

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**AT**

**KENILWORTH FIREMAN'S CLUB,**

**THE BLUNDELLS,**

**KENILWORTH, WARWICKSHIRE**

**NGR SP 289 721**

*On behalf of*

*Amy Warren*

**JULY 2011**

**REPORT FOR** Amy Warren  
Kenilworth Fireman's Club  
The Blundells  
Kenilworth  
Warwick  
CV8 2PE

**PREPARED BY** Stephen Yeates and Juan Moreno,  
with contributions by Paul Blinkhorn and  
John Moore

**ILLUSTRATION BY** Eoin Fitzsimons

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**ENQUIRES TO** John Moore Heritage Services  
Hill View  
Woodperry Road  
Beckley  
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ  
  
Tel/Fax 01865 358300  
Email: [info@jmheritageservices.co.uk](mailto:info@jmheritageservices.co.uk)

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## **SUMMARY**

*John Moore Heritage Services conducted an evaluation prior to the construction of a new build on the site of the former Firemen's Club, The Blundells, Kenilworth, Warwickshire (NGR SP 289 721). The features uncovered included the remains of a sandstone building of either a late Roman or medieval date, and a later Georgian or Victorian drainage system.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location**

The site is centred on national grid reference SP 289 721 (Figure 1) in the parish of Kenilworth at approximately 88.7 OD (Priory Road). The superficial or "drift" geology for the area consists of Baginton Sand and Gravel Formations. The deposit consists of sands and gravels with lenses of silt and clay. The drift rests upon Ashow Formation of red-brown mudstone and sandstone.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Warwick District Council has granted planning permission for the erection of a detached two storey dwelling with access from Richards Close (W10/0440). The proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential. As a result, to meet the conditions in granting planning permission, a programme of archaeological work was required.

Warwickshire Museum's Planning Archaeologist issued a Brief detailing the requirements for the programme of an archaeological evaluation. The archaeological evaluation was carried out in accordance to the specification of a Written Scheme of Investigation, approved by Warwick Planning Authority.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background by Stephen Yeates**

Neolithic and Bronze Age flints have been recovered from the Kenilworth area (MWA 4453: SP 2900 7200), and the remains of a Roman coin hoard have also been found (MWA 7314: SP 2900 7200). These finds are not precisely located and, therefore, contextualised.

The manor of Kenilworth was a sub-manor of Stoneleigh (VCH 1951, 132-43). This association explains many of the early associations between not only the manor but also the Church in the area. The association between Kenilworth and Stoneleigh is evidently of an early medieval date at least. There are some indications of a pre-Conquest castle (Yeates 2006, 1213). The site of this castle is usually placed at Hom Hill (HER 4817: SP 3175 7211). Burgess claimed that there was an encampment to the north of Kenilworth at Camp Farm (Yeates 2006, 1213). What is of interest here is that the name Kenilworth contains the Old English word, an enclosure (Gover, Mawer et al. 1936). The word is known on some occasions to apply to a large enclosure in a Roman settlement, for example at Lentwardine or Blackwardine in Herefordshire, to an enclosure around a Roman farmstead, for example at Brockworth in

