

Trial trench evaluation on land off Park Lane Castle Donington, Leicestershire March 2017

Report No. 17/40

Author: Ben Kidd

Illustrator: Olly Dindol





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Project Manager: Ant Maull Site Code: X.A112.2014

NGR: SK 437 279 (North site) and SK 435 263 (South site)

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Trial Trench Evaluation on land off Park Lane Castle Donington, Leicestershire March 2017

Report No. 17/40 Accession code: X.A112.2014

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					client comments

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David Haynes

OASIS REPORT FORM

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PROJECT DETAILS	OASIS No: molanort1-			
Project name	Trial trench evaluation of March 2017	on land off Park Lane, Castle Donington, Leicestershire,		
Lane, Castle Donington, L undated small ditches were	eicestershire. Within the e found in three trenches	ut an evaluation on land to the north and south of Park e northern site, the edge of a palaeochannel and three c. The ditches may have been part of a field system of a		
late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement excavated to the south (Kipling 2014). Three undated shallow ditches were found in two trenches at the southern site. Two of the ditches match the location of a field boundary recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. Modern disturbance and truncation was found in part of the northern site.				
Project type	Evaluation			
Site status	None			
Previous work		e 1 (Taylor 2014); Desk-based heritage assessment s (2015); Geophysical survey (ArchaeoPhysica 2009)		
Current Land use	Arable farmland and fo			
Future work	Unknown			
Monument type/ period	Ditches, undated			
Significant finds	None			
PROJECT LOCATION				
County	Leicestershire			
Site address (including postcode)	Land north and south o	f Park Lane, Castle Donington		
Study area (sq.m or ha)	North site: 4.7ha South site: c1.4ha			
OS Easting & Northing	North site: SK 437 279			
(use grid sq. letter code)	South site: SK 435 263			
Height OD	North site: 34 – 48m aC South site: 92m aOD	DD		
PROJECT CREATORS				
Organisation	MOLA (Museum of Lon	don Archaeology)		
Project brief originator	Principal archaeologist			
Project Design originator	Clark and Flitcroft (CgM			
Director/Supervisor	B Kidd (MOLA)	<u> </u>		
Project Manager	A Maull (MOLÁ)			
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting			
PROJECT DATE				
Start date/End date	28-31/03/2017			
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content		
Physical		Pottery, animal bone		
Paper	X.A112.2014 Site documents – context sheets, registers, plans and sections and other records			
Digital	Mapinfo plans, PDF report, dxf data, digital photographs			
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	Trial trench evaluation on land off Park Lane, Castle Donington, Leicestershire, March 2017			
Serial title & volume	17/40			
Author(s)	Ben Kidd			
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Date	26 April 2017			

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Trial trench evaluation on land off Park Lane Castle Donington, Leicestershire March 2017

Abstract

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out an evaluation on land to the north and south of Park Lane, Castle Donington, Leicestershire. Within the northern site, the southern edge of a palaeochannel and three undated small ditches were found in three trenches. The ditches may have been part of a field system of a late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement excavated to the south (Kipling 2014). Three undated shallow ditches were found in two trenches at the southern site. Two of the ditches match the location of a field boundary recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. Modern disturbance and truncation was found in part of the northern site.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by CgMs consulting to conduct an archaeological evaluation on two parcels of land to the north and south of Park Lane, Castle Donington, Leicestershire (NGR: north site: SK 437 279; south site: SK 435 263) (Fig 1). This followed on from desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and a trial trench evaluation (CgMs 2009 and Flitcroft 2015; ArchaeoPhysica 2009; Taylor 2014).

The Principal Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has requested that an additional archaeological trial trench evaluation should be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area. The requirements were outlined in a Specification for a programme of Archaeological Works prepared by CgMs Consulting (Clark and Flitcroft 2014, updated 2017).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the site was designed to assess the archaeological potential of the site.

