
Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation

at Tapton Lane

Chesterfield

Derbyshire

March 2006



Nathan Flavell

April 2006

Report 06/62

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**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
APRIL 2006**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
AT TAPTON LANE
CHESTERFIELD
DERBYSHIRE

MARCH 2006**

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Tapton Lane, Chesterfield, Derbyshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC), to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land adjacent to Tapton Lane, Chesterfield. The fieldwork was undertaken between 28th-30th March 2006. The trench revealed the remains of a demolished 19th century building and debris from a 20th century commercial garage.	
Project type	Evaluation	
Site status		
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Car park. Cleared for development.	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	Post-medieval	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Derbyshire	
Site address	Tapton Lane, Chesterfield, Derbyshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	15m square	
OS Easting & Northing	43860 37140	
Height OD	4-7m AOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Dan Slatcher JSAC	
Project Design originator	JSAC	
Director/Supervisor	Nathan Flavell	
Project Manager	Tony Walsh	
Sponsor or funding body		
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	28.03.06	
End date	30.03.06	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		
Digital		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation at Tapton Lane, Chesterfield, Derbyshire	
Serial title & volume	06/62	
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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	BACKGROUND	1
3	OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	2
4	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE	3
5	FINDS	3
6	CONCLUSIONS	5
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	6

Plates

Plate 1: Trench 1, NE facing

Plate 2: Wall [105]

Figures

Fig 1: Site location 1:15,000

Fig 2: Locations of previous excavations and main Roman features
(after Ellis 1989, fig 2), and historic maps

Fig 3: Trench Location

Fig 4: Sections 1:20

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT TAPTON LANE
CHESTERFIELD, DERBYSHIRE
MARCH 2006
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Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC), to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land adjacent to Tapton Lane, Chesterfield. The fieldwork was undertaken between 28th-30th March 2006. The trench revealed the remains of a demolished 19th Century building and debris from a 20th century commercial garage.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC) to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Tapton Lane, Chesterfield, Derbyshire (NGR SK 3860 7140, Fig 1). The work was undertaken to meet the condition attached to the planning permission, granted in March 2005 by Chesterfield Borough Council, for the erection of 17 flats (Ref. CHE/04/00452/FUL).

The project was undertaken in compliance with a specification prepared by JSAC (2005).

The site has most recently been occupied by a small car park, adjacent to Tapton Lane.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and Geology

The development site was located to the west of Tapton Lane, Chesterfield. It lies on a slight slope falling c1m from the south-west to the north-east. To the south is Holywell Street and to the north is the new magistrate's court with a public car park at the north-east.

The underlying geology consists of Lower Westphalian, mainly productive coal measures (British Geological Survey www.bgs.ac.uk).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

Chesterfield is a settlement with Roman, or possibly earlier, origins.

A series of archaeological excavations between 1973 and 1978 to the east of the parish church defined the location of the Roman fort at Chesterfield on the eastern end of the promontory occupied by the present town centre (Ellis 1989 and SMR Nos. 3902, 3961 and 3968) (Fig 2). Other work during the same period had located further Roman deposits to the west of the parish church (Monet-Lane 1985 and SMR Nos. 3965). More recently there has been further work by Trent and Peak Archaeological Trust to the west of the parish church in the late 1980s (SMR Nos. 3984 and 3985) and the University of Manchester has also carried out excavations in this area at Vicar Lane (UMAU Report 1995/20).

This work has indicated that the church and churchyard of the Parish Church of St Mary and All Saints, the "Crooked Spire", occupies much of the interior of the Roman fort, with Spa Lane and Church Way approximately defining the southern side of the fort defences. The dating evidence suggests that the fort was constructed around the middle of the 1st

century AD and was in use well into the 2nd century, but the excavations did not produce any evidence for post-2nd century military or civil occupation

The Roman fort at Chesterfield would have lain close to Ryknild Street, as one of two forts on the Roman road from Derby (*Derwentio*, Little Chester) to Rotherham (Templeborough). Tapton Lane lies just outside the projected northern fort boundary, possibly on the alignment of the north-south road.

