

**Evaluation of Land to the  
West of Walsall Road,  
Great Wyrley, Cannock,  
Staffordshire**

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**Project No. 1733**

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## LAND TO THE WEST OF WALSALL ROAD, GREAT WYRLEY, CANNOCK, STAFFORDSHIRE

### AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007

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## **SUMMARY**

*In 2007 Birmingham Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of land to the west of Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Cannock as part of an application for planning for redevelopment of the land. The site is located in an area of land south of the M6 Toll Road, and to the east of the railway between Cannock and Walsall. The site lies to the northwest of Cherrington Drive and to the west the A34. It is south of the centre of Cannock, and is centred on NGR SJ 9850 0800.*

*This report outlines the results of an evaluation, carried out in December 2007. Eleven evaluation trenches between 20m x 1.6m and 50m x 1.6m were excavated at strategic positions across the site. The same general pattern of deposition was encountered across the eleven trenches. This consisted of a primary layer of pale-orange, silty clay identified at 0.3–2m below modern ground level. This was overlain by a mid-dark brown silt, overlain by a thin layer of topsoil. This pattern of deposition was more disturbed on the eastern side of site and included demolition and industrial levelling deposits due to the presence of the former 19<sup>th</sup>-century edge-tool manufactory, only the foundations of which remained.*

*The archaeology encountered was comparable to the evidence available in the documentary and cartographic sources. The trenches on the eastern side of site revealed a series of walls and floor surfaces were exposed relating to the period of the manufactory, along with evidence of the processes and mechanisms contained within. Possible forging hearth flues and a machine base were exposed, along with a fragment of grindstone and a possible section of drive shaft. Various phases of construction were identified dating from the early-19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The trenches within the western half of site contained a series of field drains and linear ditches related to the irrigation of the agricultural land known to historically exist in this area.*

## **LAND TO THE WEST OF WALSALL ROAD, GREAT WYRELEY, CANNOCK, STAFFORDSHIRE**

### **AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007.**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the project**

Birmingham Archaeology was commissioned by Country Wide Homes Limited on behalf of GC Cannock Limited to undertake a programme of trial trenching ahead of a residential development of land to the west of Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Cannock, South Staffordshire (hereinafter referred to as the site, Planning Application Number 07/006670/OUT (submitted)).

This report outlines the results of a field evaluation carried out between 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007 and has been prepared in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (IFA 2001).

The evaluation conformed to a brief produced by South Staffordshire Council (Langley 2007, Appendix 2), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (Birmingham Archaeology 2007) which was approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to implementation, in accordance with guidelines laid down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990).

### **1.2 Location and geology**

The site is located in a parcel of land south of the M6 Toll Road, and to the east of the railway between Cannock and Walsall. The site lies to the northwest of Cherrington Drive and to the west the A34. The site lies south of the centre of Cannock, and is centred on NGR SJ 9850 0800 (Fig. 1).

The underlying geology consists of coal measures, overlain by drift geology of Devensian Till with possible alluvial deposits at the northern edge of the site resultant from the course of the Wash Brook.

The present character of the site is a mixture of open land, concrete plinths, loose scrub and vegetation surrounding industrial units.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The site lies adjacent to a number of former monuments as defined on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record. The earliest of these is the line of Watling Street Roman Road, now the A5, (PRN 05153) that runs northwest to southeast along the northern boundary of the site and remains associated with it may be found in the northern portion of the proposed development site.

Some evidence for early post-medieval activity has been found located just outside the site boundary but these appear to be associated with infrastructure remains and therefore less likely to impact directly on the site (Church Bridge PRN 01086, Overflow Channel, Wash Brook PRN 04897).

Later post-medieval activities, associated with the industrial period are more profuse. Archaeological evaluation works and the watching brief associated with the construction of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (Oxford/Wessex 2003) revealed structural evidence of Gilpin's Basin (PRN 04906), which appears to have been backfilled with colliery waste. This was associated with the former line of the Hadderton Branch of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal (PRN 50189). The course of the canal has been extensively removed by the presence of open-cast mining in the area. These lie directly to the northwest of the site and outside the limits of the development. However, there is the possibility that similar remains associated with Gilpin's basin may be encountered.

Evidence for Gilpin's 'edge-tool manufactory' (PRN 51790) marked on the first edition 6" OS map may survive across the proposed development site. The edge-tool works was established by William Gilpin in 1806 and is marked as an iron works on the 1838 Tithe Map. Gilpin's works are mentioned in the directory of Staffordshire written by William White in 1834:

'CHURCH BRIDGE is a small village in Great Wyrley township, 1 mile S. of Cannock, on the Watling street, and on one of the tributary streams of the Penk, where Mr Gilpin established, about 25 years ago, an extensive manufactory of *edge tools, augers, hammers &c.*, and a forge, a tilt, rolling and grinding mills, and furnaces for converting and refining *iron and steel*; all of which are now in a flourishing state, and give employment to a considerable number of workmen.' (White 1834, 487)

Some of the original 1806 buildings were said to be still standing in the late 1950s. There is potential for monuments associated with the works on the eastern half of the site in particular (Figs. 3-7).

### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The principle aim of the evaluation is to determine the character, extent, date, state of preservation and the potential significance of any buried remains.

More specific aims were to:

- To determine the presence/absence of activity across the site associated with the Roman period given the close proximity of the former course of Watling Street to the north of the site.
- To determine the survival of structural evidence relating to the edge-tool manufactory and identify production processes and the movement of production across the site where possible. Where possible determine the presence/absence of industrial activity associated with the Gilpin's basin and the relationship between the edge-tool manufactory and the canal basin built to serve it.
- To make recommendations for further work upon the site and identify specific areas of interest.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Fieldwork

The proposed development area covered approximately 5.9 hectares. A total of 400 linear metres of trenches were to be excavated across the site (subject to site practicalities), totalling 900m<sup>2</sup> which provided a 2% sample of the total area (Fig. 2).

Two areas of trenches have been established, separated by the presently existing standing industrial units. Trenches were located thus;

Within the eastern sector of the site 200 linear metres of trenches were excavated. These were positioned within two constraints. The first was the archaeological background of the area. These trench locations were designed to assess the extent and relationship of remains associated with Gilpin's basin and the edge tool manufactory. The second was the nature of the present undergrowth. It was apparent that the eastern area of the site had been undeveloped land for a considerable period and the extent of the vegetation on the site limited the feasible locations for trenching.

The western area of the site was not historically associated with the edge tool manufactory and as such had greater potential for survival of pre-existing archaeological remains principally those associated with the adjacent line of Watling Street. As such 4 x 50 linear metres (200m) of trenches were excavated. These were located to avoid a rising sewage main located along the southern boundary of the site that was known to be fragile.

Trial-trenches were surveyed-in using an EDM total station and other appropriate survey instruments.

All topsoil and modern overburden was removed using a JCB type mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision, down to the top of the uppermost archaeological horizon or the subsoil. Subsequent cleaning and excavation was by hand. A representative sample of archaeological features and deposits was manually sample excavated sufficiently to define their character and to obtain suitable dating evidence. Generally, 50% of pits or postholes and a 1m section of linear/curvi-linear features were excavated. Archaeological deposits were not completely excavated unless unavoidable. The depth of archaeological deposits across the site was assessed, although the full length of every trench was not necessarily excavated down to natural.

All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeology was present. Features were planned at a scale of 1:20, 1:50 or 1:100 and sections were drawn of all cut features and significant vertical stratigraphy at a scale of 1:10. A comprehensive written record was maintained using a continuous numbered context system on *pro-forma* context and feature cards. Written records and scale plans were supplemented by photographs using monochrome and colour slide photography backed up by digital photography for illustration purposes.

The full site archive includes all artefactual and/or ecofactual remains recovered from the site. The site archive will be prepared according to guidelines set down in Appendix 3 of the Management of Archaeology Projects (English Heritage, 1991), the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (Walker 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological collections (Museum and Art Galleries Commission, 1992). The finds and paper archive will be deposited with Potteries Museum, Stoke on Trent subject to permission from the landowner.



## 5 RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

Detailed descriptions of the individual contexts are presented in Appendix 1 and full details are available in the project archive. In the following sections both feature (cut) and context numbers are highlighted in **bold**. This section is separated into trenches in numerical order. Each individual trench is then described stratigraphically beginning with the earliest deposits. A representative sample of trench plans and sections are illustrated at the back of this report. These have been chosen to illustrate the significant archaeological deposits/ structures described for each trench. The same general pattern of deposition was encountered across the eleven trenches. This consisted of a primary layer of pale orange silty clay which was overlain by a mid-dark brown silt, overlain by a thin layer of topsoil. This pattern of deposition was more disturbed on the eastern side of site and included demolition and industrial levelling deposits due to the presence of the former edge-tool manufactory, only the foundations of which remained.

The spread of archaeological features broadly confirmed the evidence preserved in the historical and cartographic sources. The majority of archaeological features were present on the eastern side of site where the former edge tool manufactory was sited and relatively few archaeological features were present on the western side of site, which had been the site of open field systems during its recorded existence.

### 5.2 Trench 1 (Figure 8 and 9, Plates 1-3)

Trench 1 was located at the far southwestern edge of site and was aligned northwest to southeast. The trench was 50m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.95m. Trenches 1 to 4 were situated to establish the presence/ absence of archaeological remains associated with the Roman Watling Street formerly located to the north of site.

#### 5.2.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **1006** was reached at 0.4—0.8m below ground level at a height of 120.05m AOD. It consisted of pale orange, silty clay.

#### 5.2.2 Archaeological features and deposits

The trench contained two archaeological features both of which were associated with field irrigation. Towards the centre of the trench was a shallow linear gully **1003** orientated northeast to southwest, the fill of which was an orangey-brown, silty clay **1002**. A further linear drainage cut **1005** orientated northwest to southeast was present at the northwestern end of the trench. An arched ceramic field drain sat within the cut upon a base composed of flat slate and was surrounded by an orangey-brown, silty clay backfill deposit **1004**.

The features were covered by 0.2m of mid-dark brown, silt **1001**. There was a shallow lens of re-deposited coal and clinker between the silt subsoil **1001** and the topsoil **1000**, which was probably the result of dumping of material from the edge tool works. The trench was sealed by 0.25m of dark brown, silt topsoil **1000**.

### 5.3 Trench 2 (Plate 4)

Trench 2 was located at the southwestern edge of site and was aligned northwest to southeast. The trench was 50m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.6m.

#### 5.3.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **2008** was reached at 0.3–0.45m below ground level at a height of 121.5m AOD. It consisted of pale orange, silty clay.

#### 5.3.2 Archaeological features and deposits

The trench contained three archaeological features, all of which functioned as field irrigation. These three features were ceramic field drains; each was constructed in a similar way, from identical materials. At the north end of trench was a northeast to southwest orientated field drain, set within a vertically sided linear cut **2003** and covered by light brown sandy silt **2002**. A further land drain situated in the centre of the trench was orientated northeast to southwest and was set into a vertically sided linear cut **2005** and covered by light brown, sandy silt **2004**. At the southern end of the trench was an east to west orientated, vertically sided linear cut **2007** into which was set a ceramic field drain. This had been covered by a light brown, sandy silt fill **2006**.

The features were covered by 0.15m of light-mid brown organic silt **2001** and the trench was sealed by 0.2m of dark brown silt topsoil **2000**.

### 5.4 Trench 3 (Plate 5)

Trench 3 was located at the southwestern edge of site and was aligned northeast to southwest. The trench was 50m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.55m.

#### 5.4.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **3004** was reached at 0.35m below ground level at a height of 121.05 AOD. It consisted of pale brownish-orange, silty clay.

