

The Acacias,
Oxendon Road, Clipston,
Northamptonshire,
LE16 9RP (NGR: SP713822)

Archaeological Investigation

Planning App. Ref. DA/2017/0350
HER Event No. ENN108754

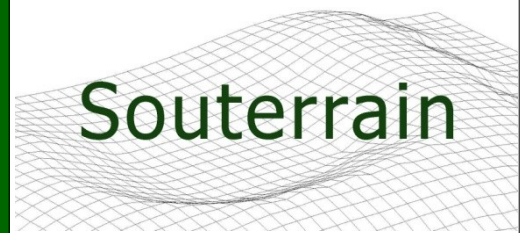


July 2017

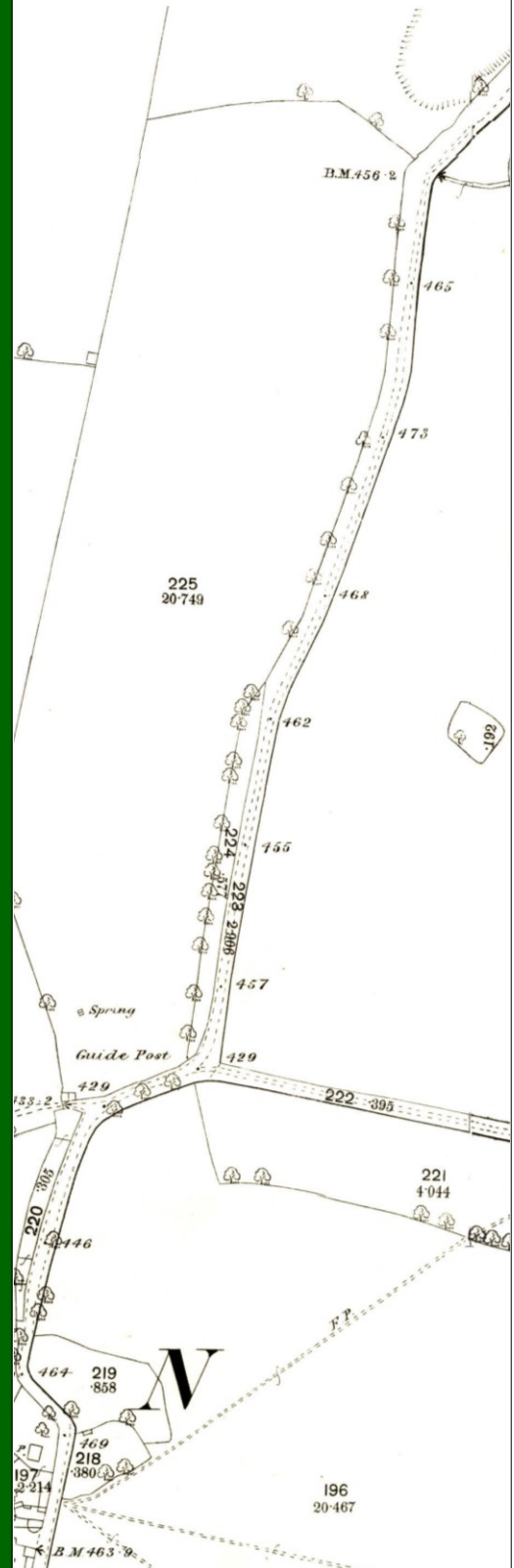
Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

for

M J Gowling & Partners



Archaeological Services Ltd



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SOU17-542

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Produced for:

M J Gowling & Partners

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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

Fieldwork & Report:

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring and investigation was carried out during ground preparation for a new agricultural grain store at The Acacias, a farm on the northern periphery of the village of Clipston, Northamptonshire, in proximity to the scheduled site of Clipston medieval settlement.

Medieval cultivation strips (ridge and furrow) is known to have been razed at the site by earthmoving machinery in the mid 20th century.

The soil strip revealed linear undulations in very low relief the subsoil horizon, denoting the former course of the cultivation strips and adjacent 'furrows'. There were no other features present and no artefacts within the footprint of the development.

