

## 3. Archaeological Survey and Excavation Within Warburton, 1981 to 2023

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### 3.1 Introduction

This section summarises the archaeological work undertaken within the parish of Warburton between 1981 and 2023 (Figs 26 & 37). It includes field survey, geophysical survey and excavation work. The fieldwork covered is arranged in chronological order. Historic building recording undertaken within the parish is summarised in Section 4 of this report. A summary list of metal detecting finds reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and STAG since 1997 can be found in Section 5 of this report.

### 3.2 Field Survey at Abbey Croft, Warburton (centred SJ 69 89), 1981 (Fig 27)

In February 1981 field walking was undertaken by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU) in the fields known as 'Abbey Croft', an area to the south-west of the old church and rectory traditionally associated with the Warburton Priory. This produced a handful of late prehistoric flints. This was followed by a resistivity survey undertaken in the same fields by the GMAU, with the aid of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Manchester. The resistivity survey indicated that there were two anomalies of potential archaeological origin. These were a north-south pair of linear features c 5m apart, possibly representing a pair of ditches shown on the c. 1757 estate map. The lack of any evidence for the priory was probably due to the fact that the site of the priory was located to the north-east of Abbey Croft, either within the grounds of the Rectory or more likely on the site of the late medieval chapel of ease, the old St Werburgh's (GMAU 1981).

### 3.3 Warburton Old Church Grave Yard Survey, 1986-87 (Fig 29)

The graveyard boundary surrounding the Old Church in Warburton was surveyed by the Trafford Archaeology and Heritage Project, run by GMAU, in 1986-7. The location of around 50 grave plots were plotted on the southern side of the church.

### 3.4 Gas Pipeline Watching Brief 1992 (Figs 8 & 9)

In 1992 an archaeological survey and watching brief was undertaken by Engineering Archaeological Services Ltd during the digging of the 10m wide easement for the Warburton to Audley Gas Pipeline (Brooks 1994). The pipeline ran through Warburton from Barns Lane on the eastern edge of the parish, through the fields to the south of Carr Green Lane and Moss Brow, crossing Bent Lane south of the New Church and then crossing Townfield Lane before reaching the Manchester Ship Canal on the western edge of the parish. Geophysical survey and watching brief works were undertaken. The only features identified in the Warburton stretch of the easement were three irregular linear features, probably field boundaries, which produced 12th to 14th century pottery.

### **3.5 North West Wetlands Survey of Warburton Moss, 1992-3 (Fig 6)**

In 1992 and 1993 the North West Wetlands Survey project, run by the Lancaster Archaeological Unit (now Oxford Archaeology) undertook a survey of the moss as part of a wider study of the historic lowland peatlands of Greater Manchester (Hall, Wells & Huckerby 1995, 110-111). Two small basin mires were identified as the core of this peatland area. Fieldwalking was undertaken of ploughed fields thought to cover the location of the moss and defined by Moss Lane to the north, Henshall Lane to the east (in Dunham), the fields to the south of Dunham Road and Warburton Lane to the west. Several sandy areas thought to be small raised islands within the mossland were identified but no prehistoric finds were recovered. It was noted that the area had extensive nightsoil deposits from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### **3.6 Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) Fieldwalking, 1995 to 1996**

In 1995 the Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) was established by the South Trafford Archaeological Group working with the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU). The first field work undertaken by the project was fieldwalking during Spring 1995 and Spring 1996. STAG members walked ploughed fields to the north and south of Moss Brow Farm, and the fields known as Abbey Croft, south-west of the Old Church on Wigsey Lane. Roman, medieval, and post-medieval pottery was recovered. The fields around Moss Brow produced finds evidence for extensive nightsoil deposits from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some of these early finds are illustrated in the 2015 book on Warburton (Nevell *et al* 2015, 35).

### **3.7 Warburton Moss Palaeo-Environmental Assessment 1996 (Fig 7)**

In 1996 the Palaeo-ecological Research Unit (PERU) in the Geography Department at the University of Manchester was commissioned by the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit to undertake research on the environmental history of Warburton moss (Nevell 1997, 6-7). A 750mm soil core was taken from surviving peat deposits in the northern basin at Moss Wood in Warburton. This area was identified as the last areas of mossland that had not been cleared or cultivated, although there was drainage in this area. The birch woodland was planted in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century but retained elements of original mossland vegetation. A pollen percentage diagram was produced covering six distinct zones (MW1a, MW1b, MW1c, MW2, MW3, and MW4). Although not radio-carbon dated, the basal zoner probably dated from c. 3000 BC and the origin of the moss. The lowest layers (MW1a to MW1c) represented a reasonably dry, heavily wooded phase. Layer MW2 probably dated to the Bronze Age (c. 2000 to 700 BC) and saw a reduction in woodland and the occurrence of charcoal, possibly associated with the arrival of human activity. Layer MW3 saw further woodland clearance and the first occurrence of cereal pollen suggesting a date in the Iron Age. Vegetation such as heather, hazel, buttercup, and sphagnum moss also indicated an increase in wetness along with a more open environment. Layer MW4 reflected the late 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape activity, indicating a drying of the moss as shown by the decrease in sphagnum moss, heather, and hazel, and a rise in birch pollen due to the planation. This layer also seems to imply that the moss had been truncated, possibly for peat digging.

### **3.8 Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) Excavations, Old Church and Rectory, 1996 (Figs 28, 30-34)**

Whilst the Warburton Archaeological Survey undertook its first fieldwork in 1995, this was limited to fieldwalking. 1996 marked the first full season of research working with the University of Manchester. From 1996 to 2002 the parish was used as the annual summer training excavation for the first-year archaeology students from the University of Manchester archaeology department. In 1996 the survey work included the excavation of a series of eight test pits in the grounds of the old rectory. Six of these trenches were dug west of the old rectory. Trenches 5 and 8 were dug to the east of the rectory on the edge of the northern edge of the graveyard to the old church.

#### *WAS Trench 1*

Trench 1, 1m by 2m, was dug to a depth of one meter next to the rectory garden's western boundary, which separates the garden from Abbey Croft. This revealed a sequence of turf (100), shallow topsoil (102), weathered sandy humous soil (103) overlying a clean sand (104). The trench did not contain any archaeological features or artefacts.

#### *WAS Trench 2*

This trench, 1m by 2m, was excavated to the north of trench 1 close to the rectory garden boundary to a depth of one metre. This revealed a sequence of turf (200), shallow topsoil (201), weathered sandy humous soils (202), (203, (204) and (205) overlying a clean sand (213). Cut into (213) but sealed by (205) was a U-shaped ditch which ran the length of the trench. The ditch was at least 1m wide and was at least 0.4m deep. The ditch ran parallel to the garden boundary (north to south). It was filled with a sandy soil (215). Several sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery were recovered from contexts (202), (203, (204) and (205).

#### *WAS Trench 3*

Located on the rear garden lawn of the rectory and east of trenches 1 and 2, this trench, 1m by 2m, was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. It had a similar stratigraphic sequence to that in Trench 1 with a sequence of turf (301), shallow topsoil (302), and weathered sandy humous soils (303) to (309), overlying a clean sand (310) at a depth of 0.9m. Numerous 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds were recovered from the topsoil.

#### *WAS Trench 4*

Located on the rear garden lawn of the rectory and south of trench 3, this trench, 1m by 2m, was excavated to a depth of 1.5m. It had a similar stratigraphic sequence to that in Trench 1, with a sequence of turf (401), shallow topsoil (402), and weathered sandy humous soils (403) and (404), overlying a clean sand (405) at a depth of 0.9m. There were no finds.

### *WAS Trench 5*

Trench 5 was located between the north-eastern edge of the old rectory building and the north-western boundary of the graveyard and was 2m x 2m in area. The turf and topsoil (501) and (501a) was 0.2m to 0.3m deep. This sealed a series of dump episodes and intrusions containing 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery (502), (503) and (504). These overlay context (505), a brown soil layer 0.1m to 0.2m thick which produced a single sherd of Midland Purple ware, of the 16<sup>th</sup> or very early 17<sup>th</sup> century. This deposit sealed a layer of cobbling (506) 0.15m thick, which was uncovered at a depth of 1m and were set directly on to undisturbed natural silver sand (507). This cobbling comprised rounded pebbles between 0.2 and 0.05m in diameter. This cobble spread covered the whole of the bottom of the trench, although there was a noticeable thinning of the cobble towards the north-western corner of the trench.

### *WAS Trench 6*

Located on the rear garden lawn of the rectory and east of trenches 3 and 4, this trench was 1m by 2m and was dug to a depth of 0.75m. The stratigraphic sequence in this trench was slightly different than the previous trenches, with the topsoil (601) overlying a layer of cinders (602), 30mm thick, beneath which was a sandy subsoil (603) 0.3m deep and beneath that undisturbed sand (604). Pottery finds from (601) were from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### *WAS Trench 7*

A trench 1m by 2m and 0.75m deep was dug north of Trench 6. As with trench 6 the topsoil (701) 0.1m deep overlay a layer of cinders (702) 30mm thick. The cinders sealed a sandy humous soil (703), 0.3m thick which sealed a cobble level (704) encountered at 0.5m. The cobbles lay on a sandy soil (705) interpreted as natural.

### *WAS Trench 8 (Fig 30)*

Trench 8 was located on the northern boundary of the graveyard and was 2m x 3m in plan and dug to a depth of 2m at its southern end. The trench was dug to the north of the church at a point where the graveyard bank appeared to be relatively undisturbed, except by the root system of a large yew tree which was growing across the top of the bank. This trench contained three major features.

The topsoil, which comprised soil and leaf mould (801), sealed a row of handmade bricks of later 18<sup>th</sup> century size (824), which appear to form the base of wall which was placed in a recess cut into the top of a bank (825).

The bank was found to contain two main layers, contexts (811) and (812), both of which were highly sandy soils containing very little organic material. However, context (812) had more organic material in it suggesting that this was the original ground surface (now badly leached) and that context (811) was the bank structure proper, forming a feature only 1m high when viewed from within the graveyard, but over 1.5m high when viewed from outside due to the natural escarpment edge. Below the old ground surface (812) was undisturbed natural silver

sand (821). A series of silting layers were found abutting the northern edge of the bank (802), (803), (804).

These silting layers were found to seal a ditch recut [805], which defined the northern edge of the bank. The fills of this recut (806) to (810) contained 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> pottery and ash and clinker, suggesting that the feature had been re-cut in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps when the wall (824) was built. The primary ditch feature [819] was cut into the natural sand (821), and had silted very rapidly, (817) and (818), perhaps because of its steep sides. Afterwards the rate of silting slowed, contexts (814) to (816), but even so when the ditch was re-cut, probably in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the original feature appears to have been almost completely filled and was sealed by a well developed topsoil (813). There were no finds from the primary ditch fills, nor from the bank structure.

### **3.9 Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) Excavations in 1997**

The Warburton Archaeological Survey excavations in 1997 included the church area once more but expanded the investigation to other parts of the village. Three trenches were dug around the old church boundary (T9, T10, and T12). A field to the east of the graveyard north of the village green was also investigated (T11), as was a garden to the south of the village cross (T13) on Wigsey Lane.

#### *WAS Trench 9, Old Rectory*

Trench 9 was located in the old rectory grounds, across the southern boundary of the graveyard and the north-western boundary of the graveyard, and was 5m x 1.5m in area. The wall, bank and ditch seen in Trench 8 were also located in this trench. A foundation cut [9003], 0.5m wide and 0.45m deep, running west to east, was cut into the top of the bank roughly at the northern end of the trench. It contained rounded stones between 0.1m and 0.4m in diameter (9004), although there were no finds. These foundations probably supported the handmade brick wall seen in Trench 8. The wall was sealed by a series of loam and topsoil levels (9001), (9002) and (9005). To the north of the wall there was a buried turf layer (9017) which was later than the wall, because it abutted it. This was sealed by a deposit of sandy brown loam (9018) which appears to have accumulated against the northern side of the wall, within the graveyard, to a depth of 0.35m.

The bank structure comprised a mid-brown sandy loam dump which contained very little organic material. This was no more than 1.1m at its highest and was at least 2.8m wide. It overlaid and sealed a natural orange/brown sand layer (9016). The southern edge of the bank was defined, and possibly even truncated, by a shallow ditch cut (9019) defining a feature 1.35m wide and 0.4m deep. This ditch cut truncated an old soil layer (9015) to the south. The ditch was filled with two distinct layers; (9014) which was an orange sandy loam containing a layer of cobbles at the very bottom c 0.1m in diameter, but no other finds and very little organic material; and (9013), a brown sandy loam, again containing no finds and very little organic material. The ditch and its fills were sealed by an old turf and wood layer (9012) which was between 0.05 and 0.15m deep. This was in turn sealed by two large dump layers (9011) and (9008), which produced 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and metalwork, including a bronze

penny of George IV. These dump levels, which raised the ground level by 0.6m are probably to be associated with the construction of the driveway to the south in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### *WAS Trench 10*

This trench was located in the vicarage garden approximately 60m due south of the church and was 1m by 4m in plan and dug to a depth of 1.2m. The trench did not produce any archaeological evidence and stratigraphic sequence was the same as other trenches excavated to the north-west in 1996 (T1 to T6), with a turf (10001) and shallow topsoil (10002) sealing a sandy humous soil (10003) and a natural consisting of orange sand (10004).

#### *WAS Trench 11 (Fig 35)*

This trench was located in a garden to the north-west of No. 8 Church Green, one of a row of cottages close to the churchyard on the north-eastern side of the church. The cottages were in a row of four and the cottage nearest to the excavation trench had been the village pub, 'The Pipe and Punch Bowl', which ceased to function in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The trench was 3m by 3m and had the following stratigraphic sequence.

A turf topsoil layer (context 11001) approximately 0.2m thick which contained some 20<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery. A mixed subsoil layer (11002) containing charcoal flecks and evidence of three 20<sup>th</sup> century post-holes penetrating from the present ground level. One of these penetrated deeper than the other two (11004). This layer was continuous across the entire trench.

Beneath (11002) was a further mixed sandy layer (11003) into which were cut a series of features. The basic composition of the layer was uniform across the trench, but contexts (11011) and (11014) contained greater amounts of charcoal, with a heavy concentration in context (11011). A series of post-holes, contexts (11005), (11007), (11015) and (11016) and a construction slot (11013) were excavated.

Layer (11003), interpreted as a building foundation deposit, produced a small amount of pottery some of which was 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also several sherds of 14<sup>th</sup> century. The two earliest pieces were a green-glazed pinched-base jug and the rim of a green-glazed cooking pot, as well as three late medieval sherds, including a possible piece of Pennine Gritty Ware from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition several sherds of Midland Purple (15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century) were recovered from this layer.

