

Kenilworth Abbey Fields New Footpath

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING



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Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1863
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*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Kenilworth Abbey Fields New Footpath
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SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during groundworks for a replacement footpath across Kenilworth Abbey Fields. The existing path was removed by mechanical excavator and excavation proceeded under archaeological supervision to the contractor's required depth. This revealed the substantial stone wall foundation, which is likely to comprise either a boundary wall within the Outer Court of Kenilworth Abbey or part of a medieval structure. The watching brief also identified a post-medieval wall footing, a possible stone-capped drain of unknown date, and various spreads of tile and rubble most probably derived from the demolition of the Abbey's buildings.

A small amount of medieval pottery was recovered, in addition to significant quantities of mostly medieval hand-made roof and floor tiles and various items of post-medieval date.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Warwick District Council is carrying out a project at Abbey Fields in Kenilworth to replace a footpath that runs from High Street towards The Gatehouse. The development site lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity of national importance being within the Scheduled Area of Kenilworth Abbey and its wider monastic precinct (List Entry Number: 1021079).
- 1.2 The proposal has been granted Scheduled Monument consent by Historic England, subject to archaeological supervision.
- 1.3 It was recommended that a programme of archaeological work be carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation submitted to Historic England. A watching brief was consequently undertaken between 26th June and 18th July 2018.
- 1.4 This report presents the results of that work. The project archive will be stored at the Warwickshire Museum under Site Code KA18. The work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidelines (2014).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The development area is centred on National Grid Reference SP 2834 7237 in the town of Kenilworth, in the parish of the same name. The site is located in a fairly central location within the town, on the northern side of the town park known as Abbey Fields, and overlooking Abbey Pool.
- 2.2 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is Kenilworth Sandstone Formation, with overlying superficial River Terrace Deposits comprising sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 2018). The land slopes down from north to south towards Finham Brook where superficial deposits of Alluvium (clay, silt, sand and gravel) are present.
- 2.3 The site is characterised by extensive, pronounced earthworks, particularly towards the base of the slope and close to the current churchyard. These comprise levelled terraces, mounds and undulations.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Kenilworth Abbey Fields park (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record No. 12724) is within the suggested area of the Kenilworth Abbey monastic precinct (MWA 10096), based on historic map evidence, although the line is conjectural in places.
- 3.2 The priory of Augustin canons in Kenilworth, which had become an abbey in 1447 was founded by *Godfrey de Clinton*, chamberlain and treasurer to Henry I, in c.1119 around the same time as he erected his castle in Kenilworth (VCH 1951, 133; MWA 3201). The site is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No. 35115). The monastery was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and its foundation charter including all of Godfrey's land and woods at Kenilworth, save those reserved for the castle and its surrounding park, together with manors and churches in Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire (after NHLE List Entry Description for List entry Number: 1021079). The monastery was dissolved in 1538. A depiction of 1701 shows the church and cloisters to be entirely ruinous by that time.
- 3.3 The Abbey ruins are located less than 50m to the east of the Kenilworth Abbey Fields footpath which forms the subject of this application. The remains of the Abbey are behind (to the south) of the Church of St. Nicholas and consist mainly of turf-covered foundations, although parts still stand to original height. The parish church of St Nicholas also largely dates to the 14th century (MWA 3219). The abbey may have acted as a focus for settlement during the medieval period and the long narrow burgage plots that are typical of medieval property boundaries can be seen fossilised in the modern property boundaries along High Street.
- 3.4 The 14th-century abbey gatehouse survives (MWA 6007) as does the building known as 'The Barn' which was probably the abbey's guesthouse (MWA 6008). Of the other buildings, little survives above ground level. Substantial parts of the major buildings were excavated in 1890 by T. W. Whitely (Draper 1891) and largely re-excavated in 1922-23 by E. Carey-Hill (Carey-Hill 1929). Excavation has revealed part of the ground plan, including the church and church tower (PRN 5384), a chapter house and cloisters (PRN 5385) and the infirmary (PRN 5386). Fishponds once existed along the length of the Finham Brook and one example, marked as the site of Bakehouse Pool on the Ordnance Survey map of 1923 (Ordnance Survey 1923), still shows in

- relief (MWA 3289). At the south-eastern corner of the Abbey grounds Finham Brook is crossed by a post-medieval bridge (MWA 3276) which replaced the one Prior Teniesford (1280-1290) had built (WRO MI392/3).
- 3.5 A resistivity survey carried out by the University of Warwick in 1996 of an area north-west of the gatehouse, and immediately to the north of a segment of the path which forms the subject of this application, identified a series of long, narrow rectangular building platforms (MWA 8404) running north-south. One area over the Abbey church failed to reveal any meaningful results whilst a further area north-west of the gatehouse produced a rectangular anomaly thought to represent either a building or evidence of quarrying (Ireland 1996). Further work carried out by the Kenilworth History and Archaeology Society confirmed the findings. These buildings were interpreted as possible Outer Court buildings associated within the priory or Abbey.
- 3.6 A medieval stone-lined conduit (MWA 20486) crosses the line of the path towards its western extent. Several stone-lined shafts or wells are present along the route of the conduit (MWA 20488, 20489), one of which is located only a few metres to the north of the path which forms the subject of this development. A copy of an original charter in the British Library, dated 1251, states that the Priory agreed with Edith Lawtherin for water to be taken from her property *in vicus castelli* as a supply for the convent (information from Norman Stevens). Stratascan carried out GPR surveys on the route of the conduit in 2001.
- 3.7 An archaeological evaluation carried out at Kenilworth Abbey Gatehouse between the 14th – 18th July 2014 by Archaeology Warwickshire (EWA 10331) and just to the east of the path line revealed significant medieval remains including the remains of two buttresses, another probable foundation and the plinth of the extant gatehouse (MWA 6007). Medieval finds including worked stone, ceramic roof-tile and ceramic floor tile were recovered.
- 3.8 A number of archaeological watching briefs have been carried out in the vicinity of the abbey. In 1989 two square pits were excavated for the foundations of two pieces of play equipment. In one of these the remains of a sandstone surface was recorded, possibly part of a courtyard or trackway at 0.60m below the ground surface, overlaid by medieval demolition material. The other revealed part of a large stone wall 0.25m below ground level (Hingley *et al.* 1989).

- 3.9 Two watching briefs in 1994 in the vicinity of the site did not record significant archaeological deposits, but further watching briefs between 1999 and 2001 have revealed fragments of medieval glazed floor tile and a quantity of sandstone rubble (Robinson and Jones 1999), fragments of hand-made roof tile (Gethin and Coutts 2000; Warwickshire Museum 2001b), 14th- to 15th-century pottery and the stone foundations for a building complex associated with the abbey (Warwickshire Museum 2002). A substantial stone wall recorded on the south side of the church was possibly part of the medieval precinct boundary (Warwickshire Museum 2001a). A small trial trench just to the north of the line of the present path, excavated because of a burst water main in 2000, found a pebble layer and some fragments of roof tile (EWA 6904).
- 3.10 More recently finds of 13th/14th-century pottery, 15th-century floor tile and medieval window glass have been recovered during a watching brief at the Abbey barn (Warwickshire Museum 2003). In 2007 the Abbey Fields car park was completely re-surfaced and a CCTV mast installed. During this work post-dissolution levelling deposits were recorded, along with two fragments of decorated medieval floor tile. A possible medieval wall foundation was also revealed in 2009 in a test pit (Rann 2009). A watching brief was carried out along the line of the path in April 2011 by Archaeology Warwickshire (EWA 9761) during drainage works and minor landscaping along the footpath. No archaeological finds were noted however. In 2013 work took place at the children's playground and numerous fragments of roof tile and sandstone were recorded during the removal of a hedge (Rann and Coutts 2013; EWA 10730). A watching brief carried out in 2013 during the upgrading of Abbey Field car park recorded a number of stone walls and areas of demolition debris, presumably associated with former Abbey buildings. Finds included pottery and glazed medieval floor tiles, numerous fragments of clay roof tiles and a 15th/16th-century German stoneware vessel (Coutts and Rann 2014; EWA 10305).
- 3.11 Archaeological events within a 250m radius include:

EVENT	DESCRIPTION
EWA 6159	Observations and work carried out at Little Virginia, Kenilworth
EWA 6858	Archaeological Observation at 18-24 High Street, Kenilworth
EWA 6903	Watching brief drainage works, Kenilworth Abbey Fields
EWA 6995	Archaeological Recording at St. Nicholas's Church, Kenilworth
EWA 7017	Archaeological Observation at Abbey Fields Play Area,

	Kenilworth
EWA 7102	Further Archaeological Observation at Abbey Fields Play Area, Kenilworth
EWA 7109	Abbey Fields Resistivity Survey
EWA 7110	The Excavation of Medieval Buildings at Abbey Fields, Kenilworth
EWA 7264	Kenilworth Abbey Barn
EWA 7287	Kenilworth, The Clarendon Arms/Harrington's Restaurant
EWA 7344	Archaeological Recording at Kenilworth Abbey Barn, Kenilworth
EWA 7367	16 High Street, Kenilworth, Warwickshire. Archaeological Evaluation
EWA 7371	A Report for Kenilworth History and Archaeology Society on a Geophysical Survey Carried out at Kenilworth Abbey Barn, Kenilworth, Warwickshire
EWA 7372	A Report for Kenilworth History and Archaeology Society on a Geophysical Survey Carried out at Castle Hill and the Abbey Precincts, Kenilworth
EWA 7503	The West Wall and Portal of the Nave at Kenilworth Priory
EWA 7528	Little Virginia Buildings, Kenilworth
EWA 7574	Abbey Fields, Kenilworth, Flood Alleviation Scheme, Warwickshire
EWA 7667	Evaluation of land adjacent to The Wantage, 1 Castle Hill, Kenilworth
EWA 7702	Conservation Plan for Abbey Fields, Kenilworth
EWA 7826	Archaeological Observation at Abbey Fields Car Park, Kenilworth Abbey, Warwickshire (2007)
EWA 9153	Archaeological excavation of a test-pit at Kenilworth Abbey Gatehouse, Kenilworth Abbey, Warwickshire
EWA 9167	Archaeological monitoring of a Severn Trent Water test pit, Abbey Fields, Kenilworth
EWA 9185	Archaeological Evaluation at 35 Castle Hill, Kenilworth, Warwickshire
EWA 9292	Archaeological Excavation at rear of 22, Castle Hill, Kenilworth
EWA 9341	Sondage excavated to south of Kenilworth Abbey Barn
EWA 9342	Human remains recorded from rear of 25 High Street, Kenilworth
EWA 9395	Watching Brief at 10 High Street, Kenilworth
EWA 9417	Archaeological Observation at 45 High Street, Kenilworth
EWA 9480	Watching Brief at 14 High Street, Kenilworth
EWA 9551	Observation of the removal of the effigy of Prior Robert Salle from the north transept wall at Kenilworth Abbey
EWA 9714	Site visit to Abbey Fields, public park, Kenilworth by J Lovie c1996
EWA 9738	Site visit to Castle Hill (1) garden, Kenilworth by J Lovie c1996
EWA 9772	Archaeological Investigations at 35 Castle Hill, Kenilworth
EWA 9853	Site visit to The Hall garden, Bridge Street, Kenilworth by J Lovie c1996
EWA 10148	Watching Brief, 10 High Street, Kenilworth
EWA 10305	Archaeological Watching Brief at Kenilworth Abbey Fields Car Park
EWA 10636	Evaluation at 39 High Street, Kenilworth

EWA 10730	Watching Brief at Abbey Fields Play Area, Kenilworth
EWA 10918	Watching brief at St Nicholas Parochial Hall, High Street, Kenilworth

3.12 A large number of archaeological monuments are also present within the search area:

MWA	Description	Date
MWA 3201	St Mary's Abbey, Kenilworth, founded in the medieval period.	Medieval
MWA 3204	Medieval Quarry by Berkeley Road, 300m NW of Abbey	Medieval
MWA 3207	Possible site of Priory Mill, Kenilworth for which there is documentary evidence from the medieval period.	Medieval
MWA 3219	Church of St Nicholas, Kenilworth. Built during the medieval period and altered during the Imperial period.	Medieval to Industrial
MWA 3220	Abbey Pool, the earthworks of a mill pond dating to the Medieval or Post Medieval period.	Medieval to Post-medieval
MWA 3223	Undated Mound at Abbey Fields. Possibly a former windmill mound although there are no records of a mill standing at this site.	Undated
MWA 3244	Site of Horn Works at Stone House, High St, identified from a newspaper article of 1894.	Industrial
MWA 3268	Little Virginia, Castle Hill, Kenilworth. Eight detached cottages of the post-medieval period.	Post-medieval to Modern
MWA 3273	Smithy on Castle Hill, Kenilworth, marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1886.	Industrial
MWA 3289	Site of Bakehouse Pool, poss Millpond at Abbey Fields of medieval or post-medieval date.	Medieval to Post-medieval
MWA 3293	Packsaddle Bridge, the site of a Medieval bridge destroyed by a flood in 1673.	Medieval to Modern
MWA 3294	Pound on High Street, Kenilworth	Post-medieval to Industrial
MWA 3300	Abbotsford School, Bridge Street, Kenilworth. 19th century red brick with stone dressings.	Industrial to Modern
MWA 4765	Findspot - Medieval coin	Medieval
MWA 5591	Findspot – Post-medieval coin, Abbey Fields, Kenilworth	Post-medieval
MWA 7520	Bank Offices, High Street, Kenilworth, shown on 1st edition Ordnance Survey mapping.	Imperial
MWA 9181	Evidence of medieval buildings, Abbey Fields, Kenilworth found during	Medieval

	archaeological work.	
MWA 9581	Kenilworth Medieval Settlement. Extent based on the OS map of 1886.	Medieval
MWA 9660	19th century walling and part of a modern quarry tile floor were recorded during the construction of a building extension – probably part of a post-medieval building.	Imperial to Modern
MWA 8834	Post medieval pit at 18-24 High Street, Kenilworth	Post-medieval to Industrial
MWA 9233	The site of a Second World War air raid shelter which was located on Bridge Street, Kenilworth.	Modern
MWA 12438	18th century well at 22 Castle Hill, Kenilworth	Post-medieval to Industrial
MWA 12458	Human remains found to the North of St. Nicholas'	
MWA 12514	Medieval settlement features, 35 Castle Hill. The remains of possible wall foundations, floor surfaces and a stone-lined pit or trough with 13th-century pottery. Several pits and ditches were also recorded, potentially associated with 15th or 16th-century activity on the site.	Medieval
MWA 12724	Abbey Fields public park, Kenilworth	Imperial to Modern
MWA 12853	Castle Hill (1) garden, Kenilworth, contemporary with the early 20th century arts and crafts house.	Industrial to Modern
MWA 12964	The Hall garden, Bridge Street, Kenilworth. Informal gardens with walks.	Undated
MWA 13278	Clarendon Arms public house, Castle Green, Kenilworth	Imperial to Modern
MWA 13279	Queen and Castle hotel, Castle Green, Kenilworth	Undated
MWA 13281	Virgins Inn and Castle Tavern, High Street, Kenilworth	Undated
MWA 13291	Possible site for the Red Lion public house, High Street, Kenilworth	Undated
MWA 15270	Kenilworth Post Mediaeval finds, identified during metal detecting.	Medieval to Post-medieval
MWA 18427	Kenilworth (Mediaeval finds) found during metal detecting	Medieval
MWA 23620	Kenilworth (Early Mediaeval) Field 378. Early Mediaeval artefact found during metal detecting	Early medieval
MWA 23742	KENILWORTH (Iron Age) Field 378. Iron Age artefact found during metal detecting	Iron Age
MWA 23743	KENILWORTH (Romano-British) Field 378	Romano-British
MWA 30298	No 1 Castle Hill (formerly Wantage), Kenilworth. A detached house in the Arts and Crafts style.	Industrial to Modern

