



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation at
land off Boddington Road
Byfield, Northamptonshire
April 2014**

BRB 14

Report No. 14/93

Author: Yvonne Wolframm-Murray

Illustrators: Amir Bassir
Yvonne Wolframm-Murray



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Pottery and clay tobacco-pipes: Tora Hylton

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-177902	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at land off Boddington Road, Byfield, Northamptonshire		
Short description	A trial trench evaluation was undertaken by MOLA, on land off Boddington Road, Byfield, Northamptonshire in April 2014. In total three trenches were opened. A post-medieval ditch and posthole, and remnant furrows of medieval ridge and furrow were recorded. A build-up of material was noted along the eastern side of the site.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site Status	-		
Previous work	-		
Current land use	Hay meadow		
Future work	unknown		
Monument type and period	-		
Significant finds	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	Land off Boddington Road, Byfield		
Post code	NN11 6LP		
OS co-ordinates	SP 5151 5337		
Area (sq m/ha)	0.75ha		
Height aOD	157m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray		
Project Managers	Liz Muldowney		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMS Consulting		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	31 March 2014		
End date	1 April 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	MOLA Northampton store	Pottery and clay tobacco-pipe	
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at land off Boddington Road, Byfield, Northamptonshire		
Serial title & volume	14/93		
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Archaeological trial trench evaluation at land off Boddington Road, Byfield Northamptonshire April 2014

Abstract

A trial trench evaluation was undertaken by MOLA, on land off Boddington Road, Byfield, Northamptonshire in April 2011. In total three trenches were opened. A post-medieval ditch and posthole, and remnant furrows of medieval ridge and furrow were recorded. A build-up of material was noted along the eastern side of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

CgMs Consulting commissioned MOLA to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land off Boddington Road, Byfield, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 5151 5337, Fig 1). The site has received outline planning consent for residential development from Daventry District Council (DA/2012/0952).

As a condition on planning consent there was a requirement for archaeological investigation in accordance with Section 12, paragraph 128 and Appendix 2 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). A Written Scheme of Investigation was produced by MOLA (Muldowney 2014) following a brief provided by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor at Northamptonshire County Council setting out the requirements for works. The works were monitored by the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council.

