

*BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT*

**40-46 PINWOOD DRIVE,
HAGLEY, STOURBRIDGE,
WORCESTERSHIRE
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

B.U.F.A.U.



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**40-46 Pinewood Avenue, Hagley,
Stourbridge, Worcestershire:
An Archaeological Evaluation**

by
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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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40-46 PINWOOD AVENUE, HAGLEY, STOURBRIDGE, WORCESTERSHIRE

1.0: SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation of land within the rear gardens of four existing houses at 40-46 Pinewood Avenue, Hagley, Stourbridge, Worcestershire was undertaken in advance of a proposed housing development. Although no archaeological sites or find spots were recorded within the area of the evaluation, sites and find spots of the prehistoric and Roman periods are recorded in the immediate vicinity. To the south west of the site are the remains of two Bronze Age round barrows (WSM 3148), the other three having been excavated in the 18th century. Evidence of Iron Age activity is exemplified by the nearby likely hillforts of Harborough (WSM 7559) and Ismere (WSM 9587). To the west ran the Roman road from Droitwich to Greensforge (WSM3149, 3150, 3151), close to the location of a Roman coin hoard (WSM 03147). A series of 6 hand-excavated trial trenches were located within the footprints of the proposed five new houses and the access road. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified within the trial trenches.

2.0: INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation of land adjoining the rear of four houses, 40-46 Pinewood Drive, Hagley, Stourbridge, Worcestershire (centred on OS NGR. SO 8953 7972: Figs. 1-2). Birmingham University Field Archaeological Unit (BUFAU) were commissioned to undertake the archaeological evaluation by Keith Sprason (Architect) on behalf of Harper Group Development Limited. The methodology of the fieldwork conformed to an evaluation Brief prepared by Worcestershire County Council, and a Specification prepared by BUFAU (BUFAU 1998). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed demolition of one house and the construction of five new houses.

The objectives of this archaeological evaluation were:

- 1) To define the nature, extent and significance of archaeological remains within the area proposed for development.
- 2) To assist in the definition of a mitigation strategy for further archaeological field work, if appropriate.
- 3) To provide information concerning the potential of the site to contain (i) evidence of prehistoric and/or Romano-British settlement activity, and (ii) prehistoric funerary and ritual activity.

3.0: METHODOLOGY (Fig. 2)

The nature of the gardens, and in particular the existing hedges and trees - many of which were to be retained - precluded the use of geographical survey, and the use of machine excavated trial trenches. A series of six hand-excavated trial trenches, each 3m by 1m, were positioned to sample the footprints of the new houses and the proposed new access road (see Fig 2). Within each trench, the turf and modern

topsoil/overburden was removed by hand to the subsoil surface. The surface was then cleaned by hand to provide a more conducive surface to locate any possible archaeological remains. The subsoil was then removed in spits in an attempt to increase the possibility of the identification of any archaeological remains, until the natural was reached. The natural was investigated by a sondage within trial trench one (Fig 3).

4.0: THE SITE

The site is set within a landscape with recorded archaeological remains covering the prehistoric, medieval and industrial periods. However, no actual fieldwork has been recently executed in this area. The site is located on a north west facing slope, some of which appears to have been artificially made up, most probably during the construction of the existing houses. Geologically the site is located within the range of the Lower Keuper Sandstone; red brown, with pebbly bands, with close proximity to an area of Upper Mottled Sandstone. It is situated to the north of the junction of Stakenbridge Lane and Kidderminster Road South, in what was originally heath land. To the south west is situated a group of five Bronze Age round barrows (WSM 3148), of which two remain, the others being investigated in the 18th century by Bishop Lytton during the enclosure of the former Clent Heath. After this date the land went into arable usage, which resulted in the remaining mounds being reduced to their present height. These Bronze Age barrows and the likely Iron Age hillforts of Harborough (WSM 7559) to the south west and Ismere (WSM 9587) to the north west, which dominate the landscape, indicate that the area has been in periodic occupation through the prehistoric period. To the west of the site is the possible course of a Roman road, running from Droitwich to Greensforge (WSM 3149, 3150, 3151), possibly explaining the Roman coin hoard (WSM 03147) recovered from the field to the west of the site. To the north and east of the site exist areas of medieval and industrial development in the form of corn mills (all disused or demolished) with their associated millpools, for example Sweet Pool (WSM 31244), and a post medieval corn mill (WSM 20012) still in use until 1910.

