

# Longbridge Manor, Stratford Road, Warwick, Warwickshire

## Archaeological Evaluation



*understanding heritage matters*

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*Working for  
Warwickshire*

**Project:** Longbridge Manor Evaluation

**Commissioned by:** GFP Consultants Ltd on behalf of Forever Living Products (UK) Ltd

**Project Report No.** 1201

**Site Code:** WLM11

**NGR:** SP 2680 6255

**Planning Reference:** 11/0740/FUL

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## Contents

	Summary
1	Introduction
2	Location
3	Methodology
4	Archaeological and Historical Background
5	Evaluation
6	Conclusions
	Acknowledgements
	Bibliography
	Appendix A: List of Contexts
	Appendix B: List of Finds

## List of Figures

1	Site location
2	Location of evaluation trenches superimposed on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887
3	Trench plans and associated sections
4	Trench 1, looking north
5	Trench 2, looking east
6	Trench 3, looking north
7	Trench 3, gully 303
8	Trench 4, looking north
9	Trench 5, looking east
10	Trench 6, looking north

## Summary

**An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Longbridge Manor, Warwick, prior to planning permission being granted for a single storey building and a new area of parking. A total of 50m of trenching divided into six trenches was excavated. The earliest feature was probably a small gully located in Trench 3 in the south-west of the area. This contained a single fragment of animal bone and a single piece of a fired clay object. The lack of any diagnostic pottery means that the feature remains undated. However the fired clay was very similar to that found in 1997 during an archaeological evaluation on the adjacent site in features that also contained Iron Age pottery. Trench 1 contained a single residual sherd of 13th- or 14th-century pottery and several sherds of 18th- or 19th-century pottery. Trench 4 contained brick and stone building remains which can be linked to greenhouses shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886. Trench 5 contained associated brick remains including part of a brick-lined tank.**

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Planning permission is being sought from Warwick District Council for a single storey building with new parking at Longbridge Manor, Stratford Road, Warwick (11/0740/FUL). The site lies close to several areas of archaeological sites recorded from aerial photographs and within the probable limits of a former medieval hamlet. Prior to planning permission being considered it was required that the applicant secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to evaluate the nature of the area to be developed.

1.2 An archaeological evaluation consisting of six trenches comprising a total length of 50m, in accordance with a brief prepared by the County Planning Archaeologist on behalf of the Planning Authority, was commissioned from Archaeology (Projects) Warwickshire and carried out in December 2011. This report presents the results of that work. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under the site code WLM11.

### 2. Location

2.1 The development site is located on the west side of the grounds Longbridge Manor in the parish of Warwick at map reference SP 2680 6255 (Fig 1). Trenches 1 to 3 were located on an existing lawn whilst trenches 4 to 6 were within an existing car park.

2.2 The underlying geology of the area is 2nd Terrace River gravel although it also lies very close to deposits of Lower Lias clay (British Geological Survey 1974).

### 3. Methodology

3.1 The evaluation was designed to record, as far as possible, the nature of the archaeological resource on the site.

3.2 The work undertaken involved the examination of early map evidence as well as records of archaeological remains in the area and local historical journals and other publications. Fieldwork involved the excavation of six evaluation trenches and the hand cleaning and recording of all significant exposed archaeological deposits.

## 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 A detailed historical report for Longbridge Manor has recently been compiled for Forever Living Products (UK) Ltd by noted local historian Christine Hodgetts (Hodgetts 2011). Therefore only a brief summary of the history of the site will be given.

4.2 In 1997 an archaeological evaluation (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record No EWA 9188) took place before the large hotel development to the southwest of the site. Several gullies were recorded and were dated to the Iron Age by pottery and associated fragments of fired clay (MWA 7947). A single pit (MWA 7948) was dated to the 13th century by pottery. Traces of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing were also recorded from one trench (MWA 7949). No further work was ever carried out on in this area.

4.3 Longbridge was formerly a medieval hamlet and it is almost certain that the houses that formerly existed on the north side of the Stratford Road represented a survival of some of the original medieval house plots (as can be seen on Ordnance Survey maps of late 19th and early 20th-century date). It is probable that medieval properties would also have existed on the south side of the road, now occupied by Longbridge Manor and its grounds and this was hinted at by the medieval pit found in the 1997 evaluation in this area.

