

**Staffordshire University,
Lichfield Campus,
The Friary,
Lichfield**

**An Archaeological
Watching Brief**

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
Project No. 749
September 2000

Staffordshire University, Lichfield Campus, The Friary, Lichfield
An Archaeological Watching Brief

by
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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Staffordshire University, Lichfield Campus, Staffordshire
2000**

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An Archaeological Watching Brief

Staffordshire University, Lichfield Campus, The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire

2000

1.0 Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on Tuesday 12th September 2000 on behalf of Rodgers Leask Limited. The excavation of six trial holes was archaeologically monitored ahead of an application for planning permission for the construction of an extension to the Lichfield Campus of Staffordshire University, The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire (NGR SP 116 091). The location of the development site was in the grounds of Lichfield's former Franciscan Friary and it was thought that groundworks may reveal evidence of the medieval establishment. However, no archaeological features or deposits were identified and no artifacts were recovered.

2.0 Introduction

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out during the excavation of six trial holes prior to an application for planning permission for the construction of an extension to the Lichfield Campus of Staffordshire University, The Friary, Lichfield, Staffordshire (NGR SP 116 091, Fig.1). The archaeological fieldwork was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on behalf of Rodgers Leask Limited. The location of the development site was in the grounds of Lichfield's former Franciscan Friary and it was thought that groundworks may reveal evidence of the medieval establishment. The groundworks were, therefore, to be observed by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Standard Brief For An Archaeological Watching Brief prepared by the Environmental Planning Unit, of Staffordshire County Council (Appendix 1). The guidelines set down in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999) were also followed.

3.0 Site Location (Fig. 1)

The site is currently an open area of grassland bounded to the west by the existing building of Staffordshire University's Lichfield Campus and playing fields. To the north is a tarmac car park and to the east and south are the grounds of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site is close to the location of Lichfield's former Medieval Franciscan Friary. The Friary stood on the west side of Bird Street and St John Street (Fig. 2) and was first

established in 1237. By the time of the Friary's dissolution in August 1538 it had grown into a large institution with a sizeable church located on the northern side of what is now Friary Road. Friary Road was built in the 1920s and follows the south side of the Cloister that was once located on the southern side of the church (VCH 1970). Most of the Friary had been demolished by 1545 with the exception of The Bishop's Lodging which survives today on the corner of St. John Street and Friary Street as part of the Staffordshire University Campus. John Snape's 1781 plan of the city (Fig. 2) shows the remaining buildings of the Friary and three fish ponds lying to the south. The fish ponds are believed to be associated with the Medieval Friary and are shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1882 (not illustrated). The ponds were filled in sometime after that and do not feature on the 1902 edition Ordnance Survey (not illustrated). The site of the larger pond is now occupied by the present Staffordshire University building. The proposed structure will adjoin the existing one to the east in an area shown on the 18th and 19th-century maps as open land.

5.0 Objectives

The objectives of the watching brief were to monitor the excavation of the trial holes in order to identify any archaeological remains uncovered during the course of the work, and to record them to an appropriate level. Sampling and recovery of any contextual evidence which may contribute to an understanding of the archaeological remains within the area was also to take place.

6.0 Method (Fig. 3)

The objectives were achieved through a single site visit on Tuesday 12th September 2000. The groundworks consisted of the mechanical excavation of six trial holes (Fig. 3). Each trial hole was 3m long, 0.5m wide and between 1.9m and 2.3m in depth, excavated with a 0.5m toothed bucket.

All observed deposits were recorded using pre-printed *pro-forma* recording cards for features and contexts, supplemented by scale drawings of sections and plans. Colour-slide and black and white photographs were also taken as appropriate. These records form the site archive which will be deposited with an appropriate local museum.

7.0 Archaeological Results

The groundworks revealed the topsoil (1000) to be a dark brown silty-sand layer between 20-40cm in depth, overlying a clean yellow-red sandy subsoil (1001). No archaeological features were observed nor were any artifacts recovered. The lack of any post-medieval or modern material such as brick or pottery shows that the area has been subject to minimal disturbance in the post-medieval period, and confirms the map information showing the area as open land.

