

Land off Corbetts Close Hampton in Arden Solihull

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1851

August 2018



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Evaluation at Land off Corbetts Close
Commissioned by: Barney McElholm @ Elegant Developments
Site Code: SHC18
Planning Reference: PL/2018/00989/PPFL
Planning Authority: Solihull
National Grid Reference: SP 2072 8135
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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, comprising ten trial trenches, was carried out on land west of Corbetts Close, Hampton in Arden on behalf of Elegant Developments Ltd.

The investigation identified the remains of medieval ridges and plough furrows in trenches across the northern majority of the site, which represent the remains of the open field system that once surrounded the settlement at Hampton in Arden. A corresponding hedgerow yielded 12th century pottery.

A modern pit was also recorded.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An application has been made by Barney McElholm to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council for the erection of 45 dwellings including 75 market dwellings and 18 affordable units with associated access and landscaping at Land off Corbetts Close (former cricket ground), Hampton in Arden, Solihull.
- 1.2 A desk-based assessment incorporating a site visit and walkover was carried out by Archaeology Warwickshire (Greig 2018), which concluded that there was no evidence for archaeological remains within the application site.
- 1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation, which took place between 20th April and 22nd June 2018. This report presents the results of that work.
- 1.4 This work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and guidance for field evaluation (2014) and the approved WSI.

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The application area is centred on National Grid Reference SP 2072 8135 towards the edge of the present-day village limits of Hampton-in-Arden. It is separated from the historic village core by the main London Euston to Birmingham railway and is outside the Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The site is a former cricket ground, still under grass and access is gained via a gate from Corbett's Close at the north east corner.
- 2.3 The underlying geology is mudstone of the Branscombe Mudstone Formation (BGS 2017).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site was the subject of an archaeological desk based assessment at the pre-planning stage (Greig 2018). The following general archaeological background is taken from the desk based assessment.

Archaeological and Historic Background

- 3.2 There are only three entries on the Solihull Historic Environment Record (HER) within the study area which are possibly, though not certainly, of prehistoric date. Approximately 750m to the south east of the site is a cropmark visible in air photographs (MSI 6962). Its morphology suggests it could be a ploughed-out long barrow of Neolithic to early Bronze Age date, although it could also be a medieval pillow mound. A brooch of late Iron Age to Roman date was found by metal detector (MSI 1430). Documentary research suggests the existence of an early trackway known as Salter Street approximately on the alignment of the present Solihull Road; this starts at Droitwich from where it heads eastwards (MSI 1376).
- 3.3 There is only limited evidence to suggest Romano-British activity in the area, all from metal-detector finds, and no settlement sites are known. The brooch mentioned above could be Roman (MSI 1430). Three more brooches and a thimble of this date have also been found (MSI 1465).
- 3.4 The place name Hampton is of Anglo-Saxon origin. It is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 as Hantone, and later references include Hantuna/Hamton in Ardena. It is unclear whether the original meaning of the first element of the name is 'high' (= high settlement/farmstead) or has another derivation such as 'enclosure' (Gover et al 1936, 61). It has been suggested that there may have been an Anglo-Saxon minster church on, or close to, the site of the present church (MSI 1406). The only physical evidence from this period is a coin dated to AD410-800 found by metal detector (MSI 1267).
- 3.5 The historic medieval core of the village is to the south west of the site (MSI 5831), around which is extensive ridge-and-furrow, including some now covered by modern development immediately east of the site (not listed individually; shaded yellow on Fig 1). The Grade I Listed parish church of St Mary & St Bartholomew is towards the south of the historic core, and its earliest fabric dates from the 12th century (MSI 171;