1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report documents the results of a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording carried out by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) during ground preparation for an agricultural grain store building at The Acacias, Oxendon Road, Clipston, Northamptonshire, LE16 9RP (Fig. 1), in compliance with a condition attached to the planning consent.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by M J Gowling & Partners (the planning applicant) of the above address and took place on the 22nd and 23rd of June 2017.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Daventry District Council (DDC) Planning Permission (DA/2017/0350) has been granted subject to Conditions on the 14th June 2017 to M J Gowling & Partners, for the construction of an agricultural grain store building at The Acacias, Oxendon Road, Clipston, Northamptonshire, LE16 9RP (the Application Site).
- 2.2 In view of the site's proximity to a Scheduled Monument (a historic landscape; Fig. 1), and thus its archaeological potential, a Condition (No. 4) has been attached to the planning permission for a programme of archaeological mitigation work. The reason for the Condition is to ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.3 A programme of mitigation was agreed between Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council (AAA) and Martin Wilson of Souterrain on the 9th of June 2017. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)¹ was subsequently accepted by the AAA and DDC.

3. SITE LOCATION AND ASPECT

- 3.1 The Application Site is located c. 700 m to the north of the historic core of Clipston village (Fig. 1). The new grain store is to be located to the north of the existing farmyard buildings and to the east of Harborough Road, at NGR SP713822. The proposed building footprint is defined on the drawings (latest versions) associated with the planning application².
- 3.2 The ground of the Application Site has a noticeable incline from northwest (c. 137 m OD) to southeast (c. 134.5 m OD). The underlying superficial geology is recorded as Mid Pleistocene Glacial Till, diamicton (poorly sorted unconsolidated sediment). This overlies the Whitby Mudstone Formation (previously known as Upper Lias Clay formation), which is generally comprised of medium and dark grey fossiliferous mudstone and siltstone³.
- 3.3 The grain store building is to be situated outside of the designated area of Scheduled Monument of Clipston Medieval Village (Fig. 1; SM No.1418334). Prior to ground works, the Application Site had been under cultivation. Very faint linear soil marks showing on recent aerial imagery within

¹ Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd, 2017. *Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis & Publication of Works: The Acacias, Oxendon Road, Clipston, Northamptonshire, LE16 9RP (NGR SP713822), Planning App.Ref. DA/2017/0350, SOU17-542, V.1 June 2017*

² JRC, Drawing No. 9264/1, 29.03.2017, 'Proposed Grain Storage Building'; Site Layout Drawing DA2017 0390, validated 19.04.2017

³ British Geological Survey, <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/> [accessed 14th June 2017]

the Application Site denote hollows between ploughed-down *selions* (medieval cultivation ridges)⁴.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND POTENTIAL

4.1 The archaeological and historical information in this section is derived from three main sources: Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER)⁵; the RCHME's *Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire*⁶; and the *List Entry* for Clipston Medieval Settlement', Scheduled Monument No. 1418334.

The Abandoned Medieval Settlement

4.2 The Application Site is located on the north-western periphery of a nationally important historic landscape (Fig. 1) which contains earthwork remains of an abandoned late Saxon to medieval settlement⁷. The scheduled monument, known as 'Clipston Medieval Settlement', extends over an area of more than 135 hectares and surrounds the present day 'shrunken' village of Clipston on three sides: clockwise from southwest to northeast, with an outlier of the scheduled area to the southeast of the village⁸. The earthworks comprise house platforms, tofts, crofts, hollow ways, enclosures, a windmill mound and extensive remains of *selions* of the open field system. The condition of the earthworks and their extent of their survival are considered to be exceptional. The scheduled areas of *selions* (to the N, E, SE, SW, W and NW of Clipston village) are also visually exceptional. The potential for the survival of archaeology in non-designated areas of Clipston is understood to be considerable.

Manorial History

4.3 The earliest mention of *Clipstone* is in the Domesday survey of 1086, at which time there were 41 heads of households, representing a fairly large number of inhabitants, possibly about 200. They were spread over four lordships (or manors). Before the Norman Conquest the four lordships were held by: Countess Gytha of Hereford; Burgred (father of Edwin); the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds; and King Edward's royal manor of Rothwell.

4.4 In 1086, Gytha's manor was held by William Peverel and was by far the largest and most populated with 20 households. The cultivable land was assessed at seven ploughlands, with the village possessing seven mens' plough teams. Burgred's manor had been transferred to Walkelin of Harrowden, whose tenant-in chief was Bishop Geoffrey of Coutances. Six families worked three ploughlands. The Abbey retained its land after the Conquest, which consisted of a ploughland and five households. The Crown land of 1.5 virgates passed to King William.

