

STENSON EGG FARM

DERBYSHIRE

Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief

2012.

L.Binns

Project Code: SEF



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Summary

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was contracted by John Bowlers' Eggs to conduct an archaeological watching brief on ground works associated with the building of a pullet rearing building with attendant services (water, electric) and new access road, at Lower Farm, Stenson.
- The topsoil was removed by machine to expose the subsoil, to an average depth of 300mm.
- No archaeological features, layers or deposits of archaeological or palaeo-environmental significance were observed during monitoring of the intrusive ground works.
- A small assemblage of late 19th/early 20th century pot was recovered from the site, alongside disfigured lead bullets of the same date and a copper alloy disc, possibly a coin, of unknown date. One very abraded pot sherd has been dated to the medieval period, 13th/14th century.

Lower Farm, Stenson, Derbyshire, Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief

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Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to John Bowers' Eggs and their contractors for their co-operation and assistance during the course of the watching brief. The field work was carried out by Daryl Baxter, Laura Binns, Richard Parker and Laurence Platt, The project was supervised by L.Platt and managed by Howard Jones of T&PA. Lee Elliott of T&PA assessed the finds.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was contracted by John Bowlers' Eggs to conduct a watching brief during intrusive ground works associated with the construction of a pullet rearing building with attendant services (water, electric) and new access road on Lower Farm, Stenson, Derbyshire, centred on SK 32488 29457 (Figure 1).

1.2 The groundworks involved the machine removal of topsoil, the depth of which varied between 250 and 400mm.

1.3 The aim of the watching brief was to identify the presence of any archaeological remains which may be affected by the ground works, and to achieve an appropriate level of preservation by record. This included an assessment of the overall extent, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains and features of geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental significance.

2. SITE BACKGROUND AND TOPOGRAPHY.

2.1 Geology:

2.1.1 The topsoil lies on Holme Pierrepont member fluvial sands and gravels, overlying Gunthorpe member mudstone. British Geological Survey <http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer>

2.2 Archaeological Background

2.2.1 The site is in the proximity of a cropmark complex (HER 27406), therefore a gradiometer survey was carried out on the site from the 29th September to the 8th October 2008. The work was conducted by Trent & Peak Archaeology on behalf of John Bowlers' Eggs to inform the planning process. An area of approximately 2.5 hectares was surveyed in advance of the proposed construction of the egg production unit and associated access works. The geophysical survey revealed no features within the footprint of the proposed development (Morris 2008).

2.3 Site Topography

2.3.1. The site lies on flat ground on the flood plain of the River Trent at approximately 40mOD. There is an artificial berm to the south shielding the site and the surrounding area from a shooting range. The land is in agricultural use, and hedges and an electric stock fence define the boundaries of the field.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 All intrusive groundwork was carried out by an EC 210 tracked excavator using a smooth-edged ditching bucket.

3.2 The topsoil was removed under archaeological supervision to expose the underlying natural formation (Plate 1). The surface was then examined to establish the presence or otherwise of any archaeological features or remains. The exposed surface was covered with a geo-textile layer to provide a barrier for the deposition of hardcore (recycled crushed brick). This was to form the base of the access road. The footprint of the pullet rearing building was not dressed with hardcore but left exposed until the start of construction.

3.2.1 The stripped topsoil was retained on site and stored in bunds around the edges of the site.

3.3 Any archaeological deposits were recorded by scale drawing, sections at 1:20, and plans at 1:50, and photography (digital and black and white prints). Any finds of archaeological significance were given a unique three letter code, e.g. AAA. Any archaeological features or layers were given an individual context number, e.g. 0001. The site was divided into four areas, each of which is reported on below (Figure 2).

3.4 A metal detector survey was carried out over the exposed surfaces and spoil heaps.

4. RESULTS

Area 01

4.1 Area 01 comprised the first 15m of the new access road (Plate 2) including the cutting of a new entrance to the site from Stenson Road. Area 01 was excavated to a depth of 500mm. Observation revealed layers and disturbance relating to the construction of the roadside pavement.

4.2. From to edge of Stenson Road, the ground was made up of compacted sand and gravel (0001) used as the aggregate base for the two metre wide pavement (Plate 2). A dump of modern debris (0002) measuring 12m x 5m, which cuts the natural yellowish sandy clay and gravels (0003), abutted the compacted aggregates. A modern oval void or rubbish pit measuring 4.5m x 2m was found within the 0002 debris, approximately 5m from the edge of the road. The natural sand and gravels continue to the end of area 01.

