



Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Yarmouth Road Blofield, Norfolk October 2015

Report No. 16/8

Author: Gemma Hewitt

Illustrator: James Ladocha



Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Yarmouth Road Blofield, Norfolk October 2015

Project Code: ENF139005

Report No. 16/8

Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1		P Chapman	M Holmes	A Chapman	Draft for client review

Author: Gemma Hewitt

Illustrator: James Ladocha

© MOLA Northampton 2016

MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 809800
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk

STAFF

Project Manager: Jim Brown BSc PGDip MCIfA

Text: Gemma Hewitt BA

Fieldwork: Gemma Hewitt
Ryszard Molenda
Kathrin Winzer

Illustrations: James Ladocha BA

Pottery: Anna Doherty BA MA

Roman ceramic tile: Pat Chapman BA ACIfA

Quern and millstones: Andy Chapman BSc MCIfA FSA

Animal bone: Rebecca Gordon BSc MSc

Environmental evidence: Val Fryer BA MCIfA

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort-238017	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Yarmouth Road, Blofield, Norfolk		
Short description	MOLA Northampton was commissioned to carry out an evaluation on land at Yarmouth Road, Blofield. Eleven trenches were excavated; nine trenches contained features of archaeological interest, these included three possible quarry pits, Roman boundary and drainage ditches and a Roman pit.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site Status			
Previous work	Geophysical survey (ASDU 2012), Desk-based assessment (Gailey 2014)		
Current land use	Arable		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	late Bronze Age and Roman		
Significant finds	Pottery		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Norfolk		
Site address	Yarmouth Road, Blofield		
Post code	N/A		
OS co-ordinates	NGR TG 3404 0972		
Area (sq m/ha)	3.6 ha		
Height aOD	20-25 aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Norfolk County Council		
Project Design originator	Kier Living		
Director/Supervisor	Gemma Hewitt		
Project Managers	Mark Holmes		
Sponsor or funding body	Kier Living		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	19/10/2015		
End date	23/10/2015		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	MOLA Northampton store ENF139005	Pottery, millstone, quern, animal teeth, tile, flots	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Survey data, report, photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at Yarmouth Road ,Blofield, Norfolk, October 2015		
Serial title & volume	16/8		
Author(s)	Gemma Hewitt		
Page numbers	27		
Date	23 /10/2015		

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	
2	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	
4	HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	
5	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	
6	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE	
6.1	Trench 1	
6.2	Trench 2	
6.3	Trench 3	
6.4	Trench 4	
6.5	Trench 5	
6.6	Trench 6	
6.7	Trench 7	
6.8	Trench 8	
6.9	Trench 9 and 10	
6.10	Trench 11	
7	THE FINDS and ENVIROMENTAL EVIDENCE	
7.1	The prehistoric and Roman pottery	by Anna Doherty
7.2	Roman ceramic tile	by Pat Chapman
7.3	Millstone	by Andy Chapman
7.4	The animal bone	by Rebecca Gordon
7.5	Environmental evidence	by Val Fryer
8	CONCLUSION	
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	
	APPENDIX : CONTEXT INVENTORY	

Figures

Front cover:	The site at Yarmouth Road
Fig 1:	Site location
Fig 2:	Trench locations with features
Fig 3:	Trench 1, ditch [109], looking south
Fig 4:	Plan of trenches 1-6
Fig 5:	Sections from trenches 1-6
Fig 6:	Trench 2, ditch [206], looking south-west
Fig 7:	Trench 2, quarry pit [207], looking south-west
Fig 8:	Trench 3, ditch [305], looking south
Fig 9:	Trench 4, ditch [408], looking south-west
Fig 10:	Trench 6, ditch [605], looking south-west
Fig 11:	Trench 7, ditch [705], looking north-east
Fig 12:	Trench 7, ditch [712], looking west
Fig 13:	Trench 8, posthole [808], looking west
Fig 14:	Trench 8, ditch [805], looking north-west
Fig 15:	Trench 8, pit [815] pre-excavation, looking south-west
Fig 16:	Trench 8, pit [815] post-excavation, looking south-west
Fig 17:	Trench 10 showing modern backfill layer, looking north-east
Fig 18:	Trench 11, ditch [1105], looking west
Fig 19:	Plan of Trenches 7, 8 and 11
Fig 20:	Sections from trenches 7, 8 and 11

Tables

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context

Table 2: Charred plant macrofossils and other remains

Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Yarmouth Road, Blofield, Norfolk October 2015

Abstract

MOLA Northampton was commissioned to carry out an evaluation on land at Yarmouth Road, Blofield. Eleven trenches were excavated; nine trenches contained features of archaeological interest, these included three possible quarry pits, Roman boundary and drainage ditches and a Roman pit.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Kier Living Ltd to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Yarmouth Road, Blofield, Norfolk (NGR TG 3404 0972; Fig 1). This was undertaken in advance of proposed development on the site, comprising the development of up to 75 residential units, associated access, public open space and a community facility (Planning applications: 20121587, 20150700).