The general aims of the investigation of the site were to:

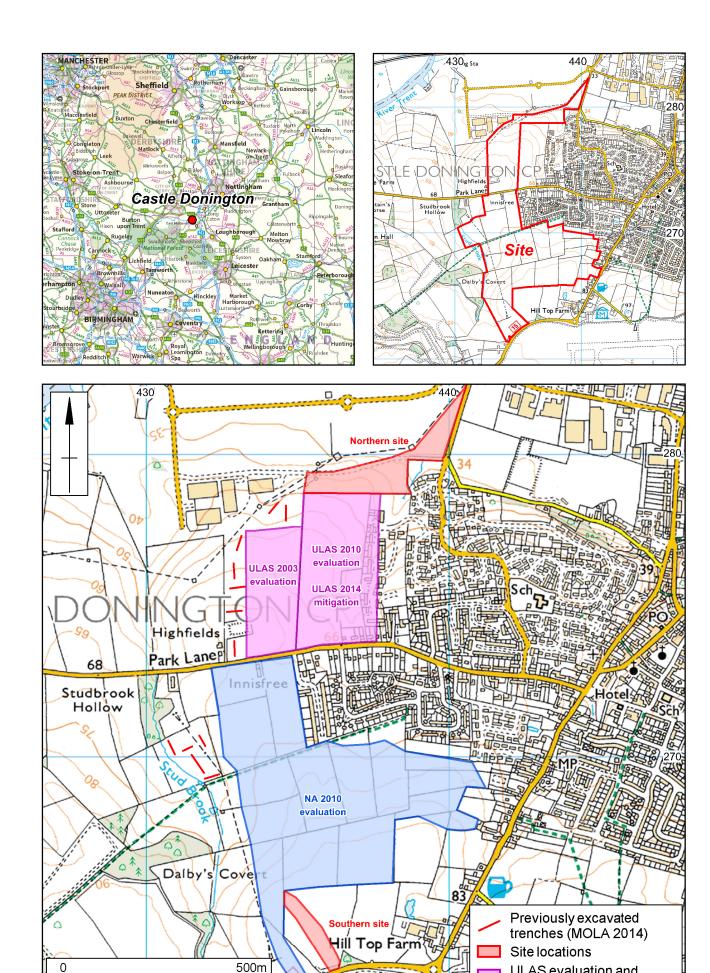
- establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation on the development site;
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine past local environmental conditions;
- To clarify the extent and nature of surviving archaeology within the area north of Park Lane, and to safeguard the significance of confirmed areas of

archaeological interest through programmes of archaeological excavation and recording;

- To evaluate whether any archaeological features survive within the area of proposed balancing, to the south of Park Lane;
- To determine the date, character, function and significance of features identified in each of these areas:
- 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, and to;
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER.

Site specific objectives relating to the results of previous archaeological works and the circumstances leading up to the requirement for the present works are outlined in the Specification (Clark and Flitcroft 2014, updated 2017), referring to the regional Research Agenda as given by Cooper (2016).

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Scale 1:12500

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NA evaluation area

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The current evaluation area comprises two parcels of land, covering *c*6.1ha, to the north and south of Park Lane. The northern site of 4.7ha is bounded by Short Lane and industrial units to the north, by industrial units to the west, by new residential development to the south and by Back Lane/Darsway and further residential housing to the east (Fig 1). The northern site lies between 34m and 48m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). It is located on a south to north slope which falls to the floodplain of the River Trent, which is located *c*590m to the north of the northern site. The highest point is located at the southern edge of the site at *c*48m aOD, whilst the lowest point is located in the north-east corner of the site (Trench 17) at *c*34m aOD. The underlying geology has been mapped as comprising of Morridge Formation (Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone) in the north-east part of the site and a mix of Moira Formation and Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation in the southern half of site (BGS 2017).

The southern site of c1.4ha is bounded to the north, east and west by arable and pasture fields and to the south by an unnamed road which follows the northern boundary of east midlands airport (Fig 1) and lies at approximately 92m aOD. The underlying geology is mapped as a Mudstone and Bromsgrove Sandstone/Siltstone Formation (BGS 2017).

3.2 Archaeological and historical background

Previous archaeological works

An Environmental Statement submitted with the planning application in 2009 with an addendum in 2012 and a separate desk-based assessment (Flitcroft 2015) assessed the archaeological potential of the overall development area. Evaluation trenching was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) to the south and south-west of the northern site (Coward 2003 and 2010); this was followed by an excavation by ULAS on the area immediately to the south of the northern site, which is now occupied by new and ongoing residential development (Kipling 2014). Trenching and Geophysical survey on land to the north of the southern site was undertaken by Northamptonshire archaeology (Flavell 2010) and ArchaeoPhysica (2009) respectively. Further evaluation, which forms the first phase of the current works were undertaken by MOLA (Fig 1) (Taylor 2014).

