



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

A trial trench evaluation on land  
at Clack Hill, Little Bowden,  
near Market Harborough, Leicestershire  
March 2012



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**Northamptonshire  
County Council**

David J Leigh  
Report 12/56  
March 2012



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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		143348
Project name	An archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Clack Hill, near Little Bowden, Market Harborough, Leicestershire	
Short description	An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of CgMs Consulting acting for their client Pegasus Planning in March 2012 in advance of residential development. This followed a programme of geophysical and topographic survey which had identified well-preserved ridge and furrow earthworks associated with medieval agriculture. The work comprised the excavation of eight trial trenches. Well defined ridge and furrow earthworks were noted throughout the investigation area, no artefacts were present.	
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	Desk-based assessment (Dawson 2007) Geophysical survey (2009) Earthwork survey (NA 2011)	
Current Land use	Pasture land	
Future work	No	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	Clack Hill, Little Bowden near Market Harborough, Leicestershire	
Study area (sq.m)		
OS Easting & Northing	SP 7510 8690	
Height OD	125m aOD	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	CgMs Consulting & Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J. Leigh	
Project Manager	Michael Dawson, CgMs Consulting, Iain Soden, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting acting for Pegasus Planning	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	March 2012	
End date	March 2012	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical	Leicestershire Museums	
Paper	Leicestershire Museums Accession No: X.A168.2011	Trial trench record sheets (8) Section sheet (1) Colour slides (28) Black and white contact prints (28) Digital photographs (42)
Digital	Ditto	Report text and figures
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Unpublished		
Title	An archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Clack Hill, Little Bowden near Market Harborough, Leicestershire	
Authors	David J Leigh	
Serial title and volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report, 12/56	
Date	March 2012	

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**A TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION ON LAND AT  
CLACK HILL, LITTLE BOWDEN, NEAR MARKET HARBOROUGH,  
LEICESTERSHIRE  
MARCH 2012**

