

Watching Brief at  
Hartford Mews  
13a Hartford Road  
Huntingdon



**Archaeological  
Watching Brief Report**



February 2011

**Client: Chris Campbell  
(Nutwood Ventures Ltd)**

OA East Report No: 1243

OASIS No: oxfordar3-92121

NGR: TL 2412 7172



***Watching Brief at Hartford Mews, 13a Hartford Road, Huntingdon***

*Site Code: HUNHAM10*

*CHER No. ECB3472*

*Date of Works: 24th-26th January 2011*

*Report No: 1243*

*Excavator: Peter Boardman*

*Client: Chris Campbell (Nutwood Ventures Ltd)*

*Report Date: February 2011*



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## Summary

*Between 24th and 26th January 2011, OA East carried out an archaeological watching brief at Hartford Mews, 13a Hartford Road, Huntingdon (TL 2412 7172).*

*The archaeological watching Brief was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC; Planning Application: 1000243FUL & 1000244CAC) (McConnell 2010), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Clarke 2010).*

*The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regards the treatment of any archaeological remains found.*

*The archaeological monitoring was carried out during the demolition of pre-existing foundations prior to the erection of three small dwellings. During the extraction of the old foundations, medieval layers and features were identified at a depth of 1.10m below ground level.*





## 1 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 1.1.1 The proposed development area is located on the Pleistocene First and Second Terrace Gravels of the River Great Ouse (BGS 1975, Sheet 187), below which the solid geology comprises Upper Jurassic Oxford Clays.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 There have been a number of archaeological investigations within the historic core of Huntingdon, several of which have been located in the vicinity of the proposed development. These have generally revealed complex and/or deep archaeological sequences spanning the Saxo-Norman to post-medieval periods.
- 2.1.2 The proximity of the current site to major elements of the post-Conquest townscape (St Mary's Church, High Street and Hartford Road) is clearly of significance. It is thought that the medieval parish church of St Mary's may have had a Saxon precursor, probably of wooden construction (CHER 04248A).
- 2.1.3 A small scale evaluation at Wood Street/Hartford Road (CHER 15695; Wills 2003) between the church and the current site recorded evidence of fairly dense occupation dating to the 11th-13th centuries. These included a gully dated to the prehistoric period, a small quantity of residual Roman pottery and a single sherd of Middle Saxon pottery. Despite its distance from the current street frontages, structural evidence including a cellared building and a number of post-holes were also revealed. These features were sealed by a 0.5m-thick buried soil containing finds that spanned the 13th-15th centuries, which suggested a reversion to agricultural use in the later medieval period. A small number of 15th century features were cut into the buried soil. These in turn were sealed beneath an early Victorian garden soil (up to 0.8m thick) through which Victorian and modern foundations were cut and finally sealed by thick rubble layers. The depth of overburden and soil layers had resulted in good preservation of the medieval archaeology. The buried soil was revealed at a depth of c.1.4m below current ground level, the medieval features at c.2m and the natural deposits at c.2.6m. The evaluation produced a relatively large quantity of pottery (1036 sherds weighing c.12kg) spanning the 11th to 19th centuries; bulk samples from the site indicated good preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains, mostly represented by charred cereal grains and arable weeds largely preserved by charring.
- 2.1.4 An archaeological evaluation in the garden of 12 Hartford Road (on the north side of the street) identified at least three phases of medieval activity on the site dating from the 12th to the mid-14th century, including clay extraction and structural evidence (CHER 11908; Connor 1996). A sequence of pitting at the rear of the plot may date to as early as the 10th century, and was also sealed by a 14th century deposit possibly equivalent to the late medieval 'cultivation soil' recorded at Wood Street and elsewhere in the town. Medieval deposits were encountered at a depth of c.0.7 - 0.9m below ground level, much shallower than those to the south-east of Hartford Road.
- 2.1.5 To the south of the current site an archaeological evaluation (CHER 11907; Welsh 1994) and excavation (Mortimer 2007) close to the junction of Hartford Road and High Street, recorded a complex stratigraphic sequence extending up to 3.5m in depth. The earliest occupation, dating to the late 10th or 11th century, comprised possible post-pits, large quarry pits and cess pits. A boundary was also identified crossing the site, perpendicular to the High Street. Medieval features and deposits dating from the 12th to 14th/early 15th centuries included wells, quarry pits, cess pits, an area of small kilns or ovens, post-holes and a beamslot. Evidence of nearby metalworking, and other

