



Archaeological Observation and Recording at Forty Hall, London Borough of Enfield January to August 2014

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Author: Carol Simmonds

Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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Author: Carol Simmonds

Illustrator: Amir Bassir

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MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 700 493
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk

STAFF

Project Manager: Anthony Maull Cert Arch

Fieldwork: Carol Simmonds BA PlfA

Anthony Maull

Gemma Hewitt BA

Kirsty Beecham BSc

Simon Markus BA

James Ladocha BA

Author: Carol Simmonds

Illustrators: Amir Bassir BSc

Pottery: Paul Blinkhorn BTech

Ceramic building material: Pat Chapman BA CMS AlfA

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-193626	
Project name	Archaeological Observation and Recording at Forty Hall, London Borough of Enfield, January to August 2014		
Short description	Landscaping works at Forty Hall, Enfield were monitored by MOLA Northampton, formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology, between January and August 2014. The works were undertaken as part of Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund project to reconstruct the 18th-century designed landscape. It focussed on the desilting of the ornamental lake in front of the Hall, the Mound and features in the Pleasure Grounds. The original 17th-century form of the lake was thought to have been much smaller and deeper. Its 18th- and 19th- century form was substantially larger and shallow. Two specimen trees along the line of the southern path were thought to be the centre pieces of 'roundels'. They may have replaced statues, although there was no evidence for that.		
Project type	Observation and Recording		
Site status	Registered Park and Garden		
Previous work	Conservation Plan (Peats and Drury 2007) Geophysical survey and trial trenching (Prentice 2010), Geophysical survey (Simmonds 2013a). Survey and trial trenching (Simmonds 2013b)		
Current Land use	Woodland and landscape parkland		
Future work	-		
Monument type/ period	Post-medieval garden landscaping, post-medieval and modern truncation and dumping		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	London Borough of Enfield (LBE), Greater London		
Site address	Forty Hall		
Study area	C1.6ha		
OS Easting & Northing	TQ 33710 98525		
Height OD	51- 41m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (now MOLA Northampton)		
Project brief originator	London Borough of Enfield/ Drury Macpherson		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology (Walker 2012)		
Director/Supervisor	C Simmonds		
Project Manager	Stephen Parry/ Anthony Maull (MOLA), Paul Drury (Drury Macpherson Partnership)		
Sponsor or funding body	Drury Macpherson Partnership/ London Borough of Enfield		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	January 2014		
End date	August 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location	Content	
Physical	FFH11	1 small box of pottery and brick	
Paper		1 archive box of site records	
Digital		DXF data, pdf of report and photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title			
Serial title & volume	Report 14/199		
Author(s)	Carol Simmonds		
Page numbers	25 pages text and illustrations		
Date	November 2014		

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Archaeological Observation and Recording at Forty Hall, London Borough of Enfield January to August 2014

