

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Ground Investigation Works near
Berrywood Road, Northampton

Archaeological Watching Brief

August - September 2006



Carol Simmonds &
Anthony Maull

September 2006

Report 06/133

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 2006

NGR SP 70586114

**GROUND INVESTIGATION WORKS NEAR BERRYWOOD ROAD,
NORTHAMPTON**
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2006

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Ground Investigation Works near Berrywood Road, Northampton Archaeological Watching Brief	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief on a series of geotechnical test pits excavated on land near Berrywood Road and Sandy Lane, Northampton. The work was undertaken for Halcrow Group Ltd on behalf of English Partnerships under advice of Northamptonshire County Council. No archaeological features were present despite extensive recorded archaeology in the vicinity.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work		
Future work	None	
Monument type And period		
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Northamptonshire	
Easting	47058	
Northing	26114	
Height OD	100m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	NCCHEP	
Project Design originator	Halcrow	
Director/Supervisor	Anthony Maull	
Project Manager	Anthony Maull	
Sponsor or funding body	English Partnerships	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	August 2006	
End date	September 2006	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		
Digital		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title		
Serial title & volume		
Author(s)		
Page numbers		
Date		

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Fig 2: Geological map of area

Fig 3: Location of test pits,

Fig 4: Detail of test pits area

Plates

Frontispiece: Test Pit STP05, looking east

Plate 1: Test Pit STP02, looking west

Plate 2: Section of Test Pit STP09, looking east

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ABSTRACT

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief on a series of geotechnical test pits excavated on land near Berrywood Road and Sandy Lane, Northampton. The work was undertaken for Halcrow Group Ltd on behalf of English Partnerships under advice of Northamptonshire County Council. No archaeological features were present despite extensive recorded archaeology in the vicinity.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out a watching brief from 31st August to 1st September 2006 on land proposed for the proposed Upton Sandy Lane Relief Road (SLRR), Upton, Northamptonshire, (NGR SP 70586114, Fig 1).

The proposed corridor is aligned from Berrywood Road to the north down to the A45 Weedon Road to the south, linking up with the proposed Upton Cross Valley Link Road (CVLR).

The work was undertaken in order to inform a planning application for the groundwork associated with the construction corridor. Archaeological works were commissioned by Halcrow Group Ltd acting on behalf of their clients English Partnerships, following a brief issued by Northamptonshire County Council Historic Environment Team (NCCHET).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and Geology

The application area comprises about 30 hectares of land, located to the west of Duston and east of Harpole. Situated at the top of the Upper Nene valley floodplain, the site lies between 120m -70m OD.

The British Geological Survey has mapped the area as glacial sands and gravels. These drift deposits overlie Northampton Sand Ironstone and Upper Lias Clay respectively (Fig 2; British Geological Survey EW 185 Northampton).

2.2 Archaeological Background

A search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the site of the proposed road corridor and its immediate hinterland lies within an area of archaeological interest ranging from the prehistoric to the post-medieval.

To the north, the line of Berrywood Road follows the alignment of the Roman Road from Duston Roman Town to Whilton Lodge, *Bannaventa*, in Northamptonshire. It joins with the line of Watling Street at Whilton Lodge.

To the south, medieval ridge and furrow, adjoins the CVLR area and medieval pot sherds are recorded on the HER database: 5137/0/1. There are also a series of possible prehistoric: 1475/0/1, 1475/0/2 and Anglo-Saxon or early- medieval linear cropmarks: 5177/0/9 (Brown 2005a).

To the east, further HER data identifies prehistoric flint: 5119/0/1-2 and Romano-British pot sherds 5125, 5126 (Shaw 1990). Additionally, the Roman Road mentioned above has been investigated providing information about road surfaces, foundations and associated find, NSMR2395 (Brown 2005b).

Further to the east, the 19th century lunatic asylum, St Crispin's Hospital, has been recorded in a Desk-Based Assessment and Historic Buildings Recording (Thorne 2002a & 2002b).

