



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological investigation of land at
Middleton Lodge Farm, Astrop Road, Middleton Cheney
Northamptonshire
May 2011



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Report 11/120

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological evaluation, Middleton Lodge Farm, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire, May 2011	
Short description	An archaeological investigation was carried out to inform a planning application for the construction of a single wind turbine, at Middleton Lodge Farm, Middleton Cheney, Astrop Road, Northamptonshire. There were no archaeological features or finds present.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Arable	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Middleton Lodge Farm, Astrop Road, Middleton Cheney, Banbury, Oxfordshire	
Easting Northing	450155 240640	
Area (sq m/ha)	25m ²	
Height aOD	130m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	NCCAAA	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	Anne Foard-Colby	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull	
Sponsor or funding body	Dodedge	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	26/05/2011	
End date	26/05/2011	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents
Physical	NA store	
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)
Digital		Client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Archaeological Investigation of land at Middleton Lodge Farm, Astrop Road, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire, May 2011	
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Back cover: General site view, looking south-east

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF LAND
AT
MIDDLETON LODGE FARM, ASTROP ROAD, MIDDLETON CHENEY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
MAY 2011

Abstract

An archaeological investigation was carried out to inform a planning application for the construction of a single wind turbine, at Middleton Lodge Farm, Middleton Cheney, Astrop Road, Northamptonshire. There were no archaeological features or finds present.

1 INTRODUCTION

In May 2011, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land at Middleton Lodge Farm, Astrop Road, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 50155 40640; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Dodedge and was undertaken to inform a planning application (S/2011/0448/FUL) for a proposed single wind turbine.

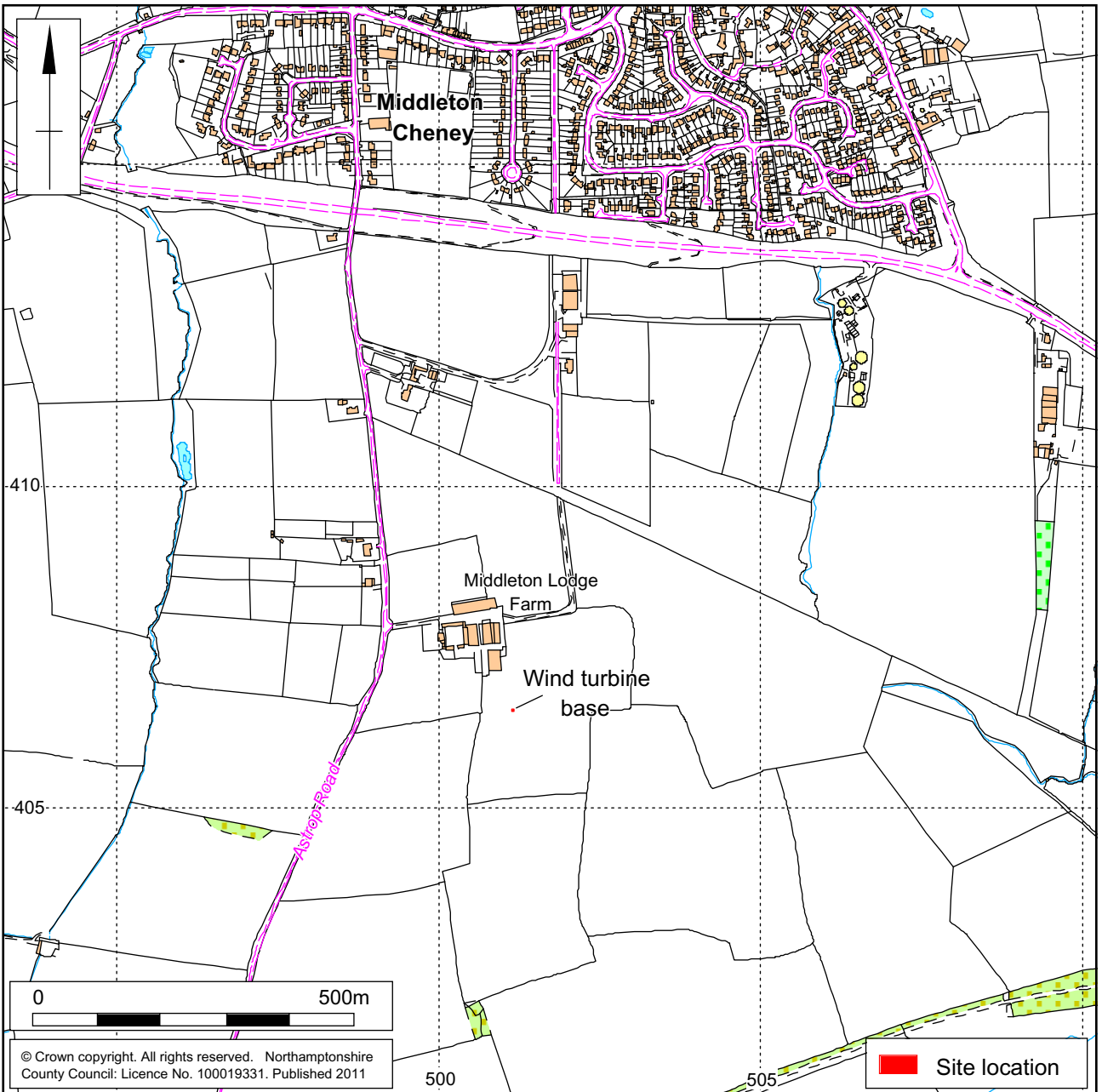
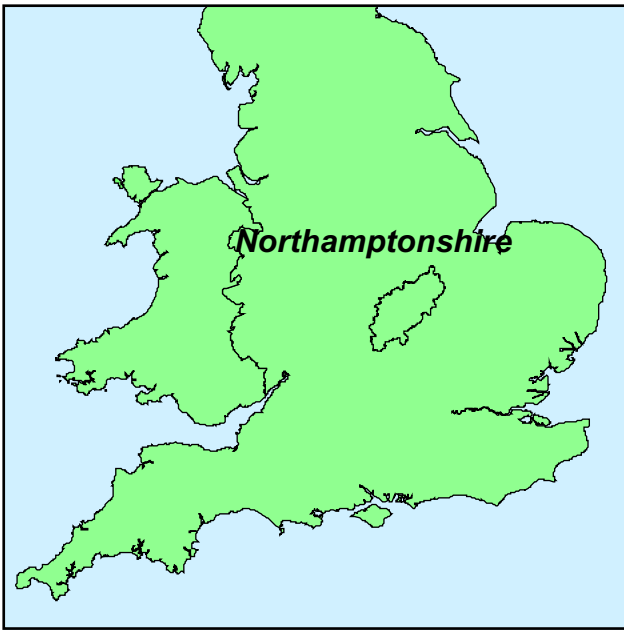
Following a brief issued by Northamptonshire County Council's Assistant Archaeological Advisor (NCCAAA) (Mordue 2011), a programme of archaeological evaluation was agreed. The objectives of the evaluation were to determine the presence of any archaeological features or deposits within the application area and to date and characterise their extent, depth of burial and state of preservation.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The base of the proposed wind turbine covers an area of 25m², and is located approximately 800m south of the village of Middleton Cheney. The villages of Warkworth and Overthorpe lie 1.2km and 1.5km to the west respectively. The site is situated on a flat plateau at an approximate height of 130m OD. At the time of the evaluation the land was covered in wheat crop.

