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# **Wellfield Redevelopment The Menai Shopping Centre Bangor**

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## **Archaeological Evaluation**

**GAT Project No. 1880**

**Report No. 643**

**August 2006**

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**Report No. 643**

**Prepared for Gardiner & Theobald**

**August 2006**

**By**

**John Roberts**

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## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

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# **WELLFIELD REDEVELOPMENT, THE MENAI SHOPPING CENTRE BANGOR G1880**

## **PHASE 2: EVALUATION RECORDING**

### **SUMMARY**

*A total of seven trenches have been opened within the former Wellfield Centre in advance of the construction of the new shopping centre. The trenches did not reveal any significant activity: the evidence was limited mainly to the construction phase of the Wellfield Centre, and specifically, the laying of large concrete pads on which the superstructure was built. These pads dominated most of the trenches and were cut into the natural glacial deposits. It appears in most instances that any other archaeological remains on the site had been removed to facilitate the construction of the shopping centre. The only exceptions were Trenches 06 and 11 (and possibly 13), which contained a deposit interpreted as buried soils associated with Wellfield House and its grounds. It appears that this buried soil only survived in Trenches 06 and 11 because of the gradient of the valley slope. Further south, all traces were removed and there was no similar activity in any other trenches. It was agreed that no further trenches were to be opened due to the lack of archaeological remains recovered in the existing trenches.*

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Gardiner & Theobald commissioned Gwynedd Archaeological Trust to undertake an archaeological evaluation during the demolition phase of the Wellfield Shopping Centre, prior to the construction of the Menai Centre. The development is centred on NGR SH 582722 and the affected area is indicated on the site plan (Figure 1). The development area contains the former Wellfield Shopping Centre, built in 1964 and closed in 2005 and the location of the new Menai Centre to be opened in 2007.

An archaeological assessment was undertaken in November 2003 by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations (Report no. 2003/126), which detailed the archaeological and historical background of the site.

Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service has prepared a Brief for this project (ref. D961); reproduced in Appendix). A project design was prepared conforming to the requirements specified within the Brief, and in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1995, rev. 1999). The mitigation was separated into two parts:

- A building record of the Wellfield Shopping Centre prior to demolitions on site, including a photographic record of all internal and external elevations and structures; a location plan showing the position and perspective of each photograph; a brief written description of points of interest, distinctive features and current use of units; any available plans or architects drawings.
- Evaluation trenching to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development, in order to make an assessment of their importance

The building record was completed by Gwynedd Archaeological trust in August 2005 (GAT Report No. 605).

A project design was subsequently produced in April 2006 by the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust in accordance with these instructions and is reproduced in the Appendix.

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust had previously conducted an archaeological excavation at the site of the Deiniol Shopping Centre, located to the west of the Wellfield Shopping Centre, where burials of Early Medieval date had been found (Longley 1995, 52-70).

### **2 SPECIFICATION AND PROJECT DESIGN**

The evaluation phase required a total of fifteen trenches to be opened (Figure 2). The trenches were positioned in accordance with the Ordnance Survey historic map evidence, with the aim to locate any

below ground post-medieval features in existence on the site, and to ensure any remains of prehistoric or medieval date would be located and recorded prior to disturbance. Prior to the construction of the shopping centre the site had been occupied by Wellfield House, and the Masonic Hall (see figure 6). Both structures dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and were demolished prior to the construction of the Wellfield Centre. West of Wellfield house lay another large unnamed building (see First Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map, figure 6).

### **3 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

The evaluation was undertaken between May and June 2006. A total of seven trenches were opened from the original quota of fifteen. These were trenches 06, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. The remaining trenches were not opened due to the limited archaeological evidence that was recovered from the opened trenches. It was determined that there was very low potential for archaeological survival in the remaining trenches and it was understood that the natural clays and sand would not be substantially disturbed during construction.

The trenches were opened using a variety of 360° tracked machines that were made available during the construction phase.

The available information was synthesised to give a summary of the archaeological and historic background and of the assessment and recommendations, as set out below. The separate features, their evaluation and recommendations are listed separately, and a summary of the overall assessment of the area is given at the end.

### **4 TOPOGRAPHY**

The site is located on the southern slope of the narrow valley enclosing the now culverted Afon Adda and the city of Bangor.

In terms of solid geology, the local area is part of the Minffordd formation, dating from the Cambrian period and comprising a combination of sandstone, conglomerate and thin tuff with intrusions of acid tuff and tuffite. However, the solid geology is usually covered by a variety of superficial fluvio-glacial drift deposits. (British Geological Survey, Bangor: England and Wales Sheet 106, 1:50000).

### **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

#### **5.1 Archaeological and Historical Background**

A detailed description of the study area is given in Cambria Archaeology Field Operations Report no. 2003/126. The report by Cambria incorporates a larger area than that evaluated in this report as it studied the area to the east and northeast of the former Wellfield Centre, including the location of the Dean Street Car Park that will subsequently be forming part of the car parking arrangements for the new shopping centre. The current report is focussed on the area that formerly housed the Wellfield Shopping Centre.

##### ***5.2.1 Prehistory/Roman***

Though the surrounding lowland area is relatively rich in prehistoric sites of mid to late Bronze Age date (especially near Llandygai village), the immediate locale on the valley side contains no evidence for settlement within the Prehistoric or Roman periods, though subsequent development may have masked evidence of this.

##### ***5.2.2. Early Medieval to sub-medieval***

The development of Bangor was concentrated mainly in the valley bottom and began in the sixth century with the founding of a church and monastic settlement c. 150m to the west of the study area. In the twelfth century, Bangor became a territorial diocese with the establishment of a cathedral church.

##### ***5.2.3 Early-Modern/Modern***

The urban development of Bangor began in earnest during the nineteenth century and incorporated the maritime quarter at Hiraël, next to the coast, followed by the development of the Dean Street area that bridged the gap between the original medieval town and Hiraël. The building of the railway station in the middle of the century brought the High Street further south, whilst the development of the southwestern end of Bangor and the northern side of the valley (the location of the University) began in the early twentieth century.

The development of Bangor during the nineteenth century is most apparent from the cartographic evidence, which show Bangor's expansion as a city in considerable detail. The earliest map to represent the study area in detail is John Wood's Map of 1834 that shows the study area as an enclosed field, bordered by the Afon Adda to the north, Church Street and the proposed line of Garth Road to the west, Castle Street to the south and a row of terraced houses facing Well Street to the east (Figure 3). The 1840 Tithe Map and Schedule (Figure 4) is generally similar to the John Wood Map except that Garth Road has been constructed to the west and south. The study area is still located in the enclosed field and is listed on the Tithe Schedule as Field Number 872: a "meadowland" owned by George Day Hawkins Pennant of the Penrhyn Estate. Meadowland was described in the Act for the Commutation of Tithes (1836) as "all grasslands which are not arable, woodland or commonland and which have not been under the plough within the three years preceding Christmas 1836" (Jones 1970, 72). It was likely that the study area would have been used for hay and pasture. The Penrhyn Estate owned the land north of the river between what is now Glanrafon Hill and Holyhead Road (both of which are visible on the map). To the south and east of the estate, the land (including the properties on the southern half of Glanrafon Road) is part of the "City of Bangor" Cathedral land.

The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (1890, 1900 and 1914 respectively) show the area fully developed, with Wellfield House and the Masonic Hall occupying the site. Wellfield House was constructed in the 1850's and prior to demolition it was a doctor's residence (Plate 12). The maps show the approach to the House via Garth Road, directly opposite Tan y Fynwent Road. The house and associated outbuildings are located in the central and southern portions of the study area, whilst the northern portion is occupied by the gardens. The Masonic Hall is located at the southwestern end of the site and comprises a rectangular building and a small outbuilding to the northeast (the Masonic Hall was built in 1882 and housed two Masonic Lodges, the C & A Conservative Club and Offices of the Inland Revenue and County Court; see Plate 12). The area of the grounds of Wellfield House that fronted onto the High Street was considerably altered in 1939, with the construction of the Woolworth's shopping Centre. Woolworth's was located to the east of the Masonic Hall.

