



**Trial Trench evaluation on land at Newton Lane
Wigston Harcourt
Leicestershire
November 2014**

Report No. 15/6

Author: Benjamin Kidd

Illustrator: James Ladocha



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-200167	
Project name	Trial trench evaluation on land at Newton Lane, Wigston Harcourt, Leicestershire		
Short description	MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Pegasus Planning, to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land south of Newton Lane, Wigston Harcourt prior to proposed development. Eighty-two trenches were excavated. A possible prehistoric pit and an undated shallow gully were observed along with extensive medieval-post medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. Made ground disturbance in the northern area probably relates to past farm works and made ground disturbance in the southern area relates directly to post-medieval-early modern limestone quarrying in the area.		
Project type	Evaluation		
Site status	None		
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Whittingham 2014), Desk-based assessment (Dawson 2013)		
Current Land use	Arable farmland and pasture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type/ period	Bronze Age pit and medieval-post medieval ridge and furrow cultivation		
Significant finds	Bronze Age Beaker pottery		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address (including postcode)	Newton Lane, Wigston Harcourt		
Study area (sq.m or ha)	c 26.8ha (Northern area) and c 6.25ha (Southern area)		
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	SP 616 976		
Height OD	c 80-100 m		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Leicestershire County Council (LCC) Archaeological Advisor		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	B Kidd		
Project Manager	A Maull		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting on behalf of Pegasus Planning		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date/End date	24/11/2014 – 17/12/2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content	
Physical	X.A149.2014	Pottery	
Paper		Site documents – context sheets et al	
Digital		Mapinfo plans, Word report, dxf data, digital photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	Trial trench evaluation on land at Newton Lane, Wigston Harcourt, Leicestershire, November - December 2014		
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Trial trench evaluation on land at Newton Lane Wigston Harcourt, Leicestershire November 2014

Abstract

MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Pegasus Planning, to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land south of Newton Lane, Wigston Harcourt prior to proposed development. Eighty-two trenches were excavated. A possible prehistoric pit and an undated shallow gully were observed along with extensive medieval-post medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. Made ground disturbance in the northern area probably relates to past farm works and made ground disturbance in the southern area relates directly to post-medieval-early modern limestone quarrying in the area.

1 INTRODUCTION

In November 2014, MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Pegasus Planning, to conduct an archaeological evaluation on land south of Newton Lane, Wigston Harcourt, Leicestershire (NGR SP616 976) (Fig 1).

The Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has 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 (WSI) prepared by MOLA (Chinnock 2014).

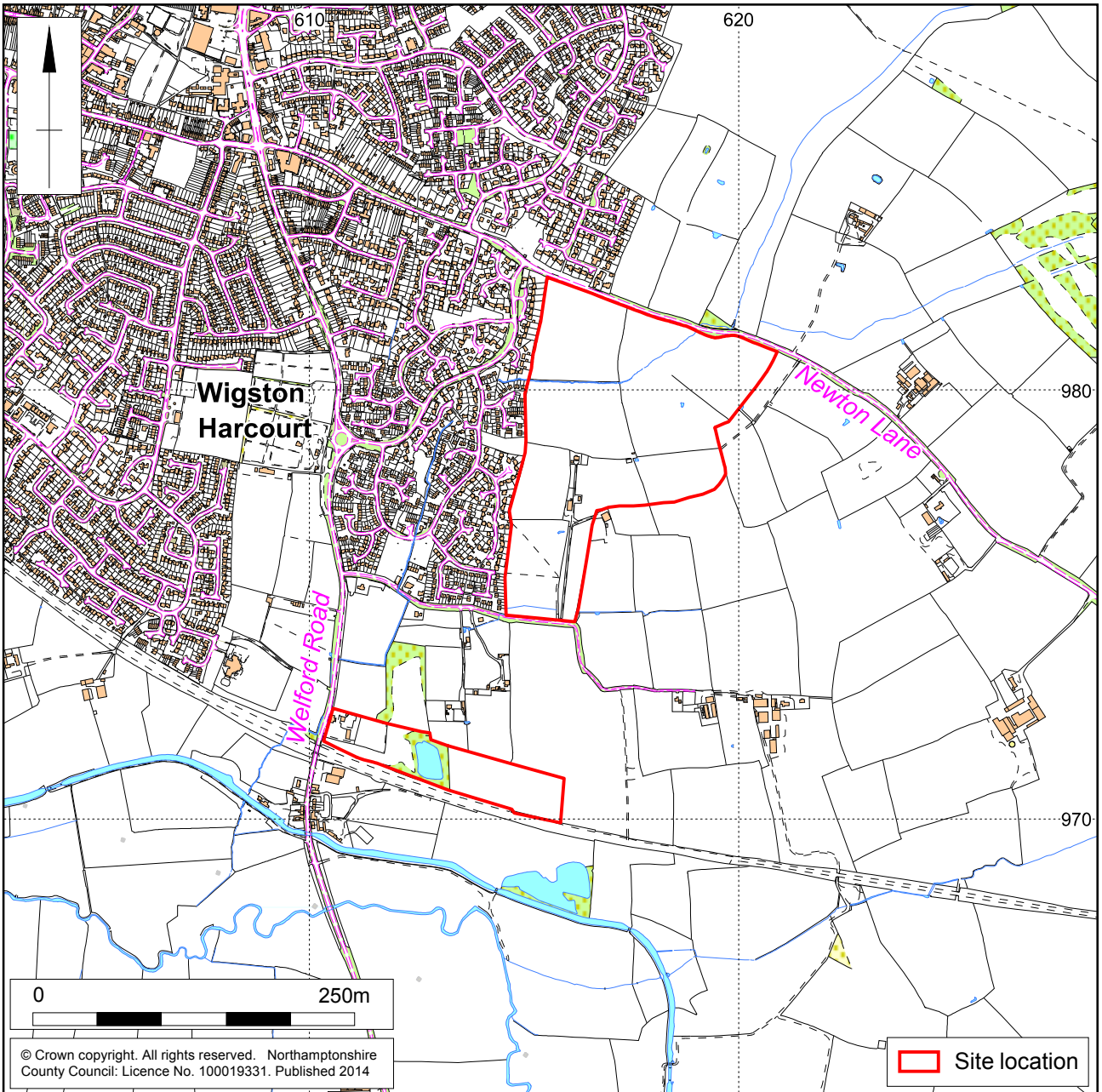
2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the site was designed to provide information that will allow for the effective targeting of further investigation of the site, if required, prior to or during the early phases of its development.

