



Archaeological excavation on land east of Leicester Road Lutterworth, Leicestershire

Report No. 16/141

Author: Susan Porter

Illustrator: Olly Dindol



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Author: Susan Porter

Illustrator: Olly Dindol

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MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 809 800
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk

STAFF

Project Manager: Mo Muldowney BA ACIfA

Text: Susan Porter BA, MA

Fieldwork: Chloe Cronogue-Freeman BA

Guillaume Gutel BA MA

Paul Sharrock MA

Roman Pottery: Dr. Phil Mills, PhD

Post Roman Pottery: Paul Blinkhorn BTech

Animal Bone: Adam Reid BSc MSc

Ceramic Building Material: Pat Chapman BA CMS ACIfA

Metal and Burnt Flint: Susan Porter

Illustrations: Olly Dindol BSc

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-260229	
Project name	Archaeological Excavation on Land east of Leicester Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire		
Short description (250 words maximum)	MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Davidsons Developments to carry out an archaeological Strip, Plan and Record excavation on land east of Leicester Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire prior to the proposed development of the site. Six ditches of Roman date and a single Roman pit were identified, alongside several undated ditches. Cutting the Roman ditches were a series of post-medieval drains, and ridge and furrow cultivation.		
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Excavation		
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None		
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	Desk-based assessment (Allen Archaeology 2013a) Geophysical Evaluation (Allen Archaeology 2013b) Archaeological Trial trenching (Allen Archaeology 2014)		
Current Land use	Agricultural land		
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	No		
Monument type/ period	Roman ditches and pit; medieval ditch; post-medieval drains		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	Pottery, flint		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address (including postcode)	Land east of Leicester Road, Lutterworth, Leicester		
Study area (sq.m or ha)	0.5ha		
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	SP 5474 8602		
Height OD	c132m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project brief originator	Richard Clark (Leicestershire County Council)		
Project Design originator	Paul Clark (CgMs consulting Ltd)		
Director/Supervisor	Susan Porter (MOLA)		
Project Manager	Mo Muldowney (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date/End date	11/11/15 – 30/12/15		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical	Leicestershire Archives X.A110.2015	Pottery, flint, report	
Paper		Site records, maps, permatrace drawings	
Digital	MOLA Northampton Offices	Mapinfo plans, Word report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological Excavation on land east of Leicester Road, Lutterworth, Leicester		
Serial title & volume	Archaeological Excavation on Land East of Leicester Road Lutterworth Leicestershire		
Author(s)	Susan Porter		
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Archaeological Excavation on Land East of Leicester Road Lutterworth, Leicestershire December 2015

Abstract

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Davidsons Developments to carry out an archaeological Strip, Plan and Record excavation on land east of Leicester Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire prior to the proposed development of the site. Six ditches of Roman date and a single Roman pit were identified, alongside several undated ditches. Cutting the Roman ditches was a series of post-medieval drains, and ridge and furrow cultivation was observed in the eastern part of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Davidsons Developments to carry out archaeological works in the form of Strip, Plan and Record on land at Leicester Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire (NGR SP 5474 8602).

Outline planning permission has been granted for the construction of 84 new dwellings (Planning App. 14/00739/OUT), subject to a number of conditions, including Condition 20 requiring the implementation of further archaeological works prior to development. The Leicestershire County Council Archaeological Officer has advised that a programme of archaeological Strip, Plan and Record be undertaken to clarify the nature of activity encountered during archaeological trial trenching and geophysical survey, and to provide further information concerning the archaeological potential of the proposed development area, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012). The requirements were outlined in a specification prepared by CgMs Consulting (Clark 2015).

The current work follows on from previous phases of work by Allen Archaeology including an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (AAL 2013a), Geophysical Survey (AAL 2013b), and Trial Trench Evaluation (AAL 2014).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The proposed area of development is located c1.5km the north of the centre of Lutterworth and east of Leicester Road (NGR SP 5474 8902; Fig 1). To the south, the site is bounded by industrial units and to the north by agricultural fields. Leicester Road forms the western site boundary, and the M1 motorway lies to the east.

The site comprises a generally flat parcel of land c132m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with the underlying geology recorded as Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation, overlain by glacial till (BGS 2016) which was confirmed within the stripped area.

