

# Hampton Court Palace East Front Drainage



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report



October 2008

**Client: Historic Royal Palaces**

Issue No: 1  
NGR: TQ 158 684

**Client Name:** Historic Royal Palaces

**Client Ref No:**

**Document Title:** Hampton Court Palace, East Front Drainage

**Document Type:** Watching Brief

**Issue Number:** Final Report (1)

National Grid Reference: TQ 158 684

Planning Reference:

OA Job Number:

Site Code: HCP60

Invoice Code: HCP60WB

Receiving Museum: HRP

Museum Accession No: HCP60

Prepared by: Ian Cook  
Position: Supervisor  
Date: 16th October 2008

Checked by: David Wilkinson  
Position: Senior Project Manager  
Date: 21st October 2008

Approved by: Dave Wilkinson  
Position: Senior Project Manager  
Date: 21st October 2008

Signed.....

Document File Location: Restricted  
Graphics File Location: Restricted  
Illustrated by: Georgina Slater and Sarah Lucas

***Disclaimer:***

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

**Oxford Archaeology**

**© Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd 2008**

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800

f: (0044) 01865 793496

e: [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)

w: [www.oxfordarch.co.uk](http://www.oxfordarch.co.uk)

Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

## Hampton Court Palace, East Front Drainage

NGR TQ 158 684

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*

#### CONTENTS

Summary .....	1
1 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Location and scope of work .....	1
1.2 Geology and topography .....	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background .....	1
2 Project Aims and Methodology .....	2
2.1 Aims .....	2
2.2 Methodology .....	2
3 Results .....	2
3.1 Description of deposits .....	2
3.2 Finds .....	3
3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains .....	3
4 Discussion and Conclusions .....	3
Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory .....	5
Appendix 2 Finds .....	5
Appendix 3 Bibliography and references .....	6
Appendix 4 Summary of Site Details .....	6

#### LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1 Site location  
Fig. 2 Site plan of area of watching brief, Plan 101  
Fig. 3 Plan 100, Section 100  
Fig. 4 Plan 102, Plan 103, Section 101 and Section 102

## SUMMARY

*From the 25th February 2008 to the 26th March 2008, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Hampton Court Palace. A single trench 98.5 m in length and 0.5 m wide was excavated along part of the eastern front of Hampton Court Palace. The work was commissioned by Historic Royal Palaces in advance of the installation of a new french drain. The watching brief revealed a layer of demolition rubble as well as wall foundations and brick built drains. The demolition was probably the result of the demolition of part of the Tudor palace prior to the construction of the new 17th century palace by William and Mary. The wall foundations could be the remains of the Tudor palace. The brick built drains could have been constructed at the same time as the Baroque palace, utilising Tudor brick.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 From the 25th February 2008 to 26th March 2008, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Hampton Court Palace (Fig. 1). The Watching Brief comprised the excavation by hand of a single trench approximately 98.5 m long and 0.5 m wide along the east front of the palace. The trench was dug in advance of the installation of a new french drain. External contractors Viking Projects Ltd. excavated the trench.

1.1.2 The Watching Brief was carried out at the request of William Page and Kent Rawlinson of Historic Royal Palaces.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies at a height of *c* 9 m above OD. The site is situated on the First Terrace Drift Geology of the River Thames, which overlies London Clay.

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 Hampton Court Palace is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Surrey No. 83). The Palace, gardens and grounds form an archaeological and historical site of national importance. The information given below is taken from Thurley (2003) unless otherwise stated.

1.3.2 The site is situated at the east front of the palace as constructed by William and Mary at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries.

1.3.3 Henry VIII re-developed the eastern side of Hampton Court during the 16th century by constructing apartments (firstly for Anne Boleyn and subsequently rebuilt for Jane Seymour) which would have overlooked the gardens and parkland to the east of the palace.

