

**Quay Street
Cardigan, Ceredigion**

Archaeological Evaluation

**Landsker Archaeology Ltd.
Project 810, 5 August 2009**

**Llys Aeron
Hebron
Whitland
Carmarthenshire
SA34 0XX**

www.landskerarchaeology.co.uk

TEN
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Dave.Maynard10@gmail.com

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Quay Street, Cardigan, Ceredigion

Archaeological Evaluation

1. Summary

Cafodd twll bach eu grei ar of tir rhwng Quay Street a Market Lane, Aberteifi yn Ebrill 2009. Agorodd tri ffosudd tua 10m at 2m llydan yb y waith. . Ffos 1 i'r Dde y seit datgloddî'r nifer o pethau rhwynoesoedd ar y clai naturiol. Mewn trench 2 roedd na waliau o adeiliadu a gafodd eu dinistrio yn y 1850's, l'r gorllewin y seit, yn ffos 3 rhoedd na lawer o pridd yn llanwi ffos a oedd yn rehedeg dros gogledd y seit, digwyddodd hwn dros y 14^e i'r 16^{ch} ganrifoedd.

Yn diweddaraff, defnyddiwyd y lle fel ardd a roedd yna pethau o'r defyniad hynni a gafodd eu recordio hefyd. Am y tri deg blwydd diweddaf, gafodd lawer o'r seit eu defnuddio fel dwmp o ysbwriel adeiladwyr.

An evaluation was conducted in on a piece of land between Quay Street and Market Lane, Cardigan in April 2009. Three trenches approximately 10m by 2m wide were opened up. Trench 1 to the south of the site revealed a number of medieval features cut into the natural clay. Trench 2 showed a series of stone walls relating to buildings demolished in the 1850's to the west of the site. Trench 3 showed deposits that gradually filled a hollow that ran east to west along the north of the site, dated to from the 14th to 16th centuries.

The later use of the site was as a garden and a number of features relating to that use were recorded. For the past thirty years, much of the site has been left as a builder's rubbish site.

2. Introduction

The site of the evaluation is located in Quay Street and extends to the line of Market Lane to the north. This forms a large area within the medieval town, bordered by two streets with early origins and lying a short distance east of the town walls.

Landsker Archaeology Ltd. was asked by Llwyd Edwards Chartered Architect to undertake the archaeological evaluation on behalf of Jamson Estates, who are applying for planning permission to erect a number of dwellings on the site (Planning Application A030898). The work followed the specification for the project, *Quay Street 801s*. Charles Hill of Dyfed Archaeological Trust-Heritage Management (DATHM) monitored the work as archaeological advisors to Ceredigion Planning Department.

The fieldwork was carried out during April 2009, over a two week period. Staff on site were Peter Maynard and Kevin Reed, supervised by David Maynard. The work was greatly facilitated by the supply of a 360° excavator and driver by Jamson Estates.

The archive is currently held by Landsker Archaeology Ltd. and on completion of the work this will be deposited with the National Monuments Record (Wales). The finds will be deposited with Ceredigion Museum, Aberystwyth.

3. Site Description

The site is located at SN 17679 45979. The site is on the west side of the ridge along which the medieval town developed and slopes down towards the Afon Mwldan as it joins the Afon Teifi.

The highest point of the site is on the east of Market Lane at 12.3m, falling to 10.2m on the west of Market Lane, with 11.1m on the Quay Street side, which is directly above the pavement level of 9.7m. The site consisted of an overgrown grassy area with fly tipped rubbish and a few elderly apple trees, the eastern end of the site contains a stone built shed with its long axis along Market Lane. The site is roughly 'T' shaped, with the north of the site being approximately 45m and 11m wide along Market Lane, with a southern extension opening onto Quay Street, 24m long and 15m wide.

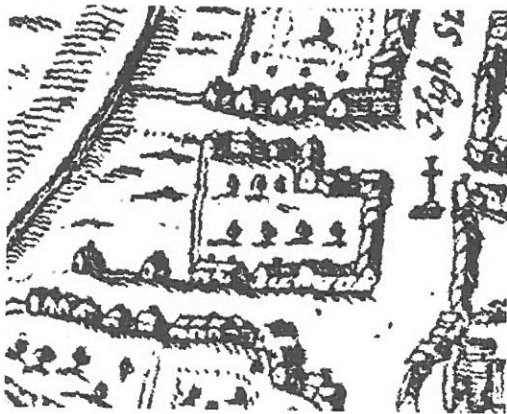
As with most of the rest of this part of the town of Cardigan, the subsoil is an orange boulder clay lying over Ordovician slates. Bedrock comes to the surface in the locality, downhill, and in the bases of cellars at the top of Quay Street.

4. Desktop Assessment

Various available historical documents were examined prior to fieldwork. The majority of the information comes from historical mapping and personal information from Canon Seamus Cunnane.

It is assumed that the site formed an area associated with the open area located beside the Market Cross in High Street which formed the original medieval market site. The land to the west of this had been open for a long time and was not filled with buildings until the late 16th Century (Johnson, 2008, p73). The market moved along Market Lane and was established in the 1820's in the area just to the north of the site (Lewis, 1990).

The historical mapping shows this process.



The earliest map is that of John Speed in 1610 which shows a street running west from a square around the market cross.

Figure 1 John Speed 1610

An illustration by JG Wood showing a vessel entering Cardigan Harbour, 1812 is reproduced in Lewis (1990, p47). This is view across the river towards the town and shows the site as an open area, enclosed by a hedge on the north side.

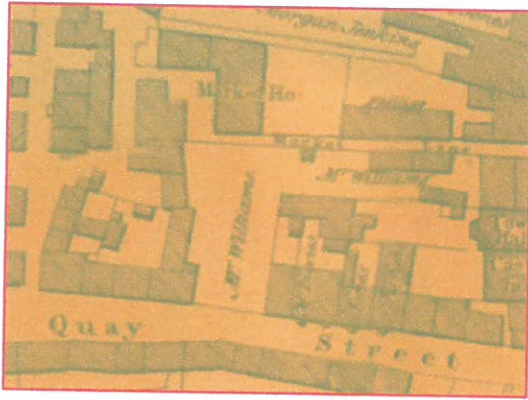


Figure 2 John Wood 1834

The next detailed map is that of JG Wood in 1834 which shows a layout similar to today. The buildings in Trench 2, (202) are shown, in an orientation that is largely in agreement with the excavated evidence.

