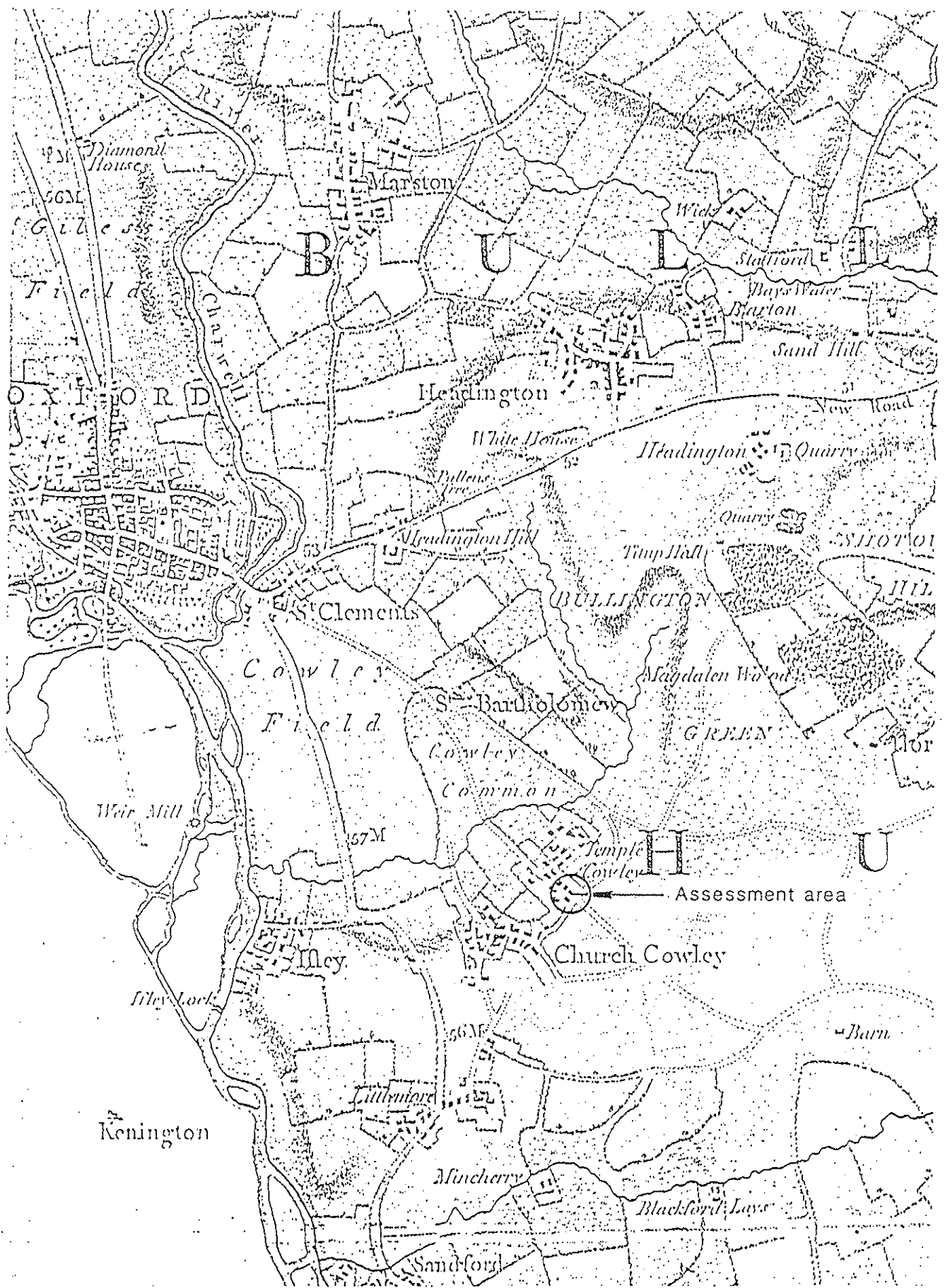


**Site Adjoining Cowley Road  
Police Station, Oxford**

**Archaeological Assessment**

**Oxford Archaeological Unit  
December 1989**

**Client: Oxford City Council**



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT  
SITE ADJOINING COWLEY ROAD POLICE STATION

Introduction

In December 1989, an assessment was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit on behalf of Oxford City Council on the land adjoining Cowley Police Station, on the corner of Cowley Road and Between Towns Road. The presence of a 2nd-4th century Roman pottery kiln under the Telephone exchange on St Lukes Road indicated the need for an archaeological assessment to define the area of Roman activity.

Archaeological Background

The discovery of a Roman pottery 'waster' dump in 1934 under the Cowley Conservative Club and the presence of Roman pottery along St. Luke's Road, together with the investigation of a kiln site under the telephone exchange on St. Luke's road in 1939-40 and 1981-2, indicated a high probability of finding further evidence of the spread of Roman pottery manufacture to the north, in the area assessed. The presence of buildings on the site which dated from the 17th century until fairly recently meant that there was a probability of locating undisturbed Roman deposits.

Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy was based on four 10m long by 1.65m wide machine-dug trenches supplemented by one further 6m trench, (fig 3). The sections of the trenches were cleaned and archaeological features were sampled by hand.

Soil Types

The topsoil on the site had been extensively disturbed by demolition and in some places had been removed and redeposited elsewhere on the site. In some trenches this had probably removed archaeological deposits. The natural subsoil was a compact yellow-orange silty sand. Archaeological features were overlaid by the topsoil and modern building and were cut into the natural subsoil.

