

**Land to the rear of Guy  
Fawkes House,  
Dunchurch,  
Warwickshire: an  
archaeological watching  
brief 2002**

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
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**Land to the rear of Guy Fawkes House, Dunchurch, Warwickshire:  
an archaeological watching brief 2002**

by  
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## **Land to the rear of Guy Fawkes House, Dunchurch, Warwickshire: an archaeological watching brief**

### **1.0 Summary**

*In July 2002 an archaeological watching brief was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on a site at the rear of Guy Fawkes House, Dunchurch, Warwickshire (NGR SP44852711). The work was commissioned by Mr D. Landers in connection with the construction of a new dwelling on the site which lies within an area of known medieval settlement and high archaeological potential. Removal of the overburden by mechanical excavator revealed a number of archaeological features, including three ditches, two of which produced 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century pottery, and which are probably medieval in date.*

### **2.0 Introduction**

In July 2002 Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) undertook an archaeological watching brief on land to the rear of Guy Fawkes House, Dunchurch, Warwickshire, for Mr D. Landers. The work was occasioned by the granting of planning permission for the erection of a dwelling. As the proposed development lay within an area of high archaeological potential, a condition of the planning permission was that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out on any intrusive groundworks.

The archaeological work was informed by a brief prepared by Warwickshire Museum (Warwickshire Museum 2002) and guided by the *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* laid down by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999).

### **3.0 Site Location (Figs. 1 and 2)**

The site is located within the town of Dunchurch, Warwickshire, to the southeast of the parish church. It is 0.114 hectares in area, and is centred on NGR SP44852711. It lies to the east of Guy Fawkes House, a sixteenth century timber-framed building that faces onto The Square, part of the former market place that lies directly in front of Guy Fawkes House. Immediately to the east of the site is the surviving arm of a possible medieval moat or fishpond (Warwickshire SMR Record No. WA 4119) visible on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (Warwickshire Museum 2002).

### **4.0 Objectives**

To obtain a record of any archaeological deposits or finds disturbed or exposed by the development and its associated works.

### **5.0 Method**

The development area was observed after removal of the overburden by mechanical excavator, and the archaeological features noted and recorded on a site plan at a scale of 1:100. A sample of archaeological features was excavated stratigraphically by

hand, and section drawings made at a scale of 1:10. Archaeological contexts were described on pro forma record sheets. The drawn and written record was supplemented by monochrome and colour photography.

## 6.0 Results

Following the removal of the overburden a number of archaeological features could be discerned (Fig.2), though the extent of some of these was hindered by an area of subsoil that remained in the centre of the site. A linear feature (F101) extended from the northwest section in an east-west direction. Differential removal of the overburden, meant that it could not be traced along its entire length, but a corresponding phenomenon on the same alignment emanating from the southeast section (F105) suggests that it continued across the entire site, and that F101 and F105 were parts of the same feature. Excavation of a section through F101 (Fig. 3, S1; Plate 1) revealed a ditch 1.48m wide and 0.57m deep. Its profile had a gently sloping south side and a much steeper north side. At the bottom of the feature was a semi-circular shaped channel. The primary fill of this ditch (1004) was a dark brown silty layer containing six sherds of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century pottery comprising fully oxidised, quartz-tempered material. Above this was a friable layer of dark brown soil (1003) mixed with considerable amounts of coal and charcoal. One sherd of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century pottery and one sherd of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> pottery were recovered from 1003.

At the extreme northeastern edge of the excavated area, and disappearing into the northwest, southeast and northwest sections, was another, apparently more substantial, linear feature (F102) on a different alignment (northwest-south southeast). This ditch (Fig.3, S2; Plate 2) was excavated to a depth of 1.8m, though not bottomed out for safety reasons. Its width to the eastern edge of the excavation was 1.98m. The fill (1007) comprised a compact medium grey/brown silt layer containing stones and charcoal. Two sherds of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> pottery were recovered, as well as one sherd of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> pottery. It is possible, however, that the latter is intrusive.

