

BHL07

**Data Structure Report of Archaeological Works
(Stage 1) at Burgh Halls, Linlithgow**

Client: West Lothian Council

August 2007

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PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (BHL07)

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Report	August 2007

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Summary

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken by Headland Archaeology at Burgh Halls, Linlithgow comprising historic building recording within the Burgh Halls, monitoring of engineering test pits and trial trench evaluation in the garden area to the rear. The work was in advance of proposed refurbishment of the Burgh Halls and construction of a rear extension by West Lothian Council. The building recording was undertaken in accordance with a condition placed on planning consent. The evaluation to the rear of the Burgh Halls lay within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No. 90201) and required Scheduled Monument Consent.

The Burgh Halls are located to the north of The Cross and on the east side of Kirkgate. The garden area to the rear is bounded by the graveyard of St Michael's parish church to the north and a retaining wall to the south. The evaluation site lies within the historic hub of the medieval settlement. A school situated close to the church was referenced in 1187, whilst a pre-1448 almshouse was located on the east side of the Kirkgate, to the south of the cemetery. A new school was erected in 1625, however during the burgh's occupation by Cromwell both the school and the almshouse were demolished as part of the refortification of the Palace and Peel (Coleman & Dennison 2000, 82). Map evidence from the early 19th century onwards shows no features or structures in the evaluated area. Work carried out in the 1980`s on the retaining wall on the south side of the garden revealed some medieval or post medieval pottery and human bone. Significant disturbance was likely to have occurred over much of the area as part of the 1980s works.

Trial trenching revealed the extent of modern disturbance from the 1980s works and exposed walls possibly relating to the corner of a building surviving beneath this disturbance. The walls appear to predate Wood's map of the area from the 1820`s. The earliest artefact from the site was redeposited and 17th / 18th century in date; no dateable archaeological finds were associated with the early walls. The walls may relate to one of the structures in the vicinity of the Kirkgate demolished by Cromwell around 1650, or to his refortifications themselves.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological programme of works carried out at Burgh Halls, Linlithgow. Building recording works were carried out in response to a planning condition imposed by West Lothian Council following advice provided by West of Scotland Archaeological Service (WoSAS). The evaluation area to the rear lies within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No. 90201) and required Scheduled Monument Consent.

A level 2 Historic Building record was undertaken within the Burgh Halls and recorded significant internal construction details within the building. Archaeological monitoring of engineering test pits followed by intrusive trial trenching was carried out in the garden area to the rear. The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Historic Scotland and the West of Scotland Archaeological Service (WoSAS). The work was undertaken from the 23rd - 25th July in sunny conditions.

2. BACKGROUND

The Burgh Halls lie at the centre of the historic burgh of Linlithgow. To the north of The Cross and on the east side of Kirkgate, which provides the southern approach to Linlithgow Palace from the town (NMRS No. NT 07 NW 13). The Halls and the garden area to the rear lie to the south of the graveyard of St Michael's parish church. A school accessed from the east side of the Kirkgate and probably standing very close to the church was referenced in 1187. An almshouse in existence before 1448 and surviving until the 17th century was also located on the east side of the Kirkgate, to the south of the cemetery.

A new school was erected in 1625, however during the Cromwellian occupation the buildings surrounding the Kirkgate, including the school and the almshouse, were demolished to provide stone for the refortification of the Palace and Peel (Coleman & Dennison 2000, 82). Cromwell is thought to have added one or even two sets of ditches cutting off the promontory from the town, and St. Michael's church was incorporated within the defended complex. Large ditches excavated by Laing (1968) and Stronach (2001) may have represented the remains of Cromwell's defensive ditch and by extrapolation this might have passed through the evaluation area.

The earliest detailed plan of the burgh by Wood in the 1820's records no features or structures within the evaluation area, as is the case with later Ordnance Survey maps. Work carried out in the 1980's on the retaining wall defining the southern limit of the evaluation area revealed some medieval or post medieval pottery in the vicinity and human bone was recovered from a depth of approximately 3.5m (DES 1985, 31). It is possible that the bones derived from previously undisturbed burials associated with the graveyard of St. Michael's parish church, which at one time may have extended into the area.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Monitoring of Engineering Test Pit

Prior to trial trenching the excavation of one engineering test pit was archaeologically monitored. The test pit was dug with a mini- excavator equipped with a 1m wide flat bladed bucket. A record was made of the location, depth and stratigraphy of the test pit.

