



**Archaeological evaluation  
on land at Hampton Leys  
Peterborough  
July 2017**

Report No.17/92

Author: Paul Sharrock

Illustrator: Joanne Clawley



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MOLA Northampton  
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Site code: PHL17  
NGR: TL 184 933

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# Archaeological evaluation on land at Hampton Leys Peterborough July 2017

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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No. molanort1-291352</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Hampton Leys, Peterborough		
Short description	<i>MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation on c2ha of land at Hampton Leys, Peterborough. Five trenches were excavated and recorded a series of furrows on a north-west to south-east alignment with no other archaeological remains present.</i>		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	Geophysical Survey (Walford 2016)		
Current land use	Agriculture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Furrows		
Significant finds	None		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Cambridgeshire		
Site address	Hampton Leys, Peterborough		
Easting and northing	NGR TL 18 93		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 2.00ha		
Height aOD	c 10.61-11.75m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project brief originator	Rebecca Casa Hatton, Peterborough City Council Archaeologist		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Sharrock, MOLA		
Project Managers	Mo Muldowney, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	O&H Hampton		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	17 July 2017		
End date	19 July 2017		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	PHL17	-	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Survey data, report, photographs	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Hampton Leys, Peterborough		
Serial title & volume	MOLA report 17/92		
Author(s)	Paul Sharrock		
Page numbers	9		
Date	July 2017		

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# Archaeological evaluation on land at Hampton Leys, Peterborough July 2017

## *Abstract*

*MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation on c2ha of land at Hampton Leys, Peterborough. Five trenches were excavated and recorded a series of furrows on a north-west to south-east alignment with no other archaeological remains present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

MOLA was commissioned by O&H Hampton to undertake archaeological trial trenching on land at Hampton Leys, Peterborough (NGR TL 184 933; Fig 1) in advance of proposed development of the site (Planning Ref: 02/01845/OUT).

Peterborough City Council required that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken as outlined in Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (MOLA 2017). This work was undertaken in July 2017 and conformed to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

This report relates to the archaeological work undertaken prior to the development of part of the land at Hampton Leys designated for landscaping, including re-contouring work around the Beeby's Link, and open space, as proposed through REM application 17/01014/REM.

