



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation at Envar Site, The Heath, Woodhurst, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire March 2013



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Northamptonshire
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Report 13/58

April 2013

Event No: ECB3909



STAFF

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SITE NAME: Envar site, The Heath, Woodhurst,
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire
NATIONAL GRID REF: TL 3383 7546
CLIENT: CgMs Consulting
CONTRACTOR: Northamptonshire Archaeology
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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS Report Form

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: 148808	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation at Envar Site, The Heath, Woodhurst, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire		
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of ENVAR, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation. A total of 15 trenches were excavated within the proposed development area. None of the trenches contained archaeological features, only tree holes and field drains being observed.		
Project type	Trial Trench Evaluation		
Previous work	None		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Roman pottery scatters and surface finds in the area		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire		
Site address	Envar site, The Heath, Woodhurst		
Easting Northing	TL 3383 7546		
Area ha/ sq m	720m linear metres		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Project brief originator	Kasia Gdaniec, Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Director/Supervisor	Christopher Jones		
Project Manager	Ian Meadows		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting for Envar		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	19 March 2013		
End date	26 March 2013		
ARCHIVES	Location	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
	Accession number		
Physical	N/A	N/A	
Paper	ECB3909	Context sheets, plans, sections, b/w & digital photographs	
Digital	N/A	N/A	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title	Archaeological Evaluation at Envar Site, The Heath, Woodhurst, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire		
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT
ENVAR SITE, THE HEATH, WOODHURST
HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
MARCH 2013
EVENT NO: ECB3909**

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of ENVAR Ltd, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation. A total of 15 trenches were excavated within the proposed development area. None of the trenches contained archaeological features, only tree holes and field drains being observed.

