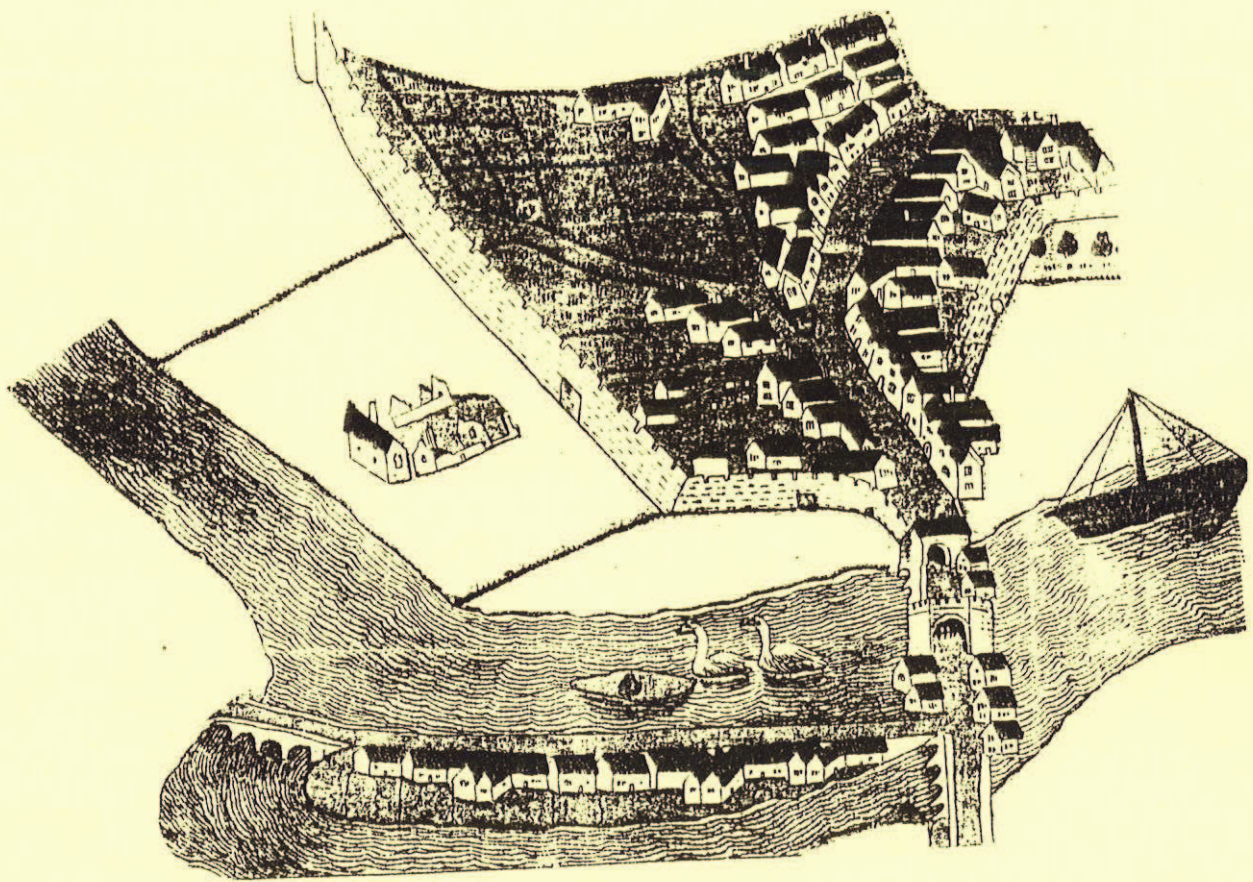


# ST JULIAN'S FRIARS SHREWSBURY

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT



**ST JULIAN'S FRIARS**

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# St Julian's Friars

## Shrewsbury

### An Archaeological Evaluation

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## St Julian's Friars

### Shrewsbury

#### An Archaeological Evaluation

*Summary: An archaeological evaluation of a proposed development centred on the St Julian's Friars area of Shrewsbury went some way to defining the limits of the medieval Greyfriars precinct, which seems to have lain immediately outside the town wall, with a ditch or moat between. The friary was evidently built on a man-made platform which was protected from erosion on the riverside by a massive stone wall; a similar though possibly later river wall was found downstream towards the bridge. It is unclear whether the line of this terracing was continuous however, because archaeological and documentary evidence suggests that this area may have been part of a medieval island separated from the friars' site and from the town, and possibly the site of 13th-century wharfage.*

*The results are discussed in the light of their importance to Shrewsbury and medieval towns generally.*

## 1 The Evaluation

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the area of a proposed development at St Julian's Friars in Shrewsbury, including the site of a house of Franciscan friars, and an area of the medieval walled town beside the ramp to the English Bridge.

### 1.1 Purpose

The investigation responds to a proposal for a new road and associated development within Shrewsbury's Conservation Area, which would have the effect of alleviating traffic congestion at a difficult road junction. The site includes 11 listed buildings which are to be retained. In 1989 a memo of SCC Property and Planning Department (4.10.1989) identified the area as 'extremely interesting archaeologically', and advised the need for an archaeological evaluation. There followed a two-stage report by Ove Arup which summarised the historical background and recognised the possibility that archaeological interest could not be discounted completely even by carrying the road over areas of existing development; it recognised the scheduled town wall near the Telephone Exchange as a listed obstruction to the proposed road line.

The fieldwork was timed to provide an assessment of the archaeological aspects for a detailed planning application in the summer of 1993. OAU was commissioned to carry out the fieldwork, and work on site began on 18 May, completed on 3 June.

## 1.2 Evaluation Brief as set

Requirements of the evaluation were as follows:

- a) to locate any archaeological features and deposits likely to be affected by the proposed development (the development was not specified in Brief).
- b) to assess the nature, survival, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological features and deposits, with due regard being paid to environmental potential.
- c) to make a detailed report including recommendations for any further archaeological provision.

## 2 Topography of the Study Area

The Study Area presently includes mixed usage from domestic to light industrial. It is mainly on the floodplain in a loop of the Severn at around OD 51 m, but extends to the edge of higher ground to the NW, where the line of the town wall and Beeches Lane (OD 54 m) probably mark the beginning of the ridge of sand and gravel on which the core of the medieval town is built. The main street of this side of the town is Wyle Cop, which runs down from the higher ground to form the N side of the study area, and then rises again to the E (OD 53 m) for the ramp of the English Bridge.

## 3 Archaeological Background (Fig. 1 and cover)

The historical background to the site was provided by the client in the form of a desktop study by Iain Ferris, which forms the basis of an appendix to this report. Additional information is drawn from the SMR, the listing of historic buildings, and data collected by M Carver in an evaluation of early Shrewsbury.

Carver notes that the shape of the medieval town of Shrewsbury has been achieved by terracing the edges of a cap of sand and gravel over a bed of Boulder Clay. The loop of the river makes it a peninsular, and confers on the crescent-shaped ridge of high ground one of the most remarkable fortress settings of any town in England. Carver notes however the paucity of early evidence, and suggests the first settlement or settlements may have been a group of interconnected townships in the 9th century, which gained cohesion around the time of the first references to the place in the early 10th century (Carver 1977, 249). A hoard of coins of the 920s would support this.

Shrewsbury therefore fits the model of late Saxon promontory fortifications in England, and subsequent archaeological work has recovered further small quantities of pottery of the period (Carver 1983, 28-9, 63). This material is too sparse however to do more than confirm that late Saxon Shrewsbury was plausibly on the same site, and the shape of the town at the Norman Conquest can perhaps best be judged from the way the Castle is sited to control the narrow isthmus; the English Bridge, affected by the present development, is assumed to be a bridging point from at least as early as the Norman abbey with which it connects.

By the period of interest identified in the evaluation brief, ie the 13th century, Shrewsbury was a 'large, powerful and well-defined settlement' (Carver 1977, 251), and like so many towns of similar status was subject to the sort of civic pride which demanded stone walls,



and the sort of prosperity which attracted the monastic orders of the friars, newly arrived from the Continent. The abbey of St Peter and St Paul had already been founded *outside* the peninsular, perhaps evidence of shortage of space, and it is significant that from the 13th century the space problem was solved by large-scale reclamation of the 'littoral' area of the peninsular (Carver 1977, 246), as shown previously at the Shrewsbury Blackfriars (Buteaux 1989, 72). The present site would seem to be an object lesson in medieval reclamation, and illustrates an early stage in the rehabilitation of land which culminates in the 20th-century proposals.

Although the broad area and period of interest had been identified from sources, the detail had not. The depth of reclamation was unclear and, aside from the surviving section of late medieval riverside range of the Greyfriars and reports of burials, there was little to indicate whether St Julian's was a full size priory, how its sacred buildings were placed within the precinct, and whether it had a conventional plan with a S cloister. For the boundary of the town, there was little beyond conjecture to show how far the 13th-century wall recorded in 1977 (Carver 1977 241, No 53) could safely be projected towards the bridge.

#### **4 Strategy (Fig. 2)**

For reasons of safety on a site with limited data on depth of deposits, OAU employed a trenching format whereby the top 1.2-1.4 m was evaluated thoroughly in all trenches, the deposits to 2.4 m were exposed in shored boxes at intervals determined by inspection, and deeper excavation was by limited hand-dug sondages within the shored boxes. Of the trenches set out in the Brief, Trenches 1 and 9 were subsequently removed from the contract by the client, although data relating to the area of Trench 9 was collected by the County Archaeological Unit at the client's request during the removal of oil storage tanks in the week before the OAU fieldwork. Trench 2 proved to be in a difficult situation for the client's own access and with respect to an existing service run; the E 6 m length was omitted by agreement. Trench 5 was the subject of minuted discussion, and the agreed position proved again to have problems for the clients's access and unmarked services, and was abandoned after removal of the tarmac on the grounds that most of the archaeological objectives seemed to have been already achieved.

The sequence of trenching followed a logical progression as outlined in Section 6.

#### **5 Results of Fieldwork**

##### **5.1 Trenching (Figs 2-6)**

There follows a brief description of the quality of evidence from each trench. Details of all recorded deposits are presented in Appendix 2.

##### **Trench 2 (Figs 2, 6)**

This most westerly trench within the Study Area encountered recent fills including 212 down to the surface of a yellowish-brown clay silt 213 at OD 49.52, which approximated to the water table in this area (elsewhere it was around 1 m lower, and the river level was OD 47.97 at time of excavation). Into this level a sondage was excavated by machine, but

the whole trench sides slid in before it could be recorded adequately. Careful sorting of the upcast of this sondage showed two fragments of charcoal but no other finds, and the trench was therefore not reexcavated for reasons of safety.

### **Trench 3 (Figs 2, 6)**

This trench was dug in an area of woodland immediately W of St Julian's Friars, and was made narrower than the remaining trenches in order to minimise root damage.

Post-medieval levels were encountered down to c. OD 49.8 m, the lowest being a dark grey-brown loam between up to 0.45 m deep, perhaps a garden or orchard soil 311. Medieval levels beneath included traces of cobbling 316 to the S and a row of single-course stones 324, nearly parallel to St Julian's Friars. This may have been the base of a timber wall. Both these features overlay a series of large (314) and small (327) lenses of dumped material which may have been a midden or deliberate reclamation with domestic waste. The finds were of the 13th century. The deepest of these dumped deposits (317) also filled the top of a ditch-like feature 318 of which part was excavated, and proved to have been cut into alluvial deposits 319 and 329.

### **Trench 4 (Figs 2, 3)**

This was the first-excavated trench, used to give an initial insight into deposits. Apart from an extraordinarily deep-cut brick drain (421) which must have belonged to one of the 19th-century cottages, there was surprisingly little post-medieval buildup (401-403), and late medieval reclamation deposits were encountered at OD 50.52. Cutting into this level was the 2.1 m-wide robber trench 414 of what appeared the main river terrace wall 425, 433, continuing the alignment of the surviving medieval range to the W of the trench. Figure 3 shows the profile of the existing building, as compiled from minimal external measurements, projected onto the profile of the excavated deposits. Deposits S of the terrace (419, 420, 427-8) seem to be material accumulating against it in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The medieval date of deposits (404-413, 431-2) behind (ie N of) this terrace wall was shown by sherds of hard-fired late medieval pottery, and by their having been cut by the construction trench 423 of the terrace wall (fill 415).

### **Trench 5 (Fig. 2)**

Detailed discussion over access problems created for the client by Trench 5 left a very limited area which could be opened, and in the event this area proved to be crossed by three unmarked services. Since the results of Trenches 4, 6 and 7 seemed to have given a clear picture of the deposits E of the friary, it was decided to save the client the aggravation of damaged services, and Trench 5 was not pursued below the modern surfacing.

### **Trench 6 (Figs 2, 6)**

This was a long trench on the N side of the existing service yard. Beneath the modern surfacing were the brick floor and walls of a building shown on the 19th-century maps (619, 620 etc), which had been built on a series of thin dump levels, all of recent date (621, 631, 632, 637, 640-44). The lowest overlay the fills 649-651 of a ditch 652 running

along the line of the trench. The ditch contained pottery of 13-14th century date, and was cut into an alluvial level at c. OD 49.0 m, which overlay a different silt at OD 48.25 m.

#### **Trench 7 (Figs 2, 4)**

This proved to be the most disturbed of the evaluation trenches, with extensive stone and brick foundations of a building shown on 19th-century maps. At the E or river-ward end, the building was founded on an ashlar stone wall 709, with a single offset course 712, oblique to the present channel. Finds from the lower (waterlaid) silts 715 against this wall suggest that the river had extended to this point in the 19th century. Beneath the stone and brick footings 702 at the E end of the trench was rubble (702/F) laid on a clay-silt with late medieval pottery (705) at a level of OD 49.7 m. This in turn overlaid further silt 706 at OD 49.3.

#### **Trench 8 (Figs 2, 8)**

Trench 8 proved to be the most enigmatic of all. It had been rotated to run N-S in order to cross the projected line of the town wall exposed in Trench 10, but instead encountered only layers of post-medieval fill, including 18th-century Staffordshire slipwares (817-820). This material was recovered from a sondage dug by hand to a level of OD 49 m, substantially deeper than the medieval alluvial deposits in the adjacent Trench 7.

