

Alveston Hill House, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1557

SEPTEMBER 2015



*Working for
Warwickshire*

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Commissioned by:	Alveston Equestrian Ltd
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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation consisting of five trial trenches, totalling c.125m in length, was undertaken on behalf of Alveston Equestrian Ltd in an area close by cropmarks indicating possible prehistoric activity and near to the Roman and medieval Saltway. No significant archaeological deposits or finds were revealed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Stratford-upon-Avon District Council for the change of use of agricultural land to equestrian accommodation for the keeping of horses, construction of equestrian stables building and outdoor riding manège and horse exerciser, relocation of field gate and creation of vehicular access with associated hardstanding and associated changes to hedgerow, new vehicular and pedestrian track and hardstandings.

1.2 It is 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 has been approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a WSI approved in August 2015 and carried out in September 2015. This report presents the results of that work. The archaeological archive will be deposited at the Warwickshire Museum under Site Code SV15.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The site lies on the south side of Loxley Road, in the western part of Stratford-upon-Avon and is currently in agricultural use. It is located at National Grid Reference SP2290 5464 (Fig 1).

2.2 The underlying geology of the site is Mercia Mudstone with overlying Ailstone Member Sand and Gravel (BGS 2015).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. The earliest evidence for human activity in the area is a probable late Bronze Age or Iron Age double pit alignment known from a cropmark on aerial photographs to the north-east (Warwickshire Historic Environment

number MWA 4944) An Iron age coin has also been found to the north-west (MWA 8171). Other features have been recorded from aerial photographs, including a linear feature and possible enclosures, which may also be prehistoric in date (MWA 877 and 6228).

3.2 The road that runs immediately north of the site is believed to be of Romano-British date (MWA 4760), while another possible Roman road lies to the south-west (MWA 4763). Three silver Roman coins were found during fieldwalking to the north-west of the site (MWA 9963).

3.3 The road to the north, with its origins in the Roman period, was used in the medieval period and is mentioned in a charter of AD 969, when it was known as the Saltway (Sealt Straet), part of a major cross-country routeway running eastwards from Stratford (MWA 8666). The road apparently veers off the line of the Roman Road to the north-east of the site, following the edge of former field boundaries.

3.4 Several feature identified from aerial photographs to the north-west (MWA 881) were recorded during an archaeological evaluation as post-medieval quarry pits (EWA 7770). Gravel pits are marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 and the second edition map of 1905. Finds of post-medieval metalwork have been reported to the Portable Antiquity Scheme from the field to the east (MWA 18235).

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 A total of five archaeological trial trenches were excavated by a JCB type machine using a 1.6m wide ditching bucket under direct archaeological supervision. The trenching

totalled c.125m in length. Trenches 1-3 were c.25m long, Trench 4 c.30m long, and Trench 5 c.20m long. The trenches were located in the north-east part of the field which makes up the application area.

5.2 The stratigraphy in each of the five trenches followed the same pattern. Geological natural yellowish brown sand and gravel with occasional patches of red clay was reached in each of the trial trenches. No features were revealed cutting the natural.

5.3 The geological natural was overlain by c.200mm of yellowish brown sandy loam (older) plough soil.

5.4 The older plough soil was overlain by c.300mm of topsoil.

5.5 No significant archaeological finds were recovered.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The evaluation has successfully established that no significant archaeological deposits or finds will be disturbed by the approved development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Dalton Cullen at Cotswold Oak Ltd for assistance on site.

REFERENCES

BGS 2015 British Geological Survey Viewer

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

Ordnance Survey 1886 First Edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map, Warwickshire
Sheet 44.7.

VCH 1904 The Victoria County History of Warwickshire, Vol.I, London.