A third linear feature (F100) visible at the southwest end of the excavation, disappeared into F101/F105. It was a shallow (0.12m deep), flat-bottomed ditch (Fig.3, S3; Plate 3) with a primary orange/brown compact fill (1001) containing a good deal of charcoal, and an upper fill of soft silt mixed with large amounts of coal and charcoal (1000). No finds were recovered from 1001, but 1000 contained a horseshoe and three fragments of clay roof tile.

Cut into F100 was a pit (F103), approximately 0.9m in diameter, full of animal bones (Plate 4). Immediately northwest of this was another pit (F106) of similar dimensions. Approximately 2.5m to the north was a post-hole (F104, Fig.3, S4; Plate 5) 0.25m in diameter and 0.17m deep; it was filled with dark brown silt (1002) but contained no finds.

Another possible linear feature (F107) was recorded in the southern corner of the site, and a small (0.1 x 0.04m) oblong feature (F108) noted towards the northeast, but neither of these features was sampled.

## **7.0 Discussion**

It seems probable that at least two of the features uncovered (F101 and F102) were in use during the medieval period. Both were probably boundary ditches, but as they lie on quite different alignments it is possible that they represent successive phases. F102 appears to be related to current street pattern, but F101 may represent a phase that predates the layout of the market place. F106, together with the later ditch, F100 and the unexcavated linear feature F107, all seem to be related to the layout of The Square, and are probably post-medieval features.

## **8.0 Acknowledgements**

The watching brief was carried out by Malcolm Hislop and Steve Williams. Malcolm Hislop wrote this report which was edited by Gary Coates who also managed the project. Annette Hancock's spot dated the pottery. The figures were prepared by Bryony Ryder. Thanks are owed to Mr D. Landers who commissioned the work. The project was monitored for Warwickshire Museum by Edward Wilson.

