



**Archaeological excavation
on land north of Kettering Road
Walgrave, Northamptonshire
October to November 2013**

GKR13

Report No. 13/229

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Illustrator: James Ladocha BA



Archaeological excavation on land north of Kettering Road Walgrave, Northamptonshire October to November 2013

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No: molanort1-172457	
Project title	Archaeological excavation on land north of Kettering Road, Walgrave, October - November 2013		
Short description	In October and November 2013, an archaeological excavation was carried out by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology), on behalf of the East Midlands Housing Association, on land north of Kettering Road, Walgrave Northamptonshire. The excavation identified undated ditches forming part of a field system. The driveway and boundary ditches are likely to be prehistoric date, because of the leached fills and absence of artefacts. A series of post-medieval furrows was also identified.		
Project type	Excavation		
Previous work	Trial Trench evaluation		
Current land use	Former smallholding		
Future work	No		
Monument type and period	Ditch, undated; post-medieval agricultural remains		
Significant finds	Pottery, tile, brick		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	Kettering Road, Walgrave, Northamptonshire		
Easting Northing	SP 80675 72425		
Area (sq m/ha)	0.07ha		
Height aOD	110mAOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA))		
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA))		
Director/Supervisor	Jim Burke (MOLA)		
Project Manager	Liz Muldowney (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	East Midlands Housing Association		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	29/10/2013		
End date	06/11/2013		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	GKR13	Pottery, brick, tile	
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title	Archaeological excavation on land north of Kettering Road, Northamptonshire October to November 2013		
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION ON LAND NORTH OF
KETTERING ROAD, WALGRAVE,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2013**

Abstract

In October and November 2013, an archaeological excavation was carried out by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology), on behalf of the East Midlands Housing Association, on land north of Kettering Road, Walgrave Northampton. The excavation identified undated ditches forming part of a field-system. The droveway and boundary ditches are likely to be prehistoric, because of the leached fills and absence of artefacts. A series of post-medieval furrows was also identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

In October and November 2013, an archaeological excavation was carried out by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology) on land north of Kettering Road, Walgrave, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 480675 272425, Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Morton Wykes Kramer LLP (Architects), on behalf of their client East Midlands Housing Association, ahead of the proposed development of the land.

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013). The objectives of the excavation were to determine the presence of any archaeological features or deposits within the application area and to date and characterise their extent, depth of burial and state of preservation.

