



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Excavation of Enclosure 8

(Area 1) on Land at Redhouse Farm,

Adwick le Street, Doncaster,

South Yorkshire

2004

An Interim Report



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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS	4
3	FINDS	7

Figures

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Enclosures plan

Fig 3: Site plan

Plates

Frontispiece: Enclosure 8 looking south-east

Plate 1: Cow skeleton under excavation within the northern subsidiary enclosure

Plate 2: Beam slot structure located to the west of the track way

Plate 3: Stamped mortarium from the southern arm of Enclosure 8

Plate 4: Beehive quern top stone SF 45 (inverted) from a pit within western sub division of Enclosure 8

Plate 5: Brooch SF 43 from the south western corner of Enclosure 8

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION OF ENCLOSURE 8

(AREA 1) ON LAND AT REDHOUSE FARM,

ADWICK LE STREET, DONCASTER,

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

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AN INTERIM REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by Jacobs Babbie (formally Babbie Group) on behalf of Teesland Management Services Ltd, to carry out an excavation of Enclosure 8 (Area 1), Redhouse Farm, Adwick le Street, Doncaster South Yorkshire, during October-December 2004 (Figs 1, 2 & 3 NGR SE 526 089). The excavation works were carried out during October and November 2004.

This report forms an interim statement of the results of the excavation works.

Background information

The enclosure forms part of an archaeological landscape that has been subject to investigation over a period of 6 years, starting in 2000. A total of eight enclosures, or parts of enclosures, have been identified by a phased programme of geophysical surveys, set-piece excavations, strip-and-record and watching brief operations. The enclosures are linked to ditched features apparently forming elements of a co-axial field system. Although this system is fragmentary, enough survives to suggest linkages between some of the enclosures as a single agricultural landscape. The overall complex appears to have Iron Age origins, but is principally of Romano-British date.

Roman Ridge, a Roman road running on a high *agger* and designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, runs through the site. Enclosures 1 and 2 lie to the east of Roman Ridge, with Enclosures 3 to 8 to the west. A section of the Roman road has been excavated as part of this project, leading to the identification of a buried topsoil and relict agricultural features underlying the road.

2 SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

The area of excavation was characterised by a Romano-British sub-rectangular enclosure, linked to additional features forming a 'ladder-settlement' type arrangement aligned approximately north-south and apparent field boundary ditches running to the east and west. The central enclosure contained a number of discrete internal features, with smaller numbers of non-linear, discrete features distributed in other parts of the complex. The features were all cut into a surface of layered magnesian limestone natural, which had been truncated by ploughing causing the upper surface to fracture.

Much of the phasing remains tentative until the pottery is fully analysed and so only a broad outline is presented here.

Enclosure 8 (Fig 3)

The enclosure was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 35m east-west by 31m north-south. The ditches were rock-cut and V-shaped with a flat base, measuring up to 0.85m deep. The eastern quarter of the enclosure was completely subdivided by a north-south aligned gully. Part of the west side of the enclosure 'bulged' outwards to the west, and this area was partially sub divided by a north-south aligned gully.

Internal features

Within the southern half of the enclosure there were a number of shallow, small truncated pits and postholes which may relate to the footprints of at least two roundhouses.

In the north-eastern corner of the enclosure there was a small group of features, consisting of two circular pits measuring c1m in diameter by up to 0.7m deep and a rectangular pit 2.3m long by 1.3m wide, by 0.56m deep with postholes at three of the corners. Additional pit-groups lay in the north-western and south-eastern corners of the principal enclosure.

No discrete features were present within the eastern subdivision of the enclosure. The western sub-division of the enclosure contained four sub-rectangular pits.

Northern Subsidiary Enclosure

The western side of the principal enclosure was continued to the north by a broad ditch, running beyond the excavation area. This ditch appears to form a substantial land boundary running northwards, although the nature of land-use to the north (allotments) has meant that its course has not been traced further through aerial photography, geophysical surveys or trial trenching.

A smaller ditch branched from it to the east, and turned sharply to the south, forming a subsidiary enclosure measuring 27m east-west by 25m north-south. There are two breaks in the eastern arm of the ditch, allowing access/egress. The subsidiary enclosure was itself subdivided by an east-west gully, separating the southern third from the remainder; this gully terminated at both ends without intersecting the enclosure ditches. Within the enclosure were three sub rectangular pits. A complete cow skeleton was recovered from the ditch at the north western corner (Plate 1).