The construction of the Wellfield Centre was the final stage of development in the study area. It was designed to reinvigorate and modernise Bangor City Centre and construction commenced in the latter part of 1962, removing all traces of Wellfield House and its grounds, as well as the Masonic Hall. The developers were Bredwood Investments Ltd and the chief Architect was Mr Roy Greenhalgh (*North Wales Chronicle* January 1963) The project was well underway by the time the foundation stone and plaque were laid by the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Caernarvonshire, Sir Michael Duff Bar on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1963. The *Chronicle* reported that the centre was close to opening in April 1964 and advertisements announcing Town centre shops to let appeared in the 1 May 1964 edition. The Wellfield Centre contained 53 shop units, a supermarket and a store along with 10,000 feet of office space, underground car parks for 91 cars, underground delivery roads and bays and a petrol station. The central shopping area consisted of an open courtyard in an attempt to emulate modern European cities. The cost of the development was about £600,000 and was described in the *Chronicle* as "a shoppers paradise" that was "designed with the modern housewife in mind" (Hopewell 2005).

Reports in 1970 during a change of management of the centre to a local firm, Jones and Beardmore, were not so optimistic. The store and 34 of the units remained empty. A photograph shows many units still closed off with wooden slats. The situation was never completely resolved and many units remained empty until the 1980s. Shops present in the early stages of the Wellfield development included a Tesco supermarket, a large bookshop (Booklands), along with shops supplying musical instruments, records, fruit and vegetables and soft furnishings. A public house was set up at the end of the courtyard. The centre was partially refurbished in 1984 with the addition of a covered mall and a new entrance and lifts from Garth Road. An ambitious plan to roof the courtyard and add extra units was put before the planning committee in June 85 but the development company pulled out in response to plans to build two major new supermarkets in Bangor. The 1984 refurbishments heralded a slight

upturn in the fortunes of the centre with the new covered mall attracting new retailers. Many units remained empty, however, and the building of the new Deiniol Centre and out of town supermarkets shortly after the refurbishments ensured that no further development would take place. In the latter years after most of the major concerns moved elsewhere (Tesco and Bookland had both left well before the refurbishment) most of the smaller units were taken up by local businesses and the centre could be seen to be providing significant niche accommodation for the smaller trader (Hopewell 2005).

The area to the west of the study area was investigated with a series of excavations during the 1980's. A total of six excavations of varying size were undertaken on both sides of Waterloo Street and along Berllan Bach (now the location of the Deiniol Shopping Centre), c.50m west of the study area. Most of the activity was relegated to nineteenth century development, with occasional examples of earlier activity. The most revealing site, however, was located at the northern end of Waterloo Street, at its junction with Tan y Fynwent, where an excavation in the winter of 1984/1985 discovered evidence of and early medieval cemetery of seventy-six graves and a tenth century boundary ditch (Longley 1995, 52-70).

## 5.2 Evaluation Results

A detailed description of the study area is given in Cambria Archaeology Field Operations Report no. 2003/126, but a brief description of the layout of the Wellfield Centre as it stood prior to demolition will help to give a general understanding of the site during the evaluation phase.

Wellfield Centre, was built on the south side of the valley on four levels to accommodate the changes in ground level. The basic construction consisted of a series of piers and large, reinforced concrete slabs. The external elevations were principally of brick. As the internal walls were not generally load-bearing, a fair amount of remodelling of the retail units, loading bays and stores was possible during the lifetime of the centre by the simple method of either adding or removing walls between the concrete piers. External access was via stairs from Garth Road along with three ramps, one from the High Street, one from the top of Garth Road facing the town clock and one from close to the car park entrance. The first two ramps provided direct access to the fourth level, the latter to the level three courtyard.

## 5.3 Results from the Evaluation Trenches

For the location of individual trenches see Figure 2.

### Trench 06 (Figure 2)

Size: 27m<sup>2</sup>

#### *Description:*

Trench 06 is located at the northern end of the site in what was formerly the lower car park of the Wellfield Centre. The surface prior to excavation comprised a level surface c.35m long and c.20m wide built from reinforced concrete and surrounded by a series of reinforced steel joists (RSJ's) that formerly supported the superstructure. The trench was orientated north to south. Directly below the ground level (comprising 0.20m of reinforced concrete), was a c.1.00m thick deposit of demolition material, comprising fragments of granite stone, slate and brick. This deposit was used as a levelling layer during the Phase 1 construction of the Wellfield Centre and was used to create a flat surface on which to build the ground level. As with Trenches 13 and 14, the granite stone could have been reused stone from the former Wellfield House buildings. Below the levelling deposit was a 0.30m thick deposit of grey-brown clay-silt (extant at 15.38m AOD; Figure 7; Plate 1). This deposit matched that identified in Trench 11 located 9.0m to the west of Trench 06 and was interpreted as a former buried soil associated with Wellfield House. The buried soil followed the gradient of the valley slope and contained small fragments of coal, slate, brick, glass and white glazed ware; all of which were indicative of post-medieval activity, and by extension, Wellfield House. This buried soil was only extant in the northern half of the trench: the southern half appeared to have been truncated during the construction of the Wellfield Centre (a similar scenario was identified in Trench 11). The buried soil was cut on the eastern side of the trench by a large foundation footing, into which was set a 1.00m thick concrete pad. The gap between the concrete pad and the edge of the foundation was filled with stone. Below the buried soil was the manganese-flecked glacial deposit that had been identified in trenches 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. No other activity was identified.

#### *Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964, in the form of a concrete foundation pad, followed by a sequence of levelling deposits and a concrete floor surface. The only evidence for activity associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Wellfield House was a buried soil, possibly from the grounds of the house. An inspection of the First to Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Maps shows the location to be an orchard. A similar deposit was identified in Trench 11, 9.0m to the west

#### Trench 10 (Figure 2)

Size: 26m<sup>2</sup>

##### *Description:*

Trench 10 was located c.25m southwest of Trench 06 in what was the loading bay area of the Wellfield Centre. The trench was orientated north to south and was located in what would have been the grounds of Wellfield House. The ground level comprised reinforced concrete, which was broken up and removed. This layer was 0.20m thick and covered a layer of demolition material. This layer was used to level off the gradient of the valley side so as to facilitate a level surface on which to lay the concrete. At the southern end of the trench, this deposit was very thin, but gradually thickened to a depth of 0.40m as the slope of the valley continued northwards (Plate 2). At the southern end of the trench the levelling layer sealed the manganese-flecked glacial deposit. In the centre and northern end of the trench the levelling layer covered two concrete pads. The central pad measured 3.00m in length and 0.30m in depth and was cut into the glacial deposit. The northern concrete pad continued outside the extent of the trench. The glacial deposit was visible between the two pads. No other activity was identified.

##### *Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964, in the form of a concrete foundation pad, followed by a levelling deposit and a concrete floor surface. There was no evidence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Wellfield House.

#### Trench 11 (Figure 2)

Size: 24m<sup>2</sup>

##### *Description:*

Trench 11 was located 9.0m west of Trench 06 in a former goods entrance associated with the Wellfield Centre. The trench was orientated north to south. The ground surface comprised reinforced concrete, which was broken up and removed. The concrete was 0.20m thick and sealed a deposit of demolition material, between 0.70 and 0.80m thick. This deposit had been used to level off the ground to facilitate laying the concrete surface. In the centre of the trench was the foundation of a brick wall, two courses wide. The bricks were "frogged" and of twentieth century date. The brick wall was interpreted as an internal partition wall. Below the levelling layer on the southern side of the trench was the manganese-flecked glacial deposit. To the north of the brick foundation wall was a 0.30m thick deposit of grey-brown clay-silt (Plate 3). This deposit matched that identified in Trench 06 located 9.0m to the west of Trench 11 and was interpreted as a former buried soil associated with Wellfield House. The buried soil followed the gradient of the valley slope and contained small fragments of coal, slate, brick, glass and white glazed ware; all of which were indicative of post-medieval activity, and by extension, Wellfield House. This buried soil was only extant in the northern half of the trench: the southern half appeared to have been truncated during the construction of the Wellfield Centre (a similar scenario was identified in Trench 06). Below the buried soil was the manganese-flecked glacial deposit found also in trenches 06, 12, 13, 14 and 15.

##### *Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964, in the form of a concrete foundation pad, followed by a levelling deposit and a concrete floor surface. The only evidence for activity associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Wellfield House was a buried soil, possibly from the grounds of the house. An inspection of the First to Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Maps shows the location to be an open area surrounded by an orchard. A similar deposit was identified in Trench 06, 9.0m to the east.

