



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological investigation of land opposite Trinlans,
Blacksmiths Lane, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire
July 2011



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Report 11/144

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OAS/S REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological investigation of land opposite Trinlans, Blacksmiths Lane, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire, July 2011	
Short description	An archaeological investigation was carried out to inform a planning application for the removal of an existing barn and the construction of a replacement barn on a larger footprint on land opposite Trinlans, Blacksmiths Lane, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire. There were no archaeological features or finds present.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Former Barn	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period	Medieval Fishponds - nearby	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Blacksmiths Lane, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire	
Easting Northing	449517 251018	
Area (sq m/ha)	140m ²	
Height aOD	136m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological Advisor (NCCAA)	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	Ian Fisher	
Project Manager	Joe Prentice	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr George Wilson Fitzgerald	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	04/07/2011	
End date	04/07/2011	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents
Physical	NA store	
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)
Digital		Client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological investigation of land opposite Trinlans, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire, July 2011	
Serial title & volume	11/144	
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Back cover: General site view, looking south-west

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF LAND
OPPOSITE TRINLANS, ASTON LE WALLS,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JULY 2011**

Abstract

An archaeological investigation was carried out to inform a planning application for the removal of an existing barn and the construction of a replacement barn on a larger footprint on land opposite Trinlans, Blacksmiths Lane, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire. There were no archaeological features or finds present.

1 INTRODUCTION

In July 2011, an archaeological watching brief was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land opposite Trinlans, Blacksmiths Lane, Aston le Walls, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 49517 51018; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Mr George Wilson Fitzgerald and was undertaken to inform a planning application for the construction of a replacement barn.

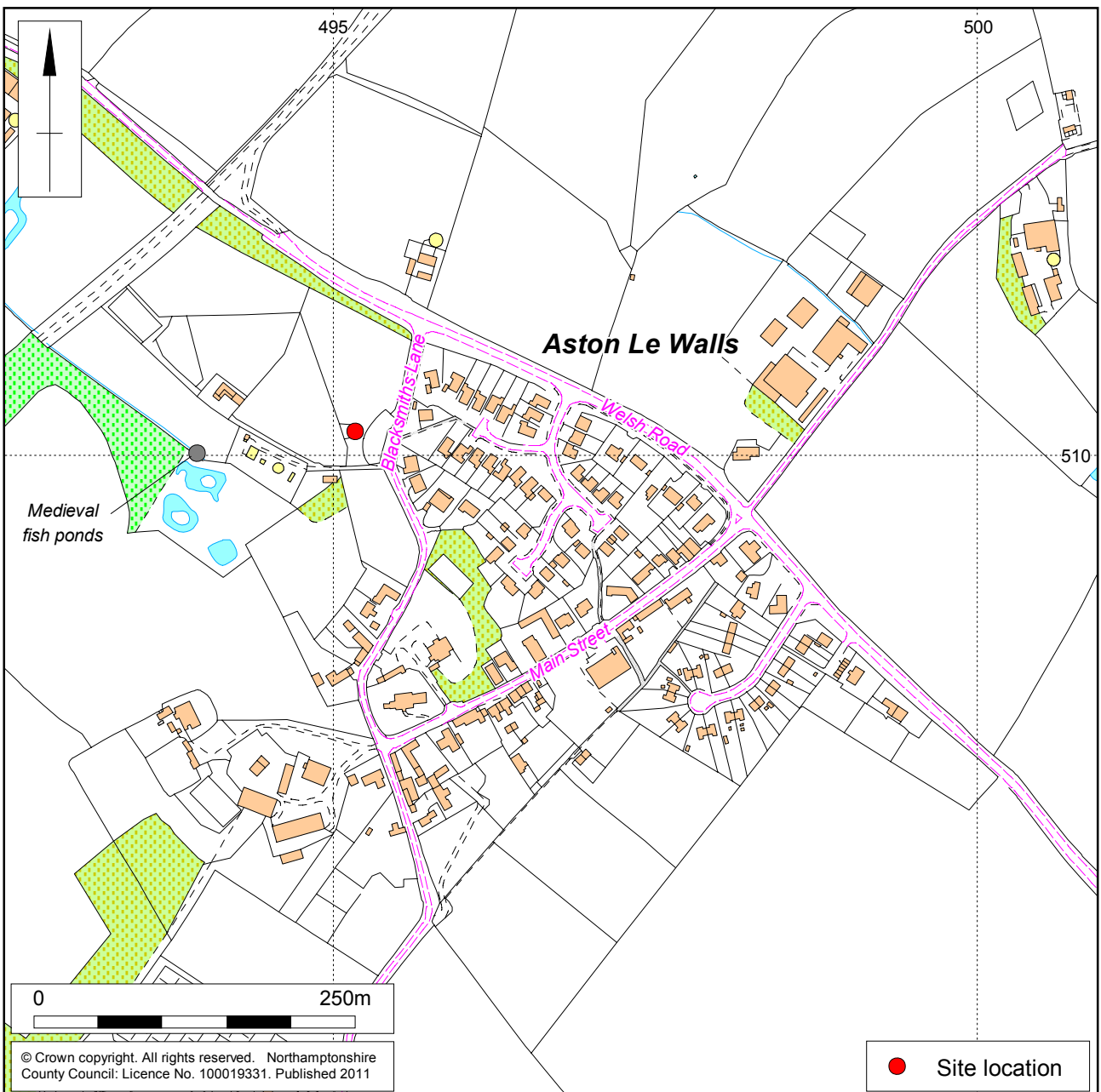
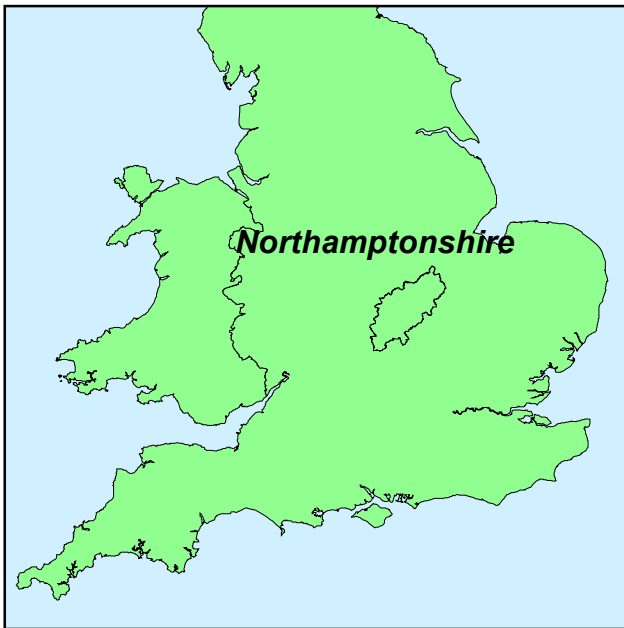
Following a brief issued by Northamptonshire County Council's Assistant Archaeological Advisor (NCCAAA), a programme of archaeological evaluation was agreed (Mordue 2011). The objectives of the evaluation were to determine the presence of any archaeological features or deposits within the application area and to date and characterise their extent, depth of burial and state of preservation.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The footprint of the replacement barn covers an area of 55m² and is located on the site of a former smaller barn. Aston le Walls lies 17.5km south-west of Northampton and 11.5km north of Banbury. The site slopes gently to the west at an approximate height of 136m aOD. The barn lies within an area of pasture.

