



**Trial trench evaluation
on land north of Fleckney Road
Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire
April 2018**

Report No. 18/50

Author: Adam Reid

Illustrator: James Ladocha



**Trial trench evaluation
on land north of Fleckney Road
Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire
April 2018**

Report No. 18/50

Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	1/04/18	C. Finn	C Chinnock	A Maull	Draft for client comments

Author: Adam Reid BSc MSc
Illustrator: James Ladocha BA

© MOLA Northampton 2018

MOLA
Kent House
30 Billing Road
Northampton
NN1 5DQ
01604 809 800
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk

STAFF

Project Manager: Anthony Maull Cert Arch

Text: Adam Reid BSc MSc ACIfA

Fieldwork: Paul Clements BA

Raúl Gómez Hernández BA

Illustrations: James Ladocha BA

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1 - 313966	
Project name	Trial trench evaluation on land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire		
Short description (250 words maximum)	<i>MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Heritage to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire prior to the proposed development of the site. Six trenches were excavated. No archaeological features were found.</i>		
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Evaluation		
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None		
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	Geophysics (Richardson 2016) and Evaluation (Chinnock 2016)		
Current Land use	Pasture		
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown		
Monument type/ period	None		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address (including postcode)	Land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire		
Study area (sq.m or ha)	c. 1.2ha		
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	SP 67304 93919		
Height OD	125m above Ordnance Datum		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project brief originator	Teresa Hawtin, Senior Planning Archaeologist Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Clements, MOLA		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Heritage		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date/End date	5/4/2018		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Paper	Leicestershire Museums: X.A91.2016	Site file	
Digital	Leicestershire Museums: X.A91.2016	Mapinfo plans, Word report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Trial trench evaluation on land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire, April 2018		
Serial title & volume	18/50		
Author(s)	Adam Reid		
Page numbers	11		
Date	12/04/2018		

Contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION
 - 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
 - 3 BACKGROUND
 - 3.1 Topography and geology
 - 3.2 Historical and archaeological background
 - 4 METHODOLOGY
 - 5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE
 - 6 DISCUSSION
- BIBLIOGRAPHY
- APPENDIX A: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Figures

- Front cover: General view of backfilled trenches
Fig 1: Site location and excavated trench locations
Fig 2: Previous archaeological and principle sites
Fig 3: Trench 2, representative section, looking north

Trial trench evaluation on land north of Fleckney Road Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire April 2018

Abstract

MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Heritage to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire prior to the proposed development of the site. Six trenches were excavated. No archaeological features were found.

1 INTRODUCTION

CgMs Heritage commissioned MOLA to undertake archaeological trial trenching on the proposed development site on land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire (NGR SP 67304 93919, Fig 1). The required works were requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council and all works fell in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF; DCLG 2012).

This was a further phase of trial trenching for the Fleckney Road development; the first stage comprised the excavation of sixteen trenches in the fields immediately to the north (Chinnock 2016). The field that was covered by this evaluation (Field 4, Chinnock 2016) was not subject to trenching in 2016 owing to access issues.

The Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (LCC) had advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the Development Area. The requirements were outlined in a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA (2018).

The evaluation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (HE 2015).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The principal aim of the archaeological evaluation work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the investigation were to:

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development area;

- 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;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains, and to;
- inform any future excavation and/or preservation in-situ strategy.

The broad research framework for the East Midlands is set out by Cooper (2006), supplemented by Knight, Vyner and Allen (2012). It was not possible to address any of the research aims set out in these documents due to the negative result of the evaluation.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

Kibworth Harcourt and Kibworth Beauchamp are two historic civil parishes which fall within the area of Kibworth, in the district of Harborough. Kibworth Harcourt is less than one third the size of the larger Kibworth Beauchamp, and lies to the north. The proposed development area, which comprises an oblong field totalling 2.2ha in size, is situated c1km to the west of the historic core of Kibworth Harcourt (Fig 1). It is bounded to the west by allotments and to the north by fields and to the south by Fleckney Road. The north-eastern corner of the field is protected grassland (0.8ha) and will not be trenched.

The proposed development area is largely flat at an average height of 125m aOD. The superficial geology of the site is classed as mid-Pleistocene Diamicton till, which overlies Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation mudstones (BGS 2018).

3.2 Archaeological and historical background

The following sites, findspots and monuments are drawn from the desk-based heritage assessment undertaken on the development area in 2015 by CgMs (Dawson 2015) and also a desk-based assessment (Crothers 2015 and 2018) for a proposed development in the field to the north of the site. Both documents utilise Leicester Historic Environment Record (HER) and available cartographic sources.

Iron Age

Geophysical survey revealed a probable Iron Age site (MLE17675, ELE7262) consisting of a series of enclosures underlying the Roman villa (MLE1767) to the north of the village. The survey also revealed a second possible sub-rectangular Iron Age enclosure immediately to the south-west (MLE17674).

