

**An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at
Gipsy Lane, Leicester
(SK 6151 0635).**

Matthew Hurford

For: Leicester Irish Sports and Cultural Association and C.P. Associates

Checked by Project Manager

SignedDate.....

Name.....

University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Report 2006/095

An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635).

Matthew Hurford

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1. Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land at Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635) by ULAS in August 2006. The work was commissioned by Leicester Irish Sports and Cultural Association and C.P. Associates.

One trial trench was excavated in order to assess the potential for the survival of archaeological remains. The evaluation produced no evidence for the presence of archaeology probably due to ground disturbance during the construction of the sports facilities in the twentieth century.

The site archive will be held by Leicester Museum Heritage Service, under the Accession Number A23 2006.

2. Introduction

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, para 30), this document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching of land at Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635).

The evaluation addresses the recommendations from the City Archaeologist, Leicester City Museum service as advisor to the planning authority. The evaluation adhered to the requirements detailed in their *Brief for an archaeological field evaluation at The Irish Sports Ground, Gipsy Lane, Leicester* (LCC 29/06/2006) and follows the approved *Design specification for archaeological evaluation* (ULAS Report No. 06/661 Appendix 1).

The proposed development site is located on Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635). It consists of an area c.0.09ha that is currently a car park to the south and sports ground to the north.

