



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation on land in Church Lane,
Deanshanger, Northamptonshire
January 2011



Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council

Anne Foard-Colby

Report 11/23

February 2011



STAFF

Project Manager: Iain Soden BA MIfA

Fieldwork supervision and text: Anne Foard-Colby Cert Ed

Fieldwork: Nathan Flavell BA PGDip

Pottery: Iain Soden

Illustrations: Amir Bassir BSc

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Iain Soden		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological evaluation of land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire, January 2011	
In January 2011, an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire. The evaluation was carried out in response to the submission of a planning application for the erection of a single dwelling. The evaluation revealed a medieval pit, a medieval stone wall and pond or quarry pit, and a 17th-century rubbish pit. The ground appears to have remained as either paddock or under cultivation for many years.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Waste ground	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period	Medieval	
Significant finds	Pottery	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Church Lane, Deanshanger	
Easting Northing	SP 76145 39710	
Area (sq m/ha)	0.37 ha	
Height aOD	c72m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council, Assistant Archaeological Advisor	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	Anne Foard-Colby	
Project Manager	Iain Soden	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr P Clarke and Mrs E Lister	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	27/01/2011	
End date	28/01/2011	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents
Physical	NA store	Pottery
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BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	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 evaluation of land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire, January 2011	
Serial title & volume	11/23	
Author(s)	Anne Foard-Colby	
Page numbers	14	
Date	16 February 2011	

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	BACKGROUND	1
	2.1 Topography and geology	1
	2.2 Historical and archaeological background	1
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	3
4	METHODOLOGY	1
5	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE	5
	5.1 General stratification	5
	5.2 Trench 1	5
	5.3 Trench 2	5
6	THE POTTERY by Iain Soden	10
7	THE MOLLUSCS by Karen Deighton	10
8	DISCUSSION	12
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	13

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

Table 1: The pottery recovered

Table 2: Ecofacts by sample and context

Figures

Front cover: General view of site pre-excavation, looking north-east

Fig 1: Site location plan showing Historic Environment Record (HER) data, 1:5,000

Fig 2: General site plan showing trench locations and proposed building footprints, 1:500

Fig 3: Trench 1, wall (104), general view, looking east (left) and west (right)

Fig 4: Plans of trenches 1 and 2, 1:50

Fig 5: Trench 1, wall (104), large cross laid stones, looking east

Fig 6: Trench 1 wall (104), sondage cut to natural, looking north

Fig 7: Trench 2, pit [205], looking west

Fig 8: Trench 2, pond/quarry pit [209], looking north

Fig 9: Sections of pond/quarry [209] and pits [205] and [211], 1:25

Fig 10: Trench 2, pit [211], looking north

Back cover: General view of the wall in Trench 1, looking north-east

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF LAND
AT CHURCH LANE, DEANSHANGER, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JANUARY 2011**

Abstract

In January 2011, an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire. The evaluation was carried out in response to the submission of a planning application for the erection of a single dwelling. The evaluation revealed a medieval pit, a medieval stone wall and pond or quarry pit, and a 17th-century rubbish pit. The ground appears to have remained as either paddock or under cultivation for many years.

1 INTRODUCTION

In January 2011, an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 76145 39710; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Mr P Clarke and Mrs E Lister and was undertaken to inform a planning application (S/2010/1504/FUL) for the proposed development of the land for a single dwelling.

The scope of works was outlined in the brief (Mordue 2011) issued by Northamptonshire County Council's Assistant Archaeological Advisor (NCCAAA) and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2011).