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

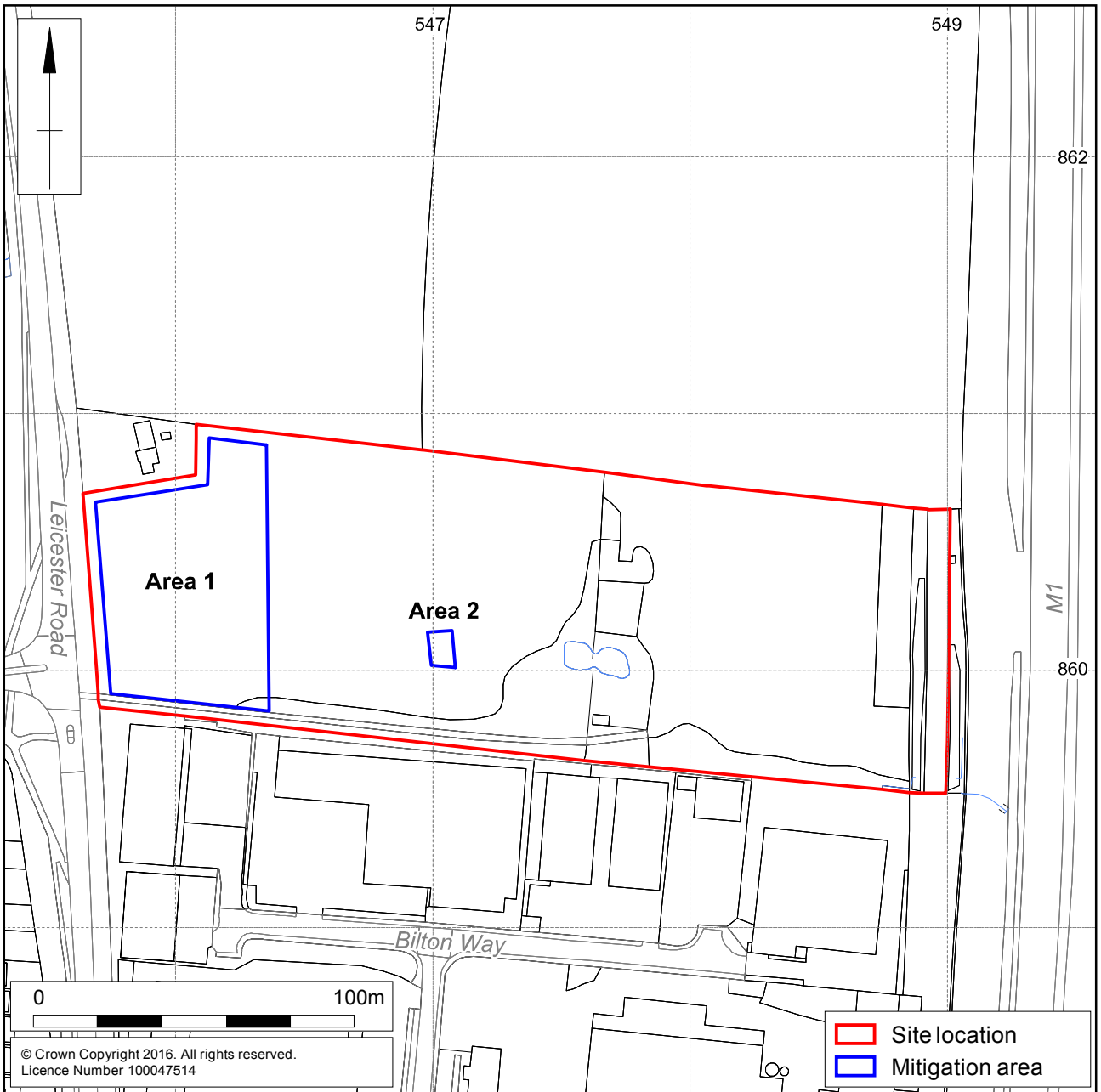
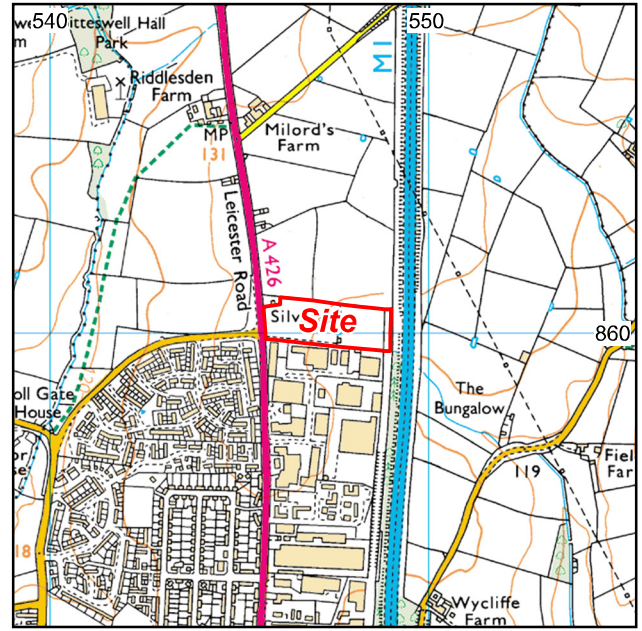
The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief prepared by CgMs (CgMs 2015) and a desk-based assessment (AAL 2013a). Numerous scatters of prehistoric lithic material have been identified in the vicinity, with Bronze Age features to the west of the site. The line of the Roman road connecting Leicester to the small town of Tripontium (south of Lutterworth), has been projected to follow Leicester Road on the western site boundary or pass through the site itself. However, neither geophysical survey (AAL 2013b) nor trial trenching (AAL 2014) have found evidence of the Roman road in this location.

The site itself lies well beyond the historic cores of Lutterworth and the neighbouring village of Bitteswell, the medieval core of which is c800m to the south-west of the site. Both settlements are listed in the Domesday Book of AD1086 (Williams and Martin 2002). The presence of faint traces of ridge and furrow on the site show that it was agricultural land in the medieval period, persisting through to the present day.

The Great Central Railway opened its main line from the north to London in 1899. The railway passed through the eastern end of the site and, although the line closed in 1966, a low embankment still survives. Two railway structures are extant on the site in the form of a brick building and a culvert.

A geophysical survey of the site, undertaken in 2013 (AAL 2013b), revealed few anomalies of potential archaeological interest. Primarily, this comprised an area of probable ridge and furrow cultivation in the western half of the site.

The subsequent trial trenching, comprising eight trenches, revealed a series of features related to medieval and post-medieval agriculture, mainly land drains and furrows (AAL 2014). A single ditch or gully identified in Trench 1 was interpreted as Anglo-Saxon date on the basis of a single sherd of pottery, although no further finds of this date were recovered. A fragment of heavily abraded Roman pottery was recovered from a pit in Trench 4. However, however no further activity dating to this period, including the putative road was identified.



Scale 1:2000

Site location and mitigation areas Fig 1

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The principal aim of the archaeological investigation was to excavate, record and understand the significance of any archaeological remains within the site prior to development.

The fieldwork comprised a Strip, Plan and Record excavation targeting features identified within evaluation Trenches 1 and 4 to provide information on the extent, character, date, state of preservation and depth of archaeological remains within the application area. This was achieved via the following aims and objectives:

- To ascertain whether any associated archaeological features survive in the immediate vicinity of the two dated features identified in the trial trenching, and to further investigate those features;
- To determine the date, character, function and significance of any features encountered;
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER;
- To undertake a programme of post-excavation analysis assessing the potential of the remains to contribute to wider research agendas and the scope for dissemination of the project results to a wider audience.

The programme of archaeological investigation was to be conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by *East Midlands Heritage: A Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment* (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012), and the earlier *Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the East Midlands* (Cooper 2006). As the Strip, Plan and Record areas were targeting individual features identified during Trial Trenching, specific research objectives were to be addressed in an iterative process as the excavations proceeded.

The excavation was carried out with reference to the ClfA's *Standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the *MOLA Fieldwork Manual* (2014) and the West Midlands regional framework (Watt 2011).

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

The Strip, Plan and Record excavation initially took place over two areas, Area 1 and Area 2 (Fig 1), to target a possible Saxon ditch encountered within Trench 1 of the trial trench evaluation, a possible Roman pit in Trench 4, and any associated evidence. Further contingency was allowed to continue the stripping of these areas to ensure that an appropriate area was investigated to address the project objectives, without excessive stripping of areas without surviving archaeological remains.

Stripping of the topsoil was undertaken prior to archaeological works by ecological investigators using a tracked 360° type machine equipped with ditching bucket. The remaining subsoil and overburden were stripped under constant archaeological supervision by a tracked 360° type machine equipped with a toothless, bladed ditching bucket in order to expose the archaeological horizon. The spoil generated was removed to an area not designated for excavation by a six-wheel dump truck and

mounded away from the stripped area. All procedures complied with MOLA Health and Safety provisions and MOLA Health and Safety at Work Guidelines

The extent of stripping was kept under review by the archaeological Contractor (MOLA) and archaeological Consultant (CgMs) in discussion with the senior planning archaeologist for Leicestershire Country Council.

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. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation.

A site grid was established and both grid and extent of excavated area 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 excavation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (CIfA 2014). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (HE 2015). The excavation was carried out in accordance with a Specification and Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by CgMs Consulting (Clark 2015).

