

Archaeological trial trench evaluation at 29 – 41 Derngate, Northampton September 2014

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Report No. 14/181

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Report No. 14/181

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No: molanort1-19	0928			
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at 29-41 Derngate, Northampton, Northamptonshire, September 2014				
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 29-41, Derngate, Northampton. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trenches, each 2m x 2m, in order to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site. The excavations determined that the site had probably been gardens or cultivated land from at least the post-medieval period up to the 20th century, confirming the sequence of historic map evidence. Natural geology lay at depth of 1.25m below modern ground surface and was sealed by the deposits of post-medieval garden soils at least 0.40m thick. Twentieth century demolition and other activity overlay these earlier layers. Although part of a possible archaeological feature was observed cutting the natural geology, no significant archaeological features were present within at least the top 1.00m of deposits across the site.				
Project type	Trial trench evaluation				
Site Status					
Previous work	None				
Current land use	Car park				
Future work	Unknown				
Monument type	Post-medieval garden soi	le			
and period	1 Ost-medieval garden sol	15			
Significant finds					
PROJECT LOCATION					
County	Northamptonshire				
Site address	29-41 Derngate, Northam	pton			
Post code	NN1 1JX				
OS co-ordinates	NGR SP 758 604				
Area (sq m/ha)		c 1400 sq m			
Height aOD	77m aOD				
PROJECT CREATORS					
Organisation	MOLA Northampton				
Project brief originator	Assistant Archaeological	Advisor NCC			
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton				
Director/Supervisors	Mark Holmes (MOLA)				
Project Manager	Steve Parry (MOLA)				
Sponsor or funding body	David Corley				
PROJECT DATE					
Start date	15 September 2014				
End date	15 September 2014				
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents			
Physical	Northamptonshire	Pottery, clay pipe			
Paper	Archaeological Archive	Site records			
Digital		ENN 107676 Report, photographs			
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)				
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at 29-41 Derngate, Northampton, September 2014				
Serial title & volume	14/181				
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Archaeological trial trench evaluation at 29-41 Derngate, Northampton September 2014

Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 29-41, Derngate, Northampton. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trenches, each 2m x 2m, in order to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site. The excavations determined that the site had probably been gardens or cultivated land from at least the post-medieval period up to the 20th century, confirming the sequence of historic map evidence. Natural geology lay at depth of 1.25m below modern ground surface and was sealed by the deposits of post-medieval garden soils at least 0.40m thick. Twentieth-century demolition and other activity overlay these earlier layers. Although part of a possible archaeological feature was observed cutting the natural geology, no significant archaeological features were present within at least the top 1.00m of deposits across the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

David Corley commissioned MOLA to carry out an archaeological evaluation comprising trial trenching at 29 - 41 Derngate, Northampton. The evaluation area comprised an active car park belonging to Tollers Solicitors, situated on the northern side of Derngate at the junction with Castilian Street (NGR SP 75765 60371, Fig 1). The fieldwork was undertaken on 15 September 2014.

The work was intended to provide archaeological information concerning the site in advance of residential development of the land. The works were undertaken in accordance with Section 12, paragraph 128 and Appendix 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and in accordance with a WSI prepared by MOLA (2014a) and approved by the Northamptonshire County Council Assistant County Archaeological Advisor.

MOLA is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation. This project was undertaken in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008a) and the procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 2009).

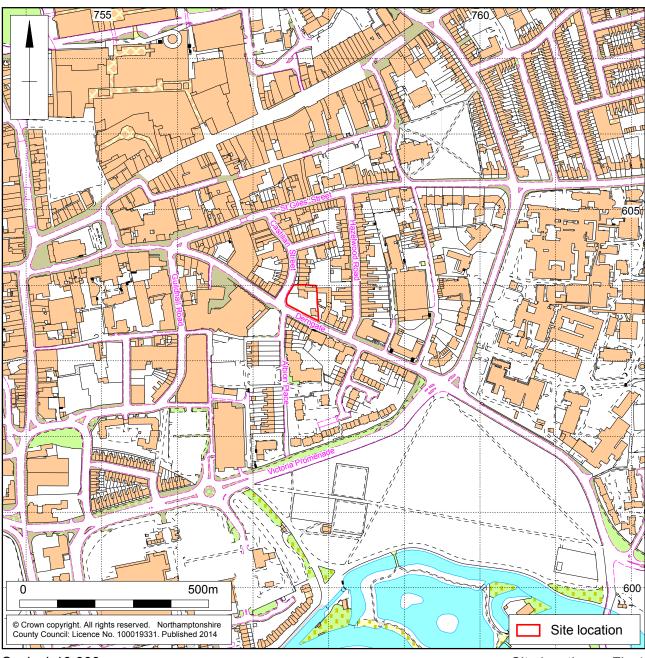
2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The evaluation area occupies a south facing slope above the 70m contour overlooking the River Nene, which runs *c* 500m to the south. The underlying bedrock is mapped as Northampton Sand Formation with no superficial deposits present (BGS 2014). The evaluation area was relatively flat and comprised the tarmac car park which is set down slightly from the adjoining Castilian Street at the west.







