



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

## Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury Northamptonshire



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Northamptonshire  
County Council

Yvonne Wolframm-Murray  
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Report 12/194  
November 2012



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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS No: 138267</b>
Project name	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by Weatherley Homes LLP to conduct an archaeological evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire, prior to a proposed residential development on the site. The evaluation encountered a medieval plot boundary together with a scatter of low density of features dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods, probably representing back-plot activity	
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Evaluation	
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None	
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	None	
Current Land use	Garden land associated with number 27 Mill Lane	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	None	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	Medieval pottery	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address (including postcode)	27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	0.4ha	
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letter code)	SP 69500 59345	
Height OD	Approx 70m aOD	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Assistant Archaeological Advisor, NCC	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray	
Project Manager	Adam Yates	
Sponsor or funding body	Weatherley Homes LLP	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	12/11/12	
End date	13/11/12	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Finds,
Paper	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Site file
Digital	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Mapinfo plans, Word report
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire	
Serial title & volume	12/194	
Author(s)	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray and Adam Yates	
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION AT  
27 MILL LANE, KISLINGBURY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
NOVEMBER 2012**

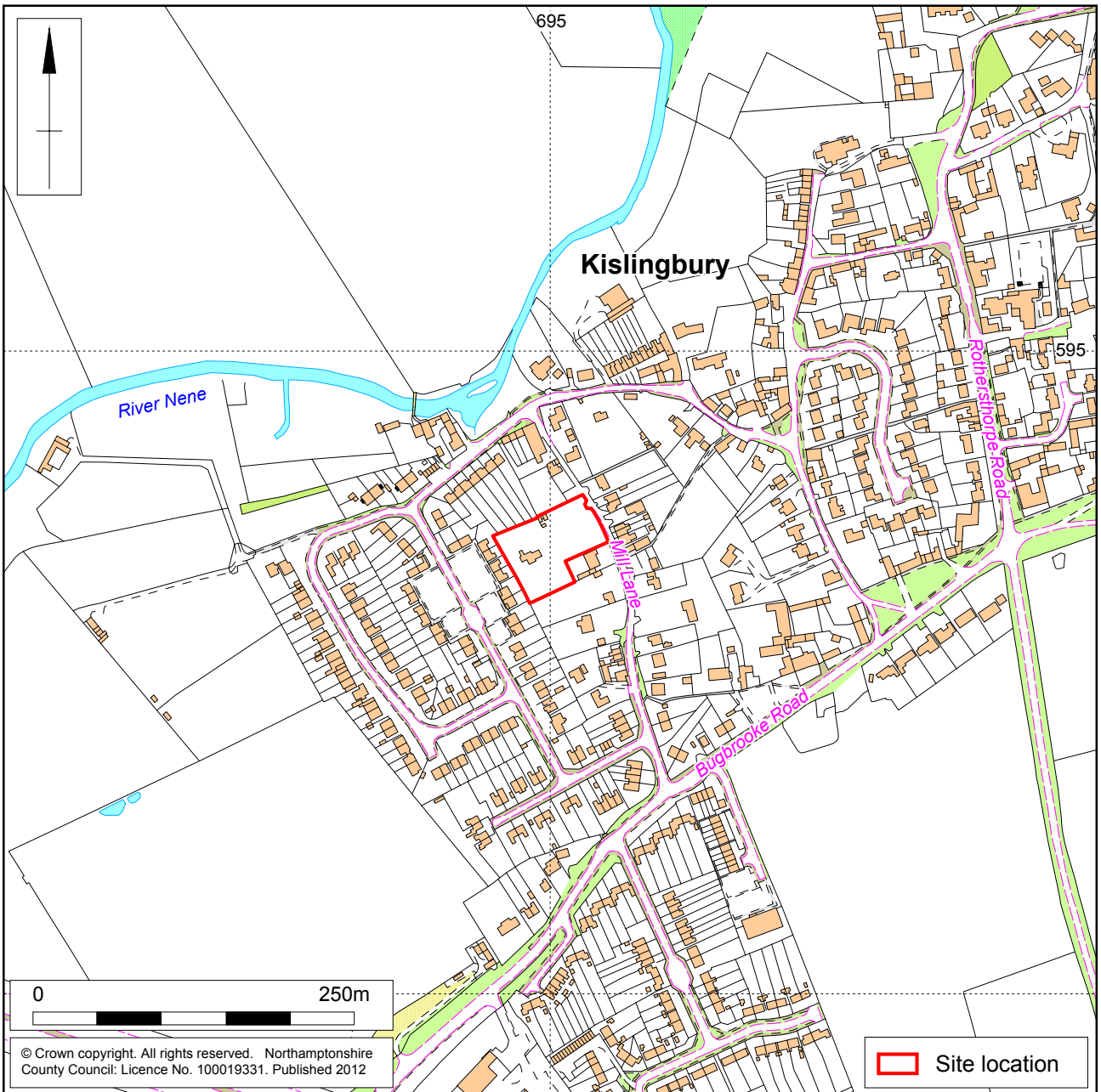
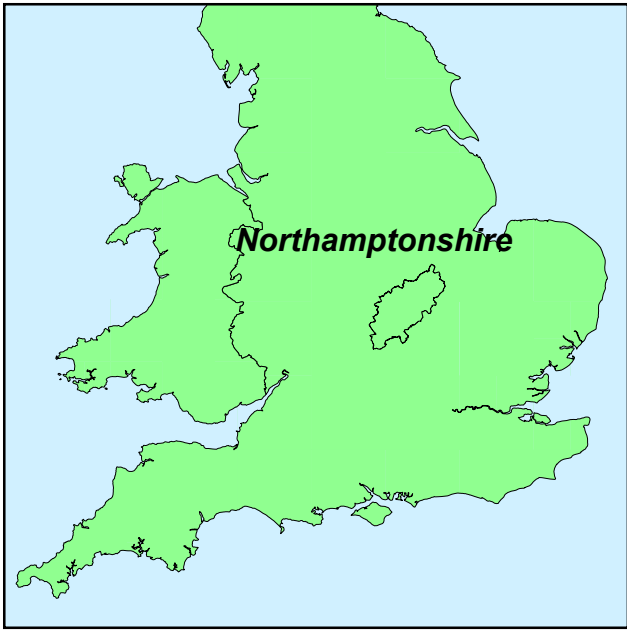
***Abstract***

*Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by Weatherley Homes LLP to conduct an archaeological evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire, prior to a proposed residential development on the site. The evaluation encountered a medieval plot boundary together with a scatter of features dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods, probably representing back-plot activity.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

In November 2012, Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by Weatherley Homes LLP to conduct an archaeological evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 69500 59345; Fig 1). Outline planning permission has been granted for residential development on the site (S/2012/0011/OUT) comprising four detached dwellings.

Works were carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008), the Brief for the works prepared by the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor at Northamptonshire County Council (NCC 2012) and the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2012). Works were monitored on site by the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor.



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

## 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the site was designed to provide information that will allow for the effective targeting of further investigation of the site, if required, prior to or during the early phases of its development.

The aims and objectives are set out in the brief NCC (2012) as follows:

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

In addition the WSI (NA 2012) set the following objectives:

- *To determine and understand the nature, function, and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.*
- *The location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.*
- *The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.*

The evaluation has been carried out within the parameters suggested by the *East Midlands Regional Research Framework, The Archaeology of the East Midlands: an Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006) and the updated *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for The Historic Environment of The East Midlands* (Knight et al 2012).

## 3 BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Topography and geology

Kislingbury is situated on the flood plain of the River Nene, immediately adjacent and to the south of the river. The development area lies in the western part of the village and on the west side of Mill Lane. The development area currently forms the garden of 27 Mill Lane and is slightly higher than the level of the road (Fig 2). On the north, west and south sides the site is bounded by residential properties and gardens. The site is reasonably level at c 70m aOD.

The solid geology of the site is the Dyrham Formation siltstone and mudstone, overlain by glaciofluvial sand and gravel, and alluvium ([www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)).





