

# Wisbech Castle Defences and Georgian Cellars: Archaeological Investigations at Wisbech Library 2008-2009



DRAFT

Excavation Report



July 2009

Client: Mouchel for Cambridgeshire County Council

OA East Report No: 1091

OASIS No: oxfordar3-55336

NGR: TF 4625 0959

**Wisbech Castle Defences and Georgian Cellars : Archaeological  
Investigations at Wisbech Library 2008-2009**

*Archaeological Excavation*

*By Taleyna Fletcher, BA, AIFA*


*With contributions by Dr Alasdair Mark Brooks, Chris Faine MA, Msc, Carole Fletcher BA,  
AIFA, Rachel Fosberry HNC (Cert Ed) and Tom Phillips, BA, AIFA*

*Editor: Richard Mortimer, MIFA*

*Illustrators: Louise Bush, MA, PIFA and Lucy Offord, BA*

*Report Date: July 2009*

**DRAFT**

Report Number: 1091  
Site Name: Wisbech Library  
HER Event No: ECB 3101  
Date of Works: January-February 2009  
Client Name: Mouchel for Cambridgeshire County Council  
Client Ref: Wisbech Library  
Planning Ref: F/02009/08/CC  
Grid Ref: TF 4625 0959  
Site Code: WIS LIB 09  
Finance Code: WIS LIB 09  
Receiving Body: CCC Stores, Landbeach  
Accession No: n/a  
Prepared by: Taleyna Fletcher  
Position: Project Officer  
Date: July 2009  
Checked by: Richard Mortimer  
Position: Project Manager  
Date: July 2009  
Signed: 

**Disclaimer**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

**Oxford Archaeology East,**  
15 Trafalgar Way,  
Bar Hill,  
Cambridge,  
CB23 8SQ

t: 01223 850500  
f: 01223 850599  
e: [oeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto:oeast@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oeast>

© Oxford Archaeology East 2008  
Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

## Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Summary.....</b>   | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>1 Introduction.....</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| 1.1 Location and scope of work.....   | 7         |
| 1.2 Geology and topography.....   | 7         |
| 1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....   | 8         |
| Acknowledgements.....   | 12        |
| <b>2 Aims and Methodology.....</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| 2.1 Aims.....   | 13        |
| 2.2 Methodology.....  | 13        |
| <b>3 Results.....</b>   | <b>14</b> |
| Introduction .....  | 14        |
| 3.1 Trench 1.....   | 14        |
| 3.2 Trench 2.....   | 17        |
| 3.3 Finds Summary.....  | 19        |
| 3.4 Environmental Summary.....  | 20        |
| <b>4 Discussion and Conclusions.....</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| 4.1 Period 1: Saxon/Medieval.....   | 21        |
| 4.2 Post-Medieval.....  | 22        |
| 4.3 Significance.....   | 24        |
| <b>Appendix A. Trench 1 and 2 Context Inventory.....</b>  | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Appendix B. Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds by Dr Alasdair Brooks with Contributions by Carole Fletcher BA, AIFA.....</b> | <b>28</b> |
| B.1 Introduction.....   | 28        |
| B.2 Methodology.....  | 28        |
| B.3 Quantification.....   | 29        |
| B.4 Provenance.....   | 31        |
| B.5 Statement of Research Potential .....   | 31        |
| B.6 Further Work and Methods Statement .....  | 31        |
| <b>Appendix C. Catalogue of Worked Stone.....</b>   | <b>32</b> |

---

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>5 Faunal Remains by Chris Faine, MA, Msc, AIFA, BABAO.....</b>              | <b>36</b> |
| C.1 Introduction.....  | 36        |
| C.2 Methodology.....   | 36        |
| C.3 The Assemblage.....  | 36        |
| C.4 Conclusions.....   | 37        |
| <b>Appendix D. Environmental Assessment by Rachel Fosberry, HNC AIFA .....</b> | <b>38</b> |
| D.1 Introduction.....  | 38        |
| D.2 Methodology.....   | 38        |
| D.3 Quantification.....  | 38        |
| D.4 Results.....   | 38        |
| D.5 Discussion.....  | 40        |
| D.6 Concussions and Recommendations.....                                       | 40        |
| <b>Appendix A. Bibliography .....</b>  | <b>43</b> |
| <b>Appendix B. Carbon 14 Dating Certificates.....</b>                          | <b>46</b> |
| <b>Appendix C. OASIS Report Form.....</b>                                      | <b>50</b> |

## List of Figures

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Figure 1  | Site location map showing location of Trenches 1 and 2 (black)   |
| Figure 2  | 1794 sketch plan of the castle (with trench locations shown in green)<br>1:1000  |
| Figure 3  | 1853 Board of Health Map (with trench locations shown in green)  |
| Figure 4  | 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1886 showing location of development area and trenches                                |
| Figure 5  | Trench 1 plans showing excavation phases   |
| Figure 6  | Trench 1, Sections 2, 3 and 5  |
| Figure 7  | Trench 2 plans showing excavation phases   |
| Figure 8  | Trench 2, Section 7  |
| Figure 9  | 1794 sketch plan of the castle with modern features overlaid   |
| Figure 10 | Plan showing projected line of features <b>34</b> and <b>51</b>  |
| Figure 11 | Digital Capture of drawing of The Crescent, Wisbech, 1827  |
| Figure 12 | Joseph Medworths proposed layout of the Wisbesch Castle development c.1800 (image from The Wisbech and Fenland Museum) |
| Figure 13 | Digital Capture of a plate of the Wisbech Methodist Chapel, demolished c.1976  |

## List of Plates

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Plate 1  | Trench 2 Working Shot  |
| Plate 2  | Trench 2 Working Shot  |
| Plate 3  | Trench 1 southwest facing  |
| Plate 4  | Trench 1, Feature <b>21</b> , northeast facing   |
| Plate 5  | Trench 1, northwest facing   |
| Plate 6  | Trench 2, Feature <b>44</b>  |
| Plate 7  | Trench 2, Feature <b>37</b> , cellar floor   |
| Plate 8  | Stone Fragment from deposit 36, Trench 2   |
| Plate 9  | Stone Fragment from deposit 36, Trench 2   |
| Plate 10 | Building in Museum Square showing evidence of subsidence, possibly into the moat below |

---

## Summary

*Between 19th January and 4th of February 2009 Oxford Archaeology East conducted archaeological investigations at Wisbech Library, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. A single 4m x 4m trench was opened within part of the footprint of the new library foundations followed by a watching brief on subsequent groundworks. This work followed investigations within the courtyard area of the library carried out in 2008. The results of both investigations will be considered together in this report.*

*The 2008 evaluation revealed evidence of what may have been part of the original, pre-Norman defences of the Castle area as well as post-medieval deposits including a mortar construction surface and two phases of brick-built wall.*

*The 2009 phase of investigations discovered evidence of a cellar which may relate to the Georgian houses previously located on this part of The Crescent. Large blocks of architectural stone were recovered from within the cellar backfill. These blocks of cut and shaped "Ashlar" stone are likely to have come from a late 19th century Methodist Chapel demolished prior to the construction of the library in 1976.*

*The most significant discovery however, was that of a large ditch-like feature, partly infilled with sterile deposits but with an organic water-logged primary fill. The top of this feature was truncated by the cellar and neither edge was recorded, making a height OD of construction impossible to establish, however pottery from the fills has been dated to the 11th to 12th century. Due to both practical and health and safety conditions imposed on the site, it was not possible to excavate to the base of this feature, however an extensive auger survey and orientation of the slumped deposits indicate a large water-holding feature on an east-west orientation. Radiocarbon dating was carried out on seeds recovered from what is thought to have been the primary fill obtained by the auger and a date range of 1220-1310 (80.9% probability) was returned. This feature may represent a defensive ditch associated with the castle on a different alignment to both that recorded in the 2008 evaluation and to the known position of the post-medieval castle moat.*

*Despite such small trenches the findings are significant in enhancing our understanding of the development of Wisbech castle. Although a 1794 plan of the castle exists, this only shows the castle as it existed at the end of the 18th century, prior to the development of the area into its current form. The design and layout of the Norman castle, reputedly destroyed during a devastating flood of 1236, is unknown. However the date of the large feature in Trench 2 corresponds with the period of the flood and may be direct evidence of a castle moat or ditch destroyed in that period.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Archaeological investigations were conducted at Wisbech Library, Ely Place, Wisbech (Figure 1; centred at TF 4625 0959).
- 1.1.2 The 2009 investigation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's CAM ARC).
- 1.1.3 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 and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 Solid geology in the vicinity of Wisbech comprises Jurassic Amphill clays, and pre-Flandrian gravels have been observed at below minus 15.0m OD. Settlement patterns, however, have been dictated by a complex and locally variable Flandrian sequence of marine transgressions, river channel (or roddon) formation, and reed swamp growth. These have led to the deposition of a thick accumulation of silts, clays, and peats overlying the solid geology.
- 1.2.2 The Flandrian deposits (deposits since the last Ice Age) covering the whole of Wisbech are Terrington Beds comprising marine clays, silts and sands (British Geological Society 1995), with most Roman and later activity occurring on an upper silt deposit. The silt area of northern fenland is associated with complex environmental change over the past two millennia. There is a relatively high band of silt running roughly west to east, from the estuary at Kings Lynn to the Lincolnshire border, that underlies the town of Wisbech. The entire island lies below 10m OD, and has been subject to repeated flooding episodes. To the south of this island lies the fresh water peat fen and to the north the salt waters of the Wash. The Nene estuary at Wisbech marks a salt water intrusion into the silt island.
- 1.2.3 The area within the town is relatively flat, with an average height of around 5m OD, ranging up to 7m OD at the east end of Hill Street. The ground level on the site itself is at c. 5.2m OD. The benchmark on the entrance of the church of St Peter and St Paul which lies to the east of the evaluation area is 5.10m OD, and is well over a metre above the floor level within the church itself. The church was built in the 12th century and therefore the floor is a good indicator of the ground level at that time. This is significant in estimating the early medieval ground level in the evaluation trenches (see discussion).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Much of this section has been taken from the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council in 2002.

#### *Prehistoric*

- 1.3.1 Prehistoric remains are almost unknown in the parish, apart from generally unprovenanced stray finds.
- 1.3.2 Peat growth has been recently dated to the Late Bronze Age near Wisbech, and may have continued into the Romano-British period in some places (Waller 1994, 250). The area was almost entirely submerged during the Iron Age, and dry land only began to emerge in the Roman period.

#### *Roman*

- 1.3.3 Roman activity in the area is of two main types – salterns and agricultural settlements. The salterns lie on the roddons along the fen edge, and are fairly numerous. While the predominantly urban nature of the parish of Wisbech masks potential archaeological finds, occasional finds of coins and pottery from within the town suggest the possibility of a Roman predecessor to the Saxon and medieval town. Finds recorded in the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment record include a Roman coin hoard 600m to the south of the castle (CHER 03910), a single coin at the Reason Homes site on the South Brink, 500m to the west (CB 14764), a painted Roman pottery sherd 500m to the south-west (CHER 03891) and two other Roman coin findspots (CHER 03934, 08001). The main Roman communication route across the Fens, the Fen Causeway, lies approximately 12km to the south.

#### *Saxon*

- 1.3.4 There is very little evidence of Early Saxon activity which is limited to two brooches found at the Corn Exchange (CHER 04012). However, the island was likely to have been settled throughout the Middle and Late Saxon period - a series of Middle Saxon sites occupied similar sites to the northeast of Wisbech. At some point before the medieval period Wisbech became the primary settlement, probably due to its location at the confluence of the two principal rivers (the Nene or Wys Beck and the Great Ouse tributary known as the Well Stream). The recent discovery of a possibly Middle Saxon defensive site in the area of the later Norman and post-Medieval castle, allied to the Saxon brooches at the Corn Exchange, suggests that this area was a focus for occupation from as early as the 7th century. This point was also the outfall of the two rivers until the beginning of the 14th century when violent storms caused the diversion of the Ouse from Wisbech to its present course via King's Lynn (Hinman 2002).
- 1.3.5 Saxon activity is again little recorded. It is known that by the Norman Conquest the entire silt isle supported around 50 households under the overlordship of the Abbey of Ely. Again the issue of marginal land comes into play, and the construction of the two sea defences either side of the estuary to protect the landscape from water incursions demonstrates the determination of the church to hold onto these fertile lands, and also proves that the island was subject to centralised authority.
- 1.3.6 Again, it is most likely that Saxon settlement is to be found in the north and west of the current town, i.e. into the silt island itself. That this area was noted as the Old Market by

the end of the 12th century is suggestive of the antiquity of this area as a settlement centre, as is the establishment of the administrative centre of the manorial estates on this side. It should also be noted that the main access route from Ely to Wisbech would have been along the Old Croft River, through Upwell to the settlement. The best disembarkation point for such a journey would have been the location of the Old Market.

- 1.3.7 Nucleation of Anglo-Saxon settlement into the villages and towns that we see today tends to be a phenomenon associated with the reorganisation of the landscape that took place from the 10th to the 12th centuries. However other factors can take precedence, and it is likely that the island was a network of smaller hamlets and farms, with lands divided by drains and a central focus at the main point of water contact, where the market and manorial centres happened to be.
- 1.3.8 Whether a church existed in this later Saxon landscape is uncertain. Certainly a manor usually had an associated church, yet in Wisbech's case the church is across the river next to the castle. It has been shown above how the church could predate the castle, but this would place a later Saxon church effectively on a peninsula over the water from its manor. Whilst not unusual in itself for a Saxon development, it would require more evidence to prove this than is currently available.
- 1.3.9 Another possibility is that the late Saxon church was demolished and rebuilt next to the castle deliberately as a reaction to the support by Ely Abbey of Hereward the Wake. This would as yet undiscovered church to the north of the river, and again is not unknown in the area. A third option is that the scattered nature of the settlement did not justify the expenditure of resources on a church.

### ***Medieval***

- 1.3.10 Wisbech in Domesday Book was not a particularly large or important, yet throughout the mediaeval period the core of the modern town that we know evolved.
- 1.3.11 Wisbech is first referenced as a grant to the abbey at Ely c. AD1000 from the East Anglian Bishop Aelfwine. The scale and nature of Saxon occupation is unknown but a manor is currently thought to have been located on the west bank of the Wysbeck due to the siting there and presumed pre-Norman origins of the Old Market (VCH Vol. IV, 243).
- 1.3.12 The construction of the church, castle and new market moved the focus of settlement away from the north bank of the Nene, a process accentuated when the Nene outflow was finally blocked by silt in the earlier mediaeval period, leaving the Well Stream as the most important water course in the emerging town. The maintenance of two market places is indicative of a change in focus for activity on the Isle. The Old Market maintained its local connections, but it is likely that the new market became more associated with the commercial trade that was beginning to emerge during the 13th century.
- 1.3.13 The castle was first built by the orders of by William the Conqueror in 1086 (VCH Vol. II, 47). This castle was probably of Motte and Bailey type although whether it had a mound or not is not known. According to the Victoria County History it was of stone, and the buildings covered 2 acres, the whole area of the castle being 4 acres (ibid.). The earliest dated evidence of episcopal tenure of the castle is in the vacancy of 1215-19, when it was entrusted in turn to Ralph de Normanville and Robert de Cantia, and to

Richard (Poore), Bishop of Salisbury (VCH Vol. IV, 252). King John stopped at the castle on 12th October 1216 on his last journey.

- 1.3.14 Episodic flooding was a major problem in Wisbech and in 1236 a particularly devastating flood may have destroyed the castle and laid waste to the surrounding area. The *Flores Historiarum* described the 1236 flood: 'But on the morrow of the blessed Martin (November 12th)...the waves of the sea flooded in, transgressing their accustomed limits, so that in the confines of that same sea, and in the marsh, as at Wisbech and in similar small places, small boats, herds, and also a great multitude of men perished.' (FH, vol. 2, 219 as quoted in Hallam 1965, 127).
- 1.3.15 Given the problems afflicting the water flows out of the town, it is interesting to speculate as to why a port evolved here. It appears that the more reliable water flows lead through Lynn, and certainly Cambridge and Ely regarded Lynn as their main trading town. Wisbech and its environs must have possessed some attribute that focussed trade here, and although it did afford access to the western fens (in particular Holme and Yaxley) presumably there was a commodity here that was traded. This probably was the agricultural surplus generated by the fertile lands, especially when an ongoing programme of drainage created more of the same.
- 1.3.16 Agricultural surpluses have always been the main export from the town, in one form or another. First it was corn, then cole-seed and rape-seed, and in more recent times market gardening, especially fruit, although vegetables are also popular.
- 1.3.17 The town however, remained fairly small in size, compared to similar ones in the region. Only one church was built (compared to the 42 in Huntingdon during the mediaeval period). The population was centred on around the two cores, the Old Market and the castle areas, but the town did not stretch much beyond these areas. The marginality of the land may have had something to do with this, for despite the continuing existence of the sea defences, and the ongoing reclamation projects, the core area (around the castle) flooded on a regular and catastrophic basis. It is quite possible that the town existed as a focus for the area, but most of its population still inhabited the hinterlands in scattered settlements.
- 1.3.18 Most of these hinterlands fall outside the remit of this survey. However, the area to the immediate south-west of the town has revealed a form of agriculture known as darlands. These are drainage ditches roughly 2m wide used to delineate strips of agricultural land. These strips are around 12m wide and 160 long, which corresponds reasonably well to plots of land identified under the Midlands system of ridge and furrow.
- 1.3.19 The castle was rebuilt although in what form and with how many alterations is unknown. From the late 13th century the building was mainly used as a prison and as a place for holding the bishop's courts. In the 15th century the castle fell into ruin, and was rebuilt during the episcopate of Bishop Morton (1479-86) (VCH Vol. IV, 252), suggesting a further change in form of the castle.