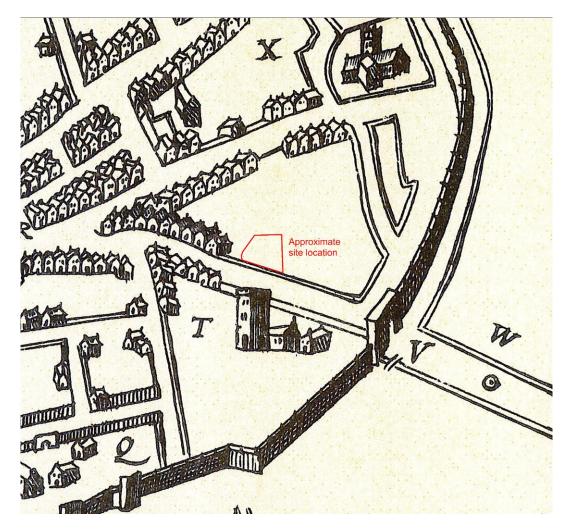
Scale 1:10,000 Site location Fig 1

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The development area is situated outside of the Saxon core of Northampton but lies within the larger medieval defensive circuit. Derngate (formerly *Darngate*) was a medieval thoroughfare leading from the centre of town, towards a town gate in the south-east corner of the medieval defences.

There are no archaeological sites or finds recorded from within the development area itself. However, in the wider vicinity prehistoric flints and pottery have been found during excavations at Swan Street and to the south of Derngate (RCHME 1985, 323). There have also been frequent medieval and post –medieval remains found during excavations and archaeological observations in the vicinity (eg HER 1160/130/4, 1160/130/1; both immediately east of the development area).

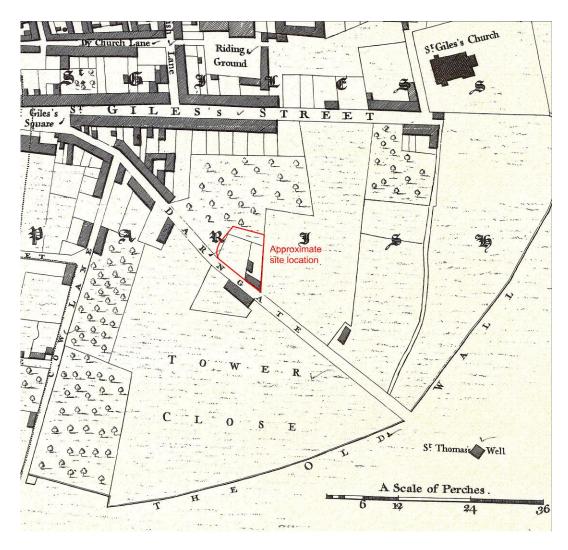
John speed's town map of 1610 shows the application area as undeveloped (Fig 2).



Extract from John Speed's 1610 map of Northampton

Fig 2

Over a century later, in 1746, Noble and Butlin's map shows a broadly similar arrangement, with orchards and undeveloped land in the immediate vicinity. However, two small closes occupied the site of the present day application area, the easternmost of which contains two buildings (Fig 3).