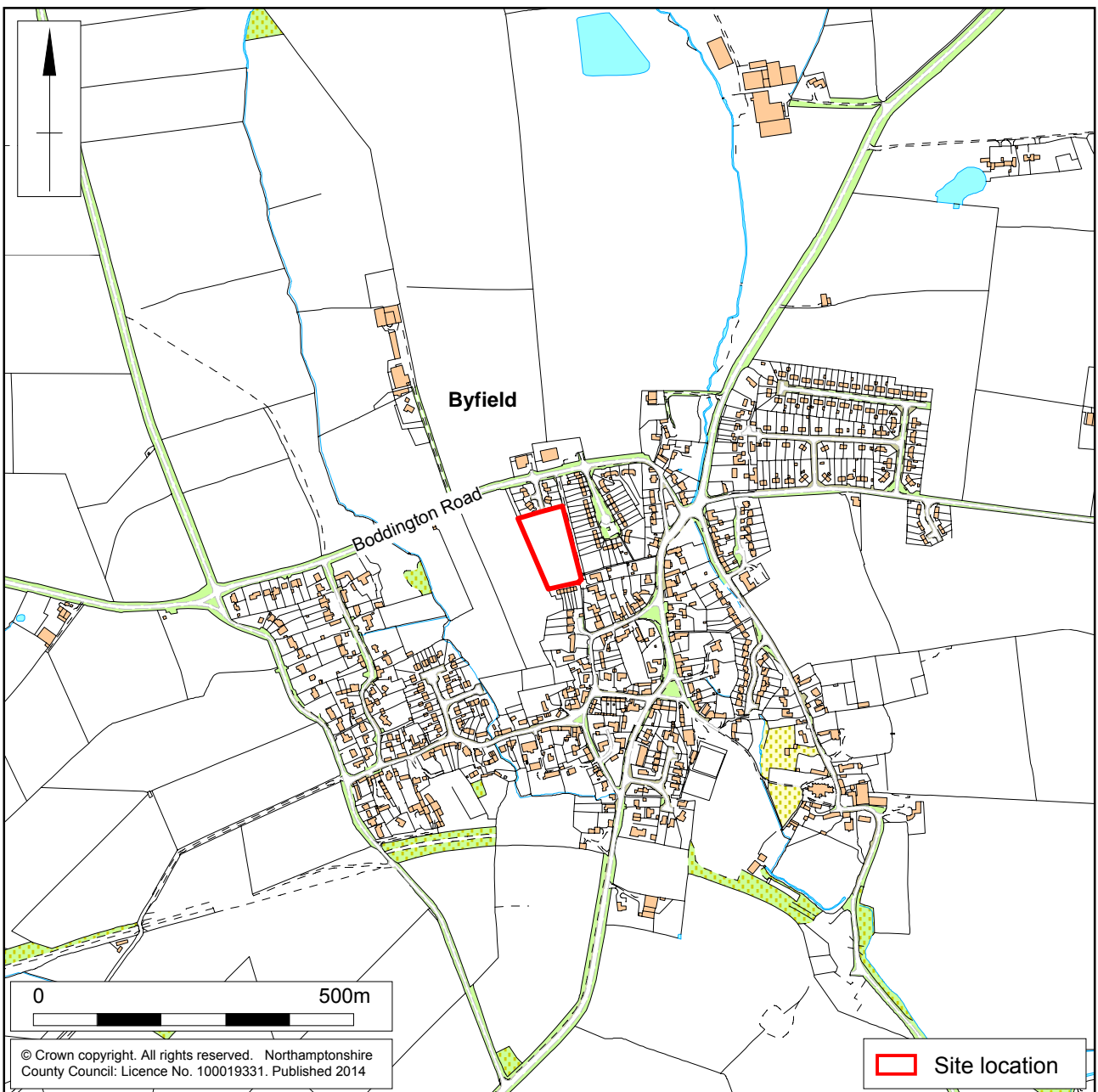
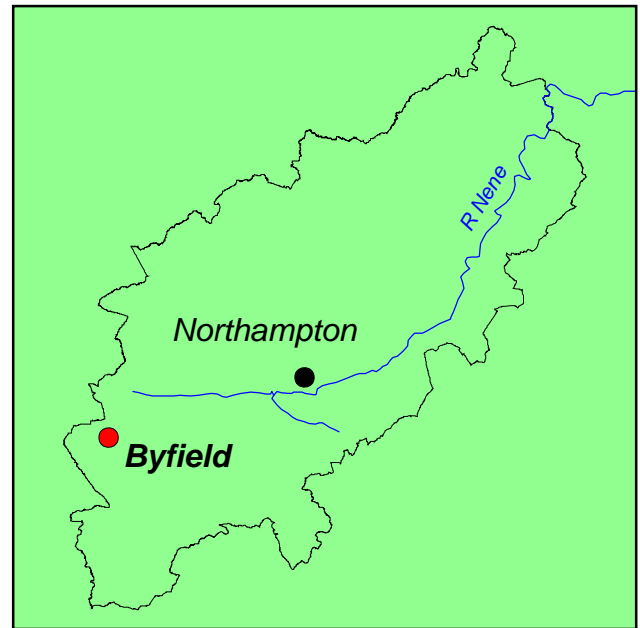
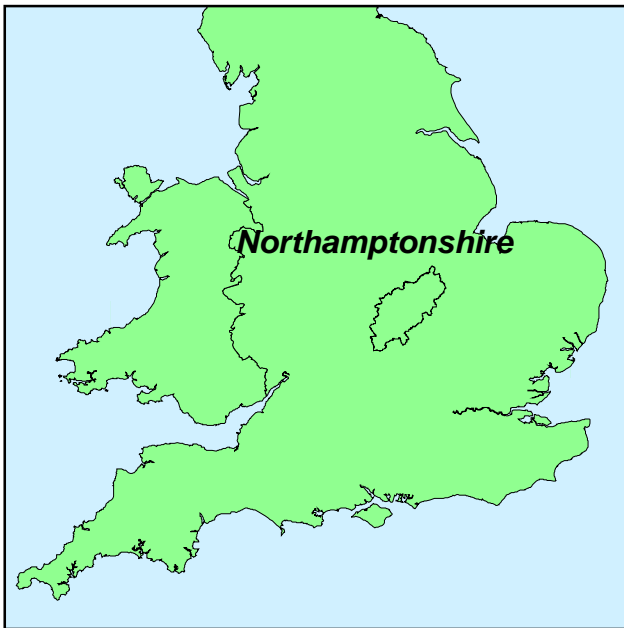
MOLA is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation. This document has been prepared in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and the procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (EH 2009).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The site is located to the south of a *cul de sac* accessed from Boddington Road within the aggregated village of Byfield. The site is bounded by residential development to the north, east and south and by agricultural land to the west.

