

# No. 20 Kings Street, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8AX


## Evaluation report

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## Summary

*An evaluation was conducted by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust between 8 and 10 March 2016 2015 on land to the rear of No 20 King Street, Canterbury, Kent (NGR 614950 158130) in advance of the proposed development of a single-storey rear extension. The work was commissioned by Mrs Belinda Kornstein. The proposed development area (PDA) forms part of an enclosed garden on the north-west side of 20 King Street, within an area of known archaeological potential, with deposits and structures dating from the Roman to medieval periods recorded in the vicinity.*

*The evaluation comprised the excavation of a single hand-dug trench 1.2m square located within the PDA to ascertain the nature, extent and depth below surface of the potential buried archaeological resource. The remains of medieval domestic buildings, comprising dwarf walls and clay floors were found at a depth of 0.8 to 0.9m below present ground level. A sequence of later layers and walls related to subsequent building developments and culminated in the construction of a late eighteenth or nineteenth century structure and associated garden walls at the rear end of the building.*

# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Project background**

- 1.1.1 Between 8 and 10 March 2016, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land to the rear of No 20 Kings Street, Canterbury CT1 2AJ (NGR 614950 158130). The work was commissioned by Mrs Belinda Kornstein of the same address, in advance of a proposed development comprising the construction of new a single-storey garden room extension. A planning application for the development (CA/15/01844/FUL) had been granted consent by Canterbury City Council on 8 May 2015 with an attached condition (6) stating that:

*‘6 Prior to the commencement of development, the following components of a scheme for the archaeological evaluation of the site, to be undertaken for the purpose of determining the presence or absence of any buried archaeological features and deposits and to assess the importance of the same, shall each be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:*

- a) A written scheme of investigation, to be submitted a minimum of fourteen days in advance of the commencement of fieldwork.*
- b) A report summarising the results of the investigations, to be produced on the completion of fieldwork, in accordance with the requirements set out in the written scheme of investigation.*
- c) Any further mitigation measures considered necessary as a result of the archaeological investigations, to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*
- d) If necessary, a programme of post-excavation assessment, analysis, publication and conservation.*

*Fieldwork, including further mitigation works and post-excavation work shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and programme timings unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local authority, and the local authority shall be notified in writing a minimum of fourteen days in advance of the commencement of any fieldwork.*

*REASON: Pursuant to Articles 35 (1) and (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015, the local planning authority is satisfied that the requirements of this condition (including the timing of compliance) are so fundamental to the development permitted that, if not imposed, it would have been necessary to refuse permission for the development. This is because, at the time of granting permission, full details of the archaeological implications for developing the site were not yet available but this information is necessary to ensure the development complies with Canterbury District Local Plan Policy BE 10 and HE 11 and HE12 of the emerging local plan and otherwise to protect the archaeological features of the site and its locality.’*

- 1.1.2 The property falls within the Canterbury Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) as designated by the Secretary of State on 30 March 1984 pursuant to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Statutory Instruments 1285 and 1286 dated 17 August and 30 September 1984 detail the procedures that should be followed to comply with the Act to ensure that the potential archaeological resource is protected and preserved. Canterbury Archaeological Trust is the designated investigating authority within the Canterbury AAI.

- 1.1.3 In mitigation of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource and in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and condition 6 of the planning consent, a programme of archaeological evaluation was carried out at the proposed development site. The archaeological works were monitored by the Canterbury City Council Archaeological Officer.