4.5 Peverel's manor descended to the earls of Lincoln. The tenants-in-chief from the early 14th century until the late 15th century were the Pedwardyn family; after which the manor was fragmented. Walkelin's manor descended to the fee of Huntingdon. It was held by the de Clipstons and Pilkingtons from the early 12th century to the late 15th century, notably with the Prince of Wales being overlord in the 14th century. The manor had descended to the families of Buswell and Wade by the mid 16th century. The Abbey's land was divided up after the Dissolution. The Crown land is thought to have become part of the manor of Geddington, but is no longer traceable after the 14th century.

⁴ Google Earth, 2017 Getmapping plc

⁵ Search date: 12th June 2017

⁶ RCHME 1981, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire, Volume 3, Archaeological Sites in North-West Northamptonshire*. Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England HMSO, Stationery Office, London, pp. 49-51

⁷ Scheduled Monument 1418334

⁸ Centred on SP 70563, 81698, and SP 71709, 81371, respectively

4.6 Despite the documentary history, the location and layout of the manors is uncertain and may not be correlated with the extant remains of the medieval settlement. By 1720, Clipston had been amalgamated into a single manor, held by Sir Justinian Isham. Fifty years later it was splintered into several freeholds and the common fields were enclosed by a private Act of Parliament in 1776. Attempts to ascertain the size of the medieval village in any one period have been thwarted by the records of the abandoned village of Nobold (c. 1.8 km ENE to the west of Clipston) which were usually mixed with those of Clipston. The Hearth Tax record of 1674 gives 49 householders at Clipston; Nobold already abandoned. By 1791, there were 120 families, and by the Census of 1801, there were 331 persons in the parish.

Development and decline of the village

4.7 It is thought that the village originated in the vicinity of the church around High Street and Church Lane. Although the origin of the settlement is uncertain, we might assume that a regular system of tofts and crofts was formally laid out in the mid-10th century, as is understood to have been the case throughout the central Midlands⁹, when dispersed settlements were brought together to be centralized around a church and manor house surrounded by a planned open field system. The purpose of such large scale re-planning is open to speculation, but was probably to improve social cohesion and increase productivity¹⁰. The village is then thought to have undergone planned expansion to the northwest, around three parallel streets with the village green to the south east. Two of the streets survive as Chapel Lane and Harborough Road, the third now an earthwork hollow-way.

4.8 It is currently believed that widespread settlement change (shift, abandonment or contraction) occurred in Northamptonshire during the 15th and 16th centuries, and was due to a shift from arable farming to sheep rearing, the latter which required larger areas of land for grazing. Other causes of change were the gradual inclosure of the open fields for agricultural improvement, which generally occurred from the late 16th century through to the mid 19th century, or creation of parks for landed estates.

5. PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION & RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

5.1 In view of the deemed archaeological potential of the Application Site, the Written Scheme of Investigation advocated a series of research objectives with particular emphasis on regional research themes (see Knight, Vyner & Allen 2012; Cooper, 2006). In brief, the key objectives of the investigation were to:

1. Establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site.
2. Establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes.
3. Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region.
4. Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.
5. To attempt to determine the function of this part of the landscape in the medieval periods.
6. To augment knowledge of the medieval settlement and the agrarian economy at Clipston.
7. Identify deposits which have the potential for the recovery of environmental data that may contribute to research themes such as changes in animal husbandry, diet and living conditions and land-use.

⁹ E.g. Lewis, C. 2006, 191, in in Cooper N. 'The Medieval Period', in *The Archaeology of the East Midlands*, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 13; Edgeworth, M, 2007, 'Anglo-Saxon' and Medieval Bedfordshire c. 400 -1550", 93, in Oake M, et al, *Bedfordshire Archaeology, Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy*

¹⁰ op.cit. Lewis, C. 2006

8. To attempt to recover information to contribute to understanding the origin of the Midland open field system.
9. To augment knowledge of interaction between towns/market areas and countryside in the medieval period, through the study of ceramics¹¹.

6. FIELD PROCEDURE

6.1 The investigation was conducted with due consideration to Health and Safety and in accordance with the requirements of the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and *Standard Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (Rev. 2014). Ground reduction was undertaken by mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth ditching bucket under the guidance of an experienced archaeologist. All investigation and recording was carried out in accordance with the written scheme. Archaeological features were surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum by RTK DGPS.

7. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

- 7.1 In the descriptions below, the numbers in bold refer to photograph numbers at Section 12. The photograph viewpoints are shown on Figure 2. The metric scales which appear in the photographs are either 2 m in length with divisions of 0.5 m
- 7.2 The clearance of crops from the Application Site revealed no signs of earthworks (*ante.* 3.3; Section 12, **1** and **2**)
- 7.3 The area of subsequent ground reduction, including access area on the south side of the building footprint, totalled 0.14 hectares (Fig. 2).
- 7.4 Topsoil was generally between 0.35 m and 0.4 m across the site and was comprised of mid-greyish brown clayey soil (**5**). At the base of the topsoil was an inconsistent, sporadic layer of gritty clay or iron-panning c. 0.05 m – c. 0.09 m thick, denoting the lower reach of the plough. A c. 6 m-wide strip along the north end of the building footprint was further reduced (to an overall depth of c.0.6 m) to confirm that the undisturbed geological horizon had been reached (Fig. 2; **4 - 6**).
- 7.5 The geology varied greatly across the stripped area. The western and central area consisted predominantly of mid brown and greyish brown clay with frequent calcareous stones and flint nodules (**3**), while to the northeast it consisted of friable iron-stone in an orange-brown clay matrix (**6**). In the southwest and southeast it was comprised of light orange-brown calcareous clay with abundant calcareous stones (**7**).
- 7.6 The soil strip revealed three linear undulations in very low relief the subsoil horizon, denoting the course of the former course of cultivation strips and adjacent 'furrows' (Fig. 2). The strips were between 5 m and 7 m apart and aligned north-south, the southern ends of each strip having a perceptible curve towards the southeast, denoting the tuning curve of the plough team at the end of the furlong field. The archaeologist was informed that the field was likely to have been razed by earth-moving plant in the mid 20th century. Other than these undulations there were no features or artefacts of archaeological significance within the footprint of the development.

¹¹ Ibid, 189

8. REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The investigation proved to be 'negative' in terms of significant archaeological remains being present.
- 8.2 The investigation was unable to contribute any of the defined archaeological research objectives at section 5.1.
- 8.3 It is not possible to infer the past cultural status or function of this part of the landscape from the results of the investigation.

9. ARCHIVE

- 9.1 A photographic record was made and the site was surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum; all data is contained in this report.
- 9.2 The OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations: www.oasis.ac.uk) identification number for this project is souterra1-290882.

10. COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

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- 10.2 Souterrain undertakes to respect all requirements for confidentiality about the Applicant's proposals provided that these are clearly stated. It is expected that owners respect Souterrain's and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' general ethical obligations not to suppress significant archaeological data for an unreasonable period.

11. REFERENCES

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Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd, 2017. *Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis & Publication of Works: The Acacias, Oxendon Road, Clipston, Northamptonshire, LE16 9RP (NGR SP713822), Planning App.Ref. DA/2017/0350, SOU17-542, V.1 June 2017*