- 1.3.4 During the reign of William III extensive building work was commissioned which involved the demolition of much of the south-east corner of the Tudor palace and the construction of the Baroque style building that can be seen today.
- 1.3.5 The gardens immediately to the east of the palace were also redesigned during this period with the creation of the Great Fountain Garden, which occupied a semicircle of land between the palace and the park.

## 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 groundworks.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was maintained during the period of groundworks that would have either affected or revealed archaeological deposits.
- 2.2.2 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:20 and 1:200, and excavated sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film as well as on a digital camera. 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

- 3.1.1 A single trench was hand dug along the eastern front of the 17th century Baroque palace to accommodate a new french drain. The trench (Fig. 2) was 98.5 m long and 0.50 m wide. The entire trench was dug to depths ranging from 0.63 to 0.48 m.
- 3.1.2 The upper layer, 100 (Fig. 3), was a gravel layer that formed the road surface of the gardens along the east front. This surface overlay a more compact surface, 101, which was probably a levelling/bedding layer onto which layer 100 was laid.
- 3.1.3 Layer 101 sits on top of a silty layer that contains a large quantity of brick, stone and tile fragments, 102 (Fig. 3), which is most likely to be a rubble deposit resulting from the demolition of part of the Tudor palace prior to the construction of the later 17th century palace by William and Mary. Large quantities of brick (much of it Tudor), building stone and tile was recovered from this deposit, including two pieces of shaped/moulded stone. A representative sample was sent back to Oxford Archaeology for analysis/dating.

- 3.1.4 Deposit 102 (Fig. 3) was found to cover several archaeological features that included brick-built wall foundations and brick built drains. The wall foundations, 104 and 106, were constructed out of dark red clay brick bonded together by a pale yellow/white mortar and it is possible that these represent part of the Tudor palace. A deposit of chalk building material, 105 (Fig. 4), was seen in section. This chalk deposit could possibly be a foundation for the Tudor palace or just a demolition dump. However not enough of the feature was exposed to ascertain its exact nature.
- 3.1.5 The brick built drains, 103 (Fig. 3) and 107 (Fig. 4), were constructed of a mixture of dark red brick and red/orange brick bound together by a pale yellow/white mortar bond. Structure 107 had stone slabs placed over the entrance to the drain. It is not certain whether these features are Tudor or were in fact built later from reused Tudor brick during the 17th century construction phase of the palace; this might explain why they appear to be beneath the demolition layer, 102.
- 3.1.6 Context 108 was a stone slab sitting on top of a concrete/mortar structure, of which only part was seen in section and plan. It is possible that the stone slab covers a later drain associated with the present drainage gully that runs along the east front of the palace.

## 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 Pottery was recovered from the demolition layer 102 and has been dated to around the period when William and Mary demolished part of the south-eastern corner of the Tudor palace and rebuilt it in the baroque style. It should be noted that Tudor brick was also recovered from layer 102.

## 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered during the watching brief.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 Archaeological remains were found during the excavation of the drainage trench as well as significant demolition deposits in the fill of the trench.
- 4.1.2 The archaeological remains consisted of wall foundation and drains. The walls were constructed of dark red brick and most probably belong to part of the Tudor palace.
- 4.1.3 The drains encountered were built of both dark red brick, probably Tudor, and a red/orange brick. The drains may have connected to the culvert known to run along the east and south fronts of the palace before heading out into the Thames. It is possible that the drains were later, using reclaimed Tudor.
- 4.1.4 The demolition deposits consisted of brick fragments, stone, chalk building fragments, tile and shards of pottery. The rubble is probably demolition waste from the Tudor palace.

- 4.1.5 Although archaeological remains were scant, remains of the old palace and subsequent drainage system were encountered. Due to the narrowness of the trench it was difficult to ascertain the true nature of the wall foundations although they were in the area of the Queen's Gallery and the King's Lodgings of 1538 (Thurley 2003).