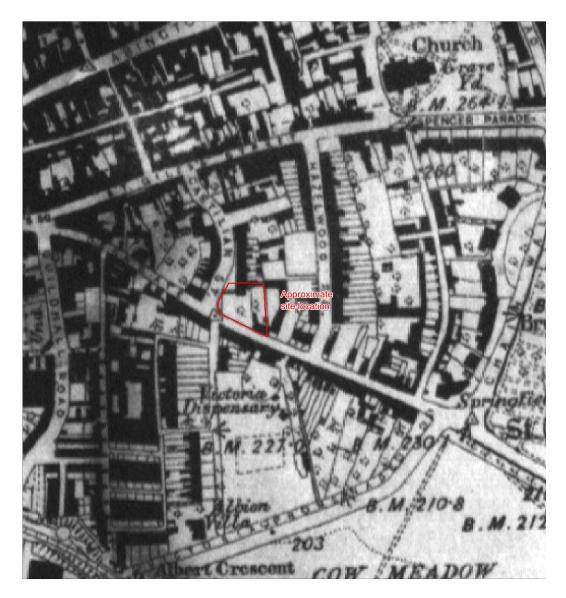


Extract from Noble and Butlin's 1746 map of Northampton

Fig 3

By the time of the first edition 6" Ordnance Survey map in the 1880s, the vacant areas and orchards on both sides of Derngate had largely been developed and Castillian Street built immediately at the west of the application area. However, the application area itself appears to have remained as two closes with the buildings and associated gardens in the same locations as previously (Fig 4).

The current No 41 Derngate appears to be a 20th-century replacement of the earlier building on the site but the general arrangement of garden plots appears, as seen on later Ordnance Survey maps (not illustrated), to continue well into the second half of the 20th century, with the current car park arrangement being a relatively recent change.



Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey 6" map, 1880s

Fig 4

3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be affected by the proposed development.

Specific research objectives followed those within national and regional research frameworks documents (English Heritage 1991, Knight *et al* 2012).

3.2 Methodology

The programme of trenching was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2014a). This required the excavation of three trenches, planned to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains within the development area (Fig 5).

The trench locations were confined to the areas where the footings of buildings would impact upon the ground level.

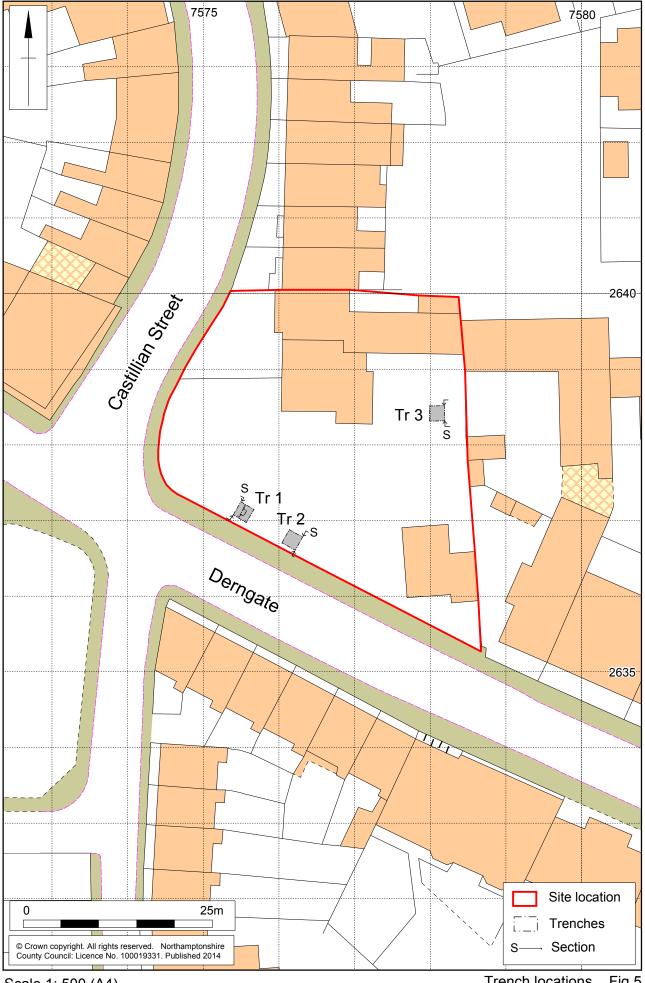
Due to the nature of the car park surface, the tarmac and make-up at each trench location had to be cut with a floor saw and then removed by a tracked excavator fitted with a toothed bucket. Once this had been removed all trenches were then excavated using a toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches all measured 2m x 2m, although Trenches 1 and 2 had to be stepped in due to the unstable nature of the upper fills. Trench 2 was re-located slightly from the position suggested in the WSI in order to avoid the roots of an established tree.

