

**Camp Cottage, Camp  
Hill, Greensforge,  
Staffordshire**

**An Archaeological  
Evaluation 2001**

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Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
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by  
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# **Camp Cottages, Camp Hill, Greensforge, Staffordshire**

## **An Archaeological Evaluation 2001**

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# **Camp Cottages, Camp Hill, Greensforge, Staffordshire**

## **An Archaeological Evaluation 2001**

### **1.0: SUMMARY**

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit at Camp Cottage, Camp Hill, Greensforge, Staffordshire (centred on NGR SO 858888). The work was undertaken on behalf of the landowner, in advance of proposals for re-siting the adjoining Camp Cottage. Although the area investigated by trial-trenching lies close to the known extent of a Roman settlement and road, no features or finds of Roman date were encountered. An archaeological watching brief during construction groundworks may be recommended by the County Archaeological Officer.

### **2.0: INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out at Camp Cottage, Camp Hill, Greensforge, Staffordshire (centred on NGR SO 858888, Figs. 1-3). The work was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on behalf of the landowner, Mrs J. Farndon, following a requirement for an archaeological evaluation in advance of a proposed residential development, in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16. The archaeological evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluations, a Brief prepared by Staffordshire County Council (Staffordshire County Council 2000), and a Specification prepared by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU 2000) and approved by Staffordshire County Council.

The site (Fig. 3) evaluated by means of a single trial-trench, in the area of the proposed relocated Camp Cottage, is situated slightly to the east of the existing build. It presently comprises an arable field of close cropped grass, sloping down to a small brook which defines the northeastern boundary of the proposed development (Fig. 2). The sites' southwestern boundary consists of a tarmacadam drive, and the Camp Hill Road frontage.

The early Roman military complex at Greensforge has been mapped extensively by aerial photography (e.g. Welfare and Swan 1995, Fig. 2), and by limited field investigation. The military complex presently comprises a number of permanent military enclosures, termed forts, as well as more temporary enclosures termed marching camps, these latter predominantly located on the western bank of the Smestow Brook. To the south of Camp Hill Road lay an associated Roman settlement, represented by a surface scatter of Roman finds, and by ditches, pits and post-holes identified during trial-trenching in 1994 (Jones 1999). The mapped course of the Roman road to the northwest of Greensforge could not be identified by the trial-trenching. The 1994 trial-trenching also included a single trench located approximately 25-30m to the southeast of the proposed new dwelling (Jones 1995).

The aims of the evaluation were to:

- 1) To define the nature, extent and significance of any archaeological remains within the site in order to permit the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy, if necessary.
- 2) To provide particular information concerning the extent, survival and significance of any Roman settlement features, and the research potential of any recovered settlement data, artifactual evidence and associated environmental material, within the proposed new build.

The trial-trench excavated in the footprint of the proposed relocated Camp Cottage was intended to test the potential for a possible northward continuation of the Roman settlement investigated to the south of Camp Hill Road, perhaps even including peripheral features such as human burials. It was also thought possible that a Roman road could lie within, or immediately adjoining the site of the new Camp Cottage.

A single trial-trench measuring 16m by 1.2m was located mainly within the footprint of the proposed development. A tracked mini-digger equipped with a toothless ditching bucket working under archaeological supervision was used to remove the overburden, to expose any archaeological features present. The machined horizon was cleaned by hand and all archaeological, or possible archaeological features were tested by hand-excavation, to identify their original profiles, and to recover artifacts for dating purposes.

All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeological deposits were present. Contextual information was supplemented with scale drawings, plans, sections and photographs. Subject to approval from the landowner it is proposed to deposit the archive with Stoke on Trent Museum.

### **3.0: RESULTS (Figs. 3-4)**

The single trial-trench was aligned northeast-southwest. The natural subsoil, a grey-orange gravel (1004) was located at between 0.2m and 1.2m below the modern ground surface. An overlying heavily charcoal flecked orange brown sand (1003), located at a depth of 0.20m at the southwestern end of the trench was disturbed by the roots of an adjoining line of coniferous trees. The northeastern end of the trench sloped downhill towards a small brook to the northeast, and here the subsoil was found at a depth of 1.2m below the modern ground surface.

In the northeastern end of the trench was a layer of post-medieval levelling activity comprising dark black loam (1001) overlying layer 1003. A small pit (F1), was partly located within the trench. Approximately 1m in diameter, 0.10m in depth and cut through the topsoil, into the subsoil, this shallow feature was found to contain a large number of soft drinks cans and other modern material (1002). The upper backfill of this feature was similar to the topsoil (1000) from which it derived.