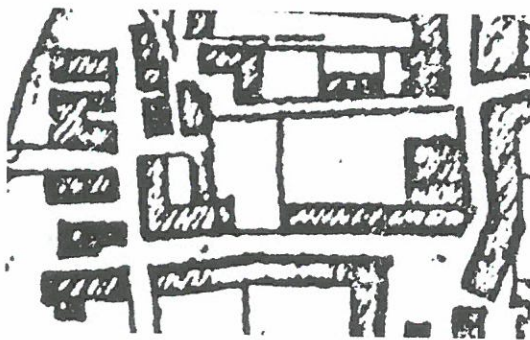


Figure 3 Tithe Map 1846

The tithe map is broadly in agreement, although it is harder to make out the detail. It could be argued that by this date the buildings in Trench 2 had been demolished, which would agree with the evidence from the glass bottles.



Figure 4 Ordnance Survey 1890 25inch

The final map of the series is the Ordnance Survey map of 1890. The entire site is clear of structures with the malthouse being entirely on the west side of the present west boundary wall of the site. This was not certain prior to the excavation and it was thought possible that the malthouse might have lain inside the limits of the site.

An RAF vertical photograph of the town in 1946 is reproduced in Cook and Poucher (2007, figure 1, p1). This shows the site much as it is now with the only feature visible being a division across the site that might agree with the line of the wall found in the extension to Trench 1 (106), although the feature in the photograph may be rather south of this point.

