

# *Archaeology Wales*

## **West Lodge, Bute Park, Cardiff**

Archaeological Watching Brief



By  
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Report No. 1042

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Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared For: Cardiff City Council

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Position:

Date:

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Report No:

Date: **January 2012**



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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of West Lodge in Bute Park, Cardiff. The work involved the excavation of three trial pits, a trench through an area of hardstanding and two trenches for new soakaways. The trial pits and the trench through the area of hardstanding revealed thick deposits of modern scalplings and rubble, while the soakaway trenches cut through the topsoil and subsoil and into the alluvial natural. No features of archaeological significance were identified.*

## **1. Introduction**

In October 2011, Archaeology Wales were commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of West Lodge, Bute Park, Cardiff. West Lodge is located on Castle Street, Cardiff (NGR: ST 1783 7646; Fig. 1), 100m to the west of the Castle. The redevelopment work involves the restoration of the Lodge and the building of an extension.

West Lodge is one of the principle entrances into Bute Park and was built in 1863 as an ornamental gatehouse by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Bute. The site lies in close proximity to two Scheduled Ancient Monuments: 200m south of the medieval Blackfriars Priory, 300m west of the Roman fort. The Lodge itself is Grade II\* (the listing also incorporates the adjacent Animal Wall), and lies within the Grade I listed Historic Landscape as included in the register of parks and gardens of historic interest in Wales.

The redevelopment of West Lodge involves the restoration of the Lodge building and the construction of an extension. The work forms part of the larger Bute Park Restoration Project, an HLF funded project being run by Cardiff Council (planning application 08/00765/c). A condition attached to the planning consent by Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT), in their capacity as archaeological advisor to the local planning authority, stipulated that all groundworks associated with the redevelopment of West Lodge were monitored by an archaeologist. This was due to the moderate potential for archaeological remains to survive on the site and to mitigate against their disturbance or destruction.

The watching brief was carried out in October 2011 by Jerry Bond.

## **2. Site Description**

West Lodge is located in the south-western corner of Bute Park, adjacent to the River Taff. The site lies on level ground, has a wall to the south and is surrounded by parkland on all other sides.

The Lodge itself is described in the NMR ([www.coflein.gov.uk](http://www.coflein.gov.uk)) as:

A two storey lodge in grey stone built in the Gothic style with castellated, stone chimneys, a splayed oriel window over 2 further Gothic windows. The left return (inside park) has a blocked Gothic doorway flanked by Gothic windows on the ground floor while on the first floor is a 2-light window flanked by single-light windows, all with hoodmoulds. To the right of the lodge, facing the road, is a stone wall with a pedestrian gateway. To the west of the lodge is a castellated screen wall with a broad gateway to Park with wooden gates, and a small pedestrian gateway with a heraldic shield over. On the west side of the gateway is a square turret, and length of stone wall.

The site lies less than 1m AOD within an area of alluvial deposits overlying Triassic Limestone (British Geological Survey 2001).

### **3. Watching Brief Results**

The groundworks monitored during the watching brief comprised the excavation of three trial pits, the excavation of a pit to contain a new soakaway and the excavation of a trench through an area of hardstanding immediately to the north of the Lodge.

#### Trial Pit 1

Trial Pit 1 was located towards the centre of the courtyard to the east of the Lodge (fig. 2). It measured 1m in length, 0.75m wide and was excavated by hand to a depth of 0.9m. The upper 0.4m of the trial pit comprised modern scalpings, which overlay a thick layer of twentieth century rubble (fig. 3). This was excavated to a depth of 0.5m. On the western side of the trial pit, within the rubble layer, the footings for the adjacent wall were identified. No features of archaeological significance were revealed.

#### Trial Pit 2

Trial Pit 2 was also located in the courtyard, 5m to the south of Trial Pit 1 (fig. 2). It measured 0.8m long by 0.55m wide and was excavated by hand to a depth of 0.9m (fig. 4). The upper 0.3m of the trial pit comprised modern scalpings, with a thick deposit of twentieth century rubble below. This was excavated to a depth of 0.6m. No features of archaeological significance were identified.

