



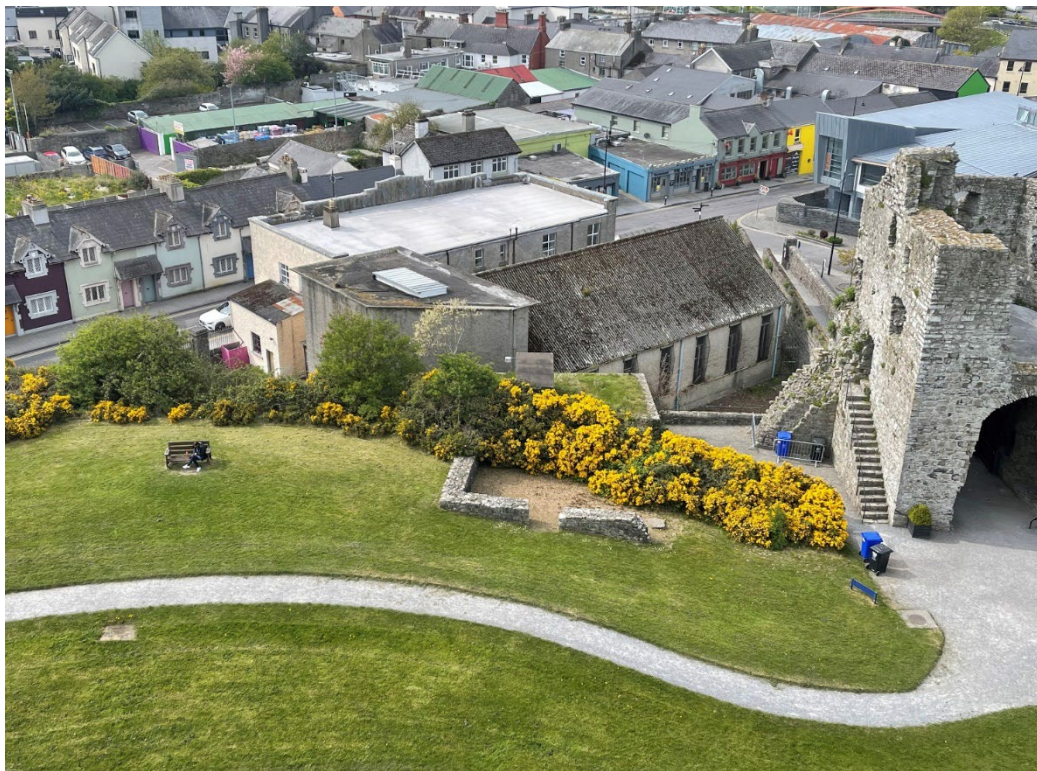
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
CONSULTANCY SERVICES UNIT

Archaeological Assessment at Trim Visitor Centre, Market House, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath

Ministerial Consent No. C001167

Registration No. E005477

Detection Licence No. R000605



ITM: 680122, 756767

National Monument No. 514

RMP/SMR Nos: ME036-048 & ME036-048004

RPS No.: 91253

Author: Donald Murphy

17th April 2023



OPW Oifig na
nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works

ACSU Ref.: 2240

PROJECT DETAILS

Project	Proposed Trim Visitor Centre at the Market House, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath
Report Type	Archaeological Assessment
Ministerial Consent No.	C001167
Registration No.	E005477
Detection Licence No.	R000605
Archaeologist	Donald Murphy
Client	Office of Public Works
Site	The Market House, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath
Townland	Manorland, Trim
ITM Refs	680122, 756767
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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of an archaeological assessment (test trenching) with the use of a metal detector in relation to the proposed Trim Visitor Centre at the Market House, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath (ITM 680122, 756767). This assessment was carried out following recommendations included in an Archaeological Impact Assessment Report by Donald Murphy in 2022, for monitoring with the use of a metal detector and advance testing of the proposed development to assess the potential for archaeological deposits surviving on site and determine if possible the line of the moat that originally surrounded the castle.

The Market House is located on the east side of Castle Street and adjacent to the Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004-). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078. It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089 and ME036-048090 located just to the east. The Market House is a Protected Structure listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This protected structure consists of the former Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, and is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH 14328035. The building is a former market house, built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The site is also located within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048.

An examination of cartographic sources and historic images revealed that around 1812-1817 a road existed within the footprint of the current Castle Street, and the castle moat is no longer shown, suggesting it was backfilled by that stage. The 1835 map depicts a row of detached buildings along the site's west extent with rear gardens or open areas. The majority of the site, particularly adjacent to the Curtain Wall, has no buildings shown. By the time of the 1909 map, the detached buildings were demolished, and a square structure with two minor projections at the rear is depicted on a roughly triangular site, bounded by walls to the north and east. The Ordnance Survey Cassini map of 1958 shows the building extended to the rear, depicted as a public building and labelled as Town Hall. The 1995 aerial shows the site largely unchanged, and it seems areas to the south and north of the building were used as a carpark, and sometime before 2005, a bus stop was added to the north of the building. A small rectangular area at the rear of the building, adjacent to the town wall and gate, is visible as grassed since 2005, later overgrown but now cleared of vegetation.

Archaeological investigations carried out previously in the immediate environs of the site (03E1484, E1138, 96E247, 02E1843) and outside of the castle, suggest a high potential of unknown medieval remains located within undisturbed areas. The archaeological features exposed in the immediate vicinity of the site include medieval moat fills, the external moat cut, and a cellar, while to the north of the site, human remains were found on a number of occasions. Trim Castle itself was the subject of several phases of major archaeological excavations in advance of its conservation.

The initial site inspection undertaken on the 26th of April 2022 by Donald Murphy as part of the impact assessment concluded that the archaeological potential of the site is very high as it is located within the area of a medieval moat surrounding Trim Castle. This was deliberately backfilled with debris of post-medieval date, and by 1812, a road running within the current footprint of Castle Street developed. Excavations (03E1484) in adjacent Castle Street, revealed undisturbed medieval moat fills survived at a depth of 1.5m below present ground level, although in places disturbance

extended to a maximum depth of 2.6m. The external cut of the moat dug through natural clays was exposed at a depth of 0.6m to the west of the site.

The proposed development involves the demolition of the ballroom complex and extended buildings, the construction of a new extension, the insertion of a lift within the Market House, the construction of a covered walkway linking the building with the existing ramp to the castle, any additional new services required and the proposed landscaping of the site. This has the potential to impact archaeological deposits where they survive.

Archaeological test trenching was carried out by Donald Murphy of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd (ACSU) from 27th – 29th March 2023, under ministerial consent (C001167, Registration no. E005477, & Detection Licence No. R000605) issued by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004. The area for testing was limited as the Market House building is still in use and access is tight, however the ballroom to the rear was vacant. A total of four test trenches were excavated, two within the ballroom and two external trenches at the location of proposed geotechnical trial pits. The trenches were positioned to target the line of the moat and the area outside the moat, to assess if archaeological deposits survive and to assess the level of disturbance caused by previous developments at the site. Due to the narrow access routes around the rear and into the ballroom, only a small mini digger could be used. The maximum depth that could be reached with this machine was 2m.

The four test trenches measuring 1.8m in width, with a total overall length of 26 linear metres were excavated to a depth of 2m. Below the concrete/gravel surface a brown stony sterile clay fill was evident throughout the four trenches and subsoil was not exposed in any trench. Sherds of black glazed earthenware, clay pipe stems and other modern finds were recovered from two of the trenches. It would appear that the site was in-filled/raised in advance of the construction of the Market Hall in the mid-19th century. A mortared stone drain parallel to the rear wall of the Market Hall & contemporary with it was exposed at the base of trench 1 at a depth of 2m beneath the fill. Any surviving archaeological deposits including the moat could possibly exist below this level. No archaeological features or deposits were identified within any of the excavated trenches.

The testing has confirmed that the upper 2m to the south and east of the Market House are disturbed or represent imported material to the site. This was probably done when the Market House was being constructed along with the uncovered mortared drain to the rear. Given this level of disturbance across the four trenches excavated it is unlikely that the proposed new building will have any impact on archaeological features. The only potential impact could be from piles or foundation levels deeper than 2m. All future demolition works of the extensions to Market House including the ballroom, stage area, fly tower, public entrance area, public toilet facilities, and the service areas to the rear and side of the building will be monitored under ministerial consent C001167. Excavation of geotechnical trial pits and all groundworks associated with the development will also be monitored under ministerial consent C001167, and will also include metal detection (R000605) to scan relevant deposits to aid in artefact recovery. It will also be necessary to carry out further test trenching to the north of the site, when access is available following demolition of the ballroom and other extensions, to attempt to identify the edge of the moat in this part of the site if such survives below the 2m limit achievable during the current testing. As the moat has the potential to contain waterlogged deposits and organic finds, their retrieval and preservation/conservation will also need

to be addressed if there is to be any impact in this area. Once the site investigation works are complete and a detailed layout and foundation design is prepared, a more detailed impact statement will be submitted. Further mitigation could include archaeological excavation in areas to be impacted by development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of an archaeological assessment (test trenching) with the use of a metal detector in relation to the proposed Trim Visitor Centre at the Market House, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath (ITM 680122, 756767, Figures 1-21). The Market House is located on the east side of Castle Street and adjacent to the Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the curtain wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078 (Figure 1). It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089 and ME036-048090 located just to the east. The Market House is a Protected Structure listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This protected structure consists of the former Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, and is also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH 14328035. The building is a former market house, built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The site is also located within the Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area and the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Trim ME036-048. Archaeological test trenching was carried out by Donald Murphy of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd (ACSU) from 27th – 29th March 2023, under ministerial consent (C001167, Registration no. E005477, & Detection Licence No. R000605) issued by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004.

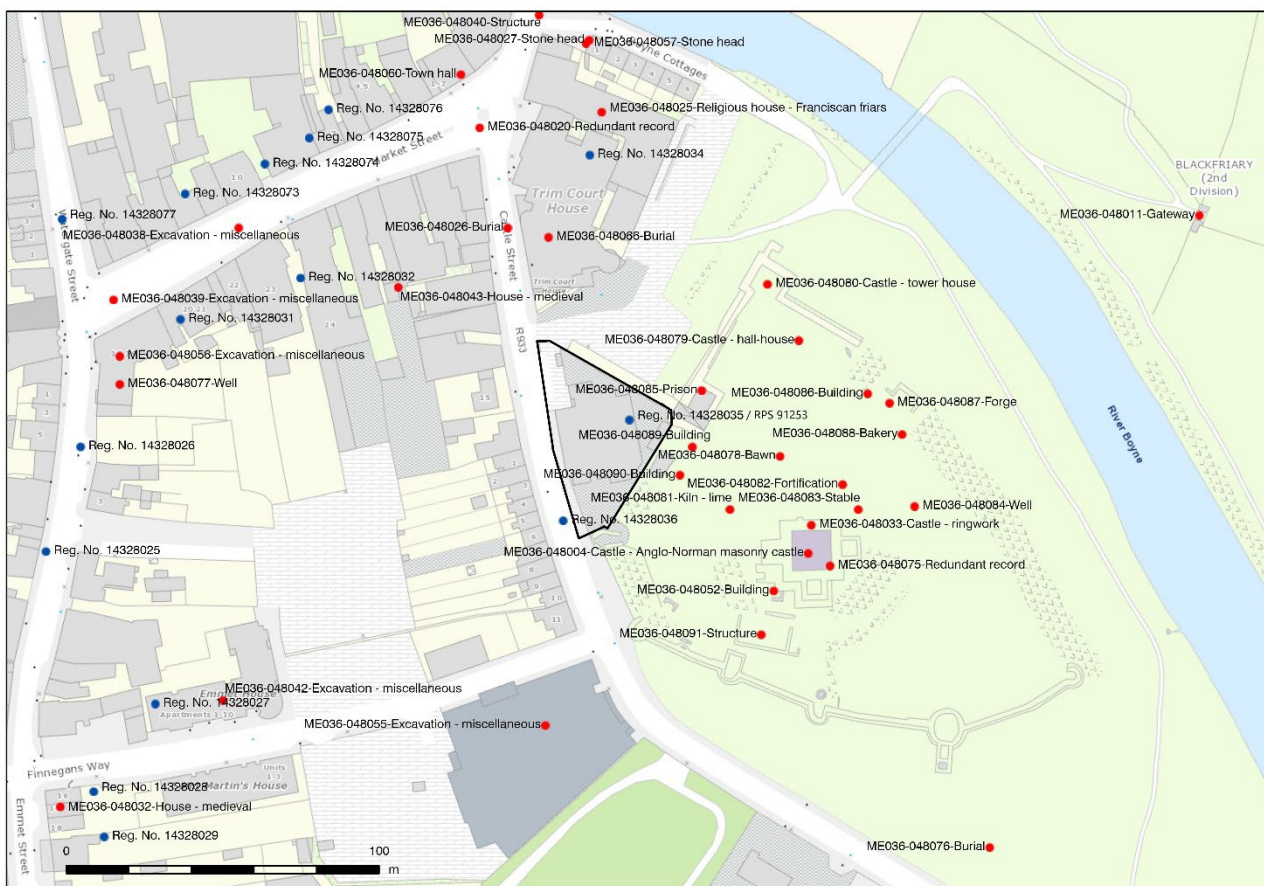


Figure 1: Location of site and nearby Recorded Monuments and Buildings recorded in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

2. THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Proposal

This archaeological assessment has been carried out in relation to the development of a Visitor Centre for Trim Castle within the existing Market House at Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath that is currently at Stage 2 developed sketch design stage. The proposed development involves the demolition of the ballroom complex and extended buildings to the rear of Market House, the construction of a new extension, the insertion of a lift within Market House, the construction of a covered walkway linking the building with the existing ramp to the castle, any additional new services required and the proposed landscaping of the site.

2.2 Archaeological Requirements

This initial impact assessment report (April 2022) was prepared following a recommendation by the Senior Archaeologist of the National Monuments Service in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to carry out an Archaeological Impact Assessment and to recommend mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the proposed development on Trim Castle and its associated archaeology. It was prepared to accompany a Part 8 planning application for the site. The purpose of that assessment was to gain an understanding of the historic environment within and surrounding the proposed development area. It assessed the site's significance relative to its hinterland and, ultimately the impact any proposed development of the site would have on these recorded monuments, protected and historic structures.

The assessment, as specified in the Scope of Works prepared by OPW for the project, addresses in particular:

- *the impact of the proposed demolition of the ballroom complex on the curtain walls of Trim Castle; on the site of the moat associated with Trim Castle defences and on potential sub-surface archaeology.*
- *the impact of the proposed covered entrance to ramp and service gate on possible archaeological features associated with the medieval causewayed entrance into Trim Castle and its potential sub surface archaeology.*
- *the impact of the proposed new extension to the Market House on potential sub-surface archaeology*
- *the impact of associated services on potential sub-surface archaeology*
- *the visual impact of this proposed development on Trim Castle from inside and outside the castle.*
- *Measures to safe guard archaeological features during pre and work phases.*

The impact assessment report recommended the following:

As a minimum mitigation in the form of monitoring of the demolition of all buildings and of all groundworks under strict archaeological supervision is required. The proximity of the site to the National Monument of Trim Castle (Nat. Mon. 514) requires that Ministerial Consent is obtained prior to works commencing. A metal detector should also be used to scan relevant deposits and aid in artefact recovery. All archaeological works should be carried out by an experienced licence

eligible archaeologist in line with a method statement submitted and approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. More specific mitigation is however required for the proposed areas of impact.