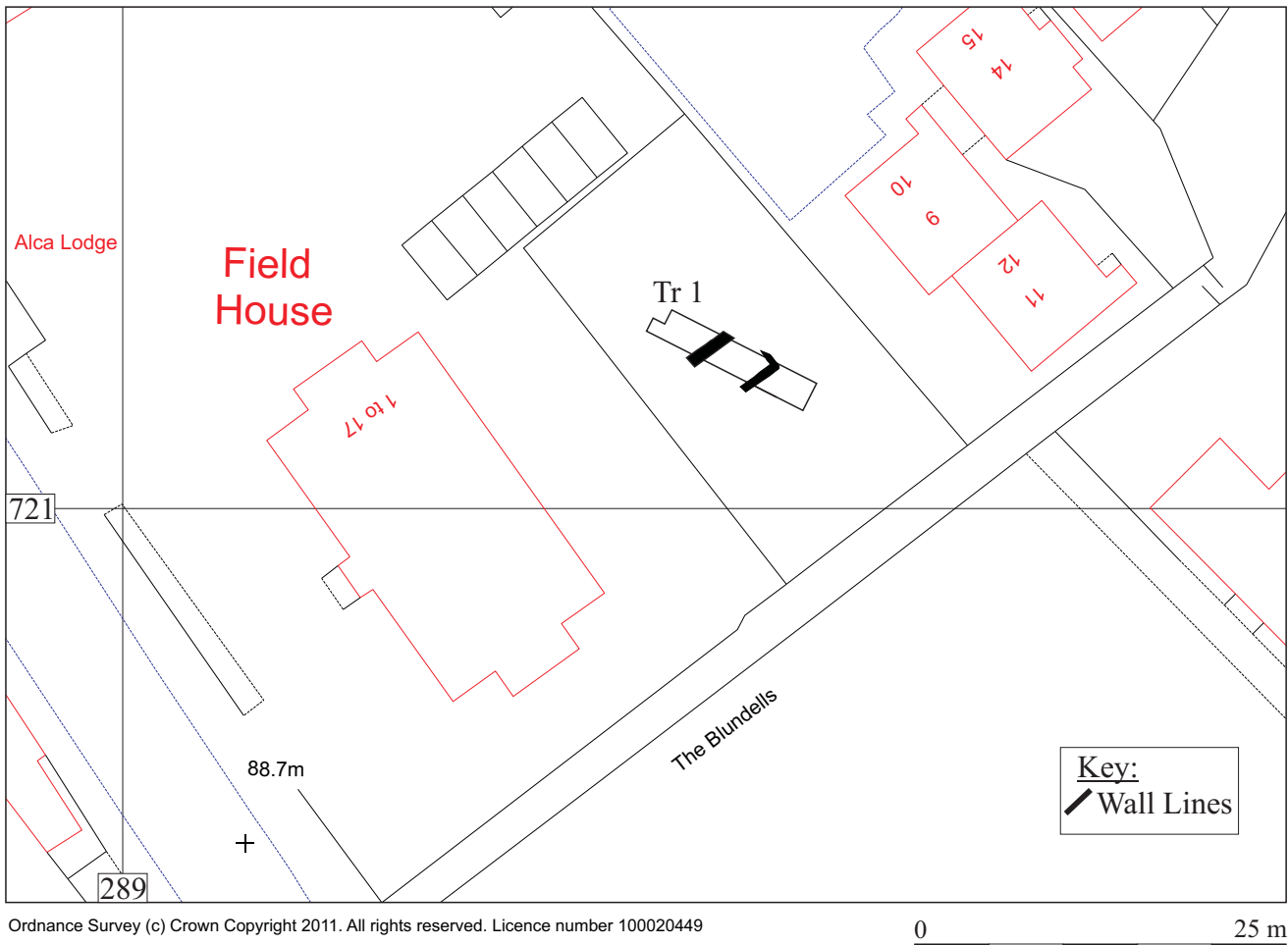
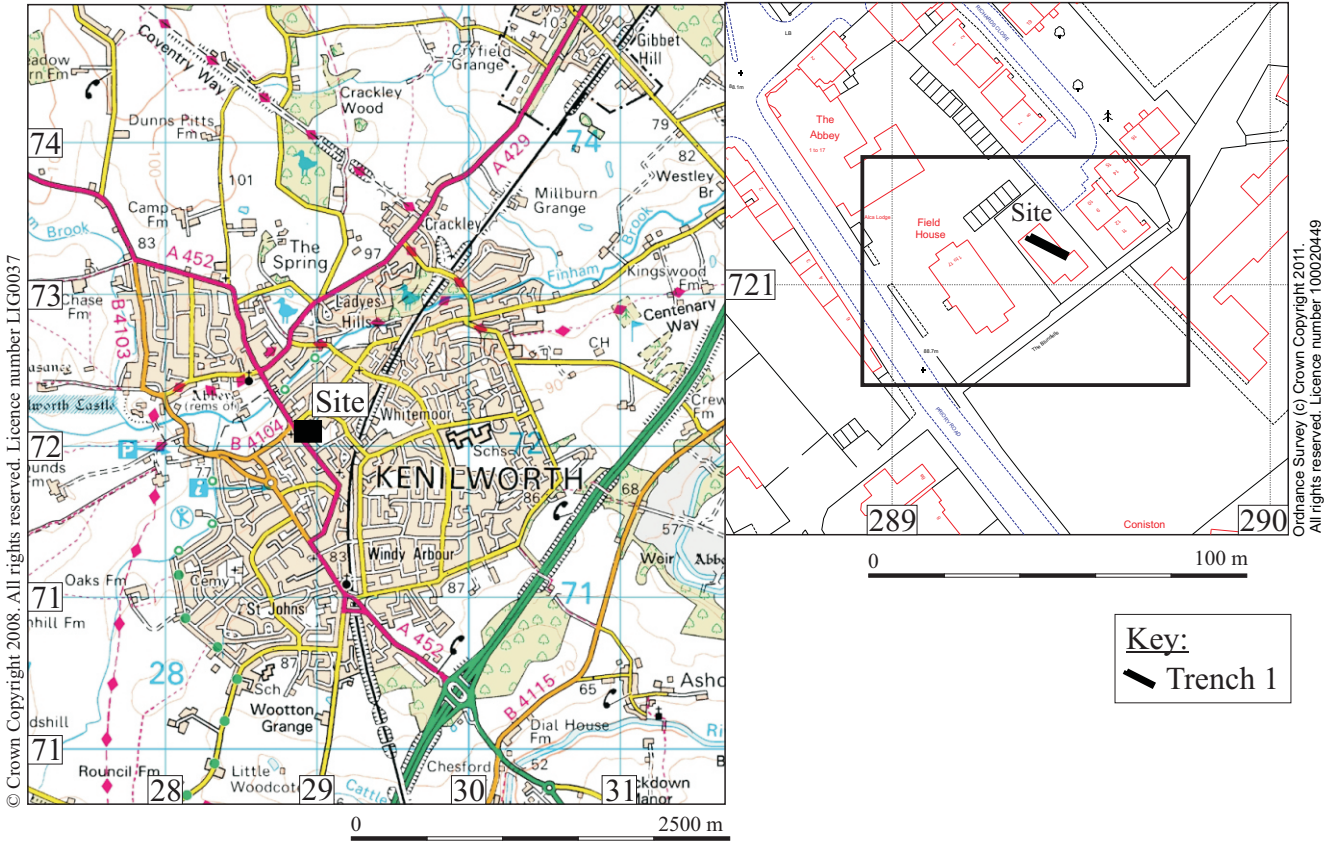