The earliest reference to Chesterfield is in a Saxon charter of 955 (Doe *et al* 1973, 5). At the time of the Domesday Book (1086) Chesterfield was only a village. Its expansion to a town occurred between 1086 and 1204, when it remained in the hands of the Crown. Before the creation of the new market to the west, the town was centred around the parish church of St Mary's. The development area is located *c* 200 metres north of the church and was located on the edge of the medieval town. The organisation of the medieval town is partly shown by a map of 1633-7.

The town continued to expand through the post-medieval period. This is recorded by the Tithe Map of 1846 (not illustrated) and later published Ordnance Survey maps. Mid 19th century mapping indicates that the area was at the edge of the town, but probably occupied by buildings at that time.

The 1898 Ordnance Survey maps, (Fig 2) show three buildings on the site. At the north was a fairly large building, possibly a warehouse or similar. This building seemed to have survived until at least the Second World War.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the excavation, as stated in the specification (JSAC 2005) were:

- i. *to determine the presence or otherwise of remains of archaeological interest and*
- ii. *to assess the site's archaeological potential in order to prepare detailed proposals for archaeological mitigation.*

Should any significant remains be identified, an additional set of aims are in place. These are:

- i. *to assess the nature, date, density, extent, function and state of preservation of archaeological remains identified;*
- ii. *to assess their potential for answering questions about the development of land use in the region; and*

Where remains of are of sufficient importance, in liaison with the County Archaeologist, to formulate a strategy designed to determine the best method by which these remains can be preserved by record.

The specification (JSAC 2005) required the excavation of a single trial trench, 10m long, designed to investigate the area of the proposed development. During excavation the trench was widened at the south-west quadrant, due to health and safety concerns about loose edges. Overburden and recently made ground was removed with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision. Machine excavation ceased at a depth of *c* 1.2-1.8m.

The written record was made on pro-forma sheets following the NA Fieldwork Manual (NA 2004). A plan of the excavated trench was made at a scale of 1:20. Sections of trench edges were drawn at 1:10 and 1:20 and related to the Ordnance Survey Datum. A photographic record of each stage of the work was maintained on colour slide and black and white negative film.

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 The Trench

The trench (Fig 3; Plate 1) was orientated north-west to south-east, parallel to Tapton Lane on an area recently used for car parking.

Two layers of natural geology were encountered (Fig 4, Section 1). The lower deposit, of coal (109) was revealed at a depth of 1.1m. Above this was a grey sandy-clay (108), 0.9m thick. This appears to be similar, if not the same, as that recorded in the excavations at Spa Lane 1976 and Station Road 1976-8 (Ellis 1989, Fig 2).

A wall (105) (Fig 4, Section 2; Plate 2) was encountered within the western face of the trench. It was constructed of two different materials, a yellow sandstone, and modern red brick. Both were coursed with a cement bonding. It appeared that the sandstone had been reused to make the wall. The visible section was approximately 4.5m long and 0.85m high. It was a surviving wall of the building that previously stood on the site.

Overlying the natural clay (108) and abutting the wall (105) was a modern concrete floor (104), 0.1m thick. On the north-west side of the trench there was a concrete buttress, measuring 0.3m wide and deep, which formed part of the concrete surface.

Bounding (104) across the north-east end of the trench, was a foundation cut for a wall [107]. Aligned north-west to south-east it had vertical sides and a flat base, measuring 0.5m deep and 0.6m wide. It was filled with a mixture of concrete and brick rubble (106) and probably represents the position of an internal wall of the building.

Above the concrete floor was a layer of demolition rubble (103), consisting of brick and tile within grey/brown, silty sand. It was 1m deep at the south-west end of the trench and continued for 8.35m along the trench. Within the fill were the remains of various commercial garage related advertising signs and equipment.

