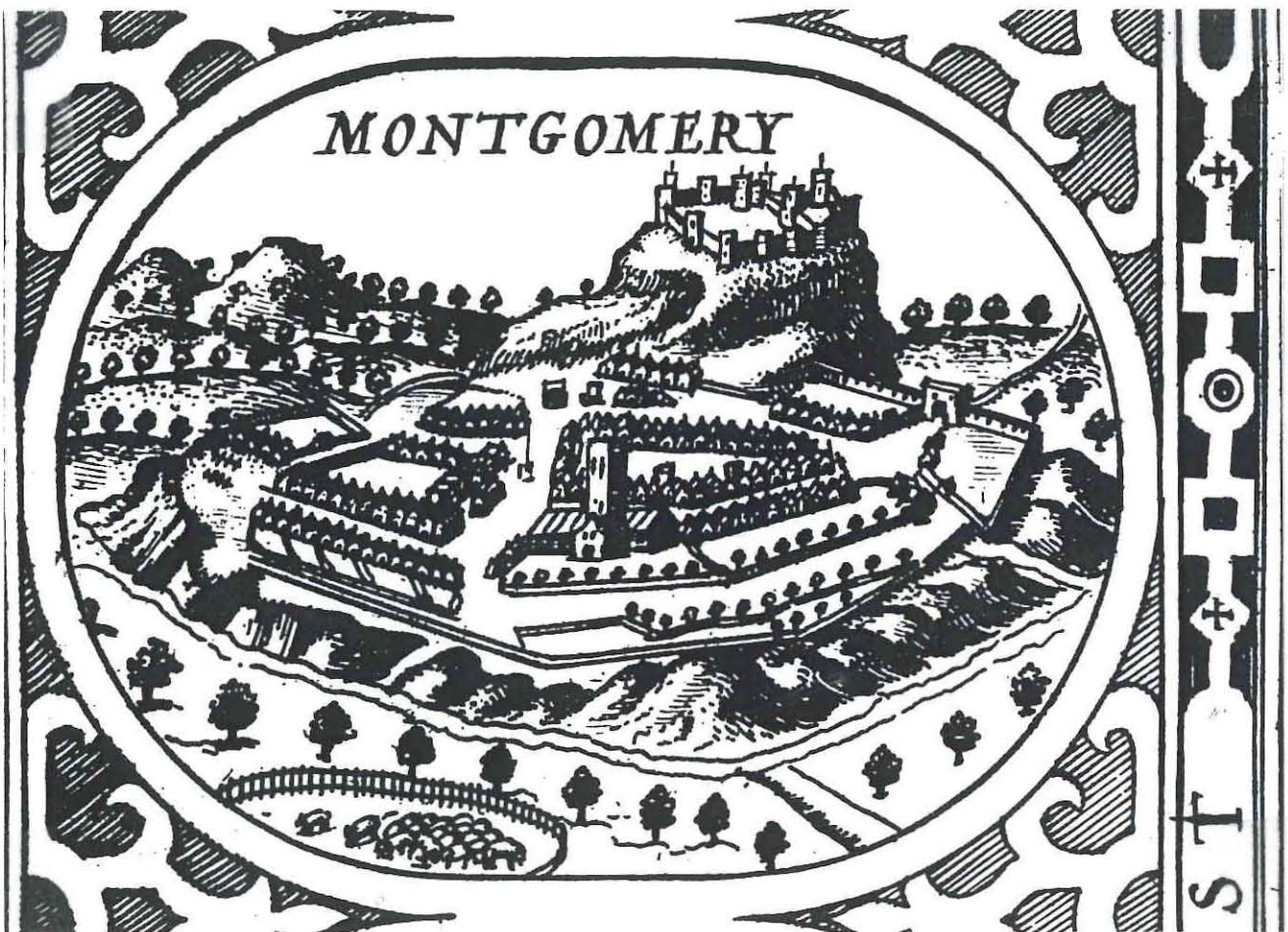


THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

*Land Adjacent to Garden Cottage,
Montgomery, Powys*
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