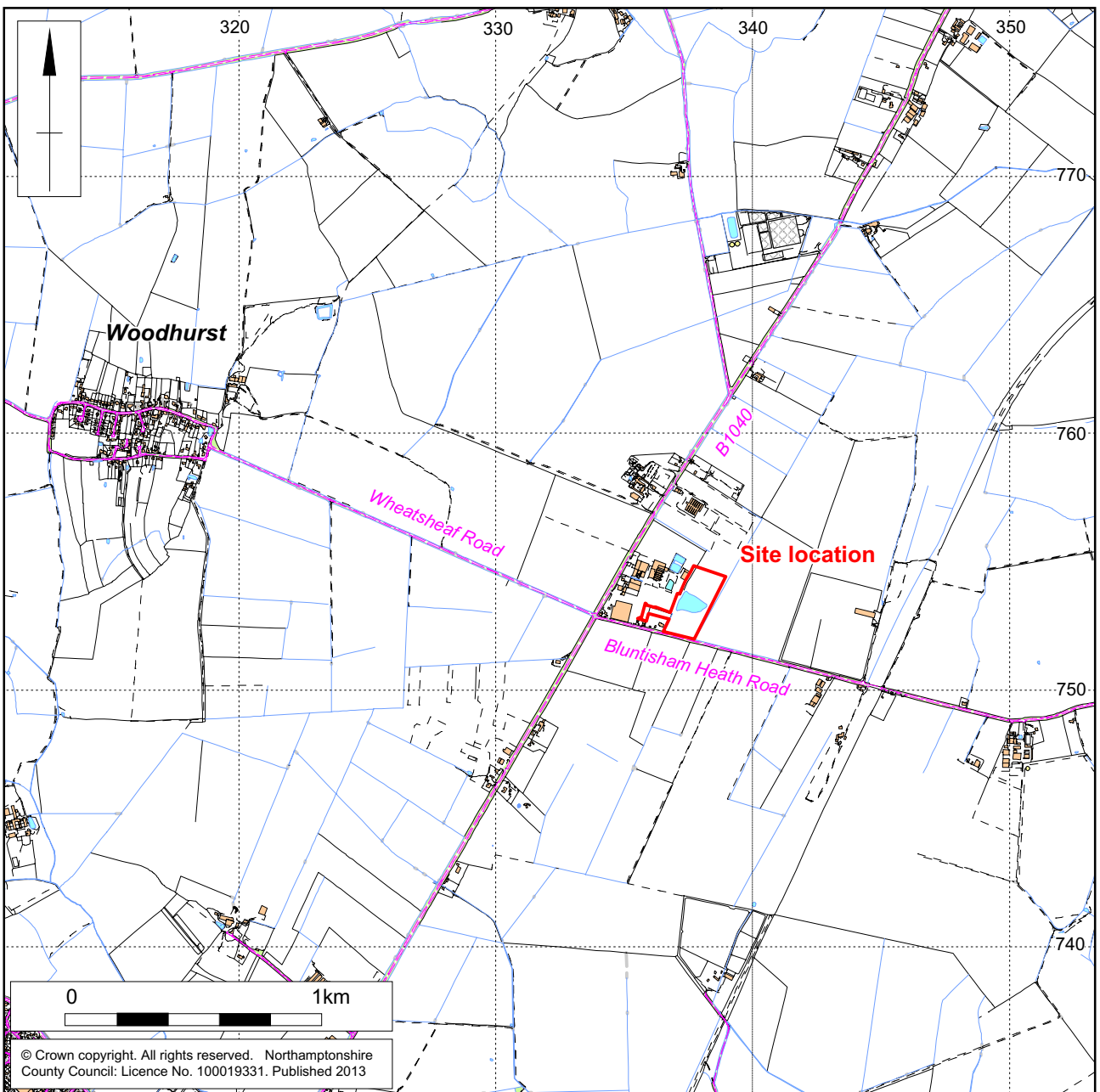
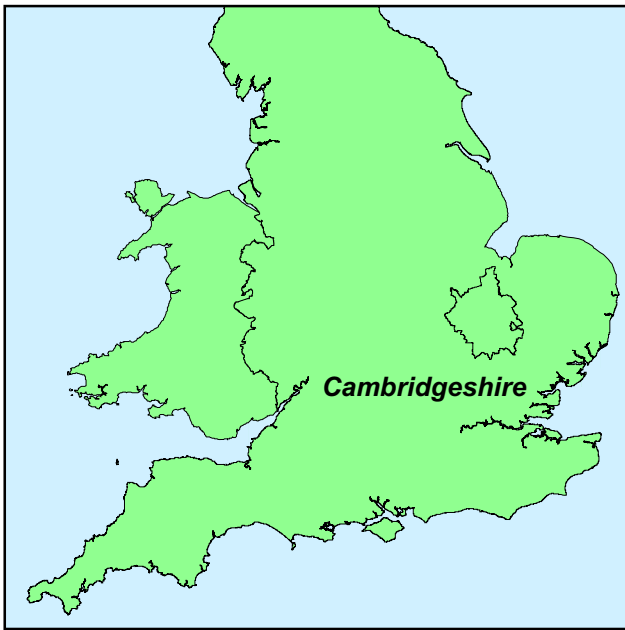
1 INTRODUCTION

In March 2013, CgMs Consulting commissioned Northamptonshire Archaeology to carry out archaeological trial trench evaluation at The Heath, Woodhurst, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3383 7546; Fig 1). The works were required to fulfil the planning conditions (planning application: H/05/003/12/CW).

The development is for the extension of a concrete pad for the maturation of compost, with drainage balancing lagoons, a reed bed, and perimeter earthen screening bunds.

