



**Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation  
at North Lodge, Wymington  
Bedfordshire  
February 2015**

Report No. 15/32

Author: Claire Finn

Illustrators: Amir Bassir, James Ladocha



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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS No: molanort1-204639</b>	
Project title	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at North Lodge, Wymington, Bedfordshire February 2015		
Short description	MOLA Northampton carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at North Lodge, Wymington. All four trenches produced evidence of modern disturbance and dumping, probably for levelling the area in the early 21st century. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site status	none		
Previous work	none known		
Current land use	pasture		
Future work	unknown		
Monument type/period	none		
Significant finds	none		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Bedfordshire		
Site address	North Lodge, Wymington		
Postcode	n/a		
OS co-ordinates	496651 263148		
Area	c0.46ha		
Height aOD	C98m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Vanessa Clarke, Senior Archaeologist , Bedford Borough Council		
Project Design originator	Anthony Maull, MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Jim Burke, MOLA		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Wykes Engineering		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	19 February 2015		
End date	20 February 2015		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>		<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content</b>
Physical	MOLA Northampton Archive Store Acc no. BEDFM2015.06		none
Paper			site records, background data, photographs, one section on permatrace
Digital			survey data, digital report, digital photographs
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at North Lodge, Wymington, Bedfordshire February 2015		
Serial title & volume	15/32		
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# Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at North Lodge, Wymington Bedfordshire February 2015

## *Abstract*

*MOLA Northampton carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at North Lodge, Wymington. All four trenches produced evidence of modern disturbance and dumping, probably for levelling the area in the early 21st century. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of their client, Wykes Engineering, to undertake a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land to the east of Wymington village (Event Number BEDFM2015.06). This evaluation was undertaken in advance of the construction of a solar array near to the property of North Lodge, Bedford Road (Fig 1, NGR 496651 263148).

