



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation
of Land off Anstey Lane
Groby, Leicestershire
(SK 53405 08269)**

by Gerwyn Richards



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**An Archaeological Evaluation of
Land off Anstey Lane
Groby,
Leicestershire.**

(NGR SK 53405 08269)

Gerwyn Richards

Planning Permission: Pre-planning Enquiry

For: Bowler Energy

Checked by

Signed:  **Date:** 9th September 2011

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Bowler Energy to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Anstey Lane, Groby, Leicestershire in advance of the construction of two 50kw wind turbines. The proposed development area had been identified as being an area of archaeological potential.

Two evaluation trenches centred on the proposed footprints of each turbine, were machine excavated and recorded. A third trench was also excavated and recorded after the trench for turbine 2 exposed a buried service. No evidence of archaeological deposits or artefacts was observed within trenches 1 and 2 and single un-dated linear feature was excavated and recorded within trench 3.

The archive for the archaeological work will be held by Leicestershire County Council, under the accession number X.A111.2011.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Bowler Energy to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of the proposed development on land off Anstey Lane, Groby, Leicestershire (SK 53405 08269; Fig. 1). The proposed development involves the construction of two 50kw Wind Turbines within an arable field. No previous intrusive archaeological work has been carried out within the proposed development area.

2. Background

Archaeological evaluation of the site by trial trenching was requested by Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCC HNET) on behalf of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 170 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Oadby Member Diamicton deposits overlying mudstone (Edwalton Member).

The proposed development area lies towards the north of the historic settlement core Groby, which is largely medieval in date but has Anglo Saxon origins. An

examination of the Historic Environment Record for Leicestershire & Rutland (HER) indicates a number of known archaeological sites within the vicinity of the proposed development area, including the medieval and post medieval village core of Groby (HER Ref MLE5991).