## Archaeology

### TRENCHES 1 & 2 (fig 4)

These trenches contained a thin layer of topsoil which overlay a deposit of late medieval pits. A presumed well in Trench 1 (1/7) contained one residual Roman sherd. Trench 2 was shallower than Trench 1 and contained one Roman-feature (2/2) which produced two Roman sherds, and two medieval pits, (2/1 and 2/7). Trench 2 also contained a large modern disturbance at its east end from building demolition, (2/5).

### TRENCH 3 (fig 4)

This contained the cellar of a modern building and a pipe trench.

### TRENCH 4 (fig 4)

Trench 4 contained the stone wall of a recent building (4/6) and several pipe trenches which ran north-south. At the west end was a shallow layer 0.30m thick composed of medieval features. A large Medieval pit (4/3) was excavated in the centre of the trench and one sherd of Roman mortarium was recovered.

### TRENCH 5 (fig 4)

Trench 5 showed how the re-deposited topsoil overlay the old ground surface and had been pushed into depressions caused by the demolition of the buildings.

## Summary

The area assessed showed some Roman activity although no more than expected on the periphery of an extensive low-density pottery making area. The late medieval activity is typical of settlement in the area, and shows the spread of domestic activity along the Cowley Road, (fig 2).

Mark Roberts  
Brian Durham  
OAU

LIST OF FINDS BY TRENCH AND CONTEXT

TRENCH NO.	CONTEXT	FINDS	REMARKS
1	3	1 pot sherd	15th - 16th C.
1	6	1 pot sherd	14th C.
1	7/A	6 pot sherds 4 metal objects 65 bones	15th - 16th C. 1 residual Roman.
2	1/A	6 pot sherds 1 bone 1 metal object	15th - 17th C.
2	2/A	2 pot sherds	3rd - 4th C. Roman sherds.
4	1	1 pot sherd	14th C.
4	3/A	4 pot sherds 2 bones	3, 14th C, 1, 3rd -4th C, residual Roman.

Scale: 1:2500



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Fig. 1

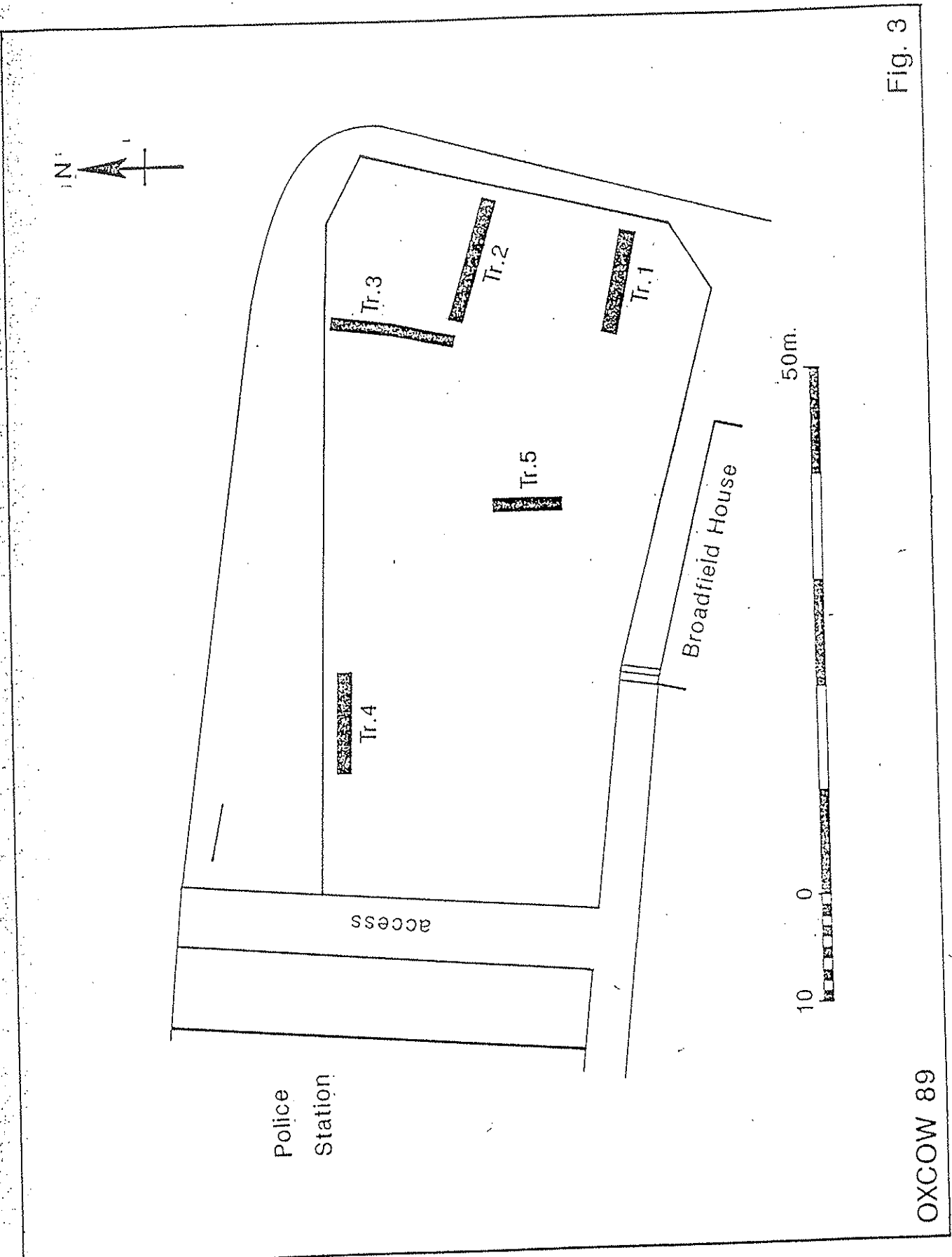


Fig. 3

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