#### **'Trench 9' (outside contract)**

This trench was to have been located on the forecourt of the former Barge Garage beside the ramp of the English Bridge, and although removed from the contract by the client, subsequent removal of fuel storage tanks from this area in the week of 10 May enabled the County Archaeological Service to carry out a watching brief. Informal information from Hugh Hannaford and Mike Watson suggests that the basement of the former Barge Inn was 2.5 m deep, and beneath it was made ground to a depth of a further metre (perhaps OD 48.3 m) at least.

#### **Trench 10 (Figs 2, 5)**

This trench was intended to locate the town wall as projected from previous sightings to the W. Most deposits down to 50.4 m were late, and the drawn section (Fig. 5) illustrates how they dipped across the line of the town ditch, the upper fills of which (down to 1006) contained 18th-century finds. A wall 1052 probably revetted the outer edge of the ditch at this period. The lower fills were dated only by a 14th-century English jetton from primary silt 1062, but samples of waterlogged material were taken from deepest deposits for future analysis if required.

The masonry of the town wall was encountered at OD 50.2 m, and survived to 3 courses of ashlar (1013) plus one offset course (1014) on the outside face. The inside face had been damaged by a late intrusion 1017, which may explain a short section of N-S walling 1016 built onto the main wall. In front of the wall were a series of deposits (1007-1012), the uppermost including brick fragments, but 1011 having hard-fired late medieval-type pottery.

The town wall was built on a silty clay 1037 with 13th-century pottery overlying an alluvial silt 1022, with a slightly embanked profile rising to OD 49.48. Outside the town



ditch to the S the alluvial level was deeper, at OD 48.7 m, and here it was covered with a series of deposits 1035, 1061, 1063, 1067-8, very similar to the reclamation deposits at Trench 4. Pottery from these deposits was mainly 13th century, with later medieval in the topmost.

## 5.2 *Finds* (Fig. 8)

by Catherine Underwood-Keevil

A range of finds was recovered from the excavations, which provided a chronology for the main stratigraphic sequences, and in some cases give an indication of the status of the settlement.

### **The Pottery**

A total of 84 sherds weighing 1.17 kg was recovered from seven trenches. The pottery has been sorted into fabric groups and vessel-types according to the type series published for the Pride Hill Chambers pottery (Morris 1983), and counted and weighed by context.

The pottery consisted mainly of medieval sandy fabric types (Fabric types 1-12, Morris 1983) dated from the 13th century. The limited amount of diagnostic forms confirmed a date range from the 13th century to the late medieval period for contexts in trenches 3, 4 and 10. The presence of green-glazed white wares with incised decoration can be seen as a good indicator of the higher status of the occupants, and has been noted on merchants' housing plots elsewhere in Shrewsbury (Maxwell 1986).

The post-medieval pottery consisted mainly of Staffordshire brown wares, mottled wares and slip-decorated flat wares dated to the 17th and early 18th centuries. 18th- and 19th-century creamwares and transfer printed wares were also noted. Dating from comparative material from kiln sites in Stoke-on-Trent (Kelly and Greaves 1974) confirms the date range.

### **The Floor Tile**

The site produced 75 tile fragments, of which 27 were plain roof tile, the rest being decorated and glazed floor tiles. The majority of the floor tiles were from Context 428, and included incised/impressed line decorated tiles and slip and glazed two-colour tiles. Many of the decorated tiles were triangular mosaic tiles with incised decoration, and a mosaic-type with deeply scalloped corners. Three tiles are illustrated (Nos 1-3) since they are unusual for the area. The double fleur-de-lys motif (tile no: 2) has been noted at Hailes Abbey, West Midlands (Eames 1980, design no 2153) and dated to the 15th century.

### **Other Finds**

A chequer-board counter or 'Sterling head jetton' was recovered from 1062 in Trench 10. It bears the head of Edward II as used on coinage struck between 1320-1328, but may have been in use for several generations after this (Mayhew pers.comm.). Three fragments of medieval glass were also noted from contexts 1007, 1008 and 1009.

### 5.3 Other field survey

A area of the St Julian's Friars site was surveyed by Stratascan using ground probing radar.

In addition to the area specified in the Brief, Mr Barker surveyed the ground either side of Trench 10 in order to confirm the characteristics of a known wall structure on the site (ie the town wall in this case). A full set of radargrams will be included in his report which is in preparation, but in the interim OAU is grateful for the following observations which describe the type of evidence recovered, and interpret the findings for the immediate area of the friary site, as illustrated in Figure 7.

#### **Ground Probing Radar Survey: Interim Report (Fig. 7)** by Peter Barker

The survey has been split into three sections.

- 1 All work inside the garage (Radargrams prefixed 'G')
- 2 All work around the garage exterior (Radargrams prefixed 'E')
- 3 Traverses across the Town Wall (Radargrams prefixed 'TW')

The work inside the garage was carried out with two antennae, 300 MHz and 500 MHz. The reinforced concrete floor of the garage caused multiple reflections with the 300 MHz antenna making the data collected useless as no penetration of the slab was obtained. The 500 MHz antenna did however successfully penetrate the slab, as is demonstrated in Radargram G12 where the traverse starts 19 m outside the garage and ends 12.5 m inside the garage. Although the signal was attenuated to a minor extent, much useful data was still obtained from below the concrete slab. (NB The reinforcing can be seen in the top of the Radargram where it travelled over the concrete slab.)

The work outside the garage, including the Town Wall section, was all carried out with the 300 MHz antenna only, apart from E4 alongside one of the archaeological excavations where both the 300 MHz and 500 MHz antennae were again used.

The plot of the anomalies (Fig. 7) seen in the Radargrams is an attempt to simplify the complex nature of the survey results. The anomalies have been broken down into four categories.

#### 1 **Possible foundations or robber trenches**

These are generally higher amplitude returns, and normally planar in nature, although some with diffractions at their ends have been included. A good example of this category was the Town Wall in Radargram TW2 between Chainages 19 to 21 (not illustrated on Fig. 7).

#### 2 **Possible ditch or pit**

These were typically lower amplitude returns with a sloping or U-shaped characteristic. They can be simple and complex in nature. Good examples

of this were on Radargram E1 (300 MHz) between Chainages 4.5 to 10, and Radargram TW2 between Chainages 21 and 24.5 (latter not illustrated on Fig. 7).

3 **Possible buried surface**

These were typically level planar returns and can be medium to high in amplitude. They do not necessarily represent a floor but could be any horizontal interface such as a change in fill material.

4 **Possible pipeline or point target**

These were diffractions in the shape of a hyperbola generated by an object presenting a face or angle to the radar and being "seen" before the antenna is over the object itself. A pipeline running at right angles to the direction of travel of the antenna is a classic example. Such diffractions were seen in Radargram E4 at chainage -9.5 m where the antenna passes over a 150 mm diameter clayware pipe.

A quick study of the plot of the anomalies (Figure 7, Abstraction of features/Interpretation) shows the number and complexity of the features generally in the area. In particular the eastern end of the garage, and the area between this eastern end and the river to the south, show a marked concentration of anomalies.

This contrasts with the less complex area within the western part of the garage, apart from the suspected foundations beneath G4 and G10.

The depth of these features is not very great, falling mainly between 0.5 and 2.0 m (2 m being the typical maximum depth of penetration of the radar in these soils).

## 6 Discussion of the Fieldwork Results

The investigation of this site was approached on the basis set out in the brief, using information provided by the desktop report. Additional ideas on the archaeological objectives arose out of discussions with Iain Ferris for the client, Mike Watson and Hugh Hannaford for the County Council, Mike Stokes for Rowleys House Museum and Nigel Baker of Birmingham University, to whom the Unit is grateful. Little was known about the depth of the monastic horizon, nor the projected line of the town wall, nor the level of the premonastic surface. There were reports of a 4 m depth of alluvium on the flood plain at Shrewsbury at the abbey mill site opposite (Baker 1987, 24). The one identifiable datum was the existence of a waterside range of buildings with clear late medieval features, and with a present floor level at OD 51.89 somewhat above the modern ambient ground level.

In the light of experience of an entirely similar flood plain site of a mendicant friary at Oxford (the Blackfriars), which similarly includes some standing masonry incorporated in a domestic building (Lambrick and Woods 1976; Lambrick 1985), it was clear that a high priority was to identify the level of the monastic horizon at Shrewsbury, so that predictions could be made of the extent of the precinct. This was one of the reasons for starting the

trenching with Trench 4, the closest to the surviving medieval structure. Regrettably there was no definable monastic level, instead a series of fill levels of distinctive sandy material with medieval pottery. The writer was grateful to M Watson for discussions on the meaning of this material, in the light of recent excavations at a friary site beside the Severn at Bromsgrove, where there was evidence of terracing (Ferris 1989, 67-9). The extent to which this profile applied over the remainder of the study area was revealed progressively by the investigation of other trenches.

### 6.1 *Investigation of the pre-monastic surface*

By means of sondages into deeper levels it was possible to identify alluvial levels across the site. The material was uniform, a granular clay silt, substantially less clayey than comparable Thames overbank deposits (Lambrick 1985). At Trench 2 the alluvium was detected at OD 49.52 (prior to collapse of the trench sides), comparable to the (slightly embanked) level on the inside of the town ditch at Trench 10. The general level for an alluvial surface unaffected by medieval activity was nearer 49 m, ie Trench 3. 319, (49 m); Trench 6. 649 (49 m), Trench 7. 706 (49.3); Trench 10. 1022 outside the ditch (48.8 m).

This lower level was most easily distinguished at the S end of Trench 10, because here it was sealed by a thick deposit of red stony sand (1061, 1063, 1067), evidently weathered sandstone brought from elsewhere, similar to deeper fill deposits in Trench 4 (430), and logically the substance of reclamation of the lower flood plain for the friars precinct. We turn therefore to a consideration of this reclamation.

### 6.2 *Extent of reclamation for the friary*

Reclamation of the flood plain is suggested by previous work in Shrewsbury (Carver 1977, 246). The typical profile at the present site seems to be that in Trench 10, levelling off at OD 49.8, and the dating here would be consistent with a start date in the first half of the 13th century. Although only seen at the perimeter of the presumed precinct, the friable nature of the dumped material suggests that it was designed to create a building platform, rather than being simply flood embanking around the edges of the site, and its absence in Trenches 3 and 6 therefore provide a plausible guide to the limit of the raised precinct.

The Trench 4 profile was different (Fig. 4). The absence here of the basal alluvial level (typical of Trenches 3, 6, 7 and 10, see above) beneath the reclamation deposit would suggest that the fill had been tipped into a pre-existing hollow, logically into part of the main channel of the medieval Severn. It was to be fronted by the river terrace wall 425, evidently a single-phase structure, and taken with the limited amount of pottery in the reclamation layers to the rear it is consistent with deposition of the full depth of infill, as opposed to just the top, at a late date in the life of the priory (see also below). Considering the way the surviving riverside range deviates from the broad arrangement of post-Dissolution boundaries, and from a true E-W orientation, it seems possible that all the deposits seen in Trench 4 belong to the period of construction of the standing range, dated by Martin to the early 16th century (1937, 249). This may explain why this reclamation was carried to the higher level of OD 49.8.

It would seem therefore that similar material was being used for reclamation purposes both early and late in the life of the friary, and that the waterside range was a late addition to the precinct, won back from the river. The implied extent of initial reclamation is

nevertheless massive, and it is important to consider the implications of such earthmoving in a medieval context. If we take the deposit at Trench 10 as typical, it amounts to raising the ground level by c. 1.1 m over an area extending from the town ditch on the N to the near the waterside range to the S, perhaps 70 m, and from a point between Trenches 10 and 6 on the E to (presumably) the width of the existing road of St Julian's Friars to the W, perhaps 80 m, of the order of 6000 cu m of fill. The dating evidence from the deeper levels in Trench 10, together with the 14th century jetton from the ditch, makes it hard to resist a 13th-century date for this reclaimed platform.

I am grateful to Nigel Baker and Hugh Hannaford for discussion on the origin of the reclamation infill. It seems that the reddish sand in Trench 4 is similar to some subsoil deposits within the town wall and could therefore have come from remodelling of terracing on the high ground. The stony version could be quarry waste from quarries to the W where the Keele Beds are exposed between the loop of the Severn and the walls, the area still known as 'The Quarry'. It is understood that a reclamation deposit was seen in an assessment of the Shrewsbury Blackfriars site by BUFAU, and a decision on the source of the Greyfriars reclamation may be influenced by the way that the Blackfriars site was reclaimed (Buteaux 1989, 72).

Extensive reclamation of the flood plain at Shrewsbury has been noted by Carver (1977, 246), yet when unseasonable wet weather flooded the present Trench 4, and the sandy reclamation fill simply collapsed. Given the implied rise in flood levels for the medieval period, the same effect could have been happening to the base of the slopes around the town, leading to a description of Shrewsbury as 'the Cittie or the Towne of fallinge or slydinge grounde' (Carver 1977, 246). Construction of the town wall as a terrace around the foot of the high ground may have had the effect of controlling erosion in exceptional flooding such as evidently occurred in 1420, when water rose to a height of 8 ft in the church (VCH II 90).

### 6.3 *Treatment of the edges of the reclaimed area*

The failure of the reclamation material in Trench 4 to hold up in contact with water (above) should mean that its exposed edges would need to be revetted with something to control erosion. No revetment was seen to the N facing the town wall/ditch, but a stone revetment wall could have been removed in a redigging of the town ditch, or alternatively this side of the reclamation may have been regarded as at less risk of erosion. The Severn front would be different however, and it seems likely that the riverside always needed some sort of revetment. Trench 4 showed the partially-robbed remains of a stone river wall (425) whose robber trench (414) implied that it had been originally 2.1 m thick, much thicker than the surviving garden front of Nos 23-5 St Julian's Friars, but otherwise consistent in alignment.

It is apparent therefore that the reclaimed area was protected from river erosion by a wall of massive scale. Against this wall, layers of garden soil accumulated, including a range of unusual floor tiles (Context 428). The wall was only robbed after the 17th century (420), by which time it may have been no longer visible as a terrace.



#### 6.4 *Medieval buildings of the Greyfriars: a likely plan?*

Although a large area of reclamation is suggested for the friars, the trenches were all on the periphery, and tell little of the survival of building structure in the important areas at risk from the proposed development.

