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THE UNIVERSITY
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Tally-Ho! Sports Club, Edgbaston, Birmingham

An Archaeological Evaluation of Edgbaston Mill

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

REGISTERED IFA ORGANISATION
Institute of Field Archaeologists

THE QUEEN'S ANNIVERSARY PRIZES
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION
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March 2001

Tally-Ho! Sports Club, Edgbaston Birmingham
An Archaeological Evaluation of Edgbaston Mill

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1.0 Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in March 2001, on behalf of David Lock Associates, on the former Tally-Ho! Sports Club grounds, Edgbaston Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham (NGR SP 065840) ahead of a proposed development of the land. The site had been identified as the site of Edgbaston Mill, which had originally been recorded in 1231/2, rebuilt by 1843 and demolished about 1920. The evaluation aimed to locate any remains of the earlier mill and to show the extent and state of preservation of the later mill.

Two trenches were excavated, one centred on the northern wall of the later mill, and the second to locate the southern wall. Trench 1 located the northern and eastern walls of the 18th-century mill. The northern wall contained the axle hole for the waterwheel, and a wheel pit was exposed inside the walls, presumably for the pit wheel. The eastern 18th-century wall had been fronted by a 19th-century wall. A cobbled yard surface and two later walls were located to the north. These probably would have been associated with the 19th-century mill building. A bone hairbrush was found, although not from a dateable context.

Trench 2 located the southern and eastern walls of the 18th-century mill building. The southern wall contained the external hole for the waterwheel, and again the wheel pit for the pit wheel was located inside the structure. The 18th-century walls were again fronted/strengthened by later walls, with the southern later wall containing the axle hole. A brick sluice was revealed to the south of the building and other later walls were located in the trench, although these are likely to be associated with agricultural use in the late 19th-century. Internal floors and features were not located in either trench due to the height of the water table. The buildings had been backfilled, presumably when they were demolished. The walls of the buildings are located just below the present ground surface and the state of preservation of the walls was excellent.

2.0 Introduction

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken in the grounds of the former Tally Ho! Sports Club in Edgbaston, Birmingham. The work was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on behalf of David Lock Associates ahead of a proposed development by Calthorpe Estates. The site had already been assessed and identified as a zone of potential archaeological survival (Demidowicz 1990). The evaluation was carried out in advance of planning permission being granted for the proposed development. This procedure is in line with government guidance (Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, Department of the Environment 1991) and the City Council's planning policies.

The archaeological evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994), a Design Brief prepare by Birmingham City Council (Hodder, 1999) and a specification prepared by BUFAU.

3.0 Site Description and Location (Fig. 1)

The site is centred on NGR SP 065840 (Fig. 1) south of Edgbaston County Cricket Ground. The Tally Ho! Grounds are bounded by the police-training centre to the south and west, Queens Ride and the River Rea to the east and Edgbaston Road to the north. The site previously contained the Tally-Ho! Sports Club, which consisted of bowling greens, tennis courts, a clubhouse and several pavilions. These buildings were recently demolished and the site is now derelict.

4.0 Archaeological Background

The documentary evidence for the mill has been previously researched in detail (Demidowicz 1990), so only a brief summary is given here.

Edgbaston Mill was constructed in the Medieval period to grind corn for the manor of Edgbaston, and was owned by the lords of Edgbaston who leased it to tenants. It was first recorded in 1231-2, when it was burgled, and then in 1495, when part of the River Rea was granted to the lord of the manor.

The mill is first described in detail in 1700 as having "four water corne mills", and ten years later as having five, although it is assumed this means five sets of stones within the one mill. The waterwheel was recorded in 1783, measuring 7ft 6in in diameter and 8ft 9in in width. The grinding stones were 4ft in diameter, revolving about 110 times an hour and creating five bushels of corn an hour.

In 1787, Snape's survey of Edgbaston showed a complex of buildings constituting the mill. These straddled two channels of the headrace which were separated by an island, and allowed the mill to run two water wheels. The headrace was fed directly from the Rea and Bourn Brook, with a side race taking excess and storm water across weirs to the north. This made the mill a substantial building which would have reflected its manorial status, and lack of competition in the surrounding area. This complex of buildings is still evident on the 1829 plan of Edgbaston.

An 1843 map shows that the mill had by then been reduced to a pair of buildings: a narrow rectangular mill building, and an almost square dwelling house, perhaps originally L-shaped. The mill would have reverted to one waterwheel at this time, with the northern of the two channels being infilled. These buildings are still shown on the 1890 1st edition OS map. The waterwheel was recorded in 1867 as being 12ft in diameter

and 12ft in width, with an iron pit wheel and wallower. The spur wheel was iron and wood, which was normal practice by this time (Watts 2000), powering four sets of stones. The mill machinery consisted of a standard sack hoist system, a dressing machine, a bran machine and a smut mill.

The mill was converted to agricultural use, as corn-grinding mills were made obsolete by the development of threshing machines (Watts 2000) in about 1880, with the mill building extended considerably in plan on a 1904 map. This also shows that the head and side races had been infilled by this time. The buildings are referred to as Edgbaston Mill Farm on the 1913 OS map of Moseley. The mill building was demolished between 1916 and 1925, as the land became a bowling green. The mill dwelling survived as a tennis clubhouse, with a wooden pavilion built on its rear in about 1927. This was demolished with the closure of the Tally Ho! Sports Club in the early 1990s

5.0 Objectives

The proposed development is likely to disturb below-ground remains of the mill. As the location and history of the mill have already been established, the evaluation aimed to define the state of preservation of the remains and to establish relationships between the earlier and later phases of the mill, so that requirements for *in situ* preservation or further investigation could be assessed.

