Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation on Land North of Bedford Road, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire

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Report 13/101

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OASIS REPORT FORM 151993

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Archaeological evaluation on land north of Bedford Road, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire, May 2013	
Short description	The geophysical survey identified linear anomalies and an area of disturbance which matched post-medieval field boundaries and a pond marked on the first edition OS map. The trial trenches targeted these features and 'blank' areas in order to clarify the presence or absence of any further archaeological potential. As per the geophysical results, post-medieval hedgerows and a pond were indentified in the trial trenches. No further archaeology was observed.	
Project type	Evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Arable and set-aside	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	Post-medieval field boundaries and pond	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Bedford Road, Yardley Hastings	
Study area	2.3ha	
OS Easting & Northing	486206 257010	
Height above OD	*c* 80m aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Assistant County Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Chris Chinnock, John Walford	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull	
Sponsor or funding body	Wilbraham Associates Ltd on behalf of Compton Estates	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	May 2013	
End date	May 2013	
ARCHIVES	**Location**	**Content**
Physical	YBH13 Northamptonshire Archaeology stores	
Paper		Archive box of site pro-forma sheets, permatrace and other documents
Digital	YBH13	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological evaluation on land north of Bedford Road, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire, May 2013	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology 13/101	
Author(s)	Chris Chinnock	

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ON LAND NORTH OF BEDFORD ROAD, YARDLEY HASTINGS, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE. MAY 2013

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by Wilbraham Associates Ltd to undertake a geophysical survey and trial trenching evaluation on land to the north of Bedford Road, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire.

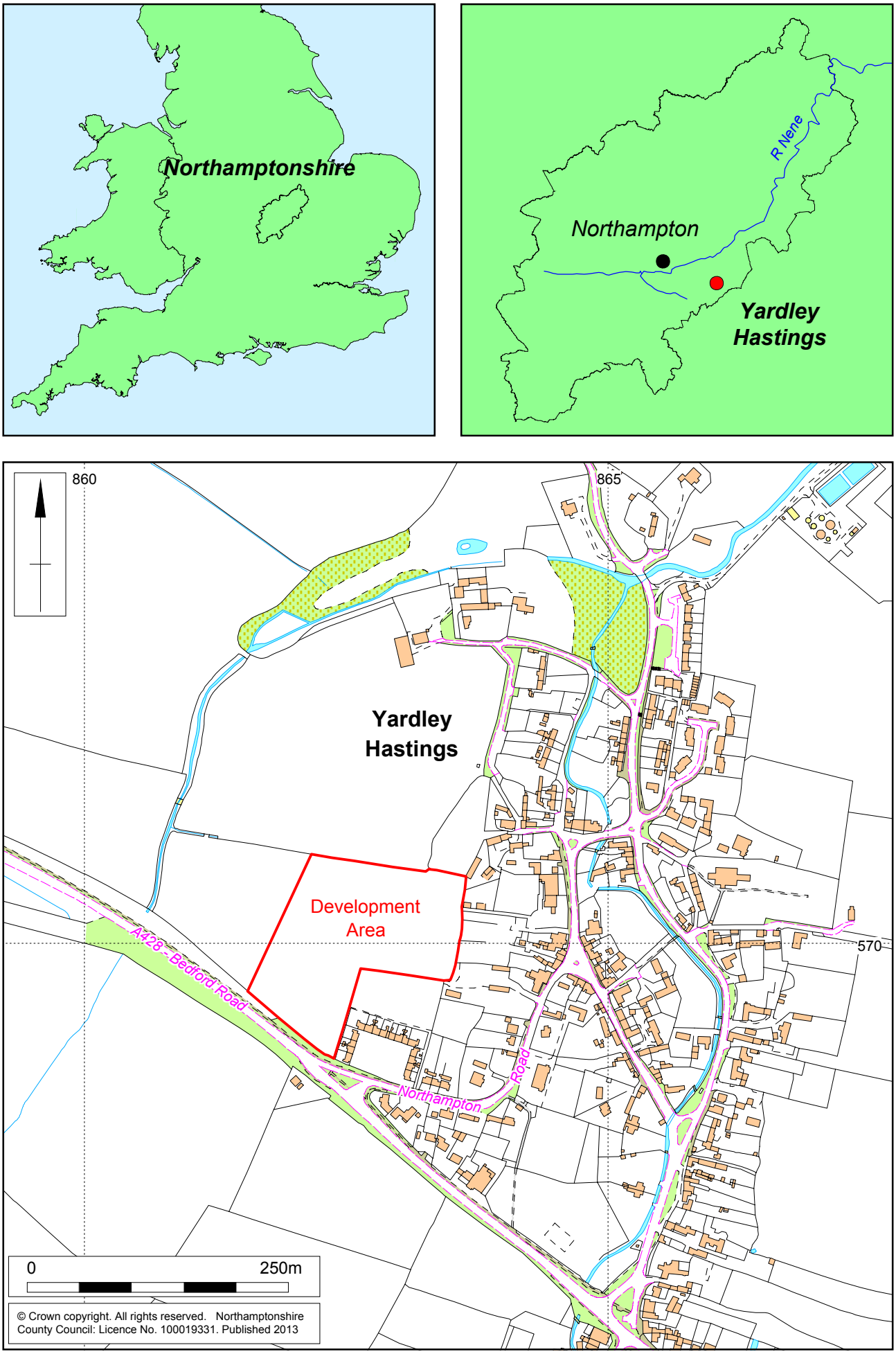
Geophysical and cartographic evidence suggest that the field was previously divided up into smaller parcels of land by ditches and/or hedge lines running north to south and east to west with a pond or quarry at their junction.