*Abstract*

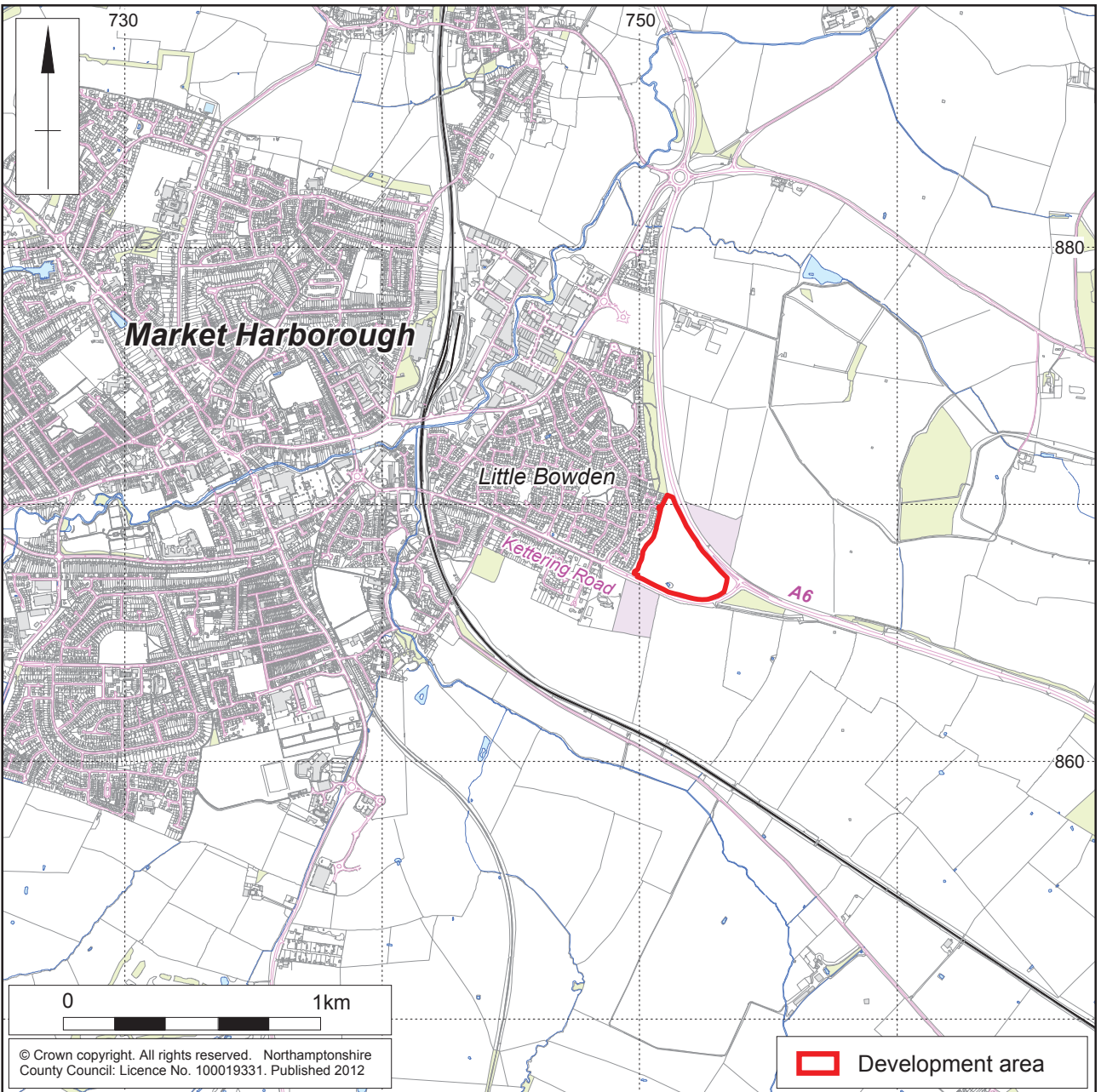
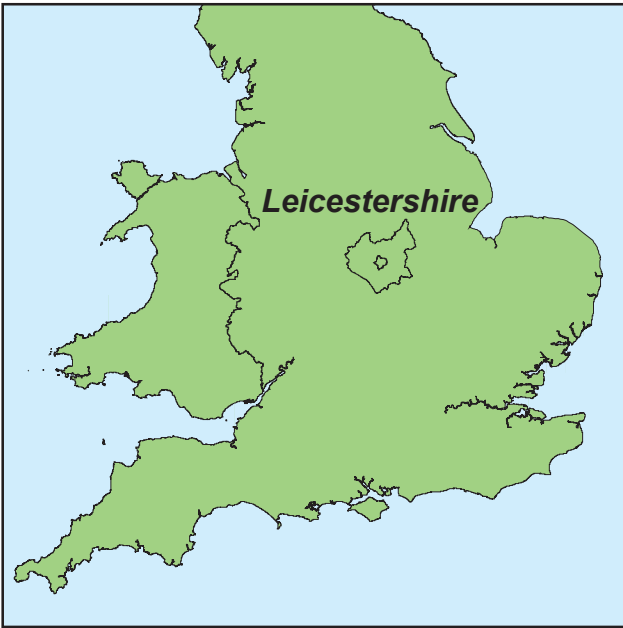
*A trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of CgMs Consulting acting for their client Persimmon Homes in March 2012 in advance of residential development on land at Clack Hill, Little Bowden, near Market Harborough, Leicestershire. This followed a programme of geophysical and topographic survey which had identified well-preserved ridge and furrow earthworks associated with medieval agriculture. The trial trench evaluation comprised the excavation of eight trial trenches. Well defined ridge and furrow was noted throughout the investigation area, no artefacts were present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Consent to construct a new residential development on land at Clack Hill, Little Bowden, near Market Harborough, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 751 869; Figs 1, 4 and 5) was allowed at appeal (APP/F2415/A/10/2134083) confirmed after the appeal was called-in by the Secretary of State on 24th October 2011. This report concerns the archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken as a requirement of the pre-commencement works for the new development. The evaluation was undertaken in order to inform as to the archaeological potential within the development area so that a mitigation strategy to deal with any archaeological deposits present could be implemented.

As a condition of the planning consent, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken. This was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which had been approved by the district Planning Authority. The written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared on behalf of CgMs Consulting and submitted to Leicestershire County Council on 29th February following correspondence with Teresa Hawtin, Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council.

The trial trench evaluation was undertaken in March 2012, following the notification of commencement of works to the Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council. The fieldwork was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of CgMs Consulting acting for their client Persimmon Homes.



Scale 1:25,000

Site location Fig 1

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Archaeological and historical background**

Clack Hill is located on the eastern side of the village of Little Bowden, near Market Harborough in southern Leicestershire. Little Bowden is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086AD as *Bugendone*. A desk-based assessment (Dawson 2009) identified Clack Hill to have lain within the open fields of Little Bowden during the medieval and post-medieval periods. Cartographic evidence associated with the 1780 enclosure award suggests that Clack Hill lay in four furlongs, Stockwell Furlong, Flax Furlong, Clack Hill Leys and another furlong, the name of which is now illegible. A clay pit was excavated between 1780 and 1880 to feed the brickworks at the foot of Kettering Road. The desk-based assessment noted that well defined ridge and furrow were present within the investigation area.

Geophysical survey by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Butler 2009) confirmed the survival of three elements of ridge and furrow (Fig 6), along with headlands, a curving ditch and a droveway. These were subsequently the focus of an earthwork survey, also by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Simmonds 2011).

### **2.1 Topography and geology**

Topographically the site occupies a triangular-shaped area of land on ground sloping down to the west on the eastern edge of Little Bowden. It is bounded by Kettering Road on the south and the A6 on the north-east and lies on ground sloping down to the west, at a maximum height of approximately 125m aOD. The site is used as pasture.

The underlying geology of the site has been mapped by The Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Upper Lias clays (BGS Geindex <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geindex>). The geology of the site comprises an isolated outcrop of glacial till made up of Chalky Tills deposited during the Mid Pleistocene Anglian Glaciation, overlying a solid geology of mudstones of the Lower Jurassic Lias Group Whitby Mudstones Formation.

### **2.2 Objectives**

The principal objective of the trial trench evaluation was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any significant archaeological evidence present within the investigation area and subsequently to put the site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The specific aims of the project were to:

- Determine whether any significant archaeology survived within the area of development;
- Determine the date and character of any evidence at the site;
- Having obtained a chronological sequence for human activity on the site to place it within its regional context(s);
- Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis.

The national framework for research is set out by English Heritage (1997) and regionally by Cooper (2006). The research aims set out in these documents provided the context for the analysis of results from the trial trench evaluation.

### **3 THE RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The trial trench evaluation comprised the excavation of eight trial trenches (Fig 2).

As a result of groundwork activity just prior to the evaluation, it was not possible to position the trenches in the original locations. The trenches were repositioned in those areas unaffected by groundworks and as close as possible to the original locations. Topsoil and subsoil was removed down to the natural substratum or archaeological features, whichever came first with a 360° excavator fitted with toothless ditching buckets (Fig 7). A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept, along with supplementary photographs in digital format. The written record used Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma record sheets (NA 2011). The trial trench evaluation was carried out in accordance with the IfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2008), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (EH 2006) and the *Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists* (IfA 2010).

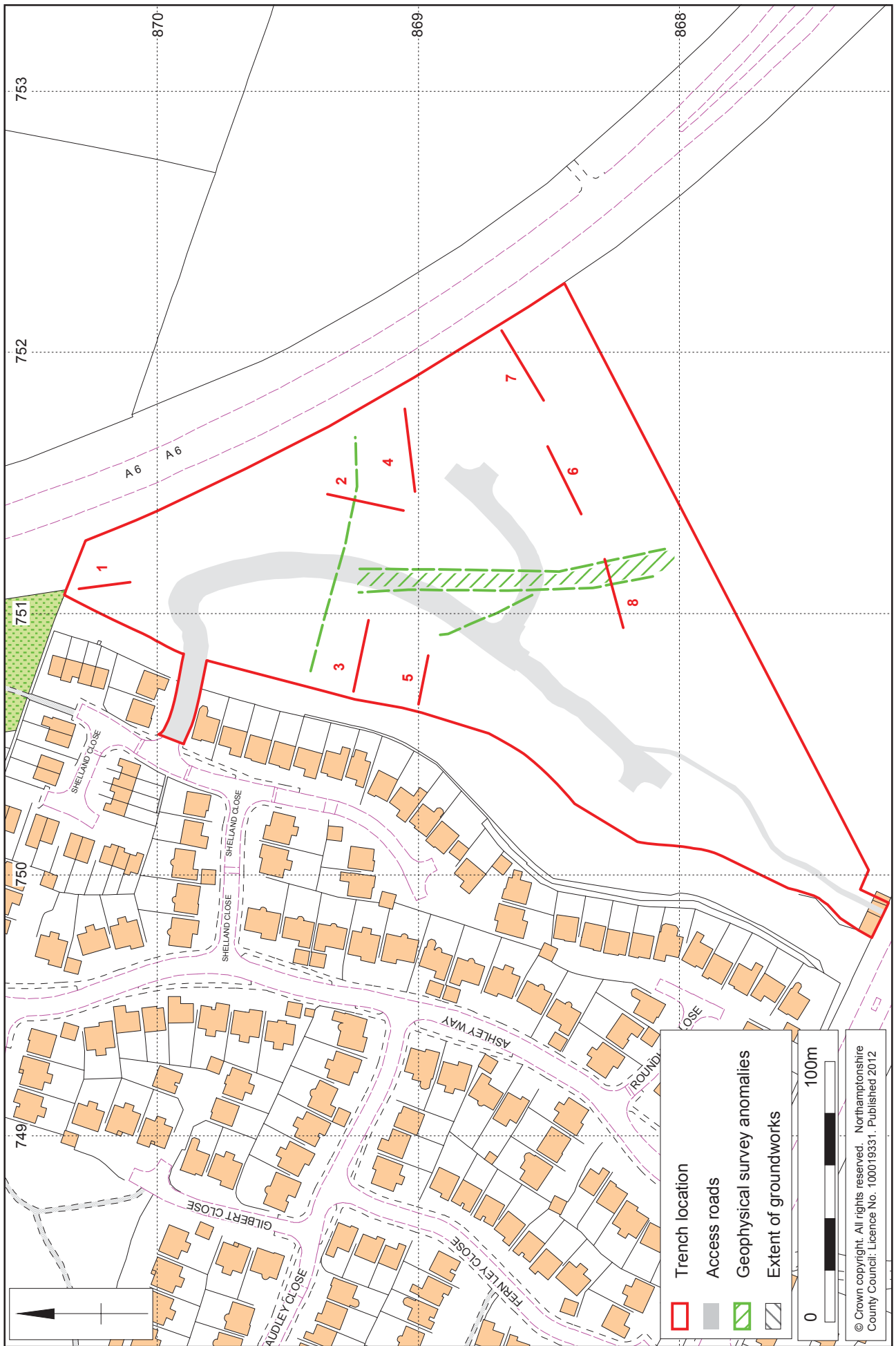
A metal-detector survey of the trenches and associated spoil-heaps was undertaken to ensure maximum retrieval of metal finds, if any.