Abstract

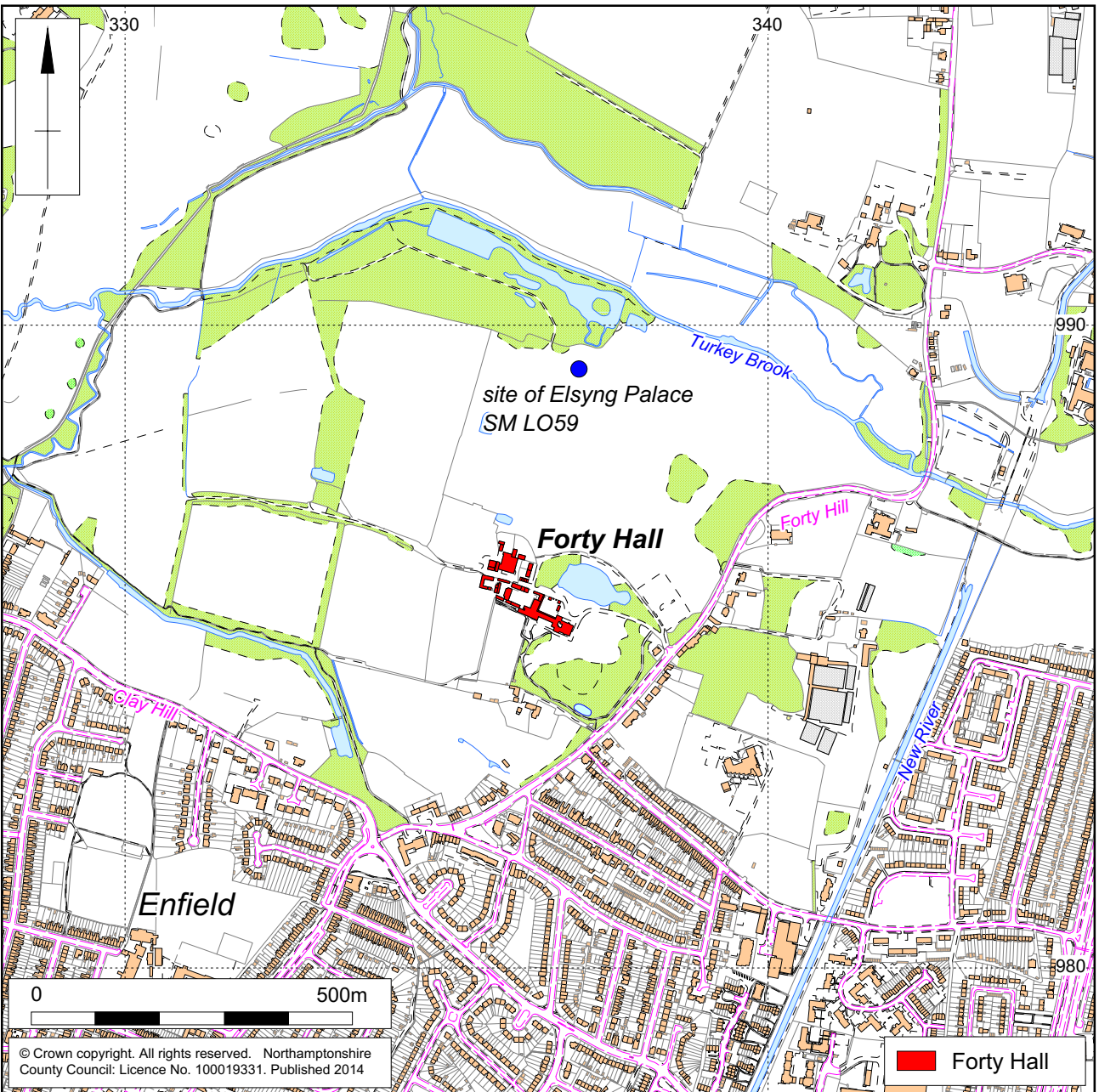
Landscaping works at Forty Hall, Enfield were monitored by MOLA Northampton, formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology, between January and August 2014. The works were undertaken as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund project to reconstruct the 18th-century designed landscape. It focussed on the desilting of the ornamental lake in front of the Hall, the Mound and features in the Pleasure Grounds. The original 17th-century form of the lake was thought to have been much smaller and deeper. Its 18th- and 19th-century form was substantially larger and shallow. Two specimen trees along the line of the southern path were thought to be the centre pieces of 'roundels'. They may have replaced statues, although there was no evidence for them.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA Northampton, formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by Drury Macpherson Partnership, acting on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield (LBE), to undertake a programme of archaeological observation and recording at Forty Hall, Enfield, North London (NGR TQ 33710 98525, Fig 1). The works were undertaken between January and August 2014.

