

Poulton Hall, Pulford, Cheshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of the Results



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Poulton Hall, Pulford, Cheshire

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Prepared on behalf of
Videotext Communications Ltd
49 Goldhawk Road
LONDON
W12 8QP

By
Wessex Archaeology
Portway House
Old Sarum Park
SALISBURY
Wiltshire
SP4 6EB

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Summary

In June 2006 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at the site of Poulton Hall, Pulford, Cheshire (centred on NGR 340600 358700) to investigate the remains of a Cistercian Abbey, an associated grange complex and a small chapel. The site at Poulton Hall and the small chapel are currently under investigation by a local group, the Poulton Research Project.

The primary aims of the evaluation were to determine whether the remains within the grounds of the former Poulton Hall relate to a Cistercian Abbey which was only in existence for *c.*60 years before it was disbanded, and to investigate the nature of the small chapel located to the south. As a result of the Time Team evaluation, it appears likely that the Abbey was never built at Poulton Hall. The evaluation suggested potential alternative sites for the Abbey through the analysis of the historical mapping, aerial photography and topography of the area. The most likely location is in and around the area of the small chapel.

The earliest phases of activity at the Poulton Hall site appear to date to the 14th century and probably relate to the use of a monastic grange. Occupation, activity and rebuilding of structures continued until the 16th century, when the grange evolved into a manor house, and then through to the 19th century when it was finally demolished.

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The geophysical survey was undertaken by John Gater, Ian Wilkins and Sam Hodson of GSB Propection. The field survey was undertaken by Henry Chapman, University of Birmingham and landscape survey and map regression was undertaken by Stewart Ainsworth of English Heritage. The excavation strategy was devised by Mick Aston, Bristol University. The on-site recording was co-ordinated by Steve Thompson with on-site finds processing by Naomi Hall, both of Wessex Archaeology.

The excavations were undertaken by Time Team's retained archaeologists, Phil Harding (Wessex Archaeology), Kerry Ely, Brigid Gallagher, Ian Powlesland, Naomi Sewpaul and Matt Williams with assistance from Chris Caroe, John Cole, Ian Davis, Fiona Grant, Tracey Smith and Alice Robinson. On-site pottery identification was carried out by Debbie Klemperer, with small find identification by Helen Geake.

The archive was collated and all post-excavation assessment and analysis undertaken by Wessex Archaeology. This report was compiled by Steve Thompson, with specialist reports prepared by Grace Jones and Lorraine Mephram (finds) with Jessica Grimm (animal bone). The illustrations were prepared by Kitty Brandon. The post-excavation project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Lorraine Mephram.

This programme of work also benefited from discussion on-site with Jonathan Clark, Buildings Archaeologist, Phil Harding of Wessex Archaeology, Helen Geake of Cambridge University and Mick Aston of Bristol University.

Finally thanks are extended to Mike Emery of the Poulton Research Project and the Duke of Westminster and Grosvenor Estates for inviting Time Team to Poulton Hall, and for the use of images and mapping within this report; also to Gerry and Richard Fair, landowners for the chapel site.

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Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological recording and post-excavation work on an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at two sites near the small town of Poulton in Cheshire. The first site is that of the former Poulton Hall, which the Poulton Research Project believes was constructed upon the site of a monastic grange associated with a 12th century Cistercian Abbey (hereafter Site A). Site A is an area of open grassland with clearly visible earthworks, sloping steeply down to the east towards the flood plain of the River Dee.
- 1.1.2 The second site is an area of arable land where the Poulton Research Project is currently excavating a small chapel and cemetery thought to be associated with Poulton Abbey (hereafter Site B) (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.3 This report documents the results of archaeological survey and evaluation undertaken by Time Team, and presents an assessment of the results of these works.

1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 Both sites are located near the small town of Poulton, some five miles from Chester near the Welsh border. Both sites are situated on a raised plateau to the west of the flood plain of the River Dee at approximately 5m above Ordnance Datum (m aOD). Site A (Poulton Hall) is centred on NGR 340600 359100 with Site B some 700m south-south-west of the Hall site at NGR 340500 358250. Site A lies just beyond the eastern perimeter of a Second World War airfield.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of both sites is boulder clay overlain by alluvial silts closer to the River Dee (BGS, Sheet 108).

1.3 Historical Background (Ecclesiastical Landscape Emery 1995)

- 1.3.1 The Abbey of St. Mary and St. Benedict at Poulton was founded between 1146 and 1153 by Robert the Butler, a hereditary member of the household of Ranulph II 'de Gernon', the Earl of Chester. Robert the Butler granted land on his small estate at Combermere to monks from the Savignac Abbey of St. Mary and St. Michael to establish a new house, explicitly to pray for his master's soul. (Emery 2005)

- 1.3.2 Poulton was the one of three daughter houses (with Stanlaw and Hulton) of Combermere Abbey; an Abbey in Cheshire founded in 1133 by Hugh Malbank, second baron of Wich Malbank. Malbank regarded Ranulph II as the principal founder and protector of the new abbey (VCH 1980, 150-151). The three daughter houses were originally settled by monks from the Abbey of Savigny in Normandy before the merger in 1147 with monks of the Cistercian order (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 118, 123). Savigny had been founded by Vital de Mortain, a canon who resigned his prebend and built a hermitage (later an abbey) in the forest of Savigny in 1105. He followed the rule of St Benedict interpreted in a manner similar to the Cistercians (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13489b.htm/>).
- 1.3.3 Under Cistercian rule, “...no abbot shall be sent to a new place without at least 12 monks and...without the prior construction of such places as an oratory, a refectory, a dormitory, a guest-house and a gate keeper’s cell so that monks may immediately serve God and live in religious discipline” (Emery 2005; see also Emery 2000). However, given the short life of Poulton Abbey, it is not known if any of these buildings would have been constructed in stone, or if the monks were living in timber precursors.
- 1.3.4 In 1214 Poulton was moved to a new site, the Abbey of St. Mary and St. Benedict at Dieulacres in Staffordshire, by Ranulph III ‘de Blundeville’, the 4th earl of Chester and grandson of Ranulph II ‘de Gernon’, possibly after continued incursions by the Welsh, recorded in Dieulacres Chronicles. Other stories suggest that the abbey was removed on the behest of Ranulph’s dead grandfather, who came to him one night in a vision.
- 1.3.5 Poulton Abbey was endowed with 3,000 acres of land, 1900 of which was arable and, following the movement of the monks from Poulton to Dieulacres, the site became a grange, a monastic farming estate worked by lay brothers. Endowments continued to be made to Poulton, with an increase in land given to them after their move to Dieulacres in 1214; money was also granted for the restoration of the Abbey Church (not chapel) in 1240. The site was referred to as *Grangia de Poulton* in 1315.
- 1.3.6 In 1493 the Abbot of Dieulacres leased land and buildings at Poulton Grange to John Manley, and in 1504 Manley’s son (also John) was confirmed as tenant with an 89-year lease, at a rent of £50 *per annum*.
- 1.3.7 Dieulacres grew to become a relatively prosperous house with an income of £227 in 1535 and when the Abbey was dissolved in 1538 Poulton Grange was listed as the most expensive asset, with a rental income of £25 (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 118; Videotext Communications 2006, 2).
- 1.3.8 In 1544 parts of the estate were granted to Sir George Cotton (Cheshire County Council, SMR No.1799/2), but the Manleys remained as leaseholders.
- 1.3.9 Site A was referred to as Grange of Poulton in 1560 and as Poulton Hall in 1599. In an inquisition dated 1598, the parcel of buildings associated with the hall are listed as: ‘*The gallerie over the entrée of the said mansion house,*

the kytchine and larder house there, and the building over the same, the daye house, the barne house, the lofte over the same, the goose house there and the hinn house over the same, all the northe buildings of the court there and the oxe-house and the hey barne there, the kylne, the south orchard at the parlour end, the lower garden, the Deares orchard, the More, the Hempe butt, the barne pitt, the barne crofte, with all the bankes and hill from the hey barne unto the Chappell feld, the Pryors meadow being in the lower end of Hardcliffe. The four chappell felds, the poole mott, the meadowe and the chappell meadow, with the bank under the chappell yorde joyninge to said meadow’.

- 1.3.10 In 1601 the last male Manley at Poulton died childless, and the estate passed to the family of his widow, the Grosvenors, who still own the estate today. An estate map of pre-1675 shows a range of buildings around a square courtyard, with a projection at the south-east corner, identified as ‘Poulton Hall’ (**Figure 2**).
- 1.3.11 In 1672 Sir Peter Leycester described the Abbey chapel as being in a state of decay and by 1718 Bishop Castrell on visiting the chapel commented that ‘*nothing is left of it now...*’ (see **Figure 3**). The exact location of the Abbey chapel was identified in 1892 when Mr R.G. Williams rediscovered the site and dug up a number of stamped and glazed floor tiles (Emery 2000).

1.4 Previous Archaeological Work

- 1.4.1 Mike Emery and the Poulton Research Project began looking for Poulton Abbey in 1996, beginning with the site of the chapel (Site B). It was clear that the area was rich in archaeological remains dating back to at least the Bronze Age, from the recovery of pottery from a ring ditch with an associated circular post-hole structure. This has been interpreted as a possible henge and may therefore have its origins in the Neolithic period.
- 1.4.2 Numerous Romano-British finds have been recovered during the excavation in the chapel field and through fieldwalking and imply the presence of a stone-built structure in the vicinity. Tiles stamped ‘*LEG XX*’ show that material produced by the 20th Legion, based at Holt to the south-west, was being utilised at the site, although no buildings have been identified. A Roman ditch was identified below the earliest phase of the chapel.
- 1.4.3 The chapel building appears to have been contemporary with the foundation of the Abbey (c.1153) and comprised a single nave from the earliest phase of building, with the addition of a chancel and tower in later periods. Multiple burials associated with the chapel have been identified, a number truncated by later periods of alteration to the chapel structure. Work within the chapel site is ongoing - it is being used as an archaeological training excavation and also as a training centre for the study of forensic archaeology by Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) students from a number of police forces in the surrounding area.

- 1.4.4 Recent work has identified the remnants of a stone building aligned north-south close to the chapel; however, its relationship to the chapel and the monastic complex is uncertain.
- 1.4.5 At Site A the Poulton Research Project carried out a programme of geophysical survey and, following the identification of a number of anomalies interpreted as walls, which appeared to be laid out in a square formation, the Grosvenor estate allowed the excavation of two evaluation trenches. Both trenches revealed stratified archaeology, the first containing a series of stone steps, which had been blocked off at the base by a later brick wall. The second trench contained a substantial east-west aligned stone wall of uncertain date which appeared to have reused part of a moulded door jamb. It was unclear if the identified remains related to the presumed Abbey, the later grange or to Poulton Hall itself, which was finally demolished in 1894.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 A project design for the programme of work was compiled by Videotext Communications (2006), providing full details of the research aims and methods. A brief summary is provided here.
- 2.1.2 The aim primary of the project was to investigate the hypothesis that the earthworks within the Poulton Hall or ‘Abbey’ field relate to the development of a monastic grange following the founding of a Cistercian abbey between 1146 and 1153.
- 2.1.3 At Site A the project posed specific research questions:
- 1) What is the chronology of the Site?
 - 2) What is the condition of underlying archaeological remains?
 - 3) Is it possible to determine if buildings present form part of the Poulton Abbey complex?
 - 4) What remains are there of a grange or manorial series of buildings on the Site?
 - 5) Does the site of Poulton Hall on a 17th century map represent the remains of the lost Poulton Abbey?
- 2.1.4 At Site B work by the Poulton Research Project was continuing and ‘Time Team’ aimed to investigate an area of the chapel already exposed in an attempt to answer the following research questions:
- 1) What is the date of the earliest phase of the chapel?
 - 2) How did the chapel develop?

- 3) What is the nature of the building adjacent to the chapel identified on the 17th century estate map?
- 4) Are these and any other buildings related to the monastic complex?

3 METHODS

3.1 Landscape and Earthwork Survey

- 3.1.1 A landscape survey and analysis of the cartographic evidence was undertaken by Stewart Ainsworth of English Heritage. A summary of the findings are included here.

3.2 Geophysical Survey

- 3.2.1 Prior to the excavation of evaluation trenches, a geophysical survey was carried out across the Site using a combination of resistance and magnetic survey. The survey grid was set out by Dr Henry Chapman of Birmingham University and tied in to the Ordnance Survey grid using a Trimble real time differential GPS system.

3.3 Evaluation Trenches

- 3.3.1 Six evaluation trenches of varying sizes were excavated. Trench 1 was opened across an area of the chapel already exposed, and Trenches 2-6 at the site of Poulton Hall. Their precise locations were determined so as to investigate geophysical anomalies, or targets identified from examination of the cartographic evidence.
- 3.3.2 The trenches were excavated using a combination of machine and hand digging. All machine trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological remains, or where natural geology was encountered first. When machine excavation had ceased all trenches were cleaned by hand and archaeological deposits investigated.
- 3.3.3 The excavated up-cast was scanned by metal detector.
- 3.3.4 All archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Trenches were located using a Trimble Real Time Differential GPS survey system. All archaeological features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:20 with sections drawn at 1:10. All principal strata and features were related to the Ordnance Survey datum.
- 3.3.5 A full photographic record of the investigations and individual features was maintained, utilising colour transparencies, black and white negatives (on 35mm film) and digital images. The photographic record illustrated both the detail and general context of the archaeology revealed and the Site as a whole.

