



## **Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Upton Lane Littleport, Cambridgeshire June 2015**

Report No. 15/129

Authors: Adam Reid  
& Claire Finn

Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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Event number: ECB4498

Report No. 15/129

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Other finds	Pat Chapman
Animal bone	Rebecca Gordon

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS No: molanort1-216831</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Upton Lane Littleport, Cambridgeshire, June 2015		
Summary	MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Upton Lane, Littleport, Cambridgeshire prior to the proposed development of the site. Twelve trenches were excavated. Five shallow undated ditches were identified, probably boundary or drainage ditches. A small quantity of medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered. Truncated furrows crossed the site on a north-west by south-east alignment. One contained a post-medieval iron sickle blade.		
Project type	Trial Trench evaluation		
Site status	None		
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Meadows 2015)		
Current land use	Playing field		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type/period	Undated boundary/drainage ditches, truncated furrows		
Significant finds	Medieval pottery, post-medieval iron sickle		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Cambridgeshire		
Site address	Land west of Upton Lane, Littleport		
Postcode	CB6 1GN		
OS co-ordinates	TL 5633 8654		
Area (sq m/ha)	c1.8 hectares		
Height aOD	c15-21m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project Brief originator	Kasia Gdaniec, (Cambridgeshire County Council)		
Project Design originator	Mo Muldowney, MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Adam Reid, MOLA Northampton		
Project Manager	Mo Muldowney, MOLA Northampton		
Sponsor or funding body	Manor Oak Homes		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	22/06/2015		
End date	26/06/2015		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	Location (Accession no.)	Content	
Physical	Cambridge ECB4498	Pot; flint, iron sickle	
Paper		Site records; background data, photographs; plans and sections on permatrace	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Upton Lane, Littleport, Cambridgeshire, June 2015		
Serial title & volume	MOLA Northampton Reports 15/129		
Author(s)	Adam Reid and Claire Finn		
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# Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Upton Lane Littleport, Cambridgeshire June 2015

## Abstract

*MOLA Northampton was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Upton Lane, Littleport, Cambridgeshire prior to the proposed development of the site. Twelve trenches were excavated. Five shallow undated ditches were identified, probably boundary or drainage ditches. A small quantity of medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered. Truncated furrows crossed the site on a north-west by south-east alignment. One contained a post-medieval iron sickle blade.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Manor Oak Homes commissioned MOLA to undertake archaeological trial trenching on the proposed development site on land at Upton Lane, Littleport, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 5633 8654, Fig 1). The works were required in response to a forthcoming planning application for residential development and associated infrastructure, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

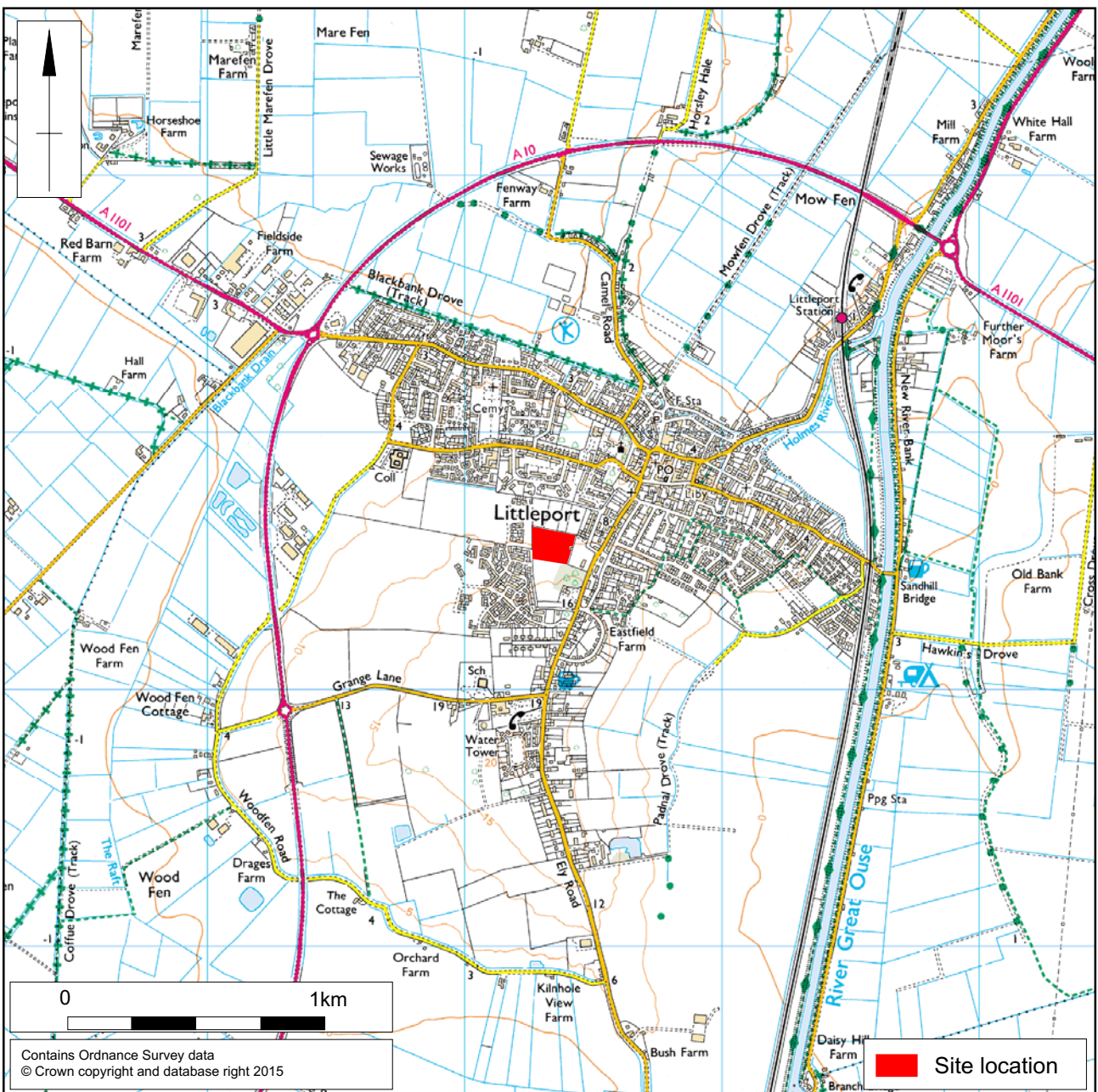
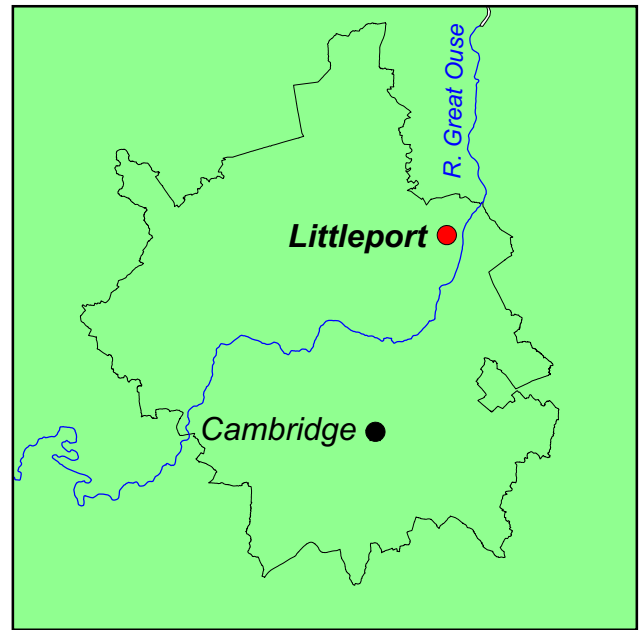
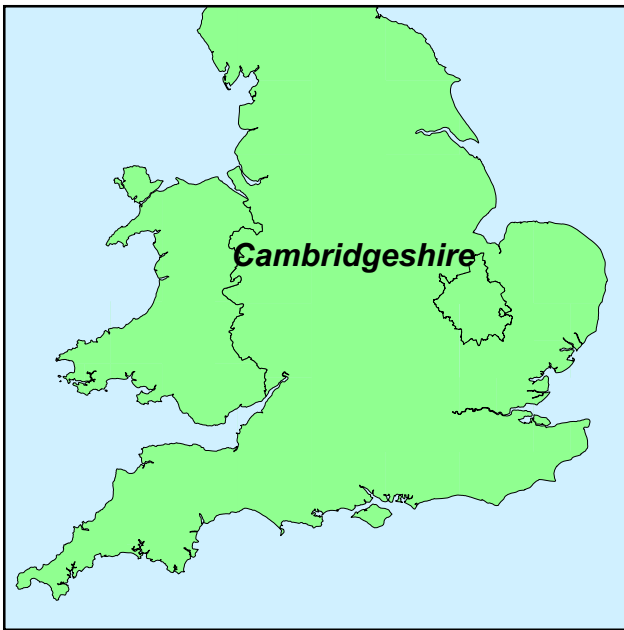
The Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET) advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area. The requirements and methodology were outlined in a Brief (Gdaniec 2015) and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2015). The fieldwork is recorded in the Cambridge Historic Environment Record under the event number ECB4498.

