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**Archaeological Services**

An archaeological evaluation  
on land at Sapcote Road,  
Sapcote,  
Leicestershire  
(SP 489 939)

Leon Hunt



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on land at Sapcote Road,  
Sapcote,  
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(SP 489 939)**

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**for:  
Jelson Ltd**

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## **An archaeological evaluation on land at Sapcote Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire (SP 489 939)**

Leon Hunt

### **Summary**

*An archaeological field evaluation was carried out on land at Sapcote Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire (SP 489 939) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in advance of a proposed new housing development by Jelson Ltd.*

*The site consisted of two fields, one sub-triangular (Field 1) and one rectangular (Field 2) within the parishes of Stoney Stanton and Sapcote, with the parish boundary running between the two fields. Both were under pasture and Field 1 contained features associated with the former Top Quarry (now Stoney Cove), which lies to the north-east.*

*Twenty-one trenches measuring 30m x 1.9m were placed across the land. Most were negative but for the presence of several stone rubble and ceramic drains. The land was very poorly drained along the western side close to a stream and several of the trenches became totally or partially flooded during the excavations.*

*Two trenches contained areas of disturbance associated with a set of large sewer pipes that ran across the site, broadly north to south.*

*Three trenches contained archaeological features, consisting of linear features, most likely ditches associated with agricultural practices. Only one sherd of datable pottery was found from a ditch feature in Trench 12 in Field 1. This was a sherd of medieval Stamford ware pottery dating to between AD 850-1250.*

*The archaeological features appeared to be concentrated at the very south-eastern edge of both fields on the higher, better drained ground, suggesting that the site lies at the very edge of this activity.*

### **Introduction**

An archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching was carried out on land at Sapcote Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 489 939). The work was commissioned by Jelson Ltd and was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in advance of a new development at the site, which consists of the erection of new housing (Planning Application No. 09/0759/1/OX).

The site currently consists of two fields, one sub-triangular to the north (in the parish of Stoney Stanton) and a rectangular field to the south (within Sapcote). Both are under pasture and the northern field contains features associated with the former Top Quarry (now Stoney Cove), which lies to the north-east.

The work was undertaken in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS 5). The fieldwork was intended to provide preliminary indications of character and extent of any buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

The definition of archaeological field evaluation, taken from the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2010) is a limited programme of non intrusive and/ or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

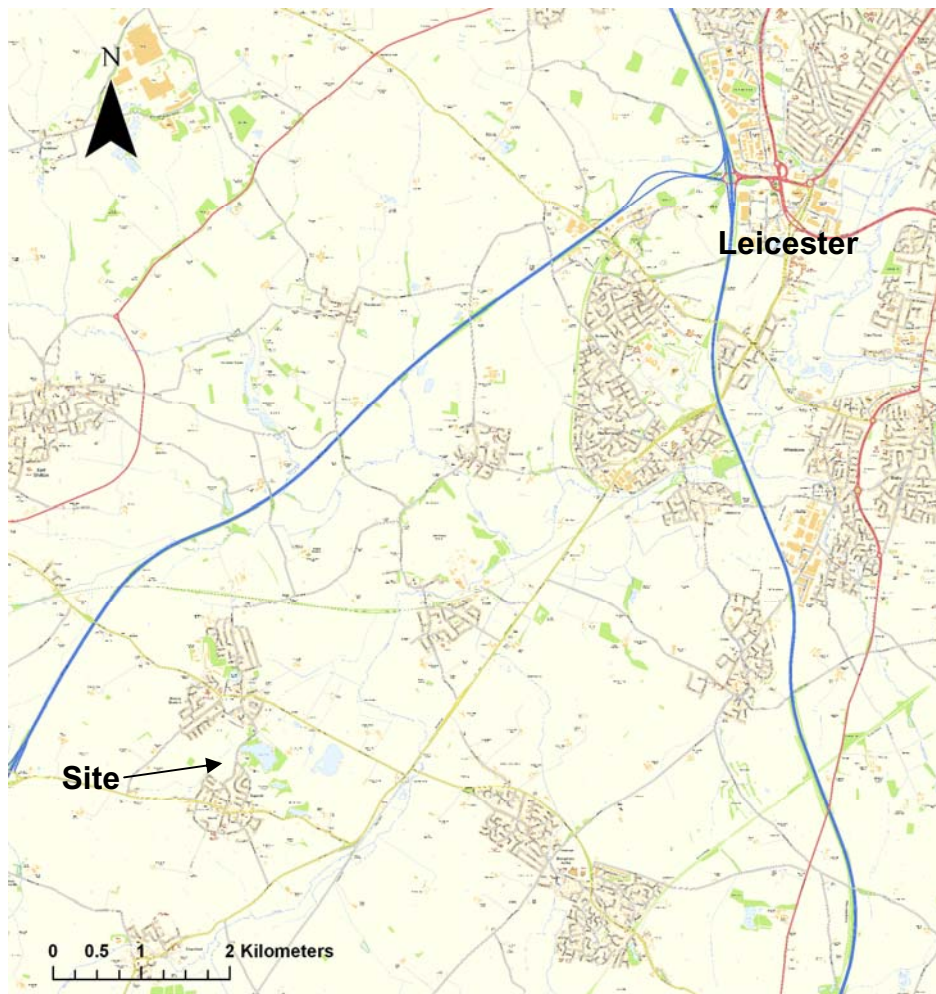


Figure 1: Location of Sapcote and Stoney Stanton  
Contains Ordnance Survey Data

### Site Location, Geology and Topography

Sapcote and Stoney Stanton lie in the Blaby District of Leicestershire, approximately 10 miles south-west of Leicester (Figure 1). The site lies to the north of Sapcote village on the western side of Sapcote Road.

The assessment area consists of two fields, one rectangular and one sub-triangular. The northern triangular field (Field 1) lies in the southern part of the parish of Stoney Stanton. The southern field (Field 2) lies within Sapcote (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Site Location

Reproduced from OS map Explorer Sheet 233 (Leicester) 1:50 000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1990  
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The total size of the assessment area is *c.*6.3ha and the land lies at a height of around 85m OD falling by around 4-5 metres to the west towards the stream which flows to the west of the fields.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 155 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of alluvium overlying Glacial Till and Mercia Mudstone Group clay.

The northernmost field undulates and a large terraced area lies in the south-west corner of this field. A further small terrace lies at the northern edge close to the field entrance. There is also a narrow earthwork in this field running north-east to south-west, which is the remains of a railway line leading from the quarries to the north (Plate 1). The southern field is flatter and contains faint ridge and furrow with a headland running parallel to the hedge between the two fields and another running north-east to south-west across the field. This hedge forms the parish boundary and contains a water filled ditch (Plate 2).



Plate 1: The northern field (Field 1), looking south. Powder shed, spoil terrace and marshy area to centre right of picture

Plate 2: The southern field, looking north





The western sides of both fields are marshy, the northern field considerably so, with rushes and reeds growing in a large area to the north of the southern terrace. This field also contains the remains of a concrete gunpowder shed which lies towards the centre of the field.

A power line crosses the field from south-east to north-west close to the southern edge of the northern field. There are also a large number of manholes across the field and a culvert empties into the stream close to the northern edge.

### Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

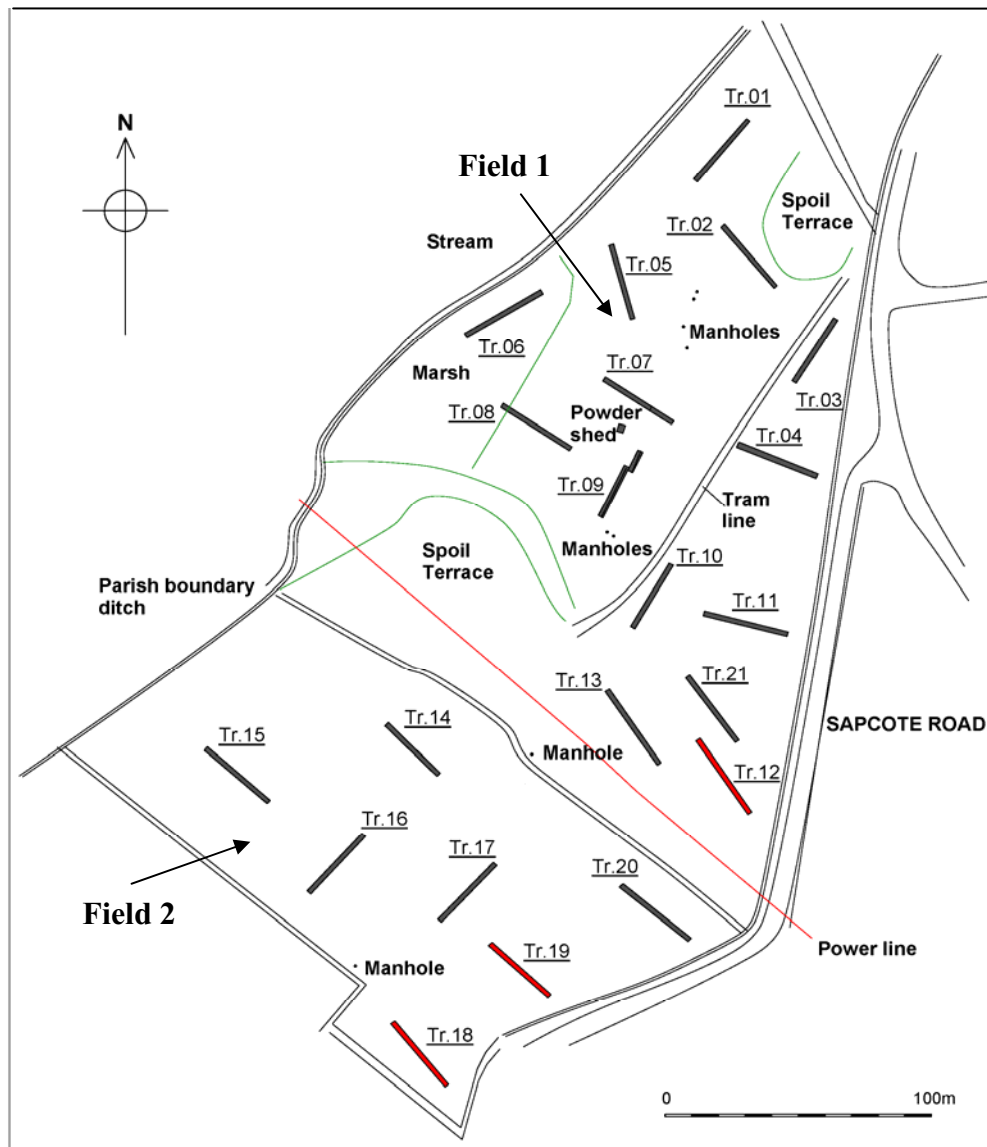


Figure 3: Trench location plan. Positive trenches in red

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the presence of archaeological deposits that may exist within the area.

### **Methodology**

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct in accordance with their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008). The archaeological work followed the *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological work* prepared by ULAS.

A 2% sample of the area was requested totalling c. 1260 sq. metres of trenching. This equates to 23 30m x 1.8m trenches placed across the land. The positioning of the trenches was somewhat restricted by site conditions. A culvert empties into the stream close to the northern edge and so this area was avoided. Similarly, the power line to the south was avoided and after consideration no trenches were placed across the terraced area, due to depth of overburden and proximity to the power line. Only one trench (Trench 6) was excavated completely within the marshy area of Field 1 as this trench quickly filled with water.

In total 21 trenches were placed across the site, with most being 1.9m wide due to the wide bucket used. Trench 21 was placed close to trench 12 in order to gauge the extent of the archaeological features identified within that trench (Figure 3).

All trenches were excavated using a large tracked excavator fitted with a 1.9m wide ditching bucket. All were excavated to the natural sub-stratum or archaeological features, whichever the higher in the sequence.

Measurements were taken of the sequence of sediments and soils within the trenches. In some cases the trenches were flooded before this could be properly carried out and so measurements of water level and base of trench and any visible horizons were taken.

### **Historical and Archaeological Background**

A desk-based assessment has been prepared for the area (Hunt 2009). This identified no known archaeological features within the assessment area itself. However, there are a number of known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the site. These include a probable Palaeolithic flake (**MLE6043**) found in Sapcote Gravel Pit, 400m to the west of the site. A possible crouched burial (**MLE8215**) of potential prehistoric date (Neolithic-Iron Age) was also found in Sapcote Gravel Pit. The gravel pit has also yielded a Bronze Age spearhead (**MLE9899**).

A Neolithic stone axe (**MLE7135**) was found 600m north-east of the site. A Bronze Age axe fragment (**MLE6269**), either a flat axe or palstave was discovered west of Stoney Bridge 1km south-east of the site.

Iron Age pottery (**MLE10197**) has been discovered in Church Street, around 400m to the south of the site.

The remains of a Roman villa lie at Black Piece and Calver Hill (**MLE283**), 1km east of the site and burials, likely to be Roman (**MLE284**) have been discovered at the Sapcote Gravel Pit, 400m to the west of the assessment area. Roman artefacts, including coins and pottery (**MLE9356** and **MLE9896**) were found to the 300m south-east and 1km to the south of the site.

The site is outside the medieval historic core of Sapcote Village (**MLE292**), which includes several buildings of a medieval origin, including Sapcote Castle (**MLE279** and Scheduled Monument **17036**) and Moats (**MLE280** and **MLE282**), dating from the early medieval period (*c.* 1066 to *c.* 1350), which lie 400m south-west of the application area.

The northern field contains the remnants of a small embankment for a tramline, which served the quarry to the north-east of the site (now Stoney Cove). This leads to a 2m high terrace, which is formed from overburden from the quarry. There is a smaller mound to the north.

The northern field was used to store the granite from the quarry until it could be used. Much of it was used during the building of the nearby section of the M1 motorway (Ray Haslett pers comm.).

A geophysical survey undertaken on the land (Graham 2010), was largely inconclusive.

## **Results**

The topsoil across the site largely consisted of greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional or frequent rounded and sub-rounded pebbles and, in the trenches to the north, very frequent chips or blocks of granite. Subsoil was normally orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent stones, often medium to large granite pieces in the northern trenches.

The natural sub-stratum varied considerably, often from trench to trench. Sand and gravel, with patches of red clay formed the sub-stratum mainly to the north and east of Field 1. In the eastern side of Field 2 it largely consisted of clayey sand and gravel, except in Trench 20, which contained clay with stones.

The trenches within the western side of both fields had a tendency to flood as soon as they were excavated. Although the substratum mainly consisted of sand and gravel in these trenches, in some areas layers of clay and peat overlay this.

The land contained a considerable amount of drains. These were mainly post-medieval formed from rough granite rubble, but there were also a large amount of more modern ceramic drains. Most of these were removed during excavation but some lay along the alignment of the trench and therefore the trenches had to be re-positioned (Trenches 9 and 14).

### ***Trench 1***

Field 1

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.44m and 0.63m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel and large pieces of granite fragments

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent gravel and large pieces of granite fragments

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brownish grey clayey-sand containing occasional red clay lumps and frequent gravel and granite fragments

Interval	0mSW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30mNE
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.17m	0.22m	0.24m	0.19m	0.24m	0.24m	0.28m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.20m	0.25m	0.30m	0.27m	60mm	0.16m	0.19m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.37m	0.47m	0.54m	0.46m	0.30m	0.40m	0.47m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.44m	0.55m	0.63m	0.58m	0.46m	0.53m	0.62m

Features: No archaeological features; three large stone land drains identified running north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east.



Plate 3: Post-excavation view of Trench 2, a typical trench in northern side of Field 1, looking north-west

**Trench 2**

Field 1

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Length: 29m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.42m and 0.78m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel and large granite fragments. There was a layer of granite chips between the topsoil and the subsoil at the south-east end of the trench.

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent gravel and large granite fragments.

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brown grey clayey-sand containing occasional red clay lumps and very frequent gravel and granite fragments

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>29mSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.22m	0.24m	0.26m	0.19m	0.24m	0.22m	0.20m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.22m	0.20m	0.16m	0.23m	0.24m	0.36m	0.32m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.44m	0.44m	0.42m	0.42m	0.48m	0.58m	0.52m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.44m	0.44m	0.42m	0.42m	0.48m	0.78m	0.70m

Features: No archaeological features; two large stone land drains identified running north-east to south-west and east to west.

**Trench 3**

Field 1

Orientation: North-west to south-west

Length: 28.5m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.60m and 0.80m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey silt with occasional gravel and large pieces of granite fragments. Stone chips under turf at the north-east end and between the topsoil and subsoil elsewhere

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy silt with frequent gravel.

