

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF AT WHITTINGHAM
HOUSE, WORCESTER ROAD,
DROITWICH, WORCESTERSHIRE

James Goad BA AIFA

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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Project 2471
Report 1200
WSM 33378

Watching brief at Whittingham House, Worcester Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire

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Background information

<i>Client</i>	CgMs Consulting on behalf of The Planning Bureau
<i>Site address</i>	Whittingham House, Worcester Road, Droitwich Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 900 632
<i>Sites and Monuments Record reference</i>	WSM 33378
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wychavon District Council
<i>Project parameters</i>	IFA 1999
<i>Previous archaeological work on the site</i>	

The site was subject to an archaeological evaluation in November 2002 (WSM 32085). A number of archaeological features were located in the four trenches excavated over the site. These features were pits and gullies dating from the late Saxon to medieval periods, which demonstrated activity on the site from the 10th century to the post-medieval period. Post-medieval features included a backfilled brine shaft dating to the 17th or 18th centuries along with various features relating to the cottages, which stood adjacent to the Worcester Road in the 19th century. A Second World War air raid shelter was also located on the site.

Previous archaeological work on associated sites

The archaeological and historical background of the site are covered in a desk-based assessment relating to the proposed development scheme (CgMs 2002), and a broader archaeological summary of Droitwich can be found in the Central Marches Historic Town Survey (Buteux and Hurst 1996).

Aims

In the north-west of the site, just adjacent to the northern boundary of the property an open brine shaft and operational pumping station exists, from which a cast iron pipe crosses the site from east to west. A junction in the pipe in the north-west corner of the site is the location of a length of the pipe running north to south along the properties western boundary. The aim of the watching brief was to locate the brine pipe at various locations around the property at Whittingham House. This was needed in order to estimate the potential impact of the proposed development on the pipes, which had to remain in situ and undisturbed.

Methods

General specification for watching brief	CAS 1995
Sources consulted	SMR Sources cited by the SMR Ordnance Survey 1:10000 map, 2000 1 st edition Ordnance Survey 1887
Date(s) of fieldwork	12 th November 2003
Area of deposits observed	c 27m ² . Indicated on Figure 2
Dimensions of excavated areas observed	Trench 1 length 3.00m

	width 3.00m
	depth 0.59m
Trench 2	length 4.45m
	width 1.55m
	depth 1.20m
Trench 3	length 3.90m
	width 1.55m
	depth 0.80m
Trench 4	length 3.30m
	width 1.55m
	depth 1.00m

Access to and location of the pipe

The trenches were positioned with the best chance of locating the junction of the brine pipe in the north-west corner of the property and tracing its course to the east and south across the garden (John Scott pers comm). The trenches were machined slowly and with great care to avoid the possibility of fracturing the cast-iron pipe. When the pipe was revealed by machine bucket the length visible was exposed more completely by hand. The location and orientation of the pipe was noted and recorded, along with any archaeological strata and features exposed in section.

Statement of confidence

Access to, and visibility of the brine pipe and the deposits recorded in the trenches, allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

Discussion

The location of the brine pipe was successful, with its precise location, junctions and orientation on the property established.

The trenches also revealed some archaeological stratigraphy. These strata had been recorded during the evaluation on the property in 2002. The strata were mainly dumps of levelling or make up material topped by varying thicknesses of garden soil. The strata contained post-medieval and modern building rubble, glass and pottery sherds. The evaluation established that the strata containing most of the archaeological features were generally found at a lower depth than the layers containing the brine pipe. No significant features were noticed during the course of the trenching.

Conclusions

The location of the brine pipe should ensure that the necessary steps are taken to preserve its status in situ with regard to the proposed development.

No significant additional information can be added to the archaeological record of this site, apart from the useful information on the exact location of the brine pipe, which will be needed with regard to future excavation in the grounds of the property.

Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for

publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of CgMs Consulting who were acting on behalf of The Planning Bureau at Whittingham House, Worcester Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire (NGR SP 900 632; WSM 33378). The project aimed to determine the exact location, orientation and junction of a modern brine pipe that crossed the property. The pipe was located in four different trenches, establishing its route from east to west and from north to south across the property. In addition to this a junction in the pipe line was located, in the north-west corner of the property. No significant archaeological strata or features were noticed during the course of the trenching.

