

Shobnall Road Burton upon Trent Staffordshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 21116
DECEMBER 2021



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Former IMEX Business Centre
Commissioned by: Keepmoat Homes
Site Code: BTF21
Planning Reference: P/2020/00745
Planning Authority: East Staffordshire Borough Council
Accession Number: STKMG:2021.LH.11
National Grid Reference: SK 23994 23081
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Date: December 2021
Report reference: Thompson, P, 2021 *Shobnall Road, Burton upon
Trent, Staffordshire: Archaeological Watching
Brief*, Archaeology Warwickshire Report 21116

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CONTENTS

	Summary	1
1	Introduction	2
2	Site Location	4
3	Archaeological and Historical Background	5
4	Aims and Methods	7
5	Results	8
6	Conclusions	9
	Acknowledgements	10
	References	11

APPENDICES

A	List of Contexts	12
B	List of Finds	13
C	Oasis Form	

PHOTOGRAPHS

1	Excavation of trench using steel trench box	14
2	Excavated section showing natural gravel	14
3	Groundworks in Plot 7 looking north	15
4	Foundation trench for Plot 17 looking north-west	16

FIGURES

1	Location of application area and Historic Environment information	
2	Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1884 (Staffordshire XL.16 & 12)	
3	Location of areas observed and geotechnical investigations	

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks for residential dwellings alongside the projected alignment of the Roman road Ryknild Street on behalf of Keepmoat Homes Ltd.

No significant archaeological deposits or finds were observed during the work as few of the trenches examined penetrated below the considerable depth of 'made ground' across the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission (Ref. P/2020/00745) has been granted by East Staffordshire Borough Council for the erection of 125 residential dwellings at the Former IMEX Business Centre, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent, DE14 2AU.
- 1.2 An archaeological desk-based assessment had identified the projected line of the Roman road, Ryknild Street, extending across the western side of the site and that the site lay within part of Burton's 'brewery district' (Skinner 2017).
- 1.3 A condition of the planning permission therefore required that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks associated with the development in the north-western part of the site.
- 1.4 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake the watching brief which took place between June 2021 and October 2021. This report presents the results of that work. The project archive will be temporarily stored in Warwick under Site Code BTF21, prior to deposition with The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, with the accession number: STKMG:2021.LH.11. The archive consists of digital photographs, a report and context sheets.
- 1.5 The work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2020).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site, formerly the IMEX Business Centre, in the town of Burton Upon Trent, is centred on National Grid Reference SK 23994 23081. It lies on the north side of Shobnall Road (B5017), to the east of Wellington Street (A5121) and to the south-east of Curzon Street. It is bounded to the east by railway lines 50m SW of Burton on Trent railway station. The River Trent is c.1.1km to the east of the site which is c.49m above Ordnance Datum.

- 2.2 Prior to the development of the IMEX Business Centre, the site included four late 19th-century Ind and Coope malshouses which had been substantially modified and joined by extensive 20th-century warehouse and factory facilities. However, all standing structures within the site boundary were demolished in 2018 when the site had been cleared and levelled to create a development platform suitable for residential development.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The baseline archaeological data was presented in the foregoing archaeological desk-based assessment (Skinner 2017) and the salient points are presented below.

Prehistoric

- 3.2 Very little evidence for prehistoric activity has been recorded in the area: a flint knife and flint scraper of Neolithic or Bronze Age date were recovered 1km to the west of the site (Staffordshire Historic Environment Record refs. HER 05513 & 60508, Fig 1) and a log boat was excavated in a local gravel pit in 1963, although its location is not currently certain (HER 05148).

Roman

- 3.3 A projected alignment for the Roman road of Ryknild Street extends across the western edge of the site (HER 01144), a forerunner to the Derby road, based on section of agger recorded within the commercial estate south-west of the site and a road surface, 4km to the north-east of the site. Although no settlement or military camps have been associated with the road, a 1st-century Roman coin from the Grange Street allotments and a 3rd century coin from Shobnall Road have been reported (HER 04922).

Medieval

- 3.4 Burton-upon Trent was held by the Abbey of St Mary and St Modwen, Burton, both before and after the Norman Conquest. It is recorded as a small settlement noted in particular for the quantities of meadow associated with the settlement. Ridge and furrow has been identified west of the site (HER 52048).