#### 5.4.2 Archaeological features and deposits

Only one archaeological feature was exposed within this trench. Situated within the centre of the trench was a northeast to southwest orientated vertically sided linear gully cut **3003** within which was set a ceramic field drain. The cut had been backfilled by a deposit of light brown, sandy silt **3002**. An assemblage of 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics dated the construction of this feature (See 7.1).

The single feature was covered by 0.15–0.2m of mid orangey-brown, sandy silt **3001** and the trench was sealed by 0.2m of dark brown, sandy silt **3000**.

### 5.5 Trench 4 (Plate 6)

Trench 4 was located at the western edge of site and was aligned north to south. The trench was 50m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.5m.

### 5.5.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **4002** was reached at 0.35m below ground level at a height of 120.15m AOD. It consisted of pale white-orange, silty clay.

### 5.5.2 Archaeological features and deposits

The trench was devoid of any archaeological features or cultural inclusions. The trench deposits consisted of a 0.15m thick mid brown, silt subsoil layer **4001** beneath a dark brown, organic silt topsoil **4000**. Two sherds of un-stratified ceramics were found associated with this trench (see 7.1).

## 5.6 Trench 5 (Plate 7)

Trench 5 was located at the northern most end of site and was aligned east to west. The trench was 24m in length and 1.6m in width. It was excavated to a depth of 1.3m. Trenches 5 and 6 were situated to establish the presence/ absence of archaeological remains associated with the Roman Watling Street formerly located to the north of the site. Further aims were to determine the presence/ absence of industrial activity associated with the Gilpin's basin and the relationship between the edge-tool manufactory and the canal basin built to serve it.

### 5.6.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **5002** was reached at 1.15–0.2m below ground level at a height of 119.7m AOD. It consisted of pale orange, sandy clay.

### 5.6.2 Archaeological features and deposits

Only one tentative archaeological feature was identified this was a small circular patch of burning **5003**, possibly the location of a small bonfire. This patch had been burnt into the subsoil layer. This was a 0.6m thick deposit of pale orangey-brown, silty sand **5001**. The trench was sealed by a thick (0.6m) layer of topsoil **5000** which was mixed with successive layers of overburden dating to the period of the edge-tool manufactory.

## 5.7 Trench 6 (Figure 10, plate 8)

Trench 6 was located at the northern most end of site adjacent to trench 5. It was aligned east to west. The trench was 19m in length and 1.6m in width, it was excavated to a depth of 1.55m.

### 5.7.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **6004** was reached at a depth of 1.45m below ground level at a height of 120.7m AOD. It consisted of pale orange sandy clay.

### 5.7.2 Archaeological features and deposits

Cut into the natural sandy clay were three irregularly cut ditches, the purpose and date of which remained elusive. At the western end of the trench were two parallel ditches orientated northwest to southeast. Ditch **6008** was a linear ditch which was moderately sloped on the western side. It was filled with an accumulated deposit of mid-dark brown, sandy silt. Located parallel to this was ditch **6010**. This was a linear ditch which was moderately sloped on the eastern side. It was filled with a similarly accumulated deposit of light brown, silty sand **6009**.

Taken together these ditches may have been part of the same feature, between which may have been a shallow bank. A further u-shaped ditch **6006** was orientated northeast to southwest. This was again filled with an accumulated deposit of mid-dark brown sandy silt **6007**. None of the ditch fills contained any material evidence.

The natural clay was covered with an approximately 0.6m thick layer of orangey-brown, silty sand subsoil **6001**, upon which were successive layers of dark blackish brown silt, slag and demolition material overburden **6002**. This layer also contained a distinct, dumped layer of pale creamy orange degraded brick and limestone **6003**. Set into the levelling deposits at the eastern end of trench was a wall **6011** orientated northeast to southwest. The wall was constructed of machine-cut, unfrogged 3 inch bricks set in a stretcher bond within a cement based mortar.

The trench was sealed by a 0.1m thick layer of topsoil **6000**.

## **5.8 Trench 7** (Figure 11, Plate 9)

Trench 7 was located on the eastern half of the evaluation area and was orientated northwest to southeast. The trench was 55m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 2m. Trenches 7-11 were situated to determine the survival of structural evidence relating to the edge-tool manufactory and identify production processes and the movement of production across the site and the relationship between the edge-tool manufactory and the canal basin built to serve it.

### **5.8.1 Subsoil (Natural)**

The natural subsoil **7008** was reached at a depth of 2m below ground level at a height of 120.5m AOD. It consisted of mid orange-grey, sandy clay.

### **5.8.2 Archaeological features and deposits**

Above the natural clay was a 0.2m thick layer of mid brownish-grey, silty clay alluvium **7007**. This was overlain by a dark black silt and coal levelling layer **7006**. This was primarily composed of waste from the edge tool works situated in this area. This was then overlain by thick lens deposits of mixed orange and grey demolition rubbles **7003/7005** composed of crushed brick, mortar and silt. A fragment of sandstone grindstone was found within this deposit (See 7.2, plate 10) which was directly related to the functioning of the edge tool manufactory. Constructed above these demolition horizons was a truncated wall orientated north to south **7004**. It was constructed of machine-cut, unfrogged 3 inch red bricks set within a cement based mortar. A series of concrete foundation pads **7002** aligned north to south were set into deposit **7006**. Associated with these foundations was a thin concrete floor surface **7001**. This demolition layer and construction of a building with concrete foundations and floor relate to a secondary period of construction post-dating the main period of manufactory construction.

The trench was sealed by a 0.8m thick modern build up of topsoil **7000**.

## **5.9 Trench 8** (Plate 11)

Trench 8 was located on the eastern half of the evaluation area and was orientated northeast to southwest. The trench was 40m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 1.8m.

### 5.9.1 Subsoil (Natural)

The natural subsoil **8006** was reached at a depth of 1.6m. Like the majority of site it consisted of mid orange-grey, sandy clay.

### 5.9.2 Archaeological features and deposits

Above the natural clay was a dark black silt layer with coal inclusions **8001**. This was spread across the entire trench. Cut into the natural aligned northeast to southwest was a ceramic salt glazed drain set into a linear cut **8008** and surrounded by a dark black, silt and clay deposit **8007**. At the western end of the trench above the natural was a yellowish-orange demolition layer **8003** which was composed of brick fragments and gravel. Two further smaller lenses of demolition material were exposed towards the centre and eastern ends of the trench **8002/8004/8005**. Again these were composed of brick fragments, gravel and silty-sand. A section of steel drive shaft was found within these demolition layers (see 7.2, plate 15)

The trench was sealed by a 0.4 thick modern build up of topsoil **8000**.

### 5.10 Trench 9 (Figure 12, Plate 12)

Trench 9 was located on the eastern half of the evaluation area and was orientated northwest to southeast. The trench was 20m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.8m. It was situated upon the location of one of the outlying buildings located on the southeastern part of site, evident of the plans of 1846 and 1884 (Figs 3 and 7). Significant structural remains relating to the edge-tool manufactory were exposed within this trench including the possible location of forging hearth flues.

#### 5.10.1 Subsoil (natural)

The natural subsoil **9009** was reached at a depth of 1.7m at a height of 121.8m AOD. The survival of structural deposits across much of the trench meant that natural remained primarily unexcavated. These structural deposits survived at a depth of 0.5m below the surface.

#### 5.10.2 Archaeological features and deposits

In the northern half of the trench, natural was overlain by a black, sandy clay **9003** contaminated by coal and industrial waste. This constituted a levelling layer after the demolition of the edge-tool manufactory. Part of this structure was observed at the southern end of the trench arranged in a series of triangular brick walls **9007**. These walls had been truncated down to the foundations and only 2-4 courses remained. These walls were constructed of machine-cut, unfrosted 2¼ inch red bricks set in a cement based mortar within a random foundation bond, the date of which can be speculated at early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. These walls were bonded in to an L-shaped section of wall **9005/9006** which was composed of the same materials. Inserted vertically into wall **9006** were two iron I-bar type structures, situated at the meeting point between the triangular sections of walls. The base of these walls was composed of a 0.03m thick level of compacted mortar **9008**. Taken together these walls made up what appeared to be the possible location of forging hearth flues. The northern wall of this structure **9005** had the remains of an external yard surface on its northern side. The surface was constructed upon a thin (0.15m), layer of crushed rubble and cement **9002** and was composed of machine-cut, unfrosted 3¼ inch red bricks **9004** laid in a simple stretcher pattern.

A mixed levelling layer of mid brown silty-sand **9001** covered the demolished features. The trench was sealed by a 0.2m thick modern build up of topsoil **9000**.

### **5.10 Trench 10** (Plate 13)

Trench 10 was located on the eastern half of the evaluation area and was orientated northwest to southeast. The trench was 22m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.8–1.7m. It was situated upon the location of one of the central buildings of the manufactory, evident on the plans of 1846 and 1884 (Figs 3 and 7). A series of truncated structures including several northeast to southwest aligned walls and associated floor surfaces were exposed. These floor surfaces provided evidence of two distinct phases of building.

#### **5.11.1 Subsoil (natural)**

The natural subsoil was not encountered in this trench due to the presence of shallow structural features. These structures survived at a depth of 0.4m below ground level, at a height of 123m AOD.

#### **5.11.2 Archaeological features and deposits**

The structural features encountered in this trench were primarily made up of a series of northeast to southwest orientated brick walls all of which appeared to represent the same structure possibly dated to the early-19<sup>th</sup> century. Their association could not however, be confirmed, as they were not structurally linked. Wall **10009** was located at the southeastern end of the trench and was made up of hand-made, unfrogged, 3 inch red bricks, set in lime based mortar within a stretcher bond. The wall survived to a depth of 1.4m+ and part of an L-shaped extension survived on the southeastern side. Walls **10008** and **10004** were composed of similar construction materials. They were located in the centre of the trench and at the northeastern end. Wall **10004** was associated with two heavily truncated, much worn floor surfaces constructed against its elevations. Surface **10005** was constructed of, hand-made, unfrogged, 3¼ inch bricks, set in a lime-based foundation mortar within a stretcher pattern. Surface **10003** was constructed in much the same way. The fragmentary remains of a further floor surface **10007** was exposed towards the centre of the trench. Again this was constructed of similar materials. Constructed upon both this floor and floor **10005** was a later concrete surface **10006**, laid to replace the work floors beneath.

A mixed layer of dark brown, grey and orange, silty sand and demolition material **10002** covered the entire trench. It was then sealed by a 0.1m thick modern build up of topsoil **10001**.

### **5.12 Trench 11** (Figure 13, Plate 14)

Trench 11 was located on the eastern half of the evaluation area and was orientated north to south. The trench was 21m in length and 1.6m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.9m.

It was situated within what would have historically been primarily an open yard area and was also the location of the northeastern buildings evident on the plans of 1846 and 1884 (Figs 3 and 7). A series of truncated structures were exposed at the southern end of the trench, including a floor surface with timber sleepers set into it.

### 5.12.1 Subsoil (natural)

The natural subsoil was not encountered in this trench due to the presence of shallow structural features. These structures survived at a depth of 0.4m below ground level, at a height of 122.5m AOD.