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>
100	Layer	0.10 m	-	-	Gravel Surface	-
101	Layer	0.34 m	-	-	Bedding Layer	-
102	Layer	-	-	-	Backfill	Clay Pipe, Brick, Stone, pottery.
103	Structure	-	0.45 m	0.45 m	Drain/Culvert	-
104	Structure	-	-	-	Wall Foundation	-
105	Layer	-	1.2 m	-	Possible Foundation	-
106	Structure	-	0.48 m	-	Wall Foundation	-
107	Structure	-	0.70 m	-	Drain	-
108	Structure	-	0.36 m	-	Stone Drain Cap	-

## APPENDIX 2 FINDS

**Pottery from Hampton Court Palace (Site HCP60)***By Paul Blinkhorn (Consultant)*

The pottery assemblage comprised 34 sherds with a total weight of 1692 g. It all occurred in a single context (102) and is of early-mid 17th century date.

**Fabrics**

The fabric codes utilized are those of the Museum of London post-Roman type-series (eg. Vince 1985), as follows:

BORDB: Brown-glazed Border ware, 1620-1700. 2 sherds, 77 g.  
 BORDG: Green-glazed Border ware, 1550-1700. 9 sherds, 187 g.  
 BORDY: Yellow-glazed Border ware, 1550-1700. 2 sherds, 22 g.  
 METS: Metropolitan slipware, 1630 – 1700. 1 sherd, 85 g.  
 PMR: Post-medieval redware, 1580 – 1900. 16 sherds, 1245 g.  
 TGW: English tin-glazed ware, 1600-1800. 4 sherds, 76 g.

The range of fabric types is typical of the London area, with the presence of the Brown-glazed Border ware and Metropolitan Slipware suggesting a date around the middle of the 17th century for the group.

Most the pottery is of a fairly utilitarian nature, and comprises domestic vessels largely associated with the storage, preparation, serving and consumption of food. The Tin-glazed earthenware is mainly plain vessels, although a small fragment of a more ornate blue-glazed vessel with painted blue decoration was also present.



**APPENDIX 3 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES**

IFA, 1992. *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

OA, 2000 *Environmental Sampling Guidelines*.

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

Thurley S, 2003. *Hampton Court: A Social and Architectural History*.

Vince A G, 1985 The Saxon and Medieval Pottery of London: A review. *Medieval Archaeology* **29**, 25-93

