

# DOG INN, BULL RING, HARBURY, WARWICKSHIRE

## Archaeological Watching Brief and Evaluation



*understanding heritage matters*

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1485  
October 2014



*Working for  
Warwickshire*

**Project:** Dog Inn, Harbury  
**Commissioned by:** Mr Jesse Stokes  
**Project Report No.** 1485  
**Site Code:** HD14  
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## SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief combined with trial trenching in advance of a new dwelling within the medieval village centre, recorded a ditch containing a sherd of medieval pottery and foundations from an outbuilding shown on 19th and 20th century mapping. The ditch seems likely to have been close by an area of medieval activity. A 19<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pit was also found.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Stratford on Avon District Council for the erection of a detached dwelling and associated access at the Dog Inn, Harbury. WCC Planning Archaeologist Anna Stocks, in her capacity as advisor to the Planning Authority has determined that the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential albeit insufficiently understood to enable the development to proceed without further archaeological evaluation.

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 approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake such an evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief and evaluation. This report presents the results of the fieldwork which was undertaken in March and October 2014. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under the temporary accession number T/1318.

## 2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The development site, which includes the former Dog Inn, is located at Bull Ring in the centre of the village of Harbury on the south side of High Street (National Grid Reference SP 3737 5996; Fig 1).

2.2 The underlying geology of the area is undivided limestone; partly Blue Lias and partly Lower Lias (British Geological Survey 1984).

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The earliest known reference to Harbury (Edburberie), is in the Domesday Survey of 1086, where, there are five references, each referring to areas under different ownership. The overall population at this time can be estimated to be around 210. A priest is mentioned at that time and so we can infer the presence of a church, although, the present church was constructed in the 13th century (VCH 1951, 106; Warwickshire Historic Environment No MWA 621, Fig 1). The village, like others in the region would almost certainly have expanded through the 12th and 13th centuries, before declining through the 14th and 15th centuries.

3.2 It has been suggested that an earthwork within the village is Herber's Bury, a fortified mound and ditch from which the village takes its name (MWA 4617). This interpretation is somewhat tenuous as the earthwork appears to be the remains of a pond with a small central island (MWA 8918). The island is no higher than the level of the surrounding ground surface and the pond is well preserved.

3.3 The extent of the medieval village can be reconstructed from early maps and the surviving topography (MWA 9055). Harbury House, a Grade II Listed Building (LBS 307071), dates partly to the 17th century and until recently it stood isolated with few houses in the immediate vicinity. This area may have become vacant due to late medieval shrinkage of the settlement.

3.4 The village has since re-expanded with several buildings of note, including the windmill which dates to the early 19th century (MWA 622). The field to the west of the church contains two house platforms (MWA 636), which belonged to buildings dating to around the early 19th century. Land to the south of the site is shown as open ground, including a possible enclosure and orchard.

3.5 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 shows a range of buildings associated with the Dog Inn occupying the Church Street frontage. Further buildings are shown to the south and along the southern boundary of the site (Fig 2). Later maps show that some of the southern buildings have been demolished (Fig 3). A single outbuilding is shown consistently in the eastern part of the site.

## 4 AIMS AND METHODS

4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there were any significant archaeological remains in the area of development, to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the Harbury area.

4.2 Secondary aims included placing the results in their wider local and regional contexts as appropriate.

4.3 The objective was to locate, record and analyse archaeological materials and deposits and to disseminate the results in an appropriate format.

4.4 A total of two trenches were opened up by a JCB type machine. Hardstanding and modern soils were removed under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist until either the top of archaeological remains or geological natural was reached.

## 5 RESULTS

### Trench 1

5.1 Trench 1 was 7.5m long and aligned NE/SW. Geological natural reddish brown/yellowish brown silty clay was recorded between 0.2m and 0.36m below the current ground surface.

5.2 Cutting the natural was an east/west aligned ditch (103). It was 0.7m wide by 0.7m deep and contained three fills. The earliest fill was re-deposited natural (106) which was not dated but which coincided with a dark greyish brown clay loam deposit (107), also not dated. Both these early fills were overlain by a deposit of very dark greyish brown clay loam (104) which contained very few pebbles and a single rim sherd of medieval pottery of probable 13th century date.