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brownish grey clayey-sand containing frequent red clay lumps and frequent gravel and granite fragments

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNE</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>28.5mSW</b>
<b>Turf Depth</b>	0.40m	0.16m	0.18m	0.20m	0.20m	0.16m	0.20m
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	70mm	0.13m	80mm	0.10m	80mm	0.16m	0.10m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.32m	0.41m	0.40m	0.40m	0.40m	0.34m	0.30m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.79m	0.70m	0.66m	0.70m	0.68m	0.66m	0.60m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.80m	0.80m	0.80m	0.78m	0.78m	0.72m	0.60m

Features: No archaeological features; two large stone land drains identified running north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east.

#### ***Trench 4***

Field 1

Orientation: East-south-east to west-north-west

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.42m and 0.70m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel.

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy silt with frequent gravel and large pieces of granite fragments.

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brownish grey clayey sand containing occasional red clay lumps and very frequent gravel and granite fragments

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mWSW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>30mESE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.18m	0.17m	0.16m	0.19m	0.16m	0.16m	0.18m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.24m	0.15m	0.26m	0.25m	0.33m	0.30m	0.36m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.42m	0.32m	0.42m	0.44m	0.49m	0.46m	0.54m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.42m	0.50m	0.50m	0.60m	0.60m	0.64m	0.70m

Features: No archaeological features. No land drains

**Trench 5**

Field 1

Orientation: North-north-west to south-south-east

Length: 29.5m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.30m and 0.49m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel and large granite fragments.

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent gravel and large granite fragments.

Sub-stratum: Greyish orange clayey-sand and gravel with scattered large angular stones

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>29.5mSSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.20m	0.15m	0.13m	0.12m	0.15m	0.16m	0.12m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.15m	0.25m	0.27m	0.21m	0.19m	0.19m	0.18m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.35m	0.40m	0.40m	0.33m	0.34m	0.35m	0.30m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.43m	0.49m	0.48m	0.44m	0.46m	0.49m	0.30m

Features: No archaeological features; one large stone land drain identified running north-west to south-east.

**Trench 6**

Field 1

Orientation: South-west to north-east

Length: 27.3m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.70m and 1.18m

Topsoil: Soft dark brown silty clay with frequent rounded pebbles. Many roots and occasional large angular boulders.

Subsoil: Soft very dark brown silty clay with few rounded pebbles.

This overlays a black band of silty clay representing waterlogging

Sub-stratum: Sand and gravel with patches of clay. Stained grey due to upper clay layers

Interval	0mNW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	27.3mSE
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.24m	0.16m	0.19m	0.17m	0.19m	0.30m	0.29m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.13m	0.22m	0.10m	0.10m	0.21m	0.12m	0.12m
<b>Layer of black silty clay</b>	0.20m	0.20m	0.20m	0.30m	0.24m	0.32m	0.30m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.57m	0.58m	0.49m	0.57m	0.64m	0.74m	0.70m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.70m	0.82m	0.89m	0.70m	0.89m	1.18m	1.16m

Features: No archaeological features. No drains

The area was generally very boggy and partially waterlogged. The trench was recorded very quickly before it became flooded.



Plate 4: Work in progress within marshy area, Trench 6, Field 1, looking west



### **Trench 7**

Field 1

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 28m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.28m and 0.56m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel.

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent gravel.

Sub-stratum: Reddish orange clayey sand with occasional gravel inclusions and lumps of red clay (north-west end). Orangey grey clayey-sand with frequent gravel inclusions and small lenses of greyish orange clay (middle). Greyish orange clayey-sand with occasional gravel inclusions.

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>28mSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.20m	0.16m	0.15m	0.12m	0.16m	0.16m	0.14m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.18m	0.21m	0.25m	0.12m	0.12m	sewer fill	sewer fill
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.38m	0.37m	0.40m	0.24m	0.28m	sewer fill	sewer fill
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.55m	0.50m	0.40m	0.28m	0.56m	0.30m	0.28m

Features: No archaeological features. No land drains.

At the south-east end of this trench was an area of re-deposited clay and sand which was subsequently revealed to be the infill for a sewer pipe trench running the length of the field.

### **Trench 8**

Field 1

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.29m and 0.74m

Topsoil: Very humic dark brown clayey-silt with few small stones which in places lay directly above the natural substratum

Subsoil: Where visible: firm orangey brown sandy silt with frequent gravel

Sub-stratum: Clay and sand and clay

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mSE</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>30mNW</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.20m	0.32m	0.58m	0.19m	0.18m	0.36m	0.27m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	-	-	-	0.28m	not visible	not visible	not visible
<b>Water level*</b>	-	-	-	-	0.46m	0.36m	0.27m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.20m	0.32m	-	0.47m	not visible	not visible	not visible
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.29m	0.42m	0.74m	0.56m	0.74m	0.74m	0.64m

Features: No archaeological features. \*Started filling with water once excavated.

### **Trench 9**

Field 1

Orientation: North-east to South-west

Length: 21m and 7m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.37m and 0.60m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with rare sub-rounded stones

Subsoil: Friable yellowish brown sandy silt with few sub-rounded and sub-angular stones and occasional larger cobbles and granite pieces

Sub-stratum: Orangey brown sand and gravel with occasional patches of red clay\*

\*Disturbance from the sewer pipe was revealed during excavation. The trench was moved to the east to attempt to avoid this but disturbance was located over whole of area, particularly across the western edge.

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNE SW trench</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>1m</b>	<b>4m</b>	<b>7mSW NE trench</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.44m	0.20m	0.24m	0.22m	0.26m	0.23m	0.20m	0.20m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	-	0.30m	0.26m	0.20m	0.13m	0.15m	0.23m	0.15m
<b>*Top of natural/sewer fill</b>	0.60m	0.50m	0.50m	0.42m	0.39m	0.38m	0.43m	0.35m
<b>Base of</b>	0.60m	0.55m	0.53m	0.46m	0.41m	0.40m	0.45m	0.37m

<b>trench</b>							
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Features: No archaeological features. Three stone land drains running east to west

***Trench 10***

Field 1

Orientation: North-east to South-west

Length: 27.3m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.41m and 0.62m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with rare sub-rounded stones

Subsoil: Friable yellowish brown sandy silt with few sub-rounded and sub-angular stones and occasional larger cobbles and granite pieces

Sub-stratum: Orangey brown sand and gravel with occasional patches of red clay

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0m NE</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>27.3m SW</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.20m	0.26m	0.19m	0.23m	0.21m	0.30m	0.30m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.20m	0.22m	0.26m	0.26m	0.26m	0.20m	0.20m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.40m	0.48m	0.45m	0.49m	0.47m	0.50m	0.50m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.41m	0.62m	0.47m	0.52m	0.49m	0.35m	0.52m

Features: No archaeological features. No land drains.

***Trench 11***

Field 1

Orientation: East-south-east to west-north-west

Length: 32m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.44m and 0.64m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel and large granite fragments

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent gravel and large granite fragments

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brownish grey clayey-sand containing occasional red clay lumps and frequent gravel and granite fragments

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mWNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>30mESE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.21m	0.18m	0.18m	0.16m	0.16m	0.16m	0.16m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.25m	0.30m	0.28m	0.20m	0.14m	0.20m	0.16m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.46m	0.48m	0.46m	0.36m	0.30m	0.36m	0.32m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.64m	0.63m	0.56m	0.50m	0.46m	0.50m	0.44m

Features: No archaeological features; three large stone land drains identified running north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east.

### ***Trench 12***

Field 1

Orientation: South-east to north west

Length: 34m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.60m and 0.80m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel and large pieces of granite fragments

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy silt with frequent gravel

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brownish grey clayey-sand.

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>34mSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.24m	0.16m	0.18m	0.22m	0.20m	0.22m	0.16m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.44m	0.38m	0.42m	0.49m	0.38m	0.34m	0.48m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.68m	0.54m	0.60m	0.71m	0.58m	0.56m	0.64m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.70m	0.60m	0.72m	0.80m	0.70m	0.74m	0.80m

Features: One large stone land drain identified running north-east to south-west.