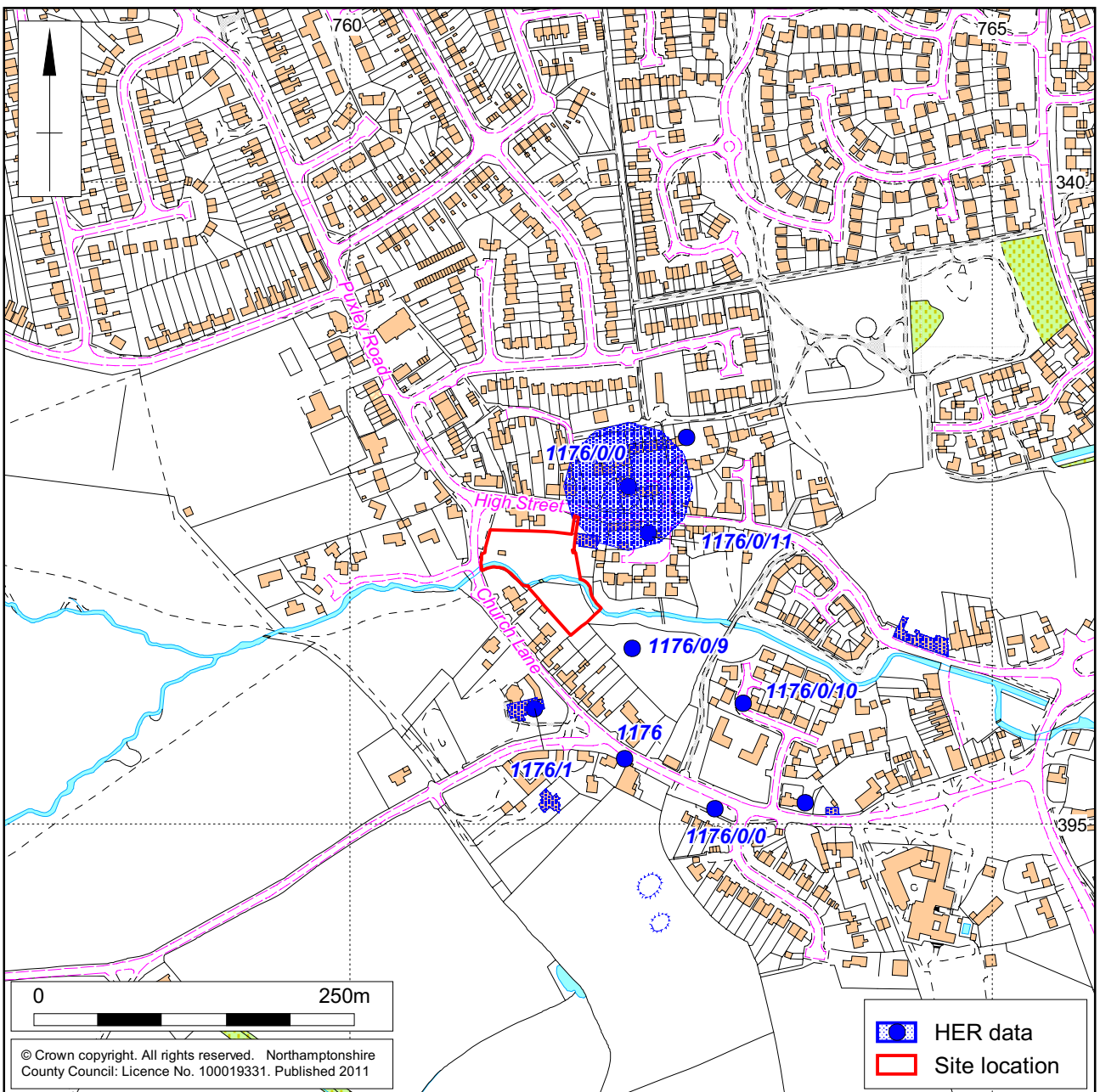
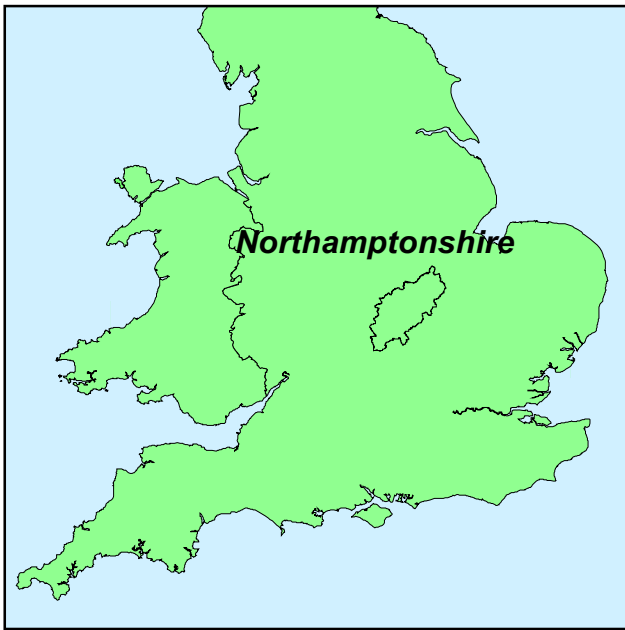
2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

The proposed development site, which covers an area of c0.37ha, is located on the eastern edge of Church Lane within the Deanshanger Conservation Area. It is bounded to the north, east and south by residential and commercial properties and to the west by Church Lane. A small brook bisects the site east to west at the centre (Fig 1).

