

# Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation at  
Station Road, Ailsworth Peterborough  
November 2006 &  
January 2007



Chris Jones

January 2007

Report 07/08

***STAFF***

Project Manager      Antony Walsh, BA  
Fieldwork              Chris Jones  
                                 Maria Gale  
                                 Yvonne Wolframm, Bsc Phd  
                                 Rhiannon Mann, Msc  
Text                      Chris Jones  
Illustrations          Jacqueline Harding, HND, BA

***QUALITY CONTROL***

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	P Chapman		18.01.2007
Verified by	A Maull		19.01.2007
Approved by	A Chapman		23.01.2007

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project title	Archaeological Evaluation at Station Road, Ailsworth, Peterborough	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation, on land proposed for residential development, at Station Road, Ailsworth, Peterborough. Nine trenches were opened across the development area, which revealed a degree of truncation caused by modern activity, overlying subsoil clays and natural gravels, no archaeological features were seen during the excavations	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Field Evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	None	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	No	
Monument type And period	No known archaeological remains from the development area	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Cambridgeshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Ailsworth, Station Road, Peterborough	
Easting Northing	511680 298679	
Area Ha	1.27	
Height OD	9-10m AOD	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Historic Environment Officer	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Chris Jones	
Project Manager	Antony Walsh	
Sponsor or funding body	Redrow Homes Ltd	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	November 2006	
End date	January 2007	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical		
Paper		
Digital		
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation at Station Road, Ailsworth, Peterborough	
Serial title & volume	07/08	
Author(s)	Chris Jones	
Page numbers	10 plus 3 figures and 9 plates	
Date	22/01/07	

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**AT STATION ROAD, AILSWORTH,**

**PETERBOROUGH**

**NGR 511680 298679**

**NOVEMBER 2006 – JANUARY 2007**

*Abstract*

*Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation, on land proposed for residential development, at Station Road, Ailsworth, Peterborough. Nine trenches were opened across the development area, which revealed a degree of truncation caused by modern activity, overlying subsoil clays and natural gravels, no archaeological features were seen during the excavations.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation during November 2006 and January 2007 on land at Station Road, Ailsworth (NGR 511680 298679). The site will comprise 48 dwellings and associated infrastructure on land occupying 1.27ha (Planning Application 06/01072/FUL), (Fig 1).

The work was undertaken for Redrow Homes Ltd on behalf of Peterborough City Council in order to inform the planning application. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology, which met the requirements of a brief issued by Historic Environment Officer (NA 2006; Robinson 2006).

**2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The site area lies on the south edge of Ailsworth and was previously used as a garage and transport area, with most of the visible ground covered with tarmac and concrete.

The geology of the area comprises Gravel River Terracing sand and gravel, as mapped by the British Geological Survey ([www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm)).

**3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

There are no known archaeological remains from the application site itself although it lies in the vicinity of known locations where significant prehistoric, Roman and medieval

remains have been recovered, principally to the west at Castor and to the south along the River Nene.

Nearby are a number of protected Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM). The course of the major Roman road, Ermine Street, lays c0.6km to the west of the site. To the east there is the site of a Roman marching camp at Sutton Cross (PE138). Between 0.8km-1.4km to the south, as well as scheduled areas within the village of Castor (PE 93) there is *Durobrivae* Roman Town (CB130); two areas known to contain Roman pottery kilns either side of the crossing point of Ermine Street over the River Nene (PE127) and the sites of three Roman villas (PE126, PE125, PE128) which stand on the north bank of the River Nene.

Scheduled monuments dating to the medieval period include Sutton Cross 0.8km to the east and a moated site (PE159) 0.2km to the south east.

#### **4 METHODOLOGY**

Nine trenches were excavated in total, each measuring 1.8m wide and 50m, 40m or 30m in length. They were excavated using a mechanical digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation proceeded as far as the first significant archaeological layer or in its absence as far as the surface of the natural gravels. (Fig 2)

All potential archaeological features were examined by hand excavation, by cutting a section through them. Standard Northamptonshire Archaeology recording procedures were employed.

