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The Minster Church of St Thomas, Newport, Isle of Wight

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

In August 2019 Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Thomas Ford & Partners on behalf of The Faculty of the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Portsmouth to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the Minster Church of St Thomas, Newport, Isle of Wight. The work involved the excavation of 12 test pits within the existing floor to investigate the remains of the early medieval church and to help inform the design of a new floor and lift installation.

The evaluation revealed a number of archaeologically significant deposits and structures associated with and pre-dating the existing mid-19th-century church, enabling the potential impact of the proposed scheme to be determined.

Two foundation structures were revealed that were stratigraphically proven to be earlier than the present 19th-century church. These include the possible archway foundation in test pit 5 and the mass-filled foundation in test pit 9.

Test pits 3, 5, 9 and 10 revealed the foundations of the present church. In each case, these were constructed using fragments of stone that appear to have been reused from an earlier structure. In particular, the large dressed block of Caen stone at the base of the column in test pit 10 would definitely have been part of a significant structure and would not originally have been intended as a foundation stone.

In-situ burials were discovered in test pits 6 and 12 at the southern edge of the church. Although no dating evidence was recovered in association with the crypt in test pit 6, these are most likely to have been constructed within the present church. The two inhumations in test pit 12 were interpreted as pre-dating the adjacent brick-and-limestone crypt. They also incorporated late medieval or early post-medieval floor tiles and probably pre-date the 19th century church.

Sterile soil horizons were identified within the nave of the existing church within test pits 8 and 10. These were not observed in the other excavation areas due to later activity and disturbances. The test pits indicate that the earliest remains were found towards the middle and south aisles of the existing church.

Archaeological remains survived *in situ* beneath the wooden raised floor. It is also likely that structural remains and human burials are present immediately beneath the tiled floor surface. Any further work should expect to encounter potentially significant archaeological remains at any point below 9.07m aOD (the top of 501), but more consistently below 8.88m aOD (surface of archaeological deposits).

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The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Carl Champness. The fieldwork was directed by Mark Dodd, who was supported by Daniel Pond and Adam Rapiejko. Survey and digitising was carried out by Conan Parsons. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the supervision of Geraldine Crann, and prepared the archive under the supervision of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Thomas Ford & Partners on behalf of The Faculty of the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Portsmouth to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the Minster Church of St Thomas, Newport, Isle of Wight. The work involved the excavation of 12 test pits within the existing floor of the church to investigate the remains of the early medieval church and to help inform the design of a new floor and lift installation.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken following advice from the Diocese archaeological advisor and project architect. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the scope of work required to inform the design of the proposed development work. This document outlines how OA implemented that work and details the results of the investigations.
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2014) and local and national planning policies.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Minster Church of St Thomas, Newport, is situated in St Thomas' Square and is bordered by buildings fronting the High Street to the north and buildings fronting Pyle Street to the south (NGR SZ 49972 89145; Fig. 1). There is a small street and buildings to the east of the church and a small street and buildings to the west. The location of the investigation works is the ground-floor area of the nave and the western end of the north and south aisles of the church (Fig. 2).
- 1.2.2 The site lies on relatively flat ground at approximately 10m aOD and is 250m south-west of the River Medina.
- 1.2.3 The underlying geology comprises Hamstead Member of clay, silt and sand, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 28 to 38 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period. The superficial geology is Head formation of gravel, sand, silt and clay, formed 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2019).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The Church of St Thomas is Grade I Listed (NHL 1034494) and is located in the Newport Historic Town Centre Conservation Area. It is the parish church of Newport and is dated to 1854–5.
- 1.3.2 The archaeological and historical background to the site has been summarised below from the Victoria County History (Page 1912), Historic England's National Heritage List and several other stated sources.
- 1.3.3 The de Redvers family were granted the whole of the Isle of Wight in the late 11th century by William I and their seat of power was Carisbrooke Castle located 1.6km south-west of the site (Young 2010, 27). Newport was part of the parish of Carisbrooke

until 1858 when it became a parish in its own right. Until that date, the parish church was St Nicholas in Castro located within Carisbrooke Castle (Page 1912, 253–64).

- 1.3.4 Richard de Redvers, fourth earl of Devon, founded the town of Newport as a borough during the 12th century. The importance of Carisbrooke and Newport were in part derived from their close proximity to the River Medina. This is the major river on the Isle of Wight. It connected Newport to the Solent by boat and beyond to the mainland. Trade in the town flourished and by the 17th century Newport quayside area (adjacent to the River Medina) was known as ‘Little London’ (Page 1912, 253).
- 1.3.5 The medieval burial ground for the town of Newport was very likely to have been the parish church of St Nicholas in Castro within Carisbrooke Castle. In 1582, a plague swept through Newport and a new burial ground was created to the south of the town (Page 1912, 254, 263). This burial ground is likely to have been on the site of Church Litten Park, located 150m south of the Church of St Thomas as it is marked on the late 19th-century OS maps as ‘St Thomas Grave Yard’. The medieval chapel of St Thomas is unlikely to have had its own burial ground, being subsidiary to St Nicholas in Castro.

The medieval chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury 1180–1854

- 1.3.6 The medieval predecessor of the current Church of St Thomas was constructed in 1180, around the time of the foundation of the town of Newport. This chapel was annexed to the parish church of Carisbrooke. Richard de Redvers founded the chapel of St Thomas and arranged for the monks from Carisbrooke to hold a service in it every day (Page 1912, 262–3). The chapel was named after Saint Thomas Becket of Canterbury who was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170.
- 1.3.7 The remains of the medieval church were observed under a manhole cover to the south-east of the present church (Fig. 2, see label A). The client suggested that this foundation might be the corner of the medieval church (John Bailey pers. comm. 23/05/19). A watching brief by the Isle of Wight County Archaeology and Historical Environment Service in 2017 (see below) did find remains of a pre-19th-century building below the organ loft at the western end of the nave and a possible rough footing with two faced stones above. This suggests that the existing church was built directly upon the site of the medieval chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury.
- 1.3.8 There are two paintings of the chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury dated c 1800, prior to the rebuild. The first is by J M W Turner and is titled *The Church and Market Place*.¹ This view shows several buildings either side of the chapel, and the chapel itself was depicted with a square tower with an arched-entrance doorway to the left of the tower. A similar view was painted from John Nixon titled *Newport*², which shows St Thomas’ Square and the church. This view also shows the tower and doorway with a window and pitched roof above. Both views are likely to be from the High Street but it is hard to work out the exact location of the medieval church as many of the buildings

¹ <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-newport-isle-of-wight-the-church-and-market-place-d00456>

² <https://www.watercolourworld.org/painting/newport-tww0008b6>

in the area of St Thomas' Square have been rebuilt. Both paintings show buildings in close proximity to the chapel and no burial ground can be seen.

Church of St Thomas (Newport Minster) 1854–present

- 1.3.9 The medieval chapel of St Thomas was demolished in 1854 and a new church was constructed in 1854–5, designed by S W Dawkes of Cheltenham. This Grade I listed church has a large tower at the western end with a central nave, two aisles with flanking buttresses and separate roofs. The main entrance is the west door below the tower with entrances also the north and south aisle. The church contains a number of 17th-century furnishings including a font dated 1636, a pulpit of 1636 and a reading desk of similar date. The church also contains an alabaster monument to Sir Edward Horsey (d 1582) and a white marble recumbent effigy of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I, who died in Carisbrooke Castle in 1650 and is buried at this church (NHLE 1034494)

2017 Watching Brief (Isle of Wight County Archaeology and Historical Environment Service)

- 1.3.10 In 2017, the Isle of Wight County Archaeology and Historical Environment Service conducted a watching brief during works to install underfloor heating below the organ loft at the western end of the nave. The watching brief found no evidence of human remains but did find remains of a pre-19th-century structure, possibly the medieval chapel.
- 1.3.11 The watching brief recorded unbonded sand and cement mix below the Victorian black and red tiles. This was a very fine grey deposit that extended approximately 150mm below the tile level. An additional 100mm was removed and the lower levels of this deposit were darker due to mixing with the brown soil below. This layer was truncated by 20th-century services. The watching brief recorded several 19th-century features including the column supports for the organ loft and two brick piers. In addition, two large stone blocks were recorded, which may indicate reuse of an earlier structure. Below these faced blocks, a single roughly hewn piece of Bembridge limestone was also recorded and it extended beyond the western extent of the investigation. The limestone footing measured 1.9m x 0.65m and was left *in situ*. It is possible that the faced blocks and the limestone footing relate to the medieval chapel or a phase of later reuse of the original medieval stone (Cambridge 2017).

