

# Northamptonshire Archaeology

## Archaeological evaluation of land at Glebe Road Market Harborough, Leicestershire March 2012



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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## OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project title	Archaeological evalua	tion of land at Glebe Road, Market				
	Harborough, Leicesters	Harborough, Leicestershire. March 2012				
Short description	In March 2012, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of CgMs Consulting acting for Redrow Homes (South Midlands) on land at Glebe Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire. The works identified a possible pit alignment superseded by a large boundary ditch, dating to the late 1st to mid 2nd centuries AD with evidence of activity until the 4th century AD. Other ditches and a pit dating of the same date were also present. The site was traversed by remnant furrows of medieval ridge and furrow					
Project type	Trial trench evaluation					
Previous work	Desk-based assessme	nt and geophysical survey				
Current land use	Arable					
Future work	Unknown					
Monument type	5					
and period	Roman					
Significant finds	Pottery					
PROJECT LOCATION						
County	Leicestershire					
Site address	Glebe Road, Market Ha	arborough				
Easting Northing	SP 744 867					
Area (sq m/ha)	7.52 hectres					
Height aOD	100.00mAOD					
PROJECT CREATORS						
Organisation	Northamptonshire Arch	aeology (NA)				
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting Ltd					
Project Design originator	CgMs Consulting Ltd					
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke (NA)					
Project Manager	Myk Flitcroft (CgMs) an	d Ian Meadows (NA)				
Sponsor or funding body	Redrow Homes (South	Midlands)				
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End date	23/03/2012					
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	(Accession no.)	Contonito				
Physical	XA41.2012	Flint, pottery, animal bone				
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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF LAND AT GLEBE ROAD, MARKET HARBOROUGH LEICESTERSHIRE

#### MARCH 2012

#### Abstract

In March 2012, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of CgMs Consulting acting for Redrow Homes (South Midlands), on land at Glebe Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire. The works identified a possible pit alignment superseded by a large boundary ditch dating to the late 1st to mid 2nd centuries AD with evidence of activity until the 4th century AD. Other ditches and a pit dating of the same date were also present. The archaeological features were all concentrated on higher ground to east of the development area. The site was traversed by remnant furrows of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

In March 2012, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land at Glebe Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 744 867; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Redrow Homes (South Midlands), and was undertaken to inform a forthcoming planning application (ref: 09/00589/OUT, Condition 17) for the proposed residential development of the land.

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by CgMs Consulting (Flitcroft 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 Location and geology

#### Location

The site comprises a mixture of former industrial land and arable fields, *c* 7ha in extent, centred at NGR SP 744 867 (Fig 1). It lies on the south-east side of Market Harborough and is bounded by Glebe Road to the west and by existing housing along Dunslade Road and Dunslade Grove to the north. The cutting of the Midland railway line lies to the south of site and agricultural land to the east.

#### *Geology* by Steve Critchley

The site is underlain by rocks belonging to the Lower Jurassic Lias Group. These consist of bluish-grey mudstones of the Whitby Mudstone Formation outcropping on the hilltop unconformably underlain by ferruginous limey mudstones and sandy mudstones of the Dryham Formation downslope. Evidence of previous quarrying was present at the base of the slope where the underlying mudstones belonging to the Charmouth Mudstone Formation have been worked. Groundwater was present within the more pervious weathered layers of the Whitby Mudstones as a perched water table allowing rapid water seepage into excavated sections.



Scale 1:10,000





#### 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was considered by an archaeological deskbased assessment and partial geophysical survey (Soden and Butler 2009).

Historic maps and documents show that the land was enclosed as pasture in its current layout in 1780, previous to which it had comprised agricultural land traceable in field names as early as 1633. It formerly contained medieval furlongs in the East Field of Little Bowden, and furrow plough cultivation regime was preserved by enclosure. It was still surviving in an aerial photograph of 1945. During the 19th century a large clay pit was dug in the north-west quadrant of the site, serving adjacent brickworks. This was infilled in the 1970s.

Geophysical survey confirmed the former ridge and furrow and suggested a possible ditch and pit on the east side of the site.

Nine sherds of Roman pottery were picked up along the field edge to the rear of number. 32 The Heights, immediately adjacent to the north-east of the development area. Subsequent test pitting in the garden by a local amateur group (Great Bowden Heritage and Archaeology Group) recovered a further 11 sherds of pottery, although no archaeological features were identified. The same excavation recovered seven pieces of worked flint.

#### 3 METHODOLOGY

Thirteen trial trenches were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by CgMs Consulting and approved by Theresa Hawtin (Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council) (Fig 2).

Nine of the trenches measured 50m long by 2m wide and four were 30m long by 2m wide. The total area excavated was 1140m<sup>2</sup>. Trenches were positioned using a Leica system 1200 GPS.

A 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m wide ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. A hand-drawn plan of all archaeological features was made at scale 1:50 or 1:100 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 2011). 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 and colour slides, supplemented with digital images. Sections were drawn at scale 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate and related to Ordnance Survey datum. Spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to maximise the recovery of metal objects.

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).

