



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation of land at 'The Limes'
Hinckley Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire
September-October 2013



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: 166452
Project name	Archaeological evaluation of land at 'The Limes', Hinckley Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire September-October 2013	
Short description	In September-October 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Prospect Archaeology on land at The Limes, Hinckley Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire. Some of the previously mapped furrows were identified in the trenches but no archaeological features or artefacts were observed or recovered.	
Project type	Evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	Yes – DBA Boutsikas 2008 and Mapped furrows (Boutsikas 2008, fig 14)	
Current Land use	Scrub land	
Future work	No	
Monument type/ period	Modern	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	'The Limes', Hinckley Road, Sapcote	
Study area	5.7ha	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 48060 93420	
Height OD	c 94 m AOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Tim Upson-Smith	
Project Manager	Ian Meadows	
Sponsor or funding body	Prospect Archaeology	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	02/09/2013	
End date	16/10/2013	
ARCHIVES	Location	Content
Physical	Leicestershire Museums X.A138.2013	None
Paper		Evaluation pro forma sheets, context sheets, colour slides, black and white contact prints, digital photographs
Digital		Report text and figures
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological evaluation of land at 'The Limes', Hinckley Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire September-October 2013	
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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	BACKGROUND.....	1
2.1	Location, geology and topography	1
2.2	Archaeological background	1
3	OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	3
3.1	Objectives	3
3.2	Methodology	3
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE	5
5	DISCUSSION.....	6
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	7

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

APPENDIX 2: VIEWS OF THE SITE

Figures

Cover: Trench 4 looking north

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Trench locations

Fig 3: Furrows in Trench 1, looking north

Fig 4: Trench 12, looking south

Fig 5: Trench 20, looking south

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF LAND AT THE LIMES, HINCKLEY ROAD, SAPCOTE
LEICESTERSHIRE
SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2013**

Abstract

In September-October 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Prospect Archaeology, on land at The Limes, Hinckley Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire. Some of the previously mapped furrows were identified in the trenches but no archaeological features or artefacts were observed or recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology to conduct an archaeological trial trench evaluation in advance of a proposed development scheme at The Limes, Hinckley Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire (NGR SP 478 934, Fig 1). The works follow on from a desk based assessment (Boutsikas 2008).

The works were undertaken in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

The programme of archaeological investigation involved the excavation of twenty-one trenches across the development area, the results of which are presented in this report.