The evaluation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance: archaeological field evaluation* (2014a) and *Code of Conduct* (2014b). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with Historic England procedural documents (MoRPHE) (HE 2015).

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Location, topography and geology

The proposed development site is located in the centre of Littleport to the west of the High Street/Ely Road. It comprises a sub-square parcel of land c1.8ha in size, on an area formerly used as playing fields. A pavilion is still extant on the eastern border of the site. The site is bounded to the west by modern residential development and small roads off Highfields Drive, and to the east by the grounds of three larger private properties, Upton House (7 Ely Road), and numbers 2 and 4 Upton Lane. To the north, the area is bounded by a hedgerow grown with poplars, beyond which lie four narrow fields, also subdivided by hedgerows. A field boundary ditch to the south divides the proposed development area from a larger area of open land grown with trees and the land belonging to the former Highfields House (4 Ely Road).



Scale 1:25,000

Site location Fig 1



The site is situated on a slope, falling from 13.5m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the south-east corner to 9m aOD in the north-west. The bedrock geology is Kimmeridge Clay Formation mudstone, a Jurassic period sedimentary bedrock, overlain by superficial deposits of Oadby Member Diamicton, with outwash sand and gravel (BGS 2015).

## **2.2 Historical and archaeological background**

Littleport is a village in East Cambridgeshire which lies on the Bedford Level South section of the River Great Ouse, and on the northern part of the Isle of Ely. The village is on slightly raised ground between Burnt Fen and Mare Fen and is the largest village in East Cambridgeshire. It was noted in the Domesday survey of 1086 with a population of 31. By 1676 there were 556 communicants, and by 1801, the village had grown considerably larger than any others in the area (Pugh 1953). Enclosure had already begun in the town by 1548 when 28 acres of arable were unlawfully enclosed. The reclamation process meant that further enclosure proceeded slowly until 1840.

Previous works on the site itself include a geophysical survey undertaken by MOLA in 2015, recorded in the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) under event number ECB4498 (Meadows 2015). This analysis revealed the presence of ridge and furrow aligned east-west across the site. Several ferrous and possible linear anomalies were identified (see Fig 3). The area was examined by aerial photographic survey in 1998 which also showed ridge and furrow (ECB2971). The area immediately adjacent to the site to the west was evaluated by trial trench in 1998, which revealed prehistoric ditches, gullies, and a pond, as well as some artefacts (ECB141). Weak anomalies seen on some aerial photos may indicate the presence of archaeological activity in the grounds west of 4 Ely Road, to the south of the proposed development site. Evaluation to the south-west of the site at Highfields Farm produced significant enclosed Roman settlement evidence with wood-lined wells, as well as a large Anglo-Saxon cemetery of 90 inhumations and three cremations, many furnished with grave goods. Detailed results are not yet available.

The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) contains numerous references to areas of historical and archaeological interest in the vicinity of the site, although no known designated heritage assets are to be found within the development area. The following summarizes selected references in vicinity of the development area by period. The details are presented in the appendix and their location is shown on Figure 2.

Low levels of prehistoric activity have been recorded around the Littleport area, predominantly associated with the Old Croft River Channel (Hall 1996). Remains primarily comprise isolated flint scatters and flint working areas. Flint tools were recovered during fieldwalking around the Ely bypass route (HER07192, HER07193), and in the centre of the village where a Neolithic flint sickle was recovered (HER07233). Neolithic flint scrapers were also found at a multi-period site 250m from the development area at 22 High Street (MCB16792). Immediately to the south-west of the site an evaluation (ECB141) revealed a Neolithic ditch, Iron Age field boundaries and a possible Bronze Age pond (CB15682). A Bronze Age burnt mound (MCB19320), debitage scatter (HER07219), and late Bronze Age axe (HER07214) have also been identified in the town.

Iron Age remains are rare within the recorded data, despite numerous archaeological interventions, and probably represent an absence of activity in what would have been a waterlogged region at this time. Despite this, a late Bronze Age into early Iron Age

settlement comprising postholes and pits has been identified in the north of the village, off Wisbeach Road (MCB17425). Some late Iron Age to Roman pottery and ditch features have been recognised 570m to the south of the site (MCB20348).

