



**Archaeological evaluation at  
6 London Road, Yaxley  
Cambridgeshire  
September 2014**

Report No. 14/187

Author: Anne Foard-Colby

Illustrator: James Ladocha



# Archaeological evaluation at 6 London Road Yaxley, Cambridgeshire September 2014

ECB 4272

Report No. 14/187

Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	02.10.2014	Pat Chapman	Jim Brown	Andy Chapman	Draft for client review

Author: Anne Foard-Colby

Illustrator: James Ladocha

© MOLA Northampton 2014

MOLA  
Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton  
NN4 8BN  
01604 700 493  
[www.mola.org.uk](http://www.mola.org.uk)  
[sparry@mola.org.uk](mailto:sparry@mola.org.uk)

**STAFF**

Project Manager Jim Brown BSc PGDip MIfA

Text Anne Foard-Colby Cert Ed

Fieldwork James Ladocha BA  
Anne Foard-Colby

Roman pottery Tora Hylton

Illustrations James Ladocha

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis no. molanort1-191519</b>	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation at 6 London Road, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire		
<p>Four trenches were excavated at 6 London Road, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire, to investigate and establish the nature of any archaeological features within the proposed development site. One of the four trenches contained a ditch, with sherds of late 1st/2nd-century Roman pottery and splinters of animal bone. In other trenches, a service trench and two land drains were also encountered.</p>			
Project type	trial trench evaluation		
Site Status	none		
Previous work	none		
Current land use	a single dwelling and garden		
Future work	unknown		
Monument type and period	Romano-British ditch		
Significant finds	Romano-British pottery		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Cambridgeshire		
Site address	6 London Road, Yaxley		
Post code	n/a		
OS co-ordinates	NGR TL 1752 9243		
Area (sq m/ha)	c0.2ha		
Height aOD	22.5m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council		
Project Design originator	Pat Chapman (MOLA)		
Director/Supervisor	James Ladocha (MOLA)		
Project Managers	Jim Brown (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	22 September 2014		
End date	22 September 2014		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	ECB 4272	Pottery	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Report, photographs	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation at 6 London Road, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire. September 2014		
Serial title & volume	14/187		
Author(s)	Anne Foard-Colby		
Page numbers			
Date	September 2014		

# Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	
2	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	
4	HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	
	4.1	Archaeological background
	4.2	Historic Environment Record data
5	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	
6	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE	
	6.1	General comments
	6.2	The ditch
7	THE ROMAN POTTERY	by Tora Hylton
8	CONCLUSION	
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	

## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

### Tables

Table 1:	Historic Environment Record data
Table 2:	Summary of Roman pottery

### Figures

Front cover:	The site at London Road, southern end, looking west
Fig 1:	Site location
Fig 2:	The excavated trenches
Fig 3:	Trench 3, representative section
Fig 4:	Trench 4, ditch 405
Back cover:	Trench 1, ceramic land drain, looking west

# Archaeological evaluation at 6 London Road Yaxley, Cambridgeshire September 2014

## *Abstract*

*Four trenches were excavated at 6 London Road, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire, to investigate and establish the nature of any archaeological features within the proposed development site. One of the four trenches contained a ditch, with sherds of late 1st/2nd-century Roman pottery and splinters of animal bone. In other trenches, a service trench and two land drains were also encountered.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