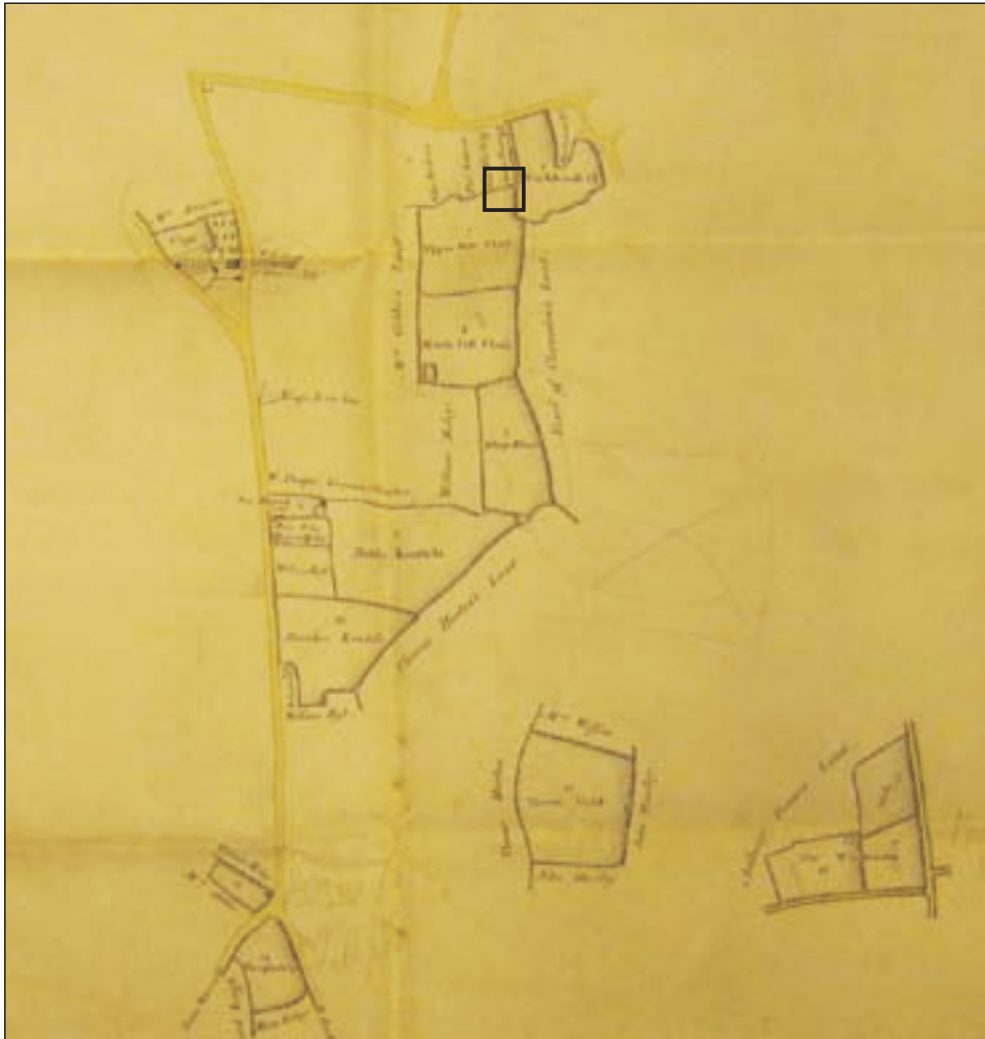