possible industrial activity was represented by a series of large, square pits, some of which showed evidence of wood-lining.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The objective of this watching brief was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.
- 3.1.2 The Brief required that no ground penetration could take place without an archaeologist present.
- 3.1.3 The area of investigation was located at the rear of 13 Hartford Road (Figure 1), around the edge of the site, following the pre-existing foundations as they were extracted. In addition, a watching brief was carried out on the excavation of the raft footings for the proposed building (Figure 2).
- 3.1.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 3.1.5 Site conditions were fine with a slightly uneven ground surface.

### 4 RESULTS

- 4.1.1 The area investigated was 0.60 metres in width and extended 5m along the length of the pre-existing foundations from their north-eastern corner (Figure 2 and Plate 2).
- 4.1.2 During the excavation of the Victorian foundation layers around the perimeter of the site (Figure 1), it became evident that there was a significant amount of post-medieval made ground and dumped material, which was up to 1.10m in thickness (Figure 2, Section 1 and Plate 1). The archaeological deposits were revealed beneath this layer and included two medieval soil layers (contexts 12 and 13) and a number of pits.
- 4.1.3 Pottery dating to AD1100-1350 was recovered from the lower of these two layers (13). Layer 13 was truncated by a possible pit or ditch (2) which was found to contain pottery dating to AD1100-1350 (Figure 2 and Plate 1). Layer 13 also sealed two other possible pits (4 and 6). Feature 6 truncated feature 4 and both contained pottery dating to AD1100-1350.
- 4.1.4 The natural deposits were recorded at 1.50m (9.89m OD) below ground level (11.40m OD).

### 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The watching brief revealed dense, stratified deposits of medieval to post-medieval remains, that included a number of pits and possible linear features sealed by medieval buried soil layers.
- 5.1.2 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

### 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Chris Campbell of Nutwood Ventures Limited who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by

Richard Mortimer. The brief for archaeological works was written by Dan McConnell, who visited the site and monitored the watching brief.

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## APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Clarke, R      2010    Specification for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording/  
Evaluation Hartford Mews, 13a Hartford Road, Huntingdon
- Connor, A     1996    *Early Medieval Structural Remains at 12 Hartford Road,  
Huntingdon. An Archaeological Evaluation.* CCC AFU Report  
122
- McConnell, D   2010    Brief fro Archaeological Monitoring and Recording/ Evaluation  
Hartford Mews, 13a Hartford Road, Huntingdon
- Mortimer, R    2007    *Late Saxon to Post-Medieval Occupation and Industry at the  
junction of Hartford Road and High Street, Huntingdon,  
Cambridgeshire PXA and UPD.* CCC AFU Report 915
- Welsh, K       1993    *Medieval and Later Deposits at Marshall's Garage, High  
Street, Huntingdon* CCC AFU Report 105
- Wills, J        2003    *Wood Street, Hartford Road, Huntingdon. An Archaeological  
Evaluation.* CAU Report 572

## APPENDIX B. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-92121			
Project Name	Watching Brief at Hartford Mews, 13a Hartford Road, Huntingdon			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	24-01-2011	Finish	26-01-2011
Previous Work (by OA East)	No		Future Work	No

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	HUNHAM10	Planning App. No.	1000243FUL & 1000244CAC
HER No.	ECB3472	Related HER/OASIS No.	

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt

### Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Field Observation (periodic visits)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Record
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Excavation (100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Field Walking
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Metal Detector Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pit Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Open-Area Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Excavation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Watching Brief

### Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Midden pit	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Ceramics	Medieval 1066 to 1540
	Select period...		Select period...
	Select period...		Select period...

### Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	Hartford Mews, 13a Hartford Road, Huntingdon. PE29 3RB
District	Huntingdonshire		
Parish	Huntingdon		
HER	Cambridgeshire		
Study Area	102 square meters	National Grid Reference	TL 2412 7172

## Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Dan McConnell
Project Design Originator	Rachel Clarke
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer
Supervisor	Peter Boardman

## Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Cambridgeshire County Stores	OA East, Barhill	Cambridgeshire County Stores
HUNHAM10	HUNHAM10	HUNHAM10

## Archive Contents/Media






	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diary
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<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey







### Notes:

## Drawing Conventions

### Plans

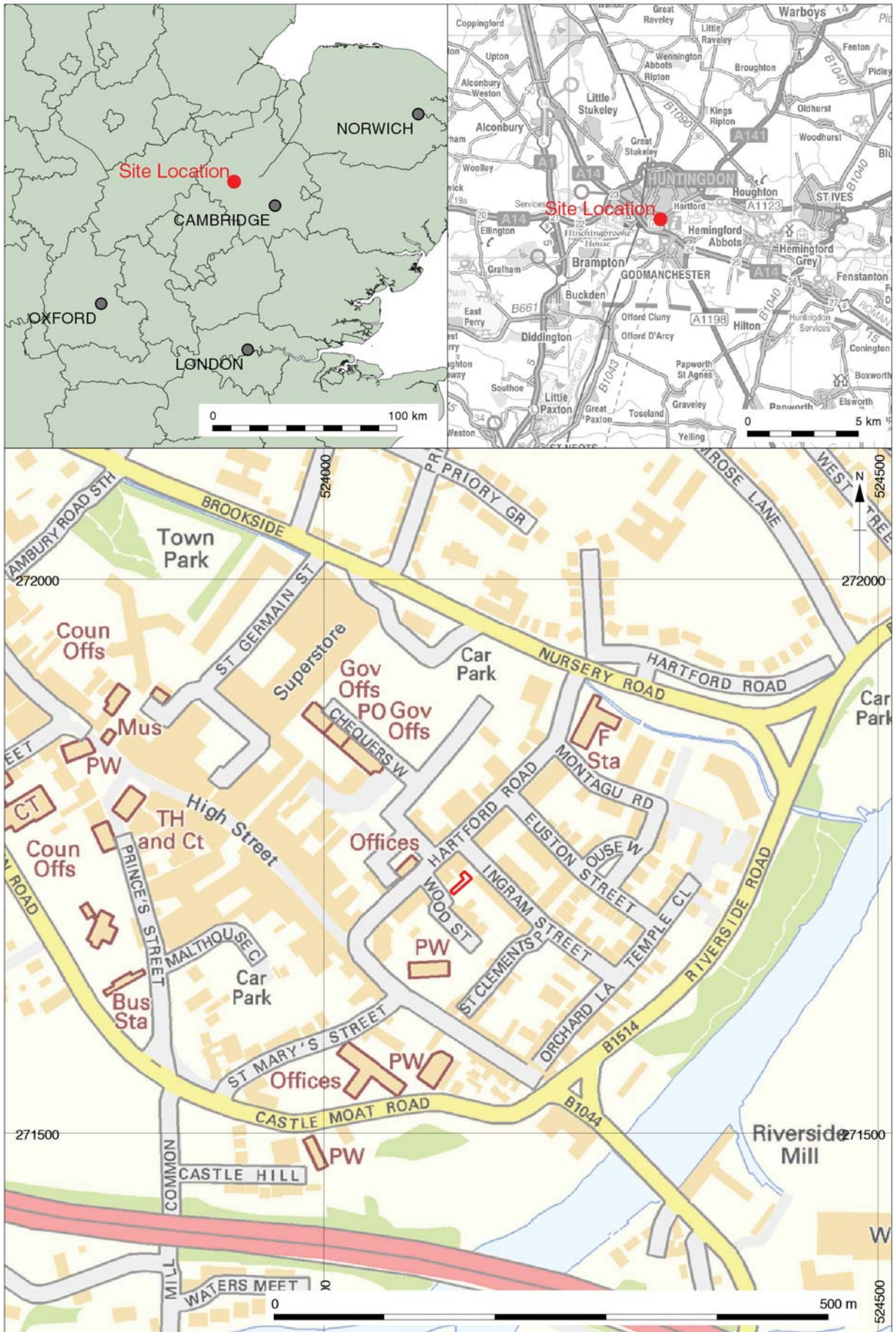
Development Area	
Limit of Excavation	
Illustrated Section	
Archaeological Deposit	
Bricks	
Cut Number	<b>118</b>

