

*BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY  
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT*

**TEACHING RESOURCES  
CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION 1999**

*B.U.F.A.U.*



Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
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by  
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# **TEACHING RESOURCES CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

## **AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 1999**

### **1.0: SUMMARY**

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation within the campus of the University of Birmingham, undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a Teaching Resources Centre. The evaluation followed two separate desk-based assessments of the site, and comprised the excavation of a total of five trenches.

Two sections were cut across the defensive ditches of the Phase 1 fort, close to its southeastern corner. Also identified were two ditches together defining the eastern side of the eastern fort annexe, first located in the Genetics Field to the north of the Teaching Resources Centre site. These eastern annexe ditches may have joined the southeastern corner of the southern fort annexe, forming a single L-shaped annexe, adjoining the eastern and southern sides of the Phase 1 fort. No contemporary, or possibly contemporary, features were identified within the eastern/southern annexe interiors. No Roman pottery was recovered during the evaluation.

### **2.0: INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation of approximately 1ha. of land located to the south of University Road West (hereafter called the site: centred on NGR. SP 4458355, Figs. 1-2), sited within the campus of the University of Birmingham. Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit was commissioned to undertake the evaluation by the Estate Management Office of the University of Birmingham, in advance of a proposed development of the site. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Department of the Environment, November 1990), and Policy 8.36 of the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan. The methodology of this evaluation conforms to a brief prepared by Birmingham City Council (see Appendix), and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by BUFAU (BUFAU 1998). The fieldwork and reporting has been undertaken in accordance with the 'Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation' (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994).

This evaluation follows two earlier desk-based assessments of the site (Jones 1995, Jones 1998a), which described the archaeological background and highlighted the archaeological potential of the site. Information from these studies is not repeated here. Briefly, the site includes the southeastern corner of the larger, Phase 1 fort, and also part of the interior of a possible southern annexe, identified from map sources (Jones forthcoming). It was also suggested that the eastern fort annexe, identified by excavation to the north of the site (Jones 1998b and in preparation) may have continued southward into the site. The desk-based assessments also highlighted the potential of the area immediately outside the fort to contain evidence of further defensive features, or of a Roman civilian settlement, associated with the occupation of the forts.

The site comprised two areas: the West Car park and the lawned areas to the east, respectively Zones 2 and 3 as defined in the most recent desk-based assessment (Jones 1998a, fig. 2). The other zones within the scope of this desk-based assessment, comprising the route of University Road West (Zone 1), and the areas of the Biology West and Engineering Buildings (Zone 4), were not available for evaluation.

The purpose of the field evaluation was to provide information concerning the extent, dating, survival and significance of the archaeological deposits within the site. The detailed aims of trial-trenching were as follows:

- To locate the Phase 1 fort defences within the West Car Park, and to attempt to locate a possible corner tower in the southeastern angle of the fort.
- To locate a possible southward continuation of the eastern defences of the eastern annexe, first located in the Genetics Field to the north of the site by recent excavation.
- To test the potential of the southern and/or eastern annexes to be associated with internal features.
- To test the area outside the forts generally, to locate evidence of civilian settlement and/or further, outer fort defences.
- To provide data to assist in the definition of mitigation strategies, if appropriate.

### **3.0: METHODOLOGY**

Since no detailed layouts of the proposed development were available, with the exception of the suggested footprint of the Medical Academics Building which forms the first stage of the development, it was decided to target the trial-trenches as widely as possible within Zones 2 and 3, although trench location was constrained by the routes of live services.

Trench 1 was located to intercept the southeastern corner of the Phase 1 defences, and to examine the fort interior for evidence of internal features, including a possible corner-tower, and to locate any hearths or ovens cut to the rear of the rampart. Trench 2 was located to intercept the line of the outermost defensive ditch of the Phase 1 fort on its southern side, and also to examine an area within the possible southern annexe for evidence of buildings and other internal features. Trenches 3 and 4 were located to intercept the line of the possible eastern side of the eastern annexe, and the eastern side of the southern annexe. Trenches 3-5 were located to test the interior of the eastern and southern annexes for evidence of internal features.

The overburden in each trench was removed by a mechanical excavator working under archaeological control, to expose the uppermost horizons of the archaeological deposits, or the uppermost surface of the subsoil. The machined horizon in each trench was hand-cleaned to define the archaeological features and deposits present. A sample of the features present was hand-excavated, to define their form and preservation, and to provide datable artifacts. In the event, hand-excavation was hampered by the high water-table. Recording was by means of pro-forma recording sheets, supplemented by plans, sections and photographs, all held in the archive.

## 4.0 RESULTS

Trial-trenching examined approximately 2% of the area of Zones 2 and 3 available for investigation, amounting to approximately 177 square metres (Fig. 2).

