

42 Market Place Devizes Wiltshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



August 2007

Client: Westray Investments Ltd

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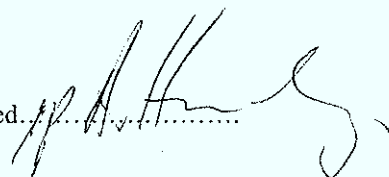
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Devizes, Wiltshire*****ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*****CONTENTS**

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SUMMARY

Between September 2006 and June 2007, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 42 Market Place, Devizes, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 0048 6152). The work was commissioned by Westray Investments Ltd in advance of the repair and conservation of the building and the construction of a new extension to the rear. The watching brief revealed the truncated foundations of the original back wall to the building, four brick-lined 18th/19th-century wells, two of which appeared to be accessed from below ground passage ways, a post-medieval rubbish pit and a possible backfilled cellar. No archaeology earlier than the 17th century was encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Between September 2006 and June 2007, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 42 Market Place, Devizes, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 0048 6152). The work was commissioned by Westray Investments Ltd in respect of a planning application for the repair and conservation of the existing building and the construction of a new extension (Planning Application No. K/53846/F).

1.1.2 Following the completion of an Archaeological Evaluation by Wessex Archaeology in 2005 (WA, 2005), a requirement for an Archaeological Watching Brief during the current phase of work was set by Sue Farr of Wiltshire County Council's Libraries and Heritage Service.

1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet this requirement (OA, 2006).

1.2 Location, geology and topography

1.2.1 The site is located on the ground floor and to the rear of 42 Market Place, Devizes, lying at approximately 130 m OD (Fig. 1). The site is bounded to the north by 41 Market Place, to the south by the Shambles, to the east by a car park, and to the west by the market place itself, and comprises a timbered framed retail premises with a sub-rectangular shaped plot of rough ground and hardcore surface covering approximately 700 square metres. The underlying geology is alluvium over Upper Greensand (Geological Survey of Great Britain sheet no. 282).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI for the project (OA, 2006) and is reproduced overleaf.

- 1.3.2 There is little evidence for prehistoric occupation in or near Devizes, while the Romano-British period is represented by finds of Roman pottery and coins from across the area to the south and east of the medieval town, including coins found near St. John's Church, approximately 250 m to the south of the Site (WCAS, 2005). There were several Saxon settlements around Devizes, notably those at Potterne, Lavington and Cannings, but there are no records or archaeological evidence for Saxon settlement within the medieval town.
- 1.3.3 The place name of Devizes is derived from the Old French '*le Diveses*' meaning 'the boundaries', or the Latin '*ad Divisas*', 'on the boundaries' (Glover *et al*). This appears to refer to the imposition of the castle on the division between the manors of Potterne and Bishops Cannings. There is no record of Devizes in the Domesday Book; the town appears to have developed around the Norman castle. The castle, located on a spur of Greensand at the western end of what is now the town, was originally a wooden structure, built in *c.* 1080 AD by Bishop Osmund of Salisbury. This was burnt down in 1113 AD and rebuilt in stone between 1113 and 1121 AD. It comprised a motte and an inner bailey defined by a series of defensive earthworks describing kidney shaped enclosures, now reflected principally in the line of New Park Street - Sheep Street. The outer bailey is assumed to have enclosed much of the present town centre, including the Market Place. The outer bailey was defined by a ditch approximately 8 m wide and 4-5 m deep with an internal bank of at least 8 m width (WCAS, 2004). The line of the defences is still visible in the town layout today and runs to the north-east of the eastern site boundary, across the Western Car Park.
- 1.3.4 The defences were levelled at some time between the 12th and 14th centuries as by the early 14th century the town had expanded into the area of the outer bailey which had therefore ceased to have a military function. When the outer bailey was subsumed within the town, a large moat was constructed across the neck of the spur separating the town from the castle (Haslam, 1980), to form a further line of defences. It is probable that the very large ditch found during refurbishment of the Corn Exchange, approximately 100 m to the south-west of the site, represents the remains of this moat running along the western side of the Market Place and St. John's Street (WA, 1994). Long burgage plots were laid out on either side of a north-south road which may have been constructed through the outer bailey at this time (WCCAS, 2004). Number 42 Market Place occupies one of these early plots. Edward Dore's Plan of Devizes (1759), shows that the frontage of the site was occupied by a building, probably somewhat shorter east-west than the present building, and the back plot by a garden.
- 1.3.5 The current building on the site is of timber framed construction and appears to date from the late 17th century (JHC, 2004). Both the interior and exterior of the building have been extensively remodelled mainly on account of the changing commercial usage of the building, which has been amongst other things an apothecary, a haberdashery, tea and coffee merchant and latterly an electrical retailers.