No other features or deposits could be identified despite hand-cleaning of the machined surface, and the trial-trench baulks. No artifacts of Roman date were collected with the exception of a heavily abraded sherd of possibly Roman date.

A scan of the few sherds from layer 1001 suggests a date from the 17-18<sup>th</sup> century. This material may have derived from manuring scatters.

#### **4.0: DISCUSSION**

Only one feature (F1) was identified, probably of modern date. Layer 1001 would seem to indicate late post-medieval or modern levelling of the area towards its northern side, towards the brook, sometime in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. No evidence of any Roman activity was found.

Similarly, the nearby trial-trench (4) dug in 1994 (Jones 1995, 10) did not identify any features or deposits of Roman date. The results of the two trenches, taken together, could indicate that the area of the proposed new dwelling lies outside the northern limit of the Roman settlement.

#### **5.0: IMPLICATIONS AND PROPOSALS**

Although no evidence of Roman activity was observed in the trial-trench, the location of the proposed relocated Camp Cottage in relation to nearby Roman forts, the possible course of the Roman road and the Roman settlement on the southern side of Camp Hill Road indicates that there may be a possibility of surviving Roman features elsewhere within the footprint of the proposed development. Such features could include human remains, and the County Archaeological Officer may for this reason recommend the maintenance of an archaeological watching brief to monitor construction groundworks, and record any features of archaeological interest.

#### **6.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The field work was undertaken by Jon Sterenberg and Charlotte Nielson. The report was edited by Alex Jones and the illustrations were undertaken by Jon Sterenberg and Nigel Dodds. Many thanks to Mrs Farndon for her interest and for her supply of coffee, and to Catharine Mould at BUFAU for her assistance.

## 7.0: REFERENCES

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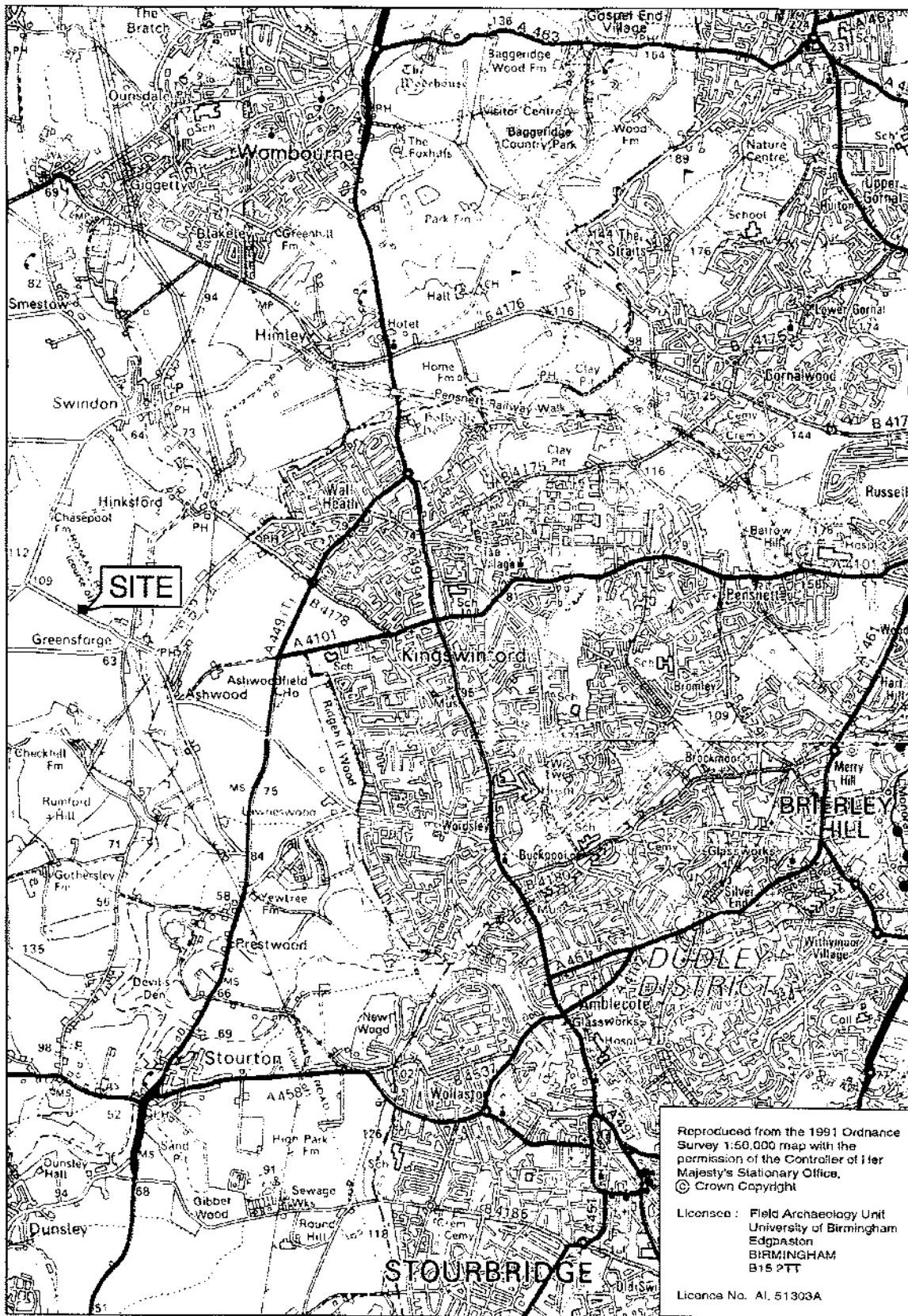


