

Weston Farm, Weston on Avon, Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1546

JULY 2015



*Working for
Warwickshire*

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Commissioned by:	Richard Bluck
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Site Code:	WF15
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Planning Authority:	Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire
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National Grid Reference:	SP 1577 5186
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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation on behalf of Richard Bluck was undertaken in advance of the development of a new house at Weston Farm, Weston-on-Avon. Two possible medieval features and a post-medieval ditch were revealed in the trenches. One of the ditches may correspond to an enclosure shown on an estate map from 1770. Pottery dating between the 12th and 19th centuries was recovered from the site but there was no indication of a nearby focus of activity.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Stratford-upon-Avon District Council for the erection of a detached dwelling house with vehicular access and parking area across land at Weston Farm, Weston-on-Avon (13/02851/FUL). The County Planning archaeologist has determined that the site lies in an area of archaeological potential and that there was a possibility that archaeological deposits could be disturbed or exposed by the development.

1.2 It was therefore a condition of planning permission that, before the development commences, the applicant secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Planning Authority. This report presents the results of that work. The archaeological archive will be deposited at the Warwickshire Museum with the site code WF15.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The site is centred on national grid reference SP 1577 5186 in the village of Weston-on-Avon (Fig 1). The site lies to the north of Weston Farm, close to the medieval parish church of All Saints.

2.2 The underlying geology of the site is Wasperton Sand and Gravel overlying Blue Lias Formation and Charnmouth Mudstone (BGS 2015).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The earliest evidence for human activity in the area is a small group of prehistoric flint tools and flakes of probable Neolithic and Bronze Age date (Warwickshire Historic

Environment Record No. MWA 5190). Some 200m to the west of Weston Farm a series of cropmarks have been recognised on aerial photographs (MWA 4680). The cropmarks are the result of underlying features which include a ring ditch, an enclosure and linear features, A Roman buckle was found 300m south-west of the church (MWA 8121).

3.2 A high status Roman period building is suggested by surface material some 200m to the west of Weston-on-Avon (MWA 1344). Finds include Roman metalwork, coins, pottery, roof tile, flue tiles and tesserae which together suggest a possible villa site. Another high status site is known 400m north of Weston church (MWA 1796). Roman pottery has been collected here over many years and groups of enclosures and linear features can be seen on aerial photographs. Roman coins and other metalwork have been found from a field to the west of Welford-on-Avon (MWA 3999).

3.3 The present development site lies in the centre of the medieval village of Weston-on-Avon (MWA 9021). The medieval parish church of All Saints lies immediately to the east (MWA 1291). The church dates from the 15th century but a church is recorded here in 1090. It was restored in 1899. Within the churchyard is the octagonal base of a churchyard cross, of medieval date (MWA 1324). The site of a medieval house is recorded to the west of the village with finds of stonework and pottery (MWA 1343). A number of medieval artefacts have been found during metal detecting (MWA 18411). Medieval pottery and further medieval metalwork have been found 500m west of the church (MWA 5191).

3.4 Documentary records suggest the site of a medieval watermill at Luddington, although its exact location is unknown (MWA 1795)

3.5 In 1636 Stratford Corporation worked on 43.5 miles of the River Avon to make it navigable (MWA 4340). Luddington Lower Lock, on the canal, dates to 1827 (MWA 4347).

3.6 Other monuments recorded on the HER include:-

- MWA 5192 Post-medieval finds of 17th-century pottery and metalwork
- MWA 8122 Findspot of post-medieval coins

3.7 There are a number of Listed Buildings within the village:-

NHLE List Entry No	Name
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- 1382867 Base of churchyard medieval cross
- 1382865 Church of All Saints, Grade I
- 1382868 Evesmere, 17thC house
- 1382869 K6 telephone kiosk
- 1382870 Low Thatch, 15thC building
- 1382871 Threeways, 18thC house
- 1245536 Weston Court, 17thC timber-framed house

3.8 Archaeological work within the village has been rare. A negative watching brief in 1997 was undertaken at 4 The Village (MWA 8203). A further watching brief was undertaken at Weston Sands Farm in 2004.