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 General Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation were to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any archaeological remains within their cultural and environmental setting. Other general aims included:

- i. to determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- ii. establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains and burials within the impact depth of the ground works;
- iii. determine and confirm the character of any remains present;
- iv. establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits within the site and to take samples where appropriate;
- v. to generate an accessible and useable archive which will allow future research to be undertaken if appropriate;
- vi. and, to disseminate the results of the work in a format and manner proportionate to the significance of the findings.

2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the test pits are:

- vii. to identify any structural remains that may help locate the medieval chapel in relation to the current church;
- viii. and, to record and protect any human remains.

2.2.2 The programme of archaeological investigation will be conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessments and Research Agendas* (Hey and Hind 2014).

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 A programme of 12 test pits were excavated within the floor of the existing church to look for any remains of the early medieval church. The pits were located as shown on Figure 2. The timber pews and platforms were removed where possible by the contractor in the area of the test pits prior to the work commencing. The test pits were hand-excavated and the deposits recorded stratigraphically in accordance with the approved recording system outlined in the project WSI (OA 2019).

2.3.2 Any human remains discovered were left *in situ* and not otherwise disturbed. All disarticulated human remains were photographed on site and immediately reburied in the test pits from which they were recovered. The excavated spoil was monitored in order to recover artefacts.

2.3.3 Test pits 4, 7 and 11 could not be excavated as removal of the timber platforms revealed live services. Following discussions with the client it was agreed that it would not be necessary to relocate these test pits to establish the aims of the evaluation. Test pit 1 was not accessible at the time of the fieldwork.

- 2.3.4 Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, it was determined that test pit 3 would be relocated from its intended location at the base of a pillar on the northern arcade, to investigate the foundations on the northern side of the tower.
- 2.3.5 Test pit 2 was reduced from 1.5m x 1.5m to 1.5m x 0.7m to avoid having to remove *in-situ* floor joists and minimize disruption to the church.

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 test pits that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions of deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B. Environmental remains are presented in Appendix C.

3.2 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.2.1 Structural remains and archaeologically significant features were revealed in test pits 3, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 12. In test pits 3, 5, 9 and 10 these comprised foundations of the 19th-century church but also evidence of earlier structures. Test pit 6 exposed brick burial crypts and test pit 12 revealed two inhumations.

3.3 Test Pit 2

3.3.1 Test pit 2 revealed a mixed deposit of gritty sandy clay (201), overlying the undisturbed natural geology. Deposit 201 contained several sherds of post-medieval pottery (c 1600–1750) and fragments of CBM and slate.

3.4 Test Pit 3 (Figs. 3 and 5; Plate 1)

3.4.1 The surface of deposit 307 was revealed at the base of the excavation and appeared to represent a layer of redeposited natural. This was overlain by layer 304, a mixed deposit of clay with sandy, lime mortar laminations.

3.4.2 The southern limit of 304 was truncated by cut 302, the foundation trench for the present church tower. This cut contained a mass-filled foundation of gravel and Portland cement (303), at least 0.23m thick. This formed the base onto which the stepped foundations, 300 were constructed. The foundations comprised fragments of roughly hewn, re-used dressed limestone blocks bonded with a hard cement mortar. The construction trench was filled with a loose deposit of construction debris, comprising un-bonded mortar and limestone chippings (301).

3.4.3 Part of the foundation trench, 302, was truncated to the north by cut 308, which was present on an east-west alignment and extended beyond the limits of the excavation to the north, east and west. It measured 0.4m deep and contained a mixed, loose deposit of sandy clay (305), with mortar lenses and artefacts including CBM and pottery (c 1780–1900).

3.5 Test pit 5 (Figs. 3 and 5; Plates 2 and 3)

3.5.1 Deposit 507 was a very well mixed deposit of silty sand and gravel, at least 0.52m thick and extending beyond the limits of the excavation to the south, east and west. It contained faunal remains and disarticulated human remains along with 252g of post-medieval pottery (c 1650–1725) and fragments of CBM.

3.5.2 Truncating deposit 507 in north-eastern corner of the test pit was a large square cut (503) containing a mass-filled foundation creamy yellow, sandy lime mortar, flints and

limestone (501). A large limestone plinth was constructed onto the surface of this foundation, which appears to be the remains of an arch or pillar.

- 3.5.3 The northern edge of structure 501 was later truncated by an east-west aligned foundation trench (505). This contained a stepped foundation (504) constructed using large blocks of dressed and roughly hewn limestone, some of which were clearly reused from an earlier structure. This foundation formed the base of the northern outer wall of the church. The construction cut was then backfilled using construction debris comprising mortar and limestone chippings (506).
- 3.5.4 Deposit 500 was found to overlie layer 507, but had no direct stratigraphic relationship with the northern wall foundation and it is unclear if it had been truncated by cut 503. A modest quantity of post-medieval pottery (c 1650–1725) was recovered from this thin layer along with disarticulated human remains and CBM fragments.

3.6 Test Pit 6 (Plates 4 and 5)

- 3.6.1 No hand excavation was possible in the location of test pit 6. Removal of the timber flooring revealed a large oblong area of subsidence and an adjacent void, approximately 0.3m in diameter, opening into a brick-built burial crypt. Visible within the crypt were the remains of an east-west aligned lead coffin. It is likely that the area of subsidence to the south was caused by a collapsed vault, although no burial was visible at this location.

3.7 Test Pit 8

- 3.7.1 Overlying the natural geology was a probable soil horizon (801). It comprised a sterile deposit of grey brown clay silt, 0.19m thick. This was overlain by the remnants of a construction horizon, represented by thin laminations of soil and mortar, 0.11m thick.

3.8 Test Pit 9 (Figs. 4 and 5; Plates 6 and 7)

- 3.8.1 Structure 900 was a mass-fill foundation of roughly hewn limestone block and loose sandy lime mortar. It was observed lying directly onto the natural geology and extended beyond the limits of the excavation area. It was therefore not possible to identify a construction cut, although it seems likely there must have been one. Similarly, no dating material was recoverable from either earlier deposit or the structure itself. The foundations survived to a depth of 0.37m.
- 3.8.2 Structure 900 was truncated in the north-west corner of the test pit by the construction cut 901. The bottom of this cut measured 0.37m deep and coincided with the base of the earlier foundations. This later cut contained the roughly hewn limestone block foundations (904), the remains of a 19th-century pillar that forms part of the present church. Backfilled around the foundations was a loose deposit of limestone chippings and mortar (902), including fragments of late 18th–19th-century architectural moulding. The area was sealed with a further, thin layer of construction debris (903) and an overlying concrete scree (906).

3.9 Test Pit 10 (Figs. 4 and 5)

3.9.1 Overlying the natural geology was a buried soil horizon, deposit 1005. This was truncated on an east-west alignment by construction cut 1001. Cut 1001 was 0.43m deep and extended beyond the limits of the excavation area to the south, east and west. It contained the foundations (1002) of an extant 19th-century pillar, similar to those recorded in test pit 9. This structure comprised between three and four courses of roughly hewn Quarr stone and at least one dressed block of Caen stone, approximately 0.6m in length. The structure was bonded with a hard blue-grey mortar, presumably Portland cement. Construction cut 1001 also contained a thin layer of trample (1004) and a deliberate backfill of construction debris (1003). Another thin layer of construction debris (1000) sealed the backfill and extended beyond the limits of the test pit.

3.10 Test Pit 12 (Figs. 4 and 5; Plates 8 and 9)

3.10.1 Grave cut 1205 was recorded in the northern half of the test pit on an east-west alignment, extending beyond the limits of the excavation. It measured approximately 0.55m deep and contained the partial remains of burial SK 1207. The exposed remains included right side of an individual in a supine position with the lower arm, pelvis and femur visible. This was backfilled with deposit 1206 and truncated by later grave cut 1208 slightly further to the north. SK 1210 was revealed in the base of this later grave cut, partially overlying SK 1207. It was also in a supine position. The skull, vertebrae, ribs and humerus were present within the limits of the excavation. The backfill (1209) of this burial contained a fragment of slate and a fragment of Flemish-style floor tile dating to the late 14th–16th centuries.