An insight into the layout of the precinct requires the analysis of a wide variety of data, little of which is likely to be corroborative. The existing archaeological desk-top survey by Iain Ferris (Appendix 1) draws together the available historical evidence from published sources and the County Sites and Monuments record, from which it can be concluded that the friars had two cloisters, an 'inner' and an 'outer'. A preliminary visit to one of the houses within the surviving medieval range, No 23 St Julian's Friars, in the company of the occupier Mrs Joan Fidler, did not change the suspicion that the medieval fenestration belongs to an originally single-storied building into which a timber floor had been inserted about 0.6 m above existing courtyard level. The present 'basement' or garden rooms of these cottages open at garden level on the riverward side, and could have been created by the removal of no more than 0.6 m of Greyfriars reclamation deposits to insert the brick floor, perhaps between 1793-1795 (*Gentleman's Magazine* LXV, 1795, 13).

Timbers visible in the E elevation of the surviving range suggest that there was a timber framed extension, and there is little difficulty in seeing this as a part-timber, part-stone, waterside range built on terracing created in the later years of the friar's occupation of the site. It is not impossible that the terrace was part of the new land added to the friars' property in 1440, deflecting the river and damaging the bridge (*VCH* 1973 89-91), though it is difficult to see how it would also damage the town wall in this position, and in view of the architectural and ceramic dating it may be best to assume an early 16th-century date.

Given the architectural and topographical evidence that the standing range was a late addition to the friary (above), it is necessary to revise the assumption that it was part of the cloister. Given also the distribution of reported burials, it is possible that the sacred part of the priory was to the N. A standard Augustinian conventual plan would have the church N of its cloister, and examples elsewhere suggest that most of the exceptions to this rule are sites where the most convenient water supply for the 'reredorter' stream (for flushing the monastic latrine) is to the N (to the E in the Bromsgrove example, Ferris 1989). The Shrewsbury site, with the Severn to the S, should be absolutely conventional, the only *proviso* in this case being that the discovery of a 'town ditch' to the N would allow the possibility that the friars shared the use of this channel. But it is more usual for a monastic community to have its own independent water supply, and with the river Severn to the S of the Greyfriars we can assume a conventional plan.

Again given that the standing building is late and probably not part of a claustral range, it is possible to argue that it is purely aligned on the river, and that the conventual buildings had a different alignment. A review of the available maps shows that relatively few of the post-dissolution boundaries are aligned on the surviving range, and interestingly most of those to the N are much more E-W oriented. Major walls tend to be used as the boundaries of plots in the Dissolution carving up of monastic precincts, and it would be no surprise if some of the boundaries which can be traced back through the map sequence originated from elements of major monastic buildings.

The most long-lived boundaries on the present site include those which now form the N wall of the Greenhouse service workshop against the adjoining No 10, and the E boundary

of No 10. The latter formerly ran S, as the W side of a woodyard. These boundaries can reasonably be traced back to 1774 but not earlier. They also lie within the zone of reclamation argued from the archaeological observations in Trenches 4 and 10. If for the sake of argument it was supposed that the E-W boundary between the garage and No 10 was the S wall of the church, then it an area of the radar survey under the garage, which has mainly 'surfaces' rather than 'foundations' (Fig. 7), could reasonably be the garth of the cloister adjoining the church. Those burials which are reported from the service workshop in 1938 and 1952 could belong to the cloister walks, and the burials with a mixed age range reported from the stores building in the 1960s would be from a lay cemetery to the N (see below, p 20).

This is the 'best fit' which can be achieved on present evidence. It must be stressed that the areas of corroboration are very generalised, and other interpretations of the radar data are possible. It should therefore be seen as a guide to the location of further trenches which would be needed to confirm the radar findings.

### 6.5 *The town wall*

While the detail of the Greyfriars needs the careful weighing of various types of data, there can be no doubt that the town wall survived well, and on a predictable line.

A new question which arises from this sighting of the wall in the St Julians area is its date. Most authorities reconstruct the wall on this side of the town as though it were a late outshot from the more continuous curve of a primary defence. It appears that the wall line at Trench 10 could be following the relict profile of a bank on the alluvial surface (1022), but this need have been no more than a property boundary to tenements fronting Wyle Cop, not an earth rampart of a previous town defence. Carver's date of '13th century' for this section is therefore acceptable (Carver 1977, 241, No 53), and it accords with a reference to a modification to the (presumably pre-existing) wall to make a gateway for the friars in 1246. Shrewsbury was granted the right to levy murage tolls over the period AD 1220 - 1242, during which period it is assumed that most of the wall circuit was constructed. The excavated section of wall can be seen as providing a defence in the early 13th century for what had previously been only a suburb.

I am grateful to the excavator Alan Hardy for pointing out that the simplest explanation of the relationship of the Greyfriars platform (Trench 10, 1061, 1063, 1065, 1068) to the wall (1013) is that the platform respected the wall, *ergo* the wall was already a feature of the landscape. This accords with the sequence adduced in the preceding paragraph, because it was in October 1245 that the king made his grant of land to the friars. The implication is that the platform material was not spoil from terracing around the town to make room for the new wall, but it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the stony sand included quarry waste and mason's waste from the production of large quantities of dressed stone for the re-walling of the town.

In order to try to plot the continuation of the town wall E towards the English Bridge, the proposed line of Trench 8 was turned round by agreement to cross the projected line of the wall E of the existing garage. It failed, and it must be assumed that the wall had already returned N. The wall may therefore be represented by one of the boundaries between Wyle Cop properties; there are two logical possibilities, either that forming the W side of the garage building which is the W wall of No 47 Wyle Cop, or a parallel boundary which appears on earlier maps forming the E side of No 46 Wyle Cop. The latter is preferred as

being the last of the standard plot boundaries on this frontage, which are assumed to have been protected by the wall, but more interestingly there are reports of exceptional depths of made ground seen when fuel tanks were recently removed from the forecourt of the garage (above, 'Trench 9'), which (in the light of typical alluvial deposits found in Trenches 7 and 8) is most easily explained as infill of a subchannel of the river which fulfilled the function of the town ditch outside the wall here. This brings the story back to the question of the existence of a town ditch at Shrewsbury generally.

## 6.6 *The town ditch*

The substantial ditch found immediately outside the town wall in Trench 10 (1060) is assumed to have been an integral part of the medieval defensive system. We are grateful to Nigel Baker for news of a forthcoming article in which he reassesses Barker's conviction that there was no town ditch at Shrewsbury (Baker *et al* forthcoming), and for references to a ditch in documents on this side of the town. In 1303-4 Richard son of Richard Sturi was granted 'all that place behind the walls called la Mote of the said walls' down as far as the Severn next to the tenement of the friars minor (ie the Greyfriars) (Blakeway 1907, 340-1). So we may assume that the medieval moat ran the full length of the friar's site; perhaps it was the one of the ditches dug by the Bangorian bretheren (Carver 1977, 246). Evidence of a perched water table at Trench 2 may explain the source of water to keep the moat filled, and may account for preserved organic remains within it, from which a sample was taken for future analysis.

East of the excavated section of moat we have a dichotomy. Logic would suggest that the moat water followed a straight course to the Severn, at a point where the line of the towpath revetment is indented. The alternative is, as observed above with respect to the town wall, that the moat followed the wall N towards the bridge. Here again I am grateful to Nigel Baker for drawing my attention to a feature which Blakeway identified as the *gulph*, 'an offensive mud-hole' and 'a disgrace to the town', long since removed in 1907. Blakeway believed that it was the site of *bulgerlode*, a way to a quay where barges were moored. He also notes a messuage with two curtileges, one being within the town ditch and one without.

This evidence was reviewed by Julian Munby of OAU in the context of archaeological observations of deep fill in both Trench 8 and the site of the former fuel tanks of the garage forecourt ('Trench 9'). He noted that a town ditch running parallel to the town wall here, potentially with a way to a mooring place of barges, and a reference to Juliana daughter of Richard le Bulger (bargee) in 1293, on a site which later became an offensive mud-hole, would argue that there was an extra channel of the river here, one which doubled as a quay for river barges and the town ditch, its E bank being effectively an island accessed from the bridge (Blakeway 1906, 379). The point where this channel met the bridge is a logical place for the first bridge arch, and perhaps the site of one of the gate arches shown astride the carriageway on the Burghley plan (cover), and perhaps maintained as a flood arch until the bridge was rebuilt in c. 1774. Regrettably the 'mud-hole' is not represented on any of the maps, but a medieval building described as being behind the Barge Inn may have been a wharf building on the island side, now beneath the garage building (Carver 1977, 242, No. 63).

The implications of these new findings are that part of the medieval town wharfage of Shrewsbury was beneath the Barge Garage.

## 7 Conclusions (Fig. 9)

The fieldwork covered by this report comes at a point when proposals for the redevelopment of St Julian's Friars are near maturity. The broad conclusions fall into three areas which can be taken separately.

### 7.1 *The Greyfriars*

The only possible route for the proposed new road would cut across the area which must be the precinct of the friars, between two groups of listed buildings, of which Nos 20-25 can reasonably be concluded to be a late addition to the friars' land achieved by dumping in the river. The sensitivity of this area, as previously recognisable from the two N-S ranges show on a map of c 1575, has been highlighted by:

- 1 recognition of the likely overall shape of the precinct, and likelihood that there was a lay cemetery to the N
- 2 recognition that the riverside range and other features along the waterfront are comparatively late, and on land created late in the life of the friary, and unlikely therefore to be part of the cloister.
- 3 results of topographical analysis of the plan overall, suggesting that the cloister should be in the area of the existing garage.
- 4 results of the radar survey, showing an area of mainly 'possible buried surfaces' beneath the service bays, with 'possible foundation or robber trench' features E and W. This would agree with such a cloister and its enclosed garth, while large deep 'possible ditch or pit' features under the access road could represent the line of a rere-dorter stream entering and leaving in a standard relationship to the S range of such a cloister. Radar anomalies to the E of this area could be the S part of the chapter house, and the easternmost could be a precinct wall near the edge of the reclaimed area.

All these factors help to visualise a cloister and chapter house on the site of the present garage and offices, possibly with a water supply entering from the SW and leaving to the SE.

In a wider perspective the scale of reclamation, involving an estimated 6000 cu m of imported fill, adds to existing archaeological and documentary evidence for such operations at Shrewsbury, which is exceptional in the English towns. It is therefore important to confirm that the dumping was consistent across the site, and whether it preceded the friars buildings or was dumped around already prepared footings, and how it relates to the 'domestic' scale of reclamation seen to the E of St Julian's Friars.

### 2 *The town wall and ditch*

- 1 the town wall behind Nos 50-2 Wyle cop is well preserved and close to the surface, and will be a material consideration in the development of this area;
- 2 the discovery of a town moat is a significant factor in Shrewsbury's medieval

defences;

3 the absence of the town wall in Trench 8 leaves two preferred lines for its N return, which cannot be resolved on existing evidence;

### 7.3 *The town ditch, the bridge and possible wharfage*

1 deep fill levels going well below the general alluvial level in two places suggest a water-course or moat heading for the bridge outside the town wall, in a location where there is documentary evidence of a barge wharf in the 13th century.

If Blakeway's reading of the documents is correct, a watercourse separated from the main river and having the dual function of town ditch and barge quay is most unusual in the English archaeological record, and may be unique in a field which has high priority in the study of medieval towns and their trade links. Anything which can be learnt of its relationship to the bridge will be of considerable importance.

Brian Durham  
Oxford Archaeological Unit  
June 1993  
(U4/2/D:\WS\SHREWSHREW.RE1)

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Lord Burghley map	(Eliz. I, c 1575)
John Speed	1610/11
J Roque	1746
R Marshall (prospect)	1734-62
St Julian Friars	1774
OS 1st Edn	c. 1825
A Hitchcock	1832
St Julian's Cottages	10.7.1880
St Julian's (gardens)	1.11.1911
Pengwern Wks (conveyance)	13.3.1914
W Garage site, St J F	24.12.1931
E of The Grove, St J F	1.5.1934
W area, St J F	21.5.1954
Hall site, St J F	1978

## **Appendix 1: History of the site**

(based on a desktop evaluation by Iain Ferris, 1993)

Construction of Shrewsbury's town walls, which may still be seen in the north-west corner of the site, probably belongs to the period of murage grants at from AD 1220-42, and the section in the Study Area must have been in place by 1246 when part of it was heightened to allow a gateway for the friars (VCH II 1973, 89-91).

The Franciscan Friary (known as Greyfriars) is first mentioned in October 1245 AD King Henry III ordered that a 'sufficient and suitable site in Shrewsbury should be assigned to the Friars for the building of their Church and for their accommodation'. The area granted lay outside the town wall, which was incorporated in the precinct boundary (Martin 1937, 8, 247); it was common for the friars to receive lands in less desirable quarters, and both the Dominicans and the Austin Friars of Shrewsbury were settled in similar locations.

The friars' church was still under construction in 1251. The gateway provided through the town wall in 1246 was enlarged in 1267 to allow carts to pass through. Building was in progress in 1371 when a stone quarry was made available near the house. Earlier walls had been at least partly of mud for reasons of asceticism. In 1382 and 1389 the friars were charged with obstructing a watercourse at Wyle. In 1440 new land had been added to the site, deflecting the river and damaging the town walls and bridge. In 1443 there were similar purprestures on the Coleham side of the river. Fish weirs were also built in the 15th century. In 1520 a granary was being repaired, and in 1529 further money was granted for repairs. The friary was poor in 1538 at the time of its dissolution, having no property or rents, but was popular locally

### **Buildings of the friars**

In many ways the Friary was typical of Franciscan foundations and this assists in the reconstruction of its appearance, but does not enable a fully accurate plan of the complex, complete with all its individual characteristics to be prepared. Buildings mentioned in the 1538 Dissolution inventory include 'upper vestrye, lower vestrye, the kechyng, the hall, the chamber (+ the frater)'. This list is not necessarily comprehensive however, and does not exclude the possibility of more extensive development. A grant of 1544 refers to the 'The Quyer' and 'Steple' and Chapter House. Normal features of such a settlement would be expected to include a Guest House, Chapter House, separate lodgings for 'the Guardian', a school house, buttery, kitchen, brewhouse and dorter, and the church itself, described as typically being 'a long house slated like a barne, boarded, the top leaded,' which we know the Friary church to have been. The main buildings of the site would have been arranged around the cloister.