### 5.12.2 Archaeological features and deposits

At the southern end of the trench was an L shaped structure **11006** constructed of machine-cut, unfrogged, 3inch red bricks. This would have constituted the corner of a building. The rest of which continued into the western section. Attached to the southeast facing elevation of this wall was a brick floor surface **11005**. This was made up of a mixture of machine-made, unfrogged, 3 inch, red and engineering bricks. A 3.75m x 3m section of flooring was exposed. Set into this floor surface were two large parallel laid wooden sleepers **11004** with regularly cut square holes cut into them. These appeared to be contemporarily laid with the floor surface and are likely to have been a machine base, the square holes having supported the frame for the machine above. The use of timber in machine bases is well known as it absorbed the shock and vibrations of a variety of machines. Examples of these type of machine bases can be seen on contemporary sites such as Wednesbury Forge, Sandwell (Mitchell 2007). Situated to the north of this building were a group of ceramic salt-glazed drains. Drain **11008** was orientated northwest to southeast and was set into a regular linear cut **11009**. In the centre of the trench was a further drain **11010** orientated northeast to southwest. This was also set into a regular linear cut **11011**. The final drain was located at the northern end of the trench **11012** and was orientated east to west. It was set in a linear cut **11013**. These drains are likely to be associated with the occupation of the edge tool manufactory.

These features were covered by a contaminated silt levelling layer **11001**, which contained a high percentage of coals and gravel inclusions. Within this layer were lenses of demolition material **11002/11003** made up of brick fragments gravel and silty sand. The trench was then sealed by a 0.3 m thick modern build up of topsoil **11000**.

## 6 SUMMARY

### 6.1 Archaeological features and deposits

Archaeological features were found within all of the 11 trenches, some of which can have more archaeological significance attached to them than the others. The archaeological features can be divided into distinct areas broadly corresponding with the areas defined in the written scheme of investigation (Birmingham Archaeology 2007). The features identified on the west of site were all associated with the irrigation of agricultural land and periodic dumping of material from the manufactory. The features identified on the east of site relate to the demolished manufactory and confirm its presence and preservation. Dating of these features has been possible through map regression of the manufactory and the relative dating of structural features exposed.

The principle dated features and deposits were:

- Early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century floor surfaces and contemporary brick walls (Trench 10).
- Early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century forging hearth flues and associated brick walls and yard surfaces (Trench 9).
- 19<sup>th</sup>-century machine base and associated brick walls and floor surface (Trench 11).
- Late-19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century concrete floor surfaces and foundation pads (Trenches 7 and 10).
- 19<sup>th</sup> century field drains (Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4)

In addition to these features further undated features were also identified:

- Linear ditches cut into the natural clay and subsequently silted-up (Trench 6).

### 6.2 Overburden and topsoil

Overlying all the features within Trenches 5-10 was a 0.4m—1.4m build up of overburden levels. These overburden levels were predominantly composed of crushed brick, industrial waste (including clinker and slag) and silts. The occurrence of this overburden was predominantly due to the periodic rebuilding and levelling of the manufactory site and the eventual abandonment and levelling. It was also the result of the clearance of waste from the forging and grinding processes on site. There appeared to be a relatively modern build up of topsoil on the eastern side of site and a more gradual and defined accumulation of topsoil on the agricultural western side of site.

## 7 THE FINDS

### 7.1 The pottery

The ceramic evidence encountered on site was sparse, this is however, usual for an industrial site as the ceramics are more prevalent on domestic sites. Industrial sites are less likely to reveal ceramics as they were usually kept clean and rubbish was disposed of in a more uniform fashion.

Within the fill of field drain cut **3003** was an assemblage of domestic ceramics dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the period of the occupation of the manufactory. The assemblage consisted primarily of white, grey and pale cream glazed stoneware's. There were also transfer and hand painted white glazed earthenware's.



Some un-stratified ceramics from trench 4 date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and consisted of one black glazed body sherd with purple slip underglaze and one dark brown manganese glazed rim sherd, both of which were roughly made domestic sherds.

The few sherds identified were from the western side of site away from the main area of the manufactory. They provide evidence of occupation from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>-century period and are more likely to be associated with the agricultural usage of this area of site.

## 7.2 Other finds

A sandstone grindstone (see plate 10) was identified from within demolition deposit **7005**. Half of the grindstone survived and the dimensions were 0.5m in diameter x 0.2m in depth. Sandstone grindstones were inferior in quality to millstone grit and provide evidence of that they were probably sourced locally. It had seen significant use as it was smoothed on the outer grinding edge and had been re-cut to allow better grip for grinding. The central hole was circular and 0.1m in diameter and there was evidence of subtle chamfering where the drive shaft would have been clamped. The grindstone itself would have sat within a grinding pit and turned using line shafting taken from a power source, which during the early period of the manufactory was likely to have been steam power. There would have been many more of these grindstones when the manufactory was operational. This particular type of grindstone was directly comparable to those found at Wednesbury Forge, Sandwell, also used for edge tool grinding, and in this case gun barrel grinding, dated between the 18<sup>th</sup> to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Mitchell 2007).

Part of a steel drive shaft was identified from the upper levels of levelling material within trench 8, (see plate 15) this would have connected directly to the power source. It consisted of a hollow steel tube with a coupling attached at one end by regularly spaced bolts, it was broken at the other end but 2.6m of it survived, the diameter was 0.16m. This end of the drive shaft would have transferred the power to additional shafting.

## 8 DISCUSSION

The natural geological substrate was identified at approximately 0.3m to 0.8m below present ground level on the western side of site and between 1.15m and 2m below ground level on the eastern side of site, this was due to the natural slope of the land towards the Wash Brook and subsequent up-building of the land by human intervention within this area. The archaeological features identified were predominantly of 19<sup>th</sup>-century origin and they provide confirmation of the documentary and cartographic sources.

Trenches 1 to 5 provided limited evidence of human intervention. These trenches were situated on the western side of site which was historically an area of open field systems.

A collection of ceramic field drains and gullies existed, associated with the irrigation of this agricultural land. Each was constructed of similar materials in a similar fashion. They appear to date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards confirmed by the dated ceramics from the surrounding fill deposits. There was limited evidence of periodic dumping of materials from the manufactory in this area, it had otherwise remained relatively free from construction or alterations. Residual fragments of 18<sup>th</sup>-century ceramics suggest an earlier presence on this site.

There was structural and artifactual evidence confirming the presence of a manufactory on the eastern site of site. The structural evidence can be separated into phases corresponding with the evidence within the ordnance survey mapping. Walls and floor surfaces relating to the early period of the manufactory were exposed within trenches 9 and 10. Later-19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century

reconstruction and site development was identified in trenches 9, 10 and 11. This predominantly consisted of replacement of brick with concrete (such as the floors within trench 11). Evidence of various phases of building were also apparent and different periods of brick build were clearly evident.

Evidence of the manufactories' specific processes were also exposed. The possible location of forging hearth flues were exposed within trench 9 and the timber sleepers representing a machine base were identified within trench 11. The grindstone fragment confirmed the process of edge-tool grinding and the possible drive shaft provided evidence of the technique of power transmission.

The industrial deposits (including various types of slag and clinkers) used within the levelling layers can be used to further identify specific processes employed during the life of the manufactory.

## **9 IMPLICATIONS**

The evaluation has successfully characterised the archaeological remains across the site. The western side of site is unlikely to reveal further substantial archaeological deposits due to its known historical use as agricultural land. Much of this area nearest the present railway verge and canal has been significantly developed and the survival of older archaeological remains is limited.

Archaeological research on the post- medieval iron industry has traditionally focused on large monumental features and other upstanding remains. The archaeological investigation of forges and foundries by contrast has often been neglected. This project is able to contribute to this topic. The manufactory site was identified within the trenches on the eastern side of site as anticipated. The preservation of the structural deposits in some area is good and remains are located close to the present ground surface. Only the foundations survive but the potential for further investigating processes, layout, and chronological sequence remains high.

On consultation with Debbie Langley and Stephen Dean of Staffordshire County Council a watching brief has been recommended in the eastern half of the site as part of a negative condition of the planning consent Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, Part 30 (DoE 1990). This will be confined to the area of the former manufactory site. The area should be defined by the results of the current evaluation as an area to the northeast of the current upstanding buildings evaluated by Trenches 7–11. The watching brief would entail archaeological monitoring and recording of the excavations associated with the initial removal of foundations and below ground structures as part of the demolition and remedial groundworks. The principal remains lie close to the surface and would be associated with the initial clearance of the site.

The scope of such work would be defined in consultation with Staffordshire County Council prior to commencement of groundwork.

## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The project was commissioned by Countrywide Homes Limited, on behalf of GC Cannock Limited. Thanks are due to Andy Williams for their co-operation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks also go to Steve dean and Debbie Langley who monitored the project on behalf of Staffordshire County Council. Work on site was undertaken by Anthony Aston, Mark Charles, James Coyne and William Mitchell. William Mitchell produced the written report which was illustrated by Nigel Dodds and Helen Moulden, and edited by Chris Hewitson who also managed the project for Birmingham Archaeology.

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## Appendix 1 – Stratigraphic Deposits

Strat No	Context Type	Description	Provisional date
1000	Layer	Dark brown silt, topsoil	Modern
1001	Layer	Mid dark brown silt, small amount of clay	Modern
1002	Fill	Mid orangey brown silty clay	Post Med
1003	Cut	Linear, moderate u-shaped gully	Post Med
1004	Fill	Mid orange brown silty clay	Post Med
1005	Cut	Linear, steep u-shaped drain, nw-se	Post Med
1006	Natural	Pale orange white clay, some silt, small pebbles & stones	
2000	Layer	Dark brown organic silt, topsoil	Modern
2001	Layer	Light-mid brown organic silt, subsoil	Modern
2002	Fill	Light brown sandy silt	Modern
2003	Cut	Linear vertical sides drain	Modern
2004	Fill	Light brown sandy silt	Modern
2005	Cut	Linear vertical sides, drain	Modern
2006	Fill	Light brown sandy silt	Modern
2007	Cut	Linear vertical sides drain	Modern
2008	Natural	Pale orange silty clay with gravel & large stones	
3000	Layer	Dark black brown sandy silt topsoil	Modern
3001	Layer	Mid orange brown sandy silt subsoil	Modern
3002	Fill	Light brown sandy silt	Modern
3003	Cut	Linear u-shaped moderate sided drain	Modern
3004	Natural	Light brown orange silty sand with small stones	
4000	Layer	Dark brown organic silt with some stones, topsoil	Modern
4001	Layer	Mid brown silt with some stones, subsoil	Modern
4002	Natural	Pale orange white clay sand silt with stones & pebbles	
5000	Layer	Mid-dark brown sandy silt with 40% demolition rubble, industrial waste & round pebbles, topsoil	Modern
5001	Layer	Pale orange brown silty sand, 30% rounded pebbles, subsoil	
5002	Natural	Pale orange sandy clay, 20-30% rounded pebbles	
5003	Layer	Dark brown black sandy silt, base of bonfire	
6000	Layer	Mid-dark brown sandy silt with 40% demolition rubble, industrial waste & round pebbles, topsoil	
6001	Layer	Pale orange brown silty sand, 30% rounded pebbles, subsoil	
6002	Layer	Dark black brown silty demolition material including slag & brick fragments	
6003	Layer	Pale patchy cream orange, degraded brick, tile, slag & limestone, flecks of charcoal	
6004	Natural	Pale orange sandy clay, 20-30% rounded pebbles	
6005	Fill	Mid brown silty sand, 10% rounded pebbles	
6006	Cut	Linear moderate u-shaped ne-sw ditch	