3.10.2 To the south of the burials and apparently truncating deposit 1206 was a large linear cut (1203). It was aligned east-west, and measured at least 0.48m deep. It contained a mass of uncoursed limestone fragments and orange-red brick fragments, at least 0.66m deep and 0.44m wide. This had been backfilled beneath a deposit of silty sand (1204) containing a complete late 14th–16th-century Flemish-style floor tile and disarticulated human remains.

3.11 Finds summary

3.11.1 A total of 44 sherds of pottery weighing 995g were recovered from four contexts from test pits 2, 3 and 5 (201, 305, 500 and 507). Nearly all the pottery is post-medieval and domestic in character. The post-medieval redwares probably come from a number of sources, such as Bishop's Waltham and Fareham, which also supplied Winchester and Southampton. Some of the redwares, however, come from Donyatt in Somerset: a decorated dish in Donyatt slipware is definitely from this source (cf Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1988). The yellow-glazed Verwood-type wares come from the Verwood area on the Dorset/Hampshire border. A single residual sherd of medieval greyware probably comes from the area north of Winchester.

3.11.2 A total of 20 pieces of CBM weighing 2318g were recovered from eight contexts (201, 305, 500, 507, 902, 1003, 1204 and 1209). The tile assemblage comprises medieval and post-medieval types of roof and floor tiles. These include several late medieval or early post-medieval Flemish-style floor (quarry) tiles with coloured glazes or white slip.

There is also a very coarse orange-buff floor tile, which may come from Devon or Normandy. Like Southampton, the Isle of Wight was in an ideal coastal position for receiving imports of floor tile from Flanders and elsewhere. A few pieces of local post-medieval red peg tile and brick are also present. A piece of mortar is also included in these totals.

- 3.11.3 A total of eleven fragments of stone were retained and submitted for analysis. These included four fragments of architectural stone that are too small for their original function to be determined but include piece of Purbeck limestone (not from the local sources at Bembridge, Binstead or Quarr) (1204, 1209) and two of Caen stone (1003). Such stones were typical building materials during the medieval and post-medieval periods, and both are found in medieval contexts on the Isle of Wight.
- 3.11.4 Slate roofing is also represented by seven fragments from contexts 500, 507, 902, 1003 and 1209.

3.12 Environmental summary

- 3.12.1 A total of 11 animal bones were recovered from the site, all of which were collected by hand. Among the specimens identified, sheep and/or goat is the most common, followed by cattle and pig. Butchery evidence consists of oblique cutmarks on some of the bone caused by filleting at the table or in the kitchen, indicating domestic waste.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The ground conditions remained consistent throughout the works and were conducive to facilitating the aims of the evaluation. However, the restricted windows of investigation mean that accurate interpretations and dating of the sequences, deposits and structures are difficult to achieve. Although the position and relative levels of each deposit and structure was confidently determined.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The evaluation work revealed a number of archaeologically significant deposits and structures associated with and pre-dating the existing mid-19th-century church. This has enabled the potential impact of the proposed development to be determined. A table summarising the heights of the most significant archaeological contexts is listed below (Table 1)

4.2.2 Two foundation structures were revealed that were proven to be stratigraphically earlier than the 19th-century building. These include the possible archway foundation in test pit 5 (501) and the mass-filled foundation (900) in test pit 9. Although there was limited dating material for structure 501, it did truncate a disturbed deposit containing post-medieval pottery (c 1650–1725). No dating evidence was available from deposits pre-dating structure 900.

4.2.3 Test pits 3, 5, 9 and 10 revealed the foundations of the mid-19th-century church. In each case, these were constructed using fragments of stone that appear to have been reused from an earlier structure. The large dressed block of Caen stone at the base of the column in test pit 10 would have certainly been part of a significant structure and not originally intended as a foundation stone.

4.2.4 Test pits 8 and 10 revealed a sterile soil horizon (deposits 801 and 1005) within the nave of the existing church. This was not observed in the other test pits due to later activity and disturbances.

4.2.5 *In-situ* burials were discovered in test pits 6 and 12. Although no dating evidence was recovered in association with the crypt in test pit 6, these are most likely to have been constructed within the present church. The two inhumations in test pit 12 pre-dated the adjacent brick-and-limestone crypt. The late medieval/early post-medieval floor tiles found in their backfills probably pre-date the 19th-century church.

Test Pit 2	Height (aOD)
Top of archaeological sequence	8.88m
Test Pit 3	
Top of stepped foundations 300	8.87m
Test Pit 5	
Top of arch foundation 501	9.07m
Test Pit 6	
Highest point of brick burial crypt	8.86m
Test Pit 8	
Top of archaeological sequence	8.82m
Test Pit 9	
Surface of possible medieval foundations 900	8.76m
Test Pit 10	
Top of archaeological sequence	8.84
Test Pit 12	
Surface of archaeological deposits	8.77m
Highest point of structure 1201	8.43m
Skeleton SK1210	8.07m
Reference	
Wooden Platforms	9.22m
Tiled floor	9.13m

Table 1. Summary of significant archaeological horizons

4.3 Interpretation

- 4.3.1 The area of sterile soils within the nave section of the church is interesting as it demonstrates an area with little human activity prior to 1854. It must therefore have been protected from disturbance whilst the town of Newport developed through the medieval and post-medieval periods. The most likely explanation is that the original medieval chapel was constructed in this area of the church, preserving these buried soils *in situ*. In contrast, the deposit sequences in trenches 2, 3 and 5 showed significant disturbance in these areas between the end of the medieval period and 1854, incorporating domestic waste and disarticulated human remains. This suggests an area of open space, presumably beyond the limits of the medieval chapel.
- 4.3.2 Structure 501 is likely to be the base of a pillar or archway. Due to its location adjacent to the present northern entrance, it is tempting to view this as the foundations of an earlier doorway. As this truncated post-medieval deposits and clearly pre-dates the 1854 construction, it is probable that this was part a post-medieval phase of construction but not part of the original medieval chapel. Consequently, it may even be part of the doorway featured in J M W Turner's depiction of the church (see above).
- 4.3.3 It has been suggested that structural remains previously identified in the manhole (Figure 2, see label A), in the south-eastern area of the church were part of the medieval chapel. Whilst it was not possible to view these remains and substantiate this interpretation, it is worth noting that the extrapolated alignment of structure 1201 coincides with this manhole. Based on observations during this investigation it is possible that 1201 was part of a 19th-century service duct situated to the south of test pit 12. This also aligned with the manhole to the east, though it may also be the backfill

of a robber trench or the foundations of one of the post-medieval phases of construction.

- 4.3.4 The human remains were largely restricted to the southern aisle of the church. Disarticulated human remains were identified in test pit 5 but these could have been disturbed by construction activities or later grave digging.
- 4.3.5 Although this evaluation has produced evidence for the earlier medieval chapel and later adaptations, it has been unable to determine its precise footprint. The undated foundation (900) is the only element that may have been part of the medieval structure. Because it was not possible to expose any of its original extent, the orientation of this structure is unknown.
- 4.3.6 Archaeological remains have clearly survived *in situ* beneath the modern wooden platforms. It is also likely that further structural remains and human burials are present immediately beneath the tiled floor surface. Any additional work should expect to encounter potentially significant archaeological remains at any point below 9.07m aOD (the top of 501), but more consistently below 8.88m aOD (surface of archaeological deposits).

4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The Solent-Thames research framework has identified 'the chronology of church building/rebuilding and its relationship to the evolving liturgy' as an area that requires particular attention. There is potential for establishing the footprint of the original medieval chapel and for understanding its subsequent development. At this stage, however, there is insufficient evidence to map the foundations of the earlier church.
- 4.4.2 None of the human remains uncovered were removed from the site for further analysis, but the evaluation has confirmed the presence of post-medieval burials at the site. Social organisation of burials was also identified by the regional research framework as an area for further study and so any additional investigations have the potential to contribute to current understanding, should human remains be encountered again.