Subsequently a Method Statement for archaeological testing and geotechnical site investigations with the use of a metal detector to be carried out under ministerial consent was submitted to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage by Donald Murphy of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd (ACSU). Ministerial consent C001167, registration no.s E005477 & R000605 was issued by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004 on the 10th February 2023, subject to the following conditions:

- a) All works shall be carried out as specified in the proposed application, accompanying documents, except as may be otherwise agreed in writing by the National Monuments Service (“NMS”) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Site investigation works shall be archaeologically monitored;
- b) The nominated archaeologist, Mr Donald Murphy shall carry out the archaeological test excavation and monitoring of site investigations;
- c) The nominated archaeologist shall adhere to the submitted method statement for test excavation and monitoring of site investigation works, which is now approved;
- d) Should significant archaeological features be found, any works which would affect them shall cease pending agreement with the National Monuments Service as to how they are to be dealt with (i.e. preserved in-situ or archaeologically excavated and recorded);
- e) The said archaeological test excavation and monitoring, and any further archaeological excavation, shall be subject to the further conditions set out in the Appendix to this Consent, and any references therein to the “excavation” shall be construed as references to the said archaeological monitoring or any further archaeological excavation. References therein to “the licensee” shall be construed as references to Mr Donald Murphy, or any such archaeologist as may, with the prior agreement of the National Monuments Service, carry out the said archaeological test excavation and monitoring or any further archaeological excavation. Any references therein to the “method statement” shall be construed as references to the proposals for archaeological test excavation and monitoring contained in the said Application and approved Method Statement or any further Method Statement as may be submitted and approved by the National Monuments Service;
- f) Any disturbed soils and deposits during the works shall be checked thoroughly for the presence of archaeological objects and accordingly care shall be taken in the course of such work to protect any archaeological objects which may be uncovered. A metal detector shall be used to assist in this retrieval. The detection device survey and usage shall endeavour to identify metal objects in-situ rather than in a spoil heap or other location that it is removed from its original context;
- g) Archaeological objects of all periods that may come to light shall be retained and treated appropriately in line with current National Museum of Ireland guidance standards (2022);

- h) This Consent may be revoked or suspended by the Minister on grounds of breach of, or non-compliance with, any condition of this Consent or otherwise on the grounds that such revocation or suspension is necessary in the interests of protection of the archaeological heritage or otherwise in the public interest. This is without prejudice to any powers of the Minister under any enactment;
- i) A copy of this Consent shall be given to the archaeologist specified under Condition (b) above and to each other professional adviser to the project and any on-site managers or supervisors;
- j) This Ministerial Consent shall remain active for six months from the date of issue. Any works intended beyond this date, or any additional works proposed and not outlined in the original application documentation, shall require a separate application to this Department for an extension/variation to this Ministerial Consent.

2.3 Methodology

A desktop survey was carried out involving a literature review and consultation of the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) compiled and updated by the National Monuments Service and the National Historic Properties Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The RMP is comprised of manuals that list all known archaeological sites and monuments in a county with accompanying maps (based on Ordnance Survey (OS) six-inch maps) locating these sites. All sites included in the RMP are protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930–2004). The SMR consists of all records stored in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland national database and is presented in the Historic Environment Viewer, which also includes sites listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The last published RMP for County Meath is dated 1996, and as such many of the sites listed in the SMR are scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP.

The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland were also consulted to assess the area's archaeological potential. These files list, on a townland basis, all archaeological artefacts in the care of or known to the museum. Such a record can provide evidence for human settlement or activity in the absence of physical remains or documentary references. The results of previous and ongoing archaeological investigations were also taken into account in order to evaluate the level of archaeological remains coming to light in the area. Historical maps held by the Map Library of Trinity College Dublin and aerial photography from the Geological Survey of Ireland were both consulted. These sources can indicate areas of archaeological potential through features like curving field boundaries, crop marks and soil marks and can provide information regarding the nature and extent of recorded archaeological sites that have become denuded since the early 19th century. Historical maps are also useful in identifying other features of cultural heritage significance.

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 was consulted as the latter contains a Record of Protected Structures for the county. Further buildings and features of architectural interest in the area that are not included on the Record of Protected Structures are detailed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH).

A site visit was carried out to examine the existing monuments in the immediate vicinity of the site and assess whether or not the site contained any evidence for the presence of any previously unrecorded areas or features of historical or

archaeological significance and assess the impacts that the proposed development would have on archaeological features. Test excavation was then carried out in order to determine the existing levels of disturbance within the site and the levels at which in situ archaeological deposits existed and also to try and determine or identify the edges of the moat which originally surrounded the castle. The test trenches were laid out in order to target the probable inner and outer edges of the moat and also assess whether deposits existed outside the presumed line of the moat. Owing to the existing nature of the site with buildings still in situ, the test excavations were constrained. Only a small micro excavator could gain access through existing doorways and external access paths in order to excavate the trenches and the maximum depth that could be reached with such a machine was 2m.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 Archaeological & Historical Background

The site is located within the north portion of Manorland (1st Division) in the southern portion of Trim town, just north of Trim Castle and west of the Trim Gate leading into the castle. It lies on the east side of Castle Street that extends north and runs along the western extent of the Trim Castle Curtain Wall, before joining with Market Street further north. Castle Street is not of medieval origin, as within its footprint, burials and the original castle moat were previously identified through excavation (Fibiger, O’Carroll, 2009). It appears that a lane within the current Castle Street footprint was first depicted on Larkin’s map of 1817 (published 1817, surveyed 1812), suggesting that by that point, the moat was backfilled (Figure 3). This same lane is apparent in Charles Pratt’s illustration of Trim Castle in 1820 (Figure 4) but is not shown on a ‘Plan of the Manor of Trim’ prepared for Wellington’s sale of the Castle in 1816 (Figure 2) so may not have been long in existence.

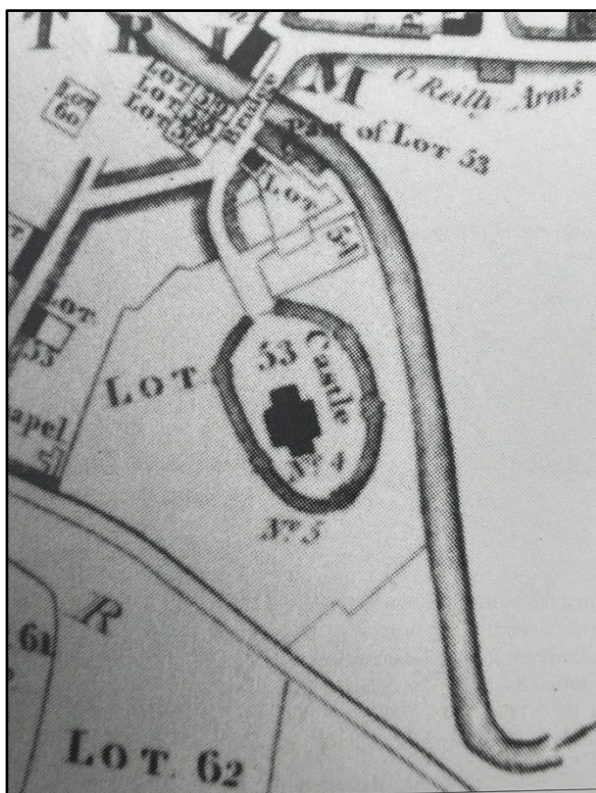


Figure 2: ‘Plan of the manor of Trim’ drawn in 1816 for the auction catalogue for Wellingtons sale of the castle (courtesy of the National Library of Ireland).

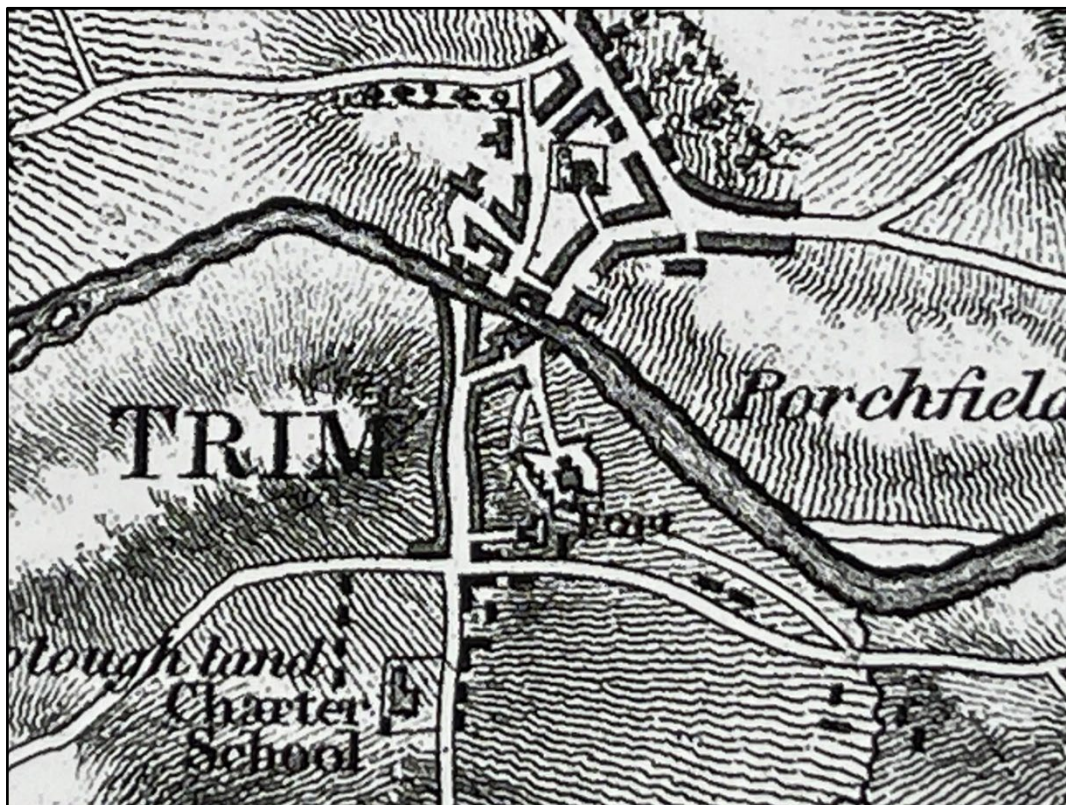


Figure 3: Extract from William Larkins map of Co Meath showing a lane along the line of Castle Street (published 1817 but surveyed in 1812)



Figure 4: Charles Pratt's Illustration (1820) of Trim Castle and Trim Gate and causeway/ramp looking southeast across site of later Market House

The rear of the site backs onto the curtain wall of the Trim Castle National Monument (Nat. Mon. 514) along the east side and a wall along the causeway/ramp leading to Trim Gate on the north side. Both walls are relatively modern in date being associated with the construction and use of the Market House during the 1850s. They are not visible on Charles Pratt's illustration drawn in 1820 (Figure 4) but are visible as the back wall of stalls shown on George du Noyer's sketch of 1859 (Figure 6) by which time the Market House was built. The causeway along with a wall dividing the bawn of Trim Castle from the present site are also shown on the Ordnance Survey Fair Plan of 1836 (Figure 5) by which time there were a row of cottages along Castle Street together with back gardens and an open area to the rear.

It appears that the current site is located within an area that in medieval times consisted of the moat around the castle. The word *moat* derives from the Old French *motte* which can be translated as mound or hillock. It originally referred to the central portion of the castle and later to the ditch/ring around it. The moat was a wide defensive feature that could be either dry (like the one around Kilkenny Castle) or filled with water (such as the Trim Castle moat). It formed the primary line of defense, consisting of a ditch dug around and just outside of the castle walls.



Figure 5: The Ordnance Survey Fair Plan, 1836 showing location of the site before the development of the Market House

It was usually a wide ditch, filled with water, and deep enough to prevent wading. It prevented tunnelling and siege as the only access to the castle was through a bridge, sometimes drawn. Moats were used for dumping even during their usage phase. Therefore an array of finds dating from their construction phase through usage and decommission can be exposed during excavation. Due to the nature of the moat and waterlogged character, preservation of organic finds tends to be very good. Some moats were used for keeping fish; however, this only worked well in moats that were stagnant pools.

The moat around Trim Castle ran on the outside of the curtain walls and enclosed the site (Figure 17). Two sections of the moat can be distinguished; one fed by the River Boyne, and the other cut through the higher ground fed by the redirected Leper River (Duchas, 2002). The moat went out of use by 1536. That date marks the start of the backfilling process of the moat and was likely at the start a natural process, as a consequence of the moat not being maintained.

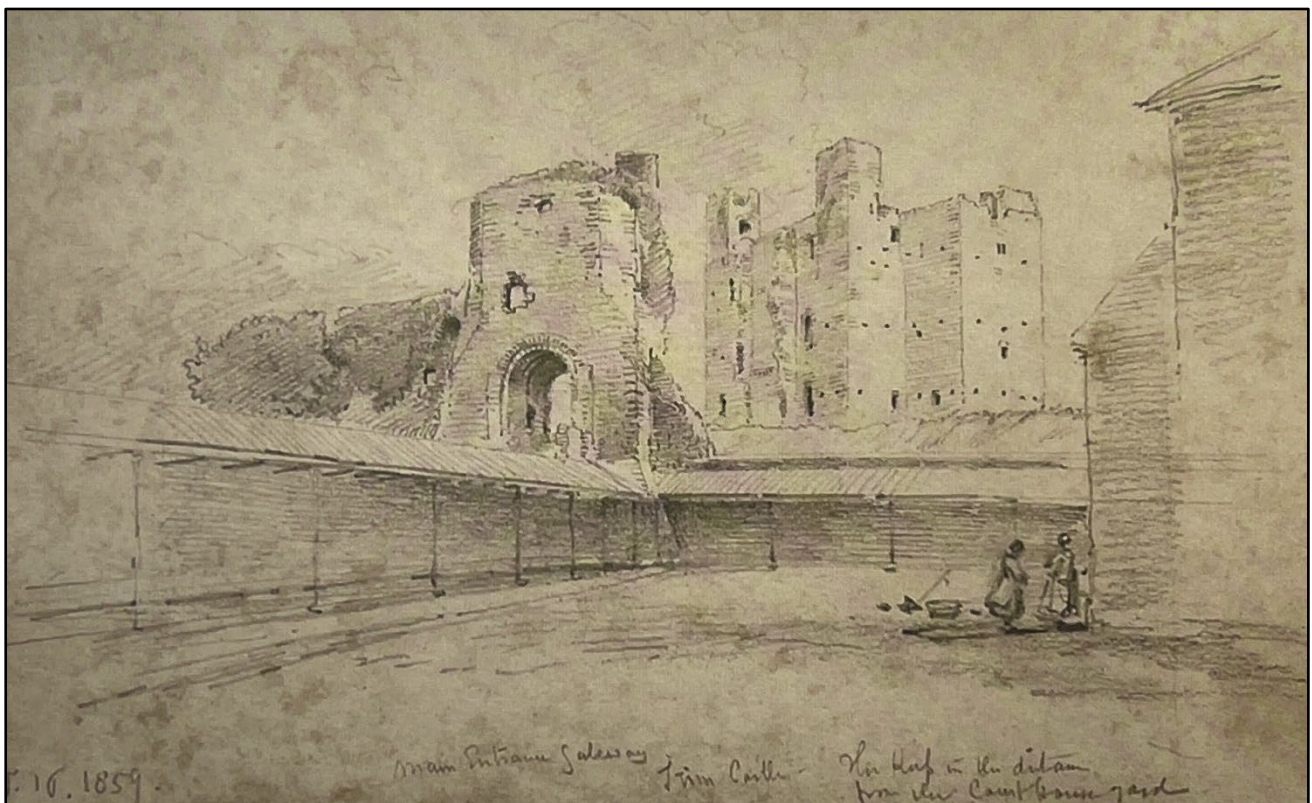


Figure 6: Sketch of Trim Castle and Trim Gate by George du Noyer in 1859 showing the lean-to structures constructed to the rear of the Market House

The castle is noted as in a semi ruinous state in the 17th century, and by the 18th century it was abandoned and left in ruins. The documentation regarding the moat around Trim Castle is very limited. What is known is largely based on archaeological investigation results carried out under licence 03E1484 (O'Carroll, 2004), when an external moat cut was exposed at a depth of 0.6m, and moat fills recorded at a depth of 1.5m below ground level within Castle Street (see Section 3.3 for details). As the moat is not depicted on the 1836 mapping, and buildings are shown at the current site and to the south, it was likely fully backfilled for some time by the 19th century, and quite likely well before that. Natural silting processes were aided by dumping rubbish and deliberate attempts to fill it up. The investigations under licence 03E1484 identified these deliberate backfilled deposits of post medieval nature (dated based on artefactual evidence to between the 17th and

19th centuries (Fibiger, O'Carroll 2009). These deposits appear to be c. 1m deep and extend to a depth of c.1.6m below present ground level within Castle Street (c. 55m OD). The part of the moat where the current site is located was most likely one of the widest and deepest sections due to the location adjacent to Trim Gate and the fact that it was located where the moat bent around the southwest corner of the castle.

