



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

A programme of Archaeological Observation,  
Investigation and Recording on land to the rear of  
Bay Tree Cottage, Adstock, Buckinghamshire  
April - May 2012



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Report 13/264

January 2014

Acc No: AYBCM:2012.35



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**QUALITY CONTROL**

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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No:</b> 168281
Project name	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording on land to the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, Adstock, Buckinghamshire	
Short description	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology between April and May 2012 on behalf of Mr and Mrs Spencer during groundworks for the construction of a new ménage on land to the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, Adstock, Buckinghamshire. The groundworks were relatively shallow in nature and comprised removal of grass and topsoil and partial excavation of the subsoil. Evidence of agricultural activity in the form of residual ridge and furrow was noted. A number of post-medieval artefacts were recovered from the subsoil.	
Project type	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Pasture	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	Medieval furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation	
Significant finds		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Buckinghamshire	
Site address	Land to the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, The Gardens, Adstock, Bucks	
Study area (sq metres)	1200m	
OS Easting & Northing	47382 23045	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer, Buckinghamshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J Leigh	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull supported by David J Leigh	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr and Mrs Spencer	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	April 2012	
End date	May 2012	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location:</b> Northamptonshire Archaeology	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical		
Paper	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Watching brief forms (2) Small finds Cu (4) black and white negatives (8) Colour slides (8) Digital photographs (12)
Digital		Report text and figures
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording on land to the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, The Gardens, Adstock, Buckinghamshire	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 13/264	
Author	David J Leigh	
Date	December 2013	

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**A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING  
ON LAND TO THE REAR OF BAY TREE COTTAGE, THE GARDENS  
ADSTOCK, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
APRIL – MAY 2012**

*Abstract*

*A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Mr and Mrs Spencer between April and May 2012 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new ménage on land to the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, The Gardens, Adstock, Buckinghamshire. The groundworks were relatively shallow in nature and comprised the removal of grass and topsoil and partial excavation of subsoil; the surface of the underlying natural was not exposed. Evidence of agricultural activity in the form of residual ridge and furrow was noted. A number of post-medieval artefacts were recovered from the subsoil.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

