

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT
WYGATE PARK PHASE 9, SPALDING,
LINCOLNSHIRE
MAY 2004



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**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

JUNE 2004

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LINCOLNSHIRE**

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WYGATE PARK PHASE 9 SPALDING

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WYGATE PARK PHASE 9 SPALDING

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project title	Spalding Wygate Park Phase 9 Trial Trenching
Short description (250 words maximum)	The evaluation revealed a sequence clays deposited in marine and salt marsh environments, interrupted by a terrestrial event. This is provisionally dated to the later Roman or Saxon periods. Evidence for past activity was uncovered including a dump of kiln waste associated with a ditch and post hole, these are provisionally dated to the late Iron Age / Romano-British periods. A series of ditches and field drains were also uncovered, these produced no dating evidence. A programme of scientific dating will be undertaken to resolve the chronological issues.
Project type	Archaeological Trial Evaluation
Previous work	
Future work	
Monument type and period	
Significant finds	Prehistoric / Romano-British industrial activity
PROJECT LOCATION	
County	Lincolnshire
Site address	Wygate Park, Spalding, Lincolnshire
Easting	523500
Northing	323050
Height OD	2m aOD
PROJECT CREATORS	
Organisation	CgMs Consulting and Northamptonshire Archaeology
Project brief originator	
Project Design originator	Mike Dawson MA MIFA
Director/Supervisor	Chris Jones
Project Manager	Adam Yates MA AIFA
Sponsor or funding body	
PROJECT DATE	
Start date	19/05/04
End date	28/05/04
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ABSTRACT

An archaeological evaluation comprising six machine excavated trenches was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of CgMs Consulting, in May 2004 at Wygate Park Phase 9, Spalding, Lincolnshire.

The evaluation revealed a sequence of clays deposited in marine and salt marsh environments, interrupted by a terrestrial event. This is provisionally dated to the later Roman or Saxon periods.

Evidence for past activity included a dump of kiln waste associated with a ditch and post-hole, provisionally dated to the late Iron Age / Romano-British periods.

A series of ditches and field drains were also uncovered, but produced no dating evidence.

A programme of scientific dating will be undertaken to resolve the chronological issues, a supplementary report will be issued when the results of the scientific dating programme are available.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation comprising six machine excavated trenches was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in May 2004 at Wygate Park Phase 9, Spalding, Lincolnshire (Fig1, NGR TF 2350 2305). The work was undertaken on behalf of CgMs Consulting prior to the development of the site by Allison Homes Ltd. The purpose of the evaluation was to investigate the archaeological potential of the site, and to determine the character, extent, use and date of any archaeological remains present. The extent of the works was set out in a specification prepared by CgMs (Dawson 2004).

This document comprises a factual report detailing the results of the excavation. It does not include analysis of samples taken during the evaluation or the results of scientific dating, a supplementary report will be issued when the results of these are available.

2 BACKGROUND

The development site lies on the north-western outskirts of Spalding, Lincolnshire. The area of investigation covered approximately 2ha in a flat field lying at approximately 2m aOD, defined by field boundaries to the north, west and south and by modern housing development to the east. The soils of the area comprise calcareous coarse silty soils of the Wisbech soil association overlying marine alluvium (SSEW 1983). The underlying geology comprises Oxford Clay with Kellaway beds.

Previous archaeological works immediately to the south, comprising geophysical survey (GSB 2004) and trial trenching (Snee 2003), have revealed extensive evidence for Iron Age and Romano-British activity, together with east-west aligned medieval and post-medieval field ditches known as dylings.

3 METHODOLOGY

Six 50m long trenches (Fig 2) were dug using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. At the request of the curatorial archaeologist, Trench 4 was extended to the west to resolve specific archaeological issues.

The base and an appropriate section of each trench were cleaned by hand and planned at a scale of 1:50. All archaeological features were sample excavated, in order to ascertain their nature, date and degree of preservation. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number and the details of each context were recorded on pro-forma sheets. Section drawings were made of all archaeological features and soil profiles at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20.

Levels were taken along the top and base of each trench, with the heights being related to Ordnance Datum. Trench locations were related to the National Grid.