### Trench 1 (Figs. 3-4)

Trench 1 measured 15m by 2m, and was orientated approximately east-west. The surface of the orange clay-silt subsoil (1008) was located at a depth of 1.3m below the modern surface. The subsoil was cut by a northwest-southeast aligned ditch (F100), partly exposed within the trench, which was only partially investigated because of the high water-table. The earliest excavated ditch fill comprised a light grey silt-sand-clay (1007), sealed by a layer of orange-brown sand-clay (1006). Above was a shallow layer of silt-clay (1005), overlain by a deposit of dark grey silt (1004), recorded below a layer of orange sand (1003), which formed the uppermost fill of the ditch. In the extreme west of the trench was located a gully (F101), aligned parallel with the ditch, backfilled with pebbles (1009). A 0.5m wide, backfilled service trench (F102) was cut along the long axis of the trench. The subsoil, and backfilled features F100 and F101 were sealed by layers of modern dumped material (1002-1000), recorded below the modern tarmac surface.

Feature F100 is interpreted as the innermost ditch of the Phase 1 fort, located just to the north of the southeastern corner of the defences. Fills 1003-1005 within that feature may be modern in origin, although no post-medieval pottery was collected during their excavation. No trace of the presumed rampart to the west of the ditch was found, presumably because of modern levelling-down. Gully F101 may be interpreted as a possible drainage feature, cut at the back of the rampart.

### Trench 2 (Figs. 3-4)

Trench 2 measured 3m by 15m, and was orientated northwest-southeast. The subsoil in this trench, comprising an orange/brown clay with gravel (2006) was recorded at a depth of 1.3m below the modern surface. The subsoil was sealed by a mixed and mottled subsoil horizon (2005), which was removed over half of the width of the trench, in an attempt to locate any underlying features. This uppermost, disturbed subsoil horizon (2005) was cut in the north of the trench by a southwest-northeast aligned ditch (F200), which was the only feature identified in the trench. The ditch measured a maximum of 4.2m in width. Because of the high water-table and for reasons of safety only the uppermost fill of this ditch, a grey sand-silt-clay (2004), could be hand-excavated. The uppermost subsoil horizon and the backfilled ditch F200 were sealed by layers of modern dumped material (2000-2003), recorded below the modern tarmac surface.

Ditch F200 is interpreted as the innermost ditch of the Phase 1 fort, intercepted along the southern side of the fort, just to the west of the southeastern corner of the defences.

### Trench 3 (Figs. 3-4)

Trench 3 measured 18m by 2m, and was orientated northeast-southwest. The orange-brown sand-gravel subsoil (3008) was located at a depth of 1.2m below the modern surface. The subsoil was cut by two parallel ditches (F301, F302), aligned approximately northwest-southeast. Ditches F301 and F302 measured a maximum of 2.7m and 1.8m in width respectively. Both were backfilled with a layer of orange-yellow silt-sand (3007). In the west of the trench the subsoil (3008) was sealed by a layer of disturbed subsoil (3009). Slightly off-centre within the trench was cut a brick-lined culvert (F300). Layer 3009 and features F300-F302 were sealed by layers of modern dumping (3001-3004), recorded below the modern topsoil (3000).

Ditches F301 and F302 are interpreted as representing the southwards continuation of the eastern defences of the eastern fort annexe, also defined to the north of University Road West.

### Trench 4

Trench 4 measured 2m by 18m, and was orientated northeast-southwest. The orange clay subsoil (4006) was recorded at a depth of between 0.5m and 1m below the modern surface. The subsoil was sealed by layers of modern dumped material (4001-4005), recorded immediately below the modern topsoil (4000).

### Trench 5

Trench 5 measured 2m by 15m, and was orientated northwest-southeast. The natural orange-brown gravel subsoil (5004) was recorded at a depth of 0.8m below the modern surface. Variation was noted in the composition of this subsoil horizon; it being very stony in the northwest of the trench, and more sandy over the remainder of the trench. The subsoil was cut by a disturbance (F500, not excavated), capped by a concrete slab, the only feature identified in this trench. The slab and subsoil was sealed by layers of modern build-up (5001-5003), recorded beneath the modern topsoil (5000).

Feature F500 is interpreted as a shaft associated with the 'model' oil wells formerly located in the vicinity.

### Finds

No finds, other than fragments of 18th-19th century pottery, and clay pipe fragments recovered from recent build-up horizons, were collected. No sampling for charred plant remains was undertaken because of the absence of dating material from the excavated fills.

## **5.0: DISCUSSION**

### **5.1: Phase 1 fort (Trenches 1 and 2)**

Both the innermost and outermost ditches of the Phase 1 fort were identified by trial-trenching. The outermost ditch was identified along the southern side of the fort (T2, F200). The innermost ditch was identified along the eastern side of the fort (T1, F100). As recorded elsewhere along the defences, the uppermost ditch fills were probably of recent origin, immediately pre-dating the car park formation. Although the ditches were not further excavated because of the high water-table, it is likely that the lower ditch fills are waterlogged, and they could contain insect and pollen remains, which could provide important data concerning the fort environment.

