

Archaeological Evaluation of  
the former Leper Hospital, Saltisford,  
Warwick



Report 0445

December 2004

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## Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the proposed site of a new office development on the edge of the medieval suburb of Saltisford, Warwick on the site of the medieval leper hospital, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Within the Scheduled Area complex medieval stratigraphy dating back to the 13th century was revealed. The archaeological remains included stone wall foundations, a pebble yard surface, postholes and pits in the area between the Chapel and the Master's House. Post-medieval remains were also recorded in this area, including stone wall foundations and occupation surfaces. Evidence for possible medieval activity was recorded to the rear of the Master's House including a boundary or retaining wall and a possible rubble surface. A modern boundary ditch was also recorded that may have been the re-cut of an earlier feature. The northern part of the site outside the scheduled area revealed only two gully features and part of the area to the rear of the development site appears to have been subject to extensive dumping during in the late 20th century.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 An application has been submitted to Warwick District Council for the erection of a new office block and conversion of existing buildings to offices on the site of the leper hospital, Saltisford, Warwick (Ref W03-1245). The proposed development lies on the edge of the medieval suburb of Saltisford, and includes part of the medieval St Michael's Leper Hospital, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The proposed development may disturb important archaeological remains associated with the Leper Hospital and other medieval remains on the site. It was therefore recommended that an archaeological field evaluation should take place before a decision on the application is made. Scheduled Monument Consent was granted (HSD 9/2/6304) for the proposed work.

1.2 A programme of fieldwork in accordance with a Brief prepared by the Planning Archaeologist on behalf of the Planning Authority was commissioned from the Warwickshire Museum and carried out in September and October 2004. This report presents the result of that programme. The site archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under the site code WLH04.

## 2. Site Location

2.1 The site of the development is located on the north-east side of Saltisford and south of the railway in the parish of Warwick, centred around National Grid Reference SP 277 654 (Fig. 1). The current development site affects approximately 2100 sq m and is currently rough ground. The front of the site is occupied by two medieval buildings, St Michael's Chapel and the Master's House.

2.2 The underlying geology of the area is Alluvium over Bromsgrove Sandstone and Mercia Mudstone (British Geological Survey 1984).

## 3. Aims and Methods of the Evaluation

3.1 The evaluation was designed to discover the date, nature and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits which might be present within the area of the proposed development.

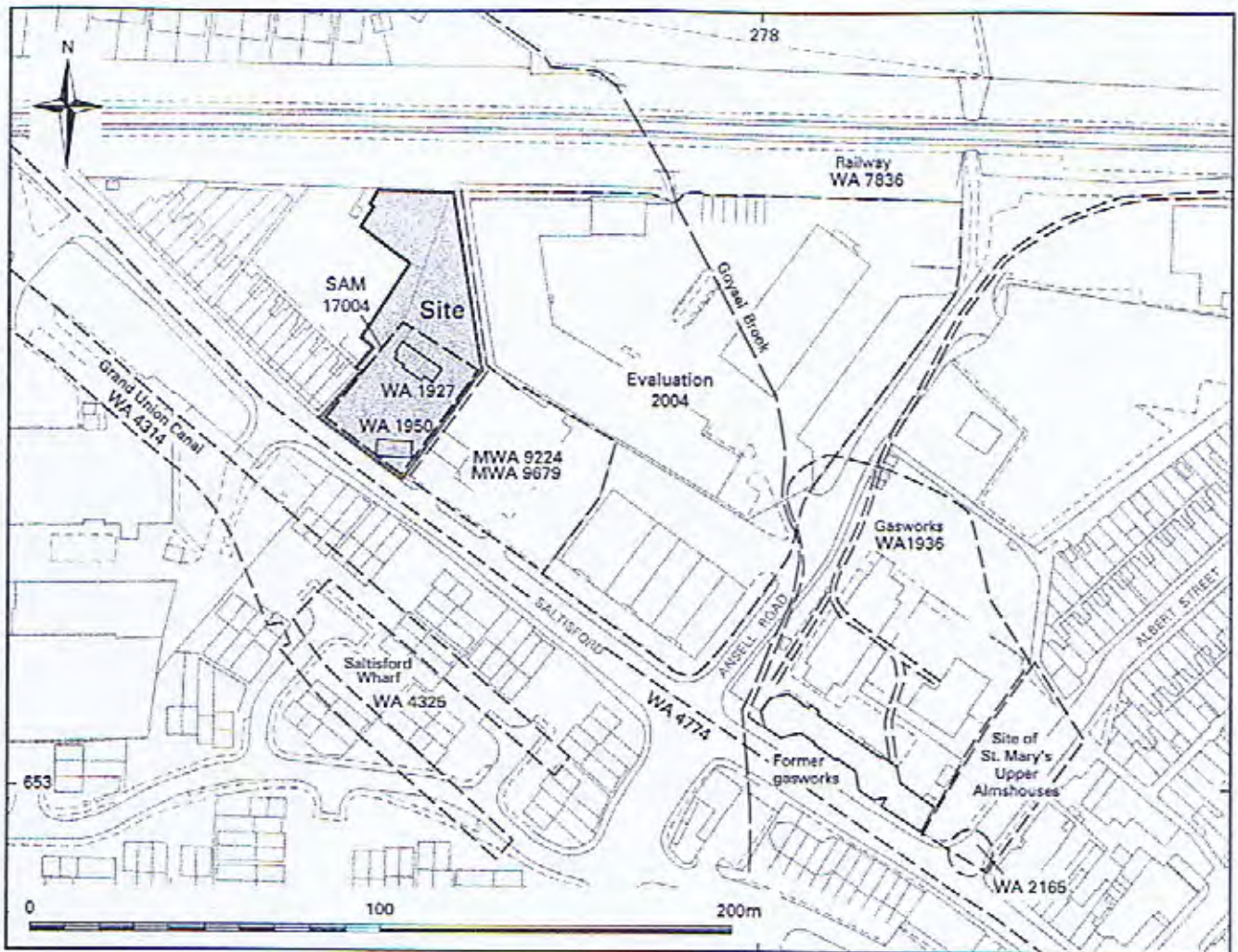


Fig. 1: Site Location

3.2 The work undertaken involved the examination of historical and early map evidence as well as aerial photographs, records of archaeological remains in the area and local historical journals and other publications. This was followed by the excavation of four trial trenches, two within the Scheduled Area and two to the north. The trenches were located in agreement with the Warwickshire County Planning Archaeologist and English Heritage so as to sample the entire area of the current proposal, with particular emphasis on the area to the north of the Leper Hospital.

#### 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The earliest evidence for human activity in the area comes from a find of a Roman coin (Warwickshire Sites and Monuments Record WA 1353, not shown on Fig. 1) from bulldozing work to the south-west of the area of the current proposal in 1975. The coin is of Faustina II, wife of Marcus Aurelius, dating from around 175AD and is not necessarily indicative of a settlement site, but does suggest Romano-British activity in the general area.

4.2 The area of the current proposal lies near to the edge of the medieval suburb of Saltisford in the area of Saltisford Common. Saltisford was an area of settlement that developed to the north-west of the north gate of the town along the salt way to