## **9.0 References**

IFA. 1999. *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief.*

Warwickshire Museum. 2002. *Brief for Archaeological Work.*

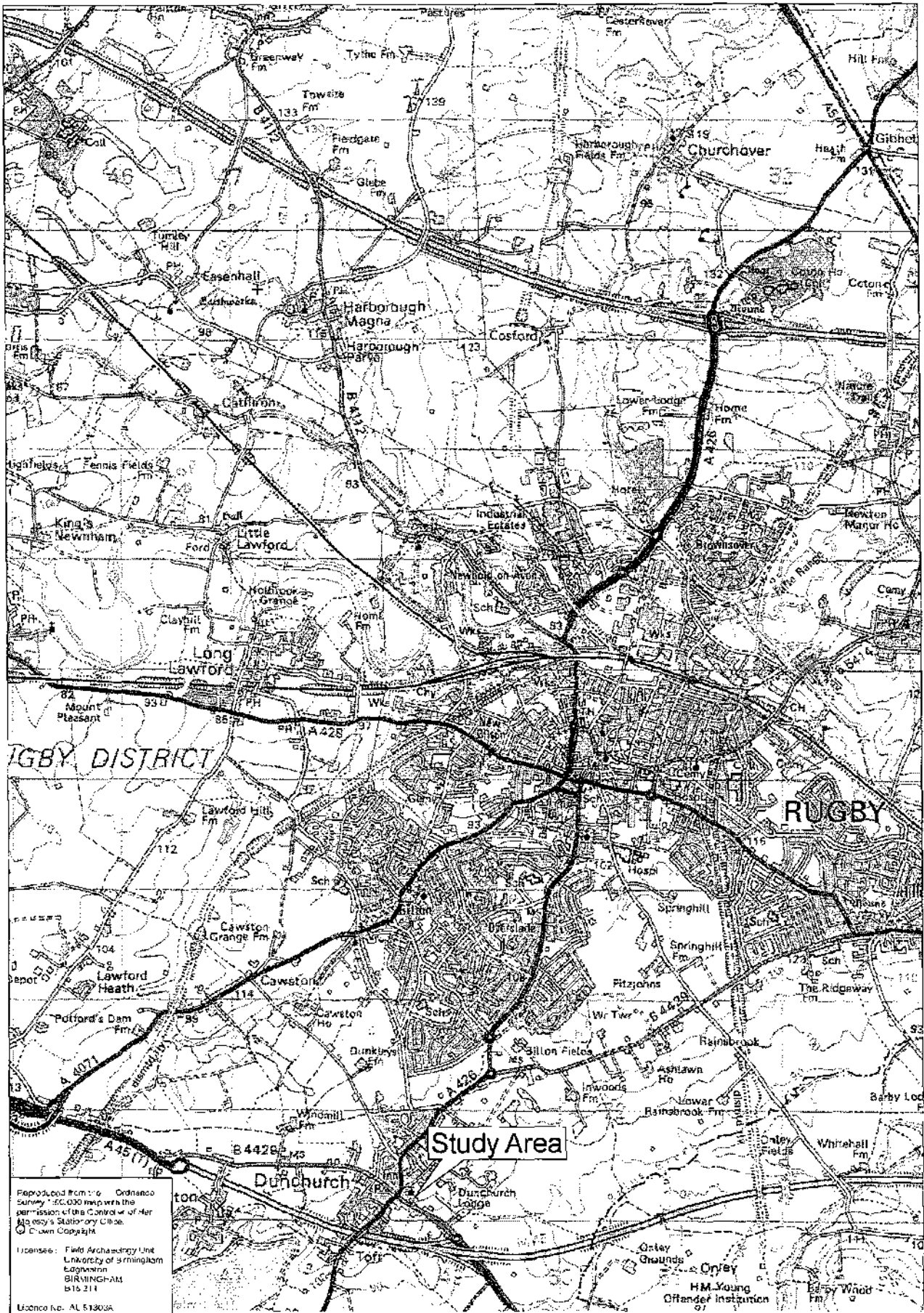


Fig.1

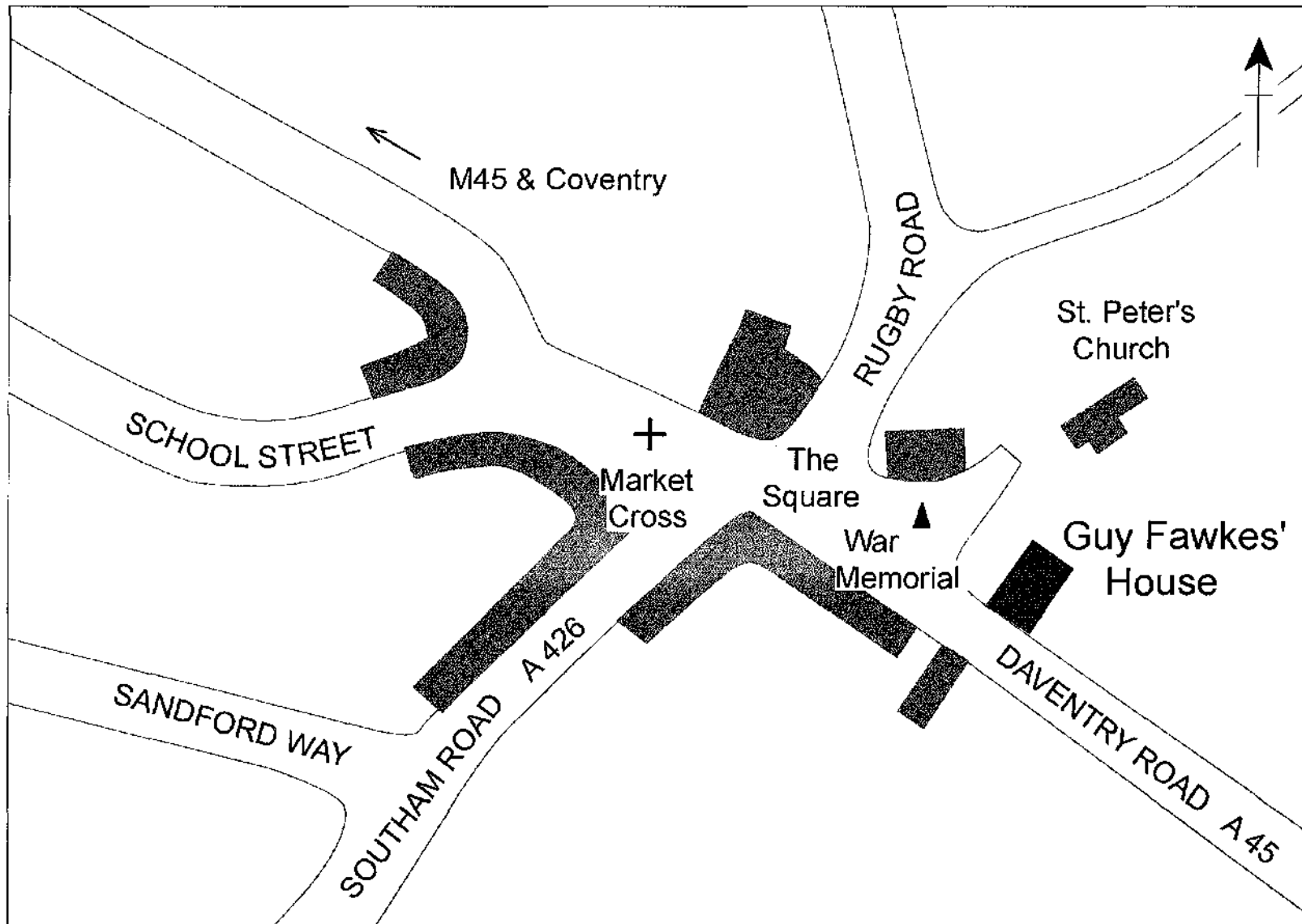


Fig.2



