

Land off Barton Road, Welford-on-Avon, Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1605

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*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project:	Barton Road
Commissioned by:	David Bishton on behalf of Mrs J.McKay
Project Report No.	1605
Site Code:	WB15
Planning Reference:	13/02445/FUL
Planning Authority:	Stratford-upon-Avon
Planning Archaeologist:	Anna Stocks, Warwickshire
National Grid Reference:	SP 4846 7386
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CONTENTS	1
Summary	2
1 Introduction	2
2 Site Location	2
3 Archaeological and Historical Background	3
4 Aims and Methods	4
5 Results	5
6 Conclusions	6
Acknowledgements	7
References	7

PHOTOGRAPHS

1 View north-east across site	8
2 Trench 3 looking south	8
3 Trench 5 looking north	9
4 Deposit sequence	9

APPENDICES

A List of Contexts	10
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FIGURES

1 Location of site and Historic Environment information	
2 Location of excavated with First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887-1889	
3 Trenches excavated with detail of trench 5 and section A	

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation consisting of six trial trenches was undertaken on behalf of Mrs McKay on land at Barton Road, Welford-on-Avon. No significant archaeological remains were revealed. The evaluation provided no further evidence of land use in the area during the prehistoric or Romano-British periods and confirmed that the site was situated in agricultural land during the medieval period.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Stratford-upon-Avon District Council for residential development of four local market homes and eight affordable local market homes together with two new access points, landscaping and associated works on land off Barton Road, Welford-on-Avon, Warwickshire (Planning ref 13/02445). Warwickshire County Council Planning Archaeologist Anna Stocks advised that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken before the development commenced in order to allow for the mitigation of any archaeological remains that might survive on the site.

1.2 A planning condition attached to the consent required that the applicant secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire have been commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the planning authority. The approved scheme included six evaluation trenches across the site. This report presents the results of the work and the project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under Site Code WB15.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The development site lies to the south of the Barton Road, Welford-on-Avon at NGR SP 145 515 in the parish of Welford-on-Avon (Fig 1).

2.2 The site was generally level with a slight slope towards the road. The underlying drift geology of the site is recorded as Wasperton Sand and Gravel with underlying Lias Clay and Charnmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 1974).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 There are no known archaeological sites or finds in the development area itself although the Welford area contains significant records of prehistoric, Roman and early medieval activity. The earliest evidence in the area comes from a number of Neolithic or Early-Middle Bronze Age flints, recovered to the west of the existing village (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record Numbers WA 4412, WA 5312, WA 5651). Similar densities of such finds have been recorded over much of the county. They do not represent evidence for early settlement, but do indicate that this part of the Avon valley was frequented during this timeframe.

Table A Romano-British records from Historic Environment Record search

(courtesy Warwickshire HER)

<i>HER ref</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
1804	Findspot	Fragments of Roman pottery were found west of Hunt Hall Lane.
3750	Findspot	Remains of a Roman pot and other fragments of pottery were found west of Headland Road
9963	Findspot	Roman coins found during fieldwalking
4763	Roman road	Probable Roman road which runs south east from Tiddington
9833	Undated	An V-shaped ditch which may have belonged to a Romano-British field system indicated by cropmarks

3.2 Undated cropmarks to the north of the site include a possible trackway or field system of later prehistoric or more likely Romano-British date (WA 1815). Finds from the north side of Barton Road also include Romano-British pottery (WA 3750). What may have been a feature associated with this crop mark system was recorded during an archaeological observation at Welford-on-Avon Primary School (WA 9833, Palmer and Coutts 2004, 5). Here a ditch with a V-shaped profile was recorded but no finds were recovered from it. An archaeological watching brief at Welford Bowls Club immediately west of the school did not record any archaeological features or finds (EWA 3384).

3.3 The earliest historical reference to Welford-on-Avon is in the Domesday Book of 1086 when it was part owned by the Abbey of St Denis in Paris (VCH 1949, 189-190). The medieval village (WA 9022) developed to the south of a ford across the River Avon on the road from Binton Bridge to Long Marston (VCH 1949, 189). Medieval finds been recovered from the area south of the site and evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation of open fields

recorded (WA 3911).

