

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
Project No. 422
June 1996

**An Archaeological Evaluation
at Michlow Drive, Bradwell, Derbyshire**

by
Catharine Mould

with
a contribution by Bob Burrows
and
illustrations by Nigel Dodds

For further information please contact:
Simon Buteux, Iain Ferris or Peter Leach (Directors)
Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
The University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TT
Tel: 0121 414 5513
Fax: 0121 414 5516
E-Mail: BUFAU@bham.ac.uk
Web Address: <http://www.bham.ac.uk/BUFAU/>

**An Archaeological Evaluation
at Michlow Drive, Bradwell, Derbyshire**

Contents

- 1.0 Summary**
- 2.0 Introduction**
- 3.0 The Site and its Location**
- 4.0 Objective**
- 5.0 Method**
- 6.0 The Archaeological Results**
 - Trench 1
 - Trench 2
- 7.0 The Artefacts *by Bob Burrows***
- 8.0 Discussion of the Trial Trenching Results**
- 9.0 Assessment of the Archaeological Significance and Potential of the Proposed Development Site**
- 10.0 Implications and Proposals**
 - 10.1 Implications
 - 10.2 Proposals
- 11.0 References**
- 12.0 Acknowledgements**

Figures

- Figure 1 Location of the Proposed Development Site
- Figure 2 Location of the Trial Trenches
- Figure 3 Trench 1: Plan, Trench 2: Plan and Sections

**An Archaeological Evaluation
at Michlow Drive, Bradwell, Derbyshire**

by
Catharine Mould

1.0 Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted in advance of a proposed residential development at Michlow Drive, Bradwell, Derbyshire, by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in the period 28th - 30th May 1996. Recent excavation at Grey Ditch, immediately to the northeast, had revealed prehistoric and Roman activity, so placing the land at Michlow Drive within an area of high archaeological potential. However, prior to this project no below-ground archaeological investigations had been conducted specifically within the proposed development area and the potential for survival of archaeological deposits, their nature and condition, was unknown. Two trial trenches were excavated; and although no archaeological deposits were recorded in Trench 1, a shallow pit and a stone surface, dated to the late 17th - early 18th century, were identified within the southeastern half of Trench 2.

2.0 Introduction

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out at Michlow Drive, Bradwell, Derbyshire. The work was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Michael Hyde and Associates Limited and their clients Northern Counties Housing Association. The archaeological investigations were conducted in accordance with specifications prepared by the Peak National Park Archaeology Service (Smith 1996) and conformed to PPG 16 guidelines.

3.0 The Site and its Location (Figures 1 and 2)

The site (centred on NGR SK 17258165) lies within the village of Bradwell, Derbyshire, which is itself located within the Peak National Park. The proposed development area, which at present comprises two pasture fields, is also considered to lie within an area of high archaeological potential. A scheduled ancient monument, Grey Ditch (SAM Derby 81; SMR 2217), whose bank and ditch seals extensive mesolithic activity, lies immediately to the northeast, whilst the projected line of the Roman road linking Buxton with the fort of Navio, is believed to run through the development area. In addition, the two fields are thought to have formed one part of the medieval open field system for Bradwell (Smith 1996).

4.0 Objective

The objective of this archaeological evaluation was to establish whether any archaeological deposits had survived within the proposed development area and to assess what impact the development might have upon such remains.

5.0 Method

The brief for this archaeological evaluation specified that a single trench should be excavated across the proposed development site (Smith 1996). However, at the time of this evaluation a drystone wall dividing the two fields which form the development area was still standing. This feature was left intact, and two separate trial trenches were excavated. The trenches were located at the centre of the proposed development area, and were aligned northwest-southeast, in order to form a right-angle with the surviving drystone field walls. The turf, root mat and associated topsoil were removed by a JCB mechanical excavator. The trenches were then excavated by hand. All artefacts recovered from the two trenches were recorded three-dimensionally. The stratigraphic sequences were recorded and contextual information was supplemented by scale drawings, plans, sections and photographs which, together with recovered artefacts, form the site archive. This is presently housed at Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit.

6.0 The Archaeological Results (Figure 3)

Trench 1

This trench (1.50m x 30m), which was located within the southeastern field, was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.45m below the present turf level. A natural and, in places, gravelly, yellow-brown, silt-clay horizon (1002) was directly overlain by a 0.20m thick layer of topsoil (1001), which was itself sealed by the turf and root matting (1000).