Remnants of post-medieval field boundaries, corresponding with fields shown on historic maps, were identified in the trial trenches. A pond, backfilled during the 20th century was also recorded. No other features of archaeological interest were discovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

Wilbraham Associates Ltd, commissioned Northamptonshire Archaeology to undertake archaeological work on a proposed development site on land off Bedford Road, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire (NGR 486206 257010, Fig 1). The archaeological works comprised magnetometry survey across 3ha of land followed by trial trenching, comprising 150 linear metres.

The works were required in response to a planning application for residential development, in line with *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). A Written Scheme of Investigation was produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology for both phases of work (NA 2013) following a Brief from the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor (NCC 2013). The works were monitored by the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council.



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, topography and geology

The development area occupies the eastern half of a field on the western edge of Yardley Hastings village. The southern boundary of the site is formed by Bedford Road (A428), to the east lies the historical core of Yardley Hastings village, to the west and north lie arable and pasture fields. The topography comprises a rolling landscape to the east of planned parkland and avenue of Castle Ashby. Geology is limestone of the Great Oolite Group and Limestone Cornbrash overlain with Diamicton glacial tills (http://www.bgs.ac.uk/)

General site view, looking north-west Fig 2

2.2 Archaeological background

A search of Northamptonshire's Historic Environment Record (HER) and available literature has allowed the following historical and archaeological summary to be written. Yardley Hastings lies in an archaeological rich landscape which was studied as part of a scoping exercise for the River Nene Regional Park bid to develop the cultural and community resources (Simmonds 2007).

The village itself appears to have Middle/Late Anglo-Saxon beginnings with ditches (HER 3340/0/3) and buildings (HERs 3340/1/5, 3340/1/6, 3340/1/4) recorded during excavations. The medieval village had at its core a church dedicated to St Andrew (HER 3340/2/1) and a manor, which in the 13th century passed to the de Hastings family (HER 3340/1; Salzman 1937). The manorial complex situated to north-east of the village comprises earthworks and garden (HER 3340/1/3) enclosed with a ditch and bank earthwork (RCHME 1979). In 1314 the manor was awarded the right to hold a market (HER 3340/3) and a fair (HER 3340/4). The principal local industries related to the Royal Hunting Forest of Salcey and Yardley Chase as well as pottery production. Remains of a 13th/14th-century pottery kiln (HER 3340/5/1) were found during excavation on the southern side of Bedford Road, approximately 150m to the

south-east of the site. The village and manor was surrounded by open fields, the vestiges of which survive as ridge and furrow earthworks (HERs 10104/1, 10104/2, 10104/3, 10104/4, 10104/5).

The two principal landscape changes in the post-medieval period were the parliamentary enclosure of common land in 1776 (RCHME 1979) and the emparkation of land as part of the creation of the Castle Ashby Estate (HER 3321). Analysis of the available historic map sources show that the village expanded piecemeal into the 19th and 20th centuries (www.old-maps.co.uk). The proposed development area was in an area of agricultural land on the periphery of the village. The fields close to the village were characterised by small rectangular parcels of land.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 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 following information was required to allow the development of a strategy for further investigation of the site:

- *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).

