



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation on land at 61 Main Street
Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire
June 2011



Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council

Jason Clarke

Report 11/130

June 2011

Event No: ECB 3601



STAFF

Project Manager: Anthony Maull Cert Arch

Text: Jason Clarke BSc MA AIfA

Fieldwork: Jason Clarke

Peter Haynes

Illustrations Amir Bassir BSc

SITE NAME: 61 Main Street, Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire

NATIONAL GRID REF: NGR TL 1189 8346

CLIENT: Henry H Bletsoe and Son

CONTRACTOR: Northamptonshire Archaeology
2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton, NN4 8BE

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Ant Maull		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

(Front cover: General view of site)
(Back cover: Trench 3 backfilled)

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological evaluation on land at 61 Main Street, Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire	
Short description	In June 2011, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Henry H Bletsoe and Son, on land at 61 Main Street, Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire. A possible post-medieval former hedgerow was present in the west of the development area. No other archaeological features were present..	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Redundant farm buildings and yard	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period		
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Cambridgeshire	
Site address	61 Main Street, Great Gidding	
Easting Northing	TL 1189 8346	
Area (sq m/ha)	0.25 hectares	
Height aOD	60mAOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Cambridgeshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke (NA)	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull(NA)	
Sponsor or funding body	Henry H Blatsoe and Son	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	14 June 2011	
End date	15 June 2011	
ARCHIVES	Location	Contents
Physical	Event Number: ECB3601	
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological evaluation on land at 61 Main Street, Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire June 2011	
Serial title & volume	11/130	
Author(s)	Jason Clarke	
Page numbers	5 text, 5 figs	
Date	June 2011	

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION ON LAND AT
61 MAIN STREET, GREAT GIDDING,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
JUNE 2011**

Abstract

In June 2011, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Henry Bletsoe and Son, on land at 61 Main Street, Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire. A possible post-medieval former hedgerow was present in the west of the development area. No other archaeological features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

In June 2011, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land at 61 Main Street, Great Gidding, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 1189 8346; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Henry H Bletstoe and Son, and was undertaken in line with conditions set out within the planning application (0901576 FUL) for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of three dwellings.

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the written scheme of investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2011) in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Council's brief for Archaeological Evaluation (Thomas 2011). 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

