



**Archaeological observation, investigation, recording
analysis and publication of works at
4 Moor Cottages, Nags Head Lane
Hargrave
Northamptonshire**

Report No. 19/80

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-363038	
Project title	4 Moor Cottages, Nags Head, Hargrave		
<p>MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a watching brief at o4 Moor Cottages for residential re-development. No archaeological remains were found on the site which comprised of house footings and service trenches for a single residential building.</p>			
Project type	Watching Brief		
Site status	None		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Housing		
Development type	Housing		
Future work	None required		
Monument type/period	None		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	4 Moor Cottages, Nags Head, Hargrave		
OS coordinates	TL 03869 70819		
Area (sq m/ha)	c0.06ha		
Height aOD	c81m		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project Brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council Senior Archaeology Officer		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Project Director/ Manager	Paul Thompson, MOLA		
Project Supervisor	Paul Sharrock, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	Mrs Maria Bray		
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Start date (dd-mm-yyyy)	12-07-2019		
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Archaeological observation, investigation, recording analysis and publication of works at 4 Moor Cottages, Nags Head Lane Hargrave Northamptonshire

ABSTRACT

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a watching brief at 4 Moor Cottages during groundworks for residential re-development. No archaeological remains were found on the site which comprised of house footings and service trenches for a single residential building.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by Mrs Maria Bray to carry out an archaeological investigation during the re-development on land at 4 Moor Cottages, Nags Head Lane, Hargrave, Northamptonshire (NGR TL 03869 70819, Fig 1). The work comprised the demolition of a garage and the construction of a new dwelling, including associated works.

The archaeological watching brief requirement was outlined in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2019) and was carried out in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

The archaeological works was undertaken in compliance with the instruction from the Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological Advisor.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, geology and topography

The site lies on the north-eastern corner edge of Hargrave village, located 11km east of Rushden, Northamptonshire. The site is flat and lies at c81m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in a private garden. To the north and east the site is bordered by fields.

The geology of the site has been mapped as comprising mudstone and sedimentary bedrock of the Oxford Clay Formation. The superficial geology is Oadby Member diamicton. These deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period, the local environment was previously dominated by ice age conditions (BSG 2019).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The following historic background was informed by a search of the Northamptonshire Historical Environment Record (HER) for a 500m radius around the site, and quotes ID numbers from the HER. Hargrave (HER 1787) also fell within the Raunds Area Survey (Parry 2006), which provides a background to the development of Hargrave and the surrounding landscape. After extensive fieldwalking and targeted excavation, the project concluded that the village has grown episodically along the valley of a small tributary of the Great Ouse. Initial Iron Age and later Romano-British occupation was

abandoned in the late 2nd century AD, before the site was repopulated in the early-middle Saxon period. A separate middle Saxon “bottom” section of the village developed to the north and north-east, before being deserted in the late medieval period. Selected results from the Historic Environment Record results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Historic Environment Records around Nags Head Lane, Hargrave

HER no	Description	NGR
8212	Possible Roman settlement, Grass Moor	TL 0400 7072
ENN18328	Grass Moor (Raunds Area Survey), 1986 (Fieldwalking)	-
1784/0/0	Unstratified Neolithic axe	TL 036 705
1801/0/0	Unstratified Neolithic axe	TL 036 705
1787	VILLAGE (Late Saxon to Modern - 850 AD? to 1999 AD?)	TL 03347 70987
1787/0/4	Probable late Saxon boundary ditches, Nags Head Lane	TL 0374 7074
1791/0/2	Open Fields Project: Areas of Survival of Ridge & Furrow	TL 03880 70970
ENN106747	1 Nags Head Lane, 2012 (Trial trench)	TL 0374 7070
ENN108311	Nags Head Lane, Hargrave 2016 (Observation)	TL 0379 7084
ENN18270	Slade Bungalow, Hargrave 1996 (Earthwork survey)	TL 0345 7075
ENN18269	Slade Bungalow, Hargrave 1996 (Trial trench)	TL 0347 7073
ENN12818	Nags Head Lane, 1994 (Earthwork survey)	TL 0374 7075
ENN12819	Nags Head Lane, 1994 (Trial trench)	TL 0374 7075
DNN2492	The Nags Head Public House	TL 0369 7067

Prehistoric and Roman

Prehistoric finds comprise findspots of Neolithic axes (HER1784/0/0 and 1801/0/0). A short distance to east of the site is a possible Roman settlement identified through cropmarks comprising rectilinear enclosures and boundary ditches (HER8212). Fieldwalking found a small scatter of Roman pottery (ENN18328).

Anglo-Saxon

Fieldwalking by the Raunds Area Survey determined a significant early-middle Saxon pottery scatter around Hargrave to the west of the site (Parry 2006). Probable late Saxon boundary ditches have been identified at Nags Head Lane (HER 1787/0/4).

Medieval

Fieldwalking from the Raunds Area Survey returned a high-density scatter of medieval pottery across the north and north-east of Hargrave as well as in the survey area, which indicated a medieval sprawl along the bridleway towards Keyston to the north-east. By the late medieval period this “bottom” development was abandoned and became ploughland, based upon concentrations of medieval pottery suggesting manuring of the arable landscape (Parry 2006).

The region has also been investigated by the Midland Open Fields Project 1995-99, (Hall 2001) utilising aerial photography to identify, and further aid understanding of,

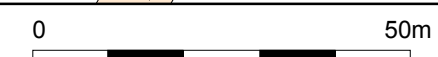
individual field systems which served the East Midlands' medieval settlements. One area of extant medieval ridge and furrow (HER 1791/0/2) was identified in the field north of the site.

Post-medieval

To the south of the site is The Nags Head Public House, a Grade II listed building dating from the mid-17th century to the 19th century (DNN2492).

Previous archaeological work

Archaeological work carried out in the vicinity of the site included a watching brief observing groundworks at Bechers, west of the site; no archaeological features or finds were recorded (ENN108311). At 1 Nags Head Lane a trial trench evaluation was carried out, which was also blank (ENN106747). South-west of the site, at Slade Bungalow of Church Street, an earthwork survey and evaluation were undertaken which revealed a group of medieval features (ENN18269-70). An earthwork survey was undertaken at Nags Head Lane comprising a low linear scarp aligns with the lane and other less well-defined features (ENN12818). Subsequent trenching revealed a series of former late Saxon boundary ditches (ENN12819).



Site location

OS OpenData contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2019

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Project aims

In order to examine the archaeological resource within the proposed development area the objectives of the investigation were to:

- Establish the level, condition and identification of any archaeological features which may have survived previous on-site construction work.
- Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits exposed during the ground works;
- Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits;
- Recover any artefacts that may assist in the development of pottery type series within the region;
- Establish the relationship of any archaeological deposits within the wider contemporary landscape;
- Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

Specific research objectives will be drawn from national and regional research frameworks documents (Cooper 2006, updated by Knight, et al 2012) as relevant depending upon the results of the evaluation.

4 METHODOLOGY

Archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication was undertaken during 12th to 24th July 2019.

The below ground works were located 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 below ground works were excavated by machine fitted with a toothless bucket, to reveal archaeological remains or where these were absent, undisturbed natural horizons.

The area on site subject to excavation was cleaned sufficiently to determine the possible presence of archaeological features. All deposits and artefacts encountered during evaluation were fully recorded, and all paperwork and plans displayed the Event Number (ENN109627) for the site. Recording followed standard fieldwork procedures (MOLA 2014). All archaeological features would have been given a separate context number. Deposits were described on pro-forma trench sheets to include details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. The field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

All works were carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* (2014a), and the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance documents (CIfA 2014b).

All works conformed to Historic England procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015). All site recording procedures are detailed in MOLA's in-house *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (MOLA 2014), which were issued to all staff.

Excavation did not proceed beyond safe working depths.

No artefacts were recovered, and no environmental samples were taken during the work.

A photographic record was maintained by high resolution digital photography exceeding 12 megapixels. Overall shots of the site were taken prior to excavation and after excavation. Overall shots of each area subject to archaeological investigation were taken together with detailed shots of individual features and feature groups as appropriate. All photographs, except general site shots or specific shots for publication included a north arrow and suitable photographic scale.

5 EXCAVATION RESULTS

5.1 General stratigraphy

The general stratigraphic sequence recorded on site comprised layers of topsoil and subsoil overlaying the natural surface and in places, made ground relating to the former garage. The topsoil, a dark brown grey loamy silt with frequent stones was consistent across the site except where made ground was present with a depth of between 0.23 and 0.30m. The subsoil, a mid-brown silty clay varied in depth to a much greater degree measuring between 0.11m towards the northern end of the footings to 0.40m at the southern end where the ground rises. The natural substrate was a mid-brown-yellow chalky clay.



Site stratigraphy Fig 2

5.2 Results of archaeological observation

During the course of the archaeological observation no features of an archaeological nature were observed. The area has previously undergone some disturbance due to the presence of the now-demolished garage and removed trees, but it was considered that the disturbance from these was not great enough to have caused significant damage to any archaeology if this had been present.

6 DISCUSSION

No archaeological features or artefactual evidence was observed during the works and it is unlikely that any further evidence exists within the development area. As such no regional research objectives could be examined further. As a result, there is no scope to address the main aims of the project as outlined within the WSI and the aims and methods section of this report although the negative results produced do correlate with other local sites of 1 Nags Head Lane (ENN106747) and Bechers (ENN108311), increasing our understanding of the archaeological value of the area.

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