

Hawkstone Hall, Marchamley, Shropshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1865

AUGUST 2018



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Hawkstone Hall, Marchamley, Shropshire
Commissioned by: Mike Petrouis
Site Code: SSH17
Planning Reference: 17/02262/FUL
Planning Authority: Shropshire Council
National Grid Reference: SJ 5822 2999
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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation consisting of a single evaluation trench, 17m in length, was carried out on behalf of Mike Petrouis in advance of the construction of a new car-park at Hawkstone Hall, Shropshire.

The new car park overlays a former range of outbuildings to the north of the hall. The trench exposed walls and floor levels associated with one of these buildings and parts of the associated walled trackways and yards, all probably late 18th to early 19th century in date.

Archaeological deposits were exposed in both parts of the trench at a depth of 0.6m below the current ground surface. Relatively thick layers of demolition rubble covered these deposits. It seems likely that if levels of ground disturbance for the new car-park are kept to a minimum then its construction will not impact on the buried archaeological remains.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Shropshire Council for the change of use of Hawkstone Hall, Marchamley, Shropshire from a pastoral and renewal centre to a Boutique Hotel and wedding venue and the formation of a car parking area (17/02262/FUL). It was a requirement of planning permission that an archaeological evaluation was carried out prior to the development, in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Archaeology Warwickshire (Steele 2017) on behalf of the developer.
- 1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with the approved WSI, which took place on the 16th of August July 2018. This report presents the results of that work.
- 1.3 This work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and guidance for field evaluation (2014).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The application area is centred on National Grid Reference SJ 5822 2999 in the parish of Marchamley, Shropshire. The site is located approximately 70m to the north-east of Hawkstone Hall within an area of former service buildings (now destroyed) between the walled garden and the driveway.
- 2.2 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is Bollin Mudstone Member. No superficial geology is recorded (British Geological Survey 2017).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There are no prehistoric or Roman archaeological remains recorded within the 500m search area.
- 3.2 Domesday records a number of settlements in the vicinity of the location of Hawkstone Hall; *Marchamley*, *Hodnet* and *Weston (under-Redcastle)*, indicating that settlement was already established here by the end of the Saxon period (opendomesday.org).
- 3.3 There is a record of ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks of medieval or later date, visible on LiDAR imagery from c.2008 (Environment Agency) to the west of Hawkstone Hall (Shropshire Historic Environment Record no. MSA 36213).
- 3.4 According to documentary records, a deer park existed at Hawkstone in 1357, although its relationship to the later park is unknown (National Heritage List for England (NHLE) no. 1000199).
- 3.5 Hawkstone Hall (MWA 8152; NHLE no. 1055335 Grade I) itself dates from c.1700. There is no evidence of it being on an early site. A circular mound approximately 400m to the north of the Hall (300m north of the development site) (MSA 13517) has been noted as a possible motte, or a mill mound following field observation by Shropshire County Council in 1991 (ESA 2199) although there is no documentary evidence to support either of these interpretations.
- 3.6 Hawkstone was acquired in 1556 by Sir Rowland Hill (d1561), Lord Mayor of London. His descendant Richard Hill built up the estate and rebuilt the Hall in 1708 after his retirement from public affairs. At his death in 1727, Phillip was succeeded by his nephew Sir Rowland Hill (d 1783) who remodelled the Hall, adding wings, a rotunda (MSA 8153; NHLE no. 1176356 Grade II) and probably in the 1740s began to create the extended pleasure grounds. A conservatory was added by Lewis Wyatt in 1832-4 (MSA 10782; NHLE no. 1055337 Grade II).
- 3.7 The park is today a Grade I registered park and garden (MSA 4031; NHLE no. 10000199) encompassing c.550ha in a fairly flat landscape of the Cheshire Plain, although a series of steep outcrops of red sandstone punctuate this otherwise flat

landscape to the west of the Hall and formed the setting of the parkland constructed there by the Hills.