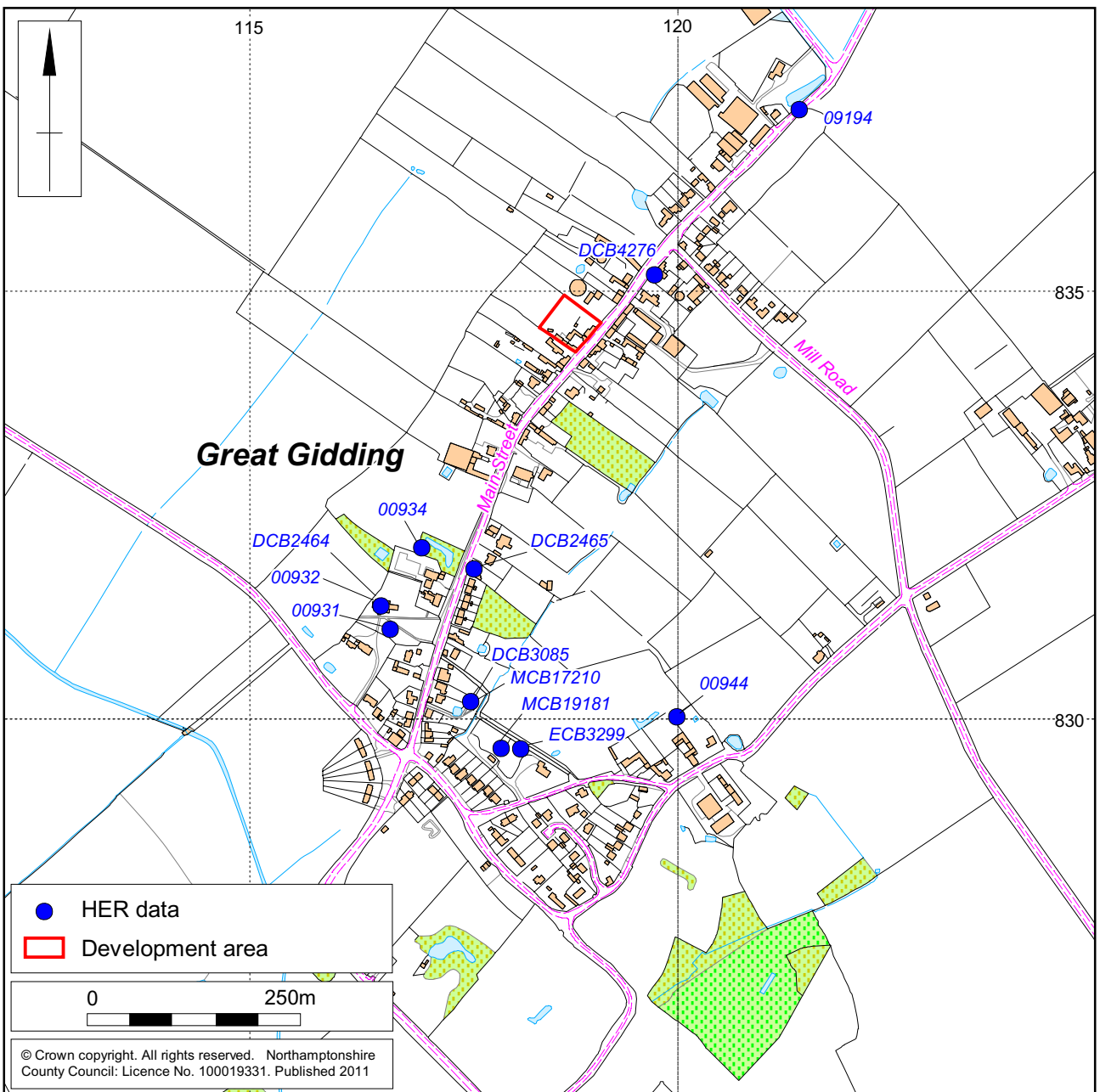
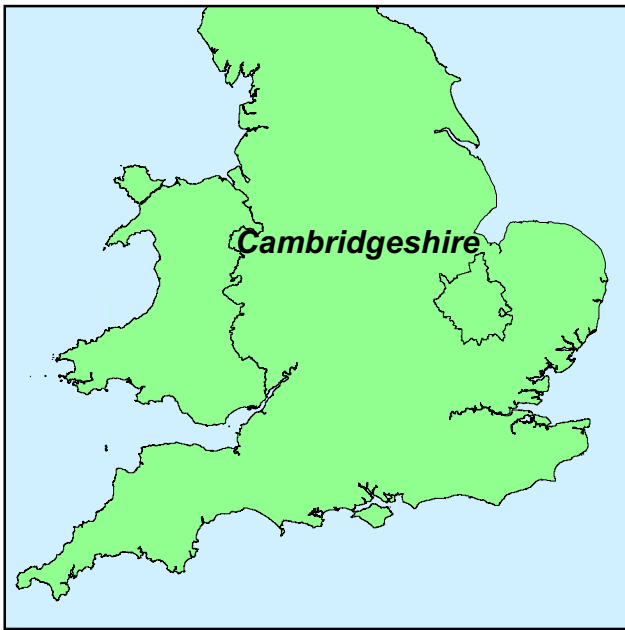
The site is situated to the north of the medieval core of Great Gidding. The application area comprises 0.25ha of land on gentle sloping ground. The underlying geology area comprises Oxford Clays overlain by Diamicton tills (BGS GeoIndex).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

A 500m radius search was undertaken of the records held by Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER Fig 1). It found that no previous archaeological works have taken place on the site.

There is limited evidence to suggest that the surrounding area has been settled. Records show that there are lithic assemblages (CHER0944) dating to the Neolithic. There are no known sites of later prehistoric or Roman date within the CHER survey area.

The parish of Great Gidding was in existence at the time of the Domesday survey of 1086 (Page, Proby and Inskipp-Ladds 1936 48-53). Before 1166 the parish was subdivided into three to form the parishes of Great Gidding, Little Gidding and Steeple Gidding. The core of the medieval village and medieval church dedicated to Saint Michael (CHER0932; DCB2464) of Great Gidding is situated approximately 200m to



Scale 1:7500

Site location showing Historic Environment Record data Fig 1

the south of the application area. Great Gidding, like many other villages in the area, had shrunk in size by the late 15th century. Earthwork remains including ridge and furrow from field cultivation (CHER0934) still survive attesting to the shrunken medieval village (SMV).

Great Gidding saw an expansion northwards in the 17th century and the application area falls within the area of post-medieval development. According to the Great Gidding map of 1541 and the pre-enclosure map of 1858 the application area falls within the post-medieval plots fronting onto Main Street (Beresford and St Joseph 1979).