- 3.3.6 At the completion of the work, all trenches were reinstated using the excavated soil.
- 3.3.7 A unique site code (POU 06) was agreed prior to the commencement of works. The work was carried out on the 20th – 23rd June 2006. The archive and all artefacts were subsequently transported to the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury where they were processed and assessed for this report.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Details of individual excavated contexts and features, the full geophysical report (GSB 2006), the summary of the landscape and earthwork survey and details of artefactual and environmental assessments, are retained in the archive. Summaries of the excavated sequences can be found in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Landscape and Earthwork Survey

- 4.2.1 Previous investigations at Site A, the former Poulton Hall site or the ‘Abbey’ field, had suggested that the earthworks in this field might be the remains of structures associated with the Cistercian Abbey. As a result of the earthwork study undertaken as part of this programme of works it became clear that these earthworks were those of Poulton Hall, potentially built upon the site of an earlier monastic grange and not the site of an abbey. The hall is known in historic documents from the end of the 16th century and appears on maps from the mid 17th century (**Figure 2**) through to the late 19th century when it was demolished.

Site A: Earthwork Survey

- 4.2.2 The earthwork survey at Site A (**Figure 4B**) identified a number of features:
- A. Trackway: a possible trackway associated with the features identified within Trench 3.
 - B. 19th century boundary: this boundary was constructed between 1882 and 1899 as identified from the historical Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping, when the hall was demolished and the Black and White Cottages were erected. Aerial photography indicates that this boundary was removed by 1954.
 - C. Hall courtyard: this is a roughly triangular-shaped, slightly raised area identified as the central courtyard surrounded by the east, north and possibly the south ranges of Poulton Hall. The earthworks are truncated at the west by a scarp (probably an old drainage leat) running obliquely across the site. The extension of the Cottage gardens and drainage may have led to the further removal of earthworks on the western side. Traces of brick walling and a small building shown on 19th and 20th century OS mapping survive as surface features on the eastern side of the courtyard. The earthworks are indicative of a courtyard arrangement of the buildings

indicated on the pre-1675 map, but undoubtedly with episodes of addition and demolition up to the 19th century.

D. Ornamental garden features: these are located to the south of the main courtyard complex as a well-defined 'L' shaped ditch. The south and east arms maintain the axis of symmetry of the earthworks to the north. At the west end of the southern arm a split level indicates a re-cutting of the ditch. Further earthworks aligned to the west of this ditch indicate drainage ditches, paddock boundaries and lets. This 'L' shaped ditch is typical of a right angled pond of an ornamental nature and part of an ornamental garden associated with Poulton Hall.

4.2.3 In summary, the earthworks are typical of a grange/courtyard house and associated gardens, orchards and paddocks. Traces of ridge and furrow running in an east to west direction can be seen overlying the earthworks, but the existence of a building on the site until the 19th century indicates that this is ploughing of a later date. Further low earthworks could be seen in the fields to the south, indicating that some of the paddocks may have extended in this direction. To the west the construction of the airfield during the Second World War has probably destroyed surface traces of further outbuildings shown on the pre-1675 map, although they may survive below ground.

Search for the Abbey

4.2.4 Following the earthwork survey at Site A and the excavation of evaluation trenches it became clear that the Abbey was unlikely to be at the site of Poulton Hall, and the surrounding area was therefore investigated in a search for possible alternative locations for the Abbey.

4.2.5 Two possible sites can be suggested from analysis of the topography and the cartographic evidence.

A. To the west of the chapel site (NGR 340400 358250), a right-handed change of direction is evident in the course of the Pulford Brook, below the escarpment on which the chapel is located. This has been shown on the mapping from at least 1719 (see **Figure 3**; the modern course of the brook has changed). Aerial photography indicates that this is a diversion of the original stream course which ran to the south, with a number of very low ridges located between the original and new alignment which may be indicative of buried features. Located to the west of these features are a number of possible fishponds. The topographic location, on a slight high spot within an area of relatively inhospitable land on the flood plain of the river, is a typical location for the establishment of a monastic site, with the right-angled diversion of the stream characteristic of the type of water management associated with Cistercian religious houses. Analysis of the mapping, aerial photography and field names allows a tentative indication of a monastic precinct, which may support the location of the abbey to the south of Pulford Brook. A curving boundary on the 1719 map (**Figure 3**: the west boundary of Chappel Little Field and Chappel Far Field) indicates the line of an earlier road, whilst the southern boundary of the latter named field probably forms the south-western limit with the River Dee forming

the eastern boundary to the complex. The southern limit is less clear. To the north, the northern boundaries of Chappel Little Field and Chappel Field might form the precinct limit, with the grange located outside to the north. A curving boundary shown on mapping from the southern end of Poulton to the site of the chapel probably forms the route of a lane from the village to the chapel and later parish church.

- B. Some 500m to the east of Poulton Hall, at the bend of the River Dee, an area just to the north of the River has topographical conditions conducive to the location of a monastic site with water from the river being easily diverted along the edge of the higher ground to the north. Unfortunately this site could not be inspected as it lies within the grounds of Eaton Hall, although the existence of ponds such as the Oxleisure Pool and the Serpentine Lake (later garden features) and a complex system of drainage channels are evidence of water management from the river along the base of the escarpment. It is possible that an earlier monastic system of water management may have been assimilated into the garden scheme.

4.3 Geophysical Survey

- 4.3.1 Four areas were investigated using a combination of resistance and magnetic survey although only the areas relating to Sites A and B are discussed here.

Site A (Figure 4A)

- 4.3.2 The resistance results show three well defined linear features, two of relative high resistance (A) and (B) and one of moderate resistance (C) together with a number of linear trends. High resistance anomalies (A) and (B) are thought to represent past field boundaries, possibly in-filled ditches. The slightly weaker response (C) corresponds with a magnetometer response suggesting it may also be a drain or field boundary, as it appears to be aligned with an existing field edge. Anomaly (A) from the geophysical survey corresponds to earthwork B from the landscape study and was identified as a 19th century field boundary from the cartographic evidence.
- 4.3.3 The zone of high resistance (D) is the known location of the earlier evaluation trenches. Further excavation at this location, after the geophysical survey, revealed a stone-built staircase, substantial stone walls and brick/stone floors. Although the walls are not readily apparent in the geophysical data, the general high resistance can be attributed to the presence of the stone/brick infill, floors and walls.
- 4.3.4 A second area of high resistance (E) was also thought to be the remains of a building; this was later confirmed by the Poulton Research Project to be the location of a 'modern' structure. This was not confirmed by excavation during this programme of works although field observations identified modern brickwork at the surface during the data collection
- 4.3.5 A number of linear trends of unknown significance are highlighted in the interpretation diagram. Although the responses are weak it is possible that some relate to the structures identified at (D) and possibly (E).

Site B (Figure 8)

- 4.3.6 Anomaly (K) appears to be an extension of the current ditch which follows the line of a former stream and boundary. The responses in the east represent the line of the now silted stream. Anomaly (L) is a weak response which may be a natural variation within the soil but might have an archaeological origin.
- 4.3.7 Potential pit-like anomalies have been identified throughout the survey area, the distribution would appear to be random; and may represent man-made pits but a natural origin is more likely. It is possible that the pit anomalies represent chemical or mineral variations within the sediment.

4.4 Evaluation Trenches

Site A: The Former Poulton Hall (Trenches 2-6)

Trench 2 (Figures 4 & 5)

- 4.4.1 Trench 2 was positioned to investigate geophysical anomaly (D). Following the removal of the topsoil, a thick demolition deposit of stone and brick rubble (202) was identified. This was mixed with backfill material from the 1997 excavation, and was removed to reveal *in situ* archaeology. It was clear that there were two clear distinct phases of activity, one medieval and the second 18th or 19th century. Pottery recovered from (202) was of post-medieval (1500-1799) and modern date (1800-present) and included modern refined whitewares, Staffordshire mottled ware and Midlands Yellow and Purple wares.
- 4.4.2 The earliest identifiable structures within Trench 2 are thought to date to the medieval period (although no direct dating evidence was recovered) and potentially relate to the monastic grange known to be on the site. An east-west aligned wall (Group (273)) had been disturbed by later activity; it was observed in three separate sondages excavated through later occupation layers, and recorded as (268), (269) and (274). Only the wall foundations remained, constructed of sandstone rubble with clay infilling, and the upper levels had been robbed so that the dressed stone could be recycled. Wall Group (273) was seen to continue through into Trench 4, where it survived in better condition (see below).
- 4.4.3 The eastern end of the wall formed a right-angled corner with the southern end of north-south aligned wall (258), enclosing a room to the north. Both walls were constructed in the same manner and were of the same dimensions.
- 4.4.4 At the western end of Trench 1 two bonded walls were possibly contemporary with walls (273) and (258). East-west aligned wall (226) was bonded at the eastern end to the southern end of (227), enclosing an area to the north-west. Both walls were highly truncated by later activity, having been extensively robbed for the recycling of dressed stonework. Only a single course remained, resting upon sandstone rubble. The area formed by walls (226) and (227) was only partially uncovered, and a clay bedding layer (228) for surface (229) was identified within it. Floor surface (229) was constructed of small bricks laid end on and had the appearance of the base of a stacked tile hearth. It is possible that the brick surface bounded by stone-

built walls formed part of a hearth positioned in the centre of the room, either with a free-standing chimney or utilising a fire hood to draw the smoke out. Such hearths potentially date from the 15th century onwards.

- 4.4.5 Two possible occupation layers were identified within the enclosed area formed by walls (273) and (258); however these had been truncated, highly disturbed and re-used during later periods of activity. Following the excavation of sondages through these deposits, earlier occupation and floor levelling layers were identified in section (**Figure 5**, section). The earliest levelling layer identified was (246), which overlay the natural geology (231). This layer of re-deposited natural had sandstone blocks set into it to provide a solid floor surface for the room. This was overlain by a thin occupation layer (247), showing evidence of burning activity and potentially hearth clearance. Above this was a layer of redeposited natural (253/277), either utilised as a rammed floor, or as bedding for a floor which was subsequently removed. Overlying this was a thin occupation layer of charcoal rich material (254/222). It is unlikely that any of these layers represent *in situ* medieval occupation (the only datable material comprised one late medieval pottery sherd from (247)), but rather later occupation layers. A sondage excavated through levelling layer (254/222) uncovered roughly circular cut (218). It is possible that this represents the remains of tree or bush throw, created when the site was cleared to begin work on the stone buildings, but the fill (221) contained 17th – 18th century pottery.
- 4.4.6 Once the building went out of use it was systematically dismantled and demolished material removed and recycled. The structures were robbed down to the foundation level leaving no evidence of the upstanding structures. Evidence of this demolition can be seen at the eastern end of the trench where deposits (245) and (257) were exposed, containing numerous fragments of sandstone, broken peg tile and decorated floor tile. Pottery recovered from (245) dated to the post-medieval and modern periods. A number of early 18th century ceramic tiles were also recovered.
- 4.4.7 At the western end of the trench, crushed sandstone layer (211) represented disturbance and damage to (269), a section of wall Group (273).
- 4.4.8 Following the demolition of this area of the building, a north-south, stone-lined drain, (244), was cut through levelling layer (253/277), occupation layer (254/222) and a section of wall Group (273).
- 4.4.9 The date at which the building was demolished is unknown, as is the date of the stone-lined drain, but it is likely that demolition only slightly predated the next phase of construction, which occurred in the 18th or 19th century.
- 4.4.10 The final phase of building in Trench 2 saw the construction of cellar Group (270) and associated structures. The cellar consisted of four dressed stone- and brick-built walls forming a square room with a doorway in the north-west corner and a cellar light in the western wall to provide light on the doorway. The basal courses of walls (213), (234) and (235) were constructed of reused medieval dressed stonework (wall (233) was not fully exposed) overlain by 18th or 19th brickwork. The cellar floor (238) was constructed

from bricks laid in stretcher bond, a single course thick, although around the edges reused medieval stone work had been utilised.

- 4.4.11 The cellar was accessed through a door in the north wall; outside the door was a series of steps leading up to ground level. The steps (214) were constructed of reused medieval dressed stone work with bricks filling the gaps between the stone, and were bordered by stone-built walls (212) and (241).
- 4.4.12 On the external face of wall (213) was a small rectangular structure formed by walls (239), (266) and (240), butted on to wall (213). The nature and function of this structure is unknown.
- 4.4.13 On the southern face of cellar wall (233) was a flight of steps leading up into the room which would have been located above the cellar on the ground floor. This structure was formed by two parallel dressed stone walls (263) and (264), with the steps built in brick overlain by lime mortar (265). It is unclear how much of the steps were truncated and at what height the ground floor of the building began.
- 4.4.14 Located to the north-west of the cellar was stone flagged surface (205), bordered by two parallel brick-built walls (204) and (207), forming a corridor. The surface was probably external as it had two small brick-built drain soak-aways (216) and (217) incorporated into it. The stone flagged surface and the soak-aways were clearly contemporaneous as the flags were laid around the drains. Wall (204) butted the northern end of wall (212).
- 4.4.15 The cellar fell out of use, perhaps in the later 19th or early 20th century, when the doorway and cellar light were blocked up. The doorway was blocked by wall (236) which appears to have been built in two phases. The cellar light was blocked by wall (237).
- 4.4.16 Following this blocking the building was demolished, the cellar was backfilled with deposit (232) and the site levelled. The cellar backfill contained post-medieval pottery.
- 4.4.17 The final phase of activity identified within Trench 2 was the excavation of a small evaluation trench by the Poulton Research Project in 1997 which exposed steps (214) and drain (243). The evaluation trench was recorded as (244) and removed the fill of the drain and the original backfill of the stairs.