2 BACKGROUND

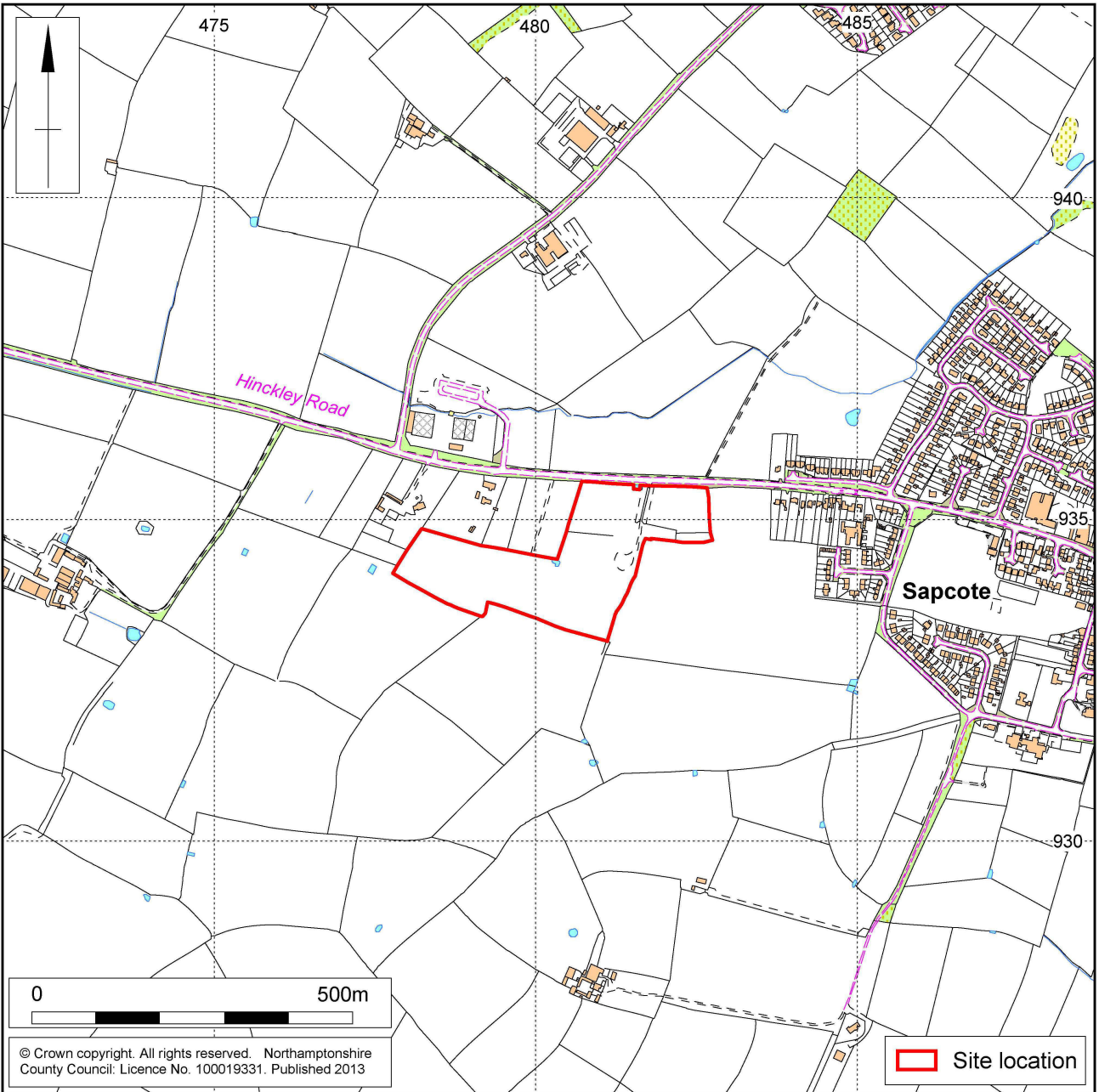
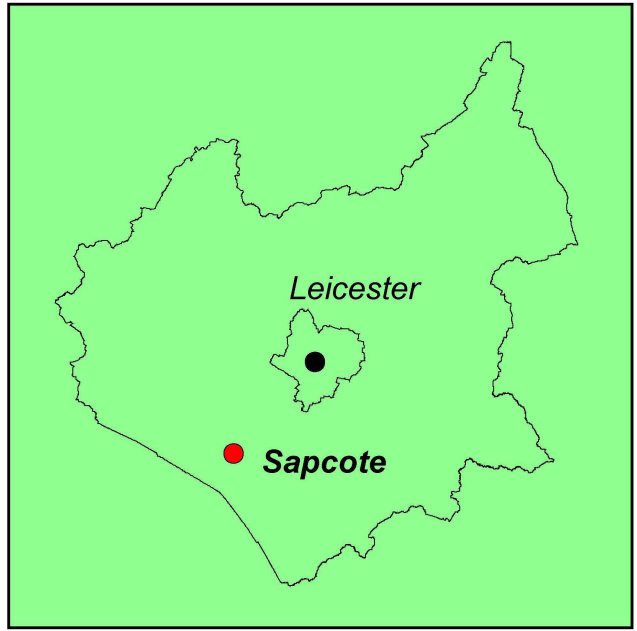
2.1 Location, geology and topography

The development area lies at the south-west end of Sapcote village, on the south side of Hinckley Road. It comprises an irregular parcel of broadly flat land, 5.7ha in extent, standing at an approximate elevation of 94m AOD (Fig 1). The solid geology of the survey area is mapped as the Mercia Mudstone with overlying superficial deposits of Wolston sand and gravel (<http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>).

