



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation  
on land east of  
West Haddon  
Northamptonshire  
March 2015**

Report No. 15/59

Author: Paul Clements

Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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Illustrations: Amir Bassir BSc

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS molanort1-208894</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land east of West Haddon, Northamptonshire, March 2015		
Short description	In March 2015 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by MOLA Northampton, for CgMs Consulting. The works identified an Iron Age pit and undated ditches. Furrows of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, and remnant deposits of compounds created for the construction of the A428 West Haddon bypass were also identified.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	Desk-based assessment; geophysical survey		
Current land use	Pasture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Iron Age, medieval/ post medieval.		
Significant finds	Iron Age pottery		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	West Haddon, land east		
Easting Northing	SP 637 719		
Area (sq m/ha)	5.4 ha		
Height aOD	c 185m AOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator			
Project Design originator	CgMs Consulting		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Clements		
Project Managers	Adam Yates (MOLA Northampton) and Simon Mortimer (CgMs Consulting)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting for Davidsons Developments Ltd		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	08/03/2015		
End date	16/03/2015		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	ENN107931	Pottery	
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land east of West Haddon, Northamptonshire, March 2015		
Serial title & volume	MOLA Northampton Report 15/59		
Author(s)	Paul Clements		
Page numbers	10 pages of text and figures		
Date	02 April 2015		

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# Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land east of West Haddon Northamptonshire March 2015

## **Abstract**

*In March 2015 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by MOLA Northampton for CgMs Consulting, acting on behalf of their clients, Davidsons Developments Ltd. The works identified an Iron Age pit and two undated ditches. Furrows of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, and remnant deposits of compounds created for the construction of the A428 West Haddon bypass were also identified.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out in March 2015 by MOLA Northampton on land east of West Haddon, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 591 718; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their clients Davidsons Developments Ltd. The work was required as a condition of planning consent (APP/Y2810/A/14/2222311). The works were carried out in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; DCLG 2012).

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA Northampton (Yates 2015).