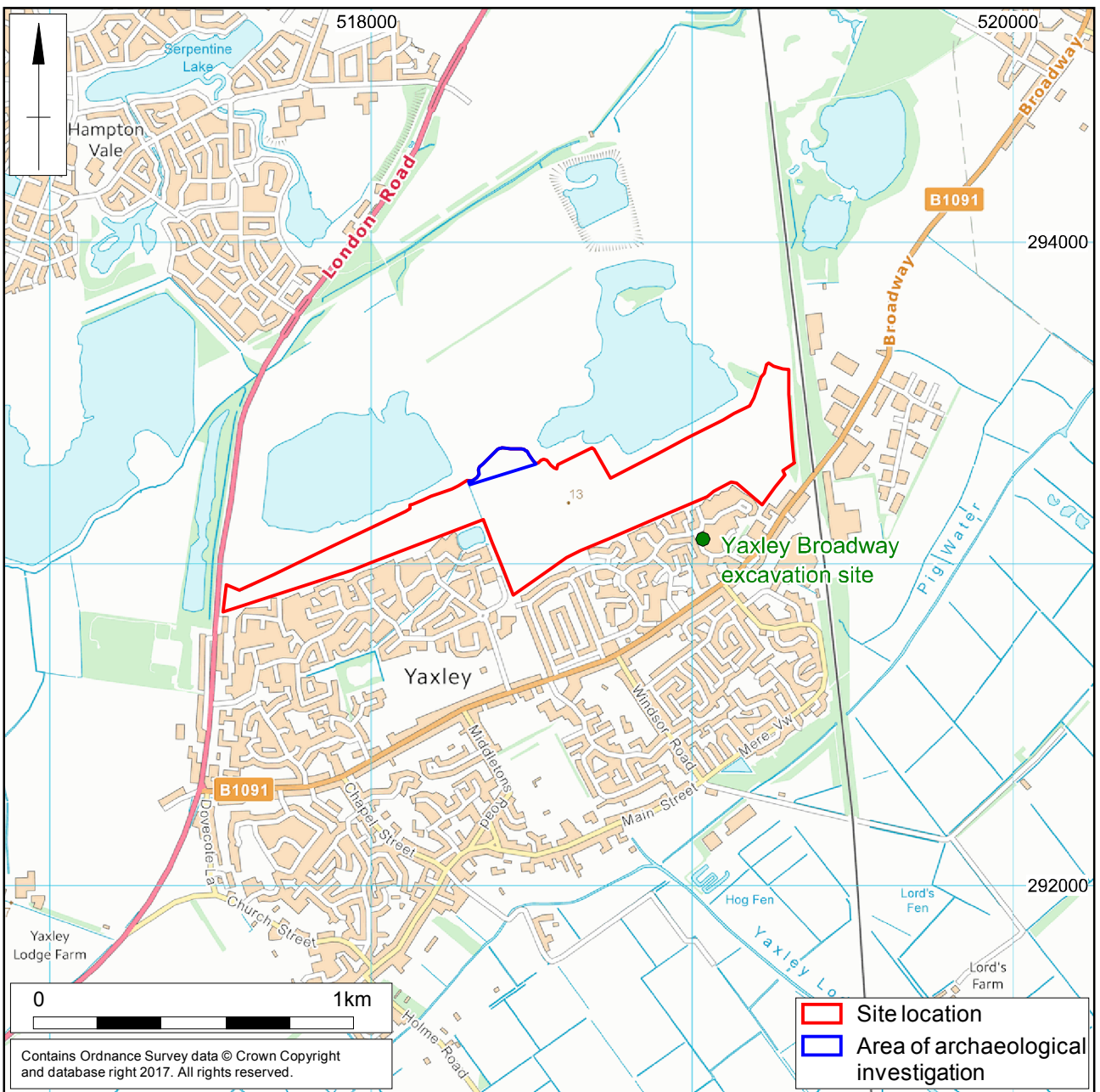
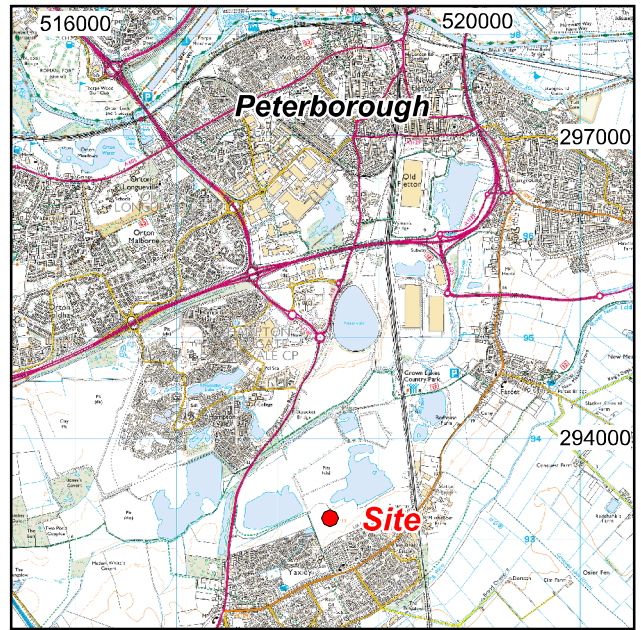
## **2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

### **2.1 Location**

The development area at Hampton Leys lies to the south of the city of Peterborough between London Road and the East Coast Railway line. It is part of the proposed Hampton East development with a total area comprising c293ha of land, which is intended to be developed into four villages and two hamlets of around 1700 dwellings, with associated community, education, leisure, industrial and commercial, open space and infrastructure (02/01845/OUT). The development will include strategic landscape elements, including the Teardrop Lake to the north, the Stanground Lode corridor, and the proposed location of Hampton County Park. This phase of the archaeological evaluation is limited to an area c2ha in size located towards the centre of the development within the area designated for landscaping (Fig 1).