Neolithic to Bronze Age

Late Neolithic to early Bronze Age activity was identified in 2003 by trial trench evaluation to the south-west of the northern site and included Neolithic flint work and early Bronze Age pottery, including a beaker, associated with gullies, ditches, pits and postholes (Coward 2003). Prehistoric activity, including Neolithic pits, a Bronze Age ring ditch with associated pits and postholes possibly representing a mortuary enclosure and a Bronze Age cremation cemetery including collared urn burials were identified just to the south of the northern site during evaluation and excavation works by ULAS (Coward 2010; Kipling 2014) (Fig 1).

Iron Age

The 2003 and 2010 evaluations by ULAS in the immediate vicinity of the northern site identified Iron Age features including, ditches, gullies, pits and a posthole along with 209 sherds of Iron Age pottery. A pit alignment of probable late Bronze Age to early Iron Age date was also identified during the 2014 excavation works to the south of the northern site (Kipling 2014). An Iron Age pit and gullies were found in an evaluation to the north of the southern site (Flavell 2010).

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Roman

A large amount of Roman archaeology including ditches, pits, a quarry pit and fragmentary traces of a timber-built structure were identified just to the south of the northern site (Fig 1) and were thought to represent a transitional late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement set within a larger field system (Kipling 2014).

Anglo-Saxon and medieval

Anglo-Saxon activity has been identified in the vicinity of the northern site by the previous ULAS evaluations (Coward 2003 and 2010) and included pits and ditches which were associated with a quantity of pottery. At Willow Farm to the north-east of the northern area, two Anglo-Saxon halls and a sunken-featured building have been excavated (Taylor 2014). The medieval and post-medieval core of Castle Donington is thought to abut the eastern edge of the northern site but to not fall within it (Taylor 2014). The earthwork remains of a castle are located c1km to the east of the development site (SAM 17096) with the castle being located on a ridge overlooking a crossing point on the River Trent. The castle was built by Eustace Fitzjohn in the 12th-13th century and was demolished in 1216 under the orders of King John, though later references suggest it was subsequently rebuilt.

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4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

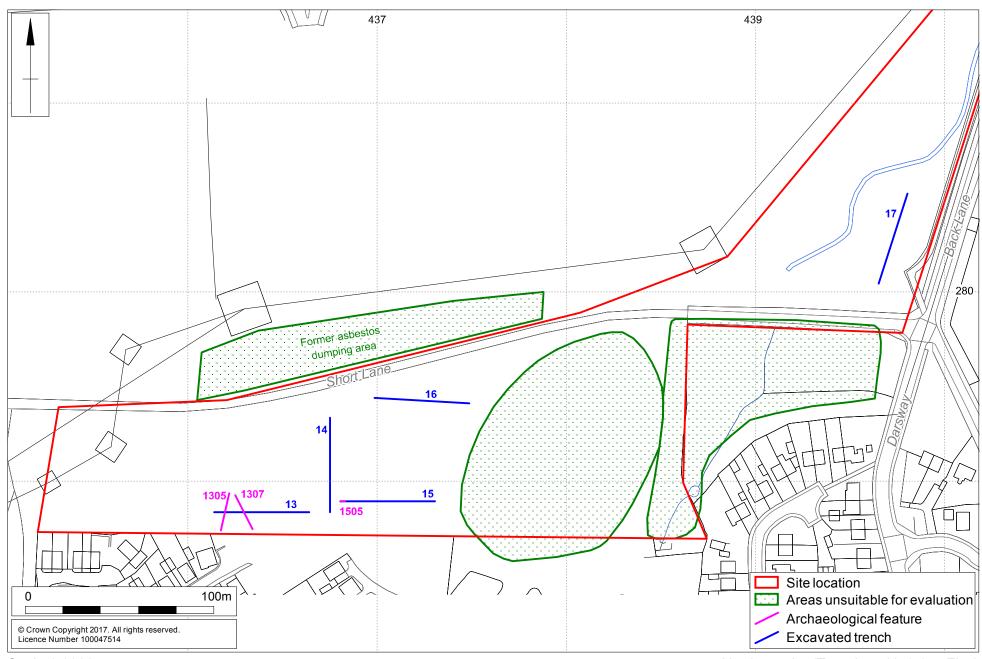
Five 50m long trenches (Trenches 13-17) were excavated in the northern site using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket. These trenches were not excavated during the 2014 evaluation due to mature woodland in this location (Taylor 2014) (Figs 1 and 2). Four 25m long trenches (Trenches 18-21) were excavated in the southern site (Figs 1 and 9) using a JCB mechanical excavator.

