

Church Street, Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire: An Archaeological Evaluation Report

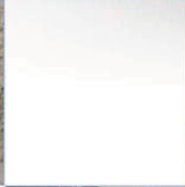
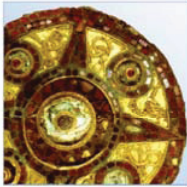
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Church Street, Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire:

An Archaeological Evaluation Report

On Behalf of:	Retail Development Partnership Millfield Barn Pickwell Lane Bolney West Sussex
National Grid Reference (NGR):	SP 9485 7075
AOC Project No:	30807
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Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group between the 15th and 19th November 2010 at the site of the former Express Shoe Works, Church Street, Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire. The work was undertaken on behalf of Retail Development Partnership Ltd. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of development on any surviving archaeological remains.

An evaluation comprising six machine excavated trenches was carried out on the site. Four of the trenches contained archaeological remains. The remains were mainly in the form of linear features and pits which appeared to represent a field boundary and general activity relating to a nearby settlement. Pottery recovered from the site indicates a 12th-13th century date. Further finds included animal bone and a fragment of iron slag.

There is very good potential for other features associated with the 12th-13th century settlement to be found on site. Such remains could be viewed as regionally significant due to their potential to inform on the development of Irthlingborough.

Due to the level of survival within certain areas of the site it is recommended that further work be undertaken post-planning consent. The amount of further work necessary will depend on the level of impact on site and the location of the impact.

1. Introduction

1.1 Site Location

- 1.1.1 The site comprises the easternmost of two parcels of land flanking Church Street, Irthlingborough, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 9485 7075 (Figure 2). Of these two land parcels, only that to the east of Church Street will be disturbed by groundworks; therefore the evaluation was only undertaken in this area.
- 1.1.2 The site to the east of Church Street, is irregular in shape and lies at a height of c. 57 – 53 m OD on the edge of the Nene flood plain with the ground falling away to the south towards the river. The site is bounded to the west by Church Street, to the north by properties fronting Station Road, to the east by Meeting Lane and to the south by properties fronting Nene View. The site is presently waste ground.
- 1.1.3 The proposed development scheme comprises a retail development comprising of a new foodstore development, and retail unit. The proposed development will also see a rationalisation of parking in Irthlingborough to the west of Church Street.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 The local planning authority is East Northamptonshire District Council. Archaeological advice to the Council is provided by Lesley-Ann Mather, Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council. The site lies within the Irthlingborough Conservation Area.
- 1.2.2 The archaeological works were being undertaken in advance of submitting a new planning application for the proposed development. An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment was prepared for the site (CgMs 2010) but the previous planning application was refused in February 2010, partly due to there having been no archaeological investigation to indicate the likely impact of the scheme on heritage assets. On June 14th 2010 an outline of how the site was to be evaluated was agreed with Lesley-Anne Mather, Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council.
- 1.2.3 The next stage involved the creation of a Written Scheme of Investigation, detailing the methodology for the evaluation (AOC 2010). The works were carried out on site in line with the methodology stated in the WSI and the current guidelines stated therein.
- 1.2.4 This reports details the results of the archaeological evaluation. The archaeological evaluation conformed with current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines.
 - English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
 - English Heritage – Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation Reports (Guidelines) (EH 1992).
 - English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998a).
 - English Heritage – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (IfA 2008).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
 - Museum of London – Archaeological Site Manual (MoL 1994).
 - RESCUE & ICON – First Aid for Finds (RESCUE & ICON 2001).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).

1.3 Geology and Topography

- 1.3.1 The site lies on the northern edge of the floodplain of the River Nene at c. 57m – 53m OD. The ground falls away to the south towards the braided channels of the River Nene, which is some 250m distant. Church Lane may once have extended to a ford across the River Nene, which linked Irthlingborough with Higham Ferrers to the south of the river.
- 1.3.2 Irthlingborough lies within the claylands of north Bedfordshire and East Northamptonshire. However, Irthlingborough itself lies on a low ridge of higher ground lying over Jurassic geology of the Wellingborough Limestone Member of the Rutland Formation (BGS 2007). This is overlain to the south of the site by drift deposits of terrace gravel with alluvium in the valley bottom.
- 1.3.3 Geotechnical investigations undertaken on the site (SoilTechnics Ltd 2007) identified made ground extending over the site to a depth of 0.14, probably associated with the demolition of the former shoe factory that stood on the site. Below this made ground was a creamy white silty sand and gravel; believed to be part of the underlying Wellingborough Limestone Formation.

2. Historical and Archaeological Background

- 2.1 The following information is taken from the Archaeological and Historical Background of the Desk-Based Assessment (CgMS 2010), information available through the Archaeological Data Service's online resource, the Nene Valley Archaeological and Environmental Synthesis (Northamptonshire Archaeology and Exeter University 2009), the Northamptonshire Extensive Urban Survey (Ballinger 2000) and the Victoria County History of Northamptonshire Vol. III (VCH 1930).
- 2.2 The Nene Valley is one of the longest river systems in England and has been the location of a number of very extensive archaeological investigations; these have identified the Nene as being a focus for human activity from the Palaeolithic period onwards. Very significant settlement and ritual sites of Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon date have been recognised beside the Nene at Irchester, Ditchford, Wollaston, Stanwick, Raunds and Higham Ferrers.
- 2.3 Within this context it is important to note that Irthlingborough is a recorded fording point across the Nene with the peculiar lantern of St Peter's Church tower possibly acting as a beacon to mark the crossing. This ford may have been established during the prehistoric period and it is possible that Church Lane follows a line which extends to a historic ford over the Nene linking Irthlingborough to Higham Ferrers.

Prehistoric Period (c 450,000 BC – AD 43)

- 2.4 Extensive prehistoric evidence has been identified on the valley sides of the River Nene. This includes evidence for Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ritual and funerary activity such as causeway enclosures, round barrows and ring ditches; these include a number of ring ditches identified on the higher ground around Irthlingborough. No archaeological evidence for these periods has, however been recorded from within 250m of the site.
- 2.5 Numerous and often extensive settlement sites of Later Bronze Age and Iron Age date have been identified along the Nene Valley; either through excavation or surmised from the evidence of aerial photography. Cropmarks suggestive of later prehistoric settlement and land use have been identified on the higher ground on which Irthlingborough lies. In addition there is excavated evidence from Irthlingborough itself with Iron Age activity, possibly indicative of settlement, in the form of pits and ditches being identified during excavations on Lime Street c. 150 m to the east of the site.

Romano-British Period (AD 43 – AD 410)

- 2.6 The Nene Valley is the location of an extensive Roman pottery industry and a number of settlement sites have been identified from excavation and aerial photographs. These include villas at Stanwick Wollaston and just across the Nene at Higham Ferrers and the Roman small town at Irchester, as well as numerous smaller farmsteads with associated field systems. Interestingly the Nene Valley has also been identified as being an area at least partly cultivated for Vines with a vineyard being identified at Wollaston. In this context it is worthy of note that the site lies on a well drained south facing slope.
- 2.7 Cropmarks of potential settlement features and field systems have been identified on the higher ground around Irthlingborough; these could represent settlement and agricultural evidence of later Prehistoric and Romano-British date.
- 2.8 Within Irthlingborough, it is believed that the line of High Street and Station Road immediately to the north of the site follows the line of a Roman routeway linking Lowick with the small Roman town at Irchester. It is also possible that the fording point across the Nene at Irthlingborough had already become established by the Roman-British period.
- 2.9 Roman features including an enclosure were also recorded during the excavations on Lime Street c. 150m to the east of the site. In addition a small quantity of Roman pottery is recorded as having been found on St Peter's Lane. Finds of Roman pottery along with roof tile and tesserae have also been recorded from excavations on the site of the former All Saints Church to the south of the site; this is highly suggestive of there being a relatively substantial and high status building being present.

Early Medieval Period (AD 410 – AD 1066)

- 2.10 The first historical record of a settlement at Irthlingborough comes from a charter of AD 780 which refers to *Yrtlingaburg*. This Old English placename links *yrblinga* (Ploughman) with *burg* (fort) which may suggest the presence of a defended enclosure for cattle of early Saxon date (Eckwall 1980).
- 2.11 Extensive Saxon evidence has been recorded during excavations at Kings Meadow, Higham Ferrers on the opposite bank of the Nene and within 1.5 km of the site. Higham Ferrers has been identified as an important mid to late Saxon estate centre, which may have its origins in the early Saxon period as an estate centre focused at Irthlingborough (Foard and Ballinger 2004). It is interesting to note that Kings Meadow Lane at Higham Ferrers and Church Lane, immediately to the west of the site both extend to opposite each other on the Nene, suggesting they may be the original fording route across the Nene. Recent excavations at Higham Ferrers have however also identified Early Saxon settlement evidence on this site (Hardy et al 2007).
- 2.12 Within Irthlingborough, Later Saxon activity in the form of ditches and gullies has been identified during the excavations on Lime Street c. 150m to the east of the site. In addition late Saxon pottery was also identified during demolition work undertaken on St Peter's Lane, immediately to the west of the site.