### **2.2 Topography and geology**

The area of the proposed County Park has bedrock geology of Oxford Clay Formation Mudstone, overlain by mid-Pleistocene glaciolacustrine deposits, primarily clay, silt and sand (BGS 2017). The site is situated on sloping land rising from around 5m above Ordnance Datum at the lakeside to a high point of 13m aOD in the centre of the park area.



Scale 1:20,000

Site location and Area of archaeological investigation Fig 1

### 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be affected by the proposed development.

Specifically, the work aimed to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of 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 local environmental conditions.

The results were considered in light of the specific research objectives drawn from national and regional research frameworks documents (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011).

### 4 BACKGROUND

#### 4.1 Historical and archaeological background

A Palaeolithic handaxe has previously been recorded from 'Yaxley Yard' and other Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flints now at Peterborough Museum are noted as coming from Farcet to the east. Neolithic and Bronze Age finds have been discovered in the village of Yaxley to the south and further off in the fens to the east (Hall 1992). No Iron Age finds or features were previously noted from the vicinity before the excavation of Iron Age settlement features at Broadway Fields (Brown 2008; Phillips 2014).

Geophysical survey has identified six areas of probable Iron Age to Roman occupation within the Hamptons East (Walford 2016). The settlements were located to the south and west of the present evaluation area (Walford 2016, fig 3 and 4).

The Roman town of *Durobrivae* was located upon Ermine Street close to the present village of Water Newton and 7 km north-west of the site. A Roman settlement and cemetery site, within an area of extensive occupation spanning the 1st to 4th centuries, was recently excavated at the nearby Broadway Fields (Brown 2008; Phillips 2014; see below). Further to the south in Yaxley, two Roman pottery kiln sites were located at Hog Fen Close and Cow Bridge Farm. Roman pottery was found in Crown Lakes Country Park directly adjacent to the site to the east (MNN 364502), and may suggest the presence of a fen-side settlement.

The site lies over 1km to the north of the medieval core of Yaxley village. Fishponds and ditches have been found in the vicinity of the medieval manor house (CHER 01028, 0128A and CB 15470). The Grade I Listed Building, the church of St Peter dates from the 13th century (CHER 01706), and remains of the shrunken medieval village are nearby (CHER 02738).

The village of Yaxley stands on high ground relative to the fenland further to the east. The study of the surrounding fen indicates that use of the upland would have been extensive (Hall 1992). The fen in this area was part of the drainage scheme implemented in the mid-17th-century by Charles I. The fen itself was sufficiently well drained to allow the extension of the medieval open fields with its characteristic ridge and furrow, although much of this has been destroyed by modern ploughing. The remainder of the fens were drained at the later date of 1830.

Significant post-medieval features include a tower mill to the north of Yaxley, built of brick with an ogee cap (MNN499143). It was photographed in 1934, at which time its



sails were already missing. The area was developed into modern housing between 1999 and 2002.

#### **4.2 Previous archaeological work**

In 2016, a detailed magnetometer survey was carried out within the site in advance of the current phase of trenching works. The work only found ridge and furrow within the present development area. These furrows were aligned north-west to south-east. Field drains were also recorded within the site (Walford 2016, fig 3).

Archaeological remains of probable Iron Age to Roman date lay to the south and west of the development proposed development (Walford 2016). A sinuous linear ditch, more than 100m to the south of the development area, presumably marking an ancient boundary, crosses the area from east to west, continuing for a distance of over 1.75km, and six discrete archaeological sites have been detected along its length. There are three enclosure complexes in the western field of the survey area and a fourth in the eastern field. A pair of unenclosed roundhouses or small ring ditches and a pair of small rectangular enclosures with opposed entrances have also been detected. Whilst the results from the western half of the survey area are clear and visually striking, those from the east are much less distinct. This variation can probably be attributed to the change in geology across the area, because soils formed over boulder clay do not always prove favourable for magnetometer survey. Moreover, the excavation of the Broadway site immediately adjacent to the eastern part of the survey area (Brown 2008) identified archaeological remains that were more numerous and densely arranged than had been suggested by the preceding magnetometer survey (Butler and Fisher 2005).

