

**1630 High Street,
Knowle,
Solihull**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1930

MARCH 2019



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: 1630 High Street, Knowle, Solihull
Commissioned by: Jacques Van Der Merwe
Site Code: KNH19
Planning Reference: PL/2017/02957/PPFL
Planning Authority: Solihull Borough Council
National Grid Reference: SP 1811 7682
Project Manager: Stuart Palmer MCI fA
Fieldwork: Jodie Duffy BA PCI fA, Samuel Hirst MA
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Approved by: Stuart Palmer MCI fA
Date: March 2019
Report reference: Duffy, J, 2019 *1630 High Street, Knowle, Solihull: Archaeological Evaluation*, Archaeology Warwickshire Report 1930

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, comprising a single 8.60m x 1.60m trial trench was carried out on behalf of Jacques Van Der Merwe. Post-medieval or later postholes and an undated pit were found in the trench. A further feature was likely to have been a tree bole. No evidence for medieval activity was found in the trench.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council for the change of use from former bank (A2) to mixed restaurant and bar (A3/A4) plus two storey rear extension at 1630 High Street Knowle Solihull B93 0LB (Planning ref: PL/2017/02957/PPFL). It was a requirement of planning permission that a programme of trial trenching be carried prior to the development, in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Planning Authority.
- 1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire (AW) were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with the approved WSI, which took place on the 8th March 2019. This report presents the results of that work. The archive will be stored by AW until a suitable repository becomes available.
- 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 SP 1811 7682 in the village of Knowle. The site is located on the western side of the High Street, centrally located within the core of the former medieval settlement. There are numerous listed buildings and locally listed buildings in the vicinity and although the former HSBC Bank is not one itself it is referred to as a 'positive building within the Conservation Area' (Emery Planning Heritage Statement 2017). The area of the new extension is currently occupied by a small car park with a recently demolished garage on the western corner (Fig 1).

- 2.2 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is Branscombe mudstone Formation with overlying glaciofluvial deposits (British Geological Survey 2019).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Knowle lies within the Arden National Character Area (Natural England no. 97). The area is characterised as a 'well-wooded farmland landscape'. The Triassic Mercia Mudstone group of the Knowle Basin has been extensively used as a source of brickclay. Its sense of history is derived from medieval moated sites, manorial deer parks, remnants of wood pasture, historic farm buildings and ancient oak woodlands. The historic settlement pattern is characterised by small villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads many with origins in the later Anglo-Saxon period. Following the conquest an increased number of isolated farmsteads grew in areas of waste and woodland, many of them were moated (Hooke 1985, 143).
- 3.2 Prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains have yet to be recorded within the settlement of Knowle.
- 3.3 The name Knowle, first recorded in c.1200 as *Gnolla*, probably derives from the Saxon *Cnoll* meaning small hill (Gover et al 1936, 62; Wootton 1972, 1). Despite its Saxon name Knowle is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 when it would probably have formed part of the manor of Hampton-in-Arden, which was held by Geoffrey de Wirce (VCH 1904, 319). The manor of Knowle is first mentioned in around 1200, when William de Arden granted the vill to his wife Americe de Traci. It was sold to King Edward I in 1284 but after the death of his Queen, Eleanor, it was granted to Westminster Abbey (VCH 1947, 94). Knowle remained in the parish of Hampton until 1850. There was a manorial chapel in Knowle by 1220, but it was not until 1396 when Canon Walter Cook a wealthy member of a local family, obtained licence to build a chapel on his parents' land that there was one for the general inhabitants. The chapel was consecrated in 1402 (VCH 1947, 98). After the dissolution of the monasteries the manor was granted to the bishop of Westminster and later to the bishop of London following the suppression of the See of Westminster. It was taken into the hands of the Crown in 1559 and remained there, other than a brief period of ownership by the Earl of Leicester, until 1622 from which time it remained in private hands (VCH 1947, 94).
- 3.4 The extent of the medieval settlement (Solihull Historic Environment Record no. 5834, Fig 1) has been estimated using early Ordnance Survey maps. There are a number of Listed Buildings within the village and in addition, the HER has also recorded

noteworthy buildings in the village many of which are locally listed. The earliest surviving building apart from the church is The Guild House (NHLE 1281619, MSI 330), which was commissioned by Walter Cook.

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 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 The area was initially due to be evaluated by means of a 10m trench, but due to restricted space, a 8.6m x 1.60m trial trench was excavated (Fig 2).
- 4.5 Modern overburden was removed by an appropriate machine using a toothless bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Ground reduction was carried out in shallow spits until the uppermost archaeological horizon, or the geological natural was reached (whichever the higher).