The Town Hall (Market House)

The history of the Market House derives from An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment and Conservation Strategy, Refurbishment and Extension to Trim Town Hall (Market House) prepared in December 2021 by Shaffrey Architects:

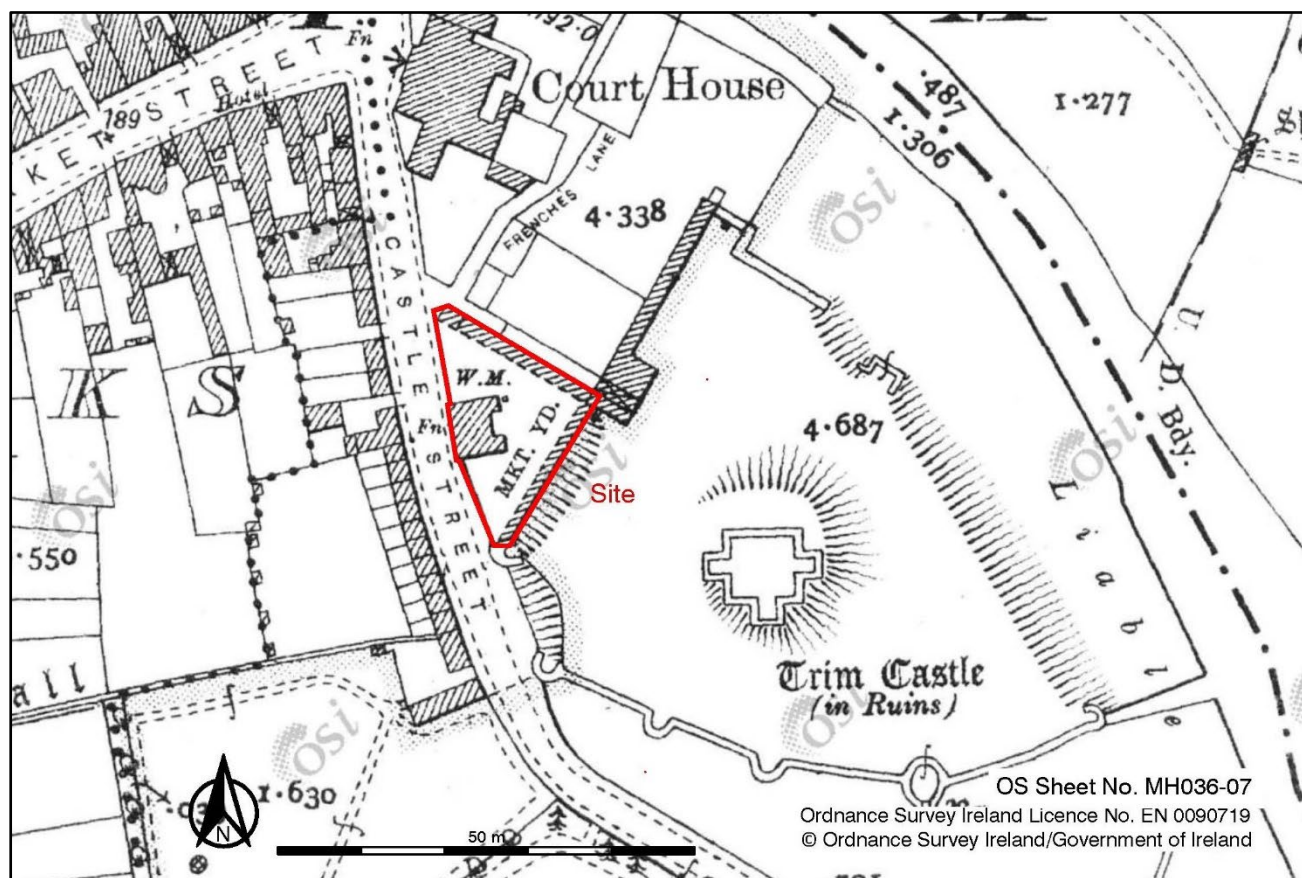


Figure 7: Extract from Ordnance Survey 25 inch map (1909-10) showing location of site, the Market house and lean to structures along east and north walls of the Market yard

In 1852-3 two major projects were initiated the building of a town hall and the installation of a gas works and gas lighting. The Irish market house has its origins in the classical tradition and was typically arranged in a classical motif, with an arcaded ground floor and an enclosed upper level. The original market house at Trim comprised a three bay two storey building with arcades at ground level with pilasters and pedimented projecting central breakfront with rendered facades and cut stone front with hipped roof. A market yard to the rear is enclosed by lean-to structures. The ground floor was for market trade, while the upper floor provided space for administration functions creating a hybrid of town hall and market house. The open

arcade provided a semi-public - semi-private space with direct access to the market yard. A newspaper article in the Carlow Post 1857 has the following description “It is an excellent market-place with a large assembly room and shed at the sides.”

British reprisals for the destruction of Trim R.I.C. barracks by an IRA Volunteer Battalion during the War of independence in 1920 resulted in the The Market house /Town Hall being sacked amongst a number of other buildings being burned in the town of Trim. A photograph of the burnt building from 1921 provides a visual record.



Figure 8: The Market House 1921 after being burnt

A newspaper article in the Drogheda Independent on court proceedings reported that a Mr Kelly architect estimated the rebuilding cost of the Town Hall at £2,800 13s. It was remodelled and extended in 1925 with two flanking single bay side extensions. The decorative interior features that survive today date from the 1925 remodeling as it unlikely any of the original interiors survived intact after it was sacked as evidenced by the extent of damage seen in the historic photo. Considerable alterations were carried out during the 1925 remodelling that include the formation of new openings and addition of chimneys. The exterior was finished with roughcast rendered with plain plastered pilasters and entablature and the roof reinstated as a flat roof. Three lunettes were introduced at ground floor with render panel beneath in the 1850s building and a door with lunette was provided at either side in the new flanking bays. The first floor has square-headed openings with a continuous rendered sill course. A new stair is located in the new northern extension serving a number of cellular rooms at first floor level.



Figure 9: The Town hall and Market yard c. 1950

In 1950 a ballroom hall was added to the rear that included public toilets. The extension is in a vernacular style with mid-twentieth-century modernist influence. Most of Ireland's best known showbands played there in the era of ballroom dancing. In recent years it was home to Trim Drama Group and Trim Musical Society until its closure in 2011. This part is now in disrepair, whilst the main building accommodates the Trim Visitor Centre and the upper floor continues to provide administrative offices.

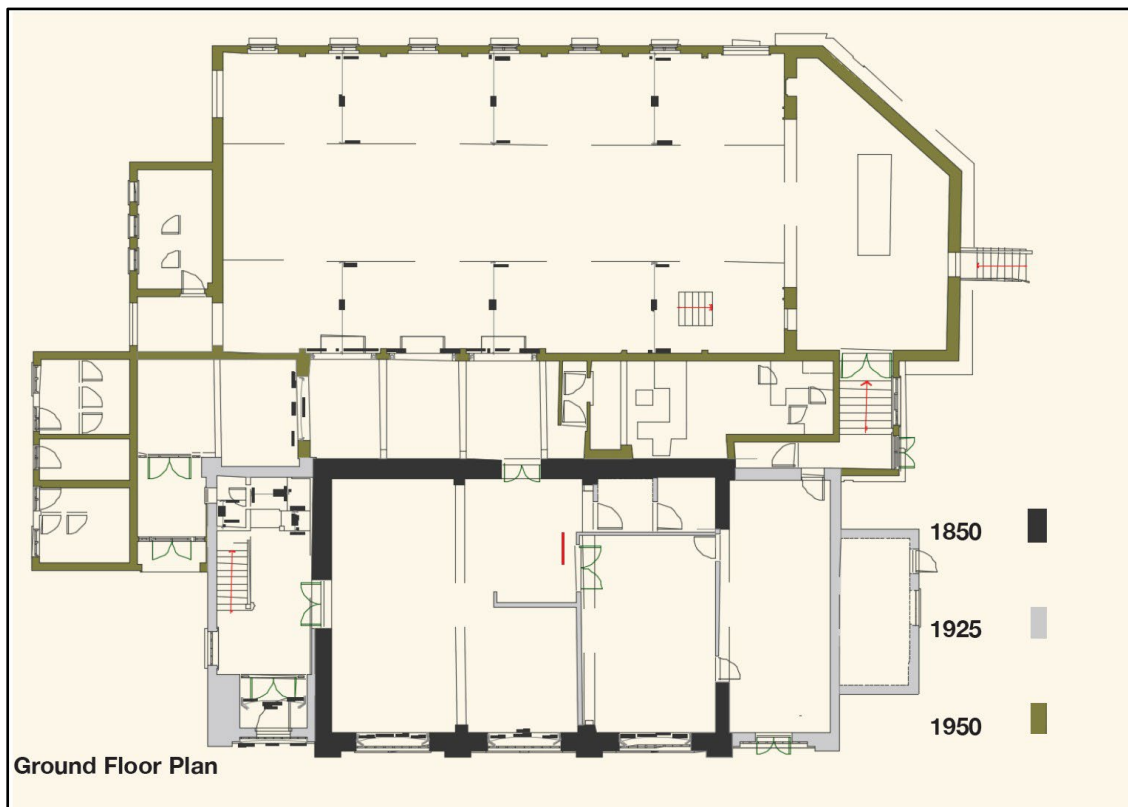


Figure 10: Development Phasing of the Town Hall (after Shaffrey Architects, 2021)

Trim

Trim or Ath Thruim has its origins in the Early Christian period when a monastery was founded at its location. The monastery was dedicated to St. Loman but became associated with St. Patrick from the ninth century onwards. It was burned several times between the eighth and twelfth centuries. Trim became a facilitator of church reform with the foundation of a house for Augustinian canons prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in 1169. The remaining part of the church of the Augustinian Priory or St. Mary's Abbey, is now referred to as 'The Yellow Steeple' and is situated on the north bank of the river. The location of the early monastery is not certain, however, as there are no surviving pre-Norman remains in Trim (Delany 1998).

The curving layout of High Street and Navan Gate Street may preserve the course of the earlier monastic boundary and the early monastery may have been located inside this area. It has also been suggested that, due to its name, the church of St. Patrick which is located outside this area, may be the location of the original monastery. An early structure found during excavation at Trim Castle may have been the remains of an early church building. The castle was built on Church land and the curve of High Street is continued by Castle Street. This suggests that the monastic enclosure may have been very large, occupying both banks of the River Boyne (Bradley 1988–89).

Apart from the early monastery and the Augustinian Priory, Trim was to become home to two more monastic establishments. The site of the existing courthouse was occupied by the Franciscan Friary which was founded in the early fourteenth century and dedicated to St. Bonaventure. The monastic buildings were destroyed following the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid-sixteenth century and the church was taken over by the corporation to be used as a tholsel. At the north side of the town, was the Dominican Friary established in 1263 by Geoffrey de Geneville. Its ruins were mostly destroyed in the eighteenth century (Casey & Rowan 1993).

Trim became the centre of the Liberty of Meath after 1172 and Hugh de Lacy, Lord of Meath, constructed a ringwork fortification there. This wooden structure was burned by the castle's constable, Hugh Tyrell, in order to prevent it falling into the hands of Roderick O'Connor, King of Connacht, in 1174. Trim was quickly refortified and went on to become the most important manor in Meath, being held by the de Lacys, de Genevilles, and de Mortimers. In 1425, the duke of York, Richard Plantagenet, inherited the manor of Trim from Edmund de Mortimer. The lands passed to the Crown in 1460 following Richard's death at Wakefield (Bradley 1988–89).

The wooden structure originally built by de Lacy was superseded by the large stone keep and castle which survives today as the largest medieval castle in Ireland. Recent excavation suggests that it was built in the late twelfth century but went through many phases of development (Hayden 2011). Soon after it was built, the castle came under attack from William de Burgo, but the garrison held out and repelled the assailants (Lewis 1837). The castle remained a formidable fortification throughout the Middle Ages and was entirely avoided by Edward Bruce during his campaign in 1315 (Bradley 1988–89).

It is clear that a town was founded at Trim during the early stages of the Anglo-Norman invasion. During the reign of Richard I, Walter de Lacy awarded the borough a charter of incorporation, thereby granting the citizens the same privileges as those enjoyed in Bristol (Lewis 1837). Indeed, the thirteenth century proved to be a period of prosperity and growth for Trim. Little

is known of the town's history between the Invasion and the early sixteenth century, though it is known to have been a place of pilgrimage as the burning of the famous 'Idol of Trim' (a statue of Mary) in 1538 shows (Bradley 1988–89).

During the fifteenth century, Trim's continued importance became apparent as it was the scene of parliaments and political intrigue. When Richard II learned that the earl of Hereford had landed with an army in England, he imprisoned Lord Gloucester and Henry of Lancaster (the future Henry V) in the barbican of the castle. In 1459, a mint was established in Trim and throughout the century, several parliaments met there instead of in Dublin (Lewis 1837). By the sixteenth century, Trim was a well fortified and substantial city (though it was taken by Silken Thomas in 1537—Killanin & Duignan 1967). One indication of its status at that time is the proposal in 1584 by its parson, Robert Draper, that it be the seat of Ireland's first university. Draper described the town as 'full of very fair castles and stone houses built after the English fashion and divided into five fair streets'. The sixteenth century street plan survives, though the many castles and houses referred to do not (Casey & Rowan 1993)

The street pattern of Trim does not conform to any of the known Anglo-Norman models found in Ireland. Essentially, Trim comprises the large curve formed by Navan Gate Street, High Street and Castle Street, with Mill Street, Market Street and Haggard Street running from this curve along a roughly east–west alignment. The addition of St. Loman Street, Watergate Street and Emmet Street along a roughly north–south alignment completed the pattern. Little is known of the town defences or how they developed, though the earliest indication of a wall comes in the murage grant of 1290 with similar grants being issued in 1316 and 1393. The grants of tolls were awarded to the corporation under the successive charters to maintain the walls of a town in which 'all the fideles of the county of Meath' congregated. Trim was probably refortified again during the wars of the seventeenth century but no details survive. Only fragments of the wall remain extant and little is known of the number or nature of the towers (Bradley 1988–89; Lewis 1837).