Geophysical survey (Walford and Clements 2015) and subsequent trial trenching (Hewitt 2015) in a triangular field located to the north-west of the site was undertaken in 2015 by MOLA. A palimpsest of enclosures and ditches was recorded suggesting occupation of a farmstead from the mid Iron Age through to the 4th century AD.



Scale 1:2000

Site location and excavated trenches Fig 1

Roman

A Roman site was excavated to the north-east of the site between 1967 and 1969. A ditch and an L-shaped area of pebbles were recorded. During excavation of the windmill mound in the 1960s, a number of large pebbles were found with a much-worn Castor ware pottery base and a late Roman belt plate with a 'mythical dragon type beast' (MLE7857). In 1837 and 1863 a possible Roman site was excavated at The Munt, Hall Close. A stone pavement was found with several Roman artefacts, including pottery, a candlestick and a penannular brooch (MLE7858). It is possible that this site is linked with the remains found at the windmill mound (MLE1768).

Saxon and medieval

The Domesday Survey of 1086 records Kibworth Harcourt as Chiborne or Cliborne. Twelve carucates in Kibworth Harcourt were held by Robert de Vescy. In 1235-36 Richard de Harcourt held land in Kibworth from the Earl of Warwick. In 1270 Walter de Merton bought a large part of the parish of Kibworth Harcourt from Saer de Harcourt, who had been forced to sell the estate following his support for the Barons' Rebellion (VCH 1964). A large part of the parish has remained property of Merton College in Oxford to the present day (Crothers 2015).

The historic medieval core of Kibworth Harcourt lies to the east of the site. It is focussed on a motte known locally as The Munt (DLE291 and MLE1772) and the Manor House (MLE10794) in Main Street. A medieval cross once stood opposite the Manor House in the village but was taken down in 1825 (MLE1771).

During the medieval period, the site and much of the western side of Kibworth Harcourt was under plough. Ridge and furrow earthworks are known to be well preserved in areas and geophysical surveys in the field to the north (Walford 2015) have also recorded ridge and furrow.

Post-medieval

The parish was enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1779 creating small rectangular and trapezoid fields, and by the close of the 18th century most of the fields had been given over to pasture (Dawson 2015).

Previous fieldwork

The western side of Kibworth has been subject to extensive archaeological evaluation over the past two decades. In 1999 GSB Prospection surveyed two blocks, one situated in the field immediately to north of the site and the second encompassing c1.3ha in the western field of the development area (GSB1999). The field to the north was later subject to a full geophysical survey in 2015 by MOLA Northampton (Walford 2015). This survey together with the subsequent trial trenching (Clements 2015) identified the remains of a track or driveway flanked on both sides by parallel linear ditches, spaced c20m apart. This trackway corresponds with a curving feature seen on aerial photographs and on the site as extant earthworks. The anomalies are all crossed by other sets of parallel linear anomalies representing traces of medieval to early post-medieval ridge and furrow. The line of the driveway appeared to have influenced the layout of the medieval fields, being fossilized as a boundary between two furlongs of ridge and furrow.

Prior to the commissioning of trial trench evaluation, the area was subject to geophysical surveys. The surveys undertaken by GSB Prospection (1999) and by Stratascan (Richardson 2016) identified linear responses suggesting a continuation of

the trackway and enclosure system recorded in the field to the north by MOLA (Walford 2015).

The trial trench evaluation of the fields immediately to the north (Chinnock 2016) determined that the trackway visible on the geophysical survey, as well as other ditches and pits were present. This trackway continued into the next land parcel to the north, situated east of Warwick Road (Clements 2015). Recent excavation in advance of development also uncovered Late Iron Age enclosures radiating from the trackway as well as a hoard of iron objects and Saxon inhumations radiocarbon dated to the 7th-8th centuries AD (Shipley forthcoming).

