

**111 Coleshill Road,
Curdworth, Warwickshire**

Archaeological Evaluation



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1364
November 2013



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: 111 Coleshill Road, Curdworth, Evaluation

Commissioned by: Mr David Cox

Project Report No. 1364

Site Code: CW13

NGR: SP 181 924

Planning Reference: PAP/2012/0564

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation undertaken prior to the construction of a new dwelling at 111 Coleshill Road, revealed no evidence for medieval Curdworth. It is likely that the site lay outside of the medieval settlement as truncation of the site was very limited.

1 Introduction

1.1 Planning permission was granted by North Warwickshire Borough Council for the erection of a house on land at 111 Coleshill Road, Curdworth. WCC Planning Archaeologist Anna Stocks, in her capacity as advisor to the local planning authority, determined that the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential.

1.2 It was therefore a condition of the planning permission that, before the development commenced, the applicant should secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which was submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

1.4 A Brief setting out the requirements for the first phase of archaeological evaluation on the site was prepared (dated June 2013). Archaeology (Projects) Warwickshire were commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation, in accordance with the Brief, and were subsequently commissioned to undertake the requisite archaeological evaluation. Fieldwork was undertaken in October 2013 and the results are presented here. The archive for the site will be deposited at the Warwickshire Museum under site code CW13.

2 Aims and Methods

2.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there were any significant archaeological remains in the area of development, to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the medieval settlement of Curdworth.

2.2 Secondary aims included placing the results in their wider local and regional contexts as appropriate.

2.3 The objective was to locate, record and analyse archaeological materials and deposits and to disseminate the results in an appropriate format

3 Location

3.1 The development site is located at National Grid Reference SP 181 924 and within the presumed extent of the medieval village of Curdworth as defined by the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (MWA 9509).

3.2 The superficial geology is recorded by the British Geological Survey as Devensian sand and gravel (BGS Viewer 2013).

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The church of St Peter and St Nicholas is a Grade II* Listed Building, located on Church Lane, Curdworth (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 41, List Entry no. 1185754). The church originated in the medieval period and was restored during the imperial period. The chancel and east portions of the nave are 12th century with some 14th century features. The west portions of the nave and tower with embattlements are 15th century. The manor of Curdworth is mentioned in Domesday (1086) when Turchil of Warwick held of the King, four Hides (VCH 1947).

4.2 Earthworks 100m south-west of the church probably represent a medieval manor house (MWA 7378).

4.3 A cross lies 20m south to the church of St Peters and St Nicholas (MWA 42). The shaft of the cross is medieval but the base and head are of modern origin. In 1952 the rector of the church recalled that it was acquired by a predecessor and was not of local antiquity

4.4 On the eastern edge of Curdworth the earthwork remains of a moat are situated at Curdworth Hall Farm (MWA 43). Three arms of the moat are water-filled and may have enclosed a Manor House (MWA 6227).

4.5 The earliest private dwellings in Curdworth are nos 45-49 Coleshill Road, now a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry No 1034674). This timber-framed building was originally a two-bay hall house with a cross-wing at the south-east end. Elements from the 16th and 17th centuries are also apparent, such as the plaster oak tree motif above the fireplace. Also on Coleshill Road, Red Lion cottages are timber-framed and of likely 17th-century date (List Entry no. 1365212). On Church Lane, a barn of late 17th-century date (List Entry no. 1299505) is situated near to number 14. The site of a house and late 17th-century barn, reputed to be the rectorial tithe barn lies south-east of the church (MWA 49).

4.6 Other Listed Buildings in Curdworth include Middle House, an early 19th-century house (List Entry no. 1299536) on Coleshill Road. A smithy is marked on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map in the centre of the village (MWA6607). Formal gardens and ponds have been recorded to the north-west of the site (MWA 12577).

