



**Archaeological earthwork survey on land
at Westgate Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire
October 2016**

Report No. 16/188

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Accession code: TBC

Report No. 16/188

Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	26/10/2016		Anthony Maull		Draft for client review

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-346352	
Project title	Archaeological earthwork survey on land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham, October 2016		
Short description	MOLA Northampton was commissioned to carry out an archaeological earthwork survey on land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham. The survey identified four rectangular or sub-square raised platforms which are likely to define medieval and post-medieval tenement plots and yard areas. To the north and west of these earthworks were the remnants of medieval ridge and furrow, post enclosure field boundary, drainage ditches and the former course of a stream bed visible as an 'Oxbow'.		
Project type	Archaeological earthwork survey		
Site Status	-		
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Davies & Reeves 2015) DBA (Dawson 2015), trial trenching Phase 1 (Hewitt, Simmonds and Dawson 2016)		
Current land use	Pasture		
Future work	Phase 2 trenching		
Monument type and period	Medieval and post-medieval		
Significant finds	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address	Land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham		
Post code	N/A		
OS co-ordinates	NGR SP 70319 87206		
Area (sq m/ha)	1.8ha		
Height aOD	90m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator			
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Carol Simmonds, MOLA Northampton		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull, MOLA Northampton		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	18/10/2016		
End date	18/10/2016		
ARCHIVES	Location	Contents	
Physical	Accession code TBC		
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Survey data, report, photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological earthwork survey on land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire October 2016		
Serial title & volume	Report 16/188		
Author(s)	Carol Simmonds		
Page numbers	31 pages text and illustrations		
Date	October 2016		

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APPENDIX 1: EARTHWORK SURVEY (GAZETEER)

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Archaeological earthwork survey on land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire October 2016

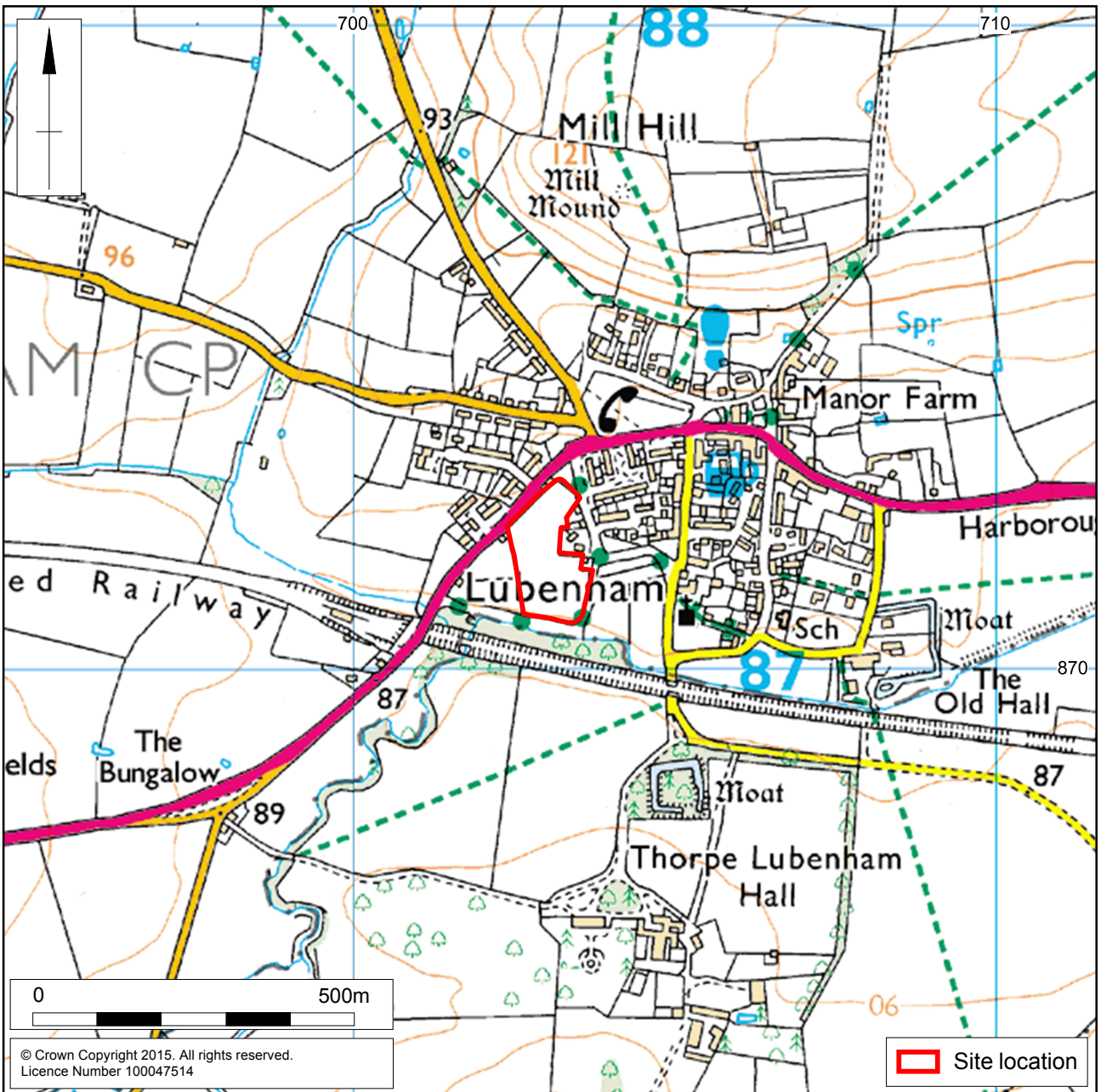
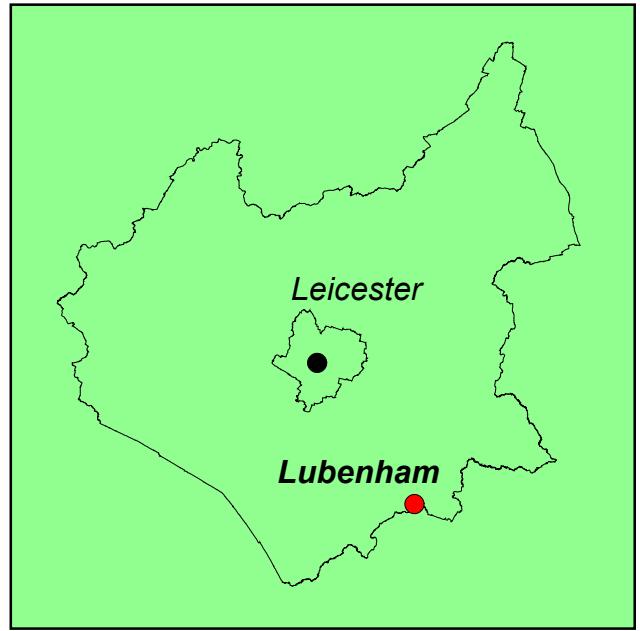
Abstract