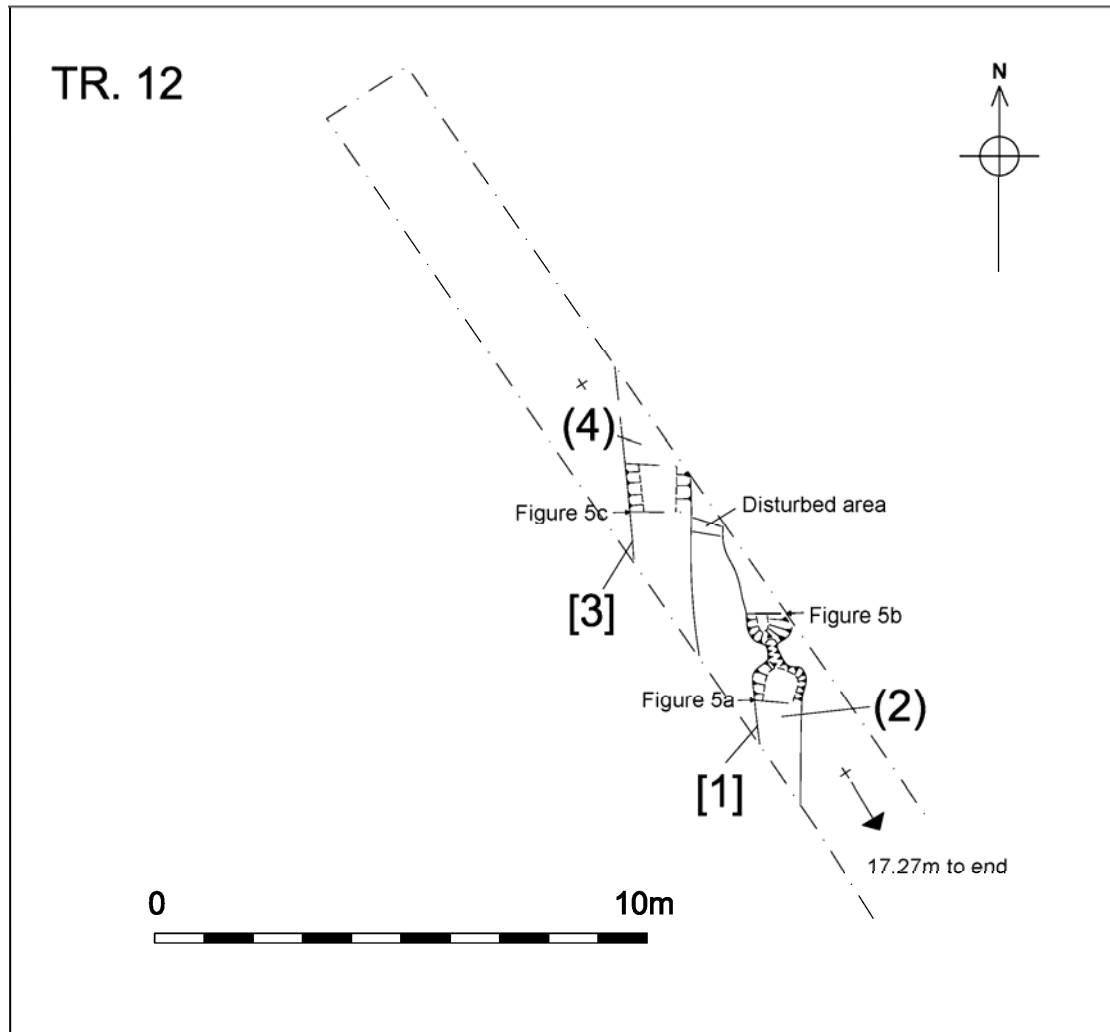


Figure 4: Plan of features in Trench 12

Between 7.4m and 16.7m from the north-western end of the trench were two linear features on a north-east to south-west alignment (Figure 4: Plate 5). Feature [1] was a ditch type feature with a visible length of 4m. It was 0.92m wide and 0.3m deep with steep sides and a flattish base (Figures 5a and b). It consisted of two butt-ends, which were joined by a narrow slot, which was 0.2m wide and 0.1m deep. The fill (2) was a sterile pale bluish grey silty-sand with frequent fine gravel and one sherd of medieval pottery dating from around AD 850-1250. The fill was slightly siltier towards the base.

Around two metres to the north-west of [1] was a similar linear feature [3], which also had a visible length of 4m and was 1.2m wide and 0.18m deep with a gentle curving profile and a flat base (Figure 5c). The fill (4) was identical to (2) but contained no artefacts. Between the two features was a narrow band of disturbed ground.

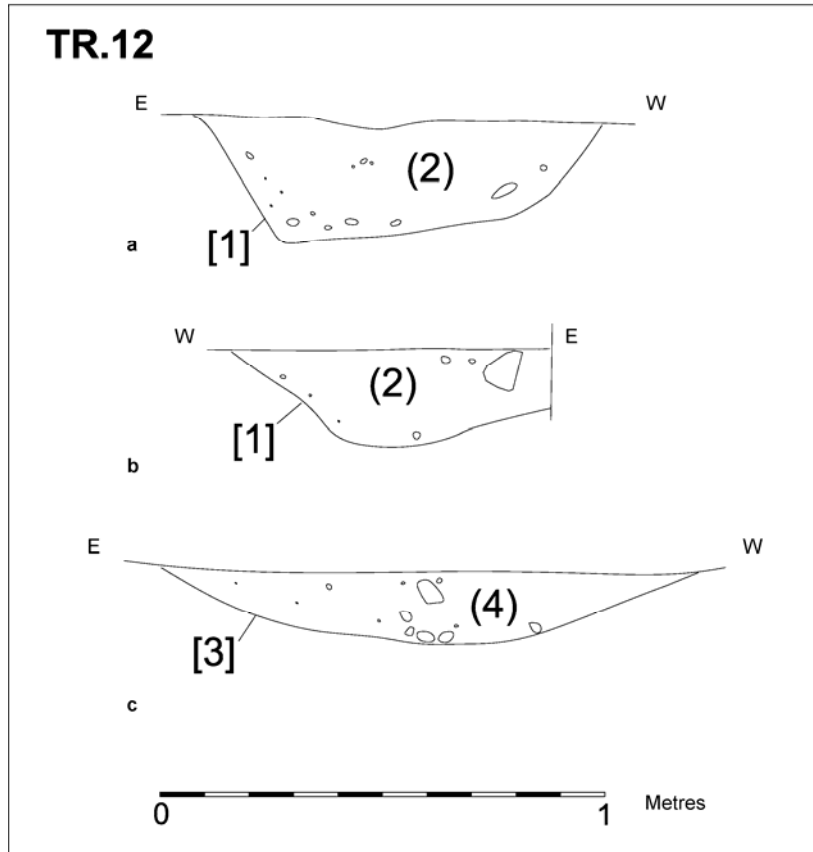


Figure 5: Sections of features in Trench 12



Plate 5: Features in Trench 12, looking north

***Trench 13***

Field 1

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 32m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.60m and 0.82m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey silt with occasional gravel and large pieces of granite fragments

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy silt with frequent gravel and large pieces of granite fragments

Sub-stratum: Mottled reddish orange and brownish orange and pale greyish orange clayey sand with abundant poorly sorted gravel and occasional small lumps of red clay

Interval	0mNW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30mSE
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.15m	0.18m	0.21m	0.22m	0.22m	0.21m	0.24m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.27m	0.36m	0.35m	0.40m	0.41m	0.37m	0.36m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.42m	0.54m	0.56m	0.62m	0.63m	0.58m	0.60m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.60m	0.65m	0.70m	0.72m	0.82m	0.76m	0.78m

Features: No archaeological features or land drains



Plate 6: Work in progress on Trench 13, looking east from spoil terrace

**Trench 14**

Field 2

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 27m and 3m (small section not recorded)

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.44m and 0.64m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Firm mottled greyish orange and greyish blue silty-clay with occasional small angular stones

Alluvial clay layer I: Mottled greyish orange clay

Alluvial clay layer II: Greyish blue clay

Between the two clay layers at around 11.7m from the north-west end there was a layer of dark brownish black peaty loam

Sub-stratum: Greyish orange clayey sand and sandy gravel

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>27mSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.10m	0.16m	0.12m	0.12m	0.12m	0.12m	not recorded
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.13m	0.13m	0.12m	0.19m	0.22m	0.13m	not recorded
<b>Alluvial clay I</b>	0.31m	0.36m	0.36m	-	-	0.36m	not recorded
<b>Peaty layer</b>	-	-	-	0.14m	0.29m	-	not recorded
<b>Alluvial clay II</b>	0.18m	0.27m	0.10m	40mm	50mm	20mm	not recorded
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.72m	0.92m	0.70m	0.49m	0.68m	-	not recorded
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.72m	0.92m	0.70m	0.70m	0.68m	0.63m	not recorded

Features: No archaeological features. One large stone drain at the south-east end running north-west to south-east.

