



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation at
18-20 Chapel Street, Warmington, Northamptonshire
August 2011



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Northamptonshire
County Council

Edmund Taylor
Report 11/170
August 2011



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project name	Archaeological evaluation at 18-20, Chapel Street, Warmington, Northamptonshire, August 2011
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation, comprising five trenches, on land at 18-20 Chapel Street, Warmington, Northamptonshire, during August 2011. The evaluation revealed a small group of postholes which are likely to be structural elements of a late medieval building known to have fronted onto Chapel Street. To the rear of the plot there was a boundary or drainage ditch which dates from the 12th to 15th centuries.
Project type	Trial trench evaluation
Site status	None
Previous work	None
Current land use	Car park
Future work	Unknown
Monument type/ period	Medieval village core
Significant finds	None
PROJECT LOCATION	
County	Northamptonshire
Site address	18-20 Chapel Street, Warmington
OS Easting & Northing	TL 07778 9123
Area (ha or sq m)	0.31ha
Height aOD	20-21m
PROJECT CREATORS	
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council Planning
Project Design originator	NA
Director/Supervisor	Edmund Taylor
Project Manager	Iain Soden
Sponsor or funding body	ADC (Mid) Ltd
PROJECT DATE	
Start date	August 2011
End date	August 2011
ARCHIVES	
Archive location	
Archive contents	Pottery; site records and related documents (2 large archive boxes); digital photographs, digital report copies
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Title	Archaeological evaluation at 18-20, Chapel Street, Warmington, Northamptonshire, August 2011
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 11/170
Author(s)	Edmund Taylor
Page numbers	15
Date	14 September 2011

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT 18-20 CHAPEL STREET
WARMINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
AUGUST 2011**

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation, comprising five trenches, on land at 18-20 Chapel Street, Warmington, Northamptonshire during August 2011. The evaluation revealed a small group of postholes which are likely to be structural elements of a late medieval building which is known to have fronted onto Chapel Street. To the rear of the plot there was a boundary or drainage ditch which dates from the 12th to 15th centuries.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation, comprising five trenches, on 0.31ha of land at 18-20 Chapel Street, Warmington, Northamptonshire, during August 2011 (NGR TL 07778 9123, Figs 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by ADC (Mid) Ltd prior to the construction of residential units. The evaluation followed an approved Specification produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2011) in accordance with a Brief issued by Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological officer (Mordue 2011)

This report, which presents the results of the evaluation, has been prepared in accordance with Appendix 4 of the English Heritage procedural document Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (EH 1991) and MoRPHE (EH 2006).

2 OBJECTIVES

The general objectives as set out in the Brief were to:

