



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

## Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Woolley Hill Wind Farm Ellington, Cambridgeshire ECB3450



### Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton NN4 8BE  
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822  
e. [sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk)  
w. [www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk)



Northamptonshire  
County Council

Jim Burke and Adam Yates

Report 10/172

November 2010

Revised January 2011



## STAFF

Project Manager	Adam Yates BA AlfA
Text	Jim Burke
Fieldwork	Jim Burke, Mark Patenall and Myk Riley
Illustration	Amir Bassir BSc
Geology	Steve Critchley BSc MSc
Worked shale	William A. Boismier BA MPhil MA PhD MifA
Prehistoric pottery	Andy Chapman BSc MifA FSA
Roman pottery	Tora Hylton
Medieval pottery	Iain Soden BA MifA
Small finds	Tora Hylton
Animal bone	Karen Deighton MSc
Palaeoenvironmental assessment	Karen Deighton

## QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signature	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Adam Yates		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

## OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Woolley Hill, Ellington, Cambridgeshire	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook a trial trench evaluation on land at Woolley Hill, Ellington, Cambridgeshire. Archaeological remains were discovered in three of the nineteen trenches excavated. Part of an Iron Age square enclosure was identified on the lower lying land. On the crest of the ridge above an area of middle Iron Age to late Iron Age/early Roman settlement was present. Remnant furrows from areas of former medieval cultivation were seen.	
Project type	Evaluation (ECB3450)	
Site status	Agricultural	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Arable cultivation	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	Iron Age enclosure, Iron Age and Roman occupation	
Significant finds	Shale artefact, Iron Age and Roman pottery, metal tools, animal bone	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire	
Site address	Woolley Hill, Ellington, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire	
Study area	218ha	
OS Easting & Northing	516080 273080	
Height OD	15-50m aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Jim Burke	
Project Manager	Adam Yates (NA), Simon Atkinson (Entec UK Ltd)	
Sponsor or funding body	Entec UK Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date/end date	September - October 2010	
ARCHIVES		
	Location	Content
Physical	ECB3450	Shale artefact, pottery, animal bone, metalwork, sample residues
Paper	ECB3450	Site records, photographs, drawings
Digital	ECB3450	Text and drawing files, Mapinfo GIS data, GPS survey data, photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological evaluation at Woolley Hill Wind Farm, Ellington, Cambridgeshire	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology Report 10/172	
Author(s)	Jim Burke and Adam Yates	
Page numbers		
Date	10 October 2010	

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
	2.1 Topography	1
	2.2 Geology by Steve Critchley	2
	2.3 Historical and archaeological background	2
<b>3</b>	<b>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE</b>	<b>3</b>
	5.1 General comments	3
	5.2 Trench 10	3
	5.3 Trench 11	4
	5.4 Trench 18	4
<b>6</b>	<b>ARTEFACTS AND ECOFACTS</b>	<b>5</b>
	6.1 Worked shale by William A. Boismier	5
	6.2 Middle Iron Age pottery and fired clay by Andy Chapman	5
	6.3 Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery by Tora Hylton	5
	6.4 Medieval pottery by Iain Soden	6
	6.5 Other finds by Tora Hylton	6
	6.6 Assessment of animal bone by Karen Deighton	6
	6.7 Assessment of charred plant material and molluscs by Karen Deighton	7
<b>7</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 1: TRENCH AND CONTEXT SUMMARY</b>	<b>11</b>

## Figures

Cover: View looking south-west to the village of Ellington

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Trench location plan

Fig 3: Plan of trenches 10, 11 and 18

Fig 4: Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4

Rear cover: General view from the highest point of the site looking north

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION AT

## WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM

### ELLINGTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

NOVEMBER 2010

#### ABSTRACT

*Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook a trial trench evaluation on land at Woolley Hill, Ellington, Cambridgeshire. Archaeological remains were discovered in three of the nineteen trenches excavated. Part of an Iron Age square enclosure was identified on the lower lying land. On the crest of the ridge above an area of middle Iron Age to late Iron Age/early Roman settlement was present. Remnant furrows from areas of former medieval cultivation were seen.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In September 2010 Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by Entec UK Ltd on behalf of their client, RES UK Ltd, to undertake a trial trench evaluation on land at Woolley Hill, Ellington, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, centred on NGR 516080 273080 (Fig 1). The work was undertaken at the request of the County Archaeological Officer to inform proposals for a four turbine wind farm with associated access and infrastructure.

The evaluation complied with a Method Statement prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (2010) and complied with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2002) and the IfA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2008).

Fieldwork took place between 20th and 28th September 2010. The works were overseen by Simon Atkinson on behalf of Entec UK Ltd and monitored on behalf of the Planning Authority by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council. The site event number ECB3450 was allocated to the project and the site archive will be deposited with Cambridgeshire County Council County Archaeological Store (Cambridgeshire Archaeology).

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Topography

The development area lies on farmland 11km east of Huntingdon, on the north side of the A14, opposite the village of Ellington, which lies immediately to the south of the A14 (Fig 1). The application covers an area of approximately 218ha within which it is proposed to construct four wind turbines, access and associated infrastructure. Current land use is almost entirely arable, with some stands of woodland. The topography slopes sharply upwards from the A14 corridor at approximately 15m aOD to the crest of the ridge on which the turbines will be positioned, which is approximately 50m aOD.

## **2.2 Geology by Steve Critchley**

The geology at the lower portion of the site comprises orange-brown coarse gravels belonging to the 1st/2nd Terrace Gravels of the Ouse overlain by recent alluvium silts and silty clays.

The remainder of the site has a solid geology of Middle Jurassic Oxford Clay overlain on the hilltop by tills deposited during the Middle Pleistocene Anglian Glaciation, commonly termed "chalky till". Only the tills were exposed in the remaining trenches and noted to be composed of stiff dark to light grey clays with abundant rounded to irregular clasts of sandstone, chalk, flint, limestone as well as occasional igneous and metamorphic rock types. The exposures were fresh, unweathered with a very variable clast content from trench to trench. There was very limited weathering decalcification noted in section and few if any later periglacial features. Some trenches exposed included rafts of chalky or clay rich till along with patches of orange brown fluvial sands and gravels, a common feature of basal or lodgement tills formed under ice sheets and incorporated into the till as rip up rafts of frozen ground.

## **2.3 Historical and archaeological background**

The following summary of the site's historical/archaeological background is paraphrased from the information supplied by Entec UK Ltd.

Features recorded within the site are an unidentified cropmark feature, recent quarrying and the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation. The extent of these features has been identified from an aerial photograph assessment of the area.

There are further features within a broader area surrounding the site relating to medieval and post-medieval settlement, including further ridge and furrow remains (MCB12706, MCB15778), hunting woodland and park (MCB995, MCB989), houses and the site of a windmill (MCB979).

