



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation
on land north of Fordham Road
Soham, Cambridgeshire
October 2017**

Report No.: 17/125

Authors: Paul Sharrock and Chris Chinnock

Illustrator: Olly Dindol



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-300572	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Fordham Road, Soham, Cambridgeshire		
Short description	MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation on land at Fordham Road, Soham in advance of residential development. Nineteen trenches were excavated. Archaeological remains included pits and ditches dated to the Roman period. Evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation as well as post-medieval steam-powered ploughing was also present across the site.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	-		
Current land use	Arable pasture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Roman and modern pits and ditches		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Cambridgeshire		
Site address	Fordham Road, Soham		
Easting and northing	NGR TL 6069 7201		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 3.5ha		
Height aOD	c 9.02-5.34m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Andy Thomas, Cambridgeshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Project Supervisor	Paul Sharrock, MOLA		
Director/ Managers	Liz Muldowney, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting/ Hopkins Homes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	2nd October 2017		
End date	6th October 2017		
ARCHIVES	Location	Contents	
Physical	ECB5216	Roman pottery, slag, CBM, animal bone	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Survey data, report, photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Fordham Road, Soham, Cambridgeshire		
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Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fordham Road Soham, Cambridgeshire October 2017

Abstract

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation on land at Fordham Road, Soham in advance of residential development. Nineteen trenches were excavated. Archaeological remains included three Roman ditches and a pit, as well as eight undated features. Evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation as well as post-medieval steam-powered ploughing was also present across the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake archaeological trial trenching on land at Fordham Road, Soham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 6069 7201, Fig 1), in advance of proposed development comprising a residential development of up to 90 dwellings, in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

Due to the archaeological potential of the site, Cambridge County Council required that a programme of archaeological trial trenching should be undertaken at the site in order to evaluate any archaeological remains present. The scheme of works was outlined in a Brief (Thomas 2017) and confirmed in an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (MOLA 2017). The programme of archaeological evaluation was undertaken in October 2017 in accordance with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003), and the results are presented below.

The field archive will be collated according to guidelines documents *Deposition of archaeological archives in Cambridgeshire* (CCC 2017), and in due course will be deposited with Cambridgeshire's County Archive Facility under Accession Id Number **ECB5216**.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, topography and geology

The proposed development area is located on the southern edge of the village of Soham and to the east of Downfields. The site is currently formed of three small paddocks/rough grassland fields. In total the area is c3.5 ha in size, is generally flat, and is sited at approximately 9m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The site is bounded by grassland with wooded areas to the north, to the east by fields and paddocks and to the south-west by a small triangle of housing development along Fordham Road.

The bedrock geology is West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation. Superficial deposits are recorded as sand and gravel of River Terrace Deposits 2 which lie in an east to west band across the northern half of the site. No records exist for the southern half of the site (BGS 2017).

2.2 Archaeological and historical background

The following historic background contains selected summarised data from a 1km radius search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) for Cambridgeshire, as reproduced as part of the Archaeological Brief (Thomas 2017). Numbers in brackets refer to the Cambridgeshire HER reference numbers.

There are no designated heritage assets, such as World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas within the area of the development site. There are numerous records of archaeological remains and artefact find spots within 1km of the development area. These relate to settlement and human exploitation of the landscape around Soham from the prehistoric period into modern times.

Prehistoric

A single Neolithic stone axe (MCB16112) was located as a surface find approximately 1km to the south-east of the site.

A possible periglacial feature containing prehistoric pottery and flint was encountered during an evaluation 350m to the south-east on the north side of the Fordham Road (MCB23450). Two flint blades (07498) were recovered as surface finds 150m to the north of this feature, close to the south-east corner of the development area.

Bronze Age

Bronze Age remains and artefacts have been recovered from a number of sites within the search area, both to the north and south of Fordham Road which divides the area in half along a north-west to south-east axis.

Archaeological interventions on opposite sides of the Fordham Road were undertaken between 600 and 700m from the development area (Allotments Site CB14631; Cherry Tree Lane site ECB4734). Both identified similar multi-period features associated with rural settlement. The excavations on the south side of the road recovered evidence for droveways, trackways and field systems laid out in the Bronze Age. This pattern of agricultural land disposition continued to be modified and maintained through the Iron Age into the Roman period (Ingham 2017).

North of the development area, a spearhead (07605a), other finds (04456) and cropmarks indicative of Bronze Age barrows (09041) were identified close to the limit of the search area. To the south and east of the development area Bronze Age pottery was recovered from four separate areas of non-archaeological intervention (07492, 07493, 07510 and 07519). Around 350m to the east of the development area cremated human remains were identified within a Bronze Age urn (07518). The exact

provenance of this discovery is unclear and may have been found during the late 19th or early 20th century.

Iron Age and Roman

Activity and artefacts dating from the Iron Age are less numerous and predominantly located to the north-west of the development area. Archaeological interventions at the Allotments and Cherry Tree Lane sites both had evidence for continued rural, agricultural use during the Iron Age, continuing from the Bronze Age.

Metal detecting has identified Iron Age coins at the northern limit of the search area (07602 and 04456b). A number of Iron Age pottery sherds were recovered from dredging the Soham Lode approximately 700m to the north of the development area (07503). Romano-British find spots and features have been identified in large numbers across the search area and strongly indicate extensive exploitation of the area in this period.

North of Fordham Road, archaeological interventions in the area of the old allotments produced evidence for likely Roman period rural activity including ditches and pits, some more closely datable to the 2nd century AD (CB14630, CB14632, MCB19583). Finds recovered during metal detecting, fieldwalking and as stray surface finds include brooches, bracelets, rings, coins, fittings and pottery sherds. Eight coins dating from the 4th century AD were recovered by metal detectorists from within the development area close to the Fordham Road (MCB 18080).

South of the Fordham Road, the Cherry Tree Lane excavation (ECB4734) indicated continued rural activity comprising rectilinear enclosures and trackways thought to date from the Roman period despite the paucity of datable material (Ingham 2017). As with the area to the north of the road, Romano-British finds spots are numerous and comprise rings, a sceptre end, brooches, coins and a key as well as pottery.