2 BACKGROUND

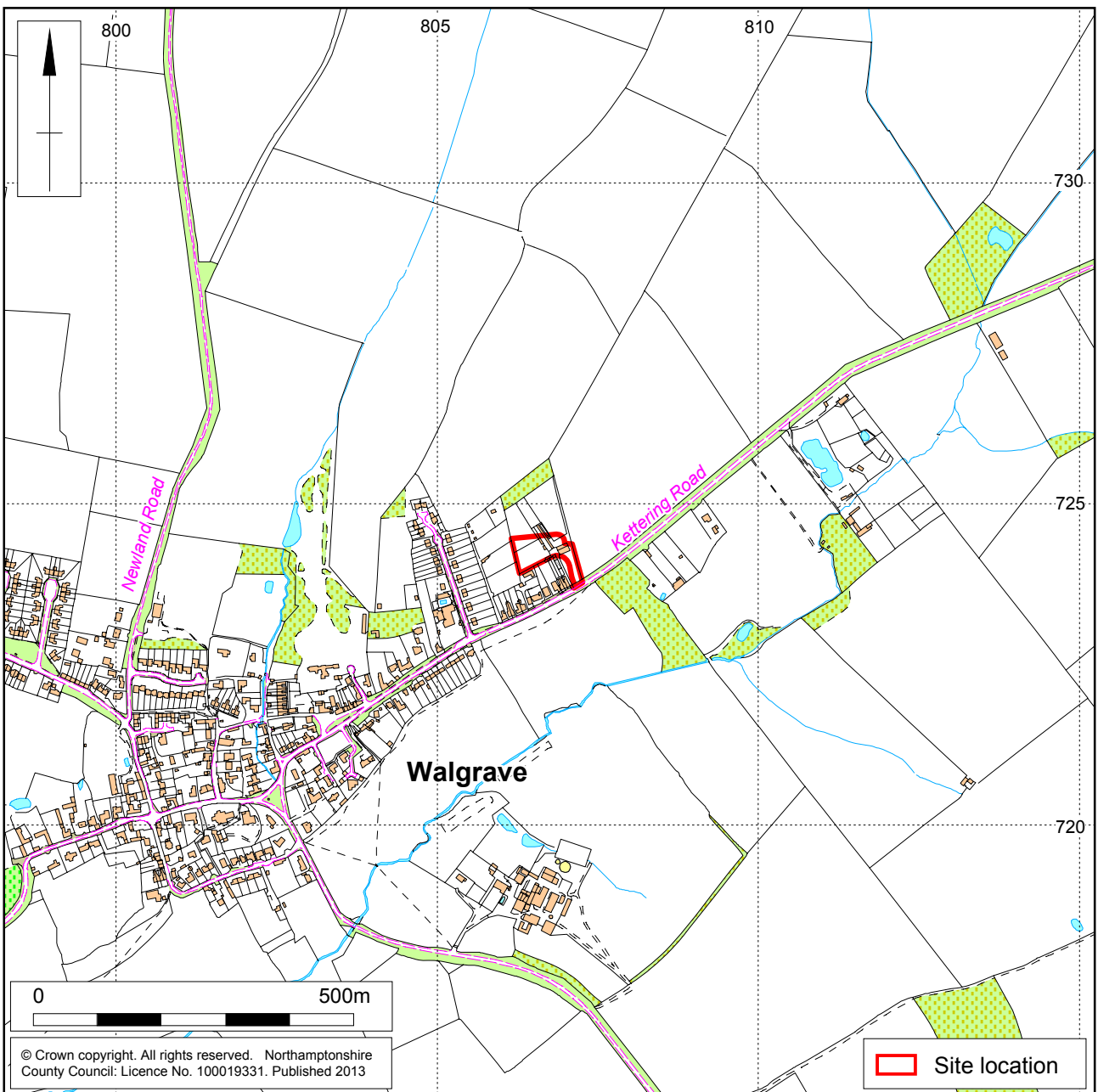
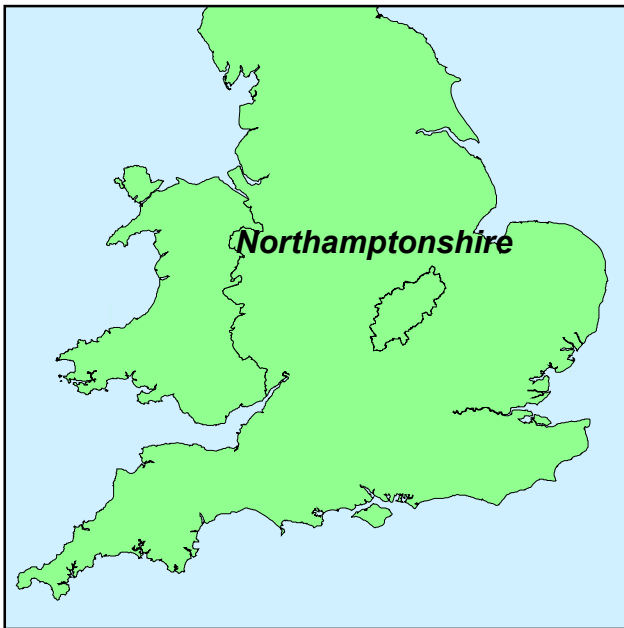
2.1 Location and geology

The site is located on the east edge of Walgrave, to the north of Kettering Road. It is currently partly occupied by standing buildings with areas of pasture. The geology comprises mid Pleistocene till (diamicton) overlying Northampton Sands and Ironstone (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk> accessed 28/05/13).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

Walgrave lies within an area of Roman activity, mostly suspected from find spots (e.g. MNN28581, MNN101989). One of these areas lies to the north of Kettering Road and may intrude into the western part of the site (MNN5504).

In the Domesday survey of 1086 Walgrave, appurtenant to the manor of Faxton, is recorded as containing 3 hides and 3 virgates and was held by Countess Judith (VCH 1937). In 1242 it was held by Geoffrey de Malesoures, whose family held it until at least 1284. By 1315 it was held by the Walgrave or de Waldegrave family, who retained the manor until 1540, when it was sold to John Lane, the then tenant. Ownership of the manor was then subject to nearly a century of legal disputes, before passing to Sir John Langham of Cottesbrooke in the mid 17th-century.