Trench 3 (Figures 4 and 7)

- 4.4.18 Trench 3 was located to investigate the eastern end of geophysical anomaly (A) and the northern limit of anomaly (D).
- 4.4.19 Following the removal of topsoil and a thin layer of demolition material (302/313) *in situ* archaeology was identified, all dating to the 18th or 19th century or later, but not fully investigated; the function is unknown. Finds were recovered only from demolition layer (313) and comprise modern refined whiteware pottery.

- 4.4.20 Towards the southern end of Trench 3 brick-built structure (304) had been partly robbed by (305), while towards the centre of the trench square brick structure (307) probably represents a plinth of some kind, perhaps related to re-used medieval stone wall (308). The corner of a possible building was formed by walls (311) and (312), enclosing an area to the south.
- 4.4.21 At the northern end of the trench a north-west – south-east aligned ditch (314) was located; this was first identified in the geophysical survey and related to the modern pumping station to the east of Trench 3.

Trench 4 (Figures 4 and 6)

- 4.4.22 Trench 4 was located to investigate geophysical anomaly (D). Following the removal of topsoil and an arbitrary cleaning layer, *in situ* archaeology was revealed, predominantly medieval in date with evidence of a number of phases of alteration, and with a small area of later (potentially 18th or 19th century) activity. The cleaning layer (402) produced pottery dating from the later medieval period (Cistercian ware) to modern (refined whitewares).
- 4.4.23 Two small features were observed in sondages excavated through later deposits, and represent the earliest phase of activity within Trench 4, pre-dating the earliest phase of stone construction.
- 4.4.24 Small sub-circular feature (407) was partially revealed beneath wall (405) and layer (404), and was filled with (406); the function of this feature is unknown. It was sealed by layer (443). Linear feature (414) was aligned roughly north-south beneath (408) and wall (405). The nature of this feature is uncertain although it is not the construction cut of wall (405), but it may have been the remains of a beam-slot, part of an earlier timber-built structure. Pottery recovered from both (407) and (414) dated to the late medieval period (14th/15th century); a single sherd of post-medieval Midlands Purple ware may be considered as intrusive.
- 4.4.25 The earliest stone-built structure, possibly forming part of the monastic grange, was represented by east-west aligned wall (412), the continuation of wall Group (273) in Trench 2. This wall survived as a single course of dressed stonework encasing a rubble core, and overlying a rubble foundation, identical to (273) in Trench 2.
- 4.4.26 Wall (412) was bonded at its western end to the southern end of wall (452), forming an enclosed room to the north-east. Wall (452) had been highly disturbed and truncated by later (probably 20th century) intrusion (425), though it was clear that (452) was constructed in the same manner as (412). At the junction of (452) and (412) was a probable doorway recorded as (427), leading into the room formed by the two bonded walls.
- 4.4.27 This room contained evidence of repeated floor make-up layers, bedding layers, rammed surfaces and occupation layers, creating a series of laminated deposits seen in the sections of sondages excavated through them (**Figure 6**, section). The latest rammed clay floor surface was (418/428/429), sealed by occupation layer (417/419) which contained a mixture of late medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery. Layers (435) and (438) contained sherds of

late medieval pottery (14th/15th century), but no pottery was recovered from underlying layers.

- 4.4.28 The western end of wall (412) was bonded to the northern end of wall (451), forming an enclosed area to the south, potentially an external central courtyard surface. Wall (451) also formed a corridor with wall (450) and stone flagged surface (446), perhaps part of an ambulatory around the central courtyard. The corridor was filled with demolition/backfill/levelling layer (432) which contained numerous sherds of post-medieval pottery
- 4.4.29 A second phase of building, possibly late medieval or early post-medieval, was identified to the south of wall (412), perhaps marking the division of the internal courtyard and the creation of a room bounded by walls (412) and (405). Wall (405) butted the southern face of (412) and several deposits had accumulated on the eastern and western sides of the wall. A sondage on the western side of (405) revealed occupation layer (404) sealing redeposited natural layer (443). On the eastern side of (405), possible floor surface (408) overlay levelling layer (409), which in turn sealed possible buried ground surface (410), over feature (414). It is possible that surface (410) was part of the internal courtyard; it was recorded as (415) in a separate sondage to the south of possible buttress (442). (Layer (415) produced medieval and early post-medieval pottery.
- 4.4.30 A large rubbish pit (425) cut through wall (452). The fill contained a mixture of domestic refuse (animal bone, ceramic building material, clay pipe, pottery), of which the datable material (pottery) is 17th/early 18th century.
- 4.4.31 At the northern end of Trench 4 was a modern brick-built structure, (454), a possible soak-away.

Trench 5 (Figures 1 & 7)

- 4.4.32 Trench 5 was located on the lower flood plain to the east of the site of Poulton Hall and to the west of the River Dee, and was targeted upon geophysics anomaly (E).
- 4.4.33 Following the removal of topsoil, a thick deposit of alluvium (502) was identified. This overlay a dark grey brown/black layer (503) which was not investigated due to the depth of the trench and time constraints. However, it was clear that archaeological layers did survive at over 1m below the current ground surface.

Trench 6 (Figures 4 & 7)

- 4.4.34 Trench 6 was positioned to target geophysical (C). The removal of topsoil revealed a large ditch cutting through natural silty clay alluvium (605). Ditch (603) was at least 2.90m wide and 1.30m deep, and contained modern brick rubble within fill (602). It could either be a backfilled field boundary or may have been associated with the pumping station.

Site B: The Chapel (Trench 1)
Trench 1 (Figures 1 & 8)

- 4.4.35 Trench 1 was located on the site of a small chapel previously excavated by the Poulton Research Project; the walls and internal structures of the chapel had been exposed and recorded, and subsequently backfilled. The current evaluation aimed to ascertain if any features or structures predated the chapel, by expanding an area already excavated. A number of construction phases had been identified for the chapel, which comprised a small single open nave enlarged by the addition of a chancel at the eastern end and a tower at the western. No date has been proposed for the earliest construction phase of the chapel, though 14th and 15th century decorated floor tiles have been recovered from the later building phases.
- 4.4.36 Trench 1 was positioned at the junction of the southern and original eastern wall of the nave where it was butted by the addition of the chancel. Following the removal of (101), deliberate backfill over the walls containing post-medieval pottery, it became clear that considerable robbing of the walls of the nave and chancel had occurred and that nothing remained of either the internal floor surfaces or the upstanding walls; only foundation material remained.
- 4.4.37 The earliest phase of activity identified consisted of a possible tree- or bush-throw (117) revealed below wall (105), which potentially represents the initial clearing of the site prior to the construction of the nave.
- 4.4.38 The southern wall of the nave (107) was built of dressed stone with a rubble core, and was tied into the eastern wall (105). Both walls were heavily truncated and showed no evidence of mortar, implying that these were foundations and not upstanding walls. No foundation trenches were identified and no datable material was recovered from the construction phase of the early nave. Two possible external surfaces may relate to the nave, or they may just be dumps of material. Layer (115) may be the remains of a rammed chalk surface, while (103) was a possible cobbled surface.
- 4.4.39 A possible unused grave was identified adjacent to wall (107), but its stratigraphic relationship to the wall had been disturbed by earlier excavation along the wall line. Feature (114) cut ?surface (115), and was truncated by the foundation cut for the chancel building (112). The foundation cut was filled with deliberate backfill material (113) around the stonework and yielded a single sherd of medieval pottery.
- 4.4.40 Walls (108/106) and (109) formed the chancel later added to the nave. The latter was the southern wall of the chancel and was heavily truncated by later robbing. It appears contemporaneous with (108/106) which butts the corner of the southern and eastern wall of the nave. Wall (108/106) consisted of a dressed outer face of stone with a rubble core, and no inner face. Due to the extent of the robbing and that no upstanding walls remain interpretation is difficult, but it is possible that (108/106) represents the remains of a door sill to enter the chancel, although it may just be the foundation of southern

chancel wall and a continuation of (109). Walls (109) and (108/106) were constructed within foundation cut (112) which cut (103).

- 4.4.41 Following the addition of the chancel it would have been necessary to knock through the eastern wall of the nave to provide access. This appears to have occurred and was recorded as (119), a linear cut which had removed the majority of wall foundation (105), leaving only a stub where it joined (107), and which was backfilled with (118). As the eastern wall of the nave was knocked through it is possible that the remains of (105) were reused as the base for the springer for the chancel arch; however, this is not clear due to the extent of robbing.
- 4.4.42 With the addition of the chancel it was deemed necessary to reinforce the junction of the southern and partly removed eastern nave walls and the southern wall of the chancel, and buttress (110) was therefore built.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Finds were recovered from five of the six trenches excavated (no finds were recovered from Trench 6, although only minimal quantities were recovered from Trenches 3 and 5. The assemblage is largely of late medieval and post-medieval date.
- 5.1.2 All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and totals by material type and by trench are presented in **Table 1**. Subsequent to quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned in order to gain an overall idea of the range of types present, their condition, and their potential date range. Spot dates have been recorded for selected material types as appropriate (pottery, ceramic building material, glass). All finds data are currently held on an Access database.
- 5.1.3 This section presents an overview of the finds assemblage, on which is based an assessment of the potential of this assemblage to contribute to an understanding of the site in its local and regional context, with particular reference to the potential presence of a monastic grange at Site A, and to the use of the chapel and associated cemetery at Site B.

5.2 Pottery

- 5.2.1 The pottery is of late medieval, post-medieval and modern date, but the majority falls within a date range of 17th to 18th century. The assemblage has been quantified by ware type, and the results are summarised in **Table 2**.

Late medieval

- 5.2.2 The earliest material is in fine, oxidised sandy wares, sometimes glazed, of 14th or 15th century date. Eight sherds of blackware, or possible Cistercian ware, were also recovered (Trench 4), including the rim from a conical mug. Cistercian ware first appeared in the later 15th century and continued in use into the 16th century. It represents changing technologies with the use of very

fine clays and saggars, but also changing social practices with the introduction of specialised ceramic drinking vessels (augmenting the more restricted, and multi-purpose, ceramic repertoire of the earlier medieval period). Blackwares evolved from the Cistercian wares during the 17th century. Five sherds of a fine whiteware and a single reduced sandy ware sherd could not be closely dated.

Post-medieval

- 5.2.3 Pottery from the 17th and 18th centuries dominated the assemblage. The most commonly occurring material was Midlands Purple ware, a hard-fired earthenware with a lead glaze. Several jar rims and horizontal strap handle fragments were present. Production centres are known from Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Derbyshire. Seven sherds of Midlands Yellow ware were also recorded. The sherds of both Purple and Yellow ware seen here are likely to represent the later part of these industries (17th to 18th century).
- 5.2.4 Redwares are also present, and many display slipped decoration, mostly in the form of trailed slip. Most of the forms encountered are open, either bowls or dishes. Production centres are known in north Staffordshire, but local kilns were also manufacturing slipware and the source of the Poulton Abbey vessels is uncertain. Sixteen sherds of trailed and combed slipware are certainly of Staffordshire type.
- 5.2.5 Most other post-medieval wares occur in small numbers. These include six sherds of mottled ware: a buff earthenware with a streaked glaze caused by particles of manganese or iron in the glaze. A number of centres, including Staffordshire, were producing mottled wares. Three sherds of stoneware were identified, at least one of which is a German import. The base from an 18th century tin-glazed earthenware plate or dish was also identified (demolition deposit (432)), decorated with a polychrome bird motif. Two pre-firing holes through the footring of the vessel indicate it was intended as a display piece.
- 5.2.6 Smaller quantities of modern refined whitewares were also recovered, these include sponge-decorated pearlwares of the 19th century.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

- 5.3.1 The CBM assemblage is dominated by roofing materials. Walling and flooring pieces were also identified, as well as two moulded chimney bricks, and two drain fragments.

Roof tiles

- 5.3.2 Roofing material comprises two peg tiles, three nibbed tiles and 13 ridge tile fragments. A complete section of one ridge tile was reconstructed (280mm wide, 130mm high and 30mm thick). A groove along the crest of another indicated that it was originally decorated. With the exception of one small undiagnostic curved fragment all other ridge tile pieces are plain and flat, and of a similar thickness to the peg and nib tile fragments.

Floor tiles

- 5.3.3 Decorated floor tiles were recorded from four contexts (demolition deposit (245), cleaning layer (402), layer (403) and dumped deposit (438)). Parallels for the tiles have not yet been identified and their date is therefore uncertain, although the form of decoration and fabric type suggests they are late medieval or early post-medieval.
- 5.3.4 Seven tiles are line-impressed. Three tiles with identical patterns came from (245) and (438). The motif comprises two parallel curved lines at one edge and a five-part leaf/tree design in the centre; it forms part of a multi-tile design. Of three fragments from (245), one shows a clover-shaped design. Another shows part of a line-impressed lion, possibly part of a Royal Standard, but is over-fired and could be a waster. One tile from (403) is also heavily over-fired and displays a fleur-de-lys and three flowing shapes/figures repeated within a circle. The presence of two over-fired pieces suggests that tile manufacture may have been taking place close to the site.
- 5.3.5 Two tile fragments from pit (425) are abraded but show the remains of a quarter-circle motif in inlaid slip. A plain floor tile was also found in cleaning layer (402), but the surface is abraded and it may be that any decoration has simply been worn away.

