

Land North of Pasture Lane Gaddesby Leicestershire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



EXPERTISE WHERE YOU NEED IT

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 21114 v.2

DECEMBER 2021



*Working for
Warwickshire*

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on behalf of The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd., in advance of a residential development in an area of archaeological potential. The main aim of the evaluation was to provide information on the extent, nature and significance of archaeological remains surviving on the site in order to further inform the local planning authority.

A geophysical survey had detected several linear anomalies and the evaluation was able to confirm that they reflected underlying archaeological features; namely a series of ditches.

The pottery assemblage was modest, but all the features yielded some pottery and this was largely confined to a single phase of use in the 4th century AD. This later Roman activity appears to represent parts of a bounded field system with a possible trackway. An associated settlement may lie to the east.

Ridge and furrow earthworks are present on the site which illustrate continued agricultural use during the medieval or post medieval period.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Outline planning permission has been granted by Melton Borough Council for a residential development of 10 dwellings, access and parking, on land to the north of Pasture Lane, Gaddesby, Leicestershire (Planning Ref: P/2014/01460). A geophysical survey had identified a series of anomalies thought likely to be archaeological.
- 1.2 Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) approved by the planning authority.
- 1.3 The fieldwork took place in November 2021 and this report presents the results of that work. The archive will be temporarily stored by Archaeology Warwickshire before deposition with Leicestershire Museums under the accession number X.A109.2021 and site code LGP21.
- 1.4 This work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and guidance for field evaluation (2020).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is located on the north side of Pasture Lane, on the north side of the village of Gaddesby, Leicestershire, centred on National Grid Reference SK 69091358 (Fig 1). The site is bounded by residential properties to the east and west (Woodbine Cottage and Rose Cottage) and further agricultural land to the north. The site comprises the southern part of a parcel of agricultural land and is c.0.04ha in extent. There is a pond in the south-west corner and a second extending across the eastern site boundary. The site lies c.1km to the north of the Gaddesby Brook and it has a gentle sloping aspect towards the north.
- 2.2 The BGS (British Geological Survey 2021) records the underlying bedrock geology of Blue Lias Formation, mudstone, with overlying superficial deposits of Oadby Member, Diamicton.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological interest with evidence of settlement and agricultural activity from the prehistoric period to post-medieval.

Prehistoric

- 3.2 Around 180m to the west of the site, a mound or tumulus of uncertain date was destroyed prior to the construction of housing in the 1960s (Leicestershire Historic Environment Record ref: MLE3781). The mound was surrounded by a shallow ditch and medieval references to a 'Le Littelhill' and a 'Le Roundhill' suggests it may have been a prehistoric burial mound. A Middle Bronze Age spearhead (MLE6382) was identified to the south-east of site of the mound, c.180m to the south-west of the site.

Roman

- 3.3 Three foci of Roman finds have been identified within the village. On the opposite side of Pasture Lane to the site, various Roman artefacts including a brooch, 10 coins, a possible nail cleaner, spoon handle and over 40 sherds of pottery were recorded by metal detectors in the 1990s (MLE6023). A similar range of artefacts including 36 sherds of Roman pottery and two Roman coins were identified c.300m to the west (MLE16330). A third site c.840m south-east is indicated by six Roman coins, a lead bracelet, bow brooch, plate brooch and a possible piece of imbrex tile (MLE5976). These foci suggest either a very large or a multi-foci settlement.

Medieval

- 3.4 The site lies to the north of the historic settlement core of Gaddesby (MLE3783). Within the centre of the village (around 500m to the south) is the site of a late 12th century hall which was demolished in 1744 (MLE25365) and the 13th-14th century Church of St Luke (MLE11674).
- 3.5 Satellite imagery shows north-south aligned earthworks indicative of ridge and furrow cultivation across the site (there is no LiDAR data available for the site). This was corroborated by magnetometer survey (Cockcroft 2020).
- 3.6 Medieval artefacts (MLE6381; MLE6975, MLE8384) have been discovered around the village. On the opposite side off Pasture Lane an ampulla fragment, four jettons, an Edward I penny and an Elizabeth I threepence were metal detected (MLE6991).