Trench 2

Trench 2 (1.50m x 17.50m) continued the line of Trench 1 in the northwestern field. This trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m below the present turf level. At the southeastern end a natural silt-clay horizon was overlain by a black sandy clay-silt (2002), which represented the fill of a shallow cut (F200). This was sealed by a rough stone surface (F201, 2004) which extended northwest for a further 8.5m, and which continued northeast and southwest beyond the bounds of Trench 2. The surface comprised a number of roughly laid, large stone flags, angular stones, sandstone and tile, which were interspersed with small angular stones. These appeared to have been trampled, rather than deliberately laid. The surface, which was partially truncated by two, northeast-southwest aligned, linear features (F202 and F203), directly overlay the natural horizon at these points. Feature 201 was truncated to the northwest by a cut filled with modern building debris (2007; loft insulation, clay service pipe), which extended to the northwestern limit of Trench 2. The debris was mechanically removed with a JCB to reveal an undisturbed natural silt-clay horizon at a depth of 0.50m below the present turf level.

7.0 The Artefacts *by Bob Burrows*

A total of 52 artefacts were recovered during this archaeological evaluation. Of these, 32 were sherds of pottery. This assemblage included examples of yellow-brown and orange-brown slip wares (1001 and F200), brown salt-glazed stoneware (1001) and white lead-glazed ware (1001). Examples of plain, locally-made earthenwares which were probably used as domestic mixing bowls and storage pots were also present (F201). In addition to the above, examples of black glaze stoneware (1001) illustrate the hard, shinier, and more attractive finish, which would have been acquired with the use of lead oxide, used after the later 17th century. A number of sherds, notably the white lead glaze and brown salt-glazed stoneware (1001) can be dated to the late 18th century. However, the lack of range in pottery types which was indicative of the 18th and 19th centuries, does suggest that the assemblage dates to the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

The remaining artefacts comprised seven clay pipe fragments (1001, F200, F201), three iron nails (1001), one iron key (1001), one glass bottle (1001), five flints (1001, F200), one animal tooth (F200), one tile and one brick fragment (2008).

8.0 Discussion of the Trial Trenching Results (Figure 3)

The natural subsoil was contacted in both trial trenches, within 0.50m of the present turf level.

No prehistoric, Roman or medieval deposits or artefacts were recorded by this evaluation. A slight undulation in the level of the natural silt-clay horizon in Trench 1 may represent the remains of a medieval ridge and furrow system, which is more clearly delineated by the line of the drystone walls bounding the present day field system. However, there was no evidence of a separate ploughsoil, and no visible undulations in the surrounding ground level.

Instead, the earliest activity appears to have been the cutting of a shallow pit (F200) in Trench 2, which is dated to the late 17th century. This feature was later sealed by a rough stone surface (F201). Artefacts dating to the late 17th - early 18th century were recovered both from the matrix of this feature and from its upper limit. The exact character and function of this surface remains unclear. It reuses a number of large, worn flagstones and sandstone and may have formed a floor surface, or at least have provided the foundation for one. However, no associated walls were recorded within Trench 2 and no structures are recorded by the historic maps for this area (Smith pers comm; 1844 Tithe map, 1820 Enclosure map, 1921 25 inch Ordnance Survey, 1972 1:2500 Ordnance Survey). The feature may, alternatively, have served as a domestic or agricultural yard.

Two linear features (F202 and F203) which partially truncated the stone surface (F201) are thought to be modern, one (F202) representing the remains of a former land-drain, and the other (F203) a disused service trench. Building debris at the northwestern end of Trench 2 may be associated with construction of the existing residential development at Michlow Drive.

9.0 Assessment of the Archaeological Significance and Potential of the Proposed Development Site

The archaeological significance of Bradwell lies with its surviving mesolithic deposits, Roman and post-Roman earthworks, and in the surviving evidence of its medieval field system. Extensive mesolithic activity was recorded during excavations across the bank and ditch which together form Grey Ditch, a post-Roman feature constructed to control access along the valley. A Roman road, which connected Buxton with the fort of Navio, is believed to pass through the proposed development site at Michlow Drive (Smith 1996). Later medieval activity is evidenced by the surviving field boundaries which curve round to follow the original line of ridge and furrow ploughing (Figure 1).

The results of this evaluation suggest that the survival of archaeological deposits is limited to the uppermost 0.50m below the present turf level. Although no surviving evidence for mesolithic, Roman or medieval activity was recorded within the two trial trenches, this does not exclude the possibility of such deposits surviving beyond the limits of the areas examined. The potential of the archaeological resource elsewhere within the proposed development area should not be underestimated.