2.2 Archaeological background

The proposed development area lies outside the historic medieval core of Sapcote and no archaeological sites or remains have been recorded within the study area. A number of prehistoric remains are, however, recorded in the vicinity. Within 500m these remains comprise a probable Palaeolithic flake (MLE6043) in Sapcote Gravel Pit, a possible prehistoric crouched burial (MLE8215) and a Bronze Age spearhead (MLE9899). About 600m east of the site Iron Age pottery (MLE10197) was recovered and a beehive quern (MLE6551) has also been discovered in the vicinity of Sapcote.

South of the site, within 250m, an Early Bronze Age flint scatter has been interpreted as a possible occupation site (MLE287). Further evidence for prehistoric occupation of this area is abundant with approximately 450m to the south-west a large area containing a flint scatter (MLE7 and MLE8) (3 fields) indicating Neolithic occupation.



Scale 1:10,000

Site Location Fig 1

Further flints scattered over five fields were identified during a survey of South West Leicestershire in 1913-17 (MLE7370). The sample of flint tools found dates to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, highlighting the evidence for potential early settlement in the area. During the same survey a very large area of flint was noted which may in part represent a Mesolithic blade industry (MLE14) and a prehistoric scraper was found as part of a large flint scatter (MLE7372).

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The aims of the archaeological evaluation are specified in the Written Scheme of Investigation (NA 2013). The main aim of the investigation was to determine if archaeological remains were present within the application area. The specific objectives of the project were to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation on the development site;
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

3.2 Methodology

The works were conducted in accordance with the specification, *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008) and the *Code of Conduct* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, revised 2010). The written scheme of investigation was approved in advance of a start on site by the Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council, who also monitored the completion of the work on site.

Twenty-one 50m trenches were machine-excavated using a toothless ditching bucket (Fig 2) via a three-stage approach, with areas only evaluated when they were released by the ecologist and declared free from Great Crested Newts (Table 1). The trenches were positioned in accordance with the approved trench location plan and were related to Ordnance Survey National Grid. Due to various obstacles or hazards a small number of trenches were shortened or moved (Fig 2). On completion of archaeological recording the trenches were backfilled. There was no requirement for specialist reinstatement.

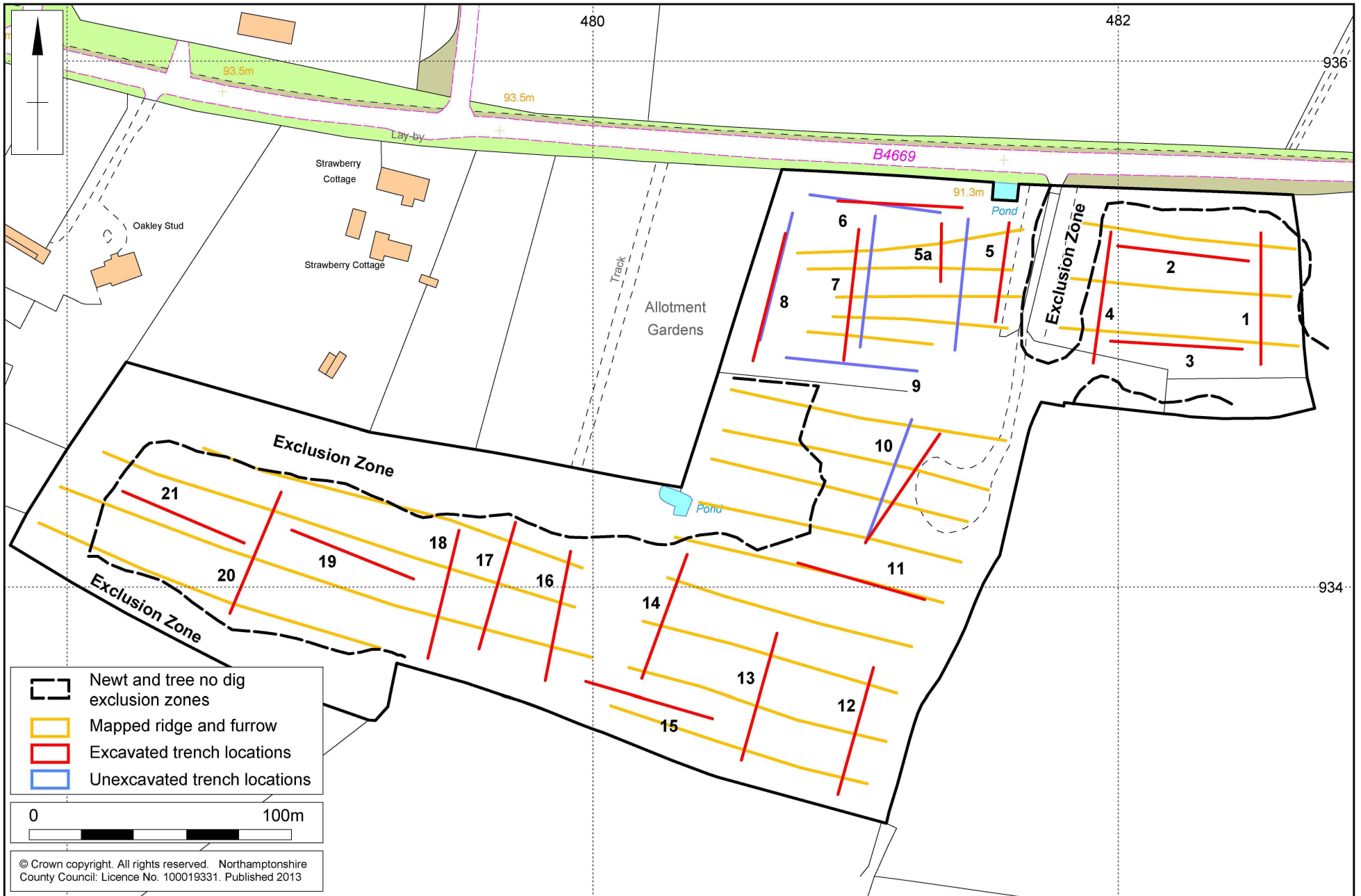
The topsoil, subsoil and non-structural post-medieval and later deposits were removed to reveal the natural. The topsoil was stacked separately from the subsoil and other deposits. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification of any features.