Saxon and medieval

Two Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been identified within the search area, one located within the modern cemetery (07027) 800m to the north-west of the development area. It was investigated in the 19th century and was believed to date between the 5th and 7th century AD. The second (07506) was identified in 1931, 900m to the south-east of the development area at the site of the water tower. This cemetery had been dated to the 5th to 7th centuries AD. Elsewhere a small number of Anglo-Saxon items including brooches had been recovered from metal detecting and as surface finds.

Soham developed into a small thriving town in the medieval period and is mentioned in the Domesday survey. However, there are few other indications of medieval activity in the area to the south of the town core. A scabbard (09233a) and a lead weight (07586b) have been recovered from the fields to the south of the development area.

Post-medieval

The HER records a number of windmills dating from the 17th to 18th centuries with some continuing in use into the early years of the 20th century in the now residential area on the opposite site of the Fordham Road from the development area (07495, 07496). Some of the mill structures are still present, though derelict.

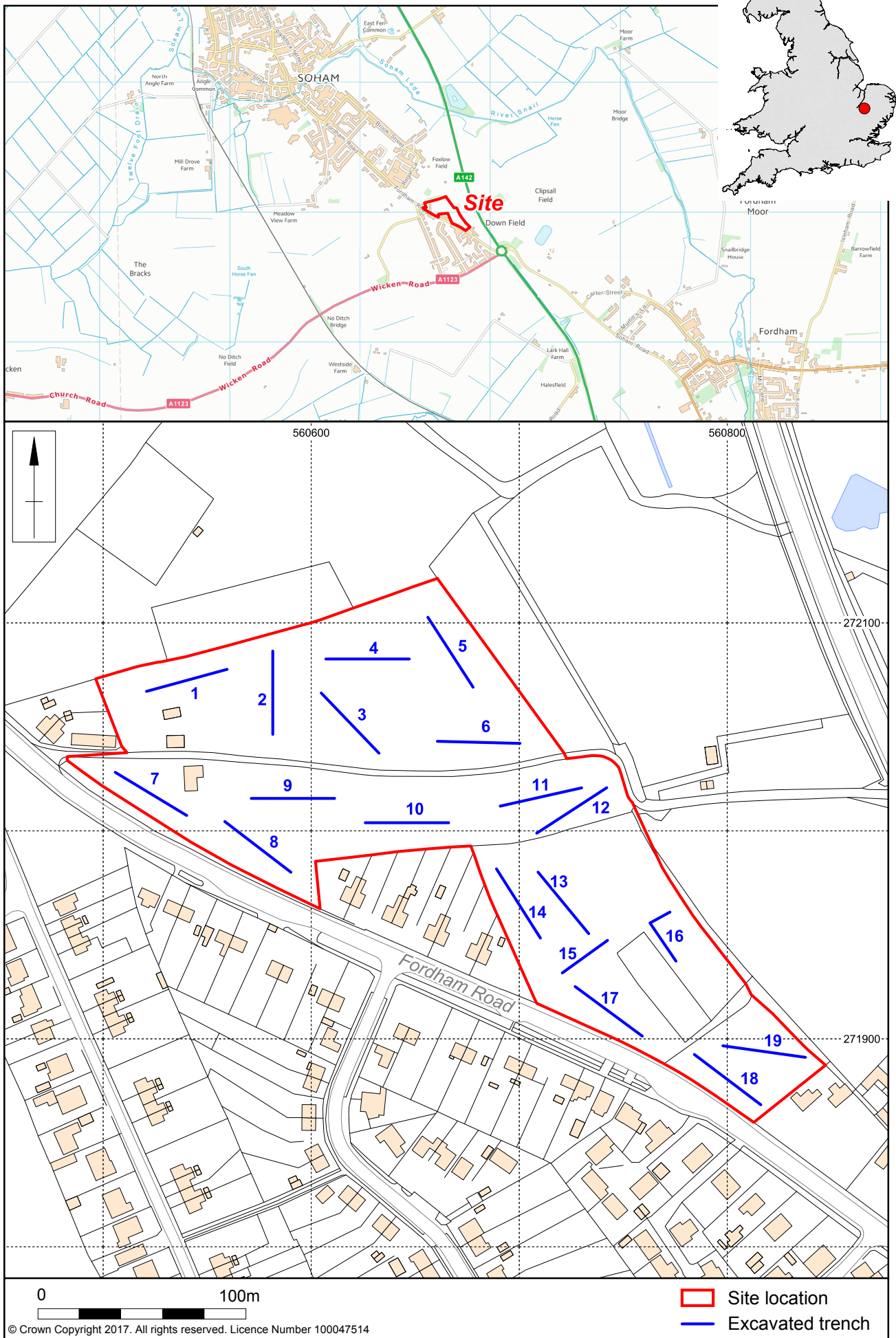
3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions, including the presence/absence of palaeosols, palaeochannels, and old land surface soils/deposits, the character of deposits and their contents within negative features, and the site formation processes generally;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains;
- and inform any future excavation, mitigation and/or preservation *in-situ* strategy.

The excavation programme was carried out within the parameters suggested by the published research priorities for the East of England and its wider region (EH 1997; Glazebrook 1997; Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Medlycott 2011).

Particular attention was paid to the research aims for the Roman period as outlined by Medlycott (2011) and by Going and Plouviez in Brown and Glazebrook (2000) as an extension of the general aims set out above.



Scale 1:2,500

Site location and excavated trenches Fig 1

4 METHODOLOGY

A sample of 4% of the 3.5ha evaluation area was subjected to trial trench evaluation. This comprised 19 trenches, each 50m long and 1.8m wide (Fig 1). Trenches were positioned to provide a broad sample across the site, avoiding constraints such as overhead electrical services.

The trenches were accurately measured in using Leica Viva Survey Grade RTK GPS using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum. Machine excavation was undertaken under the direction of a suitably experienced archaeologist. The trenches were excavated by machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket a minimum of 1.8m wide, to reveal archaeological remains or where these are absent, undisturbed natural horizons. Where deep archaeological features or deposits were encountered, trenches were stepped in order to provide a safe working environment.

