



Northamptonshire Archaeology

A Programme of Archaeological Work at the former
Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road,
Northampton
February 2012



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Report 12/79
July 2012



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OASIS REPORT FORM 130856 (Building recording) 130859 (Evaluation)

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	The former Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road, Northampton	
Short description	A programme of archaeological work was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of Persimmon Homes Limited at the former Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road, Northampton in advance of residential development. The works comprised a comprehensive Level 1 building recording survey followed by trial trench evaluation. Modern disturbance was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.	
Project type	Level 1 Building Recording and Trial trench evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	Desk-based assessment (CA 2002)	
Current land use	Former medical complex	
Future work	None	
Monument type/ period	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Former Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road, Northampton	
Study area (hectares)	18.81ha	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 719 606	
Height OD	c85m - 105m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The County Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	David J Leigh, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J Leigh and Tim Upson-Smith	
Project Manager	Stephen Parry, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	Persimmon Homes Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	December 2011	
End date	February 2012	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		None
Paper	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Trial trench log forms (6) Colour slides (42) black and white contact prints (42) Digital photographs (318)
Digital	NA	Report text and figures
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
	Journal/monograph published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	A programme of archaeological work at the former Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road, Northampton	
Serial title and volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 12/79	
Authors	David J Leigh and Tim Upson Smith	
Date	July 2012	

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**A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK AT
THE FORMER PRINCESS MARINA HOSPITAL
KENT ROAD, NORTHAMPTON
FEBRUARY 2012**

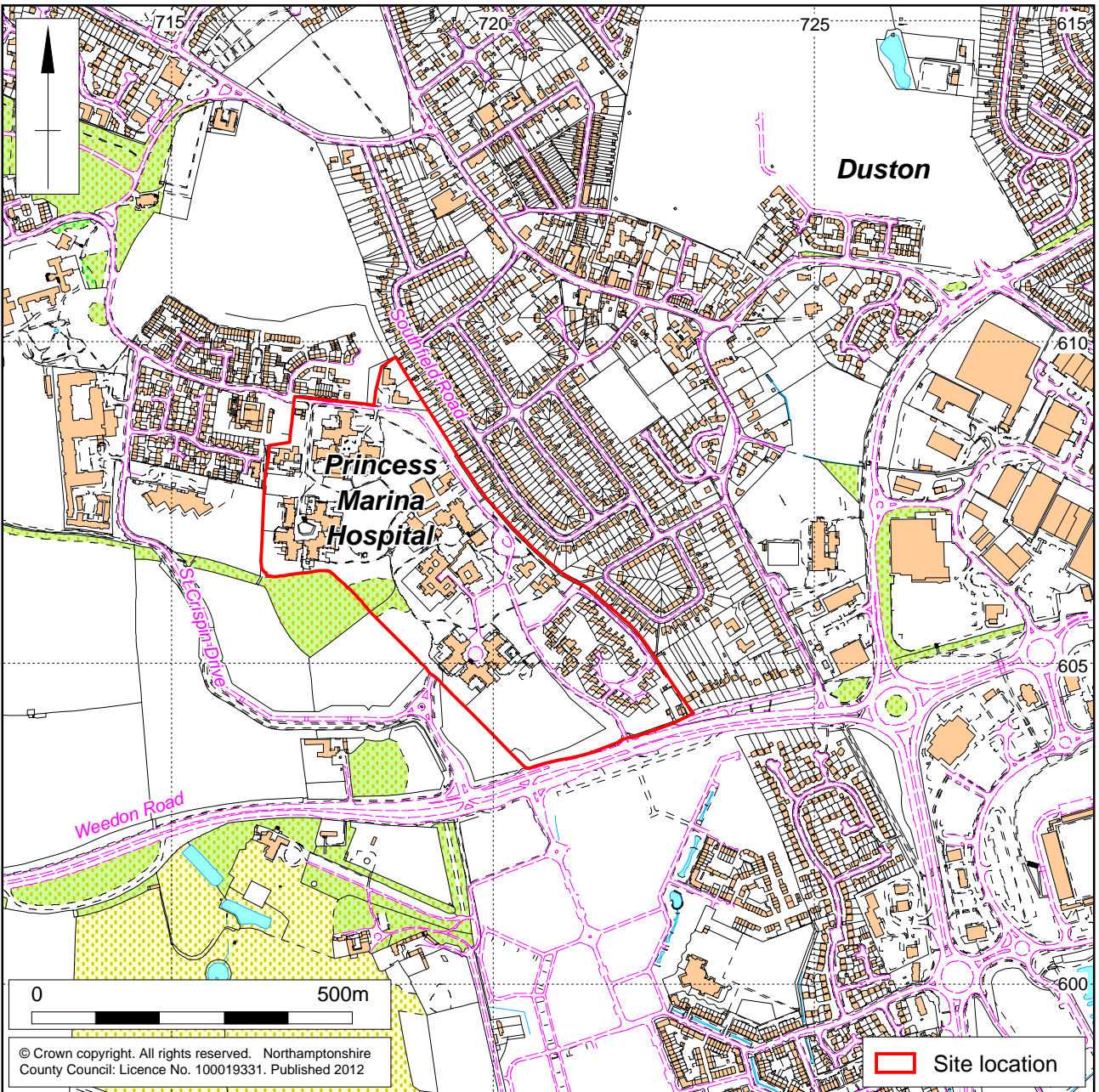
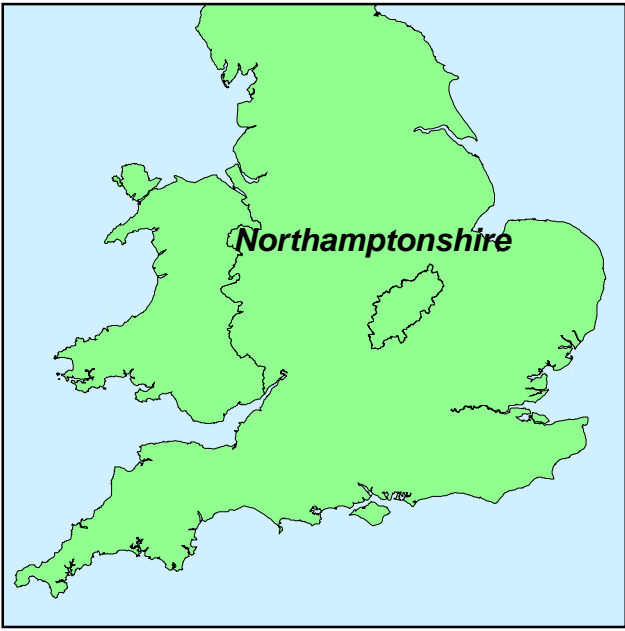
Abstract