Post-medieval & modern

- 3.7 Rose Cottage, to the east of the site, is depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 (not reproduced). At this time the site was in agricultural use with a small structure and enclosure in the south-west corner and a pond along the eastern boundary. There was no change within the site by the date of the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1902 (Fig 2) but Woodbine Cottage to the west had been constructed. By 1973 the small structure in the south-west had been demolished and a pond was depicted. There has been no further change since this date.

Previous archaeological investigations

- 3.8 A magnetometer survey carried out across the site (Cockcroft 2020) did not report any definite archaeological responses, although several linear anomalies and isolated pit-like responses were reported as uncertain. Ridge and furrow ploughing was evident in the dataset.
- 3.9 A watching brief c.20m west of the site recorded remnants of ridge and furrow (Leicestershire Historic Environment Record ELE5335) and a metal detector survey on the opposite side of Pasture Lane reported a number of Roman artefacts (ELE1953). Similarly, fieldwalking and metal detecting around 370m to the west found concentrations of Roman pottery (ELE10969).

4 AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to determine if there are any significant archaeological remains in the area to be developed; to form an understanding of their value and their potential to shed light on the subsequent development of the area.
- 4.2 Secondary aims included placing the results in their wider, local and regional contexts as appropriate. The results of the evaluation were to be tied into regional research themes identified in *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework*, where warranted. These include those in relation to the Roman period such as rural settlement patterns and landscapes and artefacts: production, distribution and social identity.
- 4.3 The objectives were to locate, record and analyse archaeological materials and deposits and to disseminate the results in an appropriate format.
- 4.4 The development area was evaluated by means of 90m of trial trenching (two 30m x 1.8m trenches and two 15m x 1.8m trenches, Fig 3).
- 4.5 Topsoil and former ploughsoils were removed by an appropriate machine using a ditching bucket under archaeological supervision.

5 RESULTS

Geological Natural

- 5.1 The geological natural across the site was silty clay and clay sediments with yellowish brown and greyish brown variations (102, 202, 302 and 402) exposed at a depth of 0.46-0.55m below the current ground surface.

Deposit Sequence

- 5.2 Where not disturbed by anthropogenic activity, the clay substrate was directly overlain by a simple sequence of plough derived silty clay subsoil and topsoil. Archaeological features were encountered in Trenches 2, 3 and 4. They have been ascribed to phases according to datable evidence recovered from them and/or morphological characteristics.

Roman

- 5.3 Gully 309 contained a single sherd of Samian pottery, which is suggestive of an early Roman phase of activity.
- 5.4 Two broadly parallel ditches, 403 and 406 were aligned west to east, corresponding closely to linear geophysical anomalies (Fig 3) and may represent a trackway. Ditch 403 was 1.24m wide and 0.52m deep (Fig 4, Section E).
- 5.5 Ditch 408 corresponded with a north-west to south-east geophysical linear anomaly (Fig 3) and was 0.89m wide and 0.34m deep (Fig 4; Section D).
- 5.6 Ditches 303, 305, 307, 315 and gully 309 were concentrated on the eastern side of the site and 303, 307, 315 and gully 309 were broadly east-west, although ditch 307 and gully 309 were slightly more northeast-southwest than the others (Fig 3). Ditch 303 was 1.78m wide and 0.44m deep and contained three sherds of 4th century pottery and animal bone fragments. It cut ditch 315 (Fig 4, Section A), from which 3 sherds of Black-Burnished Ware were recovered.
- 5.7 Ditch 305 was aligned north-south and incorporated a concentration of large sandstone, limestone and flint cobbles (306), each measuring up to 0.2m across by 0.05m thick. The stones, which exhibited no evidence for coursing or bonding and did not appear to form any coherent structure, extended into underlying dark grey silty clay

deposit 312 as well as overlying the upper fill of ditch 303 (304). A single large cobble was also present in the base of ditch 315, which had been recut by 303. The implication is that ditch 303, 305 and 315 may form part of the same feature, possibly comprising the corner of an enclosure, with the cobble concentration representing a collapsed bank or revetment.