**APPENDIX 4 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**

**Site name:** Hampton Court Palace, East Front Drainage

**Site code:** HCP60

**Grid reference:** TQ 158 684

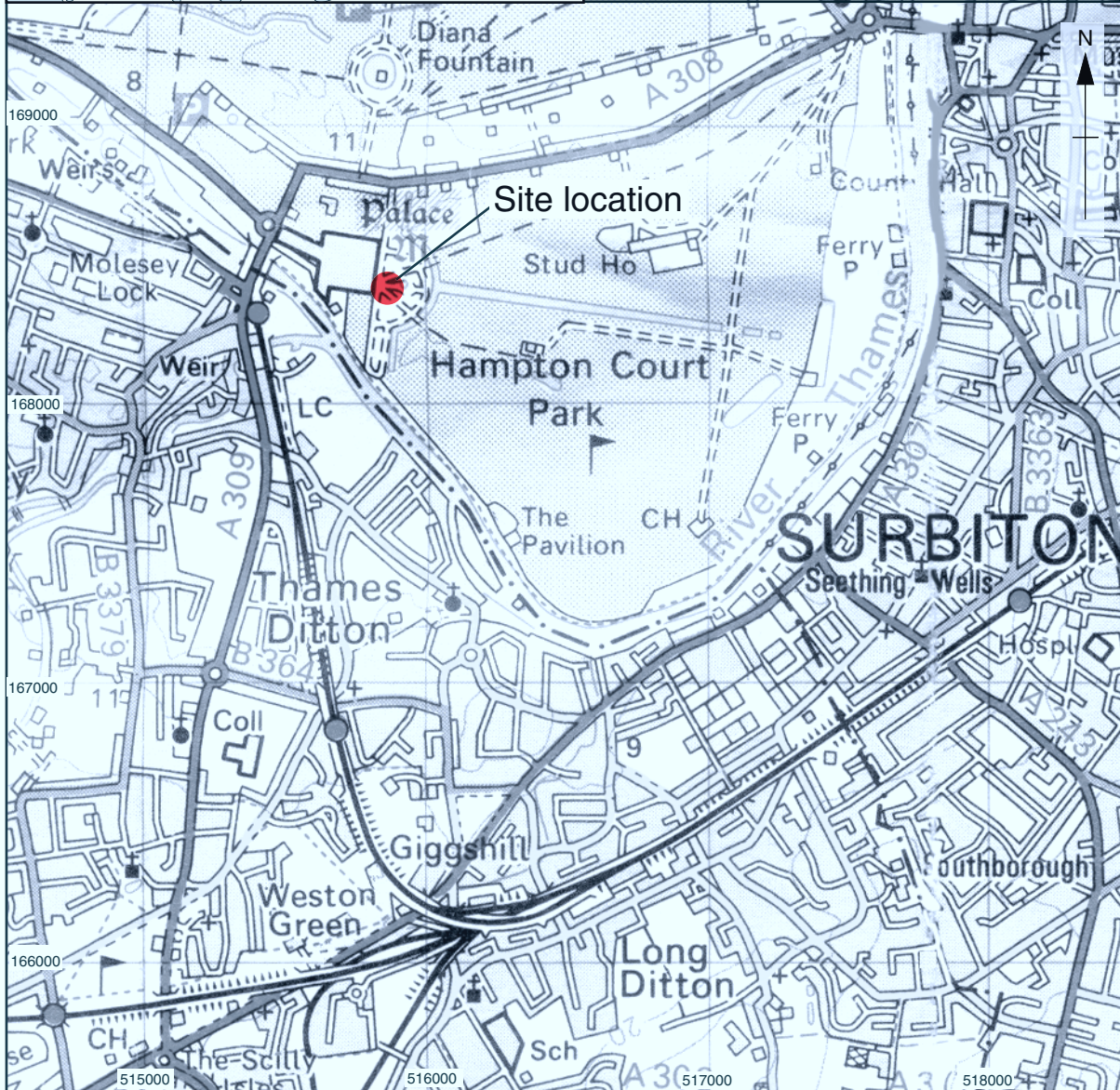
**Type of watching brief:** Monitoring of groundworks during the excavation of a new drainage trench.

**Date and duration of project:** 25th February 2008 to 26th March 2008.

**Summary of results:** Demolition deposits, wall foundations and drains were observed during the excavation of the drainage trench. Possible remains of the Tudor palace.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Historic Royal Palaces in due course.





Scale 1:25,000

Reproduced from the Landranger 1:50,000 scale by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office  
 © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL 10005569