A photographic record was made of the excavation, using both 35mm black and white negative and colour transparency films. The spoil from the trenches was scanned with a metal detector to maximise find recovery.

All works were carried out accordance with the IFA *Code of Conduct* (1995, revised 2000) and the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IFA 1994, revised 1999). All procedures complied with the Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

The site was visited by James Rackham who commented on the sedimentary sequence and recommended a programme of sampling and analysis.

4 RESULTS

Features of potential archaeological interest were recorded in Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4 which are discussed further below. No artefacts other than burnt clay were recovered from any of the trenches.

Generally, a similar sequence of naturally deposited layers was recorded in each trench. Intertidal marine silts, finer grained towards the top indicating an increasingly low energy environment, graded into salt marsh silty clays. These were overlain by a dark organic terrestrial layer, formed when conditions were sufficiently dry to allow for vegetation cover to grow and soil genesis to commence. This in turn was overlain by an accumulation of salt marsh clays and silts.

Table 1: Ordnance Survey heights of principal deposits by Trench

Trench		Marine silts / salt marsh silty clays	Terrestrial layer	Salt marsh silty clays
1	Context No	105 107 108 109 110 113	104	102 106
	Min aOD		1.92	1.95
	Max aOD	2.21	2.24m	2.43
2	Context No	204 205 209	208	202 203 206 207
	Min aOD		1.19	1.21
	Max aOD	1.47	1.49	1.79
3	Context No	302 308	306	303 304 305 307
	Min aOD		1.64	1.66
	Max aOD	1.87	1.90	2.29
4	Context No	405 417 418	404 414	402 414
	Min aOD		1.25	1.62
	Max aOD	1.97	1.99	2.47
5	Context No	505 506	504	503
	Min aOD		1.74	1.76
	Max aOD	1.86	1.88	2.38
6	Context No	605 606	604	603
	Min aOD		1.40	1.63
	Max aOD	1.37	1.65	2.09

4.1 Trench 1

The stratigraphic sequence followed the model described above. Towards the south end of the trench the terrestrial layer rose to the top of the section, possibly indicating that the ground had been truncated. A substantial palaeochannel [114] was cut from the base of the terrestrial layer (104), filled with brown-grey clay silt (112) overlain by light grey-brown sandy silt (111). The channel was aligned approximately north-south, 16m in width with shallow sloping sides, and was not bottomed within the trench. A single modern field drain crossed the trench, cut from the current ground surface.

4.2 Trench 2

The stratigraphic sequence followed the model described above. The presence of two parallel east-west aligned ditches [210] and [211] was indicated by dips in terrestrial layer (208), although the fills could not be differentiated from the overlying alluvium (207). The ditches were 1.6m and 2.1m wide respectively, with shallow sloping sides to concave bases, 0.72m and 0.78m deep respectively; the fills produced no dating evidence. Ongoing attempts to drain the field were reflected by the presence of six ceramic field drains crossing the trench.

4.3 Trench 3

The stratigraphic sequence followed the model described above. The terrestrial layer (306) was very irregular in the central portion of the trench, rising almost vertically to the top of the section, as with Trench 1, possibly indicating truncation of the current ground surface. A single ditch [309] was cut from the current ground surface and ran east-west across the trench. This was 1.48m wide, 0.9m deep, with steep sloping sides to a concave base, filled with a single fill of mid grey-brown clay (310), which produced no dating evidence.

4.4 Trench 4 (Figs 3 and 4)

The stratigraphic sequence followed the model described above.

Stratified within the alluvial clays beneath the terrestrial layer (404) was a substantial dump of fired clay (416, Fig 4, Section 1), this was 3.6m long and 0.12m deep, and probably represented kiln waste (see below). An extension was excavated to the west to resolve the extent of (416) in this direction. Charcoal associated with this context (416) was sampled for C14 dating.

Cut from beneath terrestrial layer (404) at the south end of the trench was a north-south aligned ditch [410], which terminated in a squarish terminal 4m into the trench. It was 1.1m wide, 0.85m deep, with a U-shaped profile. The fills (Fig 4, Section 2), comprised firm dark grey clay (409) with moderate charcoal flecking, overlain by charcoal-rich dark brown silt (408), in turn overlain by mottled light grey-brown silt (407) and dark brown silty clay (413). Context (408) was sampled for C14 dating and charcoal identification.