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APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	-
The client requested that this test pit was not excavated.					Length (m)	-
					Width (m)	-
					Avg. depth (m)	-
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of made ground overlying natural geology.					Length (m)	1.4
					Width (m)	0.7
					Avg. depth (m)	0.4
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer	-	0.4	Made ground, mixed deposit of brownish grey and orange, sandy clay.	Pottery, CBM	c 1600-1750
201	Layer	-	-	Natural, brownish orange, sandy clay with flints	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench revealed stepped foundations of the 19 th -century church tower.					Length (m)	1.15
					Width (m)	0.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Structure	>0.4	0.44	Foundation, roughly and well-dressed limestone blocks, two courses (stepped), blocks measured between 0.3 and 0.7m across. Hard cement bonding.	-	-
301	Fill	-	0.37	Backfill, greyish yellow sandy mortar	-	-
302	Cut	-	-	Construction cut	-	-
303	Structure	>0.39	>0.24	Foundation, mass filled hard blue grey (Portland?) cement and gravel.	-	-
304	Layer	-	0.2	Mid yellow and grey brown sandy clay and mortar	-	-

305	Fill		0.42	Fill of 308, mid grey brown sandy clay and mortar.	Pottery, CBM	c 1780-1900
306	Layer		0.05	Levelling layer/construction debris	-	-
307	Layer	-	-	Layer, mid orange brown and grey yellow clay and gravel clay, with frequent flint	-	-
308	Cut	0.8	0.42	Cut, containing deposit 305		

Trench 4						
General description					Orientation	-
Not excavated due to live services.					Length (m)	-
					Width (m)	-
					Avg. depth (m)	-
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 5						
General description					Orientation	-
Trench revealed the foundations of the north wall and arch of the northern entrance.					Length (m)	1
					Width (m)	1
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
500	Layer	-	0.05	Construction layer, light yellowish white, sandy lime mortar layer	Pottery, CBM	c 1650-1725
501	Structure	-	-	Foundation	-	-
502	Void	-	-	Natural	-	-
503	Cut	0.66	0.52	Construction cut	-	-
504	Structure	-	-	Foundation	-	-
505	Cut	1.23	0.29	Construction cut	-	-
506	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of 505, yellowish white, sandy lime mortar	-	-
507	Deposit	-	>0.52	Made ground? Mid brownish grey, silty sand with stones	Pottery, CBM	c 1650-1725

Trench 6						
General description					Orientation	-
Trench was not excavated after collapsed burial crypts were revealed.					Length (m)	-
					Width (m)	-
					Avg. depth (m)	-
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date

-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Trench 7						
General description					Orientation	-
Not excavated due to live services.					Length (m)	-
					Width (m)	-
					Avg. depth (m)	-
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 8						
General description					Orientation	-
Trench revealed made ground overlying natural geology.					Length (m)	1
					Width (m)	1
					Avg. depth (m)	0.39
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
800	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
801	Layer	-	0.19	Buried soil horizon, grey brown, clay silt.	-	-
802	Layer	-	0.11	Construction layer, laminated soil and mortar horizons.	-	-

Trench 9						
General description					Orientation	-
Trench revealed the foundations of a 19 th -century pillar, and the remains of an earlier undated stone foundation.					Length (m)	1
					Width (m)	1
					Avg. depth (m)	0.37
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
900	Structure	-	-	Foundations of pillar	-	-
901	Cut	-	0.37	Construction cut of 900	-	-
902	Fill	-	0.37	Fill of 901, grey brown silty sand and mortar with frequent stone fragments	CBM	Late 18 th to 19 th century
903	Layer	-	0.14	Construction horizon, laminations of soil and mortar.	-	-
904	Structure	-	-	Pillar foundation	-	-
905	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
906	-	-	0.04	Modern cement screed	-	-

Trench 10						
General description					Orientation	-
Trench revealed the foundations of a 19 th -century pillar.					Length (m)	1
					Width (m)	1

Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
					Avg. depth (m)	0.52
1000	Layer	-	0.08	Construction horizon	-	-
1001	Cut	-	0.48	Construction cut for 1002	-	-
1002	Structure	-	-	Foundation	-	-
1003	Fill	-	0.45	Backfill, light brown grey, silty sand and mortar	CBM	Late 17 th to 19 th century
1004	Fill	-	0.04	Trample layer, dark brown, clay silt.		
1005	Layer	-	0.3	Soil horizon, dark orange brown, clay silt		
1006	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 11						
General description					Orientation	-
Not excavated due to live services.					Length (m)	-
					Width (m)	-
					Avg. depth (m)	-
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Trench 12						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.30
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1200	Layer	-	0.07	Construction debris	-	-
1201	Structure	-	-	Culvert	-	-
1202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1203	Cut	-	0.48	Construction cut for 1201	-	-
1204	Fill	-	0.48	Fill of 1203, greyish brown silty sand with mortar	-	-
1205	Cut	-	0.55	Grave cut of SK 1207	-	-
1206	Fill	-	0.55	Fill of 1205, greyish brown, silty sand	-	-
1207	Skeleton	-	-	Supine burial	-	-
1208	Cut	-	0.52	Grave cut of SK 1210	-	-
1209	Fill	-	0.52	Fill of 1208, greyish brown, silty sand	CBM	Late 14 th to 16 th century
1210	Skeleton	-	-	Supine burial	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

- B.1.1 A total of 44 sherds of pottery weighing 995g were recovered from four contexts. Given the small quantity present, this has not been separately catalogued but is fully described below. Nearly all of this is post-medieval. Unless otherwise stated, post-medieval fabric codes referred to are those of the Museum of London (MoLA 2014). As yet, no standardized fabric codes exist for local post-medieval wares from the Isle of Wight or from nearby Southampton (Brown 2002).

Description

- B.1.2 **Context (201) Spot-date: c 1600-1750?** Description: 6 sherds (weight 108g). All fairly fresh post-medieval glazed wares. These comprise 4 sherds in yellow-glazed Verwood-type ware (Fabric VERW, c1600-1900), including a rim from a wide jar or bowl. 1x small body sherd (or scrap) in post-medieval red earthenware (Fabric PMR, c 1550-1900). 1x body sherd in unidentified ?local early post-medieval grey sandyware with a glossy greenish-brown glaze, probably from a small cooking pot/pipkin with external sooting, possibly late 15th or 16th century?
- B.1.3 **Context (305) Spot-date: c 1780-1900.** Description: 6 sherds (weight 129g). All fairly fresh post-medieval glazed wares. 1x fresh beaded jar rim in a very late-looking post-medieval red earthenware (PMR) with a thin brown glaze internally - applied in liquid form. 5x sherds of Verwood-type ware (VERW), including a plain rim from a deep bowl, and a small ?horizontal handle fragment probably from a small serving bowl (porringer).
- B.1.4 **Context (500) Spot-date: c 1650-1725?** Description: 16 sherds (weight 506g). All fairly fresh post-medieval glazed wares. 2x sherds from the same dish profile in Donyatt slipware (DONY SL, c 1630-1900) with typical slip-trailed and sgraffito (incised) decoration on the rim and internally on the wall and base (this example probably c 1650-1750). 1x small fresh body sherd of fine whiteware with a light yellow-green glaze internally, possibly a very fine variant of Verwood-type ware (VERW), or possibly Surrey/Hampshire Border ware (BORDY, c 1550-1700)? 11x sherds in post-medieval red earthenware (PMR). The latter come from a minimum of 6 vessels including a complete hollow pedestal base from a chafing dish (plate warmer or portable stove), a jar or pipkin with a collared rim, and a small dish. One of the PMR sherds (possibly a Donyatt plainware?) has a distinctive reduced glossy dark greenish-brown glaze all over internally and heavy sooting from use externally; the latter sherd almost certainly cross-joins with a flat base sherd in Context (507). Four unglazed pinkish PMR sherds (1 vessel) also cross-join with a sherd from (507). Two large sherds in an earlier-looking unglazed PMR-type fabric have reduced dark grey surfaces and an orange-brown core; one of these is from a large jug or pitcher with a plain rim and with a narrow strap-handle with a central groove, and the other is a very similar-looking strap handle from

a separate vessel; these may be earlier (16th- or early 17th-century?) products of the Donyatt industry, or they might be Southampton-type late medieval well-fired sandyware (Fabric LWFS, c 1420-1520; Brown 2002, 19-20)?

- B.1.5 **Context (507) Spot-date: c 1650-1725?** Description: 16 sherds (weight 252g). All fairly fresh post-medieval glazed wares, but sherds smaller than those in (500) above. 15x sherds (some joining) in post-medieval red earthenware (PMR). The latter come from a minimum of 6 vessels. Two sherds cross-join with (500) above. PMR vessel forms present include rims from two small jars or pipkins and a detached tripod foot from a tripod pipkin. Also a bowl rim and a jug or pipkin handle. Some of these might be Donyatt products? 1x residual medieval sherd (11g) from a cooking pot with external sooting. This appears to be the same as Winchester Fabric MDF (c 1050-1350, mainly c 1150-1350), formally known as 'Medium grained sandy ware' and unofficially as 'Common grey sandy ware', a micaceous grey sandy ware common to the Winchester area and north Hampshire (Cotter 2011, 262).

Discussion

- B.1.6 The pottery comprises ordinary domestic post-medieval wares typical of the Isle of Wight and southern Hampshire. The post-medieval redwares (PMR) probably come from a number of sources, perhaps including Bishop's Waltham and Fareham, which also supplied Winchester and Southampton (Brown 2002, 21). Some of the PMR, however, probably comes from Donyatt in Somerset, and a decorated dish in Donyatt slipware (DONY SL) is definitely from this source. The yellow-glazed Verwood-type wares (VERW) come from the Verwood area on the Dorset/Hampshire border. A single residual sherd of medieval greyware (MDF) probably comes from the area north of Winchester.

B.2 Ceramic building material (CBM)

By John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

- B.2.1 A total of 20 pieces of CBM weighing 2318g were recovered from eight contexts. A piece of mortar is also included in these totals. Given the small quantity present, this has not been separately catalogued but is fully described below.

Description

- B.2.2 **Context (201) Spot-date: 17th to 19th century.** Description: 3 pieces (weight 60g). 2x edge fragments of orange-red peg tile in a hard smooth post-medieval-style fabric (possibly 18th/19th century?). 1x scrap of soft red brick.
- B.2.3 **Context (305) Spot-date: 17th to 19th century.** Description: 5 pieces (weight 135g). 3x fragments of orange-red peg tile as in (201). 2x fragments of soft red handmade brick including a corner fragment.

- B.2.4 Context (500) Spot-date: 18th to 19th century?** Description: 1 piece (weight 79g). Fresh corner fragment from an orange-red brick in a fine sandy fabric. Very neatly made with sharp arrises (angles). Possibly handmade?
- B.2.5 Context (507) Spot-date: Late 14th to 16th century?** Description: 1 piece (weight 124g). Abraded corner fragment from a thick late medieval or early post-medieval floor tile. Probably a Flemish-style 'quarry' tile. The upper surface is almost completely worn off - probably from use. The edges are vertical or slightly bevelled. Thickness 24mm. Fairly soft reddish-brown fine sandy fabric. The two surviving edges are covered in a thin dark brown glaze which once covered the upper surface (trace surviving). A kiln-scar from another tile stacked upon it has left glaze traces on the underside. The fabric is similar to quarry tiles of this period over much of southern England. It may, perhaps, be a genuine Flemish import rather than a local copy?
- B.2.6 Context (902) Spot-date: Late 18th to 19th century?** Description: 2 pieces (weight 288g). 1x large fresh piece of fine light grey cement or mortar (211g) from a moulded architectural feature - possibly a window frame or door jamb etc? The latter probably late 18th/19th century? 1x abraded corner fragment (77g) from a late medieval Flemish-style floor (quarry) tile, as in (507). This one has a thickness of 27mm and the upper surface is covered with a reduced dark greenish-brown glaze which extends over the edges. This is from the corner or a larger square tile which has been cut-down along a pre-scored line into at least two smaller triangular tiles. Possibly Flemish?
- B.2.7 Context (1003) Spot-date: 17th to 19th century.** Description: 2 pieces (weight 190g). 2x fresh edge fragments of orange-red peg tile in a hard smooth post-medieval-style fabric as in (201). Possibly 18th/19th century? Very flat, well-made and unusually thin (11-12mm thick). One fragment has a complete circular nailhole.
- B.2.8 Context (1204) Spot-date: Late 14th to 16th century.** Description: 1 piece (weight 736g). Complete Flemish-style floor (quarry) tile. Edges chipped along one side, otherwise fairly fresh. Fairly small in size (135mm square x 23-25mm thick). Hard light orange fine sandy fabric. The upper surface, which is worn from use, has vestiges of an all-over white slip covering under a thin clear glaze - the clear (orange) glaze extends over the unslipped vertical sides. Thick patch of white lime mortar adhering underside.
- B.2.9 Context (1209) Spot-date: Late 14th to 16th century.** Description: 5 pieces (weight 706g). 5x abraded fragments of Flemish-style floor (quarry) tile. Includes 3 corner fragments in the orange-red and orange-brown sandy fabric described above. One of the latter (27mm thick) has a worn black glaze on the upper surface and a possible pinhole (or pin prick) in the corner suggesting it may be a genuine Flemish import. The other 2 orange corner fragments are very abraded and the larger of the two has been very worn down from use (now only 20mm thick). The two other fragments, including a corner, are from the same tile with a thickness of 26-28mm. The latter has a very different fabric to the sandy red tiles, it is light orange-buff in the core and cream coloured at the surfaces/margins. The upper surface is covered in a white slip and on the corner fragment there are traces of a bright green glaze over this and extending down the sides. Even more distinctive is the unusually coarse fabric which contains moderate-abundant very coarse rounded inclusions and grits of milky quartz up to 3mm across and one larger grit is 12mm across. It also has coarse inclusions of white

clay pellets and a few red clay pellets and streaks. This sort of fabric almost certainly comes from an area of igneous/metamorphic geology, possibly Devon or even Normandy. It is known that some medieval and post-medieval white floor tiles were imported into England from Dieppe in Normandy. Further research would be required however to confirm these suggestions.

Discussion

B.2.10 The CBM assemblage comprises medieval and post-medieval types of roof and floor tiles. These include several late medieval or early post-medieval Flemish-style floor (quarry) tiles with coloured glazes or white slip. There is also a very coarse orange-buff floor tile which may come from Devon or Normandy. Like Southampton, the Isle of Wight was in an ideal coastal position for receiving floor tile imports from Flanders and elsewhere. A few pieces of local post-medieval red peg tile and brick are also present.

B.3 Stone

By Ruth Shaffrey

Introduction

- B.3.1 A total of 11 fragments of stone were retained and submitted for analysis. These were recorded with the aid of a x10 magnification hand lens and details entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet entitled IWCMS_2019_984-stone-data.xlsx.
- B.3.2 Slate roofing is represented by seven fragments from contexts 500, 507, 902, 1003 and 1209. Four fragments of architectural stone are too small for their original function to be determined but include piece of Purbeck limestone (not from the local sources at Bembridge, Binstead or Quarr) (1204, 1209) and two of Caen stone (1003). Such stones were typical building materials during the medieval and post-medieval periods and both are found in medieval contexts on the Isle of Wight—Caen stone at Hyde Abbey for example.
- B.3.3 The architectural stone fragments and a sample of the roof slate should be retained in case of future analysis but all the other roofing can be discarded.

B.4 Lead

By Geraldine Crann

- B.4.1 **Context (507).** Single undiagnostic piece of lead, 100mm x 25mm x 7mm, with slightly tapering end, 144g.

B.5 Shell

By Geraldine Crann

B.5.1 **Context (201).** Seven oyster (*Ostrea edulis* Linnaeus) shells, six left valves and one right valve, 121g.

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Animal Bone

By Lee G. Broderick

Introduction

- C.1.1 A total of 11 animal bone specimens were recovered from the site (Table 2), all of which were collected by hand. Features on the site were dated on the basis of associated ceramic finds to the post-medieval/modern period.
- C.1.2 The material was recorded in full, with the aid of the OA skeletal reference collection and standard identification guides, using a diagnostic zone system (Serjeantson 1996).

Description

- C.1.3 Preservation at the site was moderate to poor.
- C.1.4 Among the specimens identified, caprine (sheep [*Ovis aries*] and/or goat [*Capra hircus*]) is the most common, followed by domestic cattle (*Bos taurus taurus*) and pig (*Sus domesticus*) (Table 1). Ageing data is limited to epiphyseal fusion of four caprine bones: two metatarsals from c AD 1600–1750 context 201 are fused proximally, a metatarsal from c AD 1780–1900 context 305 is fused proximally and unfused distally and a humerus from the same context is fused at both ends. The context 305 specimens provide age-at-death estimates of less than two-and-a-half years and more than three-and-a-half years respectively.
- C.1.5 Butchery evidence consist of an oblique chop through the proximal end of a caprine femur – suggesting rough professional butchery – and an oblique cutmark on the medial side of a possible caprine metacarpal – probably the result of skinning – from context 201. An oblique cutmark on the anterior side of the caprine humerus mentioned above was most probably caused by filleting at the table or in the kitchen, indicating domestic waste.