- 1.3.6 Wessex Archaeology excavated an evaluation trench on the site prior to the current planning application (WA, 2005). This evaluation recovered a small assemblage of medieval and post-medieval pottery from the earliest deposits encountered, which were overlain by the truncated remains of a possible wall footing or possible cobbled surface. This was overlain by made ground and topsoil of a 19th or 20th century date.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To preserve by record any deposits or features that may be disturbed or destroyed during the course of any intrusive groundworks.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was conducted as series of site visits during work likely to impinge or disturb any archaeological deposits. These works included underpinning, excavation of foundation trenches and general ground reduction. These were carried out by hand or machine as appropriate.
- 2.2.2 A plan of any excavations was maintained a archaeological features at a scale of 1:100 (Fig. 2) and any recorded sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 (Fig. 3). All excavations were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

Underpinning within 42 Market Place. (Fig. 3, Sections 1, 2 and 3)

- 3.1.1 The underlying natural, a green sand (7), was encountered at a depth of between 0.4 m and 0.5 m below the current ground floor level. This was overlaid by a layer of dark grey-brown clay silt (6) measuring 0.15 m to 0.2 m in depth. This context contained fragments of chalk and both charcoal and mortar flecking and probably represents the truncated remnants of an occupation layer. Cut into the top of this layer was a vertically sided, north-south running feature, (5). This measured 0.65 m wide and was in excess of 0.3 m deep. Built into the bottom half of this cut was a roughly constructed stone wall (4), built using roughly dressed limestone and chalk lumps bonded with a lime mortar, of which approximately 0.3 m height was exposed.

Filling the rest of the cut was a 0.13 m deep layer of grey-brown clay silt (3), containing charcoal and mortar flecking. The alignment of this feature was directly underneath a RSJ supporting the first floor of the building, suggesting that it was an original wall which had been removed, its foundations reduced in height, and the foundation trench backfilled. Overlying (3) and (6) was a 0.13 m deep layer of crushed brick (2), a hardcore base for the 0.18 m thick concrete floor slab (1), the current floor of the building.

- 3.1.2 During the underpinning of the building foundations three wells were exposed, one below the southern wall, one below the northern wall and one located within the building (Fig. 2).
- 3.1.3 The first well was exposed during underpinning work on the southern wall between Sections 1 and 2. At approximately 0.8 m below the level of the concrete floor, the side of a brick dome was encountered, which when broken through was seen to be a brick built dome capping a brick lined shaft (10). Inspection of the shaft showed it to have an internal diameter of 1.17 m and to be constructed of soft hand moulded red brick measuring 0.215 m by 0.113 m by 0.063 m laid radially within the shaft. The cap was of hemispherical construction with the bricks laid tangentially, bonded with a lime mortar. Allowing for the walls thickness, only half the well is below the wall, with the majority intruding into the market hall (The Shambles) to the south. Closer inspection showed that the brick foundations for the wall were constructed using the same type brick, possibly showing that the well and the foundations were constructed at the same time, or more likely, that the wall foundations were repaired using the same brick after excavation of the well. The brick size would indicate an 18th or early 19th century date. The use of a well cap rather than an open top suggests that the well was intended to be used with a pump rather than a bucket. Discussions with the engineer suggest that the water table is 15 m to 20 m below ground level at this point requiring a pump within the shaft, however no delivery pipe or operating rods were visible within the shaft.
- 3.1.4 As the underpinning continued along the southern wall, exposing a similar stratigraphy to that observed in Section 2 the edge of the second brick built well (30) was exposed within the northern side of the trench. Part of the structure was dislodged during the excavation allowing an inspection of the interior.
- 3.1.5 The structure was constructed of a red hand moulded brick measuring 0.225 m x 0.11 m x 0.67 m suggesting an early 19th-century date. The bricks were laid radially forming a vertical sided shaft with an inside diameter of 2.45 m and with the top 8 courses of brickwork stepping in forming the start of a hemi-spherical brick dome similar to that on Well 10. The top of the dome had been truncated flush with the base of the concrete floor (1).
- 3.1.6 Inspection of the fill of the well suggested that the dome had been truncated and the well completely backfilled during the laying of the concrete floor and that subsequent

settling had caused a void to form allowing inspection of the interior. A iron pipe was visible in the southern edge of the well. Further inspection of the interior of the well showed that at a later date an arched aperture approximately 0.6 m wide had been cut into the western side of the well lining. This had been roughly filled with modern bricks, possibly during the same phase of work as the backfilling and truncation of the brick dome. On closer examination a passageway could be seen extending westwards behind the brick blocking. Projection of this passageway showed that it connected with a bricked up doorway visible in the eastern side of the basement. This suggests that the passageway was specially constructed to enable access to the well though the side rather than the top at some point after the original construction of the well. While the diameter of the shaft is large for a well it was felt that it was too small for use as an ice-house (although there is the possibility that it may have been converted to that use at a later date, witness the new passageway and access).