#### 4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

#### 4.1 General stratigraphy

The underlying geology of mudstones and clay, was encountered between 0.2-0.5m below the modern ground surface. This occurred as light-mid orange or brownish-yellow sandy clay with occasional angular to sub-angular pebbles. The subsoil was light grey-brown sandy clay and the topsoil was mid greyish-brown sandy clay, both soils contained occasional ironstone and flint pebbles.

Archaeological features cut into the natural geology were found in four of the thirteen trenches (Trenches 6, 7, 8 and 9). Remnant furrows from ridge and furrow cultivation were encountered in Trenches 1, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

#### **4.2** The trial trenches (Figs 2 -5)

The trench locations are shown in Figure 2 and an inventory of contexts is provided in the Appendix. The topsoil had an average depth of 0.40m and subsoil of 0.10m.

#### Trench 6

Trench 6 was 50m long, aligned north to south (Figs 2, 3 and 4). Two ditches were found. Both ditches produced Roman pottery and animal bone. Furrows were also present within the trench.

#### Ditch [606]

In the middle of the trench ditch [606], aligned north-west to south-east, was 0.98m wide and 0.34m deep, with a U-shaped profile (Fig 6 section 10). The fill of mid orangebrown silty clay (605), was overlain by dark grey-brown silty clay (604). Pottery dated to the late 1st to mid 2nd century AD and animal bone was recovered from both fills.

#### Ditch [608]

In the south of the trench ditch [608], aligned north-east to south-west, was 0.65m wide and 0.22m deep, with a U-shaped profile. The fill of mid orange-brown silty clay (607) contained Roman pottery and animal bone.

#### Trench 7

Trench 7 was 30m long, aligned north-west to south-east (Figs 2, 3 and 4). At the south-east of the trench was a complex sequence of inter-cutting ditches and gullies and a large ditch that produced Roman pottery and animal bone. Also within the trench were an undated gully and a possible post-medieval pond.

#### Pit [717]

A sub-circular pit [717], 0.67m wide and 0.36m deep with a U-shaped profile had been truncated on its western side by ditch [715] (Fig 6, section 2). The fill of orange-brown silty clay (716) contained no finds.

#### Ditch [710] [715]

At the south-east of the trench was a ditch [710] [715], aligned north-east to southwest, 1.99m wide and 0.60m deep, with a broad U-shaped profile (Fig 6, section 2). The primary fill of dark grey-brown (709)/(714) contained pottery of the late 1st to 2nd centuries AD and animal bone. It was overlain by orange-brown silty clay (713) and dark grey-brown silty clay (705)/(712), which contained 4th century AD pottery, possible Saxon pottery and animal bone. The uppermost fill of dark grey-brown sandy clay (704)/(711) contained animal bone. The ditch continued north-east and was present in Trench 8. To the east of ditch [710] [715] was a sequence of intercutting ditches and gullies [719] [721] [725] [727] [729] [731] (Figs 4 and 7 section 5).

#### Ditch [725]

A ditch [725] was aligned east to west, turning south to west (Figs 4 and 7 section 5), 1.50m wide and 0.70m deep, with a shallow U-shaped profile. The primary fill of light brown-grey silty clay (724) was overlain by mid grey-brown silty clay (723). The uppermost fill was mottled grey-brown silty (722), cut by gully [721] and ditch [727]. No finds were recovered.

#### Gully [729]

At the east of the trench was a possible gully [729] (Fig 7), 1.70m wide and 0.28m deep, with an irregular profile. The fill of mottled grey-brown silty clay (728), contained no finds and was cut by ditch [727] on its north-western side.

#### Ditch [727]

A ditch [727] (Fig 7), aligned east to west, 1.0m wide and 0.42m deep, with a shallow profile, cuts ditch [725] to its north-west and gully [729] to its south-east. The fill of mid grey-brown silty clay (726) contained pottery dated to the late 1st to 2nd centuries AD and animal bone.

#### Gully [721]

Cutting ditch [725] to its south-east and ditch/pit [719] to its north-west was a gully [721] (Fig 7), aligned north-east to south-west, 1.15m wide and 0.46m deep, with a U-shaped profile. The fill of mid grey-orange silty clay (720) contained no finds.

#### Ditch terminal or pit [719]

A possible ditch terminal or pit [719] (Fig 7), truncated on its south-eastern side by gully [721], aligned east to west, was 0.95m wide and 0.38m, with a undulating U-shaped profile. The fill of dark grey silty clay (718) contained Roman pottery.

#### Gully [731]

South-east of the trench was a gully [731], aligned east to west, 0.60m wide and 0.20m deep with a U-shaped profile. The fill of mid grey-brown (730) contained no finds. The gully cut ditch [729] and terminates within the sequence of ditches and gullies described above.

#### Gully [733]

In the middle of the trench was a gully [733], aligned north-east to south-west, 0.80m wide and 0.30m deep (Fig 4). The fill of dark grey-brown silty clay (732) contained no finds.

