

41 Church Road, Hartshill, Warwickshire

Archaeological Evaluation



understanding heritage matters

Report No 1305
February 2013



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project:	Whites Engineering
Commissioned by:	Daniel Swift
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Site Code:	HC13
NGR:	SP 3261 9387
Planning Reference:	PAP/2010/0378
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Contents

	Summary
1	Introduction
2	Location
3	Methodology
4	Archaeological and Historical Background
5	Trial Trenching
6	Conclusions
	Acknowledgements
	Bibliography

Appendices

A	List of contexts
B	List of finds

Figures

1	Site location
2	Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888
3	Detail from Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1903
4	Trenches excavated
5	Trench 1, looking NNE
6	Trench 2, looking NW
7	Trench 3, looking NW
8	Trench 4, Looking NE

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 41 Church Road, Hartshill, Warwickshire, on behalf of Daniel Swift, and in advance of a housing development. Four trial trenches spread across the development revealed nothing of archaeological significance.

1 Introduction

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by the North Warwickshire Borough Council for the demolition of the former White's Engineering Works, and erection of 4 new dwellings, at 41 Church Road, Hartshill. The Warwickshire County Council Planning Archaeologist Anna Stocks, in her capacity as archaeological advisor to the Planning Authority, had advised 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 commences, the applicant should secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which had been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 A Brief for a first phase of evaluation was prepared in August 2012. Archaeology (Projects) Warwickshire was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Planning Archaeologist. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under the site code HC13.

2 Location

2.1 The site is centred on map reference SP 3261 9387 on sloping high ground on the edge of the valley of the River Anker which wends its way north to south some 1.5km to the east. The underlying bedrock is an outcrop of Outwoods Shale Formation, a sedimentary mudstone formed approximately 495 to 505 million years ago in the Cambrian Period (BGS).

3 Methodology

3.1 The principal aim of the project was to determine the presence or not of significant archaeological remains and assess the extent of any risk of damage or destruction from the proposed development on the site. Secondary objectives include communicating the results to appropriate local and regional audiences in an accessible format.

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. The fieldwork undertaken consisted of a programme of trial trenching, undertaken in accordance with Archaeology Warwickshire's Procedures Manual, the Codes and Guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists and the WCC Planning Archaeologists briefs (dated August 2012).

3.3 A total of 47m length of trenching was excavated in a series of four trenches. Each trench was 1.6m wide.

3.4 A photographic record of the excavation was produced. It contained monochrome prints as well as colour digital images of the individual trenches.

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The evaluation site lies within the suspected extent of the medieval village of Hartshill (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record No MWA 9517) based on the morphology of the settlement shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888 (Fig 2). The site is unoccupied on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1888 and 1903.

4.2 There is no evidence currently that Hartshill was settled until the Roman period, though the absence of evidence does not imply evidence of absence. Antiquarian records of Roman activity (MWA 248; VCH 1904) might well reflect the occasional and sporadic finds in Hartshill parish relating to the important pottery industry discovered during quarrying (MWA 2789). In the 1890s mortaria kilns were found in local quarries along with several 'barrows' full of fragments of pottery.

4.3 Hartshill Castle (MWA 240) commands the area. Fortified in the time of Henry I (1100-35) possibly by Hugh de Hardreshull, rebuilt, possibly about 1330 by John de Hardreshull, it remains as an earthwork (MWA 241), walls and stone-built chapel (MWA 242). It is a Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 21544). Some 50m east of the castle embankments were thrown across the valley either as part of the defences, as fishponds, or even later medieval ornamental ponds (MWA 249). The castle was replaced by a timber-framed house in the 16th century (MWA 239) with formal gardens (MWA 12549).

4.4 Several post-medieval and modern places of worship are recorded in the area, which might include a post-medieval house known as the 'The Chapel' situated at the village green (MWA 243). A Society of Friends' Meeting House of the post-medieval period which was later converted into a house is also on Hartshill Green (MWA 2448). Also included are Holy Trinity Church (MWA 245), on the other side of Church Road, and a Wesleyan Chapel (MWA 2449) which date from the Imperial period.