## **1.2 Location, topography and geology**

- 1.2.1 The proposed development area (PDA), approximately 23m<sup>2</sup> in area, forms part of a patio laid with stone slabs (which had been removed over the area of the trench prior to excavation) within an enclosed garden to the rear (north-west) of No 20 Kings Street (Fig. 1). The site is located close to the heart of the historic city of Canterbury, near the northern end of Kings Street, no more than 60m west of the precinct of Canterbury Cathedral. The PDA is relatively level and stands at an elevation of approximately 8.7m above Ordnance Datum (OD).
- 1.2.2 The underlying bedrock geology within the site is shown as Head overlying the Seaford Chalk formation, although Alluvium relating to the River Stour floodplain is present immediately to the west.<sup>1</sup>

## **1.3 Heritage potential**

- 1.3.1 The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains, which suggest that the PDA lies in an area of considerable archaeological potential.
- 1.3.2 The site is located within the Roman town walls, and numerous excavations and observations in the vicinity have demonstrated the presence of significant Roman period deposits, although these are at some depth. Excavations undertaken during the development of Cobden Place between 2001 and 2003 (Helm 2003), whilst mostly restricted to the depth of proposed ground works, confirmed the remains of substantial Roman cobbled surfaces, representing the main north-east to south-west street alignment extending from the town centre, along Palace Street and through Northgate (Frere *et al* 1987), and a second north-west to south-east street alignment extending between the Mint Yard, King's School (Bennett 1980) and St Radigund's Street (Rady 1987). These were overlain by medieval deposits and structures. Excavation at No 53 King Street has also confirmed the presence of Roman remains, including a Roman building with at least two phases of occupation. This was overlain by a series of soil horizons, refuse pits and floors, reflecting a near continuous sequence of occupation from the late Anglo-Saxon period to modern times (Frere *et al* 1987, 78-81).
- 1.3.3 Relatively little is known about the immediate area in the Anglo-Saxon period although there is evidence for activity of this date at 29-38 St Radigund's Street, where Anglo-Saxon material was mixed with a quantity of late Romano-British finds in a layer possibly deriving from rampart deposits. Two seventh-century sunken-featured huts, a road or trackway of potential Anglo-Saxon date, and a ninth-century pit were also recorded (Rady 1987, 14–15). Further activity is also recorded to the north-east of the PDA, centred around St Mary Northgate church.
- 1.3.4 A brief assessment of historical and cartographic sources would suggest that properties existed on King Street from at least *c* 1180 (Urry 1967, 183). An anonymous map of *c* 1640 shows King Street, with evidence of buildings intermittently distributed along its western side, with

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

one large house possibly within the plot of No 20 itself, although the PDA is more likely to be to the rear of any medieval frontage structures.

- 1.3.5 No 20 Kings Street is a Grade II listed property (Kent HER No. TR 1496 5812), formerly a public house and possibly of early seventeenth-century date. Just to the north-west, is the former 'Jew's Synagogue', constructed in 1847 in the Egyptian Revival style of architecture (Kent HER No. TR 15 NW 780). According to the HER this was built on the site of a church of the Knights Templar, but this may be some nineteenth-century confusion with the Black Prince's Chantry (c 1363), the precinct of which was just to the north. According to Bagshaw's Directory of 1847, 'the site of this edifice is interesting as having been formerly the property of the Knights Templars, who had a hospital here; afterwards there was a chantry founded here by the Black Prince; now thereon is being raised a Jewish Temple'. Immediately south of the PDA was a small cemetery (KCC HER No. TR 15 NW 2289), now disused and possibly post-medieval in date.
- 1.3.6 Further details of previous discoveries and investigations within the immediate and wider area may be found in the Canterbury and District Historic Environment Record.

#### **1.4 Aims and objectives**

- 1.4.1 The principal objective of the evaluation was to establish the presence or absence of any elements of archaeological resource within the proposed development area.
- 1.4.2 The investigation would ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit if possible, character, date and quality of any such archaeological remains by limited sample excavation.
- 1.4.3 The investigation would determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource if present.
- 1.4.4 In addition, the investigation would seek to place and assess any archaeological resource within the context of other recent archaeological investigations in the immediate area and within the setting of the local landscape and topography.