#### Pond or hollow [735]

At the north-east of the trench was a pond or hollow [735], 5.50m wide (visible) and 0.60m deep (Fig 4). The fill of dark brown-grey silty clay (734) contained early 20th century brick and glass. The full extent of the feature was not exposed within the trench.

#### Trench 8

Trench 8 was 30m long, aligned north-west to south-east. A re-cut ditch [808] [812] that corresponded to a geophysical anomaly, possibly representing a boundary ditch, and a pit [814] were present at the south-east of the trench (Figs 2, 3 and 5). Roman pottery and animal bone was recovered from the ditch.

#### Pit [814]

A sub-circular pit [814] (Fig 7 section 4), 0.65m long, 0.31m wide and 0.29m deep had been truncated on its western side by ditch [808]. The fill of orange-brown sandy clay (813) contained no finds.

#### Ditch [808] [812]

At the south-east of the trench was a ditch [812] (Fig 7), aligned north to south, 1.35m wide and 0.66m deep, with a U-shaped profile. The primary fill of orange-brown sandy clay (811) contained animal bone and was overlain by mid orange-brown clay (810) from which late 1st to mid 2nd and 4th century AD pottery and animal bone was recovered. The upper fill of grey-brown sandy clay (809) contained animal bone. The ditch had been re-cut on its western side [808]. The re-cut was 2.06m wide and 0.68m deep, with a U-shaped profile. The primary fill of orange-brown silty clay (807) was overlain by mid grey with orange mottling sandy clay (806), which contained 2nd century AD pottery and animal bone, and mid grey-brown sandy clay (805) with animal bone. The uppermost fill of light grey-brown sandy clay (804) contained late 1st to 2nd century AD pottery and animal bone. The ditch is likely to be the same ditch [710] [715] recorded in Trench 7.

#### Trench 9

Trench 9, 50m long, was aligned north-west to south-east. A pit [907] towards the south-east end of the trench, contained Roman pottery (Figs 2, 3 and 5). Furrows were also present within the trench.

#### Pit [907]

A sub-circular pit [205], 0.85m long, 0.73m wide and 0.25m deep, had a shallow U-shaped profile. The fill of dark grey-brown sandy clay (906) contained a fragment of late 1st to mid 2nd century AD pottery and a possible fragment of Saxon pottery.

#### 4.3 Later features

The remains of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing lying east to west, running down slope, had been detected by the geophysical survey and the remnants of their furrows were present in eight of the 13 trenches although they did not appear to have impacted greatly upon the underlying Roman archaeology. A post-medieval pond or hollow was present in the west of Trench 7.

#### 5 THE FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

#### 5.1 Worked flint by Andy Chapman

From the fill (810) of ditch [812], there is a single small blade, 29mm long by 11-14mm wide, soft hammer struck with retouch along the oblique distal end. The piece is in a light brown vitreous translucent flint. The piece could be a poorly finished, perhaps unfinished, obliquely blunted blade of late Mesolithic date.

#### 5.2 The pottery by Rob Perrin

The features in the five evaluation trenches from which pottery was recovered comprise the subsoil in Trench 1, ditches in Trenches 6-8 and a pit in Trench 9. The small assemblage consists of 99 sherds with a combined weight of almost 1.9 kg, giving an average sherd weight of nearly 19 g. The pottery was recorded using simple fabric classifications and form codes. The fabrics are based on principal inclusion or firing technique, together with the identification of some known regional and imported wares. No joins between sherds in different contexts were observed.









	Rim	Body	Base	Sherds	%	Wt (g)	%
Trench 1		4		4	4	34	1.8
Trench 6	11	47	2	60	61	1006	54
Trench 7	5	14	2	21	21	510	27
Trench 8	3	8	1	12	12	314	17
Trench 9		2		2	2	7	
total	19	75	5	99		1871	

Table 1: The quantities of pottery per trench

#### Fabrics

Table 2:	The pottery	assemblage	by princip	al fabric type
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Fabric	Rim	Body	Base	Sherds	%	Wt (g)	%
Hard cream grog	4	3	1	8	8	142	7.6
Pink grog	3	8		11	11	296	16
Misc grogs	5	3		8	8	444	24
Greys	5	23	1	29	29	286	15
Cream		5		5	5	24	1.3
Reddish yellow		8	2	10	10	30	1.6
LNVCC		1	1	2	2	30	1.6
BB1?	1	10		11	11	128	7
CGS		1		1	1	1	
Mancetter-Hartshill	1	3		4	4	356	19

The small size of the assemblage has resulted in noticeable differences in the fabric proportions by number of sherds and weight. The grey wares and grogged wares together, however, account for between a half and two-thirds of the assemblage. The grey wares occur with varying visual characteristics, including a range in colour from light to dark grey and differing core colours. None appear to have burnished surfaces, though one vessel appears to have traces of a slip on the internal face of the rim. These variations are likely, in the main, to reflect differing varying firing conditions and techniques and may not, therefore, be especially meaningful in terms of date or source. Two main types of grogged ware occur, a hard cream ware and a less hard pink ware. The other grogged wares occur as larger vessels and may be variants of the cream and pink grogged wares. One vessel, however, has a fabric which contains noticeable dull black inclusions which appear slightly magnetic and may therefore be iron ore or, possibly, slag. Reddish-yellow oxidised ware, possible black burnished ware category 1 (BB1) and Mancetter Hartshill cream ware are the other main fabrics, with small amounts of other cream ware, Lower Nene Valley colour coated ware (LNVCC), Central Gaulish samian ware (CGS) and a sherd of Spanish amphora making up the rest of the assemblage.