Strat No	Context Type	Description	Provisional date
6007	Fill	Mid-dark brown sandy silt with 30% rounded pebbles	
6008	Cut	Linear nw-se irregular shaped with steep east side & moderate west side, drainage ditch	
6009	Fill	Light brown silty sand, 20% rounded pebbles, also demolition firebricks	
6010	Cut	Linear nw-se irregular shaped with vertical sides of west side & moderate on east side, drainage ditch/gully	19th C?
6011	Masonry	Brick wall, stretcher bond, 1+ courses mid orange unfrogged, 230mm x 170mm x 75mm, runs ne-sw	L19th C
7000	Layer	Dark brown black sandy silt, topsoil	Modern
7001	Layer	Grey concrete, (in E.F.S.) base of building	Modern
7002	Layer	Grey concrete, (in W.F.S.) base of building	Modern
7003	Layer	Mixed orange grey brick rubble crushed concrete & mortar, demolition layer	Modern
7004	Masonry	N-S deep red brick wall, 3 courses in w.f.s. machine made bricks	Modern
7005	Layer	Mixed orange grey rubble crushed mortar, demolition layer	Modern
7006	Layer	Dark black silt coal, contaminated layer	
7007	Layer	Mid brown grey silty clay, alluvium layer	
7008	Natural	Mixed mid orange grey sandy clay, 50% gravel, 40% small stones	
8000	Layer	Dark blackish brown sandy silt, topsoil	
8001	Layer	Dark black silt coal	
8002	Layer	Bright orangey red silty sand, with bricks & gravel 60%, demolition layer	
8003	Layer	Yellowish orange rubble layer with bricks & gravel, demolition layer	
8004	Layer	Orange red demolition layer with bricks & gravel 60%	
8005	Layer	Yellowish orange demolition layer with bricks & gravel	
8006	Natural	Orange grey sandy clay, small stones & gravel	
8007	Fill	Dark black silt coal with gravel fill of drain	Modern
8008	Cut	Linear drain	Modern
9000	Layer	Dark brown black sand silt, garden topsoil	
9001	Layer	Mid-dark brown silt sand 80%, brick rubble 20%	Modern
9002	Layer	Mixed orange whiteish brown, rubble & cement, make-up layer for brick surface	Modern
9003	Layer	Black contaminated sandy clay & crushed coal, industrial waste layer	
9004	Masonry	Red brick floor, n-s, mid orange grey bricks (220mm x 100mm) machine cut, dry stone mortar	Modern
9005	Masonry	Red brick e-w wall 5 courses, light orange machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm), cement	Modern
9006	Masonry	Red brick n-s wall, 4 courses, mid-light orange machine cut (210mm x 70mm), cemented.	

Strat No	Context Type	Description	Provisional date
9007	Masonry	Red brick wall, 2 courses, mid dark reddish orange machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm) cemented	Modern
9008	Layer	Creamish brown cement overlying bricks on eastern edge of trench, base of wall 9006	Modern
9009	Natural	Mid orange brown sandy clay 60% gravel, 40% small stones	
10001	Layer	Dark brownish black sandy silt, topsoil	
10002	Layer	Mixed dark brown grey orange silty sand 40% rubble & mortar 60%	
10003	Masonry	Red brick floor, stained black, machine cut unfrogged bricks (220mm x 70mm)	Modern
10004	Masonry	Red brick e-w wall, light orange machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm) cemented	Modern
10005	Masonry	Red brick floor, light orange unfrogged machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm)	Modern
10006	Masonry	Concrete floor, stained black	Modern
10007	Masonry	Red brick floor, light orange unfrogged machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm)	Modern
10008	Masonry	Red brick e-w wall, 1 course, orange machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm)	Modern
10009	Masonry	Red brick e-w wall, 14 courses stretcher bond, orange machine cut bricks (220mm x 110mm x 70mm)	Modern
11000	Layer	Dark black brown silt with small stones, topsoil	Modern
11001	Layer	Dark black silt coal & gravel, contaminated coal subsoil	
11002	Layer	Orange yellow silty sand with brick & gravel 40%, demolition layer?	
11003	Layer	Reddish orange silty sand with brick gravel & small stones, demolition layer?	
11004	Wood	Dark black brown wooden sleepers for tramway	Post Med
11005	Masonry	Floor around 11004, orange red & blue engineering bricks, machine cut (230mm x 110mm x 75mm)	Post Med
11006	Masonry	Red brick ne-sw wall, orange red machine cut bricks (230mm x 110mm x 75mm)	Post Med
11007	Layer	Dark grey black silty sand with small stones 40%, possible floor surface	
11008	Fill	Yellow orange silty sand fill of drain	Modern
11009	Cut	Linear ne-sw drain, excavated by machine	Modern
11010	Fill	Yellow orange silty sand fill of drain	Modern
11011	Cut	Linear ne-sw drain excavated by machine	Modern
11012	Fill	Yellow orange silty sand, fill of drain	Modern
11013	Cut	Linear n-s drain, excavated by machine	Modern

**Appendix 2**

**BRIEF FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**WALSALL ROAD, GREAT WYRLEY, CANNOCK,  
SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE**

**October 2007**

- 1.1 A planning application (South Staffordshire Council 07/00667/OUT) has been received for the residential development of 184 dwellings, plus public open space on land between the Walsall Road and the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (M6 Toll).
- 1.2 Archaeological evaluation works and the watching brief associated with the construction of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road revealed structural evidence of Gilpins' Basin (PRN 04906), which appears to have been backfilled with colliery waste. It is possible that similar remains associated with Gilpin's basin and the 'edge-tool manufactory' (PRN 51790) marked on the first edition 6" OS map may survive across the proposed development site. The edge-tool works was established by William Gilpin in 1806 and is marked as an iron works on the 1838 Tithe Map. The Directory describes the site as including a forge, tilt, rolling and grinding mills and furnaces. Some of the original 1806 buildings were said to be still standing in the late 1950s.
- 1.3 The Watling Street Roman Road (PRN 05153) extends along the northern boundary of the site and remains associated with it may be found in the northern portion of the proposed development site.
- 1.4 The contact officer for this document is :

Debbie Langley  
Landscape Archaeologist  
Tel: 01785 277285



## **2.0 BRIEF FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION (TRIAL TRENCHING)**

Planning Policy Guidance 16 (Archaeology and Planning) states that local planning authorities can expect developers to provide the results of archaeological desk-based assessments and field evaluations as part of their planning applications for sites where there is good reason to believe there are remains of archaeological importance. Whilst a desk-based assessment will sometimes provide sufficient archaeological information to determine an application it will more often lead on to a recommendation for field evaluation from the County Archaeological Service. Field evaluation can involve a wide range of survey and investigative techniques, including fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial trenching.

This brief sets out the requirements for trial trenching which will form part of the field evaluation being conducted at this site. Trial trenching is considered necessary as the second element of the evaluative process in order to ground truth the results of the initial geophysical survey.

### **Procedure and Professional Standards**

Trial trenching should be undertaken in accordance with the "Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations" published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 1999). Each project must be governed by a project design which has been agreed in writing by the County Archaeologist. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information (especially any existing assessment or evaluation reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in the Historic Environment Record). It should conform to the guidelines set out in paragraph 3.2.19 of the IFA guidelines and should in particular specify:

- The project's objectives.
- The location of trial trenches and any constraints (to be shown on a plan).
- Procedures for project management (to follow the principles set out in Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP) (English Heritage, 1991)).
- The expertise of the project team. The project manager should be a named Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (MIFA) or be of equivalent experience. The composition and experience of the project team should be described. Specialists should be identified where required (e.g. for finds and environmental work). CVs should be supplied outlining the relevant qualifications and experience of key personnel - where relevant this should include specific reference to knowledge of particular periods and local/ regional traditions.
- Reporting and Archiving arrangements.
- An outline of the proposed timetable and staff resources - this must be non-binding and presented "for information only"
- Contingency arrangements.

### **Objectives**

Trial trenching should aim to gather sufficient information to generate a reliable predictive model of the extent, character, date, state of preservation and depth of burial of important

archaeological remains within the area of study. In this case the following specific objectives have been identified:

- To determine the presence/absence activity across the site during the Roman period associated with the Roman Road. It will also determine the survival of structural evidence relating to the edge-tool manufactory and identify production processes and the movement of production across the site where possible. It will also determine the presence/absence of industrial activity in the vicinity of Gilpin's basin and the relationship between the edge-tool manufactory and the canal basin built to serve it.
- To make recommendations for further work upon the site and identify specific areas of interest.

## **Fieldwork Methodology**

### Surveying

Accurate and precise surveying is essential. At the commencement of each fieldwork project a site grid should be carefully laid out by an experienced surveyor and related to the national grid (the accuracy of any previously surveyed grids should also be checked). All subsequent fieldwork should use the site grid. The grid should be established using semi-permanent survey stations or by relating the survey to equivalent fixed points. Trial trench locations should be plotted to within  $\pm 1\text{m}$  relative to the national grid. Within an excavation or survey area internal grid points should be located to within an error of no more than  $\pm 0.1\text{m}$  relative to the site grid. On most sites the use of an EDM or theodolite will be essential to set out site grids. All levels should be recorded relative to an Ordnance Survey datum level.

### Machine stripping

Trial trenches are normally a minimum of c 2.0m wide, although wider trenches or "boxes" are sometimes more appropriate. Machinery may be used to remove topsoil and overburden to reveal the significant archaeological deposits. Such excavation should be undertaken in level spits using an appropriate machine using a toothless bucket and working under archaeological supervision. **Archaeological deposits should not be removed by machine except where such a procedure has been sanctioned by the County Archaeologist.** Particular care should be taken when controlling machining in situations where vertical stratigraphy is to be expected or where it is considered that significant archaeological deposits may be vulnerable to damage - in such circumstances machining should be controlled by experienced senior staff. Potentially significant deposits should not be removed by machine before their character is reasonably understood.

Subject to site constraints, trial trenches should be excavated as follows:

- 250m of trial trenching across the eastern section of the development site, using the first edition OS map and the 1838 tithe map where appropriate to locate the trenches to be excavated across the building footprints. A section of the tithe map covering Great Wyrley, including a portion of the proposed development site, can be found at <http://www.places.staffspasttrack.org.uk/> under Great Wyrley. A further 200m of trial trenching to cover the western half of the site to assess potential Roman or further Post Medieval/Industrial industrial activity. The trenching strategy should look to maximize the understanding of the car park area and the layout should be agreed with the Landscape Archaeologist prior to commencing any archaeological works on site.
- A contingency for an additional 50m of machine trenching should also be allowed. This should only be used where further testing of features is required to answer specific questions concerning the site. The use of the contingency trenching will only take place

following discussion with the Landscape Archaeologist or their representative.

### Cleaning and Recording in plan-form

Each trench should be cleaned by hand sufficiently to allow the identification and planning of archaeological features and scanned with a metal-detector. Where archaeological features appear to be absent sufficient work should be done to demonstrate this. Each trench should be planned at an appropriate scale (normally 1:20 where complex deposits are present or 1:50 or 1:100 in areas of lesser complexity). Spot levels should be taken as appropriate.

Where archaeological features are thought to be present, a sufficient quantity of said features shall be investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed. All features thus investigated will be recorded in plan and section and all finds recovered shall be retained for analysis.

The stratigraphy of all trenches shall be recorded even where no archaeological deposits are identified. Plans and sections of all features shall be recorded. The site archive will include plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent.

The record of the extent and vulnerability of features will be sufficiently detailed to facilitate discussions regarding the need for preservation beneath any future potential development, or any other mitigation measures including further excavation or recording.

### Sampling

Sufficient features should be sampled by hand excavation to achieve the project objectives. For discrete features such as pits and postholes this will normally involve half-sectioning a representative sample. Linear features should be sectioned. Individual complex features such as kilns or burials should be cleaned and recorded but, subject to the agreement of the County Archaeological Service, it will normally be preferable to leave them in-situ (if necessary with specific protection against disturbance during backfilling). If deeply stratified deposits are encountered it may be appropriate to excavate sample boxes and/or examine the stratigraphy revealed in the section of excavated cut features.