Following machine-excavation, the surface of any exposed archaeological horizon was cleaned in order to define the remains, with a selection of the extant archaeological features then sampled to attempt to determine character and date. Full excavation of features was not attempted at this stage of the investigation.

All archaeological deposits and excavated features were fully recorded following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA, 2014), with each distinct context given a unique number and described on *pro-forma* record sheets in terms of its composition, relationship to other contexts and interpretation. A full photographic record comprising digital images was also maintained.

Finds were collected from stratified features and deposits and from a walk-over of the spoil heaps (with the exception of unstratified animal bone and modern material which was not retained). Excavated areas and spoil heaps were also scanned with a metal detector.

Ploughsoil and other soil horizons were investigated at regular intervals along each trench in an effort to characterise any artefacts which may have existed within them. This comprised shovel testing 30 litres of soil from both the topsoil and subsoil at both ends and at the centre of each trench. No finds were recovered from these soil horizons in any of the trenches.

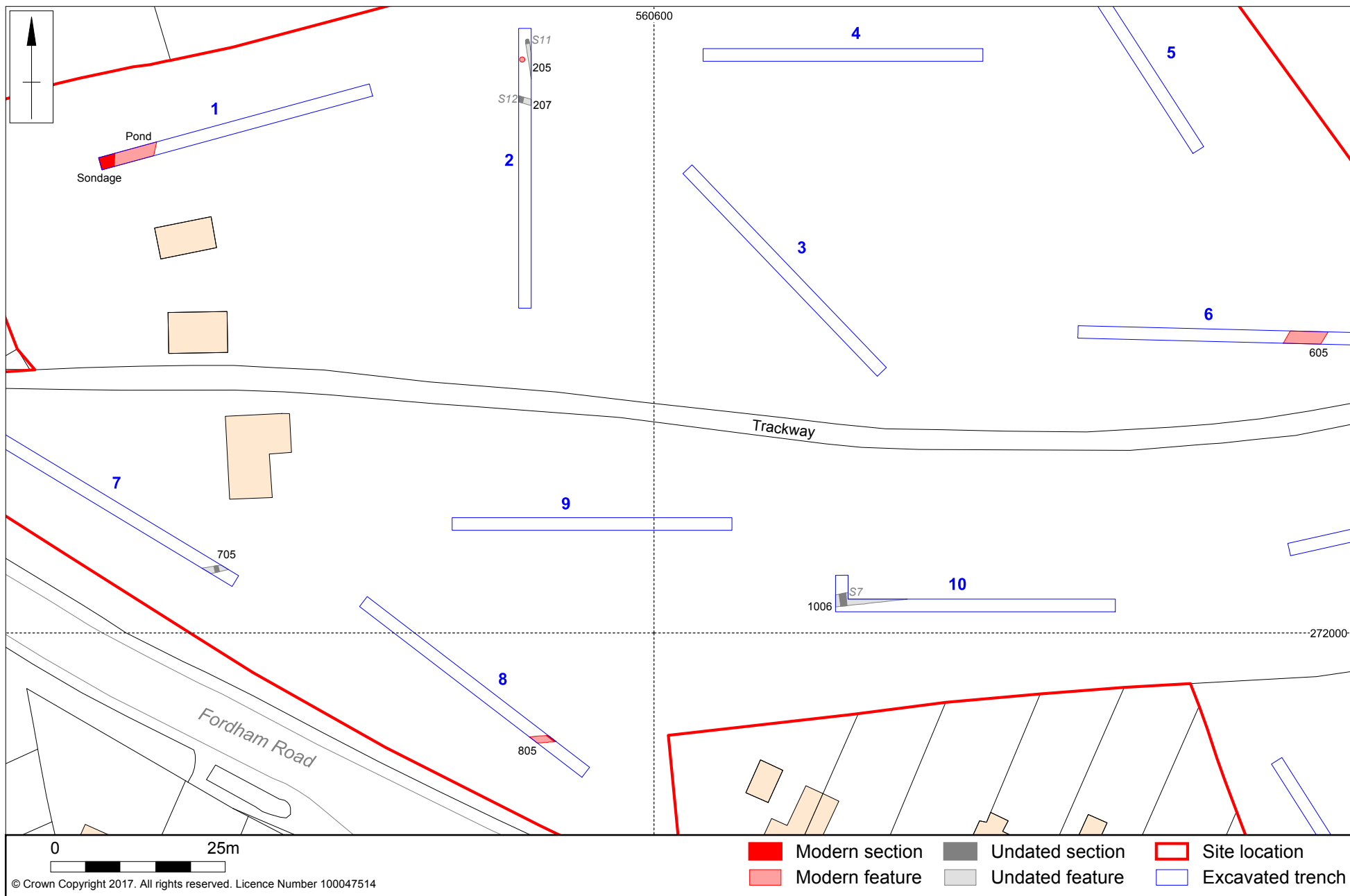
Following completion of the site investigation, all trenches were mechanically backfilled with their original excavated material.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Brief (Thomas 2017); Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2017); *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003); Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014b); the Historic England procedural document, *Management of Field Projects in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015) and MOLA's in-house *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (MOLA 2014).

Scale 1:750

Excavated features and sections (North-west fields)

