



Trial trench evaluation on land at 15 Guilsborough Road West Haddon, Northamptonshire

December 2014

Report No. 14/271

Author: Mo Muldowney

Illustrator: James Ladocha



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on land at 15 Guilsborough Road
West Haddon, Northamptonshire
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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molarnort1 - 198877	
Project name	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 15 Guilsborough Road, West Haddon		
Short description (250 words maximum)	MOLA Northampton was commissioned by New Mears Homes to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 15 Guilsborough Road, West Haddon, Northamptonshire prior to the proposed development of the site. Three trenches were excavated. Four ditches of uncertain date and two post-medieval sand-extraction pits were identified.		
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Evaluation		
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None		
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	None		
Current Land use	Garden		
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown		
Monument type/ period	Ditch, pre-medieval; pits, post-medieval		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	Pottery, clay tobacco-pipe, animal bone		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address (including postcode)	15 Guilsborough Road, West Haddon NN		
Study area (sq.m or ha)	c 0.16ha		
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	SP 6320 7190		
Height OD	175m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	NCC		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray		
Project Manager	Liz Muldowney		
Sponsor or funding body	New Mears Homes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date/End date	15/12/2014 - 15/12/2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical	Northampton Archive store ENN107880	Pottery, animal bone, clay tobacco pipe	
Paper		Site file, drawings, photographs	
Digital		Mapinfo plans, Word report, photographs, survey data	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	Trial trench evaluation on land at 15 Guilsborough Road, West Haddon, Northamptonshire December 2014		
Serial title & volume	14/271		
Author(s)	Mo Muldowney		
Page numbers	17		
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Abstract

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by New Mears Homes to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 15 Guilsborough Road, West Haddon, Northamptonshire prior to the proposed development of the site. Three trenches were excavated. Four ditches of uncertain date and two post-medieval sand-extraction pits were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by New Mears Homes on behalf of their clients, to carry out a trial trench evaluation of c 0.16ha of land at 15 Guilsborough Road, West Haddon, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 6320 7190, Fig 1).

Northamptonshire County Council's Assistant Archaeological Advisor (NCCAAA) advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area. The requirements were outlined in a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA (Muldowney 2014).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