Should sealed waterlogged deposits be encountered during the trial trenching exercise bulk samples should be taken in accordance with English Heritage Guidelines and retained for analysis during the post-excavation assessment stage of the archaeological work.

### Context recording

Each context should be recorded on pro-forma records which should include the following minimum details: character; contextual relationships; detailed description (dimensions and shape; soil components, colour, texture and consistency); associated finds; interpretation and phasing as well as cross-references to the drawn, photographic and finds registers. Normally each context should be recorded on an individual record. Sections should be drawn through all significant cut features and levelled to ordnance datum. Trench sides should also be drawn in section where they contain significant information.

A black and white photographic record should be maintained including photos of all significant features and overall photos of each area or trench. Selected colour transparencies should also be taken.

### Artefact and Ecofact collection and recording

All stratified finds should be collected by context or, where appropriate, individually recorded in 3 dimensions. Unstratified finds should only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. Provision should be made for on-site conservation advice for the lifting and treatment of fragile objects. Finds of "treasure" must be reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act procedures.

Collection policies for structural remains and industrial residues have been set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA, 1993). The presence of such materials within a context should always be recorded and, where they are considered to be of importance, the evaluation strategy should aim to quantify their occurrence, even where comprehensive retention is not considered appropriate.

Waterlogged wood should be treated accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage, 1996) and left in-situ where this is practical and its long-term preservation is achievable.

Human remains should be left in-situ, covered and protected. Where excavation is necessary it can only take place under appropriate Home Office and environmental health regulations and, if appropriate, in compliance with the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendments) Act 1981. The only exception is where excavations are being undertaken in a churchyard under a faculty issued by the Chancellor of Oxford Diocese (in such cases the faculty requirements should be followed). In certain situations special arrangements may be required for the recovery of samples for DNA analysis.

An initial assessment of the site's palaeo-environmental potential should be made by the project manager in consultation with the County Archaeologist. Where a site may have significant potential it may be necessary to obtain specialist advice and undertake sampling in accordance with a programme agreed with English Heritage's Adviser in Archaeological Science. A contingency should be allowed for this.

### **Post-Excavation Methodology**

A report will be required for every field evaluation and should always contain the following elements:

- A non-technical summary
- The objectives of the project
- The circumstances and date at which it was undertaken
- The identity of the organisation and individuals carrying out the work (in particular the names of the project director, site supervisor and any specialists)
- A summary written account of the evaluation strategy and the results of the project with appropriate supporting illustrations.
- A site location plan at 1:2500 or 1:10000 as appropriate.
- A gazetteer, referenced summary, and location plan (at 1:2500 or 1:10 000) of all previously known and newly discovered sites within or adjacent to the evaluation site.
- A 1:2500 or 1:10,000 scale plan indicating areas surveyed by each method; present landuse;

geology and topography.

- A conclusion, including a confidence rating
- An index to and the proposed location of the archive
- References
- A copy of the Activity and Source Submission Form (Appendix 1) will be completed for each site investigated.

Reports on evaluations which identified significant archaeological remains should also include:

- Detailed description and plans (at appropriate scales) of any surveys or trial trenches which provided significant archaeological information.
- Finds quantification and assessment
- Environmental archaeology assessment
- A summary of the extent, depth and state of preservation of archaeological deposits across the site.
- Where more than one technique has been used, the report should integrate the results of the trenching with the previous survey work.

In addition:

- All plans should be clearly related to the national grid.
- All levels should be quoted relative to ordnance datum.
- *If a report includes assessments of archaeological importance or recommendations for further work these will be noted but will not be binding on the County Archaeologist.*

#### Submission of the report

- **Two** copies of the final report should be supplied to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record. A digital copy of all text should also be supplied, preferably in Word format. A copy of any specialist papers relating to the project should also be supplied to the County Archaeologist.
- One copy of the report should also be supplied to the local planning authority.
- Reports submitted in support of planning applications are automatically considered to be public documents and will be made available for public consultation through the Historic Environment Record. Other reports will also be treated as a public document unless specifically identified as being confidential.

#### **Publication**

The written report will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment 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. A publication grant should be provided to the publishers in accordance with their requirements.

## **Archiving**

The archaeological contractor should endeavor to ensure that the site archive (including any artefacts recovered) are deposited in an acceptable condition with museum which is registered with the Museums and Galleries Commission and approved for the storage of archaeological archives. The preferred archive for Staffordshire is the Potteries Museum, Stoke on Trent. The procedures and requirements which must be followed for the deposit of archaeological archives with the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke on Trent are available from the Museum. A storage grant should be provided to the museum in accordance with their requirements.

The archaeological contractor should arrange for the archive to be copied on microfiche to the standard required by the National Monuments Record. One copy should be deposited with the NMR and a second copy with the County Historic Environment Record. The final report should also be forwarded to the ADS for inclusion on OASIS with text provided in Microsoft Word and images supplied as uncompressed Baseline TIFF v.6 –TIFs. Other alternatives are acceptable and the ADS website should be consulted to confirm acceptable formats.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring is carried out by the County Archaeologist or their representative, normally acting on behalf of the local planning authority, to ensure that projects are being carried out in accordance with the brief and approved project design, to enable the need for modifications to the project to be independently considered and validated and to control and validate the use of available contingencies.

A programme of monitoring should be agreed with the County Archaeologist or their representative in advance of fieldwork. The archaeological contractor should keep the County Archaeologist or their representative regularly informed of the project's progress and facilitate the monitoring of the project at each stage, including post-excitation. In particular, there should be no substantial modification of the approved brief and project design without the prior consent of the County Archaeologist and no fieldwork should be carried out without the service's knowledge and approval - the service should always be afforded the opportunity to observe archaeological excavations.

All monitoring visits will be documented by the County Archaeologist or their representative and the archaeological contractor will be informed of any perceived deficiencies.

The County Archaeologist or their representative should be informed at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected discoveries, especially where there may be a need to vary the project design. The archaeological contractor should carry out such reasonable contingency works as requested by the County Archaeologist within the resources defined in the project design.

## **Health and Safety**

**Health and Safety must take priority over archaeological requirements.** It is essential that all projects are carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined Health and Safety Policy. **Risk Assessments must be carried out for every field project.** If the risk assessment indicates it is necessary, the requirements of the brief can be varied in the

interests of health and safety (the County Archaeologist must be consulted and the proposed changes agreed in such cases

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Department of the Environment (1990). *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16). London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

English Heritage (1991). *Management of Archaeological Projects*.

English Heritage (1996). *Waterlogged wood. Guidelines on the Recording, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood*.

IFA (2001). *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations*.

OSA (2006). *The Friary Outer, Lichfield. Archaeological Desk Top Study*. OSA Report No: OSA06DT01. York, On Site Archaeology

SMA (1993). *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*.

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

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Staffordshire County Council  
Development Services Dept,  
Riverway, Stafford ST16 3TJ

Tel. (01785) 277290 - Fax (01785) 277364

**Appendix 3**  
**Staffordshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record**

**Activity and Source Submission Form.**

Submission date – February 2008

**Site Activity or Event**

Name of event

Archaeological Evaluation at land off Walsall Road, Great Wyreley, Cannock

**Location of event**

The site lies on land south of the M6 Toll Road, and to the east of the railway between Cannock and Walsall, to the northwest of Cherrington Drive and to the west the A34.

NGR [SJ 9850 0800

**Civil Parish**

Great Wyreley

**Brief Description of event**

Evaluation of land to the west of the Walsall Road and south of the M6 Toll Road as part of a proposal for planning permission on the land.

“Activity Type(s)” (highlight as appropriate) *Air Photography / Evaluation-trial excavation / Field Walking / Measured survey-drawing / Geophysical survey / Archaeological excavation-full / Archaeological excavation-part / Field survey / Photogrammetric survey / Rectified photo survey / Photographic record / AP interpretation / Salvage-rescue excavation / Watching brief / Environmental sampling / Post-excavation analysis / Documentary research*

**Commencement date** (eg. 01-May-1978)

10-12-2007

**Completion date** (eg. 02-Sept-1983)

31-01-2008

**Organisation or contractor details** (organisation name, address, telephone, e-mail etc.)

Birmingham Archaeology  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B15 2TT  
0121 414 5513

**Report Details**

Date: January 2008

**Type of document (highlight as appropriate)** *Written / Photographic / Cartographic / Drawn*  
Title

Land To The West Of Walsall Road, Great Wyreley, Cannock, Staffordshire, An Archaeological Evaluation 2007

**Author(s)**

Will Mitchell

**Brief summary of contents**

*This report outlines the results of an evaluation, carried out in December 2007. Eleven evaluation trenches between 20m x 1.6m and 50m x 1.6m were excavated at strategic positions across the site. The same general pattern of deposition was encountered across the eleven trenches. This consisted of a primary layer of pale-orange, silty clay identified at 0.3—2m below modern ground level. This was overlain by a mid-dark brown silt, overlain by a thin layer of topsoil. This pattern of deposition was more disturbed on the eastern side of site and included demolition and industrial levelling deposits due to the presence of the former 19<sup>th</sup>-century edge-tool manufactory, only the foundations of which remained.*

**Brief description of document**

Written Text with illustrations, bibliography and references. Appendices including stratigraphic list and design brief, 53 pages.