The bedrock geology is recorded as Marlstone Rock Formation, no overlying superficial deposits have been recorded (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk> accessed 16/03/14). The site is situated at approximately 157m above Ordnance Datum.



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The development area is sited towards the centre of the now aggregated village of Byfield. The village historically comprised three separate elements; Church End to the east, Byfield and Westhorpe to the west.

A desk-based assessment (Oakley 2012) was produced for the site and the findings are summarized below.

A small number of scattered finds dating from the Roman period have been recorded on the outskirts of the village mainly during quarrying. No other features of this date have been recorded within the vicinity of the development area.

No Anglo-Saxon remains have yet been recorded within the area of the village. The first reference to the settlement at Byfield was recorded in 1086 AD in the Domesday Book. The medieval settlement was, as described above, separated into three distinct areas, south, east and west of the current development area. The present development area formed part of the open fields associated with the village and remnant ridge and furrow cultivation features are apparent both on historical aerial photographs and on current satellite imagery. However, when the site was visited in 2012 these were not readily apparent (Oakley 2012). During the site visit an east to west aligned low earthwork was visible in the southern half of the field. Although undated this feature corresponds with a change in visibility of the ridge and furrow and might represent the remains of a relict headland. It is possible to trace the line of this feature on satellite imagery into the field to the west.

The earliest mapping available for the area, the enclosure map of 1779 shows that the boundaries of the development area have altered little since then, with the exception of the construction of the small *cul de sac* development in the northern portion of the field immediately adjacent to Boddington Road and now designated Clock Meadow.

There are a number of listed buildings within the village, predominantly close to the main road and dating from the 17th to 19th centuries (Oakley 2012). In recent times a number of Ironstone quarries were in operation around the village. The development area itself has recently been in use as a hay meadow.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- *to determine and understand the nature, function, and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting;*
- *the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present;*
- *the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.*

The 0.75ha development site was subject to archaeological evaluation through trial trench excavation. Three 50m long trial trenches were excavated in the study area avoiding the extant public footpaths. Orange netlon fencing was used as barriers at the exposed trench ends.

All areas of ground disturbance were accurately surveyed in using Viva 1200 GPS survey equipment and tied into the Ordnance Survey.

Machine excavation was undertaken under the direction of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Trenches were excavated by machine using a toothless ditching bucket

1.60m wide, to reveal archaeological remains or, where absent, undisturbed natural horizons.

Each trench was cleaned sufficiently to enhance the definition of features. All archaeological features were investigated. All archaeological deposits encountered during the course of evaluation were fully recorded. Recording followed standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014). All archaeological features were given a separate context number. Deposits were described on pro-forma context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation.

A photographic record was maintained using black and white film supplemented by digital photography. Photographic views of the site were taken prior to excavation and after backfilling. Each trench was photographed, together with views of individual features.

The field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing. All records were compiled during fieldwork into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive.