- ESI 662; National Heritage List for England no. 1055777). The lower half of a cross in the churchyard is dated to c.1450 (MSI 172), and is both Listed Grade II (NHLE 10767640) and a Scheduled Monument (NHLE 1017815).
- 3.6 Immediately west of the church is a dry medieval moated site within which is The Moat House, a timber framed building of 16th century origins containing re-used medieval masonry probably from the original manor house. (N.B. the building now called Hampton Manor is a locally listed 19th century house, probably rebuilt from an earlier farmhouse.) The moat is a Scheduled Monument and the house is Listed Grade II* (MSI 3101, 187; ESI 653; NHLE 1017243, 1057655; for “Hampton Manor” see MSI 1927; ESI 686, 724). Elsewhere in the study area, medieval items including coins have been found by metal detector (MSI 1268; 1585). If it is not a Neolithic long barrow (3.1 above), the cropmark to the south east is most likely to be a medieval pillow mound or artificial rabbit warren (MSI 6962).
- 3.7 There are several buildings dating from the earlier post-medieval period. Immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the site are the Old Farmhouse, a 17th century Grade II Listed timber framed building (MSI 184; NHLE 1345570) and its 17/18th century barn, Grade II Listed for group value (MSI 185; NHLE 1076768). Other buildings of similar date within the village are the Grade II Listed Church Farm House (MSI 188; NHLE 1076769), White Lion public house (MSI 166; NHLE 1055786) and Yew Tree Cottage (MSI 170; NHLE 1342866), and the locally-listed Adkin Cottage (MSI 1930).
- 3.8 Elsewhere in the study area, post-medieval artefacts have been found by metal detector (MSI 1586), and a 17-18th century cobbled surface was recorded in an archaeological evaluation at Fentham Hall in 2003 (MSI 1255 / ESI 664). A mill, apparently of post-medieval date, is marked on the 1820s Ordnance Survey 1-inch map on the eastern edge of the study area (MSI 1092).
- 3.9 On the south-east edge of the study area is Siden Hill Wood, an area of semi-natural ancient woodland (MSI 4579). To the south of the wood, mostly outside the study area, are undated cropmarks visible in air photos (MSI 8851). The largest feature recorded on the HER is a former ammunition depot dating from 1939 (MSI 1336) which has been the subject of a programme of historic building recording (ESI 1709).

3.10 Other HER monument entries within the study area relate to 18-20th century buildings, many locally listed, mostly in or adjacent to the historic village. None are close to the site. They are not relevant to the assessment and are not discussed in detail in this report.

Cartographic Background

3.11 The earliest detailed map of the application area held within the Warwick County Records Office is an enclosure plan of 1812 (WCRO QS75/51) where it shown falling within two fields. One of the fields has reference to *Marlpit* meadow although the marl pit was in the south-west corner of the field, outside the application site.

3.12 The 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey mapping (1886-8, 1904-5) show the site occupying three separate undeveloped fields.

3.13 Some minor changes in field boundaries were shown at the west, and additional sub-divisions are shown in the south-east anticipating the building of the houses known as "*The Crescent*".

3.14 The earliest cartographic reference to the site as a sports ground is the 1954 map and the site is first identified as *cricket ground* on the 1973 map.

3.15 Recent Ordnance Survey mapping (2016) shows a rectangular sub-division by the entrance to the north-east corner (the former car park) and a small structure in the south east corner of the main field.

4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if any significant archaeological remains were present 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 Ten trenches were opened by a 6 tonne 360° excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were of varying lengths between 10.6m and 40.38m. They were extended from the WSI lengths as the machine bucket was smaller than 1.6m, they were generally located in the positions specified in the WSI (Fig 2). Trenches 1, 3 and 10 were repositioned due to mature tree lines and trenches 5, 6 and 8 were altered in length due to modern services.
- 4.5 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

Geological Natural

- 5.1 The geological natural across much of the site consisted of reddish brown sandy clay interbedded with grey clay and gravel. The natural was revealed at a depth of 0.30 - 0.40m below present ground surface in all trenches (Photos 1-3).

Deposit Sequence

- 5.2 Ridge and furrow remains were visible across the entire northern field and the upper part of the southern field and were spaced at approximately 3 - 4m intervals (Fig 4). The subsoil represents a degraded natural geology and topsoil interface across the site, ranging from 0.14m to 0.15m thick. The topsoil across most of the site was greyish dark brown loam ranging from 0.14 to 0.28m deep. Concrete slabs (100, 300) were present in trench one and three. They overlaid a hard core layer (101,301) of silty rubble. These were the remnants of the car park to the former cricket ground (photo 4).
- 5.3 All features recorded were cut through the natural geology.

