

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT LONG LANE, KEGWORTH, LEICESTERSHIRE, 2010



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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF AT
LONG LANE, KEGWORTH,
LEICESTERSHIRE, 2010**

A report for Mr Charles Smith

*by
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OS Grid Ref. SK 487 277 (centred)
TPA Project Code: LLK
April 2012

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SUMMARY

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Charles Smith of Long Lane Riding School to undertake an archaeological watching brief close to Long Lane, north of Kegworth. It was to monitor ground works for a menage next to some existing farm buildings. The watching brief was carried out with six site visits between 30th November and 10th December 2010.
- The watching brief was recommended by the Senior Planning Archaeologist following Planning Application No. 10/00452/FUL to North West Leicestershire District Council. Long Lane runs in a straight northerly direction from Kegworth and is believed to be a Roman road (HER ref. MLE4658). A possible Roman occupation site is recorded relatively close to the north of the application area.
- Initially, nine drainage trenches were laid out within the 60m x 40m area of the ménage. Each trench was dug by machine to a narrow 0.25m width and to a depth of 1.00m. The trenching revealed that the topsoil was a dark reddish silt loam, 0.25m thick, with an alluvial layer of reddish brown clay beneath it. No features were noted but a single sherd of Roman pottery and several sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered, concentrated in the western half of the area.
- Topsoil and partial subsoil stripping was then undertaken with a toothless ditching bucket. A sub-oval shaped feature was found cutting the alluvial clay in the north-west part of the site but this had modern material within its fill. During the stripping a scatter medieval and later pottery was found across the site but mainly concentrated in the western half of the site, in proximity to Long Lane.
- The range of pottery fabric types is typical of contemporary sites in the region, and suggest that there was activity at the site from the 14th century to the present. The watching brief ascertained that there were no significant archaeological remains present in the area investigated.

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1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) was commissioned by Charles Smith of Long Lane Riding School, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Long Lane, north of Kegworth (Figure 1). It was following proposals to construct a menage with associated floodlighting, to convert existing farm building to form a stable block and the extension of an existing building.

Following Planning Application No. 10/00452/FUL to North West Leicestershire District Council, the Senior Planning Archaeologist (SPA) at the Historic and Natural Environment Team (Leicestershire County Council), acting on behalf of the district council, had recommended that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken to monitor and record the ground works on site. This would be carried out in accordance with appropriate professional standards, e.g. as issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA).

Long Lane runs in a straight northerly direction from Kegworth and is believed to be a Roman road (HER ref. MLE4658). A possible Roman occupation site is recorded relatively close to the north of the application area. The site lies to the west of the River Soar on the floodplain at around 30m OD. The underlying geology is Branscombe Mudstone.

The watching brief was carried out with six site visits between 30th November and 10th December 2010, during a period of extreme weather (Plate 1). The works were carried out by Boultons Contractors Ltd, specialists in preparing arenas and gallops, and were monitored by Richard Sheppard and Matt Hurford of TPA. A pottery report was subsequently prepared by freelance pottery specialist Paul Blinkhorn (see below). The TPA site code is LLK. The archive number provided by Leicestershire Museums Archaeology Collections is X.A200.2010.

2. RESULTS

Nine drainage trenches, numbered here in sequence 01-09, were laid out within the 60m x 40m area of the menage, located 2m in from the footprint's edge and excavated (and backfilled) prior to topsoil stripping (Figure 2). Trenches 01 and 09 were aligned north-west to south-east and were excavated along the south-west and north-east edge of the area respectively. The other seven trenches, 02-08, were all aligned at a right-angle to the others, running north-east to south-west and were set about five metres apart. Each trench was dug by machine to a narrow 0.25m width and to a depth of 1.00m (Plates 2, 3). An additional trench was excavated from the north-west corner of the menage to the field's north-west corner. This one was 0.5m in width and 1.20m in depth. Each trench was machine excavated under full archaeological supervision.

The trenching revealed that the topsoil (0001) was a dark reddish silt loam that was 0.25m thick. Beneath this there was an alluvial layer of reddish brown clay (0002). No archaeological deposits or features were encountered. A single sherd of possible Roman pottery and several sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered, concentrated in the western half of the area.

Topsoil and subsoil stripping was then undertaken with a toothless ditching bucket under full archaeological supervision (Plate 5). The depth of subsoil removed was up to 0.25m. A sub-oval shaped feature (0003) was found cutting the alluvial clay 0002 in the north-west part of the site (Figs 3, 4). Its full extent could not be established as it extended beneath the baulk. A box section was machined through it, revealing that it was 6.34m in width and up to 0.68m in depth, with shallow, stepped sides and a virtually flat base (Plate 6). The stratigraphy comprised three layers: one of dark reddish brown silt, one of reddish brown clay and one of stone and ash (Fig. 4). The presence of modern material within the fills indicates that feature had been backfilled relatively recently.

During the stripping a scatter medieval and later pottery was found across the site but mainly concentrated in the western half of the site, in proximity to Long Lane.

3. POTTERY REPORT

Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 27 sherds with a total weight of 276g. It was mostly medieval or later in date. It was recorded using the conventions of the Leicestershire County type-series (Sawday 1994), as follows

- CC1: Nuneaton 'A' ware**, AD1200-1400. 4 sherds, 12g.
- CC2: Chilvers Coton 'C' ware**, 1200-1475. 3 sherds, 41g.
- CW2: Cistercian ware**, 1475-1550. 1 sherd, 5g.
- EA3: Staffordshire Slipware**, 1650-1780. 2 sherds, 10g.
- EA6: Post-medieval Blackwares**, late 17th century +. 11 sherds, 125g.
- EA10: Modern earthenwares**, 1800+. 1 sherd, 13g.
- MP1: Midland Purple ware**, 1373-1550. 3 sherds, 56g.
- SW4: Staffordshire White-glazed Stoneware**, 1730+. 1 sherd, 14g.

In addition, a single sherd of Romano-British pottery (3g) was also noted. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is typical of contemporary sites in the region, and suggest that there was activity at the site from the 14th century to the present.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

| Cntxt | RB | | CC1 | | CC2 | | MP1 | | CW2 | | EA3 | | EA6 | | SW4 | | EA10 | | Date |
|--------------|----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|----|------|----|--------|
| | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | No | Wt | |
| 0001 spit 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 14 | 1 | 13 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 8 | 92 | 1 | 14 | | | E18thC |
| 0001 spit 3 | | | | | 1 | 27 | 1 | 19 | | | | | | | | | | | L14thC |
| 0002 spit 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 6 | | | | | L17thC |
| 0002 spit 2 | | | 1 | 3 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 14 | | | | | L17thC |
| 0002 spit 3 | | | 2 | 7 | | | 1 | 24 | | | | | | | | | | | L14thC |
| 0003a spit 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 13 | | | | | L17thC |
| 0003a spit 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 13 | 19thC |
| Total | 1 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 3 | 41 | 3 | 56 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 11 | 125 | 1 | 14 | 1 | 13 | |

Bibliography

Sawday, D, 1994 'The post-Roman pottery' in P Clay and R Pollard *Iron age and Roman Occupation in the West Bridge Area, Leicester. Excavations 1962-71*. Leicestershire. Museums.

4. CONCLUSION

Although it was considered due to its close proximity to a Roman road and possible site to have the potential to contain buried archaeological deposits, the watching brief ascertained that there were no significant archaeological remains present in the area investigated. The scatter of pottery in the western half of the site is to be expected in relationship to the close proximity of the historic road Long Lane.

5. Reference

Sheppard, R, 2010. 'Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief during Ground Works on Land by Long Lane, Kegworth, Leicestershire'. Unpublished watching brief specification by Trent & Peak Archaeology, Nottingham.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the client Charles Smith for commissioning the work and Paul Boulton and his team for their co-operation during the ground works.

ILLUSTRATIONS

INSET

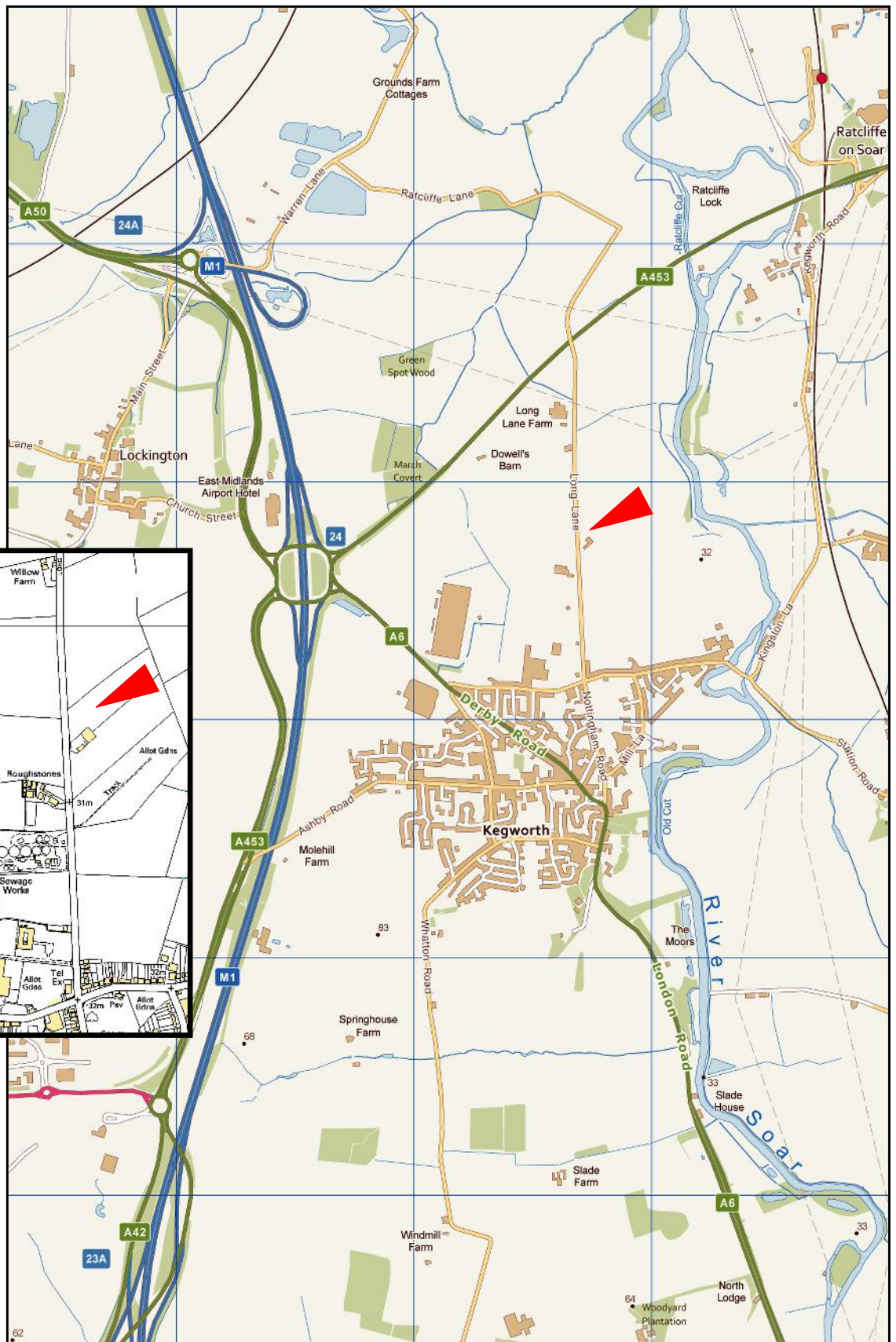
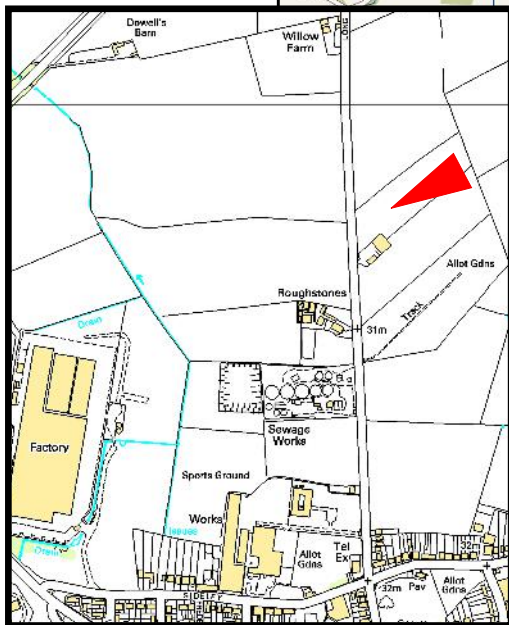


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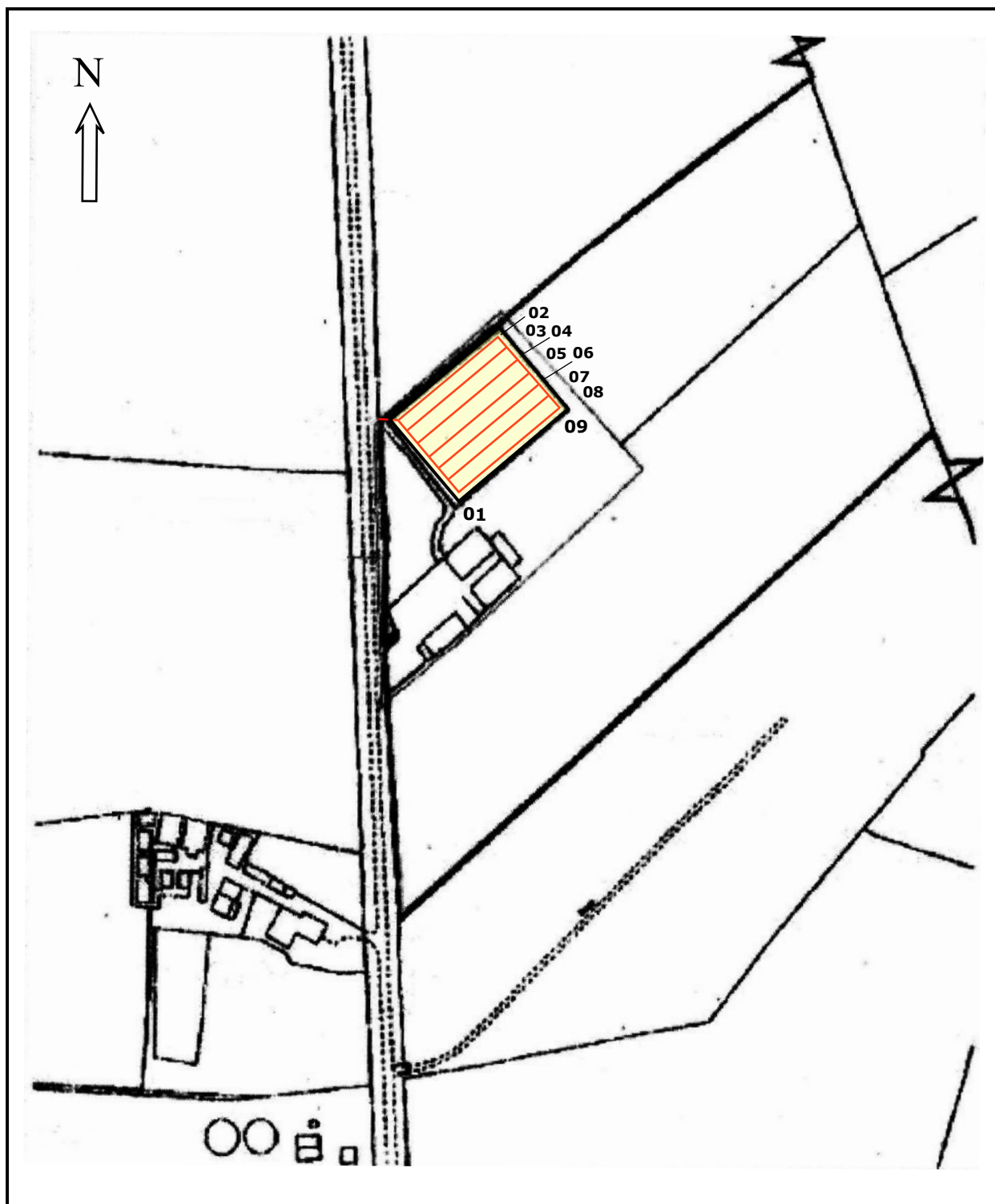


Figure 2: Area of the menage east of Long Lane, Kegworth and the positions of the initial drainage channels 01-09. Not to regular scale.

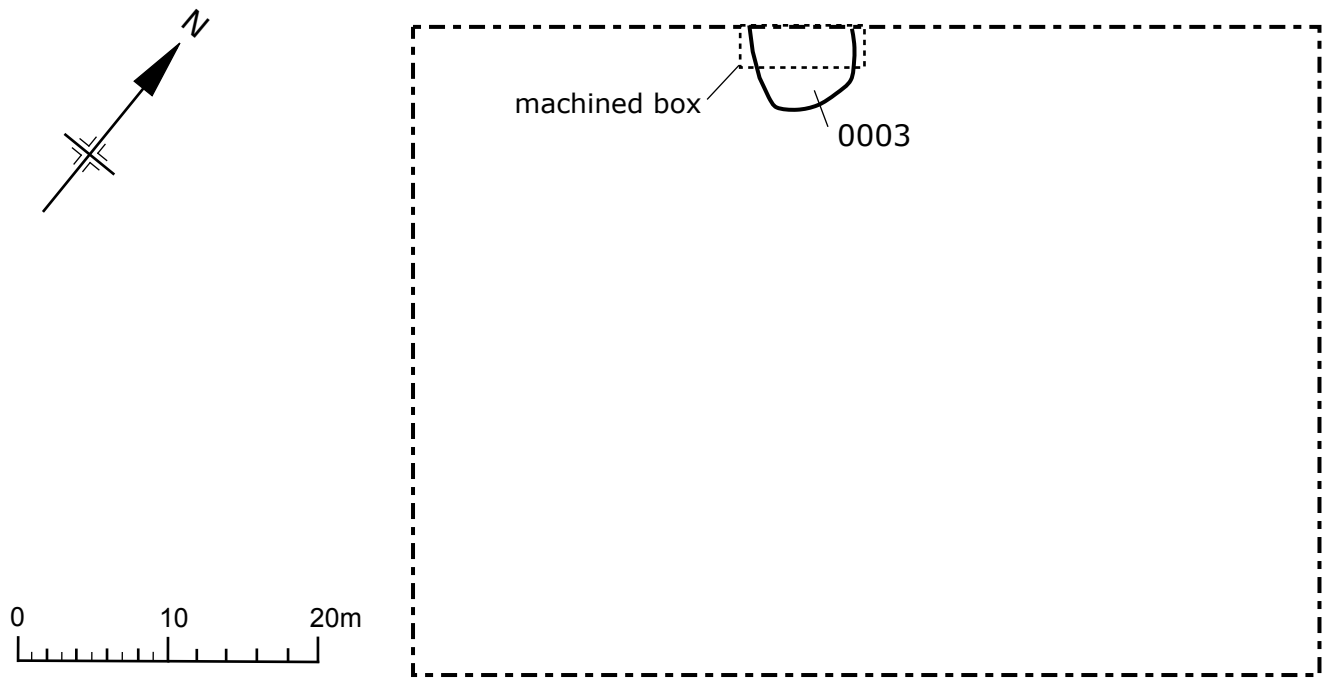


Figure 3: Plan of the cleared site with position of 0003 shown.
Scale 1:500.

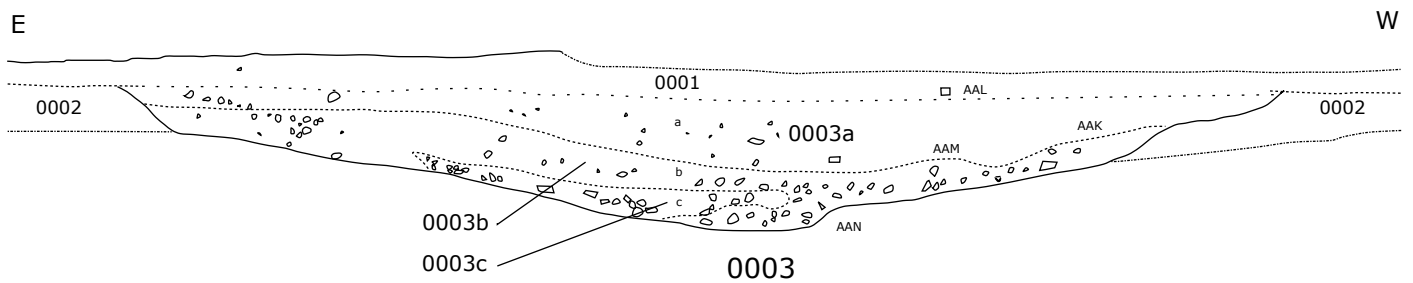


Figure 4: North-facing section across feature 0003. Scale 1:40.



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