



LAND AT SITE 10, MIDDLEMORE FARM DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation Report





**LAND AT SITE 10, MIDDLEMORE FARM
DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of a proposed new housing development ('the Site'). The Site is adjacent to a Romano-British settlement/farmstead lying under and around Middlemore Farm, Daventry, Northamptonshire (NGR 456426 265114).

As a result of the archaeological potential of the Site, Northamptonshire County Council produced a brief (NCC 2012) outlining the requirement for six 30m evaluation trenches within the north of the Site.

This evaluation revealed the remains of several furrows and an undated drainage gully. All the revealed archaeological features were thought to be of agricultural origin and no dating evidence was retrieved from any of their fills. Prior to the medieval/post-medieval period the Site may have formed pastoral land around the known Romano-British settlement.

The south-eastern part of the Site had been landscaped during the construction of the adjacent housing development.

This report has been prepared in accordance with current industry best practice (IfA 2008a) and in accordance with IfA Codes of Conduct (2010), and will be submitted to CgMs Consulting Ltd and NCC for approval.

The archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's Sheffield offices and will be deposited with an appropriate museum in due course, under a relevant accession number.

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Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Cathy Patrick of CgMs Consulting Ltd, and Wessex is also grateful to Will Bedford of CgMs and Liz Mordue of Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) who monitored the work.

The report was compiled by Alex Sotheran and illustrations were prepared by Chris Breeden. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Norton. Fieldwork was directed by Alex Sotheran with the assistance of Dane Wright and was carried out between the 15th and 17th of October 2012.

Land at Site 10, Middlemore Farm Daventry, Northamptonshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Site 10, Middlemore Farm, Daventry, Northamptonshire ('the Site' **Figure 1**). The work was carried out in advance of a proposed new housing development, as the Site is adjacent to a Romano-British settlement/farmstead (Leigh 2003).

1.1.2 As a result of the archaeological potential of the Site, Northamptonshire County Council produced a brief (NCC 2012), outlining the requirement for six 30m evaluation trenches within the Site. Wessex Archaeology (2012) produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief, and which was approved by CgMs and NCC prior to starting work.

1.1.3 This archaeological evaluation report has been prepared in accordance with current industry best practice (IfA 2008a) and in accordance with IfA Codes of Conduct (2010), and will be submitted to CgMs Consulting Ltd and NCC for approval.

1.2 The Site, Location and Geology

1.2.1 The Site is c. 1.3ha in area and located within a field to the west of new housing estate at Middlemore Farm, Middlemore, to the north of Daventry, Northamptonshire (NGR 456426 265114). The Site is bounded by Chatsworth Walk to the north, Hidcote Way to the west and a public house to the south.

1.2.2 The Site lies on Dyrham Formation (Siltstone and Mudstone) below Diamicton till deposits and is located at c. 150m AOD (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geology/ofbritain/home.html>).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 General

2.1.1 The following information is based on an HER search carried out by CgMs Consulting on 18th September 2012. Geophysical survey (Atkins and Hindmarch 2000; Butler and Yates 2011) of land to the south-west of the Site produced evidence for ridge and furrow but no other significant results.

2.2 Prehistoric and Roman

2.2.1 Iron Age and Romano-British spot finds have been recovered from land in close proximity to the Site, and Middlemore Farm is located on the site of a Romano British settlement; a watching brief and excavation revealed part of

a Romano-British field system to the east of the Site (Leigh 2003). Early Roman domestic debris was also recovered from pits and a gully to the south of the Site (Leigh 2002). Further excavation at Middlemore Farm revealed more evidence for ditches and settlement activity (Wilson 2004).

2.3 Medieval and Post-Medieval

2.3.1 Middlemore Farm dates from the middle of the 18th century, and is shown on Jeffrey's map of 1779 as Mickle Moor House and was subsequently known as Micklemoor Farm (Soden 1999). Ridge and Furrow survives within and close to the Site, and undated quarry pits also lie close to the farm.

3 AIMS AND SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 General

3.1.1 The general aims of the project were:

- to identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits within the Site;
- to determine the extent, condition, character, significance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered;
- to accurately record any revealed archaeological deposits;
- to recover artefacts disturbed by the Site works;
- to prepare a comprehensive archive, record and report of any archaeological deposits disturbed by the Site works;
- to aid the production of a mitigation strategy for the Site.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The trenches were located by means of a RTK GPS system and tied into the OS grid (within 0.1m). All trenches were scanned using a CAT to check for uncharted services prior to machining. Topsoil or overburden was removed using a mechanical excavator (JCB) fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil was removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the upper archaeological horizon, or the level of the natural geology, whichever was reached first.

4.1.2 All trenches were hand-cleaned (if necessary) to clarify the extent of any revealed archaeological remains. Where archaeological features and deposits were encountered, excavation was carried out by hand. A sufficient sample of each layer/feature type was excavated in order to establish the date, nature, extent and condition of the archaeological remains.

- 4.1.3 All recording took place in accordance with standard Wessex Archaeology methodologies and the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2012). All works were undertaken in accordance with the relevant Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) Standard and Guidance, the IfA Code of Conduct, and other current and relevant best practice and standards and guidance (IfA 2008a and b).
- 4.1.4 The trenches were backfilled with arisings following the evaluation, once NCC and CgMs were satisfied that the excavation had been carried out to an appropriate standard.

5 EVALUATION RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The following section is a summary of the information held in the Site archive. Trench locations are shown in **Figure 1**. Observed deposits for each trench are summarised in **Appendix 1** and referred to in the text in bold. The dimensions of each trench were 30m long and 1.80m wide.

5.2 Trench 1

- 5.2.1 Three north-south aligned furrows were observed in Trench 1 (**Figure 2**). The western furrow was sample excavated and found to be approximately 0.10m in depth. No other archaeological remains were revealed (**Plate 1**).

5.3 Trench 2

- 5.3.1 A single furrow that ran the entire north to south length of the trench was the only feature noted in Trench 2 (**Plate 2**). A sample slot was excavated through this feature to confirm its nature.

5.4 Trench 3

- 5.4.1 A south-west to north-east aligned furrow ran from the centre of Trench 3. As the furrow was at a slightly different alignment to the other furrows within the Site a slot was excavated through the feature to confirm its nature. The feature was wide and shallow and despite its south-west to north-east alignment was also likely to be a furrow.
- 5.4.2 An east-west aligned gully (**3004**) was recorded in the south of Trench 3. The gully was 'V'-shaped, 0.13m deep and 0.63m wide, and filled with a silty clay (**3005**); no finds were recovered (**Figure 3**).

5.5 Trench 4

- 5.5.1 The heavily truncated remains of three furrows running in a north to south direction were revealed under modern landscaped deposits (**4002**). These later deposits were possibly laid as an area of hard standing during the building of the adjacent modern housing estate (**Plate 3**).

5.6 Trench 5

- 5.6.1 The only remains noted in Trench 5 were three furrows running in a north to south direction (**Plate 4**).

5.7 Trench 6

- 5.7.1 Natural yellow sand (**6005**) was revealed 1m below ground level and was overlain by a dark blue/grey silty clay (**6004**), which may have once formed a waterlogged deposit within a natural hollow. The deposit was overlain by a layer of coarse sand (**6003**) below modern made ground (**6002**).
- 5.7.2 The modern made ground consisted of building material and rubble and was probably contemporary with **4002** in Trench 4. No further archaeological remains were noted in Trench 6 (**Plate 5**).

6 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 No artefacts were recovered from any of the furrows and features in the six trenches. No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 The revealed features predominantly comprised the bases of furrows, which are still visible in the topography of the Site. The furrows are likely to be post-medieval in date.
- 7.1.2 A probable gully was revealed in Trench 3, which although undated could potentially be Romano-British in origin - but may also represent a later drainage feature.
- 7.1.3 It was also apparent that the south-eastern quadrant of the Site was recently landscaped, possibly to form a compound for construction works. This activity had truncated the original ground surface and potentially any underlying archaeology.