Generally, the land to the north of the site is flat, descending to the valley of the brook at the centre and rising again to the south. The ground surface lies at an average height of 72m at Ordnance Datum. At the time of the evaluation the land was private garden, covered in coarse grass and bushes.

The underlying geology comprises Jurassic rock of Inferior Oolite Limestone, overlain by glacial till (BGS 2009).



Scale 1:5000

Site location plan showing Historic Environment Record (HER) data Fig 1

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

Reference to the Northamptonshire Environment Record (HER) has identified a number of Saxon and medieval sites in the surrounding area (Fig 1).

The site lies within the historic core of Deanshanger and is situated north of the 19th-century Church of the Holy Trinity (HER 1176/1). Immediately to the north-west of the site, a number of individual medieval artefacts have been recorded at various times (HER 1176/0/0). A 13th/14th-century gully and boundary ditch and a 17th-century quarry pit were located 100m to the south-east of the site during excavations in 2000-2001 (HER 1176/0/9). Within 50m of the site, an 18th-century cobbled yard surface and stone-lined drain cut two possible pits containing post-medieval brick or tile fragments (HER 1176/0/11). Approximately 150m to the south-east a gully containing 13th/14th-century pottery and animal bone, together with weathered human bone suggests settlement activity (HER 1176/0/10).

There is a Tree Preservation Order on a single tree within the garden.

The site has not been subject to previous archaeological intervention.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the evaluation were to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

Specifically the objectives included:

- Defining the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present
- Ascertaining the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.