#### Trench 12 (Figure 2)

Size: 60m<sup>2</sup>

##### *Description:*

Trench 12 was positioned at the southwestern end of the site to the rear of what was "Soled Out" shoe shop (basement level), to the east of the Phase 2 "Mall". The trench was positioned on a southeast to northwest alignment and was hoped to reveal information regarding the foundation level of the former

Masonic Lodge, demolished during the Phase 1 construction of the Wellfield Centre in 1964 and also any Medieval activity associated with the Cathedral. The position of the trench had to be altered due to the proximity of live services and the trench was separated into four segments to accommodate this. The first segment, Segment A (Plate 4), was dug to a depth of 2.0m, cutting through a top layer of tarmac and levelling material (1.00m thick), followed by a 1.00m thick layer of concrete. In the centre of the trench there was a 1.00m wide and 3.00m long gap in the concrete, exposing a deposit of glacial sand. The concrete was interpreted as part of the construction for Phase 1 of the Wellfield, which utilised extensive concrete pads terraced into the valley side, onto which were built the superstructure. The second segment, Segment B, confirmed this. This segment was 7.0m long and 2.0m wide and was located c.2.5m southwest of Segment A. The concrete extended for c.5.0m along the trench. The pad differed in this instance as the concrete sealed a series of brick-built courses, 1.0m in height. The bricks were frogged and were interpreted as part of the Phase 1 construction. The brick courses were cut into the glacial sand and were sealed, along with the concrete, by a deposit of tarmac and overburden, 1.0m thick. An extension was made to the western side of Segment B to investigate further the concrete pad and the brick-built foundations. The trench was extended c.5.50m to the southwest and revealed a continuation of the concrete pad. No further evidence of the brick-built foundation was recovered. Segment C was located 6.0m to the southwest of Segment B. Segment C was dug to a mean depth of 1.10m and measured 2.00 wide and 5.60m long (Plate 5). The segment comprised 0.50m of reinforced concrete followed by 0.60m of glacial sand. The concrete was interpreted as foundation for Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre. Segment D was located c.3.00m to the southeast of Segment C and measured 2.00m in width and 3.10m in length (Plate 6). This segment could not be fully excavated due to the reinforced concrete that covered the area. This concrete could not be removed successfully within the confines of the trench but was interpreted as part of the foundation layer of Phase 1 Wellfield Centre.

*Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964. There was no evidence for the Masonic Lodge, formerly extant in this area. The brickwork associated with Segment B was interpreted as part of the Wellfield Centre Phase 1 construction. The glacial sand did not contain evidence for Medieval activity.

Trench 13 (Figure 2)

Size: 28m<sup>2</sup>

*Description:*

Trench 13 was located at the western end of the site and ran parallel to Garth Road. The trench was situated within the ground floor of the Wellfield Centre across a series of office spaces. The ground surface comprised 0.20m of reinforced concrete, which was broken and removed. Below this was a 0.25m thick deposit of levelling material, which in turn sealed a 0.30m thick deposit of dark-brown clay-silt (Plate 7). This deposit was similar to that identified in Trenches 06 and 11 and was interpreted as a possible buried soil associated with Wellfield House (extant at 14.12m AOD; see Figure 8 section A). This deposit was only extent in the southern half of the trench as the centre of trench was dominated by a 3.00m long concrete pad, 0.30m thick, which cut through the buried soil. There were also concrete pads at the northern and southern ends of the trench. At the base of the trench was a manganese flecked glacial deposit.

*Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964. According to the First to Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Maps, this area was part of the grounds of Wellfield House. It appeared from the trench that all evidence for this had been removed during the Phase 1 construction of the Wellfield. Some evidence of the Wellfield House was identified in trenches 06 and 11 to the east, both of which contained a buried soil horizon.

Trench 14 (Figure 2)

Size: 24m<sup>2</sup>

*Description:*

This trench was located c.15.0m northeast of Trench 13 and also ran parallel to Garth Road within former office space. The ground comprised 0.20m of reinforced concrete, which was broken and removed. Below this was a 0.35m thick levelling deposit comprising redundant building material (Plate 8; Figure 8). Noticeably, the majority of the material used was sub-angular blocks of granite, of various sizes but no more than 0.30m in width. This material may well have been sourced from structures within the Wellfield House property. However, there was no way to tell definitively. At the middle and southern end of the trench, the levelling deposit covered large concrete pads, with a brick foundation wall running through the centre of the middle concrete pad. Between the two pads was a gas pipe and

below this, a glacial deposit. At the northern end of the trench, the levelling layer was removed to expose more glacial activity (extant at 11.37m AOD; see Figure 8; Section B).

*Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964. According to the First to Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Maps, this area was part of the grounds of Wellfield House. It appeared from the trench that all evidence for this had been removed during the Phase 1 construction of the Wellfield. Some evidence of the Wellfield House was identified in trenches 06 and 11 to the east, both of which contained a buried soil horizon.

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of Phase 1 of the Wellfield Centre in 1964. According to the First to Third Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Maps, this area was part of the grounds of Wellfield House. It appeared from the trench that all evidence for this had been removed during the Phase 1 construction of the Wellfield. Some evidence of the Wellfield House was identified in trenches 06 and 11 to the east, both of which contained a buried soil horizon.

Trench 15 (Figure 2)

Size: 24.75m<sup>2</sup>

*Description:*

Trench 15 was positioned at the eastern corner of the site at the location of the former stores for the shops that ran up the slope into the shopping centre. The stores had been demolished but the partitions were still visible at foundation level. The trench was orientated NNW to SSE and measured 16.5m by 1.50m (Plate 9; Figure 9). The brick-built partitions were visible on the southwest facing section, positioned c.2.5m apart. The foundations had been cut into a 0.50m thick levelling layer comprising modern building waste, including brick and slate fragments (extant at 15.98m AOD; see Figure 9). This levelling layer had also been cut by two ceramic drains. The levelling layer sealed a deposit of sand that was assumed to be glacial in origin rather than imported (extant at 15.73m AOD; see Figure 9). Above the levelling layer and forming the floor surface was a 0.40m thick deposit of concrete. The northeast facing section revealed a similar relationship except that only two of the four brick-built foundations were visible in section. The only major difference was a four metre wide pit visible below the levelling layer. The pit was located towards the centre of the trench and was filled with demolition waste, including brick, slate and mortar fragments (base of pit at 15.23m AOD; see Figure 9). Several sherds of white glazed pottery and a small stem fragment from a clay pipe were also recovered. The pit appeared to be associated with the construction of the Wellfield Centre, possibly a refuse pit. A large concrete footing was set into the pit below the concrete flooring and one of the brick foundations, suggesting that the pit may have been associated with this activity. It did not appear to be a backfilled tree-bowl. Another option is that it could have been a refuse pit associated with the Wellfield House as the trench was located in what would have been the grounds for the house.

*Interpretation:*

The trench contained activity associated with the construction of the Wellfield Centre, viz., the foundations and floor level of the garage and stores below a series of shops. There did not appear to be any activity associated with Wellfield House, suggesting that the area was levelled and landscaped prior to building the shopping centre. However, there was a slim possibility that the large pit towards the centre of the trench could have been a refuse pit associated with the house, although there was no way to confirm this.

A large pipe trench opened along the former loading bay area of the Wellfield Centre by Jennings for laying pipes was inspected. The only activity noted was from the construction of the Wellfield Centre, with a thick layer of levelling material placed over a glacial deposit (see location Figure 2; Plate 10).

## **5 CONCLUSION**

The archaeological information derived from the seven trenches opened during the evaluation phase was fairly limited. There were no remains of any of the structures associated with Wellfield House or the Masonic Lodge (both of which were dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and the only indication of post-medieval activity prior to the Wellfield Centre was the buried soils identified in Trenches 06, 11 and (possibly) 13. The buried soils are best interpreted as belonging to the gardens or grounds of Wellfield House. The opened trenches covered the north, east and western portions of the site. The central/southern portion of the site was not evaluated further as the information derived from the open trenches suggested that the construction of the Wellfield Centre necessitated extensive landscaping, including the terracing of the valley side towards the area of Woolworths. This explained why the concrete foundations for the Wellfield Centre were built on glacial deposits: the ground was terraced to

provide a level platform on which to build the superstructure. At the northern end of the site, as represented by Trenches 06 and 11, the valley side was built-up and levelled using deposits of building material, which is why the buried soil from Wellfield House managed to survive. Elsewhere, the terracing of the valley during construction removed all traces of structures and the grounds. It is possible that some of the material used to level the valley side incorporated building material from Wellfield House and the Masonic Lodge as the material recorded in trenches 13 and 14, at the western end of the site, included sub-angular blocks of granite stone.