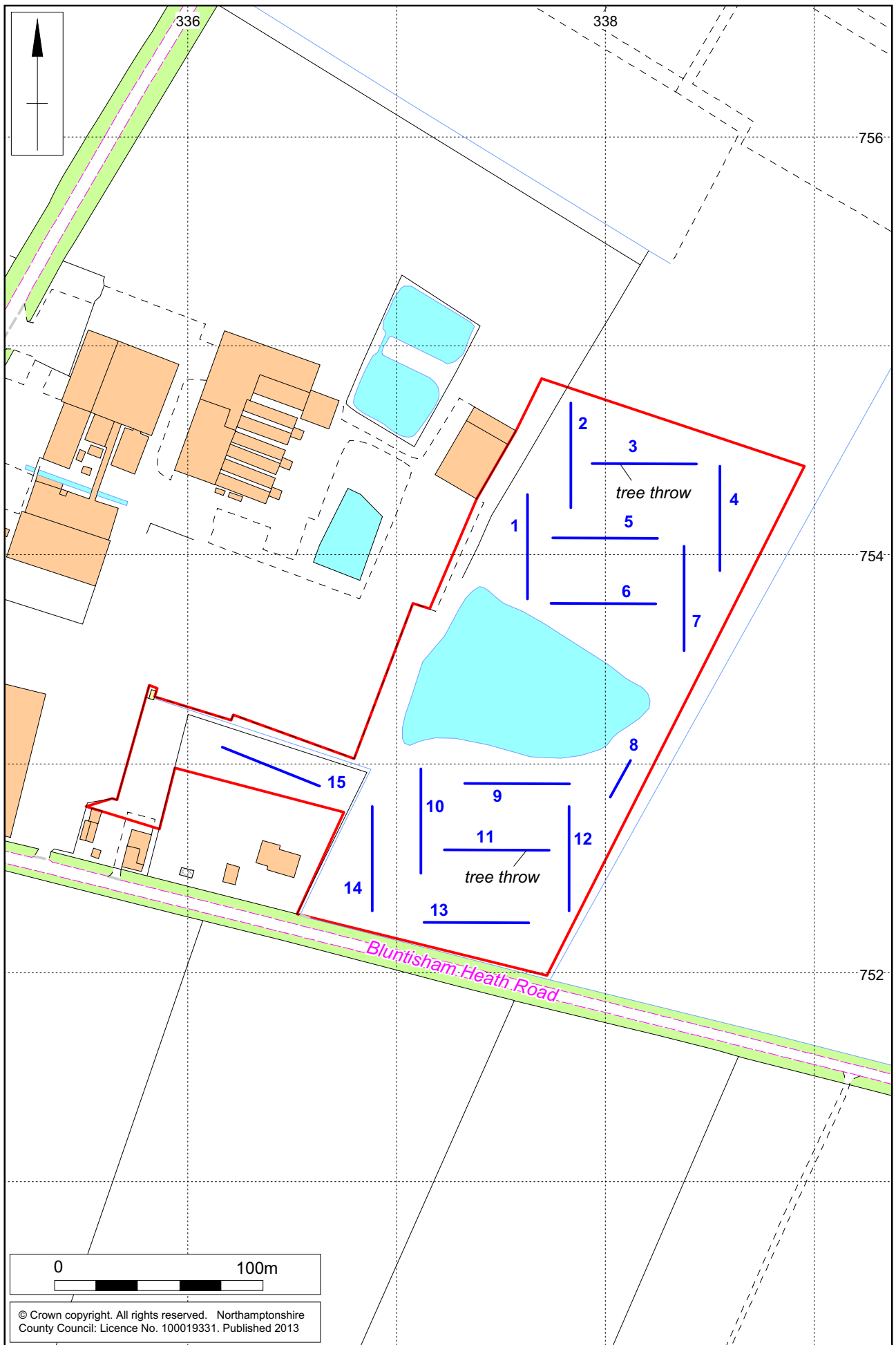
The site lies within an area of numerous Roman pottery scatters and surface finds. Consequently a programme of archaeological evaluation was implemented to meet the requirements of a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Councils Historic Environment Team (HET) and the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by NA (2013). This report considers evidence from the evaluation.

Northamptonshire Archaeology is an Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) registered organisation. This document was prepared in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and the procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 2006).



Scale 1:25,000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:2500 (A4)

The archaeological investigation area showing the location of evaluation trenches

Fig 2

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2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The general aims of the investigation were to identify the location, extent, nature, date and quality of archaeological deposits and features within the site.

Specific objectives of the investigation were to:

- Provide a comprehensive, illustrated assessment of the regional context within which the archaeological evidence rest;
- Refine the date, nature, character and extent of the activity on the development site;
- Examine any evidence for the transition from the Iron Age into Romano-British culture at the site and its impact on the landscape;
- Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- Assess the impact of development;
- Create an organised and indexed site archive;
- Understand analysis, interpretation and reporting of the findings from the field work.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography and geology

The site lies on the clay plain to the north of the River Ouse at the southern end of Somersham parish at about 32mOD. The underlying geology comprises West Walton/Ampthill Clay over lain by Pleistocene till.