The underlying geology comprises Lias Group, consisting of Mudstone, Siltstone, Limestone, and Sandstone (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex).



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The proposed wind turbine base lies on the north-western edge of an extensive area of cropmarks interpreted as a prehistoric settlement (NHER 9682) recorded by the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (NHER). The features were identified by the National Mapping Programme and aerial surveys in 1981, and include cropmarks of a number of square, rectangular and subcircular enclosures and linear features. Lying immediately to the south-east of the site, a group of cropmarks include a number of square enclosures (NHER 9682/0/5 and 9682/0/9), and other enclosures (NHER 9682/0/1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8). Further to the south-east lies another area of prehistoric activity including additional enclosures (NHER 9682/0/11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20). Cropmarks of ditches were also present (NHER 9682/0/10, 13 and 18).

Areas of extant ridge and furrow cultivation are recorded adjacent to the farm buildings (NHER 6415/0/2 and 3) and west of Astrop Road (NHER 9/0/3). An area of open field systems (NHER 6415) is recorded to the north.

Possible post-medieval agricultural activity is recorded to the south (NHER 8995 and 8995/0/1), north-east of the site (NHER 1437 and 1437/0/1) and to the west (NHER 9/0/3). Post-medieval activity (NHER 29), ditches (NHER 29/0/11, 12, 14 and 15) and a water channel (NHER 29/0/13) lie to the south-west of the site.

The disused line of the London and North Western Railway (Bletchley to Banbury) lies to the south of the site (NHER 6296/1).

