University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

An archaeological field evaluation at the former King Edward VII School, Burton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire SK 759 179

Leon Hunt

ULAS Report No 2013-148

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for

Leicestershire County Council Property Services

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An archaeological field evaluation at the former King Edward VII School, Burton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 759 179)

Leon Hunt

Summary

An archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land at the former King Edward VII School, Burton Road, Melton Mowbray in advance of the proposed re-development of the site.

The site consists of an area of grassed playing fields to the north and east of the disused school buildings, along with an area of arable land to the east of the school grounds.

A geophysical survey was carried out on the land prior to the archaeological work and a number of anomalies, which may have been archaeological in origin, were identified within the playing field area, along with ridge and furrow earthworks and possible field drains. The survey revealed substantial areas of disturbance in the southern part of the eastern field, with archaeological features absent from the northern area.

A total of 20 trenches was placed across the playing fields to the west , with a further nine placed across the arable field to the east. Most of the trenches in the western part of the playing fields were negative for archaeological features, but six of the trenches in the southern and eastern parts of the site contained a number of large ditches and gullies, most of which could be dated to the Roman period from the 2nd century AD through to the 4th century AD with an emphasis on the second half of the 2nd century and the 4th century. These mainly corresponded with geophysical anomalies with predicted archaeological origins.

The large amount of material recovered from the features points to the centre of activity being near to the site possibly focused to the south-east of the present school site, close to the neighbouring new Sixth Form Centre.

The trenches on the arable field were all negative for archaeological remains. The results in this area also mirror the findings of the geophysical survey as the southern and central parts of the field appear to be covered in made up ground, mainly consisting of the remains of the school that previously occupied the Sixth Form Centre site.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Leicestershire County Council Property Services to carry out an archaeological field evaluation at the former King Edward VII School, Burton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 759 179) in advance of the proposed development of the school site.

This archaeological work is in accordance with NPPF Section 12: Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment.

Melton Mowbray is situated in a rich archaeological landscape and remains from the Bronze Age and Roman periods have been discovered close to the application area. The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that there are two possible archaeological sites listed as lying within the school grounds: a windmill (HER Ref. No.**MLE3912**) and a possible Bronze Age barrow (**MLE3927**).

Figure 1: Site Location

Location and Geology

The application area lies on the eastern side of Burton Road (A606), 1.2km south-east of Melton Mowbray town centre (Figure 1). The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 142 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of Glacial Till (Boulder Clay). The site lies at a height of *c.* 106 m aOD.

The site consists of three areas to the north and east of the now disused school buildings; the main playing fields of the school (Western Area, Field 1), a smaller

section of playing fields to the east of the larger playing fields (Western Area, Field 2) and part of a large agricultural field to the east (Eastern Area, Field 3).

The western part of the site is a large sub-rectangular area of 4.9 hectares (Field 1), the smaller field is a smaller rectangular area of 0.65 hectares (Field 2) and the section of agricultural land to the east is a rectangular area of around 3 hectares.

The playing field area is largely flat with a slight fall from south-east to north-west. The site is mainly surrounded by neighbouring school buildings, except to the north-west where there is a small wooded area. There is a notable ridge running north to south across the western part of the site, which corresponds with a former hedge boundary shown on early maps of the site (Hunt 2007).

The agricultural field falls significantly to the north from around 107m aOD to around 97m aOD and contained rough ground over the western part of the field and crop stubble over the eastern part of the field at the time of the evaluation. To the north was an overgrown area of brambles and bushes and the backs of neighbouring properties. The field was open to the east where it joined the larger field, but the eastern edge could be demarcated by an electricity pylon, which ran the length of the field from north to south. A wind turbine lies close to the southern edge of the site and supplies power to the nearby Sixth Form Centre (MV16).

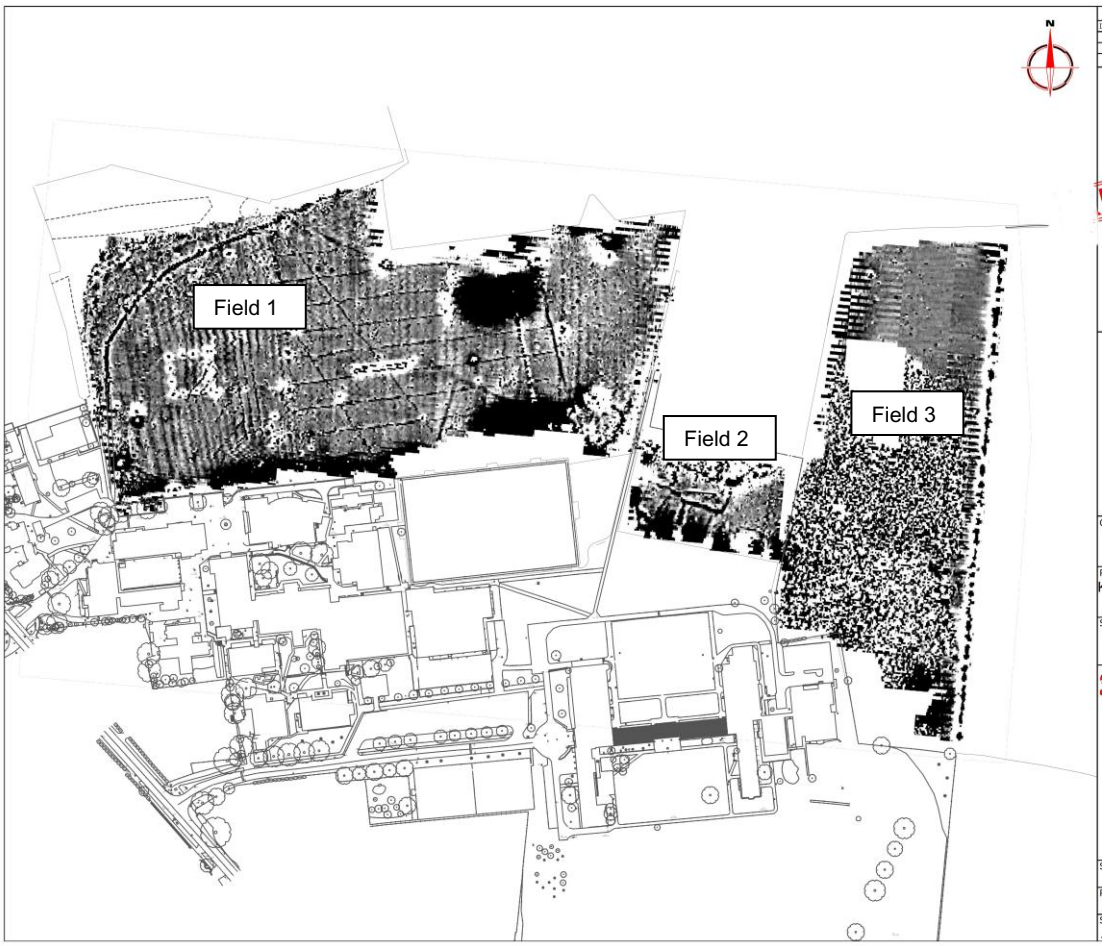

Figure 2: Geophysical results of study area: Raw data plan

Historical and Archaeological Background

A desk-based assessment was prepared for the site in 2007 (Hunt 2007). The Historical Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that Melton Mowbray lies in an area rich in archaeological remains from the prehistoric period through to the medieval period and beyond.

The school grounds lie outside the medieval core of the town and within an area where the archaeological potential is largely unattested. However, the HER for the area shows that heritage assets from the Bronze Age and Roman periods have been discovered close to the application area.

There are two sites; a windmill (MLE3912) and a possible Bronze Age barrow (MLE3927) that are listed within the application area. Therefore, there was seen to be moderate to high potential for archaeological remains to be present within the application area.

A geophysical survey has been prepared (Richardson 2013), which identified features and anomalies potentially of archaeological origin in addition to clear evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation (Figure 2). Many of these features were likely to be associated with drainage and other services; for instance, a defined grid pattern across the centre of the playing fields is clearly associated with the drainage of the central sports pitch.

Figure 3: Geophysical results: Interpretive plan.
Possible archaeological features in yellow, brown and red,
ridge and furrow in green and disturbances in lilac

The anomalies picked up by the geophysical survey that may be archaeological in origin are shown in yellow, brown and red on the interpretive plan (Figure 3). It was noted that at least one of the anomalies running north-west to south-east corresponded with a known drain running along this orientation (see Figure 4).

Much of the eastern agricultural field would appear to consist of made-up ground. This would be in keeping with local knowledge of the area as the field was used to dump material from the demolished former school building to the west, which was replaced by the new sixth form centre (M. Watchorn and Mr Lomas, pers. comm.).

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.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation is 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 existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

Methodology

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2010) in accordance with their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2010). The archaeological work followed the *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological work* prepared by ULAS.

For the first phase of the work (Fields 1 & 2) a *c*. 2% sample of the area was proposed for trenching (1120m²), the equivalent of 16 30m x 1.8m, two 50m x 1.8m and two 20m x 1.8m trenches. A provisional trench plan was prepared for the WSI.

Prior to the evaluation being undertaken, a service plan was requested. This indicated that an electrical cable runs from the neighbouring schools, across the playing fields from north to south. Further cables run to the floodlights which lie within the central sports pitch area. In addition, a request was made not to place trenches across this central pitch as it was still in use. Therefore, the two trenches that were to be placed across this area were not excavated and it was proposed that 14 30m trenches were to be excavated, along with one 50m trench. The second 50m trench was excavated as two 25m trenches after a large drain was encountered and the 20m trenches were largely used as annexes to the trenches that contained archaeological features (Figure 4).

For the second phase of work (Field 3) a *c.* 3% sample of the area was proposed for trenching (810m²), the equivalent of 15 30m x 1.8m trenches. A further WSI was prepared and stipulated that if made-up ground was encountered and excavation proved difficult that the evaluation would be adapted to account for any problems.

A total of nine trenches was excavated due to the depth and disturbances caused by the made up ground.

Figure 4: Plan of trench locations, western area. Negative trenches in black

Within Fields 1 and 2 the trenches were excavated using a large tracked excavator fitted with a 2.1m wide ditching bucket, thus making up the slight shortfall in sampled area (Plate 1). A 1.8m blade was used for Field 3.

The first phase of work, within the playing fields (Fields 1 & 2) was carried out between 15th-23rd August 2013 and the second phase of work upon the agricultural land (Field 3) was carried out between 5th-7th November 2013.

Results

Western Area (Fields 1 & 2)

The topsoil throughout most of the site was a soft or firm dark grey or brown silty clay with small occasional pebbles and charcoal flecks. In some areas, particularly on the eastern side the topsoil was a brownish grey clayey silt with small occasional nodules of flint and chalk. The subsoil was normally dark yellowish grey or brown silty clay with occasional small pebbles or nodules of flint and chalk.

The natural substratum was mainly mottled greyish yellow and greyish orange stony clay with chalk and flint inclusions. In some areas the clay was also quite sandy.

Archaeological features described in the text below are identified by their cut numbers, in square brackets (i.e [2]), whereas their fills are identified by numbers in round brackets (i.e (1).