The town defences enclosed an area of c.49 acres (19.83 hectares). The walls ran from the castle, across to Emmet Street where a section survives. The wall turned northwards at the rear of the properties along the west side of Emmet Street and continued towards the River Boyne where more sections survive. On the north side the river, it ran from a point opposite Water Gate up to Athboy Gate. From there, it ran eastwards for around 200m just south of the Dominican Friary site and turned south, crossing Navan Street at the Navan Gate and continued southwards towards Sheep Gate and the river once more (Moore 1987).

Trim became a place of military importance once again during the Confederate Wars of the mid-seventeenth century. In 1642, the town was held by the Catholic Confederation though they were later expelled. The commander of the Parliamentary forces in Leinster, Sir Charles Coote, was killed in Trim during a skirmish to retain the garrison. It is believed that the ball which struck him came from the musket of one of his own men. Towards the end of the war, the Confederates and the Royalists held negotiations in Trim, but the garrison immediately surrendered on hearing of the massacre at Drogheda perpetrated by Parliament's general, Oliver Cromwell (Lewis 1837).

In the eighteenth century, Trim was the county town for Meath. It had a thriving market and was the seat of the assizes. However, in the nineteenth century, Navan emerged as the more successful commercial centre and eventually took over Trim's role as Meath's administrative capital. One of the reasons for Navan's commercial superiority was Trim's isolation

from the canal navigation system. Plans to extend the Drogheda–Navan canal to Trim never came to pass. By 1837, the town of Trim contained 570 houses as well as a small flour mill, a brewery and a tannery (Lewis 1837). By 1868, Trim was connected to the Dublin & Meath Railway by a short stretch of line. The streets were all paved and the population of the town was 2,068 living in 369 houses (Virtue 1868).

Talbots Castle, north of the river is a large urban tower house which was built by Sir John Talbot in 1415. This building incorporates a vaulted basement with main hall above and bears a plaque displaying the Talbot and Furnival arms (Moore 1987:168). A second fragmentary tower house lies to the north. This structure, known as Nangle’s Castle, partially survives to ground floor level with the remains of a garderobe and corbelled chamber (Seaver 1998).

The abbey referred to in the Abbey street name is St. Mary’s Augustinian Abbey founded in the thirteenth century and the main abbey buildings were located to the northeast of the site. The east and west walls of the church tower known as the ‘Yellow Steeple’ survive to seven storeys. The bottom floor is vaulted and the tower was originally square with the belfry located on the fifth floor. It is possible that Talbot Castle may have originated as part of the cloistral buildings and it is probable that a considerable area of land in the form of orchards, gardens and other amenities was located within the precinct.

3.2 Recorded Monuments

The proposed development site is adjacent to Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004-). The site lies adjacent to and west of the curtain wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078-. It also lies in the immediate environs of two medieval buildings, ME036-048089- and ME036-048090-located just to the east, inside the bawn. In addition, the site lies within the zone of archaeological potential of the historic town of Trim ME036-048, with a portion of town wall ME036-048005- just to the south of the site. A number of human remains were also identified to the north of the site (ME036-048066-; ME036-048026-).

The immediate environs of the site are rich with a collection of archaeological sites. The following is a list of 29 monuments located within 200m of the edge of the site. These descriptions are derived from the National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey Database (<http://maps.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/>).

Table 1: Recorded Monuments in the environs of the site

RMP No./ SMR No.	Class/Site Type	Townland		
ME036-048004-	Castle - Anglo-Norman masonry castle	MANORLAND (1st division)	680189	756726
ME036-048----	Historic town	BLACKFRIARY (2nd division),COMMONS (1st division),COMMONS (2nd division),COMMONS (3rd division),COMMONS (5th division)	680113	756952

RMP No./ SMR No.	Class/Site Type	Townland		
		(Moyfenrath Lower By.), FOSTERSHOLDING, TOWNPARKS NORTH, TOWNPARKS SOUTH, MANORLAND (1st division)		
ME036- 048020-	Redundant record	TOWNPARKS SOUTH	680084	756862
ME036- 048025-	Religious house - Franciscan friars	MANORLAND (1st division)	680123	756867
ME036- 048026-	Burial	TOWNPARKS SOUTH	680093	756830
ME036- 048027-	Stone head	MANORLAND (1st division)	680119	756890
ME036- 048033-	Castle - ringwork	MANORLAND (1st division)	680190	756735
ME036- 048043-	House - medieval	TOWNPARKS SOUTH	680058	756811
ME036- 048052-	Building	MANORLAND (1st division)	680178	756714
ME036- 048055-	Excavation - miscellaneous	MANORLAND (1st division)	680105	756671
ME036- 048057-	Stone head	MANORLAND (1st division)	680118	756889
ME036- 048060-	Town hall	TOWNPARKS SOUTH	680078	756879
ME036- 048066-	Burial	MANORLAND (1st division)	680106	756827
ME036- 048075-	Redundant record	MANORLAND (1st division)	680196	756722
ME036- 048078-	Bawn	MANORLAND (1st division)	680180	756757
ME036- 048079-	Castle - hall- house	MANORLAND (1st division)	680186	756794
ME036- 048080-	Castle - tower house	MANORLAND (1st division)	680176	756812
ME036- 048081-	Kiln - lime	MANORLAND (1st division)	680164	756740
ME036- 048082-	Fortification	MANORLAND (1st division)	680200	756748
ME036- 048083-	Stable	MANORLAND (1st division)	680205	756740
ME036- 048084-	Well	MANORLAND (1st division)	680223	756741

RMP No./ SMR No.	Class/Site Type	Townland		
ME036-048085-	Prison	MANORLAND (1st division)	680155	756778
ME036-048086-	Building	MANORLAND (1st division)	680208	756777
ME036-048087-	Forge	MANORLAND (1st division)	680215	756774
ME036-048088-	Bakery	MANORLAND (1st division)	680219	756764
ME036-048089-	Building	MANORLAND (1st division)	680152	756760
ME036-048090-	Building	MANORLAND (1st division)	680148	756751
ME036-048091-	Structure	MANORLAND (1st division)	680174	756700
ME036-048005-	Town defences	BLACKFRIARY (2nd division), COMMONS (1st division), COMMONS (2nd division), COMMONS (3rd division), FOSTERSHOLDING, MANORLAND (1st division), TOWNPARKS NORTH, TOWNPARKS SOUTH	680093	756982

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigations

The site was not subject to archaeological investigations previously. Significant excavations took place previously at Trim Castle itself ahead of its conservation (Hayden 2011) but the most relevant excavation to the site was carried out in an area adjacent to and to the west, within the footprint of Castle Street under licence 03E1484.

Listed below (Table 2) are the details of these investigations that further demonstrate the overall archaeological potential of the site. The details are derived from the *Summary Accounts of Archaeological Excavations in Ireland* (www.excavations.ie).

Table 2: Previous archaeological investigations in the environs of the site

Excavation.ie ref	Licence No.	RMP/SMR No.	Site Type	Investigation Type
- MANORLAND (1ST DIVISION), CASTLE STREET, TRIM, CO. MEATH, Meath	E1138	N/A	Graves of indeterminate date	Rescue
2000:0781 - CASTLE STREET/FRENCHES LANE, TRIM, Meath	00E0700		Environs of Franciscan friary	Test trenching
2003:1469 - Castle Street, Trim, Meath	03E1484		Urban medieval	Testing and monitoring

Excavation.ie ref	Licence No.	RMP/SMR No.	Site Type	Investigation Type
1997:437 - TRIM COURTHOUSE, CASTLE STREET, TRIM, Meath	96E247ext.		Urban	Monitoring and excavation

The site itself was not subject to archaeological investigations previously, and during the most recent development of the ballroom in the 1950s to the rear of the Market House it appears no features or finds were reported to the National Museum of Ireland. However, the most relevant investigations to the site included monitoring carried out in relation to road resurfacing and the provision of services at Castle Street adjacent and to the west of the site (03E1484). The monitoring exposed both undisturbed and disturbed archaeological deposits. It appears that the wastewater system and the water main services running within the footprint of Castle Street truncated archaeological deposits. The services were excavated to a depth of 2.6m and 1m below the street level, respectively. This was observed when two trenches were opened under licence 03E1484; one trench was opened along the eastern side, the other along the western side of Castle Street and a third towards the Town Gate. Both were excavated at a distance of 171m, stretching southwards from Market Street to the southernmost mural tower. The trenches were 4.5m wide, and the eastern trench was excavated to a maximum of 1.5m depth c. 1.6m from the curtain wall at its very south portion, while the western trench was excavated to a depth of 0.75m truncating post-medieval deposits. The section of the eastern trench, relevant to the current site, stretches between chainage 65 to 130 meters. It should be noted that the human remains were not exposed beyond chainage 43; c. 22m to the north of the current site. Archaeological deposits recorded within the relevant chainage included: remains of medieval date (moat and external moat cut) sealed by backfilled deposits of the 17th to 19th-century date (based on artefactual evidence) and a post-medieval cellar. The external moat cut was detected at chainages 115 and 134 just outside of the curtain walls (Figure 17). The undisturbed medieval moat fills were noted at Chainage 138 and recorded as F316 and F317. These were described as moist, peaty deposits with high organic content. The medieval moat fills were sealed by rubble deposits of post-medieval and modern dates (dated between the 17th to 19th centuries). These deposits were interpreted as deliberate backfills after the castle was abandoned. The medieval moat fills were identified at a depth of 1.5m, while the external cut of the moat was recorded at a depth of c. 0.6m. It appears that cut F309 at Chainage 115 and 134 represents the external cut of the moat. It was recorded at the point where the moat realigned towards the northeast, following the line of the curtain wall, and appears to be cut into the natural subsoil. It likely extends towards the Trim gate of the castle as it was not detected further north; it was projected to curve within the southern portion of the current site.

Furthermore, the remains of a masonry structure of post-medieval date built on the top of earlier backfills was recorded just to the west of the current site and interpreted as a cellar. This structure might extend into the current site. The structure consisted of two walls; F307 and F310. The walls recorded measured c. 0.8m in width, were of limestone and shale undressed stone with course bonding of sand and gravel and roughly east-southeast to west-northwest aligned. Between the walls, a floor F311 consisting of sand, clay and mortar was exposed and was sealed by backfill of 18th-century date.

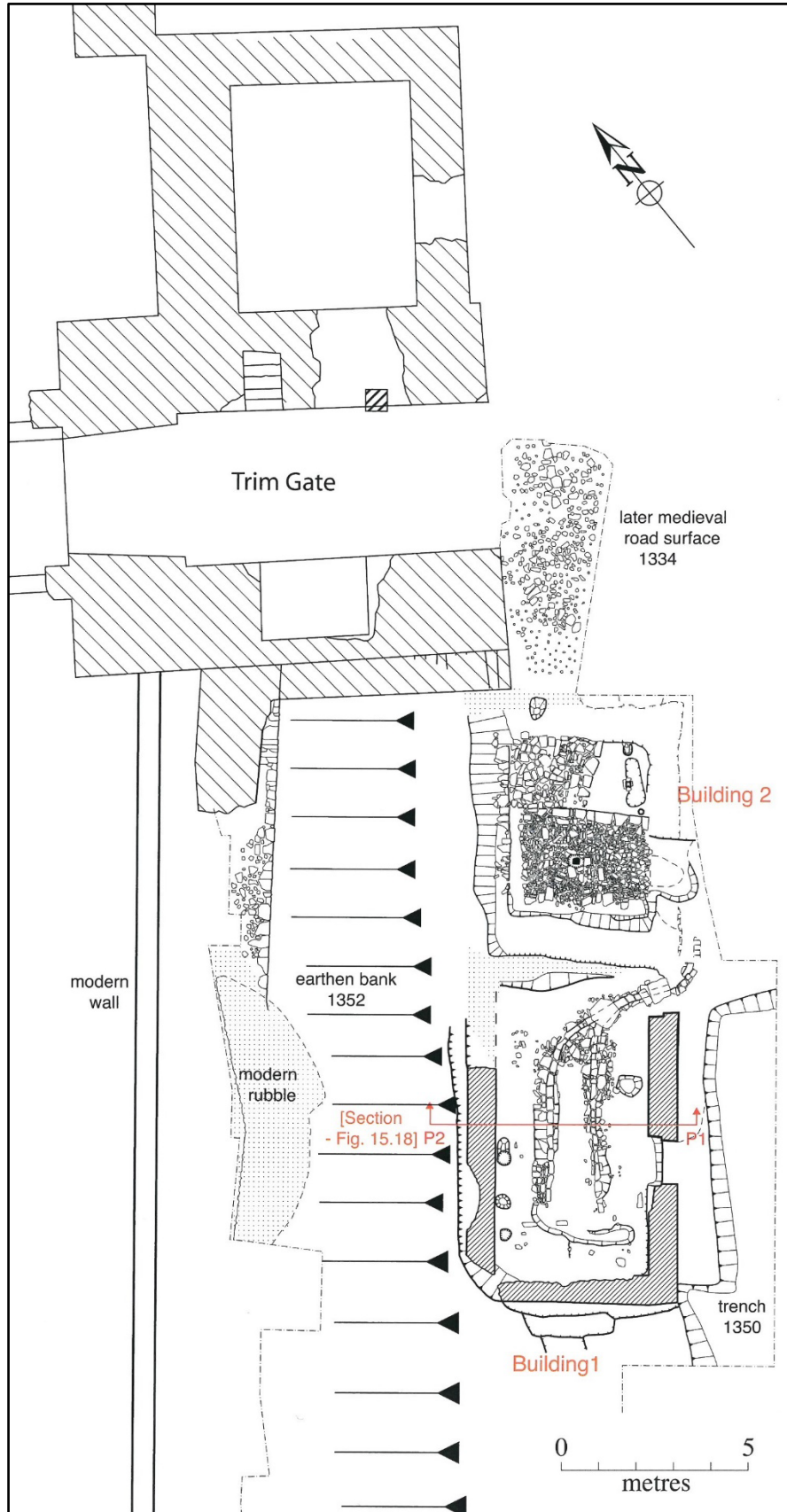


Figure 11: Plan of excavations carried out by Alan Hayden adjacent to the Trim gate (Market House site to west of modern wall)