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

Scale 1:2000 (A4)

Sapcote, Leicestershire, Revised Trench Locations

Fig 2



A full photographic record comprising 35mm black and white negatives was maintained, supplemented with digital images. The field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing and using accession number: X. A138.2013.

Table 1 Stages of fieldwork

Date	Trench number
2nd to 3rd September 2013	1 to 4
20th September 2013	5, 5a & 6
15th to 16th October 2013	7 to 21

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The sequence of soils encountered across the evaluation area comprised mid orange-brown/yellow sandy clay natural at an average depth of 33.79m below the ground surface. It was overlain by light grey-brown sandy clay subsoil in all trenches except Trench 1, where it was absent and in Trench 2 where the equivalent layer consisted of a heavily disturbed brownish-orange silty sand layer 0.09m thick. The subsoil was on average 0.16m thick, but was thinner in the north-east part of the development area around Trenches 1 to 4. Topsoil overlay all deposits and was dark brown silt loam, on average 0.24m thick.

Furrows were identified in Trenches 1 (Fig 3), 2 and 4 only. This may be a consequence of a thinner subsoil deposit, down to 0.09m in Trench 2 for example, near the road. Trenches 5, 5a, 17 and 18 contained modern services or land drains only. No archaeological features were present in any of the excavated trenches (e.g. Fig 4 & 5).



