



# **Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer Northamptonshire March 2015**

Report No. 15/57

Author and illustrator: Carol Simmonds



.

**Archaeological trial trench evaluation  
at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer  
Northamptonshire  
March 2015**

HER number: ENN107930

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**OAS/S REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>molanort1- 208205</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, March 2015		
Short description	MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting acting on behalf of Taylor Wimpey East Midlands to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire. The development area is located on low lying ground adjacent to a stream. The evaluation confirmed the presence of alluvial deposits at the base of the slope with colluvium on higher ground. The evaluation identified two modern ditches which may indicate an attempt was made to improve the drainage. There were no pre-modern finds or features.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	Geophysical Survey		
Current land use	Pasture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Modern drainage ditches		
Significant finds	None		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	Finedon Road, Burton Latimer		
Easting Northing	SP 9882 7392		
Area (sq m/ha)	2ha		
Height aOD	53-63m		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	NCC		
Project Design originator	MOLA (2015)		
Director/Supervisor	Yvonne Wolfram- Murray, MOLA		
Project Manager	Adam Yates MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	Taylor Wimpey East Midlands		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	25/03/2015		
End date	27/03/2015		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	ENN107930 /BLFR15		
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Site pictures, report	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, March 2015		
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# Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	1
3	BACKGROUND	3
3.1	Location and geology	3
3.2	Historical and archaeological background	3
4	METHODOLOGY	4
5	EVALUATION RESULTS	6
5.1	General stratigraphy	6
5.2	Ditches in Trench 2	8
6	CONCLUSION	8
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	9

## Figures

Front Cover	The development area, looking south-east
Fig 1	Site location, 1:10,000
Fig 2	Excavation of Trench 1 in progress, looking south
Fig 3	Trench location, 1:2,000
Fig 4	Representative section in trench 3, looking north
Fig 5	Trench 2, plan (1:200) and section (1:25), ditch 208
Back Cover	General view of trench 1 after backfilling, looking north-east

# **Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer Northamptonshire March 2015**

## **Abstract**

*MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting acting on behalf of Taylor Wimpey East Midlands to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire. The development area is located on low lying ground adjacent to a stream. The evaluation confirmed the presence of alluvial deposits at the base of the slope with colluvium on higher ground. The evaluation identified two modern ditches which may indicate an attempt was made to improve the drainage. There were no pre-modern finds or features.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, acting on behalf of Taylor Wimpey East Midlands (TWEM), to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Finedon Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 9882 7392; Fig 1). The scope of the works was set out in a brief prepared by the County Archaeological Advisor at Northamptonshire County Council, (NCC 2012). The trial trenching follows a geophysical survey which had been undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Pelling 2012).

The works were undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (NA 2012) prepared by MOLA, formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology. The evaluation was undertaken between the 25th and 27th March 2015, according to the ClfA's *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a) and MOLA's in-house manual (MOLA 2014).

