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**18 Main Street, Carlton,
Leicestershire:**

An Archaeological Evaluation

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit



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Project No. 1005
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by
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**18 Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire:
An Archaeological Evaluation.
Planning Application 02/0487/FUL**

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at Lehigh, 18 Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire (Planning Application 02/0487/FUL) in advance of a residential development. The site is located close to the church and the medieval core of Carlton. The Design Büro (Coventry) Limited commissioned Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit to carry out archaeological trial trenching. This was to determine the extent of any archaeological remains.

A total of three trial trenches were excavated, two 10m long and one 25m long. These trenches identified several layers of topsoil and approximately 1.2m of post-medieval build-up towards the front of the property. The stratigraphy revealed no evidence for medieval occupation of this site, either in situ, or redeposited.

1.0 Introduction

The Design Büro (Coventry) Limited proposed the development of land at Lehigh, 18 Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire (Planning Application 02/0487/FUL). This involves the demolition of an existing building and the construction of five dwellings. A brief was issued by the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council Museums, Arts and Records Service (Chettle 2002) which required an archaeological evaluation in order to assess the potential for the preservation of archaeological deposits, associated with the medieval village of Carlton. The Design Büro (Coventry) Limited commissioned Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) to carry out this archaeological evaluation during October 2002. Stephanie Chettle, monitored the evaluation of behalf of Leicestershire County Council.

2.0 Location, Topography and Geology

The site is located close to the centre of the village of Carlton (Figs. 1 and 2). The village of Carlton is clustered around the church and the manor house, along each side of Main Street which runs through the village. The village of Carlton is located on a pocket of sand and gravel which overlies the lower Lias Clays (VCH). The soils are loamy clay and the land in the proximity is generally devoted to pasture (*ibid.*).

Located to the south side of Main Street the level of the ground on the site is noticeably higher than that of the adjacent land, especially to the south. Across the site the modern surface level undulates, but generally drops towards the south and the west. In the course of the evaluation and an earlier watching brief (Bain 2002), it was apparent that the subsoils across the area are in the majority clay based with little sign of sand and gravel.

3.0 Archaeological Background

Mentioned in the Domesday book, the village of Carlton seems to have been relatively small, comprising a cluster of farm buildings along the main road and focused around the church and manor house (VCH). There are reports of old gravel quarry pits located near to the road (*ibid.*).

The proposed development is situated within the historic core of Carlton on the south side of the main street. The site lies to the west of St Andrews Church and the Manor House. It was thought that the proposed development could disturb archaeological remains relating to the medieval occupation of Carlton, or possibly locate former quarry pits mentioned above.

4.0 Aims

The aims of this trial trenching exercise were, as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation Works (Cutler 2002. 2-3)

- Determine the extent of any subsurface remains
- Establish the presence or absence of a palaeosol or 'B' horizon and site formation processes generally.
- Establish the presence or absence of any periphery features associated with medieval occupation at Carlton, particularly in the form of occupation deposits.
- Obtain dating evidence to establish a chronology of the site.
- Establish the extent of later post-medieval disturbance within the development area.
- Recover environmental information as to the economy, diet etc of the inhabitants of the area.
- To provide information to develop a strategy for the recording, preservation or management of the resource.
- To provide sufficient information to enable appropriate an mitigation strategy.
- To provide sufficient information to enable any subsequent archaeological works or excavation to be conducted within clearly defined research aims.

5.0 Method

The excavation of the trial trenches were carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (Cutler 2002) and the Brief (Chettle 2002). The position of these trenches were constrained by the presence of standing buildings and live services on this site. Two trenches (Trenches 1 and 2, Fig. 3) were located to the south of the property and one trench (Trench 3) was located to the north of the property close to the road. This was to establish the presence or absence of structures fronting onto Main Street. The trenches were excavated by mechanical digger under archaeological supervision down to the upper surface of the archaeological or natural horizon.

All archaeological deposits were cleaned and excavated by hand. Where no significant archaeological deposits were encountered the stratigraphy was cleaned and recorded.