Archive

Fieldwork progress records AS2	1
Photographic records AS3	1
Digital photographs	25
Drawings	1
Trench record sheets AS41	4
The project archive is intended to be placed at:	Worcestershire County Museum Hartlebury Castle, Hartlebury Near Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
telephone	01299 250416

Acknowledgements

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Bibliography

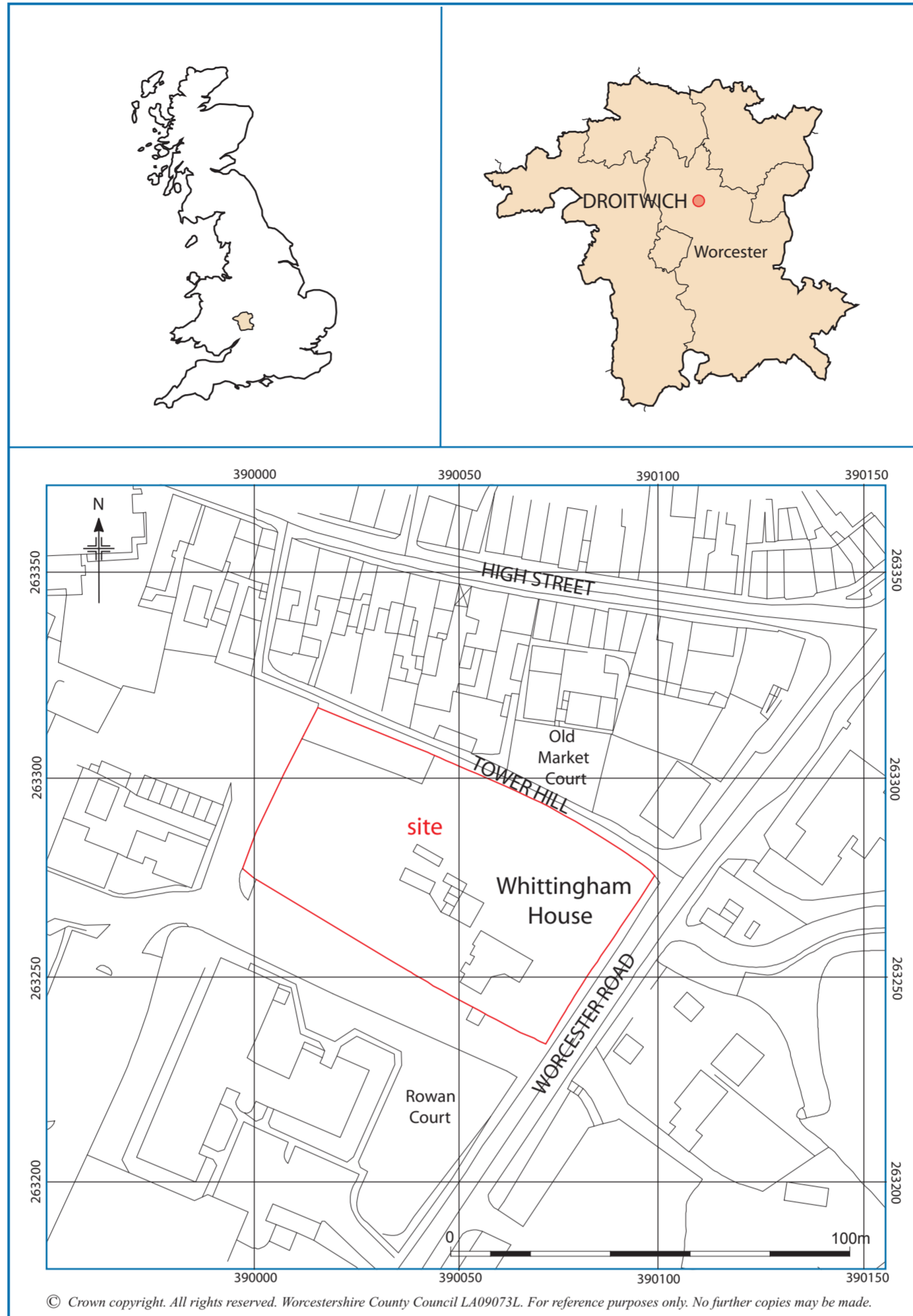
Buteux, V and Hurst, D 1996 *Archaeological assessment of Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester*, County Archaeological Service, Worcestershire County Council, report **312**