In contrast to the Iron Age, activity dating from the Romano-British period is widespread. The roddon of the Old Croft River was heavily exploited for salt making in this period and sites have been identified along the known course of the river (HER07261, HER10939, HER15677, HER15678). These tend to be associated with ancillary water management features. Romano-British settlements and field systems have also been identified. One settlement at Camel Road, 580m to the north (HER11961) may have been associated with a villa or other high status building. The increased use of the area in this period probably reflects the generally drier weather pattern that allowed wider exploitation of the fenland area. Pottery findspots have been identified 600m to the south of the site (HER07212), 800m to the north (HER08425) and coins have been found 450m to the north-east (HER07222), and 1km to the south (HER11332). Excavation in 1996 at Parson's Lane revealed several ditched field boundaries, probably from the Roman or medieval period (HER11920), and a Roman pit was found in the south of the village during extensions to the school (MCB17479).

As mentioned above, a large Anglo-Saxon cemetery has recently been identified 430m south-west of the site, although no structural evidence is yet known. Medieval remains are mainly present as the remnants of cultivation systems and boundary ditches, such as those identified at Littleport Primary School (MCB16496), and through aerial photography and excavation around 250m west of the site (CB15683). Geophysical survey within the development area in 2015 also identified ridge and furrow across the site (Meadows 2015). The Grade II\* listed church of St George and St John, which lies 400m to the north of the site, has extant 14th-century elements. Some domestic evidence is known, such as the intercutting waste pits on Victoria Street, which spanned four centuries (HER16277), and 14th to 19th-century pits off Ely Road (MCB17866). A possible 15th-century stone- and brick-lined well shaft was identified at 3A Main Street, with 19th-century culvert and capping stones (HER11726). Metal detecting to the south of the village recovered numerous medieval and post-medieval artefacts including coins, dress accessories and tools (HER11322A).

Post-medieval ditches and plot boundaries have also been identified across the area, including 380m north-east of the site on Main Street (MCB17811), and further to the north-east (MCB20347). A large post-medieval ditch containing pottery from the 16th to 18th-centuries is thought to relate to illegal enclosure which took place in the 16th-century (MCB17878). Six World War II pill box defences, a destroyed water tower and anti-tank ditching were identified from post-war aerial photographs. None of the pillboxes are believed to be extant.

An examination of historic maps for the area show that little has altered in the layout of the area in recent times. The Ordnance Survey map of 1887 shows that the boundaries of the development area were largely in place at this time. The rear gardens of the large properties to the east contained an orchard during this period, and the eastern and southern boundaries adjacent to Upton House and Highfield House were edged with trees. The southern boundary is not clearly marked on all maps, and may not have been a separate parcel of land until recently. By 1902, the site was planted with several trees, one of which is still extant. The pavilion was in place by 1926, at which point a pump is also noted to the north of the building along the eastern edge of the site. Prior to the development of land to the west in 2007, the site was bounded on this side by two large fields.



### 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the evaluation was to record the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains. The trenching specifically aimed to examine:

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains;
- and inform any future excavation and/or preservation *in-situ* strategy.

Where applicable, specific research objectives were drawn from national and regional research frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Glazebrook 1997; Medlycott 2011).

### 4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

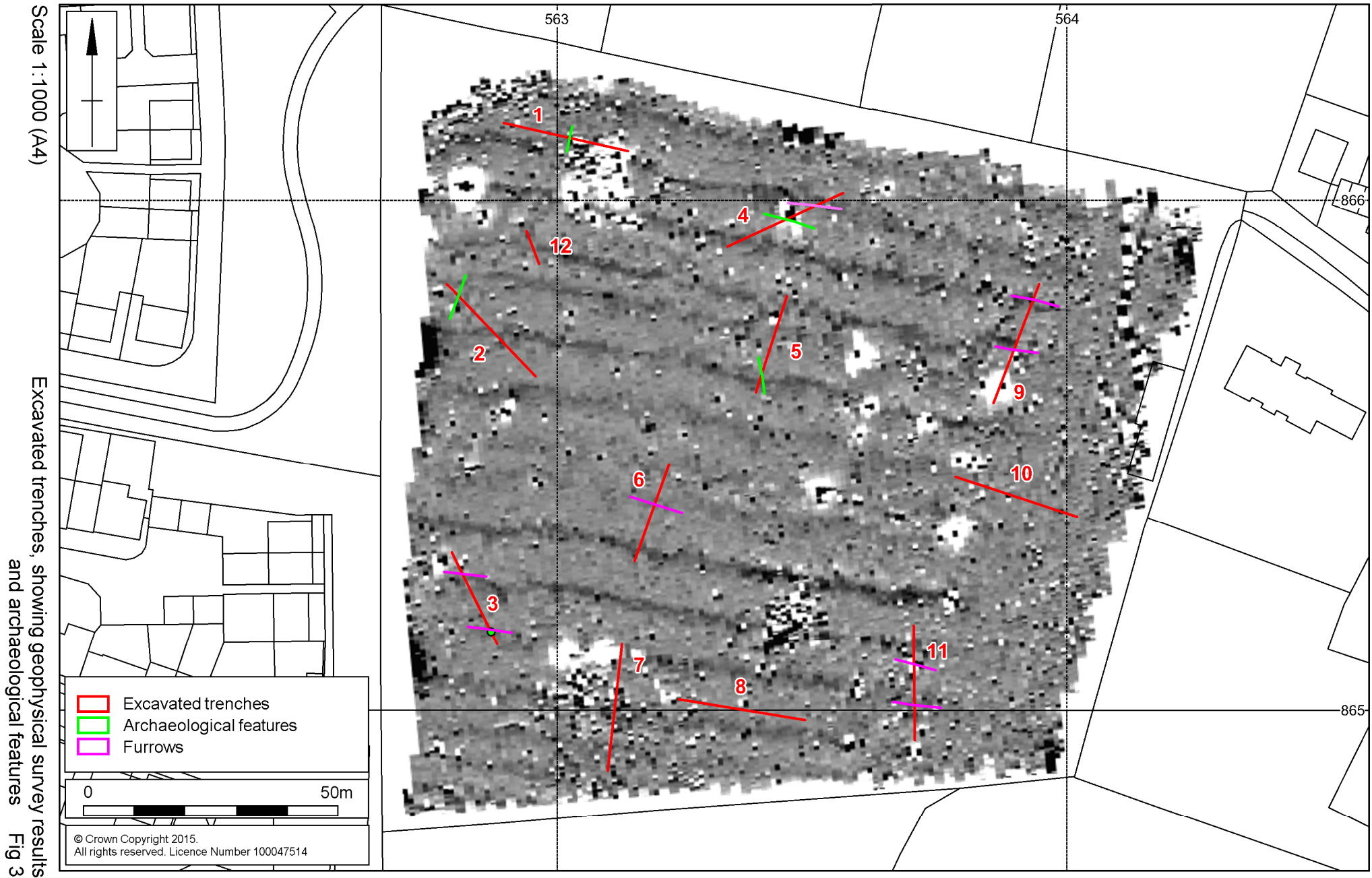
The original proposal was for eleven 25m trenches, located to test a variety of linear and amorphous anomalies identified by the preceding geophysical survey (Meadows 2015), as well as to adequately sample the development area (Fig 3). An additional trench, 5m long, was added with the approval of Kasia Gdaniec of the CCC HET, in order to further test the presence of an anomaly. Trench 8 was relocated to the south in order to avoid a large tree. Trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m-wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and subsoil were removed under archaeological direction to reveal natural substrate and were stacked separately at the side of the trench. All procedures complied with MOLA Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