In February 2012 a programme of archaeological work was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology at the former Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road, Northampton in advance of residential development. The work was carried out on behalf of Persimmon Homes Limited and comprised a comprehensive level 1 building recording and trial trench evaluation. Modern disturbance was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

In February 2012 a programme of archaeological work was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in advance of residential development at the former Princess Marina Hospital, Kent Road, Northampton (NGR SP: 719 606 ; Figs 1 and 2). The work was carried out on behalf of Persimmon Homes Ltd and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Leigh 2011) and approved by the County Archaeological Advisor. It adhered to the English Heritage procedural documents *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (EH 2006) and *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991) and the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008, 2012).

The work comprised a comprehensive level 1 building survey followed by trial trench evaluation. The work was carried out in order to investigate and quantify the archaeological potential within the investigation area and provide information for further targeted investigation if required.



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The investigation area lies on the north-west edge of Northampton and is situated within the grounds of the former Princess Marina Hospital off Kent Road. The site lies at an approximate height of 105m aOD on the north-west boundary sloping gradually downwards to approximately 85m aOD towards the south. The site comprises four separate nursing units along with former staff accommodation and a sports field, the areas between the buildings having been subject to landscaping.

The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Northampton Sand and Ironstone (BGS Geotitles <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geotitles>).

2.2 Historical background

The investigation area lies within an area of archaeological interest. To the south of the site on the southern side of the A45 an extensive Iron Age and Roman settlement was identified, first by geophysical survey and field evaluation and later confirmed during open area excavation (Walker and Maull 2010 a & b). The remains consisted of a pit alignment and a series of enclosure ditches with internal features including associated pits, postholes and gullies, together with double-ditched trackways and field boundaries. Additional investigations undertaken as part of the open area excavation immediately to the west of the site revealed no archaeological deposits.

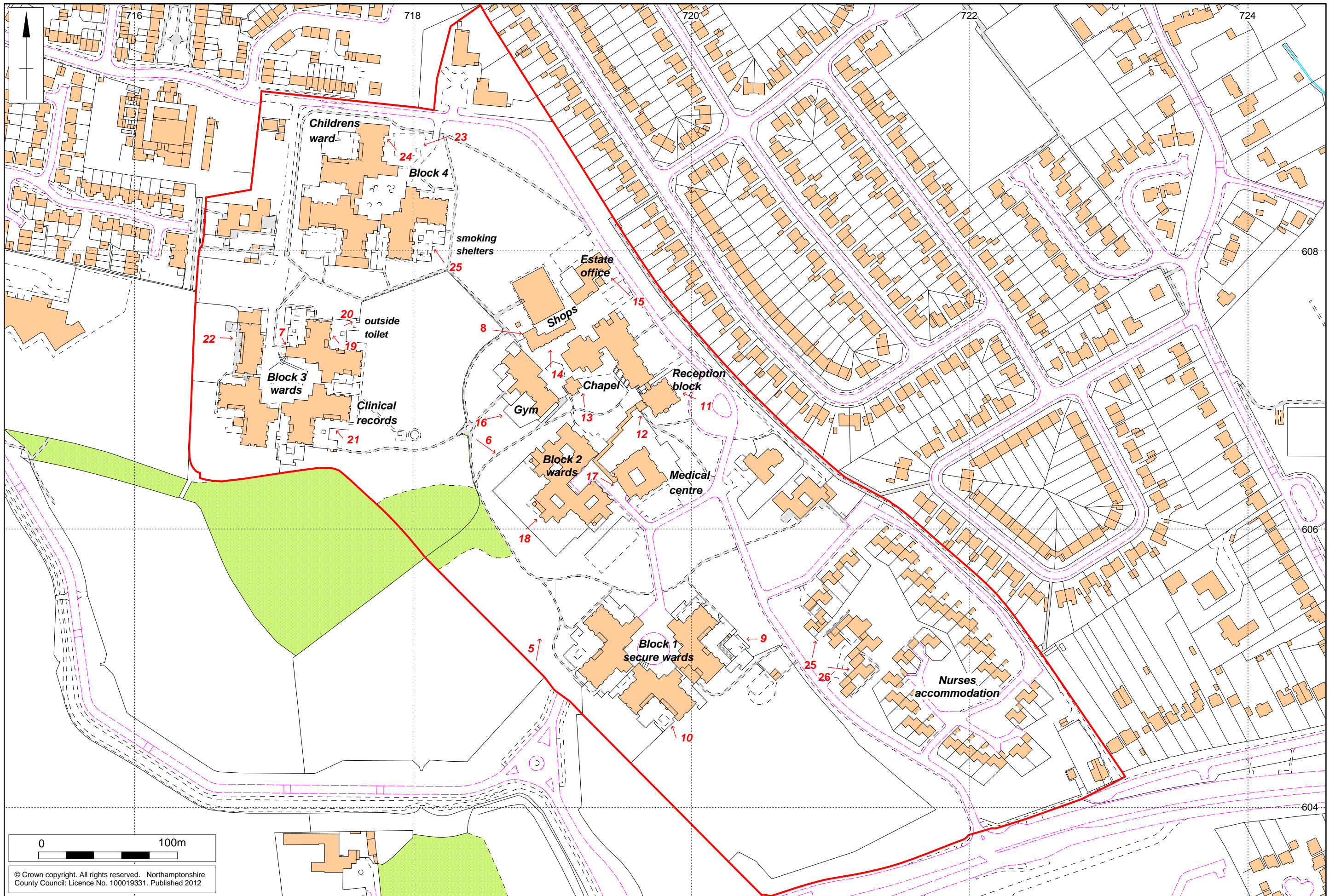
Further archaeological investigation to the south (Dawson and Leigh 2011) confirmed a continuation of the settlement comprising a double-ditched boundary or enclosure ditch and pits.