Above the demolition rubble (103) was a levelling layer (102) for the current car park surface (101). Layer (102) consisted of hard compacted dark red clay soil with stone/gravel inclusions, 0.13m thick. The modern car park surface (101) was made up of three separate layers of tarmac, sand and gravel, 0.25m thick.

5 FINDS

5.1 Automobilia

The evaluation produced an assemblage of material deriving from an automotive fuel station. The assemblage comprised 14 glass sherds connected with fuel pump advertising, two metal advertising signs and a fragment of plastic panel with logo. Typologically these have a date range of between the early 1950s and the early 1980s.

The glass fragments

The glass fragments indicate three individual fuel pumps. These are identified below:

BP BLEND

There are 11 fragments deriving from a circa 1950s British Petroleum (BP) fuel pump advertising globe. All of the fragments are of white milk coloured glass. Visually this would have appeared as an illuminated shield set on top of the fuel pump, with the green

and yellow BP logo and the word BLEND in blue lettering below. BLEND was the brand name of BP's three star petrol.

CLEVELAND

One sherd of pale blue glass with a slanted letter E royal blue in colour in relief. The exact form of this cannot be ascertained, however, most likely this would have appeared as an illuminated globe set on top of the fuel pump with the word CLEVELAND in slanted letters, datable to the mid-late 1950s.

DERV and non-brand specific

Two sherds of milk white glass, with the fragmentary remains of the letters E and V in dark red. This would originally have read DERV and derives from a non-brand specific diesel fuel pump. DERV, which is an abbreviation for Diesel Engined Road Vehicle, was the common term for diesel prior to its wider adoption for non-commercial road vehicles. This would have appeared as a glass panel within the main body of the fuel pump and may be dated between mid-late 1960s to the 1980s.

Quantity	Description BP BLEND
5	Flat in section, with fragmentary remains of the BP logo, yellow letters with green background.
2	Circular base fragments, 6 inch opening with manufacturers name. Webb's Industrial Glass Co Ltd, London
4	Flat glass with fragmentary remains of the letters B and L in blue, one of which with traces of the green BP shield

Quantity	Description CLEVELAND
1	Pale blue glass, slightly curved with a slanted letter E 2 inches high in relief in royal blue

Quantity	Description DERV non-brand specific
2	Flat milk white glass with fragmentary remains of the letters E and V in dark red

5.2 The metal signs

Two metal signs were recovered:

BP ZOOM

This measures 13 inches long by 8 inches high (325mm by 230mm) and is of white enamelled aluminium with the logo BP ZOOM in red slanting letters with feathered edges. This originally hung below a larger advertisement. This dates from between the 1970s and 1980s.

SHELL 2T

This measures 12 inches (305mm) square and is made from white enamelled aluminium with the SHELL 'Clam' logo and the letters 2T below. This was fastened at its base and advertised Shells own brand of petrol-oil fuel mix for two-stroke motorcycles c1970s.

5.3 The plastic advertisement

A single fragment of a plastic BP shield was recovered. This measures 10 inches (254mm) in width with a green background and yellow letters. This would appear to be one side of a larger advert and is datable to the late 1970s – early 1980s.

5.4 Discussion

This assemblage derives from a pre-solus or multi-brand garage, which sold fuel from a number of different companies. These were common up to about the late 1960's when the move towards single brand or 'solus' garages began. The assemblage suggests that the BP affiliation of the garage outlived that of the other brands.

The BP archive does not record a BP specific garage at this location, however further investigations with the local records office or community archive may yield further information.

6 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological remains were revealed earlier than the 19th century. The wall, visible in the west face of the trench, was probably part of the large building shown on the late 19th century Ordnance Survey mapping.

The fragments of petrol company signs (BP and Shell) and of petrol pump globes with logos, circa 1950s-1970s (BP) suggest that the latest use for the building was as a commercial garage, perhaps as a filling station, although there was no evidence for this in the form of petrol tanks, and it may be that the automobilia came from elsewhere. The depth of the concrete floor in relation to the current ground level suggests that it may have been the base of a vehicle inspection pit. The provision of the inspection pit, which bottomed into the natural, would have removed any earlier deposits in this area and other contemporary features may have caused further damage to any earlier deposits.