The following information was required to allow the development of a strategy for further investigation of the site:

- *The location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present;*
- *The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.*

The evaluation was carried following the guidelines suggested by the IfA's *Standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008), the MOLA Fieldwork Manual (2014) and the East Midlands regional framework (Knight *et al* 2012).



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The proposed development area consists of two parcels of land; the northern parcel consists of three fields of pasture and six fields of arable on land to the south of Newton Lane and is c 26.8ha. This area is bounded to the west by housing, to the north by Newton Lane and to the south and east by further arable and pasture fields (Fig 1).

The southern parcel of land consists of one field of pasture and one field of pasture/scrubland and lies on land to the south of Cooks Lane and is c 6.25ha. Both areas lie to the south-east of the small town of Wigston. The southern area is bounded to the north by arable and pasture fields, to the west and east by further arable fields and immediately to the south by the London-Midland railway (Fig 1).

The site is undulating and is at an average height of between 80-100m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Society as comprising the Blue Lias formation with periglacial deposits of Diamicton to the west of the site with an area of glacio-fluvial deposits of sand and gravel of the mid-Pleistocene to the north of Spring Cottage Farm (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex).

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

The development area lies within the historic parish of Wigston. The Leicestershire Historic Environment Record has been consulted to assess the archaeological potential of the development area for the desk-based assessment by CgMs consulting (Dawson 2013) from which the following is taken (Table 1).

An individual find spot of a single Palaeolithic flint flake (MLE7634) was found within the development area; however, it is thought that this derived from topsoil from the nearby limestone quarry at Kilby Bridge (Dawson 2013) and should be taken as being out of context.

There is no evidence of Mesolithic or Neolithic activity recorded within the development area. The Bronze Age is represented by a burial containing an urned cremation and several flints (MLE 4977) located to the north of Spring Cottage (west of Field 1) and uncovered during ditch widening.

An Iron Age settlement is known, several hundred metres to the west, close to Wigston cemetery, where a single brooch was recovered (MLE 4965). A Roman settlement (MLE 4965) is known from the same site as the Iron Age settlement, near Wigston cemetery. Roman finds have also been recovered from east of Spring Cottage within the development area (MLE 4982). Further to the north a pottery assemblage indicates Roman settlement near Seven Oaks Farm (MLE 18842). Concentrations of Roman coins and metal objects have also been found nearby and have been recorded on the Portable Antiquity Scheme (PAS) with concentrations uncovered at Wigston cemetery (84C98-B2F8B8), in Wigston Magna (812EC2-81A925) and a single coin (C17C18) found off Herrick Way. All of which are fairly close to the development area.

Wigston is thought to have originated in the Anglo-Saxon period where it has eventually become populated by Norse settlers. It is first mentioned in the Domesday Book as *Wilkingestone* and was located north of the proposed development area; in the past Wigston was known as Wigston Magna to distinguish it from Wigston Parva.

Throughout the medieval and into the post-medieval period the site remained within the parish of Wigston, though is located on the periphery of the settlement. The name of Wigston is supposed to have originated in the Anglo-Saxon period and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery is located close to Wigston cemetery several hundred metres to the west

(MLE 4966), the site was discovered in the late 18th century and comprised 20 inhumations with associated grave goods.

Post-medieval activity within the development area is limited, little development has taken place within the majority of the area from 1886 onwards, as is shown in the Ordnance Survey map series.

The Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Union Canal (MLE 16300) and the Midland railway (MLE 16083) are both close to the study area, with the Midland railway immediately adjacent to the southern area.

Close to the southern area one post-medieval lime kiln is recorded as being present at the southern edge of Wigston Harcourt and another lay just to the south of the southern development area (MLE 17034 and 17035).

The 1886 1st edition Ordnance Survey map references 'Old Limestone pits' in part of the southern area (field 11), with the 1914 map showing 'Old clay pits' and the 1930 map showing a fairly large 'Limestone quarry' in the same area.

Geophysical survey carried out by Phase site investigations in 2014 (Whittingham 2014) had identified an area of high magnetic disturbance in the southern area (Field 11) which may reflect high levels of work associated with successive quarrying.

Table 1: Historic Environment Record data for monuments close to Newton Lane, Wigston

Historic Environment Record (Preferred reference)	Description
4965	Iron Age/Roman settlement
4966	Anglo-Saxon cemetery
4977	Bronze Age burial
4982	Roman find scatter
16083	Midland railway
16300	Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Union Canal
17034	Post-medieval Kilby Bridge lime works
17035	Post-medieval lime kiln at Cooks Lane
18842	Roman settlement

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

A total of eighty-five trenches were originally planned although only eighty-two trenches were excavated using a 360 mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket (Fig 2). This was owing to trenches 68, 69, 70 being inaccessible due to adverse ground conditions. Trenches 73 and 74 were also foreshortened from their original lengths due to overhead power cables being present. The topsoil and subsoil were removed under archaeological direction to reveal natural substrate.