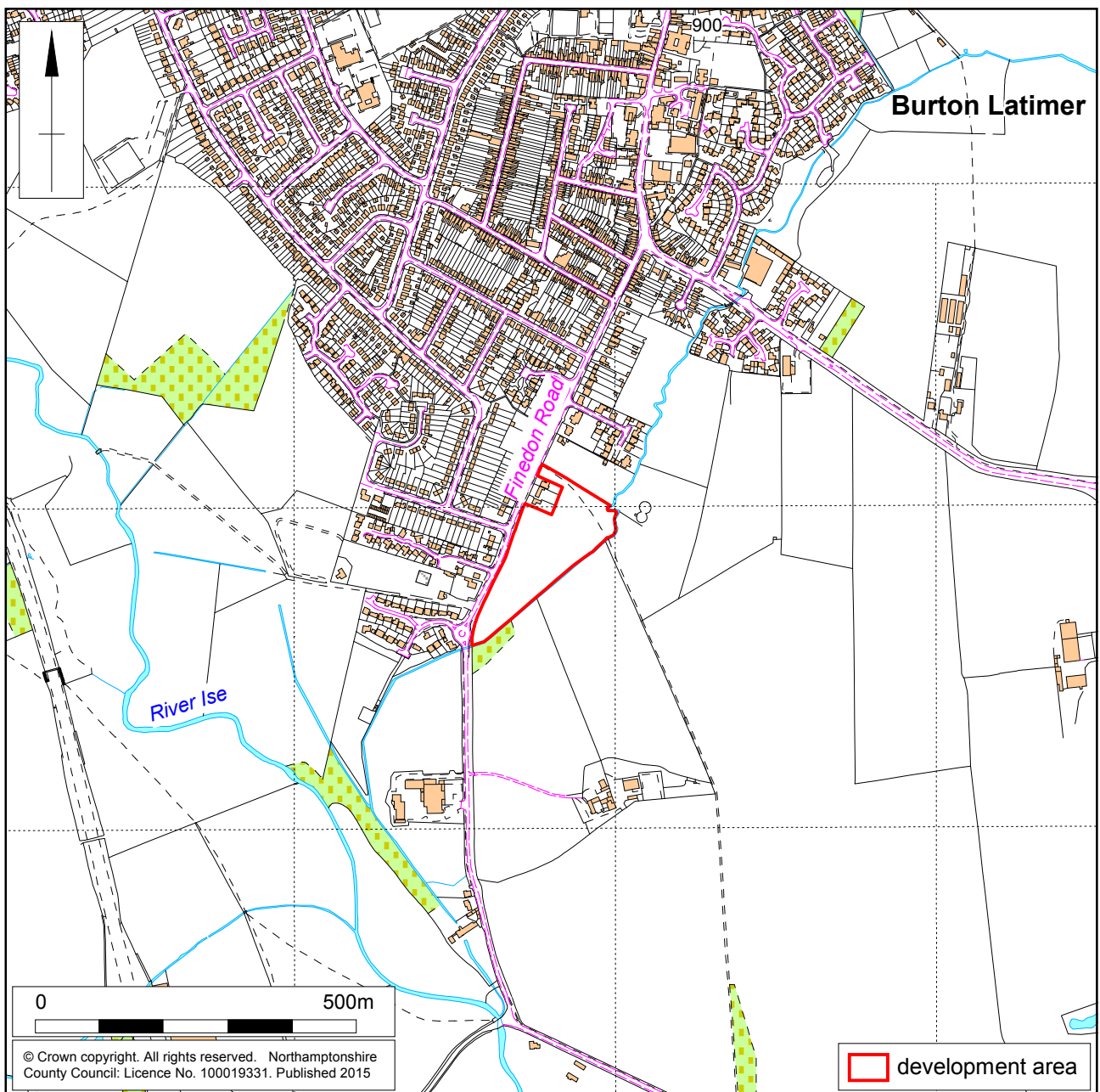
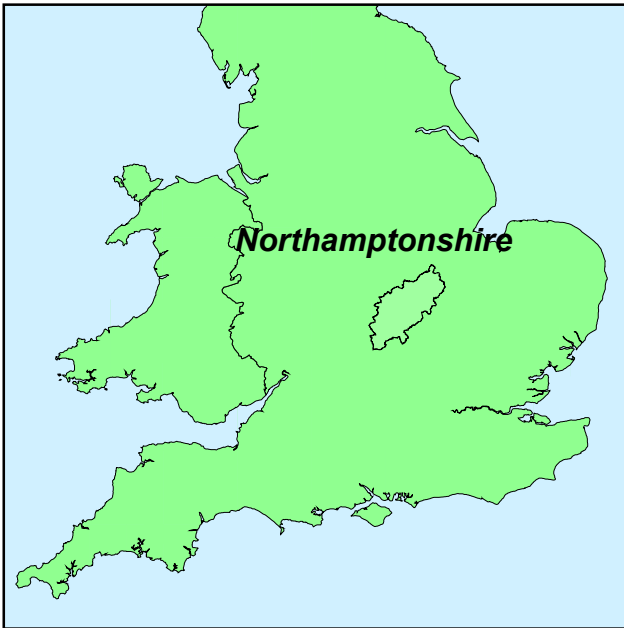
## **2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The general 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, and to inform any mitigation decisions which might be required.

