



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation
on land west of Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire
May- June 2013



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Report 13/120
July 2013



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS NUMBER: 155056	
Project name	Archaeological evaluation on land west of Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire.		
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by Bloor Homes South Midlands, to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Banbury Road, Southam. The works followed a geophysical survey. Two fields were targeted, Field 2, a pasture field and Field 7, a sports stadium. The evaluation identified post-medieval or modern drainage features in Field 2. Trenching in Field 7 identified areas of modern disturbance associated with the construction of the sports facilities.		
Project type	Evaluation- trial trenching		
Site status	None		
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Walford 2011)		
Current Land use	Pasture and recreational		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type	None		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Warwickshire		
Site address	Land off Banbury Road, Southam		
Study area	22ha		
OS Easting & Northing	SP 41594 60945		
Height OD	81m		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Project brief originator	Warwickshire Museum Services		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Director/Supervisor	J Burke		
Project Manager	A Yates		
Sponsor or funding body	Bloor Homes South Midlands		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	28/05/2013		
End date	07/06/2013		
ARCHIVES		Location	Content
Physical			1 archive box of site forms and records
Paper			Digital photographs, pdf of report and dxf data
Digital			
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title	Archaeological evaluation on land West of Banbury Road, Southam , Warwickshire, May- June 2013		
Serial title & volume	NA report 13/120		
Author(s)	Jim Burke		
Page numbers	36 pages text and illustrations		
Date	June 2013		

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
ON LAND WEST OF BANBURY ROAD
SOUTHAM, WARWICKSHIRE
MAY- JUNE 2013**

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by Bloor Homes South Midlands, to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land west of Banbury Road, Southam. The works followed a geophysical survey. Two fields were targeted, Field 2, a pasture field and Field 7, a sports stadium. The evaluation identified post-medieval or modern drainage features in Field 2. Trenching in Field 7 identified areas of modern disturbance associated with the construction of the sports facilities.

1 INTRODUCTION

Bloor Homes South Midlands, commissioned Northamptonshire Archaeology to undertake archaeological work on the proposed development site on land to the west of Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire (NGR 441594 260945, Fig 1).

