

# THE WALLINGFORD BURH TO BOROUGH RESEARCH PROJECT

## EXCAVATIONS IN CASTLE MEADOWS – SUMMER 2008



Finding the edge of the outer ditch.



Finding the base of the ditch.



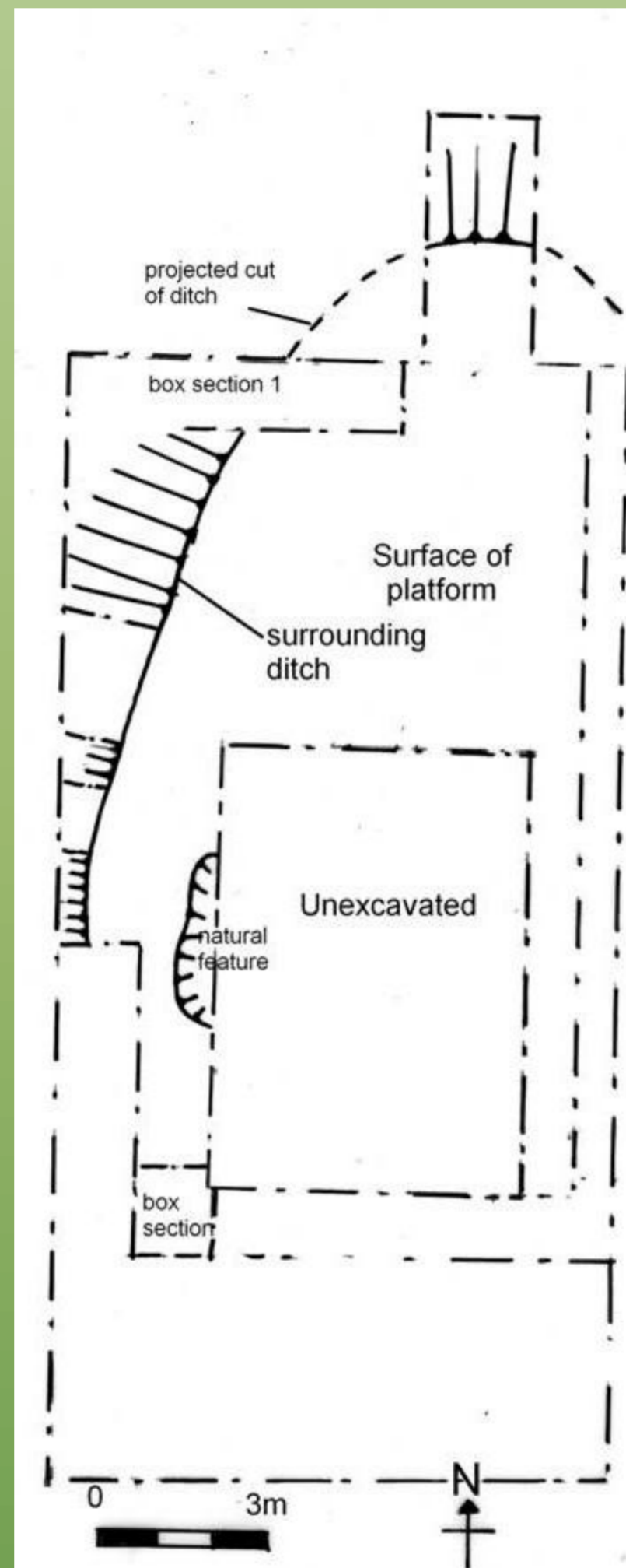
Digging through the platform.



One of several test pits.