CAS 1995 (as amended) *Manual of Service practice: fieldwork recording manual*, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council, report, **399**

CgMs Consulting 2002 Archaeological desk-based assessment, Whittingham House, Worcester, Droitwich, Worcestershire. CgMs CAM/3596

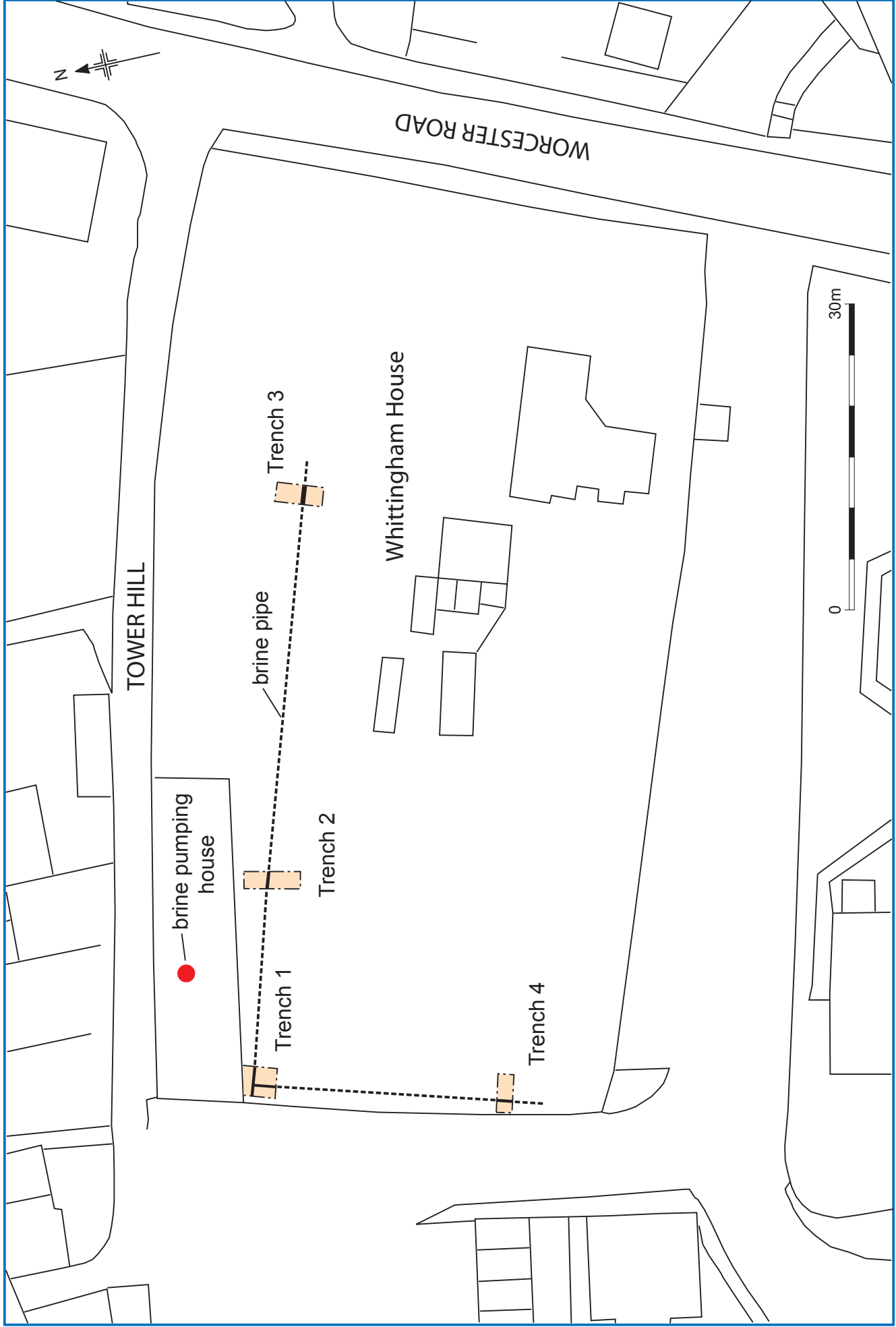
IFA, 1999 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

Patrick, C 2002 *Archaeological evaluation at Whittingham House, Worcester Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council, report **1128**



Location of the site.