The works formed part Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' estate restoration. The areas of observation and recording undertaken by MOLA lay within the Pleasure Grounds to the east of the Hall. They comprised shallow leaf vegetation/soil removal prior to the re-surfacing of a sinuous path on an 18th-century prospect mound, mechanical removal of accumulated silts from the Ornamental Lake east of the mound and the removal of a small island. Other works included topsoil / subsoil strip of temporary 'lagoons' to hold silt removed from the lake, the partial re-excavation of a former Pond or Bog Garden in the south-eastern corner of the Pleasure Grounds and the investigation of two possible roundels, thought to be positioned along the line of the southern path. Observation of a planting bed within the walled garden also took place. Other work around the Hall and within the Scheduled Monument area associated with Elsyng Palace (SM LO59) was monitored by Enfield Archaeological Society (EAS).

This tranche of works followed building recording of The Summerhouse (Prentice 2010b) and archaeological trial trenching undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2010 (Prentice 2010a) and later work in August 2013 (Simmonds 2013a) and in November 2013 (Simmonds 2013b). The 2013 works followed a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Walker 2012).



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

Forty Hall is situated to the north of Enfield, Greater London. It comprises the Hall and ancillary buildings set within designed parkland. The eastern boundary is defined by Forty Hill and the modern suburbs of Enfield lie to the south.

Forty Hall stands slightly to the east of the highest point of Forty Hill, a remnant of the upper terrace of the River Lea where the natural geology has been mapped as London Clay with a capping of Boyne Hill Gravel (Gillam 1997). The surviving natural topography suggests that the hall sits at approximately 47m aOD and slopes down gradually to the north (towards Turkey Brook) and to the south-east (to the junction of Forty Hill and Goat Lane).

The hall itself is early 17th century in origin but was expanded and remodelled in the 18th and 19th centuries. The surviving landscaping around the Hall is largely 18th century in design although elements have been remodelled.

2.2 Historical background

A full historical background is provided in the report on the earlier archaeological works undertaken in 2010 (Prentice). Its conclusions and additional details are briefly summarised below.

Forty Hall was built for a London merchant, Sir Nicholas Rainton c1629. His nephew, also Nicholas, expanded the estate northwards to include the remains of the Tudor and earlier Elsyng Palace (Fig 1) which he demolished and added the stable block west of the house. The exterior of Forty Hall was remodelled c1708 and the present landscape setting largely developed during the 18th century out of a formal 17th-century landscape, elements of which still survive to the present day. The house changed little during the 19th-century until significant alterations in 1897. The house and park were acquired from the Parker-Bowles family by the Local Authority, now the London Borough of Enfield in 1951.

The house and stable courtyard gateway are Listed Grade I and the stable block and subsidiary buildings Grade II. The park is registered at Grade II and includes the site of Elsyng Palace and its medieval predecessor which is a Scheduled Monument (SM LO59).

2.3 Previous works

Forty Hall and the site of Elsyng Palace have been subject to considerable interest and archaeological scrutiny. Since 2003, the Enfield Archaeological Society has undertaken a program of geophysical survey and trial excavation at the site of Elsyng Palace and within the grounds of Forty Hall. Some of the work was in response to the plantation of saplings and monitoring of the laying of gravel paths (EAS <http://www.enfarchsoc.org/index.html>).

Previous work by Northamptonshire Archaeology included an archaeological survey and evaluation in the park which established that elements of designed landscaping within the Pleasure Grounds, known now only from documents, survive within the ground as buried features (Prentice 2010a). Building recording of the 18th-century remains of the Summerhouse also took place in 2010 (Prentice 2010b)

Trial trenching also took place on the Mound and ascertained that gravel paths, presumably relating to the 18th-century garden design, lay beneath a thin layer of leaf mould. This phase of works ascertained that there was an area of modern dumping in the south-eastern corner of the Mound (Prentice 2010a, trench 16).

An area to the north of the Upper Lake has been identified for the creation of a temporary silt lagoon for the material from the Upper Lake (Simmonds 2013a). This is adjacent to an area that was previously proposed as an extension to the car park (Prentice 2010a). In both areas magnetometry survey was carried out but did not identify the remnants of brick kilns, instead the ferrous anomalies recorded were likely to have been disturbance in the topsoil.