4.7 The Birmingham to Fazeley canal was built in 1789, to link the Birmingham Canals at Salford junction with the Coventry Canal at Fazeley (MWA 4399). The canal is 20 miles long and has provided a useful alternative to the Warwick-Napton route to the Oxford Canal as it had rather fewer locks. A canal tunnel (MWA 4394) on the Birmingham to Fazeley canal is located 400m northwest of Highfield Farm. The tunnel is approximately 75 yards long and in good condition with red bricked tiles inside which may be original, hence why it is Listed (Entry no 1259858). Curdworth Wharf is south-west of Curdworth Bridge and marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1903. During the 19th and early 20th centuries this would have been the site for loading and unloading of vessels.

4.8 A watching brief took place at 84 Coleshill Road in 2006 (EWA 7705). No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

4.9 Early maps show that the site was to the rear of a property fronting Coleshill Road (Ordnance Survey 1888, Fig 2). A small outbuilding was built in the area of the new development by 1905 (Ordnance Survey 1905, Fig 3).

5 Evaluation

5.1 A total of 25m of trenching was excavated in the areas to be disturbed by the new build. The trenches were at least 1.6m wide.

Trench 1

5.2 Situated in the north-eastern corner of the development site, trench 1 was 3.4m long and 1.6m wide (Figs 4-5). Geological natural, a brownish-yellow sand and gravel (102) was found at a depth of 0.35m below the current ground level. It was overlain by a 0.26m deep layer of grey sandy loam (101). Overlying 101 was a layer of concrete 0.09m thick (100).

Trench 2

5.3 Trench 2 ran down the western side of the site and was 11.5m long (Figs 4, 6). Brownish-yellow sand and gravel natural (202) was noted at a depth of 0.55m. A 0.25m layer of grey sandy loam (201) overlay the natural. Brick fragments were noted in this layer. Topsoil to a depth of 0.3m covered the trench (200) and a surface of blue engineering bricks was recorded in the northern part of the trench (203). This was probably the floor of the outbuilding depicted on the Second Edition map and a part of the upstanding building was noted outside of the trench (Fig 7).

Trench 3

5.4 Trench 3 was 3.6m long and ran east-west in the south-western corner of the plot (Figs 4, 8). The geological natural sand and gravel (302) was reached at a depth of *c.*0.7m below the current ground level. It was overlain by 0.4m of grey sandy loam (303). Overlying this layer was 0.28m of very dark grey loam topsoil (301) and slabs (300).

Trench 4

5.5 Trench 4 was located centrally and ran north-east to south-west for 7m (Figs 4, 9). Geological natural (402) was reached at a depth of *c.*0.78m. Overlying the natural was a layer of grey sandy loam (401) 0.28m deep. Topsoil made up of very dark grey sandy loam (400) overlay layer 401 to a depth of 0.5m. Cutting the topsoil was a pipe trench (403), which still contained an iron pipe (404) in a dark grey sandy loam backfill (405).

6 Conclusions

6.1 The geological natural sand and gravel was consistently overlain by a subsoil layer

and topsoil, neither of which showed significant evidence for having been disturbed by settlement or agricultural activity. The outbuilding depicted on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1905 was represented by a layer of bricks in the northern part of Trench 2.

6.2 No medieval finds or features were noted in the trenches. There was no evidence to suggest that any previous disturbance was responsible for this lack of evidence so it seems likely that the site was outside of the medieval settlement.

Acknowledgements

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank David Cox for commissioning the work and for Anna Stocks of Warwickshire County Council for preparing the brief.