Plate 1: Work in progress on Trench 03, looking south from Trench 02

Trench 01

Orientation: NE-SW

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (NE)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (SW)
Made Ground	1.06m	1.05m	1.04m	1.10m	1.12m	0.92m	0.40m
Topsoil	0.30m	0.32m	0.28m	0.28m	0.20m	0.26m	-
Subsoil	0.34m	0.37m	0.28m	0.16m	0.08m	-	-
Top of Natural	1.70m	1.74m	1.60m	1.54m	1.40m	-	-
Base of trench	1.80m	1.90m	1.78m	1.60m	1.48m	1.18m	0.40m

No archaeological features or artefacts were discovered within this trench. The trench contained a thick layer (up to 1.12m) of made up ground overlaying the buried topsoil. Several field drains were noted crossing the trench from south to north.

Trench 02

Orientation: N-S

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (N)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (S)
Topsoil	0.28m	0.26m	0.28m	0.24m	0.30m	0.28m	0.26m
Subsoil	0.28m	0.30m	0.22m	0.24m	0.30m	0.36m	0.33m
Top of Natural	0.56m	0.56m	0.50m	0.48m	0.60m	0.64m	0.59m
Base of trench	0.66m	0.62m	0.60m	0.58m	0.69m	0.72m	0.63m

No archaeological features were discovered within this trench. Two narrow gullies were identified within the trench. These were sampled and found to be very diffuse and filled with subsoil. They were not recorded as archaeological features.

Trench 03

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (E)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (W)
Topsoil	0.28m	0.22m	0.22m	0.25m	0.22m	0.24m	0.22m
Subsoil	0.12m	0.18m	0.25m	0.25m	0.27m	0.21m	0.22m
Top of Natural	0.40m	0.40m	0.47m	0.50m	0.49m	0.45m	0.44m
Base of trench	0.50m	0.56m	0.60m	0.58m	0.64m	0.56m	0.44m

No archaeological features were discovered within this trench. Three field drains were identified running south to north across the trench, including one within a furrow. Two further furrows were identified spaced around 6m apart and running north/ south.

Trench 04

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (E)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (W)
Topsoil	0.34m	0.23m	0.25m	0.20m	0.23m	0.30m	0.30m
Subsoil	0.16m	0.17m	0.19m	0.16m	0.17m	0.22m	0.30m
Top of	0.50m	0.40m	0.44m	0.36m	0.40m	0.52m	0.60m

Natural							
Base of trench	0.76m	0.54m	0.44m	0.42m	0.49m	0.68m	0.64m

No archaeological features were identified within this trench. Seven field drains were identified crossing the trench from south to north.

Trench 05

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	**0m (W)**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**30m (E)**
Topsoil	0.26m	0.24m	0.23m	0.28m	0.27m	0.28m	0.28m
Subsoil	0.08m	0.12m	0.11m	0.12m	0.17m	0.10m	0.20m
Top of Natural	0.34m	0.36m	0.34m	0.40m	0.44m	0.38m	0.49m
Base of trench	0.40m	0.50m	0.42m	0.50m	0.54m	0.50m	0.62m

No archaeological features were identified within this trench. Three field drains were identified crossing the trench from south to north.

Trench 06

Orientation: NW-SE

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	**0m (NW)**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**30m (SE)**
Topsoil	0.20m	0.26m	0.19m	0.22m	0.30m	0.24m	0.30m
Subsoil	0.06m	0.13m	0.15m	0.16m	0.19m	0.13m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.26m	0.39m	0.34m	0.38m	0.49m	0.37m	0.44m
Base of trench	0.35m	0.45m	0.42m	0.60m	0.54m	0.48m	0.50m

No archaeological features were identified within this trench. Three field drains were identified crossing the trench from south to north.

Trench 07

Orientation: NE-SW

Length: 50m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (NE)	10m	20m	30m	40m	50m (SW)
Topsoil	0.21m	0.22m	0.20m	0.22m	0.26m	0.25m
Subsoil	0.27m	0.21m	0.24m	0.29m	0.28m	0.29m
Top of Natural	0.48m	0.43m	0.44m	0.51m	0.54m	0.54m
Base of trench	0.56m	0.54m	0.46m	0.62m	0.67m	0.68m

No archaeological features were identified within this trench. Two large field drains were identified crossing the trench from south-east to north-west. These correspond with two large anomalies identified during the geophysical survey.

Plate 2: Post excavation view of Trench 07, looking north-east

Trench 08

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (W)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (E)
Topsoil	0.18m	0.21m	0.24m	0.24m	0.22m	0.24m	0.21m
Subsoil	0.11m	0.22m	0.18m	0.19m	0.16m	0.17m	0.21m
Top of Natural	0.29m	0.43m	0.42m	0.43m	0.38m	0.41m	0.42m
Base of trench	0.36m	0.49m	0.50m	0.54m	0.45m	0.53m	0.46m

No archaeological features were identified within this trench. Two large field drains were identified crossing the trench from south to north. These may be part of the large grid system of field drains identified during the geophysical survey.

Trench 09

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (SW)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (NE)
Topsoil	0.18m	0.19m	0.18m	0.20m	0.18m	0.20m	0.20m
Subsoil	0.08m	0.16m	0.10m	0.16m	0.20m	0.13m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.26m	0.35m	0.28m	0.36m	0.38m	0.33m	0.34m
Base of trench	0.26m	0.52m	0.36m	0.47m	0.45m	0.40m	0.40m

No archaeological features were identified within this trench. Two small field drains were identified crossing the trench from east to west. Also, a much larger drain was also identified corresponding with a drain identified on the service plan and by the geophysical survey (see Figure 4).

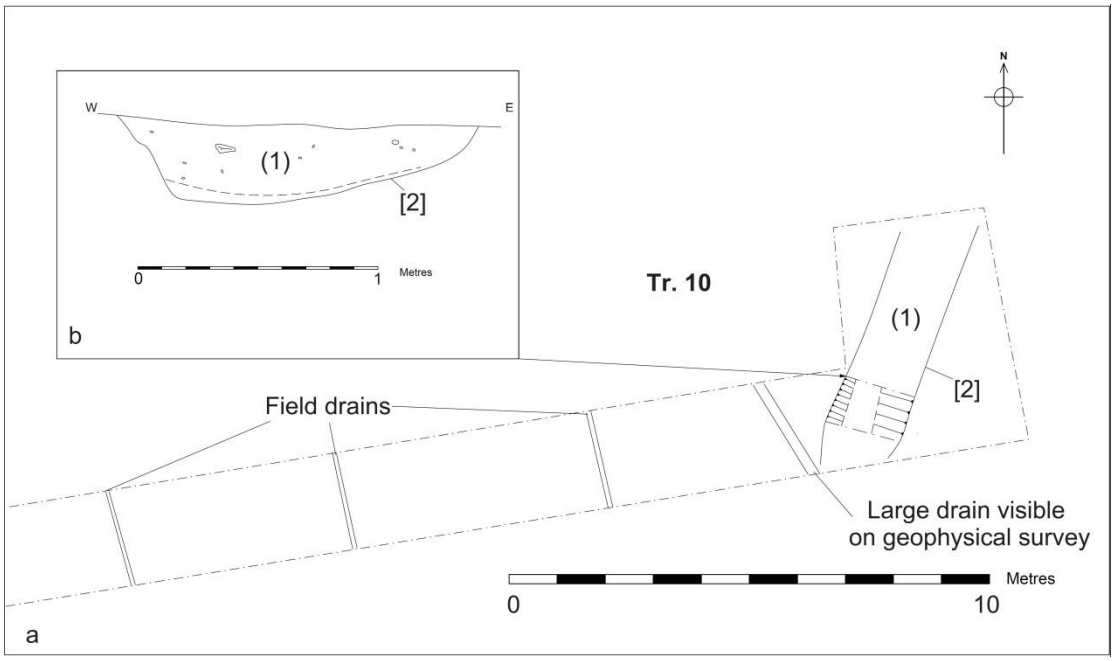

Figure 5: Plan and section of Trench 10, showing features

Trench 10

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30.5m + 2.7m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (W)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (E)
Topsoil	0.21m	0.25m	0.24m	0.21m	0.21m	0.22m	0.36m
Subsoil	0.19m	0.15m	0.26m	0.25m	0.18m	-	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.40m	0.40m	0.50m	0.46m	0.39m	-	0.46m
Base of trench	0.49m	0.40m	0.50m	0.46m	0.39m	0.22m	0.56m

Contexts: (1), [2]

Plate 3: Feature [2] in Trench 10, looking north-east

Three small field drains were located running south to north across the trench. A further larger drain was identified running south-east to north-west across the trench, which corresponded with the large linear anomaly identified on the geophysical survey.

A linear feature was identified running across the trench from south-west to north-east and so the trench was extended at the eastern end to the north by 2.7m to clarify the feature. The feature was found to be a 1.47m ditch, visible for 5.3m across the trench and consisting of a cut [2] with a western steep side and a gently sloping eastern side. The base, at a depth of 0.32m was relatively flat and uneven. The fill of the ditch (1) consisted of an orangey grey silty-clay, becoming more greyish orange at the base of the feature. The fill contained frequent sub-rounded small chalk and flint nodules and occasional charcoal flecks. There were some large angular stones at the base of the feature. The fill contained 25 animal bones identified as part of a dog skeleton, presumably deposited whole and later disturbed, and one sherd of Central Gaulish samian ware Romano-British pottery, dating from the 2nd century (Figure 5 and Plate

3). There were also a few further bones of cattle, sheep and other unidentifiable large mammals.

Trench 11

Orientation: NE-SW

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (SW)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (NE)
Topsoil	0.19m	0.21m	0.20m	0.18m	0.19m	0.20m	0.20m
Subsoil	0.16m	0.17m	0.14m	0.06m	0.16m	0.18m	0.18m
Top of Natural	0.35m	0.38m	0.34m	-	0.35m	0.38m	0.40m
Base of trench	0.44m	0.46m	0.40m	0.24m	0.44m	0.48m	0.49m

No archaeological features were discovered within this trench. Two field drains were identified, one running south-north the other east to west across the trench. There was also a band of orange clayey sand, which after sampling was found to be geological in nature.