5.0: RESULTS

Trench one (Fig 3)

Trench one was 3m long and 1m wide on a north-west by south-east alignment. The natural (12), comprising red sand, was encountered at a depth of 550-650mm. A further 150mm was excavated from the north-west end of the trench to ensure the validity of the natural. This was sealed by a 300mm thick deposit of subsoil (11), comprising orange silty sand with reddish brown mottles. The trench was sealed by a 300mm thick deposit of topsoil (10) and turf comprising dark brown loam. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered within this trench. However, post medieval pottery fragments were recovered from the topsoil.

Trench two

Trench two was 3m long and 1m wide on a south-west by north-east alignment. The natural (22), comprising reddish pink sand, was encountered at a depth of 600-

650mm. A further 100mm was excavated from the south-west end of the trench to ensure the validity of the natural. This was sealed by a 300mm thick deposit of subsoil (21) comprising orange brown silty sand with reddish brown mottles. The trench was sealed by a 280-400mm thick deposit of topsoil and turf (20) comprising dark brown loam. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered within this trench. However, fragments of post medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil.

Trench three

Trench three was 3m long and 1m wide on a east by west alignment. The natural (32), comprising red sand, was encountered at a depth of 500mm. This was sealed by a 200-300mm thick deposit of subsoil (31) comprising orange brown silty sand with reddish brown mottles. The trench was sealed by a 250-300mm thick deposit of topsoil and turf (30) comprising dark brown loam. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered within this trench. A Victorian penny (1870) was recovered from the topsoil.

Trench four

Trench four was 3m long and 1m wide on a south-west by north-east alignment. The natural (42), comprising pink silty clay, was encountered at a depth of 400-460mm. This was sealed by a 100-240mm thick deposit of subsoil (41) comprising orange silty sand with reddish brown mottles. The trench was sealed by a 260-200mm thick deposit of topsoil and turf (40) comprising dark brown loam. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered within this trench. However a retouched flint flake of possible Bronze Age date was recovered from the topsoil.

Trench five

Trench five was 3m long and 1m wide on a north-west by south-east alignment. The natural (52), comprising red sand, was encountered at a depth of 300-450mm. This was sealed by a 100mm thick deposit of subsoil (51) comprising orange silty sand with reddish brown mottles. The trench was sealed by a 300-400mm thick deposit of topsoil (50) and turf comprising dark grey brown loam. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered within this trench.

Trench six (Fig 3)

Trench six was 3m long and 1m wide on a north-west by south-east alignment. The natural (63), comprising red sand, was encountered at a depth of 750-800mm. This was sealed by a 460-600mm thick deposit of subsoil (61) comprising orange silty sand with reddish brown mottles, and in the northern end a mixture of ash and building debris (62). The trench was sealed by a 150-280mm thick deposit of topsoil and turf (60) comprising dark brown loam. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered within this trench.

6.0: DISCUSSION

Despite the known presence of prehistoric and Roman features in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development area, no deposits of archaeological significance were encountered in any of the trenches. The sequence of deposits encountered was identical in each trench with 150 - 400mm of topsoil and 100 - 600mm of subsoil

scaling clean undisturbed natural. The only feature encountered, in trench 6, contained modern debris and has been interpreted as the result of modern filling of an old tree bowl during the landscaping of the garden. However only a limited sample of the proposed development area was examined and the lack of features does not preclude the possibility of archaeologically significant deposits in the area.

7.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork was commissioned by Keith Sprason (Architect) on behalf of Harper Group Development Limited. We thank Mr Keith Sprason for his assistance and the co-operation of the residents, Mr and Mrs M R T Ford, Number 40; Mr and Mrs I Williams, Number 42; Mr and Mrs G Walters, Number 44 and Mr and Mrs D Auden, Number 46. The fieldwork was supervised by Lesley-Ann Mather, with the assistance of Robert Burrows, John Hovey, Edward Newton and Jon Sterenberg. The figures were prepared by Nigel Dodds.