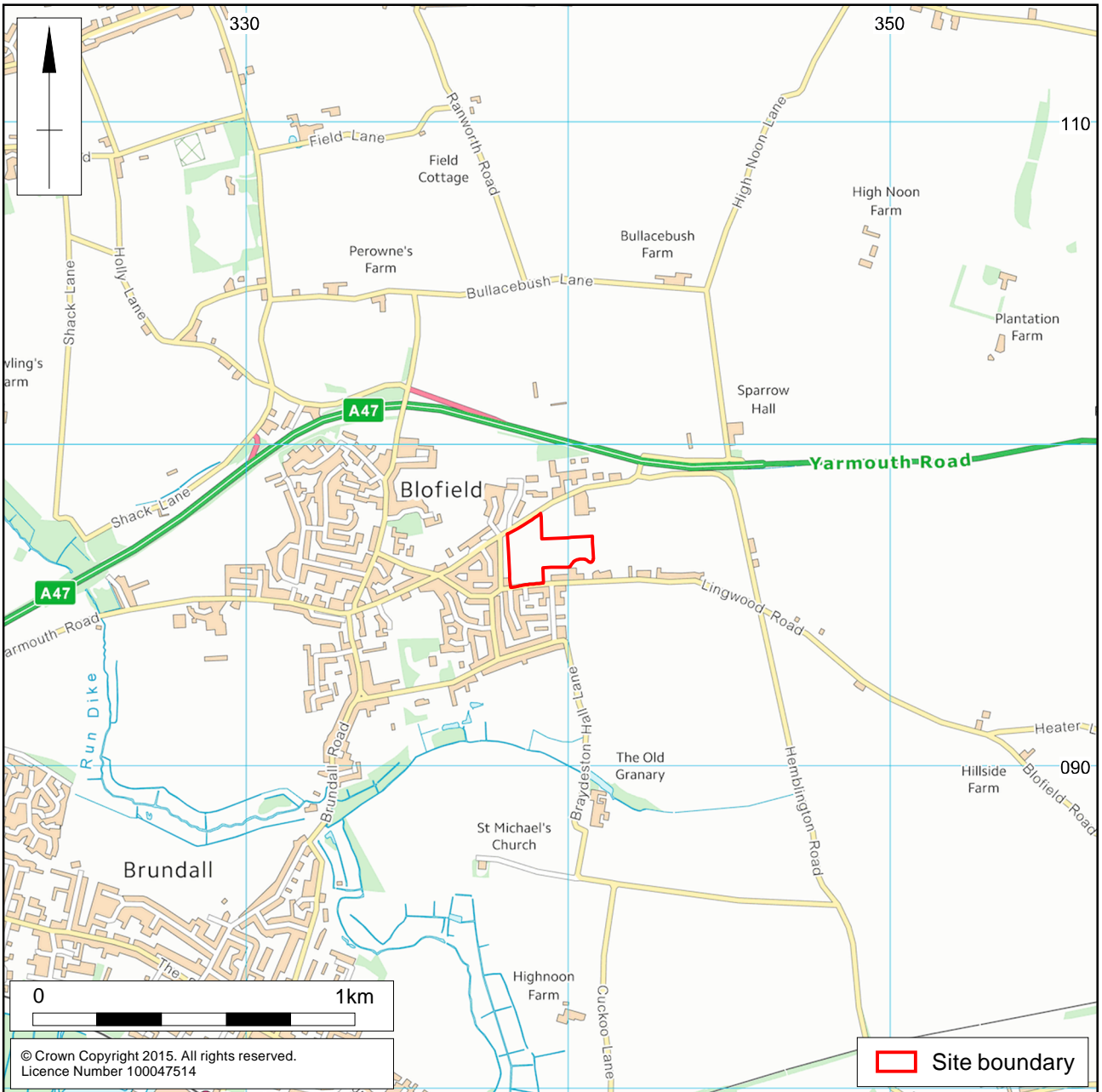
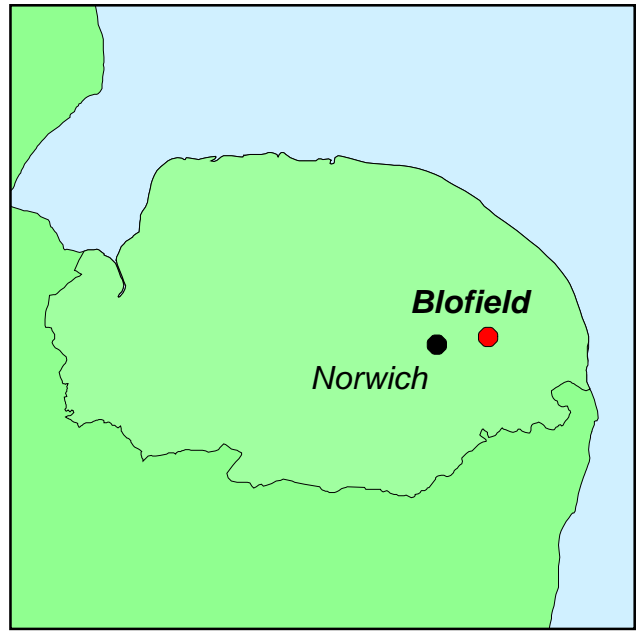
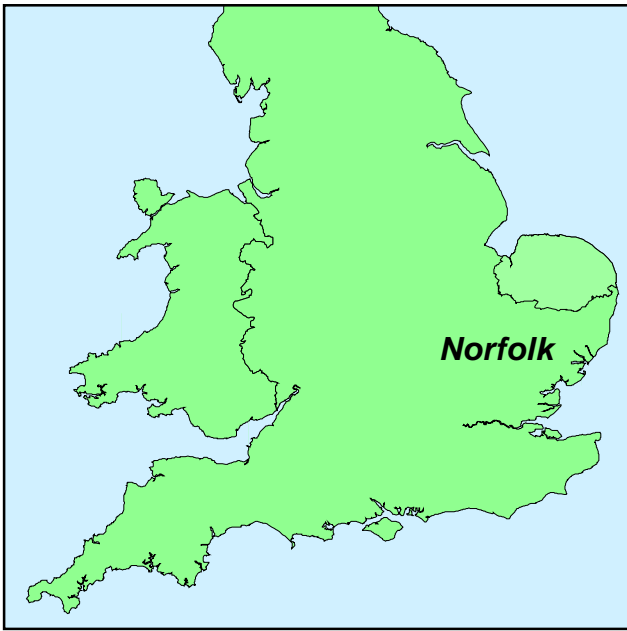
All archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012), and following an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (*MOLA 2015*). MOLA is a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) registered organisation, and all works were undertaken according to the CIfA's *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014b), the Historic England procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (HE 2015), and with regional guidelines (Gurney 2003 and NM 2015). The site has been given the accession number ENF139005 to enable deposition of the site archive with Norfolk Museums at the end of the project.

2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The proposed development area comprises 3.6ha of arable farmland on the eastern edge of Blofield. It is bounded to the north by Yarmouth Road, agricultural fields and an industrial unit. The southern boundary is formed by Lingwood Road and a number of houses. The western boundary is formed by a small strip of land and Fox Lane, and to the east lie further agricultural lands and a single property.

Topographically the site falls slightly from the north from 25m to 20m aOD to the south.

The underlying geology is mapped as Quaternary period Crag Group sand and gravel. This is overlain by superficial bands of Happisburgh Glacigenic Formation, with diamicton to the south and sand to the north of the site (BGS 2015). Soil in this area comprises mainly Wick 2 glaciofluvial and aeolian drift and till, which are deep, well-drained coarse loamy soils. A band of Hanworth aeolian drift and peat may be encountered in the lower area to the south (LAT 1983).



Scale 1:20,000

Site location Fig 1

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to examine the archaeological resource within the proposed development area the objectives of the evaluation were to establish:

- Establish the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- Establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- Determine the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- Establish the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- Examine the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains, and;
- Inform any future excavation or mitigation strategy.

The project will address the research aims contained within regional research guidelines *A Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011) as appropriate.

4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A desk-based assessment was undertaken in 2014 by CgMs Consulting, which included a search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) for Norfolk (Gailey 2014). The following historical background is drawn from this survey. There are no known monuments or designated heritage assets within the study area, and a geophysical survey undertaken in 2012 produced no evidence for archaeological features, beyond field boundaries, across the site (ASDU 2012).

A Neolithic flint axe was found 100m to the south of the site (HER10255), and further afield, a polished Neolithic stone axe was recovered 750m to the south-east (HER10258). Other finds of Neolithic date were recovered from a site 500m away near the River Witton, including arrowheads, a pick, and pottery fragments (HER17120). Cropmarks and aerial photography (HER12781, HER12782, HER12783 and HER49570) have identified a possible Bronze Age barrow cemetery 400m to the south-east of the site.

Cropmarks observed from aerial photographs of the area have suggested a number of possible Iron Age or Roman enclosures. Approximately 1km from the site a D-shaped enclosure can be seen (HER45150), and to the south-east a further two enclosures (HER49569). A Roman enclosure was recorded during trial trenching at a site 900m to the west of the study site.

Blofield was recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 under the name *Blafelda* and the settlement was believed to have been centred on the Norman church 500m to the southwest of the site. Cropmarks also suggest a possible Anglo- Saxon sunken featured building 500m south west of the site.

Towards the south-west lay a medieval moated manor (HER12445), which is believed to be the focus of the latter settlement, and belonged to the bishops of Norfolk.

Evidence of this possible medieval settlement was suggested by finds made during previous trenching to the west of the site on Yarmouth Road.

Bryant's map of 1826 shows that two buildings stood on the east side of the site at this time, but they were demolished before the first edition Ordnance Survey map was made in 1881. The Ordnance Survey map shows that the east fields had internal divisions as well as a trackway aligned north to south through the eastern field (Gailey 2014). Throughout the 20th century, much of the eastern area of the site was under orchard. There are four Listed Buildings near the site: the Church of St Andrew and St Peter, the House at Owls Barn and Owls Barn (Grade II Listed, HER1372653 and 1304603) to the south-east of site, and Turrett House (Grade II Listed, HER1051518) to the east of the site.

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A programme of evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (MOLA 2015). This required the excavation of eleven trenches to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains, and to target anomalies identified by the geophysical survey (ASDU 2012) within the development area. Ten trial trenches were 50m long by 2m wide, and one was 25m long by 2m wide.