Plate 4: Plan and section of feature [3], Trench 12, looking north-west

Trench 12

Orientation: N-S

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (N)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (S)
Topsoil	0.30m	0.38m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.28m	0.26m
Subsoil	0.10m	0.11m	0.14m	0.10m	0.10m	0.08m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.40m	0.49m	0.44m	0.40m	0.40m	0.36m	0.40m
Base of trench	0.46m	0.50m	0.46m	0.40m	0.40m	0.36m	0.40m

Contexts: [3], (4). [5], (6)

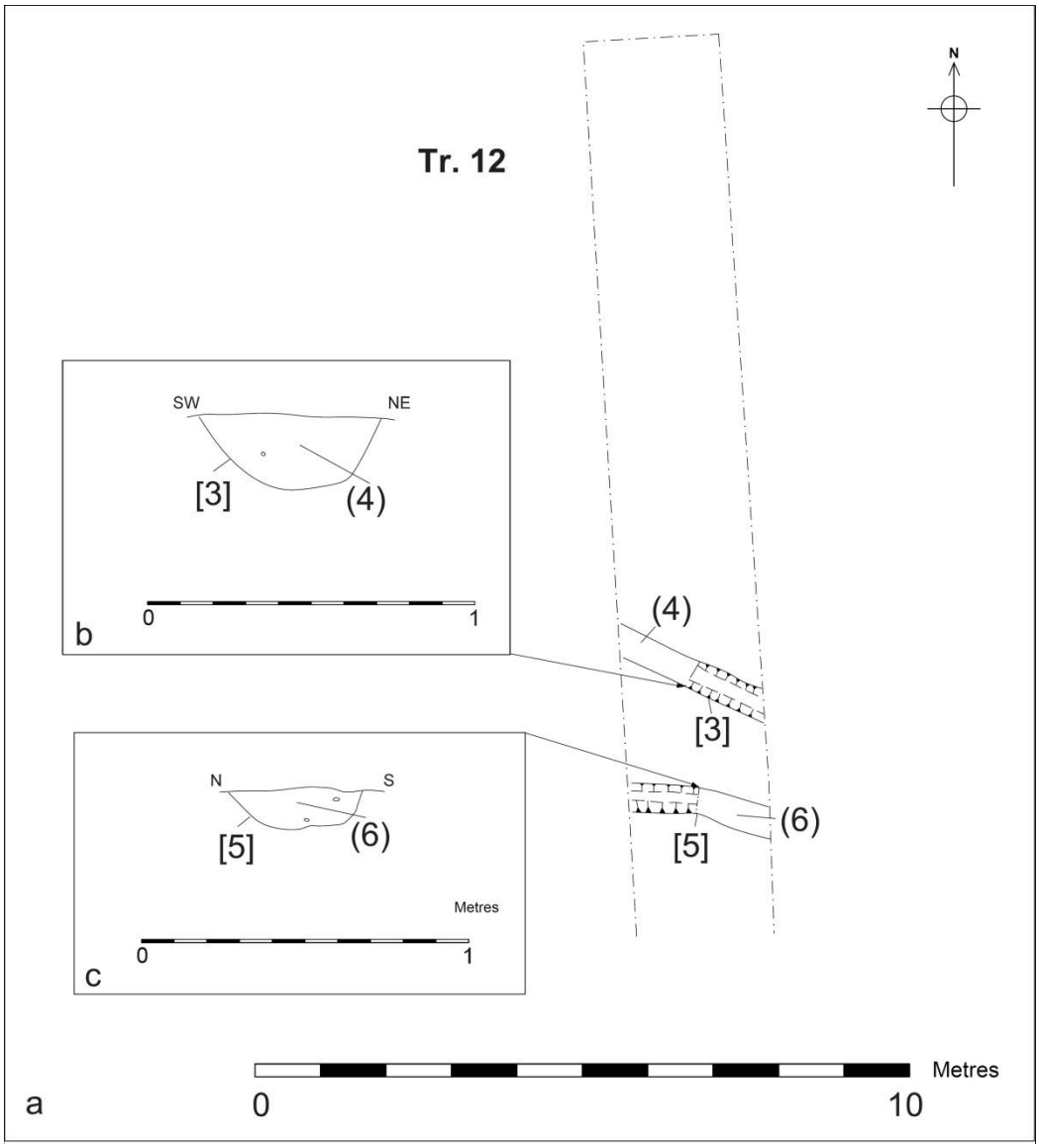

Figure 6: Plan and section of Trench 12, showing features

Two narrow linear features were identified running broadly east to west across the trench. Closer inspection revealed the northernmost feature as a steep sided gully, 0.60m wide and visible for 2m across the trench width, with a narrow flat base 0.24m deep [3]. The fill (4) was a dark yellowish brown silty-clay with occasional limestone flecks and some charcoal flecks (Figure 6a and 6b and Plate 4).

The southern feature was 0.42m wide gully [5], with a 45 degree gradient, which was also visible for around 2m across the trench. The cut had a narrow flat base of 0.15m depth. The fill (6) was a mid-yellowish brown silty-clay with occasional small angular stones (Figure 6a and c). Neither feature contained dating evidence.

Trench 13

Orientation: E-W

Length: 29.5m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (W)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (E)
Topsoil	0.18m	0.18m	0.20m	0.22m	0.19m	0.20m	0.19m
Subsoil	0.17m	0.18m	0.14m	0.16m	0.18m	0.20m	0.15m
Top of Natural	0.35m	0.36m	0.34m	0.38m	0.37m	0.40m	0.34m
Base of trench	0.46m	0.47m	0.42m	0.48m	0.48m	0.47m	0.48m

No archaeological features were discovered within the trench. Two field drains were

Plate 5: Post excavation view of Trench 14,
showing unexcavated ditch [7], looking north

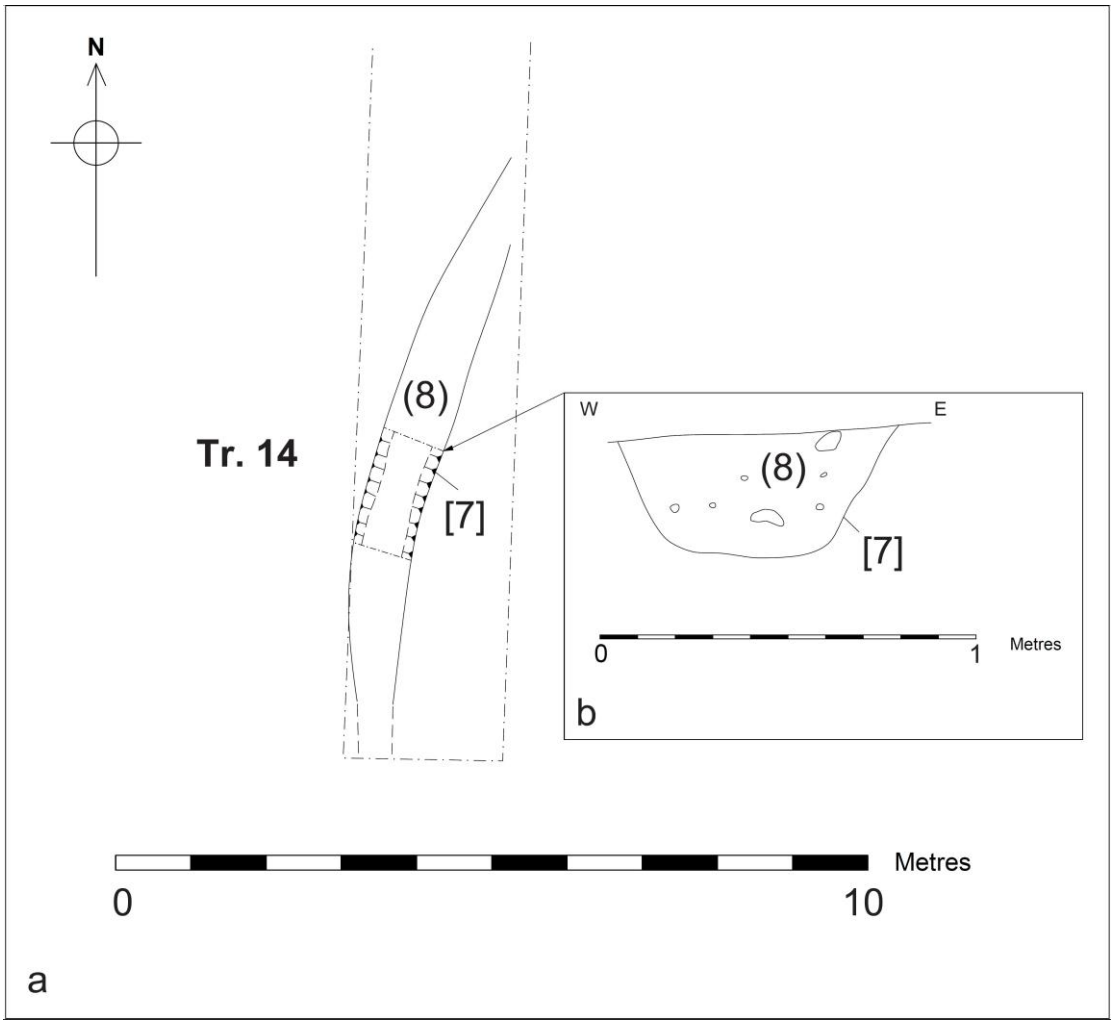

Figure 7: Plan and section of Trench 14, showing features

Trench 14

Orientation: N-S

Length: 30m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (S)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (N)
Topsoil	0.25m	0.25m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.26m	0.30m
Subsoil	0.15m	0.34m	0.20m	0.22m	0.18m	0.14m	0.30m
Top of Natural	0.40m	0.59m	0.50m	0.52m	0.48m	0.50m	0.60m
Base of trench	0.55m	0.66m	0.58m	0.70m	0.70m	0.70m	0.60m

Contexts: [7], (8)

This trench contained a linear feature, which was running from the south and curving towards the north-east. It was 0.8m wide and was visible for 7.5m across the trench.

The cut of the ditch [7] was steep sided with a flat base at 0.3m depth (Figure 7 and Plate 5).

The fill (8) consisted of a mid-yellowish brown silty-clay with occasional sub-rounded limestone flecks. The fill also contained three sherds of Romano-British pottery identified as 2nd century shelly ware.

Trench 15

Orientation: NW-SE

Length: 25m + 4m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (NW)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m (SE)
Topsoil	0.20m	0.30m	0.28m	0.31m	0.40m	0.40m
Subsoil	0.15m	0.22m	0.12m	0.21m	0.23m	0.10m
Top of Natural	0.35m	0.52m	0.40m	0.52m	0.63m	-
Base of trench	0.36m	0.60m	0.60m	0.61m	0.67m	0.86m

Contexts: (9), [10], (11), [12], (13)

A very large feature was identified towards the south-eastern end of the trench. The trench was widened here to define the feature and it was revealed as a 1.7m wide ditch [12], which appeared to curve from the north-west towards the south. The ditch had 45 degree sides and a concave base of 0.85m depth. The upper fill of the ditch (11) was a very dark yellowish brown silty-clay with frequent small nodules of flint and chalk plus occasional large ironstone pieces, animal bone and two large lumps of very light fuel ash, probably from a hearth. The lower fill (13) was more sterile and consisted of mottled yellowish grey/ brown silty clay (more clay than fill (11)), with very few small crushed pieces of chalk and a few very large cobbles towards the base (Figure 8a and b and Plate 6).