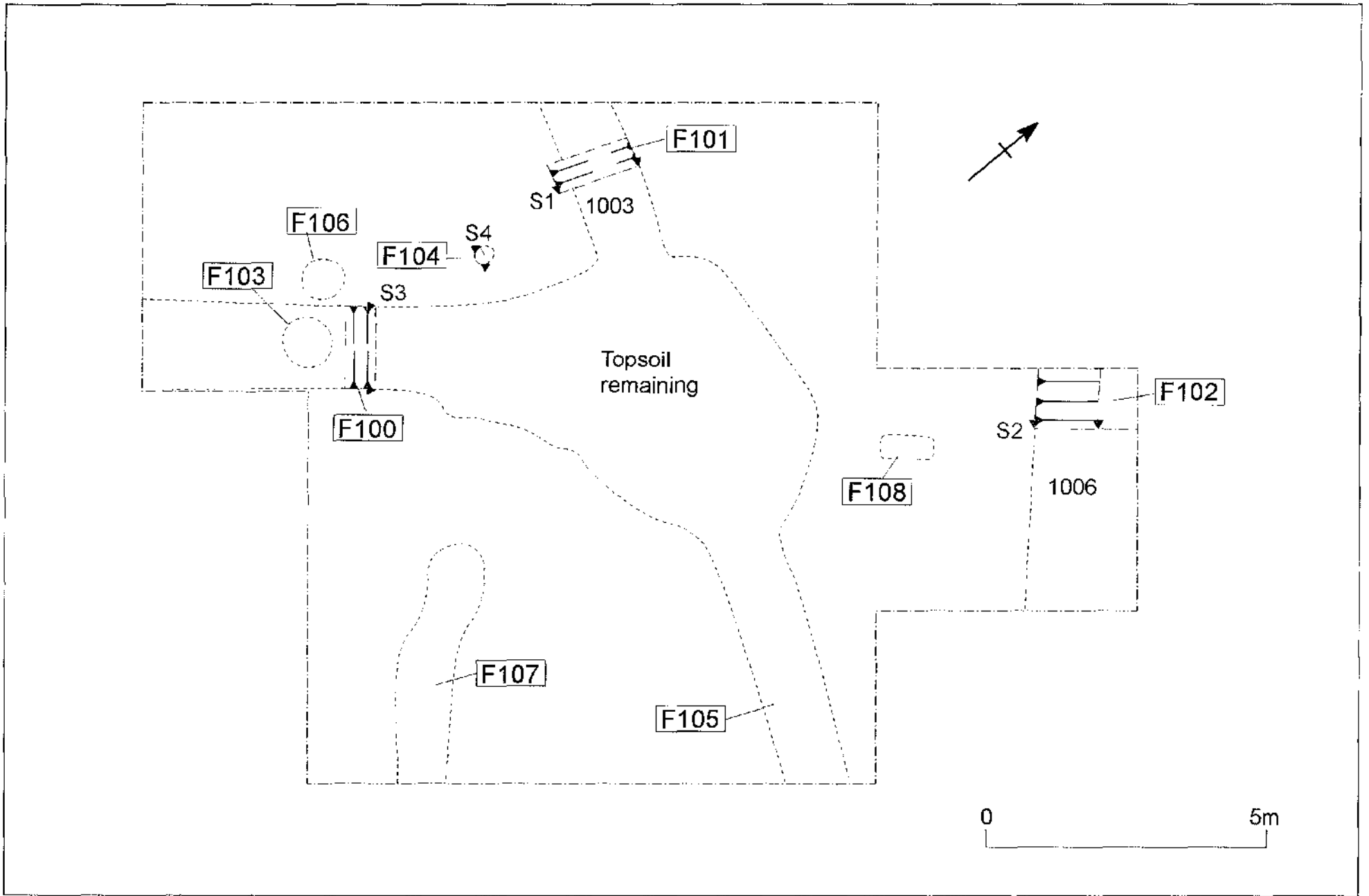


Fig.3 Site Plan

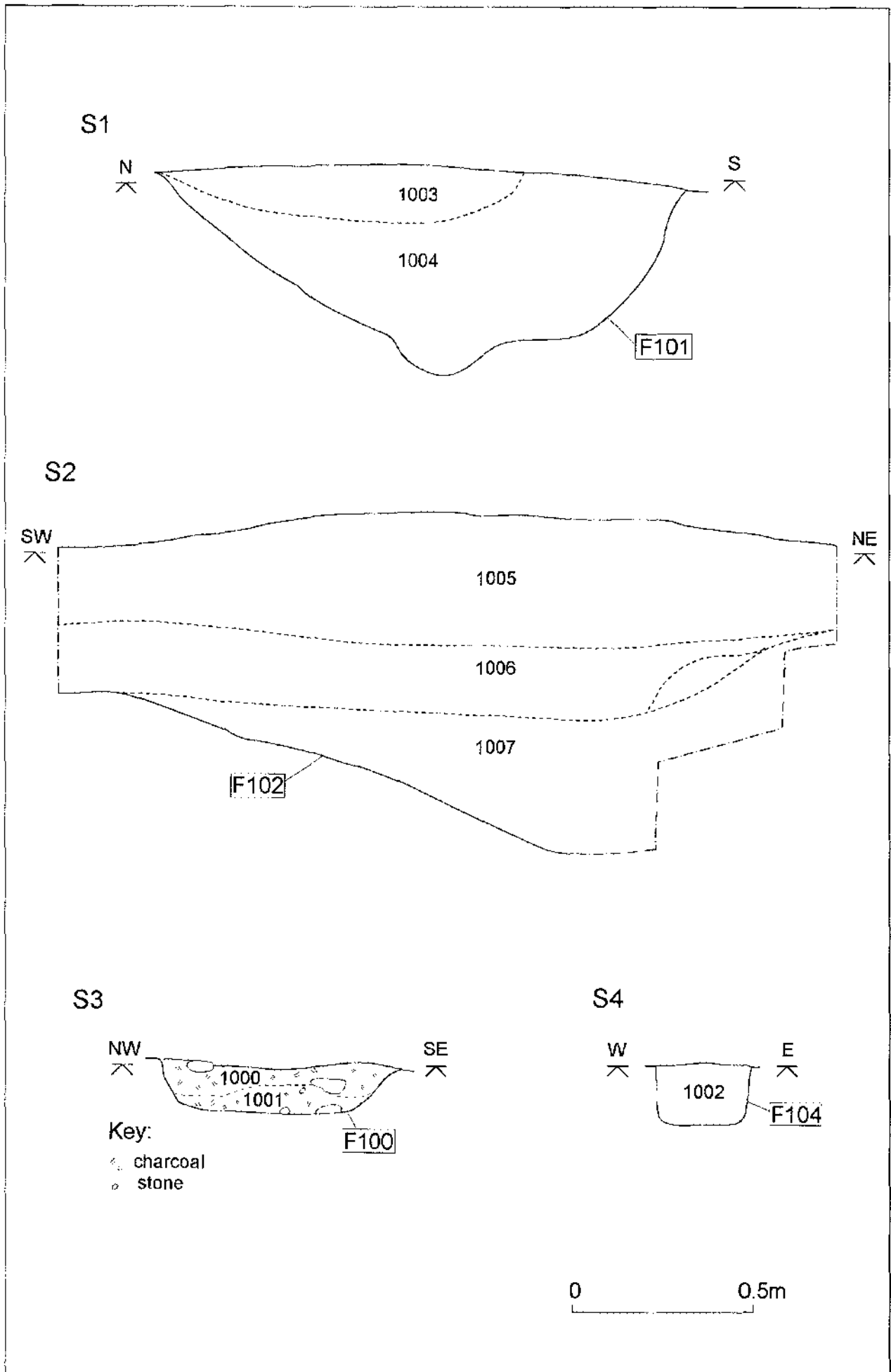


Fig.4 Sections