- 3.8 The aforementioned mound (MSA 13517) located 400m to the north of the Hall is located in a prominent location within the park, being clearly visible from various points around the park, as well as providing extensive views of the park, most notably Hawk Lake and the landscape beyond and was also interpreted following fieldwork under the Monuments Protection Programme (ESA5913) as a possible prospect mound.
- 3.9 Within the park are several follies. One of these has a semi-circular opening at the end of a deep tunnel-shaped ravine cut into the red sandstone. It known as "*The Dungeon*" and possibly dates to 1780 and was most likely used as an ice house (MSA 43274). A railway ran from it to the Hall.
- 3.10 Located 180m to the north of the Hall is a range of farm buildings in a courtyard plan (MSA 27623; NHLE no. 1055338 Grade II). A late 18th century map (c.1795) of the estate shows the former U-shaped stable block which is identified as "new stables". The farm buildings are a former mid-late 18th century stable block. A farmhouse (MSA 10783) attached to one of these ranges is not listed.
- 3.11 A Victorian sundial approximately 15m to the west of Hawkstone Hall is also listed (MSA 10781; NHLE no. 260209 Grade II).
- 3.12 Hawkstone Hall has recently been the subject of a preliminary heritage statement to inform the current proposed application, incorporating a summary account of the development of the house, the grounds and the impact of the proposed car park (Heath 2017; ESA 8278).
- 3.13 The heritage statement discussed the impact of the proposed car park and identified the current proposed area as the preferred location and identified considerable potential for buried archaeological remains.
- 3.14 Historic maps reproduced within the preliminary heritage statement (1785, Shropshire Archives 4133/2; 1789, Shropshire Archives D641/6/1/14; 1815, Shropshire Archives

P132/B/7/2; mid-19th century, Shropshire Archives 731, Bundle 351p1; 1880, Ordnance Survey 25"; 1900, Ordnance Survey 25") identify successive ranges of service buildings within the proposed area of the car park as well as yards and former access routes. The last of the service buildings were demolished in the 1930s when the access drive was rerouted. Archaeologically significant deposits are likely to lie beneath the current ground surface but the extent of survival and depth of the remains is untested.

- 3.15 The proposed site is now a grassed area to the west of the walled garden and flower garden, fringed by trees to the west which would have originally screened the service buildings from the park.

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 were to place 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 site was investigated by means of a 17m x 1.6m trench split either side of a live water main. Topsoil and other overburden was 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 trench was divided into two unequal parts, 1 'A' and 1 'B'. The Geological natural was not reached in either part as the remains of former buildings were encountered.
- 5.2 Trench 1 'A' was excavated down to the top of a wall foundation (8) and was then cleaned and recorded. Trench 1 'B' was excavated down to a firm layer of mixed mortar and crushed brick (16), which was interpreted as a floor surface, and then cleaned and recorded.

Trench 1 'A'

- 5.3 Trench 1 'A' was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.02m below the current ground surface (126.70 above Ordnance Datum, a.O.D). The earliest layer exposed was a reddish brown clay layer (5), which was not a geological natural deposit, but possibly part of a make-up layer across this part of the site. This was cut by a construction trench (6) for a sandstone wall (8). The construction trench only visible on the eastern side of the wall, was a maximum of 0.16m wide and was filled by a very dark grey sandy loam with frequent small mortar flecks (7). The wall (8) consisted of at least two courses of neatly cut pale grey sandstone blocks, up to 0.70m long by 0.19m deep and 0.25m wide.
- 5.4 On the east side of the wall a small area of mortared welsh slate and fragments of sandstone (11) had been cut down, or pressed, into clay layer 5 and appeared to have been cut by construction trench (6), suggesting it had may have been associated with earlier garden features or outbuildings.
- 5.5 The east and west sections of the trench showed different stratigraphy. A layer of dark brown silty loam, up to 0.16m thick (10), butted up against the west side of wall 8. This was overlain by a layer of demolition rubble, 0.70m (9). On the eastern side of the trench the clay layer 5 was overlaid by a layer of crushed sandstone, 0.13m thick (4), which was in turn overlain by a layer, 0.12m thick, of black ash and charcoal (3). This was overlain a layer, 0.15 thick, of reddish brown clay containing very frequent flecks of off-white mortar (2).