The eastern part of the site looking east

Fig 2

### 3.2 Historical and archaeological background

The site lies within the historic core of Kislingbury. It is thought that the western part of the village was the earlier area to be settled and the eastern part, around High Street, was laid out in a more formal plan. Kislingbury is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086AD as *Ceselingeburie*. Medieval activity in the area is recorded, including earthwork remains that may be connected with a manorial site in the area of the church (MNN 31238) to the north of the site and remains of buildings along Church Lane (MNN 19372). The church of St Luke (MNN 8601) is of medieval date with later additions and subsequent restoration in the 1800s. To the east of the site, alongside Church Lane, the remains of probable house platforms were still visible in the 1980s.

## 4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

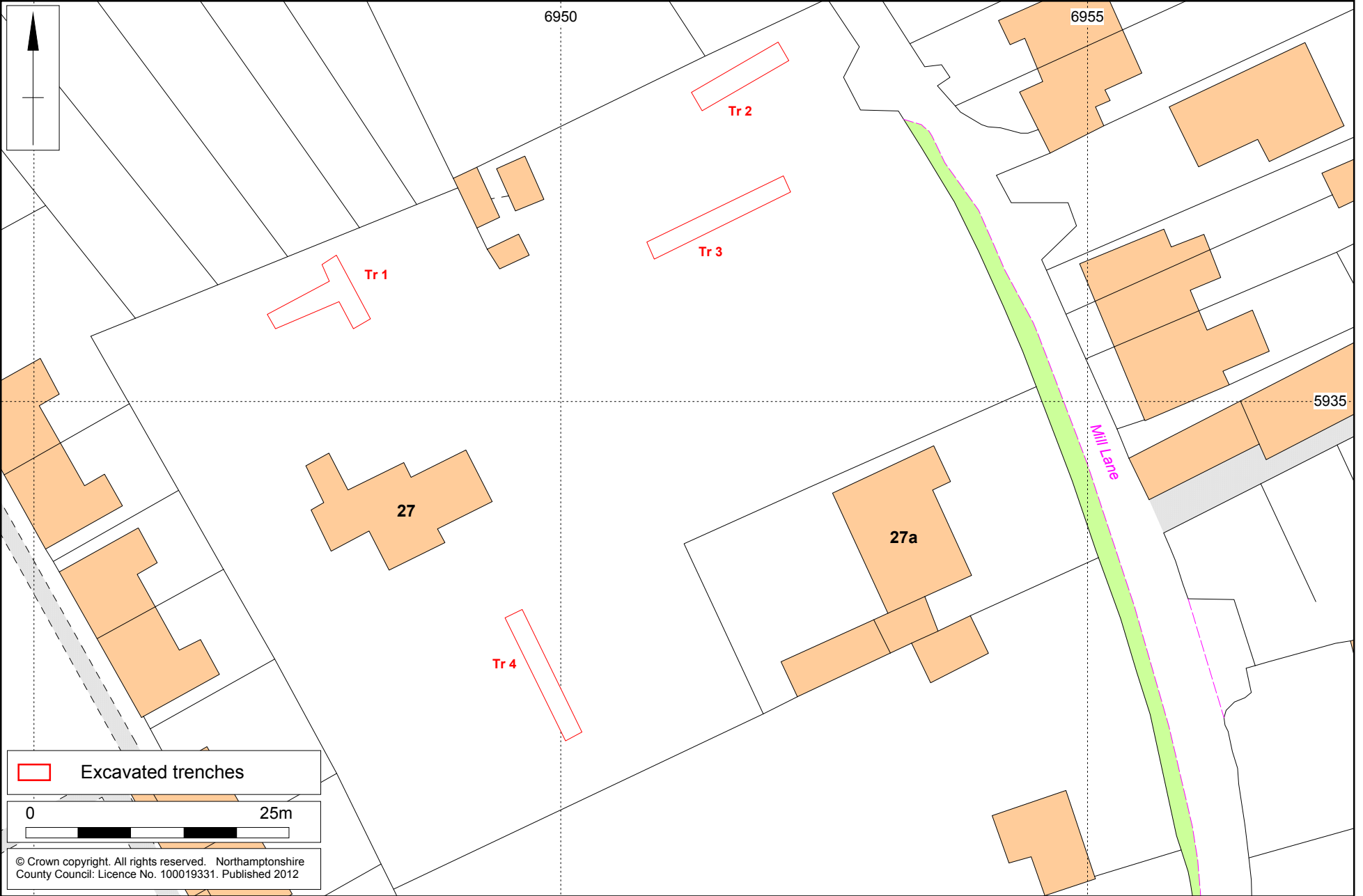
Four trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m-wide toothless ditching bucket. The positions of Trenches 1, 2 and 3 varied from those specified in the WSI (NA 2012) due to constraints on site (Fig 3).

