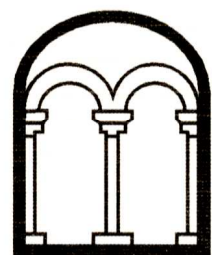


**LAND OFF GUILSBOROUGH ROAD
AND NORTHAMPTON ROAD
WEST HADDON
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION, RECORDING,
ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION**

Albion
archaeology



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ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION**

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Marcin Koziminski	Gary Edmondson	Drew Shotliff

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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology 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.

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The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Lesley Ann Mather, County Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council (CAA).

The fieldwork was carried out by Marcin Koziminski (Archaeological Supervisor), Anna Rebisz-Niziolek (Assistant Supervisor) and Krzysztof Ryniec (Archaeological Technician). This report has been prepared by Marcin Koziminski, with contributions by Jackie Wells (Artefacts Officer) and Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). Environmental soil sample processing was by Anna Rebisz-Niziolek.

Albion Archaeology
 St Mary's Church
 St Mary's Street
 Bedford, MK42 0AS
 ☎: 0300 300 6867
 Fax: 0300 300 8209
 E-mail: office@albion-arch.com
 Website: www.albion-arch.com

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Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CAA	County Archaeological Advisor for NCC
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Client	CgMs Consulting Ltd.
PDA	Proposed development area
HER	Historic Environment Record
NCC	Northamptonshire County Council
<i>Procedures Manual</i>	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> , 2nd edn, 2001
	Albion Archaeology
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

An outline planning application (DA/2014/0218) to Daventry District Council for new residential development on land off Guilsborough Road and Northampton Road, West Haddon, Northamptonshire was allowed on appeal (APP/Y2810/A/14/2222311). A condition requiring a programme of archaeological works was placed on the planning permission. This was to ensure that features of archaeological interest were properly examined and recorded, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

An initial phase of investigation comprised a programme of geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching. As a result of this work, an area of Iron Age activity was identified and NCC's County Archaeological Advisor (CAA) issued a brief for a programme of archaeological works to mitigate the impact of the development. On the basis of the evaluation results, an area of c. 45 x 55m was selected for investigation.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to carry out the excavation, analysis and publication, the approach to which was specified in a Written Scheme of Investigation.

The mitigation works largely confirmed the findings of the trial trench evaluation. An Iron Age boundary/enclosure ditch was revealed. Evidence of possible weathered bank material was encountered in one of the excavated segments, suggesting that a bank was located on the western side of the boundary. This deposit also produced a residual flint core of possible late Neolithic date, indicating early prehistoric activity in the vicinity. The pit that had produced middle Iron Age pottery during the trial trenching was fully excavated during the mitigation works, although no additional dating evidence was obtained. A number of undated features — including three post holes and an isolated small pit — may be associated with activity in the Iron Age period.

Evidence for medieval/post-medieval ploughing was encountered in the form of NW-SE aligned furrows, which survived on higher ground in the southern part of the site, spaced 6–6.5m apart.

Modern remains were represented by wheel ruts and plough scars associated with modern agricultural activity. A shallow ditch encountered in Trench 8 during the evaluation works is thought to be another wheel rut.

Archaeological remains were generally shallow and truncated by medieval and later ploughing, indicating relatively poor below-ground preservation.

The archaeological work within the site indicates that this area was peripheral to any focus of Iron Age activity. This is in keeping with the findings of previous investigations to the north of Guilsborough Road. The results have limited potential to contribute to understanding of the morphology, spatial extent and function of Iron Age settlement in the area (Knight et al. 2012, 58, Objective 4C). The results of the investigation have been fully analysed in this report, which will be uploaded onto the OASIS website; no further analysis or reporting is necessary. The project archive will be deposited at the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC) (accession no. ENN108050).



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

An outline planning application (DA/2014/0218) to Daventry District Council for new residential development on land off Guilsborough Road and Northampton Road, West Haddon, Northamptonshire was allowed on appeal (APP/Y2810/A/14/2222311). The development will comprise up to 100 dwellings, with vehicular access, pedestrian links, public open space, car parking, landscaping and drainage.

A condition placed on the planning permission stated that: “No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological works has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority”. This was to ensure that features of archaeological interest were properly examined and recorded, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 141.