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines and all records were created using MOLA pro-forma (MOLA 2014b). 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 Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

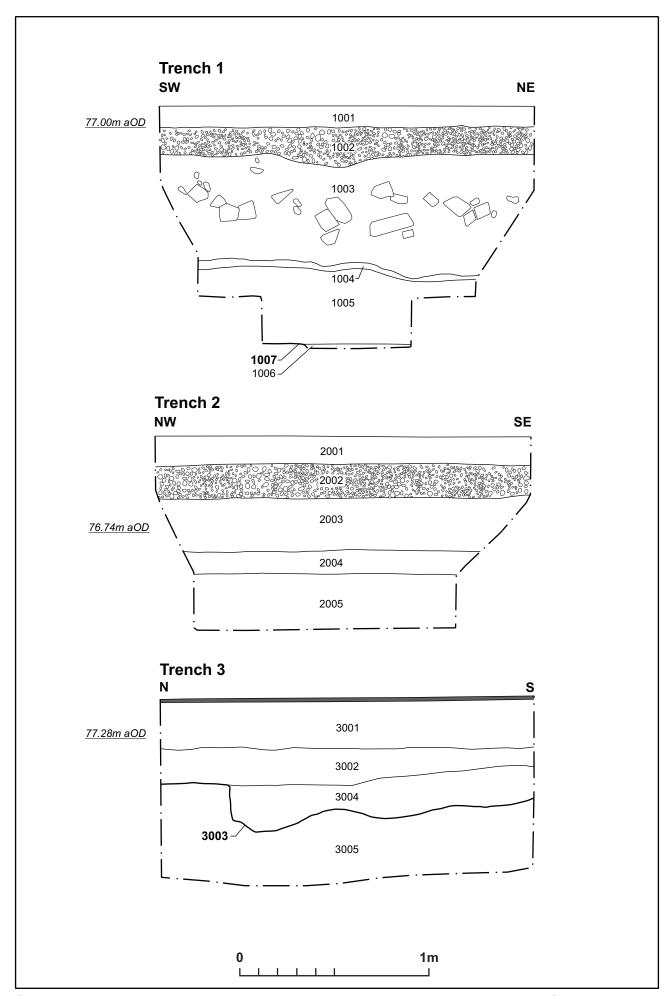
The trenches were to be excavated either to the top of the natural geological horizon or the upper significant archaeological levels, or 1.0m depth from ground surface whichever was the highest. The depth of 1.0m was chosen since the proposed building deposits were not planned to exceed 0.50m deep. In the event all three trenches were still in deposits at a depth of 1.0m and so excavation stopped at this point. However, a small sondage was dug in Trench 1 to establish the depth of the natural geology below these deposits.

Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches using a dumpy level from a temporary bench mark (TBM) established using GPS.

All records and materials were compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991).



Trench locations Fig 5 Scale 1: 500 (A4)



Scale 1:20 Sections Fig 6

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 The general stratigraphy

No significant archaeological features were present in any of the trenches. Artefacts recovered comprised pottery and clay tobacco-pipes (see section 5 below).

The general stratigraphic sequence was consistent in all three trenches excavated, although the composition of the deposits differed across the site (Fig 6). Natural geology was only exposed in one location, a sondage in Trench 1, where it comprised the orange-brown sandy clays of the Northampton Sand formation 1.25m below the modern ground surface. Above the natural geology was a band of well sorted garden soils at least 0.40m thick. This was sealed by a more mixed context of otherwise similar material. Above this and located immediately below the existing car park make-up were layers of brick rubble demolition material and other detritus.

A full index of contexts is included as Appendix 1.

4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was positioned adjacent to the Derngate frontage (Figs 5 and 7). It was excavated to a depth of 1.0m without encountering significant archaeological deposits. However, a sondage was dug in the base of the trench and encountered what is probably the Northampton Sand (Ironstone) natural (1008) at *c* 1.25m below the modern ground surface.