Trench 1 was T-shaped in plan, each arm measuring 7.5m in length. Trench 2 was 9.5m long; Trench 3 15m long; and Trench 4 12m long. All trenches were 1.6m wide.

Topsoil and subsoil were removed under archaeological supervision to reveal natural substrate or archaeological features where apparent. The topsoil and subsoil were stacked separately at the side of the excavated area. All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.



Scale 1:500



Trench location plan Fig 3

Excavated trenches

0 25m

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The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to define any features. The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

All archaeological deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were fully recorded, following standard NA procedures (NA 2011). All deposits were given a separate context number in a sequence continuing from those allocated during the evaluation. They were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. Unstratified animal bones and modern material were not retained.

The location of the trenches was surveyed and related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A full photographic record comprising both 35mm black and white negatives and colour transparencies was maintained, supplemented with digital images. The field data from the evaluation has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

The evaluation conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised Oct 2008). All stages of the project were undertaken in accordance with English Heritage, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (EH 2006). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the brief issued by the Northamptonshire County Council (NCC 2012) and the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2012).

All trenches were backfilled with their up-cast, lightly compacted by the mechanical digger.

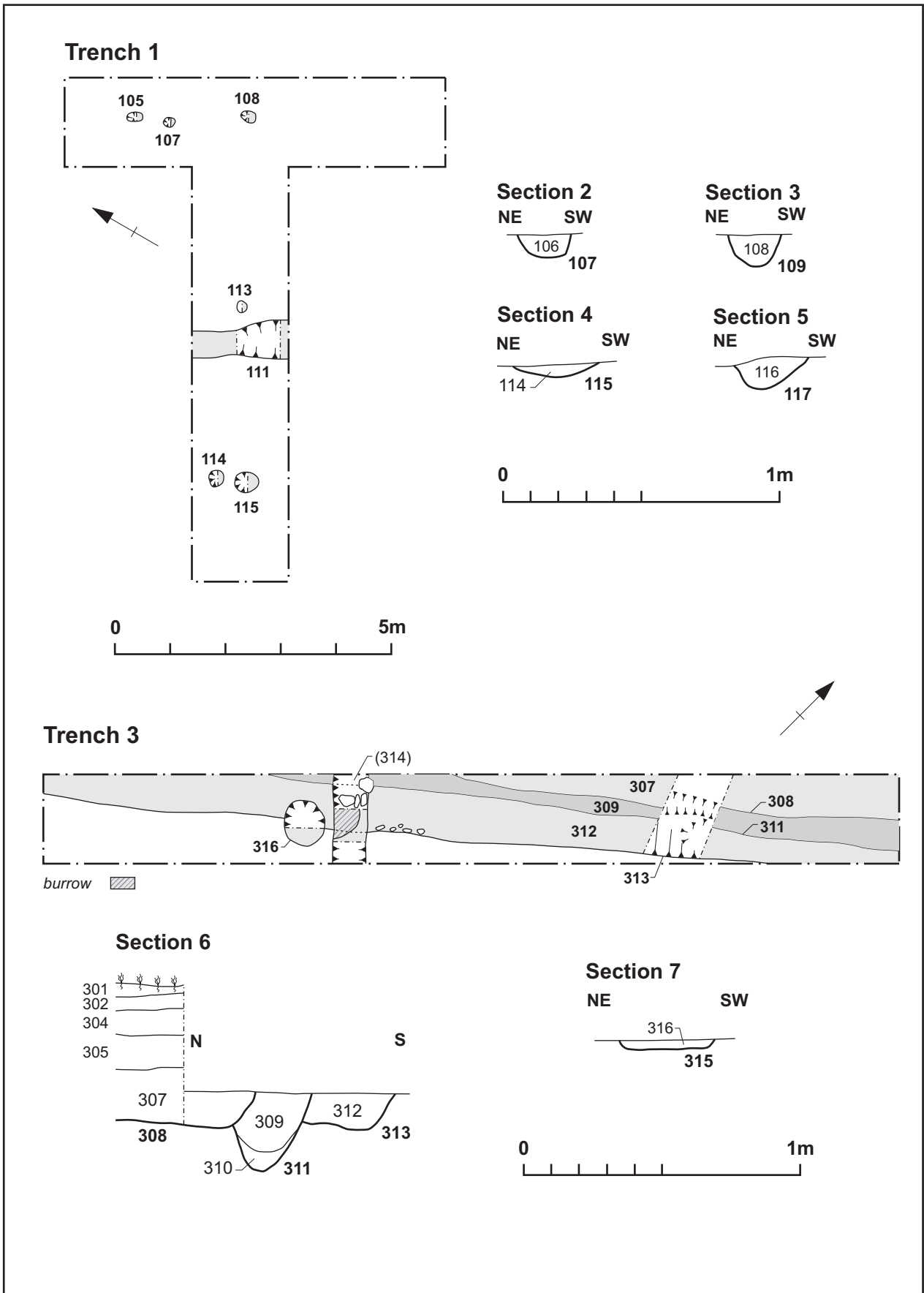
## **5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