5.3 Overlying the ditch was a 0.3m deep layer of modern aggregate make-up (102) and 0.06m of tarmac car park surface (101). A small strip to the south contained very dark greyish brown clay loam topsoil (100) overlying the natural to a depth of 0.2m

### Trench 2

5.4 Trench 2 was 6.5m long and aligned NW/SE. Geological natural reddish brown/yellowish brown silty clay (202) was revealed at a depth of 0.36m below the current

ground surface. It was overlain by car park deposits; (201) and (200). No features were observed cutting the geological natural.

### **Watching Brief**

5.5 Service trenches were observed in the area of the new development. Geological natural sand and limestone (4) was recorded at a depth of 0.46m below the current ground level.

5.6 Pit (5) cut the natural 0.48m deep and contained a black ash fill with glass, tile and 19th century pottery sherds (6).

5.7 A limestone wall foundation (7) and a brick wall foundation (8) aligned north/south sandwiched a layer of blue grey clay (9) and seem likely to relate to an outbuilding shown on 19th and 20th century mapping.

5.8 Modern make-up layers included a 0.25m deep layer of brick rubble hardcore (3), 0.15m of modern stone (2) and tarmac car park surface (1).

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 A single significant feature was recorded in the evaluation trenches. It is not possible to be certain what function this ditch served as it was only evident in Trench 1. The single sherd of medieval pottery recovered from it is in good condition and seems likely therefore to have been close to a foci of activity.

6.2 Foundations found in the service trenches were probably the remains of an outbuilding shown on 19th and 20th century mapping. The pit was likely to have been a contemporary rubbish pit.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mr Jesse Stokes for commissioning the work and the Planning Archaeologist for preparing the brief.

## **REFERENCES**

British Geological Survey 1984 Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales), Solid and Drift Geology, Warwick Sheet 184.

Landmark 2003 Ordnance Survey 1887 *First Edition 1:2500 map, SP3759*

Landmark 2003 Ordnance Survey 1905 *Second Edition 1:2500 map, SP3759*

VCH 1951 *The Victoria History of the County of Warwickshire, Vol. VI, Knightlow Hundred*, London, 103-108.