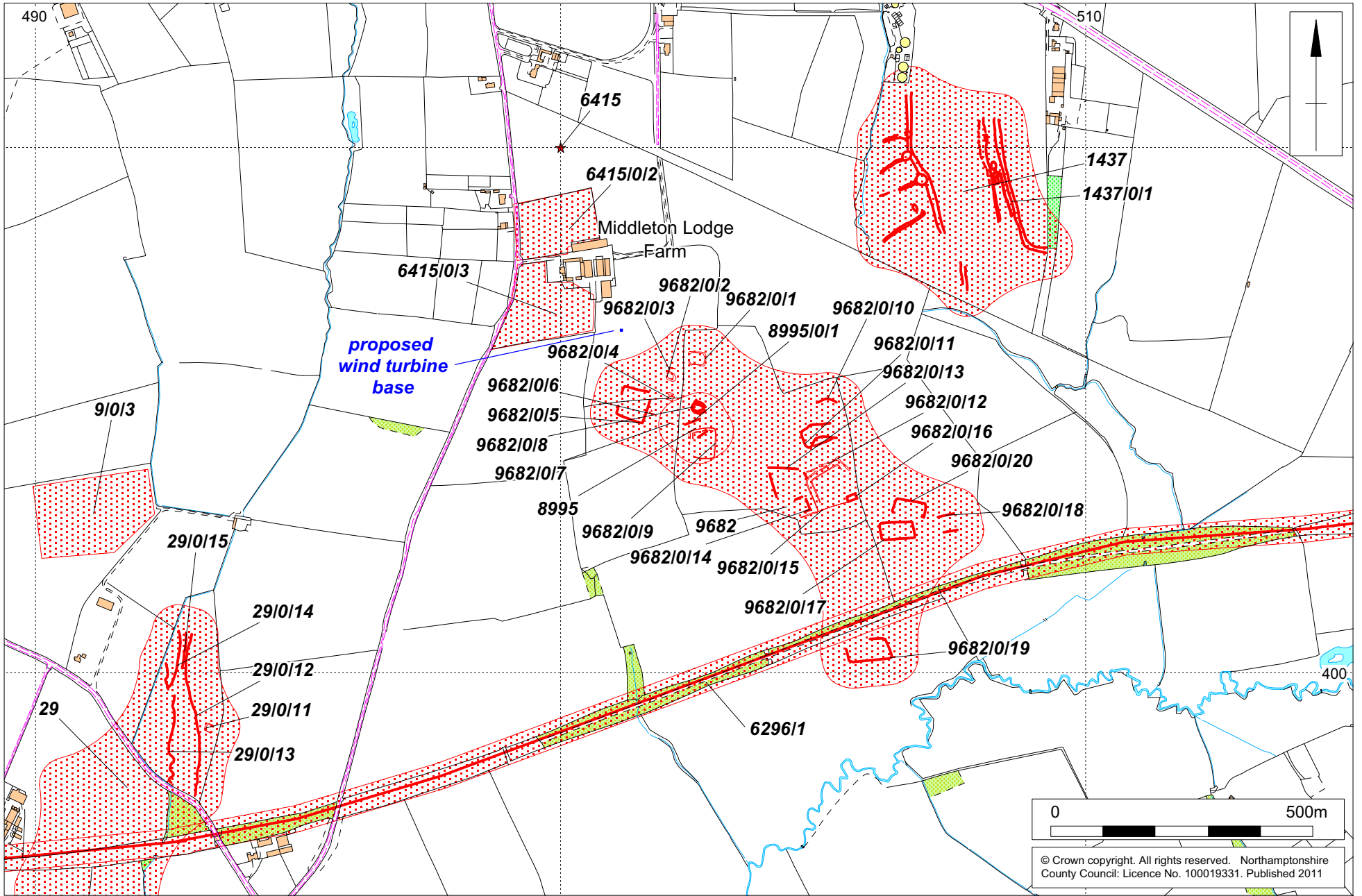
Neither the site, or the field in which the wind turbine is to be constructed, has been subject to previous archaeological intervention.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the work is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