The surviving portion (Nos. 20-26 St Julian's Friars) is widely identified as the 'frater', although it is dated towards the end of the friars' occupation of the site in the early 16th century and the standard work on Franciscan architecture describes it as a 'subsidiary building' (Martin 1937 Pl 27); a long low timber framed building of similar date which had adjoined it to the west was surveyed prior to demolition in 1967, and has been identified as the dormitory. Evidence suggests that building extended further west still, a range having been destroyed in 1879 when the Greyfriars Bridge was built.

Reference is made in a 1544 lease to an inner and outer cloister. Martin states that the

frater was normally on the first floor of one of the ranges of the principal cloister, generally opposite the church. Most of the maps appear to show the extant building forming the south side of an open area enclosed to the east and west. In part this effect was created by buildings in the earlier 17th century and 19th century on the west, but the 1575 map of Shrewsbury in Lord Burghley's collection shows the present building running east-west together with detached ranges running north at each end. These are unroofed and this could explain why John Speed's map shows only the extant building.

An average cloister size might be somewhere in the region of 60 ft square which would fit the map evidence quite well. If the extant building is the frater, then the maps may be showing the inner cloister, but if the inference of the new work is that what survives is derived by inserting a floor into what was originally a single-storey building, it is less likely to originally have been the frater, and may instead have been the 'hall' mentioned in the Dissolution inventory. This would support Martin's view that it was 'subsidiary' (1937, Pl 27), and in turn would imply that the cloister shape argued above was perhaps the 'outer cloister' the inner cloister perhaps being to the north and the church beyond that. The argument for a sizeable complex of buildings is reinforced by the decision of the general chapter of the whole order of England to meet there in 1509.

### Lands of the friars

The evidence relating to the land holdings of the Friary is more detailed, with a description of the size of the holding and the use to which various parts of it. Whereas with the buildings it was known what *ought* to have been there, with the land it is known what *was* there, but exact location and layout of the plots of land in relation to one another is again a matter for conjecture.

A lease of 1544 describes 'ten separate parcels of land' which amount to an average of 3 1/8 acres exclusive of the land occupied by the inner and outer cloisters. This is the amount referred to in a general description of the Friars; 'a proper house... no rents but the howse, and abote iii or iiii acres of eryabull londe lyeinge to it'. There are several descriptions of the land, all of which place it without the Town Wall and having the Severn as its southern boundary. It is the eastern and western boundaries which are not clear, although part of a precinct wall is known to have survived in 1825 (PRN 1523 ? Owen and Blakeway 1925, 461-4). The plan of c. 1774 names one area to the east, Pig Fryers, and one field to the west, Grey Fryers. The latter field is larger than 4 acres, the area to the east is about two acres or less. It seems more logical that the Friars would take a piece of land with a natural boundary on the east formed by the river, rather than an area less securely delineated. Owen's description of the property, drawn from a document of c. 1572, is the most complete, if not altogether clear; 'The portion of land called behynd the walles, which belonged to the Fryars minors was reported to be that which lyeth between the water quarrel and the fryars Ditches and from a red stone to the town wall next to the steeple on St. John's Hill and the pasture gate next to the Fryars so down to Severne'. Certainly that part of the field to the west, which in c. 1774 is called Grey Friars, is the same as that called Friars London in earlier times and referred to in the 1544 lease as part of the holding. Speed's map firmly locates Friars London to the west of the house. It is most tempting to say that the land is Pig Friars taken together with two acres or so of land to the west as the Friars holding. Given the Friars' known interest in drainage it is particularly interesting to note two large drains on the c. 1774 plan, one to the east of the property and one to the west on a line running north and south which cuts off a portion of the field called Grey Friars, of about two acres in size.

Given the above evidence for the precinct, only the cemetery can be appropriately located. In 1938 and 1952 skeletons were discovered opposite 'the portion now remaining' in a pit which was being dug in the workshop of Vincent Greenhouse (SBL D87/4066.61; Carver 1977, No 52). A further eyewitness report of a row of burials of various ages exposed in about 1969 during the construction of an inspection pit within the west end of what is now the stores building of the Greenhouse garage suggests that there was a lay cemetery close to the town ditch at the north edge of the precinct (information L Hamer). Otherwise although the area to the north and east of St Julians Friars appears from later maps and records to have been used as gardens, to state that these were therefore the ancient Friars gardens would be to conjecture even more dangerously than has already been done. As Owen so cuttingly remarks 'Conjecture is the last resource of ignorance and much more often wrong than right'.

### **Historical topography of the Study Area**

The Burghley plan of c 1575 shows the site south of the town walls to be mainly undeveloped, although the route network appeared to be much the same as present, with a bridge spanning the Severn at the site of the present English Bridge.

J. Roque's plan of 1746 indicates the street names of Beech Lane and under the Wyle to the north of the site and Friars Lane accessing the Greyfriars. Two drains are shown on the plan of 1774, one west of the friars across the present car park and one east running into the river across the present 'Kennings' (former Barge Garage) site. This was the site of tanning, where skins were stretched out to dry.

Although Hitchcock's plan of 1832 is the first to refer to the English Bridge by that name, the second bridge was believed to have been constructed around 1776 after the demolition of the stone bridge in 1774. (In fact, the parish boundary marking stone was removed from the old bridge and relocated behind the Wyle Cop southside footway in front of the old Barge Garage where it still stands).

The Ordnance Survey sheet of 1882 shows the site in considerable detail. Three timber yards were shown approximately along the side of the proposed relief road. Other developments include a smithy, carriage manufacturers (opposite the Acorn Inn off St. Julian's Friars) and a Baptist Chapel (to the rear and west of the Lion Inn on Wyle Cop, shown as a 'club' on the current OS plan).

The English Bridge was rebuilt in its present form in the mid 1920's and the water way below the bridge was increased considerably.

By 1927, development had taken place on the timber yard sites, with larger buildings being constructed. Little development appeared to have taken place elsewhere except for more buildings at the south end of St. Julian's Friars. However, the Barge Inn, (dating from the 16th century) is still shown at this time on the site of the former Barge Garage site adjacent to the English Bridge, although not shown on the 19th century maps. The Greyfriars footbridge is also shown.

The 1989 OS sheet (1:1250) essentially indicates development on the site as it is today. No's 7-10 Beeches Lane had been rationalised adjacent to the Town Walls and now stand vacant. The BT exchange 'constructed in the early 1950's) is shown although a club shown south of the Christian Fellowship Meeting Hall has been demolished to increase the

size of the car park; No's 28-30 St. Julian's friars has also been demolished as had the bridge Inn to allow construction of a petrol filling station and garage (now closed). The memorial to William Clement, situated at the south end of the Study Area, west of Greyfriars bridge is shown. The site immediately south-west of the junction of St. Julian's Friars with Wyle Cop has undergone many changes; first known use being as an iron foundry (since relocated), the site has been subsequently used as premises for a heating engineers, cinema, club and lately a furnishing warehouse.



Appendix 2: Table of archaeological features and layers

TRENCH 1. - Not excavated.

TRENCH 2.

	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENTS
201	TARMAC	-	0.08	MOD	
202	MAKE-UP	-	0.24	MOD	
203	RUBBLE	-	0.18	MOD	BRICK/CONCRETE
204	BUILD-UP	-	0.30	MOD	Pottery includes C18-C19 Creamware and local red earthenware
205	MAKE-UP	>1.30	0.10	MOD	OVER 206
206	RUBBLE	>1.40	0.14	MOD	DEMOLITION
207	DUMP	>2.00	0.15	MOD	
208	BUILD-UP	7.00	0.22	MOD	Pottery includes C19 transfer printed ware
209	BUILD-UP	>4.20	0.24	c.19th	3 claypipe stems
210	FILL	>0.80	>0.60	MOD	OF 211
211	PIT?	>0.80	>0.60	MOD	Pottery includes late C17/early C18 Staffs tankard base and glazed red earthenware
212	BUILD-UP		0.50	c.19th	Pottery includes Staffs mottled brown ware late C17/early C18. 1 claypipe stem.
213	ALLUVIUM		-	MED?	NO FINDS
214	WALL		0.23	MOD	BRICK

A total of 8 sherds weighing 0.1 kg was recovered from Trench 2, these consisted mainly of late seventeenth/eighteenth century Staffordshire tankard sherds and nineteenth century creamwares and transfer printed wares.

TRENCH 3.

CXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENTS
301	TOPSOIL		<0.40	MOD	
302	RUBBLE	>10.00	<0.50	MOD	BRICK/MORTAR
303	WALL	>1.00	0.60	MOD	BRICK
304	FILL	0.60	0.10	MOD	OF 308
305	FOOTINGS	-	0.15	MOD	FOR 303
306	FILL	0.40	0.22	MOD	OF 308
307	FILL	0.30	0.28	MOD	OF 308
308	TRENCH	1.40	0.70	MOD	FOR CONST. OF 305
309	DUMP				SAME AS 311
310	MAKE-UP	>8.00	0.34	P/MED	
311	DUMP	>10.00	<0.70	P/MED	GARDEN SOIL?
312	FILL	0.68	0.22	P/MED	OF 313 Pottery consists of reduced sandy ware with splashed glaze C14/C15?
313	POSTHOLE	0.70	0.44	P/MED	
314	DUMP	>6.60	<0.20	L/MED	SAME AS 315?
315	DUMP	2.20	<0.10	L/MED	MORTAR CONTENT

316	SURFACE	>2.50	0.10	L/MED	COBBLED? Pottery includes hard smooth sandy reduced ware C15 and a C13 jug sherd
317	DUMP	>3.60	<0.40	L/MED	FILL OF 318
318	CUT	>1.10	>0.45	MED	POSS DITCH
319	ALLUVIUM	-	-	MED?	NO FINDS
320	FILL	0.24	-	MOD	OF 321
321	PIT?	0.24	-	MOD	
322	FILL	>0.44	0.34	MED	OF 323
323	DITCH	>0.44	0.34	MED	NNE-SSW
324	WALL?	0.20	0.08	L/MED	Pottery consists of reduced late med hard sandy ware C14/C15 Decorated floor tile includes two slip dec tiles- 1 triangular dated C14
325	FILL	-	0.22	MED	OF 318 Pottery includes decorated whiteware- incised scale pattern C14 and coarse quartz cooking pot base
326	FILL	0.20	0.18	MED	
327	DUMP	1.50	0.20	L/MED	LENS WITHIN 314? Pottery includes hard smooth sandy fabric baluster base C14. Two rim frags to Type 6 cooking pot C13? hard gritty fabric, 1 rim to type 2 cooking pot C13+, 1 white ware base angle
328	FILL	0.80	0.10	MED	OF 318
329	ALLUVIUM	-	-	MED	NO FINDS

A total of 20 sherds weighing 0.24 kg was recovered from trench 3. The majority of these consisted of oxidised gritty sandy wares and hard reduced wares dating from the thirteenth century onwards. One sherd of highly decorated white ware with thick green glaze incised overlapping arcs 'scale' decoration and slip line. White wares have been noted from elsewhere in the town (Maxwell 1986) and are presumed to be an indicator of high status.

TRENCH 4.

CXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENTS
401	TARMAC	-	<0.70	MOD	+MAKE-UP
402	BUILD-UP	-	<0.30	MOD	
403	BUILD-UP	>7.00	<0.40	P/MED	
404	DUMP	2.00	0.19	MED	TERRACE BUILD
405	DUMP	2.00	0.14	MED	TERRACE BUILD
406	DUMP	2.00	0.04	MED	TERRACE BUILD
407	DUMP	2.00	0.17	MED	TERRACE BUILD Pottery consists of 1 sherd reduced late med ware
408	DUMP	2.00	<0.16	MED	TERRACE BUILD
409	DUMP	2.00	0.16	MED	TERRACE BUILD Pottery includes late med reduced ware.
410	DUMP	2.00	0.16	MED	TERRACE BUILD 1 dish rim type 9 vessel C15+ and sherd in reduced sandy ware
411	DUMP	2.50	0.20	MED	TERRACE BUILD

412	DUMP	1.20	<0.10	MED	TERRACE BUILD
413	DUMP	2.60	0.13	MED	TERRACE BUILD Body sherd hand finished sandy reduced ware
414	R/TRENCH	2.15	1.60	MED	TERRACE WALL
415	FILL	1.20	1.40	MED	OF 423
416	CUT				SAME AS 414
417	BACKFILL	2.20	0.95	P/MED	OF 414/416
418	INFILL	>2.50	0.50	P/MED	OVER 417
419	BUILD-UP	>0.45	0.32	P/MED	GARDEN
420	BUILD-UP	0.45	0.34	P/MED	GARDEN Brown ware tyg late C15-C17. Staffs flat waresherds early C17 and red earthen ware
421	DRAIN	0.60	1.00	VICT.	NNE-SSW
422	SILT	0.20	0.20	VICT	FILL OF 421
423	TRENCH	1.20	1.60	MED	CONST. 425
424	BACKFILL	1.50	>1.20	P/MED	OF 414/416 Staffs mottled brown ware tankard
425	WALL	0.60	0.50	MED	REVTMENT
426	BACKFILL	>0.90	0.36	P/MED	OF 414/416 C15/C16 hard sandy glazed base. 1 claypipe stem.
427	BUILD-UP	>0.45	0.30	MED	S.OF WALL 425



428	DUMP	>0.45	0.20	MED	S.OF WALL 425 38 decorated floor tile frags dated C15 and 3 roof tile frags
429	ALLUVIUM	>0.45	0.18	MED	S.OF WALL 425 1 white ware rim similar to vessel type 11 C13+ 1 floor tile frag thick green glaze
430	DUMP	>1.60	0.80	MED	TERRACE BUILD
431	DUMP	>1.00	0.20	MED	TERRACE BUILD
432	DUMP	-	>0.20	MED	TERRACE BUILD
433	FOUNDATION	-	0.20	MED	FOR WALL 425?
434	BUILD-UP	0.40	0.06	MED	OVER 433

A total of 18 sherds weighing 0.28 kg was recovered from trench 4. These ranged in date from the thirteenth century to the seventeenth century. The majority consisted of the hard reduced late medieval ware represented by the bowl type 9 in context 410. A large amount of decorated floor tile was recovered from this trench, notably from context 428. These consisted of triangular and star shaped mosaic tiles with line impressed decoration and slip and glazed decorated square tiles. Some of the tiles are paralleled at Haughmond Abbey (Lunt and Lisk in prep. and Lisk pers. comm.) and the majority that can be dated appear to be fifteenth century.