6.0 Methodology (Fig. 2)

Two trenches were excavated on the site of Edgbaston Mill. Trench 1, measuring 7m by 2m, was centred on the north wall of the latest mill building, in order to assess the relationship between the latest mill and the preceding mill, which was to the north. Trench 2, measuring 5m by 5m, was centered on the south wall of the latest mill building, in order to locate the external axle hole of the mill wheel, the wheel pit and any internal floors. Both trenches were excavated to 1.2m at which depth the water table was reached.

The layers of modern overburden were removed with the use of a JCB, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision, until archaeological deposits were encountered. Subsequent excavation was carried out by hand, and environmental samples were taken from features where appropriate. Recording was carried out using pre-printed *pro-forma* record cards for contexts and features, supplemented by plans and sections (at 1:20) and monochrome print and colour slide photography. These form part of the archive, which is currently stored at BUFAU.

7.0 Results

Trench 1 (Figs. 2-4, Plates 1-3)

Level at top of trench: 111.29m AOD (north), 111.34m AOD (south)

Trench 1 was on a north-south alignment over the northern wall of the mill building. The trench measured 2.4m by 6.8m. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.5m, the water table was reached at 1.1m. The natural ground surface was not located due to the height of the water table.

A brick wall (1019) was located at a depth of 0.1m below the present ground surface and running along the eastern side of the trench. The wall was 5.5m long and 0.48m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.93m (11 courses), although the base was not reached. At its northern edge, 1019 was bonded with an east-west aligned brick wall (1018) which dissected the trench approximately 1.4m from the northern edge. This wall was 2.2m long and 0.48m wide and was excavated to a depth of 1.5m (17 courses). The eastern side of a brick arch was observed within 1018. The archway was 0.9m from the eastern edge of the wall, and observed at a depth of 0.6m. The archway has a curved top and straight sides but the full width or depth could not be recorded. Bonded with 1018 at a depth of 1.1m was a north-south brick wall (1017) which was 1.3m long and 0.23m wide at the top. The wall sloped slightly to the west, and the bricks along this face were extremely worn. No more than two courses were exposed. All three walls were constructed using clamped, frogless red bricks, measuring 2½" in depth and bonded with a yellowish lime-based mortar. The walls were constructed in a variation of the English Garden Wall bond. The north side of 1018 has a more classic version of the English Garden Wall bond.

Lying over 1017 was a north-south brick wall (1015), approximately 0.45m in length and 0.23m in width, This was bonded with an east-west brick wall (1016), approximately 0.5m in length and 0.35m in width. Both these walls only consisted of one course. They were constructed with clamped, frogless red bricks, measuring 2¾" in depth and bonded with a yellowish lime-based mortar. A 0.1m-thick layer of lime-based mortar (1014) butted against the walls where they joined. Filling the area to the west of 1019 and south of 1018, a mid-brown soft silt layer (1005) was recorded at a depth of 0.9m. This layer contained rubble and brick fragments as well as some 18th/19th-century pottery and a bone hairbrush.

Over 1015, 1016 and 1005, and butted against 1019 and 1018 a 0.15-0.2m thick layer of lime-based 'concrete' (1013) was recorded. This consisted of a white lime-based mortar containing pebbles and brick fragments. This 'concrete' housed a north-south brick wall (1012), running along the eastern side of 1019 and butting against the southern face of 1018. The wall was approximately 5m long, 0.23m wide and 0.7m deep (9 courses) and made from clamped, frogless red bricks of differing sizes. The wall was bonded with a whitish lime-based mortar and constructed in a stretcher bond with headers at the top and bottom courses.

The area to the south of 1018 and to the west of 1012 had been backfilled with two levelling layers (1003 and 1002), consisting of brick, rubble, ash and clinker with some 19th/20th-century pottery

A north-south brick wall (1011) butted up against the northern face of 1018 and bisected the trench north of 1018. The wall was constructed from clamped, frogless red bricks, measuring between 2½-3" in depth and bonded with a pinkish lime-based mortar. The wall was approximately 1.3m in length, 0.23m wide and excavated to a depth of 1.1m (10 courses, although the bottom was not reached). Again, an English Garden Wall bond was used in the construction of the wall. Butted up against this wall was a cobbled surface (1008) with stones measuring between 0.03m and 0.3m in diameter. These were held in a brown silty matrix (1009).

Another north-south brick wall (1010) butted against the northern face of 1018 on the western side of the trench. This was made with a variety of clamped, frogless red bricks held in a concrete mortar. The wall was 1.4m long, 0.23m wide and 0.8m deep (10 courses). It was poorly constructed in a stretcher bond with headers as the top and base courses. The space in between 1011 and 1010 was infilled with a loose brick and rubble fill containing 19th and 20th-century pottery. Cut through 1007, 1008, 1009, 1010, 1011 was a modern pipe trench (1006), although wall 1010 had been reconstructed over the top of the pipe, so this wall could have still been in use when the pipe was laid.

The entire trench was capped with a gravel and mortar levelling layer (1001) and a layer of tarmac (1000).

Trench 2 (Figs. 2 and 5, Plates 4-6)

Level at top of trench: 111.36 AOD (northwest), 110.67 AOD (southeast)

Trench 2 was centered on the southern wall of the latest mill building. The trench was roughly square, the northern side measuring 5.4m in length, the eastern side 5.6m, the southern side 5.3m and the western side 4.5m. The trench was excavated to a depth of 1.3m. The natural ground surface was not reached due to the height of the water table.

A brick wall (2006) on an east-west alignment was uncovered on the northern side of the trench. This wall was 5.7m long and 0.36m wide and excavated to a depth of 1m (13 courses). The wall was constructed in a variation of the English Garden Wall bond and made of clamped, frogless red bricks, 2½" high, held in a yellowish lime-based mortar. The wall had an opening, 2m from the western edge of the trench, approximately 1.1m wide and 0.8 m deep. A 1.2m by 0.8m sondage was excavated on the northern side of the opening to reveal the internal facing. This revealed another north-south brick wall (2011), 0.4m north of 2006 and located at a depth of 0.9m below the present ground surface. The wall was 0.9m long, 0.18m wide and 0.24m (3 courses) deep (not fully exposed). It was constructed with clamped, frogless red bricks, 2½" high and bonded with a yellowish lime-based mortar. One piece of sandstone capped the wall at the

western end. The space between 2006 and 2011 was filled with a clean red clay (2014) which contained no finds.