10.0 Implications and Proposals

10.1 Implications

All deposits and features recorded by this evaluation survived within 0.50m of the present turf level. Should earlier, and more extensive, archaeological deposits be present elsewhere within the proposed development site, their survival would certainly be compromised by the need for ground consolidation, structural foundations and by the provision of services for the proposed residences.

10.2 Proposals

The proposals set down below provide an outline of the archaeological mitigation fieldwork which could be required if the proposed development is approved. The precise nature of such mitigation would need to be determined following the completion of a final design layout, and with the approval of the Peak National Board Archaeology Service.

- 1) If development proposals exclude ground disturbance by construction or landscaping, no further archaeological fieldwork would be recommended.
- 2) If ground disturbance is unavoidable, it is proposed that provision be made for the maintenance of an archaeological watching brief to further record any surviving archaeological deposits and features, and to recover any datable artefacts.
- 3) Should, during the maintenance of a watching brief, significant archaeological remains be recorded, provision should be made for a more intensive archaeological presence, which would allow for the full excavation and recording of the remains in advance of further groundworks, allowing for their preservation by record.

- 4) On completion of such further works, it may be appropriate to prepare an assessment of the significance of the findings, in accordance with the recommendations of Management of Archaeology Projects (English Heritage 1991), with a view to further analysis and publication of the results in a local archaeological journal.

11.0 References

Smith, K. 1996 *Specifications for an Archaeological Evaluation at Michlow Drive, Bradwell, Derbyshire*. Peak National Park Archaeology Service.

12.0 Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Michael Hyde and Associates Limited, on behalf of their clients Northern Counties Housing Association. We are grateful to Mr. P. Gardner of Michael Hyde and Associates Limited and to David Chiltern of Northern Counties Housing Association for their assistance, and to Ken Smith of the Peak National Park Archaeology Service for his advice on-site and for information relating to the historic maps for the proposed development area. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Catharine Mould and Bob Burrows. Simon Butoux edited this report.