Medieval Period (AD 1066 – AD 1536)

- 2.13 Irthlingborough is recorded as *Edinburne* in the Domesday survey of 1086 and as *Hyrtingberi* in a charter of 1137. Throughout the medieval period the manor at Irthlingborough was held by Peterborough Abbey; a market had also been established at Irthlingborough by the mid 12th century; the market cross once lying at the crossroads of High Street/Station Road with Church Street, immediately to the north of the site

- 2.14 Until the 16th century, Irthlingborough was also divided into two parishes; one based on St Peter's Church, immediately to the south west of the site and the other on the Church of All Saints, which once stood c. 300m to the east of the site. By 1428, All Saints was already in significant disrepair and had been pulled down sometime before 1724 (VCH 1930).
- 2.15 The medieval settlement at Irthlingborough is clustered around the road leading from the late Saxon estate at Higham Ferrers to Kettering and it is believed that the existing stone bridge, c. 400m to the southeast of the site was first constructed during the 13th century (VCH 1930). Earthworks, including possible fishponds associated with the Manor at Irthlingborough lie in the fields to the east of the village, c. 250m from the site
- 2.16 The site lies within the historic and medieval core of Irthlingborough and St Peter's Church, which has its origins in the 12th century, lies immediately adjacent to the site. Medieval settlement activity has been identified during the excavations on Lime Street, c. 150m to the east of the site. These investigations were interpreted as being part of a manorial farm dating to the 14th century with evidence for a malthouse, dovecote, large barn and boundary walls; there was also some evidence for possible 13th century industrial activity.

Post-Medieval Period (AD 1536 to Present)

- 2.17 During the post-medieval period, Irthlingborough developed from a small agricultural settlement into a small industrial town. The focus of the town remained on the line of High Street and Station Road immediately to the north of the site. The main phase of development was in the late 18th and 19th century when a significant shoe manufactory became established in the town. In 1777 16 shoemakers are recorded in the town; this had increased to 127 in 1841 and 268 by 1851 (Ballinger 2001). This tradition continued almost up to the present day with the Express shoeworks, which stood on the site, closing in the 1990's and Doc Marten's principal UK manufactory only being moved to China in 2003.
- 2.18 Buildings are first shown on the site on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 with what appears to be an industrial building occupying the eastern section of the site with a cluster of smaller buildings around a courtyard to the west. The site appears to have been mainly cleared to make way for the expansion of the Express Shoeworks factory by 1965. The factory became disused in the 1990s and was demolished in 2008.

3. Strategy

3.1 Aims of the Investigation

3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation are defined as being:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
- To enable Lesley-Ann Mather, Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.

3.1.2 The specific aims of the archaeological evaluation are defined as being:

- Determine the presence of any prehistoric and/or Romano-British activity on site.
- Determine the presence of any early medieval/medieval activity on site? This will include attempting to define the date at which the land plot first became developed and the nature of any trade or industry that may have been undertaken on the site.
- Assess the potential of the site to inform on the post-medieval development and chronology of Irthlingborough.
- Assess the degree and extent of truncation of earlier deposits by late post-medieval and modern development of the site.

3.1.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions. If the nature of any findings warrant, this will include discussion as to the development of an appropriate outreach policy.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 The evaluation consisted of archaeological trial trenching (archaeological evaluation). The evaluation involved the machine excavation of 6 trenches (Figure 2), excavated under archaeological supervision. The trenches were located to target possible archaeological features outside of the previous structures onsite.

3.2.2 All machining was carried out using a JCB excavator with a smooth bladed ditching bucket, under the constant supervision of an archaeological Project Officer and Project Supervisor.

3.2.3 The site code CHI 10 was agreed with the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record for the project, and was used for all fieldwork.

3.2.4 All evaluation trenches were accurately located to the National Grid and their levels calculated using a temporary benchmark established off site at the base of a lamppost adjacent to the steps to the

- church site by the fieldwork team having moved the level from a BM on 25 Finedon Road. The value of the BM was 64.30mOD whilst the TBM on site was valued at 52.72mOD.
- 3.2.5 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Museum of London's *Archaeological Field Manual* (MoL 3rd edition 1994).
- 3.2.6 All of the work was carried out in line with:
- Archaeological Guidance Papers (AGP): 2-4, *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* (English Heritage 2009)
 - IfA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008).
- 3.2.7 A continuous unique numbering system was employed. For each trench, a block of numbers in a continuous sequence was allocated. In this report the archaeological fills and layers are represented in curved brackets i.e. (), whilst the cut numbers are represented in square brackets i.e. [].
- 3.2.8 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.
- 3.2.9 The evaluation was conducted by Catherine Edwards under the overall management of Melissa Melikian, Operations Director. The site was monitored by Lesley-Ann Mather Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council.

4 Results

Trench 1 (Fig 2 & 3)

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
100	0.30m	56.95m – 56.65m	Light to mid brown sandy clay with occasional stones. Imported soil.
101	0.03m	56.65m – 56.62m	Grey blue gritty grit. Possible tarmac horizon.
105	0.22m+	56.62m – 56.42m	Yellow and white sandy clay with natural stone. Natural.

- 4.1.2 Trench 1 was located in the northwest corner of the site, sighted on a slope, sloping northwest to southeast. (Figure 2 & 3). The trench was orientated northwest-southeast and measured 22.00m by 1.80m.
- 4.1.3 The earliest deposit identified in Trench 1 was (106), a natural yellow and white sandy clay with natural stone, recorded at a height of 56.20m-55.41mOD. Cutting into the natural was [105], a sub-circular pit with gradual slopes and a concave base. The pit measured 1.30m x 0.76m x 0.15m and was filled by (104), a grey silt with re-deposited natural and frequent brick and concrete.
- 4.1.4 Also cutting into the natural were two areas of modern disturbance recorded as (103) and (102). Deposit (103), measuring 8.00m x 1.80m, was located centrally within the trench and was recorded as a 0.50m thick layer of various fills including grey brown and yellow silts with frequent brick, breeze block and concrete. The disturbance recorded at a height of 55.20mOD is likely to relate to the demolition and the removal of footings. Deposit (102) was located within the northern extent of the trench as was recorded as grey brown gritty sand clay with inclusions of metal, brick and re-deposited natural. The feature was not excavated.
- 4.1.5 Overlying (102) in the northern half of the trench was layer (101), a 0.03m thick layer of degraded tarmac. The tarmac may have been partially removed prior to being sealed by later deposits. The tarmac horizon is likely to represent a former surface horizon. The horizon measured 7.80m x 2.00m x 0.03m deep.
- 4.1.6 Overlying (101) in the northern half of the trench was layer (100), a 0.30m thick layer of imported light to mid brown sandy clay with occasional stone and rooting. This layer probably represents an attempt to make the area a green space. The layer measured 7.80m x 2.00m at a height of 56.95mOD. This layer does not extent past the modern disturbance discussed above and recorded as (103).
- 4.1.7 No Archaeological remains were recorded in Trench 1.

Trench 2 (Fig 2 & 4)**Table of the stratigraphic sequence**

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
200	0.25m	56.20m – 55.95m	Mixed brown, grey and yellow silty clay with sand and mortar inclusions. Demolition layer.
201	0.30m	55.95m – 55.65m	Dark blue brown silty clay with inclusion of charcoal, clinker, CBM and natural stone. Made ground.
202	0.33m	55.65m – 55.32m	Mid brown grey gritty sandy silt with occasional charcoal and natural stone. Buried soil.
209	NFE	55.32m	Light brown yellow sandy clay and natural stone with patches of brickearth. Natural.

- 4.1.8 Trench 2 was located in the north of the site (Figure 2 & 4), orientated northwest-southeast and measured 25.00m by 2.00m.
- 4.1.9 The earliest deposit recorded was (209), a light brown yellow sandy clay with natural stone and patches of brickearth, observed at a height of 55.31mOD. Cutting into the natural clay was circular pit [208] which measured 1.15m x 0.77m x 0.90m deep. The pit had sharp sides with some undercut edges and a flat base. The pit cut was recorded at a height of 55.21mOD. Pit [208] was filled by (207), a mid to dark grey sandy silt clay with natural stone, burnt clay, sheep bone, and pottery sherds. The burnt clay pieces were flat and un-diagnostic. The 12 pottery sherds were identified as jar fragments dating to the 12-13th century.
- 4.1.10 To the north of pit [208] was ditch [206]. The ditch ran northwest-southeast and measured 2.20m x 1.15m x 0.37m deep at a height of 55.23mOD. The ditch was filled by (205) a light to mid brown silty sandy clay with occasional natural stone. No dating evidence was recovered during excavation. It is unclear whether the pit and ditch are contemporary.
- 4.1.11 Overlying the archaeological features was (202), a 0.30m-0.48m thick layer of mid brown grey gritty sandy silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and natural stone. The layer has been interpreted as a buried soil. Overlying (201) was a 0.30m thick layer of dark blue brown silty clay with inclusions of charcoal, clinker, CBM, bricks and mortar interpreted as made ground. Cutting into (201) was [204], a vertical cut for a modern culvert [203]. The cut measured 1.05m wide and 0.79m deep in section only. The culvert [203] was constructed in red brick cemented together. The culvert had been very heavily disturbed prior to the excavation of the trench.
- 4.1.12 Overlying the trench was a 0.25m thick layer of modern demolition with included brown, yellow and grey silt, with sand and mortar. This was recorded at a height of 56.20-55.46mOD.

Trench 3 (Fig 2 & 5)

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
300	0.46m	52.90m – 52.44m	Mottled grey and light brown sandy silt clay with inclusions brick and concrete. Demolition layer.
301	0.50m	52.90m – 52.40m	Mixed purple, brown, black and green silt with inclusions of glass, metal and industrial waste. Industrial layer.
302	0.42m	52.40m – 51.98m	Light grey brown gritty sandy clay with inclusions of charcoal. Buried soil.
306	0.10m+	51.98m – 51.88m	Light yellow and white sandy clay with patches of brickearth. Natural.