4.4 The house itself (MWA 1941) has been extended many times but contains timber-framed elements of a late 16th- or early 17th-century building as well the main frontage of the house which can be dated on stylistic grounds to around 1690-1700 (Hodgetts 30-35). Despite its name the house was never actually a manor and has only been known as such since 1909 when a new owner changed the name from Longbridge House. A large circular pond is shown on the east side of the house on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map and a long rectangular one south-west of the house (MWA 8124), the long rectangular pond is now dry. There were originally three ponds, the earliest map upon which they appear being from 1786 (Baker, 1786). These are thought likely to date to the late 17th or early 18th century (Hodgetts 36-40) and may be ornamental ponds associated with the major building work on the house in the same period. The formal gardens of the house are also recorded on the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (MWA 12908).

4.5 A number of other sites in the vicinity are shown on Fig 1. These are:

MWA 7873	Findspot of Roman and possibly Iron Age pottery
MWA 7879	Findspot of four Roman coins of 2nd- to 4th-century date
MWA 7880	Findspot of 16th to 18th century coins
MWA 6425	Undated features showing as cropmarks
MWA 5516	A trackway showing as a cropmark
MWA 1921	A rectangular enclosure, known as a cursus, of Neolithic date (cropmarks)
MWA 5515	Bronze Age or Iron Age enclosures (cropmarks)
MWA 4685	A ring ditch, linear features and a trackway (cropmarks)
MWA 6377	A collection of 420 worked flints, probably Neolithic in date
MWA 6424	Part of an enclosure of uncertain date (cropmark)
MWA 6426	Part of an enclosure of uncertain date (cropmark)
MWA 5517	Undated linear cropmarks
MWA 5159	A trackway, possibly medieval (cropmark)
MWA 967	Two undated enclosures (cropmarks)
MWA 966	A complex of linear features and enclosures probably of prehistoric to Roman date

An archaeological evaluation carried out to the south-east of the site (EWA 9096) recorded parts of the trackway (MWA 5516) noted above. Three of the areas of cropmarks are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM 140, 141 and 142).

## 5. Evaluation

Trenches 1 to 3 were excavated within existing lawns, on the south side of Longbridge Manor (Fig 2).

### Trench 1 (Fig 4)

5.1 This was 9.6m long and 1.8m wide. Geological natural (103), a pale brown sand and gravel, was exposed at a depth of 0.81m at its northern end but only 0.6m at its southern end. At the northern 3m of the trench natural layer 103 was overlaid 0.28m of grey sandy loam (102) which contained a single fragment of 13th- to 14th-century pottery and occasional fragments of 18th- or 19th-century pottery and glass along with fragments of ceramic tile and brick. Layer 102 was covered by 0.32m of brownish grey sandy loam (101) which was covered by 0.21m of greyish brown topsoil (100). At the southern end of the trench, where layer 102 did not exist, the natural was overlaid directly by 0.40m of layer 101 which was covered by 0.20m of topsoil (100).

### Trench 2 (Fig 5)

5.2 This was 12m long and 1.8m wide. Geological natural was reached at a depth of 0.64m in at the eastern end of the trench and 0.69m at the western end. It was overlaid by a layer of 0.30-0.49m of brownish grey sandy loam (201). This was covered by 0.20-0.30m of greyish brown sandy loam (200). No archaeological features or finds were recovered.

### Trench 3 (Figs 6-7)

5.3 This was 9m long and 1.8m wide. At the southern end the geological natural was reached at a depth of 0.31m whilst at the northern end it was 0.57m below the ground surface. Close to the south end of the trench a narrow gully (303, Figs 3 and 7) running in an approximately east-west direction, up to 0.40m wide and a maximum depth of 0.17m deep was exposed. The gully was filled by a grey sandy loam (304) with very occasional charcoal flecks (Fig 3, section A). A single fragment of animal bone and a single fragment of fired clay were recovered from the fill. It seemed possible that the fired clay fragment was prehistoric in date. The geological natural (305) and gully fill 304 were overlaid by up to 0.2m of a brownish grey sandy loam (302). This was covered by up to 0.17m of strong brown sandy loam (301) which contained occasional charcoal flecks. Above this was up to 0.21m of greyish brown sandy loam topsoil (300).