Post Medieval

- 5.8 In Trench 2 a spread of large pebbles with post-medieval brick fragments (203) may have derived from a former structure although other explanations are possible
- 5.9 North-south aligned furrows were evident in the trenches. These represent the negative cuts created by non-reversible ploughs and corroborate the geophysical survey anomalies.
- 5.10 17th to 19th century pottery was recorded in the ploughsoil.

Pottery Dr Jerry Evans

- 5.11 Some 48 sherds of Roman and later pottery were recovered from the evaluation (Appendix B). The 41 sherds of Roman pottery weighed 458g, and the medieval and post-mediaeval pottery weighed 450g. The material was subject to a rapid scan with material recorded into fabrics and fabric classes within the Warwickshire Museum/OAU categories (Booth 2000).
- 5.12 The average Roman sherd weight was 11.2g, at the lower end of the usual range for lowland zone rural sites.
- 5.13 Late Harrold shell-tempered ware provide around 25% of the Roman material, confirming most of the pottery must come from later fourth century contexts. The assessment assemblage is too small to provide any usable information on fabric proportions. The material is similar to that from East Leake Quarry (Evans 2021).

Other finds

- 5.14 An assemblage of animal bone totalling 94 fragments was recovered from the evaluation (Appendix B). This included cattle bone recovered from ditch and gully contexts.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The evaluation was able to confirm that the linear anomalies reported in the geophysical survey relate to sub-surface archaeological features. These appear to relate to a Roman period bounded field system. There is some suggestion that a contemporary settlement lies to the east.

- 6.2 The pottery assemblage was not large, but all the features yielded some pottery, predominantly from the 4th century AD. The occurrence of cattle bones in the features may reflect the dominance of cattle farming in the later Roman period.

- 6.3 Evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation across most of the site illustrates the continued agricultural use during the late medieval or post medieval period.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd. for commissioning the work and Chloe Cronogue-Freeman at Leicestershire County Council for representing the planning authority.

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Cartographic sources

National Library of Scotland, n.d. *Second Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1902, 1:2500, digitised version*



1: Trench 1 looking west



2: Trench 2 looking east



3: Trench 3, Ditch 309



4: Trench 4 looking south-west, Ditch 403 in foreground



5: Trench 4, ditch terminus 408



6: Trench 3, Cobbles 306 filling ditch 305

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Context	Description	Length (m)	Width / diameter (m)	Depth/ height (m)	Comment
100	Dark yellowish brown clayey silt. Occasional small pebbles	>5	≥1.8	0.23	Topsoil
101	Yellowish brown silty clay with occasional pebbles	>5	≥1.8	0.23	Subsoil
102	Mottled greyish brown and pale grey clay with occasional pebbles	>5	≥1.8	107.53 – 107.94m AOD	Geological natural
200	Dark greyish brown clay loam	>5	≥1.8		Topsoil
201	Grey brown silty clay	>5	≥1.8		Subsoil
202	Yellowish brown clay with occasional pebbles	>5	≥1.8	107.97 – 10.8.04m AOD	Geological natural
203	Greyish brown silty clay with occasional large pebbles and brick fragments.	Approx. 1.6	Approx. 1.3	0.2	Post med layer deposit.
300	Dark grey brown clay loam	>5	≥1.8	0.23	Topsoil
301	Greyish brown silty clay	>5	≥1.8	0.32	Subsoil
302	Yellowish brown clay with occasional pebbles	>5	≥1.8	108.19 – 109.06m AOD	Geological natural
303	Linea with moderately sloping sides and flattish base. Running NE-SW		1.78	0.44	Cut of ditch
304	Dark grey silty clay with moderate charcoal and occasional pebbles.		0.74	0.1	Top fill of 303
305	Linear with gently sloping sides. Running NW-SE		3.06	>0.11	Cut of possible ditch
306	Sandstone, limestone, flint cobbles.			>0.2	Cobble layer within ditch 305
307	Linear in plan. Not excavated and filled with 308.		Approx. 1.5	N/A	Cut of ditch