- 4.1.13 Trench 3 was located in the east of the site (Figure 2 & 5), was orientated northwest-southeast and measured 25.00m by 1.80m.
- 4.1.14 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 3 was (306), a natural light yellow and white sandy clay with patches of brickearth. This was recorded at a height of 53.08mOD in the north and 51.88mOD in the south. Overlying the natural was layer (302), a 0.42m thick layer of light grey brown gritty sandy clay with inclusions of charcoal interpreted as buried soil.
- 4.1.15 Overlying (302) was (301), a 0.50-0.73m thick deposit of mixed purple, brown, black and green silt with inclusions of glass, metal, oil drum, plastics and four circular discs made out of wood and one out of metal. The layer has been interpreted as mixed made ground and industrial waste deposition possibly related to the shoe factory that previously occupied the site. The discs are thought to relate to leather working.
- 4.1.16 Cutting into (301) was [304], a large pit recorded in section and measuring 1.50m wide x 1.10m deep. The pit was filled by (303), a grey silt with very frequent red bricks measuring 240mm x 100mm x 70mm. The pit is likely to represent a demolition waste pit.
- 4.1.17 Also cutting into (301) was a modern wall footing [305]. The wall measured 1.80m x 0.24m x 0.87m deep and was composed of red brick with a concrete slab footing.
- 4.1.18 Overlying the pit and the northern extent of the trench was layer (300), a 0.46m thick layer of modern demolition waste. The layer measured 11.30m of the trench at a height of 53.92mOD.

Trench 4 (Fig 2 & 6)

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
400	0.35m	51.91m – 51.55m	Dark grey brown silty clay with inclusions of brick, mortar and concrete. Modern demolition and made ground.
401	0.12m	51.55m – 51.43m	Mid orange brown clay. Brickearth.
409	NFE	51.43m	Mid orange brown clay. Brickearth
410	NFE	51.43m	Yellow brown sandy clay with very frequent natural stone. Natural.

- 4.1.19 Trench 4 was located in south of the site (Figure 2 & 6) and was orientated roughly northeast-southwest and measured 25.00m by 1.80m.
- 4.1.20 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 4 was (410), a natural yellow brown sandy clay with very frequent natural stone. This was recorded at an upper height of 51.79m-51.63mOD. Overlying the natural were two large patches of brickearth recorded as (402) and (409). The patches measured 3.00m x 1.80m and 6.50m x 1.80m respectively. Cutting into brickearth layer (409) was gully [404] which ran northeast-southwest, measuring 2.75m x 0.40m x 0.10m deep at a height of 51.67mOD. The gully was filled by (403), a dark grey brown silty clay with inclusions of charcoal, natural stone, burnt clay and pottery sherds. The pottery sherds were identified as fragments of a jar dated to the 12-13th century.
- 4.1.21 Cutting into the natural deposits were pits [406] and [408]. Pit [406] was semi-circular in shape (extending into the baulk) and measured 1.25m x 0.40m x 0.07m deep at a height of 51.81mOD. The pit was filled by (405), a dark grey brown clay with occasional charcoal, cattle and sheep/goat bone and small stones. Four sherds of pottery were recovered from the fill, three of which have been identified as part of a bowl dated to the 12th mid 13th century.
- 4.1.22 Pit [408], was oval shaped and measured 0.70m x 0.40m x 0.08m deep at a height of 51.76mOD. The pit was filled by (407), dark grey brown silty clay with inclusions of charcoal, CBM flecks, burnt clay and two sherds of pottery dated to the 12th-13th century.
- 4.1.23 Overlying the archaeological remains was layer (401), a 0.35m thick layer of dark grey brown silty clay and demolition rubble recorded at a height of 51.91mOD.

Trench 5 (Fig 2 & 7)

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
501	0.30m	53.45m – 53.15m	Demolition debris and dark grey brown silty clay. Made ground.
502	0.20m	53.15m – 52.95m	Concrete slab. Modern surface.
513	0.30m	52.95m – 52.65m	Mid orange brown silty clay. Brickearth.
514	NFE	52.65m	Yellow sandy clay and gravel. Natural.

- 4.1.24 Trench 5 was located in western section of the site (Figure 2 & 7) and was orientated northwest-southeast and measured 23.70m by 1.80m.
- 4.1.25 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 5 was (514), a natural yellow sandy clay and gravel recorded at a varying height of 52.91m-51.48mOD. Cutting into the natural was pit or ditch terminus [506]. The feature measured 1.90m x 1.80m x 0.30m deep and was recorded at a height of 52.71mOD. The cut had gradual sloped sides and a flat base and was filled with (505), a dark grey brown silty clay with inclusions of occasional stone and charcoal flecks. Ten sherds of pottery were recovered from the fill and have been identified as fragments of a jar dating to the 12th-13th century. Animal bone fragments were identified as being from cattle and sheep.

- 4.1.26 Also cutting into the natural was possible pit [508]. The pit measured 1.70m x 1.10m x 0.08m deep at a height of 52.49mOD. The cut had gradual sloped sides and an uneven base, which was filled by (507), a dark grey brown silty clay with inclusions of charcoal. No dating evidence was recovered from the feature.
- 4.1.27 A modern service trench was recorded at the northern end of the trench. This was recorded as [504] with a backfill of (503), a mid brown clay with inclusions of modern brick and concrete. The trench measured 1.80m x 0.20m x 0.20m deep. Two modern intrusions were also recorded in the pit as [510] and [512]. Pit [510] measured 2.50m x 0.95m x 0.80m deep at a height of 52.38mOD and had gradual sloping sides. The pit was filled by (509), a deposit of demolition debris consisting of bricks, concrete and mortar which suggests the pit may have been created during the removal of a concrete base or footing. The same interpretation can be applied to linear [512] which ran northeast-southwest measuring 1.80m x 1.40m x 0.30m+. The cut was filled by modern brick concrete interpreted as demolition rubble.
- 4.1.28 Overlying the northern extent of the trench was concrete slab (502), which measured 1.80m x 0.20m x 0.20m thick. Overlying the remainder of the trench was (501), a 0.30m thick layer of demolition material at a height of 53.91-51.88mOD.

Trench 6 (Fig 2 & 8)

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Depth	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
600	0.40m	55.23m – 54.83m	Brick, mortar and sandy silt. Demolition layer.
601	0.40m	54.83m – 54.43m	Grey brown silty clay mortar and brick. Made ground.
610	NFE	54.43m	Yellow brown sandy clay with very frequent natural stone. Natural.

- 4.1.29 Trench 6 was located in western area of the site (Figure 2 & 8) and was orientated north-south and measured 30.00m by 1.80m.
- 4.1.30 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 6 was (610), a natural yellow brown sandy clay with inclusions of natural stone recorded at a varying height of 55.23m-53.45mOD. Cutting into the natural was linear gully [609] which ran east-west terminating in the trench. The exposed section measured 0.41m x 0.40m x 0.31m deep at a height of 54.94mOD. The gully cut had gradual sloping sides and a concave base, which was filled by (608), a dark grey brown silt clay with inclusions of charcoal flecks and a sherd of pottery dated to the 12th-13th century.
- 4.1.31 Also cutting into the natural were post-medieval features [607], [603] and [605]. Circular pit [607] measured 0.90m in diameter and was filled by (606) a dark grey black brown sandy clay with inclusions of metal hinges and brackets, clinker and wood. The feature was not excavated.
- 4.1.32 Large intrusions [603] and [605] were identical in shape and composition. Both features were semi circular in shape. And measured 2.90m x 0.98m x 0.55m [605] and 3.30m x 0.88m x 0.60m [603]. Both pits were filled with demolition debris recorded as (602) and (604).
- 4.1.33 Overlying the northern half of the trench was (601), a 0.40m thick layer of mid to dark grey brown silty clay with inclusions of brick, mortar and occasional charcoal recorded at a height of 55.60mOD.

Overlying the remainder of the trench was (600), a layer of modern demolition debris varying in depth from 0.40-0.70m deep recorded a upper height of 54.02mOD.

5. Finds (Appendix B)

- 5.1 Seven contexts on site produced a small assemblage of pottery sherds which have been dated to the 12-13th century. The fragments are in good condition showing little signs of abrasion. Five rims were recorded with the remaining sherds being un-diagnostic. Three fabrics are present, however, the assemblage is dominated by the well fired and generally oxidized local M1 calcareous (limestone/shell) tempered ware (30 sherds weighing 148g). Although these wares were made well into the 14th century the absence of notable quantities of sandy wares and glazed vessels suggest that the assemblage is more likely to be of 12th- to mid/late 13th- century date. The only other medieval sherds consist of an off-white/grey fine sandy ware body sherd (M2) and another body sherd in spare fine sand tempered off-white ware (M3) with apparent crude red-orange painted decoration. Both sherds have been dated to the 12th- to early 13th- century. The pottery assemblage should be studied in conjunction with any further material that may result from future work at the site.
- 5.2 A small animal bone assemblage containing 27 fragments of bone has been retrieved by hand collection. The bone assemblage is in a moderately well preserved condition with some evidence of surface erosion visible. The skeletal elements represented are those of the extremities including a sheep metacarpal, a cattle calcaneus and a cattle phalanx. The cattle-sized and sheep-sized elements include fragments of long bone and ribs. There are no butchery marks on the bones, although these may have been destroyed by weathering and erosion. No further work is recommended on this bone assemblage.
- 5.3 A single piece (4g) of un-diagnostic iron slag was recovered. The piece demonstrates the presence of possible small scale smithing on site during the 12th to 13th centuries. The slag has no potential for further analysis.
- 5.4 A total of seven fragments of ceramic building material were collected from site. The majority of the brick recovered was in MoL 3038 fabric. Bricks in this fabric were machine-made and of 20th century date. An unfrosted engineering brick with hard fired purple appearance to the outer surfaces was also recovered from the site and is likely to be of later 19th- or 20th- century date. An unfrosted brick with sharp arises recovered, is likely to date to the 18th or 19th century. A single fragment of pantile is of probable mid 17th- to 19th- century date. No further work is recommended on this assemblage.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The evaluation successfully established the presence or absence of archaeological remains on site. Four archaeological trenches contained archaeological remains.
- 6.2 The natural horizon was established on site in all trenches, however it was notable that this varied due to the natural slope from northwest-southeast across the site. The natural was recorded as a yellow brown sandy clay with inclusions of natural stone varying in frequency per trench. The natural deposit was recorded at a height of 56.20mOD in Trench 1 in the north of the site and 51.78mOD in Trench 4 in the south..
- 6.3 The archaeological results were mainly in the form of linear features and small pits. The linear ditch may have functioned as a boundary ditch considering its size. The gullies may have a different function possibly drainage or agricultural. The pits contained animal bone and pottery but not at a level that would be expected for domestic waste deposition. This suggests the pottery and bone disposition may have a secondary function. The primary function remains unknown.