#### **3.2 The stratigraphic sequence**

A consistent stratigraphy was recorded throughout the investigation area. The natural substratum comprised reddish grey-brown silt clay progressing to a sandier silt-clay towards the east. This was encountered between 113.22m aOD and 108.82m aOD below present ground level. Overlying this was mid-brown silt loam, between 0.64m and 0.25m thick, sealed by mid grey-brown silt loam topsoil, between 0.25m and 0.18m thick and containing occasional irregular stones. Two representative sections were drawn to illustrate the stratigraphic sequence in the investigation area (Figs 3, 8-11).

The anomalies detected in the geophysical survey (Butler 2009) were not seen.

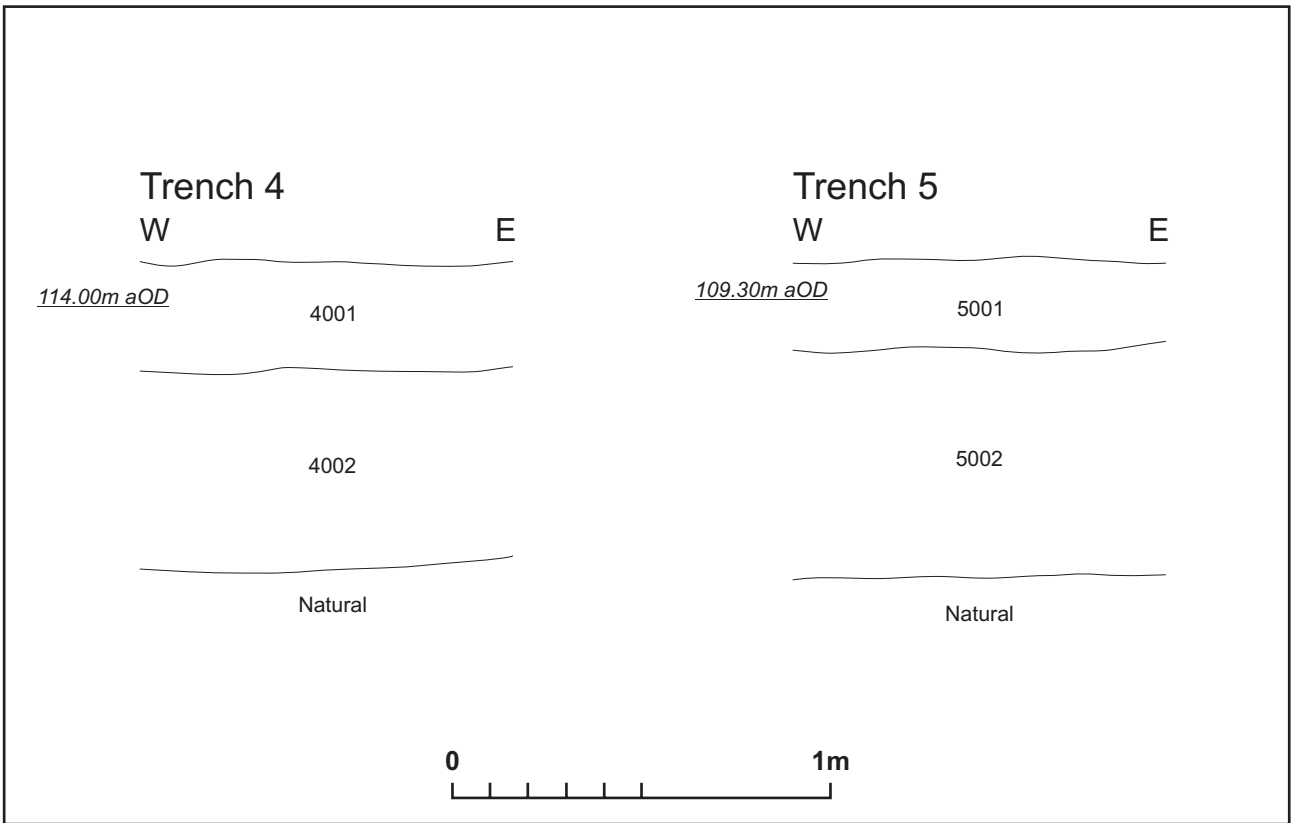




Scale 1:2000 (A4)

The location of the trial trenches Fig 2

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Scale 1:20

Sections of trenches 4 and 5 Fig 3



The investigation area, looking south Fig 4



The investigation area, looking north Fig 5



Ridge and furrow earthworks in the eastern corner of the site Fig 6



General view of the groundworks, looking west Fig 7



Trench 4, looking east Fig 8



Trench 4, south facing section Fig 9



Trench 5, looking west

Fig 10



Trench 5, south facing section

Fig 11

#### 4 DISCUSSION

The trial trench evaluation revealed relatively undisturbed soils. Medieval agricultural activity was evidenced by well defined ridge and furrow earthworks throughout the investigation area.

The trial trench evaluation was carried out in favourable conditions and the results are considered to be reliable.

#### 5 THE ARCHIVE

The trial trench evaluation has generated a small archive of photographs, paperwork and artefactual evidence, which will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums following consolidation and preparation of the archive for deposition under the Accession No: X.A168.2011.

<b>Record</b>	<b>Number</b>
Trial trench record sheets	8
Section sheets	1
Colour slides	28
Black and white contacts and negatives	28
Digital photographs	42

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Butler, A, 2009 *Archaeological geophysical survey on land at Clack Hill, Market Harborough, Leicestershire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology report, **09/147**

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LCC 2011 *Generic brief for Archaeological Attendance*, Leicestershire County Council

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## APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX BY TRENCH

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR 4751 2870	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	22m x 1.8 N-S		106.97m aOD	0.60m, 106.37m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.10m-0.20m thick	-
