

Land at the rear of
Chequers Public House
11 Wallingford Road
Cholsey
Oxfordshire

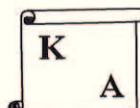


Archaeological Watching Brief



Oxford Archaeology

6th February 2002



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**Land at rear of Chequers Public House
11 Wallingford Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire.**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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SUMMARY

In January 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Chequers Public House, 11 Wallingford Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 589 868). The work was commissioned by Kempston Associates on behalf of Mr Angur Miah in advance of the construction of a new extension. The watching brief revealed that the current building saw at least one phase of modification, and was probably built originally in the later post-medieval period. Probable post-medieval features including a cess pit and ditches were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In January 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief on land at the rear of Chequers Public House, 11 Wallingford Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire (Fig. 2). The work was commissioned by Kempston Associates on behalf of Mr Angur Miah in respect of a planning application for construction of a new extension (Planning Application No. PO1/W0796)
- 1.1.2 No formal brief was issued for the project, though discussions took place between OA and Paul Smith, the County Archaeological Officer as to the best way of mitigating the impact of the development.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would undertake a watching brief during the groundwork (OA 2002).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on the edge of the valley gravel overlying lower chalk at 45 m OD. The site is 0.1 hectares in area.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI for the project (OA 2002) and is summarised below.
- 1.3.2 The Dorchester-Silchester Roman Road extends to the west of the application area and Roman occupation remains have been found in the vicinity. A coin of Constantine 1st (PRN 7638) was found nearby and a number 3rd-4th century coins are reported west of Honey Lane (PRN 2686, 7953).
- 1.3.3 A Saxon glass bead was found in 1965 on the west side of Cholsey (PRN 7637). Medieval occupation evidence has been identified within the village (PRN 879) and further medieval remains were recorded at Cholsey Vicarage in 1992 (PRN 5941).
- 1.3.4 In November 1999 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU, now Oxford Archaeology, OA) carried out a field evaluation at 10 Amwell Place, Cholsey (due south of this development site) followed by a watching brief in 2001 - a possible medieval pit and a medieval or post-medieval ditch were identified here.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The garden topsoil and a concrete base were removed. The foundation trenches were then excavated with a mini excavator equipped with 0.8 m and 0.5 m wide toothed buckets. The area within the extension was reduced by 0.3 m and the foundation trenches excavated to a depth of 1 m (Fig. 3).
- 2.2.2 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:100 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The site soils consisted of a dark greyish brown silty clay loam topsoil (1) 0.15 to 0.3 m thick overlying the natural weathered chalk with bands of sandy chalk gravel (2). The topsoil sealed a number of features that cut into the natural.
- 3.1.2 At the centre of the new building plot was a large north-south aligned ditch (3) with steep sloping sides rounding to a concave base (Figs 3 & 4, sections 1 & 2). The ditch was at least 6 m long as seen and 2.9 m wide by 0.34 m deep.
- 3.1.3 At a point two metres from the building, the ditch narrowed sharply to a near vertical sided cut with a flat base (Fig. 4, section 2). Here the feature was filled by a very dark greyish brown silty clay loam with charcoal and chalk flecks and patches of chalk (4). The ditch cut an earlier oval shaped pit (5 filled by 6) that was 1.9 m wide, and 0.4 m deep (Figs 3 & 4, section 2), but contained no dating evidence.
- 3.1.4 A small oval cess pit (15) was identified south of the building (Figs 3 & 4, section 4). It was 1.2 m wide and at least 1 m deep with near vertical sides and was filled with a dark greyish brown silty clay with chalk and charcoal flecks (16) that contained no dating evidence. The base of the feature extended below impact level.
- 3.1.5 A natural feature (19), or possibly a water channel, was seen in the base of the eastern foundation trench. It was filled with an undated light grey silty clay with chalk specks (Figs 3 & 4, section 5). A new service trench was cut through the fill.