A ceramic drain was uncovered running north-west to south-east at the north-west end of the trench at the beginning of the excavation. This immediately flooded the trench and so the trench was re-positioned to avoid it. The very south-east end of the main trench was also not recorded due to waterlogging.



**Trench 15**

Field 2

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 31m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.60m and 0.92m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Firm mottled greyish orange and greyish blue silty-clay with occasional small angular stones

Sub-stratum: Greyish orange clayey-sand and sandy gravel

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>31mSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.18m	0.18m	0.24m	0.24m	0.22m	0.22m	0.23m
<b>Water Depth</b>	0.50m	0.43m	0.31m	0.30m	0.24m	0.27m	0.17m
<b>Top of natural</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.88m	0.92m	0.70m	0.66m	0.66m	0.65m	0.60m

The trench soon became completely waterlogged and it was not possible to record properly. No archaeological features were seen during excavation.

During excavation it was observed that at the north-west end the topsoil and subsoil overlay brown then blue alluvial clay then greyish orange waterlogged sand, greyish blue alluvial gravels and then the natural sand and gravels.

At the south-west end the topsoil and subsoil overlay dark peaty loam then blue alluvial clay then the natural sands and gravels.



Plate 7: Flooding in trench 15, looking north-west

***Trench 16***

Field 2

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.45m and 0.68m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Soft greyish orange silty clay (I) with occasional small stones overlying dark brownish clayey peat (II)

Sub-stratum: Mottled greyish orange clayey sand and gravel

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mSW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>30mNE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.10m	0.10m	0.12m	0.10m	0.14m	0.13m	0.10m
<b>Subsoil Depth (I)</b>	0.14m	0.16m	0.18m	0.14m	0.26m	0.16m	0.16m
<b>Subsoil Depth (II)</b>	0.14m	0.12m	0.16m	0.20m	60mm	0.11m	40mm
<b>Top of</b>	0.38m	0.38m	0.46m	0.44m	0.46m	0.40m	0.30m

<b>Natural</b>							
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.45m	0.48m	0.68m	0.58m	0.60m	0.48m	0.55m

Features: No archaeological features. Three ceramic land drains running north-west to south-east. The trench soon became waterlogged after excavation.

***Trench 17***

Field 2

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.58m and 0.82m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Soft greyish orange silty clay (I) with occasional gravel and large granite fragments overlying bluish grey clay with frequent gravel (II)

Sub-stratum: Brownish orange clayey sand and gravel with occasional lenses of gravelly clay

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mSW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>30mNE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.12m	0.13m	90mm	0.10m	0.11m	0.18m	0.12m
<b>Subsoil Depth (I)</b>	0.32m	0.24m	0.24m	0.14m	0.23m	0.24m	0.26m
<b>Subsoil Depth (II)</b>	0.22m	0.27m	0.22m	0.24m	0.15m	0.13m	0.12m
<b>Top of Natural</b>	0.66m	0.64m	0.55m	0.48m	0.49m	0.55m	0.50m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.75m	0.75m	0.70m	0.58m	0.60m	0.82m	0.64m

Features: No archaeological features.

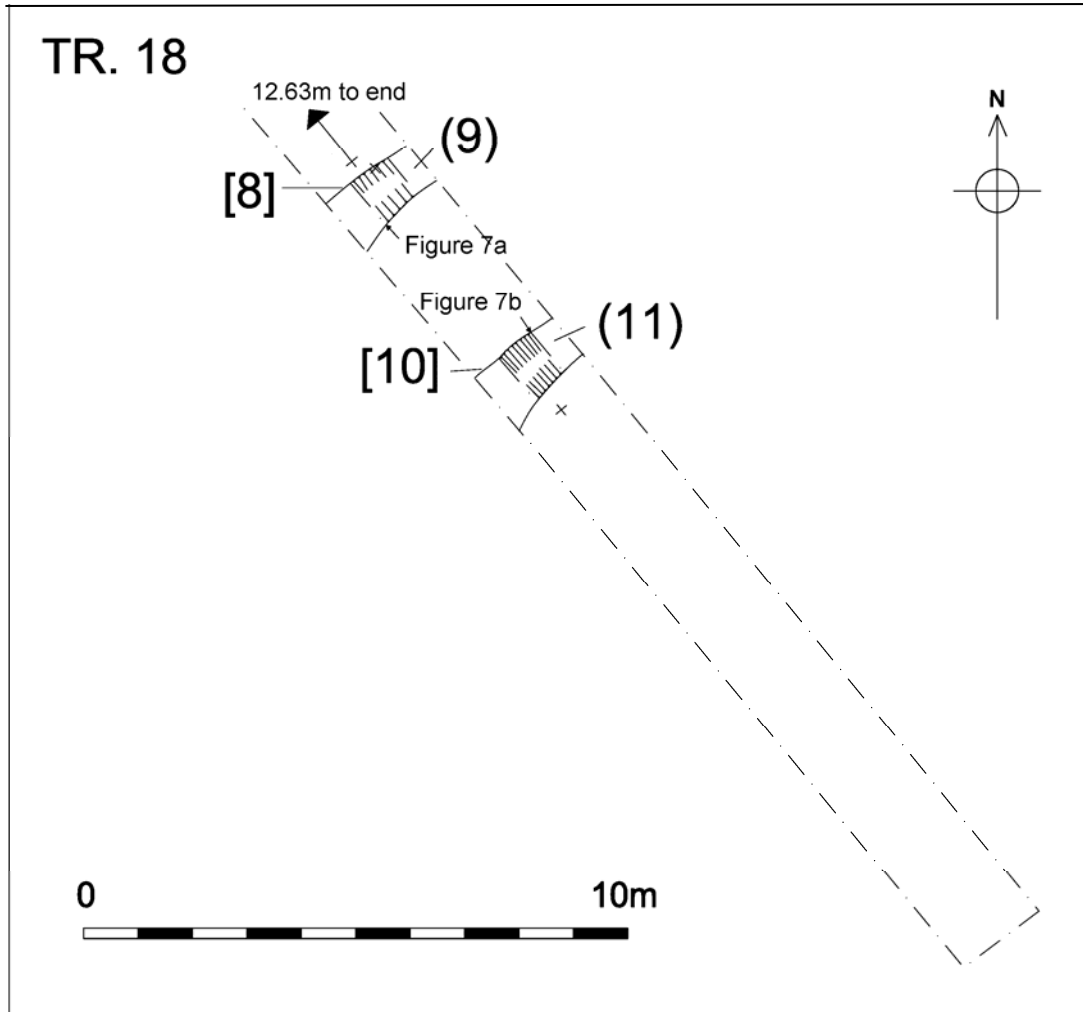


Figure 6: Post-excitation plan of Trench 18, showing features

**Trench 18**

Field 2

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.44m and 0.72m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Firm greyish orange silty-clay with occasional small pebbles

Sub-stratum: Mottled bluish grey and reddish orange sand and gravel, overlying mottled greyish orange and brownish red clayey sand and gravel

Interval	0mNW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30mSE
Topsoil Depth	0.24m	0.24m	0.20m	0.24m	0.26m	0.20m	0.30m

<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.20m	0.22m	0.24m	0.19m	0.25m	0.20m	0.20m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.44m	0.46m	0.44m	0.43m	0.51m	0.40m	0.50m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.45m	0.56m	0.60m	0.63m	0.72m	0.44m	0.55m

Features: Two parallel linear features crossed the trench on a south-west to north-east alignment at 13m and 17m from the north-west end (Figure 6: Plate 8). The first [8] had a visible length of 1.9m and was 0.84-0.87m wide (Figure 7a). The profile was fairly smooth with a slightly steeper side on the north-west side. The base was curved and flattish and the feature was between 0.16m-0.29m deep. The fill (9) was a loose reddish grey silty-sand with frequent small and medium pebbles.