- 3.8 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1888) shows the current route of the path was within fields as the Abbey Fields Park was not established at that time. This arrangement remains relatively unaltered, although with the appearance of Abbotsfield, a large dwelling fronting onto High Street to the north, on the Second Edition mapping (1905). The path is shown for the first time on the Ordnance Survey 1969 mapping.
- 3.9 Robin Leach suggests that the former footpath may have been laid out as a cycle path for school children in the 1960s along the line of the 'rough cow-path' that had been created by cattle (Leach 2017, 133). A path is shown on a 1966 photograph which Leach refers to as 'the cow-path' (ibid).

4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the work was to record any significant archaeological deposits revealed or disturbed by the development, to collate the fieldwork records into an archaeological archive and present the results of the fieldwork in this report for dissemination.
- 4.2 This report will describe and discuss the extent, character and dates of all archaeological remains exposed and place the results in their local and regional contexts.
- 4.3 The work undertaken involved the examination of early map evidence as well as records of archaeological remains in the area and local historical journals and other publications.
- 4.4 An experienced archaeologist was present for each period of ground disturbance when notified by the client in accordance with the WSI. Where potential archaeological deposits were encountered, the supervising archaeologist assessed and recorded them before they were disturbed.
- 4.5 Removal of the existing tarmac path was carried out by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothed bucket (Photo 1). Subsequent stripping of topsoil and subsoils to the depth required for the new path was then achieved with a wider toothless ditching bucket (Photos 2, 3 and 4). The trench for the new path was generally 1.7m wide. Any archaeological features encountered were cleaned by hand and recorded using digital and manual film cameras, and pro-forma recording sheets.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Due to the shallow depth (maximum 0.30m) of excavations geological natural was not identified with certainty at any point along the length of the new path. Nonetheless, deposits were encountered that could be interpreted as either natural sandstone or very dense and compact dumps of demolition rubble.
- 5.2 At the trench's eastern end, close to the Gatehouse, a layer (118) of light reddish grey brown sandy silt with frequent small to very small sub-rounded stones was noted (Photo 6) which may either comprise a subsoil, separate to subsoil 106 (see below), or the upper surface of a natural river terrace deposit of sands and gravels as recorded by the British Geological Survey (BGS 2018). Further to the west, at the base of the hill which slopes upwards to the north, a concentration of stone (126) initially thought to comprise a wall was cleaned and re-interpreted as a either a rubble dump or, more probably, an outcropping of natural sandstone bedrock (BGS 2018) (Photo 7). Both deposits were notable for the absence of finds, with the sands and gravels being differentiated from adjacent layers partly because they didn't contain tile and CBM fragments.
- 5.3 Three significant archaeological features were encountered during the course of machine excavation, all comprising linear structural remains (109, 112 and 123), while a dump of rubble, re-deposited clay and tile - most probably representing demolition material - was recorded at the trench's eastern end (115). None of the features can be dated precisely as the trench's limited depth meant investigation was generally restricted to cleaning and recording in plan or excavating a section through a feature to the contractor's specified depth. In the case of wall 109, though, the structure's importance was felt to warrant more detailed study.
- 5.4 The feature was first identified during removal of the existing tarmac path (100) and underlying gravel foundation layer (103). Preliminary cleaning showed it to most likely comprise a stone wall running NNE-SSW across the trench (Photo 8). This was confirmed when, to accommodate the new path's width, the trench was carefully widened and deepened with a toothless ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision (Photo 9). The orientation of the wall does not match that of the buildings to the east in the main precinct, but may have been related to the lie of the land and location of the former pool's northern side. The wall was found to sit within a linear

construction cut (108), filled by dark reddish brown silty clay with moderate inclusions of small sub-angular and sub-rounded stones (129). Much of the structure was obscured by rubble (110) comprising brown sandy loam and frequent small to medium-sized fragments of stone (Photo 10). This deposit, which also yielded a piece of glazed medieval roof finial and an iron nail, is thought to represent the remnants of collapsed wall, mostly derived from the structure's rubble core. The wall's substantial nature was indicated by a large isolated stone with a rounded convex upper surface resting atop a larger dressed sandstone block on its western side. Removal of the rubble revealed a well-built footing 0.9m wide and 0.46m high with clearly defined eastern and western faces made up of a single course of dressed sandstone blocks (Photos 11, 12 and 13), which retained a thin rubble core. Excavation demonstrated that no further courses existed beneath the blocks, meaning the exposed structure comprised the lowermost part of a wall foundation. No floor surface was recorded in association with the footing, which was, in any case, likely to have been below ground level when it was standing.

- 5.5 West of the wall a narrow, linear structural feature (123) was also encountered extending roughly N-S across the trench for the new path (Photo 14). This took the form of a line of rough stone pieces, at least 1m long and 0.15–0.25m wide, not obviously worked or dressed and with significant gaps between each stone. These sat within a construction cut (122) clearly visible in plan but not excavated as the feature was positioned at the contractor's required depth. The structure may comprise the footing for a poorly built wall or, more probably, a drain with the sandstone pieces forming capping stones.
- 5.6 At the trench's eastern end, close to an area of trees and the churchyard of St Nicholas, a possible wall footing was recorded oriented NNW-SSE across the trench's full width (Photo 15), 0.4m wide and at least 2.3m long, the feature was first revealed as a linear area of hard-packed light reddish brown clay, with inclusions of frequent sub-rounded, angular and sub-angular stones, and moderate tile/CBM fragments, contrasting with surrounding subsoil 106. Twelve tile fragments were recovered, representing roof and floor tiles of probable medieval date, in addition to a single, very small fragment of burnt bone (not retained). Removal of the subsoil showed the clay to be upstanding but also likely extending deeper into the ground indicating it was structural rather than simply the fill of a ditch or gully. This was demonstrated more clearly by excavation of a slot through the feature to the depth of

the rest of the trench, which revealed the feature in plan, including an associated linear construction cut (111). The wall footing appeared, therefore, to cut through surrounding deposits, including a layer of probable demolition rubble (114) composed of dark reddish brown silty sandy clay with frequent small- to medium-sized stone, moderate tile fragments and moderate coal/charcoal flecks and smears (Photo 16) which was overlain by a thin spread of coal/charcoal, little more than 0.01m thick (105). Consequently, the wall footing must post-date the layers of rubble and coal/charcoal, potentially suggesting it was built in the post-medieval period. Such an interpretation is supported by the apparent re-use of medieval tiles as construction material for the wall footing, many of which closely resemble the tiles retrieved from both the rubble spread and the charcoal layer. A number of medium-sized rough sandstone pieces were also identified either side of the wall footing, towards the trench's south-facing section, possibly representing some of the original walling structure.

