

75 Tiddington Road Stratford-upon-Avon Warwickshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 16119

DECEMBER 2016



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: 75 Tiddington Road, Stratford-upon-Avon
Commissioned by: Professor Peter Fidler
Project Report No. 16119
Site Code: SD16
Planning Reference: 16/01564/FUL
Planning Authority: Stratford-on-Avon District Council
National Grid Reference: SP 2129 5534
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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new extension and double garage in an area where evaluation had determined Roman deposits survived on behalf of Professor Peter Fidler.

An early phase of activity is evident in the form of handmade pottery of probable middle Iron Age date. The activity continued into the 1st century AD judging by the presence of Aylesford – Swarling tradition fabrics and together the evidence suggests the location of a farmstead. This is one of a number of complexes along the Avon Valley at Tiddington which seem to have coalesced into a village which thrived throughout the Roman period.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council for 2 storey side/front extension, single storey rear extension, double garage to front and various alterations at 75 Tiddington Road, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire (Planning Ref. 16/01564/FUL).
- 1.2 Prior to receiving planning permission, Archaeology Warwickshire had undertaken a field evaluation which identified the need for further mitigation (Charles 2016), and prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out during the groundworks phase.
- 1.3 The watching brief was carried out in November 2016 and this report presents the results of that work. The archive will be deposited with the Warwickshire Museum under Site Code SD16.

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is located on the northern side of Tiddington Road and is centred around National Grid Reference SP 2129 5534 (Fig 1). The area of new development is currently driveway/parking and a garden lawn.

- 2.2 Tiddington Road runs along the southern side of the River Avon along the ridge formed by the 2nd river gravel terrace (BGS 1974).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The archaeological background has been fully described in the evaluation report (Charles 2016). In summary the site lies in an area of later prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation with the potential for deposits of any of these periods to be present.

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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 The main objectives were to supervise the excavation of foundation trenches to the top of the geological natural and to excavate and record any archaeological deposits encountered.
- 4.4 All work was undertaken in accordance with Archaeology Warwickshire's Procedures Manual, and the Codes and Guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- 4.5 Foundation trenches associated with the new extension to the house and the new garage were observed by an archaeologist. Both areas had been partly revealed in the earlier evaluation.
- 4.6 Trenches for the new double garage were 0.60m wide and between 1.10 and 1.20m deep. Trenches for the extension to the existing house were 0.60m wide and 0.95m deep.

5 RESULTS

Garage foundations

- 5.1 Geological natural sand and gravel 302 was exposed throughout except for the part excavated for the column between garage doors. Two features were observed cutting the natural.
- 5.2 Ditch 303 was aligned NW-SE and was 1.50m wide and filled with greyish brown silty sand (304). A single sherd of handmade pottery and a small piece of copper alloy and a few small but relatively well preserved fragments of animal bone (not retained) were recovered from this feature. This feature aligns with evaluation ditch 203.
- 5.3 Ditch 305 was aligned NE-SW and was approximately 0.95m wide. It was filled with greyish brown silty sand (306) from which two sherds of pottery were recovered.
- 5.4 The ditches were overlaid by between 0.70m and 0.90m of greyish brown silty sand (301) and 0.30m of dark greyish brown sandy loam topsoil (300).

Extension foundations

- 5.5 Geological natural sand and gravel 402 was exposed throughout. Two archaeological features were evident cutting the natural.
- 5.6 Ditch 403 was aligned NE-SW and was 0.90m wide and filled with greyish brown silty sand (404). It corresponds with evaluation ditch 103 which contained pottery.
- 5.7 Undated ditch 405 was aligned NW-SE and was 1.25m wide and filled with greyish brown silty sand (406).
- 5.8 The ditches were overlain by 0.80m of greyish brown silty sand (401) and 0.15m of dark greyish brown sandy loam topsoil (400).

