



**An archaeological trial trench evaluation  
at Duston School, Berrywood Road  
Northampton  
May 2014**

Planning reference: 2013/00078/CCDFUL

Report No. 14/104

Author: S Markus

Illustrator: A Bassir





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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No. Molanort1-178766</b>
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Duston School, Northampton, May 2014	
Short description	An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by MOLA at Duston School, Berrywood Road, Northampton prior to the proposed development on the site. Three trial trenches were excavated in the playing fields of Duston School. One trench contained a levelling layer linked to the school's use of the land.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Site Status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Playing fields	
Monument type and period	N/A	
Significant finds	None	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Duston School, Berrywood Road, Northampton	
Post code	NN5 6XA	
OS co-ordinates	NGR SP 7115 6164	
Area (sq m/ha)	1.5 ha	
Height aOD	115m	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	MOLA	
Project brief originator	Lesley Ann Mathers (NCC planning)	
Project Design originator	Elizabeth Muldowney (MOLA)	
Director/Supervisor	Simon Markus (MOLA)	
Project Managers	Elizabeth Muldowney (MOLA)	
Sponsor or funding body	Interserve Construction	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	08/05/2014	
End date	08/05/2014	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>
Physical	MOLA Offices	None
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)
Digital		Client report PDF
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Duston School, Northampton, May 2014	
Serial title & volume	14/104	
Author(s)	Simon Markus	
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# **An archaeological trial trench evaluation at Duston School, Northampton Northamptonshire May 2014**

## *Abstract*

*An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by MOLA at Duston School, Berrywood Road, Northampton prior to the proposed development on the site. Three trial trenches were excavated in the playing fields of Duston School. One trench contained a levelling layer linked to the school's use of the land.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology, now operating as MOLA, was commissioned by Interserve Construction to carry out archaeological trial trenching on the proposed development site on land at Duston School, Berrywood Road, Northampton (NGR 47115 26164; Fig 1).

The proposed development site comprises c 1.5 ha. of land, which is part of Duston School, on the west side of the town.

