

# Claraden Cottage Bridge Street, Fenny Compton Warwickshire

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION



*understanding heritage matters*

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1683

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*Working for  
Warwickshire*

<b>Project:</b>	Claraden Cottage, Fenny Compton
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	Andy Spencer and Lesley Ross
<b>Project Report No.</b>	1683
<b>Site Code:</b>	FB15
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<b>National Grid Reference:</b>	SP 4161 5227
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## SUMMARY

*An archaeological investigation consisting of observation and recording was undertaken during supervised ground reduction on behalf of Mr Andy Spencer and Ms Lesley Ross within the extent of the medieval village of Fenny Compton. No evidence associated with the medieval settlement was revealed. The investigations recorded the foundations for previous post-medieval buildings.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Stratford-upon-Avon District Council for the construction of a rear extension (15/03433/FUL) and a new garage (15/04125/FUL) at Claraden Cottage, Bridge Street, Fenny Compton, Warwickshire. The site lies in an area of archaeological potential so it was therefore a condition of the planning consent that the applicant secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.
- 1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake a programme of archaeological observation, recording and sampling focussed on the areas of proposed extension and garage construction in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the planning authority. This report presents the results of the work which was carried out in August 2016. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum (Site Code FB15).

## 2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The development site, centred on National Grid Reference SP 4161 5219, lies fairly centrally within the village of Fenny Compton, within the parish of the same name. It occupies a large plot on the eastern side of Bridge Street and is bounded by a stream on the northern side. This stream is a tributary to the brook which runs under Memorial Road and continues through the village.
- 2.2 The site is within the core of the village Conservation Area and before the development took place was a garden with a very slight slope from west to east towards the brook. The underlying geology is recorded as Lower Lias clays (BGS 2014).

## 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Prehistoric and Roman

- 3.1 There is no known evidence for significant prehistoric activity within Fenny Compton, although a Neolithic arrowhead was found in the High Street area (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 9746).
- 3.2 Romano-British finds and settlement evidence have been recovered to the west of the village (MWA 10019) and during work by the Feldon Archaeology Society (MWA 10258).

### Medieval

- 3.3 Medieval Fenny Compton can be traced as far back as Domesday (1086) when the population was approximately 250 people in *Contone* (VCH 1904, 317). The parish was 10 hides divided into three estates, one of which was held by the Earl of Meulan and the others by Turchil of Warwick. The recording of a priest suggests a parish church already existed by this time.

**Table A Medieval records from Historic Environment Record search**

(courtesy Warwickshire HER)

<i>HER ref</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
646	Possible moat	Possible moat at manor House which may date from medieval period
664	Church of St Peter and St Clare,	Parish church with surviving 14th century chancel arch.
667	Shrunken medieval settlement	The possible site of an area of earthworks including ditches, house platforms and ridge and furrow which are visible on the ground and on aerial photographs.
668	Shrunken medieval settlement	The possible site of an area of earthworks including ditches, house platforms and ridge and furrow which are visible on the ground and on aerial photographs.
7458	Medieval features	Later medieval features recorded at 2 Church Street
7523	Shrunken medieval settlement	Archaeological investigations revealed dwellings and associated yards and pottery
8983	Fenny Compton Medieval Settlement	Probable extent of Medieval settlement in Fenny Compton as indicated on the Ordnance Survey map of 1886.
19617	Ridge and furrow ploughing	To the west, south and north-east of Fenny Compton

- 3.4 The parish church of St Peter and St Clare lies less than 170m to the south-east of the site (MWA 664). The medieval settlement of Fenny Compton has been mapped using the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (MWA 8983) although the extent of the settlement can be better surmised from surviving earthworks (MWA 668), and from the ridge and furrow earthworks which reveal the extent of the fields adjacent to the settlement.
- 3.5 Evidence for medieval and post-medieval settlement has been recorded 100m north-west of the site during archaeological fieldwork undertaken in 1994 and 1997 (MWA 7272).