The Ceramic Evidence by Dr Phil Mills

- 5.9 Ten sherds, weighing 129g were assessed. The material was very mixed and in poor condition. No forms could be identified, although pottery fabrics indicated deposition in the middle Iron Age, Roman transition (1st century AD) period and in the modern

period. The material was rapidly scanned by context and recorded using the Warwickshire fabric classes. The small size of the assemblage means that the full catalogue is presented below.

The Catalogue

Context	Description	Date
104	1 sherd of a brown well levigated and slipped fabric, possibly from a drain	C19 +
204	Two sherds, 13g of a quartz and grog tempered wheel made fabric. Possible Tiddington product, class E, Aylesford- Swarling tradition,	AD 1-70
	One plain base sherd, 8g class E with calcareous and grog inclusions, wheel made,	AD 1-70
	One base sherd with outturned rounded base, 10g, in a class E calcareous and grog tempered wheelmade fabric,	AD 1-70
208	One sherd, 3g of a class E wheelmade fabric with fine black grog and quartz inclusions, possible Tiddington product	AD 1- 70
304	One sherd, 21g handmade 6mm thick wall sherd of a reduced handmade class P , Middle Iron Age tradition fabric with coarse rounded quartz inclusions	MIA
306	One sherd of a class P handmade fabric with common rounded quartz inclusions with a black core and brown surfaces 70g	MIA
	One sherd, 1g of a class P handmade reduced fabric with common quartz inclusions	MIA
	One fragment, 1g of an oxidised fired clay fragment	

Discussion

- 5.10 This is a small group of disparate material. The earliest material is from Trench 3 which would indicate Middle Iron Age pottery deposition, most likely deriving from a basic level rural site.
- 5.11 Trench 2 would indicate Late Iron or transition period activities with a small number of wheel made grog tempered fabrics in the Aylesford – Swarling tradition, including a number of fragments which may be Tiddington products. This would suggest an AD 1- 70 date and again is consistent with basic level rural site.
- 5.12 The latest material is from (104) and is probably from a drain and is of 19th century or later date.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 A number of archaeological features were recorded during the watching brief and some of these appear to correspond with features recorded in the archaeological evaluation.
- 6.2 An early phase of activity is evident in the form of handmade pottery of probable middle Iron Age date. In this instance it is not possible to be more accurate than c.200BC-50BC. Middle Iron Age foci of activity have been identified sporadically along the Tiddington Road and seem to relate to individual farmsteads. The occurrence of Aylesford – Swarling tradition fabrics, possibly made at Tiddington, suggest that this farmstead was in use at the turn of the millennium and probably after the Roman conquest of AD43. The features 303 and 305 could relate to a boundary for such a farmstead, particularly in view of the alignment with 405 under the extension.
- 6.3 The site lies on the south-western edge of what had previously been understood as the limit of Roman settlement. These features suggest that prehistoric settlement activity could spread further south-west.
- 6.4 The mitigation strategy has been vindicated insofar as it has enabled the recovery of significant new data, using a methodology proportional to the size and kind of development. Given the depth of the deposits, it also infers that archaeological features are likely to survive below existing buildings in this area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Professor and Mrs Peter Fidler for commissioning the work and the staff at Rajkowski for their assistance during the work.

REFERENCES

BGS 1974 *1:50,000 Series, England and Wales Sheet Solid and Drift Geology, Sheet 200, Stratford-upon-Avon*, British Geological Survey.

Charles, E, 2016 *75 Tiddington Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, Archaeology Warwickshire Report 1666.

Landmark 2003 First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 18876-9, 1:2500, digital edition



1. Feature 303



2. Feature 305



3. General view of house and garage foundation trenches



4. General view of extension trenches



5. Features 403 and 405

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Trenches</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3	300	Dark greyish brown sandy loam	0.30	Topsoil
3	301	Greyish brown silty sand	0.70-0.90	Layer
3	302	Brownish yellow sand and gravel		Geological natural
3	303	Cut for linear feature		Ditch
3	304	Greyish brown silty sand		Ditch fill of 303
3	305	Cut for linear feature		Natural
3	306	Greyish brown silty sand		Ditch fill of 305
4	400	Dark greyish brown sandy loam	0.15	Topsoil
4	401	Greyish brown silty sand	0.80	Layer
4	402	Brownish yellow sand and gravel		Geological natural
4	403	Cut for linear feature		Ditch
4	404	Greyish brown silty sand		Ditch fill 403
4	405	Cut for linear feature		Ditch
4	406	Greyish brown silty sand		Ditch fill of 405