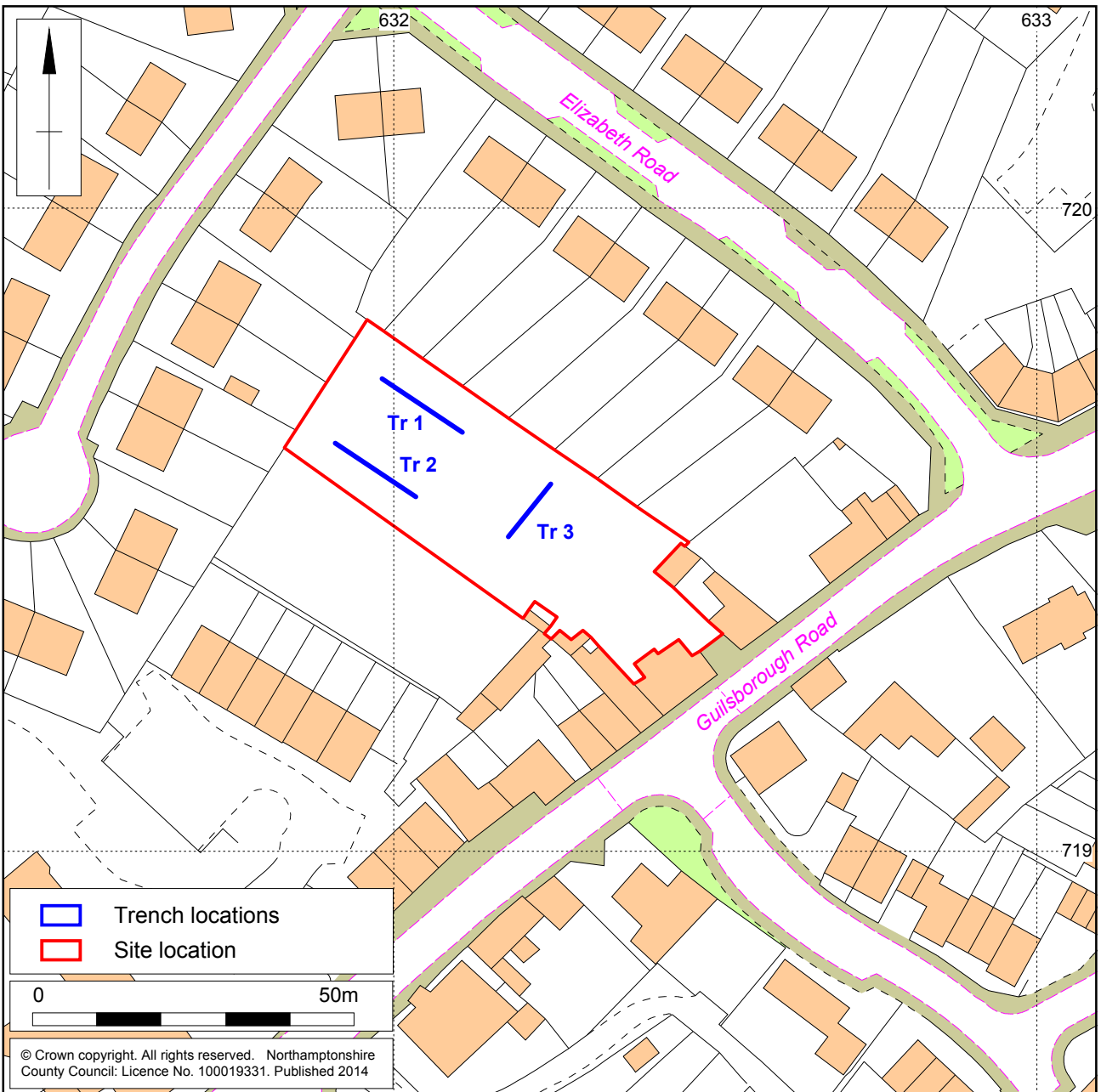
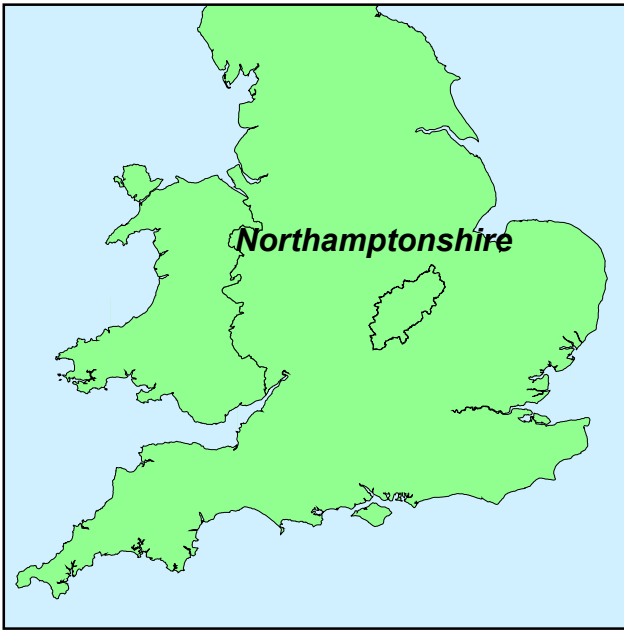
The principal aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. This was achieved through trial trench evaluation (Fig. 1).

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The site is located on the east side of the village of West Haddon. It comprises a rectangular parcel of land fronting onto Guilsborough Road and is mostly set to grass. The site is bounded on the south, west and north sides by the gardens of surrounding properties and is accessed from Guilsborough Road.

The bedrock geology is recorded as Northampton Sand Formation - Sandstone, Limestone and Ironstone, superficial geology is recorded as glaciofluvial sands and gravels (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk> accessed 01/12/14). The site is situated at approximately 175m above Ordnance Datum.



Scale 1:1000

Site location Fig 1

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

The village and wider landscape around the development area are known to contain a small amount of multi-period activity from the Iron Age through to the medieval/post-medieval period. The earliest activity was located 520m to the north-north-west of the site and comprised a possible Iron Age/Romano-British settlement (MNN7640). An area around the High Street and West End, 250m to the west contains possible Romano-British settlement or funerary activity (MNN3891).

The presumed extent of the medieval village (MNN6938) encompasses the site as well as an area around the core of the modern settlement including the Church of All Saints, the High Street, West End and Station Road. Ridge and furrow cultivation features that are likely to date from the medieval to post-medieval period, survive to the south (MNN133773) and north-west (MNN132968) of the site and also within the grounds of West Haddon Hall Park, approximately 500m to the south-south-west (MNN3081 and 133774).