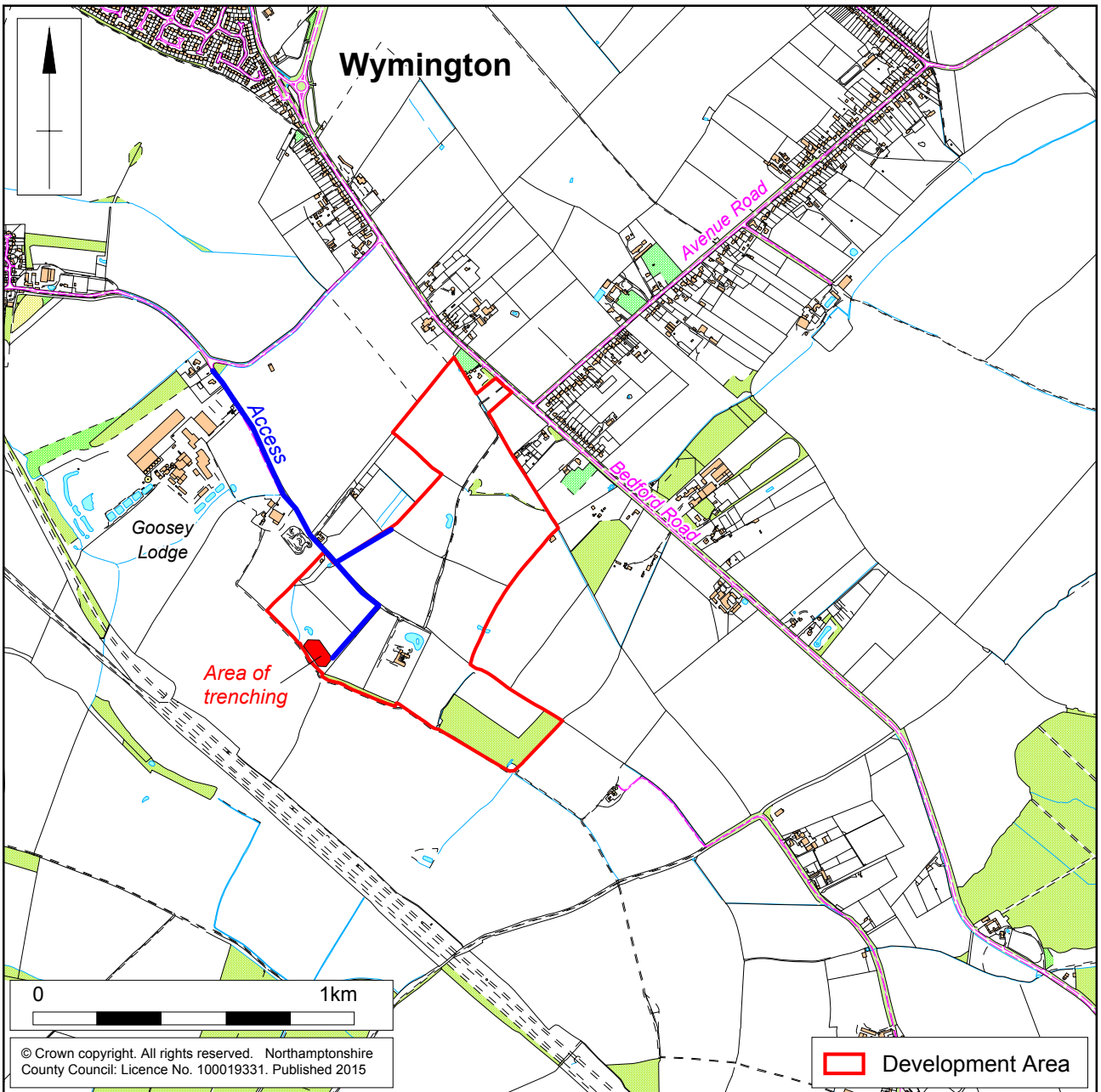
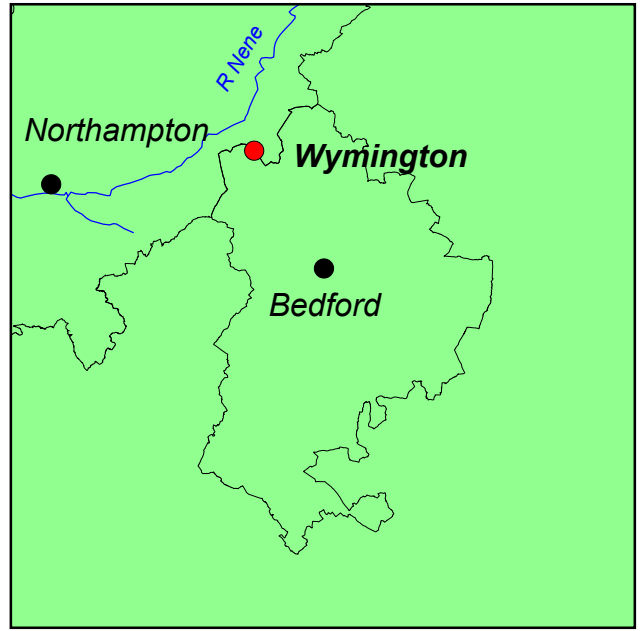
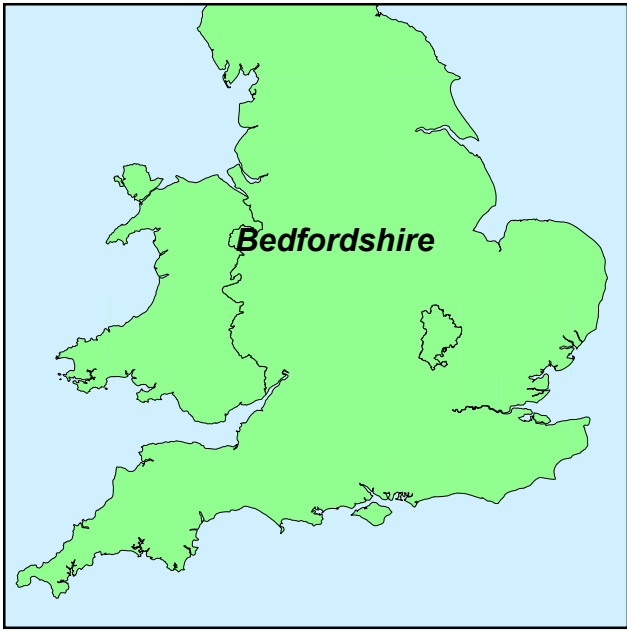
The application for the array had received planning permission (14/01999/MAF), provided that archaeological evaluation was undertaken (see a Comment by Vanessa Clarke, Senior Archaeologist, Bedford Borough Council, dated 17.12.14). This was to ensure that any archaeological remains present within the Development Area were appropriately investigated and recorded prior to development, and to inform any future archaeological mitigation. This is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; DCLG 2012). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by MOLA and approved by Bedford Borough Council prior to work commencing (Finn 2015). The evaluation was carried out following the guidelines suggested by the ClfA's *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and guidance: Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014a and b), and the MOLA Fieldwork Manual (MOLA 2014).