Figure 1. Site location



□ Rough Area of site

Figure 2. Estate map of 1781

Gloucestershire, or to a probable prehistoric enclosure at Bedwardine in Worcestershire. The exact feature referred to at Kenilworth has not been identified.

The manor of Kenilworth is incorporated into the king's holding of Stoneleigh in 1086 (Morris 1976, 1.4, 9); previously King Edward held the manor. The manor had 68 villagers, 4 smallholders, 2 priests, 2 slaves, 2 mills, 20 acres, 4 by 2 leagues of woodland, and pasture for 2000 pigs. There is also a smaller reference to Kenilworth specifically mentioning 3 virgates held by Richard the Forester from the king. There were 10 villagers, 7 smallholders, and 4 by ½ hide of woodland.

Henry I granted his Chamberlain Geoffrey de Clinton the manor of Stoneleigh, with Kenilworth. It was about this time that the castle was built as the principle seat of the manor, with the earliest phase of the medieval castle being constructed. The present castle grounds and the parkland were the only lands that were not granted to the priory of Kenilworth at this time. The manor and castle returned to the monarch. King John extended the castle of Kenilworth. There were further grants of the castle by the monarch to retainers and kin, amongst them Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who was appointed ward of the castle. Simon and his wife Eleanor gained custody of the castle in 1253. In 1266 the castle was granted to Edmund, the Earl of Lancaster.

The priory at Kenilworth was founded in 1122, and became an abbey in 1450 (VCH 1951, 132-143). With the dissolution of the monasteries the abbey was initially granted to Sir Andrew Flanmock. The initial church of Kenilworth was established alongside the abbey and dedicated to Saint Nicholas. The foundation of this chapel provoked no problems with the mother church of Stoneleigh as that church was granted to the priory at its foundation. The monastic precinct boundary (MWA 10096: SP 2843 7220) lies some 100m to the north of the site. The Domesday Book reference to two priests at Stoneleigh is significant and indicative of an ancient and major church. The recognisable chapels of Stoneleigh include Baginton, Cloud Bridge, Cryfield, Fletchamstead, Kenilworth, Newnham, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Stoneleigh and Whaburley (Yeates 2006, 1214-6). The structure of the church estate may indicate that the estate of Stoneleigh had two centres, an ecclesiastical centre at Stoneleigh, and a lordly centre at Kenilworth. If this is the case then there may have been an earlier church at Kenilworth.

The borough is first referenced on the edge of the priory precinct in the reign of King Stephen (1135-1154), though it is not till 1268 that a weekly market is referred too (VCH 1951, 132-143). The earliest recognised medieval settlement falls outside the priory precinct, which is classed as the historic settlement core (MWA 9581: SP 28869 71619). A 12th/13th century wall was exposed during excavation of the Little Virginia area in the northwestern part of the precinct.

