

# Extension to 48 Barton Road Market Bosworth Leicestershire

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



**EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT**

**Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1906**

**JANUARY 2019**



*Working for  
Warwickshire*

**Project:** Extension to 48 Barton Road, Market Bosworth  
**Commissioned by:** Mr S. Wong  
**Site Code:** LMB18  
**Planning Reference:** N/A  
**Planning Authority:** Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council  
**National Grid Reference:** SK 4059 0356  
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## SUMMARY

*An archaeological evaluation, comprising a single 10m trench, was undertaken on behalf of Mr S. Wong in December 2018 ahead of a proposed extension to No. 48 Barton Road, Market Bosworth.*

*A probable linear ditch containing Roman tile and pottery was identified at the trench's eastern end, alongside a posthole incorporating a large packing stone. The ditch had been cut on its eastern edge by a later pit, while to the east an animal burrow or root bole was also found to contain Roman tile and pottery, probably derived from nearby Roman features.*

*The work confirmed that Roman remains, potentially associated with a known Roman building and scheduled monument, continue to the south of No. 48 but are concentrated to the east of the present building.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An application for the construction of extensions to 48 Barton Road, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, will soon be submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. Alterations to the existing structure will comprise an extension to the south side of the building (approx. 12m x 5.5m) and a further extension to the front elevation (approx. 4m x 3m) replacing the existing porch.
- 1.2 The house and the proposed extensions are situated in close proximity to a scheduled Roman building – assumed to be part of a villa complex - part of which was uncovered during excavations by Archaeology Warwickshire in advance of the construction of a new property to the north (Gethin forthcoming). Consequently, the potential existed for the proposed works at No. 48 to impact on buried archaeological features associated with Roman activity on the site.
- 1.3 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation, comprising a single trial trench approximately 10m long, in accordance with the approved WSI. The work was carried out on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 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).

## 2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The application area is centred on National Grid Reference SK 4059 0356 on the east side of Barton Road leading north out of Market Bosworth, in the parish of the same name, Leicestershire. The site is situated beyond the Conservation Area encompassing the town's historic centre, but is immediately adjacent to a Scheduled Monument (SAM 1005476), the boundary of which defines the site's southern edge. The monument also incorporates much of the garden to No. 48, which is situated to the east.
  
- 2.2 The site is underlain by mudstone of the Gunthorpe Member, with superficial deposits comprising mid-Pleistocene glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel (BGS 2018).

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The known archaeological background to 2014 was considered in a Desk-based Assessment by Archaeology Warwickshire, the main points of which are summarised here, and to which reference should be made for full details including historic maps (Rann 2014). Chance finds of prehistoric and Roman material have been found in the wider area. An Iron Age settlement and Romano-British field system was excavated at the former cattle market in the town. The application area is outside the historic medieval core of Market Bosworth, but less than 100m from the boundary of a former medieval deer park to the north.
- 3.2 A Roman building thought to have been part of a villa complex or other high status structure was partly excavated in 1967 by the local school master and children, but the results were not published. The following year a group of amateur archaeologists dug a test pit in what was still a field to the south, found more Roman remains and recorded details of the previous year's excavations. One sketch plan indicates the area in which walls, a tessellated pavement and hypocaust system were revealed in 1967, in the garden to the north-east of the existing house. The extent of the Roman remains is not fully known but the site, and an area around it, is protected as a Scheduled Monument (National Heritage List for England no. 1006476). In addition to the Roman material uncovered during the excavations, several sherds of Iron Age pottery were found, suggesting the possibility of earlier occupation.
- 3.3 Archaeological work has taken place in the wider area in order to further investigate the Roman occupation of the area. Clay objects which could be associated with the site were recovered in Harcourt Spinney, to the west, in the 1970s, and a watching brief in 2013 to the east of the site found a Roman tegula.
- 3.4 Since 2014, Archaeology Warwickshire has carried out evaluation and excavation work in response to planning applications for the construction of two houses and a new garage within the application area. An evaluation on the former tennis court between the existing house and the road, on the site of a proposed new house, found no Roman features and the area had been truncated for construction of the tennis court (Gethin 2016). An evaluation in 2017 consisted of two trenches (Gethin & Palmer 2017). Trench 1 was in front of the existing house at the south of the application area on the site of a new garage, and found only a probable 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>-

century quarry pit and backfill. Trench 2 was to the north of the existing house, on the site of a second proposed new house, and revealed a pit and part of another feature, both containing Roman pottery and building material including tesserae, and a spread of rubble which could have been a surface or demolition rubble from a building.