Medieval

- 5.4 Regularly spaced ridges and furrows, the remains of an open field system, were recorded across the northern majority of site, aligned east-west. These were most visible in trench 4 which was cut laterally across them facilitating machine excavation of furrow 403 (Photo 3). The most southerly of these [1007] was recorded in plan in trench 10. The furrows were typically 1-2m wide and, where excavated, were 0.24m deep. They are interpreted as furrows based on their symmetrical profiles with moderately sloping sides, flattish bases and single clay rich sandy silt fills.
- 5.5 Situated at the southern edge of the ridge and furrow sequence, roughly 10m south of the E-W oriented present southern field boundary, within trench 10, was the remains of hedgerow 1003. This comprised a silty clay deposit (1004) within a very shallow irregular depression, evident of bioturbation. It measured c. 0.03m thick at its deepest points and was parallel to the ridge and furrow system. Most of the feature was extremely shallow at c.0.02m thick with frequent interruptions in its presence. Two sherds of Medieval (probable 12th century) pottery were recovered from its upper extent. This feature was only recordable in plan due to the nature of its profile.

Modern

- 5.6 Sub-circular pit 1005 at the southern end of Trench 10 contained 18th or 19th century pottery.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The evaluation identified the remains of a probable historic field boundary related to the remnants of a ridge and furrow system. Since the furrows are only present north of the hedgerow, consequently respecting it as a border, it probably marks a former agricultural boundary for the open field system.
- 6.2 This is partially corroborated insofar as only the present E-W southern field boundary is visible on all historic O.S map editions. There is no boundary depicted on the earliest enclosure map from 1812 which confirms that the hedgerow predates 1812.
- 6.3 The small modern pit in Trench 10 is of unknown function.
- 6.4 Modern disturbance and a service trench were recorded across the centre of the application area. This part is characterised by shallow horizons and disturbed soils.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Barney McElholm for commissioning the work and for facilitating access to the site and John Robinson and Anna Stocks for monitoring the work on behalf of the planning authority. Thanks to Stephanie Ratkai for identifying the pottery sherds.

REFERENCES

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Greig, I, 2018 *Land off the B4102, Hampton in Arden, Solihull: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment*. Archaeology Warwickshire Report 17114.1.

Ordnance Survey 1886 1905, 1945-9 *6 inch maps Warwickshire Sheets XX.NW & NE*

Ordnance Survey 1887-8 1904, 1939 *1:2500 maps Warwickshire Sheets XX.2, 3, 6, 7*

Ordnance Survey 1954 1975 *1:2500 maps* (examined online at www.old-maps.co.uk)

PHOTOGRAPHS



1: SW facing view of pit 1005



2: NW facing view of trench 10



3: SE facing view of trench 4 with machine excavated furrows



4: W facing view of trench 3

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m)	Comment
1	100	Concrete Slabs, silty turf	0.10	Covered carpark
1	101	Hardcore type 1	0.23	Hardcore
1	102	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay		Geological natural
2	200	Greyish brown clay rich loam	0.21	Topsoil
2	201	Reddish brown clay silt	0.14	Subsoil
2	202	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay and gravel >25mm		Geological natural
3	300	Dark greyish brown sandy loam	0.15	Topsoil
3	301	Reddish brown clay silt	0.15	Subsoil
3	302	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay		Geological natural
3	303	Natural/Animal feature		
4	400	Greyish brown clay rich loam	14	Topsoil
4	401	Reddish brown clay rich silt	11	Subsoil
4	402	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay		Geological natural
5	500	Greyish brown clay rich loam	0.28	Topsoil
5	501	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.12	Subsoil
5	502	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay		Geological natural
6	600	Greyish brown clay rich loam	0.21	Topsoil
6	601	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.17	Subsoil
6	602	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay		Geological natural
7	700	Greyish brown clay rich loam		Topsoil
7	701	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.22	Subsoil
7	702	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay	0.17	Geological natural
8	800	Greyish brown clay rich loam		Topsoil

8	801	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.16	Subsoil
8	802	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay and gravel >25mm	0.15	Geological natural
9	900	Greyish brown clay rich loam		Topsoil
9	901	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.20	Subsoil
9	902	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay and gravel >25mm	0.18	Geological natural
10	1000	Greyish brown clay rich loam		Topsoil
10	1001	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.19	Subsoil
10	1002	Reddish brown sand and dark reddish brown clay	0.18	Geological natural
10	1003	Generally linear E - W, irregular in plan and undulating throughout.	0.04m	Cut of hedgerow
10	1004	Sand clay rich silt with occasional pebble >25mm	0.04m	Fill of hedgerow
10	1005	Sharp sloping sides concave base	0.14m	Cut of pit
10	1006	Reddish brown clay rich silt	0.14m	Fill of pit
10	1007	0.25m deep, gradual break of slope, undulating base	0.20m	Cut of furrow
10	1008	Light reddish brown clay rich sandy silt	0.20m	Fill of furrow