Trench 1 'B'

- 5.4 Trench 1 'B' contained different features and deposits to Trench 1 'A'. The trench was excavated down to the top of two surfaces (16 and 17), both at a depth of c.0.78m below the current ground surface (c.126.8m a.O.D). A test hole towards the southern end of this trench revealed the earliest deposit, a layer greyish brown silty sand (18), containing very occasional brick, tile, welsh slate and a few fragments of late 18th/early 19th century pottery, which was excavated to a depth of 0.33m but its full thickness was not determined. Overlying layer 18 was a layer, 0.09m thick, of firm mortar and crushed brick (16), which may have been the remains of a former floor. Its northern side butted against a layer of firm greyish brown sandy clay containing frequent small to medium pebbles and very occasional greyish sandstone fragments (17), which had the appearance of an external yard surface or trackway. Although there was a clear difference between surfaces 16 and 17, there was no evidence for a wall or formal boundary between them, which makes the interpretation of surface 16 as a floor uncertain.
- 5.5 Overlying both surfaces was a layer of firm greyish brown sandy loam, 0.09m thick (15). This was covered by a 0.4m, layer of greyish brown clay loam (14) which contained much crushed mortar, frequent bricks, occasional medium to large sandstone fragments along with some metal items such as copper cable and plastic coated wire. This layer clearly represented demolition rubble and was similar to layer 9 and trench 1 'A'. Layer 14 was overlain by a layer of dark grey sandy loam, 0.17m thick (13).
- 5.6 The gap between the two parts of the trench meant that there were no easily discernible stratigraphic relationships between them, however demolition layers 9 and 14 were likely to date to the same episode of destruction, sometime in the 1930s.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The two sections of trench both exposed remains associated with the former arrangement of buildings and surrounding walled yards and trackways. In trench 1 'A' the exposed wall foundation (8) may have been associated with these tracks and yards whilst in trench 1 'B' a possible floor layer (16) was most likely associated with the building targeted by the evaluation trench. It is possible that this surface once acted as the bedding for a brick floor, but if so none remained.
- 6.2 Neither of the wall footings expected for this building were exposed. The line of the southern wall may have been just outside of the trench, but it is not clear why no northern footing was uncovered, unless it had been completely removed during the demolition of the building in the 1930s. The possible exterior surface (17), which was just to the north of the supposed location of this building is not depicted on any map. Layer 18, beneath possible floor layer 16, suggested that the area was built-up and levelled prior to the construction of the buildings shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. A small amount of pottery dating to the late 18th or early 19th century was recovered from this layer.
- 6.2 It remains possible that the location of the trench was not exactly positioned over the former buildings, due to differences in the early Ordnance Survey mapping compared to modern mapping. However, the trench has shown that deposits associated with features on the early mapping do survive. It has also shown that they are all relatively deeply buried beneath demolition layers, levelling layers and topsoil. The significant archaeological remains in Trench 1 'A' survived at a depth of between 0.64 and 0.65m (127.08 and 127.01m a.O.D.) below the current ground surface (127.72 - 127.66m a.O.D). In Trench 1 'B' they survived at a depth of 0.64-0.66m (126.80-126.78m a.O.D) below the current ground surface (127.56m a.O.D.).
- 6.3 The evaluation trench suggests that as long as the ground disturbance caused by the new car park is limited in depth then remains associated with the former service buildings are unlikely to be disturbed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mike Petrouis for commissioning the work and Hugh Hannaford of Shropshire Council for representing the planning authority on behalf of Andy Wigley. We would also like to thank all of those involved in machining the trench and marking out the line of the live water main.