An initial phase of investigation comprised a programme of geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014) and archaeological trial trenching (MOLA 2015). As a result of this work, an area of Iron Age activity was identified and NCC’s County Archaeological Advisor (CAA) issued a brief for a programme of archaeological excavation, analysis and publication, targeting a c. 45 x 55m area identified as a result of the evaluation (NCC 2015).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to carry out the excavation, analysis and publication, the approach to which was specified in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion 2015).

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The village of West Haddon lies in the west of Northamptonshire, 10km north-west of Northampton and 5km east of the M1.

The proposed development area (PDA) is situated on the eastern margins of West Haddon, bounded to the north by Guilsborough Road, to the east by the A428 and to the south by Northampton Road (Figure 1). It is centred on grid reference SP 6370 7190. Prior to the commencement of the archaeological investigation the land comprised arable fields and scrub.

Topographically the site rises towards the south to a height of 185m OD with a slight slope down to the north. It is underlain by sandstone, limestone and ironstone of the Northamptonshire sand formation. These are overlain by superficial deposits of glaciofluvial sand and gravel¹.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

A desk-based assessment of the archaeological potential of the PDA was produced in advance of fieldwork investigation (Flitcroft 2013). It concluded that during archaeological excavation and monitoring along the A428 West

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2015]



Haddon Bypass (Mason 2005) a number of archaeological finds were recovered that dated to the prehistoric, Roman and medieval periods. However, none of these finds were indicative of significant archaeological remains and did not constitute 'heritage assets'.

The ploughed-out remains of medieval and post-medieval open field ridge and furrow had been previously recorded within the PDA; their presence was subsequently confirmed by geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014). Other geophysical anomalies had been interpreted as two former field boundaries and a single possible pit (ibid).

Archaeological trial trenching (MOLA 2015) identified an area of activity adjacent to the western boundary of the PDA. This comprised a pit, which contained a sherd of middle Iron Age pottery, and two undated ditches. Traces of furrows, characteristic of medieval and later arable cultivation were also identified.

1.4 Project Objectives

The research agenda and strategy for investigations within Northamptonshire are provided by Cooper (2006) and supplemented by Knight *et al* (2012): *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*. These documents are a vital tool for the assessment of any heritage asset within its local, regional and national historic environment setting.

Based on evidence from the archaeological evaluation (MOLA 2015) remains dating to the Iron Age were anticipated within the investigation area. Surviving below-ground remains of medieval and post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation were also likely.

The research agenda for the East Midlands states that more information is needed on the morphology, spatial extent and functions of Iron Age settlement in order to characterise settlement of this period and to explore intra-regional variations (Knight *et al.* 2012, 58, Objective 4C).

The aims of the investigation programme were therefore formulated as follows:

- To establish whether any further evidence for Iron Age settlement existed within the PDA;
- To determine and understand the date, nature, function and character of any past activity within the PDA, in terms of its cultural and environmental setting;
- To recover artefactual and environmental materials to assist in understanding the cultural and economic basis of former settlements, and indications of change over time;
- To produce a site archive for future deposition with an appropriate museum, and to provide information for accession to the Northamptonshire HER.

The research aims were reviewed throughout the project to ensure that:



- they were still relevant to the data being uncovered;
- methodologies were still appropriate.

A preliminary key review stage took place once all overburden had been removed. It was at that stage that all features were visible and, once planned, detailed strategies for their sample excavation were established

The principal outcome of the works was the production of a report that fully described the results of all stages of the archaeological works and findings (this document).



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards

The standards and requirements set out in the following documents were adhered to throughout the project:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edition, 2001).
• CI/A	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
• English Heritage	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> (2011)
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (2015)
• NARC	<i>Northamptonshire Archaeological Archives Standard</i> (June 2014)

2.2 Archaeological Excavation and Recording

The PDA principally comprises three fields, bounded by hedgerows on most sides. The programme of archaeological investigation was carried out in the area of archaeological sensitivity as defined by the results of the evaluation (MOLA 2015) and agreed with the CAA. This comprised a c. 45 x 55m area, centred on Trench 8, located adjacent to the western boundary in the north-western part of the PDA (Figure 1). However, since remains of possible archaeological interest continued beyond the initial area of investigation, the south-western corner was extended by an additional c. 10 x 14m area.