- 3.5 The footprint of the second new house was subsequently excavated by Archaeology Warwickshire (post-excavation analysis and reporting in progress). Several rooms of a substantial Roman building were revealed, including one containing a hypocaust and another with *in situ* remains of a tessellated pavement. This structure would appear to be the north-west corner of the villa complex first located in 1967. The walls were clearly continuing to the south, under the existing house. A series of Roman ditches were also exposed to the north and west of the structure.



## 4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The general aim of the evaluation was to determine if there were 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. More specifically, the evaluation sought to determine whether any remains associated with the known Roman building extended to the south of No. 48. This would facilitate an assessment of the significance of any remains outside the boundary of the Scheduled Monument, but within its setting and associated with it.
- 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 A single trench was opened up by a 360° mechanical excavator, fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket (Photos 1 and 6). The trench was approximately 10m long, oriented E-W but with a slight dog-leg to the NE. The positioning of the trench had to be adjusted slightly from that in the WSI to avoid a manhole cover and associated pipe.
- 4.5 Topsoil, former ploughsoils and demonstrably modern overburden were removed 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 natural substrate (4) mostly comprised loose yellowish red brown sand, incorporating frequent small and very small angular, sub-angular and sub-rounded stones. At the trench's eastern end, however, this material gave way to firm reddish brown clay.

### Roman

- 5.2 Three archaeological features were identified in the eastern end of the trench: a probable linear ditch, a pit, and a posthole, only one of which – the ditch - produced artefacts of Roman date. A probable animal burrow or root bole (5) also yielded quantities of Roman pottery and tile, possibly derived from nearby Roman features (Photo 2).
- 5.3 The posthole (7) was sub-rounded in shape with very steep sides and a rounded base (Photo 3). It measured 0.26m in diameter and reached a depth of 0.25m. The single fill of light brown sandy loam (8) contained a large sub-rounded stone, which most likely comprised a packing stone. While the feature did not yield any finds, its proximity to other features containing Roman pottery and tile, suggests a similar date for its creation.
- 5.4 The posthole was located immediately to the north-east of a north-south oriented linear ditch (11), which had steep sides and an uneven base (Photo 4). The ditch was 2.2m wide and 0.16m deep, and was filled with light brown sandy loam (12), which contained very occasional small pebbles, five Roman pottery sherds, five Roman tile fragments and a single piece of animal bone.
- 5.5 The ditch had been cut on its eastern edge by a sub-rounded pit (13) with a gentle west side and a much steeper east side (Photo 4). It was 0.64m long, 0.54m wide and 0.26m deep, and contained a single fill of light brown sandy loam (14), which did not incorporate any finds. Despite the absence of clear dating material, though, the pit's association with other features containing Roman pottery and tile means it is likely to have been dug during the Roman period.

### **Undated**

- 5.6 A possible posthole (9) of probably quite recent date was recorded at the trench's western end. The feature was roughly square in plan, 0.2m long, 0.13m wide and 0.06m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. It contained a single fill (10) of dark greyish brown sandy silt, which incorporated occasional small stones in addition to a single animal bone and a piece of slate. Neither of these objects can date the feature and, given its limited depth, it is quite possible they are both intrusive, perhaps even derived from the topsoil or subsoils.

### **Subsoil**

- 5.7 The natural substrate, and the features that cut it, were overlain in places by subsoil composed of pale yellowish grey brown sandy silt (3). This was most conspicuous towards the trench's western end where it was up to 0.19m thick, but elsewhere it was barely discernible. It is possible that it was the product of ground disturbance by the roots which comprised a significant component of the overlying topsoils.