- 6.4 The modern intrusions and features are all likely to be part of the demolition and grubbing out of the footings and slabs relating to the previous factory structures on site.
- 6.5 Based on the archaeological results it is clear that the construction of the previous factory structure that had occupied the site has impacted on the archaeological remains. Trenches 1, the southern end of Trench 6 and parts of Trench 5 all show truncation, whereas Trench 4 has been horizontally truncated leaving only the base of the features. Preservation was significantly better in the northern end of Trench 6, Trench 2 and Trench 3, although no remains were encountered in Trench 3.
- 6.6 It is recommended that should the development progress, a targeted excavation should be carried out looking at expanding the results recorded in trenches 6, 2 and 4. Depending on the level of impact from the proposed development a targeted watching brief may also be utilised.

7. Publication

- 7.1 A paper copy of the evaluation report will be issued to Lesley-Ann Mather County Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire and to the Northamptonshire HER on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time. A third digital copy of the report will also be submitted to Northamptonshire HER.
- 7.2 An OASIS form has also been completed, (Appendix C) and an electronic copy of the evaluation report will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

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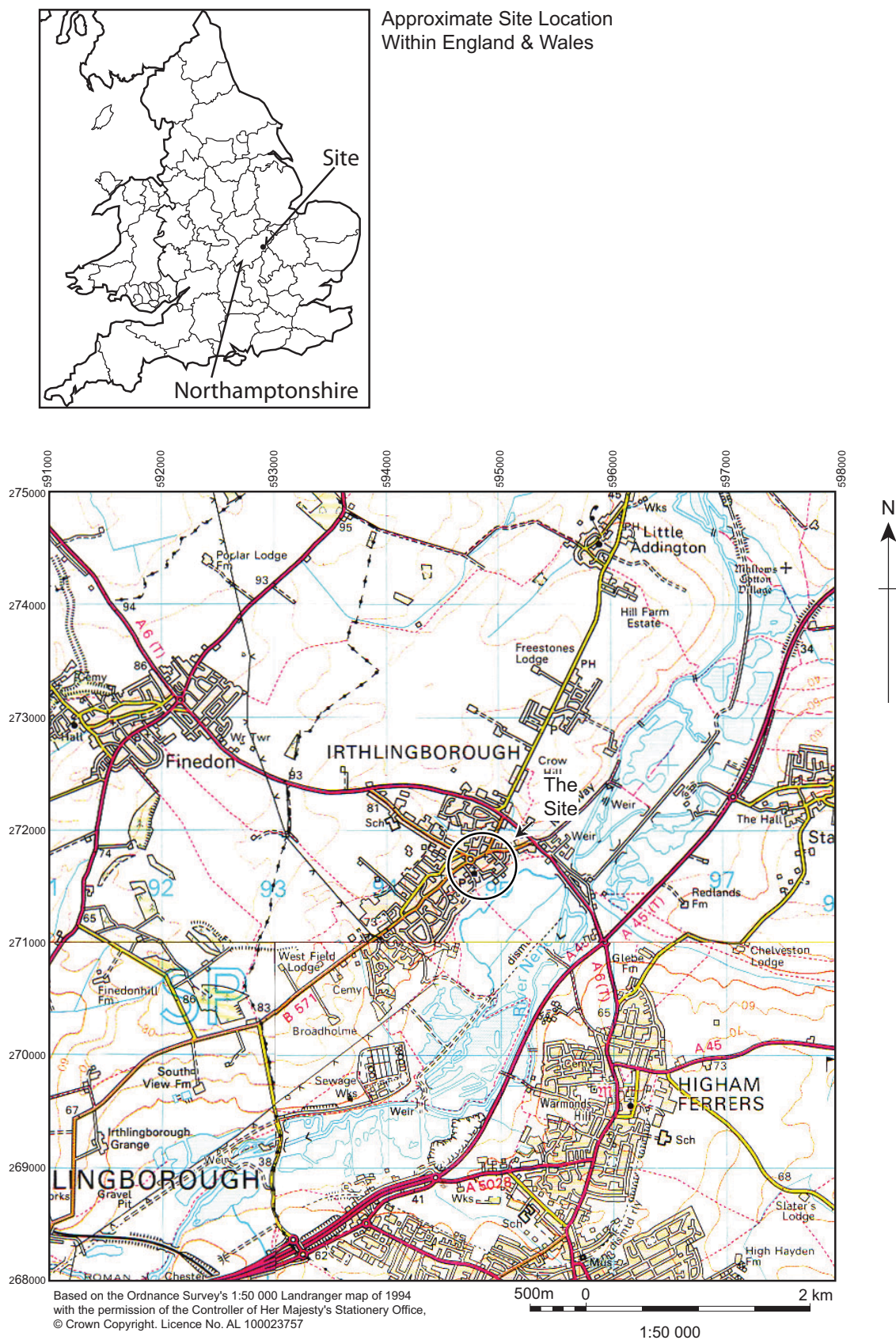
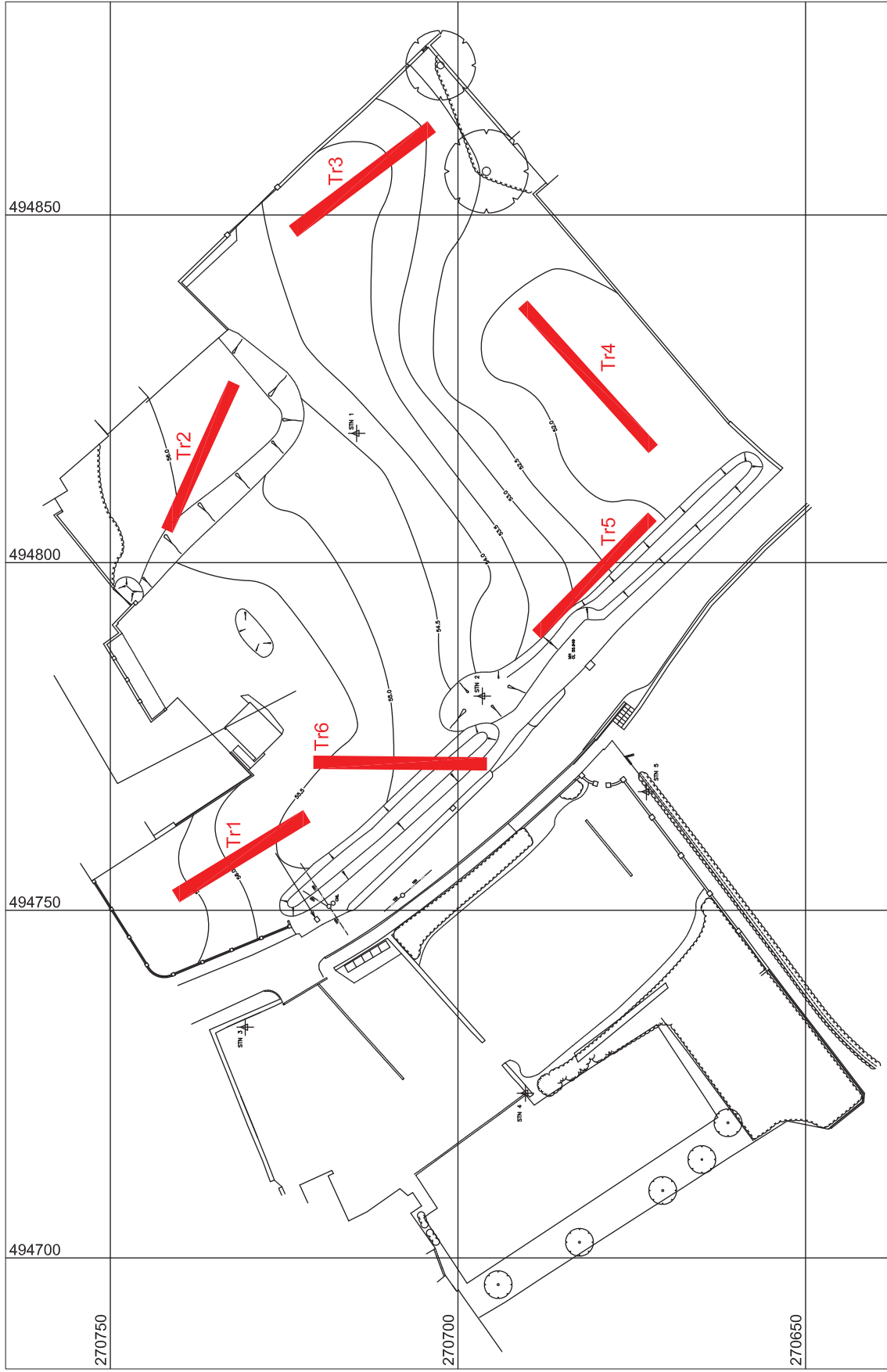