B List of Finds

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
1004	Ceramic	2	Medieval pottery (probably 12 th century)

C Oasis form

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No archaeol27-321860
Project name		
Short description (250 words max)	An archaeological evaluation, comprising ten trial trenches, was carried out. The investigation identified the remains of medieval ridges and plough furrows in trenches across the northern majority of the site, which represent the remains of the open field system that once surrounded the settlement at Hampton in Arden. A corresponding hedgerow yielded 12th century pottery. A Victorian/modern pit was also recorded.	
Project type (Eg DBA, Eval etc)	Evaluation	
Site status (None, NT, SAM etc)	None	
Previous work	DBA	
Current land use	Grassland	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	No	
Monument type / period	Hedgerow - Medieval Pit-Victorian / Modern Furrows Medieval	
Significant finds (artefact, type, period)	12 century Pottery x 2	
Methods & techniques	Sample Trenching	
Development Type	Housing	
Prompt	NPPF	
Position in planning process	Post determination evaluation	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Warwickshire	
Site address (inc postcode)	land west of Corbetts Close, Hampton in Arden	
Study area	2 ha	
OS E & N	SP 2072 8135	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Archaeology Warwickshire	
Project brief originator	Anna Stocks	
Project design originator	Nigel Page	
Director/supervisor	Ed Pearson	
Manager	Nigel Page	
Sponsor or funding body	Elegant Developments	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date /end date	June 2018	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	AW	Pottery
Paper	AW	Contexts
Digital	AW	