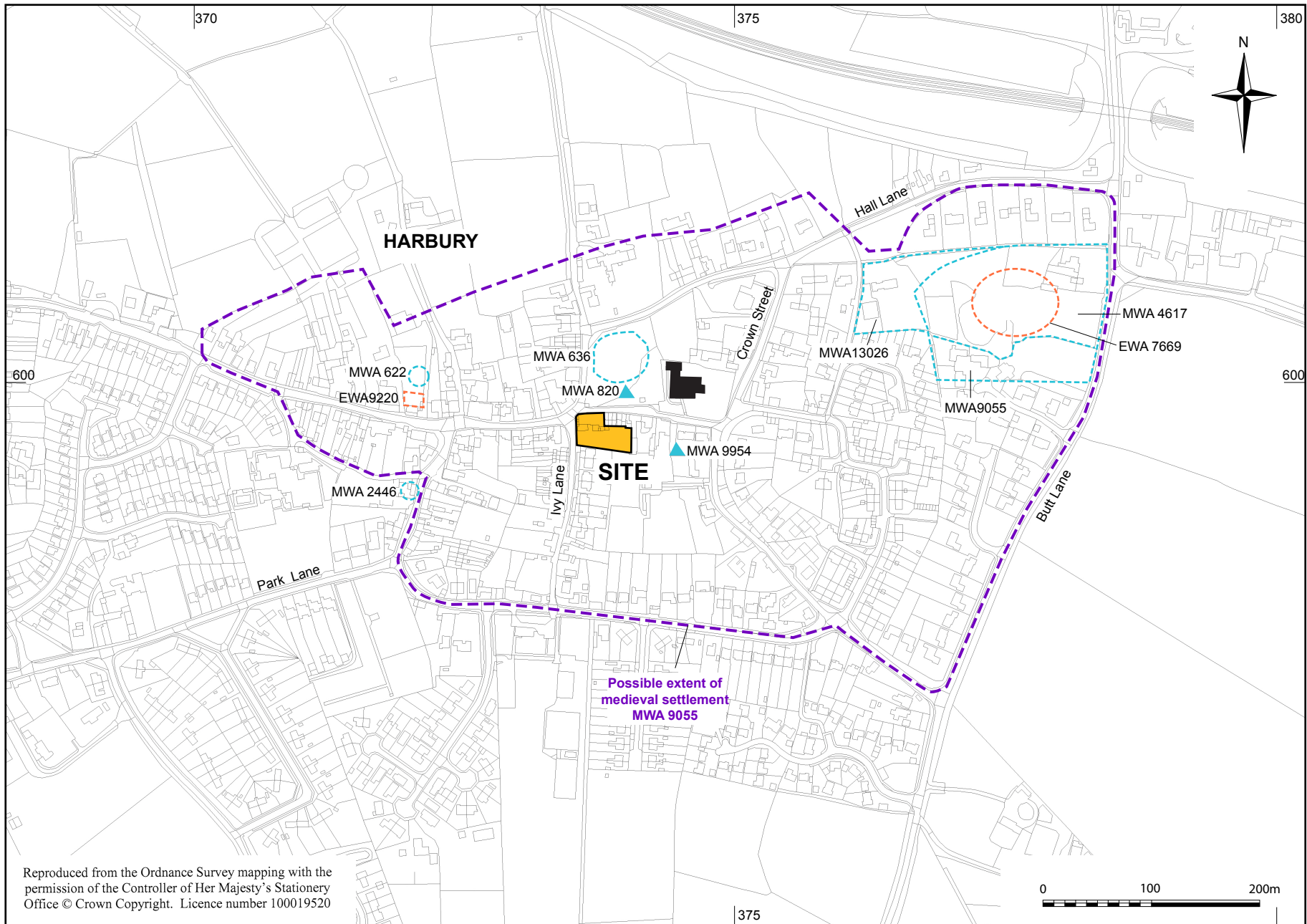
## APPENDICES

### A List of contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	Tarmac	Car park surface
2	Aggregates	Make-up layer
3	Hardcore	Brick rubble make-up layer
4	Yellowish brown sand and limestone	Geological natural
5	Pit	Post medieval
6	Black Ash	Fill of 5
7	Limestone footing	Wall foundation
8	Brick footing	Wall foundation
9	Blue clay	Bonding material
100	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Topsoil
101	Tarmac	Car park surface
102	Aggregates	Make-up layer
103	Ditch cut	Boundary feature?
104	Very dark greyish brown clay loam	Fill of 103
105	Reddish brown/yellow clay	Geological Natural
106	Yellowish brown clay	Redeposited natural fill of 103
107	Dark greyish brown clay loam	Lower fill of 103
200	Tarmac	Car park surface
201	Hardcore Layer	Make-up for car park
202	Reddish brown clay/limestone	Geological Natural

### B Finds List

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Comment</i>
6	Pottery	39	19 <sup>th</sup> century
6	Glass	8	19 <sup>th</sup> century vessel glass
104	Pottery	1	Medieval