The archaeological works took place between 23rd September and 2nd October 2015. The overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ‘ditching’ bucket, operating under close archaeological supervision. Once archaeological remains or the upper surface of undisturbed geological strata were reached, machine excavation ceased and no machine movement across the stripped area was permitted. The identification of archaeological features was made during, as well as after, machine stripping to allow oxidisation of different soil deposits. Once machining was complete, pre-excavation planning was undertaken and used as the framework for the detailed excavation strategy. The soil bunds were scanned for artefacts recovery on a regular basis and a metal detector was used routinely, both to check spoil and to locate potential metal artefacts in advance of the excavation of features.

All archaeological features were investigated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology’s *pro formae* sheets; they were also drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits revealed were recorded using a unique number sequence, commencing at 1000. Context numbers in square brackets refer to the



cuts [**] and those in round brackets to fills or layers (**). The development site was inspected by the CAA on 30th September 2015. A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion 2015).

2.3 Archive

An integrated project archive (including both artefacts/ecofacts and project documentation) was prepared on completion of the project and it will be deposited at the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC) (accession no. ENN108050).

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (ref: albionar1-215618) in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

All deposits and features revealed are described below and discussed in chronological order, from earliest to latest. Plans, sections and photographs are shown on Figures 2–5, with context information contained in Appendix 1.

3.2 Overburden and Geological Strata

Overburden was similar across the site — 0.35m-thick, dark grey-brown silty sand ploughsoil (1000), sealing a paler 0.1m-thick subsoil (1001) that consisted of mid orange-brown sandy silt. Both deposits contained occasional small to large stones.

Undisturbed geological strata predominantly comprised mid grey-orange silty sand with patches of gravel and mid grey clay (1002). In the central part of the site this was overlain by deposit of light grey silty sand (1051).

3.3 Iron Age Remains

A single boundary/enclosure ditch [1021/1024/1043/1047/gen. 1058] was revealed within the excavation area. It was aligned south to north, curving towards the north-west where it petered out. It was traceable for c. 40m. The ditch had been recorded as segments [816], [818] and [823] during the trial trenching. Whilst one excavated section in Trench 8 contained evidence of recutting, no such evidence was encountered during the mitigation works.

The ditch was 0.9–1.63m wide with a steeply sloping V-shaped profile. It was 0.36–0.72m deep and was more substantial to the south (Figure 2: sections 1–3; Figure 3: images 1 and 2). All the excavated segments were infilled by deposits that had formed through natural processes, such as slumping of geological deposits and silting. However, the intermediate fill of segment [1043] may have formed as a result of weathered-in bank material from the western side of the boundary (Figure 2: section 1; Figure 3: image 2).

A very small, abraded shell-tempered sherd of early to middle Iron Age pottery (1g) was recovered from the lower fill of [1021]. The lower fill of [1024] yielded a small fragment (3g) of abraded fired clay. The intermediate fill of segment [1043] contained a residual flint core (24g) of grey translucent flint with a single platform and three flakelet scars; it may date to the late Neolithic period. Sample <2> from the ditch contained occasional very small fragments of charcoal and an occasional charred seed fragment. The deposit was very rooty; it also contained uncharred seed and insect egg cases, indicating a degree of intrusion. This material has no analytical potential.

Pit [804] was investigated in Trench 8 where a large middle Iron Age pottery sherd dated was recovered from the fill. The trial trench backfill was removed and the remainder of the pit was excavated as [1041]. The pit had a concave profile, c. 1.25m wide by 0.2m deep, filled with naturally silted material (Figure 2: section 4; Figure 4: image 3). Sample <1> from the pit contained occasional very small fragments of charcoal and charred seed, along with modern insect



fragments and eggs and uncharred seed, indicating the presence of intrusive material.

3.4 Medieval/Post-medieval Agricultural Remains

A series of three medieval/post-medieval furrows [1052], aligned NW-SE, are indicative of arable cultivation. They survived better on higher ground in the southern part of the site, where they were 0.9–1.50m wide and up to 0.15m deep. They were spaced at c. 6–6.5m intervals (Figure 4: Image 4).

3.5 Modern Activity

A series of wheel ruts and plough scars are likely to be associated with recent agricultural activity.

Wheel ruts were represented by two sets of remains. One of them — [1054] and [1056] — precisely followed the western site boundary, mirroring a characteristic ‘kink’ in the fence line (Figure 5: Image 5), which only appears on maps after 1975; prior to this the boundary was straight. Wheel ruts [1026] and [1030] were on an east-west alignment. All ruts shared slightly irregular and shallow profiles that were 0.28–1m wide and 0.06–0.17m deep.