### Sections

Limit of Excavation	
Cut	
Deposit Horizon	
Top Surface/Top of Natural	
Cut Number	<b>118</b>
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD 
Bricks	







Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010

Figure 1: Site location (development area outlined red)



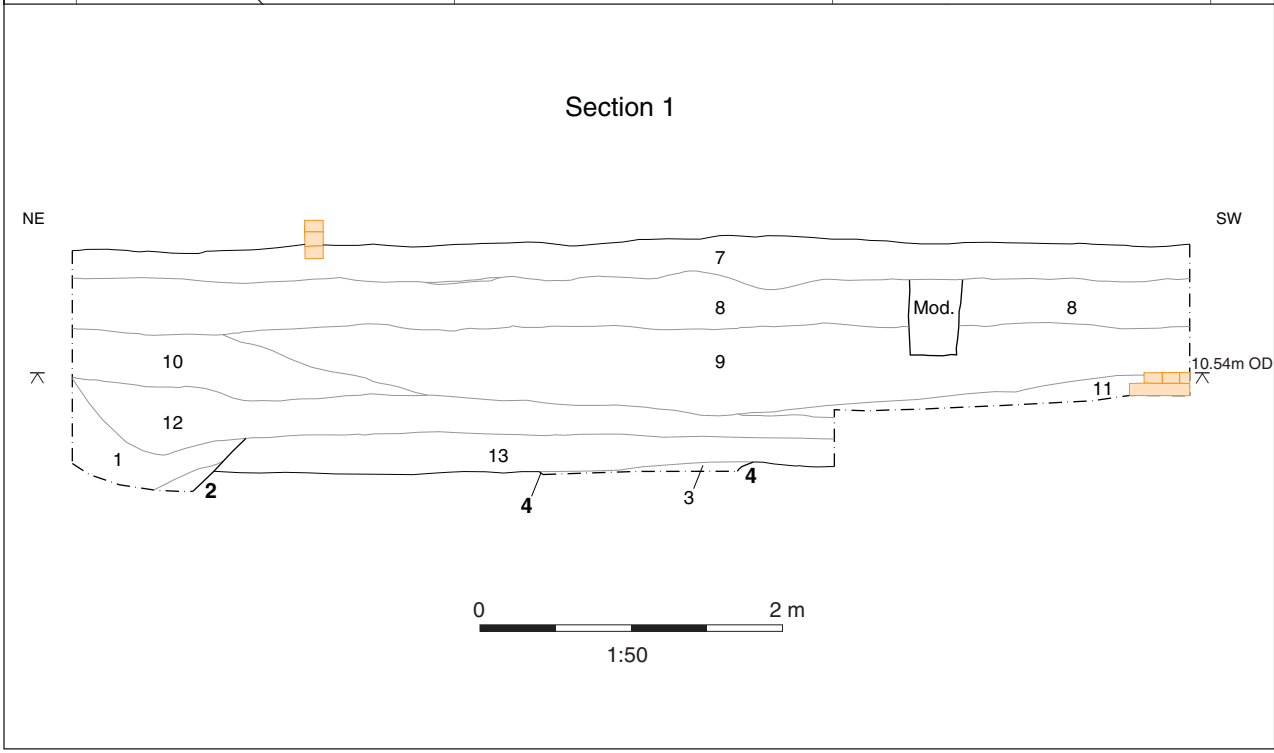