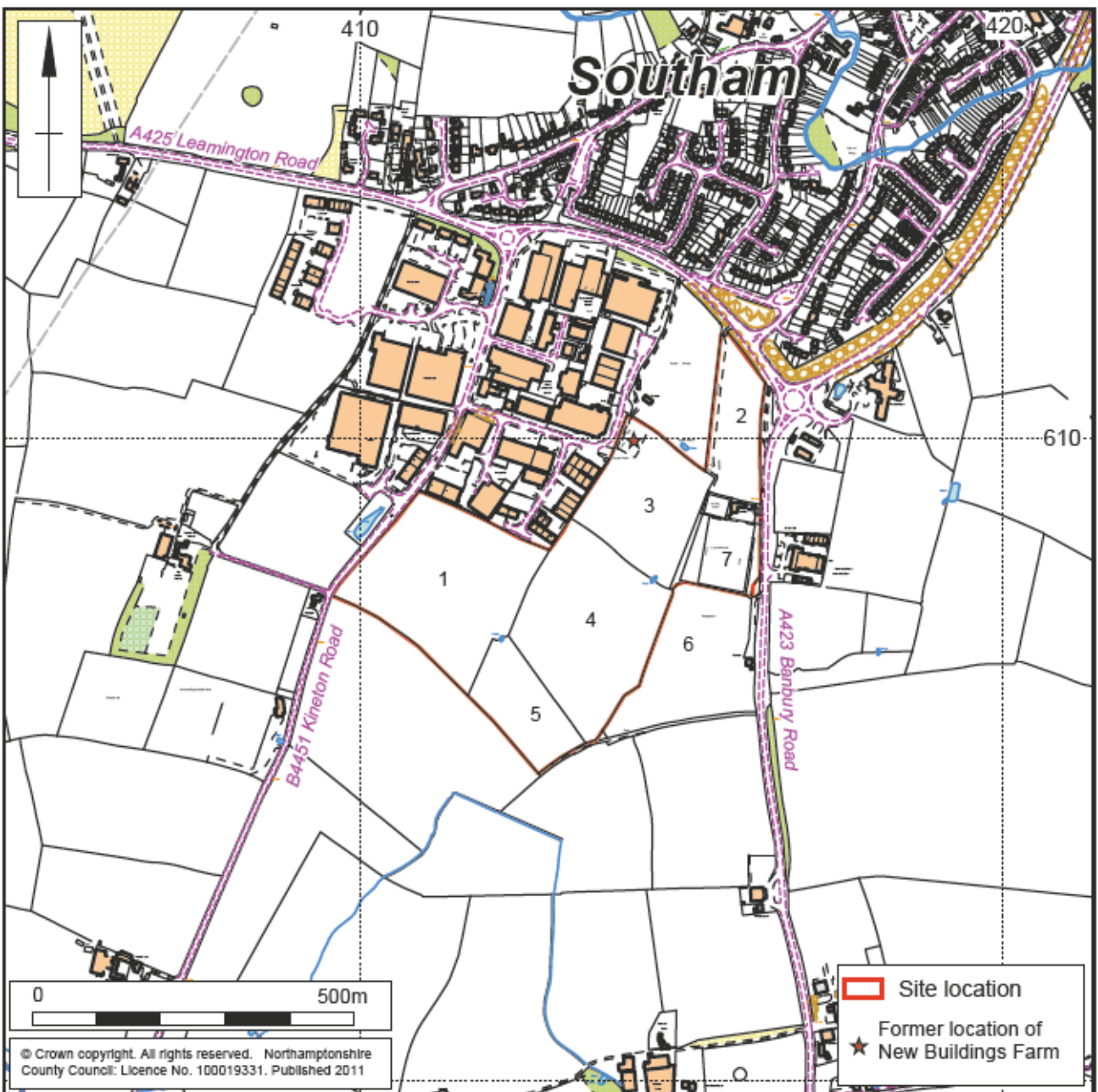
The new development will comprise a mixed use site incorporating residential and employment areas together with an expansion and partial relocation of the existing sports facilities. The entire area was subject to geophysical survey (Walford 2011). Based upon the results of this two areas, Fields 2 and 7, were identified for pre-determination trial trenching. Field 2 is a pasture fields which has a pond in the centre, Field 7 comprises the stadium of Southam United Football Club.

The works were required in response to the forthcoming planning application, in line with National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (DCLG 2012). A Project Specification was produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology for the trial trench evaluation work (NA 2013) in response to a generic brief issued by the Planning Archaeologist at Warwickshire County Council, who also monitored the works.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The proposed development occupies approximately 18.8ha of land, located on the south side of Southam and bounded to the west by Kineton Road, to the east by Banbury Road and to the north by the A425 Leamington Road (Fig 1). The south-western part of this area is currently occupied by Southam United, whilst the remainder is comprises agricultural land. The site is topographically subdued, sloping down gently from 87m AOD in the west to 81m AOD in the east. It is underlain by the Blue Lias (BGS 1984), which supports clayey soils of the Denchworth and Evesham associations (SSEW 1983).



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1



1:2,000

Trial trench locations Fig 2

2.2 Archaeological background

There are no known archaeological findspots or sites within the survey area itself, but a number of Iron Age and Roman coins have been found immediately to the north-west, near to the Kineton Road Industrial Estate (Warwickshire SMR Nos. 763 & 765).

During the middle ages, the survey area is likely to have been in agricultural use, as indicated by the surviving remnants of ridge and furrow. The first edition Ordnance Survey shows that the land remained largely undeveloped in the late 19th century although, some time prior to 1887, a group of farm buildings had been constructed towards the north-east of the survey area, at SP 4142 6100. These buildings are named on a subsequent edition of the map as 'New Buildings Farm'.