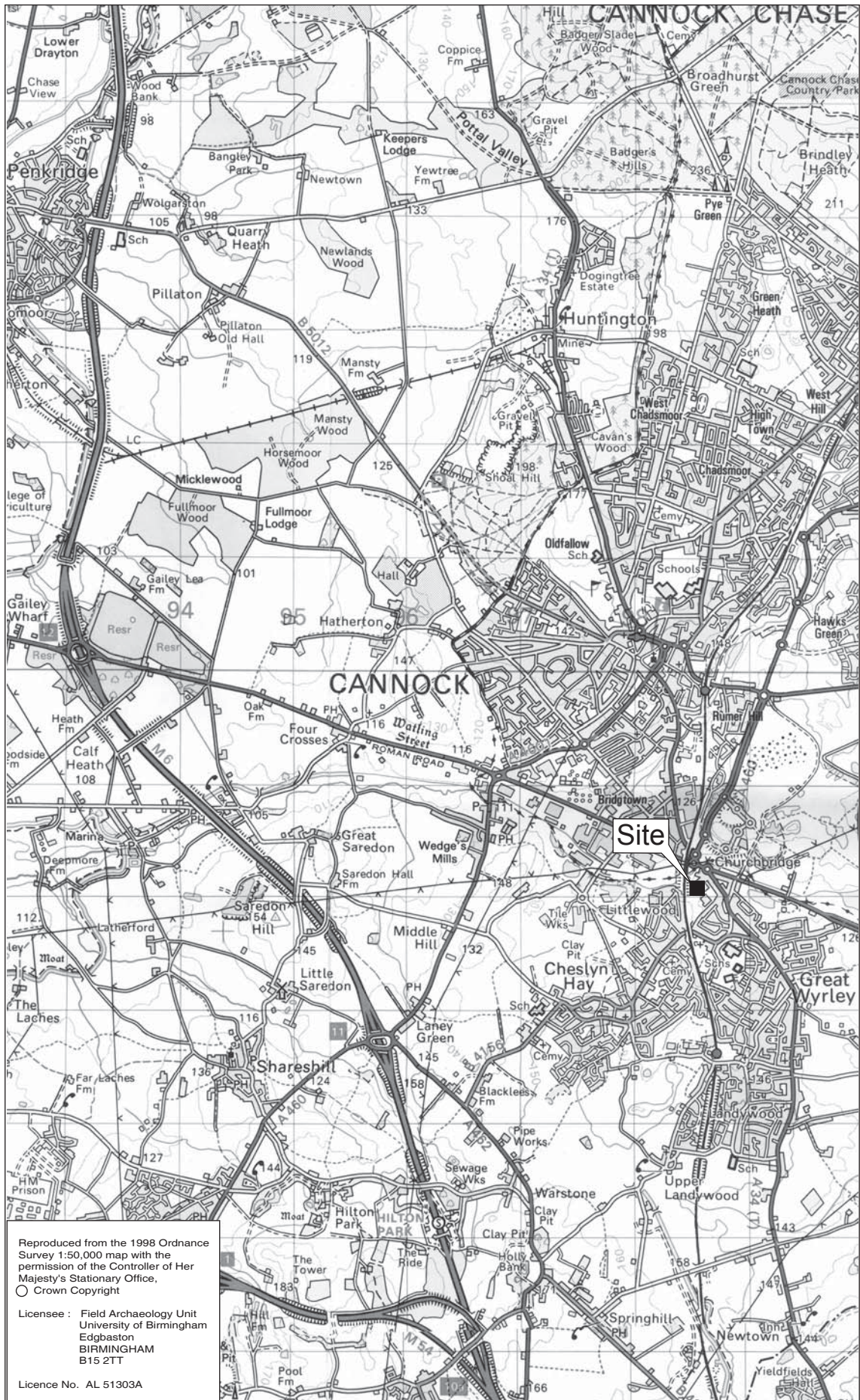


Fig.1

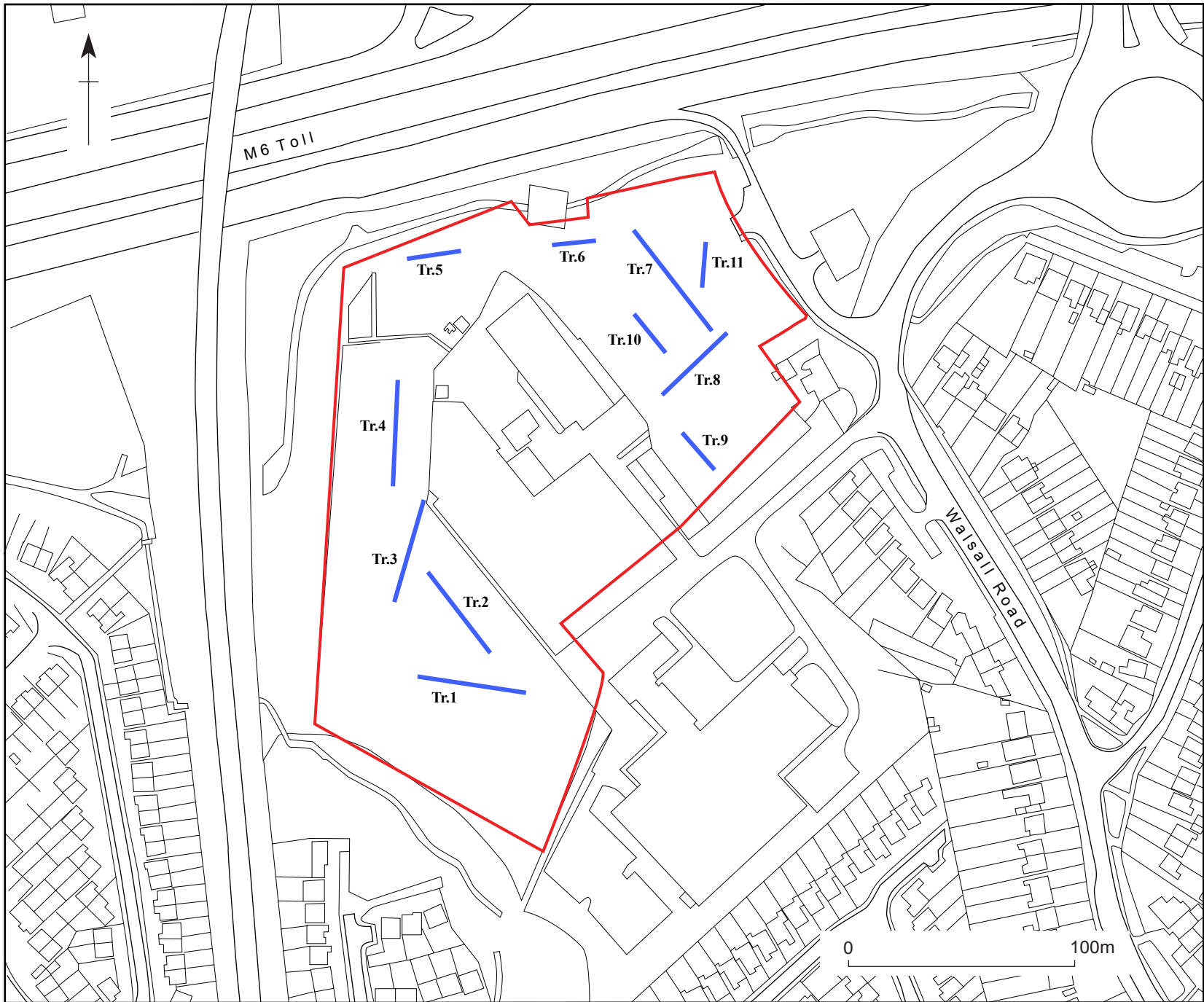


Fig.2

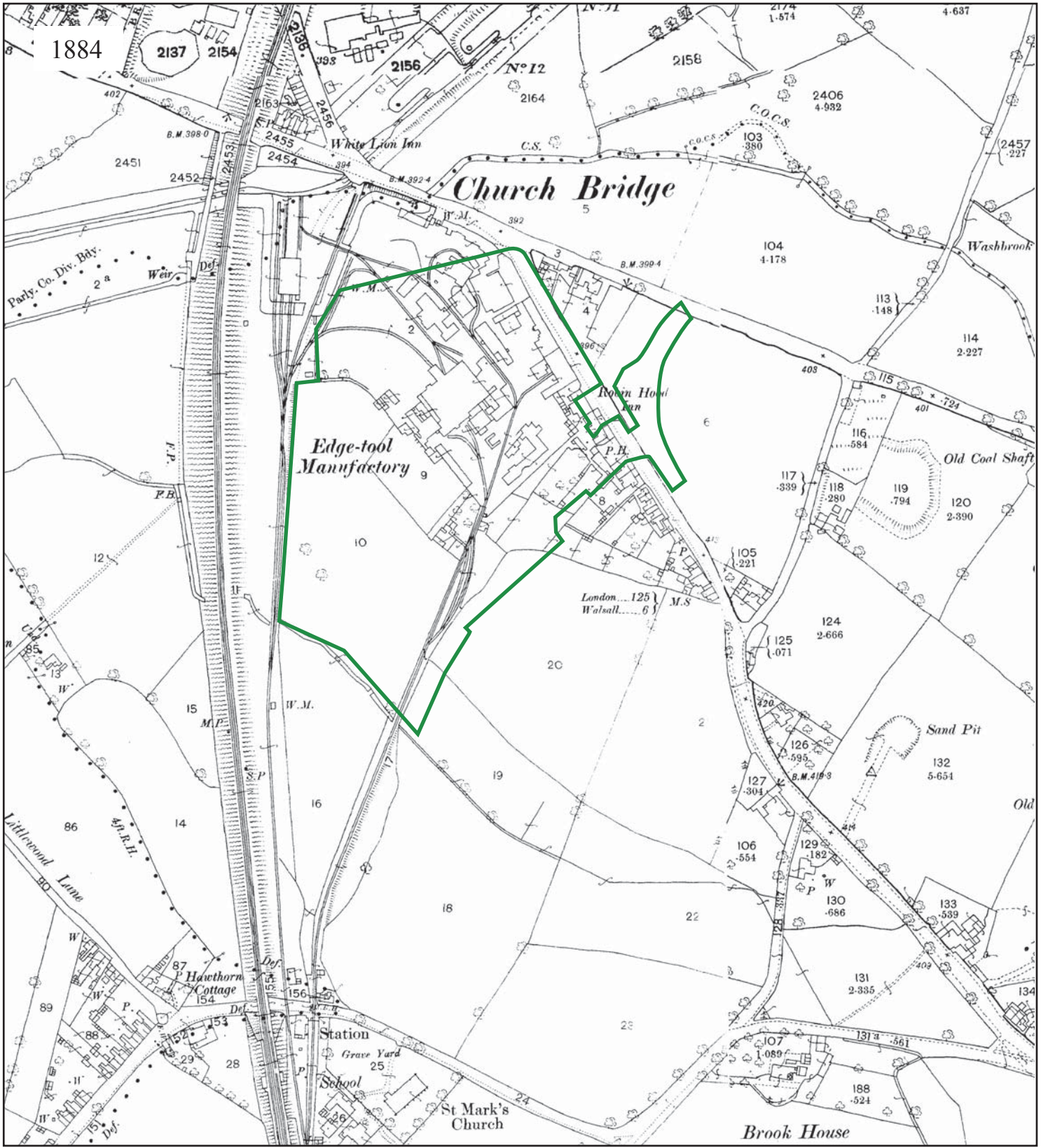


Fig.3

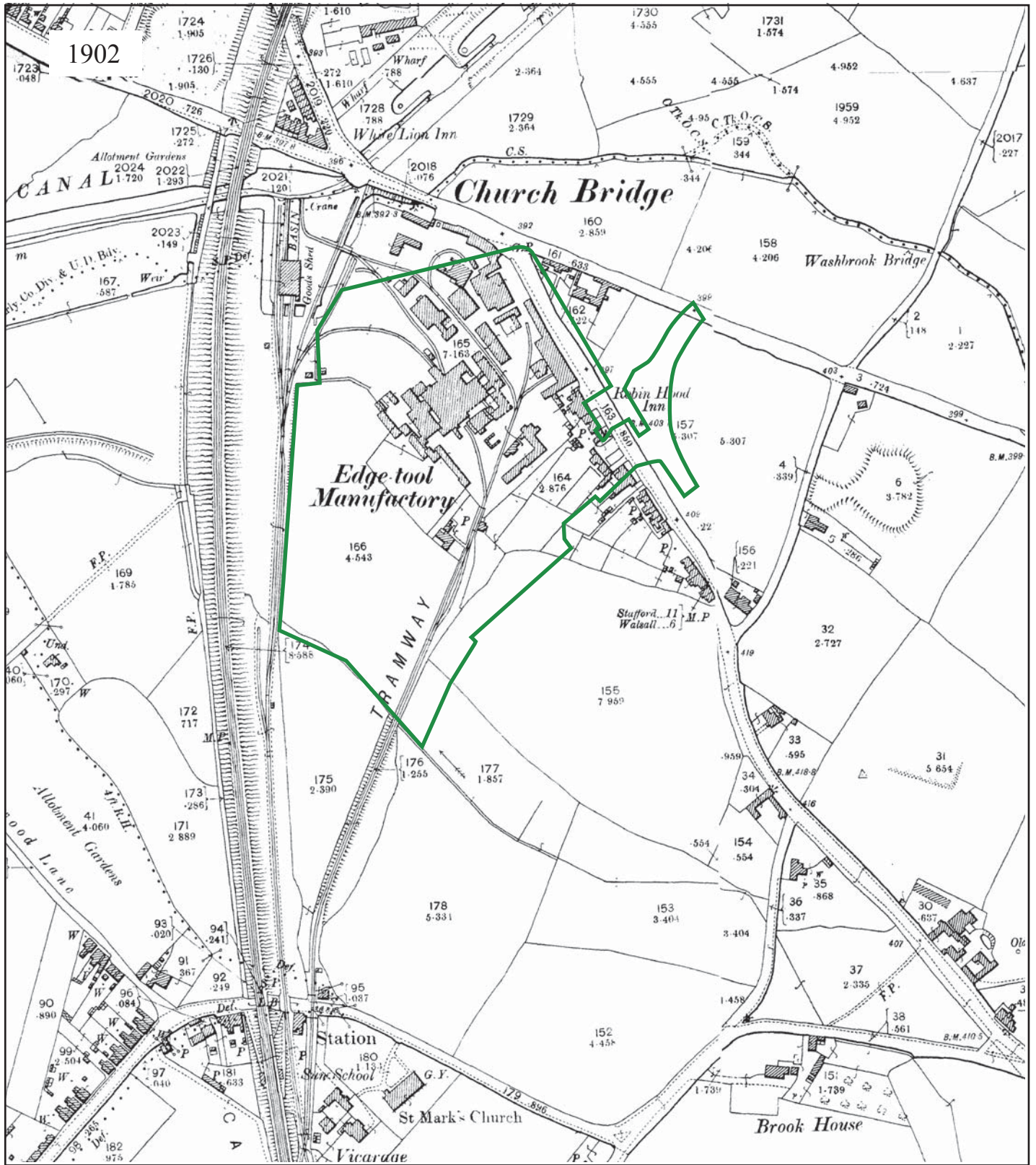