8 ARCHIVE AND COPYRIGHT

8.1 Archive

- 8.1.1 The archive will be deposited with an appropriate museum in due course, under the relevant accession number.
- 8.1.2 The Site archive will be prepared in line with United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (2001), Museums and Galleries Commission (1991), English Heritage (2006) guidelines and the requirements of the local Museums Service.

8.2 Copyright

- 8.2.1 This report, and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

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10 APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No. 1		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 0.30m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
1001	Topsoil: Light greyish brown clayey silty loam.	0 - 0.23m
1002	Subsoil: Dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional small rounded stones. The subsoil was only visible in the furrows.	0.23 – 0.30m
1003	Natural: Yellowish grey sandy clay with moderate amounts of rounded stones.	0.30m +

Trench No. 2		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 0.55m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
2001	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown silty clay loam. Occasional small stones.	0 – 0.27m
2002	Subsoil: Light yellowish brown clayey silt loam with occasional small rounded stones.	0.27 – 0.55m
2003	Natural: Mid greyish yellow clay with occasional small stones.	0.55m +

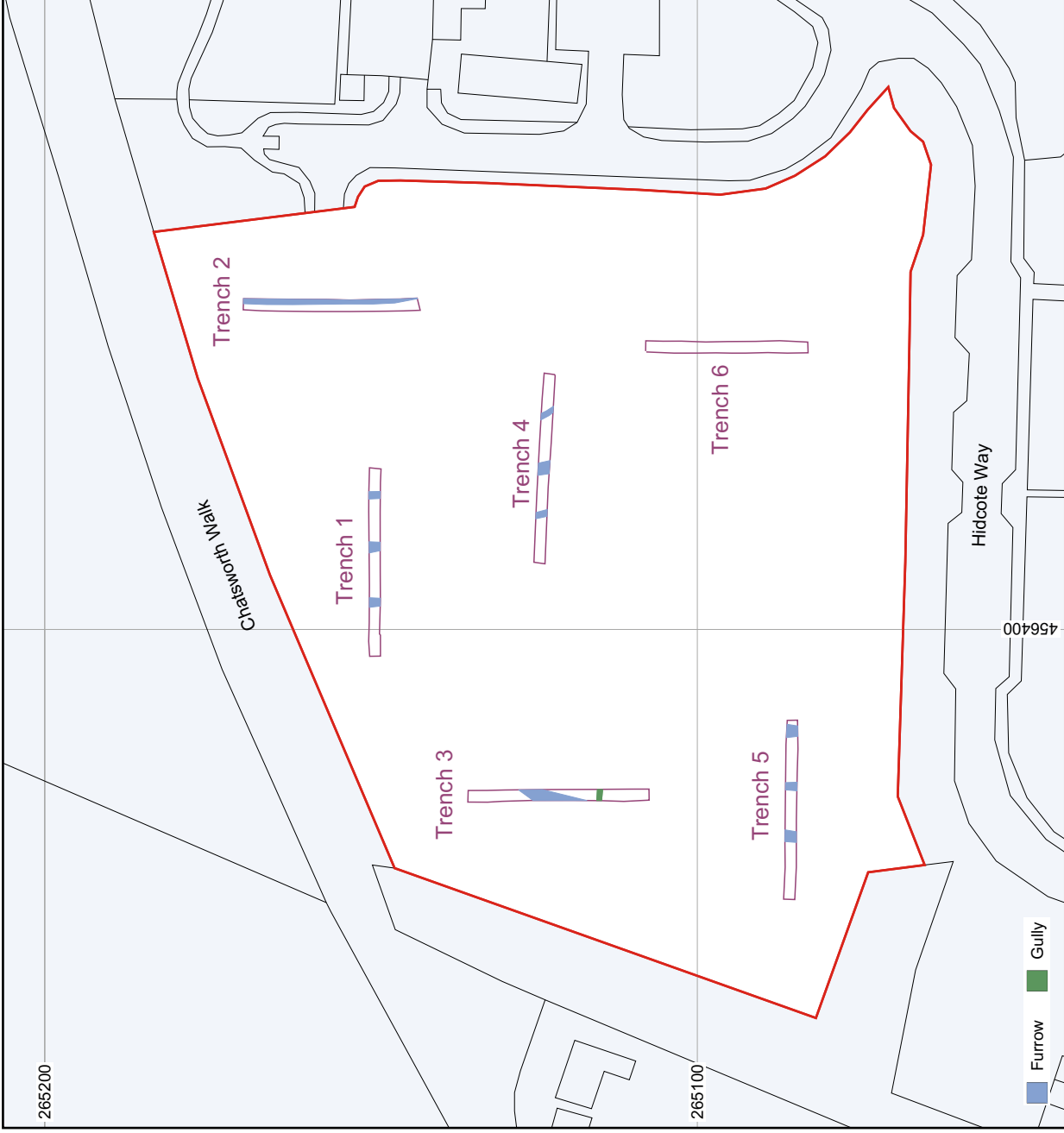
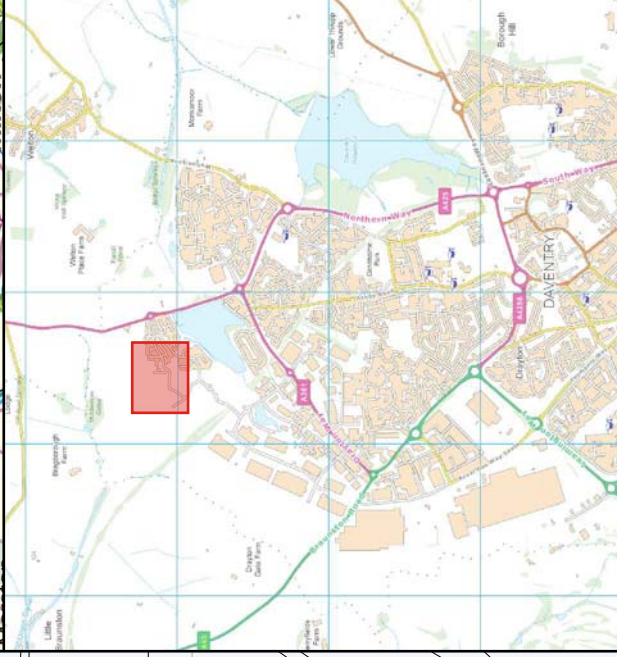
Trench No. 3		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 0.46m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
3001	Topsoil: Dark greyish brown sandy silt loam with occasional small stones.	0 – 0.25m
3002	Subsoil: Light yellowish brown sandy clay with frequent small stone inclusions.	0.25 – 0.42m
3003	Natural: Mid yellowish orange sandy clay with moderate small stone inclusions.	0.42m +
3004	Gully: Shallow gully of uncertain date	0.25-0.38m
3005	Gully fill: Silty clay fill of 3004	0.25-0.38m