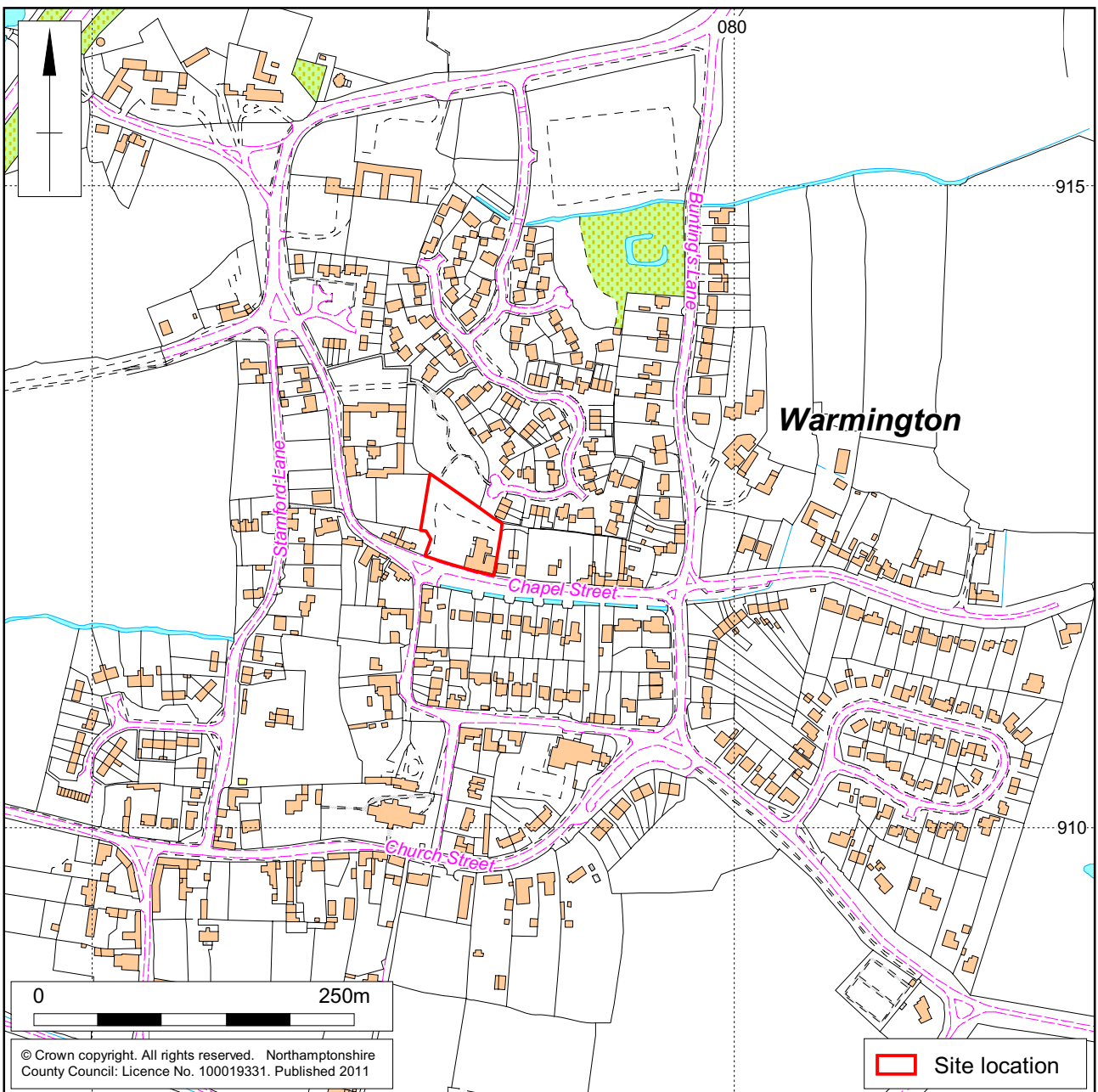
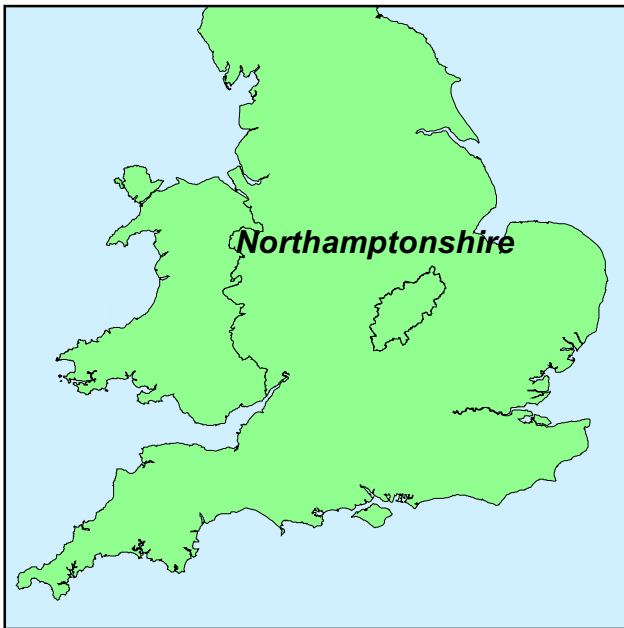
- establish the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present
- establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The site is situated in the Historic Core of Warmington at c20-21m above Ordnance Datum. The land lies on the north-facing slope of the Lower Nene Valley. The geology of the valley sides comprises a sequence of Northampton Sand with Ironstone, Great Oolite Limestone and Clay, with outcrops of Cornbrash and Oxford Clay (Parry 1996, 222). Pockets of drift material are present as red loam and areas of Cornbrash are generally thin with Great Oolite Clay exposed beneath.

At the time of excavation the ground was in use as a car park for an adjacent social club.



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

The details below are taken from a desk-based assessment by Northamptonshire Archaeology (McAree 2008).