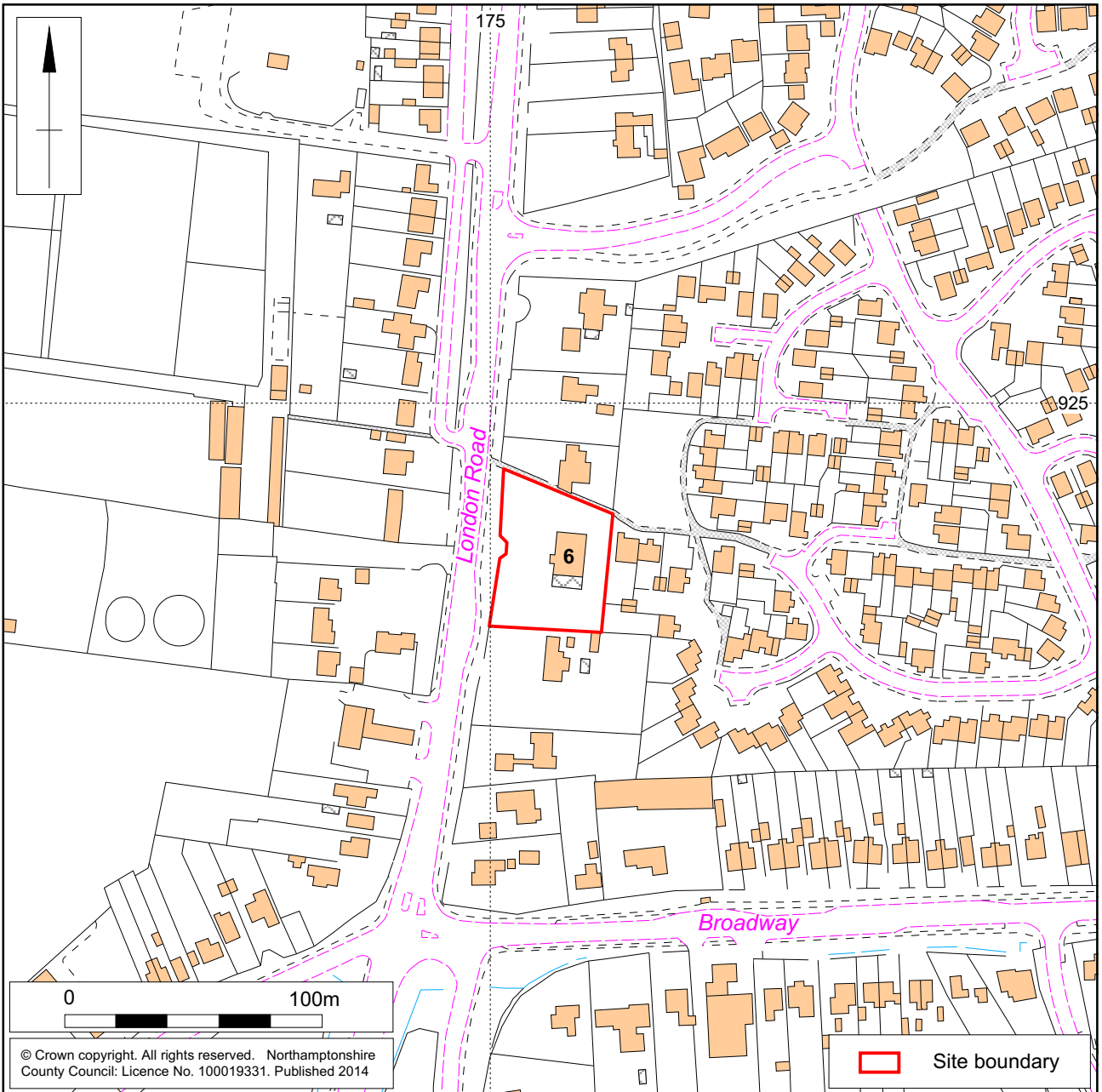
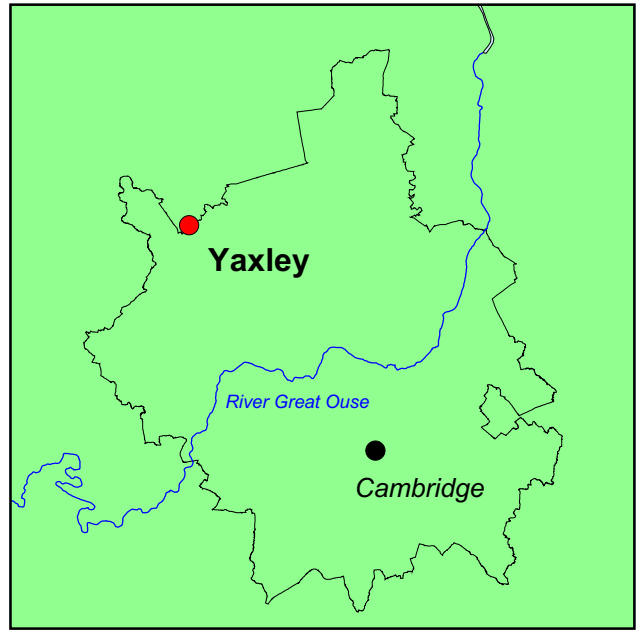
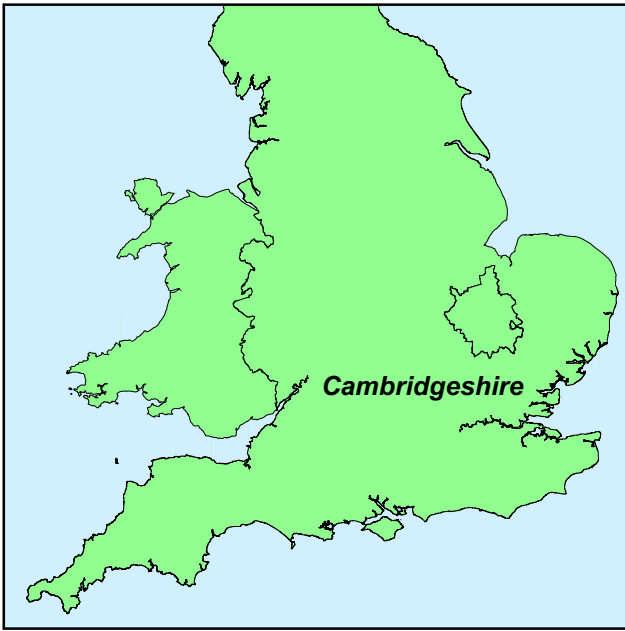
MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at 6 London Road, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 1752 9243; Fig 1). The work is intended to inform a planning application (1400541 FUL) for development of the land, and was undertaken as a condition of the consent.