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

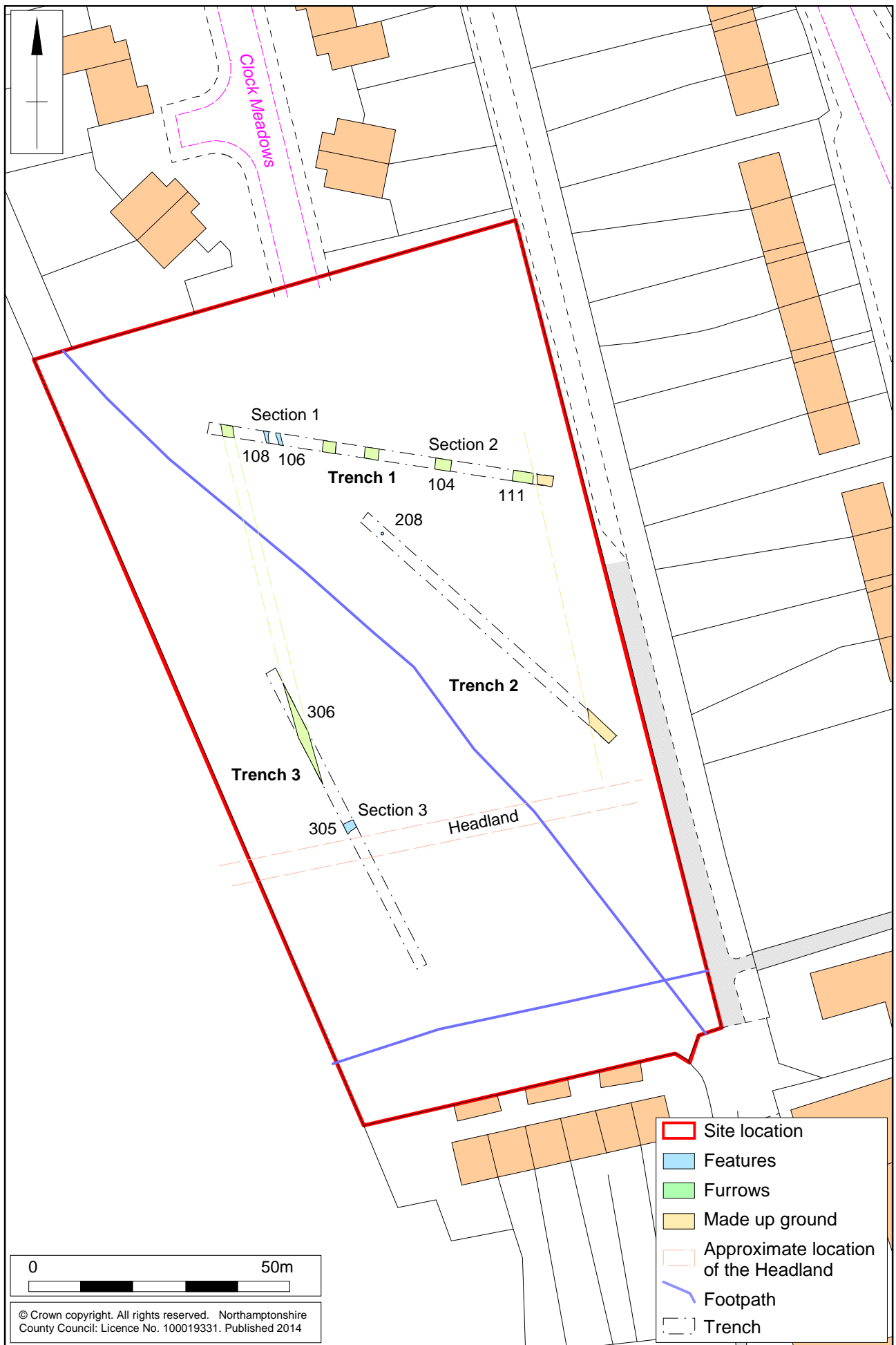
4.1 General comments

The natural substrate consisted of mid brown-yellow silty clay with a high gravely ironstone content and purple-orange sand; this was overlain by mid purple-brown silty clay subsoil. The topsoil was mid grey-brown sandy loam; see Appendix for details (Fig 2).