8.0 Acknowledgements

The watching brief was sponsored by Rodgers Leask Limited and was carried out by Chris Patrick of Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit. The report was written by Chris Patrick and edited by Lucie Dingwall. Illustrations were prepared by Mark Breedon. The project was managed for BUFAU by Lucie Dingwall. Thanks are due to Mr Ian Bradley of Rodgers Leask Limited for commissioning the project.

9.0 Reference

(VCH) 1970 Staffordshire Vol. III.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The objective of this Brief is to establish a framework which is acceptable to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), acting on the advice of the County Archaeological Officer (CAO), within which a watching brief may be carried out.
- 1.2 The watching brief will be conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), drawn up by a professional archaeological contractor, to be agreed between the Developer and the Local Planning Authority, and in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994).
- 1.3 Any variation in the WSI will be agreed in advance by the developer and the LPA.

2.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains.
- 2.2 To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme.
- 2.3 To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 The archaeological contractor is asked to design a programme of monitoring and recording to be carried out during those stages of development involving substantial ground disturbance. The project should include the following as appropriate:
 1. Soil and overburden stripping under archaeological supervision;
 2. Inspection of sub-soil for archaeological features;
 3. The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits;
 4. Sub-soil stripping under archaeological supervision;
 5. Examination of any service and foundation trenches and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits;
 6. Examination of spoil-heaps for archaeological material;
 7. A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.
- 3.2 If necessary, arrangements shall be made for development to be interrupted for reasonable periods in order that satisfactory records might be made.
- 3.3 If finds are located of a significance beyond that which might have been anticipated before the development began, development shall cease where they might be disturbed in order that provision for their adequate recording or preservation may be made in consultation with the LPA or personnel nominated by them. Contingency provisions should be made within the programme of work for this.

- 3.4 The developer shall afford access to the development site for the purposes of archaeological monitoring to officers of the LPA or personnel nominated by them at all reasonable times upon compliance with the requirements of health and safety.
- 3.5 The developer shall give the LPA or personnel nominated by them at least ten days' notice in writing of the commencement of the development, and shall keep them informed of the progress of the watching brief during the period in which it is carried out.
- 3.6 The project archive shall be compiled in accordance with the guidelines contained in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (UKIC, 1990), and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission, 1992)
- 3.7 The archaeological contractor should agree all on-site working practices with the developer at the earliest opportunity and identify those elements of the construction programme requiring time for recording.
- 3.8 The project should also attempt to place the project findings into their historical and geographical context through cartographic and documentary research.
- 3.9 The project should be conducted by an archaeological organisation working in accordance with the By-laws of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Archaeologists working on the project should not attempt tasks outside of their areas of competence.

4.0 CONTENTS OF WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the IFA (see above), this design brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) or project specification is required, therefore, in order to provide the basis for a measurable standard and for submission by the developer to the LPA for approval.
- 4.2 The WSI should be prepared by a professional archaeological consultant and should:
1. provide details of the senior project staff, all specialist sub-contractors and the intended on-site archaeologists (CVs may be requested); the on-site supervisor must have fieldwork experience equivalent to at least that required for Associate membership of IFA.
 2. include an archaeological 'method statement' detailing the techniques, systems and procedures to be employed;
 3. a detailed and comprehensive schedule of all development-related works which are to be monitored (this should be accompanied by an annotated site plan);
 4. identify intended location for long-term deposition of project archive;
 5. demonstrate that the recording work will be undertaken in accordance with all relevant health and safety legislation (including CDM).

5. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DEPOSITION OF ARCHIVE

- 5.1 A report on the results obtained should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and personnel nominated by them within 8 weeks of the completion of site work. This should include consideration of:
1. the aims and methods adopted in the course of the recording
 2. the nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any archaeological and environmental material uncovered