MOLA Northampton was commissioned to carry out an archaeological earthwork survey on land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham. The survey identified four rectangular or sub-square raised platforms which are likely to define medieval and post-medieval tenement plots and yard areas. To the north and west of these earthworks were the remnants of medieval ridge and furrow, post enclosure field boundary, drainage ditches and the former course of a stream bed visible as an 'Oxbow'.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was been commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out archaeological earthwork survey of c.1.8ha of land at Westgate Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire (NGR SP 70319 87206, Fig 1).

An initial stage of evaluation comprising geophysical survey (Davies and Reeves 2015) and the excavation of seven trial trenches (Hewitt, Simmonds and Dawson 2016) took place during 2015 and 2016 respectively. During the course of the trial trenching LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) imagery was obtained for the site. This imagery clearly showed upstanding earthwork features including ridge and furrow and possible platforms. Following a recommendation for planning approval for residential development, the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council requested additional archaeological evaluation of the site. The earthwork survey forms part of this second stage of evaluation together with a further stage of trial trenching which will be undertaken at a later date.



Scale 1:10,000

Site Location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

Topography and geology

The proposed development area comprises c 1.8ha of pasture (Fig 2), to the west of Market Harborough in the south of Leicestershire. The north-west boundary is formed by Theddingworth Road, to the west by Westgate Lane and a trackway known as Washpit Lane. To the south lies the River Welland and the former Stamford to Rugby railway line. Small arable lands form the border to the west.



The survey in progress, looking north Fig 2

The development area is on the first terrace of the River Welland valley and is mainly flat at an elevation of c 90m (aOD). The underlying geology for the site is mapped as undifferentiated Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone formation (BGS 2016)

Archaeological and historical background

The summary of the historical and archaeological background is drawn from the data discussed in the desk-based heritage assessment, which utilised the Leicester Historic Environment Record (LHER) (Dawson 2015).

Within the boundaries of the site there are recorded remains of ridge and furrow cultivation, however, no undesignated or designated heritage assets were shown to be present within the development area.

Neolithic and Iron Age enclosures and settlements have been identified at Lubenham Hill (MLE 7197 20198/9) over 1.2km to the east of the site. Evidence for Roman occupation is defined by possible settlement remains on the southern side of the river (NHER222). Roman pottery has been recovered close to the parish church of All Saints (MLE7866).

The village of Lubenham appears in the Domesday Book as Lubanham (Lubba's farm) with a population of at least 45. The development area is to the west of the Anglo-Saxon (Ekwall 1980, 306) core of occupation. There is the suggestion that the village may have once been larger as earthworks to the east of the village suggest the village may have contracted at some point in the past. Medieval pottery has been recovered throughout the village, (MLE 1892, 1893, 9316). There are two moated sites within the area Thorpe Lubenham Manor House (HER4206) to the south of the river and the 16th-century Old Hall (HER1896) to the east of the site. Evidence of ridge and furrow within the development area suggests it may have been a part of the open field system for the village during this period.

Parts of the parish were enclosed in 1604 and subsequently in 1776. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map dated 1886 shows that the development area was once part of the farmland to the west of Lubenham.

Previous archaeological work

A geophysical survey was undertaken by Stratascan in 2015 (Davies and Reeves 2015) the survey tentatively identified anomalies of archaeological origin along the eastern boundary of the site. The western and northern parts had remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation as well as a former field boundary.

Following the geophysical survey, an initial phase of trial trench evaluation was undertaken by MOLA (Hewitt, Simmonds and Dawson 2016). Observation of the site during the trenching and subsequent analysis of the LiDAR data (Fig 3) indicated that remains of the medieval village, including platforms and tenements extended across the eastern side of the proposed development. The western and northern parts had the remains of medieval and post-medieval cultivation strips (ridge and furrow).



Detail of the LiDAR survey (sp7087 DTM1m, HS A315 H35) Fig 3

3 OBJECTIVES

It was the principal aim of the archaeological evaluation to quantify the quality and extent of the archaeological resource.

The programme of archaeological work was designed to gather sufficient information to generate a reliable predictive model of the location, extent, character, date, state of preservation and depth of important archaeological remains within the application area. Specifically this will be through the listed aims and objectives, which are as follows:

- to record the extant earthworks visible on the site;
- to establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site;
- to recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

Specific research objectives will be drawn as necessary from regional research frameworks documents (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012) as relevant depending upon the results of the evaluation.

