

Land Rear of 18 The Green, Bilton, Rugby, Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1545

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*Working for
Warwickshire*

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Planning Authority: Rugby Borough, Warwickshire
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National Grid Reference: SP 4833 7376
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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation consisting of two trial trenches was undertaken in advance of the construction of new dwelling on behalf of Court (Warwickshire) Ltd. The site was considered to lie within the extent of the medieval settlement. Trench 1 revealed a boundary gully containing fragments of 13th/14th century pottery and post-medieval glass, as well as two undated possible pits. Trench 2 revealed a wall foundation possibly associated with the buildings shown on the First Edition map and that part of the site had been subject to truncation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Rugby Borough Council for the construction of seven houses with associated access roads, car parking, sewers and associated works at land to the rear of 18 The Green, and off Ivy Grange in Bilton Rugby.

1.2 It was a condition of the planning permission that the applicant secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which had been approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation. This report presents the results of that work. The archaeological archive will be deposited at the Warwickshire Museum under Site Code RG15.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The development site is located in the centre of Bilton to the north of The Green and south of Ivy Grange. The site is within the unparished area of Rugby centred on National Grid reference SP 4833 7376.

2.2 The site was previously partly within gardens to the rear of 18 The Green, Bilton and partly within the rear of a car park fronting on to The Green (Fig 1). Preparation work undertaken included the cutting down of trees and removal of car park surfacing. The brick outbuilding shown on the site was still standing at the time of the work.

2.3 The site lies on a northern edge of Dunsmore, a Pleistocene deposit of sands and gravels known as Dunsmore Gravel. The underlying geology includes clays and silts of Wolston Clay (British Geological Survey 1984).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The development site lies within an area of archaeological potential associated with the medieval and post-medieval settlement of Bilton.

Medieval

3.2 Bilton had two entries in the Domesday Book and the medieval settlement (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 9494) is likely to have centred around the medieval church (WMA 3342) to the north-east of the site and towards The Green.

Post –medieval

3.3 A number of recorded sites lie in the vicinity of the site and are summarised below.

HER ref	Date	Description
MWA 3636	Post-medieval	Quarry
MWA 3340	Post medieval	Stocks
MWA 3637	Post medieval	Forge shown on the 1840 map
MWA 3341	Medieval	Market Cross, restored at end of 19th century
MWA 12623	Late 18th century	Bilton Hall Gardens, formal gardens
MWA 3632	19th century	Bilton House
MWA 3645	Late 19th/20th century	Manor House
MWA 3617	Late 19th century	Chapel of Numc Dimittis and St Mark
MWA 3647	Late 19th/20th century	Evangelical Chapel (originally a school)
MWA 3646	20th century	Methodist chapel

3.4 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888-9 shows that the site is within the rear boundaries of plots fronting The Green and Main Street (Fig 2). The outbuilding currently on the site occupies the footprint of the building shown on the First Edition map.

3.5 Recent archaeological work at Ivy Grange during 2013 and 2014 did not reveal any significant archaeological finds or features.

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 The original proposal was to evaluate the area by means of two trial trenches: each 15m x 1.6m. However, as part of the southern edge of the site is still part of an operating car park it was not possible to fit one of the 15m long trenches in its agreed position. Following discussions with a WCC Planning Archaeologist and contractors it was agreed that a 12m long trench would be excavated with two additional “arms” approximately 2m long. This allowed an undisturbed area of natural to be examined and a larger extent of a brick structure to be examined to clarify its character and extent.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The trenches were machine excavated by a 360° excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide ditching bucket. Archaeological features were recorded in both of the trenches.

Trench 1

5.2 Trench 1 was located partly within the proposed footprint of the western building. The geological natural gravel (16) was revealed at a depth of approximately 0.38m below the present ground level, between 112.53m and 112.61m OD.

5.3 The natural gravel was cut by several features. A shallow gully (18) aligned roughly west to east extended across the trench. It was a maximum of 0.15m deep and was filled by a greyish brown silty clay (17) which contained six sherds of medieval pottery and one fragment of post-medieval glass.

5.4 Two possible pits were revealed but remained undated. The larger part of an oval-shaped, shallow pit 20, contained a greyish brown silty clay fill with some yellowish brown

sand (19). Pit 22 was a maximum of 0.22m deep and contained a greyish brown silty clay fill (21).

5.5 The stratigraphic sequence overlying the natural cut features included a layer of grey brown sandy clay (14) and a layer of sandy clay loam topsoil (15). No finds were recovered from the layers above the natural gravels.