To the south-west, geophysical survey and subsequent archaeological excavation carried out within the grounds of Quinton House School (Foard-Colby and Walker 2010) revealed a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure, ditches, a possible pit alignment and a number of other pits dating from the Iron Age. A medieval enclosure ditch possibly relating to a deserted medieval village (HER No: 5138, SM 165) further south was also recorded. An archaeological watching brief carried out during the St Crispin link road construction (Leigh 2003) to the west of the site revealed no archaeological deposits.

Within the site itself a Neolithic axe was recovered from the area of the southern hospital buildings in 1968, whilst a scatter of prehistoric worked flint was collected from the western side of the site, although no further details of this find are recorded. Previous archaeological work recorded as having been carried out within the area of the site has comprised a desk-based assessment (CA 2002) undertaken as part of the current application.

On the north-western edge, and just outside the site is Hospital Farm, also known as Berrywood Farm. This dates from 1876 with later additions and alterations.

The former hospital buildings were constructed between 1964 and 1972 and were designed by Stillman and Estwick-Field Partnership for what was the first psychiatric hospital to be purpose built for patients with acute disorders. The hospital was opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Marina Duchess of Kent on the 28th May 1968 and was the first psychiatric unit to be purpose built for patients with acute psychiatric disorders. The buildings are ordered in four main units, which are further made up of interconnecting blocks (Fig 3). The buildings are predominantly of low single storey construction with an emphasis on the horizontal line and rectangular in form (Fig 5 & 6),



Scale 1:2500 (A3)

Princess Marina Hospital, showing organisation of buildings and location of photographic survey figures Fig 2

In an brutalist style of architecture which is displayed in many designs originating from Stillman and Eastwick-Field.

Up to the present development the site has become semi-derelict subsequent to having fallen out of use as a public health facility. Two areas of the complex are currently in use, having been retained by the local health authority.



General view of the investigation area, looking south Fig 3

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the programme of archaeological work as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Leigh 2011) were to:

- ◆ Undertake a comprehensive visual record of the extant structures associated with the former hospital in their current form prior to their permitted demolition at English Heritage's Level 1;
- ◆ Undertake a trial trench evaluation in order to quantify the archaeological potential of the site;
- ◆ Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits, exposed during the trial trenching evaluation;
- ◆ Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits;
- ◆ To provide information as to the archaeological potential within the site and to provide for further effective archaeological investigation, either in advance of, or during early construction phases;
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.



The investigation area, looking south-east across the playing field Fig 4

4 THE BUILDING RECORDING SURVEY by Tim Upson Smith

4.1 Methodology

The photographic survey was carried out on the 12th and 13th December 2011 in bright low sun-light conditions. Only the exterior of the buildings were accessible for recording. As requested by the County Archaeological Advisor, the survey focussed on the four main nursing blocks; the staff accommodation in the south-eastern corner of the site lay outside of the building survey, although general record photographs were taken of the buildings.

4.2 Building assessment

The hospital is in four blocks set into the hillside, the blocks were further subdivided into smaller units or wards. It became clear whilst undertaking the survey that the separate blocks may have catered for patients of differing levels of psychiatric disorders, with the southern block being for high security patients with the others being for progressively lower risk patients. This was demonstrated by the height of the wall surrounding each block, the southern block having a high wall surmounted by a fence. The wall around each of the remaining blocks becoming progressively lower northwards. The northernmost block having no enclosing wall at all.



General view, looking north, showing the low profile of the buildings Fig 5



General view, looking south-east, showing the low profile of the buildings Fig 6

The central block had a row of shops, a chapel, the main reception area, estates office, post-graduate medical centre, gym and physiotherapy along with wards. Each block had a pair of green light beacons mounted on a pole on the roof, perhaps indicating the position of the staff station (Fig 7).

All of the cabling and pipework for the site was contained within brick ducts with concrete sleeper tops (Fig 8).