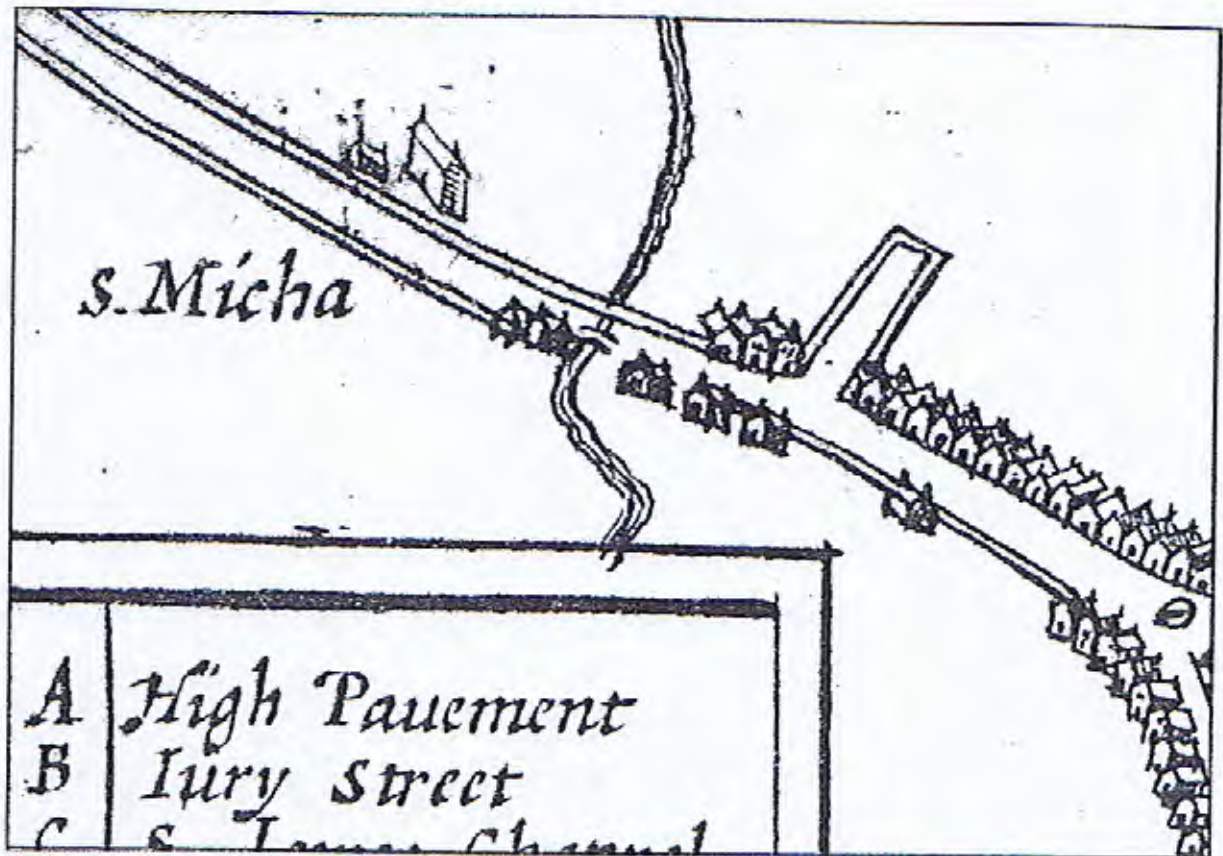


Fig. 2: Detail from Speed's map of 1610



Fig. 3: Details from a) Fish and Bridgeman map of 1711, b) Baker map of 1788

Droitwich (VCH 1969, 422). The medieval suburb is usually thought to have extended as far north-westwards as the ford over the Goyssel Brook (VCH 1969, 423). Goyssel Brook ran to the east of the current proposal area, and is now culverted. Saltisford Common would have been largely uncultivated or the population of 'waste' land during the medieval and post-medieval periods and used in common by Saltisford.

4.3 The current development lies partly within the precinct of the medieval Leper Hospital (Scheduled Ancient Monument 17004; SMR WA 1927). The church of St Michael (SMR WA 1950) was founded by Roger Earl of Warwick in 1135 (English Heritage 1991), possibly as a parish church (VCH 1969, 422), becoming the Chapel of the Leper Hospital at a later date. The first reference to the Leper Hospital comes in 1275 (English Heritage 1991). The existing standing buildings include the stone Chapel and the timber-framed Master's House, both dating from the 15th century and both Grade II\* Listed Buildings (Appendix D). The extent of the original precinct of the leper hospital, which would presumably have included a cemetery, is uncertain. It probably extended beyond the current site boundary to the south-east and may have covered the plot shown on post-medieval maps. The Hospital lay beyond the Goyssel Brook and would have been situated outside the original suburb, though subsequent medieval expansion may have filled the gap.

4.4 In 1545 the hospital came into lay ownership, but continued to provide an income for distribution to the poor. The earliest map of the area (Speed 1610, Fig. 2) shows St Michael's Chapel and the Master's House in virtual isolation beyond the Goyssel Brook, but unfortunately provides no boundary details. This plan probably reflects the decline of the late medieval period after the depopulation associated with the Black Death had diminished both town and suburbs. Almshouses are thought to have been built along the frontage of the former Leper Hospital in the mid-17th century and four new cottages were added to the north-west, probably between 1702 and 1730. This formed a terrace along the Birmingham Road frontage to the west of the Chapel (VCH 1969, 550). The Chapel itself was divided into two cottages in the late 17th or 18th century (RCHME 1988, 6).

4.5 A plan of 1711 also shows a range of buildings along the street frontage to the south-east of the Chapel (Fish and Bridgeman 1711, Fig. 3). This plan is fairly schematic showing a chapel at right angles to the road frontage with buildings running along the frontage to either side, but there is no representation of the Master's House. It is probably accurate in showing the road frontage occupied by buildings. It also shows the plot within which the structures lay as protruding to the south-east to the rear. This may be the result of pre-existing structures in separate ownership along the road frontage in the medieval period that had since been abandoned. The rear boundary is shown as a straight line running roughly north-west to south-east, parallel to the road and not far from to the north-east wall of the Master's House (WCRO PH210/182/21, Fig. 7). The current development area extends beyond this boundary to the north-east into an area that was probably occupied by fields and is shown as being in agricultural use on more detailed later maps. It is likely that this area always lay outside the precinct of the Leper Hospital and was in use for agriculture from the medieval period onwards.

4.6 The area remained isolated from the town throughout the 18th century and into the 19th century. Contemporary plans (Baker 1788, WCRO Z122(u), Fig. 3; James 1806 WCRO Z276/2(u)) show the area in better detail. The Almshouses along the street frontage to the west of the Chapel formed part of Thomas Puckering's Charity (VCH 1969, 550) and lay within a small enclosure, separate from the Chapel and the rest of the precinct. The Chapel itself is shown at an angle to the street frontage, though once again there is no representation of the Master's House. In 1806 the property within which the Chapel lay was let by a Mrs Allworthy and owned by

Henry Wise and the south-east bulge in the property boundary is still shown. Virtually the same situation is shown on a map of the early 19th century, with Puckering's almshouses in a separate enclosure, though here the Master's House is represented with some form of porch or outbuilding set against its rear wall. Another building is shown on the street frontage within the main enclosure to the east of the Chapel and outside the current eastern boundary (WCRO Z172(u)).

4.7 In the late 18th century more almshouses were built on the outskirts of the Saltisford suburb to the east of the current proposal area. These were known as St Mary's Upper Almshouses and at one stage had their own pump (SMR WA 2165, Fig. 1). St Mary's Upper Almshouses became part of a joint almshouses charity known as St Mary's Almshouse Charity, in 1956 (VCH 1969, 552). None of the 18th or 19th century buildings survive today.

4.8 In 1725 the Birmingham road was "turnpiked" as part of the London to Holyhead road (SMR WA 4774; Slater 1981, 83) and by 1793 the Warwick-Birmingham canal had been opened (SMR WA 4314; VCH 1969, 508) with a wharf (SMR WA 4325) at Saltisford immediately across the road from the almshouses (Fig. 1, WCRO Z172(u); James 1806 WCRO Z276/2).

4.9 The canal wharf stimulated industrial development and by 1851 the area near to the wharf was occupied by timber yards, coal yards and goods yards as well as a number of pubs and a new Gas Works (SMR WA 1936, Board of Health 1851, Fig. 4). The Gas Works, which was built in 1822, consisted in 1851 of two octagonal gasometers at either end of a range of buildings along the Birmingham Road frontage with a courtyard and large circular gasometer to the rear. The octagonal gasometers represent the earliest known surviving gasworks buildings and the whole survives today as a Grade II listed building (DoE 1973, 105-6).

4.10 A map of 1847 (Turner & Co 1847) shows the first detailed arrangement of the area while a yet more detailed and annotated version, appearing in 1851 (Board of Health 1851, Fig. 4), shows exactly the same arrangement in even more detail. At this time the almshouses labelled Saltisford Almshouses, are shown in their separate enclosure with the boundary being a hedge and with a trough, pump and privy in the rear yard. The eastern boundary of the main area of the Master's House and St Michael's Chapel now ran at right angles to the street immediately east of the Chapel cutting off a large part of the former compound including the eastwards bulge shown on earlier maps. The excluded area was now occupied by terraced houses and "the Green Man" public house, while the characteristic shape of the bulge is still visible in the property boundaries. The street frontage east of St Michael's Chapel was occupied by a smithy that probably extended into the Chapel itself (WCRO DR1000/20 Fig. 4, WCRO PH210/182/21, Fig. 6). Midway between the Chapel and the Master's House was a possible boundary with a privy on the Chapel side and two outbuildings, including a piggery, on the Master's House side. The area behind the Chapel contained further outbuildings along the eastern boundary consisting of two piggeries and a cow house as well as a pump and two sinks. The Master's House was divided into three separate cottages, as well as a possible lean-to on the western end, with the surrounding area being further divided into separate yards containing two more privies.