Figure 1: Site Location



Based on the Survey Plan Provided by the Client

Figure 2: Detailed Site Location Plan



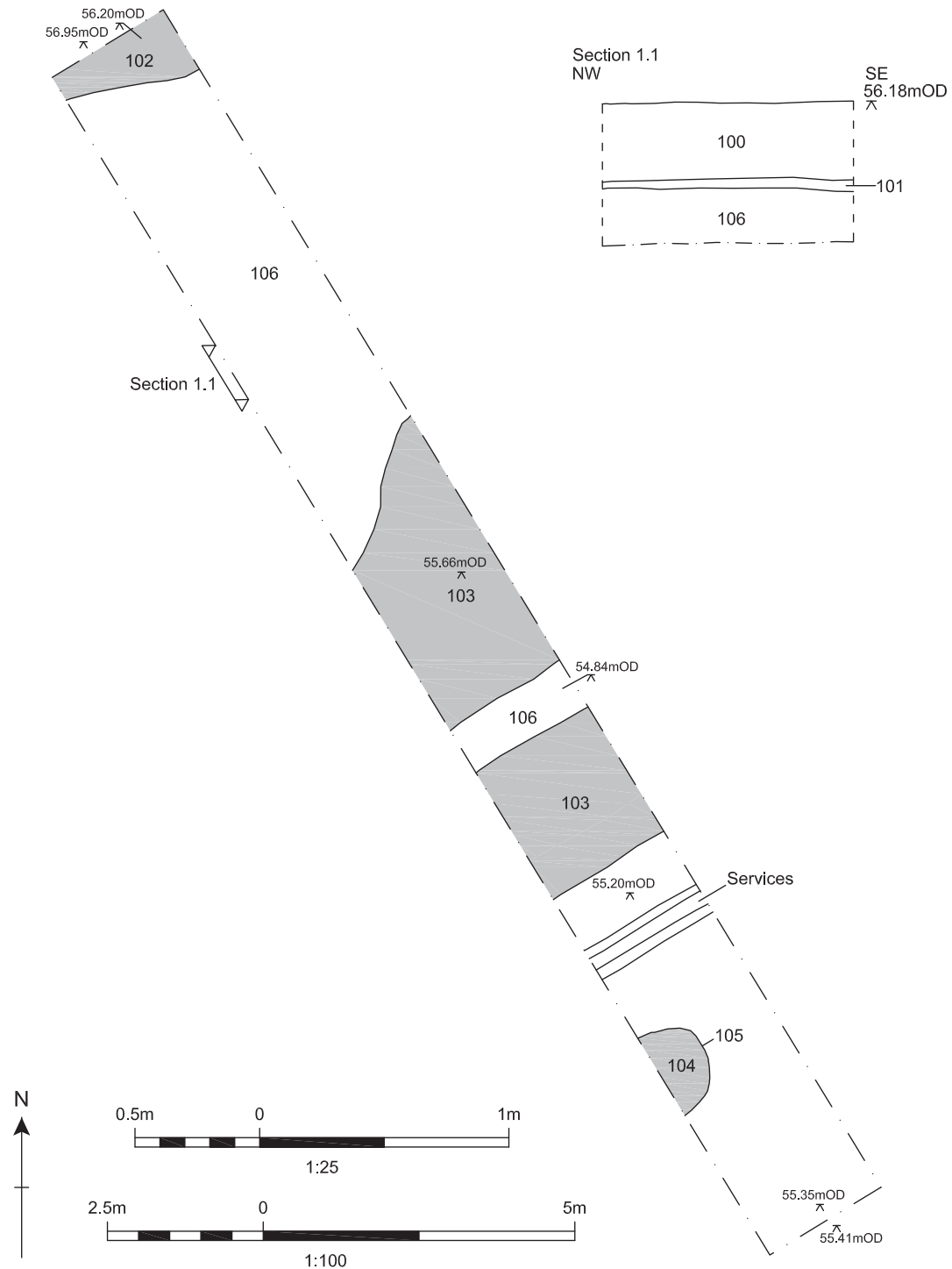


Figure 3: Trench 1: Plan (1:100) & Sample Section (1:25)

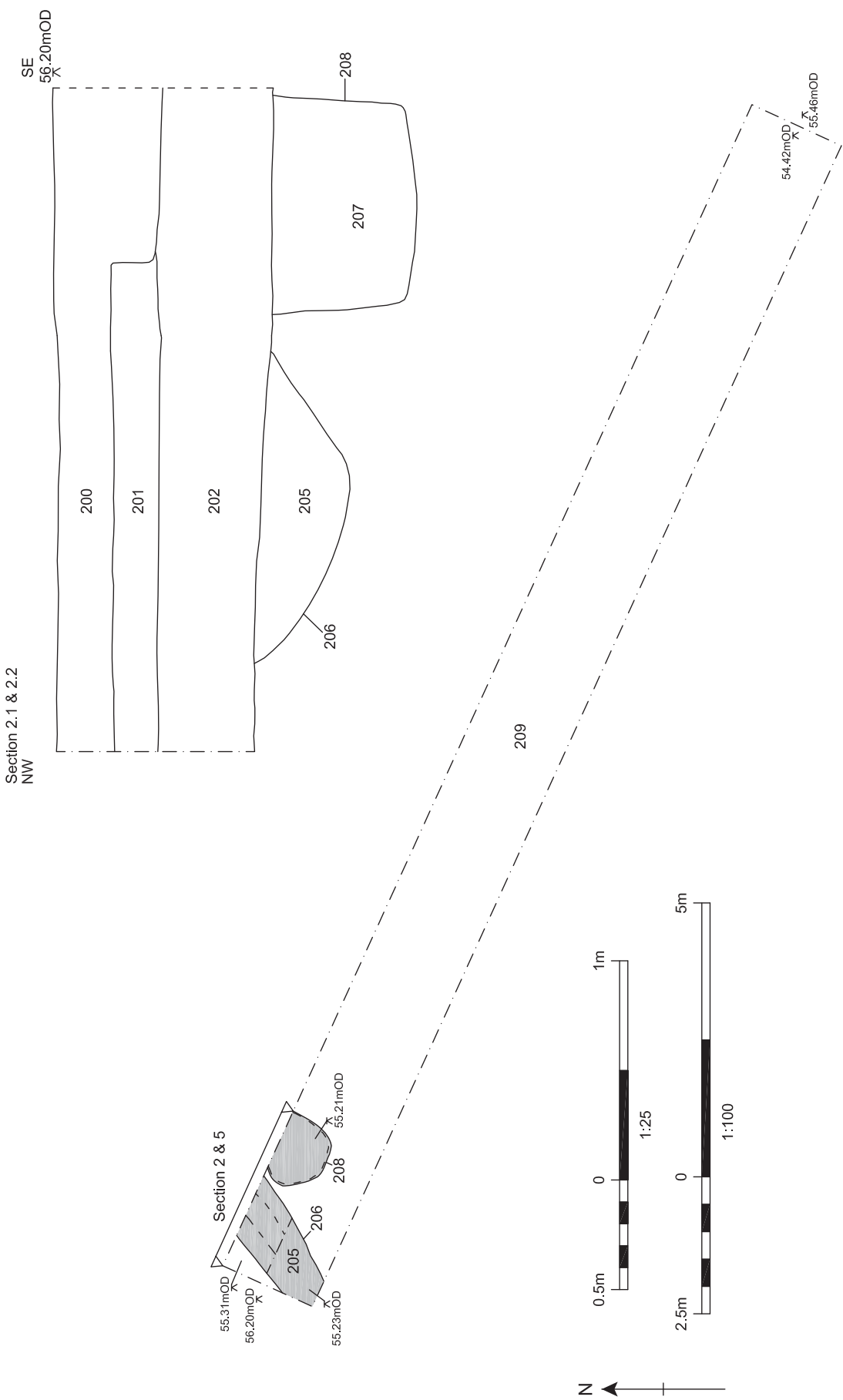


Figure 4: Trench 2: Plan (1:100) & Section (1:25)