Post-medieval and modern

- 3.5 Burton upon Trent developed as a centre for industries related to woollen textiles, fulling mills, iron working, hat making and brewing. In the early 19th century the Midland railway, which was laid down and opened in 1839 (HER 57908), was constructed directly to the east of the site. The Tithe map of Burton, produced in 1847 (Ref. B/A/15/67; not reproduced) depicts the site as one of three large, enclosed fields, named 'Big New Close' within the estate of the Marquess of Anglesey. The specific landowner in this case were the 'Feoffees or Trustees of Burton Town Sands', leasing the field to William and Jonathan Perks. The field is described as 'Old Turf'. Thomas

Spoooner's 1857 map of Burton-upon-Trent (Ref. BD110/18; not reproduced) shows the same array of fields and labels the application site as 'Garden Allotments'.

- 3.6 The later 19th-century development in the brewing industry is reflected in many new premises in the study area, including malshouses for the Ind, Coope and Co. Brewery within the site (HER 54648) and these are first depicted on Mason's 1879 map of the town (Ref. 5284; not reproduced). The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 (Fig 2) depicts the four malshouses, bisected by railway sidings and joined by a small ancillary building immediately to the north. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey of map 1901 (not reproduced), indicates two further ancillary structures on the southern boundary of the site and a further storehouse on the north-east side.

Previous ground investigations (boreholes)

- 3.7 A pre-demolition ground investigation comprising 21 window sample boreholes between 0.7m and 5m deep (WYG summarised by GRM Development Solutions Ltd 2020a), reported variable thicknesses of made ground across the site with a maximum proven thickness of 2.8m overlying River Terrace deposits. Post demolition investigations by GRM Development Solutions Ltd (2020b) established made ground to depths ranging between 0.9m and 2.8m deep.

4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the work was to record any significant archaeological deposits revealed by the development, to collate the fieldwork records into an archaeological archive and present the results of the fieldwork for dissemination.
- 4.2 An experienced archaeologist was present for each period of ground disturbance when notified by the client in accordance with WSI.
- 4.3 Ground reductions were carried out using a machine fitted with a toothless bucket. The trenches were generally 0.60m wide and excavated to a depth of 1.2m. Drainage trenches observed were excavated to a depth of 2.6m.
- 4.4 Groundworks were observed in the western part of the site in Plot 1, Plots 7, 8 and 9 as well as Plot 17.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Geological natural yellowish-brown sand and gravel (2) was identified in drainage trenches approximately 1.5m below existing ground surface (Fig 3).

- 5.2 Above the natural were several layers of made ground comprising greyish brown sand and yellowish-brown sand and gravel containing brick, other ceramic building material and glass bottle fragments (1), greyish brown sandy silt and yellow contains concrete fragments (3), and modern debris (4).

- 5.3 No significant archaeological deposits were observed during the watching brief and no significant finds were recovered.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The watching brief did not identify any significant archaeological deposits and significant finds were identified. The area observed was covered in a significant depth of made ground which incorporated previous building material.

- 6.2 The groundworks in the area of the projected Roman Road alignment were not sufficiently deep to penetrate below modern make up or levelling deposits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Keepmoat Homes for commissioning the work and Shane Kellerher for monitoring the work on behalf of the planning authority.

REFERENCES

Archaeology Warwickshire 2021 *Former IMEX Business Centre, Shobnall Road, Burton Upon Trent: Written Scheme of Investigation, Watching Brief*

BGS British Geological Survey 2021 *Geology of Britain Viewer, accessed September 2021, <<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?>>*

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2020 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*

GRM 2020 P9308.LET REP-1 Ground investigation Letter

Skinner 2017 *Former Imex Business Centre, Burton on Trent, Archaeological Desk-based Assessment, WYG*

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Context	Description	Depth (m)	Interpretation
1	Mixed deposit of greyish brown sand and yellowish brown sand and gravel contains brick, other cbm and glass bottle fragments	Min 1.0	Redeposited hard core and levelling layer
2	Yellowish brown sand and gravel		Natural geology
3	Mixed deposit with greyish brown sandy silt and yellow contains concrete fragments	1.0	Redeposited modern rubble deposit
4	Very dark reddish brown sandy clay silt with frequent brick fragments	0.t	Modern construction deposit

B List of Finds (Not retained)

Context	Material	Quantity	Date/Comments
1	Brick	11	Modern brick and concrete fragments (NR)
1	Glass	3	Bottle glass (NR)
3	CBM	5	Modern brick and concrete fragments (NR)
4	Brick	2	Modern brick fragments (NR)