4.5 Other sites recorded on the HER include:

- MWA 8212 The site of Hartshill Green post-medieval manganese mine.
- MWA 5901 The site of a blacksmiths workshop of Imperial date.
- MWA 5902 The site of a quarry dating from the Imperial period.
- MWA 5900 A livestock pound of Imperial date.
- MWA 12548 A modern cemetery
- MWA 244 The Drayton Memorial, a commemorative monument to the poet Michael Drayton, which was erected in 1972.
- MWA 7403 Archaeological evaluation carried out in 1994 at 14 Grange Road, revealed faint traces of a medieval field system (Scott and Wilson 1994).

Archaeological work undertaken in the area includes

- EWA 7288 A negative watching brief at 49 Grange Road, Hartshill (Coutts 2003).
- EWA 6713 A negative watching brief at 108-110 Castle Road, Hartshill (Coutts 1999).
- EWA 6899 A negative watching brief at 108-110 Castle Road, Hartshill (Palmer 1999).
- EWA 9564 Site visit to Hartshill Cemetery, Hartshill (Lovie 1997).
- EWA 2703 Field Survey of Hartshill Hayes. An earthwork survey and field investigation of the extant archaeology in woodland at Hartshill Hayes was carried out in March 1997. The survey highlighted a number of industrial and landscape features including: a series of woodbanks (MWA 8245); diorite pits and mounds (MWA 8246); manganese quarries (MWA 8212); a double contour terrace (MWA 8247); the round barrow (MWA 246, SAM 38); an ice house (MWA 4609); the motte and bailey (MWA 241); and other miscellaneous features including forestry tracks, an undated mound and the Illings Trenches (geological trenches dug c1913). Report also lists relevant aerial photographs in RCHME collections (Brown 1997).

5 Trial Trenches

5.1 Four trial trenches were dug by a JCB-type machine, with a 1.6m wide, toothless ditching bucket.

5.2 Trench 1 was 8m long, aligned NNE-SSW, and was positioned in the south-east corner of the site. Geological natural (102) was reached at a depth of 0.29m. Above this was a 0.14m deep layer of brownish yellow clay loam (101), which produced two sherds of pottery, of 18th/19th-century and 19th/20th-century date. The topsoil in trench 1 was 0.15m deep and consisted of very dark grey clay loam (100).

5.3 Trench 2 was 10.64m long, aligned NW-SE, and was positioned on the south side of the site. Geological natural (202) was reached at a depth of 0.31m. Above this was a 0.15m deep layer of brownish yellow clay loam (201). The topsoil was 0.16m deep and consisted of very dark grey clay loam (200).

5.4 Trench 3 was 15.36m long, aligned NNW-SSE, and was positioned in the centre of the site. Geological natural (302) was reached at a depth of 0.44m. At 3.63m from the NNW end of the trench, there was a modern, linear, 'French' drain (303) cutting the natural. The drain was aligned ESE-WNW and was filled with loosely compacted brick, pebbles and limestone fragments (304). Above the drain and the geological natural, there was a 0.14m deep layer of brownish yellow clay loam (301). The topsoil was 0.30m deep and consisted of very dark grey clay loam (300).

5.5 Trench 4 was 13m long, aligned NE-SW, and was positioned in the northwest corner of the site. Geological natural (402) was reached at a depth of 0.44m. At 3.10m from the SW end of the trench, a modern 'French' drain (403) cut the natural, aligned ESE-WNW. The drain was filled with loosely compacted brick, pebbles and limestone fragments (404), and was seen to be a continuation of a similar feature seen in Trench 3. Above the natural and the drain, there was a 0.14m deep layer of brownish yellow clay loam (401). The topsoil in

Trench 4 was 0.30m deep and consisted of very dark grey clay loam (400). At the NE end of the trench, there a very modern, square pit (405). This pit cut the topsoil and contained a concrete lining and re-deposited clay (406).

6 Conclusions

6.1 No significant archaeological deposits or remains were discovered on the proposal site. Only two sherds of pottery were recovered, both of later post-medieval date.

Acknowledgements

Archaeology (Projects) Warwickshire would like to thank Daniel Swift for commissioning the work. Work on site was carried out by Rob Jones and Kevin Wright.