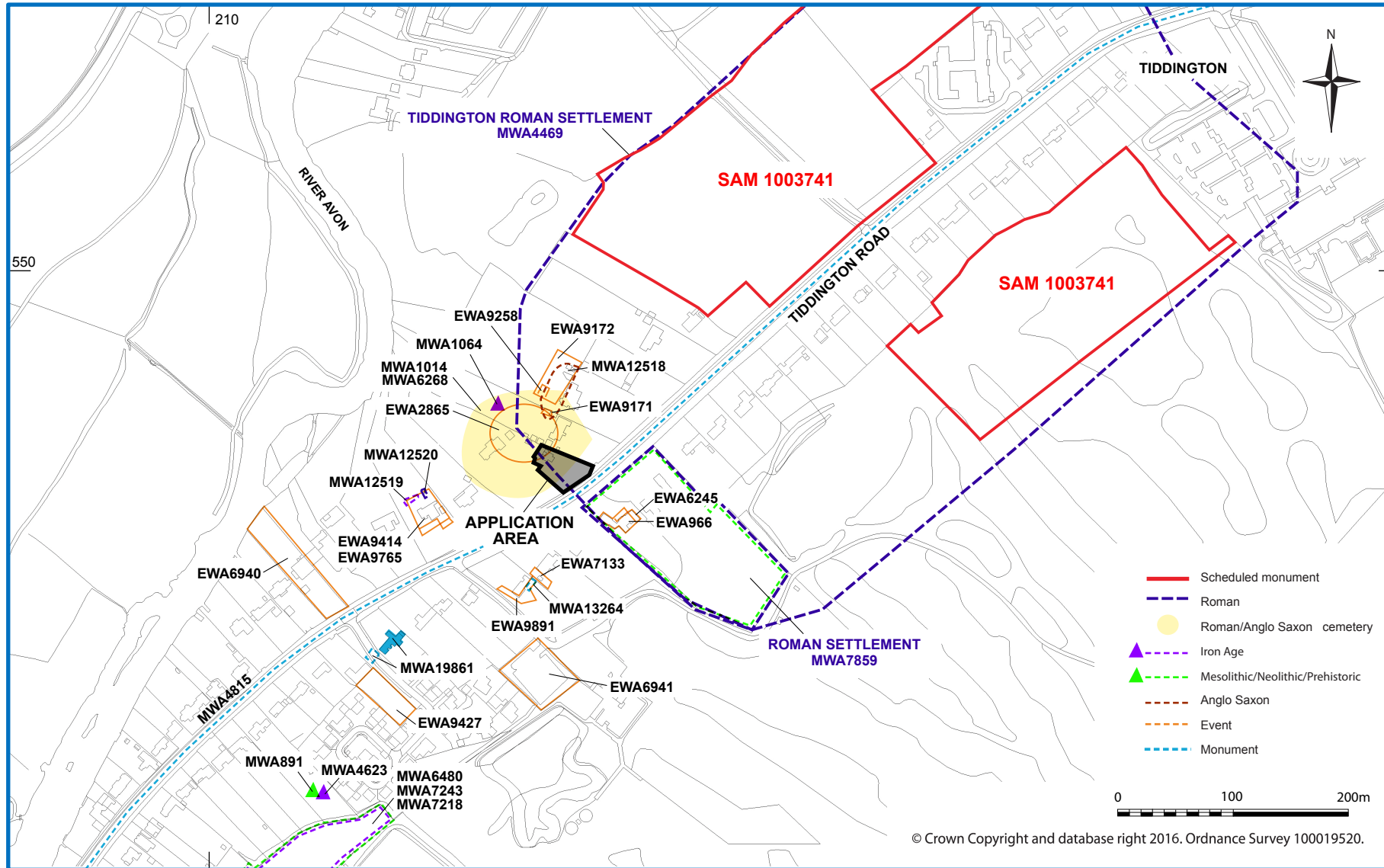


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