

MONYHULL HALL HOSPITAL:

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF. 2003**

ProjectNo. 1081

**MONYHULL HALL HOSPITAL:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF 2003**

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MONYHULL HALL HOSPITAL: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF 2003

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on land at Monyhull Hall Hospital, King's Norton, Birmingham (NGR SP 067 791) between June and November 2003. John Samuels Archaeological Consultants Ltd commissioned the work on behalf of Bellway Homes. The watching brief was required by the Planning Archaeologist for Birmingham City Council as a condition of planning permission in advance of residential development. The site is located immediately north of Monyhull Hall, which is thought to have been situated on the site of an earlier medieval farm or manor house and associated buildings. It was possible on this basis that evidence of the earlier structures may survive below ground.

No archaeological features, deposits or significant artefacts, which dated to the medieval period were recorded during the observation of groundworks for the new development. The only artefacts recovered dated to the late post-medieval and modern periods. These were recorded in the western and central areas of the site. The deposit in the western area, a 0.5m deep layer may represent the remains of a levelling event during the course of the development of the hospital in the early part of the 20th century, perhaps associated with the infilling of two pools or fishponds known to have existed at this location. The remains of a single modern brick cellar were also exposed. This had previously been infilled with mixed building debris.

1. INTRODUCTION

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (hereafter JSAC) for Bellway Homes at the site of Monyhull Hall Hospital, King's Norton, Birmingham (hereafter the site) between June and November 2003 (Fig. 1). This report outlines the results of work carried out during the excavation of trenches for drainage pipes and sewers on the site prior to the construction of 600 houses. The watching brief was requested in a brief prepared by Dr. Mike Hodder for Birmingham City Council as a condition of planning permission (planning ref. No. S/02457/97/OUT). It follows guidelines laid down in the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IFA 1994) and is in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990). It also conforms to a written scheme of investigation produced by JSAC (Slatcher 2003).

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located to the southeast of Monyhull Hall Road in King's Norton, c.9km to the south of Birmingham City Centre. The area was formerly the site of Monyhull Hall Hospital, most of which has now been demolished. The site is currently open grassland, bounded by the Stratford-upon-Avon canal to the north, Chinn Brook to the east, Monyhull Hall, the Church and houses to the south and properties fronting onto Monyhull Hall Road to the west (Fig. 2).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Documentary evidence dates the Monyhull estate to at least 1237 (Mawer and Stenton 1969, 355). Prior to this the area of the estate is recorded in a charter of 699-709AD, when Offa of Mercia granted three hides of woodland near the Chinn Brook to the church of Worcester (Demidowicz, 2003). At the Dissolution the estate passed from crown hands through a succession of lay owners, before being purchased by the Kings Norton Union in 1905 for use as a psychiatric hospital known as the 'Monyhull Colony for epileptics and the feeble-minded'.

A medieval farm or manor house stood in the vicinity of the current Hall, which is situated advantageously on a hill overlooking the Chinn Brook to the southeast. The 1838 Tithe map shows the current Hall along with two large pools or fishponds now filled in, lying to the south of the Hall and farm buildings. These pools may have had a medieval origin. Three water-filled pits were also shown, possibly clay or marl pits for brick making.

A watermill is listed on the site, which was constructed in 1286. Earthworks near the Chinn Brook, which have been identified as the remnants of a medieval moat, may be the remains of this mill, with the lower of the two fishponds being a millpond (Demidowicz 1998, 10).

Detailed recording of one of the buildings near Monyhull Hall to the southwest of the hospital site prior to its demolition, demonstrated that it included the roof of a timber-framed building (Litherland 2000 and 2001). This timber-framed building dated broadly to 1550-1650. Dendrochronological dating on one of the timbers produced a felling date for the wood of c.1450. The timber itself may therefore have been reused, perhaps from an earlier building nearby.

4. OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the archaeological watching brief is to provide a record of any archaeological deposits or features, which might be revealed during groundworks and to provide an understanding of the history and the significance of the archaeology of the site as a whole. The specific aims of the watching brief are:

- to monitor all groundworks marked as areas 2 and 4 in the brief, including the excavation of foundation and service trenches (Fig. 3).
- to record the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains affected by the development works.
- to preserve any archaeological deposits exposed 'by record', and conserve for future analysis all artefactual/ ecofactual material recovered from the site.

