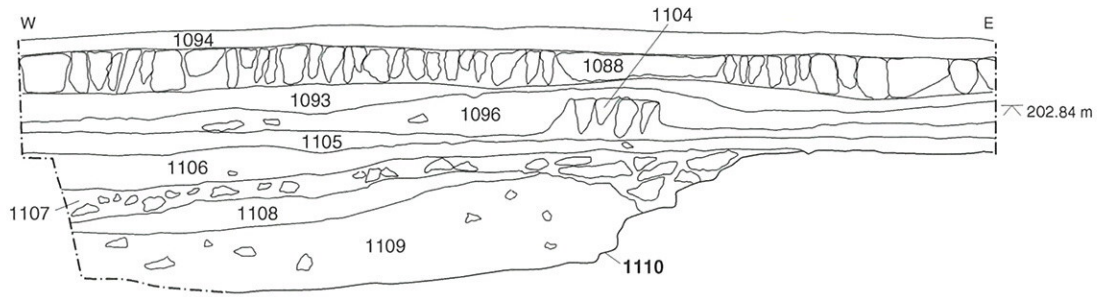


Figure 5: Plan of Area 4 after removal of cobbled floor 1104

Section 1



Section 2

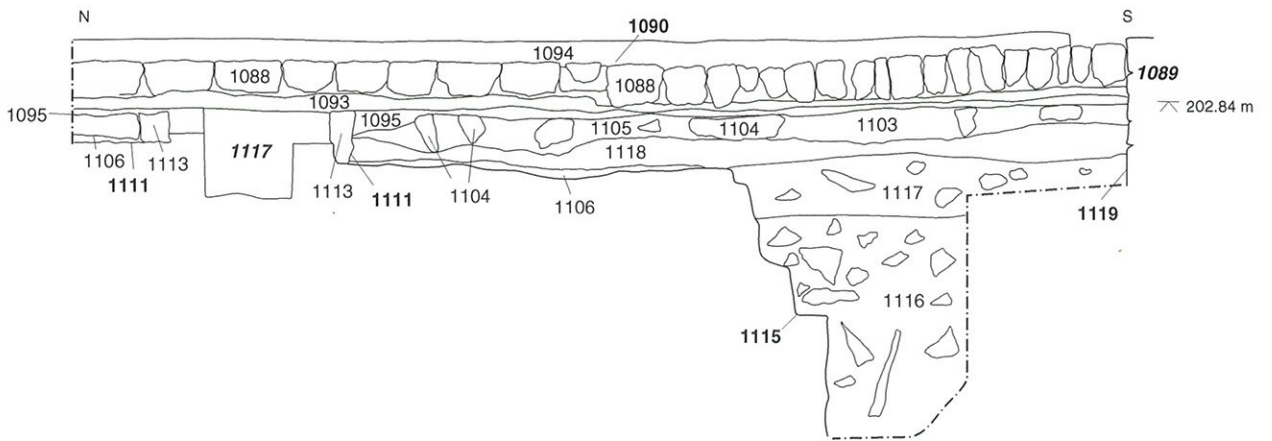


Figure 6: Sections of Area 4



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