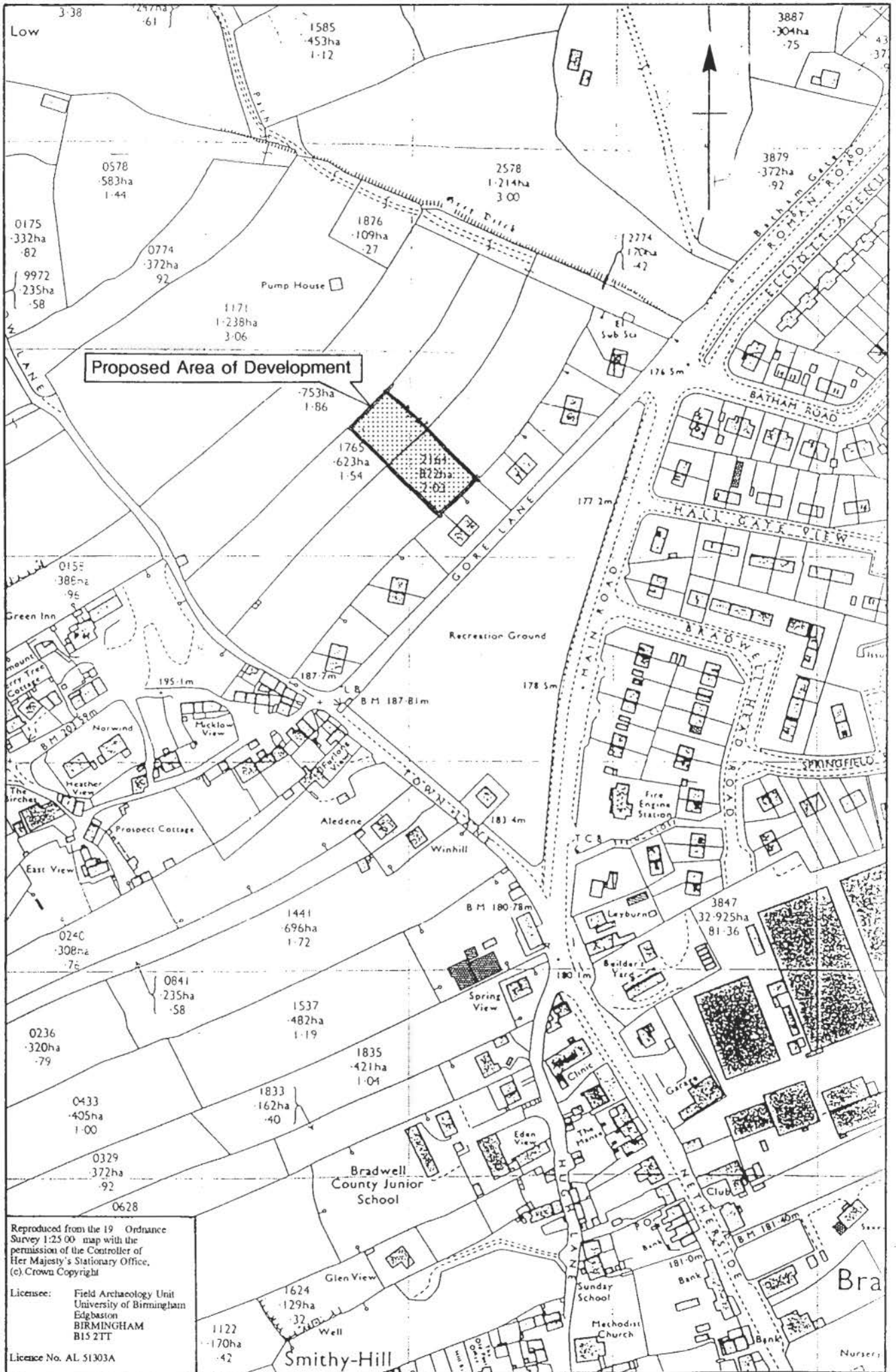


Fig.1

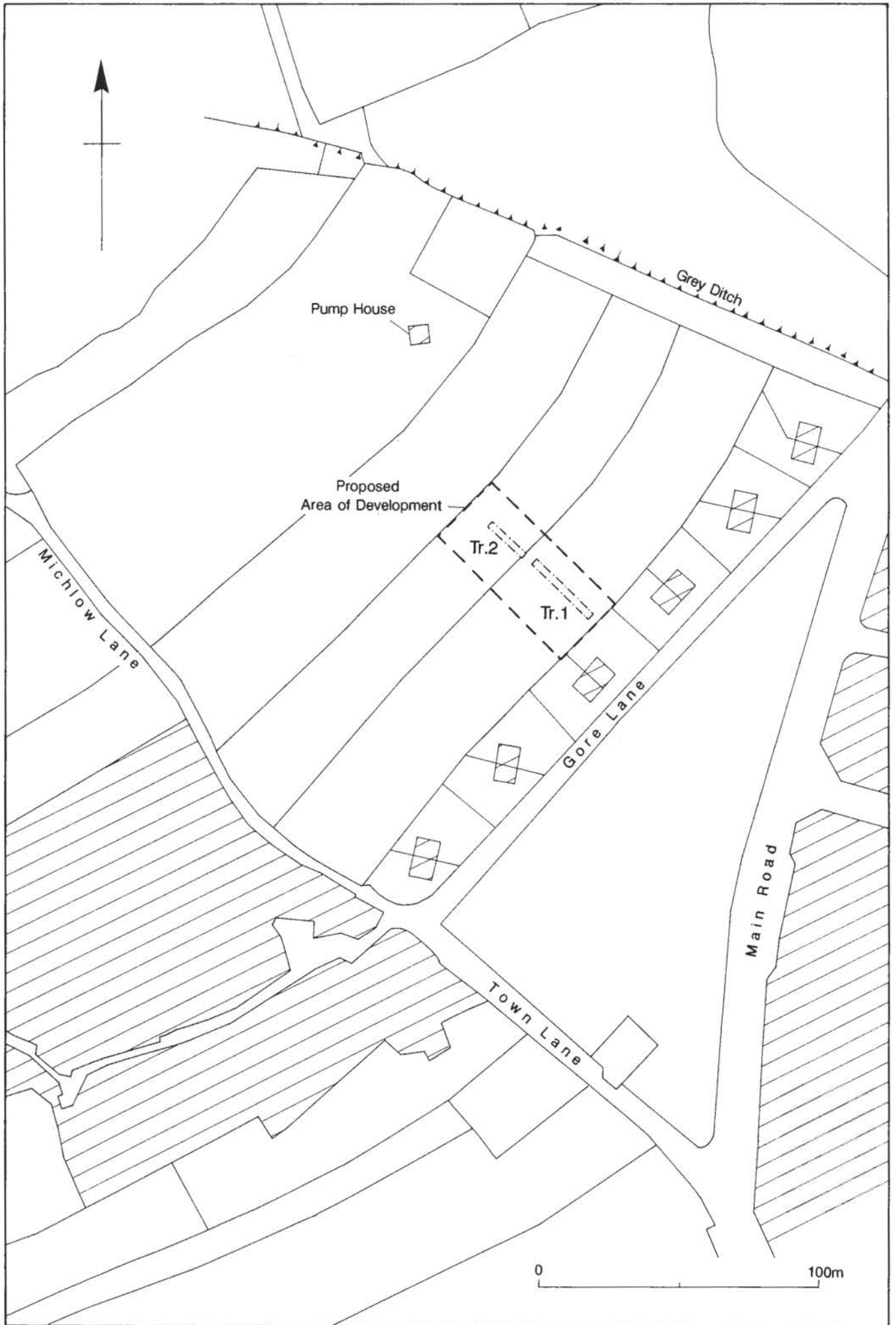