### ***Post-Medieval – Wisbech Castle***

- 1.3.20 During the Civil War the town, generally on the side of Parliament, and the castle, were put into a state of defence. In 1643 £11 was spent on ironwork for the castle drawbridge. This is strong evidence that a moat was open in the mid 17th century and had presumably been there for a long time already. However, it is quite possible the moat, being part of the defences, was re-worked at this time. Following the Civil War,

John Thurloe (Secretary to the Commonwealth Government) purchased the manor and replaced Morton's palace with a mansion on the site in 1658 (ibid. 254).

- 1.3.21 The only plan of the castle comes from a sketch plan made in 1794 when the site was finally cleared (Figure 2). This clearly shows the near circular form of the castle and the moat around the north-east of the enclosure fronting the market place. The moat is said to have been 40ft (12m) wide (VCH Vol. II, 47). Excavations on the site of the Tesco store in the market place (now QD Stores) during the 1950s encountered evidence of the existence of the castle wall and the extensive moat, the gradual filling in of which seems to have extended into the 16th century (Annis 1977). This is suggested by the pottery found during these excavations which included Bourne and Grimston wares of the late 15th – early 16th century (Moorhouse 1974, 58).
- 1.3.22 In 1793 the castle and grounds were sold to Joseph Medworth who turned the site into a residential development of Georgian houses formed around The Crescent and Ely Place, most of which still survives today. He also demolished Thurloe's mansion and replaced it with the current Wisbech Castle in 1816 (VCH Vol. IV, 254).

### ***Post-Medieval Town***

- 1.3.23 The main growth of the town took place in the post-medieval period, when the population expanded rapidly. This could be down to several factors. Firstly, widespread drainage of the fens coupled with mechanical means of pumping water off the lands created wide swathes of very fertile agricultural land that could be used for crops or (in the case of marginal land) summer pasture. Secondly, there were deliberate attempts to free up the flow of the Nene through the town and improve access to the port facilities.
- 1.3.24 The impact of this was two-fold. The area could now generate larger agricultural products to export, and also the access to the port was improved to permit larger vessels to ship it. The use of mechanical pumps generated a need for certain products, in particular wood and coal. Most of the port facilities were located below the Town Bridge, especially out towards the Horseshoe sluice to the north. Sutton bridge still provided a mooring for large vessels.
- 1.3.25 As the trade grew, so the town prospered. The creation of extensive and elaborate Georgian and Regency properties are a reflection of that. However there was also a requirement for housing for the growing number of labourers that served the port and the town, and there are several references to a lack of such housing in the 18th and 19th centuries. The areas around Walsoken were always regarded as the poorer areas, so it is unsurprising that this is the direction in which the town expanded from the mid-19th century.
- 1.3.26 It also grew southwards, and the terraces around Victoria Road, Milner Road and such like were laid out at this time. The town expanded along Leverington Road and Lynn Road in a linear fashion, and in time Walsoken became totally absorbed. Expansion westwards was hindered by the fact that the wealthy families (especially the Peckovers) who owned the houses around here also owned the land, and would not permit much development in their vicinity.
- 1.3.27 As part of the development of the development of The Crescent and Ely Place, a Baptist Chapel was built. This can be seen on the 1853 Board of Health map (Wisbech Museum; Figure 3). The building was expanded or replaced by the time of the First Edition Ordnance Survey (Figure 4).

- 1.3.28 The town probably reached its zenith by the end of the 19th and into the 20th century. At the opening of the 21st, Wisbech is still recovering from the decline of its port and trade, and still is trying to find a new purpose for itself. Its population is static, and the whole area is economically depressed.

### **Acknowledgements**

- 1.3.1 The author would like to thank Michael Thorley of Mouchel who commissioned and funded the archaeological work on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. The project was managed by Richard Mortimer. The site was excavated by Dave Brown (who also carried out a later watching brief), Graeme Clarke and the author. Trench 1 was excavated by Tom Phillips, assisted by Dave Brown in 2008. The author would also like to thank Jason Spurling and Simon Bates of Kiers as well as the staff of East Dereham Plant Hire who all assisted on site. Andy Thomas of CAPCA monitored both stages of the investigations.

## 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this investigation 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 and to record these by excavation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The **2008** trench was located in the courtyard of the library building (Figure 1). The small size of the plot (9x8m), the lack of space to pile spoil and the presence of modern drains lead to the decision to open a 4x3m trench in the south-east corner of the site. This represented a 17% sample of the area and was machine excavated to a depth of 1m below ground level. The trench was then stepped for safety; a 1.7x1.8m trench was excavated approximately in the centre. This was hand excavated to a depth of 1.75m OD, 3.3m below ground level, with a further step nearer the base. Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a 3 ton tracked mini-digger using a toothless ditching bucket. Site conditions were favourable. Beneath the modern layers the deposits were moderately compact stable silts, which formed firm trench baulks. The water table was encountered at approximately 2.15m OD, 3m below ground level.
- 2.2.2 The **2009** investigation was located inside the library building. The small size of the plot, the lack of space to pile spoil and the need for shoring led to the decision to open two 4x4m trenches in the north-west corner of the site. The discovery of unstable soils in the base of the first trench resulted in a review by the clients engineers to redesign the foundations for the library extension and subsequently the second test pit was only excavated to a depth of 1.00m and was subject to a watching brief. The initial test pit was machine excavated to a depth of 1m below ground level. The trench was then shored for safety using 3.5m inter-locking steel “boards” with internal box-collars inside inserted at 1m intervals. This box was hand excavated to a depth of 2.35m OD, 3m below the library ground level. The bucket of the digger was lowered into the trench to assist with the removal of spoil (Plate 1) which was emptied onto a conveyor belt which led out of site, into a skip. Site conditions were good. Beneath the modern layers the deposits were moderately compact stable silts. The water table was encountered at approximately 2.45m OD. Due to health and safety regulations, it was unsafe to excavate below 3m as a 0.5m “toe” of the steel frame was required to be left below ground, and the foundations of the surrounding library walls went no deeper. As the natural undisturbed geology had not yet been reached at this point, an auger was used to establish the continuation of deposit depths – this is discussed further in Section 3.2.
- 2.2.3 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench plans and sections were recorded at 1:20 and the trench location was tied into clients plans provided. Colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits supplemented by digital photographs.
- 2.2.4 Twelve environmental samples were collected in total to investigate the possible survival of micro and macro botanical remains (see Appendix E).

## 3 RESULTS

### Introduction

The results are presented by trench, and starting with the earliest deposits. Apart from natural flood deposits encountered below the dateable contexts the results can be broken down into two broad periods; medieval and post-medieval. A full context summary can be found in Appendix A. Full interpretation is given in the discussion section. Deposits and layers are in normal text, cut numbers are shown in **bold**.

### 3.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 measured approximately 4m by 3m and was located in the courtyard area of the library building (Figure 1 and Plate 2).

#### *Natural Flood Deposits*

- 3.1.1 The earliest deposit encountered was layer 35, a light brown silt. It was not excavated but was augered to ensure it was not a flood deposit masking earlier archaeology. The auger penetrated 1.2m below the lowest point of the trench to a height of approximately 0.5m OD. There was no change in the deposit.
- 3.1.2 Layer 35 was sealed by layer 26, a mid grey silt measuring 0.36m thick, containing rare inclusions of fish bone, possibly suggesting this was a marine silt. It was sealed in turn by layer 25, an orangey brown silt measuring 0.38m thick, containing a single butchered distal cattle metacarpal, along with rare inclusions of frog and eel bone, conversely suggesting a possible riverine silt.

#### *Saxon/Medieval*

- 3.1.3 The earliest archaeological feature, which truncated layer 25, was ditch/terrace cut **34** (Figure 5, Plan 1; Figure 6, Section 3, Plate 3). Only part of the cut was visible. In plan it appeared to be orientated north-northeast to south-southwest. The base was sloping very gently east to west before diving steeply. This deeper part obviously had a specific purpose. It measured 1.13m deep although it was truncated by **33** so this was not an accurate depth. Ditch/terrace **34** contained three fills. The lower fill (24) was a greyish black silt measuring 0.6m deep with frequent inclusions of charcoal, burnt wood, occasional fired clay and portions of butchered horse femur along with duck bones. Sample 3, collected from fill 24, contained a large quantity of charred leaf and stem fragments of saw sedge. Frog bones and a single mackerel bone were also retrieved from sample 3. Fill 24 had the appearance of debris from a major episode of burning. Saw sedge is traditionally used for thatching and therefore fits well with debris resulting from the burning of nearby structures. Radiocarbon dating was carried out on charred timber retrieved from this context which has produced a date of AD660-780 at 95.4% probability (Appendix G). Fill 30 only appeared in Section 5. It was a light brown clayey silt measuring 0.1m deep with no artefacts. It possibly represents silt washed in to the feature. The upper fill (23) was a dark grey clayey silt measuring 0.54m deep, containing occasional charcoal flecks, a sherd of St Neots type-ware pottery (c. AD850-1150), a small fragment of early medieval-type ware (c. AD1050-1200) and field vole and house mouse bones. Mineralised maggots were retrieved from sample 2, suggesting that the deposit may originally have contained some cess.
- 3.1.4 The upper fill of **34** was truncated by ditch/terrace cut **33** (Figure 6, Section 3 and 5). This could only be seen in section and only the base was visible, gently sloping from

west-northwest to east-southeast, measuring 0.54m deep. The fill sequence showed four fills. The lower two (31 and 32) represented material washed into the bottom of the feature. The upper two fills were very similar in appearance. Fill 22 was a light brown clayey silt measuring 0.3m deep and contained two sherds of pottery. One was a sherd of Thetford ware (c. AD900-1200) and the other was a sherd of Huntingdonshire Fen sandy ware (c. AD1150-1350), suggesting a mid- to late-12th century date for the context.

### ***Post Medieval***

- 3.1.5 Fill 19 was also a light brown clayey silt measuring 0.38m deep. It contained a mixture of late medieval and post-medieval pottery including two sherds of Bourne D-type ware (c. AD1450-1630), a single fragment of late medieval reduced ware (c. AD1350-1500), two fragments of post-medieval redware of indeterminate date and a single fragment of white saltglazed stoneware (c. AD1720-1800). There is likely to be some contamination between fill 19 and the fills of feature **21** because during excavation it was not immediately thought that feature **21** penetrated this deep. Therefore it is difficult to determine whether this fill belongs to the medieval or post-medieval period but as the latest sherds are post-medieval it has been included in this period. Faunal remains consisted of parts of a large adult pig, along with smaller amounts of butchered cattle and sheep. Sample 1, collected from fill 19, contained field vole, house mouse and eel bones. Both 19 and 22 had the appearance of naturally accumulated soils or material which had slipped in from nearby (possibly a bank).
- 3.1.6 Sealing fill 19, the upper fill of **33**, was layer 18, a dark greyish brown clayey silt measuring 0.4m deep. It contained a single fragment of undecorated creamware (c. AD1720-1830), portions of an adult pig similar to those found in fill 19, occasional inclusions of tile and rare slag.
- 3.1.7 Truncating layer 18 was feature **21** (Figure 5, Plan 2; Figure 6, Section 3 and 5; Plate 4), a curvilinear feature running north-east to south-west from beyond the northern baulk (section 3) before turning to run beyond the western baulk (section 5). It had near vertical sides and a concave base, measuring 0.58m wide and 1.06m deep. This was a considerable depth, which was only seen fully in section. It contained three fills (20, 28 and 29), all of which were of a loose compaction and contained varying quantities of post-medieval brick and tile. In particular, the upper fill (20) was of a very loose compaction and had the appearance of material which had filled a void left by timbers or a robbed out wall.
- 3.1.8 Sealing feature **21** was brick wall **27**, measuring approximately 0.45m wide and 0.34m deep, orientated north-northwest to south-southeast, running across the trench perpendicular to the western wall of the museum. The bricks were red, unfrogged and handmade, measuring 0.24m x 0.12m x 0.08m. Wall **27** was five courses high although had probably been truncated during the construction of wall **3** which sat directly on top of it, utilising the earlier one. The rough appearance of wall **27** suggests it was probably the foundation of a wall.
- 3.1.9 Abutting wall **27** on its south-western side was mortar construction surface 17, a very compact yellowish white sandy mortar measuring a maximum of 0.03m deep and extending across most of the central 1.7x1.8m trench. It contained a single fragment of undecorated creamware (c. AD1720-1830), and a single small fragment of post-medieval Chinese porcelain of uncertain date. The surface probably represents a layer

of mortar that formed from dropped and falling material during the construction of wall **27** as it was not substantial enough to be a permanent surface or floor.

- 3.1.10 Sealing surface 17 was layer 16, a mid brown clayey silt measuring 0.2m deep, containing a single fragment of undecorated creamware (c. AD1760-1830), a single black-glazed post-medieval redware base sherd of uncertain date, occasional fragments of tile and charcoal flecks, and rare slag. This was sealed by a thin layer of light brown clay (15), measuring 0.03m deep.
- 3.1.11 Layer 14 was a dark brown clayey silt measuring 0.2m deep, containing occasional gravel and crushed red brick and a copper pin (SF2). This was the latest context excavated in the central 1.7x1.8m trench. All later contexts were machine excavated.
- 3.1.12 Layer 7 (Figure 6, Section 2) was a dark brown clayey silt measuring 0.32m deep. It was very sterile and had the appearance of a buried subsoil. It contained three sherds of 19th century pottery and several pieces of clay pipe. It was sealed by layer 6=8, a reddish brown clayey silt measuring 0.26m deep. The only obvious difference between 6 and 8 was that layer 8 contained near complete bricks, where as layer 6 did not. Otherwise there was no clear relationship between the two. It probably represented a deliberate dump of material.
- 3.1.13 Layer 12, a mid grey sandy silt and layer 9, a dark greyish brown clayey silt, both appeared to be sloping, in a similar fashion to layer 8, from south-southwest to north-northeast. What the function of these layers was is uncertain, although they may relate in some way to wall **3** (see 3.4.10). Layer 12 contained a mixture of pottery ranging in date from a residual sherd of 11th century Thetford ware jar rim to a fragment of burnt high-fired slightly vitrified whiteware (2nd half of the 19th century).
- 3.1.14 Feature **13** truncated layer 12. It was only visible in the south-western corner of section 2. However, the two fills (4 and 5) were visible along the whole southern trench baulk suggesting feature **13** ran parallel with it, east-southeast to west-northwest. It was difficult to interpret what the function of feature **13** was; it may relate to the construction of the wall 1m to the south of the trench.
- 3.1.15 Brick wall **3** was 0.45m wide and 0.7m deep. It utilised wall **27**, which it sat directly on top of. The bricks were orange or dark red and were unfroged. The wall survived to roughly ten courses high. On the northern side of the wall evidence of a small recess was found. This side of the wall had also been backfilled with loose bricks (11) (Plate 5). These two factors indicate the northern side of wall **3** was the interior. Unfortunately the loose nature of context 11 meant it could not be fully excavated because of the danger of the trench edge collapsing. The relationship between wall **3** and the layers to the south was unclear. Either the wall truncated layers 9 and 12 and a construction cut simply wasn't visible or there was a much larger construction cut and layers 9 and 12, and possibly 8, were backfilled up against the wall.