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

The historic core of the village lies to the west, centred on the medieval church of St Peter. Earthworks to the south and west of the village are thought to mark an area of late medieval expansion (RCHME 1979, fig 131). To the north of the village is a rectangular moat (RCHME 1979, fig 130). The site lies outside the medieval core of Walgrave (MNN5505), and medieval cultivation remains are known immediately to the east and south of the site (MNN133164, MNN143705).

The development area was evaluated in July 2013 by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Clarke 2013). Five trial trenches were excavated over the development area, three of which identified elements of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, corresponding with those recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) to the east and south of the site. A segmented linear ditch was recorded at the northern end of the development area and was interpreted as a possible enclosure ditch (Fig 2). This possible enclosure predated the medieval agricultural use of the area, but was otherwise undated.

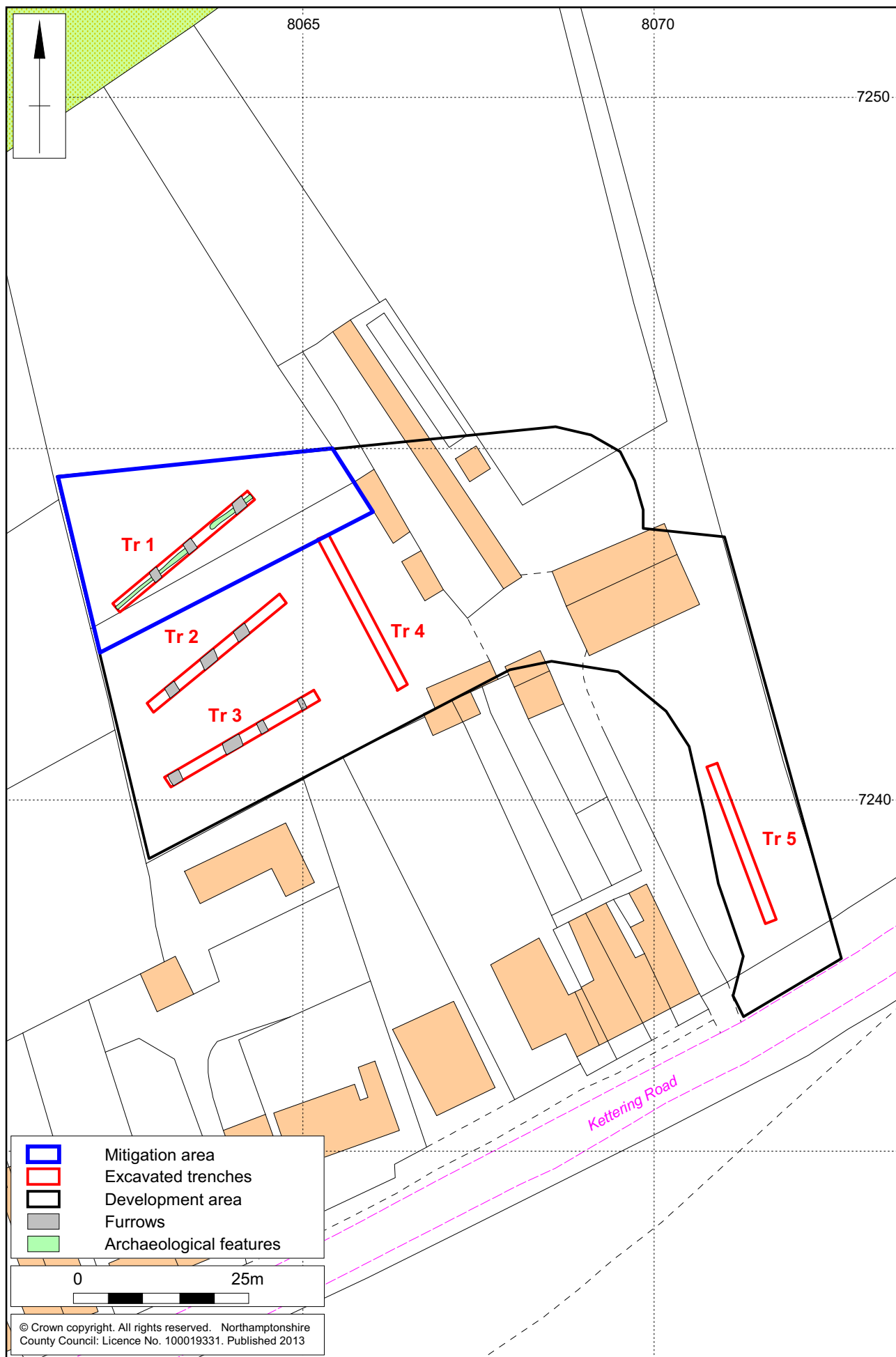
3 METHODOLOGY

The site was excavated in accordance with a plan prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology and approved by Liz Mordue (Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological Advisor).