### **5.1 Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5)**

The natural substrate (103) was firm mid brown-orange clay containing flint fragments and pebbles, encountered at a depth of 0.42-0.48m along the trench. This was overlain by mid grey-brown silty clay subsoil (102) between 0.22-0.29m deep which produced three sherds of pottery, one of which was medieval in date, and dark grey-brown topsoil (101) 0.15-0.23m deep. The trench contained six postholes and a gully, none produced any artefactual material.

At the eastern end of the trench were three small post holes on a north-west to south-east alignment [105] [107] and [109] (Fig 4). These were all approximately 0.2m in diameter and no more than 0.11m deep, with concave profiles (Fig 4, sections 2 and 3). Fills (104), (106) and (108) were consistently dark grey-brown silty clay.

Gully [111] was aligned north-west to south-east, and was between 0.4-0.5m wide and up to 0.09m deep. The fill was mid grey-brown silty clay with root disturbance. The irregular shallow nature of the feature may indicate that is a previous hedge line.



Plans and sections, Trenches 1 & 3 Fig 4

Posthole [113] was immediately to the north of gully [111] and was 0.18m in diameter and 0.03m deep, filled with mid grey-brown silty clay (112).

Postholes [115] and [117] at the western end of the trench were between 0.28 and 0.33m in diameter and up to 0.11m deep (Fig 4 sections 4 and 5). Fills (114) and (116) comprised mid grey-brown silty clay with rounded stones.



Trench 1, looking west Fig 5

## 5.2 Trench 2

The natural substrate (203) was mid brown-orange clay with sandy patches containing flint fragments and pebbles, encountered at a depth of 0.43-0.61m along the trench. This was overlain by mid grey-brown silty clay subsoil (202) between 0.22-0.39m deep, and dark grey-brown topsoil (201) 0.21m deep. No archaeological features were present.

## 5.3 Trench 3 (Figs 4 and 6)

The natural substrate (306) was mid brown-orange clay with sandy patches containing flint fragments and pebbles, encountered at a depth of 0.62-0.71m along the trench. This was overlain by mid grey-brown silty clay subsoil (305) between 0.22-0.30m deep which produced three sherds of medieval pottery and a cattle molar; and dark grey-brown buried topsoil (304) 0.12-0.20m deep. Overlying this was a layer of modern dumped mid orange-brown sandy gravel containing brick (302) between 0.08-0.15m deep and the current topsoil 0.13m deep.

The earliest feature within the trench was recut ditch [313] [311] [308] (Fig 4 section 6). This was aligned approximately north-east to south-west and was at least 1.6m wide, although the southern side was not contained within the trench. The earliest cut

[313] was to the south, with the recuts proceeding progressively northwards. Ditch [313] was 0.6m wide and 0.22m deep with sloping sides to a flattish irregular base, filled with dark gray-brown silty clay (312) which produced one sherd of medieval pottery and two fragments of animal bone, a sheep/goat jaw and a piece of cattle foot. Recut [311] was 0.52m wide and 0.58m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. The basal fill of grey-brown sandy silt (310) produced one sherd of medieval pottery and was overlain by grey-brown silty clay (309).