#### *WAS Trench 12 (Fig 31)*

Trench 12 was located in the old rectory grounds, across the southern-western boundary of the graveyard and the north-western boundary of the graveyard. It was 4m x 1.5m in area. The wall, bank and ditch seen in Trenches 8 and 9 were also located in this trench, although the path along the top of the bank was not present. The trench only sectioned half of the bank, and time and weather constraints meant that it was not possible to finish this trench, although a sondage 0.5m wide was cut along the full length of the trench along its eastern edge. A wall cut [12015] truncated the top of the bank and this was filled with rounded

pebbles c 0.1m across (12004) representing a wall foundation as seen in trenches 8 and 9, aligned west to east.

A series of dump layers, (12002), (12003), (12005), (12006) and (12007) in total 0.3m deep and covering the northern 1.4m of the trench, comprising sandy loam deposits ran to the south of this feature and contained large quantities of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and metalwork. These layers were in turn overlaid by a thick topsoil (12001) which was 0.35m deep in places. The dump layers partially sealed a shallow U-shaped double bottomed feature (12012) 1.3m wide and 0.25m deep filled with a brown sandy loam. It spanned the whole trench and appeared to be a shallow ditch-like feature of recent origin. Below this were two layers of sandy loam which produced some 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery (12008), a dark brown loam 0.25m deep, and (12009), a light brown loam with 5% stones 0.2m deep, that covered the northern 3.5m of the trench and appeared to be deliberate dump layers. These features are probably to be associated with re-landscaping when the late 19<sup>th</sup> century driveway was built.

These sealed the bank structure, a mid-brown sandy loam containing very little organic material (12010) and a shallow ditch feature that ran along the southern edge of the bank (12016). The ditch was a shallow, U-shaped feature, 1.6m wide and 0.3m deep and contained no finds. There was, however, an initial thin sandy silt layer (12014) 0.1m thick at the very bottom of the ditch. The ditch was cut into the natural orange sand (12013). The bank appeared to be dumped directly onto this sand.

#### *WAS Trench 13*

This trench was located three metres to the south of the old village cross in the front garden of Cross Cottage. A trench 3m x 1m was dug to a depth of 0.8m. The stratigraphic sequence was topsoil (13001) approximately 0.12m thick followed by redeposited soil down (13002) to a depth of 0.5m. At this depth a linear feature made up of a single thickness and width of stones and brick was discovered (13003) running approximately parallel to the present boundary between the garden and the Cross. This sealed a sandy soil interpreted as natural (13004).

### **3.10 Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) Excavations in 1998**

Warburton Archaeological Survey field work in 1998 focussed on excavating small trenches in the gardens of the properties in the village, especially around the village green the cross on Wigsey Lane.

#### *WAS Trench 14 -No. 6 Church Row, Warburton Green*

This trench was dug in the vacant vegetable plot on the western end of the garden of No 6, Church Row, Warburton. Trench 14 was initially excavated with the dimensions 2.65m x 1m although as structures were uncovered it was increased to 3.25m in length and 1.5m in width. The trench was dug on an approximate N-S axis to a depth of 0.35m at the north end and 0.45m at the south end, although the excavation of post holes (4) and (18) and context (6) – between features (3) and (21) – led to a maximum depth of the trench of 0.8m.

The top soil (1) consisted of a black, sandy, loam which overlay context (2), a grey sandy loam. Evidence of pottery was found in both layers. Context (3) appeared to be the remains of a loosely structured wall made of varying materials – brick, sandstone and flagstones fragments. Features (4) and (18) were postholes and were 0.25m and 0.38m deep respectively. Both still had the remains of the posts within them and should therefore be considered as completely modern and relating to garden structures. A linear wall structure (21) consisted of 3 stone and 1 sandstone blocks which were lying parallel and lower to (3). The blocks varied in thickness from 0.12m to 0.18m and were separated from each other by a gap of some 0.15m. This feature was initially overlaid by a layer of brick and stone rubble.

Parallel to (21) were features (20) and (5). Context (20) was a linear feature which appeared to be a brick and stone-lined open drain 0.15-0.2m in width and 0.2-0.3m in depth. The drain contained many sherds of pottery and glass. Alongside the drain were two stone flags – context (5) – some 0.78m in total length and 0.24m wide and an average of 50mm in depth and bedded on yellow sand. Between features (21) and (3) was context (6) which was a layer of grey sandy loam containing rubble and pottery sherds. At the bottom of this layer was a large sandstone block. Alongside this ran a late 20<sup>th</sup> century plastic waterpipe which from the lack of disturbance in the trench was ‘moled through’ rather than ‘dug in’.

The structures found in T14 suggest a building of some sort with features (20) and (21) suggesting an external wall. Feature (5) – the flagstones – may be seen as the entry point of the structure. A large amount of glass and pot sherds were found in all levels particularly areas containing demolition rubble.

#### *WAS Trench 15 – No. 4 Church Brow Warburton Green*

Trench 15 was dug in the south-western corner of No. 4 Church Brow, Warburton. The trench lay E-W and was c. 1.8m long and 1m wide. The trench was approximately a meter deep although a sondage was sunk at either end, the depth of the western end being 1.2m and the eastern end being 1.25m. The topsoil (1) covered approximately the first 0.5m of the trench and was a black, sandy, loam overlying (2), averaging approximately 0.3m in depth and consisted of a layer of red, sandy, loam. This in turn overlay (3) which consisted of a sandy, red-brown, gravel with pebbles and was considered to be the undisturbed natural level. There was no evidence of archaeological evidence found in this trench.

#### *WAS Trench 16 - Ditchfield Cottage*

Cut 4metres north of T15 this sondage was 1m wide x 3.5m long with the long axis N-S. Topsoil (1) to an average depth of 0.3m was removed and overlaid the subsoil layer (2), partially overlying a clay area (11) and going below this layer for a depth of approximately 1.2m at the North end of the trench. Cleaning (11) revealed the extent of the full width of the trench and 2.3m from the south end towards the north. This feature is interpreted as a clay floor laid around post-holes (14), (16), (17), (22) & (24) and beam slot (15). Post holes (12a) and (12b) and (13a) and (13b) indicated these had been cut through after the floor level (11) had been laid down, possibly as part of a later development phase. The clay floor showed no sign of habitation such as soiling and had no traces of a sand bedding plane for sandstone flags. The



former use of this construction is as yet unknown. A sondage to natural (23) at a depth of 1.2m was cut at the northern end of the trench.

#### *WAS Trench 17 No. 4 Church Brow Warburton Green*

T17, 1.6m x 1.5m with an E-W axis, was dug in line with T15 and was 4m to the east of this. Black topsoil (1) was excavated to an average depth of 0.4m and was comparatively clean and overlay a grey brown sand soil (2) approximately 0.2m deep. At this depth a grey-brown feature (10) approximately 0.4m wide was uncovered running E-W in the near middle of the trench and along the full length. On each side of (10) the red-brown sandy gravel interpreted as natural to the area was recorded. A transverse slot was excavated across (10) giving a depth of 0.3m slightly narrowing with depth, with a flat bottom. This is interpreted as a beam slot which did not appear in T15. There was no opportunity to find the extremities of this feature.

#### *WAS Trench 18 – Ditchfield Cottage*

T18 was located in the driveway to a former garage area to the north of No. 4 The Green, Ditchfield Cottage and was 1m by 5m. After clearing a partial covering of black loam (1) a general layer of deteriorating tarmac (7) was removed over an area 1m wide by 5m long with an E-W axis. Directly under the tarmac was a general spread of sandy loam (2) within which was cut a feature (8) of yellow brown sand with brick fragments and a thin metal box badly masked but with no contents of interest. A sondage at the east end of this trench revealed a land drain, sunk 0.95m below ground and cut into the natural (23). At the north centre of the trench an additional sondage was cut to confirm the depth of the natural layer (23).

#### *WAS Trench 19: The Old Cross, Wigsey Lane (Figs 38-9)*

This trench was dug on the western side of the cross base and was 1.2m by 4m. Context 1 was the topsoil comprises dark grey sandy loam with an overall scatter of modern rubbish (Pierce 1998). The loam itself contained earlier 20th. c. Fragments of pottery and brick over the entire trench to an average depth of 0.22m. Context 2 directly below 1 comprised red-brown fine sand over the entire trench to an average depth of 0.3m, into which had been dug three pits 3, 4, and 5. Context 3 cut into 2, appeared as a rubbish pit 0.86m x 0.60m x 0.40m deep with a general fill of dark grey sandy loam. This feature contained fragments of 20th c. pottery, glass, wood and plastic interpreted as a mix of contexts 1 and 2 thrown in as infill over the abandoned material. Context 4 cut into 2, was an infilled oval hole oriented NE/SW. It was 0.53m x 0.36m x 0.27m deep filled with dark grey sand, context 1, but no intrusions. Context 5 cut through 2 and into 6 lying below. It extended under the north wall of the trench appearing as 0.70m x 0.46m x 0.42m deep. The fill was redeposited red-brown sand from the upper levels, 1 and 2, and contained pottery and glass fragments, also a George III, (small find 004). This is interpreted as another rubbish pit. Context 6 appeared as a coarse orange brown sand over the whole of the trench and is interpreted as the uppermost natural layer for the site. Context 7 lies at the west extremity of the sondage, appearing as a wedge-shaped layer 0.30m long deepening to 0.10m thick and continuing under the west end of the trench. No significance is attached to this dark red-brown sandy loam fill which was sterile.

### *WAS Trench 20: The Old Cross, Wigsey Lane (Figs 38-9)*

This trench was dug on the eastern side of the cross base and was 0.5m by 0.8m. Context 1, as T19, was found to extend as a general layer of average depth 0.10m above 2 (Pierce 1998). This is interpreted as a general build-up of detritus and soil resettlement after the initial infilling of the foundation trench for the sandstone slab wall. The foundation trench was cut into 2 and the infill was of compatible red brown fine sand as in T19. No artefacts or intrusions were recovered from this slot. There was no evidence of a laid foundation for the wall although where a large fragment of the corner of one stone was broken off, several pieces of brick had been used to level up the slab.

### *WAS Trench 21: The Old Cross, Wigsey Lane (Figs 38-9)*

Trench 21 was 1.0m x 1.4m in plan and was approximately 3.0m south-east from corner of the cross base (Pierce 1998). Context 1, as context 1 of T19, covered the entire sondage to an average depth of 0.10m. Context 2, as context 2 of T19, is above 6 approximately 0.20m deep. Context 6 as 6 of T19, is undisturbed natural. Context 8 occurred in the south-east corner as a quadrant of a steep-sided hole approximately 0.25m diameter x 1.0m deep and infilled with red-brown sandy loam with no inclusions. Context 9 underlies the uppermost natural layer 6 but is clearly defined as a coarse sandy red brown gravel 0.15m thick at the bottom of pit 8. Context 10 underlies 9, again with good definition as fine yellow-brown sand, cut into by the sump of pit 8. The thickness of this layer was not determined.

## **3.11 Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) Excavations in 1999**

The focus of the work of the Warburton Archaeological Survey in 1999 was the eastern graveyard boundary of the old church and the stripping and planning of Onion Farm cottage at Moss Brow.

### *WAS Trench 22: The Eastern Graveyard Boundary (Figs 32-34)*

Trench 22 was located across the eastern boundary of the graveyard, and was 8m x 2m in area. The ditch and bank seen in trenches 8, 9, and 12 were located again, although the brick wall also seen in trenches 8, 9, and 12 was absent, as was the pathway seen in Trench 12. The topsoil [22001] was found to seal the bank [22003]. Pottery was found at the intersection between the top of the bank, which appeared to have been truncated by graveyard activity, and the bottom of the topsoil [22001] and [22002]. The bank had been terraced on its eastern side and the top fills of the ditch had also been truncated by the terracing at its western end. This terracing [22004] was perhaps part the foundations for the brick wall as seen in Trench 8. However, no trace of the brick wall was found. The bank structure [22003] comprised brown sand with some loam. It sealed an old grey soil [22000] which had been leached of nearly all organic material.

The ditch [22007] had a number of fills. The primary ditch feature [22007], a 1.5m wide U-shaped feature up to 1m deep, was cut into undisturbed natural orange sand [22006]. It was filled by a sequence of sandy silts, [22013] to [22008], only one of which produced any pottery [22008]. The sherd from this final fill appeared to be 16<sup>th</sup> century of Midland Purple type. The

ditch was sealed by an old dark brown soil level [22005] which produced 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery. The ditch appeared to be curving and shallowing towards the southern baulk of the trench.

*WAS Trenches 23a & b: No 4 Church Green (Fig 36)*

Two trenches were dug by hand in the rear, western, garden of No 4 Church Green. This garden area backed onto the north-eastern corner of the old church graveyard.

Trench 23a lay closest to the graveyard and was 1m by 3m in plan and was dug to a depth of 1m. Beneath the turf and topsoil (23001) (0.2m deep) was a dark-brown soil layer with lots of organic material (23002). This layer was 0.4m deep and sat on an orange-red sandy soil interpreted as natural. A narrow ditch (23003) with a U-shaped profile ran across diagonally the western end of the trench this was cut from context (23002) and was 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep. It was filled (23004) with a dark-brown organic soil. There were not finds from this nor the rest of the trench..

Trench 23b lay closest to the house and was 1m by 3m in plan and was dug to a depth of 1m. Beneath the turf and topsoil (23005) (0.2m) was a dark-brown soil layer with lots of organic material (23006). This layer was 0.5m deep and sat on an orange-red sandy soil interpreted as natural (23007). No features were located and no pottery was recovered by this trench.

*WAS Trench 24 Onion Farm Cottage, Moss Brow (Figs 44 to 45 & 49-51)*

Two trenches were opened in June 1999 on land belonging to Mr & Mrs Beckman of Onion Farm, in the hamlet of Moss Brow. T24 was located to the south of the pigsties and was designed to section an anomaly recovered by resistivity survey.

Trench 24 was dug south of the pigsties to assess a short linear anomaly shown on the geophysical survey of this area. It was thought that this could have been related to the ditch for the medieval park pale. The trench was 2m wide and 5m deep and was dug down to the undisturbed natural sand drift geology. No archaeological features were recovered (ie ditch or pit features) apart from a ploughsoil (24002) 0.4m deep lying on top of the undisturbed natural sand (24003). No explanation was found for the geophysical anomaly.

*WAS Trench 25 Onion Farm Cottage, Moss Brow (Figs 44 to 45 & 49-51)*

T25 was positioned over the site of a house platform recorded as early as c. 1757. Oral evidence from the last farmers at Onion Farm indicated that this feature was the foundation of a timber-framed building demolished in the 1940s.

An area of 8m by 20m was hand-stripped over the site of the house, Onion Farm Cottage, shown on the Ordnance Survey map sequence. This trench revealed archaeological remains relating to an L-shaped, five-bay, building with several different phases was found to lie immediately beneath the shallow topsoil (25001).