It is probable that the most of the grey, grogged and reddish-yellow oxidised wares were locally produced. A recent summary of the Roman pottery industry of West-Central Leicestershire (Pollard 2005) records a number of kiln sites in and near Leicester, within a 20 kilometre radius of Market Harborough. Pollard also notes, however, that the industry in Leicester and its hinterland is poorly understood (*ibid*. 153). There are other known kiln sites within a 20 km radius of the site in modern day Northamptonshire, such as Corby and in and around Kettering (Swan 1984, 144-5 and map 14). The BB1 will either be a product of the Poole Harbour industry or be a locally produced imitation. Some of the cream wares may also have been produced locally, or be from the Mancetter Hartshill kilns.

#### Forms

All of the recognisable vessel forms in the grey and grogged wares are jars. These are mainly either lid seated or have curved rims, although some large storage-type jars occur in grogged wares. A vessel in the possible BB1 fabric is a jar or cooking pot with external burnished decoration comprising acute lattice on the vessel wall and a wavy line on the neck. A base sherd in LNVCC is probably from a bowl or dish and the cream ware Mancetter-Hartshill sherds are from mortaria, one represented by a spout and the other a reeded hammerhead form with external red painted vertical and horizontal lines. One fine cream ware sherd is from a flagon and a base in a reddish yellow fabric may also be from a flagon.

#### Dating

The pink grogged ware is probably of later 1st century date but the hard cream variety was also produced in the 2nd century. Much of the grey, reddish yellow oxidised and cream wares date to the later 1st or 2nd centuries. The possible BB1 jar or cooking pot is a Hadrianic-Antonine form, while the CGS scrap is of mid to later 2nd century date.

The LNVCC dish or bowl base and the painted Mancetter-Hartshill mortarium are probably 4th century in date. Two broad periods of Roman occupation therefore appear to be represented, late 1st to mid 2nd century and 4th century, with nothing which would point to activity between these periods.

A few sherds of non-Roman pottery were recovered. Those from Trench 1 are medieval and post-medieval in date while sherds in a very coarse fabric from two contexts in Trenches 7 and 9 (705, 906) may be belong to the Saxon period.

#### Assemblage characteristics

The small assemblage has a limited range of fabrics and forms, with few regional or continental imports, suggesting that activities on the site were predominantly simple domestic or utilitarian, and little to suggest anything of a sizeable higher status nature.

The assemblage is locally and regionally important in that it derives from a site in an area where there has been little previous investigation; it does not, however, warrant further detailed analysis.

#### **5.3 Animal bone** by Lazlo Lichtenstein

A total of 260 (NISP) animal bone elements and fragments were collected from a range of features during the excavation, weighing 3.285kg. Some 95.4% of the specimens had been hand-collected during the excavation and the remaining 4.6% were recovered from the sieved environmental samples. Following cleaning and drying all fragments of animal bone were analysed and recorded, using standard zooarchaeological methods. This material was analysed to determine the taxa present, state of preservation and it is potential to provide evidence on the function and economy of the site.

#### Method

The animal bone was identified using Northamptonshire Archaeology's and the author's vertebrate reference collection, and further guidelines from Schmid (1972), Driesch (1979), Sisson & Grossman (1953) and Feher (1990). Due to anatomical similarities between sheep and goat the criteria set out by J. Boessneck (1969) were used to separate the two species. Ageing data and tooth eruption and wear were categorised according to Bull and Payne (1982), Grant (1982), Hillson (2005) with the identification of juvenilis after Amorosi (1989) and Schmid (1972).

All the animal remains were counted and weighed, and where possible identified to species, anatomical element, fragmentation, side, zone, fusion, cut- or animal teeth marks, age and sex.

Bones that could not be identified to species were, where possible, categorised according to the relative size of the animal represented (large ungulate size: cattle or horse sized, small ungulate size: pig or sheep/goat). Presence of large and medium vertebrae and ribs was recorded for each context.

The minimum number of individuals (MNI) was calculated on the most frequently occurring bone for each species and taking into account left and right sides, as well as epiphyseal fusion and tooth wear stage. For the calculation of the number of identified fragments per species (NISP) all identifiable fragments were counted.

All teeth and a restricted suite of parts of the postcranial skeleton were recorded and used in counts. All fragments were recorded.

#### Results

Employing standard zooarchaeological methodological procedures 234 specimens (90% of the total NISP) were identified to taxa and parts of anatomy, representing five mammalian (*Equus*/horse, *Bos*/cattle, *Sus*/pig, *Ovicaprid*/sheep or goat, *Canis*/dog) species (Table 3). The majority of bones came from cattle (54.6%) and lower number of sus (4.6%) and sheep/goat (4.6%). Dog was also represented at the site. No avian, fish or amphibian bones were recovered.