CPAT Report No 344

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

W G Owen
October 2000

Report for Turnbull Tweedale Planning and Design

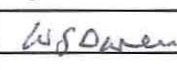
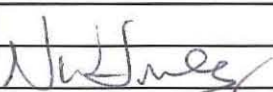
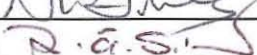
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CPAT Report Record

Report and status

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CPAT Project No	871	CPAT Report No	344
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checked by	N.W. Jones		27/10/2000
approved by	R.J. Silvester		30/10/2000

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no	date	made by	checked by	approved by

Internal memo

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2000, the Contracts Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (henceforth CPAT Contracts) were asked by Turnbull Tweedale Planning & Design to provide a detailed specification and cost estimate for a watching brief on land adjacent to Garden Cottage, Montgomery, Powys based on a design brief (CWAT 357) prepared by the Curatorial Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, acting in its capacity as adviser to the planning authority.
- 1.2 The development constitutes the construction of a new dwelling with access, parking and associated landscaping.
- 1.3 The specification and cost estimate were duly accepted and CPAT Contracts were asked to carry out the work.

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 The development plot is located on land adjacent to Garden Cottage, Montgomery (SO 22459682) which overlooks Chirbury Road. The remains of the Montgomery town defences (Scheduled Ancient Monument Mg 023) lie c. 15m to the east of the rear boundary of the plot, on the opposite side of an access track.
- 2.2 The underlying solid geology at this point consists of Wenlock calcareous shales with stagnogley silty clay loam of the Cegin series above (Rudeforth *et al.* 1984). With depth, this becomes a stiff mottled yellow or grey clay.

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The dominant feature of Montgomery is the castle built under the instructions of Henry III. Building commenced in 1223 and may have been completed by the end of that decade. At the same time it seems clear that the nucleus of a settled town came into being. Its first charter was awarded in 1227 by Henry III and this stated that the town could be enclosed by a ditch and a wall and it has been suggested that work may have commenced by 1230 (O'Neill & Foster Smith 1940). It seems likely that the first defences consisted of a timber palisade surmounting an earth rampart with an external ditch. The timber palisade appears to have been replaced in stone between 1278 and 1280 (Taylor 1950) but it is improbable that this was done along the entire circuit of approximately 2km. John Speed's map of 1610, however schematic it may be, seems to show a wall only on the sections adjacent to Arthur's Gate on the north side of the town. A section of the defences, 50m long, is located to the south-east of Garden Cottage where it is visible as a broad bank.
- 3.2 Speed's map shows the general layout and street frontages of the town but is unclear as to whether or not there were any houses adjacent to the Town Wall in the vicinity of Garden Cottage at that time. However, an evaluation carried out on the development site in 1997 did suggest the presence of a nearby medieval dwelling (Detheridge 1997). Similarly, trial excavations carried out in the open field to the south-west of the site (centred at SO 2240 9678) demonstrated occupation during the medieval period (Gibson 1991).
- 3.3 Excavations and watching briefs carried out elsewhere in the northern part of the town have demonstrated that there was domestic occupation in the late medieval period notably adjacent to Pool Road (Britnell & Jones (1989) and in the grounds of Plas Du (Ashton & Garwood 1985).
- 3.4 The Tithe Apportionment map of 1842 indicates that the development plot contained no building but the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1892 and 1903 respectively do show a very small structure adjacent to the south-western boundary, possibly a byre.