8.0: REFERENCES

BUFAU, 1998, *Archaeological Methods Statement. Field Evaluation, Land at 40-46 Pinewood Avenue, Hagley, Stourbridge, Worcestershire*. BUFAU. Unpublished.

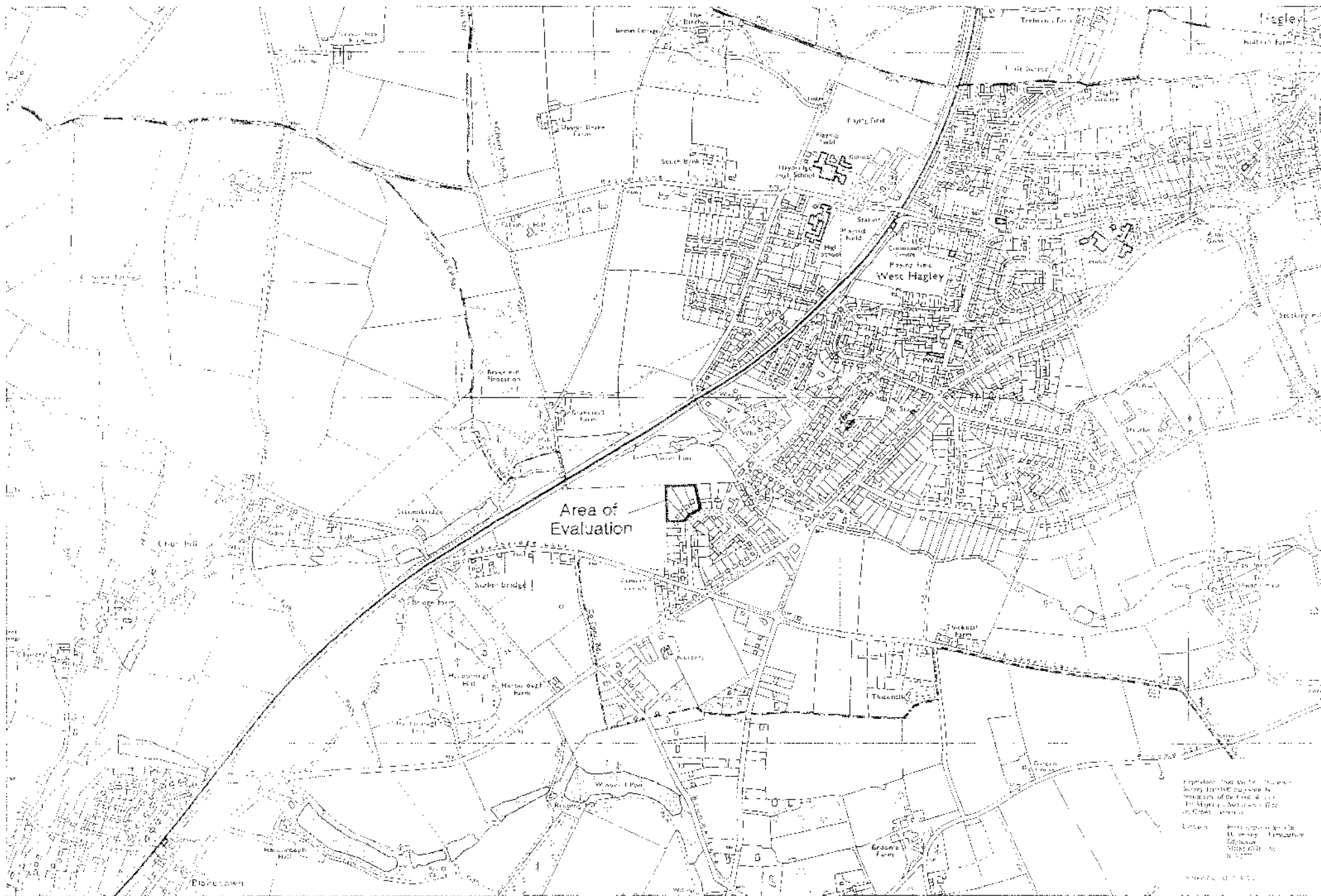