#### Trial Pit 3

Trial Pit 3 was located on the southern side of the courtyard, adjacent to the eastern wall of the Lodge (fig. 2). It measured 2m long, 0.5m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.5m. The upper 0.2m comprised modern scalpings, which overlay a thick deposit of twentieth century rubble. This was excavated to a depth of 0.3m. No features of archaeological significance were revealed.

#### Section 1

A trench was dug through an area of hardstanding, immediately to the north of the Lodge, from which a 2m length of section was recorded. The trench was orientated east/west and cut through the original paved surface. Below the paving was a thick deposit of modern scalpings. This was excavated to a depth of 0.65m. No features of archaeological significance were identified.

#### Soakaway Trench 1

Soakaway trench 1 was located on the north-eastern edge of the Lodge site (fig. 2). It measured 2.3m long by 2.1m wide and was excavated to a depth of 2m (fig. 7). Below the topsoil was a thin deposit of orange brown silty clay, 0.2m deep, which overlay the grey/brown silty clay natural. This was excavated to a depth of 1.8m. No features of archaeological significance were identified.

#### Soakaway Trench 2

Soakaway trench 2 was located 5m to the north of the animal wall and 5m to the east of the eastern wall of West Lodge (fig. 2). The trench was orientated roughly north-east/south-west, measured 1m by 1.3m and was excavated to a depth of 1m. Below

the turf was a layer of topsoil 0.3m thick, within which was a ceramic drain pipe running north-east/south-west across the trench. Below the topsoil was a thick deposit of yellow/brown clay. This was excavated to a depth of 0.7m. No features of archaeological significance were identified.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusions**

The archaeological watching brief revealed that no archaeology survived on the site, despite its history and proximity to both the Roman fort and the medieval priory. The digging of the trial pits and the trench through the area of hardstanding revealed that a thick deposit of modern scalpings overlay a deposit of rubble of probable twentieth century date. The rubble comprised stone and brick fragments and contained occasional sherds of modern pottery. This evidence suggests that there were extensive groundworks carried out on the site in the twentieth century.

The trench for the soakaway lay outside the courtyard of the Lodge, within the park grounds. The trench dug through the topsoil and a thin subsoil into the clay silt alluvial natural. No archaeological features were identified which suggests that this area was not exploited during the Roman, medieval or post-medieval use of the park.