Fig.1

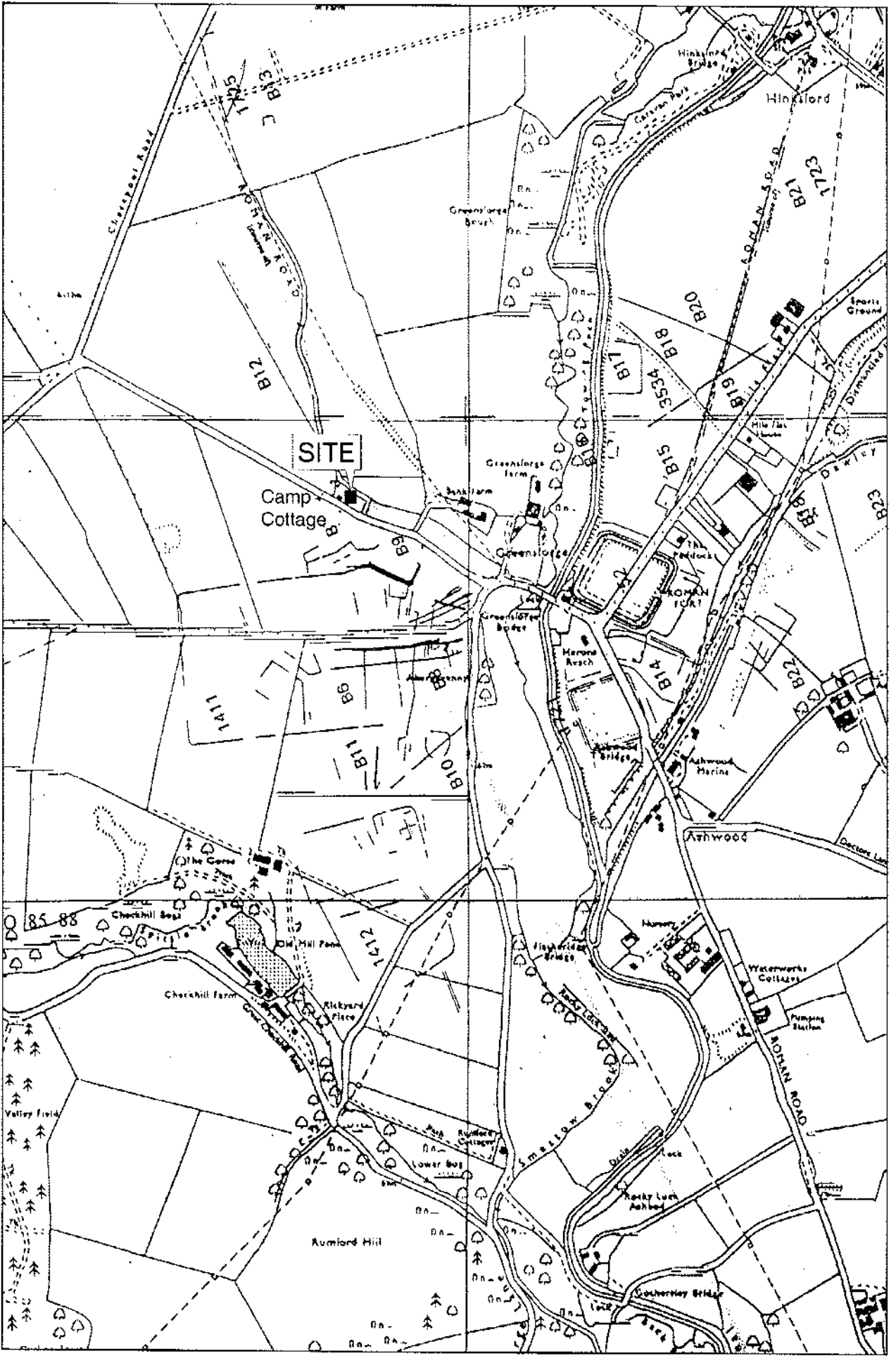


Fig.2

