

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
ON LAND AT  
COLLYWESTON GREAT WOOD,  
COLLYWESTON,  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

Work Undertaken For  
**Strutt and Parker LLP**

July 2014

Report Compiled by  
Neil Parker MA

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A.P.S. Report No. **75/14**

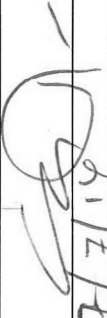

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES**



## Quality Control

### Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Collyweston Great Wood, Collyweston, Northamptonshire

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## 1. SUMMARY

*Archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at Collyweston Great Wood, Collyweston, Northamptonshire in order to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development on the site.*

*A desk-based assessment of the site has been undertaken previous to this phase of intrusive fieldwork.*

*Excavations at the Site, prior to the construction of a bomb storage depot, revealed an extensive Romano-British (AD 43-410) ritual complex. Several temples were recorded during the construction works and the overall area may extend beyond the boundaries to the Site.*

*In order to establish the potential for survival of any archaeological remains associated with the complex, six trial trenches were excavated at locations around the site positioned to avoid buried underground services and evaluate land least likely to have been disturbed during the construction of the bomb store.*

*The programme of trial trenching revealed that except in the vicinity of Trenches 1, 2 and 4 all surface deposits had been completely removed, only the natural substrate surviving. Trench 4 in particular appears to illustrate the original ground level.*

*No features or deposits of an archaeological nature were revealed during the evaluation.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of an Evaluation

An archaeological evaluation is defined as *'a limited programme of non-intrusive*

*and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site. If such archaeological remains are present Field Evaluation defines their character and extent, quality and preservation, and it enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate'* (IfA 2008).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Strutt and Parker LLP to undertake archaeological evaluation of land at Collyweston Great Wood, Collyweston, Northamptonshire. The evaluation is required in support of a proposed planning application for a storage and office development at the site.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Collyweston is located 12km northwest of Oundle and 16km northeast of Corby, in the administrative district of East Northamptonshire (Fig. 1).

The proposed development site is located 2.6km southeast of the centre of Collyweston, as defined by the parish church of St Andrew at National Grid Reference TF0078 0071 (Fig. 2).

Local soils are of the Denchworth Association, typically stoneless, clayey pelo-stagnogley soils, with pelo-stagnogley soils of the Ragdale Association to the south of the site (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 155; 293). These soils are developed on a solid geology of Jurassic limestones of the Upper Estuarine Series with a slight outcrop of glacially derived till to the immediate north of the site (GSGB 1978).

The site lies at a height of *c.* 80m AOD on land that slopes gently down to the east. The proposed development area encompasses some 11.05 hectares.

## 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Collyweston is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of *c.* 1086. Referred to as *Weston* and *Westone* the name derives from the Old English and simply means 'west farm (*tūn*)', no doubt in relation to Easton on the Hill. The prefix *Colly* is said to relate to a pet-form of the name Nicholas, who held the manor in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Gover *et al.* 1933, 200).

Archaeological excavation of the site was carried out prior to the construction of the Explosives Storage Area (ESA) in 1953. The excavations revealed a cluster of buildings dating to the Romano-British period. These comprised 3 circular, 2 rectangular and hexagonal and octagonal structures (Knocker 1965). It is believed that the arrangement had some ritual significance, possibly of a regional type as comparable buildings have been discovered at Brigstock, 16km to the southwest (Greenfield 1963), and more recently during excavations undertaken by Archaeological Project Services at Oundle, 11km to the southeast (*pers. comm.* Gary Trimble).

For a full description of Collyweston Great Wood and the surrounding area see the text of the desk based assessment (Cope-Faulkner 2014).

## 3. AIMS

The aim of the evaluation was to gather information to establish the presence or absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits present on the site.

## 4. METHODS

Six trenches, measuring between 17m and 23m, dependent on constraints of space due to buried services, were placed on areas least likely to have been disturbed by the construction of the Explosives Storage Area. (Fig. 3).

Removal of topsoil and other overburden (where present) was undertaken by mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. The exposed surfaces of the trenches were then cleaned by hand and inspected for archaeological remains.