Brick wall 2006 was bonded at its eastern end with a north-south aligned brick wall (2015) which was 1.2m long, 0.48m wide and excavated to a depth of 1m (13 courses). Again, this was constructed in an English Garden Wall Bond style, using clamped, frogless red bricks, 2½" high and bonded with a yellowish lime-based mortar. This wall was on the same alignment as brick wall 1019 in Trench 1, with a space of 6.1m between them.

A brick wall (2008) had been constructed against 2006. This wall measured 5.7m in length, 0.1m in width and had been excavated to a depth of 1m. This wall had been constructed in a stretcher bond with clamped, frogless red bricks, 3" high. This wall also had an opening, in the same place as 2006, 1.1m wide and 0.6m deep, and contained a line of two or three crumbled and worn bricks through the courses of the wall, about 1.5m from the western end. The opening in 2006 and 2008 had been blocked up by a brick wall (2010). This was 1.1m long, 0.1m wide and 0.6m deep (7 courses) and built with a stretcher bond. Clamped, frogless red bricks, 3" high, had been used in the construction.

Butted against the southern side of 2008, at its western end, was a north-south aligned brick construction (2005), 3.1m long, 1m wide and 0.6m high (bottom not reached). This consisted of a wall stepping out slightly to the east, with a two course wall at the top. This was constructed using various-sized clamped, frogless red bricks held with a whitish lime-based mortar. The bricks in this structure were slightly water-worn. Another north-south brick wall (2016) had been constructed over 2005. This was a poorly constructed wall, 3.1m long, 0.22m wide and 0.86m high (8 courses). Again, 2016 was constructed from clamped, frogless red bricks, between 3 and 3½" high and bonded with a pinkish lime-based mortar.

Built up against 2015, and butted against 2006 was a north-south brick wall (2009), 1.2m long and 0.48m wide. Bonded with 2009 was a northeast-southwest aligned brick wall (2017), 1.6m long and 0.36m wide. The elevation of the walls was not exposed, but clamped, frogless red bricks, held in a pinkish lime-based mortar were used in the construction.

Butted up against the northern face of 2006 was a north-south aligned brick wall (2013), 1m long and 0.2m wide. The faces of this wall were not exposed, but clamped, frogless red bricks bonded by concrete were used in the construction. An east west brick wall (2007) butted up against the eastern face of 2015, at its southern end. Only 0.3m of this wall was exposed, but it was 0.35m wide, and 0.2m of its depth was exposed. This was constructed using clamped, frogless red bricks, 3" high and bonded with a concrete mortar.

Another brick wall (2012) was seen in the southern section of the trench. This was 0.75m in length and 0.4m in depth (4 courses). It was constructed in a stretcher bond using 3"

high clamped, frogless red bricks. Loose bricks were observed under this construction, but could not be properly recorded due to the height of the water table.

The area between walls 2008 and 2005 was filled with a beige and grey clay layer (2003) containing brick rubble, bone and some 18th/19th century pottery. On the north side of 2005, 2003 contained a significant dump of sandstone blocks (2004), some of which were faced, and some having mortar on them. However, the stones did not form a structure of any kind.

The eastern side of the trench was capped with a 0.2m-thick layer of sandy silt topsoil (2001) with pebbles. The western side of the trench had a 0.2m-deep layer of brick and rubble (2002) overlying the walls, which was capped with a 0.1m layer of tarmac (2000).

8.0 The Finds *by Erica Macey*

The site produced a small quantity of finds, all of post-medieval date, The assemblage was fragmentary, but unabraded. Twenty fragments of pottery were recovered from the site. These included 17th-and 18th-century sherds, but the majority of the pottery was dated to the 19th-century (S. Ratkai, pers. comm.). The assemblage included probable 17th-century coarseware (2004), creamware from the later part of the 18th-century (1005), 19th-century utilitarian white ware (1002) and the more decorative 19th-century painted ware, which was dated to between 1840 and 1850.

The unworked animal bone assemblage was all of a recent date, and included a modern cat bone and a goose bone (1005) and bone from modern "improved" breeds of sheep and chicken (1007) (Dr. E. Murray and R. Thomas, pers. comm.). Two contexts also produced worked bone finds; these were a 19th-century bone hairbrush (1005) and a small quantity of button making debris (2004). This consisted of scraps of bone, sawn into a rectangular shape, from which a circular button was cut. These buttons are uniformly 16mm in diameter, although the fragments of bone from which they are cut vary in size. Button making debris is common on urban sites in Birmingham, and the button making industry in the city was at its peak in the mid 19th-century (White, 1977), also the date of the majority of pottery from the site.

A small amount of glass was also recovered from the site. This consisted of five bottle fragments (1005 x 3, 1007, 2004) all of 19th-century date. The most complete example was a beer bottle (2004) belonging to the "Birm. and Dist. Ale & Porter Bottlers Association" and bearing their registered trade mark "BIRBOT."

Other finds from the site included four fragments of 19th-century ceramic roof tile (1007, 1008 x 2, 2004), a small fragment of clay pipe stem (2004), a fragment of ceramic air brick (1007), a piece of slag (2004) and some metal items. These items were an iron stake (1005), an unidentifiable iron plate (1005), a modern nail (2004) and an unidentifiable modern copper alloy item (1005).