Recut [308] was at least 0.52m wide and 0.22m deep, with sloping sides and a flat base, filled with mid to dark grey-brown silty clay (307). The fills of these features all displayed considerable root disturbance, and the irregular base of [313] may also be due to vegetation growth.



Trench 3, looking north-east Fig 6

Circular pit [315] cut ditch [313]. This was 0.64m in diameter, 0.06m deep with a flat base (Fig 4 section 7), filled with mid brown silty clay (316).

Crossing the trench aligned north-west to south-east was a stone-filled drain (314), cut through subsoil (302). This produced a fragment of 19th/20th-century glass.

#### 5.4 Trench 4

The natural substrate (403) was firm mid reddish brown silty clay, encountered at a depth of 0.53-0.70m along the trench. This was overlain by firm mid reddish-brown

silty clay subsoil (402) between 0.11-0.20m deep, and dark grey-brown topsoil (401) 0.42-0.51m deep.

A single small posthole [405] was present at the south end of the trench (not illustrated). This was 0.16m in diameter and 0.08m deep, filled with mid grey-brown silty clay (404).

## 6 FINDS

### 6.1 Worked flint by Yvonne Wolfram-Murray

One piece of worked flint was recovered from subsoil (402) in Trench 4. This comprised the proximal end of a blade and displayed small edge spalls. It was dark/mid striped brown-grey flint with a smooth mid brown cortex, the flint was likely to have derived from local gravel deposits. The worked flint is not directly dateable.

### 6.2 Pottery by Tora Hylton

Nine sherds of pottery were recovered from Trenches 1, 3 and 4. The earliest fabric represented is a rim sherd from a Roman jar in a greyware fabric, dating to the c. 2nd century which was recovered from subsoil (402) in Trench 4. The remaining sherds are medieval. The majority were recovered from subsoil deposits within Trenches 1 and 3, while a further two sherds were located within ditch fills (310) and (312). The medieval assemblage is represented by sherds of Shelly coarseware (CTS 330) which dates to c. AD1100-1400 and Potterspury ware (CTS 329) which dates to AD1250-1600.

*Table 1: Pottery quantification*

Fabric type	Context/feature									
	102 subsoil		305 subsoil		310/ ditch 311		312/ ditch 313		402 subsoil	
	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)	No	Wt(g)
<b>Roman pottery</b>										
Greyware	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	18
<b>Medieval pottery</b>										
Shelly Coarseware (CTS 330)	-	-	3	33	1	55	1	13	-	-
Potterspury ware (CTS 329)	1	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Indeterminate	2	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

### 6.3 Glass by Tora Hylton

A single sherd of vessel glass was recovered from the fill of a post-medieval drain [314]. The exterior surface of the fragment is marked with the letter 'E' in high relief. The form and style of the piece, suggests that it may originate from a codd bottle, a type of bottle which dates to the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



#### **6.4 Animal bone**

Three pieces of animal bone were recovered from the excavations. From subsoil (305) there was one cattle molar. From fill (312) of ditch [313] there were a right mandible from a sheep/goat and fragment of cattle foot bone. All these appeared to be from mature individuals.

### **7 DISCUSSION**

Archaeological features were encountered in Trenches 1, 3 and 4. These seem to represent low intensity activity within the site in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The recut ditch in Trench 3 probably represents a property boundary leading from Mill Lane. The single pit and small postholes encountered do not seem to represent substantial levels activity or structures and are likely to be fence lines or other episodes of ad-hoc activity. The irregular gully seen in Trench 1 may represent a former hedge line or property sub-division. The stone lined drain in Trench 3 was cut through the subsoil, and is likely to be of at least post-medieval date. The shallow surviving depth of many of the smaller features (postholes, pits and gullies) probably indicates that the site has been somewhat truncated.

The archaeological remains encountered show that whilst activity was taking place on site from the medieval period onwards, this was at a low level typical of back-plots in medieval villages. There was no evidence for permanent structures, and whilst artefactual material was present, this was at a low level perhaps indicating that the site lay away from the main centres of occupation.