In addition to the geophysical survey, an update to the 2002 Desk-based Assessment was undertaken (Crothers 2016). The new 'Addendum' document presented the results of a search Historic Environment Records of Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough Unitary Authority. A further 125 records were identified, only one of which related to past activity within the wider development area. None of the records show activity within the 're-contouring area'. The Addendum DBA should be read in conjunction with this document, as the contents will not be reproduced here. Reference to the Addendum will however be made in the Phase 1 evaluation report.

Previous archaeological work in the area of the development has mainly taken place in the north of the village of Yaxley. Two magnetometer surveys were undertaken in 2005; one on land to the north-east of Yaxley (Elks 2005), and the second due north, beyond Broadway (Butler and Fisher 2005), on the border of the new Country Park area.

This later survey was followed by a trial trench evaluation which recorded Iron Age and Roman occupation activity including roundhouses (ENN1453343, PCCHER 51720; Taylor and Chapman 2005), and a mitigation excavation (ECB1978; Brown 2008). This excavation identified a principal bank and ditch, with a crossing point, aligned east to west along the natural ridge. The nearby late Iron Age roundhouses were cleared by the 1st century. Former ditches were incorporated into a new enclosure, and a single roundhouse and a small short-lived pottery kiln were established. By the mid-2nd century, activity was defined by a large enclosure with a small cemetery along its western perimeter. A stone-roofed building was present with other timber framed structures, probably of a domestic function. During the 4th century the land was reorganised into a pattern of smaller enclosures.

A field immediately adjacent to the east was evaluated in 2009-2010 (Philips 2014). The investigations revealed evidence of land use from the late Iron Age and Roman periods. The late Iron Age occupation lay within the eastern half of the site and comprised a principal boundary ditch, square enclosure, roundhouse and parts of a field system (PCCHER 52131). Within the square enclosure was a smaller C-shaped

enclosure which may have been the remains of a shelter, and contained the remains of industrial activity, including slag, hearth lining, fired clay and hammer scale. The Roman evidence comprised a rectilinear field system of small fields. A rectangular water tank contained a large assemblage of pottery, mainly 3rd-4th century Nene Valley Ware and C BM. Subsequent to this, the earlier fields had been partially abandoned, giving the site a more open plan. Two beam slot structures and an aisled building were also uncovered (PCCHER 52147).

An evaluation undertaken in advance of proposed redevelopment at Middleton's Road, 700m to the south of the site, recorded medieval and post-medieval features, including ditches, pits and a cobbled surface (Site AS1351; Barlow and Thompson 2010).

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

A total of five trenches were investigated, all of which were 50m in length. The location of the trenches were outlined in the WSI and approved by Peterborough City Council. A sixth, measuring 30m was also proposed however was not excavated due to being located under current crops, across a new fencing and beyond the revised development area. The trenches were located using a Leica Survey Grade RTK GPS operating to an accuracy of +/-0.05m to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum and were positioned to examine a representative sample across the development area.

Trenches were excavated by machine using a 1.8m wide toothless bucket, to reveal archaeological remains or, where these were absent, undisturbed natural horizons. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. Archaeological deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard MOLA Northampton procedures as described in the Fieldwork Manual (MOLA 2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. A photographic record was compiled using digital images supplemented by 35mm black and white film.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014b) and the Historic England procedural document, *Management of Field Projects in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015).

## **6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

### **6.1 General stratification**

The geological substrate across the site was consistent light brown-yellow sandy clay with patches of gravel and blue clay. This was overlain in all trenches by a friable, mid yellowish-brown silty sand subsoil varying in thickness from 0.09m to 0.12m. The topsoil across the site was friable, dark, brown-grey silty sand varying in depth from 0.27m to 0.44m.