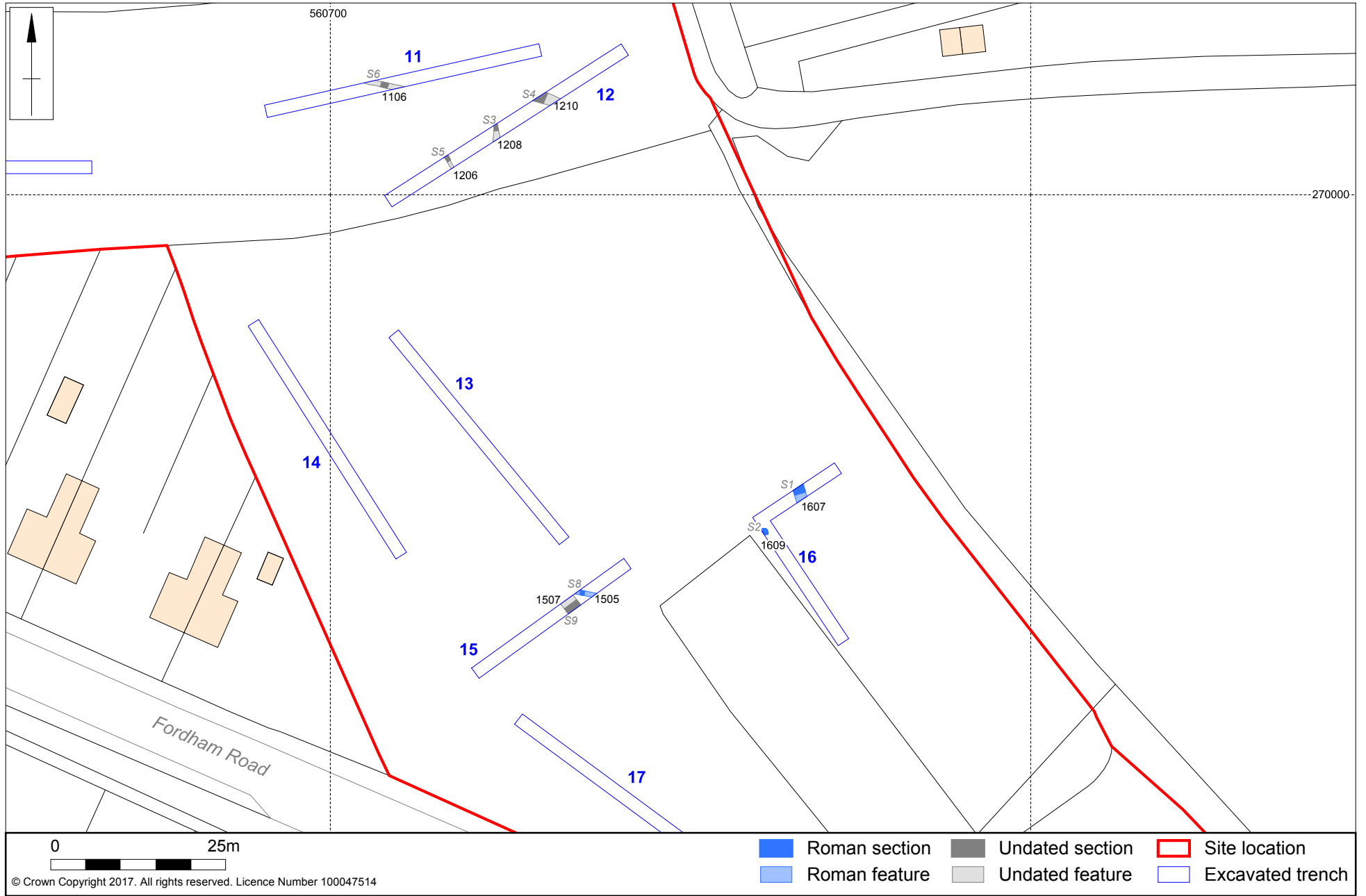
Fig 2



Scale 1:750

Excavated features and sections (South-east fields)

Fig 3



5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

5.1 General stratification

The geological substrate across the site varied between an orange-brown sand and white chalk. Within Trenches 9, 10, 11 and 12 this was overlain by a possible alluvial deposit varying in depth from 0.20 to 0.30m and characterized by mid-light brown sandy-silt. A layer of subsoil was also present in all trenches except Trench 14 and the south-eastern end of Trench 8. The subsoil varied in depth from 0.07m to 0.40m and comprised friable mid-brown sandy-silt. The topsoil across the site was described as friable, mid brown-grey silty sand and varied in depth from 0.25m to 0.50m.



Trench 19, representative section, facing south-west Fig 4

5.2 Overview of the archaeological remains

Of the 19 evaluation trenches excavated, a total of 10 trenches contained archaeological features. This comprised a total of 15 archaeological features, three of which could be dated to the Roman period, eight did not contain any datable material and the remaining four were modern features.

Trenches 3, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 17, 18 and 19 contained no archaeological remains. Full context descriptions for each trench can be found in the Appendix.

5.3 Roman ditches and a pit

Two ditches and a pit were excavated in Trenches 15 and 16 in the south-east of the site.

Ditch [1505] in Trench 15, aligned west-north-west to east-north-east, was 0.70m wide and 0.16m deep with an asymmetrical U-shaped profile and concave base (Figs 5 and 12: Section 8). The fill was characterised as friable mid-dark brown silty clay-sand. A single fragment of pottery has been broadly dated to the Roman period. An undated ditch [1507] may have intersected with this ditch just beyond the limit of excavation.



Trench 15, ditch [1505], looking north-west Fig 5

In Trench 16 was Ditch [1607], aligned north-north-west to south-south-east. This was 1.95m wide and 0.64m deep with a broad U-shaped profile and concave base (Figs 6 and 11: Section 1). The primary fill of the ditch comprised firm mid brown-grey silty clay and contained domestic waste material including pottery, tile, animal bone and metalworking slag. The pottery has been dated to the late 1st to early 2nd centuries AD. The subsequent fills were characterised by brown silty sand with occasional charcoal flecks and likely reflect the gradual accumulation of naturally derived material.



Trench 16, ditch [1607], looking north-west Fig 6

Pit or ditch terminus [1609], located at the north-western corner of Trench 16, was 1.20m wide and 0.40m deep with broad U-shaped profile and concave base (Fig 11: Section 2). The single fill, (1608), comprised friable mixed brown/black silty sand with

root disturbance throughout. A single sherd of pottery was recovered from the fill and has been broadly dated to the Roman period.

5.4 Modern features

A number of modern features were present on the site. A probable pond [105] was located at the western end of Trench 1. The pond was machine excavated to a depth of approximately 1m and the fill comprised mixed dark grey-black sandy silt and clay with modern bricks and other organic debris present throughout. Other modern features included a small pit [209] within Trench 2 containing plastic, a north-east to south-west aligned ditch [605] in Trench 6 containing the head of a modern iron hoe and a north-east to south-west aligned ditch [805] in Trench 8 contained fragments of modern bottle glass.

In addition, across much of the southern part of the site there was evidence for 18th to 19th-century steam ploughing in the form of dark brown linear plough scars in the base of the trench, which contained numerous small fragments of coal (Fig 7).