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

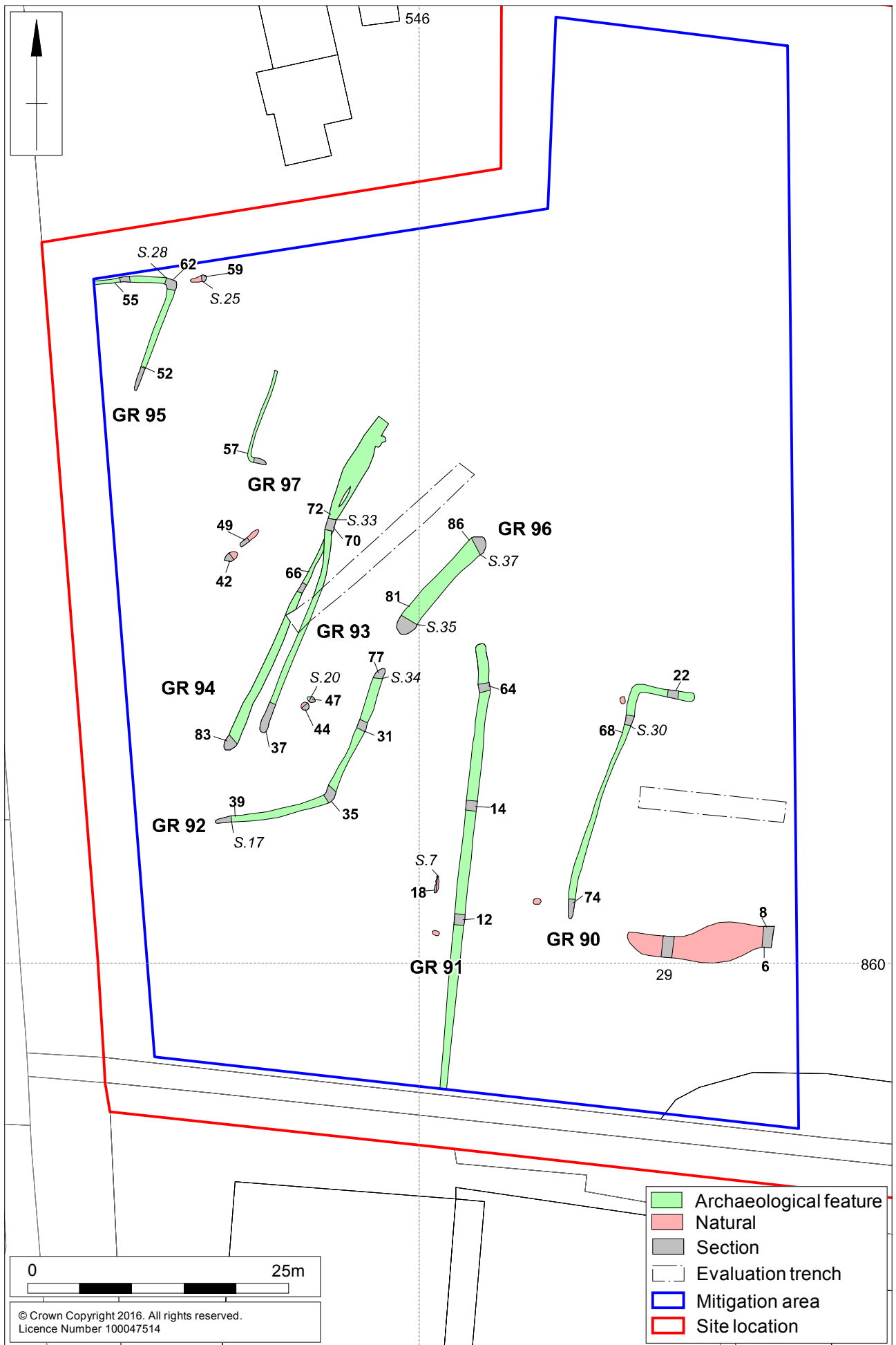
The stratigraphic sequence remained broadly consistent across the site and the natural geology comprised the aforementioned Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation, overlain by glacial till. The natural was between 0.20m and 0.50m below the upper ground surface and was overlain by mid red brown sandy clay subsoil which varied between 0.10m-0.40m deep. The deeper strata was observed to the north and west along the line of Leicester Road and the depth may be associated with the development of the road.

The excavation revealed that features of archaeological interest were concentrated in the south western corner of the site and comprised a series of short ditches, and field drains, most likely associated with agricultural activity.

Eight ditches were identified, alongside four drainage channels, a single pit, a modern posthole and seven features determined to be of natural origin.

5.1 Roman ditches and a pit

The larger area of excavation at the western end of the site (Fig 1) targeted the location of the former Trench 1, with intent to confirm the presence of the possible Saxon ditch that was recorded. Six ditches dated to the 1st to 2nd century AD were identified; these were broadly parallel, lying primarily on a north-east by south-west alignment. A pit of the same date was also identified.



Scale 1:500

Plan of mitigation Area 1 Fig 2

Ditch 91 was oriented north-east by south-west, but became indistinct and ephemeral possibly terminating to the north (Fig 2). It extended beyond the limit of excavation to the south. The ditch varied in width from 0.97m-1.20m and in depth between 0.16m-0.21m. The fill comprised firm mid brown-grey silty clay, although it was observed to have a more greenish hue to the north. Pottery was recovered from fills (11) of [12] and (63) of [64], and has been dated between the 1st to 3rd century AD. The ditch probably formed a land boundary.

Immediately to the west of Ditch 91 was Ditch 92, oriented north-east by south-west before turning through a wide curve at its southern end to follow a more east-west alignment (Fig 2; Fig 3, Section 34). The ditch varied in width between 0.35m and 1.00m, noticeably narrowing once it turned east-west, and it was between 0.31m to 0.60m deep, becoming deeper to the north. The fill comprised mid grey-brown silty clay, and contained sherds of pottery dating from AD 1-70 from [31] and [39]. The ditch terminated to the west [39], although the terminal was heavily truncated by a modern ceramic field drain, leading to a dark fill. A large amount of burnt stone was recovered from the terminal (Fig 3, Section 17).

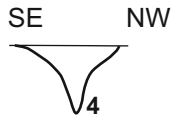
In the north-west corner of the site, Ditch 95 lay on a north-east by south-west alignment before turning sharply to the west at its north end, and extending beyond the limit of excavation. The ditch had a U-shaped profile and varied in width from 0.40m at the southern terminal to 0.75m in the corner. The depth varied between 0.15m-0.45m. The primary ditch fill comprised light grey silty clay, overlain by mid brown-grey silty clay with orange flecks. All excavated sections produced sherds of Roman pottery, from fill (50) of [52], (54) of [55], and (60 and 61) of [62]. The northern arm of the ditch also contained an upper deposit of lighter colour with a greenish hue. However this colour differentiation can be attributed to the proximity of tree growth which has resulted in a leeching of moisture and nutrients from the soils (Fig 3, Section 28).