- 3.1.7 During excavation work on underpinning the northern wall a third well was encountered (20). While excavating the brick rubble (2) used as a hardcore base for the concrete floor, the layer was seen to increase in depth until a circle of bricks was encountered at a depth of 0.4 m below the concrete floor. On further excavation the brick rubble could be seen to be backfilling a brick built well partially extending under the northern wall. The brick lining starts on top of the underlying green sand at 2 m below the concrete floor. The bricks measuring 0.208 m by 0.106 m by 0.058 m, were laid radially to form a vertical shaft measuring 1.2 m internally. This was continued for a height of 0.7 m before the bricks were gradually stepped in forming a "funnel" towards the top of the shaft. A section of this part was smoothed off directly below the wall continuing to the surface resulting in a "horseshoe" shaped top of the well rather than a true circle. As in the previous well the brick size suggests an 18th or early 19th century date, while the use of an open top suggests it was intended for bucket operation.
- 3.1.8 Because of the depth of the well shafts it was impossible to bottom the wells in order to produce definitive dating evidence.
- 3.1.9 During underpinning work in the basement the natural green sand (7) was encountered 0.1 m below the concrete floor. This was overlaid by a 0.05 m deep layer of grey-brown clay silt (11), which supported the 0.05 m deep concrete floor (12). Fragments of 19th and 20th pottery were recovered from layer (11).

Underpinning excavations in the yard to the rear of the building.

- 3.1.10 As part of the building operations underpinning trenches were dug along buildings fronting to both the north and south sides of the yard. This was done both to stabilise the buildings and also to provide a concrete base to support the steel skeleton of the new extension.
- 3.1.11 The underlying natural, the green sand (7) was encountered within these excavations at a depth of 1.2 m below the old yard level (Fig. 3, Section 3). Along the southern

side of the yard this was cut by the foundation trench for the north wall of the "Shambles", (17). The foundations comprised of a shallow foundation trench approximately 0.3 m deep, filled with a roughly constructed footing which consisted of a mixture of red brick and fragments of limestone (16). Approximately 3.5 m east of the rear of 42 Market Place the foundations changed to a mixture of shallow brick piers 0.5 m deep supporting a brick arch 1.5 m wide. Although there was a void approximately 0.15 m high left underneath the arch there was no evidence that the arch was part of a doorway or possible cellar entrance.

- 3.1.12 Constructed on top of the footings and the brick arch was the south wall of the "Shambles" using a plain red brick laid using a "Bastard" English bond.
- 3.1.13 Overlying the green sand and butting up against the "Shambles" was a 0.4 m deep layer of very dark grey/black clay silt (13). This layer contained quantities of charcoal and brick fragments and may represent the original ground level. Cutting into this layer within the centre of the yard, and exposed during the ground reduction was a circular pit (12) (Fig 2, Plan 2). This had vertical sides and measured approximately 1.8 m in diameter. It was filled by a grey-brown sand silt (11) which contained lenses of charcoal and ash and numerous fragments of late 17th century/early 18th century pottery and bottle glass and probably represents a rubbish pit from that period.
- 3.1.14 Sealing the pit and overlying Layer 13 was a 0.35 m deep layer of mixed green sand and clay (9). This is a probable layer of redeposited natural sand, possibly from construction excavation of the cellar at the front of the building. This layer was overlaid by a 0.55 m deep layer of dark grey silt clay (8) which contained many lenses of red-brown earth (possible evidence for burning ?) and many fragments of brick. This is a probable occupation layer. During the ground reduction the removal of the top of this deposit exposed the top of a brick built well 40, capped with a brick built dome similar to well 10. Where the bricks had become dislodged it was possible to see that the well was of 1.25 m diameter and that the depth of the shaft was in excess of 4 m. The top 1.2 m of the shaft was constructed of brick sitting directly on top of the green sand (7), although the sand had collapsed in places leaving the brickwork unsupported. A hemi-spherical dome of bricks had then been constructed on top of the brick lining. No opening was visible in the top of the cap for a suction pipe, although a small square opening approximately 0.7 m by 0.7 m was visible in the north-western side of the brick lining.
- 3.1.15 During the excavation of the underpinning trench along the northern edge of the yard a series of truncated brick walls and a short length of brick vaulting was exposed (42) (Fig. 2, Plan 2). This ran parallel to the north side of the yard before appearing to turn to the south-east and possibly connecting to the window observed in the side of well 40. These walls were constructed using red brick and lime mortar and appear to have been constructed separately from the walls of the rear of 41 Market Place.

3.1.16 The walls had been subject to a degree of truncation in the past although there was evidence that the stub wall continued across the yard, possibly forming the rear wall of a cellar which has now been backfilled with redeposited material (43).

3.1.17 During the excavation of the underpinning trench along the northern side of the yard the foundations of the building to the rear of Number 41 were exposed. These were constructed using a random mixture of limestone, sandstone and brick (18). Built within part of these footings was a roughly constructed brick arch spanning what appeared to be an area of 19th-century backfilling (Fig. 3, Section 4). This was constructed using a single course of bricks with a span of 3.1 m. While the remainder of the foundations were excavated down onto the natural green sand, the arch spanned an area of dark grey clay silt (14) which produced 19th-century material.

3.2 Finds

3.2.1 All the finds recovered were of post-medieval origin and included pottery, bottle glass and brick fragments. Where these finds could be associated with a defined deposit they were retained, but other finds such as those recovered from the spoil heap were noted and then discarded..

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

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

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 The watching brief has provided evidence for the continuous use and adaptation of the building throughout the later part of its working life.