Context	Description	Length (m)	Width / diameter (m)	Depth/ height (m)	Comment
308	Grey silty clay		Approx. 1.5	N/A	Fill of 307
309	Linear in plan with moderately steep sides and a slightly rounded base. Filled with 310.		0.75	0.15	Cut of Gully
310	Grey silty clay.		0.75	0.15	Fill of 309
311	Yellowish brown clayey silt with occasional small pebbles		3.06	0.07	Upper fill of 305
312	Same as 304		≥0.5	N/A	Lower fill of 305
313	Brown mottled with greyish brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles and charcoal.		1.54	0.18	Lower fill of 303
314	Light greyish brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles		1.42	0.36	Middle fill of 303
315	Linear with gently sloping sides running NE-SW		>0.88	>0.44	Cut of ditch
316	Grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and small pebbles.		>0.88	>0.44	Fill of 315
400	Greyish brown loamy silt	>5	≥1.8	0.2	Topsoil
401	Dark yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles	>5	≥1.8	0.18	Subsoil
402	Mottled yellowish brown and dark brown silty clay	>5	≥1.8	108.08 – 108.34m AOD	Geological natural
403	Linear with sharp convex sides and rounded base. Running NE-SW		1.24	0.52	Cut of ditch
404	Light yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles.		0.01	0.044	Upper fill of 403

Context	Description	Length (m)	Width / diameter (m)	Depth/ height (m)	Comment
405	Greyish brown clayey silt with moderate pebbles and occasional charcoal.		0.78	0.48	Upper fill of ditch 403
406	Linear/straight in plan, running parallel to 403. Not excavated and filled with 407.		1.1	N/A	Cut of ? ditch
407	Dark yellowish brown silty clay		1.1	N/A	Fill of 406
408	Linear with sharp sloping sides and gently sloping base. Running SE-NW		0.89	0.34	Cut of ditch terminus
409	Greyish brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles		0.89	0.18	Fill of 408
410	Mottled greyish brown and yellowish brown		<0.89	0.16	Fill of 408

B List of finds

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
100	Pottery	3	
200	Pottery	4	
203	Animal bone	2	1 cattle m3 molar 1 long bone fragment
203	Pottery	5	
301	Pottery	2	
301	Animal bone	1	Long bone fragment with possible gnawing marks
304	Animal bone	2	1 Large mammal scapula fragment 1 fragment
304	Pottery	4	
308	Pottery	6	
308	Ceramic building material	1	
308	Animal bone	2	1 cattle phalange 1 tiny cattle molar
310	Pottery	4	1xSamian
310	Ceramic building material	1	
310	Animal bone	13	1 mammal long bone 2 cattle molars 1 medium mammal vertebra 1 small long bone fragment 6 skull fragments 2 fragments
311	Animal bone	10	1 long bone fragment 9 fragments
311	Pottery	15	
311	flint	2	Natural discarded
311	Fe	1	
314	Animal bone	10	9 cattle rib fragments 1 fragment
316	Pottery	3	
316	Animal bone	3	1 pig canine 1 pig tibia 1 mammal ulna
405	Snail Shell	3	Non-burrowing snails
405	Flint	3	Natural discarded
405	Animal bone	35	28 fragments 3 long bone fragments 2 medium mammal long bone fragments 1 cattle fused central and 4th tarsal 1 fragment of pig trotter