3.2 Historical and archaeological background

To the west of the development area numerous records of Roman pottery scatters and surface finds from field surfaces. The examinations carried out during the laying of a water pipeline leading to Woodhurst (including CHER refs MCB4556, 4422, 2249 and 14569) produced further evidence including bronze metalwork objects (eg MCB4470).

Roman occupation is reflected in the surrounding area such as Pidley Parks to the north by quantities of material reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme including coins, brooches, rings and pins in addition to pottery scatters. Slightly further away to the north of the site towards Cuckoo Bridge Iron Age remains are known (MCB 2278) and nearer to the Bluntisham and Colne parish boundaries stone tools are present amongst flint scatter (eg MCB4452, 2249 and 4448). A World War 2 decoy-bombing site MCB15474 lies to the north east of the present study area.

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

The excavation areas were accurately measured in and marked out prior to the commencement of work using Leica System 1200 GPS operating to an accuracy of +/- 0.1m to Ordnance Survey National Grid (Fig 2). Machine excavation was undertaken under the direction of a suitably experienced archaeologist. The area was excavated by machine using a toothless bucket, to reveal archaeological remains or, where these were absent, undisturbed natural horizons. The spoil heaps and excavated areas were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

The area was cleaned sufficiently to enhance the definition of features. All archaeological features were investigated. All archaeological deposits and artefacts encountered during the course of excavation were fully recorded. Recording followed standard Northamptonshire Archaeology procedures (NA 2011). All archaeological features were given a separate context number. Deposits were described on pro-forma context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds.

Archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50. Sections through features were drawn at a scale of 1:10. All levels were related to Ordnance Datum. A photographic record was maintained using black and white film supplemented by digital photography.

The field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing. All records were compiled during fieldwork into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive.

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The total area comprised 720m linear metres of trench in mainly 50m lengths. The 15 trenches were excavated across the proposed development area (Fig 2).

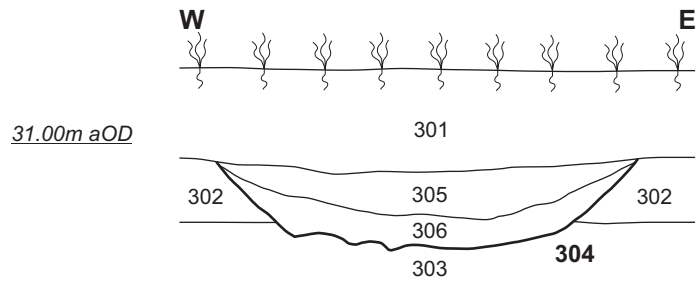
The natural substrate consisted of light grey-brown chalky clay. The subsoil was mid orange-brown clay with the overlaying topsoil dark grey-brown clay loam (Figs 4 and 5).

It should be noted that the area investigated was waterlogged with standing water on the ground and groundwater soon filled the opened trenches.

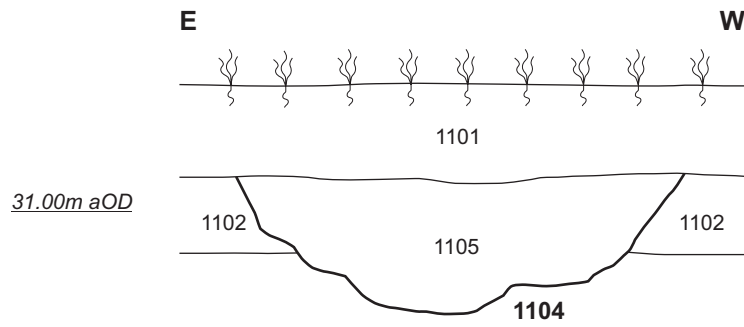
The trenches were 50m long by 2.10m wide except for trenches 1 and 2, which were shortened to 30m due to standing water, trench 8 which was 20m long and trench 15 which was shortened to 20m due to a pond at the eastern end and live cables at the western end. Trench 8 had a layer of made-up ground (804), above the topsoil. The layer was the dumped soils from the digging of a modern drainage ditch to the north-east of trench 8.