4.11 Further industrial and housing development continued in Saltisford over the next hundred years including the construction of the railway (SMR WA 7836) to the north in the late 19th century (Ordnance Survey 1887, 1905, 1938, 1952), but little alteration was made in the area of the current proposal until the late 20th century. The canal wharf survived in part until 1969 (Ordnance Survey 1969), but by 1983 it had been filled in and the area built over (Ordnance Survey 1983). The gasworks ceased manufacture of gas in 1953, though for a number of years it continued as a local depot and distribution centre (Wilkinson & Taylor 2003, 1). By 1967 all of the buildings to the east of the proposal area had been demolished





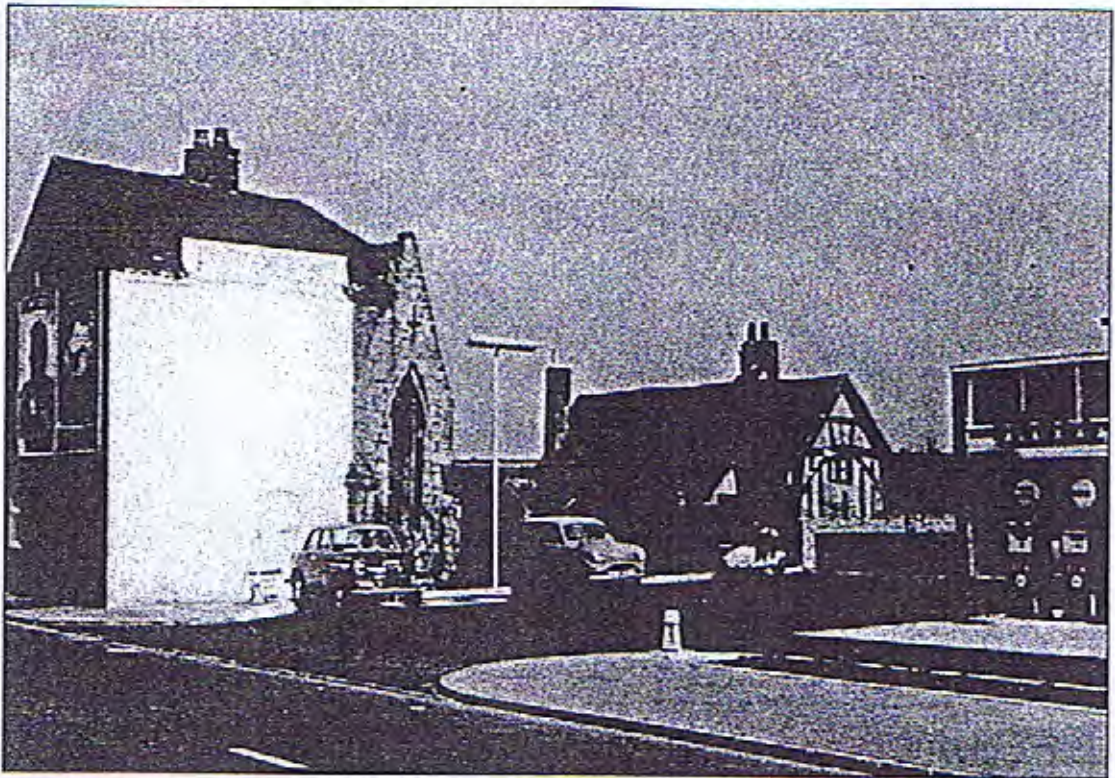


Fig. 6: The Master's House and Chapel, 1962 photo (WCRO PH210/182/21)

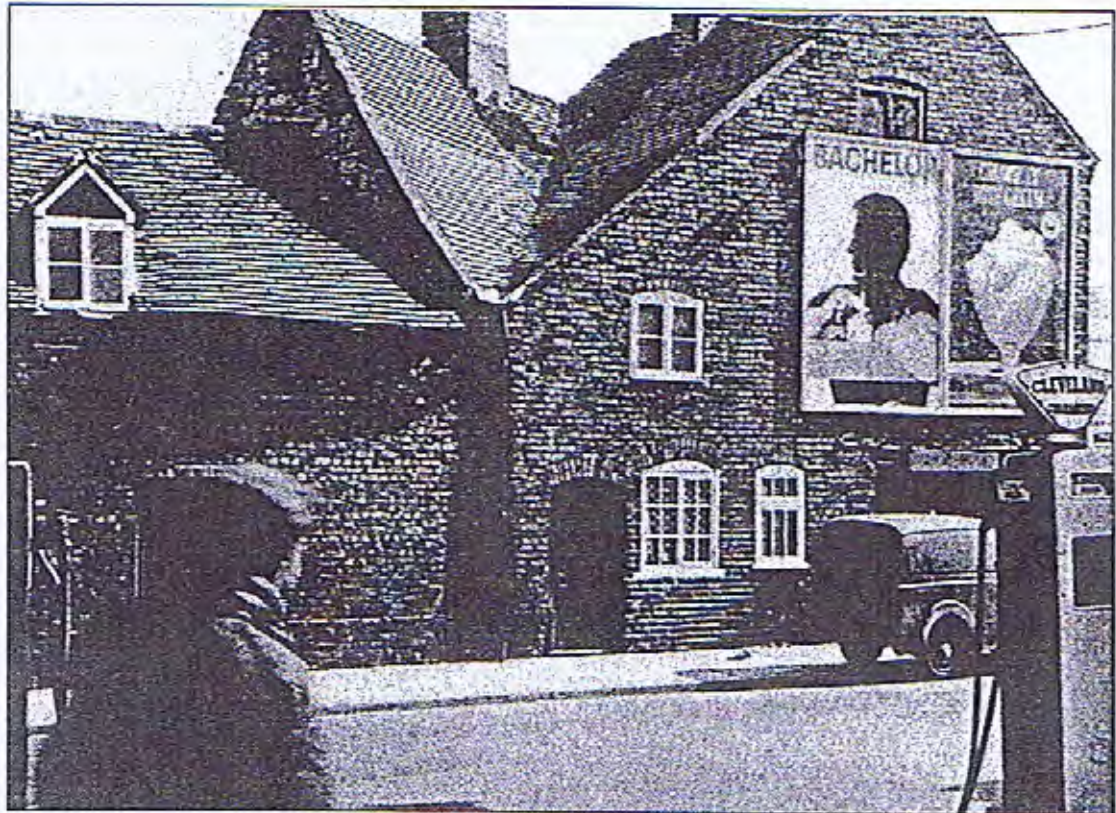


Fig. 7: The street frontage and Chapel, 1962 photo (WCRO PH210/182/21)

and a garage constructed in their place (Ordnance Survey 1967). In 1967-69 the former Almshouses west of the Chapel were demolished (Ordnance Survey 1969) followed by former smithy east of the Chapel in 1978 (Mytum 1978). At this time the boundary to the north of the Master's House appears to have been partly removed, leaving the area open to Saltisford Common. The existing boundary was established following the construction and subsequent development of the council depot to the north-east in the 1980's (Ordnance Survey 1983, 1992).

4.12 Two archaeological investigations have been carried out in the area of the Leper Hospital. In 1978 two trial trenches were excavated in the area of the south wall of the former Chapel, in association with the demolition of the former smithy building. The pits recorded a feature of uncertain nature, possibly a pebble yard surface, which predated the construction of the surviving 15th century Chapel. The Chapel foundations and associated construction material were also recorded and a sherd of medieval pottery of possible 15th century date recovered (Mytum 1978). In 1988 two small trial holes were excavated by contractors in advance of proposed redevelopment close to the south wall of the Master's House (Fig. 8). These uncovered the large stone foundations of the Master's House, possibly re-used from an earlier building, and medieval deposits including the remains of a medieval sandstone floor or yard surface (Booth 1988, 3-4).

4.13 In 2002 an archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site of the former Hutfields Garage to the south-east of the current proposal area but probably within the original hospital precinct. This recovered evidence for a yard surface of 16th/17th century date that may have been associated with the Leper Hospital or Almshouses (SMR WA 9224). A ditch that may have formed a boundary around the Chapel was also recorded (Warwickshire Museum 2002, 11). Subsequent observation of the associated development (Warwickshire Museum 2003, 10) recorded evidence for possible 17th/18th century industrial activity in the area (SMR WA 9679).

4.14 An archaeological evaluation carried out on land to the east of the Leper Hospital in February 2004 recovered evidence for a 20th century waste dump, but not for any earlier activity (SMR EWA 7410).

## 5. Evaluation Trenches

5.1 The four evaluation trenches were laid out in order to investigate the potential archaeological resource present on the site (Fig. 8). The trenches were located in the available open areas on the site and away from the existing medieval buildings. The four trenches were opened with a JCB-type machine using a 1.6m wide ditching bucket under archaeological supervision. All modern surface material, topsoil and recent disturbance were removed by machine. Archaeological deposits and features, where revealed, were then investigated by hand.

### Trench 1

5.2 Trench 1 measured 30m long by 1.6m wide and was aligned roughly north-west to south-east in the north-western corner of the current proposal area outside the Scheduled Area (Fig. 8). Geological natural was in the form of outcropping sandstone (103), overlain by layers of reddish brown clay (107, 109) and alluvial deposits (102). The natural was encountered at between 55.10m AOD and 54.94m AOD. The depth of the trench varied between 0.18m at the north-west end of the trench and 1.10m at the south-east end; the difference being the result of a large deposit of modern material (see below 104).

5.3 The geological natural alluvium was cut by a small gully (106) running roughly north-south across the centre of the trench. This was not excavated and was

backfilled by a grey alluvial silt (105). It may have been a drainage gully or a natural feature. At the north-west end of the trench the natural alluvium was overlain by a thin layer of redeposited natural reddish brown clay (101). The backfilled gully 105 and clay layer 101 were overlain by a layer of dark greyish brown clay loam (100) that had once formed the topsoil in the south-eastern half of the trench and still did in the north-western half (Fig. 9, Section A).