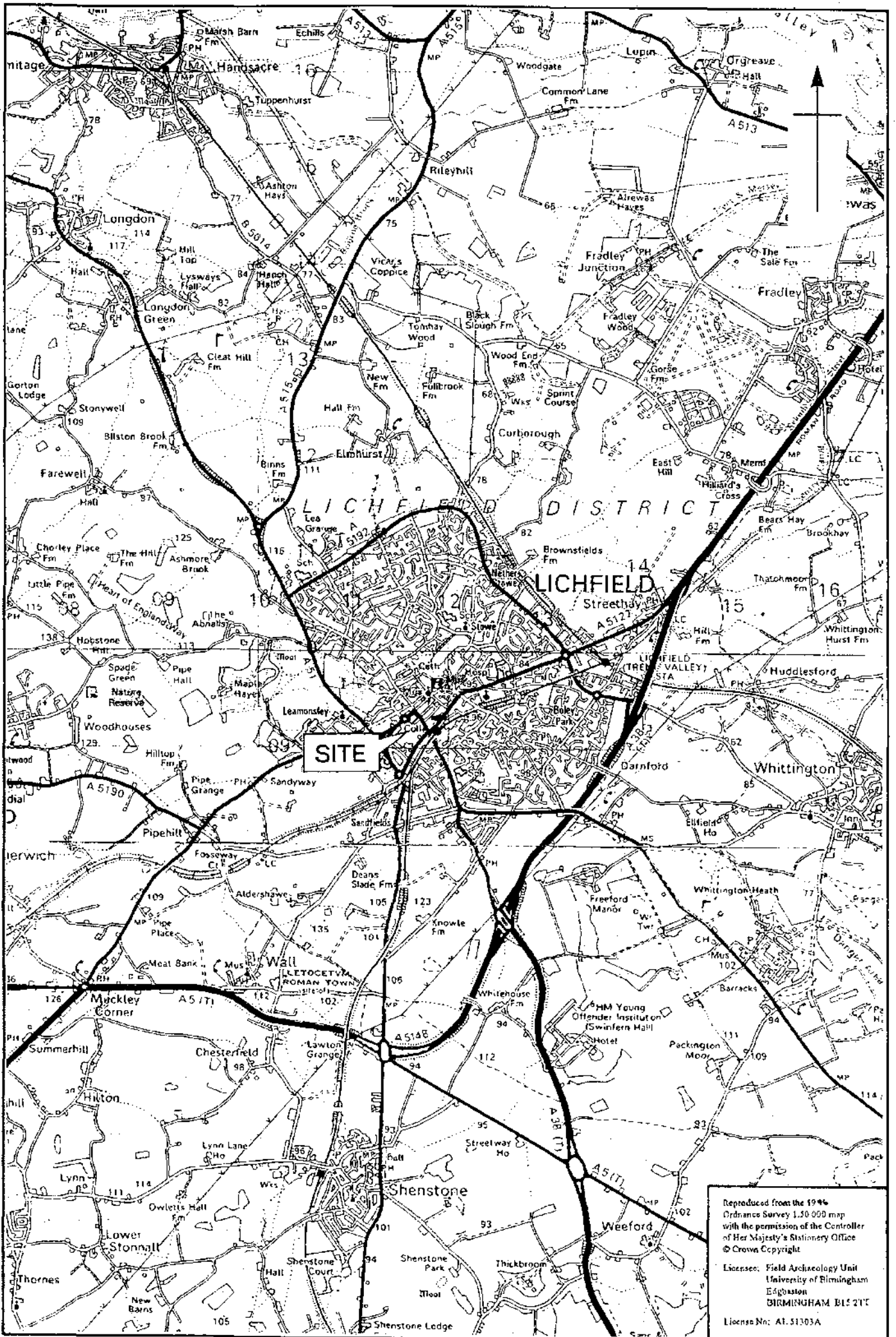
3. the anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits and structures on the site not disturbed by development - surviving areas of archaeological potential should be indicated on the site plan
4. appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings at an appropriate scale and photographs. All plans, sections, etc., created during the watching brief will be related to Ordnance Survey datum levels and their relation to the National Grid referencing system shall be made clear.
5. summary of results
6. description of the archive and the location for its long-term deposition
7. non-technical summary

If significant remains are recorded during the project, then it may be necessary to undertake a full programme of analysis and publication in accordance with the guidelines contained in English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*. If this is the case, then a timetable and programme of work for this aspect of the project will need to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for agreement.