Context	Type	Quantity	Comment
407	Animal bone	9	1 cattle molar 1 long bone fragment 4 fragments 1 cattle spinous process fragment 1 cattle fused 2nd and 3rd carpal 1 cattle tibia distal
409	Flint	1	Natural discarded
409	Animal bone		8 fragments

Pottery spot dating

Context	Nosh	Dating evidence
100	3	P MED, C16-C18
200	4	TRANSFER PRINTED WARE C1850+
203	3	C20TH MIXING BOWL
301	2	BLACK GLZ BOWL, c17-C19
304	3	SST jar, AD340-400
308	5	Mancetter b-s AD100+
310	4	OxCC C51 flange, AD240-400
311	11	NVCC developed beaded and flanged bowl, prob AD350-400. Also 1 MED b-s
316	3	BB1 b-s? AD120+?
405	7	SST b-s, AD300-400
407	2	Grey b-s, poss S. Yks, poss AD150-350
409	3	SST jar, AD340-400

Occurrence of pottery fabrics by Nosh and Wt

Fabric reference		Sum of Nosh	Sum of weight
BO1?	BB1	1	3
C10	Harrold	10	98
F01	NVCC	2	27
F10	Ox CC	1	16
M01	Mancetter	1	68
R20	Grey	6	28
R20?	Grey	3	7
R201	Grey	1	1
R201?	Grey	1	11
R21?	Grey	2	22

Fabric reference		Sum of Nosh	Sum of weight
R221	S Yorks grey	2	139
R23	Grey	6	31
S20?	CG Samian	1	7
Z20	Medieval	1	6
Z30	Post- medieval	10	144
	Total	55	946