A geophysical survey of the (Walford 2011) identified one group of archaeological anomalies in Field 6, lying close to the eastern edge of the survey area at SP 4158 2607, although Field 6 no longer form part of the application. These seemed to represent a roundhouse and a length of ditch of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date. It is possible that this site is more extensive than the survey data suggested, although there are no indications that these remains extend westwards into the development area. There were several other anomalies in the data which could represent small kilns or concentrations of ceramic material but, as none was diagnostic enough to be interpreted with confidence, their archaeological significance remained unclear. The remaining parts of the survey data contained little of interest, apart from parallel linear anomalies indicative of medieval or later ridge and furrow cultivation. This suggested that no substantial archaeological remains exist across the majority of the survey area, although it does not entirely preclude the presence of inhumations, post-built structures or other relatively small or ephemeral features.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The aim of the investigation was to determine if archaeological remains are present within the application area.

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

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

3.2 Methodology

The works were conducted in accordance with the specification (NA 2013) and the following guidance documents: *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a) and the *Code of Conduct* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008b) and in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (NA 2013) and Brief.

Trial trenching comprised the excavation of eight (8) trial trenches 50m long and 1.8m wide in Field 2 and six (6) 10m long trenches in Field 7 (Fig 2). Total length of trenching was 460 linear metres. Trenches were targeted on the few geophysical anomalies detected in the survey and to investigate the potentially blank areas.

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

The sequence of all deposits encountered during the course of the excavation were given a separate context number and fully recorded. Recording followed standard Northamptonshire Archaeology procedures (NA 2011). Deposits were described on pro-forma context sheets to include details of the context, its relationships and interpretation.

The machined surface was cleaned by hand sufficiently to identify and establish the extent of archaeological features, if present. Trenches containing archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50.

A full photographic record comprising both 35mm black and white negatives and colour transparencies were maintained, supplemented with high resolution digital photographs. The field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

All artefacts encountered were of modern date and not retained. No samples were taken.

4 EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 Field 2

Detailed context information is provided in an Appendix. In general, the trenches were between 0.40m and 0.80m deep. The natural soils comprised Blue Lias clays with bands of glacial tills and sands and gravels and lay between 0.45m and 0.68m below modern ground level. The natural was overlain by well developed subsoil generally comprising sterile yellowish-brown or greyish-brown clays generally 0.25-0.35m deep. The topsoil was a layer of dark brown or dark greyish brown sandy clays, measuring between 0.20m and 0.30m deep.

Potential archaeological features were observed in Trench 1 (which also contained ridge and furrow), Trench 2 and Trench 6.

Trench 1

Shallow remains of medieval furrows, aligned north – south, were noted. These were cut by two post-medieval or modern gullies [105] and [109], aligned east to west, which were cut through the subsoil (Fig 3). These both had similar profiles, comprising steep sloping sides to concave bases, averaging 0.38m wide and 0.2m deep. The fills, (104) and (108) comprised sterile light gray-orange brown silty clays. These features probably relate to previous land division or attempts to improve drainage.



Trench 1 Gully [109], looking west Fig 3

Trench 2

Ditch [205] aligned north-east to south-west was 1.2m wide and 0.6m deep, cut from beneath the topsoil through the subsoil (Fig 3). It had steeply sloping sides and a concave base, with a fill of clean grey-brown silty sandy clay (204).



Trench 2 Ditch [204], looking south-west Fig 4

Trench 6

In addition to numerous land drains, Trench 6 contained a gully [604], aligned east to west (Fig 3). This was 0.55m wide and 0.16m deep, with a fill of mid grey-brown silty clay (603), which was similar to the subsoil. It was unclear as to whether this feature was cut through or from beneath the subsoil.