Trenches 4 to 6 were excavated within the car-park on the west side of Longbridge Manor.

### Trench 4 (Fig 8)

5.4 Trench 4 was 5.5m long and 1.8m wide. It contained a large number of archaeological layers and features (Fig 3). Geological natural was not exposed in this trench. A number of walls and a tiled floor were exposed and cleaned by hand. At the north end of

the trench a brick wall (410) running in an east-west direction was exposed. The full width of the wall was not exposed, although it is unlikely to have been very much wider. Two courses of wall remained and the visible piece within the trench was 1.8m long, 0.4m wide and up to 0.22m high. It was constructed from machine-made bricks which were bonded with a white mortar. To the south of this was a sandstone wall (408) up to 0.3m wide, 1.65m long and 0.25m high. It was constructed from neat blocks of green sandstone and was bonded with a white mortar. A single brick on top of the sandstone wall and only visible in section (Fig 3, Section B) suggests that this stonework may have formed the footing for a brick wall. To the south of this two brick features; the remains of a wall (404) and a possible step (405), were exposed. These butted up against a floor (403) of large ceramic tiles, each 0.37 by 0.35m in size. The southern edge of the floor was defined by another brick wall (402) 0.23m wide and two courses in height. The space between brick wall 410 and sandstone wall 408 was partly excavated and revealed a pebble surface (415). This appeared to butt up to wall 408 and wall 410 may have been cut through it. It was covered by a layer of off-white mortar containing frequent small pebbles (409). Both this and wall 408 were cut by a relatively modern pit (411) which was filled with a greenish brown clay loam (412). To the south of wall 408 the lowest layer reached was a dark greyish brown clay loam (407). Brick feature 405 and tile floor 403 were overlain by a layer of mixed clay loam and brick (416), clearly a layer associated with the demolition of the buildings, whilst all of these layers and walls were overlain by a layer very dark greyish brown clay loam (406), again mixed with frequent broken brick fragments and again associated with demolition. Layer 406 was overlaid by a layer of grey hardcore (401) which was covered by 0.1m of modern tarmac surface (400).

#### Trench 5 (Fig 9)

5.5 This was 5.5m long and was excavated down to geological natural sand and gravel (509) at its northern and southern ends. A live sewer pipe trench (503), filled by grey hardcore (504), ran the length of the trench, cutting the natural sand and gravel. Geological natural was also cut by a sub-rectangular pit (506) which was filled by a dark greyish brown clay loam. This fill contained occasional fragments of tile and a single piece of flower pot and was not excavated due to its relatively modern date. The natural gravel was also cut by two associated brick walls (505 and 508). Wall 508 appeared to form part of a tank and consisted of at least four courses of blue 'engineering' brick bonded with a hard white mortar. Attached to wall 508 was a further length of wall (505) which was made of red brick and was 0.45m high and 0.24m wide. The two walls had clearly formed part of the same structure and were late 19th or early 20th century in date. The structure had been demolished and the area levelled up using the demolition rubble mixed with dark grey clay (502). This was covered by a layer of modern grey hardcore (501) above which was the current tarmac car park surface (500).

#### Trench 6 (Fig 10)

5.6 This was 8m long and was excavated down to geological natural sand and gravel (606) which was reached at a depth of 0.71m at the northern end of the trench and 0.76m at the southern end. This was overlaid by 0.20-0.23m of a grey sandy loam layer (604) which was covered by either 80mm of steel re-enforced concrete (602) or an associated layer of yellowish brown hardcore (603). These layers were covered by 60-80mm of modern grey hardcore (601) which was overlaid by 0.17-0.18m of tarmac.

## 6. Conclusions

6.1 The earliest possible archaeological feature exposed during the evaluation was a small gully (303) in Trench 3. This contained a single fragment of animal bone and single fragment of fired clay. This had not been fired to a high temperature and so was relatively soft. Such a find cannot be easily dated but as 30 fragments of fired clay were found in Iron Age features in the archaeological evaluation just to the west in 1997, it seems an Iron Age date for this fired clay is possible. The fill of the gully itself was a grey sandy loam (304), such a fill being common in older archaeological features where a long period of leaching has removed much of its colour.