4 METHODOLOGY

A detailed measured earthwork survey was undertaken in October 2016; surveying conditions were good over the survey zone. At the time of survey, a small flock of sheep were grazing in the field (Fig 2). The works were undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (MOLA 2016) and national guidelines (EH 2007).

A measured survey of earthworks and natural slopes was undertaken by means of electronic instruments (Fig 3). They included a Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS) to a 3D accuracy of +/- 0.05m (using SMARTNET real-time corrections).

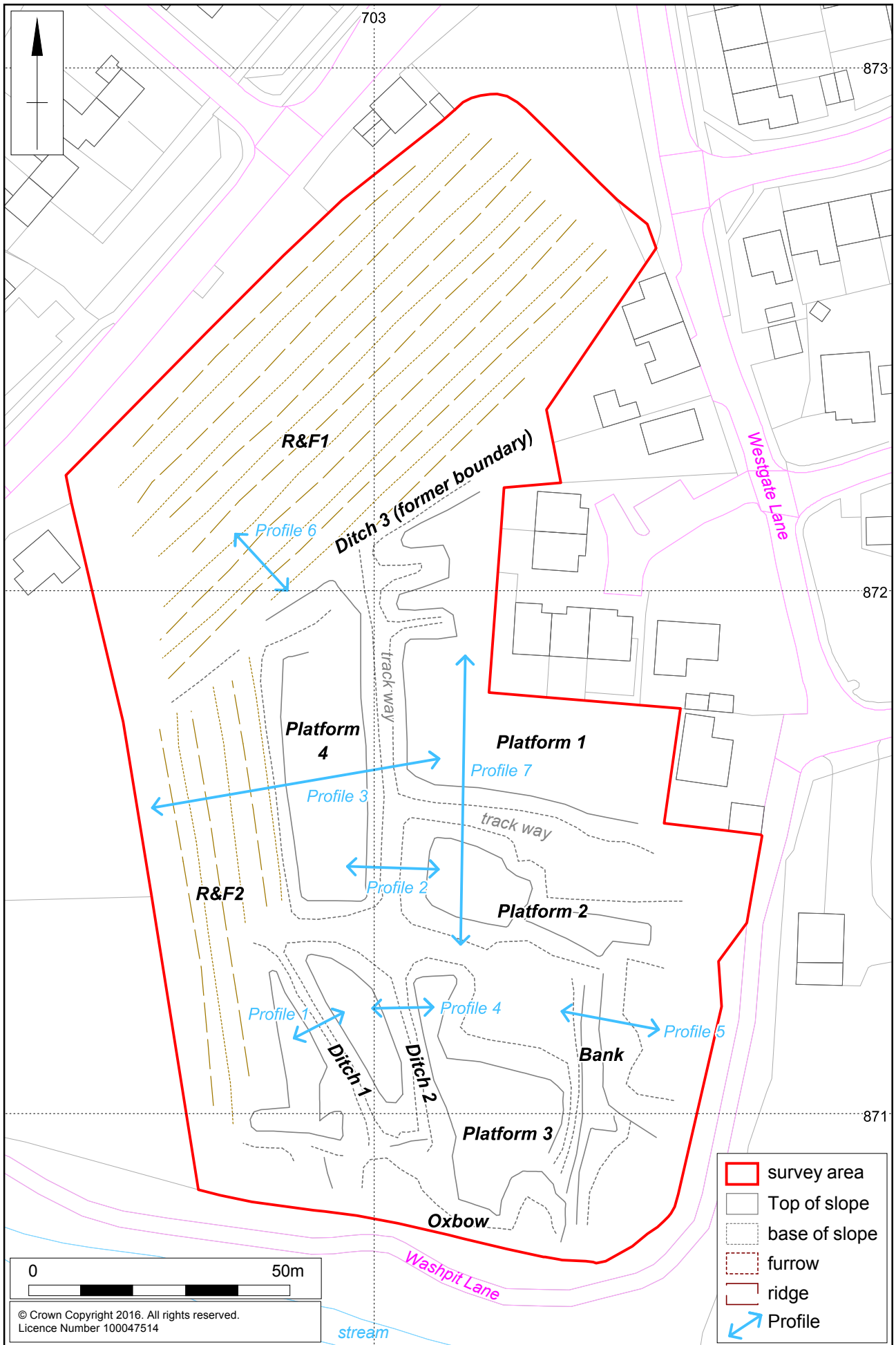


The survey in progress, using a Leica Viva GPS Fig 4

The features were surveyed relative to Ordnance Survey National Grid; levels were related to Ordnance Survey datum. The tops of the ridges and bases of the furrows were surveyed, alongside the tops and bottoms of slopes (for headlands) in order to generate a series of line (Fig 5) and hachure plans (Fig 6). An interpretive plan of the remains is presented in Fig 7. These were supplemented by a series of profiles (Fig 8). GPS survey data was exported and processed in AutoCAD and in MapInfo. General photographs of the survey area and surveyed features were taken from a variety of directions using a digital camera. A record of photographs taken was entered on a cross-referenced index sheet.

Prior to the works and to inform the earlier phase of trial trenching MOLA Northampton obtained LiDAR (Light Detecting and Ranging) data. This earthwork survey was requested to 'ground truth' the LiDAR results and provide contextual interpretation for the proposed development.

Detailed descriptions and photographs are included as Appendix 1.



Scale 1:1,000

The survey results Fig 5

5 THE EARTHWORK SURVEY

In general, the survey were undertaken in sunny to overcast conditions with good surface visibility. The backfilled trial trenches were only slightly visible as slight depressions on the surface.