In November 2013, Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook a further phase of evaluation focussing on the Mound and the Bog Garden (Simmonds 2013b). This phase of works comprised a topographic and earthwork survey of the Mound and hand dug test pits to help further define the paths. Trenches were also excavated in the Bog Garden, manually excavated or using a small mechanical excavator. The presumed original form of the 'pond' in the Bog Garden area had been truncated by later extraction and dumping of domestic waste. However it is believed that the fragmentary line of the northern edge of the 'pond' was visible, cut into gravels.

3 METHODOLOGY

MOLA observed the landscaping works in the areas of the 18th-century landscaped grounds to the east of the Hall. This comprised the Mound, Ornamental Lake silts, Lagoons, the Bog Garden and 'leat', ascertaining the position of two roundels and limited works within the Walled Garden. All other areas of works, particularly in the Scheduled Monument area and the courtyards were undertaken by Enfield Archaeological Society (EAS).

Detailed methodologies and constraints for each area are defined below as are the recording strategy.

3.1 The Mound

This phase of watching brief observed the mechanical excavation along the sinuous path which was then reconstructed with a rammed hogging layer, edged with timber. Initially some of the trial trenches previously excavated in 2011 and 2013 were manually reopened to expose the gravel paths. A small mechanical excavator then proceeded to remove leaf mould / topsoil deposit from the projected line of the path where practicable, following the remnant gravel paths, and existing contours. The presence of mature trees and roots meant that the line had to be altered in places. The new path was no wider than 1.5m.

3.2 The Ornamental Lake

The ornamental lake to the front of the hall was drained and desilted in two stages. An island was removed and repositioned within the eastern side of the lake in order to open up the vista to the north of the lake and towards the site of Elsyng Palace. The lake was divided by means of a coffer dam and the western half was drained and desilted first. The silts were removed using a mechanical excavator and placed in the silt lagoon areas for reuse as fertiliser at a later date.

3.3 The silt lagoons

The area strip for the silt lagoons comprised two areas to the north and west of the car park. The northern part was much reduced owing to its close proximity to the

boundary of the Scheduled Monument. In January 2014 the areas were stripped to a depth of c0.20m using a mechanical excavator fitted with a ditching bucket

3.4 The Roundels and Walled Garden

A small mechanical excavator was used to strip topsoil from the site of one roundel adjacent to the Walled Garden. The location of the other roundel, to the east, was dominated by a mature tree and apart from probing by hand was left unexcavated.

The excavation of one of the small planting beds within the Walled Garden was observed.

3.5 The Bog Garden and 'leat'

The observation works in the Bog Garden comprised the monitoring of the strip of a rectangular piece of ground, 30m west to east and 8m north to south. Originally the ground was to be reduced by 0.80m but owing to the presence of mature trees and an electricity cable the cut was restricted to a depth of 0.32m at the eastern end.