- 5.7 A more substantial area of probable demolition rubble (115) was observed a short distance to the east of the wall footing (Photo 17). Composed of reddish grey brown sandy silt, frequent tile fragments (a sample of 33 pieces were retrieved) and light reddish grey stones, with a single piece of probable glass slag and reddish clay increasing in quantity to the east, the deposit corresponded with an area of raised ground close to the gatehouse. It seems likely, therefore, that the material is the product of the demolition of nearby structures, potentially those associated with the medieval abbey. This interpretation is further supported by the presence of a sherd of Warwickshire Black Ware (RSO1) of 13th/14th-century date within the deposit.
- 5.8 Further west, towards the base of the hill, a spread of tile (128) was also associated with an area of probable made ground (Photo 18). The deposit was primarily composed of light reddish yellow brown sandy silt, with moderate small sub-rounded stones and frequent small sub-angular stones (most likely derived from overlying layer 103 (see below)); however, it also incorporated a conspicuous component of tile fragments, including 11 floor and roof tiles of probable medieval date. Presumably this also comprised a layer of demolition material associated with the destruction of nearby buildings that had been dumped in Abbey Fields. Such a process may provide an explanation for many of the earthworks that can be seen west of the main abbey complex.

- 5.8 All significant archaeological features appeared to be sealed beneath a subsoil (106), which at the trench's eastern end primarily comprised dark reddish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal/coal smears and occasional brick smears and fragments but became increasingly sandy further west, particularly where the trench ascended the hill to the north. The subsoil was generally around 0.12m thick and incorporated numerous artefacts, including probable medieval tile fragments, a sherd of post-medieval pottery and CBM. This deposit had clearly been truncated by the existing footpath, parts of which directly impacted on archaeological features. In many places the base of the trench was characterised by a 0.8m wide strip of modern material associated with the path (103 – see below), bordered on either side by subsoil (either 106 or 118).
- 5.9 Towards the trench's eastern end a probable modern service trench (116) was observed apparently cutting the subsoil (Photo 19). The feature was 0.25m wide, oriented NE-SW, and filled by brownish red clay with occasional rounded and angular pebbles. As it was observed at the contractor's required depth, and could potentially contain a buried service, the feature was not excavated. A modern plastic land drain was also uncovered further to the west during initial removal of the tarmac path with a toothed bucket (Photo 20). It sat within a rough construction cut and had been sealed beneath a layer of coarse stone/gravel.
- 5.10 Overlying subsoil 106 was a turf/topsoil layer (107) characterised by light reddish grey brown silty clay and frequent small angular and sub-angular stones. This was present over much of the site, extending to a depth of around 0.07m and supporting the closely cropped grass typical of that part of Abbey Fields. It produced a single sherd of early 20th-century pottery. Beneath the trees at the far eastern end of the new footpath, the topsoil differed somewhat to that present elsewhere. Comprising reddish brown sandy silt with frequent small sub-rounded and sub-angular stones and moderate rooting, it (102) directly overlay rubble dump 115. At its easternmost end the trench didn't extend any deeper than topsoil layer 102.
- 5.11 Both topsoil deposits were cut by the construction cut (130) for the old modern tarmac path that existed prior to this programme of construction work. Beneath the trees at the trench's eastern end an earlier layer of coarse tarmac (101) was found sealed beneath the existing path. It may either represent a foundation layer for the path or comprise an earlier path that followed a slightly different orientation. Similarly, further

west at the base of the hill, a concrete layer (120), initially interpreted as a wall, was found in the footprint of the modern path (Photo 21). It too is likely to have functioned as a foundation, although why it was needed at that point is not entirely clear. These layers and a 0.8m wide strip along the middle of the trench's full length were overlain by a deposit of light grey Type 2 hardcore, with occasional brick/CBM and tarmac inclusions. This material formed a foundation for the modern tarmac path itself (100) and was contained within the original construction cut for the path (130), which for part of its length was delimited on either side by wooden planks (Photo 22). At its eastern end, beneath the trees and close to the Gatehouse, the path was 1.56m wide, but thinned to 0.8m further to the west and continued at that width for the rest of its length. The tarmac's thickness varied from 0.08m in the east and 25mm further west. The thinner section corresponded with a length of path that had been removed and reinstated during a previous phase of archaeological observation carried out by Archaeology Warwickshire in 2011 (Jones and Thompson, 2011). That programme of work involved excavation of two north-south trenches which could still be seen as parchmarks during this watching brief. On the steep slope near the High Street the tarmac was again 0.08m thick. Here the path and surrounding area had been disturbed for the insertion of a series of STW service valves in recent years.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The programme of archaeological work reported here has highlighted the potential for the Outer Court area of Abbey Fields west of the Gatehouse to contain archaeological remains of local, regional and perhaps even national significance.
- 6.2 That structures associated with Kenilworth Abbey exist beyond the principal monastic buildings, such as the cloisters, 'barn' and gatehouse, has been demonstrated by fieldwork carried out by Warwickshire Museum Field Services (now Archaeology Warwickshire) south of the modern swimming baths. During excavations there in 1989 various stone structures were located that may have been associated with a postulated water mill (Palmer, 2000). The remains of possible structures were also uncovered during a watching brief in the Abbey Fields car park by Archaeology Warwickshire in 2013 (Coutts and Rann, 2014), evidenced by a number of stone walls, mostly oriented north-west/south-east, in addition to spreads of tile and demolition debris. Resistivity surveys in the present application area have also detected anomalies of a possible archaeological nature (Norman Stevens *pers. comm.*) while a GPR survey in 2000 is purported to have traced the route of a water conduit that supplied the abbey (Sunley and Stevens, 2015, 21). Access shafts to the conduit have also been located, including one in the immediate vicinity of the new footpath (Sunley and Stevens, 2015, 37).
- 6.3 The excavated area observed during the course of the present programme of work is located within the likely boundary of the monastic precinct, within the Outer Court which would typically have accommodated ancillary structures, such as granaries, barns, buildings associated with industrial or agricultural activity, and water supply infrastructure (Aston 2009; Greene 1992). Consequently it was to be expected that structural remains might be present at some point along the path's length. Despite the small pottery assemblage and absence of precisely datable finds, it seems likely that the majority of observed archaeological features are directly or indirectly related to the medieval abbey.
- 6.4 The largest and most significant feature encountered during the watching brief was wall 109. With well-dressed, large sandstone blocks forming clear outer faces, the wall is substantial, notably contrasting with the narrower and more crudely built walls recorded in 1989. Few artefacts were found in association with the wall, however, of

those few, a medieval glazed roof finial in the rubble layer overlying the dressed stones implies a probable medieval date, as does the wall's size and construction.

- 6.5 With only the lowermost foundation course still *in situ* and no associated floor surface, it can only be speculated as to what the wall's function might have been. A boathouse is recorded on the north side of the original lake on Whitley's map (Sunley and Stevens, 2015, fig 7, 39), but, for the wall to have formed part of such a building, it would be expected that at least one additional wall would have been observed in the trench to the west or east. It is possible that other walls did exist but have been truncated or robbed out, meaning evidence in the form of a robber trench would only be found by a deeper excavation. As only the foundation stones of wall 109 remained, it could be that all of the above-ground components of a previous structure were removed and re-used elsewhere. Alternatively, the wall may comprise a boundary or dividing wall. Previous fieldwork has identified the probable location of the abbey's precinct wall much further to the west, close to the castle (Sunley and Stevens, 2015, 38), suggesting the newly discovered wall is unlikely to have formed part of this outer boundary. The possibility exists, therefore, that it served to subdivide the outer precinct into two areas. A similar arrangement has also been postulated for Tintern Abbey (Courtney, 1989, 104).
- 6.6 While it cannot be proven at this stage that the large stone wall formed part of a building, the presence of structures is strongly suggested by the large quantities of tile and rubble encountered along many parts of the excavated trench, particularly towards its eastern end. These often corresponded to areas of conspicuously raised ground, implying that many of the earthworks visible in that part of Abbey Fields comprise dumps of demolition material. As the field has most probably been under pasture since the medieval period such material is also unlikely to be derived from manuring.
- 6.7 Notable concentrations of tile and rubble occurred in the vicinity of the churchyard and further west at the base of the hill. Both floor and roof tiles were recorded, including some glazed examples, with the majority most likely being medieval. Additionally, small fragments of slate were noted, but not retained. Such material could have derived from buildings in the main abbey complex; however, it is equally probable they came from structures that formerly existed in the immediate vicinity. This is particularly true of the concentration of rubble and tile, overlain by a thin coal/charcoal layer, which had been cut by a possible wall footing. The footing itself

incorporated medieval tile fragments very similar to those in the surrounding rubble spread, suggesting re-use of material from a nearby demolished medieval building and indicating that the later structure had been constructed in the post-medieval period.