The building was subsequently demolished and the site used as a car park.

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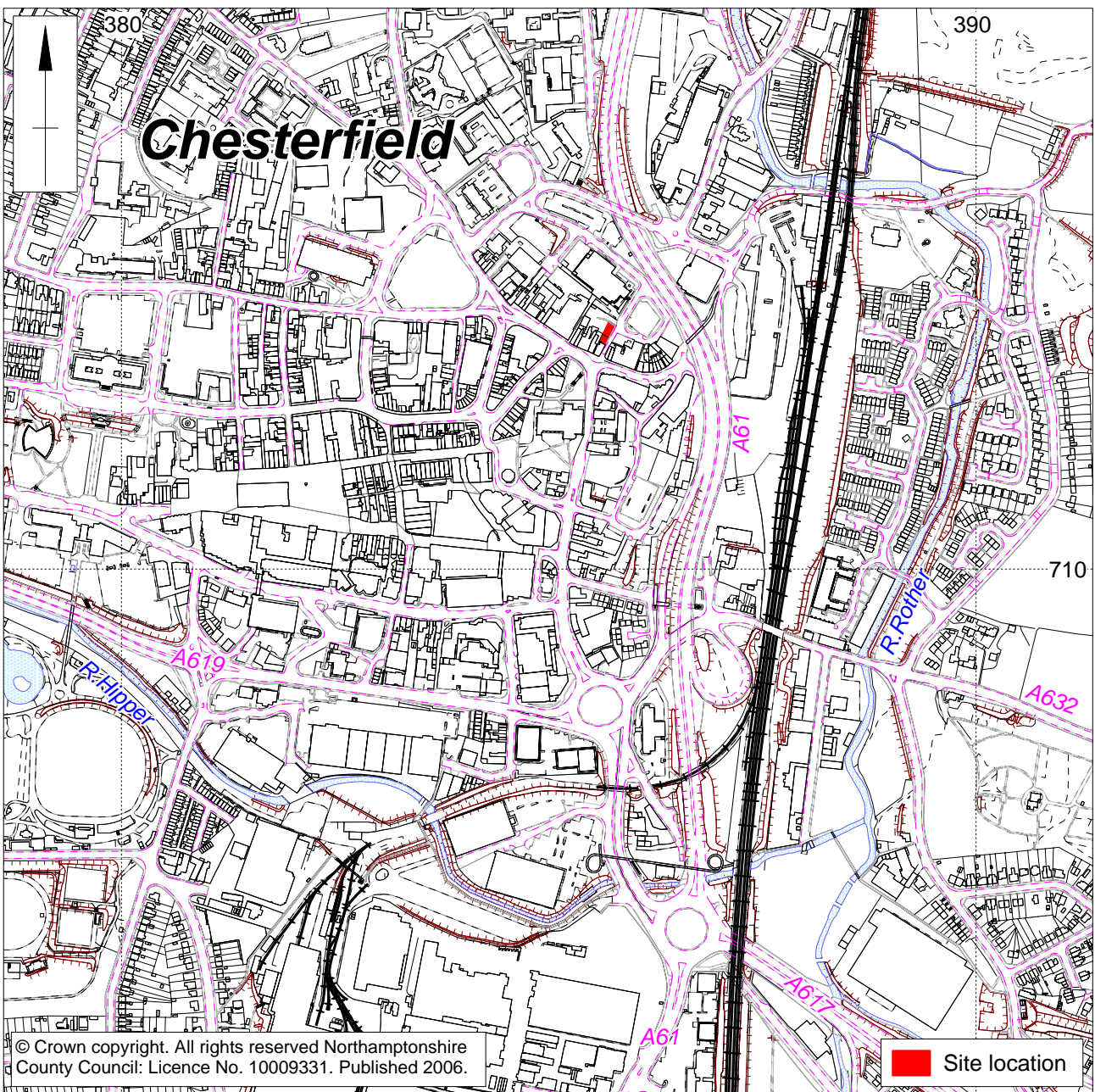
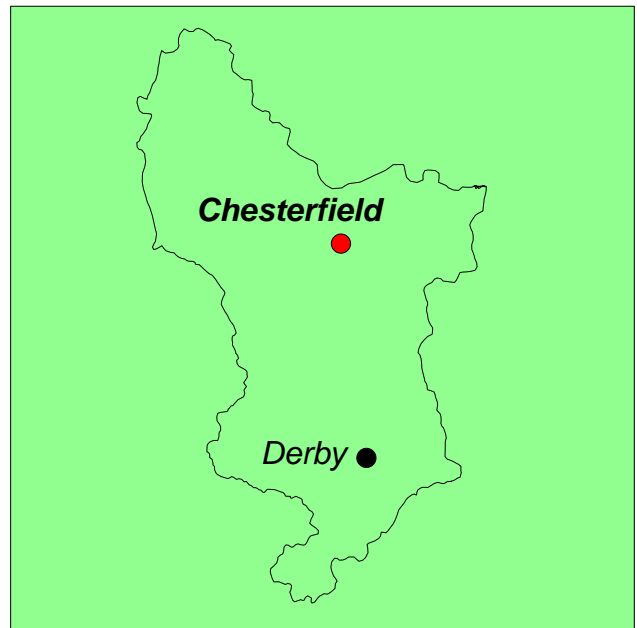