All works were undertaken in accordance with current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a), the procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)* and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 1991; 2006) and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA (Chapman 2014).

## **2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The proposed development area comprises c0.2ha of domestic dwelling and garden. The site is located to the south of the village of Yaxley. The rectangular parcel of land is bounded to the east by a housing estate, to the north and south by neighbouring property and to the west by London Road.

Topographically the site is generally flat at c22.5m above Ordnance Datum. The geology is chalky boulder clay of the Jurassic formation, comprising Oxford Clay and Kellaways Beds (BGS 2001). The soils are of the Hanslope Association, which comprise slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils that have formed over the chalky till (LAT 1983, 411d).



Scale 1:2,500

Site location Fig 1

### 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the investigation was to determine if archaeological remains were present within the application area.

The specific objectives of the project were to provide further information on the following:

- The location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present at the proposed development site;
- The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present at the proposed development site;
- The presence or absence of a palaeosoil or 'B' horizon, preservation of deposits in negative features, site formation processes.

The project addressed the research aims and made reference to the following documents as appropriate:

- *Research and Archaeology, A Framework for the Eastern Counties: 1, Resource Assessment* (Glazebrook 1997).
- *Research and Archaeology, A Framework for the Eastern Counties: 2, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Medlycott and Brown 2008; Medlycott 2011).

### 4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

#### 4.1 Archaeological background

An isolated pit containing a small number of flints and some fragmented bone, to the east of the development site, is the only indication of Neolithic or Bronze Age activity in the vicinity (CHER 11336a).