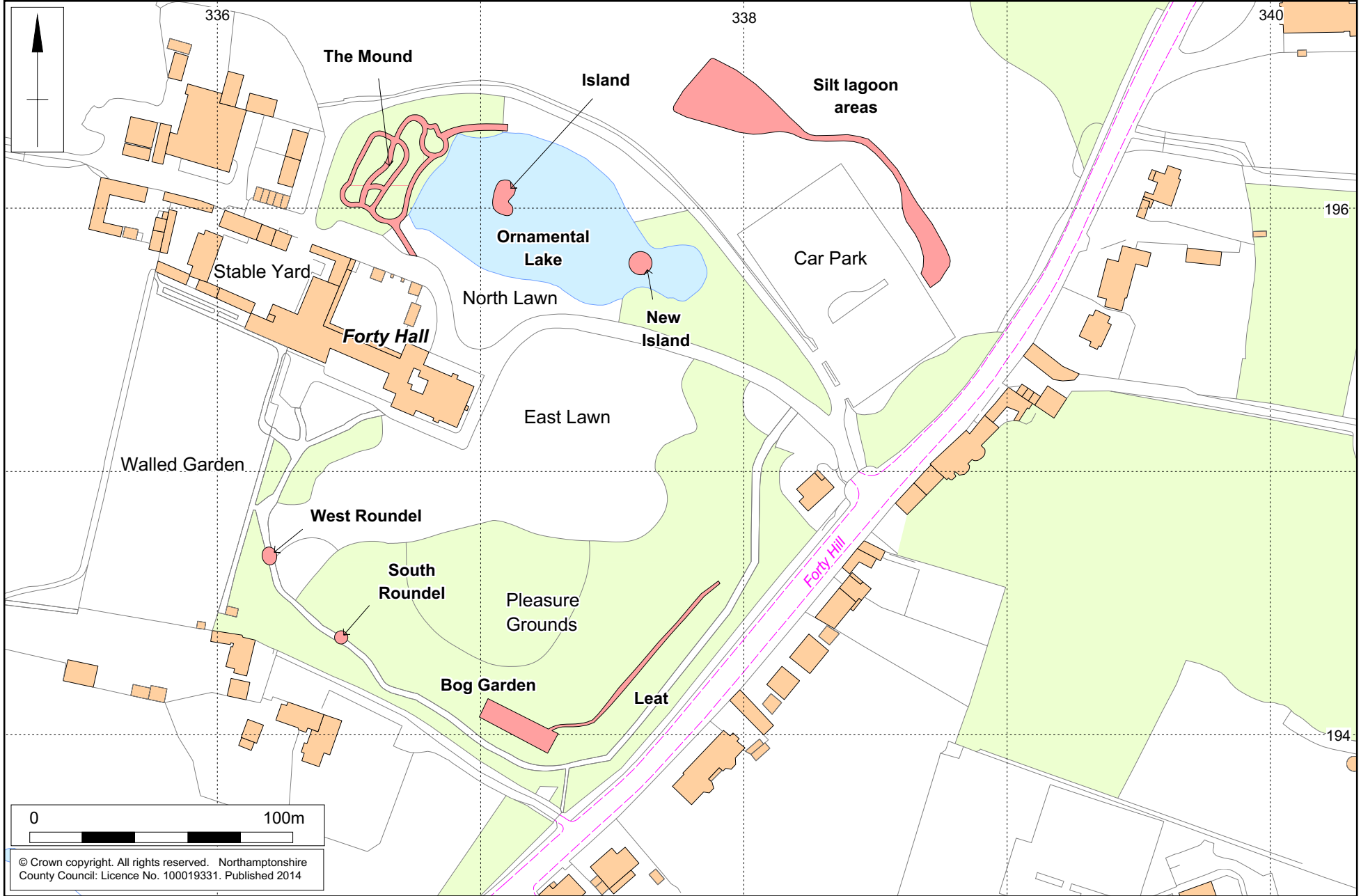
The 'leat' which comprised a linear cut roughly aligned south-west to north-east was to be redefined by removing silt material 0.40m thick. A small mechanical excavator was used to remove the silt.