To the north-east of Ditch 92, and on the same alignment, was Ditch 96. This was a short length of ditch, 1.40-1.70m wide and 0.53-0.70m deep. The ditch had a V-shaped profile, with a pronounced stepped slope to the east, becoming steeper to the south-east and progressively undulating to the north-west, through excavated sections. (Fig 3, Sections 35 and 37). The ditch contained several fills of light grey blue material in the uppermost deposits and a darker material to the base of the feature. The primary fill (80) of [81], noted to be below the line of the water table, contained a fragment of animal bone. An upper fill (79) produced early Roman pottery, dated AD 1-70.

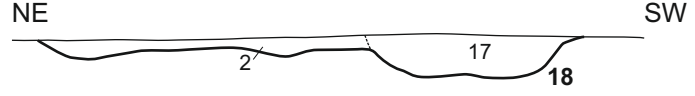
Ditch 97 was a short length of ditch between Ditches 94 and 95, aligned north-east by south-west and turning through 90 degrees at the south-western end before terminating. It was truncated by a field drain to the north, beyond which the ditch did not continue. The terminal end was excavated, and the ditch was recorded as at least 0.43m wide by 0.16m deep containing a single fill deposit (56) from which sixteen sherds of Roman pottery were recovered, including the full profile of a London ware jar, dated c AD 100-120.

At the eastern edge of Area 1 lay Ditch 90 on a north-east by south-west alignment, parallel with the earlier Roman ditches ([68], [74]). It made a 90 degree turn at its north end, and turned east ([22]). Both terminal ends were identified. The ditch had a V-shaped profile (Fig 3, Section 30). It varied in width between 0.65m and 0.80m, and in depth from 0.11m to 0.26m. A single sherd of 12th-century pottery was recovered

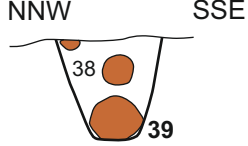
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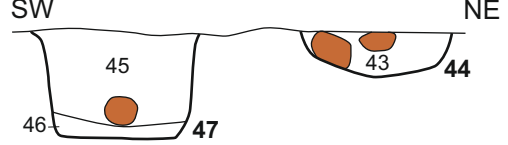
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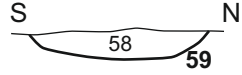
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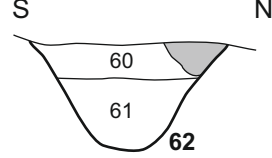
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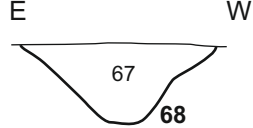
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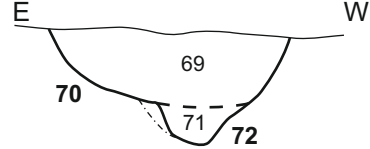
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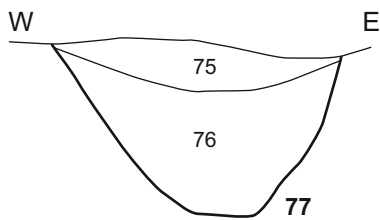
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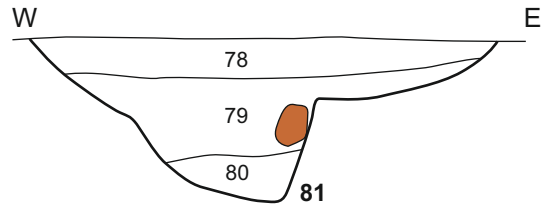
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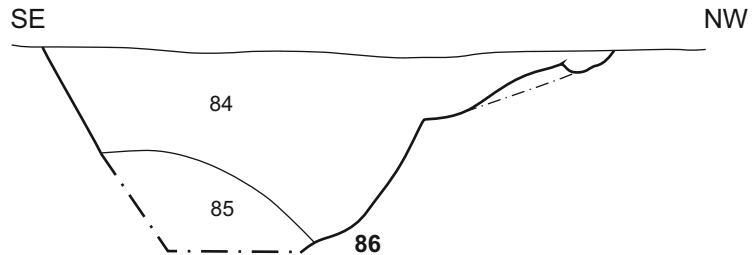
Section 34



Section 35



Section 37



Key

 Burnt Stone



from the fill of [22], and may suggest a medieval date for the ditch, although its similarity and orientation to the Roman ditches indicate a Roman date.

To the north-west of Ditch 92 were two narrow associated ditches. The first, Ditch 93, was identified during the trial trench evaluation in Trench 1 as feature [104], and a single sherd of Saxon abraded pottery led to a tentative Saxon date being given (AAL 2014). During the excavation phase, the ditch was shown to be aligned north-east by south-west, between 0.30m-0.56m wide, and 0.13m-0.15m deep. The fill comprised a mid-light grey-brown silty clay, from which no finds were recovered. As such, the excavation phase was unable to confirm the postulated Saxon date for this feature, however its orientation within the site and similarity to dated ditches on the site suggests a Roman date. The ditch [72] was truncated to the north by Ditch 94 (Fig 3, Section 33).

Ditch 94 most likely comprised a re-cut of ditch 93, which it truncated to the north of Trench 1. It was excavated in three slots [66], [70] and [83] and was observed to vary in width between 0.35m and 1.15m, at its widest in the terminal slot [83]. The depth was broadly consistent varying between 0.24m and 0.35m and a single fill deposit was observed throughout, comprising mid grey brown silty clay with a lighter greenish hue observed in slot [66]. No dating evidence was recovered, however orientation and similarity to dated ditches suggests a Roman date.

Pit [47] (Fig 3, Section 20; Fig 4) was the only isolated discrete feature on site determined to be of archaeological interest. It was circular in plan, 0.54m in diameter, with steep sides to a flat base 0.36m in depth. The primary fill comprised firm mid-orange to grey mottled clay 0.05m deep (46). Overlying this was a 0.31m deep layer of soft mid grey silty clay with occasional orange flecks (45). Pottery of early Roman date, between AD 1-70, and burnt stones were recovered from this fill (45).



Pit [47] looking north-west Fig 4

Post-medieval and modern field drains and post-holes

Several field drains were excavated and recorded. Drains 1, 2 (Fig 5), [33] and two unrecorded drains to the north were V-shaped in profile oriented broadly north-south containing a single fill from which material of 17th century date was recovered.



Drain 2, looking south (scale 0.30m) Fig 5

Two further drains were observed, comprising narrow channels filled with stone of varying size. They joined a right-angle, and linked with ceramic field drains to the north-west and south-east. Slots were excavated into both features to confirm that the stone fill was indeed intended for drainage.(Fig 6).