Only trenches 3 and 11 had possible features present. The features were excavated and recorded and were identified as tree holes cut from the topsoil, which were examples from the recent orchard that used to occupy the area (Fig 3, 304 and 1104). No archaeological features were present in any of the trenches and no artefacts were recovered.

Trench 8



Trench 11



Scale 1:25 (A4)

Sections of tree holes 304 and 1104 Fig 3



Trench 12, looking north Fig 4



Trench 15; looking east Fig 5

6 THE FINDS

No finds were retrieved from any of the trenches or excavated features.

7 PALEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

No samples were taken from any of the trenches as there were no suitable deposits.

8 DISCUSSION

The trial trench evaluation across the development area did not identify any surviving archaeological remains, only tree holes from an orchard that originally occupied the area.

No archaeological features were present in any of the trenches and no artefacts were recovered.

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EH 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide*, English Heritage

Kasia, G, 2013 *Brief for archaeological evaluation*, Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team

IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists

NA 2011 *Archaeological fieldwork manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

NA 2013 *Written Scheme for Investigation for archaeological trial trenching evaluation at Envar Sitel, The Heath, Somersham, Cambridgeshire*

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	30m x 2.10m N-S	TL 3376 7540	31.26m aOD	30.55m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.33m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown clay	0.28m thick	-
103	Layer	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.10m thick	-
104	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	40m x 2.10m N-S	TL 3378 7544	31.34m aOD	30.62m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.32m thick	-
202	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.40m thick	-
203	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	50m x 2.10m E-W	TL 3382 7544	31.25m aOD	30.75m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.20m thick	-
303	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	
304	Cut	Sub-circular, irregular base. Tree hole	1.40m wide by 0.55m deep	
305	Fill of [304]	Brown-grey silt loam clay, roots.	1.40m wide by 0.18m deep	-
306	Fill of [304]	Dark grey brown silt clay.	1.40m wide by 0.10m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	50m x 2.10m N-S	TL 3386 7541	31.36m aOD	30.80m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
402	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.26m thick	-
403	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	50m x 2.10m E-W	TL 3380 7540	31.44m aOD	30.86m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
502	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.28m thick	-
503	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
6	50m x 2.10m E-W	TL 3380 7538	31.55m aOD	31m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
602	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.25m thick	-
603	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
7	50m x 2.10m N-S	TL 3384 7537	31.83m aOD	31.23m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
702	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.30m thick	-
703	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
8	20m x 2.10m. NE-SW	TL 3381 7530	31.90m aOD	31.10m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
804	Layer	Made-up ground, mixed topsoil	0.40m thick	-
801	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.24m thick	-
802	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.16m thick	-
803	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
9	50m x 2.10m. E-W	TL 3376 7528	31.34m aOD	30.76m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
902	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.28m thick	-
903	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
10	50m x 2.10m. N-S	TL 3370 7528	31.46m aOD	30.96m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
1002	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.20m thick	-
1003	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
11	50m x 2.10m. E-W	TL 3375 7526	31.42m aOD	30.82m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1101	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.32m thick	-
1102	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.28m thick	-
1103	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	
1104	Cut	Sub-circular, irregular base. Tree hole	1.50m wide by 0.45m deep	
1105	Fill of [1104]	Dark brown grey silt clay loam, roots	1.50m wide by 0.45m deep	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
12	50m x 2.10m. N-S	TL 3378 7525	31.52m aOD	30.82m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1201	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.45m thick	-
1202	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.25m thick	-
1203	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
13	50m x 2.10m. E-W	TL 3373 7523	31.48m aOD	30.98m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1301	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
1302	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.20m thick	-
1303	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
14	50m x 2.10m. N-S	TL 3368 7525	31.59m aOD	31.04m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1401	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.25m thick	-
1402	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.30m thick	-
1403	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay	-	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
15	20m x 2.10m. E-W	TL 3364 7530	31.64m aOD	31.04m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1501	Topsoil	Firm dark grey-brown clay loam	0.30m thick	-
1502	Subsoil	Light brown-grey silt clay	0.30m thick	-
1503	Natural	Brown-grey chalky clay, pockets of orange sandy clay	-	



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