The survey identified earthworks (Fig 5, 6, 7 and 8) which form the remnants of four possible building platforms or yard areas (Platforms 1, 2 3 and 4) and associated features (Bank), ridge and furrow field cultivation (R&F1, R&F2), drainage features (Ditches 1 and 2) and later field boundaries (Ditch 3). The earthworks are generally clearly defined and of fair to good condition. The southern part of the site was observed as lower lying and characterised by a large irregular area of natural erosion defining the northern bank of a stream (Oxbow), the current course of which lies c.20m to the south and outside of the application area.

Platforms

Four rectangular earthwork platforms (Platforms 1, 2, 3 and 4; Figs 5, 6, 7 and 8) are present in the central and eastern part of the survey area. Platforms 1 to 3 fronted onto or were close to Westgate Lane/Washpit Lane with Platform 4 situated to the rear. In general they are characterised as areas of raised flat ground with the edges defined by shallow to gradual breaks of slope. No visible earthworks were located within the boundaries of each platform.

The northernmost platform, Platform 1 (Fig 8, Profiles 3 and 7) forms the south-western corner of a rectangular earthwork, measuring 60m north to south, 71m east to west, average height of 0.20m. It is defined on its southern and western edges by a gradual incline, sloping away down from the platform, apart from occasional small undulations probably from sheep. It continues eastwards under the modern housing fronting onto Westgate Lane.

Platform 2 (Fig 8, Profiles 2 and 7), separated from Platform 1 by a dip, is rectangular in plan with a bulbous western end, 54m long (east to west), 12m -20m wide and 0.30m high.

Platform 3 is a large irregular shaped earthwork platform situated on south-eastern side of proposed development area. It is set slightly further back off Washpit Lane compared with Platform 2. It has a flattish top and its edges were defined with shallow to gradual breaks of slope. It is truncated on its western side by Ditch 2. Platform 3 measures 30m east to west, 31m- 43m north to south and is 0.26m high. Observations suggest that it was connected to Platform 2 by a low earthwork Bank. This bank, aligned north to south is 46m long, with a maximum width of 11m and 0.10m to 0.30m high. Its western side has a very gradual slope, barely visible from Platform 3; this is contrasted with the eastern side where the slope is much better defined.

Platform 4 (Fig 8, Profiles 2 and 3) is rectangular, north to south aligned raised earthwork between Platforms 1 and 2 to the east and R&F2 to the west. It is 57m long (north to south), 21m wide and up to 0.12m- 0.17m high. It has a flat top with, clearly defined shallow, gradual slopes. Its northern edge has been disturbed by Ditch 3.

Between Platforms 1, 2 and 4 were linear flat-bottomed hollows (Fig 8, Profiles 2, 3 and 7) between 2.8m and 10m wide. It is likely that they were the hollow or track ways linking the plots with Westgate Lane to the east. It is possible that the north to south track way between Platforms 1 and 2 may have continued to the south to link with Ditch 2, allowing access to the Oxbow/ stream.

Ridge and furrow

There are two distinct areas of ridge and furrow (R&F1 and R&F2; Figs 5, 6, 7 and 8) surviving as low earthworks. The relationship between the two sets has been disturbed by Ditch 3, the former field boundary.

R&F1 (Fig 8, Profile 6) comprises a series of north-east to south-west aligned cultivation earthworks located in the northern part of the proposed development area. There are the remnants of up to six broad, slightly rounded ridges and flattened furrows which are clearly visible on the ground and on the LiDAR imagery (Fig 3). Within the survey area the surviving length is 120m. The average width of ridges is 3.5m, height is c.0.15m and ridges are between 6m and 7m apart. The eastern and northern edges of R&F1 have been cut away by the modern bounds of the roads.

R&F2 (Fig 8, Profile 3) lies to the south of R&F1 and comprises the remnants of north, north-west to south, south-east cultivation earthworks located in the western part of the proposed development area. The LiDAR imagery clearly suggests that the strips continued westwards into the adjacent field. The surveyed earthworks comprise up to three lines of ridges and furrows with broad flattened profiles. The surviving length within the survey area is 80m, but there are longer strips in the adjacent field. The ridges have an average width of 3.5m, are 0.13m high and are between 6m and 8m apart.

Post-medieval field boundary (Ditch 3)

A linear (Ditch 3), north-east to south-west depression is visible as a clear break/intrusion between R&F1 and R&F2, c.85m long, 4m wide and c.0.05m deep. It is much more clearly defined at its north-eastern end where it is defined as a shallow break of slope interrupting the northern edge of Platforms 1 and 4. A field boundary in this location is present on the historic mapping (Hewitt, Simmonds and Dawson 2016).

The 'Oxbow' and drainage ditches (Ditch 1 and Ditch 2)

Two large irregular shaped depressions noted at extreme southern part of the development area, adjacent to current field boundary. The Oxbow measures 45m long (east to west), 15m wide and is between 0.50 and 0.90m deep. It has gradual to steep sloping sides with very sharp breaks of slope. Merging into the Oxbow feature are two ditches (Ditch 1 and Ditch 2), the slopes at the southern end of the ditches suggest that they fed into the Oxbow to the south.

Ditch 1 (Fig 8, Profile 1) is the remnants of linear north-west to south-east aligned hollow/ditch located outside of area of Platforms 1-4 and east of R&F2. Gradual to steep sloped with concave base. It is 45m long, 6m wide and up to 0.20m deep.

Approximately 8m to the east is Ditch 2 (Fig 8, Profile 4), aligned north, north-west to south, south-east. It is at least 35m long, 6.4m wide and 0.30m deep. The ditch has a concave base rising to gradual to steep sloping sides with sharp breaks of slope. It is possible that this linked with the north to south track way between Platforms 1 and 4.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological earthwork survey of the surviving remains at Westgate Lane, Lubenham recorded features that are likely to be part of the medieval and post-medieval village as well as later intrusion. The features represent the final use of the site after clearance of any structures. All the features with the exception of the 'Bank' are visible on the LiDAR survey (Fig 3).