#### **1.5 Excavation methodology**

- 1.5.1 The archaeological evaluation was conducted in accordance with accepted professional standards as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2008) and to an approved specification produced by CAT in February 2016. It consisted of the excavation of one evaluation trench (Trench 1), c 1.5m long and 1.2m wide, within the footprint of the proposed development (Figs 1 and 2).
- 1.5.2 Excavation was carried out by hand and ceased at a depth of c 1.2m below the present ground surface; natural deposits were not revealed. The trench was hand cleaned using a trowel, recorded and photographed.
- 1.5.3 Any archaeological features encountered were mapped, recorded and photographed.
- 1.5.4 A general site safety strategy was formulated and implemented prior to the commencement of all fieldworks. Safety procedures followed the guidelines established by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in *Policy statement on Health and Safety* and in the *Standards and guidance* and the practical guidance in the SCAUM manual *Health and Safety in field archaeology*.

1.5.5 All necessary precautions to the satisfaction of the Statutory or other Service Authorities and the landowner concerned were taken to avoid interference with or damage to their services, and to comply with any of their Codes of Practice that may be applicable. Prior to excavation all trench locations were scanned using a CAT scanner. No live services were uncovered during the course of the investigation.

1.5.6 The site lay within an existing enclosed area and was not accessible to unauthorized visitors.

## **1.6 Recording methodology**

1.6.1 All archaeological contexts were recorded individually on CAT *pro forma* context record sheets. Plans and sections of the trench were drawn at 1:20 and 1:10 scale respectively on polyester based drawing film.

1.6.2 All survey was undertaken with GPS equipment; plans and sections were levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum using differential GPS (Leica Viva GS08) connected to Ordnance Survey correctional data in real time via live internet feed from Leica SmartNet. A positional accuracy of within 50mm (3D) is anticipated using the ETRS89 to OSGM conversion via the OSTN02 projection and the OSGM Geoid.

1.6.3 A full colour digital photographic record of all phases of the excavation works was produced. The photographic record will comprise part of the site archive.

1.6.4 All deposits and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards using appropriate recording systems. The records are to be integrated into the Canterbury District HER and UAD under the project code 20KSC-EV-16. The site archive will be prepared according to the guidelines set out in: *Management of Archaeological Projects*: appendix 3 (English Heritage, 2nd edn, 1991).

1.6.5 The project archive is presently held in the offices of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (92a Broad Street, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2LU).

## **2 Results**

2.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 2) was excavated to a maximum depth of *c* 1.2m (7.52m OD). The earliest deposit exposed at the base of the trench (21; not excavated) was a horizontal layer of pale brown compact silty clay, with common small chalk inclusions. This deposit abutted a masonry wall (14) on the south-east. The wall was 0.25m wide, aligned north-east/south-west and of chalk and flint build in an off-white lime mortar containing abundant small chalk. Only one course was visible. This was parallel to and abutted another wall of similar construction (20). This was only partially exposed and again only one course was visible.

2.2 Layer (21) was sealed by a deposit (19) of dark grey moderate very silty clay with common small and medium gravel *c* 0.11m thick at maximum, exposed 1.08m below modern ground level (7.64m OD). The layer abutted wall (14) and yielded one pottery sherd of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date. On the north-east side of the trench it was probably cut by the construction trench [23] for another wall (13). This wall was similarly aligned to wall (14), but only partially revealed within the trench. The wall was constructed of chalk lumps and degraded blocks (80x80mm to 160x180mm in size), bonded with an off-white soft, gritty mortar containing abundant small chalk. Only one course survived, laid on a bed of unmortared flints within construction cut [23]. The upper courses had been cut away by robber trench [17] (below).

