



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological watching brief at Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire October 2011



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Report 11/260

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project title	Archaeological watching brief at Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, October 2011
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for construction of an underground water tank at Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire in October 2011. A single, re-cut but undated ditch was the only archaeological feature present on the site.
Project type	Watching brief
Site Status	None
Previous work	DBA (URS Scott Wilson, 2011)
Current land use	Residential development
Future work	None
Monument type and period	N/A
Significant finds	N/A
PROJECT LOCATION	
County	Northamptonshire
Site address	Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire
Post code	
OS co-ordinates	SP 89225 74630
Area (sq m/ha)	365 sq m
Height aOD	c 69m aOD
PROJECT CREATORS	
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council
Project Design originator	URS Scott Wilson
Director/Supervisor	Mark Holmes (Northamptonshire Archaeology)
Project Manager	Jim MacQueen (URS Scott Wilson)
Sponsor or funding body	Westleigh Developments Ltd
PROJECT DATE	
Start date	October 2011
End date	October 2011
ARCHIVES	
Archive location:	NA Stores
Archive contents	1 boxfile
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)
Title	Archaeological watching brief at Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, October 2011
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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT
BRIDLE ROAD, BURTON LATIMER
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
OCTOBER 2011**

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for construction of an underground water tank at Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire in October 2011. A single re-cut but undated ditch was the only archaeological feature present on the site.

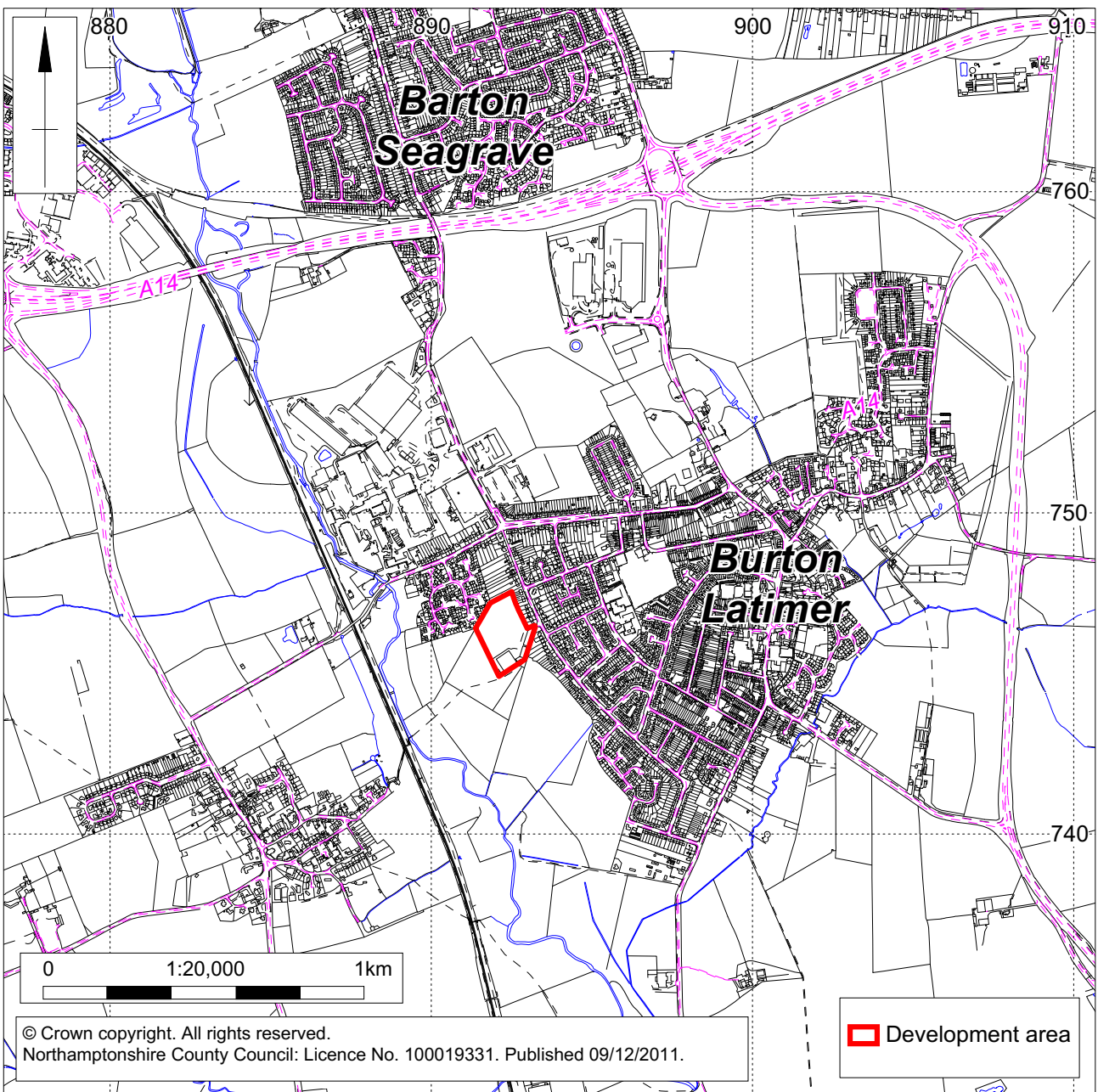
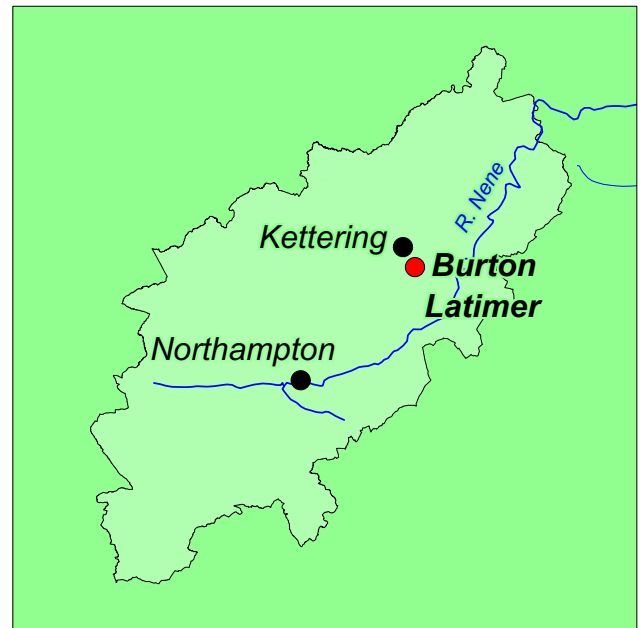
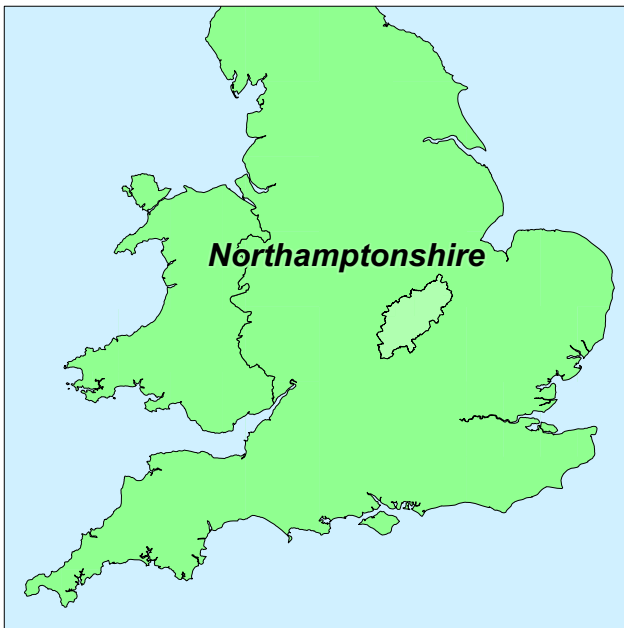
1 INTRODUCTION

In October 2011, Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 89225 74630; Fig 1). URS Scott Wilson commissioned the work on behalf of the developers Westleigh Developments Ltd.

The watching brief covered groundworks associated with the construction of an underground water tank, which was part of the infrastructure for a residential development of the site (planning consent KET/2010/0834).

Due to the archaeological potential of the site Kettering Borough Council had placed a condition upon the planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological mitigation to be undertaken. The requirements for the mitigation works were set out in a brief written by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council (NCC 2011). The specification for the works was compiled by URS Scott Wilson (2011) and approved by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor.

This report has been prepared to meet the requirements of the brief (NCC 2011) and complies with Appendix 4 of the English Heritage procedural document *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991), relevant sections of *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (EH 2006), and appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA).



Site location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The development is located off Bridle Road on the western side of Burton Latimer on the site of former playing fields. It is positioned between the 60m – 70m contours and overlooks the River Isle, which runs 300m to the west. The underlying geology is mapped as Northampton Sand Formation (BGS 2011).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

An archaeological desk-based assessment of the development area had previously been undertaken and summarised in the works specification (Scott Wilson 2011). This demonstrated that the general area around Isham and Burton Latimer was a multi-period landscape containing evidence of settlement and other activity from the Iron Age onwards. However, the development site itself had been subject to groundworks associated with the construction of a playing field. As such, the assessment concluded that there was no evidence to suggest that there was potential for archaeological remains to exist within the site.

Geotechnical investigations had demonstrated that terracing and levelling activity associated with the sports pitches had removed soil from the north-east side of the site and deposited it on the south-western side. Archaeological features, if present, would thus have been removed from the former half of the site and be buried under c 1.3m of made ground on the latter.

As a consequence the construction of a below ground water tank towards the south-western boundary of the site was the only part of the development which might potentially affect any surviving archaeology.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the project was to monitor groundworks associated with excavations to construct the underground tank and associated balancing pond. It would establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the area of disturbance and record their nature, extent and date.

The groundworks were undertaken using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket (Fig 2). The fieldwork comprised monitoring the excavation of the sunken area designed to hold the water tank and the overlying balancing pond. Due to the depth of excavation, the majority of the observations were carried out from the side of the trench. Spoil heaps were examined for stray finds.

A photographic record of the excavation was maintained using 35mm black and white film and colour slides, supplemented with digital images. The written record utilises Northamptonshire Archaeology's *pro-forma* sheets (NA 2006).

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).



Excavation in progress, looking east Fig 2

4 THE WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 General stratigraphy

The natural Ironstone sand geology was located approximately 1.6m below the modern ground surface (5) (Fig 3). Above this was mid brown clay sand, 300mm thick containing moderate small pieces of ironstone (4). This is interpreted as a former subsoil since it was overlain by a well sorted and predominantly stone-free grey silty clay, 100mm thick, which represents a buried topsoil (3). The topsoil had been buried beneath 900mm of made ground comprising dark brown sand clay with very frequent ironstone pieces (2). The present topsoil was a friable greyish-brown sandy clay, 300mm thick, containing frequent large angular ironstone pieces (1).

The general stratigraphy in the watching brief area confirmed the earlier geotechnical investigations, showing that approximately 1.2m of soil had been deposited upon an earlier ground surface to build up this part of the site.



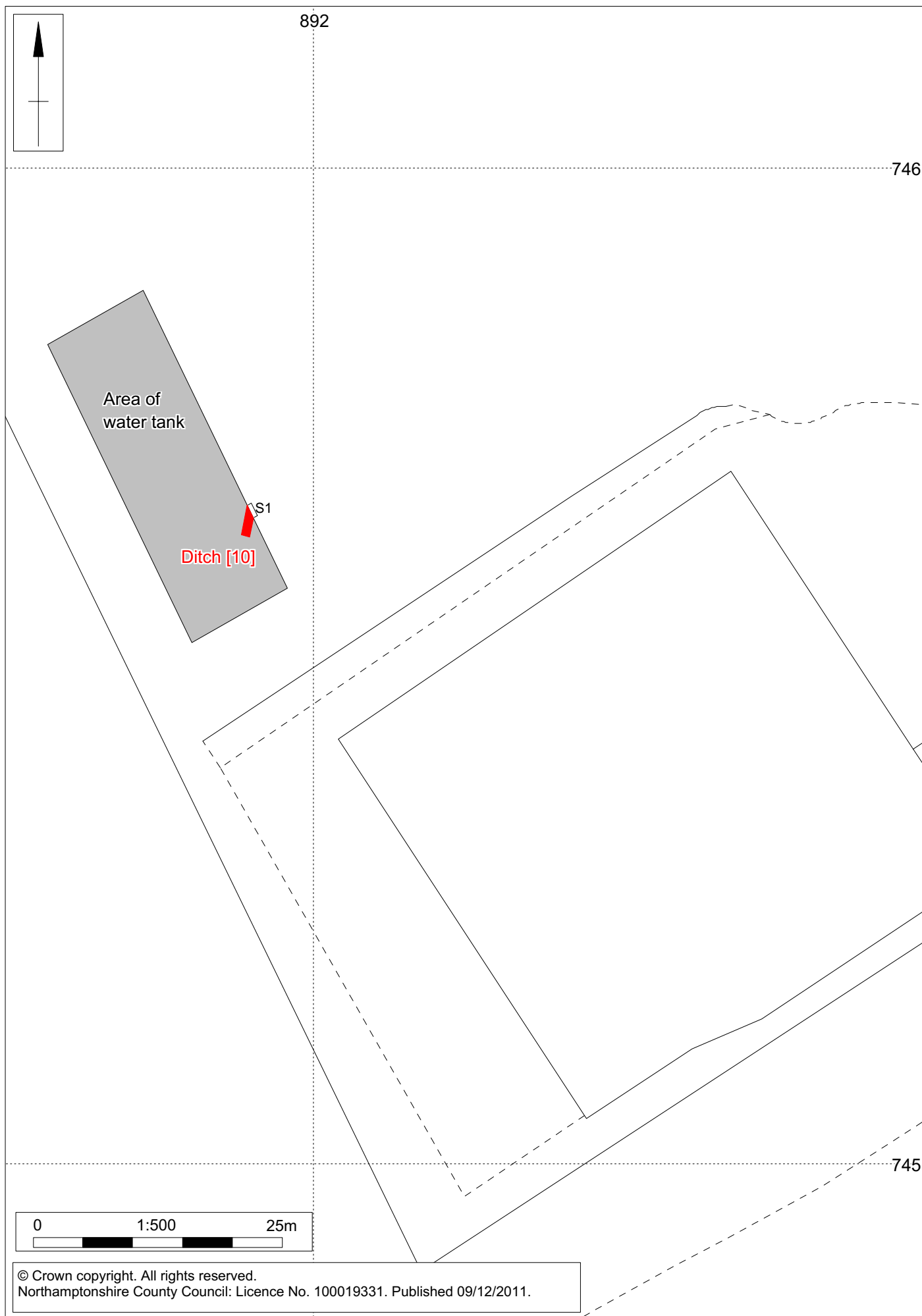
General stratigraphy Fig 3

4.2 Site observations

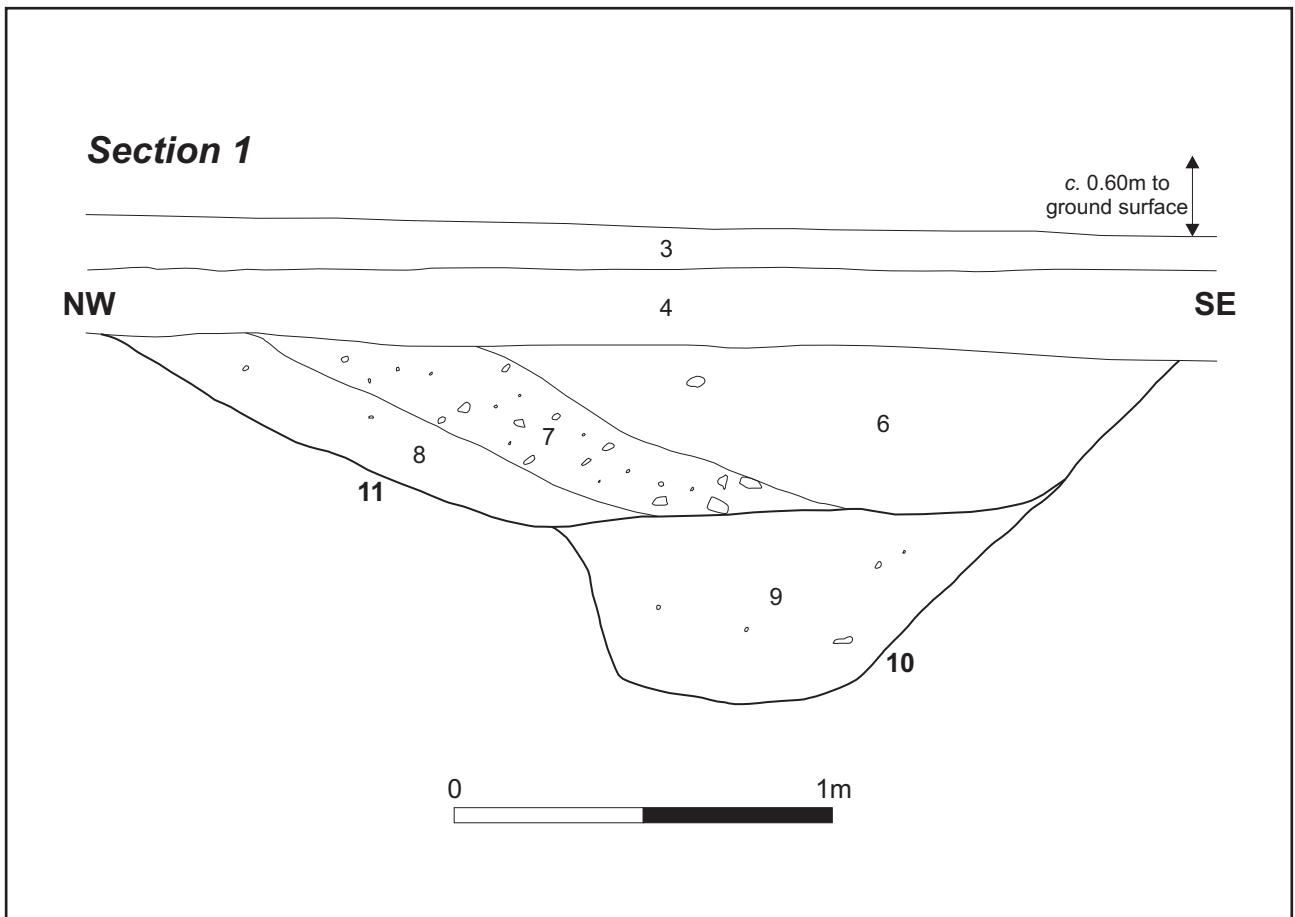
A single undated, re-cut ditch was the only feature located during the watching brief (Fig 4). The feature produced no finds and there were no finds from anywhere else on the site.

Ditch [10] (Figs 5 and 6)

A ditch, aligned north-south, was c 0.90m wide by 0.50m deep, with a steep-sided, U-shaped profile (Figs 5 & 6). It lay at the northern edge of the watching brief area, cutting into the natural underlying Ironstone geology and had survived to a length of c 3.00m. The fill was dark grey-brown sandy silt with occasional small ironstone fragments (9). There was a broader but shallower re-cut [11], c 2.10m wide and 0.45m deep. This had a primary fill (8) of mid grey-brown clay sand against the western edge, overlain by a similar mid grey-brown clay with very frequent ironstone inclusions (7) and a mid brown clay sand with very occasional small stones (6). The ditch was sealed by the former subsoil (4).



Location of water tank Fig 4



Scale 1:20

Section of ditch 10 and re-cut 11 Fig 5



Ditch 10 and re-cut 11, looking north-east Fig 6

5 CONCLUSION

The watching brief confirmed the findings of previous desk-based assessments and geotechnical investigations that showed that the western area of the site had been modified in the 20th century by raising the ground level to create a sports pitch. A single undated ditch survived below this made-ground, cut into the natural geology. The lack of pottery or other archaeological finds from the site as a whole perhaps demonstrates that the area was peripheral to any significant archaeological activity.

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