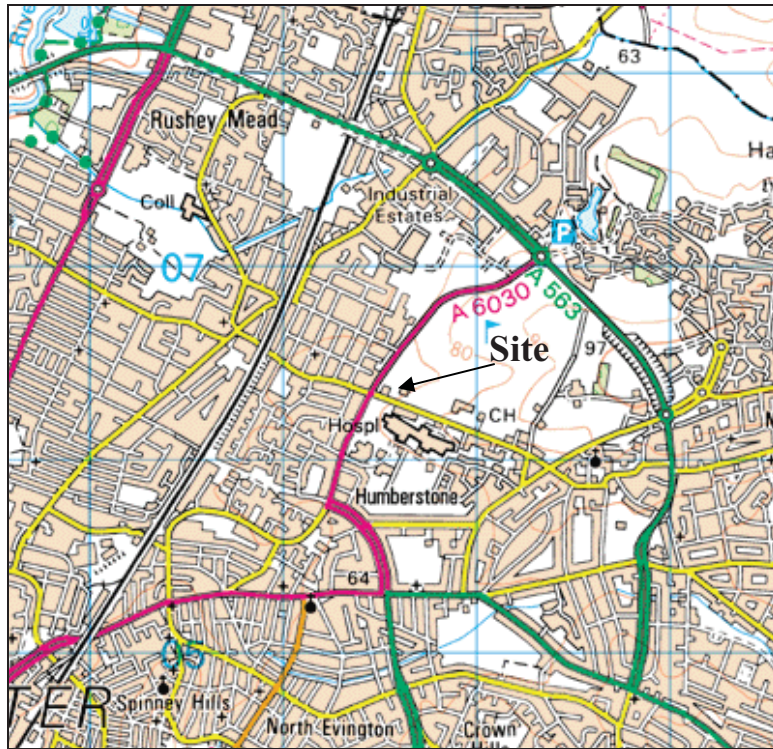


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:50000

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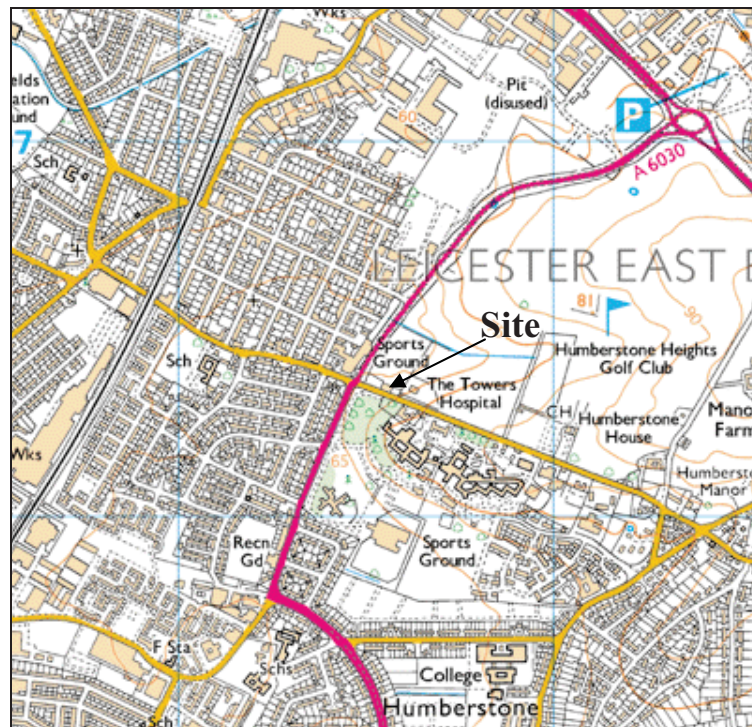


Figure 2. Site location. Scale 1:25000.

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3. Geology and Topography

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Red Marl with beds of Sandstone and bands of Gypsum. The site lies at a height of *c.*61.10m O.D.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background (Taken from Wardle 2006)

The site is located *c.*3 km to the northeast of the Roman city of *Ratae* and medieval town of Leicester. The SMR includes reports of 'a Roman urn together with a number of skeletons' and Roman pottery in the vicinity of the Sports Centre. Therefore there was some archaeological potential for remains of this period.

5. Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

All work follows the *Institute of Field Archaeologist's Code of Conduct* and adheres to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological evaluations*.

6. Methodology

Trial trenching totalled *c.*33.60 sq metres that comprised one 21m x 1.6m trench located within the footprint of the new building. The trial trenching provided *c.*4% sample of the *c.*0.09ha. area.

The topsoil was removed in spits by machine with a toothless ditching bucket under full supervision, until archaeological deposits or undisturbed substrata was encountered.

The location of the trench was surveyed using a Total Station Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) linked to a hand held computer.

The trench was hand cleaned. Samples of the archaeological deposits located were hand excavated and planned addressing the aims and objectives of the evaluation. Measured drawings of all archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:20 and

tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans were tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM).

All excavated sections were recorded and drawn at a scale of 1:10 and were levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights were taken as appropriate.

7. Results

Trench 01

Interval from NW end	0m	3m	6m	9m	12m	15m	18m	21m
Topsoil Depth	0.36m	0.35m	0.20m	0.26m	0.15m	0.21m	0.20m	0.19
Top of Natural	0.36m	0.35m	0.20m	0.26m	0.15m	0.21m	0.20m	0.19
Base of Trench	0.55m	0.40m	0.30m	0.31m	0.22m	0.55m	0.32m	0.22

Trench 01 was located in the northern half of the development area. It measured 21m long and 1.6m wide and was on a northwest to southeast alignment. Between 0.15 m and 0.36m of mid greyish brown silty sand topsoil was removed revealing natural light greyish yellow to mid orange Gypsum. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

8. Conclusion

Despite being in an area of archaeological interest the evaluation produced no evidence of archaeological activity probably due to the area being landscaped during the construction of the sports field and car park in the twentieth century.

9. References

Wardle, C., 2006 *Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation at The Irish Sports Ground, Gipsy Lane, Leicester*

10. Acknowledgements

Fieldwork was undertaken by the author with the assistance of Roy Poulter. Dr. Patrick Clay managed the project.