### Post-medieval

- 3.6 The core of the village contains at least 28 Listed Buildings and other Grade II Listed cottages and barns of 18th century date. The Cottage (at 1 Bridge Street) is part of the row which includes Claraden Cottage and is a Grade II Listed Building (LBS 306139). It is described as part of a row of cottages of late 17th/18th century date. On the western side of the road, Bayards and The Croft are also Grade II listed barn and house.

**Table B Post-medieval and later records from Historic Environment Record search** (courtesy Warwickshire HER)

<i>HER ref</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>2444</b>	Wesleyan chapel	Dated to 1838
<b>2445</b>	Primitive Methodist Chapel	Dated to 1843
<b>6196</b>	Site of hall and garden	The Hall, in decay by 1746, subsequently demolished
<b>6197</b>	Fishpond	A fishpond, used for the breeding and storage of fish is visible as an earthwork
<b>7458</b>	Post-medieval settlement evidence	Archaeological investigation revealed evidence of post-medieval settlement including a stone structure
<b>9292</b>	Site of Pound	Site of a pound which was used for penning livestock in the 19th century.
<b>13019</b>	Fenny Compton villa group gardens	Gardens with pleasure grounds
<b>19978</b>	Bridge	Post-medieval road bridge

3.7 Claraden Cottage was built immediately adjacent to The Cottage, the listing for that property is described in the Listing text below:

*FENNY COMPTON BRIDGE STREET SP4052 (East side) 6/29 The Cottage GV II Cottage; part of row. Late C17/C18; raised slightly late C18/ early C19. Coursed limestone with irregular quoins to right. Concrete tile roof; stone and brick stack. 2-unit plan. 2 storeys; one-window range. Entrance to left has C20 door and tile hood. Ground floor has fixed-light windows; single-light to left, 2-light to right. Fire window on right. First floor has 2-light casement with painted wood lintel. Stack to right. Interior not inspected. Included for group value.*

3.7 Claraden Cottage is likely to have been added to the row in the 18th century. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 shows the site as occupied by the main dwellings on the street frontage with out-shot and outbuildings to the rear. Two small outbuildings are shown on the southern boundary, but otherwise the large garden area at the rear is shown as open ground (Fig 2). The 1905 mapping shows a similar picture.

**Table C Events recorded on Historic Environment search**

<i>HER ref</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>897</b>	Archaeological evaluation
<b>945</b>	Trial trench adjacent to 1 Church Street
<b>5805</b>	Watching brief at 2 Church Street
<b>6816</b>	Archaeological watching brief
<b>9334</b>	Archaeological observation of foundation trenches at The Old Rectory
<b>9336</b>	Archaeological observation at Hall Park Field
<b>9901</b>	Visit by Lovie to villa gardens
<b>9990</b>	Topographic survey
<b>9993</b>	Archaeological evaluation
<b>9994</b>	Geophysical survey
<b>10186</b>	Archaeological evaluation
<b>10327</b>	Archaeological evaluation at AW Freeman and sons

## 4 AIMS AND METHODS

4.1 The main aim of the work was to record any archaeological remains disturbed by the development, to collate the records in an archaeological archive and present the significant aspects of the archive in a report for dissemination. The secondary aim

was to form an understanding of the remains recorded in terms of their character and date, and to place the evidence in its local and regional context.

- 4.2 The objective of the work included a programme of fieldwork with controlled excavation to the development formation levels, or the geological natural, whichever the higher.
- 4.3 The work undertaken involved the examination of early map evidence as well as records of archaeological remains in the area and local historical journals and other publications.
- 4.4 An experienced archaeologist was made available for each day of ground disturbance when notified by the client in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.

## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The ground reduction associated with the development included the excavation of foundation trenches, the reduction of the internal floor areas and associated service trenching. Ground reduction was undertaken with a 3 tonne 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Machining was in level spits, removed to the required development formation level or to significant archaeological remains, where present.