No trace was found of the associated rampart in Trench 1, although the possible drainage gully (F101) may mark the position of the rear of the rampart. No other features internal to the Phase 1 fort, or the annexes, were located.

### **5.2: Eastern/southern annexe (Trenches 3-5)**

Of particular importance was the evidence for the continuation of the eastern side of the eastern fort annexe into the site. Only the extreme bases of the ditches had survived extensive modern disturbance. The ditches (F301, F302) recorded in Trench 3 followed the alignment of the eastern annexe ditches previously excavated in the Genetics Field. This eastern side of the annexe does not appear to run exactly parallel with the eastern side of the Phase 1 fort, rather it curves slightly, possibly joining the southeastern corner of the southern annexe (Fig. 1). If, as is suggested, the eastern and southern annexes joined at this corner, a single, roughly-L-shaped annexe could have been formed along the eastern and southern sides of the Phase 1 fort, as is also indicated by the map evidence (Jones 1998, figs. 5-6). This mapping does not show an eastern side to the southern annexe, and no trace of this possible defensive line was found during this evaluation, although it is possible that this latter possible ditch line could have been located parallel with a modern path in an area excluded from investigation. Ditches F301 and F302 (Trench 3) continuing the line of the eastern annexe ditch beyond the southeastern corner of the Phase 1 fort comprise the only, albeit tentative, archaeological evidence at present for the existence of the southern fort annexe. No internal features could be identified within the limited internal areas of the southern or eastern annexes which were trenched.

## **6.0: IMPLICATIONS AND PROPOSALS**

### **6.1: Implications (Fig. 9)**

#### **6.1.1: Archaeology**

The innermost (F200) and the outermost (F100) ditches of the Phase 1 fort were identified, together with a gully (F101), cut to the rear of the rampart. Neither ditch appeared to have been severely disturbed by recent activity. Also identified was the

heavily-truncated base of two parallel ditches (T3, F301, F302), interpreted as forming part of the eastern side of the eastern fort annexe. In all cases the Roman ditches were sealed by modern build-up deposits. The uppermost fills of the Phase 1 fort ditches were also probably of recent origin, as suggested by an earlier evaluation to the west of the present site (Jones 1996), and also by other evidence that the fort ditches nearby remained visible as surface earthworks into the 1960s.

Given the small area of the Phase 1 fort interior available for investigation it is unsurprising that only one feature (F101) was located. Although the interior of the southern annexe was more extensively sampled, no contemporary, or possibly contemporary, internal features could be identified. Any internal features in this area could have been scoured-out by modern disturbance. Alternatively, it is possible that this annexe may not have contained extensive buildings and other internal features, although this hypothesis is not proven on the basis of the present limited evidence. Excavation along the western, southern and northern sides of the forts has indicated that the defences provided by the rampart and associated ditches were strengthened by an additional, outer counterscarp bank, a timber palisade and outer ditched defences (e.g. those located outside the eastern annexe in the Genetics Field). It is possible that other evidence of defensive outworks, such as ditches or other obstacles to attackers, may be located outside the line of the identified fort and annexe ditches, and the possibility of the survival of evidence for Roman civilian settlement in this area should not be entirely discounted.

If further excavation is undertaken, investigation should attempt to locate and test the intersection between the southeastern corner of the Phase 1 fort, and the possible northeastern corner of the southern annexe, to attempt to establish the relative chronology of these two defensive features. Similarly, it may be possible to locate the junction between the eastern and southern annexe defences (probably located within Zone 4).

The eastern annexe could have been contemporary with the southern annexe (and also possibly the northern annexe).

#### 6.1.2: Significance

The significance of the evaluation results may be summarised as follows:

- Feature survival. The results from Trenches 1 and 2 (West Car Park) suggest that features and deposits, including traces of internal features, could be relatively well-preserved. This part of the car park appears to have suffered less recent disturbance than the areas evaluated in 1996 and excavated in 1997 to the west of the present site. In contrast, Zone 3 appears to have suffered a greater degree of recent disturbance, possibly during construction of the adjacent buildings, and the use of an area for oil rig demonstrations.
- Given the relatively high water-table encountered, it is possible that the lower fort ditch fills may be waterlogged, and could contain insect, pollen and other environmental remains which would provide important data concerning the



contemporary fort environment. Such sampling should be considered a priority of any subsequent excavation on the site.

- The southeastern corner of the Phase 1 fort, a length of the eastern annexe defences and part of the interior of the eastern/southern annexes are located within the footprint of the proposed Medical Academics Building. Groundworks in the surrounding area would affect part of the Phase 1 fort interior, and other parts of the annexe interiors.

## **6.2: Proposals**

This section of the report is principally concerned with assessing the archaeological impact of the first stage of the Teaching Resources Centre development to the south of University Road West, comprising the construction of the Medical Academics Building (see Fig. 3 for the proposed extent of the new build). It is important to emphasise that proposals for archaeological mitigation are defined not only in respect of areas directly affected by the new build, but also those areas affected by associated groundworks (e.g. access routes for construction traffic, new service routes, the location of construction compounds, and by related landscaping).