All trenches were set out using differential GPS (Leica Viva) operating to an accuracy of +/- 0.05m. The topsoil, subsoil and non-structural post-medieval and later deposits were removed by mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, to reveal significant archaeological remains or where these were absent, the natural substrate. All work was carried out under archaeological supervision by a suitably qualified archaeologist

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines and all records were created using MOLA Northampton *pro-forma* context recording sheets (MOLA 2014). Photographs were taken of all trenches and all relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film and high resolution digital images. Work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014b).

The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural geological horizon or the upper archaeological levels, whichever was the highest. Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches and excavated features using a dumpy level and related to temporary benchmarks established using Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS). Artefacts were recovered from individual contexts and stored and packed according to type. All excavated areas and spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

The site record will be prepared for archive deposition in accordance relevant county guidelines (NM 2015), as well as with Walker (1990), Brown (2011), CIfA (2014c) and the MGC (1992). Any material requiring special curation will be handled under the recognised guidelines (Watkinson and Neal 2001).

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

Archaeological features were recorded in nine of the eleven excavated trenches (Trenches 1-8 and 11). Unless otherwise stated, all recorded features cut the natural horizon and were sealed by subsoil. The natural substrate across the majority of the site comprised orange sand with flint. The subsoil was light to medium orange-brown sandy clay between 0.10m and 0.40m deep, sealed by a topsoil of mid-brown friable silty clay between 0.30m and 0.60m thick. Full context information is included in the appendix.

6.1 Trench 1

This trench was located on the northern edge of the western field of the development area, aligned north-east to south-west (Fig 2).

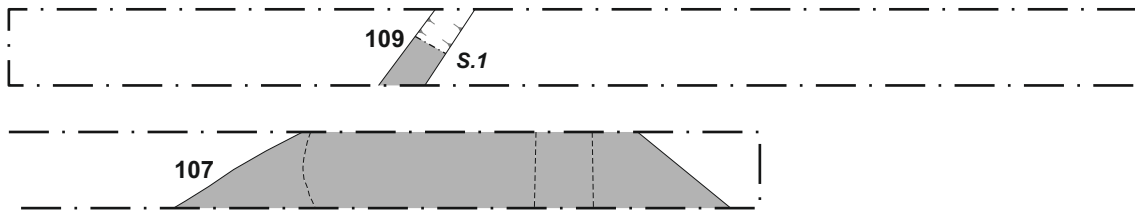
Ditch [109] lay towards the southern end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east. It had a shallow profile with gently sloping sides, 0.90m wide and 0.11m deep (Figs 3, 4, and 5, section 1). The fill (108) was loose, greyish- brown silty clay. One sherd of post-medieval pottery from the fill was not retained.



Trench 1, ditch [109], looking south Fig 3

At the northern end of the trench was a possible quarry pit [107]. This was 15m wide and 1.7m deep (Fig 4). The basal fill (106) was light brown silty clay with 30% charcoal flecks; this was overlain by a fill of light brown silty clay with 30% flecks of charcoal (103). Although the geophysical survey showed areas of magnetic anomaly along the edge of the roadway, the quarry pit in Trench 1 did not appear to correlate with any identified anomaly.

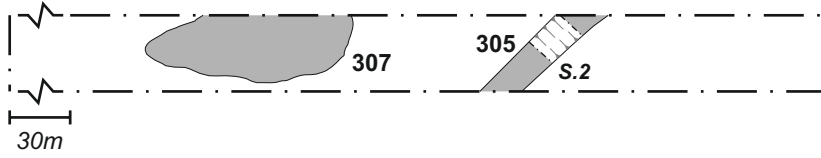
Trench 1 ↗



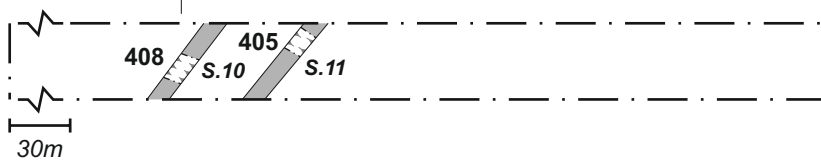
Trench 2 ↖



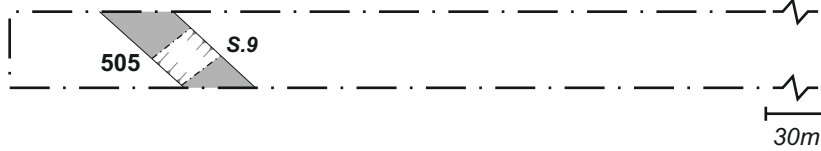
Trench 3 ↗



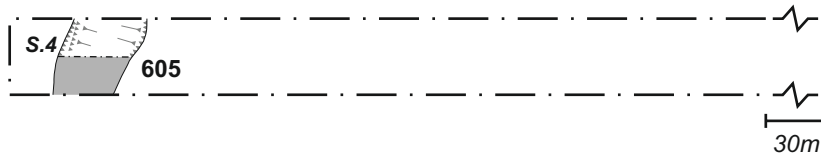
Trench 4 ↑

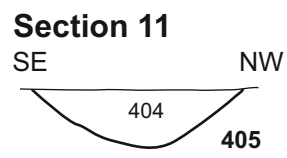
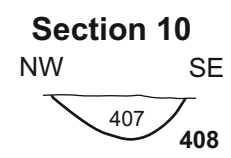
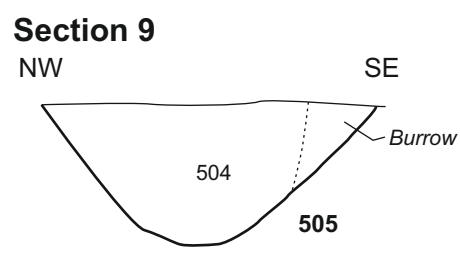
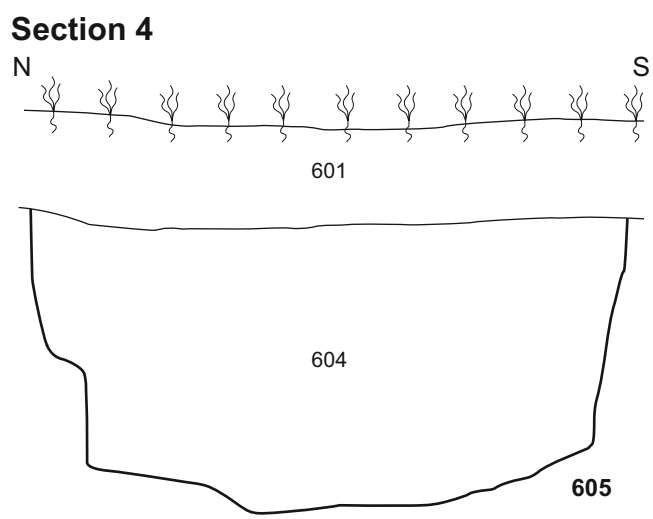
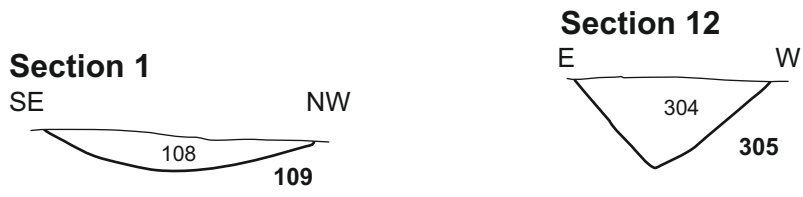


Trench 5 →



Trench 6 →





Scale 1:25

Sections from trenches 1-6 Fig 5

6.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was located in the north-west corner of the development area, aligned north-west to south-east (Fig 2). Ditch [206] lay towards the southern end of the trench, and was aligned north-east to south-west. It had shallow, gently sloping sides, 0.90m wide and 0.28m deep, with a rounded base (Figs 4 and 6). The fill (205) was loose, grey-brown silty clay.