In Trenches 1 and 3 furrows were noted, including two separately recorded features related to the furrows, in Trench 1. A post-medieval posthole was recorded in Trench 2, and a post-medieval ditch was identified in Trench 3. Along the eastern edge of the development area in Trenches 1 and 2 a build up of soils was noted (Fig 3).



Trench 3 baulk section, looking east Fig 2



Scale 1:1000

Trench plan Fig 3

4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 50m long and aligned north-west to south-east (Fig 3). At the north-western end of the trench were two ditches cutting the natural substrate (Fig 4). Ditch [106], 0.56m wide and 0.21m deep, was filled with mid grey-brown sandy silt. No finds were recovered from the ditch (Figs 5 and 6, Section 1). Ditch [108] was 1.20m to the north-west, 0.56m wide and 0.21m deep. The mid grey-brown sandy silt was devoid of any finds (Fig 6, Section 1).



Trench 1, looking south-east Fig 4

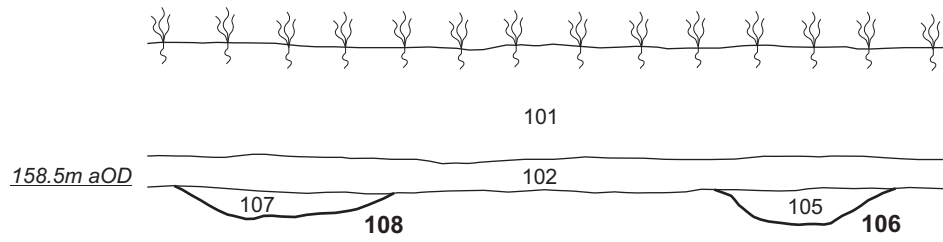


Ditch [106] looking north-east Fig 5

Section 1

NW

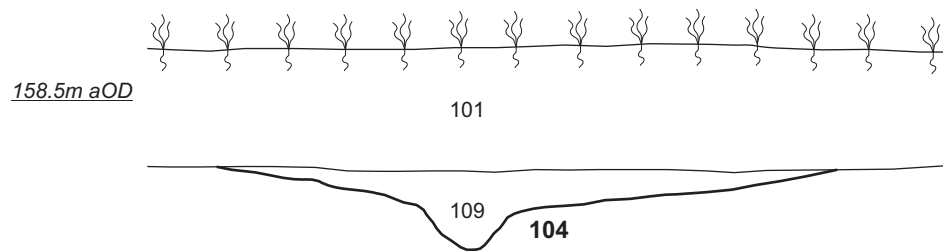
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Section 2

NW

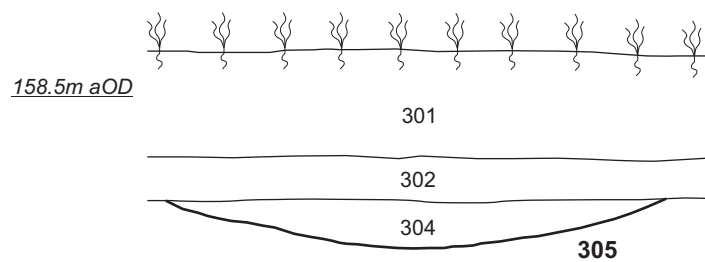
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Section 3

N

S



Five furrows were also noted (Fig 3). They were orientated north-south and around 6m apart to the east becoming wider spaced to around 11m apart to the west. The sampled furrow [104] was 2.02m wide and 0.28m deep (Fig 6, Section 2). The fill was mid red-brown sandy silt (109). Two 18th/19th-century clay tobacco-pipe stems were recovered from the fill of the easternmost furrow (111).