Trench 13, parallel linear plough scarring, looking north-west Fig 7

5.5 Undated features

Two undated linear ditches were present in Trench 2 in the north-western part of the development area (Fig 2). Ditch [205], which terminated within the trench and was aligned approximately north to south, was 0.54m wide and 0.28m deep with a U-shaped profile and concave base (Fig 12: Section 11). The fill comprised loose mid grey silty sand with few inclusions. No finds were recovered and the fill appeared to reflect gradually accumulated wind-blown material.

Ditch [207], aligned north-west to south-east, was 0.90m wide and 0.45m deep with a broad U-shaped profile and concave base (Fig 12: Section 12). The fill, (206), was characterised as loose mid brown silty sand and likely reflect naturally deposited material. No finds were recovered from this feature.

A single linear ditch [705] in Trench 7, aligned roughly east to west, was 0.80m wide and 0.10m deep with a shallow irregular profile. No finds were recovered from this

feature; the form and alignment of the feature suggest that it may be the base of a plough furrow.

Trench 10 contained one undated linear ditch (Figs 2 and 5). Ditch [1006], aligned roughly east to west, was 1.80m wide and 0.40m deep with a broad U-shaped profile, eroded upper edges and flat base (Figs 8 and 12: Section 7). The single fill comprised light brown-grey clay silt with few inclusions and appeared to reflect natural in-filling of the ditch over a significant period of time. No finds were recovered from the feature.



Trench 10 ditch [1006] pre-excavation, facing west Fig 8

A small group of linear ditches were present in Trenches 11 and 12 (Fig 2). No dateable material was recovered from any of these features.

Ditch [1106], aligned north-west to south-east, was 0.70m wide and 0.15m deep with a broad U-shaped profile and flat base (Fig 11: Section 6). The fill, (1105), comprised friable mid brown silty sand and likely reflects the gradual accumulation of natural material.

Feature [1206], aligned roughly north-west to south-east, was 0.70m wide and 0.23m deep with an irregular profile (Figs 9 and 11: Section 5). The fill was characterised as dark/grey sandy silt with frequent rooting throughout. The feature was interpreted as a probable natural feature. Ditch [1208], aligned roughly north-south, was 1.00m wide and 0.35m deep with a broad U-shaped profile and concave base (Fig 11: Section 3). The single fill comprised dark grey silty sand with no inclusions. Feature [1210], aligned east to west, was 1.48m wide and 0.16m deep with a shallow broad profile and flat base (Figs 6 and 11: Section 4). The fill comprised mid-dark brown sandy silt with no inclusions. The form, depth and alignment of the feature was similar to that of [1106], and both features may have been remnant furrows associated with medieval or post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation.



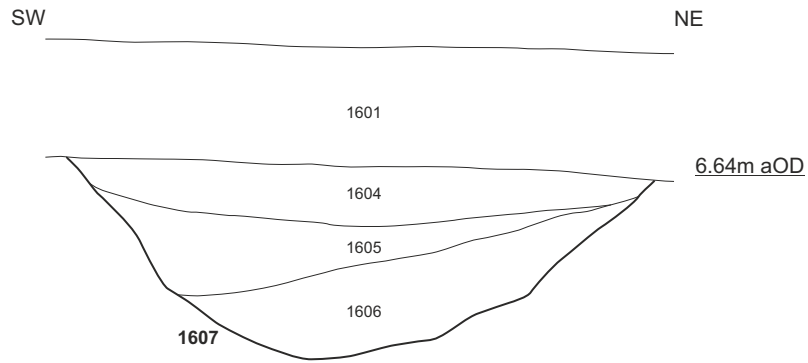
Trench 12, possible furrow [1210], looking east Fig 9

Ditch [1507], aligned north-west to south-east, was 1.10m wide and 0.25m deep with a broad U-shaped profile and flat base (Figs 10 and 12: Section 9). The fill (1506), comprised friable mid-brown silty sand and appeared to reflect gradually accumulated natural material. The fill contained fragments of animal bone but no other finds material was present.