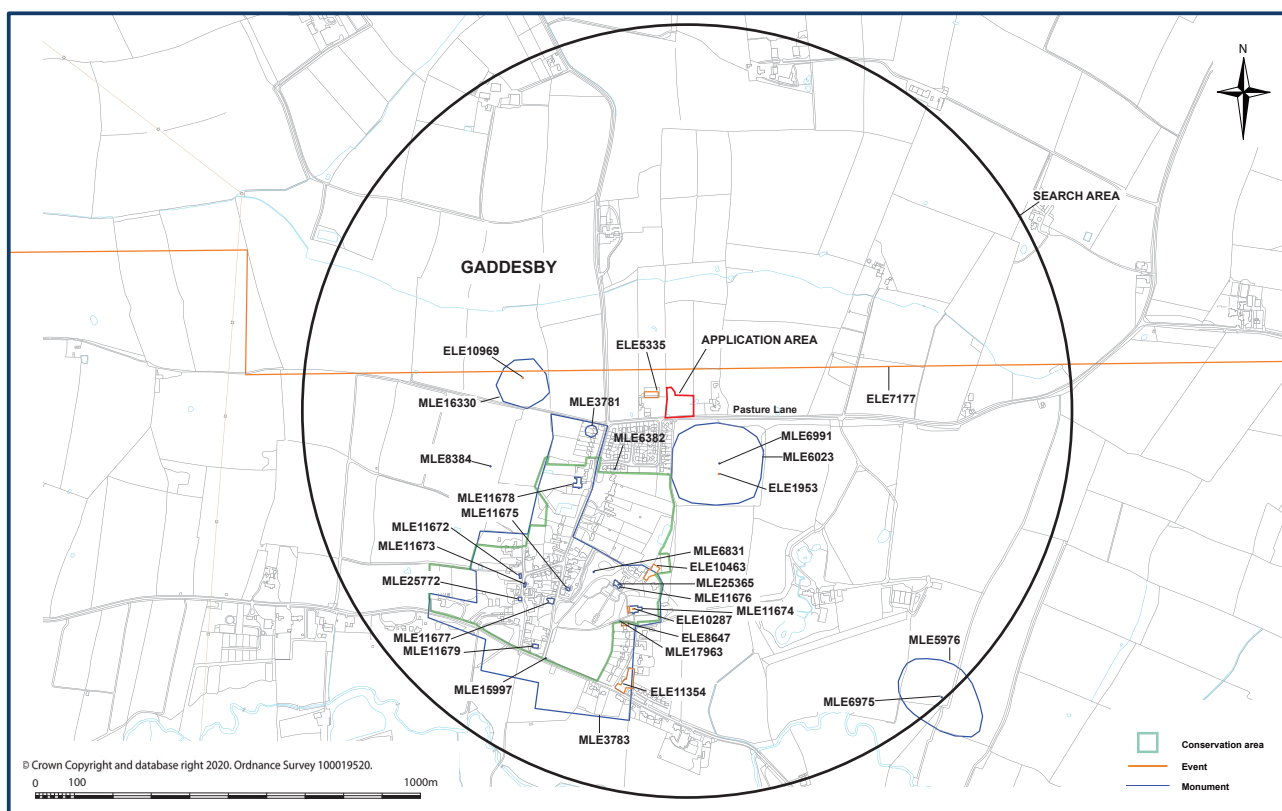


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information

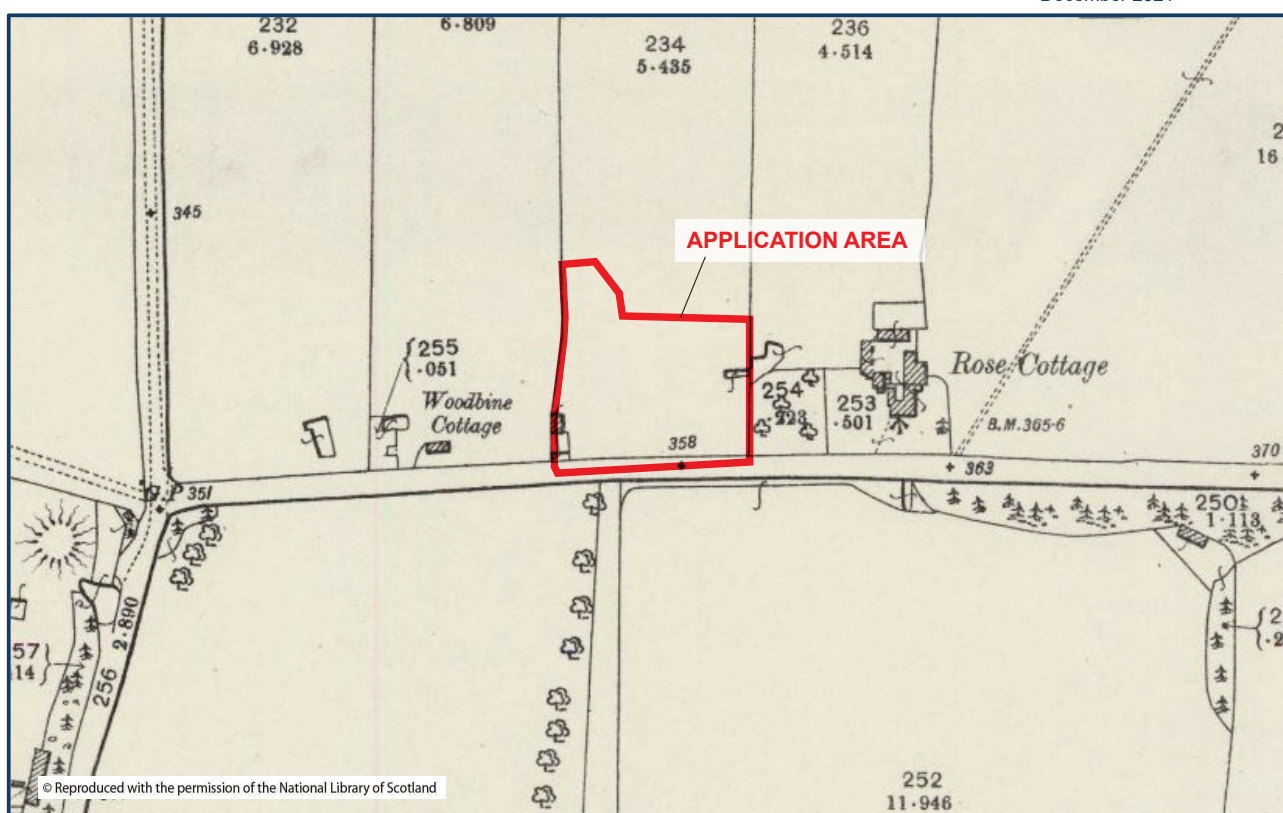


Fig 2: Detail from Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1902 (Leicestershire XXVI.7)

