

Land off Bishops Hill, Wellesbourne Road, Lighthorne, Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1703

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*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Bishops Hill, Lighthorne
Commissioned by: Lloyd Lewis @ Housestyle Countrywide Ltd
Project Report No. 1703
Site Code: LO16
Planning Reference: 15/02828/OUT
Planning Authority: Stratford-on-Avon
Planning Archaeologist: NA
National Grid Reference: SP 3376 5555
Team:
Project Manager: Stuart C Palmer MCIfA
Fieldwork: Bryn Gethin BA
Nicola Herring BA
Author: Bryn Gethin BA
Illustrations: Candy Stevens
Report checked by: Dr Cathy Coutts
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Archaeology Warwickshire

Unit 9

Montague Road

Warwick

CV34 5LW

01926 412278

fieldarchaeology@warwickshire.gov.uk

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/archaeology

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, comprising four trial trenches, was undertaken in an area adjacent to a site in which later prehistoric features had previously been found, on behalf of Housestyle Countrywide Ltd. No archaeological features or finds were encountered.

The evaluation has established that the development will not impact on any significant archaeological deposits and no further mitigation is necessary.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Outline planning permission has been granted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council for the erection of four dwelling houses with access onto Bishops Hill (15/02828/OUT).
- 1.2 It was a condition of the planning permission that the applicant secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been approved by the Planning Authority.
- 1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire carried out a field evaluation in December 2016 in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (June 2016).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The development site is located at the southern limit of the village of Lighthorne and lies on the northern side of Bishops Hill before the road drops down towards the centre of the village. It is centred around national grid reference SP 3376 5555, within the parish of Lighthorne.

- 2.2 The underlying geology of the area is Langport Member Limestone (British Geological Survey 2016).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric and Roman

- 3.1 The site of a Neolithic long barrow has been suggested to the west of the site, but to date there is no corroborative evidence (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record no. MWA 4460).
- 3.2 An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land to the west of the development site in 2015 (Gethin 2015). The work recorded several Iron Age and Roman features on the western side of the area, whilst the eastern side, nearest to the development site was sterile. It is possible that it had been truncated by modern agricultural activity.
- 3.3 The field to the west of the development named 'Owberry' was previously known as Old Borough field. The field name may mean 'burial place' and might be the reason for the suggested location of the long barrow (i.e. old barrow). Nine burials were recorded here in the 19th century (MWA 676) during quarrying work (MWA 9262). No trace of any burials was found during the trial trenching in 2015.
- 3.4 The Fosse Way Roman road forms the western boundary of the parish of Lighthorne which suggests that the parish post-dates the road. A possible villa site has been recorded to the north of the village.

Medieval

- 3.5 Lighthorne is recorded in Domesday although the first record for the parish church of St Laurence (MWA 674) is from 1291. The present structure largely dates from the 18th and 19th centuries and little fabric remains from the medieval church. The likely extent of the medieval settlement of Lighthorne (MWA 9012) can be surmised from 19th-century mapping and the field boundaries implied by mapping the extent of the ridge and furrow ploughing.
- 3.6 Records from the medieval period on the HER include:-
- | | |
|-----------|--|
| MWA 673 | Churchyard cross; socket stone and part of shaft survive |
| MWA 19566 | Surviving ridge and furrow, east, south and south-west of Lighthorne |
| MWA 19567 | Surviving ridge and furrow around Far Westfields Farm |
| MWA 19569 | Surviving ridge and furrow, east, south and south-west of Lighthorne |