Fig.4

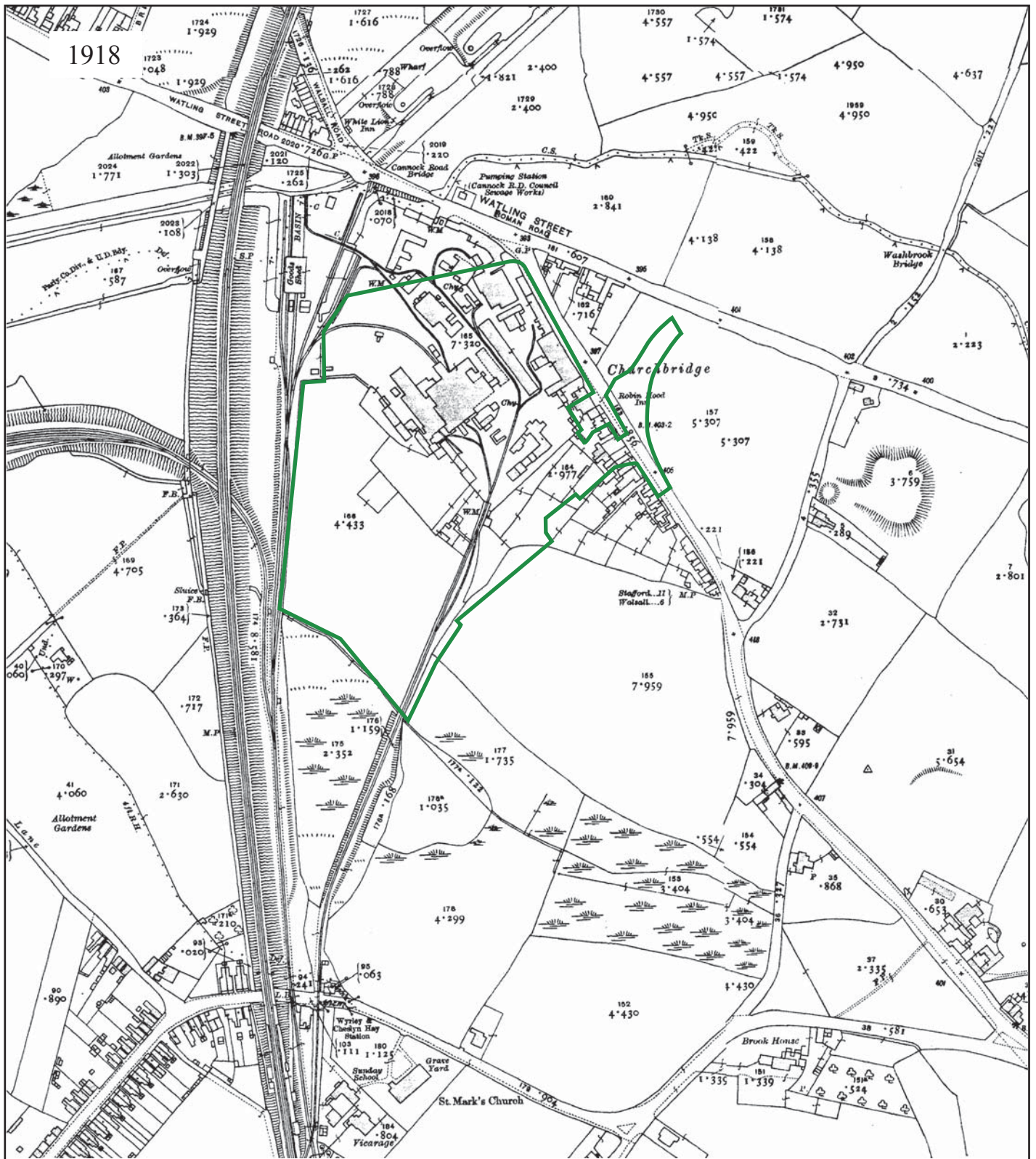


Fig.5

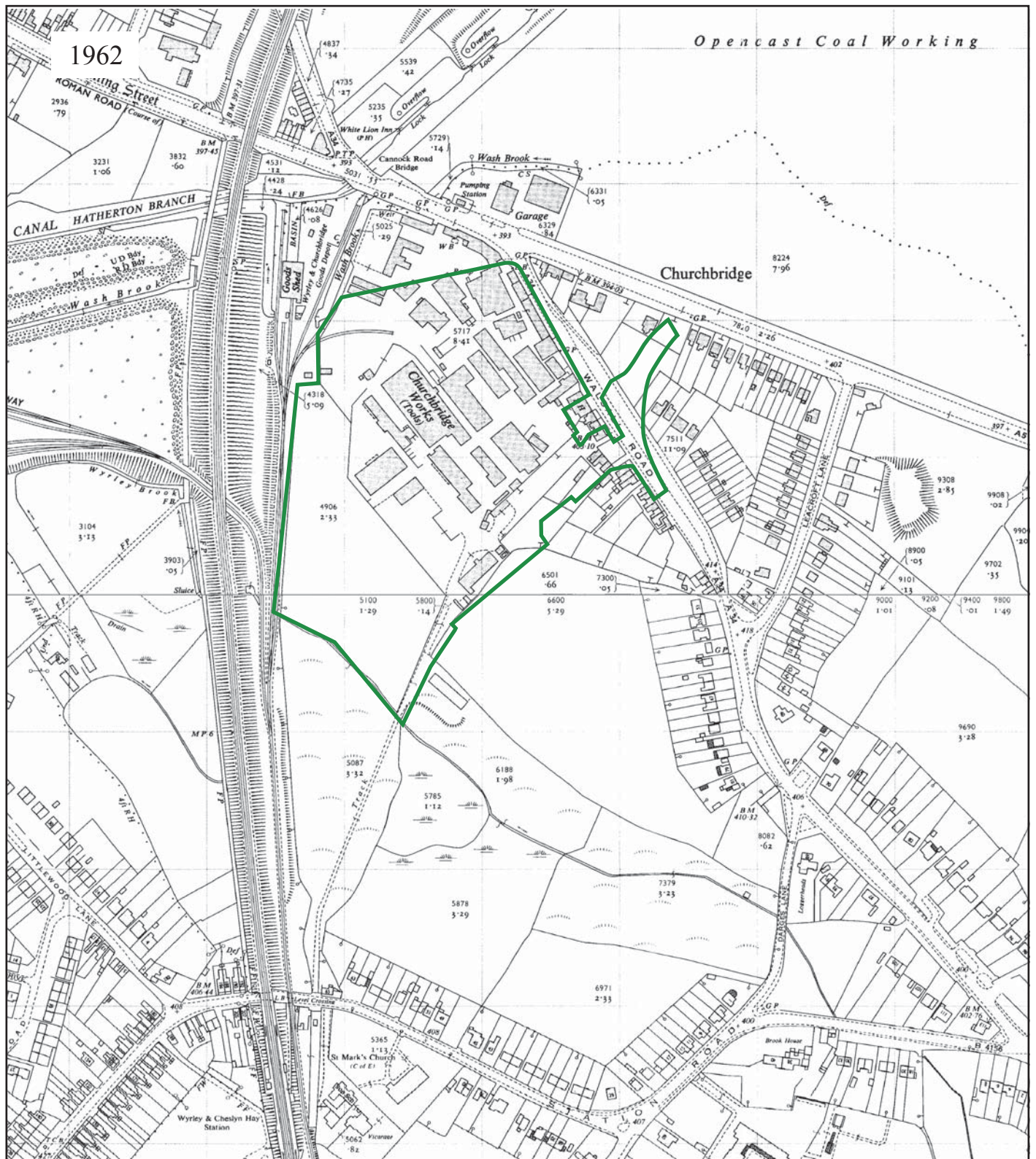
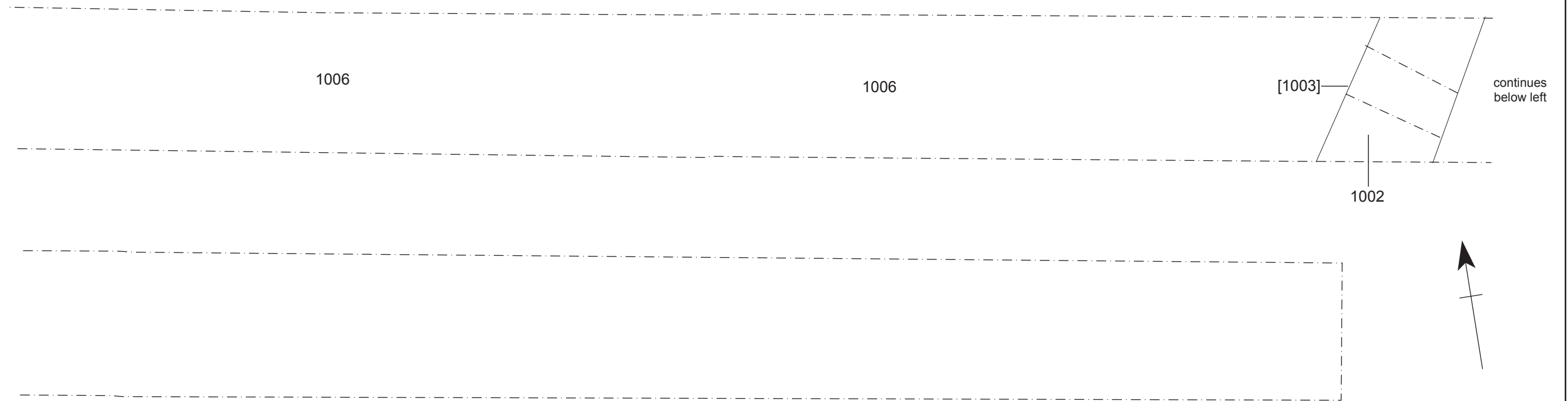
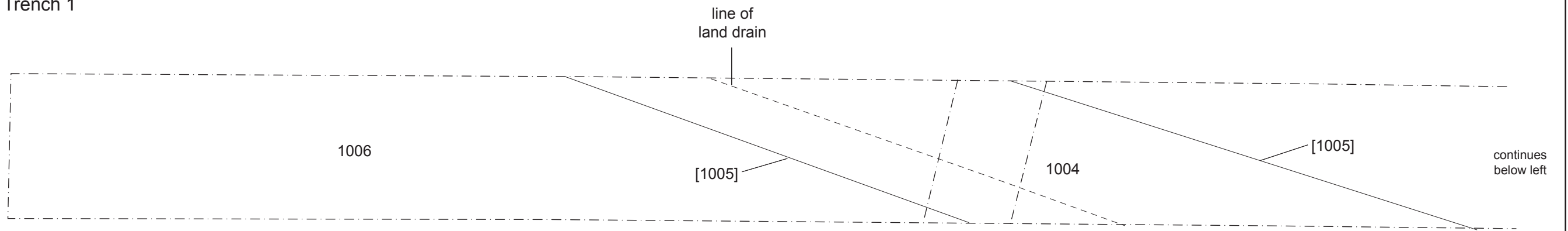