Around the middle of the trench was a 0.5m-1.02m wide ditch [10], which was visible for 3.1m across the trench, running from south-west to north-east. The cut [10] was steep sided with a flat base of 0.20m depth. The fill (9) was a dark brownish silty-clay with occasional small rounded chalk nodules and angular pieces of ironstone with some charcoal flecks. The fill contained a cow femur and tibia, plus 790g of light fuel ash, probably from a hearth structure (Figures 8a and c)

Plate 6: South-east facing section of Feature [12] in Trench 15, looking north-west

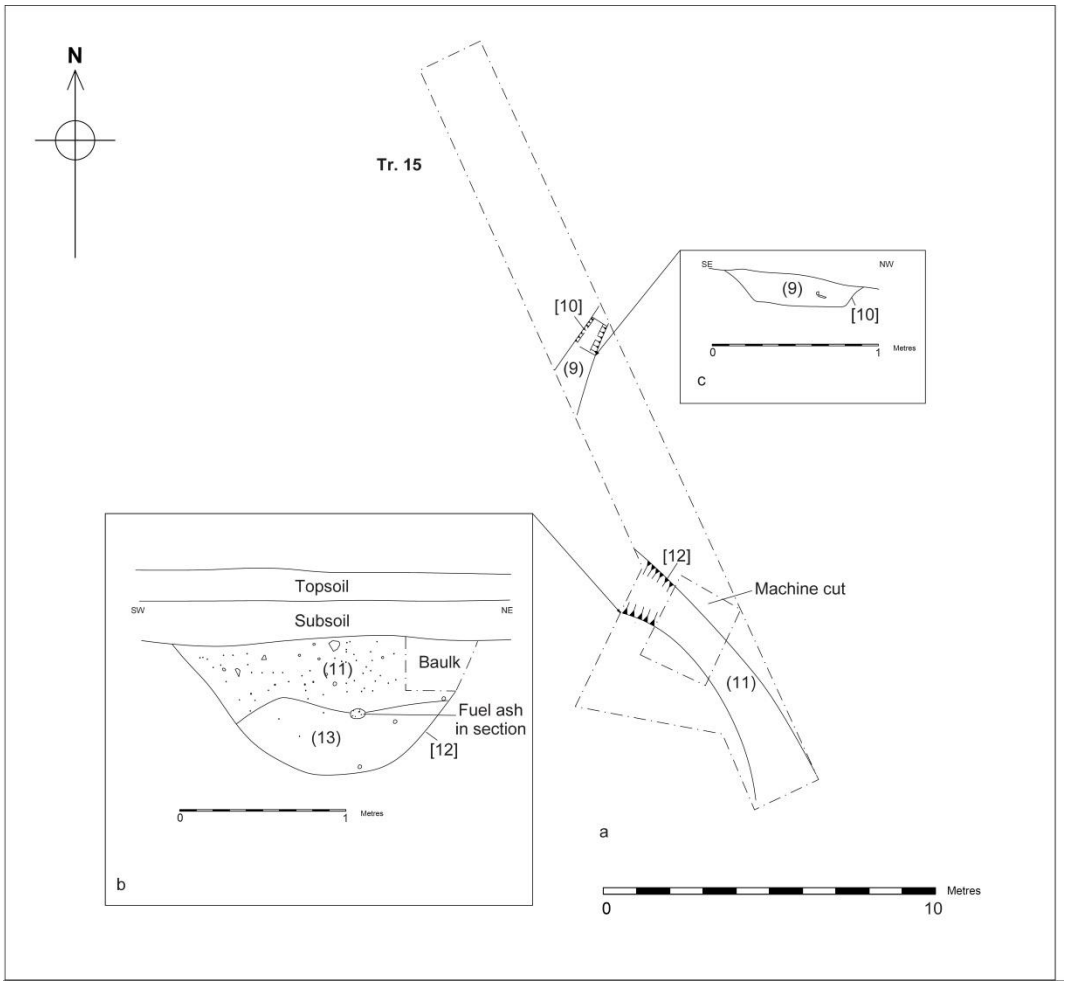

Figure 8: Plan and sections from Trench 15, showing features

Trench 16

Orientation: NW-SE

Length: 26.4m + 5.6m

Width: 2.1m + 4.3m

Interval	0m (NW)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m (SE)
Topsoil	0.23m	0.24m	0.25m	0.24m	0.20m	0.26m
Subsoil	0.25m	0.49m	0.17m	0.19m	0.20m	0.21m
Top of Natural	0.48m	-	0.42m	0.43m	0.40m	0.47m
Base of trench	0.62m	0.49m	0.50m	0.58m	0.40m	0.59m

Contexts: [14], (15), [16], (17), (27), (32)

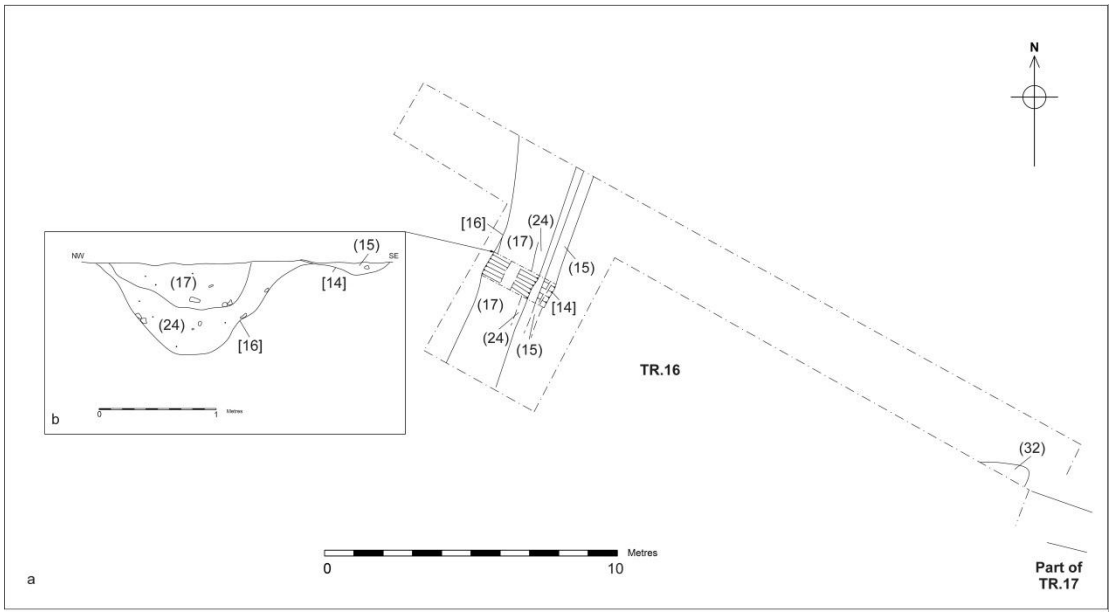

Figure 9: Plan and section from Trench 16, showing features

Around 4m from the north-west end of the trench on a roughly north-south alignment was a 1.85m wide ditch [16], with a 0.72m wide gully [14] running parallel to the east and then cutting the ditch as they both continued northwards. Ditch [16] had steep sides and a flattish base at 0.79m depth and the gully [14] had gently sloping sides and a concave base at 0.11m depth.

Plate 7: Features [14] and [16] in Trench 16, looking east

The lower fill of [16] was an orangey grey silty-clay of with frequent small nodules of angular flint, and rare large angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal. This layer was 0.79m deep. The upper fill (17), which was 0.41m deep was a dark brownish grey silty-clay with frequent small chalk nodules and flint sherds, occasional charcoal flecks and larger stones. This fill contained ten sherds of Romano-British pottery including Grey Ware, Sandy Ware and Harrold Shelly ware, dating from the late 2nd to the 4th century (Figure 16; Plate 7).

At the south-eastern end of the trench was a small vague feature (32), close to the boundary with Trench 17. It was around 1m long and 0.30m wide and appeared to have a fill of dark grey silty-clay with occasional small stones. This was not excavated.

Trench 17

Orientation: NW-SE

Length: 24.3m + 9.9m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (NW)	5m	10m	15m	20m (SE)
Topsoil	0.26m	0.28m	0.26m	0.26m	0.20m
Subsoil	0.24m	0.28m	0.22m	0.28m	0.16m
Top of Natural	0.50m	Furrow	0.48m	1.30m	0.36m
Base of trench	0.70m	0.56m	0.57m	1.50m	0.48m

Contexts: [18], (19), (29), [30], (31)

Emerging from the north-western end of the trench, on an east west alignment was a faint linear feature [30] running 9.8m across the trench. It was 1.4m wide. The cut was steep sided and the base flat at 0.32m depth. The fill (29) was a greyish orange silty-clay with occasional small to medium rounded chalk nodules and angular pieces of flint. No dating evidence was retrieved from the fill (Figures 10a and b).

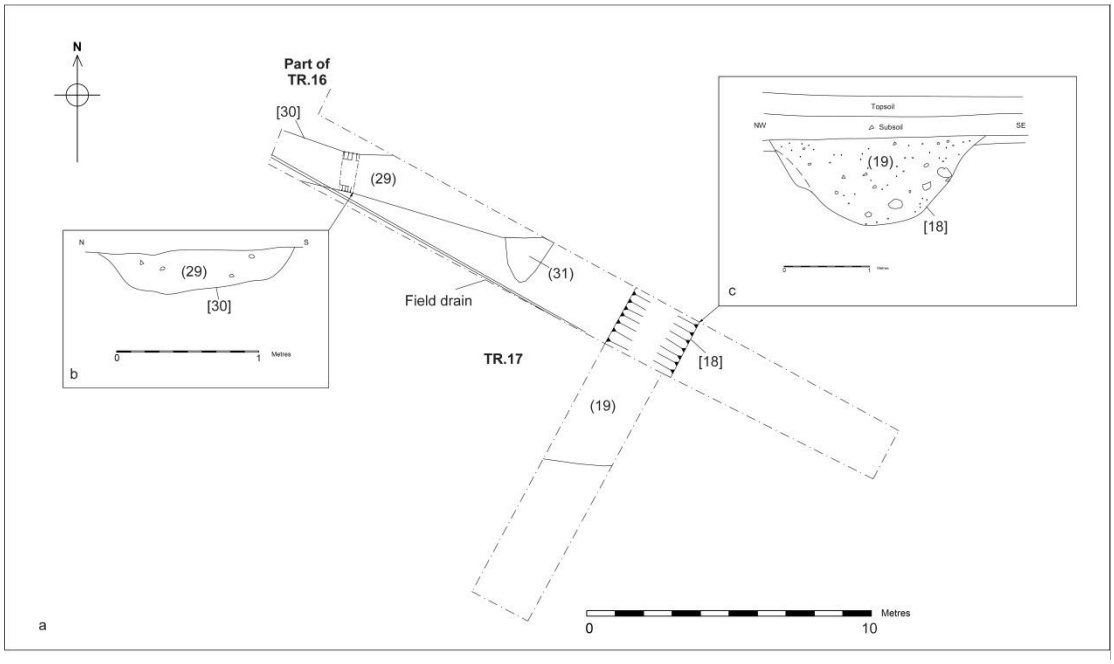

Figure 10: Plans and sections from Trench 17, showing features

Plate 8: Post-excavation view of feature (31), looking north

Feature [30] cut across another feature (31), which appeared to be a spread of material measuring 1.5m x 1.2m and around 40mm deep of dark brownish grey silty-clay with

frequent scattered small to medium chalk nodules and flint fragments. The layer contained 18 sherds of Romano-British pottery of white ware and Bourne-Greetham shelly ware, giving a late 2nd century to mid-3rd century date for this feature (Plate 8).

