

# Bradshaw Farm, Wasperton, Warwickshire

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



*understanding heritage matters*

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1596

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*Working for  
Warwickshire*

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<b>Commissioned by:</b>	Mr Jamie Dewhurst @ J & A Growers Ltd
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## SUMMARY

*An archaeological evaluation consisting of a single trial trench was undertaken in advance of the construction of a new accommodation building on behalf of J & A Growers Ltd. The site lies on the possible alignment of a cropmark trackway. No archaeological deposits were recorded and no finds were recovered.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Warwick District Council for the erection of a 7 bedroomed agricultural workers accommodation unit at Bradshaw Farm, Wasperton.

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 (Rann 2015) which had been approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire was commissioned to carry out an archaeological evaluation which took place in November 2015. This report represents the results of this work. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under the site code WA15.

## 2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The development site is to be located within agricultural land to the west of the A429 at Wasperton. The village of Wasperton is to the north and it is within the parish of the same name (Fig 1).

2.2 The underlying geology of the site is Mercia Mudstone with superficial deposits of river terrace gravels (BGS 2015).

## 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Significant prehistoric activity has been recorded along the Avon Valley near Wasperton. To the west of the site is the cropmark of a possible trackway (MWA 6755) although this has not been proven by excavation. Several possible burial monuments can be found in the wider area (MWA 6761, MWA 7107).

3.2 A number of enclosures also show as cropmarks in the area. Many are undated but

are probably prehistoric or Roman (MWA 1142, MWA 6759, MWA 6760). To the south of the site an enclosure was partly excavated (MWA 7540, MWA 4652) and limited dating evidence from the archaeological work, gave a possible Neolithic or Iron Age date.

3.3 The site of a ford to south of the site was referred to as 'Theulisford' in medieval documents (MWA 8679). A priory was established next to the ford. Thelsford Priory (MWA 1116, not on Fig 1) was excavated in 1972 by H P Sanders (EWA 2871). It had a church (MWA 6275), monastic buildings (MWA 6278), field systems (MWA 6279), fishponds (MWA 6277), and moat (MWA 6276).

3.4 The possible extent of the medieval settlement of Wasperton (MWA 9137) has been determined by using the limits of the ridge and furrow revealed on aerial photographs and boundaries marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 (Landmark 2003a). The manor of Wasperton is mentioned in Domesday (1086) when it was owned by Coventry Priory. It remained in the possession of the priory, apart from a brief period in the early 13th century, until the Dissolution when it passed to the Walter family (VCH 1949, 188). The central part of the manor house itself (MWA 2204, NHLE 1325532, not on Fig 1) is actually the brick-clad remains of an early 14th-century timber-framed hall.

3.5 The parish church of St John the Baptist (MWA 2203, NHLE 1035126) was entirely rebuilt in a 14th-century style in 1843 by Sir Gilbert Scott. The church was a chapel attached to the parish of Hampton Lucy throughout the medieval period (MWA 5250).

3.6 A ditch and a pit of post-medieval date were found during a Watching Brief at the village hall in 1990 (MWA 8405/EWA 3406).

3.7 Thelsford Old Bridge, which dated to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century was demolished when it became a flooding hazard due to its disrepair (MWA 13189/EWA 9980). The toll road from Warwick to Paddle Brook ran over the Bridge (MWA 4820).

3.8 Cedar House in Wasperton, was formerly the vicarage and has extensive gardens (MWA 12854) which were recommended for inclusion on a local list by Jonathan Lovie. He also visited the gardens of Wasperton House (MWA 12983).

3.9 Negative watching briefs were carried out at St Johns House (EWA 4178), 21 Wasperton Road (EWA 9437), Bradshaw's Farm (EWA 7730), Seven Elms (EWA 9529) and Llwyn (EWA 7722). They were all very limited in scope.

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

**NHLE List Entry No Name**

1107194	The Elms
1035127	Wasperton House

3.11 Map regression shows that the development site has been in agricultural use since at least 1841 (WCRO 1841, tithe map). A linear cropmark is visible on Aerial Photograph SP2658-J (Warwickshire HER). It appears to be perpendicular to the field as shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 (Landmark 2003, Fig 2).

## 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.

4.4 A single trench was machine excavated under direct archaeological supervision in the position agreed with the planning archaeologist. Topsoil and other overburden were removed in shallow spits to the top of the geological natural.