There have been three recorded archaeological investigations within the immediately surrounding area, which have included excavation or trial trenching. Archaeological evaluation of an area in the northern part of Ellington at Yew Tree Farm in 1996 (ECB646) identified post-medieval activity, but no earlier features were identified. Archaeological field evaluation at Grove Lane in 2004 (ECB1468), located adjacent to the southern site boundary, included the assessment of aerial photographs and trial trenching. No archaeological features were identified during this assessment, although the area was assessed as having a good potential for the preservation of archaeology. The 1994 evaluation of a site at Weybridge Farm, Alconbury, in advance of proposed gravel extraction (ECB13) identified a number of Roman features, including the cremation burials of two individuals believed to date to the 2nd century AD.

A previous aerial photograph assessment (ECB1476) examined a 5.45 hectare area around the village of Ellington and includes most of the southern half of the site. Extensive areas of ridge and furrow were identified by this assessment, especially on photographs pre-dating 1969, after which there appears to have been a change from pasture to arable farming, which has resulted in the ploughing out of these features.

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The overall aim of the evaluation is to establish the nature and extent of any archaeological remains which may be affected by the proposed development of the site. The trial trenching exercise will aim to characterise the nature, date and significance of

any archaeological features, deposits and structures identified, to include as necessary the artefacts and ecofacts contained within them or associated with them.

Specific aims are to:

- determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be affected by the proposed development
- provide a comprehensive, illustrated assessment of the regional context within which the archaeological evidence rests and should aim to highlight any relevant research issues within a national and regional research framework
- provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relative importance against known development proposals
- assess the impact of development

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

Nineteen trial trenches all 1.8m in width were excavated. This comprised ten trenches each measuring 25m long, six of 30m length and three 50m in length (Fig 2). The total length of trenching was 580m.

Trench positions were stipulated by the Method Statement (NA 2010) but due to on-site constraints, two trenches were relocated close to the original positions. Trench 11 was cut short by 10m at its north-eastern end and extended 10m to the south-west to avoid a current farm access track; and Trench 3 was moved 3m to the south and 7m to the west to avoid an area of woodland. All trenches were located using Leica System 1200 survey grade GPS.

The topsoil and subsoil was removed with a tracked mechanical digger fitted with a 1.8m-wide toothless ditching bucket to expose the first significant archaeological level, or in the absence of archaeology, the geology. Cleaning of exposed surfaces, hand excavation and recording progressed in accordance with the Method Statement (NA 2010) and in fulfilment of the standards set by the IfA (2008) and Gurney (2002). Following the completion of the work the trenches were backfilled with the material extracted.

## **5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

### **5.1 General comments**

Archaeological features were present in Trenches 10, 11 and 18. Furrows were noted in Trenches 1-5, 11-14 and 17-19. Land drains were present in Trenches 7, 11, 12, 15 and 16. Trench 16 contained the remnant of a recent hedge ditch and Trench 19 contained a modern drain. Archaeological features were overlain by the subsoil and cut into the underlying natural deposits and are described below. A full inventory of individual contexts is included as Appendix 1.

### **5.2 Trench 10**

In Trench 10 approximately 0.33m of ploughsoil and 0.15m of subsoil overlay the natural clay. Cutting the clay and overlain by the subsoil was a recut ditch on a north-east to south-west alignment (Fig 3).

Ditch [1007], which was 1.95m wide, with sloping sides to a flattish sloping base 0.68m

deep (Fig 4, Section 1). The lower of the two fills (1006) was compact dark grey clay 0.05m in depth containing numerous small stones and some charcoal flecks and produced late Iron Age/early Roman pottery. This was overlain by compact medium grey clay (1005) containing some small stones and flint nodules and produced three pieces of animal bone; one cattle, one sheep/goat and one large ungulate.

The ditch was subsequently recut [1008] on the same alignment and wholly within the bounds of ditch [1007]. The recut was 0.83m wide, U-shaped in profile with near vertical sides, and 0.5m deep. The fill (1004) comprised mid-dark grey compact clay with occasional stones which produced late Iron Age/early Roman pottery and fired clay. A soil sample from this context (Sample 3) contained numerous freshwater snails, indicating that the ditch probably contained standing water.

### **5.3 Trench 11**

In Trench 11 approximately 0.4m of ploughsoil and 0.1m of subsoil overlay the natural clay. The natural clay was cut by two gullies on differing alignments which were overlain by the subsoil. A tree hole was cut through the subsoil from beneath the topsoil and also cut one of the gullies (Fig 3).

Gully [1106] was aligned north-west to south-east (Fig 4, Section 2). It was 0.55m wide with steep sides and a rounded base 0.29m deep. The basal fill of orange grey silty clay (1105) contained fragments of gravel and ironstone and produced late Iron Age/early Roman pottery together with one piece of sheep/goat and one piece of pig bone. This was overlain by compact dark grey silty clay (1104) containing gravel, flint and burnt stone which produced middle Iron Age pottery and late Iron Age/early Roman pottery, an iron cleaver of a type in use throughout the Roman period and an iron knife blade. A soil sample taken from this context produced only charcoal (Sample 1).

Gully [1108] was aligned west north-west to east south-east (Fig 4, Section 3). It was 0.38m wide with steeply sloping sides and a concave base 0.18m deep. The fill was compact dark orange-brown silty clay containing chalk and ironstone fragments (1107), which produced late Iron Age/early Roman pottery. The nine pieces of animal recovered included five cattle, two sheep/goat, and one of each of horse and small ungulate. A soil sample taken from this context produced evidence for cultivation and crop processing, although the quantities were small and may represent a general background level of activity in the vicinity rather than anything specific to this feature.

Gully [1108] was cut by a shallow circular pit [1110] cut from beneath the topsoil through the subsoil filled with dark brown silty clay, interpreted as a tree hole.

### **5.4 Trench 18**

In Trench 18 approximately 0.32m of ploughsoil and 0.2m of subsoil overlay the natural gravels. Cutting the gravel and sealed by the subsoil was a substantial ditch which corresponded with the cropmark enclosure (Fig 3). As the feature ran obliquely across the trench, the trench was expanded in order for the full profile of the feature to be investigated.

The ditch cut [1816] was 2.8m wide and 1.1m deep, with sloping sides and a concave base (Fig 4, Section 4). The basal fill comprised very dark grey sandy silt (1815) containing lenses of fine sand and grit, probably derived from inwash or weathering at the base of the feature. Overlying this was dark grey organic silty clay (1814) that would have accumulated in standing water at the base of the ditch. Overlying this was a slump deposit on the southern side of the ditch (1812); this comprised orange-brown silty clay



containing sand and gravel. This was followed by an episode of renewed silting comprising dark brown sandy clay (1813), which contained small stones and charcoal fragments. A soil sample taken from this layer (Sample 4), produced only indeterminate waterlogged plant taxa. Overlying this were further silting layers (1811) – orange-brown sandy clay containing stones; (1810) – orange-brown sandy clay; and (1809) – orange-brown sandy gravel.