The locations of the trenches were surveyed and related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid using Leica Viva GPS survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of \pm 0.05m. A full photographic record comprising both 35mm black and white negatives and digital images were taken.

The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to define any features. All archaeological deposits were fully recorded, following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014). All deposits were given a separate context number. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. An on-site monitoring meeting was held during the excavation with Sophie Clarke, the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, on 31st March 2017. She requested a number of additional sondages be excavated in the area of Trench 17 to investigate deposits of alluvium uncovered in the trench. On completion all trenches were backfilled with their up-cast, lightly compacted by the mechanical excavator.

The evaluation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Code fo Conduct (ClfA 2014a) and the Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2014b). 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 evaluation was carried out in accordance within the Specification prepared by CgMs (Clark and Flitcroft 2014) and with county guidelines (LCC 1997).

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5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE – THE NORTHERN SITE (TRENCHES 13 – 17)

5.1 Overview

Archaeological features found in Trenches 13 and 15 consisted of undated ditches (Fig 8). Substantial modern truncation and disturbance was observed in Trenches 14, 15 and 17. Trench 17 contained a palaeochannel with a deposited alluvium layer and buried subsoil and topsoil, all overlain by several layers of modern made ground identified as deeper at the SW part of the trench.

5.2 General stratigraphy

The natural geology consisted of mixed light-mid orange-red-yellow sandy clays interspersed with occasional patches of sandstone. The natural was between 0.22-0.59m below the present ground surface, except in Trench 17 where it was possibly at 1.7m.

Overlying the natural in Trench 13 was a subsoil, 0.20-0.30m thick, which comprised loose mid orange-brown sandy clay. Overlying the natural in Trench 17 was subsoil at 0.20-0.30m thick and comprised a mid-brown-grey silty clay.

The topsoil, 0.19-0.30m thick, was loose dark brown-grey silty clay, with a large amount of root disturbance present due to the mature woodland which had previously been present on the site.

5.3 Palaeochannel

The earliest feature observed on the site was probably a palaeochannel, which was observed in Trench 17 and investigated through a series of sondages (Figs 3, 4 and 10). These investigations showed that an undated layer of alluvium, up to 0.40m thick, was found sealing the natural and infilling the channel to an unknown depth due to H&S restrictions. A subsoil layer, comprising of 0.30m of mid brown-grey silty clay, overlaid the alluvium. This in turn was sealed by a possible former topsoil layer (1704), 0.35m thick, and comprising a dark mottled brown silty clay with patches of mid orange-brown silty clay (Fig 10, Section 1).

A stream was observed to lie around c20m to the west of the palaeochannel (Fig 2), flowing north-east down the slope. It is likely that the observed palaeochannel formed an earlier predecessor of this waterway, which deposited alluvium as it meandered west.



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Trench 17 sondage, showing layers of modern made ground, buried topsoil, subsoil and alluvium, looking west Fig 3



Trench 17 sondage, looking south-west Fig 4

5.4 The archaeological features

Trench 13

Two undated ditches were identified within Trench 13 (Fig 8). Ditch [1305] was aligned north to south. It was 0.70m wide and 0.55m deep with a U-shaped profile and flattish base. Its single fill consisted of mid brown-reddish sandy silt (Figs 5 and 8, Section 3).

Approximately 4.5m to the east of [1305] was ditch [1307] which was aligned NW-SE and was 0.70m wide and 0.44m deep with a shallow U-shaped profile and flattish base. The single backfill comprised mid reddish-brown sandy silt with occasional small sandstone fragments (Figs 6 and 8, Section 3).

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Ditch [1305], looking south Fig 5



Ditch [1307], looking south-west Fig 6

Trench 15

Trench 15 contained modern disturbance relating to previous industrial structures which had existed within the site in the late 20th century. A small ditch terminal was identified at the western part of the trench in the only area of undisturbed natural (Fig 8). Ditch [1505] was aligned east-west and was 0.46m wide and 0.16m deep with moderate sloping sides and a slightly concave base (Figs 7 and 9, Section 4).