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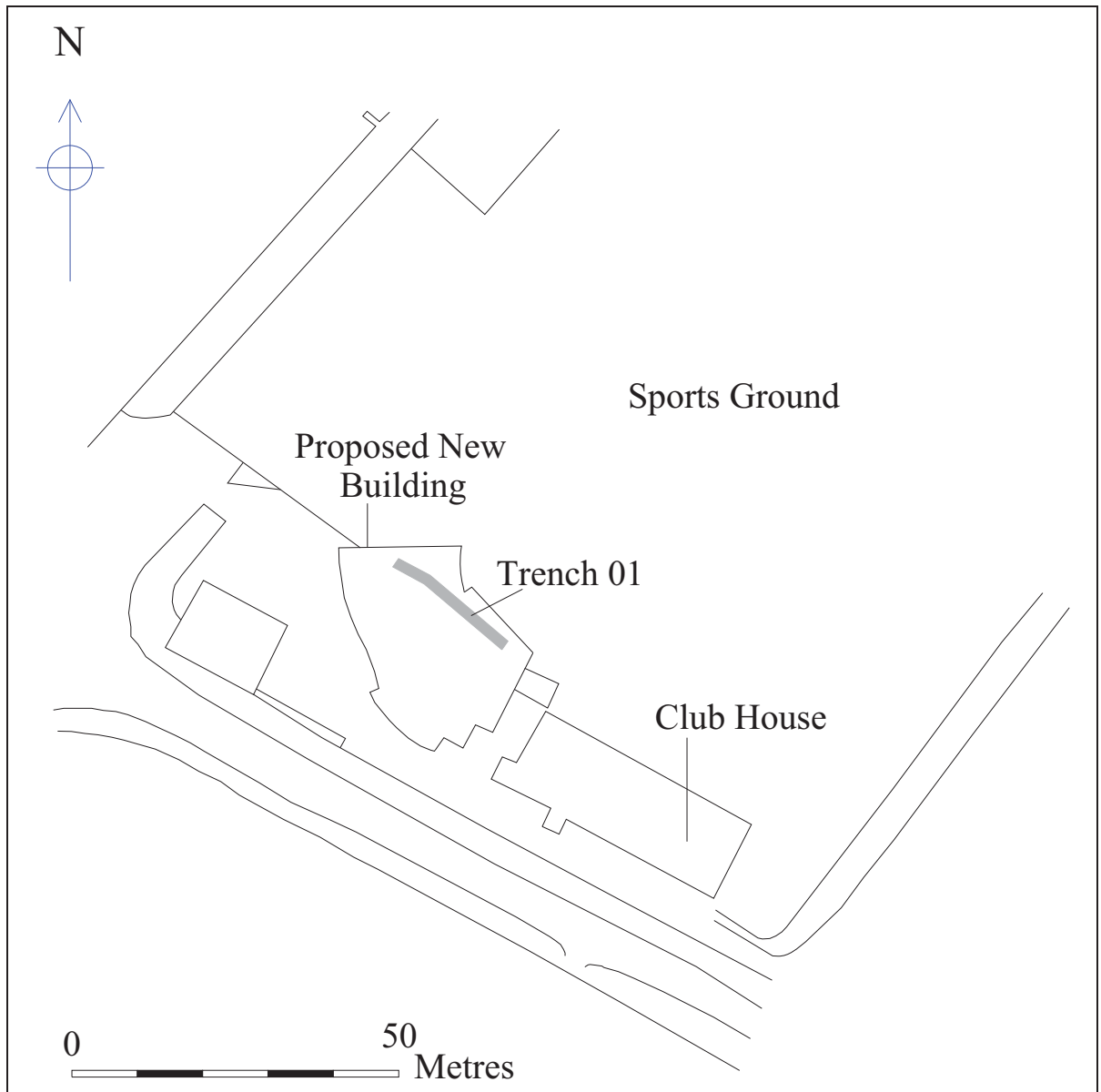


Figure 3. Trench location plan.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological evaluation

Land at Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635)

P.A. 20030655

For: Leicester Irish Sports and Cultural Association and C.P. Associates

1. Definition and scope of the specification

1.1 This specification is for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching in advance of a proposed new club house at land north of Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635), for Leicester Irish Sports and Cultural Association and C.P. Associates.