Figure 1: Site location

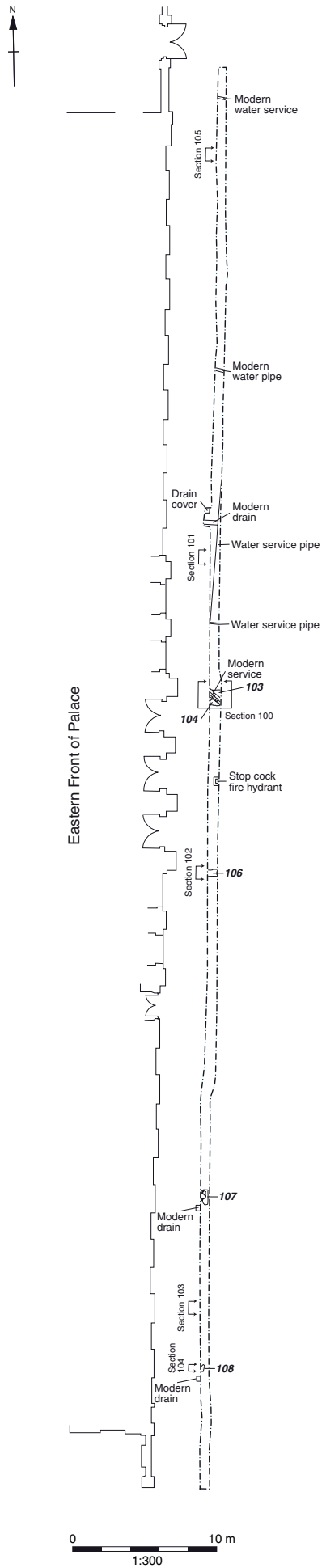
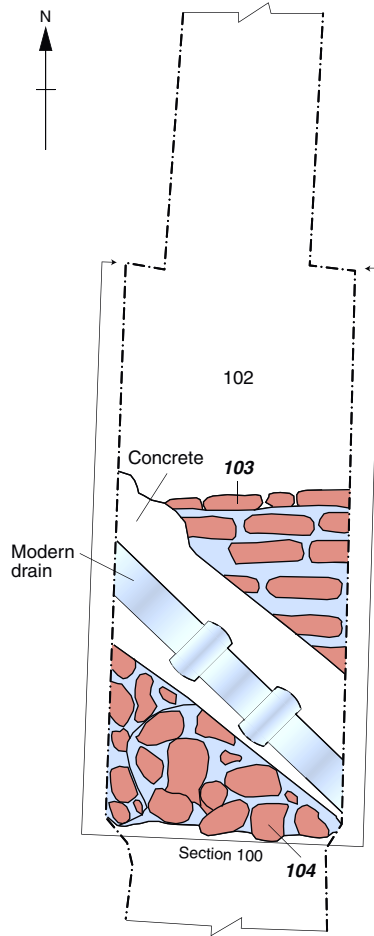


Figure 2: Site plan of area of watching brief

Plan 100



Section 100

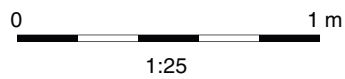
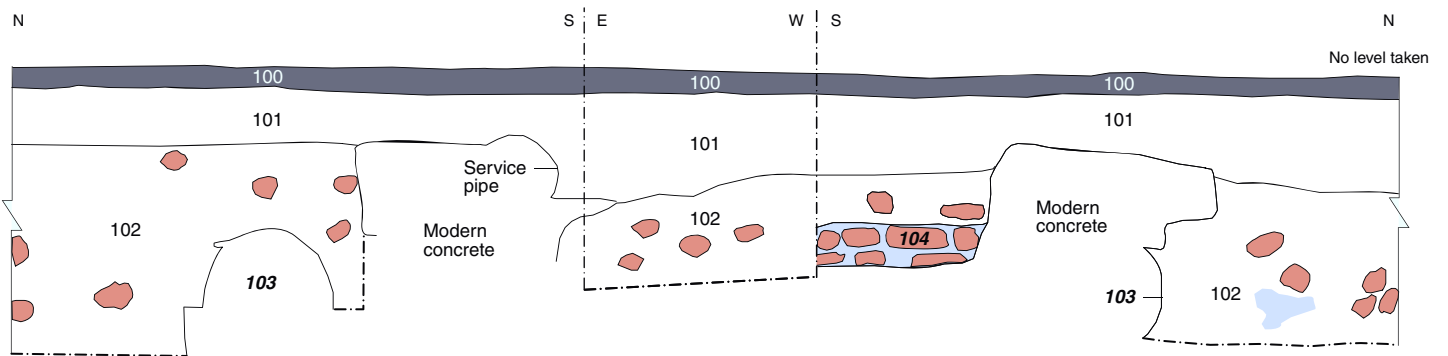


Figure 3: 100, plan and section

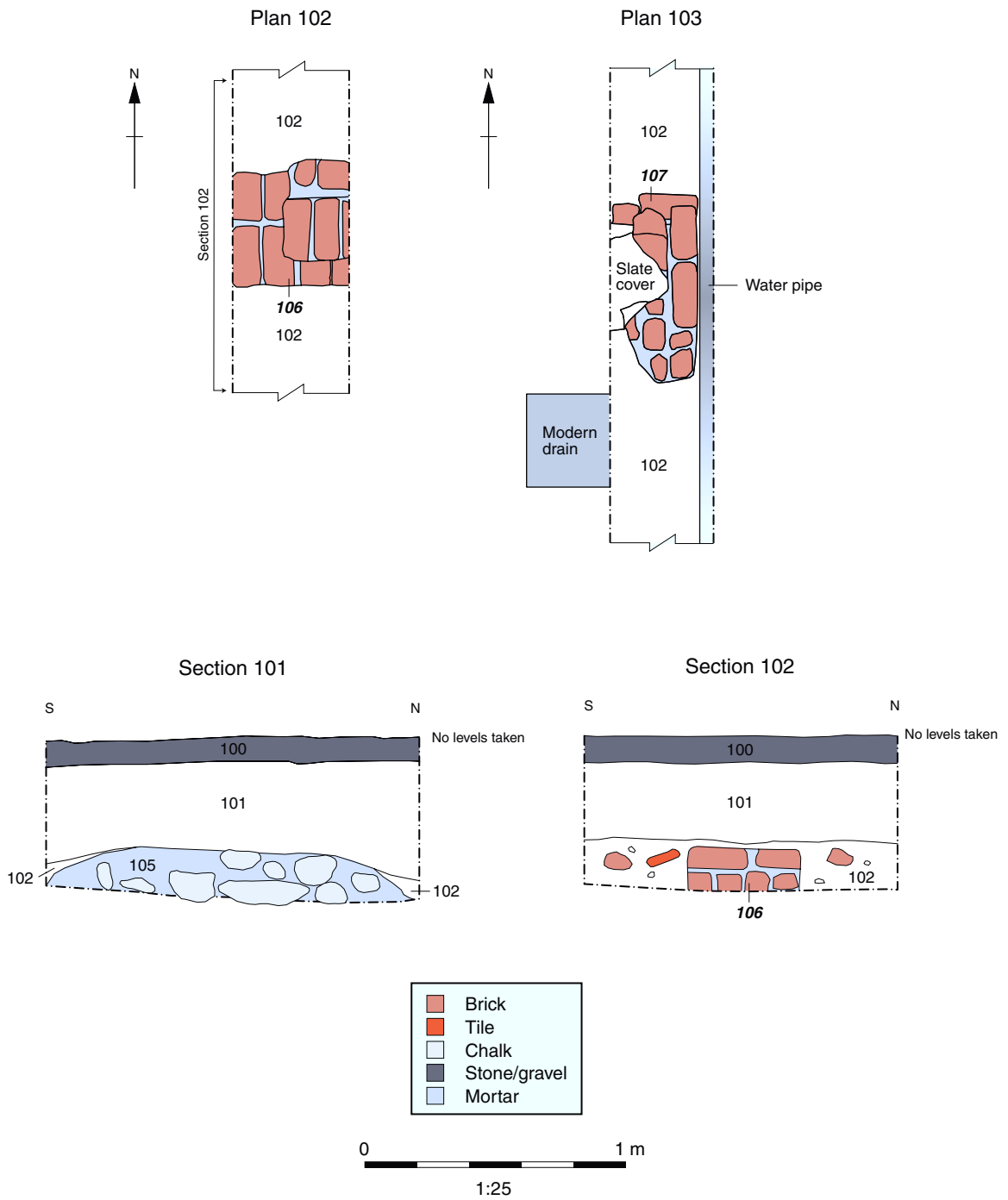


Figure 4: 102 and 103, plans and sections