6.2 In Trench 1, a layer above the geological natural, within the area of existing lawn, contained a few sherds of pottery, mostly of 18th- and 19th-century date but also a single medieval sherd dating from the 13th or 14th century. The medieval sherd is most likely a residual find from the nearby medieval hamlet. A fragment of hand-made brick, also from Trench 1, was probably later 17th century in date and appeared similar to those from which part of the Longbridge Manor is built.

6.3 Two of the three trenches within the existing car park exposed remains of brick and stone structures. The brick structures must be those shown first shown on the 1886 Ordnance Survey map as greenhouses. The stone wall (408) may well have always been part of these greenhouses although its different method of construction and the apparently associated pebble surface (415) might suggest an earlier date. It is just possible that this is part of an earlier building shown on an estate plan of the site in 1815 (Hodgetts 2011, fig 6). This is also shown a tithe map of 1849 (Hodgetts 2011, fig 7) but had gone by 1886 and is likely to have been either demolished to build the greenhouses, or just possibly incorporated into them.

## Acknowledgements

Archaeology (Projects) Warwickshire would like to thank Gary Plant of GFP Consultants Ltd for commissioning the work on behalf of Forever Living Products (UK) Ltd and the County Planning Archaeologist for preparing the brief. Work on was carried out by Bryn Gethin, Rob Jones and Kevin Wright. This report was written by Bryn Gethin and checked by Pete Thompson.

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Ordnance Survey 1938 *Revised Edition 1:2500 map*, Warwickshire Sheet 44.9.

## Appendix A: List of Context

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Topsoil
101	Dark grey clay layer
102	Yellowish brown sand and gravel
103	Brownish yellow sand and gravel
200	Topsoil
201	Brownish grey sandy loam layer
202	Geological natural
300	Topsoil
301	Strong brown sandy loam layer
302	Brownish grey sandy loam layer
303	Gully
304	Gully fill (of 303)
305	Geological natural
400	Tarmac
401	Modern hardcore
402	Brick wall
403	Tile floor
404	Brick wall
405	Brick structure
406	Demolition layer
407	Dark greyish brown sandy loam layer
408	Sandstone wall
409	Mortar layer
411	Pit
412	Pit fill (of 411)
413	Yellowish brown clay loam layer
414	Fill of 414
415	Pebble surface
416	Demolition layer
500	Tarmac
501	Hardcore layer
502	Demolition layer
503	Pipe trench
504	Pipe trench fill (503)
505	Brick wall
506	Pit
507	Pit fill (of 506)

508	Brick wall
509	Geological natural
600	Tarmac
601	Hardcore layer
602	Concrete layer
603	Hardcore layer
604	Grey sandy loam layer
605	Yellowish loam layer
606	Geological natural sand and gravel

## Appendix B List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
102	Pottery	8	1 13th-14th century, 7 18th/19th century
102	Brick	1	17th-18th century
102	Roof tile	1	Post-medieval
102	Glass	2	1 fragment window, 1 fragment vessel
304	Fired clay	1	Uncertain, possibly Iron Age
304	Animal bone	1	Uncertain, possibly Iron Age
407	Roof tile	7	Post-medieval
407	Animal bone	1	Post-medieval
412	Pottery	1	Flower pot (post-medieval)
412	Roof tile	3	Post-medieval