REFERENCES

BGS British Geological Survey 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed October 2017

Domesday Online 2017 <http://opendomesday.org/> Accessed October 2017

Steele, W, 2017, *Hawkstone Hall, Marchamley, Shropshire, Written Scheme of Investigation*, Archaeology Warwickshire



1: Trench 1 'A', looking north, with wall 8 clearly visible



2: Trench 1 'A', wall 8, looking west, with foundation trench (6) on east side and rubble layer (9) butting up against the wall on the west side



3: Trench 1 'B', looking north, with demolition rubble layer (14) in foreground and floor layer (16) in the background with camera scale



4: Trench 1 'B' showing layer (18) beneath floor layer (16, under scale)



5: Trench looking west across the lawn formerly occupied by outbuildings

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m)	Comment
1 'A'	1	Brown clay loam	0.16	Topsoil
1 'A'	2	Reddish brown clay loam with very frequent off-white mortar flecks	0.15	Possibly older topsoil
1 'A'	3	Black ash/charcoal. Occasional unburnt wood and nails	0.12	Layer
1 'A'	4	Light brown crushed sandstone	0.13	Layer
1 'A'	5	Reddish brown clay with flecks of brick and occasional charcoal	0.16	Layer
1 'A'	6	Construction cut for wall 8, up to 0.16m wide	Unex	Foundation trench
1 'A'	7	Very dark grey sandy loam with flecks of mortar	Unex	Foundation trench fill (of 6)
1 'A'	8	Wall made from well-cut sandstone blocks, 0.25m wide. Mortar bonded.	0.38	Possible side wall of road/track
1 'A'	9	Greyish brown clay loam and, crushed mortar, frequent brick, occasional medium sandstone fragments, occasional metal	0.70	Demolition rubble
1 'A'	10	Dark brown silty loam	0.16	Layer
1 'A'	11	Sandstone, welsh slate		Possible wall
1 'B'	12	Brown clay loam	0.23	Topsoil
1 'B'	13	Dark grey sandy loam, firm	0.17	Older buried topsoil.
1 'B'	14	Greyish brown clay loam and, crushed mortar, frequent brick, occasional medium to large sandstone fragments, occasional plastic coated wire	0.40	Demolition rubble
1 'B'	15	Greyish brown sandy loam, firm	0.09	Probable build-up of soil over floor
1 'B'	16	Layer of firm mortar and crushed	0.09	Probable floor layer.

		brick fragments.		
1 'B'	17	Greyish brown sandy clay with frequent small-medium pebbles	Unex	Probable exterior surface
1 'B'	18	Greyish brown silty sand with occasional brick, ceramic tile, welsh slate and some pottery	Over 0.33m	Pre-building layer

B List of finds (not retained)

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
1	Pottery	2	19th century
18	Pottery	4	Late 18th, early 19th century

C Oasis Form

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No	archaeol27-326875
Project name			
Short description (250 words max)		See summary above	
Project type (Eg DBA, Eval etc)		Evaluation	
Site status (None, NT, SAM etc)		Listed Building	
Previous work		Not known	
Current land use		Other	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)		Not Known	
Monument type / period		Building shown on 1901 map	
Significant finds (artefact, type, period)		none	
Development Type		Car park	
Prompt		NPPF	
Position in planning process		Post-determination condition	
PROJECT LOCATION			
County		Shropshire	
Site address (inc postcode)		Hawkestone Hall, Marchamley, SY4 5LG	
Study area (sq.m or ha)			
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq letter code)		SJ 5822 2999	
Height OD			
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation		Archaeology Warwickshire	
Project brief originator			
Project design originator			
Director/supervisor		Bryn Gethin	
Manager			
Sponsor or funding body			
PROJECT DATE			
Start date /end date		16/08/18	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical	none		
Paper	Shropshire Museum		
Digital	Shropshire Museum		