3.2 Trial Trench Evaluation

It was agreed that up to 20% of the 225 sq m area (Figure 1) should be sampled as part of the evaluation. This equated to an area up to 45 sq m. Two trenches were located with the aim of revealing any undisturbed archaeological features as well as establishing the limit of modern disturbance from the works on the retaining wall. A Digicat Cable Detector was used before trenching commenced to offset the possibility of disturbing any unmarked services. The trenches were initially deturfed by hand before being excavated using a mini- excavator equipped with a 1m wide flat bladed bucket. The trenches were generally excavated to a depth of 0.8m-1m, in accordance with the assumed depth of foundations, but deeper sondages were excavated intermittently. The trenches were reinstated after being recorded.

3.3 Historic Building Recording

Utilising the general standards set out by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (1996), and the techniques and practice promoted by Historic Scotland (Dallas 2003), English Heritage (2004) and the RCAHMS (2004), a Level 2 Historic Building Survey was undertaken. Existing architectural plans and elevations were used as the basis for illustrations (Figures 5 and 6). A photographic survey of the building was undertaken to provide transparencies and high-resolution digital images (Plates 1-40). Coverage included all external elevations and a series of general shots and selected details within the buildings; the locations of all photos are shown in Figures 5 & 6.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Monitoring of Engineering Test Pit

A test pit was located against the eastern wall of Burgh Halls in the garden area to the rear and was 1m wide, 1.6m in length and 0.7m deep. The topsoil comprised a dark brown silty sand, 0.24m deep, overlying modern backfill containing concrete and rubble. Excavation ceased at 0.7m depth. No archaeological finds were recovered.

4.2 Trial Trench Evaluation

Trench 1 (Figures 1 & 2)

Trench 1 was excavated from south to north, running parallel to the eastern wall of Burgh Halls. It measured 15m linear and was on average 0.9m deep. Sondages 3 and 5 excavated within the trench were 1.6m and 1.5m deep respectively.

A topsoil [01] of dark brown silty sand was on average 0.2m in depth. This sealed a deposit [02] of greyish black silty sand containing charcoal, modern pottery, plastic bags and some

animal bone. Mortar and rubble lenses [03] and a light brown silty sand lens [04] formed part of [02]. The depth of this deposit exceeded 0.9m in the south and its base was not reached until Sondage 3 was excavated. Here deposit [02] was 1.1m deep decreasing to 1.0m at the northern extent of the sondage. This overlay a light grey silty sand deposit [08] containing oyster shell and occasional animal bone (identified as butchery waste). Deposit [08] was excavated to a depth of 0.4m, where digging ceased due to the limits of the mini- excavator.

Further north Sondage 5 comprised topsoil [01] of 0.2m depth, overlying deposit [02] which decreased in depth from 0.74m to 0.56m, south to north. This overlay the continuation of light grey silty sand deposit [08] recorded in Sondage 3; here recorded as [06]. Beneath this deposit the remains of two walls forming a corner were uncovered. The face of wall [05] was revealed in the east facing trench section and was oriented north/south. The face was exposed to a depth of 0.7m before excavation reached a safe limit. The top of wall [05] was 0.8m from the ground surface. It was made of worked sandstone blocks bound by a light brown mortar; 1.6m of the wall length was exposed and it appeared that the southern end had been disturbed and was directly overlain by modern deposit [02]. To the north it was tied into wall [07] and overlapped it by 0.56m before terminating.

Wall [07; Figure 3 & 4] ran east/west across the trench. It was 1m thick and exposed to a depth of 0.6m before excavation ceased. The top of the wall was 1.1m below ground level; lower than the top of wall [05]. It appeared to be fair faced on its southern side, composed of sandstone blocks bound by the same mortar as wall [05]. The wall was rubble cored. Occasional inclusions in the bonding matrix were animal bone fragments, oyster shell and small sub- rounded pebbles. There was no apparent foundation cut for wall [07]; it was overlain and abutted by deposit [06], a sample of which contained post- medieval building remains (see Appendix 2).

At the northern limit of Trench 1 the stratigraphy comprised 0.2m topsoil [01] overlying 0.5m of modern backfill deposit [02]. This sealed earlier deposit [06], which was excavated to a depth of 0.15m.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was oriented east/ west, perpendicular to Trench 1, and measured 10.6m linear. It was 0.8m deep on average, except where Sondages 2 and 4 were excavated to a depth of 1.5m and 1.7m respectively. Dark brown silty sand topsoil [01] was approximately 0.2m deep. This sealed modern deposit [02]. The base of [02] was not reached in both sondages and therefore exceeded 1.7m in depth. Excavation could not continue to a greater depth due to the limitations of the mini- excavator.

