



**Archaeological evaluation
on land at 5 Braggintons Lane
Middleton Cheney
Northamptonshire
December 2014**

Report No. 14/245

Author: Christopher Jones

Illustrator: A Bassir



**Archaeological evaluation
on land at 5 Braggintons Lane
Middleton Cheney
Northamptonshire
December 2014**

Report No. 14/245

Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by	Verified by:	Approved by	Reason for Issue:
1	03/12/14	Mo Muldowney	Anthony Maull	Steve Parry	Draft for client review

Authors: Christopher Jones

Illustrator: A Bassir

© MOLA Northampton 2014

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

STAFF

Project Manager Anthony Maull, Cert Arch
Trial trench excavation Christopher Jones, Adam Reid MSc
Text Christopher Jones
Illustrations A Bassir BSc

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No: molanort1-202688	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation on land 5 Braggintons Lane, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire		
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 5 Braggintons Lane, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire in advance of a planning application for residential development. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trenches. No significant archaeological features were present.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site Status	In Middleton Cheney conservation area		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Residential garden		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Modern pit		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	5 Braggintons Lane, Middleton Cheney		
Post code	OX17 2NG		
OS co-ordinates	NGR 450501 241630		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 0.09 hectares		
Height aOD	130m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Archaeological Advisor NCC		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisors	Chris Jones (MOLA)		
Project Manager	Ant Maull (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	Mr Errol G Kerr		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	01 December 2014		
End date	01 December 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical		None	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Report, photographs, survey data	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation on land at 5 Braggintons Lane, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire		
Serial title & volume	14/245		
Author(s)	Christopher Jones		
Page numbers	10		
Date	04/12/2014		

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION
1.1	Background
1.2	Topography and geology
1.3	Aims and objectives
1.4	Historical and archaeological background
2	TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION
3	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE
4	CONCLUSION
	BIBLIOGRAPHY
	APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Figures

Front cover: General view of site, looking east

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Excavated trench locations

Fig 3: Trench 1, with modern pit in background, looking north

Fig 4: Trench 2, looking east

Fig 5: Trench 3, looking south

Back cover: General view of site, looking west

Archaeological evaluation on land at 5 Braggintons Lane Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire December 2014

Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 5 Braggintons Lane, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire in advance of a planning application for residential development. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trenches. No archaeological features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Mr Errol G Kerr commissioned MOLA Northampton to carry out an archaeological evaluation on land at 5 Braggintons Lane, Middleton Cheney (NGR 450501 241630, Fig 1). The evaluation consisted of a trial trench excavation, and was undertaken 1st December 2014.

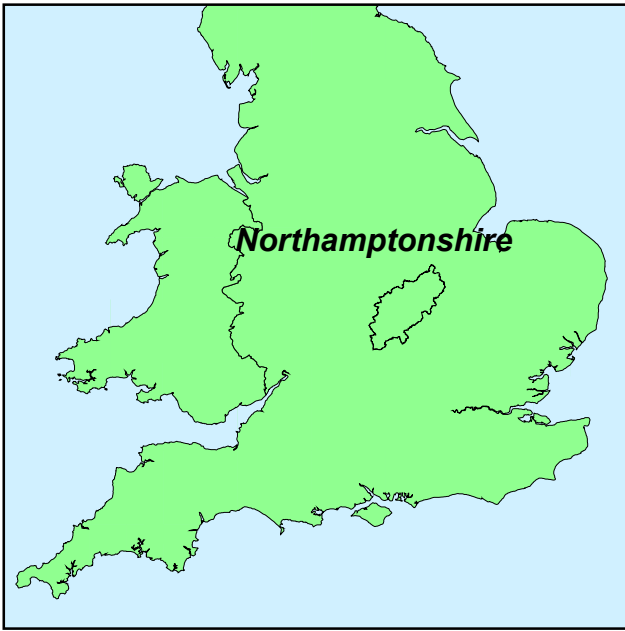
The works were undertaken in accordance with Section 12, paragraph 128 and Appendix 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (2014).

MOLA is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation. This project was undertaken in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008) and the procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 2009).

1.2 Topography and geology

The site comprised c 0.09 hectares of land to the south of Braggintons Lane, adjacent to 5 Braggintons Lane. The current land use is residential gardens bounded to the north by the Lane and on all other sides by residential housing (Fig 2). The site lies just to the south of the conservation area for Lower Middleton Cheney, which encompasses a number of historic building and other designated heritage assets.

Topographically the site is reasonably flat, and is situated on ground at a height of c 130m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising Dyrham Formation siltstone and mudstone. (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex).