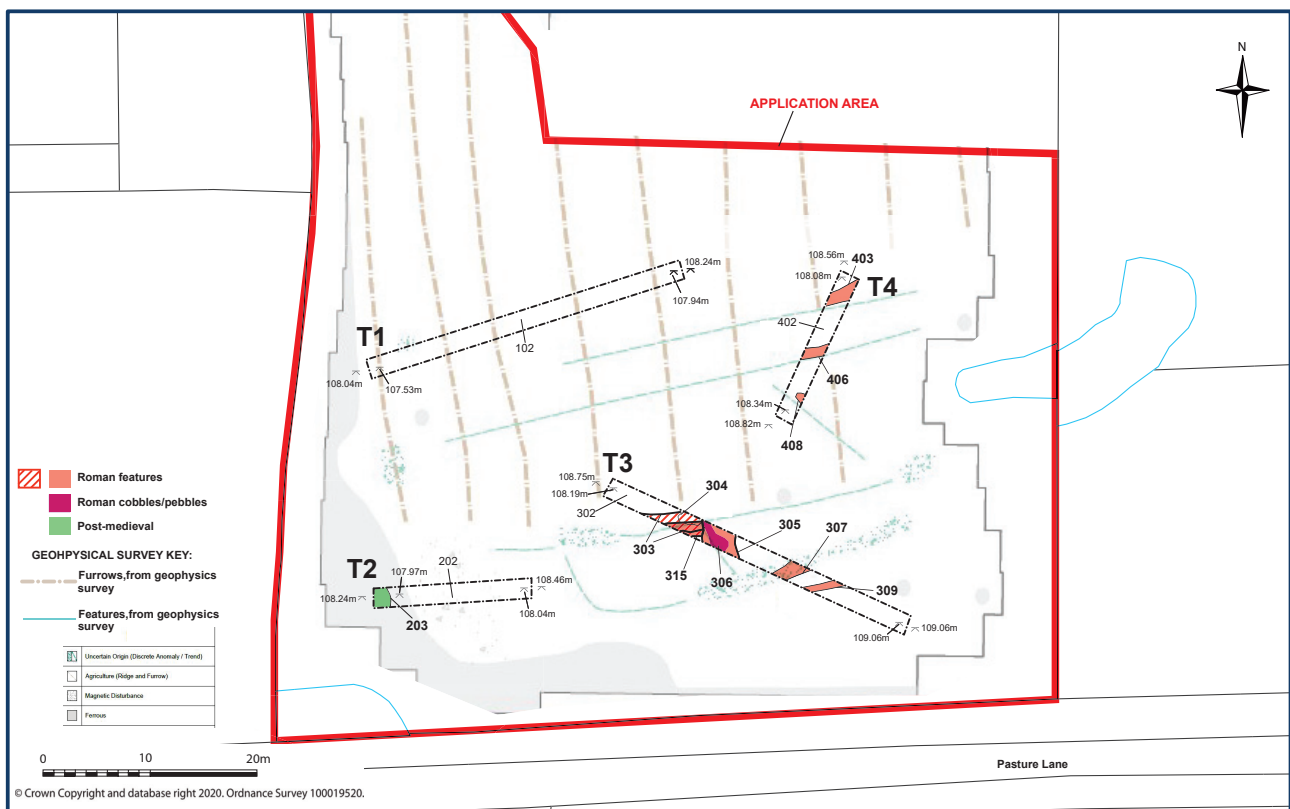


Fig 3: Location of excavated trenches and geophysics survey