Stone field drain looking north-east Fig 6

Posthole [8] was contained within the spread of natural hollow [6]. It was 0.37m in diameter and 0.18m deep with steep sides and a flat base. The fill (7) comprised firm dark brown-grey silty clay with frequent wood and recent organic inclusions (mulch). It is considered very modern and likely a fencepost or shallow borehole.

Natural features

A natural spread or hollow was observed at the south eastern end of the site, in a large amorphous area highlighted in the geophysical survey as an area of magnetic noise (Fig 2; [6] and (29)). Initially considered to be a linear feature, [6] has a clear, if somewhat irregular, edge to the south but no clear cut can be defined to the north, the base is undulating. Lying to the west of [6], feature (29) was excavated in the hope of determining the nature of [6] however, no clear cut edges could be discerned here and the feature was considered to be a natural hollow, perhaps an area where water had been standing. The feature was of similar depth 0.29m deep in slot [6] and 0.30m deep in (29). A single deposit was recorded comprising mottled grey clayey silt mixed with natural geology. Slot [6] was excavated to a width of 2.15m before it was determined that a northern cut would not be found whilst (29) appears to be only 1m in width, pottery of late 17th-century date was recovered from slot [6] and a single sherd of pottery dated AD70- 300 was recovered from (29).

Five treeboles were identified, [18], [42], [44], [49] and [59]. All were irregular in plan with loose mottled fill deposits from which no dating material was recovered, with the exception of [59] which produced three rim sherds of pottery dated to AD 70-120 were recovered, however these were all abraded and are considered to be residual likely moved by ploughing on the site.

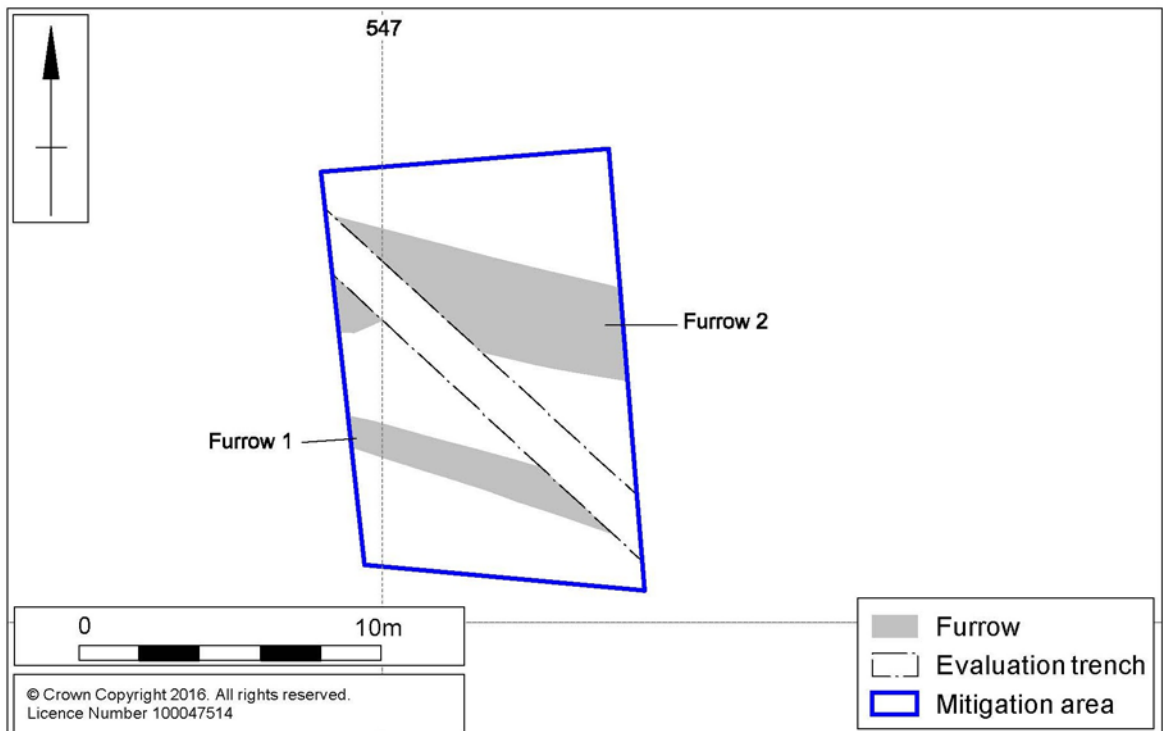
5.2 Medieval Furrows

The smaller area of excavation to the east comprised a 10mx15m stripped area at the south-eastern end of the former Trench 4 (Figs 7 and 8). It targeted a feature identified through the trial trenching in Trench 4. The feature was a shallow hollow, 0.35m deep, possibly a pit or ditch that extended beyond the limits of the trench. A single heavily abraded sherd of Roman pottery had been recovered. It was also suggested in the evaluation report that the observed feature may be part of a medieval furrow (AAL 2014).

Two furrows had previously been observed in the stripped area on a broadly north-south alignment by the geophysical survey and were confirmed by the evaluation trench. The backfilled trench was hand cleaned until the excavated section of feature [403] could be discerned. It was determined that the possible pit feature [403] was the shallow spread of the medieval furrow, Furrow 2, caused by later agricultural activity on the site. Furrow 2 entered the trial trench to the north at a width of at least 1.50m wide (incomplete width) and exited to the south 3.5m wide. A piece of post-medieval pottery was recovered from the furrow, and it is considered that the furrow deposit had 'spread' to the west.



Furrow excavated in Area 2 Fig 7



Scale 1:250

Plan of mitigation Area 2 Fig 8

6 THE FINDS

6.1 Roman Pottery by Phil Mills

There were 68 sherds of pottery, weighing 498g. This included eight rims. A catalogue of the material by context is presented in Table 1 below.

This is a small group of pottery in rather poor condition. The majority of the material would appear to belong to the grog tempered Aylesford – Swarling tradition, and the fabrics fit with those that are likely to have been in use in the region around AD 1-70. There is a small amount of Roman material of which the few datable pieces suggest a Flavian to Trajanic date of AD 70 -120. There is no evidence of any material deposited after this date. The material is consistent with a basic rural site of 1st century date which is connected to wider network of the later 1st to early 2nd century after which it goes out of use.