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

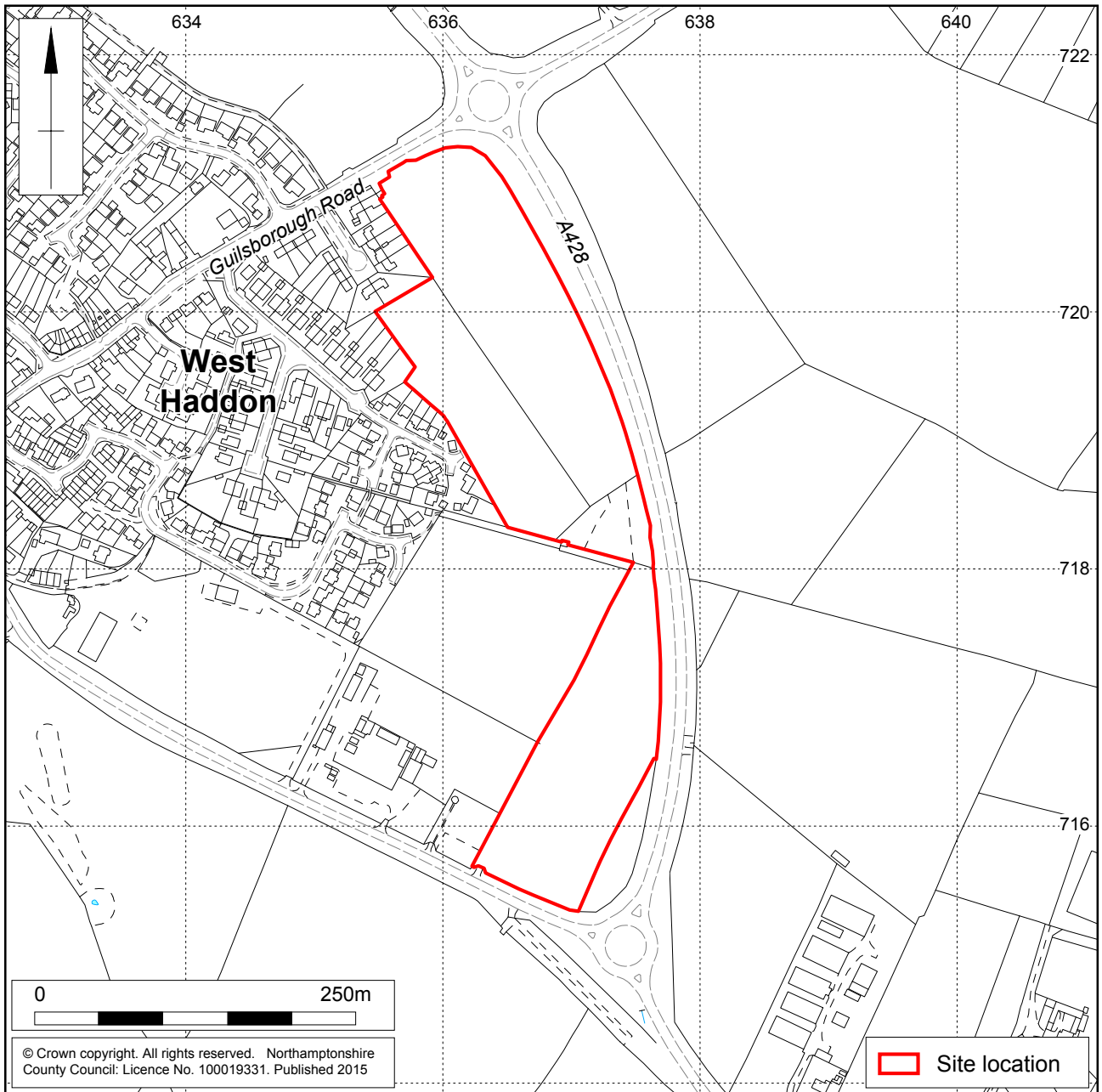
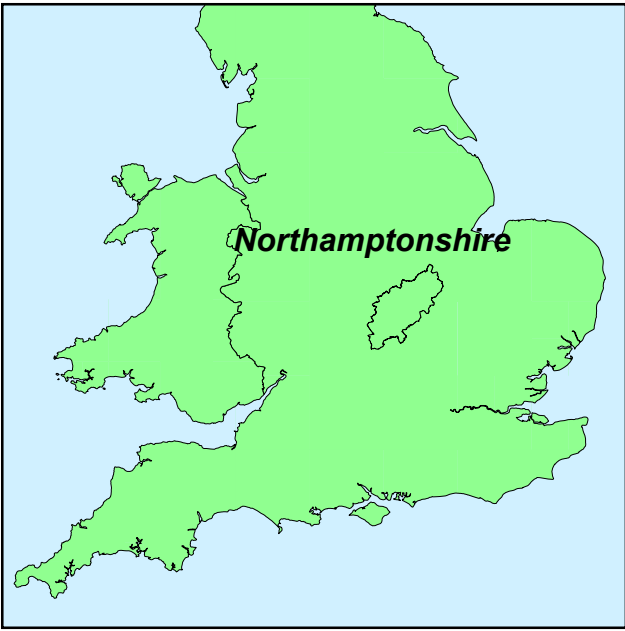
- to establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site;
- to recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location and geology**