The green light beacons over the staff station Fig 7



Ducting for pipes Fig 8

Block 1

This was the most southern of the blocks and appeared to be for patients who required a higher level of security, as evidenced by the high walls (Figs 9 & 10) Only the lack of barbed wire indicated that the block was not a penal facility, the impression being exacerbated by the stark architectural style employed in the construction.



Block 1 showing the high wall surmounted by a fence, looking west Fig 9



Block 1, looking north Fig 10

Block 2

The central block was split into a number of smaller blocks with specific functions, the reception block, with its dated foundation stone (Figs 11 & 12). The litter bin in front of the foundation stone was clearly a later addition masking as it does the inscription.



The reception block Fig 11



The foundation stone Fig 12

The shops including a hairdressers and a shop where milk and sundries could be bought, were located north of the chapel (Figs 13 & 14). Between the shops and chapel was a social space centred around trees.



The chapel, looking north Fig 13



The shops, looking north Fig 14

The estates office was a separate block and appeared to contain a workshop for running repairs along with a fenced compound (Fig 15).



The estates office, looking north-west Fig 15

The gym and physiotherapy block were positioned next to each other, serving complementary functions (Fig 16).



The gym, looking east Fig 16

The post-graduate medical centre would suggest that, at least latterly the hospital had a training section (Fig 17).



The post-graduate medical centre, looking east Fig 17



Block 2 wards, looking east Fig 18



Block 3, Bronte Ward, looking north-west Fig 19

Block 3

This block was located in the north-western part of the site (Fig 19). The two eastern blocks had gardens in the centre, with outside toilets (Fig 20). The southern block latterly housed clinical records (Fig 21). The ward on the north-western side of block 3 had windows opening out onto a grassed area (Fig 22).



Garden outside toilet, looking north-east Fig 20



Block 3 clinical records, looking north-west Fig 21



Block 3, ward opening onto grassed area, looking east Fig 22

Block 4

This was located in the northern part of the site (Fig 23) and consisted of three interconnected blocks, the most northern of which is likely to have been latterly used for children, as evidenced by the surviving window decoration (Fig 24). The eastern block had smoking shelters positioned in the gardens (Fig 25).