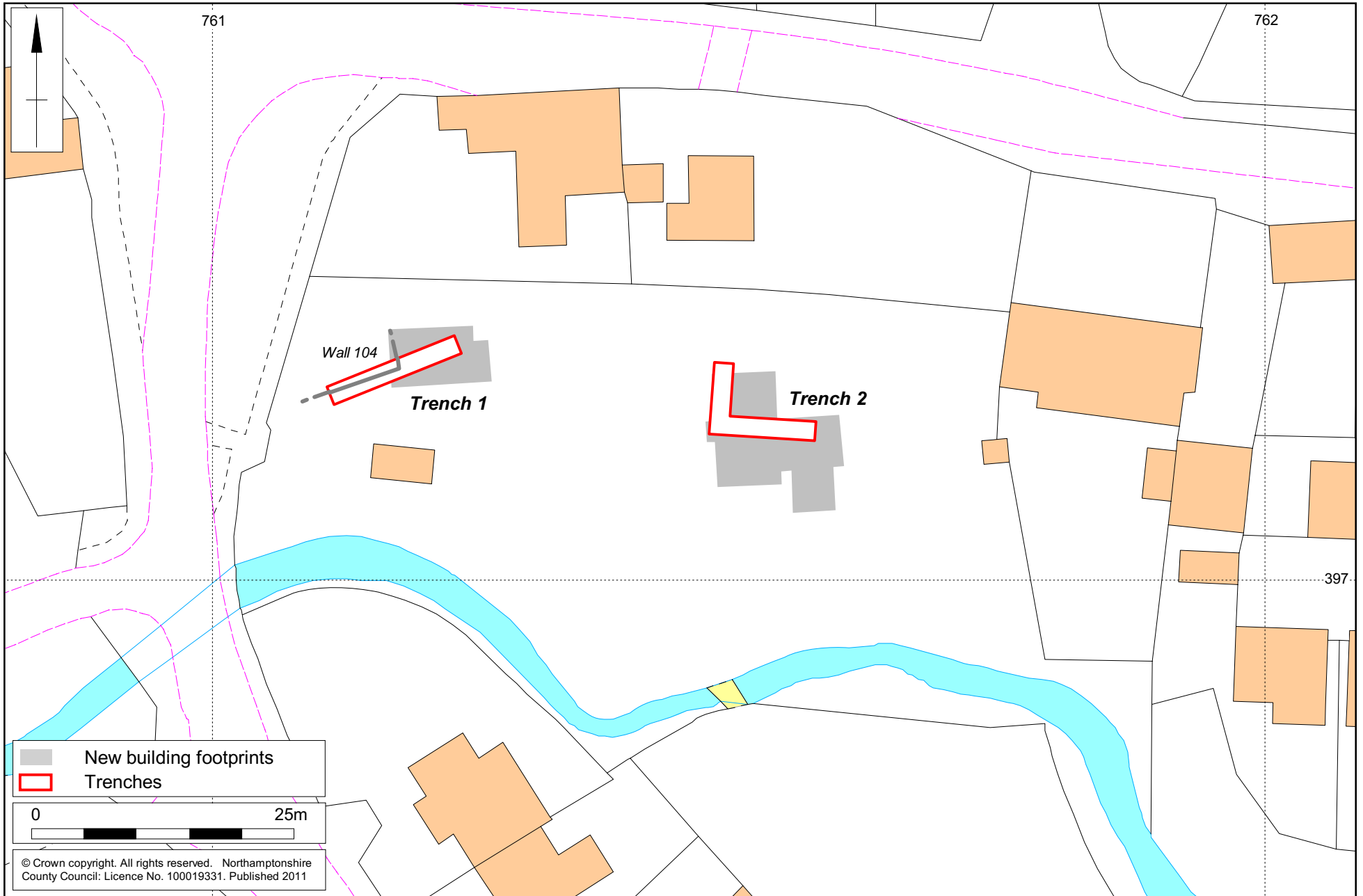
4 METHODOLOGY

Two trial trenches, measuring 15m long by 1.8m wide, were excavated in accordance with a trench plan approved by NCCAA (Fig 2). Trench 1 was shortened by 2m at the west end due to the proximity of a fence line. Trench 2 was laid out as an 'L' shape and positioned to lie within the footprint of the proposed dwelling. They were positioned using a Leica 1200 GPS surveying system. A JCB 3CX mechanical excavator fitted with a ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. A hand-drawn plan of the archaeological features was made at scale 1:50 and was related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Archaeological 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, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Context sheets were cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs. Photography was with 35mm black and white film, supplemented with digital images. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and related to Ordnance Survey datum. Spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to maximise the recovery of metal objects.

Scale 1:500

General site plan showing trench locations and proposed building footprints

Fig 2



All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 1995 revised 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 clay and limestone, which was encountered between 0.43-0.58m below the modern ground surface in both trenches. This occurred as light cream and mottled light brown silty clay with patches of limestone. The subsoil was mid brown-grey silty clay and 0.20-0.50m thick. The topsoil was dark greyish-brown garden soil with gravel and limestone fragments and approximately 0.28m thick.