CHER	Name	Type	Period
00931	Bone figurine, Saint Michael's Church churchyard, Great Gidding	Find Spot	Medieval?
00932	Saint Michael's Church, Great Gidding	Building	Medieval- modern
00934	Medieval earthworks (ridge and furrow), Great Gidding	Monument	Medieval
00944	Lithic implements, Great Gidding	Find Spot	Neolithic
09194	Pound	Monument	Unknown
MCB17210	Great Gidding Baptist Church	Building	18th Century to modern
MCB19181	Undated drainage ditches, Great Gidding	Monument	Undated
DCB2464	Parish Church of Saint Michael	Listed Building- II*	Medieval
DCB4276	Fox and Hounds Public House	Listed Building- II	17 th Century to modern
DCB2465	Crown Cottage	Listed Building- II	17th Century to modern
DCB3085	Baptist Church	Listed Building- II	
ECB3299	Evaluation at 23 Gains Lane, Great Gidding	Intervention	Undated drainage

Table 1: CHER information for 61 Main Street, Great Gidding (Fig 1)

3 METHODOLOGY

Three trial trenches, two 20m long and one 10m long were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology and approved by Andy Thomas (Senior Archaeologist, Planning and Countryside Advice, Cambridgeshire County Council) (Fig 2). The total area excavated was 100 m².

Trench 1 was repositioned to avoid a tree canopy and Trench 3 was repositioned to avoid piles of demolition material (Fig 2). A JCB 3CX mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m wide ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features.

A hand-drawn plan of all archaeological features was made at scale 1:50 or 1:100 and was related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Archaeological 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, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Context sheets were cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs. Photography was with 35mm black and white film and colour slides, supplemented

with digital images. Sections were drawn at scale 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate and related to Ordnance Survey datum. Spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to maximise the recovery of metal objects.

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 2008) and English Heritage management of projects (1991 and 2006).

4 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the work was:

- to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be affected by the proposed development.
- to provide a comprehensive, illustrated assessment of the regional context within which the archaeological evidence rests and should aim to highlight any relevant research issues within a national and regional research framework.
- to provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relative importance against known development proposals.
- to assess the impact of development.

The research aims as set out in *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource Assessment* (Glazebrook 1997) and *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) was also considered as appropriate.

Given the sites close proximity to the shrunken medieval village (SMV) of Great Gidding and its post-medieval expansion the following themes for the medieval and post-medieval periods were considered.

- to examine potential change of land use in the medieval and post-medieval period
- to model the landscape and its transformation through time.

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

5.1 General stratigraphy

The underlying geology was boulder clay with frequent limestone inclusions. The boulder clay was encountered in all trenches between 0.10-0.30m below the modern ground surface. Subsoil was dark brown sandy clay and measured between 0.10m and 0.20m thick, it was overlain by dark black brown sandy clay topsoil, measuring between 0.10m and 0.20m thick. The topsoil and subsoil was truncated within all trenches probably due to the previous landuse of the excavation area being a farmyard.

The trench locations are shown in Figure 2 and an inventory of contexts from the trenches is provided in the Appendix.

No archaeological features were present in Trenches 2 and 3. Modern demolition material, including bricks, glass and plastic pipe was present in Trench 2. Trench 3 contained a possible former hedgerow and treehole.

5.2 The features in Trench 1

Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 20m long and 2.0m wide and was aligned north-east to south-west (Figs 2 and 5). At the middle of the trench was an irregular-shaped loam-filled, non-anthropogenic feature, probably a treehole and a possible former hedgerow.

Tree bole [105]

In the middle of the trench was a treehole [105], 1.12m wide and 0.54m deep. It had an undulating irregular profile and was filled with mid brown silty clay (104). There were no finds.