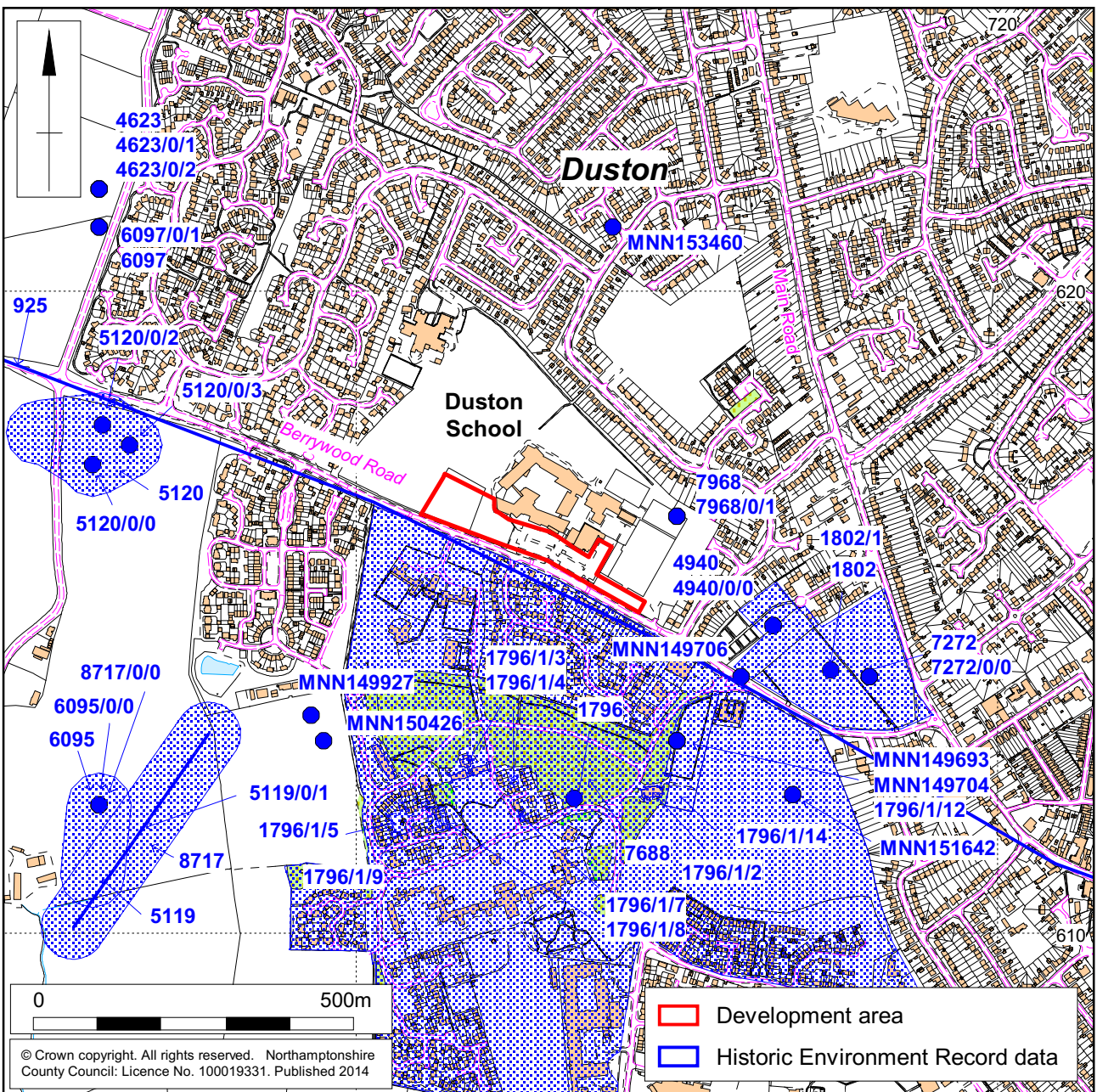
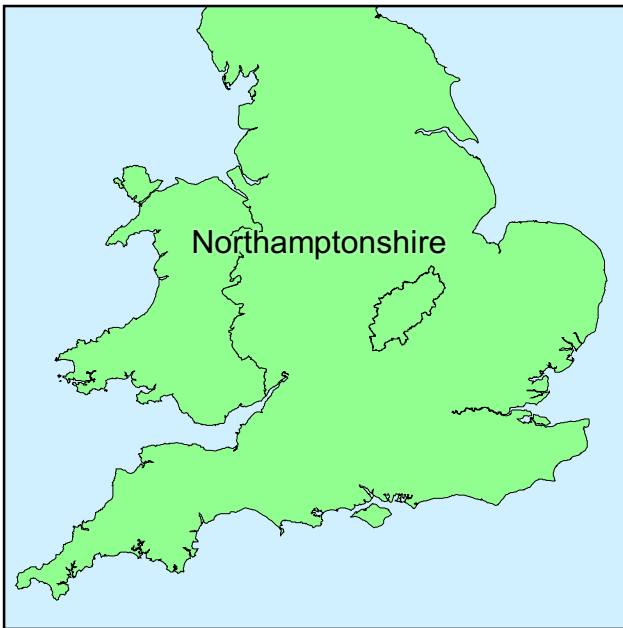
The works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013) to meet the requirements of the brief issued by Northamptonshire County Council (Mather 2013a; 2013b).

All works were conducted in accordance with the IfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* and *Code of conduct* (IfA 2008; 2010).

## **2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The development area is located on the north side of Berrywood Road, Duston, which forms the south boundary. On all other sides the school is surrounded by housing. Topographically, the site slopes gently from north-west to south-east sited atop a plateau at a height of 115m aOD. The underlying bedrock geology has been mapped as Blisworth Limestone formation (BGS GeoIndex).