4.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 50m long and was orientated north-west to south-east (Fig 3). In the north-western end of the trench a posthole [208] was uncovered, 0.37m in diameter and 0.23m deep (Fig 7). From the red-brown clay silt fill (207) a small fragment of pearlware with a vestige of a cobalt blue design and dating to c 1750-1820 was recovered.



Posthole [208], looking north Fig 7

Modern build-up was noted in the eastern ends of Trenches 1 and 2 (Fig 8). This comprised 0.12m of dark grey-brown clay silt (204) overlaying the natural stratum (206). This was overlain by 0.15m light yellow-orange clay redeposited natural (203) and 0.08m of dark grey clay loam (202) and topsoil (201). Engineering brick, concrete and brick fragments were noted in layer (202).



Build-up of material in Trench 2, looking south-west Fig 8

4.4 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 50m long and orientated north-north-west to south-south-east (Figs 3 and 9). On the northern side of a headland, situated in the south-western part of the field, a ditch was uncovered. The ditch [305], 1.62m wide and 0.16m deep, was filled (304) with grey-brown sandy clay (Figs 3, Section 3, and 10). An earthenware sherd, of a c18th/19th century date, was found. The feature was overlain by subsoil and topsoil. One furrow, orientated north to south was noted in the northern part of the Trench, and was the continuation of a furrow recorded in Trench 1 (Fig 3).



Trench 3, looking north Fig 9



Ditch [305], looking east Fig 10

5 FINDS

5.1 Worked flint by Yvonne Wolfram-Murray

Two pieces of worked flint were collected, one residual find from furrow fill (306) and one unstratified find (101) from the vicinity of Trench 1.

The complete flake (306) measures 28mm long and 39mm wide. The raw material is a light brown-grey vitreous flint with a smooth mid brown-grey cortical striking platform. The flake is in a moderate condition with frequent nicks to the edges, this is obscuring possible utilisation located at the distal end.

The medial section of a blade (101) measures 15mm long and 14mm wide. The raw material is a flawed mid brown-grey vitreous flint with mid brown cortex. The flint is in a moderate condition with frequent nicks to the edges.

The worked flints are not directly dateable but their technological characteristics suggest a broadly mid Neolithic to Late Neolithic/Bronze Age date.

Table 1: Summary of worked flint

Context	Flake/blade (portion)	Raw material	Cortex	Comments
101	Blade (medial)	mid brown-grey vitreous flint	mid brown	-
306	Flake (whole)	light brown-grey vitreous flint	mid brown-grey	Cortical striking platform

5.2 Pottery by Tora Hylton

Two undiagnostic sherds of post-medieval pottery with a combined weight of 40.9g were recovered from deposits in Trenches 2 and 3. A small fragment of pearlware (CTS 418) with a vestige of a cobalt blue design and dating to c 1750-1820 was recovered from posthole fill (202). An earthenware sherd from a vessel with vertical sides, was recovered from ditch fill (304). The interior surface of the sherd is covered in a thick iron rich glaze and the fabric suggests a c18th/19th century date (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of pottery sherds

Fabric	Date	CTS No *	Sherd count	Weight (g)	Comments
Pearl ware	c 1750-1820	418	1	0.8g	bodysherd
Iron glazed coarsewares	c 18th/19th	426	1	40.1g	bodysherd
Total	-	-	2	40.9g	-

*Northamptonshire County Type Series

5.3 Clay tobacco-pipes by Tora Hylton

Two clay tobacco-pipe stem fragments measuring up to 35mm in length were recovered from a furrow fill (111). The fragments display signs of abrasion and both have small bores measuring 4/64th of an inch. Changes in manufacturing technique and the use of finer wire to make the bores ensured that there was a regular reduction in the bore diameter between c1620 and 1800. The size of the bore suggests a c18th/19th century in date for the stems.

6 DISCUSSION

The trial trench evaluation recorded features related to the post-medieval landscape. A post-medieval ditch orientated roughly east to west was recorded in the centre of Trench 3. The ditch was situated on the northern side of a headland visible in the south-western part of the site, and was likely to be associated with it. The posthole in the northern end of Trench 2 contained a piece of post-medieval pottery, but was isolated and of uncertain derivation.