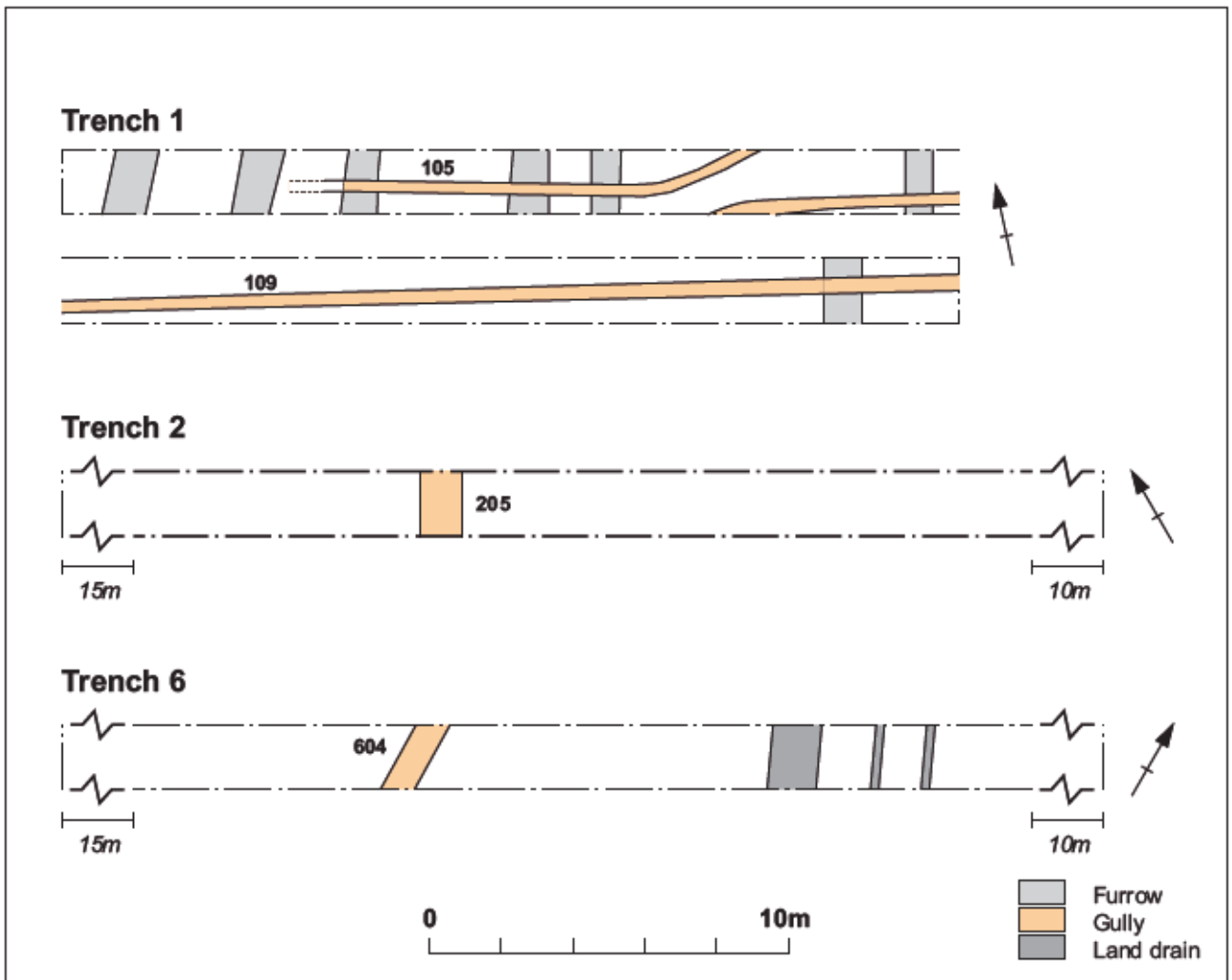
Trench 6 Gully [604], looking east Fig 5

4.2 Field 7

Trenches 9 and 10 were excavated on the perimeter of the north-eastern corner of the football pitch (Fig 2). Trench 9 was abandoned after removal topsoil as a live electric cable present running along its length. The stratigraphy in Trench 10 comprised mid-brown silty clay natural, encountered at a depth of 0.32-0.4m, overlain by mid grey-brown silty clay loam subsoil and mid brown silty clay loam topsoil. A small modern pit or posthole at the west end of the trench [1007], had a fill (1006) that included modern air brick and rubble.