## 5 RESULTS

5.1 The trial trench was excavated using a tracked machine with a toothless ditching bucket and was 15m long and 1.8m wide. It was excavated throughout its length to the geological natural brownish yellow sand and gravel (3). This was covered by 0.10-0.12m of

greyish brown sandy silt (2) which represented an older ploughsoil. Above this was 0.30-0.32m of dark greyish brown sandy topsoil (1).

5.2 No archaeological deposits were identified and no finds were recovered.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The evaluation has successfully demonstrated that no significant archaeological remains will be affected by the proposed development.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mr Jamie Dewhurst for commissioning the work and Richard Compton for driving the machine.

## REFERENCES

BGS 2015 British Geological Survey Viewer

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

Landmark 2003a First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887, 1:2500, digital version

Rann, C, 2015 Bradshaw Farm, Wasperton, Warwickshire, Written Scheme of Investigation

WCRO 1841 Wasperton Tithe map CR569/256, Warwickshire County Record Office



1. The evaluation trench, looking north-west



## APPENDICES

### A List of Contexts

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	1	Topsoil	
	2	Old ploughsoil	
	3	Geological natural	

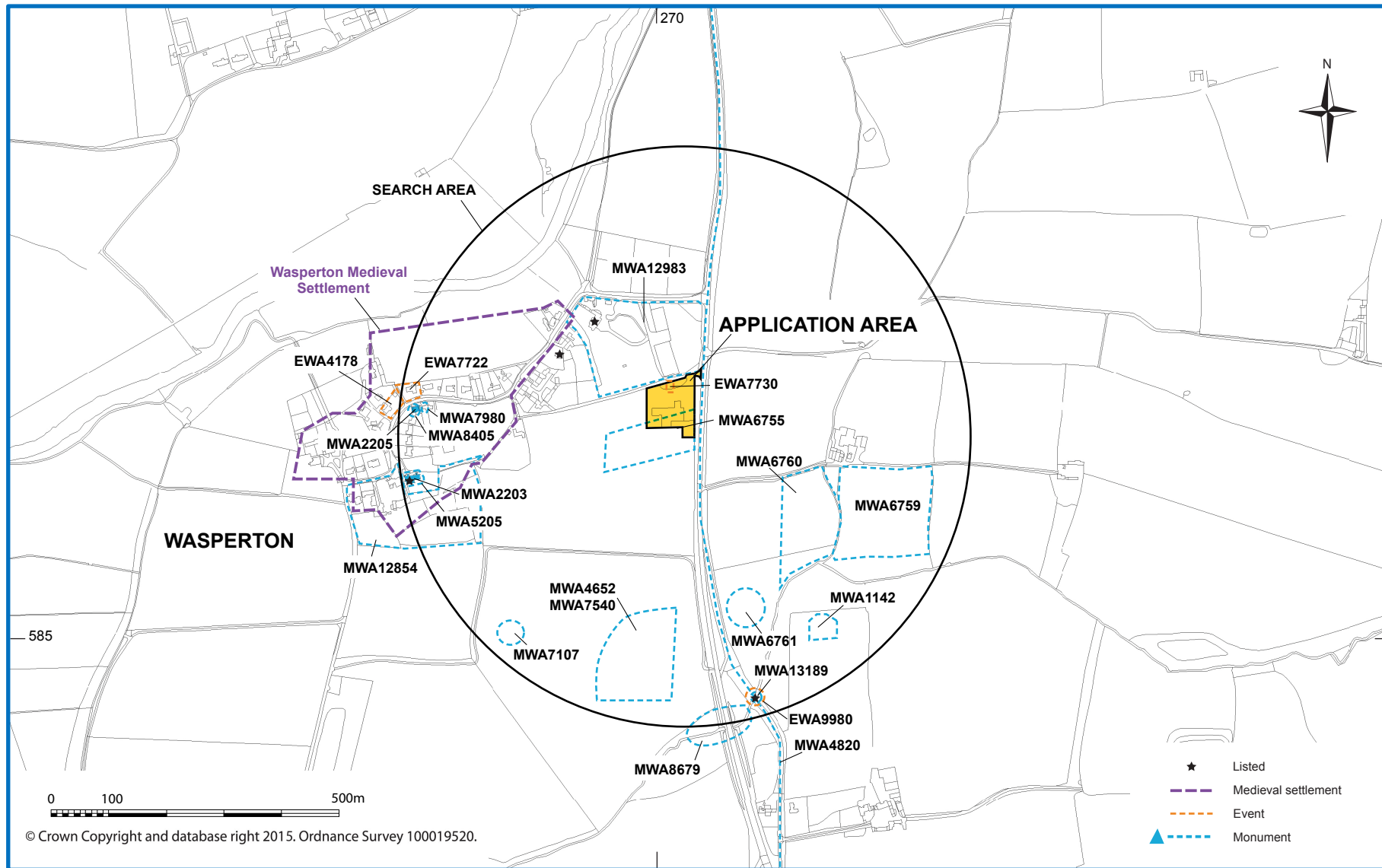


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information

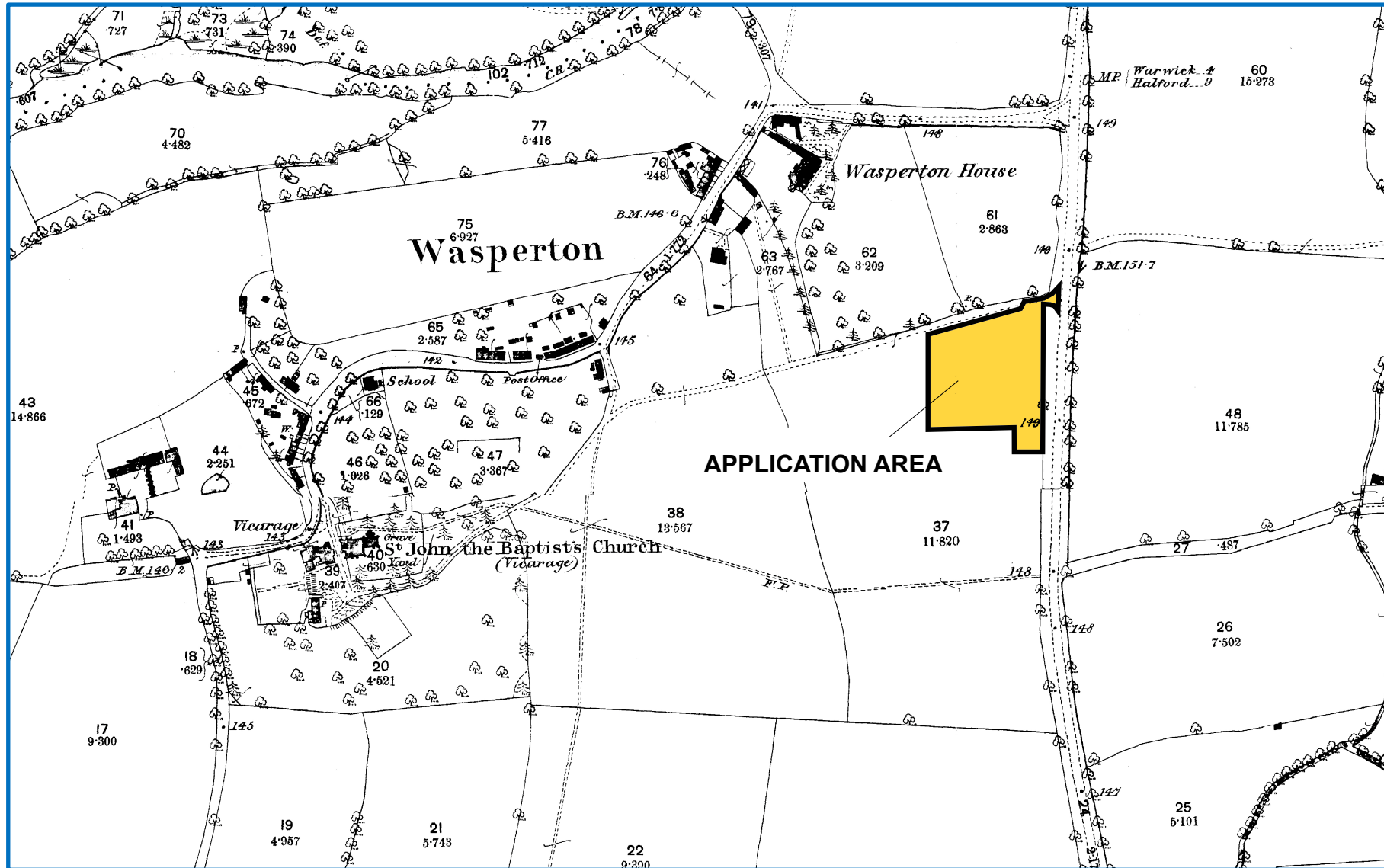


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887

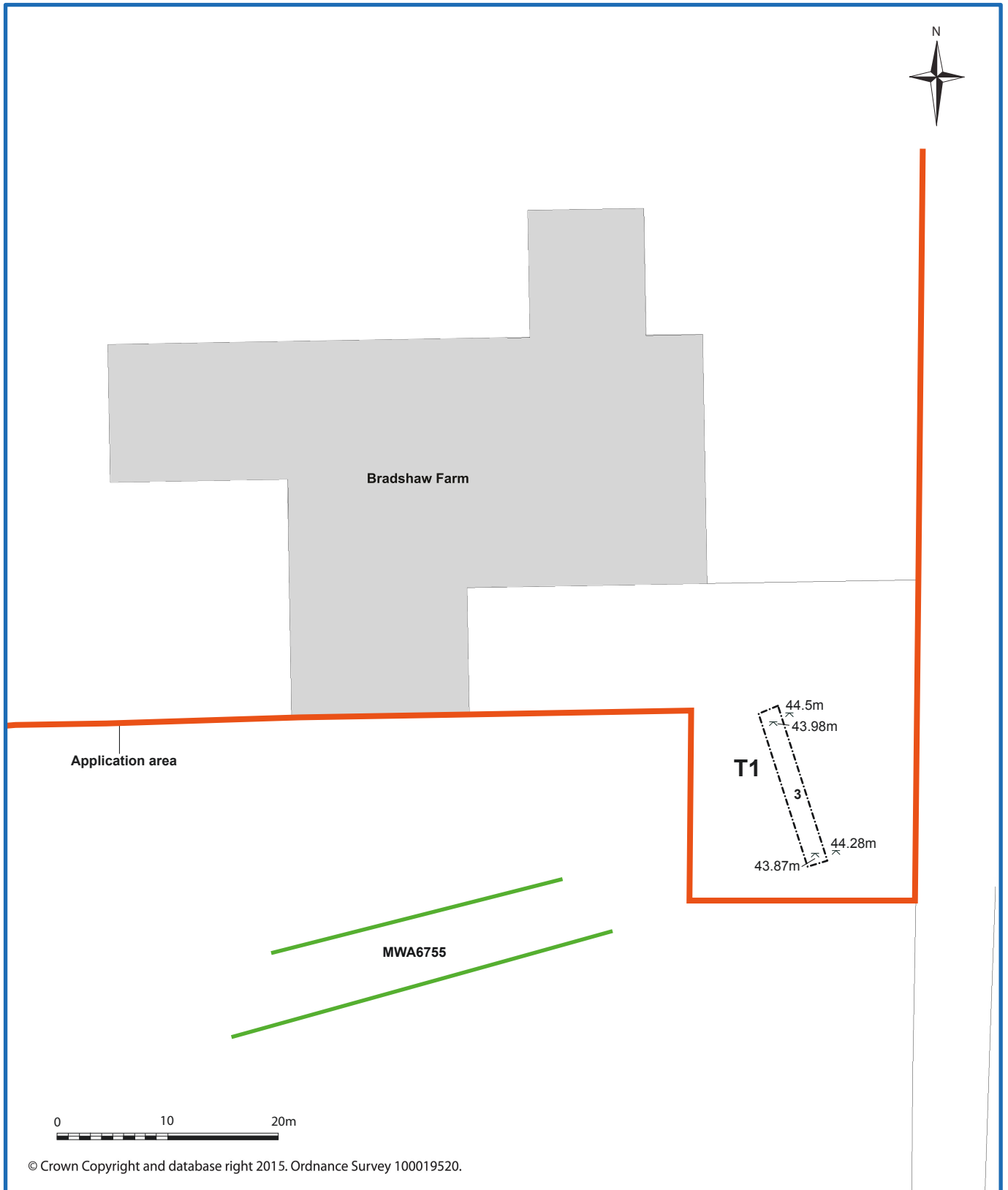


Fig 3: Location of excavated trench