The mitigation area was focussed on the features identified during the preceding evaluation in Trench 1 (Fig 2) and measured 0.7ha. The excavation area was positioned using a Leica system 1200 differential GPS.

A 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.9m-wide ditching bucket was used to remove topsoil and subsoil to reveal the archaeological horizon. The excavation area was cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. A hand-drawn plan of all archaeological features was made at scale 1:50 and was related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid using Leica system 1200 differential GPS. Archaeological features and deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature, date and significance within the percentages defined within the Written Scheme of Investigation (NA 2013). Recording followed standard NA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (NA 2011). Deposits and features were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Context sheets were cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs. Photography comprised 35mm black and white film supplemented with high resolution digital images. Sections were drawn at scale 1:10 and related to Ordnance Survey datum. Spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to maximise the recovery of metal objects. A series of environmental soil samples were taken from the ditches in order to recover artefacts and palaeo-environmental remains.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Excavation* (IfA 2008).



Scale 1:750 (A4)

Development area showing mitigation area and previous evaluation trenches Fig 2

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 Introduction

The results of the mitigation are presented below in stratigraphic sequence by phase, preceded by a description of the general stratigraphy within the excavated area. Fills are only described where appropriate, full context descriptions are included in the appendix.

4.2 General stratigraphy

The exposed natural substrate (1003) comprised mid Pleistocene till at 0.40-0.85m below the ground surface. The subsoil (1002) was mid grey-brown sandy clay and approximately 0.18m thick, whilst the overlying topsoil (1001) was dark greyish-brown sandy clay 0.14m thick. Both soils contained occasional chalk and flint pebbles.

All archaeological features unless otherwise stated cut the natural horizon and were sealed by the subsoil (Fig 3). Fill descriptions are included in Appendix 1. Finds were recovered from the furrows only.

4.3 Prehistoric field systems

Three sequential elements of field systems were recorded within the development area. None contained any datable material and all were broadly comparable in form.

Earliest ditch

The earliest feature (1025, 1021 and 1013) recorded was aligned north-north-east to south-south-west (Fig 3). It was at most 1.0m wide and 0.31m deep.