Conclusions

- C.1.6 Little can be read into such a small assemblage. The three species identified in the assemblage are the most common recovered from British archaeological sites.

	c.AD 1600-1750	c.AD 1780-1900
domestic cattle	1	
domestic cattle?	1	
caprine	4	2
pig	1	
medium mammal	1	1
Total Mammal	8	3
Total NISP	8	3
Total NSP	8	3

Table 2: Total NISP (Number of Identified SPecimens) and NSP (Number of SPecimens) figures per period from hand-collected material from the site.

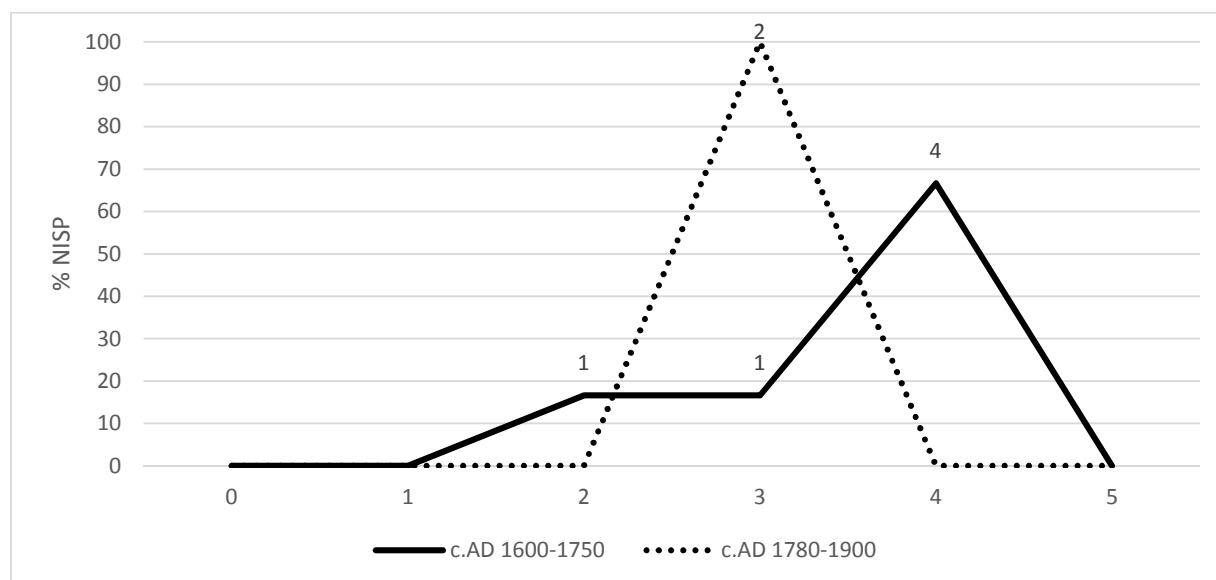


Figure 1: Condition of identified specimens, expressed as a percentage of NISP, numbers above line are raw NISP (following Behrensmeyer 1978).

	Butchery marks	Ageing data	Biometric data
domestic cattle?	1		
caprine	2	4	1
Total	3	4	1

Table 3: Non-species data recorded from the specimens (NSP) in the assemblage.

APPENDIX D**SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

Site name: The Minister Church of St Thomas, Newport, Isle of Wight
Site code: IWCMS:2019.9841
Grid Reference SZ 49972 89145
Type: Evaluation
Date and duration: 4 days (27/08/19-30/08/19)

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA South, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Isle of Wight Museum Service in due course, under accession number IWCMS:2019.9841.

Summary of Results: In August 2019 OA was commissioned by Thomas Ford & Partners on behalf of The Faculty of the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Portsmouth to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the Minster Church of St Thomas, Newport, Isle of Wight. The work involved the excavation of 12 test pits within the existing floor of the church to investigate the remains of the early medieval church and to help inform the design of a new floor and lift installation. The evaluation revealed a number of archaeologically significant deposits and structures associated with and pre-dating the existing mid-19th century church, enabling the potential impact of the proposed scheme to be determined. Two foundation structures were stratigraphically earlier than the present church, while test pits 3, 5, 9 and 10 revealed the foundations of the latter. *In-situ* burials were discovered in test pits 6 and 12 at the southern edge of the church, the former relating to a lead coffin and the latter to articulated human bones. Archaeological remains survived beneath the wooden raised floor and it is likely that additional remains are present immediately beneath the tiled floor surface.

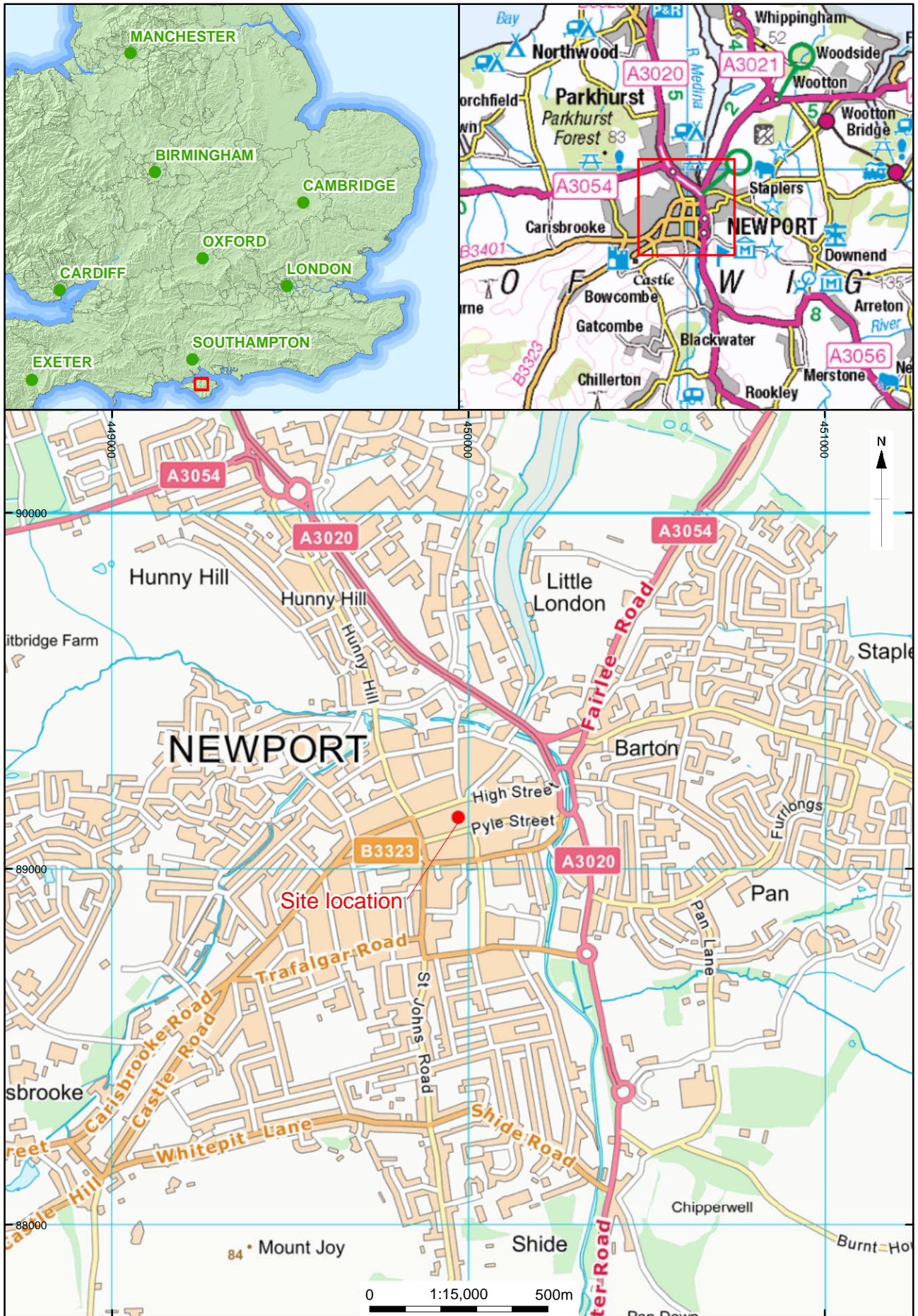
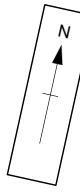


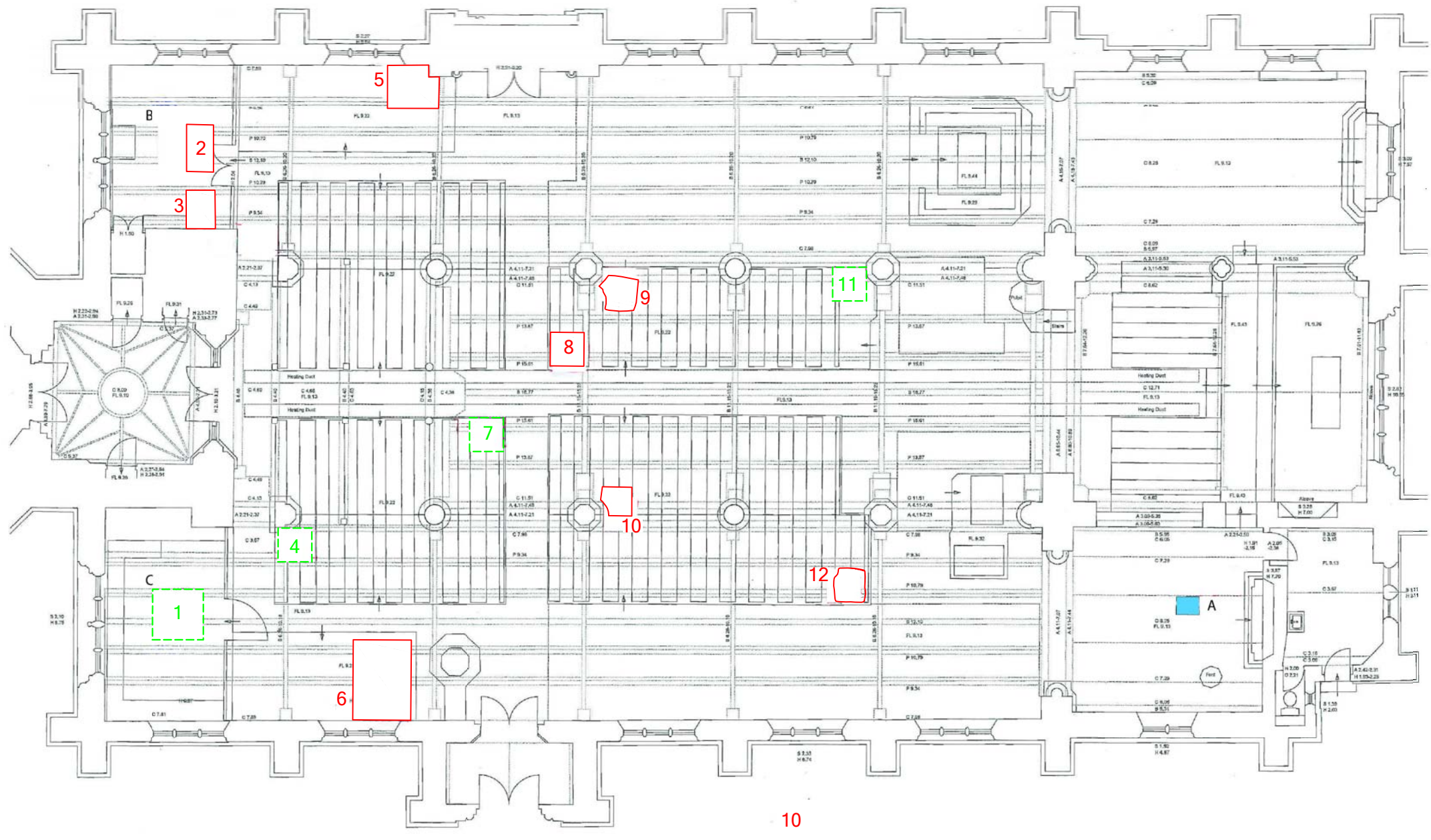
Figure 1: Site location



449950
89155

449995
89155

449950
89125



- Limits of excavation
- Unexcavated trench
- Manhole (A)

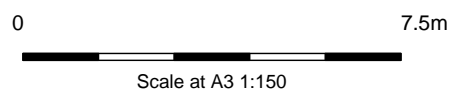
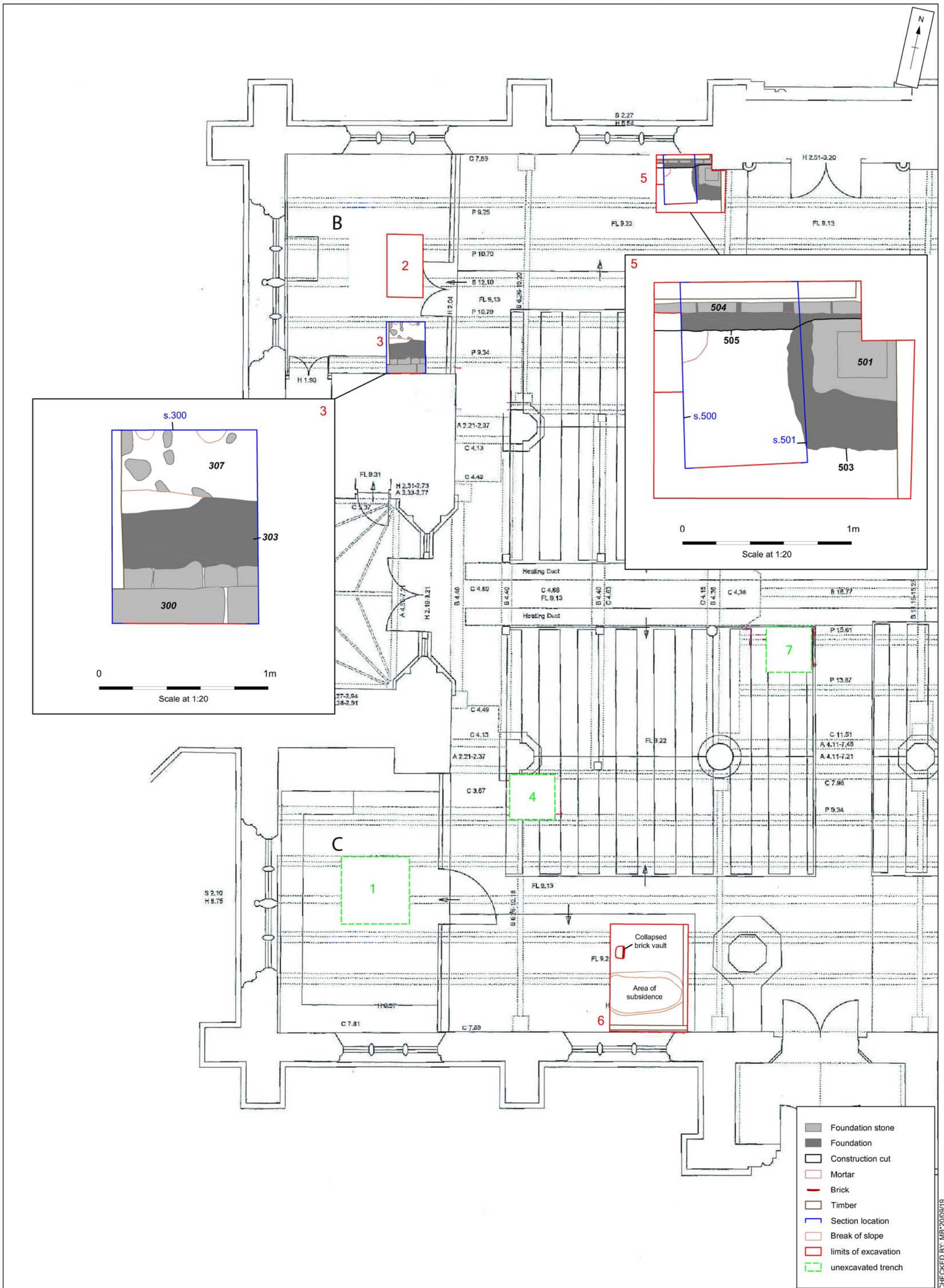
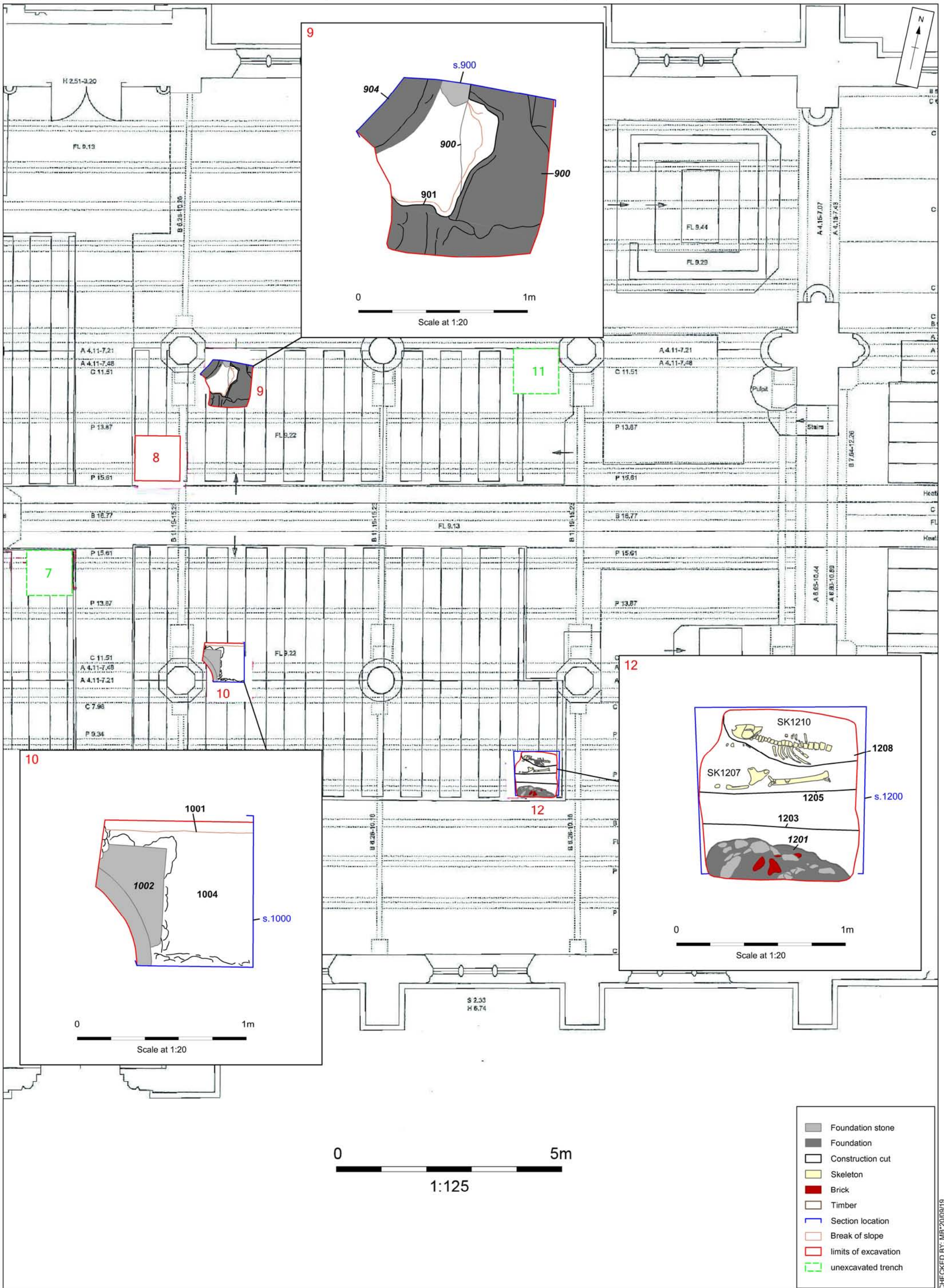


Figure 2: Trench location plan



CHECKED BY: MB 20/09/19

Figure 3: Trenches 3, 5 and 6



0 5m
1:125

0 5m
Scale at A3 1:75

Figure 4: Trenches 8, 9, 10 and 12

CHECKED BY: MB*20/09/19

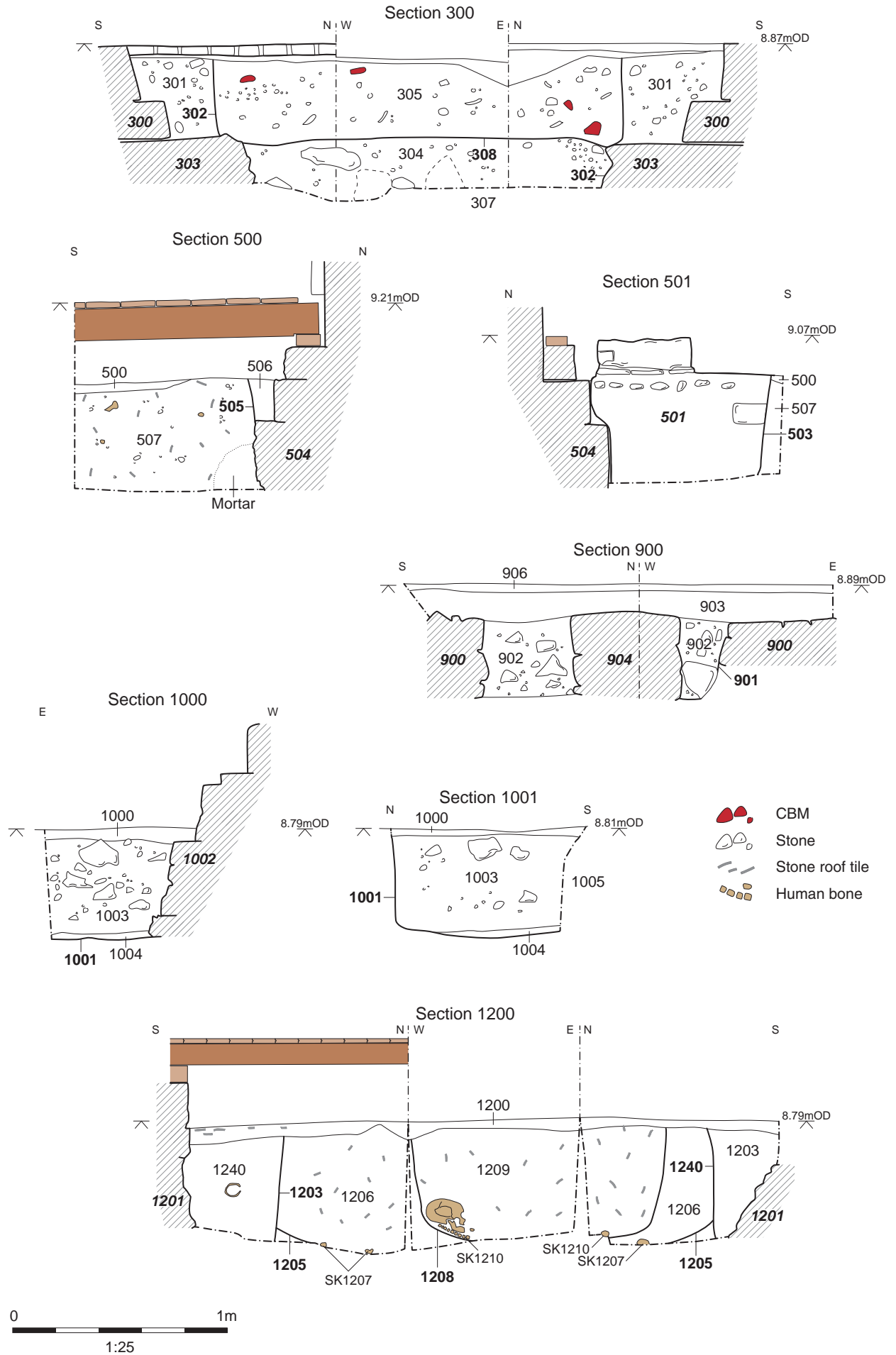


Figure 5: Test pit sections



Plate 1: East facing section of test pit 3 showing foundations 303 and 300



Plate 2: West facing section of test pit 5, showing foundations 501 and 504



Plate 3: View to north-east showing 501 and present northern entrance



Plate 4: Areas of subsidence visible beneath timber platform of test pit 6



Plate 5: View to east inside the partially collapsed brick vault of test pit 6



Plate 6: Possible medieval foundations 900, truncated by 19th century pilla



Plate 7: 19th century pillar foundations in test pit 9 (view to south-west)



Plate 8: East facing section of test pit 12, showing burials SK1207 and SK 1210



Plate 9: View to south of test pit 12 showing structure 1201



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