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location, Topography and geology**

The village of Wymington lies approximately 1km south of Rushden, just into the county of Bedfordshire. The proposed development site is situated around 1.3km to the east of the village itself, along the Goosey Lodge Estate road. The site occupies a 0.46ha area of pasture field to the west of North Lodge, on the upper sides of a shallow sloping valley above Wymington, at approximately 98m above the Ordnance Datum (aOD).

The development area lies on a bedrock of Oxford Clay Formation Mudstone, a Jurassic period sedimentary formation formed by shallow seas. The superficial deposits in this area are of Oadby Member Diamicton, formed up during the Quaternary Period ice age conditions. This group is defined by clay and silty clay, with chalk and flint fragments, and sand and gravel lenses.



Scale 1:20,000

Site location Fig 1

## 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

A search of the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record (BBHER) was conducted as part of the WSI for this work (Finn 2015), to determine the nature of archaeological activity in the area and the presence or absence of heritage assets in the vicinity of the site. Below is a summary of the findings (see the map in Fig 2).

Some indicators of prehistoric activity in the area have been recorded. In 1860, a hoard of 60 late Bronze Age socketed axes were found approximately 270m to the north-west of the proposal site, although the exact location is unknown (BBHER 915). Hoards of this kind are usually thought to have been depositions relating to bronze working. Around 370m to the east of the site, another Antiquarian Bronze Age axe find spot is recorded (FBD568). Domestic activity of a similar date can be suggested by a cropmark interpreted as a prehistoric enclosure and roundhouse c250m to the south-west of the proposal site (BBHER 2755), and cropmarks identified around 1km to the north, which include enclosures and part of a possible trackway (BBHER 15054).

Previous archaeological work, in the form of an evaluation, was undertaken on land c660m to the south of the development site in advance of granting permission for a 65,800 panel solar park at land south of Blackmere Farm, Forty Foot Lane, Souldrop, Bedfordshire (planning ref: 14/02350/NMA, event number: EBB851). Four phases of prehistoric and Roman activity were encountered, including apparent enclosure ditches, gullies, and occasional pits containing pottery of Late Iron Age to Early Roman date (BBHER 1331). Other Roman activity, in the form of enclosure groups, is known south of Wymington (BBHER 2759), and Roman pottery and building material scatters have been found just to the west of Goosey Lodge Farm (BBHER2758), c900m from the site. A single Roman coin of Valentinian (364-75) was found to the north of the site (BBHER 11393). Scattered findspots of Roman material have also been found in the area (MBB19770, 19766).