4.3 Historic Building Recording

The result of building recording and research undertaken for the Linlithgow Burgh Halls Conservation Plan suggested that the fabric at the Burgh Halls was related to 4 distinctive periods: mid 17th to late 18th century, late 18th century to 1846, 1847-1961 and 1962 to 2004. The buildings have been described in detail in the Conservation Plan, in the RCAHMS volume *Tollbooths and Town-Houses* (1996, 135-138) and in McWilliam's Lothian guide (1980, 290-291). The Plan, in particular, describes in meticulous detail the fabric alterations to the building including phasing drawings and individual historic references for each specific feature.

The Burgh Halls consist of two distinct parts: the County Halls, a two-storey range built to William Burn's designs in 1819-21 to the rear of the Town House, designed and built by John Smith in 1668-70. Both, and the Town House in particular, have been significantly altered in the ensuing decades due to changes in use, fashion and the impact of fire.

The vaulted room (Plate 24) in the lower ground floor of the former County Halls is either original or post-1850s. It was either constructed as a boiler room, or as a secure chamber. The W doorway is probably later and the rooms here are subdivided by Period 4 partitions. The E window (although barred) may also be later, though it is still Period 3. The finishing in the vaulted room is from Period 4.

4.4 Watching brief on interior works

Opening up works were undertaken in various locations in the building in order to assess the condition of the masonry. The locations are illustrated in Figures 5 & 6 as are the locations of all the plates included in this report. On the second floor, areas were opened in opposing corners of Hall 2. Work in the NW revealed lathe and plaster from the 3rd period behind the ceiling cornice (Plate 8). The area in the W gable, S of the fireplace had been partially reframed in Period 4 and an electric cupboard showed the mortared masonry behind. At the E end of Hall 2, some of the window jambs retained lathe and plaster behind later wall papering. A number of layers of paint were visible on the plaster. Other areas in the E gable had been reframed in Period 4. All of the walk-in windows have been boxed out in Period 4.

On the upper ground floor, the west gable was exposed revealing a blocked window (also visible externally) with plastered jambs. The window may have been blocked in Period 3 or 4, perhaps to add privacy to the courtroom. Another smaller hole was opened directly above the fireplace. The lathe and plaster behind is Period 3 and associated artefacts found between the wall and the lathes included a small envelope, a tram ticket (for the Scottish Motor Vehicle Traction company Ltd, a Fry's chocolate packet and cigarettes; Player's Navy Cut and Wills Wild Woodbine, both part of Imperial). These are probably from the inter-war period, suggesting a date for the lathe and plaster in this area. At the SE corner, the window had lathe and plaster finish in the jamb and below the cill. The E facing window in the same area had later plasterboard and studs, inserted in Period 4. A small inspection hatch revealed a later coal fire built with Craigend bricks (near Falkirk). Hatches above the doorways in the N wall revealed brickwork above metal lintels with timber stud and plasterboard: all Period 4 work (Plates 33 and 34).

5. DISCUSSION

Trenches 1 and 2 established that a modern infill deposit deepens from north to south through the evaluated area. This is consistent with a plan of intended structural reinforcement works to the retaining wall in the 1980's (information supplied by client). However, it appears that excavations were not as deep at the northern end as implied on the plans, with modern backfill only noted to a depth of 0.7m below the current ground surface at the northern terminus of Trench 1.

Archaeologically significant deposits and structures survive beneath modern disturbance. The section shown in Figure 2 shows the depth profile of modern disturbance and archaeologically significant remains underneath. The concrete ground beam associated with the retaining wall was not revealed and was presumably removed.

Walls [05] and [07] formed the corner of a structure. The depth of both walls exceeded that of the trench and wall [05] appeared to have been disturbed by the 1980s works to the south. The full width of wall [07] was exposed and found to be a substantial 1m. No dating evidence was directly associated with the walls, however the deposit surrounding, therefore postdating, the walls contained occasional butchered animal bone fragments and oyster shells. A sample from this deposit contained some building materials that could date from the 17th century on (Appendix 2).

Cartographic evidence from the 1820s on shows no structures at this location, suggesting the walls derive from an earlier date. It is possible they are the remains of a building demolished during the occupation by Cromwell to provide stone for the refortification of Linlithgow Palace and Peel. The 1625 school and pre-1448 almshouse both stood in the vicinity. Another possibility is that the walls could relate to Cromwell's fortifications themselves. The earliest artefacts recovered from the site can be broadly attributed to this period.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Laing, L.R. 1968 'Excavations at Linlithgow Palace, West Lothian, 1966-7' in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland*, 1966-67, Vol 99, 111-147.

Lindsay, W.J. 1985 in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 1985*. CBA.