4.1.2 The presence and location of wall 4 exposed during the underpinning of the main building gives an indication of the size of the groundfloor of the original building (approximately 8 m square). The use of the north wall of the "Shambles" (the market hall) as a party wall gives a rough date for the rear extension of the shop as being built in the late 18th/early 19th century period.

4.1.3 The presence of the well (10) under the party wall may indicate that the well was *in situ* prior to the construction of the "Shambles", however it is more likely that the construction of the well is contemporary with the construction of the "Shambles": measurement shows that the well is under the position of the preserved pump within the market hall (although no evidence for the operating mechanism was visible within the well shaft).

4.1.4 Well 20 appears to be contemporary with the construction of the rear extension to the building, with the lack of a well cap suggesting that it was designed to be bucket drawn and to be accessed from within the building.

- 4.1.5 Well 30 appears to have been a later construction (possibly because collapse of the green sand rendered Well 20 unusable and its small size made it difficult to repair), with both its brick dome and the brick size suggesting a late 18th/early 19th century date. This well was accessed by a delivery pipe and mechanism running from floor level within the rear extension.
- 4.1.6 The basement appears to have been inserted during the 19th century suggested by the brick size of the walls and the presence of 19th-century pottery under the floor. It is probable that the chimney breast in the south of the original building and the underground passageway from the cellar to Well 30 were built at this time, and also that the arched doorway visible in the west side of the brick lining of the well was knocked through. The presence of the large doorway suggests that this was to allow access to the well from the basement as well as from ground level. It is possible that a process requiring large amounts of water (brewing, laundry ?) was being undertaken in the basement. The presence of the chimney breast and fireplace in the basement would also suggest that there was activity taking place there. It has been alternatively suggested that this work was undertaken to allow the well to be reused as an Ice House, although its small size would limit its use for this purpose.
- 4.1.7 As part of the modern (20th-century) refurbishment of the ground floor of the building wall 4 appears to have been truncated and replaced with a RSJ. The original floor appears to have been lowered (resulting in the truncation of the well cap of well 30 and its subsequent backfilling, and similarly with well 20) and a concrete floor (1) laid.
- 4.1.8 The work in the rear yard exposed the original ground level (Layer 13) showing that subsequent occupation had raised the yard level by approximately 1 m. The ground reduction in the yard also exposed a rubbish pit (12) which dates to the 17th/18th centuries sealed by this layer.
- 4.1.9 The layer of redeposited natural sand (9) which seals this ground level may relate to the excavation of the basement, with the material removed disposed of by raising the yard level.
- 4.1.10 Cut through this layer of material was well 40, this was constructed using a brick lining and a hemispherical brick cap, the size of the bricks suggesting a 19th-century date. Probably contemporary with this well (although the relationship is unclear) are the series of stub walls and brick arching forming part of a probable cellar (42). Examination of well 40 showed there to be a "window" within the NE side of the shaft, with a passageway leading off, possibly connecting to cellar 42. This is very similar to the underground passageway observed in well 30 and may serve a similar function in allowing the well to be directly accessed from the cellar.

- 4.1.11 The cellar was truncated and backfilled with modern material (43), possibly contemporary with the deposition of the modern made ground within the yard, layer 8.
- 4.1.12 The brick arching within the foundations of both the north wall of the “Shambles” (16) and the south wall of No 41 (18), appear to be a reflection of the construction methods of the day rather than an attempt to provide an opportunity for the later construction of basements beneath the buildings.
- 4.1.13 No evidence for the continuation of the cobbled surface observed during the 2005 evaluation was observed, although this may be due to the location of the underpinning trenches rather than its absence.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth/ Height</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Surface	0.18 m	-	Modern concrete floor	-	C20th
2	Layer	0.13 m	-	Hardcore base for 1	Brick	C20th
3	Fill	0.15 m	0.65 m	Backfill of trench after reduction of 4	-	C20th
4	Structure	> 0.3 m	0.65 m	Original back wall of building	-	C17th ?
5	Cut	> 0.3 m	0.65 m	Foundation trench for 4	-	C17th ?
6	Layer	0.15 m	-	Buried soil horizon	-	C19th/ C20th
7	Layer	> 0.15 m	-	Natural Greensand	-	-
8	Layer	0.55 m	-	Occupation layer	Brick	C19th/ C20th
9	Layer	0.35 m	-	Redeposited natural sand	-	C19th/ C20th
10	Structure	> 3 m	1.6 m	Brick lined well with brick cap	Brick	C19th/ C20th
11	Fill	> 1.2 m	1.6 m	Fill of rubbish pit	Pottery, bottle glass	C17th/ C18th
12	Cut	> 1.2 m	1.6 m	Rubbish pit	-	C17th/ C18th
13	Layer	0.4 m	-	Buried soil horizon, original ground level	Brick	C17th/ C18th
14	Layer	0.9 m	3.1 m	Lens of redeposited soil	Brick	C19th
15	Cut	0.6 m	> 0.3 m	Foundation trench for wall 16	-	C19th
16	Structure	0.6 m	> 0.3 m	Footings for "The Shambles" north wall	Brick	C19th
17	Cut	1 m	> 0.3 m	Foundation trench for Wall 18	-	C19th
18	Structure	1m	> 0.3 m	Footings for the south wall of No 41 Market Place	Brick	C19th
20	Structure	1.8 m	> 3 m	Brick lined well	Brick	C18th/ C19th
30	Structure	2.6 m	> 3 m	Brick lined well	Brick	C19th