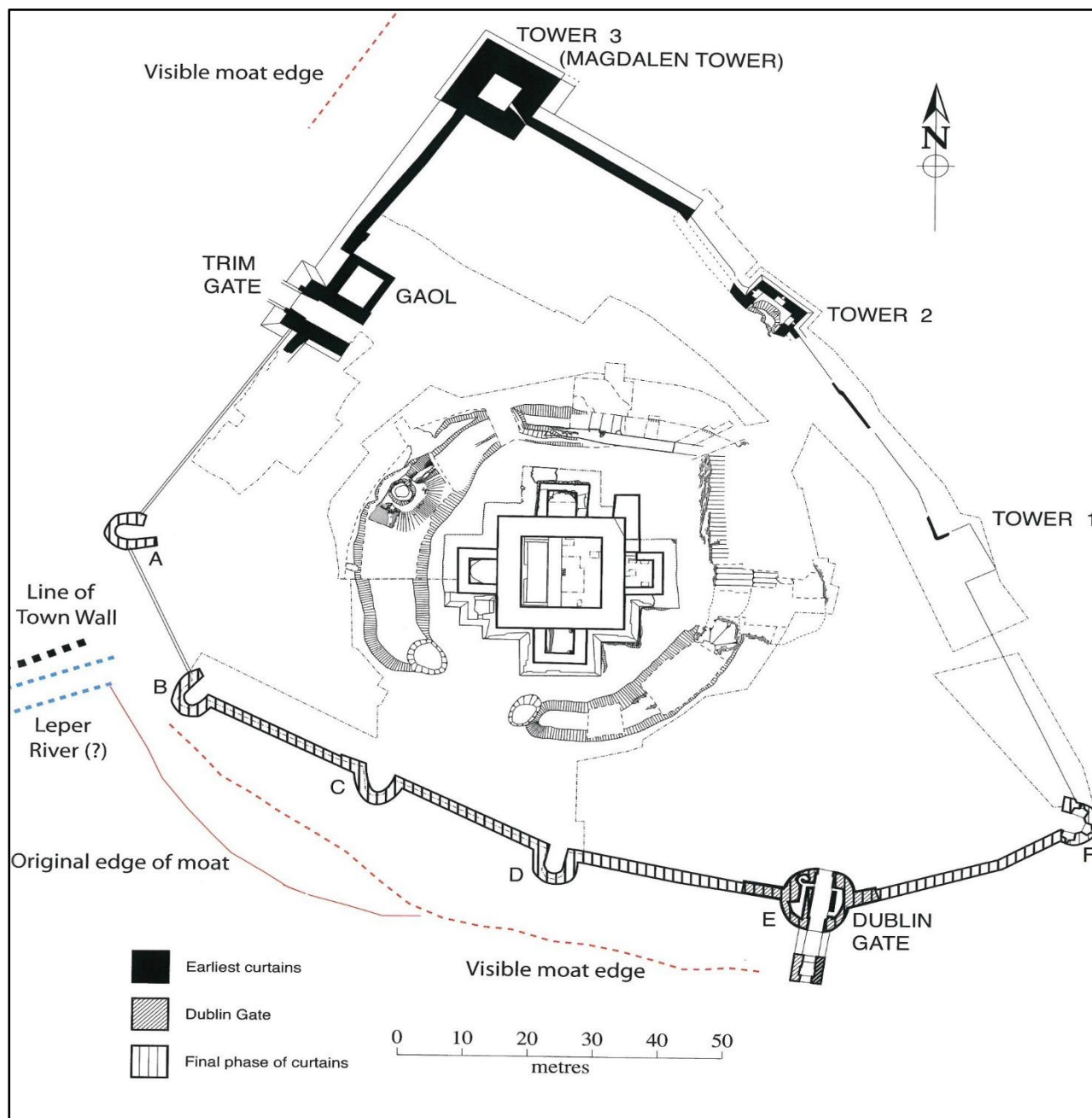


Figure 12: Layout of castle and bawn showing extant curtain walls and line of moat (after Hayden 2011)

It should be noted that while burials were identified to the north of the site, there is no record of human remains exposed in areas immediately adjacent to the site. Human remains were found on a number of occasions (E1138; 96E247, 00E0700), including in the north portion of trenches monitored under licence 03E1484. These exposed burials associated with the early post-medieval cemetery and a part of the Grey Friary religious house - Franciscan friars ME036-048025-. The burials to be impacted by works exposed under licence 03E1484 were excavated (now burial ME036-048026-), and post-medieval structures possibly relating to the Town Court were also recorded. These graves are associated with human remains identified previously (E1138; 96E247, 00E0700) in the general area of the Town Court building. It appears that the site of the burial was used as a courthouse from at least 1554. Graves of indeterminate date (E1138) were recorded at a depth of

1.4m below ground level in the NMI Burial Excavation Record for Castle Street, Trim in 1951. Remains (now ME036-048066) were identified during test trenching under licence 96E247 carried out in relation to the Trim Courthouse development. Additional in situ human remains and disarticulated remains were exposed during testing (00E0700). The burials are not thought to extend any further south than Frenches Lane (located just north of the Market House).

3.4 Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland

The Topographical Files of the National Museum of Ireland were consulted. These list only one find for the townland of Manorland 1st Division; Human remains with find place Castle Street, Trim (NMI Ref. No. 2010:86). However, it should be noted that a total of 257 objects are listed for Trim. These are mostly copper coins found in Townparks townland on Emmet Street, with some gold and copper alloy coins also recorded (NMI Ref. No. 1996C4:1-200). The second find type is represented by pottery retrieved from the River Boyne (1976:625-638). The remaining finds are listed in the table below:

Table 3: Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland

NMI Register No	SimpleName	Component	Townland	FindPlace
1000:2604	Vessel	Copper alloy		Near Peterstown, near Trim
1790:Wk073	Stirrup	Iron	NEWHAGGARD	River Boyne, above Trim
1865:W13	Macehead	Stone	HIGGINSTOWN	Near Trim
1881:224	Gouge	Bronze	TRIM (NR.)	
1883:13	Ringed pin	Copper alloy	TRIM	St. John's Castle
1888:Wk170	Gun	Iron	TRIM	UNKNOWN
1895:3	GOBLET	SILVER	TRIM	SAINT MARY'S ABBEY
1895:4	TILES	CERAMIC	TRIM	SS PETER AND PAUL'S CHURCH
1929:1593	Axehead	Stone	TRIM	
1959:123	Axehead	Bronze	TRIM	
1976:639	Clay pipe	Ceramic	N/A	River Boyne, Trim
1976:640	Clay pipe	Ceramic	N/A	River Boyne, Trim
1990:18	Comb	Antler	TRIM	River Boyne
1995:17	Spearhead	Bronze	KNOCKLYON	River Boyne, near Trim
2010:87	Human remains	BONE	TOWNPARKS SOUTH	Emmett Street, Trim
2623:W1	Object	Glass	N/A	Newtown Abbey, near Trim

NMI Register No	SimpleName	Component	Townland	FindPlace
2624:W2	Window	Glass	N/A	Newtown Abbey, near Trim
2625:W3	Window	Glass	N/A	Newtown Abbey, near Trim
2626:W4	Window	Glass	N/A	Newtown Abbey, near Trim
3045:W158	Comb	Antler	N/A	LACKANASH HILL, BETWEEN TRIM AND NAVAN
5062:W31	Key	Copper alloy	TRIM	UNKNOWN
5126:W95	THIMBLE	COPPER ALLOY	TRIM	N/A
5687:W540	Buckle	Bronze	N/A	Newtown-Trim
7090:W191	Bracelet	Gold	TREMBLESTOWN	Near Trimblestown Castle, ON THE RIVER BOYNE
8066:W31	Key	Iron	N/A	Neighbourhood of Trim
E92:337	Axehead	Bronze	TRIM	UNKNOWN
KK13388	Axehead	Stone	TRIM	
R1565	WEIGHT		N/A	TRIM
R4001	Brooch	Gold	TRIM	N/A
R4002	Brooch	Silver	TRIM	N/A
R4003	Brooch	Silver	TRIM	Newtown Abbey
R4004	Brooch	Bronze	TRIM	
R4005	Bead	Glass	TRIM	
R771	GLASS	GLASS	N/A	NEWTOWN ABBEY, NEAR TRIM
RIA1899:79	Gaming piece	Horn	N/A	Mentrim lough
RIA1902:3	Cross	Bronze	TRIM	Greek church
RIA1909:77	SPEARHEAD	IRON	TRIM	THE ABBEY AT TRIM
SA1900:22	Scraper	Flint	N/A	Mentrim Lake
SA1900:23	Knife	Flint	N/A	Mentrim Lake
X3716	Pendant	METAL	N/A	Trim Churchyard

3.5 Cartographic Review

An examination of pre-ordnance survey mapping included the Down Survey map of County Meath, Barony of Moyfenrath, Parish of Trim (1654-56), the Larkin map of 1812 and Plan of the manor of Trim (1816), in the county of Meath. All maps

depict Trim with Trim castle on the south side of The Boyne River with a bridge over it. What was thought by others to represent a moat around Trim Castle on the 'Plan of the manor of Trim' (Figure 2) is in fact the curtain walls as several towers are shown along its circumference. Larkin's map of 1812 shows no moat, but a road or lane running within the footprint of the current Castle Street curving along the west of Trim Castle. This is the first cartographic evidence for Castle Street which is clearly of 19th century date.

Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of the area were also examined in order to identify any possible archaeological features and to trace the development of the site during the 19th and early 20th centuries (Figures 5, 7). These are far more detailed than the earlier maps.

The 1836 map (Figure 5) depicts a row of detached buildings along the site's west extent with rear gardens and an open area. The majority of the site, particularly adjacent to the Trim Castle Wall, has no buildings shown. By the time of the 1909 map (Figure 7) the detached buildings were demolished, and the Market House and lean-to structures in the market yard are visible. The OS Cassini map 1958 shows the building extended to the rear, depicted as a public building and labelled as Town Hall.

3.6 Aerial Photography Review

In addition to examining the various editions of the OS maps, aerial photographs from the Geological Survey of Ireland, dating from between 1995 and 2013 and the google aerial imagery dating between 1995 and 2022 were consulted.

The 1995 aerial shows the site largely unchanged since the 1958 map. It seems areas to the south and north of the building were used as a carpark, and sometime before 2005 a bus stop was added to the north of the building. A small rectangular area at the rear of the extension of the building, adjacent to the town wall and the causeway ramp, is visible as a green area since 2005. The site remains unchanged since apart from overgrowth being cut back at the rear of the building.

3.7 Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

A Protected Structure listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 is located within the site. This protected structure consists of Town Hall known as Market House RPS 91253, also listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage NIAH 14328035. The building is a former market house, built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925. The site is also located within Trim Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area.

It is described as: *Detached five-bay two-storey former market house, built c.1850, with three-bay projecting central breakfront. Comprising of three-bay single-storey former market house, remodelled and flanked by single-bay extensions, c.1925.*

In addition, Trim Castle is also a Protected Structure (RPS 91261) and is described as: *Built by Hugh de Lacy c.1170 on the site of an earlier Motte castle. The largest Norman castle in Ireland, the central keep is surrounded by a curtain wall, which encloses an area of 3 acres.*

3.8 Field Survey

A field survey was carried out by the author in 2022 to assess whether or not the site contained any evidence for the presence of any previously unrecorded areas or features of historical or archaeological significance and the impact that the proposed development will have on those features and the various elements of the National Monument (No. 514; Plate 1).

The Market House was burned in 1920 (Figure 8) and no original interior features survived. The additional bay on the north and south date from 1925 and there is access to what appears to be a small basement area below the south-east corner of the additional bay on the south side which is approximately 1.4m below existing ground level. The ballroom behind the Market House was constructed in the 1950s and consists internally of the wooden dance floor and stage to the south end. There is a fly-tower above the stage area and there is access to the under-stage area from outside where a series of steps lead down approximately 1m below existing ground level. The line of the moat that surrounded the castle was exposed during archaeological investigations carried out along Castle Street by Finola O Carroll in 2003 (Figures 16-17). The upper edge of the moat was exposed at a depth of 0.6m below modern ground level where significant ground disturbance has occurred due to services along the street. The sheds constructed along the east wall of the Market yard are of modern concrete construction and appear to have been dry-lined at some point in the past. The present roof is supported by the concrete walls and is of modern date. From an examination of the structure there was no evidence for the survival of any original features from the lean-to structures that existed here from the 1850s and shown on du Noyer's sketch (Figure 6). Some iron loops are visible still within the north wall and these may be related to the original lean-to structures.

The two boundary walls of the Market Yard along the east side of the site and the north side date to the 1850s when the Market House and yard were constructed. There is no evidence for medieval masonry in any of the outer faces but there will be no impact on these walls for the most part. The eastern wall is effectively a retaining wall with a 4m drop between the interior of the bawn and the surface of the Market yard. This wall was built up against the original 1352 earthen bank and what may remain below ground level of the original curtain wall (Figure 11). At the north end of the wall where it joins the Trim gate the original base batter of the gate's foundation protrudes into the site and the original walls projecting south and west from the gate are clearly visible and separate from the walls of the Market yard. At the southern end of the east wall where it meets the roadside wall and railings, Tower A projects into the site and is part of the National Monument. The northern wall of the Market yard defines the southern edge of the medieval causeway which was used to traverse the moat and gain access to the castle through the Trim Gate. This wall is also related to the construction of the Market house and yard and is clearly visible in du Noyer's 1859 sketch (Figure 6) with lean-to structures up against it. There is no evidence on this wall for the lean-to structures and there are several points of repair visible. This wall also acts as a retaining wall for the causeway which ramps up from Castle Street/Frenches Lane to the Trim gate, an increase of approximately 2.5m.

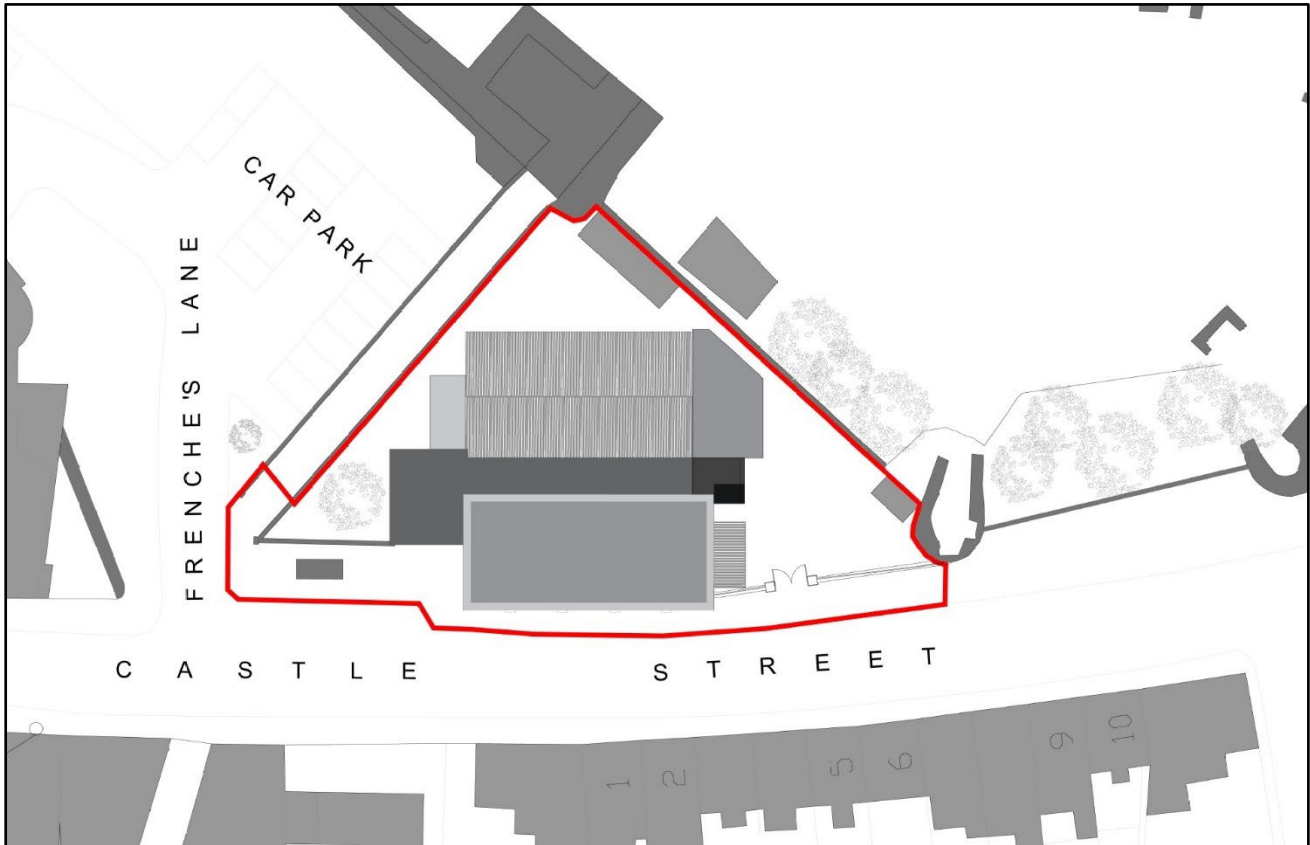


Figure 13: Existing site plan

The causeway does not appear from Pratt's illustration in 1820 to have been walled along its southern side (Figure 4). What may be a wall is shown on the 1836 OS Fair plan (Figure 5) but this could alternatively represent the unwalled edge of the causeway. The construction of the Market yard wall in the 1850s is likely to have cut into the southern edge of the causeway in order to achieve a level yard so it is unlikely that any evidence would survive for a medieval wall along the causeway now. It is proposed to insert a covered walkway connecting the Market House with the lower end of the causeway through the Market wall at a point close to the tree within the paved area in the northern portion of the site (Figure 15). There is little difference in ground level here either side of the wall so the ground impacts are likely to be low and the causeway only starts to really ramp upwards towards the Trim Gate beyond this point. The wall has been modified at this location in modern times also and there is evidence along the base for rebuilding in the form of a lower course which is slightly offset. The remaining section of wall between the bottom of the causeway and the Trim Gate will not be impacted. From inside the National Monument, the ballroom and extensions are clearly visible both from ground level and from the castle itself. The demolition of the ballroom will allow for a better appreciation of the National Monument from the grounds of the Market House but it will also improve the view from the bawn and the castle and provide a much less clustered landscape around Trim gate and the curtain walls more in line with the views from the north-east. The replacement buildings are of a much smaller scale and will be designed more in keeping with the historic nature of the site.