### **Modern**

- 3.1.16 Layer 11 comprised loose bricks measuring 1.06m deep, used to backfill the interior of a building or room bounded to the south by wall **3**. This was modern backfill as a plastic comb and part of a car headlight were retrieved. It was probably backfilled when the library was constructed.
- 3.1.17 Layer 2 was a blackish brown clayey silt top soil measuring 0.13m deep. The sequence was completed by layer 1 which comprised white limestone pebble levelling and concrete slabs, measuring 0.1m thick.

## 3.2 **Trench 2**

Trench 2 measured approximately 4m by 4m and was located in the northern end of the library building (Figure 1). The concrete floor was removed which revealed approximately 0.40m of modern rubble mixed with an orange sand which was removed carefully with a machine and sealed the first recorded archaeological deposit.

### ***Natural Flood Deposits***

- 3.2.1 The natural, pre-medieval flood deposits were possibly encountered at the base of the auger survey holes (context 52, see 3.2.5 below) and in slumped/collapsed form in context 49 (see below, 3.2.4)

### ***Medieval***

- 3.2.2 The earliest feature encountered in Trench 2 was **51** (Figure 8, Section 7); a large ditch, or possibly a moat which spans the entire width of the trench. Due to safety restrictions it was not possible to reach the base of this feature and neither edge lay within the excavation area, although the orientation of its slumped fills suggest it lay on an east to west orientation. Five fills were recorded within this trench indicating a sequence of an organic, water-logged deposit on the base (50) and subsequent sterile, silty fills (45-49), the former indicating that this feature flooded or held water. As it was not possible to excavate below 3m, an auger survey comprising 12 separate auger holes (Figure 7, Plan 1 and Figure 8, Section 7) was used to ascertain the depth, profile and sequence of fills of this large feature. This survey showed a consistent presence of fill 50, a dark organic fill, on what may be the base of the feature. This deposit was retrieved and retained for environmental analysis which revealed charred grains and water-logged seeds. The auger profile survey did not provide any reliable evidence of profile of the feature, it did however demonstrate that the sequence of fills was present throughout and that the depth of those recorded below the excavation depth limit was consistent.
- 3.2.3 Ditch/Moat **51** contained five fills. The lowest fill (50) was as a distinctive dark blackish brown organic deposit located, recorded and retrieved from auger survey only. The thickness of this deposit varied from 0.19m to 1.28m and was located in auger holes across the entire trench. There were no finds retrieved. However C14 dating was carried out on some of the charred seeds found in sample 39. The C14 date indicates a date range of between 1220 and 1310 (80.9% probability) from charred grain from the context (Appendix G). The next fill was 49 which slumped below the limit of excavation, although was partially present in the north corner of the trench (Figure 7, Plan 1, Figure 8, Section 7). This fill was a fine light orangey brown silty sand with no obvious inclusions and measured approximately 0.24m in thickness (from auger survey). There were no finds retrieved from this fill and it appeared to represent slumping of the surrounding, natural, pre-medieval flood deposits. The next fill was 48, a dark brown clayey silt with a maximum thickness of 0.33m. Located on the northern side of the trench, this deposit continued beyond the northern edge of the trench with a slumped "edge" sloping downwards and orientated east to west. Finds retrieved included a single abraded unidentified fragment of medieval pottery, recovered during the processing of environmental sample 40. Fill 48 sealed 47, a light brown sterile silt with pockets of grey clay with no obvious inclusions. This deposit was located on the base of the trench at the limit of excavation however a sample was excavated for

environmental analysis. No finds were retrieved from this deposit. Fill 46 was a mottled dark brown clayey silt with a maximum thickness of 0.64m. Located on the northern side of the trench, this deposit had formed over deposit 48, with a slumped “edge” sloping downwards and orientated east to west. This fill produced four fragments of Stamford Ware (c.850-c.1150) – one of these recovered from the processing of environmental sample 37 – one fragment of Thetford Ware (c.900-c.1200), and two fragments of early medieval ware (c.1050-c.1200). A further five small fragments of unidentified abraded medieval pottery were recovered from environmental sample 37. The uppermost surviving fill of the feature was 45, a light brown silt with no obvious inclusions. It measured approximately 0.90m in thickness and covered the full width of the trench. Two fragments of Norman-period early medieval ware (c.1050-c.1200), and a further small unidentified abraded fragment of medieval pottery were recovered from environmental sample 36. This deposit appeared to represent a flood sequence as silty swirl patterns had formed within the layer.

- 3.2.4 Beneath the basal fill (50) was layer 52, a fine light grey sandy silt deposit located, recorded and retrieved from auger survey only. This deposit was located in auger holes across the entire trench at the base of all augers. There were no finds retrieved from this deposit which *may* represent a natural undisturbed pre-medieval flood deposit.

#### ***Post Medieval and Modern***

- 3.2.5 Truncated by the construction of a brick cellar floor was pit **44** (Figure 7, Plan 2, Plate 6). This pit appeared to be rectangular in plan, located against and continuing beyond the eastern edge of the trench. It had steeply sloping edges and a rounded base and contained a single fill, 43; a dark brown silty clay with fragments of brick and occasional animal bone and charcoal flecks. Pottery retrieved included sherds of an early post-medieval redware jug (probably c.1500-c.1700), a single clay pipe stem, and four fragments of an unusual white stoneware mug. A number was allocated to a cleaning layer over the top of the pit and across the trench (42). This layer included one residual fragment of c.850-c.1150 Stamford Ware. The stoneware fragments date this context to the 18<sup>th</sup> century at the earliest.
- 3.2.6 Context **57** represents the cut for the cellar upon which levelling deposit 40 was laid to take brick floor 37. Figure 8, section 7 clearly shows a horizontal line representing the cut which has truncated the earlier deposits associated with pit **44** and feature **51**. The full dimensions of this cut could not be established as the cellar continued beyond the trench in all directions.
- 3.2.7 Layer 40 was a mid-dark grey brown silty deposit which was laid down as a levelling layer upon which the brick cellar floor was constructed. It measured approximately 0.40m in thickness and spanned the width of the trench. This layer contained 26 fragments of ceramic and ten fragments of glass. The ceramics include five fragments of creamware (c.1760-c.1830), four fragments of pearlware (c.1780-c.1830), one early fragment of transfer-printed whiteware (post-1820), four fragments of yellowware (post-1820), one fragment of bone china (post-1745), five fragments of post-medieval redware (c.1600-c.1900) – two from a pre-19th-century jug – and a single residual fragment of Stamford ware (c.850-c.1150). The context also contained eight fragments of otherwise undiagnostic late 18th- to 19th-century dark green bottle glass, two fragments of opaque milk glass that *may* be lamp glass, and a single – probably residual – late 17th-century pipe bowl. Unfortunately, during excavation, no clear

distinction was made between the finds sealed beneath the floor compared to those in the areas beyond it. It is the authors feeling that the later, post 1820 sherds came from the deposit away from the floor and are a result of intrusion by later backfill and surface trample. The earlier sherds which came from beneath the floor provide a more reliable overall context date for this deposit (40) as c.1760-1830.

- 3.2.8 The cellar floor itself (context 37) was constructed of brick (Figure 7, Plan 3, Plate 7). The bricks were dark red and unfrogged, measuring 23cm x 10cm x 6.5cm (9" x 4" x 2<sup>3/4</sup>"). The bricks were hand made and varied very slightly in dimension with some occasionally misshapened or with defects. The floor measured at least 3.40m x 1.80m, continuing beyond the northern and eastern trench edges. There was no obvious mortar used between or to set the bricks.
- 3.2.9 During the removal of deposit 36, three square, brick-built pillars were also removed. These pillars numbered **39**, **54** and **56** all continued beyond the edges of the trench (Figure 7, Plan 4) and represent roof/arch supports of the cellar with the brick floor laid around them. The pillars measured at least 1.10m x 0.65m. Pillar **39** initially appeared to truncate the floor (37) below, however there were no broken bricks and they seemed to follow the alignment of the pads confirming that the floor was laid around the pads. Similar 19<sup>th</sup> century cellar supports were recorded in the New Inn Yard site excavated in 2004 (Mortimer forthcoming). The support pillars were made from unfrogged red bricks held together by a creamy, gritty mortar.
- 3.2.10 Layer 41 may represent a second partially surviving burnt floor surface. It was located against the southwestern edge of the trench and appeared to continue beyond it. This reddish, burnt clay/brick deposit was at the same level as the brick floor, measuring approximately 0.04m in thickness and 0.24m wide. A single fragment of table glass recovered, while not well dated, it is clearly post-medieval.
- 3.2.11 Filling the cellar was over 1m of rubble mixed with loose brown silty sand, cut stone and fragments of brick (36). It extended beyond the test pit in all directions. This context contained assemblages of both ceramics and glass. The assemblage included two fragments of creamware (c.1760-c.1830), one of pearlware (c.1780-c.1830), one early fragment of transfer-printed whiteware (post-1820), one tinglazed handle fragment (c.1600-c.1800) and seven fragments of dark green bottle glass, three of which feature bottle lips characteristic of the period c.1785-c.1820 (Jones 1986: 61-68). The faunal assemblage contained evidence of bone working waste in the form a sawn distal cattle humerus. This context also contained frequent large blocks of cut stone, some of which were moulded/worked – these fragments were retained and recorded (Appendix C and Plates 8 and 9). This assemblage, appears to date to post 1820, and may be linked to the demolition of a church/chapel in the vicinity of the site, the stone from which has been used to backfill the cellar prior to construction of the Baptist Chapel as shown on Figure 3.

### 3.3 Finds Summary

- 3.3.1 Seventy six sherds of pottery, 20 fragments of glass, and 15 fragments of clay pipe were recovered from the two trenches. While the assemblage is not large, the finds are mostly Norman/early Medieval and Georgian in date, and all of the contexts conclusively dateable through their finds are either associated with the original 1086AD-1263AD castle, or post-date the development of The Crescent in 1793AD.
- 3.3.2 Finds retrieved included a small assemblage of animal bone (see Appendix D). The assemblage consists entirely of butchered domestic mammal remains, with cattle and sheep being the most prevalent. The vast majority of these fragments consist of

butchered long bones from adult animals. One instance of bone working waste was observed in the form a sawn distal cattle humerus from context 36. Over half of the identifiable fragments consist of small bone from environmental samples. The majority of these consist of common frog, with small mammal remains being to limited field vole and single mole scapula. Unfortunately many of the available fish remains were too fragmented to identify to species. However, mackerel, eel and thorn-back ray remains were present in the assemblage.

### **3.4 Environmental Summary**

- 3.4.1 A total of 13 samples were taken for environmental analysis, 5 from the 2008 investigation and a further 7 in 2009. Nearly all of the samples contained numerous fish bones and fishscale. The assemblage appears to represent mainly a natural accumulation of plant remains from local vegetation along with a small quantity of domestic waste.
- 3.4.2 Sample 39, Context 50 was recovered with the use of an auger due to the depth and restricted access of the feature. This sample was preserved by waterlogging (survival due to anoxic conditions) with some charred plant content. This sample was used for C14 dating as this context was recognised as the earliest deposit within the investigation (see Appendix G).
- 3.4.3 For a full breakdown of results, see Appendix E.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 Period 1: Saxon/Medieval

- 4.1.1 To be able to confidently interpret and explain the medieval contexts found in the investigations, a better understanding of the historical location of the site is required. Figure 9 is a copy of a 1794 sketch plan of the castle area prior to re-development, with modern features and street names superimposed, as well as the trench locations. This shows both trenches to lie just inside the castle grounds, a few metres to the west of the known moat. On a modern map the two lanes, Castle Mews and Wilderness Walk, mark where the 'ancient wall' and the side of the moat closest to the castle ran. The Crescent and Ely Place are clearly well within the grounds of the castle, in the area marked as 'the wilderness'. Of course this is a plan showing the site in 1794. What did it look like in previous centuries? Had the moat been re-worked at all, thus shifting its position slightly or even dramatically? Was the original Norman castle much smaller? Evidence that the 1794 plan shows a greatly modified moat comes from the fact that the moat only appears to encircle less than half of the castle wall. The strange 'L' shaped boundary north of the church yard on the 1794 plan looks like some modification has taken place, possibly as the church yard expanded. This is where modern day Museum Square is. Obvious subsidence on the front of the buildings in Museum Square, the museum in particular, is thought to be due to the underlying moat (plate 10). This merely serves to illustrate that the 1794 plan is not a definitive record of the castle's fortifications and defences throughout history and this should be borne in mind when discussing the findings at the present site.
- 4.1.2 In Trench 1, features **33** and **34** have both been interpreted as ditch/terrace cuts. Examination in such a small area means it is difficult to be conclusive one way or the other but there are reasons for this interpretation. Ditch/terrace **34** sits at 1.95m OD at its deepest point on the west-northwestern side of section 3 and at approximately 2.35m OD on the flat part of the cut. Below this are natural silts. This level seems too deep to be the natural ground level, even 1000 years ago. The floor of the 12th century church, which sits at approximately 4m OD, should be a good indicator of the ground level at the time of construction of the original Norman castle. This is over 1.5m above the recorded natural ground level in the trench; convincing evidence that this represents a truncated level. It is not deep enough to be the base of the moat itself but the flat part of the cut could be terracing between the higher ground of the castle to the west and the moat to the east. The deeper part of the cut could represent a construction cut for a palisade with material excavated from the terrace piled up behind it. The first castle was supposedly constructed of stone but it is probable that a more temporary form of defence existed initially.
- 4.1.3 Further evidence for feature **34** being a deep cut feature comes from the infilling sequence. The two fills (23 and 24) were both thick uniform deposits, which one would associate with the infilling of a large feature, although again, not the moat itself, which at its base would probably contain more organic deposits. Fill 24 was of particular interest, representing a major episode of burning, presumably of a structure or structures. This is supported by the frequent inclusions of large pieces of charcoal, lumps of fired clay and saw sedge remains, traditionally used in thatching. It is impossible to determine how far this deposit extends but it clearly represents a large dump of material, presumably from close by. Pottery for this first phase of evaluation was scarce; the two sherds retrieved from fill 23 suggest a mid 11th- 12th century date for the infilling of the feature, which corresponds with the construction and subsequent

use of the earliest castle. The radiocarbon date for the wood recovered from context 24 is possible evidence of a middle-Saxon structure. It should also be considered that feature **34** is earlier in date than initially thought and the later dates obtained from fill 23 above is a result of a later mid 11th-12th century flooding event or subsequent backfilling. Could therefore feature **34** be evidence of the original Saxon fortification destroyed by the building of the Norman Castle? It is also possible that ditch/terrace **33** could either be part of the Norman Castle moat – contemporary with **51** recorded in Trench 2 – and infilled at the same time, by the 1236 flood, or represent the inside lip of the known post-13th century moat. Figure 10 shows the projected alignment of ditches **51** and **34**.

- 4.1.4 Ditch/terrace **33** may be a re-working of the original feature, a re-cutting at a later date. Again, it is thought to represent a cut feature because of the infilling sequence. The scarce pottery dating the infilling of this later ditch/terrace provides a wide date range between the 12th-18th centuries, although as discussed above the later sherds may have been due to contamination from feature **21**. A more realistic date, although still wide ranging, is 12th-16th century. The two main fills (19 and 22) had the appearance of soils which had accumulated naturally. The other possibility is that both fills represent bank material which has slipped in from the west. The inclusions and artefacts within fills 19 and 22 do not really aid the interpretation. Both fills were relatively sterile, not consistent with naturally accumulating soils in an area of human occupation. The exception to this is over 1kg of animal bone found in fill 19. Either way, they are again the fills of a large feature, with no evidence for the gradual build up of occupation layers to be expected in the centre of a medieval town.
- 4.1.5 Trench 2 provides further substantiating evidence for discovery of an early castle ditch or moat. The primary fill of ditch **51** was radiocarbon dated to between 1220 and 1310 (at 80.9% probability; Appendix G) which could coincide with the destruction of the castle by flood in 1236. The difficulty in establishing a true orientation of this feature remains a problem in giving any certainty as to its function. If, as the slumping of the fills suggests it is orientated east to west, it cannot be part of the main defensive castle ditch if we see later plans such as Figure 9 as locating the Norman castle defences. There are, however, no reliable maps of the early castle and therefore the feature recorded in Trench 2 may well represent defences on an alignment not previously recorded or identified. The radiocarbon analysis provides a date for the earliest in-filling of the ditch between 1220 and 1310, however, the pottery recovered from all the subsequent fills of the ditch pre-date this, on the whole by anything up to 200 years. This may be explained by the continued flooding events in Wisbech which occurred during the medieval period despite the continuing existence of the sea defences, and the ongoing reclamation projects, with the core area (around the castle) flooded on a regular and catastrophic basis. During periods of flood, rubbish and debris would have been carried around the town in the flood waters and silts until finally resting in depressions and dips such as that of this large ditch.