#### *20th-century dumping*

5.4 In the south-eastern half of the trench layer 100 was overlain by a thick deposit of ash and cinders (104). This layer contained large quantities of domestic debris including 17th to 20th-century tableware, glass and ceramic bottles and ceramic building material. A sample only of these finds was retained. The layer resembles material encountered during trial trenching to the south-east of the site in January 2004 (Warwickshire Museum 2004) and appears to be waste material dumped on land to the rear of the current proposal area prior to the construction of the former council depot. It may have partly originated from the nearby gasworks in the 20th century. This tends to confirm the suggestion that most of the northern half of the current proposal area lay outside the boundary of the Leper Hospital/Almshouses until comparatively recently. Both layer 104 (and 201 in Trench 2) contained quantities of 19th- and 20th-century material and were laid down at virtually the same time.

#### **Trench 2**

5.5 Trench 2 measured 12.5m long by 1.6m wide, aligned roughly north-east to south-west at right angles to Trench 3, and was located to the rear of the Master's House just outside the Scheduled Area (Fig. 8). The geological natural alluvium (207) was encountered at 1m-1.2m below the existing ground surface at approximately 55.30m AOD. The deposit became deeper towards the south-west end of the trench where it was truncated by later features (Fig. 9, Section B).

#### *Post-medieval and earlier boundary*

5.6 Geological natural 207 was cut by what appeared to be a gully (205) aligned roughly north-west to south-east. Gully 205, which contained a single large shaped sandstone block in its alluvial fill (204), was not excavated due to flooding of the trench. It corresponded to the northern boundary of the Hospital site on 19th century and earlier plans. It may have originated in the medieval period, though no datable material was recovered from its fill, but continued in use until the 1980s (Ordnance Survey 1983).

#### *20th century dumping and ditch*

5.7 The backfilled gully 205 and the alluvial deposits in the centre of the trench were overlain by a layer of gravel and hand-made roof tile within a grey loam matrix (208). This would appear to have been a dump of demolition material, perhaps from the Master's House, and to date from a period after the northern boundary of the site had fallen out of use. Layer 208 was itself overlain by a thick layer of very dark grey clay loam (201) containing large quantities of 19th-20th century finds (Fig. 9, Section B). This was a variation of layer 104 in Trench 1, consisting of rubbish dumped over the rear of the area in the 20th century. It is possible that this area had been stripped of the original topsoil prior to the deposition of layers 208 and 201. Layer 201 appeared to be cut by a ditch (206) aligned north-west to south-east and parallel to gully 205. This ditch lay just within the northern boundary of the site and may have recut an earlier boundary ditch. The bottom of the ditch was probably reached, but,