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 in a sequence assigned to each trench. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. All trench locations were recorded using Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of  $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ . A full digital photographic record was maintained. The field data from the evaluation has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

The evaluation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance: archaeological field evaluation* (2014a). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with the procedural document, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (HE 2015). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2015).

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





## 5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

### 5.1 General stratigraphy

The general stratigraphy was consistent in all trenches. The natural substrate comprised light grey-orange sandy clay with patches of chalk, between 0.30m and 0.50m below the present ground surface. This was overlain by light grey-orange silty clay subsoil, 0.25m thick. The topsoil comprised dark grey-brown silty clay, 0.30m thick.

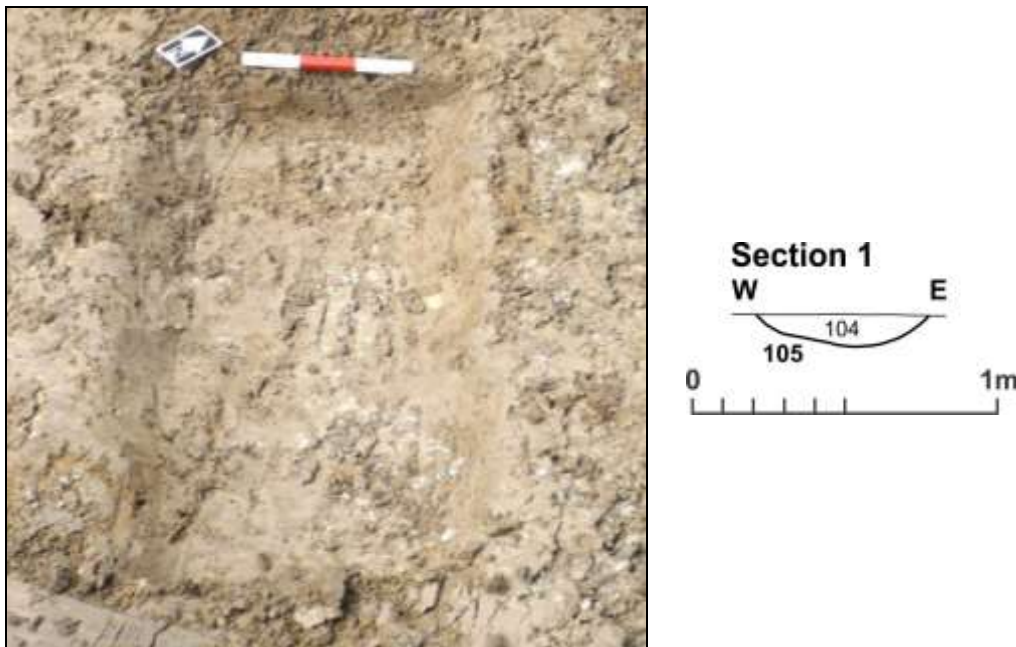
All features were cut into the natural and were overlain by the subsoil, unless otherwise stated.

### 5.2 The excavated evidence

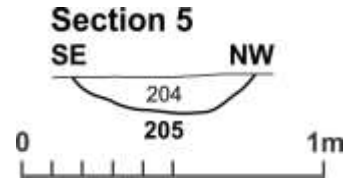
Ditches of possible archaeological origin were identified in Trenches 1 to 5. Truncated furrows from ridge and furrow cultivation were identified in all the trenches and matched closely with the results of the geophysical survey.

#### *Ditches*

In Trench 1 there was a single shallow ditch [105] aligned north-west by south-east, 0.55m wide by 0.08m deep. The fill comprised compact mid- dark grey-orange clayey silt (104) (Figs 4 and 11). No finds were recovered. Root action had disturbed the profile of the feature. A very similar ditch, aligned north to south, was identified in Trench 2 [205]. It measured 0.60m wide and 0.14m deep. The homogeneous fill comprised compact light orange-grey silty clay, which again was sterile of finds (204) (Figs 5, 11). It is likely that the ditches in trenches 1 and 2 are the same curvilinear feature, identified by the geophysical survey.

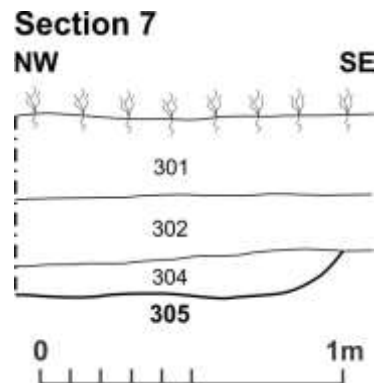


Ditch [105] in Trench 1, looking north-west, scale 1:25 Fig 4



Ditch [205] in Trench 2, looking south-west, scale 1:25 Fig 5

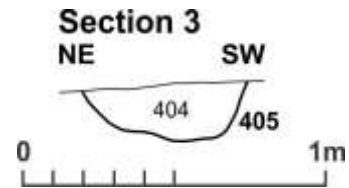
A possible pit [305] was located in Trench 3 (Figs 6 & 11). It was at least 1.10m wide and 0.09m deep and had been truncated by a land drain and possibly also a furrow which obscured its full shape in plan. The fill (304) comprised compact mid-dark grey clay, which contained one sherd of 15th-century pottery.



Ditch or possible pit [305] in Trench 3, looking south-west, scale 1:25 Fig 6

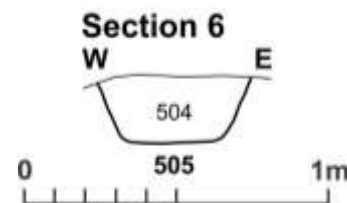
In Trench 4 ditch [405], aligned south-east to north-west was 0.55 wide and 0.18m deep (Figs 7 & 11). The fill comprised compact light to dark orange-grey clayey silt (404) and contained a single fragment of animal bone.