Species	Number	Percentage
(common name)		
<i>Equus</i> (horse)	3	1.2%
Bos (cattle)	142	54.6%
Sus (pig)	12	4.6%
Ovicaprid (Sheep/goat)	12	4.6%
<i>Canis</i> (dog)	1	0.4%
Large ungulate	57	21.9%
Small ungulate	7	2.7%
Unidentificated	26	10%
Total	260	100%

Table 3: Species present in the animal bone assemblage by fragment count (including teeth) in the Roman period

#### Taphonomy

The bones were generally in good condition, but the fragmentation was high (Table 4), with the majority (64.9%) being less than 50mm in size. The surface abrasion was at low lewel. No complete long bones recorded, because the proximal and the distal end were damaged. Taphonomic factors affecting the material were recorded including gnawed and recently broken bones. Some bones were smashed in antiquity signifying a chosen method of disposal and more than 30% showed signs of fresh breaks.

Of the assemblage 2.8% had been affected by butchery. Chopping marks was seen on cattle tibia (604-605), ditch [606], humerus (707), ditch [710] and large ungulate size animal costa (706), ditch [710] and (806), ditch [808] fragments.

Canid gnawing was seen on 2% of bone, which is relatively moderate. Canid gnawing on bones was noted on cattle tibia (604-605), ditch [606], scapula (810), ditch [812] and large ungulate size animal vertebra (804), ditch [808] fragments.

Evidence for burning was seen on some small bone fragments from sieved sample (604), ditch [606]. No evidence of bone working was observed.

Size(mm)	Number	Percentage
<20	25	10.1%
20-50	136	54.8%
50-100	74	29.8%
100-150	9	3.6%
150-200	4	1.7%
Total	248	100%

Table 4: Size of the animal bone assemblage (excluding teeth) in the Roman period

#### Ageing

Little ageing data was available from pig and cattle tooth wear evidence (Table 5). Tooth wear evidence of pigs worn down molars indicated an adult beast in context (607), ditch [608] and another adult beast in (807), ditch [808]. Deciduous premolars indicated a young cattle in context (707), ditch [710] and some worn down molars indicated another adult/mature beast in context (810), ditch [812] on the site.

 Table 5: The ageing data after the teeth erruption in the Roman period

Context	Species	Age
607	pig	Adultus, Group 3 (31-35
		months)
707	cattle	Juvenilis
807	pig	Adultus, Group 3 (31-35
		months)
810	cattle	Adultus/Maturus

The all of the horse, sheep/goat and dog bone fragments were part of adult animals.

Table 6: Minimal Number of Individuals in the animal bone assemblage in the Roman period

Common name	MNI
Cattle	2
Horse	1
Pig	2
Sheep/Goat	1
Dog	1

## Discussion

The state of preservation for bone on the site was generally good, but the fragmentation was high. Many bones were smashed recently, but 90% of the assemblage could be identified to species. The assemblage is dominated by cattle 54.6%, followed by lower numbers of pig 4.6% and sheep/goat 4.6%. Remains of horse bones were relatively infrequent, comprising only three fragments (1.2%). The dominance of cattle is not unusual for this period (Table 6) and its presence was the result of domestic waste disposal.

The dog gnawing was of relatively moderate frequency (2% of the total NISP). The dog bone was found in context (804), ditch [808], indicating the presence of only one adult.

The presence of canid gnawing on bones suggests that they were left with access of dogs before being buried. The evidence for gnawing by dogs supports the skeletal evidence for the presence by dogs at the site. Cut marks were absent on this bones and it is therefore unlikely that the dog had been skinned, dismembered or in any way utilised for meat.

Evidence for burning was seen on some small bone fragments in the sieved sample (less than 1% of the total NISP). None of the hand-collected and sieved bones from the contexts shown evidence of pathological condition.

#### Conclusion

The range of species present is not unusual for Roman contexts. Cattle were the most important species in terms of food value on account of the much greater carcass weight in this period.

All of the pigs in the assemblage appear to have been domestic. The pig being the more numerous species at Roman sites.

There are anatomical similarities between sheep and goats, but in this case the ovicaprid remains almost certainly came from sheep.

Small numbers of horse bone are common at the Roman sites. The horse bone was part of adult animal. None of the horse bones had any evidence of butchery, it seems the horse was a working animal only and reached maturity.

Dogs may have been used for different purposes, such as for herding animals, as a guard dog or even as pet. Dogs have been kept as pets and companions for a significant proportion of human history.

The assemblage appears to represent kitchen waste. The species present and their relative proportions appear to be typical for the Roman period.

#### Potential

The results showed a range of common domesticates with the dominance of cattle and lower number of pig and sheep/goat being what is expected for a Roman landscape. The level of preservation, identifiability and amount of ageing suggest that the assemblage would provide information on the animal husbandry and economy of the site. If further animal remains were collected from suitable contexts during the course of any subsequent excavation it would provide statements about the animal husbandry and thereby contribute to the understanding of the sites economy.