Close to the south-eastern end of the trench was a large feature, which stretched across the trench and so the trench was widened to the south-west to attempt to define it. This was revealed to be a ditch [18], visible for 6.5m across the trench, which appeared to run from north to south and then turn towards the west. It was 2.6m wide and 1m deep, with a fill (19) of mid to dark yellowish grey sandy-clay with frequent very small pieces of stone, mainly chalk and flint, rare large cobbles and some smaller angular stones. No finds were retrieved from the fill (Figures 10a and c: Plate 9).

Plate 9: South-west facing section feature [18] in Trench 17, looking north-east

Trench 18

Orientation: NW-SE

Length: 34m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (SE)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	34m (NW)
Topsoil	0.35m	0.30m	0.35m	0.29m	0.22m	0.24m	0.30m	0.23m
Subsoil	0.24m	0.22m	0.19m	0.20m	0.30m	0.18m	0.18m	0.20m
Top of Natural	0.59m	Feature [21]	0.54m	Feature (23)	0.52m	0.42m	0.48m	0.43m
Base of trench	0.61m	0.62m	0.55m	0.62m	0.53m	0.43m	0.48m	0.44m

Contexts: (20), [21], (22), (23), [25], (26), [27], (28)

At the south-eastern end of this trench was a linear feature [21], visible for the width of the trench and 1.44m wide. Excavation revealed it as a ditch of 0.36m depth with 45 degree sides and a flat base. The fill (22) was a mid to dark yellowish brown/grey silty-clay with frequent small to medium pieces of chalk and flint and occasional large sub-angular stones, including pieces of slate. The fill was darker and more humic towards the centre of the fill. Another feature seemed to cut the ditch [21] on the eastern side (Figures 11a and b). Excavation revealed this to be a large field drain, possibly cut into a former furrow. A further 3-4 furrows, running north-south could be seen running across the trench, between 6m and 9m apart. The trench also contained many field drains, laid running south-west to north-east, many cutting into archaeological features.

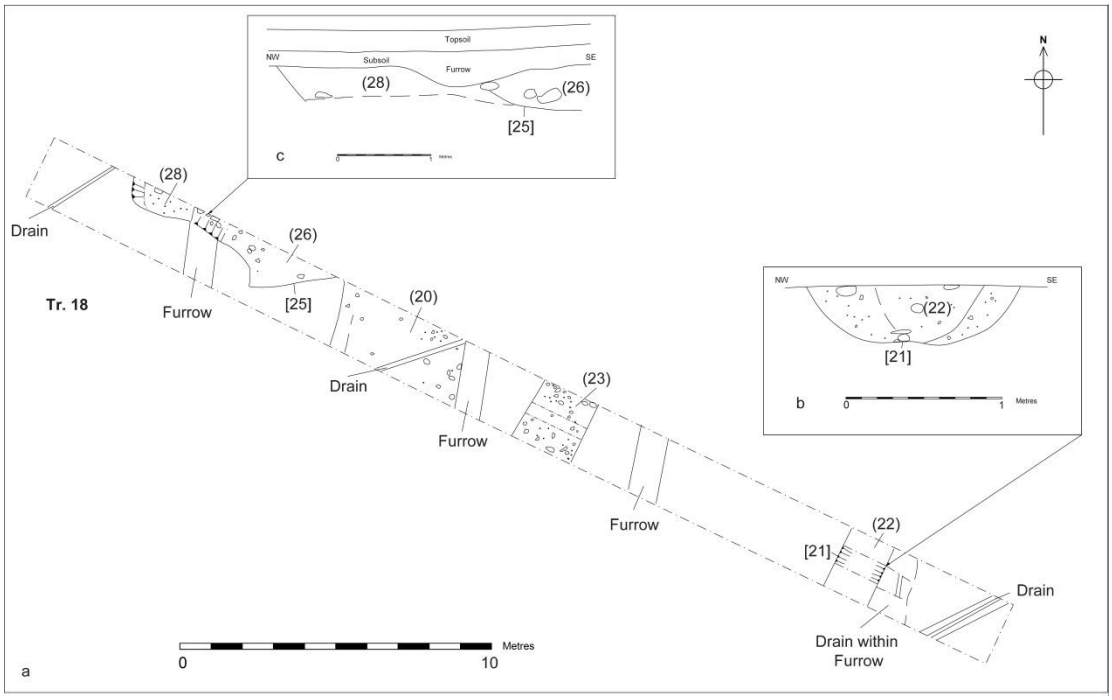

Figure 11: Plans and sections from Trench 18, showing features

Around 10m north-west of [21] was a spread of material around 2m x 2m, which was around 100mm deep and comprised of compacted mid to dark brownish grey silty-clay with frequent stones of many sizes, including several large cobbles of between 0.15m and 0.20m diameter, possibly representing some sort of surface (23). A single sherd of Romano-British pottery was retrieved from the surface of the feature.

Just to the north-west of (23) was a very large, apparently linear feature, visible across the length of the trench and 3.3m wide (20). Twenty-eight sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the surface of the feature, along with the metacarpal of a cow, showing signs of gnawing. The pottery included Nene Valley colour coated ware, grey ware, sandy ware and others. Most can be dated from the 3rd century and the 4th century.

To the north-west of (20) was a further large feature, partially obscured by the baulk of the trench. At first it appeared to be three features [25], [27] and a possible third feature later identified as a furrow, cutting through the centre of the features and

apparently dividing them. Partial excavation of the features (it was not possible to locate the base of the features due to the proximity to the baulk), revealed them to be one single feature, [25], with two distinct fills (26) and (28) (Figures 11a and c). The feature was at least 7m long and possibly around 1.4m wide. Its orientation was difficult to judge but it may be running from the north to the south and turning north-west at this point.

The eastern fill (26), which appeared to be the upper fill of the feature, was a mid to dark yellowish grey silty-clay with frequent small pieces of flint and chalk and the occasional large cobble. The fill contained grey, white and shelly wares, dating from around the 2nd century.

The western fill (28), also the lower fill of the feature, was yellowish brown silty-clay with frequent small flint and chalk nodules and slate pieces. A total of 66 sherds of pottery were retrieved from this context. These included Romano-British grey wares, oxidised ware, Bourne-Greetham shelly ware, amongst others. There were sherds of fine vessels including sherds of a Central Gaulish samian ware dish. Dating would suggest mid to late 2nd century, with some from the late 2nd to 3rd century.

Plate 10: Post-excavation view of Trench 18, looking north-west

Trench 19

Orientation: E-W

Length: 21.8m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	0m (W)	5m	10m	15m	20m (E)
Topsoil	0.28m	0.25m	0.28m	0.25m	0.24m
Subsoil	0.33m	0.28m	0.18m	0.17m	0.06m

Top of Natural	0.51m	0.53m	0.46m	0.42m	0.30m
Base of trench	0.60m	0.68m	0.57m	0.50m	0.42m

This trench was excavated close to Trenches 18 and 19 in order to see whether the features within these trenches continued to the east. A large field drain was identified towards the eastern end of the trench and a 0.5m wide feature was identified around the centre of the trench running from south to north, but the fill was identical to the subsoil and the feature was probably a furrow or drain trench.

Trench 20

Orientation: NW-SE

Length: 19.9m

Width: 2.1m

Interval	**0m (NW)**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**19.9m (SE)**
Topsoil	0.20m	0.20m	0.20m	0.20m	0.20m
Subsoil	0.25m	0.22m	0.19m	0.20m	0.18m
Top of Natural	0.45m	0.42m	0.39m	Drain	0.38m
Base of trench	0.55m	0.47m	0.43m	0.40m	0.38m

No archaeological features were discovered within this trench. A linear feature around 1.5m wide was located towards the south-eastern end of the trench. This was found to contained plastic, brick and other modern residue and was dismissed.

Plate 11: Work in progress on Field 3, looking north

Eastern Area (Field 3)

A further group of trial trenches were excavated in an agricultural field to the direct east of the school playing fields (Plate 11). It was originally planned than 15 trenches would be placed across this field, but only nine were excavated.

Trenches 21 and 22 were excavated at the far southern end of the site, close to a small wind turbine. Both revealed a sequence of very mixed and sticky clay topsoil, which lay over a deep deposit of made up ground, consisting of soil, re-deposited clay, and a large amount of rubble and building material. This was very compacted to the extent that the tracked excavator struggled to excavate the trenches. Both trenches were foreshortened and it was decided to continue the excavations at the northern end of the site.

Trenches 23-29 were excavated at the northern and central parts of the site. The northern and eastern trenches (23-25 and 27) mainly consisted of thin silty-clay topsoil lying directly over the natural substratum of yellowish brown clay and stones. Trenches 26 and 29 were similar to trenches 21 and 22 as they consisted of topsoil overlying made up ground of some depth. Trench 28, which lay further to the east, consisted of thick re-deposited topsoil containing a large amount of ceramic building material and other rubble.

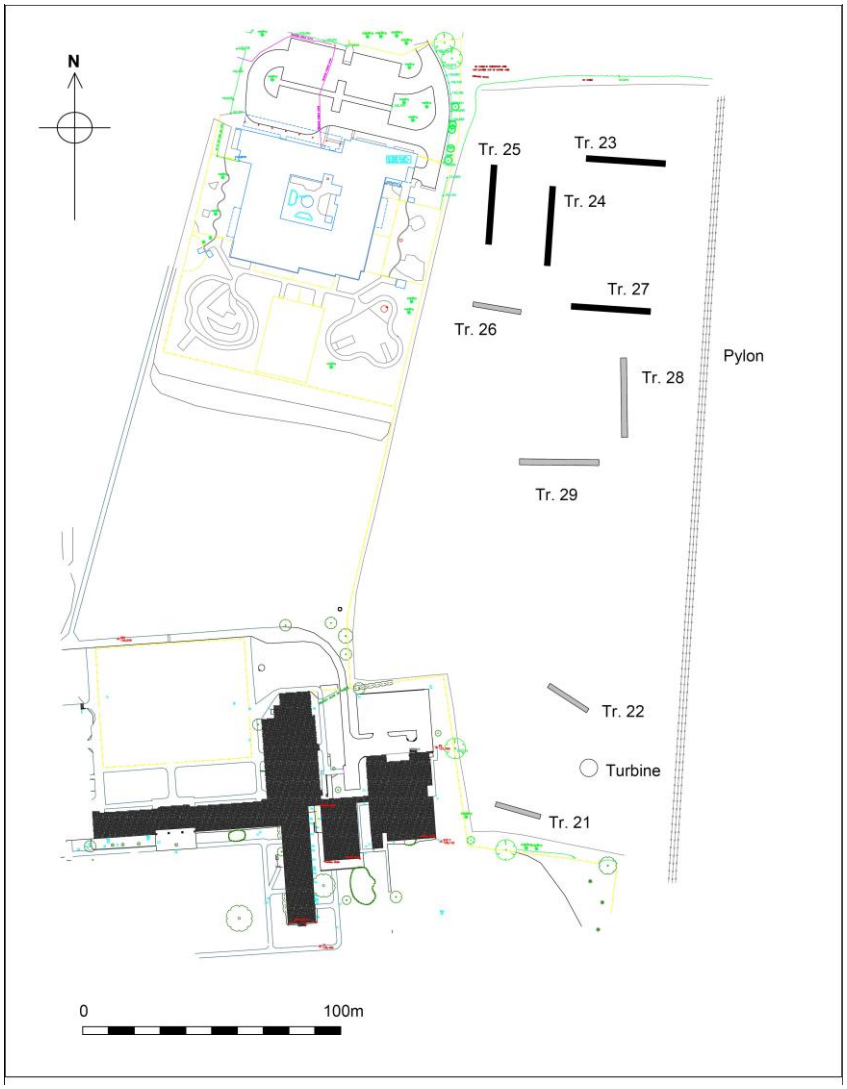

Figure 12: Plan of trench locations, eastern area.
Trenches in grey contained disturbed ground

Trench 21

Orientation: E-W

Length: 17m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m (E)	5m	10m	15m	17m (W)
Topsoil	0.20m	0.18m	0.26m	0.23m	0.23m
Made up ground	0.45m	0.76m	0.76m	0.65m	0.65m
Top of Natural	0.65m	0.94m	1.02m	0.88m	0.88m
Base of trench	0.76m	0.95m	1.02m	0.96m	0.96m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench. The trench was foreshortened as the machine struggled to excavate the made up ground.