Scale 1:5,000

Site location Fig 1

1.3 Aims and objectives

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

Specific research objectives followed those within national and regional research frameworks documents (English Heritage 1991, Knight et al 2012).

1.4 Historical and archaeological background

A detailed account of the archaeological and historical background for the area in and around Middleton Cheney has been produced as part of Desk Based Assessments for several projects within the village undertaken by MOLA Northampton (Walker 2014, Parry 2014a, Parry 2014b).

The development area appears to lie on the southern boundary of the historic medieval core of Lower Middleton Cheney and its associated open fields; and as such there is some potential for medieval remains. There were no earthworks within the development area and the construction of modern houses has removed any traces of earlier archaeology from the immediate vicinity.

The evidence for pre-medieval archaeological remains adjacent to the proposed development area is limited. A cropmark complex of sub-rectangular and sub-circular ditched enclosures and boundaries covering an area of approximately 7ha has been identified c 700m north-east of the village (HER 28). Another smaller area of cropmarks is present further to the north (HER 43). The form and layout of the enclosures is suggestive of Iron Age/Roman activity.

Records indicate that a Civil War skirmish took place in May 1643 in 'Town Field', the location of which is believed to be on the south-west edge of the modern village (HER 26/1). Metal detecting by the Midland Archaeological Research Society recovered finds including five musket balls from this same general area (HER 26/1/0). Nearby archaeological work at Purely Plants garden centre included a metal detecting survey as part of the methodology though no further evidence for the Civil War skirmish was noted.

Trial trench excavation on land adjacent to the Red Lion Public House in the centre of Middleton Cheney identified post-medieval beam slots associated with possible timber framed buildings, with fragments of timber preserved in-situ (Hewitt 2014).

2 TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

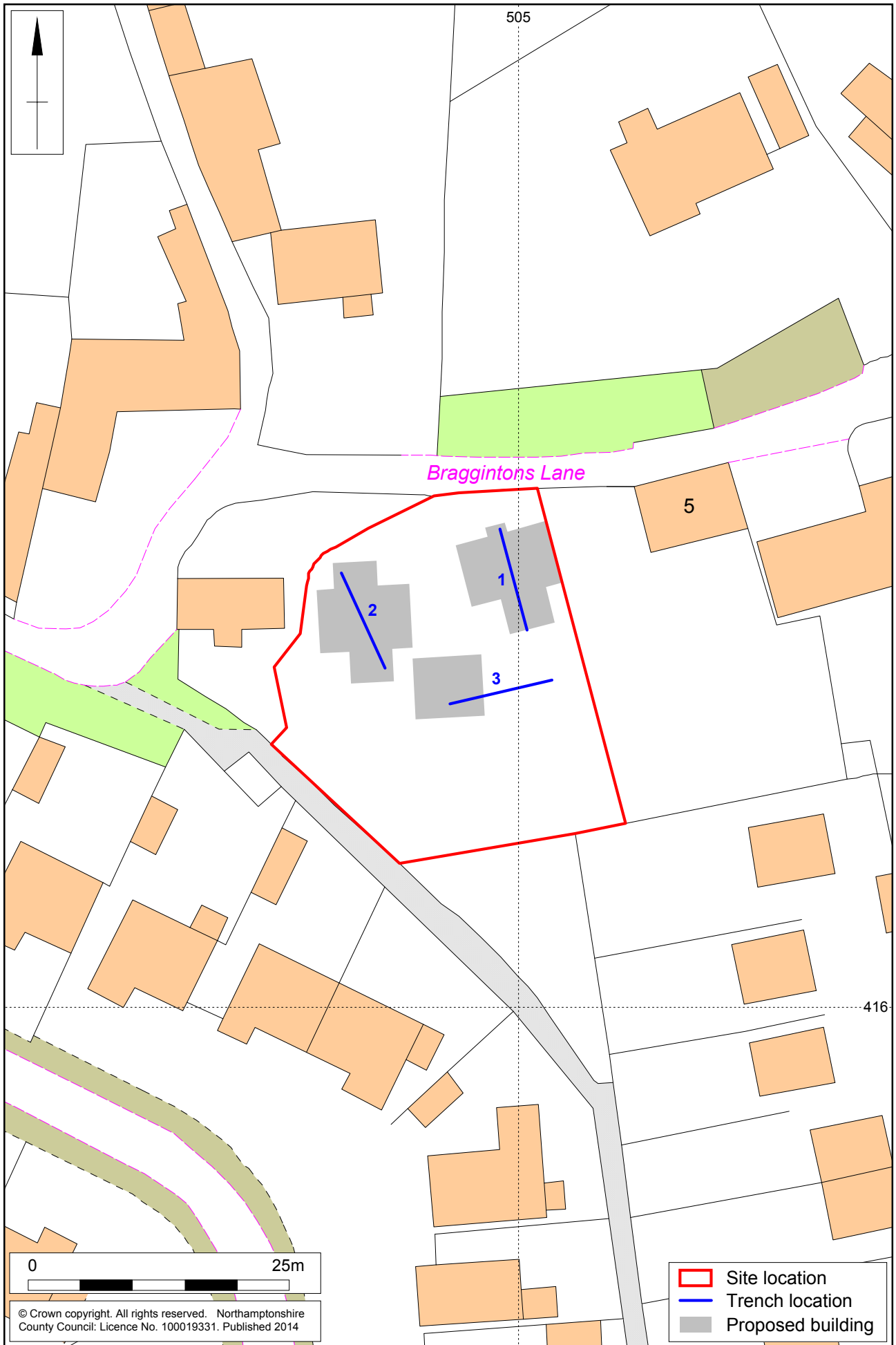
The programme of trenching was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (2014). This required the excavation of three trenches, to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains within the development area (Fig 2- 5).