### **Topsoil**

- 5.8 Two topsoils were identified overlying the subsoil, and even directly overlying the natural in places, although both were relatively similar in terms of colour and composition.
- 5.9 The lowermost (2) comprised greyish brown clayey sandy silt, up to 0.4m thick, with occasional small sub-rounded stones, occasional slate and CBM fragments and frequent rooting, especially towards the middle of the trench. This was overlain by a 0.25m thick layer of dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt (1), which also included occasional stones and roots, the latter being particularly concentrated in the middle of the trench where entire tree stumps were removed during excavation.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The trial trench excavated in the footprint of a proposed extension to No. 48 Barton Road, Market Bosworth, revealed limited evidence for Roman activity on the site associated with the building excavated to the north by Archaeology Warwickshire in 2017 and related to the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 6.2 Archaeological features comprised a possible linear ditch, cut on its eastern edge by a later pit, and a posthole containing a large packing stone. Only the ditch contained finds, but they were all of Roman date. Roman pottery and tile was also recovered from an animal burrow or root bole located a short distance to the east of the ditch and south of the posthole. Despite the absence of finds in two of the features it seems reasonable to assume they all date to the Roman period, while the objects recovered from the burrow/root bole are likely to have been incorporated from other nearby features of Roman date. Many of the features excavated to the north in 2017 and associated with the Roman building also contained very few finds (Bryn Gethin *pers comm*).
- 6.3 All such features were concentrated at the trench's eastern end, close to the boundary of the scheduled monument. Further west, the natural substrate had been subject to quite significant disturbance by rooting, while at its westernmost end a possible posthole may instead represent a depression created by a machine using a toothed bucket during construction of No. 48 in the mid-1990s.
- 6.4 The evaluation has demonstrated that few features of Roman date and potentially associated with the known Roman building survive immediately to the south of No. 48 Barton Road. East of the current building, though, Roman features do extend southwards, within the footprint of the proposed extension.
- 6.5 How these relate to the other Roman structures in the vicinity is not entirely clear. The ditch's limited depth is likely to be the result of later truncation, meaning the other features are also likely to have been truncated and more ephemeral remains may have been destroyed completely. The ditch could represent an external boundary feature, and the posthole, while evidently structural, may have been associated with a fence or palisade as opposed to a building. Nonetheless, the Roman roof tile from the

ditch and root bole are clearly derived from a structure, possibly that located to the north.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Mr S. Wong for commissioning the work and Richard Clark, Principal Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, for representing the planning authority.

## REFERENCES

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1: Trench 1, looking east



2: North-facing section of animal burrow/root bole 5, with posthole 7 in the foreground and ditch 11, cut by pit 13, to the right





3: West-facing section of posthole 7



4: South-facing section of ditch 11 and pit 13



5: South-west-facing section of possible posthole 9



4: Trench 1, looking south-west

## APPENDICES

### A List of contexts

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1	1	Dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt with occasional roots and small stones. Soft with diffuse horizons.	0.25	Turf/Topsoil
1	2	Greyish brown clayey sandy silt containing occasional small sub-rounded stones, occasional pieces of slate and CBM fragments and frequent rooting towards the middle of the trench. Soft/loose with a diffuse horizon with 1 but clearer horizons with 3 and 4.	0.4	Topsoil
1	3	Pale yellowish grey brown sandy silt. Incorporated occasional small sub-rounded and sub-angular stones. Compact, but easily loosened, with moderate horizons.	0.19	Subsoil
1	4	Yellowish red brown sand with reddish brown clay towards the trench's eastern end. Contained frequent small and very small angular, sub-angular and sub-rounded stones (gravel) and occasional roots. Soft/loose (except clay which was compact) with clear horizons.	N/A	Geological Natural
1	5	Sub-rounded in plan with a very steep western side. Filled with 6. Affected by root disturbance on its western edge.	0.22	Animal burrow/root bole

1	6	Grey sandy loam containing tile, pottery and occasional mortar flecks.	0.22	Fill of 5
1	7	Sub-rounded in plan with very steep sides and a rounded base. Filled with 8.	0.25	Posthole
1	8	Light brown sandy loam.	0.25	Fill of 7
1	9	Approximately square in plan with steep sides and a flat base. Filled with 10.	0.06	Possible Posthole
1	10	Dark greyish brown sandy silt with including occasional small stones.	0.06	Fill of 9
1	11	N-S oriented linear with very sharp sloping sides and an uneven base. Filled with 12.	0.16	Ditch
1	12	Light brown silty loam containing very occasional small pebbles, tile, pottery and slate.	0.16	Fill of 11
1	13	Sub-rounded in plan with a shallow west side and steep east side. Filled with 14.	0.26	Pit
1	14	Light brown sandy loam.	0.26	Fill of 13