Few maps survive of the area, but of those held at the Warwickshire Record Office they include one of 1781 (WRO MapP35) which is an estate map of the preceptory of Mrs Judith Bird. This shows the site located at the back (south) end of a burgage plot of the medieval settlement, but shows no buildings in this part of the plot or Hill Close bounding it to the south. The workhouse and grounds are shown to the east and southeast. Only the apportionments survive of the 1848 tithe awards (WRO CR569/139, CR1807/4), it is extremely to follow this without the map and locate buildings. The OS map of 1888 for the area shows a building lying along the northeast boundary of the plot of land. This is also the case for the OS map of 1890. The OS

map of 1905 shows a building along the northwest and northeast sides of the plot of land, as does the map of 1926.

A search area of 1km radius contains a number of archaeological sites of interest as catalogued on the HER, though most are post-medieval in date: the Baptist Chapel (now a nonconformist; MWA 3214: SP 2907 7223), the Congregational Church (built to replace the Baptist Chapel in 1872; MWA 3215: SP 2883 7209), the Presbyterian Chapel (former nonconformist and now a theatre; MWA 3216: SP 2882 7225), the pillory (MWA 3295: SP 2879 7229), a sand pit (MWA 3281: SP 2905 7215; see “Old Sand Pit” below), and the workhouse (MWA 3284: SP 2897 7220). The workhouse was located along the Blundells (EWA 7428) and was the subject of an evaluation and full excavation by Cotswold Archaeology. The stocks formerly lay in Bridge Street at the junction with School Lane c. 100m NNW of the site (MWA3295; SP 2879 7229).

There are also a large number of listed buildings in the area including: 4 Upper Rosemary Hill (EHLB no. 307851), 1 Bridge Street (EHLB no. 307735), Abbey Hill (EHLB no. 307724), 8-12 Bridge Street (EHLB no. 307736), 2 Upper Rosemary Hill (EHLB no. 307850), 1-3 Upper Rosemary Hill (EHLB no. 307847), Beauchamp Cottage 8 Abbey Hill (EHLB no. 307725), 8 Upper Rosemary Hill (EHLB no. 307852), Abbey House (EHLB no. 307726), Lancaster House Abbey Hill (EHLB no. 307727), National School (EHLB no. 471629), the garden wall 1-3 Upper Rosemary Hill (EHLB no. 307849), The Abbey 9 Abbey Hill (EHLB no. 307728), and Chapel Cottage (EHLB no. 307837). A number of these listed structures are timber framed structures dated to the 16th to 17th centuries.

Other sites catalogued on the HER include a bricked up air raid shelter situated on the south east side of Abbey Fields (MWA8931; SP 28815 72220). A former quarry in use during the imperial period; the quarry is marked on an Ordnance Survey map of 1905 as the ‘Old Sand Pit’ (MWA3281; SP 2905 7215) and lies c. 100m to the east of the site. A watching brief on land between Spring Lane and Whateley’s Drive, approximately 150m to the east of the site failed to find anything of archaeological significance (EWA9419; SP 2909 7209). There are a number of listed buildings dating between the 16th and 19th centuries that lie within this part of Kenilworth, though none are close to the proposal site.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS; 2011) were as follows:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.
- In particular to determine whether any remains of the medieval settlement survive on the site.



### 3 STRATEGY

The archaeological evaluation involved the mechanical excavation of one trench supplemented by limited hand investigation of observed archaeological deposits. A contingency allowance was made for an additional 2.4m (20%) of trench length to clarify the character or extent of particular features; this was not needed.

A single trench was set out measuring 12m in length and 1.6m wide (Figure 2). Excavation of the trench took place utilising a mini-digger (due to the limited manoeuvring area on site) equipped with a ditching bucket. Mechanical excavation was required to reach the uppermost archaeological or geological horizon; this was conducted under direct archaeological supervision. The machine excavation was used only for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately. The backfill soils were returned in reverse order to that excavated. The surface was compacted by the excavator to ground surface level. The resulting surfaces uncovered during the evaluation were hand cleaned where appropriate. All surfaces and excavated spoil were scanned with a metal detector.

