

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 897

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Catfield First School**

39856 CFD

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January 2004

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Location: Catfield First School, Catfield, Norfolk
Grid Ref: TG 38412 21163
HER No.: 39856 CFD
Date of Fieldwork: 18th December 2003

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Catfield First School, Catfield, in east Norfolk. The survey area was situated in a rich archaeological landscape where evidence dating from the Bronze Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods had previously been recorded.

As a result of this evaluation, however, no archaeological features or finds were retrieved.

1.0 Introduction

(Fig. 1)

The site consisted of two trenches within an area of proposed development for expansion at Catfield First School, Catfield, in east Norfolk. The area examined (32m²) was specified in the Archaeological Brief (below).

The report was commissioned by RG Carter Limited on behalf of Jarvis Projects who were the funding body.

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Method Statement prepared by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU Ref: 1698/JB) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: DG/21.11.03).

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 — Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

2.0 Geology and Topography

(Fig. 1)

The site lies upon a solid chalk geology with overlying, sometimes shelly, sands and gravels of the Norwich Crag formations. These are overlain by Norwich Brickearth and Boulder clay deposits (Funnell 1994). The site was generally level at an elevation of c.5m OD.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

(Fig. 1)

A number of entries exist in the Norfolk Historic and Environment Record (NHER) for the area in and around Catfield. The school is situated immediately north of an area of cropmarks (NHER 8330) which include a ring ditch of possible Bronze Age date and a sequence of enclosure ditches and linear features. Finds from this area include worked flints, Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery, a Roman coin and a 16th-century buckle. A findspot of Roman pottery, coin and bronze crossbow brooch fragment (dated 250-300 AD), together with later medieval pottery and a post-medieval bronze triangular scale pan is also recorded (NHER 22615) to the north-west of the survey area.

The parish church (NHER 8338) to the north-west of the school and a mill (NHER 15444), presently 'Mill House', to the south-east are marked on Faden's map of 1797 (Barringer 1989), as is Catfield Marsh to the west (NHER 32151).

4.0 Methodology

(Fig. 2)

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Brief required that two 10m x 1.6m trenches were excavated within the footprint of the proposed new building. Both trenches were approximately north-east to south-west orientated and situated to the east of the existing Catfield First School buildings.

Machine excavation was carried out with a 3-ton hydraulic 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

Due to the lack of archaeological features, finds or deposits, no context numbers were allocated. Trench locations and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of sample trench sections.

Due to the lack of suitable deposits, no environmental samples were taken.

Site conditions and access were good. The weather remained dry, cold and sunny.

5.0 Results

Trenches 1 and 2 contained almost identical deposits, from which no evidence for cultural activity was retrieved.

Trench 1

(Fig. 3)

Trench 1 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m removing c.0.38m of dark yellowish brown silty loam topsoil and c.0.32m of light yellowish brown clayey silt subsoil. These overlay undisturbed natural deposits of orange sands with bands of yellow sands and areas of flint gravels.

No archaeological features or finds were recovered in this trench.

Trench 2

(Fig. 4)

Trench 2 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.96m removing c.0.4m of dark yellowish brown silty loam topsoil and c.0.34m of light yellowish brown clayey silt subsoil. These overlay undisturbed natural deposits of orange sands with bands of yellow sands and areas of flint gravels.

No archaeological features or finds were recovered in this trench.

6.0 Conclusions

Despite the potential for sub-surface features of Bronze Age to post-medieval date, none were present, and no finds were recovered.

Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.