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1

This trench was located close to the southern extent of the property boundary, on an east-west alignment (Fig. 4). The trench was 10m long and 1.8m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 1m below the present ground surface. The trench was excavated to the natural subsoil. A sondage 2.5m in length, was excavated at the western end of the trench to a depth of 1m (110.85m AOD). The natural subsoil consisted of a compact, yellow sandy clay (1001). Sealing this was a layer of compact dark grey sand clay and silt with brick rubble inclusions (1003), 0.25m in depth. Above this was a layer of compact brown sand silt-clay, with brick inclusions (1002), 0.4m in depth. The trench was sealed by turf laid on a bed of sand (1000), 0.2m in depth. All of the stratigraphy encountered in this trench was on a slight incline, the western end being 0.2m lower than the eastern end.

Context Number	Description	Maximum Depth AOD
1000	Turf	111.85m
1002	Compact, brown silt-clay with brick fragments	111.4m
1003	Dark grey clay and silt layer, coal flecks visible	111.1m
1001	Natural clay subsoil horizon	110.86m

Table 1. Trial trench 1, summary of the stratigraphy

Interpretation

No features of archaeological interest were recorded in Trench 1

6.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 (Fig. 4) was excavated through the middle of the back garden of the property, this was aligned north-south. Measuring 25m in length and 1.8m in width the trench was excavated to a depth of 1m below the present ground level (110.97m AOD) at the southern extent of the trench. The northern extent of the trench was excavated to a depth of 0.45m. The trench was machined onto a horizon of natural compact yellow sandy clay subsoil (2001), above this was a layer of compact grey clay and silt (2003), 0.45m in depth. This was sealed by a layer of compact brown silt-clay (2002), 0.75m in depth. This became considerably deeper towards the southern end of the trench. Sealing the area of the trench was a layer of turf 0.2m in depth.

Context number	Description	Maximum Depth AOD.
2000	Turf	111.767m
2002	Compact, brown silt-clay with brick fragments	110.97m
2003	Compact grey clay and silt	110.97m
2001	Natural clay subsoil horizon	110.97m

Table 2. Trial trench 2, summary of the stratigraphy

Interpretation

No features of archaeological interest were recorded in Trench 2

6.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 (Fig. 4) was located to the north of the property along the frontage and was aligned east-west. The trench was 10m long, 1.8m wide and excavated to a depth of 1.2m below the present ground level (111.14m AOD). The trench was excavated on to a horizon of a compact natural yellow sandy-clay subsoil (3001). Sealing this was a layer of friable orange sand and silt (3006), 0.75m in depth. This was overlain by a layer of grey sandy clay (3004) which measured 0.25m in depth.

This layer was cut by a linear feature (F300) aligned north-south, perpendicular to the trench and located at the western end of the trench. This measured 2m in width and 0.6m in depth and had a 'U' shaped profile. The fill (3005) of this feature (F300) consisted of a friable brown sand, clay and silt, which contained quantities of white glazed early 20th century pottery and glass bottles.

Overlying this was a layer of friable black cinders and rubble, which contained bricks and numerous glass bottles (3003), 0.4m in depth. This layer was not evident at the western extent of the trench, and became deeper towards the eastern end. Sealing this was a layer of friable grey sandy clay (3002), 0.15m in depth, which in turn was sealed by a brick drive surface.

Context number	Description	Maximum Depth AOD
3000	Brick paving	112.01m
3002	Friable, grey sandy gravel	111.8m
3003	Friable, black cinders and rubble	111.39m
3004	Friable, grey sandy clay	111.19m
3005	Friable, brown sand clay and silt	111.19m
3006	Friable, orange, sand and silt	111.14m
3001	Natural clay subsoil horizon	111.14m

Table 3. Trial trench 3, summary of the stratigraphy

Interpretation

No features of archaeological interest were recorded in Trench 3

7.0 Discussion

Although no medieval features relating to the early occupation of Carlton were identified, substantial post-medieval layers are evident across the majority of the site. These become more substantial towards the extremities of the property. A visual inspection of the surrounding land shows that this property is generally higher than the surrounding plots. This would suggest that the property has been subject to a 'levelling up' of the land, especially to the south. Much of this probably dates to the construction of the building that presently occupies the site.