## 6.2 Evaluation trenches

### *Ridge and furrow*

The proposed development area contains extensive ploughed out ridge and furrow on a north-west to south-east alignment. This is particularly clear from the geophysical survey of the western half of the site becoming less clear further towards the east (Walford 2016) (Fig 3). The geophysics results broadly match the results of this evaluation revealing linear features on a similar alignment. These linear features however were much less distinguishable during the evaluation due to their shallow nature and their being fills only slightly different from the natural geology. As with the geophysical survey results the features were recognised much more clearly in Trenches 2 and 6 and only faint traces remaining in trenches 3, 4 and 5. Three furrows were excavated; [405], [407] and [605] all of which revealed a similar shallow profile 2.50m wide with a wide flat base ranging from 0.22m to 0.30m deep (Figs 2 and 3).

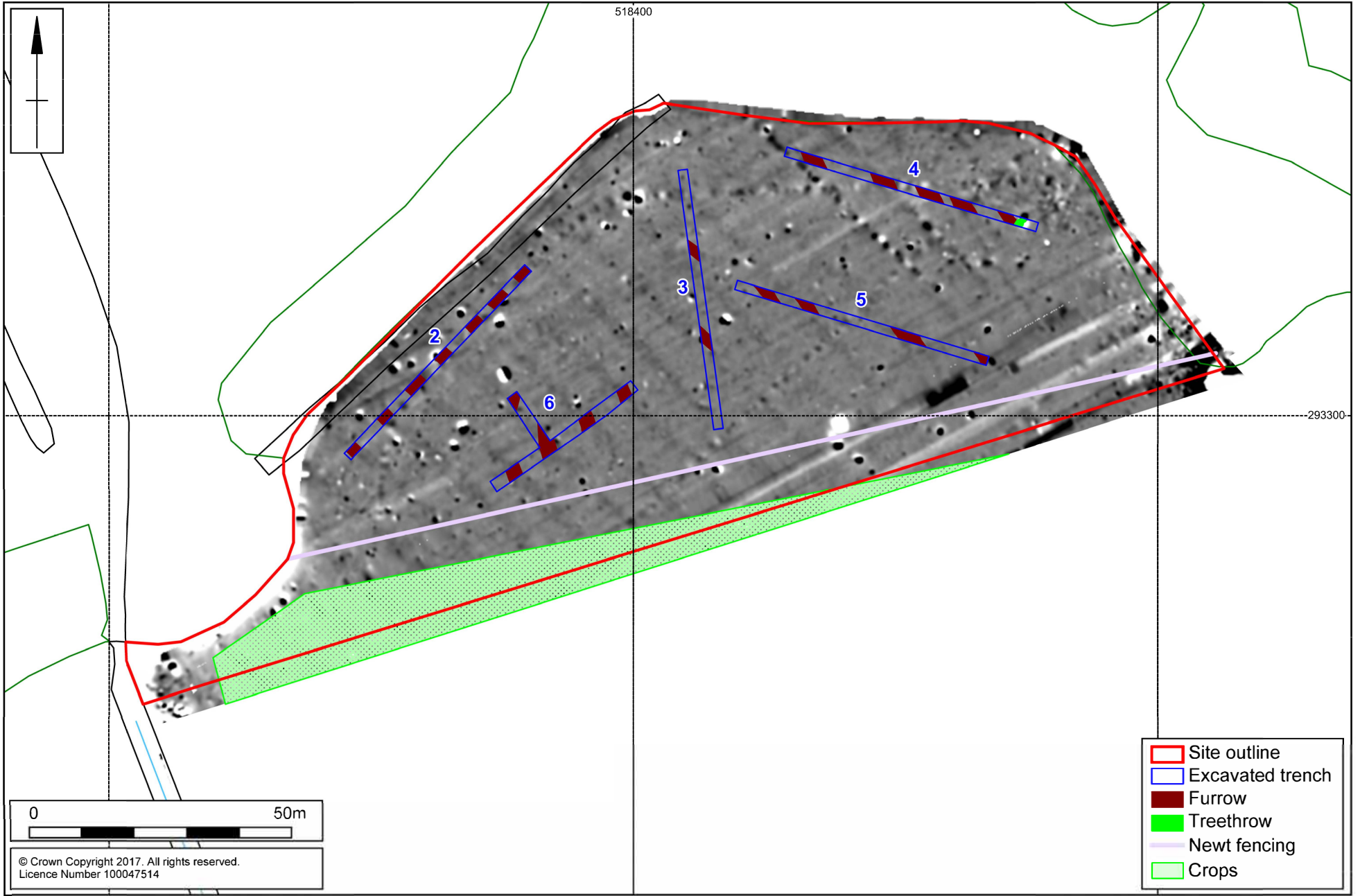


Trench 6 Furrow [605], looking north-west Fig 2

Scale 1:1000

Trench plans overlaying geophysics data

Fig 3



## **7 ARTEFACT CATALOGUE by Paul Sharrock**

### **7.1 Pottery**

Context 604: A small piece of Roman or medieval pottery (<5g). Oxidised surfaces with grey core (pers comm Rob Atkins).

### **7.4 Brick and tile**

Context 604: Two fragments in an orange sandy fabric (<5g) of uncertain date (pers comm Rob Atkins).

## **8 CONCLUSION**

Ridge and furrow has been found within the site and this corresponds with features recorded in the geophysical survey (Walford 2016). No further archaeological features were found suggesting that the Roman occupation noted to the south and west did not extend to this area.

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MOLA

First draft: July 2017

Revised: August 2017

## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

<b>Trench No 1 (Unopened)</b>
Due to the crops over the location, restriction of new fencing and revised development area trench 1 was not opened.

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NE-SW</b>		<b>11.75m</b>	<b>0.37m deep 11.38m aOD</b>
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Dark, brown-grey silty sand	0.27m deep	-
202	Subsoil	Light yellow-grey silty sand with gravel inclusions	0.10m deep	-