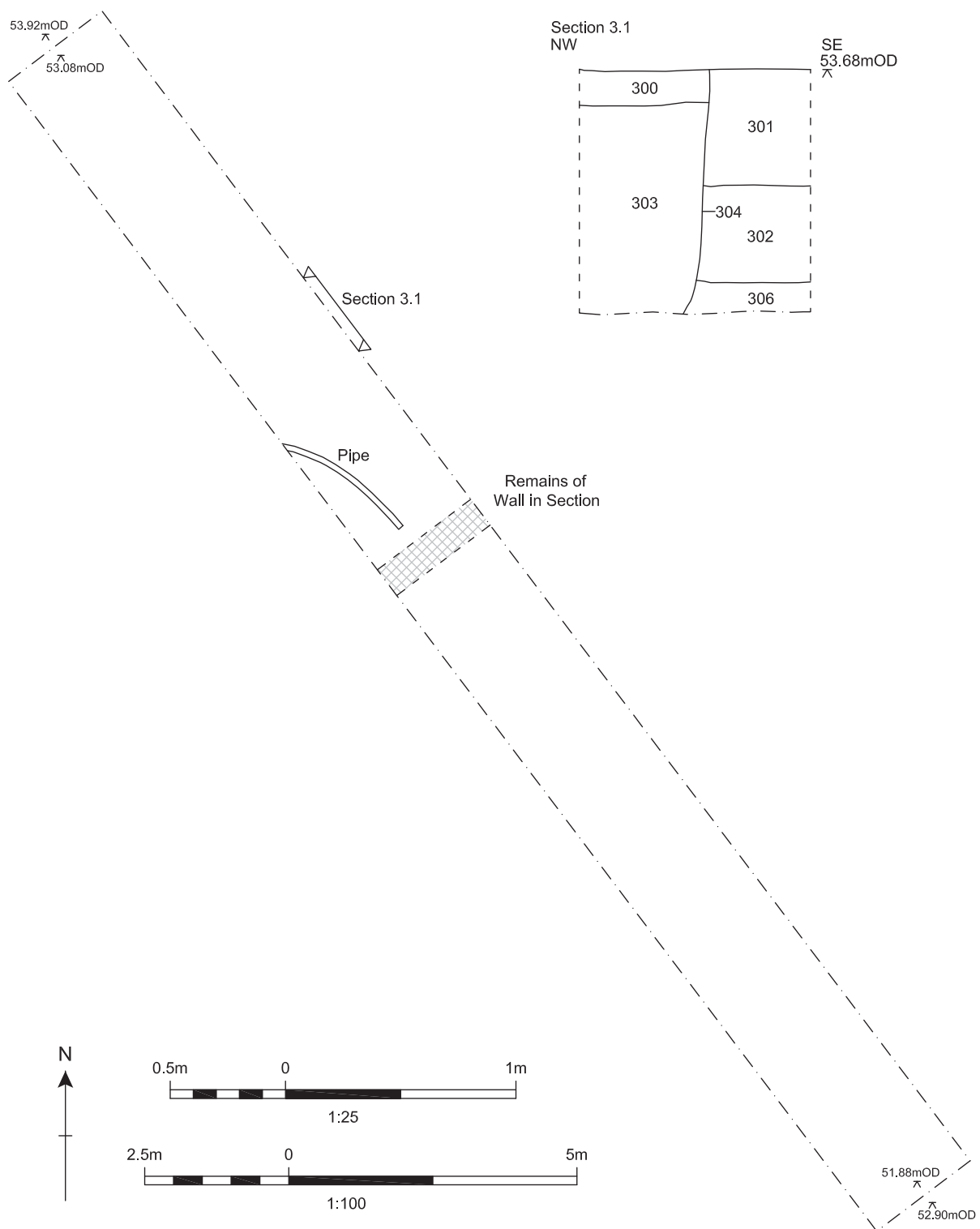


Figure 5: Trench 3: Plan (1:100) & Section (1:25)

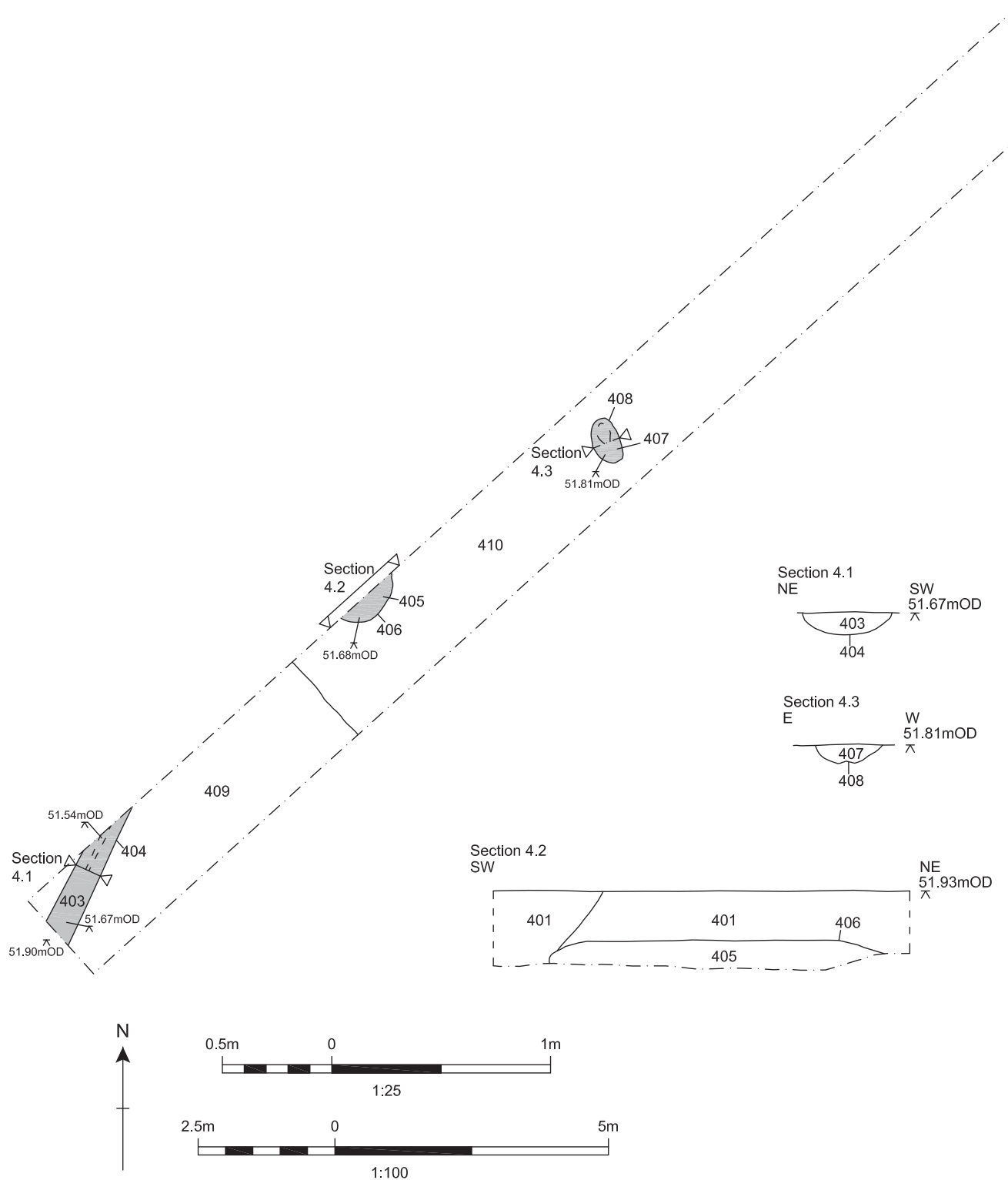


Figure 6: Trench 4: Plan (1:100) & Sections (1:25)

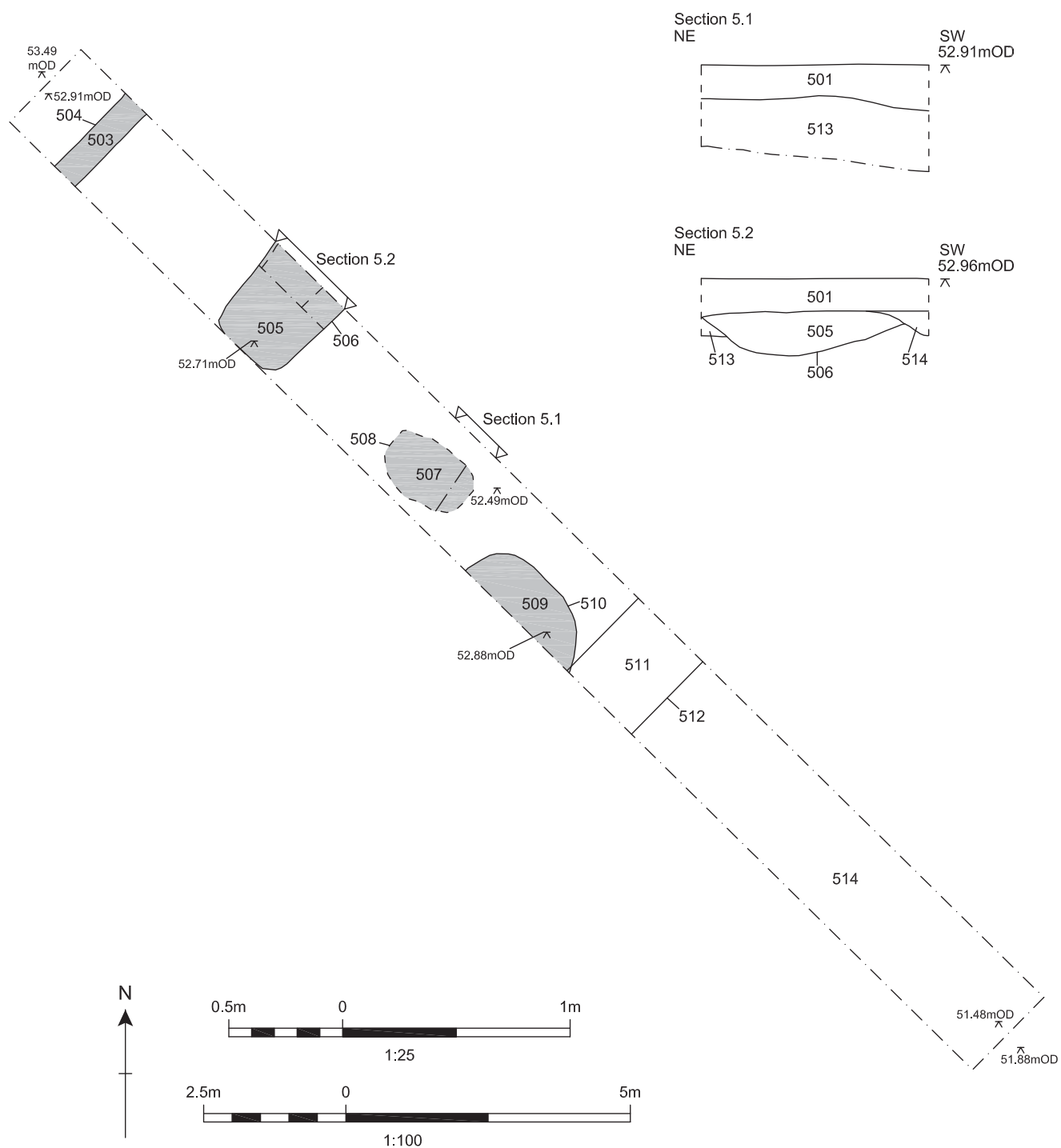


Figure 7: Trench 5: Plan (1:100) & Sections (1:25)