- 2.3 Deposit (19) and wall (14) were overlain by a thick deposit (18), which also appears to have abutted wall (13). The level, 0.24m thick at maximum was exposed at a depth of 0.9m (7.82m OD) and was composed of brown moderate silty clay with medium lumps of pale brown compact clay. Abundant large and medium peg tile fragments, common small to medium white plaster and small chalk fragments were included. A few pottery sherds, probably of later fifteenth- or sixteenth-century date and an iron object were recovered. This deposit may have been within a cut that was not clearly definable within the restricted area; if so this cut may have truncated wall (14) and also have cut into the north-west side of wall (20). The level was cut by a linear feature ([17] not shown in plan) that cut into the top of wall (13), and appeared to be a robber trench. The feature contained a fill (16) of soft silty brown clay with abundant inclusions of small off-white mortar and common small chalk.
- 2.4 The earlier levels were sealed by a horizontal deposit (15), c 0.04m thick that covered most of the trench area. This was composed of small and medium compacted chalk fragments. It was immediately superseded by layer (11), about 0.06m thick, which was of very similar composition, small and medium compacted chalk fragments with pale brown compacted clay. The very flat and regular upper surface of this layer (suggesting that it and layer (15) were floors or floor beddings) was at a depth of 0.8m (7.92m OD).
- 2.5 On the south-east, layer (11) was cut by the narrow construction trench [5] for a brick wall (4). The fill of the construction trench (which was 0.16m deep) was a grey, fairly loose silty clay, with abundant small to medium chalk and common medium red brick fragments. The wall was aligned north-east/south-west (similar to the earlier walls), 0.36m wide and survived to a height of 0.8m. It was constructed of red un-frogged bricks, bonded with a pale greyish yellow sandy mortar, with 10 surviving courses on a single course offset foundation of broken red bricks, which rested directly on the top of wall (20). At a later date, a sewer pipe had been inserted through this wall and the hole re-filled with a brick-built plug (wall (6)). This plug was built from red bricks (one frogged) bonded with pale grey hard mortar. Within the trench area, the pipe had been dug out (cut not shown on plan). Another sewer pipe was probably represented by a thick spread of concrete in the northern corner of the trench. Again the pipe had been removed; some nineteenth-century pottery was recovered from the backfill (8) of the construction cut [10].
- 2.6 Wall (4) was abutted by a thick (c. 0.57m) deposit (3) of brown and grey silty clay with common medium brick fragments, peg tile, with patches of yellow sand, small to medium chalk and coal, with one more concentrated lens of crushed chalk. A relatively large assemblage of pottery was recovered from this layer, most deriving from the mid nineteenth century, although a few sherds of earlier post-medieval pottery were also present.
- 2.7 Wall (4) and deposit (3) were sealed by relatively thin deposits of sand (2) and clay (22), that probably represent beddings for the present patio surface (or more likely an earlier hardstanding). The present ground surface was formed by flagstones over layers of aggregate and concrete bedding, 0.18m thick in total. Present ground level was at a height of 8.72m OD.

### **3 The finds**

#### **3.1 Pottery**

(3) 54 sherds, 1322g. Post-medieval 'china' and stoneware, mostly of mid nineteenth-century date, but including a few sherds of possibly earlier post-medieval oxidised earthenware.

(8) 9 sherds, 227g. Post-medieval 'china' and stoneware. Nineteenth century.

(18) 3 sherds, 66g. Post-medieval oxidised earthenware and early-looking stoneware. ? Later fifteenth to sixteenth century..

(19) 1 sherd, 35g. Late medieval coarse, oxidised sandyware. Pierced handle fragment, probably from a flagon or jug. Fourteenth to fifteenth century.