- 3.1.6 Where the foundation trenches and service drain were cut against the south wall of the building, changes in the structural form of the walls suggested that the original structure had been modified.
- 3.1.7 The earliest structure was a foundation wall (12) for a probable timber framed building (Figs 3 & 4, section 3 & 4). It was constructed of seven courses of chalk fragments, flint nodules and hand-made bricks, bonded with a coarse mortar with chalk inclusions. The structure was 3 m long and 0.65 m high; the lower 0.25 m of the structure consisted of compacted chalk rubble and yellowish brown silty clay.
- 3.1.8 The brick was used to form the south east corner of the building at one time, and the last course of walling was to level the upper surface. The wall had been constructed in a foundation trench (10) with vertical sides and flat base with the upper edge sloping outwards. The space between wall and cut was filled with a dark grey brown silty clay (11) and charcoal and chalk flecks.
- 3.1.9 The building appears to have been extended to the east with wall (8) abutting the corner of the earlier wall 12 (Figs 3 & 4, sections 3 & 5). Wall 8 was constructed of chalk, brick and flint nodules bonded with a coarse sandy mortar, standing five courses high on compacted chalk rubble and yellowish brown silty clay. This was constructed in a foundation trench (7) with a vertical side and flat base, and the upper edge had a shallow slope outwards. A dark greyish brown silty clay (9) with charcoal and chalk flecks filled the space between the wall and cut.
- 3.1.10 The building has gone through a number of minor changes and alterations up to the present day. Two 20th century soakaways were identified and additional 0.2 m layer of garden soil had been laid along the south west side of the properties as part of the old pub garden.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered from the excavations.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No environmental samples were taken during the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The results from the watching brief were generally inconclusive. No dating evidence was recovered from any of the features observed, though it is likely that they are all of post-medieval date and contemporary with the use of the building.
- 4.1.2 The ditches (3 and 19) were of unknown function and the lack of dating makes interpretation difficult, though both may have been originally dug to aid drainage on the site. The few remaining features found are probably rubbish and/or cess pits.
- 4.1.3 The building appears stylistically to originally have been pre-Victorian, as suggested by the hand-made bricks observed in places in the walls, though precise dating was not recovered from any of the foundation trenches.

- 4.1.4 It would appear that at some time in the post-medieval period the building was rebuilt in brick, replacing what might have originally been timber framed walls. At the east end of the south wall, part of the original timber framing survives, but it has been filled with brick and the lower half has also been rebuilt in brick. In this wall the join where the earlier walls meet continues, with the finial course running across the length, and this presumably supported the original timber frame. An eastward extension to the building in brick was also noted.
- 4.1.5 Further building modifications were noted in the building fabric and probably date to the Victorian period or the 20th century.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i> Finds</i>
1	Layer	0.15-0.30 m				Topsoil	
2	Deposit					Natural	
3	Cut	0.75 – 1 m	0.6 – 2 m		9 m	Boundary Ditch	
4	Fill					Fill of Ditch	
5	Cut	0.4 m	0.7 m		1.9 m	Pit	
6	Fill					Fill of Pit	
7	Cut	0.5 m	0.16 m		3.4 m	Foundation Trench	
8	Structure			0.65 m	3 m	Wall	
9	Fill					Fill	
10	Cut	0.9 m	0.5 m		1.8 m	Foundation trench	
11	Structure			1 m	1.75 m	Wall	
12	Fill					Fill	
13	Structure					Later wall rebuild	
14	Structure					Later wall rebuild	
15	Cut	1 m	1.2 m		1.5 m	Cess Pit	
16	Fill					Fill	
17	Cut	0.32 m	0.4 m		1.2 m	Root Hole	
18	Fill					Fill	
19	Cut	0.9 m	0.4 m		3 m	Natural feature	
20	Fill					fill	

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OAU 1999, *Amwell Place, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Evaluation Report*

Wilkinson D (ed), 1992 *Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual*

OA 2001, *10 Amwell Place and land rear of Paternoster Lane, Cholsey, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Watching Brief*

OA 2002 *Land at the rear of Chequers Public House, 11 Wallingford Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire. Written Scheme of Investigation*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 11 Wallingford Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire.