The earliest evidence of occupation in Warmington is the recovery of flint tools and a shallow gully uncovered some 200m immediately north of the site.

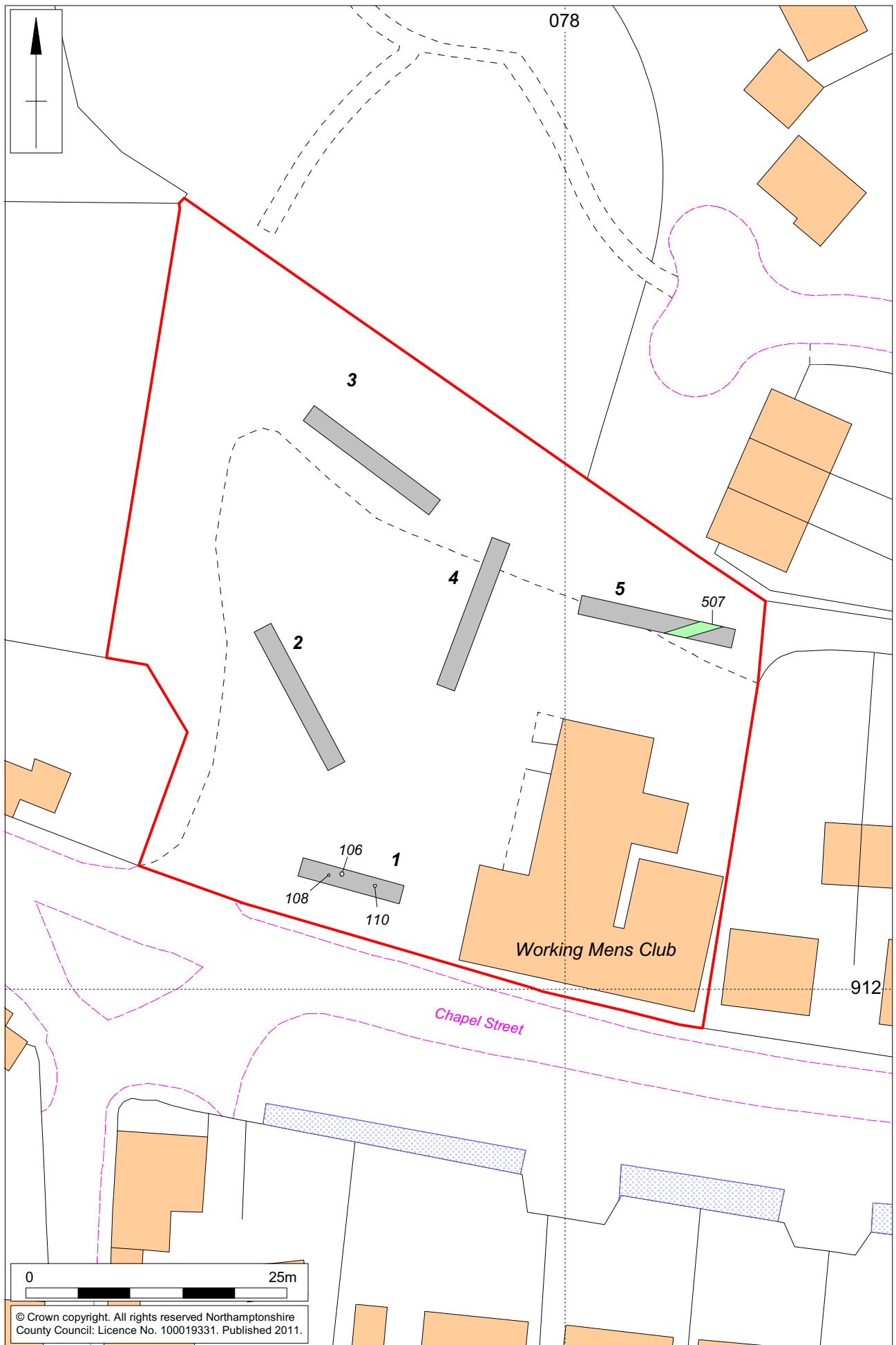
During excavations in advance of the construction of the Warmington by-pass in 1996, evidence of Bronze Age activity, including an articulated adult burial found with a flint knife, arrowheads, jet buttons and an ornate pottery beaker dating to the period around 1000 BC was uncovered (Chapman 1997a, 2004). Two bronze palstaves were recovered from the churchyard and a cluster of five ring ditches together with linear ditches and other possible settlement sites have been found in the area around the junction of the A605 and the junction with the new by-pass at the north of the village (Shaw 1993).