4 THE WATCHING BRIEF (Fig. 2)

- 4.1 On January 25th, 2000, a watching brief was conducted during the excavation of two trial pits in advance of the main building programme. The soils in both pits showed the same basic stratigraphy, namely a dark brown coloured humic topsoil (1), approximately 0.30m deep, merging into a slightly lighter coloured clayey loam horizon (2), up to 0.50m deep below it. This overlay a yellowish-brown stiff clay (3) which extended below the base of both pits and which was interpreted as undisturbed natural subsoil. Pottery sherds recovered from the upper horizons of both pits were of late post-medieval or modern date. No features of archaeological significance were recorded.
- 4.2 Between 21-23 March 2000 a watching brief was carried out during the course of topsoil stripping and foundation trench excavation on the site. Removal of the topsoil (7) revealed a greyish-brown fairly compact clayey loam (8), broadly similar to the clayey loam seen in the test pits. Examination of the excavated foundation trench sections showed that this layer varied in thickness from approximately 0.30m on the southern and south-western sides of the plot to 1.0m in the northern corner. In the north-eastern part of the plot, trench sections showed that this layer sealed a reddish-orange coloured stiff, stony clay (9), of maximum thickness 0.18m, which contained charcoal fragments and burnt stone. Bulk samples of this material were collected for possible further examination but no artefacts or other dating evidence were recovered. The base of each trench cut into a stiff clay (10), varying in colour from light yellowish brown to olive green which was identified as the undisturbed natural subsoil.
- 4.3 In a position close to the entrance gate to the plot, a truncated pit (11), 1.2m long, up to 0.6m wide and 0.25m deep was exposed below the topsoil. This contained animal bone (12), subsequently identified as that of a young bovine. Other finds recovered from the foundation trenches, included late post-medieval pottery sherds from the topsoil and the clayey loam underlying it.
- 4.4 Finds recovered from Contexts 7 and 8 of the foundation trenches included 18th and 19th-century pottery sherds.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The watching brief did not reveal any evidence to support the former presence of a dwelling on the site. The burnt layer identified in the northern part of the site appeared to correspond to a layer of similar colour exposed during the 1997 evaluation excavation and which was interpreted then as a possible hearth. However, the extent of the burnt layer (9) suggested that it represented either an *in situ* layer of burnt material or a redeposited layer sealed by a clayey-loam soil (8) which elsewhere had yielded late post-medieval pottery.

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APPENDIX 1

LAND ADJACENT TO GARDEN COTTAGE, MONTGOMERY, POWYS SPECIFICATION FOR A CONTRACTED ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF BY THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed development involves the construction of a new dwelling with access, parking and associated landscaping on land adjacent to Garden Cottage, Montgomery, Powys (Powys County Council Planning Application M991005). The Curatorial section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, acting in their role as archaeological advisors to the local authority, have determined that a watching brief should be carried out during the initial stages of topsoiling, construction and service trench excavation. Accordingly, a Brief (CWAT 357, dated 10/01/00) has been prepared detailing the scheme of works required.
- 1.2 An earlier archaeological evaluation in 1997 revealed the presence of sparse and undefined medieval deposits at a depth of c. 0.45-0.5m below present ground level, including a possible hearth and associated 13th/14th century pottery. These features may or may not be associated with a former medieval dwelling.

2 Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works are:
 - 2.1.1 to record the nature, condition, significance and, where possible, the chronology of any archaeological deposits and/or features revealed within the area of the proposed development during the development works in so far as these aims are possible;
 - 2.1.2 to prepare a report outlining the results of the watching brief.

3 Methods

- 3.1 The watching brief will be undertaken to include the initial topsoil stripping, foundation trench excavation, service trench excavation and construction of a new access.
- 3.2 Limited excavation of all significant contexts will be undertaken where possible following negotiations with the developer. All significant archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded by drawn plan/section and photography in 35mm black and white negative, colour slide and colour print. All features will be tied in locationally to the Ordnance Survey as accurately as possible.
- 3.3 Following the on-site work an illustrated and bound report will be prepared according to the principles detailed in Section 8 of the Brief. This will be in A4 format and contain conventional sections on: Site location, Topography and Geology; Historic Background; Catalogue of sites identified with notes on their condition and significance, Conclusions and Recommendations and References, together with appropriate appendices on archives and finds. Further publication of the results in an appropriate regional or national journal will be undertaken at a later date and as considered appropriate depending on the nature of the findings.
- 3.5 The site archive will be prepared to specifications laid out in Appendix 3 in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991). Following agreement with the landowner, arrangements will be made for the long term conservation and storage of all artefacts in an appropriate repository.

4 Resources and Programming

- 4.1 The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled and experienced archaeologist. Overall supervision will be by Mr R.J.Silvester, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 4.2 All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist who conducted the watching brief.
- 4.3 The duration of the watching brief will depend entirely on the developers programme of work. The subsequent report will be prepared immediately following completion of on-site recording, dependent on the client's instructions and the arrangement of a suitable timetable. CPAT would require at least one week's written notice prior to works commencing. The archaeological curator will be informed of the detailed timetable and staffing levels when agreement has been reached with the client.
- 4.4 Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.5 CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance.