The ditch was then recut on the same alignment as ditch [1808]. This was concave in profile, 1.8m wide and 0.4m deep. The basal fill (1807) was dark grey silty clay containing burnt stone and gravel overlain by compact mid grey-brown gravelly clay (1806), which produced middle Iron Age pottery.

## **6 ARTEFACTS AND ECOFACTS**

### **6.1 Worked shale by William A. Boismier**

A fragment of a worked shale artefact was recovered from context (1107), fill of gully [1108]. The object measures 38mm long, by 31mm wide (max) and 12mm thick and bears a resemblance to a scraper or large point with retouch along one edge. Origins of the raw material are unknown but are likely to be from Kimmeridge in Dorset or from Scottish or Irish sources. The date may lie anywhere from the Neolithic to the Romano-British periods, but without petrological and comparative analyses cannot be tied down further with regard to origin or age.

### **6.2 Middle Iron Age pottery and fired clay by Andy Chapman**

From Trench 11, context (1104), fill of gully [1106], there are three plain body sherds, weighing 10g, from a single vessel in a fabric that contains dense crushed shell, and has a grey-black core and inner surface and a brown external surface. From Trench 18, context (1806), there are two sherds and four small pieces, weighing 29g. They all have shelly fabrics and the two sherds are from a shouldered bowl with grey core, grey-brown inner surface and a brown external surface.

While these two small groups offer little diagnostic material, the fabrics and form are consistent with a broad middle Iron Age date, the 4th to 1st centuries BC.

There are small groups of soft, rounded pieces of fired clay from Trench 10, context (1004) and Trench 11, context (1104). In both groups the fabric is orange to brown in colour and contains small pellets of grog, 1-5mm, and sparse small calcareous inclusions, 1-2mm.

### **6.3 Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery by Tora Hylton**

The evaluation produced 70 sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman pottery with a combined weight of 0.683g (Table 1), recovered from five individual deposits in Trenches 10 and 11. The assemblage is dominated by locally produced wares dating from the mid 1st century and in conjunction with the middle Iron Age material (see report by Andy Chapman) alludes to a continuation of settlement. The condition of the pottery is good and there is little evidence of wear or abrasion. Where possible the fabrics have been coded according to The Nene Valley Research Committee Roman pottery fabric type series (Rollo and Wild 2001) and references have been made to Thompson's typology of 'Belgic' Late Iron Age forms (1982). The average sherd weight is relatively low at 9.75gm.

With the exception of small amounts of shell-gritted and sand-tempered wares, the assemblage is dominated by wheel thrown grog-tempered wares which date from the mid 1st century BC. The assemblage includes table and kitchen wares in fine grog-tempered fabrics (NVRC code W2) and coarse fabrics (NVRC code W9). The former is characterised by a grey core and pale red surfaces (sometimes brown), it is not hard fired and soapy to touch. Identifiable forms include a butt beaker (Thompson G5-1) from Trench 10 and a carinated cup/bowl with one cordon constricting the waist (Thompson E1 -1) and a carinated wide mouth cup/bowl with straight sides and multiple cordons (Thompson E1-2) from Trench 11. Other identifiable grog-tempered forms include a jar with everted rim decorated crudely executed horizontal grooves and two body sherds from large ? jars with faint vertical combing.

Table 1: Summary of late Iron Age/early Roman pottery

Fabric type	Context number									
	1004		1006		1104		1105		1107	
	No	W(g)	No	W(g)	No	W(g)	No	W(g)	No	W(g)
Late Iron Age/Early Roman Pottery										
Grog tempered wares (W2)	1	11	12	59			18	237	16	184
Grog tempered wares (W9)									2	50
Shell gritted wares					17	82	1	20	1	28
Misc. sand tempered									2	12
Total	1	11	12	59	17	82	19	257	21	274

**6.4 Medieval pottery** by Iain Soden

A single rim sherd of Lyveden/Stanion B Ware was recovered from furrow fill (1705). It dates between c.1250-1300AD and derives from a jug.

**6.5 Other finds** by Tora Hylton

Two other finds were recovered from the fill of gully fill (1104) in Trench 11, although both objects are incomplete, enough survives to permit identification; an iron cleaver and a knife blade.

The cleaver has an open socket which follows the same alignment as the back of the blade, stylistically displays similarities to Mannings Type 2 (1985, fig 30). Cleavers of this type are not uncommon, they would have been used for the butchering of meat and they were in use throughout the Roman period (Ibid, 122). The knife blade is also incomplete, but only part of the blade survives, making identification of the form impossible.

**6.6 Assessment of animal bone** by Karen Deighton

**Introduction**

A total of 640g of animal bone was collected by hand from five contexts during the course of trial trenching. This material was assessed to establish the taxa present, the level of preservation, the potential contribution to the understanding of the site and to inform on future collection strategies.

**Method**

Identifiable, ageable and measurable bones (after Von Den Driesch 1976) were noted.

Ageable elements included cheek tooth rows, where tooth eruption and wear can be observed (Payne 1973 and Halstead 1985) and bones where the state of epiphyseal fusion is apparent (Silver 1969). Animal bone from wet sieving (3.4mm and 1mm residues) was also included. Hand collected bones had previously been washed.

**Results**

Fragmentation varied with context from moderate to heavy. The taxa present are summarised in the table below.

*Table 2: Animal bone taxa present*

Cut/fill Feature	1007/1005 Ditch	1008/1004 Recut of ditch	1106/1104 Gully	1108/1107 Gully	Total
Cattle	1			5	6
Sheep/goat	1	1	1	2	5
Pig			1		1
Horse				1	1
Small ungulate				1	1
Large ungulate	1				1
Total	3	1	2	9	15

Lower fill (1808) of ditch [1808] produced indeterminate fragments only. Indeterminate bone fragments only were recovered from sieving. Sample 1 produced 7.6 grams of bone fragments and Sample 2 produced 10.1 grams of bone fragments.

**Ageing and metrical data**

Ageing data was limited to a cattle cheek tooth row (suggests an animal of 18-30 months) and a sheep/goat cheek tooth row (suggest an animal of 12 months plus). Metrical data was only available from a cattle astragalus and a horse astragalus.

**Potential**

Assessment has shown a small assemblage of common domesticates. Identifiable animal bone was recovered from the site, which suggests, if more were collected during the course of any subsequent excavation, the animal husbandry of the site could be characterised.

**6.7 Assessment of charred plant material and molluscs by Karen Deighton**

**Introduction**

Four samples were collected by hand from a range of contexts during the course of excavation. This material was processed and assessed to determine the presence, preservation and nature of any ecofacts and to inform on further sampling strategies. The contribution to the understanding of the site was also considered.

**Method**

The samples were processed using a modified siraf tank fitted with a 250micron mesh and flot sieve. The resulting flots and residues were dried. The flots were then sorted with the aid of a stereoscopic microscope (10x magnification) and residues were scanned. Any charred plant remains were identified with the aid of the author's small

reference collection, Cappers et al 2006 and Jacomet 1996. The molluscs were identified with the aid of Glöer and Meier-Brook (2003) and Kerney and Cameron (1994) and the conchological society website ([www.conchsoc.org](http://www.conchsoc.org)).

**Results**

Taxonomic distribution by context is shown in the table below.

Table 3: Taxa by context

Cut/fill	1104/1106	1108/1107	1008/1004	1816/ 1813
Sample	1	2	3	4
Feature	Gully	Gully	Ditch	Ditch
Date				
Volume(litres)	40	40	40	40
Charcoal	10	30	10	
Breadwheat		1		
<i>Triticum aestivuum</i>				
Spelt		1		
<i>Triticum spelta</i>				
Cereal indet		1		
Cereal indet				
Fat hen		4	2	
<i>Chenopodium album</i>				
Clevers		1		
<i>Galium aparine</i>				
Terrestrial taxa				
<i>Pupilla muscorum</i>		1	3	
<i>Vallonia excentrica</i>		10	1	
<i>Discus rotundatus</i>		1		
Freshwater taxa				
<i>Anisus leucostoma</i>			1,000+	
<i>Radix balthica</i>			4	
<i>Galba truncatula</i>			1	
Indet mollusc		1		
Beetle elytra				+

**Discussion**

The small number of ecofacts observed in Samples 1 and 2 suggests the origin of this material could be background, i.e. material blown or washed into features from activities taking place elsewhere. Unfortunately it adds little to the understanding of the site. Sample 3 was dominated by freshwater snails; the most numerous taxa observed (*A. leucostoma*) is common to streams and ditches which dry out in summer. Sample 4 was dominated by indeterminate waterlogged plant fibres.

**Potential**

Ecofacts were recovered from all four samples, although they add little to the interpretation of the site, their presence and reasonable level of preservation suggests that further sampling should not be ruled out should any further excavation take place. The fact that well preserved identifiable ecofacts are present indicates that further sampling of suitable phaseable/dateable contexts could result in the recovery of material

that could aid the understanding of the site.

### **Conclusion**

Assessment has shown a small range of well preserved ecofacts and indicates that further sampling during the course of any subsequent excavation could be viable.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

The evaluation has identified two zones of archaeological activity.

To the south in Trench 18 was a substantial ditch of middle Iron Age date that forms part of the southern arm of a square enclosure identified from aerial photography. The substantial size of this ditch represents considerable effort in construction, which may indicate a degree of prestige, although it was later recut as a much smaller feature. Little can be said about the nature of any activity, beyond the presence of pottery, some burnt stone and charcoal in the fills indicating it probably incorporated domestic elements.

On the ridge above an area of diffuse mid-late Iron Age/early Roman activity was revealed in Trenches 10 and 11. It is possible that the more substantial recut ditch seen in Trench 10 represents part of an enclosure, although was not detected on the aerial photographic plots. The comparative scarcity of finds in this feature may indicate that it is some way from the main areas of activity. In comparison the gullies in Trench 11 were relatively finds rich, and contained charcoal and burnt stone, indicating that they lay closer to the centre of domestic activity. It is worth noting that one of these produced a small amount of middle Iron Age as well as late Iron Age/early Roman pottery. Whilst it may be that the middle Iron Age material is residual, it may nevertheless point to a long period of possibly continuous occupation. The economy of the site, albeit based on limited evidence, seems to have comprised a mixed arable and pastoral regime, with the iron tools perhaps related to butchery.

Neither site can be directly related to other sites in the close vicinity. The excavations at Wybridge Farm, Alconbury, over 1km to the east of the site, revealed a Roman field system and two cremation burials (ECB13, Holst and Welsh 1995), although these are thought to be considerably later than the activity at Woolley Hill.

None of the archaeological remains encountered can be regarded as having a National significance, although they have the potential to contribute to regional research objectives as set out in Glazebrook (1997) and Brown and Glazebrook (2000). With regard to the Iron Age, any future excavations may provide information relating to chronology, economy and agriculture, settlement chronology and dynamics and social organisation and settlement form and function in the early and middle Iron Age (Bryant 2000, 16-17). Any further investigation of Roman remains could contribute to the topics of food consumption, agricultural production and rural settlement highlighted by Going and Flourivez (2000, 21-22). The remains also have the potential to inform on processes of economic and social change between the late Iron Age and Roman periods (Bryant 2000, 16-17).

Each of the archaeological zones lies in a part of the site designated for the construction of new access. Any impact on the archaeological remains present will depend upon the nature and method of construction, in particular the depth of any stripping or excavation operations. In general, any operation that results in excavation beneath topsoil depths in these areas may have an impact on the archaeological remains.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Brothwell, D and Higgs, E, (eds) 1969 *Science in Archaeology*, Thames and Hudson, London
- Brown, N, and Glazebrook, J, (eds), 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. Research Agenda and Strategy*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **8**
- Bryant, S, 2000 The Iron Age in N Brown and J Glazebrook (eds), 14-18
- Cappers, R, Bekker, R, and Jans, J, 2006 *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands*, Barkhuis Publishing, Netherlands
- Glazebrook, J, (ed) 1997 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties, 1. Resource Assessment*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **3**
- Glöer, P, and Meier-Brook, C, 2003 *Susswassermollusken*, DJN, Hamburg
- Going, C, and Plourivez, J, 2000, Roman in N Brown and J Glazebrook (eds), 19-22
- Gurney, D, 2002 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers **14**
- IfA 2008 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*, Institute for Archaeologists
- Halstead, P, L. 1985 A study of mandibular teeth from Romano-British contexts at Maxey in F Pryor and C French 1985, 219-223
- Holst, M and Welsh, K, 1995, *Roman Cremations and Field System at Weybridge Farm, Alconbury*, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Jacomet, S, 2006 *Identification of cereal remains from archaeological sites*, IPAS, Basel
- Kerney, M P and Cameron, R A D, 1994 *Land Snails of Britain and North-west Europe*, Harper Collins, London
- Mackreth, D, 2001 *Monument 97, Orton Longueville, Cambridgeshire: A late Pre-Roman Iron Age and Early Roman Farmstead*, East Anglian Archaeology **97**
- Manning, W H, 1985 *Catalogue of the Romano-British Iron Tools, Fittings and Weapons in the British Museum*, British Museum, London
- NA, 2010 *Woolley Hill Wind Farm, Method Statement for Archaeological trial; Trench Evaluation*, Northamptonshire Archaeology.
- Payne, S, 1973 Kill-off patterns in sheep and goats: the mandibles from Asvan Kale, *Anatolian Studies* **23**, 281-303
- Pryor, F, and French, C, *Fenland Project Number1, The Lower Welland Valley, Volume 1*, East Anglian Archaeology **27**
- Rollo, L and Wild, F, 2001 The Iron Age and Roman Pottery in D. Mackreth 2001, 46-79
- Silver, I, 1969 The ageing of domestic animals in D Brothwell and E Higgs (eds) 1969, 283-302
- Thompson, I, 1982 *Grog-tempered 'Belgic' pottery of south-eastern England*, British Archaeological Report **108**
- Von den Driesch, A. 1976 *Guide to the measurement of animal bones from archaeological sites*, Harvard University Press, Harvard

**APPENDIX 1: TRENCH AND CONTEXT SUMMARY**

Trench No and NGR	General	Context	Description	Notes
<b>1</b> 515830 272920	Traces of ploughed out ridge and furrow	101	Ploughsoil, clay loam with occasional stones, 0.24m deep	
		102	Subsoil, firm brown clay loam moderate small sub-angular stones, 0.22m deep	
		103	Natural, yellow-brown clay with sandy lenses and some small stones	
<b>2</b> 515830 272950	Traces of ploughed out ridge and furrow and land drains present	201	Ploughsoil, brown clay loam with occasional stones, 0.25m deep	
		202	Subsoil, firm brown clay loam moderate small sub-angular stones, 0.24m deep	
		203	Natural, yellow-brown clay with sandy lenses and some small stones	
<b>3</b> 515930 272920	Traces of ploughed out ridge and furrow and land drains present	301	Ploughsoil, orange-brown clay loam with some stone and flint 0.2m deep	
		302	Subsoil. Mottled grey-brown and orange clay loam 0.2m deep	
		303	Natural, grey-brown clay with blue-grey clay mottles, some chalky inclusions	
<b>4</b> 516040 292950	Furrows present on an approximately north-south alignment, land drains	401	Ploughsoil, mid-dark grey clay loam with some stones, 0.26m deep	
		402	Subsoil, brown clay loam with frequent stones and chalk fragments, 0.25m deep	
		403	Natural, firm mottled blue-grey and brown-grey clay with frequent small stones and chalk lumps	
		404	Fill of [405], brown clay with frequent small stones	
		405	Furrow	
<b>5</b> 516020 273030	Furrows present on an approximately NNE-SSW alignment	501	Ploughsoil, mid-dark grey clay loam with some stones, 0.25m deep	
		502	Subsoil, brown clay loam with frequent stones and chalk fragments, 0.28m deep	
		503	Natural, firm mottled blue-grey and brown-grey clay with frequent small stones and chalk lumps	
<b>6</b> 515990 273060	No features present	601	Ploughsoil, mid brown clay loam with some stones, 0.17m deep	
		602	Subsoil, orange-brown clay loam, 0.4m deep	
		603	Natural, mottled blue-brown clay	
<b>7</b> 516090 273080	Land drains present on approximately NW-SE alignment	701	Ploughsoil, grey brown clay loam with some stones, 0.22m deep	
		702	Subsoil, brown clay loam with moderate small stones, 0.34m deep	

WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM

Trench No and NGR	General	Context	Description	Notes
		703	Natural, blue-grey clay with moderate chalk and small stones	
<b>8</b> 516180 273100	Large chalk outcrop in centre of trench	801	Ploughsoil, mid brown clay loam, 0.26m deep	
		802	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam, 0.3m deep, although absent where chalk outcrops	
		803	Natural, grey-brown mottled clay	
		804	Natural, chalk	
<b>9</b> 516190 273110	Large chalk outcrop at eastern end of trench	901	Ploughsoil, mid brown clay loam, 0.29m deep	
		902	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam, 0.32m deep	
		903	Natural, grey brown mottle clay	
		904	Natural, chalk	
<b>10</b> 516310 273140	Substantial ditch present on NE-SW alignment	1001	Ploughsoil, dark grey-brown clay loam with some stones, 0.33m deep	
		1002	Subsoil, dark grey-brown clay loam with some stones, 0.15m deep	
		1003	Natural, light brown clay with limestone and chalk inclusions	
		1004	Fill of [1008], compact mid-dark grey clay with ferrous mottling, occasional large stones, some small stone and chalk flecks, up to 0.5m deep	Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery, fired clay, animal bone
		1005	Fill of [1007], very compact light-mid grey clay with ferrous mottling, some small stones, flint and chalk nodules, up to 0.5m deep	Animal bone
		1006	Fill of [1007], compact dark grey clay with frequent small rounded stones, chalk and flint nodules and some charcoal flecking, 0.05m deep	Late Iron Age/Early Roman pottery
		1007	Ditch cut aligned WSW-ENE, 1.95m wide and 0.68m deep, with steep sloping sides and a concave base	
		1008	Recut of [1007] cut aligned WSW-ENE, 0.83m wide and 0.5m deep, with steep sloping sides and a concave base	
<b>11</b> 516400 273140	Two gullies and, one tree bowl. Furrows present on an approximately E-W alignment. Field drains also noted	1101	Ploughsoil, mid brown clay loam 0.4m deep	
		1102	Subsoil, mid grey-brown clay with orange mottles, 0.1m deep	
		1103	Natural, orange-brown sandy clay with gravel	
		1104	Fill of [1106], compact dark grey brown silty clay with sand/gravel lenses, burnt stone, ironstone and chalk nodules, up to 0.24m deep	Middle Iron Age pottery, Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery, fired clay, iron



WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM

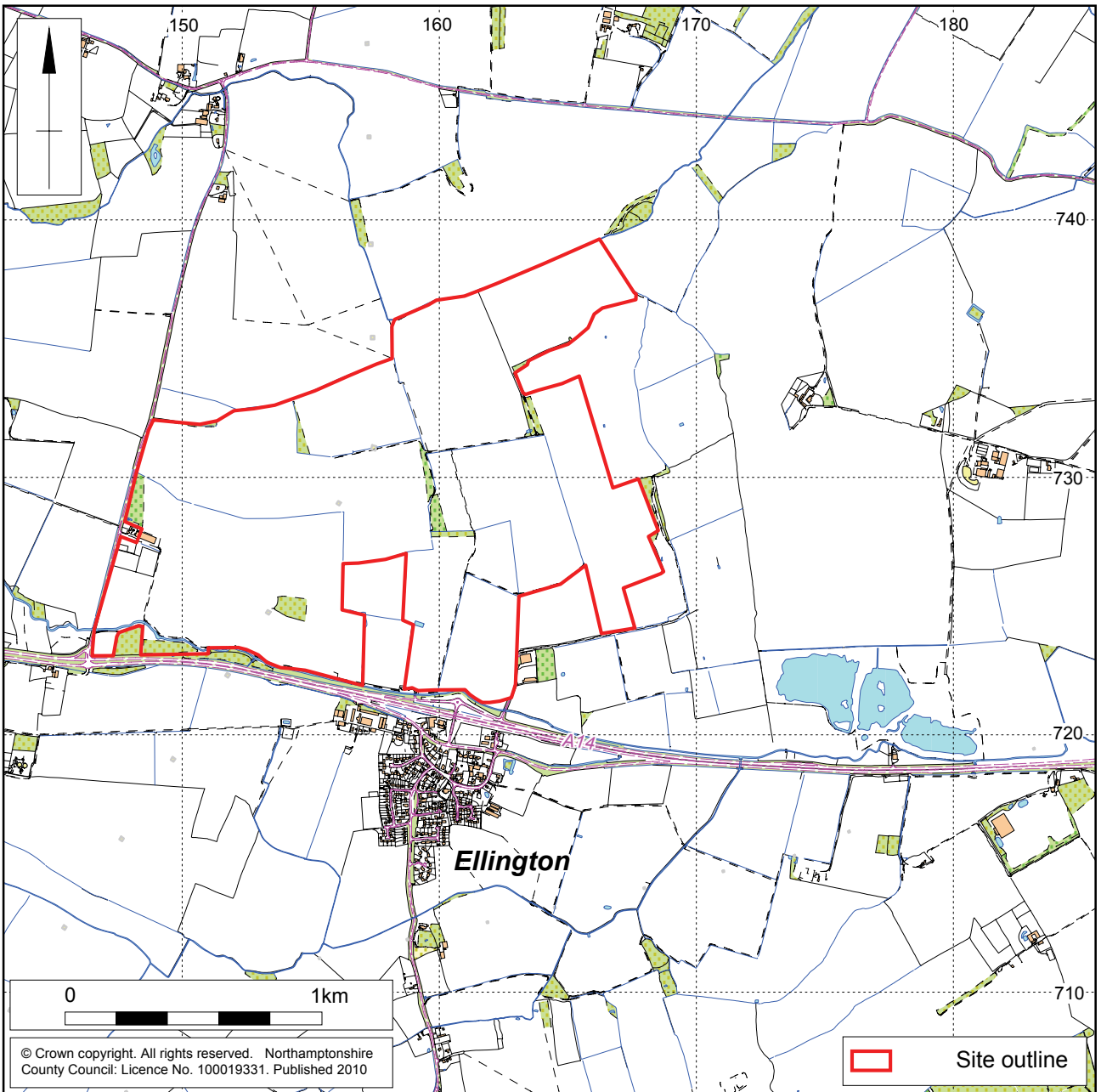
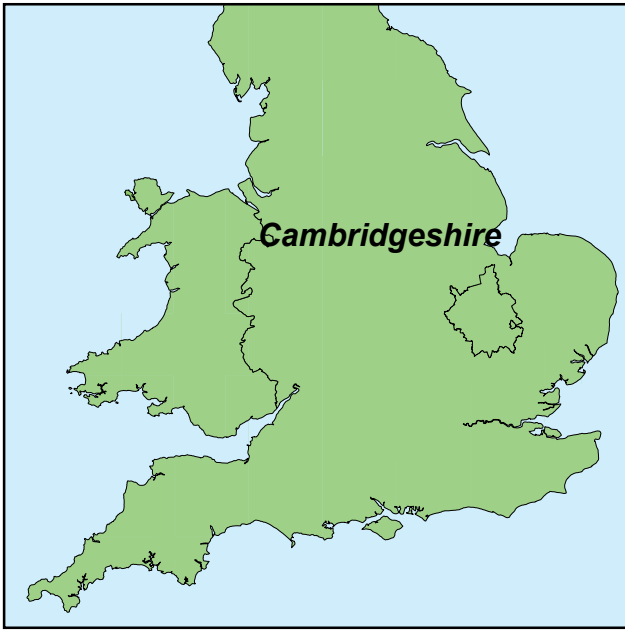
Trench No and NGR	General	Context	Description	Notes
				tools, animal bone
		1105	Fill of [1106], compact orange grey silty clay containing stones, gravel and ironstone, up to 0.1m deep	Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery
		1106	Gully cut aligned NW-SE, 0.55m wide and 0.29m deep, with steep sloping sides and concave base	Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery, Shale artefact
		1107	Fill of [1108], compact dark brown clay with orange mottles containing chalk nodules, ironstone fragments and charcoal flecks, up to 0.18m deep	Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery, Animal bone
		1108	Gully cut aligned WNW-ESE, U-shaped in profile with steep sloping sides and a concave base, 0.38m wide and 0.18m deep	
		1109	Fill of [1109], compact dark brown clay with orange mottles containing chalk nodules, ironstone fragments and charcoal flecks	
		1110	Tree hole cut, circular in shape with an irregular profile	
<b>12</b> 516370 273320	Furrows present on an approximately NW-SE alignment. Land drains noted	1201	Ploughsoil, mid brown clay loam, 0.19m deep	
		1202	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam, 0.22m deep	
		1203	Natural, grey brown mottled clay	
<b>13</b> 516530 273290	Furrows present on a N-S alignment	1301	Ploughsoil, mid grey clay loam with frequent small stones, 0.22m deep	
		1302	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam with frequent stones absent in the eastern part of the trench, 0.2m deep	
		1303	Natural, firm blue grey clay with frequent stones and chalk inclusions	
		1304	Fill of [1305], mid brown clay loam	
		1305	Furrow aligned N-S	
<b>14</b> 516620 273130	Furrows present on a NE-SW alignment	1401	Ploughsoil, mid grey clay loam with frequent small stones, 0.28m deep	
		1402	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam with frequent stones, 0.25m deep	
		1403	Natural, firm blue grey clay with frequent stones and chalk inclusions	
<b>15</b> 516610 272960	Field drains noted	1501	Ploughsoil, mid grey clay loam with frequent small stones, 0.23m deep	
		1502	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam with frequent stones, 0.17m deep	

WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM

Trench No and NGR	General	Context	Description	Notes
		1503	Natural, firm blue grey clay with frequent stones and chalk inclusions	
<b>16</b> 516620 272940		1601	Ploughsoil, mid grey clay loam with frequent small stones, 0.21m deep	
		1602	Subsoil, mid brown clay loam with frequent stones, 0.28m deep	
		1603	Natural, firm blue grey clay with frequent stones and chalk inclusions	
		1604	Ditch aligned approximately E-W, recently infilled hedgeline, not excavated	
		1605	Fill of [1604], modern rubbish noted in fill, not excavated	
<b>17</b> 515970 272180	Furrows present on a N-S alignment	1701	Ploughsoil, firm dark grey loam with occasional small stones, 0.25m deep	
		1702	Subsoil, hard dark brown clay loam with occasional stones, between 0.07-0.39m deep	
		1703	Subsoil, compact mid brown gritty clay loam with occasional small stones	
		1704	Natural, compact orange brown sandy clay gravel	
		1705	Fill of [1706], compact mid brown clay with few stones	Medieval pottery
		1706	Furrow aligned N-S, shallow U-shaped profile, 1.09m wide and 0.1m deep	
<b>18</b> 516110 272170	Substantial Iron Age ditch forming part of cropmark enclosure. Furrows present on a N-S alignment	1801	Ploughsoil, firm dark grey loam with occasional small stones, 0.32m deep	
		1802	Subsoil, hard dark brown clay loam with occasional stones, between 0.2m deep	
		1803	Subsoil, compact mid brown gritty clay loam with occasional small stones	
		1804	Fill of [1805], compact mid brown clay with few stones	
		1805	Furrow aligned N-S, shallow U-shaped profile, 1m wide and 0.1m deep	
		1806	Fill of [1808], compact mid orange-brown gravelly clay with chalk, ironstone and charcoal inclusions, up to 0.3m deep	Middle Iron Age pottery
		1807	Fill of [1808], compact dark grey silty clay containing gravel, chalk flecks and burnt stone, up to 0.12m deep	
		1808	Recut of ditch [1816] aligned E-W, sloping sides with a concave base, 1.3m wide and 0.42m deep	

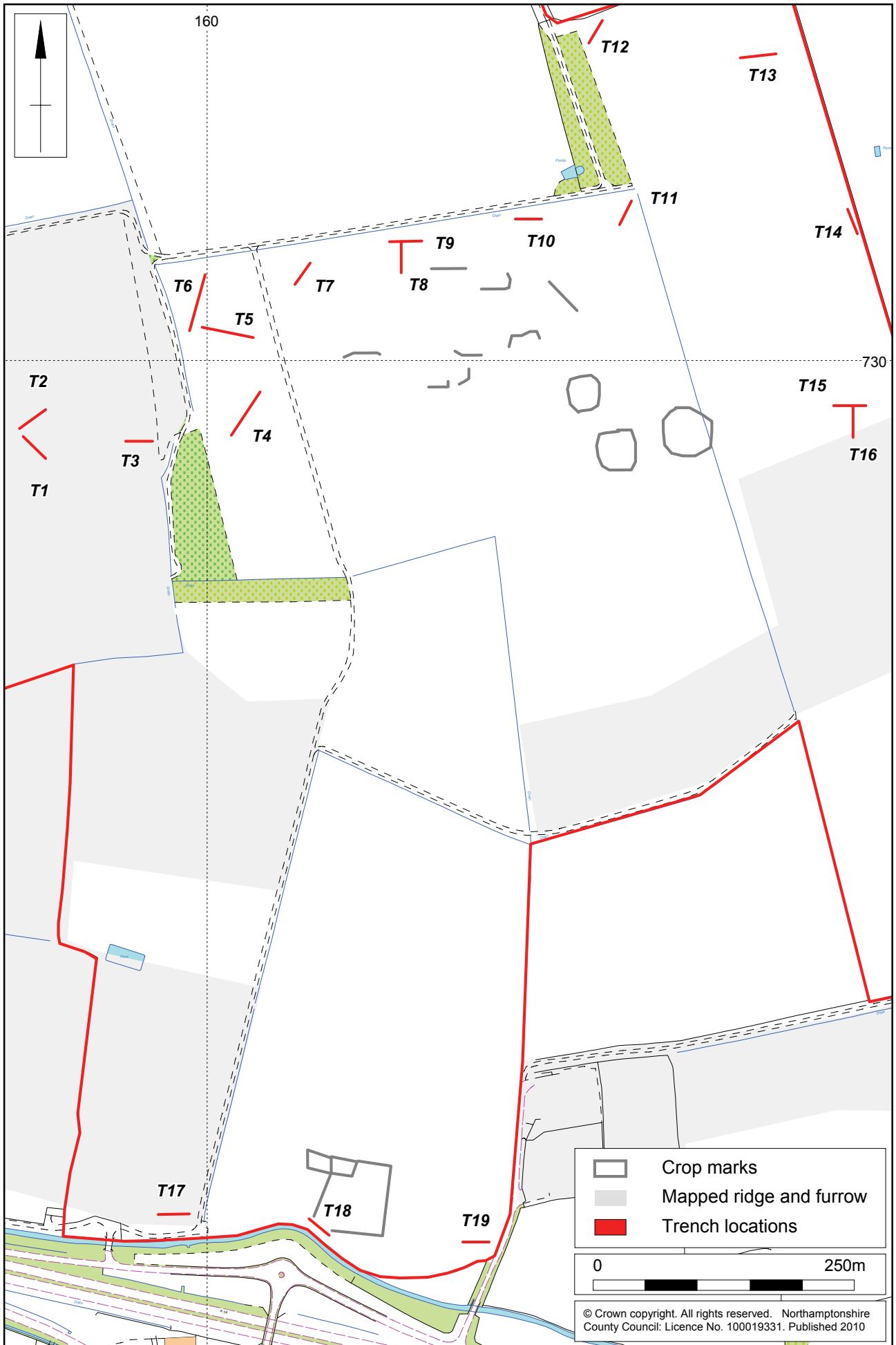
WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM

Trench No and NGR	General	Context	Description	Notes
		1809	Fill of [1816], firm orange-brown sandy gravel, up to 0.28m deep	
		1810	Fill of [1816], firm orange brown sandy clay gravel, up to 0.18m deep	
		1811	Fill of [1816], firm dark orange-brown sandy clay gravel, up to 0.24m deep	
		1812	Fill of [1816], firm orange-brown silty clay gravel, up to 0.44m deep	
		1813	Fill of [1816], friable dark brown sandy clay with some small stones, chalk flecks and charcoal, up to 0.18m deep	
		1814	Fill of [1816], firm dark grey organic silty clay with occasional small stones, up to 0.18m deep	
		1815	Fill of [1816], firm very dark grey organic sandy silt, up to 0.08m deep	
		1816	Ditch cut, aligned E-W, U-shaped in profile with sloping sides and a concave base, 2.8m wide and 1.17m deep	
<b>19</b> 516260 272160	Pipe/drain trenches present aligned NE-SW at east end of trench	1901	Ploughsoil, hard dark grey gritty loam with occasional stones, 0.25m deep	
		1902	Subsoil, hard dark grey-mid brown sandy loam with some small pebbles and flint, 0.1m deep	
		1903	Subsoil, compact mid orange-brown clay loam with some small stones, 0.35m deep	
		1904	Natural, compact orange-brown gravel	
		1905	Fill of [1906], compact grey-brown clay with some small stones	
		1906	Pipe trench aligned N-S	



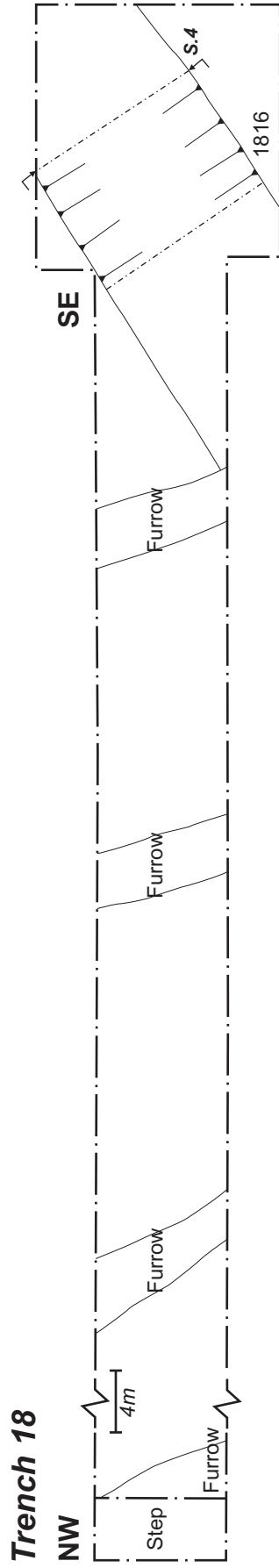
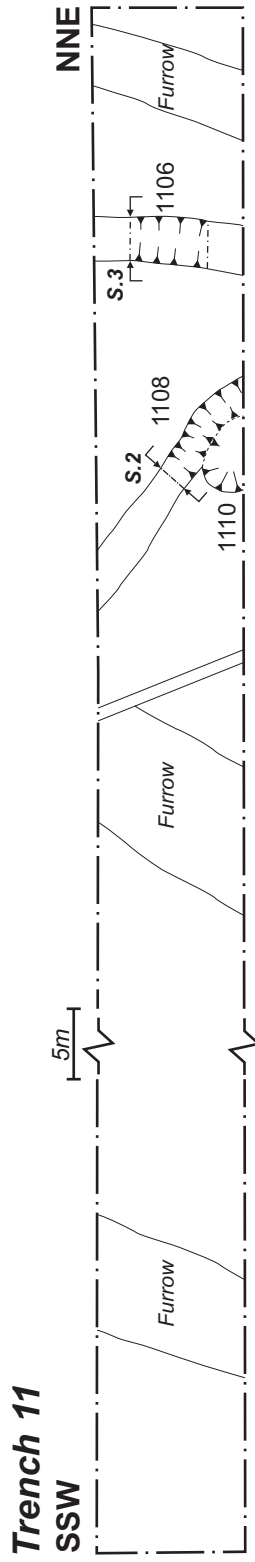
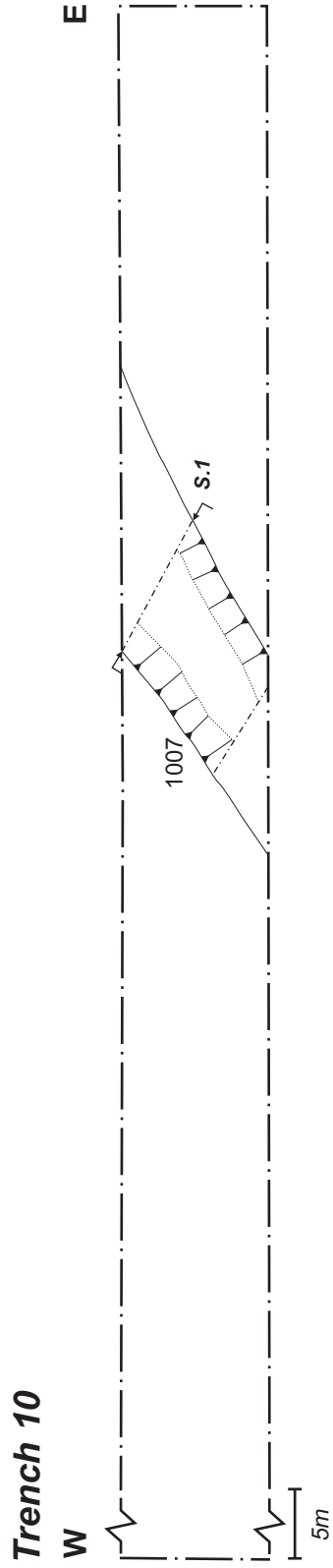
Scale 1:25,000

Site location Fig 1

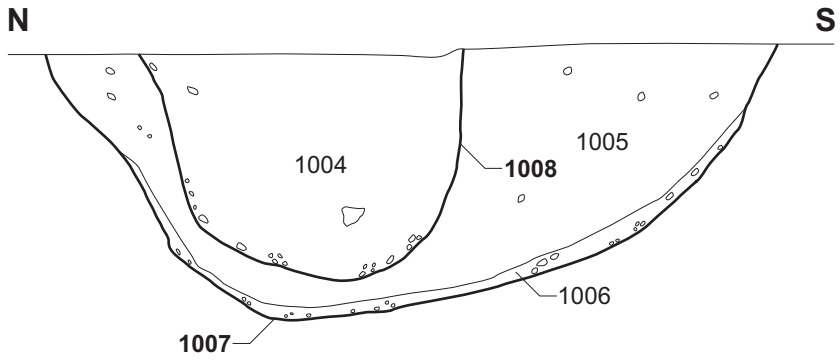


Scale 1:5000

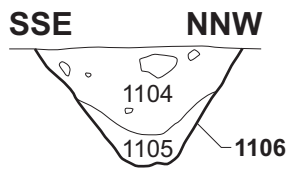
Trench location plan Fig 2



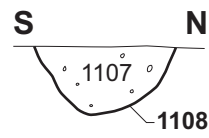
**Section 1**



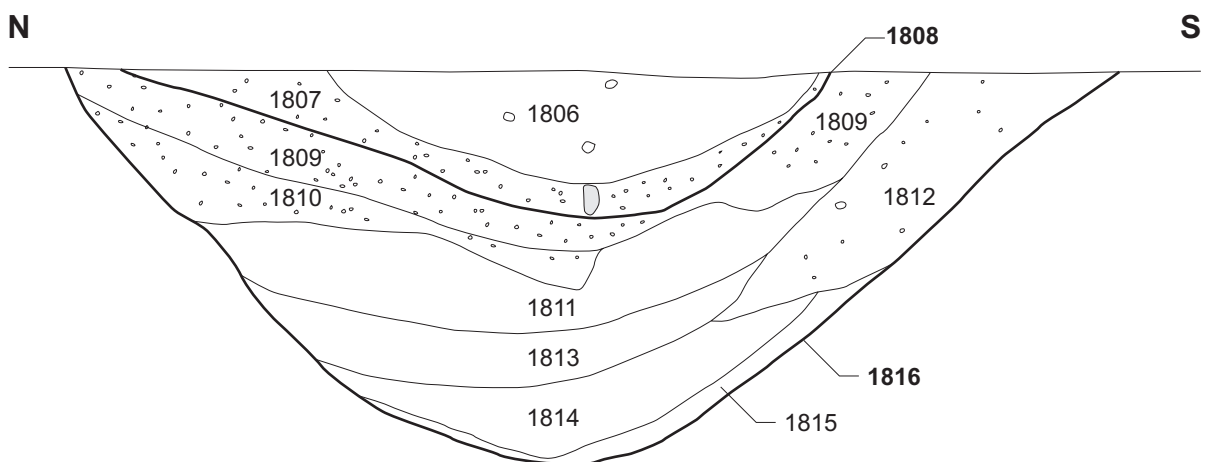
**Section 2**



**Section 3**



**Section 4**





Northamptonshire County Council

# Northamptonshire Archaeology



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. [sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

w. [www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk)



Northamptonshire  
County Council