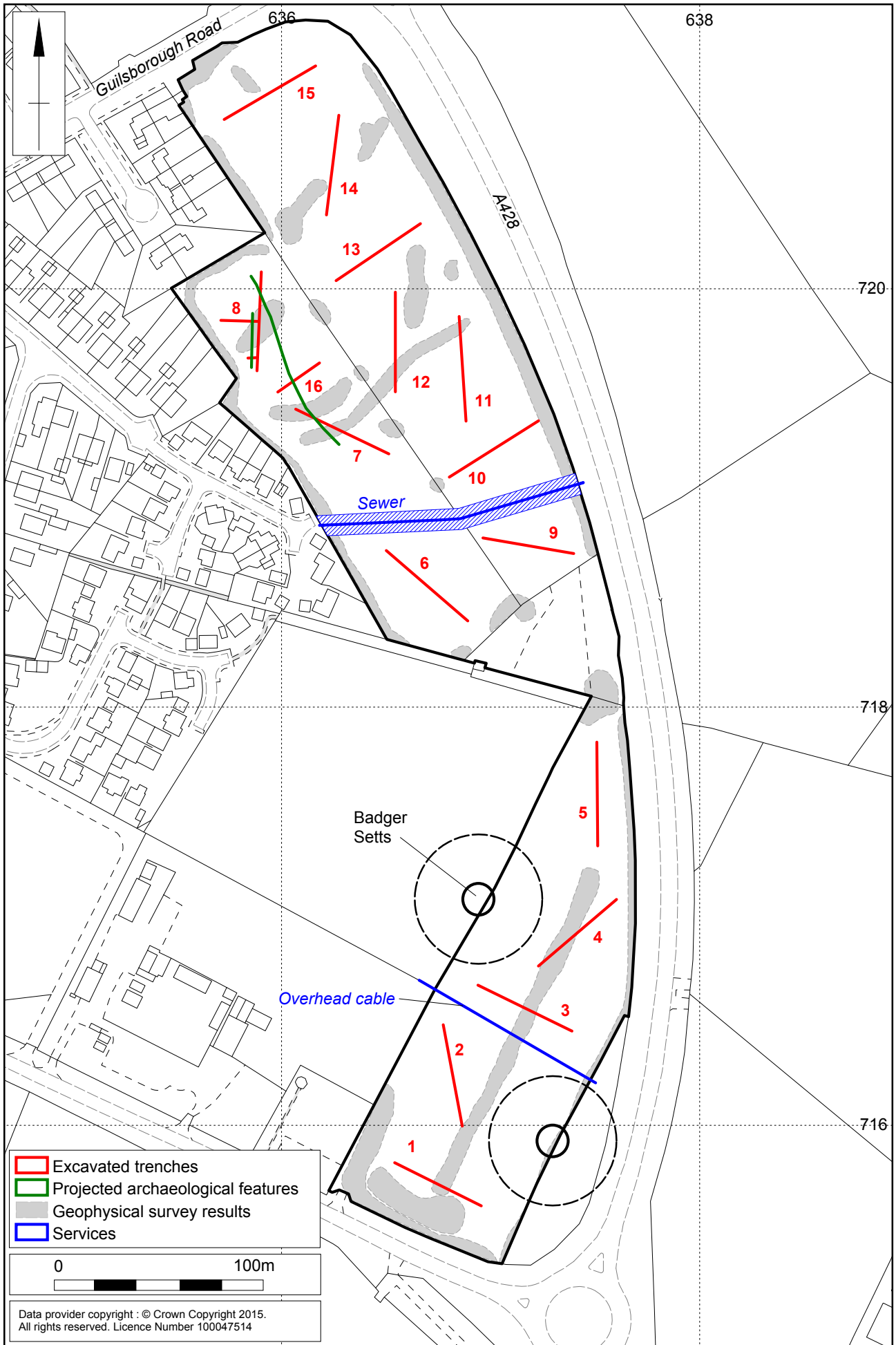
The site is located on the eastern edge of West Haddon at a height of c 185m aOD. The site is bounded by the A428 to the east and to the west by scrubland, playing fields, and housing.

The site is underlain by sandstone, limestone and ironstone of the Northamptonshire sand formation and are overlain by superficial deposits of glaciofluvial sand and gravel (BGS 2015). Soils across the site recorded as freely draining, slightly acid, loamy soils (Landis 2015).



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:2500

Excavated trenches, showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results

Fig 2



## 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

A summary of the results of a desk-based assessment (Flitcroft 2013) were included in the Written Scheme of Investigation and are reproduced here.

The Northamptonshire HER includes three Monument records which relate, in part, to the study site. All three refer to small numbers of unstratified archaeological finds (of prehistoric, Roman and medieval date) which were recovered during archaeological survey work on the A428 West Haddon Bypass (Mason 2005, 2006). None of these records are indicative of significant archaeological evidence within the site, or constitute 'heritage assets' under the definition used in the NPPF.

There is evidence of ploughed out medieval and post-medieval open field ridge and furrow present within the study site. Surviving below-ground archaeological remains of this cultivation are considered to have no archaeological interest.

Evidence from the surrounding area, including extensive archaeological survey work between 1997 and 2005 on the line of the adjacent A428 West Haddon Bypass and a Watching Brief on construction of the road itself (Mason 2005, 2006), suggests that the study site has a low potential for other archaeological assets.

Geophysical survey (Richardson 2014) identified two former field boundaries and areas of ridge and furrow cultivation together with a single possible pit. Other anomalies related to geological variations or modern features and remains.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

Sixteen trial trenches were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by MOLA Northampton and approved by Lesley-Ann Mather (Planning Archaeologist for Northamptonshire). The trench plan was designed to test anomalies revealed by the geophysical survey as well as providing a general coverage of the proposed development area (Fig 2). An additional trench, 16, was positioned between trenches 7 and 8, aligned north-east to south-west. Trench 8 was expanded west around the areas of archaeology to attempt to determine the extent of the features. A total of 16 trenches, each 50m long by 1.80m, wide were excavated totalling an area of 1440 square metres. All trenches were positioned using a Leica Viva RTK GPS.

A 14 Ton 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.80m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. A hand-drawn plan of all archaeological features was made at scale 1:100 and was related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Archaeological deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard MOLA Northampton procedures as described in the Fieldwork Manual (MOLA 2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Context sheets were cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs. Photography was with 35mm black and white film and digital images. Sections were drawn at scale 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate and related to Ordnance Survey datum.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 1994, revised 2014).