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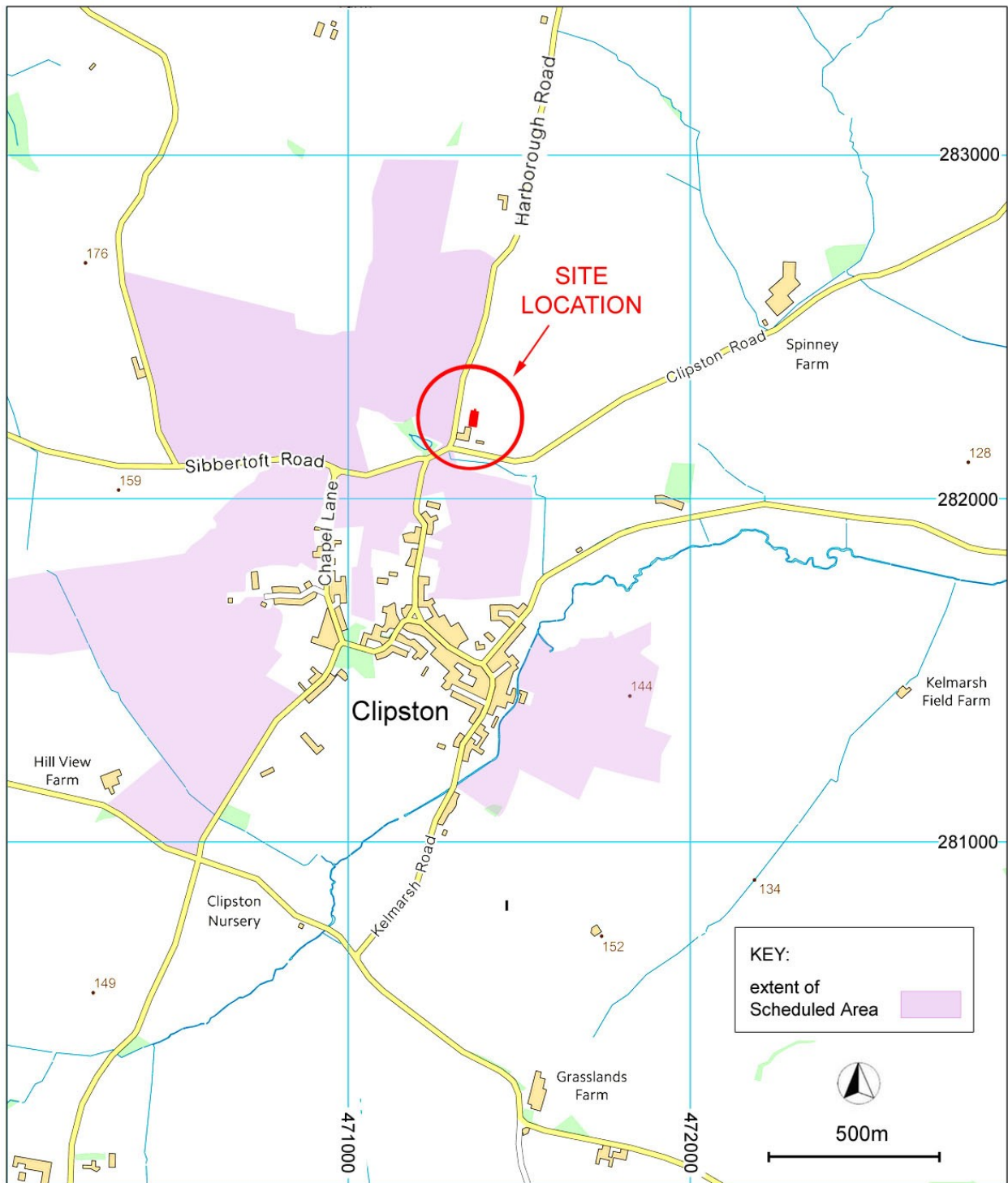


Figure 1. Location of Site showing extent of Scheduled Monument (Clipston Medieval Settlement)