3.9 The earliest estate map for the area is the roughly drawn estate map of 1770 (CRO 2591). It shows an enclosure or paddock across the development site with buildings to the south, including Weston Farm. This use as a field or paddock continues until the present day according to Ordnance Survey mapping from 1884 (Landmark 2003)

4 AIMS AND METHODS

4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there are 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.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Three trenches were excavated using a JCB with a ditching bucket. Trench 1 was moved slightly to avoid a live electricity cable. Geological natural was reached between 34.8m aOD and 34.97 aOD, c.0.4 – 0.6m below the current ground level. The geological natural (102, 202, 302) was grey clay with patches of yellowish brown sand and gravel.

5.2 Trench 2 contained a feature which may have been a pit or the terminal end of a gully (Fig 3, 203). The irregular shaped feature was just 0.13m deep and filled with dark greyish brown clay (Photograph 3). Sherds of medieval pottery and fragments of animal bone were recovered from the fill (204).

5.3 In Trench 3, two linear features were recorded. A north-south aligned ditch (Fig 3, 303) c. 1.1m wide and 0.23m deep contained greyish brown clayey sandy silt (304) which yielded medieval pottery, animal bone and occasional flecks of charcoal (Photograph 5). To the east of ditch 303 was a further north-south aligned ditch 305, c.1.4m wide. The feature was not excavated as 18th/19th century pottery and coal was noted in the very dark greyish brown sandy clay fill (306).

5.4 Overlying the features was a 0.1-0.3m deep layer of dark greyish brown sandy clay (101, 201, 301) which was overlain with 0.3m of very dark greyish brown sandy clay topsoil (100, 200, 300). Post-medieval and medieval sherds were recovered from the sub-surface layer (101, 201, 301).

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The evaluation has established that there are two ditches on the site, one or both of which may be associated with the enclosure depicted on the 1770 estate map. Pottery dating between the 12th and 19th centuries was found and this is consistent with the development site having been in agricultural use. There is no indication for a nearby focus of activity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Kim Tyler for facilitating the project on behalf of Richard Bluck.

REFERENCES

BGS 2015 British Geological Survey Viewer

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed July 2015.

CRO 2591 1770 Lordship of Weston, Warwickshire County Record Office

Landmark 2003a First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884, 1:2500, digital version.

Landmark 2003b Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1905, 1:2500, digital version.



Photograph 1. Trench 1



Photograph 2. Trench 2



Photograph 3. Trench 2, 203



Photograph 4. Trench 3



Photograph 5. Trench 3, 303

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
100	Very dark greyish brown sandy loam	Topsoil
101	Dark greyish brown sandy clay	Subsoil
102	Grey clay and sand and gravel	Geological Natural
200	Very dark greyish brown sandy loam	Topsoil
201	Dark greyish brown sandy clay	Subsoil
202	Grey clay and sand and gravel	Geological Natural
203	Irregular shaped feature	Pit? Terminal of gully? Medieval
204	Dark greyish brown clay	Fill of 203
300	Very dark greyish brown sandy loam	Topsoil
301	Dark greyish brown sandy clay	Subsoil
302	Grey clay and sand and gravel	Geological Natural
303	N-S linear ditch	medieval
304	Greyish brown clayey sandy silt	Fill of 303
305	N-S linear ditch	unexcavated post-medieval
306	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay	Fill of 305

B List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
201	Pottery	4	2 x MB02 (Midlands Black) 1 x RS02 (13 th -14 th century) 1 x STR10 (11 th -15 th century)
204	Pottery	5	3 x RS02 (13 th -14 th century) 1 x CO01 (11 th century) 1 x SLM01 (14 th – 17 th century)
204	A. bone	6	Frag of cattle bone
304	Pottery	5	5 x RS02 (13 th -14 th century)
304	A. Bone	3	Frag of unident
306	Pottery	4	1 x Pearlware 3 x Blackware (18 th /19 th century)
306	Brick	1	Handmade brick fragment