1. Trench 1



2. Trench 2



3. Trench 3



4. Trench 4



5. Trench 5

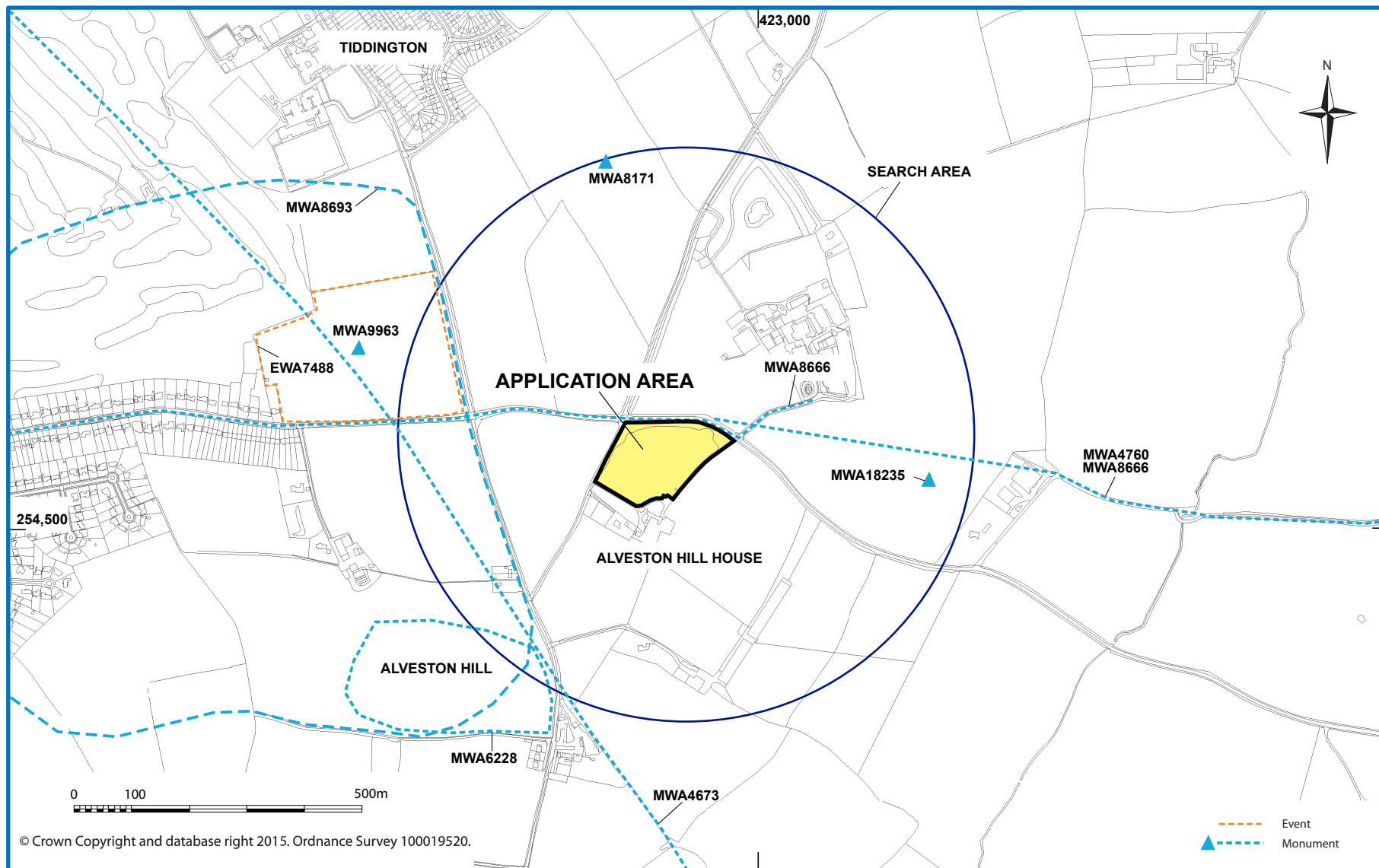