Trench No. 4		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 0.90m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
4001	Topsoil: Light greyish brown silty clay loam with frequent roots.	0 – 0.17m
4002	Made Ground: Mixed mid brown clay with frequent stone, metal, plastic, charcoal inclusions. Modern made ground surface, probably for hard standing on construction works.	0.17 – 0.90m
4003	Buried Ground Surface: Mid to dark greyish brown silty clay loam with frequent roots.	0.56m – 0.90m

Trench No. 4		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 0.90m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
4004	Natural: Mid orangey brown clay with frequent small stone inclusions.	0.90m +

Trench No. 5		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 0.42m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
5001	Topsoil: Light greyish brown sandy silt with moderate small stone inclusions.	0 – 0.22m
5002	Subsoil: Mid yellowish brown sandy clay with moderate small stone inclusions.	0.22 – 0.40m
5003	Natural: Light orangey yellow clay with frequent small stone inclusions.	0.40m+

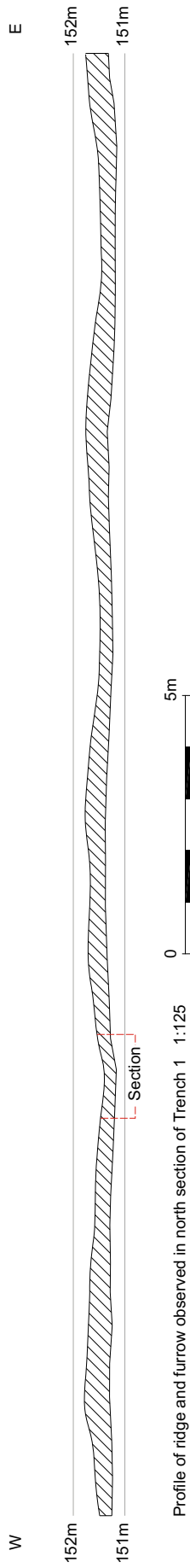
Trench No. 6		Dimensions: 30m x 1.8m Max depth: 1.01m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
6001	Topsoil: Dark brownish grey sandy silt with frequent small stone inclusions.	0 – 0.20m
6002	Made Ground: Light yellowish grey sandy clay with frequent building material and modern inclusions.	0.20 – 0.51m
6003	Sand Layer: Dark yellow course sand, deliberate modern deposit.	0.51 – 0.62m
6004	Water Borne Layer: Dark grey blue silty clay with iron mottling. Probably remains of a boggy area.	0.62- 1.01m
6005	Natural: Yellowish orange clay with moderate stone and flint inclusions	1.01m +



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Trench location

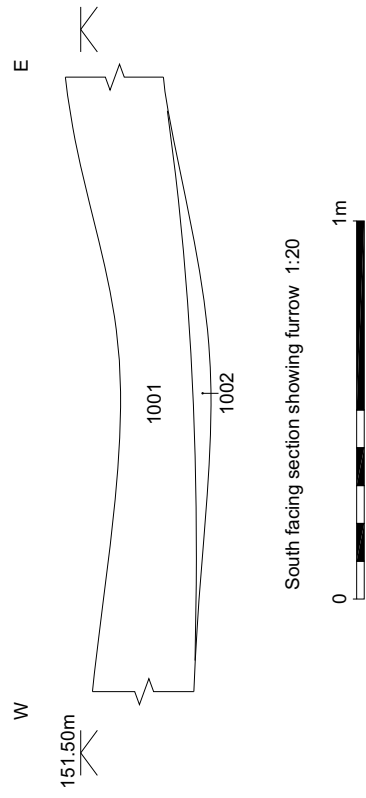
Figure 1



Profile of ridge and furrow observed in north section of Trench 1 1:125



Section through furrow in Trench 1, looking north

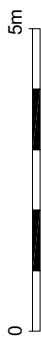
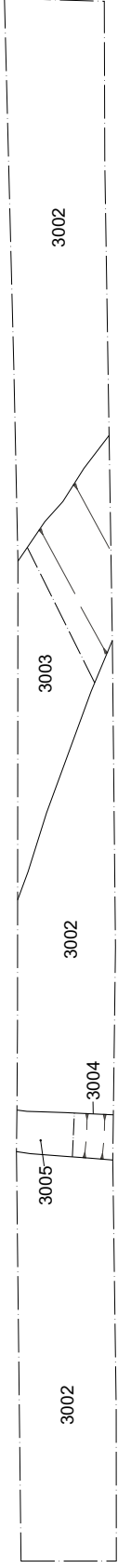


South facing section showing furrow 1:20

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Ridge & furrow within Trench 1

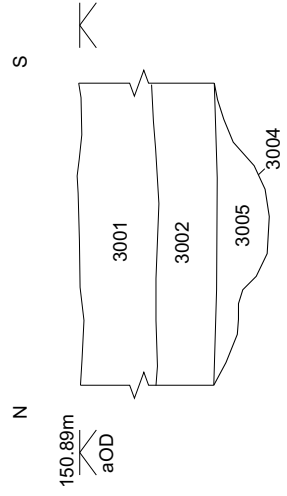
Figure 2



Plan of Trench 3 1:125



Section through gully 3004, looking east



West facing section showing gully 3005 1:20



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Plate 1: General shot of Trench 1, looking west



Plate 2: Furrow within Trench 2, looking west

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Plate 3: Representative section, Trench 4, looking south



Plate 4: General shot of Trench 5, looking west

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Plate 5: General shot of Trench 6, looking south

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