

Stratford-upon-Avon, Banbury Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

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*Working for
Warwickshire*

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Road, Stratford

Commissioned by: A P Bird

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation designed to determine the potential for archaeological deposits to be present across an area of proposed development was able to confirm that the area had been significantly disturbed in the recent past and that no archaeological deposits, features or finds are likely to be affected by the proposed development.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Outline Planning permission has been granted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council for the construction of 10 detached houses and garages with associated development at Stratford-upon-Avon Business Park, Banbury Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

1.2 It was 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 which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (2nd December 2014) approved by the Planning Authority. The fieldwork was carried out on 9th December 2014. The programme of archaeological work will inform the Planning Authority of the potential impact of the development on any potentially surviving archaeological remains.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 Stratford-upon-Avon Business Park is located 500m to the south-east of Stratford-upon-Avon along Banbury Road. The underlying geology of the site is River Terrace Deposits (BGS 2014).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 There is very little evidence for archaeological deposits in the area of the proposed development. Aerial photographs showing cropmarks of buried archaeological features suggest that there was a prehistoric or Roman settlement c.450m to the north of the site (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 1009, Fig 1).

3.2 The Saltway from Droitwich runs past the site (MWA 4757/MWA 8639). This road ran through Stratford-upon-Avon crossing the Avon at the ford (now Clopton Bridge). The Road

was turnpiked and became a toll road at some time between 1725 and 1750 (HER MWA 4775).

3.3 In the medieval period the site was likely to have been part of the open fields. There is photographic evidence for ridge and furrow survival in the immediate vicinity in 1945 and 1946 (HER AP SP2253).

3.4 An undated cropmark is situated around Little Crofts over 250m to the south-east of the site (MWA 4943).

3.5 Within the northern part of the site, a pond is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885-6 (Fig 2).

3.6 During WWII several structures were built on the site including a large storage facility, underground air raid shelters, prisoner of war huts and ancillary buildings (Fig 2). At this time considerable landscaping took place including the creation of a large embankment for a gun emplacement. The embankment was created from soils machined from the site. The pond, shown on the First Edition had been filled in at this time.

3.7 The Environment Agency records that the northern part of the site was approved for use as an inert landfill site between 1987-1994 (GEG 2014). The WWII complex was demolished between 1999-2003, with this extensive demolition activity being recorded on Google Earth.

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 to be developed; to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the Stratford area.

4.2 Secondary aims included 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 trial trench was excavated in a position agreed with the planning authority. The trench was dug in shallow spits using a 360° excavator under direct archaeological supervision.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The 30m long trench was c.1.6m wide and was carefully excavated using a toothed bucket (approved by the Planning Archaeologist). Geological natural yellowish brown sand and gravel (2) was found at a depth of 0.12m below the current ground level. As this 0.5m-1.2m deep deposit was loosely compacted it was removed to verify that it was not re-deposited. It overlay natural reddish brown clay (3). No archaeological features were noted cutting the natural, only modern land-drains.

5.2 The topsoil and turf which overlay the natural was a 20th century formation (1). No archaeological finds were recovered from it.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Significant truncation had occurred across the area of the trial trench. No surviving archaeological layers were present and it is possible that the geological natural had also been truncated. Given these results it is unlikely that any archaeological remains will be disturbed by the development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mr A P Bird for commissioning the work and arranging the machine and driver.

REFERENCES

BGS 2014 <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed September 2014)

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown sandy loam and turf
2	Superficial Natural	Yellowish brown sand and gravel
3	Underlying Natural	Reddish brown clay

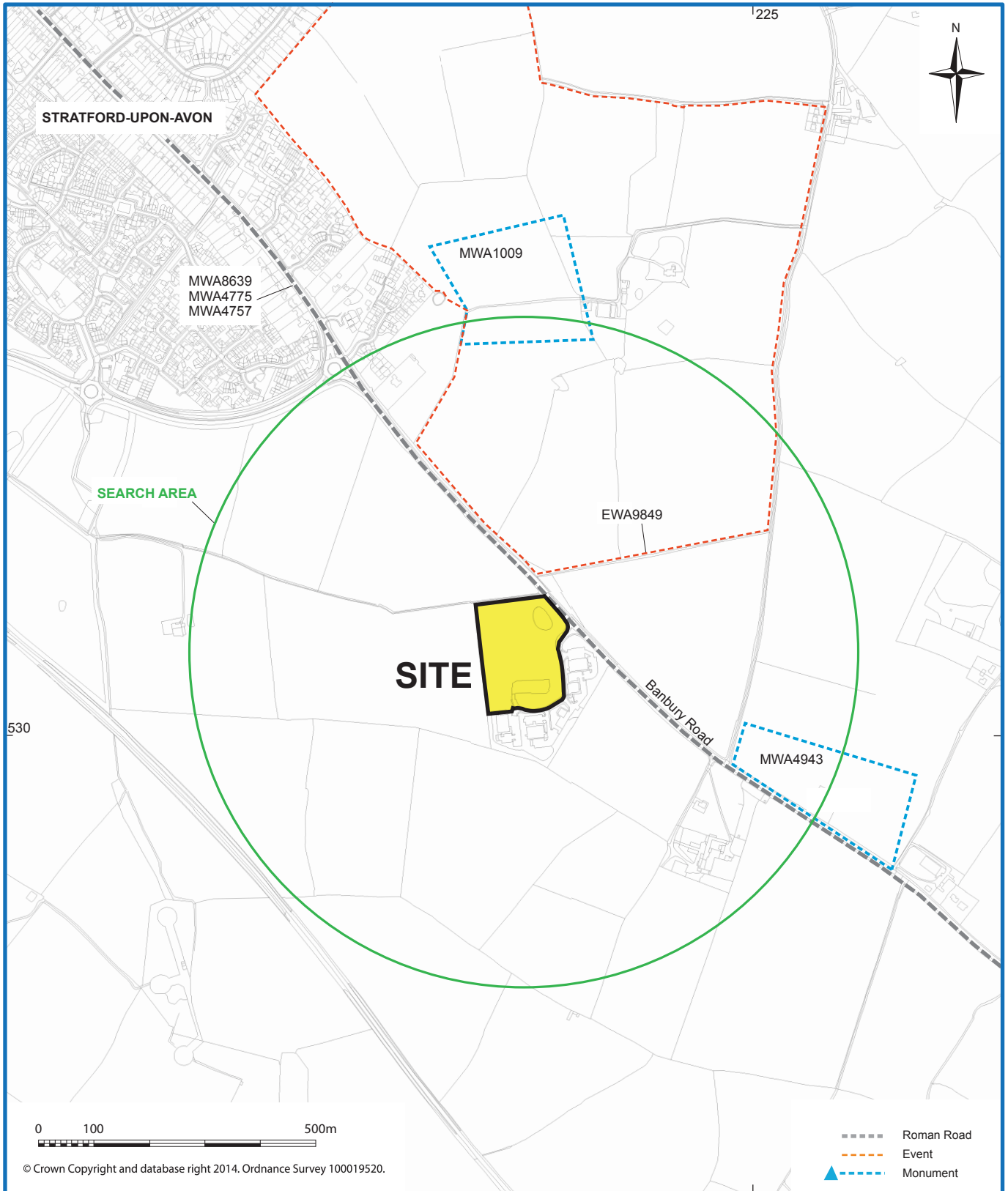


Fig 1: Site location



Fig 2: Trench excavated



Fig 3: Trial trench, looking SSW



Fig 4. Indicative depth of overlying topsoil