1: Excavation of drainage trench using steel trench box



2: Excavated section showing natural gravel



3: Groundworks in Plot 7 looking north



4: Foundation trench for Plot 17 looking north-west

Summary for archaeol27-503492

OASIS ID (UID)	archaeol27-503492
Project Name	Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire: Archaeological Watching Brief
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	BTF21 Former Imex Business Centre
Planning Id	P/2020/00745
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Archaeology Warwickshire
Project Dates	01-Jun-2021 - 31-Oct-2021
Location	Shobnall Road, Burton on Trent, Staffordshire NGR : SK 23994 23081 LL : 52.8047532947794, -1.64552423575528 12 Fig : 423994,323081
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Staffordshire District : East Staffordshire Parish : Shobnall
Project Methodology	Drainage trenches and other groundworks were observed. The work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2020).
Project Results	The watching brief did not identify any significant archaeological deposits and significant finds were identified. The area observed was covered in a significant depth of made ground which incorporated previous building material. The groundworks in the area of the projected Roman Road alignment were not sufficiently deep to penetrate below modern make up or levelling deposits.
Keywords	
HER	Staffordshire Historic Environment Record - unRev - STANDARD
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery

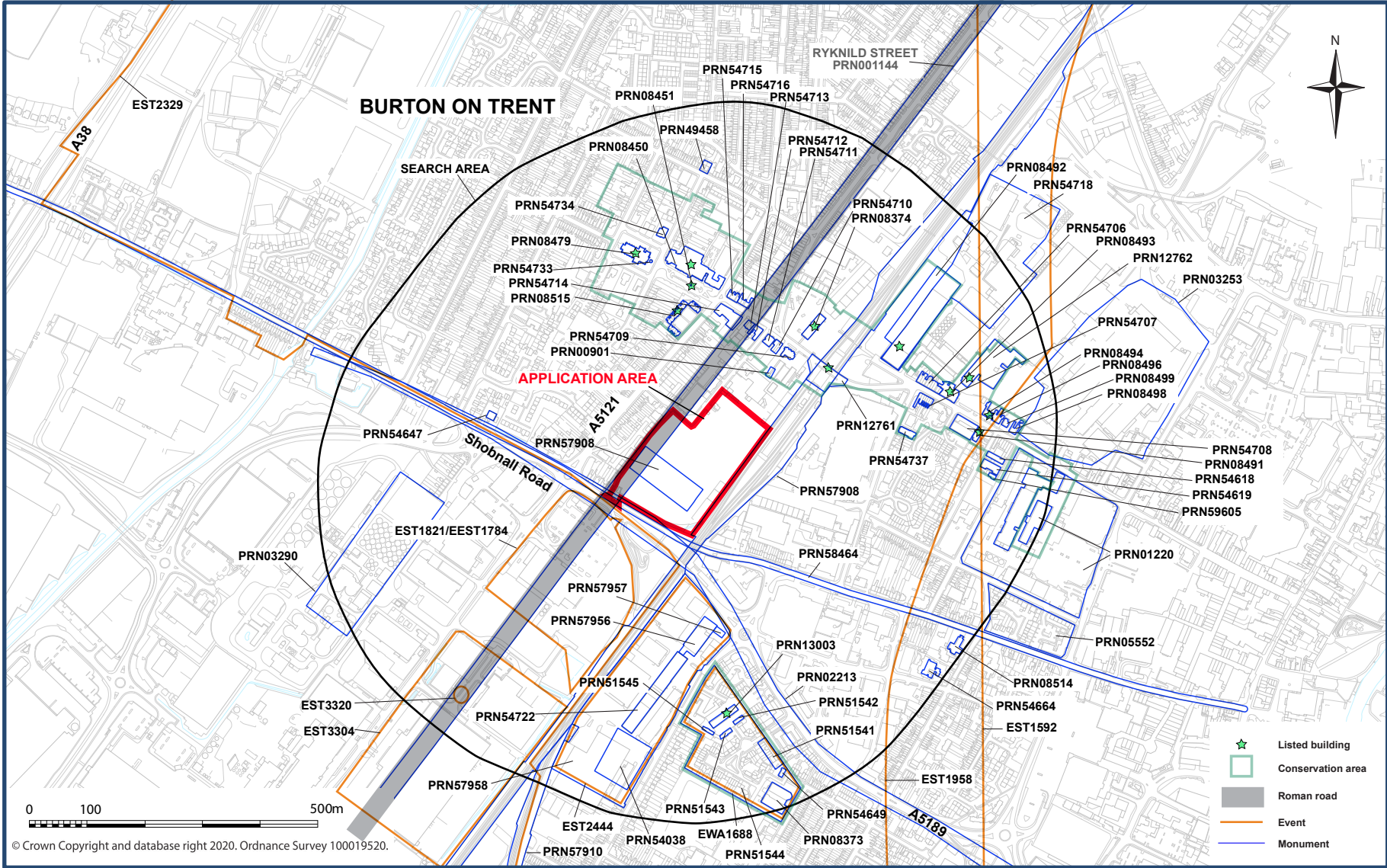


Fig 1: Location of application area

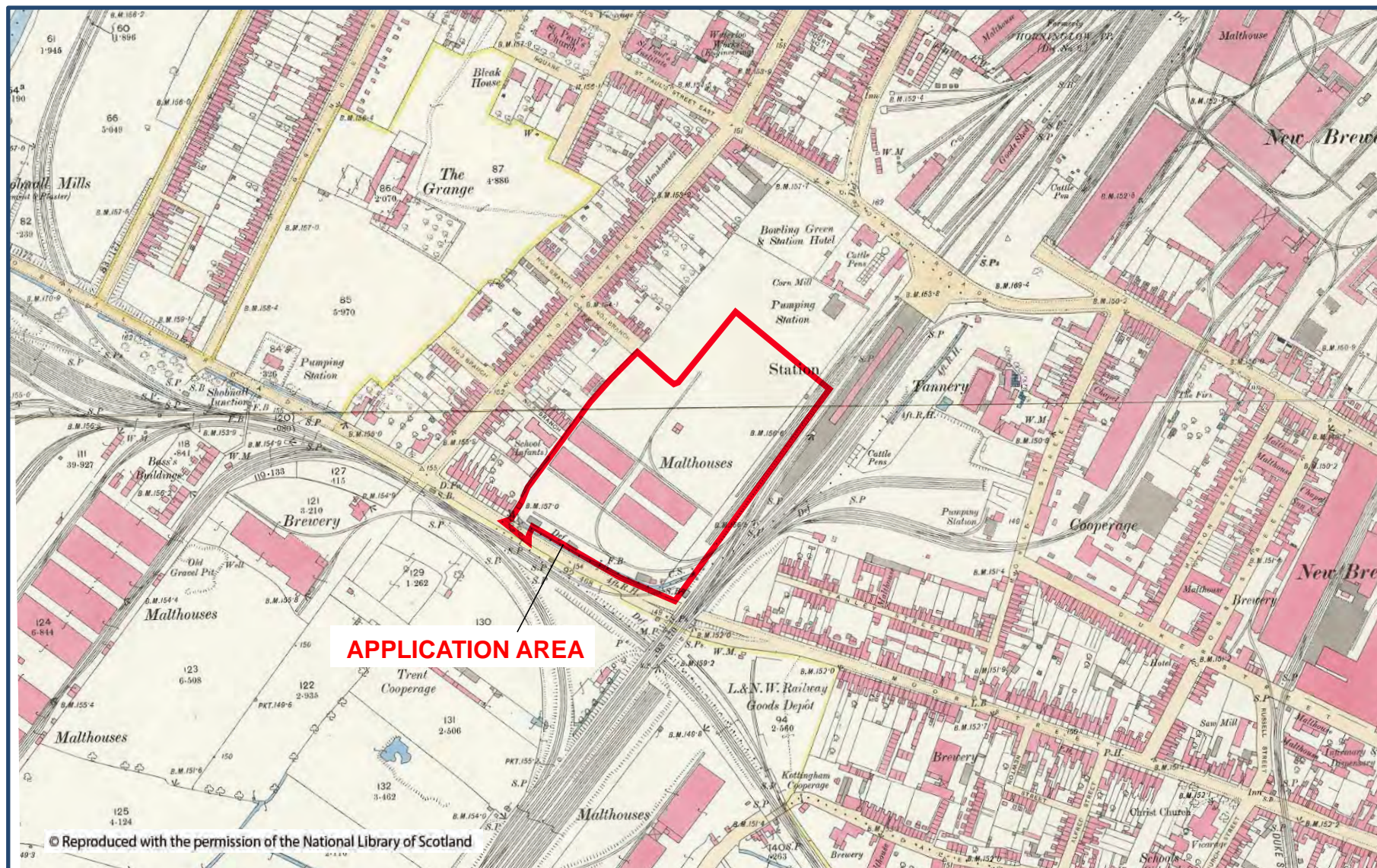


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1884 (Staffordshire XL.16 & 12)