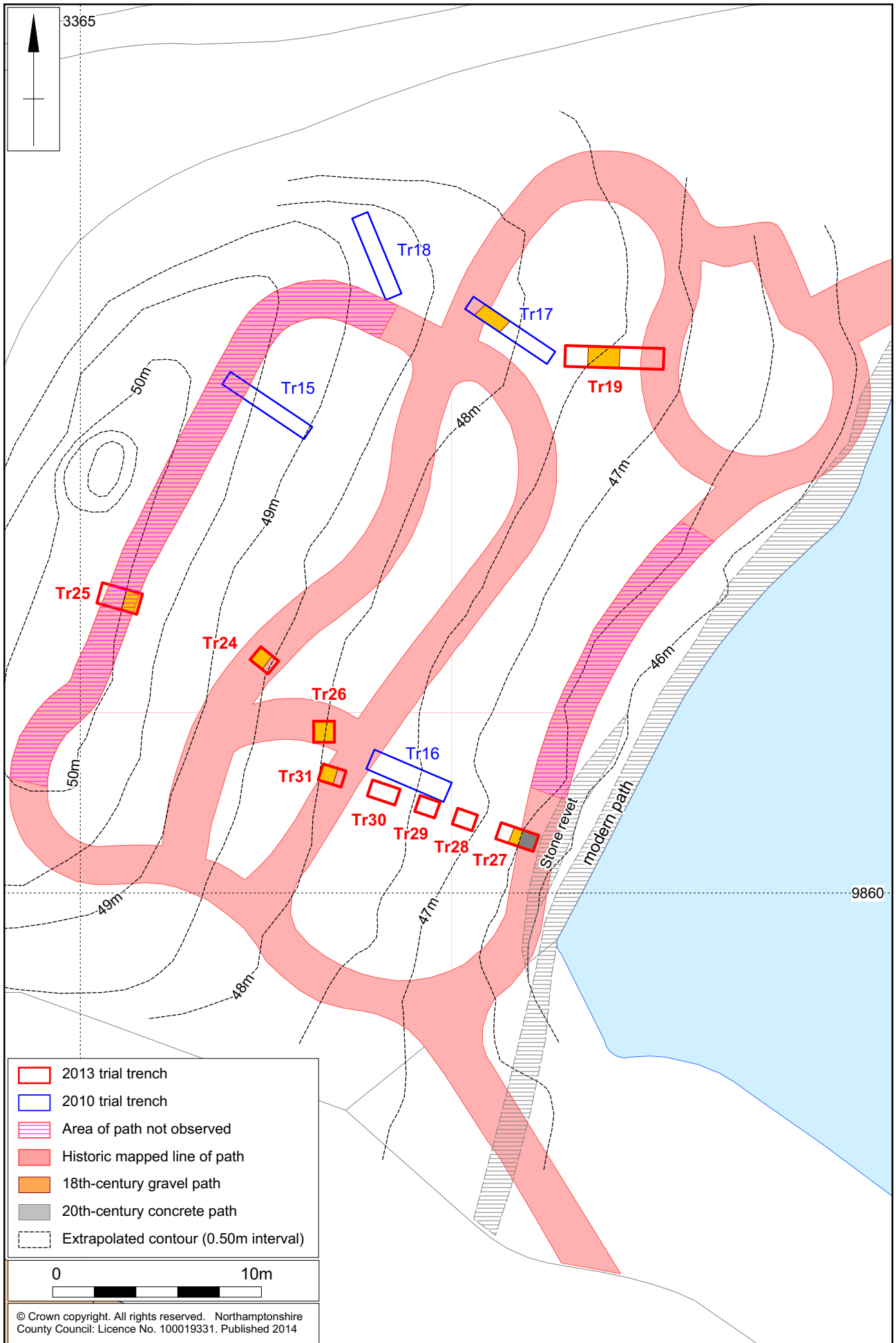
3.6 Recording

All archaeological deposits and artefacts encountered during the course of excavation were fully recorded in order to characterise and interpret their date and relationships to any features. Recording followed standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014), the standards of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008, 2014) and English Heritage (1991, 2007). All records compiled during fieldwork were filed into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive. All archaeological deposits were given individual context numbers and were described on pro-forma context sheets, including details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Photographs were taken as 35mm monochrome negatives and digital photographs. Artefacts were collected by hand and retained, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from site.

Scale 1:2,000 (A4)

Areas of archaeological observation Fig 2





Scale 1:250 (A3)

Fig 3

4 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

4.1 The Mound

Archaeological observation of the mound comprised a strip of leaf mould, c1.5m wide and up to 0.10m deep (Fig 4). The gravel path surface was patchy in terms of survival owing to extensive root disturbance and *in-situ* mature trees trunks, which were to be retained for ecological and faunal reasons. Owing to the above the observation of this phase of work was problematical and on several occasions it was decided that the former path would have made use of the existing contours of the slope (Fig 5). Therefore mechanical excavation followed whenever possible the flatter areas.