Trenches were set out using differential GPS (Leica Viva) operating to an accuracy of +/- 0.05m. All trenches were excavated using a tracked excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches were all 10m in length and were excavated to a width of 1.6m.

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines and all records were created using MOLA pro-forma (MOLA 2014c). Photographs were taken of all trenches and all relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film, high resolution digital images were also taken. Work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural geological horizon. Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches using a dumpy level from temporary bench marks (TBMs) established using GPS.

All records and materials were compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991).



Scale 1: 500

Excavated trench locations Fig 2

3 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

No archaeological features or artefacts were present in any of the trenches.

The general stratigraphic sequence was consistent in all three trenches, and comprised firm light orange silty natural clays mixed with ironstone, encountered at an approximate depth of 0.27 - 0.46m below ground surface. This was overlain by firm mid brown silt clay subsoil between 0.18m and 0.33m thick whilst the topsoil was firm dark grey brown clay up to 0.15m thick.

The only feature encountered was a modern pit in the north end of trench one. The pit was cut from the topsoil and into the natural and contained 20th-century brick and metal.

A full index of contexts is included as Appendix 1.

4 CONCLUSION

The evaluation has established that there were no significant archaeological features present, despite the potential for medieval remains as described in section 1.4. It is likely that no medieval remains are present here because the site lies on the edge of the historic core of the settlement, or within the open-field system. As the sequence of natural deposits within the trenches demonstrates the lack of archaeological remains is not due to later truncation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

EH 1991 *Exploring Our Past*, English Heritage

EH 1997 *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda*, English Heritage (unpublished draft)

EH 2009 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*, English Heritage Procedural Document

EH 2011 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from sampling and recovery to post excavation*, English Heritage

Hewitt, G, 2014 *Archaeological trial trench evaluation of the former Red Lion car park, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire*, MOLA Northampton **14/19**

IfA 2008a *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists

Knight, D, Vyner, B, and Allen, C, 2012 *East Midlands Heritage: An updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*, University of Nottingham & York Archaeological Trust

MOLA 2014 *Written scheme of investigation for trial trench evaluation on land at 5 Braggintons Lane Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire*, MOLA Northampton

MOLA 2014c *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, MOLA Northampton

Parry, S, 2014a *Archaeological desk-based assessment of land at Bowman Close, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire*, MOLA Northampton **14/169**

Parry, S, 2014b *Archaeological desk-based assessment of land at Dands Drive, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire*, MOLA Northampton **14/170**

Walker, C, 2014 *Archaeological desk-based assessment of land at Mansion Hill, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire*, MOLA Northampton **14/79**

Websites

www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex

MOLA
December 2014

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	10m x1.6 m, N-S	450501 241630	130m	103m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey-brown silty clay	0.09-0.19m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Firm mid brown silty clay. Modern pit at north end cutting into natural.	0.18-0.21m thick	20th century metal, brick
103	Natural	Mixed ironstone fragments and orange silty clay	-	-



Trench 1, with modern pit in background, looking north

Fig 3

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	10m x 1.6m, W-E	450501 241630	130m	87m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty clay occasional small stones	0.13-0.14m thick	-
202	Subsoil	Firm mid brown silty clay	0.33-0.29m thick	-
203	Natural	Firm light orange silty clay with ironstone fragments	-	-



Trench 2, looking east

Fig 4

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	10m x 1.6m, N-S	450501 241630	130m	85m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey-brown silty clay occasional small stones	0.15-0.13m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Firm mid silty clay	0.29-0.32m thick	-
303	Natural	Ironstone changing to light orange clay at south end	-	-



Trench 3, looking south

Fig 5



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