Limited archaeological evaluation and open area excavation to the north, east and west of the development site all indicate at least sporadic occupation of the village site through the late Stone Age, Bronze and Iron Ages and into the Roman period (RCHME 1975, Meadows 2002).

Roman material has been found in three locations around the village. To the west of Warmington, Roman pottery, tiles, coins and oyster shells were found in 1962 (RCHME 1975, 106). To the south, near the parish boundary at Tansor, finds of Roman pottery, tiles and stone rubble from a substantial building have been recorded. To the east around the deserted hamlet of Papley, Roman finds include pottery, tiles, limestone rubble and two pieces of fired clay, probably fire-bars from a kiln in the vicinity (RCHME 1976, 108). Warmington is believed to be located on the line of a putative Roman road from Irchester to Water Newton. The RCHME survey of the town postulates that this Roman road would cut straight through the proposed development area. This is now considered unlikely as no trace of any substantial Roman features were found during the extensive excavations immediately to the north of the site (Meadows 2002).

The extensive open area excavations in advance of the housing estate abutting the development site to the north indicated extensive occupation from the early and middle Saxon periods (Soden 1996; Chapman 1997b and 2002; Meadows 2002). In addition to Saxon burials, pottery, clusters of postholes and pits indicate probable centres of settlement or occupation across the area. A series of linear ditches forming enclosures and possible trackways were revealed by geophysics and exposed in evaluation and excavation. It is clear that the early settlement pattern had a different alignment and focus than the later medieval and modern village (Meadows 2002).

Other archaeological interventions along Chapel Street have all uncovered significant evidence of early activity across the area (Prentice 1997; Baker and Jones 1998; Meadows 2002). Saxon occupation evidence lay within the neighbouring street plot, the street is itself a Saxon and medieval thoroughfare, a Saxon burial lay 160m to the south-west and the early manor was located 150m to the west. Later medieval occupation evidence abounds along Chapel Street, and medieval agricultural activity was excavated in the fields to the north of the site, prior to the building of the present housing estate. Towards the end of the medieval period, houses set within the plots were being replaced by new buildings set on the street frontages. The post-medieval manor and its farm were located immediately to the north-west of the development site.



Scale 1:500 (A4)

Site plan showing trench locations Fig 2

4 EXCAVATION RESULTS

4.1 Methodology

The trenches were positioned using a Leica System 1200 GPS and related to the ordnance Survey National Grid. They were excavated, under continuous archaeological supervision, using a JCB-type mechanical excavator fitted with a flat toothless bucket. The upcast was stacked adjacent to the trenches. At the conclusion of the evaluation the trenches were backfilled with their upcast and lightly compacted to restore ground level (see Appendix 1).

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in NA's *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2006). Trenches containing archaeological remains were cleaned by hand, sufficient to define the features. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual context number (eg 102, Trench 1, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets. The trenches were planned (scale 1:50) and section drawings were made at an appropriate scale (1:10 or 1:20). Levels were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features and related to Ordnance Datum. A photographic record was made of the excavation, using 35mm black and white negative and colour slide film, supplemented by digital images.

Artefacts were collected by hand and retained, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from site (Walker 1990). The archive will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC 1992).

All works were carried out in accordance with the brief prepared by NCC and the specification prepared by NA and also by the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (1985, revised 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1994, revised 2008). All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology's Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

4.2 Summary

Due to the presence of heavy undergrowth along the northern and western edges of the site and buried electrical services which surrounded the car park area, Trenches 2, 3 and 4 were moved slightly from the positions agreed in the Specification.

Trenches 2-5 were 15m long by 1.5m wide, Trench 1 was limited to 10m in length by a paved area at the entrance of the social club and a metal railing near the site entrance (Fig 2 and Appendix 1).

The natural substrate across the site comprises mid brown clay with patches of yellow-orange sand. This is overlain by a mid brown sandy clay subsoil which in most parts of the site is overlain by a layer of brick rubble, presumably a levelling layer for the present day car park. Detailed trench descriptions are included in the Appendix.