Trench 2, ditch [206], looking south-west Fig 6

At the north end of the trench was another quarry pit [207], which extended 21m to the south. The depth of the pit may have been in excess of 1.7m. The fill was similar to that from quarry pit [107], comprising light brown silty clay with charcoal (203) (Figs 4 and 7). This feature was identified through the geophysical survey (ASDU 2012).



Trench 2, quarry pit [207], looking south-west Fig 7

6.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the north part of the west field of the development area, aligned north-east to south-west (Fig 2).

Ditch [305] lay towards the northern end of the trench and was aligned north-east to south-west. It had a V-shaped profile, 0.66 wide by 0.30m deep, with a pointed base (Figs 4, 5 section 12, and 8). The fill (304) was loose, light grey silty sand with <1% charcoal flecks.



Trench 3, ditch [305], looking south Fig 8

A quarry pit was situated at the north end of the trench [307]. It extended 5.5m to the south, and was at least 1.0m deep. It was filled by light grey silty sand (306). As with the quarry pit [107], this feature was not apparent on the geophysical survey plot.

6.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was situated in the centre of the west field, and aligned east to west (Fig 2).

Two small ditches were located towards the east end of the ditch, both parallel and aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch [405] had gently curving sides, 0.71m wide by 0.19m deep, with a rounded base (Figs 4, and 5 section 11). The fill (404) was friable light grey silty sand with 5% charcoal. Sherds of earlier Roman pottery (c. AD50-150) were recovered from the fill, which may be a broken cremation vessel (406). Small fragments of burnt bone were present in the soil around the vessel and have left *in situ*. Ditch [408] was parallel to [405], 2.0m to the west. It had gently sloping sides, 0.45m wide by 0.15m deep (Figs 4, 5 section 10, Fig 9). The fill (407) was equivalent to the fill of (404) but contained no pottery.



Trench 4, ditch [408], looking south-west Fig 9

6.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was situated on the west edge of the western field, aligned north-west to south-west (Fig 2). Ditch [505] at the southern end of the trench, was aligned north-east to south-west. It had a U-shaped profile, 0.55m wide by 0.22m deep (Figs 4, 5 section 9). The trench was filled by light grey-brown silty sand (504). The ditch had been partially disturbed by an animal burrow on the east side.

6.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned north-west to south-east at the southern end of the west field (Fig 2). Ditch [605] was in the far south of the trench, aligned north-west to south-east, and is shown on the geophysical survey (ASDU 2012). It had irregular sides, 2.0m wide by 0.75m deep (Figs 4, 5 section 4, and 10). The fill (604) was light-brown silty clay with orange sandy patches.

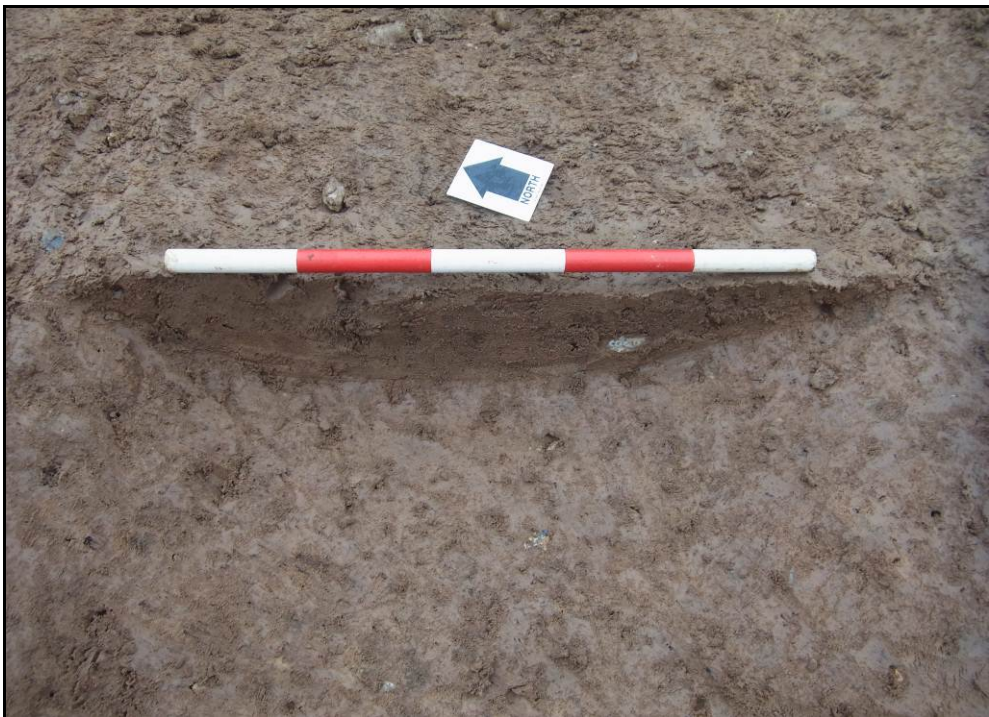
6.7 Trench 7

Trench 7 was situated in the south-east corner of the west field, aligned north-south (Fig 2). Ditch [705] crossed the north of the trench, aligned east-west. It had irregular shaped sides, 1.80m wide by 0.20m deep (Figs 11, 19, and 20 section 3) and contained fill (704) a light brown silty clay, with early Roman pottery (Fig 12).

Ditch [708] was 1.0m north of ditch [705] and also aligned east-west. It had irregular edges 1.10m wide by 0.20m deep. The basal fill (706) was light brown silty clay with orange patches, while the upper fill was light brown sandy clay with flecks of chalk (707).



Trench 6, ditch [605] looking south-west Fig 10



Trench 7, ditch [705] looking north-east Fig 11

Ditch [710] was located towards the southern end of the trench and was aligned east-west. It was parallel to ditch [712], and the two features may correlate with a double-ditched linear feature identified on the geophysical survey (ASDU 2012). Ditch [710] had gently sloping sides 1.0m wide by 0.2m deep (Figs 19, and 20 section 14), and was filled with mid brown and orange silty clay with some mixed flint (709).

The second small parallel ditch, [712], was situated just to the south of [710], on a similar alignment. It had an irregular profile, 0.80m wide and 0.30m deep (Figs 12, 19, and 20 section 14). The basal fill (711) was dark grey-brown silty clay, sealed by fill (709), as above.



Trench 7, ditch [712] looking west Fig 12

6.8 Trench 8

Trench 8 was located in the west of the central field, aligned north-west to south-east. A feature crossing the centre of the trench on a north-south alignment was identified as a modern hedgeline. This feature was seen on the geophysical survey plot (ASDU 2012), as well as the 1845 Tithe Map and first edition Ordnance Survey map (1881). A similar hedgeline was also seen in the northern end of Trench 11.

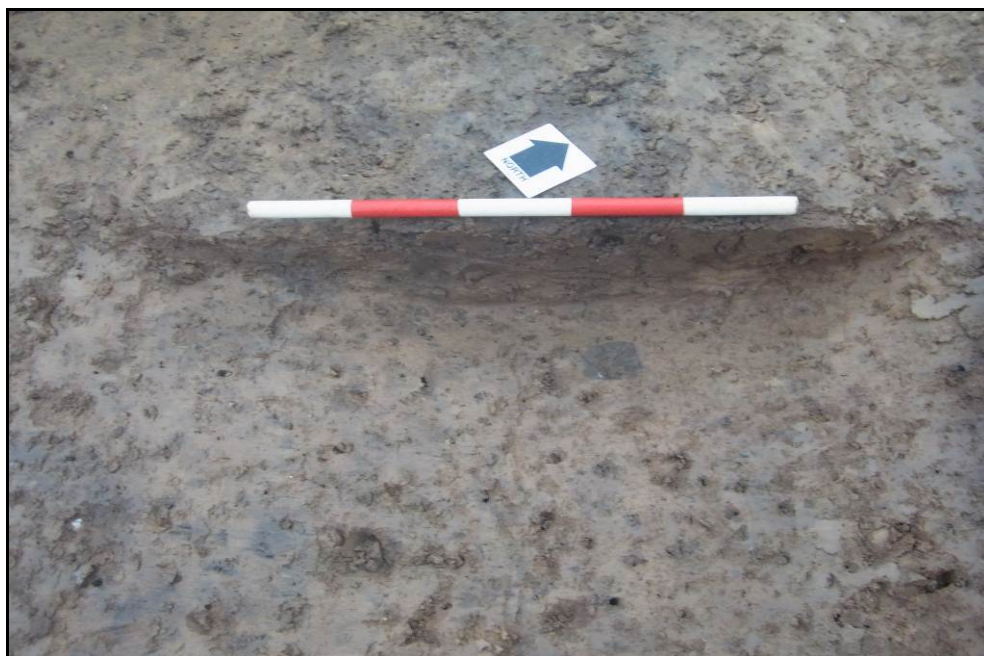
Ditch [810] was located towards the northern end of the trench, aligned north-east to south-west. It had steep sloping sides, 0.70m wide by 0.13m deep, with a flat base (Figs 19, and 20 section 13). The fill (809) was light grey-brown silty sand.

Posthole [808] was located between ditches [810] and [805]. It had gently sloping sides, 0.42m wide by 0.15m deep, with a rounded base (Figs 13, 19, and 20 section 7). A layer of light grey-brown sand backfill (807), was present on the southern side of the posthole; the rest of the posthole was filled with (806) a light grey silty sand with <1% charcoal flecks. It is possible that this is a modern feature associated with the tree nursery which formerly stood on the site.



Trench 8, posthole [808] looking west Fig 13

Ditch [805] was located in the centre of the trench and was aligned north-east to south-west. The shallow ditch had gently curving sides, 0.9m wide by 0.12m deep, with a rounded base (Figs 14, 19, and 20 section 6). The fill comprised dark brown silty sand (804). Three sherds of prehistoric pottery was recovered, dating to the early-middle Iron Age.



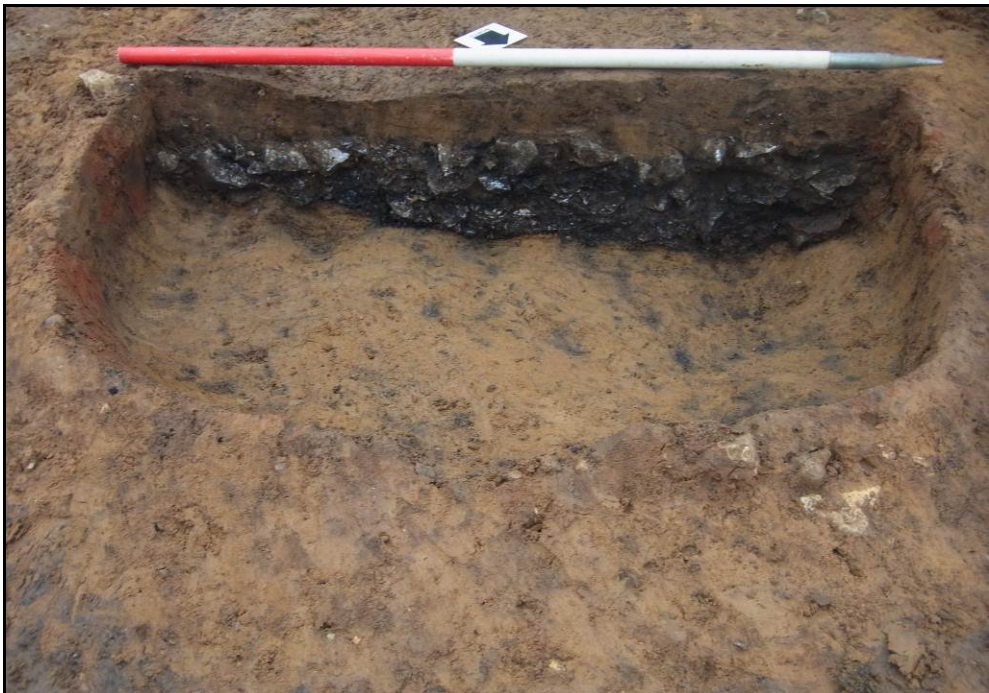
Trench 8, ditch [805] looking north-west Fig 14

Ditch [812] was located towards the southern end of the trench and was slightly curvilinear, aligned north-east to south-west. It had gently sloping sides 0.65m wide by 0.18m deep, with a rounded base (Figs 19, and 20 section 8). It was filled by light grey silty sand (811).

Pit [815] was located just to the north of ditch [812]. The pit was rectangular with rounded corners, 1.10m wide and 0.31m deep, with straight sides and a flat base (Figs 15, 16, 19, and 20 section 16). The fill was a very dark grey, almost black, silty sand with 90% mixed burnt flints, and large chunks of charcoal around 0.30m wide (814). A few fragments of Roman roof tile and a fragment of millstone were recovered from the fill. The discolouration of the profile of the pit suggests that the fill was still hot when it came into contact with the natural. The burnt fill was sealed by fill (813), which comprised dark grey silty sand with 30% charcoal flecks, and one sherd of late Bronze Age pottery, which is possible residual from earlier activity in the area.



Trench 8, pit [815] pre-excitation, looking south-west Fig 15



Trench 8, pit [815] post-excitation, looking south-west Fig 16

6.9 Trenches 9 and 10

Trench 9 was situated in the east of the central field, aligned north-east by south-west. It contained no features of archaeological interest.

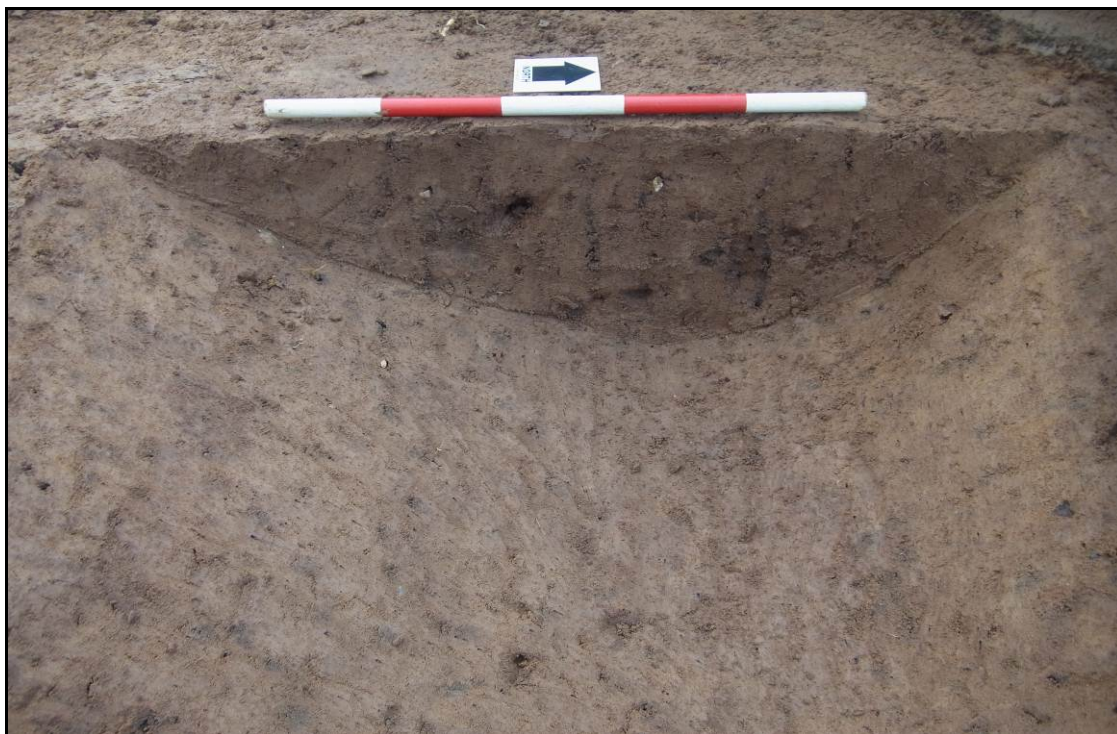
Trench 10 was excavated on the west edge of the eastern field. It was 25m long, and aligned north-east to south-west. Trench 10 had been positioned to target a number of geophysical anomalies identified during the survey (ASDU 2012). However, the anomalies were shown to have been caused by an area of disturbance comprising modern backfill, demolition waste, plastic and asbestos. Due to the nature of the fill, the trench was recorded via photographs, and backfilled (Fig 17).



Trench 10 showing modern backfill layer, looking north-east Fig 17

6.10 Trench 11

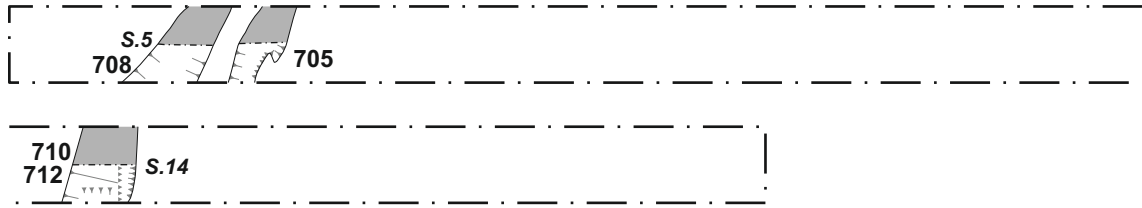
Trench 11 was situated on the east edge of the eastern field, aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch [1105] was located towards the southern end of the Trench, aligned south-east to north-west. It had steep sloping sides in a V-shaped profile 0.85m wide and 0.25m deep (Figs 18, 19, and 20 section 15). The fill was light brown-orange silty clay.



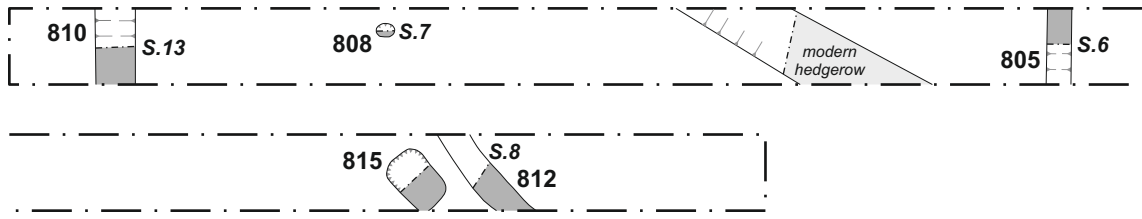
Trench 11, ditch [1105] looking west Fig 18

Trench 11 also produced the remains of a former trackway, of modern date, towards the northern end of the trench. In addition, the line of a former hedgerow crossed the centre of the trench, aligned north-south. As in Trench 8, this feature was recognised during the geophysical survey (ASDU 2012), and depicted on the Tithe Map of the area (1845).

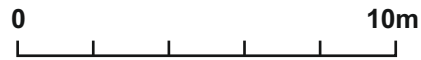
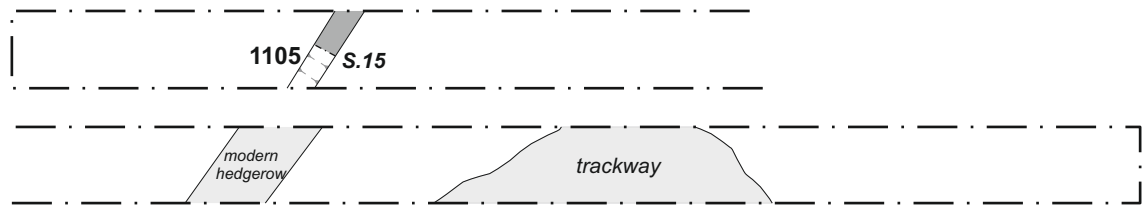
Trench 7



Trench 8



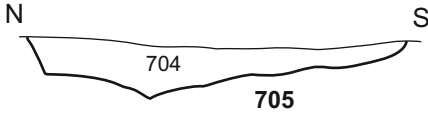
Trench 11



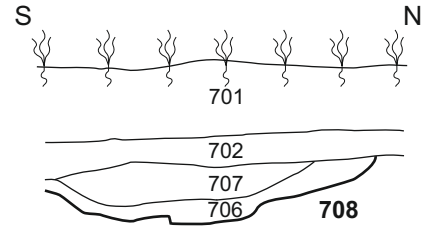
Scale 1:200

Plan of Trenches 7, 8 and 11 Fig 19

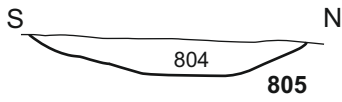
Section 3



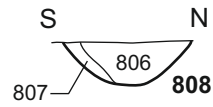
Section 5



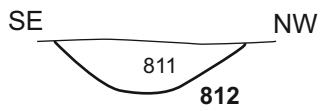
Section 6



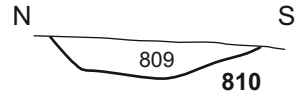
Section 7



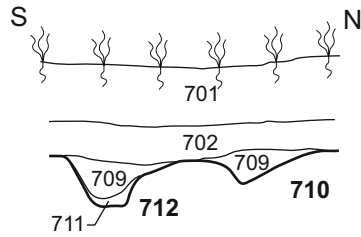
Section 8



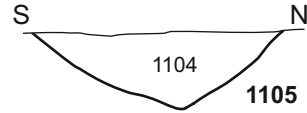
Section 13



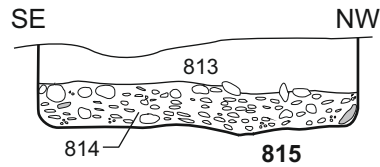
Section 14



Section 15



Section 16



7 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 The prehistoric and Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty

A small assemblage of prehistoric and Roman pottery was recovered from the site, totalling 43 sherds, weighing 497g.

Probably the earliest fragment is a small, highly-abraded bodysherd from the more sterile upper fill, (813), of burnt pit [815]. The fabric contains sparse to moderate, moderately-sorted angular flint of 0.5-2.5mm set within a slightly silty and micaceous matrix. It is difficult to date isolated flint-tempered sherds with certainty because this temper type is widespread across most pottery producing prehistoric periods; however, the size and sorting of the inclusions, together with the lack of coarse quartz is most suggestive of one of two specific periods: The Early Neolithic (c.3700-3300BC) or the Late Bronze (c.1150-800BC).

Three flint-tempered sherds of quite different character, all from the same vessel, were noted in fill (805) of ditch [806]. These contain moderate quantities of slightly ill-sorted flint (most of 0.2-1.5mm with some up to 3mm) in a very silty matrix with sparse larger quartz grains of up to 0.8mm. Again, these are not diagnostic enough to provide concrete dating evidence but the sandier nature of the matrix together with the fact that these sherds are much better-fired, suggests that they are probably of Iron Age date. Flint-tempered wares are also known to have become rapidly much less common after the start of the Middle Iron Age in East Anglia so the most likely date range is probably c.800-300BC.