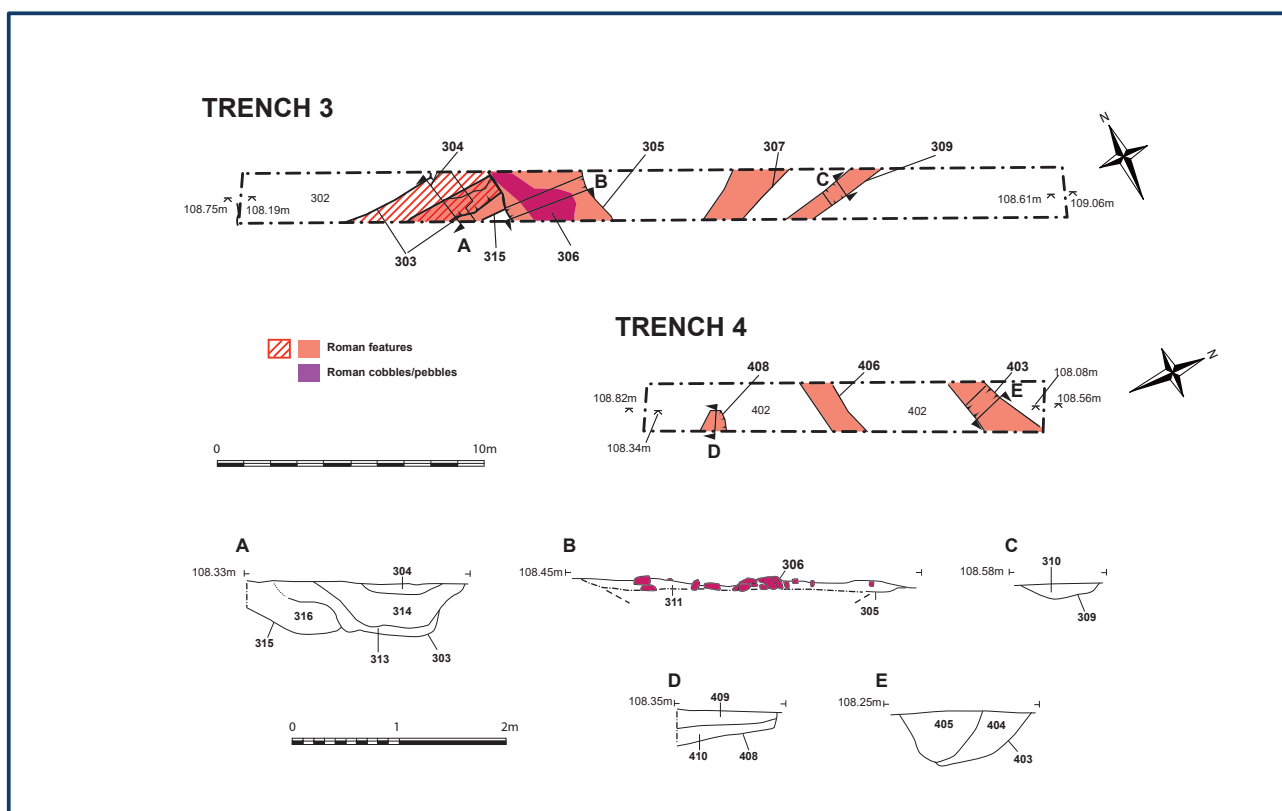


Fig 4: Detail of trenches 3 and 4, with associated sections A to E