- 6.8 In the absence of finds and clear stratigraphy little can be said about the possible drain recorded west of the stone wall, but, given its proximity to probable abbey structures and dumps of material from demolished medieval buildings, a similar date seems likely.
- 6.9 The watching brief carried out in association with the construction of a new footpath across Kenilworth Abbey Fields has identified significant evidence for the existence of previously unknown structures associated with the medieval abbey but located in the Outer Court, beyond the central monastic complex. This work has characterised a number of features including a possible post-medieval wall footing, dumps of demolition rubble from medieval buildings and a boundary/dividing or structural wall; however, further investigation would be required to determine the precise date and function of these remains. Geophysical survey, particularly ground-penetrating radar, could help to elucidate the full extent of the large stone wall, while targeted excavation may locate associated surfaces and facilitate recovery of dating material.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Context	Description	Width (m)	Thickness (m)	Comment
100	Modern tarmac path surface, bordered in places by wooden planks	0.8 – 1.56	0.025 – 0.08	Modern tarmac path
101	Coarse tarmac composed of tightly packed gravel (max. 0.025m in diameter)	0.9	≥0.04	Coarse tarmac path sealed beneath 100 close to churchyard
102	Reddish brown sandy silt; frequent small sub-rounded and sub-angular stones, moderate roots; loose; clear horizons in relation to 100 and 101			Topsoil present beneath trees close to churchyard
103	Light grey coarse gravel (>0.02m in diameter): occasional brick/CBM and tarmac inclusions	≥0.08		Layer of coarse gravel associated with, and sealed by, tarmac path 100
104				Cut of possible gully, shown to comprise a spread of coal/charcoal instead. This context is void.
105	Black coal/charcoal; frequent fragments of coal/charcoal, very thin and compacted into 114	≥1.8	>0.01	Thin spread of coal/charcoal either side of wall footing 112 and covering parts of layer 114
106	Dark reddish brown silty clay, becomes sandier further west and with increasing elevation; occasional charcoal/coal smears, occasional brick smears and fragments	>0.8	0.12	Subsoil
107	Light reddish grey brown silty clay with some sand	>5	0.07	Topsoil/Turf

	with frequent small stones; very loose			
108	Linear N-S cut, not fully excavated (so profile not revealed) filled by 109 and 129	0.43	≥0.24	Construction cut for wall 109
109	Stone wall - large dressed sandstone blocks forming eastern and western faces with a rubble core, gaps between stones filled by reddish grey brown clayey silt and frequent small stones	0.9	0.46	Stone wall
110	Brown sandy loam with frequent small – medium sized pebbles, occasional flint fragments			Layer of rubble covering parts of wall 109
111	Linear construction cut running NNE-SSW, not excavated, filled by 112	0.4		Construction cut for wall footing 112
112	Mostly light reddish brown re-deposited clay with frequent small-medium sized stones, including pebbles and flint, moderate tile/brick/CBM, rough sandstone blocks to either side at its northern end; rough, uneven, compact wall footing; no obvious coursing or bonding	0.4	≥0.05	Possible wall footing
113				Arbitrary fill number for wall footing 112. Shown to not be present meaning this context is void
114	Mostly dark reddish brown silty sandy clay with frequent small-medium			Rubble spread

	stones, moderate tile/brick/CBM fragments, moderate coal/charcoal flecks and smears; loose/friable			
115	Reddish grey brown sandy silt, with tile, and brick/CBM fragments, occasional small pebbles, increasingly frequent patches of reddish clay eastwards	≥1.7		Probable dump of demolition rubble, single piece of probable glass slag
116	Linear feature running NE-SW; filled by 117	0.25		Possible service trench, unexcavated
117	Brownish red clay; occasional rounded and angular pebbles	0.25		Fill of 116
118	Light reddish brown sandy silt; frequent small and very small sub-rounded stones; firm where compact, otherwise loose/friable	≥1.7		Possible subsoil
119				Arbitrary cut number for possible wall. Wall shown to comprise a layer of concrete meaning this context is void
120	Mostly concrete, with some sandstone pieces to south-east and gravel from 103 compressed into surface; rough finish	0.55 – 1		Layer of modern concrete associated with tarmac path 100
121				Arbitrary fill number for possible wall. Feature shown to comprise a modern concrete layer meaning this context is void
122	Unexcavated cut for 123	0.15 – 0.2		Construction cut for wall/drain 123
123	Sandstone pieces 0.15 – 0.25m in diameter; no	0.15 – 0.25		Possible wall or drain

	bonding or coursing			
124	Fill of construction cut 122			Not excavated
125	Cut for wall			Arbitrary cut number for possible wall. Feature shown to comprise a possible rubble dump or area of exposed natural stone meaning this context is void
126	Rubble spread of stone and pebbles, sandy loam; very compact			Probable natural stone exposure or possible rubble spread
127	Fill			Arbitrary fill number for possible wall. Feature shown to comprise a possible rubble dump or area of exposed natural stone meaning this context is void
128	Mostly light reddish yellow brown compact sandy silt with frequent stones associated with 103 in centre of trench, moderate tile/brick fragments, thin layer of loose/friable material at the surface			Spread of tile fragments
129	Dark reddish brown silty clay; moderate small sub-angular and sub-rounded stones			Fill of construction cut 108
130	Linear cut			For modern Abbey Fields path

B List of Finds

Context	Material	Quantity	Date/Comments
105	Roof tile	2	Hand-made
106	CBM	3	Brick or tile fragments
106	Pottery	2	1 x Trailed Slipware (SLP02 c.1640 – 1700) from near 123
106	Roof tile	34	Hand-made, medieval, 11 from near wall 109
106	Cu Alloy	1	Small find 1: cu alloy object
107	Pottery	1	1 x early C20th sherd, possibly from mixing bowl (MGW)
110	Roof tile	1	Part of glazed roof finial
110	Iron	1	Nail
112	Roof tile	12	3 x likely medieval
112	Bone	1	1 x small fragment (<0.01m) burnt bone
114	Iron	1	Nail
114	Roof tile	21	1 x with square nail hole
114	Floor tile	1	1 x glazed floor tile fragment (no decoration; limited surviving glaze)
115	Pottery	1	Medieval 13th/14thC (RSO1)
115	CBM	2	Tile or brick fragments
115	Roof tile	33	3 x glaze splashed
120	Iron	1	Horseshoe (likely 19th century)
128	Roof tile	11	Hand-made, medieval
U/S	Pottery	2	1 x Nottingham Stoneware (STE02 c.1750 – 1900) from near 123, 1 x early 20thC sherd, possibly from marmalade jar (MGW)
U/S	Roof tile	35	Hand-made, medieval, 1 with glaze splash, in addition –

			from a dump near 104; 3 x tile; 1 x green-glazed probable tile (possibly from same finial as in 110)
U/S	Glass	1	2 x Modern green bottle glass, Modern colourless transparent glass from milk bottle or similar, embossed with lettering from near Gatehouse end of path
U/S	Vulcanite	1	Internal screw bottle top, vulcanised rubber 1870s to mid 20th century, from near Gatehouse end of path
U/S	CBM	1	