1.2 It addresses the requirements for archaeological evaluation from the City Archaeologist, Leicester City Museum Service as archaeological advisor to the planning authority following Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning para.30) as detailed in the *Brief for an archaeological field evaluation at The Irish Sports Ground, Gipsy Lane, Leicester* (LCC 29/06/2006 hereinafter the 'brief').

1.3 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* and the *Guidelines and procedures for archaeological work in Leicester* (Leicester Museum Service).

2. Background

2.1. The proposed development is for a new sports club house. It lies close to the location of a Roman cemetery and therefore has some archaeological potential for remains of this period. A programme of archaeological work comprising trial trenching is now required to confirm whether archaeological remains are present within the application area and, if necessary, formulate a mitigation strategy.

3. Objectives

3.1 The objective of the archaeological work is to ascertain whether any significant archaeological remains are present within the area to be developed. If identified a sufficient sample to establish their extent, date, quality, character, form and potential including environmental data will be recorded. Further archaeological recording may be required in the light of the results of this programme.

4 General Methodology

4.1 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Code of Conduct* and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.

4.2 Staffing, recording systems, Health and Safety provisions and insurance details are provided.

4.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the sites from the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are being met and professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with

representatives of the clients and Leicester City Council. The strategy will be reviewed in the light of the quality of the archaeological resource as revealed at different stages of the fieldwork.

4.5 Trial trenching

4.5.1 The 'brief' has requested a single trial trench totalling no less than 15 sq metres.

4.5.2 The topsoil and disturbed subsoil will be removed in spits by machine using a toothless ditching bucket (or similar) under full supervision, until archaeological deposits or undisturbed substrata are encountered.

4.5.3 The location of the trenches will be surveyed using a Total Station Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) linked to a Psion hand held computer.

4.5.4 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate to addressing the aims and objectives of the evaluation. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM).

4.5.5. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer. Deposits which may provide radiocarbon dating evidence will be sampled.

4.5.6 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.5.7 Any human remains encountered will only be removed under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The client, Leicester City Council and the coroner will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.6 Mitigation Strategy

4.6.1 Depending on the results of the trial trenching and following consultation with the City Archaeologist and the client a mitigation strategy may need to be formulated.

5 Recording Systems

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, enlarged to 1:500 (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 Some record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include

'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation undertaken.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the excavation.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

6 Report and Archive

6.1 Before commencement of work an accession number will be obtained from Leicester City Museums. A report on the fieldwork will be provided following analysis of the records and materials.

6.2. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the 'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage' (UKIC 1990), and Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections (MGC 1992) and 'Guidelines for the preparation of site archives and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (RFG/FRG 1993) will be presented to Leicester Museums. This archive will include all written, disk-based, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

6.4 On the completion of fieldwork The originating organisation should complete the on-line OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis> on completion of the fieldwork.

7 Timetable and staffing

7.1. The trial trenching will be undertaken within a one week period and can commence during August 2006.

8. Health and Safety

8.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001) with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate.

9. Insurance

9.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

10. Bibliography

MAP 2, *The management of archaeological projects* 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission)

RFG/FRG 1993, *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700)

SMA 1993, *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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28.07.2006

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

Land at Gipsy Lane, Leicester (SK 6151 0635)

P.A. 20030655

For: Leicester Irish Sports and Cultural Association and C.P. Associates

1. Nature of the work

1.1 This statement is for trial trenching. It will be revised following the commencement of operations when the extent of risks can be assessed in full.

1.2 The work will involve machine dug trial trenching during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be *c.* 0.2-0.5m. This will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manual, as revised in 1997, together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines, including the following.

HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.

HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.

HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.

CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.

CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.

HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.3 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation. All work will adhere to the company's health and safety policy.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 Working within an excavation.

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces deeper than 1.2m. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 Working with plant.

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation.

2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.

Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Weils disease or similar.