Scale 1:10,000

Site location, showing Historic Environment Record data

Fig 1



### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A search of Northamptonshire's Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that Duston School lies near a small number of known sites of historical and archaeological interest from the prehistoric to modern period. Of greatest relevance to this scheme of works is the Roman Road (HER925), now Berrywood Road, which led from Duston to *Bannaventa* (both Roman towns). The development area lies to the immediate north of its presumed course.

Prehistoric and possible prehistoric or Roman activity is known from sites to the south of the school, and comprises a mix of unstratified flints and unidentified activity including a ditch (e.g. HER6097, 5120). Additional Roman activity includes a coin (HER7272) found to the south-east and unclassified activity to the west (HER5120).

Evidence from the medieval period is also small-scale and is limited to unstratified finds and unknown activity less than 1km to the south-west.

Most of the post-medieval records refer to buildings associated with St Crispin's Hospital (HER1796) to the south, including a chapel (HER1796/1/2) and stables (HER1796/1/7), as well as two WWII military installations (HER7968) in the north-east corner of the school grounds.

*Table 1: Inventory of Historic Environment Record data*

MonUID	Type	Prefref	Name
MNN102362	FS	7272/0/0	Unstratified Roman coin
MNN103810	MON	7968	WWII military activity
MNN103811	MON	7968/0/1	WWII searchlight battery
MNN24533	MON	4623/0/1	Possibly modern building cropmarks
MNN24534	MON	4623/0/2	Possible modern road/track
MNN24927	FS	4940/0/0	Possible prehistoric flint scatter
MNN25154	FS	8717/0/0	Unstratified prehistoric to Saxon finds
MNN25155	FS	5120/0/0	Unstratified prehistoric flints
MNN26015	FS	6095/0/0	Unstratified Medieval / post-medieval finds
MNN26016	FS	6097/0/1	Unstratified prehistoric flints
MNN3025	MON	1796	St Crispin's
MNN6118	MON	4623	Uncertain activity, possibly modern
MNN6303	MON	4940	Uncertain activity, prehistoric
MNN7012	MON	6095	Possible medieval / post-medieval activity
MNN7014	MON	6097	Possible prehistoric activity
MNN7232	MON	1802	Funerary site, Duston
MNN24925	BLD	1796/1/3	Connolly Lodge
MNN116132	BLD	1796/1/7	St Crispin's Hospital stables
MNN116139	BLD	1796/1/8	The Fire Station, St Crispin's Hospital
MNN116140	BLD	1796/1/9	The Old Laundry, St Crispin's Hospital
MNN116141	BLD	1796/1/4	Beechwood House, St Crispin's Hospital
MNN116142	BLD	1796/1/5	Nurses' Home, St Crispin's Hospital
MNN106414	BLD	1796/1/2	St Crispin's Hospital chapel
MNN135275	MON	1796/1/12	St Crispin's Hospital cemetery
MNN14539	MON	1802/1	Cemetery, Duston
MNN17117	MON	7688	Parkland at St Crispin's Hospital
MNN141076	MON	5120/0/2	Probable prehistoric / Roman ditch
MNN141077	MON	5120/0/3	Probable prehistoric / Roman ditch



MonUID	Type	Prefref	Name
MNN25153	MON	5119/0/1	Possible trackway, undated
MNN1928	MON	5119	Possible communications, undated
MNN141085	MON	8717	Possible prehistoric activity
MNN1929	MON	5120	Possible prehistoric and Romano-British activity
MNN141087	MON	7272	Possible Roman activity
MNN143065	BLD	1796/1/14	St Crispin's chapel store
MNN149693	PAS	MNN149693	Copper alloy token
MNN149704	PAS	MNN149704	Medieval – modern lead musket ball
MNN149706	PAS	MNN149706	Post-medieval – modern copper alloy buckle
MNN149927	PAS	MNN149927	Post-medieval silver coin
MNN150426	PAS	MNN150426	Post-medieval silver coin
MNN151642	PAS	MNN151642	Post-medieval copper alloy seal matrix
MNN153460	PAS	MNN153460	Modern copper alloy button
MNN505	MON	925	Bannaventa to Duston road

#### 4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the investigation were to:

- Establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation on the development site;
- Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine past local environmental conditions.