## 4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

### 4.1 General stratigraphy

The underlying geology was encountered at an average depth of between 0.30m and 0.50m below the modern ground surface. It comprised mid orange-brown and yellow sand and in places light grey sand. It was mixed with occasional small to medium-sized gravel and infrequent ironstone pieces.

A subsoil was only encountered in Trenches 13, 14, and 15, comprising mid orange-brown sand loam containing very infrequent pieces of ironstone. It had an average depth of 0.25m. The topsoil was 0.30m thick and comprised dark grey-brown sandy loam containing infrequent small and medium sized gravels.

### 4.2 The trial trenches

The trench locations are shown in Figure 2 and an inventory of contexts is provided in the Appendix. Features were identified in Trenches 3, 7, 8, and 16. Furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation were located across the development area.

Trenches 1 and 15 contained modern material which related to compounds that were built as part of the construction of the A428 West Haddon Bypass.

#### ***Trench 3***

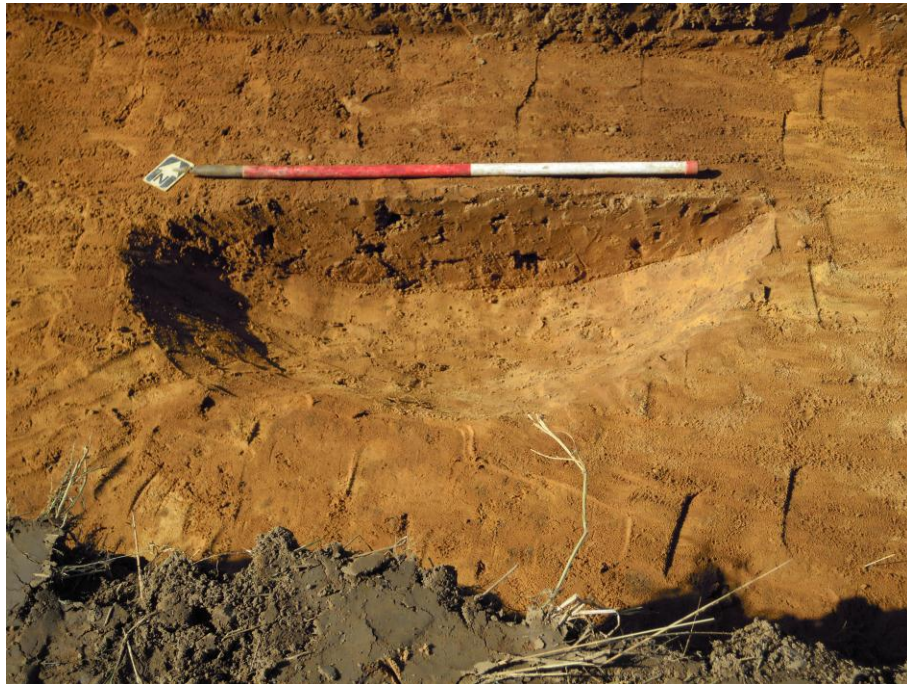
Centrally within Trench 3 were two linear features, [304] and [306]. Both were 0.45m wide and 0.10m deep with shallow bowl-shaped profiles. The locations of these features were directly under, and aligned with the modern field tramlines and represent modern compaction of the topsoil by farming machinery (Fig 3).



Trench 3, wheel rut [306], facing south Fig 3

**Trenches 7, 8, and 16**

At the southern end of Trench 8 was pit [804], 1.20m wide and 0.26m deep. The fill (803) comprised mid grey-brown silty sand and a single sherd of Iron Age pottery was recovered (Figs 4, 6, and 7; section 2).



Trench 8, pit [804], facing west Fig 4

A group of three intercutting features [808], [810], and [812] were located near the centre of Trench 8. Their irregular profiles, form in plan, and the mottled fills suggests these are root hollows and not pits (Figs 6, and 7; section 4).

An undated ditch aligned north-south was identified in Trenches 7, 8, and 16 as features [704], [806], and [1604]. It was 0.40m wide and upto 0.30m deep, with an uneven U-shaped profile. The fill was mid yellow-brown silty sand (Figs 6, and 7; sections 1, 3, and 7).

To determine the extent of the features in Trench 8, the trench was extended west in two areas around pit [804] and the potential features [808]-[812]. Two ditches aligned north-south were identified in the extension. Ditch [818] was 0.30m wide and 0.20m deep and was filled with naturally accumulated mid grey-brown silty sand.

This was cut by a ditch [816] and [823], 1.30m wide and 0.40m deep with a bowl-shaped profile. In [823] an erosional fill (822) comprising naturally slumped sand had entered from the eastern edge of the ditch. This was overlain by a purpose infill deposit of dark orange-grey sand (815) and (821). Ditch [823] also cut through a tree bole [820].