The shallow, NW-SE aligned ditch [806] identified in Trench 8 was not encountered within the mitigation area. This may be due to the shallow nature of the feature, which was 0.40m wide and 0.09m deep. However, its orientation as well as its mid yellow-brown silty sand fill may indicate that it was another modern wheel rut.

Plough scars were revealed with a turning near the northern limit of the site indicating that they were also modern, respecting the 20th-century housing development on the northern margin of the land parcel.

3.6 Undated Features

Three post holes, a small isolated pit and a tree-throw were revealed during the mitigation works remained undated.

Post holes [1037] and [1039] were c. 1.0m apart and may have served as part of the same structure of uncertain function. Post hole [1032] was located c. 11m to the north and was truncated by a wheel rut. The post holes were 0.22–0.28m in diameter and 0.05–0.25m deep with rounded profiles (Figure 2: sections 6 and 7). The undifferentiated fills contained no evidence of post packing, suggesting that the material formed after removal of the timber posts.

Pit [1028] was located in the vicinity of modern wheel ruts and plough scars in the west of the site. It was 0.62m wide by 0.16m deep, with a steep-sided concave profile. Its only fill was fully excavated for finds recovery, though no dating evidence was recovered.

Tree-throw [1060] was revealed in the north-western corner of site (Figure 2 – green feature). The roughly circular feature was up to 1.88m across and 0.12m deep, with an asymmetrical profile and slightly uneven base, filled by mid brown-grey silty sand with occasional small to medium stones



It is possible that these undated archaeological features may be associated with the Iron Age activity on site.



4 CONCLUSIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE

The mitigation works largely confirmed the findings of the trial trench evaluation. They also indicated that the archaeological remains had suffered from plough truncation from at least the medieval period onwards.

An Iron Age boundary/enclosure ditch was revealed within the excavation area. It was aligned south to north, curving towards the north-west where it petered out. All the excavated ditch segments were filled by deposits that formed through natural processes; however, possible evidence of weathered bank material was also encountered in one segment, suggesting that the bank was located on the western side of the boundary. This deposit also produced a residual flint core of a late Neolithic date, indicating an earlier phase of activity in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The other half of the pit that had produced middle Iron Age pottery during the trial trenching was fully excavated during the mitigation works. No additional dating evidence was obtained.

Evidence for medieval/post-medieval ploughing was also encountered in the form of NW-SE aligned furrows that survived better on the higher ground in the southern part of the site, where they were spaced *c.* 6–6.5m apart.

Modern remains were represented by wheel ruts and plough scars which followed the modern boundaries of the land parcel. The shallow ditch encountered in Trench 8 during the evaluation works is likely to be another wheel rut.

Undated features comprising three post holes, an isolated small pit and a tree-throw were revealed during the mitigation works. It is possible that these were associated with the Iron Age activity.

The archaeological work indicates that the area of the site was peripheral to any focus of Iron Age activity. An evaluation undertaken in 2013 on the land parcel immediately to the north of Guilsborough Road, also revealed low-level activity in this period with the main focus situated further to the north and north-west (Albion Archaeology 2013). The findings of this investigation have limited potential to contribute to understanding of the morphology, spatial extent and functions of Iron Age settlement in the area (Knight et al. 2012, 58, Objective 4C).

The results of the investigation have been fully analysed in this report; no further analysis or reporting is necessary. This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website. The project archive will be deposited at the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC) (accession no. ENN108050).