Plate 12: Post-excavation view of Trench 21, looking west

Trench 22

Orientation: E-W

Length: 19m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m (E)	5m	10m	15m	19m (W)
Topsoil	0.20m	0.32m	0.34m	0.30m	0.30m

Made up ground	0.80m	0.80m	0.85m	0.80m	0.76m
Top of Natural	1.00m	1.00m	1.19m	1.10m	1.06m
Base of trench	1.00m	1.00m	1.20m	1.10m	1.10m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench. The trench was foreshortened as the machine struggled to excavate the made up ground.

Trench 23

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	**0m (E)**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**30m (W)**
Topsoil	0.21m	0.28m	0.24m	0.18m	0.20m	0.23m	0.26m
Subsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.21m	0.28m	0.24m	0.18m	0.20m	0.23m	0.26m
Base of trench	0.22m	0.29m	0.26m	0.24m	0.21m	0.23m	0.27m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench.

Trench 24

Orientation: N-S

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	**0m (S)**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**30m (N)**
Topsoil	0.16m	0.17m	0.14m	0.10m	0.15m	0.18m	0.20m
Subsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.16m	0.17m	0.14m	0.10m	0.15m	0.18m	0.20m
Base of trench	0.17m	0.23m	0.19m	0.15m	0.15m	0.29m	0.25m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench.

Trench 25

Orientation: N-S

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m (N)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (S)
Topsoil	0.14m	0.19m	0.20m	0.22m	0.23m	0.24m	0.25m
Subsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.14m	0.19m	0.20m	0.22m	0.23m	0.24m	0.25m
Base of trench	0.15m	0.22m	0.28m	0.30m	0.28m	0.29m	0.25m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench.

Trench 26

Orientation: E-W

Length: 10m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m (W)	2m	4m	6m	8m	10m (E)
Topsoil	0.40m	0.38m	0.35m	0.39m	0.40m	0.50m
Made up ground	-	0.15m	0.20m	0.35m	0.40m	0.30m
Top of Natural	0.40m	0.53m	0.55m	0.74m	0.80m	-
Base of trench	0.48m	0.60m	0.64m	0.75m	0.85m	0.80m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench. As the excavation moved to the east, the made up ground became thicker until, at 10m the made up ground (which mainly consisted of large pieces of rubble), could no longer be easily excavated. Therefore, the trench was shortened to 10m.

Trench 27

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m (W)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (E)
Topsoil	0.36m	0.35m	0.22m	0.31m	0.33m	0.26m	0.27m
Subsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.36m	0.35m	0.22m	0.31m	0.33m	0.26m	0.27m
Base of trench	0.43m	0.50m	0.30m	0.35m	0.38m	0.29m	0.32m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench.

Trench 28

Orientation: N-S

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m (N)	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (S)
Topsoil	0.40m	0.60m	0.50m	0.53m	0.60m	0.65m	0.60m
Subsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.40m	0.60m	0.50m	0.53m	0.60m	0.65m	0.60m
Base of trench	0.47m	0.75m	0.63m	0.76m	0.70m	0.76m	0.70m

No archaeological features were discovered in this trench. The topsoil was clayey, thick and disturbed. It also contained a considerable amount of bricks and other rubble within the soil. This appeared to lie at the edge of the disturbed ground.

Plate 13: Trench 29, showing depth of made up ground, looking south-west

Trench 29

Orientation: E-W

Length: 30m

Width: 1.9m

Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m

	(E)						(W)
Topsoil	0.25m	0.28m	0.20m	0.28m	0.23m	0.27m	0.30m
Made up ground	0.60m	-	-	-	-	-	-
Top of Natural	0.85m	-	-	-	-	-	-
Base of trench	0.85m	0.28m	0.20m	0.28m	0.23m	0.27m	0.30m

Excavation revealed a thick layer of made up ground at a depth of 0.85m at the eastern end of the trench. This layer was thick with bricks, tarmac and concrete along with plastic and terram material. As the machine immediate began to struggle to excavate the consolidated made ground only the topsoil was stripped throughout the rest of the trench, revealing made up ground beneath. No archaeological features were discovered in this trench.

No further trenches were excavated to the south of this trench.

Conclusion

The geophysical survey carried out at King Edward VII School, prior to this evaluation highlighted a number of anomalies, which may have been archaeological in origin, as well as other features, identified as drainage, ridge and furrow or natural phenomena.

The results of the evaluation largely mirrored those of the survey, with field drains and furrows being identified in most of the evaluation trenches.

Prior to the fieldwork it had been identified, via the site manager of the playing fields, that a large amount of made-up ground, from the laying of the astro-turf to the south of the site, may be encountered on the north-western part of the site (M. Watchorn, pers. comm.). This was indeed the case and Trench 01 revealed at least 1m of made-up ground lying over the original land surface.

Furthermore, it was also revealed that the large anomalies running from south-east to north-west across the centre of the site were most likely more recent large drainage systems running from the aforementioned astro-turf and also from the new Sixth Form Centre to the south-east of the site. This was confirmed by the evaluation, as Trenches 07, 09 and 10 revealed the large drains running south-east to north-west to a stream to the north (Figure 13).

The other anomalies highlighted by the geophysical survey were all revealed to be archaeological in nature. Trenches 10, 15, 16, 17 and 18 all contained archaeological features formerly highlighted by the geophysical survey and Trench 14 contained a further feature not revealed by the geophysics (Feature [7]).

Two further features ([2] & [5]) were located in Trench 12. One of these, at least, was shown on the raw geophysical data (Figure 2), running from the corner of the right-angled feature (picked up in Trench 10 as feature [2]) to the north-west, but not on the interpretation plan (Figure 3). Its line is shown on Figure 14 (red line).

Figure 13: Plan of western area, showing trenches in relation to geophysical survey results

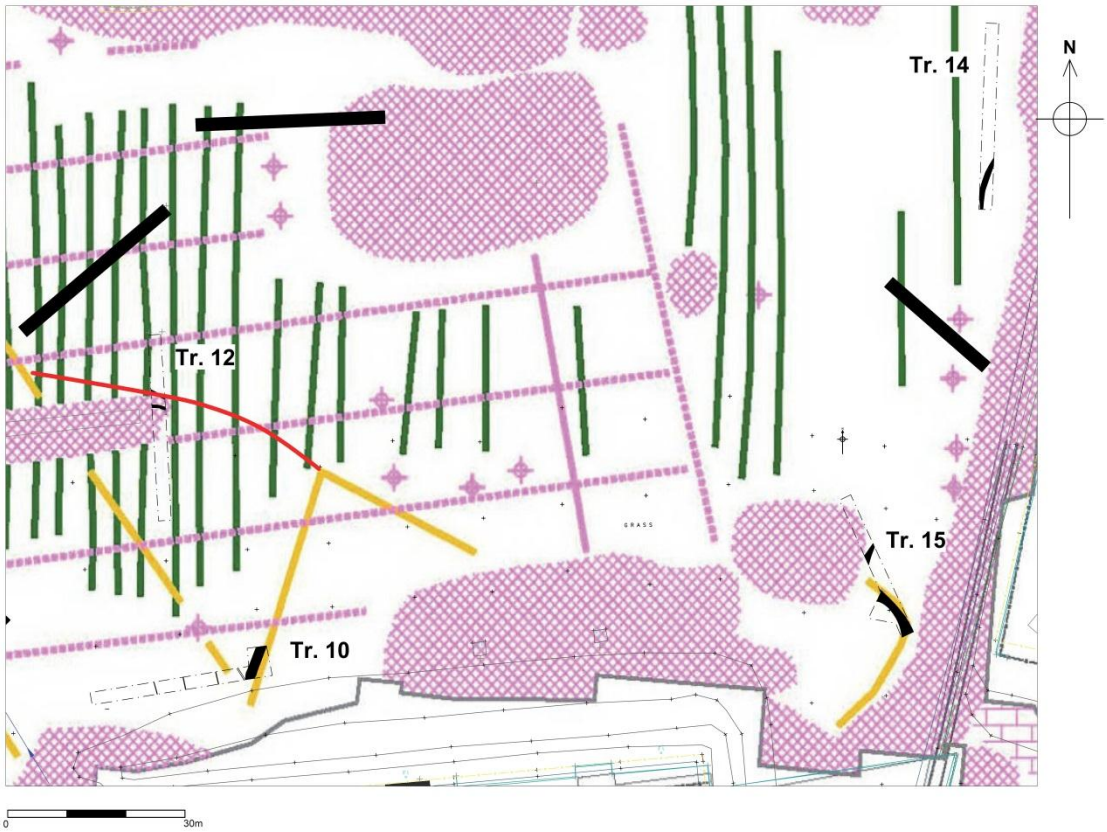

Figure 14: Detailed plan of archaeological features and geophysical data, Field 1