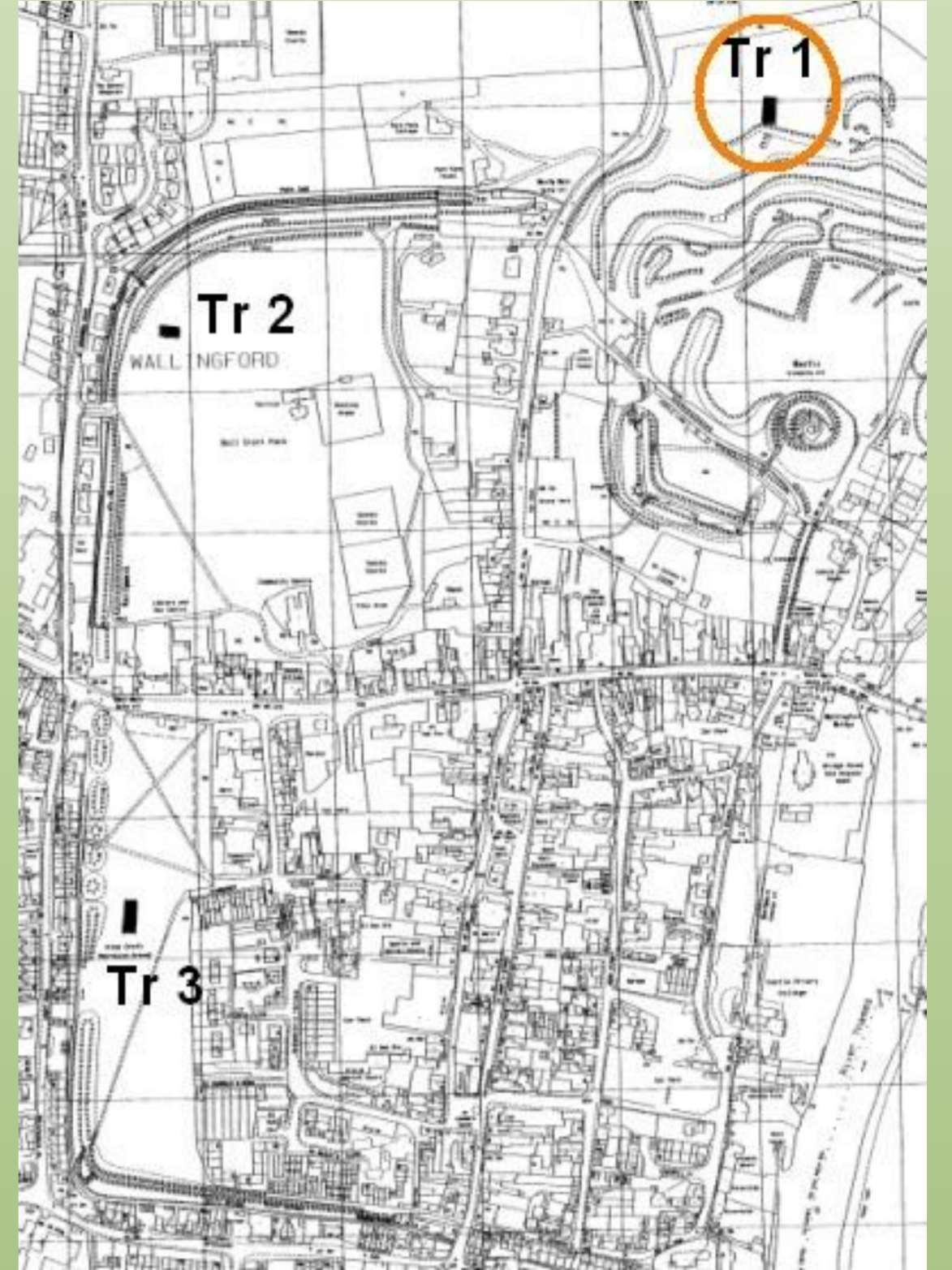
The excavation took place in Castle Meadows, one of the most beautiful spots in Oxfordshire. Looked after by the Northmoor Trust, the meadows contain the earthworks of Wallingford Castle – destroyed after a long siege by the Parliamentary army in the English Civil War.



### A U-shaped Platform - is it a Civil War bastion?

The Castle Meadows trench was placed on a bastion-like feature that was detected by geophysical survey just outside the outer moat of the castle. The excavation revealed an artificial platform of compacted white stony clay, surrounded by a large U-shaped ditch. No features were found on the surface of the platform to indicate what it was used for, but we did find a large number of broken clay pipes. The date of the platform is thought to be 17<sup>th</sup> century. Was it a defensive outwork of the castle during the English Civil War?

Under the platform, and cut through by the outer ditch, we found an earlier and quite extensive layer of reddish soil containing medieval pottery. Despite several test-pits we never reached the base of this layer. The sheer depth of archaeological stratigraphy on the site testifies to the amount of earth-moving and landscaping that has occurred here in the past.



The Castle Meadows trench was the largest of the three areas to be excavated in 2008.



Trowelling the silt-clay surface of the platform.



TWHAS volunteers glad of a break from trowelling.



Students, volunteers, academics, museum workers – and their cups of tea!



What community archaeology is all about.



Here an area of topsoil is used for a children's excavation – archaeologists of the future perhaps?

The 2008-2010 Project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and is a joint academic venture between the archaeology departments of the Universities of Leicester, Exeter and Oxford. The project is run in collaboration with Wallingford Museum and The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS), and is supported by Wallingford Town Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Archaeology Service, English Heritage, the Northmoor Trust, the Ashmolean Museum and Reading Museum.