



Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Bedford Road, Great Barford Bedfordshire October 2016

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS molanort1-280712	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Bedford Road, Great Barford, Bedfordshire		
Short description	MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology, on behalf of Linden Homes, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Bedford Road, Great Barford, Bedfordshire prior to the proposed development of the site. Thirteen trenches were excavated to target ridge and furrow identified in the geophysical data and apparent blank areas. No archaeological features were encountered apart from the remains of undated furrows.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Meadows 2015)		
Current land use	Arable field		
Future work	None		
Monument type and period	None		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Bedfordshire		
Site address	Great Barford		
Easting Northing	SP 512721 252082		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 2.15 ha		
Height aOD	c 28m aOD to c 23.20m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Christopher Jones		
Project Manager	Anthony Maul (MOLA Northampton)		
Sponsor or funding body	Prospect Archaeology on behalf of Linden homes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	24/10/2016		
End date	26/10/2016		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	BEDFM.2016.67	None	
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title	Archaeological Trial Trench evaluation at Bedford Road, Great Barford, Bedfordshire, October 2016		
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Archaeological Trial Trench evaluation

Bedford Road, Great Barford

Bedfordshire

October 2016

Abstract

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology, on behalf of Linden Homes, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Bedford Road, Great Barford, Bedfordshire prior to the proposed development of the site. Thirteen trenches were excavated to target ridge and furrow identified in the geophysical data and apparent blank areas. No archaeological features were encountered apart from remains of undated furrows.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) were commissioned by Prospect Archaeology, on behalf of Lindon Homes to conduct a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation at Bedford Road, Great Barford (NGR: 512721 252082, Fig 1), in advance of proposed development of the site. The works were required by the Historic Environment officer for Bedford Borough Council in response to a planning application for residential development, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

1.2 A brief setting out the requirements for archaeological works to discharge Condition 7 of the planning approval was prepared by the Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer (Saunders 2016). This document had recommended an archaeological trial trench evaluation and publication of works.

1.3 A written scheme of investigation was prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2016). It described the proposed methodology to be undertaken for the fieldwork, to comply with the Brief issued by the Bedford Borough Council (Saunders 2016).

As part of the planning requirements the Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer, stipulated a programme of trial trench evaluation to determine the archaeological potential of the site.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to examine the archaeological resource within the proposed development area the objectives of the evaluation were to establish:

- The date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- The relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;

- The potential for 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 as an intrinsic part of the investigation.
- The impact of the proposed development works upon any surviving archaeological remains
- To inform any future excavation or mitigation strategy

Specific research objectives were to be drawn from national and regional research frameworks as relevant depending upon the results of the work. The regional research agenda is given by Oake *et al* (2007), Glazebrook (1997), Brown and Glazebrook (2000), and Medlycott (2011).

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location, topography and geology

The proposed development works are to take place on a 2.15ha plot of land located on the eastern side of Bedford Road on the southern edge of the village of Great Barford (Fig 1). The site is currently in use as agricultural field and has previously been under crop. The site is bounded to the west by Bedford Road, to the north by Great Barford Lower School and residential properties off Silver Street and Bereford Close. Alban Academy lies to the east with associated school sports fields to the south.