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6 APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Context Type	Feature	Feature Type	Processual interpretation
1000	Layer	1000	Ploughsoil	UD
1001	Layer	1001	Subsoil	UD
1002	Layer	1002	Geological strata	UD
1003	Cut	1003	Wheel rut	C
1004	Fill	1003	Wheel rut	D
1005	Cut	1005	Wheel rut	C
1006	Fill	1005	Wheel rut	D
1007	Cut	1007	Wheel rut	C
1008	Fill	1007	Wheel rut	D
1009	Cut	1009	Wheel rut	C
1010	Fill	1009	Wheel rut	D
1011	Cut	1011	Wheel rut	C
1012	Fill	1011	Wheel rut	D
1013	Cut	1013	Wheel rut	C
1014	Fill	1013	Wheel rut	D
1015	Cut	1015	Wheel rut	C
1016	Fill	1015	Wheel rut	D
1017	Cut	1017	Wheel rut	C
1018	Fill	1017	Wheel rut	D
1019	Cut	1019	Wheel rut	C
1020	Fill	1019	Wheel rut	D
1021	Cut	1021	Ditch	C
1022	Fill	1021	Ditch	U
1023	Fill	1021	Ditch	UD
1024	Cut	1024	Ditch	C
1025	Fill	1024	Ditch	UD
1026	Cut	1026	Wheel rut	C
1027	Fill	1026	Wheel rut	D
1028	Cut	1028	Pit	C
1029	Fill	1028	Pit	UD
1030	Cut	1030	Wheel rut	C
1031	Fill	1030	Wheel rut	D
1032	Cut	1032	Post hole	C
1033	Fill	1032	Post hole	D
1034	Cut	1034	Wheel rut	C



Context	Context Type	Feature	Feature Type	Processual interpretation
1035	Fill	1034	Wheel rut	D
1036	Fill	1024	Ditch	UD
1037	Cut	1037	Post hole	C
1038	Fill	1037	Post hole	D
1039	Cut	1039	Post hole	C
1040	Fill	1039	Post hole	D
1041	Cut	1041	Pit	C
1042	Fill	1041	Pit	UD
1043	Cut	1043	Ditch	C
1044	Fill	1043	Ditch	U
1045	Fill	1043	Ditch	UD
1046	Fill	1043	Ditch	D
1047	Cut	1047	Ditch	C
1048	Fill	1047	Ditch	U
1049	Fill	1047	Ditch	UD
1050	Fill	1047	Ditch	D
1051	Layer	1051	Geological strata	UD
1052	Cut	1052	Furrow	C
1053	Fill	1052	Furrow	UD
1054	Cut	1054	Wheel rut	C
1055	Fill	1054	Wheel rut	D
1056	Cut	1056	Wheel rut	C
1057	Fill	1056	Wheel rut	D
1058	Cut	1058	Ditch	C
1059	Fill	1058	Ditch	D
1060	Cut	1060	Tree-throw	C
1061	Fill	1060	Tree-throw	D

Key to processual interpretation: C – construction; U – use; UD – use/disuse; D – disuse