5 RESULTS

Geological Natural

- 5.1 The geological natural (1004) in the trench was reddish brown and yellow mottled sandy clay which was exposed at a depth of 0.88m below the current ground surface. An interface layer of 0.1m dark grey pebbly clay overlay it (1003).

Post-medieval and undated Features

- 5.2 At the southern end of the trench, a possible tree bole was recorded (1012). A test section was excavated through the feature as the NW/SE and NE/SW edges formed a right angle and appeared regular on the surface. Excavation showed its irregularity consistent with a tree throw (Photo 3, Fig 2). No finds were recovered from the grey clay fill (1011). Trees in this area are depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887.
- 5.3 Further to the north a rectangular pit (1005) was found cutting the natural. The extent of the pit within the trench was 1.5m long and 1.1m wide and it was on a NE/SW orientation. It was at least 0.35m deep. No finds were noted in the redeposited natural, reddish brown clay fill (1006).
- 5.4 Two postholes had been dug into rectangular pit 1005. The north-eastern posthole (1007) was fully revealed in the trench and was half-sectioned. The straight-sided, circular feature was 0.6m in diameter and 0.35m deep. A primary fill of 0.05m of light grey clay was found in the base (1013) and it was overlain by dark grey clay, 0.3m deep from which animal bone and a fragment of post-medieval tile were recovered (not retained).
- 5.5 The second posthole was only partly revealed in the trench (1009, fill 1010) and was similar in dimensions and fill and was therefore likely to have been contemporary.

20th century

- 5.6 Sealing the pit, postholes and tree bole was a 0.5m deep layer of very dark greyish brown clay loam (1002). A few sherds of 18th-19th century pottery were found in this layer along with 20th century willow pattern.

- 5.7 A linear soakaway or rubble-filled drainage gully (1014) had been constructed through layer 1002. The earliest pottery from this feature had a 17th century date and although the majority was 18th/19th century, 20th century material was also present.
- 5.8 Overlying layer 1002 and the soakaway was a make-up layer (1001) for the tarmac surface (1000).

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No finds predating the 17th century were recovered from the trench. Whilst stratigraphically the earliest feature on the site was the undated rectangular pit it was modern in character. Scant dating evidence was recovered from one of the two postholes cut into the rectangular pit and their function is unknown.

- 6.2 No evidence for medieval (or earlier) activity was present in the trench.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Jacques Van Der Merwe for commissioning the work and Anna Stocks at Warwickshire County Council for representing the planning authority.

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1: Trench 1, looking south, with sub-rectangular pit 1005 and circular pits 1007 and 1009.



2: Circular pit cut 1007 within Sub-rectangular feature 1005.



3: Tree bole 1012

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Trench	Context	Description	Depth (m)	Comment
1	1000	Tarmac	0.07	Tarmac
1	1001	Hardcore	0.03	Hardcore
1	1002	Blackish brown silty clay	0.5m	Subsoil
1	1003	Dark grey sandy clay	0.1m	Geological interface
1	1004	Grey/Yellow mottled brown sandy/clay with large pebbles		Natural
1	1005	Rectangular with curved corners.	>0.35m	Cut of possible post medieval feature. Not excavated.
1	1006	Red/yellow mottled clay, compact.		Fill of 1005
1	1007	Circular, vertical edges, uneven base, bump on east side of edge with more gradual slope into base.	0.35	Cut of post medieval feature.
1	1008	Grey, clay few stones and some charcoal flecks.		Fill of 1007
1	1009	Circular, unexcavated.		Cut of possible post medieval feature.
1	1010	Grey clay, few stones.		Fill of 1009
1	1011	Grey, clay/silty/sand. Charcoal flecks.	0.21	Fill of 1012
1	1012	triangular with irregular base	0.21	Tree bole
1	1013	Light grey clay, with some stones.		Fill of 1007
1	1014	Linear NE/SW	0.45	Soak away/drain
1	1015	Tiles, brick, pottery		Fill of 1014 soak away

B List of finds (not retained)

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
1002	Pottery	1	CRW – cream ware 1740-1790
		1	PLW – Willow pattern 20th century
		1	Earthenware with yellow glaze
		1	? Dark brown fabric, blue/black/cream glaze
	Animal Bone	3	2x Rib and 1x Long bone
1008	Roof tile	1	Post-medieval
1015	Pottery	1	STE03 – White salt-glazed stoneware 18 th century.
		6	STE – 19 th -20 th centuries. Rim and base
		1	SLW01 – feathered Slipware 17 th -18 th centuries
		1	CRW – 18 th century
		1	Black glazed courseware 18 th - 19 th centuries
		1	PLW – Pearlware 18 th -19 th century
	Animal Bone	1	Burnt epiphysis