Fig.6



Fig.7

Trench 1



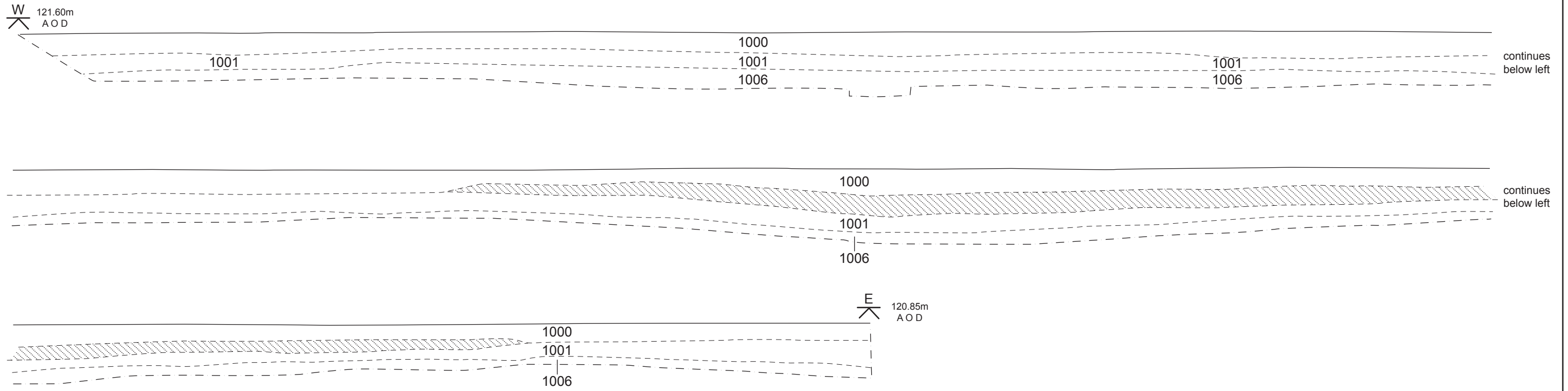
0 2m




Fig.8



Trench 1

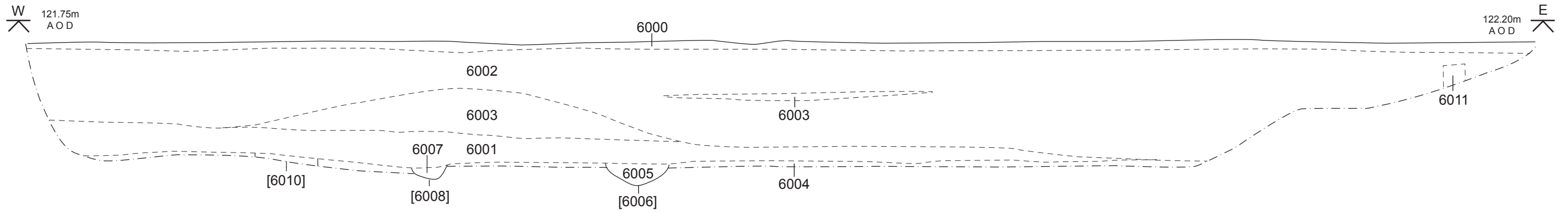


 Coal/clinker layer

0  2m

Fig.9

Trench 6



0 2m

Fig.10

# Trench 7

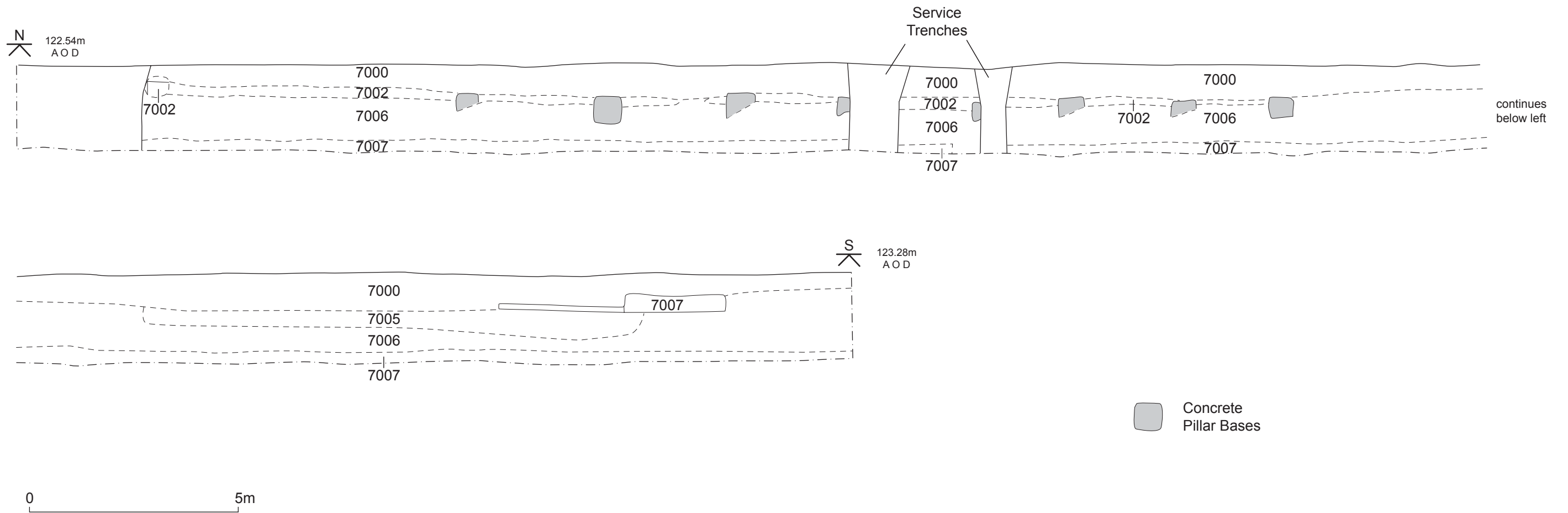


Fig.11

Trench 9

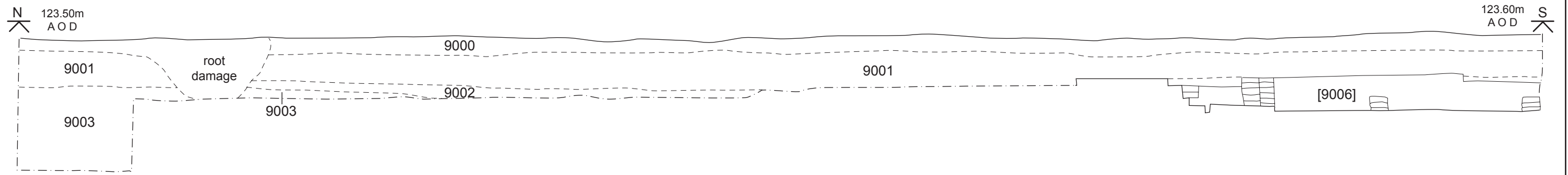
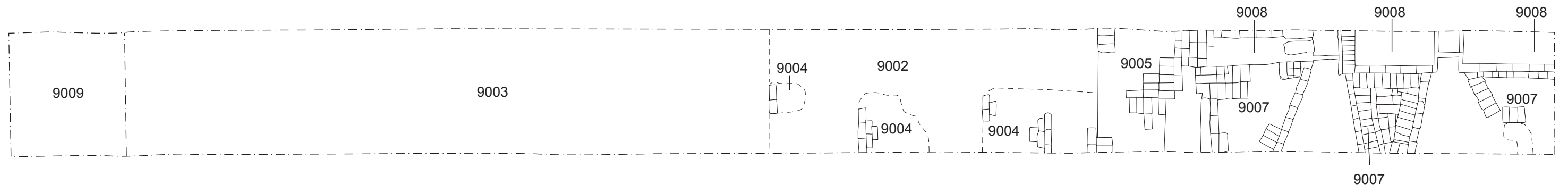
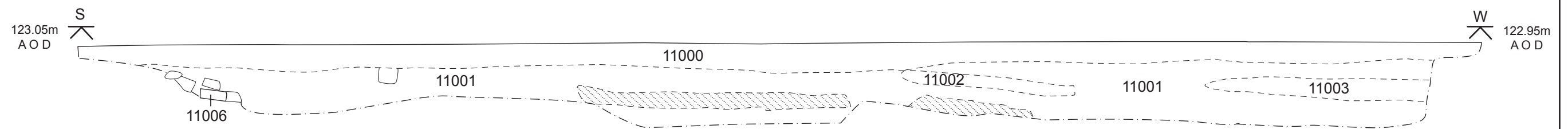
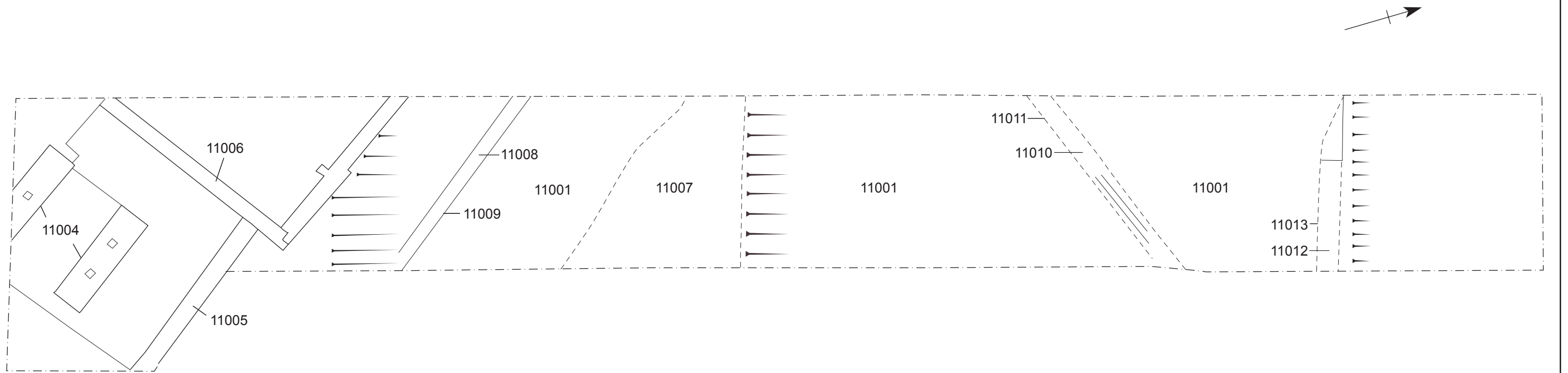



Fig.12

Trench 11



 Coal/clinker layer

0 2m

Fig.13



Plate 1



Plate 2



Plate 3



Plate 4



Plate 5



Plate 6





Plate 7



Plate 8



Plate 9



Plate 10



Plate 11



Plate 12



Plate 13



Plate 14