

8.34 MARBLE HILL HOUSE - SAC REPORT

ENGLISH HERITAGE
INTERVENTION AND ANALYSIS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE TEAMS

Evaluation of the grounds at Marble Hill House, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond

Site Archive Completion Report

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1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Historic England’s Excavation and Analysis team on the site of Marble Hill House, London Borough of Richmond. The evaluation was part of a wider Marble Hill House Landscape Assessment which will contribute to the re-instatement of the 18th-century gardens as well as further interpretive work in the house (Alexander 2016). The excavations in the area of the Service Wing and China Rooms will provide details of the surviving remains for these buildings. A full list of Project Aims and Objectives and the evaluation Method Statement can be found in the Project Design (Forward 2016) at S:\oldshare\Projects\Pr7382_MarbleHillHouseExcavation\ProjectManagement\ProjectDesign\HE7382-ProjectDesign-Draft-v3

The fieldwork was carried out between 11th and 18th November 2016, following an initial site reconnaissance visit on 20th October 2016. The wider project team comprised 15 members of core staff, 1 temporary member of staff and 2 external specialists. The onsite team consisted of 2 members of core HE staff and 1 temporary member of staff. This excavation followed an extensive survey of documentary and cartographic sources, but no geophysical or geomorphological survey was possible due to the non-availability of access to the area covered by heavy ground vegetation.

The project archive – physical and digital - is currently located at Fort Cumberland (see ‘location of digital data’ within section 2.1),

The archive will be deposited with English Heritage collections at Wrest Park. Copies of reports will also be sent to project partners listed in the Project Design. All data created will be Historic England copyright.



Figure 1 showing the trench locations



Figure 2 showing the project area location (see red outline)

1.2 Trench locations (fig 1)

Trench 1 was designed to be located over the site of the Service Wing of Marble Hill House. The Service Wing was constructed in the first half of the 18th century and was demolished in 1909. The trench was planned to measure 11m long and 2m wide. The area where the trench was placed (fig 3) was one of the less densely covered areas of shrub and therefore no mature trees were at risk from the work. Access was from the tarmac path running in front of Marble Hill House after the removal of a fencing panel. A mini digger was used, under archaeological supervision, to remove topsoil and expose the highest surviving archaeological levels.

Trench 2 measured 2m x 2m and was hand dug as it was not possible to gain access for the mini digger to this area due to the thickness of the undergrowth and location of mature trees (fig 2) . The trench was located at the junction where the wall of the Service Wing drying area met the wall of the China Room as it was anticipated that this would catch internal floor surfaces, if they survived. Unfortunately whilst removing the topsoil from this area, a white fibrous mineral deposit was encountered and excavation was halted to allow sampling and testing. Subsequent analysis confirmed that the material was a mixture of both white (chrysotile) and brown (amosite) asbestos. No further archaeological work was undertaken in trench 2 and a small amount of finds material recovered from the topsoil was disposed of as hazardous waste.



Figure 3 showing the pre-excitation trench locations (Trench 1 left and Trench 2 right)

