

**Archaeological geophysical survey of land  
East of Watford Road  
Crick, Northamptonshire  
September 2014**

**NHER code: ENN107680**

Report No. 14/201

Authors and illustrators: Carol Simmonds  
John Walford



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**OASIS REPORT**

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-193311	
Project name		Archaeological geophysical survey of land east of Watford Road Crick, Northamptonshire.	
Short description		MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, acting on behalf of Gladman Developments, to undertake geophysical survey of c5.4ha of pasture land to the east of Watford Road, Crick, Northamptonshire. The survey recorded a palimpsest of rectilinear enclosures, ditches and roundhouses of likely Iron Age or Roman date. These remains are overlain, and partially masked, by medieval ridge and furrow earthworks.	
Project type		Geophysical survey	
Site status		None	
Previous work		Desk-based assessment (Butler 2014)	
Current Land use		Pasture	
Future work		Unknown	
Monument type/ period		Iron Age or Roman enclosures, ditches and roundhouses Medieval ridge and furrow	
Significant finds		Undated ditched enclosures	
PROJECT LOCATION			
County		Northamptonshire	
Site address		Watford Road, Crick	
Study area		5.4ha	
OS Easting & Northing		SP 591 718	
Height OD		c 150 aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation		MOLA Northampton	
Project brief originator		Lesley-Anne Mather, Northamptonshire Archaeological Advisor	
Project design originator		MOLA Northampton	
Director/Supervisor		Adam Meadows	
Project Manager		John Walford	
Sponsor or funding body		CgMs Consulting Ltd	
PROJECT DATE			
Start date		22 September 2014	
End date		22 September 2014	
ARCHIVES		Location	Content
Physical		N/A	N/A
Paper		ENN107680	Site survey records
Digital		ADS & MOLA Northampton	Geophysical survey & GIS data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report	
Title		Archaeological geophysical survey of land east of Watford Road, Crick, Northamptonshire, September 2014	
Serial title & volume		MOLA Northampton Reports 14/201	
Author(s)		Carol Simmonds and John Walford	
Page numbers		13 pages text and illustrations	
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# Archaeological geophysical survey of land east of Watford Road, Crick, Northamptonshire September 2014

## ABSTRACT

*MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, acting on behalf of Gladman Developments, to undertake geophysical survey of c 5.4ha of pasture land to the east of Watford Road, Crick, Northamptonshire. The survey recorded a palimpsest of rectilinear enclosures, ditches and roundhouses of likely Iron Age or Roman date. These remains are overlain, and partially masked, by medieval ridge and furrow earthworks.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, acting on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd, to undertake geophysical survey of c 5.4ha of pasture land to the east of Watford Road, Crick, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 591 718; Fig 1). Gladman Developments Ltd are seeking planning permission to construct residential properties and associated infrastructure on the site.

The geophysical survey followed the production of a desk-based assessment (Butler 2014) which concluded that the site had low archaeological potential for periods other than medieval. There are upstanding ridge and furrow earthworks, of presumed medieval date in part of the site.

The survey was undertaken on 22nd September 2014, and was recorded on the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record under event number ENN 107680.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Location and geology

The survey area is located on the southern edge of Crick and extends as far south as Field House Farm (Fig 1). It is bounded to the west by Watford Road, to the north by Boat Horse Lane and by agricultural land to the south and east. It is divided into two pasture fields, the eastern of which is bisected longitudinally by a farm track. A set of overhead electricity cables cross the southern portions of both fields.

The survey area lies on a shoulder of high ground, the crest of which stands at approximately 150m above Ordnance Datum and overlooks the village to the north. A gentle but irregular slope leads down to the northern end of the site, which stands at c 142m aOD.

The geology of the survey area comprises siltstones and mudstones of the Dyrham Formation and limestones of the Marlstone Rock Formation. In the southernmost part of the site, these strata are overlain with superficial deposits of diamicton (Oadby member) tills and glaciofluvial sands and gravels (Butler 2014 and BGS Geo Index).

## 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

A desk-based assessment for the survey area has been written by CgMs Consulting (Butler 2014) and its results are briefly summarised here. The desk-based assessment incorporated the data from Northamptonshire's Historic Environment Record (NHER) and included historic map regression.

There are no statutorily designated sites within the survey area and the only NHER reference within its boundary relates to well-preserved ridge and furrow earthworks (8074/0/12). However the site sits in a landscape rich in archaeological sites dating from prehistory to the present day.