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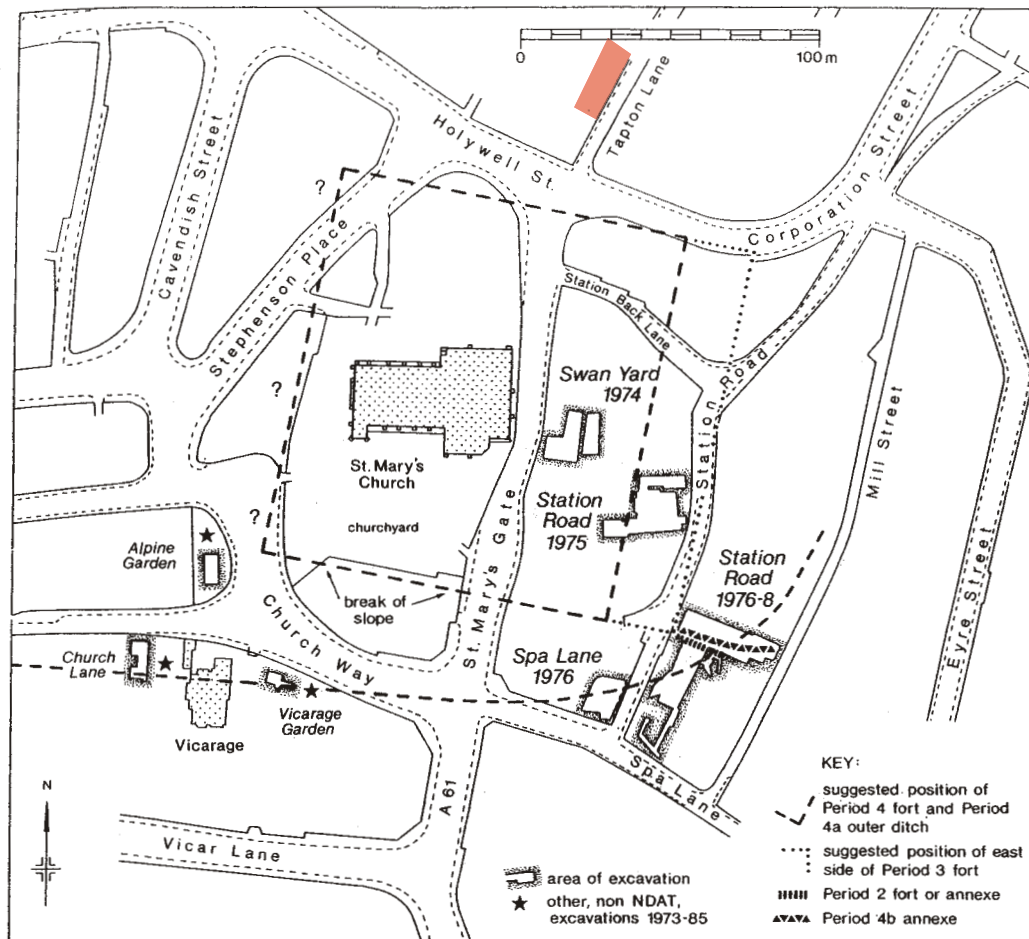
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<http://web.apu.ac.uk/geography/rigs/index.html>



