

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**2-22 Northgate Street, Northgate Southside
and The Butts, Warwick**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Site Code: NSW13/140

(SP 2816 6505)

**2-22 Northgate Street, Northgate Southside and The Butts,
Warwick, Warwickshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Ash Mill Developments Ltd**

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code NSW 13/140

January 2014

Summary

Site name: 2-22 Northgate Street, Northgate Southside and The Butts, Warwick

Grid reference: SP 2816 6505

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 7th -9th January 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Bray

Site code: NSW 13/140

Area of site: 0.524ha

Summary of results: The small evaluation has confirmed the presence of archaeological deposits in the form of a stacked tile hearth constructed of re-used medieval roof tile but thought to date to the early 18th century and after the great fire of Warwick in 1694. Landscaping and redevelopment of the area after the fire has resulted in a large deposit containing both medieval and post-medieval finds and although the full thickness of this deposit was not determined it is possible that archaeological deposits of earlier periods survive underneath.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Warwick Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 30.01.14
	Steve Preston✓ 29.01.14

2-22 Northgate Street, Northgate Southside and The Butts, Warwick, Warwickshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Report 13/140

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at on land at 2-22 Northgate Street, Northgate Southside and The Butts, Warwick, Warwickshire (SP 2816 6505) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andrew Brown of Ash Mill Developments Ltd, 23 Princes Street, London, W1B 2LX.

Planning permission (W/13/1490) has been granted by Warwick District Council for the demolition and redevelopment of the site to provide a total of 18 residential dwellings, by conversions and alteration of former education department offices on Northgate Street to create 11 of the residential dwellings and the erection of a garage building; conversion and alteration of former county court offices on Northgate to provide another three dwellings and partial redevelopment/infill and conversion/alteration/extension of former museum services building off Northgate to provide four dwellings. Although the development is largely that of refurbishment the construction of a new garage and area of ground reduction might damage any surviving archaeological remains therefore an archaeological evaluation has been requested.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Anna Stocks, Planning Archaeologist for Archaeology Warwickshire, archaeological adviser to the District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray and Lizzi Lewins on 7th - 9th of January 2014 with the site code NSW 13/140. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Warwick Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the north of the historic town of Warwick (Fig. 1). The irregular parcel of land which is currently occupied by the vacant offices previously used by the county council is bounded by Northgate Street with its Georgian grade listed buildings to the west (Fig. 2). These buildings have 20th-century extensions to the rear. Directly to the South of the site is the graveyard of the Collegiate Church of St Mary's. The northern and eastern boundaries are defined by Northgate and The Butts. The site lies at varying heights. The trench located to the north lies at 74.16m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) while the southern trench lies at a height of 72.42m aOD.

Northgate Street and St Mary's Church are significantly lower than the level of the site, a height of 69.9m aOD. The varying heights of the site and the surrounding area suggest that a considerable amount of landscaping has been undertaken. The underlying geology is mapped as Bromsgrove sandstone formation (BGS 1984).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Kelleher 2007). In summary the site lies within an area with a wide range of archaeological periods represented back to the Neolithic, but with the most significant component being its location within the historic core of the town. The site lies on a medieval street dating back to at least 1086. The great fire of Warwick in 1694 resulted in the destruction of the medieval buildings on the site which were replaced by the high quality 'fire proof' Georgian buildings that are the listed properties present today. To the south, St Mary's church dates from AD1123.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. The specific research aims of the project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any Late Saxon or Medieval deposits are present on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits dating from the Roman period are present; and
- to determine if there are any burials present representing either a formerly larger church graveyard than currently enclosed or a piece of unconsecrated ground adjacent to the churchyard for the burial of undesirables.

It was proposed to excavate two trenches each measuring 10m long and 1.6m wide close to the position of the proposed garage and area of ground reduction. The trenches were to be excavated using a 360⁰-type mini excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and supervised at all times by an archaeologist, with the spoil removed being monitored for finds. All potential archaeological deposits were to be hand-cleaned and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

Results

Both trenches were dug as close as possible to their intended positions (Fig. 3). Due to the depth of the trench and the limited space available for spoil, Trench 2 was slightly shortened. The trenches were 10.00m and 8.60m in length and both measured 1.60m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5; Pls 1 and 3)