These aims were achieved through a programme of archaeological monitoring visits to the site during groundworks.

5. METHODOLOGY

The excavation of service trenches in the areas specified in the brief was monitored by a qualified archaeologist to standards set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994). Salvage recording of any potential archaeological features or

deposits revealed by contractors' groundworks was carried out where necessary. All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeology was present. Contextual information was supplemented where required by scale drawings, plans at 1:50, 1:100 and sections at 1:20 and 1:50, and monochrome print, colour slide and colour print photographs. These form the site archive. Features were assigned unique numbers from F100, and contexts from 1000.

The site archive comprises all data recorded during the watching brief and is prepared according to guidelines set down in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991), the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (Walker 1990) and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Art Galleries Commission 1992). The archive will be deposited with an appropriate repository within a reasonable time after the completion of the project. Advice will be taken from Birmingham City Council's Planning Archaeologist.

6. RESULTS

Natural red clay subsoil was exposed in service trenches in both east and west areas of the site. In the west the natural subsoil (1006) was exposed at a depth of c.2.5m. It was overlain by a 0.6m deep layer of reddish-brown mixed silt clay, probably re-deposited natural subsoil (1005). A series of layers of mid-brown silt clay overlay this, the most recent of which yielded a selection of late post-medieval and modern brick, glass and tile fragments (1001).

The clay subsoil was exposed in trenches to the west of the site also. On this occasion it lay c.0.5m below the modern ground surface. It was overlain by a mid-brown, charcoal flecked silt clay deposit (2000) from which no artefacts were recovered.

Towards the central area of the site the remains of a modern brick cellar were exposed (F300). This measured c.2.35m square and had been partially demolished at an earlier date. The brick walls had originally been whitewashed and the floor was of concrete. The cellar infill comprised primarily rubble debris from the initial demolition and included electrical wiring presumably associated with the original structure. The cellar was cut into the natural red clay subsoil. In its vicinity the natural subsoil was overlain by a 0.2m deep mid-brown, charcoal flecked clay deposit, which in turn was overlain first by a thin layer of yellow sand silt and subsequently by a 0.5m deep mid-brown silt clay layer (3000) containing modern building debris.

7. FINDS

The late post-medieval and modern examples of brick, glass and tile, associated with layer 1001, in the western part of the site and with layer 3000 in the central area were not of particular significance and were subsequently discarded.

8. DISCUSSION

No significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recorded during the observation of groundworks. However, the remodelling of the site and associated tipping known to have occurred in its vicinity may still preserve quite deeply buried archaeological features.

It may be that the deep deposits in the west area of the site are associated with the two large pools or fishponds known to have been infilled at an earlier date. The trenches observed did not, however, provide significantly extensive exposures from which to form a more confident conclusion. The only feature exposed of note, the modern cellar is probably to be associated with the hospital building.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork was carried out by Emma Hancox and Paul Harris. Richard Cuttler managed the project, Mark Hewson prepared the report and Nigel Dodds drafted the illustrations. Thanks are due to Dan Slatcher of JSAC and Mark Walker of Bellway Homes for their help and co-operation during the project.