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment Information

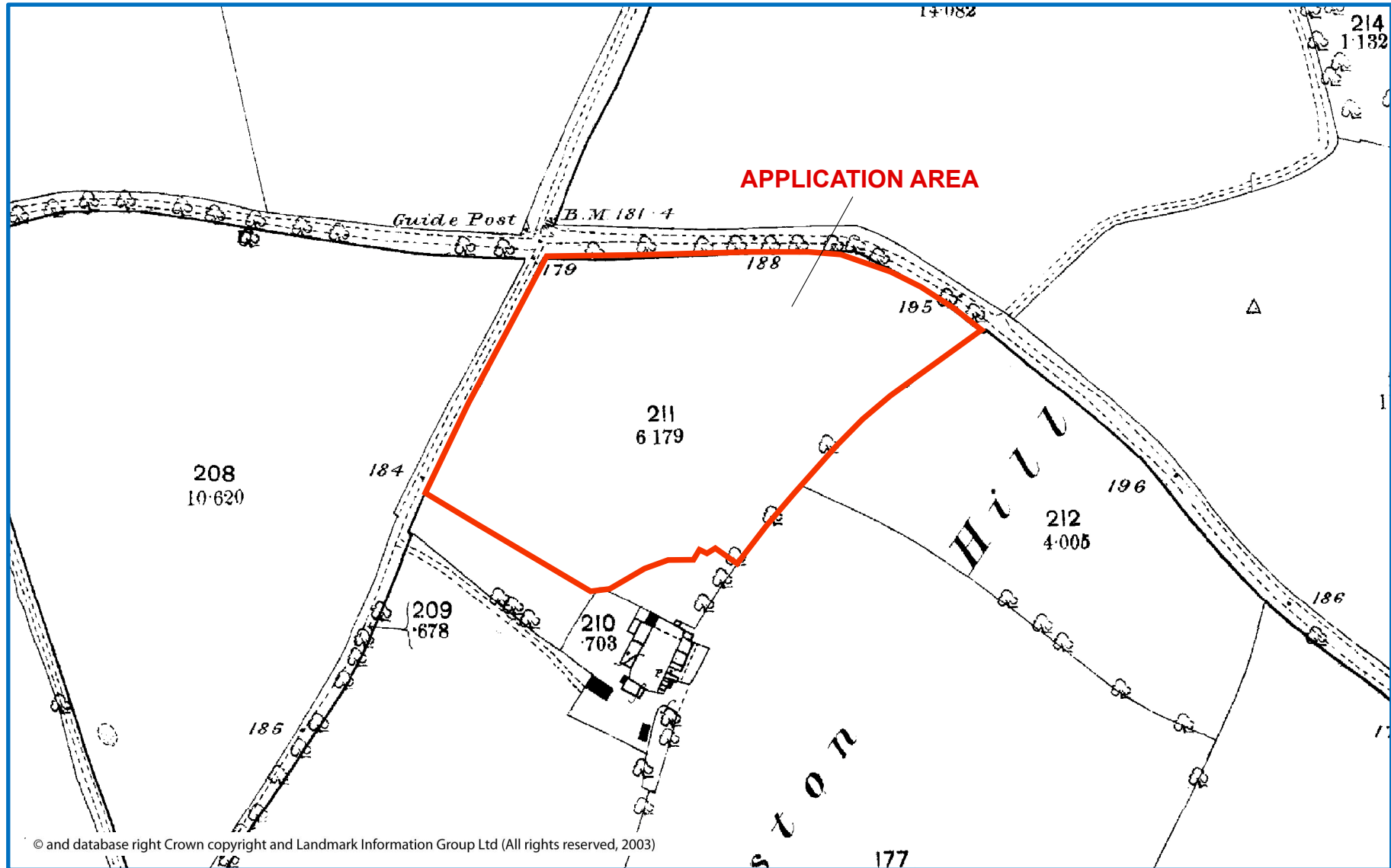