## 4.2 Post-Medieval

- 4.2.1 In Trench 1, there is a gap in the sequence between the latest medieval deposit, the upper fill of **34** dated as late medieval, and the earliest post-medieval deposit, layer 18, dated to the late 18th- early 19th century. This could simply be due to the retrieval of an inadequate assemblage of pottery in a small sample area. Alternatively, it may be explained by a truncating or levelling off of the ground level at some point, thus

removing the earlier post-medieval deposits. In Trench 2 there is a similar gap in the sequence from the latest medieval context (54), the upper fills of **51**, to the fill of pit **44** dated as early post-medieval. This, probably caused by the more visible cellar truncation having removed the level from which pit 44 was cut, and the layers that lay in between.

- 4.2.2 In Trench 1, feature **21** most likely had a structural function. The loose fills perhaps consistent with a void that had been filled after the removal of timbers. A feature of such considerable depth and narrow width would not realistically serve any function other than to hold posts. The alignment of the feature is not consistent with any earlier alignments or the later brick-built walls so presumably this was a structure that existed after the castle defences went out of use but before the early 19th century redevelopment took place. The 1794 plan shows the moat to still exist at that time and there is no evidence of structures but again, this might point to the unreliability of the plan, which show the major features of the castle but may miss out insignificant detail.
- 4.2.3 The cellar floor (37) recorded in Trench 2 is likely to be associated with one of the late Georgian houses of The Crescent, built in 1793 as part of the redevelopment of the castle and grounds by Joseph Medworth. The back edge of the cellar was observed as the steel piles were being inserted to form the safety cage. It was located against the northeast edge of the trench and its alignment, although not fully revealed appeared to respect the curve of the crescent. An engraving of The Crescent from 1827 (Figure 11) shows houses in the location of the site, to the left of the 1816 castle with the church of St Peter and St Paul in the background. A plan of the proposed development of the Castle area by Joseph Medworth (Figure 12) also shows the row of houses on The Crescent and Ely Place prior to the demolition of the earlier castle building. Neither of these images show any evidence of the Methodist Chapel on the row as seen by 1853 (Figure 3).
- 4.2.4 The brick and stone rubble (36) removed from the backfill of the cellar in Trench 2 appears, in part, to have belonged to a church located near to the site, perhaps just recently demolished and used for backfill. Figure 11 shows the row of houses still there in 1827 and Figure 3 shows a chapel on the site by 1853 indicating a date range of demolition of the houses in this part of the row. The ceramic assemblage from the backfill suggests a date of approximately 1830. Research has found a building nearby which was demolished and could have been used for the backfill. The Particulars Baptist Church was built in 1692 on Deadmans Lane (now Alexandra Road), 150m south west of the site, the exact date of demolition is unknown.
- 4.2.5 Figure 3 shows a baptist chapel on the site by 1853, however, by 1886 (Figure 4) there appears to have been alterations to the building or even complete replacement as the building looks different in plan. A photograph taken prior to the construction of the library shows the Methodist Chapel on the site in 1976 (Figure 13). Presumably the cellars from the Georgian building was retained and the first chapel constructed above it. When the chapel was removed to make way for the library in 1976, much of the demolition rubble was used to fill the cellar, hence the large stone building blocks (plates 8 and 9).
- 4.2.1 The other post-medieval features of interest are the two brick built walls recorded in Trench 1, contexts **3** and **27**, the former being built directly over the latter. The 1830

map of Wisbech by John Wood (Wisbech Museum) shows the Georgian properties fronting onto Ely Place but there are no buildings to the rear where the trench is located. By the time of the 1853 Board of Health map (Figure 3) there is a boundary which lines up perfectly with walls **3** and **27**, with the area to the north being interior and to the south being exterior. Unless there was another wall on this exact location prior to the 1830 map then wall **27** must correspond with this wall. Construction surface 17 fits stratigraphically with wall **27** as a layer of dropped and spilled mortar formed when building the wall from the outside. The later wall **3** must have been a re-building of the same wall.

### 4.3 Significance

- 4.3.1 It is worth re-iterating the difficulty of drawing conclusions from such a restricted study area. However, it can be stated with confidence that the small trenches have revealed evidence of some form of ground works relating to the defences of Wisbech Castle. This is significant because it expands the limited knowledge relating to the castle and its defences.
- 4.3.2 The middle-Saxon date for the timber recovered from Trench 1 is highly significant as it may represent remains of defensive structures relating to an original, pre-Norman fortification. This is the first physical evidence of the structure found during investigations in the town and although the orientation of the ditch from which they came (**34**) could not be determined in such a small trench, the location and depth is an important discovery which may assist future investigations.
- 4.3.3 The discovery of the potential Norman castle moat in Trench 2 on an east-west orientation is also highly significant as no other defensive ditch on this orientation has been identified previously.
- 4.3.4 The post-medieval remains provide evidence of buildings which have stood on the site since the castle finally went out of use, this includes a cellar floor from building forming part of the 1793 Crescent development.

## APPENDIX A. TRENCH 1 AND 2 CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Context No | Trench Number | Context type | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Comment  | Finds   | Date     |
|------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|--|---|----------|
| 1          | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.1       | Whiteish grey made ground                          |   | Modern   |
| 2          | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.13      | Blackish brown clayey silt topsoil                 |   |          |
| 3          | 1             |              | 0.45      | 0.7       | Wall   |   |          |
| 4          | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.04      | Yellowish brown sand, levelling                    |   |          |
| 5          | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.64      | Dark yellowish brown sandy silt subsoil            | Clay pipe   | Post-Med |
| 6          | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.06      | Reddish brown crushed brick, levelling             |   |          |
| 7          | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.32      | Dark brown clayey silt, buried soil                | Bone, clay pipe, vessel, CBM                            | Post-Med |
| 8          | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.26      | Reddish brown clayey silt, dumped material         |   |          |
| 9          | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.75      | Dark greyish brown clayey silt                     |   |          |
| 10         | 1             | Cut          | 1.6       | 0.75      | Construction cut                                   |   |          |
| 11         | 1             | Layer        | 1         | 1.06      | Reddish brown bricks, deliberate backfill          |   | Modern   |
| 12         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.54      | Mid grey sandy silt, levelling                     | Clay pipe, vessel, shell                                | Post-Med |
| 13         | 1             | Cut          | 2.4       | 0.54      | Unknown function                                   |   |          |
| 14         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.2       | Dark brown clayey silt                             |   |          |
| 15         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.03      | Light brown clay                                   |   |          |
| 16         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.2       | Mid brown clayey silt, naturally accumulated       | Clay pipe, glass, shell, slag, CBM, stone, vessel, bone | Post-Med |
| 17         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.03      | Yellowish white sandy mortar, construction surface | Mortar, vessel  | Post-Med |

| Context No | Trench Number | Context type | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Comment                                     | Finds  | Date     |
|------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|---|--|----------|
| 18         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.4       | Dark greyish brown clayey silt              | Glass, bone, shell, slag, vessel, CBM, clay pipe | Post-Med |
| 19         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.38      | Light brown clayey silt, ditch/terrace fill | Vessel, CBM, clay pipe, shell, bone              | Medieval |
| 20         | 1             | Fill         | 0.58      | 0.48      | Dark brown clayey silt                      |  |          |
| 21         | 1             | Cut          | 0.58      | 1.06      | Construction cut                            |  |          |
| 22         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.3       | Light brown clayey silt, ditch/terrace fill | Fired clay, bone, slag, shell, vessel            | Medieval |
| 23         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.54      | Dark grey clayey silt, ditch/terrace fill   | Bone, shell, vessel                              | Medieval |
| 24         | 11            | Fill         |           | 0.6       | Greyish black silt, ditch/terrace fill      | Charcoal, shell, flint, fired clay, slag, bone   | Medieval |
| 25         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.38      | Orangey brown silt, natural silt            | Shell, bone                                      |          |
| 26         | 1             | Layer        |           | 0.36      | Mid grey silt, natural silt                 | Bone   |          |
| 27         | 1             |              |           | 0.34      | Wall  |  |          |
| 28         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.37      | Dark brownish slightly clayey silt          |  |          |
| 29         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.52      | Mid greyish brown clayey silt               |  |          |
| 30         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.1       | Light brown clayey silt, ditch/terrace fill |  |          |
| 31         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.03      | Mid brown clayey silt, ditch/terrace fill   |  |          |
| 32         | 1             | Fill         |           | 0.05      | Grey clayey silt, ditch/terrace fill        |  |          |
| 33         | 1             | Cut          | 1.8       | 0.54      | Ditch/terrace                               |  |          |
| 34         | 1             | Cut          | 1.8       | 1.13      | Ditch/terrace                               |  |          |

| Context No | Trench Number | Context type | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Comment   | Finds        | Date                   |
|------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|---|--------------|------------------------|
| 35         | 1             | Layer        |           | 1.2       | Light brown silt, natural silt  |              |                        |
| 36         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Rubble backfill of Cellar   | Worked stone | C19th                  |
| 37         | 2             | Floor        |           |           | Red-brick cellar Floor  | -            | Late C18 <sup>th</sup> |
| 38         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Rubble fill of base of Foundation Pad   | -            | C19th                  |
| 39         | 2             | Cut          |           |           | Foundation pad  | -            | C19th                  |
| 40         | 2             | Layer        |           |           | Levelling layer for cellar floor  |              | Late C18th             |
| 41         | 2             | Floor        |           |           | Remnant of burnt floor  |              | Late C18th             |
| 42         | 2             | Layer        |           |           | Cleaning layer  |              |                        |
| 43         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Fill of Pit <b>44</b>   |              | C17/18th               |
| 44         | 2             | Cut          |           |           | Cut of pit  |              | "                      |
| 45         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Silty fill of <b>51</b> (?)   |              |                        |
| 46         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Darker silty fill of <b>51</b> (?)  |              |                        |
| 47         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Light silty fill of <b>51</b> (?) with bluey clay flecks                            |              |                        |
| 48         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Dark clayey fill of <b>51</b> (?)   |              |                        |
| 49         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Silty sandy fill of <b>51</b> (?)   |              |                        |
| 50         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Dark brown/black organic primary (?) fill of <b>51</b> (?). retrieved by auger only | -            |                        |
| 51         | 2             | Cut          |           |           | Cut of large East-West (?) orientated feature                                       | -            |                        |
| 52         | 2             | Layer/ Fill  |           |           | Fine grey sandy silt – natural (?)  |              |                        |
| 53         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Rubble fill of foundation pad   |              |                        |
| 54         | 2             | Cut          |           |           | Foundation pad  |              |                        |
| 55         | 2             | Fill         |           |           | Rubble fill of foundation pad   |              |                        |
| 56         | 2             | Cut          |           |           | Foundation pad  |              |                        |
| 57         | 2             | Cut          |           |           | Cut for cellar floor  |              | Late C18th             |

---

## APPENDIX B. MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL FINDS BY DR ALASDAIR BROOKS WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY CAROLE FLETCHER BA, AIFA

### B.1 Introduction

B.1.1 Seventy six sherds of pottery, 20 fragments of glass, and 15 fragments of clay pipe were recovered from the evaluation and excavation carried out in 2008-2009 at Wisbech Library (WIS LIB 08 and WIS LIB 09). While the assemblage is not large, the finds are mostly Norman and Georgian in date, and all of the contexts conclusively dateable through their finds are either associated with the original 1086AD-1263AD castle, or post-date the development of The Crescent in 1793AD.

### B.2 Methodology

B.2.1 This assessment integrates the text of the original pottery and clay pipe assessment from the evaluation stage (Brooks 2008) with new text on the finds from the excavation stage, with some slight revisions of the evaluation text undertaken where relevant.

B.2.2 In the absence of standardised British guidelines for the analysis of later post-medieval ceramics, the ceramic terminology and dating criteria used in this report were taken from the author's own book on later post-medieval ceramics (Brooks 2005) and Miller's 2000 guide to dating post-medieval finds. Medieval ceramics were described by OA East medieval pottery specialist Carole Fletcher using Medieval Pottery Research Group guidelines. The 18th-century advent of increased ceramic standardisation through industrial mass-production often requires a different approaches to later post-medieval ceramics than that used for earlier periods (Brooks 2005). For example, post-medievalists typically use sherd counts, while medievalists typically use sherd weight; for the sake of consistency, while the body of the text follows post-medieval methodology, quantification tables use both methods. Post-medieval sites often refer to the traditional most common period of production rather than definitive start and end dates; the transition from creamware and pearlware to whiteware from c.1820-c.1830, for example, is a gradual process rather than a sudden shift from older types to the newer type.

B.2.3 There are also no standard British guidelines to the archaeological analysis of later post-medieval (post-1750) glass. This assessment uses the *Parks Canada Glass Glossary* (Jones and Sullivan 1989), the US Bureau of Land Management and Society for Historical Archaeology bottle identification web page (Society for Historical Archaeology 2009), and the Heritage Council of New South Wales' *Early Australian Commercial Glass: Manufacturing Processes* (Boow 1991) as standard references, with the BLM/SHA guide used as the base reference where terminological differences exist between the three. A certain amount of caution must be used when using North American and Australian archaeological reference guides with British bottle assemblages, particularly as regards dating, but the three sources cited here remain the best available archaeological sources until a standard guide is written for the United Kingdom, so long as they are not approached uncritically.

B.2.4 The clay pipe terminology used in this report was taken from Bradley (2000). The pipe bowls, considered the most diagnostic part of this small assemblage, were identified and dated using the standard typology for English pipe bowls, as featured in this case in Orser and Fagan (1995:104). This is a broad international typology, rather than a local Cambridgeshire-based one, but the basics of date and type usually hold across regions.

- B.2.5 The ceramic building material (CBM) and mortar are not described in any detail, though a quick reference table by context and weight is provided at the end of this assessment. If a full report on the finds from the WIS LIB site is later considered necessary, these materials should be sent to a relevant specialist.

### B.3 Quantification

- B.3.1 The tables at the end of the finds assessment include detailed quantification of the ceramics, glass and clay pipes. The following section provides a written discussion of these materials (only) by context.
- B.3.2 Context 5: This subsoil fill context contains an undiagnostic clay pipe stem fragment.
- B.3.3 Context 7: This buried soil layer contains one sherd of an undecorated whiteware jar lid (c.1820+), one fragment of Bristol glaze-type stoneware (c.1835+), and one 19th century flowerpot base sherd. The context also contains two mending marked pipe bowl fragments and three stem fragments, one of them featuring a simple rouletted decoration of. The pipe bowl is stylistically of 18th-century manufacture; the mark on the pipe bowl heel reads 'IP'. This is an extremely common set of initials (with the 'I' usually standing for 'J'). Flood (1976: 40-41) lists at least six potential 18th-century pipe makers based in the city of Cambridge alone. As a whole, the context is mostly 19th-century with one 18th-century pipe bowl.
- B.3.4 Context 12: This levelling layer contains one burnt high-fired slightly vitrified whiteware (2nd half of the 19th century), one fragment of Bristol glaze-type stoneware (c.1835+), one very early post-medieval redware (16th-17th centuries), and one 11th-century Thetford ware jar rim. The context also includes four pipe bowl fragments which mend into two separate bowls. The larger and more complete of these is 18th century in style, and has a marked heel reading 'IW'. No 18th-century makers with those initials are known in Cambridgeshire (Flood 1976:39-45), though a John Wood was active in Lincoln in 1749 (Oswald 1960: 101). As a whole, the context features mixed materials from the 11th century through to the 19th century.
- B.3.5 Context 16: This naturally accumulated layer contains a single fragment of undecorated creamware (c.1760-c.1830), and a single black-glazed post-medieval redware base sherd of uncertain date. The latter is slightly unusual in being so highly-fired that it has technically become stoneware. The context also includes a single undiagnostic clay pipe stem mouthpiece fragment, and a very small fragment of otherwise undiagnostic bottle glass. The context is clearly late post-medieval, and the only solidly dateable item indicates a late 18th to early 19th century date.
- B.3.6 Context 17: This floor layer contains a single fragment of undecorated creamware (c.1720-c.1830), and a single small fragment of post-medieval Chinese porcelain of uncertain date. The only solidly dateable item indicates a late 18th to early 19th century date.
- B.3.7 Context 18: This unidentified layer contains a single fragment of undecorated creamware (c.1720-c.1830), a single undiagnostic clay pipe stem fragment, and a single fragment of undiagnostic bottle glass. The context is clearly late post-medieval, and the only solidly dateable item indicates a late 18th to early 19th century date.
- B.3.8 Context 19: This probable ditch fill context features the greatest amount of pottery in both count and weight. It includes a single fragment of white saltglazed stoneware (c.1720-c.1800), two fragments of post-medieval redware (one a black-glazed large storage vessel, the other clear-glazed) of indeterminate date, two late medieval to early post-medieval early Bourn D-type ware (c.1450-c.1630), and a single fragment of late

medieval reduced ware (c.1350-c.1500). A tiny fragment of indeterminate green-glazed buff-bodied post-medieval redware was also recovered during environmental sample processing. The only clay pipe fragment is an undiagnostic stem. The context contains mixed late medieval through 18th century materials.

- B.3.9 Context 22: This probable ditch fill context features only medieval pottery. It includes one fragment of Huntingdonshire fen sandy ware (c.1150-c.1350) and one fragment of Thetford ware (c.900-1200). From the date overlap, this suggests a mid- to late-12th century date for the context.
- B.3.10 Context 23: This probable ditch fill context features only medieval pottery. It includes one fragment of St. Neots-type ware (c.850-c.1150), and one small fragment of early medieval-type ware (c.1050-1200). Date overlap suggests a mid-11th to 12th century date.
- B.3.11 Context 36: This cellar backfill context contains both ceramics and glass, including two fragments of creamware (c.1760-c.1830), one fragment of pearlware (c.1780-c.1830), one early fragment of transfer-printed whiteware (post-1820), one tinglaze handle fragment (c.1600-c.1800) and seven fragments of dark green bottle glass, three of which feature are bottle lips characteristic of the period c.1785-c.1820 (Jones 1986: 61-68). While the tinglaze handle is somewhat earlier than the other finds, date overlaps suggest final deposition no later than c.1820-c.1830; the relative lack of post-1820 whiteware is important in this regard.
- B.3.12 Context 40: The 26 fragments of ceramic and ten fragments of glass in this levelling layer mark it as the most artefact-rich of the site contexts. The ceramics include five fragments of creamware (c.1760-c.1830), four fragments of pearlware (c.1780-c.1830), one early fragment of transfer-printed whiteware (post-1820), four fragments of yellowware (post-1820), one fragment of bone china (post-1745), five fragments of post-medieval redware (c.1600-c.1900) – two from a pre-19th-century jug – and a single presumably residual fragment of Stamford ware (c.850-c.1150). The context also contained eight fragments of otherwise undiagnostic fragments of late 18th- to 19th-century dark green bottle glass, two fragments of opaque milk glass that may be lamp glass, and a single – probably residual – late 17th-century pipe bowl. The overall impression is of a context dating, like context 36, no later than c.1820-c.1830.
- B.3.13 Context 41: This context may be the remains of a burnt floor. The single fragment of table glass recovered is not particularly diagnostic from the perspective of date, though it is clearly post-medieval.
- B.3.14 Context 42: Only one fragment of c.850-c.1150 Stamford Ware was recovered in this trench cleaning layer.
- B.3.15 Context 43: This pit fill context contains an early post-medieval redware jug (probably c.1500-c.1700), a single clay pipe stem, and four fragments of an unusual white stoneware mug. More research would be needed on the latter item to ascertain whether it is early 18th-century in date, or post-dates 1835; this obviously would have significant bearing on dating the context, though it is clearly post-medieval.
- B.3.16 Context 45: This layer is possibly flood-related; it contains two fragments of Norman-period early medieval ware (c.1050-c.1200), and a further small unidentified abraded fragment of medieval pottery recovered from environmental sample 36.
- B.3.17 Context 46: This fill context contains four fragments of Stamford Ware (c.850-c.1150) – one of these recovered from the processing of environmental sample 37 – one fragment of Thetford Ware (c.900-c.1200), and two fragments of early medieval ware (c.1050-

c.1200). A further five small fragments of unidentified abraded medieval pottery were recovered from environmental sample 37. This suggests that the fill is Norman, but pre-dates 1200AD.

- B.3.18 Context 48: A single abraded unidentified fragment of medieval pottery was recovered during the processing of environmental sample 40.

## B.4 Provenience

- B.4.1 Industrial mass-production and improved transportation routes make the identification of location of manufacture less important for the later post-medieval period than for earlier periods. However, all but one of the later post-medieval ceramics are English, with the refined tablewares (mostly creamware and pearlware) probably originating in Staffordshire. The exception is the single fragment of Chinese porcelain in context 17, though this is by no means unusual as Chinese porcelain enjoyed relatively wide distribution internationally from the 17th century onwards.
- B.4.2 The medieval wares are all appropriate to the region, and feature no exotic imported goods or wares. All of the identified fabrics are from East Anglia or Lincolnshire.

## B.5 Statement of Research Potential



- B.5.1 While the assemblage is small, it is not without research potential as it appears to demonstrate that there were two major periods of activity at the site. With a small number of exceptions, such as a late 17th-century pipe bowl and a small number of late medieval to early post-medieval pot sherds, most of the site artefacts can be divided into two discreet components. These are a late Georgian component dating from the first three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and a Norman component largely pre-dating 1200AD. The identifiably-Georgian contexts include 16, 17, 18, 19, 36, and 40. The identifiably-Norman contexts include 22, 23, 45, 46.
- B.5.2 The dates of the Norman pottery are consistent with an association with the Norman castle originally built in 1086, and destroyed during a severe flood in 1236. The Georgian-period materials are consistent with an association with The Crescent, developed in 1793 (Phillips 2008: 7-8). If an association with the 1803 Baptist chapel is considered likely, note that the wine bottles recovered from the site need not indicate that the Baptists were drinking wine; bottle re-use is a recognised phenomenon in post-1750 glass use. The small quantity of finds from the periods between the Norman and Georgian were all recovered from contexts containing identifiably Georgian finds. No excavated contexts conclusively relate to the known use of the area as a medieval prison, Bishop Morton's redevelopment of the castle in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, or Civil War-era site use (Phillips 2008: 7-8).



## B.6 Further Work and Methods Statement



- B.6.1 While no further work is necessary on this small assemblage, the assemblage should be considered as a possible comparative collection should any future archaeological work take place in the vicinity of The Crescent and Ely Place.



## APPENDIX C. CATALOGUE OF WORKED STONE

| Small Find Number | Dimensions (cm) and weight (kgs) | Description   | Image  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| 10                | 40 x 40 x 24cm<br>57.4kg         | Large, moulded cut stone with remnants of red paint.                    |   |
| 11                | 23.5 x 23 x 16cm<br>16.2kg       | Rectangular block of cut stone with star-shaped masons mark on one side |  |

|    |                            |   |  |
|----|----------------------------|---|--|
| 12 | 35 x 31 x 26cm<br>30.2kg   | Bulky block of cut stone with moulded detail on one side.                     |   |
| 13 | 62 x 22.5 x 17cm<br>35.8kg | Long, deeply moulded edging stone (?). Clear marks from masons cutting tools. |  |

|    |                          |  |  |
|----|--------------------------|--|--|
| 14 | 39 x 29 x 29cm<br>45.2kg | Large, heavy cut and moulded stone with central void for support rod or bar. |   |
| 15 | 47 x 23 x 22cm<br>45.8kg | Large squarish cut block with small triangle shape masons mark.              |  |



|    |                           |  |   |
|----|---------------------------|--|---|
| 16 | 13 x 12 x 7.5cm<br>1.66kg | Small decoratively moulded trefoil with "N" engraved masons mark at one end. |  |
|----|---------------------------|--|---|

## 5 FAUNAL REMAINS BY CHRIS FAINE, MA, MSc, AIFA, BABAO

### C.1 Introduction

C.1.1 3.8 Kg of faunal material was recovered from the archaeological work at Wisbech Library, yielding 64 “countable” bones (see below). This report also includes and reassesses the material from the 2008 evaluation of the same area (Phillips, 2008). All bones were collected by hand apart from those recovered from environmental samples; hence a bias towards smaller fragments is to be expected. Residuality appears not to be an issue and there is no evidence of later contamination of any context. Faunal material was recovered from pits and ditches dating from the Early and Post-Medieval periods. One-hundred and nine fragments of animal bone were recovered with sixty four identifiable to species (58.7% of the total sample).

### C.2 Methodology

C.2.1 All data was initially recorded using a specially written MS Access database. Bones were recorded using a version of the criteria described in Davis (1992) and Albarella & Davis (1994). Initially all elements were assessed in terms of siding (where appropriate), completeness, tooth wear stages (also where applicable) and epiphyseal fusion. Completeness was assessed in terms of percentage and zones present (after Dobney & Reilly, 1988). Initially the whole identifiable assemblage was quantified in terms of number of individual fragments (NISP) and minimum numbers of individuals MNI (see table 1). The ageing of the population was largely achieved by examining the wear stages of cheek teeth of cattle, sheep/goat and pig (after Grant, 1982). Wear stages were recorded for lower molars of cattle, sheep/goat and pig, both isolated and in mandibles. The states of epiphyseal fusion for all relevant bones were recorded to give a broad age range for the major domesticates (after Getty, 1975). Measurements were largely carried out according to the conventions of von den Driesch (1976). Measurements were either carried out using a 150mm sliding calliper or an osteometric board in the case of larger bones.

### C.3 The Assemblage

C.3.1 Table 1 shows the species distribution for the entire assemblage. In terms of the hand collected material the assemblage consists entirely of butchered domestic mammal remains, with cattle and sheep being the most prevalent taxa both in terms of fragment count (NISP) and number of individuals (MNI). The vast majority of these fragments consist of butchered long bones from adult animals. One instance of bone working waste was observed in the form of a sawn distal cattle humerus from context 36. Over half of the identifiable fragments consist of small bone from environmental samples. The majority of these consist of common frog, with small mammal remains being limited to field vole and single mole scapula. Unfortunately many of the available fish remains were too fragmented to identify to species. However, mackerel, eel and thorn-back ray remains were present in the assemblage.

|   | <b>NISP</b> | <b>NISP%</b> | <b>MNI</b> | <b>MNI%</b> |
|---|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Cattle ( <i>Bos</i> )                     | 10          | 15.6         | 8          | 17.3        |
| Sheep/Goat ( <i>Ovis/Capra</i> )          | 10          | 15.6         | 7          | 14.9        |
| Pig ( <i>Sus scrofa</i> )                 | 5           | 7.8          | 1          | 2.1         |
| Domestic Duck ( <i>Anas sp.</i> )         | 1           | 1.6          | 1          | 2.1         |
| Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> )               | 1           | 1.6          | 1          | 2.1         |
| Field Vole ( <i>Microtus agrestis</i> )   | 7           | 10.9         | 5          | 10.6        |
| Common Mole ( <i>Talpa europaea</i> )     | 1           | 1.6          | 1          | 2.1         |
| Common Frog ( <i>Rana temporaria</i> )    | 11          | 17.1         | 7          | 14.9        |
| Thorn-back Ray ( <i>Raja clavata</i> )    | 1           | 1.6          | 1          | 2.1         |
| Mackerel ( <i>Scomber sp.</i> )           | 1           | 1.6          | 1          | 2.1         |
| European Eel ( <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> ) | 5           | 7.8          | 4          | 8.5         |
| Unid. Small mammal                        | 5           | 7.8          | 5          | 10.6        |
| Unid. Fish                                | 5           | 7.8          | 4          | 8.5         |
| Unid. Bird                                | 1           | 1.6          | 1          | 2.1         |
| <b>Total:</b>                             | <b>64</b>   | <b>100</b>   | <b>47</b>  | <b>100</b>  |

Table 1: Species distribution for the entire assemblage (both hand collected and from samples).

## C.4 Conclusions

C.4.1 As mentioned above the majority of the identifiable assemblage consists of small mammal, fish and amphibian remains. Many of these are indicative of the general environment of Wisbech at the time. Due to its geographical location the Town was often affected by periods of (on occasions quite destructive) flooding. This, along with the general waterlogged nature of the site would account for the large number of frog remains. Field vole and mole are more commonly found in pasture and rural areas. The vole remains could have been brought with hay for animal feed, while the mole could have been the prey of a dog or cat. However, it is possible both sets of small bones could have been carried to the site as part of a flood deposit. The fish remains are also of species commonly found on other contemporary sites in Wisbech such as Market Mews (Hinman, 2002) and New Inn Yard (Mortimer, 2007) and further afield at Norwich Castle (Albarella et al, forthcoming). Whilst all are common food fish it is equally likely that the elements could also have formed part of a flood deposit.

## APPENDIX D. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BY RACHEL FOSBERRY, HNC AIFA

### D.1 Introduction

- D.1.1 Twelve bulk samples were taken from features within the two excavated areas of the site (five from WISLIB08 and seven from WISLIB09) for the retrieval of plant remains, bones and artefacts.
- D.1.2 Features sampled include layers and ditch fills dated to the medieval period.
- D.1.3 Sample 39, Context 50 was recovered with the use of an auger due to the depth and restricted access of the feature.

### D.2 Methodology

- D.2.1 The volume of bulk soil samples collected was between 5 – 60L
- D.2.2 The total volume of each sample (except Sample 39) were processed by water flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flots were collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residues were washed through a 0.5mm mesh. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residues were passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for ecofacts (e.g. animal bone, fish bone, charcoal, shell, etc..) and artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds.
- D.2.3 Sample 39 was processed by wet-sieving.
- D.2.4 The flots were examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification. Identifications were made by the author without comparison to the OA East reference collection and should be seen as provisional. Nomenclature for the plant classification follows Stace (1997).

### D.3 Quantification

- D.3.1 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories

# = 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

- D.3.2 Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance
- D.3.3 + = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant
- D.3.4 Table 2 summarises the results obtained at the end of this report

### D.4 Results

#### Preservation

- D.4.1 The majority of the samples contain plant remains preserved by carbonisation.

- D.4.2 Sample 5 contained uncharred seeds that have been preserved by water-logging. Mineralised maggots occur in sample 2. Preservation of plant remains is poor, especially in sample 1 which seemed to have been subjected to repeated or high-temperature burning.
- D.4.3 Sample 37 contains a single seed preserved by mineralisation and Sample 36 contains a mineralised millipede segment.
- D.4.4 Samples 39 is preserved by waterlogging (survival due to anoxic conditions) with some charred plant content.

### **Plant Remains**

#### ■ **Cereals**

- D.4.1 Charred cereal grains are present in all of the samples except Sample 41. Quantities are generally low; not exceeding twenty grains. Wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and rye (*Secale cereale*) were tentatively identified. No chaff elements occur in the assemblage.

#### ■ **Weed seeds**

- D.4.1 Charred weed seeds are rare and include single specimens of spike rush *Eleocharis* sp., vetch (*Vicia* sp.) and a single nutlet of Saw sedge (*Cladium mariscus*).
- D.4.2 The waterlogged sample produced seeds of dead nettle (*Lamium* sp.), elder (*Sambucus* sp.), goosefoot (*Chenopodium* sp.), docks (*Rumex* sp, ) and sedges (*Carex* sp.).
- D.4.3 Most of the samples contain uncharred seeds of elderberry (*Sambucus* sp.). Sample 5 contains uncharred seeds of henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) and sedges (*Carex* sp.)

#### ● **Legumes**

- D.4.1 Charred remains of field beans (*Vicia faba*) occur in Sample 37

#### ● **Other plant remains**

- D.4.1 Sample 3 seems to be predominantly composed of charred leaf and stem fragments of saw sedge (*C.mariscus*) mixed with large (up to 7cm) pieces of wood charcoal.

### **Ecofacts and Artefacts**

#### ● **Bone**

- D.4.1 Elements of fish bone and small mammal bones and large mammal bones are common in most of the residues. Elements of fish bone occur in all of the Samples except for Sample 3. A caudal denticle of the Thornback ray (*Raja* sp.) was recovered from the residue of Sample 37.

#### ● **Pottery**

- D.4.1 Sherds of pottery were present in many of the samples

### **Contamination**

D.4.2 Modern roots were present in most of the samples

### **D.5 Discussion**

D.5.1 The charred plant remains in this assemblage are dominated by cereal grains. A range of cereals were identified including wheat, barley and rye. Although they are present in small quantities, they do indicate that cereals were being utilised. The lack of any chaff elements suggests that clean grain was imported as would be expected in a medieval urban environment. The cereals along with other dietary remains namely legumes, animal bone and fish bone, are probably derived from low-density deposits of domestic refuse.

D.5.2 Mineralisation is an indication of cess.

D.5.3 The plant remains in this assemblage are dominated by wood charcoal and burnt saw sedge. Saw sedge was traditionally used in this area for thatching and could have been burnt accidentally which could explain the large quantity in sample 3 mixed with large pieces of wood charcoal

D.5.4 Fish bones predominate in this assemblage suggesting that fish was a dietary constituent. All elements of the bones seem to be represented although fish scale was relatively rare.