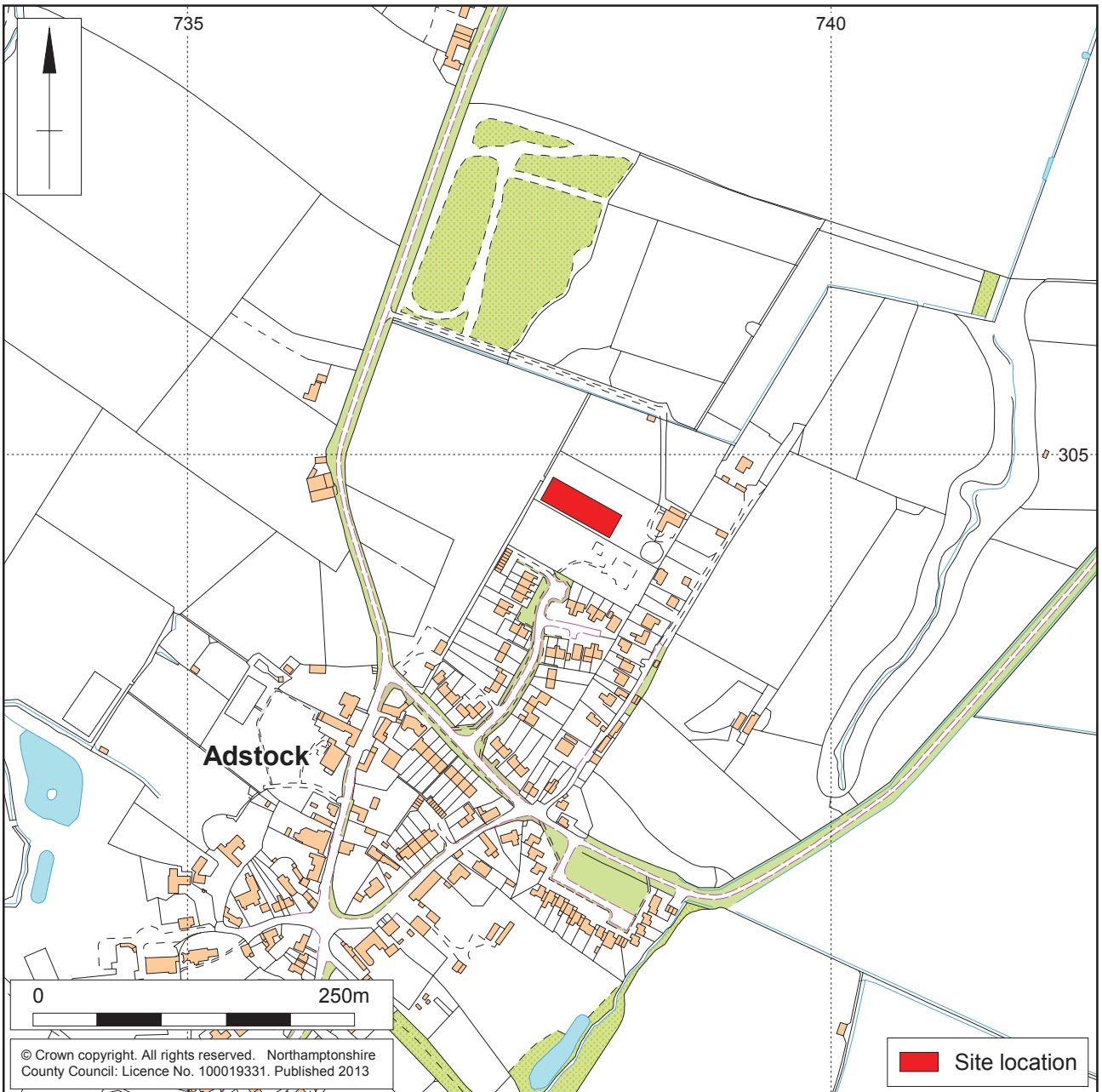
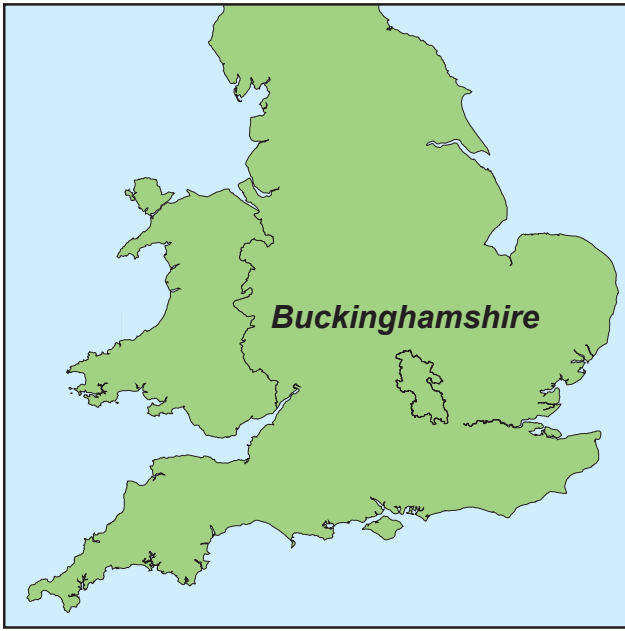
A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken between April and May 2012 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new ménage on land to the rear of Bay Tree Cottage, The Gardens, Adstock, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 47382 23045; Figs 1, 2 and 3). The work was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of Mr and Mrs Spencer following a request for a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording by Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer, Buckinghamshire County Council in a brief for archaeological work issued on the 1 December 2012 (BCC 2012).

It adhered to the National Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Leigh 2012) and the procedural document MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (EH 2006) along with the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

## **2 BACKGROUND**

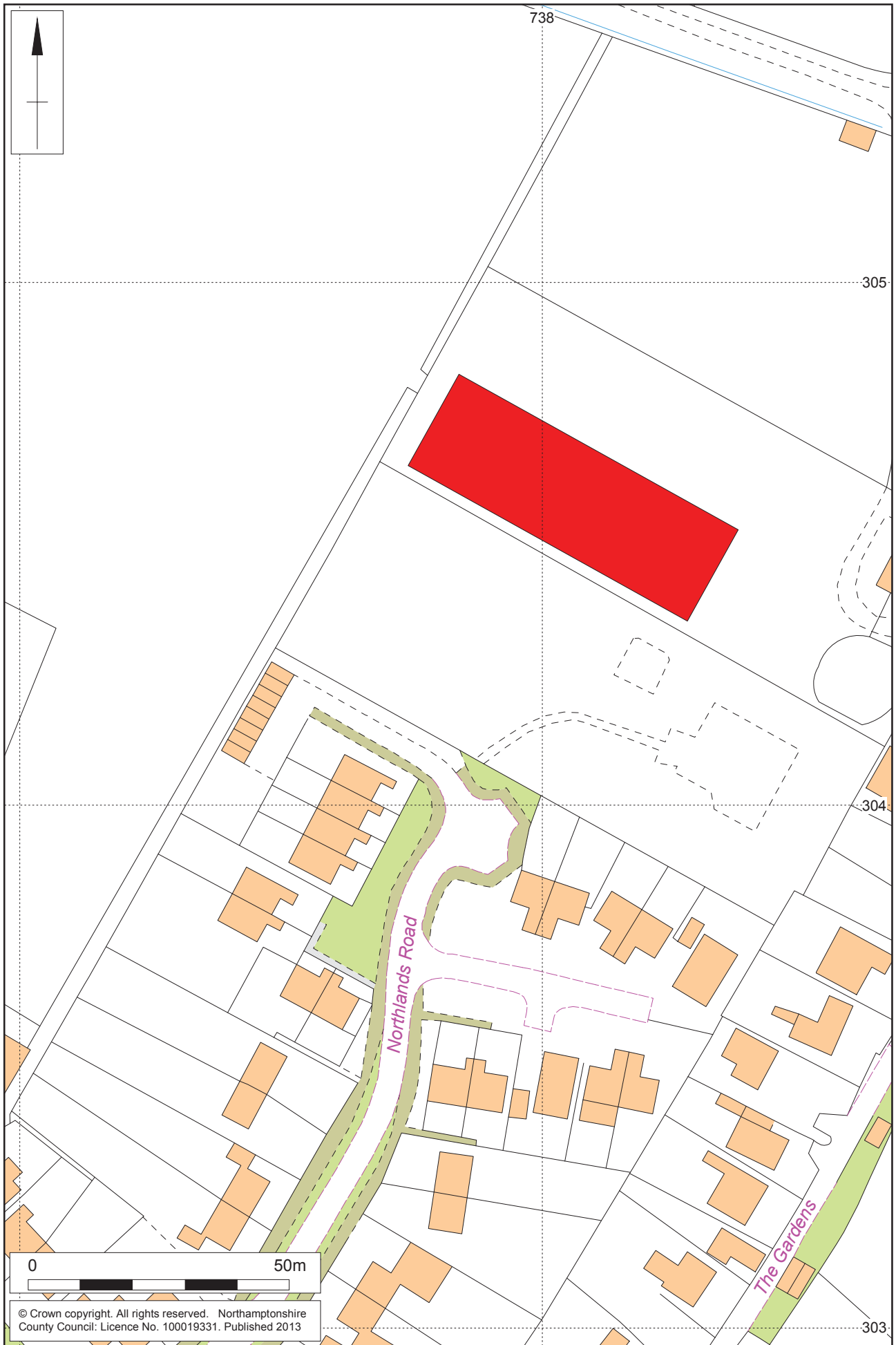
### **2.1 Location and topography**

The investigation area lies on the north-eastern boundary of the village of Adstock, which lies approximately 21km north-west of Aylesbury. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising rocks of the Portland, Kimmeridge and Ampthill group (BGS Geotitles <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geotitles>).



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1



Scale 1: 1000

Area of archaeological observation Fig 2

## 2.2 Historical background

As a requirement of the archaeological condition a search of all relevant records held by the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record was made in order to quantify the potential archaeological resource within the site and its immediate environs.

A Roman road or track is thought to pass close to the east of the village, aligned north-west to south-east, although the exact location is unknown (HER no 2034). It connects Akeman Street and the Alchester-Towcester road. The flanking ditches of the road were identified at Fleet Marston during a geophysical survey. It is possible that roadside settlement may also be present.

At Domesday in 1086, Ambrose was a tenant of Adstock Manor from William Peverel, although after 1086 it was held by the lords in demesne. There were 10 hides and land for seven ploughs. It was valued at 100s, although before 1066 it was worth £8 and was held by Gytha, Earl Ralph's wife. The church, St Cecilia's, has 12th-century origins, with alterations in the 14th and 15th centuries. It was restored in the 19th century. There is documentary evidence of a windmill in the parish in the 14th century (HER no 5246).

A substantial ditch running along the east side of Main Street, approximately 520m to the south-west of the site, may be a medieval boundary ditch (HER no 6311). Pottery associated with the ditch dated to the late 12th to 13th centuries.

The open fields of Adstock were enclosed in 1797, although as late as the mid-20th century there were extensive ridge and furrow earthworks surviving in fields around the village, including in the site.

There are a number of 17th and 18th-century listed buildings within the village. One house, which originated in the 17th century, is thought to be a rare survival of a one-storey peasant house, which may have been a squatter's house built on the edge of common land (HER no 10696).

During World War II Adstock Manor was used as an outstation for Bletchley Park for code breaking (HER no 9505). Adstock village is a Conservation Area.

The Historic Environment Record data has shown that there is little evidence for activity in and around the village prior to the medieval period, although this may be the result of little previous archaeological investigation. The investigation area lies adjacent to the course of a Roman road or track which has been sampled elsewhere along its route.

The site lay outside the village, within the open fields, during the medieval period and it is therefore unlikely that there will be any unexpected archaeological remains dating to this period within the site area.



### 3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the archaeological investigation were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks for the new ménage and to record all archaeological deposits uncovered;
- ◆ Determine the date, character, state of preservation and depth of any archaeological deposits observed and to retrieve all datable artefacts;
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

A photographic record in black and white negative and colour slide film was kept, with supplementary photographs in digital format. The written record used Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma sheets (NA 2011). The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).

The fieldwork was undertaken between April and May 2012 during groundworks for the new ménage. The groundworks were undertaken using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket (Fig 4) and comprised the removal of grass and topsoil across all of the area of the new ménage followed by the partial excavation of subsoil across the northern half of the area. The southern half was subsequently built up to formation height (Fig 5). A metal detector survey was undertaken during the course of the groundworks (Fig 6).



The investigation area, looking north-west Fig 3



General view of the groundworks, looking north-west Fig 4

#### 4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

The groundworks did not expose the natural substratum, and remained within the subsoil at a maximum depth of 0.35m below present ground level. The exposed stratigraphic sequence (Fig 7) comprised mid grey-brown sandy loam subsoil, containing numerous small irregular stones and very occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material. Sealing this was a grass-humus horizon, comprising grey-brown sandy loam, up to 0.08m thick, containing occasional irregular stones.

Evidence of ridge and furrow was noted as discrete linear undulations on the surface of the investigation area set on a north-south orientation. No sub-surface indications of the ridge and furrow were identified.

Four post-medieval artefacts were recovered from the subsoil during the course of the metal detector survey, the earliest of these comprising a copper alloy thimble dating from the 17th century. The other artefacts comprised two 19/20th-century copper alloy buttons and a modern copper alloy ring with a soldered joint.



Building up the southern half of the area, looking north-east Fig 5



The metal detector survey in progress, looking west Fig 6



The stratigraphic sequence in the northern half of the area, south facing section Fig 7

## 5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	2
Small finds (cu)	4
Black and white negatives	8
Colour slides	8
Digital photographs	12

The archive will be consolidated and prepared for deposition with Buckinghamshire Museums under the accession number: AYBCM: 2012.35.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The groundworks were of relatively limited nature, remaining entirely within the subsoil, in this respect it is not possible to determine if any archaeological deposits are present. However the scarcity of any artefactual evidence would suggest, although not preclude, that no significant archaeological deposits are present within the investigation area.

Residual remains of ridge and furrow was noted and three post-medieval artefacts were recovered from the subsoil.

The archaeological investigation was carried out in favourable circumstances and the results are considered to be reliable.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

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IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

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NA 2011 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology



Northamptonshire County Council

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