Trench 2

5.6 Trench 2 was located partly within the footprint of the eastern building plot. As the southern limit of the application area remained part of an active car park it was not possible to fit the full proposed length in its agreed position. Following discussion with a Warwickshire County Council Planning Archaeologist it was agreed to extend the trench westwards in two places in order to investigate an area of undisturbed natural and further brick wall remains.

5.7 Geological natural yellowish brown sand and gravel (3) was revealed at a depth of c.0.40m below current ground level, at 112.80m aOD.

5.8 Geological natural was cut by a series of service trenches (4 and 8) including modern drainage and water.

5.9 At the southern end of the trench a 3.6m long brick wall (10) extended south-west to north-east across the trench. With a corner and return to the south. It was constructed on a concrete foundation and survived as a single, mortared, course. To the south of the wall was a small area of brick surface (12), possibly yard or floor. A brick wall (6) at the northern end of the trench was at least 1.4m long and comprised six courses of brick. These features are likely to be the structure shown on the First Edition map.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The evaluation has established the presence of several archaeological features although the eastern half of the site appears to have been disturbed and/or truncated by previous construction and services associated with car parking and earlier buildings.

6.2 Three features were revealed in the western trench and these include one possible medieval gully. The western part of the site reflects its previous use as garden and was subject to less truncation. It is possible that the undated pits may relate to garden features or tree positions.

6.3 The wall foundations revealed in Trench 2 closely match the positions of buildings or boundaries shown on the Ordnance Survey First Edition map and these walls appear to be part of those structures. No evidence of associated deposits or finds was recovered during the evaluation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mark Hayward of Court (Warwickshire) Ltd for commissioning the work and for providing the machine on site.

REFERENCES

BGS 2014 British Geological Survey Viewer

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed December 2014.

Ordnance Survey 1888 First Edition Ordnance Survey map, Warwickshire, Sheet 50.9,



Photograph 1. Trench 1



Photograph 2. Pits 20 and 22



Photograph 3. Trench 2



Photograph 4. Wall 10

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
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Trench 1

13	Layer	
14	Layer	
15	Layer	
16	Layer	Natural
17	Fill of 18	
18	?Gully	
19	Fill of 20	
20	?Pit	
21	Fill of 22	
22	?Pit	
23	Fill of service trench	
24	Service trench	

Trench 2

1	Layer	
2	Layer	
3	Layer	natural geology
4	Fill of service trench	
5	Service trench	
6	Brick wall foundation	
7	Backfill of service trench	
8	Service trench	
9	Natural clay	
10	Brick wall foundation	
11	Layer	
12	Brick surface	

B List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
17	Pottery	6	Medieval
17	Glass	1	Post-medieval