A pit [814] was cut into the eastern edge of ditch [818] it had a diameter of 0.80m and was 0.23m deep. Its fill was mid yellow brown silty sand (Figs 5, 6, and 7; sections 5 and 6).



Trench 8, pit [814], and ditches [816] and [818], facing north Fig 5

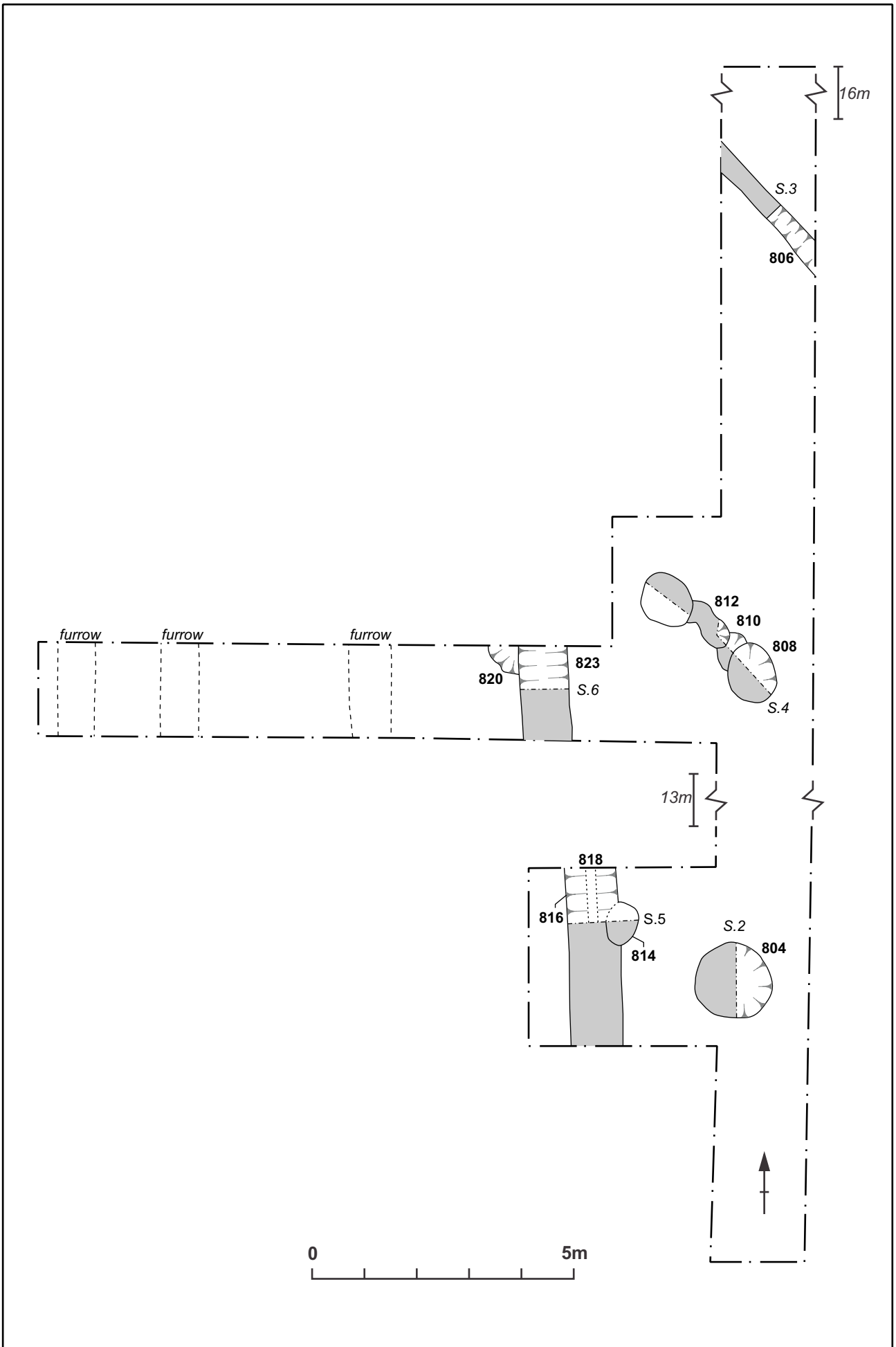
## 5 THE IRON AGE POTTERY by Andy Chapman

The fill (803) of pit [804] produced a single large sherd, weighing 109g, from the base of a thick-walled jar, 10mm thick. The base is 13mm thick and 90mm in diameter. The fabric is uniformly dark grey, apart from the external surface which is light brown to grey-brown. It contains no evident mineral inclusions, but sparse large voids may be from leached shell inclusions. The lower part of the body is heavily worn, but shows faint traces of near vertical scoring. The recovered vessel is, therefore, a scored ware jar dating to the middle Iron Age, broadly the 4th-1st centuries BC.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The trial trenching located three archaeological features in the western field. Iron Age activity is indicated in the area by the single isolated pit [804]. As no features were identified in the trenches to the south and east it would suggest any further Iron Age activity was located north and west of Trench 8 (Fig 8), likely under the modern housing.