Scale 1:1000

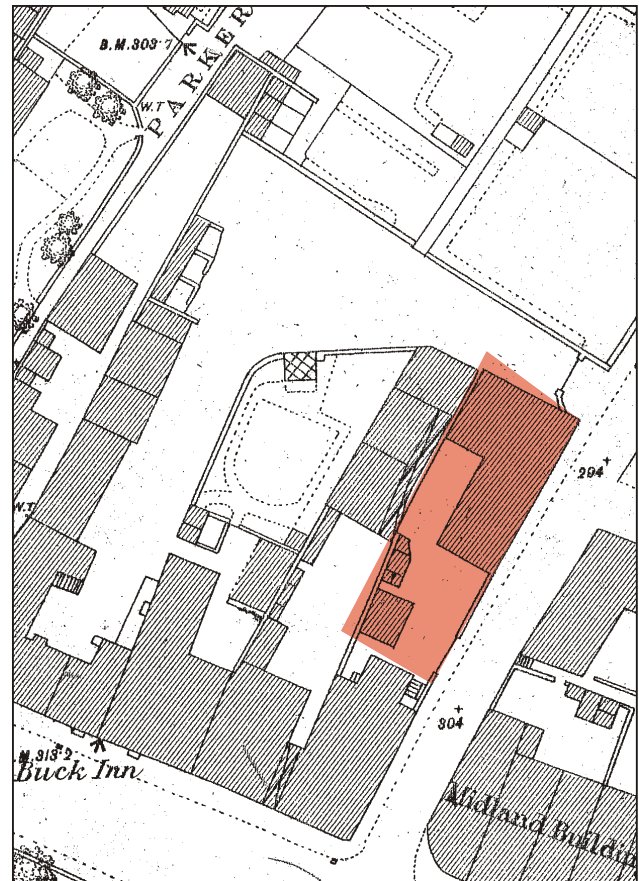
Site location Fig 1



Location of previous excavations and main Roman features (after Ellis 1989, fig 2)