3.2 Methodology

Geophysical survey

The survey was conducted with Bartington Grad 601-2, twin sensor array, vertical component fluxgate gradiometers (Bartington and Chapman 2003). These are standard instruments for archaeological survey and can resolve magnetic variations as slight as 0.1 nanoTesla (nT).

A network of 30m grid squares was established across the area to be surveyed. This was laid out with a tape measure and optical square and was tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid by measurement to field boundaries and other points of detail. The gradiometers were carried at a brisk but steady pace through each grid square, collecting data along 1m spaced traverse lines. Measurements were automatically triggered every 0.25m along the traverses, giving a total of 3600 measurements per square.

All fieldwork methods complied with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and by the Institute for Archaeologists and with the method statement for this project (EH 2008; IfA 2011; NA 2013).

The survey data was processed using Geoplot 3.00v software. Striping, caused by slight mismatches in sensor balance, was removed using the 'Zero Mean Traverse' function and destaggering of the data was performed as necessary.

The processed data is presented in this report in the form of grey-tone plots, at a scale of +/- 4nT black/white. The plots have been scaled, rotated and resampled (georectified) for display against the Ordnance Survey base mapping (Fig 2). An interpretative overlay has been produced and is shown in Figure 4. The unprocessed survey data is presented as greyscale plots in Figure 5.

Trial trenching

The works were conducted in accordance with the specification (NA 2013) and following discussions with the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor. The following guidelines were adhered to: *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008) and the *Code of Conduct* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, revised 2010). The work was monitored by the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council

Trial trenching comprised the excavation of five trenches. All of the trenches measured 30m by 1.8m. The trenches were machine-excavated in dry conditions using a toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were positioned in accordance with the trench location plan approved by the Assistant County Archaeological Advisor to Northamptonshire and have been related to Ordnance Survey National Grid (Fig 6). On completion of archaeological recording the trenches were backfilled. There was no requirement for specialist re-instatement.

The topsoil, subsoil and non-structural post-medieval and later deposits were removed to reveal archaeological remains or where absent to the natural. The topsoil was stacked separately from the subsoil and other deposits. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification of any features.

All deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were given a separate context number and fully recorded. Recording followed standard Northamptonshire Archaeology procedures. Deposits were described on pro-forma context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds.

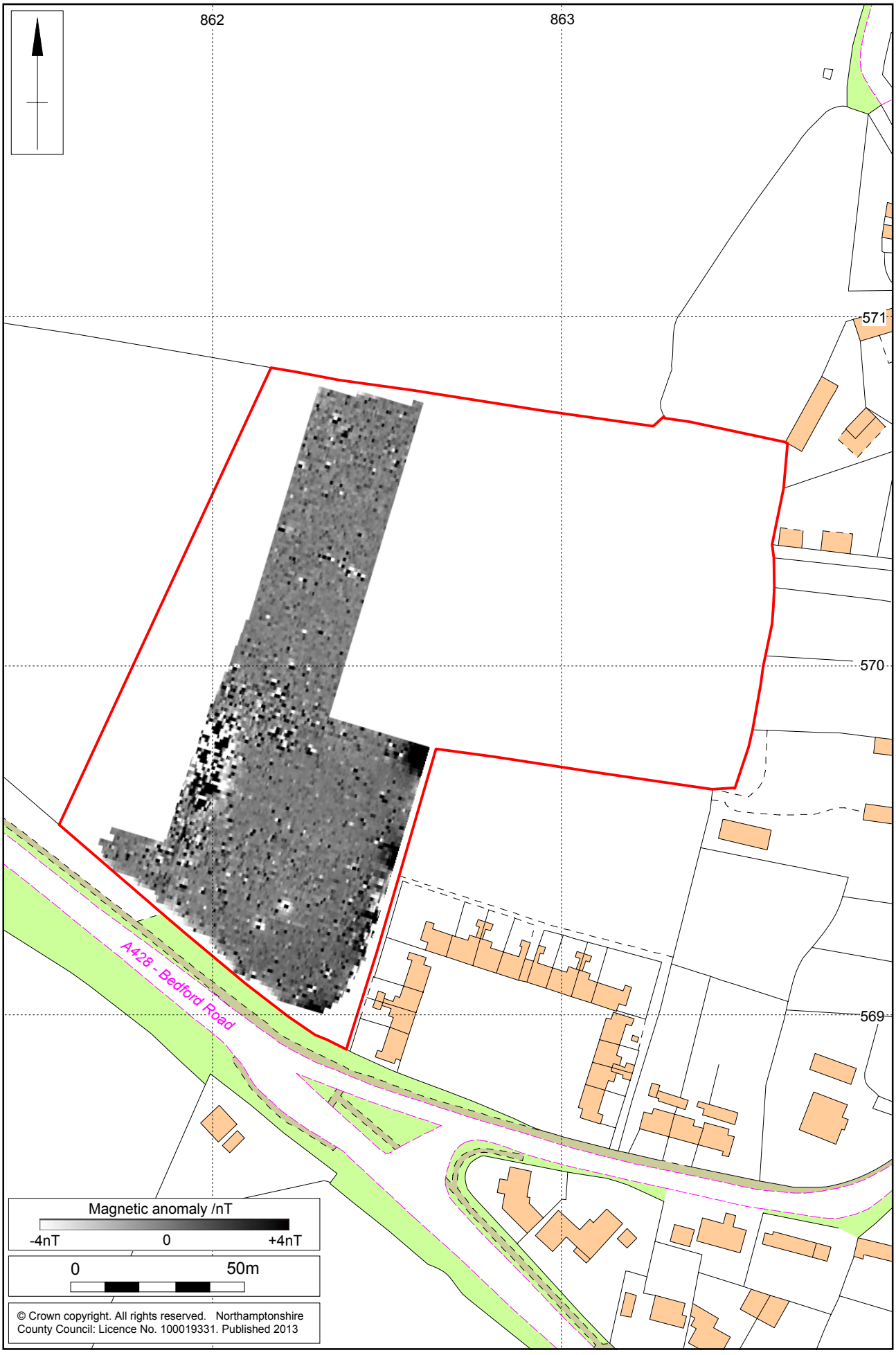
The trenches were planned at a scale of either 1:50 or 1:100. Sections of the sequence of deposits in each trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 and related to Ordnance Datum. The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned visually and with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