Ditch [405] in Trench 4, looking south-east, scale 1:25 Fig 7

In Trench 5, flat-based ditch [505], aligned north-south was identified (Figs 8 & 11). It was 0.50m wide and 0.22m deep. The fill (504) comprised compact light grey-orange clayey silt, with no finds.



Ditch [505] in Trench 5, looking north, scale 1:25 Fig 8

### Furrows

Shallow linear features, the truncated furrows from medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, were present in trenches 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12. The furrows were aligned west-north-west to east-south-east and were spaced approximately 5m apart, as indicated by the geophysical survey (Fig 3). Three furrows were excavated: [407] (Fig 9), [605] (Fig 10) and [1105]. The furrows were approximately 1.5m wide and 0.15m to 0.20m deep, and all contained a homogeneous fill comprising compact light orange-brown silty clay. The fills of furrows 1003, 1105, 407 and 605 all contained small sherds of pottery which dated between the 12th and 17th centuries.

Several of the furrows also contained post-medieval or modern ceramic drains laid along the length (Fig 9). Two furrows [705] and [707] were noted in section in Trench

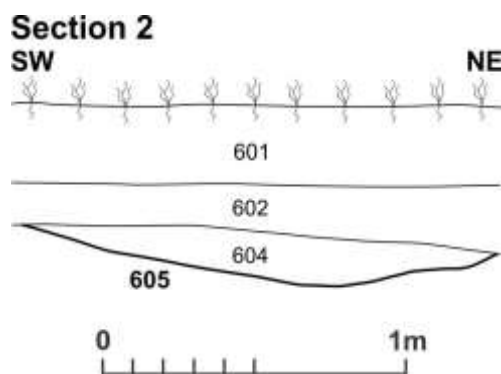


7. They were similar in profile to the manually excavated furrows, and no finds were recovered (Fig 12).



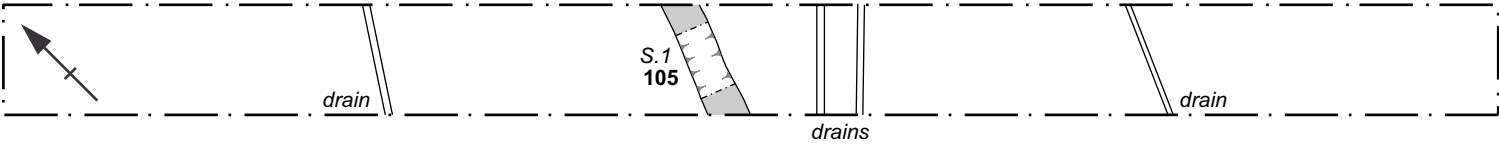
Trench 4, furrow [407], containing field drain, looking north-west Fig 9

Trench 10 was aligned north-west to south-east and a furrow [1003] was visible along its length. Interestingly, the furrow continued to be visible all the way up to the eastern end of the trench, beyond the point at which the geophysical survey result seems to indicate that the furrows end. This trench crossed slightly raised ground at this point, gaining 0.47m from west to east. This discrepancy between the geophysical results and archaeological results may indicate that the strip against the eastern edge of the field was subject to disturbance which has removed traces of the furrows at higher soil levels. Another possibility is that the furrow at this point was extended for use as a post-medieval field drain, which continued along the length of trench 10. Several sherds of pottery and a post-medieval iron sickle blade were recovered from the fill of the feature (1002) (Fig 13).



Trench 6, furrow [605], scale 1:25 Fig 10

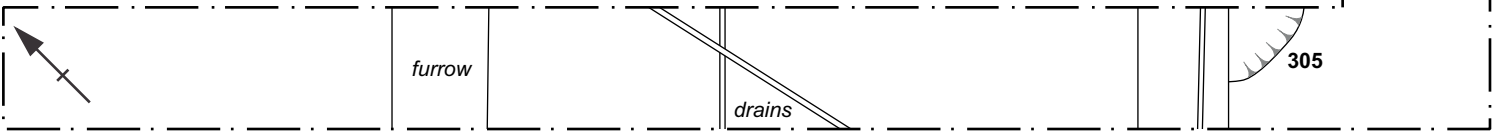
Trench 1



Trench 2



Trench 3



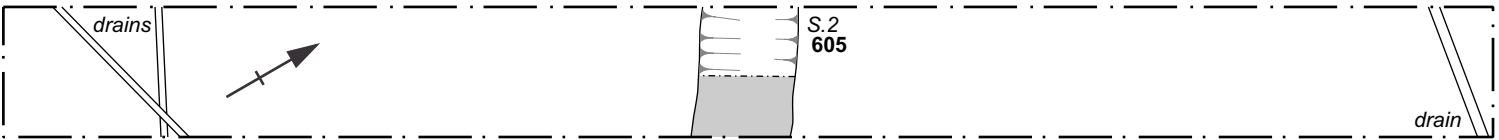
Trench 4



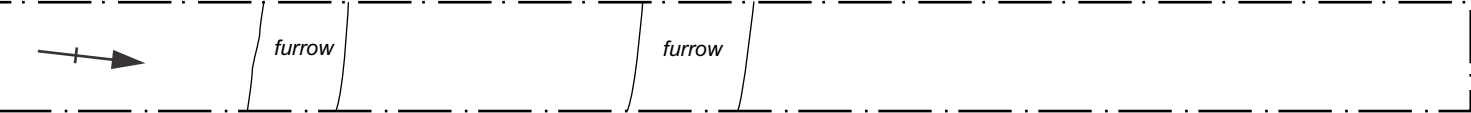
Trench 5



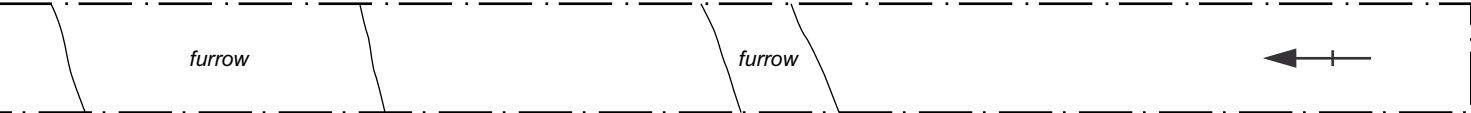
Trench 6



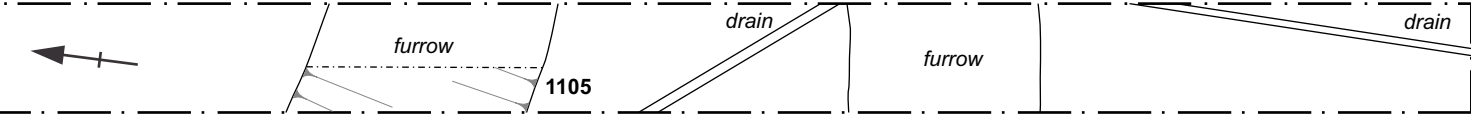
**Trench 7**



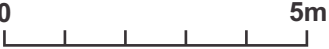
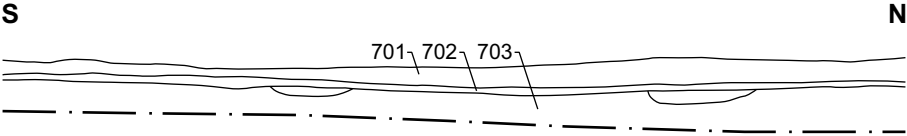
**Trench 9**