Block 4, looking west Fig 23



Block 4, Children's ward window Fig 24



Block 4, smoking shelter, looking north-west Fig 25

Staff accommodation

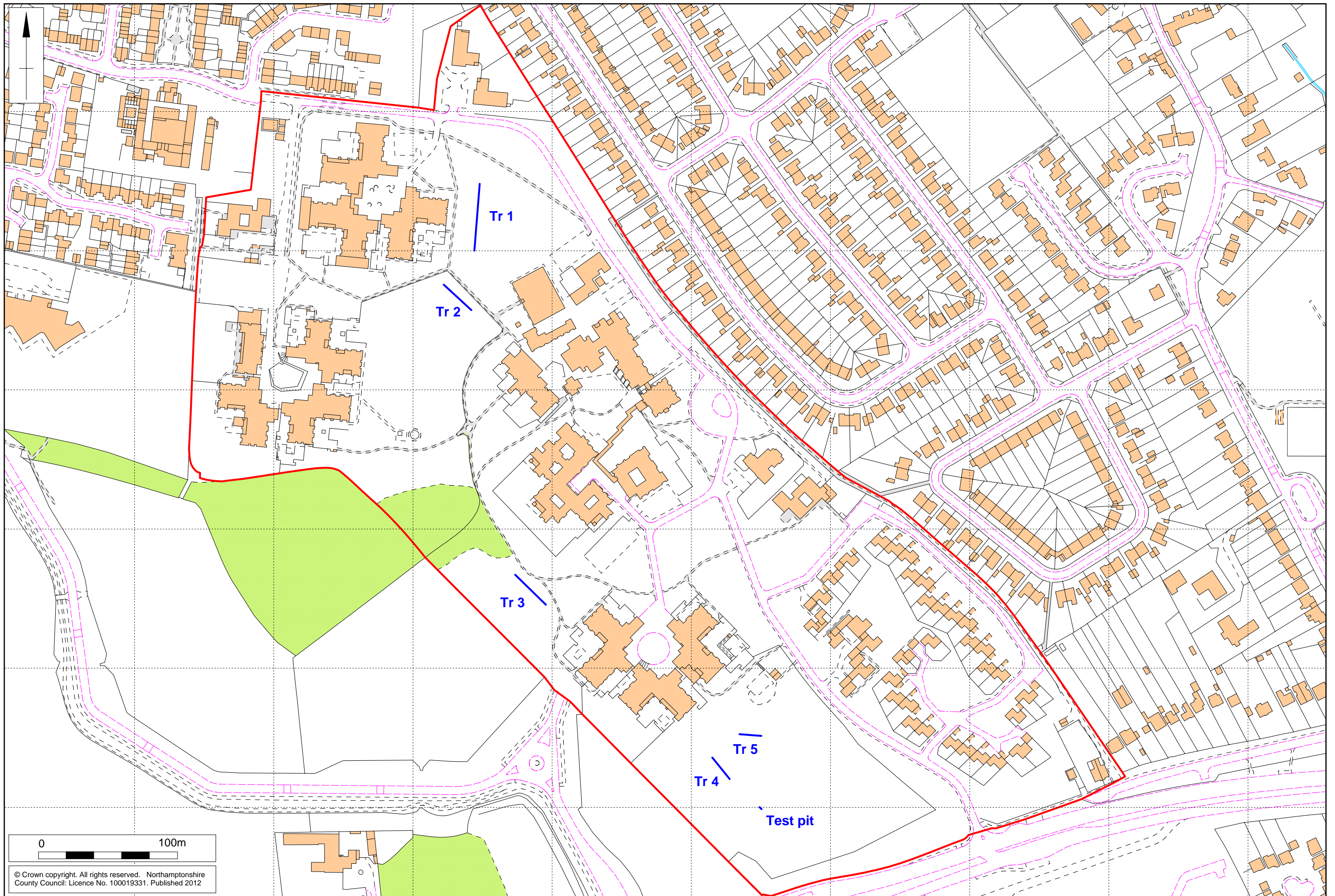
The accommodation for the staff (Figs 26 and 27) was located in the south-eastern corner of the site. These were constructed in a distinctive almost triangular style, differing to the main hospital buildings which focussed on the horizontal and were constructed in dark brickwork, whilst in contrast the staff accommodation featured brickwork brightly painted in pastel pink, augmented by graffiti since the closure of the hospital.



The staff accommodation Fig 26



The staff accommodation showing the triangular lines of construction Fig 27



0 100m
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Scale 1:2500 (A3)

Princess Marina hospital, location of trial trenches Fig 28

5 THE TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION by David J Leigh

5.1 Methodology

The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trial trenches located in accordance with the trench plan approved by the County Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council (Fig 28). The trenches were located in relation to the Ordnance Survey mapping using a Leica GPS survey instrument.

The trenches were excavated using a JCB 4CX excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket (Fig 29). Topsoil and overburden was excavated to expose the upper strata of the natural substratum. Once opened, each trench was recorded in accordance with standard NA procedures (NA 2011).



General view of the excavation of the trial trenches Fig 29

A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept, with supplementary photographs in digital format. The written record used Northamptonshire Archaeology *pro-forma* sheets. The trial trench evaluation was carried out in accordance with the IfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and *Code of conduct* (IfA 2010).

5.2 The results

Five trenches were excavated within the investigation area. Trenches 1, 2 and 3 (Figs 2 to 32) were excavated within the landscaped areas surrounding the former hospital buildings, whilst trenches 4 and 5 were positioned within the sports field (Figs 33 and 34). All of the trenches and associated spoil heaps were scanned with a metal-detector both during excavation and during the backfilling of the trenches.

A consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded throughout trenches 1 – 3. The natural substratum was encountered at a depth of 0.45m below present ground level and comprised orange-brown sand, containing occasional irregular stones. In the south-western end of trench 1 a single modern service pipe was noted cutting the natural. Overlying the natural substratum in the southern half of trench 2 was a spread of modern sub-base material (203). This was overlain by mid brown silt loam, up to 0.30m thick, containing occasional irregular stones and numerous small fragments of modern ceramic building material. (Fig 31 and 35). Sealing this was grey-black topsoil, up to 0.15m thick, containing occasional irregular stones and very occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material.