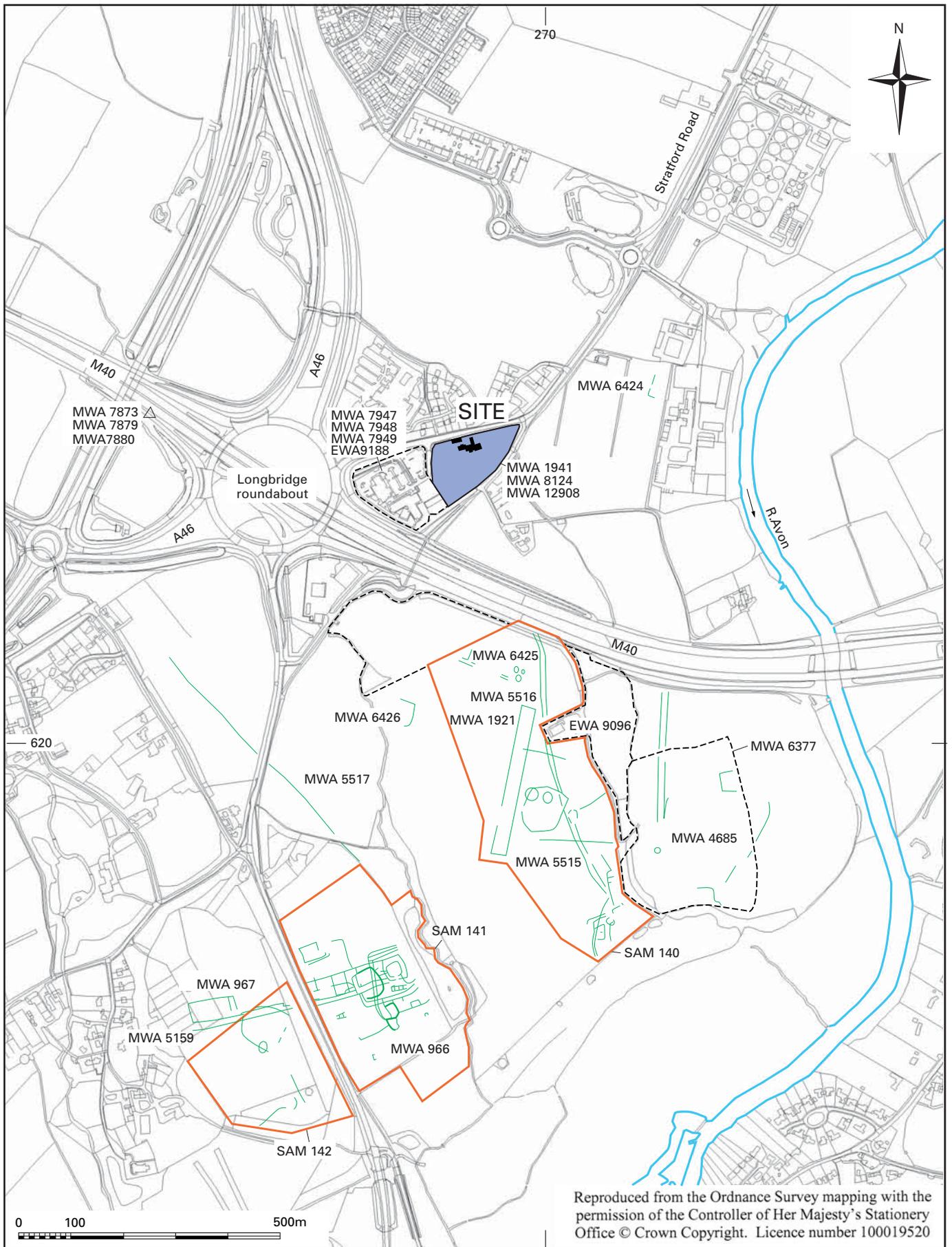


Fig 1: Site location

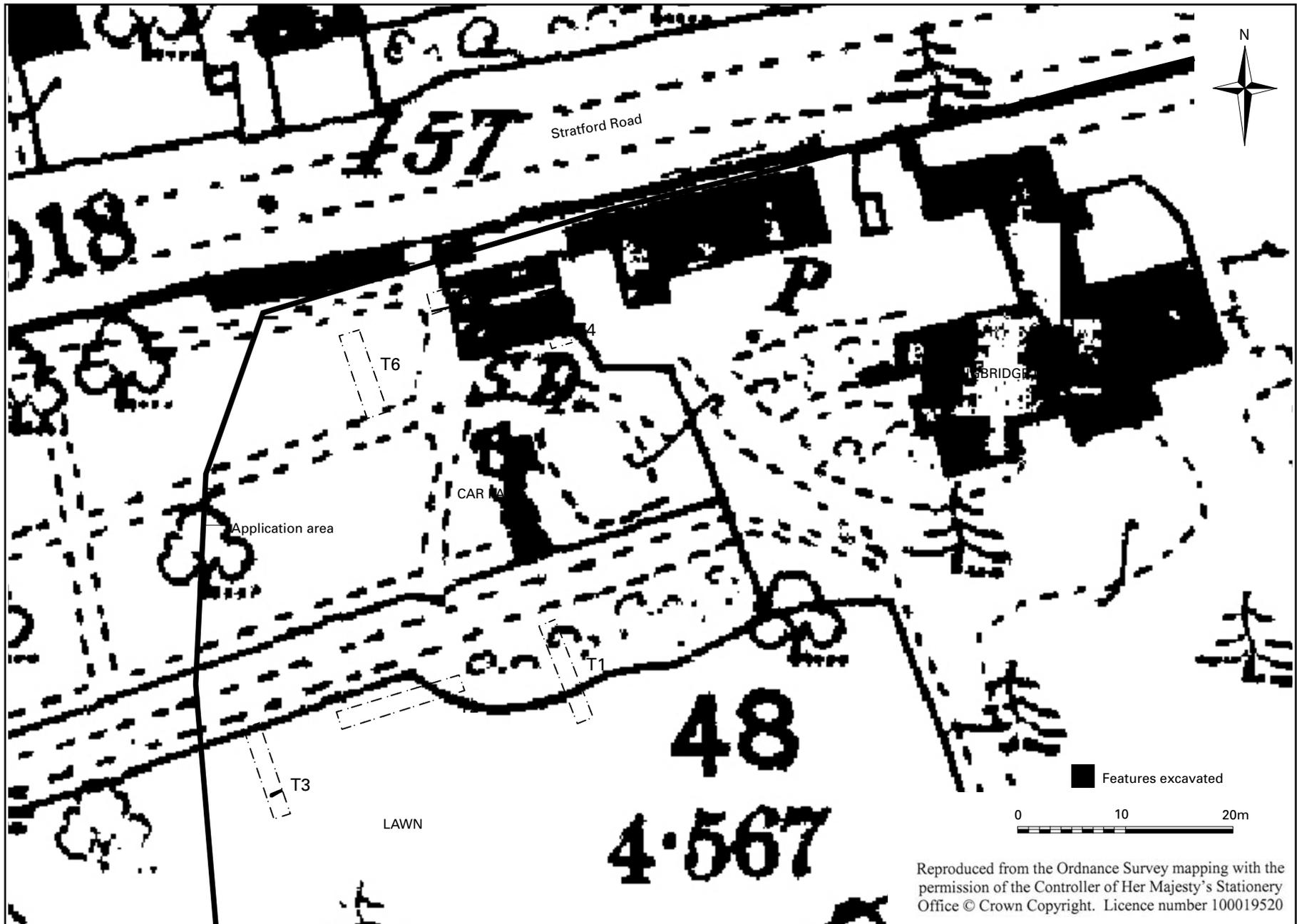