Unstratified finds were not retained

C Oasis Form

PROJECT DETAILS	OASIS No archaeol27-325397
Project name	Kenilworth Abbey Fields New Footpath
Short description (250 words max)	<p>A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during groundworks for a replacement footpath across Kenilworth Abbey Fields. The existing path was removed by mechanical excavator and excavation proceeded under archaeological supervision to the contractor's required depth. This revealed the substantial stone foundation of a 0.9m wide north-south wall, which is likely to comprise either a boundary wall within the Outer Court of Kenilworth Abbey or part of a medieval structure. The watching brief also identified a post-medieval wall footing, a possible stone-capped drain of unknown date, and various spreads of tile and rubble most probably derived from the Abbey's dissolution and demolition.</p> <p>A small amount of medieval pottery was recovered, in addition to significant quantities of mostly medieval handmade roof and floor tiles and various items of post-medieval date.</p>
Project type	Watching Brief
Site status	Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)
Previous work	Yes
Current land use	Other 14 – Recreational usage
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Not known
Monument type / period	Wall – medieval Foundation – post-medieval Drain – undated Demolition debris - undated
Significant finds (artefact, type, period)	Pottery – post-medieval, medieval and modern Roof tile – medieval, Floor tile – medieval CBM – medieval/post-medieval Nail – undated Finial (Architectural) – medieval Horseshoe – post-medieval
Development Type	DDA path
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent
Position in planning process	N/A
PROJECT LOCATION	
County	Warwickshire
Site address	Abbey Fields, Kenilworth, CV8 1RU
Study area	1064 Sq.m
OS Easting & Northing	SP 2834 7237
Height OD	c.78m to c.91m
PROJECT CREATORS	
Organisation	Archaeology Warwickshire
Project brief originator	Historic England
Project design originator	Will Steele
Director/supervisor	Alexander Portch
Manager	Cathy Coutts
Sponsor or funding body	Warwick District Council
PROJECT DATE	

Start date /end date	26-06-2018 / 18-07-2018	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Warwickshire Museum	Ceramics, Metal
Paper	Warwickshire Museum	Context Sheet, Diary, Drawing, Report
Digital	Warwickshire Museum	Images raster/digital photography, Survey, Text



1: Removal of modern tarmac path 100 in progress, looking east



2: Stripping of topsoil and subsoil with a toothless bucket following removal of existing tarmac path



3: Trench for new footpath excavated to a depth of 0.25m with a toothless ditching bucket



4: The new footpath trench with St Nicholas Church beyond, looking north-east



5: Geotextile permeable membrane and base course being positioned following trench excavation and recording of archaeological features. View south-east from top of hill at the site's western end



6: Possible subsoil or river terrace sand and gravel deposit 118, looking south



7: Possible natural sandstone outcrop or densely packed rubble dump 126, looking north-west



8: Wall 109, looking north-west following its initial discovery and prior to trench widening with a toothless bucket



9: Wall 109, looking north, following trench widening but prior to excavation of wall faces



10: Wall 109 within construction cut 108, looking south, with rubble layer 110 still obscuring much of the eastern facing stones



11: Wall 109, looking south-west, following removal of rubble layer 110



12: Wall 109, looking south, showing the lowermost foundation course of dressed sandstone blocks



13: North-west-facing view of site with wall 109 in the foreground and positioning of foundation material for new path in progress beyond



14: Possible stone drain 123, looking east



15: Possible wall footing 112, looking south-east, following excavation of a section across its north-western end



16: Rubble spread/layer 114, looking north-west



17: Rubble dump 115, looking east



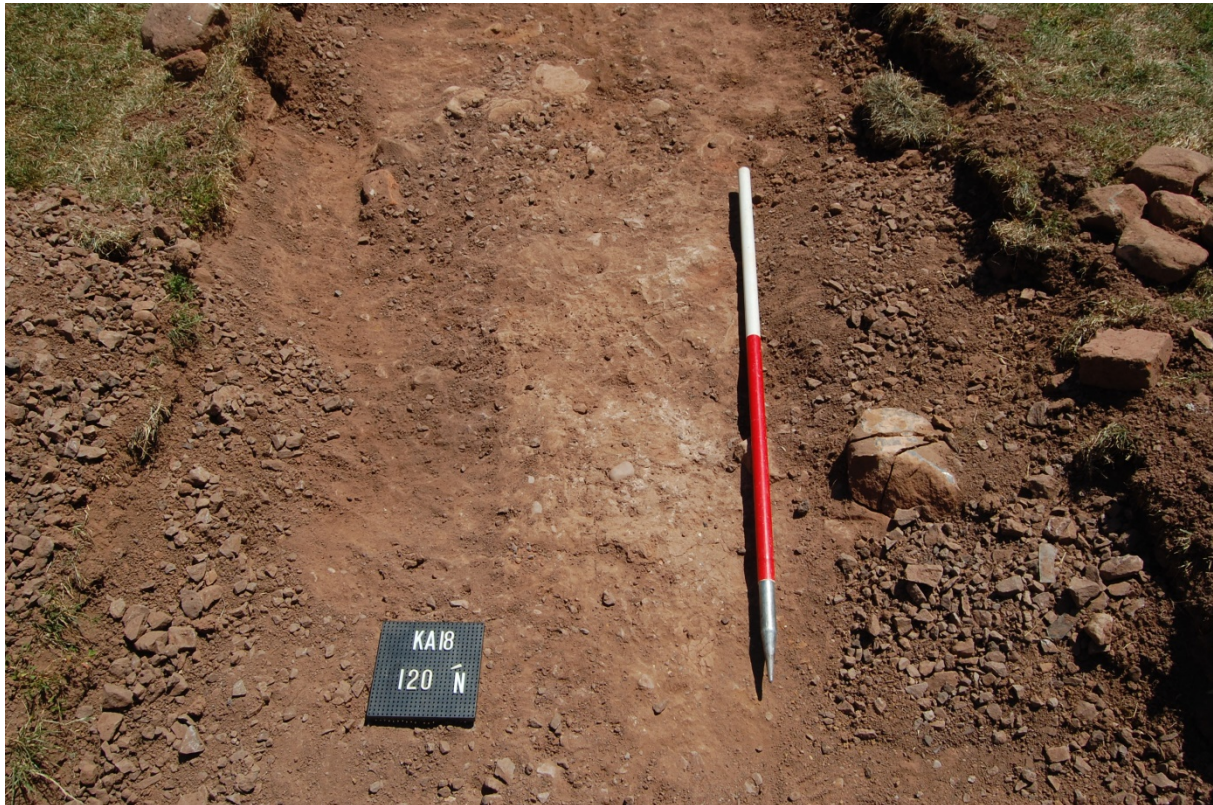
18: Tile/rubble spread 128, looking north-west



19: Modern service trench 116, looking north



20: Modern plastic land drain revealed in the trench base following removal of modern tarmac path, looking south-east



21: Concrete layer 120, looking south-east



22: Trench for new footpath following removal of modern tarmac, looking north-east, showing the wooden boards either side of the existing path