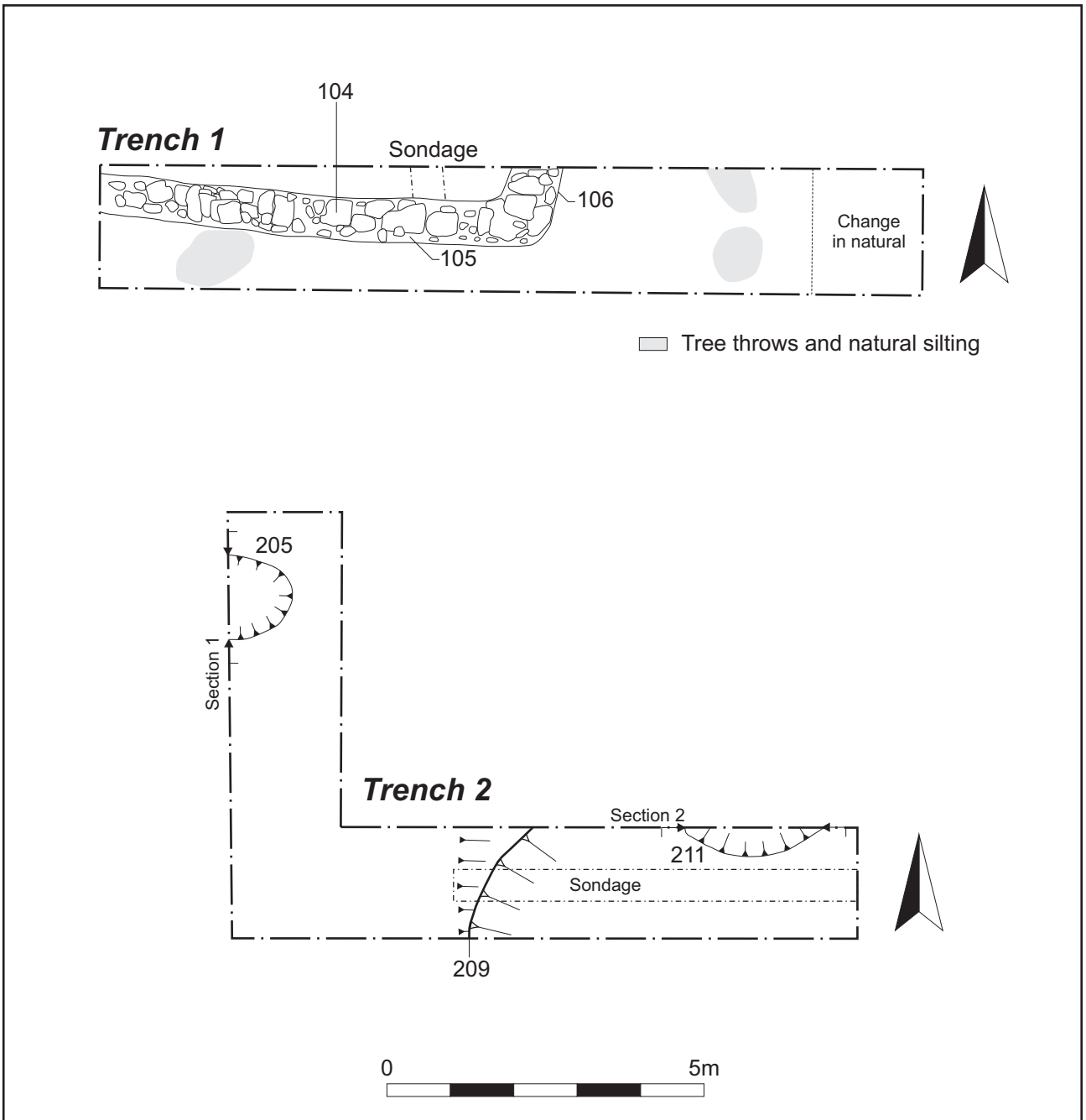
5.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned east to west and was located on the west side of the site. At the west end of the trench was a corner of a limestone wall (104) (Figs 2, 3, 5 and 6). The wall was at least four courses high, the lower course was as wide as its foundation trench; the upper three courses were stepped in and approximately 0.50m wide. The foundation trench of the wall [106] measured 7.12m long on the east to west alignment and 1.30m long on the north to south alignment. Both wall foundation trenches continued beyond the limit of the trial trench. They were 0.65-0.80m wide by at least 0.10m deep and cut the natural light grey-brown clay (103).



Trench 1, wall (104), general view, looking east (left) and west (right)

Fig 3



Scale 1:100

Plans of Trenches 1 and 2 Fig 4

Along the length of the wall, large stones were laid at intervals across its width for the purpose of tying in (Fig 5). A particularly large, flat stone was located at the base of the corner of the wall, presumably to provide stability (Fig 3). The stones were clay bonded (105) a material from which medieval pottery was recovered.



Trench 1, wall (104), large cross laid stones, looking east Fig 5

A small sondage was cut within the stone structure to test for the possibility of a floor surface (Fig 6), however, there was no surface or finds present. This suggests that the wall may have been a plot boundary, rather than a building.



Trench 1, wall (104), sondage cut to natural, looking north Fig 6

5.3 Trench 2

Located in the north-east corner of the site, Trench 2 contained two pits and a pond or quarry pit (Figs 7 - 10). A small oval-shaped pit [205], half of which lay beyond the limit of the trench was located at the north end of the L-shaped trench (Figs 7 and 9, section 1). It had a shallow, U-shaped profile, 1.66m wide by 0.40m deep, filled with mid to dark brown-grey silty clay (204). Two sherds of medieval pottery, one of which was a rim sherd, were recovered from the fill.