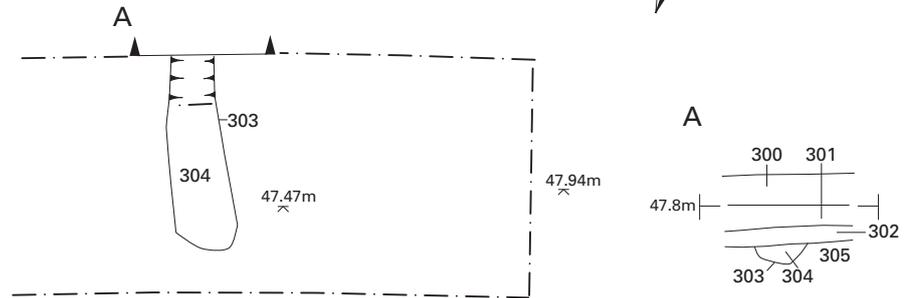
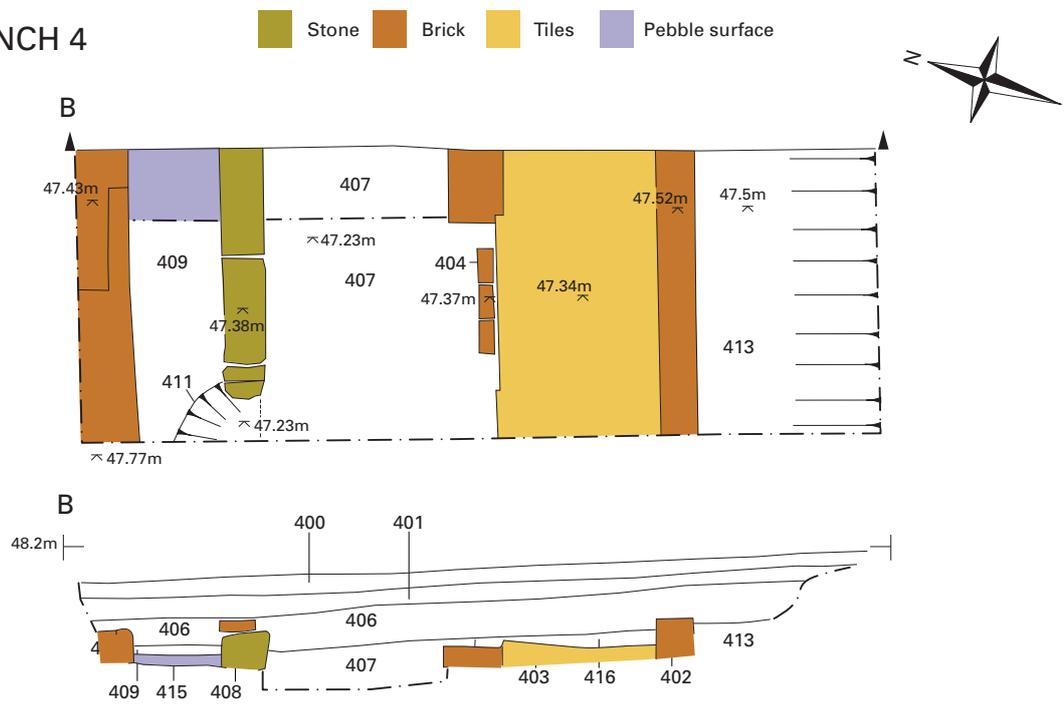