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OASIS ID: archaeol27-345982

Project details

Project name	1630 High Street, Knowle, Solihull
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation, comprising a single 8.60m x 1.60m trial trench was carried out on behalf of Jacques Van Der Merwe. Post-medieval or later postholes and an undated pit were found in the trench. A further feature was likely to have been a tree bole. No evidence for medieval activity was found in the trench.
Project dates	Start: 01-01-2019 End: 16-03-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	KNH19 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	PL/2017/02957/PPFL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST MIDLANDS SOLIHULL SOLIHULL 1630 High Street Knowle
Postcode	B93 0LB
Study area	10 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 1811 7682 52.388726615216 -1.733863215905 52 23 19 N 001 44 01 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology Warwickshire
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Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Jodie Duffy
Project director/manager	Stuart Palmer
Project supervisor	Jodie duffy

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	none
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Digital Archive notes	Stored at Archaeology Warwickshire
Paper Archive recipient	none
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Notebook - Excavation', ' Research', ' General Notes", "Plan", "Section", "Survey "
Paper Archive notes	Stored at Archaeology Warwickshire

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	1630 High Street, Knowle, Solihull, Archaeological Evaluation, Archaeology Warwickshire Report 1930
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Duffy, J.
Other bibliographic details	1930
Date	2019
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology Warwickshire
Place of issue or publication	Warwick
Description	A4 comb bound report with colour illustrations and photographs
Entered by	Caroline Rann (carolinerann@warwickshire.gov.uk)
Entered on	16 March 2019

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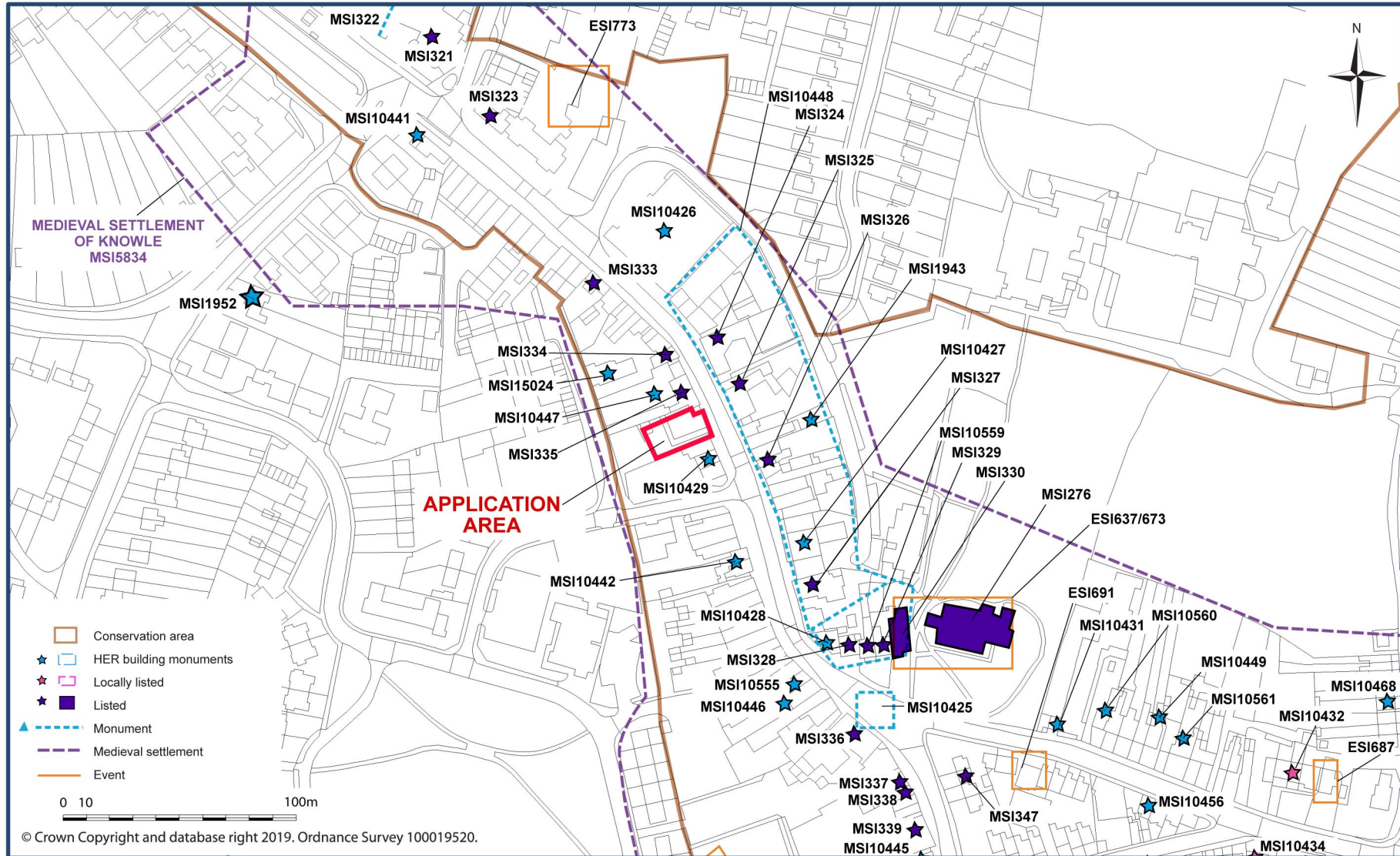