## B List of finds

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
6	Tile	3	Tegula (x1 with fingerprint impression)
6	Pottery	1	Roman
6	CBM	1	Daub
10	Animal Bone	1	
12	Tile	5	x2 imbrex, x3 tegula
12	CBM	1	Possible tegula, very worn on both faces
12	Pottery	4	Roman (x1 fine sandy grey ware (1 <sup>st</sup> – early 3 <sup>rd</sup> and later 4 <sup>th</sup> centuries AD))
12	Animal Bone	1	

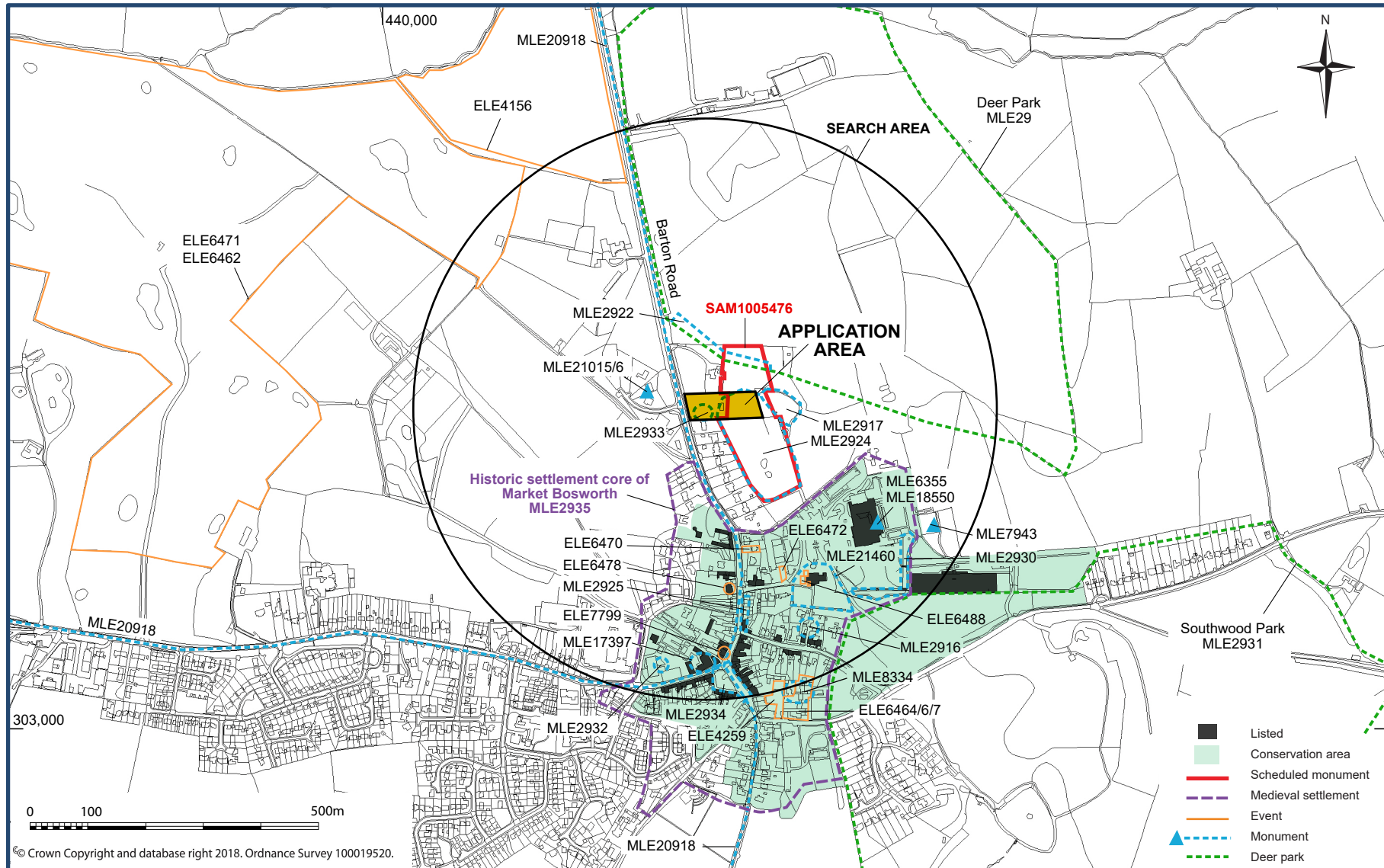


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment Information

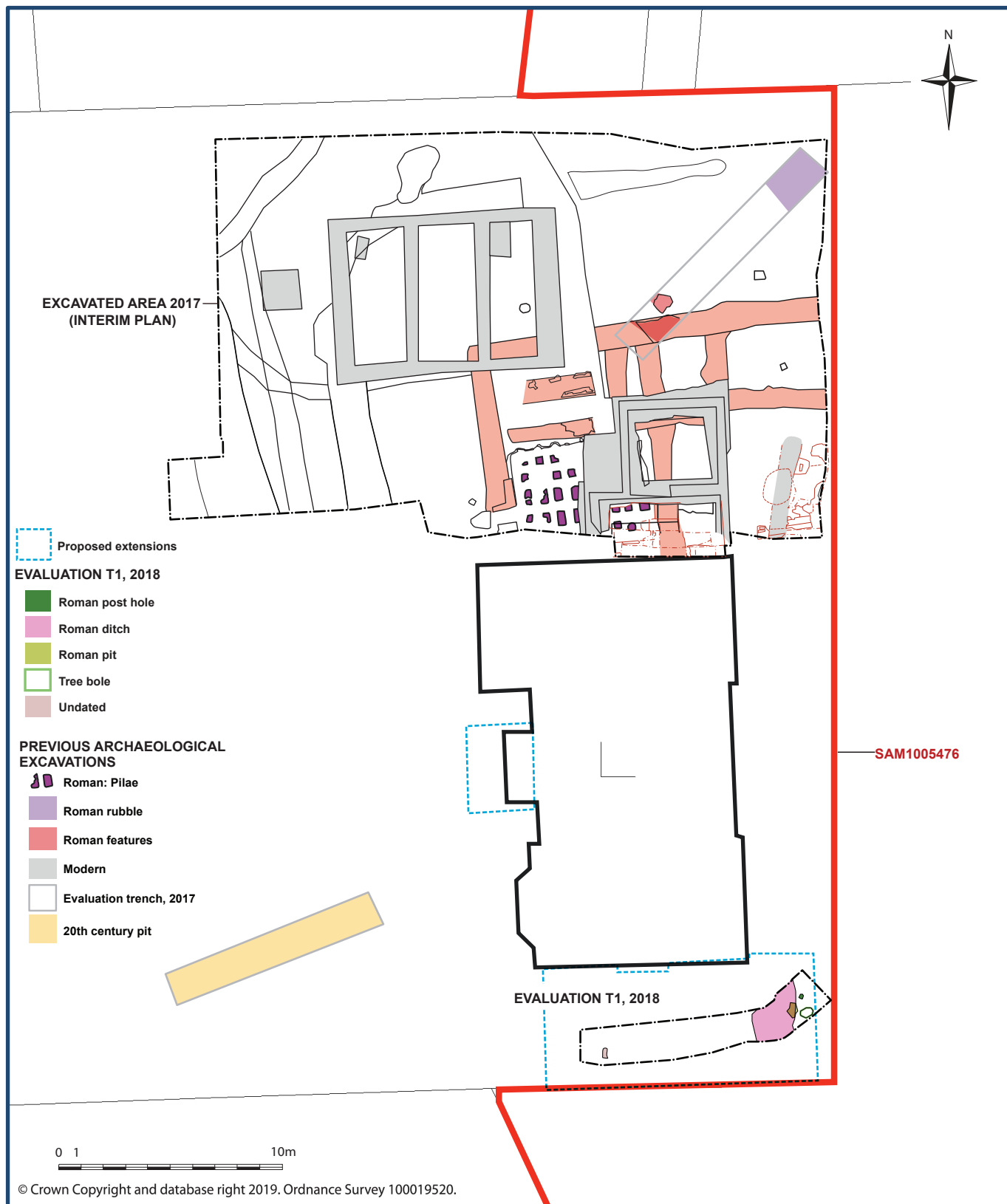


Fig 2: Location of evaluation trench 1, 2018, and previous archaeological excavations