Stronach, S. 2001 *Results of Archaeological Assessment of Linlithgow Palace and Peel, West Lothian*. Unpublished client report.

Maps (National Library of Scotland)

1820 John Wood. Plan of the town of Linlithgow.

1858 Ordnance Survey 1:10, 560 scale. Linlithgowshire. Sheet 5.

APPENDIX 1- SITE REGISTERS**1.1 Context Register**

Context No.	Description
01	Topsoil
02	Modern backfill deposit
03	Rubble and mortar lens within [02]
04	Brown sandy deposit within [02]
05	Wall remains oriented N-S. Forms corner with [07]
06	Light grey silty sand deposit below [02]
07	Wall remains oriented E-W. Forms corner with [05]
08	Light grey silty sand deposit. Same as [06]

1.2 Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Scale	Description
1	1:20	East facing section. Trench 1
2	1:20	South facing section showing wall [07] in trench 1
3	1:20	Plan of wall [07] in Trench 1
4	1:50	South facing section Trench 2
5	1:10	South facing section, engineering test pit 1

1.3 Sample Register

Sample No.	Context No.	Description
1	06	Deposit around wall [07]

1.4 Photographic Registers

Shot No.	Direction facing	Description	Date
1		ID shot	23/7/07
2	S	Engineering test pit 1	23/7/07
3	S	Working shot- deturfing	23/7/07
4	N	S. facing section of Trench 2 showing sandstone deposit	23/7/07
5	S	N. facing section of Trench 2 showing no sandstone	23/7/07
6	N	S. facing section of Sondage 4, Trench 2	23/7/07
7	E	W. facing section of Trench 2	24/7/07
8	E	W. facing section of Trench 1 with plastic at base	24/7/07
9	W	E. facing section of Trench 1, Sondage 3	24/7/07
10	N	S. facing section of Trench 1, Sondage 5 showing wall	24/7/07
11	N	S. facing section of Trench 1, Sondage 5 showing wall	24/7/07
12	E	W. facing section of trench 1, Sondage 5	24/7/07
13	W	E. facing section of Trench 1, Sondage 5	24/7/07
14	S	Shot of excavated Trench 1	25/7/07

15	E	Plan view of wall [07] Trench 1, Sondage 5	25/7/07
16	E	Plan view of wall [07] Trench 1, Sondage 5	25/7/07
17	N	S. facing elevation of wall [07] Trench 1	25/7/07
18	N	S. facing elevation of wall [07] Trench 1	25/7/07
19	NE	SW facing corner of walls [05] & [07] Trench 1	25/7/07
20	W	E facing section showing walls [05] & [07]	25/7/07
21	W	E facing section showing walls [05] & [07]	25/7/07

APPENDIX 2 – FINDS ASSESSMENT

Julie Franklin

The 14 sherds of pottery are all of post-medieval date, possibly all 18th century. The sherds from Tr.1 appear to represent 4 bowls, possibly all contemporary redware, creamware and pearlware of late 18th or early 19th century date. The sherds from Tr.2 are more varied and include a probable teapot base of late 18th or 19th century date; an 18th or 19th century slip-decorated redware dish sherd, possibly with an improving message (the letters 'Go-' are discernable - 'God'/'Good'?); and potentially the oldest sherd, a piece of 17th or early 18th century local greyware, possibly from a bowl or other similar open form.

The finds from context 006 are of post-medieval building materials: pan tile and mortar fragments. They may date back as far as the 17th century.

Tr.	Ctxt	Smpl	Material	Qty	Description	Spot Date
1	U/S		Pottery	11	3 Mod Redware, slip lined bowls, 2 vessels 8 Mod Whiteware, plain creamware bowls, 2 frags of blue trans printed	18 th -e.19 th
2	U/S		Pottery	3	1 Mod Whiteware, polygonal ?teapot base, blue line décor 1 Mod Redware, slip decoration, ?writing - 'Go-' 1 Post-Med Reduced, base sherd, internal olive glaze, bowl? 17 th /e.18 th	?17 th -19 th
	006		Mortar	4	Lime mortar fragments	
	006		CBM	2	Pan tile sherd and small fragment of brick/tile	17 th /20 th

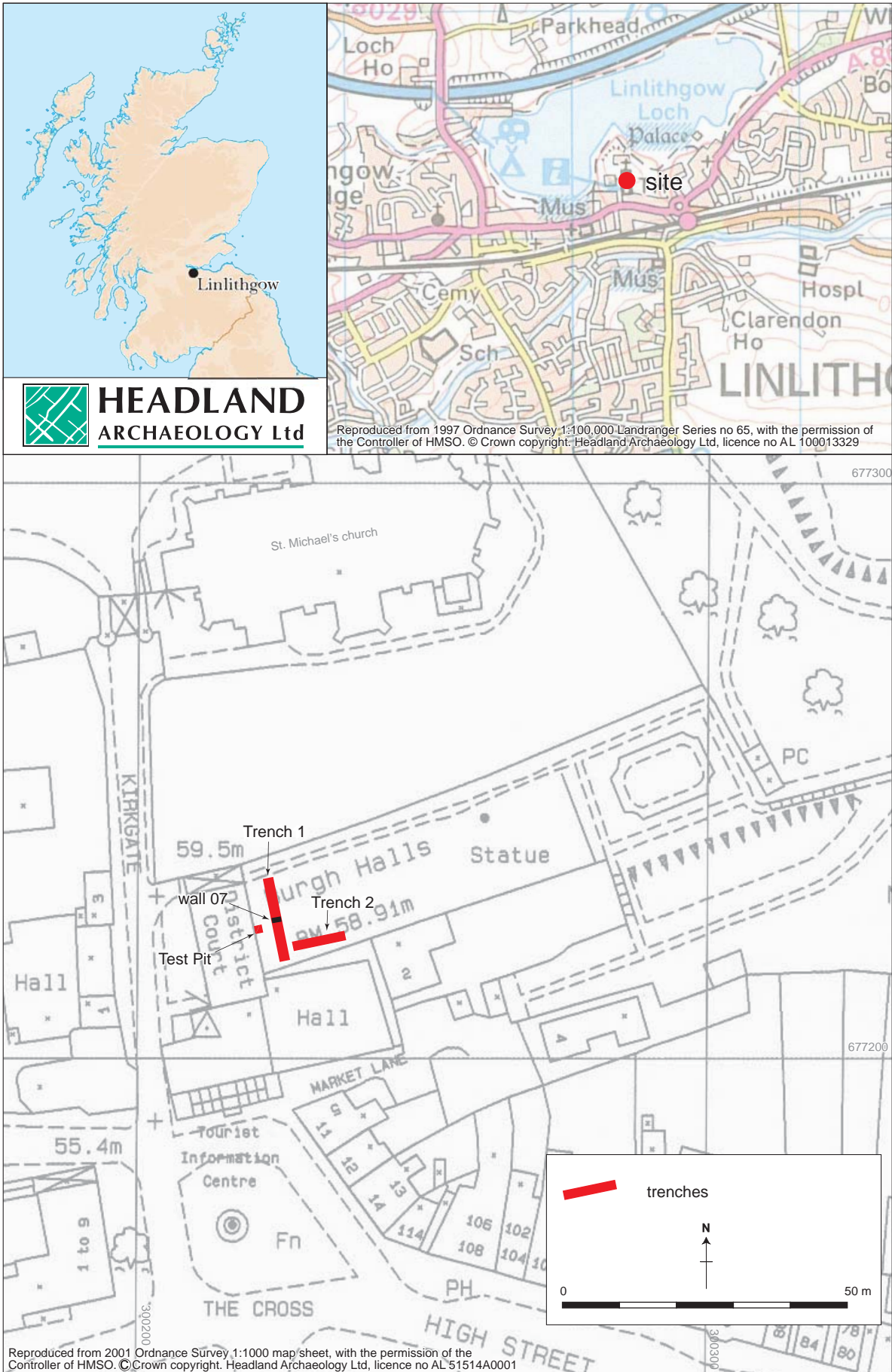


Figure 1: BHL07, Burgh Halls, Linlithgow - Location of evaluation trenches.

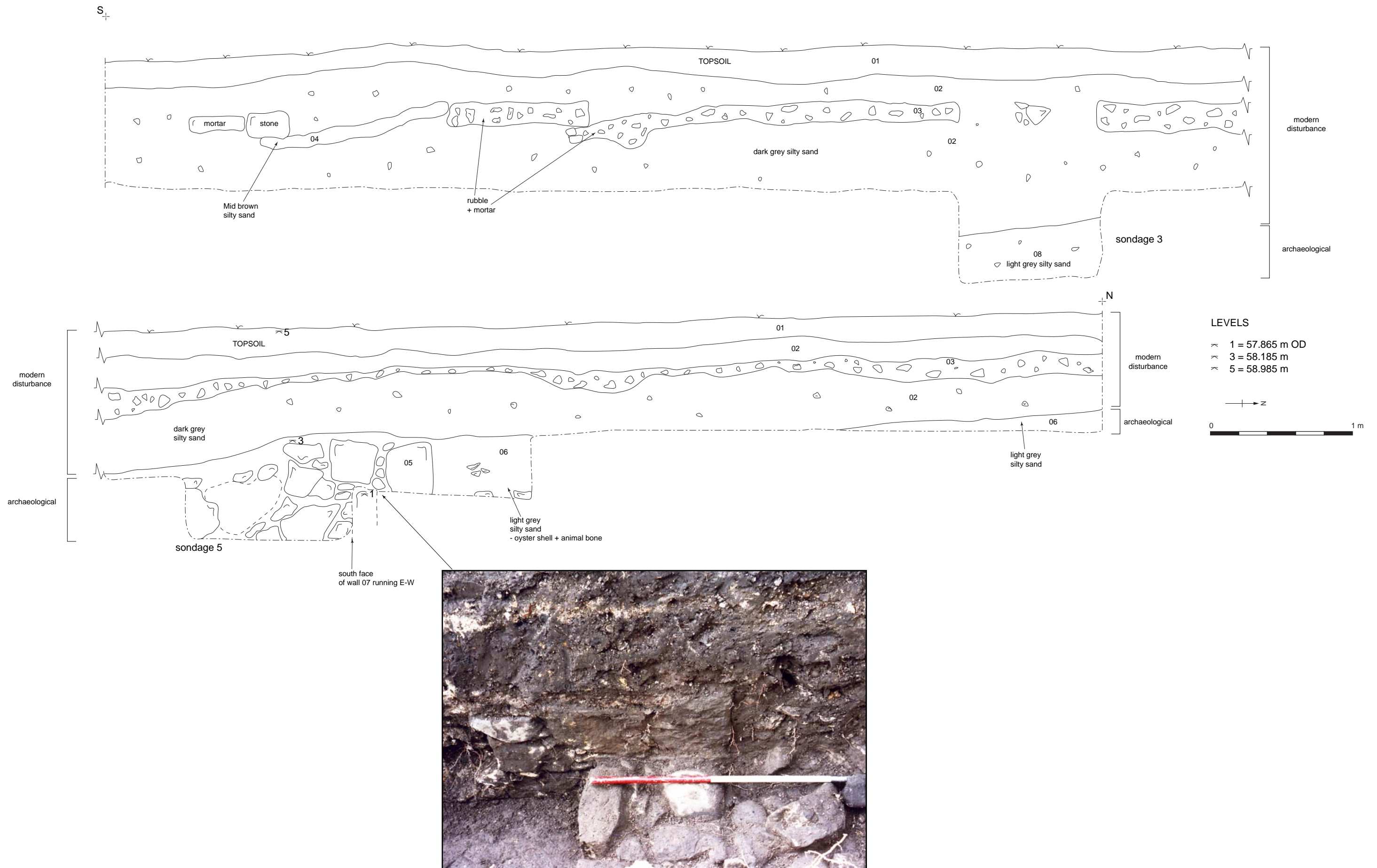
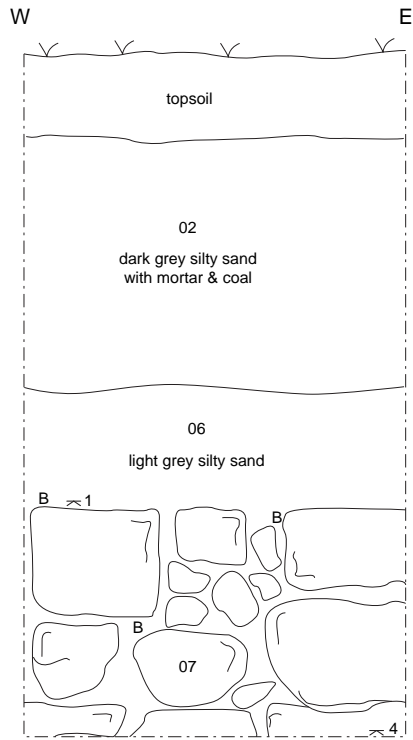


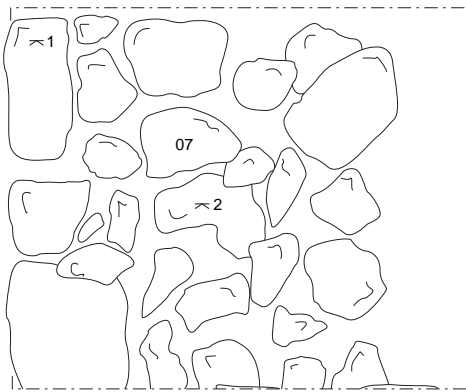
Figure 2: BHL07, Burgh Halls, Linlithgow
 - East facing section Trench 1 & detail of walls 05 & 07.