## **6 REFERENCES AND OTHER SOURCES CONSULTED**

### *Cartographic evidence*

John Speed Map of 1610

John Woods' Map of Bangor, 1834

Tithe Map and Schedule of Bangor 1840

25" County Series Caernarfonshire VI.12 1890, 1900 and 1914

### *Published and unpublished reports*

Cambria Archaeology Field Operations (Report no. 2003/126)

Cowell, J., 1994, *Bangor A Pictorial History*. Porthaethwy.

Hopewell, D., 2005. 'Wellfield Redevelopment. The Menai Shopping Centre Bangor. Archaeological Mitigation Phase 1: Building Recording. GAT Report: 605. Project No. G1880.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **WELLFIELD CENTRE, BANGOR**

#### **PROJECT DESIGN FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING AND EVALUATION (G1880)**

**10 April, 2006**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This project design outlines the archaeological mitigation to be undertaken in advance of the demolition of the Wellfield shopping centre, Bangor. The design has been requested by Gardiner and Theobald and has been drawn up by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

An initial assessment has been undertaken of the Centre by Cambria Archaeology (Report No. 2003/126). A brief for archaeological mitigation has been prepared by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service (D961), requiring building survey and trial excavation. The building survey is now complete, and this project design applies to the requirements for trial excavation.

### **3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE BRIEF**

The requirements specified within the brief are for evaluation excavation to a minimum sample of 4%.

### **4. METHOD STATEMENT**

#### **4.1 Trial trenching**

The excavations will conform to the guidelines specified in IFA Standards and Guidance: Field Evaluation (1994, rev. 1999), where field evaluation is defined as “a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate”.

If archaeological remains or deposits are found, then a decision based on the nature and status of the findings will determine the next phase of the project.

This phase of the work will involve the excavation of fifteen trenches, each measuring approximately 35 square metres. These will total 520 square metres, which equates to 4% of 13,000 square metres, the total area of the development. The exact location of the trenches will need to be varied to suit conditions on site, including the location of services or concrete pads that are to remain *in situ*. A suggested layout is appended to this design.

The work will be undertaken according to the following specification.

A visual inspection of the entire site will be undertaken. This will include the examination of any available exposures (e.g. geological test pits).

For machine excavated trenches an appropriate machine will be used. This will normally be a JCB 3CX type excavator or a 360° tracked excavator with a 1.5m or 1.8m wide toothless bucket. All machining will be undertaken under direct archaeological supervision.

All undifferentiated topsoil or overburden of recent origin will be removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon, in successive, level spits. Following machine clearance, all faces of the trench that require examination or recording will be cleaned using hand tools. All investigation of archaeological levels will be by hand, with cleaning, examination and recording both in plan and section. Spoil heaps will be monitored to recover artefacts to assist in the analysis of the spatial distribution of artefacts. Modern artefacts will be noted but not retained.

Within significant archaeological levels a minimum number of features required to meet the aims will be hand excavated. Occasional pits and postholes will be subject to a 50% sample by volume. Complex clusters of pits will be sampled more selectively. Linear features will be sectioned as appropriate. Features not suited to excavation within narrow trenches will not be sampled. No archaeological deposits will be entirely removed unless this is unavoidable. It is not necessarily the intention that all trial trenches will be fully excavated to natural stratigraphy, but the depth of archaeological deposits across the site will be assessed. The stratigraphy of all evaluation trenches will be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified.

### **4.3 Processing data, illustration, report and archiving**

The level of post-excavation analysis and reporting for the purposes of the evaluation will be sufficient to establish the character, scale, date range, artefactual and palaeo-environmental potential and overall significance of the remains.

The level of artefact analysis will be sufficient to establish date ranges of archaeological deposits, a general assessment of the types of pottery and other artefacts to assist in characterising the archaeology, and to establish the potential for all categories of artefacts should further archaeological work be necessary.

Palaeo-environmental samples, if appropriate, will be processed and scanned to establish the site's potential for yielding valuable information of this type. The scanning will be performed by specialists with appropriate experience of assessing the significance and potential of such material on the basis of limited analysis. Samples will be retained for possible future detailed analysis.

The significance of any archaeology will be judged by general reference to the non-statutory criteria for scheduled monuments. The report on the evaluation will provide an assessment of the impact of the scheme and an outline of mitigation measures proposed. The findings will be discussed with the Development Control archaeologist.

Following the completion of the field work, the data will be processed, final illustrations will be compiled and a report will be produced which will detail and synthesise the results. Survey drawings and a sample of relevant photographs will be used to illustrate the reports.

The report will include:

- a) details of the agreed project design
- b) a scale plan showing the route and location of the sites
- c) the results of any geophysical surveys
- d) plans and sections of all trial excavations
- e) survey results, including plans and elevations of relevant structures
- f) detailed survey results of relevant structures, including the crane and bridges
- g) other illustrations as appropriate
- i) a bibliography of all sources consulted
- j) all specialist reports.

### **4.8 Archive**

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project will be prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions will be labelled and cross-referenced, and lodged in an appropriate place (to be decided in consultation with the regional Sites and

Monuments Record) within six months of the completion of the project. All digital data will be written to CD-ROM and stored with the paper archive.

## **5. STAFF**

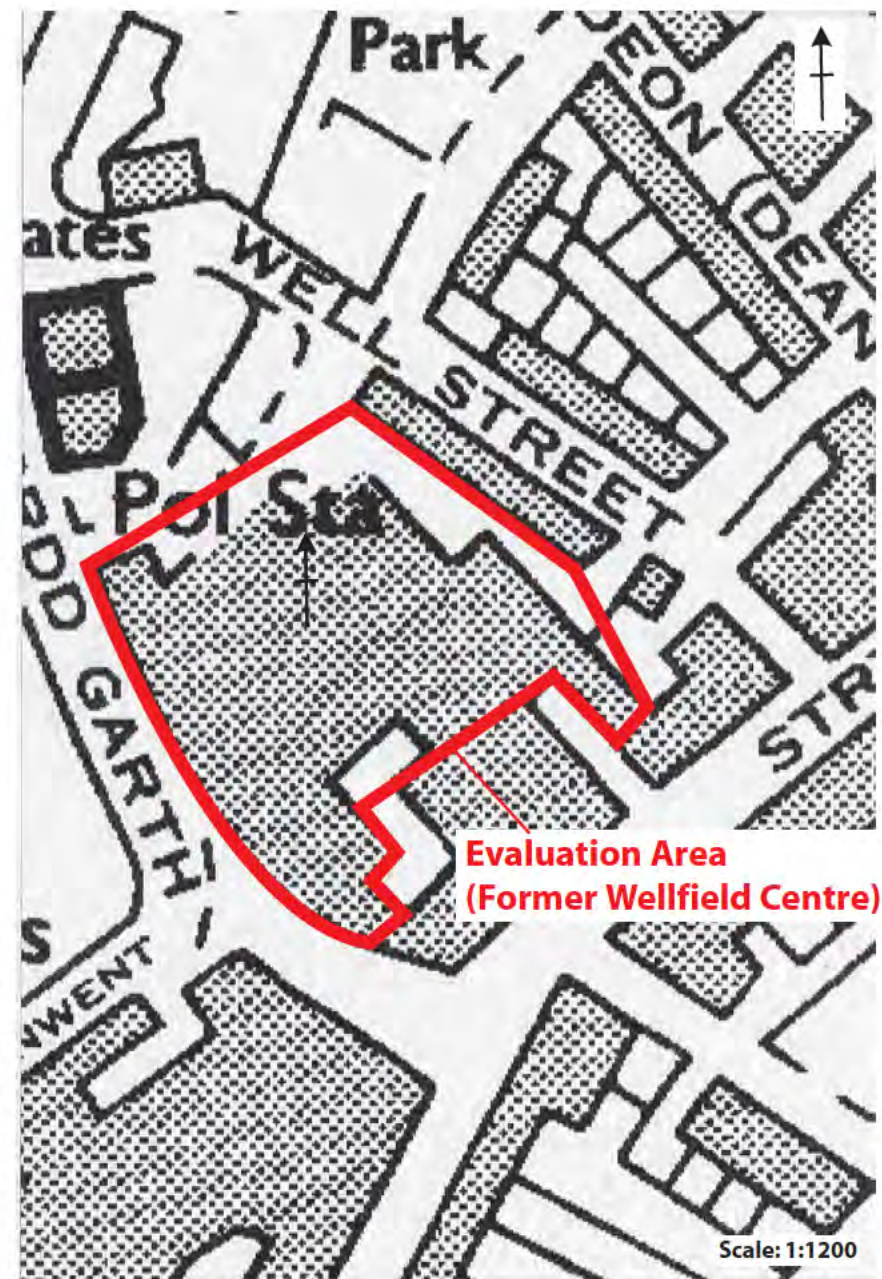
The project will be supervised by Andrew Davidson, Principal Archaeologist at the Trust, who has worked in various aspects of British archaeology for 18 years, and who has been responsible for managing all contract work at the Trust for the past five years, including archaeological programmes for major road contracts, pipeline construction and new development sites. The work will be carried out by fully trained Project Archaeologists who are experienced in conducting watching briefs and working with contractors and earth moving machinery. (Full cv's are available upon request).