Roman pottery was recovered from two features. Ditch [408] contained a possible cremation in its upper fill. Fill (407) also contained 15 sherds of pottery, weighing 309g. The sherds do not cross-fit but are probably mostly from a single vessel in a fairly fine sandy micaceous grey ware of probable local manufacture. All of the sherds are probably from the upper body area and represent up to a quarter of the complete vessel. They include a partial rim showing a necked jar profile and several shoulder sherds with burnished lattice decoration. The vessel is not closely datable but it is likely broadly to belong to the earlier Roman period (c.AD50-150). The environmental sample produced a single bodysherd from a different vessel in a similar black-surfaced sandy micaceous fabric. It is unclear whether the main vessel was deliberately placed as part of a burial rite because it is very incomplete and grey ware jars are more typically used as cinerary urns rather than as accessory vessels in funerary contexts.

Fill (704) of irregular ditch [705] also contained a number of sherds from a similar, though undecorated, necked jar in fairly fine sandy micaceous fabric. Alongside these were two sherds in a much coarser low-fired grey ware containing rare coarse flint and quartz/quartz-rich inclusions of up to 2mm. This latter fabric seems quite typical of fairly early Roman grey wares still containing an element of tempering. However, otherwise this group is undiagnostic and, like (407) can probably only be broadly placed in the earlier Roman period.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (g) of sherds per context

Trench	Fill/cut	Sherd no	Wt (g)	Spot-date
4	407 ditch 405	15	309	Early Roman c.AD50-150
7	704 ditch 705	24	171	Early Roman c.AD50-150
8	804 ditch 805	3	14	MIA c.800-300BC
8	813 pit 815	1	3	EN c.3700-3300BC LB c. 1150-800BC
Total		43	497	

7.2 Roman ceramic tile by Pat Chapman

Four abraded tile sherds, weighing 1005g, come from the lower fill (814) of pit [815]. There are two joining *tegula* roof tile sherds, with a fragment most likely from the same tile, and two body sherds.

The *tegula* is 30mm thick with a broken flange 22mm wide at the base. The fabric is hard sandy dark red with a faint grey core and rare inclusions of burnt flint or gravel up to 8mm.

One body sherd is black, 28mm thick, made with a finer sandy fabric with one smooth surface and a deep impression on the other, as if it had been laid on a twig when drying. The other body sherd, made with a slightly soft sandy orange fabric with large buff and pink clay lumps and tiny red grog inclusions, has lost its upper surface.

The fact that the tile sherds were worn and abraded when they fell or were deposited into the pit indicates that they had already been around for some time previously and probably some distance from their place of origin

7.3 Millstones by Andy Chapman

From the fill (814) of pit [815] there is a fragment from the circumference of a quern/millstone in a coarse-grained Millstone Grit. From the small fragment of the circumference surviving, less than 5%, it is difficult to make an accurate assessment of the original diameter, but it appears to be c. 900mm, which would indicate that this piece was from a heavily worn millstone rather than a quern. The stone is up to 40mm thick, with the upper surface undulating and showing dimpled tool marks. On the grinding surface there is a groove centred 25mm in the circumference, and a tooled grinding surface would also be more characteristic of a millstone rather than a quern, even though a millstone upper stone would usually be at least 80-100mm thick when new.

Millstone Grit was used for millstones from the Roman period through to the 19th century, but tooled surfaces are more characteristic of Roman rather than medieval millstones. It would probably have used within an animal-powered mill.

7.4 The animal bone by Rebecca Gordon

Four adult sheep or goat maxillary teeth were recovered from fill (504) of ditch [505]. The assemblage is too small for any conclusions to be drawn.

7.5 The environmental evidence by Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from the fill (407) of ditch [408] (Sample 1) and fill (814) (Sample 3) and fill (813) (Sample 2) of pit [815], all of which were potentially of Roman date.

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 x16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed below in Table 2. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010). Most plant remains were charred, but an uncharred grape (*Vitis vinifera*) ‘pip’ was noted within pit fill (814). At the time of writing, it is unclear whether this may be contemporary with the feature fill (such woody seeds being capable of enduring for long periods given the right burial conditions) or a later contaminant. Modern roots, seeds, chaff elements and arthropod remains are also recorded.

Results

All three assemblages are small and largely composed of comminuted charcoal fragments. Other plant macrofossils are exceedingly scarce, although the assemblage from sample 3 does include a single possible barley (*Hordeum* sp.) grain and sample 2 contains a further possible indeterminate grain fragment. Larger charcoal/charred wood fragments >10mm in size are also noted within samples 2 and 3, although most of these larger fragments do appear to be somewhat rounded and abraded. Many of the smaller charcoal fragments have a distinctive flaked appearance, possibly indicating that they were exposed to very high temperatures during combustion. Other remains are also scarce, although both pit assemblages do include numerous small flakes of heat shattered stone.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, the regular shape of pit [815] and the predominance of charcoal within its fills may indicate that this feature had a very specific function, which almost certainly involved high temperatures of combustion. However, as the pit assemblages are so limited in composition, there is little or nothing to suggest what this function may have been. Although cereals are present, only two grains are recorded, almost certainly precluding the possibility that the pit had an overtly agricultural use. It is, perhaps, more likely that the cereals are derived from the use of cereal processing waste as tinder, kindling or fuel. As plant remains are so scarce within the ditch assemblage, further interpretation of this feature is not possible.

As none of the assemblages contain a sufficient density or range of material for quantification, no further analysis is recommended. However, a summary of this assessment should be included within any publication of data from the site.

Table 1: Charred plant macrofossils and other remains

Sample No.	1	2	3
Fill/cut	407 / 408 pit	813 / 815 pit	814 / 815 pit
Plant macrofossils			
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grain)	-	-	xcf
Cereal indet. (grain)	-	xcffg	-
Charcoal <2mm	xx	xxxx	xxxx

Charcoal >2mm	x	xxx	xxx
Charcoal >5mm	-	xx	xxx
Charcoal >10mm	-	xx	xx
Charred root/stem	-	-	x
Other remains			
Black porous 'cokey' material	x	x	-
Burnt stone	-	xxx	xx
Small coal frags.	x	x	-
Sample volume (litres)			
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%

Key to Table

x = 1 – 10 specimens; xx = 11 – 50 specimens; xxx = 51 – 100 specimens; xxxx = 100+ specimens

fg = fragment cf = compare

8 CONCLUSIONS

A number of features of archaeological interest have been identified during the evaluation, often correlating well with the findings of the geophysical survey (Fig 2).

In Trench 7 were two sets of narrow, parallel ditches [708/705] and [710/712], all dating to the early Roman period. The southern set correlates with a double-ditched linear feature seen on the geophysical survey, and interpreted as a former narrow track edged by drainage ditches. The same type of feature could also have been present in Trench 4, formed by ditches [408/405].

Trench 3 contained one pit and one posthole. Neither contained any datable material. But pit [815] contained a concentration of burnt material, comprising very dark grey silty sand with burnt flints and charcoal. It is thought that this pit did not have an overtly agricultural function, but beyond this its function could not be identified, however the millstone and roof tiles date the pit to the Roman period with a residual sherd of late Bronze Age pottery.