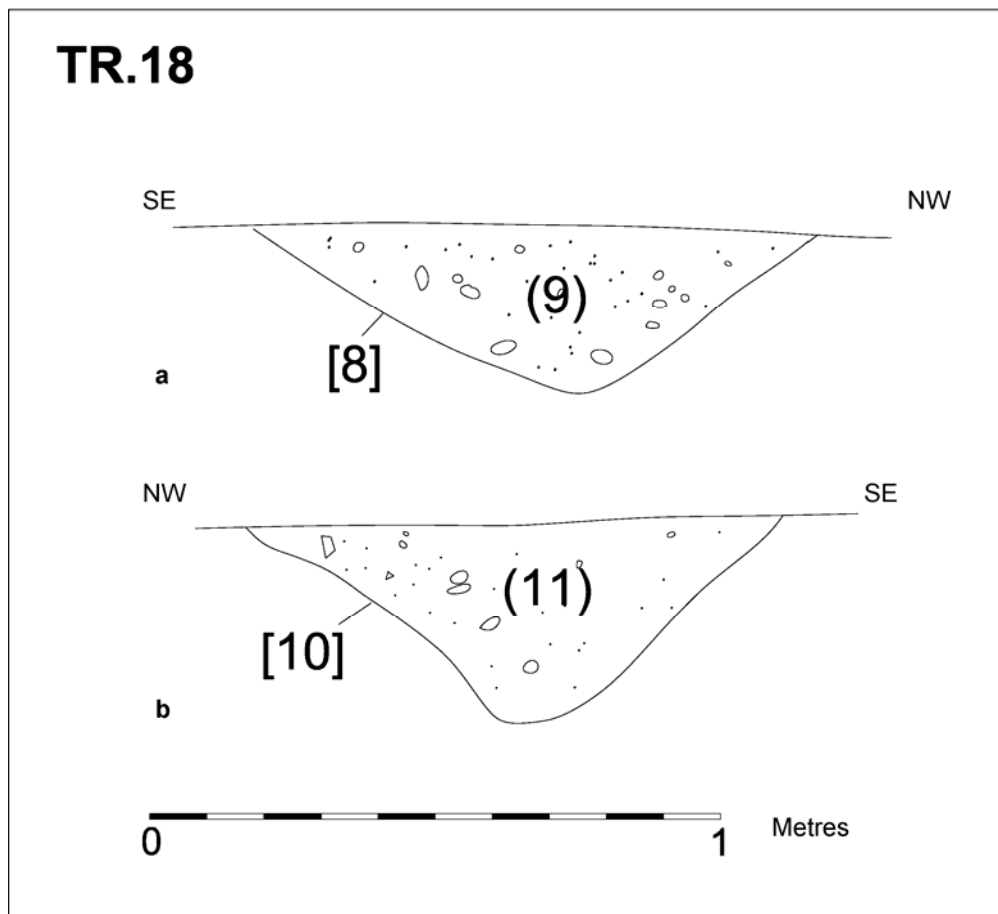


Figure 7: Sections of features in Trench 18

The second ditch [10] had a visible length of 1.9m and was 0.9m-1m wide, 0.31m-0.36m deep with 45 degree sloping sides and a u-shaped profile, although the north-west edge was slightly convex in shape (Figure 7b). The fill (11) was a weak mottled orangey brown and yellowish grey sandy-silt with frequent small and medium pebbles. There were no finds in either fill.

A large drain ran over these features from the south-east end.



Plate 8: Post-excavation view of Trench 18, looking south-east

***Trench 19***

Field 2

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 29m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.55m and 0.80m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Firm greyish orange silty-clay with occasional small pebbles

Sub-stratum: Mottled bluish grey and reddish orange sand and gravel, overlying mottled greyish orange and brownish red clayey sand and gravel

Interval	0mNW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29mSE
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.21m	0.22m	0.22m	0.20m	0.22m	0.20m	0.28m
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.38m	0.36m	0.35m	0.25m	0.22m	0.18m	0.12m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.59m	0.58m	0.57m	0.45m	0.44m	0.38m	0.40m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.70m	0.80m	0.80m	0.80m	0.67m	0.55m	0.60m

Features: A linear feature [5] lay across the trench at around 5-6m from the SE end. It had a visible length of 1.9m and lay broadly on a west-south-east alignment.

The feature was 2m wide and 0.36m deep. The north-west side of the feature was steep whereas the south-east side was gently sloped. The base of the feature was flat.

The fill consisted of two components. The lower horizon (7) was a soft mottled orange and bluish grey clayey-sand with frequent fine gravel and occasional pebbles. The upper layer (6) was a firm dark bluish grey clay with occasional gravel. There were no finds.