The location of the trenches were surveyed and related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid using Leica Viva dGPS survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$. A full photographic record comprising both 35mm black and white negatives and digital images was maintained. The field data from the evaluation has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

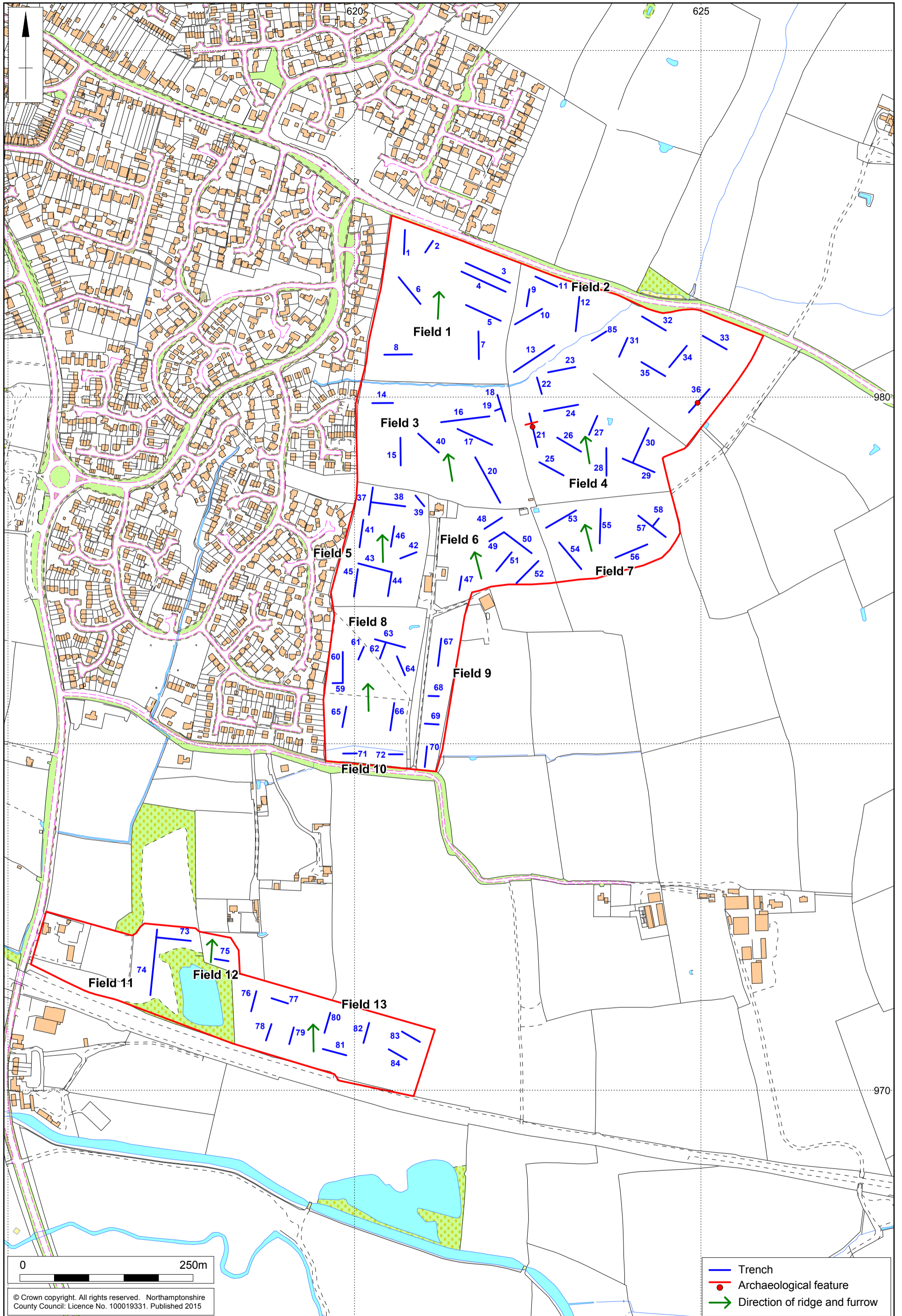
The excavated area was cleaned sufficiently to define any features. The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

All remnant furrows were excavated out by machine as per the WSI (Chinnock 2014).

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. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation.