Trench 1 was aligned NE - SW and was 10m long and a maximum depth of 0.90m at the north eastern end. The stratigraphy at the south-western end consisted of 0.43m of topsoil overlying a thin layer of mid reddish brown gravel (52) measuring 0.10m thick. This overlaid a dark grey brown clay silt deposit (51) (Fig. 5). The full thickness of this deposit could not be ascertained but a test pit showed it to be at least 1.40m thick giving a depth from the surface of 1.93m. At the north-eastern end the stratigraphy consisted of 0.09m of Tarmac above 0.24m of made ground overlying another 0.05m of Tarmac and 0.24m of made ground, above another 0.28m of dark grey brown made ground layer which was above a dark sandy silt deposit (51). The excavation of the trench was stopped at this level due to the presence of a stacked tile hearth (50) (Pl. 3). A total of 3m of the linear structure was revealed measuring 0.50m wide and 0.10m deep and consisted of a single level of tiles stacked on their sides. It appears to be sitting on or pressed into the top of deposit (51) as no cut was visible in plan or in the section dug up against the structure (Fig. 5; section 1). Two small stems of clay pipe were observed pressed between tiles in the top of the structure. A sondage was excavated against the structure to a further 0.60m depth which revealed that homogenous deposit (51) which contained both medieval and post-medieval finds continued underneath the structure. Augering showed this to be at least another 0.94m deep, giving a total thickness of at least 1.54m. The total depth of the trench reached was therefore 2.44m without natural geology being revealed.

Trench 2 (Figs 4 and 5; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned east - west and measured 8.60m long and 1.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying a layer of dark grey brown clay silt made ground layer measuring 1.20m thick. This layer was on top of the natural mid red and yellow brown sandstone. A modern soakaway most likely associated with the nearby building was revealed at the western end of the trench and a concrete footing was observed at the eastern end. A feature (1), possibly linear, was revealed at the eastern end of the trench. The feature had gradual sides and measured 0.25m deep (Pl. 4; Fig. 5; section 2). Only one edge was revealed giving the feature a minimum width of 3.60m. The single fill (53) produced no datable finds.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 5 sherds with a total weight of 61g. It all occurred in a single context, 51, and was recorded using the codes and chronology of the Warwickshire Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery Type-Series (Ratkai and Soden, in archive), as follows

RS01: Warwickshire black ware. 13th – 14th century. 2 sherds, 2g.

Sq02: Warwick Sandy ware, 12th – 13th century. 1 sherd, 5g.

Sq30: Chilvers Coton 'C' ware, 1300-1500. 1 sherd, 11g.

STG03: Frechen Stoneware, 1550– 1700. 1 sherd, 43g.

All the pottery types are common finds in the region. The sherd of Sq30 is from the rim of a bowl, and that of STG03 is from the shoulder of a long-necked bottle. Both are typical products of their respective traditions.

Animal Bone by Danielle Milbank

Animal bone was recovered from one deposit encountered in the evaluation. This comprises 8 fragments weighing 192g from context 51, with a further 11 small fragments (4g) recovered from a sieved soil sample from the same context. The condition of the fragments was moderate, with little surface erosion and moderate fragmentation, and the pieces were identified by species where possible. A single small animal bone was recovered (a long bone from a small rodent). Two fragments of long bone from a large animal (cattle or horse) were recovered. The distal end of a cattle humerus (left) was also identified, and has butchery marks in the form of a clean cut to the caudal side of the head, and a second cut 20mm wide and 20mm deep which has split the articular part from the shaft.

Ceramic Building Materials by Danielle Milbank

Brick and tile fragments were encountered in the evaluation, from four contexts (including a sieved soil sample (101 fragments weighing 1430g: Appendix 3). The majority are tile fragments, although no complete bricks or tiles were present. The fabric was examined under x10 magnification.

A sample of seven tile fragments were recovered from hearth 50, which comprised tiles laid end-on and closely packed. The examples are of one fabric type, which is fairly hard and evenly-fired and of a medium to fine sandy fabric. All are *c.* 16mm thick, with some unevenness and edge-thickening. All have slight striations

on the upper surface and rough undersides indicating a sandy mould was used. Three of the examples show evidence of a flange (formed by an applied piece of clay in the manner of a jug handle) on the short edge, suggesting they are nib tiles. The flanges appear to be centrally-placed and may have broken off accidentally, though it is more likely that they were intentionally removed in order to lay them parallel on their sides to form the hearth. The form and finish of the nib tiles suggest they are of mid to late medieval date (13th century onwards).