Trench 2, pit [205], looking west

Fig 7

A large pond/quarry pit [209] cut the natural gravels in Trench 2 (Figs 8 and 9, section 2). Its full size and shape lay beyond the limit of the trench, except for its western edge which was at a 45° angle with a flat base. The lower black, silty fill (208) contained roots or other such vegetation at the base, and was 0.25m thick. The middle fill (207) was a mottled mid grey and red-brown silty clay with considerable quantities of molluscs, 0.12m thick.

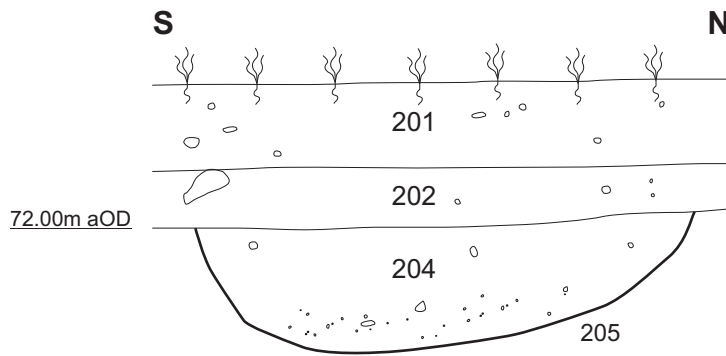
The upper deposit (206) was firm brown-grey silty clay with occasional limestone fragments and charcoal lumps, 0.14m thick. The fill also contained three sherds of medieval Potterspurgy ware.



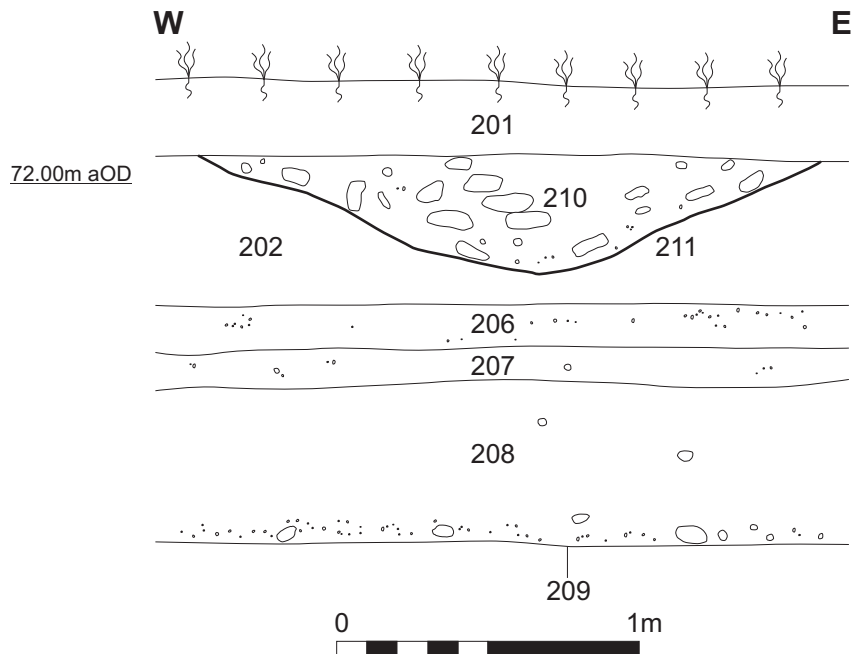
Trench 2, pond/quarry pit [209], looking north

Fig 8

Section 1



Section 2



Scale 1:25

Sections of pond/quarry [209] and pits [205] and [211] Fig 9

Located at the east end of Trench 2, and cutting the subsoil (202) above the pond/quarry was an oval shaped pit [211], the other side of which lay beyond the limit of the trench (Figs 4, 9, section 2, and Fig 10). It was 2.04m wide and 0.38m deep. Large fragments of limestone within the brown-grey silty clay fill (210) appeared to be a deliberate dump of rubble, together with large sherds of a 17th-century bowl.