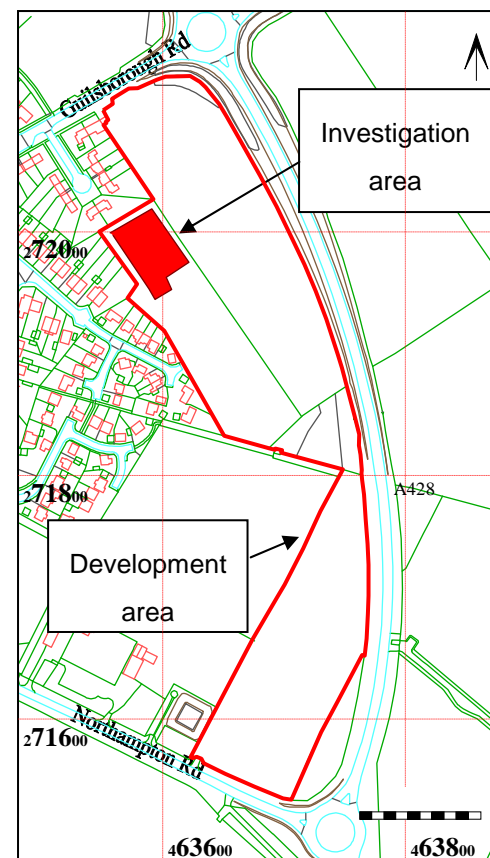
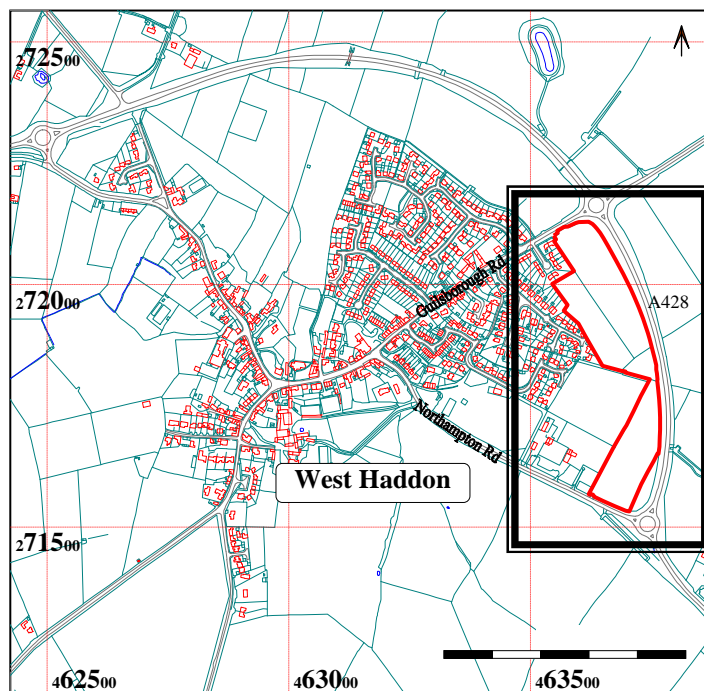
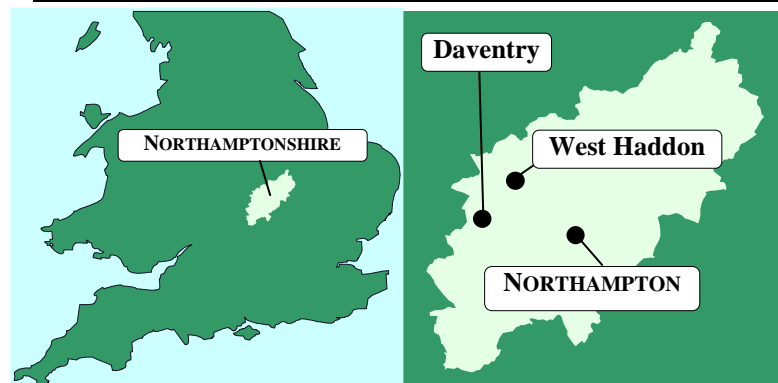


Figure 1: Site location plan

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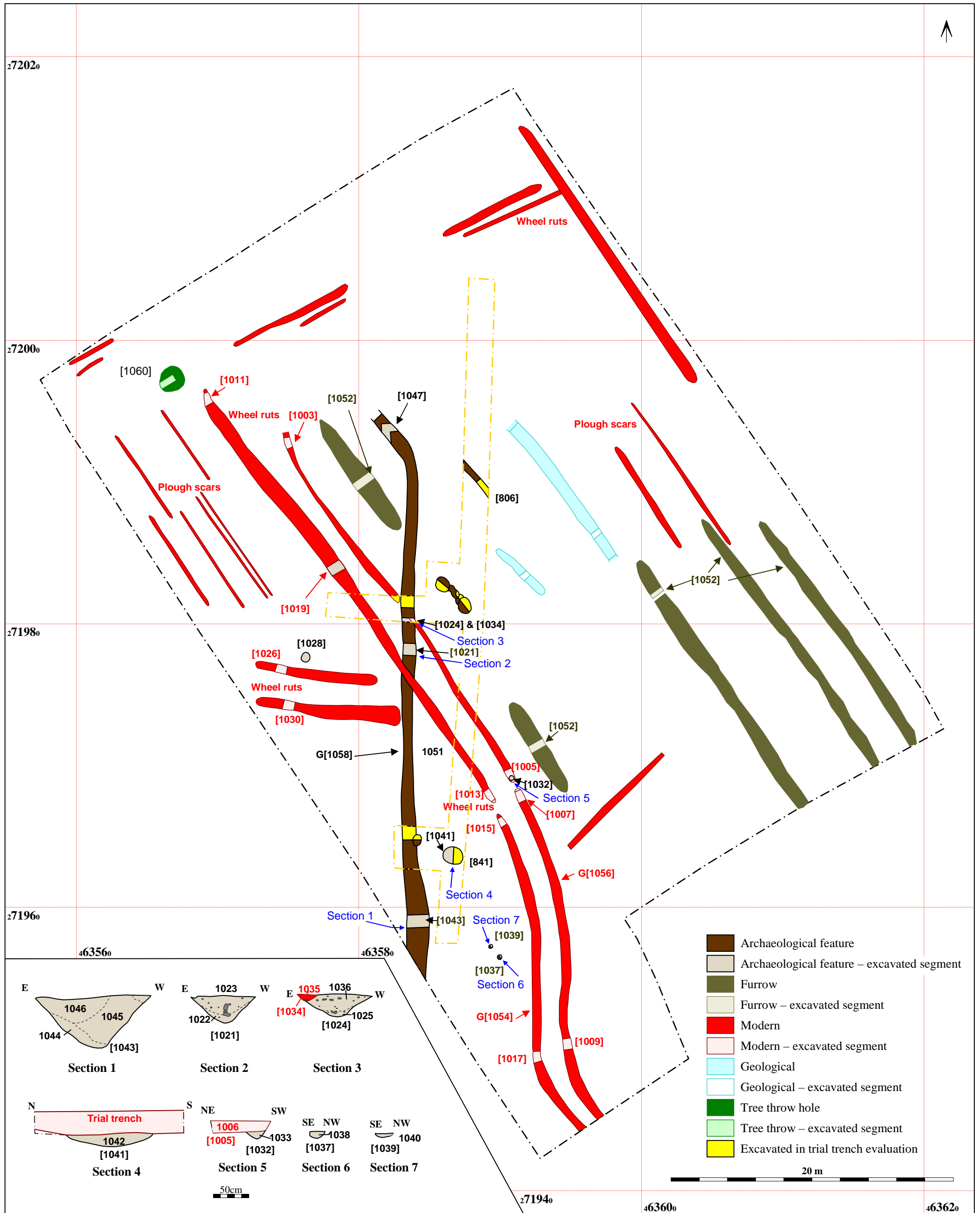