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth/ Height</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
40	Structure	1.8 m	> 4 m	Brick lined well	Brick	C19th
41	Cut	> 1.2 m	> 2.5 m	Cut for Cellar 42	-	C19th
42	Structure	> 1.2 m	> 2.5 m	Truncated remains of cellar wall and brick arching	Brick	C19th
43	Fill	> 1.2 m	> 2.5 m	Backfilling of Cellar 42 after truncation	Brick	C19th/ C20th

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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WA 1994 *Corn Exchange, Devizes, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief* Unpublished Client Report No. W687

WA 2005 *42 Market Place, Devizes, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report*

WCCAS 2004 *The Archaeology of Wiltshire's Towns, An Extensive Urban Survey: Devizes*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 42 Market Place, Devizes, Wiltshire

Site code: DEVMP06

Grid reference: SU 0048 6152

Type of watching brief: Excavations for new extension, underpinning, foundation trenches and ground reduction.

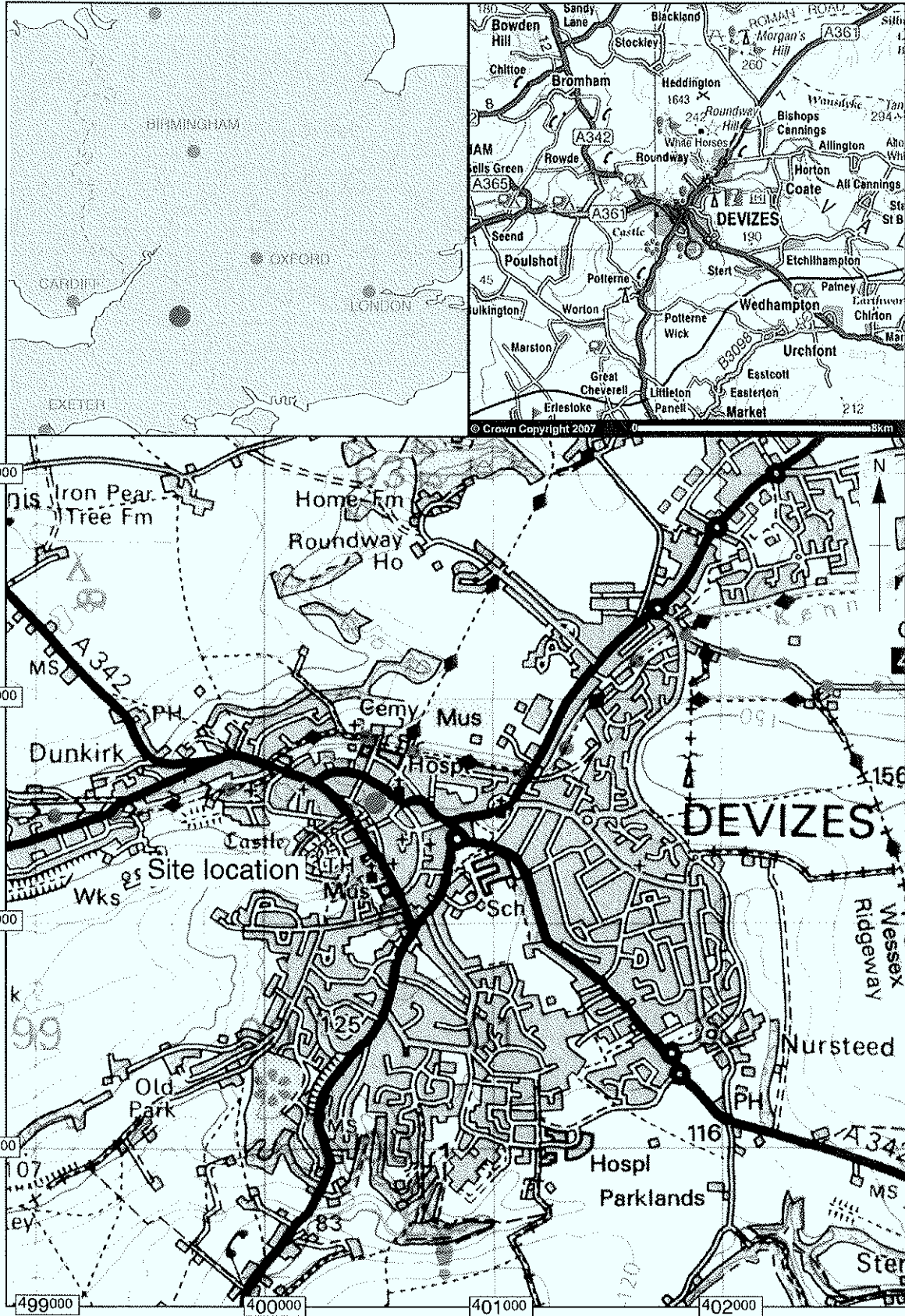
Date and duration of project: September 2006 to June 2007

Area of site: 700 m²

Summary of results: The watching brief revealed the truncated foundations of the original back wall of the building, four brick lined 18th/ 19th century wells, two of which appeared to be accessed from below ground passage ways, a post-medieval rubbish pit and a possible backfilled cellar. No archaeology earlier than the post-medieval period was encountered.