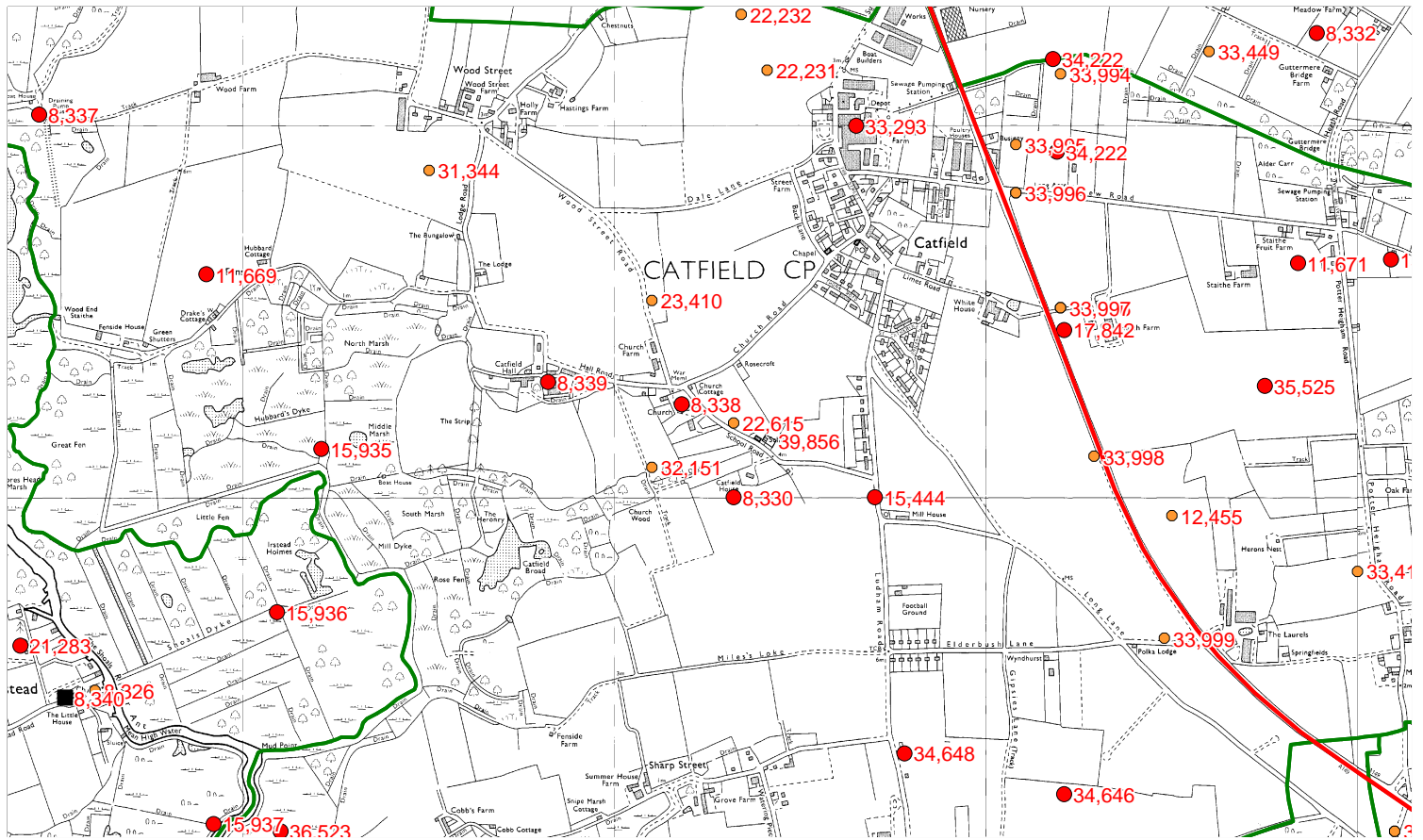
Acknowledgements

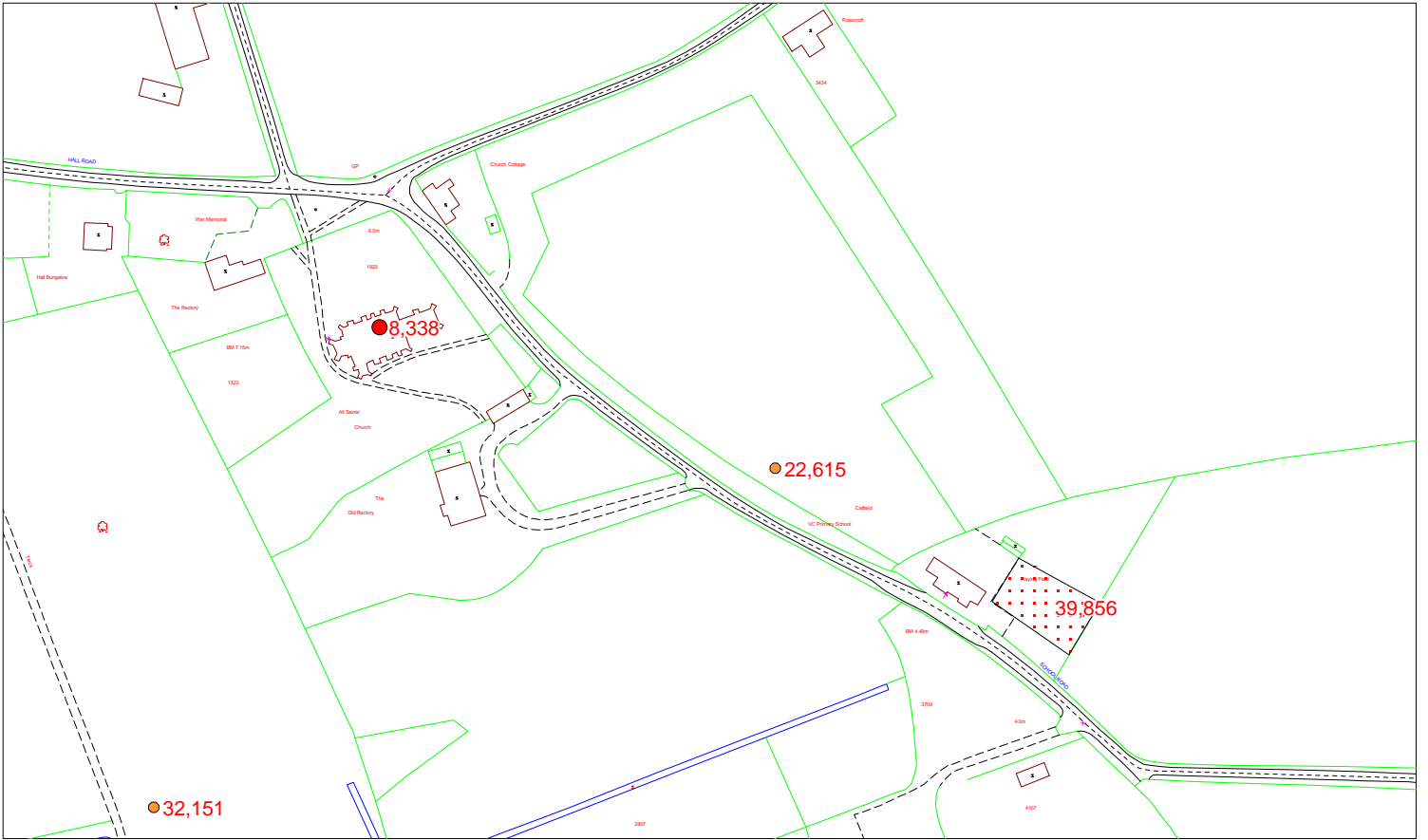
Many thanks to Mrs Blackie, head teacher of Catfield First School for her assistance. Thanks are also due to the staff at the Norfolk Historic and Environment Records office based at Gressenhall.

The excavations were carried out by the author and Steve Tatler. The report was illustrated and formatted by Maggie Foottit and edited by Alice Lyons.

Bibliography

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| Barringer, J.C., | 1989 | <i>An Introduction to Faden's Map of Norfolk</i> , Larks Press Edition |
| Funnell, B., | 1994 | 'Solid Geology' in Wade-Martins, P., (ed.), <i>An Historical Atlas of Norfolk</i> (Norfolk) |