#### **5. Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Jerry Bond for carrying out the watching brief.

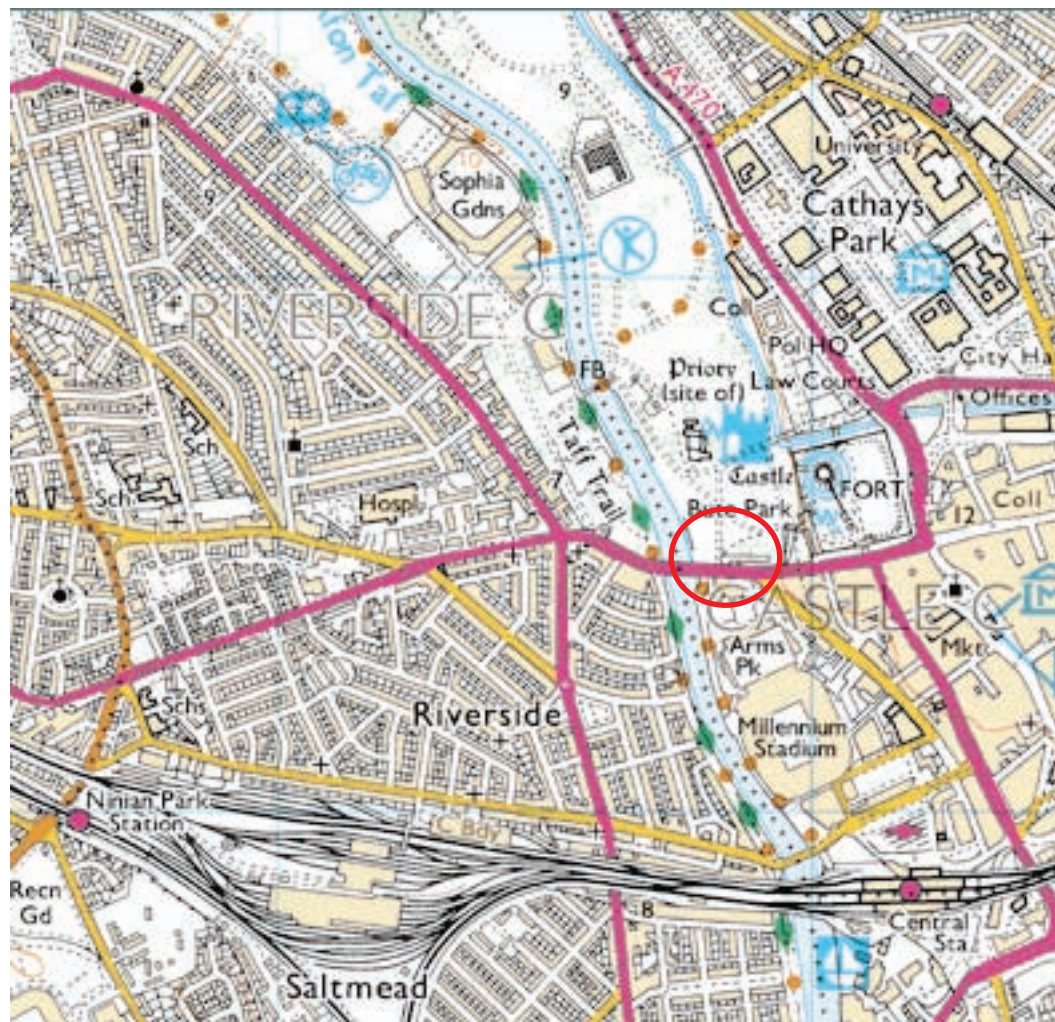
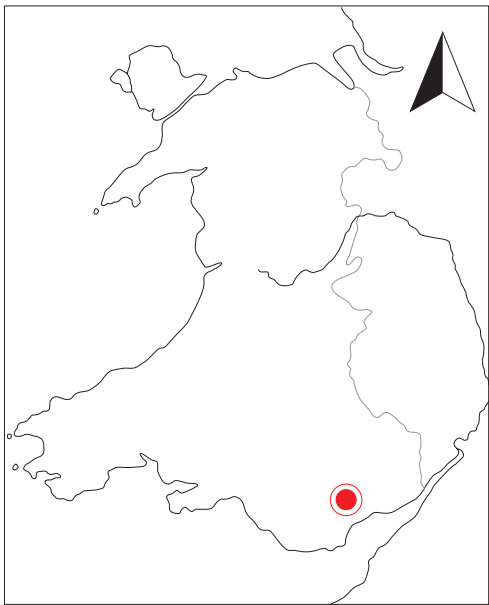
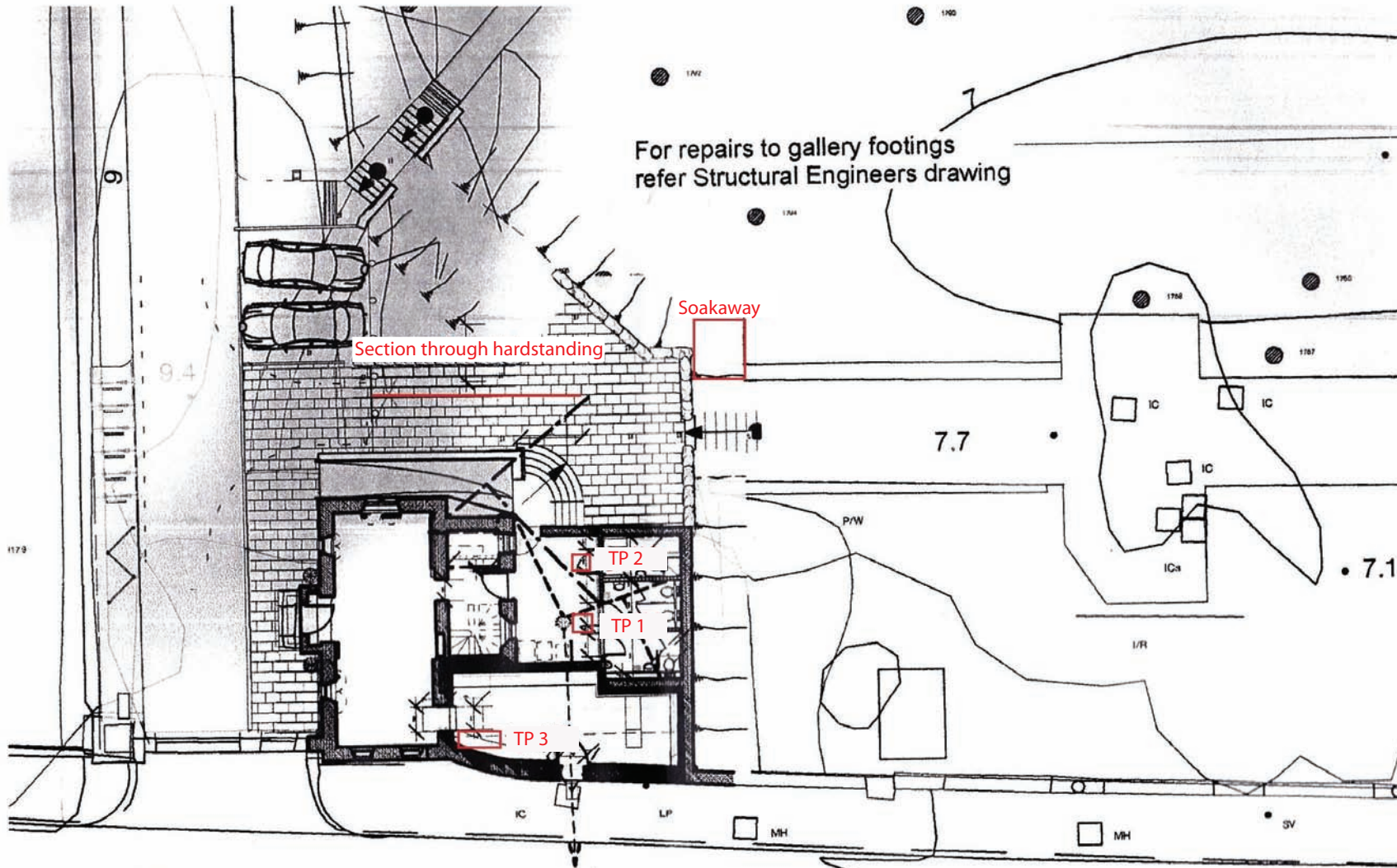