The fragments recovered from context 51 are of a range of fabrics, though all are evenly-fired, in fairly fine clay fabric with sandy inclusions, and occasional examples with larger inclusions (quartz sand, grog and flint). The thickness ranges from 14–16mm, with some examples of edge-thickening.

Although the majority of the tile forms encountered are only broadly dateable to the medieval and post-medieval periods, the uneven thickness and slightly irregular edges of some fragments, and the presence of nib tile fragments, indicate that some of the assemblage is of medieval date. The tile pieces which were recovered from the hearth suggest a later medieval date. It is likely that the feature was built from reused tiles, and the feature may be of early post-medieval date. Roof tiles were frequently re-used in this way, and the practice illustrates the durable nature of the material.

Clay Pipe by Danielle Milbank

A fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem of likely early to mid 18th century date and small piece of bowl with a milled edge of likely 17th century date were recovered from context 51.

Glass by Danielle Milbank

Five small fragments of glass (total 5g) were recovered from context 51. These are all of the same thin (1mm) flat type, and they are all clear, although they are very highly patinated. It is unlikely that they are window glass and they possibly derived from a flat-sided vessel.

Metalwork by Steven Crabb

Two metal objects were recovered from a sondage dug beside tile structure 50. One is a small iron nail measuring 21mm long by 5mm thick, the head does not survive fully. Also recovered was a small dome-headed

copper alloy tack. Where the top of the dome has been slightly scratched the metal is revealed being similar to brass. It measures 18mm long and 12mm wide with a square shaft 2mm across.

Stone by Danielle Milbank

The stone recovered from context 51 (4 fragments weighing 1072g) was a pale grey pink quartz sandstone, soft, slightly weak, with well-sorted fine to medium grains. The pieces have been roughly faced and two have traces of a pale grey lime mortar.

Conclusion

The evaluation has confirmed the presence of archaeological deposits on the site and also suggests that earlier deposits might survive at a deeper depth. The stacked tile hearth found in Trench 1 is constructed of medieval roof tile and sits on or is pressed into a thick deposit containing both medieval and post-medieval finds including ceramic building material, clay pipe, glass and pottery. The pottery recovered ranges in date from the 13th through to the 18th century meaning the construction for the hearth could be between AD1550 and 1700. The great fire of Warwick in 1694 resulted in the destruction of medieval buildings on the site and it is likely that the tiles used in the construction of the hearth are recycled medieval tiles and the homogenous deposit that contains a range of material from a wide date range is the result of the landscaping and redevelopment of the area post-fire. Although no features were found of late Saxon or medieval date, the presence of medieval pottery and the thickness and extent of the deposit below the stacked tile hearth suggest that features of earlier date could have survived and be present at a depth greater than 2.44m and not reached during the evaluation.

The feature identified in Trench 2 was cut through the natural sandstone geology at a depth of 1.50m. The feature was wide but shallow and no datable artefacts were recovered. The development proposes to reduce the ground level in this area between 1.30 and 1.55m which could impact on the archaeological horizon at the deepest point.

References

- BGS, 1984, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 184, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
Hammond, M, 1981, *Bricks and Brickmaking*, Shire Publications, Haverfordwest
Harley, L S, 1974, 'A typology of brick', *J Brit Archaeol Assoc* **37**, London
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
Ratkai, S and Soden, I, in archive *Warwickshire Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery Type-Series*