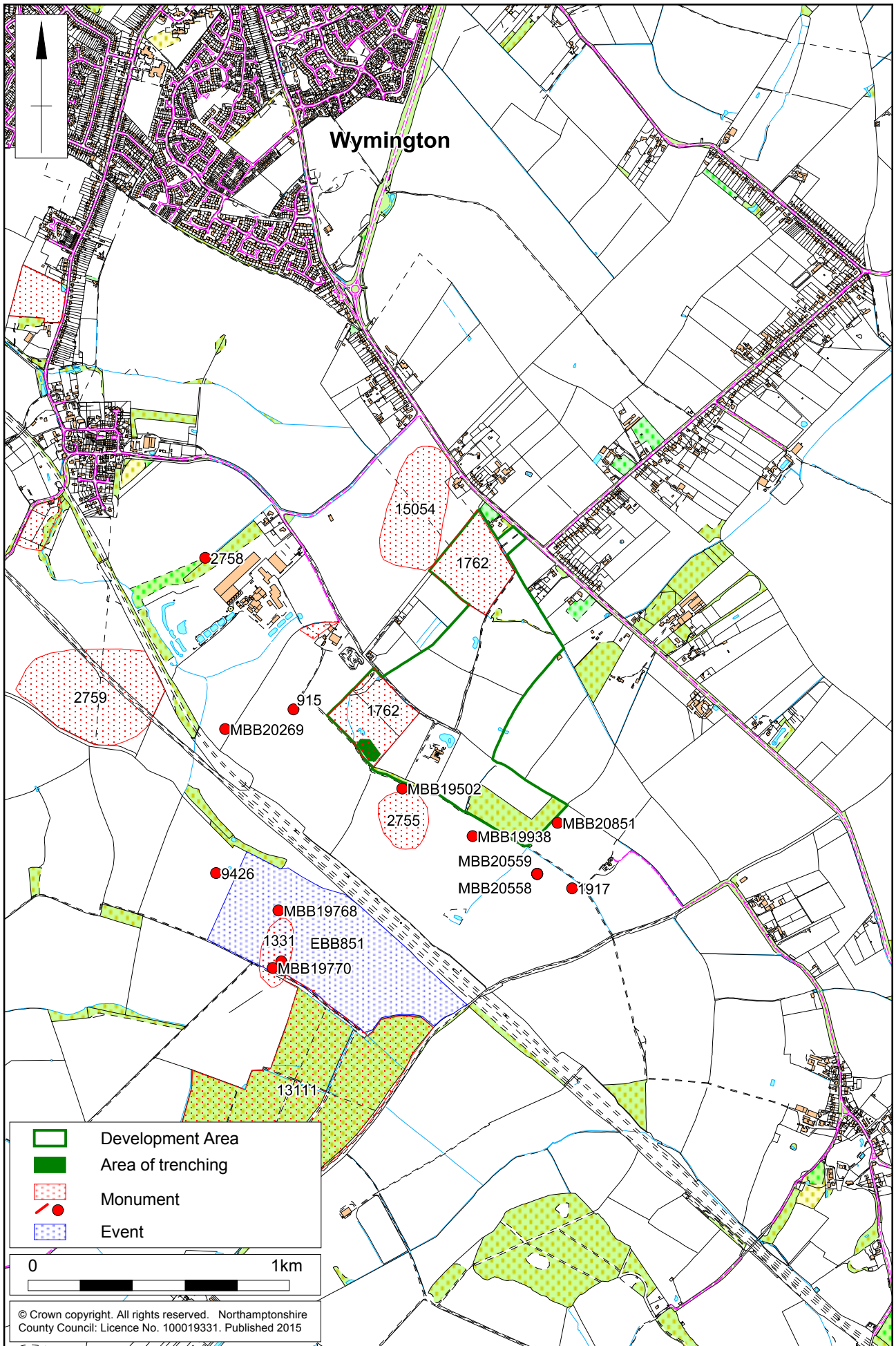
Earthworks indicate that the proposed development site was part of the open field system of Wymington village during the medieval period. Ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks survive across the majority of the field within which the installation will be situated (BBHER 1762). However, the area proposed for the footprint of the solar array does not contain any surviving ridge and furrow. A study of vertical aerial photographic records suggest that disturbance and dumping seems to have destroyed any extant earthworks between 1945 and 2002 (Figs 3 and 4). In addition, the access to the solar array is to take place down pre-existing tracks, and the route of the underground cabling is shown to run outside of the ridge and furrow, adjacent to one of these tracks. Findspots of medieval material dress accessories have been made to the north-west and south of the site (19938, MBB20561, 20562).