203	Natural	Light yellow-brown silty sandy soil with pockets of gravel and flint	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NE-SW</b>		<b>11.02m</b>	<b>0.42m deep 10.60m aOD</b>
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Dark, brown-grey silty sand with gravel	0.30m deep	-
302	Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silty sand with infrequent gravel	0.12m deep	-
303	Natural	Light yellow-brown silty sandy soil with pockets of gravel and flint	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NE-SW</b>		<b>10.61m</b>	<b>0.40m deep 10.21m aOD</b>
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
401	Topsoil	Dark brown-grey silty sand with occasion gravel	0.30m deep	-
402	Subsoil	Light-mid yellow-brown silty sand with infrequent gravel	0.10m deep	-
403	Natural	Light yellow-brown silty sandy soil with pockets of gravel and cobbles	-	-

404	Fill of Furrow	Mid-Dark brown silty clay	4.00m wide 0.30m deep	Pottery & Brick/Tile
405	Cut of Furrow	Linear (NW-SE), mod sides, wide flat base (oblique)	4.00m wide 0.30m deep	-
406	Fill of Furrow	Mid-Dark brown silty clay	3.50m wide 0.28m deep	-
407	Cut of Furrow	Linear (NW-SE), mod sides, wide flat base (oblique)	3.50m wide 0.28m deep	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NE-SW</b>		<b>10.95m</b>	<b>0.53m deep 10.42m aOD</b>
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
501	Topsoil	Dark brown-grey silty sand with occasion gravel	0.44m deep	-
502	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown silty sand with infrequent gravel	0.09m deep	-
503	Natural	Light yellow-brown silty sandy soil with pockets of gravel	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height (aOD)</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NE-SW &amp; NW- SE</b>		<b>11.50m</b>	<b>0.42m deep 11.08m aOD</b>
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
601	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silty sand with occasional gravel	0.32m deep	-
602	Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silty sandy clay with occasional gravel	0.10m deep	-
603	Natural	Light yellow brown silty sandy clay with patches of gravel	-	-
604	Fill of Furrow	Mid brown silty clay	2.60m wide 0.22m deep	-
605	Cut of Furrow	Linear (NW-SE), mod sides, wide flat base	2.60m wide 0.22m deep	-



## APPENDIX 2: TRENCH PHOTOGRAPHS



Trench 2, looking northeast



Trench 3, looking north



Trench 4, looking southeast



Trench 5, looking southwest



Trench 6, looking northwest