Rectilinear field system

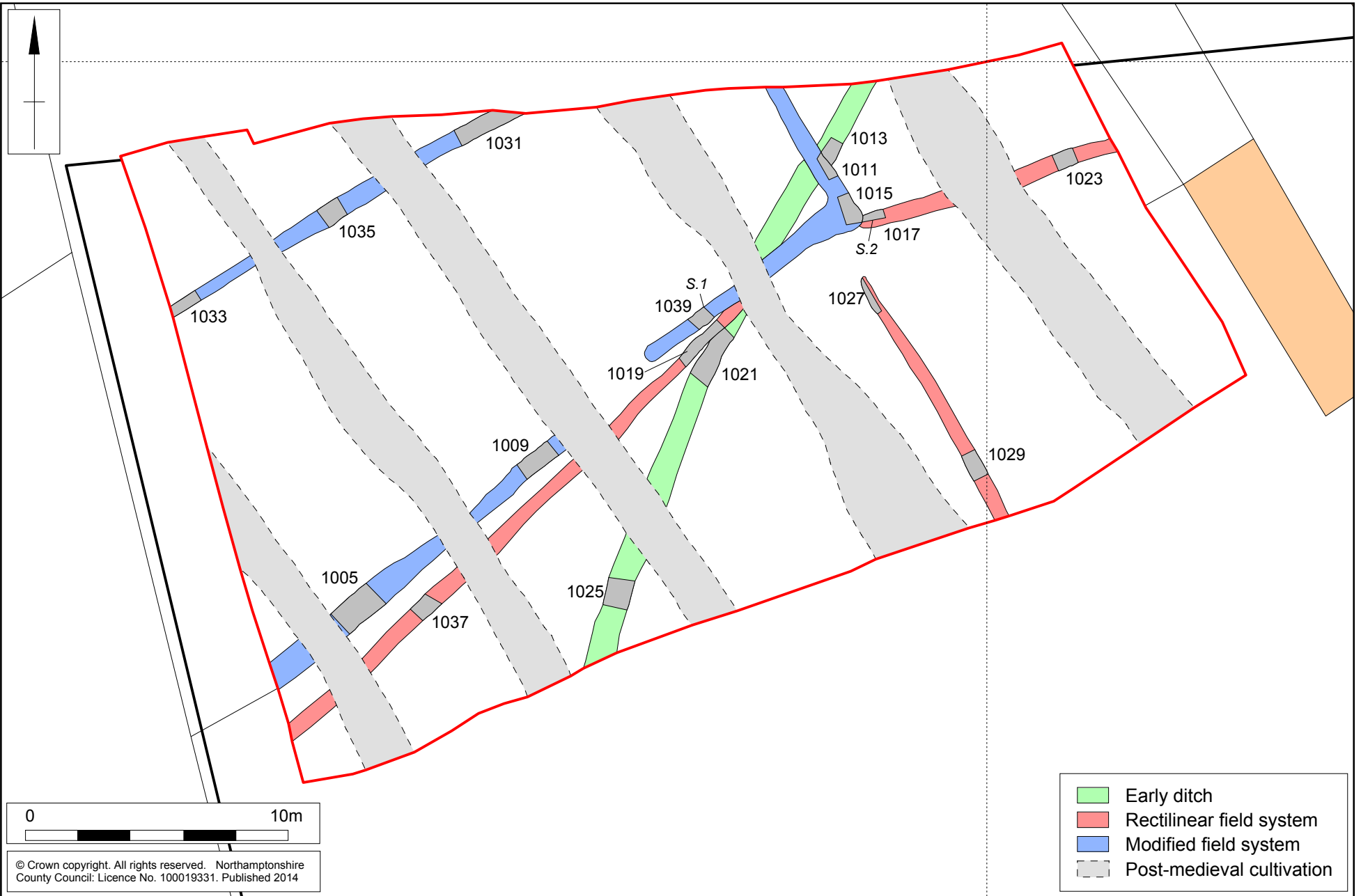
The earliest ditch was replaced by series of rectilinear field parcels forming a minimum of three fields (Fig 3). It comprised a segmented ditch on an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment (1019, 1037, 1017 and 1023), and a perpendicular ditch (1027 and 1029) on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment. The ditches formed entrances to three areas, the largest of which lay to the north of ditches 1019 and 1017. The entrance to this area was approximately 5m wide, whilst the entrance to the south-east area was 1.80m wide.

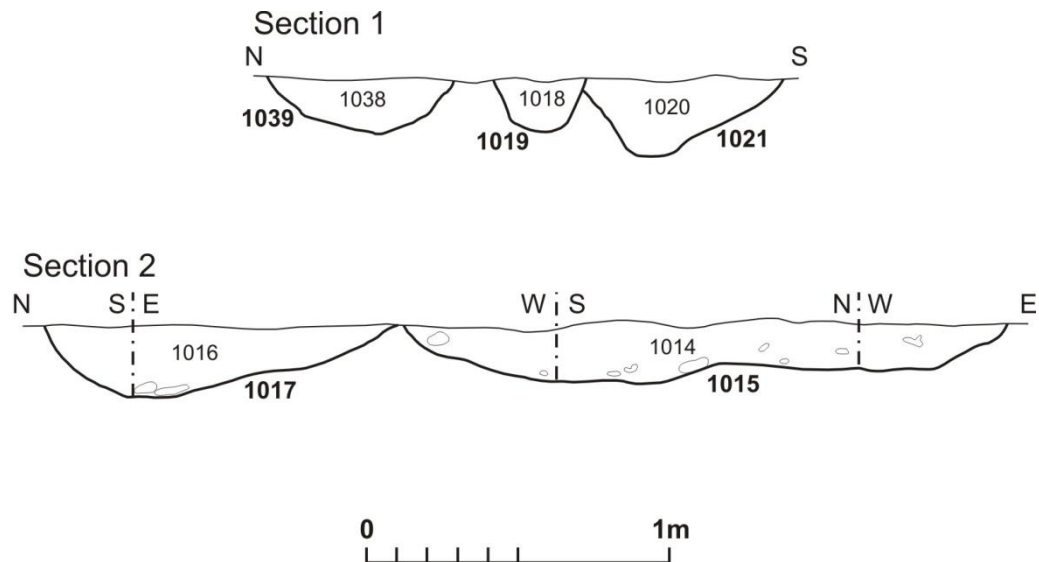
The western arm of the segmented ditch 1019/1037 was between 0.30m and 0.70m wide, was a maximum of 0.28m deep and had a U-shaped profile. It extended beyond the edge of excavation to the west and truncated the earlier ditch (1021) just before terminating (Fig 4, Section 1). The precise point of termination is not clear due to truncation by a furrow. There was a gap of approximately 5m to the eastern arm of the ditch 1017/1023. This element was 0.58m wide by 0.30m deep with a similar-shaped profile.