Trenches 11 and 12 were excavated in a car park to the east of the football ground (Fig 2). Natural comprised mid brown-gray silty clay encountered at a depth of 0.48-0.53m. In Trench 11 this was overlain by further clay layers, possibly representing levelling deposits associated with the car park, and overlain by the hardcore. Cutting the levelling layers and directly beneath the hardcore was a shallow ditch [1105] whose fill (1104) contained modern brick and tile. In Trench 12 hardcore had been placed directly over the natural clays. The absence of preserved topsoil or subsoil in these trenches indicates that the area had been stripped prior to construction of the car park.

Trenches 13 and 14 were excavated to the west of the football pitch, in the south-west corner of Field 7 (Fig 2). In both trenches mid brown silty clay natural was encountered at a depth of 0.4-0.6m. This was overlain by a levelling layer containing modern hardcore and rubble, overlain by the topsoil. As with Trenches 11 and 12 the absence of any preserved topsoil or subsoil beneath the levelling layer would indicate that this area has been previously stripped.



Scale 1:200

Plans of trenches 1 & 6 Fig 6

5 DISCUSSION

Archaeological features were encountered in the southern end of Field 2. These appeared to mostly be related to post-medieval or modern attempts to improve drainage. Consultation with the farmer suggests that the feature in Trench 6 related to improving run-off when the pond in the central part of the field overflowed.

The trenches in Field 7 the car park and to the west of the football pitch encountered modern disturbance, suggesting that this area had been subject to disturbance during the construction of the stadium and related infrastructure. It is uncertain how much this would extend into the pitch itself although the soil profile in Trench 10 did not appear to have been disturbed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS 1984 *Map sheet 184 (Warwick)*, 1:50,000 series, British Geological Survey

DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government

IfA 2008a *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists

IfA 2008b *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists

NA 2011 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

NA 2013 *Archaeological trial Trench Evaluation, Banbury Road, Southam, Warwickshire, Written Scheme of Investigation*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

SSEW 1983 *Soils of England and Wales, Map sheet 3 (Midland and Western England)*, Soil Survey of England and Wales 1:250,000 series

Walford, J, 2011 *Archaeological geophysical survey of land between Banbury Road and Kineton Road, Southam, Warwickshire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology report, **11/186**

