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CONWY SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME
RE-INVESTIGATIONS AT LOWER EAST GATE STREET



Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Ltd

Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd Cyf

CONWY SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME

RE-INVESTIGATIONS AT LOWER EAST GATE STREET

by A. Gruffydd
illustrations by H.F. Riley

for Gwynedd Archaeological Trust 1992

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Introduction

Further considerations of engineering problems concerning the route of the proposed sewerage pipe scheme at Lower East Gate Street, Conwy, led Wallace Evans on behalf of Welsh Water to ask Gwynedd Archaeological Trust to conduct a second watching brief on a test pit adjacent to the Mediaeval town wall. The test pit was excavated by Wallace Evans on the 12th May 1992, on the foreshore some 15m west of the town wall archway, (Fig.1), at the north end of Lower East Gate Street (and some 5m east of T1 which was excavated in November 1991 as part of the main test excavations carried out for the scheme).

Brief / Aims and Methods

The general working agreement, as well as the the aims and methods of the work are as outlined in the 1991 report, and are not repeated here.

Results

The test pit, butting the south side of the curtain wall on the upper foreshore, measured 4.8m x 2.5m, and reached a maximum depth of 4.2m, (Fig.2). The trench was machine dug. The initial 1.5m consisted of very coarse grey/brown gravel, 001, intermittently filled with large cobbles and occasional boulders. Context 001 contained a small amount of modern pottery. This overlaid a lens of orange sandy gravel, 0.20m thick, 002. The orange gravel sealed a distinct 1m thick layer of dark grey/black organic sand, 003, containing occasional large shaped planks of wood (on average 1m x 0.20m) and some animal bone. This organic sand overlaid a 1m thick layer of light grey/blue alluviated clay, 004, which in turn overlaid up to 0.5m of orange/yellow sandy gravel, 005, containing a large amount of small stone rubble.

The curtain wall, faced down the north section of the trench, was related to the above mentioned contexts as follows :

The masonry style of the wall above and below surface level was very similar (unlike the previous excavation), consisting of large blocks of squared boulders, closely packed, and intermittently filled with smaller elongated stones in a 'stringed' fashion. The face of the wall remained straight down to a depth of nearly 3m from surface level, where three courses of foundation stones were reached. This foundation 'platform' projected 0.35m outwards from the wall above it, cutting into the upper levels of 004. The foundation platform measured 1.10m in depth and lay on top of a rubble fill, previously identified as 005.

Because of the depth of excavation, none of the trench could be accurately drawn. Photographic records and representative drawings were obtained however, and levels were taken within the trench.

The general soil stratigraphy was very similar here compared to the previously excavated trench some 5m to the east (T1). A marked difference was seen however in the structure of the curtain wall, especially at the foundations. The foundations in T1 were far less conclusive and the wall merely seemed to rest on rubble/weathered stone. It is clear therefore, that at some point along the 5m that separates these two trenches, a definite change occurs in the construction of the foundations.