Furrows in Trench 1, looking north Fig 3



Trench 12, looking south Fig 3



Trench 20, looking south Fig 4

5 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has demonstrated that furrows were present in Trenches 1, 2 and 4 only - despite having been mapped across all three fields - where there was a slightly reduced depth of overburden. This indicates that most of the furrows were not deep enough to have truncated the underlying natural. No archaeological features were identified in the development area despite lying within an area of prehistoric activity.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	50m x 2m E-W	448254 293510	92.34m	0.26m deep 92.08m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark brown-black, organic rich silty sand. Heavily root disturbed	0.28m thick	
102	Natural	Orange sand with occasional chert cobble	0.20m thick	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	50m x 2m E-W	448226 293527	91.76m	0.28m deep 91.48m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark brown silty sand	0.21m thick	
202	Subsoil	Dark brownish-orange silty sand	0.09m thick	
203	Natural	Orange sand with occasional chert cobble		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	50m x 2m E-W	448222 293492	92.84m	Data missing
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
301	Topsoil	Mid grey-brown sandy clay	Data missing	
302	Subsoil	Light grey-brown sandy clay	Data missing	
303	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay sand		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	50m x 2m E-W	448194 293511	92.48m	0.29m deep 92.19m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
401	Topsoil	Dark brown-black, organic rich silty sand. Heavily root disturbed	0.19m thick	
402	Subsoil	Light grey-brown sandy clay	0.10m thick	
404	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay sand		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	38m x 2m E-W	448147 293525	92.04m	0.30m deep 91.74m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
501	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy loam	0.16m thick	
502	Subsoil	Dark orange-brown sandy loam	0.13m thick	
503	Natural	Light brown sandy clay		

SAPCOTE, HINCKLEY ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5a	22m x 2m E-W	448108 293545	92.87m	0.45m deep 92.42m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
501a	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy loam	0.30m thick	
502a	Subsoil	Dark orange-brown sandy loam	0.10m thick	
503a	Natural	Mid orange-brown and grey mottled sandy clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
6	46m x 2m E-W	448123 293526	91.20m	0.35m deep 90.85m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
601	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy loam	0.33m thick	
602	Subsoil	Dark orange-brown sandy loam	0.07m thick	
603	Natural	Mid orange-brown and grey mottled sandy clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
7	30m x 2m E-W	448098 293512	92.10m	0.49m deep 91.61m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
701	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.26m thick	
702	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.22m thick	
703	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
8	22m x 2m E-W	448067 293513	93.00m	0.41m deep 92.59m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
801	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.22m thick	
802	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.17m thick	
803	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
10	50m x 2m NE-SW	448113 293440	93.20m	0.51m deep 92.79m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1001	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.26m thick	
1002	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.24m thick	
1003	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		
1004	Pit fill	Pebbles – hardcore?	None given	
1005	Pit cut	Modern square pit filled with hardcore?	None given	

SAPCOTE, HINCKLEY ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
11	50m x 2m E-W	448101 293402	94.13m	0.33m deep 93.80m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1101	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.13m thick	
1102	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.25m thick	
1103	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
12	50m x 2m E-W	448101 293347	94.24m	0.55m deep 93.69m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1201	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.26m thick	
1202	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.25m thick	
1203	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
13	50m x 2m E-W	448064 293360	94.57m	0.45m deep 94.08m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1301	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.19m thick	
1302	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.26m thick	
1303	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
14	50m x 2m E-W	448028 293390	95.12m	0.50m deep 94.62m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1401	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.28m thick	
1402	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.20m thick	
1403	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
15	50m x 2m E-W	448021 293357	95.18m	0.44m deep 94.74m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
1501	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.23m thick	
1502	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.26m thick	
1503	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

SAPCOTE, HINCKLEY ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
16	50m x 2m E-W	447987 293390	95.54m	0.51m deep 95.03m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1601	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.32m thick	
1602	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.23m thick	
1603	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
17	50m x 2m E-W	447964 293402	95.68m	0.42m deep 95.26 aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1701	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.30m thick	
1702	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.24m thick	
1703	Natural	Light yellow clay		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
18	50m x 2m E-W	447943 293398	96.02m	0.39m deep 95.63m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1801	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.27m thick	
1802	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.21m thick	
1803	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
19	50m x 2m E-W	447908 293413	96.54m	0.44m deep 96.10m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
1901	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.25m thick	
1902	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.21m thick	
1903	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
20	50m x 2m E-W	447872 293415	97.21m	0.29m deep 98.92m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
2001	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.22m thick	
2002	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.20m thick	
2003	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

SAPCOTE, HINCKLEY ROAD

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
21	50m x 2m E-W	447843 293427	98.24m	0.29m deep 97.95m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
2101	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.22m thick	
2102	Subsoil	Mid yellow-brown sandy silt	0.16m thick	
2103	Natural	Light yellow sandy silt		

APPENDIX 2: VIEWS OF THE SITE



North-west corner of the development area prior to excavation



Trial trenches and newt fencing



Backfilled trench



Backfilled trench



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