#### 5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

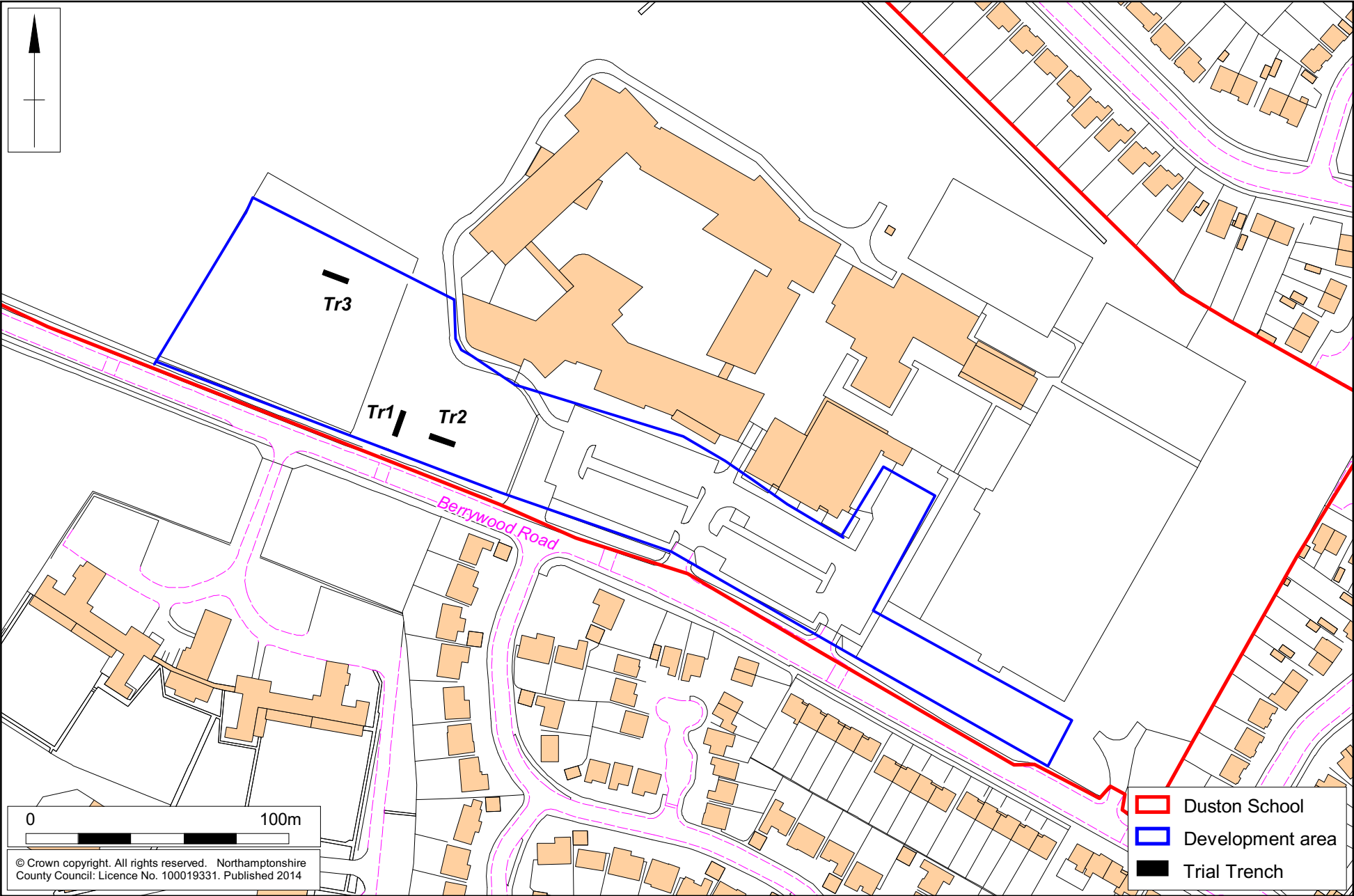
Three trenches were excavated, 10m by 1.8m, with a total length of 30m (Fig 2). The trial trenches were located within the footprint of the proposed building and over the location of the attenuation tank in the car park extension.