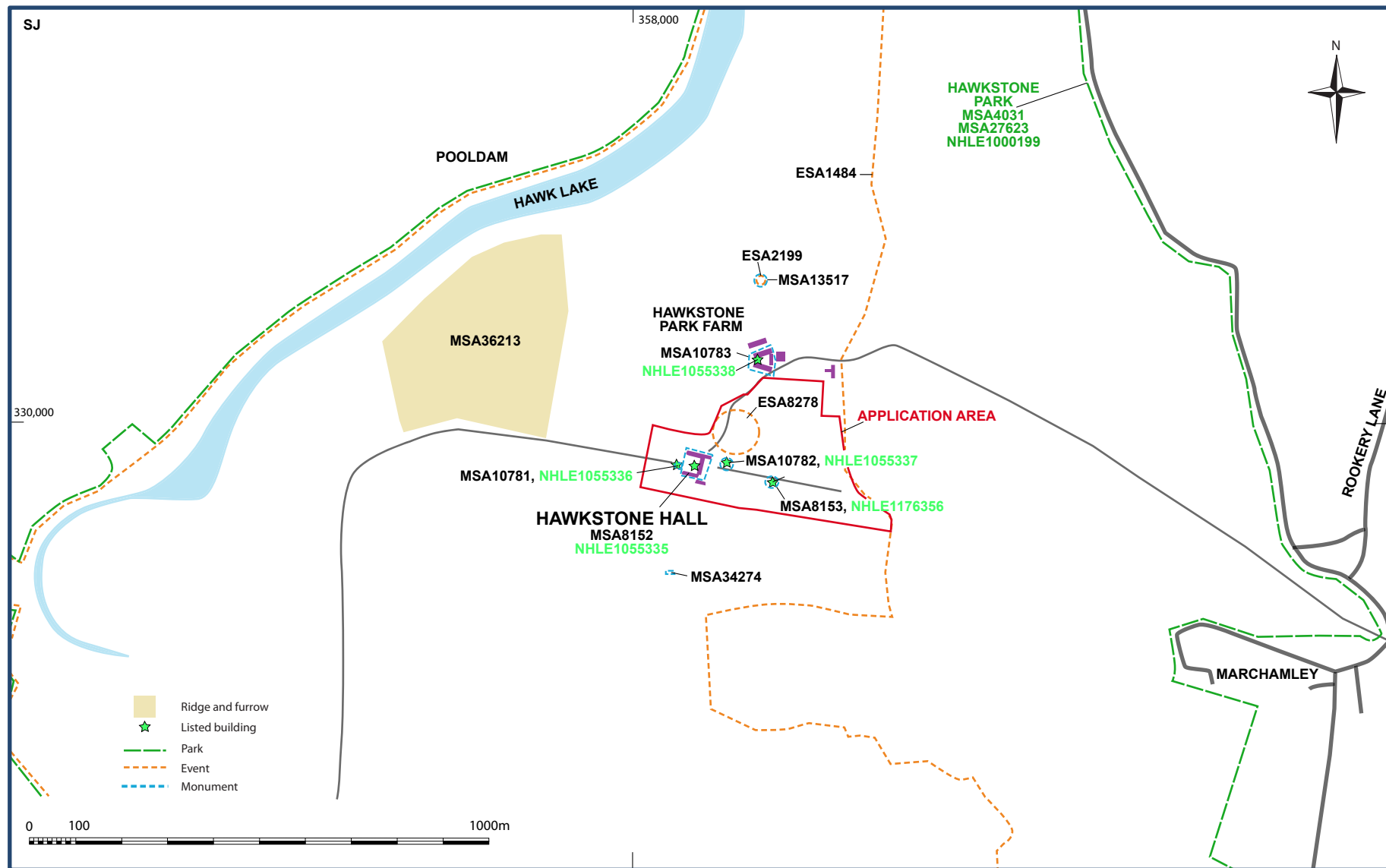


Fig 1: Location of Application area and Historic