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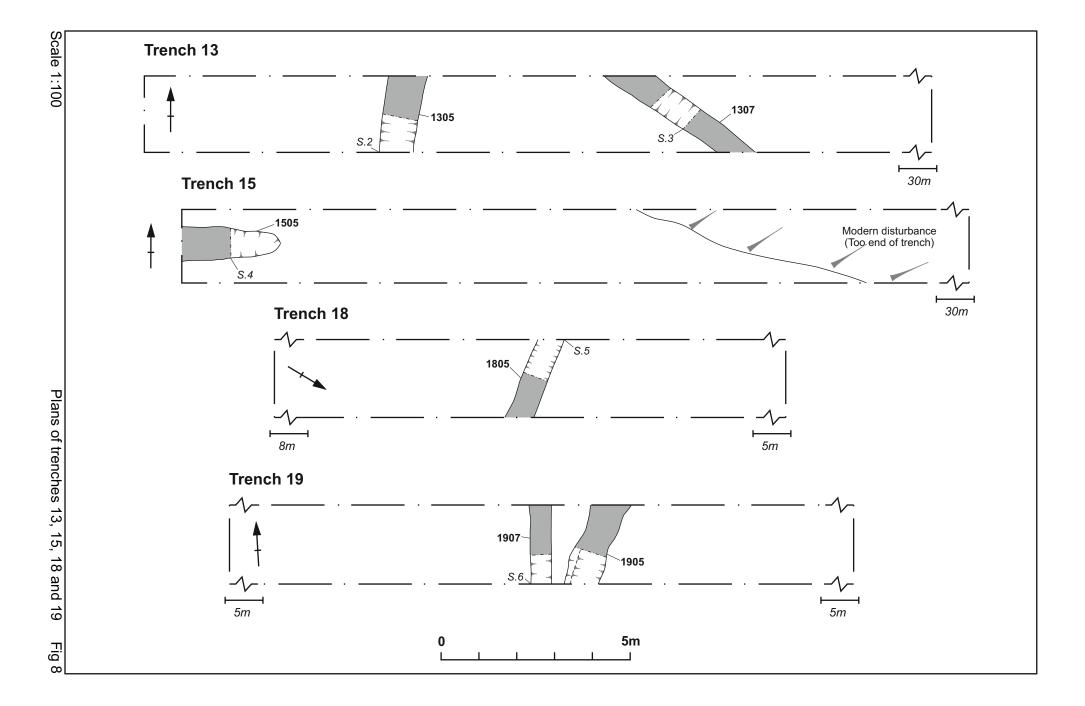
Terminal of ditch [1505], looking west