A full photographic record comprising 35mm black and white film and digital images was maintained. The field data has been compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

4 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

The geophysical survey detected an area of magnetic 'noise', located at the western edge of the survey area and coinciding with a slight depression in the field surface. It is likely to represent a former pond backfilled with ferrous debris and brick rubble. To the south of the former pond, a weakly positive linear anomaly aligned roughly north to south has been detected. Similarly to the east of the pond a further weakly positive linear is noted aligned roughly east to west. These represent former field boundaries as marked on an ordnance survey map from the 1880s.

At the eastern edge of the survey area there are several small magnetic halos, arising from the adjacent fence. There are also some small dipolar anomalies, distributed at random across the survey area, which represent pieces of ferrous debris within the ploughsoil.

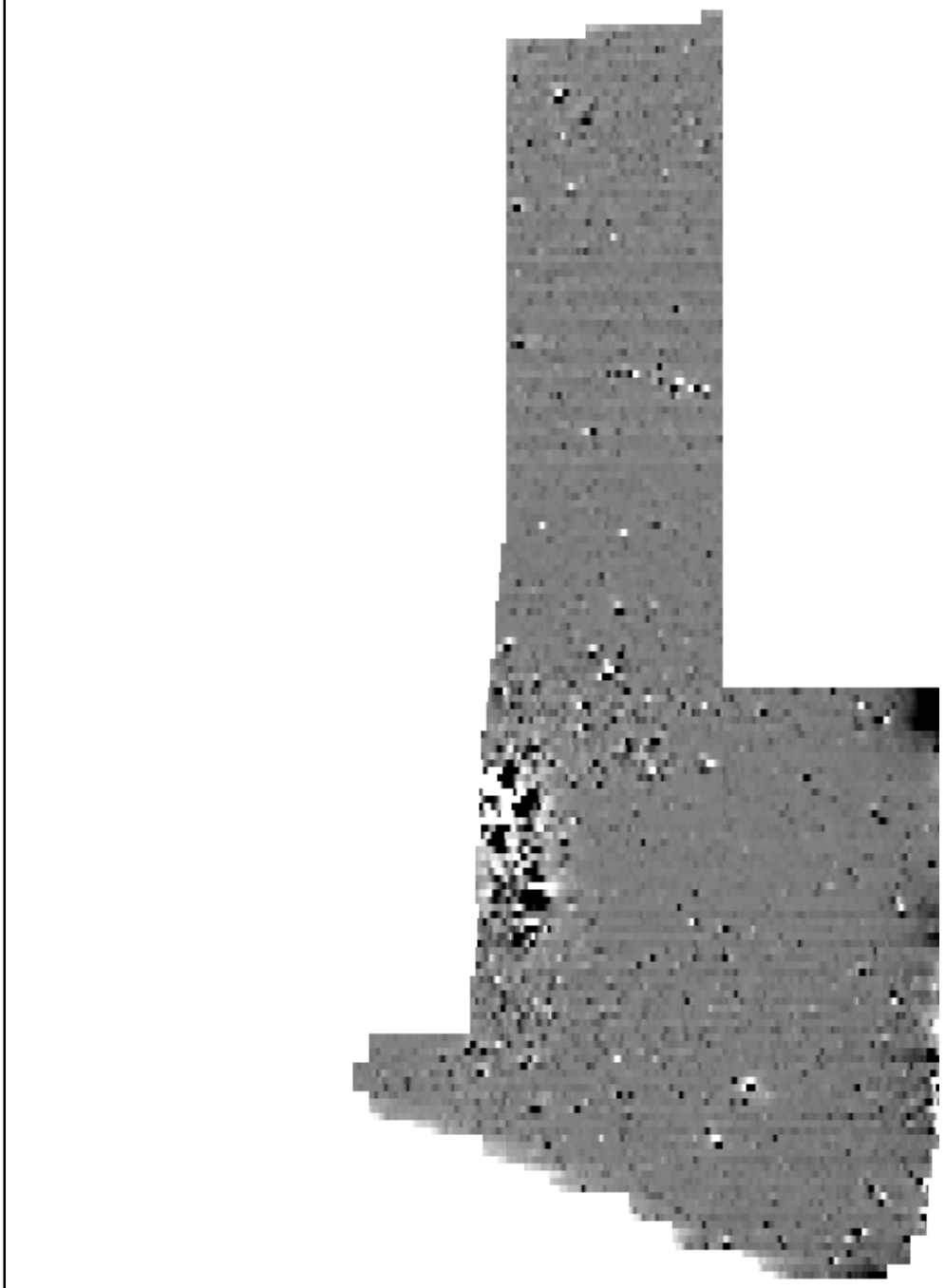


Scale 1:1500

The geophysical survey results Fig 3

Scale 1:1500

The geophysical survey results with interpretation Fig 4



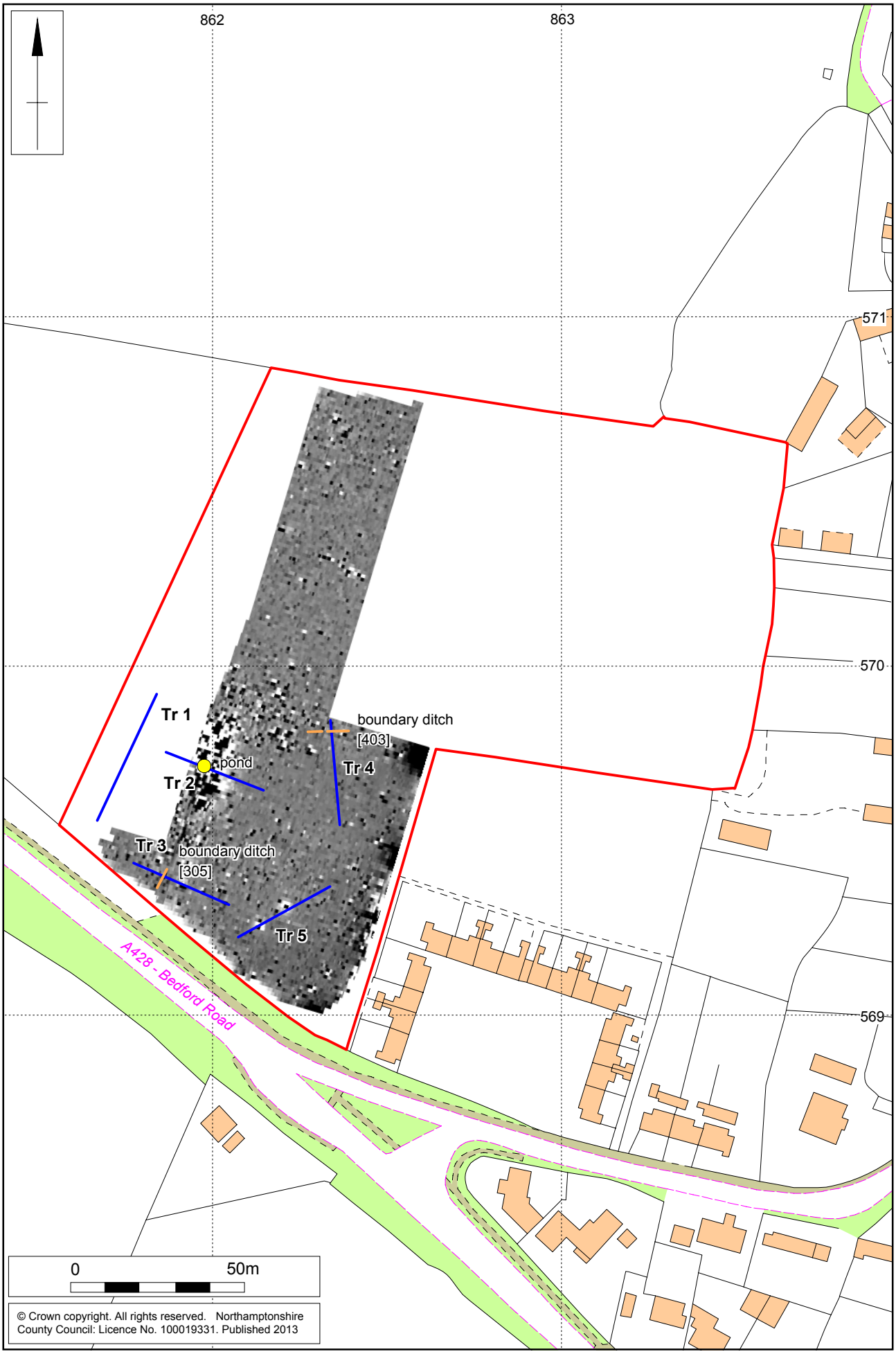
Magnetic anomaly /nT

-4nT 0 +4nT

0 50m

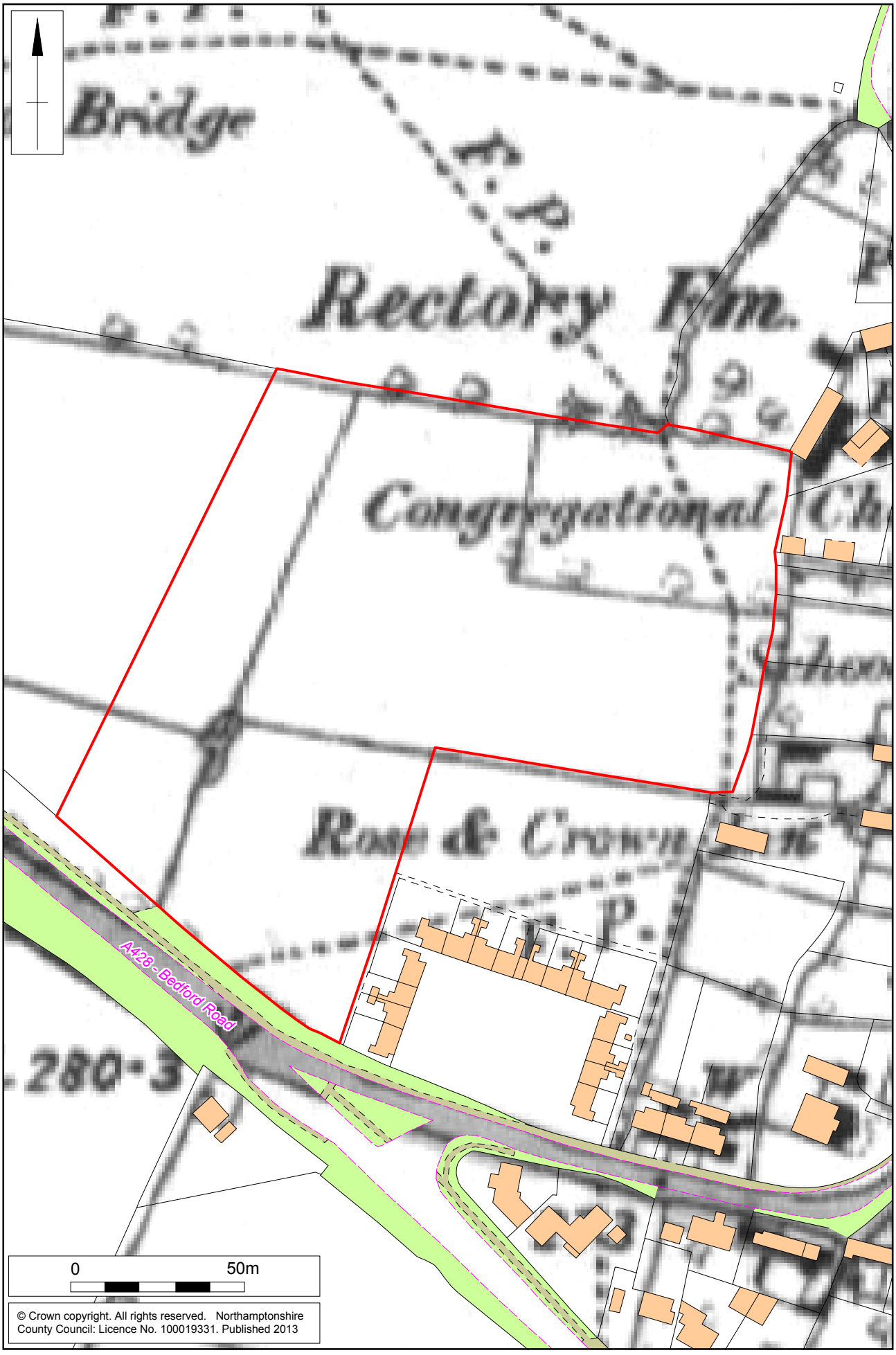
Scale 1:1000 (A4)