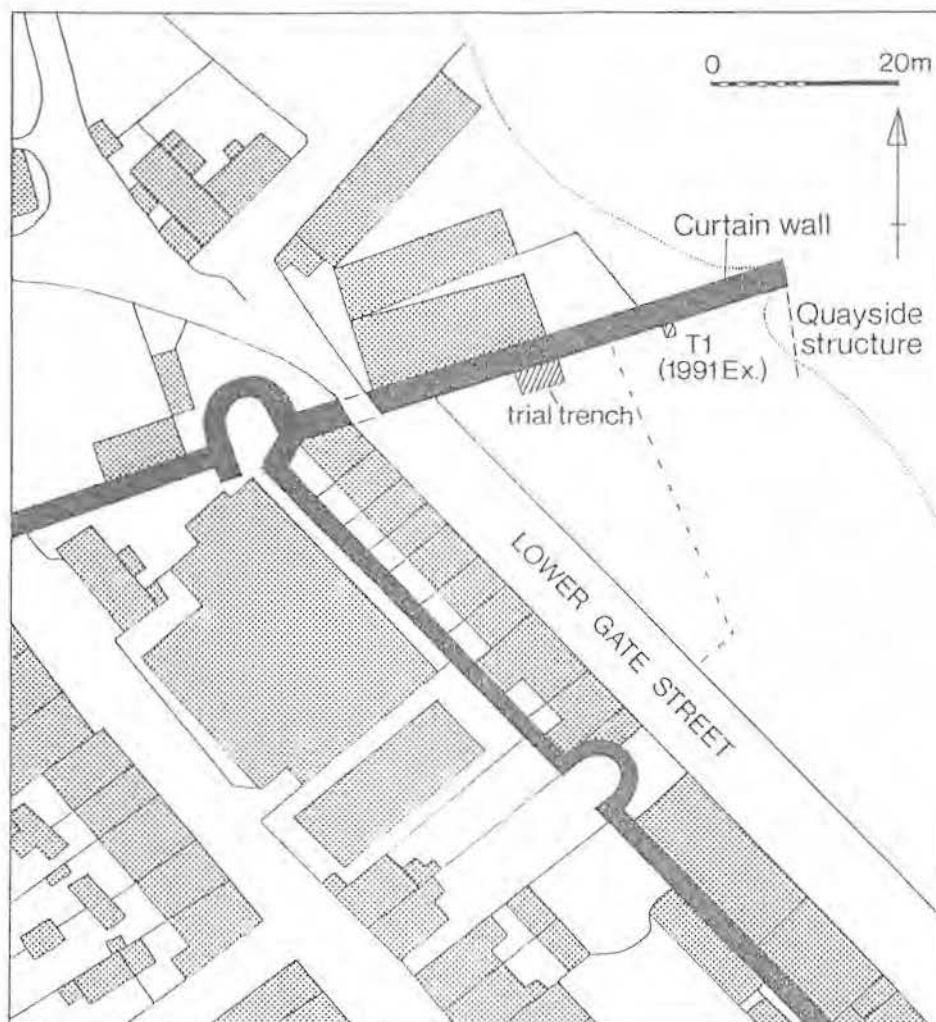


Fig. 1 General location map

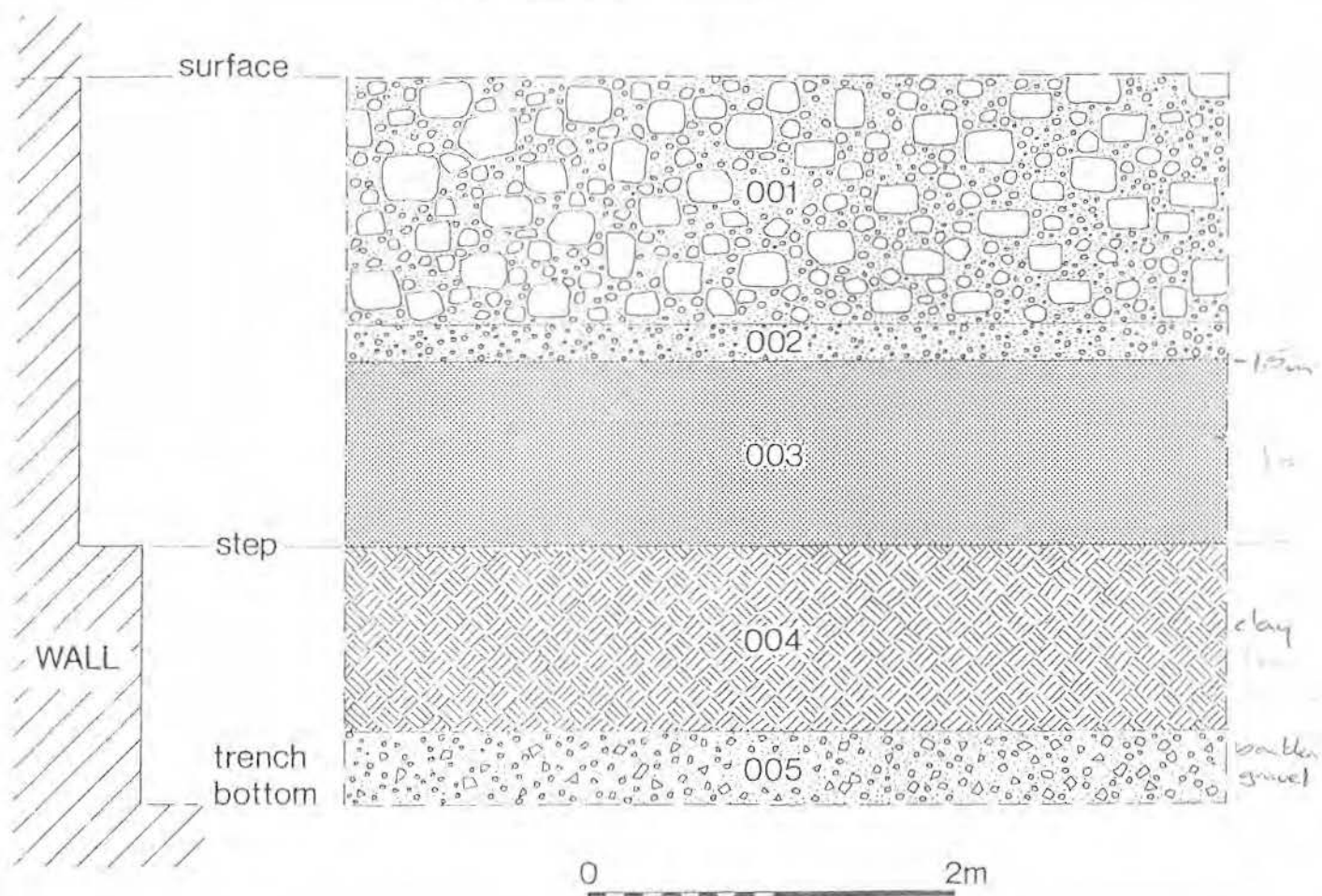


Fig. 2 Scaled representation of east section in relation to town wall