Seven post-medieval findspots are known from the west and south of the site. These comprise buckles and coins, including a hoard of four 16th and 17th-century shillings (MBB 20557, 20558, 20559, 20560, 20851, 19502, 20269). Two post-medieval barns which stood to the south-east and south-west of the site have since been demolished (BBHER 1917, 9426). An area of ancient woodland, Great Hayes Wood, is to be found c950m to the south of the site (BBHER 13111).



Table 1: BBHER data around the proposed development site

<b>BBHER number</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Location (centred on)</b>
915	A hoard of 60 late Bronze Age socketed axes found in 1860	SP 9635 6331
FBD568, 347101 2755	Find spot: Bronze Age axe Sub-rectangular enclosure cropmark, with internal circular house site with east-facing entrance, in area of undated occupation and pebble spread	SP 97 63 SP 967 629
15054 1331	Cropmarks, possibly of enclosures and a trackway Archaeological field evaluation, producing late Iron Age to Early Roman enclosure ditches, gullies, and pits	SP 968 640 SP 963 623
EBB851	Monitoring of geotechnical test pits and trial trench evaluation (see BBHER 1331)	SP9649 6240
2758	Roman activity, including pottery and building material scatter	SP 960 638
MBB19770	Find spot: A copper-alloy dolphin type brooch of Roman (probably mid to late 1st century) date	SP 96 62
MBB19768, 66 2759	Find spot: Roman pottery sherds Extensive spread of (mainly sub-rectangular) enclosures & enclosure groups, running west-east, identified by field-walking	SP 96 62 SP 955 633
11393	Find spot: Roman coin of Valentinian (364-75)	SP 969 641
1762	Extant ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks	SP 9643 6384
19938	Find spot: A medieval silver annular brooch - 13th to 14th century	SP 96 63
MBB20561	Find spot: A copper-alloy strap-loop of medieval date	SP 97 62
MBB20562	Find spot: A frame from a copper-alloy single-loop buckle of medieval date	SP 97 62
MBB20558	Find spot: A copper-alloy double-oval buckle, 16th to 17th-century	SP 97 62
MBB19502	Find spot: Post-medieval copper alloy buckle	SP 96 63
MBB20269	Find spot: Post-medieval coin hoard	SP 96 63
MBB20557	Find spot: Post-medieval coin, copper-alloy Rose farthing of Charles I, 1625-1649 AD	SP 97 62
MBB20851	Find spot: William III Silver sixpence, the coin is rippled in a way normally associated with use as a love token	SP 97 62
MBB20559	Find spot: A copper-alloy knee buckle 17th to early 18th century	SP 97 62
MBB20560	Find spot: A copper-alloy two-piece buckle, 17th to 19th century	SP 97 62
1917	Blackmere Barn – 19th century	SP 974 626
9426	Whitlands Barn - Grade II listed 18th century threshing barn. Now demolished	SP 9606 6267
13111	Great Hayes Wood, Ancient Woodland	SP 963 618



Scale 1:20,000

Historic Environment Record (HER) results Fig 2



Satellite photograph, dated 2002, showing modern disturbance to the survey area ©Google Earth Fig 3