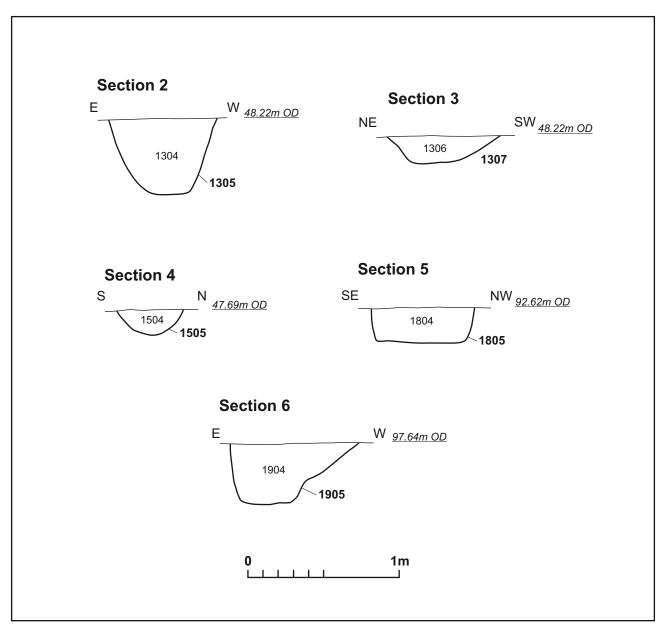
Fig 7

Trench 17

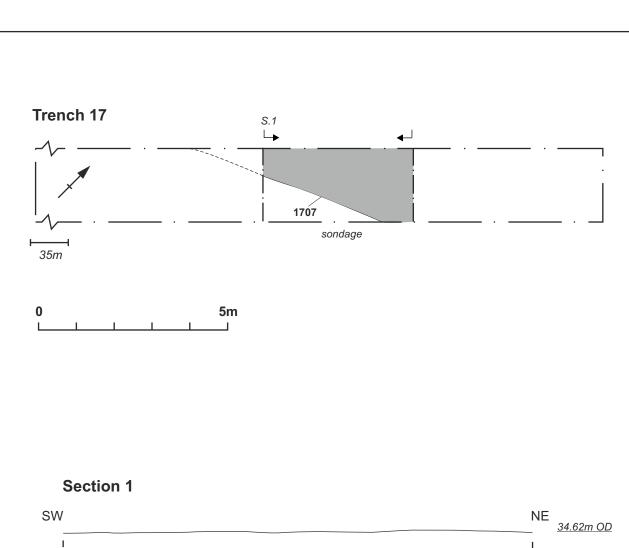
A large modern layer of made ground overlaid the former topsoil layer. It comprised three layers collectively 0.75m thick and consisted of charcoal and ash rich deposits which contained modern brick, tile and metal. It is likely that these layers derived from former industrial buildings which had stood to the west and south-west of Trench 17.

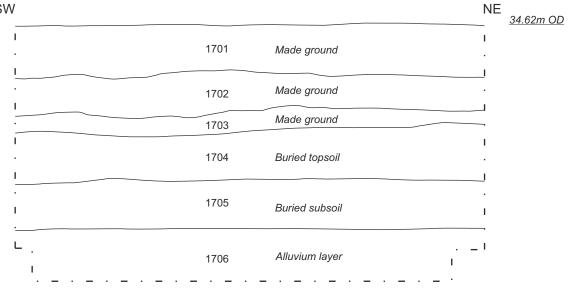
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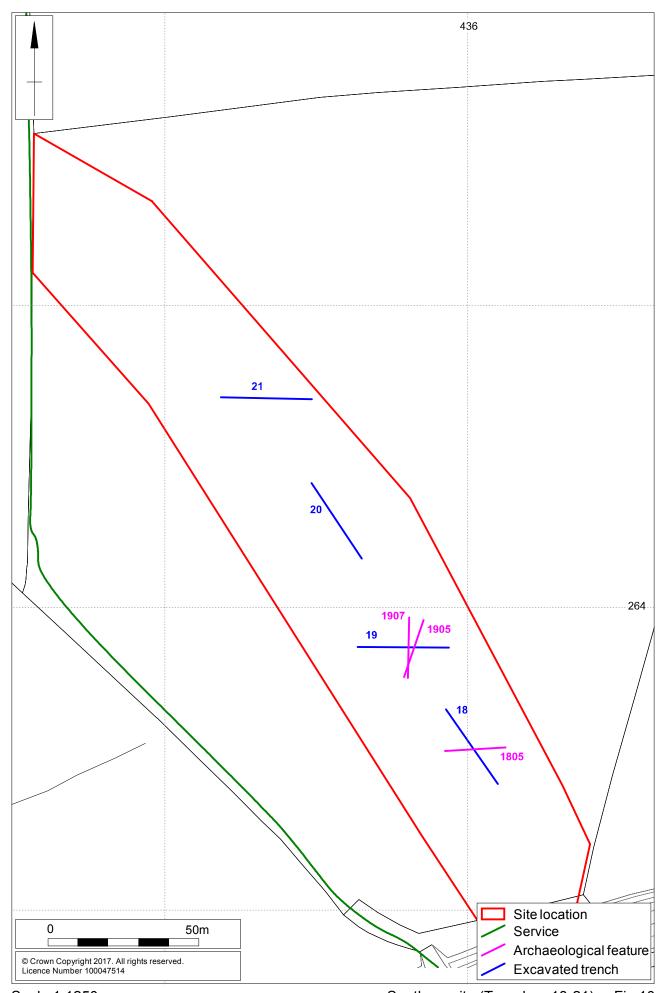


Scale 1:25 Sections 2-6 Fig 9





0 1m



6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE – THE SOUTHERN SITE (TRENCHES 18 - 21)

6.1 Overview

Archaeological remains were found in Trenches 18 and 19 and consisted of undated ditches (Fig 11).