## **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Trust subscribes to the SCAUM (Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers) Health and Safety Policy as defined in **Health and Safety in Field Archaeology** (1999). During this project, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust will be included under the Health and Safety rules laid down by the Site Developers, and will be inducted onto site by the Developers.

## **7. INSURANCE**

The Trust holds public liability insurance with an indemnity limit of £2,500,000 through Russell, Scanlon Limited Insurance Brokers, Wellington Circus, Nottingham NG1 5AJ (policy 01 1017386 COM), and Professional Indemnity Insurance for £2,000,000 per claim (policy No. 59A/SA11818791).



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Figure 1. Site Location

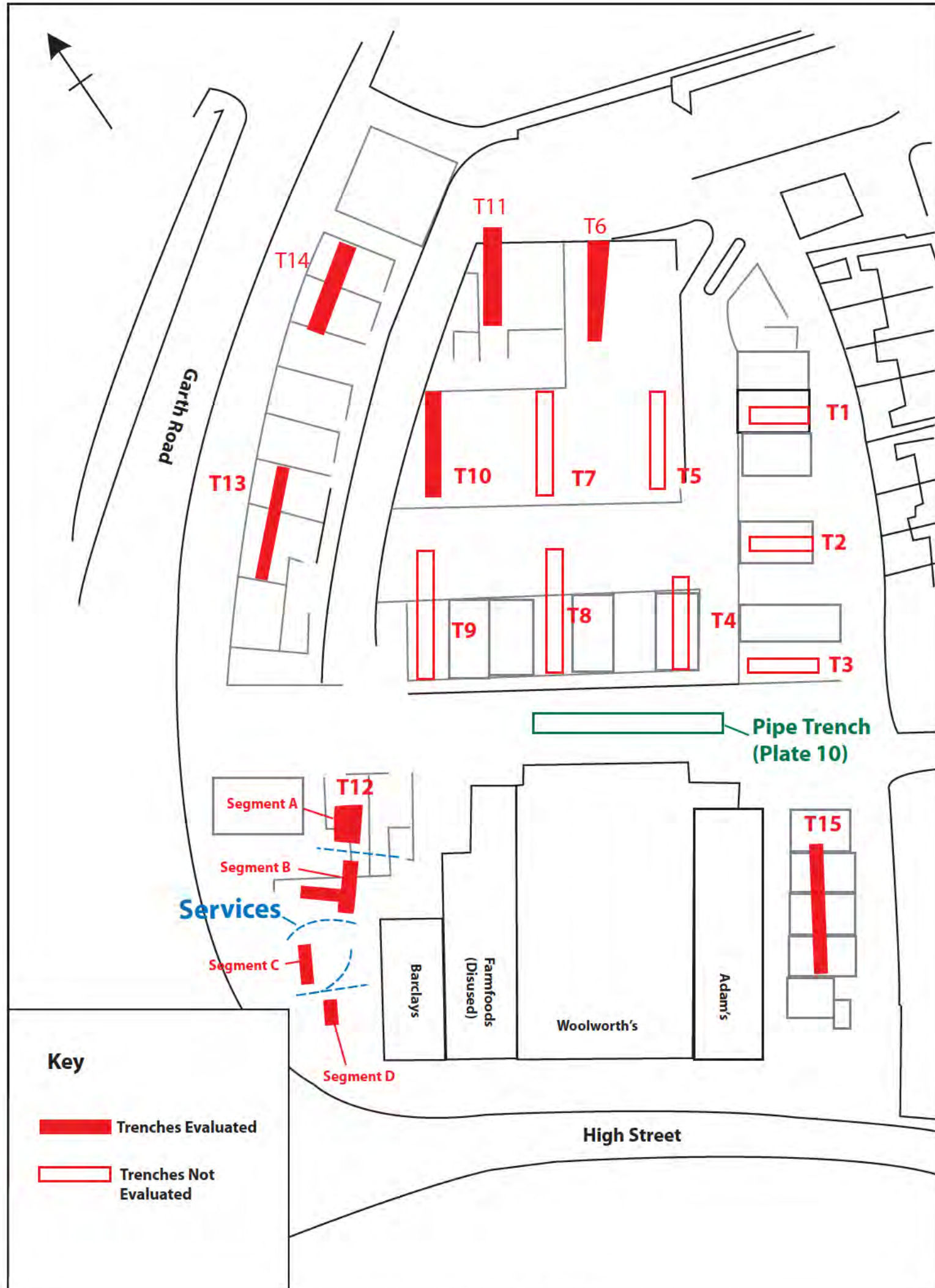


Figure 2: Location of Evaluation Trenches 1-15  
(Figure based on Alfred McApaine Site Drawing: Not to Scale)