Table B Medieval records from Historic Environment Record search

(courtesy Warwickshire HER)

<i>HER ref</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
1803	Findspot	Fragments of pottery were found east of Headland Road
2751	Findspot	Fragments of pottery were found west of Headland Road
9022	Village	The possible extent of the Medieval settlement of Welford on Avon is suggested by documentary evidence.
5443	Findspot	Bronze late Medieval buckle found by owner c1955.
3911	Medieval/Post-medieval	Ridge and furrow cultivation in the parish of Welford on Avon, visible as an earthwork or on aerial photographs.

3.4 The Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER) also includes the following entries for archaeological events or interventions in the area of the development.

Table C Records of events from Historic Environment Record search

(courtesy Warwickshire HER)

<i>HER ref</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
EWA7191	WB	Bank Farm, Long Marston Road, Welford
EWA7405	AO	Archaeological Observation at Welford-on-Avon Primary School
EWA9197	WB	Watching Brief at Bank Farm
EWA3384	WB	Welford on Avon Bowls Club
EWA9523	EV	Archaeological Evaluation at Bank Farm

3.5 Historic mapping shows that the eastern half of the site was utilised as an orchard in the early part of the 20th century.

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 six trenches were opened up by a 20-tonne, 360° excavator with a 1.90m wide, toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and other plough soils were removed under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist until either the top of archaeological remains or geological natural was reached.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The six trenches were opened by machine with a supervising archaeologist. A broadly similar deposit sequence was revealed during the evaluation although localised truncation or variations in natural were apparent.

Table D Trench summary

Trench No	Dimensions		Orientation	Contexts*	Topsoil	Natural geology (Reddish brown/light greyish yellow clay)	Modern truncation/Constraint
	Length	Width					
1	30m	1.9m	SW-NE	100-101	*	✓	Ground reduction
2	30m	1.9m	NW-SE	200-202		✓	Ground reduction
3	30m	1.9m	N-S	300-302	✓	✓	
4	30m	1.9m	NW-SE	400-402	✓	✓	
5	30m	1.9m	SW-NE	500-505	✓	✓	Field drain
6	30m	1.9m	SW-NE	600-603	✓	✓	

5.2 Topsoil and other overburden were removed in spits to the top of the geological natural, where no significant archaeological remains were revealed. The geological natural was revealed in all trenches, but there was some variation in the revealed deposits. Layers of reddish brown silty clay (101, 202) were predominant on the western side of the site. These included patches or interleaving deposits of lighter yellowish grey clay with occasional

Table E Deposit level encountered in trenches (T1 - T6)

Trench	Levels (aOD)			
	Ground surface		Natural	
	max	min	max	min
1	37.61m	37.21m	36.95m	36.65m
2	36.70m	36.67m	36.08m	35.99m
3	36.69m	36.61m	36.17m	36.16m
4	37.10m	36.81m	36.48m	36.10m
5	36.98m	36.92m	35.92m	35.88m
6	37.31m	36.81m	36.42m	36.22m

patches of gravel. Elsewhere on the site yellowish grey clays were present (402, 503, 603). There was no evidence of the revealed natural layers being cut by any significant features.

5.3 Natural clays were overlain by other layers of silty clay (502, 602) and sporadically by a layer of light grey silty clay (501, 601), which may have been a former horticultural soil. No significant archaeological remains were revealed in association with this sequence. The ground surface was comprised of topsoil (400, 500, 600) or redeposited topsoil or modern material (200). The topsoil deposit survived intermittently across the site.

5.4 A single land drain (505) was revealed in the northern end of Trench 5 where it was aligned north to south across the trench. The current ground surface deposits contained a few fragments of 19th and 20th century pottery, which were not retained. No earlier or other finds were revealed during the evaluation.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The evaluation trenches revealed no significant archaeological remains and whilst there were localised areas of reduced ground where the topsoil deposits had been truncated a clear deposit sequence was revealed.

6.2 Existing topsoil and a former ploughsoil or horticultural soil reflected the recent history of the site as orchards or previously agricultural fields.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank David Bishton for initiating the work and Mrs McKay for commissioning the work. Thanks also to PVL Construction for providing the machine and assistance on site.

