



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation on land at
Home Farm, Warrington, Olney
Milton Keynes
December 2013



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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis Number:	
Project title	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation on Land at Home Farm, Warrington, Olney, Milton Keynes		
Short description	In December 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at Home Farm, Warrington, Olney. Two trenches were excavated across the proposed development area. Only Trench one revealed archaeological remains. These consisted of two pits, both containing medieval pottery, dating to the 13th-15th centuries.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Pasture		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Medieval		
Significant finds	Medieval pottery		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Milton Keynes		
Site address	Home Farm, Warrington, Olney		
Easting Northing	SP 489813 253948		
Area (sq m/ha)	-		
Height aOD	65m		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Project brief originator	Milton Keynes Council Senior Archaeological Office		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Director/Supervisor	Christopher Jones (NA)		
Project Manager	Edmund Taylor (NA)		
Sponsor or funding body	David Coles Architects		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	10/12/13		
End date	10/12/13		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	NA Offices	Site records (1 archive box)	
Paper			
Digital		Client report PDF. Photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title	Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation on Land at Home Farm, Warrington, Olney, Milton Keynes		
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION ON LAND AT HOME FARM, WARRINGTON, OLNEY, MILTON KEYNES DECEMBER 2013

Abstract

In December 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on; land at Home Farm, Warrington, Olney. Two trenches were excavated across the proposed development area. Only trench one revealed archaeological remains. These consisted of two pits both containing medieval pottery dating to the 13th-15th centuries.

1 INTRODUCTION

In December 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) on land at Home Farm, Warrington, Olney (NGR: SP 89813 53948; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by David Coles Architects in advance of the proposed development of the land, these works were carried out following a request for archaeological evaluation by Milton Keynes Council's (MKC) Senior Archaeological Officer in accordance with *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (DCLG 2012).

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Brief issued by Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologists and in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013). 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

Warrington is a hamlet which straddles the A509 approximately 1.5 miles north-east the market town of Olney in the borough of Milton Keynes. The proposed development area lies on the eastern side of the A509 and is bounded to the north and east by Home Farm Lane, a pasture field to the south and agricultural buildings to the west. It is currently under pasture and lies at an approximate height of 65m aOD. The underlying geology is mapped as Blisworth Formation Limestone.

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The site lies within an area of archaeological significance. The Scheduled Monument of Lavendon Abbey lies 400m to the south-east. The abbey, founded in 1155-8 and dissolved in 1536 is the only known example of a Premonstratensian abbey in Buckinghamshire. There are no above ground remains of the abbey buildings but earthworks suggest the presence of fish ponds and a probable moated enclosure. The site of the abbey is now occupied by Lavendon Grange, an early 17th century country house which is Grade II listed.