This part of the village appears to have an informal grid system perpendicular to Westgate Lane, with four occupation areas or yards defined by platforms, and separated by linear hollows which may have been tracks. Two platforms (Platforms 1 and 2) may have been building platforms, as they fronted onto Westgate Lane. The first stage of trial trenching (Hewitt, Simmonds and Dawson 2016) Platform 3, to the south of Platform 2 appears to have been adversely truncated by drainage (Ditches 1 and 2) and also by the erosion of the stream bed (Oxbow). Platform 3 is also set back further to the road perhaps suggesting it was a yard or garden area. To the west of Platform 1 was a clearly defined rectangular Platform (4)

Contraction of the settlement from this area is likely to have taken place after 1835 on the basis of the evidence recovered during the first phase trial trenching and analysis of the historic maps (Hewitt, Simmonds and Dawson 2016). The area would have become open land/ pasture in the post-medieval period.

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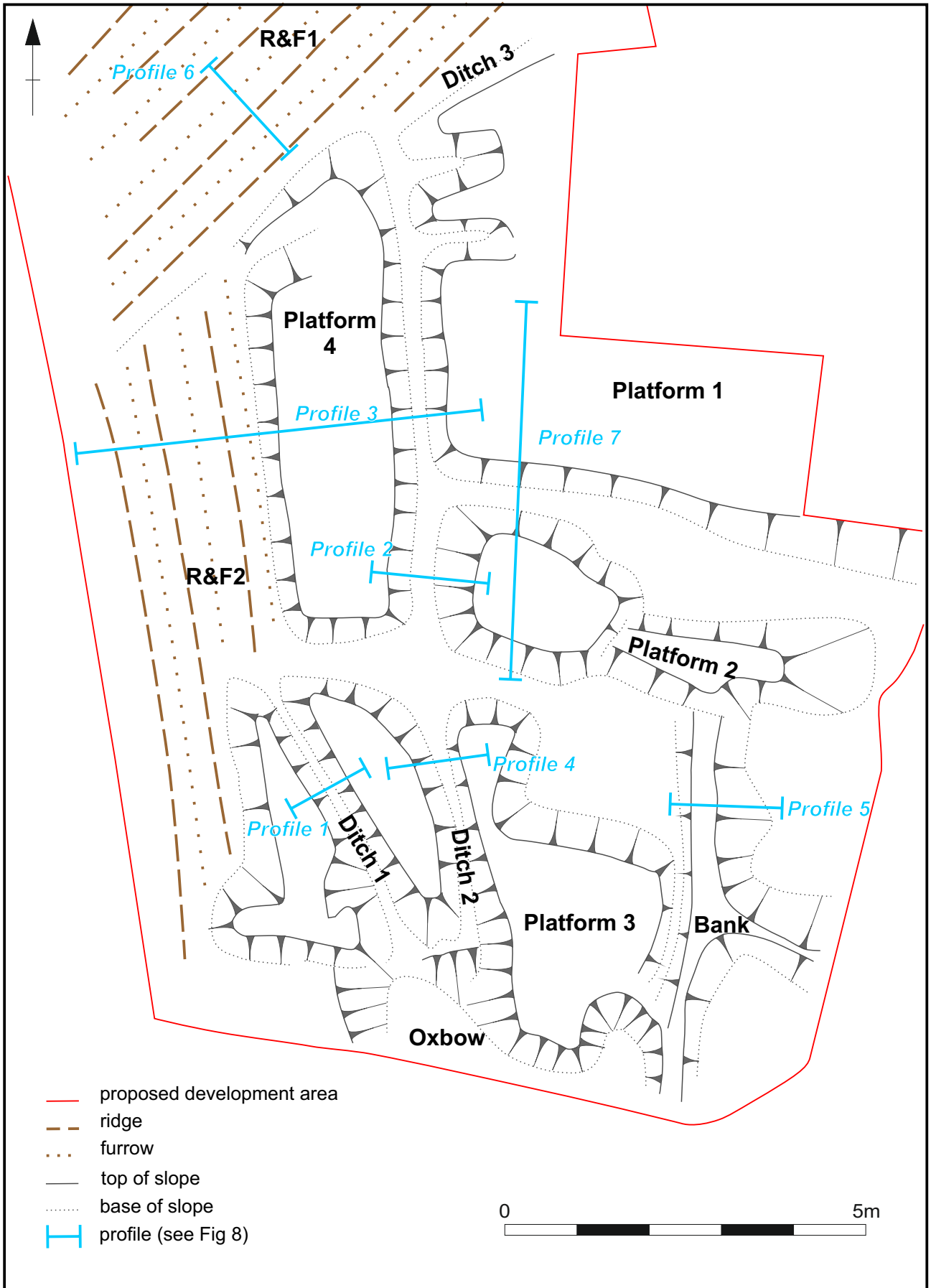
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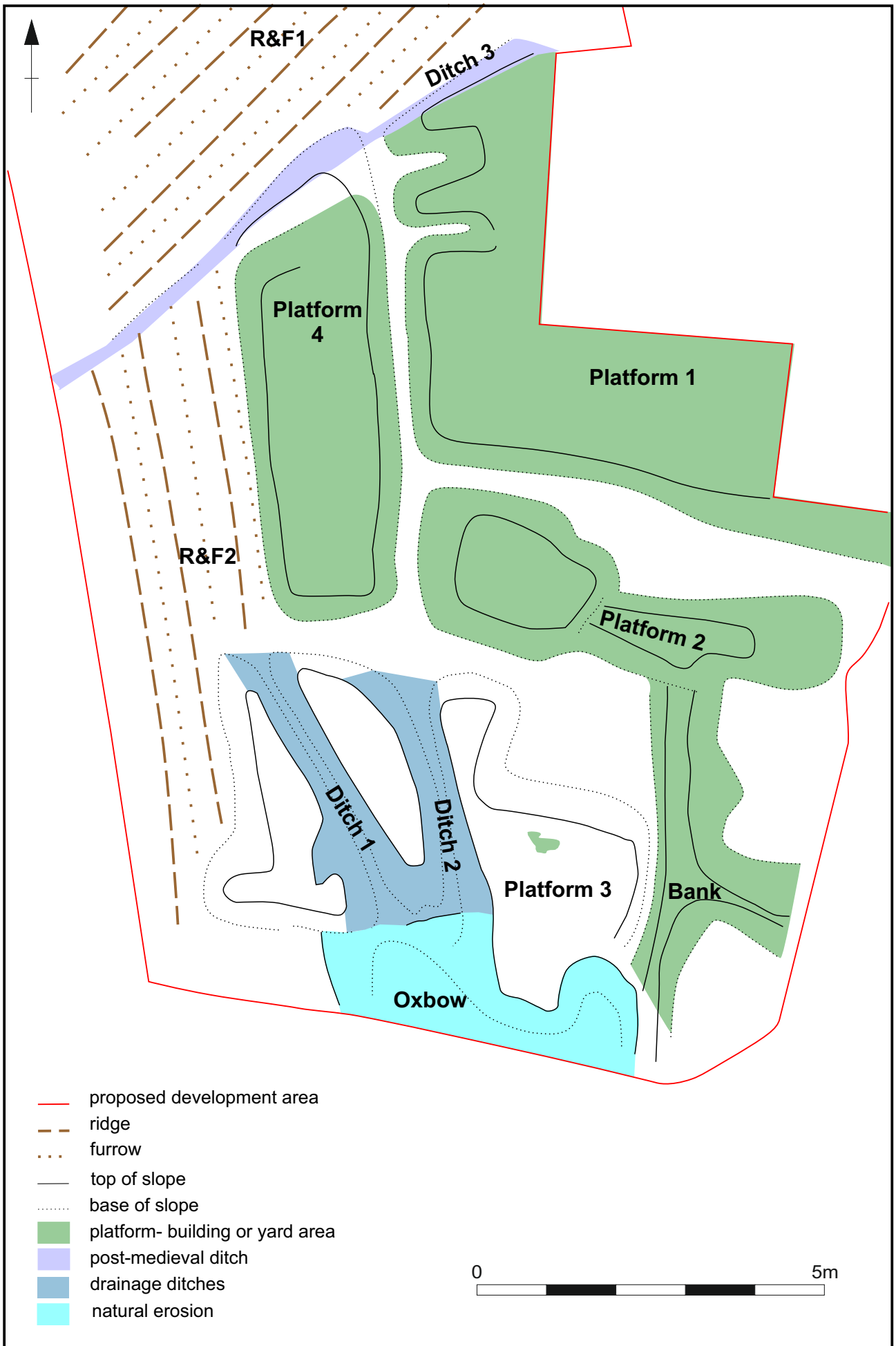
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October 2016