1002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.08m-0.40m thick	-
1003	Natural	Reddish-grey-brown compact clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	30m x 1.8m N-S	4751 2869	113.04m aOD	0.59m, 112.45m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
2001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam occasional stone inclusions	0.25m thick	-
2002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.34m thick	-
2003	Natural	Reddish-grey-brown compact clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	25m x 1.8m	4750 2869	106.25m aOD	0.22m, 106.03m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
3001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam occasional stone inclusions	0.15m -0.18m thick	-
3002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.45m – 0.67 thick	-
3003	Natural	Grey-brown compact clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	30m x 1.8m E-W	4751 2869	114.00m aOD	0.78m, 113.22m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
4001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.10m-0.19m thick	-
4002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.35m-0.59m thick	-
4003	Natural	Reddish-grey--brown compact clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	20m x 1.8m E-W	4750 2868	109.30m aOD	0.60m, 108.70m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
5001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.13m-18m thick	-
5002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.35m-0.42m thick	-
5003	Natural	Reddish-grey--brown compact clay	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
6	30m x 1.8m NE-SW	4751 2868	118.82m aOD	0.49m, 118.33m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
6001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.20m-0.24m thick	-
6002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.19m-0.25m thick	-
6003	Natural	Reddish grey-brown sandy clay	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
7	30m x 1.8m NE-SW	4751 2868	117.74m aOD	0.83m, 116.91m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
7001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.20m-0.25m thick	-
7002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.40m-0.58m thick	-
7003	Natural	Reddish grey-brown sandy clay	-	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
8	30m x 1.8m NE-SW	4751 2868	118.35m aOD	0.83m, 117.52m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/Samples</b>
8001	Topsoil	Grey-brown silt loam, occasional stone inclusions	0.20m- 0.25m thick	-
8002	Subsoil	Mid brown silt loam	0.40m-0.58m thick	-
8003	Natural	Reddish grey-brown sandy clay	-	-



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