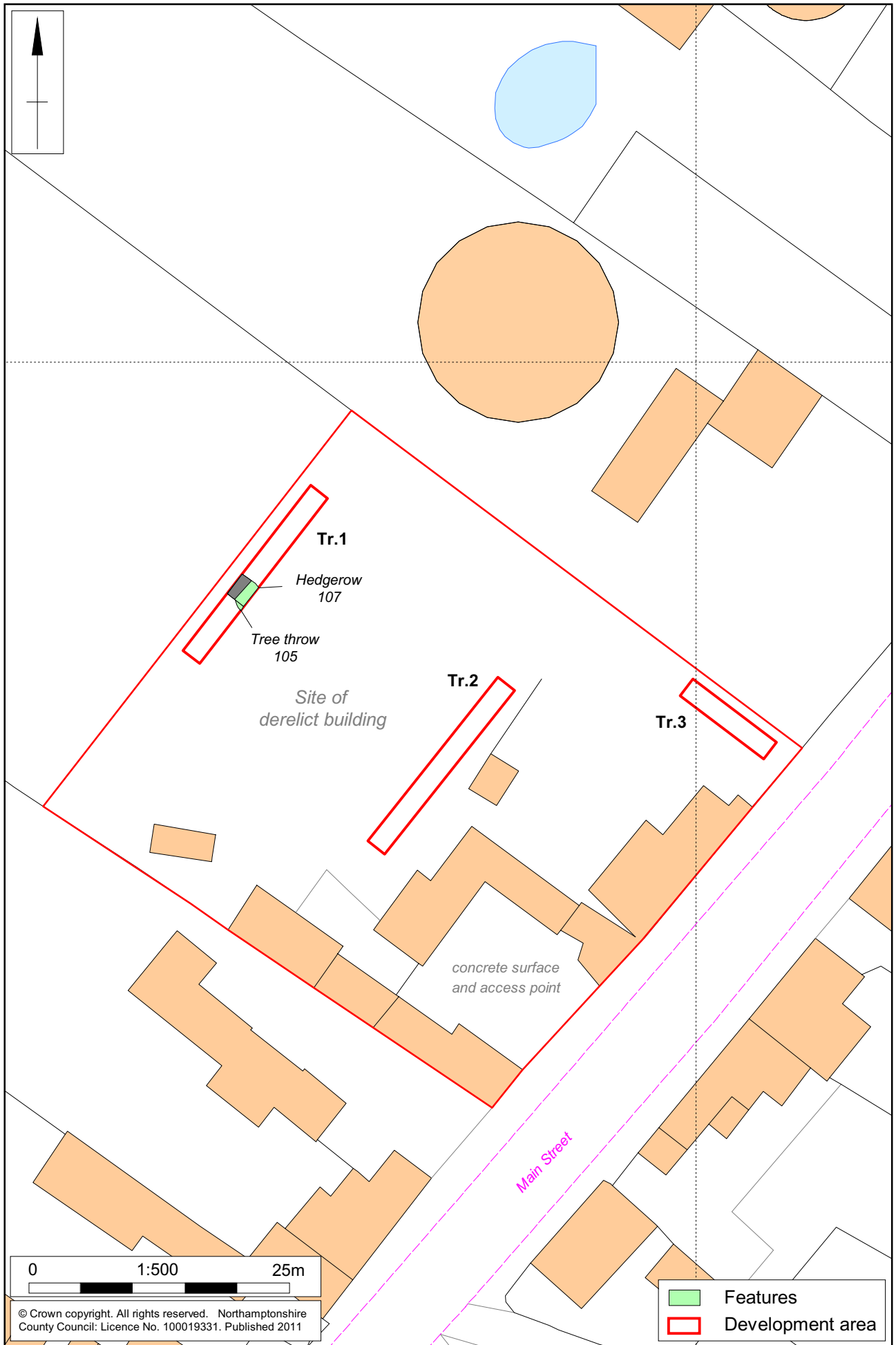
Hedgerow [107]

In the middle of the trench, adjacent to the treehole [105] was a former hedgerow [107], 1.20m wide and 0.24m deep and aligned north-west to south-east. It had an undulating irregular profile and was filled by mid grey-brown silty clay (106). Two small sherds of late 19th-century pottery recovered from the feature. After agreement from the curator they were noted but not retained.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation identified no significant archaeological features or deposits. A possible former hedgerow was present within Trench 1, 19th-century pottery was recovered from its deposit but its function or alignment is uncertain. Consultation of the first Ordnance Survey maps (1889-92) show the present farm buildings but no hedgerow boundary in the location of the feature recorded in Trench 1.

The underlying geology was boulder clay with frequent limestone fragment inclusions and was present in all trenches. The topsoil was truncated and contained frequent building rubble inclusions throughout the development area. The dump of building demolition rubble within Trench 2 and numerous amount of building material on the site reflects the development area use as a farmyard for over hundred years. The evaluation provided no evidence for activity on the site before the post-medieval period.



Scale 1:500 (A4)

Trench location plan showing features Fig 2



Trench 2, looking south-west Fig 3



Trench 3, looking north-west Fig 4



Trench 1, looking north-east Fig 5

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APPENDIX: Context Index

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	20m x 2.0m NE to SW	TL 1189 8346;	61.83m aOD	0.30m,61.53 m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Mid black-grey sandy clay	0.10m thick	
102	Subsoil	Light black-grey sandy clay	0.10m thick	
103	Natural	Mid brown-grey clay with frequent limestone inclusions.		
104	Fill	Mid brown silty clay. Fill of [105]		
105	Cut	Irregular side and base. Treehole. Filled by (104)	1.12m wide and 0.54m deep	
106	Fill	Mid grey-brown clay. Fill of [107]		19th-century pottery, not retained
107	Cut	Cut of possible hedgerow. Filled by (106)	1.20m wide and 0.24m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	20m x 2.0m NW to SE	TL 1189 8346	61.55m aOD	0.15m,61.70 m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.10m thick	
202	Subsoil	Light black-grey sandy clay	0.05m thick	
203	Natural	Mid brown-grey clay with frequent limestone inclusions.		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	10m x 2.0m NE to SW	TL1189 8346	61.98m aOD	0.30m, 62.28 m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Mid grey-black sandy clay	0.20m	
302	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.10m	
303	Natural	Mid brown-grey with frequent limestone inclusions		



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