Environment information

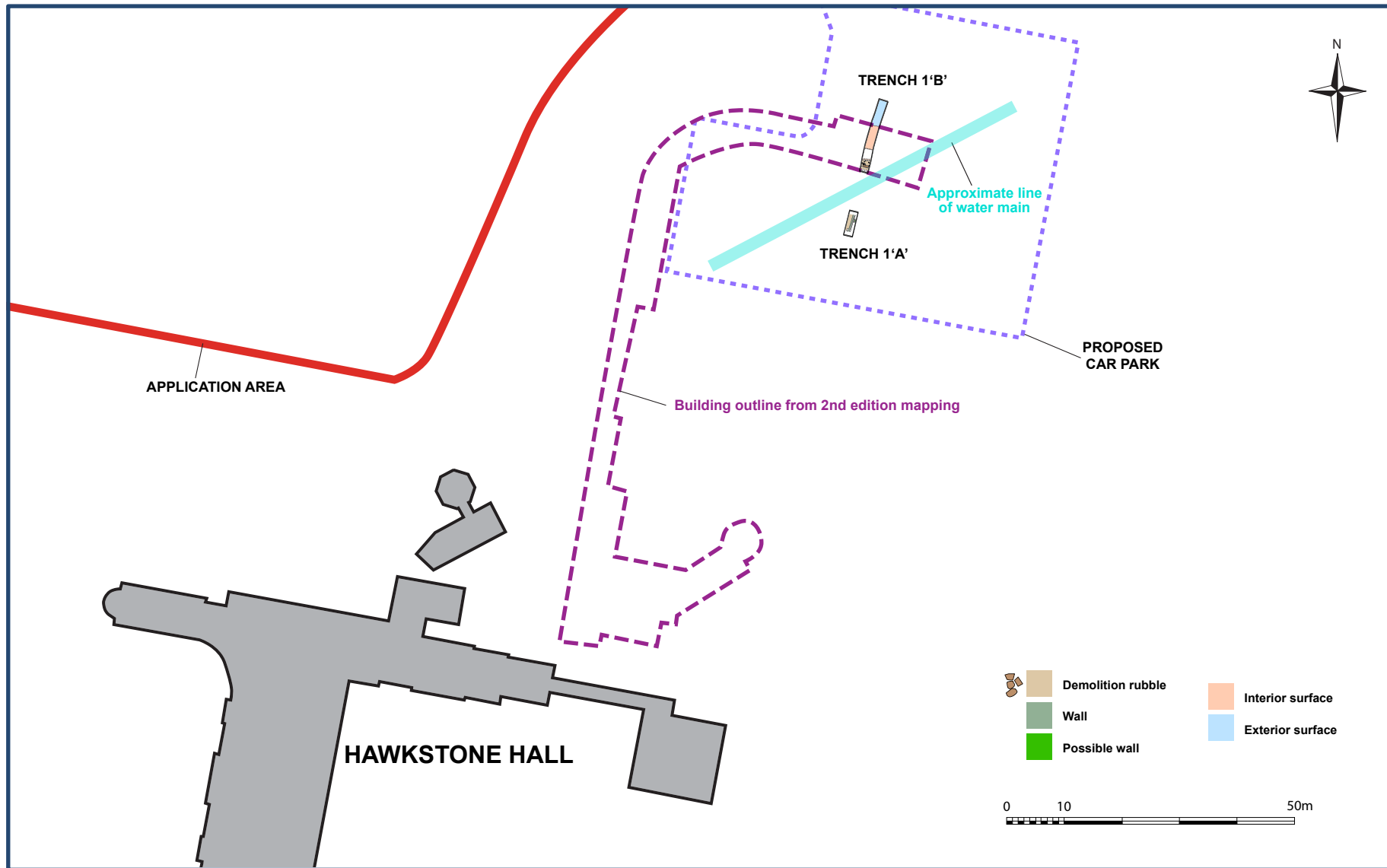


Fig 2: Location of excavated trench