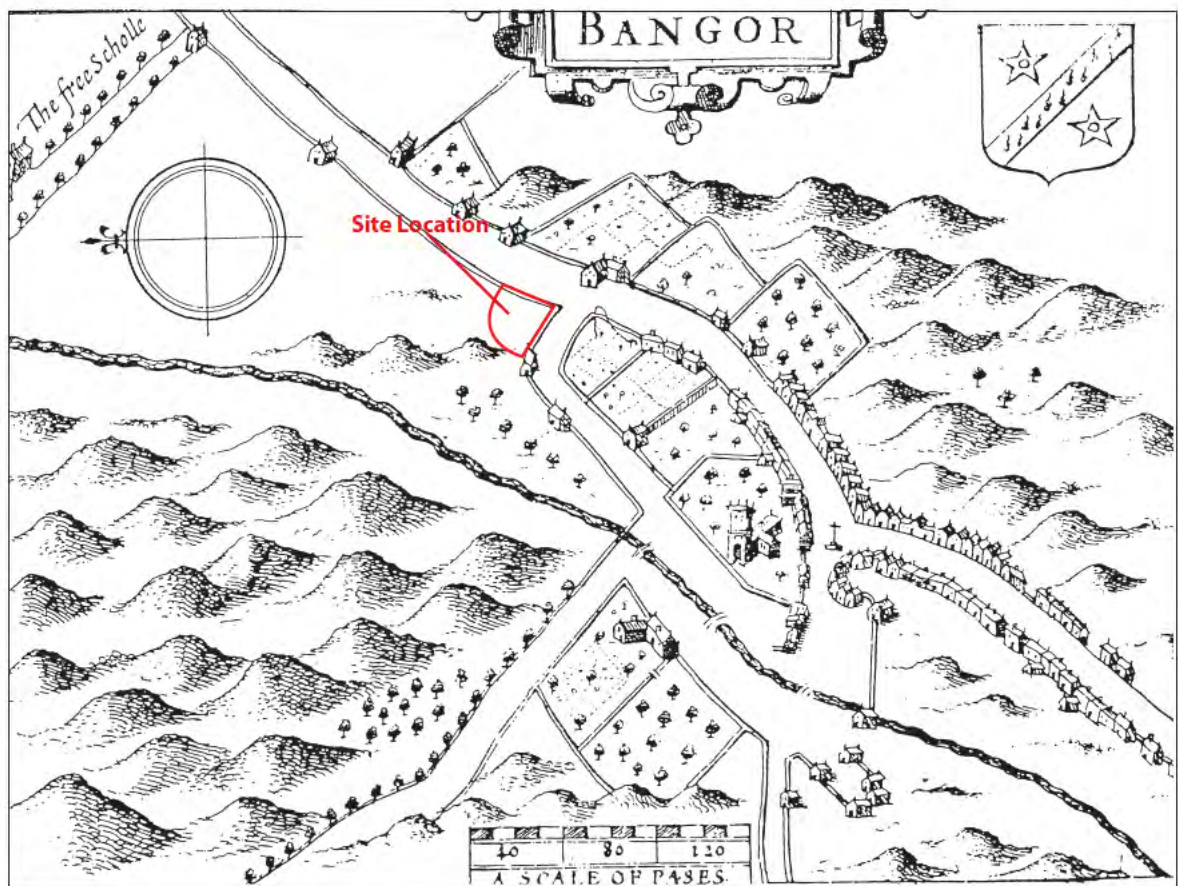
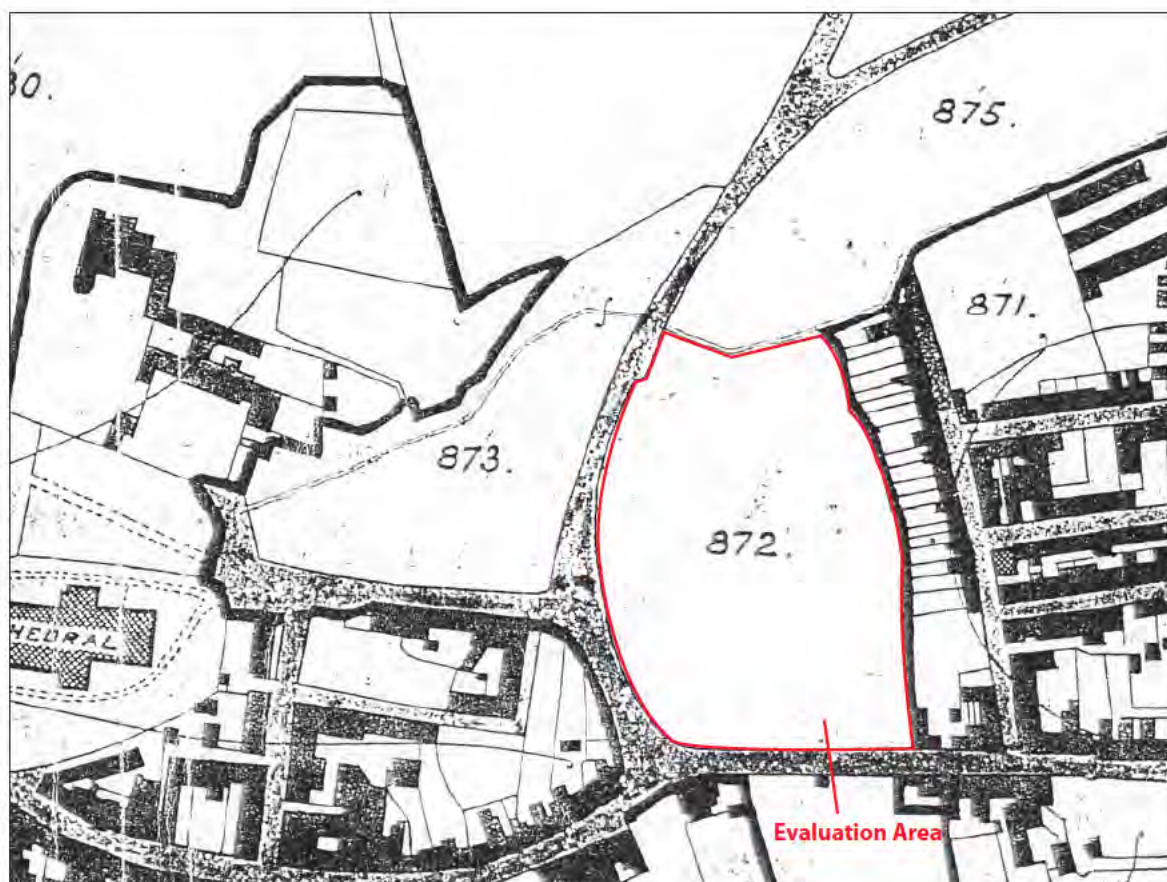


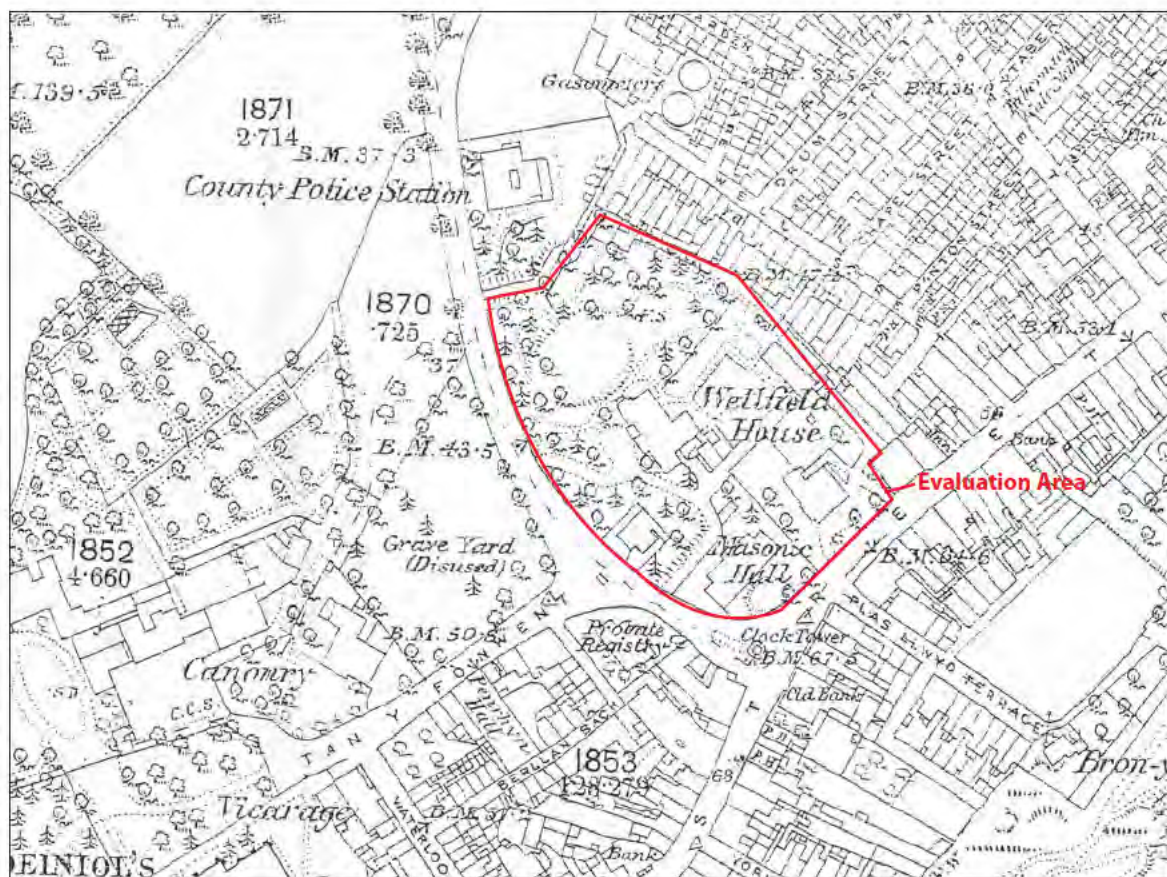
Figure 3. Map of Bangor. John Speed 1610