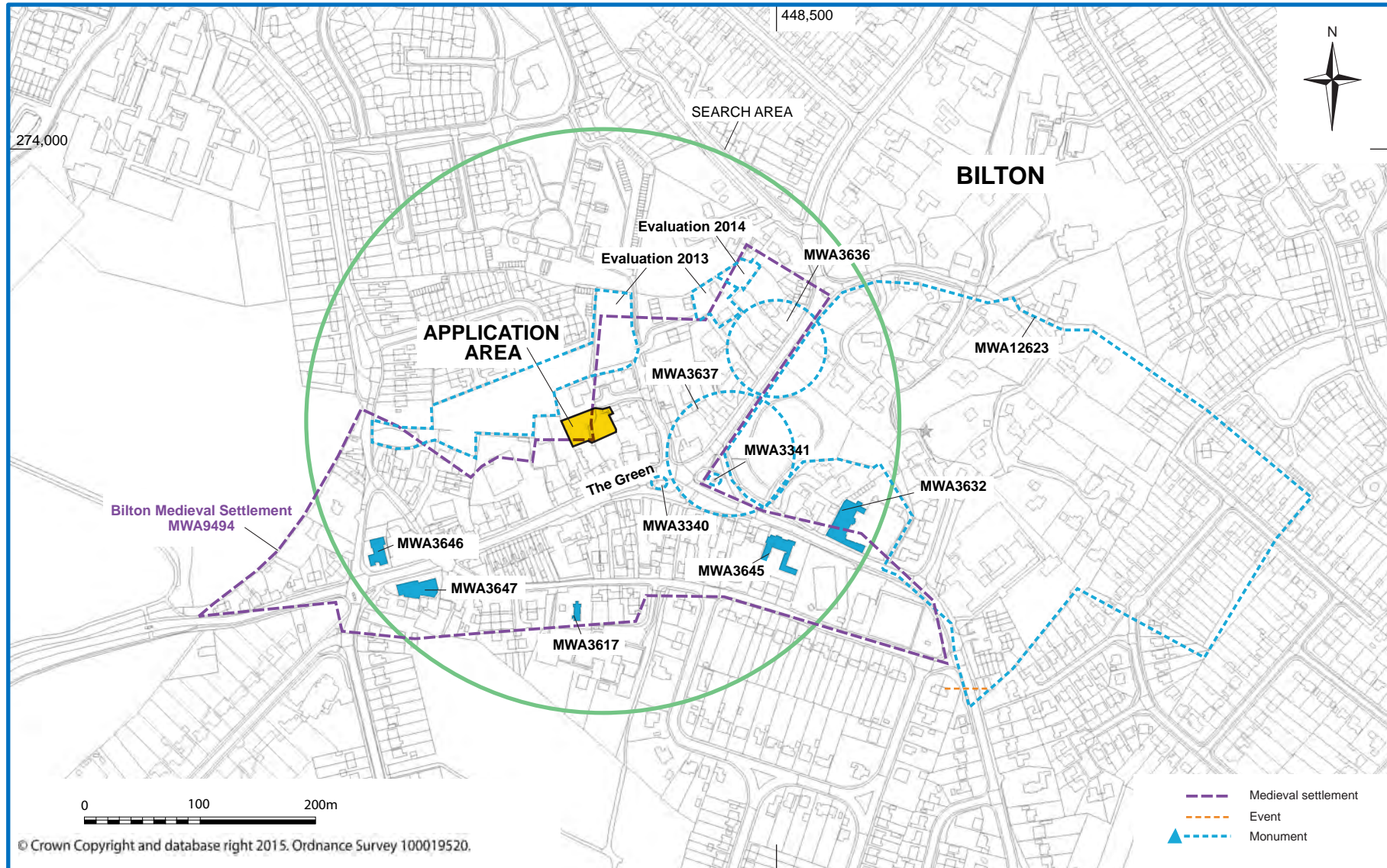


Fig 1: Location of Application Area and Historic Environment Information