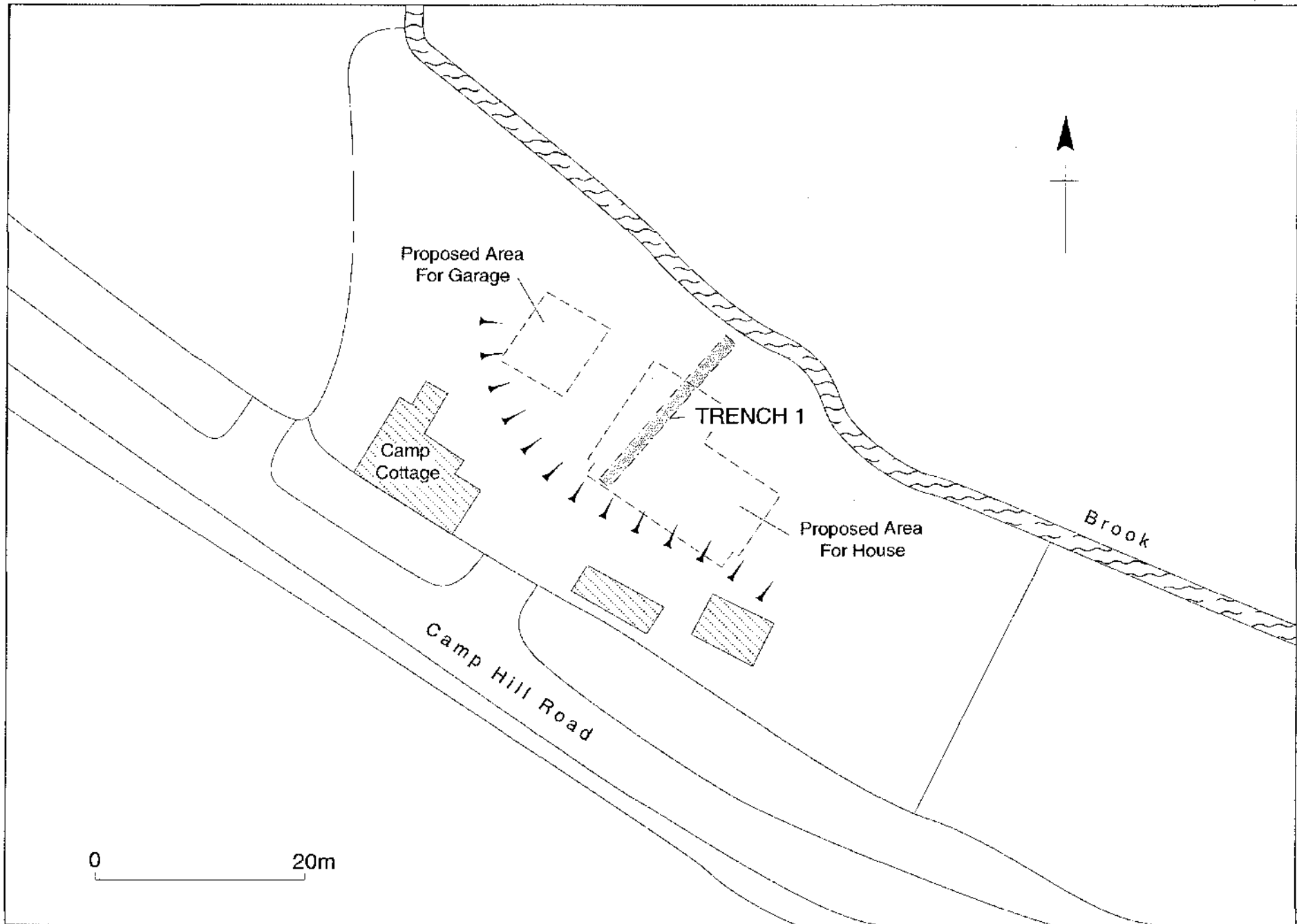


Fig.3

# Southeast