Table 1: Catalogue of Roman pottery

Fill / Cut / Type	Number of sherds	Fabric type/ description	Weight	Date
11 / 12 / Ditch	1 x body sherd	Oxidised pottery	6g	AD70- 300
29 / Hollow	1 x body sherd	Oxidised pottery	20g	AD70- 300
30 / 31 / Ditch	1 x body sherd	Handmade grog tempered ware	5g	AD 1-70
32 / 33 / Gully	1 x body sherd	Wheel made grog tempered ware	6g	AD 1-70
34 / 35 / Ditch	1 x body sherd	Handmade grog tempered ware	10g	AD 1-70
38 / 39 / Ditch	2 x body sherds	Wheel made grog tempered ware	4g	AD 1-70
	1 x body sherd	Handmade grog tempered ware	1g	-
45 / 47 / Pit	4 x body sherd	Oxidised wheel made grog tempered ware	81g	AD 1-70
	1 x rim sherd	Greyware jar with a beaded slightly undercut rim	3g	Roman
50 / 52 / Ditch	1 x rim sherd	1 rim sherd of a greyware necked jar with and everted outcurving beaded rim	7g	Roman
	1 x rim sherd	1 rim sherd in greyware from a necked jar with and everted slightly outcurving rim with a slightly undercut beaded tip	8g	Roman
	1 x rim sherd	1 rim sherd from a greyware jar with a strongly everted beaded undercut rim, heavily sooted	18g	Roman
	1 x rim sherd	1 rim sherd from a greyware necked jar with an everted outcurving rim, slightly beaded at the tip	80 g	Roman
54 / 55 / Ditch	11 x body sherds	Greyware	81g	-
	5 x body sherd	Reduced coarse sandy greyware	4g	Perhaps AD 70- 200
56 / 57 / Ditch	7 x body sherds	Probably forming an almost complete profile of a small beaker or jar with an everted stubby rim and flat base in London ware	28g	c. AD 100-120
	2 x body sherd	Oxidised pottery	16g	AD70- 300
	7 x body sherds	Greyware globular jar with an everted slightly beaded rim with very abraded surfaced	35g	Roman
58 / 59 / Tree Bole	3 x rim sherd	3 joining rim sherds from an oxidised flanged bowl derived from the reeded rim sequence	38g	AD 70-120
60 / 62 / Ditch	1 x body sherd	Grog tempered ware	4g	-
	1 x body sherd	Greyware	3 g	Roman

61 / 62 / Ditch	3 x body sherds 1 x body sherd	Greyware Early greyware	7g 11g	Roman AD 70 - 120
63 / 64 / Ditch	1 x body sherd	White ware	2 g	c1- c3
79 / 81 / Ditch	8 x body sherds	Wheel made grog tempered ware	14g	AD 1-70
Furrow 2	1 x body sherd	Oxidised pottery, or possible tile fragment	6g	Roman
TOTAL	68	-	498g	-

6.2 Post-Roman pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The post-Roman pottery assemblage comprised six sherds with a total weight of 37g. It was mostly post-medieval. It was recorded using the conventions of the Leicestershire County type-series (Sawday 1994), as follows:

EA6: Post-medieval blackwares, late 17th century +. 3 sherds, 28g.

EA8: Creamware, mid 18th – 19th century. 2 sherds, 7 g.

PM: Potter's Marston Ware, 1100-1300. 1 sherd, 2g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 2. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region.

Table 2: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Fill / Cut / Type	Potter's Marston Ware		Post-medieval Blackwares		Creamware		Date
	Sherds	Weight	Sherds	Weight	Sherds	Weight	
Furrow 2	-	-	1	6g	-	-	L17thC
5 / 6 / Ditch	-	-	1	2g	-	-	L17thC
9 / 10 / Gully	-	-	1	20g	-	-	L17thC
21 / 22 / Ditch	1	2g	-	-	-	-	12thC
23 / 24 / Gully	-	-	-	-	1	2g	M18thC
27 / 28 / Gully	-	-	-	-	1	5g	M18thC
Total	1	2g	3	28g	2	7g	-

6.3 Animal Bone by Adam Reid

A small bone assemblage was recovered by hand collection from five different contexts. The material was washed and then assessed to determine the level of preservation, the taxa present and to inform on the potential for further work.

The remains of least two highly fragmented cattle molars were recovered from the fill of ditches [31] [39] and [62]. A complete, albeit weathered, cattle molar was recovered from the lower fill of ditch terminal [80]. A single fragment of unidentifiable mammal bone was recovered from ditch [22]. The small bone fragment was calcined, indicating that it had been heated to a high temperature.

The small assemblage is a reflection of the poor quality of preservation offered by the acidic clayey fills and provides limited interpretative value.

6.4 Ceramic Building Material by Pat Chapman

There are eight small sherds of brick and tile, weighing 120g, made with sandy orange-brown clay. Six come from fill (5) in feature [6] and one each from fills (7) and (23) in features [8] and [24] respectively. The only definite roof tile sherd comes from fill (5) and is 15mm thick. An obvious brick sherd, slightly overfired, also comes from fill (5). Three other sherds are probably brick remnants and three could be from roof tiles.

These scattered remnants could be datable from the 16th to 19th centuries. None of them are machine-made.

6.5 Metal by Susan Porter

Three large and heavily corroded iron nails were recovered from fill (9), within field drain [10] and are likely to be post-medieval in date.

6.6 Burnt Flint by Susan Porter

Three pieces of burnt flint were recovered from ditch [39], pit [47] and treebole [44], none were worked. The piece from ditch [39] was the largest, weighing 38.02g, whilst the other two fragments varied between 3.19g-1.48g, the smaller fragment being from treebole [44].

7 DISCUSSION

The purpose of the excavation was to ascertain the survival of features (if any) in the immediate vicinity of the features within the evaluation trenches. The resulting evidence of these works has demonstrated a small number of archaeological remains of Roman, medieval and post-medieval date on the site. The limited amount of archaeological activity present was concentrated in a narrow band running north-west to south-east across Area 1. The site had been subject to an amount of intrusive post-medieval and modern activity in the form of field drains comprising excavated channels, ceramic and stone drains, and agricultural ploughing.

The majority of the features encountered within Area 1 were linear, broadly aligned north-east to south-west. With the exception of the field drains, all excavated ditches seemed to terminate or shallow out along a broadly north-west to south-east line visible on the plan (Fig 2). As such, a boundary of sorts can be inferred on this alignment. Within the smaller strip of Area 2, medieval ridge and furrow was observed. The furrows had previously been observed on the geophysical survey results (AAL 2013b) and in evaluation trench 4 (AAL 2014). No ridge and furrow remains were observed in Area 1.

No features were found during the excavation that related to undated feature [205] recorded in Trench 2 of the evaluation. It was considered during the evaluation that this elongated oval feature may have been the terminal of a furrow or a pit. As no

evidence for the feature extending beyond the trench was revealed within the excavation, it seems reasonable that this feature be identified as an undated pit. Likewise no further extensions were observed to features [106] and [108] recorded within evaluation Trench 1. Nothing further of Roman date was recovered from the vicinity of the possible Roman pit recorded in Trench 4. No evidence for the Roman road was encountered.