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

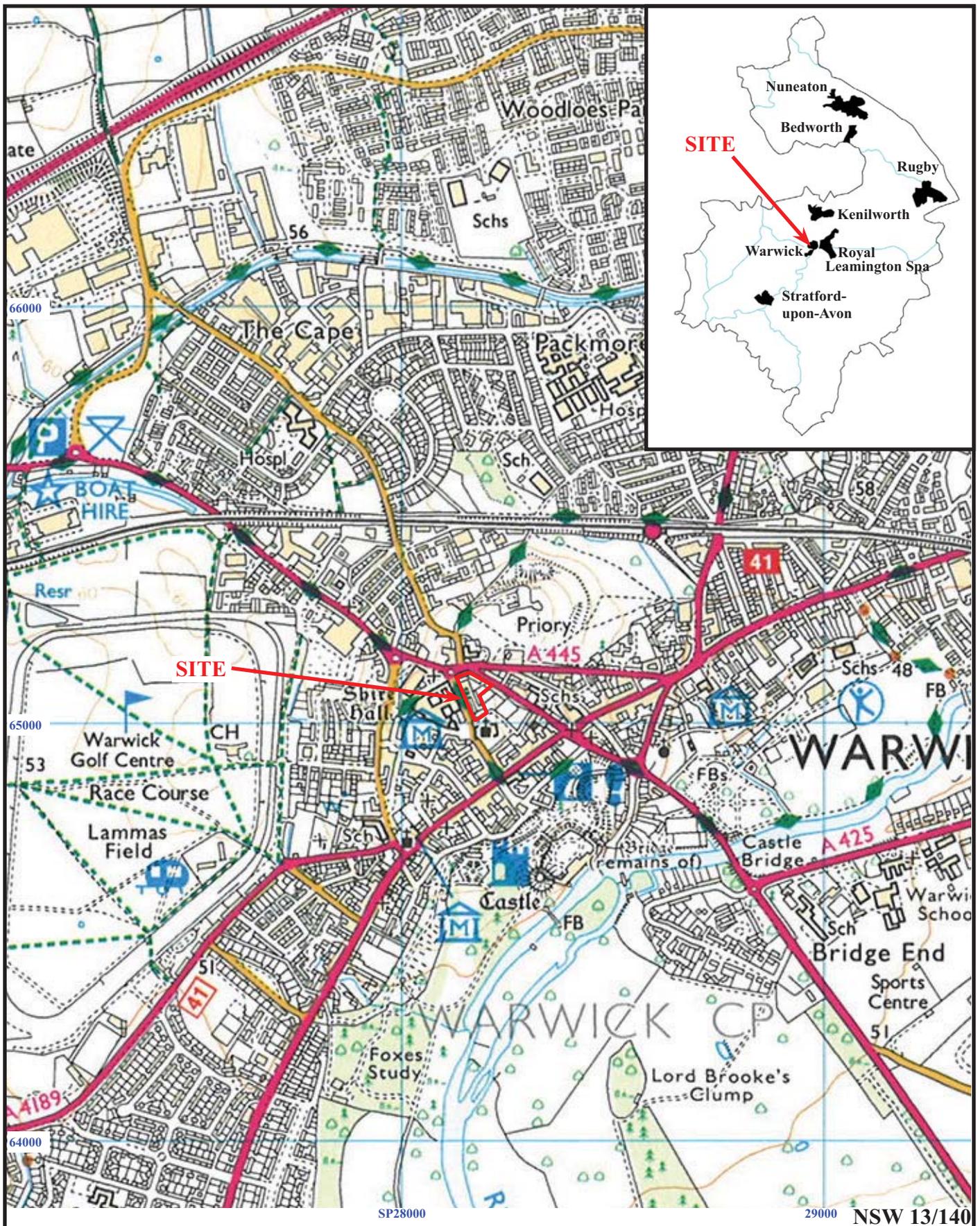
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.00	1.60	0.90	SW end: 0-0.43m topsoil; 0.43-0.53m mid red brown gravel; 0.53m+ mid grey brown clay silt; NE end: 0-0.09m tarmac; 0.09-0.33m made ground; 0.33-0.38m tarmac; 0.38-0.62m made ground; 0.62-0.90m made ground; 0.90m+ mid grey brown clay silt. Staked tile structure (50) [Pls 1 and 3]
2	8.60	1.60	1.50	0-0.30m topsoil; 0.30-1.50m made ground; 1.50m+ mid red and yellow brown sandstone natural geology. Feature (1) [Pls 2 and 4]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1		50	Stacked tile hearth	Post-medieval	Stratigraphy
1		51	Deposit	Post-medieval	Clay pipe, pottery
1		52	Deposit		
2	1	53	Feature		

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of ceramic building material

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
	50	Hearth	7	1698
	51	Layer	12	2310
	51	Layer	82	122



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Figure 1. Location of site within Warwick and Warwickshire.

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Figure 2. Current setting of the site.