The three main rooms of the building (rooms 1 to 3), aligned north to south, were found to be covered in demolition rubble (including brick, plaster and stone). Contexts (25002) covered the southern bay (room 1); context (25003) covered the central bay (room 2); and contexts (25004) and (25049) covered the northern bay (room 3). Rooms 4 to 5, a later lean-to structure to the west, were not sealed by any demolition rubble, nor was room 6 (a hay barn) to the north, but were covered by a thin topsoil and turf layer. Rooms 1 and 2 were extensively, but not fully excavated. Only the southern part of Room 3 was excavated, whilst only the outlines of Rooms 4 and 5 were excavated.

The earliest element was a two-bay cruck-framed cottage aligned north to south with a doorway in the western wall, and an inglenook fireplace against the northern wall of room 2. Phase 2 saw the extension of the building northwards with the addition of room 3. The building was further expanded during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Phase three, with the building of another northern room (room 4). In Phase 4 during the mid- to late-19<sup>th</sup> century, a two roomed (rooms 5 & 6) rectangular bay was added to the west of rooms 1 and 2 forming a small western wing. A lean-to brick structure was added to the western wall of room 6 in the new western bay. Phase 5, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, saw alterations to the interior of the cottage. A tile floor was inserted into the southern room 1, whilst a concrete floor added to room 2. Map evidence and oral testimony indicates that the cottage was demolished in the period 1949-60.

Pottery and clay pipes from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century were also found across the site. The earliest ceramic type on the site came from the fill of this pit, context (25022). This produced six sherds: three of Yellow Ware and three sherds of black glazed ware. This dates this feature to the 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

#### *Moss Brow Test Pitting (Figs 52-55 & 58)*

In June 1999 a large field to the south of Moss Brow Farm (centred SJ 709 888) was the subject of an evaluation excavation, by University of Manchester as part of an archaeological training dig. This followed the discovery of several dozen metal detector finds from the field by Mr Jim Balme in the period 1995 to 1998 spanning the Roman, Early Medieval, Late Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. The field was made available due to the area being under pasture as part of a 'set aside' scheme for agriculture at that time (Beale & Gimsditch 2001).

A contour survey of the area, covering 400m, east to west by 250m north to south was undertaken revealed an east to west ridge. The field reached a height of 24m AOD on a shallow rise at the western end of the field before dipping southwards towards the River Bollin, dropping to 19m AOD at the southern edge of the field. 42 test pits, each 1m by 1m in plan and 0.5m deep, were excavated in the southern half of the field. Two sections in each test were recorded and the spoil sieved and metal-detected. A ditch feature, aligned north to south, was located in one of the test pits in Grid 1B. No dating evidence for this V-shaped feature was uncovered.

These test pits produced no stratified finds. However, though many surface finds were discovered through further metal detecting as part of the project. Most of these finds dated from the prehistoric (two Neolithic flint arrowheads and a flint scraper), Romano-British (13

bronze brooch fragments, 2 bronze coins, 2 silver coins, 2 bronze terrets), Early Medieval (Saxon bronze belt/strap end), and Later Medieval periods (five lead spindle whorls), with other ceramic material from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### **3.12 Warburton Excavations in 2000**

#### *WAS Trench 26: White Cottage Watching Brief*

A watching brief was undertaken by STAG during the construction of an extension to White Cottage, on the corner of Wigsey Lane and Warburton Bridge Road. The narrow (0.5m wide and 0.65m deep) foundation trenches for the brick extension were observed on the eastern side of the cottage. No finds were recovered and no features observed. The trench sides showed a turf and topsoil c. 0.2m deep beneath which was a sandsoil.

#### *WAS Trench 27a Paddock Lane Farm (Figs 42 & 43)*

The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit were commissioned to undertake a survey of Paddock Lane Farm, Paddock Lane, Warburton, Trafford (SJ 7018 8956) prior to demolition (Nevell, Hradil & Pierce 2001). The farmhouse structure comprised two wings. The eastern wing was a three storeyed (including the attic), double depth, central staircase plan farmhouse with Georgian detailing. The western wing was a smaller two bay, two storey, structure containing fragmentary remains of a three bay, open hall, cruck timber-framed building dating from the late 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. This was originally part of a much larger U-shaped complex, the western and eastern wings of which were demolished when the Georgian farmhouse was built in the period 1757-1839.

Late in July, S.TAG. was asked to try and confirm the extent of the west wing of the farmhouse, that had been indicated on an estate map of 1757. Two trenches were cut. T27a, 1m by 5m a rubbish pit containing bottles and late 19th/early 20th century pottery, was uncovered, together with a drain. There were no other features, with the exception of a layer of cobbles at the bottom of sondages cut at the east and west ends of the trench.

#### *WAS Trench 27b (Figs 40 & 41)*

The opportunity was taken to clear and examine the area within the foundation remains of the demolished timber cruck building adjacent to the farmhouse (Nevell, Hradil & Pierce 2001). This was T27b, and it was 5m by 5m. After the demolition of the western wing the opportunity was taken to clear and examine the site of the cruck structure. This was confined to the western bay of the northern wing. The brick foundations of the western gable of the western wing (27002) and the northern (27001) and the southern (27003) walls exposed. These walls also incorporated a number of sandstone fragments, particularly in the western gable wall foundation. The final phase brick and stone floor covering survived in a fragmentary form in the northern half of the trench (27007), along with the later internal brick partition (27008). There were also the remains of two opposing padstones (27005; 27006), which sat c 3.5m to the west of the surviving in situ cruck truss. Below the final phase floor surface was a general layer of yellow/brown clay (27009) with small patches of black sandy loam. Into this

clay layer were cut five circular-section post holes, between 0.2 and 0.4m deep (27011-27016). Below this was the undisturbed yellow/brown gravelly sandy natural (27010).

It was concluded that there had been a build-up of over 1m of land from the low level cobbling to the present garden level. No evidence was found of an earlier structure within the two trial trenches. Five phases of building were identified on the platform. The foundations of the western wing (in Trench 3) were found to incorporate padstones for an earlier cruck structure and these in turn overlay an early clay floor into which five postholes had been cut. No dating evidence was found for this earliest phase. The excavations in Trench 3 also revealed a short stretch of brick foundation wall, two bricks deep, relating to the southern wing and running southwards from the south-western corner of the western wing for c 0.6m

#### *WAS Onion Farm Well Excavation (Figs 46-48)*

Ahead of the building of an extension at Onion Farm, STAG excavated the site of an old well. The well was situated on the western side of the old farm house. It lay roughly 2m west of the stone wing of the old farmhouse. The well was c. 1m in diameter and was lined with handmade brick. It was excavated to a depth of 2m. It was found to be backfilled with old bricks, ceramic tiles and fragments of sandstone blocks. The brick sizes suggested it was dug, or perhaps re-dug in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and sealed in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.13 Warburton Excavations in 2001: Brook Farm, Moss Lane**

In February 2001 STAG undertook an archaeological watching brief ahead of the building of six new dwellings immediately south-west of Brook Farmhouse, on the corner of Moss Lane and Warburton Lane. Investigation took place after the ground had been stripped and levelled removing any traces of three buildings recorded on the site in 1966. However, an area of stone cobbling at the eastern edge of the site close to the boundary with Brook Farmhouse was located. Elsewhere, pottery sherds included 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century cream wares and slip wares, and two small medicine bottles. There was a brown manganese glazed sherd and a Buckley type black glazed red fabric rim. The earliest object was the rim of a yellow ware plate with brown strip decoration, from the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.14 Warburton Archaeological Survey Geophysical Survey 2001: Moss Brow (Fig 57)**

As the evaluation excavation of 1999 was largely inconclusive, it was decided, due to the amount of artefactual discoveries and their location, that a geophysical survey, using magnetometry and resistivity techniques, would be carried out across the whole field Moss Brow test-pitted in 1999, and which was the focus of these metal finds. The geophysical survey in October 2001 covered an area of 300m by 140m. Magnetometry survey covered the whole of this area, but the resistivity analysis was confined to two, 20m by 20m, squares (1B and 2C) (Beale & Grimsditch 2001a).

The results identified six possible archaeological features: five linear and one circular. These included a possible ditch feature orientated approximately north to south and in alignment with the ditch discovered in 1999 (Grimsditch & Beale 1999). Most of long linear features were interpreted as ancient agricultural remains, possibly field boundaries visible on the 1756

estate map. Finally, there were two other less definite anomalies: another rectilinear feature close to the 1999 ditch feature and a circular anomaly.

### **3.15 Warburton Archaeological Survey Excavations 2001: Moss Brow (Fig 56-59)**

Four trenches were excavated in November 2001. These were designed to target four of the geophysical features identified earlier in 2001 (Beale & Grimsditch 2001a).

T4, 1m by 3m, in Grid 1E revealed the circular anomaly to be a layer of compact soil, approximately 0.5m in width. The excavation of two rectilinear features was largely inconclusive, although there were bands of sands and gravels, which might be archaeological in nature. These two features were only investigated in plan, where no consequent intrusive investigation was undertaken.

T2 (1m by 4m) and T3 (1m by 4m) both in Grid 2C investigated of the long linear features interpreted as field boundaries. These trenches revealed two ditch-type features, approximately 4m apart, the most southerly being larger and deeper than the other. There were no stratified artefactual finds to assist in the dating of this and the two previous two features; therefore their provenance is unknown, to date.

Trench 1 (1m by 4m), in Grid 1B, investigated the possible ditch feature running north-south, also seen in 1999. This trench revealed that the feature was a ditch with V-shaped profile. However, no stratified artefactual evidence was obtained.

The feature in Trench 4 was probably geological in origin. Trenches 2 and 3 revealed two field boundaries probably to be associated with those seen on the 1756 estate map. Trench 1 contained a ditch with a different profile which was not seen on the 1756 map. Its form was reminiscent of a Roman-style military ditch but there was no dating evidence to support this suggestion.

### **3.16 Warburton Archaeological Survey Excavations 2002: Moss Brow (Figs 57, 60-63)**

In the autumn of 2002 a further six trenches were hand dug by STAG to further assess the ditch feature in the 2001 evaluation in Trench 1 in an attempt to date it (Pierce & Nevell 2002). Six trenches were dug in Grids 1A, 1B and 1C. Trench 1 in Grid 1A was designed to assess the location a possible east to west trackway. Trenches 2, 4, 5 and 6, all in Grid 1B, were designed to determine whether the V-shaped ditch seen in 1999 and 2001 was part of an enclosure. Trench 3 was dug to examine a linear geophysical feature in Grid 2B seen in the 2001 survey but not investigated.

Trench 1 (1m by 4m) did not produce any evidence for a trackway. Trench 2 (1m by 4m), located c. 5m to the north of the ditch seen in 1999 and 2001, contained a ditch-like feature with a U-shaped profile of unknown date. Trench 3 (1m by 4m) contained a late 20<sup>th</sup> century plastic drainage pipe. Trench 4 (1m by 4m) contained geological features. Trench 5 (1m by 4m) contained cut features of an unknown date. Trench 6 (1m by 4m) contained ditch with a V-shaped profile c. 8m south of the feature seen in 1999 and 2001.

No dating evidence was recovered from any of these archaeological features.

### **3.17 Excavations in 2003: Paddock Lane**

The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU) was commissioned by H2 Construction to undertake an archaeological evaluation at land off Paddock Lane, Warburton, Trafford, (SJ 70228945) prior to site re-development (UMAU 2004). The evaluation was carried out in August 2003 to try to locate the possible remains of a ditch that encircled a Medieval deer park located in the area. Two trenches were dug by machine and hand cleaned. T1 (WAS trench 28) was 30m by 1.60m, dug by machine to a depth of 0.4m and aligned north-east to south-west. T2 (WAS Trench 29) was 30m long and 1.6m dug by machine to a depth of 0.4m and aligned north-east to south-west. It lay 10m to the east of T1.

No archaeological features were present beneath the thin sandy topsoil and deeper sandy subsoil. The remains of the Medieval park boundary were not encountered during the course of the evaluation. The unstratified finds from both trenches would seem to be the result of manuring and ploughing. Only two pottery sherds were identified as Medieval which would appear to tie in with the documentary and cartographic evidence for agricultural activity within the vicinity. It seems likely that the medieval park boundary ran further to the north.

### **3.18 Warburton Excavations 2005: Old Church Watching Brief**

In September 2005 a watching brief was undertaken at St Werburgh's Old Church during drain works at the base of the southern side of the nave and southern transept. Four small trenches were excavated. T1 was 0.95m wide and 0.5m wide. It was dug to a depth of 0.9m. A drain cut was located with at a depth of 0.72m the clay remains of a horseshow drain. The sandy loam fill contained disturbed human remains: right pelvis fragment with ball and femur, and a fragment of skull. These were left in situ.

T2 lay 1.83m east of T1 and was 0.9m by 0.43m It was dug to a depth of 0.77m where a sandy soil was encountered. The sandy loam above contained a fragment of arm bone and a clay pipe fragment at a depth of 0.3m. These finds were left in situ.

T3 was 1m by 0.5m in plan and lay east of T2. It was dug to a depth of 0.75m against the church wall. The upper soil (0.1m) was a mixed loam and sand. Next was a sandy layer 0.2m thick which sealed a clay horse-show drain at 0.25m. Below was a sandy soil and at 0.75m a coffin nail and at 0.75m under the wall footing was a very degraded human skull, wood fragments and a nail. These finds were left in situ.

T4 lay east of T3 and was 1.3m by 0.4m a lid against the wall of the church. It was dug to depth of 0.8m. The upper layer was turf (0.05m) below which was a sandy gravel 0.2m deep. This sealed a clay horseshoe drain. Fragments of wood were located at depth of 0.8m.

### **3.19 Warburton Time Team Excavations, Moss Brow, 2006 (Figs 64-72)**

In September 2006 the television archaeology programme, Time Team, undertook an extensive evaluation of the fields to the south of Moss Brow to further investigate the



possibility of Roman settlement in this area based upon the concentration of metal detecting finds (Wessex Archaeology 2007). 17 trenches of varying sizes were excavated in two fields. These were located to investigate either geophysical anomalies, or concentrations of finds from the fieldwalking and shovel test pits and features previously identified in the 2002 evaluation. The excavated up-cast was scanned by metal detector. The only features located were, firstly, a linear feature in T1, which corresponded with the line of an old hedgerow identified on the 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps. Secondly, two lynchets, probably agricultural terraces, were identified in Trench 5. Runnign east to west following the line of the hillside, these were roughly 20m (northern lynchet) and 30m (southern lynchet) wide.

All other anomalies observed in the trenches were revealed to be geological trends, agricultural activity, or modern dumps of metallic material. Thus, the evaluation at Moss Brow Farm demonstrated that the site did not represent a previously unknown Roman fortlet, nor did it locate and settlement.

