



Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological strip, map, and sample on
land west of Norfolk and Norwich
University Hospital



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Pottery: Simon Markus
Other finds: Tora Hylton

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. 144998
Project title	Archaeological Strip, Map, and Sample on land west of Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, February 2013	
Short description	An archaeological strip, map, and sample was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land west of Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital as part of the creation of a temporary car park on the site. An area approximately 126m x 75m was excavated and produced only two tree holes of present origin. A single sherd of early/middle Saxon pottery was recovered from the topsoil.	
Project type	Strip, Map, and Sample	
Site Status	None	
Previous work	DBA (Walker 2012) geophysical survey (Butler 2009; Walford 2012) fieldwalking survey (Wolfram-Murray 2009) trial trench evaluation (Jones 2012)	
Current land use	Arable fields	
Future work	None	
Monument type and period	N/A	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Norfolk	
Site address	Land West of Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Colney	
Post code	NR4 7UY	
OS co-ordinates	NGR TG 1791 0715	
Area (sq m/ha)	1 ha	
Height aOD	30m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Norfolk Planning Archaeologist	
Project Design originator	Mark Holmes and Charlotte Walker (NA)	
Director/Supervisor	Simon Markus (NA)	
Project Managers	Mark Holmes and Charlotte Walker (NA)	
Sponsor or funding body	Bullen Developments Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	18/02/2013	
End date	22/02/2013	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents
Physical	ENF 129692	None
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)
Digital		Client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE ON LAND WEST OF NORFOLK AND NORWICH UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Abstract

An archaeological strip, map, and sample was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land west of Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital as part of the creation of a temporary car park on the site. An area approximately 126m x 75m was excavated and produced only two tree holes of present origin. A single sherd of early/middle Saxon pottery was recovered from the topsoil.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by Bullen Developments Ltd to carry out an archaeological strip, map and record as part of the development of a temporary car park on land to the west of Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Colney (NGR TG 1791 0715; Fig 1).

The development site comprises c. 1 ha. of land, lying to the west of the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. The site consists mostly of a rectangular block of land 126m x 75m in the north-east corner of a larger field.

The works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and with the *Project Design* produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology and approved by the Norfolk Planning Archaeologist (NA 2012).

All works were conducted in accordance with the IfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and *Code of conduct* (IfA 2010).

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The village of Colney lies to the west of Norwich. The site is situated to the south of the village and the B1108 Watton Road and immediately to the north-west of the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. The site is flat and currently arable land.

The underlying geology is Cretaceous Chalk overlain by local drift geology of glacial sand and gravel (BGS Geotitles). The site lies at c 30m aOD.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A desk-based heritage assessment, geophysical survey, fieldwalking survey, and trial trench evaluation (Walker 2012, Butler 2009, Walford 2012, Wolfram-Murray 2009, Jones 2012) have previously been carried out across the proposed development area.

Early prehistoric

A Neolithic site was identified to the north of the current area prior to the construction of the John Innes Centre in 2000 (HER 9332). A large assemblage of worked flint had been collected from the site from the 1970s and when the site was evaluated a ditch containing further flint work, as well as Neolithic deposits and flint scatters were identified.

During the subsequent excavation a natural hollow filled with a brown forest soil was revealed. It was overlain by a Neolithic topsoil sealed by a Neolithic occupation layer and extensive deposits of flint-knapping waste (amounting to 28,000 struck flints) indicating a tool manufacturing site. Over the occupation layer was a rectangular structure and possible floor surface.

Immediately to the east of the current area, a Beaker period site was identified at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. Scattered ditches and pits dating to the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age were identified, as well as Mesolithic and Neolithic flints. Some of the ditches may continue into the development area. A subsequent watching brief found further flint and pottery, but no other features.

The two phases of geophysical survey identified a number of possible ditches, including a likely ring ditch, which is located c 165m to the north-west of the site, although no archaeological features were observed within the site area.

Fieldwalking of the area (HER 55753) recovered large quantities of worked flint including an axe fragment, four cores and 24 blades.

Iron Age/Roman

Iron Age pits and ditches were identified during the evaluation of the Hospital site in 1996, but a subsequent watching brief did not identify any further archaeological remains.

The fieldwalking survey found no Iron Age pottery and only a single sherd each of Roman pottery and tile from the field within which the site lies, indicating low background activity in the Roman period. Archaeological investigation at the John Innes site (HER 9332) to the north found several Roman coins and small quantities of Roman pottery. Several later Roman features were recorded during the excavation of the John Innes site (HER 9332).

Anglo-Saxon/medieval

A number of finds of Anglo-Saxon date have been found close to the site. There are reports of pits dug to the north of the site, close to the B1108, where a number of early Saxon artefacts were found (HER 9335). These included knives, spearheads and pottery. Metal detecting carried out around the John Innes site to the north found a number of items including a mid-late Saxon disc brooch, ball-headed pin and late Saxon disc brooch.

At Domesday, Colney is referred to as *Coleneia*. There have been a number of medieval finds in the vicinity of the site, but most appear to have been the result of casual loss rather than indicating the presence of a site.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the investigation was to determine if archaeological remains were present within the development area.

The specific objectives of the project were to provide further information on the:

- location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that might be present at the development site;
- integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that might be present at the development site.

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

All works were conducted in accordance with the procedural documents *The Management of Archaeological Projects* issued by English Heritage (1991), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 2006), *the Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (2008) and *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) . Where appropriate the research frameworks were borne in mind. The *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003) were followed.

The works were conducted in three phases:

- Four test pits were excavated within the development area;
- The area approximately 126m x 75m, was stripped to the natural level and any archaeological features investigated;
- Three strips measuring 5m x 1.8m, were excavated to the depth of cut for the development to assess the formation process of the mixed coloured sandy natural.

The character, composition and general depositional sequence of the site stratification was recorded on *pro-forma* sheets, with a unique context number being allocated to each distinct deposit and feature. All recording followed the guidelines detailed in the Northamptonshire Archaeology *Archaeological fieldwork manual* (2011).

Artefacts and ecofacts were collected by hand and retained, receiving appropriate care prior to removal from site, in line with procedures outlined in *First Aid for Finds* (UKIC 1998). Unstratified animal bones and modern material were not collected.

A photographic record comprising digital images was maintained.

All records were compiled during fieldwork into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive. All records and materials will be compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (1991).

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The glacial sands and gravel natural was overlain by topsoil of dark brown sandy loam, with frequent flint inclusions, 0.30m-0.40m thick. No subsoil was observed in the excavation area. Remains of modern plough scars and changes in the natural were seen across the area.

6.1 Test pits

Four test pits, approximately 1m x 2m, were excavated across the development area to a depth of between 0.50m-0.60m (Fig 2). Test pits 1, 2 and 4 showed no archaeological evidence, and Test Pit 3 showed evidence of root activity beneath the topsoil (Fig 3 and 4). This was investigated during the next phase of works.

6.2 Strip, map, and sample

The remainder of the development area was stripped to natural sand and gravel in strips c. 4m wide. The area showed frequent strips of modern plough scar (Fig 5) and two tree

holes were located towards the centre of the stripped area. The topsoil produced a single piece of pottery from the north-western corner of the development area.

The two tree holes [3004] and [3006], had a diameter of 0.95m-1.15m and a depth of 0.30m-0.35m with root hollows extending further. Tree hole [3004] showed evidence of burning *in situ* due to discolouration of the natural gravel and sand from a deep orange to a bright red (Fig 6). This is supplemented by the presence of large pieces of burnt wood and charcoal, alongside which a hand forged iron nail (SF 3001) was recovered. Tree hole [3006] also contained large amounts of wood and charcoal, however did not contain any of the discoloured sand or produce and archaeological finds (Fig 7). Samples were not taken from either deposit.

No further archaeological features or finds were present within the trenches.

6.3 Sondage into natural sand and gravel

Three sondages, approximately 5m x 1.8m, and 0.40m-0.50m deep, were excavated into the natural sand and gravel to investigate the formation process of the colour variants within the natural layers. These showed that natural merged between mid orange, dull white and mid orangey-brown sands with varying quantities of flint fragment inclusions (fig 8-12). The differentiations appear to occur gradually, resulting in diffuse boundaries between the colour changes.

7 THE FINDS

7.1 Pottery by Simon Markus

A single sherd of hand-made pottery weighing 26g, was recovered from the topsoil in the north-west corner of the development area. The fabric contains coarse sand and small grit up to 4mm in diameter. The sherd has simple rounded rim and comes from a bowl-shaped vessel. The external surface of the sherd has been smoothed but contains no decoration. The presence of a coarse sand temper likely dates this to the early/middle Saxon period, similar to finds to the north of the site.

7.2 Metal objects by Tora Hylton

A complete hand forged nail was recovered from a tree hole (3003) sited in the centre of the development area. The head of the nail is small, sub-oval in shape and slightly 'burred'. From the underside of the head protrudes a large rectangular-sectioned shank (9x6mm), measuring c130mm in length. The shank has a curved profile (clenched), indicating that it has been used, it was recovered with large fragments of burnt wood. A nail of this size could have had any number of uses.

8 DISCUSSION

The presence of a single sherd of Saxon pottery is indicative of casual loss/deposition rather than occupation or settlement.

The survival of large pieces of wood and charcoal within the tree holes and the lack of corrosion on the hand forged nail would indicate these features are from the last century.

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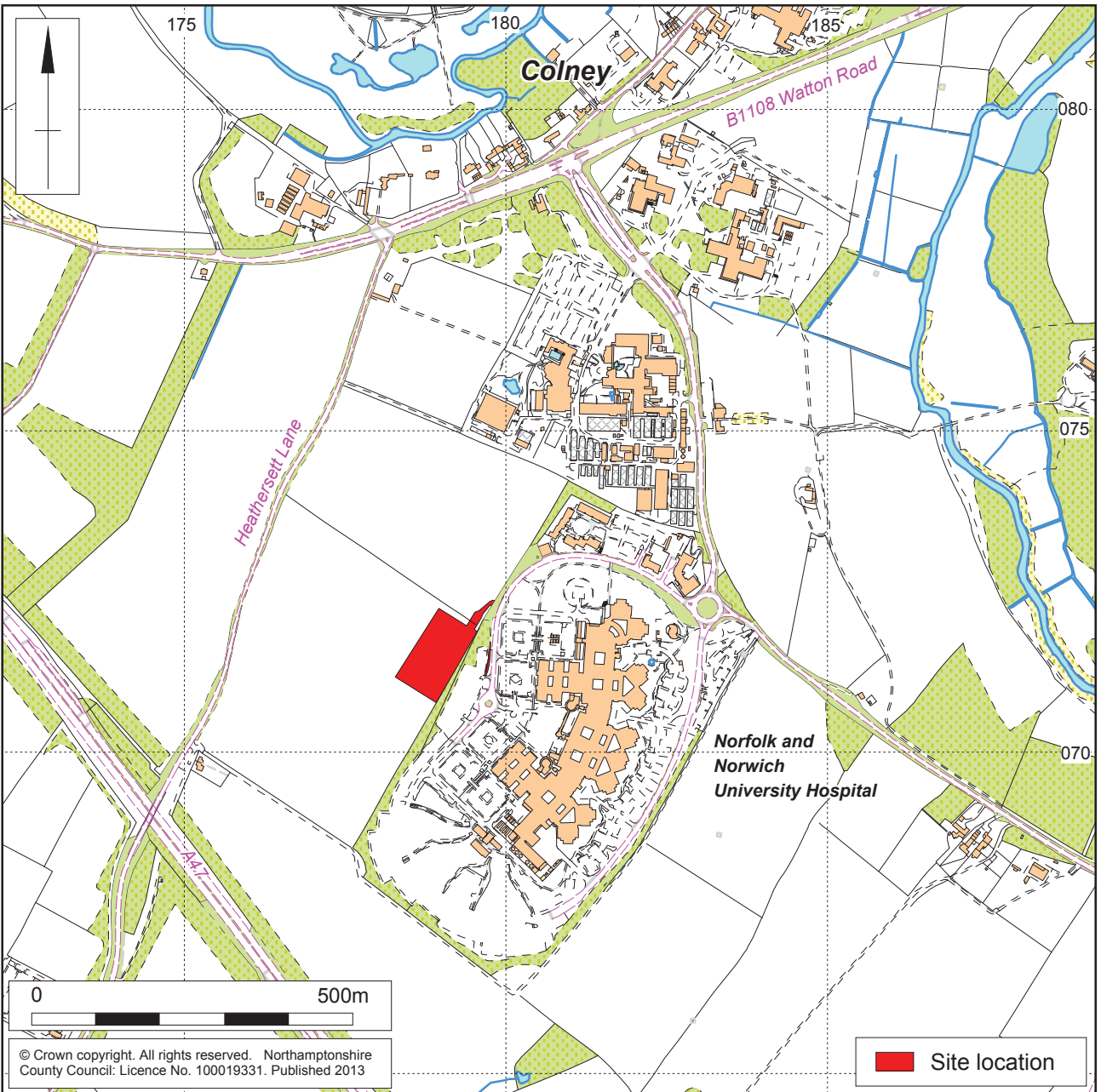
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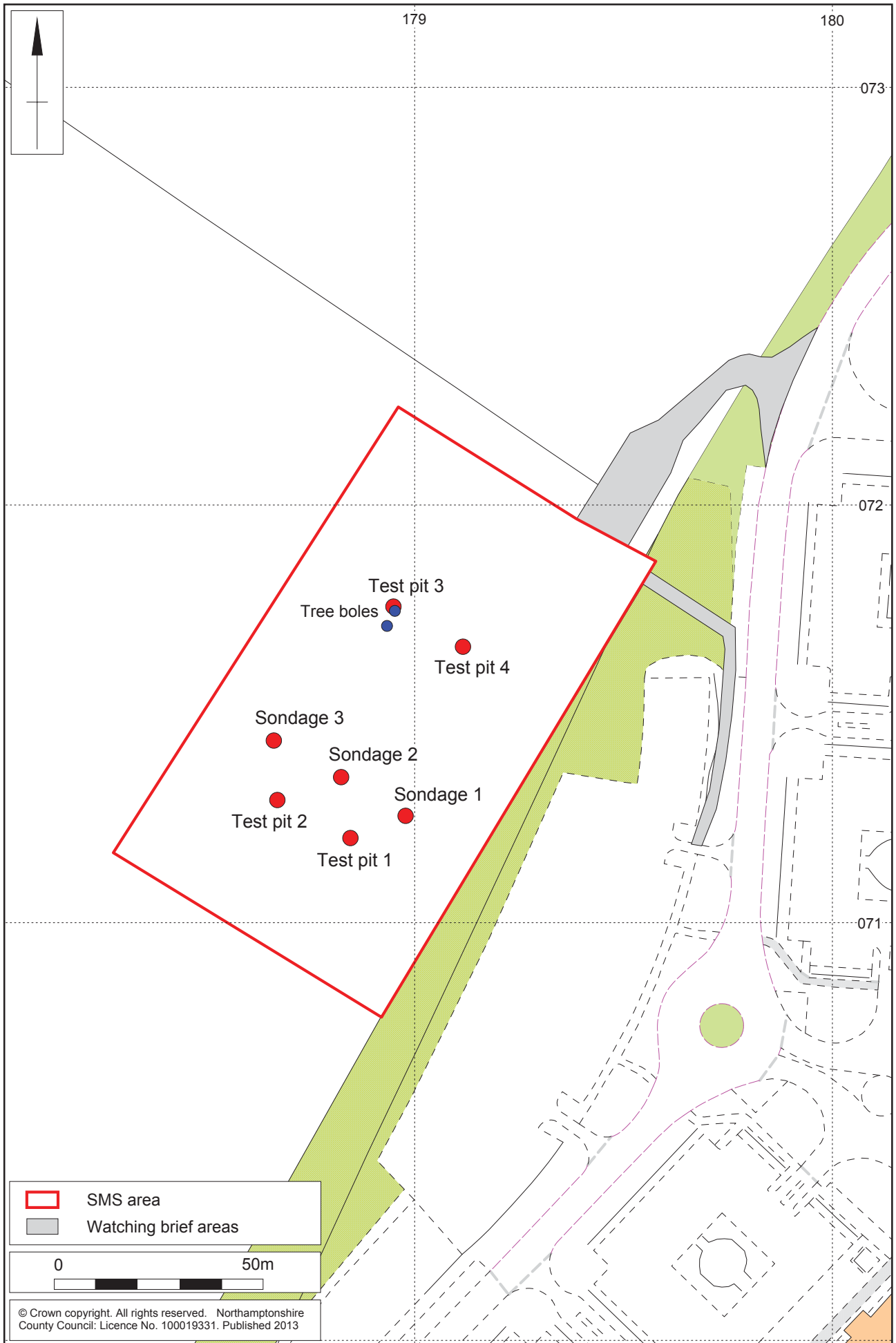
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Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:1,250 (A4)