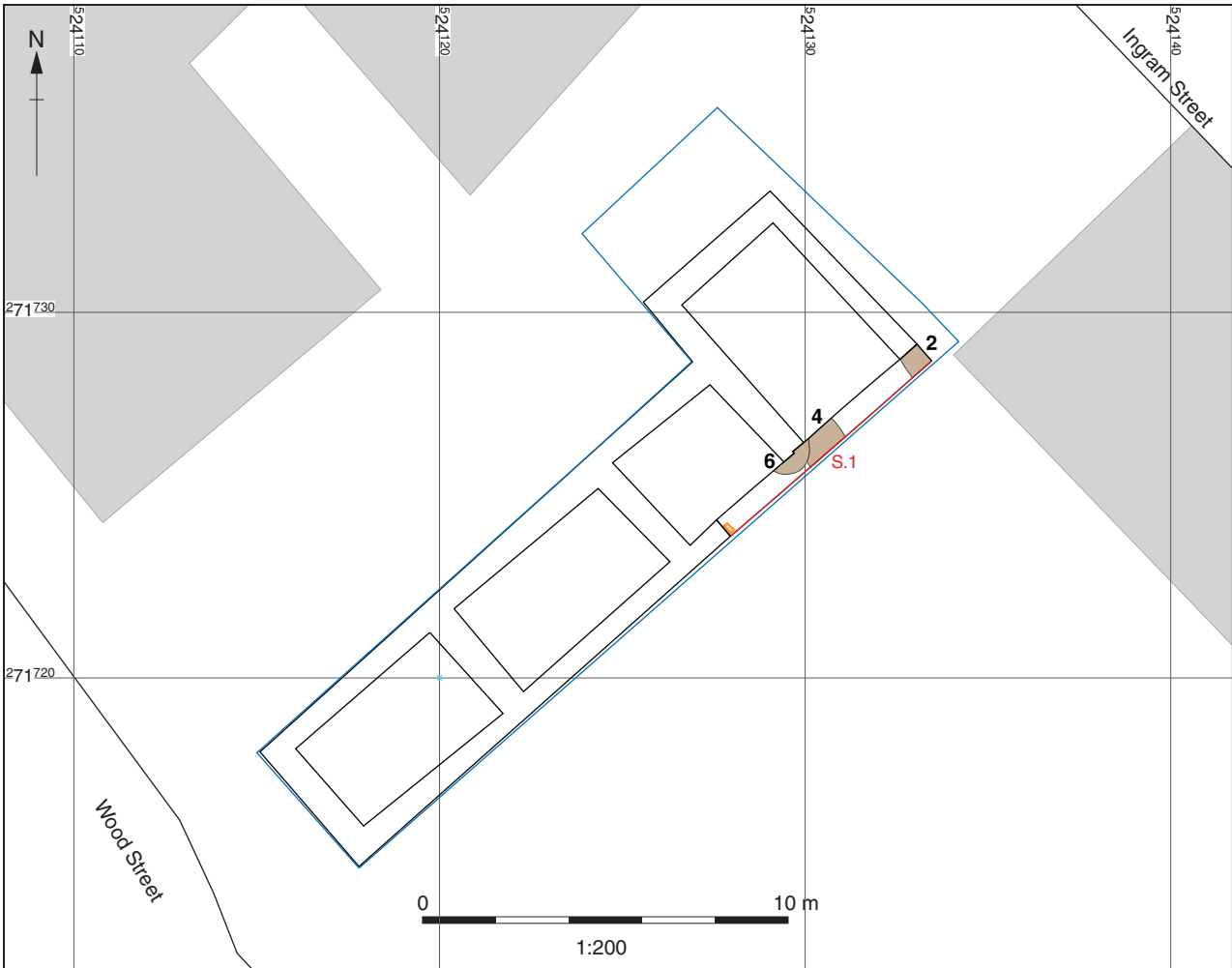


Figure 2: Trench plan and section







Plate 1: Section and feature at the NE end of trench 1



Plate 2: Showing foundation extraction from the west





Plate 3: Extent of extraction from south









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