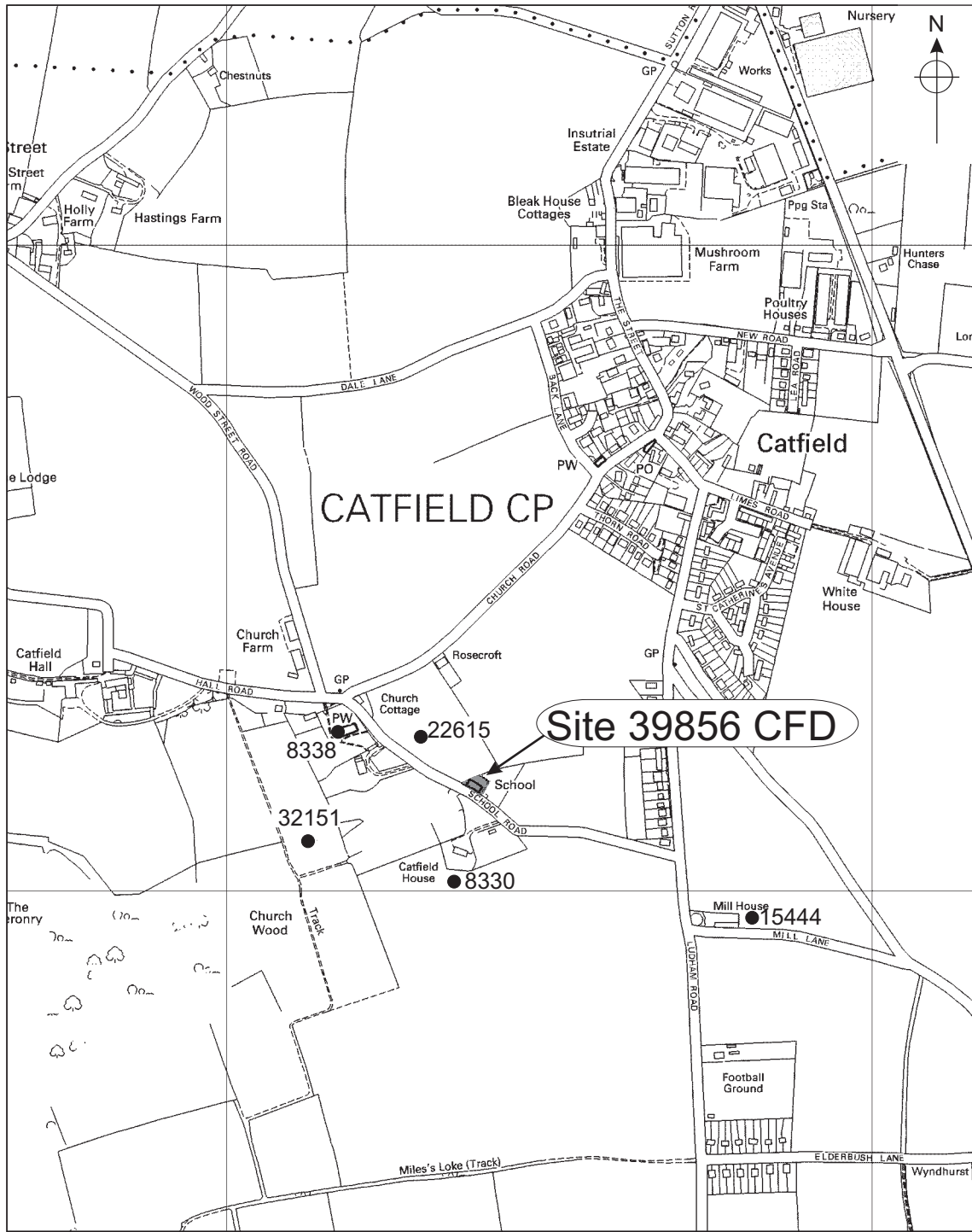


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:10,000

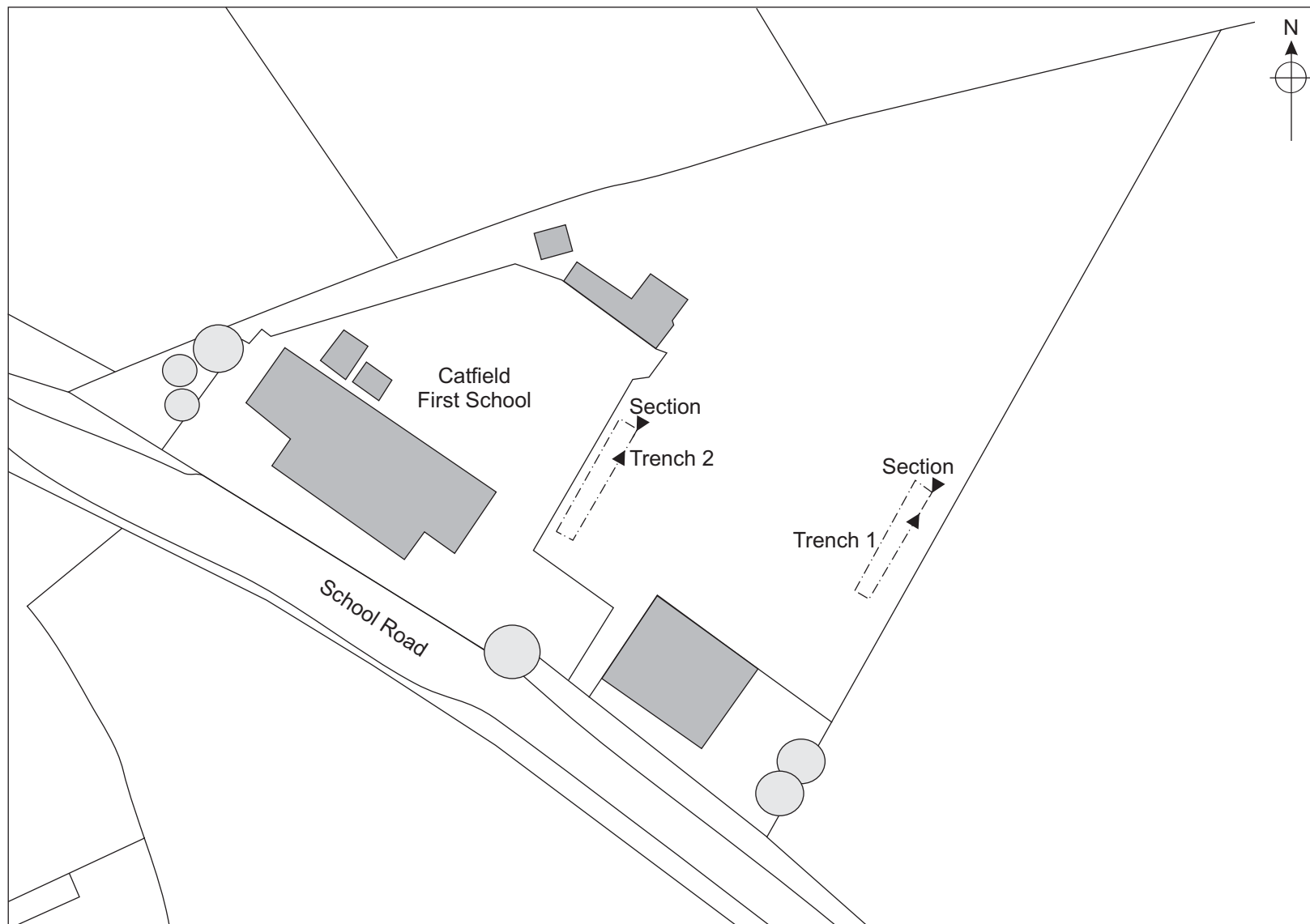


Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500