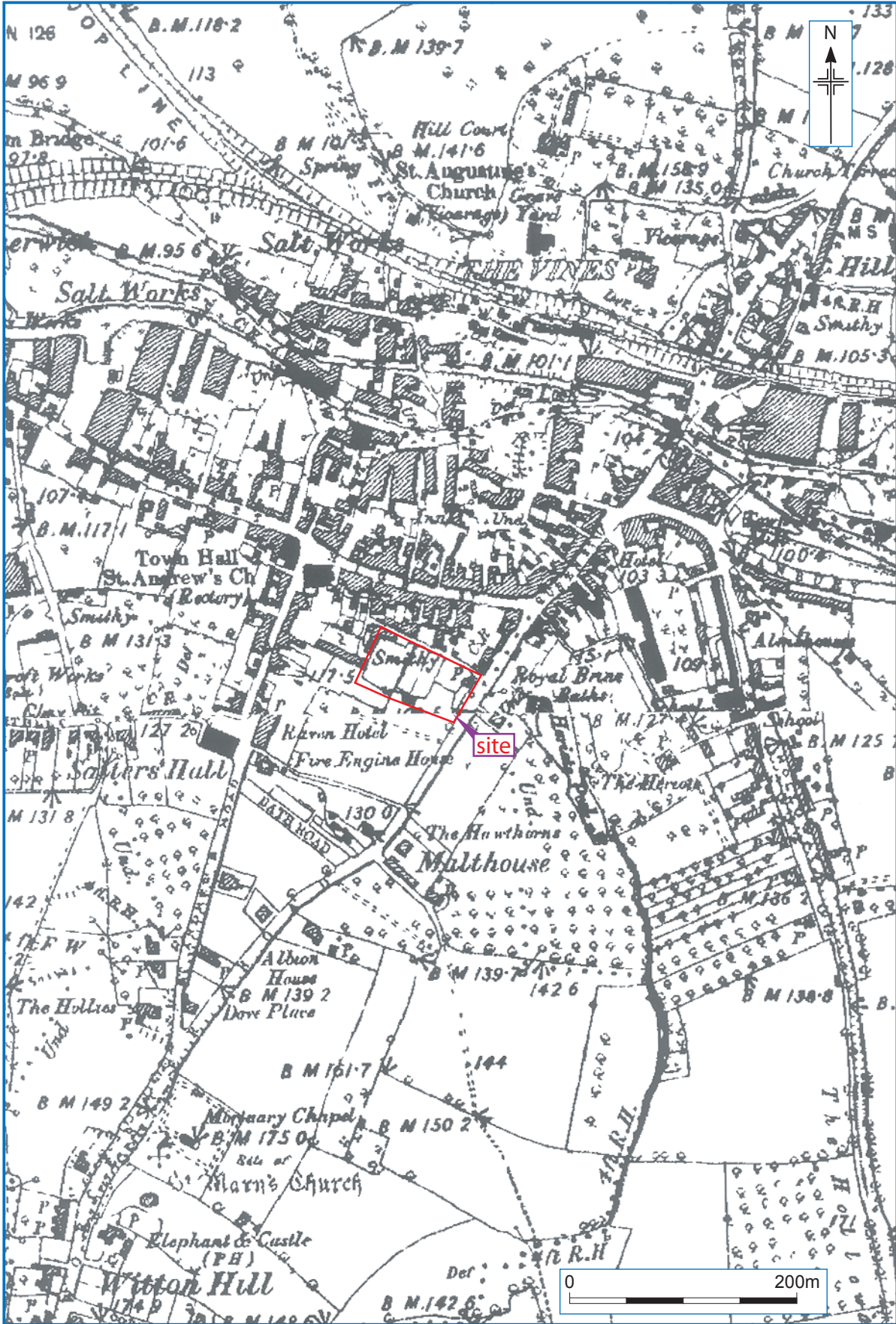
Figure 1



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Trench location plan.

Figure 2



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Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey.

Figure 3



Plate 1: Brine pipe junction in Trench 1



Plate 2: Brine pipe in Trench 2



Plate 3: Brine pipe located in Trench 3



Plate 4: Brine pipe and section in Trench 4