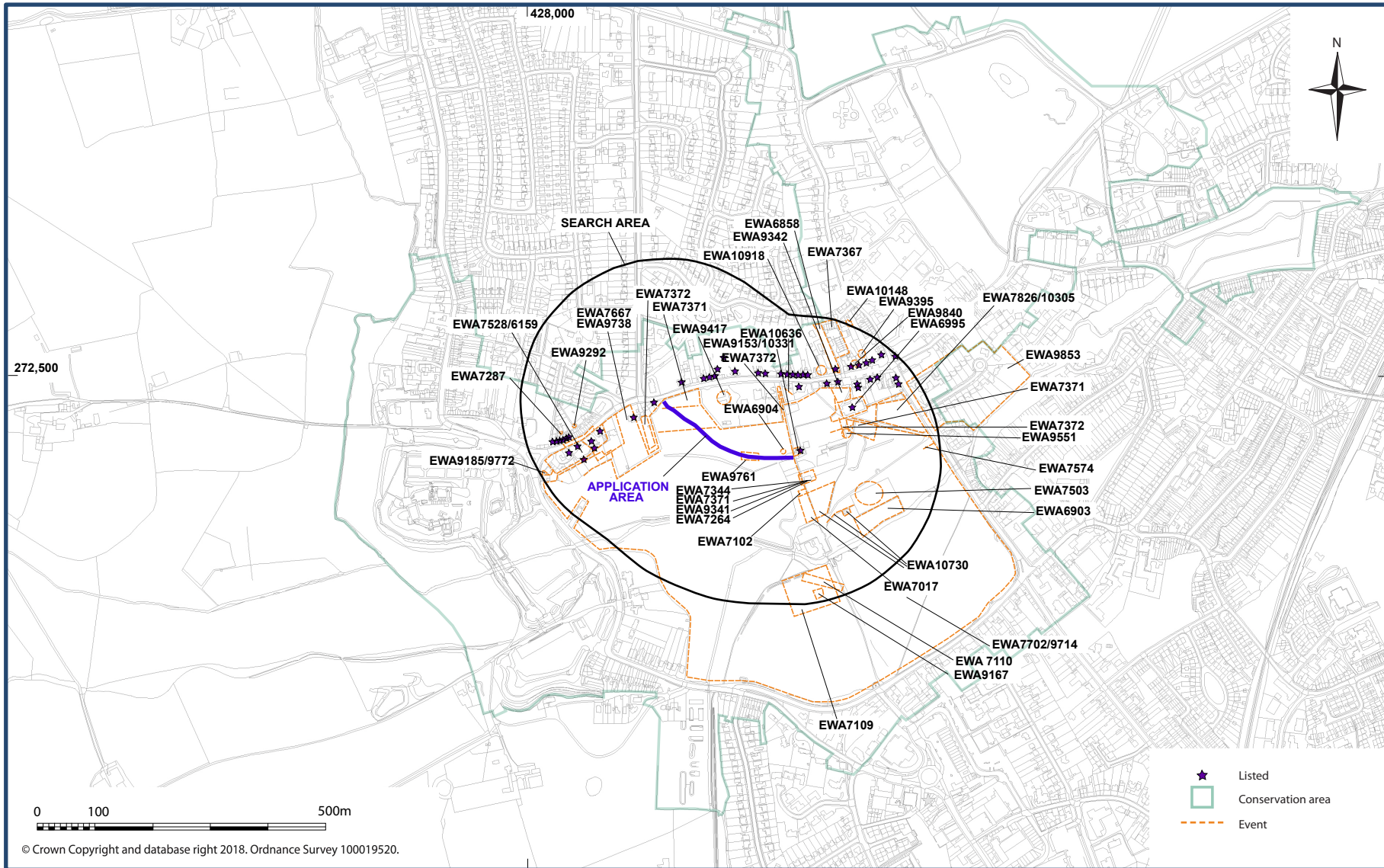


Fig 2: Location of application area and Historic Environment information, events

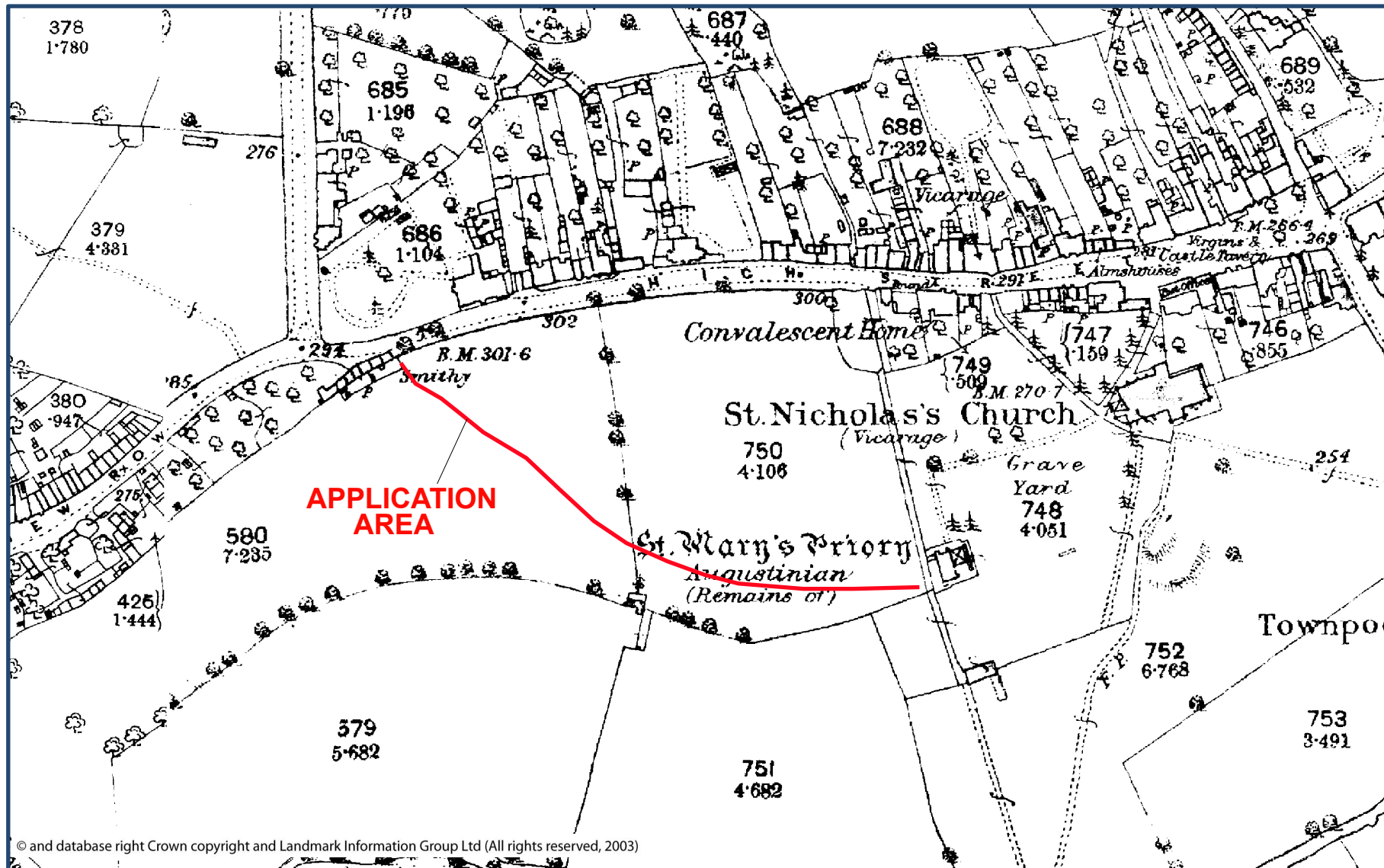


Fig 3: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888