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

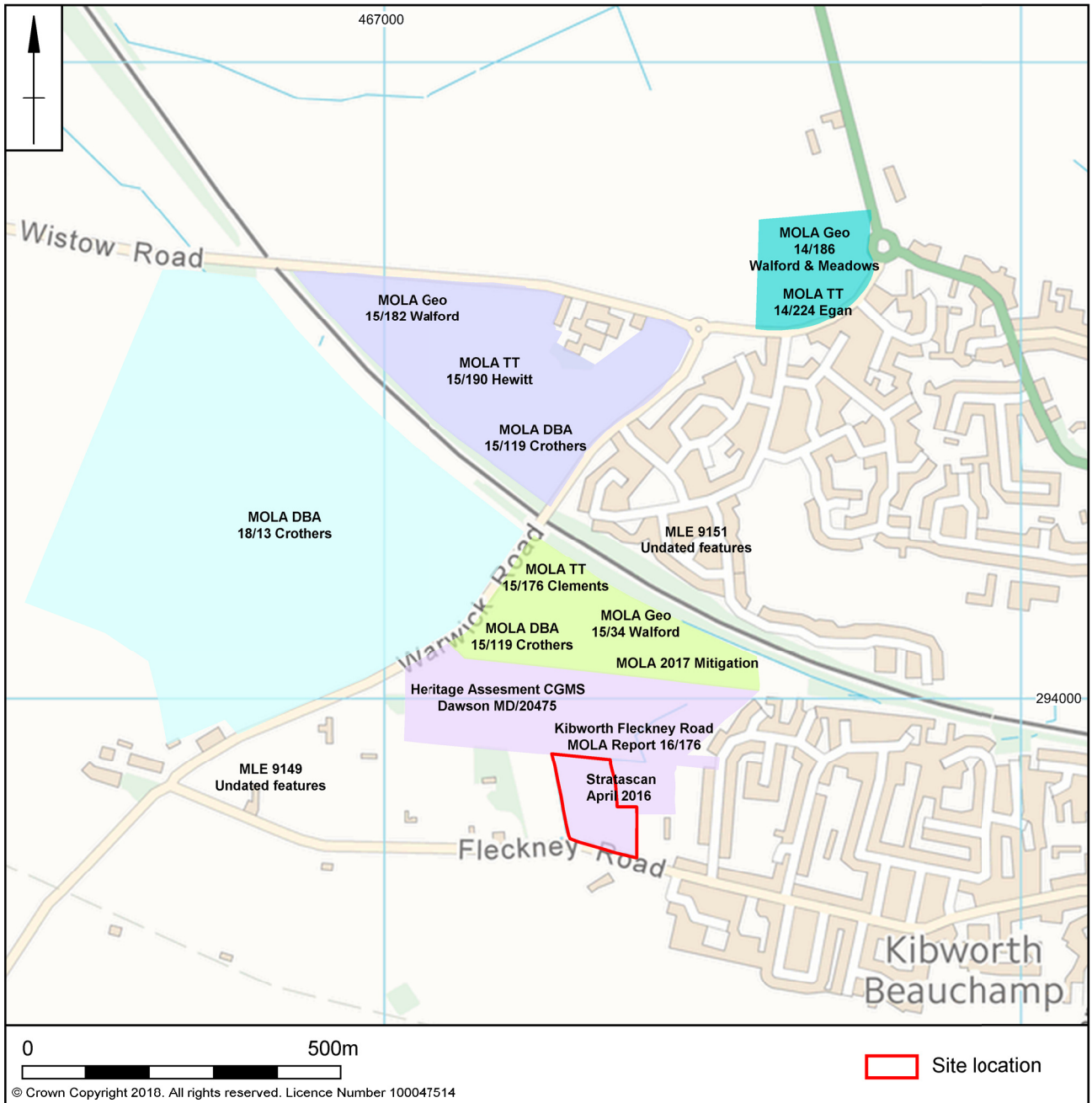
An area of the proposed property development measuring 1.2ha was subject to archaeological evaluation through trial trench excavation. A sample of 2% was required by the Senior Planning Archaeologist. Six trenches, 30m long and 1.8m wide, were excavated in the area. Trenches 4 and 5 were intended to target an anomaly identified in the geophysical data and the other trenches were a sample of the remaining area. Trench 6 was shortened by 10m at its north-western end due to the presence of standing water in the field.

All archaeological deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were fully recorded, following standard MOLA procedures (MOLA 2014). All deposits were given a separate context number in a sequence assigned to each trench. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation.

All trench locations were recorded using Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$. A full digital photographic record was maintained. The field data from the evaluation has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing and will be archived under Accession Code X.A91.2016.

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (2018).

All trenches were backfilled with their up-cast material and compacted by the mechanical excavator. Those trenches cut through extant ridge and furrow earthworks were reinstated as best as was practicable.



Scale 1:10000

Previous archaeological and principle sites Fig 2

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The general stratigraphic sequence remained broadly similar across the field (Fig 3)



Trench 2, representative section, looking north Fig 3

The natural substrate largely comprised light brown-orange silty clay. Subsoil was present in all of the excavated trenches to varying depths and was characterised as a light or mid grey-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones throughout. The topsoil was described as friable dark grey-brown sandy clay with rare small stones and frequent root disturbance throughout. Full details of the depth of each soil horizon can be found in Appendix A.

Layers of modern debris, including red brick, tile and plastic, were located in Trenches 4 and 5 in the areas corresponding with geophysical anomaly shown during the survey (Walford 2015). They ranged from 0.50 to 0.40m thick and do not appear to correspond with any structures that can be identified from historical mapping.