The third ditch 1027/1029 was 0.55m wide by 0.25m deep and continued to the south beyond the limit of excavation.

Scale 1:200 (A4)

The excavated area Fig 3





Sections of excavated ditches Fig 4

Modified field system

The segmented west-south-west to east-north-east boundary was replaced by an L-shaped, segmented, ditch. It was formed by ditches 1005/1009 and 1039/1015/1011 and enclosed an area that extended to the north and west of the development area. The south-east corner of this enclosure was sited directly over the terminal of the earlier boundary (Fig 4, Section 2; Fig 5). There was a 3-4m wide entrance through the southern arm.



L-shaped enclosure ditch clipping terminal of earlier field ditch, looking south Fig 5

Towards the northern limit of the development area there was a linear ditch on the same alignment as the southern arm of the L-shaped ditch (1033/1035/1031). It might

have formed an internal subdivision ditch within the latest enclosure or it might have been the northern boundary to a 10m wide driveway associated with the earlier segmented field ditches.

4.4 Post-medieval cultivation

Remnant furrows, aligned north-north-west to south-south-east, from a post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation system were present across the excavated area (Fig 3). The furrows were spaced between 4m and 7m apart and were between 1.8m and 2.4m wide. The furrows were not excavated as their function had already been determined during the evaluation stage of works (Clarke 2013).

A small artefact assemblage was recovered from the surface of the furrows and comprised fragments of brick and tile as well as a small assemblage of post-medieval pottery sherds indicating a late 18th to mid 19th century date for the disuse of this cultivation system.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 Post-medieval pottery by Tora Hylton

Eight sherds of unstratified pottery with a combined weight of 113g were recovered from furrow deposits. The assemblage comprises standard post-medieval fabric types dating from the late 17th-19th centuries. Although much of the assemblage comprises undiagnostic bodysherds, the range of fabrics and forms present, represent kitchen and tablewares. Chronologically the earliest fabric represented is Manganese Mottled Glazed Ware (CTS 413) which dates to c.1680-1760. Later wares are represented by the pancheons/bowls in Iron-glazed Coarsewares (CTS 426), and undiagnostic body sherds in Underglaze Transfer-printed Ware (CTS 416) and Mocha Ware (CTS 432).

Table 1: Pottery quantification

Fabric (County Type Series)	Date	Sherds	Weight (g)	Comments
Manganese mottled glazed ware (413)	c 1680-1760	1	5	bodysherd
Under glazed transfer–printed (416)	Late 18th century	1	2	bodysherd
Iron glazed coarsewares (426)	18th/19th century	4	99	Bowls/bodysherds
Mocha ware (432)	c 1820-40	1	5	?base sherd
Misc. White ware	c 19th century	1	2	Body sherd
Total		8	113	

5.2 Brick and tile by Pat Chapman

The four roof tile sherds recovered weighed 300g. Four of these come from pantiles which have a gentle S-shaped curve. They are 15mm thick, made with fine silty pale red-brown clay with occasional buff streaks and a few tiny ironstone inclusions. Pantiles were traded into this country, mainly from the Netherlands, along the British southern and eastern seaboard from Exeter to Aberdeen during the late 16th to 18th centuries. By the 18th century manufacturing had begun on the mainland and this type of roof tile became more widespread.

There are two floor tile sherds, weighing 175g. One sherd, 12mm thick, is made from fine sandy red-brown clay with occasional stone inclusions. There is part of a stamp surviving with the letters HEM possibly preceded by a small cross, but the lettering was damaged when the tile was taken from the mould. The other sherd, 22mm thick, is factory-made from fine red-brown clay. It has a raised cross on the base for keying into a floor, although this example has no mortar or other material adhering to it.

One very small fragment, weighing 16g, is probably from a brick made of fine red-brown clay.