Each trench was located using a Leica System Viera GPS operating to an accuracy of +/-0.05m to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum. Trenches were machine-excavated using a flat toothless bucket 1.8m wide under continuous archaeological supervision and were excavated to the upper interface of geological deposits. Topsoil and subsoil were stored separately on either side of the trench, at least 1m from the trench edges.

The character, composition and general depositional sequence of the site stratification was recorded on *pro-forma* sheets, with a unique context number being allocated to each distinct deposit. All recording followed the guidelines detailed in the *Excavation Manual* (MOLA 2014).

All records were compiled during fieldwork into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive. All records and materials were compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (1991).





Scale 1:2,000 (A4)

Trial trench location Fig 2



A photographic record was kept of the excavation, comprising 35mm black and white negatives and digital photographs.

The trenches were backfilled with their up-cast, lightly compacted by the mechanical digger, following approval of the works by the CAO. Subsoil and topsoil were backfilled separately.

## **6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

The natural substratum, of light yellow-grey clay with up to 5% small chalk fragments, was overlain by subsoil of mid brown sandy silt, with 2-3% small gravels, up to 0.30m thick. This was overlain by topsoil of dark brown sandy silt with up to 5% small gravels (Fig 3).



Stratigraphy within trench 1, looking east Fig 3

Trench 1 contained a layer (102), above the subsoil, of dark brown-grey silty clay with 2-3% small gravels and brick fragments, and <1% charcoal fragments (none recovered). It became thicker towards the northern end of the trench.

No further archaeological finds or features were present within the trenches.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

The evaluation produced evidence for activity relating to the modern school playing field only. The layer recorded between the subsoil and topsoil in Trench 1 is likely to be the remains of a levelling layer deposited to create a level playing field.

Duston School, is located approximately 1.5km from the known north-western limits of the Roman town of Duston, although it is sited directly to the north of the Roman road leading to Bannaventa no features of this, or any other, date were encountered. It is likely that it was too distant from the main settlement for strip development along the road or for an associated cemetery.



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MOLA  
15 May 2014



## APPENDIX: CONTEXT TABLES

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth of natural
1	10m x 1.8m N-S	SP 7115 6164	115m aOD	0.70m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt, with 5% small gravels	Up to 0.15m thick	—
102	Layer	Dark brown-grey silty clay with 2-3% small gravels and brick fragments	Up to 0.25m thick	—
103	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy silt with 2-3% small gravels	Up to 0.30m thick	—
104	Natural	Light yellow-grey clay with 5% small chalk fragments	—	—



Trench 1, looking north

Fig 4



Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth of natural
2	10m x 1.8m E-W	SP 7115 6164	115m aOD	0.45m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt, with 5% small gravels	Up to 0.45m thick	—
202	Natural	Light yellow-grey clay with 5% small chalk fragments	—	—



Trench 2, looking west

Fig 5



Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth of natural
3	10m x 1.8m E-W	SP 7115 6164	115m aOD	0.47m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
301	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt, with 5% small gravels	Up to 0.25m thick	—
302	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy silt with 2-3% small gravels	Up to 0.22m thick	—
303	Natural	Light yellow-grey clay with 5% small chalk fragments	—	—



Trench 3, looking west

Fig 6





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