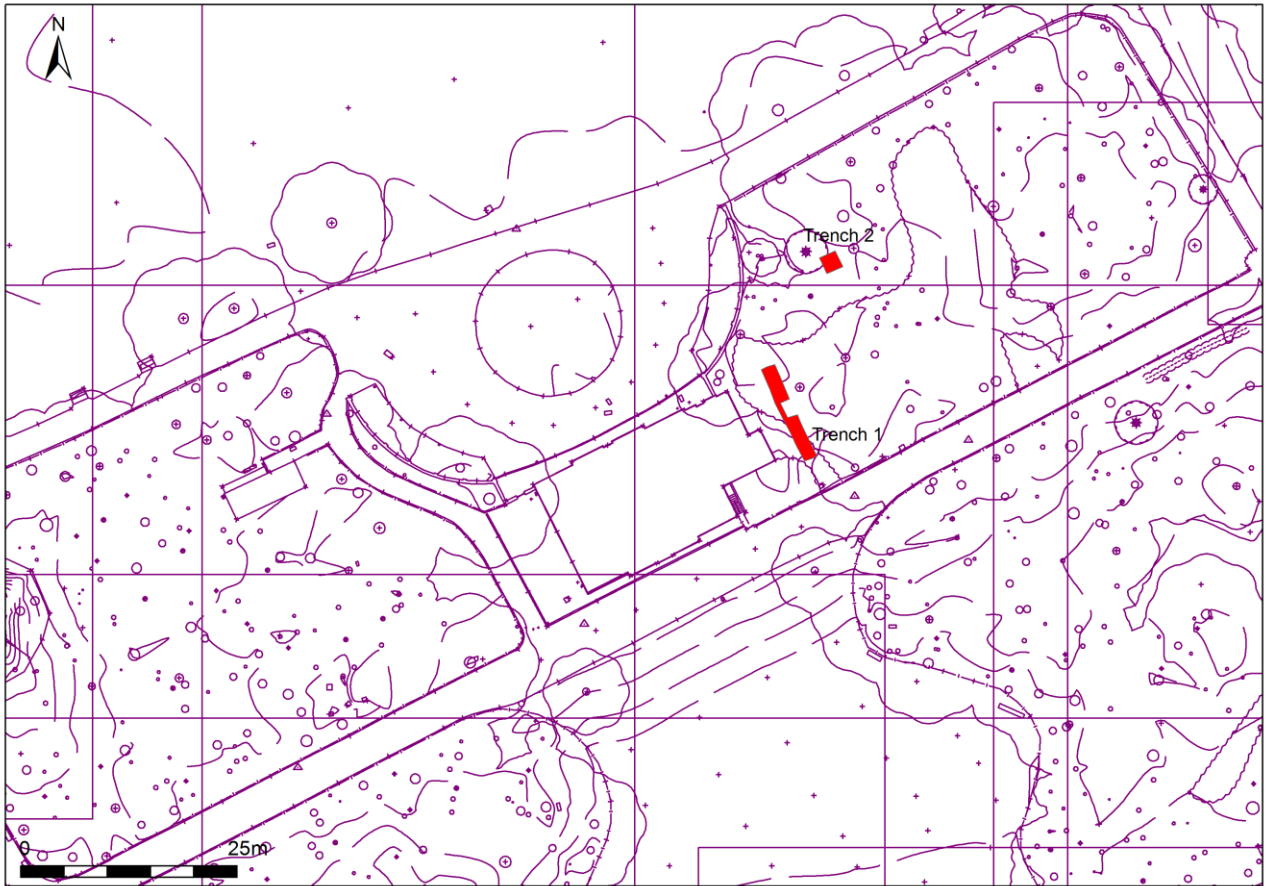


Figure 4 Evaluation trench locations after excavation

2 Summary account of the structural record

Initial consideration of the context record suggests that the evaluation produced sufficient evidence to predominantly meet the project objectives. A summary report of the excavations follows which includes descriptions of each trench (Section 2.2 below), and a tabulated quantification of the context record, site photographs and drawings (section 6.1).

2.1 The structural archive

All context records were entered into the project database (see 'location of digital data' below) and checked on site. Context sketches, all site drawings and the working and trench matrices were scanned and imported into the database.

Survey data is stored in the project database. Survey stations were established using the GPS, and no permanent points were left *in situ*. The site survey book contains handwritten logs of the daily survey work.

All project photography was digital, and the photographs have been imported into the project database. All project photographs have been given site-level metadata using BreezeBrowser. The photograph descriptions and relationships are in the project database.

Interpretative information: Phases and Structural Groups have been created in the project database where appropriate. Matrices for each trench are included below and available at:

S:\oldshare\Projects\Pr7382 MarbleHillHouseExcavation\04-Investigation\Images\Matrixes

Location of the digital data
The Intrasis database can be found in I:\Database\Pr7382MarHil
A zipped back-up file of the Intrasis database as at XX/XX/XXXX is included in the folder ASK HUGH TO ZIP AND STORE
All other digital files are in the appropriate locations in the project folder S:\oldshare\Projects\ Pr7382 MarbleHillHouseExcavation
The Record Numbers Used Form and Drawing Sheet Index are Sections 6.1 and 6.4 of this report

Accession of the physical records is being arranged with Archaeological Archives (21/11/16). A list of the paper records it is currently intended to retain and a box list form Sections 6.5 & 6.6 below.

2.2 Trench Narratives

Trench 1

SSD	10001		
Contexts	91001-91021		
Samples			
Small Finds			
Drawings	Sheet 1-2	Plans 2101	Section 21001

Table 1 showing the numbers used during the excavation of trench 1

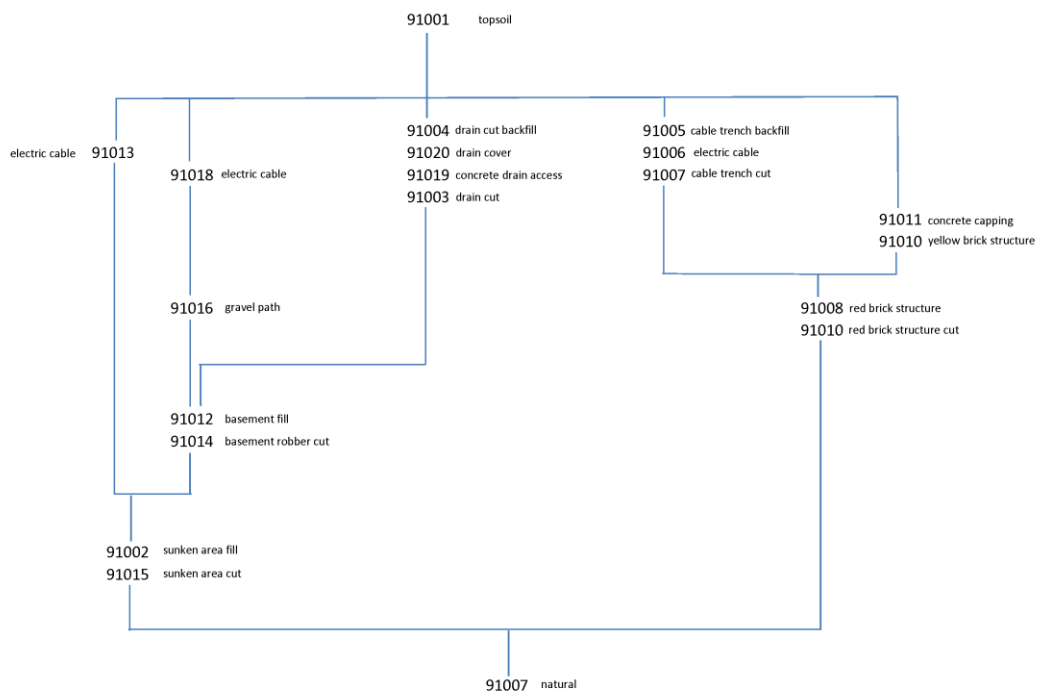


Figure 5 trench 1 matrix

Description:

Trench 1 was located immediately to the east of Marble Hill House, in an area believed to have been occupied by a Service Wing to the main house, probably built in the first half of the 18th century and demolished in 1909. Prior to the commencement of the excavation, the area of the proposed trench was covered in heavy undergrowth and sapling trees. The clearance of these was arranged by the English Heritage Trust Marble Hill Rangers prior to the commencement of the excavation. The location and size of the trench was limited however by the location of mature trees and by the known location of an electrical cable trench running parallel to the wall of the standing building. The eventual size of the trench was 11.5m (N-S) x 1.80m (E-W); at its southern end the trench narrowed to 1.50m in width. The top soil removed during machining was numbered 91001 and a number of ceramic finds (pottery and brick) retained for specialist examination.