No other archaeological features or finds were identified in any of the trenches.

7 DISCUSSION

The negative results of the trial trench evaluation suggest that the field investigated during this phase of work lay outside of the area of previous settlement activity to the north and north-west, indicating activity of the Iron Age to Medieval periods took place in a linear band to the south of Kibworth Harcourt and did not extend further south than the remains previously identified in the first phase of excavation at Fleckney Road (Chinnock 2016). The absence of features corresponded with the results of the geophysical survey (Walford 2015).

Layers of modern building debris were identified in trenches in the northern central part of the field. Historic mapping ranging back to 1886 does not indicate the presence of buildings at the site and the layers probably represent isolated episodes of dumping in recent times.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BGS 2018 available at: www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index/html, accessed 15/03/2018
- CIfA 2014 *Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- Clements, P, 2015 *Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land east of Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire, August 2015*, MOLA Northampton report, **15/176**
- Chinnock, C, 2016 *Trial trench evaluation on land north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire, August 2016*, MOLA Northampton report **16/176**
- Cooper, N J, (ed) 2006 *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: an archaeological resource assessment and research agenda*, University of Leicester/ English Heritage
- Crothers, M E, 2015 *Archaeological desk-based heritage assessment of Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire*, MOLA Northampton report, **15/07**
- Crothers, M E, 2018 *Archaeological desk-based heritage assessment of land west of Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire, February 2018*, MOLA Northampton report, **18/13**
- Dawson, M, 2015 *Heritage Assessment: Fleckney Road, Kibworth, Leicestershire*, CgMs Consulting **MD/20475**
- DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government
- GSB 1999 *Geophysical survey: Kibworth, Leicestershire*, GSB Prospection Report **99/27**
- HE 2015 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* Historic England Procedural Document
- Hewitt, G, 2015 *Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire*, MOLA Northampton report, **15/190**
- Knight, D, Vyner, B, and Allen, C, 2012 *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*, Nottingham Archaeology Monographs, **6**
- MOLA 2014 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, MOLA Northampton
- MOLA 2018 *Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological trial trench evaluation on land to the north of Fleckney Road, Kibworth, Leicestershire*, MOLA Northampton
- Richardson, T, 2016 *Geophysical Survey Report, Fleckney Road, Kibworth, Leicestershire*, Stratascan report, **J9800**
- Shiple, A, forthcoming, *Land off Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire*, MOLA Northampton
- VCH 1964 *A History of the County of Leicester*, **V**, Victoria County History

Walford, J, 2015 *Archaeological geophysical survey of land east of Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire*, MOLA Northampton report, **15/34**

Walford, J, and Clements, P, 2015 *Archaeological geophysical survey of land west of Warwick Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire*, MOLA Northampton report, **15/182**

MOLA

12 April 2018

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
1	N-S 30mx 1.8m	467372 293809	125.80m	125.30m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown clay loam	0.25m	-
102	Subsoil	Light grey-brown silty clay, infrequent small stones	0.25m	-
103	Natural	Mid orange-grey-brown silty clay with small to medium-sized stones and patches of chalk flecks.	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
2	E-W 30mx 1.8m	467306 293808	125.23m	124.68m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown clay loam	0.30m	-
202	Subsoil	Light orange-grey-brown silty clay	0.25m	-
203	Natural	Light grey silty clay containing small stones, flecks of chalk and patches of orange-brown sandy loam	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
3	N-S 30mx 1.8m	467292 293820	124.61m	124.16m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay	0.25m	-
302	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.20m	-
303	Natural	Light brown-orange silty clay very stony with a path of orange-brown sandy loam	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
4	N-S 30mx 1.8m	467345 293837	124.01m	122.96m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
401	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sandy clay	0.20m	-
402	Subsoil	Mid brown-orange silty clay	0.35m	-
403	Modern Building Debris	Mid brown-grey mix of natural and subsoil	0.50m	- Bricks, tiles, plastics, etc.
404	Natural	Light brown-orange silty clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
5	E-W 30mx 1.8m	467303 293883	123.17m	122.02m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
501	Topsoil	Light grey silty clay loam	0.20m	-
502	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.15m	
503	Modern Building Debris	Mid grey-brown mix of natural and subsoil	0.40m	- Bricks, tiles, plastics etc.
504	Cut of (503)	Shallow edges and flattish base	0.40m	-
505	Natural	Light brown-orange silty clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	height of natural
6	N-S 20mx 1.8m	467286 293865	123.46m	123.11m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
601	Topsoil	Light grey sandy clay loam	0.15m	-
602	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.20m	
603	Natural	Light brown-orange silty clay	-	-



MOLA
Kent House
30 Billing Road
Northampton
NN1 5DQ
01604 809 800
www.mola.org.uk