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886

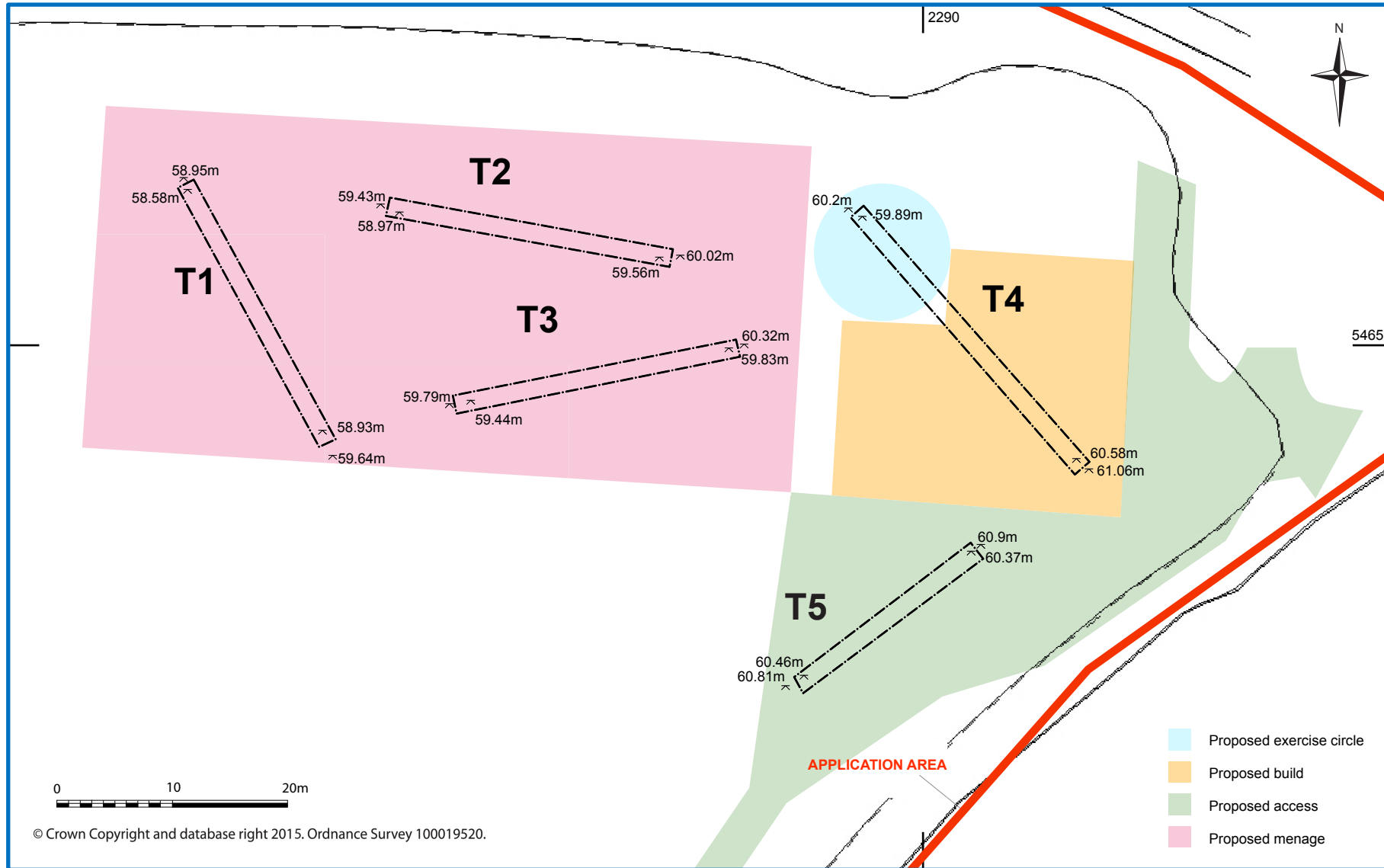


Fig 3: Location of excavated trenches