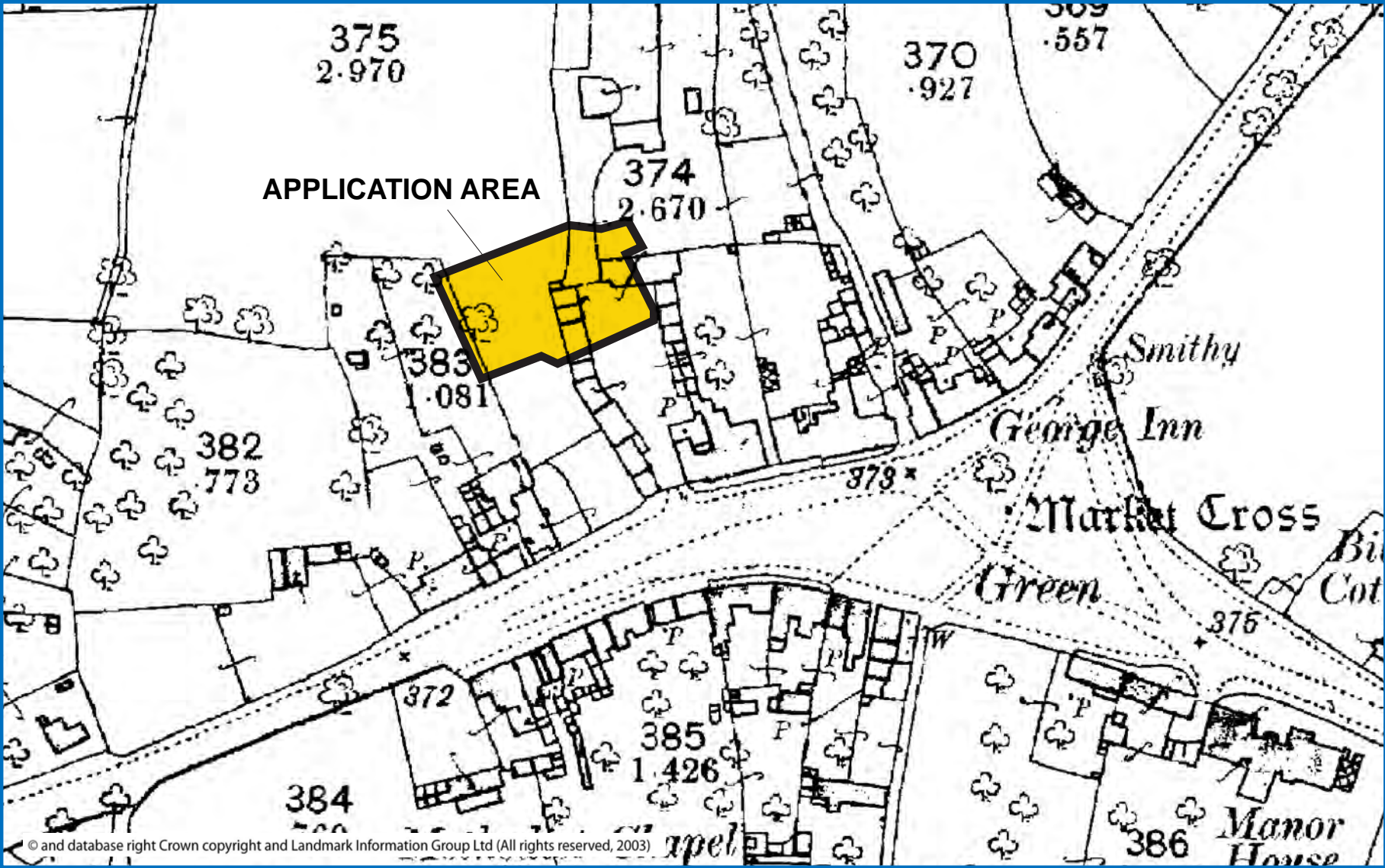


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887-9

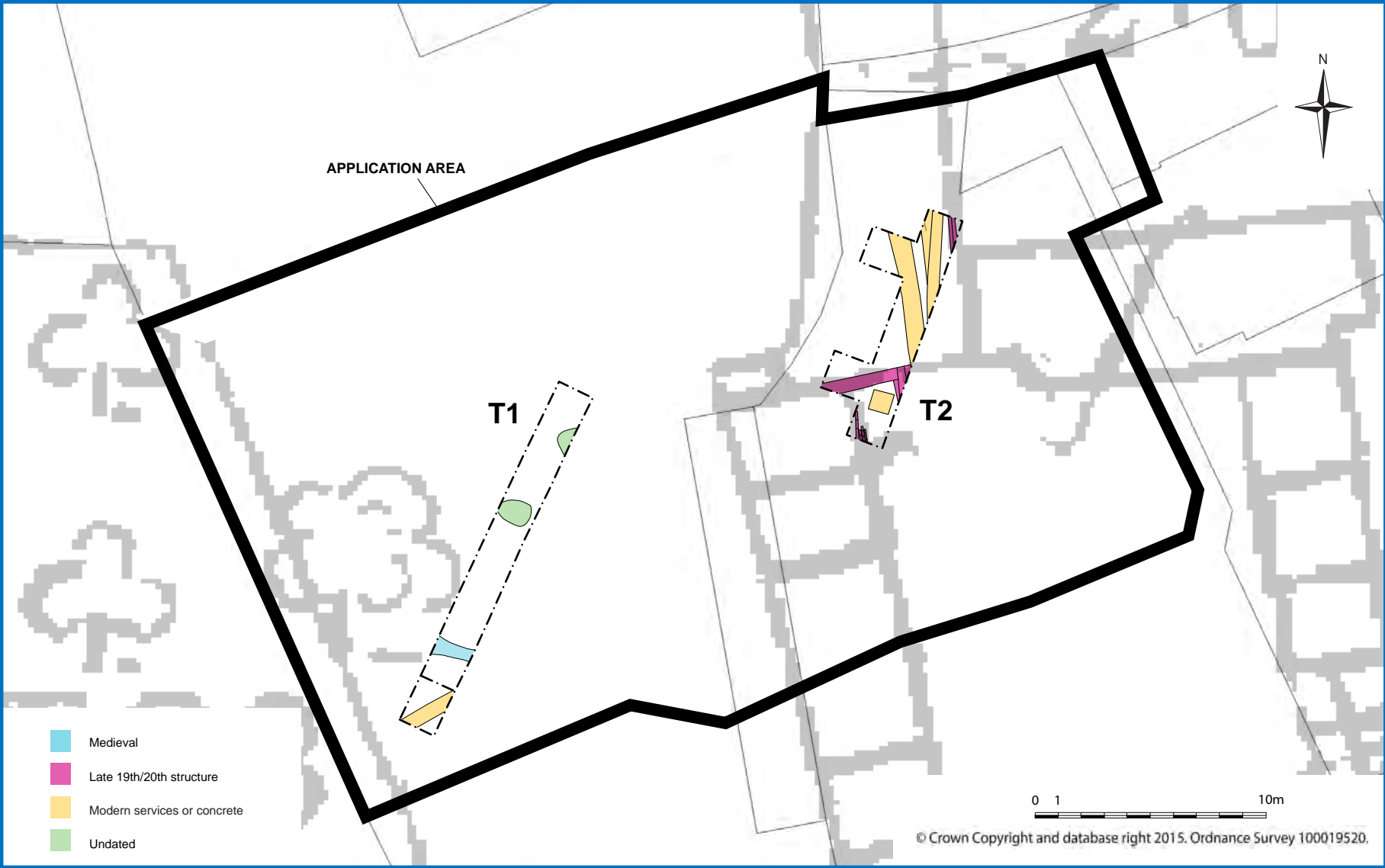