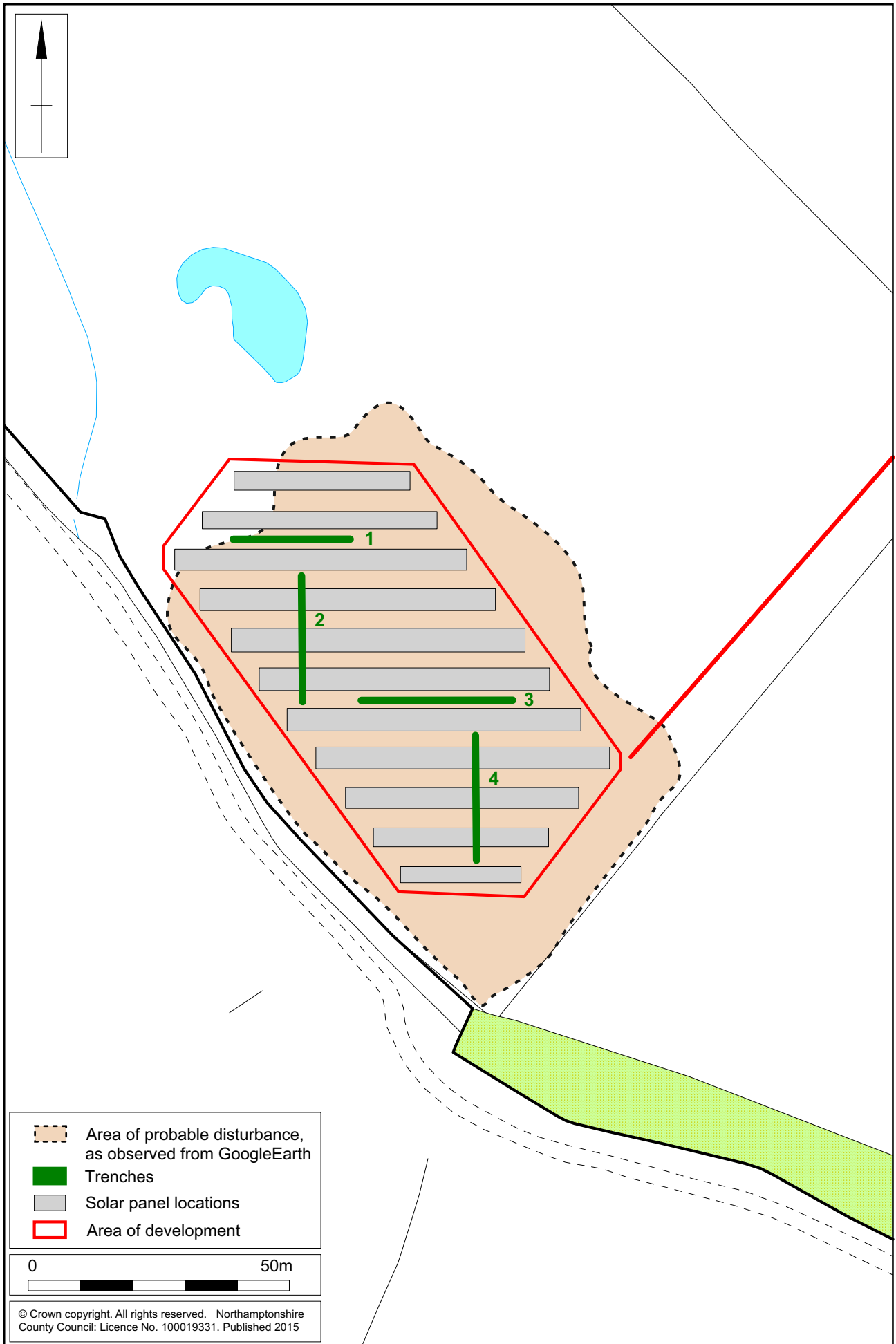
### 3 OBJECTIVES





The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to understand the nature, function and character of the site in its cultural and environmental setting, specifically to:

- identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits, exposed during the groundworks for the new development and any associated groundworks;
- determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits;
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.