Specifically, the work aimed to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site;
- Determine the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

Specific research objectives were to be drawn from national and regional research frameworks documents (English Heritage 1991, and Knight *et al* 2012) if warranted by the results of the evaluation.



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

### **3 BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Location and geology**

The proposed development area is situated on the southern outskirts of the town and comprises a roughly triangular-shaped parcel of land bounded by the Finedon Road on the west, a stream to the south-east and domestic gardens to the north-east.

The site sits between 53-63m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and slopes to the south and east towards the stream. In the north of the site a public footpath leads south-east from the Finedon Road to the stream. Approximately 15m to the south of the footpath and alongside Finedon Road there is a modern development of three houses and associated gardens.

The bedrock of the area is part of the Whitby Mudstone formation (formerly Upper Lias Clay) with alluvial deposits adjacent to the stream (BGS 2012).

#### **3.2 Historical and archaeological background**

The earliest known reference to Burton Latimer is in the Domesday Book when the manor was called *Burtone*. There is a reference to a division of the manor in the 13th century, and it is from that point that the area became known as Burton Latimer (VCH 1930). Records indicate Burton Latimer was predominantly an agricultural village up until the 19th century. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the area became more industrialised but the Finedon Road area was not developed until the 20th century (Ballinger 2000).

There are no known archaeological finds recorded in the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record from the survey area itself, however, Mesolithic flint tools have been found at Burton Latimer Sewage Works, just to the east of the site (HER 5507/0/0). The Roman road from *Durobrivae* to Dungee Corner is conjectured to pass through the site (HER 3141/1), and in 1954 Roman remains including pottery and coins from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD were found 1km to the north of the proposed development area (Walker *et al* 2009). More recently in 2011, a Romano-British farmstead and associated cemetery were excavated 600m to the north-east of the survey area. Preliminary findings suggest that the farmstead was occupied between the 2nd – 4th centuries AD (Albion Archaeology 2011) with the cemetery in use in the late 3rd/early 4th centuries AD (Luke and Philips 2011).

Maps of the area from the early 19th century onwards show the site to have been given over to agriculture with generally little change up to the present day (Walker *op cit*). However, the stream's meandering course, as shown on the 1803 Enclosure map, had been altered to its present straight course by the time of the Ordnance Survey 6" first edition map of 1885-86.

An archaeological evaluation comprising desk-based assessment and geophysical survey was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology of the field immediately north of the present site in 2009 but this did not reveal any significant archaeological features (Walker *et al* 2009, fig 2).

Detailed magnetometer survey of the current site detected the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation and a possible ditch (Pelling 2012). However, magnetic interference from modern features, including fencing and underground services, obscured some parts of the survey area. No anomalies associated with the presumed Roman road were detected.



## 4 METHODOLOGY

Three trenches, each measuring 50m long and 1.8m wide, were excavated. The position of the trenches was initially determined following discussion with the County Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council, and were designed to examine the ditch detected by geophysical survey and confirm the absence or presence of the Roman road. Trench positions were subsequently altered to allow for known constraints such as sewers and overhead services. Although the trenches were adjusted they would have still located the Roman road and ditch.

The trial trenches were surveyed using Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of  $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ .

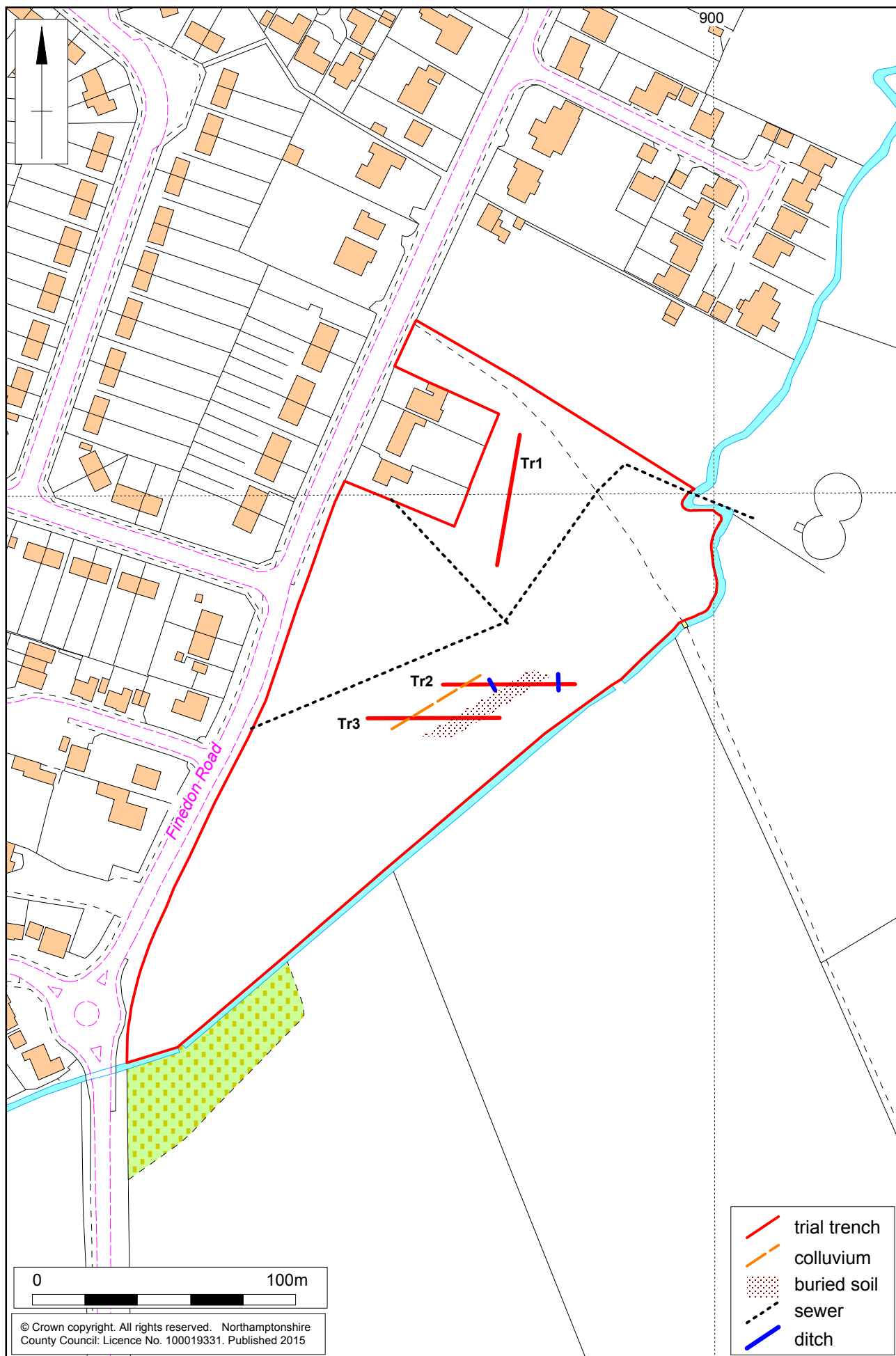
The trenches were excavated using a JCB 3CX excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision, to reveal archaeological remains or, where these were absent, undisturbed natural horizons (Fig 2). The topsoil and subsoil were stacked separately at the side of the excavated trench.



Excavation of Trench 1 in progress, looking south Fig 2

The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines, following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for 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).

Each trench was hand cleaned sufficiently to enhance the definition of features, unless it was certain that there were no archaeological remains present. All archaeological deposits identified during the course of the evaluation were recorded following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014b). Levels were related to the Ordnance Datum. Photographs were taken of all trenches and any relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film and high resolution digital images.



Scale 1:2,000

Trench location Fig 3

## 5 EVALUATION RESULTS

### 5.1 General stratigraphy

Natural substrate comprising blue/green-grey clays were recorded in trenches 1 and 3. At the top of the slope on the western part of the site the natural was between 0.41m and 0.60m below modern ground level. Downslope the overlying alluvial and colluvial deposits masked the natural to a depth of 1.22m (Trench 3; Fig 4).

The alluvial deposits comprised a sequence of pink-orange, grey-brown and brown-orange silty clays, between 0.41m thick in trench 1 and 0.72m thick in trench 3.