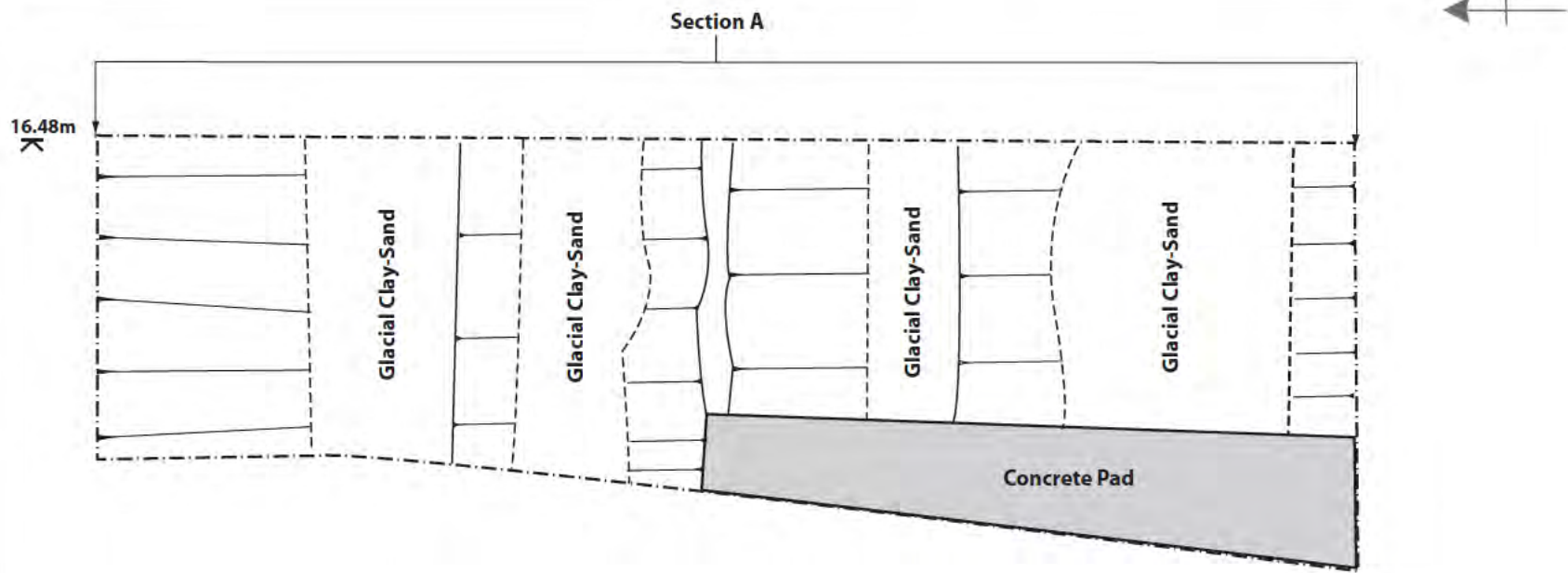
Figure 4. Map of Bangor. John Wood 1834



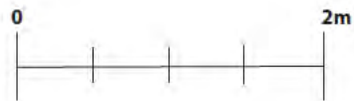
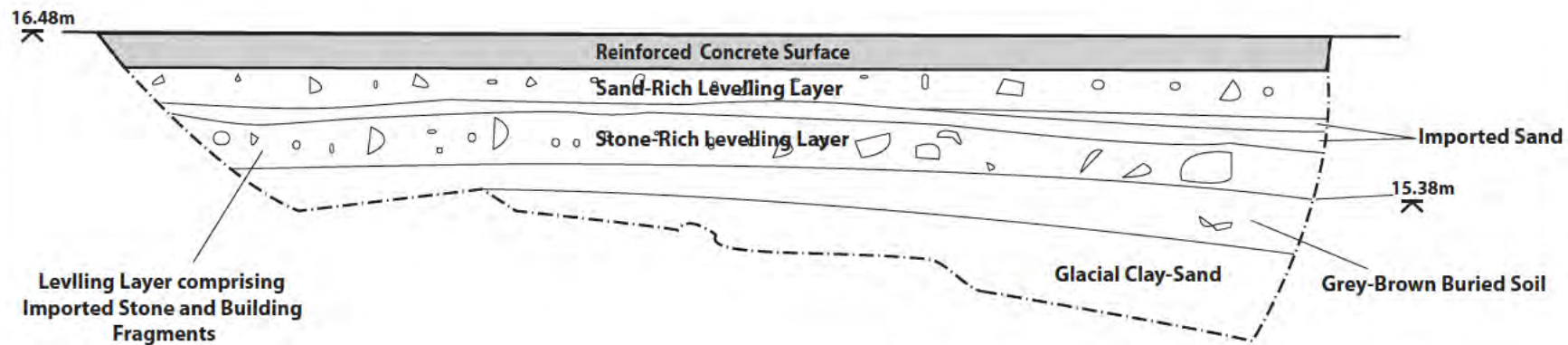
**Figure 5. Map of Bangor. Tithe Map 1840 (Not to Scale)**



**Figure 6. Ordnance Survey County Series 25" Caernarfon. VI. 12. 1890 (Not to Scale)**



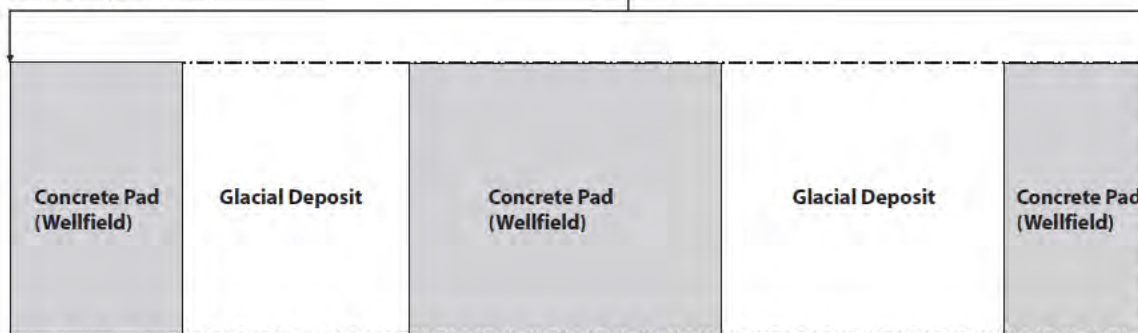
**Northeast facing Section of Trench 14 (Scale 1:50)**



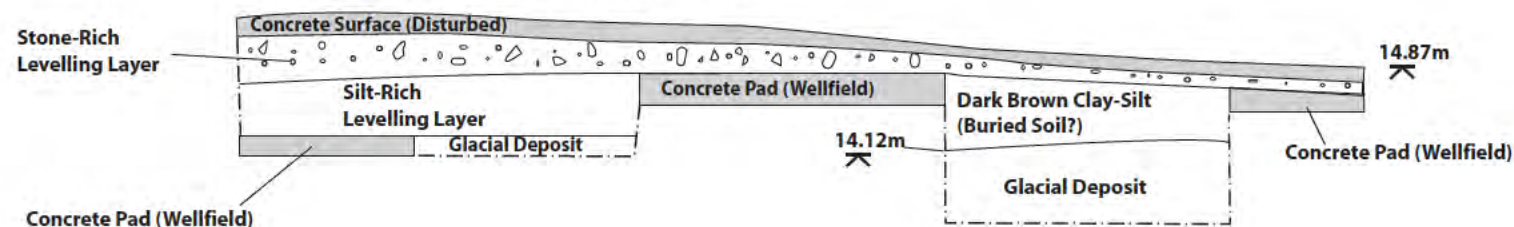
**Figure 7: Trench 06  
Scale 1:50@A4**

Trench 13 (Scale 1:80)

Section A

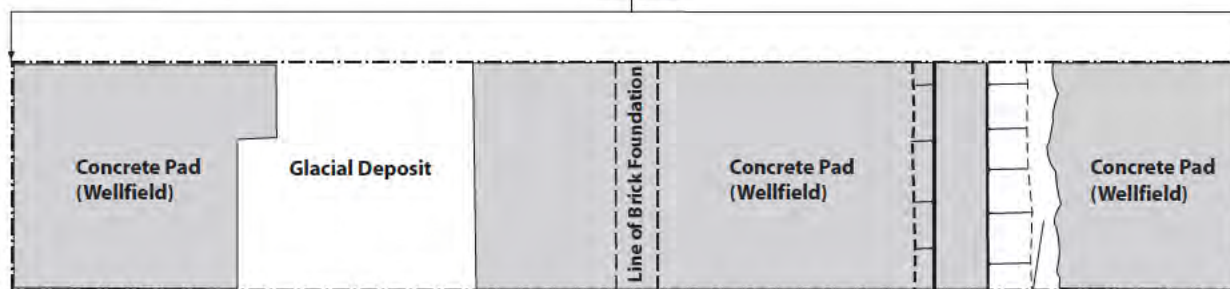


Section A: West facing Section of Trench 13 (Scale 1:80)



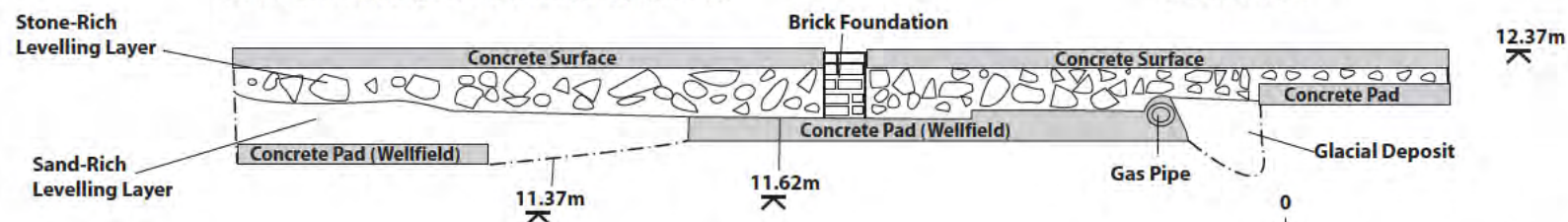
Trench 14 (Scale 1:80)