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Field 2

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	50m x 2m, E-W	SP 41584 60927	80.48	0.62m – 0.80m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
100	Topsoil	Dark blackish-brown silty clay. Frequent small flints, gravel and small stones	0.20m	
101	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay, occasional orange clay mottling and frequent rounded pebbles	0.42m-0.60m	
102	Natural	Firm mid brownish-orange. Frequent patches/banks of brown-grey clay. Patches of orange sandy gravel and natural chalk fleck. Moderate gravel and small rounded pebbles		
103	Void	Void	Void	Void
104	Fill of 105	Of drainage ditch/gully. Compact light grey-orange – brown clay. Possible disturbance by tree hole	0.38m wide 0.20m deep	
105	Drainage ditch/gully	Of drainage ditch/gully. Linear, NE-SW, flat base.	0.38m wide 0.20m deep	
106	Fill of 107	Firm mid grey-brown silty clay. Fill of shallow furrow	0.80m wide 0.16m deep	
107	Furrow	Linear, N-S, u-shaped and very shallow. Flat base	0.80m wide 0.16m deep	
108	Fill of gully 109	Firm, mid brownish grey clay. Frequent small angular stones and occasional small flint chunks. Some patches of orange sandy clay. Boundaries clear to natural	0.40m wide 0.21m deep	
109	Gully	Linear, roughly E-W. Soft V-shaped profile with gently sloping sides, concave base.	0.40m wide 0.21m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	50m x 2m, NW-SE	SP 41602 60954	80.54	0.52m-0.68m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/samples</i>
200	Topsoil	Dark blackish-brown silty clay. Occasional ironstone and brick fragments. Frequent gravels and quartz	0.20m	
201	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown silty clay. Frequent gravel, flint, chalk and rounded pebbles. Occasional quartz	0.32-0.48m	
202	Natural	Mid brown-grey sandy clay. Frequent banks of orange sandy gravel. Frequent quartz pebbles, chalk flecks, rounded pebbles		
203	Void	Void	Void	Void
204	Fill of 205	Firm grey-brown very silty sandy clay. Rare gravel and very rare chalk flecks. Clear boundaries. No dating	1.20m wide 0.60m deep	
205	Drainage gully	Of drainage gully. Cuts subsoil. Linear, NE-SW, 45degree sides, concave base	1.20m wide 0.60m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	50m x 2m, NE-SW	SP 41602 60992	80.83	0.57m-0.67m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
300	Topsoil	Dark black-brown silty clay. Frequent gravels, occasional stone fragments and quartz pebbles	0.23m	
301	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay. Occasional natural chalk fragments, moderate flint fragments, frequent quartz pebbles	0.37-0.46m	
302	Natural	Mid grey-orange silty clay. Frequent natural chalk flecks and rounded pebbles, flint chunks. Frequent pockets of firm blue/grey clay, patches of orange sandy gravel. Occasional patches of mid grey clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	50m x 2m, NE-SW	SP 41569 60998	80.75	0.47m-0.54m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
400	Topsoil	Dark blackish-brown silty clay. Plough scars visible. Frequent quartz and flint pebbles, occasional small, angular stone chippings	0.19m	-
401	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay. Frequent quartz and flint, frequent small, rounded cobbles	0.27-0.36m	-
402	Natural	Mid orange-grey clay. Frequent small, rounded pebbles and pockets and orange sandy gravel. Moderate blue/grey clay pockets and frequent patches of chalk flecks	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	50m x 2m, E-W	SP 41587 61020	890.87	0.50m-0.64m
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
500	Topsoil	Dark black-brown silty clay. Organic fibrous inclusions, moderate rounded pebbles and flint	0.22m	
501	Subsoil	Mid-dark brown silty clay. Occasional flint fragments and small angular stones	0.35m	
501	Natural	Mid brown-orange sandy clay with frequent pockets and blue/grey clay. Frequent small shell inclusions, rounded pebbles and flint chunks. Occasional chalk flecks		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
6	50m x 2m, NW-SE	SP 41608 61079	81.25	0.40m-0.60m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
600	Topsoil	Dark blackish-brown silty clay. Roots/bioturbation, moderate flint and quartz inclusions and occasional ironstone chunks	0.22m	
601	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown silty clay with dark blackish grey mottling. Pockets and orange clay, moderate flints and rounded pebbles	0.16-0.42m	
602	Natural	Mid brownish-orange silty sandy clay with darker clayey variations. Occasional pockets of sandy gravel, Variation in part due to land drains. Blue-grey clay pockets and moderate flint chunks		
603	Fill of 604	Firm mid greyish-brown silty clay. No inclusions, clear boundaries to natural. Fill similar to subsoil above although no obvious cut could be seen in section.	0.55m wide 0.16m deep	
604	Gully	Linear, NE-SW, U-shaped with eroded upper edges, concave base	0.55m wide 0.16m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
7	50m x 2m, SW-NE	SP 41576 61097	81.10	0.50m-0.62m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
700	Topsoil	Firm dark blackish-brown silty clay, occasional flint and quartz	0.21m	
701	Subsoil	Mid brownish-grey silty clay, moderate rounded pebbles, flint	0.35m	
702	Natural	Firm light-mid greyish brown clay. Frequent blue-grey clay pockets and orange sandy gravel pockets. Occasional flint nodules and rounded cobbles	0.50-0.62m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
8	50m x 2m, NW-SE	SP 41596 61124	81.80	0.52m-0.70m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
800	Topsoil	Dark blackish-brown silty clay, occasional quartz pebbles, stone, gravels, flint	0.23m	
801	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown silty clay. Moderate gravel and quartz pebbles, occasional ironstone	0.32-0.42m	
802	Natural	Mid brown-grey clay. Frequent pockets of flint chunks and orange sandy gravel. Pockets of mid-sized cobbles and frequent pockets and blue/grey clay		