Bibliography

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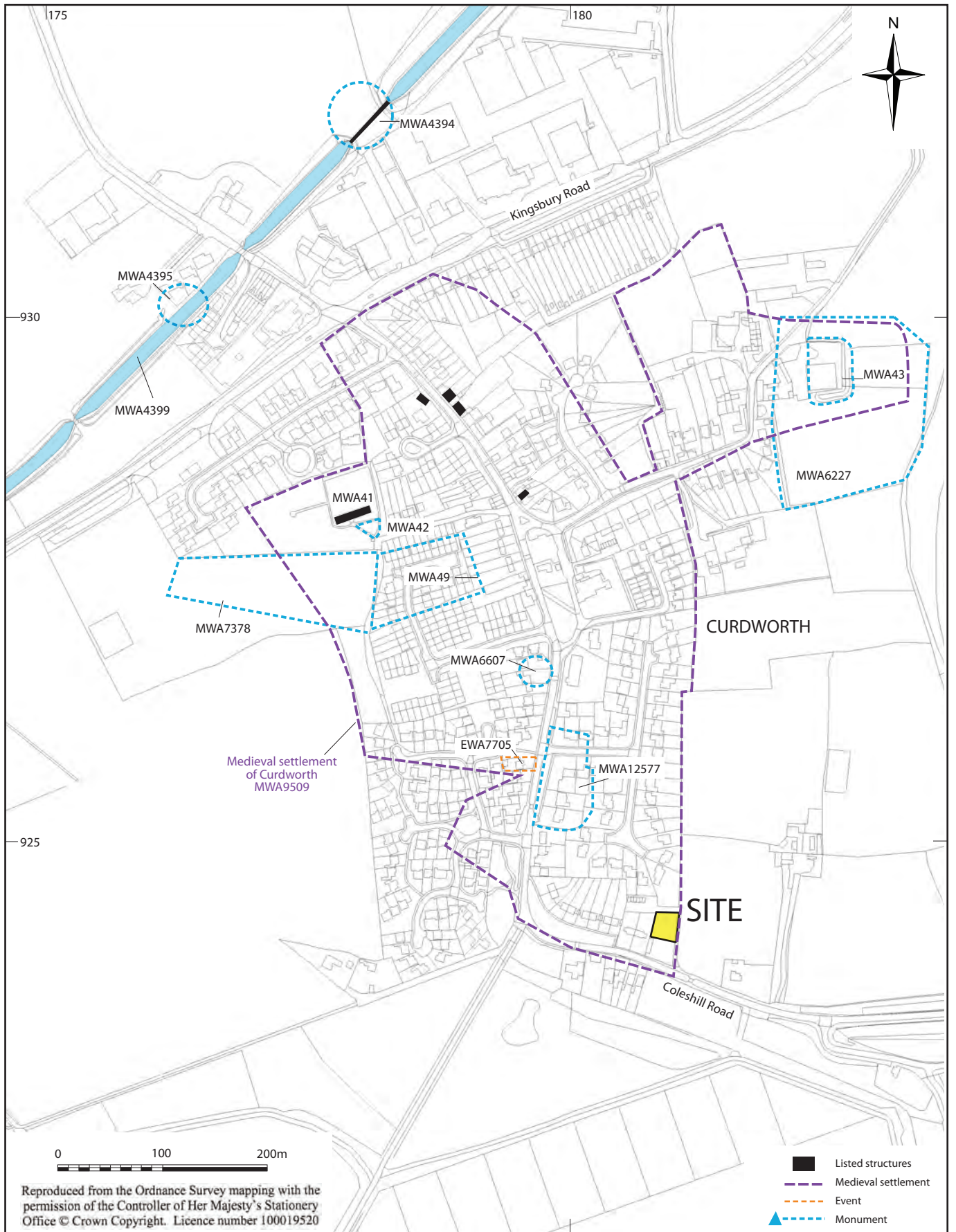
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Appendix

List of Contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comments</i>
100	Concrete	Hardstanding
101	Grey sandy loam	Layer
102	Brownish yellow sand and gravel	Natural
200	Very dark grey sandy loam	Topsoil
201	Grey sandy loam	Layer
202	Brownish yellow sand and gravel	Natural
203	Blue brick pavers	Floor of building
300	Slabs	Surface
301	Very dark grey sandy loam	Topsoil
302	Brownish yellow sand and gravel	Natural
303	Grey sandy loam	Layer
400	Very dark grey sandy loam	Topsoil
401	Grey sandy loam	Layer
402	Brownish yellow sand and gravel	Natural
403	Pipe trench cut	Modern service
404	Iron pipe	Modern service
405	Dark grey sandy loam fill of 403	Modern service