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

servimg/A06H/DEV/VP077/DEV/VPWB/42_Market_Place_Devizes_AH/03_08_07



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Figure 1: Site location

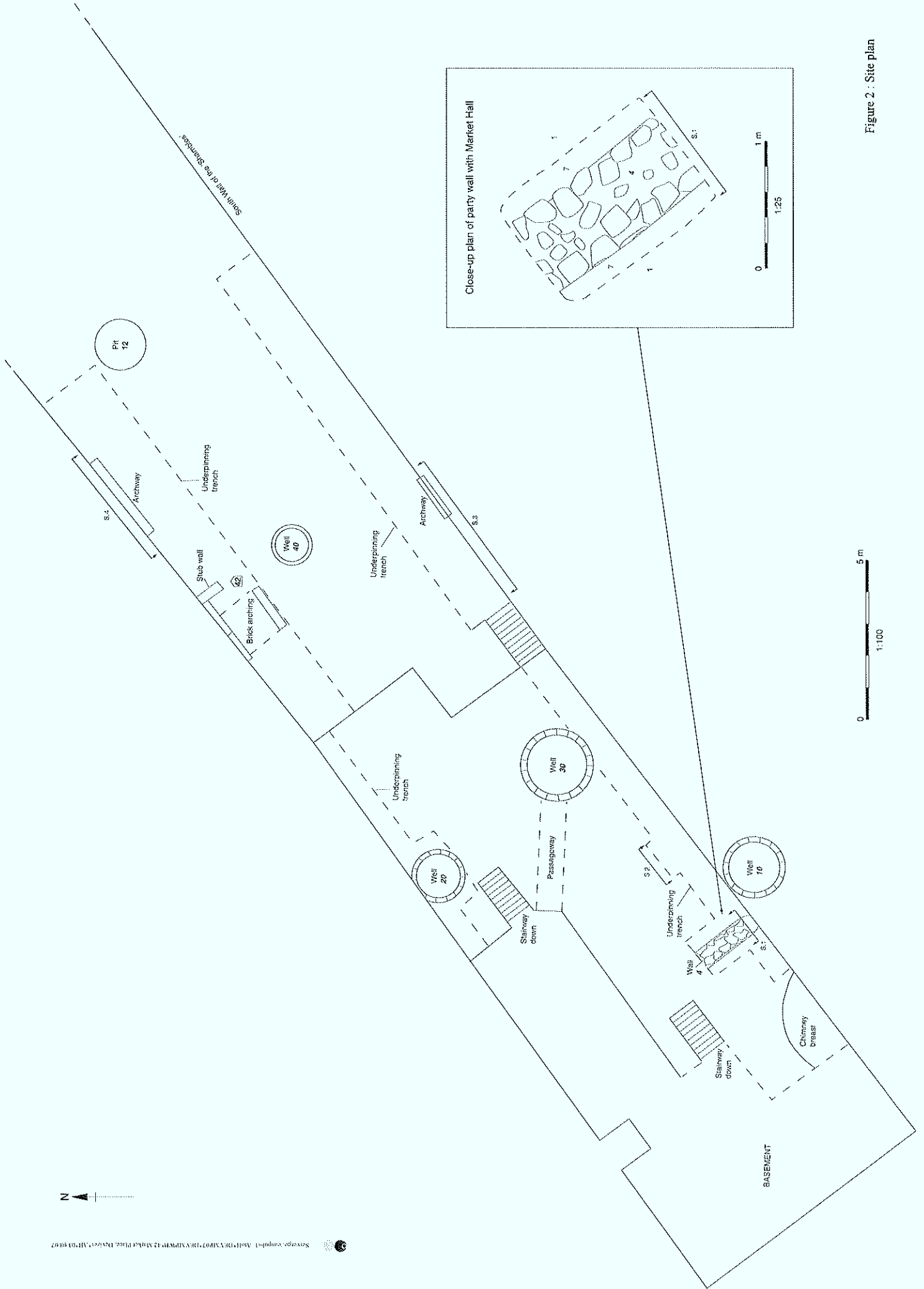


Figure 2 : Site plan

