

Belvidere Paddocks Shrewsbury Shropshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 16101
OCTOBER 2016



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Belvidere Paddocks, Shrewsbury
Commissioned by: Louise Dwyer @ Cameron Homes
Project Report No. 16101
Site Code: SBP16
Planning Reference: 15/02212/FUL
National Grid Reference: SJ 5174 1264
Team:
Project Manager: Stuart Palmer MCIfA
Fieldwork: Marcus Hedifen BA, Lis Charles BA,
Caroline Rann BA MCIfA
Author: Caroline Rann BA MCIfA
Illustrations: Candy Stevens
Report checked by: Stuart Palmer MCIfA
Date: October 2016
Report reference: Rann, C, 2016 *Belvidere Paddocks, Shrewsbury, Shropshire: Archaeological Observation and Recording*, Archaeology Warwickshire Report 16101.

Archaeology Warwickshire

Unit 9

Montague Road

Warwick

CV34 5LW

01926 412278

fieldarchaeology@warwickshire.gov.uk

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/archaeology

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Summary | 2 |
| 1 Introduction | 2 |
| 2 Site Location | 2 |
| 3 Archaeological and Historical Background | 2 |
| 4 Aims and Methods | 3 |
| 5 Results | 3 |
| 6 Conclusions | 4 |
| Acknowledgements | 4 |
| References | 4 |

APPENDICES

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| A List of Contexts | 5 |
|--------------------|---|

PHOTOGRAPHS

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Plot 2 | 6 |
| 2 Plot 8 | 6 |
| 3 Typical deposit sequence | 7 |
| 4 Ditch 4 | 7 |

FIGURES

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 Site location | |
| 2 Area observed | |

SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological observation and recording was undertaken between 2015 and 2016 during housing development by Cameron Homes. A single, undated possibly linear feature was recorded which may have been related to the agricultural use of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Shropshire Council for the erection of 25 new dwellings and associated public space on land on the south side of Hillside Drive (Belvidere Paddocks), Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 5LW (Ref. 15/02212/FUL). The proposed development site lies within an area of archaeological potential. A condition of planning permission therefore required the applicant to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to be carried out in conjunction with the development.
- 1.2 A programme of fieldwork, consisting of the archaeological observation of selected plots across the site was agreed with the Shropshire Natural and Historic Environment Manager. It was carried out between January 2016 and October 2016. The project archive will be stored at Shropshire Museums.

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is centred on national grid reference SJ 5174 1264, in the parish of Shrewsbury, Fig 1. The development covers an area of 2 hectares of which 0.73ha will remain open space.
- 2.2 The underlying geology of the area is Glacial sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 2015). The site occupies an area of higher ground on the west bank of the River Severn.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A temporary Roman marching camp has been identified on the opposing bank of the River Severn (Shropshire Historic Environment Record MSA 168). When part of the feature was excavated in 1988-1990 two ditches were noted cutting an earlier curvilinear ditch (MSA 14652 ESA 4742 and ESA 4744).

- 3.2 The Shrewsbury to Wellington railway line was opened in 1849, it forms the southern boundary of the site (MSA 12790). It crosses the River Severn over the 1848 Belvidere Bridge (MSA 9007).
- 3.3 The Historic Farmsteads Characterisation project (ESA 6427) identified the farmstead of Crowmoor at Kingdom Hall (MSA 30065) and Weirhill Farm (MSA 30064, MSA 24015) within the study area. A 19th century Grade II Listed Roman Catholic Church can be found to the west of the site (MSA 33184).
- 3.4 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881-1882 depicts the site lying within fields (old-maps.co.uk (a) 2015). To the north and west was Belvidere, a large house with landscaped grounds. In 1962 the house was renamed Belvidere Paddocks (old-maps.co.uk (b) 2015). It was demolished and developed by 1984 (old-maps.co.uk (c) 2015). Since at least 1999, the development site was used for playing fields (google earth).

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. The objective of the work was a programme of controlled excavation to development formation levels, or the geological natural, whichever the higher.
- 4.2 An experienced archaeologist was made available for each day of ground disturbance when notified by the client in accordance with WSI. Ground works observed included drainage trenches for the road, topsoil removal and selected foundation trenches. In addition two test holes were excavated through the partially stoned up access road.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Geological natural reddish brown sand and gravel (3) was observed at a depth of c.0.6m below the ground surface. A layer of agricultural soil, consisting of dark reddish-brown, gravelly-sand, overlay the natural (2). No finds were noted in it.