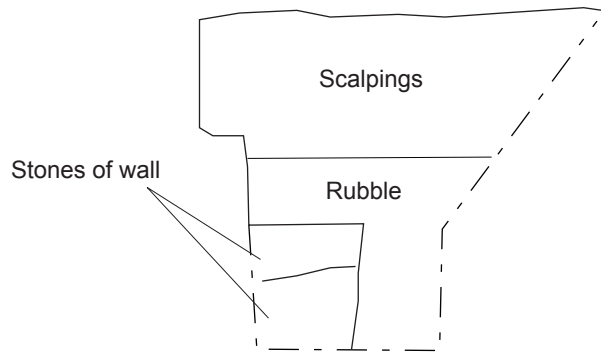
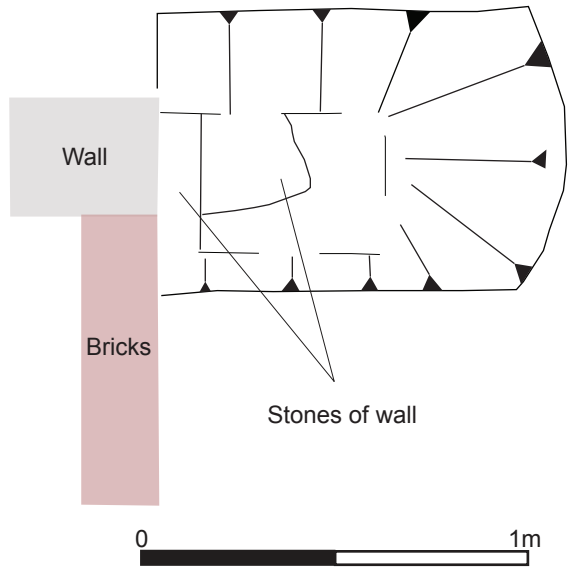
Fig. 1  
Location of  
development  
site