A natural brickearth deposit 91017 was uncovered in the southern area of the evaluation trench and confirmed the documentary evidence that this area was not basemented (Figure 6). A small sondage was excavated through the brickearth deposit 91017 to a depth of 90cm, to confirm that it was not re-deposited

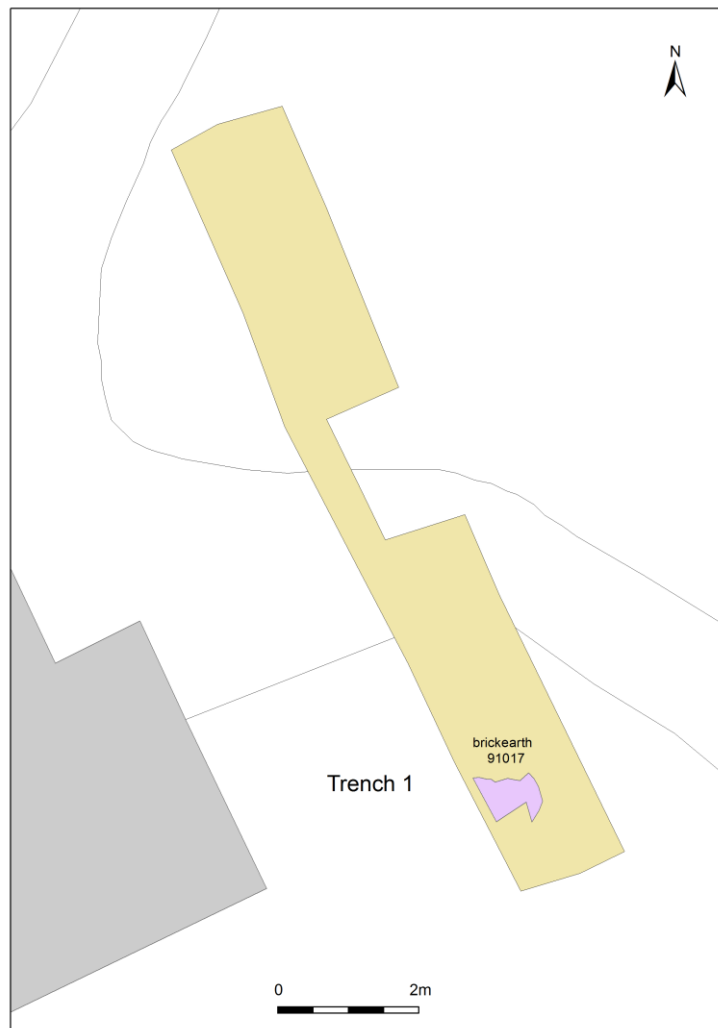


Figure 6 Trench 1 brick earth 91017

At the extreme southern end of the evaluation trench two brick built foundations were uncovered (Figure 7). The earliest 91008 (cut 91010), was largely constructed of red and purple unfrogged bricks, mixed in with an off white mortar. The foundation was un-coursed and appeared to be very rough in nature, as if the bricks had been dumped in the cut 91010, rather than laid in a systematic fashion. A number of examples were retained for examination by the brick specialist. The foundation was cut by the later cable trench cut 91007.

A second brick structure 91009 (Figure 7), comprised wholly of roughly made, frogged, yellow stock bricks was sat on top of the brick foundation 91008. Structure 91009 appeared to be of later date and was capped by a concrete foundation 91011. Both brick foundations lay to the south of the suspected location of the Service Wing and therefore may represent a plant bed or gatepost fronting onto that building. The presence of the concrete 91011 and the frogged bricks 91009 suggests that the upper structure most likely dates to after the middle of the 19th century, although of course the lower foundation 91008 might be contemporary with the construction of the House.

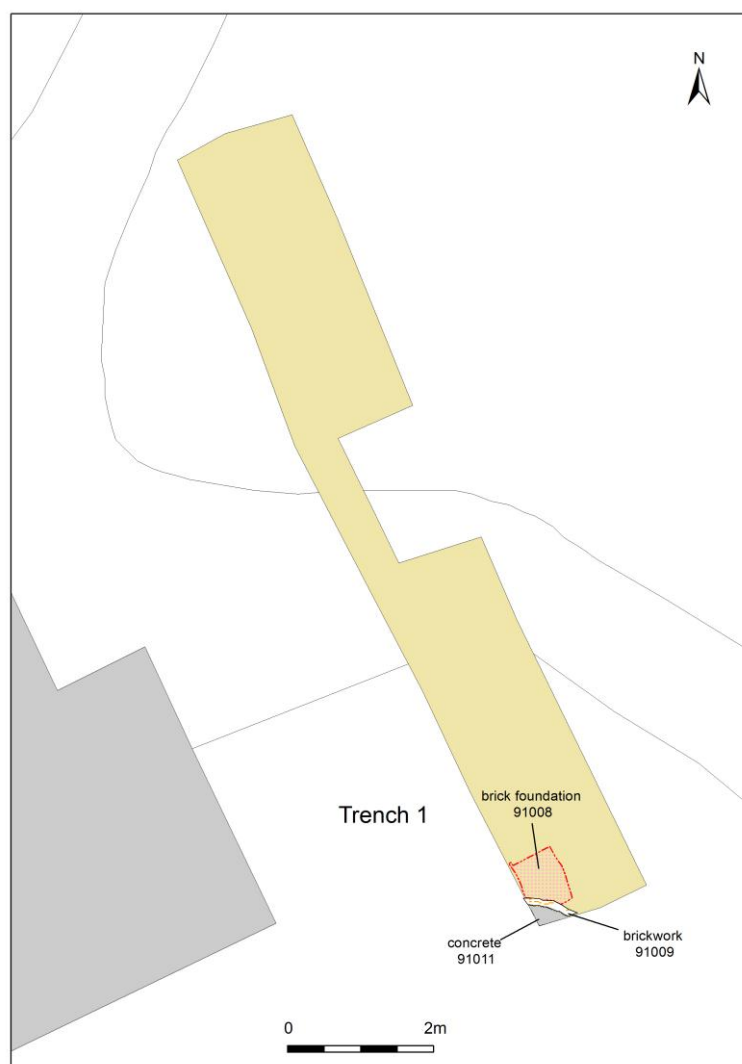


Figure 7 showing brickwork

Trench 1 was targeted to uncover the expected location of an 18th century basement to the south and a sunken courtyard area to the north. Neither of these structures was observed during the excavation. A yellow/cream fine grained sand 91002, infilling a cut 91015 (Figure 8) was observed in section. This deposit was excavated to a depth of 1.10 metres below modern ground level, but not bottomed. This fill is believed to relate to the infilling of the sunken courtyard area to the north of the 18th century service block.