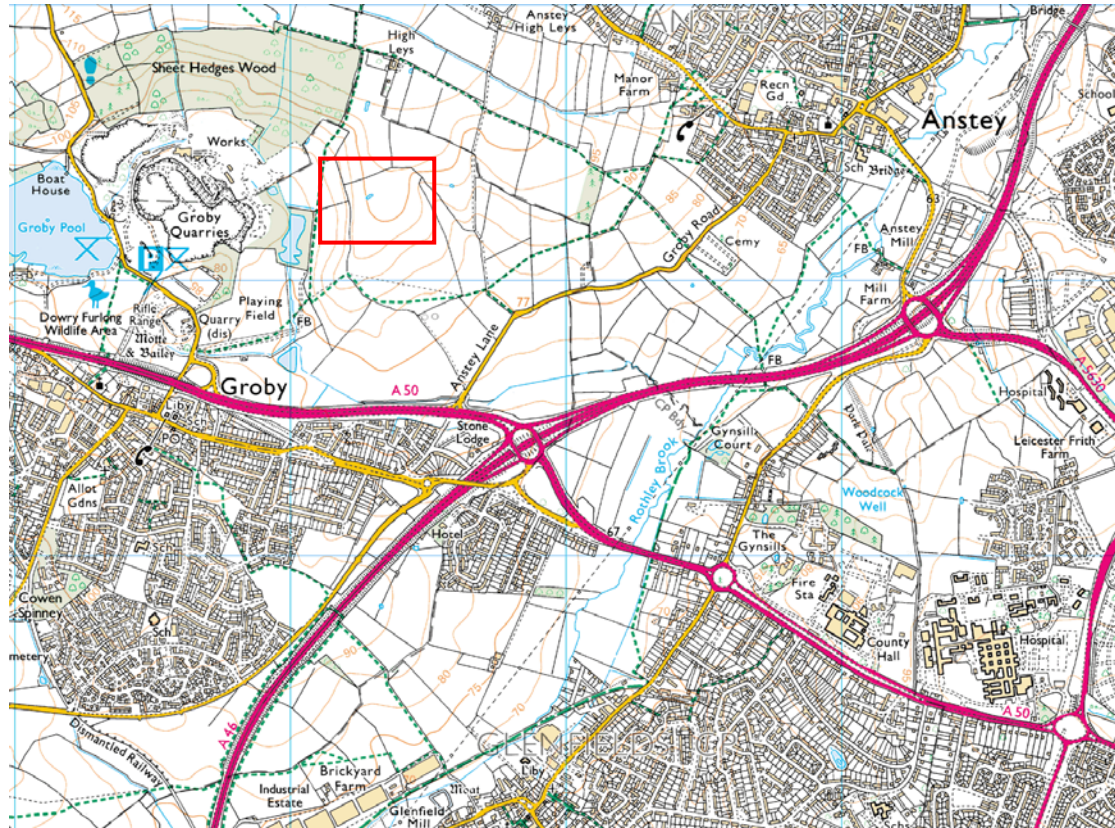


Figure 1: Site location Scale 1:25000

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In addition, various archaeological remains and sites are located within the vicinity of the proposed development area including Groby Old Hall next to the A50 to the south west, within the grounds of which is Groby Castle (SM 17066, HER Ref MLE2758). This surviving as a motte 30m across and 7m high although little survives of the bailey. The Norman Castle was built c.1086 with a possible Saxon manorial precursor. The site is essentially a Norman castle that remained an important manorial complex throughout the medieval period. Several medieval features including a dam and fishponds and a watermill also lie nearby (HER Ref MLE2783, MLE2782, & MLE2784).

There are a number of earlier sites in the area including an Iron Age site east of the proposed development area (HER Ref MLE411). A scatter of Roman pottery, slate, tile and kiln bars were found nearby and geophysical survey recorded several anomalies that may be kilns (HER Ref MLE2770). There is a possible Roman site at Blacklands Field where at least two querns were found. Another beehive quern was found out to the east of the area (HER Ref MLE6553). Small scatters of Roman

pottery have also been found from the fields in this area (HER Ref MLE6554 & MLE7731).



Figure 2:
Proposed development area; with turbine locations in red
Drawing supplied by client, not to scale, north to top of page.

3. Aims and Methodology

The main objectives of the evaluation were through archaeological trial trenching:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits in areas to be affected by the development.
- To provide information on the extent, character, condition and date range of archaeological deposits within the application area.
- To assess the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

In consultation with Planning Control Archaeologist it was decided to evaluate the impact of proposed development with the excavation of two 5m x 5m trenches (*Figure 2*) centred on the footprint of each turbine, using co-ordinates provided by Bowler Energy. These co-ordinates were plotted using a Topcon Hiper Pro GPS+ RTK System attached to a Topcon FC-100 controller with an on-site accuracy of 1m-2m. After exposing a Severn Trent water main within the proposed footprint of turbine 2 a third trench was excavated under the instruction of Bowler Energy approximately 10m-12m east of turbine 2.

The trenches were excavated by a 13 tonne back actor using a ditching bucket. The evaluation took place on August 30th 2011.

The archaeological work addressed the requirements detailed in *Design Specification for archaeological work* (ULAS 11-372).

4. Results of Trial Trench Evaluation

4.1 Trench 1 (Turbine 1)

Interval	0m	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m
Topsoil Depth in mm	200	200	200	200	200	200
Subsoil Depth/Top of Natural	250	270	270	300	300	250
Base of Trench	300	340	390	400	400	370

Trench 1 was located at the highest point of the proposed development area (*Figure 3*). Approximately 0.2m of plough soil was excavated revealing a thin layer of light orange brown silty clay, below which was weathered purple-brown clay substratum. Excavation ceased at this level, approximately 0.3m to 0.4m below the existing ground level. An apparent furrow was observed adjacent to the southernmost edge of the trench; it was decided to extent the trench towards the south by approximately 1.5m to confirm the extent of this furrow (*Figure 6*).