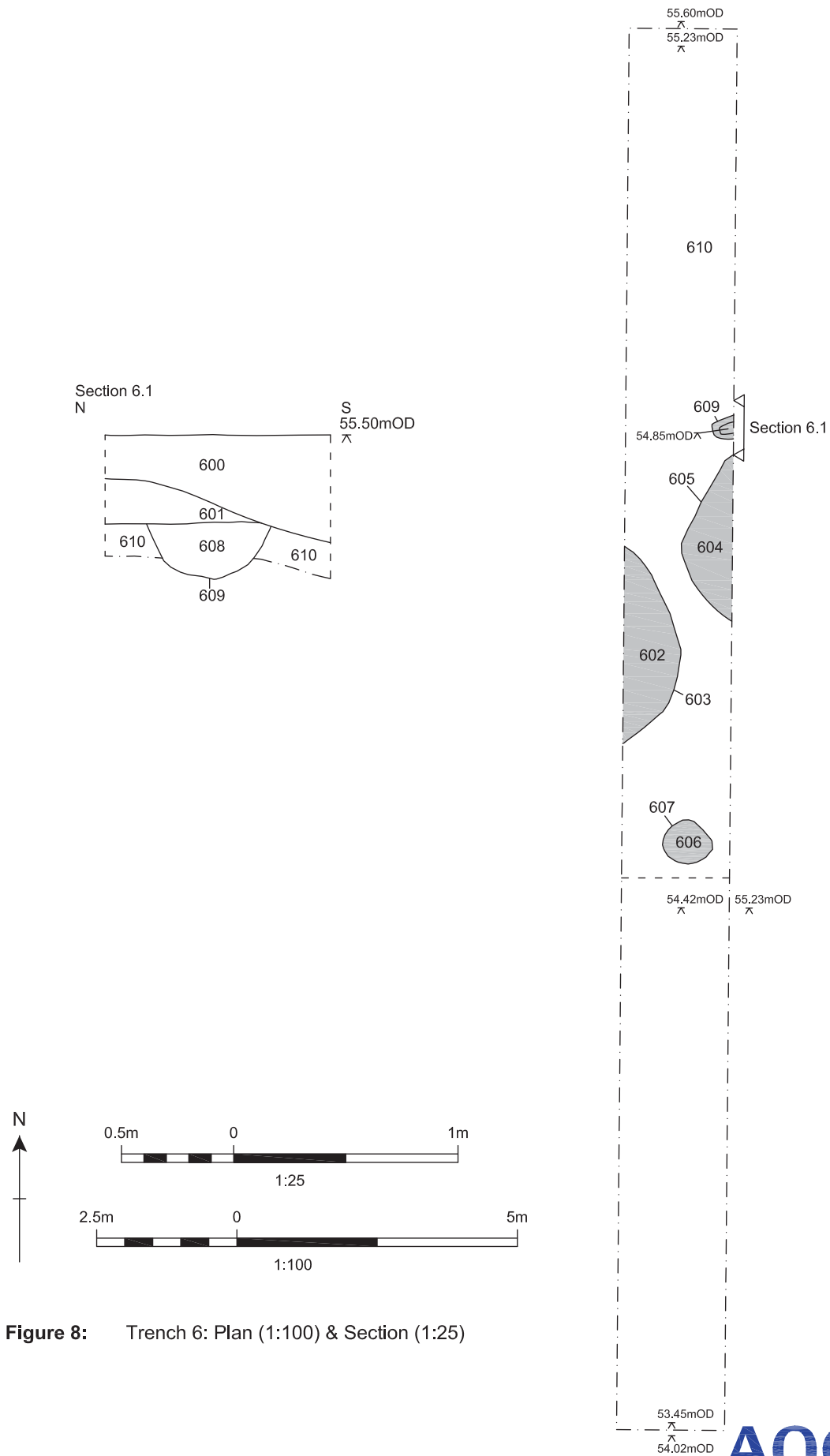


Figure 8: Trench 6: Plan (1:100) & Section (1:25)

Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
100	Imported Soil	7.30m	1.80m	0.30m
101	Tarmac surface	7.80m	1.80m	0.03m
102	Modern disturbance	1.80m	1.30m	NFE
103	Modern disturbance	8.00m	1.80m	0.50m+
104	Modern pit fill	1.30m	0.76m	0.15m
105	Modern pit cut	1.30m	0.76m	0.15m
106	Natural	22.00m	1.80m	0.22m+
200	Demolition layer	25.00m	2.00m	0.25m
201	Made ground	25.00m	2.00m	0.30m
202	Buried soil	25.00m	2.00m	0.48m
203	Brick culvert	-	1.40m	0.79m
204	Culvert cut	-	1.40m	0.79m
205	Ditch fill	2.20m	1.15m	0.37m
206	Ditch cut	2.20m	1.15m	0.37m
207	Pit fill	1.15m	0.90m	0.77m
208	Pit cut	1.15m	0.90m	0.77m
209	Buried soil	25.00m	2.00m	NFE
300	Demolition layer	25.00m	1.80m	0.46m
301	Industrial layer	25.00m	1.80m	0.50m
302	Buried soil	25.00m	1.80m	0.42m
303	Demolition pit fill	-	1.50m	1.10m
304	Demolition pit cut	-	1.50m	1.10m
305	Post med wall	1.80m	0.24m	0.87m
306	Natural	25.00m	1.80m	0.22m+
401	Topsoil and demolition layer	25.00m	1.80m	0.35m
402	Brickearth	3.00m	1.80m	0.12m
403	Fill of gully	2.75m	0.40m	0.10m
404	Cut of gull	2.75m	0.40m	0.10m
405	Fill pf pit	1.25m	0.40m	0.07m
406	Cut of pit	1.25m	0.40m	0.07m
407	Fill of pit	0.70m	0.40m	0.08m
408	Cut of pit	0.70m	0.40m	0.08m
409	Brickearth	6.50m	1.80m	-
410	Natural	25.00m	1.80m	-
501	Made ground	23.50m	1.80m	0.30m
502	Concrete slab	1.80m	0.20m	0.20m

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
503	Service trench fill	1.80m	0.50m	0.30m
504	Service trench cut	1.80m	0.50m	0.30m
505	Fill of pit	1.80m	1.90m	0.30m
506	Cut of pit	1.80m	1.90m	0.30m
507	Fill of pit	1.70m	1.10m	0.08m
508	Cut of pit	1.70m	1.10m	0.08m
509	Fill of modern pit	2.50m	0.95m	0.80m
510	Cut of pit	2.50m	0.95m	0.80m
511	Fill of linear	1.80m	1.40m	0.30m
512	Cut of linear	1.80m	1.40m	0.30m
513	Brickearth	23.70m	1.80m	0.30m
514	Natural	23.70m	1.80m	NFE
600	Demolition Layer	30.00m	1.80m	0.40m
601	Disturbed Layer	30.00m	1.80m	0.40m
602	Fill of pit	3.30m	0.88m	0.60m
603	Cut of pit	3.30m	0.88m	0.60m
604	Fill of pit	2.90m	0.98m	0.55m
605	Cut of pit	2.90m	0.98m	0.55m
606	Fill of pit	0.90m	0.90m	0.53m
607	Cut of pit	0.90m	0.90m	0.53m
608	Fill of gully	0.44m	0.41m	0.31m
609	Cut of gully	0.44m	0.41m	0.31m
610	Natural	30.00m	1.80m	NFE

Appendix B – Specialist Reports

The Pottery *by Luke Barber*

The archaeological work recovered 33 sherds of post-Roman pottery, weighing 187g, from seven individually numbered contexts. At least 12 different vessels are represented. The assemblage mainly consists of small sherds (less than 30mm across) although a couple of medium sized sherds are also present (the largest being 45mm across). Despite the small sherd sizes, most do not show extensive signs of abrasion suggesting they have not been subjected to repeated re-deposition. Although five rim sherds are present these are often only partial and do not show the full form in most instances. The vast majority of the assemblage consists of un-diagnostic body sherds. The largest context group is from pit [208], fill [207] and consists of a mere 12 sherds weighing 91g. The whole assemblage has been fully quantified on an excel database for archive. The pottery is of two periods: medieval and late post-medieval.

The medieval assemblage consists of 32 sherds (162g) from six apparently medieval deposits. Three fabrics are present, however, the assemblage is dominated by the well fired and generally oxidized local M1 calcareous (limestone/shell) tempered ware (30 sherds weighing 148g). This fabric was recovered from every medieval context. Although the production site at Olney Hyde, North Buckinghamshire (Mynard 1984) or Harrold, Bedfordshire (Hall 1971) may be the source of this material, the more distant Northamptonshire kilns at Stanion and Lyveden were also producing similar fabrics (McCarthy and Brooks 1988). Due to the difficulty in differentiating between the products of these kilns, such wares have been grouped together in Northampton (McCarthy 1979, 156: T2). With the exception of a bowl with simple rim (pit [406], fill [407]) all vessels appear to consist of jars with triangular club, necked beaded (pit [208], fill [207]) or lid-seated-type (cut [506], fill [505]) rims. All of these forms can be paralleled at the St Peter's Street excavations, Northampton (McCarthy 1979). Although these wares were made well into the 14th century, the current forms and absence of notable quantities of sandy wares and glazed vessels suggest the current assemblage is more likely to be of 12th- to mid/late 13th- century date. The only other medieval sherds consist of an off-white/grey fine sandy ware body sherd (M2) from pit [406], fill [405] and another body sherd in spare fine sand tempered off-white ware (M3) with apparent crude red-orange painted decoration (cut [506], fill [505]). Both sherds may be from the Stamford industry whose products were still present in notable quantities in Northampton assemblages of 12th- to early 13th- century date (McCarthy 1979, 164-5, Fabrics X1 and red painted Fabric X1-Y).