Archaeological investigations at the Tile Library site found three ditches, two of which appeared to form the corner of a possible enclosure of Iron Age date, which may extend into the development site (CHER ECB3807; MCB19632). Late Iron Age Nene Valley shell tempered ware pottery was recovered from one of the ditches.

Background Roman activity in the area is indicated by a small assemblage of Romano-British pottery, possibly dated to the 2nd century AD, which was recovered from a ditch during an excavation and earthwork survey to the north of Manor Farm (CHER MCB15469). Roman coins and pottery have been found around the farm.

There are extensive medieval earthworks and features in the immediate vicinity of the site, probably pertaining to a medieval manor, the remains of which may lie below Manor Farm, or possibly within the present proposed development area. Excavations located several ditches dating to the 12th to 14th centuries but found no evidence for a moat enclosing the original site of the manor house. No direct evidence was found to locate the site of the original manor house, which may lie to the north. The archaeological features formed part of an extensive series of ponds, perhaps for fish, apparently supplied by a ditch system still visible in the fields to the north of the



farmyard complex. A moated site dating from the 16th century lies to the south of the development site.

#### 4.2 Historic Environment Record data

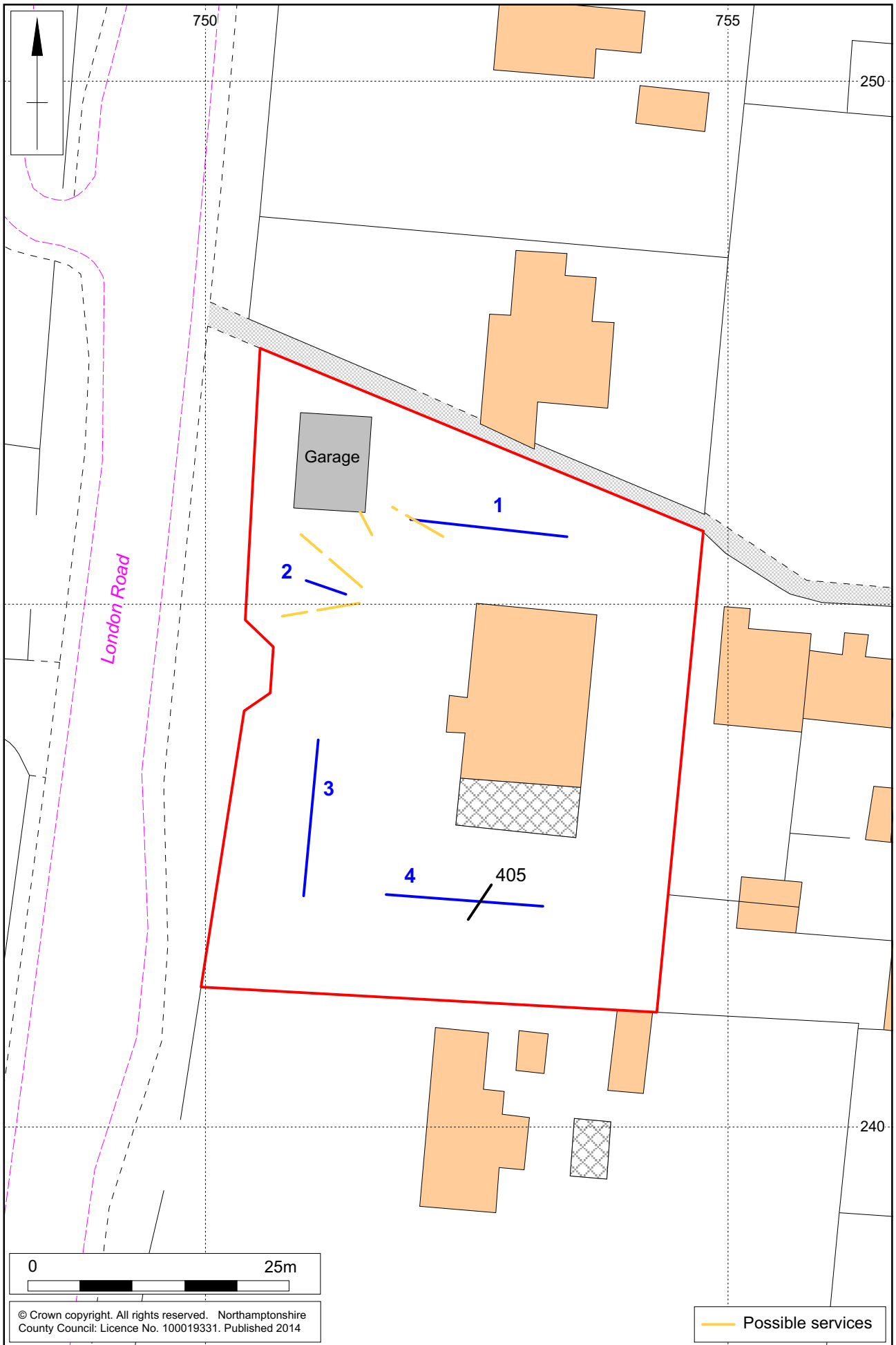
A search of recorded data for sites within 1km radius of the development was made with the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER), which produced 24 records. Since the development lies in close proximity to the border with Peterborough City Council, their HER data has also been consulted via the online gateway, which lists the records by parish and provided 51 entries. Some of these records were duplicated or lie over 1km from the site. Overall there is a strong emphasis upon the likelihood of Iron Age, Roman and medieval settlement activity within the wider parish.