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Fig 1: Site location

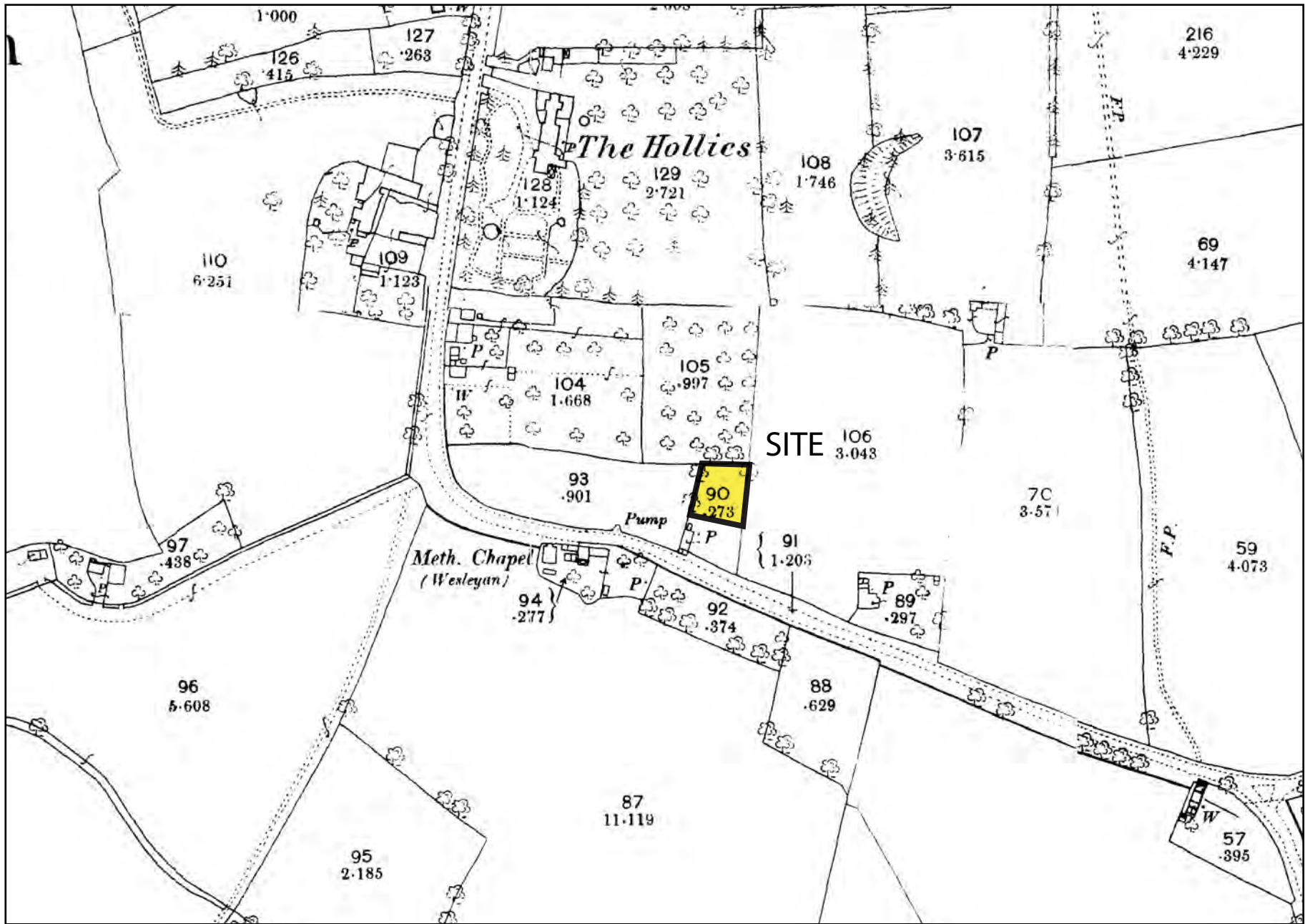


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888