Post-medieval

- 3.7 The Tithe map for Lighthorne of 1843 (WRO) shows that the settlement of Lighthorne was laid out east-west along what is now Church Lane and Old School Lane. Houses in the village include Grade II Listed 17th- and 18th-century cottages and farmhouses with alterations during the 19th century.
- 3.8 Post-medieval records on the HER include:-
MWA 9263 Smithy
MWA 13044 Lighthorne Rectory, 17th-century house with pleasure grounds
MWA 20035 The Wash Brook Bridge
- 3.9 The Tithe map shows that Oberry Fields was formerly known as Townsends Close and was owned by Lord Willoughby de Broke and rented to John Bishop (Warwickshire County Record Office tithe apportionment database). An earlier, mid-18th-century estate map also shows that the site field was previously known as Townsends Close (WRO Z228).
- 3.10 Since 1885, Lighthorne village has developed southwards along Wellesbourne Road towards the development site (Ordnance Survey First Edition map of 1885-6, Fig 2).
- 3.11 A Wellington bomber is reported to have crashed near to Lighthorne in 1942, causing the loss of five lives. The remains are protected by law under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 (MWA 20447).

4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there were any significant archaeological remains in the area to be developed; to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the area.
- 4.2 Secondary aims include placing the results in their wider local and regional contexts as appropriate.
- 4.3 The objectives were to locate, record and analyse archaeological materials and deposits and to disseminate the results in an appropriate format.
- 4.4 The final positions of the four evaluation trenches deviated from that proposed because of the presence of large spoil heaps, machinery and building materials.
- 4.5 The trenches were opened up by a JCB-type machine with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and other plough soils were removed under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist until either the top of archaeological remains or geological natural was reached.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Trench 1 was 37m long and was doglegged around a large spoil heap. Trench 2 was 13m long, whilst both Trenches 3 and 4 were 25m long. Trenches were all shallow, generally being around 0.3m deep, with relatively thin layers of topsoil and former ploughsoil. The topsoil was deepest in the southern two trenches.
- 5.2 Geological natural was recorded in all four trenches (102, 202, 302, 402). It consisted of 80% fragmentary pale limestone and 20% yellowish brown silty clay. This is now known as Langport Member Limestone but previously had the more descriptive name of White Lias.
- 5.3 In all four trenches the natural geology was overlaid by a simple deposit sequence:
Former ploughsoil: a thin layer of yellowish brown silty clay (101, 201, 301, 401).
Topsoil: a very dark greyish brown clay loam (100, 200, 300, 400).
- 5.4 No archaeological features were exposed in any of the trenches and no finds were recovered.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The evaluation has established that the development will not impact on any significant archaeological deposits.

- 6.2 The absence of any prehistoric deposits or finds similar to those found on the adjacent site strongly suggests that the present site falls outside the area of prehistoric occupation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Lloyd Lewis for commissioning the work. Trenches were expertly excavated by Trevor of Edward Brain and Sons.

REFERENCES

- British Geological Survey 2016 Geology of Britain Viewer
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home> Accessed June 2016.
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- Landmark 2003 *First Edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1885-6*, digital edition.
- WRO CR 569.57 *Lighthorne Tithe Map, 1843*, Warwickshire County Record Office.
- WRO Z228 *Estate map of Kingston and Lighthorne, mid 18th century*, Warwickshire County Record Office.
- Warwickshire County Record Office 2016 Tithe Apportionment database
<https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/titheapp/tithes/indexes> accessed June 2016.



1. Trench 1, north-east end



2. Trench 1, south-west end



3. Trench 2



4. Trench 3



5. Trench 4

APPENDIX

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m)	Comment
1	100	Dark greyish brown clay loam	0.06-0.11	Topsoil
1	101	Yellowish brown silty clay	0.04-0.13	Old ploughsoil
1	102	Limestone & yellowish brown silty clay		Geological natural
2	200	Dark greyish brown clay loam	0.10-0.15	Topsoil
2	201	Yellowish brown silty clay	0.07-0.08	Old ploughsoil
2	202	Limestone & yellowish brown silty clay		Geological natural
3	300	Dark greyish brown clay loam	0.17-0.24	Topsoil
3	301	Yellowish brown silty clay	0.03-0.07	Old ploughsoil
3	302	Limestone & yellowish brown silty clay		Geological natural
4	400	Dark greyish brown clay loam	0.22-0.29	Topsoil
4	401	Yellowish brown silty clay	0.10-0.19	Old ploughsoil
4	402	Limestone & yellowish brown silty clay		Geological natural