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the watching brief were to identify, record and retrieve, as far as practicable, archaeological features and artefacts relating to previous land uses.

Specific objectives were as follows:

- To identify, characterise, record and date, any features exposed by means of an archaeological watching brief on the geotechnical test pits.
- To provide detailed information on the presence or absence, area of extent, depth of burial and degree of survival for archaeological deposits and features exposed within the development area with particular reference to the environmental preservation of the site.

4 WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 Methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to observe the excavation of geotechnical test pits along the proposed line of the Sandy Lane Relief Road near Upton, Northamptonshire (Fig 3). A total of 17 test pits were opened, of which 11 were observed to their full depth while 6 were observed from the backfilled material (Fig 4). They were excavated by a JCB type excavator fitted with a 600mm toothed bucket. All test pits were 3.5m long, 0.6m to 1.2m wide and averaged between 2.1m and 4m deep. A log and digital photographic record were maintained. The works were monitored from 31st August 2006 to 1st September 2006.

4.2 Results

The test pits were all in the northern half of the proposed road corridor of (Fig 4). The natural varied across the site. Eight test pits, STP 01-08, located adjacent to Berrywood Road to the north, had natural glacial clays overlying natural limestone in the case of STP 08. Above which were either stiff clays or glacial tills (Plate 1). The remaining three test pits STP 09, 010 and 1200L, were located about 500m south of Berrywood Road, adjacent to Sandy Lane and here the natural Northampton Sand and Ironstone bedrock were identified. Covering these layers were silty clays. The only anomaly of note was observed in STP 09 where a possible large anomaly was identified above the level of the sand. The slope of the contour northwards towards STP 1200L suggests a large bowl-shaped depression filled with Northampton Sand and Ironstone (Plate 2). Topsoil predominantly comprised a mid brown silty clay, and was typically between 220mm and 300mm thick. However, STP's 07 and 08 comprised a mid grey brown clayey silt and was between 260mm and 340mm thick.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Although the projected corridor for the Sandy Lane Relief Road lies within a broader landscape that contains extensive archaeological remains, no archaeological remains were identified. Also no evidence relating to the Roman Road from Duston Roman Town to Bannaventa were observed.