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Fig 1: Site location

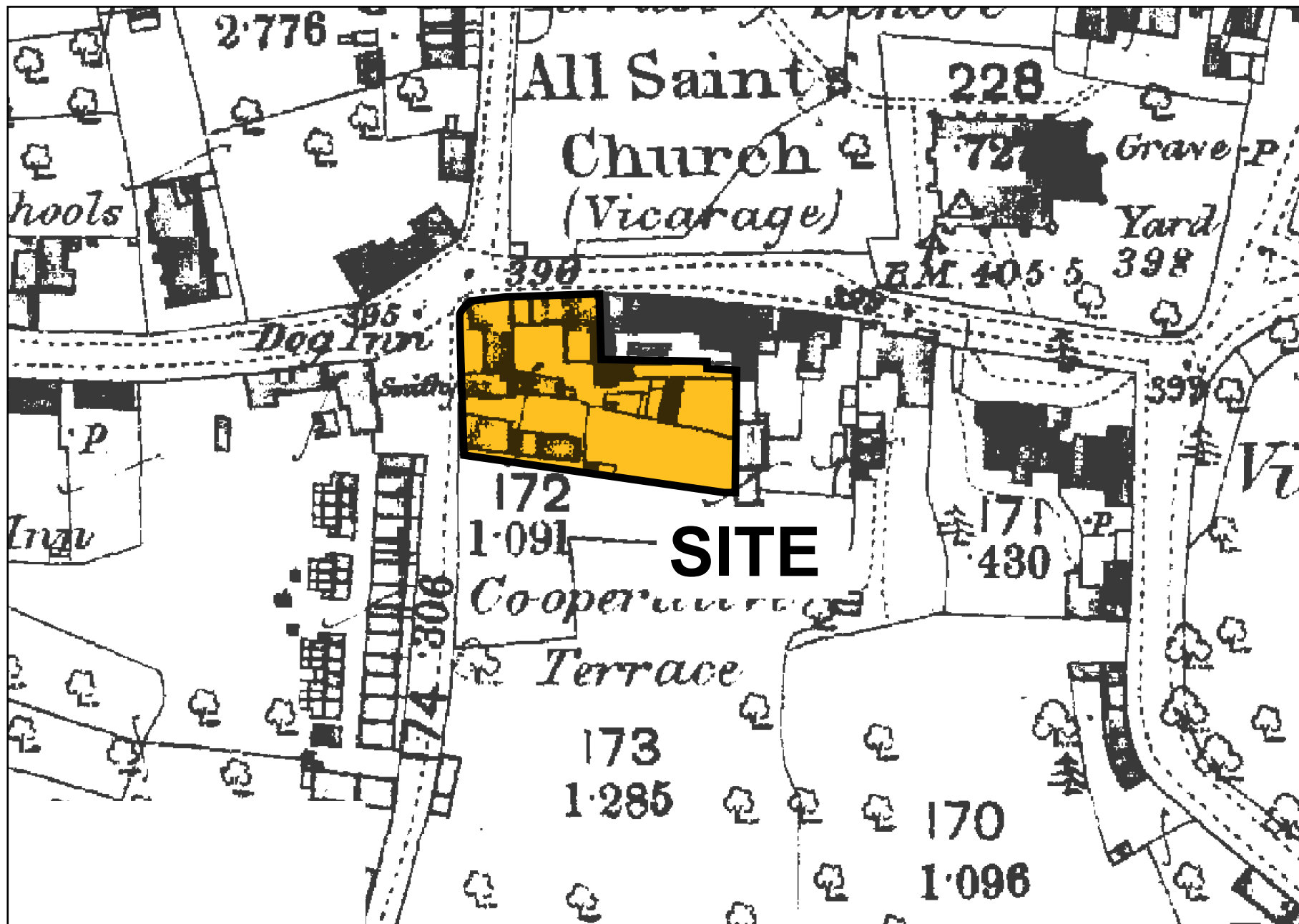


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887

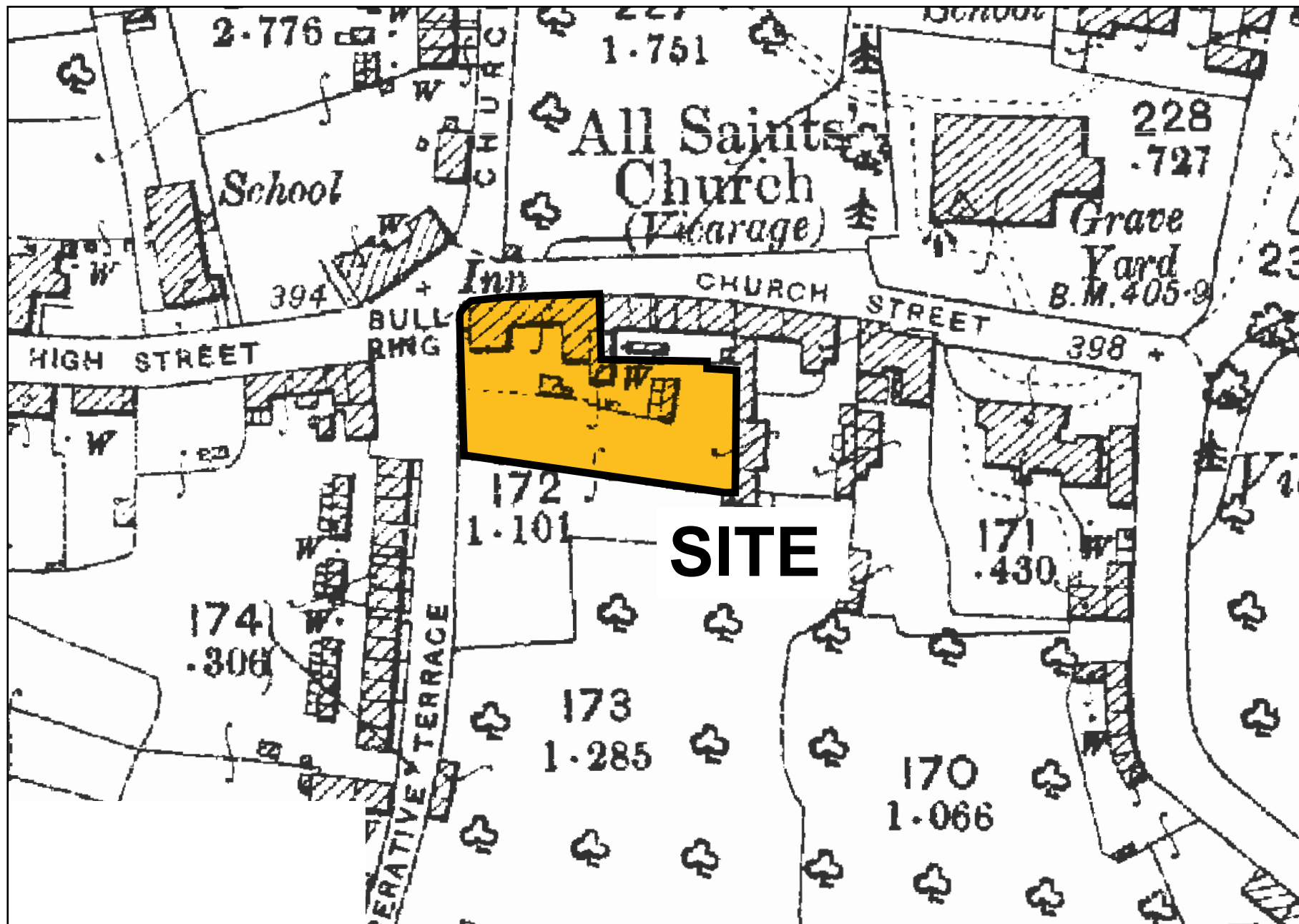