2.4 Working with chemicals.

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

2.5 Other risks

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.6 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

10.02.2006

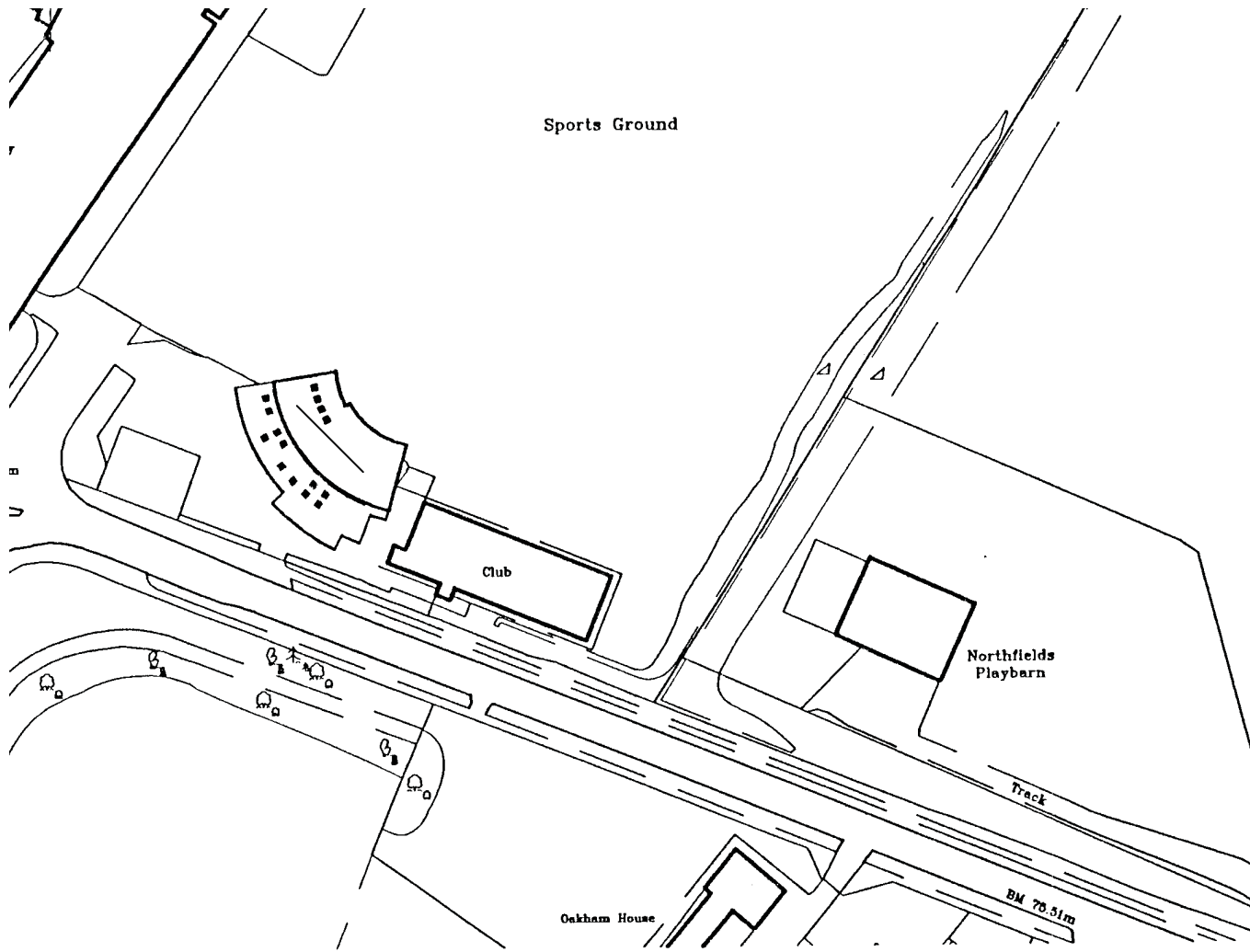


Figure 1. Proposed trench location in relation to proposed new building. NTS