Bricks

- 5.3.6 Rubble backfill layer (232) (cellar 270) produced four complete bricks; all were hard fired, and two were over-fired. The largest brick is overfired and blistered, and measures 250mm in length, 110mm in width, 90mm in height and weighed 5.4kg. All other bricks are of a similar size (225x115x55mm; 235x110x80mm; 235x110x70mm) and weight (3-3.8kg). Brick fragments were also recorded from pit (425) and demolition deposit (432).
- 5.3.7 Two moulded bricks were recovered from cleaning layer (402). These are of the type used for barley-twist columns and chimneys, and date from the second half of the 19th century.

Pipes and drains

- 5.3.8 A contorted, blistered and vitrified field drain fragment from cellar backfill (232) is probably a waster. A complete drain pipe was recorded from context 208.

5.4 Glass

- 5.4.1 The glass is all of post-medieval date. The assemblage comprises vessel glass (24 fragments) and window glass (12 fragments). Some of this is in particularly poor condition, with active oxidisation.

Vessel glass

- 5.4.2 Cellar wall (234) produced 12 fragments from an 'onion-shaped' bottle of mid 17th to mid 18th century date. A distorted fragment from demolition deposit (202) may be from a similar vessel. The top of a 17th/18th century phial was identified from pit (425). The base of a flask, in an almost colourless glass, came from cleaning layer (402). An early 17th century

example from Southampton is comparable (Charleston 1975, fig. 225, no.1590). The same context also produced single fragments of green vessel glass which could not be related to type. Fragments from modern wine bottles, dark green or brown in colour, were recorded from demolition deposit (202), cut (218), construction cut (203) and cleaning layer (402). A light green fragment from a modern jar base also came from (202).

Window glass

- 5.4.3 Nine fragments from a very pale green diamond-shaped quarry with grozed edges came from cleaning layer (402). These are in poor condition and heavily oxidising; the condition is typical of late medieval or early post-medieval window glass. Single small and undiagnostic fragments were also recovered from Trench 1 topsoil, pit (425) and demolition deposit (432).

5.5 Clay Pipe

- 5.5.1 Most of the clay pipe comprises undiagnostic stem pieces. Demolition deposit (202) produced a bowl from a spurred pipe with moulded leaf decoration, of 18th century date. A bowl fragment from pit (425) is of early 17th century date.

5.6 Metalwork

Coins

- 5.6.1 One coin and one token were recovered. The former is a badly corroded coin, possibly an 18th century halfpenny (unstratified in Trench 2), whilst the latter is a post-medieval token, too badly corroded to be identified (demolition deposit (432)).

Copper alloy

- 5.6.2 The copper alloy objects comprise a dressmaker's pin, tack head, and a cartridge end.

Lead

- 5.6.3 A plano-convex decorated lead spindle whorl was recovered from cleaning layer (402). The decoration occurs on both sides and is geometric, consisting of a zigzag line creating triangle shapes. Egan has noted that lead was not uncommonly used for spindle whorls in the north of England and Wales, citing that 34 out of 44 published whorls from Meols, Cheshire are of lead, although most are undecorated (Egan 1998, 261). A perforated disc from make-up layer (435) represents a weight or fitting. A piece of lead waste was recorded from Trench 5 topsoil.

Iron

- 5.6.4 Of the 47 iron objects recovered, 28 are nails. Other finds include a stirrup (make-up layer (435)), an iron ring (same context), a possible fitting associated with horse-gear, and a two-pronged implement of uncertain function (cleaning layer (402)). The remaining objects are heavily corroded and could not be identified.

5.7 Other Finds

- 5.7.1 Roofing slates, either whole or partial, were recovered from demolition deposit (202), cellar backfill (232), cellar wall (234) and cleaning layer (402). An architectural fragment from demolition deposit 245 consists of a half-round moulding in Old Red Sandstone. A piece of worked mudstone of unknown function was present in gully (414).
- 5.7.2 A very small quantity of fired clay from layer (403) and make-up layer (435) is probably structural in origin. All fragments display organic impressions and one also shows wattle impressions.
- 5.7.3 Two pieces of iron slag were present in cleaning layer (402).

5.8 Human Bone

- 5.8.1 Redeposited fragments of human bone were recovered from two contexts at the Chapel site (Trench 1), all from the topsoil (101). These comprised a fragment of adult skull, and an adult tooth (not necessarily from the same individual), and a group of infant bones (*c.* 2-3 years), from the lower limb of one individual.

5.9 Animal Bone

Methods of assessment

- 5.9.1 Conjoining fragments that were demonstrably from the same bone were counted as one bone in order to minimise distortion, and therefore specimen counts (NISP) given here may differ from the absolute raw fragment counts in **Table 1**. There may also be some discrepancies when bone is fragile may fragment further after initial quantification. No fragments were recorded as 'medium mammal' or 'large mammal'; these were instead consigned to the unidentified category.
- 5.9.2 The extent of mechanical or chemical attrition to the bone surface was recorded. The numbers of gnawed bone were also noted. Marks from chopping, sawing, knife cuts and fractures made when the bone was fresh were recorded as butchery marks.

Condition and preservation

- 5.9.3 The 243 animal bones derive from two sites: Poulton Hall (Trenches 2 and 4) and Poulton Chapel (Trench 1). A small amount of material comes from the demolished chapel in Trench 1. The bulk of the material comes from Trench 4 (**Table 3**).
- 5.9.4 Analysis of the pottery showed that most of it dates to the post-medieval period, suggesting that the bones derive from the demolition phases rather than from the occupation phases of the sites.
- 5.9.5 All animal bone was in fair or good condition. 4% of the bones showed signs of gnawing (no trench was particularly affected). Of note is a bone of a young pig from layer (441), which showed traces of rodent gnawing

(probably rat). The gnawing indicates that some of the bone were (deliberately) laying around and were accessible by dogs and rodents. However, at only 4%, canid scavenging is not a significantly biasing factor.

- 5.9.6 As can be seen in **Table 3**, although all three assemblages are very small, they show a similar faunal list dominated by cattle bones and followed by sheep/goat and a small proportion of pig. The chapel trench (Trench 1) contained only a few bones from the usual domesticates: cattle, sheep/goat and pig.
- 5.9.7 The larger assemblages from the Poulton Hall site show more species variety. Trench 2 contained the bones of cat, fallow or red deer, rabbit, chicken and a wader (could be further identified to species). Trench 4 contained cat, chicken, (greylag) goose, woodcock, possible pigeon, magpie and fish (a dermal denticle of a spotted ray).
- 5.9.8 The presence of deer, rabbit and wild birds indicate that venison was (occasionally) eaten by the inhabitants of the site. As the strict medieval/post-medieval hunting laws restricted hunting for the commoners, the presence of a deer bone could indicate wealth or poaching.
- 5.9.9 Young chicken, goose and possible pigeon bones indicate that these birds were kept on the site. In medieval and post-medieval times, the keeping of pigeons was restricted to the elite. The best time to hunt woodcocks is during spring when the male birds perform their mating ritual.
- 5.9.10 Spotted rays live in the Irish Sea, which is approximately 15 km away from the site. It is likely that the specimen was caught there.

Material characteristics

- 5.9.11 7% of the bones could inform us about the phenotype of the post-medieval animals on the site. 14% of the bones can provide an age at death. It was noted that many bones derived from young cattle, sheep/goat and pig. In particular, gully (414) and layer (419) contained the remains of suckling pig and point to a luxurious lifestyle. The foetal cattle metatarsus (240-50 days after conception) from layer (416) indicates that some animals were kept on the spot. This is not an unusual find for a monastic grange.
- 5.9.12 The bones showed signs of professional butchery with joints and ribs being chopped up by cleavers. A cattle rib was sawn-off below the head. Three bones from Trenches 2 and 4 were calcined.
- 5.9.13 The overall impression of the three assemblages is that they represent butchery waste and kitchen refuse typical for a (high status) post-medieval site.

5.10 Potential and further recommendations

- 5.10.1 The evaluation has produced a relatively small finds assemblage, which is largely post-medieval in date, only small quantities of medieval material having been recovered. The potential of the assemblage to contribute any further to an understanding of the use of the site in the medieval period is,

therefore, extremely limited, nor can much be added to a discussion of the post-medieval occupation of Poulton Hall. Further analysis of this assemblage is therefore not proposed.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Site A: The Former Poulton Hall

Introduction

- 6.1.1 The research aims of the project had been centred around the medieval Abbey of Poulton, established between 1146 and 1153. It became clear, however, that the structures identified within the evaluation trenches probably related to the medieval grange which grew up on the site following the movement of the monks in 1214 to the Abbey of St. Mary and St. Benedict at Dieulacres in Staffordshire, and which later developed into Poulton Hall.
- 6.1.2 It was always going to be difficult to identify any structures relating to the Abbey. The site appeared to have undergone a number of alterations and rebuilding episodes which may have masked earlier structures. Moreover, as the Abbey was short-lived it may in any case have been constructed in wood rather than stone, which would have been more difficult to identify. However, the more obvious reason why the Abbey was not identified on the site is because it was never there. The trenches revealed no evidence of a medieval monastic house, and the landscape survey was able to identify two potential alternative sites for the Abbey.

Chronology

- 6.1.3 In the absence of any features or deposits relating to the 12th century Abbey, the earliest identified features, in Trench 4, were dated by pottery to the 14th and 15th centuries; one was a possible beam slot, later replaced by a stone wall. This late medieval activity presumably related to the monastic grange, but building phases dating to this period proved difficult to identify.
- 6.1.4 The earliest phases of the building had undergone a number of alterations, both during the post-medieval period and into the modern period. No structures could be clearly assigned a medieval date as no datable material was recovered from the construction cuts of the walls, although occupation layers associated with stone walls in Trench 4 did contain (late) medieval pottery, and repeated repairs to floors and the deposition of occupation debris show that the buildings were in use for some time. Trench 2 also showed evidence of possible medieval structures, including stone walls and stacked tile hearth.
- 6.1.5 The change from a Cistercian monastic grange to the manor of Poulton Hall was not clear from the archaeological remains; it appears that there had been a continuous use of the site, with buildings reused and repaired in later periods. The pottery assemblage, however, does suggest that major activity was occurring on site in the 17th and 18th centuries when the site was owned by the Grosvenor family (who still own the site today). In the mid 17th

century Poulton Hall comprised four ranges of buildings enclosing a central courtyard and further outlying buildings (see **Figure 2**). This courtyard was perhaps identified in Trench 4, with a possible surrounding ambulatory. Pottery from the courtyard surface ranged in date from the late medieval to post-medieval period.

- 6.1.6 The final phase of buildings on the site is 18th or 19th century in date and relates to farm buildings; these can be seen as the cellar and associated structures in Trenches 2 and 3.

Condition

- 6.1.7 The condition of the underlying archaeology was on the whole very good and it was clear that evidence for multiple phases of activity survived beneath the topsoil and turf of the pasture field. The archaeology had suffered most in Trench 2 due to the extent of the 18th or 19th century cellar and associated structures which greatly impacted upon the underlying structures and features. The medieval walls had been highly truncated and the shaped stone re-used in the steps to the cellar and lower courses of the cellar walls.

6.2 Site B: The Chapel

Chronology and Chapel Development

- 6.2.1 The earliest identifiable phase of activity on Site B related not to the building of the chapel but to the clearance of the site prior to the chapel construction. A small tree or bush throw was revealed beneath the southern wall of the nave which had been identified by the Poulton Research Project as the earliest phase of chapel construction. It appears that the bush was part of the vegetation cleared as the site was prepared for building.
- 6.2.2 The evaluation was unable to provide any further information about the earliest phases of the chapel construction, which had already been excavated and interpreted by the Poulton Research Project.
- 6.2.3 Investigation of the construction cut for the addition of the chancel at the eastern end of the nave did recover a single sherd of medieval pottery within the backfill around the southern chancel wall, but no more precise date could be assigned, and the sherd is likely to be residual from activity on the site prior to the chancel construction.
- 6.2.4 Analysis of the structural remains by Buildings Archaeologist Jonathan Clark did identify a possible springer base for the chancel arch between the nave and the chancel.

Associated Buildings

- 6.2.5 It did not prove possible within the time constraints of the evaluation to investigate the building adjacent to the chapel, to try and ascertain its function, perhaps as a gate house contemporaneous with the chapel.

The Abbey Complex

- 6.2.6 The original Abbey complex could not be identified, but from analysis of the field names, historical mapping, aerial photography and topography it seems

most likely to have been located around the chapel site. A limit to the precinct has been possibly identified surrounding the site of the chapel, and modifications to the waterways and fish ponds have also been recognised. Earlier work by the Poulton Research Project has identified buildings within this area which could not be investigated at this time; these remains potentially represent structures belonging to the Abbey.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1.1 Given the limited nature of the results of the evaluation, no further analysis is deemed appropriate. A copy of this report will be submitted to the Cheshire Sites and Monuments Record, and the results may also be used by the Poulton Research Project in their continuing investigation of the site of the Abbey. It is recommended that a summary of the results of the evaluation is submitted as a short note for inclusion in the annual round-up of investigations and excavations in the *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*.