A zone of extensive Iron Age settlement has been excavated at Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT), 2.5km to the west of the survey area (Masefield *et al* forthcoming), and a few Iron Age pits were discovered during recent excavations at Oak Lane, Crick (Markus 2014), but there are no other records for prehistoric occupation in the immediate vicinity. There is more information in the NHER for the Roman period; unsurprisingly as the site lies only 1.3km to the east of Watling Street. Several putative areas of Roman occupation have been located within 1km of the survey area, around Crick village and on the line of its bypass.

Excavations have shown that Crick was settled in the late Saxon period (Markus 2014), although its first historical reference is in the Domesday survey of 1086. Its medieval core is thought to have been larger than the core of the modern village, as there were deserted closes surviving as earthwork remains until relatively recently. The Royal Commission volume covering Crick and the earthwork remains indicated that part of Crick may have been abandoned by the late 14th century (RCHME 1981).

The earthworks and historic maps illustrated in the desk-based assessment suggest that the survey area lay undeveloped and was farmland from the medieval period. Following enclosure the survey area was subdivided into three small rectangular fields, two of which were later amalgamated to form the present eastern field.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

The magnetometer survey was conducted with Bartington Grad 601-2, twin sensor array, vertical component fluxgate gradiometers (Bartington and Chapman 2003). These are standard instruments for archaeological survey and can resolve magnetic variations as slight as 0.1 nanoTesla (nT).

An independent network of 30m grid squares was established across each of the fields to be surveyed. These grids were set out with a tape measure and optical square and were tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid by means of a Leica Viva GPS. The gradiometers were carried at a brisk but steady pace through each grid square, collecting data along 1m spaced traverse lines. Measurements were automatically triggered every 0.25m along the traverses, giving a total of 3600 measurements per square. All fieldwork methods complied with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and by the Institute for Archaeologists (EH 2008; IfA 2011).

The survey data was processed using Geoplot 3.00v software. The striping was removed using the 'Zero Mean Traverse' function and destaggering of the data was performed where necessary. The processed data is presented in this report in the form of greyscale plots at ranges of +4nT (black) to -4nT (white) for the eastern field and +10nT (black) to -10nT (white) for the western field. These have been scaled, rotated and resampled (georectified) for display against the Ordnance Survey base mapping (Fig 2) and are shown with an interpretative overlay in Figure 3. Separate plots of the unprocessed data are presented in Figure 4.

## 4 SURVEY RESULTS

The survey has detected an arrangement of linear and amorphous magnetic anomalies which represent part of a complex of ditched enclosures and associated remains of probable Iron Age or Roman date. These remains are overlain by medieval to early post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, represented by sets of parallel linear anomalies. A few magnetic anomalies of recent origin have also been detected.

The archaeological remains cover at least 3ha, with a concentration towards the high ground in the south of the survey area. They extend across both fields, but have not been clearly detected in the western field due to masking by the exceptionally strong anomalies from the overlying ridge and furrow earthworks.

In the eastern field, the main archaeological features are two conjoined rectilinear enclosures, oriented on a west-south-west to east-north-east axis. These intersect to the north with a less regular pattern of smaller enclosures, which probably belong to a separate phase of the site's development. Further north, the survey has detected several lengths of ditch which do not form a particularly coherent or intelligible pattern.

A penannular anomaly at the southern end of the eastern field is likely to represent a roundhouse approximately 10m in diameter, with a possible entrance to the east. Another roundhouse may be represented by a more fragmentary anomaly which lies approximately 40m to the north-west.

In the south-western corner of the western field, there is a complex of roughly square enclosures, from which four parallel linear ditches extend to the east. Seventy meters north of this complex there is a separate enclosure which appears, from the interrupted form of its anomaly, to have suffered extensive plough damage. Other ditches have been detected at various places within the field, but they are too scattered and disjointed to merit individual description.

The ridge and furrow in both fields is represented by sets of parallel linear anomalies with slight but distinctive S-shaped curves. One set, which covers the greater part of both fields, represents a furlong with furrows aligned north to south. To the north of this, in the eastern field, the survey has detected part of a separate furlong with east to west aligned furrows. At the southern end of the western field there is linear trend running perpendicularly across the furrows, perhaps representing a former plough headland..

At the northern end of the survey area, a large area of very intense magnetic disturbance, c 45m long by 24m wide, has been detected. It perhaps represents a former quarry pit infilled with scrap metal, cinders, brick rubble or other magnetic rubbish. However, there is no evidence of such a pit on any of the historic Ordnance Survey maps (Butler 2014) and the anomalies could have another cause, such as a layer of recent made ground levelling a natural depression.