Trench 1, looking north-west

Fig 7

The sondage, dug towards the centre of the trench, exposed the edge of possible feature [1007] cutting the probable natural geology (1008) (Figs 6 and 8). Given the small area dug it was impossible to characterise the feature, although pottery recovered from the surface of the fill (1006) was of mid-12th century date. Since the full extent of the possible feature could not be ascertained and since it was unthreatened by the proposed development, no further excavation was undertaken.



Trench 1, possible feature [1007], looking south-east

Fig 8

The natural was covered by a well sorted garden soil (1005) comprising mid brown sandy clay, 0.40m deep, with frequent small ironstone pieces and moderately frequent charcoal flecks and small pieces of oyster shell. Clay tobacco-pipe stems and sherds of pottery suggest a date after the mid-17th century for the layer.

A thin band of mixed dark grey sandy clay (1004), 0.12m thick, lay at the interface between this garden soil and a thick layer of demolition rubble (1003). The demolition debris comprised very frequent whole red bricks and other structural material such as stone mouldings and iron fitments in a yellow-brown sand matrix. A sample of the brick and stone moulding were taken but have not been retained in archive (see section 5.3). It is likely that the rubble represents the remains of a former building levelled out across this part of the site.

Above the demolition layer was layer of rounded cobbles, 0.15m deep, set in a yellow-brown sand matrix (1002). It would seem unlikely that this was a foundation for the overlying car park (1001) and may represent a sealing layer over the rubble, acting as a path or some such garden feature.

4.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was set along the frontage of Derngate and had a similar stratigraphic sequence to Trench 1 (Fig 9). It was dug to a depth of c 1.00m without encountering the natural geology (Fig 6). The earliest material was a homogeneous soil layer (2005), similar to (1005) in Trench 1, comprising a dark grey-brown sandy clay with very occasional small ironstone pieces and moderately frequent charcoal and shell fragments. It was at least 0.30m deep but was not fully excavated. The finds recovered again comprised clay tobacco-pipe and pottery, this time indicating a 19th century date for the layer. It presumably represents a continuation of the garden soils along the street frontage area.



Trench 2, looking south-east

Fig 9

A layer of dark grey sandy clay (2004), similar to (1004) in Trench 1 but slightly thicker at 0.12m, overlay the garden soil. The layer of demolition material observed in Trench 1, continued into Trench 2 (2003), overlying (2004). Here it was 0.28m thick and comprised the same yellow sand matrix with moderately frequent red bricks and moderately frequent concrete slabs. As in Trench 1, this was overlain by a layer of unbonded cobbles 0.18m thick (2002) which in turn was sealed by car park make-up (2001).

4.4 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the north-east corner of the car park, in an area proposed for garages in the planning application (Figs 5 and 10). The trench was dug to a depth of c 1.00m without locating the underlying natural geology. As in Trenches 1 and 2 a layer of orange-brown sandy clay with occasional small ironstone fragments and

frequent charcoal flecks (3005) probably represents a former garden soil. It was at least 0.40m deep but was not fully excavated. The finds comprised clay tobaccopipes and pottery indicating a 17th century or later date.



Trench 3, looking east

Fig 10

Into this layer had been cut a feature [3003] that occupied the majority of the trench (Fig 6). Only the northern edge was exposed, with the feature extending beyond the outer edges of excavation. The northern edge was vertical and the feature had an uneven base, c 0.25m deep. It was filled with mixed dark grey-brown sandy clay, with moderate ironstone fragments and frequent charcoal, ashy deposits, red brick bats and other building debris (3004). The infill material was Victorian or later.

The feature was overlain by a layer of mid grey sandy clay with lenses of orange-brown sandy clay 0.16m deep (3002). It contained moderately frequent pieces of charcoal and tile and other modern detritus such as glass and wire. Car park foundations (3001), comprising an aggregate Type 1 base layer and tarmac, sealed all underlying layers.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 24 sherds with a total weight of 404g. It was recorded using the conventions of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS), as follows:

- F320: Lyveden/Stanion 'B' ware, AD1225-1400. 1 sherd, 9g.
- F329: Potterspury Ware, AD1250 1600. 2 sherds, 116g.
- F330: Shelly Coarseware, AD1100-1400. 8 sherds, 123g.
- F401: Late Medieval Oxidized Ware, AD1450 1550. 1 sherd, 5g.
- F407: Red Earthenwares, AD1450-1600. 1 sherd, 12g.
- F409: Staffordshire Slipwares, AD1680-1750. 2 sherds, 40g.
- F413: Manganese Glazed Ware, AD1680-1750. 2 sherds, 55g.
- F415: Creamware, 1740 1820. 1 sherd, 2g.
- F429: White Salt-glazed Stoneware, 1720-1780. 1 sherd, 2g
- F1000: Miscellaneous 19th and 20th century wares. 5 sherds, 40g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in Northampton (eg. McCarthy 1979).