9.0 Discussion and Implications

No remains were found of the early mill buildings due to the height of the water table. The walls 1018, 1019, 2006 and 2015 form the external walls of the 18th-century mill building, 1018 being the north wall, 1019 and 2015 the eastern wall and 2006 the southern wall. These walls are constructed from 2½" high bricks, which were normally in use in the 18th century, before the brick tax (Litherland, pers. comm.)The distance from the north end of 2019 to the southern end of 2015 would give the building a length of approximately 13m, but the width cannot be fully measured. The brick archway within 1018 is likely to be the external axle hole for the northern waterwheel. The brick wall 1017 next to the opening would be eastern side of the wheel pit for the internal pit wheel, and this would account for the bricks within this wall being so worn (Demidowicz, pers. comm.). Walls 1016 and 1015 are later editions to this structure, although their function is uncertain. Similarly the opening in the south wall 2006 would be the external axle hole for the southern wall, with walls 2006 and 2011 forming the south and north sides of the internal wheel pit for the pit wheel. The external wheel pits for the waterwheels were not located, due to the height of the water table. No evidence for the mill machinery was located.

Evidence for the 19th-century mill building can be seen in other walls. Wall 1012 could be a strengthening wall for 1019, with the 'concrete' 1013 providing a base for this wall. The depth of this wall could indicate that the building was raised when the 19th-century building was constructed. Wall 1011 could also be associated with this phase, as it is of a similar build to wall 1012, and yard surface 1008 could also be associated with this building. The presence of wall 1011 would signify that the northern headrace had been infilled and that the northern wall had gone out of use at this time. This ties in with the documentary evidence (Demidowicz, 1990).

In Trench 2, wall 2008 would appear to be a strengthening wall for 2006, similar in construction to 1012 in Trench 1. This wall still contains an opening in the same position as the one in 2006, although slightly higher. This would indicate that the southern waterwheel will have still been in use during this phase. The wearing of bricks in 2008 is likely to be associated with the turning of the waterwheel. Wall 2009 would also appear to be a strengthening wall for 2015, although it is significantly thicker than 1012, its contemporary in Trench 1. The return of 2009 (2017) would also have to be associated with the 19th-century building, although the angle of the wall is strange, and cannot be explained. The brick structure, 2005, is likely to be a sluice for the 19th-century building, and this would explain the stepped effect of the bricks within the structure, and also the worn appearance of the brick.

Walls 1010, 2013 and 2016 are later in construction than the 19th-century walls, and the clamped bricks used in their construction are likely to have been reused (Litherland pers. comm.). These walls could be associated with farm buildings constructed at the end of the 19th century or buildings associated with the Tally Ho! Sports Club.

The buildings seem to have been backfilled with brick and rubble, probably upon demolition in the 1920s. However, the stone rubble 2004 in Trench 2 could be associated with an earlier phase of the mill, and could also have been imported for backfilling.

The walls of the 18th and 19th-century mill buildings survive directly under the tarmac of the present car park and are very well preserved. Any redevelopment of the mill site should aim to preserve the remains of the mill *in situ*. Further archaeological work on the site would be useful to determine the extent of the mill and the dwelling house. The state of preservation of the buildings should provide useful information regarding the mill in its local context. Any discussion on mitigation measures resulting from the reporting of the results of the excavation rests with the Birmingham City Council Planning Archaeologist.

10.0 Acknowledgements

The project was sponsored by David Lock Associates on behalf of Calthorpe Estates. Our thanks go to Dr. Mike Hodder, Birmingham City Council Planning Archaeologist, and George Demidowicz for their advice and guidance on site. Thanks also go to Steve Litherland for his brick and mortar identification. Work on site was carried out by Mary Duncan and Josh Williams. The report was written by Josh Williams with a contribution by Erica Macey. The illustrations were prepared by Nigel Dodds. The report was edited by Iain Ferris, who also monitored the project for BUFAU.