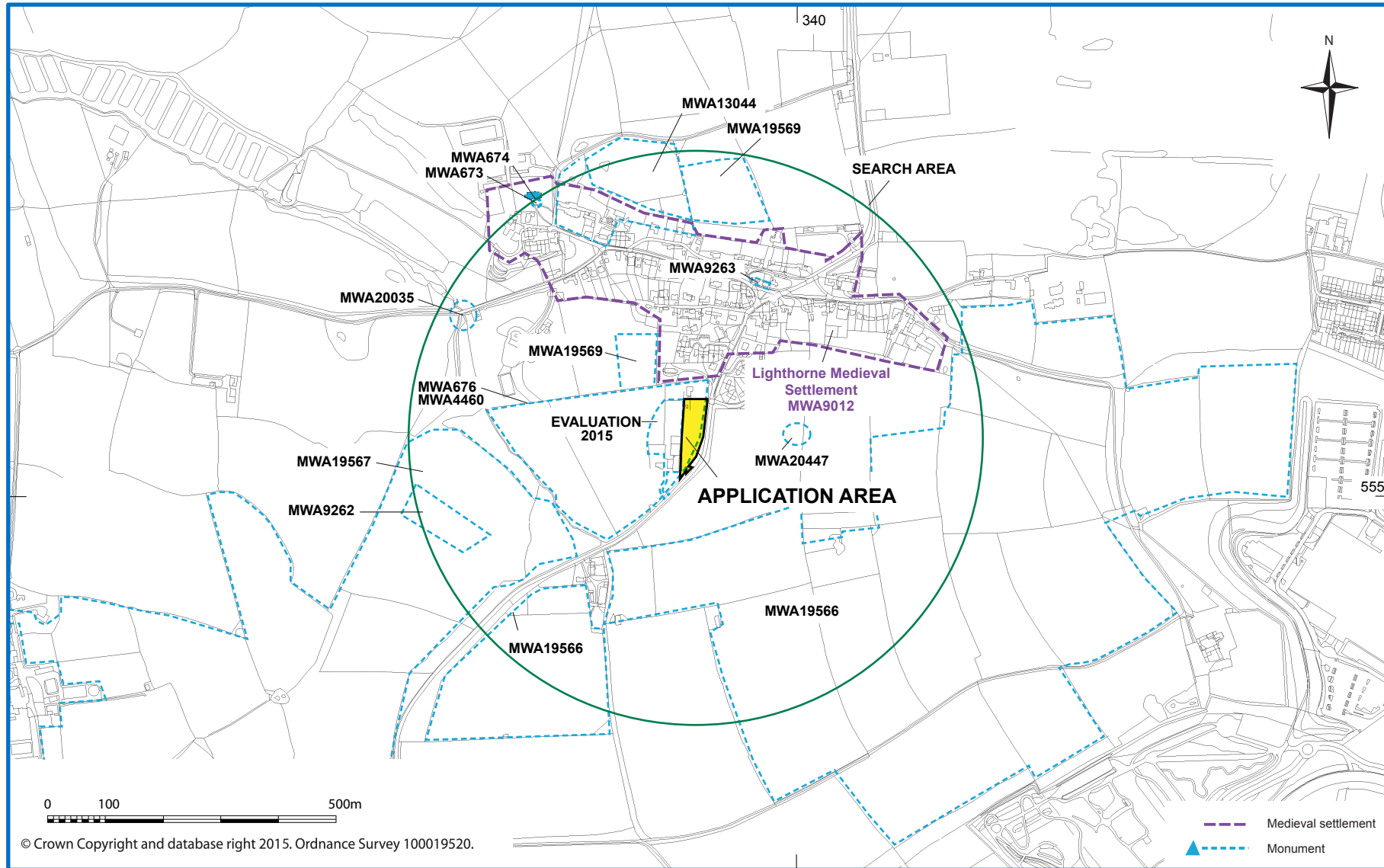


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment Information

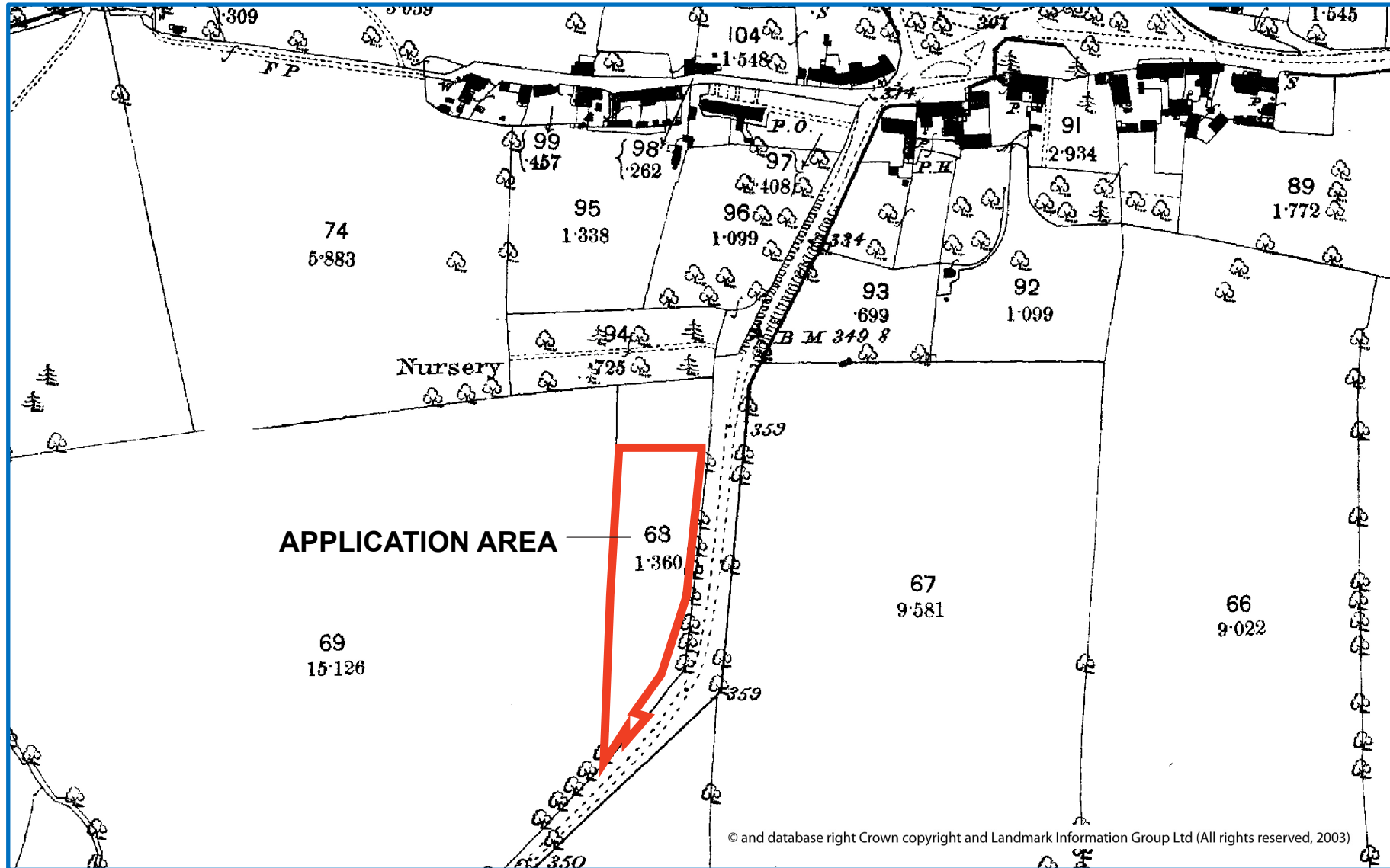


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