A geophysical survey of a parcel of land on the north-east edge of the village and within the bypass was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Clements 2013). The survey identified a series of linear anomalies indicating the presence of a possible Bronze Age barrow, two sub-square enclosures of possible Iron Age date, a series of ditches that may relate to a known Roman settlement (Mason 2006), and furrows of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation.

Another geophysical survey was undertaken on land north-west of West Haddon and again, within the ring road. This work identified roads and enclosures of a Roman settlement. Medieval ridge and furrow was also identified (Fisher 2013).

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Three trenches were excavated using a wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m-wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and subsoil were removed under archaeological direction to reveal natural substrate and were stacked separately at the side of the trench. All procedures complied with MOLA Health and Safety provisions and MOLA Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

All archaeological deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were fully recorded, following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014). All deposits were given a separate context number in a sequence assigned to each trench. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation.

All trench locations were recorded using Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$. A full digital photographic record was maintained. The field data from the evaluation has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

The evaluation conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised Oct 2008). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (EH 2006). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (Muldowney 2014).

All trenches were backfilled with their up-cast material and compacted by the mechanical excavator.

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The stratigraphic sequence comprised natural light brown-yellow sands with occasional patches of sandstone. This was overlain in Trenches 1 and 3 by mid grey-brown clay sand subsoil which was between 0.29m and 0.56m thick. The uppermost topsoil layer was present in all three trenches and comprised dark grey sandy loam, varying in thickness between 0.20m and 0.40m overlain by a recently derived mid brown-grey topsoil. Post-medieval pottery was observed in this deposit, but not retained.

Four ditches were identified in Trench 1, post-medieval sand-extraction pits were noted in Trench 2 and a post-medieval pit in Trench 3 (Figs 2 to 3).

Trench 1

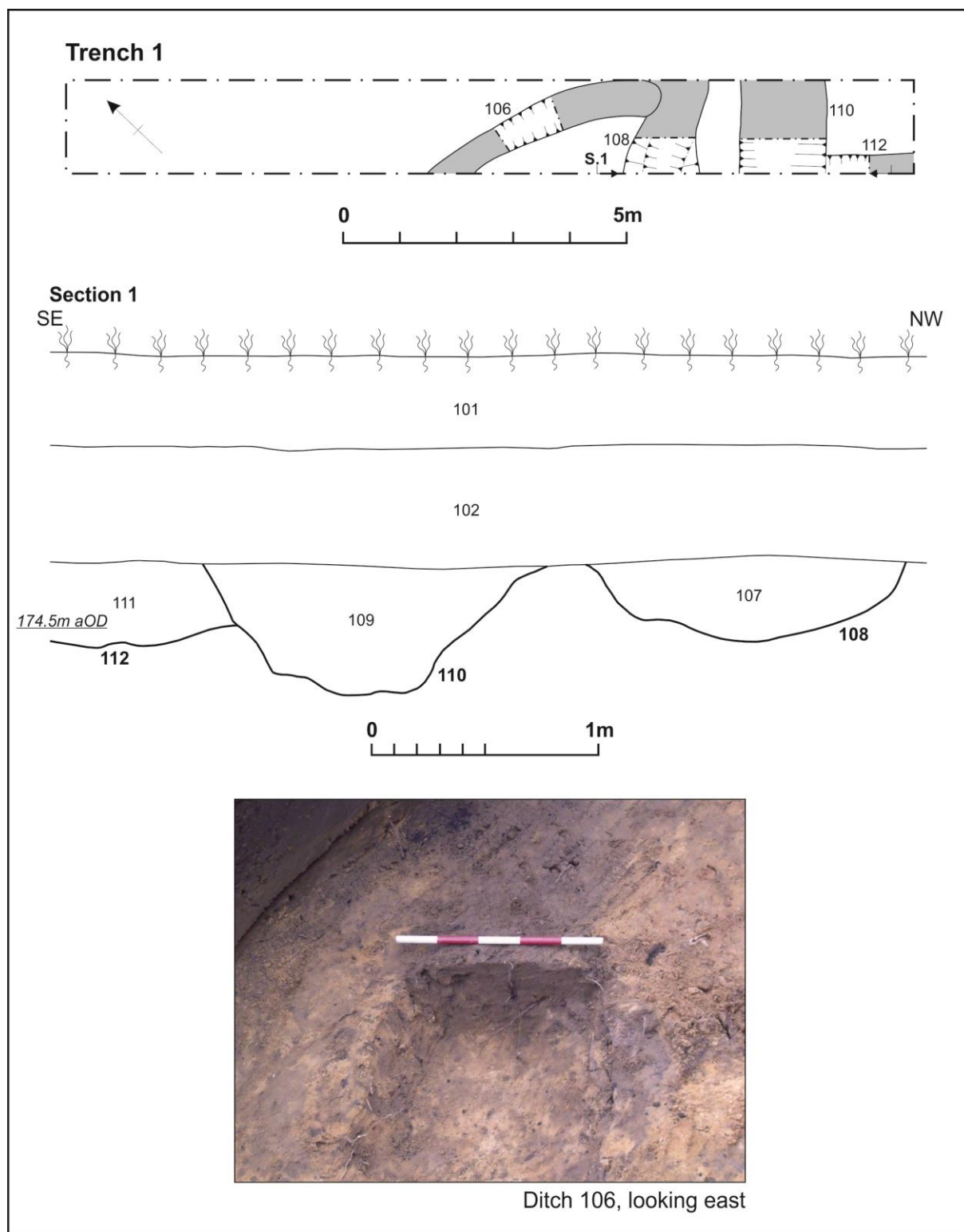
Trench 1 was aligned north-west to south-east and four ditches were recorded (Fig 2).