TRENCH 5. - Not excavated

TRENCH 6.

CXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENTS
601	TARMAC		0.04	MOD	
602	MAKE-UP		0.08	MOD	FOR 601
603	CONCRETE	>8.00	0.12	MOD	
604	WALL	0.24	0.90	MOD	BRICK
605	CON. TREN.	0.26	0.14	MOD	FOR 604
606	MAKE-UP	5.60	0.17	MOD	FOR 603
607	SURFACE	7.00	0.07	MOD	BRICK
608	BEDDING	7.00	0.08	MOD	FOR 607
609	DUMP	>0.90	0.20	MOD	E. OF 604
610	BUILD-UP	>0.90	0.22	MOD	E. OF 604
611	DUMP	>0.90	0.30	MOD	E. OF 604
612	FILL	0.58	0.40	MOD	OF 613
613	PIT?	0.58	0.40	MOD	
614	DUMP	9.50	0.60	MOD	
615	FILL	>2.60	0.65	MOD	OF 616
616	FEATURE	>2.60	0.65	MOD	TREE HOLE?
617	FILL	0.64	0.35	MOD	OF 618

618	PIT?	0.64	0.35	MOD	
619	SURFACE	>12.00	0.07	MOD	BRICK (STABLES?)
620	BEDDING	>12.00	0.06	MOD	FOR 619
621	BUILD-UP	>6.00	0.06	MOD	
622	FILL	0.68	0.26	MOD	OF 623
623	PIT?	0.68	0.26	MOD	
624	WALL	0.10	0.42	MOD	BRICK
625	FILL	0.60	0.36	MOD	OF 626
626	PIT?	0.60	0.36	MOD	
627	SURFACE	1.20	0.03	MOD	MORTAR
628	FILL	0.30	0.15	MOD	BRICKS - IN 630?
629	FILL	1.15	1.24	MOD	OF 630 - INC.628
630	PIT	1.15	1.24	MOD	
631	BUILD-UP	>12.00	0.34	MOD	
632	DUMP	>4.60	0.08	MOD	SLATE
633	BUILD-UP	>4.80	0.13	MOD	
634	BUILD-UP	2.00	0.08	MOD	
635	FILL	1.00	0.50	MOD	OF 636
636	PIT?	1.00	0.50	MOD	
637	BUILD-UP	>4.60	0.30	MOD	

638	DUMP	5.00	0.10	MOD	SLATE
639	DUMP	5.20	0.14	MOD	
640	SURFACE?	>12.00	0.08	MOD	MORTAR/SAND
641	MAKE-UP	-	0.14	MOD	
642	SURFACE?	-	0.11	MOD	SAND coarse grey flint and limestone cooking pot base Malvernian? Medieval
643	BUILD-UP	-	0.12	MOD	
644	BUILD-UP	-	0.28	P/MED	Staffs brown and yellow slip sherd . Transfer printed ware C19 and C18/C19 Creamware
645	ALLUVIUM	-	0.50	MED?	
646	ALLUVIUM	-	0.30	MED?	SAME AS 645?
647	ALLUVIUM	-	-	MED	
648	WALL	0.24	-	P/MED	
649	FILL	-	0.27	MED	OF 652 dense sandy oxidised ware jug rim vessel type 14 C13/C14
650	FILL	-	0.17	MED	OF 652 2 frags of glazed floor tile
651	FILL	-	0.09	MED	OF 652
652	DITCH?	-	0.82	MED	E-W
653	TRENCH	0.24	0.20	MOD	CONST.FOR 624

654	TRENCH	0.24	-	P/MED	CONST FOR 648

Six sherds of pottery were recovered from trench 6. Two sherds consisted of medieval pottery dated to the thirteenth/fourteenth century and the majority consisted of eighteenth and nineteenth century wares.

TRENCH 7.

CXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENTS
701	TARMAC	3.80	0.25	MOD	+MAKE-UP
702	LAYERS	>4.00	1.25	MOD	DEMO +BRICK WALL +FLOORS
703	R/TRENCH	1.00	0.30	MOD	OF WALL 704
704	WALL	0.50	0.25	MOD	CONTEMP. TO 707
705	ALLUVIUM	-	0.38	MFD	1 sherd of hard reduced sandy ware late med/post med.
706	ALLUVIUM	-	>0.40	MED	
707	WALL	0.48	1.00	MOD	NW-SE BRICK/STONE
708	STRUCTURE	0.80	0.50	MOD	STONE/MORTAR
709	WALL	0.80	0.90	MED	STONE TERRACE
710	DRAIN		1.00	MOD	C18 tin glazed sherd



711	DRAIN		1.00	MOD	Staffs brown mottled glaze sherd late C17/C18 C19 moulded white ware bowl sherd
712	FOOTING	0.30	>0.20	MED	FOR WALL 709
713	DUMP	-	-	P/MED	N. OF WALL 709
714	DUMP	-	0.20	P/MED	S. OF WALL 709 Staffs brown ware porringer with slip dot dec 1620-1700
715	ALLUVIUM	-	0.52	P/MED	S. OF WALL 709 Moulded edge creamware dish C18/C19
716	DUMPS	-	-	P/MED	ONTO 715
717	DUMP	-	0.04	P/MED	WITHIN 715
718	ALLUVIUM	-	-	MED	ABUTTS/UNDER 712?

A total of 7 sherds weighing 0.42 kg was recovered from trench 7. All the assemblage consisted of late medieval and post-medieval wares mainly from the Staffordshire area.

TRENCH 8.

CXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENTS
801	TOPSOIL	-	0.14	MOD	
802	DUMP	>1.30	<0.16	MOD	
803	DUMP	-	0.26	MOD	

804	DUMP	-	0.30	MOD	
805	DUMP	>1.80	0.10	MOD	RUBBLE
806	SURFACE	-	0.13	MOD	STONE/GRAV/MORTAR
807	BUILD-UP	>1.20	<0.12	MOD	
808	FILLS	>2.60	>0.80	MOD	OF 809
809	PIT	>2.60	>0.80	MOD	
810	BUILD-UP	>3.10	0.62	MOD	CUT BY 809
811	BUILD-UP	>3.10	0.16	MOD	
812	FILL	>1.00	>0.30	MOD	OF 813
813	PIT?	>1.00	>0.30	MOD	
814	SURFACE	>3.30	0.05	MOD	CLINKER
815	DUMP	>3.30	0.16	MOD	SAND
816	SURFACE	>3.40	0.20	MOD	COBBLED?
817	BUILD-UP	-	0.20	P/MED	COMPACTED C17/C18 Staffs slip ware dish, Staffs mottled ware tankard, Staffs brown tyg frag, tin-glazed blue dec ware and C18 bone china. 2 claypipe bowls.
818	BUILD-UP	-	0.18	P/MED	Staffs brown ware C17/C18
819	BUILD-UP	-	0.32	P/MED	Staffs slip trailed flat ware early C18. 2 claypipe stems.
820	BUILD-UP	-	>0.30	P/MED	Staffs hollow ware slip trailed early C18

TRENCH 9 - Not excavated.

TRENCH 10

CXT	TYPE	WIDTH	DEPTH	DATE	COMMENT
1001	TOPSOIL	-	0.20	MOD	
1002	DUMP	6.80	<0.32	MOD	DEMO DEBRIS
1003	BUILD-UP	>14.50	<0.20	MOD	CRUSHED COAL
1004	BUILD-UP	6.20	<0.30	MOD	OLD TOPSOIL
1005	BUILD-UP	3.60	<0.15	P/MED	SAME AS 1050
1006	LAYERS	5.00	<0.70	P/MED	ASH TIPPING C17 Staffs yellow ware and late C17 Staffs brown ware tyg handle. 2 claypipe stems.
1007	INFILL	>2.10	<0.35	P/MED	DEMO DEBRIS Brick/tile
1008	MORTAR	0.45	0.02	P/MED	DEMO/CONST SPILL?
1009	INFILL	>1.60	<0.38	P/MED	C13 grey sandy ware vessel type 2 rim, 1 grey sandy sherd and decorated C13/C14 slip and glaze jug sherd
1010	MORTAR	0.20	0.06	MED?	CONSTR. SPILL?
1011	DUMP	0.50	0.10	P/MED	C15+ hard sandy reduced body sherds with green glaze
1012	ALLUVIUM	-	-	MED	SAME AS 1037
1013	WALL	1.40	0.85	MED	TOWN WALL

1014	FOOTING	0.24	0.20	MED	FOR WALL 1013
1015	BACKFILL	1.00	0.32	P/MED	ROBBING OF 1013
1016	WALL	>0.30	0.40	MOD	RELATE TO 1017
1017	FILL	1.40	0.90	MOD	OF CUT 1027
1018	SURFACE	2.50	0.08	MOD	MORTAR/GRAVEL
1019	SURFACE	2.50	0.08	MOD	MORTAR/RUBBLE
1020	MAKE-UP	3.20	<0.30	MOD	MORTAR/RUBBLE
1021	DUMPING	3.40	<0.42	P/MED	
1022	ALLUVIUM	-	>1.20	MED	C13 reduced gritty sandy ware similar fabric to C13 rim in context 327 and oxidised fabric type similar to context 327.
1023	VOID				
1024	VOID				
1025	VOID				
1026	VOID				
1027	CUT	1.50	1.20	MOD	N. SIDE 1013
1028	TRENCH	0.80	1.05	MOD	DRAIN CONSTRUCT
1029	FILL	0.80	1.05	MOD	DRAIN - IN 1028
1030	TRENCH?	>1.00	0.60	P/MED	DRAIN CONSTRUCT?
1031	FILL	>1.00	0.60	P/MED	OF 1030
1032	VOID				

1033	VOID							
1034	INFILL	>1.60	0.40	MOD		OVER 1027		
1035	MAKE-UP	>1.10	<0.30	MED		TERRACE BUILD. Pottery includes late med hard gritty ware C14/C15		
1036	PIT	0.70	0.35	MOD		+FILL		
1037	ALLUVIUM	-	>0.50	MED		Late med reduced sandy hard ware with thick green glaze.		
1038	DUMP	3.20	<0.20	MOD				
1039	PIT	0.80	0.70	P/MED				
1040	FILL	0.80	0.70	P/MED		OF 1039		
1041	SURFACES	>6.50	<0.20	MOD		BRICK/GRAVEL/MORT		
1042	MAKE-UP	0.80	0.09	MOD				
1043	BUILD-UP	0.80	0.08	MOD		CRUSHED COAL		
1044	TRENCH	0.30	0.35	MOD		CONSTRUCTION		
1045	FILL	0.15	0.30	MOD		OF 1044		
1046	FILL	0.12	0.30	MOD		OF 1044		
1047	FOOTINGS	>0.28	0.45	MOD		FOR 1044 BUILD		
1048	DUMP	1.60	<0.48	MOD				
1049	BUILD-UP	2.60	<0.35	MOD				
1050	BUILD-UP	2.40	<0.40	P/MED		SAME AS 1005		
1051	DUMP	1.10	<0.15	P/MED		DEMO OF 1052?		
1052	WALL	0.75	0.40	P/MED		REVEITTING		



1053	BUILD-UP	2.00	<0.30	P/MED	ABUTS 1052
1054	INFILL	1.00	0.15	P/MED	INTO 1060
1055	INFILL	>3.00	0.05	P/MED	PART OF 1006
1056	INFILL	<4.00	<0.30	P/MED	INTO 1060
1057	INFILL	>1.00	<0.35	P/MED	DEMO DEBRIS IN 1060.
1058	INFILL	2.30	<0.40	P/MED	SAME AS 1057
1059	DUMP	1.10	<0.10	MOD	
1060	DITCH	7.00	>2.30	P/MED	TOWN DITCH
1061	MAKE-UP	>1.60	<0.45	MED	TERRACE BUILD 1 decorated floor tile frag C14? and 2 glazed floor tile frags
1062	BUILD-UP	>2.60	0.08	P/MED?	OR DITCH LINING? Sterling Head English jetton, equal to type XV circulated 1320- 28 and onwards.
1063	MAKE-UP	>2.20	0.30	MED	MORTAR/HARDCORE TERRACE BUILD
1064	BUILD-UP	3.00	<0.45	P/MED	
1065	INFILL	-	>0.50	P/MED	
1066	INFILL	-	<0.15	P/MED	HIGH ORGANIC
1067	MAKE-UP	>2.20	<0.40	MED	TERRACE BUILD
1068	ALLUVIUM	0.60	0.08	MED	TERRACE BUILD? 1 sherd of oxidised sandy ware similar to rim dated to C13/C14 in context 649.
1069	INFILL	-	-	P/MED	OF 1060

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A total of 15 sherds weighing 0.21 kg was recovered from trench 10. The earliest material is thirteenth century in date from contexts 1022 and 1009 with a late C13/C14 decorated sherd in context 1009, two sherds in contexts 1035 and 1037 indicate late med fourteenth to fifteenth century fabric types. Seventeenth century pottery is limited to context 1006. The slip and glaze decorated floor tile in context 1061 has parallels with tile motifs at Haughmond Abbey (Design 33) and with tiles from Pride Hill Chambers, Shrewsbury (Design 101), examples from elsewhere indicate a fourteenth century dating. Of note also is a sterling jetton from context 1062 dating from the early fourteenth century onwards.