To the north of the terminal was a small ovoid post / stakehole [412], 0.18m x 0.14m and 0.04m deep, bowl shaped in profile filled with light brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks (411). Context (411) was sampled for C14 dating.

East-west aligned ditch [421] was associated with the terrestrial layer (404). It was aligned east-west, with shallow sloping sides, 4.6m wide. The terrestrial layer continued along the base of the ditch and was overlain by a fill of light brown very silty clay (403), which produced no dating evidence.

An undated east-west aligned ditch [419] was cut from the current ground surface. The single fill of dark grey-brown organic silt (406), which was sampled for C14 dating.

Towards the northern end of the trench the uppermost 0.4m had been heavily disturbed by modern activity

4.5 Trench 5

The stratigraphic sequence followed the model described above, no features were present.

4.6 Trench 6

The stratigraphic sequence followed the model described above, no features were present.

5 FINDS

5.1 Fired clay by Tora Hylton

A small assemblage of fired and partially fired clay fragments was recovered from a dump (416) in Trench 4. In total there was 893g of partially fired clay, comprising undiagnostic, amorphous, friable

fragments, some of which still retain vestiges of burnt organic matter.

A small number of pieces (25+) weighing 0.679kg were fired. Most of these pieces still retained one or more smoothed surfaces, the largest piece has a curved outer edge and measured in excess of 100mm deep, suggesting that it may originally have been part of a large structure, possibly a kiln. The fabric appears to be natural clay, no tempering or additional materials have been added, and it displayed similarities to the fragments of partially fired clay.

6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has demonstrated the survival of significant archaeological remains in the south-east part of the development area. These comprised cut features and industrial residues, probably dating to the late Iron Age or Romano-British periods, and are likely to be related to the extensive remains identified to the south (Snee 2003). The palaeochannel seen in Trench 1 is likely to be a continuation of that identified to the south by geophysical survey (GSB 2004), and appeared to mark the western limit of the Iron Age / Romano-British remains in Wygate Park Phase 9. The dating of these features should be regarded as provisional until a programme of dating is undertaken. It is proposed that this will comprise the following elements as recommended by James Rackham:

- 1) Charcoal rich fill of butt-ending ditch (408). Cereal grains or roundwood for AMS date and identification will be targeted.
- 2) Charcoal from among kiln debris (416) for AMS. Cereal grains or roundwood for AMS date and identification will be targeted.
- 3) Peaty upper fill of ditch in section (406), humic fraction only. This is likely to date the terrestrial episode, or at least the end of it.

The results of this programme will be incorporated in a supplementary report.

The east-west aligned ditches identified by the evaluation may have formed part of the same system of dyings (medieval/post-medieval field systems) identified to the south (Snee 2003).