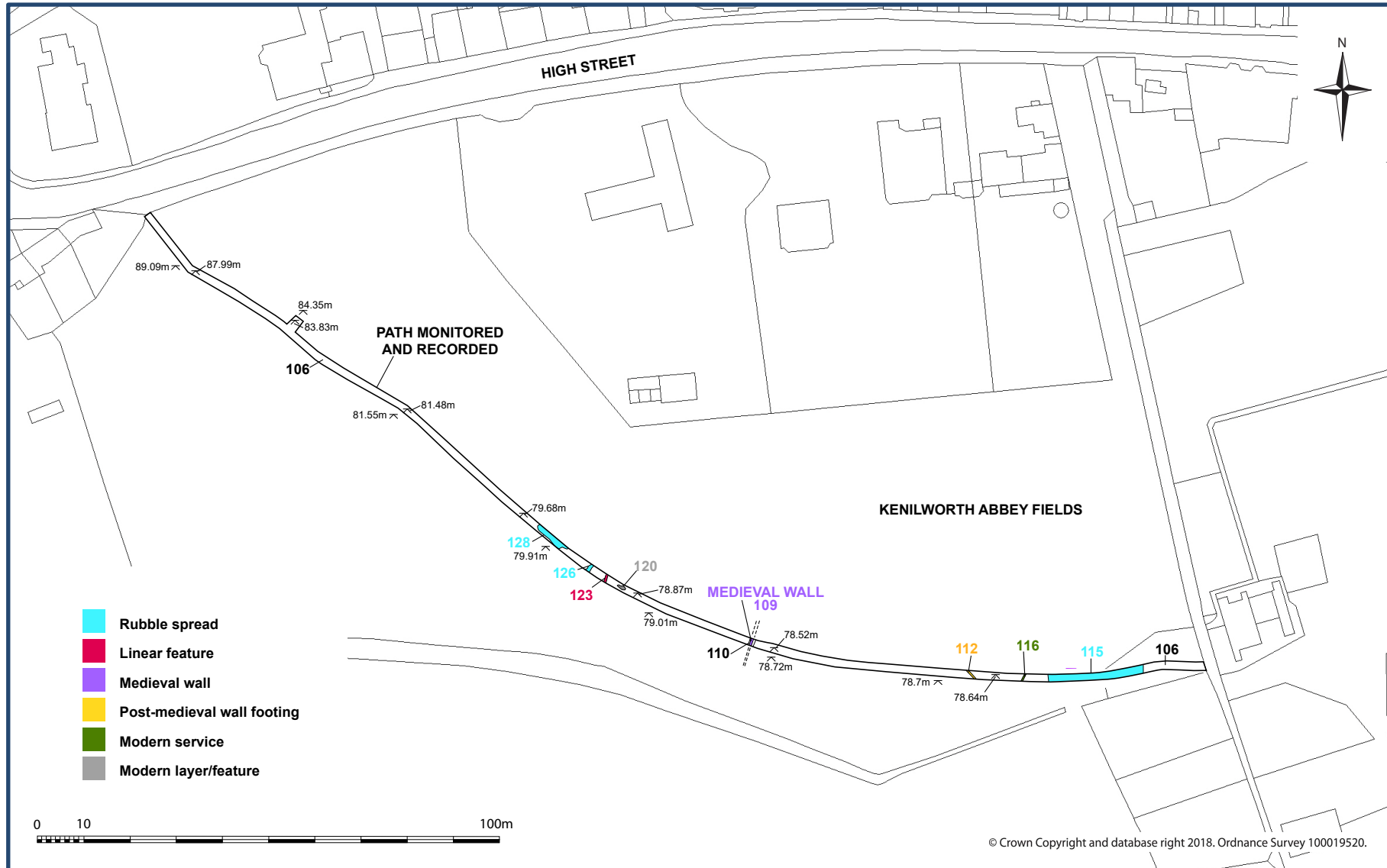


Fig 4: Location of path monitored and recorded

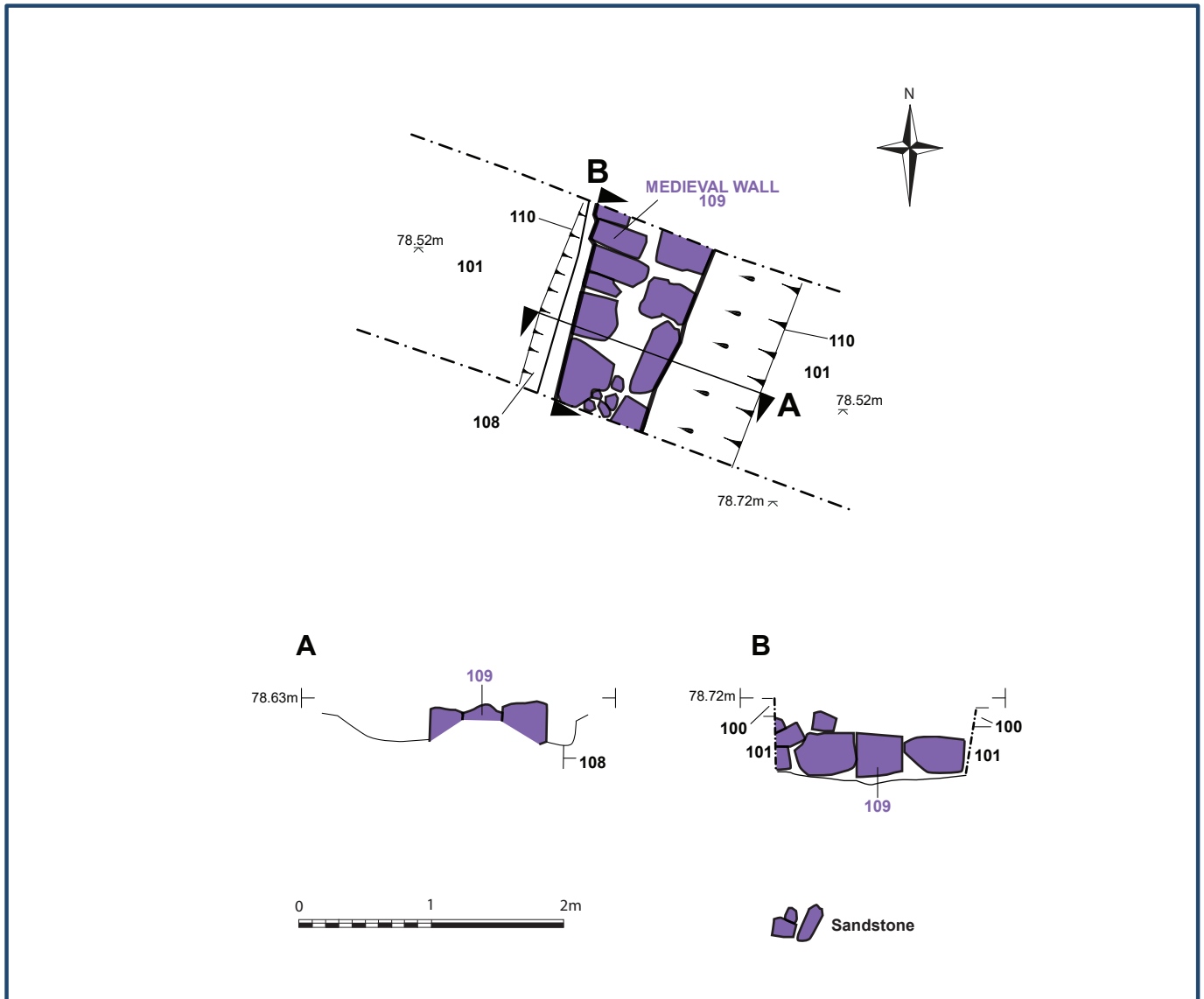


Fig 5: Detail of wall 9, elevation A and section B