Trench 1 after excavation, looking north-east Fig 30



Trench 2, west facing section Fig 31



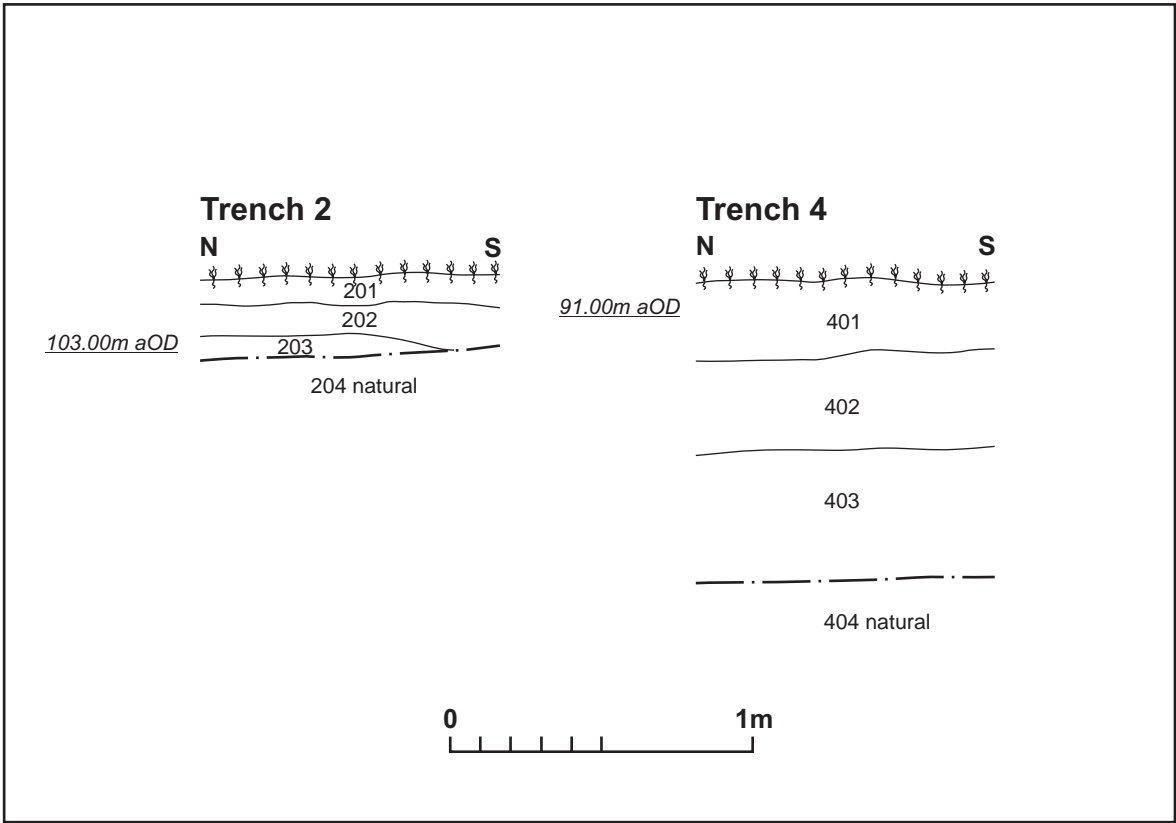
Trench 3, looking north Fig 32



Trench 4 during excavation, looking east Fig 33



Trench 4 west facing section Fig 34



Scale 1:25 (A4)

Representative sections Fig 35

Trenches 4 (Fig 32) and 5 were located within the sports field on the southern boundary of the investigation area. A consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded within both trenches.

The natural substratum was (404) encountered between 1.10m below present ground level in the northern end of trench 4 and sloped down towards the south to a depth of approximately 1.30m below present ground level. It comprised orange-brown sand containing occasional irregular stones.