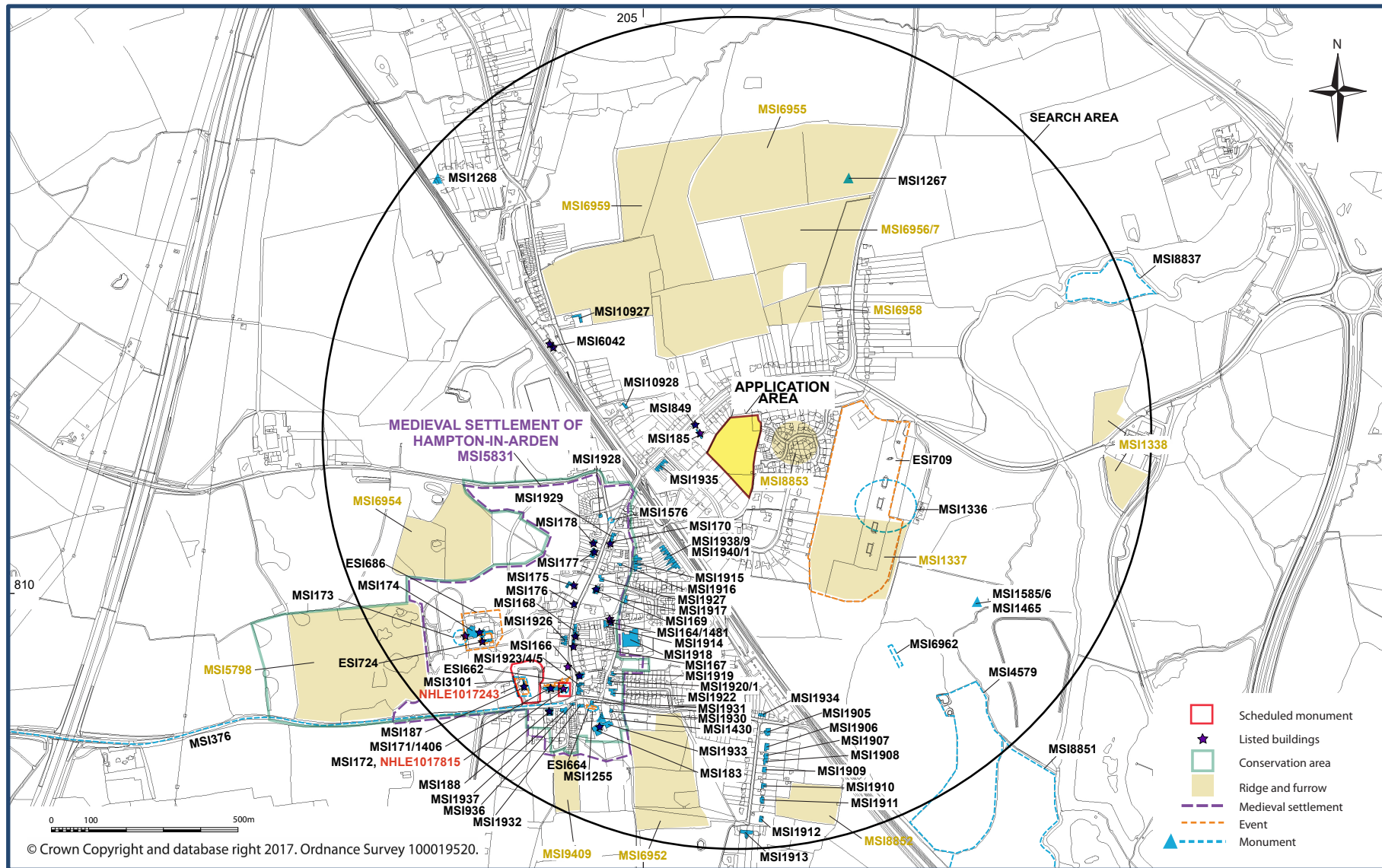


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information

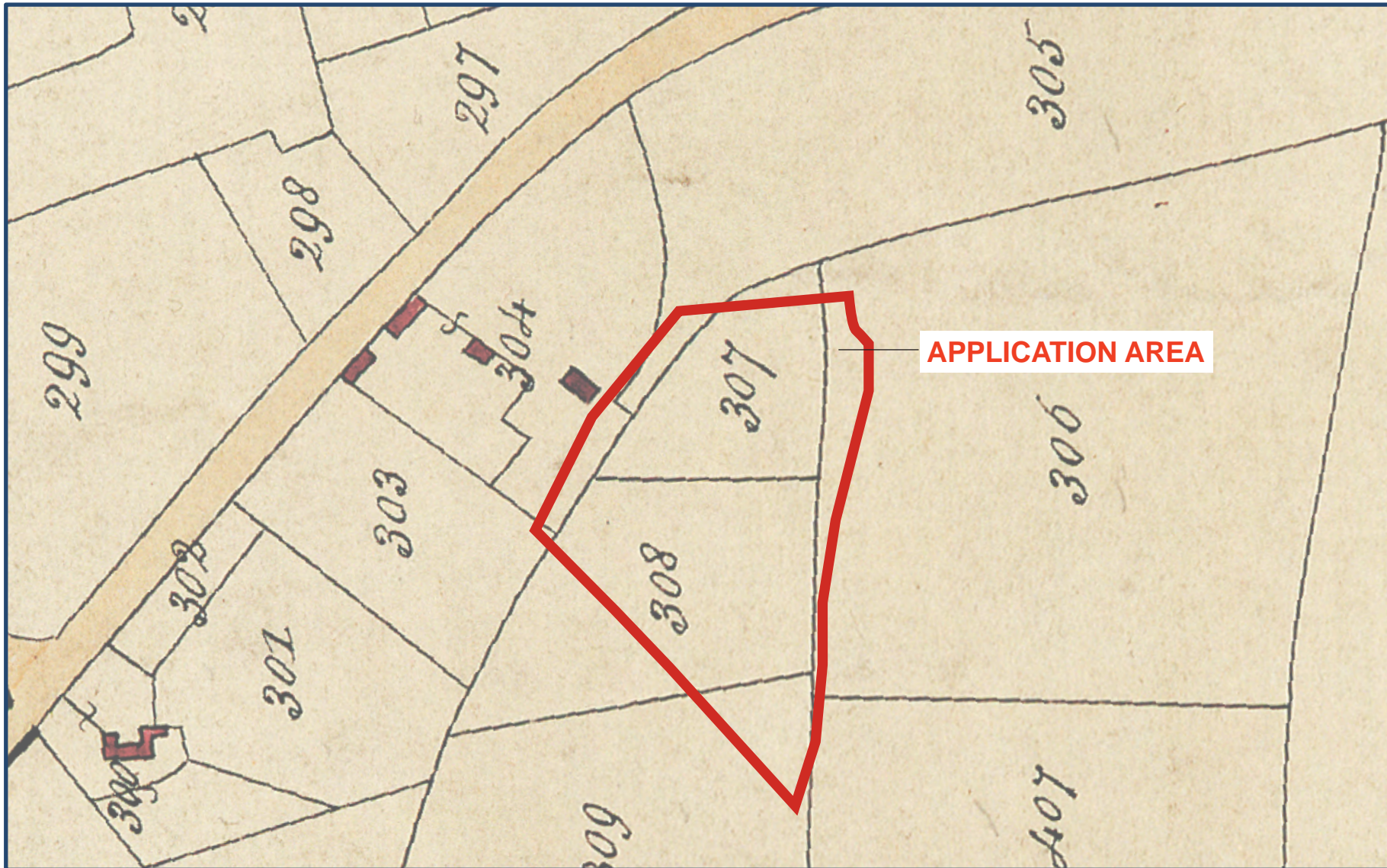


Fig 2: Detail from Hampton in Arden tithe map, 1843 (WCRO CR382/22/2)