The work aimed to contribute to the research objectives drawn from national and regional research frameworks as an extension of the general aims set out above (EH 1991 and 1997; Medlycott 2011, Oake 2007, Bryant 2000). This includes:

- The inter-relationship between settlements, monuments and field systems during the Bronze Age (Medlycott 2011, 20, Oake 2007, 10-12);
- The significance of Bronze Age hoarding and other depositional practices within social and economic context (Medlycott 2011, 21; Oake 2007, 10-12);
- Characterising and understanding Iron Age rural settlement including layout and economy (Oake 2007, 10-12; Bryant 2000, 14-15, Medlycott 2011, 47);
- The origins and development of field systems and the relationship between field systems and settlements in the Iron Age (Oake 2007, 10-12; Bryant 2000, 15; Medlycott 2011, 47);
- Change in field systems and occupation patterns, as well as evidence for acculturation in the Iron Age/Roman transitional period (Medlycott 2011, 31, Oake 2007, 10-12).



-  Area of probable disturbance, as observed from GoogleEarth
-  Trenches
-  Solar panel locations
-  Area of development

0 50m



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Scale 1:1000

Trench layout, showing probable area of disturbance Fig 4

## 4 METHODOLOGY

The evaluation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance: Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014b). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (EH 2006), as well as specific guidelines for this project given by Vanessa Clarke (Comment dated 17.12.14, Bedford Borough Council), and the WSI prepared by MOLA (Finn 2015).

A 4% sample of the 0.46ha site was required, with a further 1% contingency if further definition had been required. Four trenches of 20m long by 1.80m wide, were positioned by the client to sample the site area. The trenches were excavated by machine using a toothless bucket, and any features were to be further defined by hand.

All archaeological features were given a separate context number. Deposits were described on *pro-forma* trench sheets to include details of the context, its relationships, and interpretation (MOLA 2014). The trenches and spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval. Subsequent to the evaluation, the trench was backfilled with up-cast, lightly compacted by the mechanical excavator.

Section drawings could not be produced due to the flooded nature of the trenches after persistent heavy rain, and the unsafe section edges. Digital photographs therefore formed the principal record for report purposes, and black and white negatives were taken for submission to the archive.

## 5 EVALUATION EVIDENCE

All of the trenches produced four horizons of very similar nature (Figs 5-11). The natural geological deposit in this area was between 1.38m and 1.50m below ground level, and was shown to be quite mixed; grey-brown boulder clay with pockets of stained grey-blue clay and orange-grey gravel and clay (104, 204, 304, 404). This was overlain in all trenches by a buried soil of grey-brown silty clay, containing frequent inclusions of gravel and chalk (103, 203, 303, 403), between 0.18-0.25m thick.

Layer (102) was shown to be a highly mixed made ground, with ceramic building materials of brick and tile, and demolition rubble mixed with clay (Fig 5). Frequent inclusions in this layer were lengths of metal pipe, plastics, and other debris. This layer was varying thickness across the area, being up to 1.0m thick in trenches 3 and 4 (302, 402), but becoming shallower to a depth of 0.89m to the north-west (102, 202). In trench 3, this layer had a high content of ash and burnt material (302, Fig 6). This layer had caused some staining down into the buried soil below.

The topsoil across the trenches was a built-up or levelling layer, either formed during the use of the area as pasture, or as a deliberate made ground for levelling (101, 201, 301, 401). This horizon contained crushed brick.

No archaeological features or finds were observed in any of the trenches.



Made ground layers in Trench 1, looking west Fig 5



Black ash content in layer (302) in Trench 3, looking north Fig 6



Overview of Trench four, looking north-west Fig 7

## 6 CONCLUSION

The evaluation of land at North Lodge, Wymington involved the sampling of the proposed development area with four trenches. The evaluation was undertaken to identify any archaeological deposits in the area in advance of the construction of a solar array.