## **4 Interpretation**

- 4.1 A sequence of deposits dating from the medieval period onwards was revealed within the trench. The earliest levels undoubtedly relate to a medieval building and at least two reconstructions or re-arrangements of it, all of timber framed construction built on masonry dwarf walls. The lowest deposit (21) was almost certainly a clay floor relating to wall (14) and indicates that the trench was internal to the building. The chronological relation of wall (14) to the immediately adjacent wall (20) could not be determined within the confined area, and it (20) could represent either an entirely new build, or just an internal refurbishment. Deposit (19) probably represents an occupation deposit over the floor. The single sherd of pottery from the level is consistent with the likely date of the early structures, the remains of which are typical of domestic buildings of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The nature of the thick deposit (18), with abundant roofing tile and other detritus, sealing these earlier levels and walls suggest it relates to the demolition of the structure represented by wall (14) and/or wall (20). Although only minimal dating evidence was recovered, it suggests this occurred in the later fifteenth or sixteenth century.
- 4.2 In any event, a new structure, was then erected. This was also represented by a dwarf wall (13), suggesting a new timber-framed building, a later date indicated by the fact that its construction trench [23], cut through layer (18). If the dating evidence from layer (18) is reliable, then a very early post-medieval date can be postulated for this construction, although the build of the wall might be more consistent with a late medieval date. No floor levels relating to this wall were discernable and it is therefore possible that it represents a detached structure (north-west of the trench) to the rear of the main road frontage building on the plot, perhaps a kitchen or bakery (which were sometimes detached from the main house due to fire risk). The structure was in turn eventually demolished, and the upper courses of its walls robbed out (robber trench 17).
- 4.3 A new phase of construction is probably represented by deposits (11) and (15), which appear to represent beaten chalk floors. Although these levels must relate to an early post-medieval structure, again perhaps detached from the main domicile, they cannot be closely dated and no walls of the building were evident in the trench area.
- 4.4 Yet another phase of reconstruction is represented by brick wall (4). The construction trench for this (25) cut through the possible chalk floors/beddings (11/15), indicating that the wall was later than this phase. The wall (4) corresponds closely with the wall line of a building or outshot shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey (1874; see Fig 3). This indicates that it probably represents the north-west, external side of a structure to the rear of the main property, and a contiguous wall to the south-west enclosing a back yard. Scars from the demolition of this wall are still visible in the surviving walls to north and south. The only problem with this interpretation is the low level of the contemporary ground surface to the rear, which appears to be equivalent to the surface of chalk floor (11), 0.8m below present ground surface. This seems rather low for the probable late eighteenth-/early nineteenth-century construction date of the wall (which is suggested by the brickwork and nature of the foundation). It is possible that yet another external half-cellaried building was present here however, perhaps with a sunken floor level utilizing the earlier chalk floors, and which may have been demolished



before the first Ordnance Survey. This question cannot be readily answered without further excavation.

- 4.5 Whatever the case, the ground level to the rear was eventually raised by the deposition of the thick level (3) of varied material that yielded a fairly large corpus of mid nineteenth-century ceramics. At a later date, a sewer was cut through wall (4) while it was still standing, as indicated by the plugging of the void by wall (6). This would almost certainly have occurred in the later nineteenth century after mains sewerage was installed in Canterbury (1868-70; Pilbrow 1871).
- 4.6 The structures represented by wall (4) were in turn demolished. This demolition obviously occurred after 1874 and was probably contemporary with a reconstruction of the rear end of No 20 Kings Street that is clearly evident in the fabric. Subsequent levels in the trench all related to modern landscaping in the garden.

## **5 Conclusion and impact assessment**

- 5.1 The evaluation has indicated that the remains of a sequence of medieval and possibly early post-medieval structures survive in the PDA. These would appear to be the truncated remnants of dwarf walls, associated with timber-framed domestic buildings, either forming the rear part of an extensive frontage property, or detached structures within its back gardens. These survive to an elevation of 7.82m OD or 0.9m below present ground surface. Subsequent deposits mostly relate to post-medieval building developments and are of lesser significance. However, the earliest of these (possible chalk floors (11 and 15)) could not be related to any structural elements and therefore their significance or date is less clear. These survived at a depth of 0.8m (7.92m OD).
- 5.2 These levels indicate that any foundations extending to a depth below 0.8m from the present ground surface are likely to affect potentially significant archaeological deposits, and beyond 0.9m depth would intrude into the medieval sequence of layers and structures on the site.

## References

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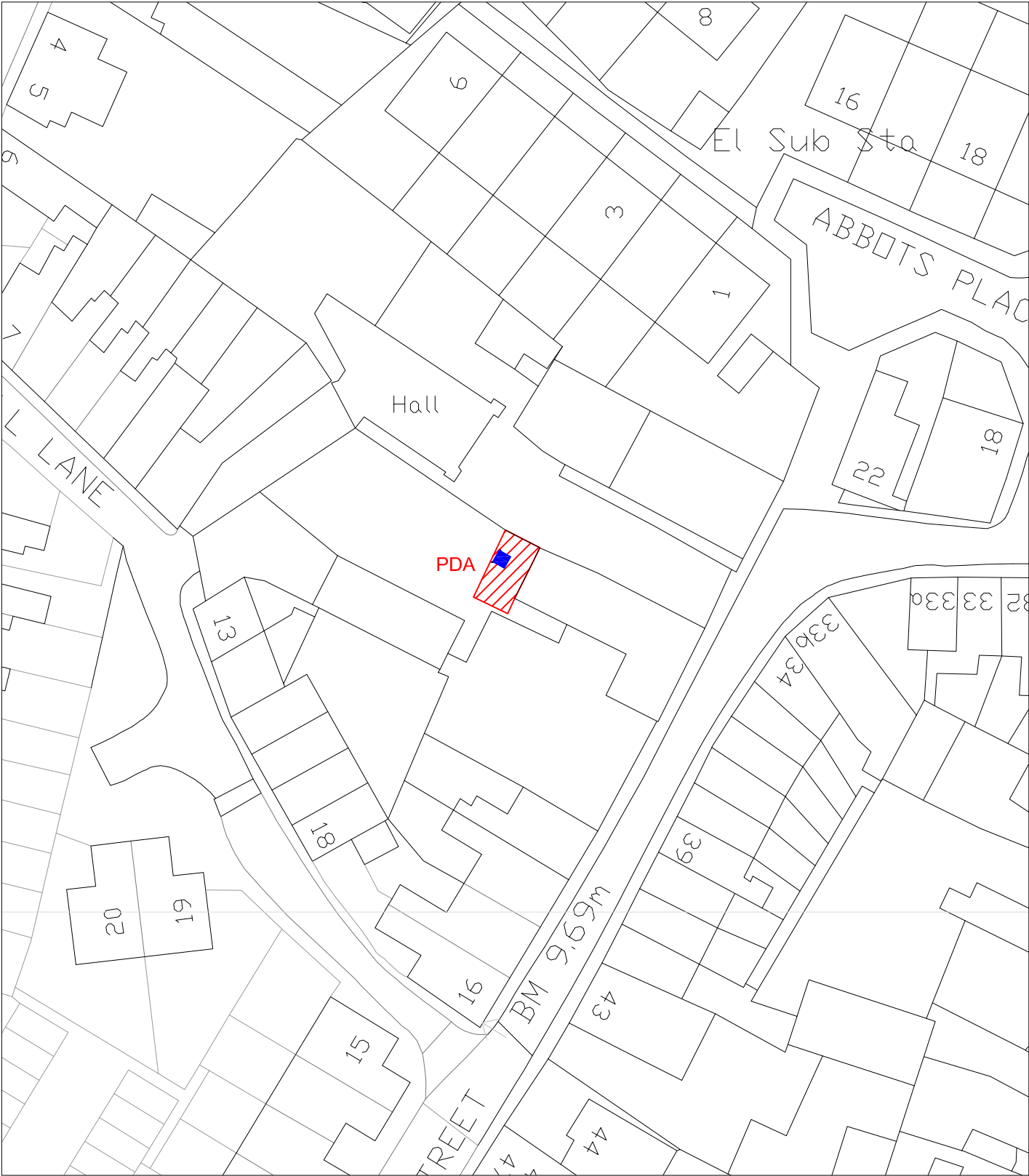
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20 King's Street, Canterbury.  
Fig. 1. Site and trench location

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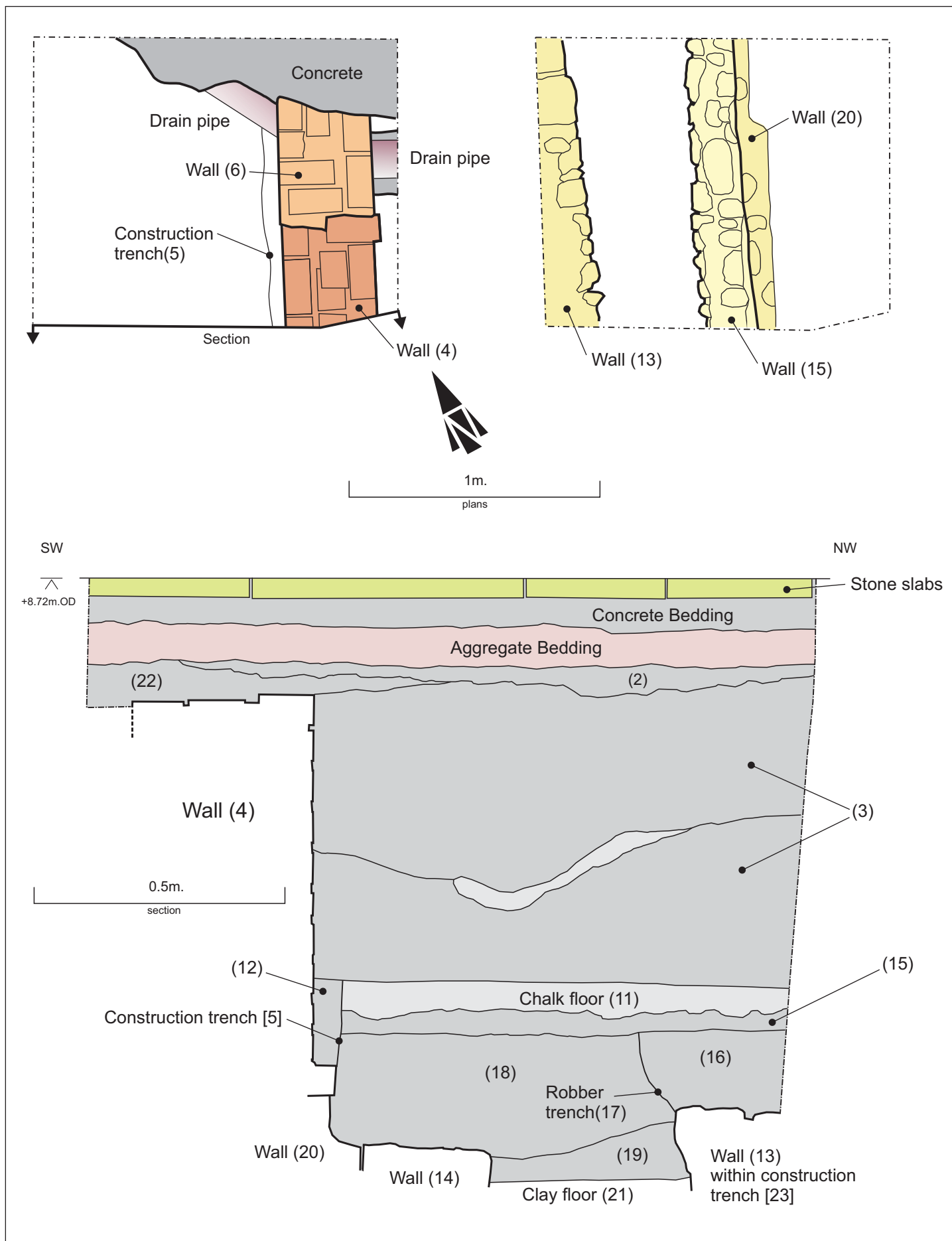


Fig. 2: Site plans and section

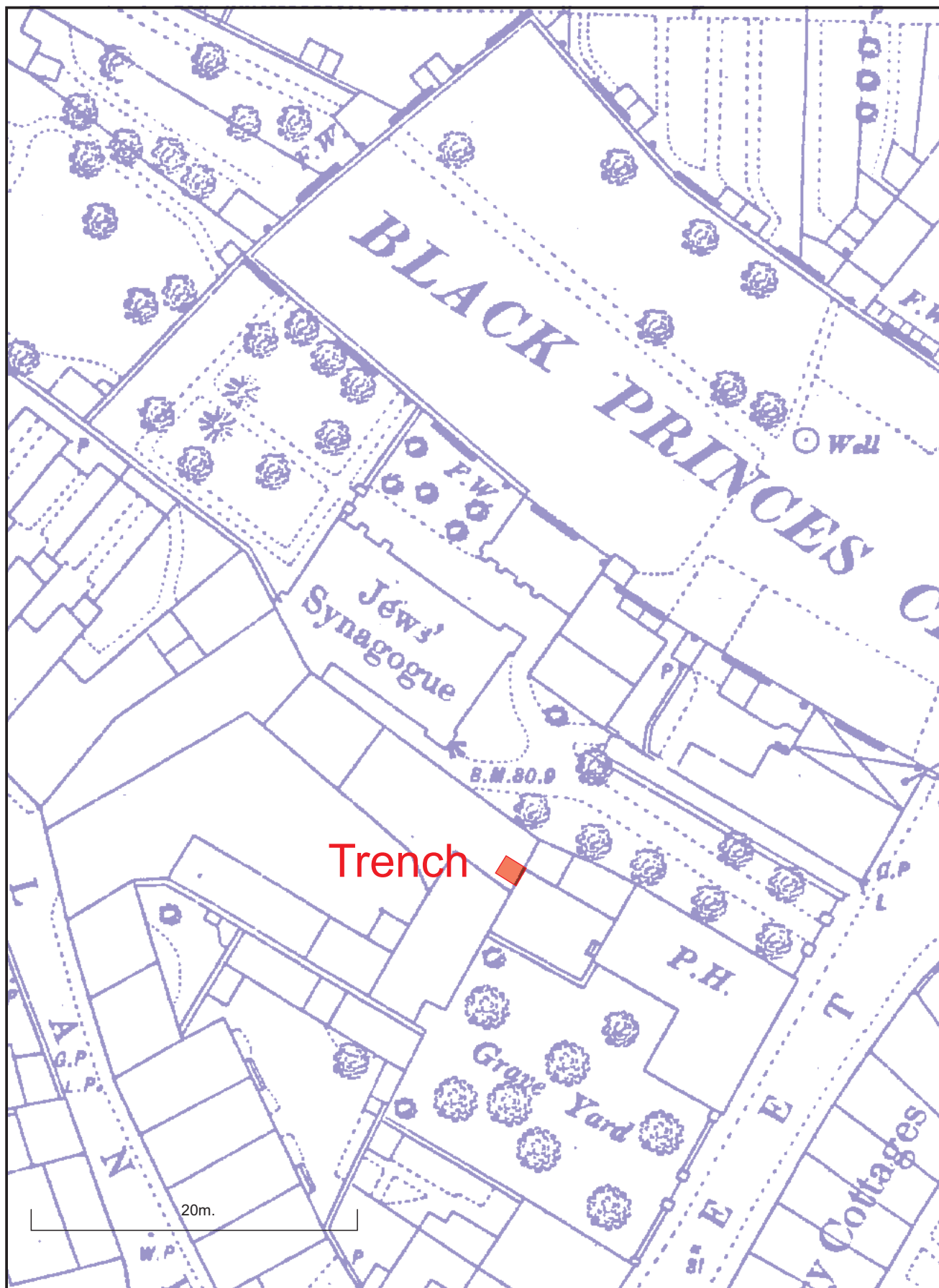


Fig. 3: Excavated trench, shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1874 (scale approximate)





Plate 1: Trench looking south-east, showing walls (4 and 6), and chalk floor (11). Scale 0.5m



Plate 2: Trench looking south-east, showing medieval walls (13, 14 and 20). Scale 0.5m



Plate 3: Trench looking south-west, showing medieval walls (13, 14 and 20) and soil sequence. Scale 0.5m



Plate 4: Wall 4 looking south-west, showing alignment with scar of rebuild in adjacent garden wall. Scale 0.5m