#### 5.4 Charred plant materials by Val Fryer

Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from pit and ditch fills, and three were submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by NA and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 7. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). All plant remains were charred. Modern seeds, arthropod remains and fibrous roots were also recorded, with the latter being particularly abundant within all three assemblages.

#### Results

Although charcoal/charred wood fragments were present throughout, cereal grains/chaff and seeds of common weeds and wetland plants were only recorded at a low to moderate density within the assemblage from ditch [606] (sample 3). Preservation was generally quite poor, with evidence that some grains and seeds had been burnt at such high temperatures that they had been partly converted to black, tarry residues.

Oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains were recorded within the assemblage from sample 3, with wheat being predominant. Of the wheat grains, most were of an elongated 'drop' form typical of spelt (*T. spelta*), although a small number of more rounded hexaploid type forms were also present. Spelt glume bases were recorded along with single bread wheat (*T. aestivum/compactum*) type rachis node. A limited range of seeds of common segetal weeds was also recorded, with taxa noted including brome (*Bromus* sp.), black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), grasses (Poaceae), dock (*Rumex* sp.) and vetch/vetchling (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.). Wetland plant macrofossils, including sedge (*Carex* sp.), saw-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) and spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.) nutlets and bur-reed (*Sparganium* sp.) fruits, were also recorded along with a small number of indeterminate culm nodes and tubers.

Black porous and tarry residues, all of which were probably derived from the extremely high temperature combustion of organic remains, were recorded throughout, but other remains were very scarce.

Sample No.	1	2	3
Context No.	813	709	604
Feature No.	814	710	606
Feature type	Pit	Ditch	Ditch
Cereals			
<i>Avena</i> sp. (grains)	-	-	xcf
(awn frags.)	-	-	х
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grain)	-	-	xcf
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)	-	-	XX
(glume bases)	-	-	XX
(spikelet bases)	-	-	х
(rachis internodes)	-	-	х
<i>T. spelta</i> L. (glume bases)	-	-	XX
<i>T. aestivum/compactum</i> type (rachis nodes)	-	-	х
Cereal indet. (grains)	-	-	XX
Herbs			
Arrhenatherum sp. (tubers)	-	-	xcf
Bromus sp.	-	-	xcf
Chenopodiaceae indet	-	-	х
Fabaceae indet.	-	-	х
Fallopia convolvulus (L.)A.Love	-	-	х
Hyoscyamus niger L.	-	-	xcf
Small Poaceae indet.	-	-	х
Large Poaceae indet.	-	-	х
Rumex sp.	-	-	х

Table 7: Charred plant macrofossils

Sample No.	1	2	3
Context No.	813	709	604
Feature No.	814	710	606
Feature type	Pit	Ditch	Ditch
R. acetosella L.	-	-	х
Sinapis sp.	-	-	xcf
Stellaria graminea L.	-	-	х
Vicia/Lathyrus sp.	-	-	х
Wetland plants			
<i>Carex</i> sp.	-	-	х
Cladium mariscus (L.)Pohl	-	-	х
<i>Eleocharis</i> sp.	-	-	х
Montia fontana L.	-	-	х
Sparganium sp.	-	-	Х
Other plant macrofossils			
Charcoal <2mm	х	х	XXX
Charcoal >2mm	-	-	XXX
Charcoal >5mm	-	-	х
Charcoal >10mm	-	-	х
Charred root/stem	-	-	х
Indet.culm nodes	-	-	х
Indet.seeds	-	-	х
Indet.tubers	-	-	Х
Other remains			
Black porous 'cokey' material	х	х	х
Black tarry material	-	х	х
Bone	-	-	xb
Small coal frags.	-	-	Х
Sample volume (litres)	-	-	-
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	<b>100%</b>	100%

Key to Table

x = 1 - 10 specimens, xx = 11 - 50 specimens, xxx = 51 - 100 specimens of cf = compare b = burnt

#### Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, although the assemblages from samples 1 and 2 contain insufficient material for interpretation, the remains from ditch [606] are of some note, as they appear to be derived from a small deposit of charred cereal processing waste. Processing waste often occurs in Roman contexts where it has been used as tinder or fuel for a range of domestic or light 'industrial' purposes, and in this instance there certainly is evidence that the material was burnt at an extremely high temperature. That this temperature possibly exceeded that which may be expected in an ordinary domestic context is implied by the extremely poor condition of the macrofossils, many of which literally appear to have melted. It is currently unknown if there is any evidence for ovens, kilns or other industrial activities on or near the site, but it is tentatively suggested that this assemblage may have an industrial rather than domestic origin.

As none of the current assemblages contain a sufficient density of material for quantification (i.e. 100+ specimens), no further analysis is recommended. However, a summary of this assessment should be included within any publication of data from the site.

#### 6 DISCUSSION

The trial trenching generally confirmed the accuracy of the earlier geophysical survey. Although the site was traversed by medieval ridge and furrow ploughing, the majority of archaeological features had not been greatly affected. The excavations confirmed the presence of Romano-British occupation that can be characterised as a rural, possibly with an Iron Age antecedent.