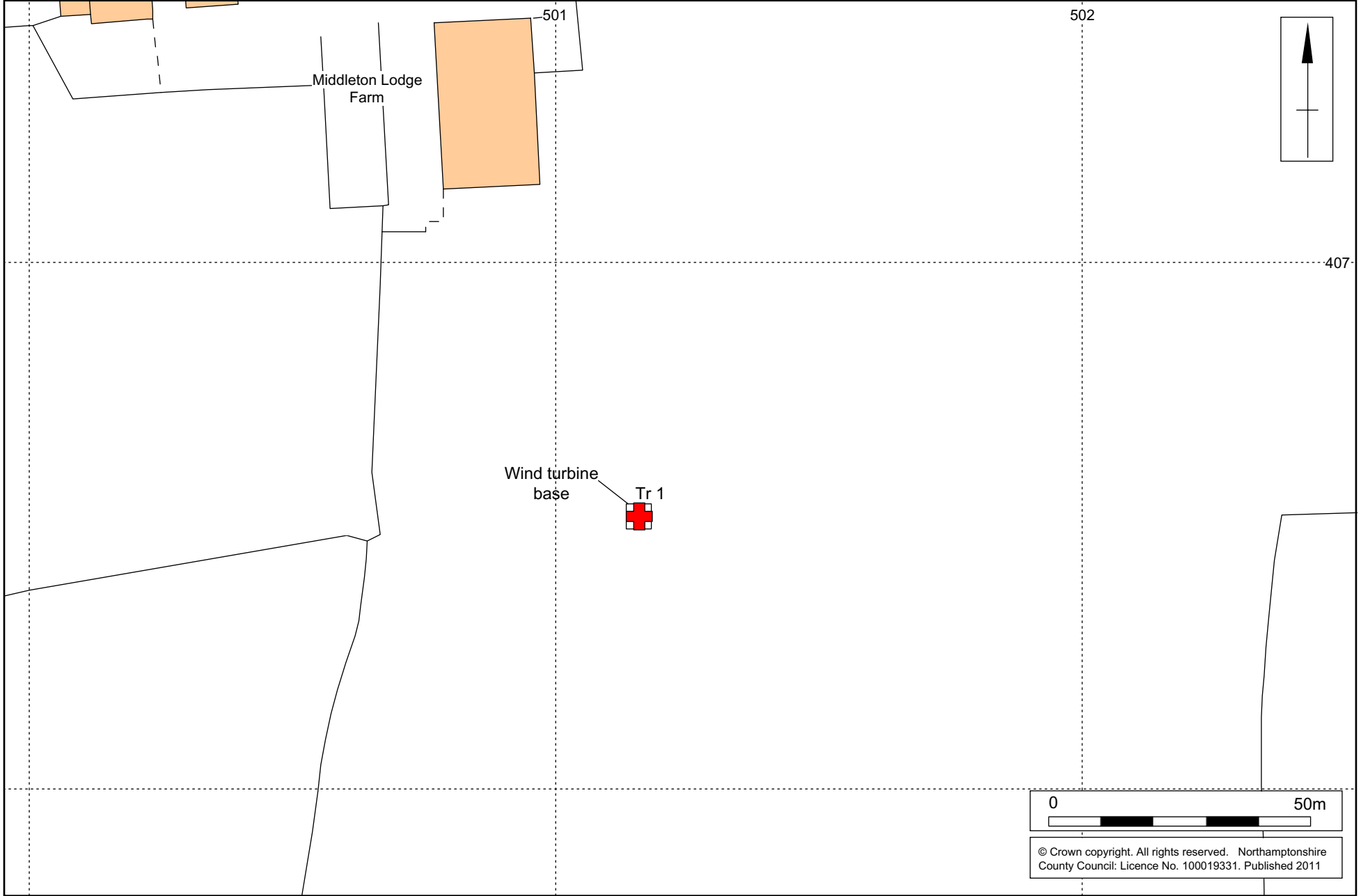
The aims of the investigation are to:

- Establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation on the development site
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.



Scale 1:1000 (A4)

Trench location Fig 3



0 50m
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4 METHODOLOGY

One trial trench (Trench 1), in the shape of a cross, each arm measuring 5m long by 2m wide, was excavated on the site of the turbine base in accordance with the trench plan approved by NCCAAA (Fig 3). The trench was positioned using a Leica 1200 GPS surveying system.

A 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to the natural substrate. Deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature.

Recording followed standard NA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (NA 2006). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. A photographic record was made using 35mm black and white negative film and digital images. Spoil heaps were scanned by eye and metal detector to maximise the recovery of any artefacts.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008).

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

5.1 General stratigraphy

The underlying geology was light orange-brown sandy clay with frequent sandstone fragments.

There was no subsoil present. The shallow topsoil was friable, light to medium orange-brown, clayey loam, with inclusions of sandstone fragments, approximately 0.22m thick. It was a clean soil, devoid of modern debris.



Trench 1, looking east

Fig 4

5.2 The trench

Trench 1 (Figs 3, 4 and 5), was aligned north to south and east to west in the form of a cross. It was located over the position of the proposed turbine base. There were no archaeological features or artefacts present.



Trench 1 section, looking south

Fig 5

6 DISCUSSION

The site of the proposed wind turbine lies in an area of extensive cropmarks. The majority lying to the south-west of the site have been interpreted as prehistoric enclosures and areas of activity.

Although the site lies close to the cropmarks, the archaeological investigation established that there were no archaeological features or deposits encountered within the site.

There was no subsoil present and no finds were recovered from the shallow topsoil.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

IfA 1994, revised 2008 *Standard and guidance for field evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists

IfA 1995 revised 2010 *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists

NA 2006 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Mordue, L, 2011, *Brief for the archaeological field evaluation of land at Middleton Lodge Farm, Astrop Road, Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire*, Northamptonshire County Council

Websites

BGS 2011 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geindex/home.html> British Geological Survey website

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

Trench no	Context	Type	Description	Thickness (m)
1	101	Layer	Topsoil, friable, light to medium orange-brown, clayey loam, with inclusions of sandstone fragments	0.22m thick
	102	Layer	Natural substrate, light orange-brown sandy clay with frequent sandstone fragments	



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