### **Proposed Extension (Planning ref 15/03433/FUL)**

- 5.2 The lowest layer reached in the foundation trenches was a sticky grey silty clay (13), a part of the natural geological sequence associated with Lower Lias clays. On the northern side the natural was overlaid by a layer of light greyish brown silty clay (11) which may have been alluvial in origin and related to the existing or former stream.
- 5.3 A series of large limestone fragments (14) extended from the corner of the extant house for approximately 3m and these probably formed part of the foundation for an earlier, now demolished, off-shot building. This may have been associated with a possible wall was implied by a discrete patch of masonry (15) located inside the building footprint. This was 1.1m long and 0.6m wide, comprised a single course of rough fragments of limestone roughly dressed on the northern edge.



- 5.4 A remnant stone surface (20) revealed on the southern side of the extension footprint consisted of a large fragment of limestone with frequent small fragments and pebbles extending over an area 1.1m x 0.8m. The surface was directly overlaid by a rubble deposit, but no dating evidence was recovered.
- 5.5 Gully 17 was aligned ENE-WSW for at least 11m across the footprint, was 0.25m wide and largely filled with small limestone fragments (12). This feature was also identified in the foundation trenches and it seemed to follow the slight slope of ground to the brook.
- 5.6 A modern drainage system (18) extended across the proposed footprint (including ceramic pipes and brick manhole chamber).
- 5.7 Part of the area was sealed by a small amount of topsoil (1); however the area was generally covered with make-up deposit or rubble (21) associated with the previous structure to the rear of the property. The deposit included two 20th-century finds which were not retained.

#### **Proposed Garage (Planning ref- 15/04125/FUL)**

- 5.8 A simple sequence of deposits was also revealed in the foundation trenches for the proposed garage. This included the lower layer of light grey silt clay (4) and a layer of greyish brown silty clay (3) adjacent to the stream, which were probably alluvial in origin.
- 5.9 At the northern end of the trench large fragments of limestone (16) were revealed which probably represent the remains of foundations of the former outbuilding shown on the 19th century mapping. This was composed of a possible course of five fragments of limestone, approximately 0.4m x 0.3m x 0.3m in size. No bonding was apparent.
- 5.10 A 0.4m thick layer of greyish brown silty clay (2) overlay the natural across the proposed garage footprint. It contained a few very small fragments of tile and charcoal.
- 5.12 The upper horizon across the garage footprint was dark grey brown silty loam (1), probably a garden or horticultural soil to the rear of the property. Several fragments of

tile and brick and a fragment of 19th/20th-century pottery were present but these were not retained.

- 5.13 At the northern corner of the proposed footprint was a retaining wall for the tributary stream (19). This was a cement bonded stone wall.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological investigations undertaken during the groundworks phase of the development did not reveal any evidence for medieval activity. The absence of medieval finds tends to suggest that the site was subject to low intensity use in the medieval period although the reason for this is not at all obvious.
- 6.2 No post-medieval finds were recovered during the work and this may also reflect an absence of occupation in that period and a continuation of the land use of the medieval period.
- 6.3 Several islands of masonry were recorded which seem likely to relate to the buildings and walls to the rear of that on the street frontage as shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> century mapping. It was not possible to accurately date any of this masonry and an insufficient amount of material evidence was recovered during the work to suggest a likely date range for them. However it is unlikely that they date before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Ms Lesley Ross for commissioning the work.

## REFERENCES

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Warwickshire County Record Office.



1. Foundation trenches for proposed garage



2. Foundation trenches and reduction for proposed extension



3. Masonry 15 and soakaway 12



4. Possible surface 20

## APPENDIX

### A List of contexts

Context	Description	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	Dark grey brown silty loam		0.3m	Topsoil
2	Greyish brown silty clay		0.4m	Layer
3	Light brown yellow sand			?Natural alluvial
4	Light grey silty clay			Geological natural Lias Clay
5	Drain			Modern ceramic drain and cut
6	Brick manhole			Modern chamber and ceramic drain pipe
7	Concrete manhole			Modern chamber and cut
8	Masonry fragments		0.2m	Fill of soakaway
9	Grey silty clay loam			Geological natural Lias
10	Yellowish brown silty clay		0.3m	
11	Light greyish brown silty clay			
12	Masonry rubble			Limestone rubble
13	Grey silty clay			Natural
14	Masonry foundation			Post-medieval building
15	Drain			Modern ceramic drain and cut
16	Masonry foundation			Post-medieval building
17	Gully			Soakaway
18	Drain cut			Modern ceramic drain and cut
19	Retaining wall			Post medieval
20	Pebble and limestone layer		0.05m	? Surface
21	Rubble layer		0.2m	modern