11.0 References

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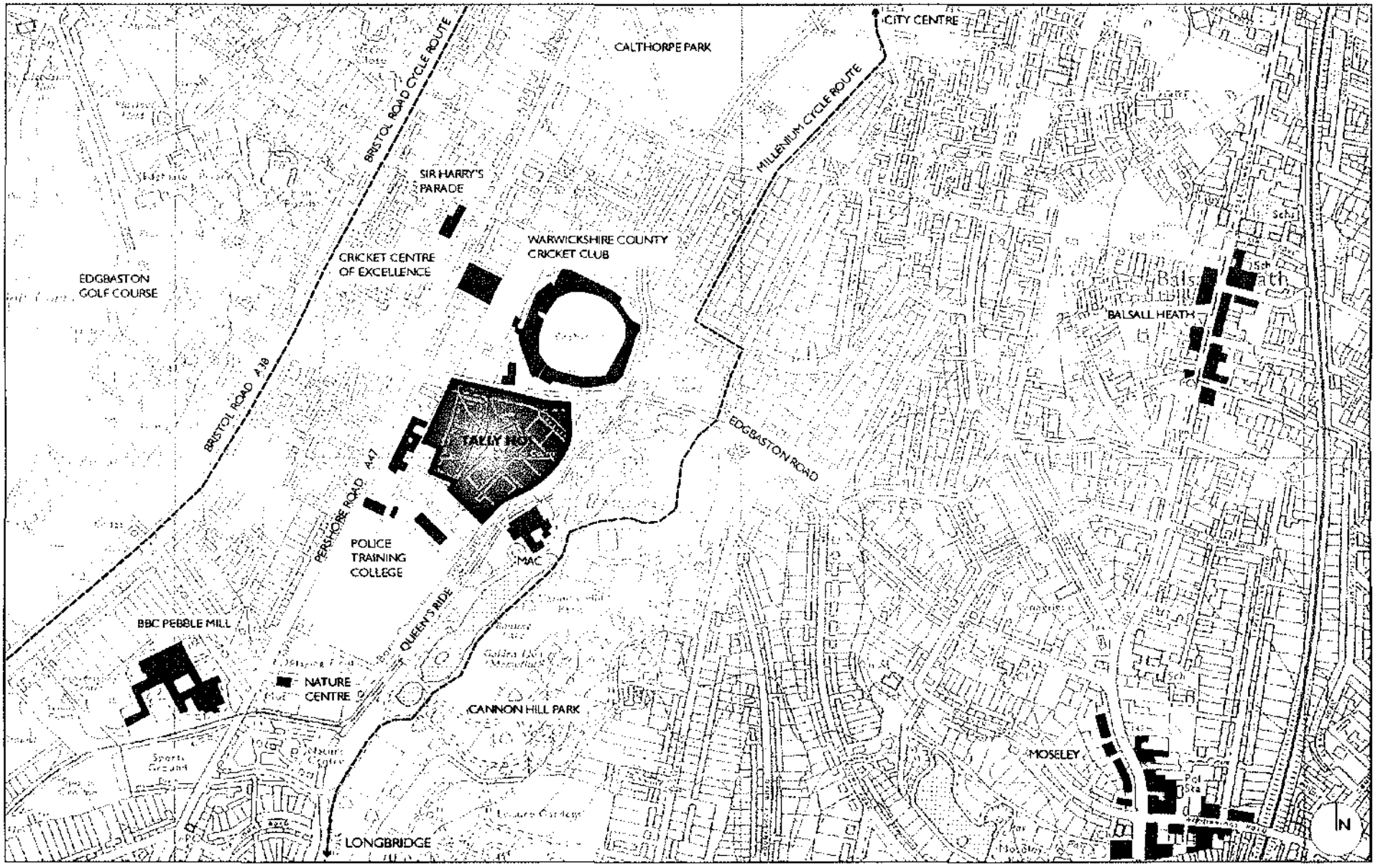
Appendix 1 Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation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CALTHORPE PARK
BRISTOL ROAD CYCLE ROUTE
MILLENIUM CYCLE ROUTE
SIR HARRY'S PARADE
WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB
CRICKET CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
EDGBASTON GOLF COURSE
BRISTOL ROAD A38
BALSALL HEATH
TALLY HO
EDGBASTON ROAD
PERSHORE ROAD A47
POLICE TRAINING COLLEGE
MAC
BBC PEBBLE MILL
QUEEN'S RIDE
NATURE CENTRE
CANNON HILL PARK
MOSELEY
LONGBRIDGE
N

Fig.1

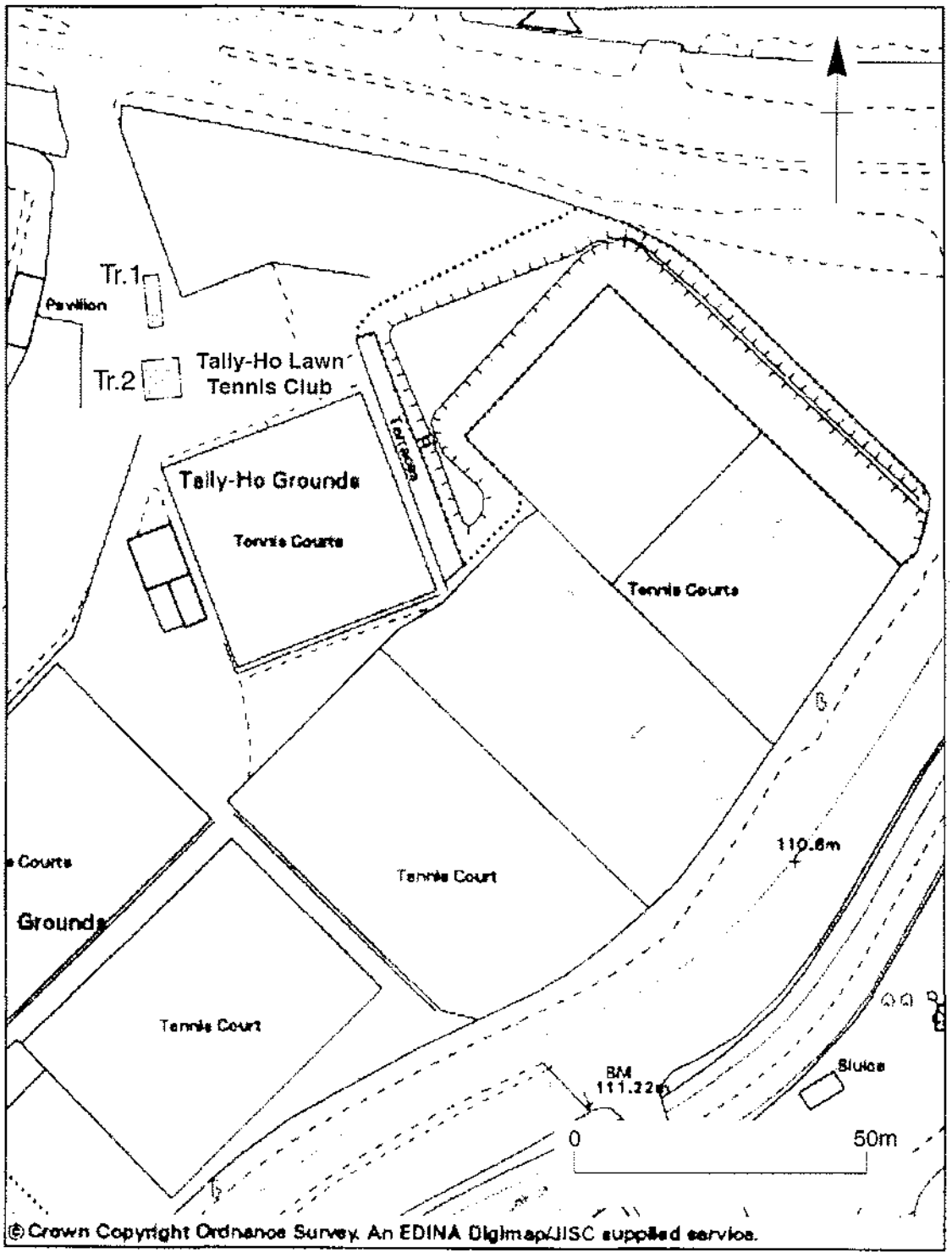
Tr.1
Pavilion
Tr.2
Tally-Ho Lawn
Tennis Club
Terrace
Tally-Ho Grounds
Tennis Courts
Tennis Courts
Tennis Court
Tennis Court
Courts
Grounds
110.6m
BM
111.22m
Sluice
0
50m
© Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. An EDINA Digimap/JISC supplied service.