8 ARCHIVE

- 8.1.1 The excavated material and archive, including plans, photographs and written records, are currently held at the Wessex Archaeology offices under the project code 62506 and site code POU 06. It is intended that the archive from the Poulton Hall field evaluation should ultimately be deposited with the Chester Museums Service, with the archive from the chapel evaluation being retained by the Poulton Research Project to be used in their continued work at the Site.

9 REFERENCES

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Internet source

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13489b.htm/>

Abbey of Savigny

Table 1: Finds totals by trench (number / weight in grammes)

	Chapel	Poulton Hall				
Material	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
Pottery	4/27	101/2136	2/4	140/2812	-	247/4926
<i>Medieval</i>	1/1	3/31	-	28/246	-	32/278
<i>Post-Medieval</i>	3/26	98/2105	2/4	112/2566	-	215/4648
Ceramic Building Material	7/133	68/26,354	-	87/30,411	-	162/56,898
Wall Plaster	-	2/7	-	3/332	-	5/339
Fired Clay	-	-	-	5/125	-	5/125
Clay Pipe	1/4	6/25	-	8/34	-	15/63
Stone		4/2606	-	5/850	-	9/3456
Glass	1/1	18/762	-	17/111	-	36/874
Slag	-	-	-	2/299	-	2/299
Metalwork	2	12	-	40	1	55
<i>Coins</i>	-	1	-	1	-	2
<i>Copper Alloy</i>	1	2	-	-	-	3
<i>Iron</i>	1	9	-	37	-	47
<i>Lead</i>	-	-	-	2	1	3
Human Bone	9/27	-	-	-	-	9/27
Animal Bone	66/348	77/1168	-	95/1677	-	238/3193
Shell	-	3/43	-	2/55	-	5/98

Table 2: Pottery totals by ware type

Date Range	Ware	No.	Weight (g)
Medieval	Fine whiteware	5	8
Medieval	Reduced sandy	1	1
Late Medieval	Cistercian ware	8	62
Late Medieval	Fine sandy ware	18	207
	<i>sub-total medieval</i>	32	278
Post Medieval	Midlands Purple Ware	99	3092
Post Medieval	Midlands Yellow Ware	7	176
Post Medieval	Mottled ware	6	73
Post Medieval	Fine whiteware	1	2
Post Medieval	Pale firing sandy ware	3	27
Post Medieval	Redware	12	250
Post Medieval	Redware (slipwares)	34	598
Post Medieval	Stoneware	3	19
Post Medieval	Staffs-type slipware	16	70
Post Medieval	Tin-glazed earthenware	1	35
Modern	Refined redware	2	11
Modern	Refined whiteware	31	295
	<i>Sub-total post-medieval</i>	215	4648
	OVERALL TOTAL	247	4926

Table 3 Faunal list by trench (NISP)

		Chapel	Poulton Hall	
Species		Tr 1	Tr 2	Tr 4
Mammal	Cattle (<i>Bos Taurus</i>)	12	33	34
	Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	5	12	11
	Pig (<i>Sus dom.</i>)	4	4	11
	Cat (<i>Felis catus</i>)		1	2
	Fallow/Red Deer (<i>Dama dama/Cervus elaphus</i>)		1	
	Rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>)		1	
Bird	Chicken (<i>Gallus gallus dom.</i>)		1	9
	Goose (<i>Anser anser (dom.?)</i>)			5
	Woodcock (<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>)			3
	Wader (<i>Scolopacidae</i>)		1	
	Pigeon (<i>Columba livia/oenas</i>)			1?
	Magpie (<i>Pica pica</i>)			1
	Bird	1	4	3
Fish	Spotted ray (<i>Raja montagui</i>)			1
	Indeterminate	44	18	20
	Total	66	76	101

APPENDIX 1: Trench Summaries

bgl = below ground level

Trench 1			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 5.06m x 4.1m		Max. depth: 0.15m deep	Ground level: 15.39m aOD	
context	description		depth (bgl)	
101	Topsoil.	Current topsoil, mid grey brown friable silty clay. Re-deposited backfill material which seals the archaeology already exposed within the chapel site.	0-0.10m	
102	Skeletal remains	Fragment of infant skeleton recovered during removal of 101.	-	
103	Floor	Possible cobbled surface identified to south of chapel structure, or remnants of infilling from demolished chapel walls, not removed. Small sandstone pebbles.	-	
104	Natural	Natural geology, alluvial silts.	-	
105	Wall	Foundation of area of walling, 1.60m long by 0.80m wide, relationship unclear due to extent of robbing, though appears to form eastern wall of the nave and is contemporary with wall 107, the southern nave wall. Forming the eastern corner of the early single celled chapel. Alternatively, it could form the springer of the chancel arch, separating the earlier nave from the second phase addition of the chancel.	0.15m high	
106	Structure	Small section of wall foundation associated with 108, rubble infilling of southern wall of chancel, and associated with 109. Or could be possible door sill for entrance through the southern wall. 1.20m long by 0.60m wide. Interpretation difficult due to robbing.	-	
107	Wall	Southern wall of nave, recorded for 2.60m in length and 0.80m wide, constructed of shaped sandstone blocks for external and internal faces with rubble core. Butted by external buttress 110 and 108 and 106.	0.20m high	
108	Structure	East west aligned structure. Shaped sandstone blocks forming southern wall of chancel (with rubble core 106), though possibly door sill for entrance through chancel wall.	0.15m high	
109	Wall	Interpreted as southern wall of chancel, associated with 108 and 106, though highly disturbed through robbing. Later addition to the chapel, second phase. Roughly shaped sandstone blocks.	0.15m high	
110	Structure	Roughly rectangular buttress located on the southern side of wall 107. supporting structure following the addition of chancel wall 109 and possibly 108 and 106.	0.01m high	
111	Fill	Fill within construction cut 112, dark brown silty clay, infilling around walls 108,109 and buttress 110.		
112	Cut	Construction cut for the erection of southern chancel wall 108, 106 and 109 and buttress 110. cuts 113. Not excavated.	-	
113	Fill	Fill of 114. Mid brown silty clay. Cut by 112.	0.08m deep	
114	Cut	Cut of unknown feature, possible unused grave. Relationship to wall 107 lost, by earlier excavation. Potentially contemporary with earliest phase of chapel activity, cut through by construction cut for chancel 112. Recorded as 1.14m long and 0.54m wide and 0.10m deep.	0.08m deep	
115	Layer	Possible crushed chalk and mortar floor surface, or result of material discarded during construction of chapel cut through by 114.	-	
116	Fill	Mid to dark brown silty clay fill of 117, probable tree throw, charcoal rich, evidence of burning the stump out prior to chapel being built.	0.14m deep	
117	Cut	Cut of probable tree throw, removed to build chapel, underlies 105.	0.14m deep	
118	Fill	Fill of north-south aligned cut 119. Fill of removed wall cut. Eastern wall of nave.	0.14m deep	
119	Cut	Cut for the removal of the eastern wall of the nave following the addition of the chancel so allowing access from the nave to chancel.	0.14m deep	
120	Cut	Equivalent to 112.	-	
121	Fill	Equivalent to 111.	-	

Trench 2			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 11.88m x 9.7m		Max. depth: 1.40m	Ground level: 11.44m aOD	
context	description		depth (bgl)	
201	Topsoil	Current turf and topsoil of pasture field, dark grey brown silty clay.	0-0.25m	
202	Layer	Dark grey silty clay demolition layer containing fragments of CBM and broken stone work. Mixed with deliberate backfill from the 1997 excavation by the Poulton Research Project.	0.25-055	
203	Cut	Construction cut for wall 204, roughly north south aligned. Contains wall 204, with deliberate backfill 224 and 225 deposits. Cuts levelling layers 253 and 277.	-	
204	Wall	North-south aligned brick-built wall, probably English bond, with compact lime mortar, only 2 courses identified. 2.80m long by 0.40m wide and 0.34m high. 18 th or 19 th century build. Butts wall 212.	-	
205	Surface	External surface constructed of stone setts, forms corridor between walls 204 and 207. Set into layer 222. Had a slope angled towards the centre and so probably associated with drain openings 216 and 217.	-	
206	Cut	Construction cut for north-south aligned wall 207.	-	
207	Wall	North-south aligned brick-built wall, 1.20m long by 0.24m wide and 0.08m high. Two courses of English bond with compact lime mortar. Associated with wall 204 and surface 205.	-	
208	Drain	Ceramic drain pipe which runs alongside wall 207. Associated with external surface 205 and wall 207.	-	
209	Layer	Charcoal rich deposit directly below 202 and overlying 210. Spread of burnt material possibly associated with demolition phase of later structures. 19 th century.	-	
210	Layer	Light yellow brown clay levelling layer which is sealed by 209 and seals 211. Possible levelling following the demolition of the later buildings.	-	
211	Layer	Crushed sandstone blocks and small stones resulting in layer of crushed sandstone. Derived from foundation material for probable medieval wall 269. Damaged following the destruction of the medieval buildings and later activity.	-	
212	Wall	Part of cellar Group 270; forms western wall of stone steps leading to cellar. Contemporary with steps 214 but stratigraphically overlies them. Recorded as 0.80m long by 0.40m wide and 1.05m high. Butted by wall 213, and is butted by later wall 204. Constructed of shaped sandstone blocks with lime mortar. Four courses.	-	
213	Wall	Part of cellar Group 270. Forms the western wall of the cellar, 5.60m long by 0.440m wide and maximum height 1.50m constructed in red brick in rough English bond with compact lime mortar. Reused medieval stone work for the basal levels. Has window set in to it, which had been blocked by blocking brickwork 237. Butts the southern end of 212.	-	
214	Steps	Part of cellar Group 270. Set of five steps leading down into the cellar. Constructed from large reused medieval stonework with bricks to level and fill gaps in the stonework. Bonded by walls 241 and 212. Initially exposed by the Poulton Research Project.	-	
215	Cut	Construction cut for ceramic drain 272, cut through by 203.	-	
216	Structure	Brick built drain/soak-away opening, within cut 219, associated with sett surface 205.	-	
217	Structure	Brick built drain/soak-away opening, within cut 220, associated with sett surface 205.	-	
218	Cut	Cut of small circular feature revealed in sondage excavated through levelling deposit 222. Clear steep sides and flat base. Filled with 221.	-	
219	Cut	Construction cut for drain/soak-away opening.	-	
220	Cut	Construction cut for drain/soak-away opening.	-	
221	Fill	Mid grey brown silty clay with rare sandstone inclusions, fill of feature 218.	-	
222	Layer	Light yellow brown silty clay, bedding layer for sett surface 205. Overlies 268 and 230. Deposit equivalent to 254.	-	
223	VOID	VOID	-	

224	<i>FILL</i>	Backfill deposit which seals drain 275 and fills construction cut 203 of wall 204 on the western side of wall 204. Mixed mid brown and dark grey black silty clay.	-
225	<i>Fill</i>	Backfill deposit of construction cut 203 of wall 204 on the eastern side of wall 204. Mid grey-brown silty clay.	-
226	<i>Wall</i>	Roughly east-west aligned wall foundation associated with possible wall 227, built from shaped sandstone blocks forms a corner with 227. Unclear if medieval in date but appears associated with later floor surface 229 and bedding layer 228. Overlies feature 218. Wall highly truncated.	-
227	<i>Wall</i>	Roughly north-south aligned wall fragment associated with wall 226 and possible floor surface 229. Wall highly truncated.	-
228	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow brown clay bedding layer for brick floor surface 229.	-
229	<i>Surface</i>	Brick-built surface, thin bricks laid side on into clay bedding layer, has a similar appearance to tile stacked hearth, possibly medieval in date.	-
230	<i>Layer</i>	Redeposited natural mid yellow silty clay.	-
231	<i>Natural</i>	Mid yellow silty clay alluvial deposit.	-
232	<i>Layer</i>	Brick rubble backfill of cellar formed by walls 213, 233, 234 and 235. Result of demolition and material used to fill void. 19 th early 20 th demolition. Stratigraphically later than doorway blocking 236 and window blocking 237.	1.50m thick
233	<i>Wall</i>	Southern brick wall of cellar Group 270. Only two courses visible as backfill 232 not removed at this point. Light grey compact mortar.	-
234	<i>Wall</i>	Eastern brick wall of cellar Group 270. Upper six courses (0.62m) English bond with compact lime mortar overlying re-used medieval shaped sandstone blocks (0.85m).	1.47m high
235	<i>Wall</i>	Northern brick wall of cellar Group 270. Fifteen courses, English bond, overlying a single course of re-used medieval stonework. Doorway at western end, leading to steps 214, later blocked by 236.	1.44m high
236	<i>Wall</i>	Brick blocking wall of doorway through wall 235; appears to be two phases of blocking as upper seven courses (0.55m) in irregular bond with rough, unpainted mortar compared to the lower nine courses; 0.84m. Blocking inserted just prior to demolition.	1.39 high
237	<i>Wall</i>	Brick blocking wall of cellar light in wall 213. Five courses in stretcher bond, same phase as blocking of doorway with 236.	0.40m high
238	<i>Floor</i>	Brick floor of cellar, stretcher bond, single course thick; towards centre is a line of half bricks. Part of Group 270.	-
239	<i>Wall</i>	Northern east-west aligned wall, part of structure butting onto the western side of wall 213; only exposed in plan and so not fully understood. Forms a rectangular structure with walls 240 and 266.	-
240	<i>Wall</i>	Southern east-west aligned wall, part of structure butting onto the western side of wall 213; only exposed in plan and so not fully understood. Forms a rectangular structure with walls 239 and 266.	-
241	<i>Wall</i>	Northern wall of stairway structure leading into cellar down steps 214. Part of Group 270. Constructed of sandstone blocks, no mortar identified. Overlies, but contemporary with, 214.	-
242	<i>Structure</i>	Stone-lined drain, partly excavated in 1997 by the Poulton Research Project. Within cut 243, and clearly truncated by construction cut for cellar Group 270.	-
243	<i>Cut</i>	Construction cut for stone lined drain 242, roughly north-south aligned.	-
244	<i>Cut</i>	Excavation trench into drain 243, part of Poulton Research Project excavations of 1997.	-
245	<i>Layer</i>	Dark grey brown sandy silt demolition layer which overlies 257.	-
246	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow brown silty clay levelling layer revealed below 247 in sondage to east of wall 204. Only revealed in section.	-
247	<i>Layer</i>	Charcoal rich dark brown silt clay layer; possible occupation activity identified in sondage, above 246 and sealed by 253.	-
248	<i>Layer</i>	Mottled grey and brown clay layer below 222 in sondage on west side of 204.	-
249	<i>VOID</i>	VOID	-
250	<i>Cut</i>	Construction cut for set of steps to the south of cellar Group 270. Possible steps leading into ground floor rooms of now demolished building.	-
251	<i>Fill</i>	Backfill deposit around steps in 250. Mixed mid brown silty clay.	-