information

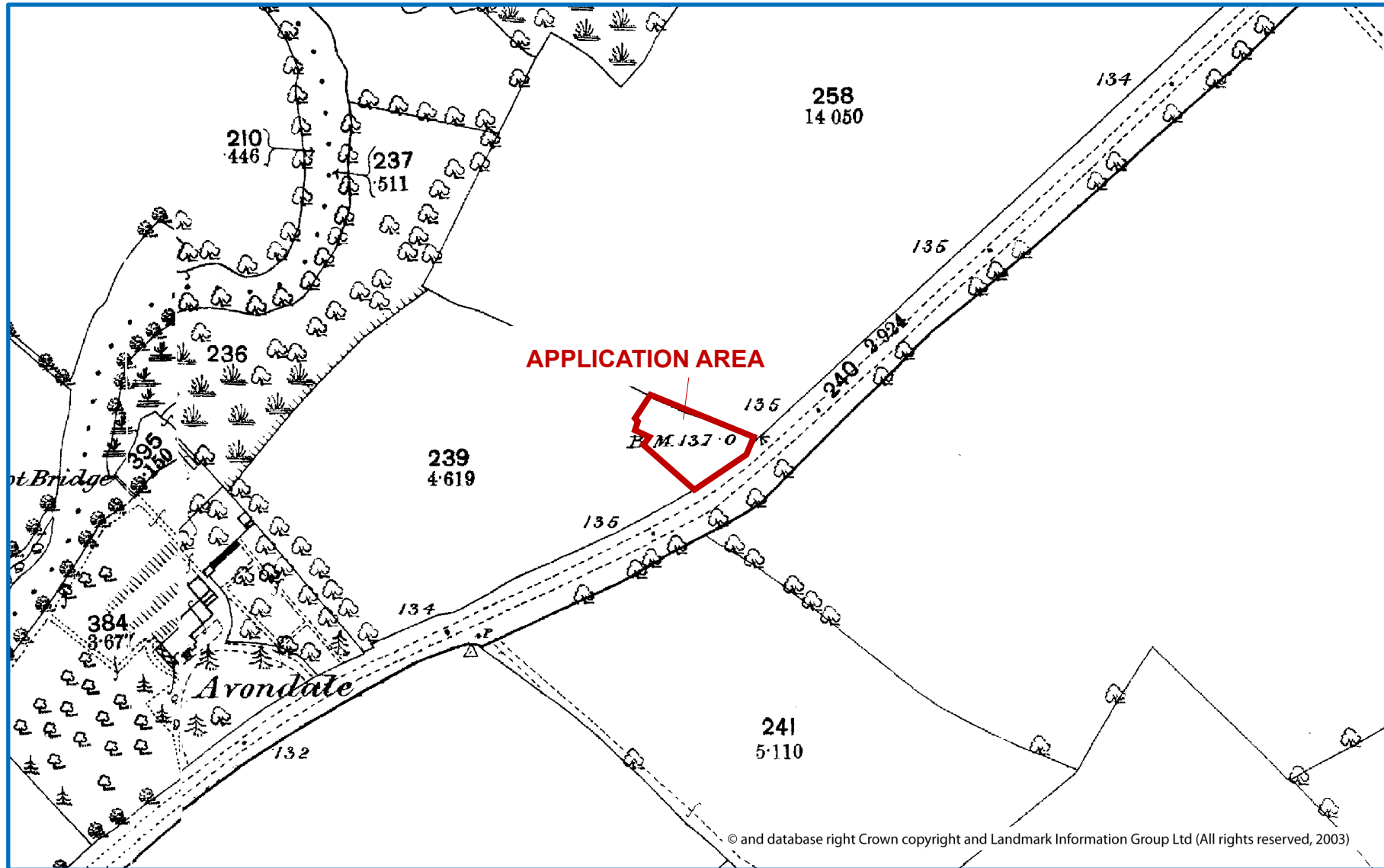


Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886-1889

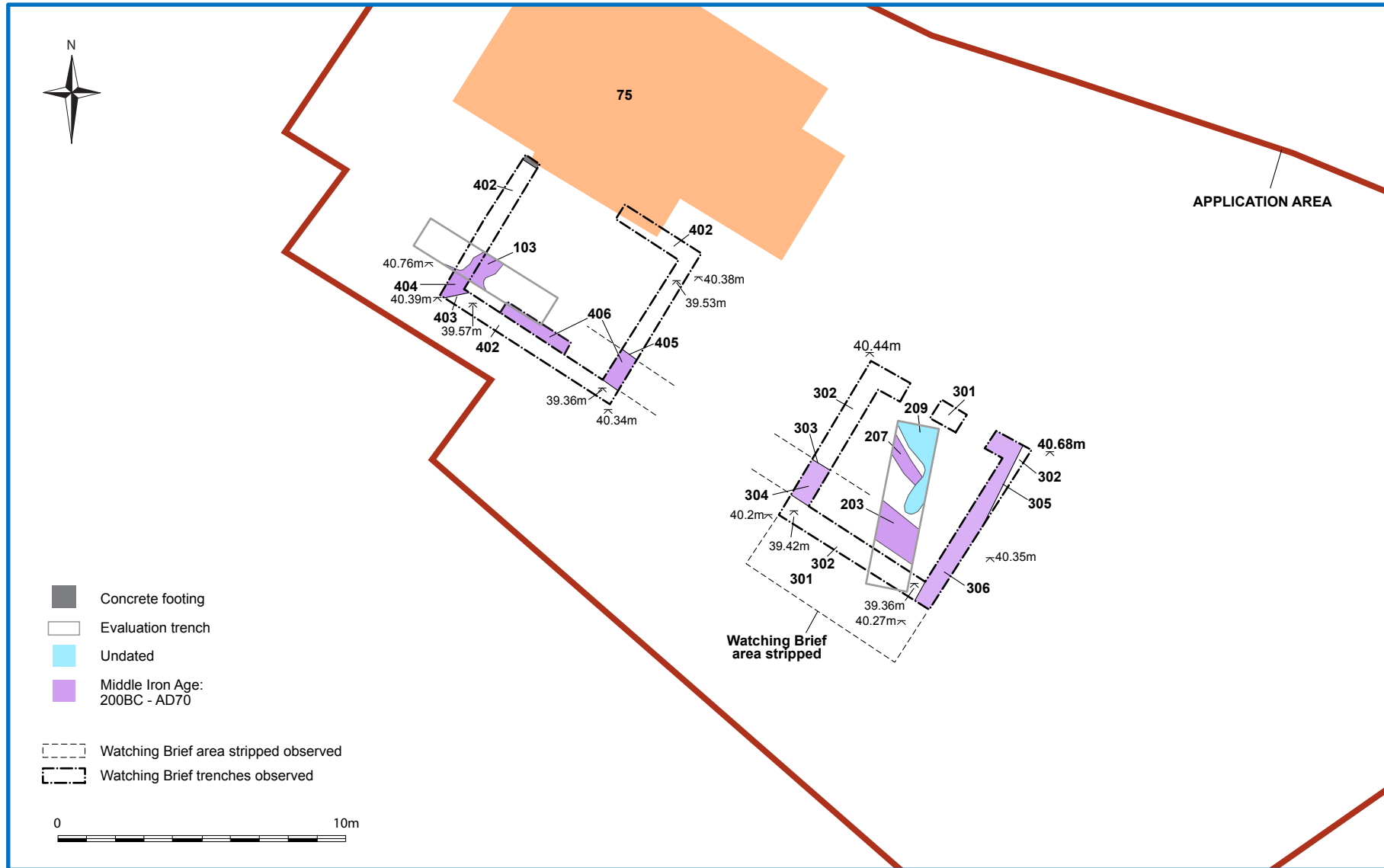


Fig 3: Works observed