Plate 1. F101 from the northwest

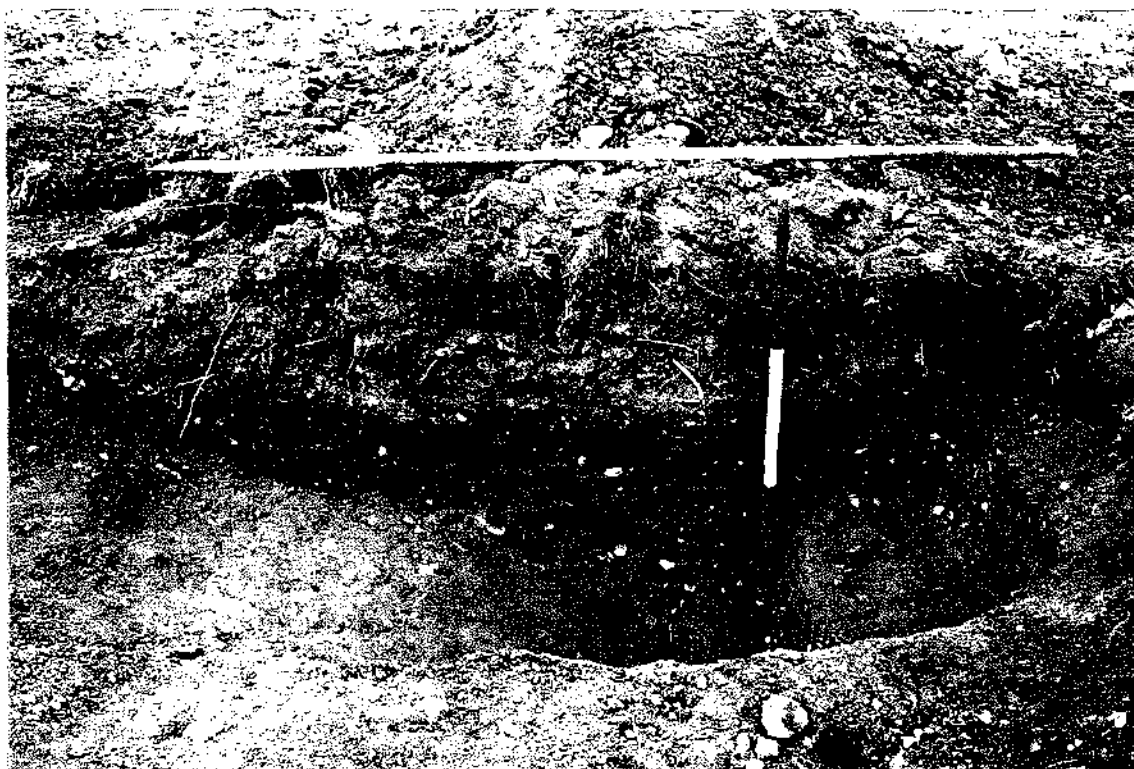


Plate 2. F102 from the southeast