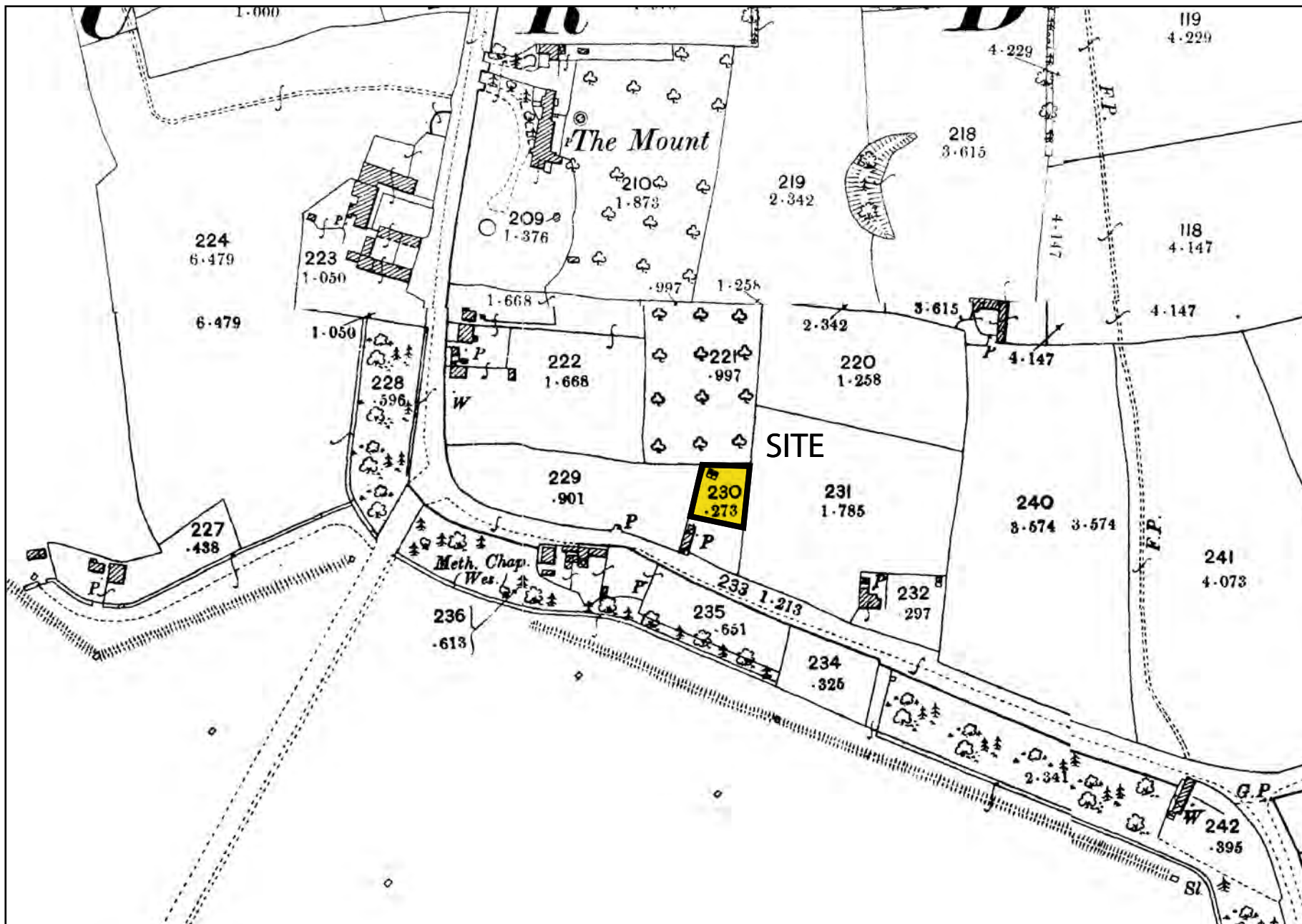


Fig 3: Detail from Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1905

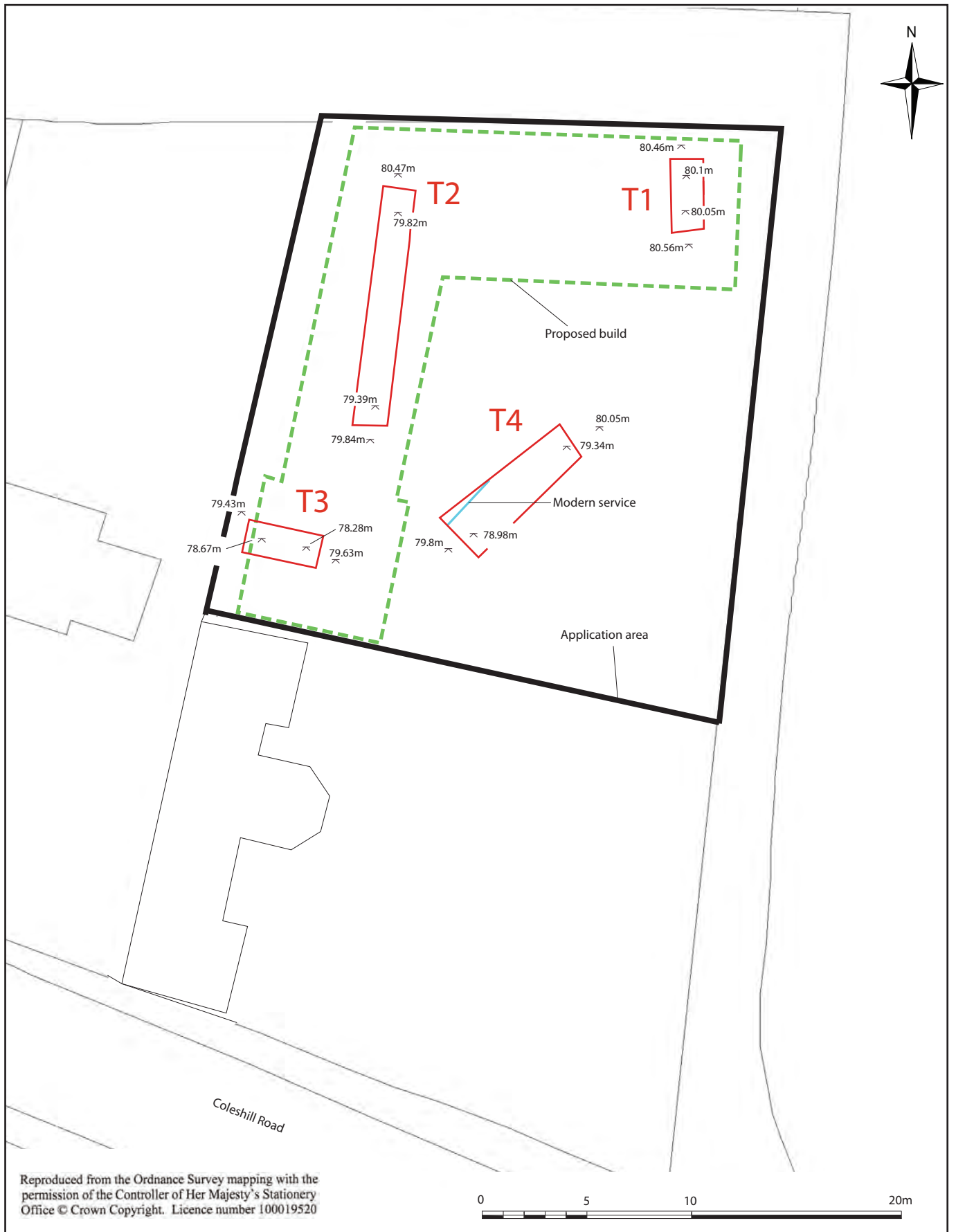


Fig 4: Location of proposed trenches



Fig 5: Trench 1, looking north



Fig 6: Trench 2, looking south



Fig 7: Remains of building shown on Second Edition map of 1905



Fig 8: Trench 3, looking west



Fig 9: Trench 4, looking south-west