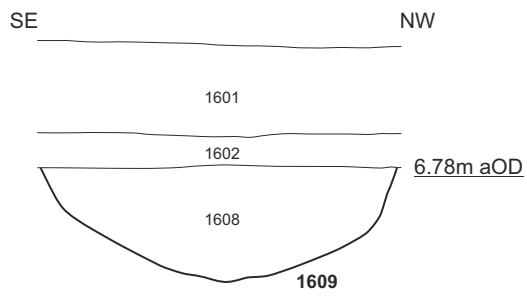


Trench 15, ditch [1507], looking south-south-west Fig 10

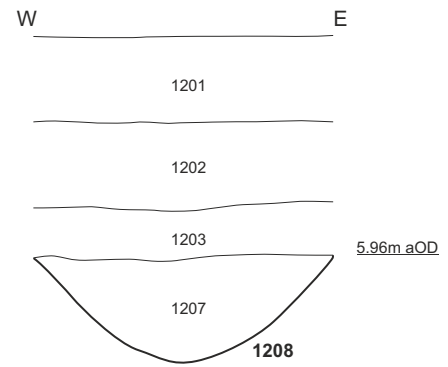
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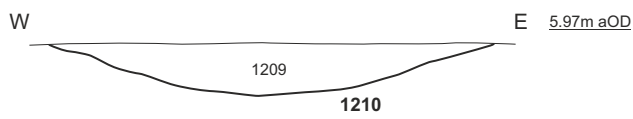
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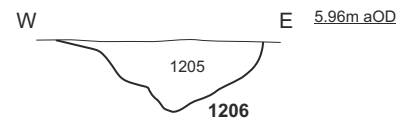
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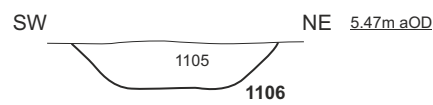
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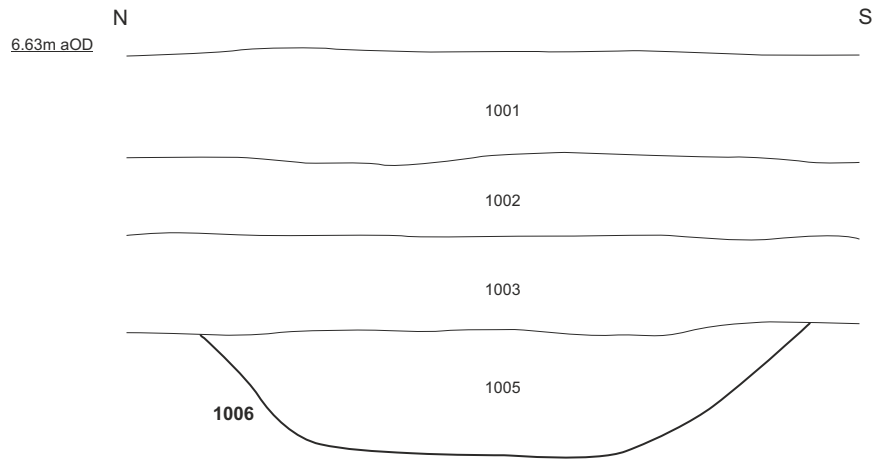
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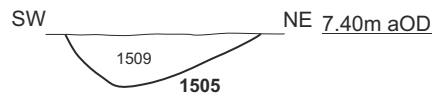
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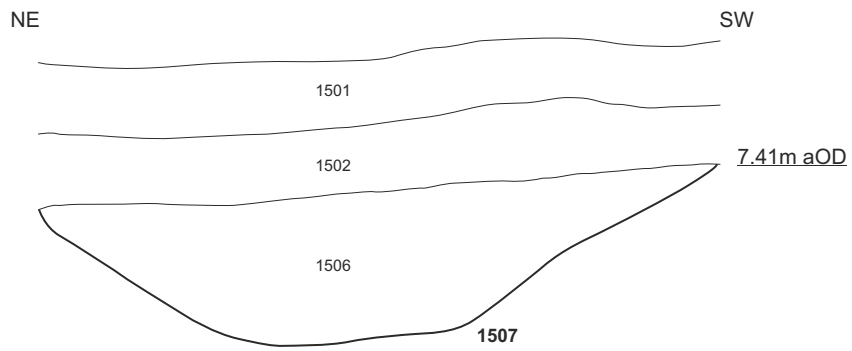
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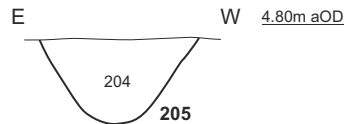
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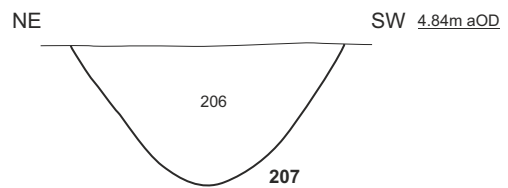
Section 9



Section 11



Section 12



6 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

6.1 Pottery by Rob Perrin

Forty-six sherds weighing 440g and with a rim estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) of 0.34 were recovered from three contexts in two trenches (15 and 16); Eleven different vessels were noted. The contexts were from two ditches [1505] and [1607], and a pit [1609]. Ditch [1607] contained the majority of the pottery. Table 1 shows the pottery fabrics and forms per feature.

Table 1: Soham pottery quantification

Cut/ fill / type	Fabric	No. Sherds	Weight (g)	Rim EVE	Form
1505/ 1504/ ditch	Grey	1	24	-	-
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Grog, colour-coated	1	14	-	Bowl/ Dish
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Grey	1	23	0.06	Jar
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Grey	1	13	0.04	Jar
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Grey	1	28	0.08	Dish, plain rim
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Grey	25	147	-	-
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Reddish-yellow	2	5	-	-
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Buff	1	20	-	Jar
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Buff	4	89	-	Storage jar
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Colour-coated	4	18	-	Beaker
1607/ 1606/ ditch	Colour-coated	2	15	-	Beaker
1607/ 1606/ ditch	LNV CC	1	3	-	-
1607/ 1606/ ditch	LNV WH	1	19	0.08	Mortarium
1609/ 1608/ pit	Grey	1	22	0.08	Bowl/ Dish, bead rim
Total	-	46	440	0.34	-

The grey, buff and reddish-yellow wares are all sand-tempered and are likely to have been produced in the kilns known collectively as the Horningsea industry, located less than ten kilometres to the south-west. The grey ware sherds in Ditch [1607] include two jars and a curved-sided dish with a plain rim which has an external groove just below the rim. The grey-ware bowl or dish in Pit [1609] has a bead rim and burnished surfaces and is reminiscent of BB2 vessels made in Colchester and sites along the Thames Estuary. The buff ware sherds are from a storage jar and another jar with a horizontal burnished wavy line on its shoulder and the reddish-yellow ware sherds are from a thin-walled vessel. The assemblage includes two sherds from the Lower Nene Valley, one colour-coated ware (LNV CC) and one white ware (LNV WH); the latter is from a mortarium with a grooved flange. The fabric which appears to have grog inclusions has a deep red internal and external slip or colour-coat and is part of a base from a dish or bowl with a footring and may be an imitation of a Gallo-Belgic or samian ware type. A possible source for this vessel is West Stow, about 20km to the east. The two beakers are in a reddish-yellow ware with a dark grey/black colour-coat; one has rouletted decoration and one is similar in appearance to Central Gaulish colour-coated ware. The fabric appears too sandy for these to be Gaulish products, or to be from the Lower Nene Valley kilns, so they may be of local origin or have been made in the kilns at Pakenham or Colchester.

The grey and buff ware body sherds are difficult to date as the fabrics were in use throughout the Roman period in the area. The grog-tempered vessel is probably mid 1st century in date and the grey ware dish from Ditch [1607] late 1st to 2nd century, while that from Pit [1609] is a later 2nd to mid 3rd-century type. The colour-coated

beakers are of mid to late 2nd century date and the LNV WH mortarium is a late 2nd to 3rd-century type.

Despite the small amount recovered, the assemblage has a wide range of fabrics and forms. The pottery originates from local and regional sources and the vessel forms comprise both utilitarian and more domestic types, including some finer, tablewares. Overall, the pottery suggests fairly high status occupation or activity in the vicinity, mainly in the 2nd century, but possibly starting in the 1st century and extending into the 3rd century. The low mean sherd size indicates attrition due to re-deposition and re-working of deposits.