6.2 General stratigraphy

The natural substratum recorded in the southern site consisted of a compact mid redorange sandy clay. It occurred between 0.30-0.37m below the present ground surface.

A layer of subsoil 0.05-0.08m thick overlaid the natural and comprised mid-reddish-brown sandy clay.

The topsoil, 0.25m thick, was loose mid-dark brown-grey silty clay.

6.3 The archaeological features

Trench 18

Ditch [1805] was aligned east to west in the middle of the trench. It was 0.65m wide and 0.23m deep with vertical sides and a flat base (Figs 8 and 9, Section 5, and 12). The single fill consisted of mixed grey reddish-orange sandy clay.



Ditch [1805], looking east Fig 12

Trench 19

Two ditches were identified within the middle of Trench 19. Ditch [1905] was aligned north-west to south-east. It was 0.82m wide and 0.40m deep with an irregular U-shaped profile and flattish base (Figs 8 and 9, Section 6 and 13). The single fill comprised friable mixed dark reddish-brown-grey silty clay. Semi-decayed organic

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matter including wood was observed within the fill, perhaps indicating the ditch was backfilled relatively recently.



Ditch [1905], looking south Fig 13



Ditch [1907], looking south Fig 14

Ditch [1907] aligned north to south, was located *c*0.30m to the west of [1905]. It was 0.55m wide and 0.10m deep with a shallow U-shaped profile and flat-slightly concave base. The single fill consisted of friable dark grey silty clay, and again, semi-decayed organic matter including wood was observed in the fill (Figs 8 and 14).

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7 DISCUSSION

Northern site

The earliest probable feature in the northern site comprised a palaeochannel and area of deposited alluvium in the vicinity of an extant stream. Archaeological remains identified within this northern area comprised three undated ditches within Trenches 13 and 15; all were relatively shallow (Figs 1, 2 and 8). Although undated it is likely that these ditches form part of a field system associated with a late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement which was identified immediately to the south of the northern site (Kipling 2014). The settlement itself was located on the high ground to the south, with these ditches being located on the upper edge of the River Trent valley.

A substantial amount of modern disturbance including, concrete footings, rubble, old services and a made-ground layer was identified within Trenches 14, 15 and 17 (Fig 1), with these likely relating to demolished industrial buildings associated with the now demolished Castle Donington power station just to the north. Indeed buildings of a clear industrial function are visible within the area of the evaluation on the 1963 Ordnance Survey map and appear to have been demolished at some point before the early 1990s (OM 2017).

Southern site

Two linear features were identified in Trench 19 (Figs 1, 8 and 10); both were undated. The first edition Ordnance Survey map (1882) (OM 2017) depicts a north-south aligned field boundary, possibly a hedgerow, in the approximate location of these features. The boundary persisted until the early 1990s, and given the presence of semi-decayed organic matter including wood within the fills, it seems likely that the excavated features represent phases of this boundary, in use until relatively recently

A single undated linear feature was also identified within Trench 18. It is possible that this feature also represents a field boundary, although no boundary is marked in this position on historic mapping. Features of Iron Age origin were identified during previous evaluation to the north of the current site (Flavell 2010), but there is no clear association.

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MOLA Northampton 26 April 2017, revised 15 May 2017

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

NORTHERN SITE

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
13	50m x 1.9m E-W		48.27m aOD	0.59m 47.69m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1301	Topsoil	Loose dark brown-grey silty clay with large amount of root disturbance	0.19-0.27m thick	-
1302	Subsoil	Loose mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.20-0.30m thick	-
1303	Natural	Light-mid orange-yellow sandy clay	-	-
1304	Fill of [1305]	Medium mid brown-reddish sandy silt	0.70m wide 0.55m deep	-
1305	Ditch	NE-SW linear with a U-shaped profile and flattish base	0.70m wide 0.55m deep	-
1306	Fill of [1307]	Mid reddish-brown sandy silt with occasional small sandstone fragments	0.70m wide 0.44m deep	-
1307	Ditch	NW-SE linear with shallow U- shaped profile and flattish base	0.70m wide 0.44m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
14	50m x 1.9m N-S		48.24m aOD	0.42m 47.82m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1401	Topsoil	Loose dark brown-grey silty clay	0.02-0.27m thick	-
1402	Made ground layer	Mixed brown-grey-yellow sandy clay with modern bricks, metal, concrete, old services etc	0.40m thick (minimum)	-
1403	Natural	Mixed mid red-yellow sandy clay	-	-