The trench contained nothing of archaeological significance and was recorded and released for backfilling.

4.2 Trench 2 (Turbine 2)

Interval	0m	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m
Topsoil Depth in mm	200	220	230	200	200	250
Subsoil Depth/Top of Natural	330	330	390	Backfill	Backfill	
Base of Trench	600	640	500	400	310	290

Trench 2 was located approximately 100m south east of trench 1 (*Figure 3*). Approximately 0.2m to 0.25m of plough soil was excavated revealing the same thin layer of subsoil seen in trench 1. Almost immediately the line of a service trench carrying a Severn Trent water main was identified, excavation immediately ceased at this level (*Figure 7*).

The trench contained nothing of archaeological significance and was recorded and released for backfilling.

4.3 Trench 3 (Turbine 2)

Interval	0m	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m
Topsoil Depth in mm	200	200	250	200	210	200
Subsoil Depth/Top of Natural	300	300	300	300	300	300
Base of Trench	410	600	500	450	400	400

Following the results of trench 2 a third trench was excavated under the direction of Bowler Energy approximately 12m east of trench 2 (*Figure 3*). Approximately 0.2m to 0.25m of ploughsoil was excavated revealing the same thin layer of subsoil seen in trenches 1 and 2, below which was weathered purple-brown clay substratum. Excavation ceased at this level, approximately 0.4m to 0.6m below the existing ground level.

Adjacent to the western edge of the trench there was a linear deposit of mid grey-brown silty clay, clearly different to the surrounding substrata. Further cleaning revealed a north-north west to south-south east aligned linear approximately 1.2m wide [001] - only at the southern end of the trench were both sides of the linear visible. A 1 metre wide section was excavated across the linear against the southern edge of the trench (Figures 4-5, Figure 8-9). The ditch was approximately 0.5m deep with concave sides and a flat bottom. The fill (002) consisted of grey-brown silty clay with lenses of orange-brown clay. Unfortunately no dating evidence was recovered from the feature; however, it is likely to be archaeological in origin.

There were no further features of archaeological significance within the trench and it was recorded and released for backfilling.

5. Conclusion

The proposed development area occupied a promising location within a rich archaeological landscape on the northern edge of the historic settlement core of Groby. Only limited archaeological deposits were encountered during the course of this evaluation. Trenches 1 and 2 contained nothing of archaeological significance. Trench 3 contained an undated linear feature of possible archaeological significance.

6. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of:

- 1 A2 permagraph sheet with plan & section
- 1 A3 permagraph trench identification plan
- CD containing 12 digital images
- 1 A4 contact sheet
- 12 Black & White negatives & contact prints
- 3 A4 trench recording sheets
- 2 A4 context sheets
- Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report Number 2011-133)

The archive will be held at Leicester County Council Museums under the Accession Number X.A111.2011

A version of the summary (above) will be submitted to the editor of the local journal *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* for inclusion in the next edition.

7. References

IfA, 2010 *Code of Conduct*

IfA, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

ULAS 2011 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation. Land Adjacent to Ansty Lane, Groby, LE6 0DA*