Ridge and furrow was visible as earthworks in the fields. The evaluation recorded furrows in Trenches 1 and 3, but not in Trench 2. The sampled furrow revealed a depth of 0.36m. Two fragments of 18th/19th-century clay tobacco stems were recovered from another furrow.

The two parallel ditches excavated in Trench 1 have the same orientation as a furrow and are in a position where one ought to have been. The ditches may represent the uneven base of a furrow or related drainage ditches.

Beside the furrows no truncation of the natural substrate was noted in the trenches. However, a build-up of material in the ends of trenches 1 and 2 were noted along the eastern side boundary. The brick and concrete fragments suggest this to be relatively recent, and possibly associated with the construction of properties or access road to the east in the 20th century.

The finds have limited importance to the interpretation of the site and have no intrinsic value, as such they have been discarded.

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MOLA
8th July 2014

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	50m x 1.8m N - S		158.76m aOD	0.55m, 158.26m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/samples
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty loam with occasional charcoal flecks, occasional small stones and frequent root intrusions	0.55m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Dark brown-red silty clay with frequent small to medium rounded and sub-angular stones	0.17m thick	-
103	Natural	Mid brown-yellow silty clay with frequent small to large sub-angular ironstones	-	-
104	Furrow	Shallow linear feature running c N-S	0.36m deep 3.54m wide	-
105	Fill of [106]	Mid grey-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones	-	-
106	Ditch	Shallow linear feature running c N-S, gently sloping irregular sided, irregular concave base	0.21m deep 0.56m wide	-
107	Fill of [108]	Mid red-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones	-	-
108	Ditch	Shallow linear feature running c N-S, gently sloping irregular sided, irregular concave base	0.19m deep 0.60m wide	-
109	Fill of [104]	Mid red-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones	-	-
110	Make-up layer	Re-deposited natural of orange-yellow clay	0.05m thick	Brick (not retained)
110	Layer	Dark brown-grey silty loam	0.05m thick	-
111	Fill	of Furrow	-	clay tobacco-pipe stem fragments c 18th/19th

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 1.8m NW - SE		158.55m aOD	0.62m, 157.93m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/samples
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty loam with occasional charcoal flecks, occasional small stones and frequent root intrusions	0.29m thick	-
202	Make-up layer	Dark grey clay loam	0.08m thick	Engineering brick, concrete, bricks, modern pottery (not retained)
203	Make-up layer	Light yellow-orange clay with frequents small to medium stones, re-deposited natural, only in SE end of trench	0.15m thick	-
204	Make-up layer	Dark grey-brown clay silt, only in SE end of trench	0.12m thick	-
205	Subsoil	Dark brown-red sandy clay with frequent small to medium rounded and sub-angular stones	0.22m thick	-
206	Natural	Mid purple-orange silty clay with frequent small to large sub-angular ironstones	-	-
207	Fill of [208]	Friable mid red-brown clay silt with occasional small rounded and sub-angular stones	0.23m deep 0.37m wide	c 1750-1820 pottery sherd recovered
208	Posthole	Regular circular shape, steep vertical sides and slightly concave base	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	30m x 1.8m NE-SW		158.42m aOD	0.52m, 157.90m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/samples
301	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty loam with occasional charcoal flecks, occasional small stones and frequent root intrusions	0.30m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid purple-brown sandy silt with frequent small sub-angular stones; not always present	0.24m thick	-
303	Natural	Mid brown-orange gravelly clay, some areas more purple-brown and sandier, frequent small to large stones	-	-
304	Fill of [305]	Friable mid grey-brown, sandy clay with frequent small to medium angular stones	0.14m deep 1.57m wide	Iron glazed coarsewares c 18th/19th
305	Ditch	Shallow and gently sloped with flat base, NE-SW orientated	-	-
306	Fill	of Furrow; Mid grey-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones	-	-

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