#### Mesolithic

The presence of a fragment of worked flint, residual in a later feature, indicates some Mesolithic activity in the vicinity, although no features belonging to this period were identified.

#### Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age

The pits truncated by the Romano-British ditch in Trenches 7 and 8 suggests a possible pit alignment may have been present before being re-cut and re-used as a boundary ditch in the Roman period. The re-use of an existing boundary indicates the continued use and respect for boundaries within the landscape through the Iron Age and into the Roman period. Although no dating evidence was recovered, pit alignments are generally dated to the late Bronze Age to early Iron Age.

#### **Romano-British**

The majority of features at the site belonged to the Romano-British period and were located on top of the slope on a flat plateau to the east of the development area. They constituted a series of ditches that may represent enclosures that spanned the period from the 1st to mid 2nd centuries AD, possibly continuing until the 4th century AD. In both character and date range, the site appears to be similar to that excavated just over one kilometre to the north at Airfield Farm (Clarke 2008, 2010) and two kilometres away at Lubenham Hill (Clarke 2011)

The excavated remains probably constitute fields or animal enclosures; however, the quantities of domestic pottery would suggest occupation in the vicinity, with the charred plant remains from ditch to the south also suggesting possible industrial activity. No definite structures were identified, although the presence of gullies and pits indicate that these may be present. Alternatively, occupation may lie at the east of the site, outside the area of investigation.

#### Saxon/medieval

Two sherds of possible Anglo-Saxon pottery were recovered from Roman contexts and were probably intrusive or accumulated in the disused features that may have been visible in the topography as shallow depressions. The presence early/middle of Saxon pottery suggests settlement in the vicinity although no features of possible early/middle Saxon date were identified during the evaluation.

Subsequent to the Romano-British occupation, no further identified activity occurred at the site until the area was put under the plough in the medieval period.

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Northamptonshire Archaeology a service of Northamptonshire County Council

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## **APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX**

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	50m x 2.0m N-S	SP 713 362	90.51m aOD	90.21m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.19m thick	
102	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.18m thick	Pottery
103	Natural	Dark orange-brown clay		
104	Fill of furrow	Dark orange-brown sandy clay		
105	Cut of furrow	Cut of furrow, filled by (104)	1m wide 0.15m deep	
106	Fill of furrow	Dark orange-brown sandy clay		
107	Cut of furrow	Dark orange-brown sandy clay	0.80m wide 0.10m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	50m x 2.0m E-W	SP 650 449	99.50m aOD	99.15aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.30m thick	
202	Subsoil	Light grey-brown sandy clay	0.05m thick	
203	Natural	Mid yellow-brown clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	50m x 2.0m NE to SW	SP 613 414	100.51m aOD	100.21m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Mid grey- brown sandy clay	0.30m thick	
302	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.05m thick	
303	Natural	Mid yellow-brown clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	50m x 2.0m NW-SE	SP 552 484	103.45aOD	103.04m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.30-0.35m thick	
402	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.05m	
403	Natural	Mid yellow-brown clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	50m x 2.0m N to S	SP 653 495	105.60m aOD	105.20m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
501	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.40m thick	
502	Natural	Mid yellow-grey clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
6	50m x 2.0m NE to SW	SP 583 532	105.40m aOD	105.40m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
601	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sandy clay	0.30m thick	
602	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.10m thick	
603	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay		
604	Fill of [606]	Dark grey silty clay. Overlies (605)	0.84m wide 0.21m deep	Roman pottery and animal bone. Sample 3
605	Fill of [606]	Mid brown-orange silty clay.	0.98m wide 0.31m deep	Roman pottery and animal bone

606	Cut of ditch	NW-SE aligned, shallow U-shaped profile. Filled by (604) (605)	0.98m wide 0.34m deep	
607	Fill of [608]	Mid orange-brown silty clay		Roman pottery and animal bone
608	Cut of ditch	NW-SE aligned, shallow V-shaped profile. Filled by (607)	0.67m wide 0.22m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
7	30m x 2.0m NW to SE	SP 614 564	106.87m aOD	106.31m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
701	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.30m thick	
702	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.10m thick	
703	Natural	Mid yellow-brown clay		
704	Fill of [710]	Dark orange-brown silty clay		
705	Fill of [710]	Dark grey-brown sandy clay	1.60m wide 0.22m deep	Roman pottery, Saxon pottery and animal bone
706	Fill of [710]	Dark grey-brown silty clay	1.87m wide 0.32m deep	Animal bone
707	Fill of [710]	Dark grey-brown sandy clay	1.18m wide 0.32m deep	Animal bone
708	Fill of [710]	Mid orange-brown silty clay		
709	Primary fill of [710]	Dark grey-brown silty clay	0.80m wide 0.25m deep	Roman pottery and animal bone Sample 2
710	Cut of ditch	NE-SW aligned, U- shaped profile, filled by (704-9)	1.90m wide 0.92m deep	
711	Fill of [715]	Dark grey-brown sandy clay, same as (705)	2.06m wide 0.33m deep	
712	Fill of [715]	Dark grey-brown silty clay. Same as (707)	1.32m wide 0.28m deep	
713	Fill of [715]	Mid orange-brown silty clay	0.98m wide 0.28m deep	