Facing Section

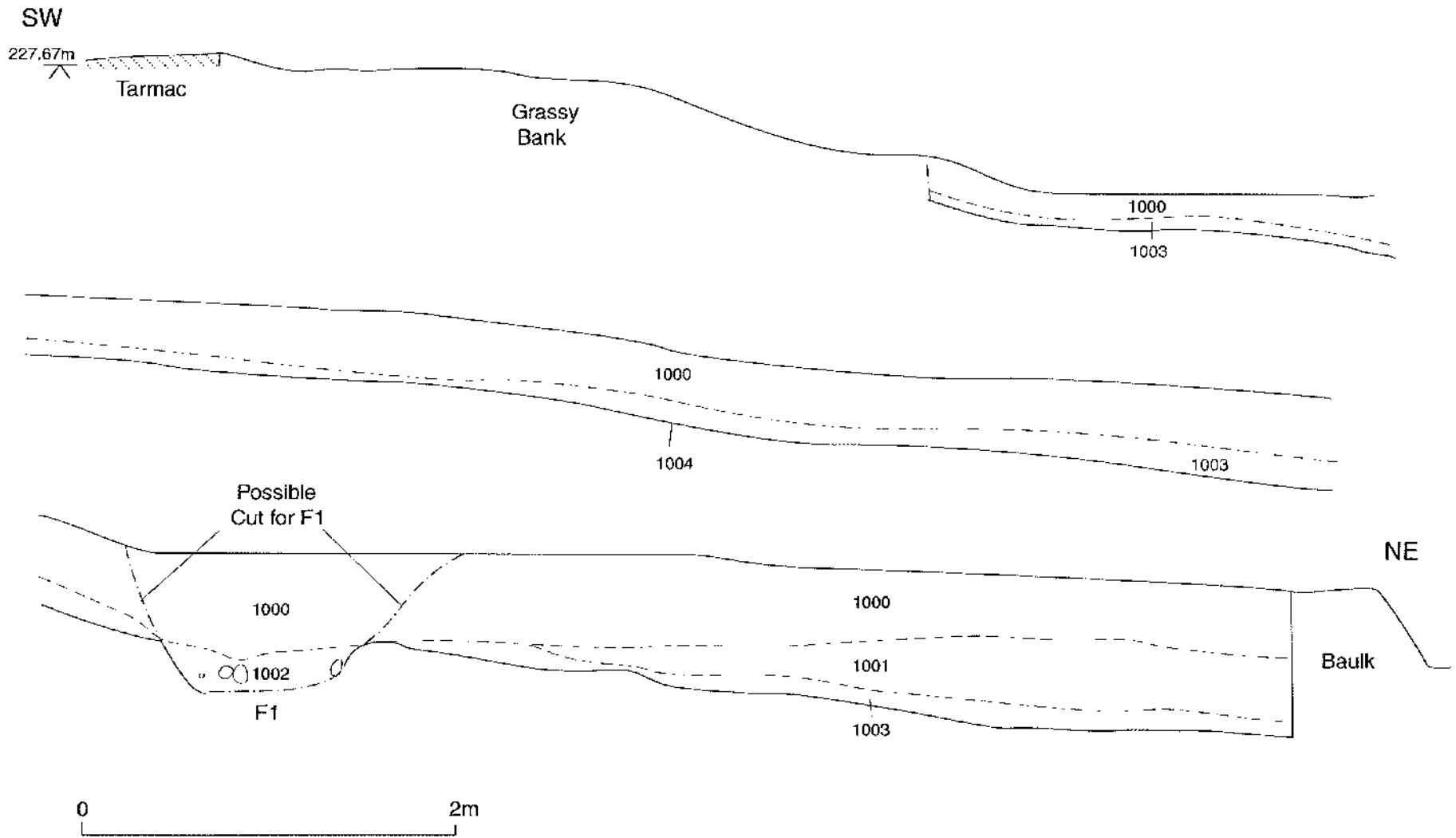


Fig.4