This material is of late post-medieval date, the late 18th to the early 20th centuries.

Introduction and method statement

Excavations at Walgrave, recorded a number of ditches, which although un-dated by artefact association, were thought to be of prehistoric (possibly Iron Age) date. Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from across the excavated area and five were submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by MOLA and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 2. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots, seeds, leaf fragments and arthropod remains were also recorded.

Results

Although cereal grains, chaff and seeds are recorded within all five assemblages, the density of material is exceedingly low. Preservation is variable; the two cereal grains are very well preserved, but the chaff is mostly fragmentary and very abraded.

Oat (*Avena* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are present along with occasional fragments of wheat chaff, including spelt wheat (*T. spelta*) glume bases. Only one weed seed (of goosegrass (*Galium aparine*)) is recorded within the assemblage from ditch [1023] (sample 1), and sample 3 (ditch [1030]) includes a small fragment of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell. Small charcoal/charred wood flecks are present throughout, but other plant macrofossils are scarce.

The small fragments of black porous material are all thought to be residues of the high temperature combustion of organic materials including cereal grains. A single, small fragment of abraded bone is present within the assemblage from sample 1. Small fragments of coal are present throughout, but all are probably intrusive within the feature fills, introduced via root channels or similar post-depositional bioturbation of the deposits. Such contamination is often recorded where night soil was spread on the land during the post-medieval period or where steam implements were used during the early modern era.

Conclusions

In summary, the assemblages are extremely sparse and limited in composition. Cereal chaff occurs most frequently, but it is thought most likely that this is derived from scattered or wind-dispersed detritus which was accidentally incorporated within the ditch fills. The abraded state of the chaff may indicate that it had been exposed to the elements for some considerable period prior to deposition. The paucity of plant macrofossils within the assemblages (including charcoal) almost certainly indicates that the ditches were entirely peripheral to any foci of either domestic or agricultural activity.

Table 2: Plant macrofossil results by sample

Sample	1	2	3	4	5
Context	1022	1016	1030	1024	1028
Feature	1023	1017	1031	1025	1029
Feature Type	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch
Cereals					
<i>Avena</i> sp. (grain)	x	-	-	-	-
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grain)	-	x	-	-	-
(glume bases)	-	-	-	-	x
(rachis internodes)	-	x	-	x	
<i>T. spelta</i> L. (glume bases)	x	x	-	-	x
Cereal indet. (sprout frag.)	-	x	-	-	-
Herbs					
<i>Galium aparine</i> L.	x	-	-	-	-
Tree/shrub macrofossils					
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	-	-	x	-	-
Other plant macrofossils					
Charcoal <2mm	xx	x	x	x	x
Charcoal >2mm	x	-	-	-	-
Charred root/stem	-	-	x	-	x
Indet.seeds	x	x	-	-	-
Indet. tuber frag,	xcf	-	-	-	-
Other remains					
Black porous 'cokey' material	x	-	x	x	x
Bone	x	-	-	-	-
Small coal frags.	x	x	x	x	x
Sample volume (litres)	-	-	-	-	-
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	0.1	0.2
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%

Key to Table:

x = 1 – 10 specimens; xx = 11 – 50 specimens; cf = compare

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

The earliest features encountered within the excavation area were undated but are thought to be prehistoric, because of the leached fills and absence of artefacts commonly found in features of this nature dating from the late Iron Age onwards. Following the disuse of the fields and enclosures there was no archaeologically visible use of the area till the post-medieval agricultural use of the site.

7.2 Undated field systems and enclosures

The earliest feature was a single ditch crossing the excavation area at an oblique angle. It lay on a different alignment from all other features and was truncated by both rectilinear field systems/enclosures. It represents the earliest sub-division of the area.

After this early sub-division the land was split into at least three areas/fields. At this time the enclosures' alignment swings to the south-west to north-east. Final alterations to the field system comprised the instatement of a rectangular enclosure in the north-west corner of the excavation area which had the effect of 'closing' ingress to the north-east enclosure whilst ensuring the entrance to the south-east enclosure remained open. The new field had its own entrance which was wide enough to accommodate cattle and may have been a livestock enclosure. The relatively unmodified nature of the fills of each ditch indicates that these modifications may have taken place over a relatively short period of time.

The arrangement of the two later elements of enclosures and field systems strongly suggests that they were designed for the management of stock. As all ditches were narrow and shallow it is likely that they would have functioned in conjunction with hedges to form more permanent and substantial boundaries.