Trench 2, pit [211], looking north

Fig 10

6 THE POTTERY by Iain Soden

A total of 34 sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recovered in four fabrics or types from seven contexts and weighed 1936 g.

The fabrics present have been related to the Northamptonshire County Type Series (CTS), which carried a 3/4-digit identification code as follows:

- 329 Potterspurty ware c1250-c1500 & 17th century
- 330 Shelly coarseware c1200-c1500
- 365 Late medieval reduced ware c1400-1500
- 1000 Modern industrial wares 19th-20th century

Table 1: The pottery recovered

Type/ context	102/ subsoil	105/ 106	201/ topsoil	204/ 205	206/ 209	207/ 209	210/ 211	Total
329 Med	1/27g	11/119g	-	-	3/163g	1/15g	-	16/324g
329 (C17)	-	-	2/43g	-	-	-	9/1486g	11/1529g
330	-	1/13g	1/11g	2/40g	-	-	-	4/64g
365	-	1/7g	-	-	-	-	-	1/7g
1000	-	-	2/12g	-	-	-	-	2/12g
Total	1/27g	13/139g	5/66g	2/40g	3/163g	1/15g	9/1486g	34/1936g

As a result, the dates (*termini post quem*) for each of the contexts is as follows:

(102) c1400, (105) c1500, (201) 20th-century, (204) 15th-century, (206) 16th-century
(207) 1500, (210) 17th-century

There is a medieval reliance on Potterspurty products, unsurprising given its proximity. This is noted also in the resurgence of the 17th-century material, in this

case a near primary deposit of a hollow-ware bowl or jar in the fill (210) of a pit [211] (Mayes 1968, 55-82). The vessel had been much used, and possibly frost-damaged. It may have been very old when broken.

This is a small assemblage of very local significance. There are no fabrics or types which are unexpected or might be considered regional imports. It reflects nearby occupation and dumping, although not necessarily intensive, of the 13th to the 17th-centuries, perhaps most notably c1500-1650.

7 THE MOLLUSCS by Karen Deighton

A single sample was collected from fill (207) of pond/quarry [209] during the course of trial excavation. This material was assessed to determine the presence, nature and preservation of ecofacts and to inform on any future sampling strategies

Method

The sample was processed using a siraf tank fitted with a 250micron mesh and flot sieve. The resulting flot and residue were dried. The flot was sorted with the aid of a microscope (10x magnification). Residues were dry sieved (3.4mm, 1mm) and the 3.4mm retent sorted by eye. The 1mm retent was scanned using a microscope.

Molluscs were identified with the aid of Kerney and Cameron (1994). Charcoal was finely comminuted preventing any further identification. The preservation of molluscs was reasonable with low fragmentation and abrasion.

Table 2: Ecofacts by sample and context

Cut/fill	209/207
Sample	1
Feature type	Pond/quarry
Date	1500AD
Volume(litres)	40
Charcoal	30-50 fragments
Terrestrial molluscs	
<i>Cochiopa lubrica</i>	8
<i>Discus rotundatus</i>	19
<i>Vallonia excentrica</i>	14
<i>Clausilla bidentata</i>	3
<i>Vertigo pygmaea</i>	26
<i>Pupilla muscorum</i>	6
<i>Euconulus fulvus</i>	5
<i>Carychium minimum</i>	29
<i>Oxychilus sp</i>	1
<i>Trichia sp</i>	5
<i>indet</i>	148
Freshwater molluscs	
<i>Planorbis sp</i>	2
<i>Bithynia sp</i>	10
<i>Radix sp</i>	4
<i>Bivalves</i>	4

A single *Helix aspersa* (garden snail) was recovered from the context by hand.

Discussion

The majority of taxa identified prefer moist or wet environments. For example *Carychium minimum* was the most numerous of the identified taxa and is a species of wet places such as marshes. *Discus rotundatus* the third most common taxa inhabits moist sheltered places. Finally the presence of a small range of freshwater molluscs suggests some standing water.

Vertigo pygmaea the second most common taxa will live in marshes and similar wet habitats, although preferring dry calcareous grassland.

Vallonia excentrica and *Pupilla muscorum* were the only taxa present which like dry exposed calcareous places.

A tentative explanation for the presence of this particular range of taxa is that it represents a period of silting when the predominantly wet habitat of the pond starts to become drier.