The results of the combined HER data searches:

*Table 1: Historic Environment Record data*

Period	HER ref.	Description
<b>Cambridgeshire</b>		
Neolithic	01428	worked flint
?prehistoric	11336a	pit, Vicarage Farm
late Iron Age	MCB19632	evaluation 2012: 266 The Broadway, ditches & pottery
Roman	01390	earthwork: coins and pottery found NW of The Folly
	01409	coins and pottery, Manor Farm
	MCB15469	evaluation 1998: north of Manor Farm
medieval	02738	shrunken medieval village, near St Peter's
	01028a	fishpond
	01427	ridge and furrow cultivation
	01706	St Peter's Church
	11336	field systems, 18th-19th century overlying medieval
	MCB15470	excavation & watching brief 1998-9: Manor Farm
	MCB15873	earthworks north of Manor Farm
	MCB19283	evaluation 2010: 52 Chapel Street, ditches, pot, bone
	MCB19286	evaluation 2010: 41 Middletons Road, cobbled surfaces
post-medieval	12262	cemetery with mortuary chapel remains
	MCB15468	evaluation 1998: dovecote, Manor Farm
	MCB16655	structure: cast iron village pump
	01028	manor house, Manor Farm
16th century	01417	timber-frame house, NW side of Middletons Lane
16th-17th C	01345	timber-frame house, 10 Back Lane
17th century	01667	stone windmill, demolished
20th century	05710	The Folly
	MCB15173	military depot of World War II
<b>Peterborough</b>		
Palaeolithic	01419	handaxe
	01597	handaxe
Neolithic	50400	worked flint fabricator
	51155	flint axe head
Bronze Age	02924	handaxe
?prehistoric	01352	pottery
	11336a	animal bone and worked flint
Iron Age	51718	pits, ditches, field systems & pottery, The Broadway
	51720	settlement activity, The Broadway
	52131	metalworking site, The Broadway
Iron Age/Roman	50401	enclosure ditch
	51717	enclosures, ditches & pits, The Broadway
Roman	00996	pottery, Cow Bridge Farm
	01353	pottery