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information

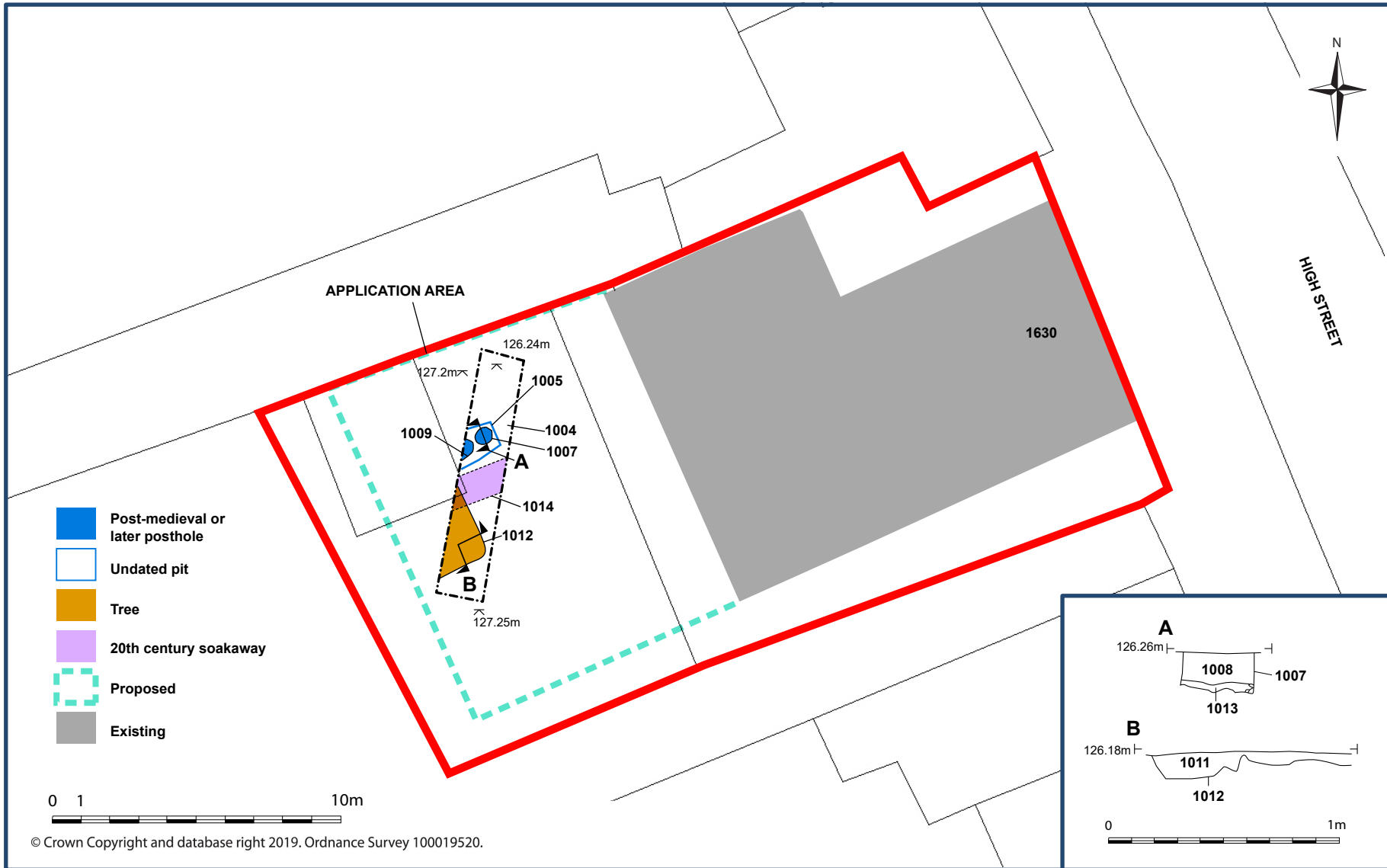


Fig 2: Location of excavated trench and associated sections