Identification shows a fairly limited range of ecofacts, but provides some useful information on environmental conditions. The site has previously been marked by standing water in quantities sufficient to attract water-loving snails in numbers. This seems to have been during the 16th-century.

8 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation identified two pits, a pond/quarry pit and a stone wall within the development area. The earliest dated feature was a pit located in Trench 2 at the west side of the site, which contained two sherds of later medieval pottery. A pond or quarry pit also in Trench 2 contained early post-medieval pottery in an upper layer. Within Trench 1 was the corner and length of a stone wall, which contained sherds of medieval pottery. The absence of later pottery from the trench suggests that it may be medieval in date. It is unclear of the function of the structure, but a sondage excavated on the 'interior' side of the wall failed to locate any evidence of flooring which may indicate the function was that of boundary wall. A later rubbish pit was located cutting the subsoil in Trench 2. A quarry pit was recorded 150m to the south-east of the site during excavations in 2000-01.

An environmental sample taken from the pond/quarry pit in Trench 2 contained a variety of snail species, indicating periods of wet and dryer conditions, which suggest that the feature may have silted up over a period of time.

The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 shows the west part of the site to have been laid to gardens, whilst the east part of the site has continued in use as a small paddock and allotment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

IfA 1994, revised 2008 *Standard and guidance for field evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists

IfA 1995 revised 2010 *Code of Conduct*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

Kerney, M P and Cameron, R A D, 1994 *Land Snails of Britain and North-west Europe*, London, Harpercollins

Mordue, E, 2011 *Brief for the archaeological investigation of land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire*, Northamptonshire County Council

Mayes, P, 1968 A 17th-century kiln site at Potterspury, Northamptonshire, *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, **2**, 55-82.

NA 2011 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Field Evaluation of Land at Church Lane, Deanshanger, Northamptonshire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

NA 2006 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Websites

BGS 2009 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html> British Geological Survey website

Maps

SSEW 1983 *Soils of Eastern England*, Sheet 202, Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1:250,000

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

Trench No.	Context	Type	Description	Dimensions /thickness (m)	Artefact type
1	101	Layer	Topsoil, dark brown silty clay loam	0.30m thick	
	102	Layer	Subsoil, mid brown silty clay with limestone and charcoal	0.15-0.28m thick	1 sherd Potterspurly ware
	103	Layer	Natural pale grey-brown clay with patches of limestone cobbles		
	104	Wall	Limestone, aligned NE-SW	7.12m long 0.60m wide, 0.32m high	
	105	Fill of [106]	Mid grey-brown silty clay with orange mottling	0.16m wide 0.10m deep	11 sherds Potterspurly ware, 1 Shelly coarse ware, 1 late medieval reduced ware
	106	Cut	NW-SE and NE-SW, steep cut wall foundation	7.12m long, 0.70m wide, 0.10m deep	
2	201	Layer	Topsoil, dark brown silty clay loam	0.30m thick	2 sherds Potterspurly ware, 1 sherd Shelly coarse ware, 2 sherds modern industrial ware
	202	Layer	Subsoil, mid brown silty clay with limestone and charcoal	0.15-0.28m thick	
	203	Layer	Natural pale grey-brown clay with chalk flecks and patches of limestone cobbles		
	204	Fill of [205]	Mid grey silty clay with infrequent gravel	1.66m wide, 0.40m thick	2 sherds shelly coarse ware
	205	Cut of pit	Sub-circular, shallow sides, flattish base		
	206	Fill of [209]	Dark brown-grey silty clay with occasional gravel pebbles and charcoal flecks	6m wide, 0.14m thick	3 sherds Potterspurly ware
	207	Fill of [209]	Russet and grey mottled silty clay with very frequent snails	5.8m wide, 0.12m thick	1 sherd Potterspurly ware
	208	Fill of [209]	Black silty clay	5m wide, 0.25m thick	
	209	Cut of pond/quarry	Irregular shaped, gently sloping sides to flat base of pit	6m wide, 0.80m deep	
	210	Fill of [211]	Mid brown-grey silty clay with very frequent dump of limestone stones	0.30m wide, 0.20m deep	9 sherds 17th-century Potterspurly ware
	211	Cut of pit	Sub circular V-shaped pit		



Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology



Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk

w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council