Figure 2: All features plan and selected sections

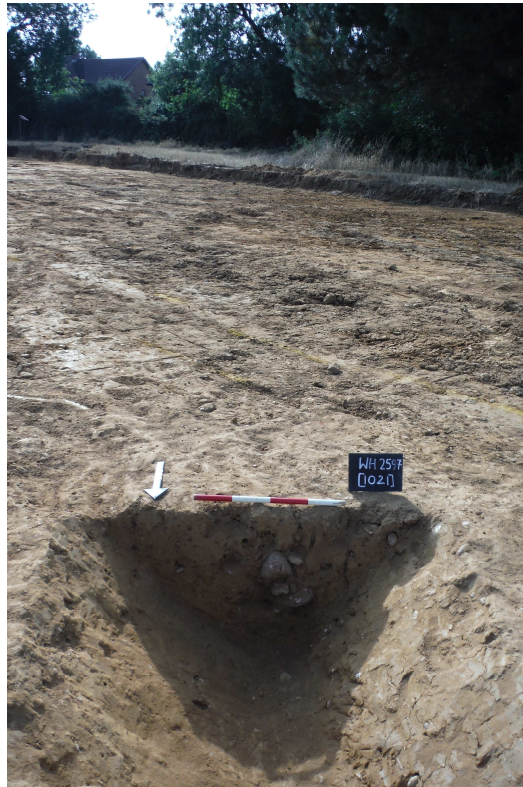


Image 1: Section [1021] through Iron Age ditch, looking southwards
(Scale 40cm in 10cm divisions)



Image 2: More substantial section [1043] through Iron Age ditch. Stones and lighter deposit may indicate the presence of a bank to the west (left of image).
(Scale 1m in 50cm divisions)

Figure 3: Selected images 1 and 2



Image 3: Pit [804] was revealed in the evaluation when Trench 8 was extended. During the recent work the trench was reopened and the other half of the pit [1041] was excavated, with only a sliver of the deposit surviving in section beneath the backfill of the evaluation trench extension.
(Scale 1m in 50cm divisions)



Image 4: Eastern part of the area during removal of the overburden, revealing traces of a series of furrows that appear as darker bands aligned parallel with the hedge to the right of the image.

Figure 4: Selected images 3 and 4

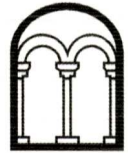


Image 5: Western side of investigation area with the extension in the south-west. A pair of sinuous features interpreted as modern wheel ruts are parallel with the modern western boundary of the land parcel.

Figure 5: Selected image 5



Albion
archaeology



Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford
MK42 0AS

Telephone 01234 294000
Email office@albion-arch.com
www.albion-arch.com