The extent of groundworks Fig 2



General view of test pits, looking north-west

Fig 3



Root disturbance in test pit 3, looking south

Fig 4



General view showing modern plough scar, looking south

Fig 5



Section through tree hole [3004], looking north

Fig 6



Section through tree hole [3006], looking north

Fig 7



General view of sondage 1, looking north Fig 8



General view of sondage 2, looking north Fig 9



General view of sondage 3, looking north Fig 10



Section of sondage 2, looking east

Fig 11



Section of sondage 3, looking east

Fig 12

APPENDIX: CONTEXT TABLES

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth of natural
1	126m x 25m N-S	TG 1791 0715	30m aOD	0.40m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
3001	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy loam	0.40m thick	Pottery
3002	Natural	mid orange, dull white and mid brown sands mix. Plough scars.	—	—
3003	Fill	Dark black charcoal and sand.	1.15m diameter and 0.35m deep	Fe Nail
3004	Interface	Irregular sub-circular interface between burnt tree stump and natural sands (discoloured through heating).	1.15m diameter and 0.35m deep	—
3005	Fill	Dark black charcoal and sand.	0.95m diameter and 0.30m deep	—
3006	Interface	Irregular sub-circular interface between burnt tree stump and natural sands.	0.95m diameter and 0.30m deep	—



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