The single piece of Roman pottery from a subsoil context is residual. Whilst this indicated a general Roman presence in the area, there were no features on site that could be ascribed a Roman date.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Knight, D, Vyner, B, and Allen, C, 2012 *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for The Historic Environment of The East Midlands*, Nottingham University monog, **6**, and York Archaeological Trust

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NCC 2012 *Brief for the archaeological field evaluation at 27 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire*, Northamptonshire County Council

## **WEBSITES**

[www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html)

**APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<b>Trench 1</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment T-shaped, 7.5m x 7.5m x 1.6m</b>		<b>Surface height 70.3m OD</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural 60.9m OD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts /Samples</b>
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loam	0.15-0.23m	
102	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.22-0.29m	Roman pottery Medieval pottery
103	Natural	Firm orange-brown clay		
104	Fill of [105]	Dark grey-brown silty clay		
105	Cut	Posthole	0.2m diam, 0.09m deep	
106	Fill of [107]	Dark grey-brown silty clay		
107	Cut	Posthole	0.2m diam 0.06m deep	
108	Fill of [109]	Dark grey-brown silty clay		
109	Cut	Pos hole	0.19m diam 0.11m deep	
110	Fill of [111]	Mid grey-brown silty clay with occ charcoal, root disturbance		
111	Cut	Gully, aligned north-west to south-east	0.4-0.5m wide 0.09m deep	
112	Fill of [113]	Mid grey-brown silty clay with occ charcoal, root disturbance		
113	Cut	Posthole	0.18m diam 0.03m deep	
114	Fill of [115]	Mid grey-brown silty clay occ rounded stone		
115	Cut	Posthole	0.33m diam 0.05m deep	
116	Fill of [117]	Mid grey-brown silty clay occ rounded stone		
117	Cut	Posthole	0.28m diam 0.11m deep	

<b>Trench 2</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment 10m north-east to south-west</b>		<b>Surface height 70.2m OD</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural 69.7 OD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts /Samples</b>
201	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.22m	
202	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.22-0.39m	
203	Natural	Firm orange-brown clay		

<b>Trench 3</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment 15m north-east to south-west</b>		<b>Surface height 70.6m</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural 69.8m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts /Samples</b>
301	Topsoil	Dark brown silty loam	0.13m	
302	Dump	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.08-1.15m	
303	Layer	Firm orange-brown clay		
304	Buried topsoil	Dark brown silty loam	0.12-0.2m	
305	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	0.22-0.3m	Medieval pottery Animal bone
306	Natural	Mid orange-brown silty clay with sandy patches		
307	Fill of [308]	Mid grey-brown silty clay with root disturbance		
308	Cut	Ditch aligned north-east to south-west, flattish irregular base	0.52m wide, 0.22m deep	
309	Fill of [311]	Mid grey-brown silty clay with freq pebbles, some root disturbance		
310	Fill of [311]	Grey-brown sandy silt		Medieval pottery
311	Cut	Ditch aligned north-east to south-west, steeply sloping sides and concave base	0.52m wide 0.58m deep	
312	Fill of [313]	Dark grey-brown silty clay occ small pebbles and root disturbance		Medieval pottery Animal bone
313	Ditch	Ditch aligned north-east to south-west, flat irregular base	0.6m wide 0.22m deep	
314	Structure	Drain filled with losses limestone rubble		Modern glass
315	Fill of [316]	Dark grey-brown silty clay		
316	Cut	Circular pit, shallow with flat	0.64m diam	

		base	0.06m deep	
--	--	------	------------	--

<b>Trench 4</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment 12m north-west to south-east</b>		<b>Surface height 71.5m</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural 70.9m</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts /Samples</b>
401	Topsoil	Friable dark brown loam	0.22-0.51m	
402	Subsoil	Firm mid red-brown silty clay	0.11-0.19m	Worked flint Medieval pottery
403	Natural	Firm mid reddish-brown silty clay		
404	Fill of [405]	Mid brown silty clay		
405	Cut	Posthole	0.16m diam 0.08m deep	



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