D.5.5 The presence of mineralised maggots in sample 2 suggest that this deposit originally contained cess. No other evidence such as mineralised seeds were noted.

D.5.6 The weed seed assemblage suggests utilisation of a wetland environment typical of the Fen-edge. The uncharred seeds in Sample 5 have been preserved by water-logging although the excavator did not consider this deposit to be wet. This suggests that this deposit has recently become de-watered or may be subject to seasonal water-logging.

### **D.6 Concussions and Recommendations**

D.6.1 In conclusion, the assemblage appears to represent mainly a natural accumulation of plant remains from local vegetation along with a small quantity of domestic waste.

D.6.2 Nearly all of the samples contain numerous fish bones and fishscale suggesting that fish was a dietary constituent. Analysis of these remains could provide an insight into diet and butchery practice.

D.6.3 The low density of plant macrofossils in this assemblage limits interpretation of the features sampled. It is not considered that full analysis would add significantly to this and further work is not recommended



Table 2. Results of Environmental Sampling

| Sample No. | Context No. | Feature Type | Sample Size (L) | Comments   | Flot Volume (ml) | Cereals | Legumes | Weed Seeds | Small Bones | Charcoal <2mm | Charcoal > 2mm | Flot comments   | Small animal bones | Large animal bones | Fishbone | Pottery | CBM  | Slag | Magnetic residues | Residue comments |   |
|------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|--|------------------|---------|---------|------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|----------|---------|------|------|-------------------|------------------|---|
| 1          | 19          | layer        | 20              | possibly buried sub-soil/flooding deposit? Included darker lenses with charcoal  | 10               | ##      |         | ##         | #           | ++            | ++             | vitirified cpr  | ##                 | #                  | #        | #       |      |      |                   |                  |   |
| 2          | 23          | layer        | 20              | Layer of dark grey silty soil approx 1.5m below ground level   | 10               | ##      |         | ##         | ##          | ++            | ++             | single spheroid hammerscale   | #                  | #                  | ##       |         |      |      |                   |                  |   |
| 3          | 24          | layer        | 20              | black silty layer rich in charcoal and fired clay. Possible dump of material. No pot                                       | 30               |         |         | ##         |             | +++           | +++            | predominantly Cladium leaf  | #                  | #                  | #        |         | ###  |      |                   |                  | Large pieces of roundwood charcoal, some of bone was burnt. Oyster shell                        |
| 4          | 25          | layer        | 20              | sterile light brown silt. Either fill of moat or flood deposit   | 1                | #       |         | #          |             | +             |                |   | ##                 |                    | #        |         |      |      |                   |                  |   |
| 5          | 26          | layer        | 10              | lowest deposit reached. Dark grey silt containing small pieces of bone   | 1                |         |         | #          |             | +             |                | De-watered seeds  | #                  |                    | #        |         |      |      |                   |                  |   |
| 35         | 40          | Layer        | 20              | Silty sand layer. River flooding with occasional early medieval finds. First layer beneath 19 <sup>th</sup> Century cellar | 5                | ##      |         | #          | ##          | ++            | +              | hammerscale, burnt fishbone, fishscale, <i>Cladium mariscus</i> nutlet, <i>Eleocharis</i> sp. | #                  | #                  | ##       | #       | Fc # |      | #                 |                  | small fragments of fired clay, degraded pottery, numerous fishbones and a few fragments of bone |



|    |    |       |    |  |    |    |   |    |     |    |  |  |     |    |    |      |   |  |               |
|----|----|-------|----|--|----|----|---|----|-----|----|--|--|-----|----|----|------|---|--|---------------|
| 36 | 45 | Layer | 20 | Sterile sand layer. Possible flooding episode                    | 5  | #  |   | #  | ++  |    | Fishscale, mineralised millipede segment | #  |     |    | #  | Fc # |   | large piece of pottery, some charcoal  |               |
| 37 | 46 | Layer | 40 | Darker silty sand flooding layer. Some pot and animal bone found | 2  | ## | # | #  | ##  | ++ | ++                                       | mineralised <i>Chenopodium sp.</i> , charred beans, fishbone, fishscale, mixed cereals   | ##  | ## | #  | #    | # | pottery, thornback ray caudal denticle, small bone, flakes + spheroids + some large bone burnt, charcoal |               |
| 38 | 49 | Ditch | 30 | Silty ditch fill   | 1  | #  |   | #  | ++  |    | <i>Vicia sp.</i> Fishbone and fishscale  | #  | #   | #  |    |      |   | fishscale, flakes + spheroids +  |               |
| 39 | 50 | Ditch | 5  | Black, organic fill recovered with an auger                      | 50 | #  |   | ## | #   | ++ | ++                                       | charred grain and waterlogged seeds ( <i>Lamium sp.</i> , <i>Sambucus sp.</i> , <i>Chenopodium sp.</i> , <i>Rumex sp.</i> , <i>Carex sp.</i> ) |     |    |    |      |   | waterlogged  |               |
| 40 | 48 | Ditch | 60 | Low est fill of big ditch. Possible pre-Norman castle defences   | 40 | ## |   | #  | ### | ++ | +  | Numerous small bones and fishbone, fishscale, mixed cereals  | ### | #  | ## | #    | # | #  | some charcoal |
| 41 | 47 | Ditch | 30 | Sandy silt fill with clay lenses                                 | 1  |    |   | #  | ++  |    |  | Very little in flot  | #   |    |    |      |   | amphibian bone, no fish bone, no magnetic  |               |

## APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- |   |             |  |
|---|-------------|--|
| Annis, G.   | 1977        | A History of Wisbech Castle  |
| Albarella, U. and Davis, S.J.M.   | 1994        | The Saxon and medieval animal bones excavated 1985-1989 from West Cotton, Northamptonshire. Ancient monuments Laboratory Report 17/94.   |
| Albarella, U., Beech, M., Locker, A., Moreno-Garcia, M., Mulville, J & Curl, J. | Forthcoming | Norwich Castle: Excavations and Survey 1987-98. Part III: A Zooarchaeological Study. East Anglian Archaeology  |
| Boow, J.  | 1991        | Early Australian Commercial Glass: Manufacturing Processes. The Heritage Council of New South Wales, Sydney.   |
| Bradley, C. S.  | 2000        | Smoking pipes for the archaeologist, in K. Karklins. (ed.) <i>Studies in Material Culture Research</i> . The Society for Historical Archaeology, California, Pennsylvania, pp. 104-133.                        |
| Brooks, A.  | 2005        | <i>An Archaeological Guide to British Ceramics in Australia, 1788-1901</i> . The Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology, Sydney, and the La Trobe University Archaeology Program, Melbourne.          |
| Brooks, A.  | 2008        | Pottery and Clay Pipe. In T. Phillips, Wisbech Library, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire: Archaeological Evaluation. Oxford Archaeology East Report 1048, pp 19-21.   |
| Cambridgeshire County Council   | 2002        | Cambridgeshire Extensive Urban Survey: Wisbech. Draft Report 10/05/2002.   |
| Davis, S. J. M.   | 1992        | A rapid method for recording information about mammal bones from archaeological sites. Ancient Monuments Laboratory Report19/92.   |
| Dobney, K & Reilly, K.  | 1988        | A method for recording archaeological animal bones: the use of diagnostic zones. <i>Circaea</i> 5(2): 79-96  |
| Driesch, A von den.   | 1976        | A guide to the measurement of animal bones from archaeological sites, Harvard: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology Bulletin 1.   |
| Flood, R.J.   | 1976        | <i>Clay Tobacco Pipes in Cambridgeshire</i> . The Oleander Press, Cambridge.   |
| Grant, A.   | 1982        | The use of tooth wear as a guide to the age of domestic ungulates. In B. Wilson, C. Grigson & S. Payne (eds.) <i>Ageing and sexing animal bones from archaeological sites</i> . Oxford: BAR British Series 199 |

|                                      |      |  |
|--------------------------------------|------|--|
| Hallam, H.E.                         | 1965 | Settlement and Society, A Study of the Early Agrarian History of South Lincolnshire  |
| Hinman, M                            | 2002 | .Deeply Stratified Medieval and Post-Medieval Remains at Market Mews, Wisbech, Archaeological Field Unit Report 156  |
| Jones, O. and Sullivan, C.           | 1989 | <i>The Parks Canada Glass Glossary</i> . Canadian Parks Service, Ottawa.   |
| Miller, G.L.                         | 2000 | Telling Time for Archaeologists. <i>Northeast Historical Archaeology</i> 29:1-22.  |
| Moorhouse, S.                        | 1974 | A Distinctive Type of Late Medieval Pottery in the Eastern Midlands: a definition and preliminary statement, Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society Volume 65, 46-59 |
| Mortimer, R.                         | 2007 | New Inn Yard, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. CAMARC Rep. 992   |
| Mortimer, R                          | 2009 | Specification for Archaeological Evaluation: Wisbech Library Extension   |
| Orser, C.E. and Fagan, B.M.          | 1995 | <i>Historical Archaeology</i> . HarperCollins, New York.   |
| Oswald, A.                           | 1960 | The Archaeology and Economic History of English Clay Tobacco Pipes. <i>Journal of the Archaeological Association</i> 23:41-102.  |
| Phillips, T                          | 2008 | Wisbech Library, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire : Archaeological Evaluation   |
| Stace, C.                            | 1997 | New Flora of the British Isles. Second edition. Cambridge University Press   |
| Victoria County Histories Volume IV, | 1953 | A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely   |
| Waller, M                            | 1994 | The Fenland Project, number 9: Flandrian Environmental change in Fenland. East Anglian Archaeology Report 70   |

### Other Sources Consulted

[www.wisbechbaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.wisbechbaptistchurch.org.uk)

[www.ads.ahds.ac.uk](http://www.ads.ahds.ac.uk)

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Society for Historical Archaeology 2009: *Historic Glass Bottle Identification & Information Website*. Society for Historical Archaeology and Bureau of Land Management. <http://www.sha.org/bottle/index.htm>. Site accessed 16/02/2009.

## APPENDIX B. CARBON 14 DATING CERTIFICATES



Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre  
Director: Professor A B MacKenzie, Director of Research: Professor R M Elliot  
Rankine Avenue, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park,  
East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0QF, Scotland, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1355 223332 Fax: +44 (0)1355 229998 [www.gla.ac.uk/suerc/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/suerc/)

### RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

9 July 2009

---

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Laboratory Code</b>                                   | SUERC-19888 (GU-17214)  |
| <b>Submitter</b>   | Tom Phillips<br>Oxford Archaeology East<br>15 Trafalgar Way<br>Bar Hill<br>Cambridge CB23 8SQ |
| <b>Site Reference</b>                                    | Wisbech Library (WISLIB 08)   |
| <b>Sample Reference</b>                                  | Context 24  |
| <b>Material</b>  | Wood : Unidentified   |
| <b><math>\delta^{13}\text{C}</math> relative to VPDB</b> | -25.1 ‰   |
| <b>Radiocarbon Age BP</b>                                | 1285 $\pm$ 30   |

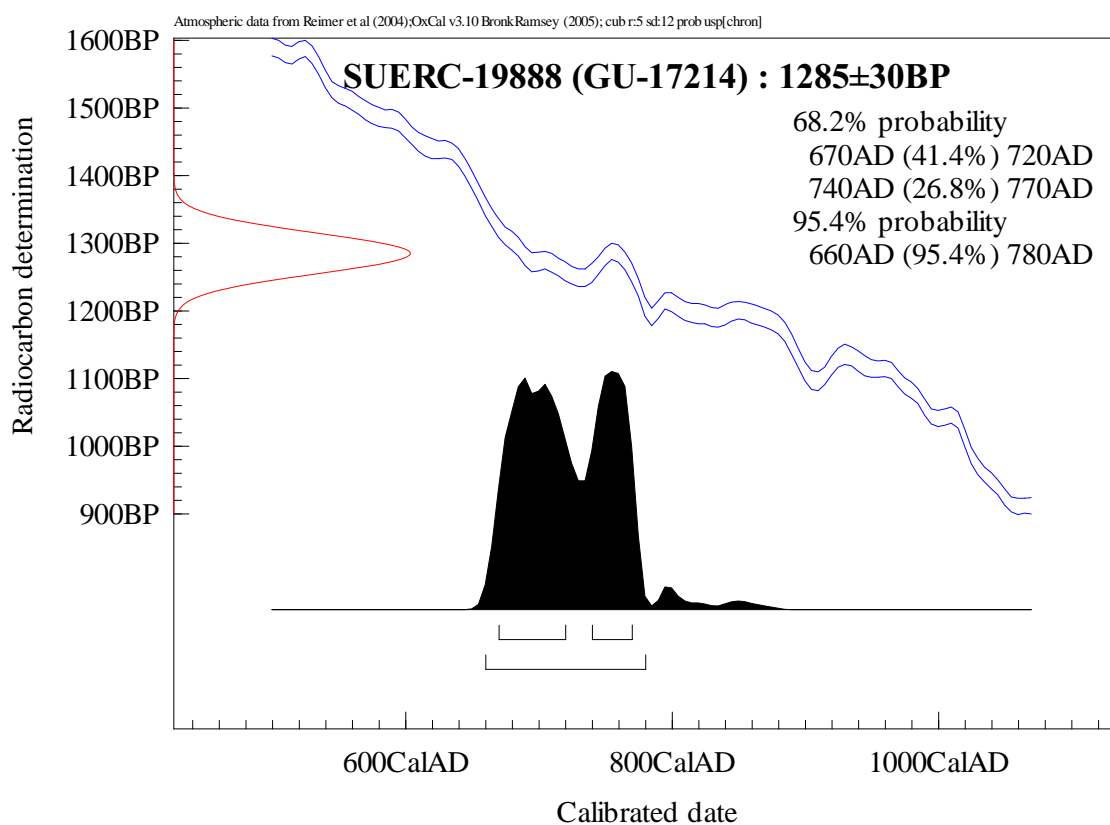
- N.B**
1. The above  $^{14}\text{C}$  age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD). The error, which is expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.
  2. The calibrated age ranges are determined from the University of Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program (OxCal3).
  3. Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. Any questions directed to the Radiocarbon Laboratory should also quote the GU coding given in parentheses after the SUERC code. The contact details for the laboratory are email [g.cook@suerc.gla.ac.uk](mailto:g.cook@suerc.gla.ac.uk) or Telephone 01355 270136 direct line.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :-

Date :-

Checked and signed off by :-

Date :-





Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre

Director: Professor A B MacKenzie, Director of Research: Professor R M Egan

Rankine Avenue, Scottish Enterprise Technology Park,

East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0QP, Scotland, UK

Tel: +44 (0)1292 223332 Fax: +44 (0)1292 229898 www.glasgow.ac.uk/suerc

## RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

11 June 2009

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Laboratory Code</b>                                   | SUERC-23938 (GU-18845)   |
| <b>Submitter</b>   | Rachel Fosberry<br>Oxford Archaeology East<br>15 Trafalgar Way<br>Bar Hill<br>Cambridgeshire CB23 8SQ  |
| <b>Site Reference</b>                                    | Wisbech Library Site   |
| <b>Sample Reference</b>                                  | WIS LIB 09 Sample 39, Context 50   |
| <b>Material</b>  | Leaf and Nutlet : <i>Cladium mariscus</i> (Saw sedge)  |
| <b><math>\delta^{13}\text{C}</math> relative to VPDB</b> | -23.7 ‰  |
| <b>Radiocarbon Age BP</b>                                | 715 ± 40   |
| <b>N.B</b>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The above <math>^{14}\text{C}</math> age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD). The error, which is expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.</li><li>2. The calibrated age ranges are determined from the University of Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program (OxCal3).</li><li>3. Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. Any questions directed to the Radiocarbon Laboratory should also quote the GU coding given in parentheses after the SUERC code. The contact details for the laboratory are email <a href="mailto:g.cook@suerc.gla.ac.uk">g.cook@suerc.gla.ac.uk</a> or</li></ol> |

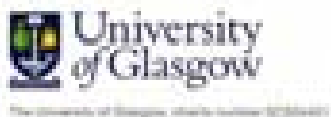
Telephone 01355 270136 direct line.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :-