Site code: CHWALR 02

Grid reference: NGR SU 589 868

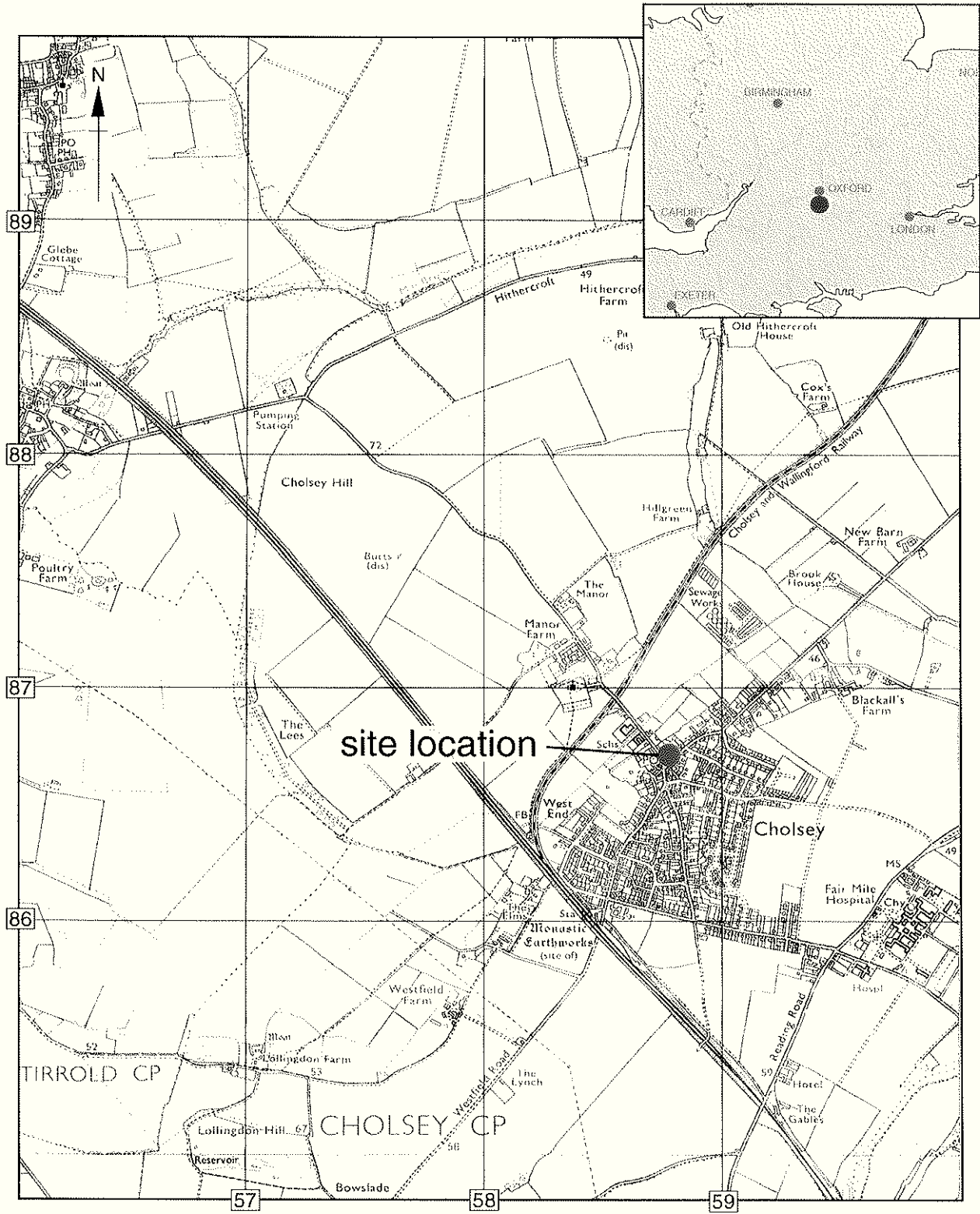
Type of watching brief: Excavation of trenches for new extension on back of the property.