No medieval activity is evident from the evaluation works, although the proximity of the medieval church suggests that the site may once have been occupied. It is possible that evidence of medieval activity in the area could have been destroyed by more recent activity, although it is also possible that the medieval occupation of the village

never extended to the southwest, being concentrated to east of the church. The old gravel pits and land-fill that were thought to be in the vicinity of this site are not present. This may be due to the location of the site on clay subsoils rather than gravel, on which the majority of the village is located to the north and the east.

8.0 Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Terry Plant who commissioned this work on behalf of The Design Büro (Coventry) Limited. The work on site was carried out by Mary Duncan, Helena Beak and Kate Bain for BUFAU. The project was managed by Richard Cuttler (BUFAU) who also edited this report. Thanks are also due to Stephanie Chettle who monitored the evaluation of behalf of Leicestershire County Council.

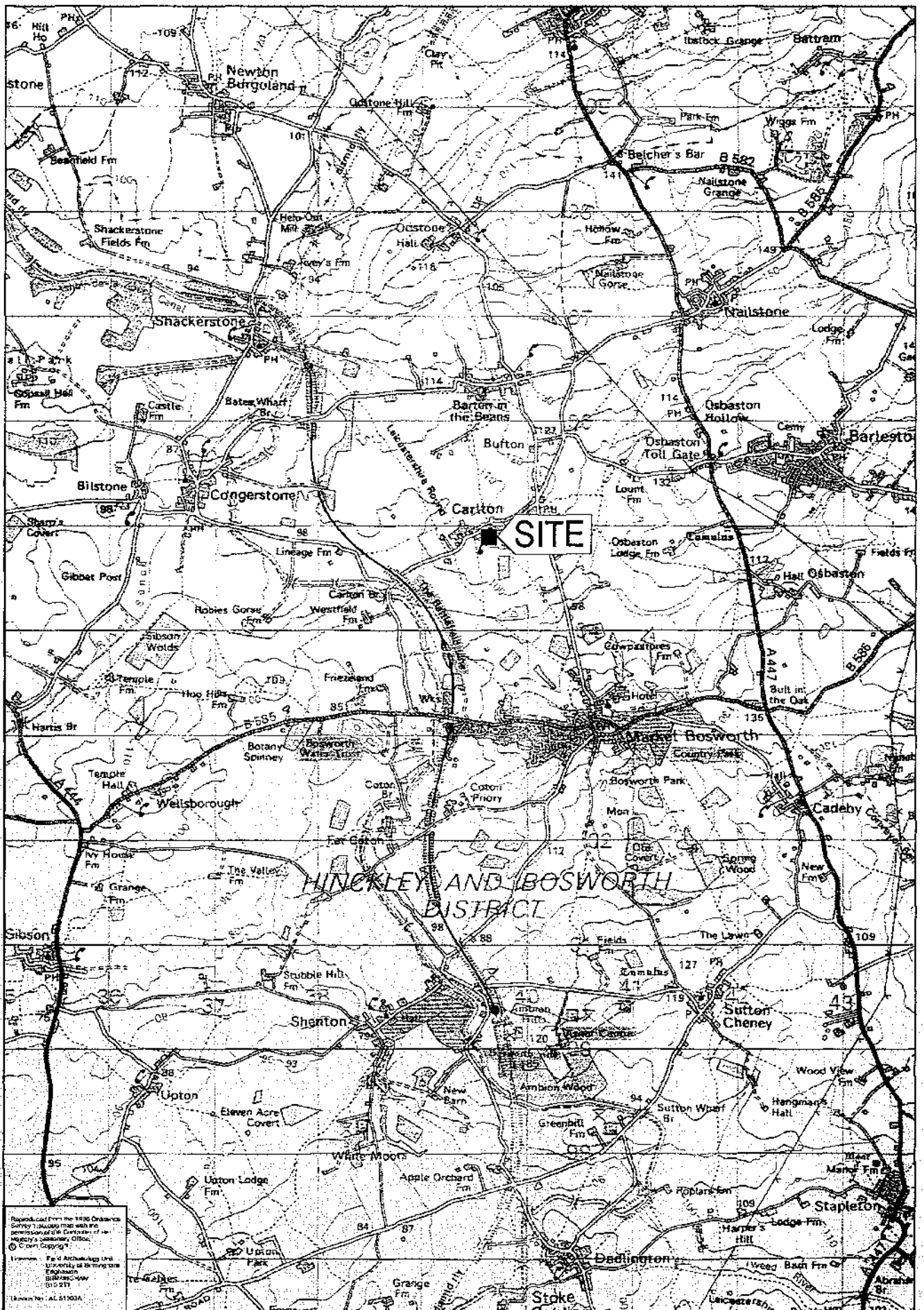
9.0 References

Bain, K. 2002 *18 Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire: A Watching Brief during the excavation of Geo-technical Boreholes*. BUFAU report PN993