7.1 Roman

Five ditches, 97, 91, 92, 96 and 95, produced pottery of Roman date. The ditches are aligned parallel to each other but do not intersect, as such, full enclosures for livestock containment seems unlikely. A more likely interpretation is that the ditches are part of an agricultural management system related to crop rather than livestock cultivation and may have functioned as simple land division or for water/ drainage control. Ditch 91 may have been a field boundary, possibly originally continuing to the north. The remaining three ditches 97, 92 and 95 form right angled curves and are likely to perform an agricultural function although their definitive purpose is unclear. Ditch 96 may also have functioned as a short boundary.

A single sherd of 12th-century pottery was recovered from ditch 90; however, this was abraded and may be intrusive. The ditch was aligned similarly to the Roman ditches and was similar in profile, as such is likely to be part of the same agricultural system.

Although neither ditch produced dating evidence during this excavation Ditches 93 and 94 lay on a broadly similar alignment and seem likely to belong to the same agricultural system as the dated Roman ditches, with ditch 94 being an obvious recut of ditch 93. The single sherd of Saxon pottery recovered from ditch 93 during the trial trench evaluation (AAL 2014) is therefore likely to be intrusive.

Pit [47] includes hearth material as part of backfill and is of Roman date. It is situated in the vicinity of undated Ditches 93, and 94, and may be associated with these. There is no evidence for a building on the site; it is likely that this was a rubbish pit for disposing of used material in a single instance.

7.2 Medieval

A number of furrows were observed during the trial trenching phase of works, with both features [106] and [108] in evaluation trench 1 listed as furrows belonging to different phases of activity (AAL 2014). However furrows were not clearly observed during work in Area 1 due to adverse weather conditions affecting the condition of the ground.

Pottery of late 17th-century date was recovered from one of the furrows in Area 2 with a single heavily abraded fragment of Roman pottery or possible tile fragment. The heavy post-depositional abrasions indicates that the sherd has been frequently rolled in the ground and as such is likely to be a residual fragment dragged by the plough from a location elsewhere on the site.

7.3 Post-medieval and modern

A total of four drainage channels, along with a number of ceramic and stone field drains, were observed crossing the site. These post-dated the earlier ridge and

furrow. Several fragments of pottery of later 17th- and mid-18th-century date was recovered from the narrow 'V'-shaped channels implying these may predate the ceramic and stone drains. Activity of this date is most likely to have occurred when the site was being used for agricultural activity, and drainage was required.

A single modern posthole [8] is likely to represent the course of a modern fence line, the removal of which is recent enough that the feature was still filled with decaying grass and leaf mulch. No further features were noted along this line however it was on the limit of excavation and it is likely that the fence line continued on a north-south alignment outside of the limit of excavation.

7.4 Natural Features

Five of the excavated features were determined to be natural treehollows. A pond is known to have been on the site, however this lies further to the east, although it is possible that this vaguely linear spread/ hollow may have been a small stream or overspill from the pond.

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MOLA Northampton
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APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF CONTEXTS

Context	Context Type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1	Topsoil	Firm dark grey brown sandy clay	0.10m	-
2	Subsoil	Firm mid red brown sandy clay	0.20-0.40m	-
3	Fill of [4]	Sticky mid brown grey silty clay	0.22m deep 0.35m wide	-
4	Drainage Gully	Linear V shaped profile ditch with slotted base running SW-NE filled by (3)	0.22m deep 0.35m wide	-
5	Fill of [6]	Firm mid grey brown silty clay	0.29m deep 2.15m wide	L17thC pottery/ CBM
6	Ditch/ hollow?	Linear wide with flat base ditch, running E-SW filled by (5)	0.29m deep 2.15m wide	-
7	Fill of [8]	Firm dark brownish grey silty clay	0.18m deep 0.37m wide	CBM
8	Modern Posthole	Circular U-shaped profile filled by (7)	0.18m deep 0.37m wide	
9	Fill of [10]	Sticky mid brownish grey silty clay	0.19m deep 0.35m wide	L17thC Pottery
10	Drainage Gully	Linear V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base running SW-NE filled by (9)	0.19m deep 0.35m, wide	
11	Fill of [12]	Firm mid brownish grey, silty clay	0.16m deep 0.98m wide	Pottery
12	Ditch	Linear U-shaped profile ditch running N-S filled with (11)	0.16m deep 0.98m wide	-
13	Fill of [14]	Firm mid brownish grey silty clay	0.21m deep 1.20m wide	-
14	Ditch	Linear with broad base and steep sides ditch running N-S filled with (13)	0.21m deep 1.20m wide	-
15	Fill of [16]	Soft mid greyish red silty clay	0.19m deep 0.24m wide	-
16	Drainage Gully Terminus	Linear V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base running NE-SW filled with (15)	0.19m deep 0.24m wide	-
17	Fill of [18]	Firm mid brownish grey silty clay	0.10m deep 0.70m wide	-
18	Treebole	Irregular circular with irregular sides and base filled with (17)	0.10m deep 0.70m wide	-
19	Fill of [20]	Firm mid reddish brown silty loam	0.12m deep 0.19m wide	-
20	Drainage Gully	Linear 'V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base running N-S filled with (19)	0.12m deep 0.19m wide	-

Context	Context Type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
21	Fill of [22]	Soft mid greyish brown silty clay	0.11m deep 0.80m wide	12th century pottery, animal bone
22	Ditch	Linear U-shaped profile ditch running SSE-NNW filled with (21)	0.11m deep 0.80m wide	-
23	Fill of [24]	Firm mid reddish brown silty loam	0.12m deep 0.29m wide	M18thC pottery/ CBM
24	Drainage Gully	Linear V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base, running N-S filled with (23)	0.12m deep 0.29m wide	-
25	Fill of [26]	Firm mid reddish brown silty loam	0.18m deep 0.24m wide	-
26	Drainage Gully	Linear V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base running N-S filled with (25)	0.18m deep 0.24m wide	-
27	Fill of [28]	Firm mid reddish brown silty loam	0.14m deep 0.24m wide	M18thC pottery
28	Drainage Gully	Linear V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base, running E-W filled with (27)	0.14m deep 0.24m wide	-
29	Natural Hollow	Soft mid orange grey silty clay	0.30m deep 1.00m wide	Pottery
30	Fill of [31]	Firm mid grey silty clay	0.31m deep 1.00m wide	Pottery, animal bone
31	Ditch	Curvilinear ditch U-shaped in profile running NE-SW, filled with (30)	0.31m deep 1.00m wide	-
32	Fill of [33]	Soft mid greyish red silty clay	0.19m deep 0.27m wide	Pottery
33	Drainage Gully	Linear V-shaped profile ditch with slotted base running SW-NE filled with (32)	0.19m deep 0.27m wide	-
34	Fill of [35]	Soft mid greyish brown silty clay	0.35m deep 1.00m wide	Pottery
35	Ditch, corner slot	Curvilinear U-shaped in profile ditch running NW-SE filled with (34)	0.35m deep 1.00m wide	-
36	Fill of [37]	Soft mid greyish brown silty clay	0.13m deep 0.56m wide	-
37	Ditch Terminus	Linear U-shaped in profile ditch running NW-SE filled with (36)	0.13m deep 0.56m wide	-
38	Fill of [39]	Loose dark brownish grey silty clay	0.35m deep 0.35m wide	Pottery, bone, sample 3
39	Ditch Terminus	Linear U-shaped in profile ditch running NE-SW filled with (38)	0.35m deep 0.35m wide	-
40	Fill of [42]	Soft mid grey mottled brown silty clay	0.15m deep 0.85m wide	-