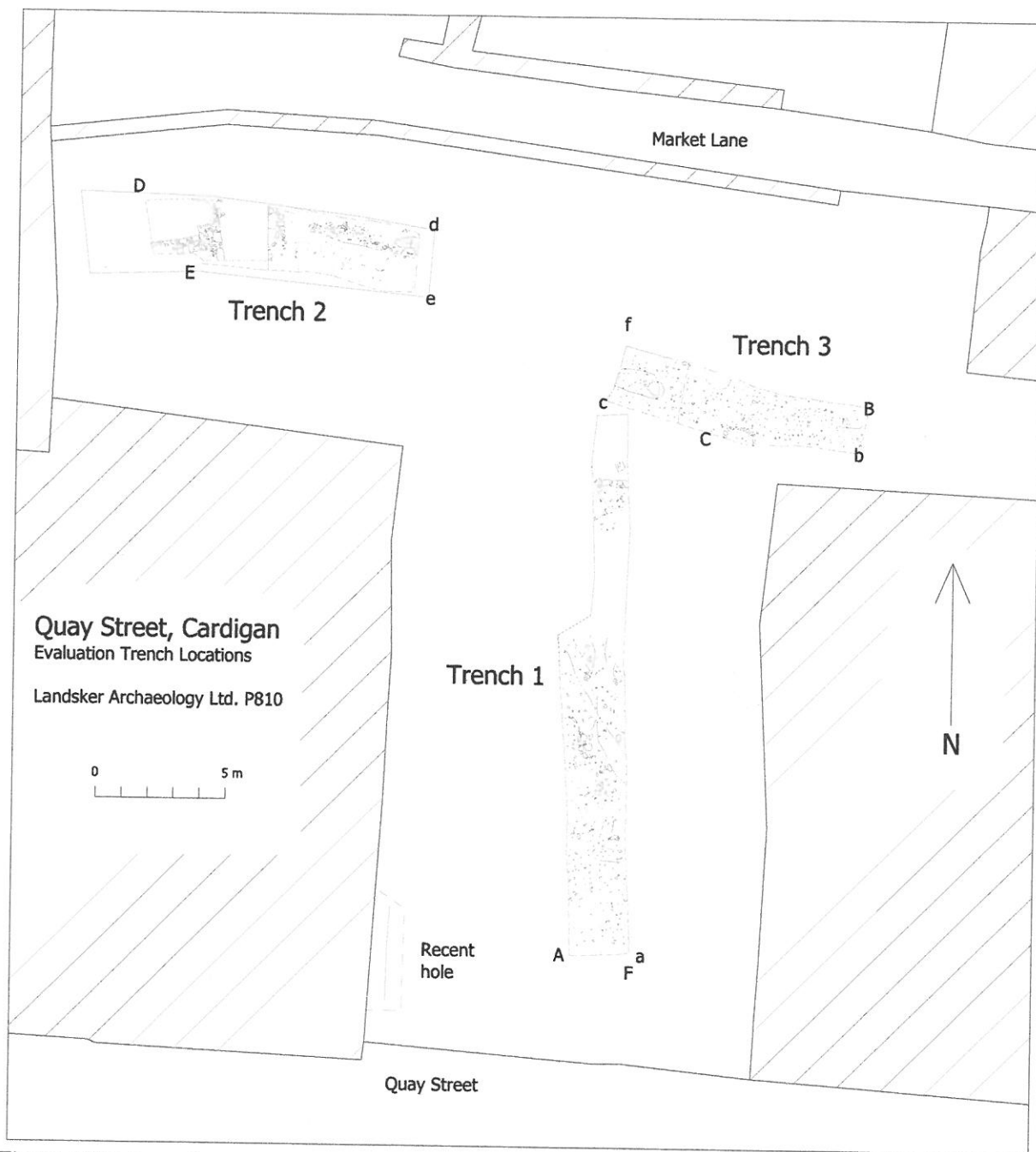


Figure 6 Site Layout

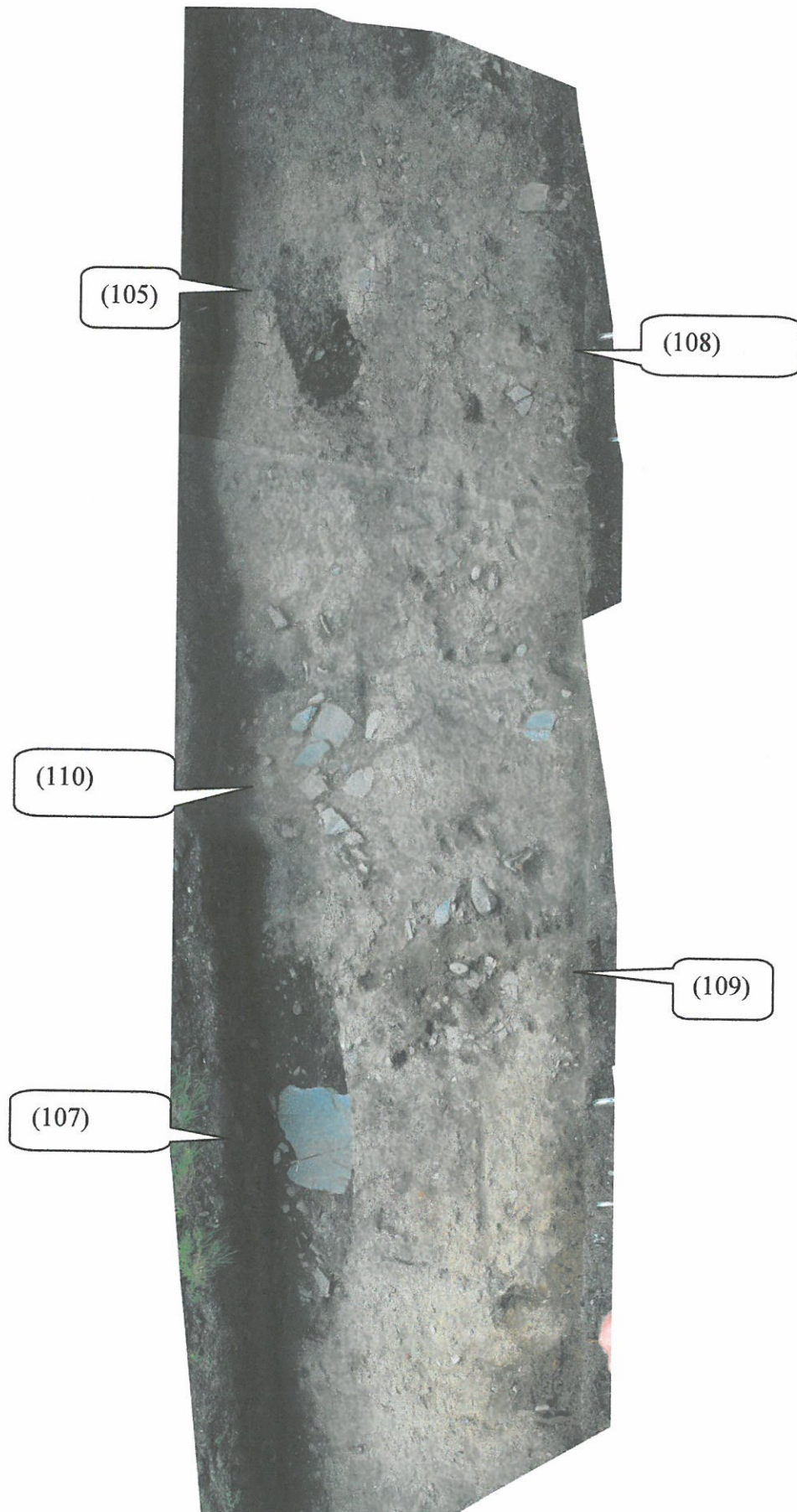


Figure 6 Image of Trench 1 (north to top)



Figure 7 Trench 1 extension looking south at wall base 106

Trench 2 (Figures 6,8-11)

The main features of this trench were a series of stone walls to the west of the site, forming parts of structure shown on maps of 1833. These buildings appeared to have been demolished around the 1850's when the present structure of walls enclosing the site was formed. The building consists of a wall running north to south (202) with a window opening (204) to the south and some form of opening to the north, possibly an oven, which incorporated bricks. This structure was not fully exposed and was largely collapsed (203). Within the interior of the building was a dividing wall (205) built later than the wall and lying between (204) and (203).

To the east of the structure was a wall (209) built of slate slabs and appearing to contain rounded stones, similar in form to the 'banded' construction style of many walls in Cardigan and the district. This wall appeared to be a retaining wall for the soil that built up from the uphill, east side of the site (207) and (208).

All the material found in the demolition layer (201) was of mid nineteenth century date, including glass bottle bases from the Bristol Glassworks used in the period 1820 to 1850.

The soil horizons to the east of retaining wall (209) consisted of two layers (207) and (208). The upper horizon (207) contained a slate lined drain (201) which acted as a soak away for drainage of the higher part of the site and probably connected with drains located on the side of Trench 3 and others reported to exist along the north of the site. Both (207) and (208) were thick deposits formed of a stone free loose material with no evidence of human activity. Finds were few and most frequent in the upper parts of (207), four small degraded sherds of medieval pottery were found in (208). This soil is assumed to be the downhill continuation of the fills of the gully that ran through Trench 3, which may have widened out at this point. The upper horizons then formed a garden soil following the demolition of the buildings to the west.