Construction groundworks and associated works within Zones 2 and 3 (as defined in Jones 1998a) would affect archaeological features and deposits which are located within 1.3m of the present ground level. In all cases the archaeological features are dug into subsoil horizons, and are sealed by layers of recent dumping.

The aims of the proposed mitigation fieldwork are as follows:

- To investigate the potential of the fort ditch fills to contain waterlogged deposits, which may contain pollen and insect remains which could provide valuable data concerning the contemporary fort environment – information not provided by previous work at the site.
- To test the sequence of deposits in the eastern Phase 1 ditch for evidence of the late re-cut found in the Genetics Field evaluation (1998b). This re-cut could be associated with the eastern annexe, or the latest, Phase 3 fort.
- To examine the Phase 1 fort interior for evidence of internal features. The evaluation results suggests that these may be fairly well preserved in Zone 2. Although the evaluation results from the Zone 3 suggest the area has been heavily truncated, islands of better archaeological survival may nevertheless be located.

These aims may be achieved through a combination of preservation by record, and preservation *in situ*. Sampling of the defensive ditches and other features/deposits where directly affected by construction (e.g. within proposed ground-beam locations, or other areas affected by lowering of the ground surface), and the preservation of features in other areas would be appropriate to meet the archaeological aims expressed above. A similar approach was adopted for the recent Public Health Building development.

It should be noted that this evaluation was necessarily limited in extent to Zones 2 and 3 of the overall Teaching Resource Centre development (as defined in Jones 1998a). The archaeological potential of the other zones remains to be defined, and proposals for their evaluation and/or for mitigation fieldwork would require to be agreed in advance of the definition of development proposals.

## **7.0: REFERENCES**

BUFAU. 1998. *Teaching Resources Centre, University of Birmingham. Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Evaluation.*

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Jones, A. E. in preparation. *Metchley Roman Forts: Excavations in the Eastern Annexe 1998. Post-Excavation Assessment.* BUFAU Report No. 385.02.

## **8.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The evaluation was sponsored by the Estate Management Office of the University of Birmingham, and we are grateful to Paul Davis for his assistance. The trial-trenching was undertaken by Gary Coates (Supervisor) with the assistance of Sarah Watt, Bob Burrows, Adam Holman and Julie Candy. The report was edited by Iain Ferris, and the drawings were prepared by John Halsted.

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE**

**Proposed Medical Academic Building, University of Birmingham(SP 044835)**

**Design Brief for archaeological field evaluation in advance of consideration of development proposals**

**1.Summary**

*Proposed construction off University Road West, University of Birmingham, may affect buried archaeological remains of a Roman fort, consisting of a possible annexe and outer defensive line. This brief is for the second stage of assessment of the archaeological impact of the proposed development, by means of an archaeological field evaluation consisting of excavated trenches..*

**2.Site location and description**

The site of the proposed Medical Academic Building lies to the south of University Road West. The site is currently occupied by various buildings, a grassed area and a car park, at various levels stepping down to the east.

**3.Planning background**

The proposed development consists of new buildings with associated access and landscaping. Because the site is likely to include archaeological remains which would be affected by the development, an assessment of its archaeological implications is required, in accordance with Policy 8.38 of the City Council's Unitary Development Plan and government advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, "Archaeology and Planning". A field evaluation is required as the next stage of assessment in advance of consideration of development proposals, following a desk-based assessment in December 1998.

**4.Existing archaeological information**

The proposed development site lies just outside the south-east corner of a Roman fort whose extent, the dates of its construction and occupation, and the form of its defences and internal buildings, are known from its representation on early maps and from various excavations undertaken since the 1930s. Excavations in 1967 and 1997 in the area now occupied by the Occupational Health Building and the Public Health Building, to the west of the proposed development, revealed postholes and slots for timber buildings, pits, pebble surfaces, hearths, ovens, a timber-framed rampart and ditches. An archaeological evaluation of the former Genetics Field in 1998, to the north of the proposed development, revealed a hitherto unknown defensive circuit consisting of a ditch parallel to and about 25m east of the defences of the earliest phase of the fort. Other features were found between this ditch and the fort defences. Projected to the south-east, the line of the newly-discovered ditch would extend into the proposed development site. The desk-based assessments for the West Car Park and the Genetics Field drew attention to a possible southern annexe to the fort, mirroring that already known to have existed on its north. This is suggested by an earthwork bank and field boundary shown on historic maps. The field boundary extends onto the proposed development site.

A desk-based archaeological assessment of the proposed development site considered archaeological and documentary evidence and modern service and topographic information and defined four zones, as follows:

**Zone 1(University Road West):** Good survival of the Phase 1 and Phase 3 forts and the eastern annexe defences, including their ramparts, is anticipated under the embankment on which the road is raised.

**Zone 2(West Car Park):** The defences and associated features of the Phase 1 fort and part of the interior of the southern annexe, containing features such as pits, hearths, ovens and buildings which may provide information on the date and function of the annexe, are likely to survive under deep make-up deposits for the car park.