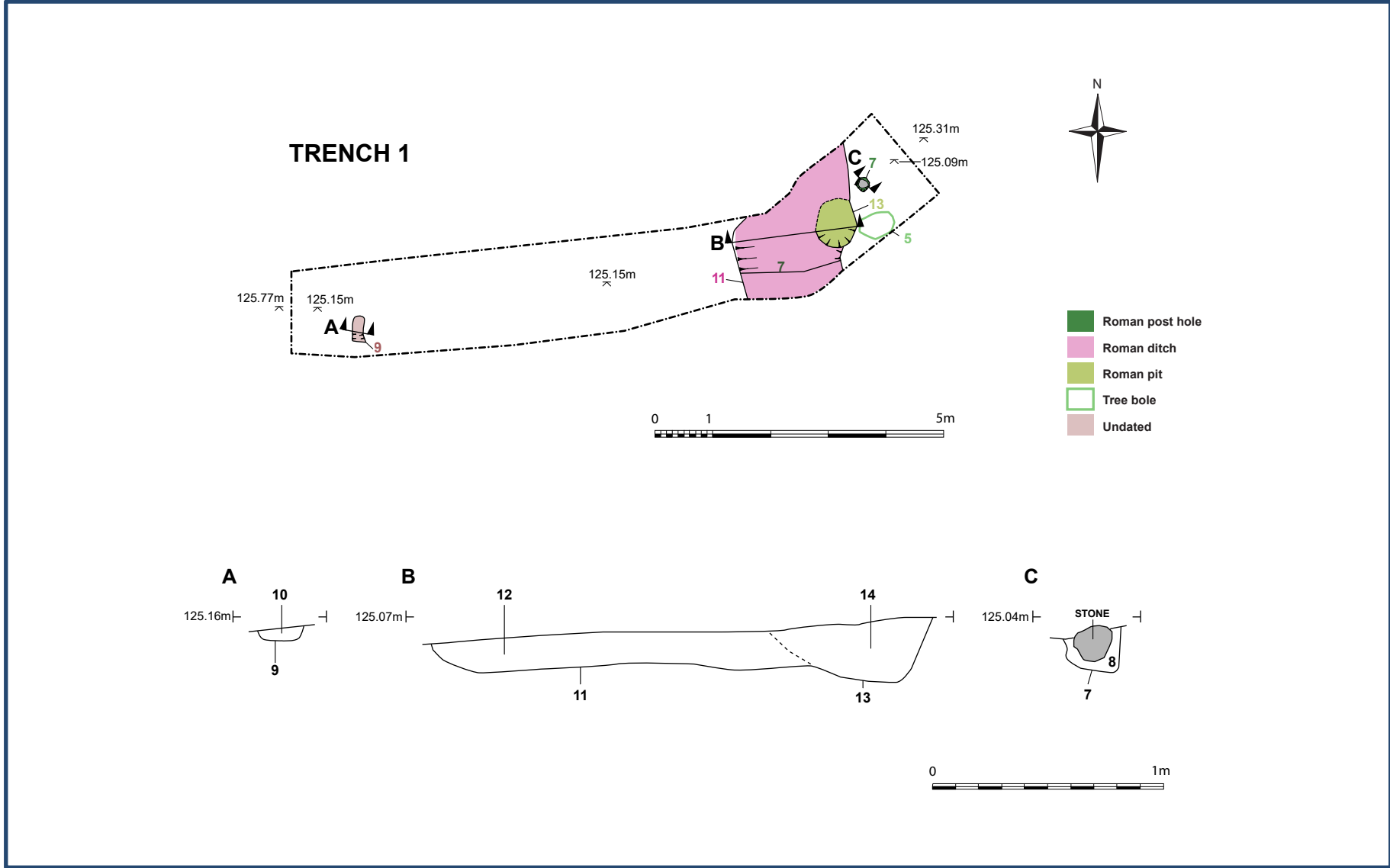


Fig 3: Detail of trench 1 with sections A to C