Key;
B = animal bone



Fig. 3 - South face of wall 07 in Trench 1, sondage 3



LEVELS
 × 1 = 57.865 m OD
 × 2 = 57.88 m
 × 4 = 57.56 m



Fig. 4 - Plan of wall 07 in Trench 1

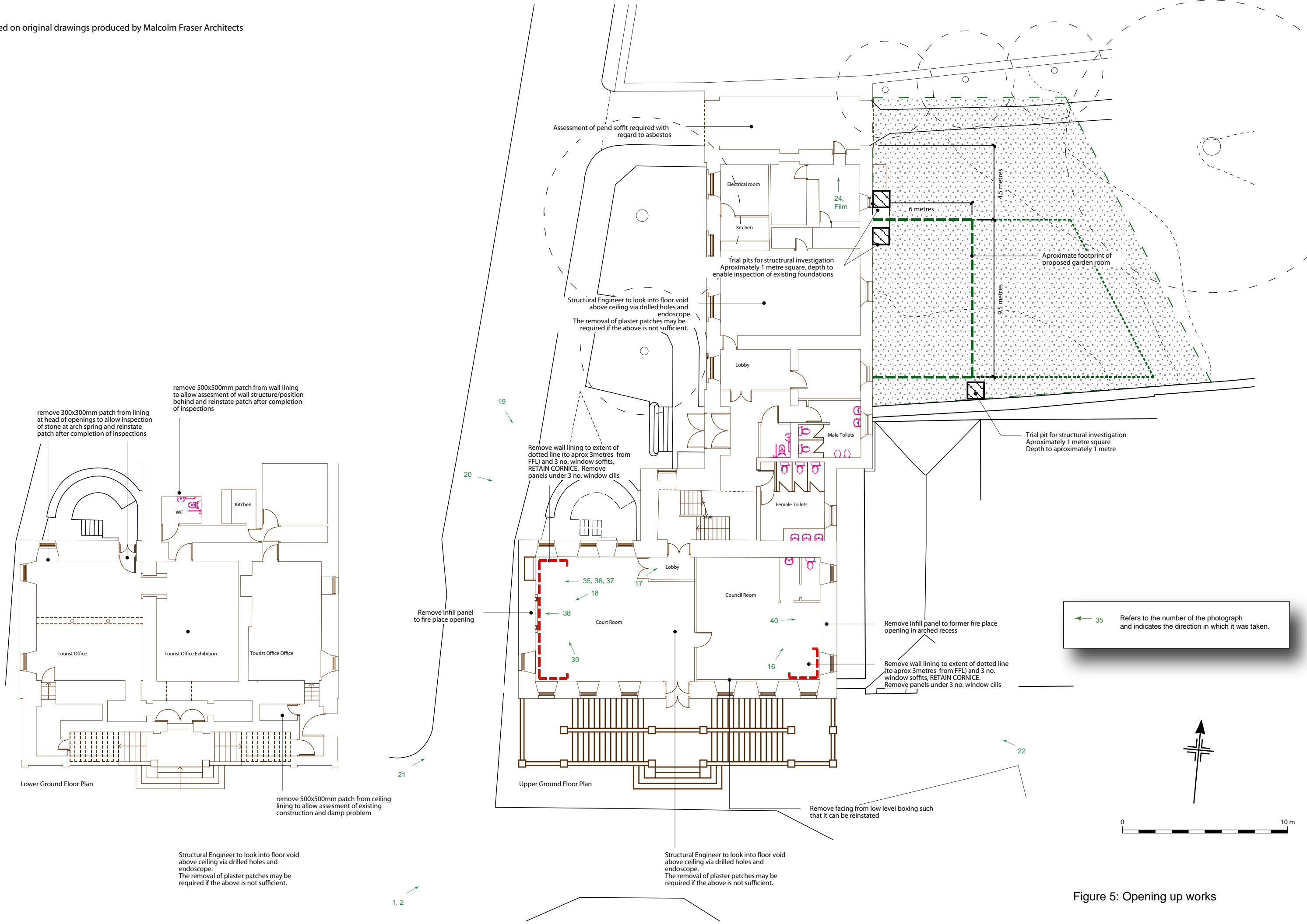


Figure 5: Opening up works

Based on original drawings produced by Malcolm Fraser Architects