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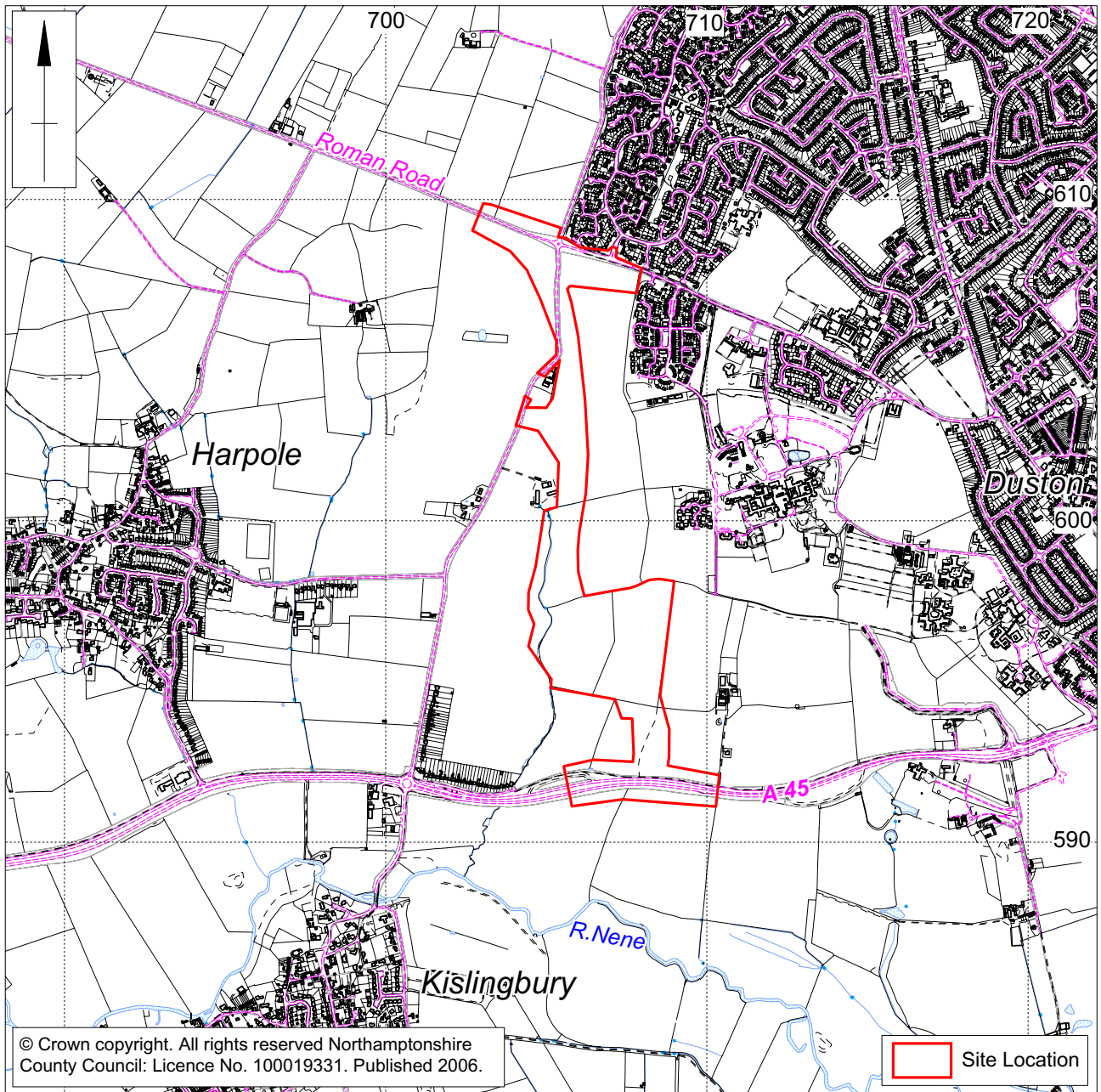
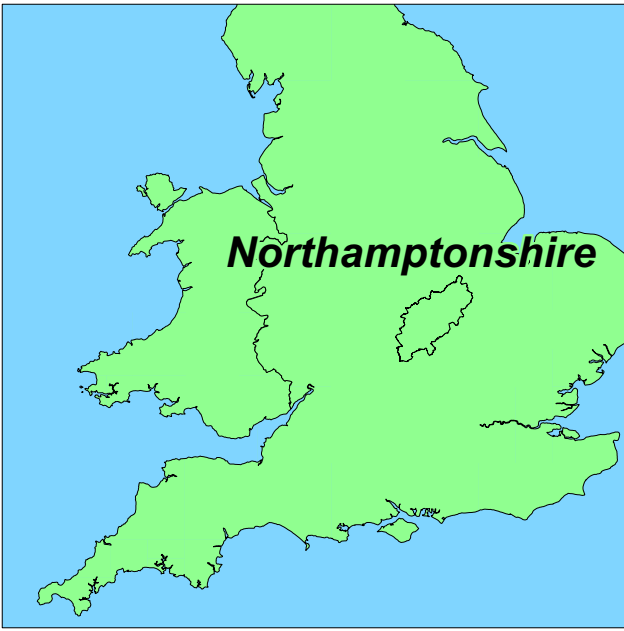
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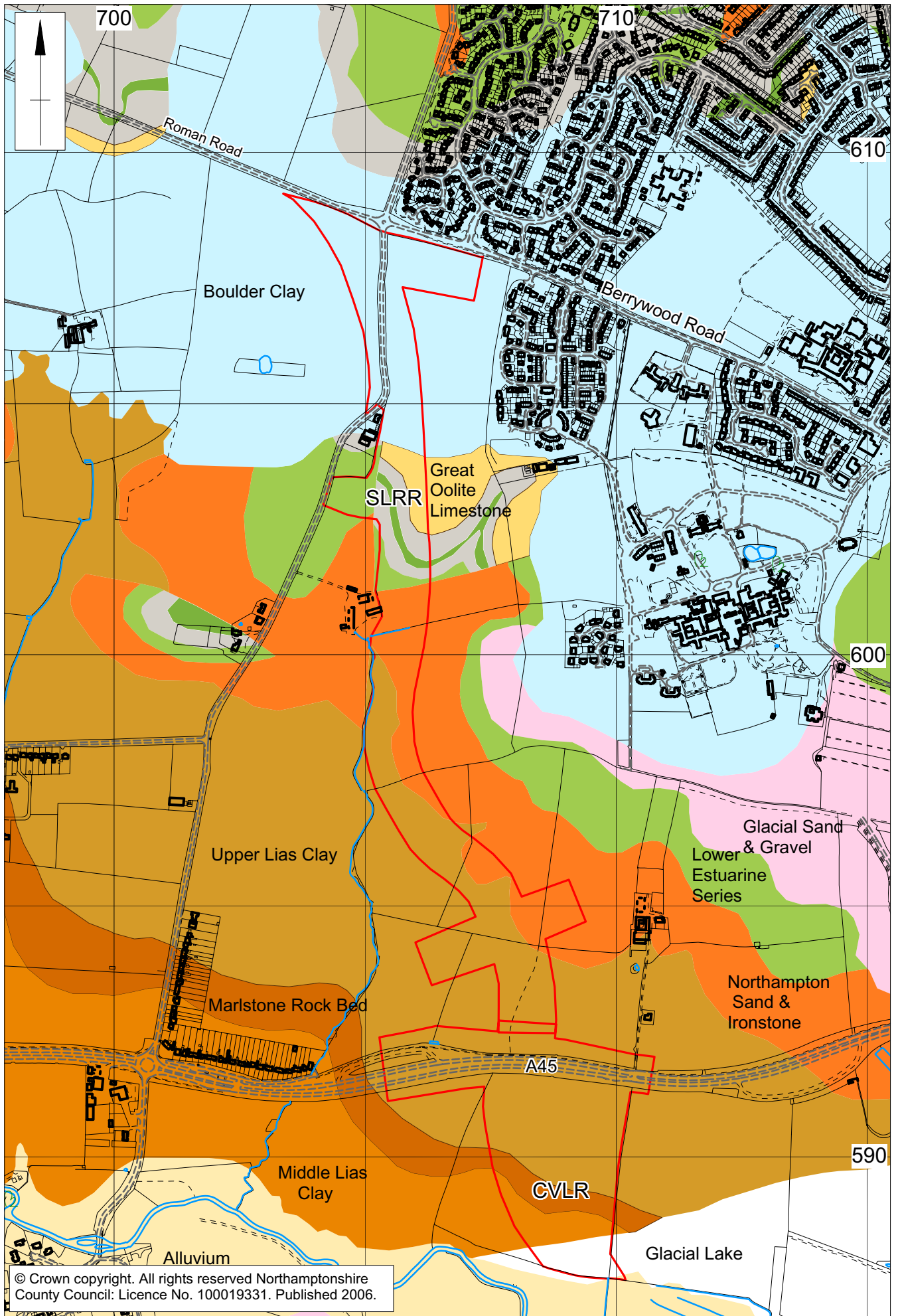
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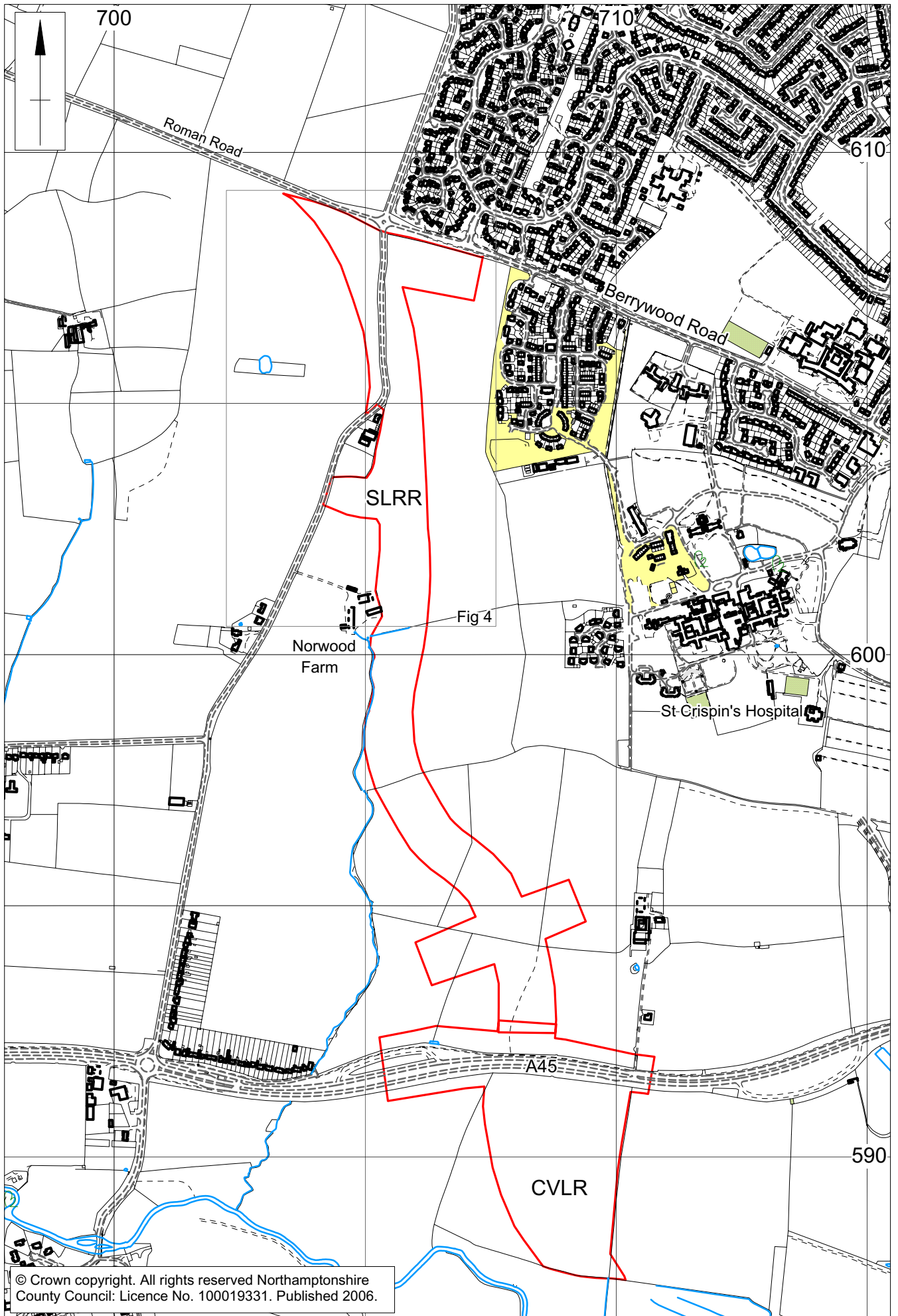
Scale 1:20,000

Site Location Fig 1



1:10,000

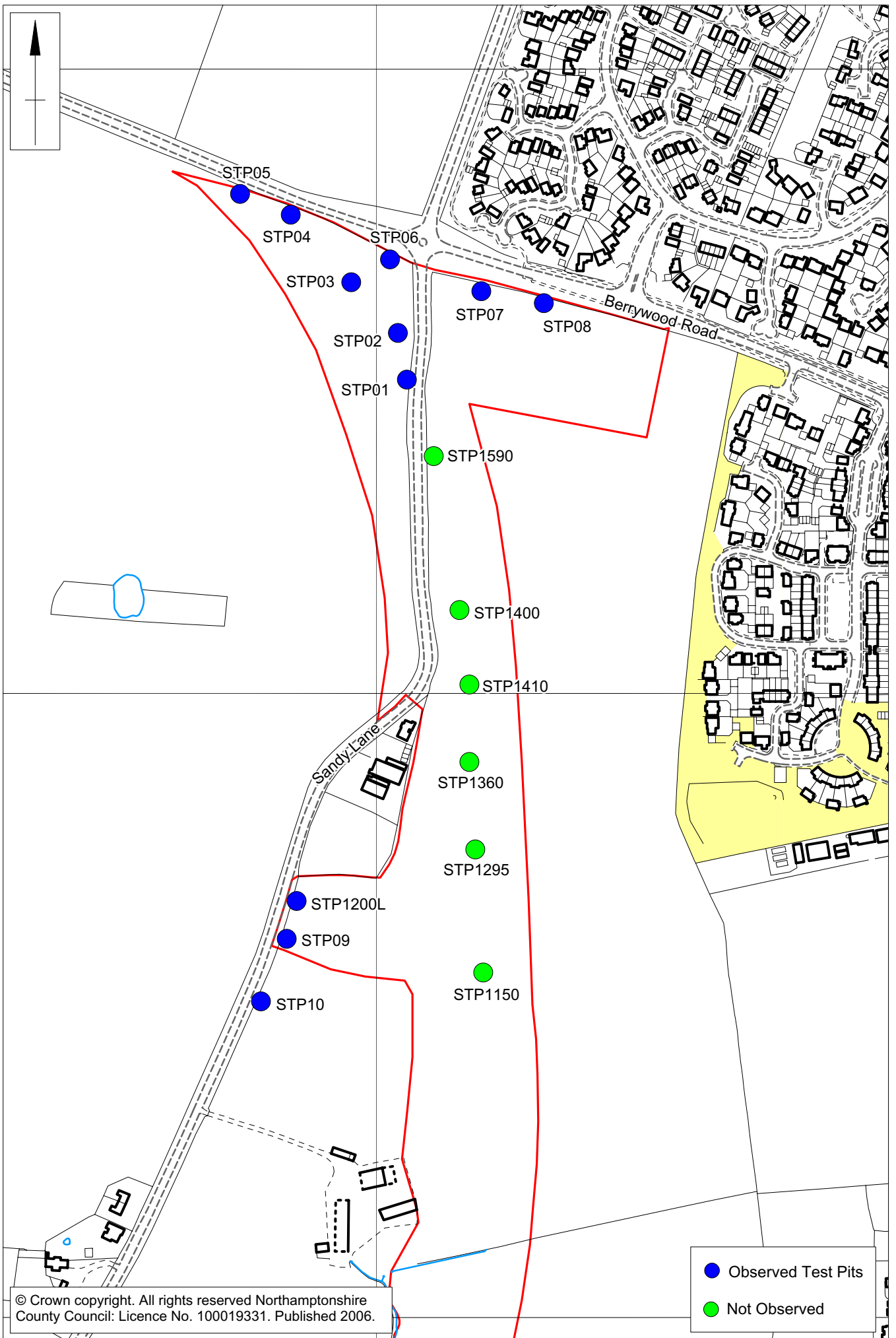
Geological Map Fig 2



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1:10,000

Location of Test Pits Area Fig 3



1:4,000

Detail of Test Pits Area Fig 4



Plate 1: Test Pit STP02, looking west



Plate 2: Section of Test Pit STP09, looking east