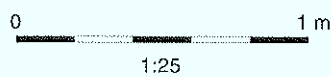
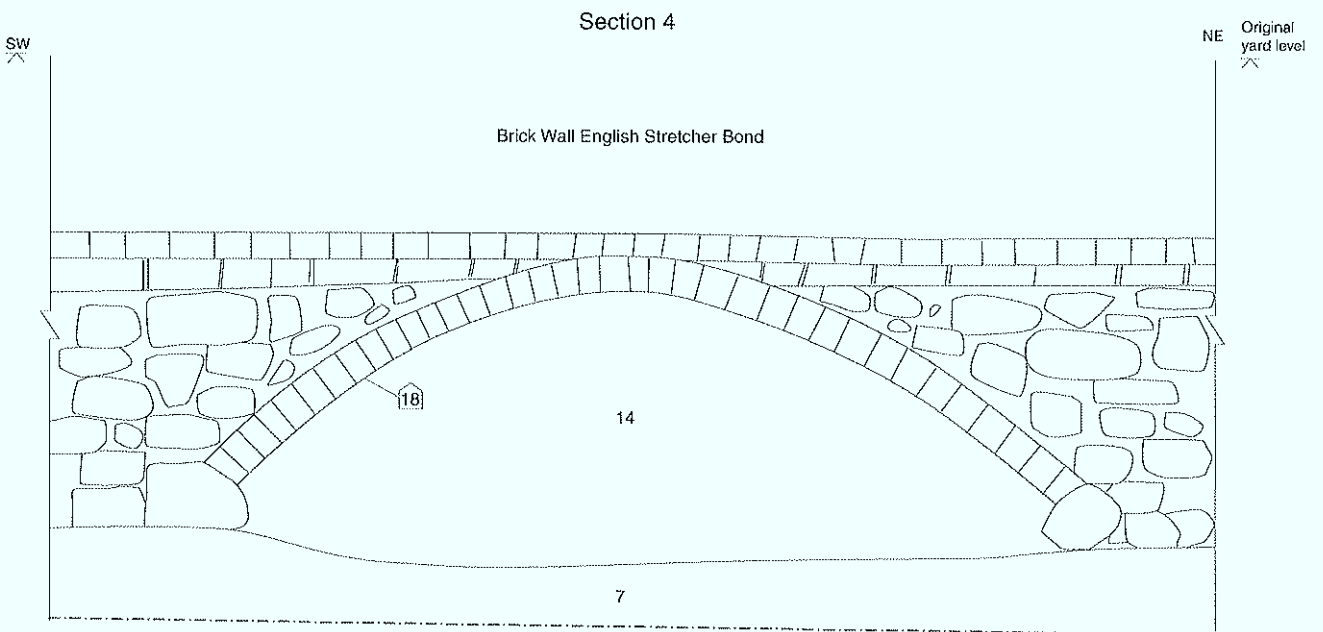
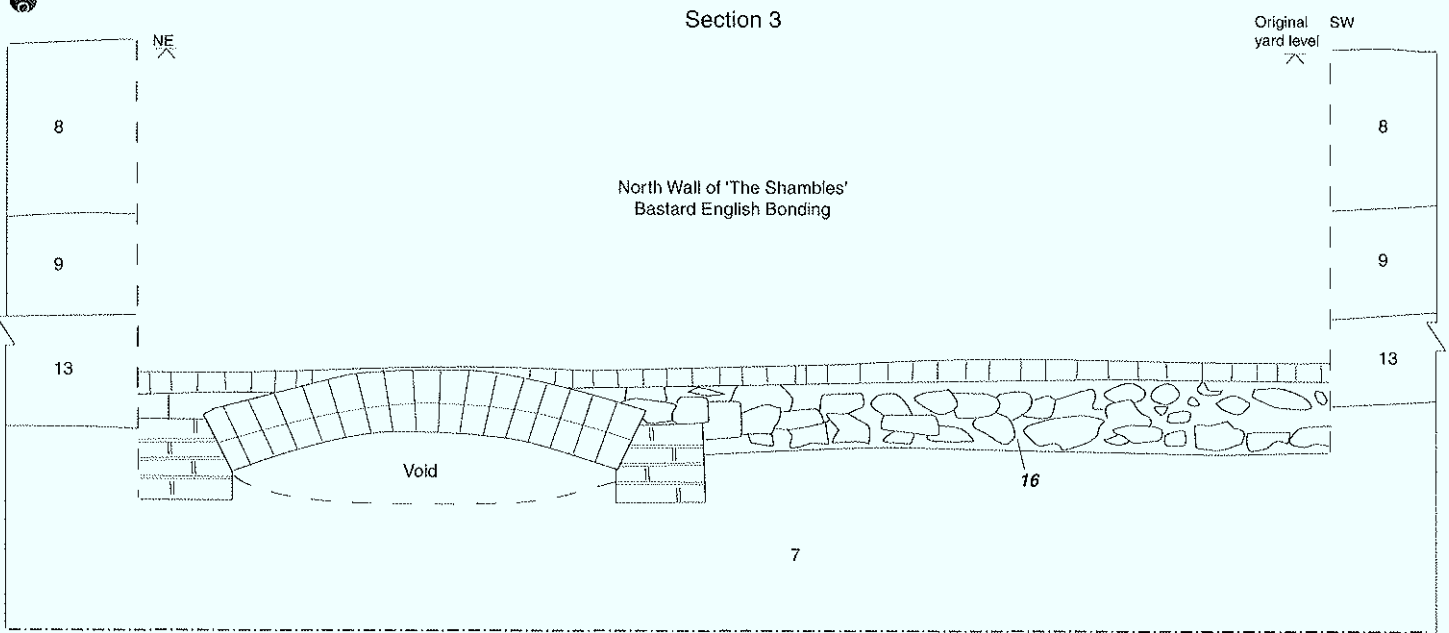
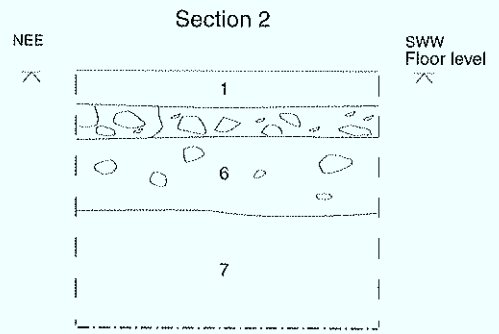
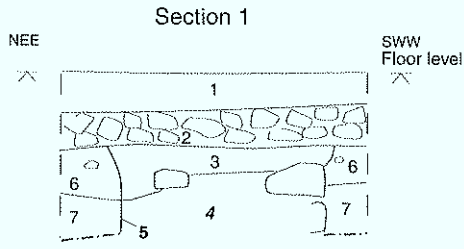
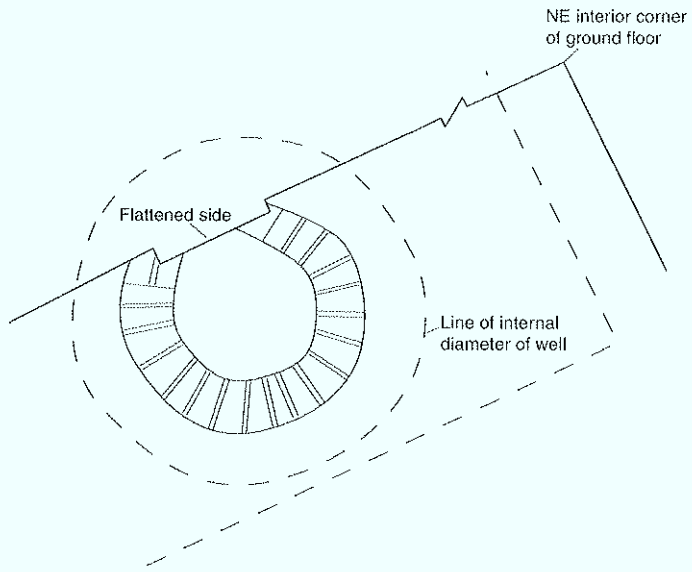