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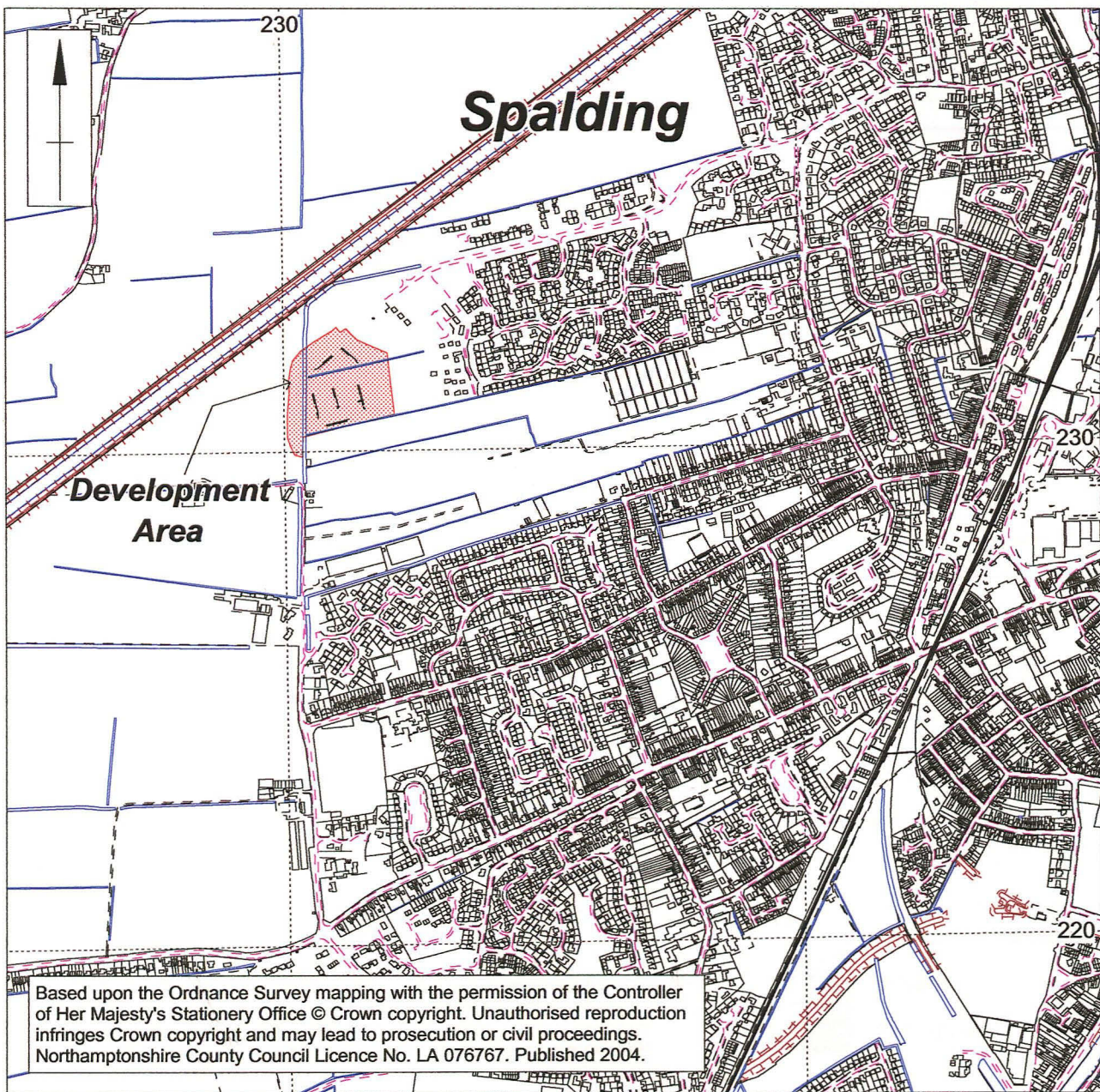
SITE DATA

Table 2: Summary of context data

Trench	Context	Description
1	101	Topsoil
	102	Alluvium, firm dark brown sandy silt
	103	Cancelled
	104	Terrestrial layer, firm dark grey clay with 40%organic content
	105	Alluvium, firm mottled light brown-grey silty clay
	106	Alluvium, firm dark grey-brown silty clay
	107	Alluvium, compact light grey-brown silty clay
	108	Alluvium, firm light brown – light grey silty clay
	109	Alluvium, firm mottled light – mid grey silty clay
	110	Alluvium, firm mottled light orange-brown / grey silty clay, some Mn staining
	111	Alluvium, fill of [114], firm mottled light –mid brown sandy silt
	112	Alluvium, fill of [114], firm light brown orange brown – mid grey silty clay
	113	Alluvium, firm light brown – mid grey silty clay
	114	Palaeochannel cut, 16m wide, aligned north-south, not bottomed
2	201	Topsoil
	202	Alluvium, firm dark brown sandy silt
	203	Alluvium, firm light brown – light grey silty clay
	204	Alluvium, compact light grey-brown silty clay