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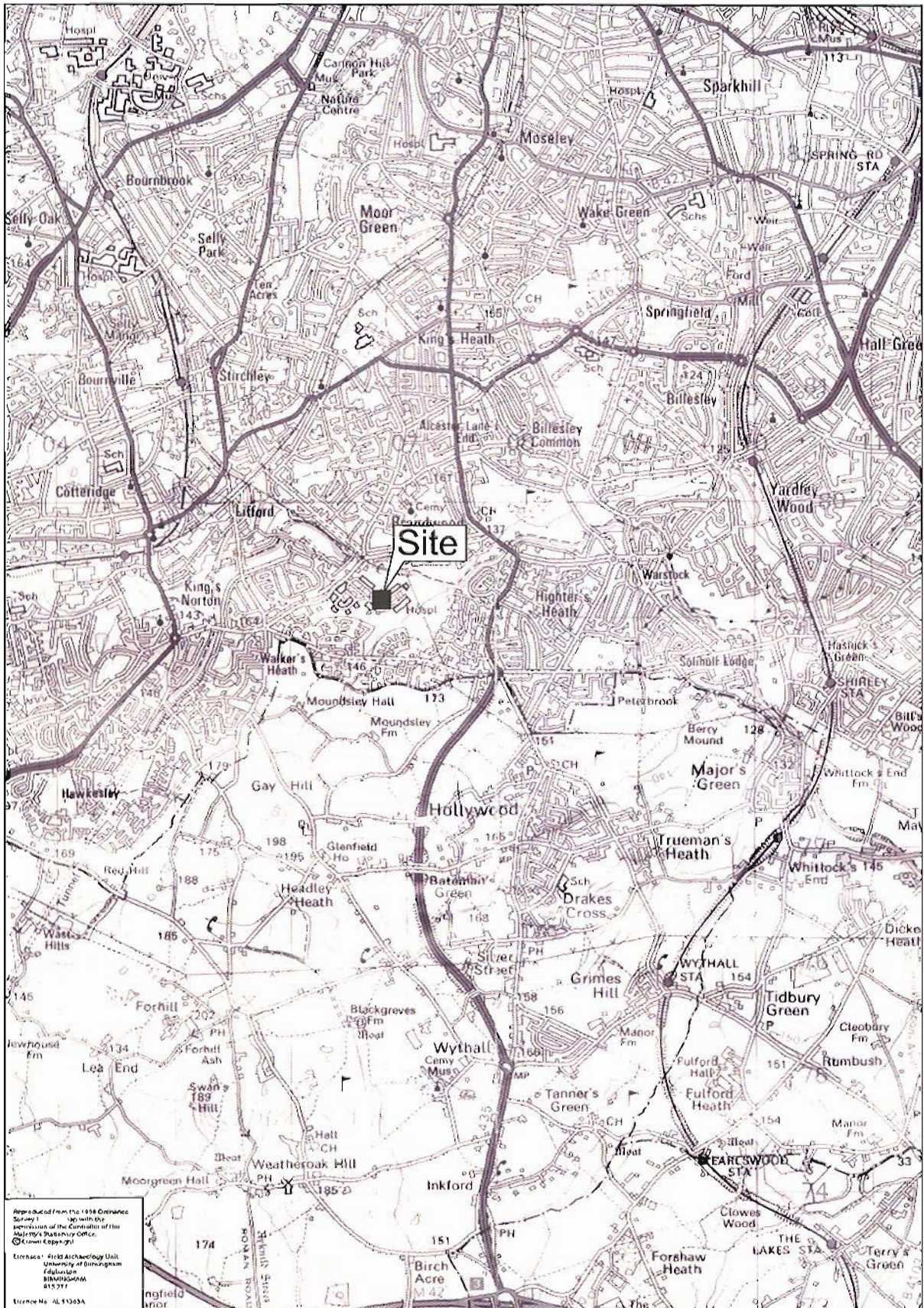
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Fig.1