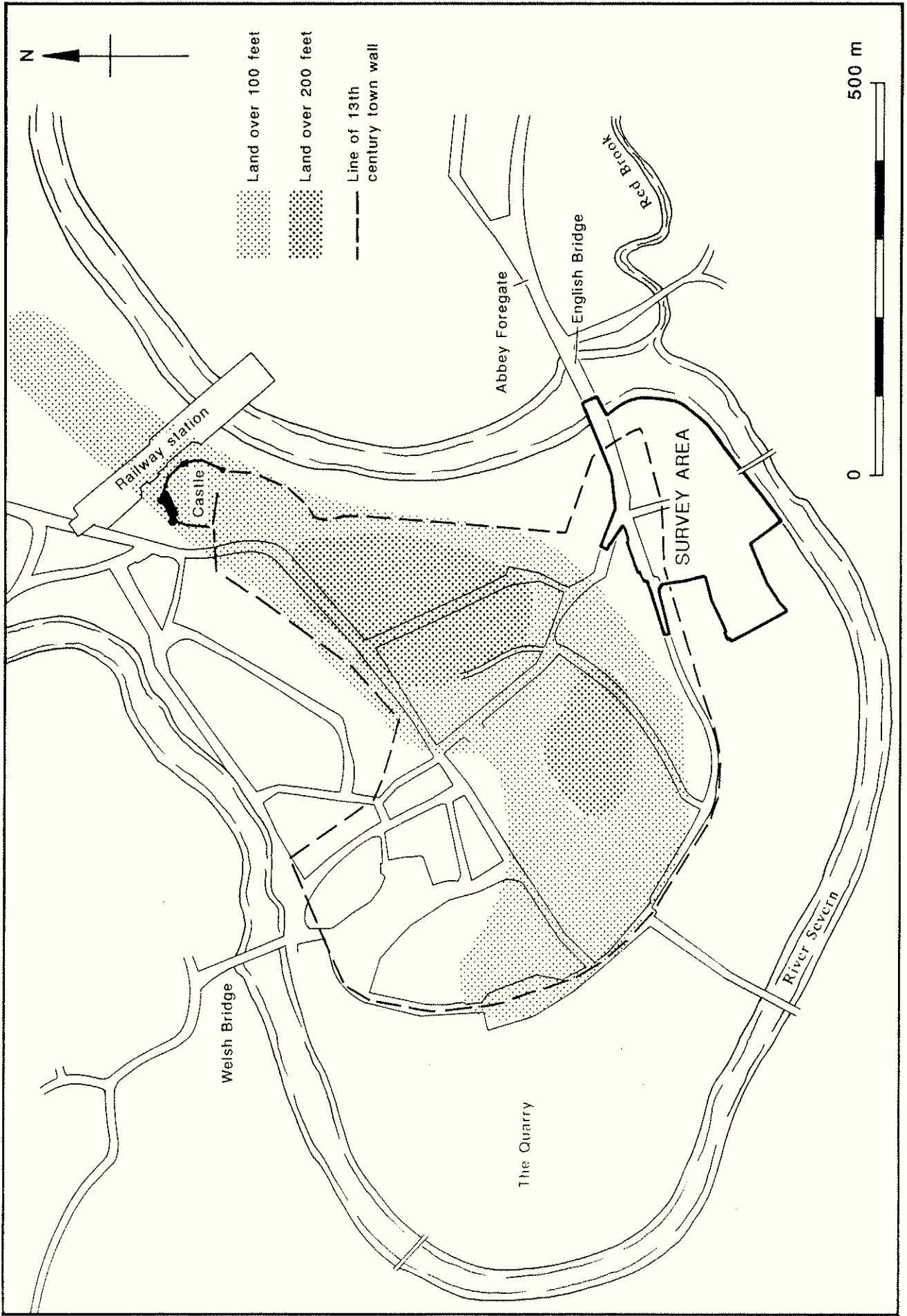


Fig. 1

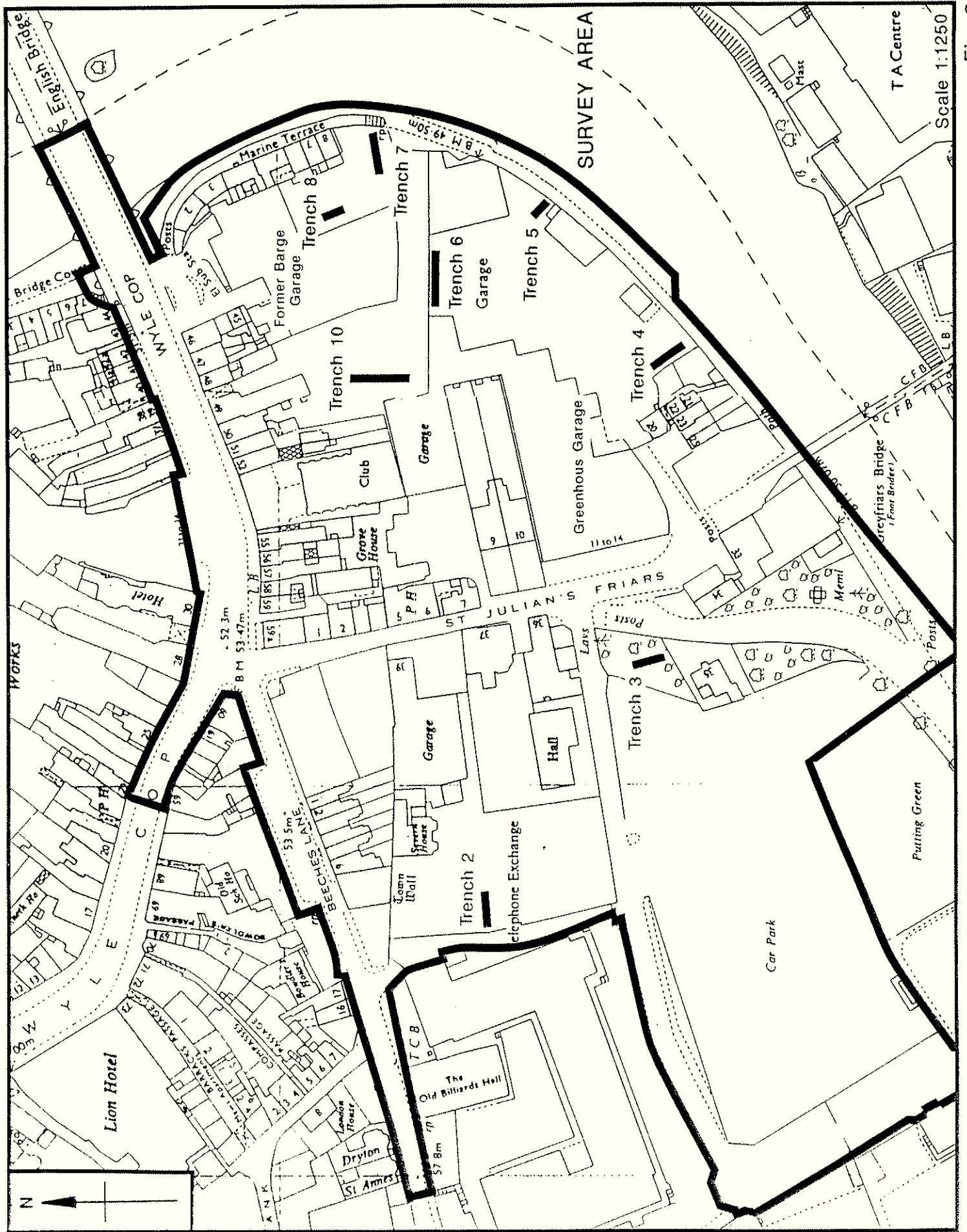


Fig. 2

Profile of Trench 4 projected onto profile of standing range

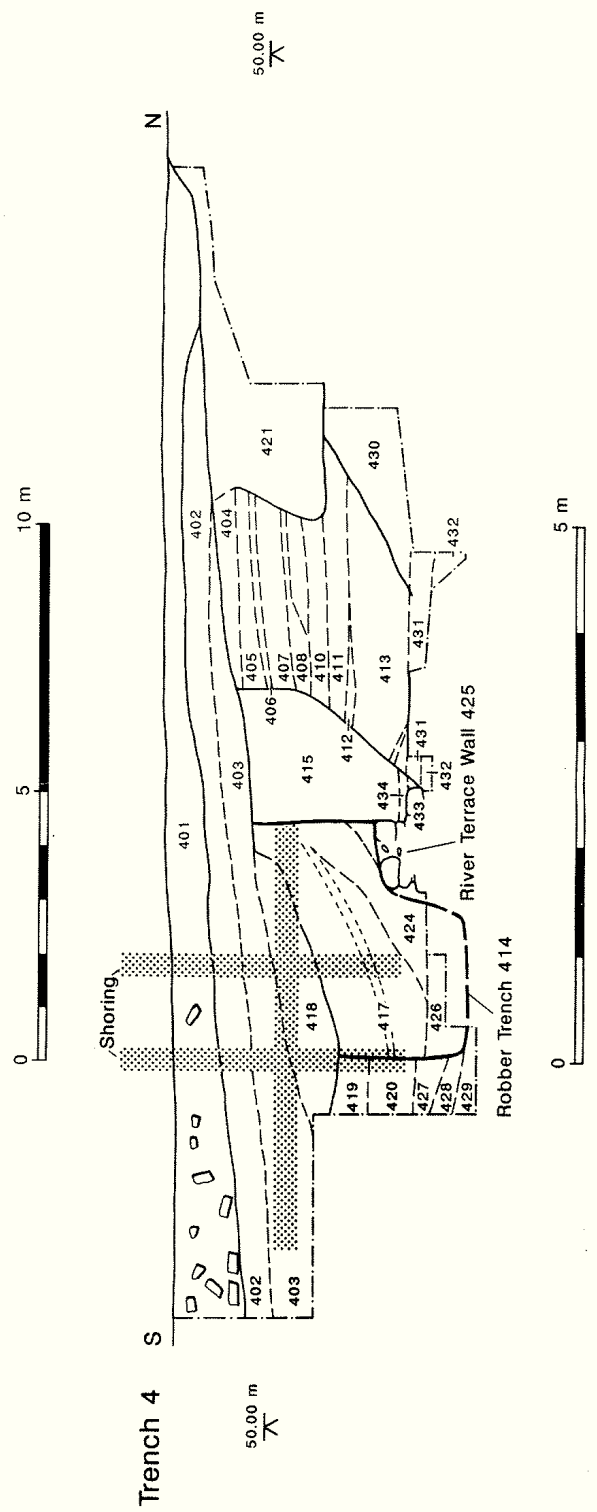
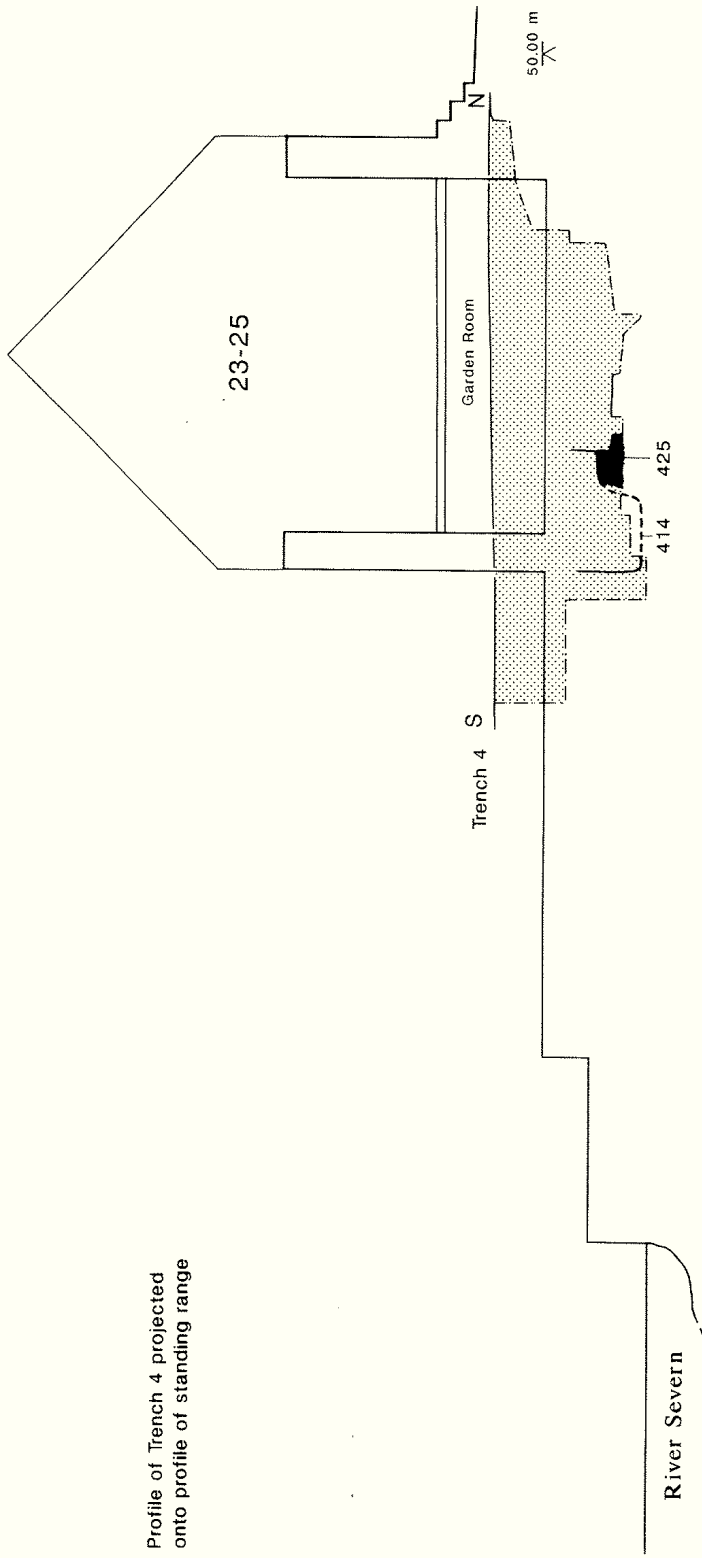