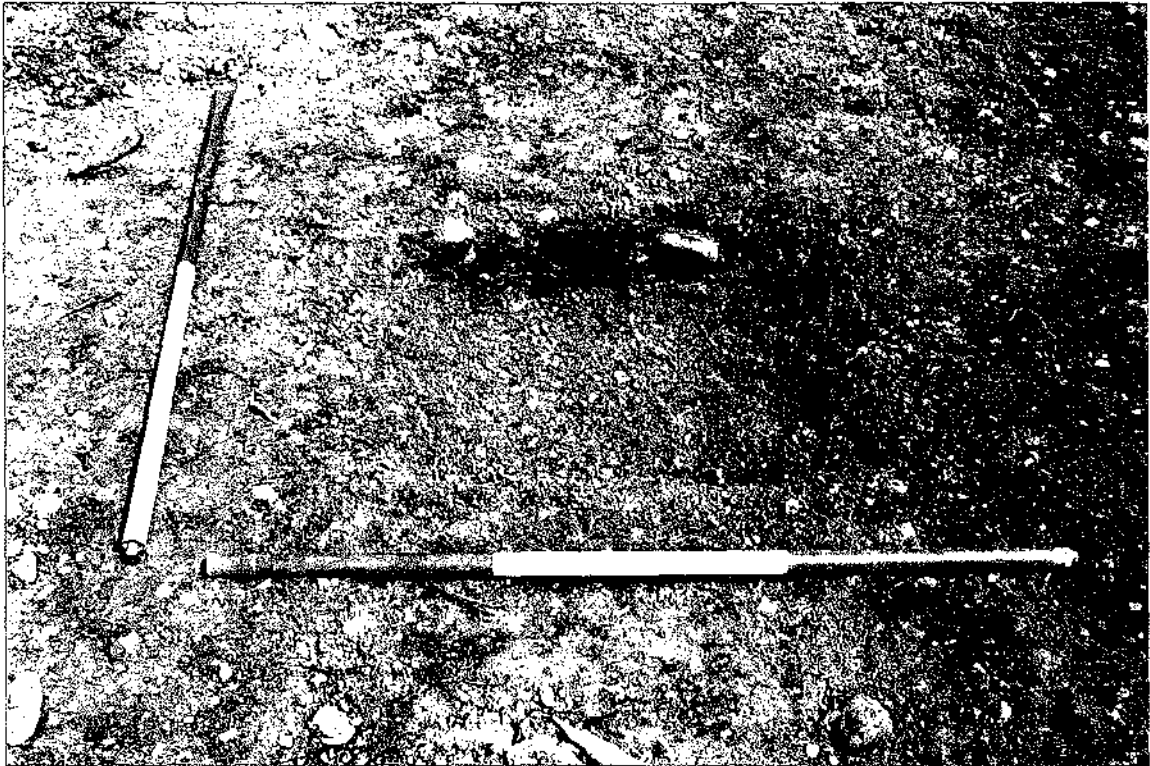


Plate 3. F100 from the southwest



Plate 4. F103 from the southwest



Plate 5. F104 from the southwest