### B List of finds (None retained)

Context	Type	Number	Comments
1	Pottery	3	19th/20th century (not retained)
9	Tile	2	Small fragments (not retained)
21	Pottery	2	19th/ 20th century (not retained)

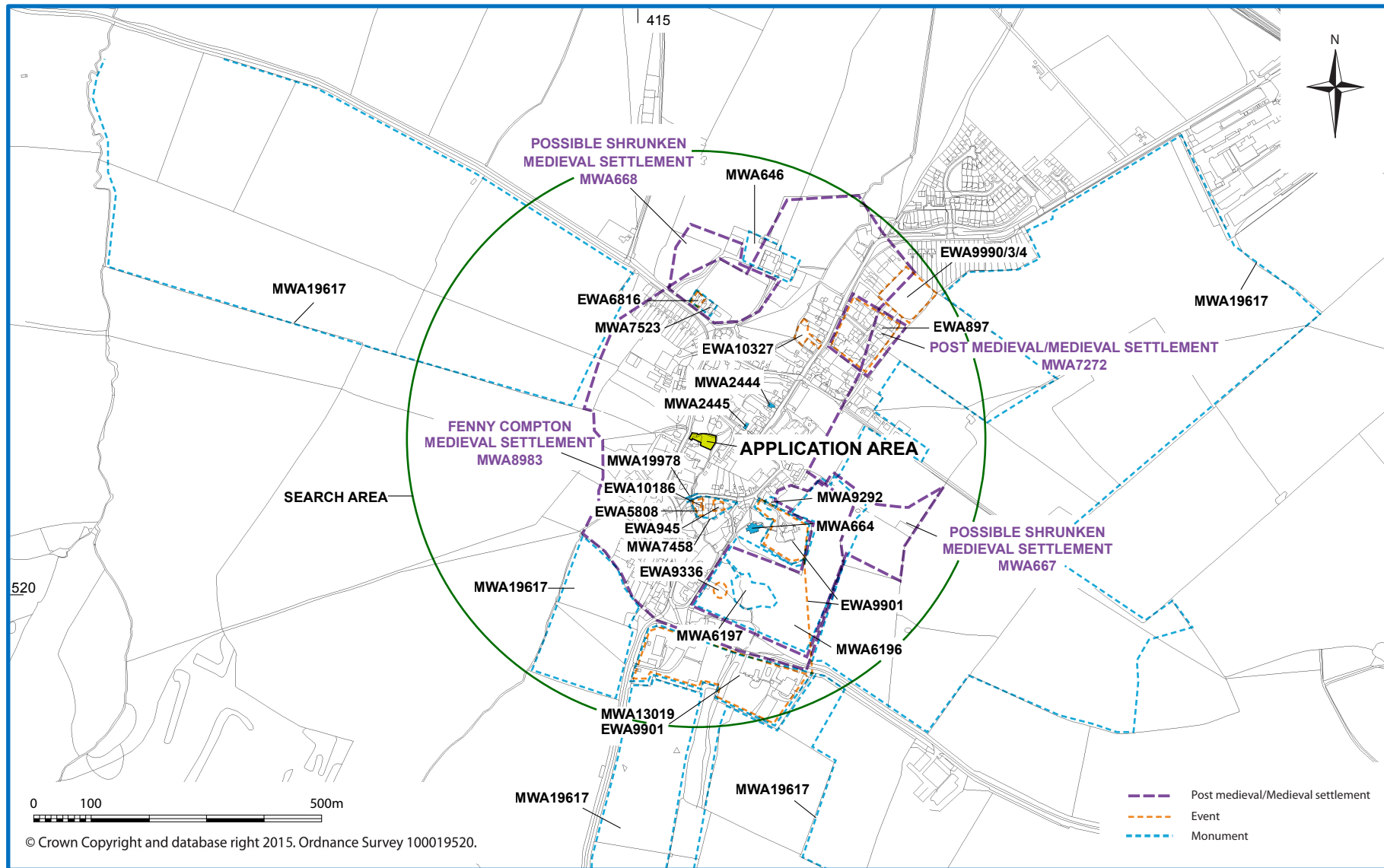


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information

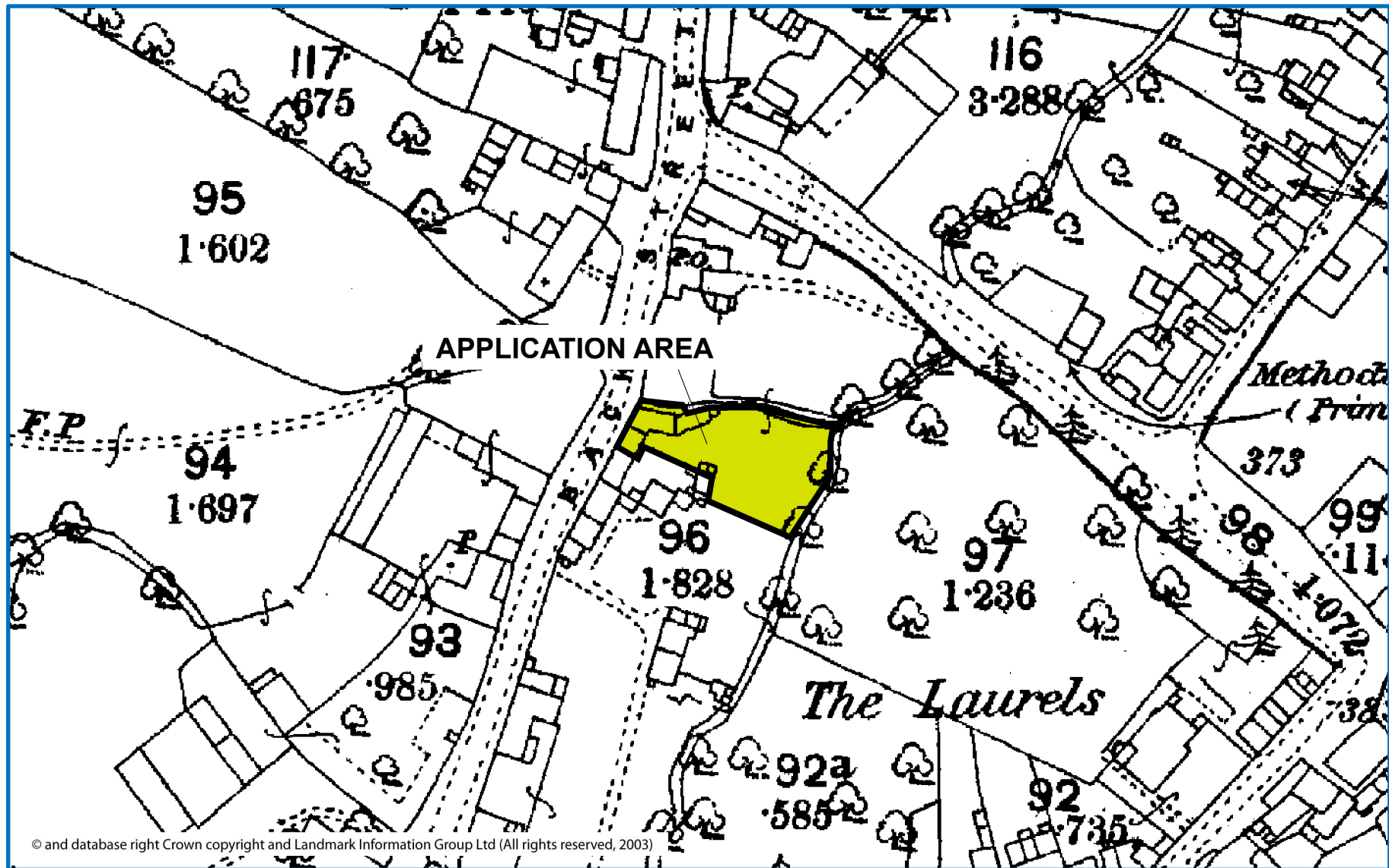