At its southern extreme, the backfill 91002 was cut by a later cut 91014 and fill 91012 (Figure 8). The fill 91012 comprised of large quantities of unfroged red-brick, some mortar and slate roof tile mixed in with a sand-loam matrix. This material was believed to be demolition debris, probably dating from the 1909 demolition of the Service Wing and infilling the basement of that building. No evidence of in-situ basement structures was observed in the evaluation trench.

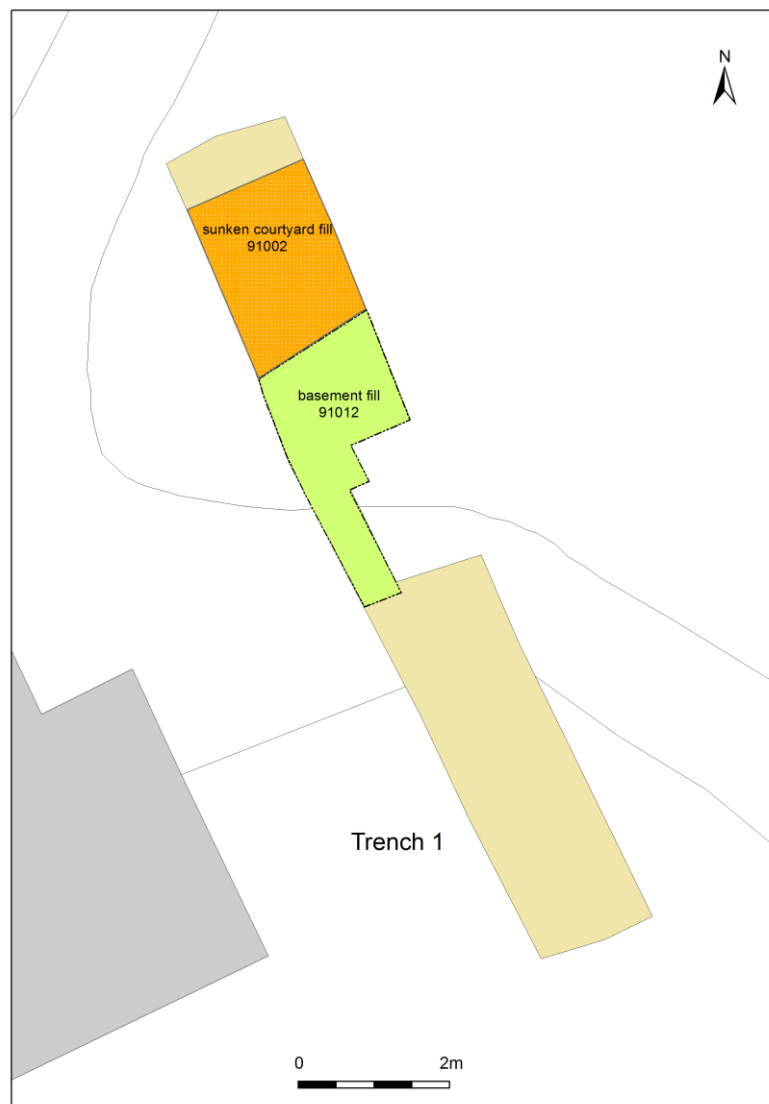


Figure 8 Trench 1 basement fill 91012 and sunken courtyard fill 91002

Evidence of a rammed gravel trackway 91016 (Figure 9) was uncovered in the centre of the evaluation trench. To the south this gravel had been cut by a later cable trench and the gravel and tarmac surfacing re-deposited in the cable trench backfill. Further to the north there was evidence that the tarmac was still in-situ, suggesting that the trackway had been paved, perhaps not initially, but certainly at a later date.