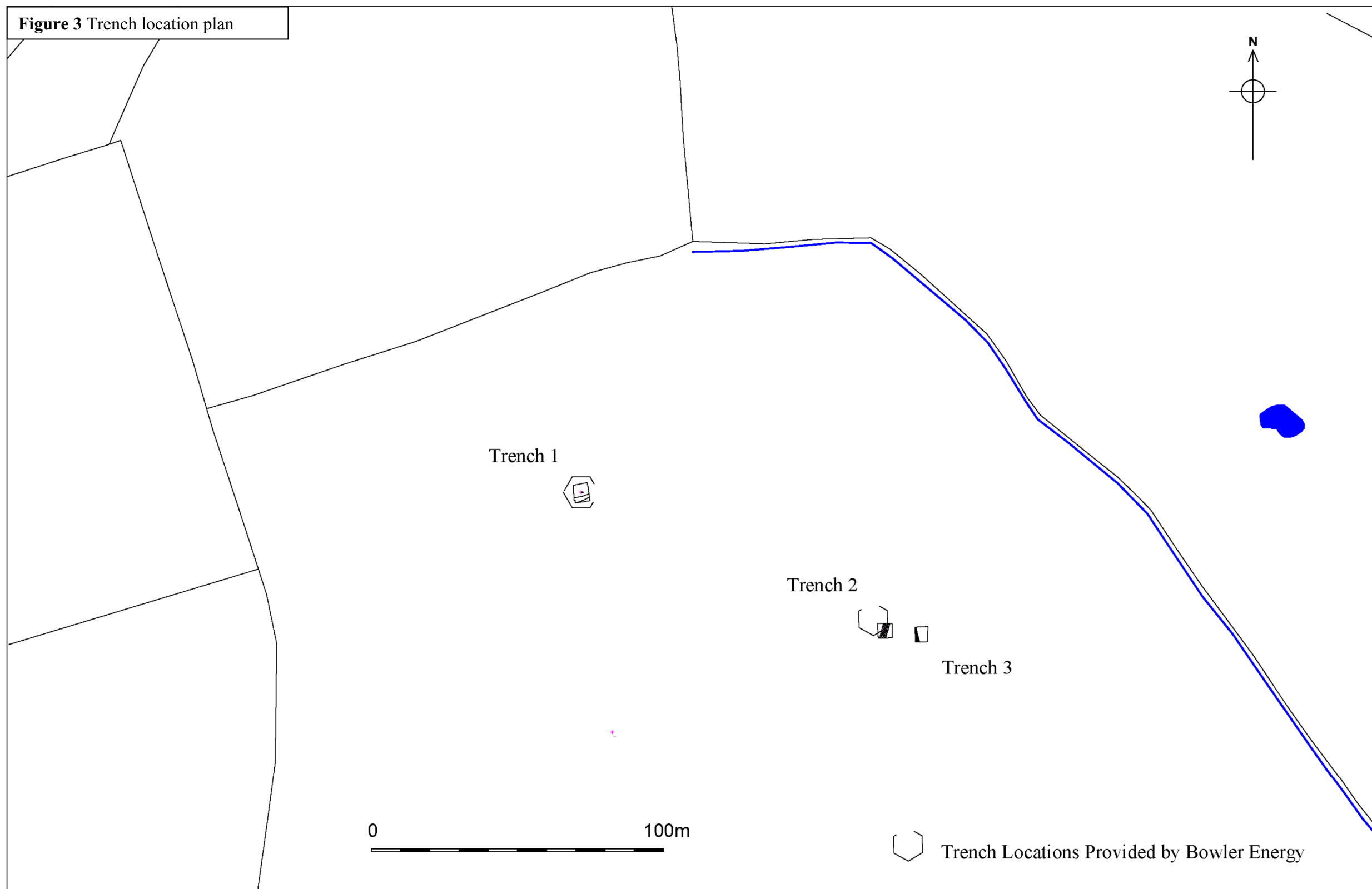
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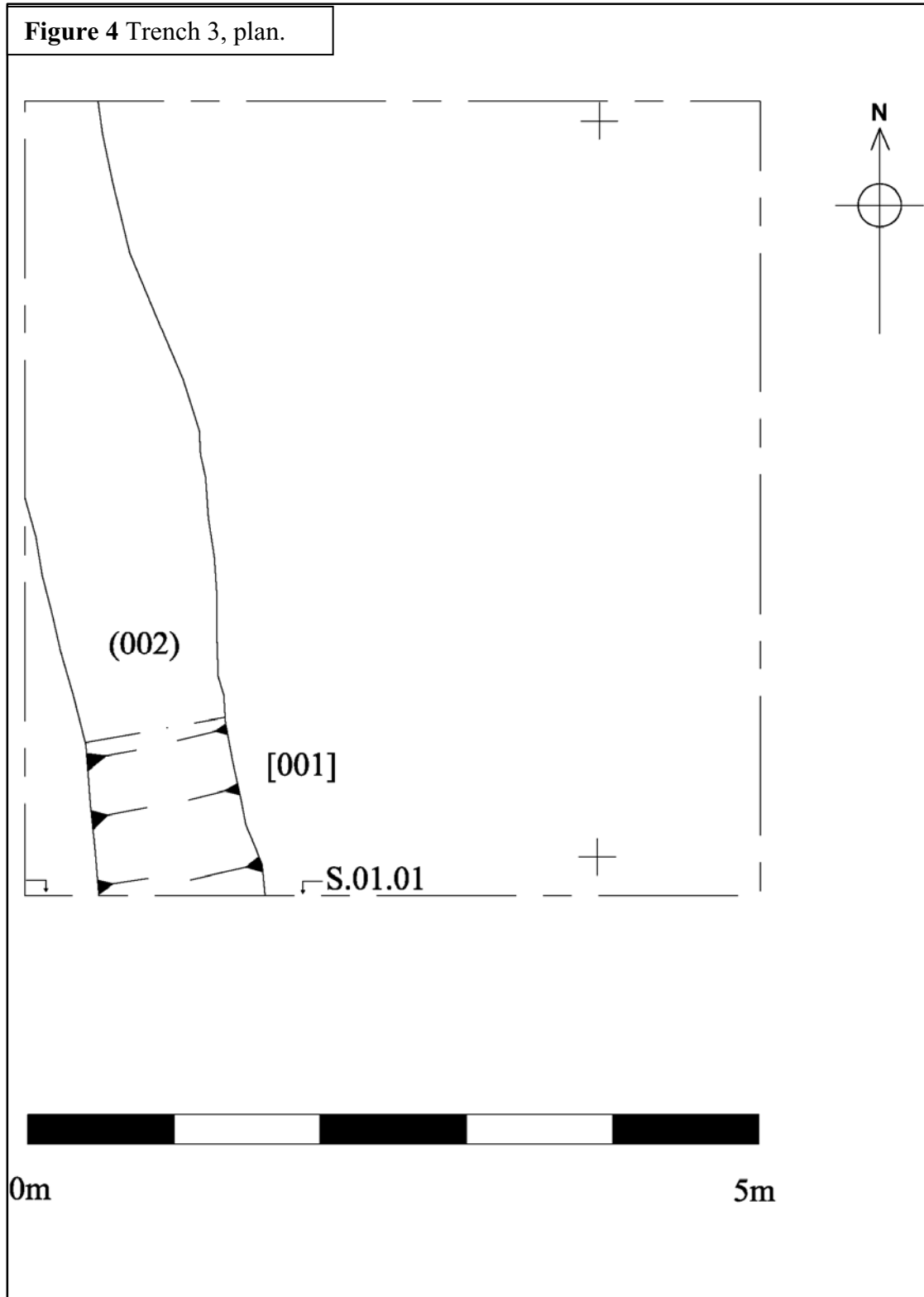
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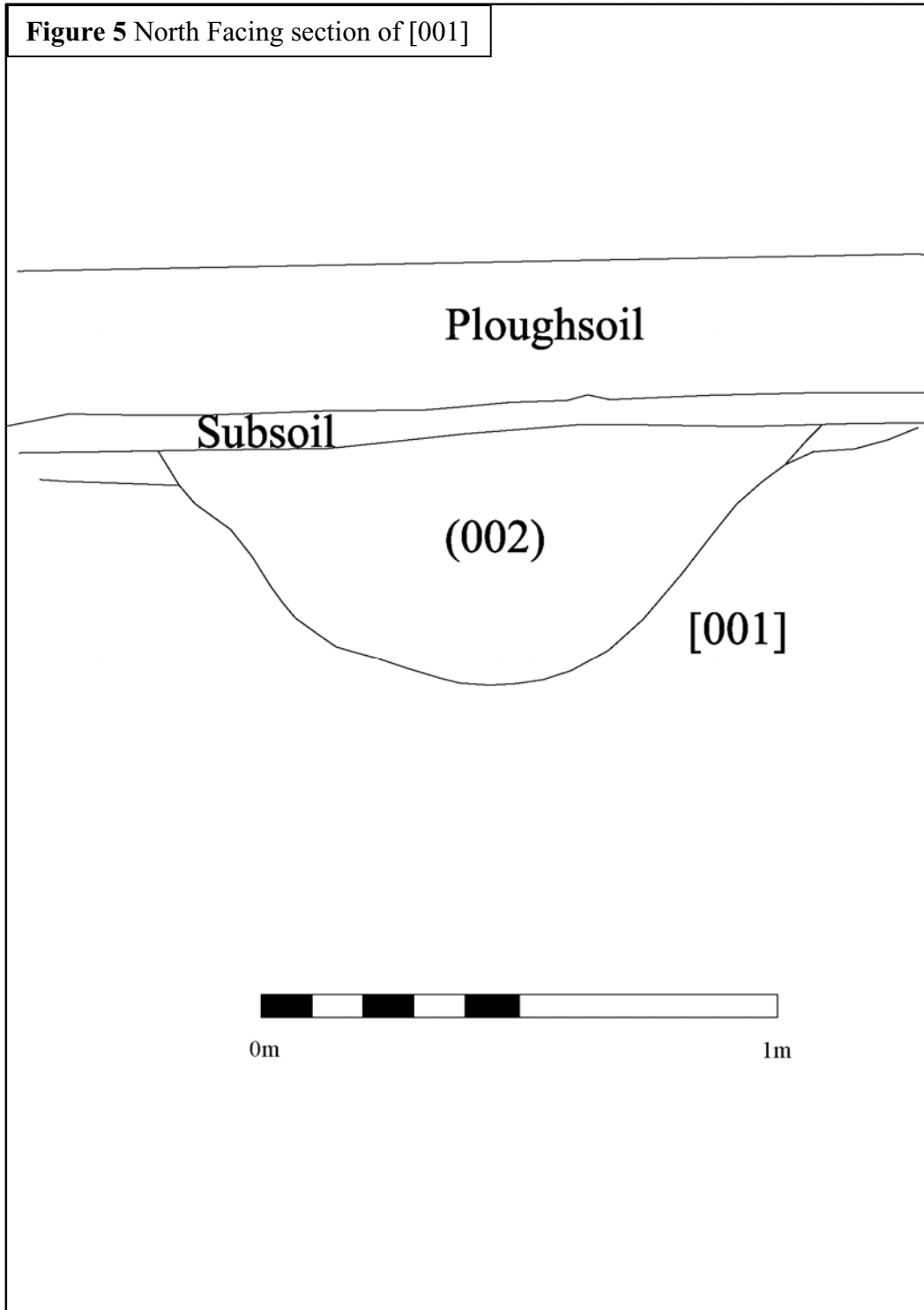




Figure 6 Trench 1 (looking east).



Figure 7 Trench 2 (looking south).



Figure 8 Trench 3 (looking south).



Figure 9 Trench 3 post excavation shot of [001] (looking south).

INFORMATION REQUIRED	EXAMPLE
Project Name	Land of Anstey Lane, Groby
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Vicki Score
Project Supervisor	Gerwyn Richards
Previous/Future work	Previous: None. Future: Not Known
Current Land Use	Agricultural
Development Type	Renewal Energy
Reason for Investigation	PPS5
Position in the Planning Process	Pre Planning
Site Co ordinates	SK 53405 08296
Start/end dates of field work	Aug 2011
Archive Recipient	LMARS
Height min/max	100mOD
Study Area	N/A
Finds	None

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