Bibliography

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Appendices

A List of Contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comments</i>
100	Topsoil layer	
101	Layer	
102	Geological Natural	
200	Topsoil layer	
201	Layer	
202	Geological Natural	
300	Topsoil	
301	Layer	
302	Geological Natural	
303	Drain	Modern, 'French' drain
304	Drain fill (of 304)	
400	Topsoil layer	
401	Layer	
402	Geological Natural	
403	Drain	Modern, 'French' drain
404	Drain fill (of 403)	
405	Pit	Modern pit
406	Pit fill (of 405)	

B List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Date</i>
101	Pottery	1	Coarseware CW01	18th-19th century
101	Pottery	1	Sprigged ware MGW	19th-20th century

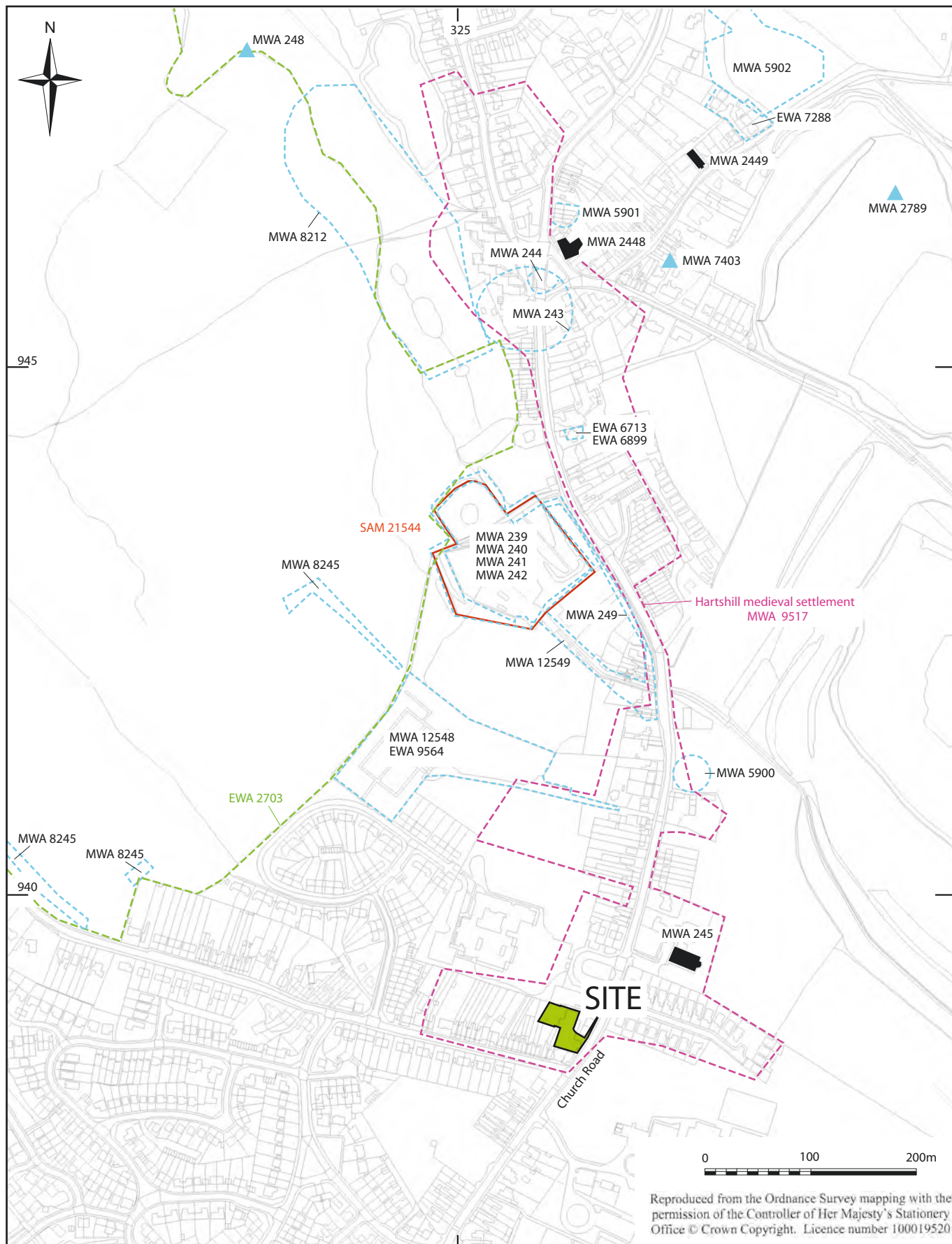


Fig 1: Site location

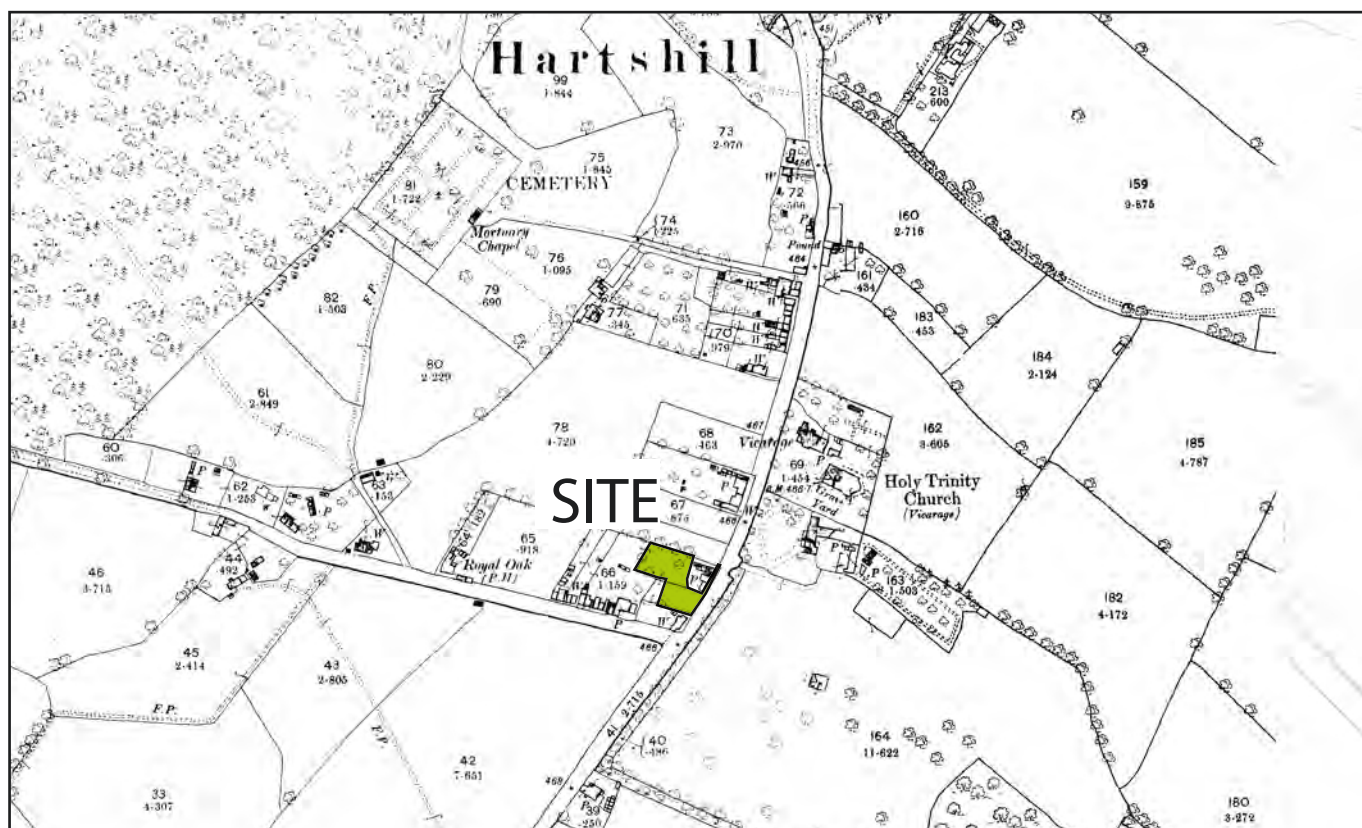


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888

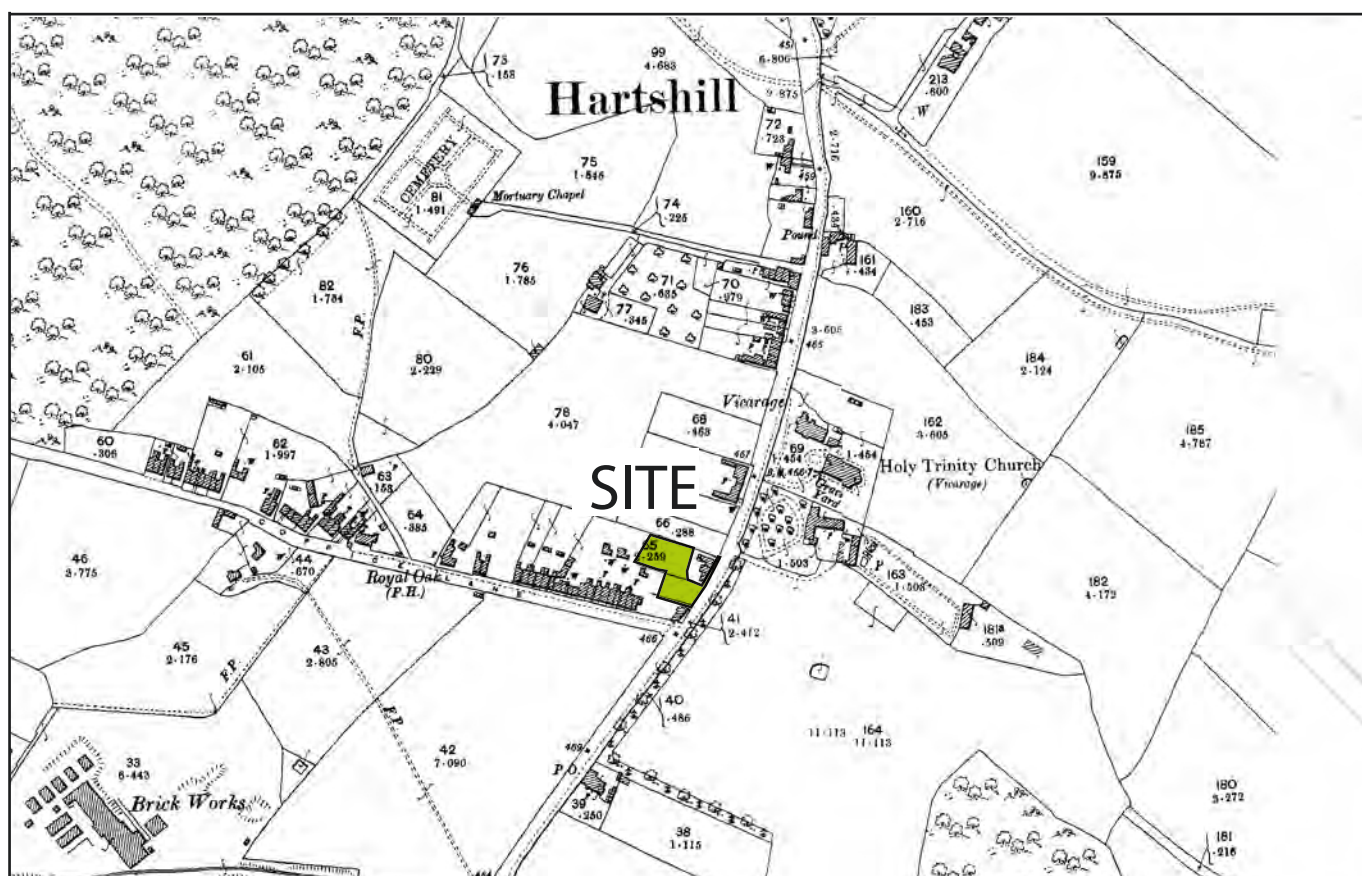


Fig 3: Detail from Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1903

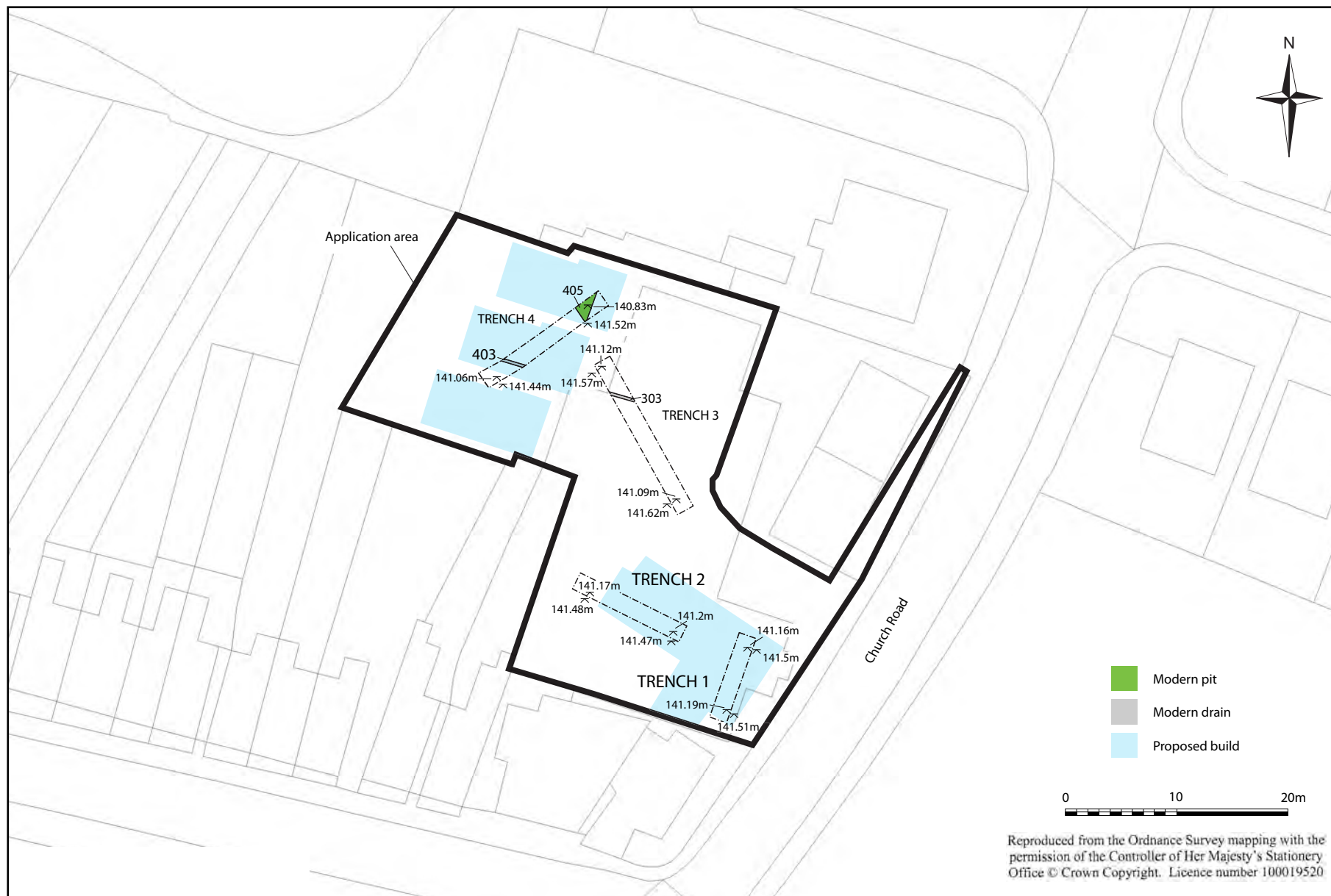


Fig 4: Trenches excavated



Fig 5: Trench 1, looking NNE



Fig 6: Trench 2, looking NW



Fig 7: Trench 3, looking NW



Fig 8: Trench 4, looking NE