The assemblage is in good condition, and appears reliably stratified. None of the apparently stratified medieval material shows more than would be expected levels of abrasion, and the mean sherd size is fairly large. The assemblage consists of fragments of jugs and jars, including a large fragment of a handle and rim from a Potterspury Ware jug from layer (1005). The post-medieval material consists of a mixture of utilitarian earthenwares and fine tablewares. This is again all typical of sites in the town.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (g)

		Contexts				Totals		
Fabric		1004 layer	1005 layer	1006 [1007]	2005 layer	3004 layer	3005 layer	
F330	No/Wt	-	2/45	3/28	2/19	1/31	-	8/123
F320	No/Wt	-	-	-	1/9	-	-	1/9
F329	No/Wt	-	2/116	-	-	-	-	2/116
F401	No/Wt	-	-	-	1/5	-	-	1/5
F407	No/Wt	-	-	-	-	-	1/12	1/12
F409	No/Wt	-	-	-	1/29	1/11	-	2/40
F413	No/Wt	-	-	-	1/29	1/26	-	2/55
F415	No/Wt	1/2	-	-	-	-	-	1/2
F429	No/Wt	1/2	-	-	-	-	-	1/2
F1000	No/Wt	-	-	-	5/40	-	-	5/40
Date		Mid 18th century	Mid13th century	12th century	19th century	late17th century	17th century	

5.2 The clay tobacco-pipe by Tora Hylton

A small group of 35 clay tobacco-pipe fragments were recovered comprising four complete or fragmented pipe-bowls and 31 stem fragments, which together to span the mid-17th to around the 18th/19th centuries. The assemblage was recovered from Trenches 1-3, the majority (30) were largely deposited within garden soils (1005, 2005, 3005), while a smaller number (5) was recovered from a soil interface just above (1004, 3004). Two of the bowls are sufficiently complete to enable dating and they have been classified according to Oswald's simplified typology using bowl and foot/spur forms (1975, 37-41) and Robert Moore's bowl types for Northampton (1980). Typologically the bowls equate to Oswald's type G17 (Moores Type 5), which provide

a mid-17th century date (c 1640-70). Two of the bowls are furnished with a narrow band of rouletting just below the lip of the bowl, a decorative motif used until c 1710.

The stem fragments measure up to 115mm in length and one fragment still retains a mouth piece. Changes in manufacturing technique and the use of finer wire to make the bore ensured that there was a regular reduction in hole diameter between c 1620 and 1800. The size of the bores are measured by 64's of an inch and the measurements suggest that the majority of stems date to the mid/late 17th century (7/64's -13 examples, 6/64's - 11 examples). The remaining seven stems measure 4/64's suggesting a later date for the fragments.

Table 2: Clay tobacco-pipe occurrence

Pipe bowl type					
	1004	1005	2005	3004	3005
Bowls, type G17	-	-	1	-	1
Bowl fragments	-	1	1	-	-
Stems	2	13	8	3	5
Total	2	14	10	3	6

5.3 The ceramic building material by Pat Chapman

The brick from layer (1003), with the CAFFERATA stamp, was manufactured in Newark, Nottinghamshire (Fig 11). It is factory-made in a uniform fine orange-brown clay, with a rectangular frog. The size of the brick, 225x112x72mm ($8\frac{1}{2}x4x2\frac{3}{4}$ inches), is very close to the British Standard 657 of 1936, which was $8\frac{3}{4}x4\frac{3}{16}x2\frac{5}{8}$ inches. There are traces of Portland cement on some surfaces.

William Cafferata bought the Newark Plaster Company at Beacon Hill, Newark in 1862, which included a brickworks (www.penmorfa.com/bricks). Unless fired very hard the bricks would retain their granular structure and not stand up to the weather (www.cafferata.plus.com). The brick-making aspect of the firm was not very successful, and was on the point of closure, until the opening of the works at Jericho Farm in the 1930s, where the Cafferata bricks were made until the brickworks finally closed in 1962 (www.ournottinghamshire.org.uk).