Fig.2

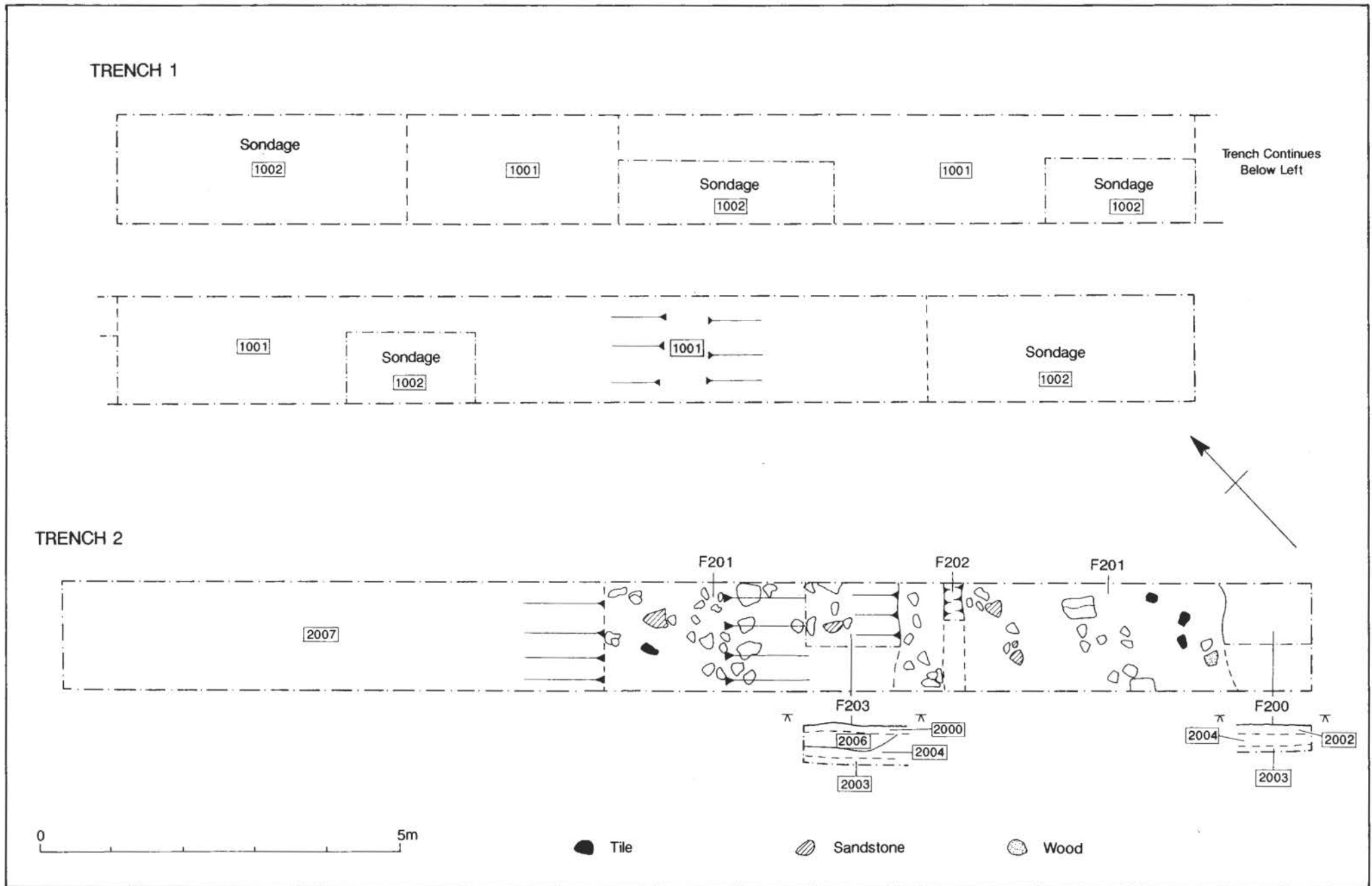


Fig.3