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Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
15	50m x 1.9m E-W		47.69m aOD	0.22m 47.47m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1501	Topsoil	Loose dark brown-grey silty clay. Heavily disturbed by roots	0.15-0.22m thick	-
1502/ 1503	Natural	Mixed light-mid yellow-grey sandy clay	-	-
1504	Fill of [1505]	Mid grey sandy silt with occasional small stones	0.46m wide 0.16m deep	-
1505	Ditch	Butt-end of E-W linear with U- shaped profile and slightly concave base	0.46m wide 0.16m deep	•

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
16	50m x 1.9m E-W		41.85m aOD	0.22m 41.63m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1601	Topsoil	Loose dark brown-grey silty clay. Heavily disturbed by roots	0.18-0.22m thick	-
1602	Natural	Mixed mid red-brown-yellow sandy clays	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
17	50m x 1.9m NE-SW		34.62m aOD	1.7m (minimum) 32.92m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1701	Made ground	Mid grey-black silty clay with glass, brick fragments and frequent charcoal	0.35m thick	-
1702	Made ground	Mid grey-black silty sand charcoal rich with modern debris; brick/tile frags, glass etc	0.25m thick	-
1703	Made ground	Light grey silty sand	0.05-0.15m thick	-
1704	Buried topsoil	Dark mottled brown silty clay with patches of mid orange-brown, charcoal flecks, brick fragments and leeched	0.35m thick	-

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		discolouration from made ground layers above		
1705	Buried subsoil	Mid brown-grey silty clay with patches of mid orange-brown silty clay	0.30m thick	-
1706	Alluvium layer	Mid yellow-brown silty clay	> 0.40m thick -	-
1707	Palaeochannel	Cut of palaeochannel, aligned NE-SW		
1708	Possible Natural?	Mid reddish-brown silty clay	-	-

SOUTHERN SITE

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
18	25m x 1.6m NW-SE		92.62m aOD	0.37m 92.25m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1801	Topsoil	Loose mid-dark brown-grey silty clay	0.27m thick	1
1802	Subsoil	Mid reddish-brown sandy clay	0.10m	-
1803	Natural	Compact mid brown-reddish orange sandy clay	-	-
1804	Fill of [1805]	Mixed grey-reddish orange	0.65m wide 0.23m deep	-
1805	Ditch	E-W linear with vertical sides and flat base	0.65m wide 0.23m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
19	25m x 1.6m E-W		92.64m aOD	0.30m 92.34m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
1901	Topsoil	Loose mid-dark brown-grey silty clay	0.25m thick	-
1902	Subsoil	Mid reddish-brown sandy clay	0.05-0.08m thick	-
1903	Natural	Compact mid red-orange sandy clay	-	-
1904	Fill of [1905]	Friable mixed dark brown- grey-red silty clay	0.82m wide 0.40m deep	-
1905	Ditch	NW-SE linear with irregular U- shaped profile and flat-flattish base	0.82m wide 0.40m deep	-
1906	Fill of [1907]	Friable dark grey silty clay with	0.55m wide	-

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		rotten wood/root inclusions	0.10m deep	
1907	Possible ditch	N-S linear with uneven/irregular sides and base	0.55m wide 0.10m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
20	25m x 1.6m NW-SE		93.45m aOD	0.33m 93.12m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
2001	Topsoil	Loose mid-dark brown-grey silty clay	0.25-0.28m thick	-
2002	Subsoil	Mid reddish-brown sandy clay	0.05-0.08m thick	-
2003	Natural	Mid orange-red sandy clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment		Surface height	Depth & height of natural
21	25m x 1.6m E-W		93.99m aOD	0.32 93.67m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimension s	Artefacts/ Samples
2101	Topsoil	Loose mid-dark brown-grey silty clay	0.27m thick	-
2102	Subsoil	Mid reddish-brown sandy clay	0.05m thick	-
2103	Natural	Mid orange-red sandy clay		

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