Archaeological remains were only encountered in Trenches 1 and 5, which are discussed below.

4.3 Trench 1

Situated at the street frontage, this trench contained three sub-circular postholes, [106], [108] and [110] which formed no recognisable pattern. They were 0.20m-0.29m in diameter and 0.05m to 0.20m deep (Fig 3, sections 2-4). Postholes [106] and [110] had similar steep-sided, flat-bottomed profiles while [108] was shallower and bowl-shaped. They were filled with grey-brown silty clay with a single example of possible packing stones in posthole [110]. A single sherd of pottery dating from the 15th to 17th

centuries was also retrieved from this feature. All of the postholes were overlain by up to 0.37m of subsoil.

4.4 Trench 5

To the rear of the social club, this trench revealed a shallow ditch aligned north-east to south-west, [507], which was 1.2m wide and 0.55m deep (Fig 3, Section1). The steep sides sloped to a narrow concave base and the fill comprised a mid grey-brown sandy clay from which sherds of pottery dating from the 12th to 15th centuries were retrieved.

The ditch was overlain by up to 0.45m of subsoil.

5 THE POTTERY by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprises 18 sherds with a total weight of 149g. It is all medieval in date or later. It was quantified using the chronology and coding system of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS) (Table 1).

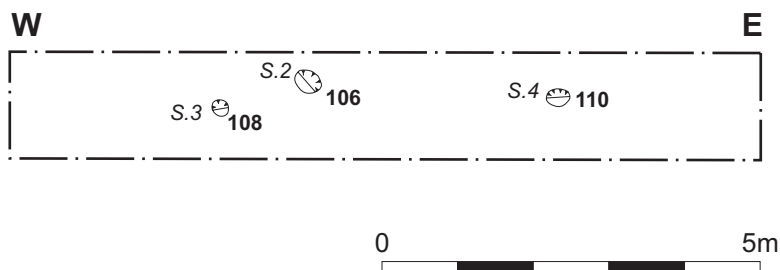
Table 1: Pottery by type and context

Context/ feature	Type	Sherds	Weight (g)	Date
(506)/[507]	F319: Lyveden/Stanion 'A' Ware	16	142	c AD1150 – 1400
(506)/[507]	F320: Lyveden/Stanion 'B' Ware	1	5	c AD1200 – 1400
(109)/[110]	F407: Red Earthenwares	1	2	AD1450-1600

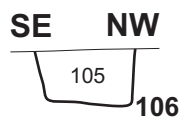
The fabric types are all well-known in the region. All the pottery occurred in a single context, ditch fill (506)/[507], other than the sherd of Red Earthenware, which occurred in the fill of a posthole (109)/[110]. The ditch fill appears likely to date to the 13th century, whilst the posthole seems to be of mid-16th to 17th century date, although the sherd of red earthenware from the posthole is somewhat abraded, and is likely to be residual.

The assemblage from the ditch appears typical of the period. All the sherds of Lyveden/Stanion 'A' Ware are from jars, including a rimsherd, and the sherd of 'B' Ware is from the body of a glazed jug. The sherds are in reasonably good condition, although in all cases, the calcareous inclusions have leached out, presumably due to acidic soil conditions. They appear reliably stratified, and probably represent fragments of no more than four vessels.