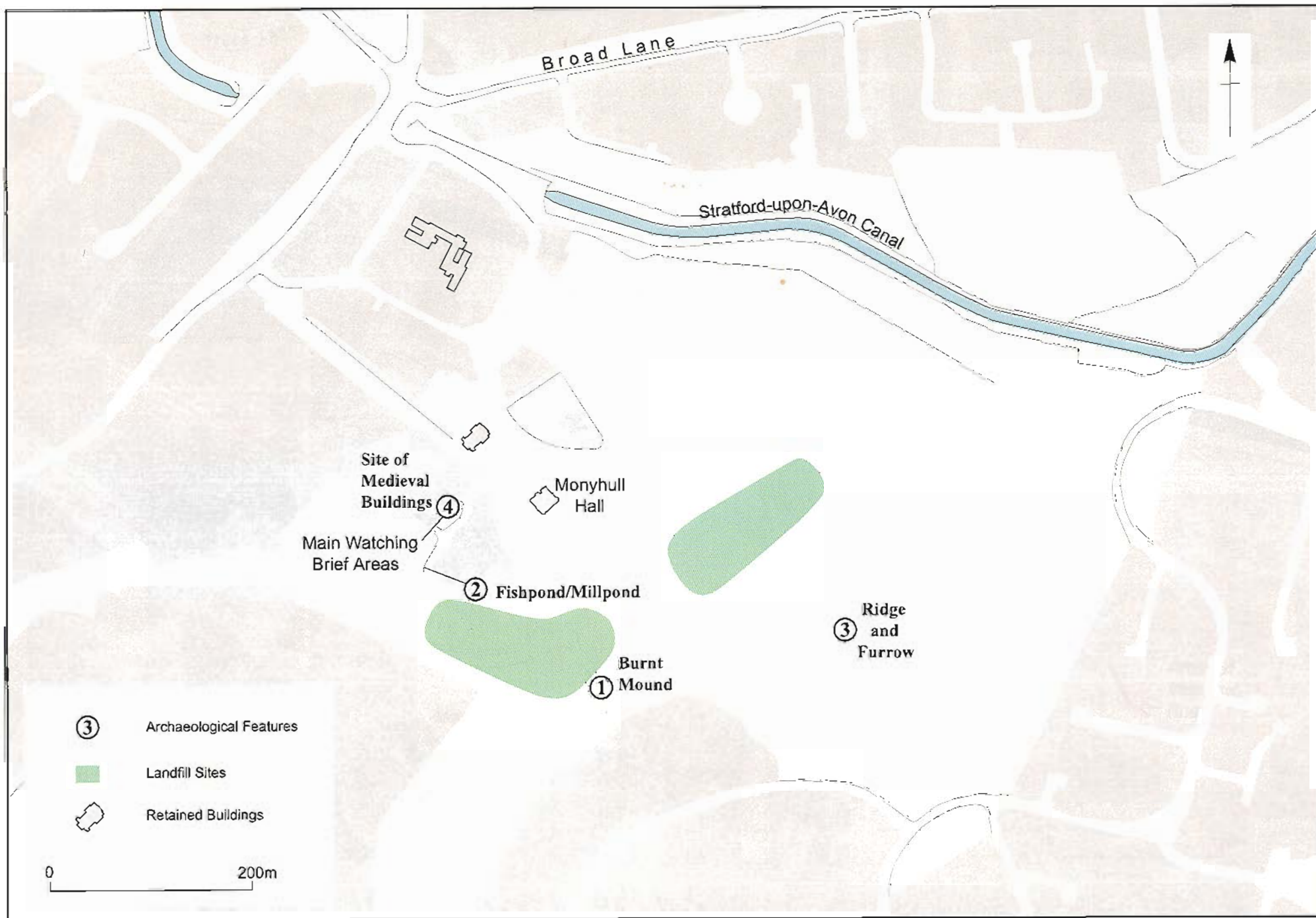


Fig.2

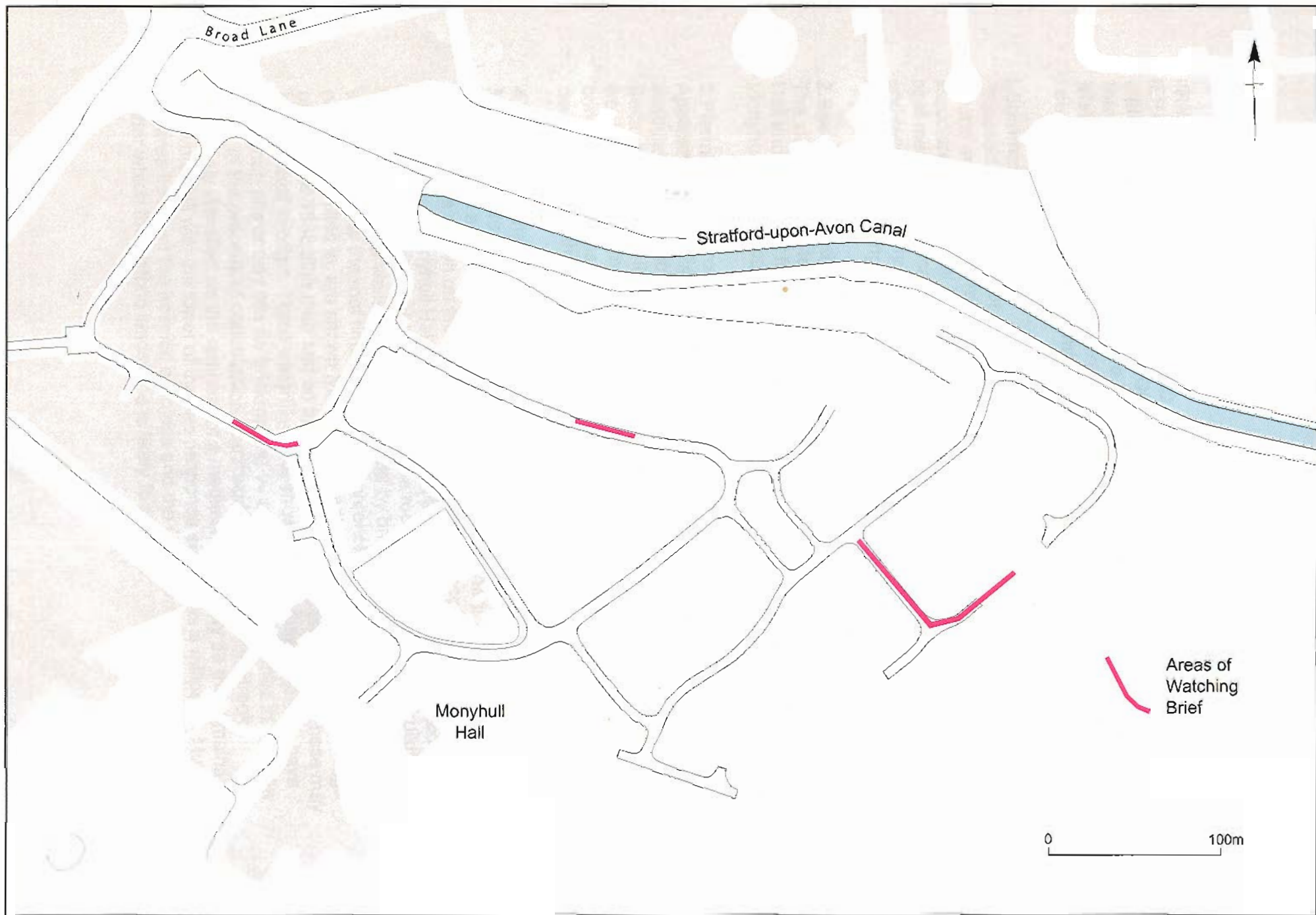


Fig.3

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE
Application number S/02457/97/OUT
Monyhull Hall and estate (centre SP 067791; SMR 03613 and 02938)
Brief for archaeological observation and recording during development as
a condition of planning permission

1. Summary

Proposed development at Monyhull Hall is likely to expose and disturb below-ground archaeological remains, including remains of a medieval dwelling and associated agricultural buildings, the site of a watermill, fishponds, clay pits and post-medieval landscaping features. This brief is for archaeological observation and recording of any archaeological features exposed by the development, as a condition of planning permission for that development.

2. Site location and description

The site is located to the south-east of Monyhull Hall Road. It contains Monyhull Hall and the site of former agricultural buildings adjoining it, the early 20th century Monyhull Hospital complex and grassed open space.

3. Planning background

Application no. S/02457/97/OUT is for residential development of the site, with associated works including landscaping and the provision of open space. Because the site is likely to contain below-ground archaeological remains which would be affected by the development, planning permission has been granted on condition that archaeological observation and recording be carried out during development, at the applicant's expense.

4. Existing archaeological and historical information

Monyhull estate is first mentioned in 1237. It is likely that the medieval farm or manor house and its associated buildings stood on or near the site of the house and buildings shown on the 1838 tithe map. Detailed recording of one of the buildings near Monyhull Hall before its demolition, as a condition of listed building consent, showed that it included the roof of a timber-framed building. The original timber walls had been replaced by brick. A felling date of about 1450 was obtained for the roof timbers by dendrochronology. Two large pools or fishponds, now filled in, are shown lying to the south of the Hall and farm buildings on both the 1838 tithe map and on the 1905 sale plan for the estate. These may be medieval in origin. Three waterfilled pits shown on the tithe map may have been marl pits or clay pits for brickmaking. A watermill is mentioned in 1286 as being in the process of construction. Earthworks near the Chinn Brook, previously identified as the remnant of a medieval moat may be the remains of this watermill with the lower of the two fishponds serving as a millpond. Much of the area between the hospital buildings and the Chinn Brook is covered by a tip, under which the historic landscape is likely to survive.

5. Requirements for work

The development site is likely to contain below-ground archaeological remains which would be affected by the proposed development. In accordance with Policy 8.36 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan and, government advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, Archaeology and Planning, archaeological observation and recording is required during development.

The archaeological observation and recording is required on the likely locations of the medieval house and associated buildings, the watermill and the fishponds. The approximate general location of these is shown as numbers 2 and 4 on the attached plan, which is an extract from the development brief for the site.

6. Stages of work

An appropriately skilled and qualified archaeologist is to be on site to observe all groundworks for the development, in the parts of the site identified on the attached plan, including topsoil stripping, foundation trenches, access and services. Any archaeological features exposed are to be recorded by written description, drawing and photography. No archaeological excavation is to be undertaken other than cleaning exposed deposits for better definition. Adequate time is to be allowed for observation and recording to take place. Finds are to be retrieved as they are revealed during groundworks or cleaning. Finds are to be cleaned, marked and bagged and any remedial conservation work undertaken.

7. Staffing

The archaeological observation and recording is to be carried out in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Standards, Guidelines and practices of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and all staff are to be suitably qualified and experienced for their roles in the project. It is recommended that the project be under the direct supervision of a Member or Associate Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

8. Written Scheme of Investigation

Potential contractors should present a Written Scheme of Investigation which details methods and staffing. It is recommended that the proposal be submitted to the City Council's Planning Archaeologist before a contractor is commissioned, to ensure that it meets the requirements of this brief.

9. Monitoring

The archaeological observation and recording must be carried out to the satisfaction of the Chief Planning Officer, Birmingham City Council, and will be monitored on his behalf by the Planning Archaeologist.

10. Reporting

The results of the archaeological observation and recording are to be presented as a written report, containing appropriate illustrations. A copy must be sent to the Planning Archaeologist.

1. Archive deposition

The written, drawn and photographic records of the archaeological observation and recording, together with any finds, must be deposited with an appropriate repository within a reasonable time of completion, following consultation with the Planning Archaeologist.

2. Publication

The written report will become publicly accessible, as part of the Birmingham Sites and Monuments Record, within six months of completion. The contractor must submit a short summary report for inclusion in *West Midlands Archaeology* and appropriate period journals.

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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**A Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief
at Monyhull Hospital, Kings Norton, Birmingham**

NGR SP 067 791

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Hospital, Kings Norton, Birmingham*

**A Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief
at Monyhull Hospital, Kings Norton, Birmingham**

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.1 The site is located in Kings Norton, about 6 kilometres south of the centre of Birmingham centred on NGR SP 067 791. The brief (see appendix) notes that the within development area may lie the remains of a medieval dwelling and associated features.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 A Planning Application (planning ref no: S/02457/97/OUT) has been made for development on this site. Condition D1 of the draft decision document states 'no development shall commence until a written scheme of investigation for archaeological observation and recording during development has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local planning authority. The scheme as approved by the local authority is to be implemented during development.

Reason

The site is of archaeological interest and it is important that archaeological remains are observed and recorded during development.

- 1.2.2 A brief for the archaeological watching brief was produced by the City Archaeologist in April 2001.

1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background is covered in some detail in section 4 of the brief for archaeological works (see appendix).

1.4 Aims

- 1.4.1 The aims of this watching brief are:

- i. to determine the presence or otherwise of buried remains of archaeological interest within the development area; and
- ii. to preserve by record any significant archaeological remains within the development area and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site.

- 1.5 This specification conforms to the requirements of *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE 1990) (PPG16). It has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national standards and guidelines including :

Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991);

Model Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessments and Field Evaluations (Association of County Archaeological Officers, 1994);

Code of Conduct (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1997); and

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*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations (Institute of Field Archaeologists,
1999).*

*Specification-watching brief at Monyhull
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2 0 Methodology

2 1 Watching Brief

- 2.1.1 The watching brief is intended to record all features of archaeological interest discovered during below ground works. It is intended to carry out a non-intensive watching brief during development. The watching brief will concentrate on the locations of the medieval house, and associated buildings, the watermill and fishponds.
- 2.1.2 In practice, and in liaison with the developers, the watching brief will take the form of a series of visits to monitor initial topsoil stripping by suitably qualified/experienced professional archaeologists. An assessment of the impact of stripping and the necessity for further watching brief work on deeper excavations will be made in liaison with the City Archaeologist. The watching brief will involve:
- 2.1.3 non-intensive watching brief of below ground works which may affect archaeological deposits. This would comprise:
- iii. archaeological inspection of modern overburden removal;
 - iv. inspection of subsoil for archaeological features;
 - v. recording of archaeological features in plan;
 - vi. rapid excavation of features if necessary to determine their date and character;
 - vii. archaeological inspection of subsoil stripping;
 - viii. inspection of natural for archaeological features, to be excavated and recorded where identified.
 - ix. Excavation, removal and recording of any human remains encountered compliant with appropriate statutory consents and licences (see below, para. 2.8)
- 2.1.4 Excavated archaeological features will be recorded in plan and section by measured drawing at appropriate scales and photography and the deposits encountered described fully on pro-forma individual context recording sheets. The recording system is based on the Museum of London's '*Archaeological Site Manual*' (1994). Spot heights and those of individual features will be recorded relative to Ordnance Datum. Features will also be recorded relative to the national grid.
- 2.1.5 A photographic record will be maintained during the course of the watching brief and will include:
- i. the site prior to commencement of fieldwork;
 - ii. the site during work, showing specific stages of fieldwork;
 - iii. the layout of archaeological features within each trench;
 - iv. individual features and, where appropriate, their sections;
 - v. groups of features where their relationship is important;
- 2.1.6 All artefacts will be treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, '*First Aid for Finds*' (1981). All finds will be bagged and labelled according to the individual deposit from which they were

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recovered, ready for later cleaning and analysis.

- 2.1.7 A suitable specialist will make a site visit to advise on deposits suitable for environmental sampling.
- i Any securely dated deposits containing the following will be sampled at a minimum of 20 litres where possible.
- charred plant remains;
 - large quantities of molluscs;
 - large quantities of bone;
 - all industrial features including 'domestic' hearths and other burnt features;
 - other domestic features, e.g. house gullies, potentially containing the above
- i Charred plant samples will be wet sieved with flotation using a 0.5mm mesh. All residues will be checked.
- i. Should waterlogged deposits be encountered, further consultation with specialists will determine methods for recovery.
- 2.1.8 Any human remains encountered will be cleaned with minimal disturbance, recorded and left *in situ* and only removed if necessary. The contractor will comply with all statutory consents and licences under the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act, 1981 or other Burial Acts regarding the exhumation and interment of human remains. The archaeological contractor will comply with all reasonable requests of interested parties as to the method of removal, re-interment or disposal of the remains or associated items. Every effort will be made, at all times, not to cause offence to any interested parties.
- 2.1.9 The City Archaeologist will be given notice of when work is due to commence and will be free to visit the site, for health and safety reasons, by prior arrangement with the project director. Should any significant remains be found it may be necessary, in liaison with the City Archaeologist, to formulate a strategy designed to fully establish their character, distribution, extent, condition, dating and further treatment.
- 2.1.10 Archaeological staff and visitors will respect Health and Safety provisions and site specific safety regulations.
- 2.1.11 The material excavated from the area which has been stripped will only be used to backfill it following the completion of work so far as is necessary to make it safe for the public and only then on instruction from the client or main contractor as appropriate.
- 2.2 *Post-excavation*
- 2.2.1 Post excavation work will comprise the following:
- i. checking of drawn and written records during and on completion of fieldwork;
 - ii. production of a stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site, if appropriate;
 - iii. cataloguing of photographic material and labelling of slides which will be mounted on appropriate hangers;
 - iv. cleaning, marking, bagging and labelling of finds according to the individual deposits from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to

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an appropriate Conservation Laboratory. Finds will be identified and dated by appropriate specialists.

- 2.2.2 A report detailing the finds of the watching brief will be prepared within three months of the completion of site works and will consist of:
- i. a title page detailing site address, site code and accession number, NGR, author/originating body, client's name and address;
 - ii. full contents listing;
 - iii. a non-technical summary of the findings of the watching brief;
 - iv. a description of the archaeological background with reference to the desk-top assessment and previous fieldwork;
 - v. a description of the topography and geology of the development area;
 - vi. a description of the methodologies used during the watching brief;
 - vii. a description of the findings of the watching brief;
 - viii. plans of the area showing the archaeological features exposed;
 - ix. sections of the excavated archaeological features;
 - x. interpretation of the archaeological features exposed and their context within the surrounding landscape;
 - xi. specialist reports on the artefactual/environmental remains from the site;
 - xii. appropriate photographs of specific archaeological features;
 - xiii. a consideration of the importance of the archaeological remains present on the site in local, regional and national terms
 - xiv. a list of contexts.
- 2.2.3 Copies of the report will be sent to the client for approval and then to the Local Planning Authority, the City Archaeologist and SMR.
- 2.4.4 The project archive will be prepared according to the recommendations in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990), *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission 1992). This excludes items of gold and silver which by law must be reported to Her Majesty's Coroner. It is hoped that the archive can eventually be deposited in an appropriate local museum.
- 2.4.5 Notes or articles describing the results of the watching brief will be submitted for publication to an appropriate local journal and/or national journals, dependant on the nature of the results. A copy of any such works will be sent to the City Archaeologist.

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3.0 Timetable and Personnel

- 3.1 Details of the timetable and CVs of key personnel will be supplied to the City Archaeologist on request. These will be forwarded to the City Archaeologist before the commencement of on-site works.
- 3.2 JSAC staff will be available throughout the groundworks programme and it is expected that post-excavation work and a report on the results will be complete within three months of the completion of fieldwork.
- 3.3 Specialist assistance where required will be provided by appropriate persons. In the recent past, John Samuels Archaeological Consultants have employed the services of a number of specialists, including

Jane Cowgill - Slags and small finds

Robert White - Conservation

Robert Alvey - Small finds/environmental sampling

Paul Blinkhorn - Iron Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery

John Samuels, Lynne Bevan (BUFAU) - Iron Age and Roman pottery

Jane Young, Stephanie Ratkai (BUFAU) - Medieval pottery

Stephanie Ratkai (BUFAU) - Post Medieval pottery

Angela Monckton (ULAS), Umberto Albarella (BUFAU) James Rackham - Environmental sampling, animal bone analysis

John Carney - Geological and soil analysis

Lynne Bevan (BUFAU) - Flint

4.0 Insurance

- 4.1 The archaeological contractor will produce evidence of Public Liability Insurance to the minimum value of £5 m and Professional Indemnity Insurance to the minimum of £2m.

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5.0 **Health and Safety**

- 5.1 It is the policy of John Samuels Archaeological Consultants ('the Employer') to conform fully with the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act (1974).
- 5.2 It is accepted that it is the duty of the Employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, the health and safety of all his employees at work.
- 5.3 The employer also has a duty to ensure that his employees are aware of their responsibility for their own health and safety, and for the health and safety of others, including the general public, who might be affected by their work.
- 5.4 Where employees are temporarily engaged at other workplaces, they are to respect relevant local regulations, both statutory and as imposed by other employers within the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (1974).
- 5.5 In furtherance of the duty of care imposed by the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act (1974), the Employer shall make available to his employees whatever reasonable facilities are required by particular circumstances, e.g appropriate protective clothing, safety equipment, rest breaks for specialised tasks, etc.
- 5.6 Attention is paid to the requirements of more recent legislation including the provision and use of *Work Equipment Regulations 1992*, the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992* and the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994*. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the contractor, with copies to *John Samuels Archaeological Consultants*, a safety officer appointed and all aspects of health and safety nominated during work. It may be necessary for the archaeological contractor to liaise with the main contractor over aspects of health and safety, depending on start dates of contracts etc.

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6 0 Figure: Site Location