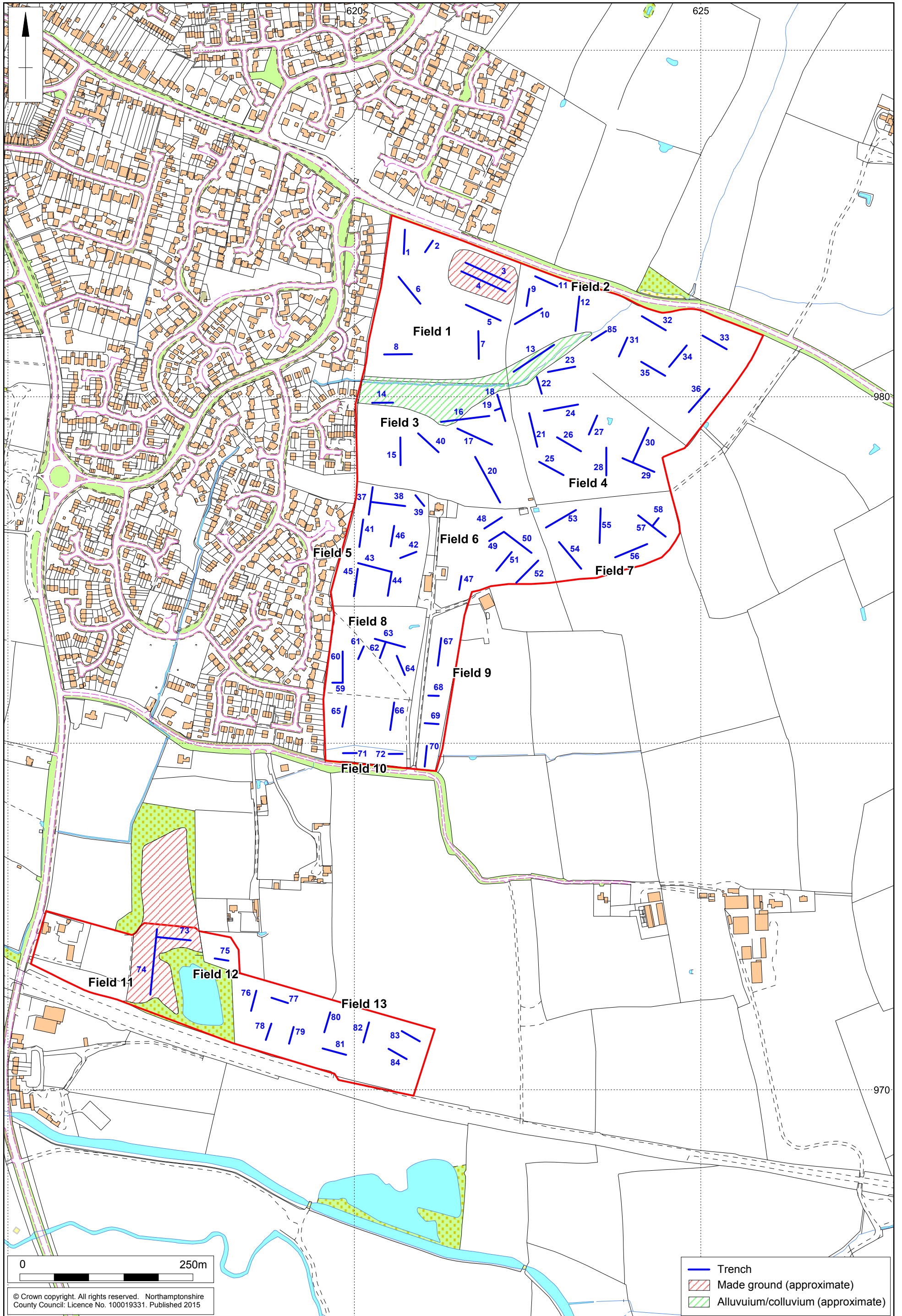
All trenches were backfilled with their up-cast, lightly compacted by the mechanical excavator.

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 (2014).



Scale 1:5000 (A3)

Excavated trenches Fig 2



Scale 1:5000 (A3)

Areas of alluvium/colluvium and made ground Fig 3

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

A full list of deposits by trench and field can be found in the Context Inventory (Appendix). The location of fields and trenches can be seen in Fig 2.

5.1 Northern Area

Field 1: Trenches 1-8

The natural substratum in this field comprised firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.20-0.40m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil comprising of friable mid-dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional-frequent small stones.

No natural was uncovered in trenches 3 and 4 down to 1.2m deep due to late post-medieval/modern made deposits.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 2-8 on an orientation of north-north-west to south-south-east, and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills. These were identified in the geophysical survey (2014).

Trenches 3 and 4, at the northern edge of Field 1 contained made ground, likely to date to the late post-medieval/modern era, which contained ceramics, tile and brick fragments (Figs 3 and 4). Machine excavated sondages were excavated to ascertain the depth of the deposits in the trenches and the natural substrate was not uncovered at 1.2m deep. It is likely that this made ground relates to the backfilling of a man made excavation or natural hollow/depression similar to a depression c 5-10m to the south-west. The anomalies present in this area in the geophysical survey (Whittingham 2014) are likely to be related to this disturbance.



Made ground layer 303 in Trench 3, looking south Fig 4

Field 2: Trenches 9-13

The natural substrate consisted of a firm mid yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.15-0.40m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil which comprised friable mid-dark brown-grey silty clay with frequent small stones.

No natural was seen in Trench 13 at 1.2m deep, due to presence of a thick alluvium layer, likely to correspond with the nearby stream (Fig 3).

No archaeological features were recorded in Field 2 and the geophysical anomalies identified in the geophysical survey of 2014 (Whittingham 2014) are likely to be the result of changes in geology or shallow activity relating to agriculture ie furrows and plough scars.

Field 3: Trenches 14-20, 40

The natural substrate comprised firm mid brown-orange sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.25-0.30m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil which comprised friable dark brown-grey silty clay with frequent small stones.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation, as identified in the geophysical report (Whittingham 2014), were present in trenches 15-20 and 40 on an alignment of north-north-west to south-south-east (Fig 2), and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills.

No natural was seen in Trench 14 and the western end of Trench 16 at 1.2m deep, due to the presence of a thick alluvium layer, likely to correspond with the nearby stream (Fig 3).

Field 4: Trenches 21-36, 85

The natural substrate comprised firm mid yellow-brown sandy clay with moderate small stones and moderate bands and patches of gravel and occurred 0.20-0.50m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil which consisted of friable dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional-moderate small stones.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 24-30 and 40, aligned north-north-west to south-south-east (Fig 2), and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills. No remnant furrows were identified in the trenches in the north-eastern half of the field, trenches 31-36.

The features identified did not specifically relate to the geophysical anomalies identified by the Phase Site Investigation survey in 2014 (Whittingham 2014), which is likely derived from changes in the geology and shallow activity relating to agriculture.

In Trench 21 a pit and possible ditch were uncovered.

Pit [2107] was 1.20m+ wide, 0.80m long and 0.64m deep. The pit was probably circular in plan, but the limit of excavation made this difficult to determine (Fig 2 and 7, section 1). The lower fill (2106) comprised firm dark grey-black sandy silt with moderate amounts of burnt stone and frequent charcoal, and Beaker pottery dating to the early Bronze Age. Two struck flints were recovered, and a few small fragments of burnt bone. A soil sample was taken from this fill. The upper fill (2105) comprised firm mid brown-grey silty sand with occasional burnt stone and charcoal, no finds were recovered from this fill. Both fills are likely to be a deliberate deposition of domestic waste.