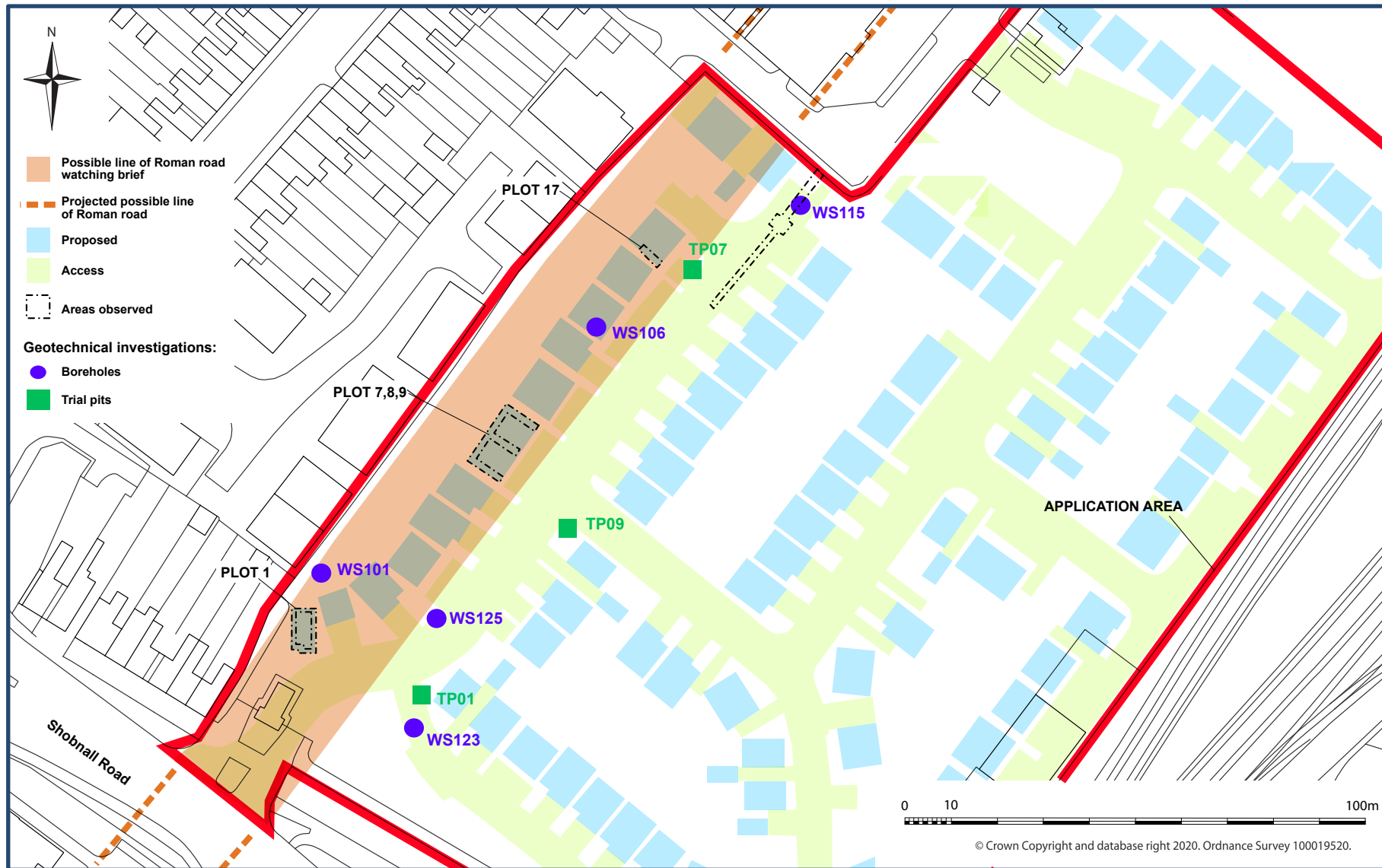


Fig 3: Location of areas observed and geotechnical investigations