252	<i>Layer</i>	Arbitrary cleaning layer around steps in cut 250.	-
253	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow brown clay levelling deposit, identical to 277, and overlies 278 and overlain by 205 and 254.	-
254	<i>Layer</i>	Charcoal rich dark grey brown silty clay layer, which overlies 253, possible occupation layer or dumped material.	-
255	<i>Wall</i>	Wall foundation for north-south aligned wall, bonded to eastern end of wall 274 forming corner. Sealed by deposit 253. Originally part of medieval wall associated with 274, 268 and 269. Part of Group 273.	-
256	<i>Cut</i>	Construction cut for wall 255. Not seen.	-
257	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow clay deposit. Similar to 253, partly overlies wall 255. Demolition layer with abundant sandstone fragments and peg tile.	-
258	<i>Layer</i>	Redeposited clay natural towards the south of the trench, light yellow silty clay, overlies possible wall 259 and 260.	-
259	<i>Structure</i>	Possible wall constructed of re-used medieval moulded stone work. Unclear if wall or just dump.	-
260	<i>Structure</i>	Possible wall constructed of re-used medieval moulded stone work. Unclear if wall or just dump.	-
261	<i>VOID</i>	VOID	
262	<i>VOID</i>	VOID	
263	<i>Structure</i>	Re-used medieval stonework forming part of stairway into first floor of buildings.	-
264	<i>Structure</i>	Re-used medieval stonework forming part of stairway into first floor of buildings.	-
265	<i>Structure</i>	Brick built entrance foundation, associated with 263 and 264; two courses thick, lime mortar.	-
266	<i>Wall</i>	Brick wall which joins 240 and 239 together, on west side of wall 213.	-
267	<i>VOID</i>	VOID	
268	<i>Wall</i>	Sandstone rubble foundation for medieval wall. Part of Group 273.	-
269	<i>Wall</i>	Sandstone rubble foundation for medieval wall. Part of Group 273.	-
270	<i>Group</i>	Group for 18 th or 19 th century cellar. Composed of construction cut 274, walls 213, 233, 234, 235, floor 238, steps 214, and wall 212 and 241.	-
271	<i>Cut</i>	Construction cut for cellar.	-
272	<i>Drain</i>	Ceramic drain within cut 215, cut through by 203.	-
273	<i>Group</i>	Group for medieval wall composed of 269, and 268 and 274. Continues in Trench 4 as 412.	-
274	<i>Wall</i>	Medieval wall foundation which butts west side of 255. Part of Group 273.	-
275	<i>Drain</i>	Ceramic drain associated with wall 204 and 213.	-
276	<i>VOID</i>	VOID	
277	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow brown clay levelling deposit, identical to 253.	-

Trench 3			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 8.40m x 1.60m		Max. depth: 1.20m	Ground level: 11.13m aOD	
context	description		depth (bgl)	
301	Topsoil	Modern topsoil and turf of pasture field. Mid grey-brown silty clay.	0.11m thick	
302	Layer	Demolition layer, directly beneath the topsoil, mid grey-brown silty clay with frequent brick rubble and sandstone rubble.	0.08m thick	
303	Layer	Mid yellow brown clay, redeposited natural. Levelling layer.	0.10m thick	
304	Structure	Brick-built structure only revealed in plan, possible corner of wall foundation but unclear. Potentially related to feature 305.	-	
305	Cut	Cut of feature of unknown function, potentially robber cut for removal of 304, but not clear.	-	
306	Fill	Fill of 305 dark yellow-brown silty clay.	-	
307	Structure	Brick built structure only revealed in plan, two courses high. Function unknown.	-	
308	Structure	Re-used medieval stonework perhaps as facing for brick built structure 307, but not clear.	-	

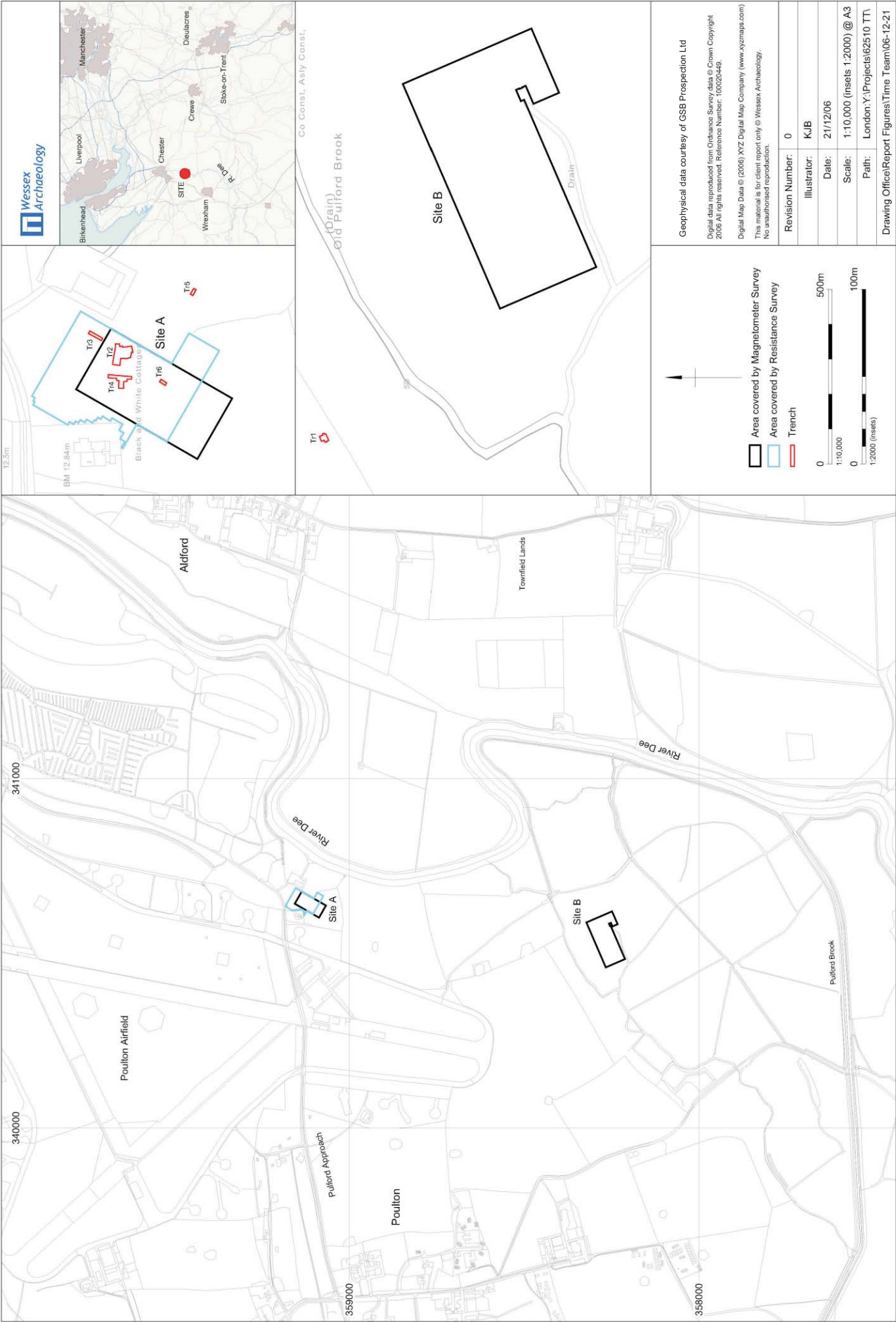
309	<i>Cut</i>	Possible construction cut or possibly robber cut for structures in Trench 4; as not investigated interpretation is difficult.	-
310	<i>Fill</i>	Fill of 309. Dark reddish-brown clay.	-
311	<i>Wall</i>	Brick built wall, north-south aligned, not fully exposed and so not entirely understood.	
312	<i>Wall</i>	Roughly east-west aligned brick wall, potentially related to 311, but unclear.	-
313	<i>Layer</i>	Demolition layer, dark brown silty clay with brick and stone rubble, similar to 302.	
314	<i>Cut</i>	Cut of large ditch north-west south east aligned, modern ditch.	-
315	<i>Fill</i>	Fill of 314, dark red brown clay with modern bricks at base of deposit.	-
316	<i>Natural</i>	Natural alluvial silts.	-
317	<i>Layer</i>	Equivalent to 313.	-
318	<i>Layer</i>	Equivalent to 303.	-

Trench 4			Type:	Machine excavated	
Dimensions: 13.40m x 7.20m		Max. depth: 0.75m	Ground level: 11.67m aOD		
context	description			depth (bgl)	
401	Topsoil	Current turf and topsoil of pasture field.			0.15m thick
402	Layer	Arbitrary cleaning layer, below 401 and above archaeology.			0.05m thick
403	Layer	Compact dark grey brown silt, with occasional charcoal flecks. Layer located to east of buttress/structure 442. Same as 404.			-
404	Layer	Equivalent to 403, mixed occupation layer which butts wall 405. Overlies layer 443.			
405	Wall	North-south aligned sand stone wall, re-used stonework for outer face and rubble core, 5.60m long by 0.65m wide and 0.40m high, two courses of stonework. No visible mortar. Butts wall 412, evidence of second phase of building. Overlies backfilled feature 407 .			0.40m high
406	Fill	Mid yellow-grey silty clay fill of 407, feature of unknown function., sealed by deposit 443.			0.15m thick
407	Cut	Cut of small circular feature with rounded sides and rounded base. Not fully exposed as lies beneath wall 405. Potentially earliest phase of activity. Function unclear.			0.15m deep
408	Layer	Mid greyish-brown silty clay, butts western side of wall 405, possible floor layer relating to walls 412 and 405. Overlies 409.			0.19m thick
409	Layer	Mid grey-brown silt with coal and clinker inclusions. Overlies 410, and sealed by 408. Levelling deposit, dumped material.			0.13m thick
410	Layer	Mid brown-grey silt with occasional coal flecks, possible buried soil layer, sealed by 409, and overlies 413, fill of feature 414 .			0.18m thick
411	Layer	Mid brown silty clay dump layer; overlies 419.			0.02m thick
412	Wall	East-west aligned wall, constructed of worked sandstone blocks for internal and external faces with rubble core and clay bedding and bonding material. No mortar identified. Single course of shaped stonework overlying rubble foundation. Has possible door way 427 through it and bonded to 451 at western end. Associated with corridor surface 446, and is butted on southern side by 405. Equivalent to Group 273 in Trench 2.			0.25m high
413	Fill	Fill of 414, dark yellow-grey silt, fill of linear gully 414. Similar to 406.			0.15m deep
414	Cut	Cut of linear feature north-south aligned, which is overlain by 405, possible pre-cursor to 405; possible beam-slot or construction gully. Cuts 444.			0.15m deep
415	Layer	Mid brown-grey silt, possible buried soil layer overlies 445.			0.15m thick
416	Layer	Mid brown-grey silt layer; possible buried soil layer which is overlain by 445.			0.26m thick
417	Layer	Light reddish-brown silt layer, possible occupation which overlies clay floor layer 418, quite patchy. Sealed below 402.			0.06m thick
418	Layer	Dark yellow clay layer, latest floor surface relating to wall 412. Overlies 431. Equivalent to 428 and 429.			0.07m thick
419	Layer	Equivalent to 417, overlain by 411.			0.06m thick
420	Fill	Fill of circular feature 421, very light brown grey. Unexcavated.			-