N.W.Jones
Projects Officer
12th January 2000

APPENDIX 2

SITE ARCHIVE

Site data

Site Plan, scale 1:100
Section drawings, Trial Pits 1 and 2
Section drawing Context 4, scale 1:20
19 sherds 18th-19th century pottery
Black & white film No 934, 28-35
Colour slide film CS00/22/12
Colour print film No 943, 1-6
12 site context sheets

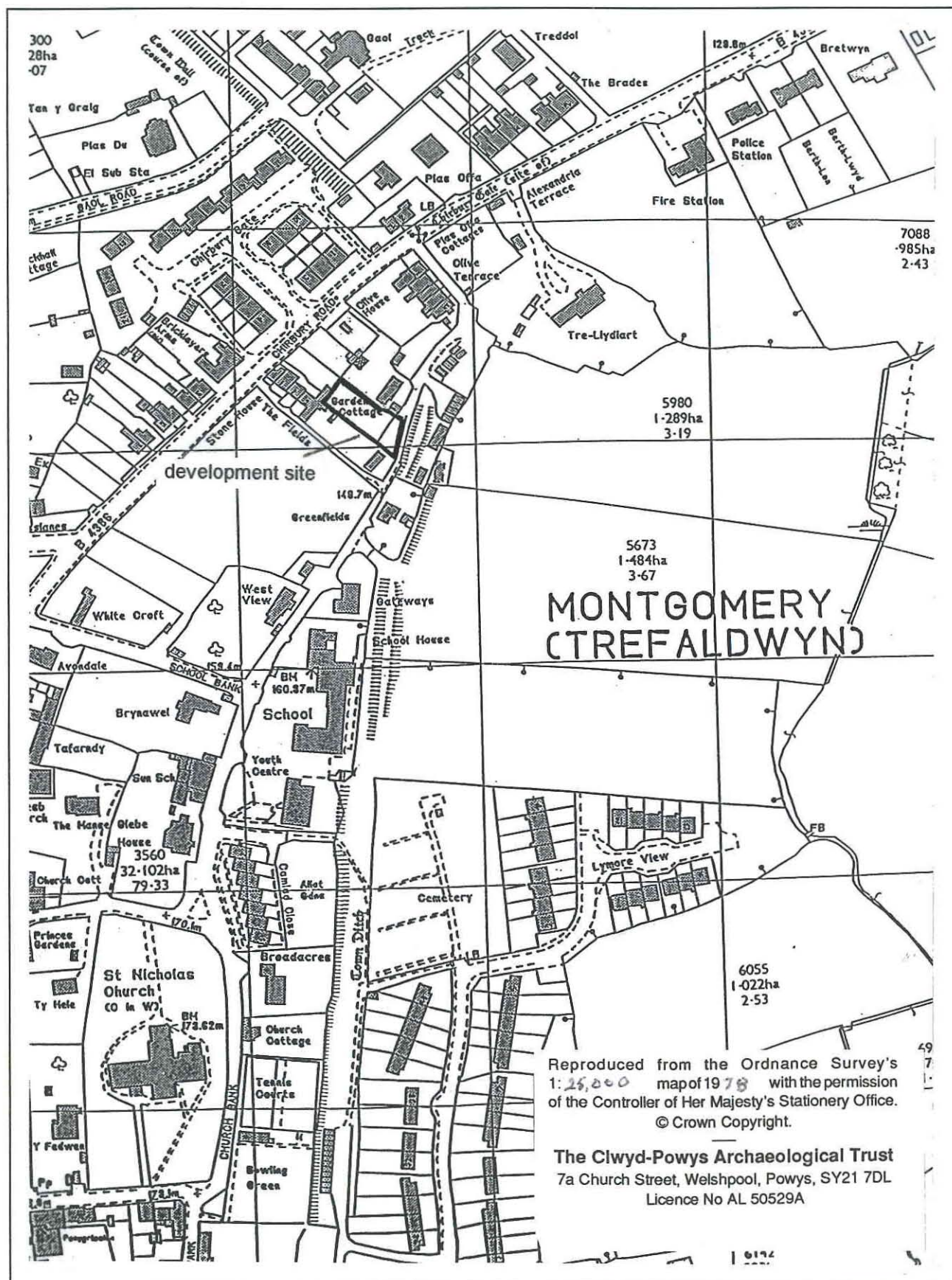


Fig. 1 Site location. Scale 1:2,500

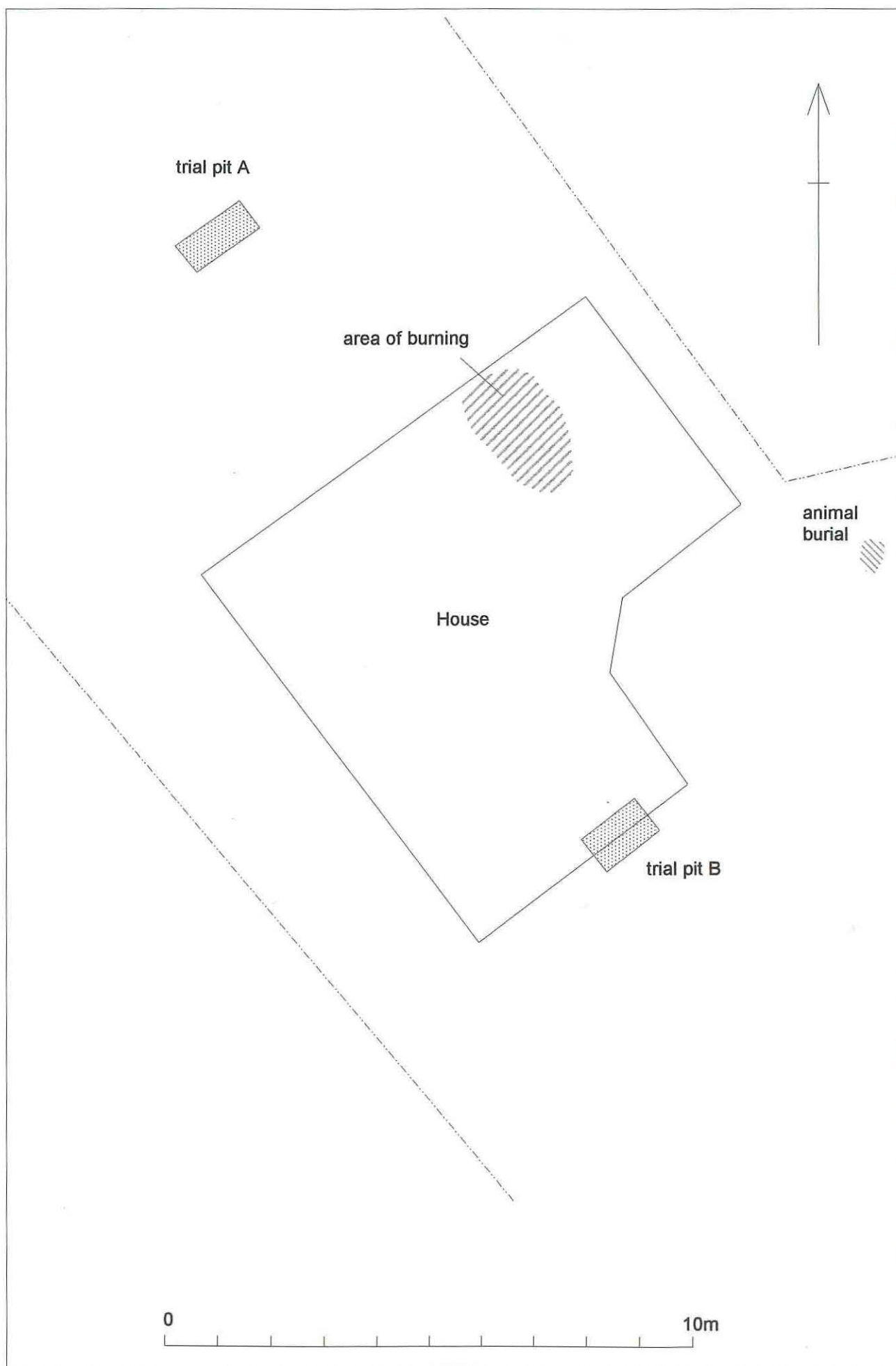


Fig. 2 Site plan, scale 1:100