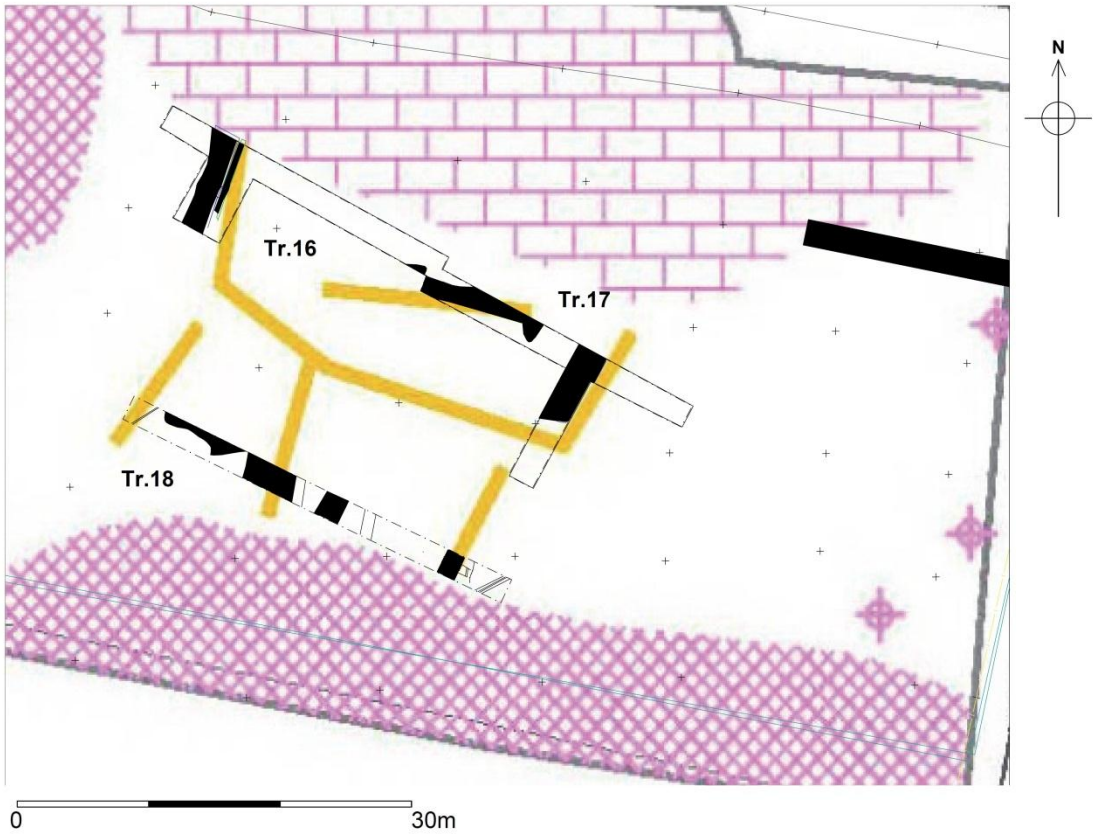

Figure 15: Detailed plan of archaeological features and geophysical data, Field 2

Most of the features appear to be linear in nature representing enclosure ditches or gullies associated with those ditches. There are also two apparent spreads of material (23) and (31), with feature (23) perhaps representing a possible surface due to the presence of large cobbles pushed into the material of the feature.

The dating evidence, which is considerable given the small number of features revealed, points to activity from the 2nd century through to the 4th century with an emphasis on the second half of the 2nd century and the 4th century. The large amount of material points to the centre of activity being near to the site. It is possible, given that the archaeology is largely concentrated on the southern and south-eastern parts of the playing fields that the focus of activity may be under the new school site to the immediate south of the playing fields.

The evidence suggests settlement with stock enclosures nearby (represented by the evidence of ditches and gullies throughout the site), with features like [3] and [5] representing gullies draining off into the open land to the north-west.

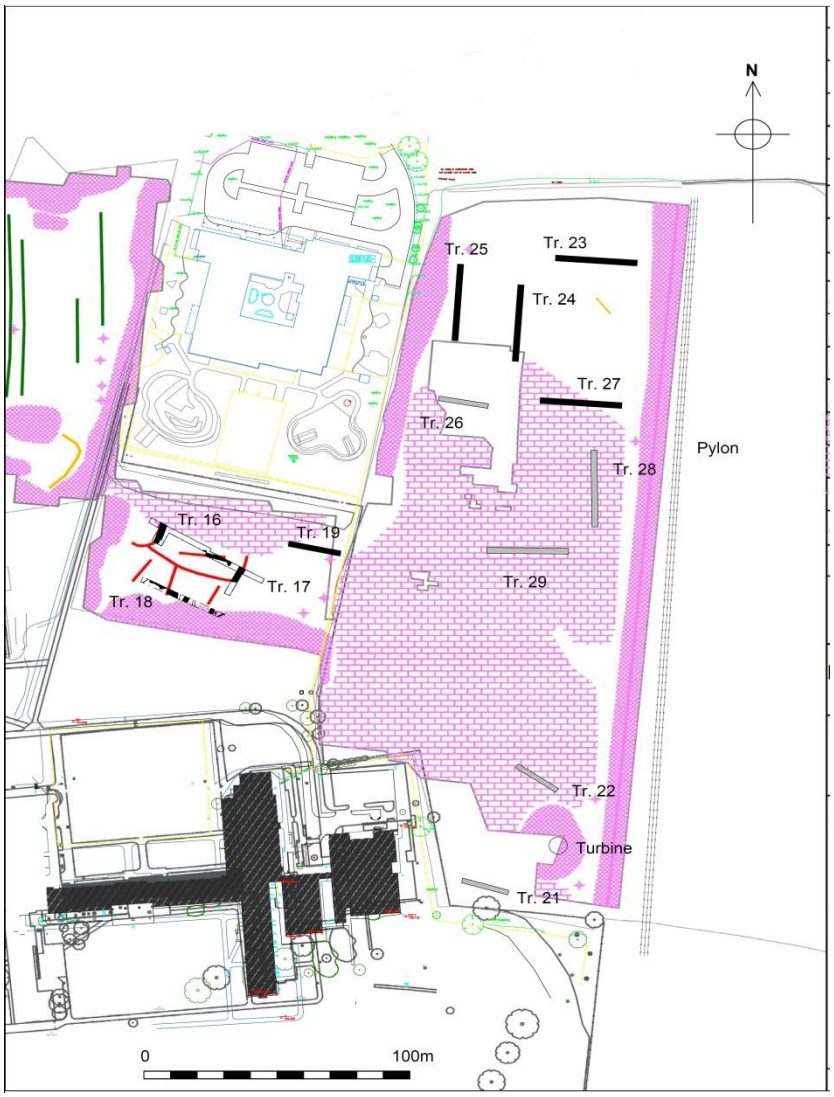

Figure 16: Plan of eastern area, showing trenches in relation to geophysical survey results

The fuel ash retrieved from ditch [12] from Trench 15 points to industrial or domestic activity, but not that associated with metal working. No further evidence was revealed from an environmental assessment.

The land generally rises from the stream and woodland to the north-west towards the south and south-east with the highest point in the area lying somewhere close to the Sixth Form Centre, which lies just to the south-east of the site. Topographically this would appear to be a suitable place for a settlement.

Trenches 19 and 20 were excavated in order to assess the extent of the archaeology to the north and east of the areas already identified. Both were fairly inconclusive, containing modern disturbances or possible drainage.

The geophysical results had shown that most of the southern and central parts of field 3 contained disturbed ground, and this was borne out by the evaluation results as it would appear that made up ground lay over most of this area (Figure 16). Local knowledge from the farmer and the caretaker of the school premises confirmed that the field had mostly been stripped of topsoil before the building rubble from the construction of the local school had been spread over the field, with the topsoil then deposited over the made up ground.

The trenches excavated on the northern part of Field 3 contained very thin topsoil and the ground appeared undisturbed. It is clear that the archaeology does not appear to continue to the north within this field. Unfortunately the extent of the made up ground and disturbance over the central and southern parts of this field would suggest that, if any archaeological remains were extant in this area that the stripping of the field has destroyed them.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Francesca Statham of LCC Property Services for arranging access. Thanks are due to site manager Mick Watchorn and farmer Mr. Lomas for their help and co-operation with this project.

The project was managed by Patrick Clay and the work carried out by Leon Hunt and Mathew Morris, with assistance from Jamie Patrick and Martyn Henson. The machine for the first phase of the work (Fields 1 and 2) was provided by Planters Ltd and was driven by Mickey Hall. The machine for the second phase (Field 3) was provided by JoinPoint and driven by Peter Smith.

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York.

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

OASIS data entry

Project Name	Mill Farm, Slawston Rd, Medbourne
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Vicki Score
Project Supervisor	Leon Hunt

Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Pasture
Development Type	Agricultural dwelling & garage
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 7885 9330
Start/end dates of field work	31-04-2013
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums
Study Area	0.05ha

Archive

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums. An accession number will be allocated forthwith.

The archive consists of the following:

1 Unbound copy of this report

29 Trench recording sheets

1 Context record

32 Context sheets

1 Photographic record

2 Contact sheets of digital photographs

1 CD digital photographs

1 Set B&W contact sheets

1 Set B&W negatives

1 Drawing record

6 A3 Sheets of permatrace containing primary drawings

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08-11-2013

Appendix I: The Roman Pottery

Elizabeth Johnson

Assemblage Size and Condition

An assemblage comprising 130 sherds of Romano-British pottery weighing 1.831kg was retrieved from the excavations. The EVEs value is 3.19 and the average sherd weight of 14.1g suggests reasonably good levels of preservation.

Methodology

The pottery was classified using the Leicestershire Fabric Series (Pollard 1994) and quantified by sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs using rims) as shown in the catalogue below. Vessel forms were also assigned where diagnostic sherds allowed.

Pottery Catalogue

Tr	Cut	Cont	Fabric	Form	Shds	Wgt (g)	Diam (cm)	EVEs	Dating
10	2	1	CGSamian	Misc	1	1			2ndC
14	7	8	Shelly ware	Jar	3	7			2ndC+
16	16	17	Harrold shelly	Bowl	1	49	20	0.1	4thC
16	16	17	Harrold shelly	Jar	2	11	12	0.085	late3rd-4thC
16	16	17	Oxidised ware	Misc	1	2			2ndC+
16	16	17	Grey ware	Jar	2	6			2ndC+
16	16	17	Grey ware	Jar	1	14			2ndC+
16	16	17	Grey ware	Jar	1	19			2ndC+
16	16	17	Sandy ware	Jar	2	29			2ndC+
18		20	Nene Valley CC	Jar	1	52	14	0.2	4thC
18		20	Nene Valley CC	Bowl	1	37	17	0.15	4thC
18		20	Nene Valley CC	Jar	1	29	16	0.1	4thC
18		20	Nene Valley CC	Beaker	1	3			3rdC
18		20	Nene Valley CC	Bowl	1	16			4thC
18		20	Nene Valley CC	Dish	1	12	16	0.12	4thC
18		20	White ware	Misc	1	8			2ndC+
18		20	Bourne-Greetham shelly	Jar	3	27			late2nd-mid3rdC
18		20	Sandy ware	Jar	1	33	22	0.1	2ndC+
18		20	Nene Valley GW	Misc	1	6			late2nd-3rdC
18		20	Grey ware	Jar	3	58	17	0.2	2ndC+
18		20	Grey ware	Jar	1	20	20	0.9	2ndC+
18		20	Grey ware	Jar	2	71			2ndC+
18		20	Grey ware	Jar	9	239			2ndC+
18		20	Grey ware	Jar	1	32			2ndC+
18		23	Grey ware	Jar	1	14			2ndC+
18	25	26	Northants white grog-sandy	Jar	1	12			late1st-mid2ndC
18	25	26	Grey ware	Jar	1	13			2ndC+

Tr	Cut	Cont	Fabric	Form	Shds	Wgt (g)	Diam (cm)	EVEs	Dating
18	25	26	Bourne-Greetham shelly	Jar	1	24			late2nd-mid3rdC
18	27	28	Grey ware	Beaker	7	76	8	0.15	mid-late2ndC
18	27	28	Grey ware	Jar	9	88	12	0.2	late1st-2ndC
18	27	28	Bourne-Greetham shelly	Jar	14	106	14	0.1	late2nd-mid3rdC
18	27	28	Colchester(?) CC	Beaker	3	10	8	0.1	2ndC
18	27	28	Northants white grog-sandy	Jar	2	45			late1st-mid2ndC
18	27	28	Bourne-Greetham shelly	Jar	8	107	20	0.185	late2nd-mid3rdC
18	27	28	CGSamian	Dish	9	60	18	0.225	early-mid2ndC
18	27	28	Grey ware	Jar	8	162	23	0.275	2ndC+
18	27	28	Grey ware	Jar	3	120			2ndC+
18	27	28	Grey ware	Jar	2	60			2ndC+
18	27	28	Oxidised ware	Misc	1	12			2ndC+
17		31	White ware	Misc	5	7			2ndC
17		31	Bourne-Greetham shelly	Jar	13	134			late2nd-mid3rdC

Stratified Features

Trench 10

Ditch [2] (1)

One very small sherd (1g) of Central Gaulish samian ware was recovered from this ditch. The sherd is abraded and the form is not identifiable. The vessel can be dated to the 2nd century based on the fabric (Webster 1996).