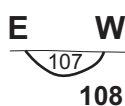
Trench 1



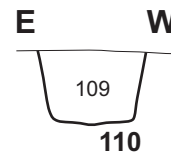
Section 2



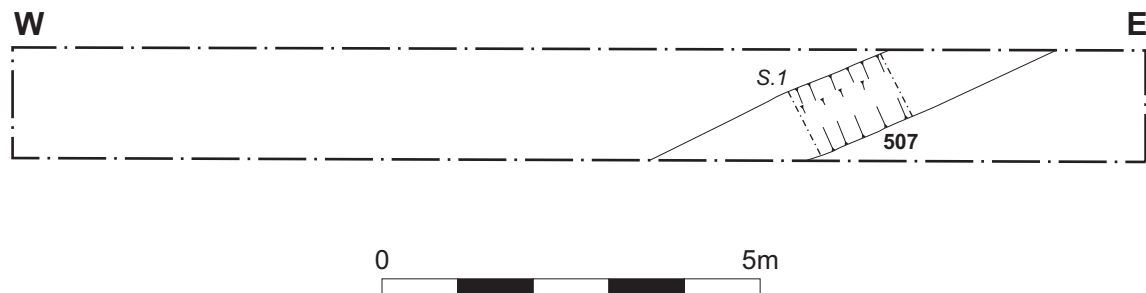
Section 3



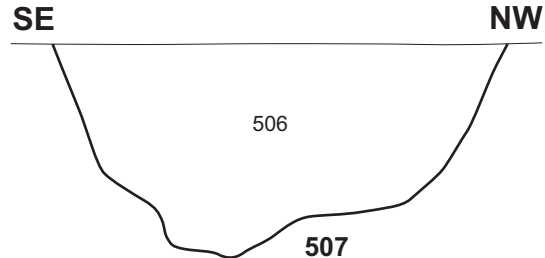
Section 4



Trench 5



Section 1



6 DISCUSSION

Despite being within the historic core of the village and in an area of known medieval activity, the evaluation revealed few archaeological remains.

The postholes in Trench 1 are likely to be structural elements relating to the building shown on the site on the Estate map of 1621 (McAree 2008) which may have been a late medieval structure fronting onto Chapel Street.

The ditch in Trench 5 dated to the 13th century and is likely to have been a plot boundary or drainage ditch. Its alignment suggests it could have been present in Trench 2, but as it was not, it either turns or terminates east of that trench.

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APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE



Trench 1, looking west, showing postholes



Trench 3, looking west



Trench 4, looking south



Trench 5, looking west, showing ditch 507



Trench 1, looking east, after backfilling



Trench 4, looking north, after backfilling



Trench 3, looking east, after backfilling



Trench 5, looking east, after backfilling



Trench 3, looking east, footpath in foreground



Trench 1, looking south, surrounded by hazard fencing

APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF CONTEXTS AND FEATURES

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR (centre)	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	10m x 1.5m NW-SE		20m aOD	0.70m
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Surface	Compacted stone chippings, car park surface	0.02m-0.04m	-
102	Layer	Brick rubble	0.14m-0.28m thick	-
103	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.29m-0.37m thick	-
104	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay with patches of orange sand	Unknown	-
105	Fill	Fill of [106]. Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.15m thick	-
106	Posthole	Sub-circular, steep-sided	0.28m Ø 0.15m deep	-
107	Fill	Fill of [108]. Mid brown silty clay	0.07m thick	-
108	Posthole	Sub-circular, gradual edges	0.18mØ,0.07m deep	-
109	Fill	Fill of [110]. Dark grey-brown silty clay, possible packing stones	0.20m deep	Medieval pottery
110	Posthole	Sub-circular, steep-sided	0.28m Ø, 0.20m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR (centre)	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	15m x 1.5m NW-SE		20m aOD	0.68m
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Surface	Compacted stone chippings, car park surface	0.05m-0.08m	-
202	Layer	Limestone fragments	0.20m thick	-
203	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.40m thick	-
204	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay with patches of orange sand	Unknown	
205	layer	Brick rubble	0.15m thick	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR (centre)	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	15m x 1.5m NW-SE		20m aOD	0.70m
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy loam	0.10m-0.25m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.20m-0.40m thick	-
303	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay with patches of orange sand	Unknown	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR (centre)	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	15m x 1.5m NE-SW		20m aOD	0.60m
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy loam	0.10m	-
402	Surface	Compacted stone chippings, car park surface	0.05m thick	-
403	Layer	Brick rubble	0.20m-0.30m thick	-
404	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.20m-0.30m thick	-
405	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay with patches of orange sand	Unknown	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR (centre)	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	15m x 1.5m E-E		20m aOD	1.24m
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy loam	0.06m	-
502	Surface	Compacted stone chippings, car park surface	0.05m-0.08m	-
503	Layer	Brick rubble	0.22m-0.28m thick	-
504	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.50m-0.76m thick	-
505	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay with patches of orange sand	Unknown	-
506	Fill	Fill of [507], mid brown sandy clay	0.56m thick	Medieval pottery
507	Ditch	NE-SW aligned, linear	1.20m wide, 0.55m deep	-



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