421	<i>Cut</i>	Cut of small circular feature possible pit or post hole. Unexcavated. Cuts 419, which seals floor 418.	-
422	<i>Layer</i>	Dark yellow dirty clay layer which is overlain by 416. Origin of deposit unknown.	0.06m thick
423	<i>Layer</i>	Mid brown silty loam, with common charcoal fragments, fill of 424.	0.04m deep
424	<i>Cut</i>	Cut of shallow scoop which cuts 419.	0.04m deep
425	<i>Cut</i>	Cut of large rubbish pit which cuts through wall 452; filled with 426.	0.60m deep.
426	<i>Fill</i>	Fill of 425, 17 th /early 18 th century rubbish pit. Dark yellow brown sandy silty clay.	0.60m thick
427	<i>Structure</i>	Possible doorway through wall 412 at its junction with 452.	-
428	<i>Floor</i>	Floor layer identical to 418, overlies 430.	-
429	<i>Floor</i>	Floor layer identical to 418, overlies 430.	-
430	<i>Layer</i>	Layer of water worn pebbles set into the top of 431, levelling or make-up for floor 418/428/429.	-
431	<i>Layer</i>	Dark grey silty clay, probable levelling layer, sealed by floor layer 418 / 429 / 428; pebbles 430 set into it.	-
432	<i>Layer</i>	Demolition layer which fills corridor formed by walls 450 and 451, and rests upon floor surface 446.	0.55m thick
433	<i>Layer</i>	Very dark brown clay silt which overlies 434, and is sealed by 418. Trample / occupation layer replaced by later floor.	-
434	<i>Layer</i>	Small spread of mortar sealed by 433; overlies 435.	-
435	<i>Layer</i>	Rubble rich layer; overlies charcoal rich layer 436. Make up layer, overlain by 431.	-
436	<i>Layer</i>	Thin charcoal rich silty layer; overlies 437 and sealed by 435.	-
437	<i>Floor</i>	Light yellow silty clay floor layer; overlies 438 and sealed by 436.	-
438	<i>Layer</i>	Very dark grey-brown silt, dump of material, coke and coal rich, overlies 439 and sealed by 437.	-
439	<i>Layer</i>	Mixed mid yellow-brown silt and black coke rich layer, sealed by 438; overlies 440.	-
440	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow silty clay, clean silt deposit which overlies natural.	-
441	<i>Layer</i>	Equivalent to 431.	-
442	<i>Structure</i>	Sandstone rubble foundation for possible buttress, associated with wall 405.	-
443	<i>Layer</i>	Re-deposited natural, light yellow silty clay levelling; seals 406 and overlain by 404.	-
444	<i>Layer</i>	Light yellow silty clay dirty natural deposit sealed by 445.	-
445	<i>Layer</i>	Very dark grey-black deposit which overlies 444 and is sealed by 415 and 416, coke and clinker rich deposit.	-
446	<i>Floor</i>	Stone flagged floor of corridor formed by wall 450 and 451.	-
447	<i>Layer</i>	Equivalent to 438.	-
448	<i>Layer</i>	Possible occupation layer, mixed silty/sandy clay, dark grey-brown black layer beneath 447.	-
449	<i>Cut</i>	Construction cut for wall 412.	-
450	<i>Wall</i>	North-south aligned wall forming the western wall of corridor, with flagged floor 446.	
451	<i>Wall</i>	North-south aligned wall forming the eastern wall of corridor, with flagged floor 446.	
452	<i>Wall</i>	North-south aligned wall bonded to the northern side of wall 412; cut through by pit 425.	-
453	<i>Cut</i>	Construction cut of brick-built structure. Cuts 448.	-
454	<i>Structure</i>	Brick-built rectangular structure of unknown function, possible soak-away but not fully exposed or investigated. Formed of bricks in stretcher bond and bonded with lime mortar. Only upper course exposed.	-

Trench 5			Type:	Machine excavated
Dimensions: 3.4m x 1.6m		Max. depth: 1.10m	Ground level:	
context	description			depth (bgl)
501	Topsoil	Current turf and topsoil.		
502	Layer	Light yellow brown alluvial deposit.		
503	Layer	Dark grey-brown black flayer sealed by 502. not investigated and so nature unknown.		

Trench 6			Type:	Machine excavated	
Dimensions: 3.5m x 1.60m		Max. depth: 2.05		Ground level:	
context	description			depth (bgl)	
601	Topsoil	Current turf and topsoil.			0-0.30m
602	Fill	Fill of ditch 603, mid to dark grey-brown humic silt layer. Contained modern brick.			1.30m thick
603	Cut	Cut of large ditch, initially thought to be wall on geophysics, steep straight sides.			1.30m deep
604	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay sub soil which seals ditch 603.			0.30-0.65m
605	Natural	Natural light yellow alluvial silts.			0.65m+

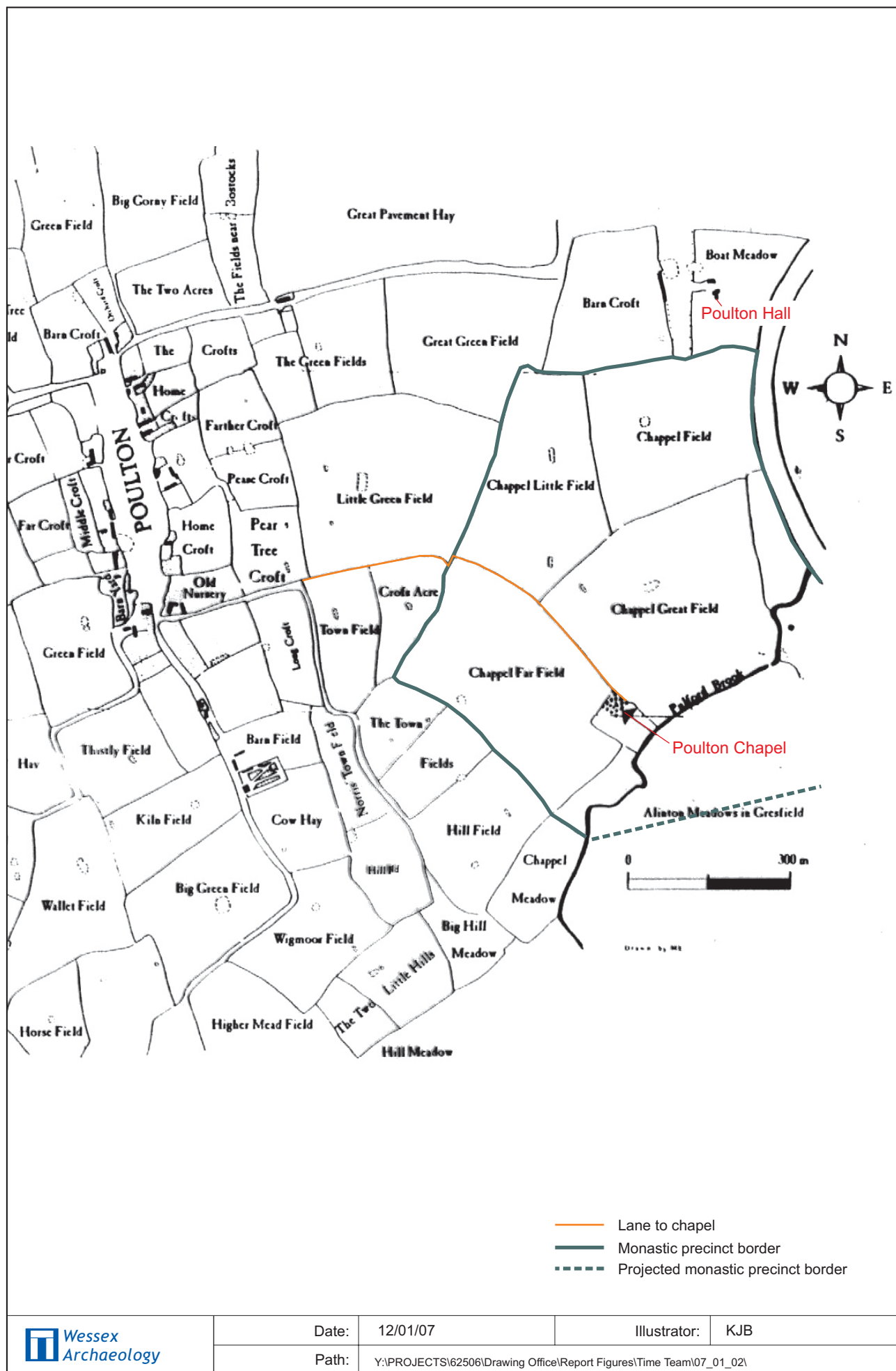


Site location, trench locations and geophysical survey areas



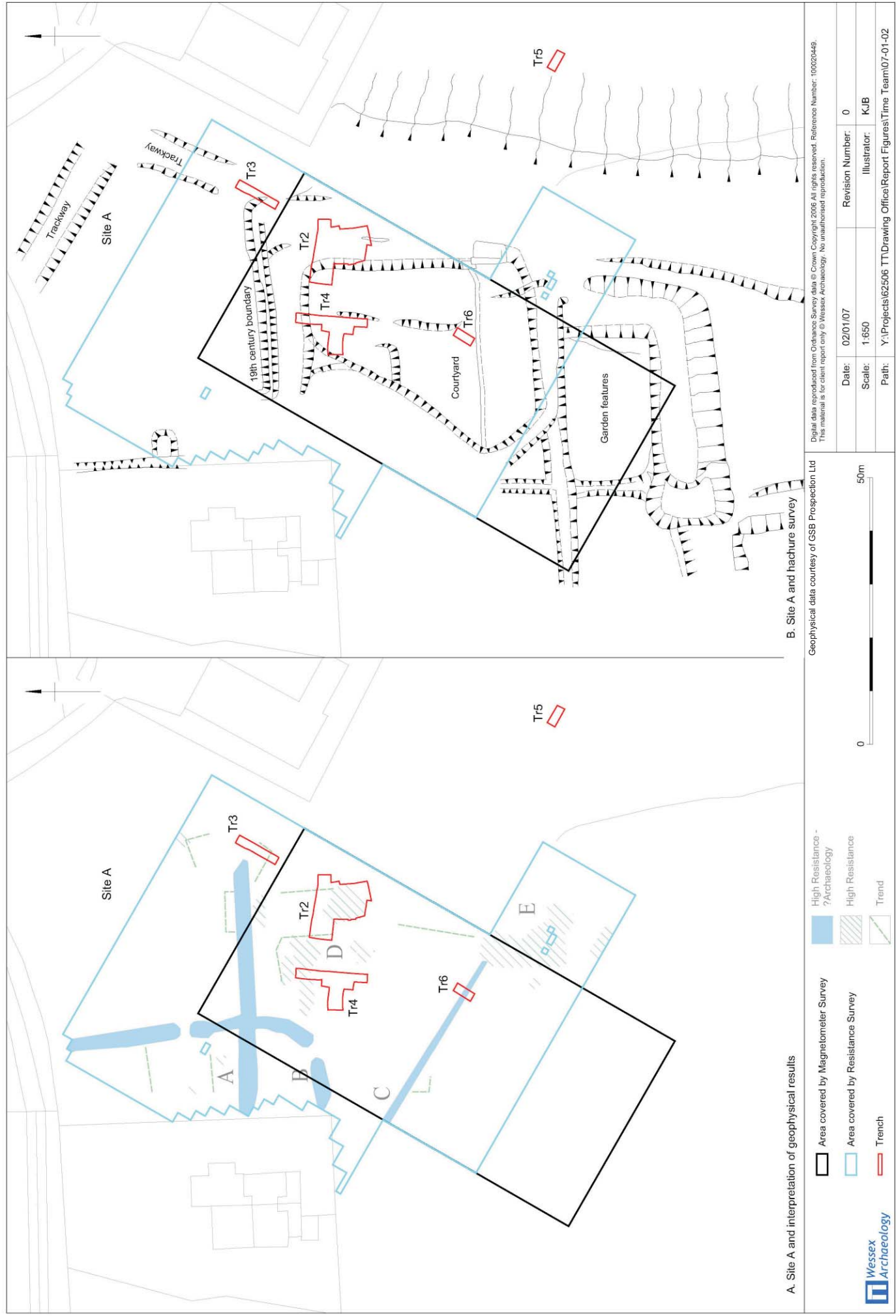
Pre-1675 Estate Map, with detail of Poulton Hall and the chapel (courtesy of the Grosvenor Estate)