6.2 Ceramic building material by Liz Muldowney

Two pieces of tile weighing a total of 441.9g were recovered from fill (1606) in ditch (1607) in Trench 16. One was a small fragment of hard-fired, orange coloured, tile with generally small grog inclusions. The fragment weighed 28.7g and had no remaining outer surfaces. It had clearly been exposed to extensive erosive processes before deposition in the ditch. The second piece was larger and weighed 413.2g. It was 24mm thick and had a reduced greyish core and a light pinkish orange outer edge. It had both grog and sand temper. Although incomplete its form suggests that it was either a floor or wall bonding tile. Both were handmade and both could have been Romano-British.

6.3 Slag by Liz Muldowney

Thirteen fragments of iron working slag weighing 603.7g were recovered from fill (1606) in ditch (1607) in Trench 16. The material is vesicular and some fragments are partly vitrified. Although fragmentary they may have originally formed part of a single smithing hearth bottom as a characteristic domed base was part of the assemblage. These slags are formed by the reaction between the iron, the silica flux or hearth structure and the iron scale, with the molten material settling into the base of the hearth and cooling into a diagnostic plano-convex lump. Although fragmentary when recovered from the ditch, it is likely that this waste material had not travelled far from point of origin. This material is not datable in isolation.

6.4 Animal bone by Sander Aerts

Introduction and methodology

A total of 25 animal bones were hand collected from two different contexts. All fragments were hand washed before analysis and discussion of the preservation and identification of the present taxa.

Identifications took place with the aid of the MOLA Northampton reference collection and with Schmid (1972) and Hillson (1992). Unidentifiable fragments were attributed to size categories where possible: large mammal (cattle, horse), medium mammal (sheep/goat, pig, large dog) and small mammal (small dog, cat, hare, rabbit and rodents).

Results

From the 25 animal bones, five could be identified to genus level (5/25: 20%) and nine could be attributed to a size category (9/25: 36%). The results have been given in Table 2.

Table 2: Quantification of the animal remains from contexts (1506) and (1606)

Cut/ fill/ type	Cattle	Pig	Large mammal	Medium mammal	Indet.	Weight (g)
1507/ 1506/ ditch	4	-	3	3	9	505.5
1606/ 1607/ ditch	-	1	3	-	2	97.3
Total	4	1	6	3	11	602.6

The animal bone is in a good state of preservation. The cattle remains in context (1506), fill of ditch [1507], are comprised of a radius, ulna, carpal and third molar. The pig remains in context (1606), fill of ditch [1607], are represented by a scapula fragment, which possibly shows minor carnivore gnawing. In this same context, the rib of a large mammal was found that exhibits a number of fine cut marks.

Conclusion and recommendations

Although the assemblage is small, it shows potential for further research. Common farmyard animals were identified, which in combination with butchering marks shows the exploitation of animals as a food source and/or economic purposes. Collecting and analysing animal remains during any future excavations on the site is highly recommended to assess the presence of (domesticated) animals, and how these resources were used in terms of food- and potentially craft production.

7 CONCLUSION

The archaeological evaluation within the proposed development area has identified a small number of archaeological remains dated to the Roman period. Evidence for extensive steam-powered ploughing of the site may suggest that shallower features may have been destroyed, whilst large ditches and pits have survived, though their depth and dimensions were reduced.

Several undated features were present across the site. Most, especially those in the northern part of the site, appear likely to relate to medieval and post-medieval agricultural or boundary features. The features firmly dated to the Roman period were grouped together in the southern part of the site. The presence of ceramic building material and metalworking slag, whilst in small quantities, may suggest that the features identified in the proposed development area are on the periphery of settlement or industrial activity somewhere within the immediate locale.

Archaeological remains from the Bronze Age were recorded on the site of the old allotments and Cherrytree Lane, sited to the north of the site on opposite sides of Fordham Road (Ingham 2017). Roman activity also took place at these sites and was dated to the 2nd century AD, which would make the activity broadly contemporary with the pottery assemblage recovered from the present evaluation. Any future work at this site or in the vicinity should consider the network of evidence for Roman activity in this area, which as it stands is limited to sporadic rural activity including ditches and pits. However, local spot finds, which include brooches, bracelets, rings, coins, fittings and pottery sherds, suggest that more centralised settlement activity may exist close by. The results from this evaluation, whilst not significant in isolation and unable to directly address the requirements of the regional research agendas, add to the growing corpus of data for this period.

The presence of coal and charcoal fragments across the site, often present as linear strips in the subsoil and stained patches on the surface of the natural, are most likely a relic of steam ploughing in the 19th-20th centuries. The earliest steam ploughs were introduced in the 1830s. These early models operated with a static steam engine at one side of the field from where it would tow a plough from an anchor point on the opposite side of the field (Bonnett 1965). This method would not leave debris across the field, only along the edges, and required fairly regularly-shaped fields with a lack of obstacles. The presence of coal throughout the subsoil across much of the site suggests that this early method of steam ploughing was not utilised. In the mid to late 19th century, direct traction steam ploughs similar to modern tractors were developed (*ibid*). These engines, huge and cumbersome as they were, would cultivate wide strips of land and became increasingly popular. It is possible that it was this type of steam engine that resulted in fragments of coal and charcoal being turned over into the ploughsoil across the site.

During excavation of the trial trenches, in an effort to characterise any artefacts present in the ploughsoil and the subsoil, samples were sorted on site. No finds were found using this method.