Fig 3: Detail from Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1905

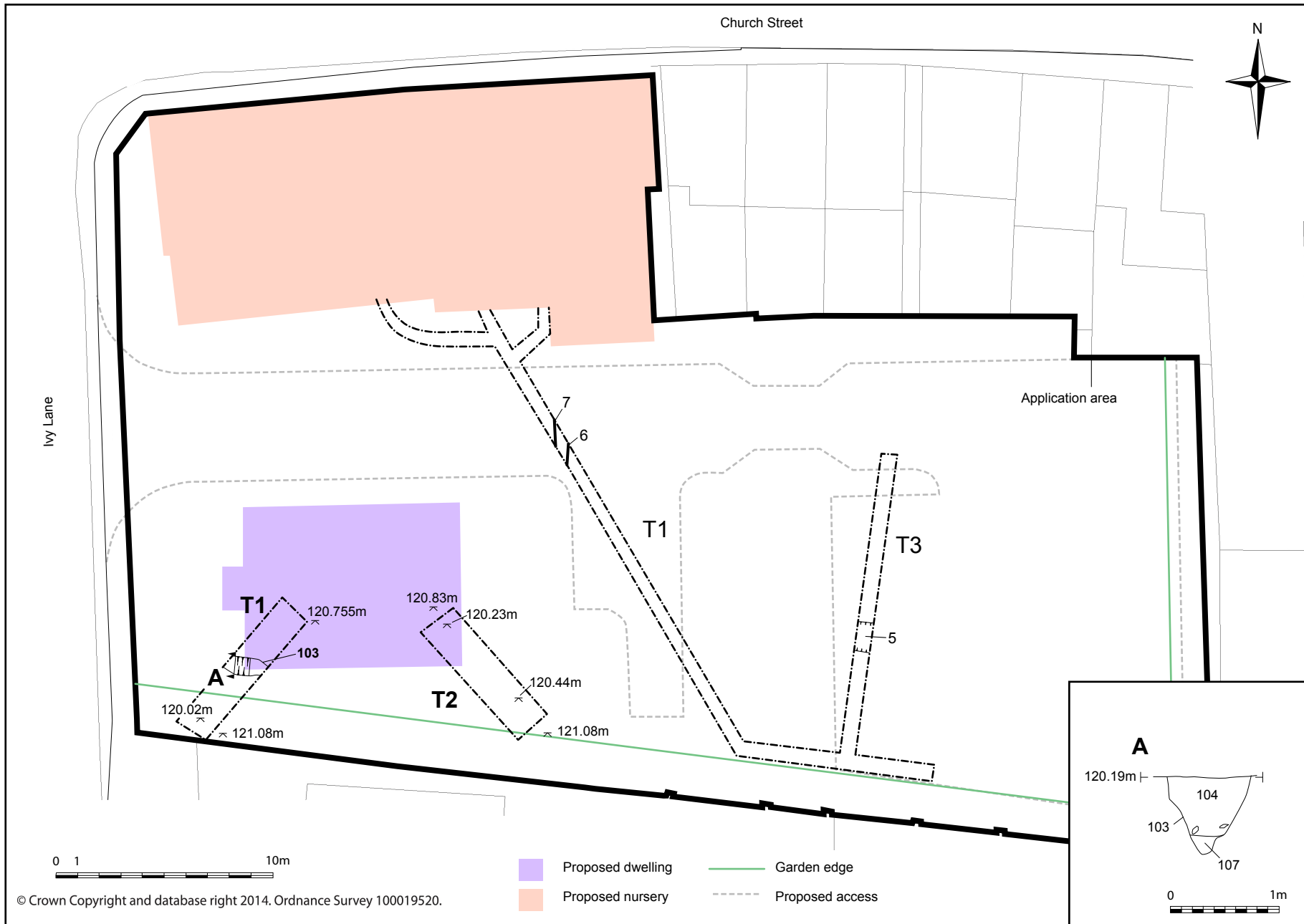


Fig 4: Location of excavated trenches



Fig 5: Service trenches looking north



Fig 6: Service trenches looking west