A layer of colluvium, 0.26m to 0.30m thick, comprising firm dark orange-pink silty clay was present at the western end of trenches 2 and 3. In trench 1 the colluvial deposits, 0.60m thick, comprised yellow-brown sandy clay with ironstone fragments.



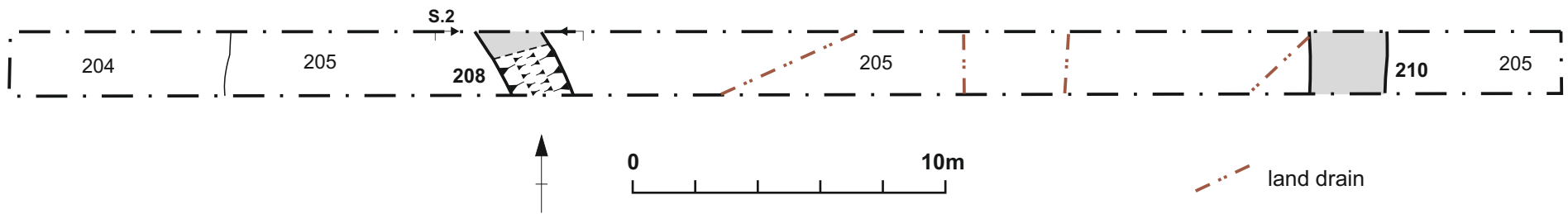
Representative section in trench 3, looking north, (scale 1m) Fig 4

The original topographic profile of the site would have been more acute. A friable dark brown loam probably representing a buried soil layer (203)/ (307), measuring 11m east to west and 0.10m thick, was present in the centre of trench 2 and at the eastern end of trench 3. It was located at the base of the natural slope c0.50m below modern ground level and was overlain with a layer of firm light brown-orange silty clay (202)/(308). This layer was also c11m east to west and up to 0.30m thick. It was overlain with topsoil comprising either a dark brown-yellow loam (101) or a dark grey-brown loam (201), (301).

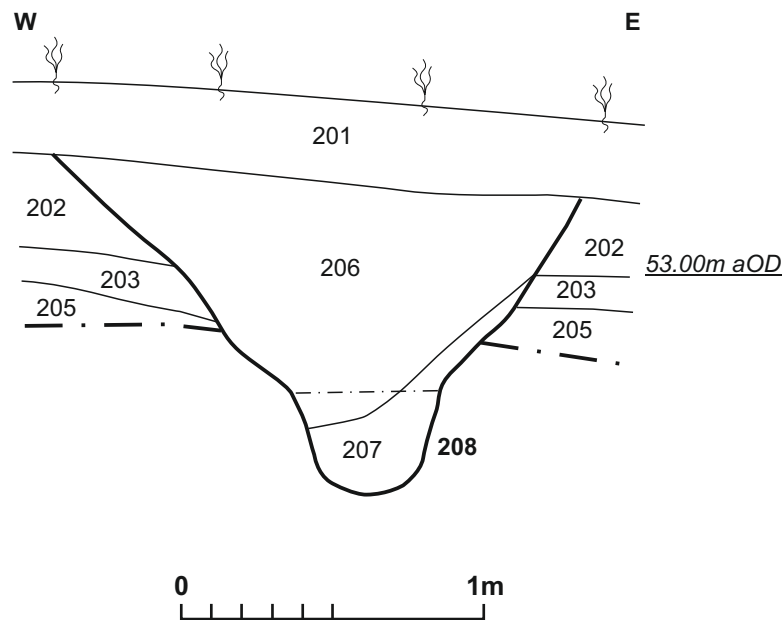
In all trenches there were pebble-covered land drains at an average depth of 0.60m. There were two ditches in trench 2 (section 5.2), no other archaeological features were present.



## Trench 2



## Section 2



Trench 2, plan and section, ditch 208 Fig 5

## 5.2 Ditches in Trench 2

In the centre of trench 2 there was a ditch [208], aligned north-west to south-east, 1.70m wide and 1.0m deep (Fig 5). It had a narrow rounded V-shaped profile rising to near vertical lower edges and steep, concave upper edges. A basal fill (207) of friable sticky patchy dark brown and grey clay, 0.30m thick, tipped from the north-east. This was overlain with a unconsolidated, loose mixed grey and brown silty clay (206), 0.80m thick. It was sealed with the modern topsoil (201).