Period	HER ref.	Description
	01409	coin & pottery, Manor Farm
	01418	pottery
	01615	villa with urns, tile & tessera
	01628	pottery kiln
	09807	pottery
	11686	pottery kiln, waster tip and manufacturing site
	50402	coin & pottery, Manor Farm
	51719	field systems, inhumation, kiln, The Broadway
	51721	settlement activity, The Broadway
	52147	Aisled building and settlement remains, The Broadway
medieval	01028a	fishpond or moat
	01427	ridge and furrow cultivation
	01706	St Peter's Church
	01706a	gravestone, St Peter's Church
	01706b	wall painting, St Peter's Church
	02493	windmill
	02738	house platform, pond, shrunken village, trackway
	02947	house and pottery
	05627	watercourse, Yaxley Fen
	11336	field systems
	11679	Church
	51826	ridge & furrow cultivation, Norman Cross
	52148	ridge & furrow cultivation, Stanground South
post-medieval	01028	dovecote
	01345	house
	01417	timber-framed house
	01667	Tower Windmill (also called Black Mill)
	02095	wind pump
	02948	house & pottery
	50418	button
	50554	button
19th century	02083	Napoleonic POW camp, well & hospital, Norman Cross
20th century	05710	modern building, The Folly
	52346	aircraft crash site
	52362	aircraft crash site
	52376	aircraft crash site



Scale 1: 500

The excavated trenches Fig 2

## 5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A programme of evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA in response to a condition on planning consent by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (Chapman 2014). This required the excavation of four trenches, planned to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains within the development area. Three trial trenches were excavated that were 15m long by 1.8m wide and one trench was 4m long by 1.8m wide. Trenches were positioned to target the areas of maximum potential whilst maintaining safe working distance from services identified on site. Trench 2 was therefore re-aligned and shortened to avoid the services (Fig 2). A water pipe at the south-east corner of the garage potentially also lead to the existing building but could not be traced with a Cable Avoidance Tool.

All trenches were excavated using a tracked excavator, fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision.

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines and all records were created using MOLA *pro-forma* recording sheets (MOLA 2014). Photographs were taken of all trenches and relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome 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 2008a).

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 from known bench marks.

Artefacts were recovered from individual contexts and stored and packed according to type. All records and materials have been 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).

## 6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

### 6.1 General comments

A single ditch was recorded in Trench 4. The other trenches, 1-3, contained no archaeological remains. Trenches 1 and 4 both contained clay land drains. A service trench was present at the west end of trench 1.

The ditch cut the natural horizon and was sealed by subsoil. The natural substrate comprised firm mid-greyish-brown silty clay and orange mottling, with angular flints and small chalk pebbles. The subsoil, similar across the site, was mid- to dark greyish-brown silty clay with flint and chalk pebbles and was sealed by friable dark greyish-brown silty clay loam topsoil, which was 200-450mm thick (Figs 3 and 4). Trench 1 was slightly different as c10m along the length was cut through an area of gravel and crushed limestone laid for parking. This layer was 200mm thick and cut into the topsoil. The subsoil was also thicker in this trench, up to 380mm.

Full context information is included in Appendix 1.



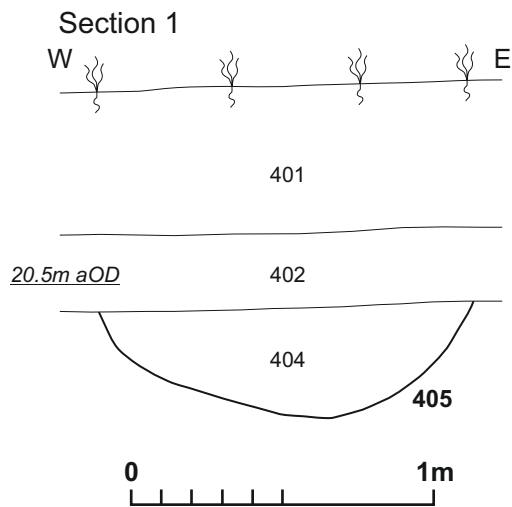
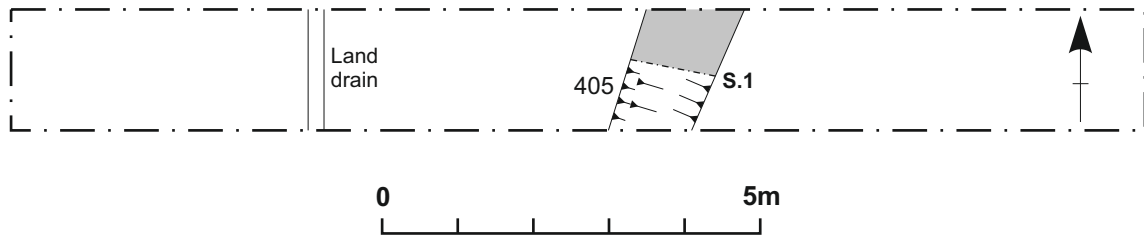
Trench 3, representative section Fig 3