Raw geophysical survey data Fig 5



Scale 1:1500

The excavated trenches Fig 6



Scale 1:1500 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880's Fig 7

5 TRIAL TRENCHING

Five trenches were excavated, all of which were 30m in length and 1.6m wide. The natural soils typically comprise mid-yellow brown glacial tills, encountered at an depth of between 0.34m and 0.46m below the modern ground surface. Plough scarring was noted across the site, evident in all trenches to varying degrees. Post-medieval field boundaries were noted in Trenches 3 and 4. Trench 2 had a large post-medieval pond.

Trench 1

This trench was aligned north-north-east to south-south-west.

This trench showed no features of archaeological interest. The natural comprised mid-yellow brown clay occurring at a depth of between 0.38m and 0.41m below the current ground surface.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned west-north-west to east-south-east.

The natural substrate (203) was a mid yellow-brown clay occurring between 0.35m and 0.46m below the current ground surface. The subsoil (202) was 0.10m – 0.21m thick and consisted of mid brown silty clay, overlain by the topsoil, (201) (0.25m thick) mid brown silty clay loam.

A large recently backfilled pond [205] was present in the centre of the trench. The fill (204) comprised dark brown silty clay loam with lots of brick rubble, tile, ferrous debris and glass. The pond was present over 6.2m of the trench and existed to an unknown depth. The feature was left unexcavated due to the obviously modern backfill.

Trench 2 looking south-west with pond in the centre Fig 8

Trench 3

The natural substrate (303) was a mid yellow-brown clay occurring between 0.34m and 0.43m below the current ground surface. The subsoil (302) was 0.10m – 0.15m thick and consisted of mid brown silty clay, overlain by the topsoil, (301) (0.20m – 0.34m thick) mid brown silty clay loam.

A very diffuse and irregular linear feature [305] was present toward the north-east end of the trench aligned north-east to south-west. It was approximately 1.2m wide and 0.34m deep with extremely ephemeral boundaries. The fill (304) was made up of mixed yellow-brown silty clay, very similar to the surrounding natural. Rotten roots were observed throughout the fill. The feature corresponds with the geophysical results and most likely represents a post-medieval boundary marked on the 1880s 1st edition ordance survey map (Fig 7).

Trench 4

The natural substrate (403) was mid yellow-brown clay occurring at 0.37m below the current ground surface. The subsoil (402) was 0.05m thick and consisted of mid brown silty clay, overlain by the topsoil, (401) (0.32m thick) mid brown silty clay loam.

A diffuse linear feature [405] was observed toward the northern end of the trench aligned rough east to west. It was 0.50m wide and 0.16m deep with ephemeral boundaries. The fill (403) was made up of firm mid brown silty clay with root disturbance and rare stone inclusions. This linear also corresponds with a post-medieval field boundary on the 1880s 1st edition ordnance survey map. Part of this boundary still exists as a hedgerow to the west of the field.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned north-east to south-west.