Each deposit exposed during the evaluation was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their interpretations appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was also compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. Recording of deposits encountered was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

The location of the excavated trenches was surveyed using tapes triangulated off existing structures.

## 5. RESULTS

The results of the archaeological evaluation are discussed in trench order. Archaeological contexts are described below. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

### Trench 1 (Figure 4, Plates 4 & 5)

The natural substrate in the trench (102) comprised a deposit of firm, plastic mottled yellow and blue clay with occasional chalk fragment and flint inclusions.

Directly overlying the natural deposits was

a firm, plastic, mid grey brown clay and silt topsoil (101). This 0.12m thick topsoil contained occasional small stones and chalky fragments.

**Trench 2** (Figure 4, Plates 6 & 7)

The natural substrate, as with Trench 1, consisted of firm, plastic mottled blue and yellow clay with chalk and flint fragments (203).

A 0.24m thick layer of mid brown, stiff clay and silt (202) formed the subsoil that overlay the natural clay.

A firm, plastic, mid grey brown clay and silt topsoil (201) was the latest deposit in the trench.

**Trench 3** (Figure 4, Plates 8 & 9)

A layer of firm, plastic mottled blue and yellow clay with chalk and flint fragments (301) was the only deposit present in this trench

**Trench 4** (Figure 4, Plates 10 & 11)

The natural substrate in this trench was divided into two distinct deposits. Dark grey blue clay with large flint fragments and some iron staining (404) lay to the east of pale yellow and blue, stiff but crumbly fine clay (403).

Subsoil with a thickness of 0.13m (402) was formed from firm, mid brown silt and clay with flint and chalk fragments and was overlain by a 0.12m thick deposit of firm, mid grey brown clayey silt with small stones and chalk inclusions that formed the topsoil.

**Trench 5** (Figure 4, Plates 12 & 13)

Three distinct layers of natural deposits were present in this trench and the depositional sequence appears to be as follows.

A pale blue deposit of firm clay (503) was

overlain by a mid yellowish brown coarse silty clay with a high ferric content (502). This was overlain by a thicker deposit of stiff, dark grey clay with chalk fragments (501).

No other deposits remained.

**Trench 6** (Figure 4, Plates 14 & 15)

Only the natural substrate was present in this trench. It comprised stiff, pale yellow and blue clay with limestone and chalk inclusions (601).

## 6. DISCUSSION

The construction of the Explosives Storage Area in 1953 was responsible for the removal of most of the upper deposits on the site. The topsoil and subsoil deposits that would have been present at the western end of the site in Trenches 3, 5 and 6 have been bulldozed away, probably to make the large earth banks at the north and south boundaries of the site. As a result, only the natural substrate remains around these trenches and it can be supposed under the roadways between the storage sheds. These deposits are in keeping with the local geology.

In three places the upper deposits survived. In Trench 1 at the east end by the entrance, Trench 2 adjacent to the woods and Trench 4 near the centre of the site.

Trenches 2 and 4 appear quite elevated from the roadways and rather than these areas having been built up, it is more likely that they form the original ground level, everything else having been reduced to a level where any archaeological deposits are unlikely to survive.



## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at Collyweston Great Wood, Collyweston, Northamptonshire prior to a submission of an application for planning permission for development of the site.

Previous excavation on the site prior to the construction of the Explosives Storage Area revealed significant remains dating to the Romano-British period.

Six trenches were located to avoid underground services and evaluate land most likely to have been left undisturbed by the previous construction.

Trenches 1, 2 and 4 showed the remaining topsoil and natural deposits and probably formed the original ground level. Trenches 3, 5 and 6 had been reduced to the level of the natural substrate.

No deposits of an archaeological nature were observed during the evaluation.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr J. Dawson of Strutt & Parker LLP for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane.

## 9. PERSONNEL

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Photographic reproduction: Neil Parker  
Illustration: Neil Parker  
Post-excavation Analyst: Neil Parker

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
APS	Archaeological Project Services
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
OS	Ordnance Survey



Figure 1 - General Location Plan

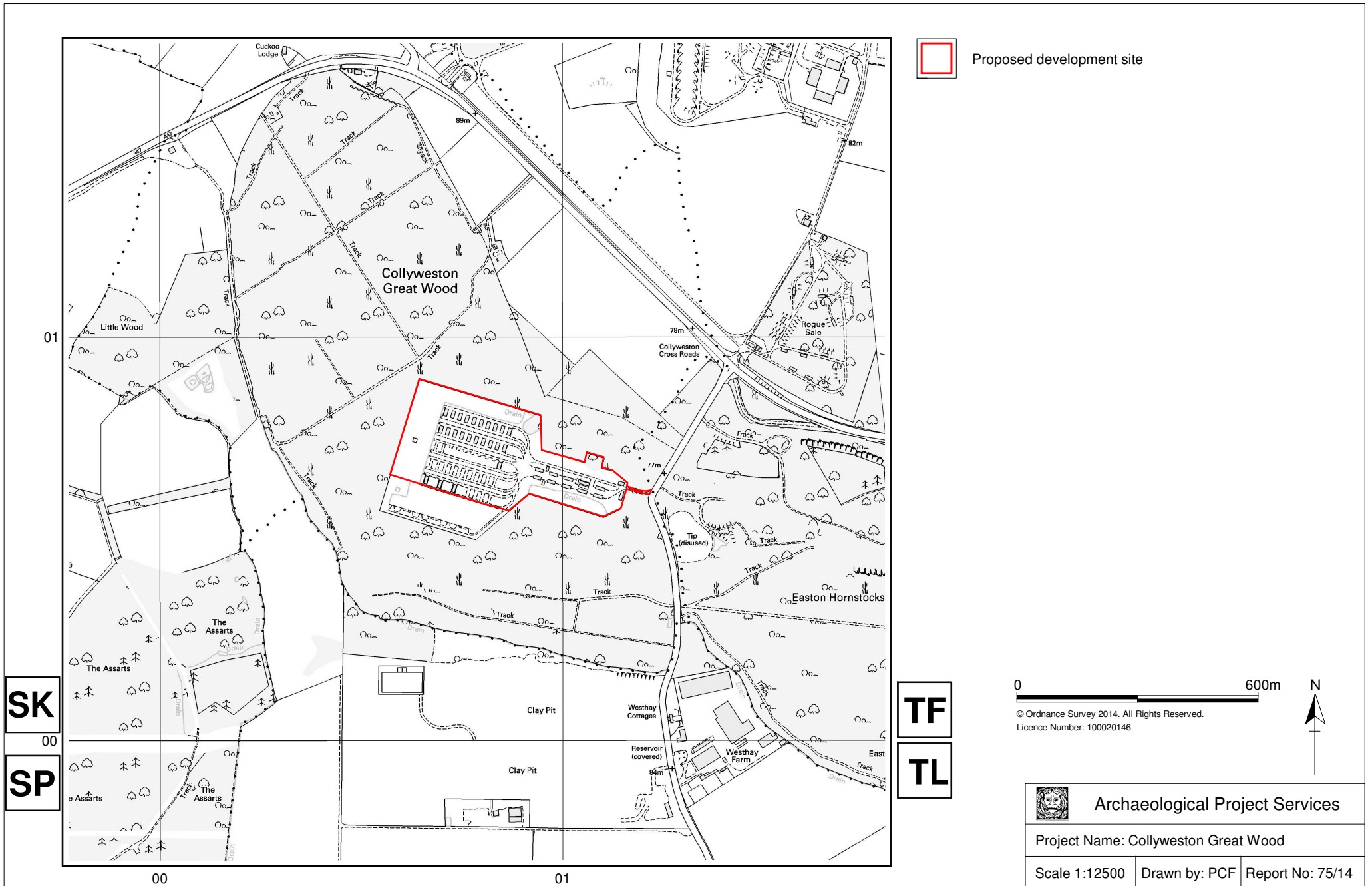


Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

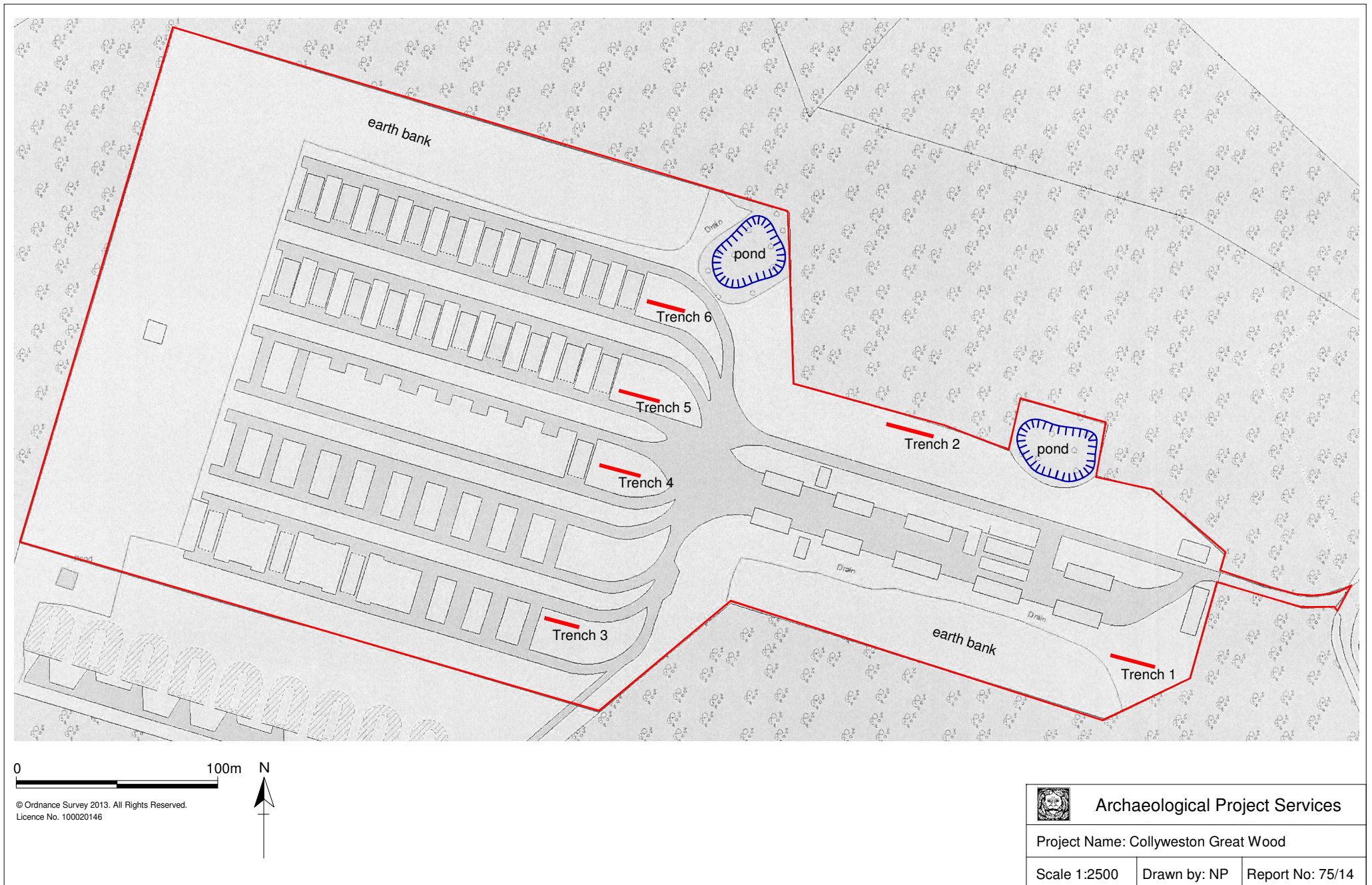
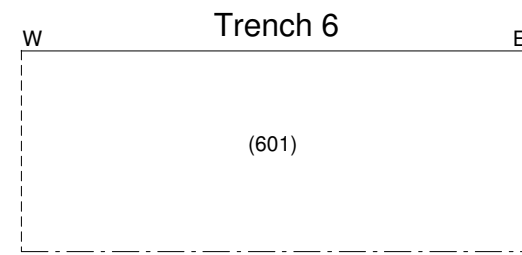
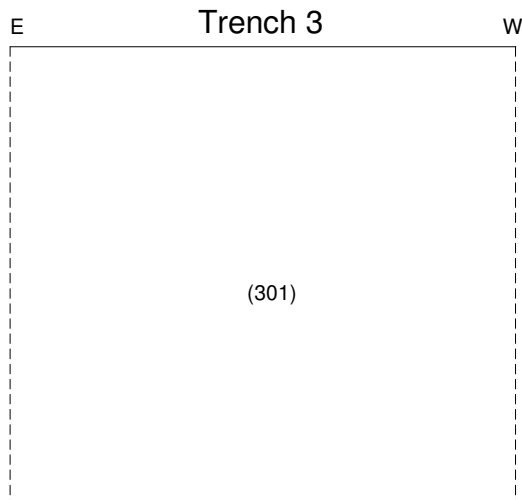
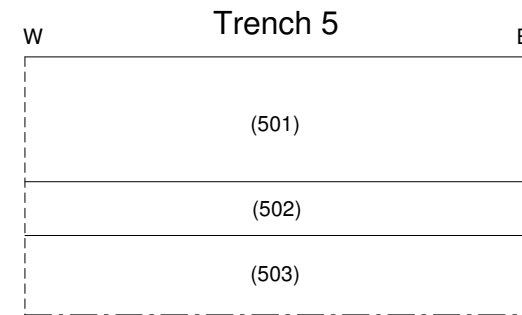
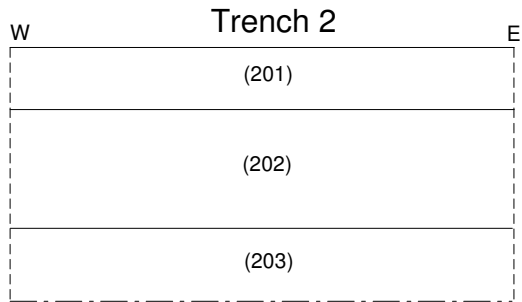
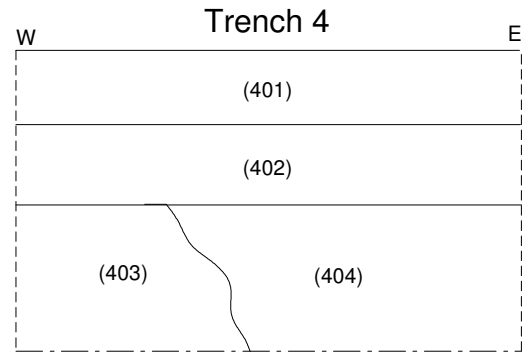
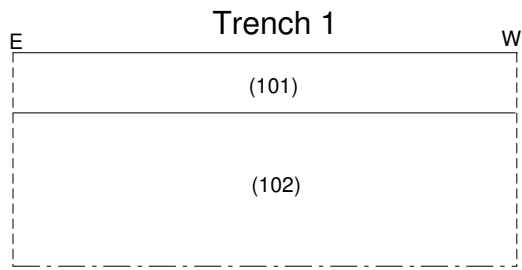


Figure 3 - Trench Location Plan




 <b>Archaeological Project Services</b>		
Project Name: Collyweston Great Wood		
Scale 1:15	Drawn by: NP	Report No: 75/14

Figure 4. Representative Sections

## The Plates



**Plate 1.** General location of Trench 1 adjacent to the explosive storage unit and the southern earth bank. Looking west



**Plate 2.** General location of Trench 2. On the right of the picture, adjacent to the northern boundary fence the ground is close to its original level prior to the construction of the roadways. Looking west



**Plate 3.** General location of Trenches 3 to 6. The higher central area (see Plate 10 for detail) appears to be the original ground level in this area. Looking south



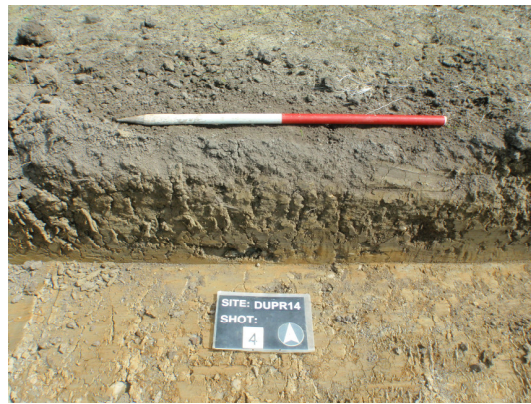
**Plate 4.** Trench 1 after excavation showing topsoil over the natural substrate. Looking east



**Plate 5.** Trench 1, representative section. Looking South



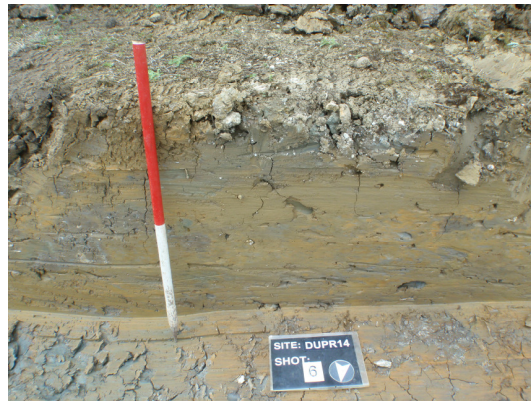
**Plate 6.** Trench 2 after excavation. Looking west



**Plate 7.** Trench 2, representative section showing topsoil, subsoil and natural substrate. Looking north



**Plate 8.** Trench 3 after excavation showing the backfilled cut for mains water at the front of the trench and an electrical service in the centre. Looking west



**Plate 9.** Trench 2, representative section showing the natural substrate, all other deposits removed during construction of the site. Looking north



**Plate 10.** Trench 4 showing the elevated position of this trench, which is likely to be the original ground level. Looking east



**Plate 11.** Trench 4, representative section, showing topsoil, subsoil and variations in the natural substrate. Looking north



**Plate 12.** Trench 5 showing variations in the natural substrate. All upper deposits have been removed during construction of the bomb store. Looking west



**Plate 13.** Trench 5, representative section showing the sequence of variation in the natural substrate. Looking north



**Plate 14.** Trench 6 after excavation. Looking west



**Plate 15.** Trench 6, representative section showing the natural substrate as the only remaining deposit. Looking north



**Appendix 1**  
**Context Descriptions**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
101	Firm, plastic, mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional small stones and chalky fragments. 0.12m thick	Topsoil
102	Firm, plastic, mottled yellow and blue clay with chalk and flint fragments	Natural substrate
201	Firm, plastic, mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional small stones and chalky fragments. 0.12m thick	Topsoil
202	Mid yellow brown, stiff clay and silt	Subsoil
203	Firm, plastic, mottled yellow and blue clay with chalk and flint fragments	Natural substrate
301	Firm, plastic, mottled yellow and blue clay with chalk and flint fragments	Natural substrate
401	Firm, plastic, mid grey brown clayey silt with occasional small stones and chalky fragments. 0.12m thick	Topsoil
402	Mid brown, firm silt and clay with occasional flint and chalky fragments	Subsoil
403	Pale yellow and blue, stiff but crumbly fine clay	Natural substrate
404	Dark grey blue clay with large flint fragments and some iron staining	Natural substrate
501	Stiff, dark blue grey clay with chalky fragments	Natural substrate
502	Firm, mid yellowish brown coarse silty clay with ferric content	Natural substrate
503	Pale yellow and blue, firm clay	Natural substrate
601	Stiff, pale yellow and blue (with dark blue patches) clay with limestone and chalk inclusions	Natural substrate

## Appendix 2

### GLOSSARY

<b>Context</b>	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
<b>Layer</b>	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
<b>Medieval</b>	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
<b>Natural</b>	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
<b>Prehistoric</b>	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
<b>Romano-British</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.

## Appendix 3

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 6 | Trench recording sheets   |
| 1 | Photographic record sheet |
| 3 | Daily record sheets       |

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services  
The Old School  
Cameron Street  
Heckington  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9RW

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

DUPR14

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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