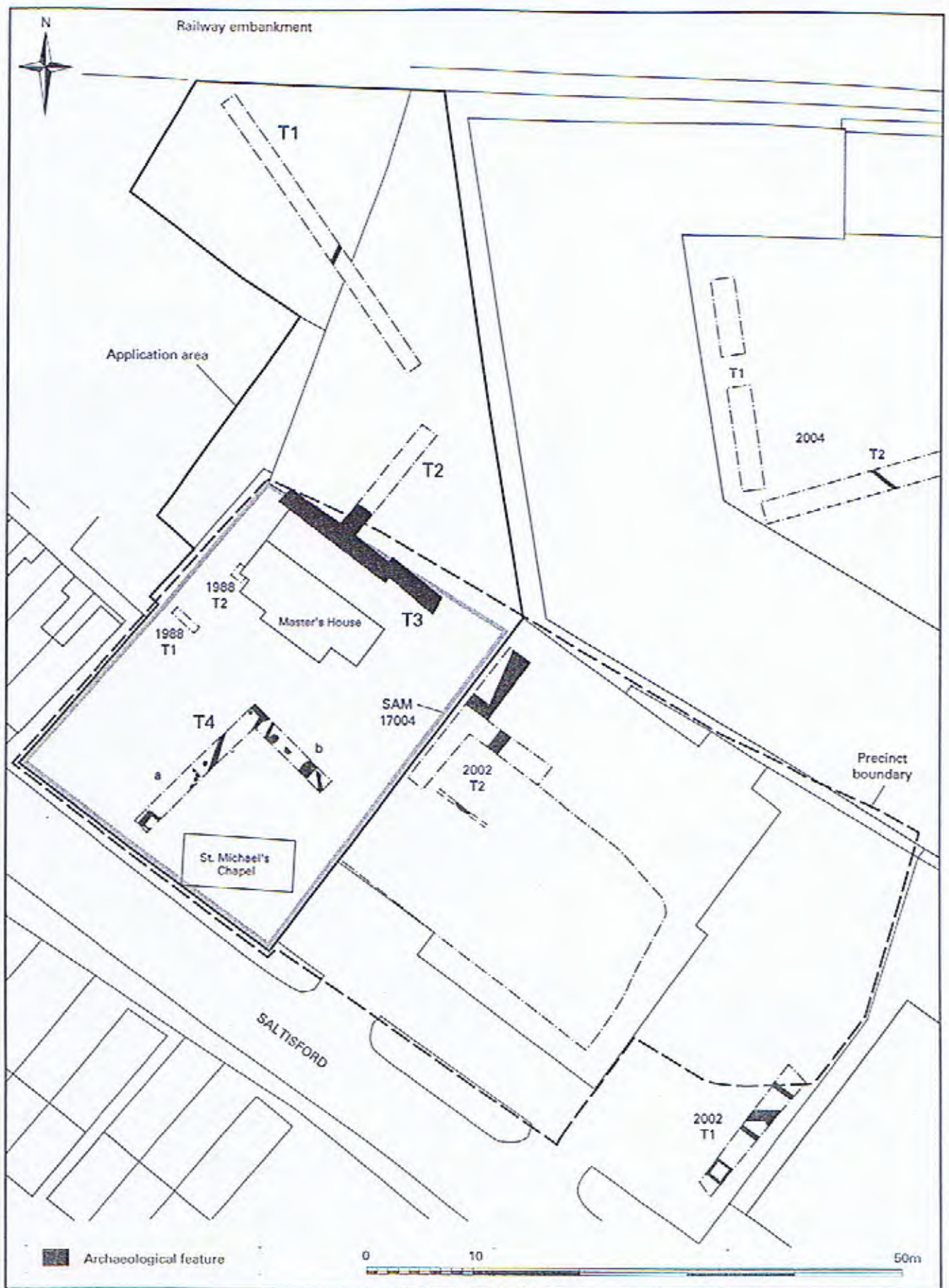


Fig. 8: Location of Evaluation Trenches 1-4



Fig. 10: Trench 1 looking west



Fig. 11: Trench 3, wall 305 and ditch 304

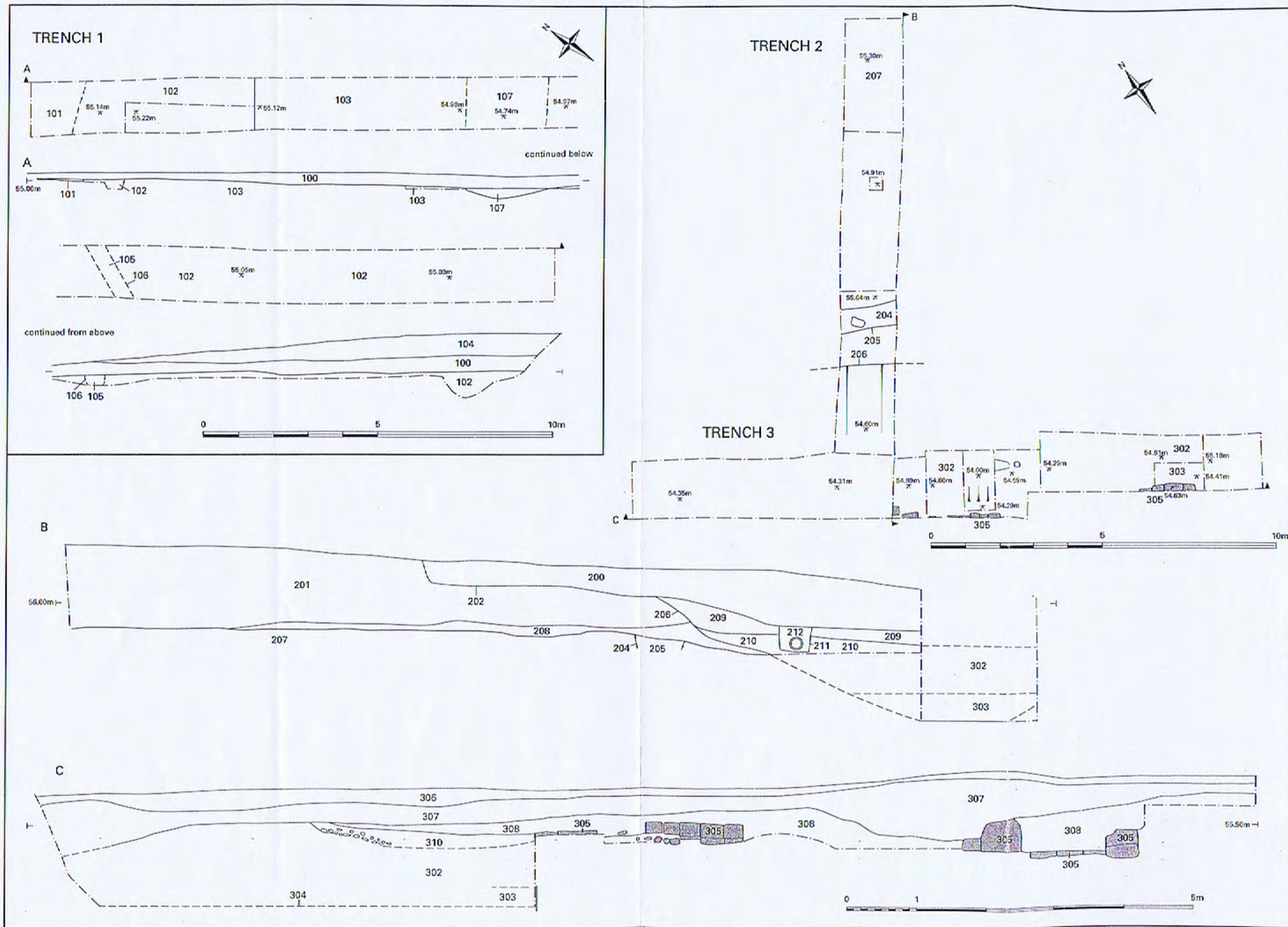


Fig. 9: Trenches 1-3, Sections A-C

due to excessive flooding, this is not certain. Two alluvial ditch fills (210 and 209) were recorded.

5.8 The upper fill (209) of ditch 206 was cut by the trench (211) for a ceramic drain (212) extending north-west to south-east across the trench. Drain trench fill 211 and ditch fill 209 were then partly removed by a linear cut running north-west to south-east (202). This was probably associated with levelling of the site and was filled with a topsoil-like layer (200).

### Trench 3

5.9 Trench 3 measured 18.3m long by 1.6-2.0m wide and was aligned roughly north-west to south-east and approximately parallel to the rear of the Master's House along the north edge of the Scheduled Area (Fig. 8). It adjoined the south-west end of Trench 2. The location of the trench was adjusted by agreement with the Planning Archaeologist and English Heritage in order to avoid the position of support props for the rear wall of the Master's House. The geological natural pebbles and alluvium were almost completely truncated by the modern ditch encountered in Trench 2 (206, here numbered 304) and which ran north-west to south-east along the entire length of Trench 3 (Fig. 9, Trench 3). Geological natural was therefore encountered at between 1.2m and 1.8m below the existing ground surface at approximately 54.00m to 54.59m AOD.

#### *Possible medieval wall*

5.10 Immediately to the south-west of the ditch, running parallel and probably cut by it, was a sandstone wall foundation (305, 309, Fig. 11). This may represent another boundary feature or the remains of a building just inside the Hospital boundary and may have been of medieval date. The precise relationship of wall 305/309 with ditch 304 was however uncertain, and it may alternatively have represented masonry fallen into the ditch.

#### *19th century ditch*

5.11 Due to excessive ground water within the trench it was not possible to obtain a clear profile of ditch 304. It is likely that the full extent of the ditch extended beyond the limit of the trench. The bottom of the ditch was apparently revealed, but no detailed investigation was possible. Ditch 304 was backfilled with various alluvial deposits (301, 302, 303) from which material of 19th century date was recovered along with residual medieval and later pottery.

5.12 Ditch fill 302 was overlaid by a spread of decomposed masonry (310) from Wall 305, and both 310 and 305 were overlaid by a layer of brownish sandy loam with occasional mortar flecks (308). The backfilled ditch and the remainder of Trench 3 were overlain by modern levelling and topsoil deposits (300, 306, 307).

### Trench 4

5.13 Trench 4 measured a total 24.2m long by 1.6m wide and was L-shaped, one arm aligned south-west to north-east (Trench 4a), the other north-west to south-east (Trench 4b). It lay in the southern half of the current proposal area within the Scheduled Area (Fig. 8). The geological natural alluvium (433, brown sandy clay) was reached only in a series of *sondages* within the trench, cut in order to minimise



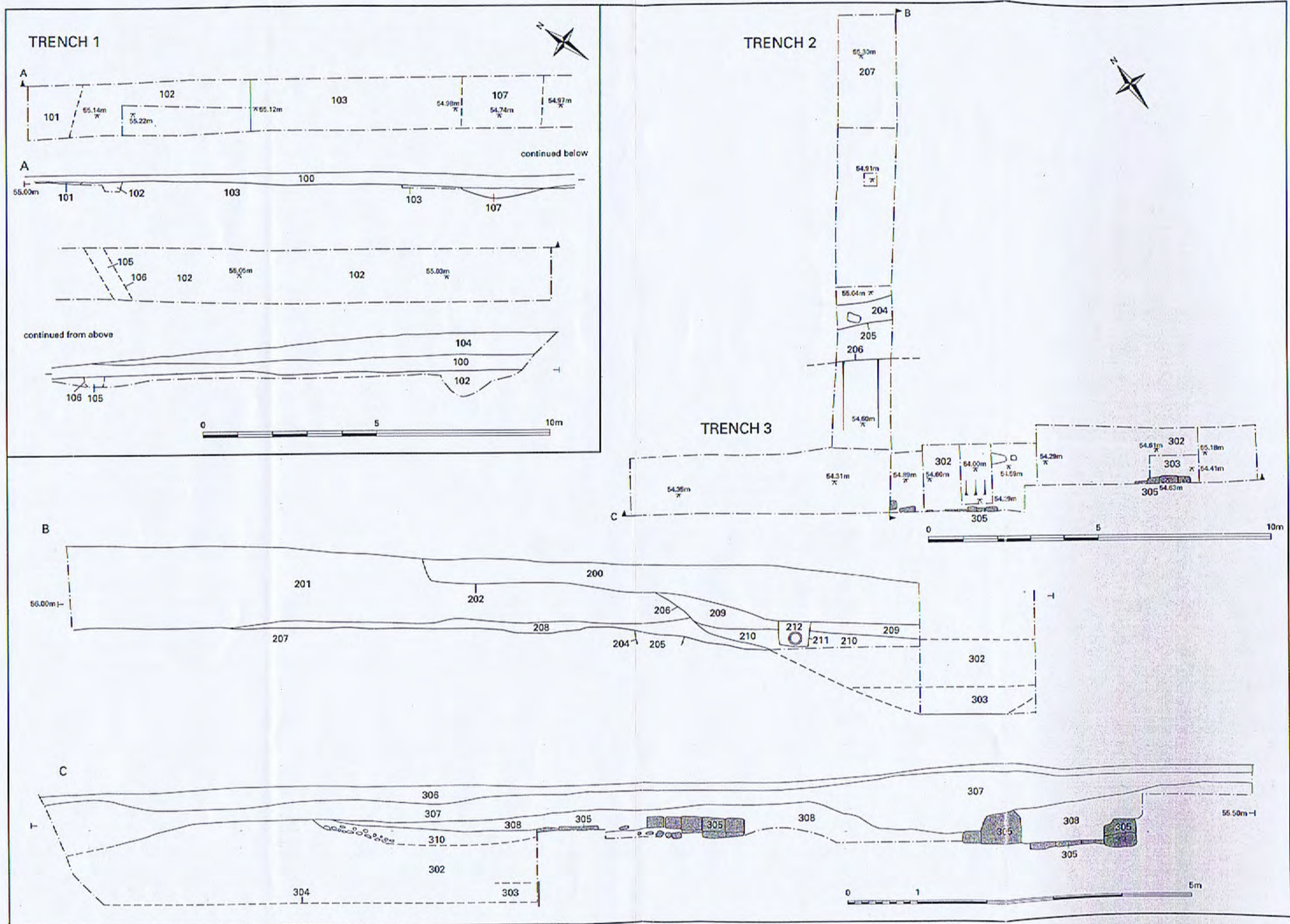


Fig. 9: Trenches 1-3, Sections A-C

the destruction of medieval stratigraphy. Here it was encountered at c.0.90m below the current ground surface in Trench 4a, deepening to 1.3m in Trench 4b.

#### *13th-century or earlier postholes and pits*

5.14 In Trench 4a natural 433 was cut by three small postholes (465, 467, 469). Two of these were excavated (465, 467) and proved to be steep sided flat-bottomed features, circular in plan (Fig. 12, Sections F and G). If contemporary, the three may have formed part of a structure, or have been associated with scaffolding erected for the construction of a larger building.