Plate 9: Post-excavation view of [5], Trench 19, looking north-east

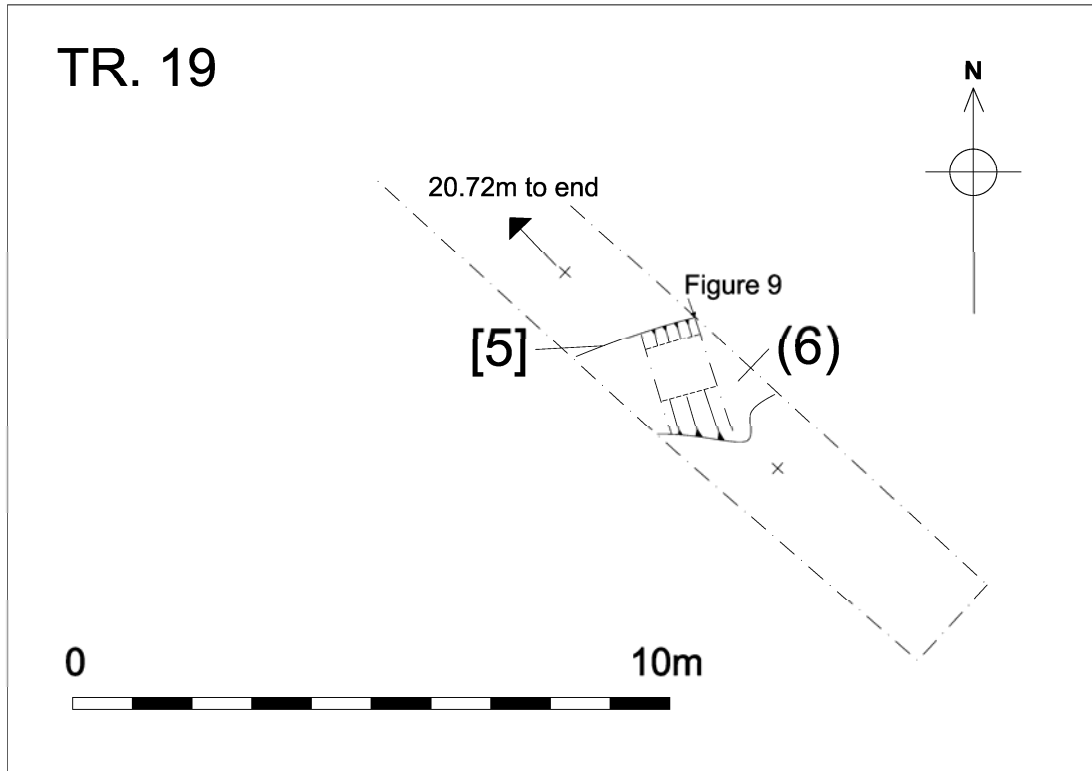


Figure 8: Post-excitation plan of Trench 19

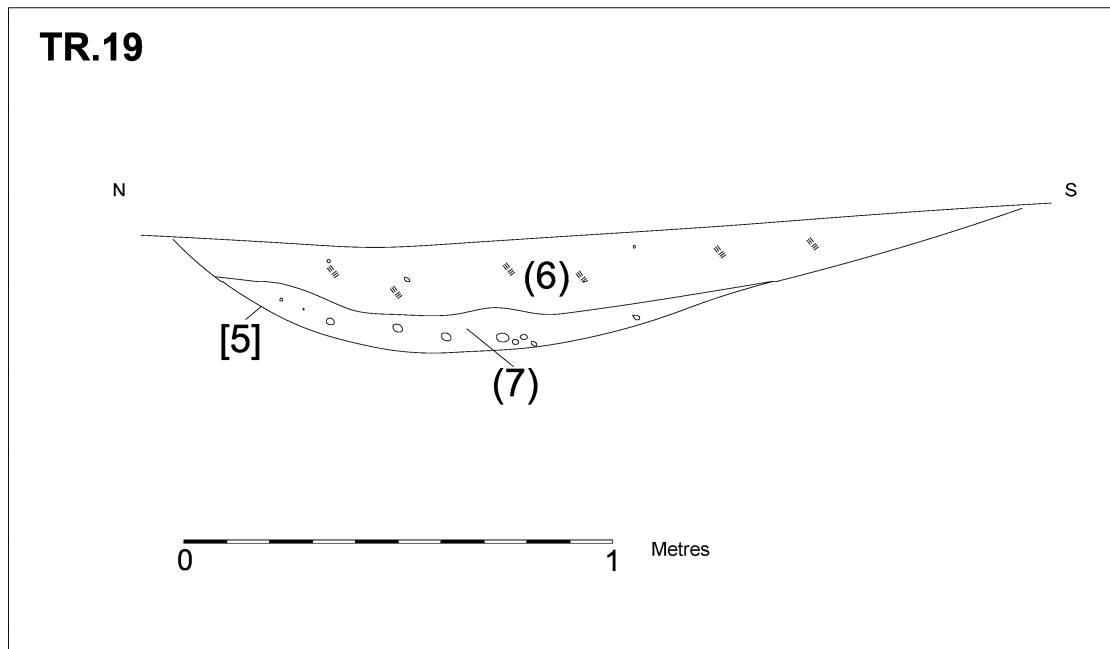


Figure 9: Section in Trench 19



**Trench 20**

Field 2

Orientation: South-east to north-west

Length: 33m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.28m and 0.60m

Topsoil: Loose greyish brown clayey silt with occasional small stones

Subsoil: Firm greyish orange silty clay with occasional small pebbles

Sub-stratum: Grey clay containing abundant poorly sorted gravel and large pebbles and occasional lenses of red clay. At the south-east end was mottled bluish grey and pinkish red clay with frequent gravel inclusions

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mNW</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>31mSE</b>
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.17m	0.17m	0.14m	0.14m	0.16m	0.16m	0.16m
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.17m	0.21m	0.12m	0.14m	0.10m	0.22m	0.28m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.34m	0.38m	0.26m	0.28m	0.26m	0.38m	0.44m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.34m	0.38m	0.30m	0.28m	0.30m	0.44m	0.60m

Features: No archaeological features. No drains

**Trench 21**

Field 1

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Depth: Between 0.35m and 0.55m

Topsoil: Friable greyish brown clayey-silt with occasional gravel

Subsoil: Firm orangey brown sandy-silt with frequent gravel

Sub-stratum: Mottled orangey grey and brownish grey clayey-sand containing occasional red clay lumps and frequent gravel and granite fragments

<b>Interval</b>	<b>0mSE</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>10m</b>	<b>15m</b>	<b>20m</b>	<b>25m</b>	<b>30mNW</b>

<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.28m	0.30m	0.22m	0.20m	0.20m	0.22m	0.24m
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.18m	0.20m	0.24m	0.20m	0.14m	0.19m	0.10m
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.46m	0.50m	0.46m	0.40m	0.34m	0.41m	0.34m
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.46m	0.55m	0.48m	0.45m	0.40m	0.45m	0.35m

Features: No archaeological features. No drains

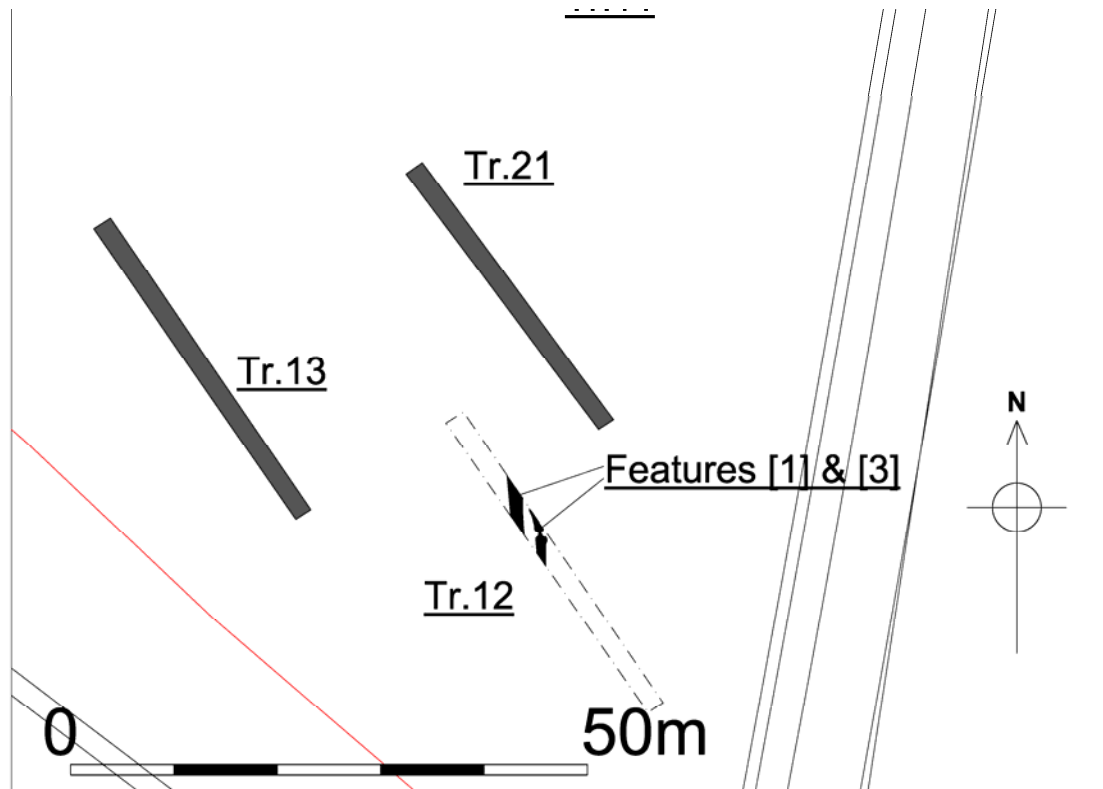


Figure 10: Plan of Trenches with archaeology in Field 1

### Conclusion

The field evaluation on the land at Sapcote Road revealed largely negative results except for the trenches in the very eastern edge of the site.

The trenches revealed that the sub-stratum in the area is largely sand and gravel with some clay on the higher ground at the eastern side of the site (Trenches 1-5, 7, 10-13, 17-19 and 21), with clay and gravel in Trench 20. Along the western side of both fields, where the land is marshy in places, the lower substratum was still sand and gravel but overlain by layers of clay and peat in some areas, suggesting that at various junctures the land here had been subject to long term flooding and even waterlogging. The water table on the western side of the site was very high and water often seeped through the sand and gravel during excavation (Trenches 6, 8, 14-16).

The marshy area on the western side of Field 1 (covered by Trenches 6 and 8) may have existed for some time. The less marshy area on Field 2 (covered by Trenches 14-

16) may have been made worse since the spoil terrace was created at the south-western edge of Field 1. By raising the land here the drainage in Field 2 may have become more poorly drained as the water would be forced to drain into the stream across a narrower area of land.

Many of the trenches at the northern end of the site contained a large amount of granite rubble within the topsoil and sub-soil and, particularly in Trenches 1 and 2, layers of granite chips between the layers. This is testament to the fact that the area was used to store quarried material before the construction of the M1 during the late 1950s and 1960s.

Trenches 7 and 9 contained areas of disturbance, which are likely to have been caused by a sewer pipe trench, which runs across the site broadly south-west to north-east; there are several manholes located over this area and a further two located close to the field boundaries on a similar alignment.

The large number of drains encountered, many of which were of stone rubble, and possibly dating to the post-medieval period, would suggest that there has always been an issue with drainage in this area. This may also explain the location of the archaeological features, which are contained within the trenches located on the higher drier ground at the very eastern edge of the site.

All the archaeological features discovered are shallow ditches. The two ditches in Trench 12, features [1] and [3] are on the same alignment (north-south) and are very similar in profile. The fills (2) and (4) consist of very similar material. Feature [1] appears to consist of two butt ends. The gap between the two ends may have been for access, but a narrow gully lies between the two, possibly to drain one into the other. Both are quite silty at the base and this may point to them being drainage ditches. The single piece of medieval pottery gives a date for the fill (2) as between AD 850-1250, although most likely from around the late 11th century to mid-12th century.

Trench 21 was excavated to trace the extent of features [1] and [3] but they do not appear to continue in this direction. Either they turned to the north-west and therefore were not picked up in Trench 21, or they terminate between Trenches 12 and 21 (Figure 9).