Area 02

4.2 Area 02 comprised the continuation of the new access road to the pullet rearing building. The mid brown sandy loam topsoil (0010) was stripped revealing patches of sandy clay and gravel (0011) which protruded through the base of the top soil. At the East end, the topsoil was excavated to a depth of between 250-300mm (Plate 3). At the western end of the access road, the depth of the top soil increased by up to 100mm. As with the eastern end of the area, extensive patches of 0011 were revealed.

Area 03

4.3 Area 03 comprised the footprint for a platform on which a mobile home would stand (Plate 4). The mid brown sandy loam topsoil (0010) was stripped down 250-300mm until patches of sandy clay and gravel (0011) could be seen protruding through the exposed surface. (Plate 4.)

Area 04

4.4 Area 04 comprised the proposed building location and the lorry parking and turning area (Plate 5). The topsoil was excavated down to 400mm. Through the stripped surface extensive patches of 0011 were visible (Plates 1 and 4).

Finds.

4.5 A small number of finds was recovered from the site consisting of five pottery sherds, one copper alloy disc, a possible coin, and seven lead bullets.

4.5.1 All the pottery sherds were recovered from the top soil, 0010, in Area 04 and with one exception are all modern in date, consisting of white wares, yellow ware and one of a paste or glass material. The exception is one sherd of medieval pottery which may be dated to the 13th/14th century. The edges of this are much abraded and only traces of glaze remain suggesting that it has been rolled around in the plough soil for a considerable period.

4.5.2 The copper alloy disc is probably a coin but is so worn as to make any certain identification difficult. It is probably 19th or 20th century.

4.5.3 The lead bullets were recovered from a metal detector survey carried out on the spoil heaps. They have all been discharged and hit either their target or the ground and are flattened and distorted. They probably date from the 20th century and are all of small calibre. They either originate from the nearby shooting range or as the result of pest control on agricultural land.

5. CONCLUSIONS.

5.1 No features or deposits of archaeological significance were exposed during the ground works associated with the proposed construction of the egg production unit and associated access works at Lower farm, Stenson.

5.2 Although the bulk of the topsoil was removed in most areas some traces of it were left *in situ* after the strip reached the required depth. This was not so extensive as to obscure the observation of cut features or archaeological deposits.

5.3 A small collection of modern pottery was recovered from the topsoil (0010), along with one copper alloy disc, possibly a degraded coin, and seven discharged and flattened lead bullets. One sherd of much abraded medieval pottery, dating to the 13th/14th was recovered from the interface between the topsoil and subsoil.

5.6 No palaeo-environmental deposits were exposed during the course of the ground works.

References

British Geological Survey <http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer>

Morris, A. 2008 *Geophysical Survey on Land near Stenson, Derbyshire* (TPA).

Appendix 1. Summary Context List.

| CONTEXT | DESCRIPTION | THICKNESS | AREA |
|---------|---|----------------------|-----------------|
| 0001 | Sand and gravel aggregate | 250mm | 01 |
| 0002 | Modern debris | Surface only exposed | 01 |
| 0003 | Natural - yellowish sandy/clay and gravel | Surface only exposed | 01, 02, 03, 04. |
| 0010 | Topsoil - mid brown sandy loam | 250-400mm | 01, 02, 03, 04 |
| 0011 | Natural - yellowish sandy/clay and gravel, same as 0003 | Surface only exposed | 01, 02, 03, 04 |

Appendix 2. Summary finds list.

| FINDS CODE | MATERIAL | DESCRIPTION and DATE | AREA | CONTEXT |
|------------|--------------|--|------------|-----------------------|
| AAA | Ceramic | Post Med. Yellow ware, strainer. 19 th century | 04 | 0010 |
| AAB | Ceramic | Post Med. Body sherd, White ware with blue sponge decoration 19 th century. | 04 | 0010 |
| AAC | Ceramic | Post Med. Body sherd, White ware with floral decoration on exterior and banded decoration in interior.. 19 th . | 04 | 0010 |
| AAD | Ceramic | Post Med. Body sherd. Blue paste or glass fragment. /20 th century | 04 | 0010 |
| AAE | Ceramic | Med. Body sherd. Vestigial green glaze on exterior, orange fabric, very abraded. 13 th /14 th century. | 04 | 0010 |
| AAF | Copper alloy | Disc, 250mm diameter. Possible coin, very abraded and unidentifiable, Possibly 19 th /20 th century | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |
| AAG | Lead | Discharged bullet, very distorted | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |
| AAH | Lead | Discharged bullet, very distorted | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |
| AAI | Lead | Discharged bullet, very distorted | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |
| AAJ | Lead | Rounded pellet | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |

| | | | | |
|-----|------|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| AAK | Lead | Discharged bullet, very distorted | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |
| AAL | Lead | Discharged bullet, very distorted | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |
| AAM | Lead | Discharged bullet, very distorted | Spoil heap | Metal detector survey |

APPENDIX 3 Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

| <i>Field Records</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Number</i> |
|--|--|---------------|
| Watching brief record sheets | Record of visit and work carried out | 4 |
| Drawing record sheets | List of drawings made on site | 1 |
| Photographic record sheets | List of photographs taken on site | 1 |
| Context records sheets | Record of contexts recorded on site | 6 |
| Site drawings on perma traces sheets | Site plan @1:200 | 1 |
| | Section drawings @1:20 on A3 permatrace | 0 |
| | @1:20 on A4 permatrace | 0 |
| Photographs:- Digital B&W (with negatives) | All views | 52 |
| | Recorded sections | 10 |
| Finds | 5 ceramic 1cu alloy 7pb bullets | 13 |
| <i>Documents</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Number</i> |
| Written scheme of investigation | Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project. | 1 |
| Report to client | Report of findings of the watching brief. | 1 |

Archive Deposition.

The archive is currently held in the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1 Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham. It will be deposited at the Derby Museum and Art Gallery, TPA project code SEF, accession number DBMU 2011-162. The archive will be deposited by the end of February 2011.

Appendix 4

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects

Main

This is the main page of the OASIS form, the form is split into sections as listed below.

You can fill as much or as little of each section in at any one time. Once you have filled in a section completely, please tick the **completed** box at the bottom of that section. The form will then check to see that all the mandatory fields (marked with a *) have been completed. If this is the case it will return to this page, if not it will ask you complete the missing fields.

There are some fields that **must** be filled in: the project name, the location and your name and email address.

Please note: the form entries are only saved when the **Save record** has been pressed. If you leave the form inactive for over 30 minutes any entries will be lost, this is to retain the security of your username and password.

OASIS ID: trentpea1-120344

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | Stenson Egg Farm |
| Short description of the project | Watching brief on intrusive ground work for an access road and pullet rearing building. There were no archaeological features revealed by the soilstripping. A small collection of modern pot was recovered from the soil stripping and a number of spent bullets were recovered by metal detector survey. One sherd of medieval pot was recovered. |
| Project dates | Start: 13-12-2010 End: 16-12-2011 |
| Previous/future work | No / Not known |
| Any associated project reference codes | SEF - Sitecode |
| Any associated project reference codes | DBYM2011-162 - Museum accession ID |
| Type of project | Recording project |
| Site status | Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area |
| Current Land use | Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m |
| Monument type | NONE None |
| Monument type | NONE None |
| Significant Finds | POT AND SPENT BULLETS Modern |
| Significant Finds | 1 SHERD, UNSTRATIFIED Post Medieval |
| Investigation type | 'Watching Brief' |
| Status | Incomplete |
| Missing Fields | Prompt |

Project location

Site location DERBYSHIRE SOUTH DERBYSHIRE STENSON FIELDS Stenson Egg Farm
 Postcode DE65 5FN
 Study area 2000.00 Square metres
 Site coordinates NGR - SK 32488 52862
 LL - 53.0717032438 -1.515049912310 (decimal)
 LL - 53 04 18 N 001 30 54 W (degrees)
 Point

Status **Incomplete**

 **Project creators**

Name of Organisation Trent and Peak Archaeology
 Project brief originator Development Control Archaeologist
 Project design originator Dr Howard Jones
 Project director/manager Dr Howard Jones and Laurence Platt
 Project supervisor Laurence Platt
 Type of sponsor/funding body Landowner

Status **Incomplete**

 **Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient Derby Museum and Art Gallery
 Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Metal'
 Physical Archive notes DBMU 2011-162
 Digital Archive recipient Trent and Peak Archaeology
 Digital Media available 'Database','Images raster / digital photography','Text'
 Digital Archive notes Stenson egg Farm SEF
 Paper Archive recipient Derby Museum and Art Gallery
 Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Drawing','Map','Plan','Report'
 Paper Archive notes DBMU 2012-162

Status **Incomplete**

Missing Fields **Digital Contents, Paper Contents**

 **Project bibliography 1**

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  



Status **Incomplete**

Please enter your name and personal email address here so that any queries about this form can be directed to

you:

Name L.Platt

Email address lplatt@yorkat.co.uk

| | |
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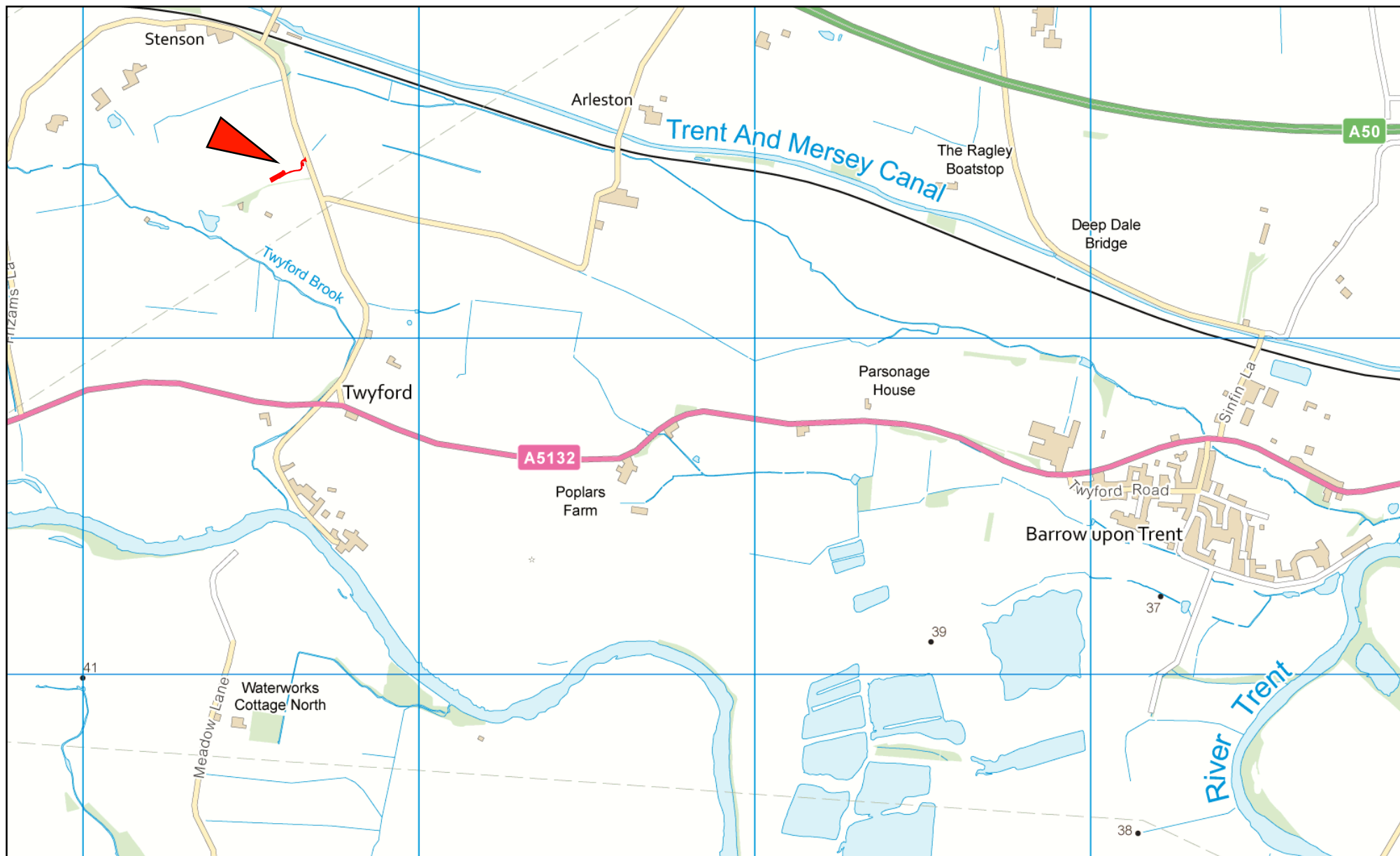


OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

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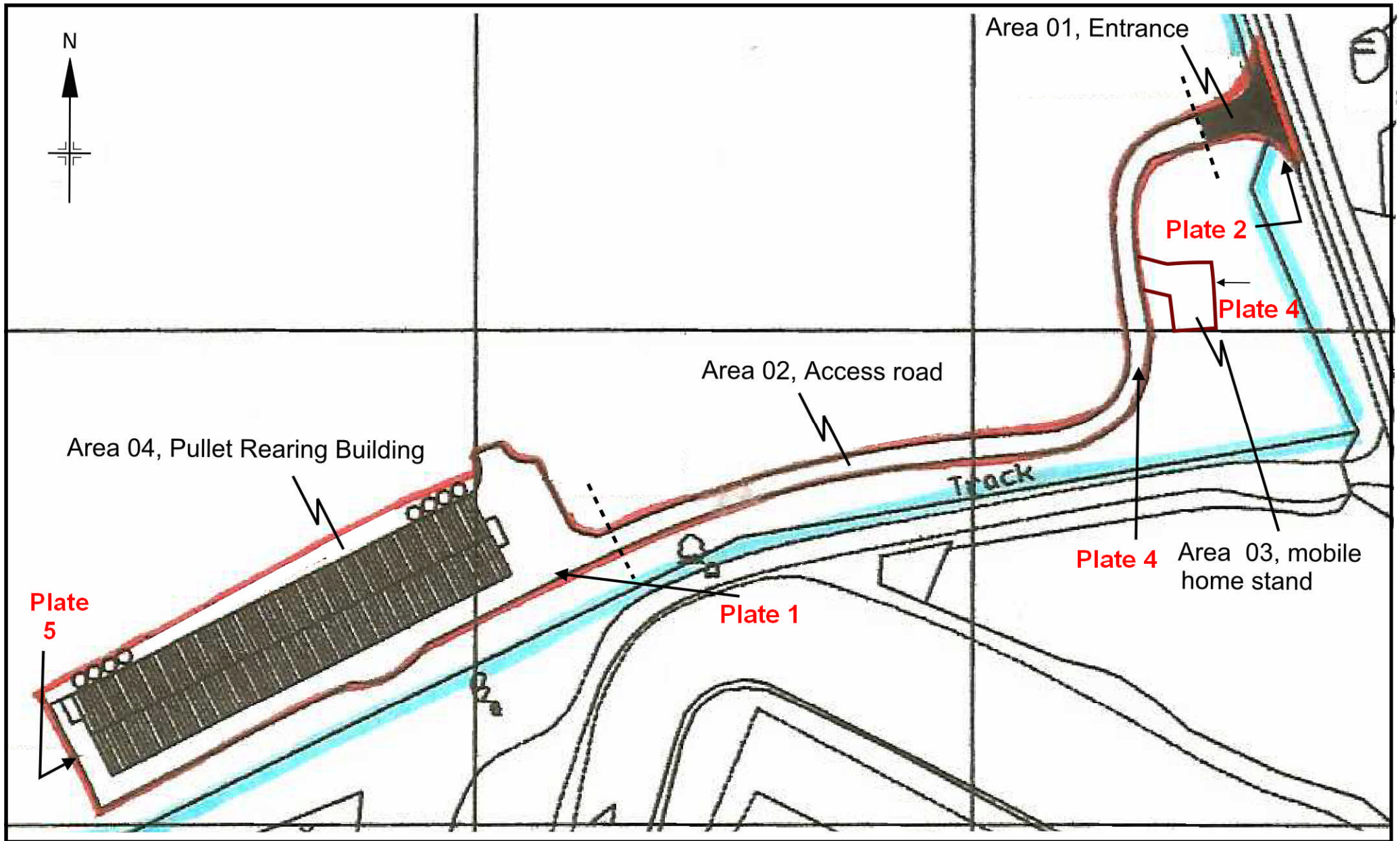




Plate 1: Working shot, topsoil strip of Area 04, looking North West



Plate 2: Area 01, Topsoil strip
for the new access road,
Looking North



Plate 3: Area 02, Topsoil strip for the new access road, looking North East



Plate 4: Area 03, Topsoil strip for the proposed construction of the mobile home platform, Looking West



Plate 5: Area 04, Topsoil strip for the proposed construction of the pullet rearing Building, Looking East