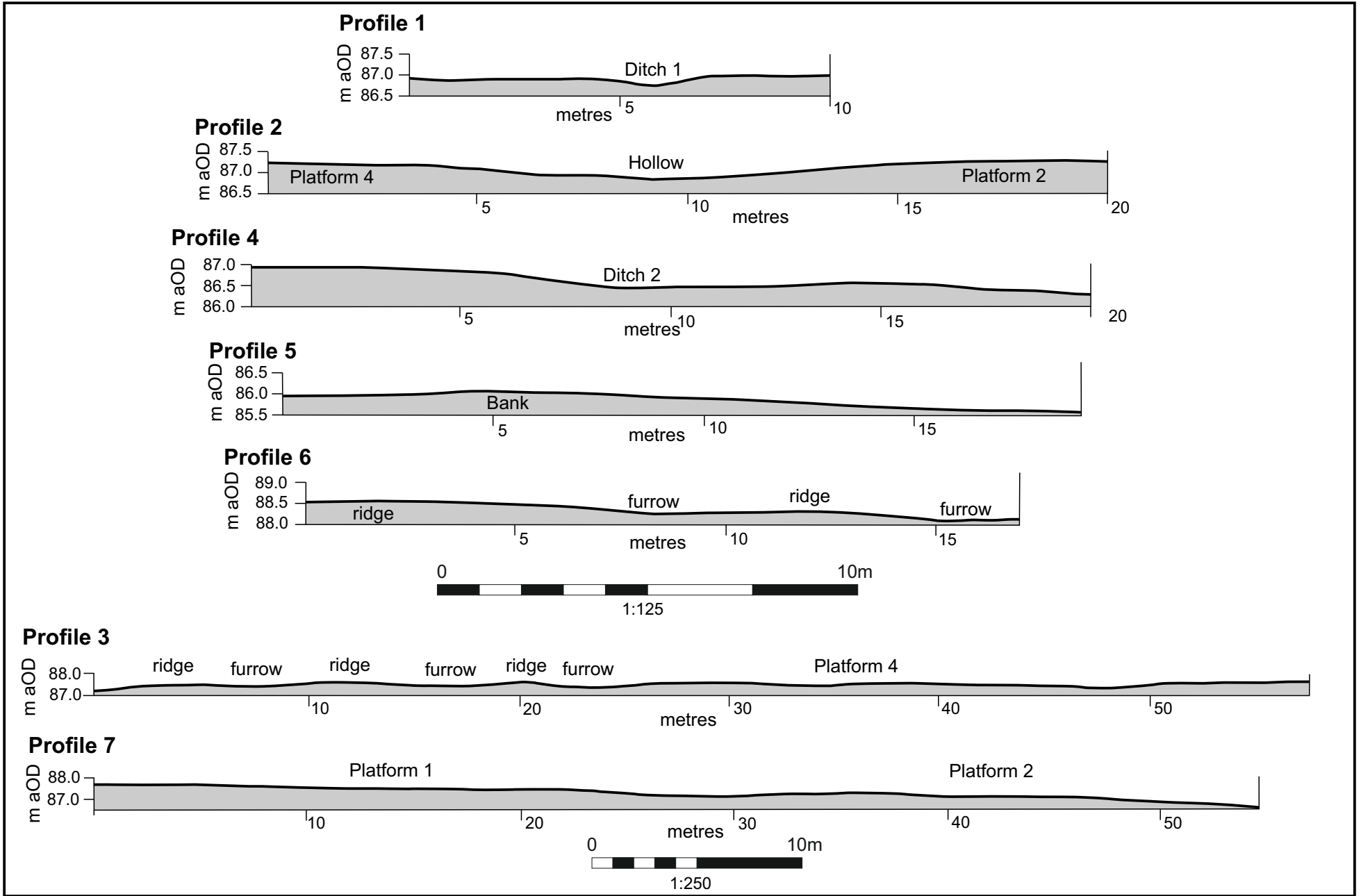




Scale 1:750 (A4)

Interpretive plan of the earthwork features

Fig 7



APPENDIX 1: EARTHWORK SURVEY (SHORT ENTRY GAZETTEER)

Feature #	Short description	Associated features	Associated evaluation trenches
Platform 1	Large rectangular raised platform, roughly east to west.	Ditch 3	Tr 3 and Tr 4
Platform 2	Located south of Platform 1. Roughly rectangular raised earthwork platform, east to west.	Bank	Tr 5
Platform 3	Located south of Platform 2 and heavily disturbed by the oxbow and also by Ditch 2. Irregular raised earthwork platform.	Bank, Ditch 2, Oxbow	
Platform 4	Located west of Platform 1 and Platform 2, rectangular raised platform aligned north to south.	Ditch 3	
R&F1	Located in northern part of survey area. Aligned north-east to south-west.	Ditch 3,	Tr 1 and Tr 2
R&F2	Located in western part of survey area. Aligned roughly north to south.	Platform 4	
Bank	Linear, low relief earthwork, aligned north to south. Linking Platform 2 and Platform 3	Platform 2 Platform 3	
Ditch 1	Linear ditch, north-west to south-east	Oxbow	
Ditch 2	Linear ditch, north, north-west to south, south-east	Oxbow, Bank, Platform 3	
Ditch 3	Probable former field boundary on historic maps. Has disturbed R&F1 and Platforms 1 and 4. Linear, north-east to south-west.	R&F1, R&F2, Platform 1, Platform 4	
Oxbow	Erosion of north side of stream. Irregular deeply incised hollows.	Platform 3, Ditch 1, Ditch 2, Bank	

APPENDIX 1: EARTHWORK SURVEY (GAZETTEER)

Feature number: Platform 1



The southern edge of Platform 1, looking north

DESCRIPTION

Part of the south-western corner of a large sub-rectangular earthwork located within the central/eastern part of the proposed development area, continuing beneath the present housing estate.

It is a generally flat raised earthwork platform with occasional small undulations, probably the result of sheep erosion and disturbance from the housing estate. It has a gradual to sharp break of slope with better preservation in the south-western corner of the earthwork.

It measures c.60m north to south, 71m east to west and is 0.20m high.

It is located north of Platform 2, east of Platform 4 and to the south of R&F1. Its northern edge appears to have been disturbed by Ditch 3.

INTERPRETATION

Part of large earthwork platform, possibly a house platform or yard area fronting onto Westgate Lane. Its frontage appears to have been reused at a later date by the existing properties.

CONDITION

Fair to good

RELATED FEATURES

Platform 2, Platform 4, R&F1, Ditch 3

Feature number: Platform 2



The bulbous end of Platform 2, looking east

DESCRIPTION

Remnants of approximately east to west aligned, rectangular platform earthwork with generally flattened profile, but with bulbous western side.

Length c54 east to west, 12m- 20m north to south and up to 0.30m high.

INTERPRETATION

Possibly part of medieval village remains. Perhaps a building platform.

CONDITION

Fair to good

RELATED FEATURES

Bank

Feature number: Platform 3



Platform 3, looking east

DESCRIPTION

Large irregular shaped earthwork situated on south-eastern side of proposed development area. It is 30m long (east to west), between 31m – 43m wide and up to 0.26m high. Shallow to gradual breaks of slope, sub square in plan. Truncated on its western side by Ditch 2.

INTERPRETATION

Disturbed remains of possible platform, perhaps forming yard area.

CONDITION

Poor to Fair

RELATED FEATURES

Bank, Ditch 2

Feature number: Platform 4



Platform 4, looking south

DESCRIPTION

Rectangular, north to south aligned raised earthwork situated between Platforms 1 and 2 to the east and R&F2 to the west. It is 57m long (north to south), 21m wide and up to 0.12m – 0.17m high. Flat top with shallow, clearly defined gradual slopes. Probably disturbed northern edge by Ditch 3.

INTERPRETATION

Low but clearly defined raised earthwork platform located to the rear of Platform 1. Possible yard area to the rear of frontage.