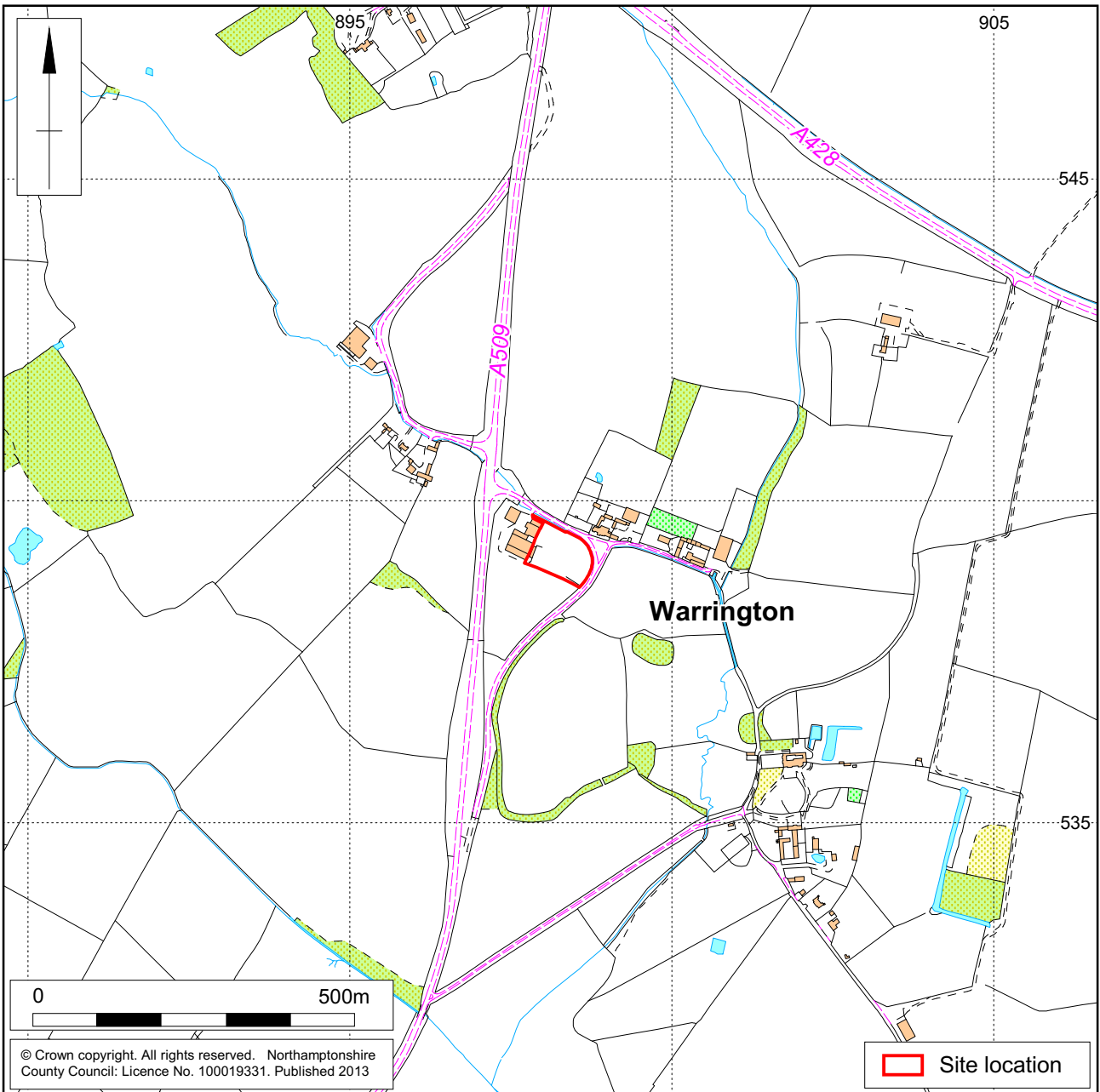
Within a 500m radius of the proposed development area, Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record (HER) lists a find spot of three Roman coins (HER 306); the remains of medieval cottages fronting on to the route of the A509 to the north-west (HER 303, 304, 305); to the south geophysical survey identified possible pits or hearths along the route of the Olney bypass (HER 5700) and to the north of the site crop marks suggesting the presence of a rectilinear enclosure were identified from aerial photography.

3 METHODOLOGY

Two trial trenches, each 20m long, were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) and approved by the Archaeological Adviser, Central Bedfordshire Council (Fig 2).

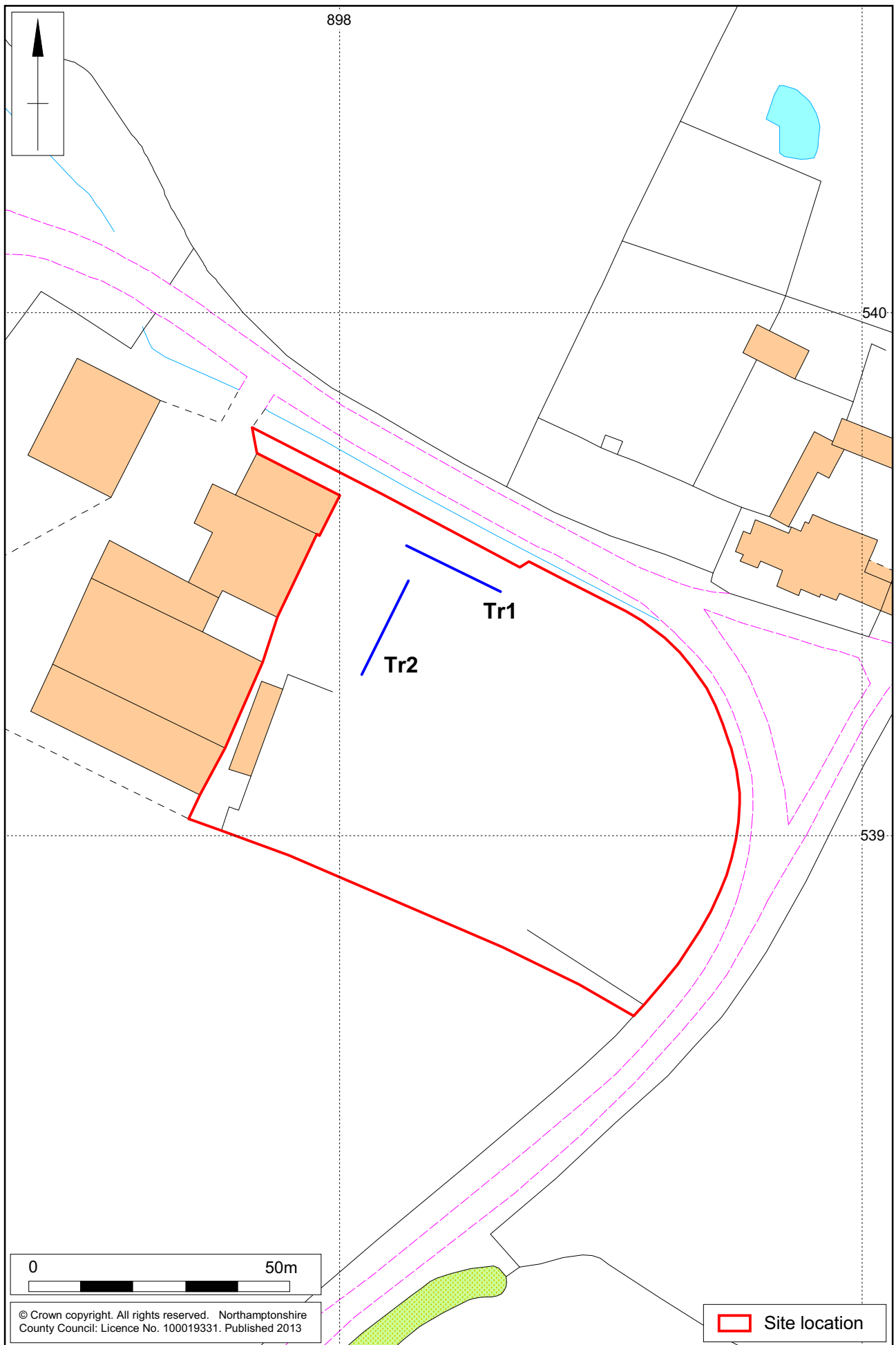
A JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m-wide ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. Archaeological deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard NA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (NA 2011). Photography was with 35mm black and white film and 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 2008).



Scale 1:10,000 (A4)

Site Location Fig 1



Scale 1: 1000

Trench locations Fig 2

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 General stratigraphy

The underlying geology of orange-grey clay was only encountered at 0.50m below the modern ground surface. The subsoil was light grey-brown sandy clay loam with small limestone fragments. The topsoil was dark brown clay loam mixed with roots and small fragments of limestone at the interface of topsoil/subsoil. An inventory of contexts is provided in the Appendix.

4.2 The trial trenches

Trench 1 was aligned east-west, across the new driveway. Trench 2 was aligned north-south, across the footprint of the proposed new dwelling.

Trench 1

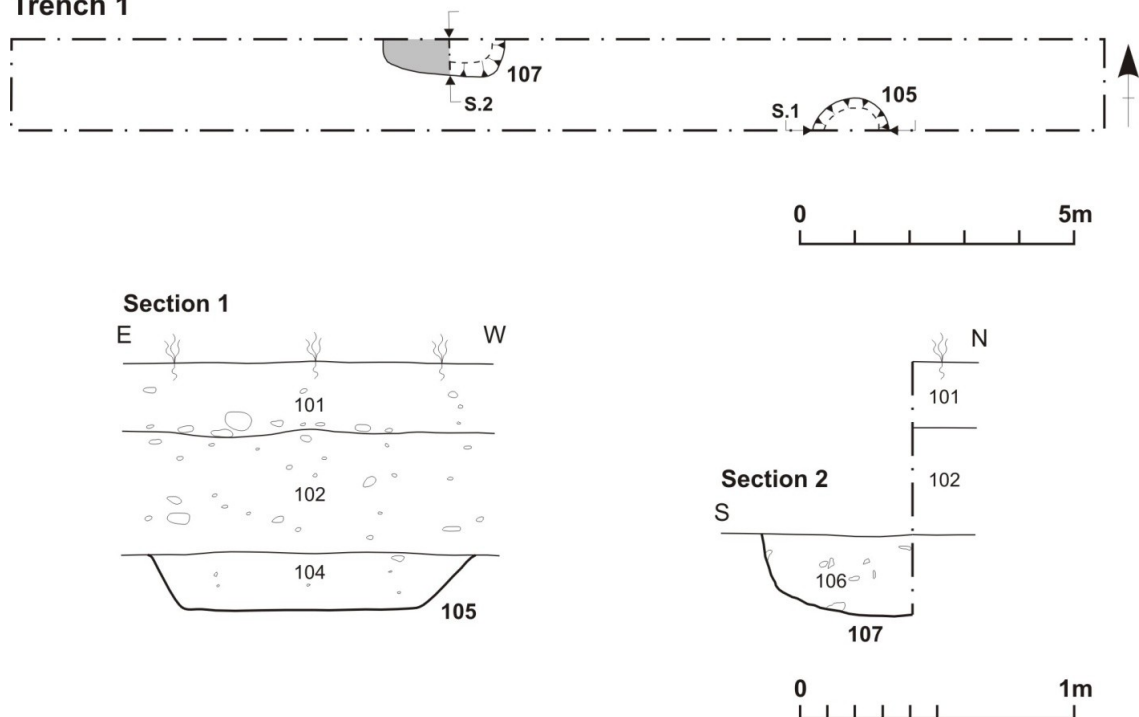
There were two archaeological features in Trench 1.

Pit [105], overlaid by subsoil and cut into the natural, was 1.20m wide by 0.20m deep with a flat base. The fill of dark brown silt clay fill (104) contained medieval pottery (Figs 3 & 5).

Pit [107], overlaid by the subsoil and cut into the natural, was 2.30m long by 0.55m wide and 0.30m deep. The fill of dark brown silt clay contained fragments of limestone and medieval pottery (Figs 2 & 6).

Neither of the pits was fully excavated as only half of each was visible in the trench.

Trench 1



Trench 1, plan and sections

Fig 3



Trench 1, looking east

Fig 4



Pit 105, Section 1 Fig 5



Pit 107, Section 2 Fig 6

Trench 2

There were no archaeological features in Trench 2.

At the northern end natural clay was observed, but the rest of the trench had modern services running east-west across the trench, including a BT cable and two large water pipes. None of the active services were exposed but because of the disturbance caused it is unlikely any archaeological features would survive.



Trench 2, looking south

Fig 6

5 THE POTTERY by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprises 71 sherds, weighing 831g, of medieval pottery. It was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (eg Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat *et al* 1994), as follows:

MC1: Shelly Coarseware (AD1100-1400), 64 sherds, 776g
 MS9: Brill/Boarstall Ware (1200-1600?), 2 sherds, 10g
 MS6: Potterspury Ware (AD1250 – 1600), 4 sherds, 28g
 TLMS3: Late Medieval Reduced Ware (mid 14th – early 16th century), 1 sherd, 17g

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The assemblage is good condition, and the sherds are in the main fairly large and fresh. It all appears reliably stratified, and suggests it is the product of primary deposition and that there was medieval activity in the immediate vicinity of the excavated trench.

The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region. The assemblage comprised mainly fragments of unglazed jars, along with a few sherds from bowls and both glazed and unglazed jugs. It appears to be a typical domestic assemblage of the period.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence per context by fabric type

Fabric Fill/cut	Shelly Coarseware		Brill/Boarstall Ware		Potterspury Ware		Late Medieval Reduced Ware		Date (TPQ)
	No	Weight (g)	No	Weight (g)	No	Weight (g)	No	Weight (g)	
104/105	45	361	2	10	3	24	--	--	Mid-13th century
106/107	19	415	--	--	1	4	1	17	Mid-14th century
Totals	64	776	2	10	4	28	1	17	

6 DISCUSSION

The trial trenching evaluation targeted the new development area and was successful in identifying new, previously unrecognised features. The features were observed only in the north of the area while the south was heavily disturbed by modern services.

Only two features were exposed but a reasonable amount of medieval pottery, dating to the 13th-15th centuries, was retrieved which would suggest that more archaeological features could be present beyond the trenches and related to possible buildings fronting on to the A509 to the north, which unfortunately could have been destroyed by the road and large drainage ditch.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

IfA 2010 *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists

NA 2011 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Mynard, D C, and Zeepvat, R J, 1992 *Great Linford*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol Soc Monog, **3**

Zeepvat, R J, Roberts, J S, and King, N A, 1994 *Caldecotte, Milton Keynes. Excavation and Fieldwork 1966-91*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol Soc Monog, **4**

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	20m x 1.60m. E-W	SP 89813 53948	65m aOD	64.45 aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark brown clay loam, limestone fragments, roots	0.25m thick	
102	Subsoil	Light brown sandy clay, limestone fragments	0.30m thick	
103	Natural	Orange-grey clay		
104	Fill of 105	Dark brown silt clay, limestone fragments		Medieval pottery
105	Cut	Circular pit, near vertical sides to flat base	1.20m wide 0.24m deep	
106	Fill of 107	Dark brown silt clay, limestone fragments		Medieval pottery
107	Cut	Rectangular pit, near vertical sides to flat base	1.90m long 0.50m wide 0.35m deep	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	20m x 1.60m. N-S	SP 89813 53948	65m aOD	64.50 aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark brown clay loam, pebbles, roots, limestone fragments	0.20m thick	
202	Subsoil	Light brown sandy clay limestone fragments. Modern services running east-west across the trench.	0.30m thick N end. S end not fully excavated.	
203	Natural	Orange-grey clay		



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