Plate 1 Cow skeleton under excavation within the northern subsidiary enclosure

‘Trackway’

A narrow ditch aligned approximately north-south followed a sinuous line approximately 5m to the west of, and parallel to, the west side of the principal enclosure, forming an arrangement resembling a trackway. This ditch terminated at a broad blocking feature aligned east-west some 4.5m north of the principal enclosure, intersecting with the major north-south boundary ditch referred to above. To the south it extended beyond the excavation area, well to the south of the principal enclosure. A second ditch branched from the south-east corner of the principal enclosure and ran southwards on a parallel course, forming the eastern side of the apparent trackway.

A shallow, elongated sub-rectangular pit lying within the trackway, adjacent to the

south-west corner of the principal enclosure, was possibly utilised as a blocking or control point.

Immediately to the west of the western trackway ditch, and outside any of the enclosures, was a four post structure *c*2.1m across. Four metres to the north of this three beam slots formed a similar sized structure (Plate 2).



Plate 2 Beam slot structure located to the west of the trackway

Southern Subsidiary Enclosure

A ditch branched to the south-east from the eastern side-ditch of the trackway, just within the southern extent of the excavation, while another ditch ran northwards from the southern edge of the excavation, terminating just short of the south side of the principal enclosure. These features appear to define a southern subsidiary enclosure measuring 27m east-west by *c*27m north-south, enclosed by ditches up to 0.8m deep. The north-west corner of this subsidiary enclosure was subdivided by a diagonally-placed gully.

Two small sub-rectangular post-pits measuring 0.95m by 1.1m by 0.35m deep were identified immediately to the east of where the southern ditch entered the southern baulk.

Other linear features

As outlined above, elements of the Enclosure 8 complex run beyond the excavation area to both north and south. In addition, small ditches run to both the east and west from points adjacent to the enclosure complex, in both cases terminating just short of an intersection with Enclosure 8. The ditch running westwards appears to link the Enclosure 8 complex to a section of co-axial field system lying some 200m further west and incorporating Enclosure 7; this field system lies on an alignment consistent to that of the Enclosure 8 group.

Excavation method

Sections were excavated through all of the ditches along the mid points of the sides of the enclosures, at the corners, the terminals and the intersections. All of the pits and postholes were half sectioned.

At the end of the excavation the outer ditch of the principal enclosure was fully excavated by a machine using a toothed bucket and the resulting spoil was searched to recover the maximum amount of pottery for dating purposes.

3 FINDS

Pottery

In terms of pottery the site produced 12,269 grams of pottery consisting of predominantly Romano-British grey wares, with small percentages of red oxidised wares and black burnished wares. Also present is a stamped rim and spout of a buff fabric mortarium (Plate 3). The assemblage has been provisionally characterised as being mainly of 1st to 2nd century AD date.



Plate 3 Stamped mortarium from the southern arm of Enclosure 8

Animal Bone

Three archive boxes of animal bone were also recovered from the site, predominantly consisting of cattle bones and pig bones, with other species which require further analysis.

Small finds

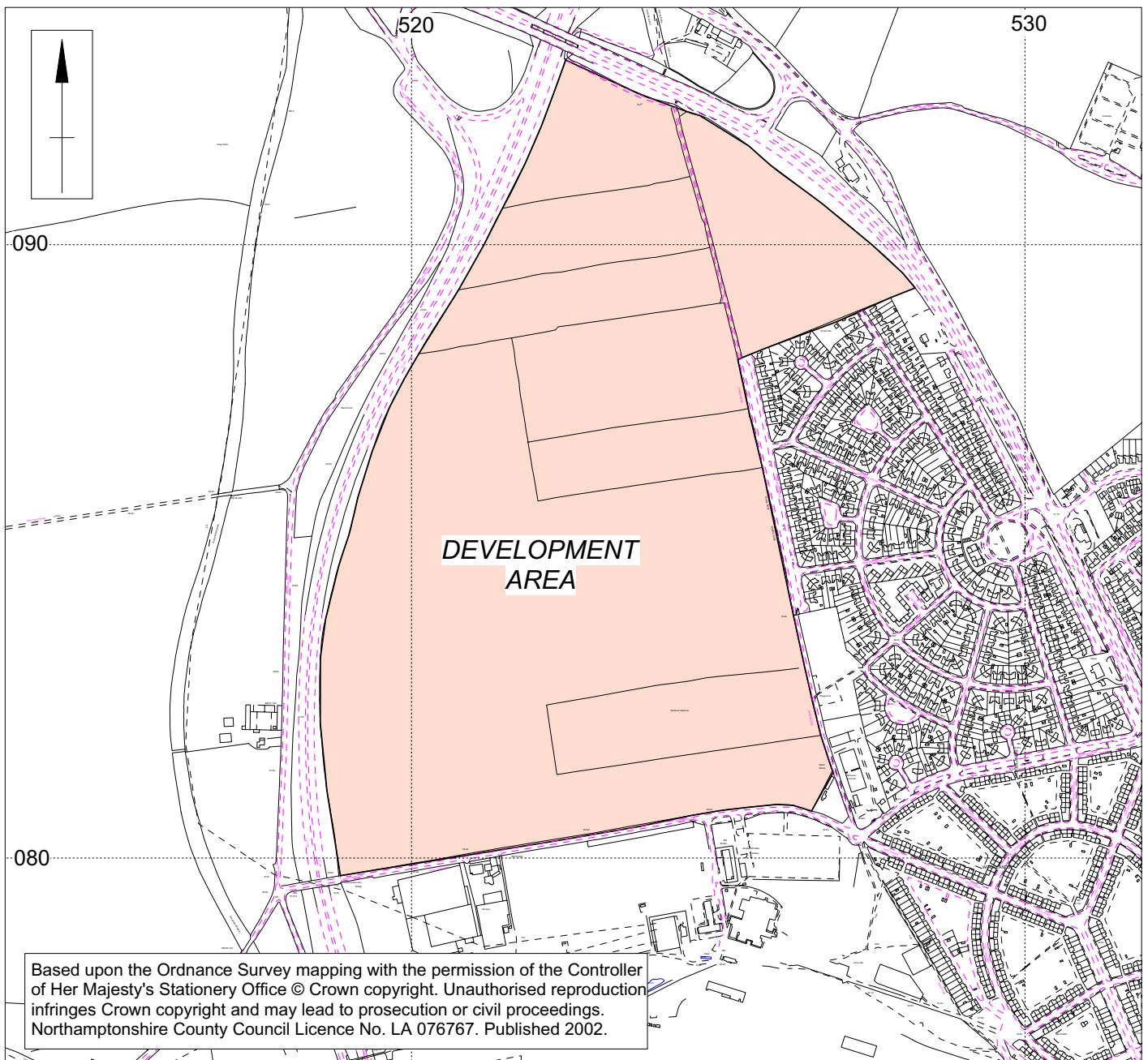
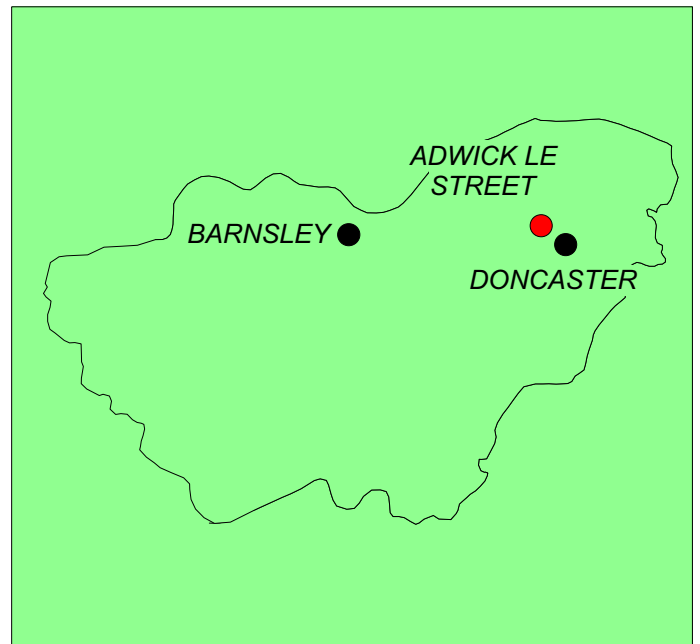
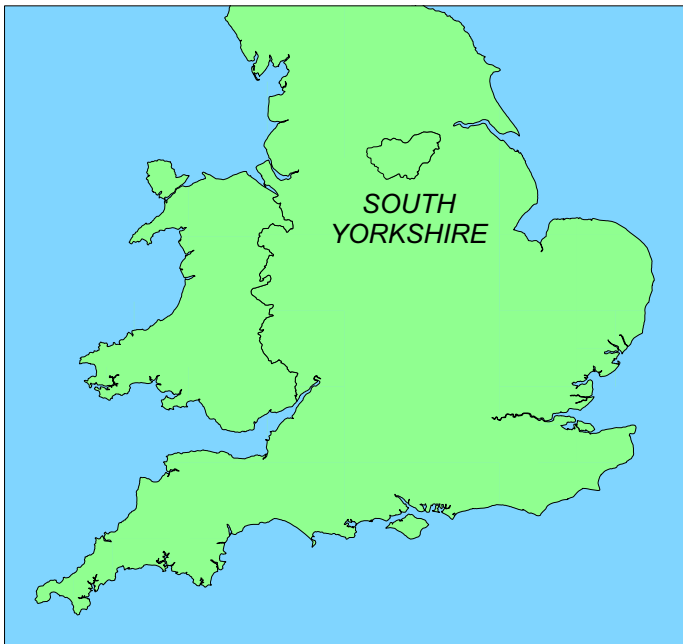
The site produced five small finds. Three of these were fragments of beehive quern (Plate 4); one was a small fragment of possible Roman window glass; and one was a brooch complete with its pin (Plate 5).