Trench 14

Ditch [7] (8)

Three sherds (7g) of pottery representing a single shelly ware jar were recovered from this feature. The sherds are small and not closely datable, though a date within the 2nd century is most likely.

Trench 16

Ditch [16] (17)

Ten sherds (130g) of pottery were retrieved from Ditch [16] (17). The two diagnostic vessels comprise a shelly ware jar and flanged bowl from the Harrold industry in the South Midlands, which give the group a 4th century date (Brown 1994, 77). The rest of the pottery consists of grey, oxidised and sandy wares, none of which are closely datable and could date any time from the 2nd century onwards.

Trench 17

Spread (31)

Eighteen sherds (141g) of pottery were recovered from a spread in Trench 17. The two vessels represented comprise a white ware flagon or bowl and a shelly ware jar. The white ware probably dates within the 2nd century. The shelly ware fabric suggests the Bourne-Greetham industry on the borders of Rutland and Lincolnshire as the most likely source, though no diagnostic form is present. This would indicate a date from the second half of the 2nd century or into the 3rd (Bolton 1968; Pollard 1994, 114).

Trench 18

The majority of the assemblage was recovered from three features within Trench 18, with 98 sherds (1.552kg) found in total.

Ditch (20) surface finds

Twenty-eight sherds (643g) of pottery were retrieved from the surface of an unexcavated ditch. Nene Valley colour-coated wares provide the diagnostic dating evidence, with six vessels comprising jars, bowls, a dish and beaker present. The beaker is a folded form dating to the 3rd century, whilst the jars, bowls and dish are typical 4th century forms. The bowls show traces of white painted decoration (Howe *et al* 1980, 24-25; Perrin 1999, 87-89). The remaining fabrics comprise white, grey, sandy and shelly wares. The grey ware includes a sherd of Nene Valley grey ware and the shelly ware jars are most probably Bourne-Greetham types, indicating a later 2nd century or 3rd century date.

Spread (23)

A single sherd (14g) of miscellaneous grey ware was recovered from (23). Unfortunately it is not closely datable and a date from the 2nd century onwards is all that can be given.

Ditch [25] (26), [27] (28)

Three sherds (49g) of pottery were recovered from [25] (26), comprising grey, white and shelly ware jars. The white ware is fabric WW1, which is a sandy grog-tempered ware from Northamptonshire used for producing jars from the later 1st century to the middle of the 2nd. This vessel is abraded. The grey ware is not closely datable, though a date within the 2nd century is probable, whilst the shelly ware is comparable to Bourne-Greetham types dating from the second half of the 2nd century.

The largest amount of pottery from a single context was recovered from [27] (28), with 66 sherds (846g) found in total. The grey wares are mostly jars, including a carinated form, and probably date within the 2nd century. In addition, a grey ware poppy head beaker dates to the mid-late 2nd century. A cornice rimmed colour-coated ware beaker probably from Colchester, also dates within the 2nd century (Tyres 1996, 167-168). The other fine ware vessel is a Central Gaulish samian ware

Drag.18/31 dish dating to the first half of the 2nd century (Webster 1996, 35). The latest datable vessels are two Bourne-Greetham shelly ware jars, dating from the mid-late 2nd century into the 3rd. The remaining pottery comprises a miscellaneous oxidised ware and a Northamptonshire white sandy-grog tempered ware.

Discussion

Overall there is evidence for activity from the 2nd century through to the 4th, with an emphasis on the second half of the 2nd century and the 4th century. The latest material was recovered from [16] (17) and (20) within Trenches 16 and 18 respectively. Within these features the presence of Harrold shelly ware and Nene Valley colour-coated ware provide a clear 4th century date. The spread (31) from Trench 17 and ditch [25] (26)/[27] (28) within Trench 18, suggest a mid-late 2nd century date, whilst the remaining features on the site probably date within the 2nd century.

The range of fabrics within the assemblage as a whole includes a variety of regional wares from Colchester, Northamptonshire and the Rutland/Lincolnshire border, in addition to later wares from the South Midlands and the Nene Valley. There are also two imported samian ware vessels. Local wares only account for 41.5% of the assemblage, with the remainder comprising a mix of regional and imported wares. This indicates access to a good market place selling a range of products, and the ability to acquire such commodities, during the 2nd century as well as later on in the 4th century when regional wares such as those from the Nene Valley become more common in general.

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Appendix II: The Animal Bones

Jennifer Browning

Introduction and Methods

Animal bones recovered by hand during the evaluation were rapidly scanned to assess preservation and variety and therefore provide an indication of the faunal potential, should the site progress to excavation.

The site is located c.1.5 miles SE of the town centre. Twenty trenches were excavated on the school playing fields. Six trenches contained features (numbering approximately 12-15 in total) of which the majority were ditches. However faunal material was only recovered from three of the excavated features. These all dated from the Roman period and included ditch fills; contexts 1, 11 and 20. The fills consisted of dark grey brown silty clay with frequent stones. The natural subsoil was stony clay with some sandier clay patches.

The Assemblage

Forty animal bone fragments were recovered during the evaluation; context 1 produced the largest assemblage consisting of 35 fragments (table 1).

Context (1) is the fill of a medium size ditch;

Context (20) is the fill of an unexcavated large ditch (the bone was presumably retrieved from the surface);

Context (11) is the fill of a large ditch;

The bones from the ditches were in good condition, which would permit the identification of butchery marks and other modifications. In general, the material was not highly fragmented and the bones are readily identifiable. Cattle, pig, sheep/goat and a partial dog skeleton were noted in the assemblage and a variety of anatomical elements were identified. Gnawing was noted on a cattle metacarpal from context 20, which also had exostosis indicating a pathological condition.

Twenty-five dog bones were recovered from ditch fill (1). The bones were in good condition and their relative sizes, preservation and the presence of articulated elements suggested that a complete animal was originally deposited, presumably disturbed at a later point. The spine was represented by an axis, a cervical vertebra and a number of articulating vertebrae from the lumbar and thoracic regions. Both of the ulnae, a femur, a tibia, a calcaneum and a partial metatarsal were also present.

Discussion

Although there is some surface abrasion, the general condition and large size of the fragments demonstrate that bone preservation at the site is fairly good. This brief examination confirms the presence of the main domestic animals, cattle, sheep and pig, as well as dog. The presence of articulated material indicates that some of the deposits are likely to be relatively undisturbed. An unfused tibia provided evidence

for immature animals in the sample and therefore suggests that juvenile bones would survive.

Faunal assemblages from rural Roman sites in the region are particularly rare, especially in contrast to those from the urban centres. The faunal remains recovered so far at the current site suggest that preservation is good across a variety of features. It is therefore hoped that recovery of a larger sample at the current site could useful evidence concerning diet and the use of animal resources in this under-represented period (Monckton 2006, 272).

Cxt	No	Taxa	Bone	Side	Prox	Dist	Notes	Fragments
1	1	dog	tibia	r	f	f	GL=201mm	1
1	1	dog	femur	r	f	f		2
1	1	dog	ulna	l	f			2
1	1	dog	ulna	r	f			2
1	1	dog	sternum				fragment	1
1	1	dog	calcaneum	l	f			1
1	1	dog	metatarsal	l	f		mt3	1
1	1	dog	axis		f	f	measurable	1
1	1	dog	c vert		f	f		1
1	6	dog	t vert		f	f	some articulate	6
1	7	dog	l vert		f	f	articulate	7
1	1	cattle	radius	l	f			1
1	1	cattle	scapula	r		f		3
1	3	lge mml	shaft fragment					3
1	1	lge mml	skull fragment					1
1	1	sheep/goat	metacarpal	l	f			1
1	1	pig	humerus			u		1
1	1	lge mml	t vert				spine fragment	1
1	1	cattle	atlas					1
20	1	cattle	metacarpal				gnawed at distal end; exostosis at proximal end.	1
11	1	cattle	tibia	l	u			1
11	1	cattle	femur	r		f		1

Table 1: Basic catalogue of material

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Appendix III: Miscellaneous

Graham Morgan

Feature [12], fill (11) contained two large lumps of very light fuel ash, weight 790g, with a vesicular structure incorporating fragments of clay, possibly from a hearth structure but with no metal content. Derives from high temperature industrial or domestic activity not involving metal working.

Appendix IV: The Environmental Evidence

Anita Radini

During an archaeological evaluation at Melton Mowbray, Burton Road, four samples were taken for the recovery of plant and other remains in order to assess the potential preservation of evidence about past environment, food production, industrial activity and consumption at the site and possible dating evidence. Four 50-litre soil samples were taken from three ditch sections and one unexcavated upper fill: sample **1** (11) [12], **2** (17) [16], **3** (26) [25], and **4** (20) (not excavated)

An initial visual inspection of the samples showed them to consist of silty-clay depsoits, with some charcoal flecks visible. This initial impression was confirmed by flotation of sub-samples, using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation through a 0.30mm mesh sieve, which resulted in the retrieval of only a limited amount of charcoal flecks, too small to be identified. This material could have been deposited as windblown or waterborne and not relate to activities on the site. Unfortunately no further information could be provided on (11) which contained fuel ash (see above).

The deposits were found to have little potential for archaeobotanical analysis, and no further archaeobotanical analysis is therefore recommended on these samples. However, it is important to take into account that soil conditions can vary widely across different areas of a site, and therefore the implementation of an appropriate sampling strategy is still highly advisable if future archaeological work is undertaken in the area.

Sample No	Context	Cut	Feature Type	Notes
1	Trench 18 (11)	[12]	Large ditch	Fill contained with fuel ash and bone
2	Trench 16 (17)	[16]	Ditch	Upper fill of ditch. Large quantities of pottery.
3	Trench 18 (26)	[25]	Part of ditch (?)	Large quantities of pottery.
4	Trench 18 (20)		Ditch (unexcavated)	Large quantities of pottery.

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