**Trench 11**



**Section 8**



## 6 THE FINDS

### 6.1 Flint by Andy Chapman

Three pieces of flint were collected.

From Trench 5 there is a large unstratified blade, 60mm long (broken) by 29mm wide, struck from a prepared blade core. The raw material is grey opaque flint, with a small area of white cortex surviving, with a partial surface patination of blue-white mottles. There is no retouch and minimal edge damage. This piece is likely to date to the early Neolithic.

From Trench 11 there are two pieces of flint. An un-stratified piece is fractured, perhaps accidentally, from a small iron-stained flint pebble, 50mm in diameter, with white cortex, with iron-staining, over one half and the other side with irregular fracture planes. From the fill (1104) of furrow [1105] there is an irregular shattered piece of cherty flint, 50mm long by 40mm wide, with uniform white surfaces.

### 6.2 Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 15 sherds with a total weight of 240g. It is all medieval or later. The following fabric types were noted:

**BD: Bourne 'D' Ware**, c1450-1637 (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 409). Soft to hard, smooth, brick-red fabric, often with a grey core. Some vessels have sparse calcitic inclusions up to 2mm. 2 sherds, 87g.

**ELY: Ely Ware**, mid-12th-15th centuries (Spoerry 2008). Generic name for a quartz sand and calcareous tempered group of pottery fabrics mainly manufactured in Ely, but also with a second possible source in the Hunts. Fenland. 5 sherds, 57g.

**GRE: Glazed Red Earthenware**, mid-16th-19th centuries (Brears 1969). Fine sandy earthenware, usually with a brown or green glaze, occurring in a range of utilitarian forms. 4 sherds, 77g.

**HED: Hedingham Ware**, late 12th-14th centuries (Walker 2012). Fine micaceous mainly unglazed jars and glazed jugs. 1 sherd, 2g.

**MET: Metropolitan-type Slipware**, 17th-18th centuries. Similar fabric to GRE, with geometric designs in white slip under the glaze. Produced at a number of centres, but particularly Harlow in Essex (Davey and Walker 2009). 3 sherds, 17g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region.

*Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type*

Cut / fill / type	ELY		HED		BD		GRE		MET		Date
	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	
1003 / 1002 / furrow	-	-	-	-	1	85	3	48	-	-	M16thC
1105 / 1104 / furrow	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	17thC
305 / 304 / ditch or pit	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	M15thC
407 / 406 / furrow	1	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	M12thC
Tr6 Unstratified	3	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	U/S
605 / 604 / furrow	-	-	1	2	-	-	1	29	1	9	17thC
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	

### 6.3 Ceramic building materials by Pat Chapman

Seven small fragments of brick, weighing 115g, were recovered. A well-worn lump of very hard purple-brown overfired brick and a tiny piece of hard fine silty orange and buff brick come from fill (304) of pit [305]. Two fragments of abraded hard fine red-brown silty clay, one with a surface of stem impressions, probably from the same handmade brick, come from fill (604) of furrow [605]. From fill (1002) of furrow [1003] come two tiny angular fragments of fine sandy orange-brown and grey brick and another very similar tiny piece comes from trench 11. These are all small dispersed brick fragments of post-medieval date.

### 6.4 Other finds by Pat Chapman

A short length of clay tobacco-pipe stem came from trench 11. The small bore size of c 4/64th (1.5mm) of an inch indicates a late 18th- to 19th-century date.

An iron sickle was found in fill (1002) of furrow [1003]. Although the shape of this agricultural implement has not changed in centuries, if not millennia, this sickle is most likely of post-medieval or Victorian origin (Fig 13). It has been damaged, the point is bent back, the blade is split nearly completely a short distance from the point and there is a notch in the inside centre of the arc. The blade curve is 360mm tip to haft internally, the blade is 33mm wide. The surviving haft is 87mm long with a square section of 10x10mm for 40mm from the blade, narrowing to 5x5mm square.



Iron sickle blade, from furrow [1002] (Scale 50mm) Fig 13

### 6.5 Animal Bone by Rebecca Gordon

Two fragments of animal bone were recovered; one was an unidentifiable shaft fragment of a medium-sized mammal from fill (404) of ditch [405] and the other was an adult sheep/goat tibia from fill (1104) of furrow [1105]. The sheep/goat tibia was partially complete with most of the shaft and the distal end present. Both bones showed moderate signs of surface abrasion and root-etching was noted on the sheep/goat tibia.

## 7 DISCUSSION

The evaluation identified four undated ditches and a pit/ditch as well as cultivation furrows from which a small finds assemblage was recovered. This comprised animal bone and flint as well as pottery, the latter of which consisted of both medieval and post-medieval sherds that derived almost exclusively from the furrows.

Generally, the archaeological features correlated with the geophysical survey results (Meadows 2015). Ditches identified in trenches 1 and 2 were aligned SW-NE, and demonstrated a good match to a curvilinear anomaly highlighted during the geophysics. A shallow ditch in Trench 4 was not seen on the geophysical survey plot; it may have been obscured by furrows or by a ferrous anomaly. The alignment of this ditch, NW by SE suggests that if extended to the west, it would meet the ditch in Trench 1 at a right angle, possibly indicative of a field system. The ditch excavated in Trench 5, aligned SSE-NNW may match a possible trend on the geophysical survey plot. With the exception of the linear features and furrows, other anomalies visible on the geophysical survey were less obviously identified. The magnetic anomalies targeted by trenches 1, 7, and 9 proved to be modern waste material. The anomaly in Trench 4 may have been caused by the ditch in that area. A possible anomaly targeted by trench 6 was not identified.