Zone 3(the lawns to the east of the car park): Parts of this area are crossed by services and their effect on archaeological remains is unknown, but the present lawned areas are unaffected by services and could contain part of the southern annexe interior, part of its eastern side and the eastern side of the southern annexe.

Zone 4(Biology West and Engineering Buildings): Construction of the existing buildings is likely to have had a variable effect on the eastern line of the eastern annexe and the two possibly associated external ditches which may continue into this zone.

#### **5.Requirements for work**

The archaeological field evaluation is required to define the survival and significance of archaeological remains in the area of the proposed development, so that appropriate mitigation strategies may be devised. The mitigation strategies may involve modification of site layout or foundation design to ensure in-situ preservation of archaeological remains, or, if this is not feasible, archaeological recording in advance of development.

In Zone 2(the West Car Park) the evaluation is required to locate the phase 1 fort defences and to identify any features associated with the southern annexe. In Zone 3(the lawns to the east of the car park) the evaluation is required to locate evidence of the defences of the southern and eastern annexes, and to locate any associated internal features. The other two zones defined in the desk-based assessment, Zone 1(University Road West) and Zone 4(Biology West and Engineering Buildings) are not currently available for evaluation but appropriate archaeological mitigation strategies must be implemented if these zones are affected by the development.

#### **6.Stages of work**

The archaeological evaluation is to consist of excavated trenches on the west car park and on the lawns to the east of the car park as proposed on p12 of the desk-based assessment and indicated on fig 9 of that document:

Trench 1(2mx15m): At the south-east corner of the Phase 1 fort, to sample the defences and to examine the corner of the interior for evidence of a corner tower and any features cut into the rampart fill such as ovens or hearths;

Trench 2(3mx15m): To intercept the outermost ditch of the Phase 1 fort and to test the area outside the fort for evidence of features in the southern annexe;

Trench 3(2mx18m): To intercept the eastern defences of the eastern annexe and to test the area external to the southern annexe for evidence of external defences;

Trench 4(2mx18m): To intercept the eastern side of the possible southern annexe and to examine its interior;

Trench 5(2mx15m): To intercept the southern side of the possible southern annexe and to examine the interior of the annexe.

The exact location of each trench is to be agreed on site with the Planning Archaeologist prior to commencement. It may be necessary to re-locate some trenches to avoid live services. Surface deposits in each trench are to be mechanically removed, under archaeological supervision.

Subsequent excavation is to be entirely manual. Excavation in each trench is to be sufficient to define, record and sample all archaeological features encountered. Feature intersections are to be left intact, so that they can be examined as part of any future large-scale excavation. The potential of deposits for environmental analysis must be assessed. Trenches are to be backfilled at the end of the evaluation. Finds are to be cleaned, marked and bagged, and any remedial conservation work undertaken.

#### **7.Staffing**

The archaeological field evaluation 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 the brief.

### **9. Monitoring**

The archaeological field evaluation must be carried out to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Architecture, Birmingham City Council, and will be monitored on his behalf by the Planning Archaeologist. At least five working days notice of commencement of the evaluation must be given to the Planning Archaeologist, so that monitoring meetings can be arranged.

### **10. Reporting**

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

### **11. Archive deposition**

The written, drawn and photographic records of the archaeological field evaluation must be deposited with an appropriate repository within a reasonable time of completion, following consultation with the Planning Archaeologist.

### **12. 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 summary reports to appropriate national period journals.

**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE  
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

Date prepared: 14 December 1998

Planning Archaeologist: Dr Michael Hodder 0121-303 3161 fax 0121-303 3193  
Birmingham City Council, Baskerville House, Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2NA  
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Fig.1