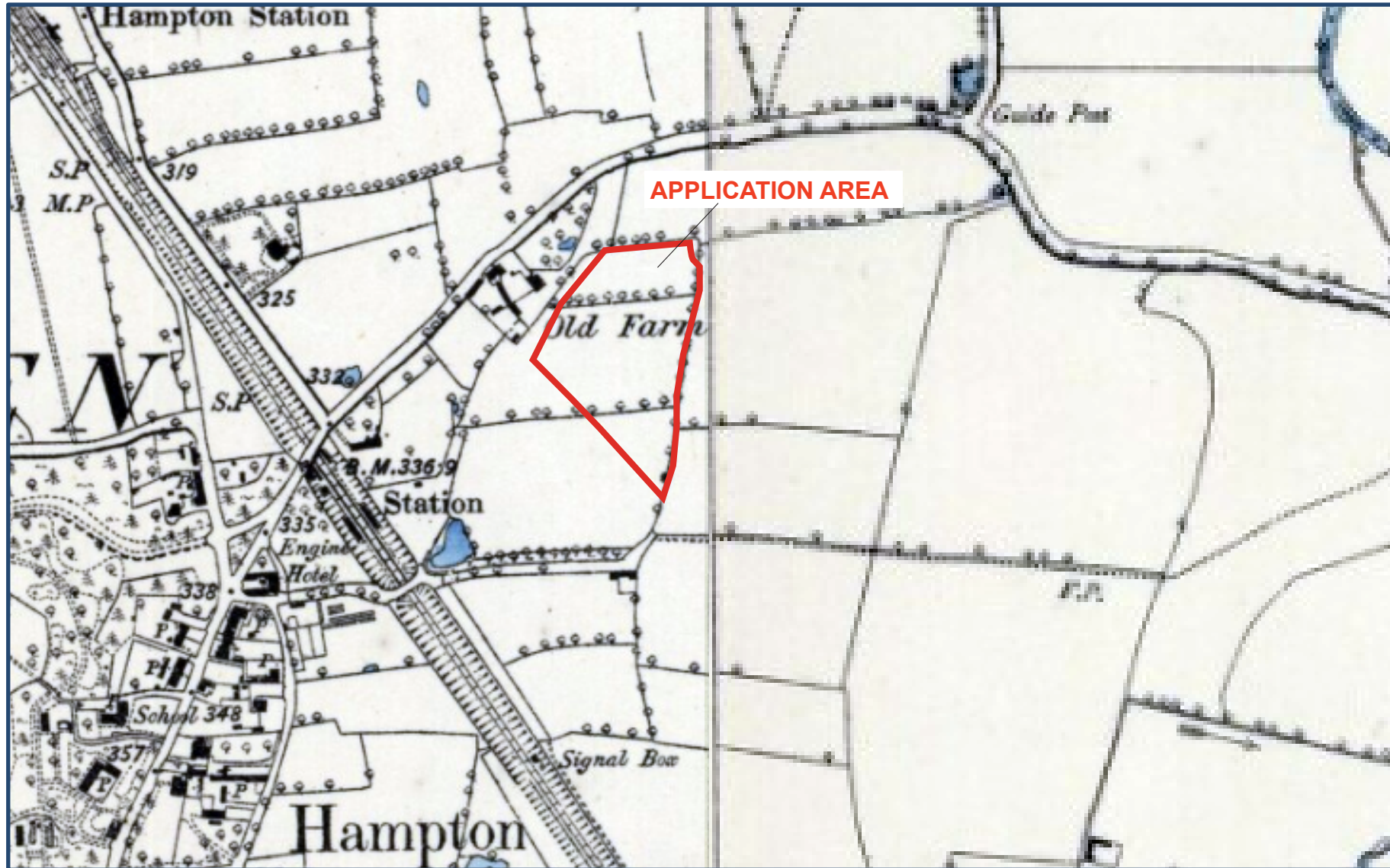


Fig 3: Detail from Ordnance Survey 6 inch map surveyed