Towards the southern end of Trench 21, there was a possible shallow ditch [2104] aligned east-west across the trench. The ditch was c 2.0m wide and 0.10-0.20m deep with irregular sides and an uneven base (Figs 5 and 7). The fill (2103) consisted of mid brown silty clay with frequent small stones and charcoal. A soil sample was taken from the fill, but no dateable artefacts were recovered.



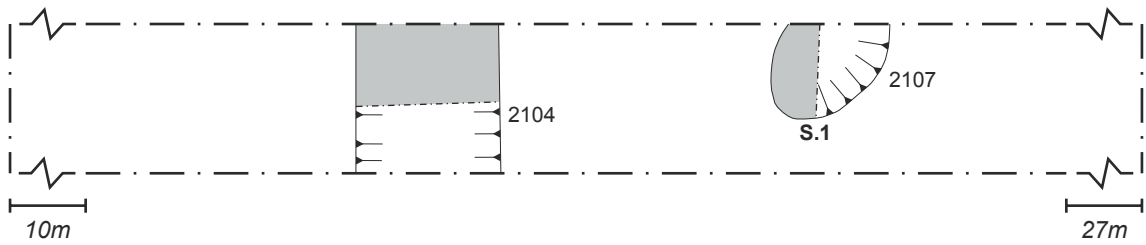
Possible ditch [2104], looking west Fig 5

In Trench 35, towards the eastern edge of Field 4, there was a small, undated gully [3605] (Figs 2 and 6), 1.8m long, 0.35m wide and 0.15m deep with a U-shaped profile and concave base.

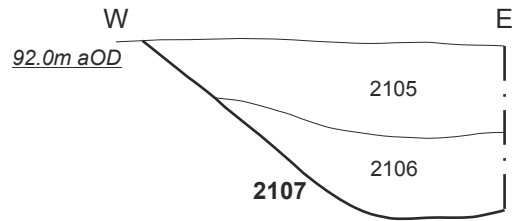


Gully [3605], looking north Fig 6

Trench 21



Section 1



Pit 2107, looking north

Field 5: Trenches 37-46

The natural substrate comprised firm mid brown-orange sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.25-35m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil comprising friable mid grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 37-46 on an orientation of north-north-west to south-south-east (Fig 2), and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills and were identified in the geophysical report (Whittingham 2014).

No archaeological features were recorded in this field and the geophysical anomalies identified in the geophysical survey of 2014 are likely to be the result of changes in geology or shallow agricultural activity ie furrows and land drains.

Field 6: Trenches 47-52

The natural substrate comprised firm mid orange-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.25-35m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil which comprised friable grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones and modern debris i.e. ceramic, plastic, brick, glass etc.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 37-46 on an orientation of north-north-west to south-south-east (Fig 2), and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills and were identified in the geophysical report (Whittingham 2014).

No archaeological features were identified in Field 6; the anomalies identified in the geophysical report (Whittingham 2014) are likely to represent changes in the geology, debris in the topsoil or shallow features relating to agricultural activity.

Field 7: Trenches 53-58

The natural substrate comprised firm mid brown-yellow sandy clay with moderate patches of mid yellow clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.25-50m below the present ground surface. Overlying the natural was topsoil which comprised of mid grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 37-46 on an orientation of approximately north-north-west to south-south-east (Fig 2), and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills and were identified in the geophysical report (Whittingham 2014).

No archaeological features were identified in Field 7 apart from modern plough scars and field drains. The anomalies present in the geophysics (Whittingham 2014) are likely to relate to changes in the geology and shallow features associated with agricultural activity.

Field 8: Trenches 59-65

The natural substrate comprised firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with frequent small stones and occurred 0.25-35m below the present ground surface. Overlying the natural was topsoil which comprised friable mid grey-brown silty clay with frequent small stones.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 37-46 on an orientation of approximately north north west-south south east (Fig 2), and all furrows

were of similar size and contained similar fills. This was identified in the geophysics report (Whittingham 2014)

No archaeological features were identified in Field 8. The anomalies present in the geophysics (Whittingham 2014) are likely to relate to changes in the geology and shallow features or debris associated with agricultural activity.

Field 9: Trench 67

The natural substrate comprised firm mid-light yellow-brown sandy clay and occurred 0.20-25m below the present ground surface. Overlying the natural was topsoil which comprised friable mid grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones and modern debris i.e. ceramic, plastic etc.

No archaeological features were identified in this trench.

Field 10: Trenches 71-72

The natural substrate comprised firm mid brown-yellow sandy clay and occurred 0.25-30m below the present ground surface. Overlying the natural was topsoil which comprised friable dark brown silty clay.

No archaeological or agricultural features were identified in this field.