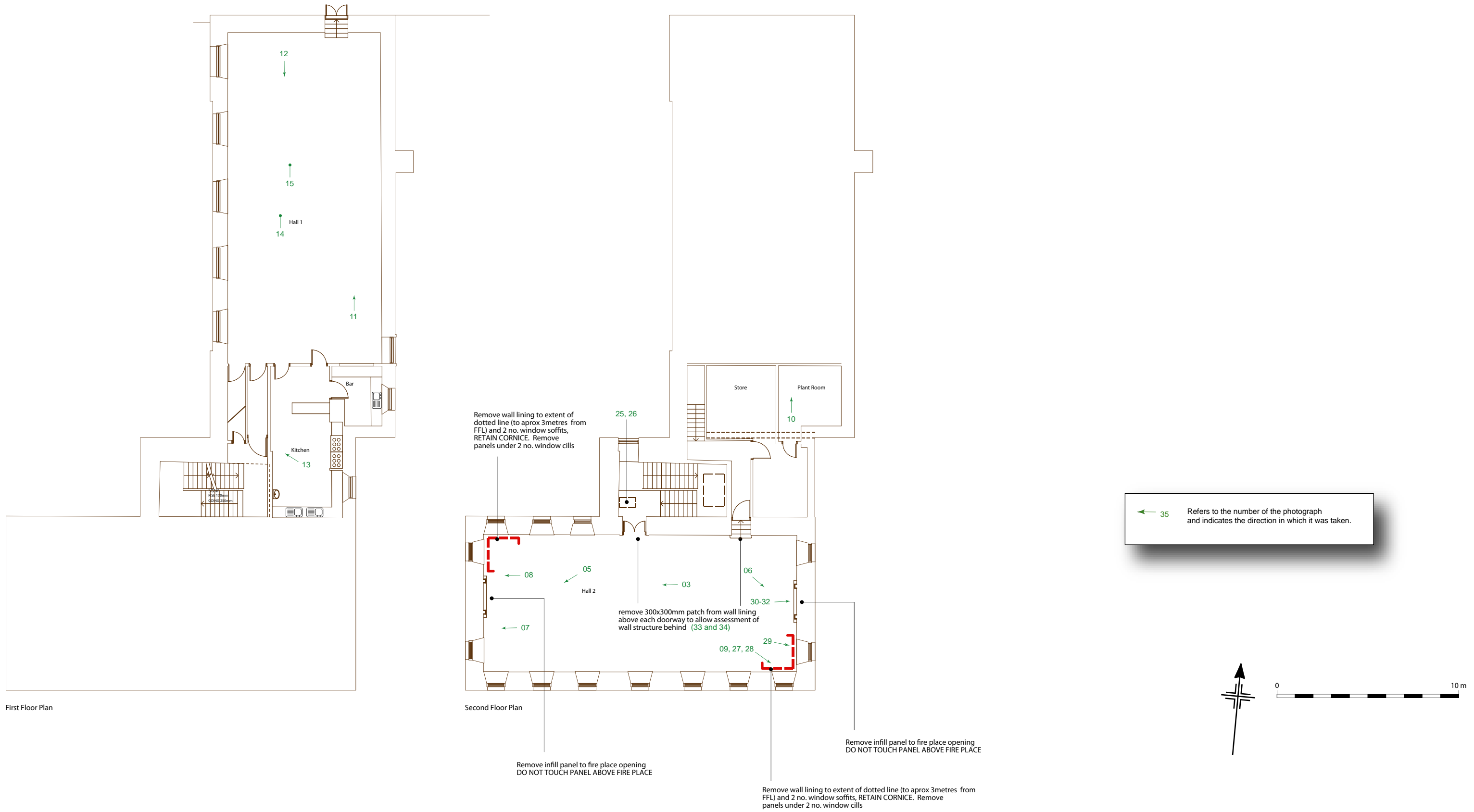


Figure 6: Opening up works



BHL07-01.jpg



BHL07-02.jpg



BHL07-03.jpg



BHL07-04.jpg



BHL07-05.jpg



BHL07-06.jpg



BHL07-07.jpg



BHL07-08.jpg



BHL07-09.jpg



BHL07-10.jpg



BHL07-11.jpg



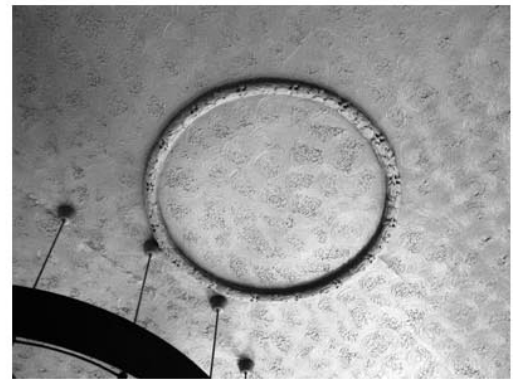
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