Fig 2: Location of evaluation trenches superimposed on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887

### TRENCH 3



### TRENCH 4



### TRENCH 5

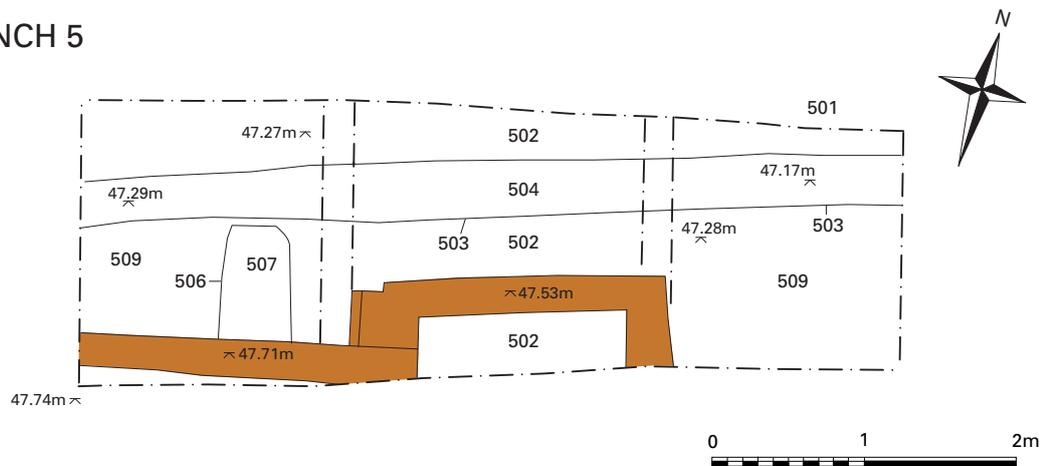


Fig 3: Trench plans and associated sections



Fig 4: Trench 1, looking north



Fig 5: Trench 2, looking east



Fig 6: Trench 3, looking north



Fig 7: Trench 3, gully 303



Fig 8: Trench 4, looking north



Fig 9: Trench 5, looking east



Fig 10: Trench 6, looking north