	205	Alluvium, firm mottled light orange-brown / grey silty clay, some Mn staining
	206	Alluvium, firm dark brown sandy silt
	207	Alluvium, compact light grey-brown silty clay
	208	Terrestrial layer, very dark brown soft organic silty clay
	209	Alluvium, firm compacted mid yellow-grey silty clay, rare Mn flecks
	210	Possible ditch cut, aligned east-west, 1.6m wide
	211	Possible ditch cut, aligned east-west, 1.6m wide
3	301	Topsoil
	302	Alluvium, firm dark brown sandy silt
	303	Alluvium, light orange grey mottled silty clay
	304	Alluvium, mid orange grey silty clay with light grey mottles
	305	Alluvium, mid orange-grey silty clay with light grey mottles
	306	Terrestrial layer, light blue-grey silty clay with organic lens at top of deposit
	307	Alluvium, yellow-grey silty clay, rare Mn flecks
	308	Alluvium, mid grey brown silty clay
	309	Ditch cut, aligned east-west, sharply sloping sides to flat base, 1.6m wide, 0.8m deep.
	310	Fill of 309, mid grey-brown clay
4	401	Topsoil
	402	Alluvium, firm dark brown sandy silt
	403	Alluvium, fill of [421], light brown very silty clay
	404	Terrestrial layer, dark grey silty clay freq organic