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1 View north-east across site



2 Trench 3 looking south



3 Trench 5 looking north



4 Deposit sequence

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	100	Redeposited topsoil	Modern
1	101	Layer	
1	102	Yellowish brown sand and gravel	Geological Natural
2	200	Modern redeposited	Modern
2	201	Light grey brown silty clay	Former horticultural/plough soil
2	202	Yellowish brown sandy gravel	Natural
3	300	Layer	Modern
3	301	Reddish brown silty clay	Disturbed natural?
3	302	Yellowish grey silty clay	Natural
4	400	Topsoil	Modern
4	401	Reddish brown silty clay	
4	402	Reddish brown/yellowish grey silty clay	Natural
5	500	Topsoil	Modern
5	501	Greyish brown silty clay	Former plough soil
5	502	Light reddish brown silty clay	
5	503	Yellowish grey silty clay	Natural
5	504	Fill of 505	Post-medieval
5	505	Field drain	Post-medieval
6	600	Topsoil	
6	601	Dark greyish brown silty sand	Former plough soil
6	602	Reddish brown/yellowish grey silty clay	Natural
6	603	Light yellowish grey silty clay	Natural

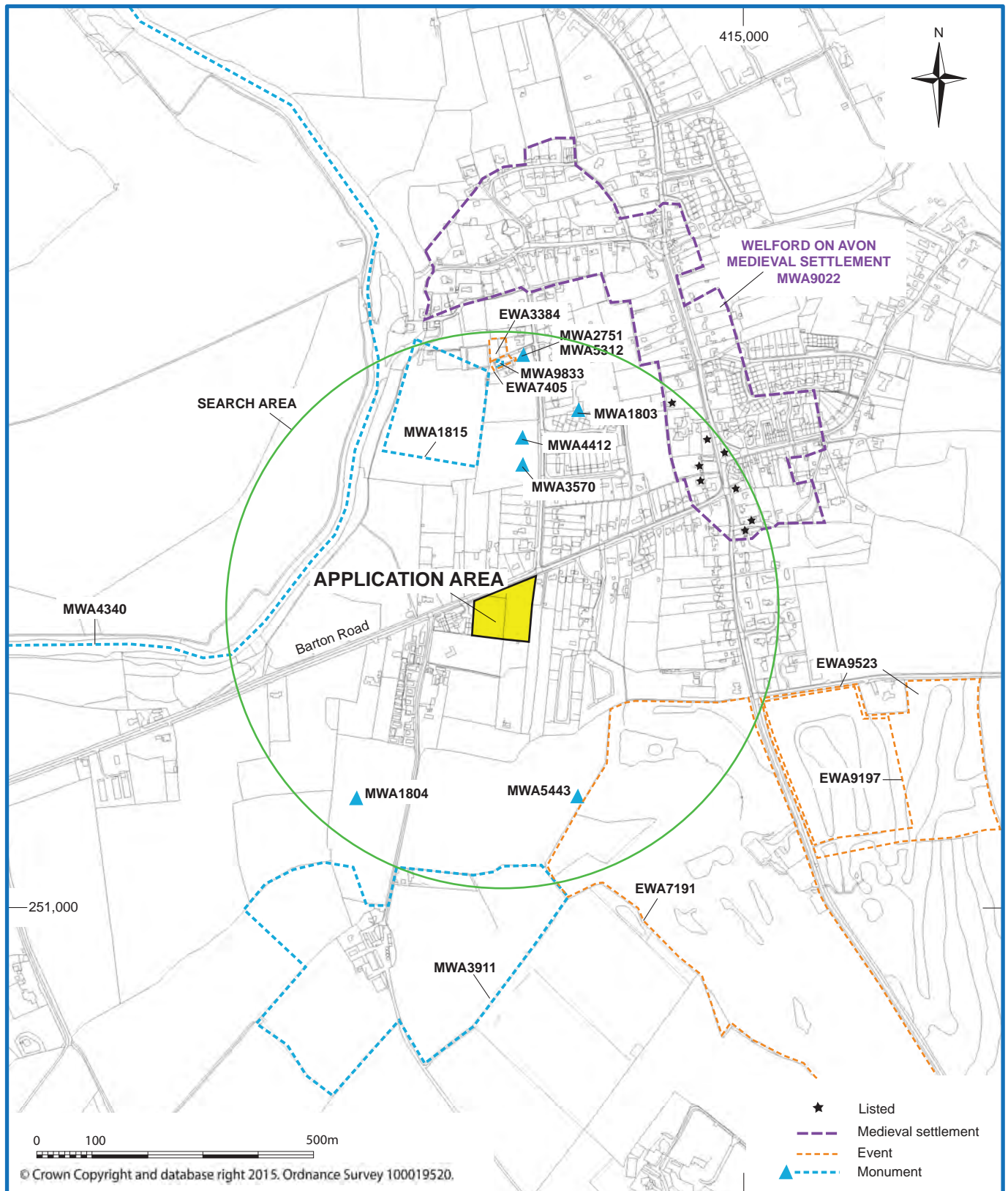


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment Information

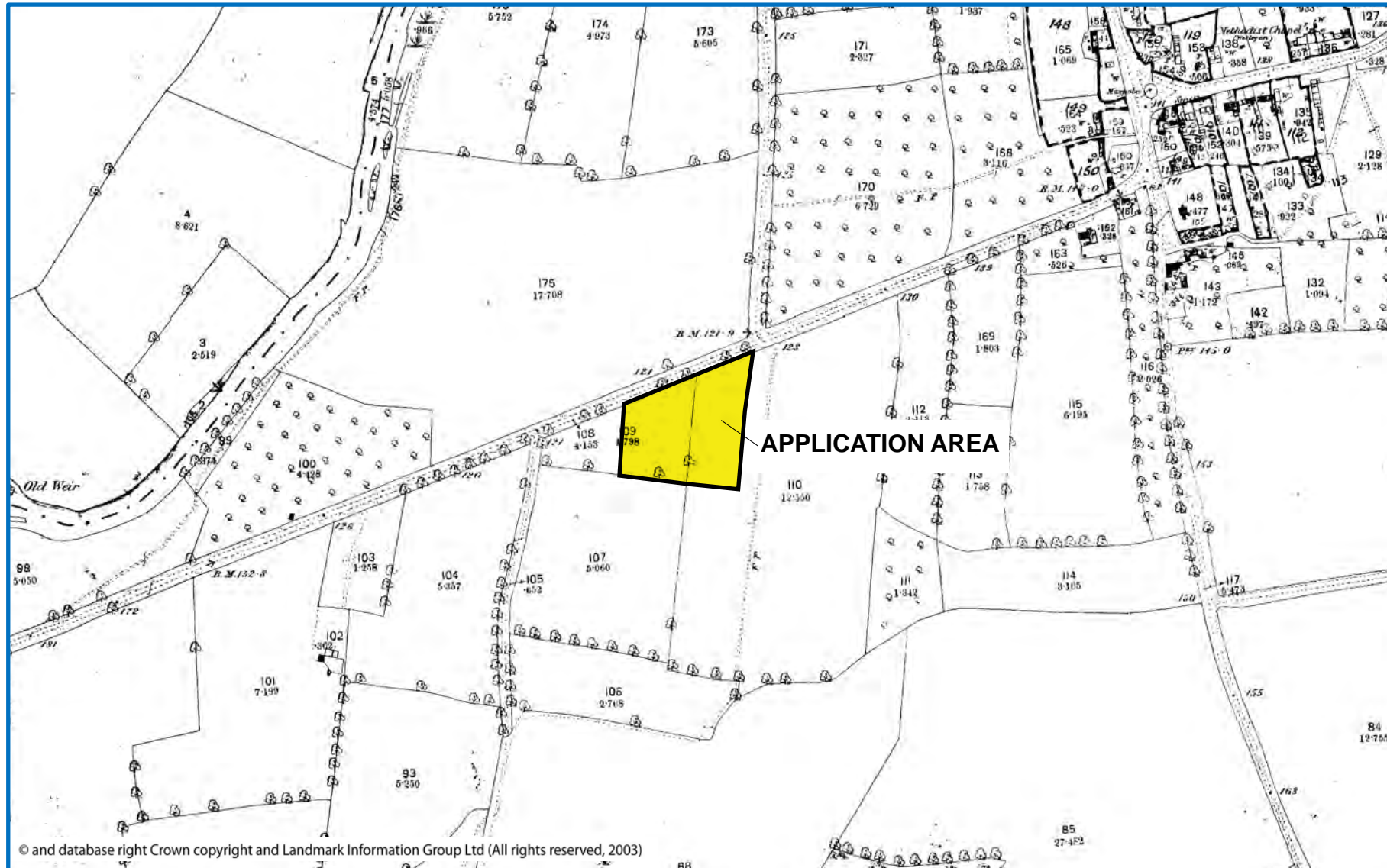


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887-9

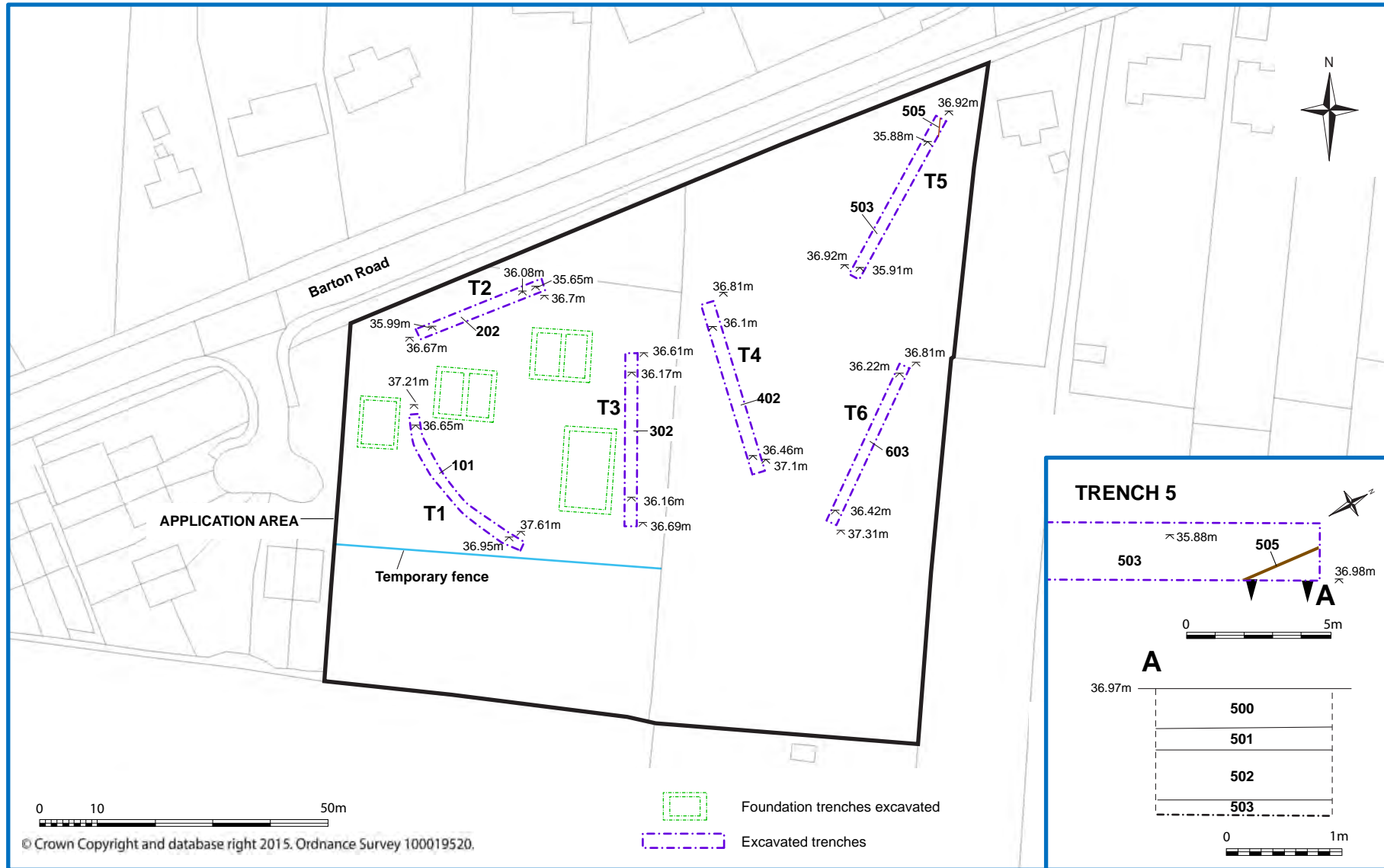


Fig 3: Trenches excavated with detail of trench 5 and section A