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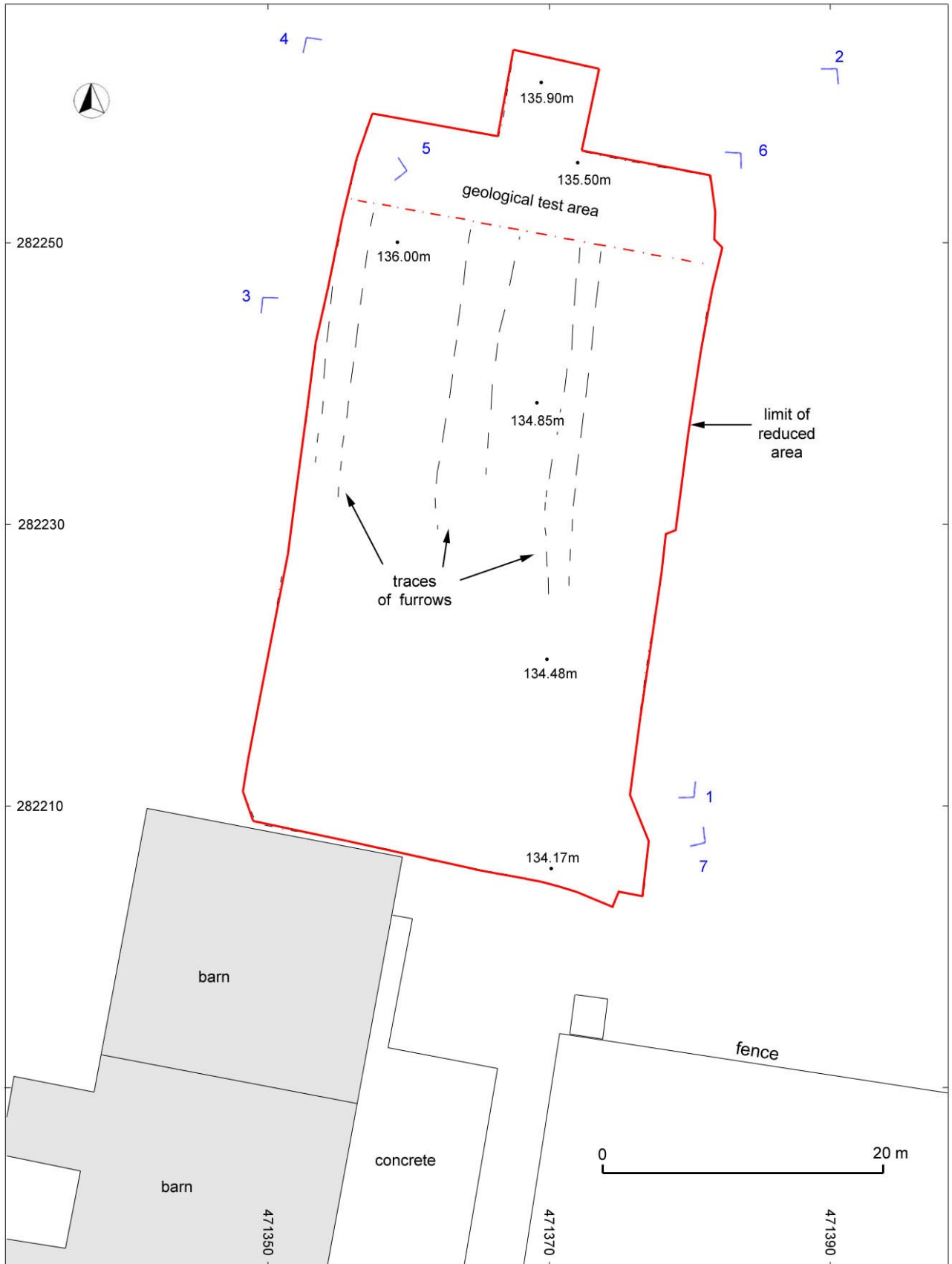


Figure 2. Area of Ground Reduction, showing direction of photographs (Photos 1 to 7)

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12. PHOTOGRAPHS



1. Overview of the site prior to ground reduction. Facing NW



2. Overview of the site prior to ground reduction. Facing SW



3. Overview of site after soil strip. Facing SE



4. Overview of site after soil strip. Geological test area in foreground. Facing SE



5. Soil profile in geological test area at NW end of site. Facing WNW



6. Overview of site after soil strip. Facing SW



7. Overview of site after soil strip. Facing NW

Project supervisor	M Wilson
Type of funding body	Developer
Name of funding body	M J Gowling & Partners
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Digital Archive ID	ENN108754
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Paper Archive ID	ENN108754
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Investigation: The Acacias, Oxendon Road, Clipston, Northamptonshire, LE16 9RP
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wilson M.D
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Entered by	M Wilson
Entered on	20 July 2017

OASIS ID: souterra1-290882

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Investigation: The Acacias, Oxendon Road, Clipston, Northamptonshire
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and investigation was carried out during ground preparation for a new agricultural grain store at The Acacias, a farm on the northern periphery of the village of Clipston, Northamptonshire, in proximity to the scheduled site of Clipston medieval settlement. Medieval cultivation strips (ridge and furrow) is known to have been razed at the site by earthmoving machinery in the mid 20th century. The soil strip revealed linear undulations in very low relief the subsoil horizon, denoting the former course of the cultivation strips and adjacent 'furrows'. There were no other features present and no artefacts within the footprint of the development.
Project dates	Start: 22-06-2017 End: 23-06-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENN108754 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	DA/2017/0350 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	SOU17-542 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	Ridge And Furrow, Medieval
Significant Finds	None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	Northamptonshire Daventry Clipston The Acacias
Postcode	LE16 9RP
Study area	0.14 Hectares
Site coordinates	SP 713 822 52.432745762893 -0.951148045009 52 25 57 N 000 57 04 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 134.17m Max: 136m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Southern Archaeological Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Southern Archaeological Services Ltd
Project manager	M D Wilson