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886



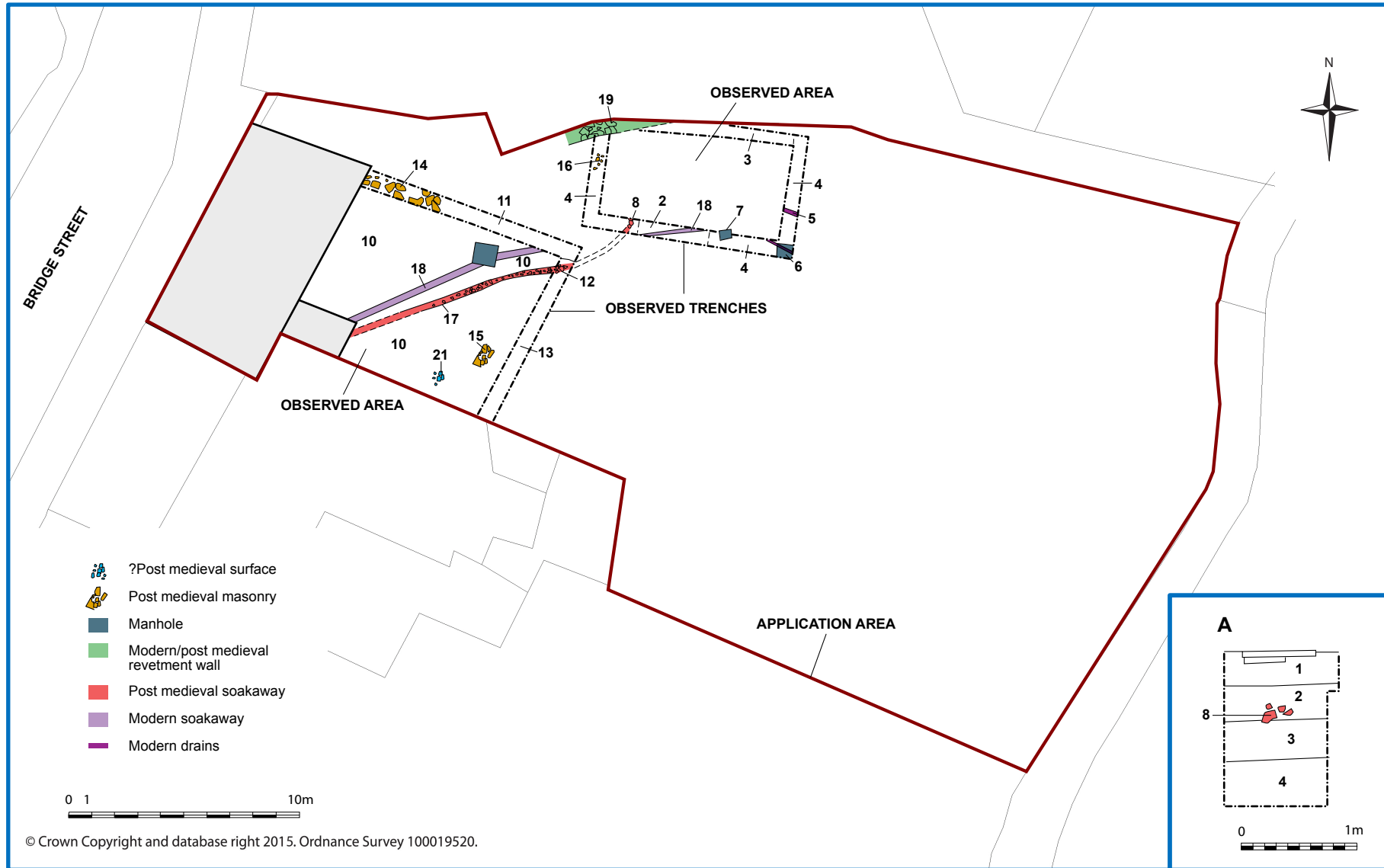


Fig 3: Location of observed trenches and areas