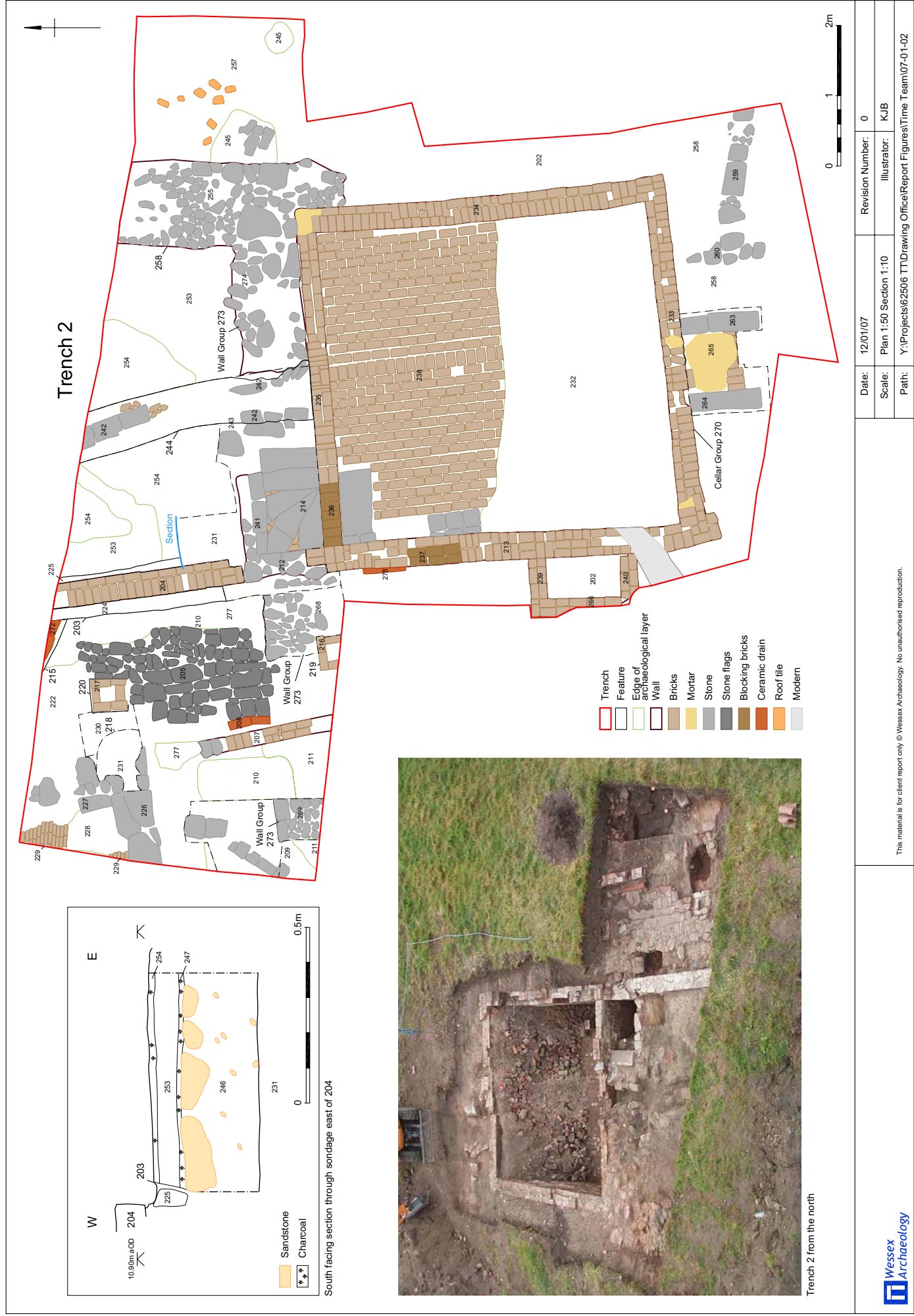
Figure 2



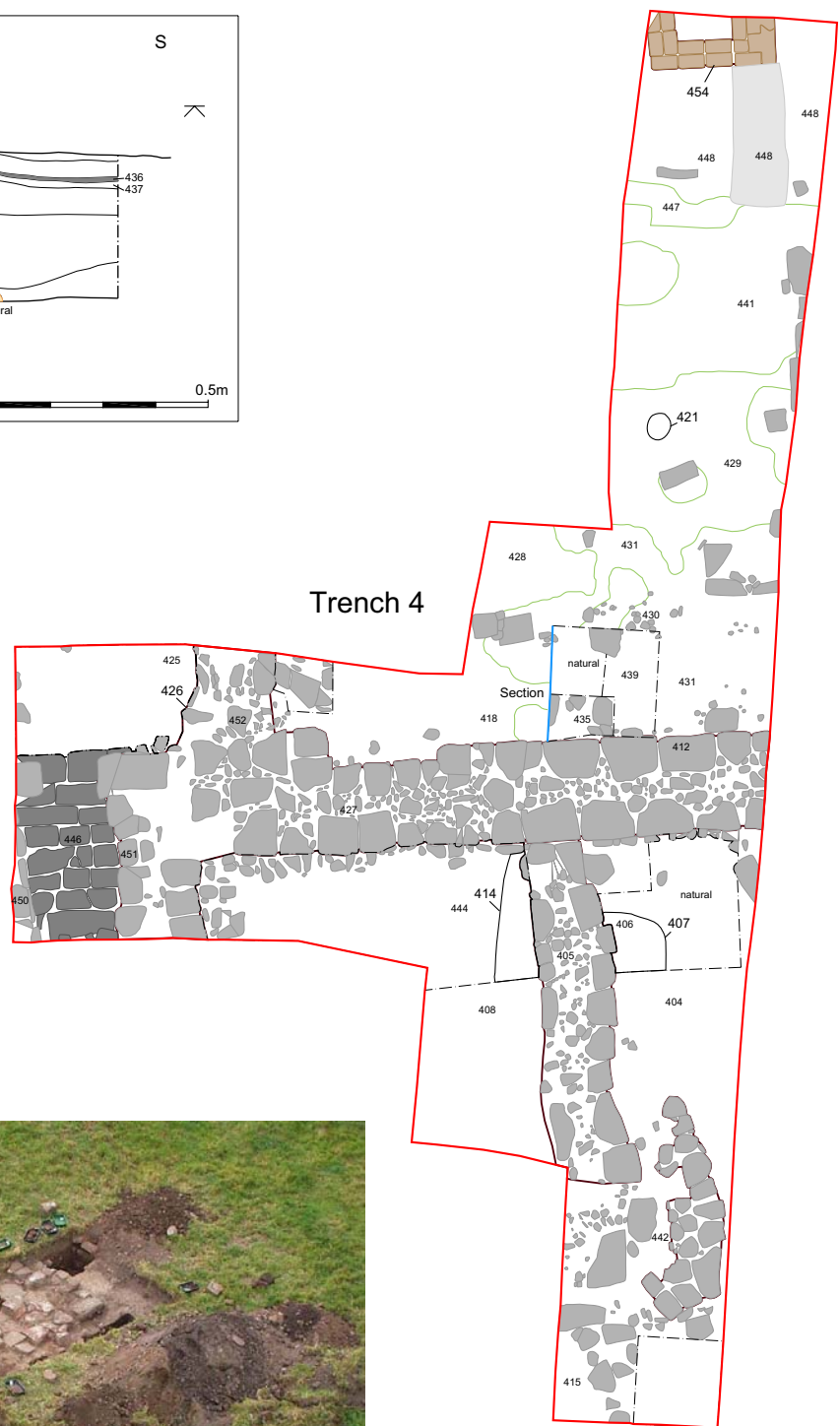
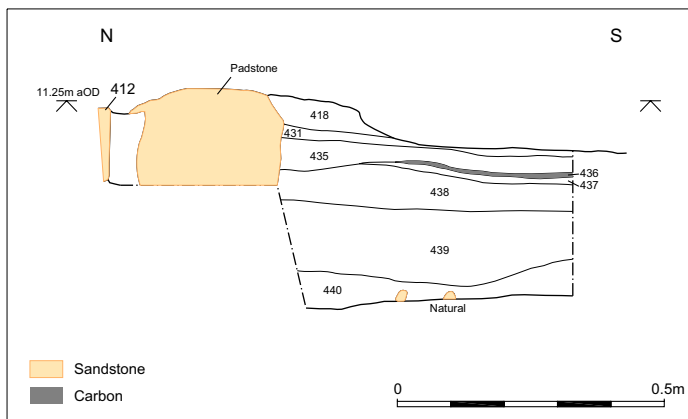
c.1719 Estate Map (courtesy of the Grosvenor Estate)

Figure 3





Detail of Trench 2



- Trench
- Feature
- Edge of archaeological layer
- Wall
- Bricks
- Stone
- Stone flags
- Modern

0 1 2m

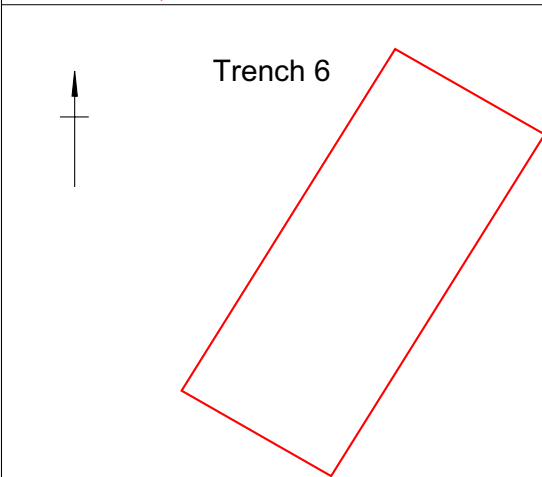


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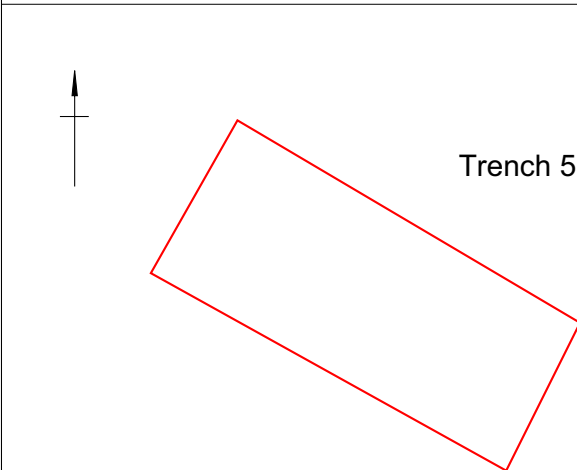
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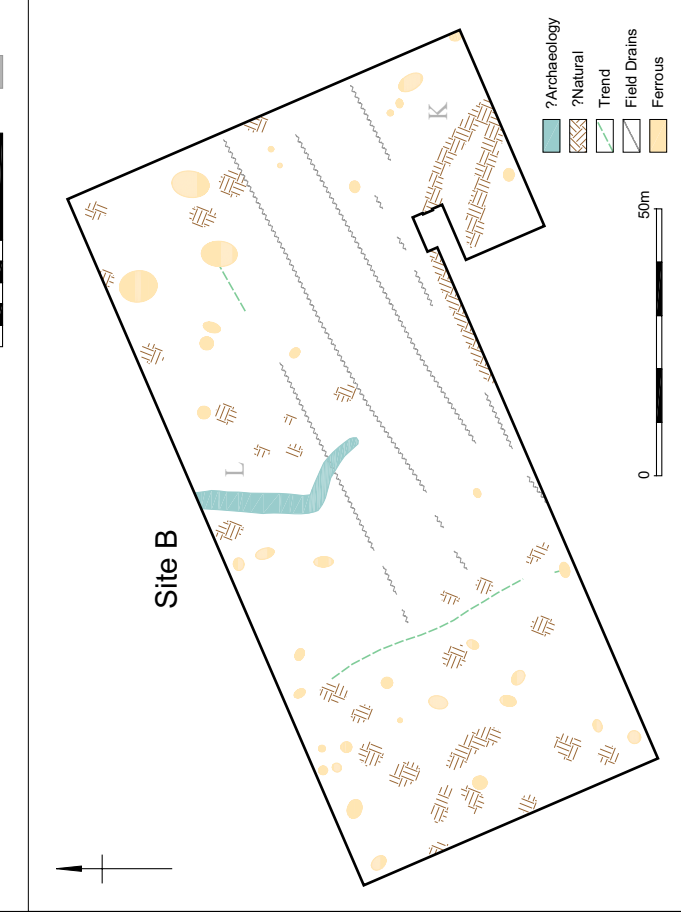
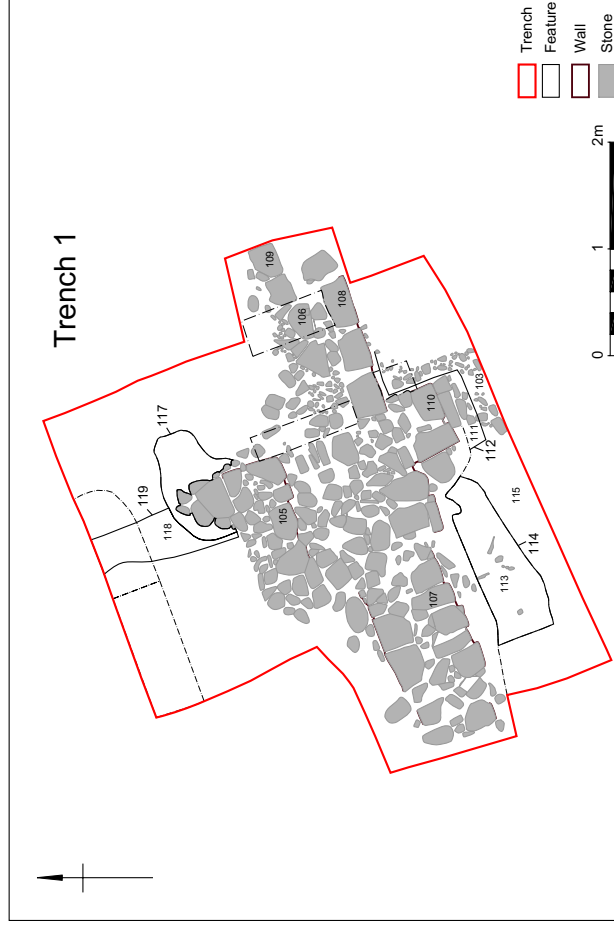
Trench 3 from the south west




Trench 6 from the north



Trench 5 from the north west



		
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WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED.

Head Office: Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB.

Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk

London Office: Unit 113, The Chandlery, 50 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7QY.

Tel: 020 7953 7494 Fax: 020 7953 7499 london-info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



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