Plate 4 Beehive quern top stone SF 45 (inverted) from a pit within western sub division of Enclosure 8

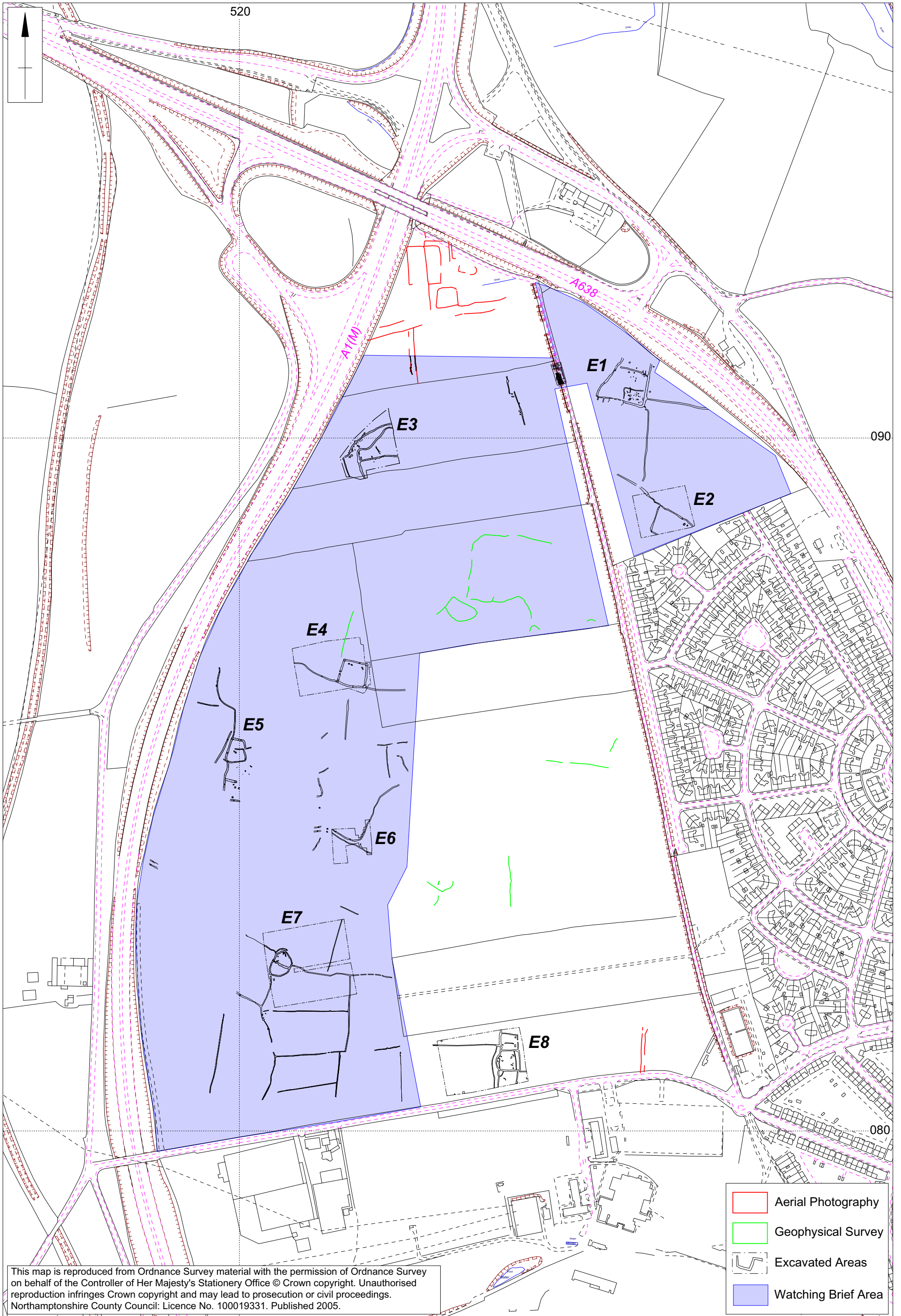


Plate 5 Brooch SF 43 from the south western corner of Enclosure 8



Scale = 1:1000

Fig. 1



- Aerial Photography
- Geophysical Survey
- Excavated Areas
- Watching Brief Area

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Scale 1:5000



Enclosure 8 general plan Fig 3