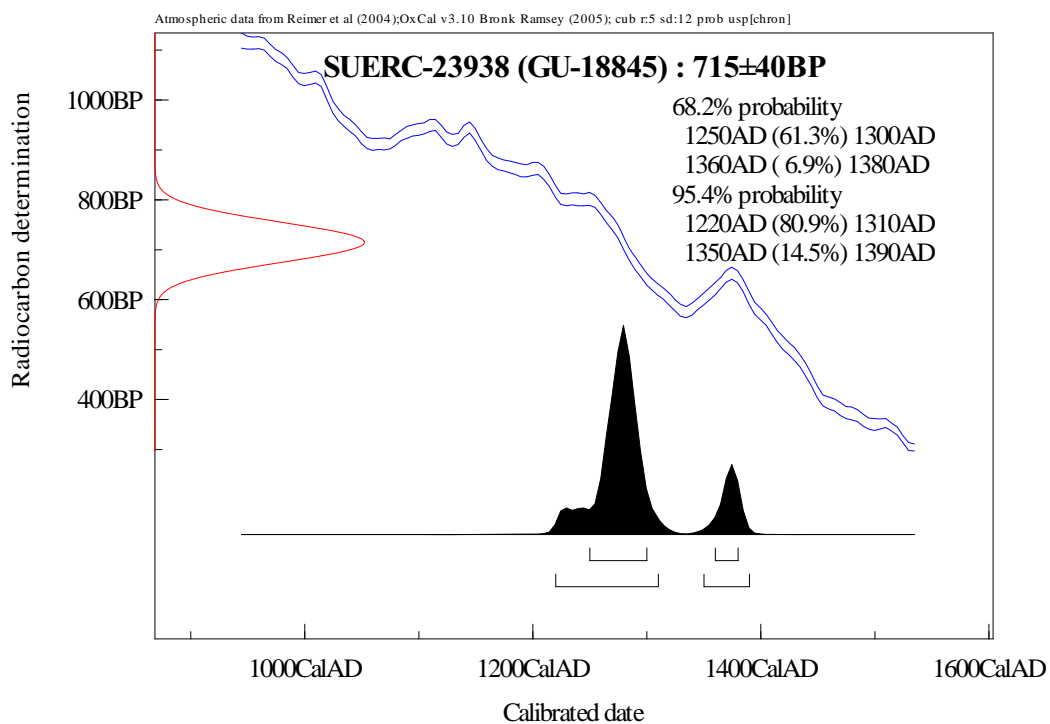
Date :-

Checked and signed off by :-

Date :-



## Calibration Plot



## APPENDIX C. OASIS REPORT FORM

### Project Details

|                                 |   |             |            |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------|------------|
| OASIS Number                    | Oxfordar3-55336   |             |            |
| Project Name                    | Archaeological Investigations at Wisbech Library, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire |             |            |
| Project Dates (fieldwork) Start | 26-01-2009  | Finish      | 04-02-2009 |
| Previous Work (by OA East)      | Yes   | Future Work | Unknown    |

### Project Reference Codes

|           |          |                       |                      |
|-----------|----------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Site Code | WISLIB09 | Planning App. No.     | F/02009/08/CC        |
| HER No.   | ECB 3101 | Related HER/OASIS No. | ECB 2970/OASIS 46094 |

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt: Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

### 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 checked="" 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           |
|----------|----------------------------|--------|------------------|
| Ditch    | Medieval 1066 to 1540      |        | Select period... |
| Cellar   | Post Medieval 1540 to 1901 |        | Select period... |
| Pit      | Medieval 1066 to 1540      |        | Select period... |

### Project Location

|            |                |   |
|------------|----------------|---|
| County     | Cambridgeshire | Site Address (including postcode if possible)                       |
| District   | Fenland        | Wisbech Library<br>5 Ely Place, Wisbech<br>Cambridgeshire, PE13 1EU |
| Parish     | Wisbech        |   |
| HER        | Cambridgeshire |   |
| Study Area | 16sqm          | National Grid Reference   |
|            |                | TF 4625 0959  |

### Project Originators

|                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Organisation              | OA EAST                   |
| Project Brief Originator  | Andy Thomas, CAPCA        |
| Project Design Originator | Richard Mortimer, OA East |
| Project Manager           | Richard Mortimer, OA East |
| Supervisor                | Taleyna Fletcher          |

### Project Archives

| Physical Archive    | Digital Archive | Paper Archive       |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Cambs County Stores | OA East Offices | Cambs County Stores |
| WIS LIB 09          | WIS LIB 09      | WIS LIB 09          |

### Archive Contents/Media

|                     | Physical Contents                   | Digital Contents         | Paper Contents                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Animal Bones        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Ceramics            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Environmental       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Glass               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Diary                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image             | <input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets             | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photos        |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans         |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report        |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections      |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey        |

**Notes:**



Figure 1: Location of trenches (black) with the development area outlined (red)



Figure 2: 1794 sketch plan of the castle (with trenches shown in green (scale 1:1000))



Figure 3: 1853 Board of Health Map



Figure 4: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1886, showing location of development area

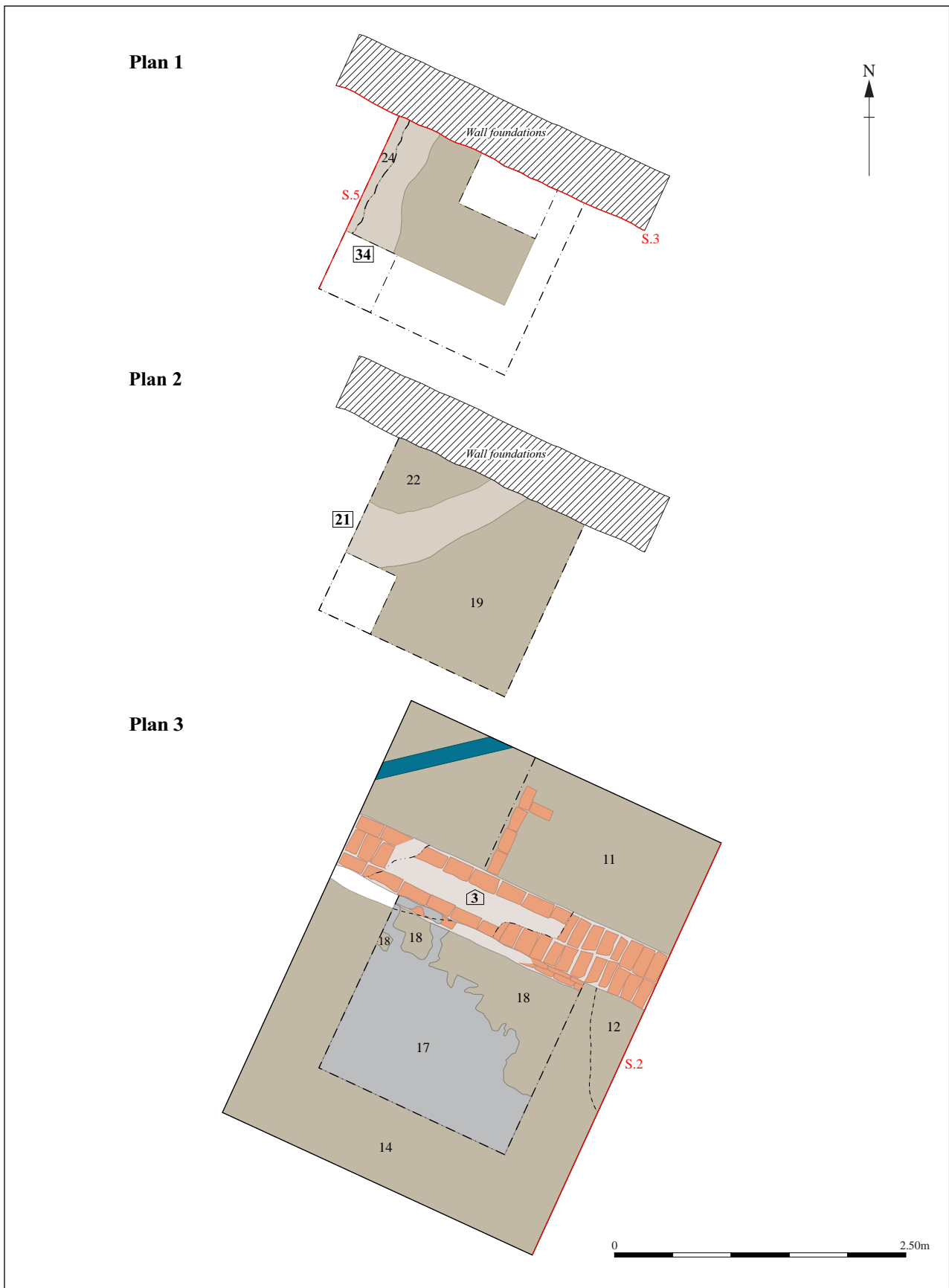


Figure 5: Trench 1 plans showing phases

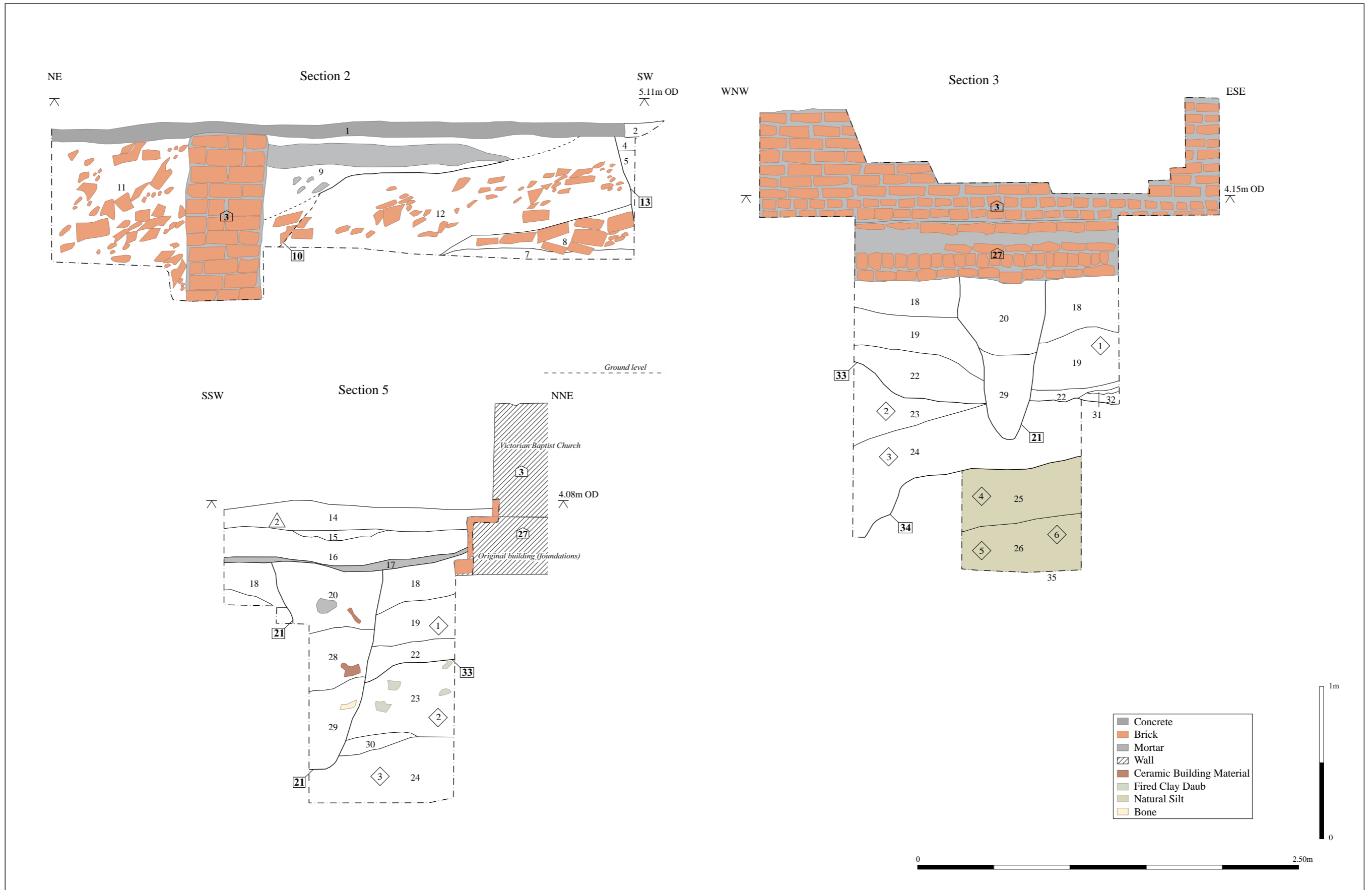


Figure 6: Sections from the 2008 excavation (scale 1:25)

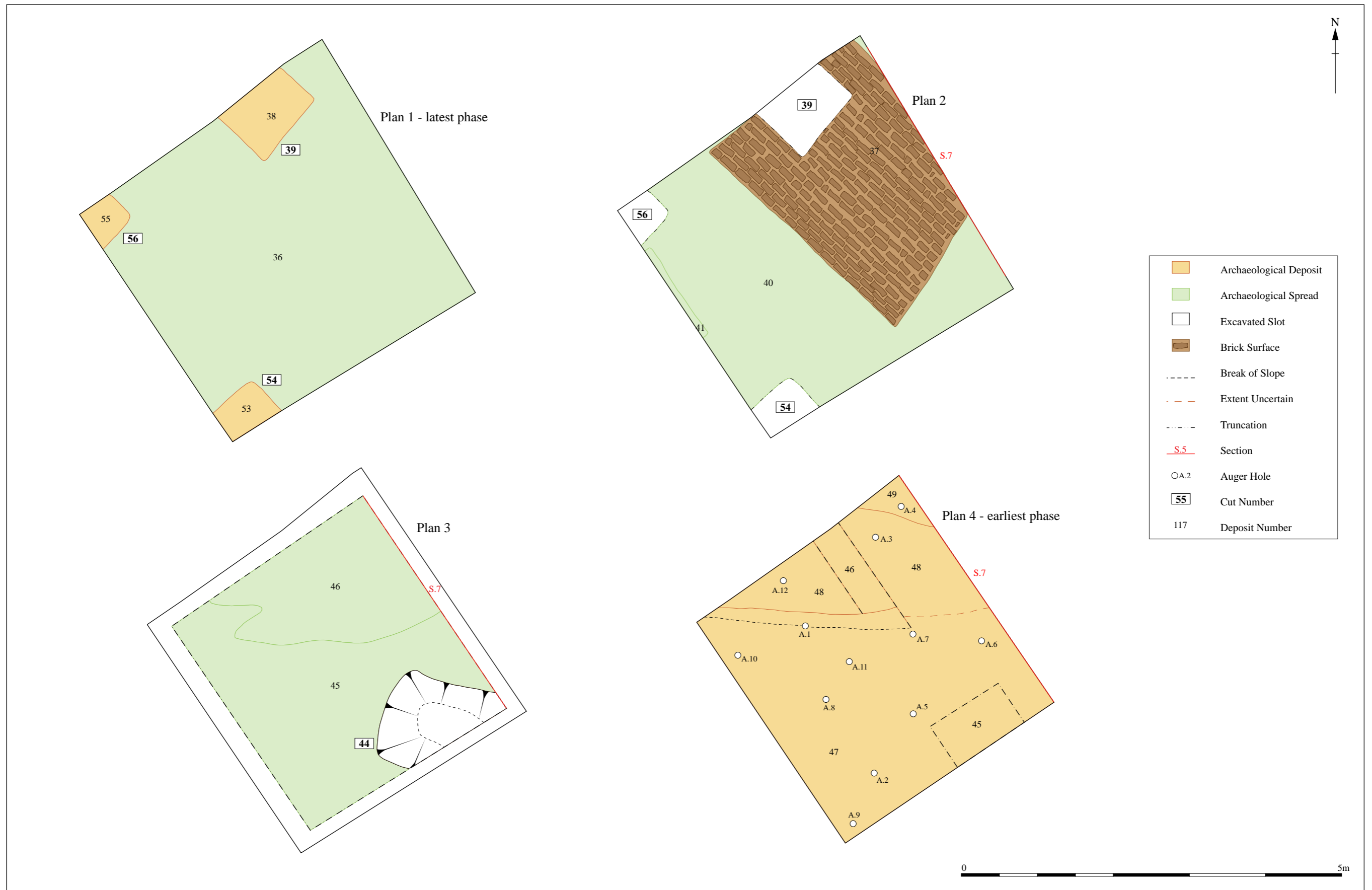


Figure 7: Plans from Trench 2 showing excavation phases (scale 1:50)