Fig. 3



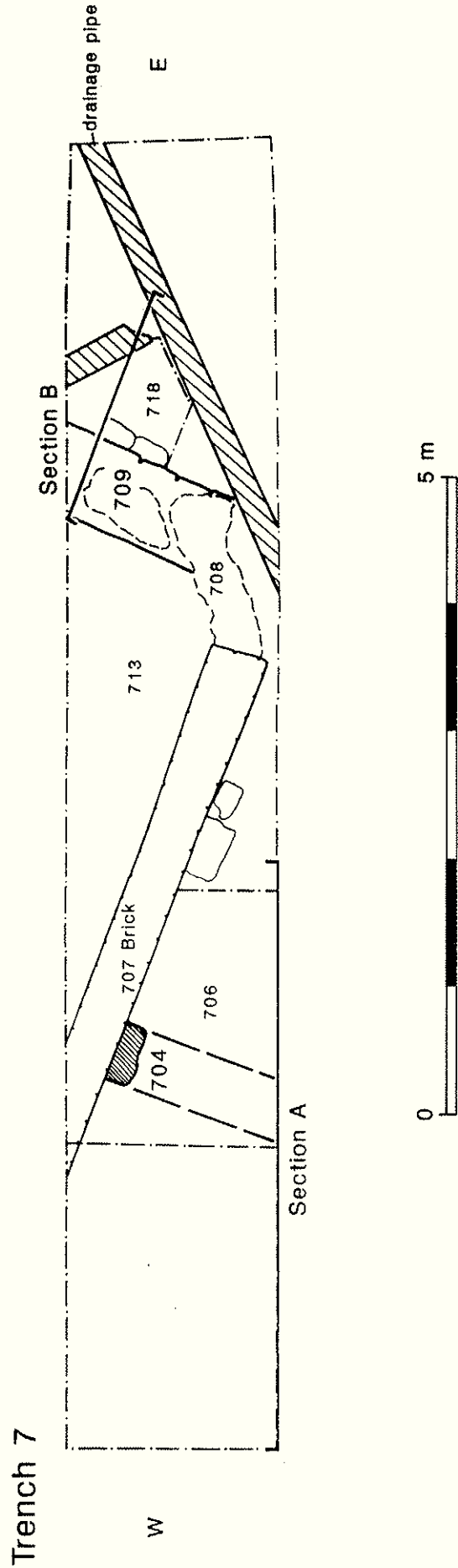
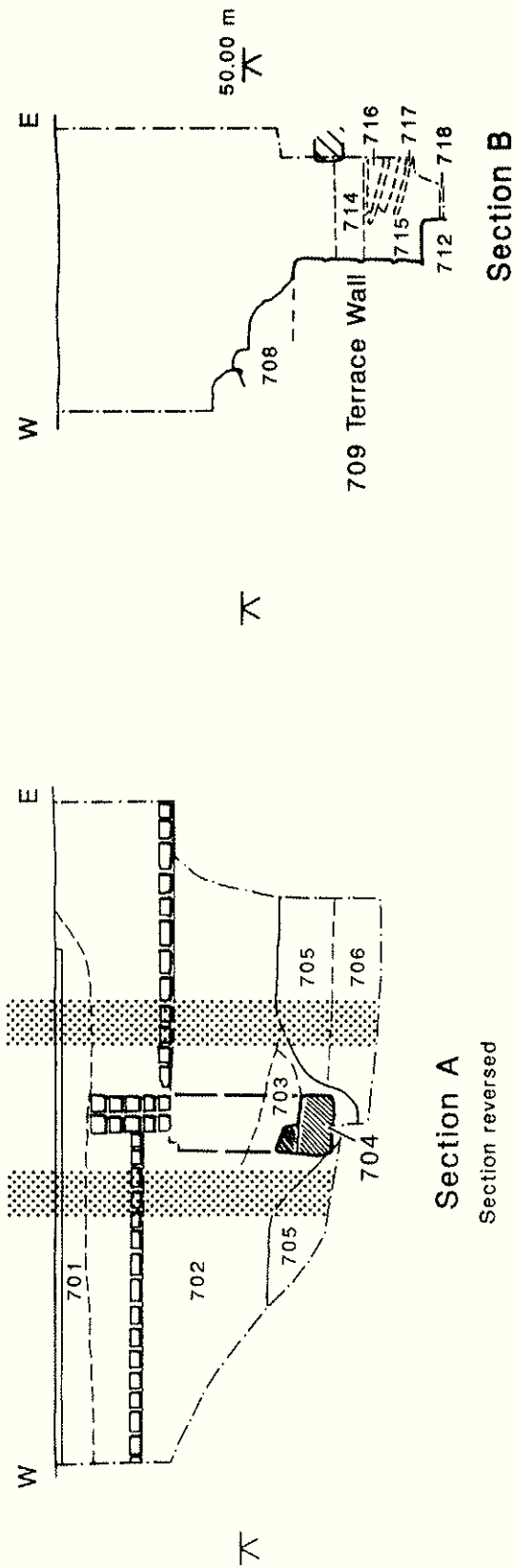
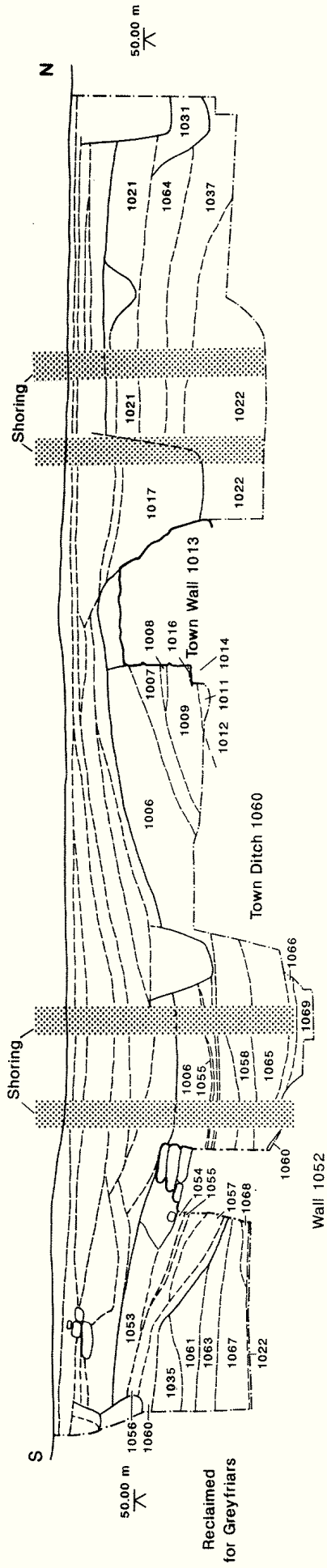
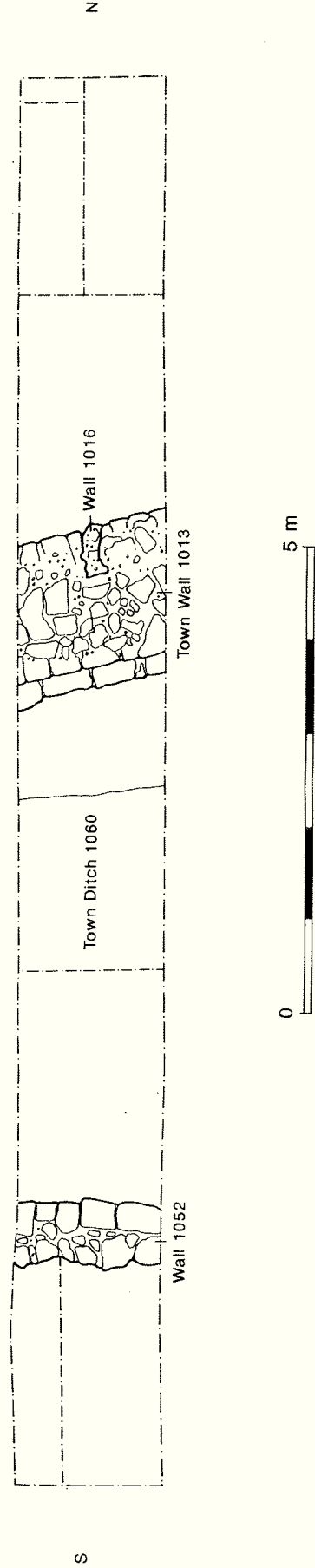