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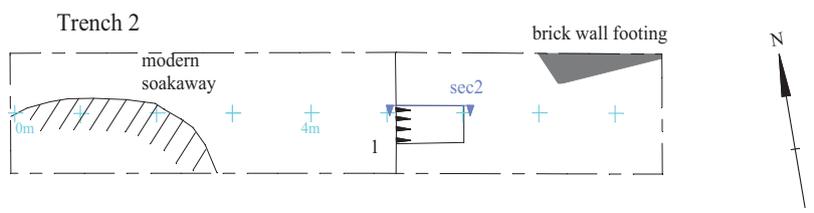
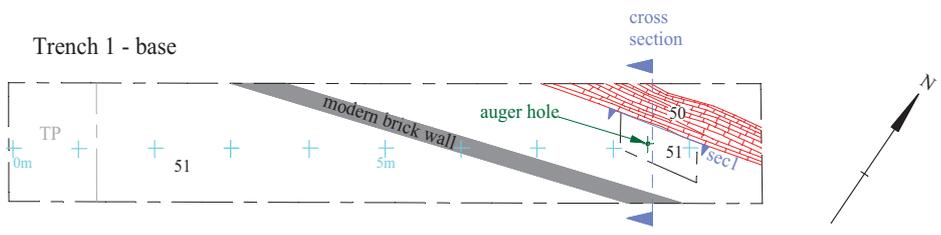
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Figure 3. Location of trenches, and outlined areas of buildings to be demolished.



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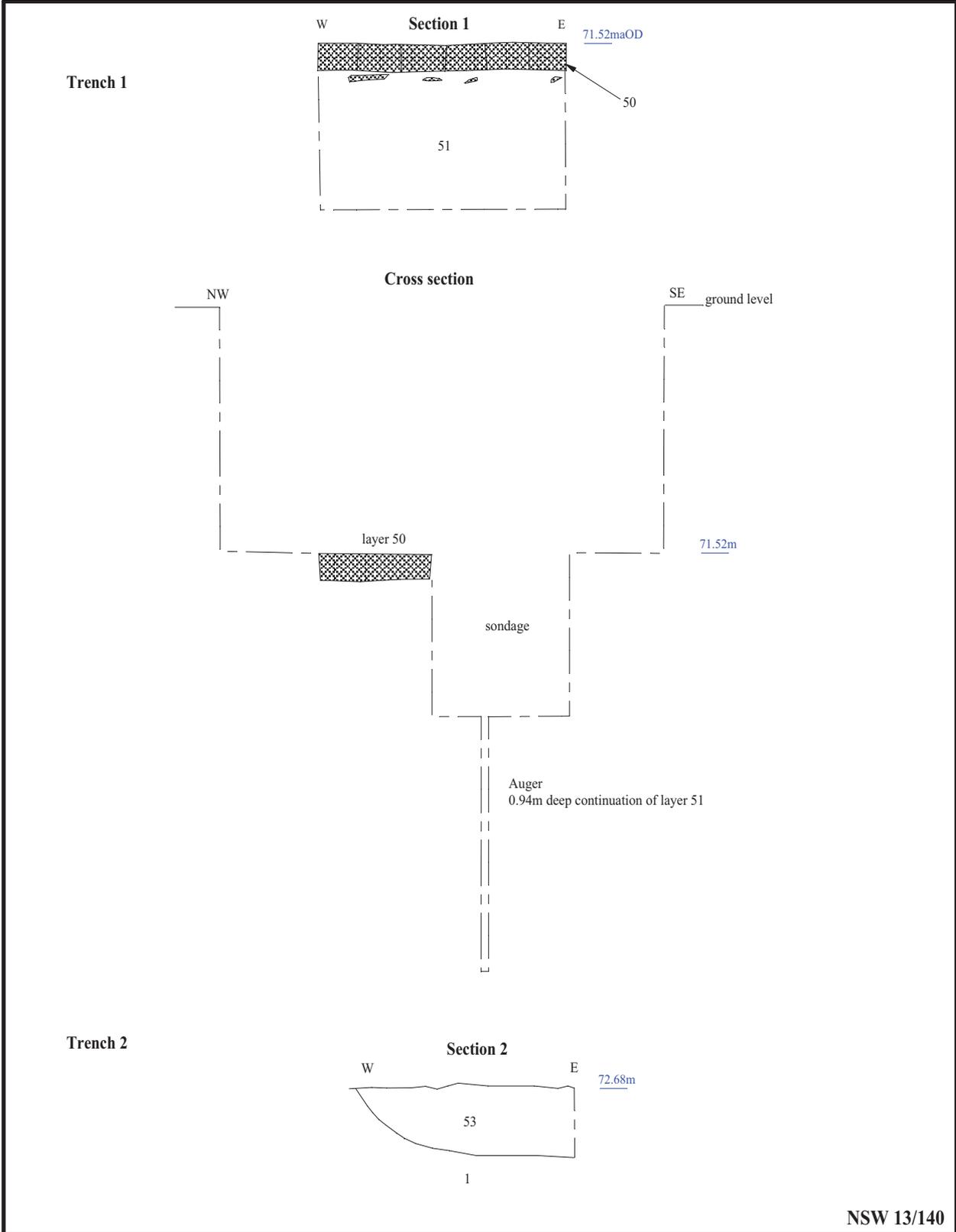
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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.