Fig 7: Pit 5 looking east

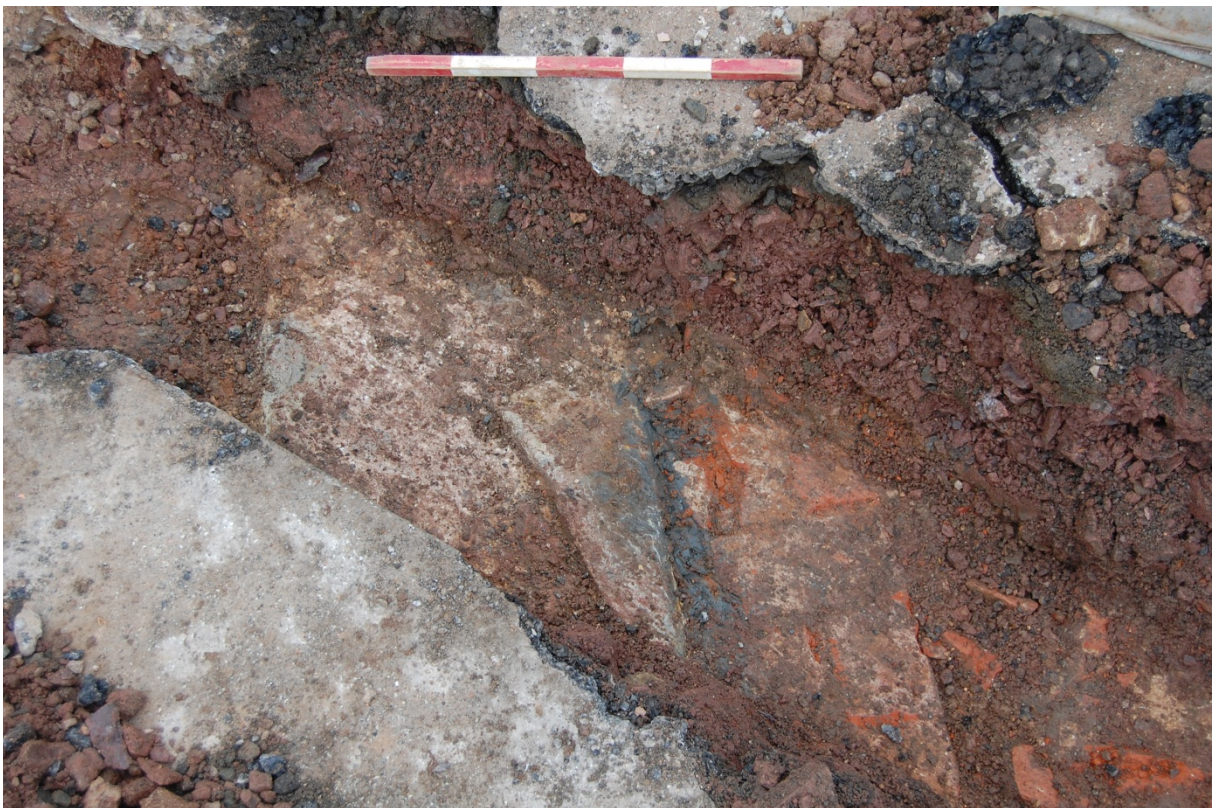


Fig 8: Wall foundations 7 & 8 looking north



Fig 9: trench 1 looking south-west



Fig 10: Ditch 103 looking east





Fig 11: Trench 2 looking north-west