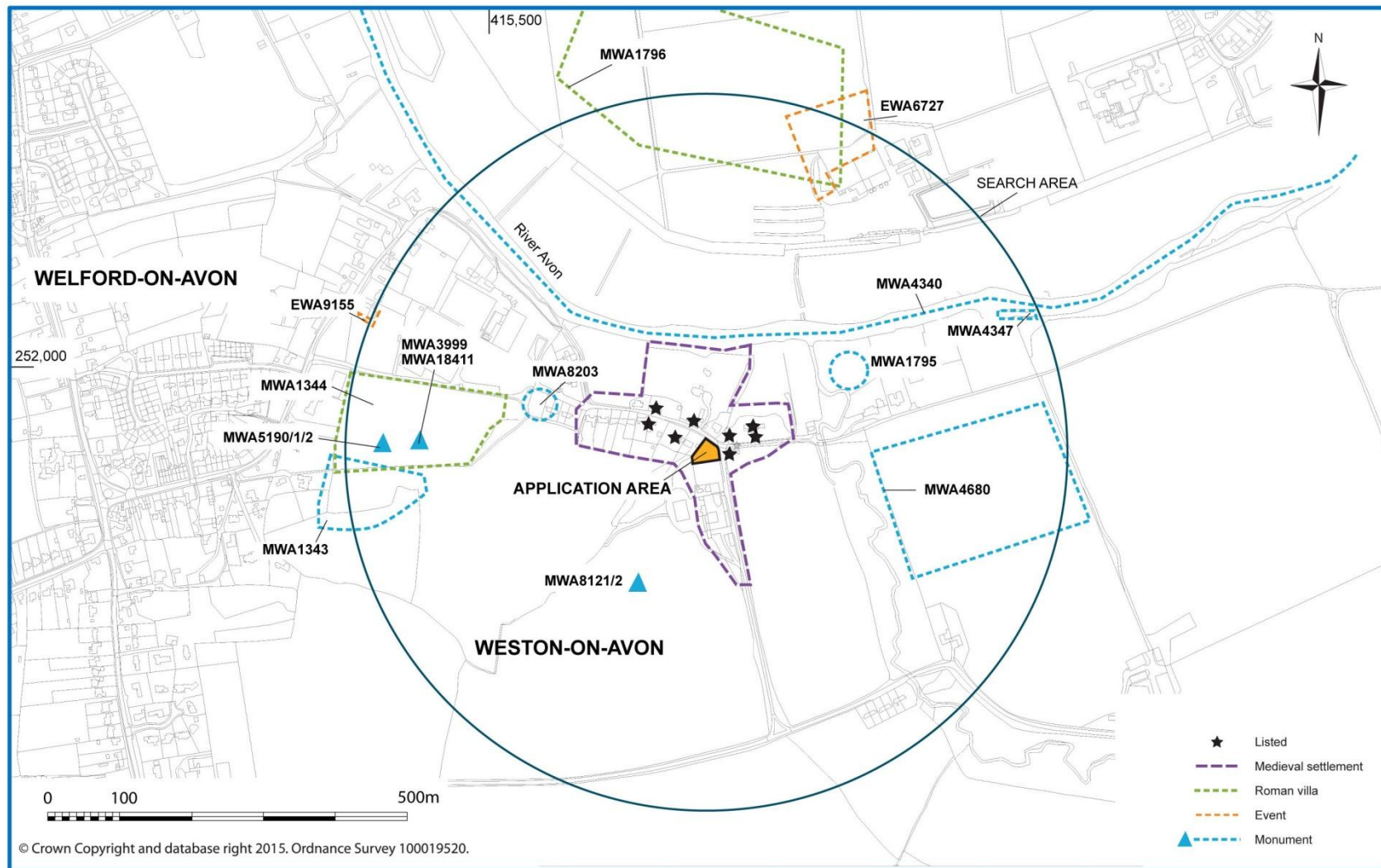


Fig 1 : Location of Application Area and Historic Environment Information