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Figure 5. Sections.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 1, tiles (layer 50), looking north east. Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 2, cut 1, looking north, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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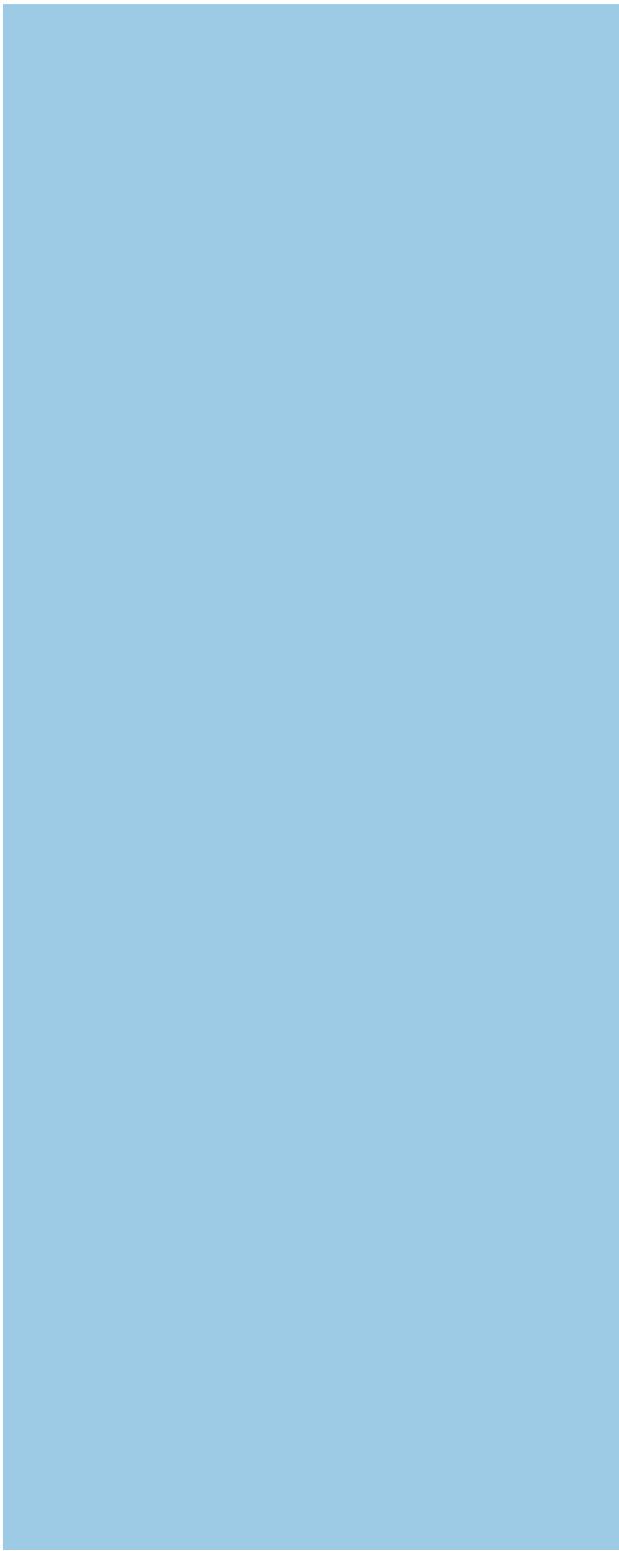
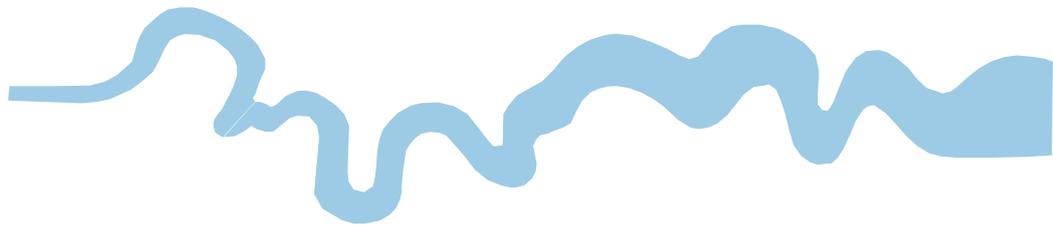
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Plates 3 - 4.

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC
↓	↓



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