- 5.2 A single feature was recorded in the drainage excavations between plots 14 and 18, cutting layer 2 (Fig 2). It appeared to be a ditch some 1.4m wide and 0.34m deep (4, Photographs 4). No finds were recovered from the light reddish-brown sand and gravel fill (5). It was not observed in subsequent excavations.
- 5.3 A 0.3m deep layer of dark greyish-brown sandy loam topsoil (1) overlay layer 2 across the site.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The programme of targeted observations undertaken as the development progressed did not reveal any significant archaeological deposits or finds.
- 6.2 A possible ditch remained undated but it seems likely to have a relatively recent agricultural function.
- 6.3 The absence of any finds across the site suggests that there are no nearby settlements or activity areas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank Dr Andy Wigley, Giles Carey and the site staff and project managers at Cameron Homes for their assistance with undertaking this project.

REFERENCES

- British Geological Survey 2015 The Geology of Britain Viewer
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>? Accessed 15/10/15
- Old-maps.co.uk (a) 2015 First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881-1882
1:2500, digital version
- Old-maps.co.uk (b) 2015 Ordnance Survey map of 1962 1:1250,
digital version
- Old-maps.co.uk (c) 2015 Ordnance Survey map of 1984 1:10000, digital version

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

| Context | Description | Depth (m) | Comment |
|----------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Dark greyish brown sandy loam | 0.12 | Topsoil |
| 2 | Dark yellowish brown gravelly sand | 0.40 | Layer, former ploughsoil |
| 3 | Reddish-brown sand and gravel | | Geological Natural |
| 4 | 1.4 wide ditch, moderately steep sloping sides, curved base | 0.34 | Ditch? |
| 5 | light reddish-brown sand and gravel fill | | Fill of 4 |



Photograph 1: Plot 2



Photograph 2: Plot 8



Photograph 3: Typical section



Photograph 4: Ditch 4

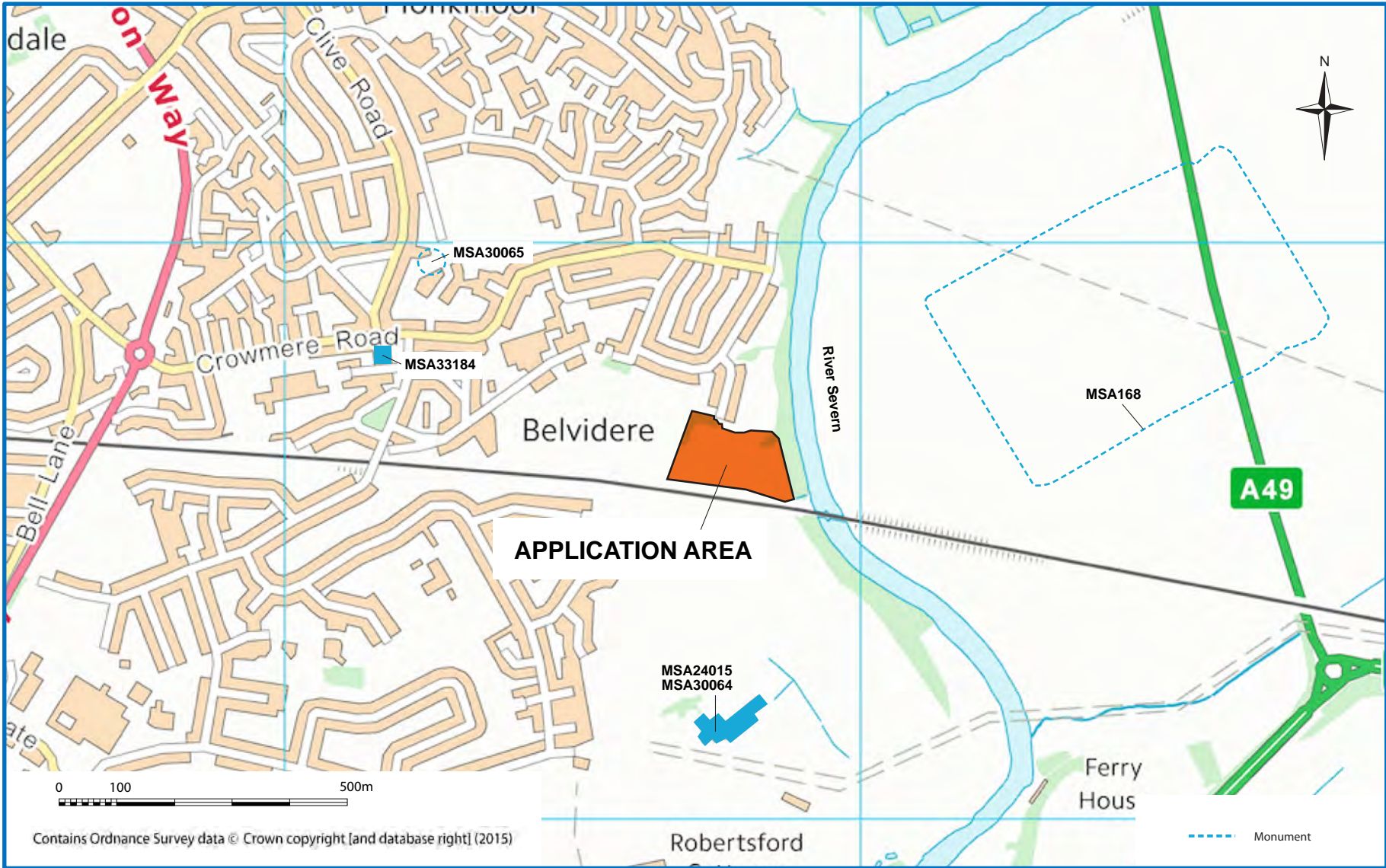


Fig 1: Location of Application area and Historic Environment information

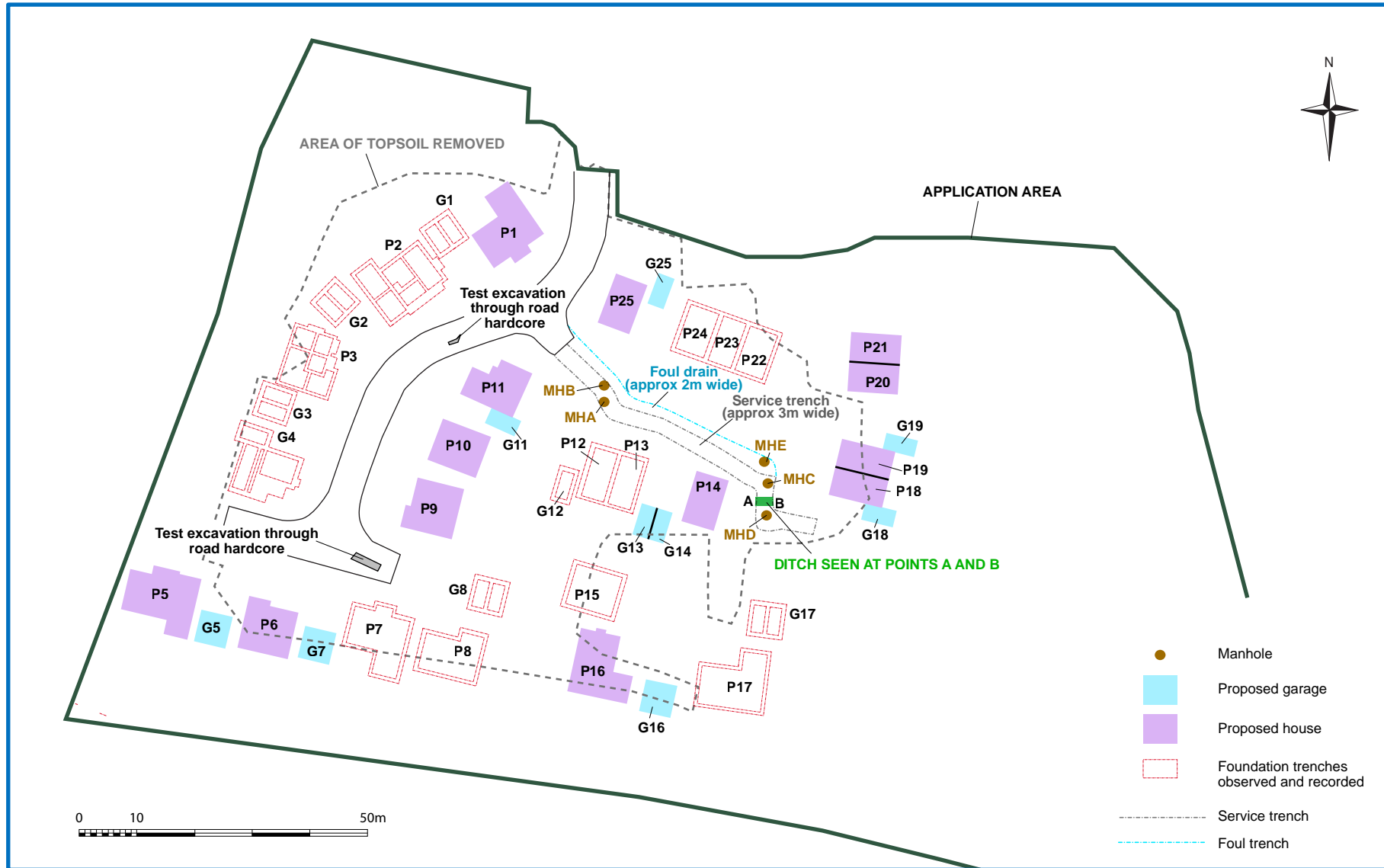


Fig 2: Location of areas observed and recorded