Plan showing extent of external works at 1:250 @ A1

Fig. 2  
Location of trial pits and trenches



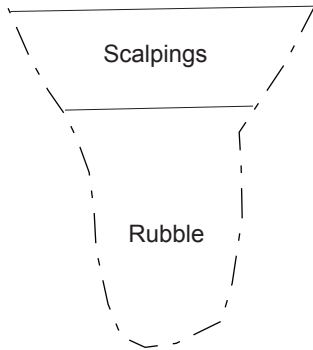
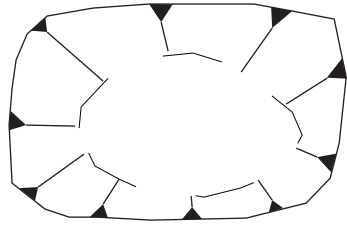
North-facing Section through Trial Pit 1



Trial Pit 1 looking west. Scale = 1m and 0.5m

Fig. 3  
Trial pit 1





North-facing Section through Trial Pit 2

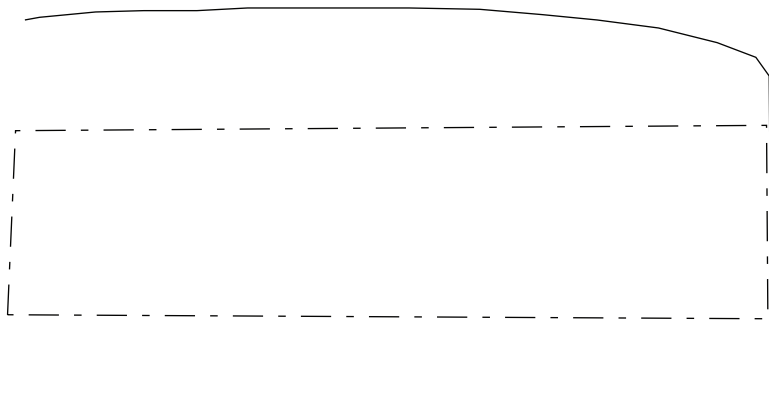


Trial Pit 2 looking west. Scale = 1m

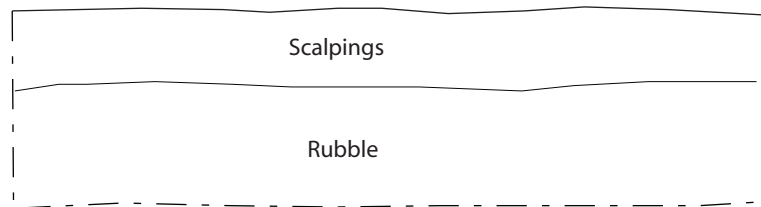
Fig. 4  
Trial pit 2



External wall



Building wall

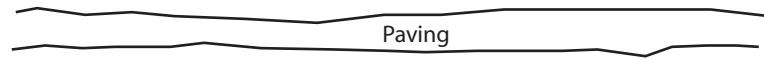


Trial Pit 3 looking west. Scale = 1m

West-facing Section through Trial Pit 3

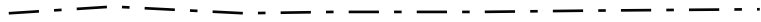
Fig. 5  
Trial pit 3

North-facing Section through Section 1



Paving

Scalpings

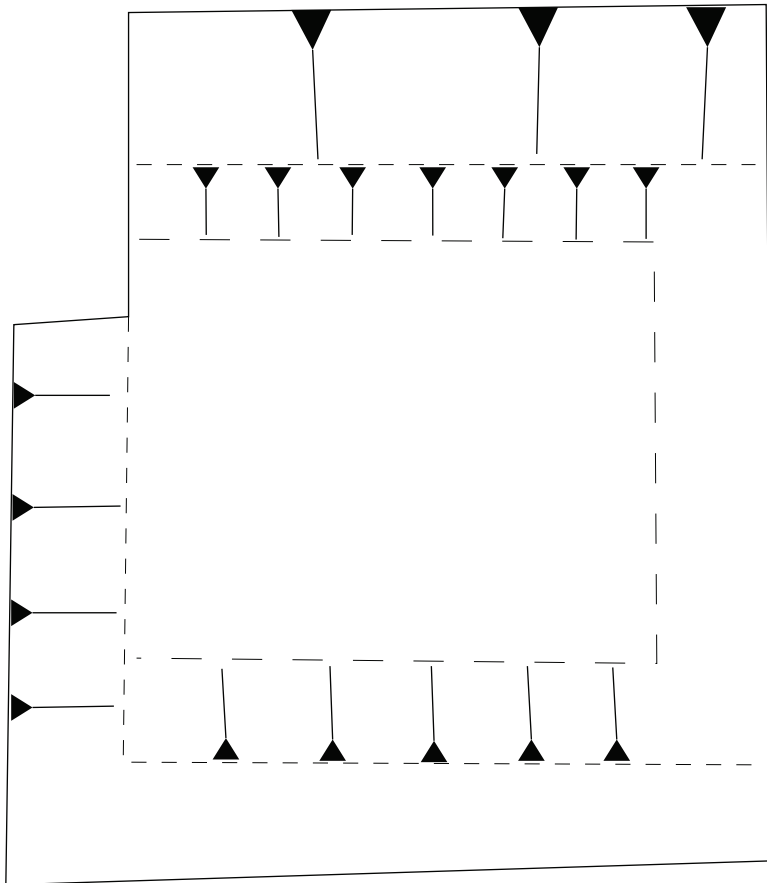


Section 1 looking east. Scale = 1m

Fig. 6  
Section 1



Concrete



0 1m

West-facing section through soakaway trench

Soakaway trench looking south-east. Scale = 2m

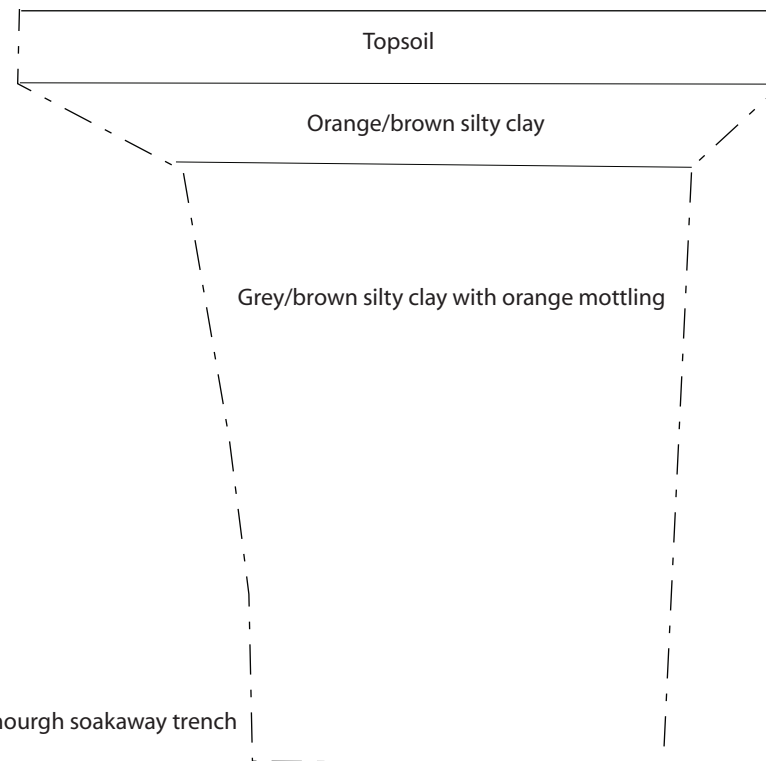


Fig. 7  
Soakaway trench

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