The underlying geology comprises Middle Lias silts and clays (www.bgs.ax.uk/geologyviewer).



2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The replacement barn lies within an area of medieval earthworks (RCHME 1982 Fig 27). Fishponds are visible to the north and west of the barn (NSMR 26034), whilst ridge and furrow is evident in the surrounding fields. On the site of the barn, eroded ridge and furrow is recorded. The line of the Roman road from Wormleighton (Warwickshire) to Bletchley (Buckinghamshire) runs to the north of the site (NA 2011).

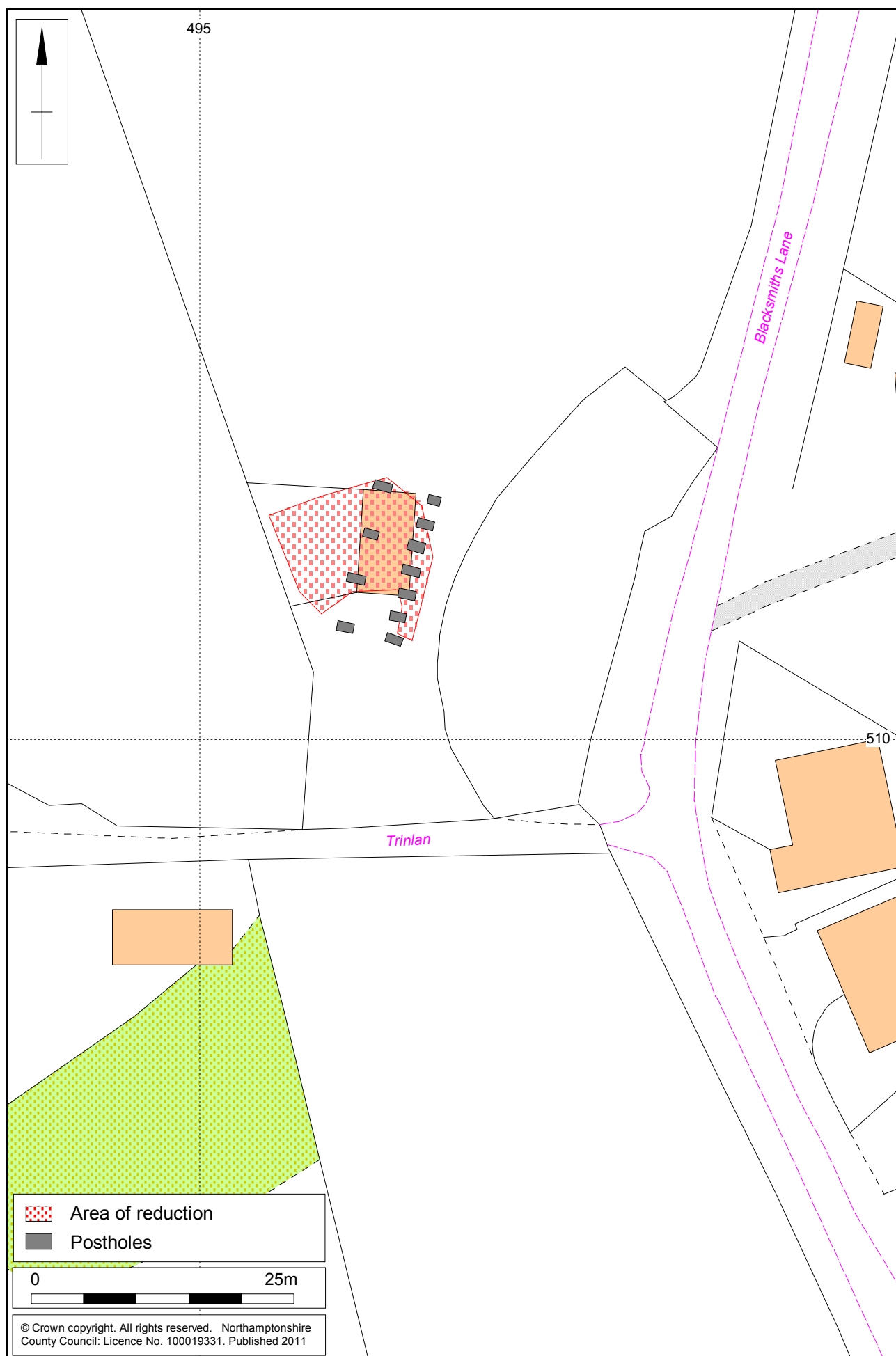
The work involves the removal of an existing barn and the construction of a larger replacement barn.

3 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 aims of the investigation were to:

- Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits exposed during the groundworks for the new dwelling and any associated groundworks,
- Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits,
- Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.



Scale 1:500 (A4)

Site plan showing the area of reduction and excavated postholes

Fig 2

4 METHODOLOGY

The work involved the reduction of the area (140m²) to establish a level surface and the excavation of eleven postholes (Fig 2). All work was recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS surveying system.

A JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove the overburden to reduce the level of the area. The postholes were excavated using a 0.7m wide toothed bucket to break through the hardcore and concrete. Deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature.

Recording followed standard NA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (NA 2006). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships and interpretation. A photographic record was made using 35mm black and white negative film and 35mm colour slide and digital images. Spoil heaps were scanned by eye and metal detector to maximise the recovery of any artefacts.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008).

5 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

5.1 General stratigraphy

The underlying geology was yellow-orange silty clay.

The subsoil was mid orange-brown firm silty clay with sandstone inclusions, approximately 0.35m-0.65m thick.

The topsoil was mid grey-brown, sandy silt approximately 0.15m-0.30m thick. Where present it was a clean soil, devoid of modern debris.



Posthole 10, looking north

Fig 3

5.2 Ground reduction and postholes

The ground reduction works removed a layer of slurry that was associated with the former barn. It revealed the footprint of the former building that consisted of concrete and hardcore (Figs 4 & 5). The eleven postholes were excavated to a depth of 0.5m to 1.0m. Topsoil was recorded in postholes 6-10, whilst subsoil was visible in all eleven postholes. Natural clay was encountered in postholes 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. There were no archaeological features or artefacts present. The presence of terram liner and the absence of top soil indicate previous ground reduction (Fig 3 & 5).



Ground reduction, looking north

Fig 4



Posthole 3, looking east showing natural sandstone embedded in clay

Fig 5

6 DISCUSSION

The site of the replacement barn lies in an area of medieval earthworks. However, the archaeological investigation established that there were no archaeological features or deposits encountered within the site. Any evidence of former archaeological activity which may have been present in the topsoil had been removed by previous ground reduction.

No finds were recovered from the topsoil or subsoil.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

Context	Type	Description	Thickness (m)
001	Layer	Topsoil, mid grey-brown sandy silt	0.15m - 0.30m thick
002	Layer	Subsoil, mid orange-brown firm silty clay	0.35m - 0.65m thick
003	Layer	Natural substrate, yellow-orange clay with sandstone inclusions	
004	Layer	Mid grey black concrete and hardcore	0.15m – 0.30m thick



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