- 5.2 The post excavation work shall be carried out immediately on completion of site investigations. The site archive shall be prepared in accordance with established professional guidelines.
- 5.3 The written and illustrated report of the watching brief shall be copied to:
 - i) the client
 - ii) the County Council
 - iii) the National Monuments Record
- 5.4 The archive and finds, including a copy of the watching brief report, shall be deposited at an appropriate museum, such as the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent (see 2.3 above). The museum guidelines regarding the acceptance of such material should be taken into account. The recipient museum shall be informed in advance of the date when the watching brief is to commence.
- 5.5 The written report will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Sites and Monuments Record, within six months of completion. The AFC shall also submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal *West Midlands Archaeology* within 6 months of the completion of the fieldwork.

If you wish to comment on the contents of this brief or require additional information, then please contact Vicky Seddon at the address below:

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Fig.1

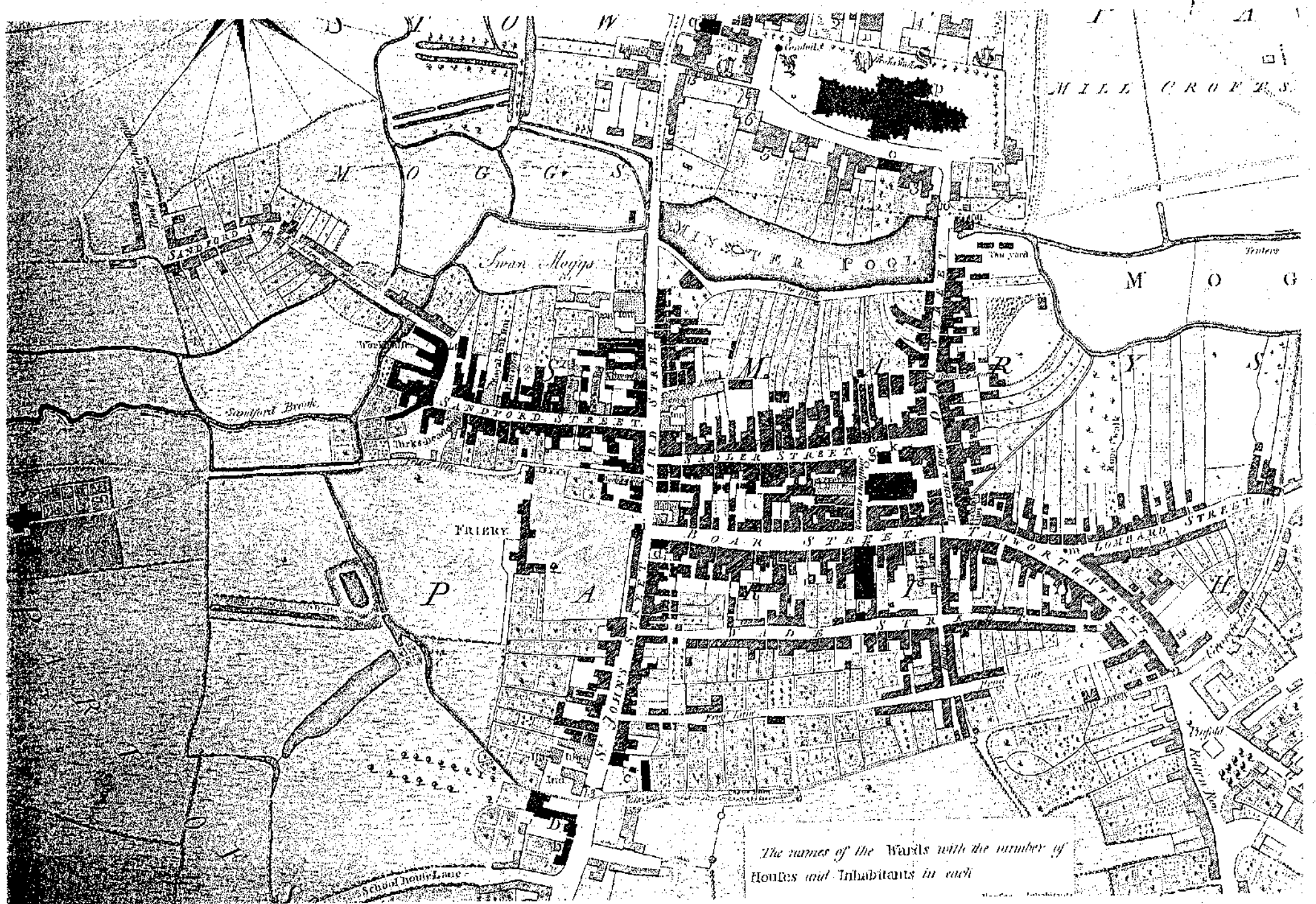


Fig.2

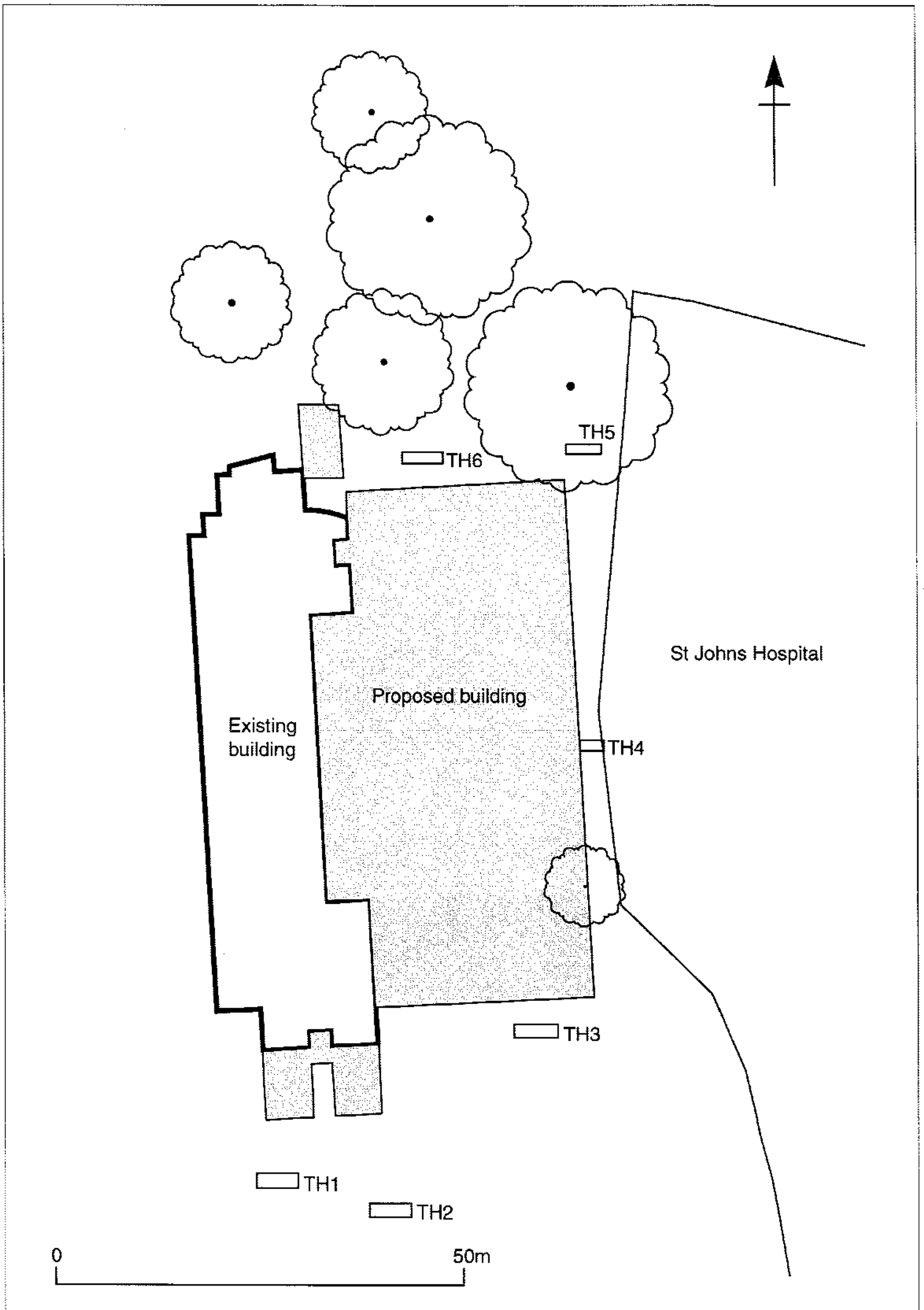


Fig. 23