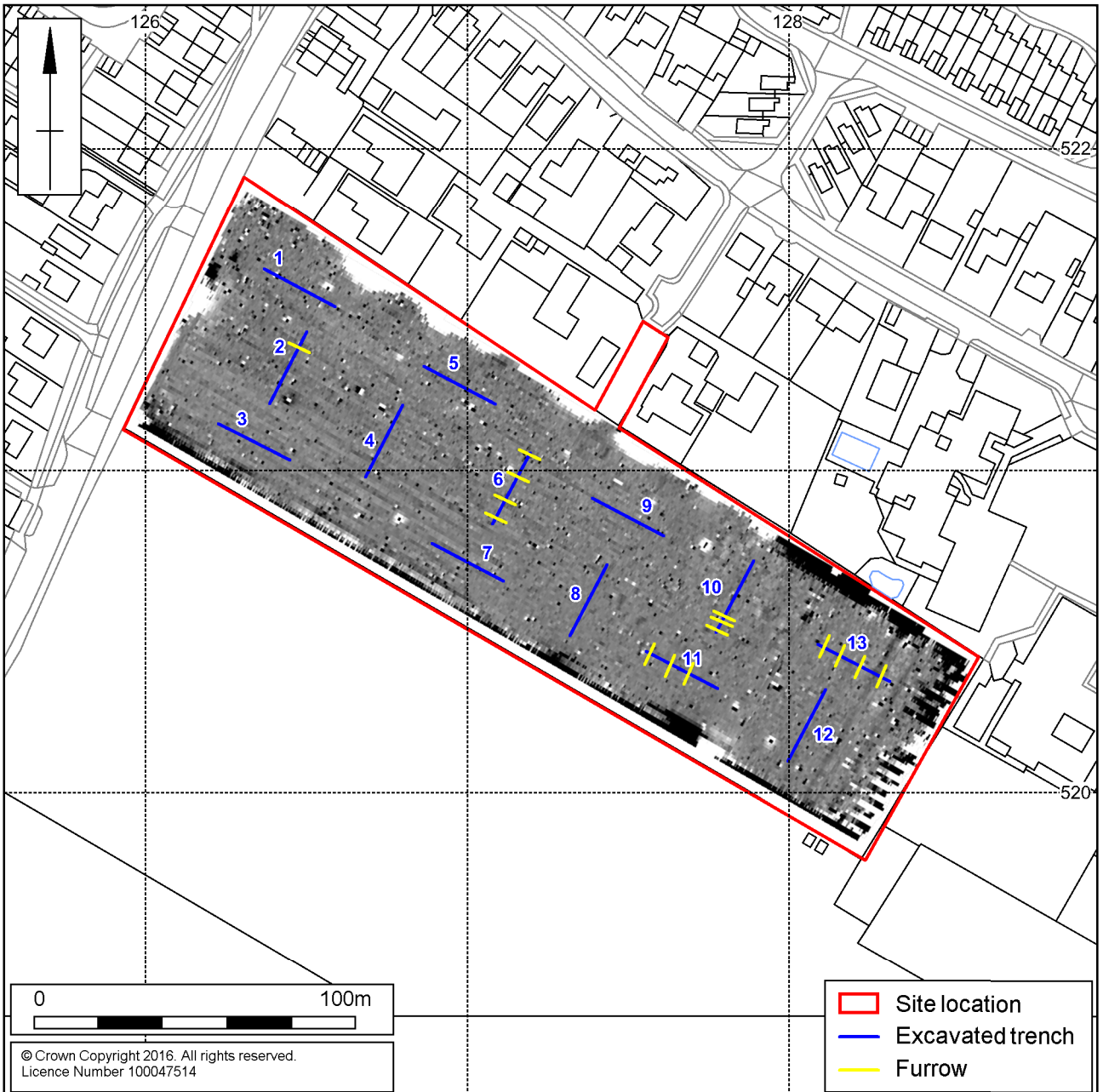
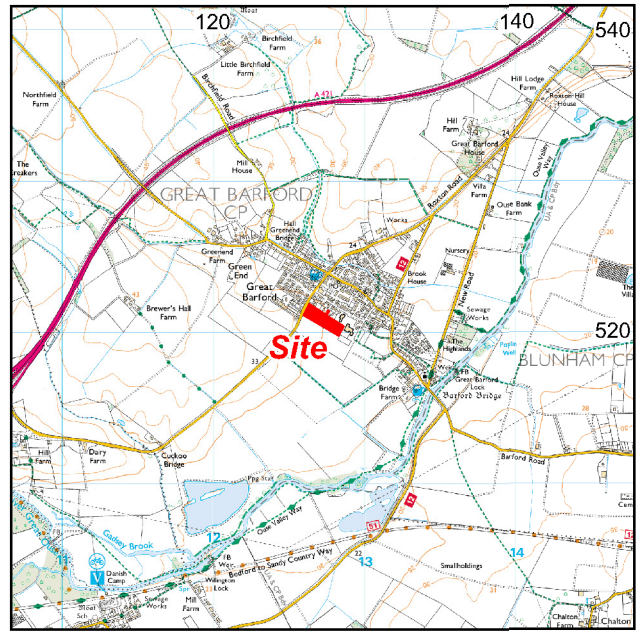
The site lies at approximately 28m above Ordnance Datum at the Bedford Road frontage and falls away to c 23.20m aOD on the eastern site boundary. The underlying geology of the area is recorded as river terrace deposits of sand gravel of the Ouse Valley Formation (BGS 2016).

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

Records held at Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record (BBHER) demonstrated that the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological interest. To the south and west of Great Barford extensive crop marks have been identified (BBHER's 596,600, 9834, & 21733). It is considered likely that these crop marks represent wide spread prehistoric and Romano-British activity.