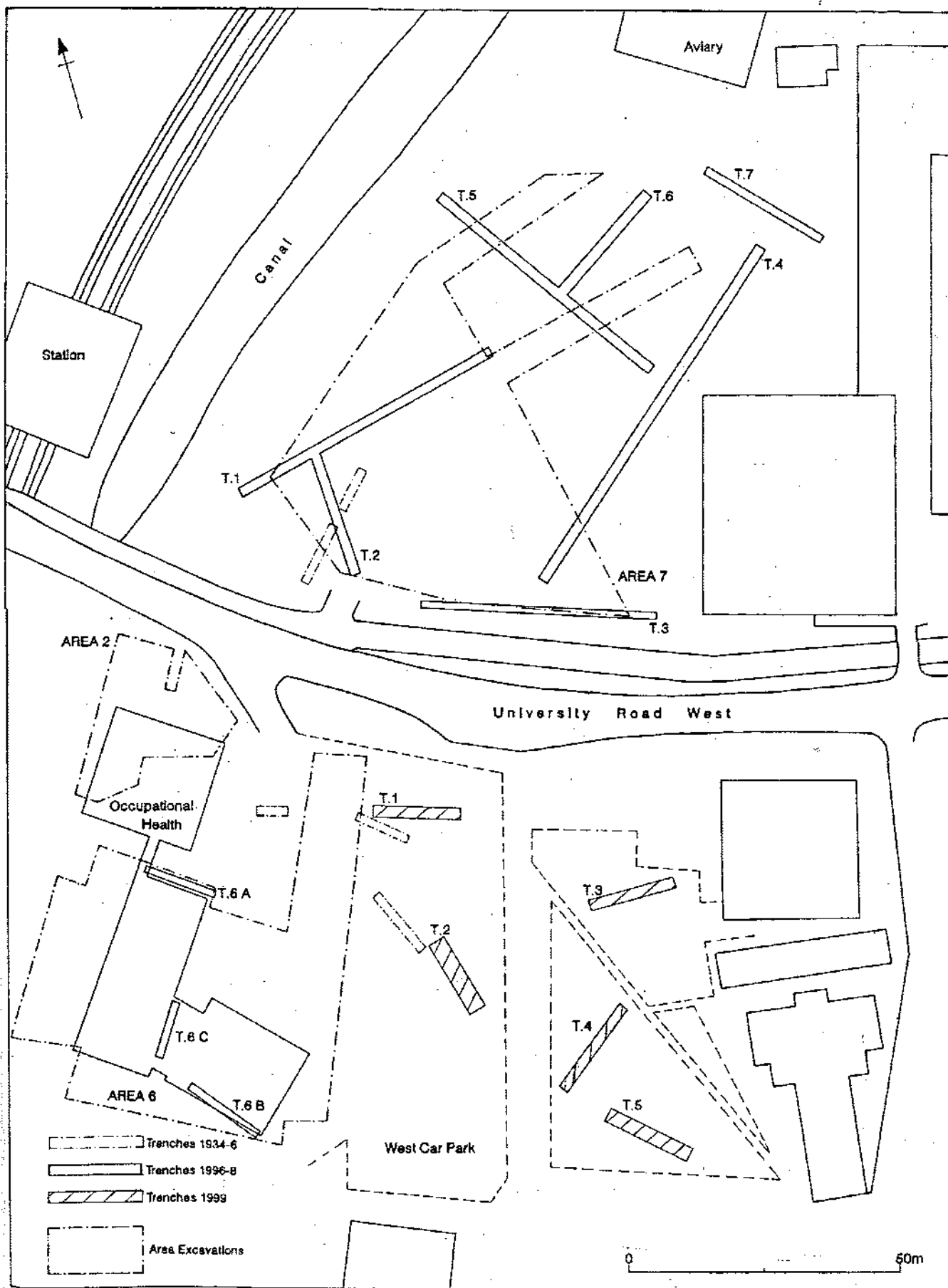


Fig.2

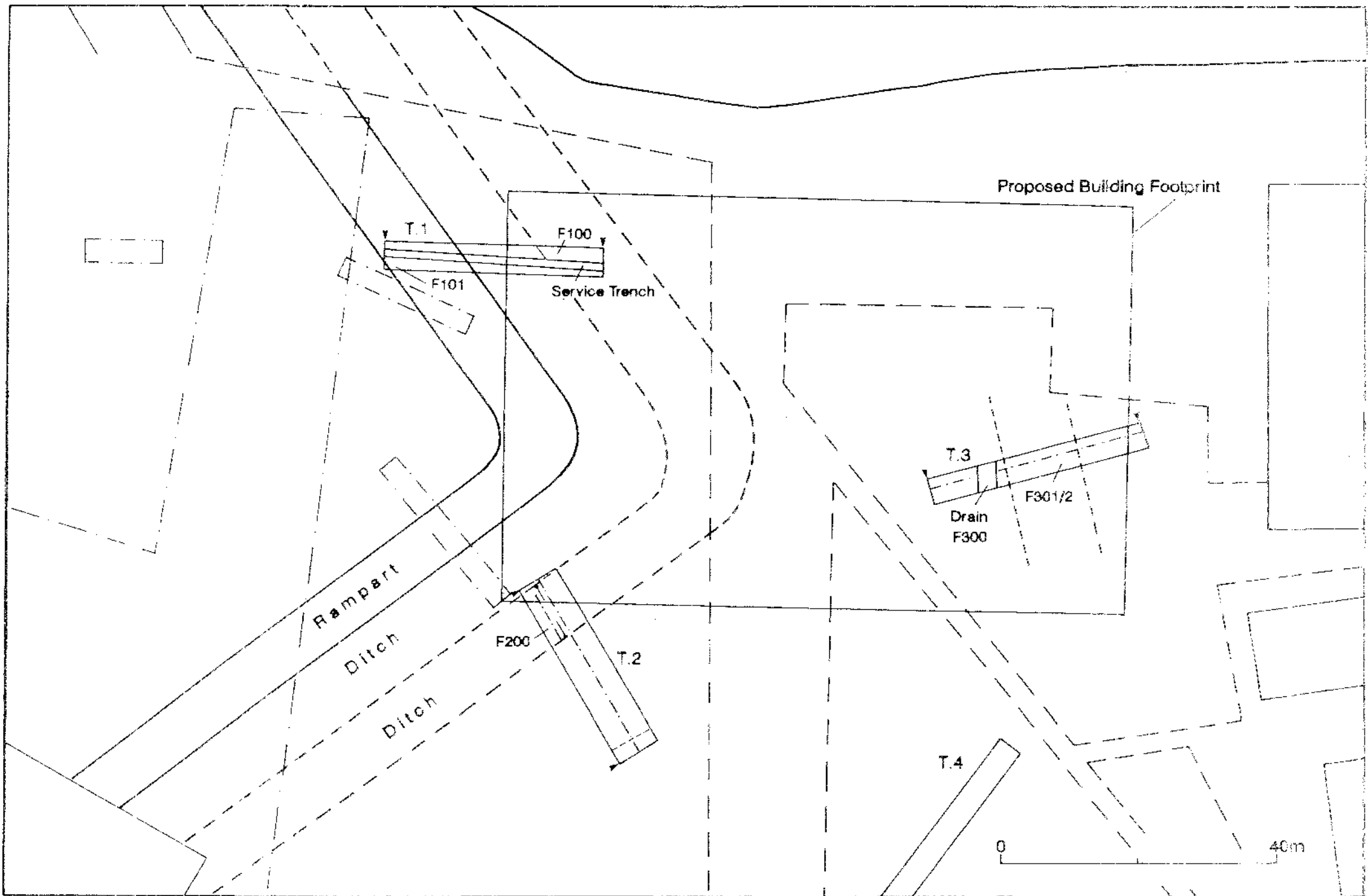


Fig 3



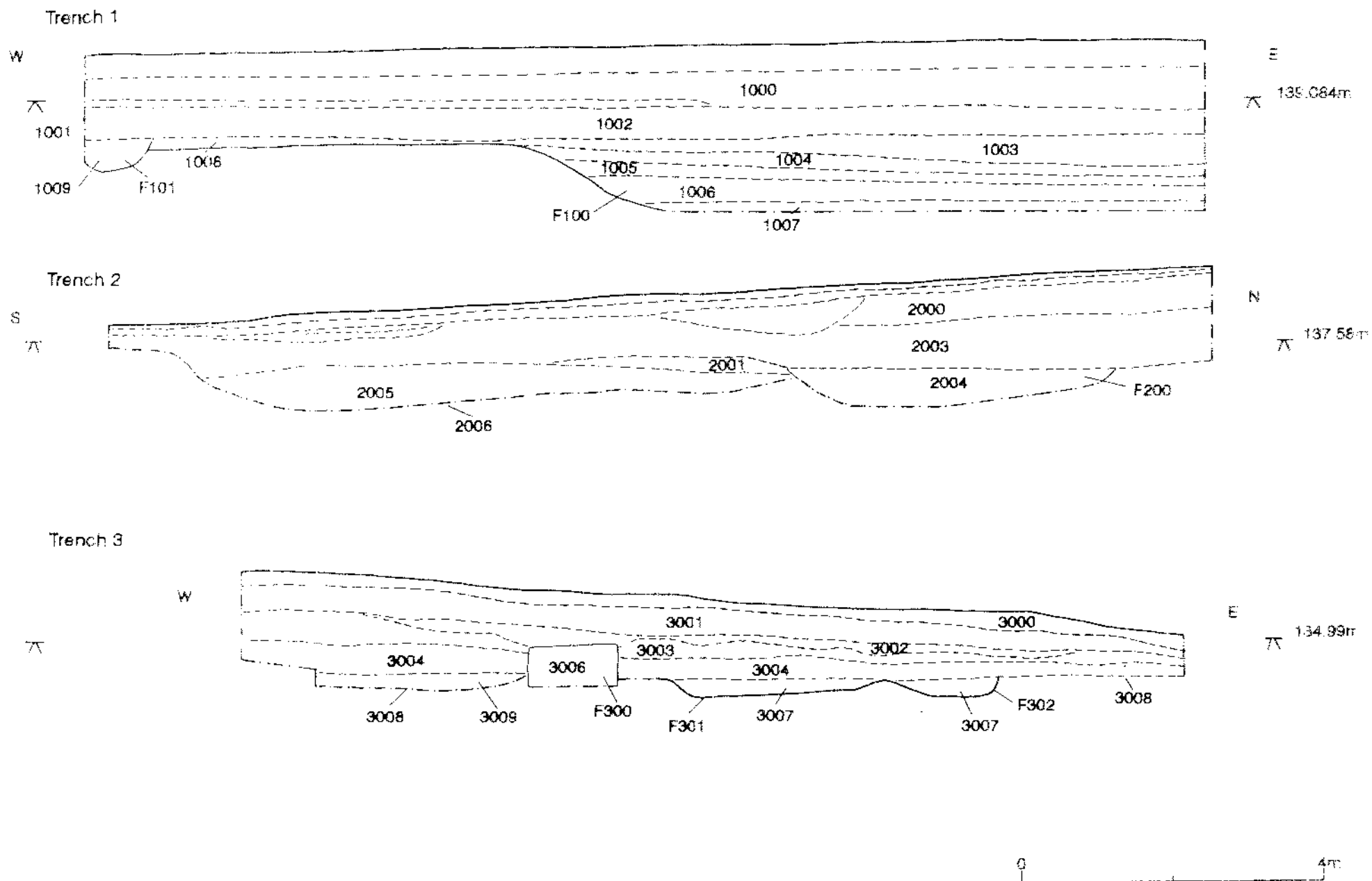


Fig.4

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The archaeological evaluation is to consist of excavated trenches on the west car park and on the lawns to the east of the car park as proposed on p12 of the desk-based assessment and indicated on fig 9 of that document:

Trench 1(2mx15m): At the south-east corner of the Phase 1 fort, to sample the defences and to examine the corner of the interior for evidence of a corner tower and any features cut into the rampart tail such as ovens or hearths;

Trench 2(3mx15m): To intercept the outermost ditch of the Phase 1 fort and to test the area outside the fort for evidence of features in the southern annexe;

Trench 3(2mx18m): To intercept the eastern defences of the eastern annexe and to test the area external to the southern annexe for evidence of external defences;

Trench 4(2mx18m): To intercept the eastern side of the possible southern annexe and to examine its interior;

Trench 5(2mx15m): To intercept the southern side of the possible southern annexe and to examine the interior of the annexe.

The exact location of each trench is to be agreed on site with the Planning Archaeologist prior to commencement. It may be necessary to re-locate some trenches to avoid live services. Surface deposits in each trench are to be mechanically removed, under archaeological supervision.

Subsequent excavation is to be entirely manual. Excavation in each trench is to be sufficient to define, record and sample all archaeological features encountered. Feature intersections are to be left intact, so that they can be examined as part of any future large-scale excavation. The potential of deposits for environmental analysis must be assessed. Trenches are to be backfilled at the end of the evaluation. Finds are to be cleaned, marked and bagged, and any remedial conservation work undertaken.