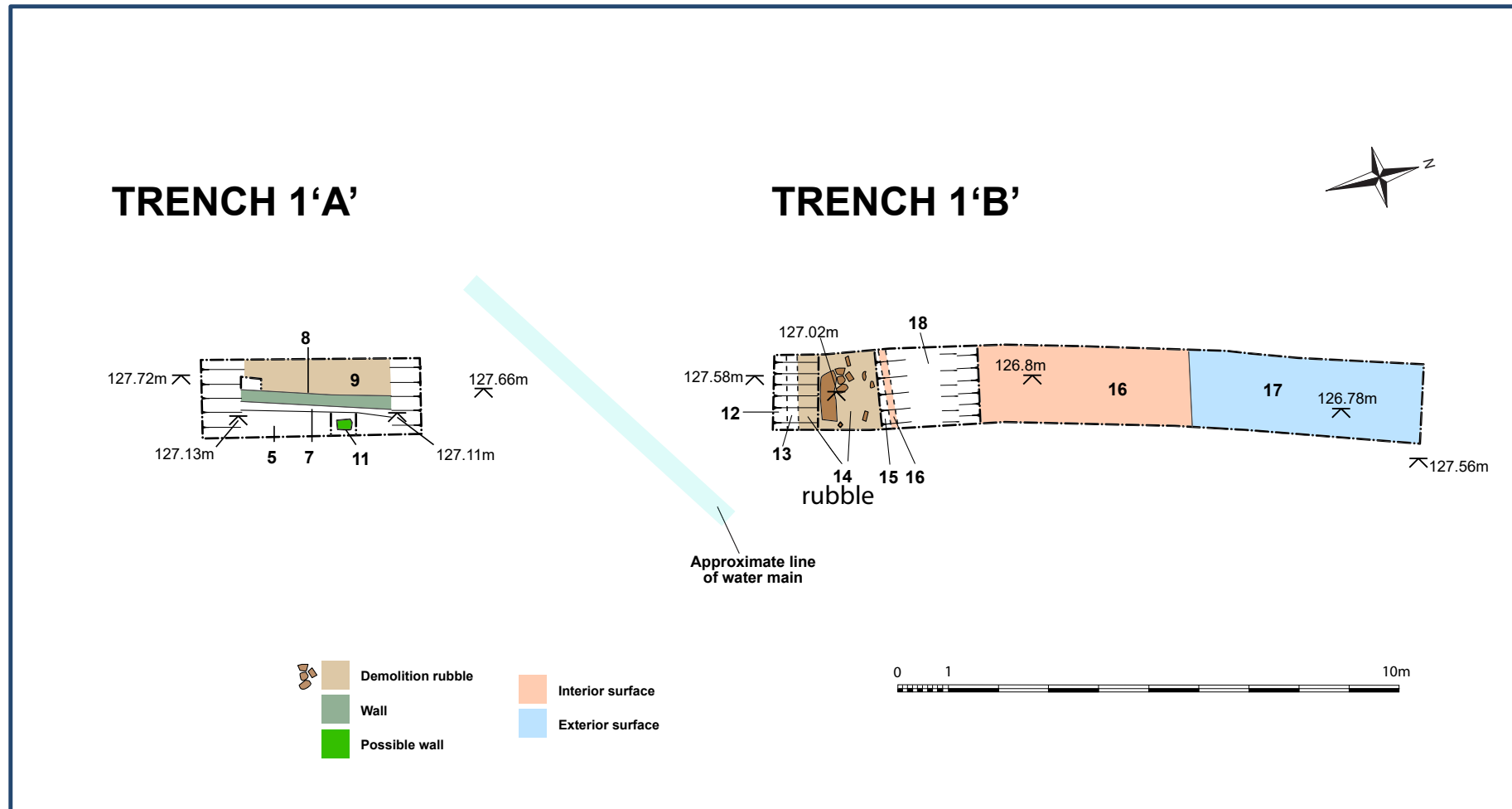


Fig 3: Detail of trenches 1'A' and 1'B'