The other features in Trenches 18 are largely on a south-west to north-east alignment with the ditch [5] in Trench 19 aligned almost east-west. Both features [8] and [10] in Trench 18 are parallel to one another with around 3m between them. They may be drainage ditches each side of a trackway, although no trace of such a feature was observed in section or during excavation. One of these features may be related to feature [5] in Trench 19, which is on a similar alignment but appears to head more to the east. There did not appear to be any archaeological features to the west of these; Trenches 14-17 were negative as was Trench 20 so presumably feature [5] heads east away from the corner of the field (Figure 10).

The evaluation has yielded evidence of linear features, possibly drainage ditches associated with agricultural practices or possibly, in the case of features [8], [10], and possibly [5], drainage ditches at the sides of a trackway. The features are limited to the very south-eastern corners of both fields and this suggests that the Sapcote Road site lies at the very edge of the area of activity. Only one feature [1] contained a single piece of medieval pottery suggesting a tentative date for the features as Saxo-Norman (AD 850-1250), most likely the period between the late 11th and mid 12th centuries.

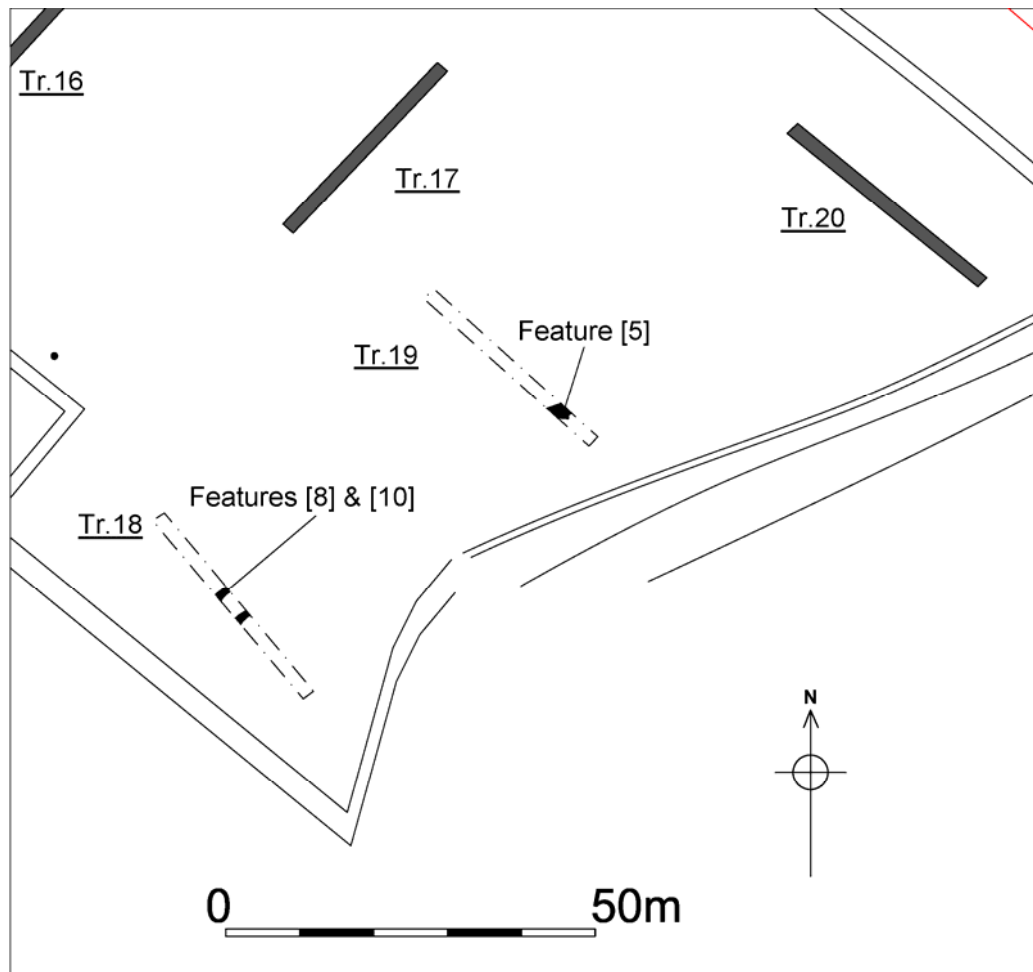


Figure 11: Plan of Trenches with archaeology in Field 2

## References

Graham, A., 2010 *Geophysical Survey: Sapcote, Leicestershire*. Stratascan Report : J2654

Hunt, L., 2009 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for land off of Sapcote Road, Sapcote, Leicestershire (SP 489 939). ULAS Report 2009-024

## Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Jelson Ltd for their help and co-operation with this project. The work was carried out by Leon Hunt and Matthew Morris of ULAS and the project manager was Patrick Clay. Leon Hunt would like to thank local historian Ray Haslett and the machine driver on site, Rob Rawlins.

## Archive

An archive will be prepared for this work and this will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council with accession number X.A182.2011.

The archive consists of the following:

1 Unbound copy of this report 2011-200

1 Unbound copy of DBA report (Hunt 2009) 2009-024

- 21 Trench recording sheets
- 11 Context sheets
- 1 Photographic Record
- 1 Contact sheet of digital photographs
- 1 CD of digital photographs
- 1 Set B and W contact prints
- 1 Set B and W Negatives
- 1 Drawing record
- 2 A3 Sheets of permatrace

The report will be listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/> (see Appendix II).

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22-12-2011

### Appendix I: Context summary

Context No.	Cut	Trench	Description	Finds
1	1	12	Cut for ditch	1 sherd pottery
2	1	12	Fill of ditch	1 sherd pottery
3	3	12	Cut of ditch	None
4	3	12	Fill of Ditch	None
5	5	19	Cut of ditch	None
6	5	19	Upper fill of ditch	None
7	5	19	Lower fill of ditch	None
8	8	18	Cut of ditch	None
9	8	18	Fill of ditch	None
10	10	18	Cut of ditch	None
11	10	18	Fill of ditch	None

### Appendix II: OASIS Record

INFORMATION REQUIRED	DATA
Project Name	Sapcote Road, Sapcote
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Leon Hunt
Previous/Future work	DBA
Current Land Use	Pasture
Development Type	Housing
Reason for Investigation	PPS 5
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-planning permission
Site Co ordinates	SP 489 939
Start/end dates of field work	7 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2011
Archive Recipient	LMARS
Height min/max	80-85m aOD
Study Area	6.3ha
Finds	Pottery

### Appendix III: Post-Roman Pottery

*Deborah Sawday*

#### The Finds

The pottery, was catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, (MPRG 1998; 2001) and the ULAS fabric series (Davies and Sawday 1999). The results are shown below (Table 1).

Stamford ware was a major product of kilns based at Stamford, Lincolnshire, dating generally from c.850-1250 (Kilmurry 1980), (Leach 1987). It represents the most common fine wheel thrown late Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery found in Leicestershire during this period.

#### Bibliography

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Kilmurry, K., 1980 *The Pottery Industry of Stamford, Lincolnshire, AD 850-1250*. Oxford: Brit. Archaeol. Rep. (Brit. Ser.) **84**.

Leach, H., 1987 'Stamford Ware Fabrics'. *Medieval Ceramics* **11**, 69-74.

MPRG, 1998 *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms*. Medieval Pottery Research Group, London.

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Table 1: The medieval pottery by fabric, sherd number and weight (grams) by context.

Context	Fabric/Ware	Nos	Grams	Comments
(2) [1] ditch	ST2 - Stamford Fine ware	1	4	Body sherd, Stamford fabric G, (Kilmurry 1980) re-defined as fine Stamford ware (Leach 1987). Over fired and patchy thin lead on exterior surfaces. This type of glaze was identified at Stamford as Kilmurry as glaze 2, and is thought to be most common from the late 11th to the mid 12th century (Kilmurry 1980, 133-134).

Site/ Parish: Sapcote Rd, Sapcote, Leics.  
 Accession No.: XA182 2011  
 Document Ref: sapcote1.docx  
 Material: pottery  
 Site Type: open fields

Submitter: L. Hunt  
 Identifier: D. Sawday  
 Date of Identification: 21.12.11  
 Method of Recovery: evaluation  
 Job Number: 11 - 642

## **Appendix IV Environmental assessment**

*Anita Radini*

Samples from Contexts 2, 4 89 and 11 were assessed for potential of environmental analysis. The samples were scanned for visible presence of charred plant remains (such as charcoal fragments and flecks), animal bone fragments, and any other biological remains such as insects or snails. The samples comprised fine brown silty-clay with no charcoal fragments or other inclusions and were therefore of very low potential for providing any environmental information.



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