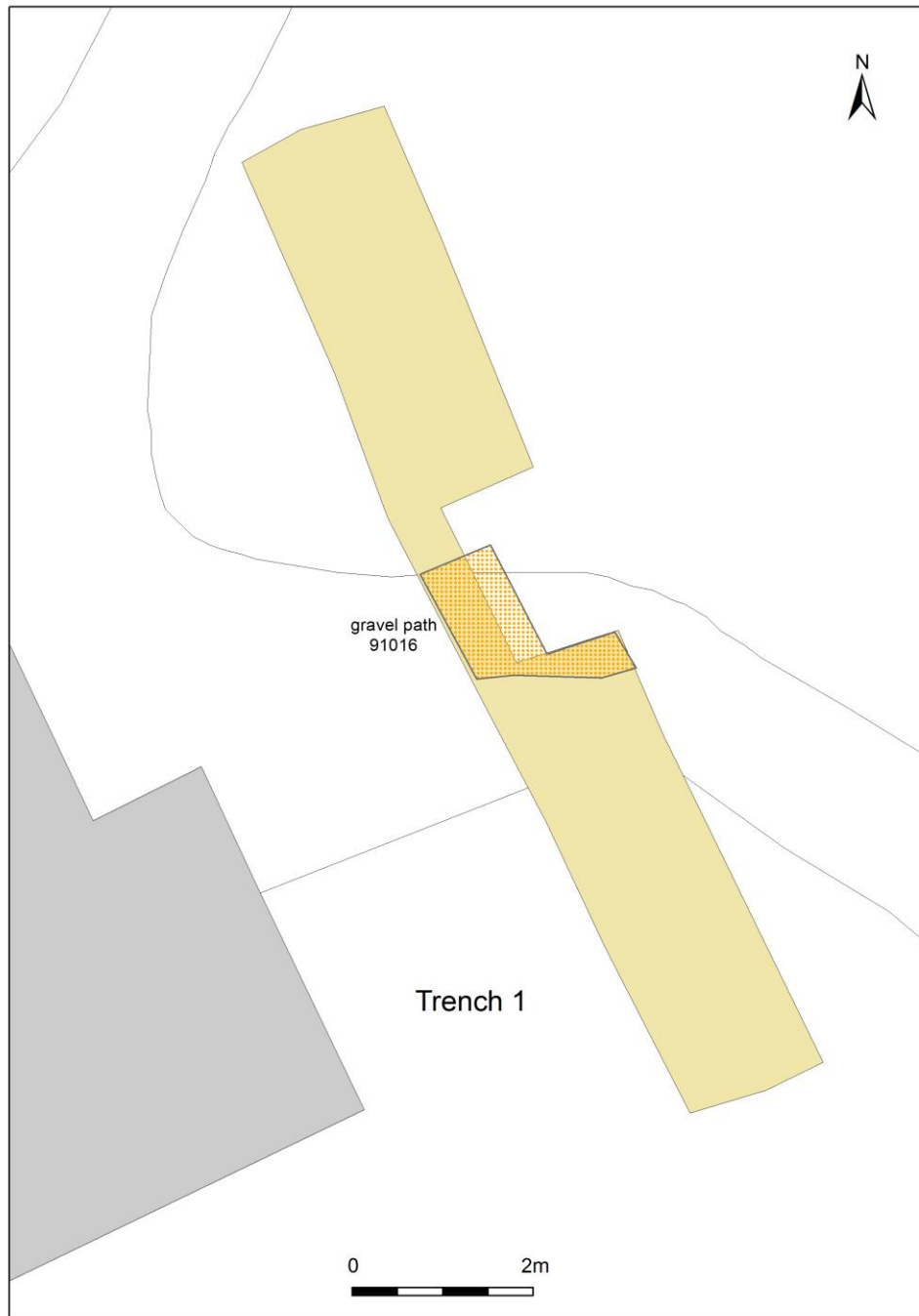


Figure 9 Trench 1 gravel trackway 91016

Three unmapped electrical cable trenches (Figure 10) were encountered during the course of the machining of the trench. These are numbered 91007, 91013, 91018, but only one (91007) was recorded in detail (cut 91007 and fills 91005 and 91006). Although these services were unknown, the nature of the exposed cables (and the covering including modern hazard tape) suggested they were of relatively recent date and probably serviced the security cameras and monitors surrounding the house. In all instances the services were reburied by hand and with replacement hazard warning tape. Needless to say the location of the buried cables restricted any deeper excavation in these areas.



Figure 10 Cable trenches 91007, 91013, 91018

Towards the centre of the evaluation trench, a modern concrete lined drain 91019, drain cut 91003 and drain cut backfill 91004, were uncovered (Figure 11) Once again these were unmapped prior to the excavation and not recorded as live services. The drain was capped by a steel inspection cover 91020 which was left exposed to the air when the evaluation trench was backfilled. The orientation of the drain cut 91003 was NE-SW aligned, suggesting that the drain might connect to services located in front of Marble Hill House.