Section B



Section B: West facing Section of Trench 14 (Scale 1:80)

Glacial Deposit



YMCERBUKLEAETH  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
TRUST



GŴYNNEDD  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
TRUST

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Figure 8: Trenches 13 & 14  
Scale 1:80@A4

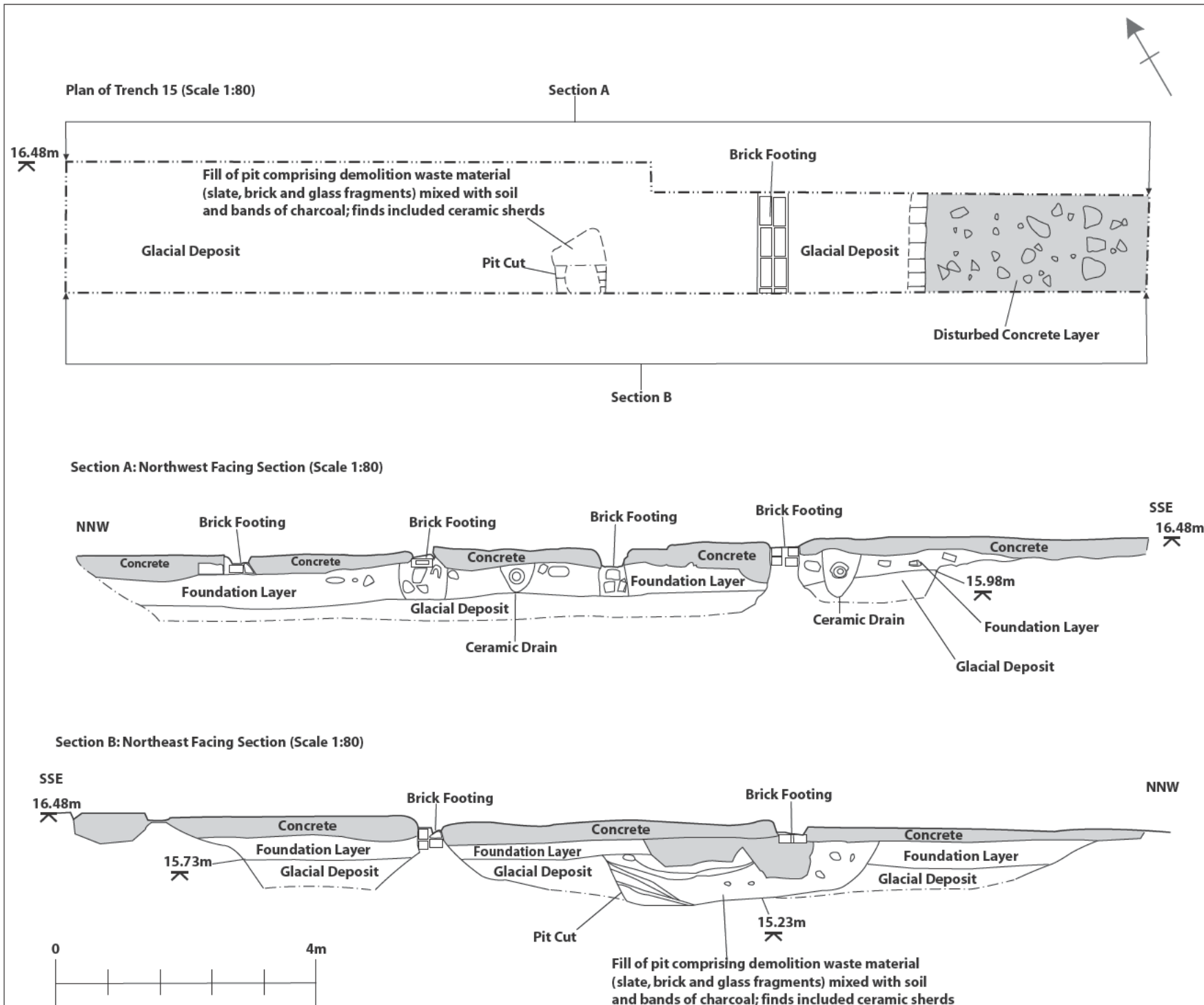


Figure 9: Trench 15  
Scale: 1:80@A4



Plate 1: Trench 06: View Northeast



Plate 2: Trench 10: View Northeast



**Plate 3: Trench 11: View South**



**Plate 4: Trench 12: View South**



Plate 5: Trench 12: Segment C



Plate 6: Trench 12: View South Segment D



Plate 7: Trench 13: View South



Plate 8: Trench 14: View Northwest



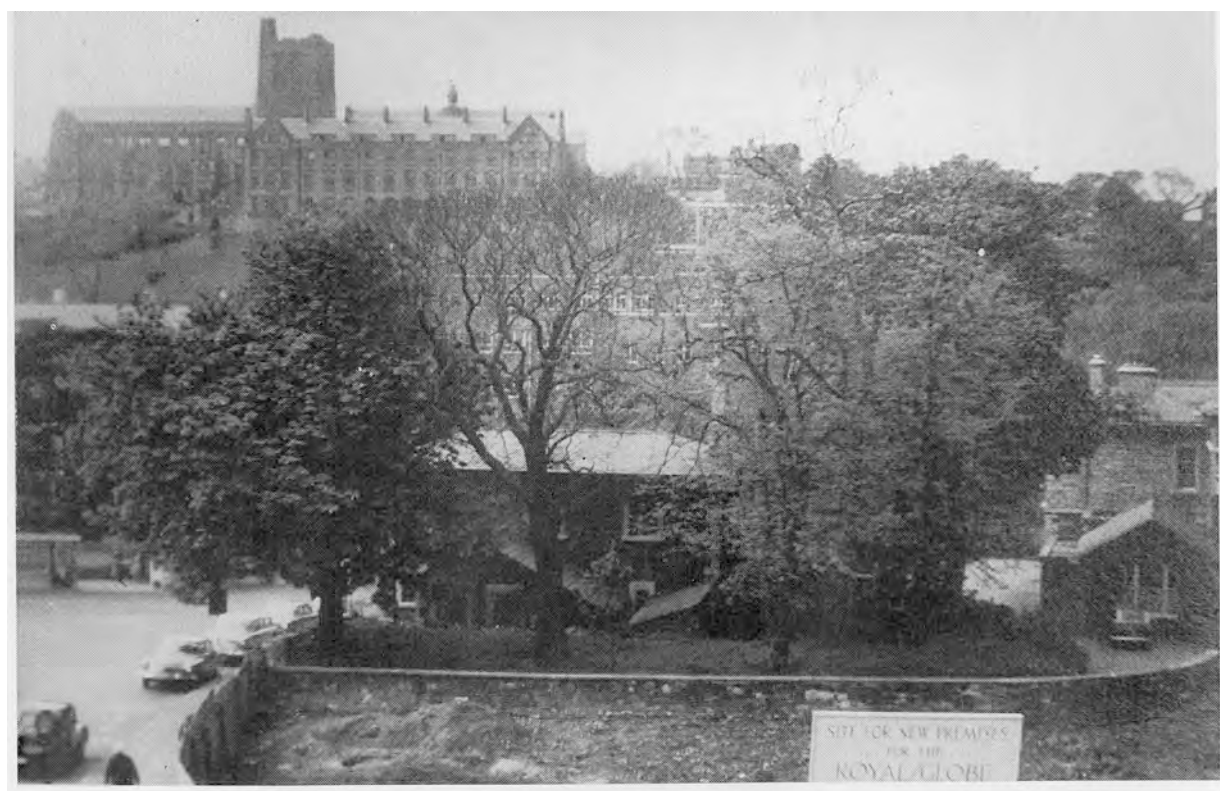
**Plate 9: Trench 15: View South**



**Plate 10: Pipe Trench**



**Plate 11: Bangor High Street During the 1930's. The Masonic Hall is to the left of Woolworth's (Source: John Cowell, *Bangor a Pictorial History*)**



**Plate 12: Part of the Wellfield Estate after the Demolition of the Masonic Hall and just prior to work commencing on building the shopping centre in 1962 (Source: John Cowell *Bangor a Pictorial History*)**



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