and published 1886

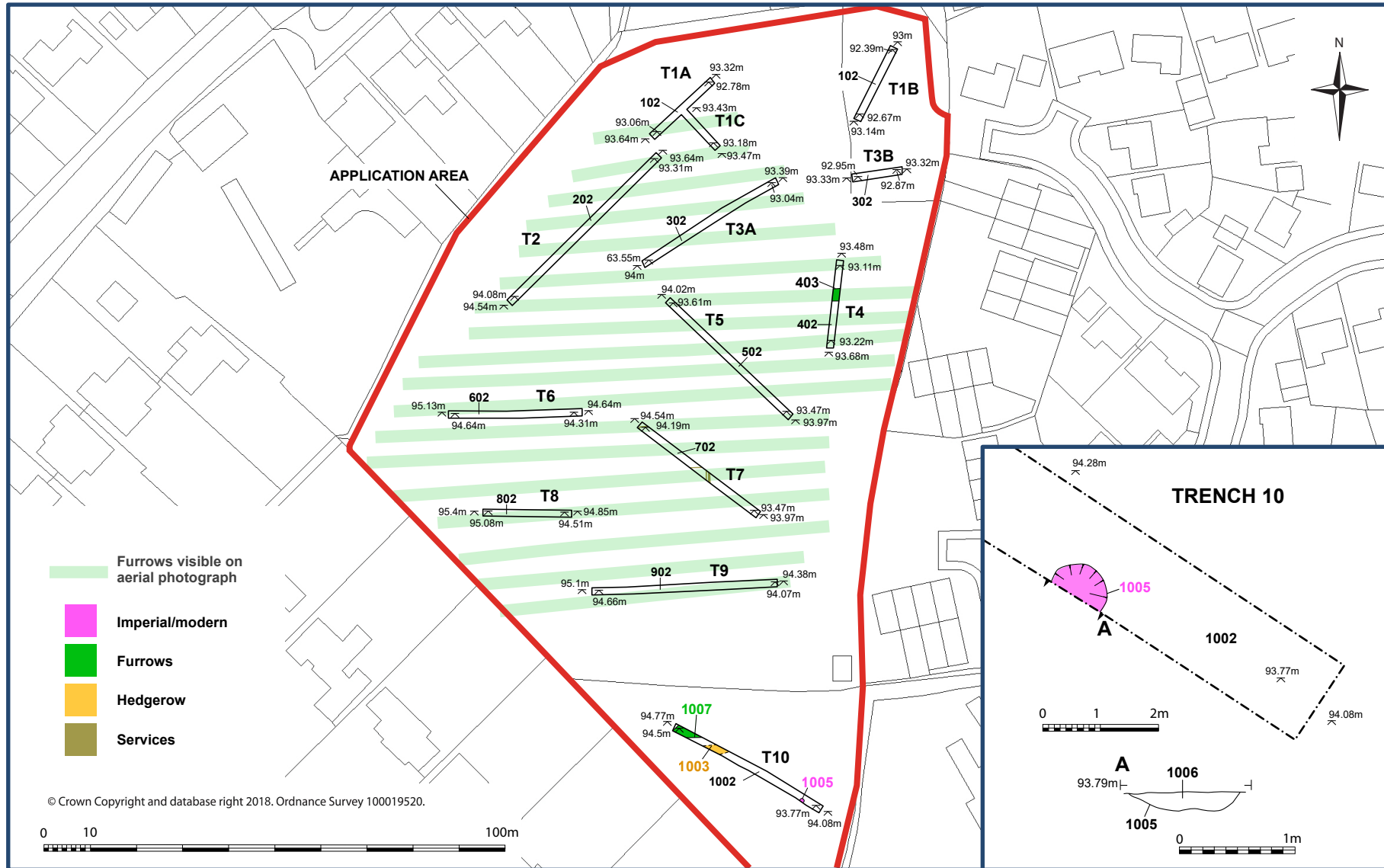


Fig 4: Location of excavated trenches