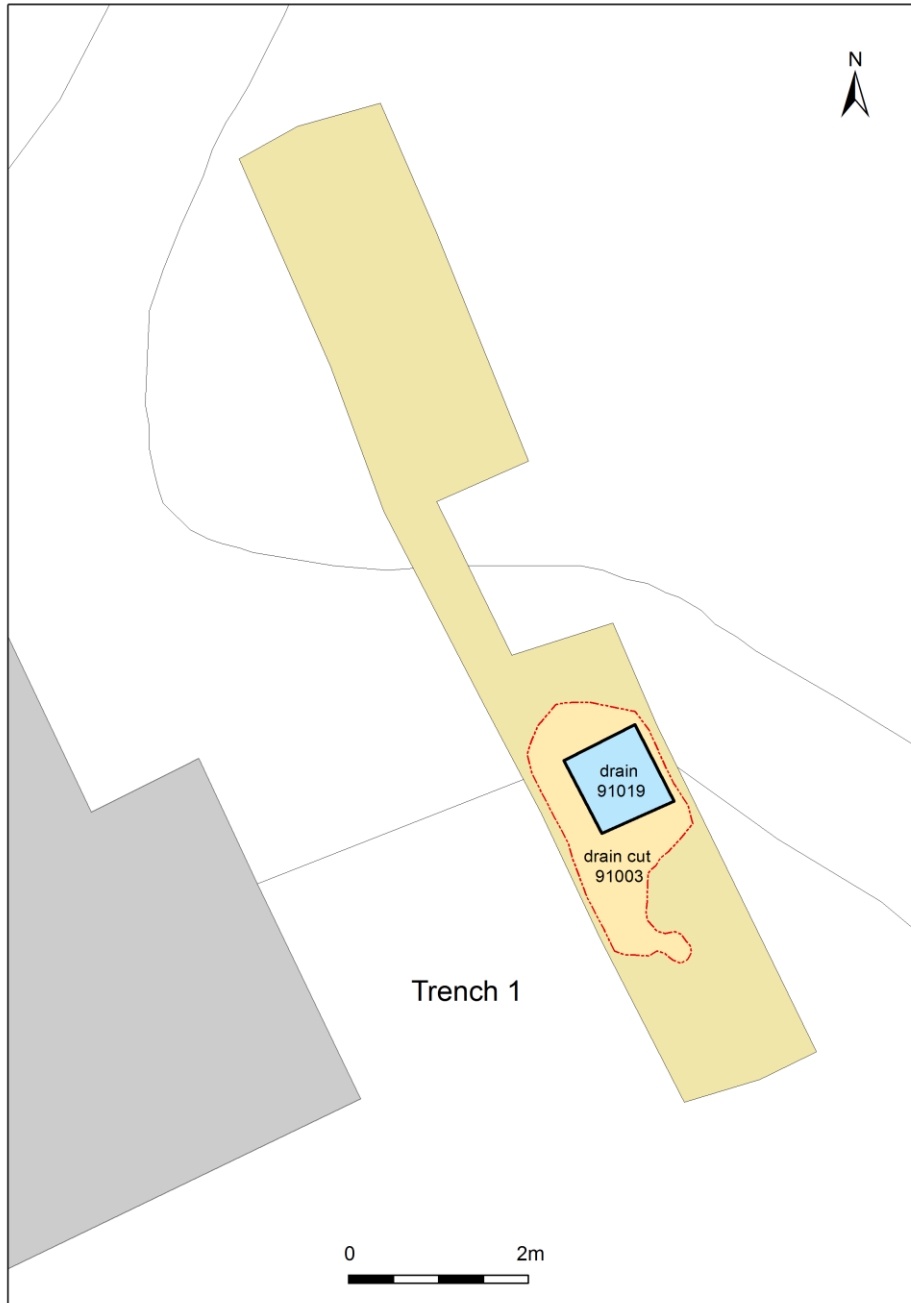


Figure 11 drain cut 91003

Interpretation

No in-situ remains of the buildings comprising the Service Wing of Marble Hill House were found during the excavation of trench 1. The location of the demolition backfill 91012 however seems likely to confirm the location of the basement of that building and the sandy fill 91002 the location of the sunken courtyard area to the north of the Service Wing. The excavations concentrated on the northern end of the Service Wing where it met the sunken area and no walls or foundations were seen in this area. The southern edge of the basement would appear to have been located in the area taken up by the later concrete drain 91003 and no excavation below the level of the drain was possible in this area. A photograph (fig 11) dating from before the 1909 demolition, shows the depth of the sunken courtyard and the equally deep basements of the Service Wing.



Figure 12 Pre-1909 photograph showing depth of sunken courtyard area and Service Wing basement

The complete lack of any basement walls showing during the excavation suggests that the 1909 demolition was comprehensive in this area. The archaeological excavation in this area stopped at a depth of 1.10m below modern ground level due to the soft nature of the backfill and clearly the floor levels of both the courtyard and the Service Wing basements in this area are deeper than that. Figure 12 shows the location of the evaluation trenches with regard to the 1904 (and seemingly accurate) architects plan of the Service Wing and house, and it seems unlikely that the excavation missed any surviving structures due to an inaccurately located trench.

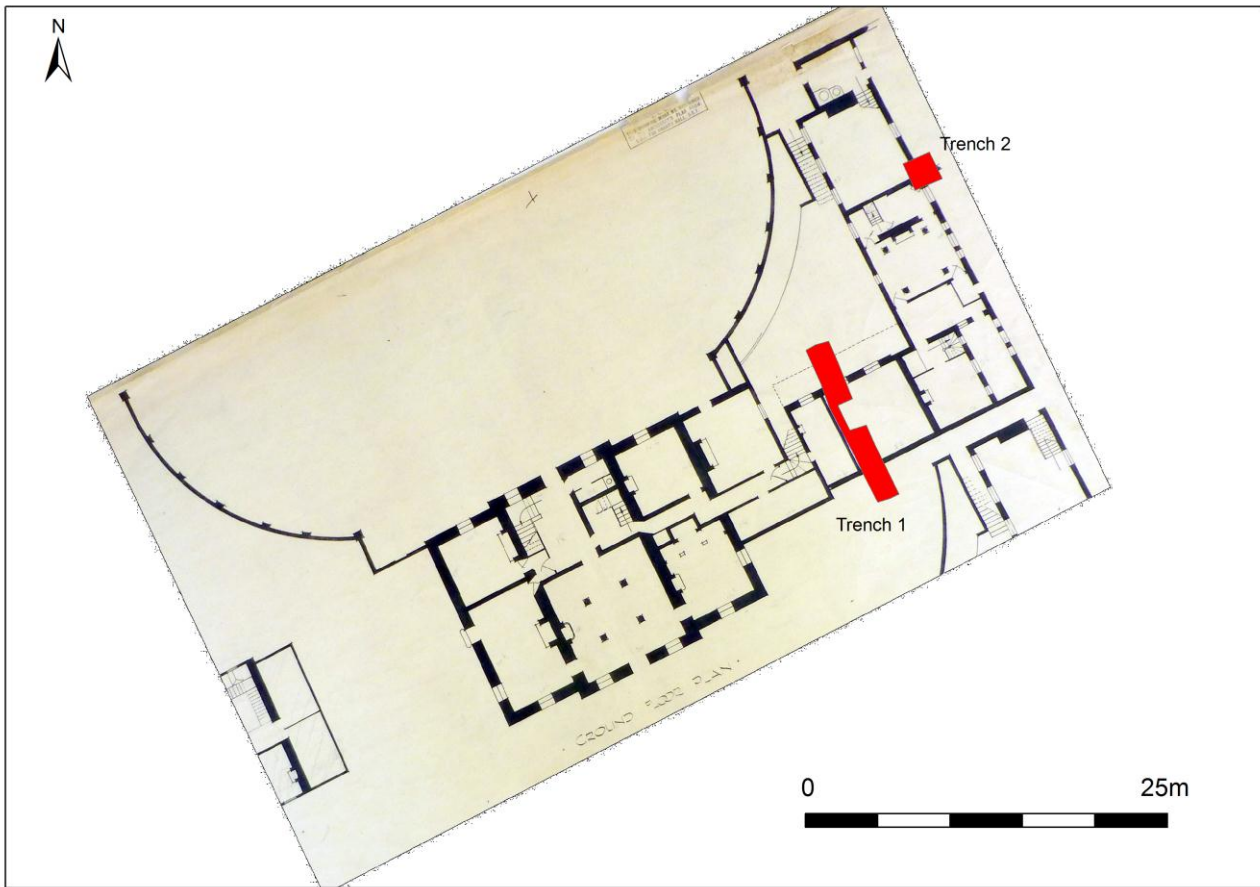


Figure 13 Architects plan from 1904 showing location of Marble Hill House and Service Wing,

At the southern extreme of trench 1, brick foundations 91008 and 91010 appear to have represented the location of a planting bed or a gatepost or some similar garden feature. The brickwork was too far south and too insubstantial to be directly associated with the Service Wing buildings.