3.9 Test Trenching Methodology

Test excavation was carried out in accordance with the *IAI Code of Conduct for Archaeological Assessment Excavation* (IAI 2006a). All test trenches were excavated to 2m in depth by a mechanical mini-excavator equipped with a 1.8m wide toothless (smooth blade) ditching bucket, under direct supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist (Donald Murphy). All spoil from the excavated trenches was examined for finds and a metal detector was used during trenching to scan soils from excavated test trenches with a Garrett ATX metal detector; the discrimination settings on the metal detector(s) was set to 'All Metal'. All excavated trenches were recorded using digital photography taken using a high-resolution camera with a minimum resolution of 10 Megapixels.

3.10 Test Trenching Results

Archaeological test trenching was carried out by Donald Murphy of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd (ACSU) from 27th – 29th March 2023, under ministerial consent C001167, registration no. E005477, & licence detection no. R000605 issued by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004. The area for testing was limited as the Market House building was still in use, however the ballroom to the rear was vacant. A total of four test trenches (Table 4; Figures 21 - 23, Plates 5-12) were excavated, two within the ballroom and two external trenches at the location of proposed geotechnical trial pits. The trenches were positioned to target the line of the moat and the area outside the moat, to assess if archaeological deposits survive and to assess the level of disturbance caused by previous developments at the site. Each trench measured 1.8m in width, and in total 26m of linear trenches were excavated.

Excavation of the trenches failed to identify any archaeological features or finds. Below the concrete/gravel surface a brown stony sterile clay fill was evident throughout the four trenches and subsoil was not exposed in any trench despite excavation to a depth of 2m. No archaeological features or deposits were identified within the excavated trenches and it would appear this relatively sterile fill was introduced to the site at the time of construction of the Market House.

Table 4: Trench descriptions

Trench Number	Length (m)	Trench depth (m)	Description
1	11m	2m	Northwest-southeast aligned test trench, within the ballroom northeast of the line of a proposed new foundation (Figures 21-23, Plates 5-6). This trench targeted the outer edge of the moat (west side). The wooden dance floor was removed in advance of excavation. Reinforced concrete (C2) with steel mesh averaging 0.15m in depth overlay a brown stony sterile clay fill (C6) that extended at least 1.8m to the base of the trench. A mortared stone drain (C7) extending northwest to southeast parallel to Market House was exposed at the base of the trench. It was sealed by C6 and owing to the depth of the trench it was

Trench Number	Length (m)	Trench depth (m)	Description
			not possible to establish what was beneath the drain. It measured 0.4m in width, 0.4m in internal height and was roofed with large flat limestone slabs. It had a stone base and there was no evidence of silt within the drain. It was concluded that the drain was contemporary with the Market Hall. Subsoil was not exposed in this trench. No archaeological features were present, and no finds were recovered.
2	5m	2m	Northwest-southeast aligned test trench in northeastern part of site parallel to trench 1 outside the ballroom (Figures 21-22, Plates 7-8). This trench targeted the moat. A layer of gravel (C1) measuring 0.1m in depth overlay a brown stony sterile clay fill (C3), that was the same as C6 exposed in trench 1. This layer measured 1.6m in depth below which a similar layer (C4) with less stone was exposed. This had a maximum depth of 0.2m and overlay a grey sterile gravel (C5) at the eastern end of the trench. This may have been natural subsoil but it was not possible to confirm this owing to the depth of the trench. No archaeological features were exposed, and finds including four clay pipe stems (E005477:03:1-4), six sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:03:5-10), a stone square surface tile (E005477:03:11), a fragment of opaque glass (E005477:03:12), were recovered from C3. Four sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:04:1-4) and a sherd of yellow and brown glazed slipware (E005477:04:5) were recovered from C4.
3	5m	2m	Northwest-southeast aligned test trench, within the ballroom, east of trench 1 and south of trench 2 (Figures 21-22, Plates 9-10). This trench targeted the moat. The wooden dance floor was removed in advance of excavation. Reinforced concrete with steel mesh (C2) averaging 0.1m in depth overlay a brown stony sterile clay fill (C6) that extended at least 1.8m to the base of the trench. Subsoil was not exposed in this trench. No archaeological features were present, and no finds were recovered.
4	5m	2m	Northwest-southeast aligned test trench in southeastern part of site in the yard area to the south of the Market House (Figures 21-22, Plates 11-12). This trench targeted the moat. A layer of gravel (C1) measuring 0.1m in depth overlay a brown stony sterile clay fill (C3), that was the same as C6 exposed in trenches 1 & 3. This layer measured 1.8m in depth and finds recovered from this layer included four large sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:03:13-16), one body sherd of red glazed earthenware (E005477:03:17) and three sherds of delft ware (E005477:03:18-20). Subsoil was not exposed in this trench and no archaeological features were present.

Table 5: Context descriptions

Context	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	Basic Description
C1	-	-	0.10-0.15m	Gravel in trenches 2 and 4.
C2	-	-	0.15m	Reinforced concrete with steel mesh in trenches 1 and 3.
C3	-	-	1.8m	Brown stony sterile clay fill in trenches 2 and 4. This is the same as C6 exposed in trenches 1 & 3. Finds including four clay pipe stems (E005477:03:1-4), six sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:03:5-10), a stone square surface tile (E005477:03:11), a fragment of opaque glass (E005477:03:12), were recovered from this context in trench 2 and four large sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:03:13-16), one body sherd of red glazed earthenware (E005477:03:17) and three sherds of delft ware (E005477:03:18-20) were recovered in trench 4.
C4			0.2m	Sterile brown clay fill with less stone than C3, present below C3 and evident only in trench 2. Four sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:04:1-4) and a sherd of yellow and brown glazed slipware (E005477:04:5) were recovered from this context.
C5				Grey sterile gravel at base of trench 2 at the eastern end. This may represent natural subsoil but this could not be confirmed during testing as the trench measured 2m in depth and could not be accessed.
C6				Brown stony sterile clay fill in trenches 1 and 3. This is the same as C3 exposed in trenches 2 & 4.
C7				Mortared stone drain (C7) extending northwest to southeast parallel to Market House at the base of trench 1. It was sealed by C6 and owing to the depth of the trench it was not possible to establish what was beneath the drain. It measured 0.4m in width, 0.4m in internal height and was roofed with large flat limestone slabs. It had a stone base with no evidence of silt within the drain. This drain was probably contemporary with the Market Hall.

3.11 Material Culture

All finds were modern in nature and came from trenches 2 and 4. Finds in Trench 2 included four clay pipe stems (E005477:03:1-4), six sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:03:5-10), a stone square surface tile (E005477:03:11), a fragment of opaque glass (E005477:03:12), four sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:04:1-4) and a sherd of yellow and brown glazed slipware (E005477:04:5).

Finds from trench 4 included four large sherds of black glazed earthenware (E005477:03:13-16), one body sherd of red glazed earthenware (E005477:03:17) and three sherds of delft ware (E005477:03:18-20).

3.12 Dating

No features of archaeological significance were exposed. It would appear that fill was introduced to the site in advance of the construction of the Market House in the mid -19th century. Finds recovered from the site are 19th- 20th century in date. Any surviving archaeological deposits including the moat may still possibly exist below the level of the fill at 2m below current ground level.

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 The Proposed Development

The proposed works include the refurbishment of Trim Market House, Protected Structure (TT036-049 - NIAH 14328036) and extension to rear within the curtilage of the existing Dance Hall to create a Visitor centre for Trim Castle, National Monument (No.514). This will also include part demolition of selected elements of the extensions to the original five bay Market House, the registered projected structure, (TT036-049 – NIAH 14328036). Extensions include the dance hall, stage area, fly tower, public entrance area, public toilet facilities, and the service areas to the rear and side of the building.

The proposal for the existing Market House building will be to conserve the original fabric where applicable and reinstatement, approximately 400m² and to provide new interventions as required to the rear, approximately 260m². The refurbishment of the existing property will be to a high standard which is both sensitive to the remaining original features of the protected structure and will bring the building up to current building regulation requirements. The Visitor Centre will be used by members of the public as a tourist hub and gateway to the Castle and wider Heritage Town. The spaces will include a reception area, exhibition spaces, audio visual room, a sensory space, a roof terrace, new lift, stairways and toilet facilities.

The new Visitor Centre will also include a staff canteen, an office and toilet facilities, which will be decanted from the existing facilities within the Castle Gaol. The new Visitor Centre will be designed to universal accessibility standards and will include a Changing Places facility. The new lift will provide a universal accessible route for visitors to view the castle walls from the first floor exhibition area and roof terrace. A new covered walkway will provide a direct link between the Visitor Centre and the existing causeway entrance to the Castle. The visitor route through the rear garden will facilitate interpretation of the moat area in an appropriate and sensitive manner. Specifically the proposed works will involve

- the demolition of some of the 20th century extension buildings on the site, principally the dancehall, fly-tower, external sheds and toilet block
- refurbishment of the Market House including a new internal lift
- construction of a new extension to the rear of the Market House on part of the footprint of the dance hall
- new covered walkway from the building to the causeway leading to Trim Castle
- landscaped area to rear



Figure 14: Proposed demolition works

4.2 Conclusion, Impacts and Recommendations

The proposed works The testing has confirmed that the upper 2m to the south and east of the Market House are disturbed or represent imported material to the site. This was probably done when the Market House was being constructed along

with the uncovered mortared drain to the rear. Given this level of disturbance across the four trenches excavated it is unlikely that the proposed new building will have any impact on archaeological features. The only potential impact could be from piles or foundation levels deeper than 2m. All future demolition works of the extensions to Market House including the ballroom, stage area, fly tower, public entrance area, public toilet facilities, and the service areas to the rear and side of the building will be monitored under ministerial consent C001167. Excavation of geotechnical trial pits and all groundworks associated with the development will also be monitored under ministerial consent C001167, and will also include metal detection (R000605) to scan relevant deposits to aid in artefact recovery. It will also be necessary to carry out further test trenching to the north of the site, when access is available following demolition of the ballroom and other extensions, to attempt to identify the edge of the moat in this part of the site if such survives below the 2m limit achievable during the current testing. In addition a test trench will be required at the junction of the proposed new covered walkway and the causeway/ramp leading to Trim gate. As the moat has the potential to contain waterlogged deposits and organic finds, their retrieval and preservation/conservation will also need to be addressed if there is to be any impact in this area. Once the site investigation works are complete and a detailed layout and foundation design is prepared, a more detailed impact statement will be submitted. Further mitigation could include archaeological excavation in areas to be impacted by development.



Figure 15: Proposed site layout and landscape plan

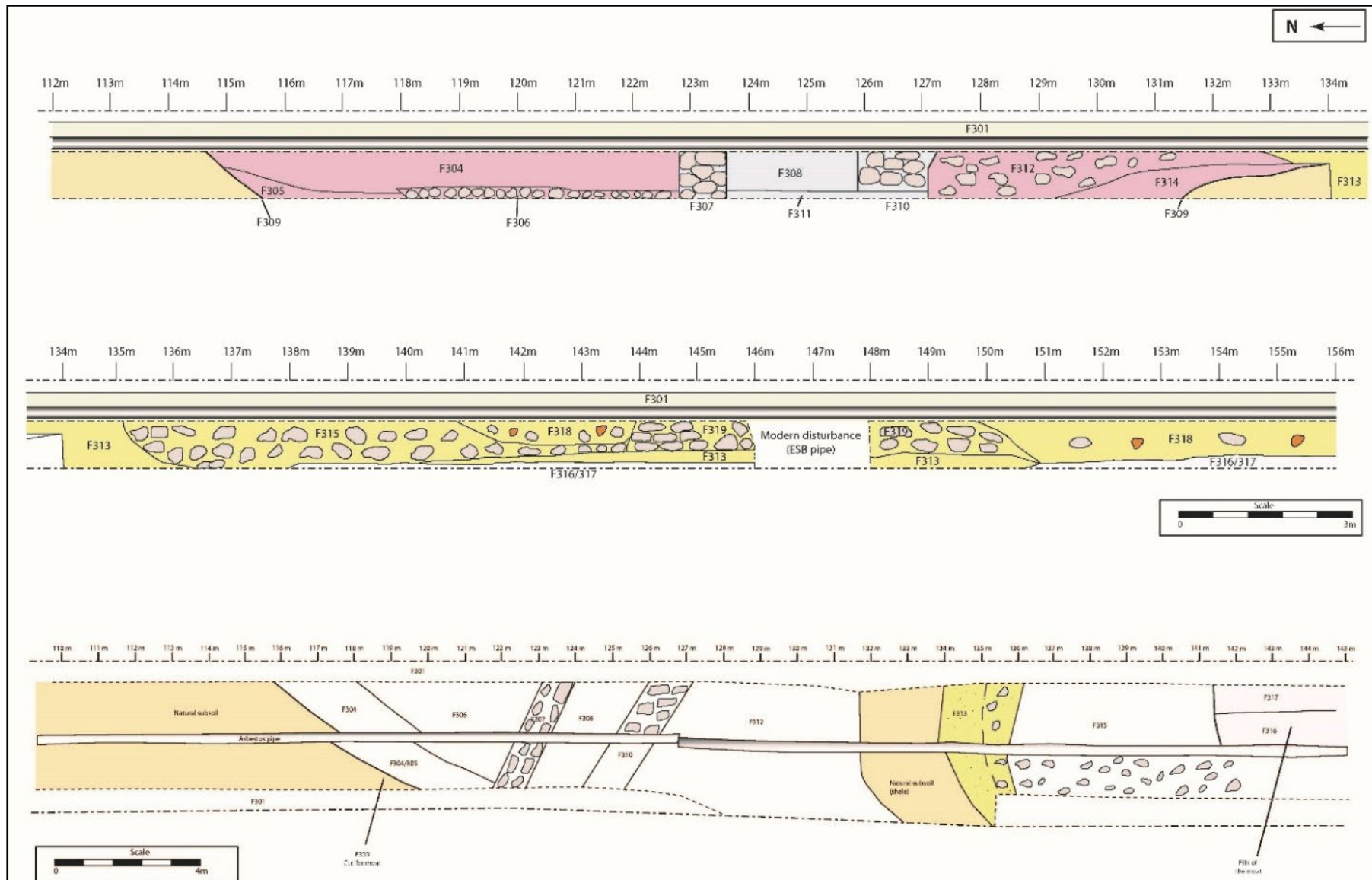


Figure 16: Section and plan of moat and post-medieval deposits uncovered along Castle Street in 2003 (after O Carroll 2004)