Date and duration of project: 29th and 30th January 2002

Area of site: 0.1 hectares

Summary of results: Post-medieval features relating to the original building of the present building on the site.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: 2002.34



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site Location



Scale 1:7,500

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Figure 2: Site Location

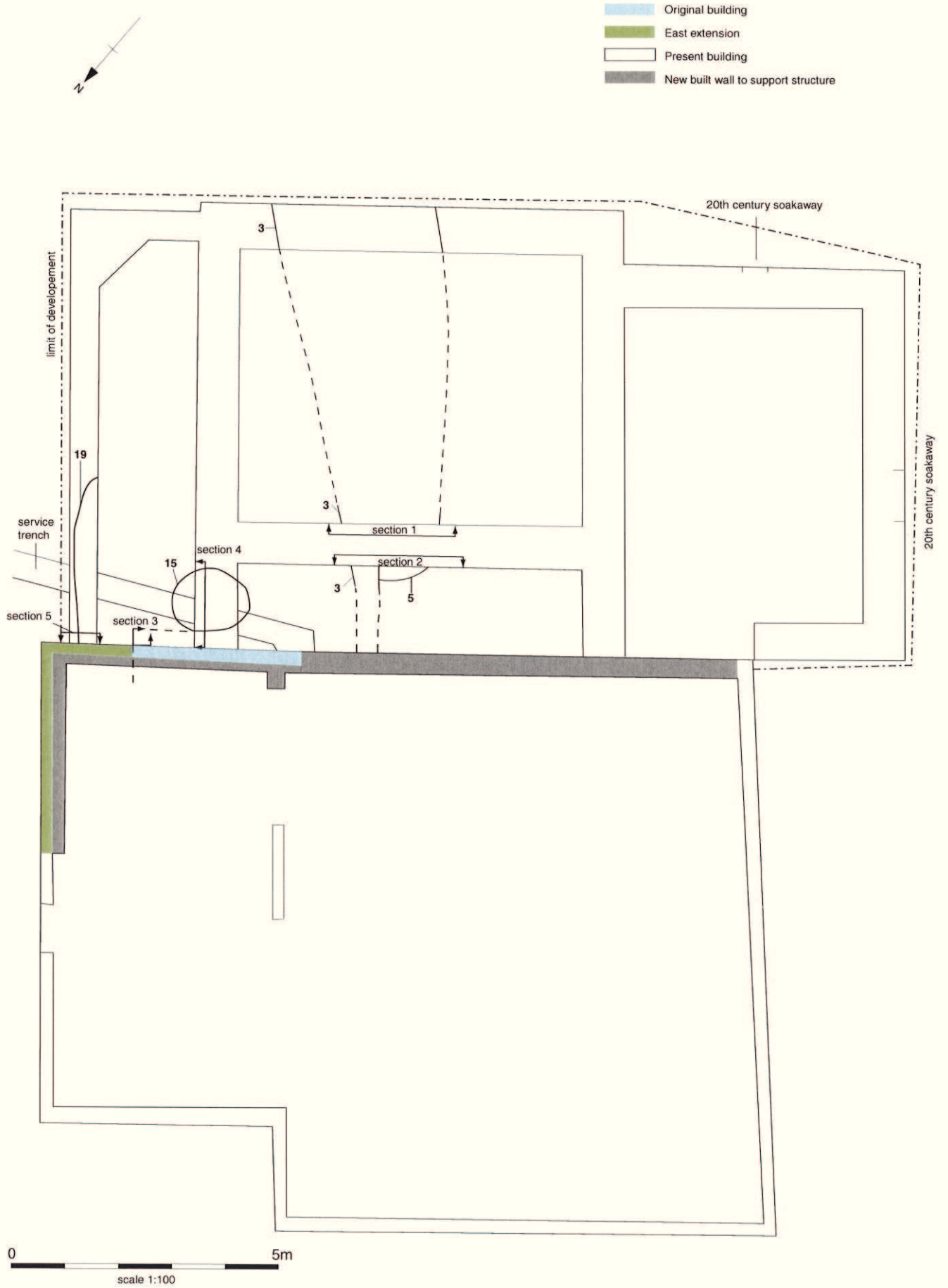


Figure 3: Plan of Foundation Trenches and Service Trenches

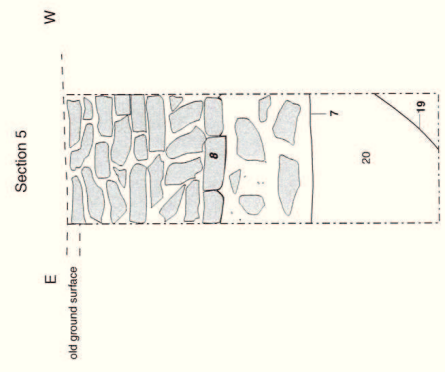
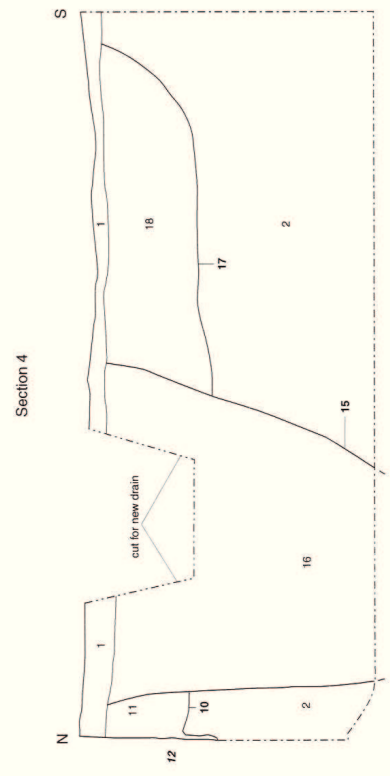
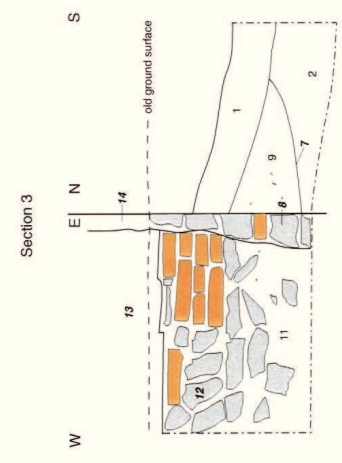
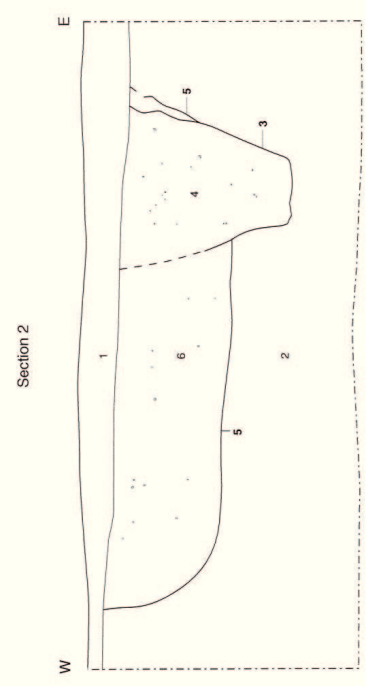
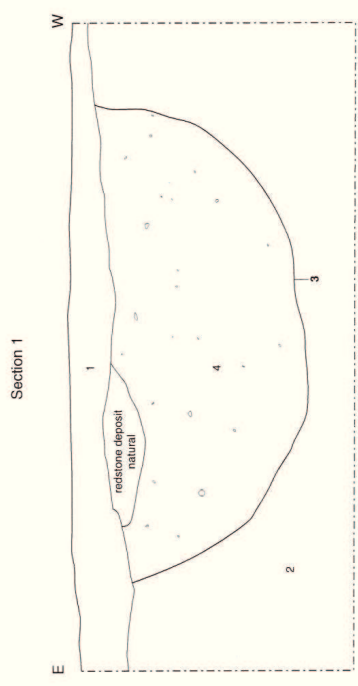


Figure 4: Sections



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