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MOLA Northampton

09 November 2017

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
1	50m x 1.80m E-W		5.70	0.65m deep 5.05m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
102	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.25m deep	-
103	Natural	Orange / brown sand	-	-
104	Fill of [105]	Friable mid greyish brown sandy silt. Contains modern material in the form of the head of an iron hoe.	7.00 m wide	-
105	Pond	Cut of large circular feature, probably a pond. Sondage revealed large tree roots at the base.	7.00m wide	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 1.80m N-S		5.34	0.50m Deep 4.84 aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
202	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.20m deep	-
203	Natural	Orange / brown sand	-	-
204	Fill of 205	Loose mid grey silty sand	0.54m wide 0.28m deep	-
205	Ditch	Terminus of ditch on N-S alignment before turning to the SE at the S end. Steep sides and concave base	0.54m wide 0.28m deep	-
206	Fill of 207	Loose mid brown silty sand	0.90m wide 0.45m deep	-
207	Ditch	E-W ditch with steep sides and concave base	0.90m wide 0.45m deep	-
208	Fill of 209	Light blue grey silty clay.	0.40m dia 0.10m+ deep	Modern plastic
209	Pit	Small circular feature with steep sided. Not fully excavated.	0.40m dia 0.10m+ deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
3	50mx 1.80m NW-SE		5.58	0.52m deep 5.06 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.44m deep	-
302	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.07m deep	-
303	Natural	Orange / brown sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
4	50m x 1.80m E-W		5.43	0.67m deep 4.76 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.35m deep	-
402	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
403	Natural	Yellow / orange sand		-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
5	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		5.36	0.55m deep 4.81 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.25m deep	-
502	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
503	Natural	Orange / brown sand		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
6	50m x 1.80m E-W		5.55	0.55m deep 5.00 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
602	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.25m deep	-
603	Natural	Orange / brown sand	-	

604	Fill of [605]	Friable mid greyish brown sandy silt. Contains modern material in the form of the head of an iron hoe.	10.00m wide 0.20m deep	Modern material. Not retained
605	Ditch	Modern ditch on N-S alignment, moderate sides. Not fully excavated	10.00m wide 0.20m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
7	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		6.67	0.60m deep 6.07 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.40m deep	-
702	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.20m deep	-
703	Natural	Orange / brown sand with chalk patches	-	-
704	Fill of 705	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.80m wide 0.10m deep	-
705	Ditch/Rut	Very shallow linear with near vertical sides and flat base, likely a wheel rut	0.80m wide 0.10m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
8	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		6.82	0.60m deep 6.22 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.40m deep	-
802	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.20m deep	-
803	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-
804	Fill of 805	Friable mid brown sandy silty	0.35m wide 0.15m deep	Modern material, not retained
805	Ditch	Modern ditch with moderate sides and flat base	0.35m wide 0.15m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
9	50m x 1.80m E-W		6.43	0.80m deep 5.36 aOD

Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
902	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.22m deep	-
903	Alluvium	Mid-light brown sandy silt	0.28m deep	
904	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
10	50m x 1.80m E-W		6.35	0.85m deep 5.50 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.35m deep	-
1002	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.20m deep	-
1003	Alluvium	Mid-light orangey brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	
1004	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-
1005	Fill of 1006	Friable light brownish grey clayey silt	1.8m wide 0.40m deep	-
1006	Ditch	E-W linear with steep sides and flat base	1.8m wide 0.40m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
11	50m x 1.80m E-W		6.36	0.90m deep 5.46 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1101	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1102	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.40m deep	-
1103	Alluvium	Mid-light orangey brown sandy silt	0.20m deep	
1104	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-
1105	Fill of 1106	Friable mid brown silty sand	0.70m wide 0.15m deep	-
1106	Gully	NW-SE linear gully with moderate sides and flat base	0.70m wide 0.15m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
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12	50m x 1.80m NE-SW		6.10	0.90m deep 5.20 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1201	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1202	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1203	Alluvium	Mid-light orangey brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	
1204	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand		
1205	Fill of 1206	Friable dark grey / black sandy silt, frequent rooting	0.70m dia 0.25m deep	
1206	Posthole/ rooting	Sub-circular feature, likely rooting	0.70m dia 0.25m deep	
1207	Fill of 1208	Friable black silty sand	1.00m wide 0.35m deep	
1208	Ditch	N-S linear ditch with moderate sides and concave base	1.00m wide 0.35m deep	
1209	Fill of 1210	Friable, mid brown sandy silt	1.48m wide 0.16m deep	
1210	Ditch/Furrow	N-S linear ditch with gradual sides and concave/ flat base.	1.48m wide 0.16m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
13	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		6.57	0.40m deep 6.17 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1301	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1302	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.10m deep	-
1303	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
14	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		6.64	0.30m deep 6.34 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1401	Topsoil	Friable Dark Grey Brown Silty Clay	0.30m deep	-
1402	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
15	40m x 1.80m NE-SW		7.95	0.35m deep 7.60 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1501	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.25m deep	-
1502	Natural	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.10m deep	-
1503	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand		
1504	Fill of 1505	Friable mid-dark brown silty sand	0.70m wide 0.16m deep	Pottery
1505	Ditch	Linear ditch NW-SE with steep SW edge and gradual NE edge and a concave base	0.70m wide 0.16m deep	
1506	Fill of 1507	Friable mid brown silty sand	2.20m wide 0.50m deep	Animal bone
1507	Ditch	Linear ditch NW-SE with moderate sides and flat base	2.20m wide 0.50m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
16	50m x 1.80m NE-SW & NW-SE		7.18	0.60m deep 6.58 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1601	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.40m deep	-
1602	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.20m deep	-
1603	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-
1604	Fill of 1607	Friable mid orange brown silty sand, upper fill	1.90m wide 0.18m deep	
1605	Fill of 1607	Friable dark brown silty sand, tipline from NE	1.75m wide 0.28m deep	
1606	Fill of 1607	Firm mid brownish grey silty sand	1.50m wide 0.30m deep	Pottery, Slag, Bone, Tile
1607	Ditch	Linear ditch on NW-SE alignment	1.90m wide 0.65m deep	
1608	Fill of 1609	Friable mixed mid brown / black	1.20m wide 0.40m deep	Pottery
1609	Pit	Elliptical, E-W moderate sides and uneven base	1.20m wide 0.40m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
17	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		8.09	0.80m deep 7.29 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1701	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.50m deep	-
1702	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1703	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
18	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		9.02	0.60m deep 8.42 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1801	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1802	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1803	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural
19	50m x 1.80m NW-SE		8.82	0.60m deep 8.22 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1901	Topsoil	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1902	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt	0.30m deep	-
1903	Natural	Chalk with frequent patches of orange / red sand	-	-



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