## 6.2 The ditch

Trench 4 was 15m long and 0.77m deep, located towards the southern side of the development area and aligned east to west.

A single linear ditch, 405, was located towards the east end of the trench, aligned south-west to north-east, and continued beyond the limit of excavation. It had a wide U-shaped profile that was 1.20m wide by 0.33m deep, and was filled by mid-greyish-brown silty clay with orange mottling (Fig 4, section 1). Roman pottery was recovered from the fill, together with a small amount of animal bone, which was too badly fragmented to be analysed. The ditch was overlain by mid-greyish-brown silty clay subsoil, with dark greyish-brown silty clay topsoil at the surface.

### Trench 4



Ditch 405, looking south-west

## 7 THE ROMAN POTTERY by Tora Hylton

A total of 10 sherds and crumbs of pottery with a combined weight of 70g were recovered from two deposits in trenches 3 and 4 (Table 2). With the exception of one rim sherd from a necked jar in a shell-gritted fabric, which was recovered from subsoil overlying trench 3, 302, the entire assemblage was recovered from the fill 404 of ditch 405 in trench 4. The pottery comprise undiagnostic body sherds in locally produced greyware and grog-tempered coarseware fabrics, therefore the fabric types have been used as an indicator of date and a late 1st/2nd century date is suggested.

*Table 2: Summary of Roman pottery*

Trench/Context	Fabric	Sherd count	Weight (g)	Comments
3/302 subsoil	Shell-gritted	1	22	Rim sherd
4/404/ditch 404	Grog-tempered ware	2	12	
4/404	Greyware	4	16	
4/404	Shell gritted	1	1	
4/404	Miscellaneous grog-shell tempered ware	1	16	

## 8 CONCLUSION

The evaluation established the presence of a ditch, 405, aligned north-east to south-west and contained pottery dated to the late 1st/2nd century. A small amount of Roman pottery and animal bone was present. The pottery was not abraded, suggesting that it had been broken and quickly deposited within the fill of the ditch together with the animal bone.

The presence of domestic refuse is not unexpected given its proximity to the contemporary Romano-British settlement at Manor Farm, 300m to the south (CHER MCB15469). However, with such little material these finds could easily be casual losses in the fields away from settlement and it was not possible to analyse the animal bone in detail, which may be from a wild source. The ditch is on a completely different alignment to that of the present plot boundaries, which makes it a candidate for antiquity.