The gravel and tarmac trackway 91016 observed cut by the cable trench 91018, but surviving undisturbed in the area immediately north, would appear to be part of the feature shown on the mid-20th century Ordnance Survey map of this area. (fig 13). This track clearly post-dates the 1909 demolition of the Service Wing, but has ceased to be maintained in modern times as no obvious signs of its existence are currently observable.

The locations of previous unknown services and drains in the area of trench 1 have been noted and mapped.

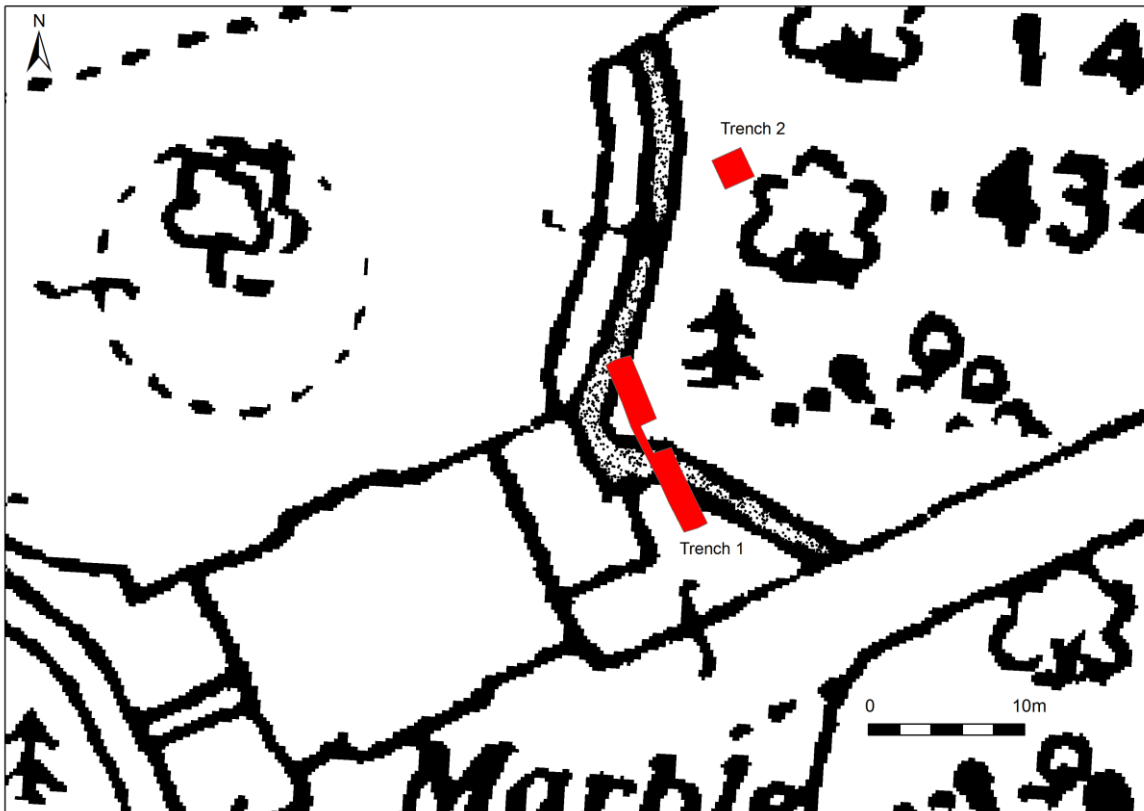


Figure 14 Ordnance Survey map showing location of gravel path (stippled) relative to locations of trenches 1 and 2

Trench 2

SSD	10002		
Contexts	94001-94009; 94043-94047; 94057		
Samples	55601;55604;55606(556061);556071(subs=5602&5603)		
Small Finds	3010;3013		
Drawings	Sheet 1;8;12	Plans 2009	Section 22601;22610; 22607

Table 2 showing the numbers used during the excavation of trench 2

Description:

Trench 2 was located in the wooded area to the northeast of Marble Hill House. The trench was located so as to catch the interface between the eastern arm of the Service Wing and a building described as the China Room. The trench measured 2m x 2m and was hand dug as it was not possible to gain access for the mini digger to this area due to the thickness of the undergrowth and location of mature trees (Figure 2).

Unfortunately whilst removing the topsoil 92001 from this area, a white fibrous mineral deposit was encountered and excavation was halted to allow sampling and testing. Subsequent analysis confirmed that the material was a mixture of both white (chrysotile) and brown (amosite) asbestos. No further archaeological work was undertaken in trench 2 and a small amount of finds material recovered from the topsoil was disposed of as hazardous waste. Where the topsoil 92001 had been removed an earlier soil horizon 92002 was observed at a depth of approximately 20cm below the existing ground surface. No further analysis of the record sheets is anticipated for this trench.

3. Artefacts

Introduction

This report summarises the material culture assemblage retrieved from the excavations at Marble Hill House (Project 7382) on 14 – 18 November 2016, and also provides information on the finds elements of the Site Archive Completion procedure:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all the necessary records and other products associated with a site archive have been created and checked, ensuring that all records are ordered, indexed, adequately documented, internally consistent, secure, quantified and conformant to standards required by the archive repository.

(Procedures for Excavation and Assessment, Procedure 9 Site Archive Completion, Historic England Archaeological Projects internal document 2008)

Site Archive Completion finds methodology

All finds records were entered by Alice Forward onto the Marble Hill database at Fort Cumberland.

Alice Forward boxed the finds assemblages as necessary, and created a box list within the database.

Due to the nature of the finds retrieved from the excavations, Angela Middleton the conservator for the project was not required for any further work.

Quantification

Box number	Material	No of boxes	Size
1	Pottery and tile	1	Skull
2	Architectural stone	1	Skull
3	Brick from 91001	1	Standard
4	Brick from 91008	1	Skull
5	Brick from 91009 and 91012	1	Standard
	Total	5	

Table 3 summary box list from Marble Hill excavations

Small finds

Material	Small find records	Number of fragments
Architectural Stone	3001	1
Architectural Stone	3002	1
		2

Table 4 Individual small finds from Marble Hill excavations (HE7382)

These objects are housed within box 2.

Bulk finds

Material	Bulk records
Pottery	3
Brick and tile	5
Slate (Architectural stone)	1
Glass	2
Animal bone	1
	12

Table 5 Bulk finds from Marble Hill excavations (HE7382)

These objects are housed within boxes 1 & 3-5

Summary of assemblages

A modest assemblage was collected from the excavation at Marble Hill House; 5 boxes of finds.

The majority of the finds collected were bricks (boxes 3-5). The architectural stone though is interesting as it is our only evidence for the now demolished Service Wing. The pottery is all likely to be 19th century in date and not associated with Henrietta Howard's residency.

Assessments

The author envisages that the following will undertake the assessments:

Internal EH specialists

Animal bone – Poly Baker

Pottery – Duncan Brown

Glass – Artefact Specialist

Architectural Stone – Matt Canti and Artefact Specialist

External specialists

Brick – Ian Betts

4. Conservation

Due to an absence of metal finds no conservation work was required

5. Environmental Archive Statement

As there weren't any contexts which were considered necessary for sampling there is no further environmental work.

6. Tabulated quantification of the site archive

6.1 Record Numbers Allocated (see Trench summaries for numbers used)

OFF-SITE RECORD NUMBERS ALLOCATED	SSD	RECORD TYPE	Allocated By/Date
2101-2199	Trench 1	Plans	
2201-2299	Trench 2	Plans	
3001-3999		Small finds (non TST) <i>numbers allocated in Finds/Enviro office</i>	
5011-5499		Samples (non TST), e.g. sub samples <i>numbers allocated in Finds/Enviro office</i>	
6001-6999		Finds photos	
7001-8499		Site photos	
9001-9399		Contexts (non TST) <i>numbers allocated in post-ex – all site contexts must be surveyed</i>	
9501- 9599		Structural groups	

Table 6 showing the list of record numbers to be used for allocation off-site

SITE RECORD NUMBERS ALLOCATED USING THE TST	SSD	RECORD TYPE	Allocated By/Date
10001-10009	All	Trenches	
21001-21099	Trench 1	Sections	
22001-22099	Trench 2	Sections	
30001-31999	Trench 1	Small Finds (TST)	
32001-33999	Trench 2	Small Finds (TST)	
55601-55699	Trench 1	Samples	
55701-55799	Trench 2	Samples	
64001-64999	Trench 1	Grid pts	
65001-65999	Trench 2	Grid pts	
91001-91999	Trench 1	Context numbers	
92001-92999	Trench 2	Context numbers	
210101-219999	Trench 1	Plan levels	
220101-229999	Trench 2	Plan levels	

Table 7 showing the list of record number to be used on-site

6.2 List of X-rays

No X-rays were taken

6.3 Spot dating

6.4 Drawing Sheets Index

Sheet No	No. of Drawings	Drawings shown
1	1	S21001
2	1	P2101

Table 8 showing the list of drawings created during excavation

6.5 The 'paper archive'

All prompt sheets and other site paper records will be retained while work on the project is in progress.

Non-digital records - the 'paper archive'		
The following permatrace records are currently regarded as part of the archive to be passed to Archaeological Archives for accessioning. No paper prompts or indexes will be passed to Archaeological Archives, as all information from these has been entered into Intrasis, which is the primary site record.		
Site Drawings		
A3 Permatrace sheets	2	

6.6 Box List

The box list is provided in section 3 above.

Appendix I: Grid pegs, plan levels and section points

Number of Grid Pegs: 2

Grid Peg 60002: E = 517318.97 N = 173632.73 Z = 8.45

Grid Peg 60001: E = 517320.10 N = 173629.98 Z = 8.51

Number of Section points: 6

Section 21001: E = 517316.41 N = 173635.68 Z = 8.87

Section 21001: E = 0.00 N = 0.00 Z = 0.00

Section 21001: E = 517317.36 N = 173634.11 Z = 8.81

Section 21001: E = 517316.41 N = 173635.67 Z = 8.80

Section 21001: E = 517316.42 N = 173635.60 Z = 8.80

Section 21001: E = 517314.55 N = 173640.23 Z = 8.76

Number of Levels: 9

Plan 2101 Level 210101: E = 517320.60 N = 173630.18 Z = 8.78

Plan 2101 Level 210102: E = 517320.52 N = 173630.36 Z = 8.57

Plan 2101 Level 210103: E = 517320.39 N = 173630.86 Z = 8.51

Plan 2101 Level 210104: E = 517319.53 N = 173631.12 Z = 8.43

Plan 2101 Level 210105: E = 517319.18 N = 173631.51 Z = 8.43

Plan 2101 Level 210106: E = 517319.59 N = 173631.81 Z = 8.44

Plan 2101 Level 210107: E = 517319.44 N = 173630.79 Z = 8.31

Plan 2101 Level 210108: E = 517319.65 N = 173630.41 Z = 8.50

Plan 2101 Level 210109: E = 517319.66 N = 173629.93 Z = 8.80