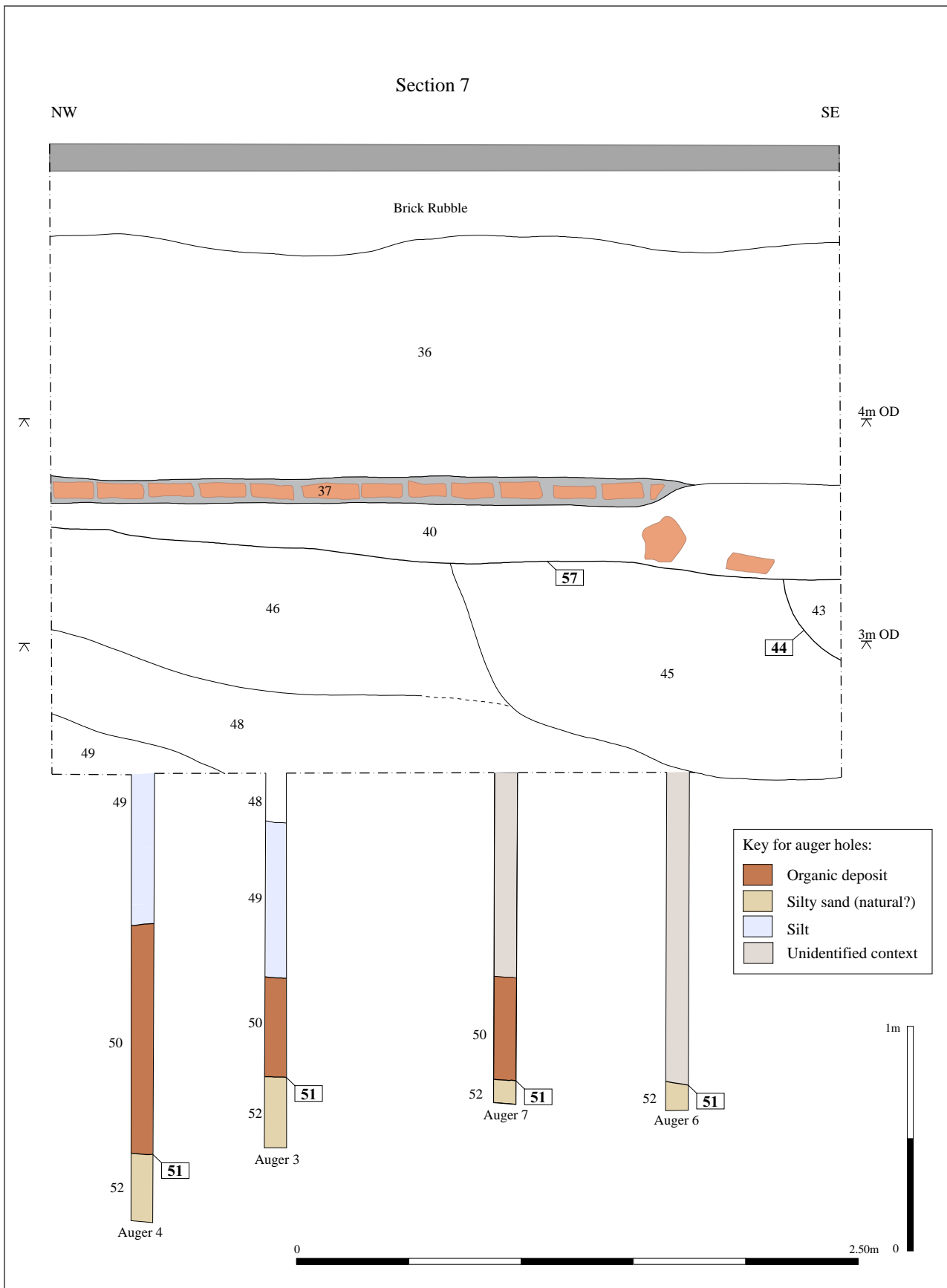


Figure 8: Section from 2009 excavation (scale 1:25)

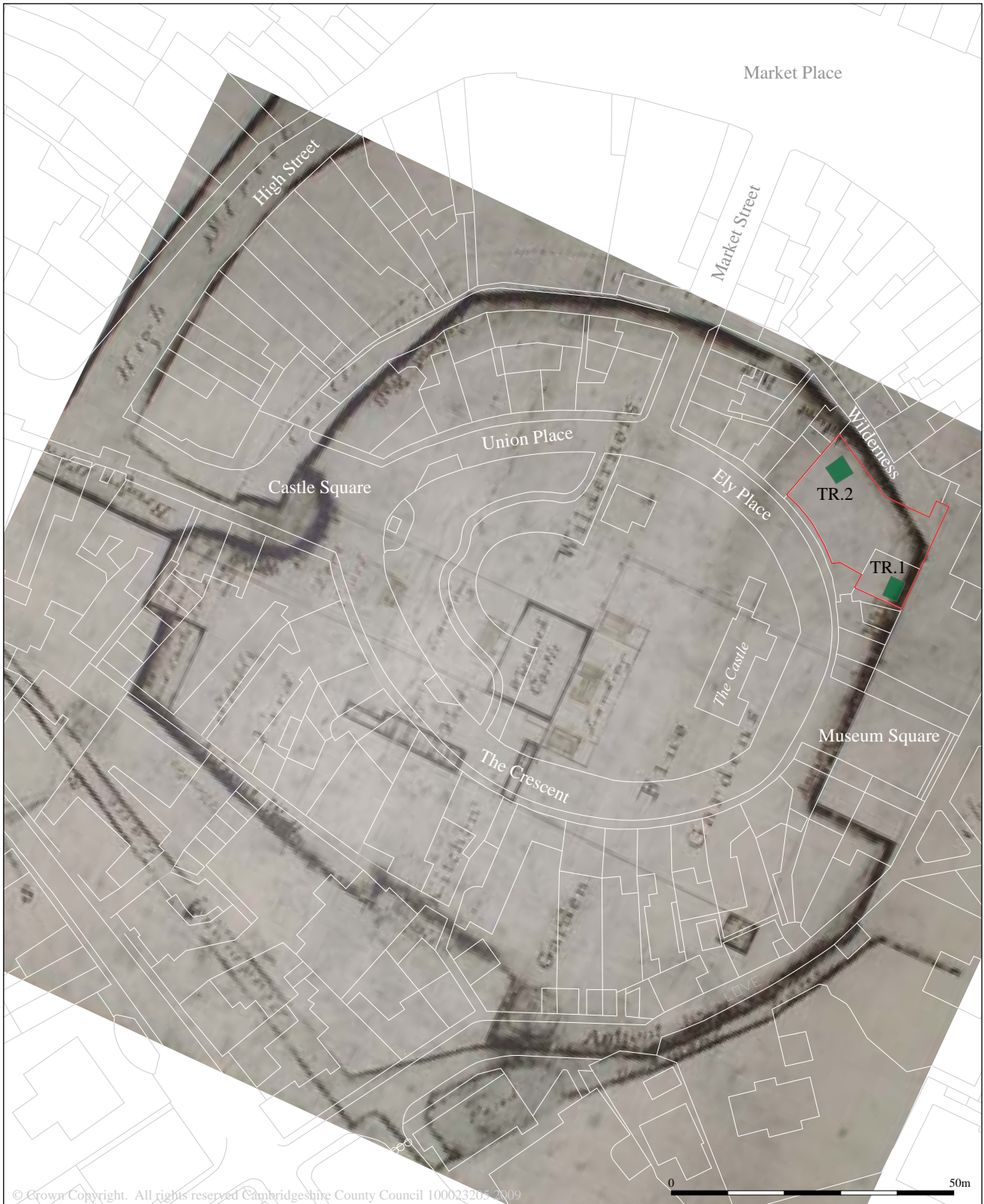


Figure 9: 1794 sketch plan of the castle with modern features overlaid (scale 1:1000)

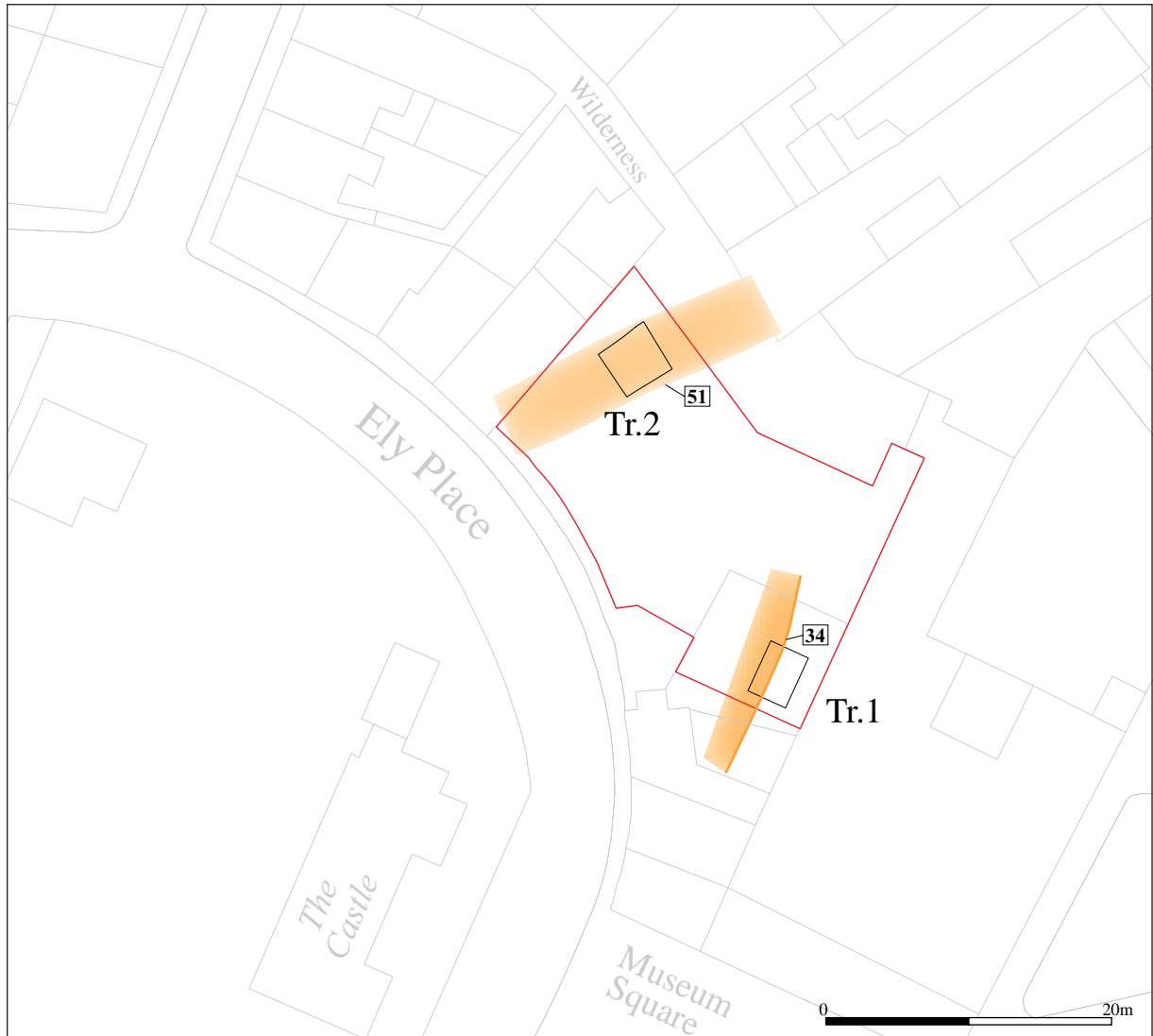


Figure 10: Plan showing projected lines of defensive features in Trenches 1 and 2



*Figure 11: Digital capture of drawing of The Crescent, Wisbech, 1827*

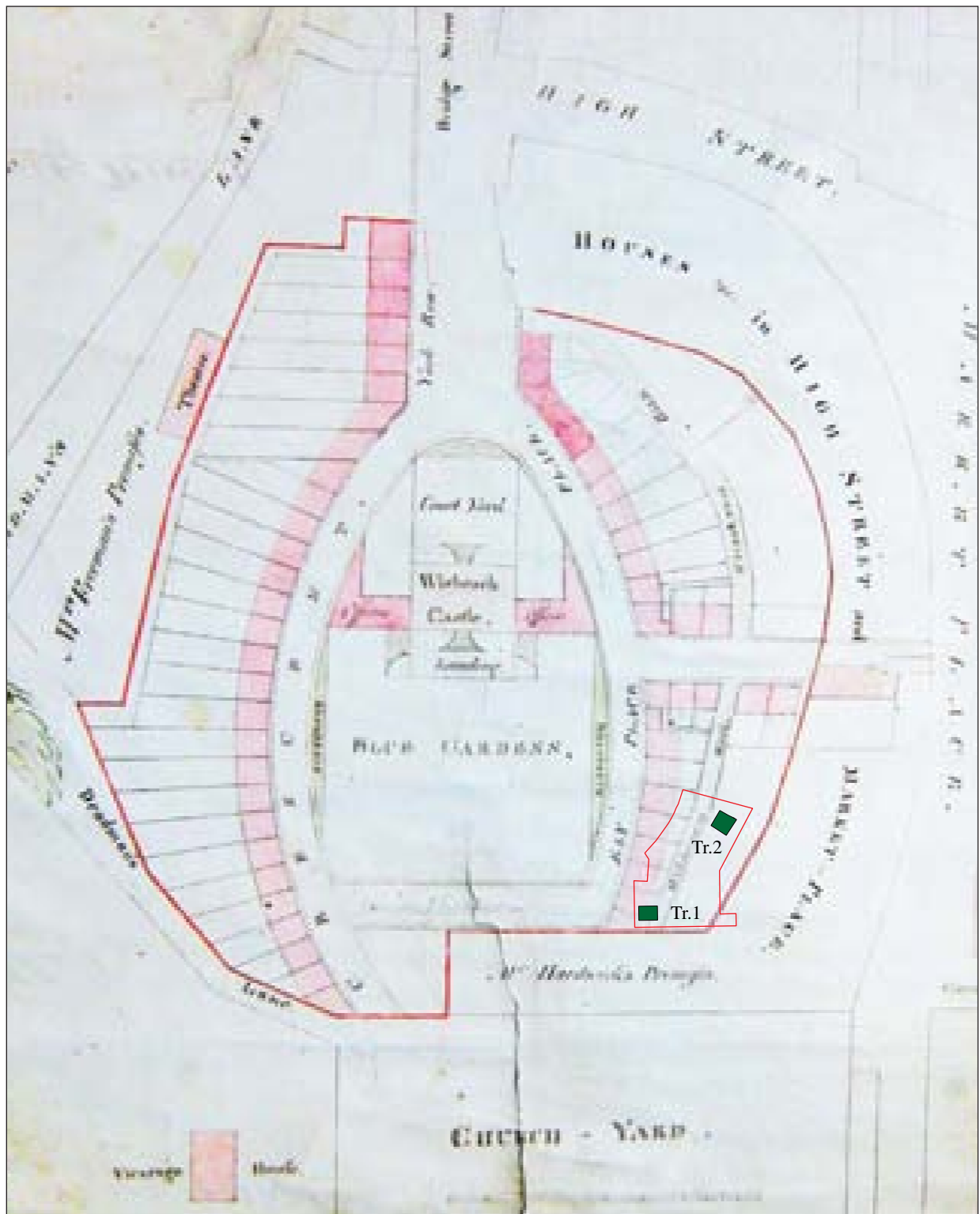


Figure 12: Joseph Medworths proposed layout of the Wisbech Castle development c.1800 (image form the Wisbech and Fenland museum)



*Figure 13: Digital capture of a plate of Wisbech Methodist Chapel, demolished c. 1976*



*Plate 1: Trench 2, working shot*



*Plate 2: Trench 2, working shot*



*Plate 3: Trench 1, Southwest facing*



*Plate 4: Trench 1, Feature 21, Northeast facing*



*Plate 5: Trench 1, Northwest facing*



*Plate 6: Trench 2, Feature 44*



*Plate 7: Trench 2, Feature 37, cellar floor*



*Plate 8: Stone fragment from deposit 36, Trench 2*



*Plate 9: Stone fragment from deposit 36, Trench 2*



*Plate 10: Building in Museum Square showing evidence of subsidence, possibly into moat below*



#### **Head Office/Registered Office**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800  
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496  
e: [info@thehumanjourney.net](mailto:info@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

#### **OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000  
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606  
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

#### **OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500  
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599  
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

#### **OA Méditerranée**

115 Rue Merlot  
ZAC La Louvade  
34 130 Mauguio  
France

t: +33 (0) 4.67.57.86.92  
f: +33 (0) 4.67.42.65.93  
e: [oamed@oamed.fr](mailto: oamed@oamed.fr)  
w: <http://oamed.fr/>



**Director:** David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

*Oxford Archaeological Unit is a  
Private Limited Company, N<sup>o</sup>: 1618597  
and a Registered Charity, N<sup>o</sup>: 285627*