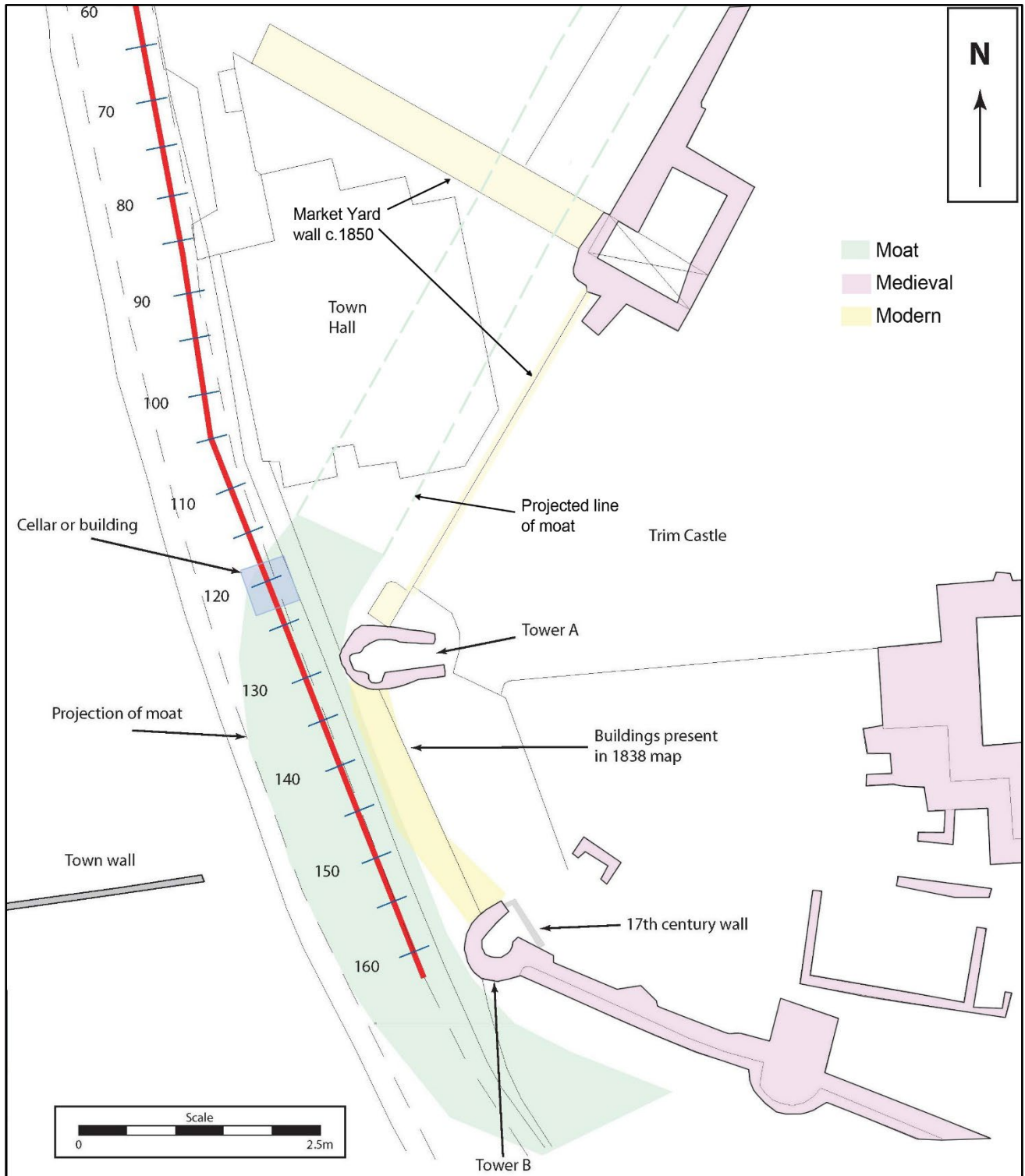


Figure 17: Plan of major archaeological features relevant to the proposed development (after O Carroll 2004 with additions)