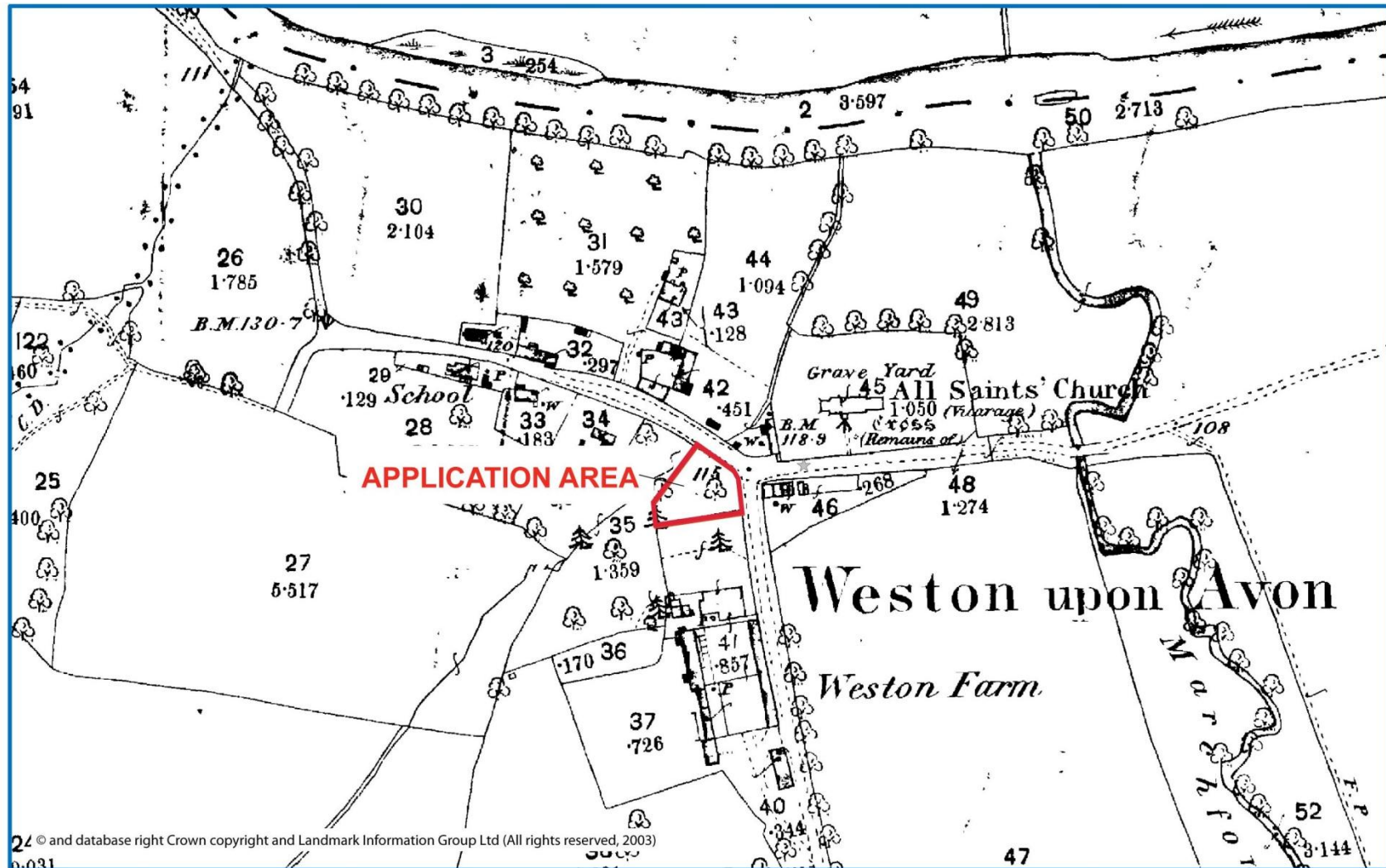


Fig 2 : Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884