Chettle, S. 2002. *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation of Land At Lehigh, 18 Main Street, Carlton*. Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Record Service.

Cuttler, R. 2002 *18 Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation Works*. BUFAU

VCH Victoria County History.



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Fig. 1

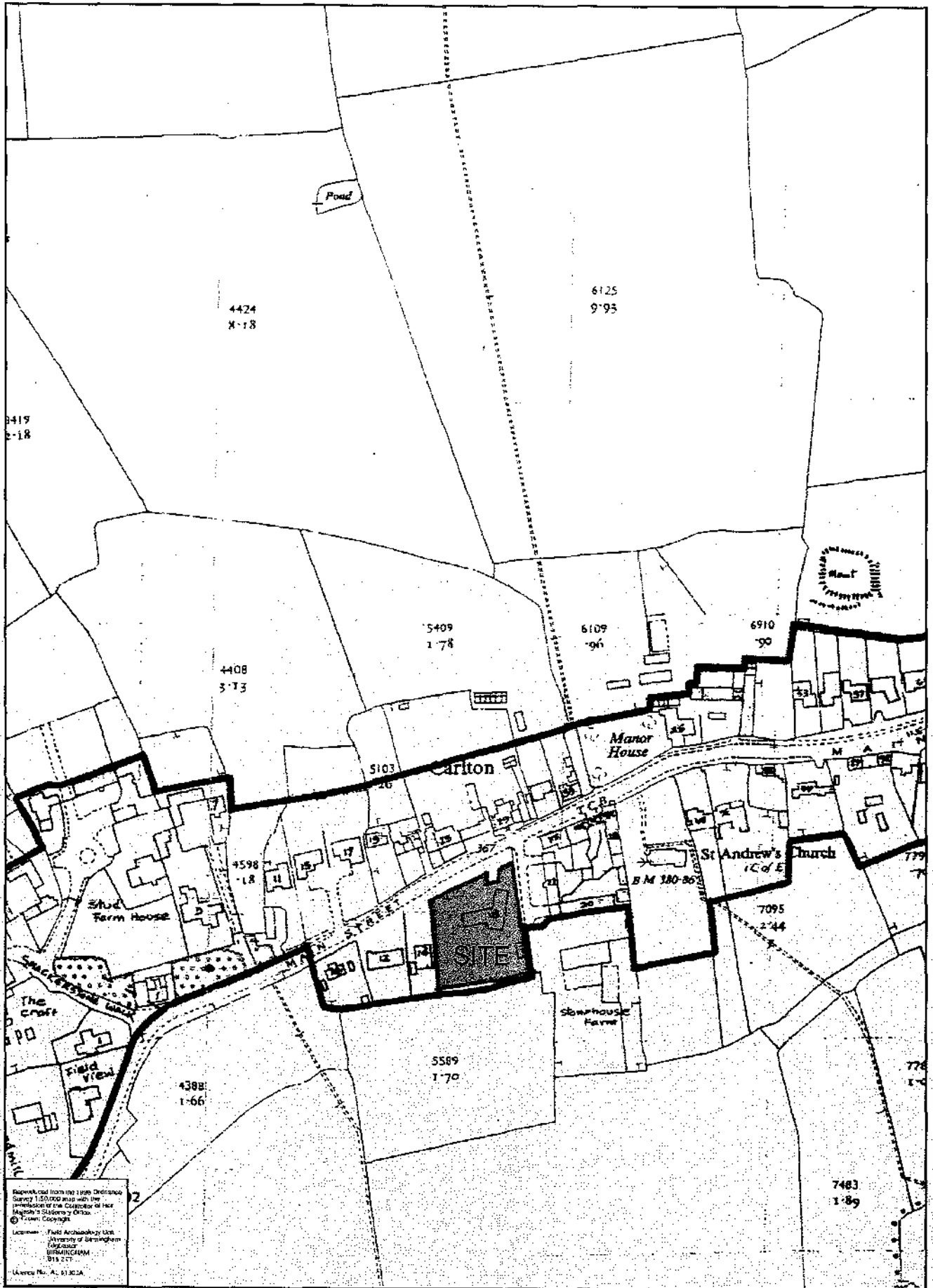


Fig.2

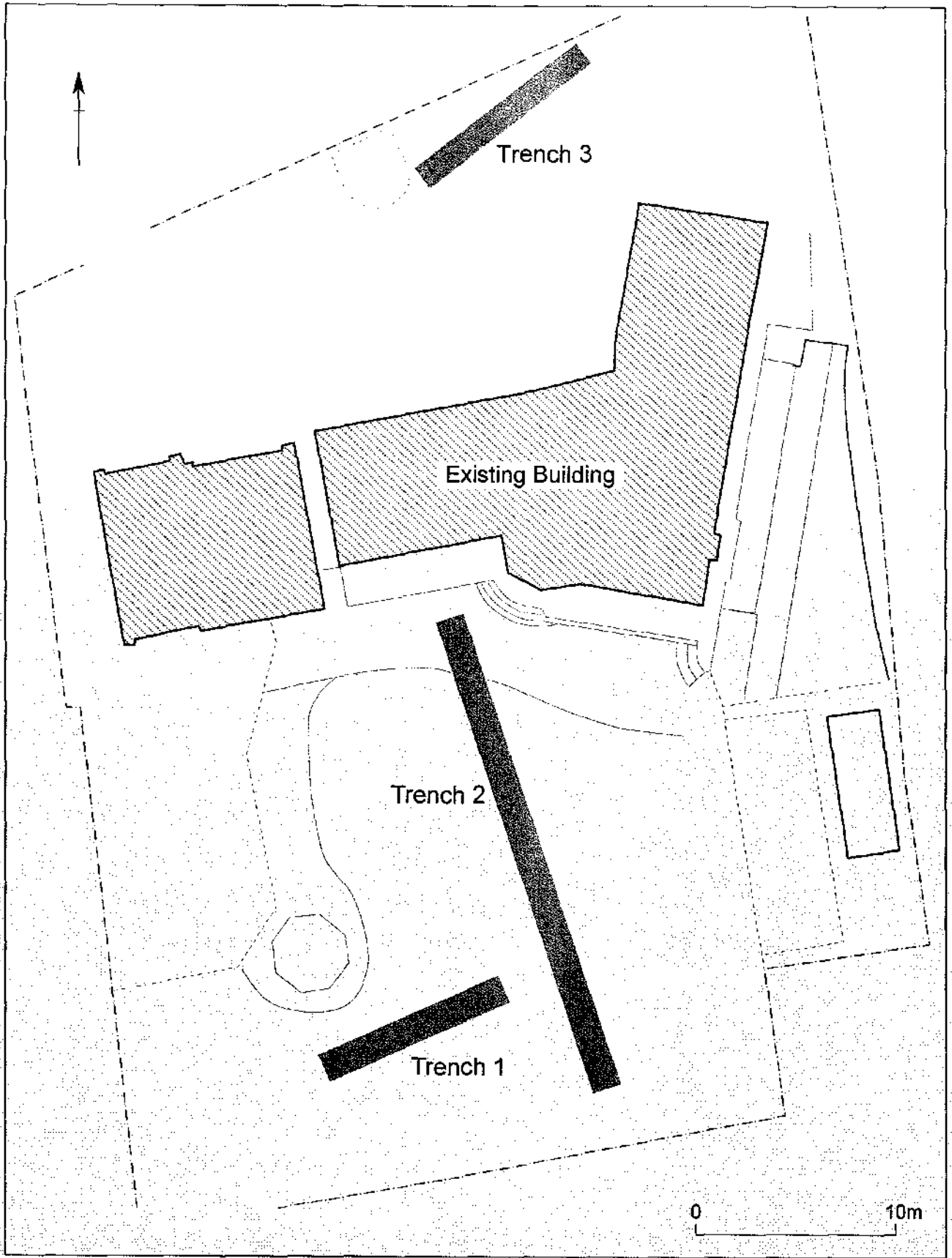


Fig. 3

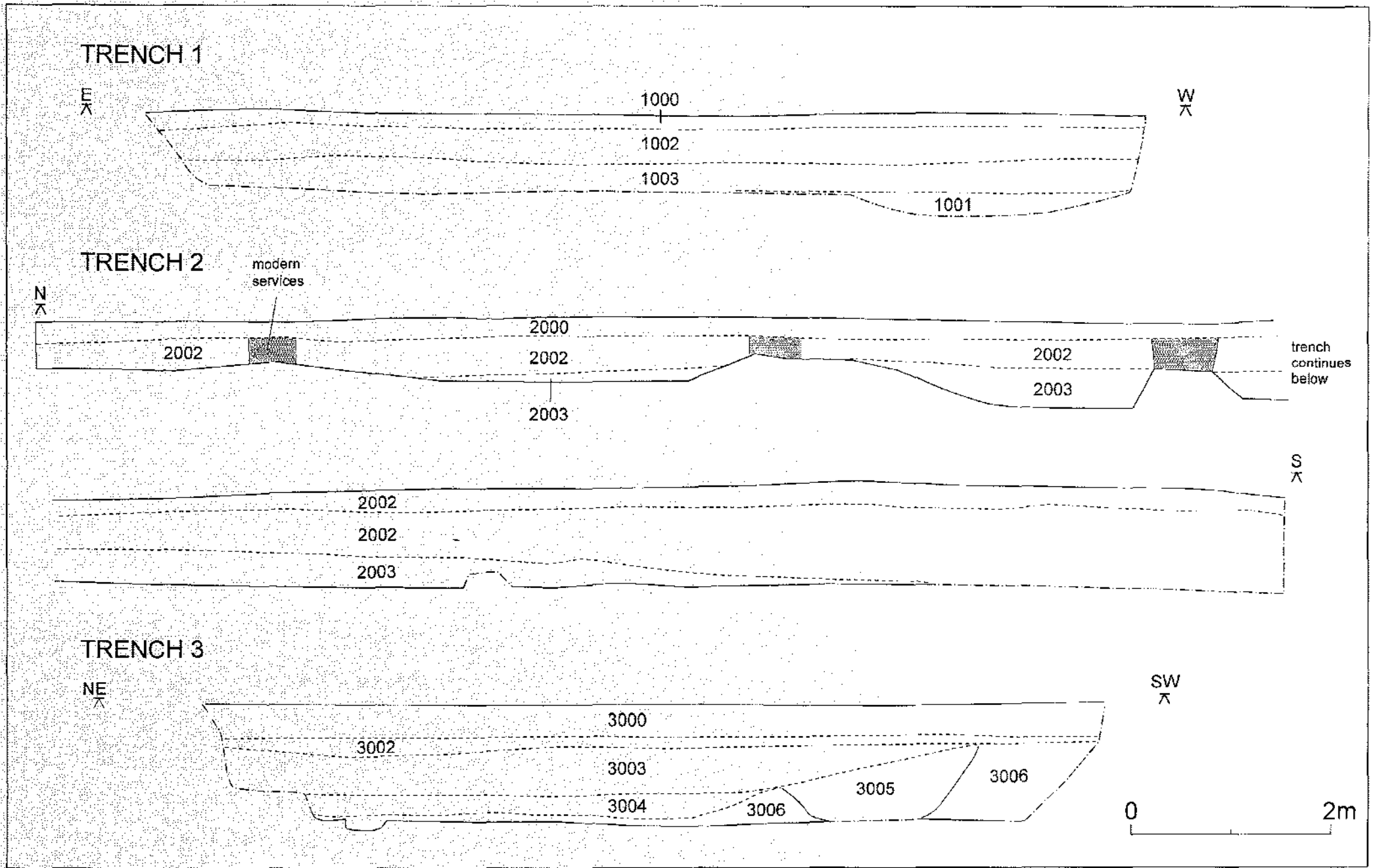


Fig. 4