Context	Context Type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
41	Fill of [42]	Friable dark greyish black silty clay	0.10m deep 0.70m wide	-
42	Treebole	Irregular oval wide base flat base and steep sides filled with (40) and (41)	0.25m deep 0.85m wide	-
43	Fill of [44]	Soft mid bluish grey silty clay	0.14m deep 0.46m wide	
44	Treebole	Circular U-shaped profile treebole	0.14m deep 0.46m wide	-
45	Fill of [47]	Soft mid grey with orange flecks silty clay	0.31m deep 0.54m wide	Pottery sample 1
46	Fill of [47]	Firm mid orange with mottled grey clay	0.05m deep 0.54m wide	-
47	Pit	Circular U-shaped pit filled with (45) and (46)	0.36m deep 0.54m wide	-
48	Fill of [49]	Soft mid brownish grey silty clay	0.05m deep 0.50m wide	-
49	Treebole	Irregular oval shallow in profile treebole filled with (48)	0.05m deep 0.50m wide	-
50	Fill of [52]	Soft mid brownish grey with mottled orange silty clay	0.10m deep 0.40m wide	Pottery
51	Fill of [52]	Firm light brownish grey with mottled orange silty clay	0.05m deep 0.30m wide	-
52	Ditch Terminus	Linear U-shaped in profile running N-S filled with (50) and (51)	0.15m deep 0.40m wide	-
53	Fill of [55]	Soft mid yellow green silty clay	0.17m deep 0.60m wide	-
54	Fill of [55]	Compact mid reddish grey clay	0.20m deep 0.31m wide	Pottery
55	Ditch	Linear U-shaped in profile ditch running SW-NE filled with (53) and (54)	0.27m deep 0.60m wide	-
56	Fill of [57]	Soft sticky dark greenish grey silty clay	0.16m deep 0.43m wide	Pottery
57	Ditch Terminus	Terminal end of linear U-shaped in profile ditch running SE-NW filled with (56)	0.16m deep 0.43m wide	-
58	Fill of [59]	Soft mid greyish green silty clay	0.10m deep 0.35m wide	Pottery
59	Treebole	Irregular teardrop in plan wide U-shaped profile with flat base filled with (58)	0.10m deep 0.35m wide	-
60	Fill of [62]	Firm light grey with orange flecks silty clay	0.15m deep 0.75m wide	Pottery

Context	Context Type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
61	Fill of [62]	Firm mid grey with orange flecks sandy clay with small pebbles	0.30m deep 0.65m wide	Pottery, animal bone
62	Ditch	Corner slot within linear V-shaped in profile ditch running S-W through corner filled with (60) and (61)	0.45m deep 0.75m wide	-
63	Fill of [64]	Soft sticky mid greenish grey silty clay	0.18m deep 0.97m wide	Pottery
64	Ditch	Linear flat base, steep sided in profile ditch running N-S filled with (63)	0.18m deep 0.97m wide	-
65	Fill of [66]	Soft light greenish brown silty clay	0.15m deep 0.35m wide	-
66	Ditch	Linear U-shaped in profile ditch running NE-SW filled with (65)	0.15m deep 0.35m wide	-
67	Fill of [68]	Friable mid yellowish grey silty clay with pebbles	0.26m deep 0.65m wide	-
68	Ditch Slot	Linear V-shaped in profile ditch running N-S filled with (67)	0.26m deep 0.65m wide	-
69	Fill of [70]	Soft mid greyish brown with reddish flecks silty clay	0.30m deep 0.80m wide	-
70	Ditch	Linear U-shaped in profile ditch running NE-SW filled with (69)	0.30m deep 0.80m wide	-
71	Fill of [72]	Soft light greyish brown silty clay	0.15m deep 0.30m wide	-
72	Ditch	Linear V-shaped in profile ditch running NE-SW filled with (71)	0.15m deep 0.30m wide	-
73	Fill of [74]	Friable mid yellowish grey silty clay with pebbles	0.18m deep 0.65m wide	-
74	Ditch terminus	Terminus of linear V-shaped in profile ditch running N-S filled with (73)	0.18m deep 0.65m wide	-
75	Fill of [77]	Soft dark greyish brown silty clay	0.15m deep 0.95m wide	-
76	Fill of [77]	Firm mid grey with orange flecks silty clay	0.45m deep 0.90m wide	-
77	Ditch Terminus	Terminus of linear V-shaped in profile ditch running N-S filled with (75) and (76)	0.60m deep 0.95m wide	-

Context	Context Type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
78	Fill of [81]	Soft mid bluish grey with mottled orange silty clay with pebbles	0.13m deep 1.40m wide	-
79	Fill of [81]	Soft mid grey mottled with orange and red flecks silty clay with cobbles and pebbles	0.26m deep 1.30m wide	Pottery
80	Fill of [81]	Soft dark grey with red flecks sandy clay	0.14m deep 0.47m wide	Animal Bone
81	Ditch Terminus	Terminus of linear stepped in profile to flat base ditch running N-S filled with (78), (79) and (80)	0.53m deep 1.40m wide	-
82	Fill of [83]	Sticky mid grey brown with yellow mottling silty clay	0.24m deep 1.15m wide	-
83	Ditch Terminus	Terminus of linear U-shaped in profile running NE-SW filled with (82)	0.24m deep 1.15m wide	-
84	Fill of [86]	Soft mottled light grey orange silty clay with large stones	0.65m deep 1.70m wide	-
85	Fill of [86]	Soft dark brownish grey silty clay with ironstone inclusions	0.35m deep 0.70m wide	-
86	Ditch Terminus	Terminus of ditch V-shaped in profile running NE-SW filled with (84) and (85)	0.70m deep 1.70m wide	-
Furrow 1	Furrow	Part of medieval ridge and furrow	1.50m wide 0.20m deep	L17thC pottery
Furrow 2	Furrow	Part of medieval ridge and furrow	2.00m wide 0.20m deep	



MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 809 800
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk