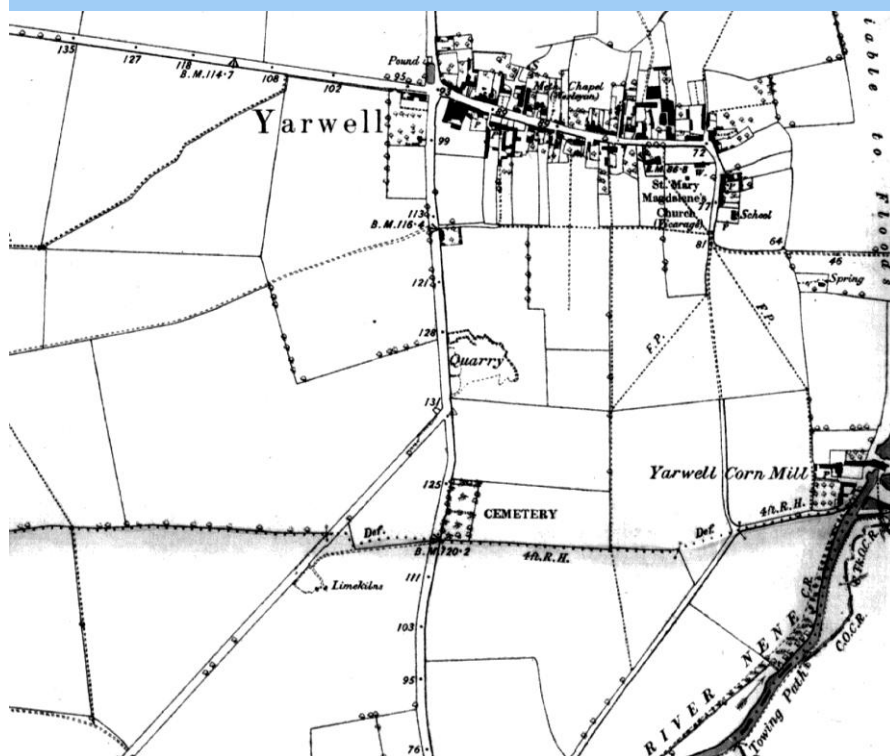




# Northamptonshire Archaeology

## Archaeological Trial Trenching at Nassington Road Yarwell, Northamptonshire November 2011



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Report 11/264

December 2011



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**QUALITY CONTROL**

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Ian Meadows		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project title	Archaeological Trial Trenching at Nassington Road, Yarwell, Northamptonshire, November 2011	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by the Nassington and Yarwell Joint Burial Board, to conduct trial trenching on land proposed for an extension to the Nassington and Yarwell Cemetery, Nassington Road, Northamptonshire. No archaeological features were recorded. A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 1.	
Project type	Evaluation- trial trenching	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Agricultural	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Nassington Road, Yarwell, Northamptonshire	
Post code		
OS co-ordinates	TL 06800 97265	
Area	0.185ha	
Height aOD	39m	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Liz Mordue, Northamptonshire County Council Planning (NCCP)	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Steve Morris (NA)	
Project Manager	Ian Meadows (NA)	
Sponsor or funding body	Nassington and Yarwell Joint Burial Board	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	November 2011	
End date	November 2011	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contents</b>
Physical	NA store	1 pot sherd
Paper		Client report, site contexts, registers and permatrace drawings, colours slides and black and white prints and negatives
Digital		Digital version of report, digital photographs, dxf data
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trenching at Nassington Road, Yarwell, Northamptonshire, November 2011	
Serial title & volume	11/264	
Author(s)	Carol Simmonds	
Page numbers		
Date		

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
	2.1 Topography and geology	
	2.2 Archaeological and historical background	
<b>3</b>	<b>AIMS AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE</b>	<b>7</b>
	3.1 Trenches 1 and 2	
	3.2 The pottery by Iain Soden	
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>8</b>

## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1: Historic Environment Record data**

**Appendix 2: Context Inventory**

## Figures

Front cover: Excerpt from the 1880 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (sheet 7SW)

Fig 1: Site location, 1:17,500

Fig 2: Historic Environment Record data, 1:17,500

Fig 3: Excerpt from the 1880 1st edition Ordnance Survey map

Fig 4: Trial Trench locations, 1:1,000

Fig 5: General view of Trench 2, looking north

Fig 6: General view of the machine excavated sondage in Trench 1, looking south

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING AT NASSINGTON ROAD  
YARWELL, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
NOVEMBER 2011**

*Abstract*

*Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by the Nassington and Yarwell Joint Burial Board, to conduct trial trenching on land proposed for an extension to the Nassington and Yarwell Cemetery, Nassington Road, Northamptonshire. No archaeological features were recorded. A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 1.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological evaluation was required to assess potential presence of archaeological deposits within the proposed extension of the existing Nassington and Yarwell cemetery (NGR TL 06800 97265; Fig 1). This WAS undertaken in compliance with the brief issued by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC 2011a, 2011b), in line with policies HE6.1 and HE6.2 of PPS5: Planning & the Historic Environment.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Topography and geology**

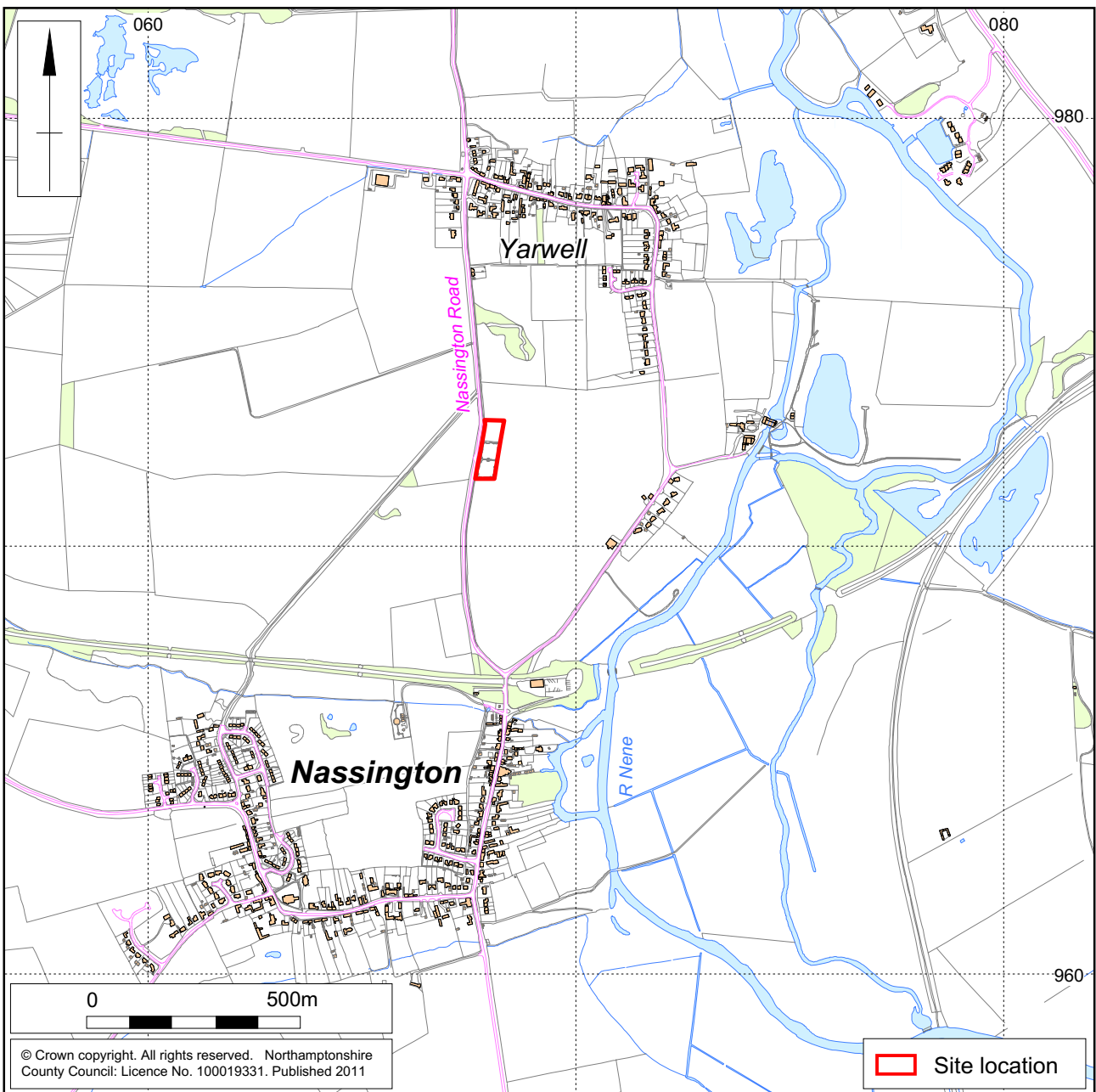
At the time of the works, the cemetery was located between Nassington and Yarwell, to the east of Nassington Road. The proposed extension encompassed 0.185ha of agricultural land, which slopes slightly down from west to east at c39m above Ordnance Datum.

The underlying geology comprises Lincolnshire limestone in the north and west and Grantham formation sandstone, siltstone and mudstone to the south and east (BGS 2001)

### **2.2 Archaeological and historical background**

A 500m radius search of Northamptonshire's Historic Environment Record (HER) was undertaken and the following is a synthesis of the HER data and some of the available historic maps. A total of 22 sites, dating from the prehistoric to the present day, are recorded, of which one (the entry for the cemetery itself: **HER5637**) falls within the study area. The data is represented in tabulated form in Appendix 1 and accompanies Figure 2.

A total of eleven features in the landscape have been identified from aerial photographic surveys; six of them, comprising a possible barrow (**HER2694**) field boundaries (**HER 0/0/0- MNN128772** and **0/0/0- MNN128773**), ditches (**HER 0/0/0- MNN128776**, **2690** and **2715**) and possible settlement enclosures (**HER2714**) are undated. A stone wall (**HER MNN138663**) behind the properties fronting onto Mill Road was recorded by David Hall.



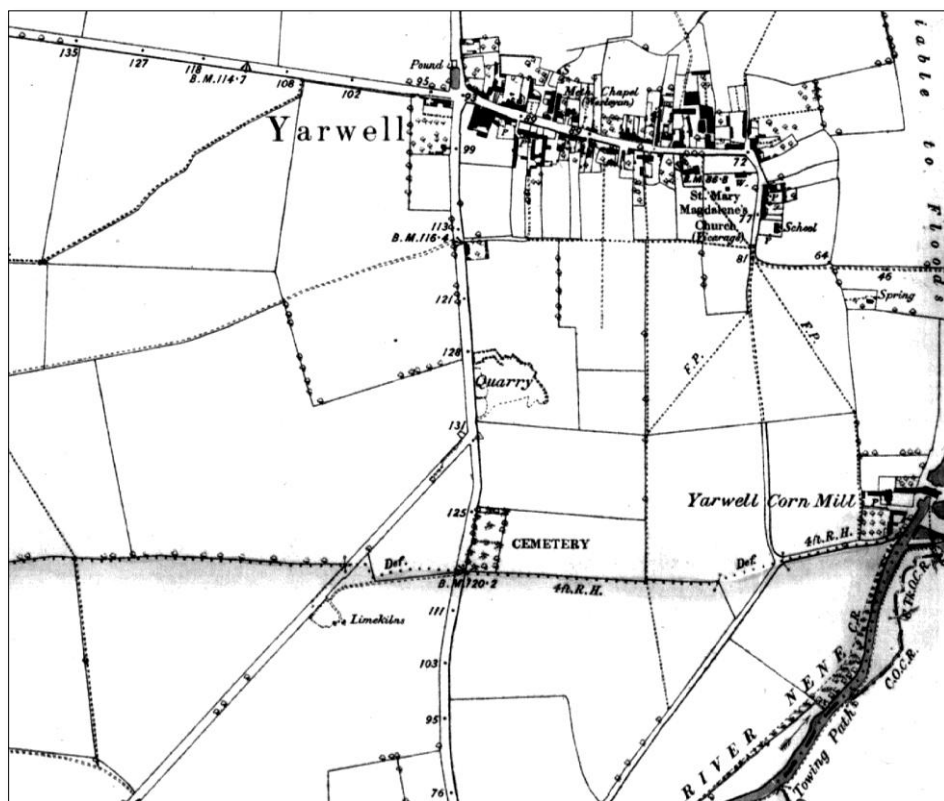
Scale 1:15,000

Site location Fig 1



Prehistoric features included a trackway (**HER2716/0/1**) between the River Nene and higher ground to the west which connected with a possible settlement comprising enclosures and pits (**HER2714** and **0/0/0- MNN128765**), heavily truncated by later quarrying (**HER MNN139461** and **10293/1/0**). Elsewhere aerial photography suggests boundary divisions by way of a pit alignment (**HER10294/0/1**). The River Nene floodplain and terraces was also used as a burial ground, as aerial photography suggested the existence of a possible round barrow (**HER2692**) located 300m to the east of the site.

It was in the medieval period that villages developed at Nassington and Yarwell, the proposed development area was probably open fields at the time. However, earlier Saxon settlement (**HER 2695**) suggested by the recovery of artefacts was located north-east of Nassington. Ridge and furrow (**HER3120/0/1**) was recorded to the south-east of Yarwell, on the banks of the River Nene. Many of the fields between Nassington and Yarwell were extensively quarried for limestone, including substantial sized pits immediately to the north (**MNN139458** and **MNN139457**) and west (**HER MNN139459**, **MNN139460**, **10293/1/0**) of the site. The cemetery (**HER5637/1**) and quarry pit (**HER MNN139457**) appear on the 1880 first edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig 3 and Front cover). The surrounding area comprised small fields close to the Nene and larger fields on the terraces. The disused London & North Western Railway between Seaton and Wansford lay to the south (**HER8292/1**).



Excerpt from the first edition (1880s) Ordnance Survey map

Fig 3



### 3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

In order to examine the archaeological resource within the proposed development, the general aims were (NCC 2011a, 2011b) to:

- determine and understand the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present;
- examine the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.

Additionally, to:

- recover artefacts to assist in the development of material studies within the region;
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

The excavation was carried out within the parameters suggested by the published research priorities for the East Midlands (EH 1997; Cooper 2006).

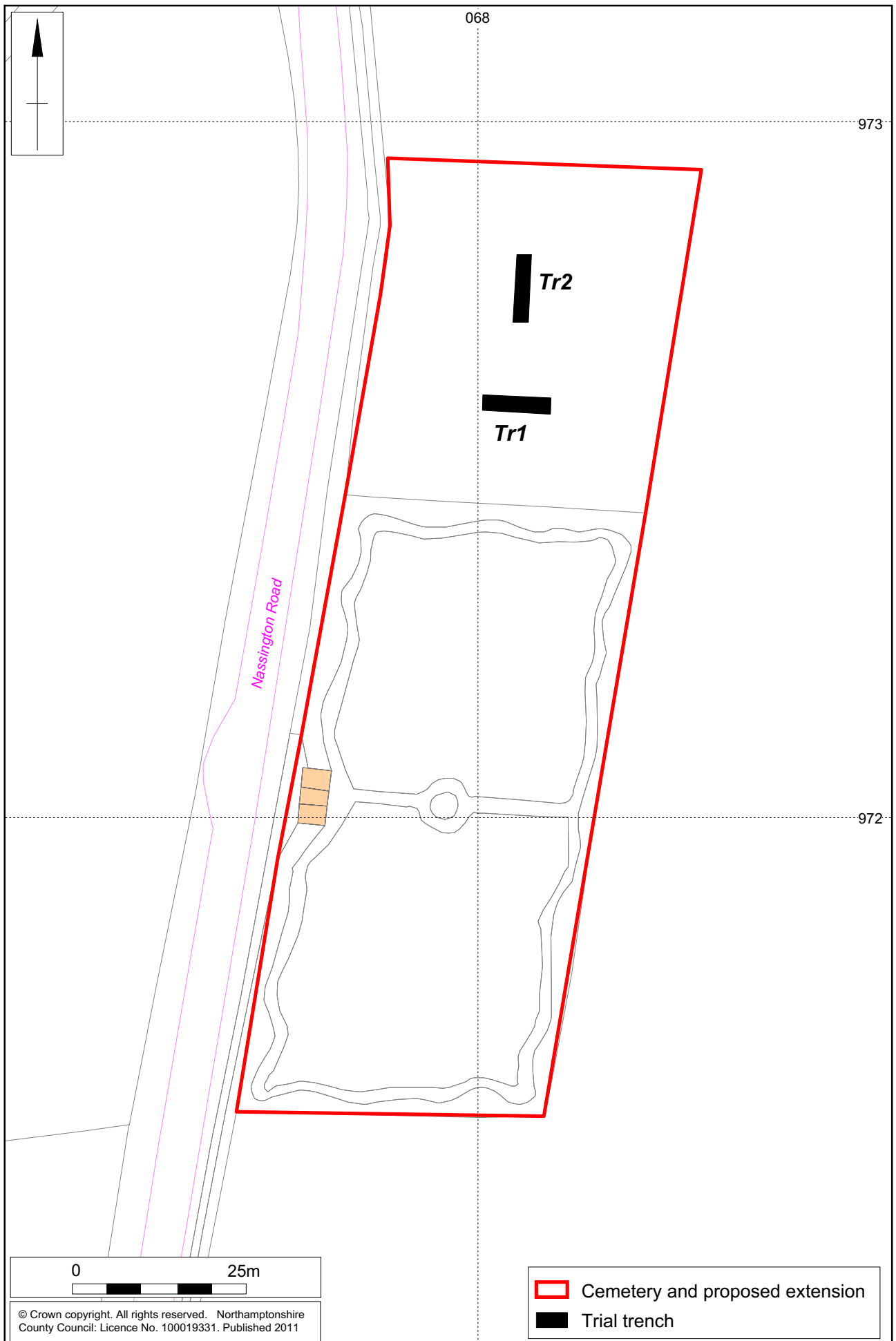
Possible questions to be answered related to:

- the Roman to Anglo-Saxon transition;
- chronology;
- material culture and environmental evidence.

The trial trenching comprised the excavation of two trenches measuring 10m long (Fig 4). The work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and the English Heritage procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (2006). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2011). It described the proposed methodology, resources and programme for the archaeological work to meet the requirements of the brief (NCC 2011a, 2011b). The works were monitored by Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council.

Topsoil and subsoil were removed separately by machine using a flat-bladed bucket to reveal underlying archaeological remains or, where absent, the natural substrate under the direct supervision and control of an experienced and qualified archaeologist.

All archaeological trenches have been related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum. Recording followed standard NA procedures (NA 2006). Deposits were described on NA *pro-forma* sheets to include details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a check-list of associated finds. A indexed photographic record was kept of the excavation, comprising 35mm black and white negatives and colour slides. Digital images were taken to supplement the photographic archive.



## 4 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

### 4.1 Trenches 1 and 2

The underlying geology of the site, comprising orangey-brown sandy silts, was encountered between 0.46m to 0.50m below the modern ground surface (Appendix 2; Figs 5 & 6) at a height of approximately 36.00m aOD. The natural clays were interspersed with patches of gravel or grit. In both trenches, a thin layer of subsoil comprising dark orangey-brown sandy silt with grit or gravel, limestone and charcoal overlay the natural. A medieval pottery sherd was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 1 (102). A well developed topsoil of dark yellowish-brown sandy/silty loam covered the subsoil. No archaeological features were seen.



General view of Trench 2, looking north Fig 5



General view of the machine excavated sondage in Trench 1, looking south Fig 6

#### **4.2 The pottery** by Iain Soden

One weathered sherd of a Lyveden/Stanion B ware jug handle, weighing 21g, was recovered from the subsoil (102). It is dated to c 1250-c 1500.

### **5 CONCLUSION**

The evaluation trenches located no archaeological features and recovered just a single sherd of medieval pottery, from the subsoil. Therefore, there is little evidence of past human activity within the study area.

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BGS <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>, British Geological Survey  
Old Maps <http://www.old-maps.co.uk>

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22 December 2011

## APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA

NHER	Name	Period	Type	NGR TL
0/0/0 MNN128765	Macula?/ Pit?	Prehistoric	Aerial photograph	06514 97042
0/0/0 MNN128772	Field boundary?	Unknown	Aerial photograph	06894 97134
0/0/0 MNN128773	Field boundary?	Unknown	Aerial photograph	06841 97091
0/0/0 MNN128776	Ditch?	Unknown	Aerial photograph	07072 97042
MNN139458	Quarry Pits (RFP Survey)	Unknown	David Hall Field Survey	06800 97313
MNN139459	Quarry Pits (RFP Survey)	Unknown	David Hall Field Survey	06747 97285
MNN139460	Quarry Pits (RFP Survey)	Unknown	David Hall Field Survey	06625 97133
MNN139461	Quarry Pits (RFP Survey)	Unknown	David Hall Field Survey	06604 97031
MNN138663	Stone Wall (RFP Survey)	Unknown	David Hall Field Survey	07245 97099
MNN139457	Quarry Pits (RFP Survey)	Unknown	David Hall Field Survey	06837 97447
2690	Unassigned (ditch)	Unknown	Survey	0720 9740
2692	Possible prehistoric burial site (round barrow)	Prehistoric	Aerial photograph	0722 9721
2964	Funerary site (barrow)	Unknown	Survey	0710 9707
2965	Settlement?	Early Middle Saxon	Findspot	0702 9683
2714	Unassigned (settlement enclosures?)	Unknown	Aerial photograph	0660 9700
2715	Unassigned (ditches)	Unknown	Aerial photograph	0690 9710
2716/0/1	Trackway?	Prehistoric	Aerial photograph	06373 97031
3120/0/1	Ridge and furrow?	Medieval	Midland Open Fields Project	07347 97487
5637	Yarwell and Nassington Cemetery	Modern	EH survey (Parks Register Enhancement Survey 1995)	06793 97200
8292/1	London & North Western Railway (Seaton to Wansford)	Modern		01028 97603
10293/1/0	Macula/ Quarry	Post-medieval	Aerial photograph	06555 96985
10294/0/1	Pit alignment?	Prehistoric	Aerial photograph	06949 97459

## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	10m, 2m & E-W	506805 297259	36.60m aOD	0.46m & 36.14m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
101	Topsoil	Soft to firm, dark yellowish-brown sandy/silty loam, with occasional small sub-angular/rounded pebbles/gravel, occasional limestone fragments	0.28m thick	
102	Subsoil	Firm dark orangey-brown sandy silt, with occasional small grit/gravel, occasional limestone fragments, charcoal flecks	0.18m thick	Medieval pottery sherd
103	Natural	Firm orangey-brown sandy silt, very occasional small gravel/grit	36.14m aOD	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	10m, 2m & N-S	506806 297276	36.90m aOD	0.50m & 36.40m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Topsoil	Soft to firm, dark yellowish-brown sandy/silty loam, with occasional small sub-angular/rounded pebbles/gravel, occasional limestone fragments	0.30m thick	
202	Subsoil	Firm dark orangey-brown sandy silt, with occasional small grit/gravel, occasional limestone fragments, charcoal flecks	0.20m thick	
203	Natural	Firm orangey-brown sandy silt, very occasional small gravel/grit	36.40m aOD	



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