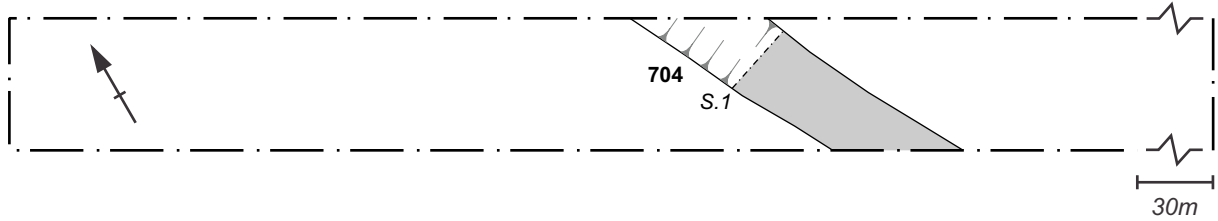
The undated ditches likely represent field boundaries and may be contemporary with the Iron Age pit, but may equally be of later enclosures.



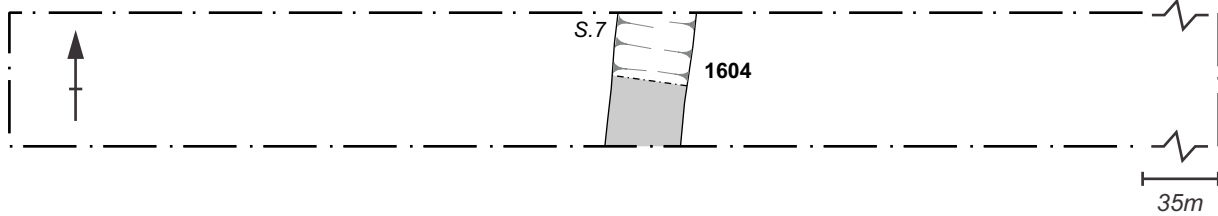
Scale 1:100

Trench 8 Fig 6

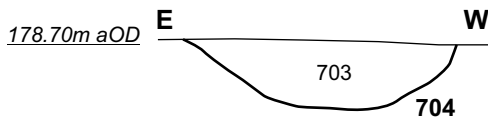
**Trench 7**



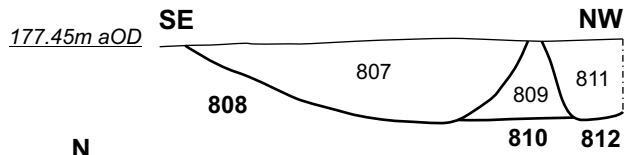
**Trench 16**



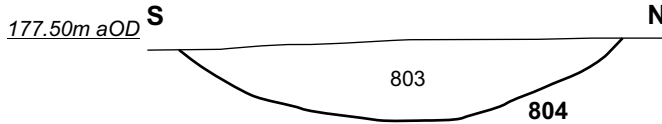
**Section 1**



**Section 4**



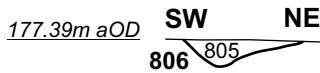
**Section 2**



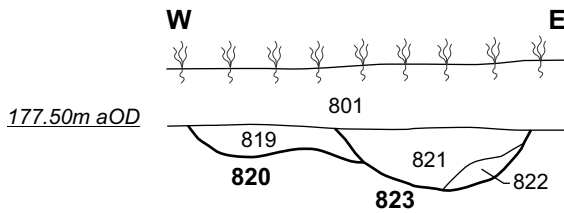
**Section 5**



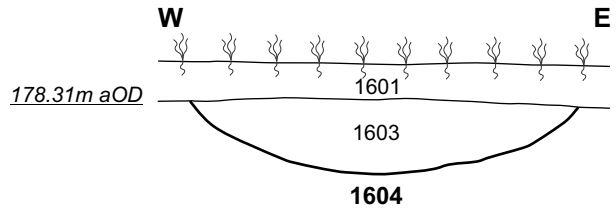
**Section 3**

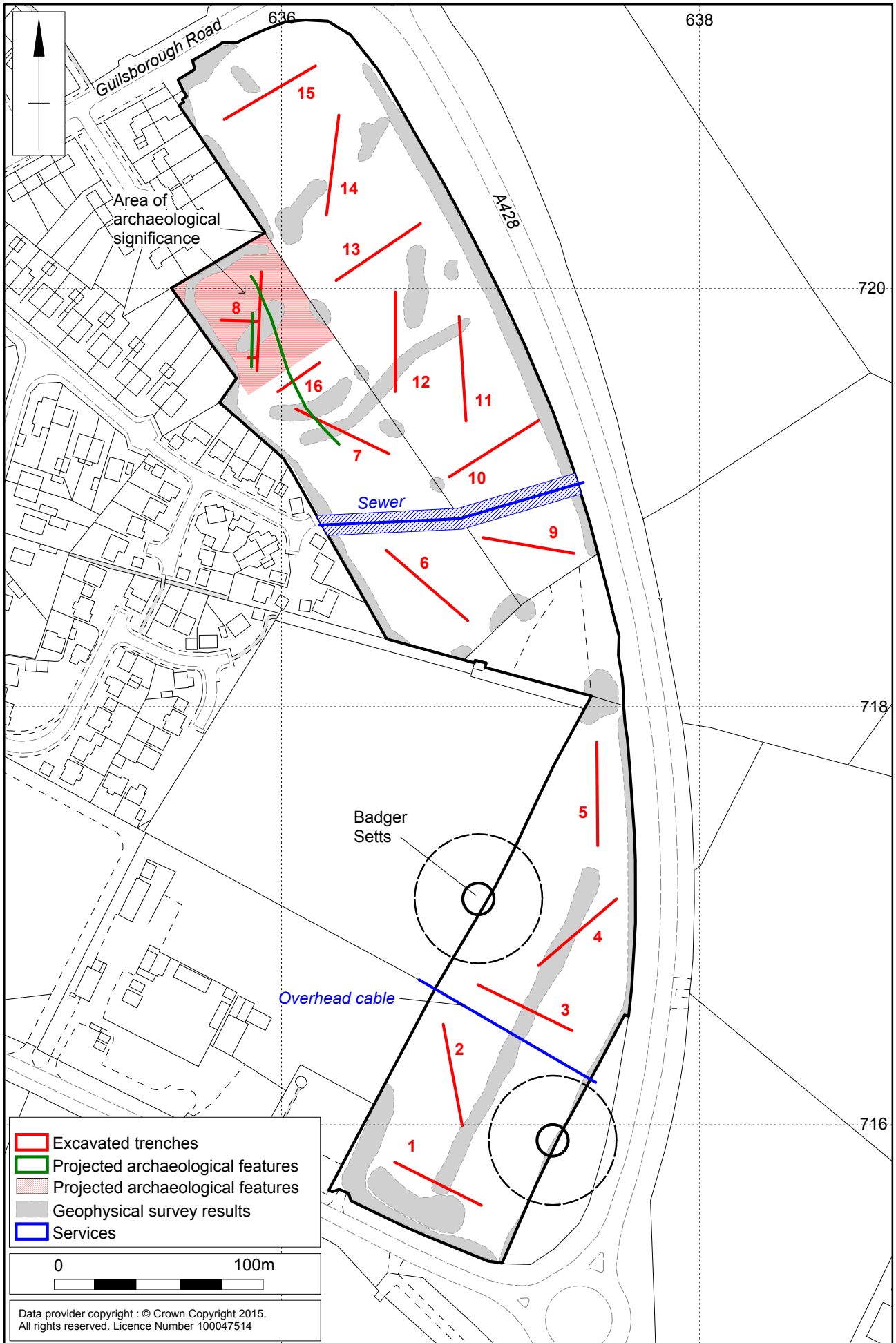


**Section 6**



**Section 7**





Scale 1:2500

Area of archaeological significance Fig 8

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Landis 2015 <https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/> Cranfield University National Soil Resources Institute



## APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	50m x 1.80m NW-SE	SP 636 715	181.36m aOD	181.06m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature &amp; type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	Modern debris; bricks etc
102	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 1.80m NW-SE	SP 636 715	181.42m aOD	181.12m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature &amp; type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	-
202	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	50m x 1.80m E-W	SP 636 716	182.12m aOD	181.87m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature &amp; type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.25m thick	-
302	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand		-
303	Fill of [304]	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.45m wide 0.10m thick	-
304	Wheel rut		0.45m wide 0.10m deep	-
305	Fill of [306]	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.45m wide 0.10m thick	-
306	Wheel rut		0.45m wide 0.10m deep	-