Approximately 24m to the east of ditch [208] was ditch [210], aligned north to south, 2.20m wide. The western edge of the ditch cut away part of one of the land drains. The fill (209) comprising mixed, loose grey and brown clay was sealed with topsoil (201). Modern waste material including fragments of plastic and a small fragment of a vinyl record were recovered but not retained.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The evaluation located no features or finds predating the 20th century, despite being located within a wider landscape of known Roman remains. The proposed route of the Roman road between *Durobrivae* and Dungee Corner is conjectured and based on evidence from Irchester Roman town to the south and at Barton Seagrave to the north (Walker *et al* 2009). The evaluation did not identify the route, suggesting that it deviated and crossed the River Ise and the stream forming the eastern boundary of the site elsewhere.

Extensive alluvial and colluvial deposits were encountered across the site indicating that the site flooded frequently and therefore may not have been suitable for settlement. The geophysical survey identified areas of ridge and furrow as faint positive magnetised linear trends, suggesting that from the medieval period the site lay outside of settlement. The remnants of ridge and furrow were not present in the trenches perhaps because the site was ploughed from the post-medieval period onwards.

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MOLA  
April 2015  
V2 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>50m x 1.8m N-S</b>	<b>489922 273999</b>	<b>57.57 (N)</b>	<b>0.60m (N) &amp; 56.97m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
101	Topsoil	Dark yellow-brown loam	0.10m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Yellow-brown sandy loam	0.40m thick	-
103	Buried topsoil	Dark yellow-brown sandy clay	0.15m thick	-
104	Colluvium	Yellow-brown sandy clay, occasional ironstone fragments	At least 0.60m thick at southern end of trench	-
105	Natural	Blue-grey clay	-	-



Trench 1, looking north

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>50m x 1.8m W-E</b>	<b>489925 273927</b>	<b>54.74m (W)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
201	Topsoil	Dark brown-grey loam, occasional rounded pebbles, brick fragments	0.28m thick	-
202	Layer	Firm, light brown-orange silty clay	c11m W-E 0.30m thick	-
203	Buried soil	Located in centre of trench. Friable, dark brown loam	11m W-E, 0.10m thick	-
204	Colluvium	West end of trench. Firm dark orange-pink silty clay	0.30m thick	-
205	Alluvium	Firm mid brown-orange silty clay, rare charcoal flecking	At least 0.41m thick	-
206	Fill of ditch 208	Unconsolidated, loose mixed grey and brown silty clay. Sealed by 201	1.70m wide 0.80m thick	-
207	Fill of ditch 208	Friable sticky dark brown with grey patches clay loam	0.70m wide 0.30m thick	-
208	Ditch Filled with 206, 207	NE-SW, V-shaped profile comprising narrow rounded base, steep near vertical lower edges rising to eroded concave	1.70m wide 1.0m deep	-
209	Fill of ditch 210	Mixed, loose unconsolidated grey and brown clay. Sealed by 201	2.20m wide	Plastic, vinyl, glass-not retained
210	Ditch Filled with 209	Not excavated. Aligned N-S	2.20m wide	-





Trench 2, looking east

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	50m x 1.8m W-E	489893 273914	54.75m (W)	0.41m (W) & 54.34m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Same as 201	0.26m thick	-
302	Colluvium	Same as 204	0.26m thick	-
303	Alluvium	Same as 205	0.28m thick	-
304	Alluvium	Firm, mid grey-brown silty clay, charcoal flecking	0.30m thick	-
305	Alluvium	Firm, pink-orange silty clay	0.18m thick	-
306	Natural	Compact, light green-blue-grey. Seen at W end of trench and in sondages	-	-
307	Buried soil	Same as 203	11m wide 0.10m thick	-
308	Layer	Same as 202	c12m wide 0.30m thick	-
309	Layer	At E end of trench. Friable white-buff sandy clay and coarse gravels	4.5m E-W	-



Trench 3, looking west



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