Fig. 4

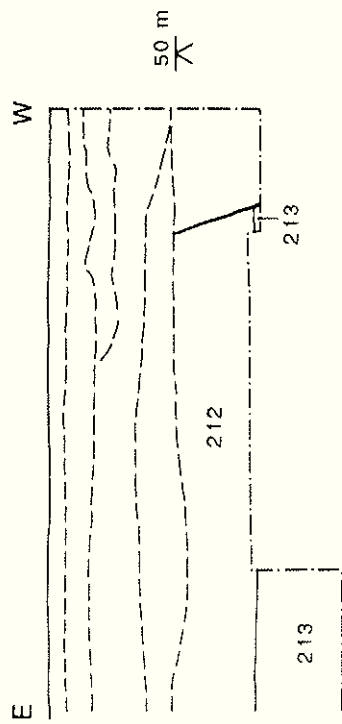
Trench 10



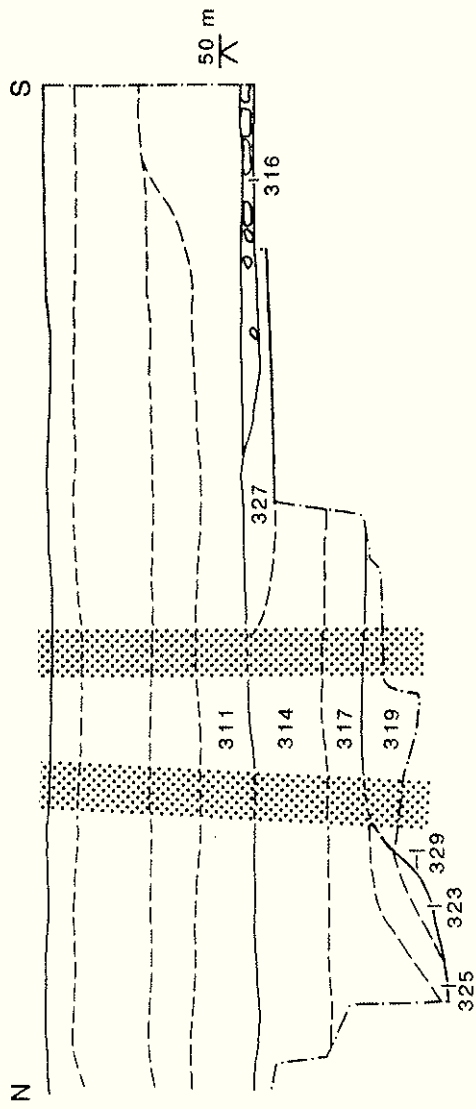
Trench 10



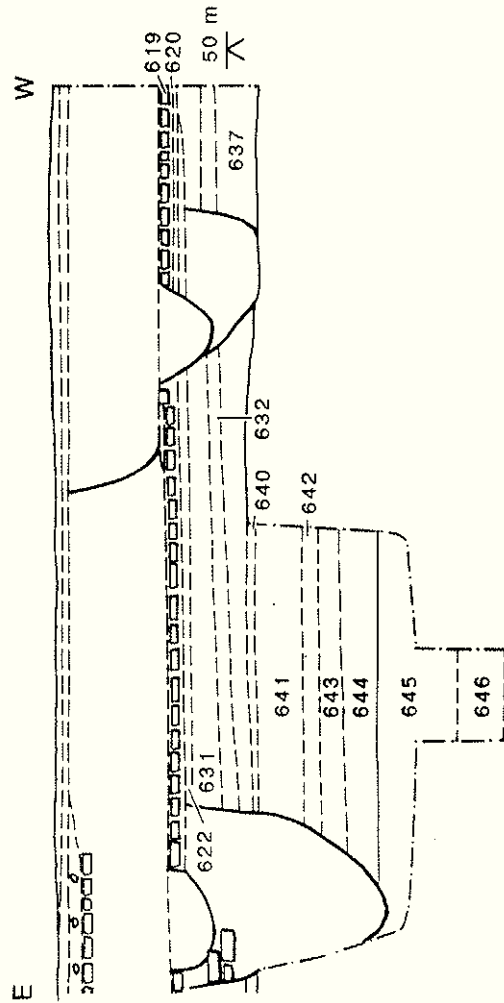
Trench 2



Trench 3



Trench 6



Trench 8

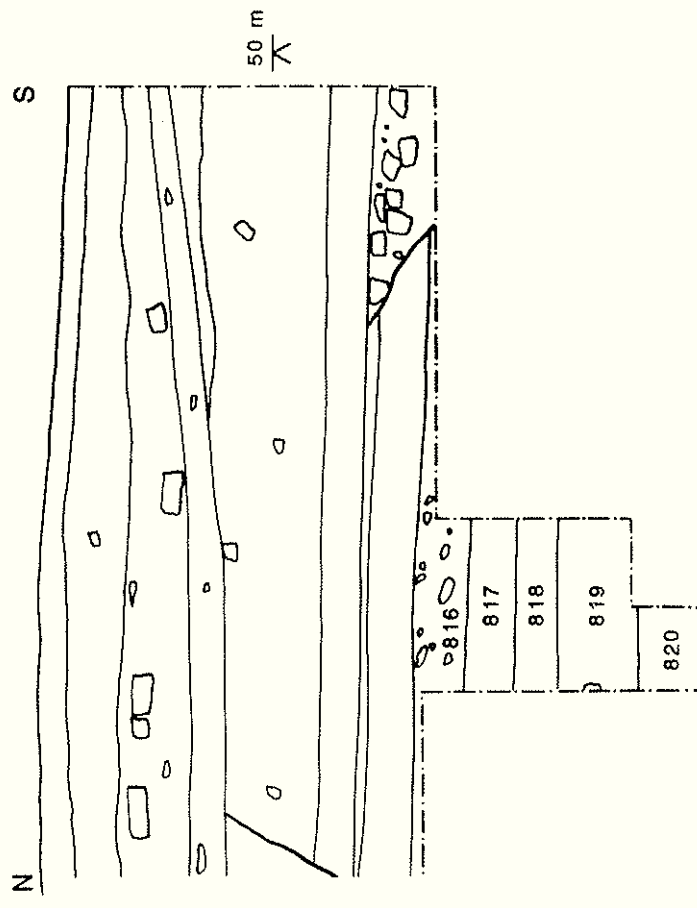
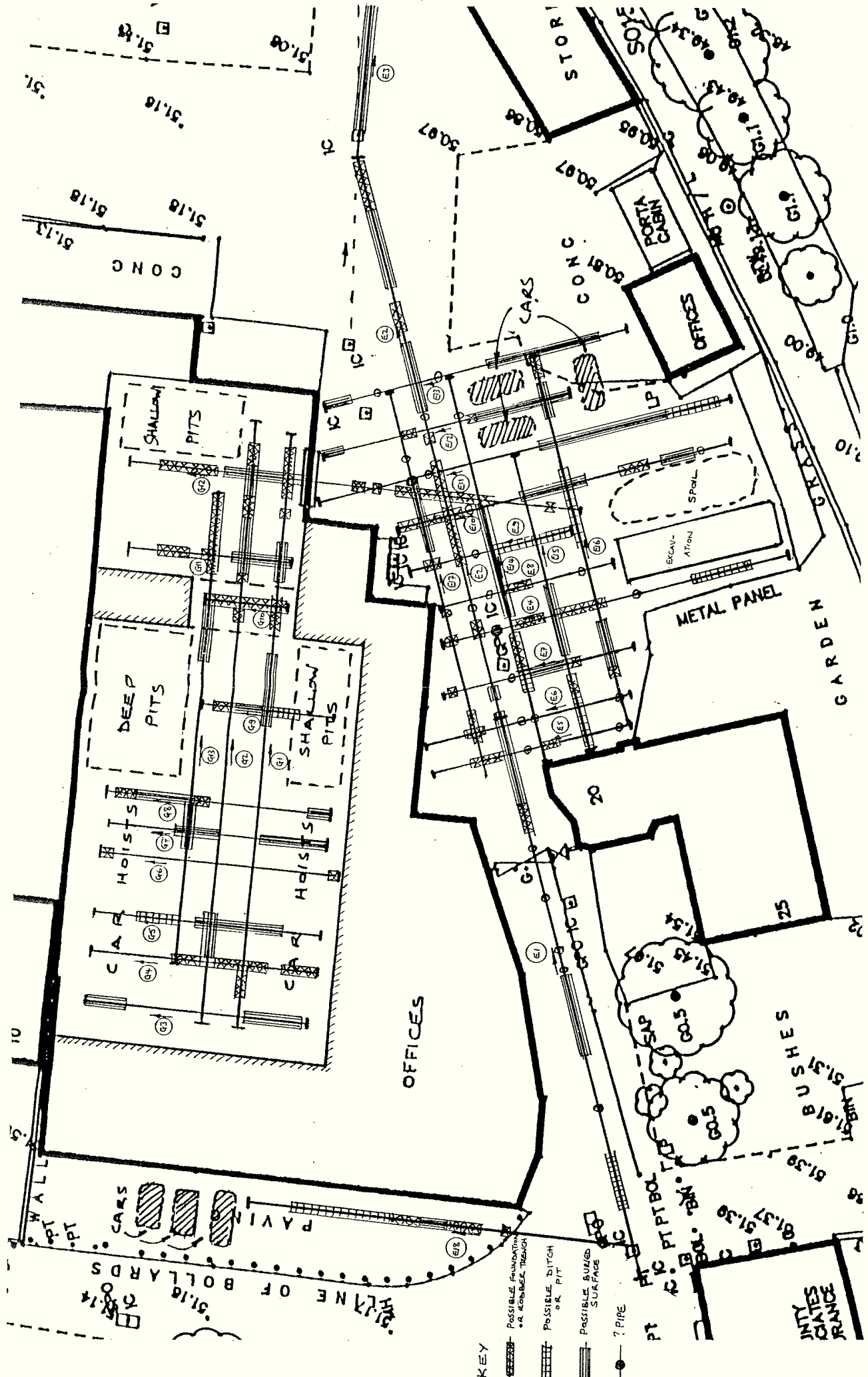
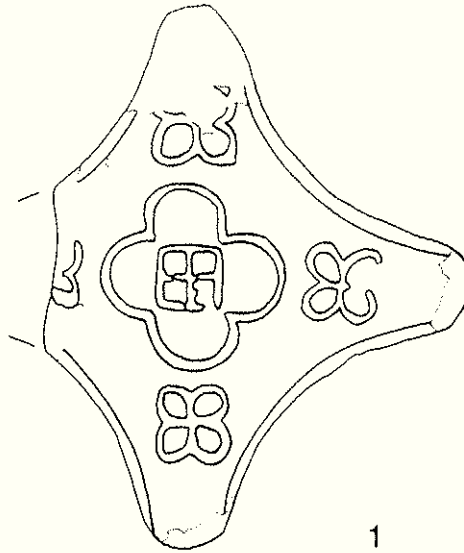


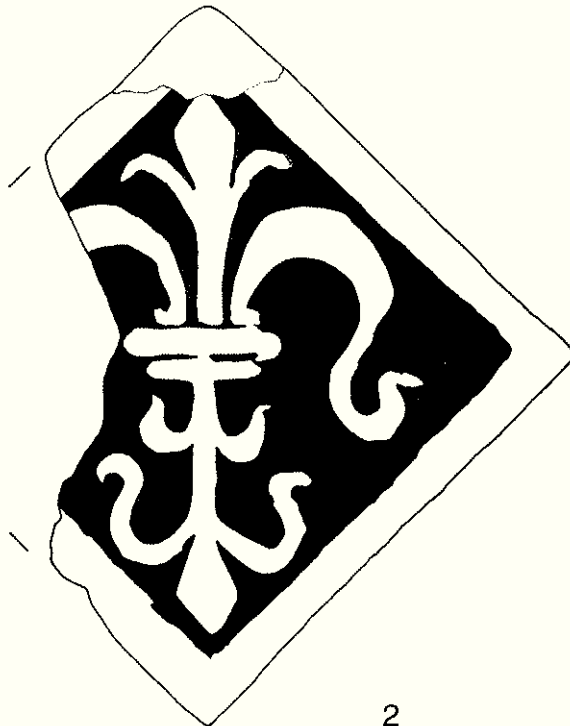
Fig. 6



Date	31st May 1993	Client	OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT	Figure	TILTRIDGE FARM UPPER HOOK ROAD UPTON UPON SEVERN WORCESTERSHIRE WR8 0SA UK
Scale	1:250	Subject	Ground Probing Radar Survey St Julians Friars, Shrewsbury	Figure	TELEPHONE (0684) 592266 FAX (0684) 594142



1



2



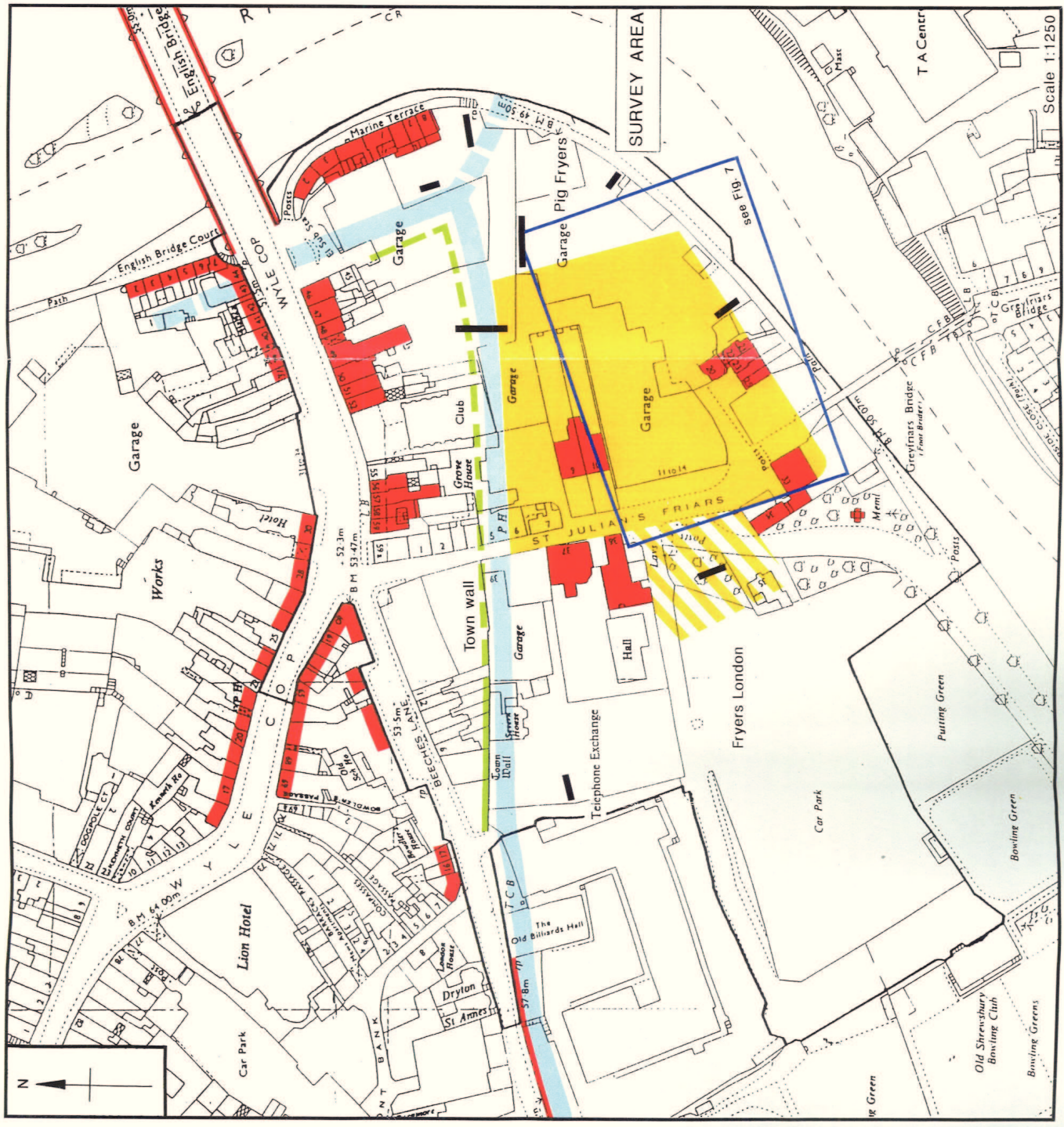
3

Scale 1:2  
Fig. 8



Fig. 9

- Key
- OAU Trenches May 1993
  - Listed buildings within & adjoining survey area
  - Moat
  - Bulk reclamation for Greyfriars
  - Domestic reclamation & usage



Scale 1:1250

## SHREWSBURY, ST JULIAN FRIARS STUDY AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 1993

### Recommendations

The evaluation report shows that the fieldwork of May 1993 was successful in narrowing down the constraints on development of the above Study Area as created by the town wall and the Greyfriars.

The most important implications on a national plane are that the site could show how a major reclamation process was integrated with the construction of a mendicant friary, how the incorporation of a suburb into the defences of an important medieval town affected existing suburban properties, and how a section of the ditch/moat of that town operated as a barge quay adjoining a major river bridge.

The factors may be seen by the planning authority as marking the site out as highly sensitive. Certain of the critical deposits lie at a depth where they can be preserved by carrying the development over them, but mitigation of this nature needs to be supported by further information. In addition to the constraints of DoE guidance note PPG 16, it should be noted that Para 6.2 of the DoT Good Roads Guide (Dec 1992) stresses the importance of understanding archaeological deposits before adopting the policy of burying them, and where direct impact is unavoidable, a design solution involving engineers, architects and archaeologists is needed.

### Greyfriars precinct and area to W

It would be prudent to assume that later friary surfaces could survive at OD 50.5 m, (the uppermost reclamation deposit in Trench, and the uppermost level of features predicted by radar), and that good quality stonework may survive to OD 50.2 m (the town wall).

### Recommendations

- 1 *The road-bed should be designed to keep above OD 50.5 m, with services kept to the line of a duct which should be excavated and recorded archaeologically in advance of construction.*
- 2 *The ground plan and service runs of new buildings proposed within the putative monastic precinct and the area of domestic reclamation to the W should be investigated archaeologically in advance.*
- 3 *A survey should be undertaken of the surviving medieval building.*

### The town wall

As with other recent developments in Shrewsbury, there is potential conflict between the line of the medieval town wall and the requirement of development. Some constraints have already been recognised in the Ove Arup report on the present proposal; in order to comply with the requirements of PPG 16 we would strongly recommend confirmation (by archaeological means) of the line of the town wall returning under the former Barge Garage, and the moat in front of it. If the corner of the town wall was to be cut off by the new road we suggest a clear justification should be prepared in advance.

In view of the linear nature of the town wall as a monument, we would suggest that it could be protected by making it a feature of the development, which could be achieved by the following:

## **Recommendations**

- 4 *The proposed relief road where it runs into Beeches Lane should be carried on a bridge-type construction over the scheduled section of town wall.*
- 5 *Subject to confirmation of the town wall line under the Barge Garage, the width of proposed walkways and the precise location of buildings should be adjusted to create a 'wall-walk' on the line of the wall.*

## **Town ditch and possible wharfage**

Any timber structure of a medieval waterfront or wharf buildings under the Barge Garage will be damaged by piling and other deep groundworks related to the proposed relief road and adjoining buildings. Given the absence of any waterside structures in the archaeological record of Shrewsbury there is clear indication that something as important as a wharf should be evaluated.

## **Recommendation**

- 6 *A trench should be excavated archaeologically beneath the floor of the Barge Garage to provide the basis on which informed engineering decisions could be made.*

## **Remainder of the site**

Several substantial archaeological questions have arisen during the fieldwork, and would merit further study as follows:

a In the 'Fryers London' area (Trenches 2 and 3 areas) a question arose under 6.2 whether the raised level of the alluvial surface at Trench 2 might imply slippage of material from the face of the natural river terrace as a result of flood erosion before the construction of the 13th-century wall. A watching brief on construction work would potentially confirm this.

b In the area of 'Pig Fryers' and the riverside terrace to the E (Trenches 5, 6 and 7), the evidence points to reclamation in the 18th century, possibly starting from two directions, eastwards from St Julian's and southwards from the English Bridge. The inference that there was an outfall from the town moat S of Trench 7 needs to be investigated, because of its absence from the early maps, and because of the insight it might give to the site of the medieval wharfage with which it would communicate.

## **Recommendation:**

- 7 *A recording watching brief should be carried out during construction work in the areas of the friars' precinct, the town wall, the town ditch and presumed wharf, and the waterfront between the friars' precinct and Marine Terrace, in order to provide background information on the specific archaeological priorities identified in Recommendations 1-6.*

Oxford Archaeological Unit  
18 June 1993