Fig.2

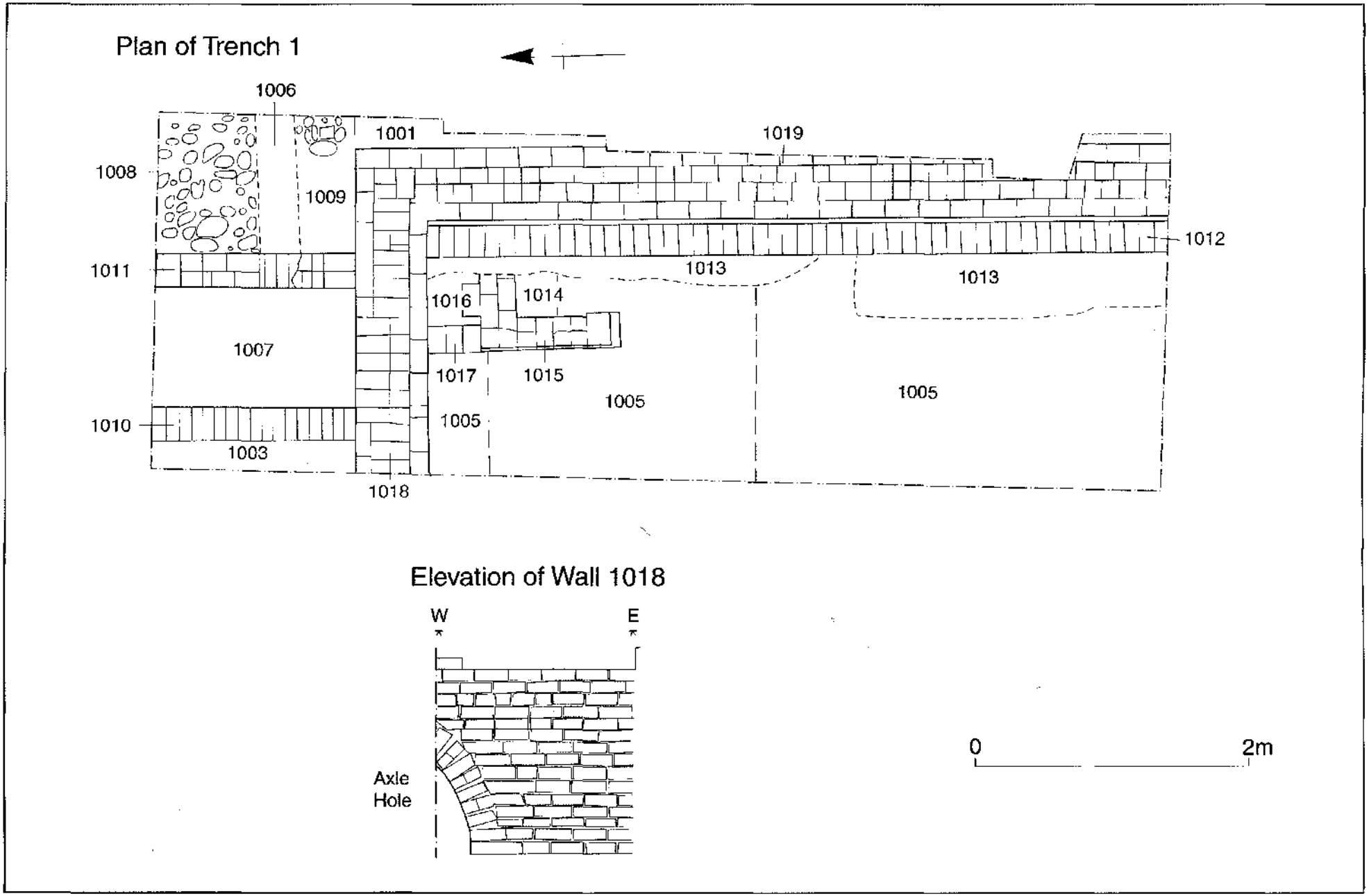
Plan of Trench 1
1006
1001
1019
1008
1009
1012
1011
1013
1013
1016
1014
1007
1017
1015
1005
1005
1010
1005
1003
1018
Elevation of Wall 1018
W
E
Axle
Hole
0
2m