A layer of dumping and disturbance was found overlaying a buried soil in all four trenches. This layer was between 0.79 and 1.0m thick, and contained modern demolition debris in the form of ceramic building materials, metal pipework and plastics (102), (202), (302), and (402). In one area in trench 3, the layer had a high content of black ashy material.

Comparing the area to vertical area photographs shows that a period of dumping took place in this area between 1945 and 2002, probably for the purpose of levelling the area to the south-east of the pond and to the west of North Lodge. The resultant made ground was observed in the layer mentioned above. The regional research frameworks (section 3) were therefore not applicable, due to the degree of dumping.

No archaeological features, artefacts, or material were found within the limits of trial trenches.



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<https://www.google.com/earth/>

MOLA  
25th February 2015

**APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY**

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Max depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	20m x 1.8m, W-E	496651 263148	96.5 – 97.2m	1.35m deep 95.4-95.95m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
101	Pasture topsoil	Pasture, made ground or built up layer, with crushed brick	0.20 - 0.23m deep	-
102	Levelling/dumping layer	Modern made ground, clay mixed with brick, tile, lead pipe, plastic, demolition rubble	0.72 - 0.89m deep	-
103	Buried soil	Grey-brown silty-clay, frequent gravel and chalk inclusions, some staining	0.20 – 0.23m deep	-
104	Mixed natural	Grey-brown boulder clay with pockets of stained grey-blue clay and orange-grey gravel-clay	-	-



Trench one overview, looking west Fig 8

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Max depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	20m x 1.8m, N-S	496651 263148	96.84 – 97.9m	1.38m deep 95.51-96.57m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Pasture topsoil	Pasture, made ground or built up layer, with crushed brick	0.25 - 0.30m deep	-
202	Levelling/dumping layer	Modern made ground, clay mixed with crushed brick, brick, tile, lead pipe, plastic, demolition rubble	0.79 - 0.83m deep	-
203	Buried soil	Grey-brown silty-clay, frequent gravel and chalk inclusions, some staining	0.20 – 0.25m deep	-
204	Mixed natural	Grey-brown boulder clay with pockets of stained grey-blue clay and orange-grey gravel-clay	-	-



Trench two overview, looking south Fig 9

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Max depth &amp; height of natural (aOD)</b>
3	20m x 1.8m, E-W	496651 263148	97.33 – 97.67m	1.55m deep 96.19 – 95.78m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
301	Pasture topsoil	Pasture, made ground or built up layer, with crushed brick	0.30m deep	-
302	Levelling/dumping layer	Modern made ground, mixed blue-grey clay with brick, tile, metal pipe, and plastic, black ash layer to the east	1.0m deep	-
303	Buried soil	Grey-brown silty-clay, frequent gravel and chalk inclusions, some staining	0.18 – 0.25m deep	-
304	Mixed natural	Grey-brown boulder clay with pockets of stained grey-blue clay and orange-grey gravel-clay, heavy staining	-	-



Trench three overview, looking east Fig 10

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Max depth &amp; height of natural (aOD)</b>
4	20m x 1.8m, N-S	496651 263148	97.73 – 97.89m	1.50m deep 95.93 – 96.29m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
401	Pasture topsoil	Pasture, made ground or built up layer, with crushed brick	0.30m deep	-
402	Levelling/dumping layer	Modern made ground, mixed clays and gravels with brick, tile, demolition debris, metal pipe, and plastic	1.0m deep	-
403	Buried soil	Grey-brown silty-clay, frequent gravel and chalk inclusions, some staining	0.20m deep	-
404	Mixed natural	Grey-brown boulder clay with pockets of stained grey-blue clay and orange-grey gravel-clay, heavy staining	-	-



Trench four overview, looking south Fig 11



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