Environmental evidence and the absence of any artefacts suggests that these features were set some distance from the focus of domestic occupation or agricultural practice.

6.3 Post-medieval agriculture

The bases of five fairly regularly spaced furrows aligned south-south-east to north-north-west were recorded. Although they were not visible on aerial photographs, extensive furrows sharing the same alignment are evident as cropmarks on the east side of the plot and in the adjoining fields to the east. The artefact assemblage recovered from the furrows suggests that they were out of use by the mid to late 19th century.

6.4 Project termination

The fieldwork undertaken addressed the condition applied to the planning application for the development area. This report, when approved by the Northamptonshire County Council Archaeological Advisor, represents the final element in the archaeological mitigation works for that condition.

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MOLA
28 February 2014

APPENDIX: CONTEXT DATA

Context	Type	Fill of	Description	Dimensions (m)
1001	Topsoil		Friable dark grey sandy clay	0.14m thick
1002	Subsoil		Friable mid brown sandy clay	0.18m thick
1003	Natural		Light brownish-yellow lias	
1004	Ditch fill	[1005]	Firm mid yellowish-brown clay	0.40m
1005	Ditch		Linear. E-W aligned V-shaped profile	1.00m wide 0.40m deep
1008	Ditch fill	[1009]	Firm mid brown silty clay	0.15m deep
1009	Ditch		Linear. NE-SW aligned asymmetrical V-shaped with concave base	0.58m wide 0.15m deep
1010	Ditch fill	[1011]	Firm grey-brown silty clay, with rare charcoal	0.18m deep
1011	Ditch		Linear. SE-NW aligned U-shaped	0.60m wide 0.18m deep
1012	Ditch fill	[1013]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.20m deep
1013	Ditch		Corner of linear. NE-SW aligned shallow sides with flat base	0.50m wide 0.20m deep
1014	Ditch fill	[1015]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.20m deep
1015	Ditch		Linear. NW-SE turning SW-NE aligned with gradual sides and a flat but irregular base	1.25m wide 0.20m deep
1016	Ditch fill	[1017]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.24m deep
1017	Ditch		Linear. WNW-ESE aligned with U-shaped profile	0.55m wide 0.24m deep
1018	Ditch fill	[1019]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.20m deep
1019	Ditch		Linear. NE-SW aligned with U-shaped profile	0.55m wide 0.20m deep
1020	Ditch fill	[1021]	Firm mid brown silty clay with orange mottling	0.26m deep
1021	Ditch	[1022]	Linear. NNE-SSW aligned asymmetrical V-shape with slightly stepped, flat base	0.65m+ wide 0.26m deep
1022	Ditch fill	[1023]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.31m deep
1023	Ditch		Linear. E-W aligned with U-shaped profile	0.60m wide 0.31m deep
1024	Ditch fill	[1025]	Firm dark greyish-brown silty clay	0.29m deep
1025	Ditch		NE-SW aligned with slightly asymmetrical V-shaped profile with concave base	1.00m wide 0.29m deep
1026	Ditch fill	[1027]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.10m deep
1027	Ditch		Linear. Shallow profile at terminus, flat base	0.55m wide 0.10m deep
1028	Ditch fill	[1029]	Firm mid grey-brown silty clay	0.24m deep
1029	Ditch		Linear. N-S aligned with U-shaped profile	0.55m wide 0.24m deep
1030	Ditch fill	[1031]	Firm dark grey-brown silty clay	0.22m deep
1031	Ditch		Linear. NE-SW aligned slightly asymmetrical profile	0.75m wide 0.22m deep
1032	Ditch fill	[1033]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.19m deep
1033	Ditch		Linear. SW-NE aligned with wide V-shaped profile and flat base	0.59m wide 0.19m deep
1034	Ditch fill	[1035]		0.29m deep
1035	Ditch		Linear. NE-SW aligned with V-shaped profile and concave base	0.80m wide 0.29m deep
1036	Ditch fill	[1037]	Firm grey-brown silty clay with orange speckles	0.31m deep
1037	Ditch		Linear. NE-SW aligned with V-shaped profile and concave base	0.70m wide 0.31m deep
1038	Ditch fill	[1039]	Firm grey-brown silty clay	0.13m deep
1039	Ditch		Linear. NE-SW aligned with V-shaped profile and concave base	0.62m wide 0.13m deep



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