Excavation on the Mound in progress, looking north-west Fig 4



The completed mound and path, looking south Fig 5

4.2 The Ornamental Lake

Following draining of the lake, mechanical excavation of the exposed silt (3300) was undertaken. The very dark brown-grey silt was on average 0.30m thick around the edge of the modern lake. However in the western part of the lake the basin (roughly 40m in diameter) gradually started to shelf down from 0.40m to a depth of approximately 1.0m in the centre (Fig 6). Here it was reported by the machine operator that there was a distinct lower sub-circular shaped area, approximately 20m in diameter and up to 1.0m deep. The silts were observed as overlying pockets of compact grey-yellow clay (3303) and a layer of dark brown gravel (3302). It is likely that this horizon of gravel formed the later surface of the lake.

The evidence for the c40m diameter area roughly corresponds with the location of the original smaller circular pond identified on a survey map of the water level (LBE 2010).



The ornamental lake during desilting, looking south Fig 6

The oval shaped island, 10m long, 4m wide and up to 1.0m high was also removed during the works. This island [3306] was constructed of a ring of concrete filled sandbags with hardcore infill (3304) and a friable grey-brown silty clay (3305) surface.

In the north-western corner of the lake there was a layer of accumulated debris (3301) which comprised coarse yellow-brown gravel in a matrix of silts and sands.



The new island and ornamental lake, looking south Fig 7

4.3 The temporary silt lagoons

The topsoil (3200) comprised a friable very dark brown sandy loam, 0.20m thick which overlay a thin layer of subsoil (3201) of friable dark yellow-grey silty sands. In places natural gravels and clays (3202) were visible (Fig 8).

Nineteenth-century pottery was recovered from the topsoil. No archaeological features were present.



The northern lagoon strip, looking west Fig 8

4.4 The Roundels and Walled Garden

An area measuring 5.6m by 5.4m was stripped of topsoil (3501) to a depth of 0.13m around the putative western roundel in order to re expose the original path surface (Fig 2). A small area of gravel path was identified to the west of a large specimen tree (Fig 9) and a discontinuous area of brick edging (Section 5.2) was found to the east. The bricks were similar in nature to part of the enclosing walled garden.



The specimen tree (left hand side), looking east Fig 9

The eastern roundel was inaccessible due to the presence of a large specimen tree and other trees and shrubs.

The roundels were believed to have originally been the position of statues. However, given the size of the trees and lack of evidence, this is open to debate.

A small 'knot garden' bed within the walled garden had been recently excavated and planted. Its depth of 0.15m was thought to have minimal impact on underlying deposits.

4.5 The Bog Garden and 'leat'

A rectangular area, 30m west to east and 8m north to south, was stripped of topsoil to 0.30m deep (Fig 10). Exposed mixed clay deposits similar to those recorded in trenches 20 (2002) and 23 (2302) (Simmonds 2013) were observed.



The Bog Garden strip, looking east Fig 10

In the north-eastern corner of the strip an area of gravel similar to (2207) (Simmonds 2013) was identified. It is possible that this marks the northern edge of the original cut.

The silts (3401) of the leat [3400] leading into the original bog garden area were removed by a small mechanical excavator. The leat was up to 1.0m wide but its full depth was not ascertained as only 0.40m of the silt was to be removed. The silts comprised friable organic dark brown silty clay.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 Post-medieval pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised five sherds with a total weight of 60g. It was all from the topsoil around the silt lagoons (3200), and comprised fragments of plates and bowls in Transfer-printed Whiteware, Museum of London Type-Series fabric TPW (eg Vince 1985). It is all of mid-late 19th century date.