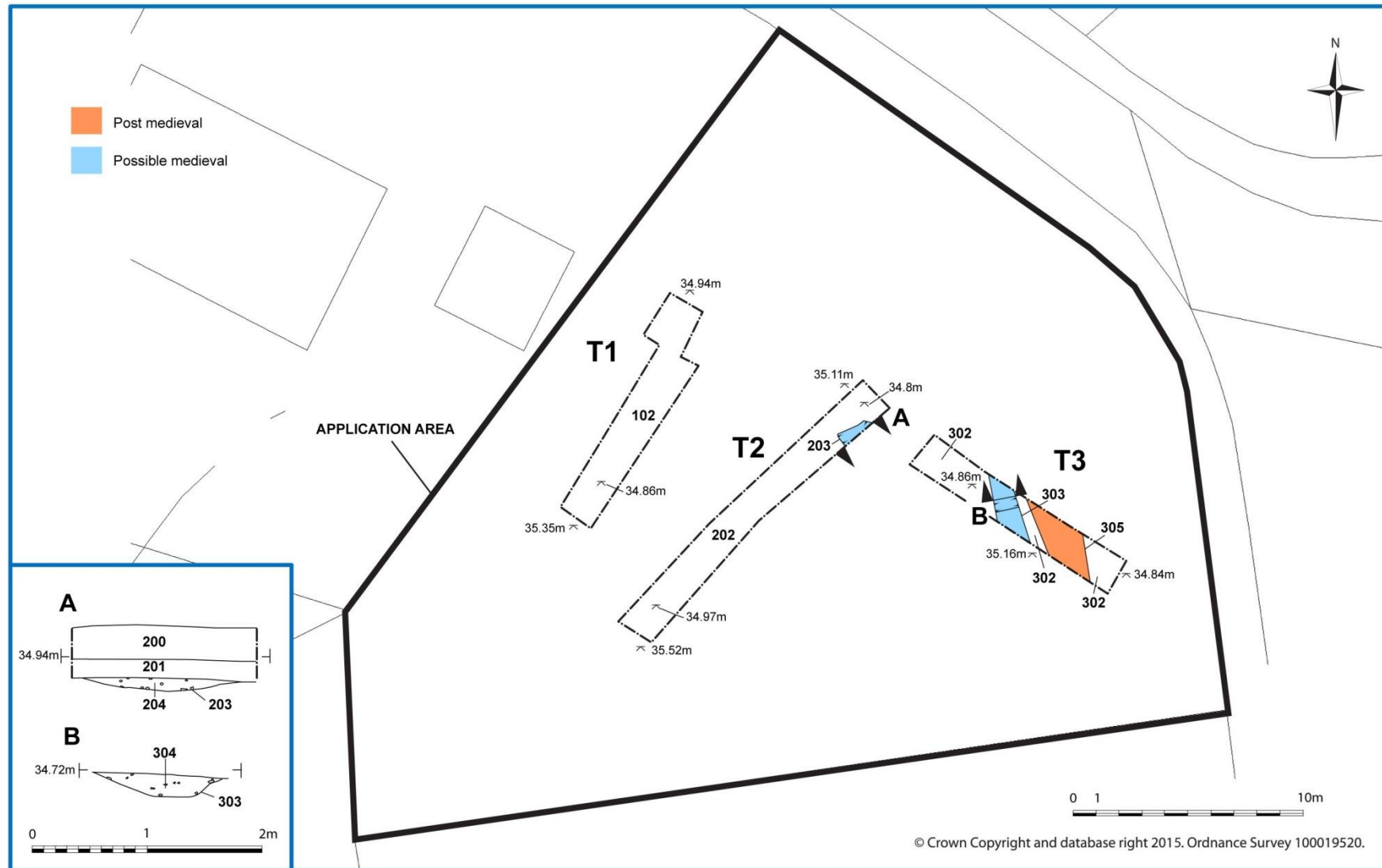


Fig 3 : Excavated trenches and sections A and B