Field 7

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
9	10m x 2m E-W	SP 41606 60866	80.36	0.23m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
901	Topsoil	Mid brown silty loam	0.16m	
902	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay. Some small stone inclusions and charcoal flecks, has been cut by gravel filled drains and by an electric power cable. Not fully excavated due to power cable running through centre of trench	0.07m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
10	10m x 2m NNE-SSW	SP 41612 602843	80.64	0.32m-0.40m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1001	Topsoil	Mid brown silty loam	0.04m	
1002	Subsoil	Mid greyish-brown, gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks.	0.14-0.21m	
1003	Natural	Mid brown silty clay, some stone inclusions	0.14m	
1004	Fill of pit 1005	Brick and rubble inclusions inc modern air brick.		
1005	Pit	Of modern pit, Visible in section.	1.70m wide 0.40m deep	
1006	Fill of 1007	Gravel fill of modern posthole		
1007	posthole	Modern posthole (not excavated)	0.35m wide 0.24m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
11	10m x 2m N-S	SP 41615 60805	80.84	0.47m-0.53m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
110	Topsoil/hard core?	Tarmac rubble/levelling. Hard core layer with frequent brick, tile, medium angular slabs/block paving inclusions	0.24m	
111	Thin layer beneath topsoil	Mid brownish-orange gravelly silt. Remnant of standing water unable to penetrate clay beneath	0.03m	
112	Subsoil?	Mid blue-grey firm silty clay with frequent tarmac flecks, small rounded gravels, Colouration due to contamination from upper hard core layer (110)	0.11m	
113	Natural	Mid brown-grey firm clay occasional dirty patches, frequent pockets to blue-grey clay and orange sandy gravel	0.06-0.19m	
114	Fill of 115	Of modern feature. Modern brick, tile and charcoal ficks	0.03m	
115	Modern feature	Probably associated with services trench? And nearby demolished building		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
12	10m x 2m N-S	SP 41612 60775	80.77	0.47M-0.53M
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
120	Hard core/topsoil?	Hard core of rubble/tarmac. Frequent brick/tile/general modern waste inclusions and frequent gravel pebbles	0.33m	
121	Natural	Mid blue-grey clay with occasional orangey gravel lenses. Overcut to define natural	0.12-0.18m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
13	10m x 2m NE-SW	SP 41509 60787	80.17	0.56-0.61
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1301	Topsoil	Mid brown silty loam with modern waste inclusions	0.15m	
1302	Made up ground	Mixture of hard core, frequent brick and tile and modern waste inclusions	0.08-0.15m	
1303	?silty layer	Mid brown-grey silty clay – where water has settled above natural clay	0.13m	
1304	Natural	Mid brown silty clay; small rounded pebble inclusions, overcut to define natural	0.16-0.33m	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
14	10m x 2m NE-SW	SP 41525 60811	80.15	0.40m-0.54m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1401	Topsoil	Mid brown silty loam; modern rubble inclusions	0.11m	
1402	Made up ground	Made up ground; modern hard core and rubble with modern rubbish inclusions	0.20-0.28m	
1403	Natural	Mid brown silty clay; some small stone inclusions. Overcut to define	0.07-0.18m	



Northamptonshire County Council

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