Ditch 112 was located at the east end of the trench and was aligned north-west to south-east. It was partially exposed at the edge of the trench and was a minimum of 0.40m wide by 0.40m deep. No finds were recovered from the fill. It was truncated at its west end by ditch 110 which was aligned south-west to north-east and had an irregular, flat-based, V-shaped profile, 1.6m wide by 0.58m deep. The fill (109) produced a sherd of medieval (AD1100-1400) pottery and two fragments of animal bone.

Ditch 108 was located approximately 1m from ditch 110 and shared the same alignment. It was approximately 1m wide by 0.38m deep. The fill (107) contained a small sherd of medieval pottery (AD1100-1400). It was cut by the terminal of a curvilinear ditch 106, aligned approximately east to west with a flat-based, U-shaped profile (Fig 2). No finds were recovered.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned north-west to south-east and contained a trench-wide deposit of made-ground or backfill, 203, between 0.50m and 0.60m thick (Fig 3). Although similar in colour to the subsoil in trenches 1 and 3, the inclusions differed. Brick fragments and charcoal flecks were observed throughout and five sherds of post-medieval pottery and three clay tobacco pipe stems were recovered. One sherd of medieval/post-medieval Midland Purple ware was also recovered. The extent of the deposit suggests it may have been the backfill of a large sand extraction pit.



Trench 1, plan, section and photo Fig 2



Trench 2, made-ground deposit 203 Fig 3

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned south-west to north-east and contained a pit. It was re-sited from its original planned position to avoid a hedge (Fig 1).

Probable sand extraction pit 306 was located at the north-east end of the trench and extended beyond its limit. Approximately 2m was exposed and revealed two light brown fills. A small assemblage of late medieval to post-medieval pottery and clay tobacco pipe stem was recovered from the upper fill (203).

6 THE FINDS

6.1 Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 13 sherds with a total weight of 102g. It was all medieval or later, and was recorded using the conventions of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS), as follows:

F330: Shelly Coarseware (AD1100-1400), 3 sherds, 28g
 F361: Potters Marston Ware (12th – 14th century), 1 sherd, 4g
 F403: Midland Purple ware (AD1450-1600), 1 sherd, 3g
 F406: Midland Yellow Ware (AD1550 – 1700), 1 sherd, 4g
 F418: Pearlware (AD1770-1900), 1 sherd, 30g
 F1000: Misc 19th and 20th century wares, 6 sherds, 33g

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 the region (eg. Blinkhorn 2010), and indicates that there was activity at the site throughout the medieval period. The assemblage is in fairly good condition, and appears reliably stratified, although there has been some disturbance of medieval strata by modern activity, and all the pottery is the result of secondary deposition.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type

	F330		F361		F403		F406		F418		F1000		
Context	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
103	1	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12th century
107	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12th century
109	1	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12th century
203	-	-	1	4	-	-	1	4	-	-	4	22	19th century
304	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	30	2	11	19th century
Total	3	28	1	4	1	3	1	4	1	30	6	33	

6.2 Clay tobacco-pipe by Mo Muldowney

Four clay tobacco-pipe stems were recovered from two contexts (made-ground 203, Trench 2 and upper fill 304, pit 305, Trench 3). None of the fragments are stamped or decorated although one retains a 'lip' at the mouthpiece end. All the fragments were found in association with sherds of post-medieval pottery and are therefore of 19th century date.

6.3 Animal bone by Mo Muldowney

Four fragments of animal bone were recovered from context 109 (ditch 110, Trench 1). Three of the fragments are broken elements of cow tooth, whilst the fourth and largest fragment is part of a sheep pelvis. The fragments were found in association with a single fragment of pottery, spot dated at the earliest, to the 12th century.

7 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has demonstrated that the development area contained a small number of archaeological remains comprising ditches and pits. The south part of the development area had been heavily disturbed, probably due to sand extraction in the medieval and post-medieval period.

Trench 1 has less evidence for disturbance and here four ditches were recorded. Single sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from two of these, one with evidence for abrasion. The curvilinear ditch had a much darker fill and its morphological characteristics are reminiscent of an eaves-drip ring gully and could be part of a roundhouse structure. The position of the terminal indicates a possible east-facing opening. Stratigraphically however, this ditch is later than at least one of the other ditches containing a sherd of medieval pottery.

It is possible that either there are a number of medieval ditches surviving in the north-west part of the site with a morphologically unusual curvilinear feature, or the features identified represent prehistoric, possibly Iron Age, activity with low levels of intrusive medieval pottery derived from the overlying mobile sandy soils.

A pre-medieval, possibly Iron Age date for the ditches would be consistent with the date of archaeological remains that have been identified by geophysical survey in the outskirts of West Haddon, such as those to the north-west of the site (Clements 2013).

Two large pits were identified in Trenches 2 and 3 as thick made-ground deposits. Material recovered from the deposits indicates that they were post-medieval, or were backfilled during the post-medieval period. The size of the possible pits and type of natural suggests that the pits were dug to extract sand, for use in construction materials like mortar or plaster. These large and deep pits might have truncated any further pre post-medieval remains in this part of the development area and may also account for the movement of pottery around the site.

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MOLA
5th January 2015

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, N end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	NW-SE 1.8m x 15m		176.03m	0.80m 174.72m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark grey silty sand	0.17 - 0.30m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown silty sand	0.29 - 0.50m thick	-
103	Subsoil interface	Mixed mid brown-yellow sand and 104	0.12 – 0.16m thick	12thC pottery
104	Natural	Light brown-yellow sand	-	-
105	Fill of 106	Friable mid grey-brown clay sand	0.23m thick	-
106	Ditch cut	NW-SE aligned curvilinear with steep-sides and a flat base	0.50m wide 0.23m deep	-
107	Fill of 108	Friable mid-brown-grey clay sand	0.36m thick	12thC pottery
108	Ditch cut	Linear, NE-SW aligned with a rounded profile	1.40m wide 0.36m deep	-
109	Fill of 110	Friable mid brown-grey silty sand	0.60m thick	12thC pottery, animal bone
110	Ditch cut	Linear, NE-SW aligned. V-shaped with uneven base	1.40m wide 0.60m deep	-
111	Fill of 112	Mid grey-brown clay sand	0.40m thick	-
112	Ditch cut	Linear, NW-SE aligned ditch. Not fully visible in trench, full profile not seen	+0.30m wide 0.40m deep	-

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	NE-SW 1.8m x 15m		175.80m	1.10m 174.75m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Friable dark brown sandy silt	0.20m thick	-
202	Topsoil	Dark brown-grey sandy loam	0.30 – 0.50m thick	-
203	Made-ground	Mid grey-brown clay sand	0.50m thick	Med and p-med pottery, clay tobacco-pipe
204	Natural	Light brown-yellow sand	-	-

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, SE end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	NE-SW 1.8m x 10m		175.08m	0.96m 174.12m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Friable dark brown sandy silt	0.40m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay sand	0.16 - 0.19m thick	-
303	Natural	Light brown-yellow sand	-	-
304	Fill of 306	Upper fill, mid yellow-brown clay sand	-	Late med and p-med pottery, clay tobacco-pipe
305	Fill of 306	Lower fill, mid grey-brown sandy clay	-	-
306	Pit cut	Not excavated	-	-



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