The only post-medieval sherd was recovered from modern disturbance [102] and consists of a body sherd from a 19th- century German seltzer bottle with partial stamp '...ASSAN'.

Although the current assemblage is too small to warrant any further analysis beyond that already undertaken, it clearly demonstrates 12th- to 13th- century activity on the site and should be studied in conjunction with any further material that may result from future work at the site.

The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

A total of seven fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) with a combined weight of 11 386g were recovered from the work. The material is entirely of post-medieval date and is summarised in table 1.

The material has been examined with the aid of a binocular microscope and fabric types have been compared with the Museum of London (MoL) fabric series where possible and a provisional fabric series drawn up where comparisons were not possible. Samples of fabric types have been retained and the remainder of the material has been discarded.

The majority of the brick recovered was in MoL 3038 fabric, which corresponds to London Brick company 'Phorpres' brick. Bricks in this fabric were machine-made and of 20th century date with well formed 'v' shaped frogs. Brick in this fabric was recovered from context [102] [509] and [511]. Also from context [511] was an unfrogged engineering brick with hard fired purple appearance to the outer surfaces and likely to be of later 19th or 20th century date. A third unfrogged brick with sharp arises was recovered from context [509] and was in an orange fabric with chunky silt and black iron rich inclusions. This brick is likely to date to the 18th or 19th century. A single fragment of pantile in an orange cream and red silt fabric with moderate fine quartz inclusions was recovered from context [102] and is of probable mid 17th to 19th century date.

Context	Fabric	form	count	weight	l	b	t	comments	spot date	fabric notes	Kept
102	MoL 3038	Brick	1	878		105	67	deep machine made frog, sharp arises	C20th		2
102	T1	pantile	1	304			17		Mid C17th-C19th	Orange cream and red silt fabric with moderate fine quartz inclusions	1
509	B1	brick	1	2034		105	74	unfrogged, sharp arises	C18th-C19th	Orange fabric with chunky silt and black iron rich inclusions	1
509	MoL 3038	brick	2	2264	222	105		LBC PHORPRES' stamped in frog. Machine made	C20th		1
511	V	Engineering brick	1	3834	240	113	78	unfrogged, sharp arises, mortared with coarse cream mortar, vry hard fired, blueish purple appearance	C19th-C20th		2
511	MoL 3038	Brick	1	2072		108	75	Machine made with sharp 'v' shaped frog in one surface	C20th	chunky silt fabric with calcareous inclusions	2

Table 1: Summary of Ceramic Building Material recovered by context.

The ceramic building material provides broad dating evidence for the features in which it occurs.

The assemblage is not of international, national, local or regional significance.

Information from this report should be incorporated into the main text of any publication as required. No further specialist work is required.

The remaining building materials should be re-boxed in stable cardboard boxes as per the specifications of any receiving museum.

The Metallurgical Remains *by Luke Barber*

A single piece (4g) of undiagnostic iron slag was recovered from cut [505], fill [506]. Although the piece demonstrates the presence of probable smithing on site during the 12th to 13th centuries, this was obviously at a negligible level. The slag has no potential for further analysis.

The Animal Bone *by Gemma Ayton*

A small animal bone assemblage containing 27 fragments of bone has been retrieved by hand collection. The bone derives from three contexts including [207] and [405], both of which are fills of pits, and [505]. These features date to the 12th and 13th Centuries. The bone assemblage is in a moderate condition with some evidence of surface erosion visible.

Wherever possible bone fragments have been identified to species and the skeletal element represented. The bone was identified using the in-house reference collection, held at English Heritage, Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth, and Schmidt (1972). Elements that could not be confidently identified to species, such as long-bone and vertebrae fragments, have been recorded according to their size. The larger fragments are recorded as cattle-sized and the smaller fragments as sheep-sized. The elements have been recorded according to the part and proportion of the bone present with reference to Serjeantson's (1996) zoning system.

The state of fusion has been noted and the differentiation of sheep and goat long-bones and teeth has been carried out with reference to Halstead and Collins (2002) Boessneck (1966) and Boessneck *et al* (1969). Each fragment has then been studied for signs of butchery, burning, gnawing and pathology.

The assemblage contains fragments of cattle (*Bos Taurus*) and cattle-sized fragments of bone as well as sheep (*Ovis*), sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) and sheep-sized fragments. The NISP (Number of Identified Specimen) counts are shown in Table 2.

Taxa	207	405	505
Cattle		1	1
Cattle-sized		11	3
Sheep	1		
Sheep/Goat		2	1
Sheep-sized			7

Table 2: NISP counts

The skeletal elements represented are those of the extremities including a sheep metacarpal, a cattle calcaneous and a cattle phalanx. The cattle-sized and sheep-sized elements include fragments of long bone and ribs. There are no butchery marks on the bones though these may have been destroyed by weathering and erosion.

The assemblage did not provide biometric data as no measurable bones were recovered. No loose teeth or mandibles were recovered which could have provided data regarding age-at-death.

No evidence of pathology, gnawing or burning has been noted.

Due to the size of the assemblage, it holds no potential for further analysis. No further work is required.

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Appendix C – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-85747

Project details

Project name	Church Street, Irthlingborough
Short description of the project	A six trench evaluation was carried out on site between the 15th-19th November 2010. The site work was commissioned by Retail Development Partnership Ltd. Four trenches revealed linear gullies and a ditch along with small pits. The archaeological remains were dated to the 12th-13th century. Later intrusional demolition activity has truncated parts of the site.
Project dates	Start: 15-11-2010 End: 19-11-2010
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	30807 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CHI 10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	GULLY Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	PIT Medieval

Monument type WALL Modern

Monument type CULVERT Post Medieval

Significant Finds CERAMICS Medieval

Significant Finds ANIMAL BONE Medieval

Significant Finds IRON SLAG Medieval

Methods & 'Targeted Trenches'
techniques

Development type Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the Pre-application
planning process

Project location

Country England

Site location NORTHAMPTONSHIRE EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE IRTHLINGBOROUGH
Church Street, Irthlingborough

Postcode NN9 5QD

Site coordinates SP 9485 7075 52.3262450999 -0.608055995481 52 19 34 N 000 36 29 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 51.78m Max: 56.20m

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology
Organisation

Project brief AOC Archaeology
originator

Project design AOC Archaeology
originator

Project Alan Ford
director/manager

Project supervisor Catherine Edwards

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Retail Development Partnership Ltd
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive
recipient

Physical Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Metal'

Digital Archive Northamptonshire Museum Service
recipient

Digital Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Metal'

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
available

Paper Archive Northamptonshire Museum Service
recipient

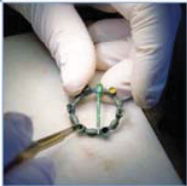
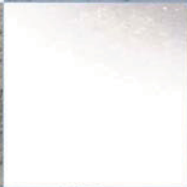
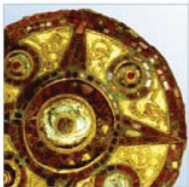
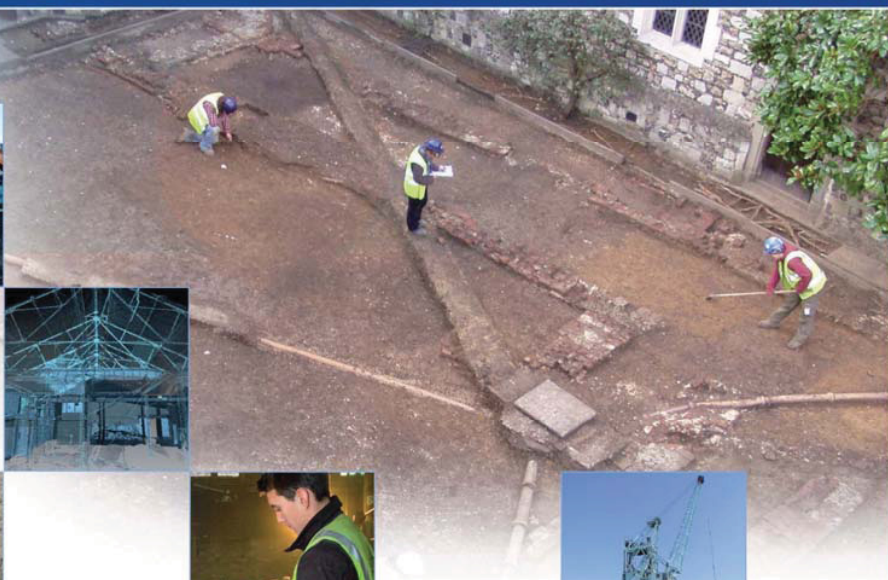
Paper Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Metal'

Paper available	Media	'Context sheet', 'Map', 'Matrices', 'Microfilm', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Survey', 'Unpublished Text'
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Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	CHURCH STREET, IRLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION REPORT
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Edwards C
Date	2011
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 document with 8 illustrations and finds reports

Entered by	catherine edwards (catherine.edwards@aocarchaeology.com)
Entered on	13 January 2011



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