



Northamptonshire  
County Council

# Northamptonshire Archaeology

An Archaeological Evaluation at

Christleton Bridges

Cheshire

December 2008



Adrian Burrow  
December 2008

Report 08/206

## Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park

Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. [sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

w. [www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk)

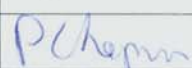
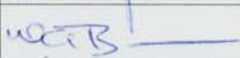
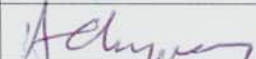


## STAFF

Project Manager	WA Boismier BA MPhil, MA PhD, MIFA
Text and Fieldwork Supervision	Adrian Burrow MA
Fieldwork	Michael Punturno BSc Lazlo Lichtenstein MA
Post-medieval pottery	Iain Soden BA, MIFA
Illustrations	Amir Bassir BSc and Pat Walsh BA

Town	Christleton
Parish	Chester
Address	N/A
Grid Reference	SJ 441 651
Size of Property	c3 ha
Landuse	Managed grassland (Fields 1 and 2) Scrubland (Fields 3 and 4)
Planning Application Number	N/A
Client	Sirdar Estates Limited
Date of commencement	19/11/08
Date of completion	2/12/08

## QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		12-12-08
Verified by	WA Boismier		12-12-08
Approved by	Andy Chapman		12-12-08

## OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Christleton Bridges, Cheshire	
An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in November and December 2008 on land proposed for a continuing care residential development in Christleton, Cheshire. Eighteen trenches were excavated, which revealed evidence for later post-medieval agricultural activities. In Fields 1 and 2 a small number of gullies and postholes were present, along with large areas of modern disturbance. In Field 4, several brick floor surfaces were present, related to the market gardening and poultry farming industries established in the twentieth century. No archaeological remains dating to earlier than the post-medieval period were present.		
Project type	Trial excavation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	Desk-based Assessment Report	
Current Land use	Managed grassland, scrub	
Future work	To be advised	
Monument type/ period	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Cheshire	
Site address	The Cheshire Cat Hotel and Restaurant	
Study area	3 ha approx.	
OS Easting & Northing	SJ 441 651	
Height OD	32m OD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	None	
Project Design originator	Gifford	
Director/Supervisor	Adrian Burrow, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	WA Boismer, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	Sirdar Estates Limited	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	19 November 2008	
End date	2 December 2008	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content
Physical		Post-medieval pottery and ceramics
Paper		Site trench record, photographic record, plans, section drawings, levels & client report
Digital		Client Report
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title		
Serial title & volume	Client report 08/206	
Author(s)	A. Burrow	
Page numbers	21 including illustrations and plates	
Date	15/12/08	

## CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
	2.1 Topography and Geology	
	2.2 Archaeological background	
<b>3</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>THE EVALUATION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>3</b>
	5.1 Field 1	
	5.2 Field 2	
	5.3 Field 4	
<b>6</b>	<b>THE FINDS</b>	<b>11</b>
	6.1 The post-medieval pottery by Iain Soden	
	6.2 The Wall tiles and other finds	
<b>7</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>15</b>

### Tables

Table 1: Pottery by context and type

### Figures

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Trench locations

Fig 3: Trenches 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

Fig 4: Trenches 10, 14 and 17

Fig 5: Sections 1-8

## **Plates**

Cover: Trench 17, with cut [1707] in the foreground and brick floor (1703) in background

Plate 1: Trench 5; mortar layer (503), with layer (504) in the foreground

Plate 2: Trench 8; trackway structure Note cut [807] and breezeblock edging (809) in foreground and brick base layer (810) in background

Plate 3: Trench 9 with modern rubble layers (903) in foreground and (902) in the background

Plate 4: Trench 12, showing buried topsoil (1203) in mid section with redeposited natural (1202) above

Plate 5: Trench 14; brick floor surface (1403)

Plate 6: Trench 17; brick floor surface (1703) in foreground, with cut [1707] in the background

**Appendix 1:** Christleton Bridges, Cheshire, A Continuing Care Community: Project Design for an Archaeological Evaluation, Gifford 2008

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT CHRISTLETON BRIDGES**  
**CHRISTLETON**  
**CHESHIRE**  
**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2008**

*Abstract*

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in November and December 2008 on land proposed for a continuing care residential development in Christleton, Cheshire.*

*Eighteen trenches were excavated, which revealed evidence for later post-medieval agricultural activities. In Fields 1 and 2 a small number of gullies and postholes were present, along with large areas of modern disturbance. In Field 4, several brick floor surfaces were present, related to the market gardening and poultry farming industries established in the twentieth century. No archaeological remains dating to earlier than the post-medieval period were present.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by Gifford, acting on behalf of their clients, Sirdar Estates Limited, to conduct an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for a Continuing Care Community in Christleton, Cheshire (NGR SJ 441 651: Fig 1).

The works was undertaken to meet the requirements of the Project Design prepared by Gifford (2008b).

**2 BACKGROUND**

**2.1 *Topography and geology***

The site is located to the south of the village of Christleton. It is bounded by the Shropshire Union Canal towpath to the north-east and the A41 Whitchurch Road to the south-west. The western fields of the site lie on relatively level ground at c32m aOD, whilst in the eastern field the land slopes to the south between 28-34m aOD.

The underlying geology comprises glacial till overlying sandstone and pebble beds ([www.bgs/geoindex.co.uk](http://www.bgs/geoindex.co.uk)).

**2.2 *Archaeological background***

The archaeological and historical background of the site is detailed in the desk-based assessment prepared by Gifford (2008a).

In brief, the assessment concluded that there was negligible potential for prehistoric remains, but that as the proposed development lay in the vicinity of Roman settlement there was the potential for surviving evidence of settlement from that period. In the early medieval period the site was on the periphery of the village of Christleton; thus the potential for surviving archaeology was judged to be low. In the later medieval period the expansion of the village led to the increased likelihood of unearthing settlement or farming remains. The highest potential for remains dated to the post-medieval period, relating to the Civil War, canal construction and farming practises, although the intrinsic value of these remains was considered low.

### **3 OBJECTIVES**

The evaluation was conducted to determine the presence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.

More specifically, as outlined in the project design (Gifford 2008b:1), the objectives were:

To produce a record of possible medieval field boundaries within the site by means of archaeological trench evaluation

To produce a report detailing the results of the archaeological works, with accompanying archive.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

Eighteen trenches were excavated, (Fig 2), positioned in accordance with the trench location plan included in the project design, although Trench 17 was moved slightly to avoid overhead power lines. All measured 20m by 2m, with the exception of Trench 10, which was 10m by 2m.

The works were undertaken in accordance to the Fieldwork Methodology set out in the project design (section 4.1). The trenches were excavated using a tracked 7 tonne excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket. All machine operation was carried out under archaeological supervision. The trenches were excavated until the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate was encountered. Where modern disturbances were present, sondages were excavated to a depth where it was clear

that the natural horizon and/or any archaeological remains had been truncated away.

The base and sections of each trench were cleaned by hand and recorded. Potential archaeological features were excavated, photographed, drawn to the appropriate scale in plan and section and recorded on pro-forma registers in accordance with standard Northamptonshire Archaeology practice. Levels were taken across both trenches and related to Ordnance Datum. Trench locations were recorded using survey-grade GPS equipment (Leica Systems 1200).

All works were carried out according to the IFA Code of Conduct and Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Evaluation (IFA 1995), and all procedures complied with the Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at work Guidelines.

## **5 THE EVALUATION EVIDENCE**

The locations of the trenches within the development area are shown in Figure 2. Individual trench plans and excavated sections showing the archaeological deposits and features present are depicted in Figures 3, 4 and 5.

### **5.1 Field 1**

#### ***Trench 1***

Trench 1 was aligned north-west to south-east. The natural horizon (103), a reddish-orange silty sand, was present at a depth of 0.3 to 0.4m, at 33.27m aOD. A thin layer of subsoil (102), a dark grey brown sandy silt 0.2m thick overlay the natural and contained residual medieval potsherds. Topsoil (101) was a dark grey brown sandy loam 0.10-0.20m thick. No archaeology was present in this trench.

#### ***Trench 2 (Fig 3)***

Trench 2 was aligned north-east to south-west. The general stratigraphic sequence found was the same as that in Trench 1.

The natural silty sand substrate (209) was present at a depth of 1.10m, at 33.01m aOD. A small, shallow gully terminal [205] (Fig 5, Section 1) extended on a north-west to south-east alignment. It had a steep concave profile and measured 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep. Fill (204) comprised dark grey sandy silt containing charcoal flecks. No datable material



was recovered from this fill.

This feature was sealed by subsoil (202), measuring 0.12m thick and topsoil (201), which was 0.15m thick. Both were equivalent to the comparative layers in Trench 1.

### ***Trench 3*** (Fig 3)

Trench 3 was aligned north-west to south-east. The natural silty sand horizon (303) lay at a depth of 0.3m, at 32.5m aOD. Six archaeological features were present in this trench; three gullies and three postholes. All were interpreted as being post-medieval in date.

Gully [307]/[313] (Fig 5, Section 2) was rectilinear in plan, extending on a north-east to south-west alignment then turning very sharply to a north-west to south-east orientation. It had a very shallow concave profile 0.4m wide and 0.10m deep. Fill (306)/(312) was dark grey brown sandy silt with 17th-19th-century slipwares, clay pipe and pieces of charcoal and coal within. This gully truncated another feature [317], interpreted as plough scarring.

Gully [305] extended across the southern end of the trench on an alignment just off north to south. It had an extremely shallow concave profile, measuring 0.4m wide and 70mm deep. Fill (304) was mid grey brown sandy silt. Pottery recovered from this fill dated from between the 15th-19th centuries.

Gully [319] (Fig 5, Section 4) extended parallel to [305] and was even smaller, measuring only 0.28m wide and 0.04m deep. Fill [318] was the same as (304), with no dating evidence. Both [305] and [319] were rather irregular in plan and were possibly the result of plough-scarring, observed in several trenches in this field.

Cut into the natural on the north-western end of the trench were three small postholes, [309], [311] and [315]. Posthole [309] was oval in plan, with a steep-sided, flat-based profile, measuring 0.2m in diameter by 0.10m deep. The fill (308) was dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecking. Posthole [311] (Fig 5, Section 3) was the same in plan and profile, measuring 0.3m wide and 0.10m deep. Fill (310) was equivalent to (308). Posthole [315] was the smallest of the three, with a flattened profile measuring only 0.18m wide and 0.04m deep. Fill (314) was the same as both (308) and (310). No finds were recovered from any of the postholes. No distinct subsoil layer was present in Trench 3; all features were overlain only by topsoil (301).

***Trench 4*** (Fig 3)

This trench was aligned north-west to south-east and contained one archaeological feature, a pit. The natural silty sand substrate (403) lay at a depth of 0.25m at 32.5m aOD. Pit [405] (Fig 5, Section 5) was a small oval feature with a steep sided, flat based profile. It measured 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep. Fill (404) was dark grey brown sandy loam containing modern earthenware ceramics and clay pipe. Subsoil (402) was dark grey brown sandy silt 0.15-0.2m thick. Topsoil (401), a dark grey brown sandy loam 0.15m thick, completed the sequence.

***Trench 5*** (Fig 3)

Trench 5 was orientated north-west to south-east. The natural horizon (507) lay at a depth of 0.3m at 32.11m aOD. This was overlain by a thin layer of mid brown clayey silt subsoil, (506). These layers were truncated by a modern feature, [505] with a north-western edge aligned north-east to south-west. No other edges were present within the trench and the depth of the feature was unknown but was tested to a depth of 1.6m before rising ground water curtailed further excavation. The purpose or full extent of this feature was unclear but it may be the cut of the large drain depicted in the project design (Gifford 2008b:7, fig 1).

This feature contained (504), a dump of material including brick, ceramics and general detritus within a firm dark grey clayey matrix. Overlying (504) on the south-east side of the trench was a thin layer of compacted white mortar (503) (Plate 1). This extended for 5.5m along the trench and had a thickness of 0.08m. This may have been a capping layer for the drain pipe within its trench. It was overlain by (502), a modern dump deposit consisting of gravel, brick, ceramic and plastics. Topsoil (501) was the regular dark grey brown sandy loam, 0.10-0.15m thick.

***Trench 6***

Trench 6 was aligned north-west to south-east. The natural horizon was not reached in the trench; it had been entirely truncated by modern depositional activity. The trench was machined to a maximum depth of 1.5m (31.05m aOD) in sondages, the depth of the ground water table (Fig 5, Section 6). Layer (604) was a dark grey brown mixed sandy clay deposit containing brick, insulated wire, metal pipe and fragments of orange plastic safety fencing. It was greater than 0.3m thick, extending from a depth of 0.6m below

ground level to below the level of machining at 1.5m. Overlying this was (603), a lense of dirty re-deposited natural reddish brown sandy silt 0.2m thick. Above this, layer (602) comprised of dark brown grey clay containing large amounts of modern detritus. It was at least 0.7m thick. Topsoil (601) overlay this.

## 5.2 Field 2

### *Trench 7*

Trench 7 was orientated north-west to south-east. As in Trench 6, the natural substrate was not reached in this trench, cut away by modern activity. Excavated to a maximum depth of 1.4m, the lowest layer was (704), a mixed layer of grey and brown clay loam at least 0.7m thick which across the entire length of the trench. This was truncated by the cut of a large pipe trench [703]. Crossing the trench at an acute angle, only one edge was visible. The fill (702) was dark grey clay loam containing large amounts of modern detritus such as plastic sheeting, metalwork, brick and modern ceramics. This was almost certainly the line of the large drain depicted in the project design (Gifford 2008b:7, fig 1). Topsoil (701) overlay these deposits to a depth of 0.3m.

### *Trench 8* (Fig 3)

This trench was orientated north-east to south-west. It contained what was interpreted as a probable trackway leading from the former Christleton Lodge (now Cheshire Cat Hotel) and modern dump deposits.

The natural substrate, an orange silty sand (814), was present in the trench at a depth of 0.32m, at 31.43m aOD on the northern end. A grey brown sandy silt subsoil layer (804) overlay the natural.

This was truncated by [807], the construction cut for the overlying track (Fig 5, Section 7, Plate 2). This cut had a gently sloping and flat based profile 7.4m wide and 0.7m deep. The lower fill (812) was a pinkish red silty sand with frequent charcoal, brick and gravel inclusions which measured 0.4m thick and was present only on the northern side of the cut. Fill (806)/(811) was a very dark grey sandy silt layer up to 0.5m thick, with frequent charcoal and coal inclusions. Overlying these deposits on the northern half of the cut was a layer of tumbled bricks and brick fragments (810). This layer was 2.2m wide and 0.2m deep and formed a solid but water permeable base layer for the overlying track surface.

The pottery recovered from this layer dated from the late 17th to 20th centuries. A rubble layer of similar but more fragmentary brick fragments (805) lay over the northern side of (810) and containing Creamwares and Midland Black pottery from the 17th-18th centuries. On the southern side of the cut, a single line of cinder breezeblocks (809) was set into (811) and bonded with a mixed layer of compact black ash, pea gravel and yellow lime mortar (808). This was interpreted as a curbing, securing the down-slope edge of the trackway. Overlying these layers was the surface of the trackway (803), comprising a very compact layer of white and grey angular gravel up to 0.3m thick.

A dark grey brown layer of sandy silt (802) overlay the northern edge of this feature. It contained brick fragments and pieces of coal, slate and ceramic pipe. Topsoil (801), 0.15m thick completed the sequence.

The desk-based research indicates that such trackways were present in this area at least from the time of the 1875 OS map (Gifford 2008a:16). This is supported by the presence of 19th century ceramics and cinder breezeblocks, known to have been in use from the 1870s onwards (J. Prentice *pers comm*).

On the southern end of the trench was another modern dump of material (813) within cut [812], truncating the natural substrate.

### ***Trench 9***

Trench 9 was aligned west north west to east south-east. As in Trench 7, the natural substrate was entirely truncated away by modern deposits, to a depth exceeding 1.8m (Plate 3). Layer (903), on the eastern side of the trench comprises a compact deposit of brick rubble, mortar and limestone hardcore lying directly beneath the topsoil. This appeared to be truncated on the western side by [904], the cut for yet another modern feature containing dump material. This material (902) was the usual dark grey clay loam containing large quantities of brick rubble, ceramics, glass, plastics and scrap metal.

## **5.3 Field 4**

### ***Trench 10*** (Fig 4)

This trench was aligned north-west to south-east and differed from the others by measuring 10m by 2m. The natural horizon (1003), an orange sandy silt was present at a depth of only 0.3m, at 30.8m aOD at the highest point. Sitting atop the natural was a

small pathway constructed of brick (1002). It was oriented east to west and measured a maximum of 0.6m wide with a length within the trench of 4m. The bricks were unmarked and unbonded, mostly set end to end down the longitudinal axis of the path. They were overlain by (1001), a dark grey brown clay loam topsoil up to 0.28m thick. This path was most likely associated with the numerous farming structures or gardening plots known to exist on the site up until the late 20th century.

### ***Trench 11***

Trench 11 was orientated east to west. The natural substrate (1103), an orange clay, was present at a depth of 0.5m, at 30.7 m aOD. Overlying this was subsoil (1102), a dark brown sandy silt 0.35m thick. Topsoil (1101) was dark grey brown clay loam 0.15m thick. No archaeology was present in this trench. On the extreme western end however, was the cut for a modern service trench aligned roughly north-west to south-east.

### ***Trench 12***

Trench 12 was aligned north-west to south-east. Undisturbed natural (1205), a yellow sand, was present at a depth of 1.2m, at 30m aOD. Overlying this was a sequence of buried subsoil (1204) and topsoil (1203) (Plate 4). Layer (1204) was a mid brown sandy silt layer 0.5m thick. Layer (1203) was dark brown grey clay loam 0.15m thick and represented the original ground surface. These layers were overlain by a thick dump deposit of re-deposited natural orange sand (1202). This layer contained many small patches of dark grey clay. No dating evidence was recovered from this layer other than brick fragments and it was considered possible though unlikely that this deposit be upcast from the construction of the canal, some 50m up slope to the north. It is more likely to be 'made ground' related to the more recent agricultural practices. The modern topsoil layer (1201) was the usual dark grey brown clay loam, 0.10m thick.

### ***Trench 13***

Trench 13 was oriented north-west to south-east. Natural orange sand (1303) was present at a maximum depth of 0.45m, at 29.04m aOD. This was overlain by (1302), a deposit of re-deposited natural yellow orange sand similar to that in Trench 12. This was up to 0.4m thick and contained patches of dark clay and charcoal. No firm dating evidence was

present in this layer. Topsoil (1301) was 0.10m thick and the same as (1201).

***Trench 14*** (Fig 4)

Trench 14 was oriented north-east to south-west and contained the brick floor surface of a building. Natural orange sand (1405) was present at a maximum depth of 0.45m, at 28.05m aOD. Subsoil (1404) was dark brown sandy silt, up to 0.35m thick. Sitting directly on top of the subsoil was a brick floor surface (1403) (Plate 5). This measured 4.6m in length and for the most part was fairly crudely laid, with the single layer of bricks bonded with a white lime mortar. There was no evidence for a construction cut within which the floor surface was sitting. Nor was there any evidence for walls. The northern section of floor had clearly been heavily disturbed during demolition.

The brickwork was overlain by a layer of brick rubble (1402) from the demolition of the structure. This rubble also extended to the north of the floor surface. The brickwork lay only 0.3m below the present ground surface. The modern topsoil (1401) overlay the rubble. A pocket calendar dating from 1959 and a large number of pieces of 20th century stoneware mixing bowls retrieved from the floor surface provided a *terminus post quem* for the demolition of this building.

This structure was most likely one of the numerous farming or market gardening structures existing in this area throughout the 20th century, although probably not the farm building depicted on the 1982 Ordnance Survey map (Gifford 2008a:16).

***Trench 15***

Trench 15 was aligned north to south on the far eastern side of Field 4. The natural orange yellow sand (1503) was at a maximum depth of 0.4m, at 31.3m aOD. Subsoil (1502) was grey brown silty sand 0.25m thick. Topsoil (1501), 0.25m thick, was the usual dark grey brown sandy silt loam. No archaeology or modern disturbance was present.

***Trench 16***

Trench 16 was aligned west north-west to east south-east. It had the same stratigraphic sequence and depths as Trench 15. No archaeology or modern disturbance was present in this trench.

***Trench 17*** (Fig 4)

The location of this trench was moved slightly to avoid low overhead power cables, and was aligned north-west to south-east. It contained a broad, shallow cut feature, probably a planting trench dating to when the field was used as a market garden. A brick floor surface overlay this feature (Plate 6 and Cover).

Natural red silty sand (1708) lay at a depth of only 0.10-0.15m, at 32.9m aOD. It was truncated by the western edge of cut [707], orientated just off north to south. This cut had a shallow, gently sloping profile with a flat base 0.35m deep. Lower fill (1706) was a thin compact layer of black stained fine gravel 80mm thick containing large quantities of 18th-19th century Blackware ceramics. Fill (1705) was light brown sandy silt partly derived from the natural substrate which measured 0.25m thick. Overlying this, fill (1704) was dark brown grey sandy silt up to 0.12m thick containing frequent pieces of coal and brick fragments.

It is possible that this feature is a result of 'double-digging' ground working, a common agricultural practice in order to create a planting trench with a deeper topsoil layer for crop growing (Campbell 2005, 262). A base layer of porous gravel and ceramic, such as (1706), was routinely used to increase the drainage of the soils. Such activity might be expected on land used as a market garden for a considerable period of time.

Sitting atop this layer was brick floor surface (1703). It extended for 6m before continuing under the south-east end of the trench. This surface comprised a single layer of well laid but unbonded bricks. The bricks were for the most part laid lengthways across the trench, but with no consistent pattern to their alignment. Several large square grey ceramic tiles were laid in among the bricks. The brick surface on the far south-east end had sustained damage and most of it had been ripped out, revealing (1704) beneath.

Surface (1703) was sealed by (1702), a thin compact layer of fine gravel. Topsoil (1701), 0.12m thick, completed the sequence.

***Trench 18***

Trench 18 was aligned east north-east to west south-west. Natural sand (1804) was present at a maximum depth of 0.47m, at 33.9m aOD. Subsoil (1803) was mid brown sandy silt 0.25-0.3m thick. This was truncated in several places by modern dumps containing organic debris probably relating to the poultry farming practices. Topsoil (1801) was the usual dark clay loam.

## 6 THE FINDS

### 6.1 The Post-medieval pottery by Iain Soden

A total of 97 sherds was recovered in 18 types, covering the medieval period to the 20th century. Most of the pottery was very fragmentary, residual and derives from dumps of material of no intrinsic significance, others are from subsoil, but a small proportion is useful for providing dates for construction or demolition of buildings, as indicated below (1402, 1703, 1706).

#### *Pottery*

The material recovered is as follows and was simply attributed to type by context in a simple sherd count (see Table 1).

- A Medieval coarse sandy ware, 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century
- B Cistercian Ware, late 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century
- C Midland Yellow ware, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century
- D Slipwares, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century
- E Manganese mottled ware, c1690-1740
- F Sgraffito Ware, 18<sup>th</sup> century
- G Creamware, 1720-80
- H Blue shell-edge Pearlware, 1780-1810
- J Plain pearlware
- K Nottingham Stoneware, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century
- L Midlands Blackware, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century
- M Blackware Pancheon, 19<sup>th</sup> century
- N Blackware specialist vessel types, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century
- P Underglaze transfer printed and plain glazed earthenware, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century
- R Stoneware marmalade jar, c1870-1910
- S Stoneware mixing bowls, 20<sup>th</sup> century
- T Blue and white banded breakfast ware, 1950s

#### Imported types

- U Frechen Ware 17<sup>th</sup> century



Table 1: Pottery by context and type

Context/type	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K	L	M	N	P	R	S	T	U
Trench 1 u/s	2									1		1						
312				2							1	1						
304		1	1		1	1					2	2						
306		3					1		1		4							
404														1				
602			1									1		1				
702														1				
805							2		2		2			2				
810				1	1				1					1				1
1002												3		8				
1202												1	3					
1402			1										1	3	1	14	2	
1703									3		2							
1706												6	15					
1804								1										
Total	2	4	3	3	2	1	3	1	7	1	11	5	19	17	1	14	2	1

## 6.2 Wall tiles and other finds

A total of 26 wall tile fragments were also recovered from contexts 702 (3), 805 (1), 1402 (16) and 1404 (6). Amongst those from context (1402) are fragments on which the maker's mark on the back is in relief T & R BOO[TE]...ENGLAND. Set up in 1842, they traded in dust-impressed wall tiles as T and R Boote, of Waterloo Pottery, Burslem, Staffordshire, between 1850 and 1962 (Austwick, 1980, 130 and 154). The glaze used on the tiles suggests they date to the 1920s or 1930s and may derive from domestic fireplaces.

Context (1404) also produced a rigid plastic fragment of a calendar from a publishing company, dated 1959, providing a *terminus post quem* for that context.

On the whole this fragmentary assemblage has little intrinsic value and is not useful, for the most part, for close dating. There are exceptions, however.

Context (1703), from above a brick floor, seems to date no earlier than the 18th century, but may be later. Context (1706) is the fill of a construction trench is 18th or 19th century but is packed with specific storage vessels, some possibly butter pots, of Blackware.

Two very distinctive vessel types were present. One is a Midland Yellow Ware candlestick of the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century from context (1402); the other a specialist 18th-century Midlands Blackware vessel, possibly for distilling purposes, from context (1202). Both items are of intrinsic interest although neither is more closely datable

## 7 DISCUSSION

The evaluation revealed evidence for the development of the site from the 19th century onwards. No evidence of medieval or earlier remains was present on the site with the exception of several residual potsherds. Nor was there evidence from either the Civil War period or the construction of the Shropshire Union canal in the late 18th century.

### *Fields 1 and 2*

The earliest phase of activity in these fields is represented by the shallow linear features and postholes found in trenches 2, 3 and 4 which date from the 17th to 20th centuries. These features are most likely related to the agricultural practises employed in this field during this period.

The trackway in Trench 8, probably dating from the late 19th to mid 20th centuries is most likely one of the tracks visible on the 1875 Ordnance Survey Map (Gifford 2008a:16), giving access to Christleton Lodge (now the Cheshire Cat Hotel) and its ancillary buildings.

The areas of modern disturbance present in trenches 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 represent an episode of significant earthworking and backfilling with debris. This precise nature of this activity is unrecorded but most likely relates to major roadworks on the adjacent A41 as recently as the 1990s. A large pipe trench appears to cross between Trenches 5 and 7. The landscaping of the grounds and construction of the new access road to the Cheshire Cat Hotel in 2001 may also have contributed to this disturbance. It is obvious that any archaeological remains in these trenches would have been negatively affected by this activity.

*Field 4*

Archaeological evidence in this field appears limited to the 20th century market gardening and poultry farming practices. The brick surfaces found in trenches 10, 14 and 17 are almost certainly the remains of poultry houses or gardening sheds and associated pathways.

The layers of redeposited natural sand in the upper layers of Trenches 12, 13 and 18 are considered more likely to be related to this recent period than to the construction of the Shropshire Union Canal in the 1770s as the layers in Trenches 13 and 14 clearly seal recent agricultural deposits.

Owing to the infrequent and fragmentary nature of the surviving remains, their relatively recent date and the lack of significant structural activity, it is unlikely that further archaeological works would be needed on the site.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Austick, J, and Austwick, B, 1980 *The decorated tile: an illustrated history of English tile-making and design*, Pitman House, London

Campbell, S, 2005 *A History of Kitchen Gardening* Francis Lincoln

Gifford 2008a *Christleton Bridges, Cheshire, A Continuing Care Community: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*

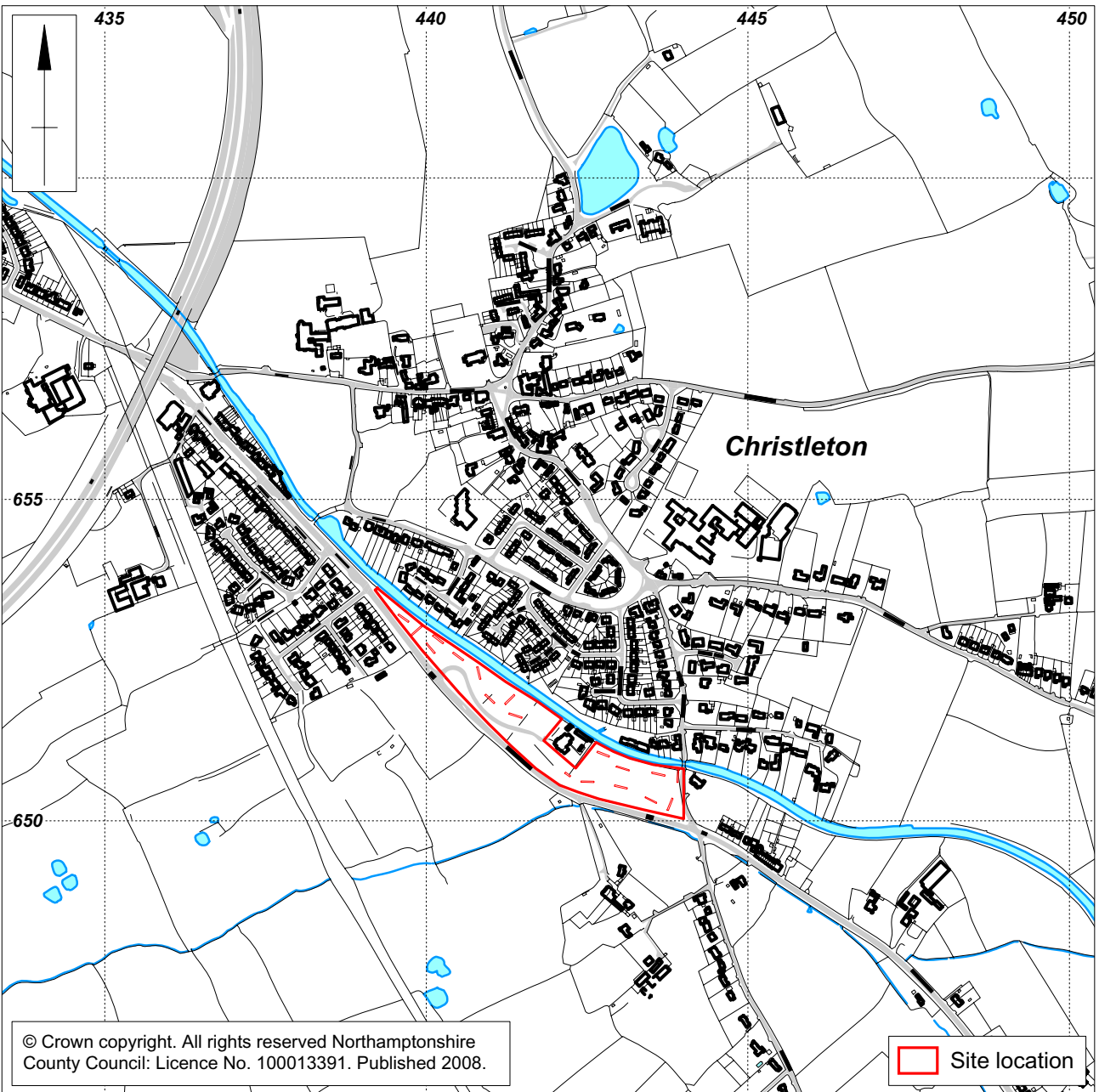
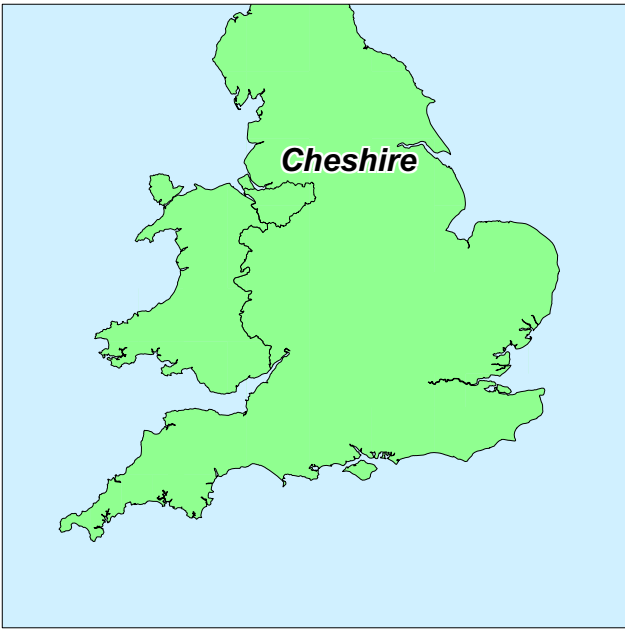
Gifford 2008b *Christleton Bridges, Cheshire, A Continuing Care Community: Project Design for an Archaeological Evaluation*

IFA 1994, revised 2001 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

IFA 1995 revised 2006 *Code of Conduct*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

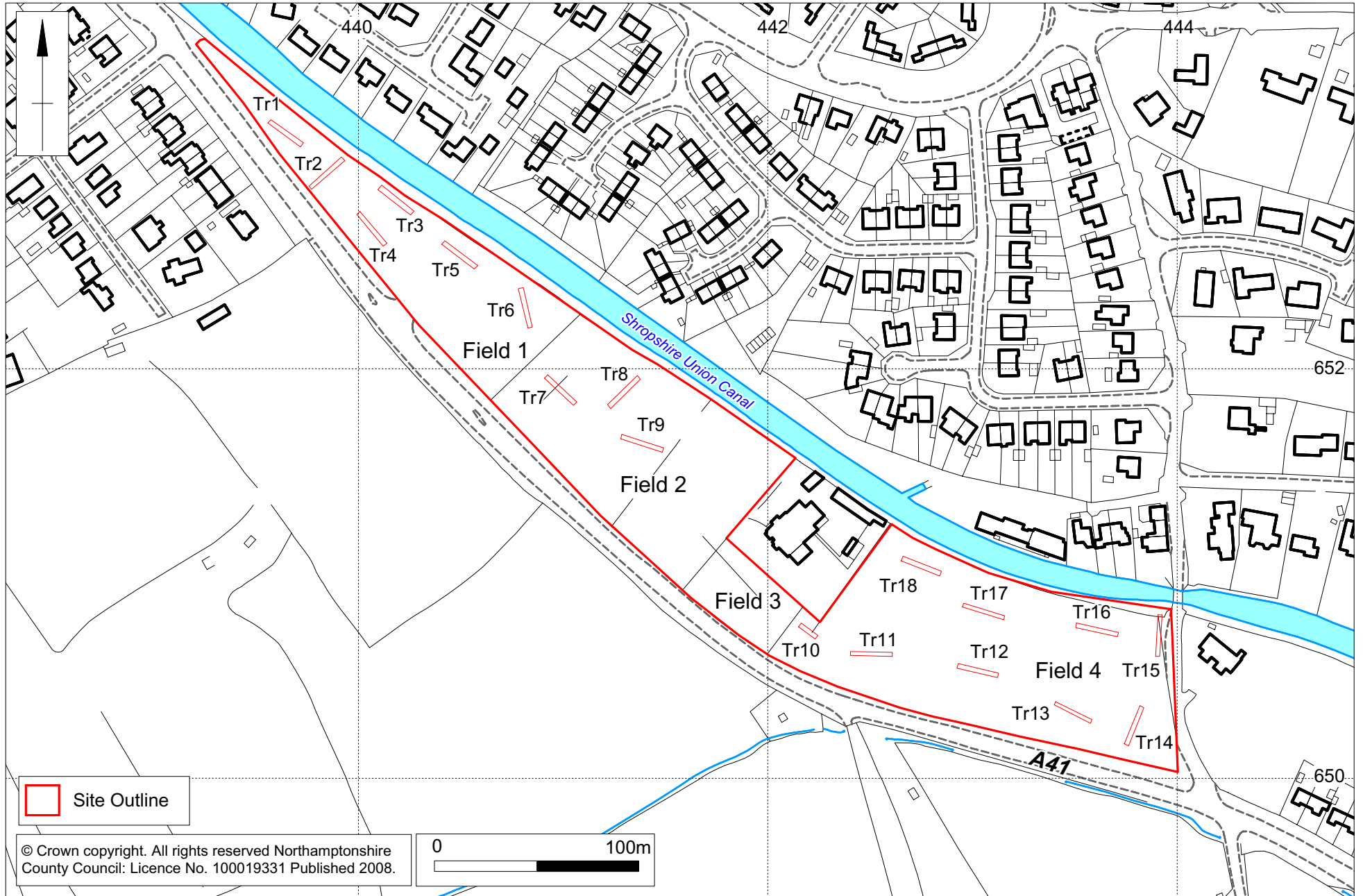
## **Websites**

<http://www.bgs/geoindex.co.uk>



Scale 1:10,000

Site Location Fig 1



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Northamptonshire County Council: Licence No. 100019331 Published 2008.



Trench Locations Fig 2

**Trench 2**



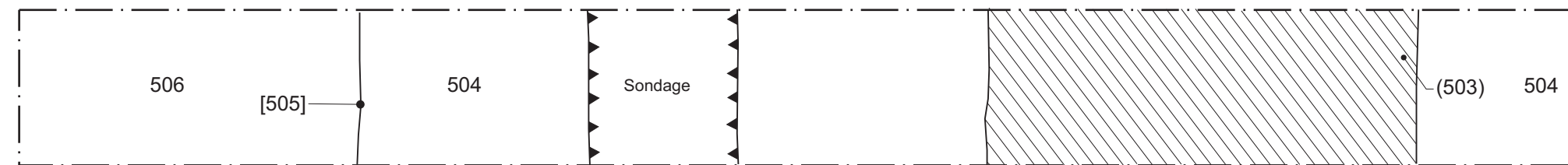
**Trench 3**



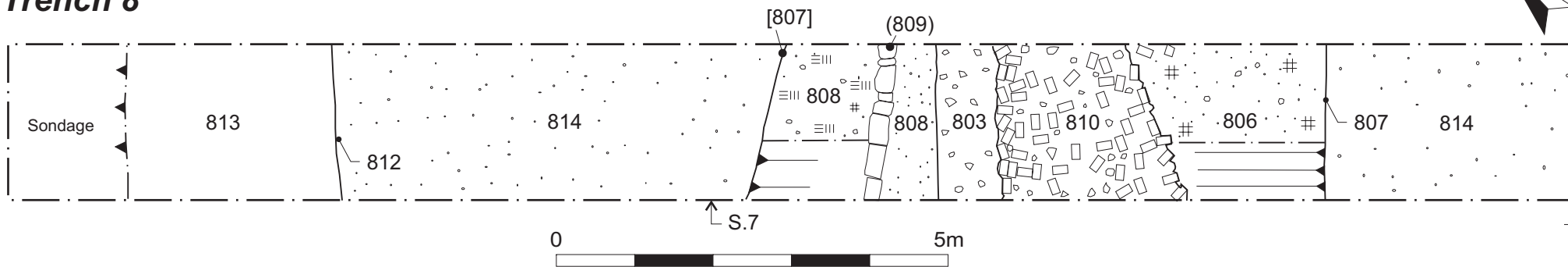
**Trench 4**






**Trench 5**



**Trench 8**



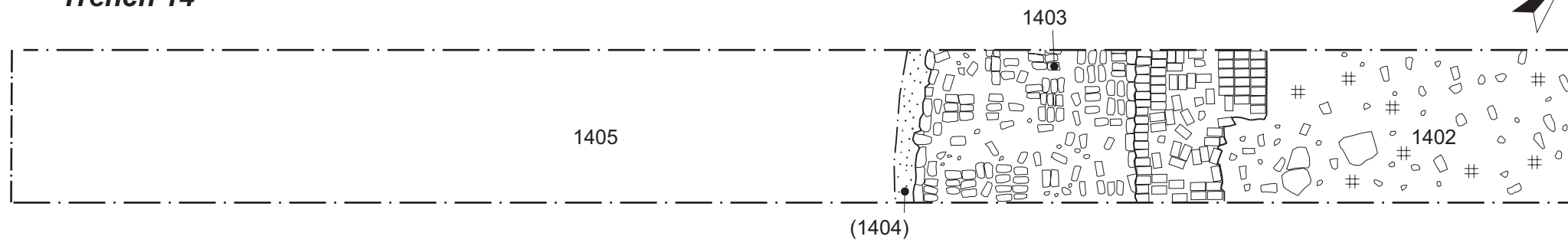
-  Brick
-  Clay
-  Charcoal

Trenches 2,3,4,5 and 8 Fig 3

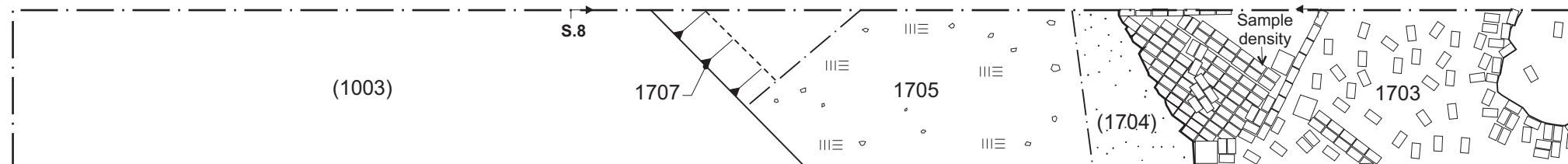
**Trench 10**



**Trench 14**

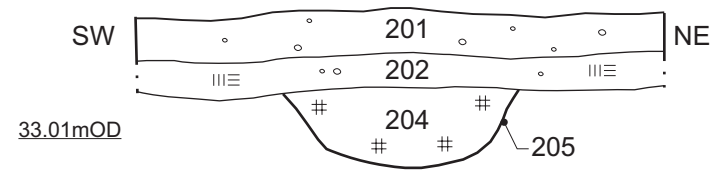


**Trench 17**

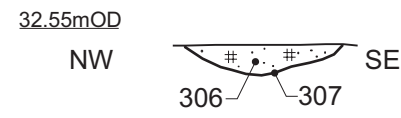




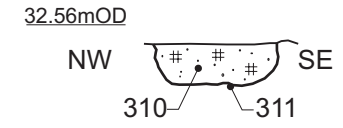
**Section 1**



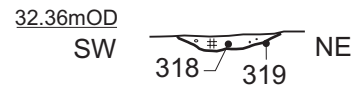
**Section 2**



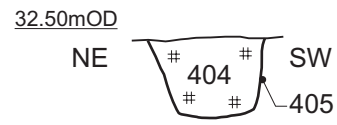
**Section 3**



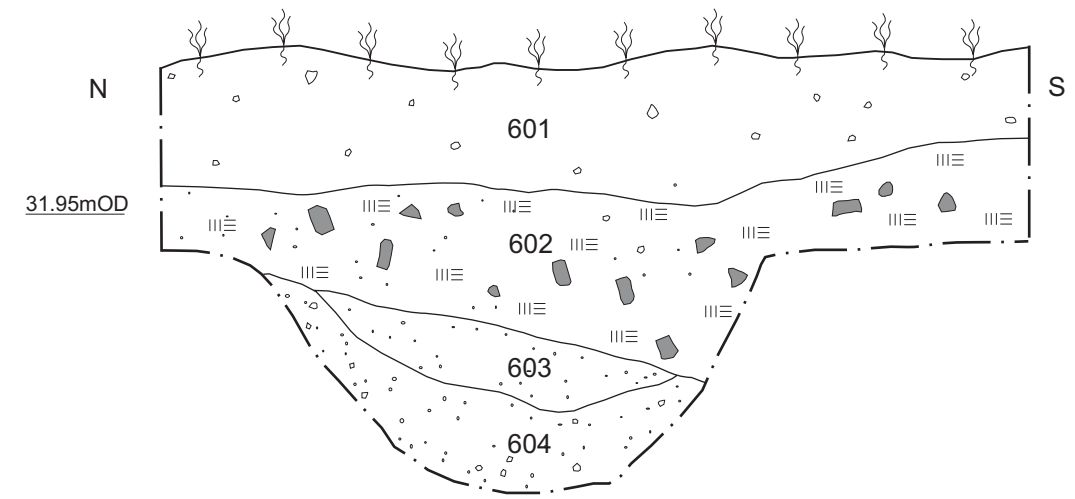
**Section 4**



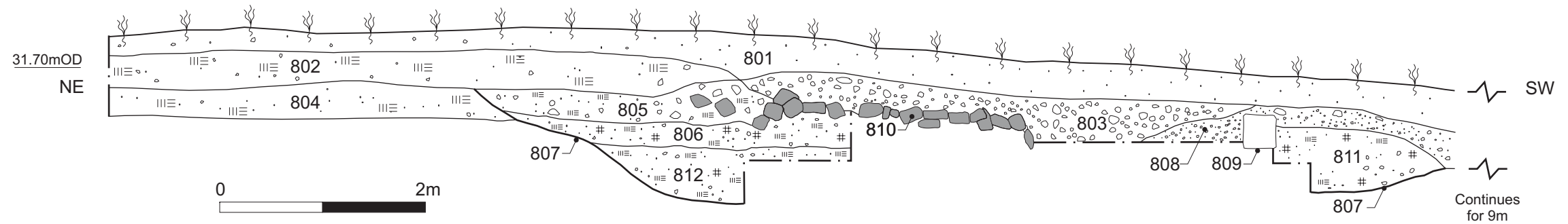
**Section 5**



**Section 6**



**Section 7**



**Section 8**

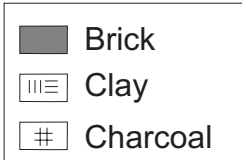
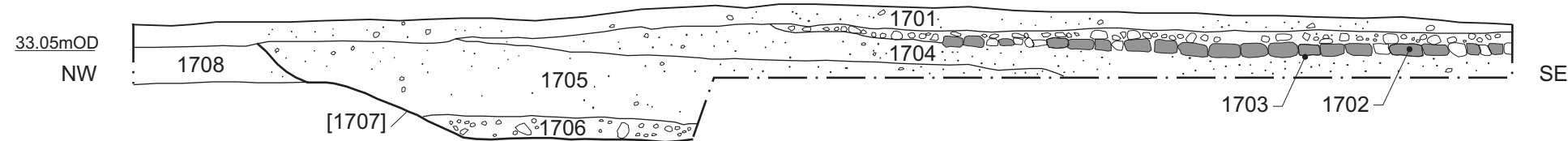




Plate 1: Trench 5; Mortar layer (503), with layer (504) in the foreground



Plate 2: Trench 8; path structure. Note cut [807] and breezeblock edging (809) in foreground and brick base layer (810) in background



Plate 3: Trench 9 with modern rubble layers (903) in foreground and (902) in the background



Plate 4: Trench 12, showing buried topsoil (1203) in mid section with redeposited natural (1202) above



Plate 5: Trench 14; brick floor surface (1403)



Plate 6: Trench 17; brick floor surface (1703) in foreground, with cut [1707] in the background



**Appendix 1:** Christleton Bridges, Cheshire, A Continuing Care Community:  
Project Design for an Archaeological Evaluation, Gifford, 2008

Report No. 15103.ARCH02  
November 2008

# Gifford

**CHRISTLETON BRIDGES, CHESHIRE  
A CONTINUING CARE COMMUNITY  
PROJECT DESIGN FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

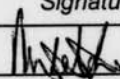
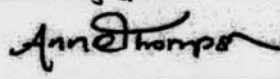
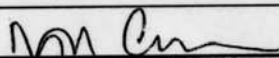
**Sirdar Estates Limited**  
Jupiter House  
Tattenhall  
Chester  
CH3 3PX



**CHRISTLETON BRIDGES, CHESHIRE  
A CONTINUING CARE COMMUNITY**

**PROJECT DESIGN FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**CONTROLLED DOCUMENT**

Gifford Document No:		15103.ARCH02	
Status:	Project Design	Copy No:	
	<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Prepared by:	Tam Webster		13.11.2008
Checked:	Anne Thompson		13.11.2008
Gifford Approved:	Nigel Cossons		13.11.2008

<b>Revision Record</b>					
Rev.	Date	By	Summary of Changes	Chkd	Aprvd

Sirdar Estates Limited  
Jupiter House  
Tattenhall  
Chester  
CH3 3PX

Gifford  
20 Nicholas Street  
Chester  
CH1 2NX



**CHRISTLETON BRIDGES, CHESHIRE  
A CONTINUING CARE COMMUNITY**

**PROJECT DESIGN FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**C O N T E N T S**

	Page
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION.....	1
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT .....	1
4. METHODOLOGY.....	2
4.1 On Site Works.....	2
4.2 Report Preparation.....	3
4.3 Archive .....	3
5. HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	4
6. CONFIDENTIALITY.....	4
7. COPYRIGHT .....	4
8. PROJECT MONITORING AND TIMETABLE .....	5
9. RESOURCES .....	5

**FIGURES**

Figure 1 Trench Location Plan

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This project design has been prepared by Gifford on behalf of Sirdar Estates Limited and details an archaeological evaluation of a proposed development site on land at Christleton Bridges Chester (centred at NGR SJ 344181 365106).
- 1.1.2 The proposed development comprises a retirement community involving the construction of accommodation, care facilities with associated infrastructure/landscaping.
- 1.1.3 A desk based assessment report on the archaeology of the proposed development site (Gifford report no. 15103.ARCH01) has been agreed with the Chester City Archaeologist, Mike Morris, who has indicated that an archaeological trench evaluation is required to enable a planning determination on the archaeology of the site to be made. No brief for the evaluation has been issued, but the scope and methodology for this project design is in accordance with the with the Institute of Field Archaeologists document *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (2001) and as verbally agreed with the Chester City Archaeologist.

## 2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 The proposed development site is located c. 3.2 km to the south-east of Chester city centre, off the A41 Whitchurch Road, centred at NGR SJ 344190 365140. The site is located between the A41, Whitchurch Road to the south and west, a towpath adjacent to the Shropshire Union Canal to the north, and Rowton Bridge Road to the east. The site lies on relatively level ground lying at c. 32.00m AOD to the north-west of the Cheshire Cat hotel complex, whilst to the south-east the land falls by 6.35m southwards from the canal to the A41.
- 2.1.2 The 1:50,000 British Geological Survey (BGS) map, Sheet 109, Chester, Drift (1965) shows the solid geology of the site comprising Pebble Beds, which are underlain by Lower Mottled Sandstone, of Permo Triassic Age. The drift geology at the site is shown on the geological map to comprise glacial till (formerly Boulder Clay).
- 2.1.3 The site is divided into three areas – the north-west (land to the north-west of the Cheshire Cat hotel complex), central (Cheshire Cat hotel complex) and south-east (land to the south-east of the Cheshire Cat. The north-west area consists of open pasture/grassland and the south-east area overgrown former enclosed arable fields. The central/Cheshire Cat hotel complex comprises a former lodge (Christleton Lodge) with outbuildings to the rear, with associated car parking and landscaping.

## 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- 3.1.1 The specific objectives of the project are:
- to produce a record of possible medieval field boundaries within the site by means of archaeological trench evaluation.
  - to produce a report detailing the results of the archaeological works, with accompanying archive.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 On Site Works

- 4.1.1 Eighteen trenches 2m wide (seventeen 20m long and one 10m long) will be excavated as a 2% sample of the assessment site (Figure 1).
- 4.1.2 The trenches will be excavated by a machine, equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist. As soon as archaeological deposits have been identified machine clearance will cease and hand excavation by archaeologists will be undertaken to investigate and record archaeological features and deposits.
- 4.1.3 In the event of flooding the trenches will be pumped dry and cleaned for examination and recording.
- 4.1.4 The trenches will be recorded using *proformae* recording forms and located on a suitably scaled site plan related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum references. The recording system to be used is based on that developed by English Heritage, Central Archaeology Service
- 4.1.5 A stratigraphic record of the deposits will be undertaken for each trench. The recording forms will be supplemented with plan and section drawings (at scales of 1:20/1:50 and 1:10 respectively).
- 4.1.6 The photographic record will comprise 35mm format monochrome prints and colour slides with supporting record index. The photographic record may be supplemented with images captured on a digital camera, images recorded on this media will not form the images of record.
- 4.1.7 Artefacts will be collected and recorded stratigraphically, unless collected from spoil. All artefacts of twentieth century date will be noted, quantified and summarily described then discarded, unless the artefacts are of exceptional historic significance of fall under the terms of the *Treasure Act* (1996). All artefacts will be labelled, packed and stored in appropriate materials and conditions to ensure that no deterioration occurs. All artefact processing and storage will be carried out in accordance with UKIC (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation) guidelines.
- 4.1.8 In the event of significant archaeological discoveries the treatment of which (either arising from the volume/quantity of material and/or the complexity/importance of the material) is beyond the reasonable expectations arising from a duly diligent approach to this Project Design, Gifford will notify the Client as soon as practically possible and certainly within 24 hours, and if warranted, arrange a site meeting.
- 4.1.9 In the event of significant archaeological discoveries up to a further 0.5% of the site may be subject to archaeological evaluation.
- 4.1.10 On site work is envisaged to take up to 15 days.
- 4.1.11 Environmental sampling of deposits during the evaluation will be undertaken to assess the importance of the deposits and to determine their potential use for archaeological and palaeoecological reconstruction. Where identified, samples of 40 ltrs will be recovered for analysis.

- 4.1.12 Any human remains (whether articulated or disarticulated) identified during the evaluation will be left *in situ* with recording limited to the position of the grave, alignment, burial position and stratigraphic relationships. Gifford will advise the Client immediately and inform the relevant authorities of any such discovery.

## **4.2 Report Preparation**

- 4.2.1 Within a month of the completion of the archaeological works as defined in this Project Design Gifford will submit to the Client a draft report on the findings of the works.

- 4.2.2 The report will include as a minimum:

- a table of contents.
- a summary of the results
- an introduction including a list of all staff members involved in the project.
- a summary of the available geological, archaeological and historical background of the site.
- a statement of the aims of the archaeological works.
- a statement of the methodology of the archaeological works and an assessment of the same.
- a full description of the results of the archaeological work.
- plans and sections and survey drawings at an appropriate scale cross-referenced with the written descriptions
- appropriate maps, photographs and artefact drawings.
- a discussion of the location, extent, date, nature, condition, quality and significance of any archaeological deposits identified during the works.
- an interpretation of the results of the archaeological works in relation to archaeology in the vicinity and an identification of any research implications arising.
- a bibliography.
- an index to the project archive and statement on its location/proposed repository.

- 4.2.3 Appendices to the report will include a copy of this Project Design.

- 4.2.4 A draft version of the report will be made available to the Client and the Chester City Archaeologist for comment before the final report is issued. Gifford will take into account any observations the Client and the Chester City Archaeologist may have on the content of the report. Any comments on the draft report must be received by Gifford from the Client and the Chester City Archaeologist within 15 working days of receipt of the draft report.

- 4.2.5 Six copies of the final report will be submitted by Gifford to the Client for retention and dispersal to the Chester City Archaeologist (1) and the Cheshire County Council HER (1).

## **4.3 Archive**

- 4.3.1 The project archive will be prepared by Gifford and will consist of all original records, artefacts, (excluding those discarded as agreed with the recipient institution) ecofacts/samples and all documentation that relates to the evaluation. The archive will be collated according to the recipient institution's guidelines on the deposition of archaeological archives.

- 4.3.2 The archive will be presented within 12 months of completion of the fieldwork, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with the Chester City Council Archive Curator.

- 4.3.3 The archive will be prepared according to the *Management of Archaeological Projects*, English Heritage, Second Edition (1991). The records therefore will be fully ordered and indexed.
- 4.3.4 The archive will comply with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (Archaeology Section) *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage* (1990), The Society of Museum Archaeologists document *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive* (1995) and to the requirements of the recipient institution.
- 4.3.5 Some or all artefacts may be retained by the owner of the freehold of the land or the successor in title to this freehold but records of these artefacts will form part of the archive.

## **5. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 5.1.1 Gifford operates in accordance with the health and safety procedures as set out in:-
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
  - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations (2002)
  - Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations (2007)
  - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
  - Working at Height Regulations (2005)
  - Confined Spaces Regulations (1997)
  - Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations (2002)
  - The Gifford Health and Safety Manual
- 5.1.2 Gifford will provide its staff with all necessary protective clothing and equipment.
- 5.1.3 Where contaminated material is identified in the surface or sub-surface deposits at the site appropriate measures will be taken by Gifford to ensure the health and safety of its staff which may come into contact with contaminants. In the event of encountering contaminated soil or soil suspected of containing contaminants Gifford will inform the Client immediately and if necessary Gifford will produce a revised method statement for approval by the Client and the Chester City Archaeologist.
- 5.1.4 Gifford will submit to the Client a Health and Safety Risk Assessment before site works commence.

## **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 6.1.1 With respect to this project Gifford Staff or representatives will not speak to the media or any other third party about the works unless specifically instructed to do so by the Client.

## **7. COPYRIGHT**

- 7.1.1 Gifford will retain the copyright to all documents, reports, drawings and images generated by Gifford during the archaeological evaluation and will grant a royalty-free, non-exclusive, irrevocable and non-transferable licence to Sirdar Estates Limited to reproduce the documents, drawings, reports and images.

## **8. PROJECT MONITORING AND TIMETABLE**

- 8.1.1 It is understood that the archaeological evaluation will be monitored by the Client and the Chester City Archaeologist. Gifford will give the Chester City Archaeologist as much notice of the commencement of the works as possible.
- 8.1.2 Gifford will inform the Client and the Chester City Archaeologist of any significant discoveries. The Chester City Archaeologist will be given reasonable notice to inspect such significant discoveries within the timetable for the site works. The Chester City Archaeologist will be under the supervision and direction of the Client during any site visits.

## **9. RESOURCES**

- A Thompson  
(Project management; report editing)
- T Webster  
(Archaeological site director)
- Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(Site supervisor x 1)
- Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(Site assistants x 2)
- Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(Preparation of report)
- Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(Pottery assessment)
- Northamptonshire Archaeology  
(Environmental assessment)

**FIGURES**



Figure 1: Trench Location Plan