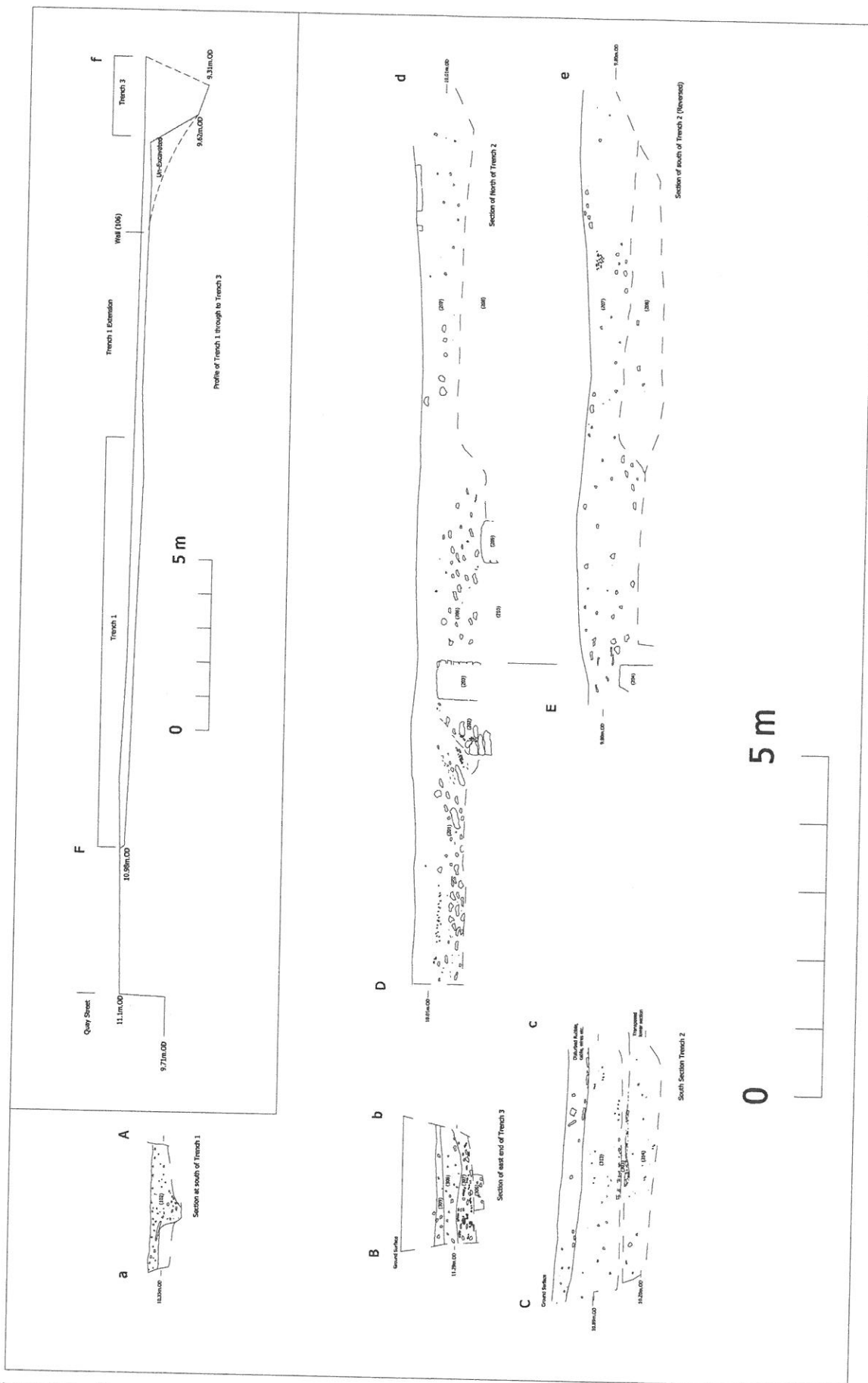


Figure 8 Sections
 Quay Street, Cardigan
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Figure 9 Trench 2 Wall 202 with 209 partly exposed

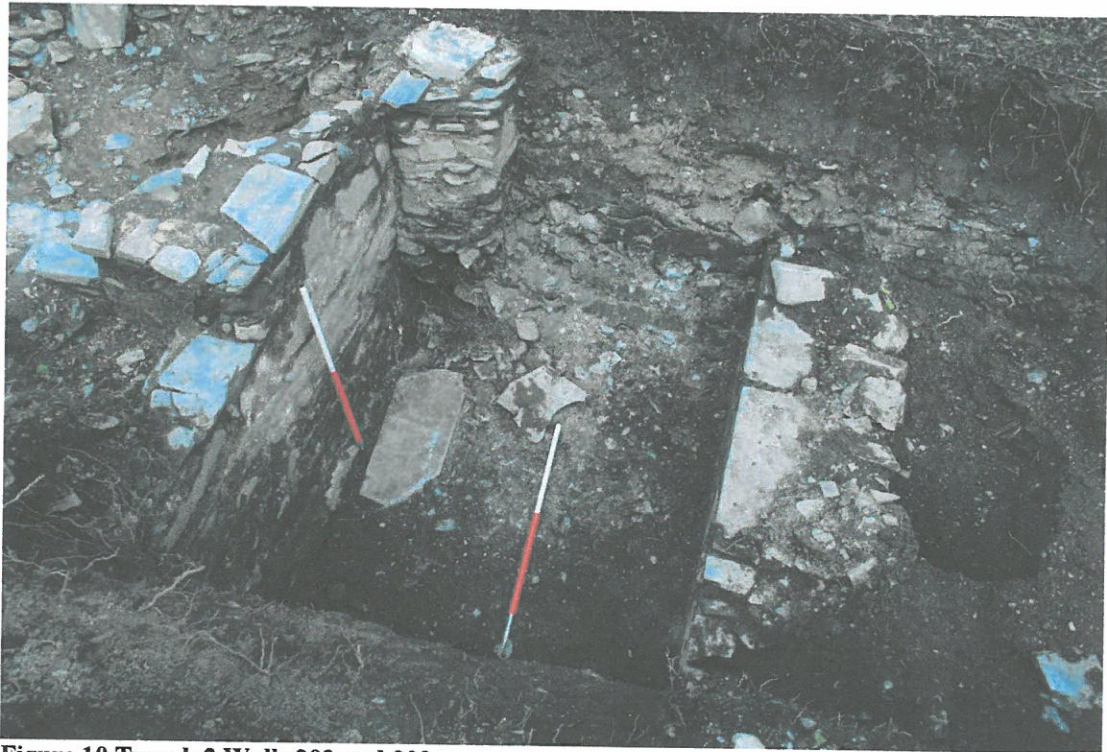


Figure 10 Trench 2 Walls 202 and 209



Figure 11 Trench 2 detail of Wall 209

Trench 3 (Figures 6,8,12,13)

This trench was excavated to assess deposits to the north of the site. The trench location was determined by the presence of a concrete yard surface at the site entrance, known drains and existing party walls, along with thick deposits of recent builders rubbish spread over this part of the site.