Fig.3

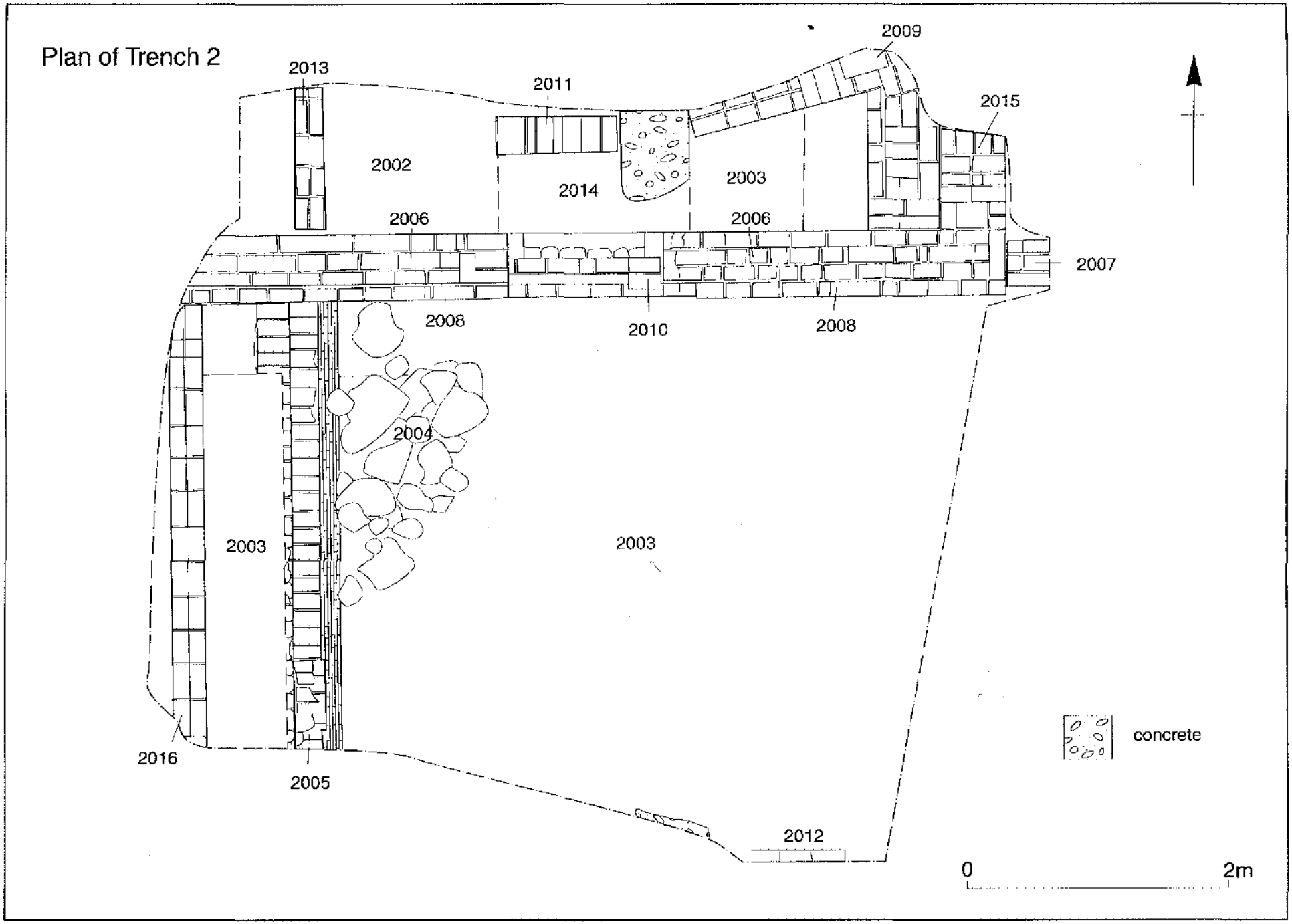
Plan of Trench 2
2009
2013
2011
2015
2002
2014
2003
2006
2006
2007
2008
2010
2008
2004
2003
2003
2016
2005
2012
concrete
0
2m