714	Primary fill of [715]	Dark grey-brown silty clay. Same as (709)	0.51m wide 0.19m deep	
715	Cut of ditch	NE-SW aligned, U- shaped profile, same as [710]. Filled by (711-14)		
716	Fill of [717]	Mid orange-brown sandy clay. Cut by [715]		Animal bone
717	Cut of pit	Sub-circular U-shaped pit. Filled by (716)	ub-circular U-shaped 0.67m wide 0.36m t. Filled by (716) deep	
718	Fill of [719]	Dark grey silty clay. Cut by [721]		Roman pottery
719	Cut of pit/butt- end	U-shaped profile. Filled by (718)	0.95m wide 0.38m deep	
720	Fill of [721]	Mid grey with orange mottling		
721	Cut of ditch	NE-SW aligned, U- shaped profile. Filled by (720). Cuts (718) (722)	1.15m wide 0.46m deep	
722	Fill of [725]	Mid grey-brown silty clay. Cut by [721] [727] [731]		
723	Fill of [725]	Mid grey-brown silty clay		
724	Primary fill of [725]	Light brown silty clay		
725	Cut of ditch	E-W aligned. Filled by (722-4).	1.5m wide 0.70m deep	
726	Fill of [727]	Mid grey-brown silty clay		Roman pottery and animal bone
727	Cut of ditch	NE-SW aligned, U- shaped profile. Filled by (726). Cuts (728)	1m wide 0.43m deep	
728	Fill of [729]	Mid grey-brown sandy clay. Cut by [727]		
729	Cut of ditch	Irregular shaped. Filled by (728)	1.70m wide 0.28m deep	
730	Fill of [731]	Mid grey-brown silty clay. Cut by [727]		
731	Cut of gully	E-W aligned. Filled by (730)	0.60m wide 0.20m deep	
732	Fill of [733]	Dark grey-brown silty clay		
733	Cut of gully	NE-SW aligned. U- shaped profile. Filled by (732)	0.80m wide 0.30m deep	
734	Fill of [735]	Dark brown-grey silty clay		Horse shoe, modern brick and tile
735	Cut of pond or hollow	Sub circular, U-shaped profile. Filled by (734)	5.50m visible 0.60m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
8	30m x 2.0m E to W	SP 644 572	108.89m aOD	108.41m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
801	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.20m thick	
802	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.20m thick	
803	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay		
804	Fill of [808]	Light grey-brown sandy clay	1.57m wide 0.27m deep	Roman pottery and animal bone
805	Fill of [808]	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	2.06m wide and 0.16m	Animal bone
806	Fill of [808]	Mid grey sandy clay	1.38m wide 0.25m deep	Roman pottery and animal bone
807	Fill of [808]	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.88m wide 0.11m deep	
808	Cut of ditch	N-S aligned, U- shaped profile. Filled by (804-7). Cuts (809) and (813)	2.06m wide 0.68m deep	
809	Fill of [812]	Mid grey-brown sandy clay. Cut by [808]	1.10m wide 0.28m deep	Animal bone
810	Fill of [812]	Mid orange-grey sandy clay	1.28m wide 0.37m deep	Mesolithic flint Roman pottery and animal bone
811	Fill of [812]	Orange-brown sandy clay	1.01m wide 0.05m deep	Animal bone
812	Cut of ditch	N-S aligned, U- shaped profile. Filled by (809-11)	1.35m wide 0.66m	
813	Fill of [814]	Mid orange-brown sandy clay. Cut by [808]		Sample 1
814	Cut of pit	Sub-circular shaped, filled by (813)	0.31m wide 0.29m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
9	50m x 2.0m NW to SE	SP 655 533	102.60m aOD	102.12m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
901	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sandy clay	0.23m thick	
902	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.17m thick	
903	Natural	Light orange-brown clay		
904	Fill of [905]	Dark brown sandy clay		
905	Cut of furrow	E-W aligned, filled by (904)	0.45m wide 0.10m wide	
906	Fill of [907]	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.30m wide 0.05m deep	Roman pottery
907	Cut of pit	Sub-circular, filled by (906)	0.85m long, 0.73m wide 0.25m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
10	30m x 2.0m N to S	SP 664 568	107.10m aOD	106.60m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1001	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.30m thick	
1002	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.20m thick	
1003	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
11	30m x 2.0m E to W	SP 696 591	105.25m aOD	104.75m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1101	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.35m thick	

1102	Subsoil	Light brown sandy clay	0.05m thick	
1103	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
12	50m x 2.0m NW to SE	SP 729 559	100.60m aOD	101.00m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1201	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.40m thick	
1202	Subsoil	Light brown sandy clay	0.05m thick	
1203	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
13	50m x 2.0m N to S	SP 751 484	97.70m aOD	97.25m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
1301	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	0.40m thick	
1302	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	0.04m thick	
1303	Natural	Light yellow-brown clay		



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