Features were evaluated according to the minimum sample hand excavation levels:

- 50% of each intrusive feature (pits, postholes etc.)
- 25% of each linear feature's exposed area plus all terminals and intersections
- 50% of structural features (beamslots, ring ditches etc.) with actual surviving structural elements (walls, collapse/debris fields) just being exposed, cleaned and preserved for excavation in more appropriate circumstances
- 50-100% of domestic/industrial working features (hearths, ovens, kilns, etc.) unless large and structural, in which case see above.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded utilising written, drawn and photographic records. All artefacts were collected and retained where appropriate. Deposits, structures or features to be left in situ were recorded as found. All surfaces were planned and levelled to Ordnance Datum. All excavated features/deposits will be referenced to the Ordnance Survey datum. The trench was accurately surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid. There were no human remains discovered, nor were there any geo-archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits or general ecofacts observed that required sampling.

Prior to the works commencing an OASIS record of the work was initiated. Site procedures carried out followed IfA guidelines and the requirements of the Warwickshire Museum's Brief.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services pro forma was in use throughout the evaluation. This involved the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans (1:100) and sections drawings (1:20; 1:50) compiled where appropriate. A black and white, coloured and digital photographic record was also produced. The trenches were backfilled after recording.

### 4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

The natural (1/13) was a dense brown orange sandy clay.

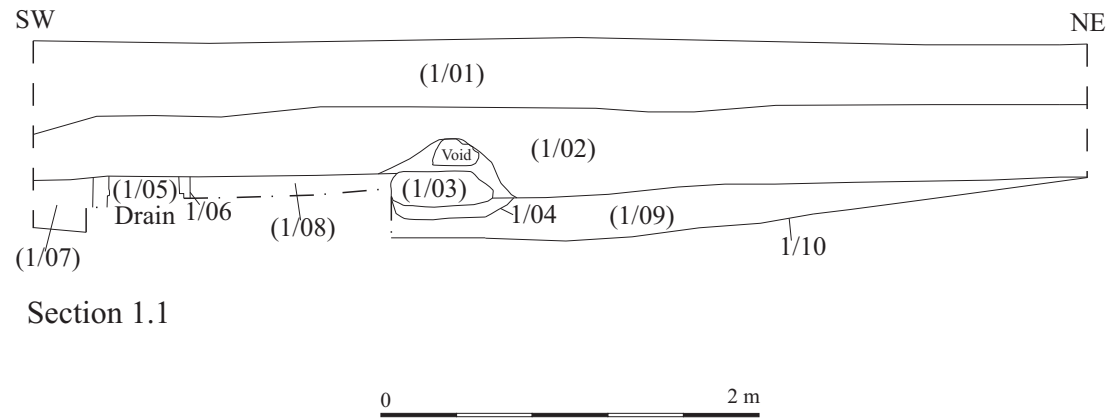
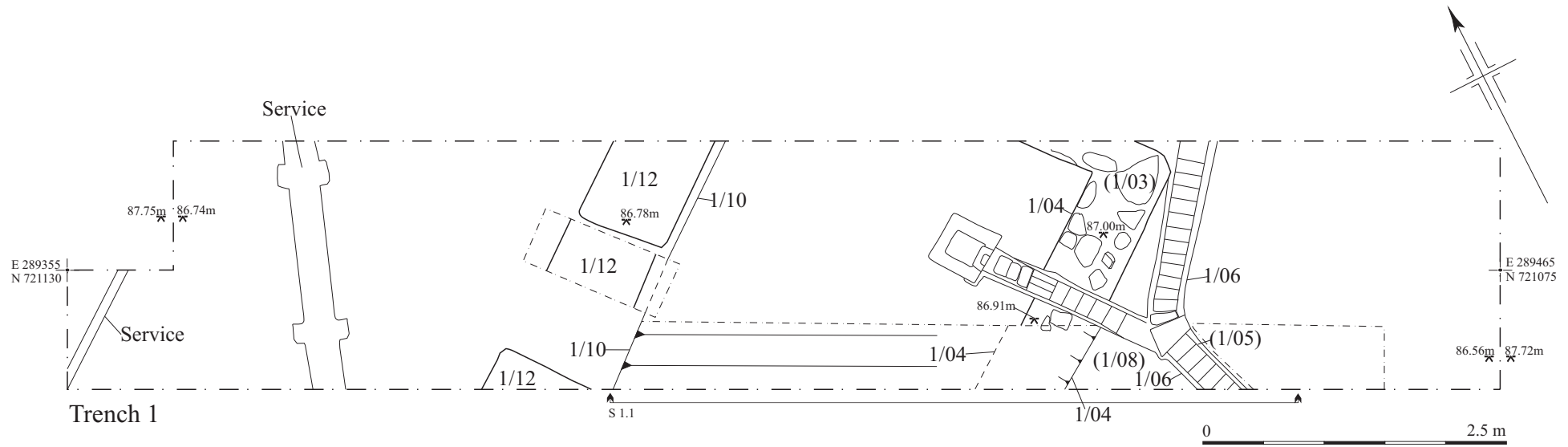