In the southern corner of the eastern field there is a small area of magnetic disturbance indicating a deposit of hardcore where a modern farm track approaches a gateway. To its east, there is a very large magnetic dipole cause by a telegraph pole. Another pole is represented by a similarly large anomaly in the eastern field. A few other dipolar anomalies, mostly quite small, represent a random scatter of ferrous debris across the two fields.



## 5 CONCLUSION

The geophysical survey has identified a substantial area of probable Iron Age or Roman settlement located on high ground overlooking the medieval and modern village of Crick. It comprises a network of enclosures, ditches and roundhouses, all of which are overlain and partially masked by well-defined ridge and furrow earthworks of medieval to early post-medieval date. The survey results suggest that the archaeology may be well preserved under the ridges, but less so where it has been cut by the furrows.

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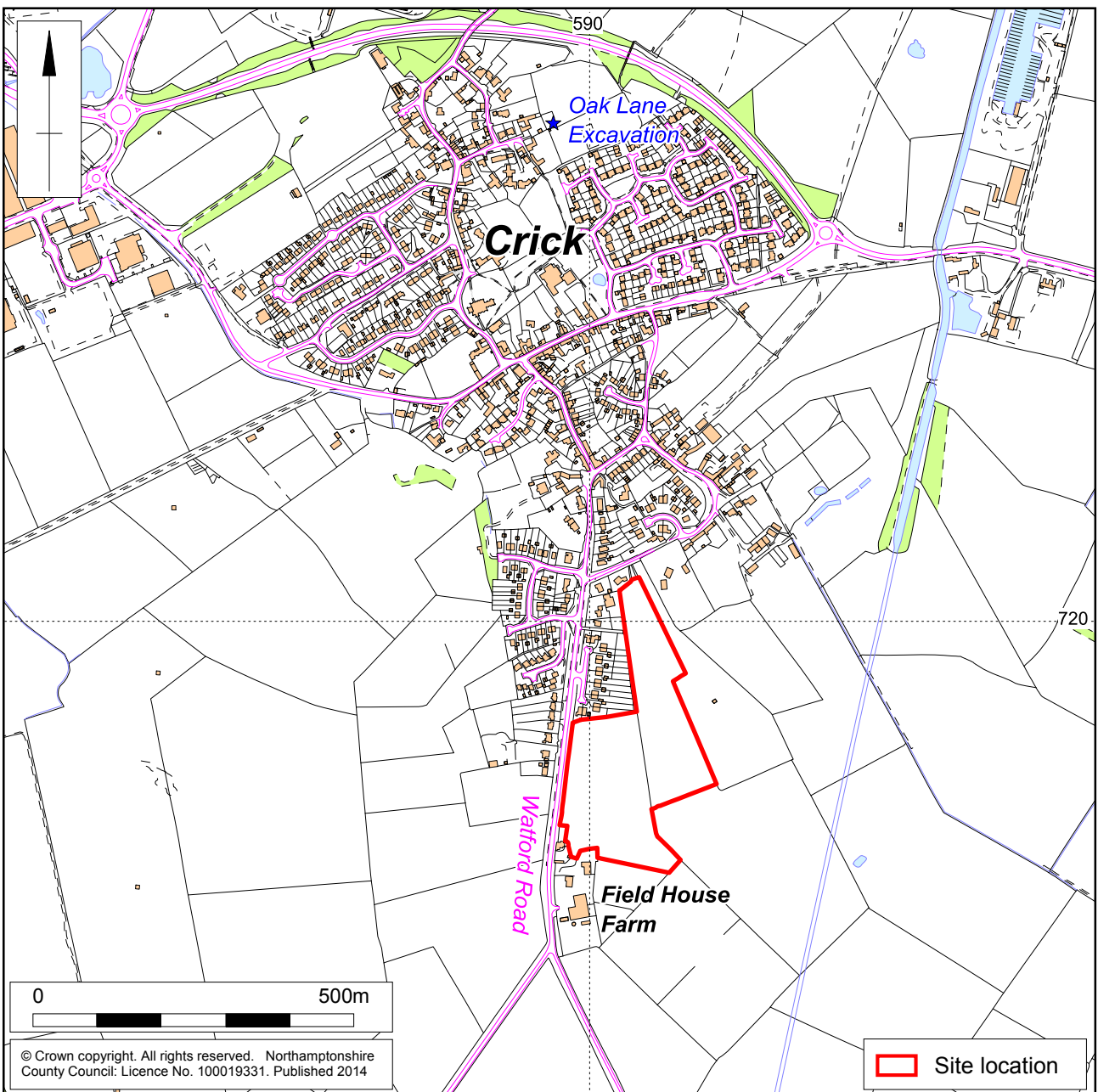
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Scale 1:10,000