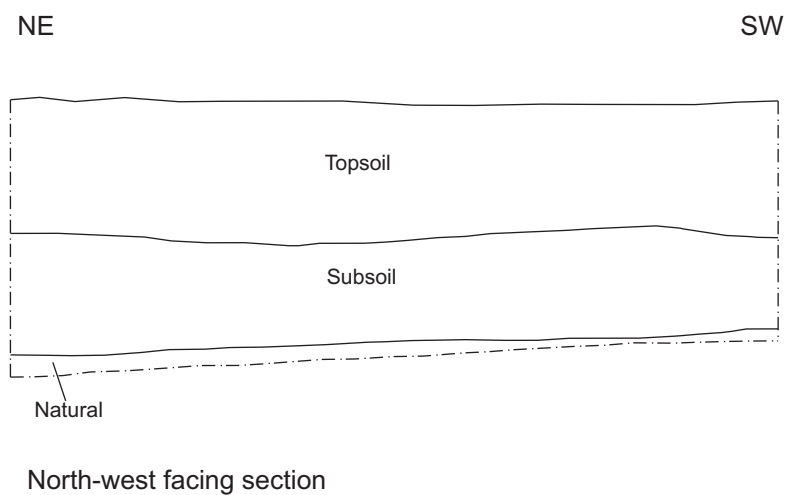


Figure 3. Trench 1, section. Scale 1:20

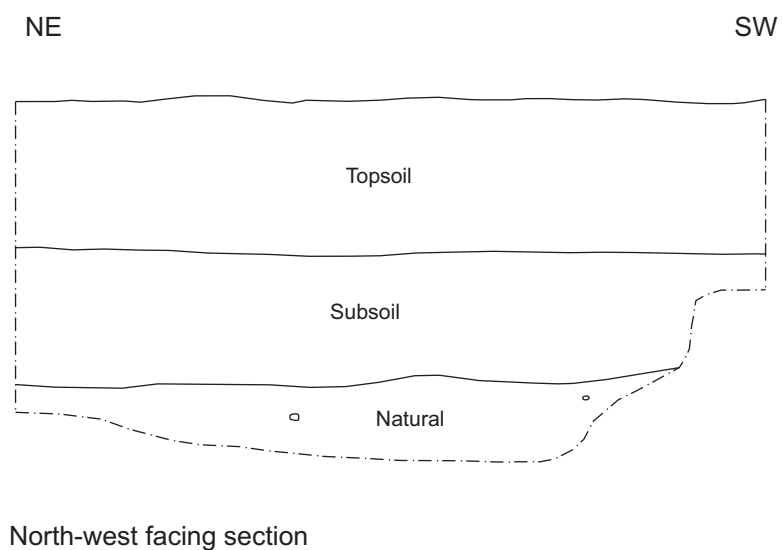


Figure 4. Trench 2, section. Scale 1:20