CONDITION

Fair to Good

RELATED FEATURES

Ditch 3, R&F2

Feature number: R&F1



Ridge and Furrow R&F1, looking north-east

DESCRIPTION

Series of north-east to south-west aligned cultivation earthworks located in the northern part of the proposed development area. They comprise the remnants of up to six broad, slightly rounded ridges and flattened furrows.

Minimum surviving length of R&F1 is 120m. Average width of ridges is c3.5m, height is c.0.15m and ridges are between 6m and 7m apart.

INTERPRETATION

Remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation strips.

CONDITION

Good

RELATED FEATURES

Ditch 3, R&F2, modern field boundaries

Feature number: R&F2



Ridge and Furrow R&F2, looking south, south-east

DESCRIPTION

Series of north, north-west to south, south-east cultivation earthworks located in the western part of the proposed development area. The earthworks comprise up to three lines of ridges and furrows. They have broad flattened profiles.

Minimum surviving length is 80m. Average width of ridges is c3.5m, height is c.0.13m and the ridges are between 6m and 8m apart.

INTERPRETATION

Remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation strips. LiDAR suggests that it extends further into the field to the west of the survey area.

CONDITION

Fair to good

RELATED FEATURES

Platform 4, R&F1, modern western field boundary

Feature number: Bank



The Bank, looking north-east

DESCRIPTION

Linear earthwork bank, aligned north to south linking the south-eastern corner of Platform 2 and eastern edge of Platform 3. Earthwork is low, with very gradual western slope and a slightly rounded top.

Total length is 46m, maximum width is 11m and height is 0.10m on its western edge compared with 0.30m on its eastern edge.

INTERPRETATION

Earthwork bank perhaps linking plots fronting onto Westgate Lane/ Washpit Lane.

CONDITION

Fair

RELATED FEATURES

Platform 2 and Platform 3

Feature number: Ditch 1



Ditch 1, looking south-east

DESCRIPTION

Remnants of linear north-west to south-east aligned hollow/ditch located outside of area of platforms (1-4) and east of R&F2. Gradual to steep sloped with concave base.

It is 45m long, 6m wide and up to 0.20m deep.

INTERPRETATION

Possible drainage ditch feeding into Oxbow to the south, maybe contemporary with Ditch 2 to the east.

CONDITION

Good

RELATED FEATURES

R&F2, Oxbow

Feature number: Ditch 2



Ditch 2, looking south, south-east

DESCRIPTION

Linear north, north-west to south, south-east aligned hollow/ditch located immediately west of earthworks Platforms 2 and 3. Sharp break of slope, gradual to steep sloping sides with concave base. It has a gradual slope from NNW-SSE suggesting it fed into Oxbow to the south.

At least 35m long, 6.4m wide and 0.30m deep.

INTERPRETATION

Possible drainage ditch feeding into Oxbow to the south, perhaps contemporary with Ditch 1 to the west.

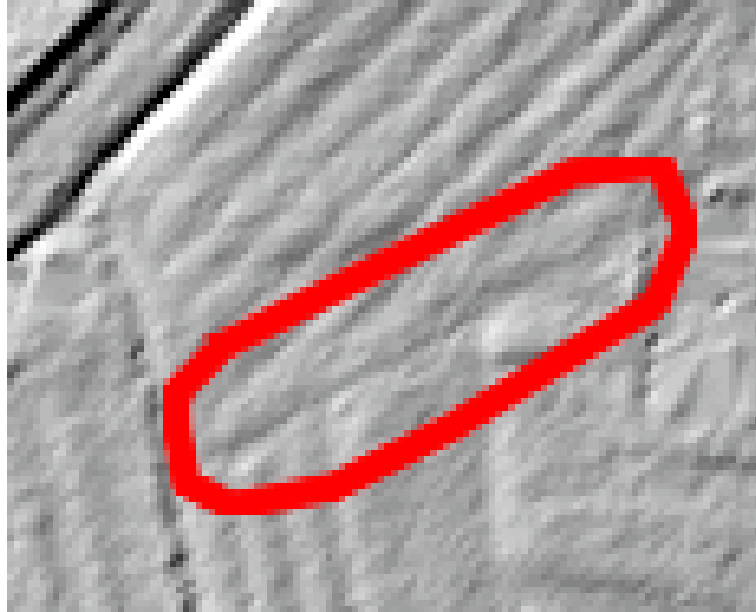
CONDITION

Good

RELATED FEATURES

Platform 2, Platform 3, Oxbow

Feature number: Ditch 3



Detail of LiDAR data (SP7087 DTM 1m, HS A315, H35) with Ditch 3 circled

DESCRIPTION

Linear, north-east to south-west on the same line as modern plot boundary. Visible as a clear break/intrusion between R&F1 and R&F2. Much more clearly defined at its north-eastern end where it is defined as a shallow break of slope interrupting the northern edge of Platforms 1 and 4.

It is c.85m long, 4m wide and c.0.05m deep.

It is clearly visible on the LiDAR.

INTERPRETATION

Remnants of former post-enclosure field boundary visible on historic mapping, perhaps was originally a hedgerow planted in a shallow trench rather than a ditched boundary. . Probably followed the line of the headland between R&F1 and R&F2.

CONDITION

Fair

RELATED FEATURES

R&F1, R&F2, Platform 1

Feature number: Oxbow



The Oxbow during the survey, looking east

DESCRIPTION

Two large irregular shaped depressions noted at extreme southern part of the development area, adjacent to current field boundary. It measures 45m long (east to west), 15m wide and is between 0.50m and 0.90m deep.

Gradual to steep sloping sides with very sharp breaks of slope.

INTERPRETATION

Possible course of former stream with erosion of northern bank.

CONDITION

Good

RELATED FEATURES

Platform 3, Ditch 1 and Ditch 2



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