5.15 In Trench 4b natural 433 was cut by two small circular pits or large postholes (429, 431) with near vertical sides and flattish bases (Fig. 12, Sections Q and S). If postholes then they must have supported a large structure on a north-west to south-east alignment, but only further excavation could confirm this. The fill of one of the pits (428) was itself cut by a posthole (424) (Fig. 12, Section R), whilst a similar posthole (459) cut geological natural 433 to the north-west (Fig. 12, Section N). Both were circular features with vertical sides and flat bases. The two postholes appear to have been structural, but had bases at very different levels (459 at 54.80m AOD, 424 at 54.35m AOD). They may however have formed parts of, or repairs to a building represented by 429 and 431. All of the backfilled features described above, with the exception of posthole 459, were sealed by a thick layer of light greyish brown silty clay sand (432, 473, 494). 13th-century pottery was recovered from the layer indicating that the features sealed by it were of this or earlier date also, although no finds were recovered from their fills (423, 428, 430, 460, 466, 468, 470, 499). They may have been associated with the construction of the first church in the 12th century, but only further excavation would identify their true nature and purpose.

#### *13th-century stone building remains*

5.16 At the south-east end of Trench 4b layer 432/473/494 was cut by the foundation of a large mortared sandstone wall (410, Fig. 14) running north-east to south-west, at right angles to the earlier posthole alignment (431/429/424/459). A single sherd of 13th-century pottery was recovered from the foundation, which may have belonged to the early church or to the early period of the Leper Hospital. A less substantial sandstone wall foundation (405), with no apparent bonding, ran roughly north-south from the south-eastern edge wall 410 and may have been a boundary feature. To the north-west was a north-south aligned gully (412), perhaps a drain, and a probable pit (435). If the building formed by wall 410 extended to the north-west, as seems probable, then gully 412 and pit 435 are unlikely to have been contemporary with it and were probably earlier features.

#### *Later medieval/early post medieval surface and building remains*

5.17 In Trench 4b walls 405 and 410 were subsequently demolished and a layer of pebbles (404, 420) laid down from which more pottery of 13th-century date was recovered. The pebble surface covered most of Trench 4 and appears to represent the yard of the Leper Hospital between the Master's House and the Chapel. Feature 461 may represent the remains of a large pebble, subsequently removed and the hollow silted up (462). In the evaluation carried out at the former Hutfields Garage to the east in 2002 a similar layer (Trench 2, context 204) at a similar level was recorded. Here pottery of medieval and early post medieval date was recovered, suggesting a long period of use lasting into at least the 16th/17th century (Warwickshire Museum 2002, 10, context 204).

5.18 In Trench 4a pebble layer 420 was cut by a steep sided flat-bottomed gully (463) aligned roughly north-south (Fig. 12, Sections I and J). The gully extended for approximately 3m and became deeper towards the south. As with the earlier gully

412 this was probably a silted up drainage feature. Set into the yard surface west of gully 463 was a shaped rectangular sandstone block (484) that may have formed a post pad for a possible timber superstructure. To the south-west of this layer 420 was overlain by a ridge of decayed sandstone (498) aligned roughly north-west to south-east. This may be the remains of a dwarf wall for a timber superstructure, possibly the same as that represented by a post pad 484, or possibly a different structure fronting onto Saltisford. Between sandstone ridge 498 and block 484 the pebble layer 420 was overlain by a patch of irregular sandstone blocks (495). It is uncertain whether these were associated directly with a structure formed by 484 and 498 or if the blocks resulted from its demolition. If 484 and 498 formed a single structure then it would have extended over gully 464 which would therefore not be a contemporary feature. Between gully 463 and sandstone 484 pebble layer 420 was cut by a small circular posthole (471) with steep sides to a flattish sloping base. This may have been associated with the construction of a building associated with 498 and 484 or have had some other function.

#### *17th-century frontage buildings*

5.19 At the south-west end of Trench 4 a sandstone wall (417, Fig. 16) was aligned north-east to south-west at right angles to the road frontage. This area was not fully excavated down to the medieval deposits, and the wall lay at a high level, but it is possible that it dates from the 17th century or earlier. It may represent the buildings of Puckering's Almshouses shown on maps from the 18th century, the street frontage buildings recorded in the 17th century. Photographs taken before the demolition of the latest street frontage buildings show them to have been built of brick and of probable 18th/early 19th century date. The stone foundations are likely to have been laid down for buildings that preceded these.

#### *18th-century rebuilding of structures to rear*

5.20 Following the demolition of the potential structure(s) represented by 484 and 498, and the backfilling (464) of gully 463 and posthole 471 (472), a layer of redeposited natural sand and clay was laid down over parts of Trench 4a (425, 493). A few flat sandstone fragments embedded in the surface of this layer may suggest that it have formed the make-up, or levelling deposit for a yard surface of sandstone flags that were subsequently removed for re-use. This layer contained 18th-century pottery, along with earlier material suggesting a date for the demolition of building 484/498 and the disuse of the former pebble yard 404/420. In Trench 4b layer 425 was cut by the trench (414) for a sandstone wall foundation (413) bonded by reddish brown clay and aligned north-east to south-west. The wall may have formed part of a building whose extent is unknown, or may be a boundary feature associated with surface 425. In either case it appears to be directly associated with surface 425 which did not extend beyond wall 413 to the south-east.

5.21 Immediately north-west of wall 413 layer 425 was cut by two small circular postholes with steep sides and rounded bases (422, 457). These may have been from scaffold posts associated with the construction of the wall or have marked a fence line for an internal division within a yard. No datable material was recovered from their fills (421, 458). At the south-east end of Trench 4 a circular posthole (427) with near vertical sides and an irregular rounded base was probably a contemporary feature whose fill (426) contained pottery of 18th century date. Its purpose is unknown.

5.22 A layer of grey silty loam (474) developed subsequently over the south-western end of Trench 4a overlying all of the backfilled features and layers south-west of and including gully 463 up to and including sandstone ridge 498. This may represent a small cultivation area or perhaps a pen for keeping animals. Layer 474 was cut by a



Fig. 15: Trench 4b looking north-west



Fig.16: Trench 4b, wall 410



Fig. 17: Trench 4a looking south-west



Fig. 18: Trench 4a, walls 415 and 417

substantial posthole (455), possibly belonging to a fence line or outbuilding. After posthole 455 had gone out of use and been backfilled (456) this part of layer 474 was cut by an oval pit with shallow sloping sides and a flattish base (419) that may have been cut to extract some of the gravel from earlier yard surface 420 (Fig. 12, Trench 4, location indicated). No datable material was recovered from its fill (418).

#### *18th-century levelling*

5.23 The ground level was subsequently raised over the whole of Trench 4 by a series of backfilling and levelling deposits. These clay loam deposits (439, 440, 441, 442, 453, 480, 483), extended north-eastwards from the Saltisford frontage (Fig. 12, Section D). Pottery retrieved from these deposits dates this levelling to the 18th century. This level may have formed a working surface, once again probably for gardening.

#### *18th/19th-century buildings and outbuildings*

5.24 A possible brick-lined pit constructed with late 18th/early 19th-century bricks (485) was cut into layer 480 and may have used the existing stone wall 413 as part of the lining (Fig. 12, Section O). The pit was subsequently backfilled (486) and a levelling deposit laid down (487). A brick walled and floored outbuilding was then constructed from machine-made bricks (447, 451, 452, 457). This building may have re-used wall 413 as part of its foundations. The building may be one of several structures shown as piggeries and a privy in 1851 (Board of Health 1851, Fig. 4). A trench (449) for a ceramic sewer pipe (450) cut through layer (453) was probably associated with these outbuildings. It was probably at this time that alterations or rebuilding of the street frontage buildings took place. Wall 417 was resurfaced with mortared brick (415) and an associated construction surface (416) formed of loose bricks and loam was laid down (Fig. 16). This walling would have formed part of the buildings shown on photographs of the 1970s prior to their destruction.

#### *19th century levelling*

5.25 Following the demolition of the outbuildings, and the partial robbing of the brickwork robber trench 489 was backfilled (490), and the ground was once again levelled up towards the north and west by further loam deposits (436, 437, 438, 479). The fragmentary remains of sandy clay make-up (454) for a path or yard overlying 438, and of a pebble yard surface (492) overlying 441 immediately behind the street frontage properties, also date from this period. The yard surface was cut by a small pit or posthole (475) with no finds in its fill (476). It was also probably at this time that a rubbish pit (407), whose fills (406, 443, 444, 445, 446, 448) contained pottery dating from the medieval period up to the 19th century, was cut through layer 453 (Fig. 12, Section V). A single fragment of glazed medieval floor tile recovered from fill 406 probably originated from a building on the site, possibly the chapel or the earlier church.

#### *Modern features and topsoil*

5.26 A pit (409) for a dog burial was cut into the top of foundation (410) and backfilled (408). The whole of the area was subsequently overlain by a mixed layer of silty clay containing some brick rubble (401). This probably dates from the demolition of the street frontage buildings in the 1970s. This layer was cut by various modern service trenches (403, 449, 481, 496) containing ceramic and metal pipes. All were probably rapidly backfilled (402, 450, 497, 482). A probable rubbish pit (477) was also dug and backfilled (478), (Fig. 12, Section D). These were overlain by the modern topsoil deposit (400).