Fig 3: Location of excavated trenches with detail from 1887 map

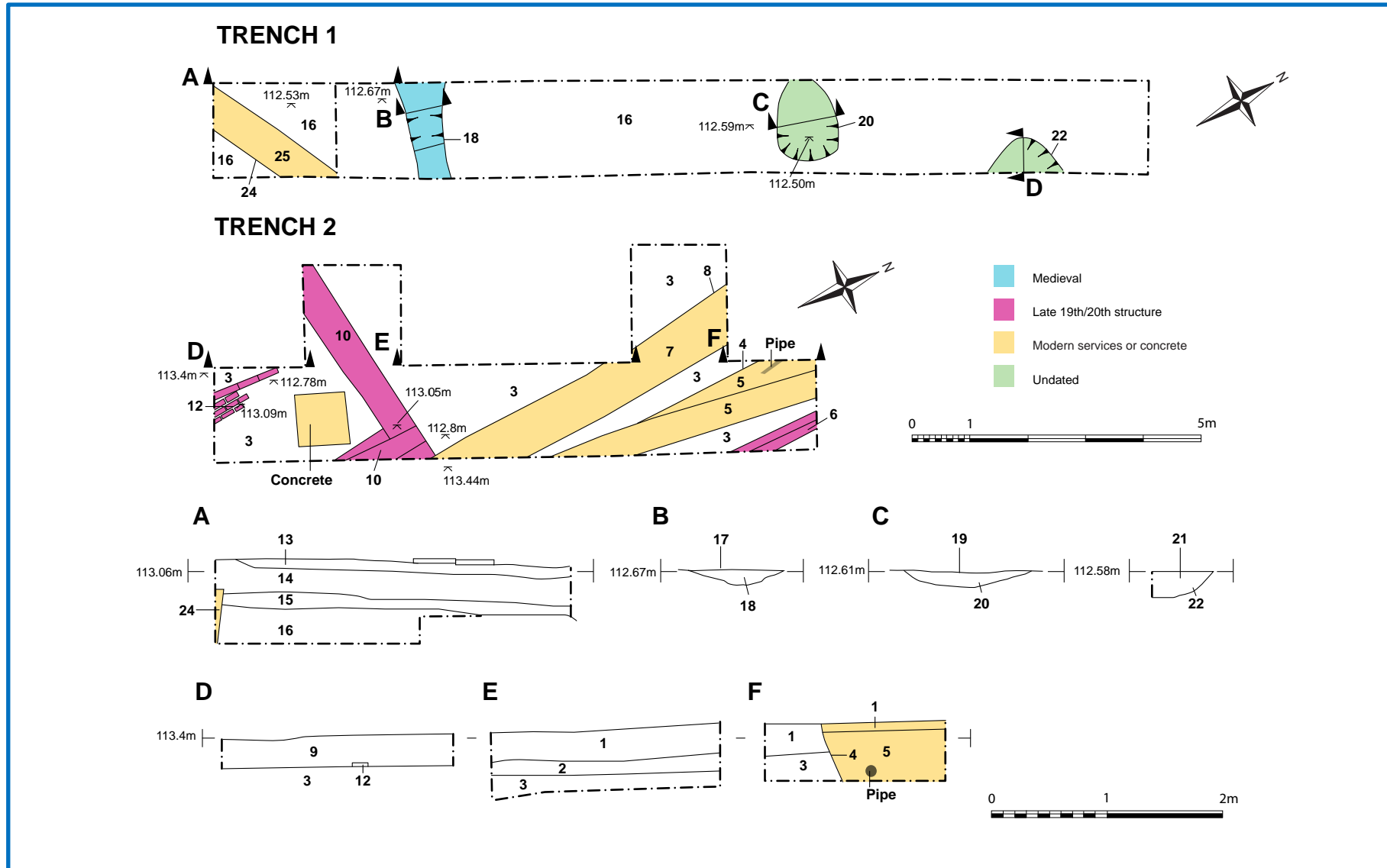


Fig 4: Detail of trenches and sections