Figure 3. Trench 1 plan and section

#### **4.1 Phase 1: late-Roman, medieval, or early post-medieval**

Cut 1/10, truncated the natural, it had a gently sloping profile and a flat base. Although this could have been a furrow it is more likely that it was a terrace that extended beyond the southeast end of the trench. Set within the terrace was a fill (1/09), also including (1/07, 1/08), which was a moderately compact yellow brown sand clay with pebble and charcoal inclusions. The maximum depth of this deposit was 0.28m. This fill contained a sherd of Roman period pottery along with fragments of daub.

Cutting into the fill of the terrace was cut 1/04. This contained two linear cuts at right angles to each other that had steep sides with a rounded base. This cut was filled by wall 1/03 was constructed of sandstone blocks of which the largest was 0.35m x 0.27m x 0.46m; they were irregularly cut and remained in the form of a foundation. The remains uncovered included the corner of a structure covering a length of 2.4m and a width of 0.5m with an average depth of 0.17m. Parallel to one of the sections of wall in the L-shape feature 1/03 was a further cut 1/12 and feature 1/11. The cut 1/12 was 0.65m wide. This cut was filled by context 1/11 that consisted of decomposing sandstone blocks, and which was interpreted as the remains of a wall due to orientation and size. The finds in neighbouring contexts indicate that this feature may be a stone feature of the later Roman period or medieval period, or post-medieval period before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **4.2 Phase 2: 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Truncating the stonewall was cut 1/06 a Y-shaped feature with vertical sides. The drain 1/05 formed a Y-shape feature with three runs measuring 0.7m, 1.79m and 1.5m, with a width of 0.29m. One of these arms had a square box on the end measuring 0.46m sq. The bricks measured 240mm x 110mm x 60mm, a brick size that would fit into a construction date in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but could also be 19<sup>th</sup> century. The mortar was white, a different colour to that of the stonewall, and therefore, the remains of a different construction phase.

Fragmentary remains of brick buildings were recognised in the upper layers, these were considered to be part of the building(s) that were demolished for the site, though they may have belonged to these late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings that were on the site earlier. The drainage system with its brick and mortar almost certainly have to belong to this phase of building.

#### **4.3 Phase 3: 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries**

Layer (1/02), sealed the drain 1/05, a compact green grey silt clay 0.48m deep and containing inclusions of tile and pebbles. The finds from the base of this context were mixed and included Roman period sherds, a sherd of Brill/Boarstall Ware dated 1200-1600, besides sherds of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Sealing (1/02) was deposit (1/01) was a moderately compact silt clay that contained inclusions of tile and brick along with stone rubble. The maximum depth was 0.38m.

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery (by Paul Blinkhorn)

The pottery assemblage comprised 6 sherds with a total weight of 52g. It was recorded using the codes and chronology of the Warwickshire Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery Type-Series (Ratkai and Soden, in archive), as follows:

Sg20. Brill/Boarstall Ware, 1200 – 1600. 1 sherd, 41g.

MGW. Modern earthenwares, late 18th century +. 1 sherd, 12g.

In addition, four sherds (36g) of Romano-British pottery were also noted. They were all sandy wares, with varying quantities of red grog. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a terminus post quem.

The post-Roman wares are all types well-known in Warwickshire. The sherds appear reasonably fresh, and show little evidence of redeposition of transportation.

Table 1: *Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type*

Tr	Cntxt	RB		Sg20		MGW		Date
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
1	2	3	28	1	4	1	12	19thC
1	8	1	8					RB?
	Total	4	36	1	4	1	12	

### 5.2 Flint

A single piece of non-retouched struck flint was recovered from the subsoil (1/02). The flint is dark brown in colour and contains a small amount of cortex along the left dorsal edge. Percussion rings are visible on the ventral side, though the striking platform at the proximal end of the flake is missing. No date can be assigned to the flake.

### 5.3 Other finds by John Moore

Context	No. of fragments	Dimensions (mm)	Wt (g)	Identification
1/02	1	L=65, W=45	90	c. 18/19 <sup>th</sup> century tile fragment
1/02	2	L=45, W=25 L=35, W=30	68	c. 18/19 <sup>th</sup> century brick fragments
1/05	1	L=70, Dia=5	4	Clay tobacco pipe stem
1/09	1	L=35, W=30	10	Daub
1/05	1	L=70, W=65, D=25	48	Tile fragment

Tile3 and brick fragments came from the subsoil (1/02). Part of a clay tobacco pipe stem along with a tile fragment came from the drain 1/05. Tile and brick were recovered from the subsoil (1/02)

## 6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation trench revealed the remains of a sandstone foundation for a building set on a terrace cut into the natural. A single Roman pottery sherd was recovered from the fill of the terrace, while the subsoil contained Roman, medieval and 18<sup>th</sup> century material. The bricks in the drain which truncates the stonewall are of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is likely that the stone building is probably of a later Roman date or medieval.

The design of the building indicates a rectangular structure measuring 4m across its short axis and is at least 5m along the longer axis. The foundation externally lipped up over the fill of the terrace. Internally the floor layer may have been lower. The superstructure was probably of timber. No material was recovered from the section through the wall but a Roman sherd was recovered from the deposits below and the deposits above. The probability is that it is a structure of a late Roman date, but one cannot rule out the possibility at present that it is medieval. The structure is not on any recognised map.

The drainage system is probably of a late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century date, which would suit belonging to the buildings on the earlier OS maps.

## 7 ARCHIVE

### Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

#### Paper record

The project brief  
Written scheme of investigation  
The project report  
The primary site record

#### Physical record

Finds

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the County Museums' Store.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Revised 2001

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ID	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
<b>Trench 1</b>								
1/01	Deposit	Moderately compact, black grey, silt clay, with brick and tile inclusions	0.38				Topsoil	20 <sup>th</sup> century
1/02	Deposit	Compact, green grey, silt clay with inclusions of brick, tile, and pebbles	0.48				Subsoil	
1/03	Masonry	Wall of sandstone blocks of which the largest is 0.35m x 0.27m x 0.46m, the stones are irregular in shape. The piece of uncovered wall was L-shaped with stretches facing east and west and north and south. The mortar was a red sandy pink.	0.17	0.5	2.4		Wall foundation, dwarf wall	Late-Roman or Medieval
1/04	Cut	Linear, L-shaped, with sharp break of slope, steep sides, and a rounded break of slope at bottom and base. One of the cuts was orientated E-W and the other N-S. The fill was truncated by 1/10.	0.17	0.5	2.4		Cut of wall foundation	Late-Roman or Medieval
1/05	Masonry	Bricks measuring 240mm x 110mm x 60mm, laid in stretcher fashion along sides. Bonded with white lime mortar. Forming a Y-shaped feature with three runs. Box at end 0.46m sq.	0.3	0.29	0.7 1.5 1.79		Drain	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> to Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century
1/06	Cut	Y-shaped cut with three linear sections. The cut has vertical sides and a flat base.	0.3	0.29	0.7 1.5 1.79		Cut for drain	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> / Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century
1/07	Deposit	Moderately compact, yellow brown, sandy clay with pebble and charcoal inclusions	0.28	5			Fill of terrace cut	Late-Roman
1/08	Deposit	Ditto.					Part of 1/07	
1/09	Deposit	Ditto					Part of 1/07	
1/10	Cut	Linear, cut with gentle break of slope and gentle slope, with rounded break of slope and flat base. Orientated SW-NE	0.28	5			Terrace cut or house platform cut	Late-Roman
1/11	Masonry	Decomposing sandstone blocks.		0.65	2		Remains of a decaying wall contemporary with 1/03	Late Roman
1/12	Cut	Linear cut with sharp to vertical sides and		0.65	2		Cut of a decaying wall	Late Roman

		an unknown base					
1/13	Deposit	Dense, brown orange, sandy clay with pebble inclusions				Natural	