Finds were recovered from 12 of the 17 trenches excavated (no finds were recovered from Trenches 1, 3, 7-9), and also from the fieldwalking and shovel test pit survey, and from the metal detector survey. Fieldwalking and shovel test pit finds were quickly scanned and found to comprise almost exclusively post-medieval and modern artefacts. Artefacts which were demonstrably or possibly of earlier date were extracted and only these have been recorded from this group of material. These and all other finds recovered (from trenches and from the metal detector survey) have been quantified by material type within each context.

Very little material was recovered which pre-dated the post-medieval period, although a small number of objects remain undated, including ten small fragments of undiagnostic and abraded ceramic building material (from the topsoil in Trenches 2, 10, 11, 12), a possible whetstone (fieldwalking square 46), and 13 metal objects (nails, scraps and waste pieces). Three prehistoric worked flints were recovered, two from fieldwalking (squares 95 and 96) and one from a shovel test pit (square 1025). These comprise two broken flakes (one burnt) and one core. None are datable more closely within the prehistoric period. Two pottery sherds were identified as Romano-British, both are coarsewares, one oxidised (Trench 16 topsoil) and one greyware (fieldwalking square 23). Both are body sherds and neither is more closely datable within the Roman period.

Fieldwalking also produced two medieval sherds, one oxidised sandy ware (square 116) and one fine whiteware (square 134). Again, these are undiagnostic; a probable date range of 12th/13th century can be suggested. The remainder of the assemblage is of post-medieval or modern date and includes pottery (coarse red earthenwares, Staffordshire-type mottled wares, stonewares and modern refined wares), ceramic building material (brick fragments), clay pipe (stem fragments), glass (vessel and window), roofing slate and metalwork (fittings, sheet fragments, a U-staple, a Victorian farthing, a button, a lead seal stamped TATE).

### **3.20 Watching Brief at Warburton Mill Weir, 2008**

In October 2008, the Environment Agency commissioned Oxford Archaeology North to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation on the north-eastern bank of the River Bollin, opposite the site of Warburton Mill, Greater Manchester (centred on SJ 7030 8870). The

evaluation was required to establish the presence or absence of any buried remains of archaeological interest prior to the construction of a fish passage creating a diversion around Heatley Weir.

The site of the weir forms part of the water management for Warburton Mill, which occupied the south-western, Heatley, bank of the River Bollin. There was a corn mill in Warburton by the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the mill site on the south-western bank of the Bollin in use from the late medieval period. The archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation of a single trench, measuring 19.5m long and 1.8m wide. No archaeological deposits or features were encountered in the excavated trench, the simple stratigraphic sequence comprising the natural clay geology and topsoil (OAN 2008).

### **3.21 Warburton Archaeological Survey (WAS) 2013: Old Church Graveyard Watching Brief**

In March 2013 a watching brief was undertaken within the graveyard of the old church during the repositioning of pair of stone grave slabs, each 0.5m by 0.2m, linked by two iron straps. These had become unstable and needed re-setting. This grave lay opposite the south-western corner of the nave roughly 5m to the south of the structure. The two grave slabs were lifted revealing a very loose sandy soil with a small oval void in the centre. The rectangular plot was trowelled to below the bottom of the hole, a depth of 0.4m. Several fragments of human skull were recovered from this sandy soil, but no obvious grave cut. These were replaced in the grave slot along with the soil which was compacted prior to the grave slabs being replaced. No other finds were recovered (Nevell et al 2015, 38).

### **3.22 Survey of Warburton Deer Park, 2019-2023**

It has been suggested that Sir Geoffrey de Dutton II was responsible for creating the deer park sometime between his succession of the estate in 1248 and his death in 1278, although there is no documentary evidence for this (Warburton 1970). The park is first shown on several early maps (Saxton's map of Cheshire, 1577; Speed's maps of Lancashire, 1610; Speed's map of Cheshire, 1611; Blaeu's Atlas Maior of England showing Cheshire in 1662-5 (although likely just a redrawing of Speed's map). There are references to the park in the Warburton manorial court leet records in 1581 and 1610 (Nevell et al 2015, 113, 130). The Warburton manorial stewards, the Drinkwater family, were referred to as park keepers in the early 17th century parish registers and rentals, and there is font the old church with inscription that reads 'William Drinkwater the Keeper 1605'. However, an Estate Plan of 1757 shows that the land that formed the deer park had been enclosed by this date and was held as one tenancy. The surrounding landscape was presumably deforested and enclosed for agricultural purposes in the period c. 1662-5 to 1757. It is estimated that the size of the park in the 16<sup>th</sup> century would have been around 112ha, although it may have been bigger in the late medieval period (Nevell et al 2015).

Observations by the Lymm Historical Society in 1968-69 first drew attention to a pillow mound east of the farm house in the park (Lymm Historical Society Newsletter No. 14, 1969). The park was listed in a study of parks and gardens in Greater Manchester in 1994 (Roberts with Currie 1994). In 2019 and 2020 Salford University undertook a landscape and historical assessment of the former Warburton Deer Park as part of a study of land around Carrington

(Lee & Reader 2020a). Wider research for the Warburton Parish Council was undertaken by Paul Beckman in the period 2019 to 2023.

This research has identified several features and buildings across the former park landscape relating to the use of the park and its subsequent enclosure for agricultural purposes. Some of the features are visible in the landscape, whilst some are likely to survive as buried remains. These include: Warburton Park Farm, thought to have originated as the medieval moated manor of the de Dutton family; physical evidence for the park pale (boundary); evidence for a water mill and associated water management such as a millrace (leat) and dams; evidence for fishponds; evidence for a possible pillow mound (artificial rabbit warren); possible salters (deer-leaps), and an eastern entrance to the deer park possibly associated with a hunting lodge (Onion Farmhouse).

### **3.23 Geophysical Survey of Land to the North of Moss Lane, 2020**

In 2019 Magnitude Surveys was commissioned by Redrow Homes to assess the subsurface archaeological potential of a c. 24.25 ha area of land at Warburton Lane, Trafford, ahead of proposed house building (Armstrong 2020). A fluxgate gradiometer survey was successfully completed across the survey area. The geophysical survey detected drainage features and modern ploughing regimes as well as evidence of ridge and furrow and former field boundaries, and a former road related to historical agricultural land-use running south to north towards a ford or bridge over Red Brook. A possible brick kiln was located within a field known as 'Kiln Field' on the 1839 tithe map as an area of burning and high magnetic response. Other anomalies identified relate to agricultural reclamation of land, and the location of a modern gas pipe.

### **3.24 Warburton Excavations in 2022: Onion Farm Cottage (Fig 50-51)**

Excavations in February 2022 uncovered the western lean-to buildings at Onion Farm Cottage, one element of Onion Farm (see above Section 3.11; Nevell 2023). The northern range of the post-medieval Onion Farm Cottage, covering rooms 3 and 4, was stripped and planned in 1999. The eastern two-thirds of this area was uncovered again briefly by machine during excavation work ahead of new foundations in the autumn of 2022. No additional evidence was recorded in 2022 in room 4, beyond what was noted in 1999. Watching brief work during the autumn of 2022, did, however, produce new evidence on the western side of room 2. This work uncovered the western stretch of sandstone wall (25005) seen in 1999 when it stood two courses high. At its northern end, where it turned at 90 degrees to form the northern end of room 2, in the upper course was located a large sandstone block 293mm by 400mm, and 300mm deep, with a central groove, 58mm to 75mm wide and roughly 50mm deep running in full length. This was interpreted as a possible padstone for a timber upright.

Trench 2022/T30 was located immediately east of the pigsty and west of the site of Onion Farm Cottage, excavated in 1999. This trench, which was 4.4m by 4.1m in extent, contained the remains of a pathway and the brick and stone foundations of a small outhouse lying between the remains of Onion Farm Cottage to the east and the 19th century pigsty to the west.

A general demolition deposit (30002) containing a lot of brick, stone, and some pottery covered the whole trench to a depth of around 0.18m. This sealed a series of brick walls. The brick wall (30008) ran along the entire length of the eastern side of the trench. This feature was the western wall of the cottage excavated in 1999. The wall comprised handmade bricks, surviving up to three courses high, bonded by lime mortar. The width of the wall was not fully excavated, but this previous work showed that it was one brick's length wide. In addition the trench section showed that the handmade bricks rested on a single row of sandstone blocks (30010).

Towards the northern end of this wall was a further handmade brick wall, also one brick's length wide (30004), and standing three bricks high. This abutted the cottage wall (30008) showing that it was later. Running south for at least 3m from the western end of the wall (30004) was a third brick wall, one brick's length wide (30003). These two features formed the northern and western sides of a brick structure 1.8m wide and at least 3m long. No southern wall was found within the current excavations. With these walls were the remains of a floor formed by sandstone slabs (30007). Below this was a make-up foundation layer of brick rubble, stone, pottery and loam to a depth of c. 0.3m (30017). Below this was undisturbed sand (30017). The western wall of the cottage (30008) was covered in lime plaster suggesting that the interior of this structure was probably completely plastered in this way.

A short stretch of handmade brick wall (30006) ran westwards from the southern end of wall (30003). This was associated with a drain (30005)

West of this small brick structure was an area of redeposited fill (30009). It contained brick and stone and was 0.3m to 0.4m in depth and ran the full length of the trench. This area of fill was defined on its western side by a cut (30014) which marked the line of a sandstone edge (30011) and (30013) a path. The path was formed by a loam and stone deposit (30015) and one sandstone slab (30012). The western side of the path was defined by the enclosure in front of the pigsty.

The 2022 excavation produced 78 finds which were split into pottery (66 sherds), CBM (3 pieces), glass (8 pieces), and clay pipes (1 piece). The largest number of stratified finds (39) came from context (30009), a dump layer. The 2022 finds weighed 4.359kg of which 1.294kg were stratified. Of the stratified finds, in terms of weight, 47% was CBM, 41% was pottery, and 12% was glass.

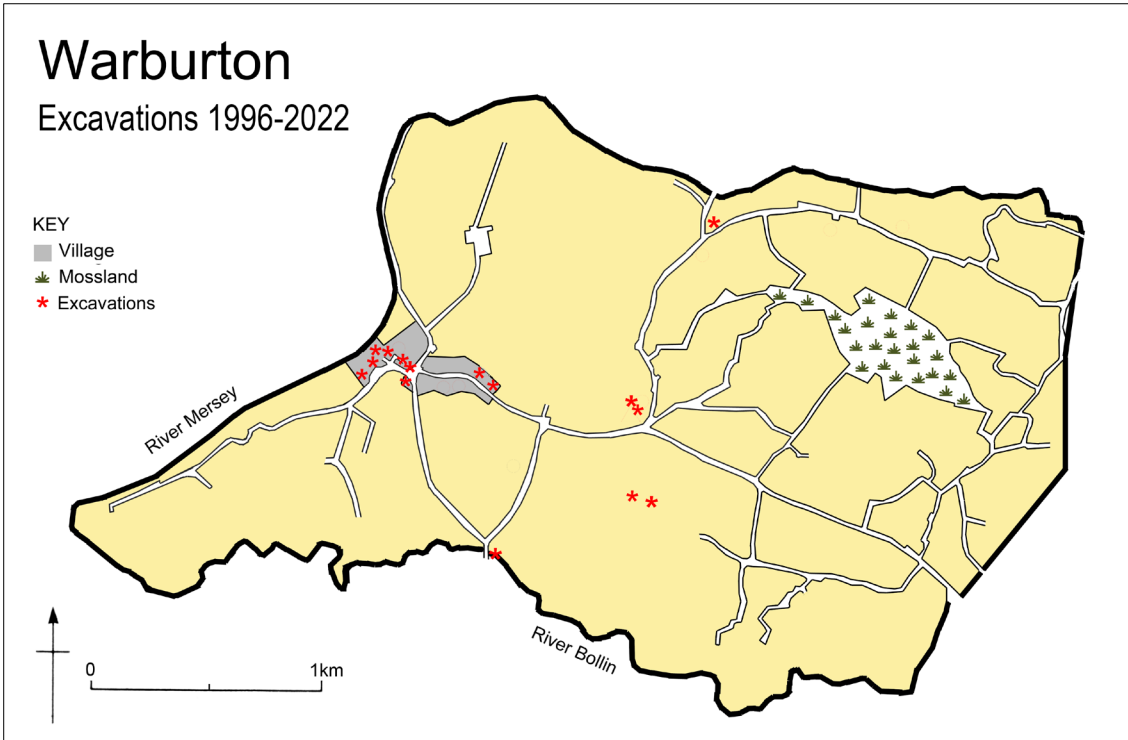


Figure 26: The location of archaeological excavations with the parish of Warburton, 1996 to 2022.



Figure 27: An aerial view of Warburton village with site of the medieval open fields in the foreground, 1996. Copyright Dr Michael Nevell.

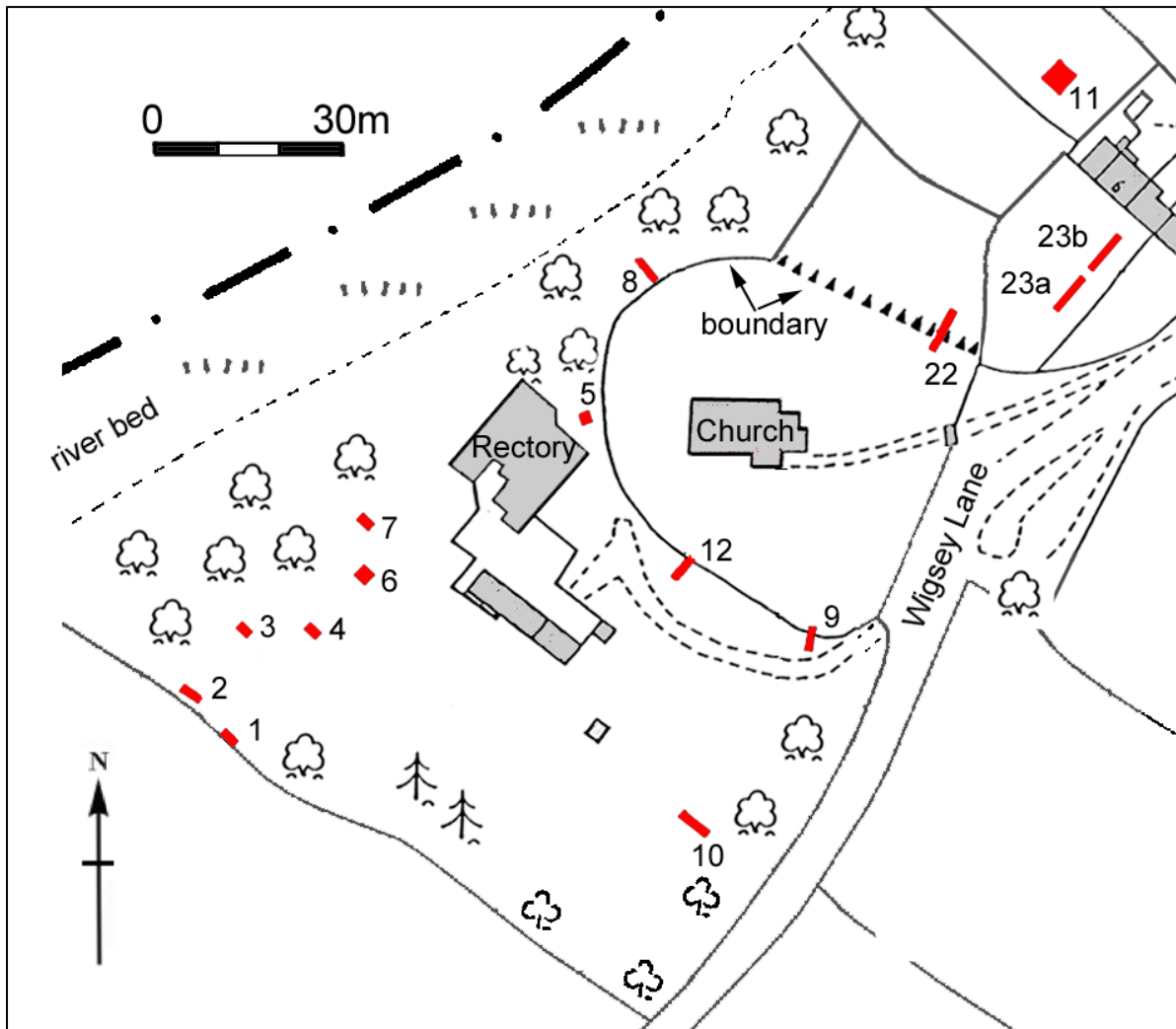


Figure 28: (above)  
The location of  
WAS trenches 1 to  
12, 22 and 23 (dug  
1996, 1997 &  
1999).

Figure 29: (right)  
An aerial view of  
Old St Werburgh's  
church and  
Warburton village  
green, 1996.  
Copyright Dr  
Michael Nevell.



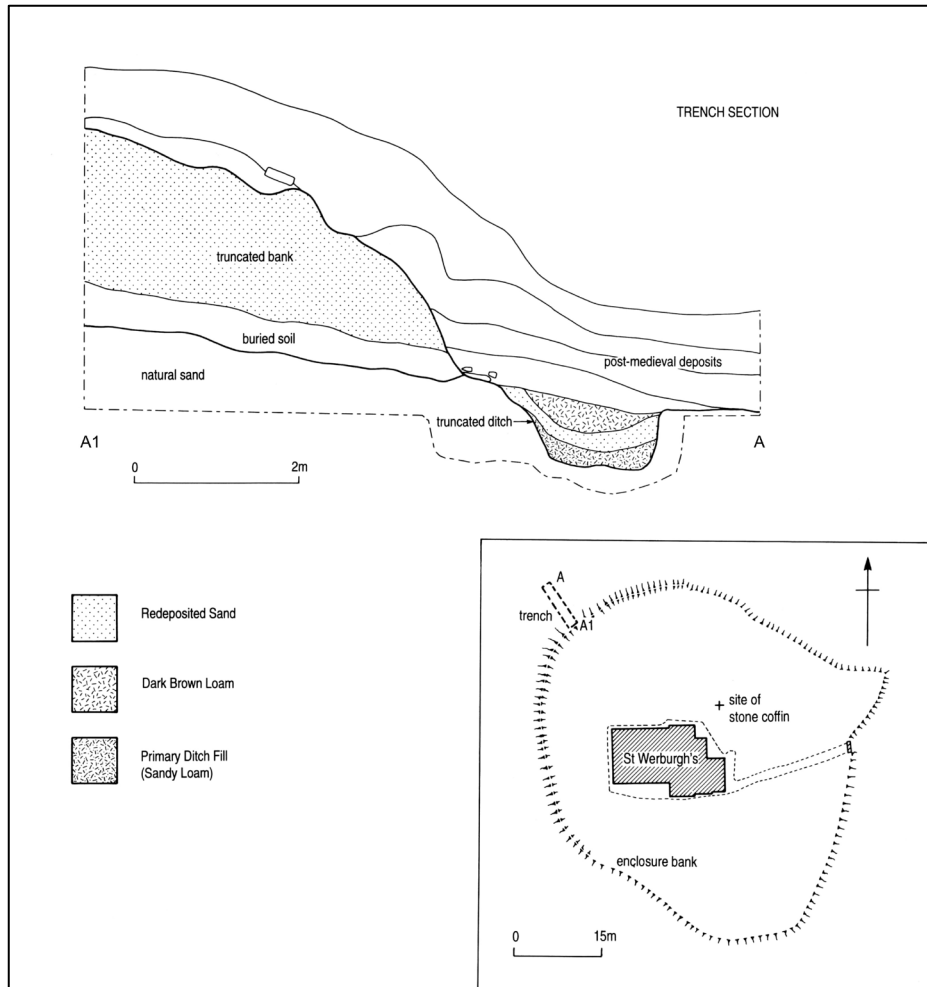


Figure 30: (above) Section drawing of T8 showing the bank and ditch around the graveyard at Old St Werburgh's, excavated in 1996..

Figure 31: (right) The graveyard bank as excavate din T12, 1997.



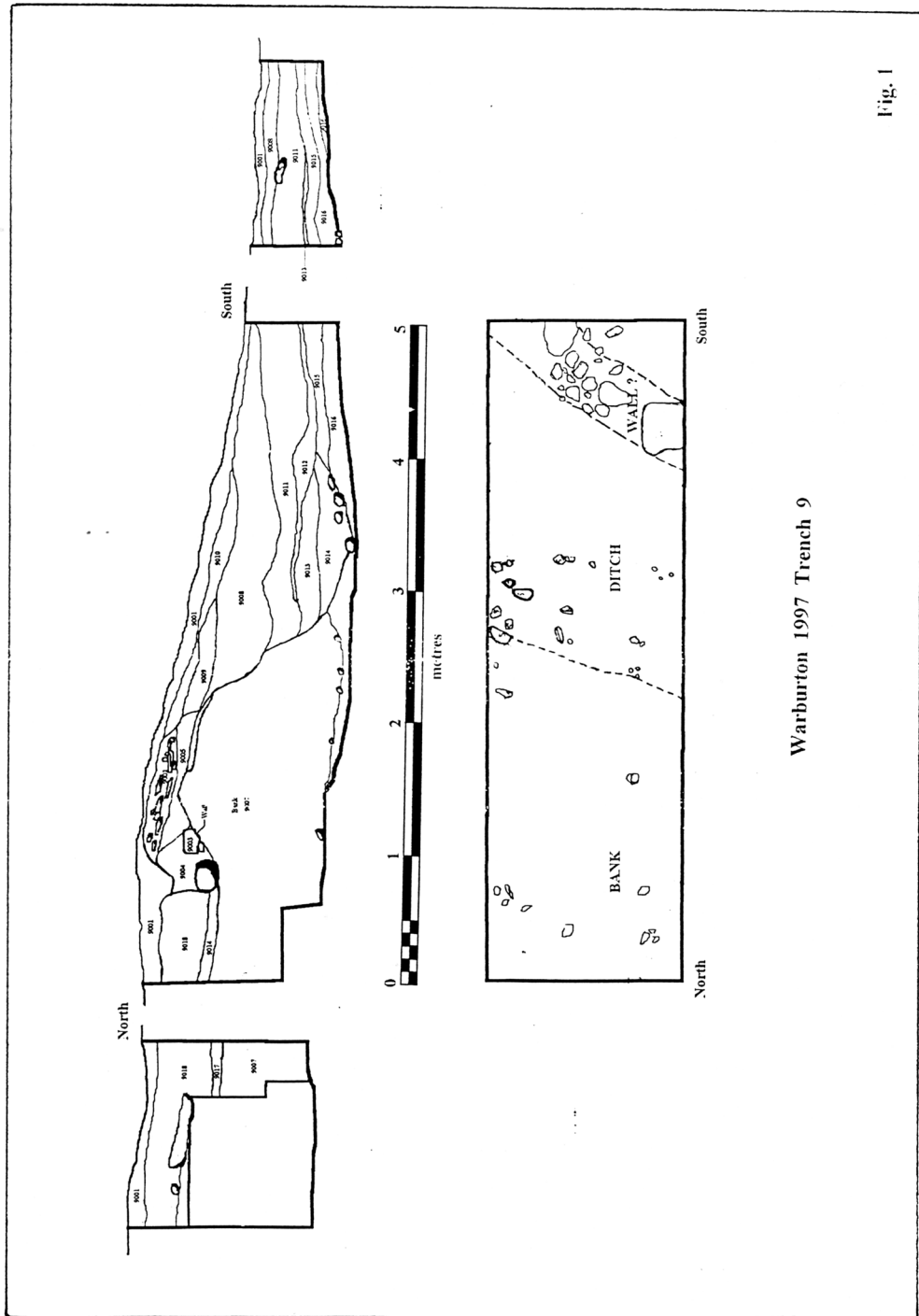


Fig. 1

Figure 32: Section and plan of T22 excavate din1 999 on the eastern side of St Werburgh's graveyard showing the boundary bank and ditch.



*Figure 33: (right) The excavated bank of the graveyard in T22, excavate din 1999.*

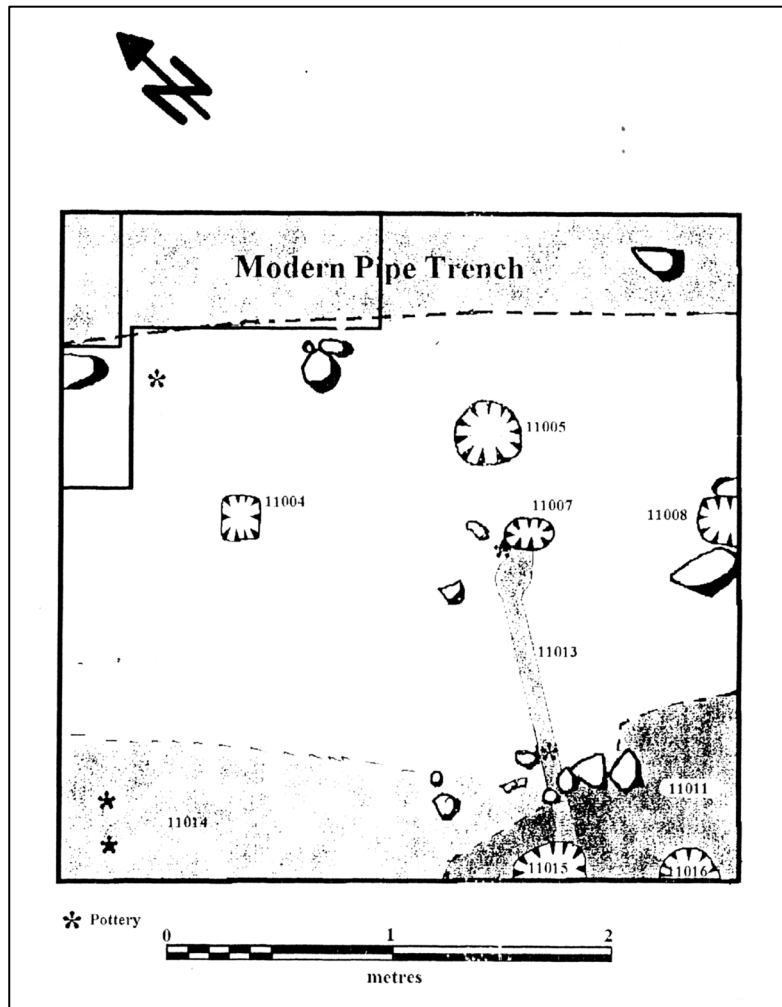


*Figure 34: (below) T22 showing the graveyard bank and ditch excavation in 1999.*



Figure 35: (right)  
Excavated plan of T11  
showing the medieval  
clay floor and associated  
postholes as uncovered  
west of the Pipe and  
Punchbowl in 1997.

Figure 36: (below) T23a  
and 23b as excavated in  
1999, wets of the village  
green.



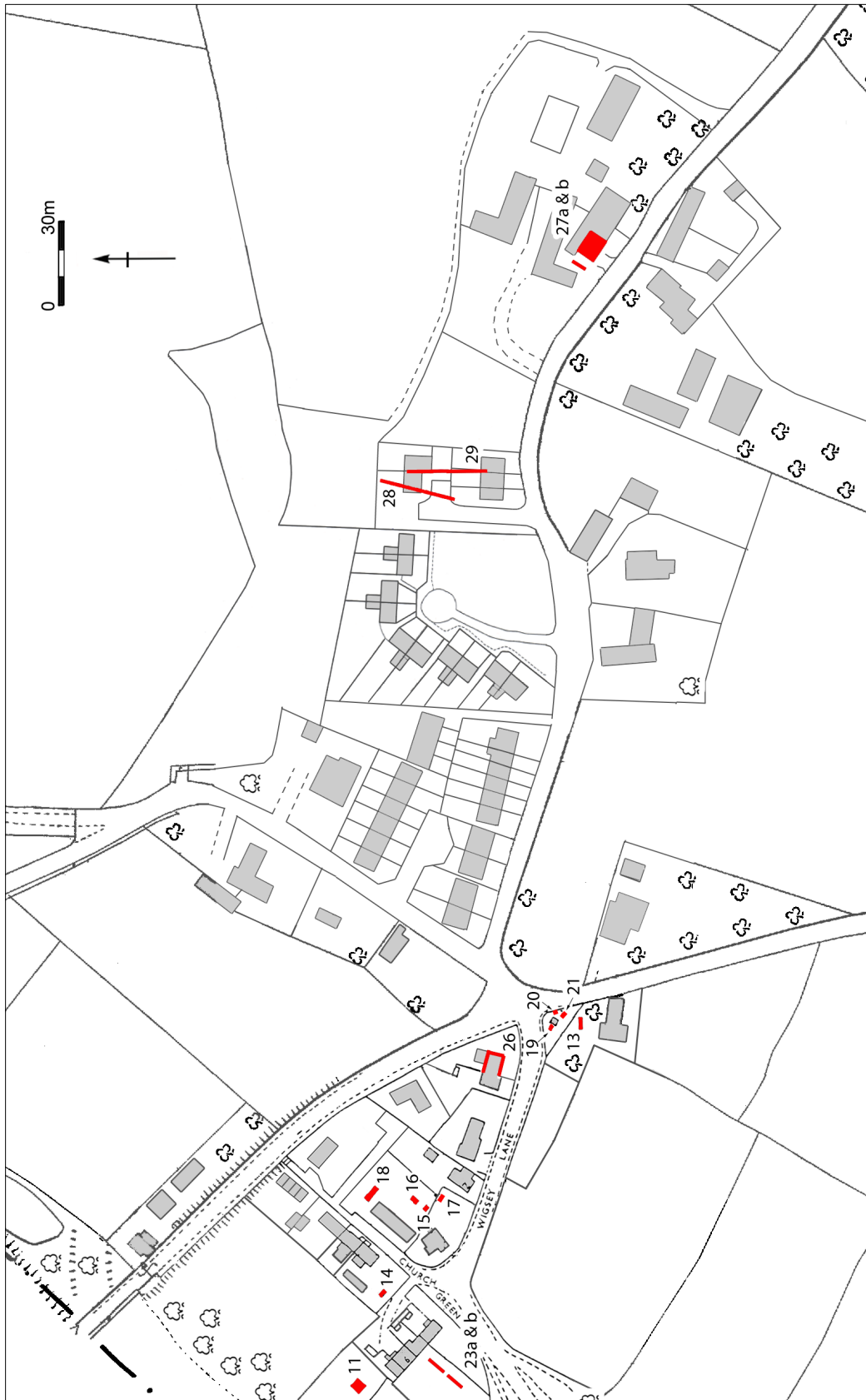


Figure 37: The location of WAS trenches 13 to 29, excavated across Warburton village, 1997 to 2000 and 2003.