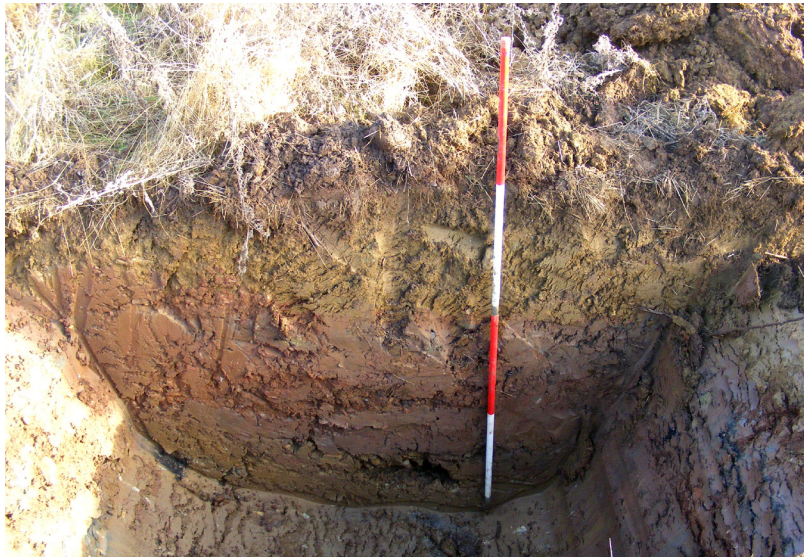
5.2 Southern area

Field 11: Trenches 73 and 74

In Trenches 73 and 74 no natural substrate was uncovered due to successive layers of made ground in the each trench (Fig 3). Machine excavated sondages were excavated to ascertain the depth of the deposits in the trenches and the natural substrate was not uncovered at 2.0m deep (Figs 8 and 9). It is likely that this made ground relates to earlier quarrying works and the backfilling of an old limestone quarry (Fig 10).

The high amount of anomalies present in the geophysics report (Whittingham 2014) would account for a high level of disturbance relating to successive quarrying works.

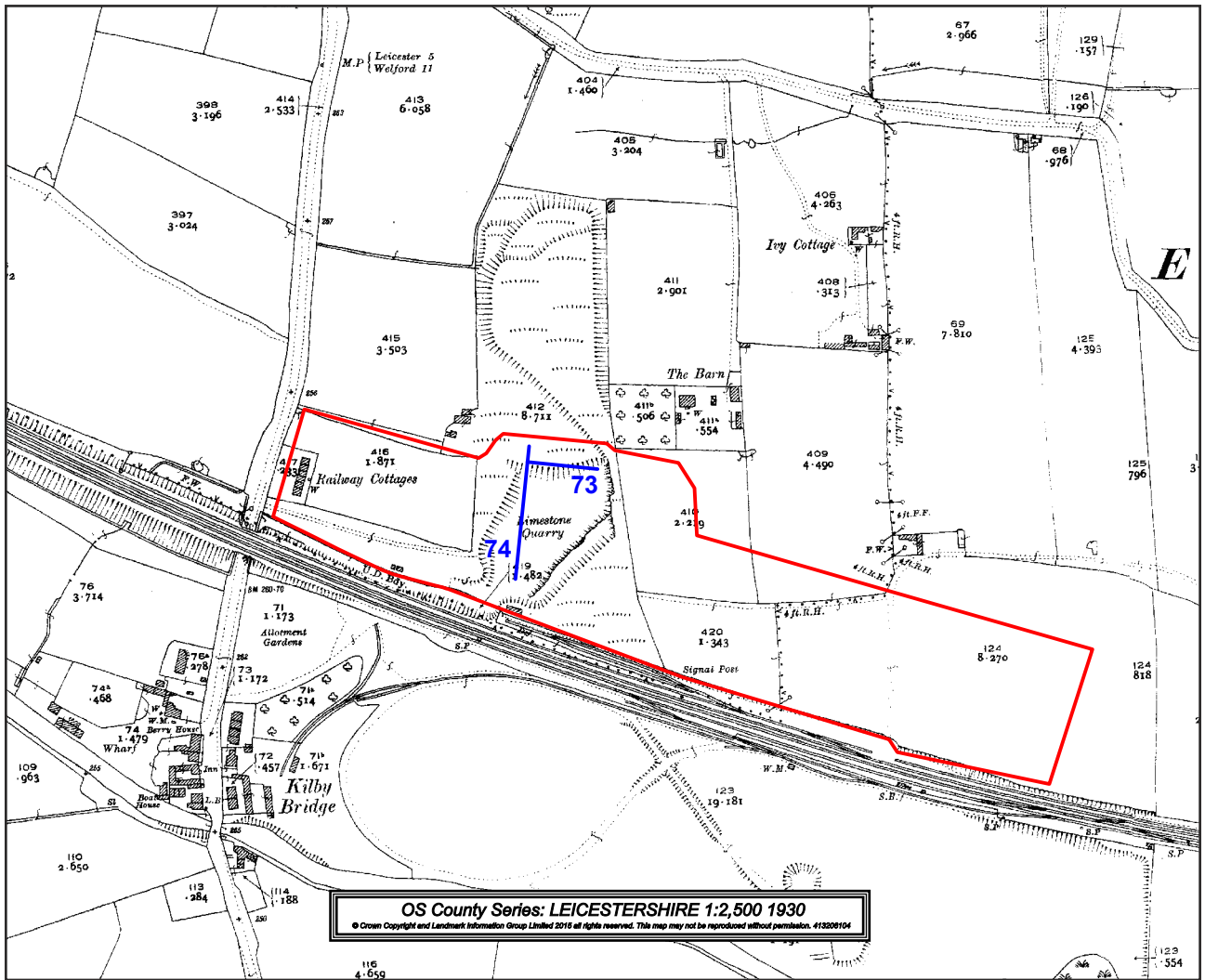
No archaeological features were uncovered.



Made ground in Trench 74, looking east Fig 8



Made ground in Trench 73, looking north Fig 9



Field 12: Trench 75

The natural substrate comprised firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.22-0.30m below the present ground surface. Overlying the natural was topsoil which comprised friable dark grey-brown silty clay with occasional small stones.

Surviving ridge and furrow earthworks were observed in this field (Figs 2 and 11) on an approximate north-south alignment. The fills of the surviving earthworks were machined out to expose the natural substrate. The ridge and furrow was seen to extend eastwards and southwards into Field 13, where it was only visible as remnant furrows.

No archaeological remains were uncovered.



Surviving ridge and furrow earthworks, in Field 12, looking east Fig 11

Field 13: Trenches 76-84

The natural substrate comprised firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and occurred 0.25-40m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by topsoil which comprised friable dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional small stones.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present in trenches 76-84 on an alignment of approximately north-south (Fig 2) and all furrows were of similar size and contained similar fills. These were identified in the geophysical survey report (Whittingham 2014).

No archaeological remains were uncovered.

6 THE FINDS

6.1 The Bronze Age pottery by Andy Chapman

Eight sherds of pottery, weighing 39g, are from three Beaker vessels of the early Bronze Age, all deposited in the fill (2106) of a circular pit [2107] in trench 21.

There are two larger sherds and four smaller pieces, weighing 32g, from the rim and upper body of a rusticated Beaker. The fabric is sandy, containing fine quartz grains and sparse darker mineral inclusions. The core is grey-brown and the surfaces are orange-brown. The body sherds are 7-8mm thick and it has a simple rounded rim. There is row of fingernail impressions immediately below the rim and a parallel row, 14-16mm below. There are rows of oblique fingernail impressions between the horizontal rows, and a pattern of oblique fingernail impressions in alternating directions on the lower body (Fig 12).

There are two small body sherds, weighing 5g, from a thin-walled Beaker vessel, 5mm thick, with a brown core and orange surfaces. The surviving surface decoration comprises a horizontal band of three parallel incised lines with impressed decoration above and below, evidently only a small part of the overall scheme (Fig 13).

There is a single small sherd, weighing 2g, with a grey core and inner surface and a light brown external surface. A remnant of incised line decoration survives (Fig 13).



Fig 12 Rusticated Beaker, with fingernail decoration (Scale 10mm)



Fig 13 Beaker sherds (top) and sherd with incised decoration (bottom)

6.2 The flint by Yvonne Wolfram-Murray

Two pieces of worked flint were recovered from an early Bronze Age pit [2107]. The flint comprises two waste flakes, one broken. The condition of the flakes is good with the flint showing post-depositional edge damage in the shape of occasional nicks of the edges. The raw material is a vitreous flint, mid grey-brown coloured with a white patina cortex. The raw material was likely to have originated from local gravel deposits.

The technological characteristic of the worked flint is not directly dateable but is likely to be contemporary with the early Bronze Age pottery, see above.

6.3 The environmental evidence by Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Excavations at Wigston, undertaken by MOLA Northampton (MOLAN), recorded a small number of features including a possible ditch ([2014]) within an area damaged by the grubbing out of tree roots and a pit ([2017]), the latter containing Early Bronze Age Beaker style pottery. Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from both features and submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by MOLAN and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed below in Table 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots and seeds were also recorded.

Results

The assemblage from sample 1 (context (2013) fill of ditch [2104]) appears to be entirely composed of variously sized fragments of a sedimentary deposit, possibly shale. Clear bedding plains are visible in most pieces, with the largest fragment measuring approximately 62 x 54 x 12mm. It is unclear why this material is present within this particular context. Sample 2 (fill (2106) within pit [2107]) is largely typical of material from a Beaker pit assemblage, in that it contains a high density of charcoal/charred wood and a number of particularly well preserved fragments of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell. A single, very poorly preserved cereal grain fragment is also noted. Similar assemblages, which have been tentatively interpreted as the 'ritual' disposal of midden waste prior to the vacation of a site, have been noted from other contemporary deposits within eastern England and the Midlands, for example from the Harford Park and Ride site, Norwich (Fryer, forthcoming)

Recommendations for further work

As the assemblage from sample 2 is extremely limited in composition, quantification and further analysis are not recommended. Identification of the material within sample 1 could prove interesting, although given the disturbance of the context, it may be difficult to link the remains to any specific activity.

Table 2: The environmental evidence

Sample No.	1	2
Context No.	2103	2106
Feature No.	2104	2107
Feature type	Ditch	Pit
Plant macrofossils		
Cereal indet (grain frag)	-	x
Corylus avellana L	-	xx
Charcoal <2mm	-	xxxx
Charcoal >2mm	-	xxxx
Charcoal >5mm	-	xxx
Charcoal >10mm	-	xxx
Other remains		
Black porous/tarry material	-	x
Unknown sedimentary deposit	xx	-
Sample volume (litres)	40	30
Volume of flot (litres)	0.2	0.2
% flot sorted	100%	100%

Key to Table:

x = 1 – 10 specimens; xx= 11 – 50 specimens; xxx= 51 – 100 specimens

xxxx= 100+ specimens

7 DISCUSSION

Trial trench evaluation on land south of Newton Lane near Wigston identified an early Bronze Age pit and a single undated gully; it is likely that the gully represents a shallow former field boundary.

A small pit is dated to the early Bronze Age by a group of Beaker pottery. Isolated pits or small clusters of pits containing deposits of domestic debris, particularly pottery sherds, are a common feature in the middle/late Neolithic and the early Bronze Age. They may mark temporary settlement sites where there are no surviving traces of the associated temporary dwellings. A Bronze Age urned burial found c. 300-350m to the north-west, just outside the development area, is broadly contemporary and might be associated.

Remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were present across the site and all appeared to be of a similar size and on a similar alignment. They were also recorded in the geophysical survey (Whittingham 2014). Surviving ridge and furrow earthworks are only evident in Field 12 in the southern development area.

The features identified in the evaluation suggest that the development area lies in an area of sparse prehistoric activity and lies outside any pre-medieval settlement. The evaluation also suggests that the development area is located within the agricultural hinterland of the medieval and post-medieval settlement of Wigston.

The modern disturbance in the north of Field 1 probably relates to the backfilling of a late post-medieval/early modern quarry pit or natural depression.

The geophysical anomalies identified in Field 11 (Whittingham 2014) relate directly to successive phases of quarrying in this field with Trenches 73 and 74 sited directly on a limestone quarry dating to the early 20th century (Fig 10).

The present day 'pond' represents a much contracted version of the earlier quarry, with Field 11 itself likely to have been built up with waste material from the successive quarries. The limestone quarries were likely to have served the nearby kiln works just to the south, at Kilby Bridge and to the north at Cooks Lane.

Other anomalies across the development area are likely to represent variations in the natural geology and shallow agricultural features.

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WEBSITES

www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html

MOLA
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APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Field 1

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1-8	2.0m x 20-70m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with frequent small stones	0.20-40m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm light-mid orange-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-
303	Made layer	Firm mid brown silty-sandy clay with frequent charcoal flecks, occasional small stones and moderate tile fragments.	1.2m + thick	Post-med-Modern pottery, Tile and brick fragments
402	Made layer	Firm mid brown-grey silty-sandy clay with moderate charcoal flecks and small stones with moderate tile fragments.	1.2m + thick	Post-med-Modern pottery, Tile and brick fragments

Field 2

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
9 - 13	2.0m x 25-75m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown silty clay with occasional small stones	0.15-0.40m thick	-
02	Natural	Friable-firm light-mid orange-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-
1304	Alluvium layer	Firm light-mid brown sandy silt.	1.0m +	-

Field 3

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
14-20, 40	2.0m x 10 - 50m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with frequent small stones	0.25-30m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm mid orange-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-
1403	Alluvium	Friable-firm light brown sandy silt	1.2m thick	-
1603	Colluvium	Friable-firm light brown sandy silt	0.80m thick	-

Field 4

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
21-36, 85	2.0m x 25-50m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay with occasional-moderate small stones	0.20-50m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm mid yellow-brown sandy clay with moderate small stones and occasional gravels	-	-
2202	Natural	Light grey-brown silty clay	-	-
2103	Fill of [2104]	Mid brown silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and frequent small stones	0.40m wide, 0.05m deep	-
2104	Cut	Shallow, broad irregular shaped profile and base	2.0m wide, 0.10-0.20m deep	Sample No 1
2105	Fill of [2107]	Firm mid brown-grey silty sand with occasional charcoal and occasional heat affected stone.	1.20m wide. 0.80m long, 0.31m deep	-
2106	Fill of [2107]	Firm dark grey/black sandy silt with moderate burnt stone and frequent charcoal	0.95m wide, 0.80m long, 0.26m deep	Prehistoric pottery, Flint, Burnt bone, Sample No 2
2107	Pit	Sub circular pit with moderate steep sides and concave base.	1.20m+ wide, 0.80m+ long, 0.64m deep	
3604	Fill of [3605]	Mid brown-grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks.	0.35m wide, 0.20m deep	-
3605	Cut of gully	Shallow gully with U-shaped profile.	0.35m wide, 0.20m deep	-

Field 5

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, E end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
37-46	2.0 x 25-50m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable mid grey-brown silty clay with moderate small stones	0.25-0.35m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm mid brown-orange sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-

Field 6

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
47-52	2.0 x 25-50m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with moderate small stones	0.25-0.35m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm mid orange-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-

Field 7

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
53-58	2.0 x 10- 50m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
01	Topsoil	Firm dark brown silty clay with occasional small stones	0.25-50m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm mid brown-yellow sandy clay with moderate patches of mid yellow clay with occasional small stones	-	-
5304	Fill of [5305]	Friable- firm dark brown-yellow sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks	-	-
5305	Cut of furrow	Wide U-shaped profile with irregular base.	1.5m wide, 0.30m deep	Post medieval-modern CBM

Field 8

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, W end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
59-66	1.8 x 10-50m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with frequent small stones	0.25-0.35m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with frequent small stones.	-	-

Field 9

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
67	2.0 x 10m N-S			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
6701	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with moderate small stones	0.20-25m thick	-
6702	Natural	Firm mid-light yellow-brown sandy clay	-	-

NB: Trenches 68-70 were not excavated due to ground conditions

Field 10

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
71,72	2.0 x 25m			
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown silty clay	0.25-30m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm mid brown-yellow sandy clay	-	-

Field 11

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
73	2.0 x 50m E-W		86.61m E end	No natural uncovered to depth of c.2.0m +
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
7301	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional small stones	0.12m thick	-
7302	Made ground	Firm mixed brown clay and red-brown clay with brown-orange sand with moderate brick and stone inclusions	0.30-1.70m	-
7303	Made ground	Firm dark blue-grey clay with occasional charcoal inclusions	0.40m	-
7304	Made ground	Firm mid red-brown clay	0.60m	-
7305	Made ground	Firm mid yellow-brown clay with occasional charcoal and brick frag	-	-

NB: Trench was foreshortened in places due to overhead power cables

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height, (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
74	2.0 x 100m N-S		85.52m N end	No natural uncovered to depths of c.2.0m +
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
7401	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional small stones	0.10-20m thick	-
7402	Made ground	Firm mixed mid brown silty clay with red-brown clay and yellow-brown sand with moderate brick and stone inclusions.	0.50-1.40m thick	-
7403	Made ground	Firm mid-dark grey clay with moderate brown-red clay patches with occasional brick and charcoal	0.30m thick	-
7404	Made ground	Firm mid red-brown clay with occasional brick and stone	0.70m thick	-
7405	Made ground	Firm mid brown-yellow sandy clay with infrequent brick and charcoal.	0.40m+	-

NB: Trench was foreshortened in places due to overhead power cables

Field 12

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
75	1.8 x 25m E-W		87.91m E end	0.30m 87.61m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
7501	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown silty clay with occasional small stones	0.22-0.30m thick	-
7502	Natural	Firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-

Field 13

Trench No.	Length, width & alignment		Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
76-84	1.8 x 30m			
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
01	Topsoil	Friable dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional small stones	0.25-0.40m thick	-
02	Natural	Firm light-mid yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones	-	-



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