## 6. Conclusions

6.1 Within the Scheduled Area the evaluation trenches revealed that complex medieval stratigraphy survives in the area between the Master's House and the Chapel. Well-preserved archaeological remains were revealed throughout the extent of Trench 4 and did not appear to have been significantly disturbed by later activity. The earliest recorded phase of activity consisted of postholes and pits, which may date from the early phases of the Leper Hospital or from the church that preceded it. These may have formed part of timber structures associated with this phase of the site. The stratigraphic sequence included a later medieval phase surviving at approximately 0.55m below the ground level. This phase of activity included masonry wall foundations and a yard surface that appear to have formed part of the Leper Hospital complex. It is likely that the Hospital precinct did extend beyond the Scheduled Area though little detailed occupation has been recorded. Significant stratigraphic deposits and structural remains are present in the Scheduled Area in addition to the existing Listed medieval buildings.

6.2 Outside the Scheduled Area in the northern part of the site no evidence for medieval activity was recorded and significantly fewer archaeological features were apparent. Two gullies, possibly post-medieval boundaries, were identified. This part of the site was also used to dump extensive layers of 19th- and 20th-century building and domestic debris during the late 20th century. Evidence for similar deposition was identified further to the south-east close to Ansell Road (Warwickshire Museum 2004).

6.3 Close to the limit of the Scheduled Area and the likely line of the precinct boundary to the rear of the Master's House part of what may have been a rubble surface was recorded in Trench 2. This extended beyond the former rear boundary, first shown on maps of the 18th century, which may be of late medieval or early post-medieval origin. This boundary was represented by a modern ditch, which possibly re-cut an earlier ditch. A masonry wall following the line of the ditch at the edge of Trench 3 and immediately behind the master's house may represent a medieval boundary feature or building. Further investigation would be needed to understand the exact nature and extent of the features recorded.

6.4 No evidence for the cemetery almost certainly associated with the leper hospital was recorded. It is likely that it was situated away from the buildings and whilst it is possible that the evidence may have been subject to disturbance or truncation in the northern part of the site it is most likely that the cemetery may be located to the north-west or south-east of the site.

6.5 Evidence for the later occupation of the site, from the early post-medieval period to the present day, survives over the whole of Trench 4. This includes stone and brick structures, yard surfaces, make-up deposits and agricultural layers. Possible 17th-century structural remains close to the street frontage survived at 0.15m below current ground surface.

## Acknowledgements

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Warwickshire Museum 2004 *Archaeological Evaluation north of Ansell Road, Saltisford, Warwick, Warwick*

WCRO Z122(u) *Map of the Earl of Warwick's Estate by Mathias Baker, 1788*

WCRO Z172(u) *Map of the Earl of Warwick's Estate with later alterations, early 19th century*

WCRO Z276/2(u) *Map of the Earl of Warwick's Estate by William James, 1806*

WCRO PH210/182/21 *Photographs of the old leper hospital in 1948 and 1962*

WCRO DR1000/20 *Photograph of St. Michaels Chapel in the 1880s*

Wilkinson, J B, & Taylor, G, 2003 *Warwick Gasworks Site, Saltisford, Warwick, Cambrian Archaeology*



## Appendix A: List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>
<b>Trench 1</b>			
104	Pottery	44	17th to 20th century
	Ceramic	4	Bottles
	Clay pipe	6	Stem (6)
	Glass	8	19th century bottle frags (4)
	Brick/Tile	5	
<b>Trench 2</b>			
200	Pottery	22	19th/20th century
	Clay Pipe	1	Bowl (1)
201	Pottery	37	19th century
	Ceramic	5	20th century (1)
			19th century knob (1)
			19th/20th century bottles (3)
	Clay pipe	2	Stem
	Glass	25	19th century bottle (18), vessel (7)
	Iron	1	Nail
<b>Trench 3</b>			
300	Pottery	64	Post-medieval
	Animal Bone	14	
	Glass	7	
301	Pottery	127	17th/19th century (123), Medieval (4)
	Ceramic	1	Fragment 19th/20th century
	Animal Bone	13	Sample only retained
	Shell	1	Oyster
	Clay Pipe	22	Stem (16), Bowl (6)
	Glass	1	18th/19th century, vessel fragment
	Lead	1	Window lead
303	Pottery	9	17th/18th century
	Animal Bone	6	Sample only retained
	Clay Pipe	1	Stem (1)
	Shell	4	Oyster
	Leather	1	Shoe fragment
<b>Trench 4</b>			
401	Pottery	10	18th/19th century
402	Pottery	10	18th/19th century
	Slate	1	19th/20th century roof slate
404	Pottery	14	13th century
	Animal Bone	1	
406	Pottery	11	18th century (2), 12th-14th century (9)
	Tile	1	Medieval glazed floor tile
	Animal Bone	15	Sample only retained
	Clay pipe	6	Fragments
408	Animal Bone	3	Dog burial, sample only retained
410	Pottery	1	13th century

<i>Context</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>
<b>Trench 4 (cont.)</b>			
425	Pottery	4	18th century (2), 13th/14th century (2)
	Tile	1	Roof tile
	Iron	4	? Nail fragments (4)
	Animal Bone	1	
426	Pottery	6	18th century (2), 13th century (4)
	Animal Bone	1	
	Tile	2	
	Brick	1	
432	Pottery	3	13th century
	Iron	1	Nail
438	Pottery	1	18th century
440	Pottery	4	17th/18th century
441	Animal Bone	1	
	Tile	2	Roof tile
446	Pottery	29	18th/19th century
	Animal Bone	5	
	Clay Pipe	1	Bowl fragment
	Glass	1	Vessel
453	Pottery	4	18th century
473	Animal Bone	8	
460	Copper Alloy	1	Aglet (Lace tag)
473	Pottery	20	13th century
478	Clay Pipe	1	Stem fragment
	Glass	10	18th/19th century,
	Pottery	3	18th/19th century

## **Appendix B: List of Contexts**

<i>Context No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Context No</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>Trench 1</b>		<b>Trench 2 (cont)</b>	
100	Topsoil	208	Gravel/Tile Layer
101	Redeposited silty clay	209	Ditch fill of 206
102	Natural silty clay	210	Ditch fill of 206
103	Bedrock outcrop	211	Drain
104	Dump Layer	212	Drain fill of 211
105	Gully fill of 106		
106	Gully	<b>Trench 3</b>	
107	Layer	300	Topsoil
108	Layer	301	Ditch fill of 304
		302	Ditch fill of 304
		303	Ditch fill of 304
		304	Ditch
		305	Wall foundation
		306	Layer
		307	Layer
		308	Layer
		309	Layer
		310	Layer
		311	Layer Natural
<b>Trench 2</b>			
200	Topsoil		
201	Layer		
202	Linear cut		
203	Deleted record		
204	Pit fill of 205		
205	Pit?		
206	Ditch		
207	Natural		

<i>Context No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Context No</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Trench 4</i>		450	Pipe fill of 449
400	Layer	451	Brick wall foundation
401	Layer	452	Brick wall foundation
402	Pipe fill of 403	453	Layer
403	Pipe trench	454	Layer
404	Layer	455	Posthole
405	Limestone	456	Posthole fill of 455
406	Pit fill of 407	457	Posthole
407	Pit	458	Posthole fill of 457
408	Pit fill of 409	459	Pit/Posthole
409	Pit	460	Pit/Posthole fill of 459
410	Wall foundation	461	Posthole
411	Gully fill of 412	462	Posthole fill of 461
412	Gully	463	Gully
413	Wall foundation	464	Gully fill of 463
414	Foundation trench	465	Posthole
415	Brick Wall	466	Posthole fill of 465
416	Layer	467	Posthole
417	Sandstone Wall	468	Posthole fill of 467
418	Pit fill of 419	469	Posthole
419	Pit Cut	470	Posthole fill of 469
420	Layer	471	Posthole
421	Posthole fill of 422	472	Posthole fill of 471
422	Posthole	473	Layer
423	Posthole fill of 424	474	Layer
424	Posthole	475	Pit
425	Layer	476	Pit fill of 475
426	Posthole fill of 427	477	Pit
427	Posthole	478	Pit fill of 477
428	Posthole fill of 429	479	Layer
429	Posthole	480	Layer
430	Pit/Posthole fill of 431	481	Modern Disturbance
431	Pit/Posthole	482	Fill
432	Layer	483	Layer
433	Geological Natural	484	Sandstone Block
434	Gully fill of 435	485	Wall
435	Gully	486	Layer
436	Layer	487	Layer
437	Layer	488	Brick floor
438	Layer	489	Pit
439	Layer	490	Fill of 489
440	Layer	491	Layer
441	Layer	492	Layer
442	Layer	493	Layer
443	Layer	494	Layer
444	Layer	495	Layer
445	Layer	496	Pipe Trench
446	Layer	497	Fill of 496
447	Brick floor	498	Wall foundation?
448	Pit fill of 407	499	Post-hole fill of 469
449	Pipe trench		

## **Appendix C: Ancient Monument Scheduling Listing** (Reference AA 091976/1, English Heritage 1991)

**Monument:** St Michael's Leper Hospital, Warwick

**Parish:** Warwick

**County:** Warwickshire

**National Monument No:** 17004

**National Grid Reference:** SP27696541

### **Description of the Monument**

This monument includes the below ground remains of a leper hospital, chapel and cemetery located outside the medieval settlement of Warwick. The present focus of the hospital complex is formed by the upstanding Chapel, a single cell stone building of 15th century date, and a late 15th century or early 16th century timber-framed building, known as the Master's House, situated to the north of the Chapel. Although partly rebuilt, the buildings are contemporary with the later medieval development of the site. The standing buildings are considered to overlie the remains of earlier medieval hospital buildings which extend across the whole of the site. These include an earlier chapel, the infirmary and the cemetery which coexisted on the site.

Hospital records show that the church of St Michael was founded by Roger, Earl of Warwick in 1135. The first actual reference to the leper hospital is in 1275, but by 1540 it was said to be 'much in ruin'. By 1545 it was leased to a layman, Richard Fisher, who distributed alms to the poor and gave lodging to four poor men. The last priest recorded as warden took office in 1557. The Chapel and Master's house were converted to cottages in the 17th-18th centuries.

Today the site is in private ownership. The Chapel and Master's House are both Listed Grade II\* and are excluded from the scheduling, although the ground beneath both of them, which is believed to contain evidence of structures relating to the earlier development of the hospital, is included.

### **Assessment of importance**

A medieval hospital is a group of buildings which housed a religious or secular institution which provided more spiritual than medical care. The leper house was a segregated settlement set up for those suffering from leprosy and other related diseases. The first definite foundations for medieval hospitals were by Anglo-Norman bishops and queens in the 11th century. Leper houses form a distinct type among medieval hospitals being settlements that provided a sufferer with permanent isolation from society. Their function was segregation rather than medical care. The first foundations were in the 11th century although most houses were founded in the 12th and 13th centuries. Between the 14th to 16th centuries only 17 houses were founded, perhaps reflecting the gradual disappearance of leprosy. Probably about half of the medieval hospitals were suppressed by 1539 as part of the Dissolution of the monasteries. The smaller institutions survived until 1547, when Edward VI dissolved all chantries.

St Michael's is one of three known examples of leper hospitals in the country. The site has a long history of use documented from the 12th century onwards and includes 15th century buildings associated with the hospital. As such, it offers an important survival of a multi-phase medieval site unaffected by modern development. The existence of this extra-mural hospital also provides a significant insight in the relationship between urban communities and special institutions as well as attitudes towards disease in the medieval period.

## Appendix D: Listed Building Citations

### LEPER HOSPITAL OF ST MICHAEL

**LBS number:** 307622  
**Address:** 4, 5 AND 6 SALTISFORD  
**Grade:** II\*  
**Parish:** WARWICK  
**Date listed:** 10-JAN-1953  
**District:** WARWICK  
**Date of last amendment :** 05-DEC-1973  
**County:** WARWICKSHIRE  
**NGR:** SP 277 654  
**Postcode:** CV34 4TA

1781

SALTISFORD (North East Side)  
Nos 4, 5 and 6  
St Michael's Court  
10.1.55,  
GV

SP 2765 SE 5/204  
II\*

Part of the Leper Hospital of Saint Michael founded in C12. Subsequently divided into three tenements. C15 structure on C12 foundations; often called the Priest's or Master's House. Heavy, fairly close set timber framing, brick and some cement infilling. Later wooden casements and doors. 2 storeys, old tiled roof. One of the very few leper hospitals of the early middle ages still surviving. VCH, viii, p.438.

Nos 4, 5 and 6 St Michael's Court with Nos 108 and 108A form a group of considerable historic significance. Nos 4, 5 and 6 St Michael's Court shall be amended to read Nos 4, 5 and 6 St Michael's Place The group value note to be amended accordingly.

### FORMER CHAPEL OF ST MICHAEL TO REAR OF NUMBER 108 SALTISFORD

**LBS number:** 307623  
**Address:** 108 108A SALTISFORD  
**Grade:** II\*  
**Parish:** WARWICK  
**Date listed:** 10-JAN-1953  
**District:** WARWICK  
**Date of last amendment :** 19-MAR-1973  
**County:** WARWICKSHIRE  
**NGR:** SP 276 653  
**Postcode:** CV34 4TD

1781

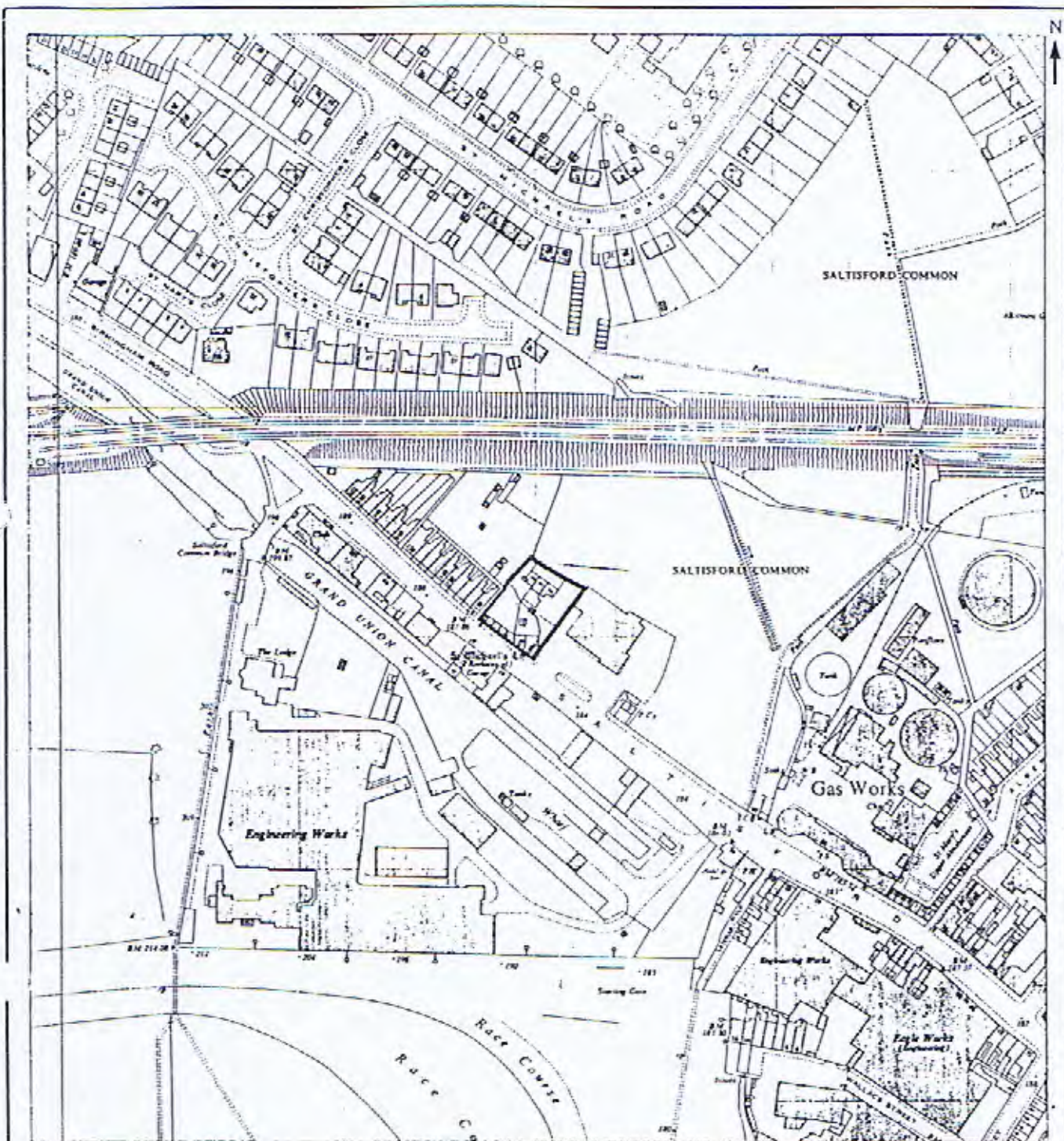
SALTISFORD (North East Side)  
Nos 108 and 108A  
(formerly listed as  
"Former Chapel of  
St Michael to rear of  
No 108 Saltisford")  
10.1.53.  
GV

SP 2765 SE 5/535  
II\*

2.

C15 on C12 foundations. Chapel for the Leper Hospital of Saint Michael. Ashlar, old and machine tiled roof. Now part of 2 cottages formed in C18 from chapel and brick additions towards road. Blocked east window, no tracery. Interior: carved and moulded timber barrel vault.

Nos 4, 5 and 6 St Michael's Court with Nos 108 and 108A form a group of considerable historic significance



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For identification purposes only

Site Name: St Michael's Leper Hospital, Warwick

County: Warwickshire

District: Warwick

Parish: Warwick

Notes:

For exclusions - see text record

Key: Monument No.      Location/extent of site



Scale: 1:2500      Derived from: 1:2500

Centred on NGR: SP27696541

Extract from OS sheet: SP2765

Date: 10.6.91

Monument No: SM17004

English Heritage

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