The dimensions and quality of the brick would suggest that it is of 20th century date, probably of the 1930s from the Jericho works. It has not been retained in archive.



The CAFFERATA brick, scale 50mm

Fig 11

An architectural fragment from layer (1003) is part of a column plinth, made of Portland cement, from a column or half column (A Bassir, pers com, Fig 12). Portland cement was used from the middle of the 19th century onwards. It has not been retained in archive.



Portland cement plinth, scale 50mm

Fig 12

6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has established that no significant archaeological features are present within the top 1.00m of deposits at the site, in the areas to be affected by the proposed development.

The deposits encountered comprised Victorian and later demolition layers overlying a build-up of homogeneous garden soils, possibly of 18th century date. The natural geology was not encountered within the top 1.00m of soils.

A sondage through the base of the garden soils adjacent to the Derngate frontage established that in at least this one location, the Northampton Sand natural was located immediately below the garden soils at a depth of c 1.25m below ground surface. The edge of a possible archaeological feature was observed cutting the natural geology here, suggesting that archaeological features may be preserved at this level.

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MOLA 25 September 2014

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	2m x 2m, NE-SW/ NW-SE	Centre: 475755 260371	77.10m aOD	1.25m 75.85m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Layer	Car park surface and make-up comprising tarmac on a thin bed of yellow-brown sandy clay	Depth 110mm	-
1002	Layer	Very frequent large rounded, unbonded cobbles set in a sparse matrix of yellow-brown sand. Very loose	Depth 150mm	-
1003	Layer	Yellow-brown clay sand containing very frequent whole red bricks, occasional moulded stone and other building debris	Depth 540mm – 640mm	Brick and moulding fragment (not retained)
1004	Layer	Dark grey sandy clay, moderate small stone and charcoal inclusions	Depth 40mm	Pottery, clay tobacco- pipe
1005	Layer	Mid brown sandy clay. Frequent small ironstone inclusions and flecks of charcoal	Depth 400mm	Pottery, clay tobacco- pipe
1006	Fill of [1007]	Grey-brown sandy clay with occasional small ironstone pieces and charcoal flecks	Not excavated	Pottery
1007 1008	Cut Natural	Only partly observed in plan Firm orange-brown sandy clay .	Not excavated	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	2m x 2m NE-SW/ NW-SE	Centre: 475762 260367	77.24m aOD	Not reached
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
2001	Layer	Car park surface and make-up comprising tarmac on a thin bed of yellow-brown sandy clay	Depth 110mm	-
2002	Layer	Very frequent large rounded, unbonded cobbles set in a sparse matrix of yellow-brown sand. Very loose	Depth 180mm	-
2003	Layer	Yellow-brown clay sand containing very frequent whole red bricks, occasional moulded stone and other building debris	Depth 280mm	-
2004	Layer	Dark grey sandy clay, moderate small stone and charcoal inclusions	Depth 120mm	-
2005	Layer	Dark grey-brown sandy clay. Very well sorted. Very occasional small pieces of ironstone. Moderate charcoal flecks and small pieces of shell.	Depth > 300mm (not bottomed)	Clay tobacco- pipe, pottery

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	2m x 2m, N-S/E-W	Centre: 475781 260384	77.48m aOD	Not reached
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
3001	Layer	Car park surface and make- up,comprising tarmac on a bed of Type 1 aggregate	Depth 330mm	-
3002	Layer	Mid grey sandy clay, lenses of orange-brown sandy clay, moderate charcoal	Depth 160mm	Glass, tile and other modern detritus (not retained)
3003	Cut	Vertical straight sided cut, 0.25m deep. Uneven base.	Extends beyond trench edges	-
3004	Fill of [3003]	Dark grey-brown sandy clay. Very mixed with moderate ironstone fragments, frequent charcoal and ashy deposits	Depth 250mm	Brick (not retained), pottery clay tobacco- pipe
3005	Layer	Orange-brown sandy clay. Very occasional small ironstone pieces. Frequent charcoal flecks and very occasional oyster shell.	Depth > 400mm (not bottomed)	Clay tobacco- pipe, pottery