Figure 3 : Sections



Plan 3



Section 3 Composite section of well

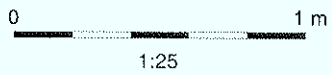
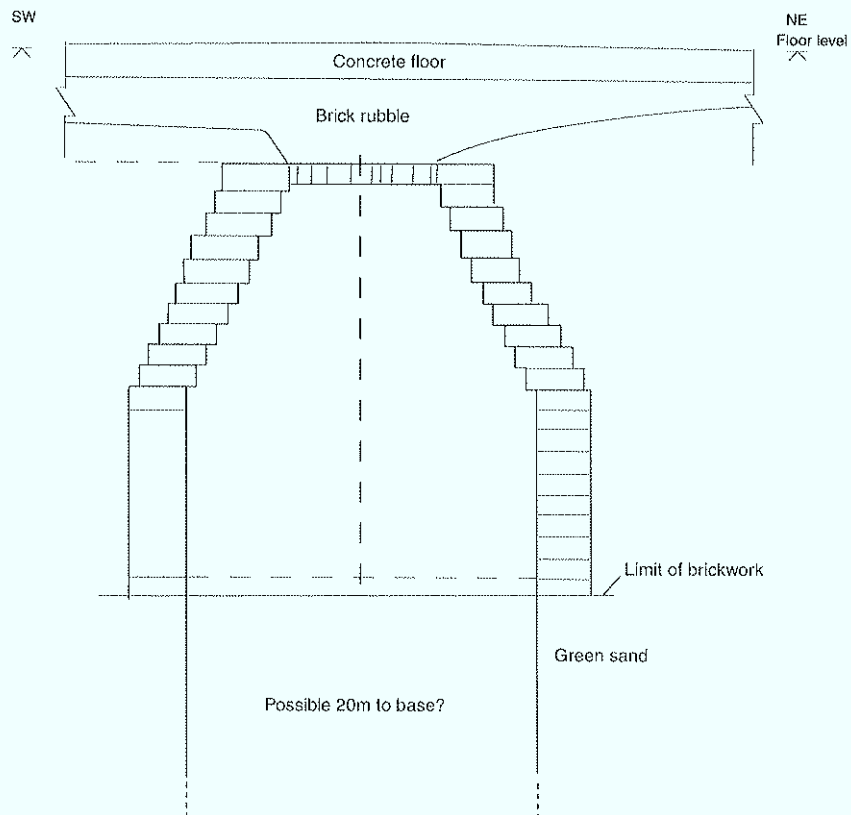


Figure 4 : Plan and section of Well 20



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