WEST HADDON, LAND EAST, TRIAL TRENCHING

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
4	50m x 1.80m NE-SW	SP 637 716	182.74m aOD	182.44m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
401	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	-
402	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
5	50m x 1.80m N-S	SP 637 717	182.85m aOD	182.55m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
501	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	-
502	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
6	50m x 1.80m NW-SE	SP 637 716	181.45m aOD	181.20m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
601	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.25m thick	
602	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand; 2 patches of concentrated cobbles.	-	-

WEST HADDON, LAND EAST, TRIAL TRENCHING

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
7	50m x 1.80m NW-SE	SP 637 716	181.27m aOD	180.97m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
701	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	-
702	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-
703	Fill of [704]	Mid grey-brown silty sand	0.90m wide 0.20m thick	-
704	Ditch	North-south linear ditch	0.90m wide 0.20m deep	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
8	50m x 1.80m N-S	SP 635 717	181.35m aOD	181.05m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
801	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	
802	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand; 2 patches of concentrated cobbles.	-	-
803	Fill of [804]	Mid grey-brown	1.20m wide 0.26m thick	Iron Age pottery
804	Pit	Circular pit	1.20m wide 0.26m deep	-
805	Fill of [806]	Mid yellow-brown silty sand	0.40m wide 0.09m thick	-
806	Ditch	North-west to south-east linear	0.40m wide 0.09m deep	-
807	Fill of [808]	Dark grey-brown silty sand	1.00m wide 0.27m thick	-
808	Pit/ tree bole	Circular pit/tree bole	1.00m wide 0.27m deep	-
809	Fill of [810]	Yellow-brown silty sand	0.48m wide 0.25m thick	-
810	Pit/tree bole	Circular pit/tree bole	0.48m wide 0.25m deep	-
811	Fill of [812]	Yellow-brown silty sand	0.23m wide 0.26m thick	-

WEST HADDON, LAND EAST, TRIAL TRENCHING

812	Pit/tree bole	Circular pit/tree bole	0.23m wide 0.26m deep	-
813	Fill of [814]	Yellow-brown silty sand	0.88m wide 0.23m thick	-
814	Pit	North-south oval pit	0.88m wide 0.23m deep	-
815	Fill of [816]	Grey-brown silty sand	0.85m wide 0.33m thick	-
816	Ditch	East-west linear ditch	0.85m wide 0.33m deep	-
817	Fill of 818	Grey-brown silty clay	0.32m wide 0.15m thick	-
818	Ditch	East-west linear ditch	0.32m wide 0.15m deep	-
819	Fill of [820]	Orange-brown silty sand	0.80m wide 0.20m thick	-
820	Tree bole	Irregular circle	0.80m wide 0.20m deep	-
821	Fill of [823]	Orange-grey silty sand	1.30m wide 0.40m thick	-
822	Fill of [823]	Light orange-grey silty sand	0.50m wide 0.20m thick	-
823	Ditch	North-south linear ditch	1.30m wide 0.40m deep	-

<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>9</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NW-SE</b>	<b>SP 636 718</b>	<b>181.19m aOD</b>	<b>180.89m aOD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
901	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	
902	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand.	-	-

WEST HADDON, LAND EAST, TRIAL TRENCHING

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
10	50m x 1.80m NE-SW	SP 636 719	181.21m aOD	180.91m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1001	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	
1002	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand..	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
11	50m x 1.80m N-S	SP 636 719	180.36m aOD	179.96m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1102	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1103	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand.	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
12	50m x 1.80m N-S	SP 636 719	179.79m aOD	179.49m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.30m thick	-
1202	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-

WEST HADDON, LAND EAST, TRIAL TRENCHING

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
13	50m x 1.80m NE-SW	SP 636 719	179.64m aOD	179.24m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1301	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1302	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1303	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand.	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
14	50m x 1.80m N-S	SP 637 720	178.61m aOD	179.96m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1401	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1402	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1403	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand.	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
15	50m x 1.80m NE-SW	SP 637 720	180.36m aOD	179.96m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1501	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1502	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown silty sand	0.20m thick	
1503	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand.	-	-

WEST HADDON, LAND EAST, TRIAL TRENCHING

<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>16</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NE-SW</b>	<b>SP 636 715</b>	<b>181.36m aOD</b>	<b>181.06m aOD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
1601	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand	0.40m thick	
1602	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty sand	-	-
1603	Fill of [1604]	Mid grey-brown silty sand	2.10m wide 0.45m thick	-
1604	Ditch	North-south linear ditch	2.10m wide 0.45m deep	-



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