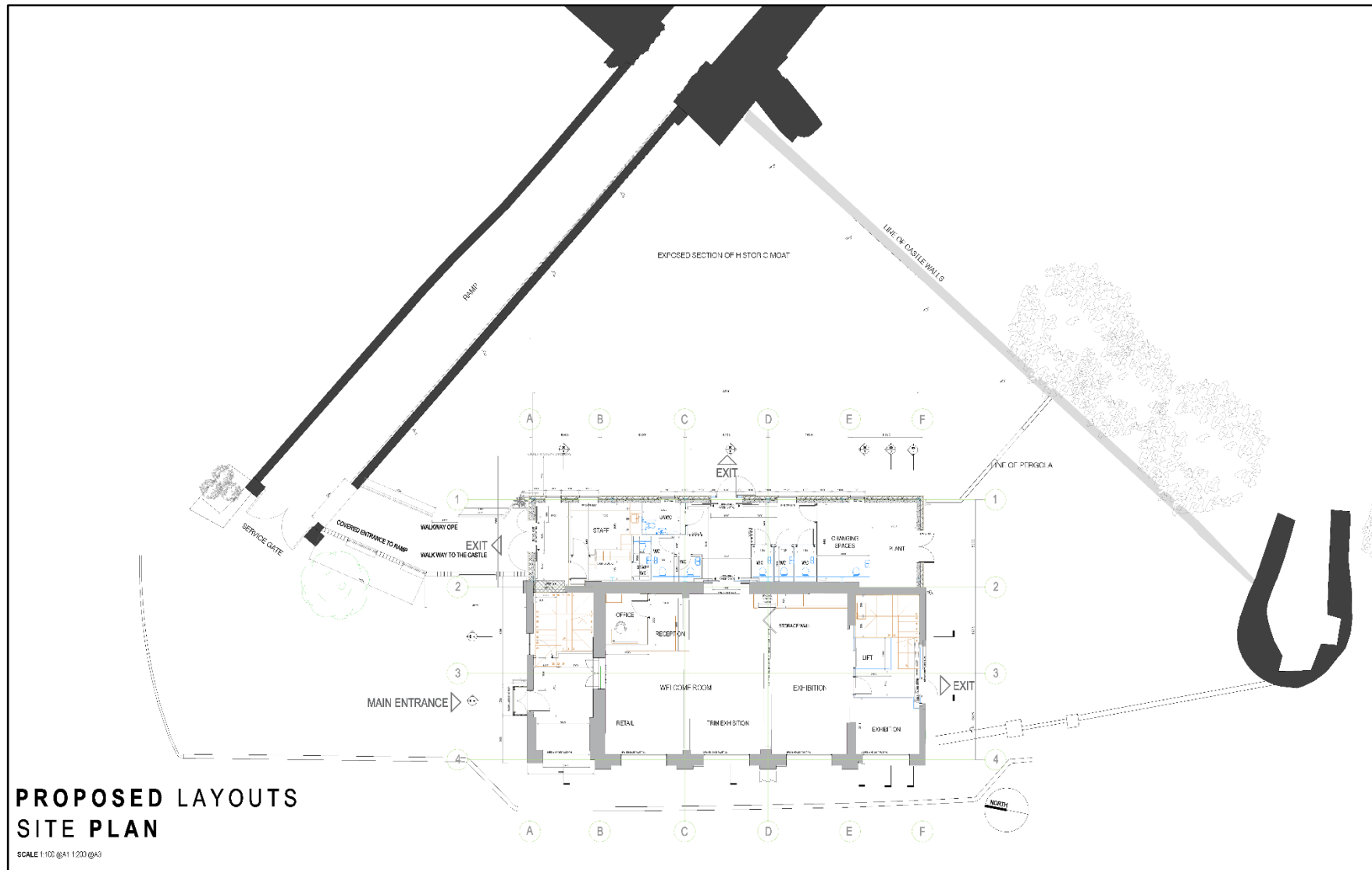


Figure 18: Proposed Ground floor of Market House and site plan

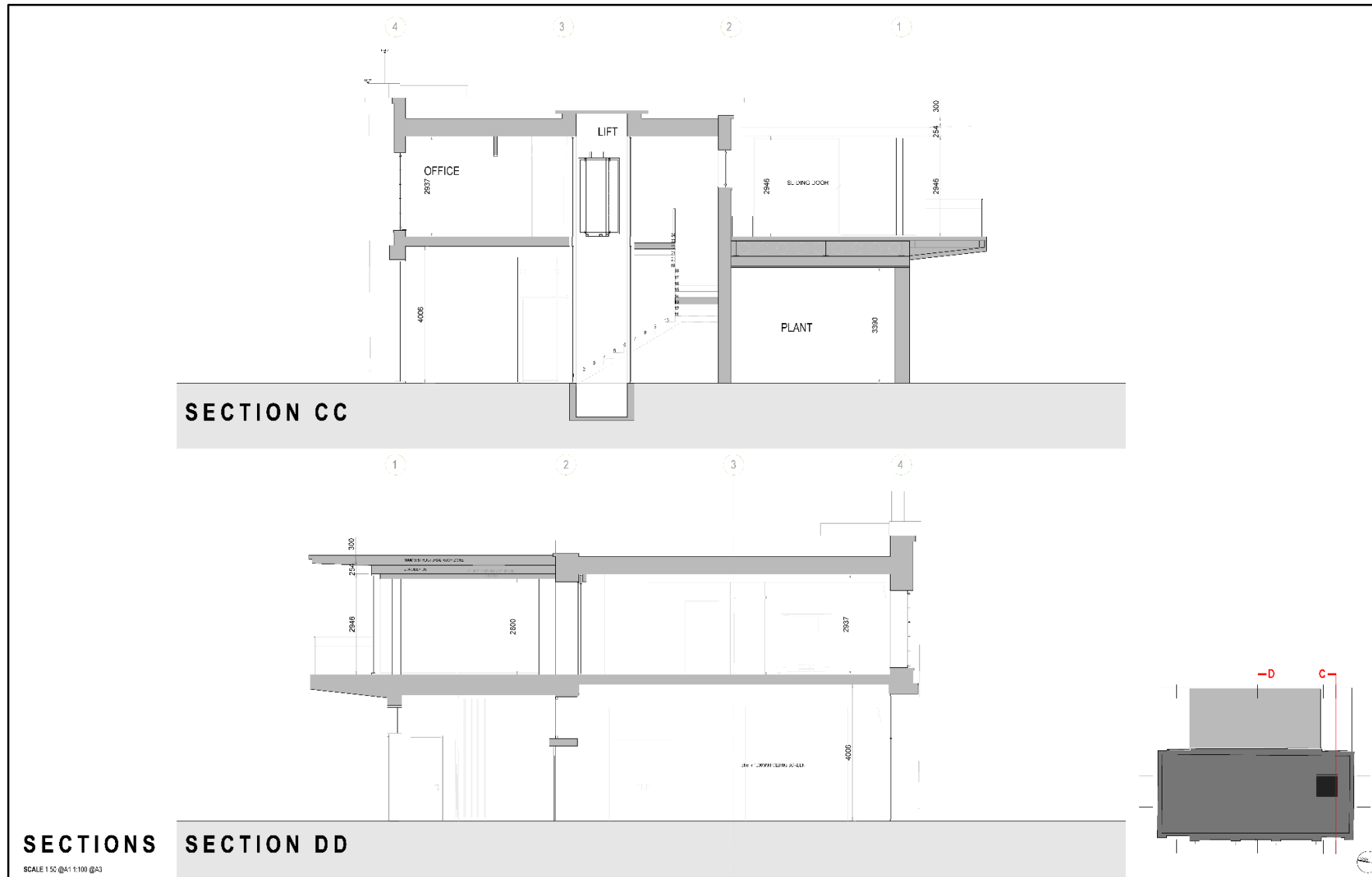


Figure 19: Sections through proposed redevelopment

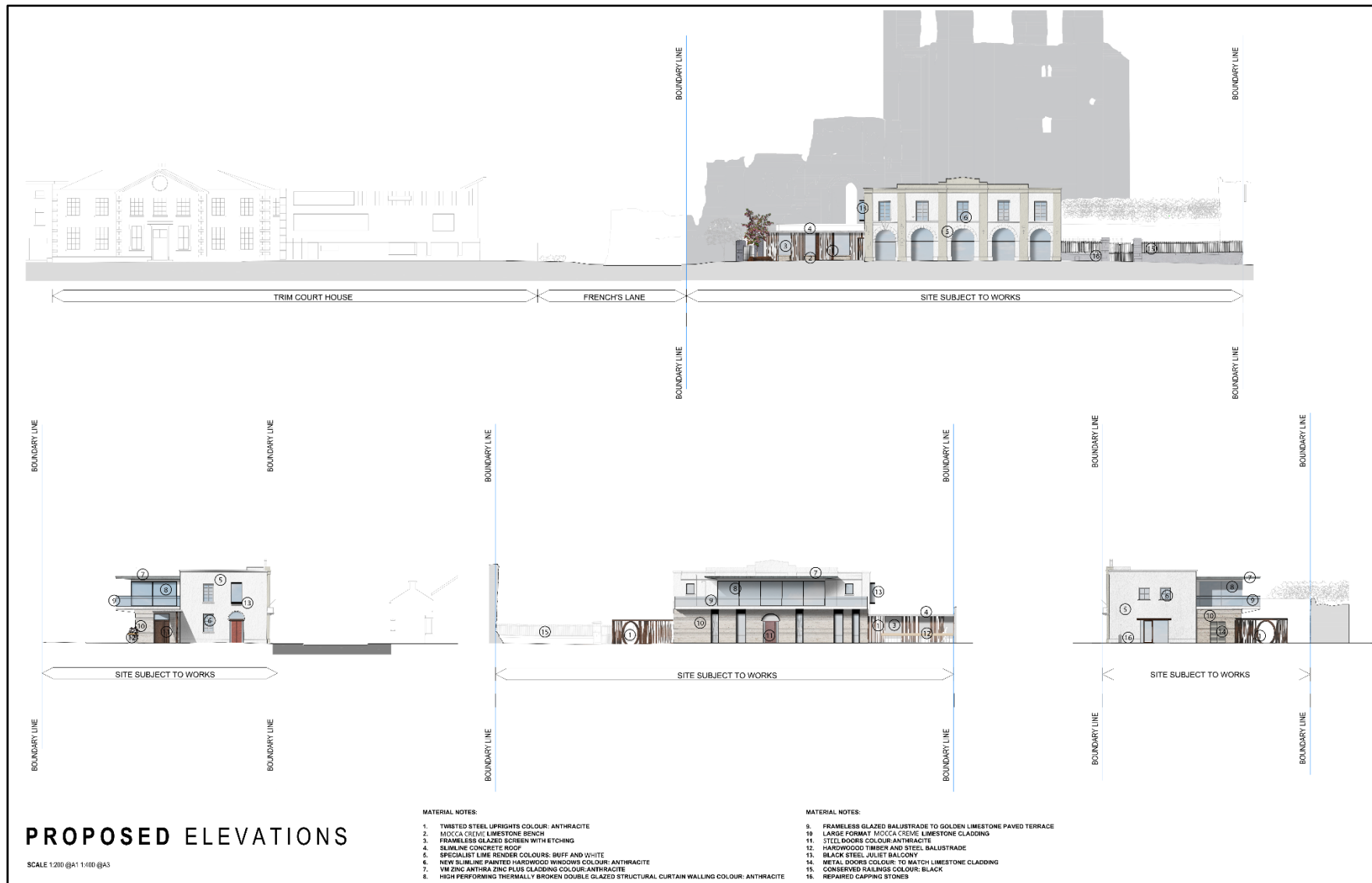


Figure 20: Elevations of the proposed redeveloped site

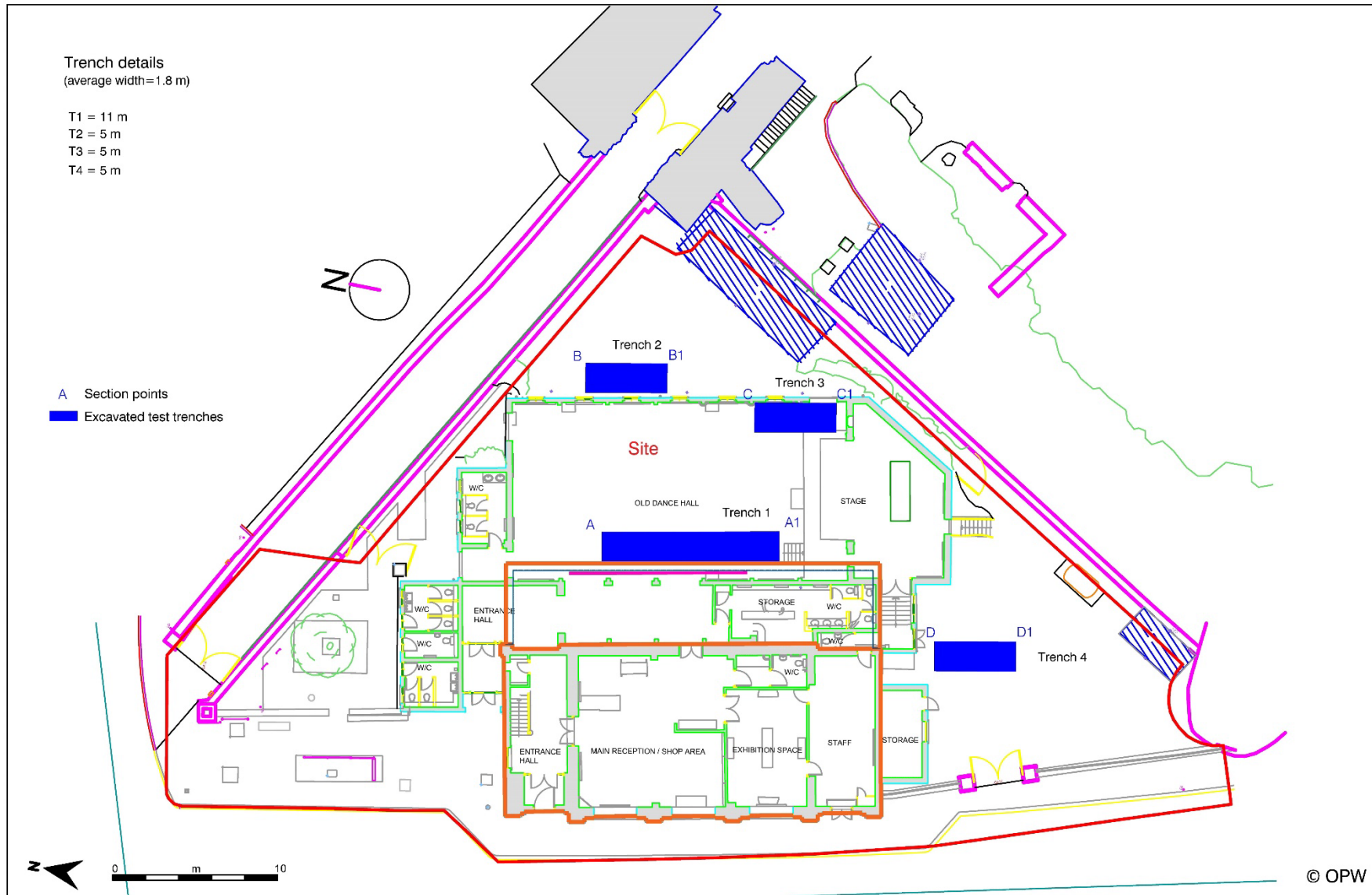


Figure 21: Location of test trenches

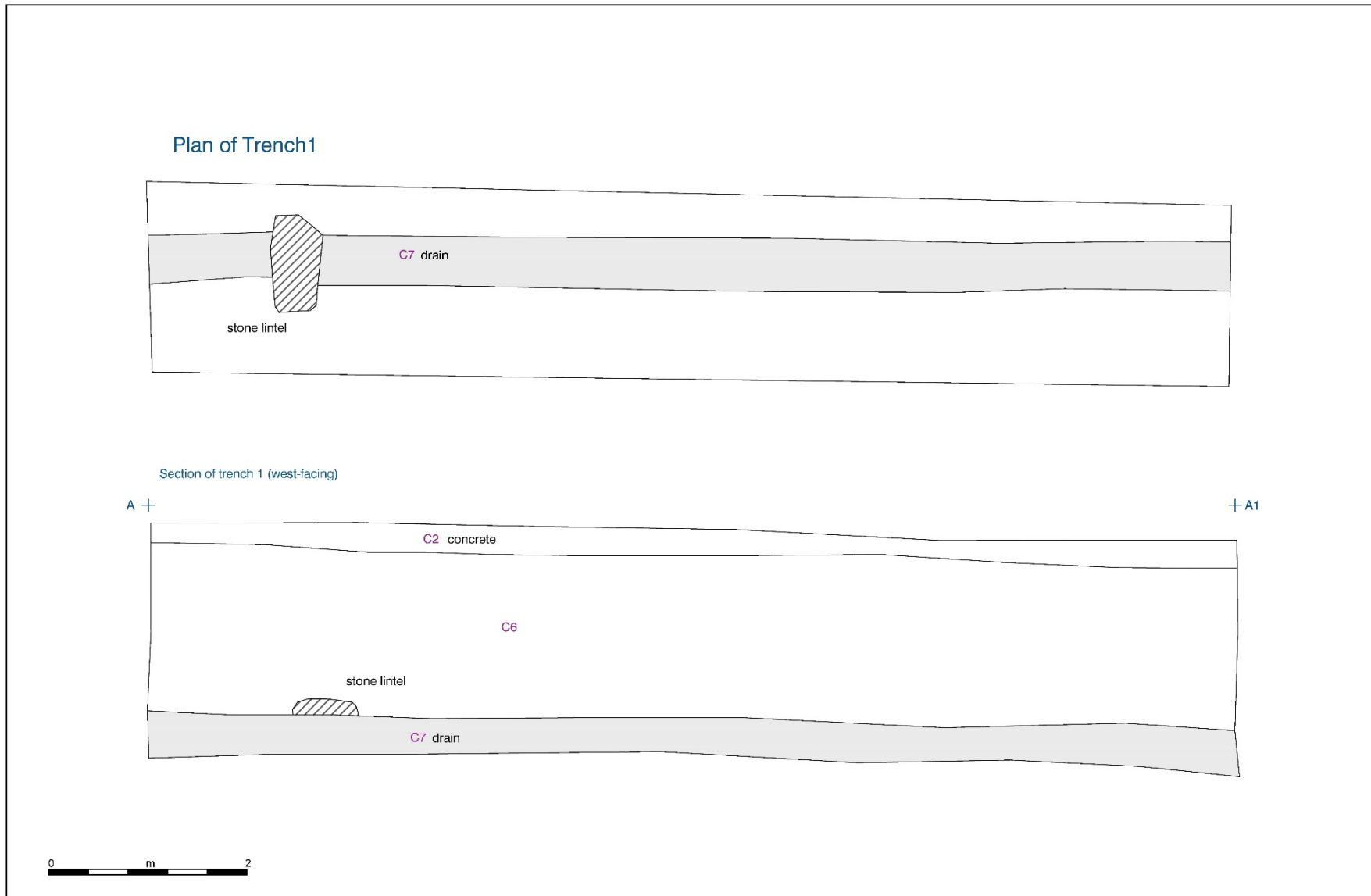


Figure 22: Plan and section of Trench 1

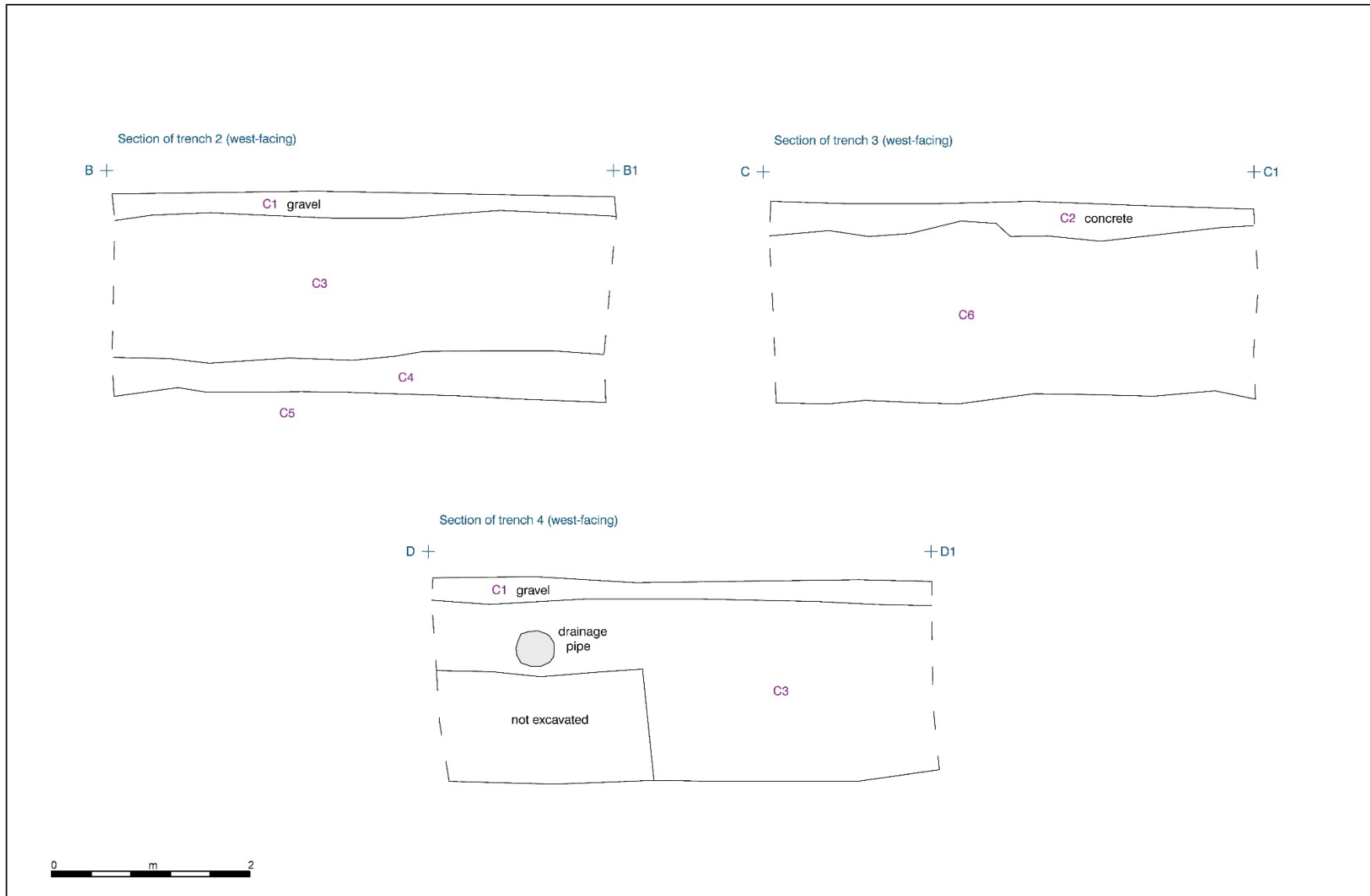


Figure 23: Sections of Trenches 2-4

6. EXCAVATION BULLETIN

Market House, Trim.

Manorland, Trim

Co. Meath

C001167/E005477/R000605

I.T.M. 680122, 756767

Testing

The site is located at Market House, Castle Street Trim to the northwest of Trim Castle Complex (Nat. Mon. No. 514; RMP ME036-048004). The site lies adjacent to and immediately west of the wall surrounding the bawn ME036-048078. The Market House is a Protected Structure (RPS 91253) listed in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and was built c.1850, remodelled and extended c.1925 with a ballroom added to the rear in 1950. The proposed development involves the demolition of the ballroom complex and extended buildings, the construction of a new extension, the insertion of a lift within the Market House, the construction of a covered walkway linking the building with the existing ramp to the castle, any additional new services required and the proposed landscaping of the site. This has the potential to impact archaeological deposits where they survive.

Archaeological test trenching was carried out by Donald Murphy of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd (ACSU) from 27th – 29th March 2023, under ministerial consent (C001167, Registration no. E005477, & Detection Licence No. R000605). The area for testing was limited as the Market House building was still in use, however the ballroom to the rear was vacant. A total of four test trenches were excavated, two within the ballroom and two external trenches at the location of proposed geotechnical trial pits. The trenches were positioned to target the line of the moat and the area outside the moat, to assess if archaeological deposits survive and to assess the level of disturbance caused by previous developments at the site.

The four test trenches measuring 1.8m in width, with a total overall length of 26 linear metres were excavated to a depth of 2m. Below the concrete/gravel surface a brown stony sterile clay fill was evident throughout the four trenches and subsoil was not exposed in any trench. Sherds of black glazed earthenware, clay pipe stems and other modern finds were recovered from two of the trenches. It would appear that the site was filled in advance of the construction of the Market Hall in the mid-19th century. A mortared stone drain parallel to the Market Hall & contemporary with it was exposed at the base of trench 1 at a depth of 2m beneath the fill. Any surviving archaeological deposits including the moat possibly exist below this level. No archaeological features or deposits were identified within the excavated trenches.

All future demolition works of the extensions to Market House including the ballroom, stage area, fly tower, public entrance area, public toilet facilities, and the service areas to the rear and side of the building will be monitored under ministerial

consent C001167. Excavation of geotechnical trial pits and all groundworks associated with the development will be monitored under ministerial consent C001167, and will also include metal detection (R000605) to scan relevant deposits and aid in artefact recovery. It will also be necessary to carry out further test trenching to the north of the site, when access is available following demolition of the ballroom and other extensions, to identify the edge of the moat in this part of the site. As the moat has the potential to contain waterlogged deposits and significant organic finds, their retrieval and preservation/conservation will also need to be addressed. Further mitigation could include full archaeological excavation in areas impacted by development.

Donald Murphy, Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit, Unit 21, Boyne Business Park, Greenhills, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

7. PUBLICATION PLAN

An account of archaeological testing and its results will be published online as an excavation bulletin at www.excavations.ie (see Section 6).

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Plate 1: Aerial view of Trim Castle and Market House to northwest.



Plate 2: View of Trim Castle and Market House, looking southeast.



Plate 3: North portion of site, looking east.



Plate 4: South portion of site—Market Yard, looking northeast.



Plate 5: Location of Trench 1 inside ballroom, looking southeast.



Plate 6: Drain in base of trench 1, looking east.



Plate 7: Location of Trench 2, looking southeast.



Plate 8: Close up of east section of Trench 2, looking east.



Plate 9: Location of Trench 3 inside ballroom, looking southeast.



Plate 10: Trench 3, looking northwest.



Plate 11: Location of Trench 4, south of Market House, looking northwest.



Plate 12: Close up of Trench 4, looking southeast.