The natural was overlain by mid-dark brown silt loam, up to 0.50m thick, containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and corroded iron constructional fittings and a plastic storage drum (403). Overlying this was pale grey-brown silt loam, up to 0.70m thick, containing occasional fragments of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones (402). Sealing this was grey-brown silt loam topsoil (401), up to 0.10m thick, containing very occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones.

Due to the depth of the trenches and following approval from the County Archaeological Advisor, the linear amount of trenching in the sports field area was reduced. A small test pit was excavated south of trench 4 to ascertain the depth of the natural substratum (Fig 28).

No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present within the trial trenches.

6 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Trial trench log forms	6
Colour slides	42
Black and white contacts and negatives	42
Digital photographs	318

The project archive will be held with Northamptonshire Archaeology until such time as a suitable depository has been appointed.

7 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered within the investigation area. The results of the investigation suggest that the area immediately surrounding the former hospital buildings has been subject to considerable disturbance, most likely associated with landscaping of the site during the construction of the hospital during the late 1960's and early 1970's. It was not possible to ascertain whether the natural substratum had been truncated during this event.

Disturbed soils were recorded throughout the area of the sports field, examination of the stratigraphic sequence suggests that the area was stripped of topsoil and subsoil, following which the ground was significantly built up to form a level sports field. Similarly to the area of landscaping to the north, it was not possible to determine if the natural substratum had been truncated during this activity.

The lack of any artefactual evidence would suggest that no significant archaeological deposits lie within the immediate vicinity of the site. There remains, however, the possibility that soils had been imported into the site during the landscaping of the hospital grounds and therefore may not be indicative of the original make up of the investigation area.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX BY TRENCH

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	50m x 1.8 E-W	471856 260814	102.68m aOD	0.51m (max), 102.17m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Grey-black silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.11m thick	-
102	Overburden	Dark grey-brown silt loam containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and modern metal items	0.27m-0.40m thick	-
103	Natural	Orange-red-brown sand containing stone inclusions	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	30m x 1.8m N-S	471830 260749	103.31m aOD	0.40m, 102.91m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam occasional stone inclusions	0.10m thick	-
202	Overburden	Dark grey silt loam containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and modern metal items	0.20m-0.40m thick	-
203	Sub-base material	Grey-white patch of modern sub-base material	0.10m thick	-
204	Natural	Orange-red-brown sand containing stone inclusions		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	31m x 1.8m N-S	471887 260546	99.91m aOD	0.50m, 99.41m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam occasional stone inclusions	0.10m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Dark grey silt	0.40m thick	-
303	Natural	Orange-red-brown sand containing stone inclusions	-	-

THE FORMER PRINCESS MARINA HOSPITAL, NORTHAMPTON

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR 472003 260432	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	19m x 1.8 N-S		92.28m aOD	1.30m (max), 97.98m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
401	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam contains very occasional small fragments of modern building material and irregular stones	0.10m thick	-
402	Overburden	Pale grey-brown silt loam containing occasional fragments of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones	0.20m-0.50m thick	-
403	Levelling-up material	Dark brown silt loam, contains numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and corroded iron constructional fittings and a complete plastic storage drum	0.40m-0.70m thick	-
404	Natural	Orange-brown sand with occasional irregular stones		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR 472049 260461	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	19m x 1.8 N-S		92.29m aOD	1.30m (max), 90.99m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
501	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam contains very occasional small fragment of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones	0.10m thick	-
502	Overburden	Pale grey-brown silt loam containing occasional fragments of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones	0.50m thick	-
503	Levelling-up material	Dark brown silt loam, contains numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and corroded iron constructional fittings	0.50m thick	-
504	Natural	Orange-brown sand with occasional irregular stones		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR 472027 260406	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
Test pit	2m x 1.8 N-S		91.74m aOD	1.30m, 90.44m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
601	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam contains very occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones	0.10m thick	-
602	Overburden	Pale grey-brown silt loam containing occasional fragments of modern ceramic building material and irregular stones	0.50m thick	-
603	Levelling-up material	Dark brown silt loam contains numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and corroded iron constructional fittings	0.70m thick	-
604	Natural	Orange-brown sand with occasional irregular stones		



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