WYGATE PARK PHASE 9 SPALDING

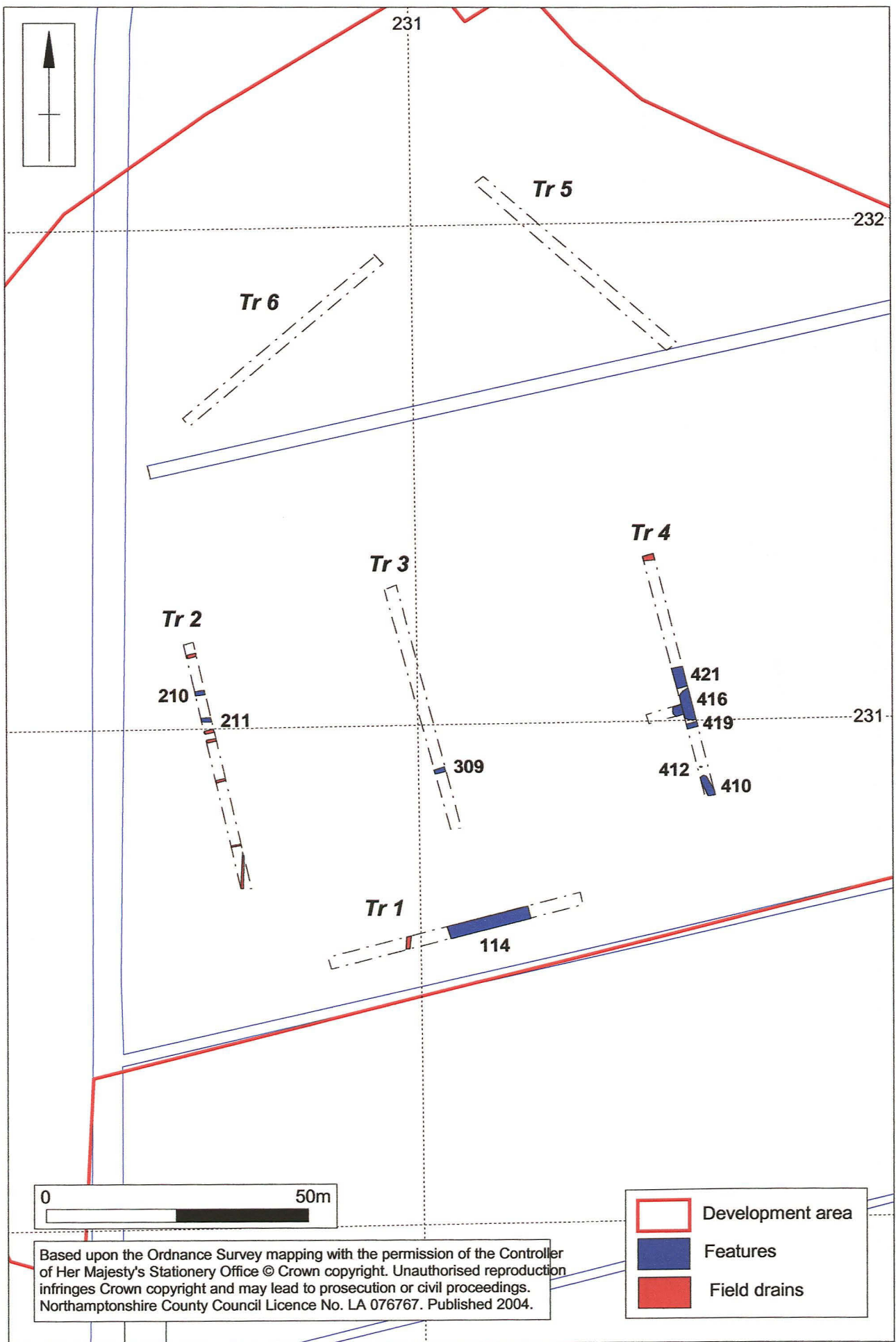
	405	Alluvium, firm mottled light brown-grey silty clay
	406	Fill of [419], dark grey-brown soft loamy silt with organic debris
	407	Tertiary fill of [410], firm mottled light brown – grey silt with occ charcoal
	408	Secondary fill of [410], soft dark brown silt with freq charcoal and some fired clay
	409	Primary fill of [410], firm dark grey clay with moderate charcoal
	410	Ditch cut, aligned NNW-SSE, U-shaped profile, sides sloping at 50° to concave base, 1.1m wide, 0.85m deep, squarish terminal to north
	411	Fill of [412], moderately compact, light brown-grey silty clay, few charcoal flecks
	412	Post-hole, ovoid 0.18 x 0.16m, 0.04m deep, bowl-shaped profile, truncated by machining
	413	Final fill of [410], soft grey-brown silt with moderate flecks of fired clay
	414	Compact yellow grey smooth silty clay associated with terrestrial layer (404), some Fe and Mn flecks
	415	Compacted mid – grey brown silty clay overlying northern end of spread (416), contains rare frags of fired clay and charcoal, poss derived from redeposition of (416)
	416	Spread of fired clay with some charcoal, probable dump of kiln debris, up to 0.15m thick, 3.6m long
	417	Alluvium overlying (416) and underlying (404), well compacted mid orange grey silty clay, very rare fired clay and Mn flecks
	418	Alluvium underlying (416), well compacted mid orange grey silty clay, very rare Mn flecks
	419	Ditch cut, 1.4m wide, 1.2m deep, aligned east-west, steep sloping sides to flat base
	420	Cancelled
	421	Ditch cut, aligned east-west, 4.6m wide with shallow sloping sides, not bottomed
5	501	Topsoil
	502	Subsoil
	503	Alluvium, light brown silty clay
	504	Terrestrial layer, dark grey brown silty clay with high organic content
	505	Alluvium, light grey brown silty sand
	506	Alluvium, light brown silty clay
	507	Same as (504)
6	601	Topsoil
	602	Subsoil
	603	Alluvium, light brown silty clay
	604	Terrestrial layer, dark brown organic silty clay
	605	Alluvium, light grey brown silty sand
	606	Alluvium, light grey brown clay