Plate 1 View down face of town wall / foundations (from south)

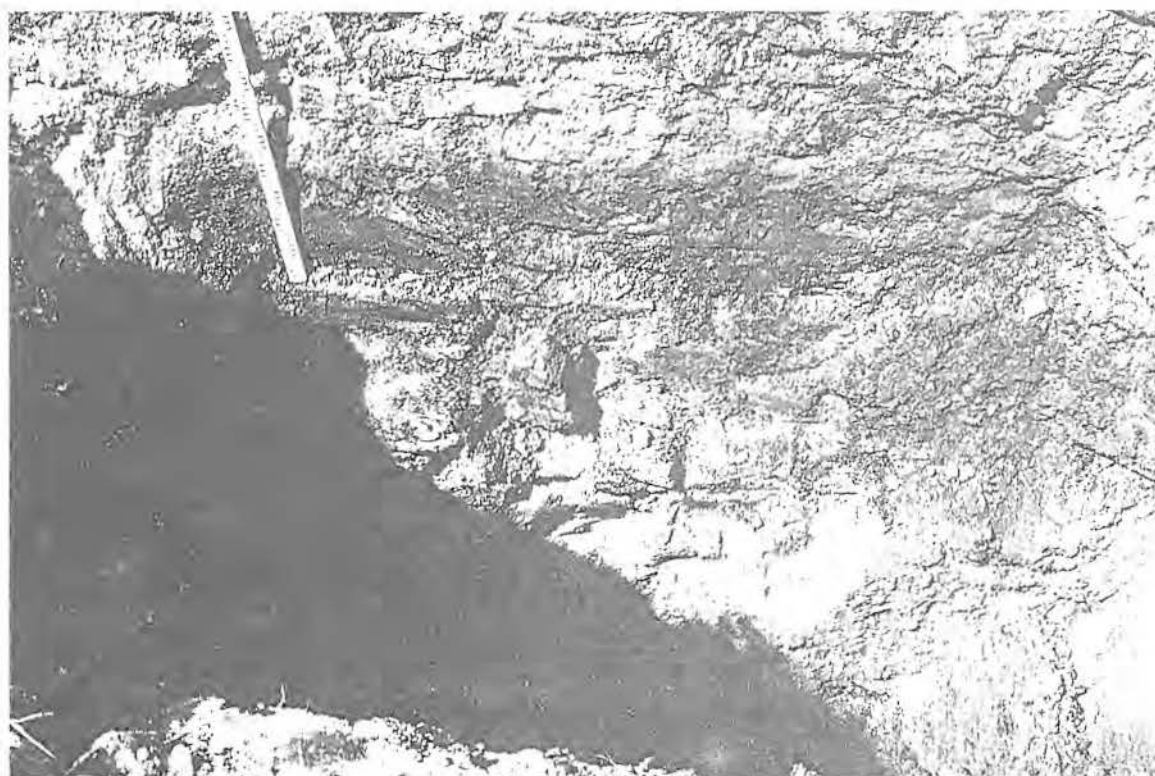


Plate 2 View down face of town wall / foundations (from east)