This trench showed no features of archaeological interest. The natural comprised mid-yellow brown clay occurring at a depth of between 0.34m and 0.42m below the current ground surface.

6 DISCUSSION

The trial trenching evaluation has confirmed the results of the magnetometer survey. Nothing of archaeological significance was recorded in any of the trenches other than the post-medieval field boundaries and large pond.

Diffuse and irregular linear features characteristic of hedgerows were recorded in Trenches 3 and 4 as anticipated in light of the geophysical results and cartographic evidence (Fig 7). Trench 1 did not locate the field boundary indicated on the 1880s 1st edition ordnance survey map, most likely it has been lost due to modern ploughing.

Material observed in the backfill of the pond in Trench 2 included brick rubble, ferrous debris and glass. This kind of material results in the typically ‘noisy’ magnetic readings evident in the geophysical data. Conversations with the current landowner confirm that the pond was backfilled and hedge boundaries removed in the 1960s to 1970s.

Many of the surrounding fields show extant medieval ridge and furrow earthworks. No evidence for ridge and furrow was encountered in any of the trenches. Moderate to severe plough scarring in all of the trenches suggest modern ploughing has destroyed the ridge and furrow, if indeed it existed in this area.

No evidence was found in either in the geophysical or trial trenching results that suggest activity related to the medieval pottery kilns (HER 3340/5/1) found to the south of Bedford Road extended into the area of proposed development.

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http://www.bgs.ac.uk

Northamptonshire Archaeology
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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1	**Length, Width & Alignment 30mx1.6m NE-SW**		**Surface Height 83.14m aOD**	**Height of Natural 82.73m aOD**
Context	***Context Type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/ Samples***
101	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay loam	0.28m thick	N/A
102	Subsoil	Mid brown-grey silty clay	0.10m thick	N/A
103	Natural	Mid brown-yellow silty clay		N/A

Trench 2	**Length, Width & Alignment 30mx1.6m E-W**		**Surface Height 83.46m aOD**	**Height of Natural 83.06m aOD**
Context	***Context Type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/ Samples***
201	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay loam	0.25m thick	N/A
202	Subsoil	Mid brown-grey silty clay	0.15m thick	N/A
203	Natural	Mid brown-yellow silty clay		N/A
204	Fill of [205]	Dark brown silty clay loam filled with modern brick rubble and ferrous material	6.2m wide	N/A
205	Cut of pond	Wide irregulary shaped pon, unexcavated	6.2m wide	N/A

Trench 3	**Length, Width & Alignment 30mx1.6m E-W**		**Surface Height 83.50m aOD**	**Height of Natural 83.16m aOD**
Context	***Context Type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/ Samples***
301	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay loam	0.25m thick	N/A
302	Subsoil	Mid brown-grey silty clay	0.12m thick	N/A
303	Natural	Mid brown-yellow silty clay		N/A
304	Fill of [305]	Compact, plastic mid brown-grey clay , occasional root intrusion and rare stone inclusions	0.34m deep, roughly 1.2m wide	N/A
305	Cut of ditch	Irregular linear aligned roughly north-south. Very ephemeral edges	0.34m deep, roughly 1.2m wide	N/A

Trench 4	**Length, Width & Alignment 30mx1.6m N-S**		**Surface Height 83.98m aOD**	**Depth & Height of Natural 83.61m aOD**
Context	***Context Type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/ Samples***
401	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay loam	0.32m thick	N/A
402	Subsoil	Mid brown-grey silty clay	0.05m thick	N/A
403	Cut of ditch	Small linear for post-medieval hedgerow with irregular and ephemeral edges	0.16m thick and 0.50m wide	N/A
404	Natural	Mid brown-yellow silty clay		N/A
405	Fill of [403]	Firm dark brown silty clay, post-medieval brick visible on the surface	0.16m thick and 0.50m wide	N/A

Trench 5	**Length, Width & Alignment 30mx1.6m NE-SW**		**Surface Height 84.36m aOD**	**Depth & Height of Natural**
Context	***Context Type***	***Description***	***Dimensions***	***Artefacts/ Samples***
501	Topsoil	Mid brown silty clay loam	0.30m thick	N/A
502	Subsoil	Mid brown-grey silty clay	0.06m thick	N/A
503	Natural	Mid brown-yellow silty clay		N/A

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