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Scale 1:1250

Fig. 1



Scale 1:1000

Fig. 2

Plan 1 – Trench 4



Continued above



Fig. 3

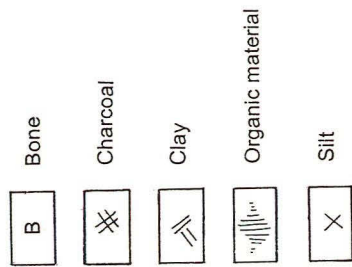
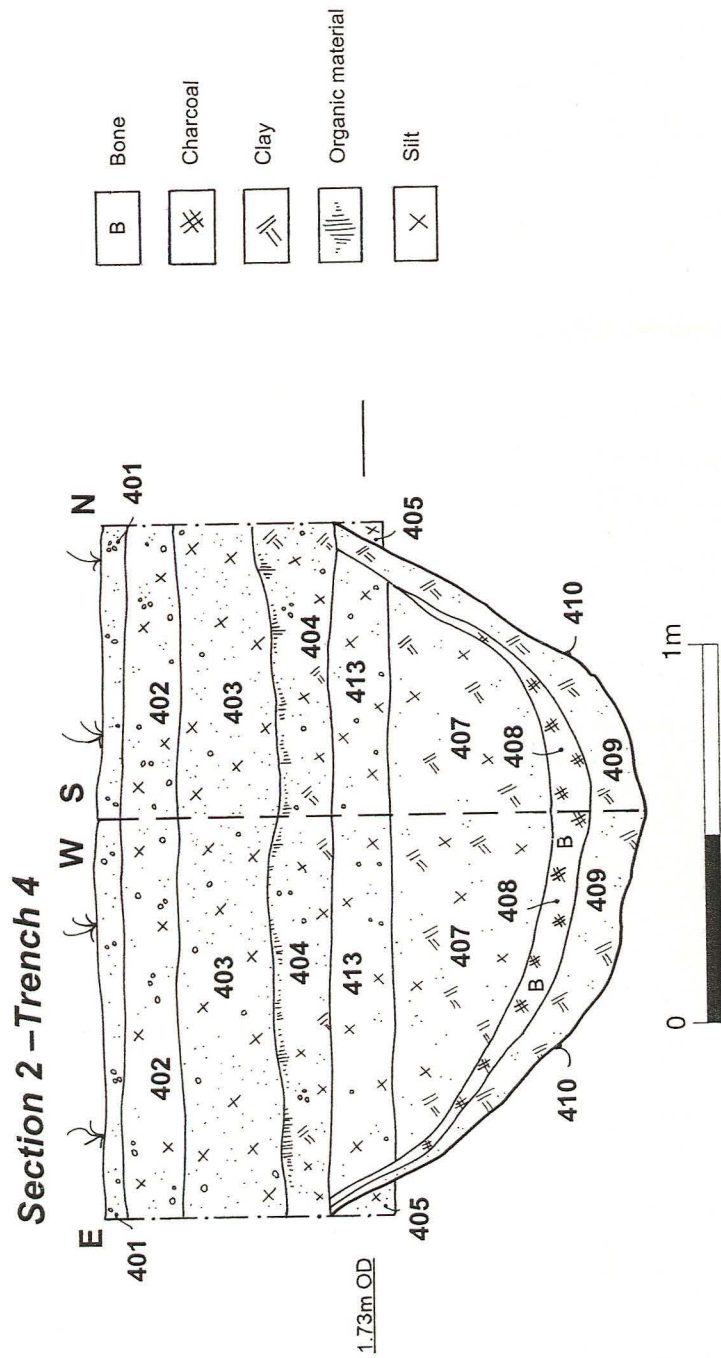
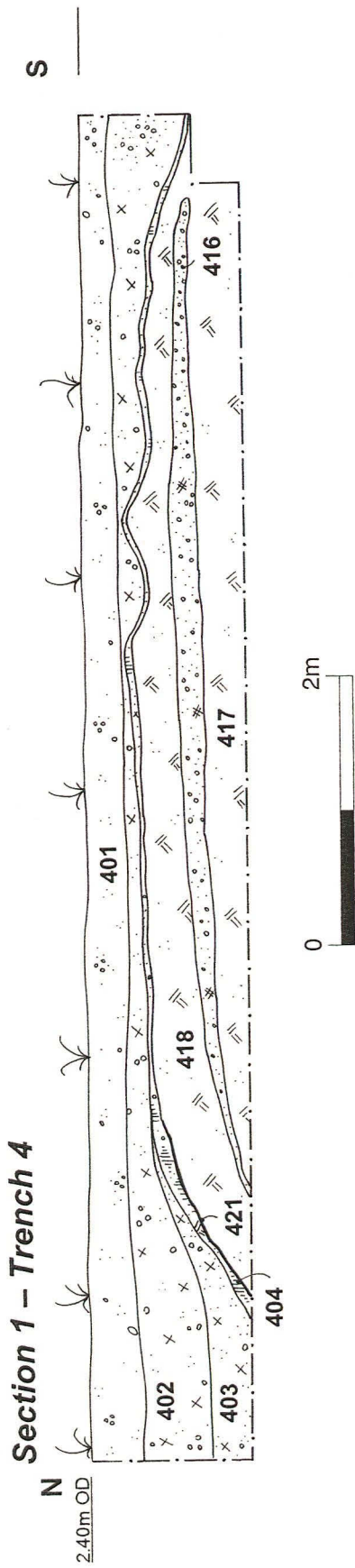


Fig. 4