5.2 Brick by Pat Chapman

One brick, c 225mm long by 95mm wide and 70mm thick ($8\frac{7}{8}$ x $3\frac{3}{4}$ x $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches), came from the brick edging (3503) in the area of the western roundel. It appears to be a yellow London stock brick which has been overfired, causing the brick to bloat slightly and become blackened on some surfaces and vesicular cindery pale grey on others. It is likely to be of 18th to early 19th century date.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological observation and recording exercise during the ground and landscaping works at Forty Hall clarified the form of the 18th and 19th century park landscape, where it had not been truncated by later activity.

The observation of the strip of the pathways on the Mound further defined the original line of the paths. Where the gravel surface survived it was heavily disturbed by tree and shrub roots, however, its long term survival was assured as it will be preserved under matting and a new gravel/hogging surface.

The desilting exercise of the ornamental lake comprised the removal of the later silts and did not impact on the gravel and clay lining. The island, demarcated by concrete filled sandbags, was demonstrably 20th century in date. This island was mechanically removed and re-established within the eastern side of the lake thereby opening up the vista from the house towards the northern part of the park (Fig 11), one of the key objectives of the landscaping works. Although the work in the lake did not recover any archaeological artefacts it could be suggested that the outline of the original 17th-century circular pond survives and that the lake was enlarged in the 18th century. The original lake is thought to be approximately 40m in diameter, corresponding with data gathered by LBE. There is a deeper basin (between 0.40m and 1.0m) in the centre of the lake located on a line between the hall and the lime avenue.



The re-established vista from the hall, looking north Fig 11

The stripping of the silt lagoon areas did not adversely impact the shallow subsoil or natural substrate and no archaeological features were visible. It should be noted that no definite features were recorded in the geophysical survey (Prentice 2010a and Simmonds 2013a) and the dipolar anomalies are likely to be remnant metal objects in the topsoil.

The works in the Pleasure Grounds, which included attempting to establish the exact location of the roundels, the Bog Garden limits and the leat were either of minimal impact or inconclusive. The roundels identified on the historic maps were thought to comprise a central statue with the path circuiting around it. The evidence from the archaeological works suggests that if there were statues present in the two locations they were subsequently replaced with specimen trees.

The strip of the Bog Garden comprised the shallow removal of topsoil and part of the overburden or infill recorded in the evaluation (Simmonds 2013b) and did not expand on the previous findings. The fragmentary, original northern edge of the Bog Garden/pond was identified, supporting the evidence recovered from trench 22. The removal of the silts from the leat did not impact on the surrounding ground and its full depth was not ascertained.

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V2 4th December 2014

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY**Silt Lagoon areas**

<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3200	Topsoil	Friable very dark brown sandy loam	0.20m thick	19 th century pottery
3201	Subsoil	Friable dark yellow-grey silty sands	Up to 0.10m thick	
3202	Natural	Gravels and clays		

Ornamental lake

<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3300	Lake silts	Dark brown-grey silts	0.40m- 1.0m thick	
3301	Layer/ debris	Coarse yellow-brown gravel in a matrix of silts and sands	Unexcavated	
3302	Gravel lining	Dark brown gravel	Unexcavated	
3303	Clay lining	Compact grey-yellow clay	Unexcavated	
3304	Infill of 3306	Hardcore	0.70m thick	
3305	Infill of 3306	Friable grey-brown silty clay	0.30m thick	
3306	Construction ring for island	Concrete filled sandbags	10m long, 4m wide up to 1.0m high	

Leat

<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3400	Infill of 3401 leat	Friable, dark brown silty clays with organic material including leaf mold	1.0m wide At least 0.40m thick	
3401	Cut of leat Filled with 3400	Linear	1.0m wide At least 0.40m deep	

Western roundel

<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3501	Topsoil/turf	Brown clays	0.13m thick	
3502	Subsoil	Soft buff sandy soils	At least 0.18m thick	
3503	Brick edging	Discontinuous line of bricks. Vitreous, local hand made each measuring 0.25m x 0.10m x 0.06m		Brick retained for reporting



MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 700 493
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk