

**LAND AT
SLUDGE HALL FARM
COLD NEWTON
LEICESTERSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

MARCH 2012

REPORT: R11194



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION



Site Name

Land at
Sludge Hall Farm,
Cold Newton
Leicestershire

Type of project

Archaeological Evaluation

Quality Control (Revision 1)

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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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Land at Sludge Hall Farm, Cold Newton, Leicestershire, LE7 9DA

An Archaeological Evaluation

Site Code: LSHF12

Planning Application Number: pre-planning

Local Planning Authority: Harborough District Council

Central National Grid Reference: SK 7220 0580

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at Sludge Hall Farm, Cold Newton, Leicestershire, LE7 9DA (SK 7220 0580). The evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited between 8th and 10th March 2012; it was commissioned by Mr Andrew Hill, the landowner.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Brown 2012) which designed an investigation whereby four trenches would be excavated. The work was commissioned in response to advice issued by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team, prior to submission of a planning application for the development on the site of new dairy farming facilities.
- 1.1.3 Evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was identified in all four trenches, cutting into the natural clay substratum. The only other features located were a drainage trench post-dating and following the line of one of the furrows in Trench 1 and a ceramic land drain of 20th century type in Trench 4.
- 1.1.4 Five sherds of medieval pottery and one undiagnostic flint flake were recovered from plough furrows. Three sherds of modern pottery were recovered from the topsoil.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at Sludge Hall Farm, Cold Newton, Leicestershire, LE7 9DA at the request of Mr Andrew Hill, the landowner.
- 2.1.2 The evaluation was requested in response to advice issued by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team, prior to submission of a planning application for the construction on the site of new dairy farming facilities consisting of two cubicle buildings to accommodate cattle, a collecting yard and slurry lagoon.
- 2.1.3 The site is located approximately 1km south-east of the shrunken medieval village of Cold Newton and 2km west of Tilton on the Hill, in east Leicestershire. Sludge Hall Farm is situated on the north side of Enderbys Lane. The evaluation area is centred on National Grid Reference SK 7220 0580 (Figure 1).
- 2.1.4 The evaluation site is within two fields lying immediately to the north-west of existing farm buildings. The two fields are permanent pasture and are separated by a hedgerow aligned approximately north-east to south-west. The evaluation trenches were positioned to correspond with the location of the proposed new buildings, collecting yard and slurry lagoon (Figures 2 & 3).
- 2.1.5 Site records were compiled using the site code LSHF12. Following the completion of the project the site archive will be deposited in its entirety with Leicestershire Museums Service under the accession code X.A37.2012.
- 2.1.6 The fieldwork was conducted between 8th and 10th March 2012.
- 2.1.7 The project was monitored by Teresa Hawtin of the Leicestershire Museums Service Historic and Natural Environment Team, and project-managed for PCA by Gary Brown. The evaluation was supervised by the author, Neil Finn.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The proposed development of this site is subject to planning guidance and policies contained within Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment.
- 3.1.2 The planning authority is Harborough District Council.
- 3.1.3 The need for archaeological evaluation of the site was recommended by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team, in her capacity as archaeological advisor to Harborough District Council, in response to a pre-planning enquiry.
- 3.1.4 The scope of the evaluation was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (Brown 2012) and approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 The site is located on the boundary of two bedrock formations. In the south, and for the most part making up the escarpment of Sludge Hall Hill is Dyrham Formation interbedded Siltstones and Mudstone (Jurassic). To the north, in the area of the new development the bedrock is Triassic mudstone.
- 4.1.2 The natural ground exposed within the evaluation trenches was a mottled orange/brown coloured clay.

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The site is located in the midst of agricultural land with small areas of woodland to the south-east and south-west of Sludge Hall Farm.
- 4.2.2 The site is located towards the base of an escarpment known locally as Sludge Hall Hill. A spot height on Enderbys Lane, in the vicinity of the farm is at 166.1m above OD.
- 4.2.3 The two fields were fairly level and flat. In the field to the east of the hedgerow, closest to the farm, there were a series of ruts where agricultural machinery had run across the site.
- 4.2.4 There was no evidence of ridge and furrow at the ground surface. The landowner noted that the fields had been permanent pasture within living memory except for one crop of wheat grown in the 1970s.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1.1 The archaeological and historical background presented below is derived from the Written Scheme of Investigation (Brown 2012, 4). A desk-based assessment has not been produced in respect of this project. A 500m search has indicated that three pieces of archaeological work have previously been undertaken within the vicinity of the evaluation site, as detailed below. No archaeological remains were recorded by any of these interventions.
- 5.1.2 A watching brief in the vicinity of Main Street, Cold Newton (SK 7150006400).
- 5.1.3 An evaluation of a proposed new reed bed sewage works at Old Newton recorded no significant archaeological activity (SK 71800 06600).
- 5.1.4 Evaluation in advance of proposed development on land adjacent to The Cottage, Main Street, Cold Newton recorded an undated linear and residual 13th century pottery (SK 71600 06400).
- 5.1.5 Cold Newton, to the north-west of the subject site is a shrunken medieval village displaying a number of extant features including house platforms, trackways, a moat, fishpond and windmill. It is first recorded in 1086.
- 5.1.6 The Senior Planning Archaeologist indicated the potential for the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation on the site; this was not apparent from the contour of the ground surface at the time of the evaluation.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1.1 In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (Brown 2012), the evaluation trenches were arranged in order to establish whether there were any significant archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development.
- 6.1.2 The evaluation was designed to consist of 4 trenches, corresponding with the positions of the proposed new buildings, collecting yard and slurry lagoon. Trench 1 was located within the area of cubicle building 1; Trench 2 within the area of cubicle building 2; Trench 3 within the area of the collecting yard; and Trench 4 within the area of the slurry lagoon (Figure 2).
- 6.1.3 It was specified in the WSI that Trenches 1 and 4 would be 50m long, Trenches 2 and 3 would be 30m long and all trenches would be 1.8m wide. In the event the ditching bucket supplied with the machine was only 1.6m wide and therefore the length of the trenches was increased, within the limits of the proposed development areas, in order to compensate for this (Figure 4).
- 6.1.4 All 4 trenches were excavated on 8 March 2012.
- 6.1.5 The trench dimensions were as follows:

Trench	Length	Width	Max Depth	Orientation
1	54.60m	1.60m	0.45m	NE-SW
2	32.00m	1.60m	0.40m	NW-SE
3	31.30m	1.60m	0.35m	NW-SE
4	53.50m	1.60m	0.50m	NE-SW

- 6.2 The trenches were opened with a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, fitted with a flat-bladed ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision. Excavation by machine was undertaken in spits until significant archaeological horizons or natural geology was reached.
- 6.3 All recording systems adopted during the investigations were fully compatible with those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, now published by Museum of London Archaeology (1994). Individual descriptions of all archaeological and geological strata and features excavated and exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. All trenches were planned at a scale of 1:50. The trenches were located using GPS and tied into the Ordnance Survey grid.
- 6.4 A full photographic record was compiled, which included black and white 35mm prints and colour digital shots.
- 6.5 Levels were taken in all trenches with a GPS.

7 RESULTS BY TRENCH

7.1 Trench 1

7.1.1 Trench 1 was aligned NE-SW within the footprint of the proposed Cubicle Building 1 (Figure 4). The topsoil [1] was 300mm deep, beneath which was a subsoil deposit [2] averaging 150mm in depth. The natural substratum was a mottled orange/brown coloured clay. Cut into the natural clay were two plough furrows on a NE-SW alignment. An offset towards the SW end of the trench marks the point at which the machine was repositioned to avoid one of these plough furrows [3]. The second plough furrow was examined in more detail within an area opened up on the NW side of the trench. The fill [6] was a yellow brown silt clay. The cut [7] was up to 2.46m wide and a maximum 120mm deep, with diffuse edges. Three sherds of Potters Marston pottery were recovered from [6]. Cut into this furrow was a later land drain, which followed a similar NE-SW alignment. The cut of the land drain [5] was 350mm deep and 480mm wide and it was filled with a mixed silty clay deposit [4]. No dating evidence was recovered but the land drain was mechanically cut and is likely to date to the later 19th or 20th century.

7.2 Trench 2

7.2.1 Trench 2 was aligned NW-SE within the footprint of the proposed Cubicle Building 2 (Figure 4). The topsoil [1] was typically 200-250mm deep, beneath which the subsoil [2] varied between 100mm and 150mm deep. The natural substratum was similar to that recorded in Trench 1. Six furrows were located, crossing the trench on a NE-SW alignment at an average spacing of c.5m measured between centres. A single sherd of Midland Purple pottery was recovered from one of the furrows [8].

7.3 Trench 3

7.3.1 Trench 3 was aligned NW-SE within the area of the proposed Collecting Yard (Figure 4). The topsoil [1] was between 250mm and 290mm deep. No subsoil was recorded in this trench. The natural substratum was similar to that recorded in Trench 1. Seven furrows were located, crossing the trench on a NE-SW alignment at an average spacing of c.5m measured between centres. No finds were recovered.

7.4 Trench 4

7.4.1 Trench 4 was aligned NE-SW within the area of the proposed Slurry Lagoon (Figure 4). The topsoil [1] averaged 300mm deep, below which the subsoil [2] was up to 150mm deep. The natural substratum was similar to that recorded in Trench 1. A single plough furrow [22] followed a similar alignment to those recorded in the other three trenches. A single sherd of Potters Marston pottery and a flint flake were recovered from [22]. The only other feature was a ceramic land drain of 20th century type, aligned roughly NW-SE across the width of the trench.

8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1.1 The main objective of the archaeological evaluation was to establish whether there were any significant archaeological deposits at the site that may be affected by the proposed development. It sought:

- To establish the nature, extent, date, character, quality, significance and state of preservation of any archaeological remains affected by the investigation.
- To assess where appropriate the ecofactual and palaeo-environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features within the site.
- To report on the results of the investigation.

8.1.2 The only archaeological remains encountered were a series of furrows representing the remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. Furrows were recorded in all trenches and were consistently aligned approximately NE-SW, on a similar alignment to the hedgerow between the two fields. Pottery recovered from three of the furrows was of 12th to 14th or 15th century date (see Appendix 2). The pottery is likely to have been an incidental inclusion in manure spread on the fields to condition the soil. The only other features encountered during the evaluation were two land drains, one consisting of a ceramic drain of 20th century type and the other a mechanically cut drain post-dating one of the plough furrows.

8.1.3 A single undiagnostic flint flake was also recovered from one of the plough furrows. This is insufficient evidence to suggest significant prehistoric activity in the vicinity.

8.1.4 No significant ecofactual or palaeo-environmental deposits were identified and no environmental samples were taken.



Plate 1 - Trench 1 looking southwest



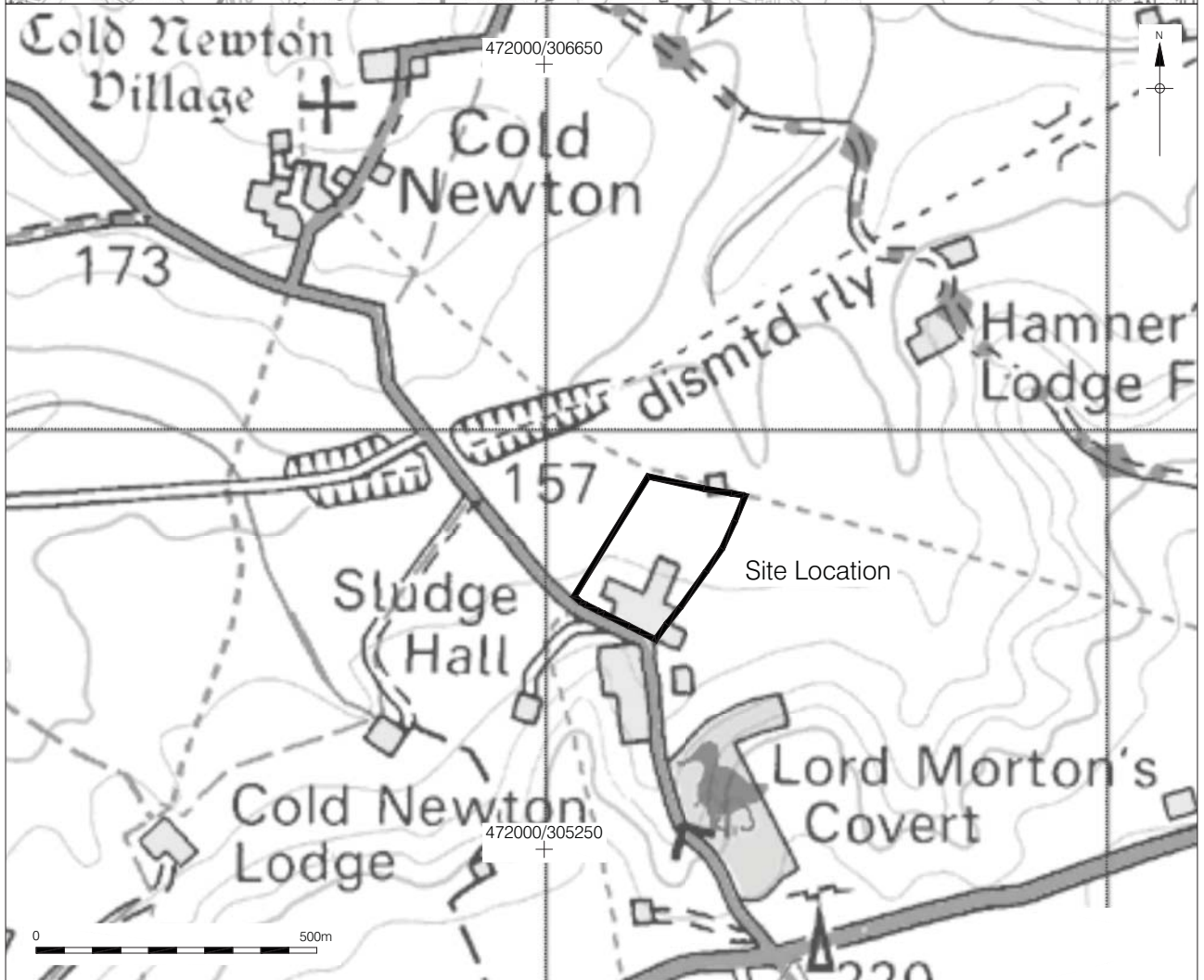
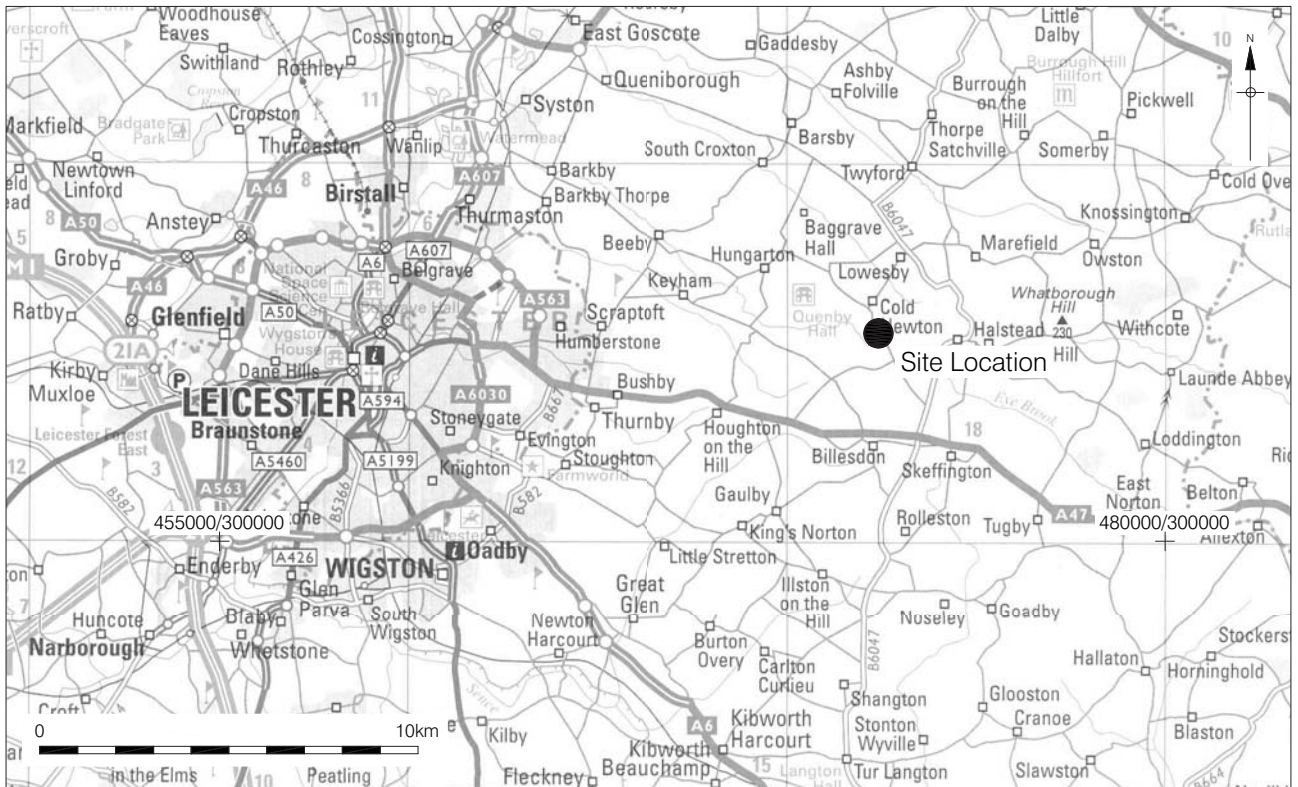
Plate 2 - Trench 2 looking northwest

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Andrew Hill for commissioning the work. We also thank Teresa Hawtin of Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team.
- 9.1.2 The author would like to thank Gary Brown for project management and report editing and Deborah Sawday for identifying and reporting on the pottery.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, G. 2012. *Land at Sludge Hill Farm, Cold Newton, Billesdon, Leicestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Pre-Construct Archaeology, Unpublished Report.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:200,000 and 1:12,500 at A4



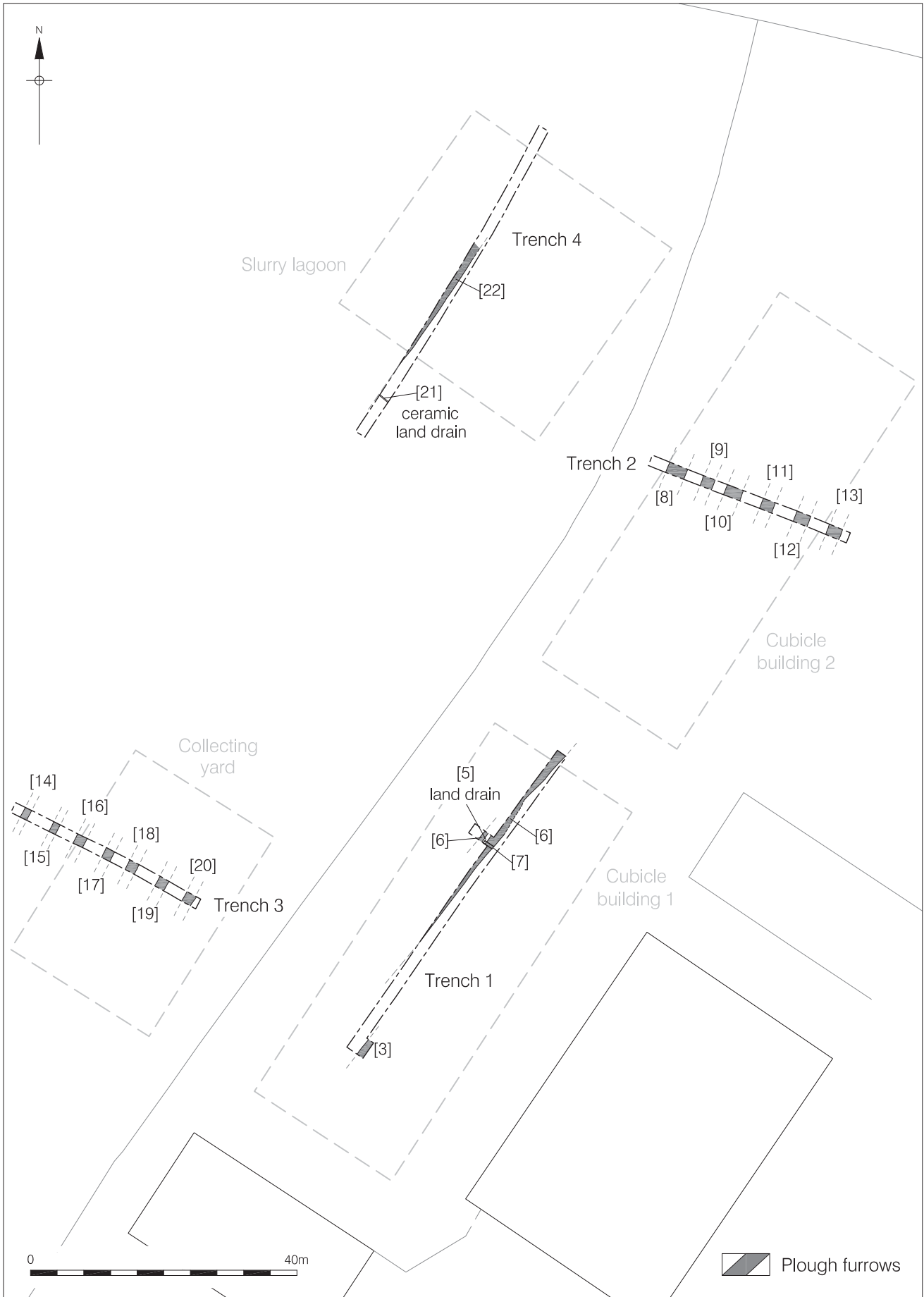
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Figure 2
 Site plan showing proposed trench locations
 1:1,250 at A4



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Figure 3
Aerial view of site with footprints of proposed structures
Approx. 1:4,000 at A4



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Figure 4
 Plans of Trenches 1 to 4
 1:800 at A4

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Site Code	Context No.	Trench	Plan	Type	Description	Date
LSHF12	1	1-4	-	Layer	Topsoil	-
LSHF12	2	1, 2 & 4	-	Layer	Subsoil	-
LSHF12	3	1	1	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	4	1	1	Fill of [5]	Fill of land drain	Modern
LSHF12	5	1	1	Cut	Land drain	Modern
LSHF12	6	1	1, 2	Fill of [7]	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	7	1	1	Cut	Cut of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	8	2	3	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	9	2	3	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	10	2	3	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	11	2	3	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	12	2	3	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	13	2	3	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	14	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	15	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	16	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	17	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	18	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	19	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	20	3	4	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval
LSHF12	21	4	5	Fill	Ceramic land drain	Modern
LSHF12	22	4	5	Fill	Fill of plough furrow	Medieval

APPENDIX 2: THE FINDS *by Deborah Sawday*

The results are shown below (Table 1). The pottery, eight sherds, weighing 119 grams, was catalogued with reference to the ULAS fabric series (Davies and Sawday 1999). Contexts (6), (8) and (22) all lay within the furrows of the medieval field system and are evidence of the manuring of the fields during the 12th to the 14th or 15th centuries. A flint flake, possibly waste, suggests Prehistoric activity in the vicinity.

Bibliography

Connor, A., and Buckley, R., 1999 *Roman and Medieval Occupation in Causeway Lane, Leicester*, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 5.

Davies, S., and Sawday, D., 1999 'The Post Roman Pottery and Tile' in A. Connor and R. Buckley, 1999, *Roman and Medieval Occupation in Causeway Lane, Leicester*, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 5, 165-213.

Table 1: The medieval and later pottery by fabric, sherd numbers and weight (grams) and miscellaneous find by context.

Context	Fabric/Ware	Nos	Grams	Comments
	POTTERY			
6	PM- Potters Marston	3	14	Includes an everted and abraded jar rim and two body sherds – 12th – early 13th C.
8	MP1 – Midland Purple 1	1	28	Hard fired flat bottomed base fragment, probably from a jar/cistern or jug, - 14th to mid 15th C.
22	PM- Potters Marston	1	26	Abraded body, quite thick walled, 12th – 13th C.
1	SW5 – Brown Salt Glaze Stoneware	2	46	Modern
1	EA10 – Fine White Earthenware	1	5	Modern, machine rouletted decoration
	MISC.			
22	Flint	1		Flake – possibly waste.

Site/ Parish: Sludge Hall Farm, Cold Newton, Leics.	Submitter: N. Finn
Accession No.: XA37 2012	Identifier: D. Sawday
Document Ref: cold newton3doc.x	Date of Identification: 28.03.12
Material: pottery and flint	Method of Recovery: evaluation
	Site Type: medieval ridge and furrow

APPENDIX 3: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-119791

Project details

Project name	Land at Sludge Hall Farm, Cold Newton, Leicestershire
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at Sludge Hall Farm, Cold Newton, Leicestershire in order to assess the archaeological impact of the proposed development of new dairy farming facilities on the site. The only archaeological remains encountered were a series of furrows associated with medieval ridge and furrow cultivation.
Project dates	Start: 08-03-2012 End: 10-03-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	LSHF12 – Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	
Current Land use	Cultivated land
Monument type	Strip Field Medieval
Significant Finds	POT Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Farm infrastructure
Prompt	Direction from local planning authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE, HARBOROUGH, COLD NEWTON, Sludge Hill Farm
Postcode	LE7 9DA
Study area	8313.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 7220 0580 Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Gary Brown
Project director/manager	Gary Brown
Project supervisor	Neil Finn
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr Andrew Hill

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
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Physical Contents	'Ceramics', 'worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Digital Contents	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Photograph','Plan','Report'

Project bibliography 1

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