Fig.4

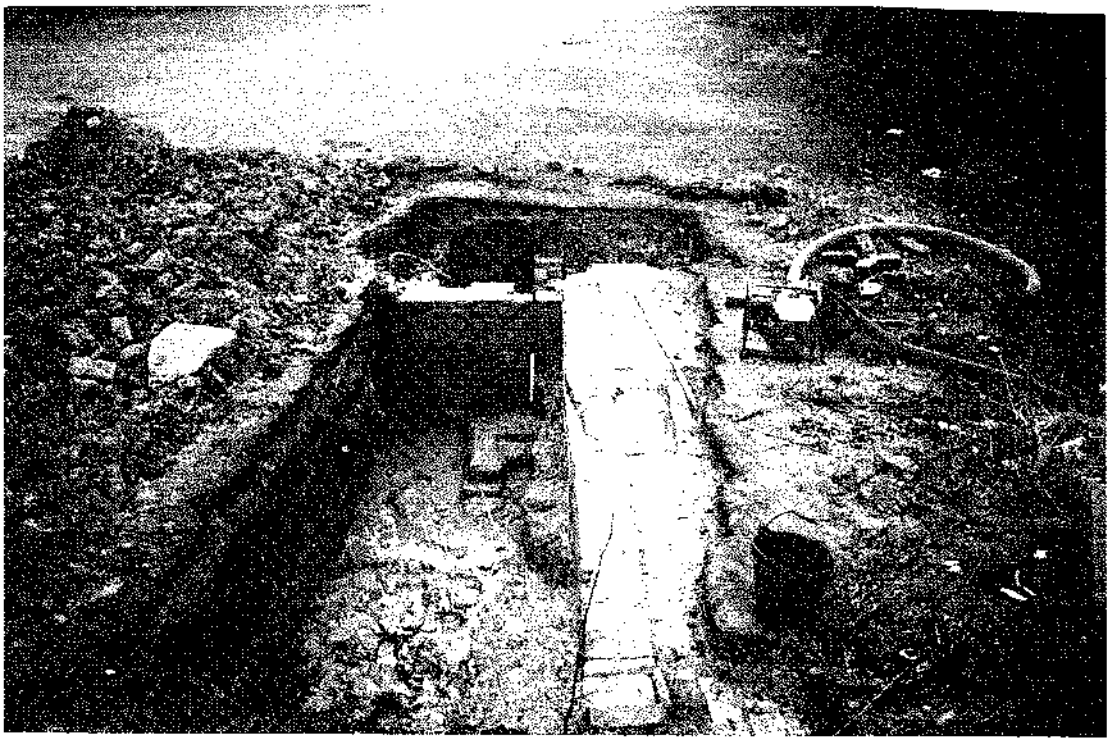

Plate 1

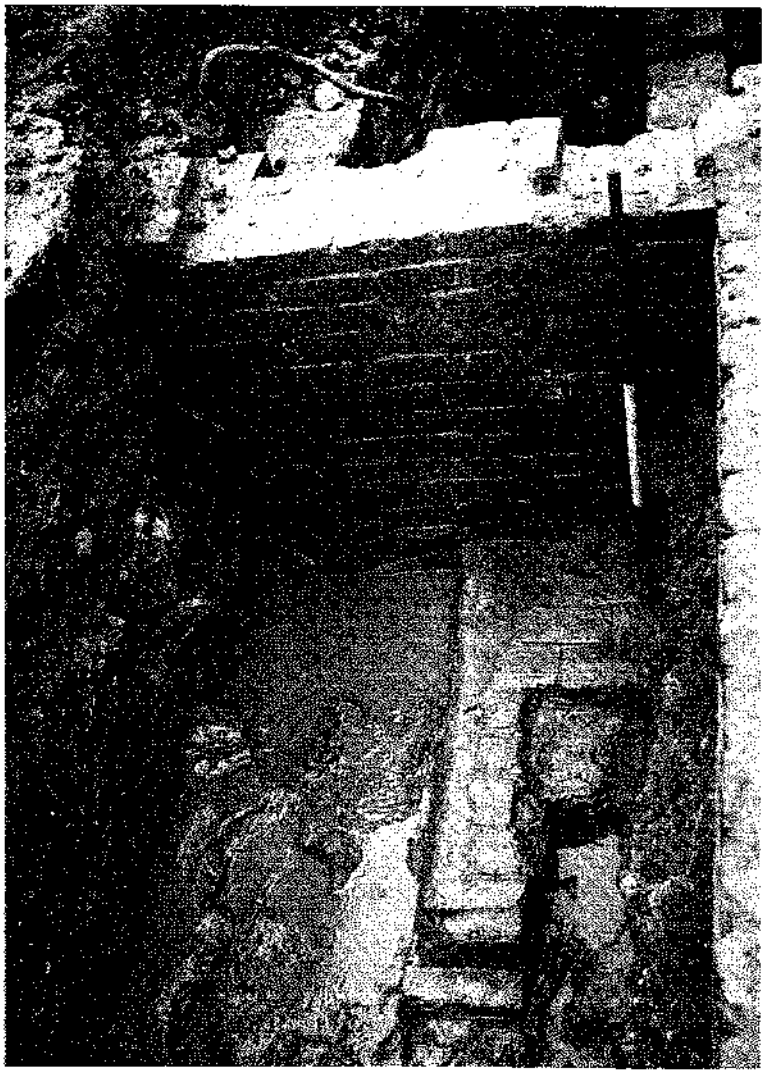

Plate 2

Plate 3

Plate 4

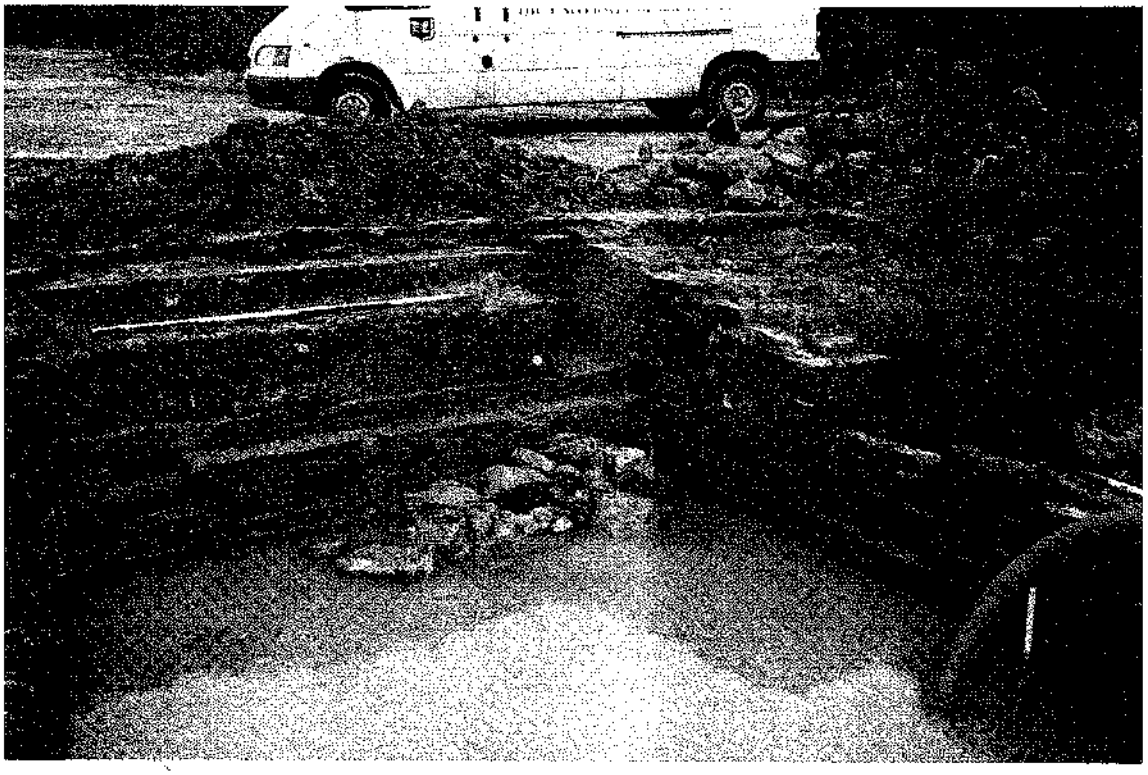

Plate 5

Plate 6