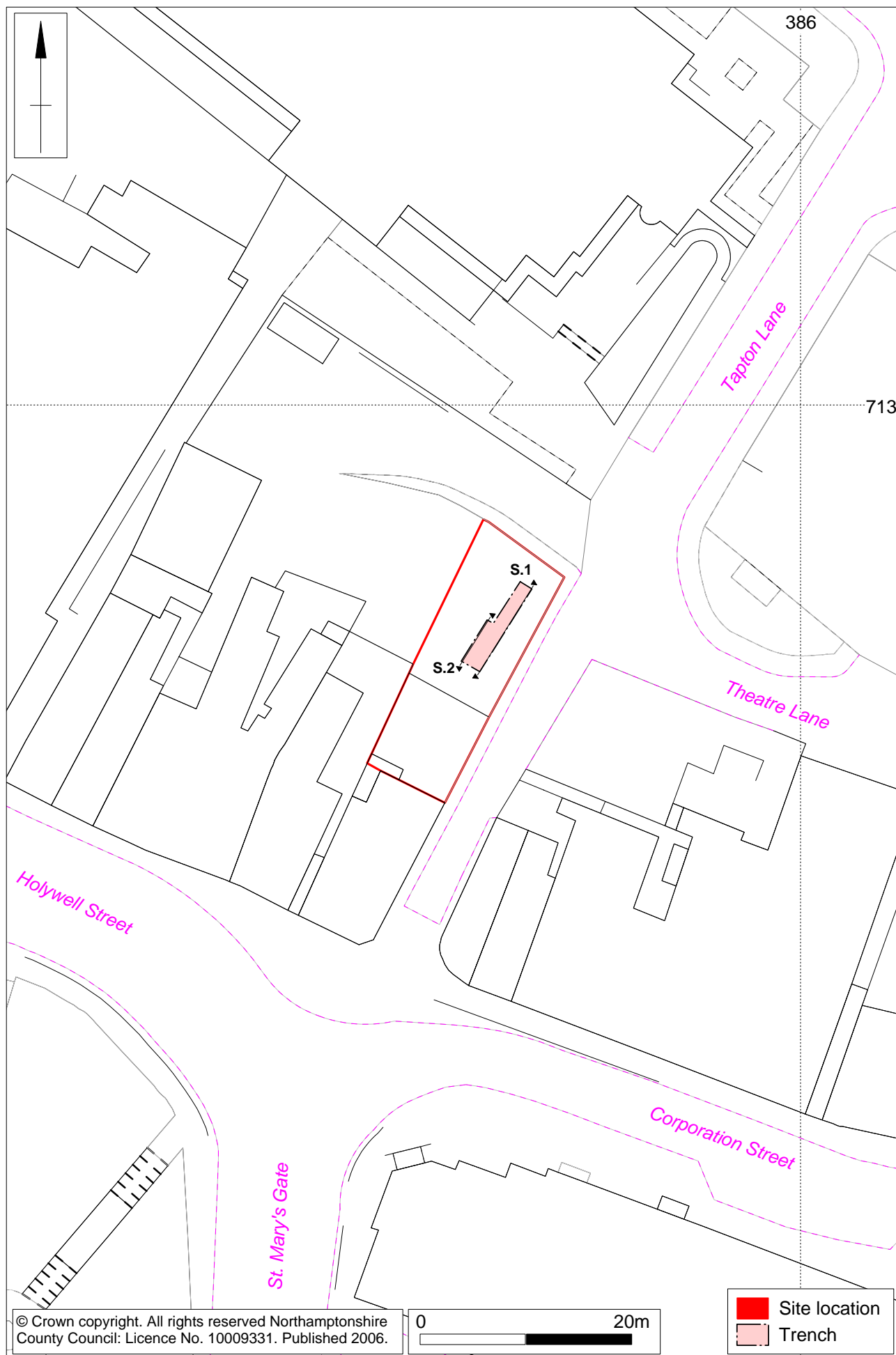


Ordnance Survey 6" Map 1898



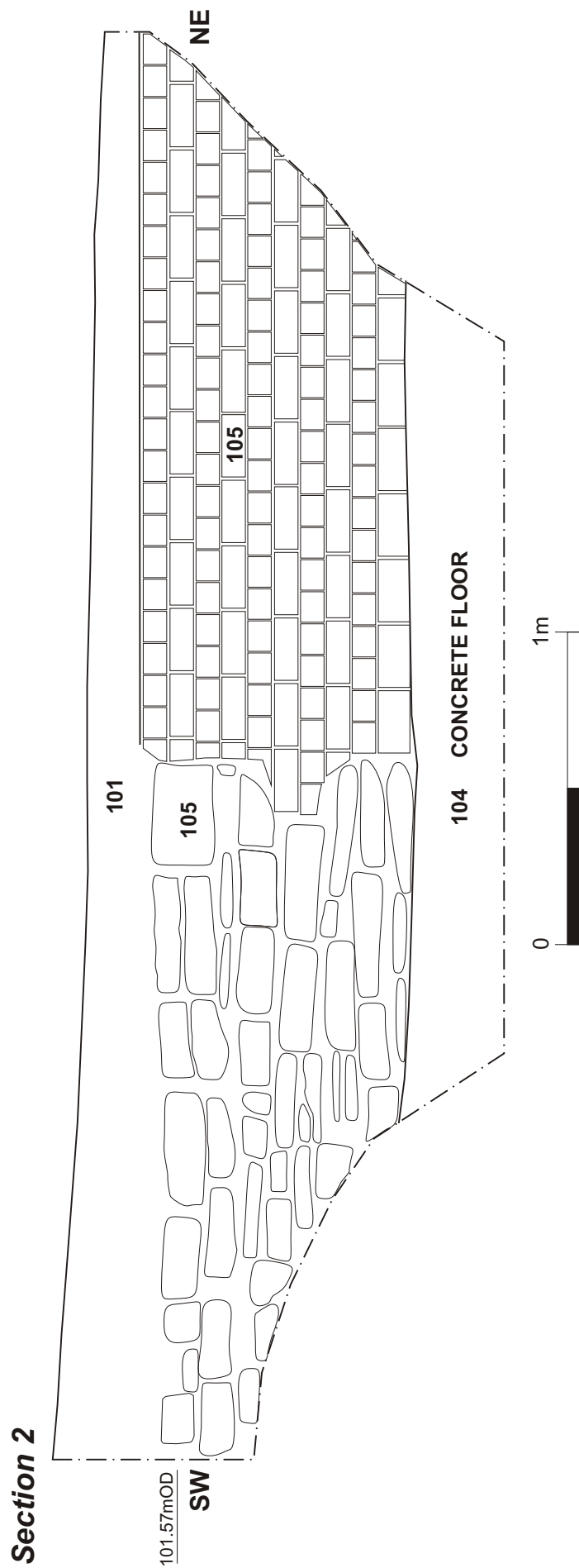
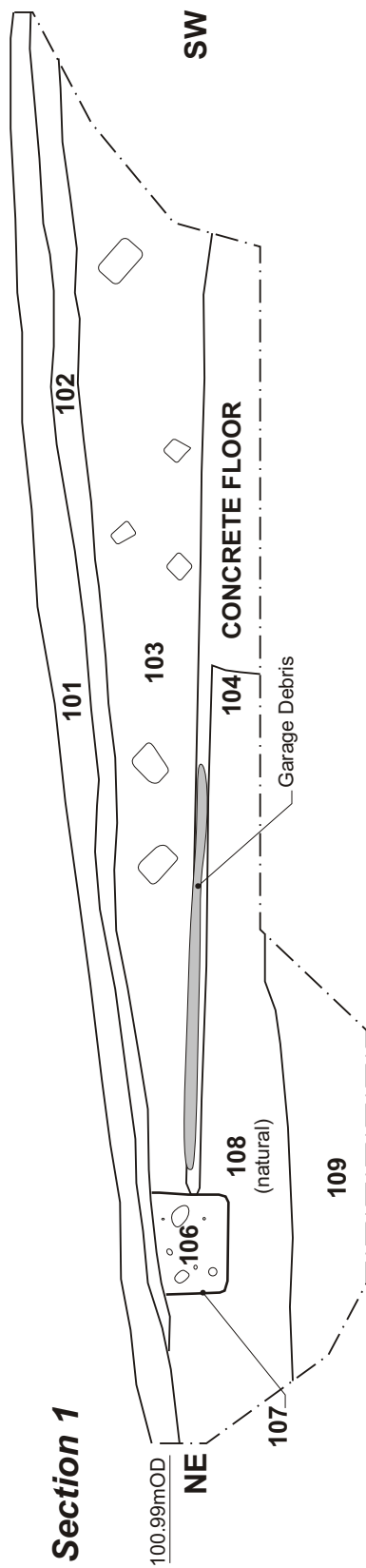
Ordnance Survey 1:500 1898

Locations of previous excavations and main roman features (after Ellis 1989, fig 2), and historic maps. Fig 2



Scale 1:500

Trench location Fig 3



Sections Fig 4



Plate 1 Trench 1, Looking NE



Plate 2 Wall [105]