Previous archaeological works

No known intrusive archaeological work has taken place on the site. However a geophysical survey identified the presence of ridge and furrow remains on the site (Meadows 2015). The Heritage Statement noted that geophysical survey alone was not able to establish the full archaeological potential of the site. Ridge and furrow remains can mask more subtle responses from earlier features and certain discrete feature types. An intrusive stage of evaluation trial trenching was therefore required in order to confirm the results of the geophysical survey and fully establish the archaeological interest of the site.



Scale 1:2000

Site location and trial trenches overlying geophysical survey Fig 1



Trench 2, furrow and drain, looking east

Fig 2



Trench 13, furrow looking south

Fig 3

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Thirteen trenches were excavated, each 25m long by 1.8m wide (Fig 1). The trenches were positioned to target anomalies identified in the geophysical data, as well as to sample the apparent 'blank' areas. Their positioning was subject to on-site constraints, such as tree-growth and buried or overhead services.

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

The trenches were machine excavated using a flat toothless bucket, 1.8m wide, under continuous archaeological supervision. They were excavated to the first archaeological horizon or, where these were absent, the upper interface of geological deposits. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately on either side of the trench, at least 1m from the trenches edges. Excavation did not proceed beyond safe working depths.

The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enhance the definition of features, unless it was certain that there are no archaeological remains present. A sufficient selection of possible features were sampled by hand to determine their date and character.

Any archaeological deposits encountered during the course of the evaluation were fully recorded. Recording followed standard fieldwork procedures (MOLA 2014).

A photographic record was maintained by high resolution digital photography exceeding 12 megapixels, and monochrome negatives. Overall shots of the site were taken prior to excavation and after backfilling.

The site and spoil heaps were checked by metal detector.

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The natural horizon across the site generally comprised two types of natural: Light grey clay with chalk and flint fragments to the west and orange sandy clay mixed with gravel and flint to the east. This was overlain by subsoil (but not in all trenches) which was light brown clay. The topsoil was dark brown loamy clay. Full context information is included in Appendix 1.

The ridge and furrow identified in the geophysical survey running in a north-west by south-east direction at the western side of the site was exposed in Trenches 2, 6 and 10 (Figs 1 and 2).

Trenches 11 and 13 were located over ridge and furrow aligned across the site in a north-east by south-west direction at the eastern end of the site (Fig 3).

The furrows were between 1.10m to 1.70m wide by 0.10m to 0.15m deep with a mid-brown grey clay fill.

Following a monitory meeting and at the request of the Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer, hand-dug sections were dug through possible archaeological deposits which turned out to be modern plough scars or tree/vegetation.

No other archaeological features were recorded in any of the thirteen trenches.

6 DISCUSSION

The trenching confirmed the data from the geophysical survey revealing furrows in a north-west by south-east direction and also showed a change of direction of the furrows at the eastern end of the site. None of the furrows contained artefacts but they are likely to date to the medieval to post-medieval period indicating that the development area lay within the general field system around Great Barford at this time. No other archaeological features were identified. The lack of remains suggests that the site area has been uninhabited, despite widespread prehistoric and Roman-British activity in the surrounding area.

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MOLA
October 2016

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
1	NW-SE 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.32m thick	-
102	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.16m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
2	NE-SW 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.30m thick	-
202	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.16m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
3	NW-SE 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.32m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Light brown clay	0.16m thick	-
303	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	-	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
4	NE-SW 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.32m thick	-
402	Subsoil	Light brown clay	0.12m thick	-
403	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	-	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
5	Nw-Se 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.30m thick	-
502	Subsoil	light brown clay	0.30m thick	-
503	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	-	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
6	NE-SW 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.31m thick	-
602	Subsoil	Light brown clay	0.10m thick	-
603	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	-	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
7	NW-SE 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.29m thick	-
702	Natural	Light grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint. Orange sandy clay with gravel NW end	0.10m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
8	NE-SW 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.30m thick	-
802	Natural	Light orange/ grey clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.10m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
9	NW-SE 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.35m thick	-
902	Natural	Light orange sandy clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.12m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
10	NE-SW 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.30m thick	-
1002	Natural	Light orange sandy clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.12m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
11	NW-SE 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1101	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.30m thick	-
1102	Subsoil	Light orange clay	0.15m thick	-
1103	Natural	Light orange sandy clay, fragments of chalk and flint	-	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
12	NE-SW 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1201	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.30m thick	-
1202	Natural	Light orange sandy clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.20m+ thick	-



Trench No	Length, width & alignment			
13	NW-SE 25m x 1.80m			
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1301	Topsoil	Dark brown loamy clay	0.35m thick	-
1302	Natural	Light orange sandy clay, fragments of chalk and flint	0.19m+ thick	-





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