The evidence from the trench can be summarised as a series of deposits filling a gully that ran along the length of the trench. The gully or hollow must have extended both to the east and west of the trench and would have formed a major feature of the site. The gully was up to 1.65m deep in the natural clay. The full profile of the gully was not excavated, but it was in excess of 2m wide with a slope on the south side and possibly a level floor seen in the west portion of Trench 3. The north side of the gully was not observed, so the form and nature of the feature is uncertain.

The base of the hollow was filled with a silty clay loam (311) containing rounded pebbles and also a high proportion (up to 10%) of limestone fragments and flecks. The layer appeared to be running down hill from east to west, filling the gully from the uphill side, as shown by the orientation of stones. The limestone fragments were found throughout the extent of the trench, and appeared to be concentrated to the uphill side as though the point of origin was not very distant. The hollow appeared to be filled by deposits with a high humic content as though the environment had been damp and undisturbed (314) with evidence of gradual filling along with episodes of more dramatic levelling suggested by a dump of mortar and stone (307) which formed a band across the west of the trench. The upper horizons of the trench were clean brown humic loam (309), (310), (313) and (302).

Later activity in this trench was related to features that are associated with the use of the area as a garden. The earliest of these is probably (301) which was a stone lined circular area half exposed in the south east side of the trench. This is probably a well. Features (304) and (305) are the result of post holes or post packing using

cement. The stone wall base (106) found in the extension of trench 1 could well relate to this period.



Figure 12 Trench 3 view from south



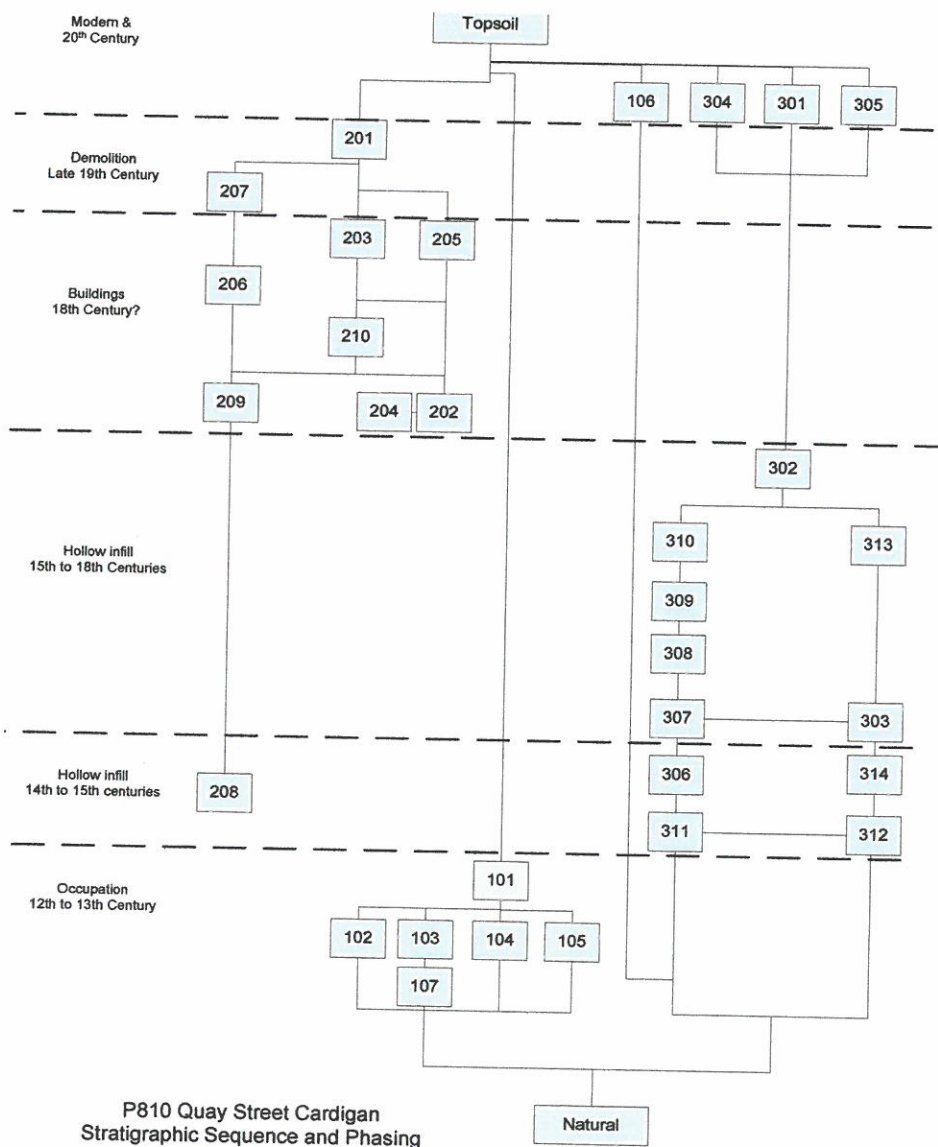
Figure 13 Trench 3 looking west machine cut deposits at base of hollow

Figure 14 Stratigraphic Sequence and Phasing

6. Discussion (Figure 14)

The three trenches of the evaluation achieved the primary objective of identifying the presence of archaeological deposits through the site. Unfortunately, each trench was rather different in the nature and date of deposits observed.

The earliest deposits lie to the south of the site on the Quay Street frontage with a series of features cut into the natural clay, associated with mid C12th to C13th pottery. These features were not fully excavated, so it is difficult to be sure of their nature, but they appear to evidence of pits and possibly structural remains. The shallowness of the deposits and lack of stratigraphical complexity may imply lack of use of the area which is not surprising given the map evidence which shows that the site was open since the time of Speed's map (1610). The thinness of the deposits and proximity to the surface is a feature of other parts of the town eg (Maynard, 1975) and observations of building work in recent years on the north side of Market Lane and in Ebens Lane (Maynard *pers obs*). These seem to show that in parts of the town, after the removal of existing buildings, even with shallow footings, the natural clay is revealed with only discrete archaeological features remaining.



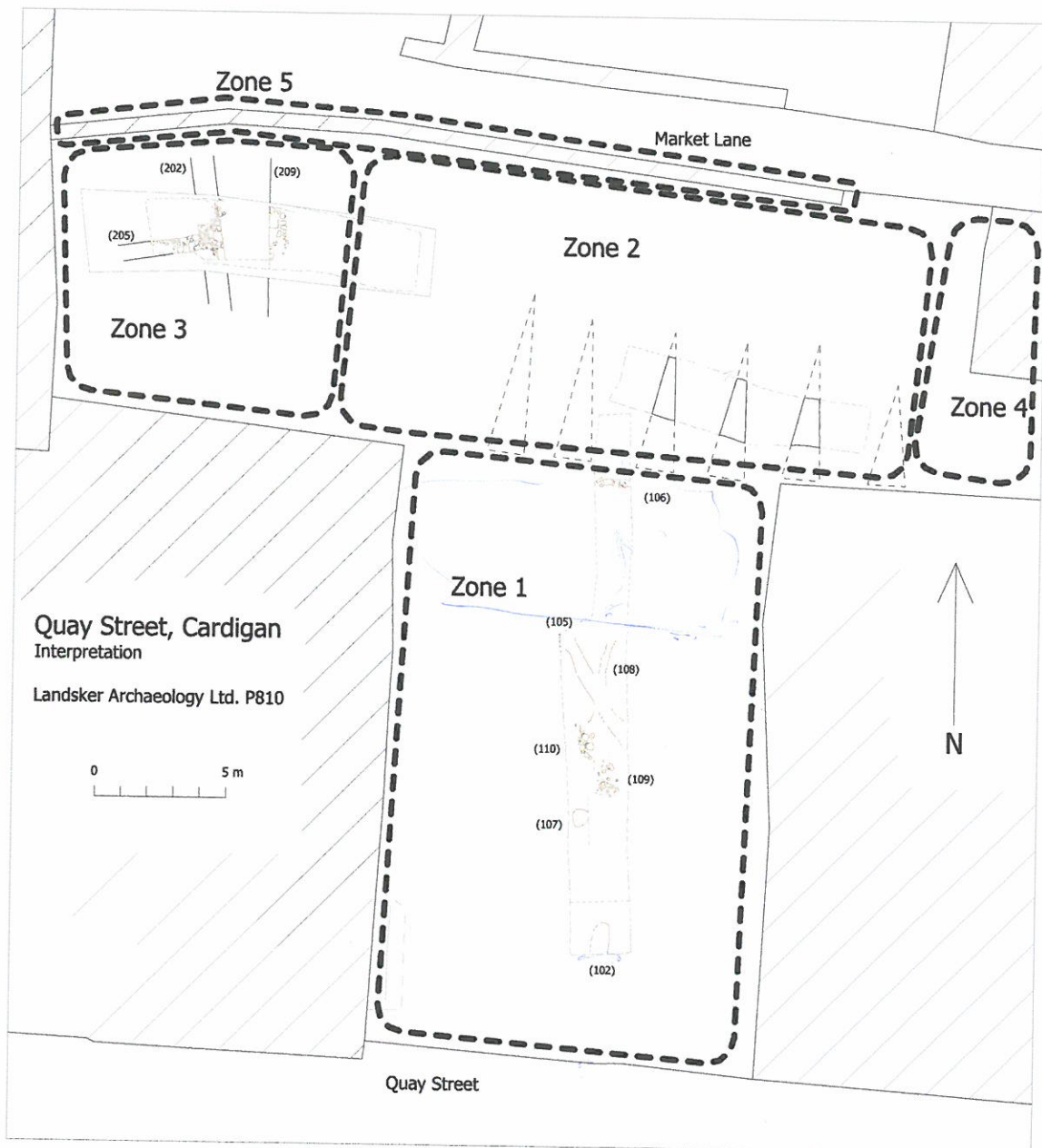


Figure 15 Interpretation and Impact Zones

Within the southern area of the site there is evidence of a recent disturbance, but below this there are medieval deposits that appear to be relatively intact and reasonably intelligible.

The stratigraphy of the northern part of the site is dominated by a large gulley running east to west parallel with the line of Market Lane. This is over 1.65m deep beneath the surface deposits and was filled with humic deposits over a considerable period of time. The origin of the gulley could not be determined as the feature was not fully exposed in cross section, but the top of the slope of the gulley was revealed on the south side in the extension of Trench 1. Unfortunately the northern side could not be exposed due to the presence of drains and a concrete surface. The factors also precluded determining the relationship between the gulley and the line of Market Lane whether there were any structural features to be found along the line of this street frontage.

The effects of this gulley can be observed from the effects it created in Trench 2, with a deep deposit of clean soil containing a few degraded medieval sherds and little else in an area where the gulley would have opened out and formed deposits that would have been carried downhill by water. Natural clay was not encountered in Trench 2, despite a machine excavated test pit to 2.5m in depth.

The base of the gulley in Trench contained organic deposits as revealed by a machine dug pit and was progressively filled with deposits that appeared to cascade from the higher, east side of the site. These included the limestone fragments, some of which were burnt that suggest the presence of a lime kiln somewhere in that vicinity. The pottery evidence suggests a later medieval date for the lower fills of the gulley, which is in contrast with the material from Trench 1.

The interpretation of the origin of this gulley is difficult. It could be that this is a natural feature that progressively filled. It is also possible that this was a precursor to the modern line of Market Lane, possibly formed as a hollow-way resulting from traffic coming up from the Afon Mwldan valley to the ridge on which the town developed. A third suggestion is that the gulley is evidence for an early line of defence enclosing a smaller area than the later town walls, as suggested by James (1983, p338). The components of this line of defence being the ditch as shown by the gulley, backed by the line of an earth rampart, in the area of the natural clay with no features in the north of Trench 1, backed by domestic structures in the south of Trench 1. The correct interpretation will have to await further excavation on the site. It is however clear that this gulley was a major factor in the development of the site. Its presence as a channel for water and consequent dampness may be the reason for the relative lack of use of the site in late medieval and early post medieval periods.

The last intensive use of the site was the building of a row of houses along the west of the site. This cannot be accurately dated at present, but the presence of brick in the makeup suggests a date possibly of the mid C18th. The rear of the houses was exposed, so it is likely that the front was towards the west. These were demolished in the 1840's and after that the site was given over to use as a garden.

7. Impact Assessment (Figure 14)

The construction of houses on this site will have an impact upon the archaeological resource. The impact can be divided into a number of zones.

Zone 1

The major impact will be in the southern area fronting on to Quay Street, where the ground level will have to be lowered by approximately 1.5m to allow access for vehicles from Quay Street. This is an area 13m wide by 22m. The archaeological deposit are found under topsoil cut into the clay subsoil and are potentially up to 0.5m deep, ~~although parts of the zone may contain no archaeological features~~. All the deposits within this area will be removed and would require recording by archaeological excavation. *Parts of the zone contain no archaeological features*

Zone 2

Is the northern part of the site, approximately 21m wide by 10m. Archaeological deposits up to 2m deep can be expected to be found through out this area. This will be an area of houses that may penetrate to 0.5m below the surface. This will cover the area of the gulley which will be impacted to a certain degree, but not fully removed. The upper fills and edges of the feature will be removed, along with any features to be found along the absolute northern limit of the site. It is possible that

damage to the archaeological resource could be minimised by the construction of the houses on a concrete raft. Excavation would be needed to record those areas that will be damaged.

Zone 3

This lies to the west of the site being 10m wide by 10m and contains the remains of Post Medieval houses. As this is made ground with slopes to the outside of the site, it may require deeper excavation to create a firm surface for building, or the structures could be constructed using a concrete raft. The structures should be recorded if they will be damaged.

Zone 4

The building to the north west of the site will be removed as part of the redevelopment. This should be recorded before this happens. It is not known if archaeological deposits lie under the building. There should be a watching brief to record the presence of any features that may be exposed.

Zone 5

The wall to the side of Market Lane will be removed. This should be recorded before it is removed as it contains evidence of the local 'banded' building style.

8. Medieval and Later Pottery Assessment

Catherine Freeman

This small collection of pottery, 183 sherds from eight contexts, is important because it was found in close proximity to Cardigan Castle and bears a strong similarity to material from the 1984 excavations (O'Mahoney, 1985). Since then new evidence has caused the dating of Ham Green wares (B4 and B5) made near Bristol to be revised (Ponsford, 1991). This could throw new light on the previous excavations.

The type codes used below are those defined in the Carmarthen Greyfriars pottery report (O'Mahoney, 1995).

Trench 1

(101) This context contains three sherds now dated to the mid C12th: two sherds of B4 and one of B5A with characteristic decoration (Ponsford, 1991). The latter is the only recognised example of a Type A Ham Green jug from this collection. The bulk of the 80 sherds present are from unglazed A2 cooking pots, which could be consistent with a late C12th early C13th date. The fact that these sherds are from only a few different vessels suggests little later disturbance. Two sherds are unidentified but would not be inappropriate for this date. Two joining rims in a finer version of the fabric have decoration of a series of incised crosses along the top which is unusual. One hard-fired sherd may be part of a strap handle of a later A type. The only necessarily later sherd is an internally glazed example of B39, probably C16th, although production continued to the C18th.

(102) Four sherds: one A2, one A4 glazed slashed strap handle, one A6, one unsourced, shoulder sherd in abraded pink sandy fabric with horizontal scored lines at intervals. Date range C12th-C15th.

(103) 24 sherds: one B5 b/sh, three rims 18b/sh. A2 unglazed cooking pots, one infolded rim B7 cooking pot Bath Fabric A (pre 1250), one internally glazed base sherd B39. Again could all be C12th - early C13th apart from B39.

(105) Seven sherds, all unglazed A2, could be C12th -C13th.

Trench 2

(208) Four sherds: two rims one base sherd of A types, and one unsourced abraded rim, ranging C12th-C16th in date.

Trench 3

(306) 21 sherds: one piece brick or tile, two B5 from different vessels, miscellaneous A types including three cooking pot rims, one thin jug rim and jug rim with slashed strap handle. Date range C12th-C15th, but clay pipe stems are present.

(312) 29 sherds: B36 one Cistercian ware cup b/sh. B39: one unglazed twisted handle, one internally glazed bowl profile, two b/sh. C17 one fine shoulder sherd, flaking orange glaze on both surfaces, not typical but probably Beauvais. B37 South Somerset: one bowl rim, one ba, four b/sh. Twelve sherds miscellaneous glazed and unglazed A types including thumbled jug base and possible Newport material. One unsourced redware jug sherd. Three pieces very crudely made roof tile or curfew with some stab marks possibly Malvern (B32) although not a known form. One piece brick. Date range of much of the material consistent with C16th although some earlier and could extend later. Clay pipe stems present.

(314) 14 sherds: one rim 13 b/sh A types C13th-C14th including one externally glazed.

9. Post Medieval pottery (Trench 2)

David Maynard

The demolition layers of the buildings located in trench 2 contained large quantities of pottery, china, glass and other debris. The pottery included examples of North Devon Gravel tempered ware and black glazed Buckley wares. Amongst the bottle glass were three glassworks stamps (Ricketts&Co Bristol; H. Ricketts&Co Glassworks Bristol and Powell&Co, Bristol). These types were used in the 1820's and 30's before the two companies amalgamated at a later date.

10. Assessment of Faunal Remains

Richard Moore

Summary

A small assemblage of animal bone and mollusc shell was assessed. This assemblage was fairly unremarkable and seemed to be typical of casually disposed waste, some of it probably from butchery, but also including food residues. Any potential for further analysis or research would be very limited and no recommendations for further work have been made.

Introduction

In total, ninety-two pieces were recovered from seven contexts: seventy-three fragments of animal bones, nine teeth and ten mollusc shells. The assemblage is summarised in the table below.

Methods

The bone and shell assemblage was rapidly assessed, recording numbers of fragments, identifiable bone by taxon and any particularly salient features.

Species

The common domestic species were represented: cattle, sheep or goat, pig and horse. Oyster and cockle shells were present, along with a marine or terrestrial gastropod.

Condition

The animal bone is fairly dense with reasonable well preserved surfaces, indicating that soil conditions are quite conducive to preservation of both the organic and mineral content. The teeth similarly show good preservation. Much of the bone is, however, very fragmented. On the more complete pieces, the extremities are often damaged and eroded, the damage probably partly the result of animal gnawing. This suggests that the bone became incorporated into its context after having lain around on the ground surface for some time, or had suffered damage when deposits were reworked.

At least three of the bones show very clear butchery cuts.

Description by context

Because of the state of fragmentation and the numbers of rib and vertebra fragments, there is a relatively low proportion of identifiable elements: twenty-five pieces of bone in addition to the nine teeth.

There is a notable group of calf bones from context 311: a humerus, radius, ulna and metacarpal probably all from the same forelimb. The small size of these bones suggests that they are from a fairly young animal, probably in its first year. Although missing their epiphyses, these bones are otherwise substantially complete.

The only other largely complete bones are phalanges of cattle and horse and a pig metapodial. These, along with other identifiable elements such as two acetabula of cattle innominate bones, a cattle horn core, a sheep scapula glenoid and sheep radius, tibia, femur and ulna fragments, are all relatively robust elements and reinforce the impression that the composition of this assemblage reflects those pieces which survived surface exposure for some time before burial.

The teeth include cattle and horse incisors, a sheep upper molar, a cattle deciduous premolar and five assorted cattle molars.

The mollusc shell is presumably food waste and included seven oyster shells, four lower and three upper, and two cockles.

Context	Total	Bone	Teeth	Identifiable elements:			
				Cattle	Sheep/goat	Pig	Horse
101	18	17	1	2	2		
102	6	3	3	4	1		
103	13	13				1	
306	5	3	2	1	1		
311	29	28	1	10	5	1	
312	8	7	1	2	2		
314	3	3	1				2
Total	82	73	9	19	11	2	2

Statement of potential

As this is a small assemblage and appears to include a high proportion of residual material, it is considered to be of negligible research potential when considered alone. The poor condition of the bone, and the fact that many of the more complete bones are from immature animals, means that there is little or no potential for metrical analysis.

The tooth-wear stages of the cattle molars could be recorded, but this would only be of use if the data could be combined with other assemblages of a similar provenance. If the contexts from which the bone derives can be dated and characterised sufficiently well to allow the data to be combined in this way, then complete cataloguing of material, including wear stages of the teeth would be worthwhile.

Recommendations

If the dating of the material is secure enough to allow the data from this site to be meaningfully combined with that from other similar sites, the assemblage should be

fully catalogued and retained. Otherwise, it is recommended that the material is discarded.

11. Limestone

Tim Wright

Eight samples of limestone up to 100mm in length were examined. All the samples are carboniferous limestone that could have come from either north or south west Wales. Several examples are heavily fired such that they have been turned to a reddish brown as opposed to the normal mid grey.

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		Fills					Cuts													
Cont.	Type	1. Compaction	2. Colour	3. Composition Particle size over 10%	4. Inclusions under 10%		1. Shape in Plan	2. Corners	3. Dimensions / depth	4. Break of slope top	5. Sides	6. Break of Slope base	7. Base	8. Orientation	9. Inclination of axis	10. Fill Nos.	11. Comments	Above	Below	
100	L	Loose	Dark brown	Small grits	Slate and modern brick debris	Interpretation											Natural topsoil over the site	101		Topsoil
101	L	Loose	Mid Brown Clay Loam	Small grits	50% large broken slate fragments 50-100 occ 150 slabs	0.5m thick											Fills southern 3m of trench 1 appears to fill gully 102 and then to build upwards to form a large filling levelling layer to the rear of the brick wall	102	100	
102	C						Linear	Non defined	900 wide 500 deep	Not easily seen	45deg slope	Abrupt	Level	runs north to south		101	Feature not fully dug, may extend and deepen further south	101		
103	L	Loose	Dark brown	humic soil small grits	White lime mortar, coal and charcoal	20mm												101		
104	L	Loose	Mid Brown		Grits, small stones, charcoal	2m wide, depth U														
105	L	Loose	Black	varied grits	Brick, concrete conduit pipe cover	20mm											Possible fill of modern disturbance		101	
106							Linear	Not seen	1.3m wide								Wall found in machine extension to trench 1	Natural	100	Wall joining the rear of gardens fronting Quay Street
107	L	Loose	mid brown	Grits and small stones 10%		35mm											Covers large flat slate	101		Possible fill of pit associated with feature 109 and 110
108	L	Firm	mid brown	Grits and small stones 10%	small stones and pottery fragments	NA											Linear feature which contains small stones and pottery fragments set on edge, possibly filling and forming packing material. Feature not excavated	101		Linear gully fill
109	L	loose	Dark brown	small grits, appears silty	Large numbers of pottery fragments	NA														
110	L	Firm	Mid brown	Small grits	Frequent stones 50-150mm long in a setting	NA											Setting of stones forming a straight section with a possible right angled turn			
201	L	Loose	light brown	small grits	50-70% large slate slabs 20-60mm 5% roof slates, 2% Pottery and bone														Topsoil	Rubble fill of demolished building