All works were carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeology *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (IFA 1999) and *Standard for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). Procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council's Health and Safety policy and Northamptonshire Archaeology's Health and Safety at Work Guidelines (NA 2003).

#### **5 RESULTS OF FIELDWORK**

Trenches 1-6 on the north side of the development area were excavated in November 2006 and trenches 7-9 at the south in January 2007, after the removal of modern standing buildings. The individual context descriptions, by trench, are given in appendix A1.

No archaeological features were seen during the excavation of any of the trenches.

Across the whole area the topsoil was disturbed by the demolition of modern buildings and the burying of the rubble. In trenches 1-6 the former ground surface had been truncated down to the level of the natural gravel, which was sealed by a deposit of rubble from the demolition of the modern buildings (Fig 3, sections 1-6, Plates 1-6).

In trenches 7-9 the ground surface had been less severely truncated, leaving 0.30m to 0.40m thick subsoil intact, with a thin disturbed topsoil layer and again this was sealed beneath building rubble (Fig 3, section 7-9, Plates 7-9).

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological features were encountered within the trial trenches. The excavation area had been significantly disturbed by modern development. This is shown in the level of made ground in the trenches. It appears, from the deposits encountered, that in trial trenches 1-6 the ground level was reduced and then built up using the debris from demolished buildings, therefore destroying any potential archaeological remains. In trenches 7-9 more of the natural topsoil and subsoil remained providing the best opportunity to encounter archaeological features but none were encountered during the excavation. As no archaeological features or finds were seen in any of the trenches even where good subsoil remained, it would appear that no archaeological occupation was ever present on the site which is surprising due to the archaeological remains known all around the development area.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gurney, D, 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, ALGAOEE

IFA 1999 *Code of Conduct and Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Evaluation*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

NA 2003 *Northamptonshire Archaeology Advisory Document on Health and Safety at Work*, Issue No. 1 November 2003, Northamptonshire Archaeology

NA 2006 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation at Station Road, Ailsworth, Peterborough*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

British Geological Survey (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm>)

**7 A1: SITE DATA**

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Deposit Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1</b>	101	Layer	Modern rubble. Tarmac surfaces
	102	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay. 0.24m thick
	103	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.26m thick
	104	Natural	Gravels
<b>2</b>	201	Layer	Modern rubble.
	202	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay. 0.40m thick
	203	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.23m thick
	204	Natural	Gravels
<b>3</b>	301	Layer	Modern rubble. Tarmac surfaces. 0.53m thick
	302	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay 0.22m thick
	303	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.52thick
	304	Natural	Gravels
<b>4</b>	401	Layer	Modern rubble. Tarmac surface. 0.50m thick
	402	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay. 0.22m thick
	403	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.28m thick
	404	Natural	Gravels
<b>5</b>	501	Layer	Modern rubble. 1.10m thick
	502	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.30m thick
	503	Natural	Gravels
<b>6</b>	601	Layer	Modern rubble. Tarmac surface. 0.302m thick
	602	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay 0.22m thick
	603	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.45m thick



Trench No	Context	Deposit Type	Description
	604	Natural	Gravels
7	701	Layer	Modern rubble. Tarmac surface. 0.30m thick
	702	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown silt clay. 0.30m thick
	703	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.30m thick
	704	Natural	Gravels
8	801	Layer	Modern rubble. Tarmac surface. 0.30m thick
	802	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay. 0.45m thick
	803	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay. 0.30m thick
	804	Natural	Gravels
9	901	Layer	Modern rubble. 0.30m thick
	902	Layer	Topsoil. Grey brown clay. 0.12m thick
	903	Layer	Subsoil. Orange brown silt clay 0.40m thick
	904	Natural	Gravels



Plate 1. Trench 1



Plate 2. Trench 2





Plate 3. Trench 3



Plate 4. Trench 4





Plate 5. Trench 5



Plate 6. Trench 6





Plate 7. Trench 7

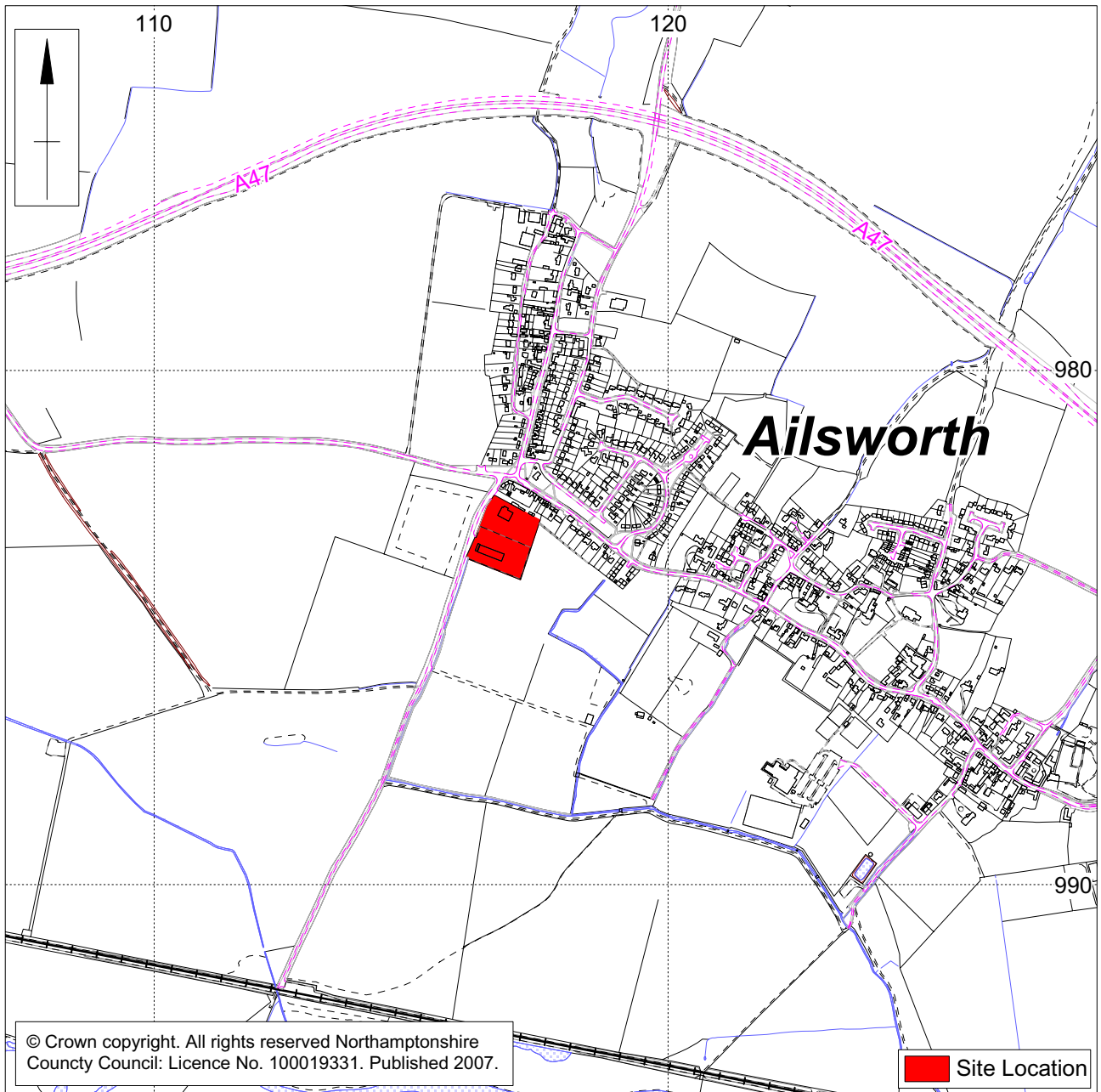
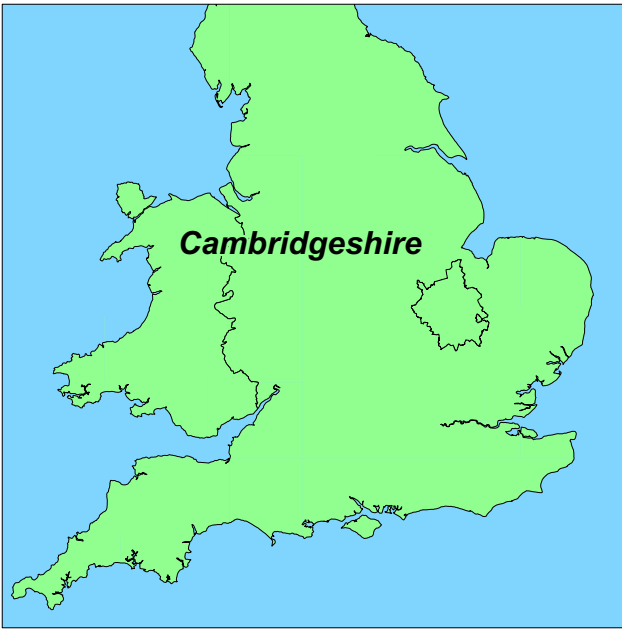


Plate 8. Trench 8



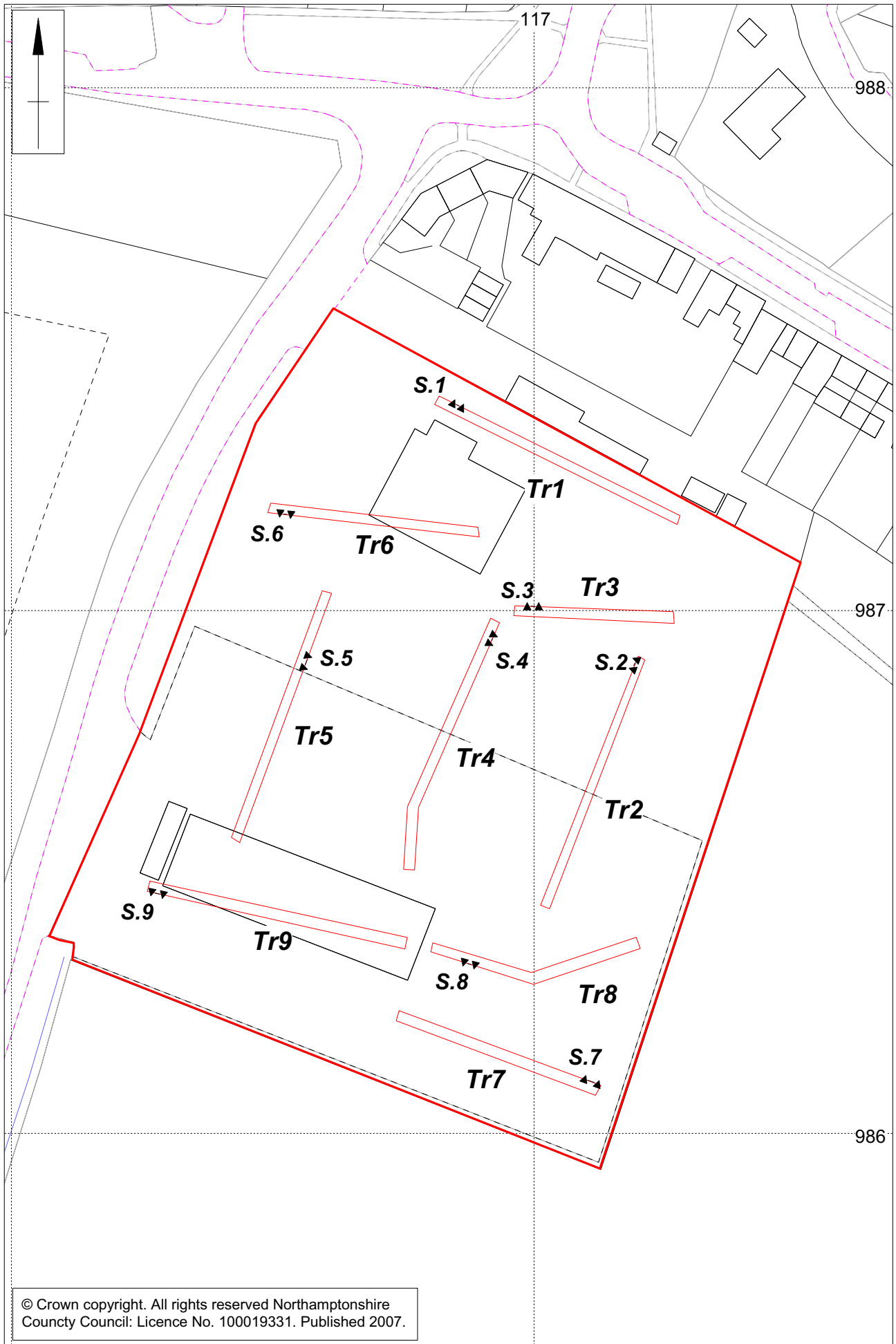


Plate 9. Trench 9



Scale 1:12500

Site location Fig 1

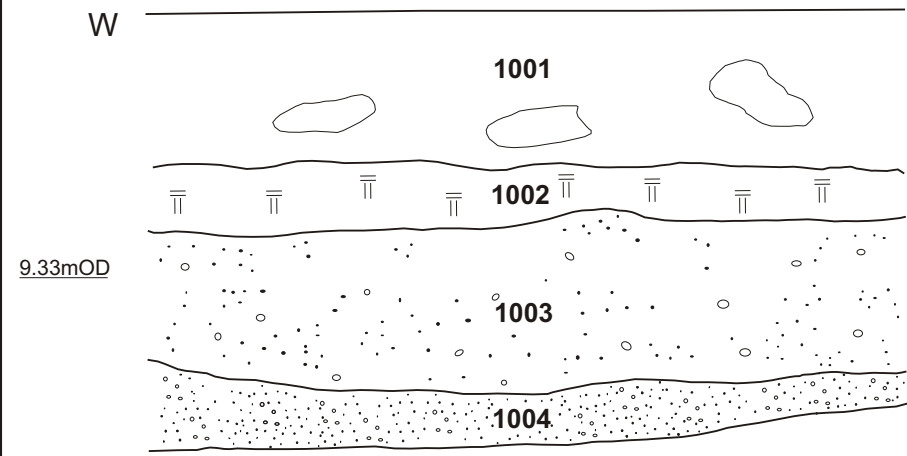


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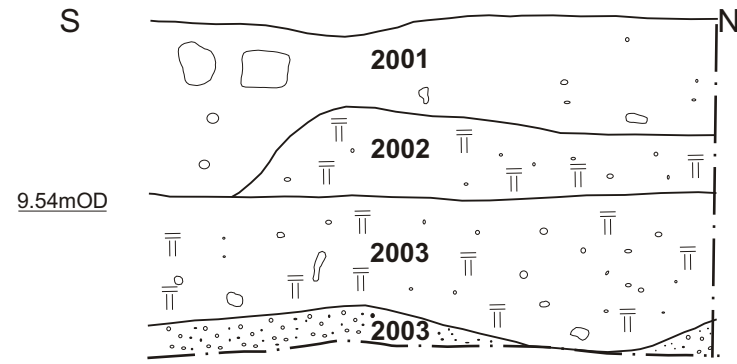
Trench locations Fig 2



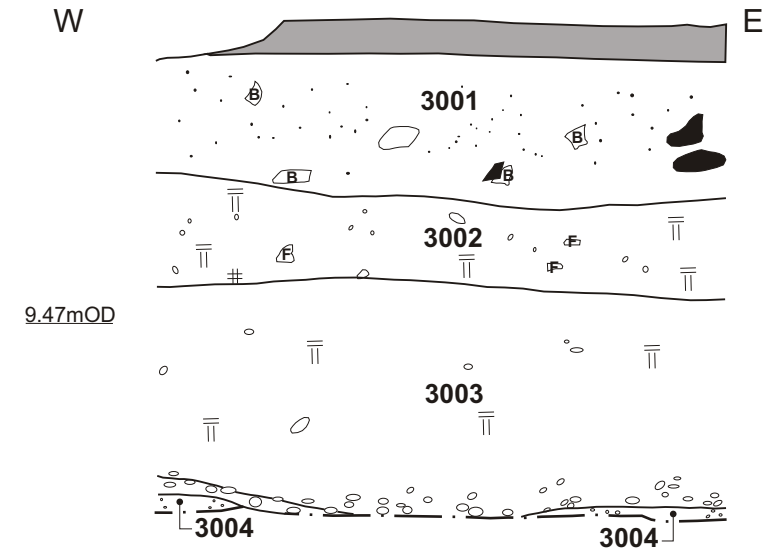
**Section 1 - Trench 1**



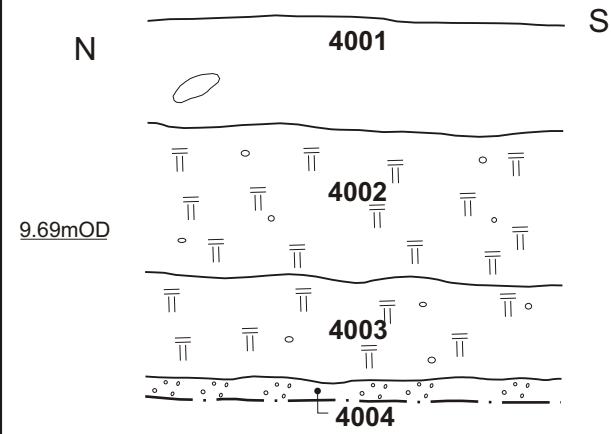
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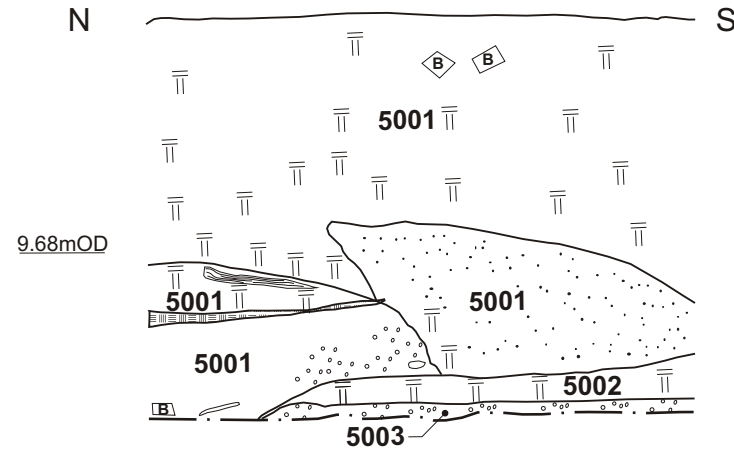
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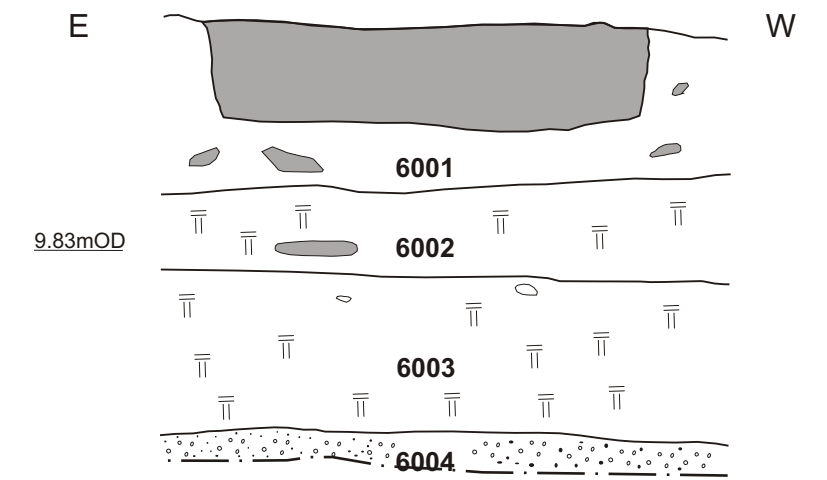
**Section 4 - Trench 4**



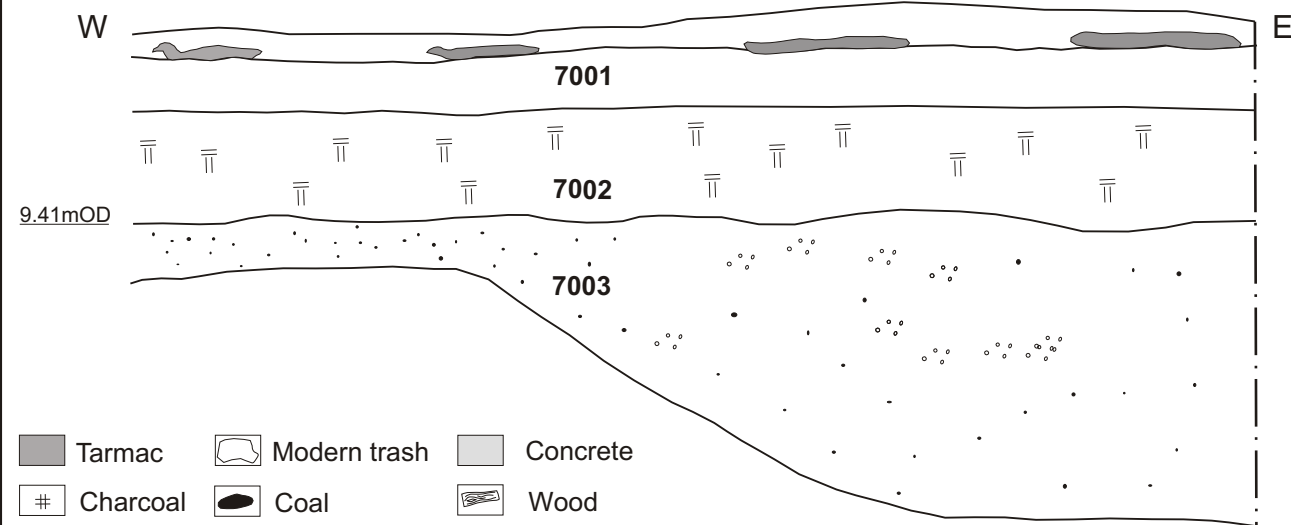
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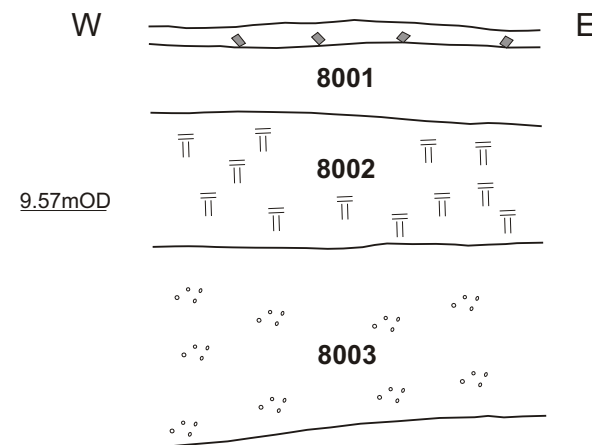
**Section 6 - Trench 6**



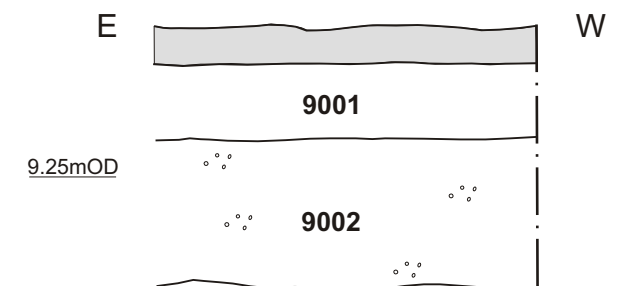
**Section 7 - Trench 7**



**Section 8 - Trench 8**



**Section 9 - Trench 9**



- |          |                 |          |
|----------|-----------------|----------|
| Tarmac   | Modern trash    | Concrete |
| Charcoal | Coal            | Wood     |
| Brick    | Rubber cladding |          |
| Clay     | Sand            |          |
| Flint    | Gravel          |          |



Sections 1-9 Fig 3