#### **7.Staffing**

The archaeological field evaluation 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.

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE**

**Proposed Medical Academic Building, University of Birmingham(SP 044836)**

**Design Brief for archaeological field evaluation in advance of consideration of development proposals**

**1.Summary**

*Proposed construction off University Road West, University of Birmingham, may affect buried archaeological remains of a Roman fort, consisting of a possible annexe and outer defensive line. This brief is for the second stage of assessment of the archaeological impact of the proposed development, by means of an archaeological field evaluation consisting of excavated trenches..*

**2.Site location and description**

The site of the proposed Medical Academic Building lies to the south of University Road West. The site is currently occupied by various buildings, a grassed area and a car park, at various levels stepping down to the east.

**3.Planning background**

The proposed development consists of new buildings with associated access and landscaping. Because the site is likely to include archaeological remains which would be affected by the development, an assessment of its archaeological implications is required, in accordance with Policy 8.36 of the City Council's Unitary Development Plan and government advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, "Archaeology and Planning". A field evaluation is required as the next stage of assessment in advance of consideration of development proposals, following a desk-based assessment in December 1998.

**4.Existing archaeological information**

The proposed development site lies just outside the south-east corner of a Roman fort whose extent, the dates of its construction and occupation, and the form of its defences and internal buildings, are known from its representation on early maps and from various excavations undertaken since the 1930s. Excavations in 1967 and 1997 in the area now occupied by the Occupational Health Building and the Public Health Building, to the west of the proposed development, revealed postholes and slots for timber buildings, pits, pebble surfaces, hearths, ovens, a timber-framed rampart and ditches. An archaeological evaluation of the former Genetics Field in 1998, to the north of the proposed development, revealed a hitherto unknown defensive circuit consisting of a ditch parallel to and about 25m east of the defences of the earliest phase of the fort. Other features were found between this ditch and the fort defences. Projected to the south-east, the line of the newly-discovered ditch would extend into the proposed development site. The desk-based assessments for the West Car Park and the Genetics Field drew attention to a possible southern annexe to the fort, mirroring that already known to have existed on its north. This is suggested by an earthwork bank and field boundary shown on historic maps. The field boundary extends onto the proposed development site.

A desk-based archaeological assessment of the proposed development site considered archaeological and documentary evidence and modern service and topographic information and defined four zones, as follows:

**Zone 1(University Road West):** Good survival of the Phase 1 and Phase 3 forts and the eastern annexe defences, including their ramparts, is anticipated under the embankment on which the road is raised.

**Zone 2(West Car Park):** The defences and associated features of the Phase 1 fort and part of the interior of the southern annexe, containing features such as pits, hearths, ovens and buildings which may provide information on the date and function of the annexe, are likely to survive under deep make-up deposits for the car park.