A single rim sherd of late 1st/2nd century shell-gritted pottery was present in the subsoil of Trench 3. Trenches 3 and 4 were located to the south of the development area. This suggests that residual finds lie in the soils locally. However, no other features of archaeological interest were present.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BGS 2001 *Solid Geology Map, UK South Sheet, Scale 1:625 000*, British Geological Survey
- Brown, N, and Glazebrook, J, (eds) 2000 *Research and Archaeology, A Framework for the Eastern Counties: 2, Research Agenda and Strategy*, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper, **8**
- Chapman, P, 2014 *Written Scheme of Investigation for land at 6 London Road, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire*, MOLA Northampton
- DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government
- EH 1991 *Management of archaeological projects, second edition (MAP2)*, English Heritage
- EH 2002 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to Theory and Practice for Methods, from sampling to post-excavation*, English Heritage
- EH 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide*, English Heritage
- Glazebrook, J, 1997 *Research and Archaeology, A Framework for the Eastern Counties: 1, Resource Assessment*, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper, **3**
- Gurney, D, 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper, **14**
- IfA 2008a *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists
- IfA 2008b *Standards and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*, Institute for Archaeologists
- IfA 2014 *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists
- LAT 1983 *Soils of Southern England and Wales, 4, Scale 1:250 000*, Lawes Agricultural Trust
- Medlycott, M, and Brown, N, 2008 *Revision of the Regional Archaeological Framework for the Eastern Region*, Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
- Medlycott, M, 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper, **24**
- MGC 1992 *Standards in the Museum care of Archaeological Collections*, Museums and Galleries Commission
- MOLA 2014 *Archaeological fieldwork manual*, MOLA Northampton
- Walker, K, 1990 *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage*, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation
- Watkinson, D, 1998 *First Aid for Finds, 2nd edition*, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation



**APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural (aOD)</b>
1	15m x 1.6m W-E	517527, 292457	21.78m	21.03m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
101	Drive surface	Gravel top layer over crushed limestone base layer	D:0.20m	-
102	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown silty clay loam. Occasional flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.20m-0.40m	-
103	Subsoil	Firm, mid to dark greyish-brown silty clay with flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.10m-0.38m	-
104	Natural	Natural mid grey-brown and orange mottled silty clay with angular flints and rounded, very small chalk pebbles, with patches of mid to dark silty clay and gravel with chalk pebbles.	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural (aOD)</b>
2	4m x1.6m NW-SE	517511, 292452	21.45m	20.85m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
201	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown silty clay loam. Occasional flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.30m-0.45m	-
202	Subsoil	Firm, mid to dark greyish-brown silty clay with flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.15m-0.30m	-
203	Natural	Natural mid grey-brown and orange mottled silty clay with angular flints and rounded, very small chalk pebbles, with patches of mid to dark silty clay and gravel with chalk pebbles.	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural (aOD)</b>
3	15m x1.6m N-S	517510, 292430	21.5m	20.95m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
301	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown silty clay loam. Occasional flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.30m-0.40m	-

YAXLEY, 6 LONDON ROAD

302	Subsoil	Firm, mid to dark greyish-brown silty clay with flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.20m	1st/2nd century Roman pottery, 1 rim sherd
303	Natural	Natural mid grey-brown and orange mottled silty clay with angular flints and rounded, very small chalk pebbles, with patches of mid to dark silty clay and gravel with chalk pebbles.	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	15m x1.6m W-E	517525, 292422	21.5m	20.85m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
401	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown silty clay loam. Occasional flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.40m-0.43m	-
402	Subsoil	Firm, mid to dark greyish-brown silty clay with flint and chalk pebbles	D:0.25m	-
403	Natural	Natural mid grey-brown and orange mottled silty clay with angular flints and rounded, very small chalk pebbles, with patches of mid to dark silty clay and gravel with chalk pebbles.	-	-
404	Fill	Hard, mid grey-brown silty clay with slight orange mottling. Frequent angular flint with small chalk pebbles and charcoal pieces	1.20m wide, 0.33m deep	1st/2nd century Roman pottery, 8 sherds, small amount of animal bone
405	Cut	Ditch, aligned NE-SW with wide, U-shaped profile	1.20m wide, 0.33m deep	-



MOLA  
Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton  
NN4 8BN  
01604 700 493  
[www.mola.org.uk](http://www.mola.org.uk)  
[sparry@mola.org.uk](mailto:sparry@mola.org.uk)