Fig 1

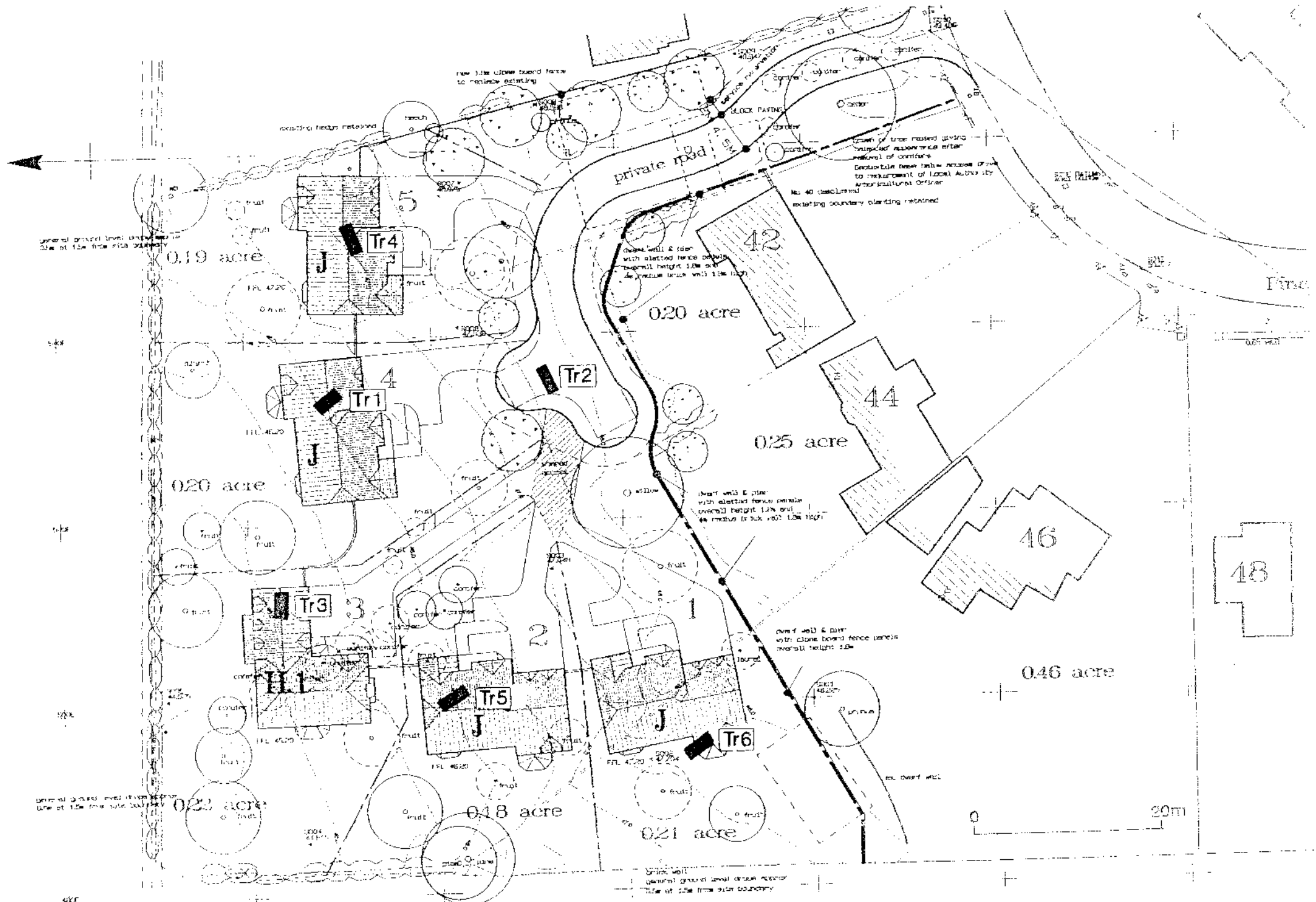


Fig. 2

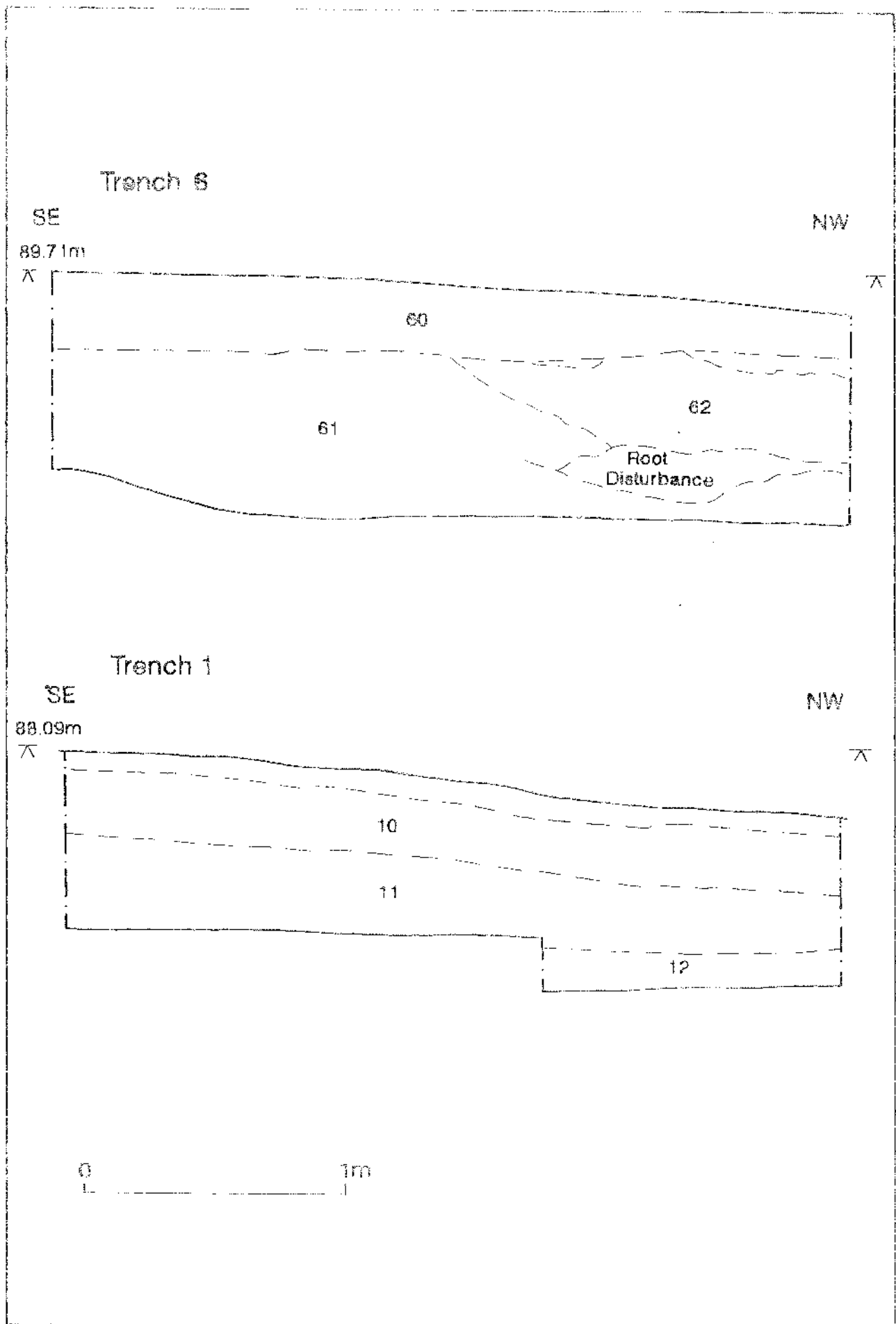


Fig.3