Figure 38: The Warburton cross excavation in 1998

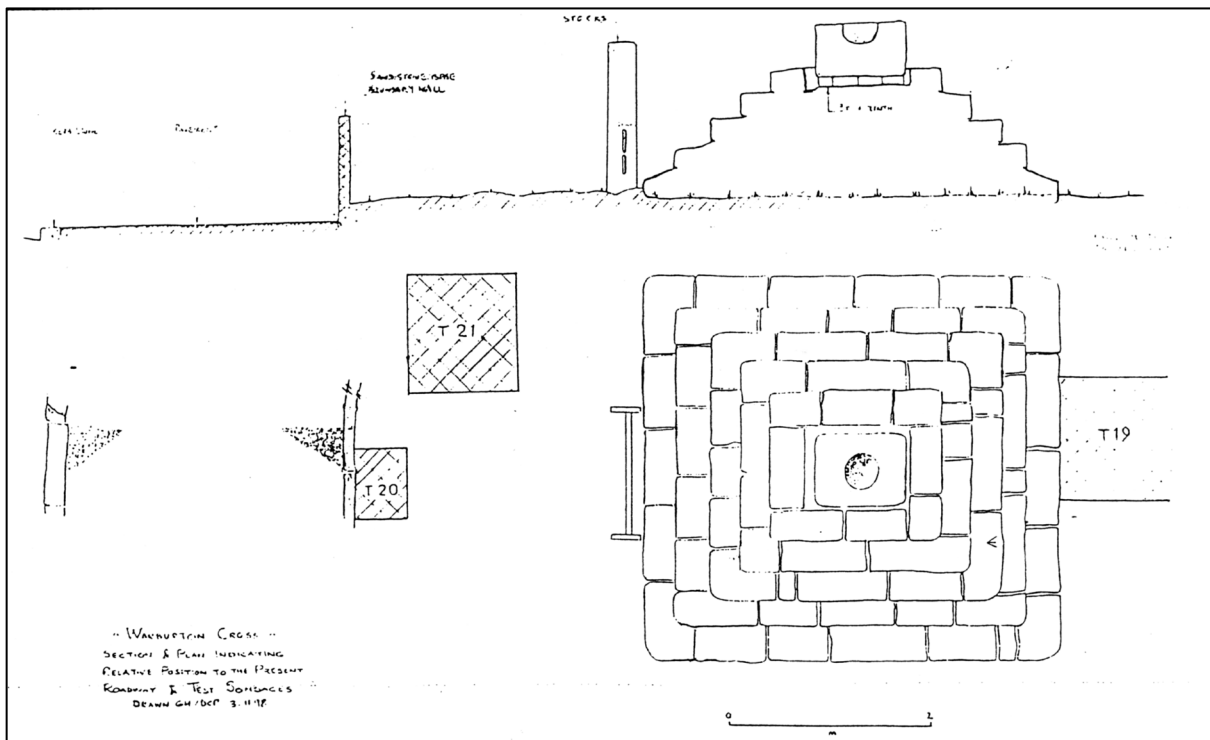


Figure 39: Details of the Warburton cross trenches and survey, 1998.



Figure 40: The excavation of the foundations of the cruck wing at Paddock Lane Farmhouse, 2000, T27b.



Figure 41: Excavated plan of T27b showing the foundations of the late medieval and post-medieval cruck wing.



Figure 42: The excavation of trench 27a at Paddock Lane Farm, 2000.

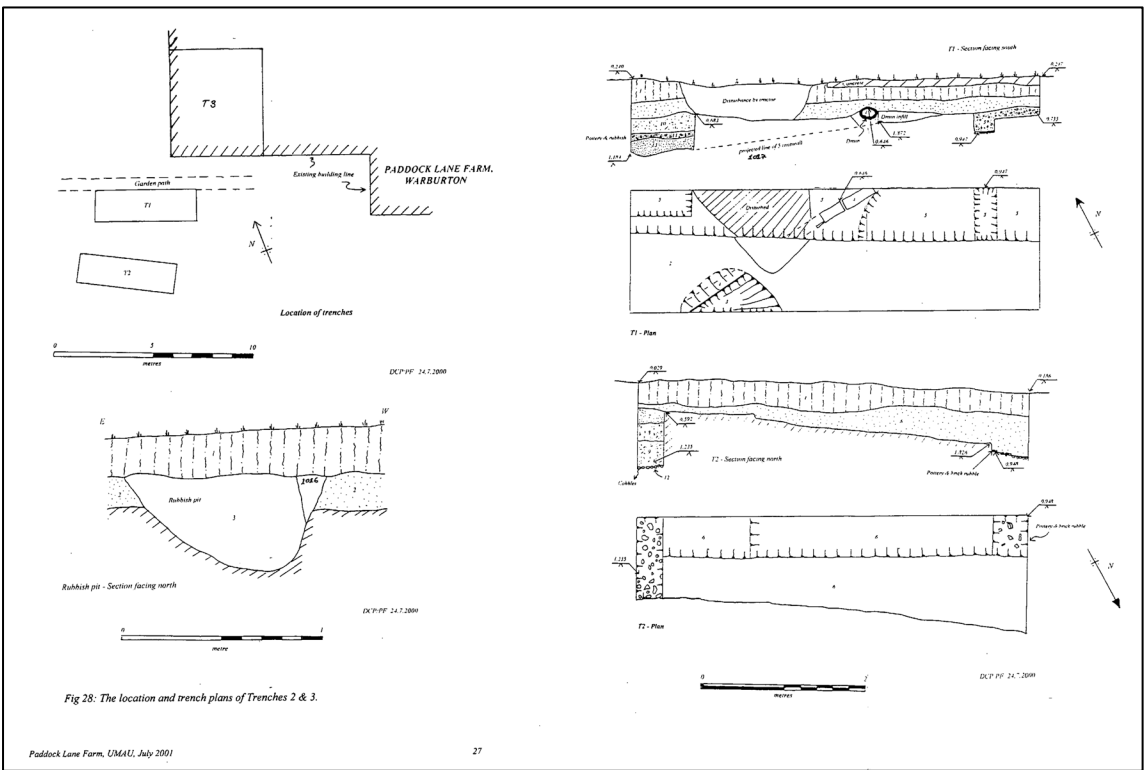


Fig 28: The location and trench plans of Trenches 2 & 3.

Figure 43: Details of T27a at Paddock Lane Farm, 1999.



Figure 44: Aerial view of the Onion Farm excavations in 1999 (arrowed). Copyright Dr Michael Nevell.



Figure 45: Aerial view of the excavations remain of Onion Farm Cottage in 2015 (arrowed)

*Figure 46: The excavation of the well at Onion Farm by STAG, 2000.*



*Figure 47: Detail of the excavated well structure at Onion Farm, 2000.*









*Figure 49: Onion Farm Cottage excavations in 1999.*



*Figure 50: Onion Farm Cottage excavations in 2022.*

# ONION FARM COTTAGE EXCAVATIONS 1999 & 2022

- Key**
- Phase 1
  - Phase 2
  - Phase 3
  - Phase 4
  - Phase 5

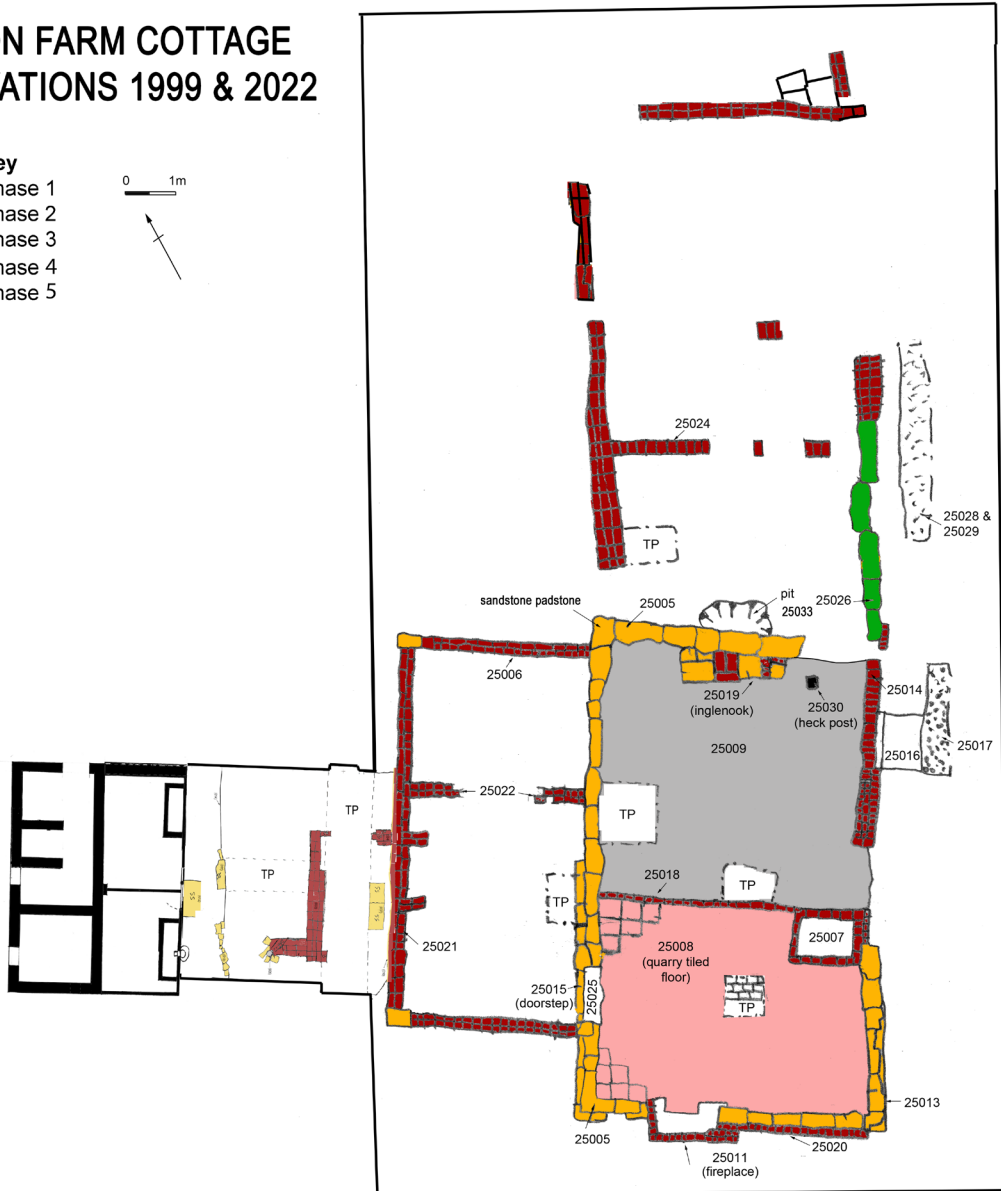


Figure 51: A plan of the excavated Onion Farm Cottage at Moss Brow, in 1999 and 2022.



*Figure 52: Aerial view of the fields south of Moss Brow in July 1999, where test pitting by the University of Manchester took place. Copyright Dr Michale Nevell.*



*Figure 53: These fields south of Moss Brow were the focus of excavations from 1999 to 2006.*

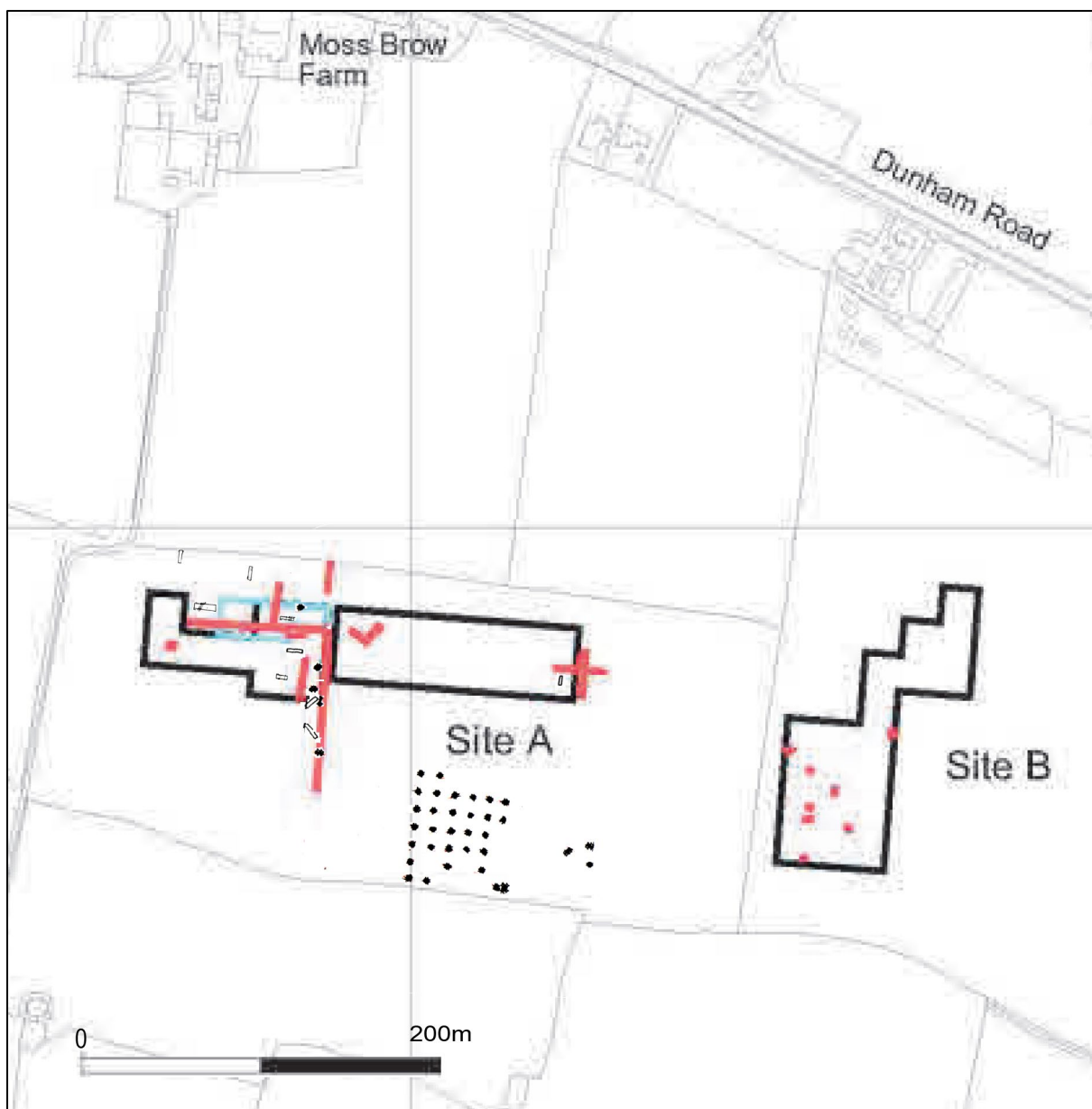


Figure 54: Moss Brow excavation test pits and trenches 1999 (University of Manchester, 2001 (STAG), 2002 (STAG), and 2006 (Timer Team, Site A and Site B, red trenches).

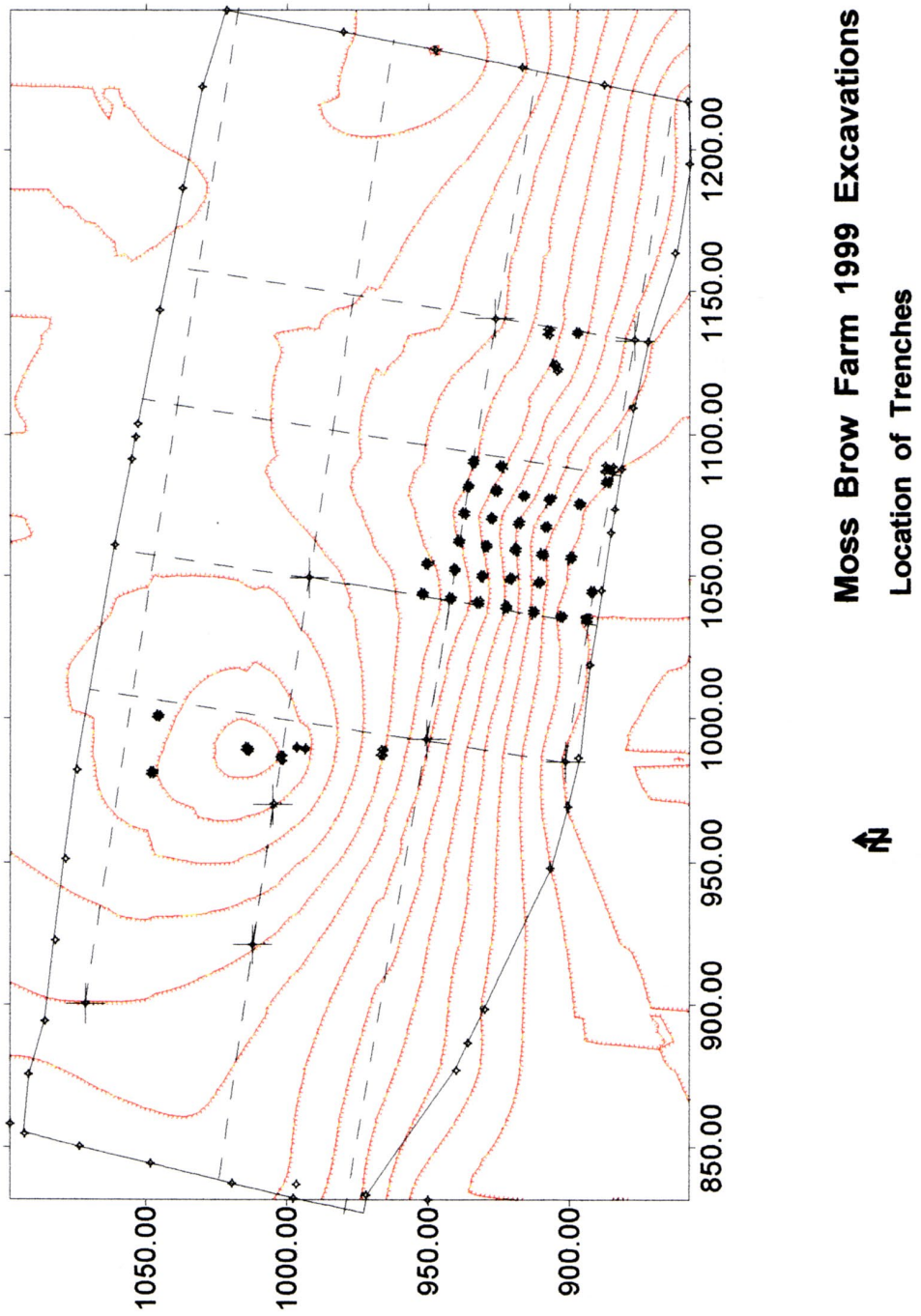


Figure 55: Moss Brow excavation test pits and trenches dug by the University of Manchester in 1999.

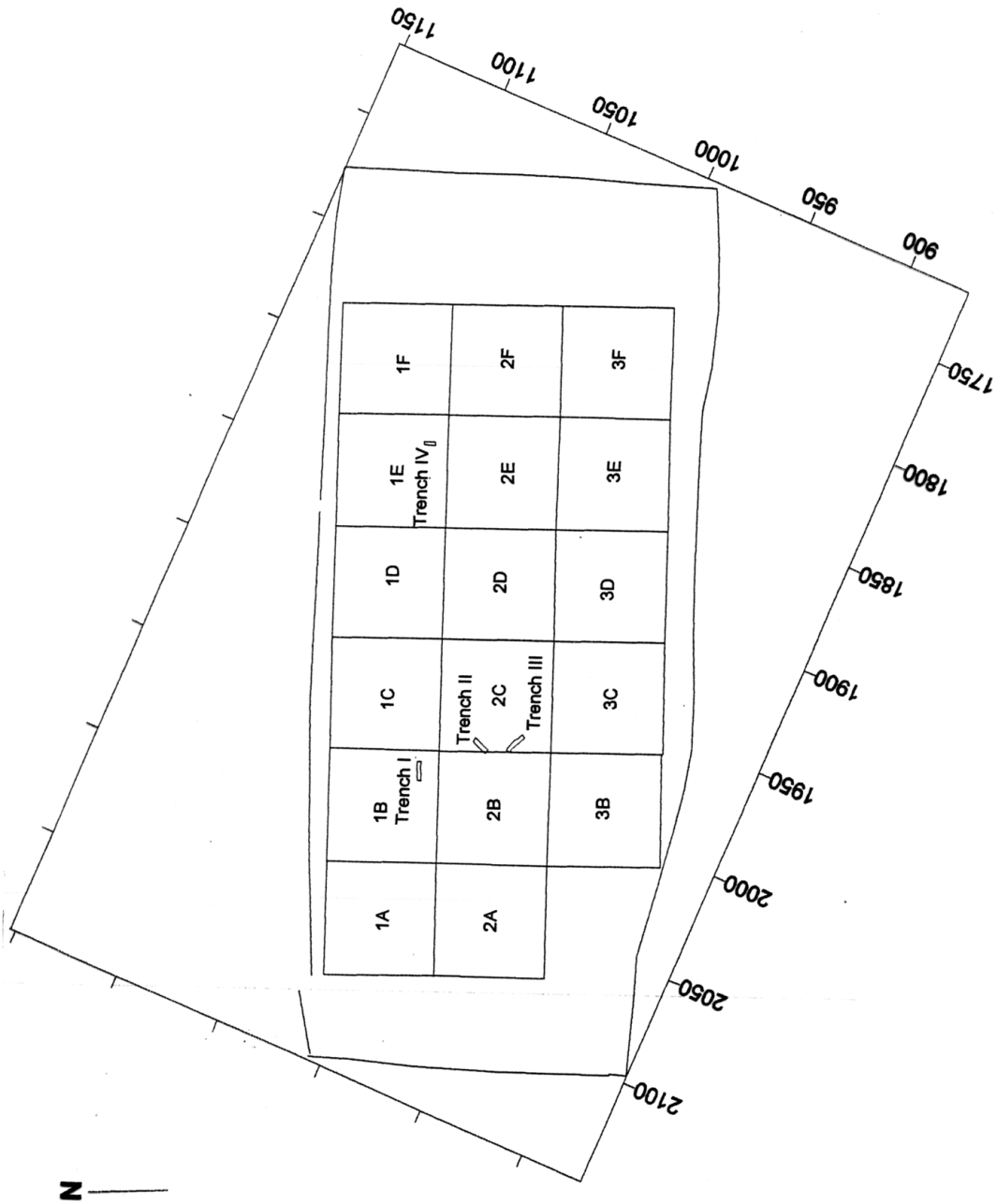


Figure 56: The location of the STAG trenches at Moss Brow dug in 2001.



Figure 57: The location of Stag trenches at Moss Brow dug in 2001, 2002 and showing the position of the geophysical survey undertaken in 2001 (shaded area).





*Figure 58: The excavated ditch profile in one of the test Pits in Grid 1b (see Fig 56) at Moss Brow, 1999.*



*Figure 59: STAG excavation in 2001 of T1 showing a ditch profile close to the ditch excavated in 1999.*





*Figure 62: The excavated ditch discovered in T5 in 2002, thought to be Roman in origin but now interpreted as a pre-1757 field boundary.*



*Figure 63: Detail of the pre-1757 field boundary excavate din T5 in 2002.*



*Figure 64: Aerial view of the Time Team excavations in 2006 at Moss Brow looking west.*

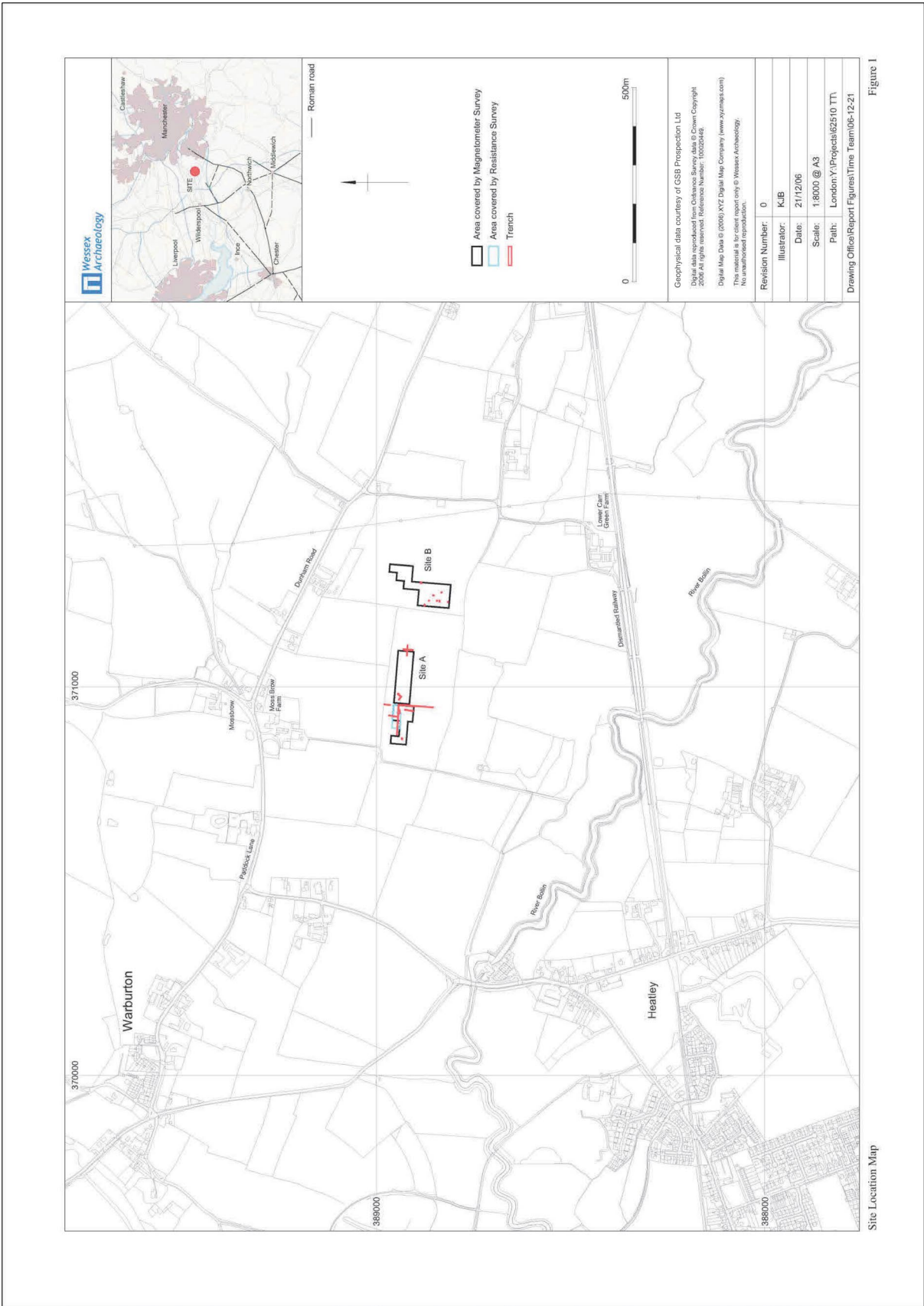


Figure 1

Figure 65: The location of the Time Team trenches in 2006 at Moss Brow.

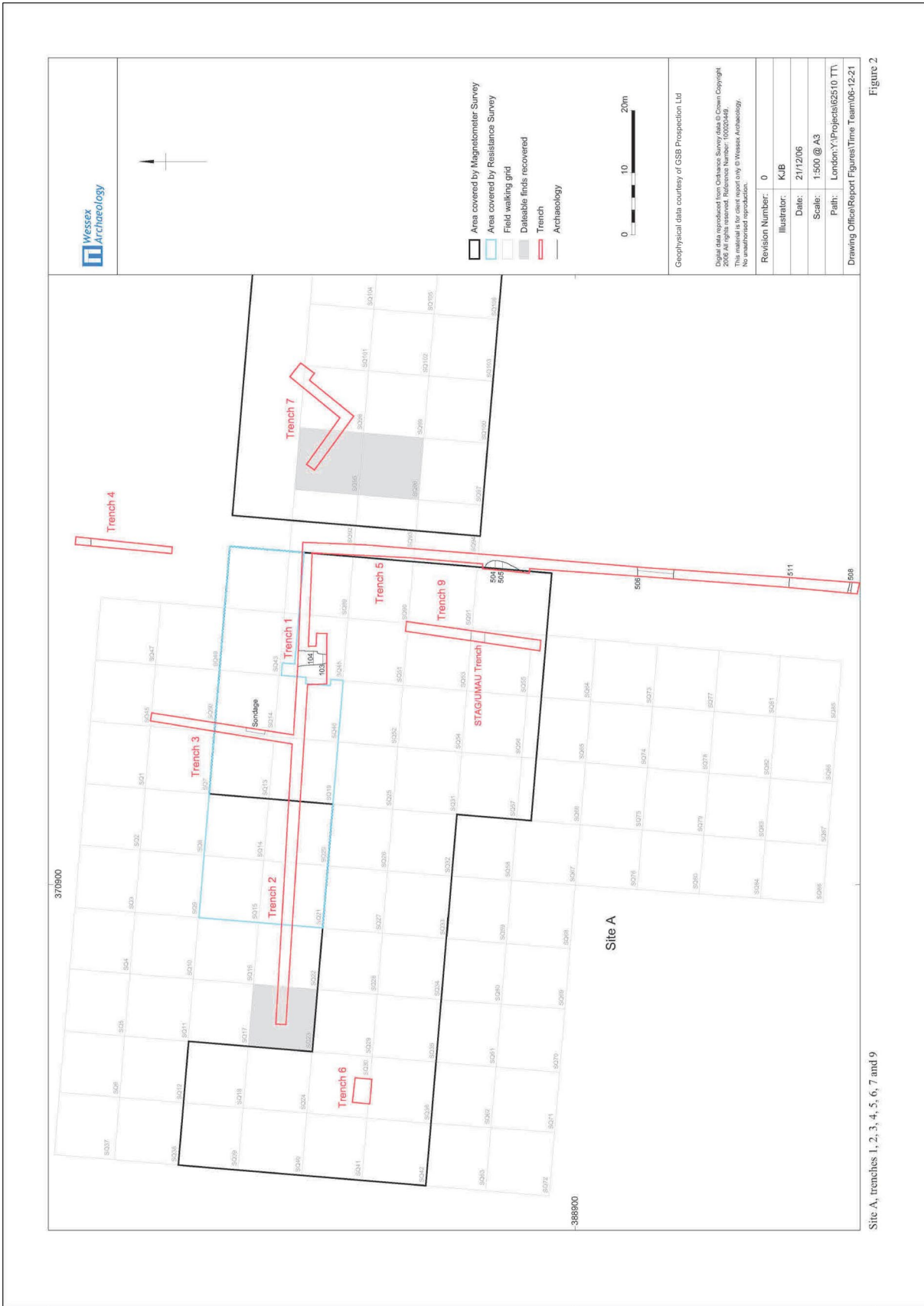
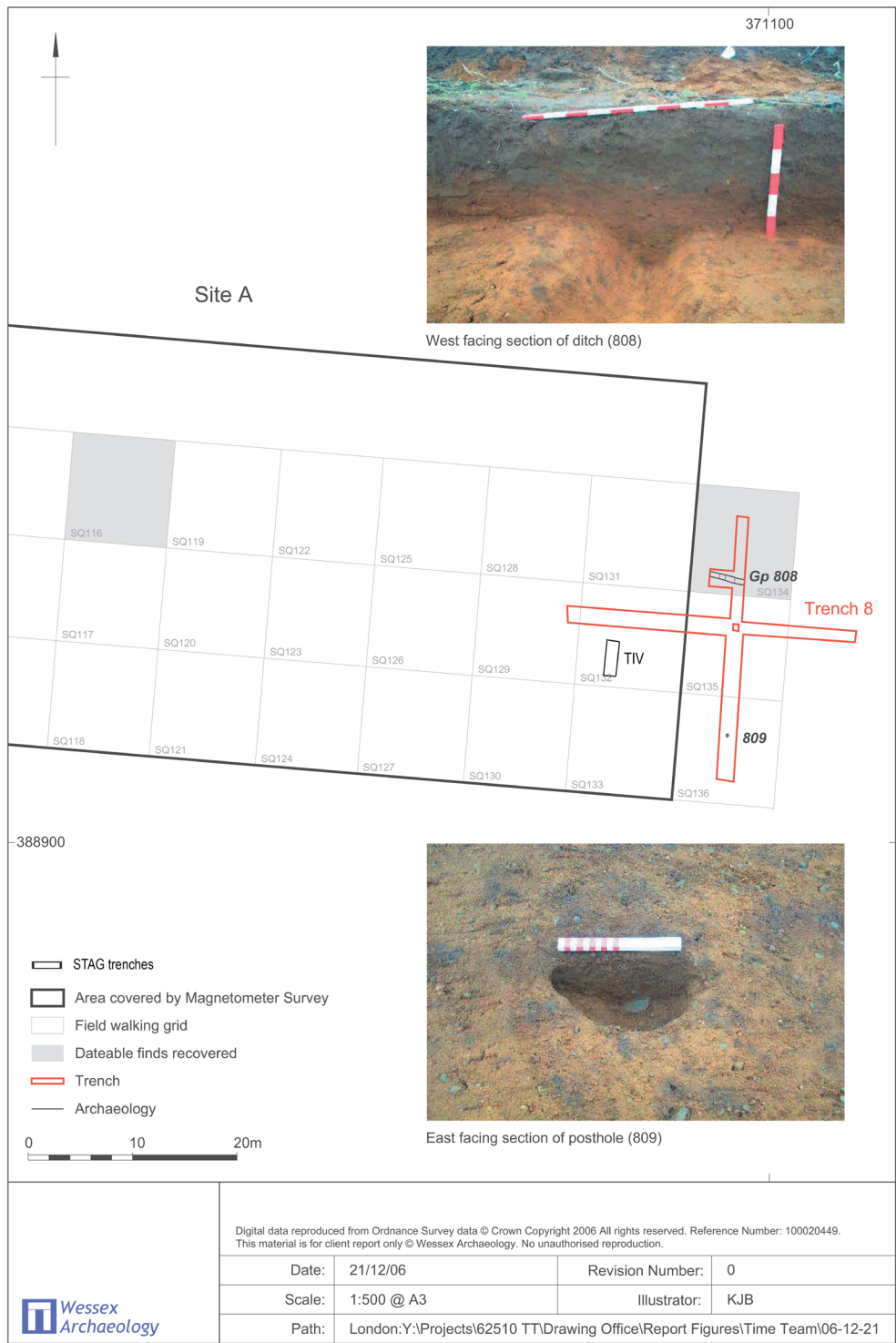


Figure 66: Detail of the Time Team trenches excavated at Moss Brow in 2006



Site A, Trench 8

Figure 3

Figure 67: Field boundaries excavated by Time Team at Moss Brow in 2006.

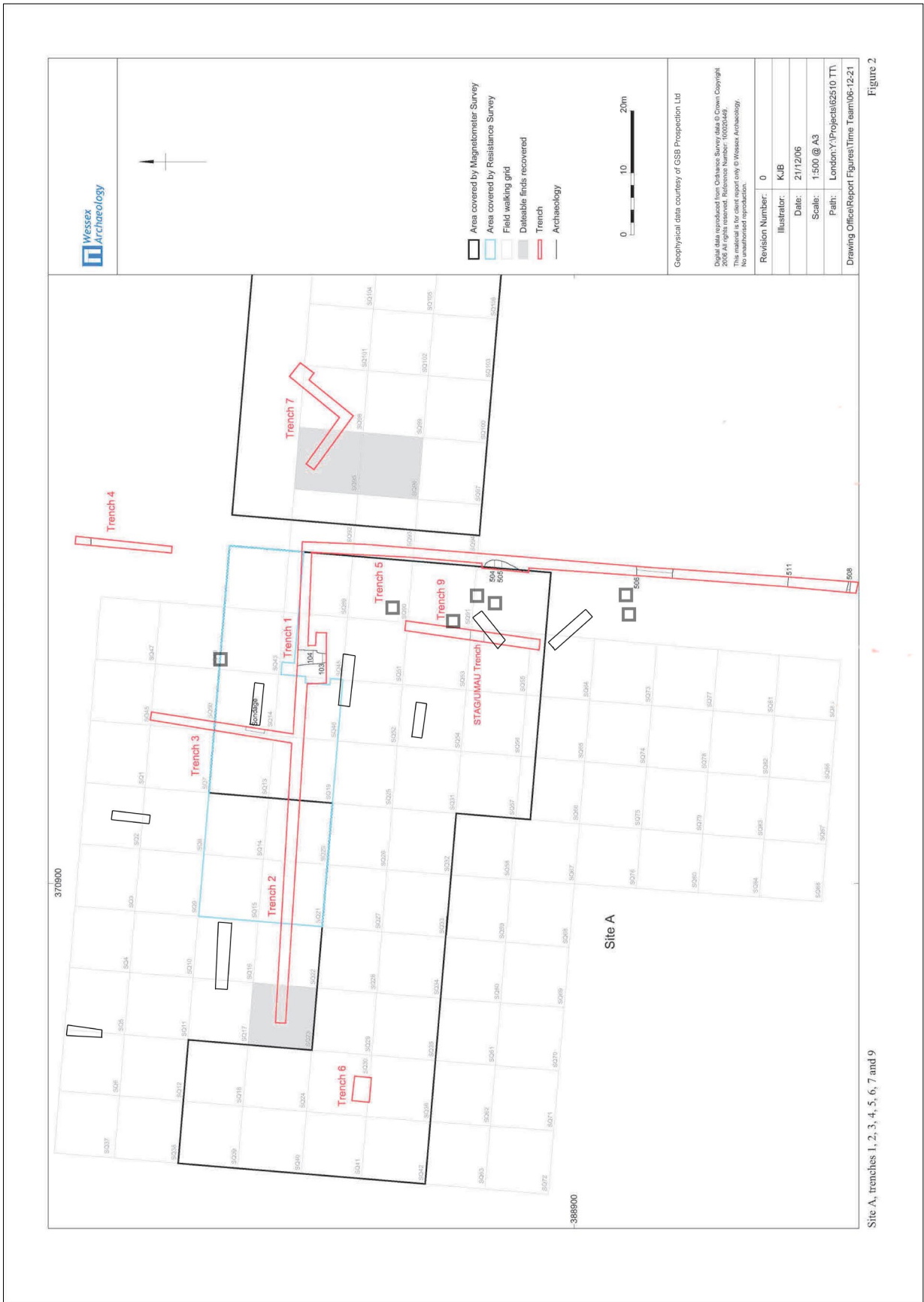


Figure 68: The location of the STAG and Time Team trenches at Moss Brow, 2001., 2002, and 2006.



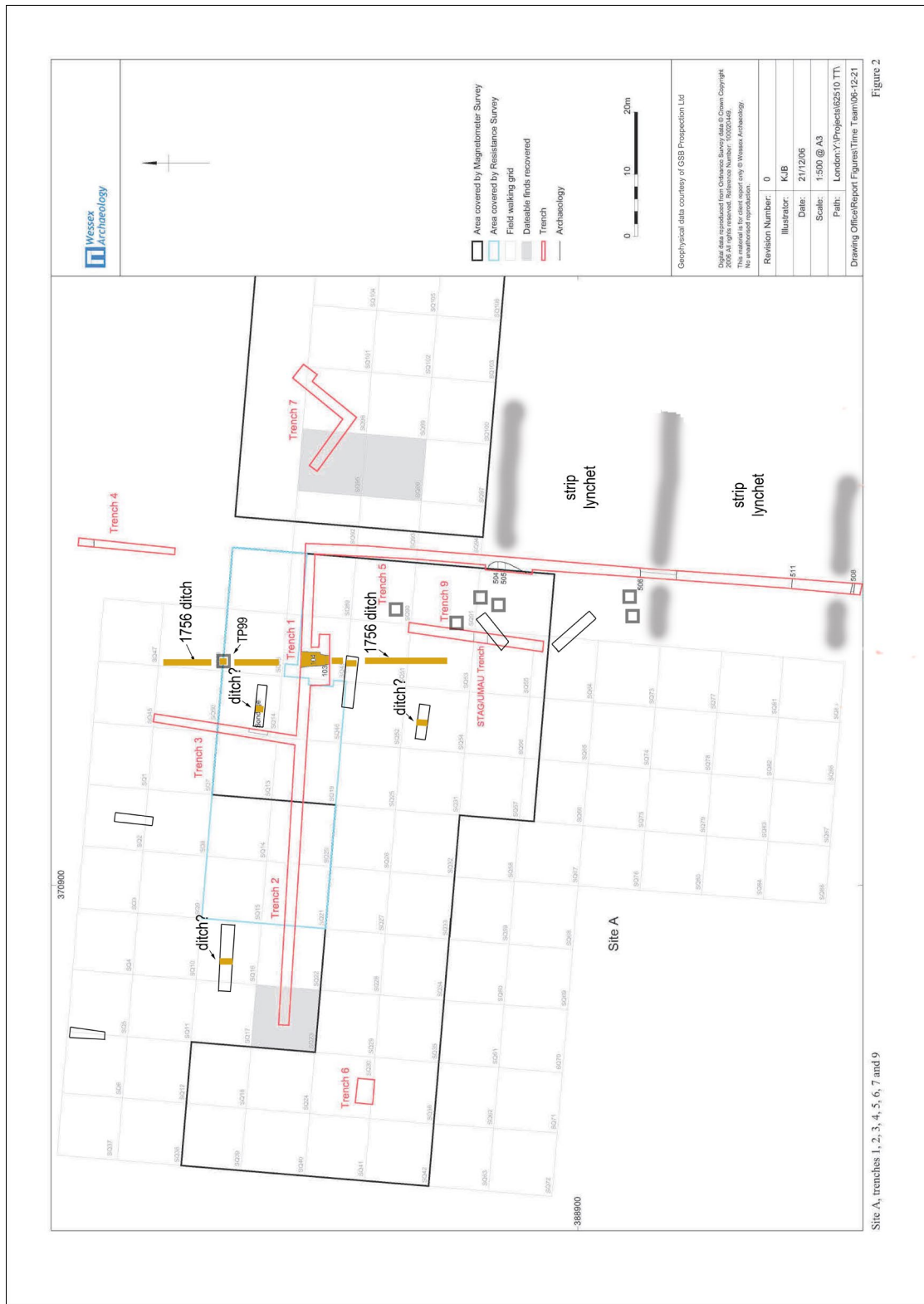


Figure 2

Site A, trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9

Figure 69: Archaeological features identified at Moss Brow showing the line of the pre-1757 field boundary (orange), earlier ditches not recorded on the 1757 estate map (orange) and the location of the prehistoric strip lynchets (grey shading).



*Figure 70: Time Trench showing the strip lynchets looking south towards the River Bollin, 2006.*



*Figure 71: Time Team test pitting at Moss Brow in Site B*



*Figure 72: Time Trench showing the strip lynchets looking north towards the hilltop, 2006.*