885-6

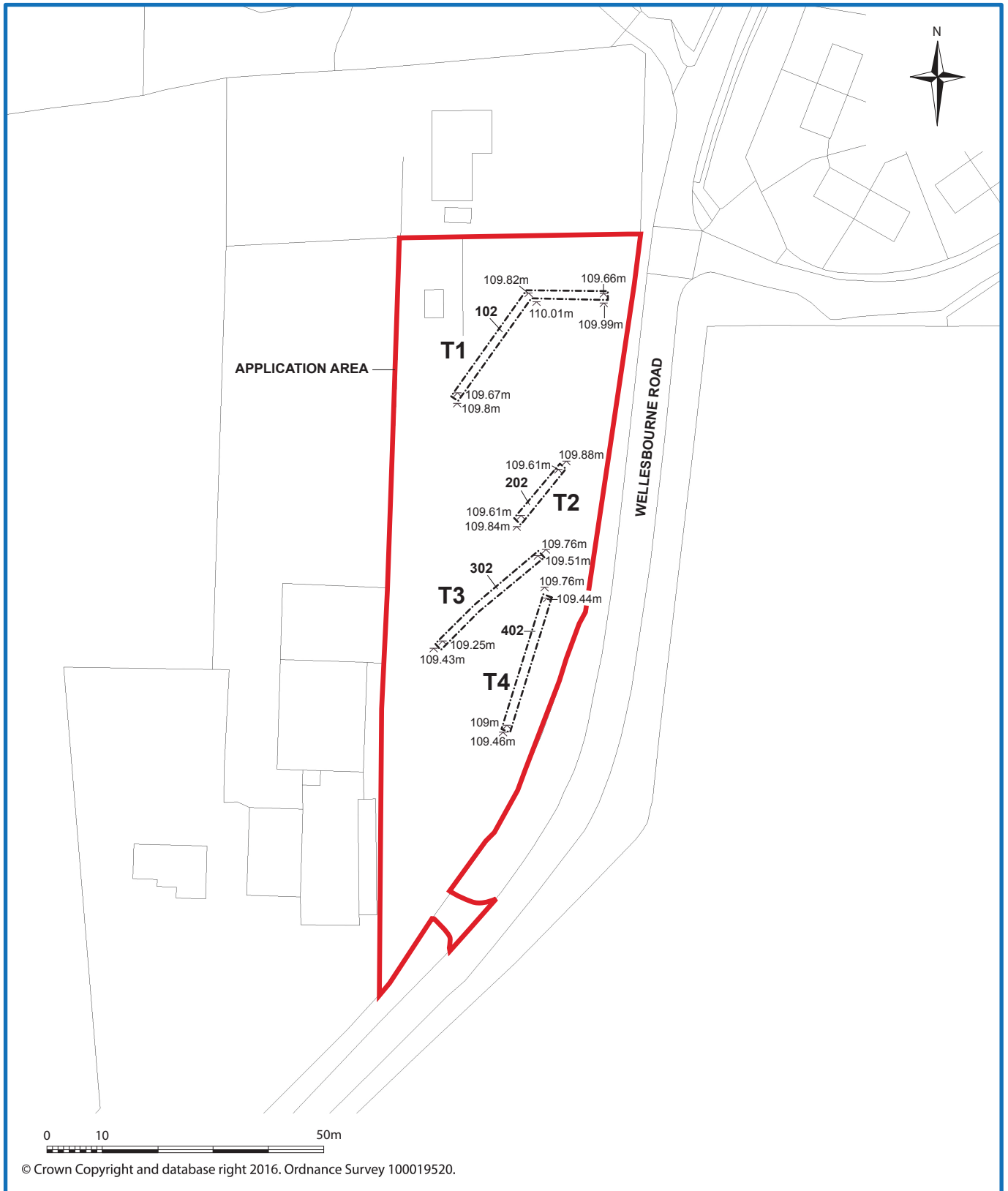


Fig 3: Location of excavated trenches