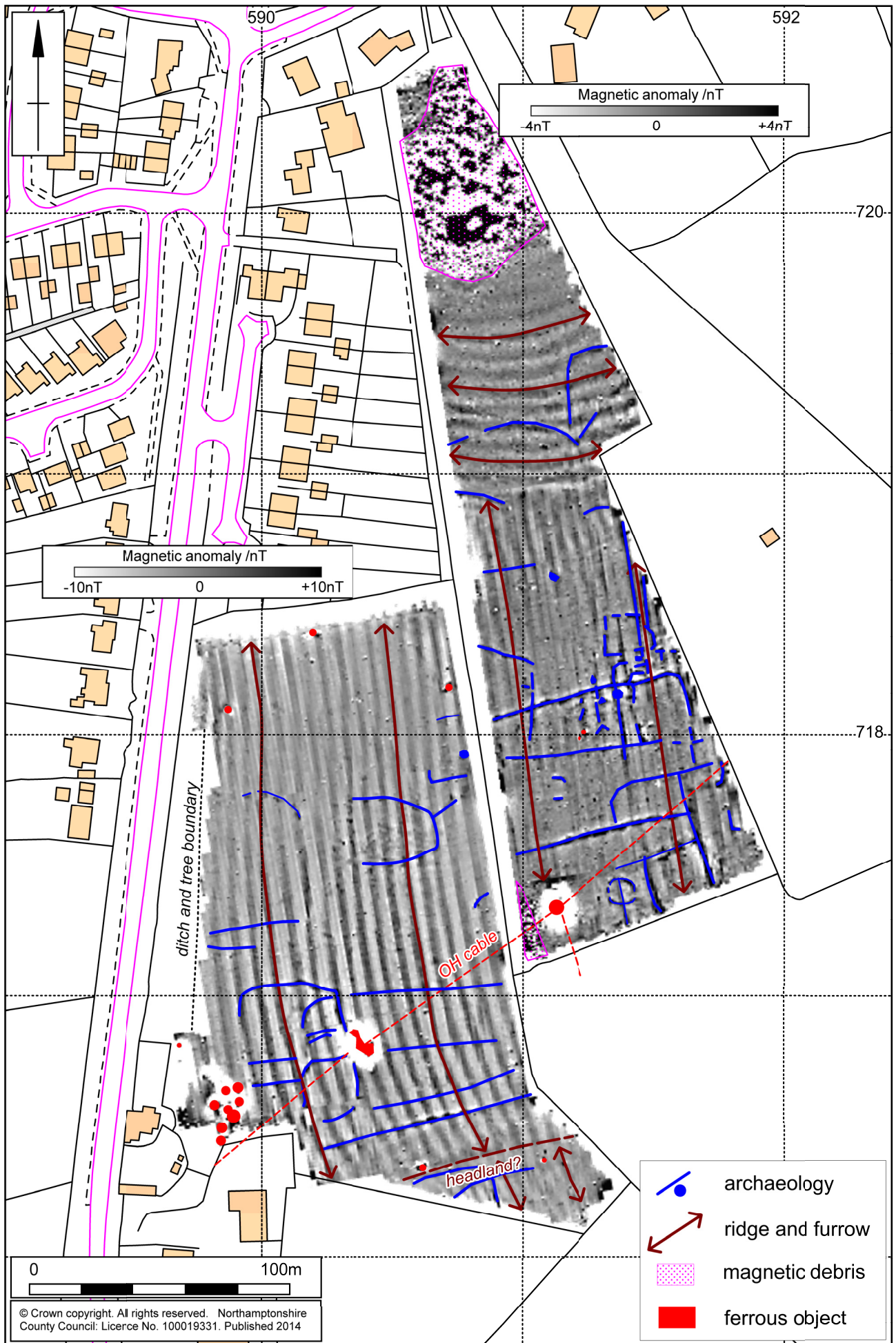
Site location Fig 1



1:2,000

Magnetometer survey results Fig 2





1:2,000

Magnetometer survey interpretation Fig 3



1:2,000

Unprocessed magnetometer data Fig 4

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