The low number of archaeological features is perhaps surprising given the site's proximity to the Highfield Farm site (APS, forthcoming), which lies just a few hundred meters to the south-west. This complex included significant Roman settlement evidence as well as a large Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery, with linear features extending beyond the limit of investigation to the north and east. It is possible that the undated ditches seen in the evaluation may form part of the continuation of that settlement evidence to the north-east, based on a similarity of alignment.

The ditches were all notably shallow and contained almost no datable material. Only the possible pit [305] produced one sherd of pottery, identified as 15th-century Bourne 'D' ware, but as this feature may have been truncated by a furrow, this material may be intrusive. Despite the probable truncation of this feature, no clear relationship between furrows and ditches was observed anywhere on the site. However, it is likely that the ditches would have pre-dated the furrows, and due to the proximity of the Highfield Farm complex, the ditches may be tentatively associated with the Iron Age or Romano-British periods.

The remains of truncated furrows were also found across the evaluation area, and corresponded well with the geophysical survey, with the exception of the furrow in Trench 10. This furrow continued into the area identified from the geophysical survey as a possible headland along the east edge of the site. It may therefore have been recut by a field drain, or obscured by an accumulation of material at the rear of the plots fronting Ely Road, which was sufficiently deep to mask their eastward continuation. Four furrows were excavated and produced a small number of medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds ranging in date from the 12th to 17th centuries, as well as an iron sickle.

The site appears to have lain on the north-eastern edge of the Iron Age/Romano-British settlement at Highfield, possibly as part of its field system. There followed a hiatus until the medieval period when the site became part of the open field system of the village, whose focus had shifted from the south-west side of the raised ground, to the north-east.

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MOLA Northampton  
09 July 2015



**APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<b>Trench No.</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>Grid Reference (N end)</b>	<b>Surface height, N end (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural (aOD)</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>25m x 1.6m NW-SE</b>	<b>556289, 286615</b>	<b>9.2m</b>	<b>8.55m 0.65m deep</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
101	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey-brown silty clay	0.35m deep	-
102	Subsoil	Mid-dark orange clay, some charcoal, 1% root disturbance	0.30m deep	-
103	Natural	Light grey-orange clay with chalk flecks	-	-
104	Fill of 105	Compact mid-dark grey-orange clayey silt	0.55m wide, 0.08m deep	-
105	Ditch	Shallow U-shaped ditch	0.55m wide, 0.08m deep	-



Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, N end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	25m x 1.6m N-S	556278, 286583	9.8m	9.10m 0.70m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Topsoil	Mid- dark grey-brown clay	0.30m deep	-
202	Subsoil	Mid-dark orange clay, some charcoal, root disturbance	0.50m deep	-
203	Natural	Light grey-orange clay with chalk flecks	-	-
204	Fill of 205	Compact light orange grey silty clay	0.60m wide, 0.14m deep	-
205	Ditch	Shallow U-shaped ditch	0.60m wide, 0.14m deep	-



Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, E end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	25m x 1.6m NW-SE	556279, 286530	11.0m	10.4m 0.60m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
301	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty clay	0.30m deep	-
302	Subsoil	Mid-light grey-orange clay, some charcoal, root disturbance	0.30m deep	-
303	Natural	Light grey-orange clay with chalk flecks	-	-
304	Fill of 305	Compact mid-dark grey clay	1.10m wide, 0.09 deep	Pottery, brick
305	Ditch or pit	Shallow flat based ditch	1.10m wide, 0.09m deep	-





Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (W end)	Surface height, N end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	25m x 1.6m SW-NE	556333, 286591	9.7m	9.15m 0.55m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
401	Topsoil	Dark grey silty clay with charcoal and chalk flecks	0.30m deep	-
402	Subsoil	Mid-light grey-orange clay, some charcoal	0.25m deep	-
403	Natural	Light orange clay with chalk flecks	-	-
404	Fill of 405	Compact light to dark orange clay-silt, root disturbance	0.55m wide, 0.18 deep	Animal bone
405	Ditch	Shallow U-shaped flat-based ditch	0.55m wide, 0.18 deep	-
406	Fill of 407	Compact mid-dark grey orange clay silt, containing field drain		Pottery
407	Furrow	Shallow flat-based furrow		-



Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N)	Surface height, W end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	25m x 1.6m NE-SW	556345, 286581	10.0m	9.45m 0.55m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
501	Topsoil	Dark grey silty clay with charcoal and chalk flecks	0.25m deep	-
502	Subsoil	Light-mid- grey-orange-brown clay, some charcoal	0.30m deep	-
503	Natural	Dark orange brown clay with chalk flecks	-	-
504	Fill of 505	Compact light grey-orange clayey silt	0.50m wide, 0.22m deep	-
505	Ditch	Steep-sided U-shaped shallow ditch	0.50m wide, 0.22m deep	-





Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, N end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
6	25m x 1.6m N-S	556321, 286548	10.7m	10.05m 0.65m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Dark grey silty clay with charcoal and chalk flecks	0.35m deep	-
602	Subsoil	Light grey-orange-brown clay, some root disturbance	0.30m deep	-
603	Natural	light orange-grey sandy-clay with chalk flecks	-	-
604	Fill of 605	Compact light orange-brown clay	1.60m wide, 0.15m deep	Pottery, brick
605	Furrow	Shallow furrow with an uneven base	1.60m wide, 0.15m deep	-



Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, E end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
7	25m x 1.6m N-S	556312, 286513	11.9m	11.4m 0.50m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Dark grey silty clay with charcoal and chalk flecks, root disturbance	0.30m deep	-
702	Subsoil	Light grey-orange-brown clay, some root disturbance	0.20m deep	-
703	Natural	Light grey-orange-yellow clay with chalk flecks	-	-





Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, N end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
8	25m x 1.6m E-W	556323, 286502	12.4m	11.81m 0.59m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sandy clayey silt with charcoal flecks, root disturbance	0.35m deep	-
802	Subsoil	Light grey-orange-brown clayey silt, with charcoal flecks and some root disturbance	0.24m deep	-
803	Natural	Light grey-orange-yellow silty clay with chalk flecks	-	-





Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, W end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
9	25m x 1.6m N-S	556394, 286583	10.0m	9.40m 0.60m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown sandy clayey silt with charcoal flecks, root disturbance	0.30m deep	-
902	Subsoil	Firm mid yellow-brown silty clay, with patches of grey-brown clay, charcoal flecks and some root disturbance	0.30m deep	-
903	Natural	Light grey-orange-yellow silty clay with chalk flecks	-	-



Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, NW end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
10	25m x 1.6m NW-SE	556378, 286545	11.0m	10.5m 0.50m deep
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Friable dark grey-brown sandy clayey silt with charcoal flecks, root disturbance	0.25m deep	-
1002	Fill of 1003	Firm mid-yellow brown silty clay with occasional charcoal and chalk flecks	0.45m deep	Iron sickle blade (SF1), brick
1003	Furrow	Shallow furrow, uncertain profile	0.45m deep	-
1004	Natural	Firm mid grey-brown silty clay with chalk flecks and orange mottling	-	-
1005	Subsoil	Light grey-orange-brown clayey silt, with charcoal flecks and some root disturbance	0.25m deep	



Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, E end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
11	25m x 1.6m N-S	556370, 286516	12.1m	11.7m 0.40m deep
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sandy clayey silt with charcoal flecks, root disturbance	0.35m deep	-
1102	Subsoil	Light grey-orange-brown clayey silt, with charcoal flecks and some root disturbance	0.24m deep	-
1103	Natural	Light grey-orange-yellow silty clay with chalk flecks	-	-
1104	Fill of 1105	Compact light orange-brown silty clay	1.50m wide, 0.20m deep	Flint, pottery, animal bone
1105	Furrow	Shallow furrow with sloping profile and flat base	1.50m wide, 0.20m deep	-





Trench No.	Length, width & alignment	Grid Reference (N end)	Surface height, N end (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
12	5m x 1.6m N-S	556295, 286594	9.6m	9.15m 0.45m deep
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1201	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey-brown sandy clayey silt	0.31m deep	-
1202	Subsoil	Mid-dark orange clayey silt, with charcoal flecks and some root disturbance	0.14m deep	-
1203	Natural	Light grey-orange clay with chalk flecks	-	-



**APPENDIX 2: Selected Historic Environment Record references**

Reference	Type	Form	Date	Description	
HER07192	Findspot	Flint tool; pottery	Prehistoric; medieval	Found during field walking on the route of the Ely Bypass	TL 555 870
HER07193	Findspot	Flint tool; pottery	Neolithic; medieval	Found during field walking on the route of the Ely Bypass	TL 553 870
CB15682	Excavation	Ditches, field boundaries, cremation	Neolithic, Iron Age to Roman. Bronze Age	A concentration of prehistoric features	TL 56178 86350
HER07219	Findspot	Flint	Bronze Age	Bronze Age debitage scatter	TL 5597 8672
HER07214	Findspot	Bronze Axe	Bronze Age	Bronze Age axe found in clay below peat	TL 569 857
MCB19320	Excavation	Features	Bronze Age	Bronze Age burnt mound and palaeochannel	TL 5649 8717
HER07221	Cropmarks	Field system	Undated	Rectangular enclosure	TL 564 873
MCB17425	Excavation	Settlement	Late Bronze Age to early Iron Age	Ditches, pits and postholes	TL 5610 8729
MCB20348	Excavation	Ditches, pit	Iron Age to Roman	Buried soil horizon, pits, and ditches	TL 5624 8592
HER07233	Findspot	Flint	Prehistoric	Neolithic flint sickle	TL 57 87
HER07261	Excavation	Settlement	Romano-British	Saltern and settlement site at Camel Road	TL 5651 8757
HER08425	Cropmarks, Findspot	Pottery	Romano-British	Large quantity of pottery recovered during construction	TL 565 874
HER10939	Cropmarks	Saltern	Romano-British	Cropmarks and pottery (assoc. 08425)	TL 5650 8725
HER07230	Findspot	Pottery	Romano-British	Roman sherds found at White Hall Farm	TL 574 868
HER07222	Findspot	Coin	Romano-British	Coin (bronze) of Gallienus found under garden	TL 566 870
MCB18585	Excavation	Field system	Romano-British	Ditched system	TL 5597 8731
HER11332	Findspot	Coin, pottery	Romano-British	Found during metal detecting	TL 563 855
HER07212	Findspot	Pottery	Romano-British	Pottery found during house development	TL 561 859
HER11670	Excavation	Roddon	Undated	Remnant natural water channel	TL 563 877
MCB16923	Excavation	Agricultural features	Undated	Undated gullies	TL 5545 8650
HER11961	Excavation	Settlement	Romano-British	Possible high status settlement at Camel Road	TL 5660 8715
HER15677	Excavation	Saltern	Romano-British	4th-century salt making site	TL 56989 86964
HER15678	Excavation	Canal	Romano-British	Canal possibly associated with salt making	TL 5663 8724
MCB17479	Excavation	Pit, field drain	Romano-British	Roman pit and field-drain	TL 5608 8606
HER11920	Excavation	Boundaries	Roman or medieval	Field boundary ditches	TL 5602 8683
HER16277	Excavation	Settlement features	Multi-period	Romano-British ditches; medieval pits on street frontage; post-medieval pit	TL 5696 8682

Reference	Type	Form	Date	Description	
MCB16496	Excavation	Agricultural features	Multi-period	Medieval furrows; post-medieval ditches	TL 55710 86860
MCB16792	Findspot	Artefacts	Multi-period	Neolithic scrapers; Romano-British pottery; medieval pottery; post-medieval pottery; human skull fragment	TL 5662 8673
HER11332A	Findspot	Artefacts	Multi-period	Medieval/post-med pottery, coin, seal, thimble, button, fishing weight and buckle	TL 563 855
CB15683	Excavation, aerial photograph	Agricultural features	Medieval	Some extant and some excavated headland and ridge and furrow	TL 56040 86488
MCB17866	Excavation	Pits	Post-medieval – 14th century to 19th century	Three pits containing pottery	TL 56400 85596
HER11726	Structure	Well	Medieval-19th century	Stone-lined well	TL 568 867
MCB20319	Excavation	Marling pit	18th to 19th century	Marling pit	TL 5616 8745
HER17811	Excavation	Boundary	Post-medieval	18th to 19th century boundary ditch	TL 5674 8674
MCB17878	Excavation	Field system	Post-medieval	Large ditch with pottery, possibly relating to illegal enclosure	TL 5730 8670
HER12153	Document evidence	Garden	Post-medieval	Vicarage gardens	TL 562 859
HER12154	Document evidence	Cemetery	Post-medieval	Post-medieval cemetery	TL 561 871
MCB20347	Excavation	Ditches	Post-medieval	Post-medieval ditches	TL 5717 8697
MCB16481	Structure	Water tower	Modern	Destroyed water tower	TL 5607 8586
MCB16420	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII pill box site	TL 573 869
MCB19165	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII Anti-tank ditch	TL 5744 8692
MCB19176	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII pill box site	TL 5645 8770
MCB19177	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII pill box site	TL 5633 8773
MCB19178	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII pill box site	TL 5634 8773
MCB19179	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII pill box site	TL 5683 8734
MCB19180	Structure	Defences	Modern	WWII pill box site	TL 5682 8725



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