Fifteen ditches were identified within the trenched area. Many of the ditches were aligned north-south, parallel with known historic boundaries and with Fox Lane, which appears on an 18th-century map (Gailey 2014). It is probable that these ditches represented plot or field boundaries

Three large pits, which appear to be quarry workings, were situated to the north of the western field in Trenches 1-3. As there is no indication of extraction pits here on the historic Ordnance Survey maps, it could be concluded that these extraction pits predate the first edition map of 1882.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASDU 2012 *Lingwood Road, Blofield, Norfolk, Geophysical Survey*, Archaeological Services Durham University, report **3022**

Brown, D, 2011 *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archive Forum

CIfA 2014a *Code of Conduct*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIfA 2014b *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIfA 2014c *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government

Gailey, S, 2014 *Heritage Desk-based Assessment, Land east of Blofield, Norfolk, March 2014*, CgMs Consulting, **14368**

Gurney, D, 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers, **14**

HE 2015 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*, Historic England

Knight, D, Vyner, B, and Allen, C, 2012 *East Midlands Heritage An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*, Nottingham Archaeological Monograph, **6** / York Archaeological Trust

Medlycott, M, (ed) 2011 *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the east of England*. East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, **24**

MGC 1992 *Standards in the Museum care of Archaeological Collections*, Museums and Galleries Commission

MOLA 2014 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, MOLA Northampton

MOLA 2015 *Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological trial trench evaluation at Yarmouth Road, Blofield, Norfolk* September 2015

Stace, C, 2010 *New Flora of the British Isles 3rd edition*, Cambridge University Press

Walker, K, 1990 *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage*, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation

Watkinson, D, and Neal, V, 2001 *First Aid for Finds*, RESCUE Institute for Conservation Archaeology Section

Websites and maps:

BGS 2015 *GeoIndex*, British Geological Survey, www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex (accessed 21/09/2015)

LAT 1983 *Soils of Eastern England (Sheet 4)*, Lawes Agricultural Trust (Soil Survey for England and Wales)

NM 2015 *Deposition Guidelines for Excavation Archives*, Norfolk Museums, http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/Research/Collections/Archaeology_Collections/NCC084073 (accessed 21/09/2015)

MOLA Northampton
January 2016

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
1	NE-SW 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Light-mid brown silty clay with 5% small stones and roots	0.40m	-
102	Subsoil	Light –mid orange sandy clay	0.30m	-
103	Fill of [107]	Light brown silty clay with 30% charcoal flecks	-	-
104	Natural	Orange sand with 20% flint nodules, with bands of lighter sand		
105	Fill of [107]	Light brown silty clay		
106	Fill of [107]	Dark orange with 30% charcoal flecks		
107	Quarry pit	Full plan and profile unknown		
108	Fill of [109]	Firm mid greyish-brown silty clay with 20% small stones	W:0.90m D:0.14m	pottery
109	ditch	Linear, gently curving sides with a rounded base	W:0.90m D:0.14m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
2	NW-SE 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.40m	-
202	subsoil	Same as 102	0.10m	-
203	Fill of [207]	Light brown silty clay with 10% charcoal flecks and 1% broken brick	>1.7m	
204	Natural	Same as 104	-	
205	Fill of [206]	Light- mid grey brown silty sand with 5% charcoal flecks	W:0.90m D:0.28m	-
206	Ditch	Gently sloping sides with a rounded base	W:0.90m D:0.28m	-
207	Quarry pit	Full plan and profile unknown		

YARMOUTH ROAD, BLOFIELD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
3	NE-SW 50mx2m			
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.35m	-
302	subsoil	Same as 102	0.40m	-
303	Natural	Same as 104		
304	Fill of [305]	Light grey silty sand with <1% charcoal flecks	W:0.90m D:0.27m	
305	Ditch	Gently curving sides with a rounded base	W:0.90m D:0.27m	
306	Fill of [307]	Light grey silty sand	-	
307	Quarry pit	Plan and profile unknown	*	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
4	W-E 50mx2m			
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
401	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.40m	-
402	subsoil	Same as 102	0.20m	-
403	Natural	Same as 104	-	
404	Fil of [405]	Light-mid grey silty sand	W:0.75 D:0.20m	Pottery Sample 1
405	ditch	Gently sloping sides with rounded base	W:0.75m D:0.20m	-
406	Cremation	Broken possible cremation vessel	-	-
407	Fill of [408]	Light-mid grey silty sand	W:0.45m D:0.15m	-
408	Ditch	Gently sloping sides with an rounded base	W:0.45m D:0.15m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
5	NW-SE 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Same as 101	0.40m	-
502	subsoil	Same as 102	0.40m	-
503	natural	Same as 104		
504	Fill of [505]	Light grey brown silty sand	W:0.55m D:0.25m	Sheep/goat teeth
505	Ditch	U-shaped profile with a flat base	W:0.55m D:0.25m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
6	N-S 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Light-mid brown silty clay	0.40m	-
602	subsoil	Light-mid orange sandy clay	0.20m-	-
603	Natural	Orange sand with 20% flint nodules and patches of iron panning towards the southern end		
604	Fill of [605]	Light-mid brown silty clay with 5% small pebbles	W:2.00 D:0.95m	-
605	ditch	Irregular sides and uneven base	W:2.00m D:0.95m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
7	W-E 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Same as 601	0.45m	-
702	Subsoil	Same	-	-
703	natural	Bands of orange sand with flint nodules and yellow white sandy clay	-	-
704	Fill of [705]	Light brownish silty clay with 5% flints	W:1.25m D:0.18m	Roman pottery
705	Ditch	Irregular sides and base	W:1.25m D:0.18m	
706	Fill of [708]	Light brown-orange silty clay with 5% small pebbles	W:1.10m D:0.10m	
707	Fill of [708]	Light brown with patches of white sandy clay with 5% flint flakes	W:0.85m D:0.12m	
708	ditch	Irregular sides and base	W:1.10 D:0.22m	
709	Fill of [710]	Mid brown-orange silty clay 5% mixed flints	W:1.0m D:0.20m	
710	ditch	Gently sloping sides and irregular base	W:1.0m D:0.20m	
711	Fill of [712]	Dark grey-brown silt clay	W:0.80m D:0.30m	
712	ditch	Irregular profile and flat base	W:0.80m D:0.30m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
8	N-S 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Light reddish brown silty clay	0.40m	-
802	subsoil	Same as 602	-	-
803	Natural	Red-orange sand with 50% mixed flints	-	
804	Fill of [805]	Dark grey-brown silty sand with 30% rooting	W:0.95m D:0.13m	Pottery
805	ditch	Gently curving sides with a flat base	W:0.95m D:0.13m	
806	Fill of [808]	Light grey silty sand with <1% charcoal flecks	W:0.36 D:0.14m	
807	Fill of [808]	Light brown silty sand	W:0.08 D:0.14m	
808	Posthole	Circular in plan with gently curving sides and flat base	W:0.44 D:0.14m	
809	Fill of [810]	Light grey brown silty sand	W:0.70m D:0.12m	
810	ditch	Steep sided with board flat base	W:0.70m D:0.12m	
811	Fill of [812]	Light grey silty sand with 5% small stones	W:0.65m D:0.18m	
812	ditch	Gently sloping sides with rounded base	W:0.65m D:0.18m	
813	Fill of [815]	Upper fill light grey silty sand	W:1.06m D:0.20m	Sample 2 pottery
814	Fill of [815]	Lower fill ,dark grey silty sand with 80% flint fragments	W:1.06m D:0.15m	Sample 3 Roman millstone , tile fragment
815	pit	Steep sided pit with board flat base	W:1.06m D:0.35m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
9	NE-SW 50mx2m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Same as 801	0.50m	-

YARMOUTH ROAD, BLOFIELD

902	subsoil	Same as 802	0.20m	-
903	natural	Same as 803		-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
10	N-S 25mx2m			
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
1001	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey brown silty clay	0.30m	-
1002	Make up	Dark grey-brown silt with modern debris	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
11	NE-SW 50mx2m			
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
1101	Topsoil	Same as 801	0.40m	-
1102	Subsoil	Same as 802	0.10m	-
1103	Natural	Same as 803	-	-
1104	Fill of [1105]	Light brown-orange sandy clay with 5% flint flecks	W 0.85m D 0.25m	
1105	Ditch	Steep sided with pointed base	W 0.85m D 0.25m	-



MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 809 800
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk