

**An Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching
of land between Leicester Road and Dalby Road,
Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 7485 1880 (centre)**

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An Archaeological Evaluation at land between Leicester Road and Dalby Road, Melton Mowbray Leicestershire (SK 7485 1880)

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land between Leicester Road and Dalby Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7485 1880) by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services between the 29th March and 10th April 2006 for Jelson Ltd. This work represents the second phase of evaluation that was required to establish the extent of the surviving archaeology as well as help form a mitigation strategy in advance of the residential development.

Nine trenches totalling 240m in length and 1.6m wide were machine excavated (equalling 384m²). The location of these trenches was limited due to site various constraints including gas/electric mains and spoils heaps.

Positive results were obtained from five of the trenches excavated although much of the archaeology uncovered remains undated. During the initial phase evaluation Trench 8 identified a dense area of archaeology close to the western boundary of the ambulance station. Trenches 5, 6 and 9 were located in close proximity to this trench where further archaeological features were identified. These included potential domestic activities and enclosure ditches. Elsewhere further ditches were observed in Trenches 1 and 2 although these features were less clustered than the ones observed further north.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council (Accession No. X.A 32.2006).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Jelson Ltd. to carry out a second phase archaeological evaluation at land south of Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7485 1880). The work was undertaken in order to establish the extent of the surviving archaeology and help formulate a mitigation strategy in advance the agreed residential development (PA 00/0888/6).
- 1.2 A desk-based assessment has been undertaken (Marsden 2001) that identified the site as an area of high archaeological potential. An initial phase of archaeological evaluation was undertaken during June 2001 that confirmed this potential, uncovering a variety archaeological remains dating between the Late Neolithic to Saxo-Norman period (Finn 2001). This report presents the

results of the second phase of archaeological evaluation by trial trenching that was carried out between the 29th March and 10th April 2006, by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). The trial excavation followed the Project Design (ULAS 2006, Appendix 3), which had been approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

- 2.1 The development site is located to the west of Melton Mowbray town centre, in north-east Leicestershire on land formally occupied by the police station. It consists of an area of *c.* 4.39 ha that is bounded to the north by Leicester Road, to the east by Dalby Road, to the west by the former day care centre and by the railway line to the south (centred on SK 7485 1880; figs. 1 and 2). This second phase of evaluation was focussed purely on the site of the former police station buildings (assigned Area 1 in the first phase, *c.*2.56 ha area) in order to evaluate areas that were inaccessible while the buildings were still extant. Here groundwork had already begun in preparation for the residential developments which meant certain areas were still inaccessible for evaluation.
- 2.2 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 170 indicated that the underlying geology was likely to consist of clays. The site lies at a height between *c.* 70-80 m OD.

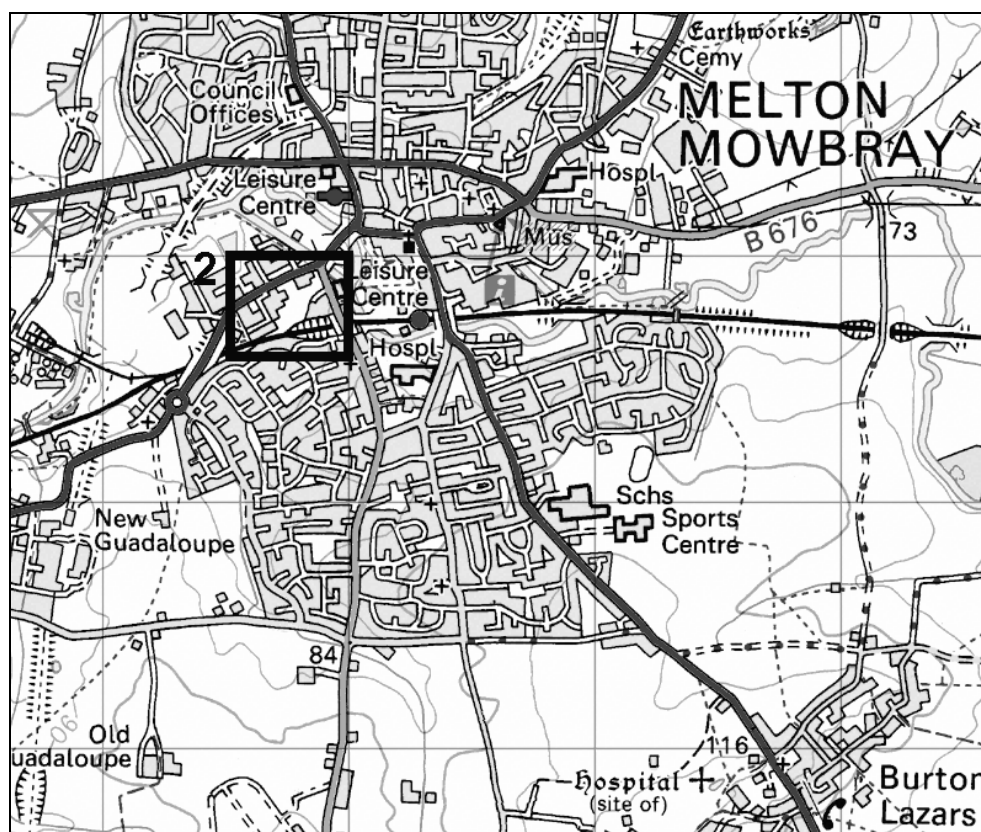


Figure 1 Site location

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3. Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1. Historical Background

3.1.1 In the Domesday Book, Melton was held by Geoffrey of la Guerche. Included under the entry are '2 priests ... A market ... and 2 mills' (Morgan 1979). Melton was clearly a substantial village and administrative centre by the time of the Domesday Book. It lay at the centre of a large estate whose dependent hamlets included Freeby, Wyfordby, Burton Lazars, Eye Kettleby, Sysonby, Eastwell and Goadby. The presence of two priests indicates the existence of St Mary's church though it is not specifically mentioned. Melton already had a market in 1086 but was not to obtain borough status until the 12th century under the lordship of the Mowbray family (Courtney 1994).

3.1.2 The enclosure map for Melton Mowbray of 1761 showed that the site as being separated into one large field to the west with several smaller enclosures adjacent to Dalby Road. The 1871 map of Melton shows buildings near the junction between Dalby Road and Leicester Road, which are also shown on subsequent OS maps, but had been demolished by 1991. The 1871 map shows the rest of the land as agricultural and trees are shown on the Mount. The OS maps of 1886 show a similar landscape to the 1871 map as do those of 1904 and 1930. The OS maps all show a pond just to the south of the Mount or Mound. The 1972 map shows the police station and police houses in the west of the area as well as two other small buildings. The 1991 map shows a platform to the south of the Mount which is still visible at present.

3.2. Archaeological Background

3.2.1 The site has already been subject to evaluation by ULAS in 2001 (Finn. 2001). The site includes part of an earthwork, most likely of 12th century date known as The Mount or Mount Pleasant (**MLE3958**). There is a post-medieval windmill mound (**MLE3959**) and also possibly originally a medieval castle motte earthwork (**MLE3958**). It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (**SM17023**), being recorded as a medieval motte, although the evaluations of 2001 showed no evidence of this.

3.2.3 The evaluations of 2001 produced evidence of settlement remains of Late Bronze-Age to Iron Age date, attributable to the first millennium BC (**MLE9232 & MLE9233**). Two ditches containing Anglo-Saxon pottery were also discovered (**MLE9231 & MLE9234**) and may have been evidence of a possible settlement in the area (Finn 2001). The evaluation also uncovered signs of Neolithic activity (**MLE9229**) and Saxo-Norman pottery was also recovered from the site.

3.2.3 The archaeology uncovered on the site was sealed by a thick layer of alluvium. In the Trent Valley it has been noted that alluviation is a predominantly medieval phenomenon, thought to be due to increased flooding as a result of climatic downturn around the 14th century, with flood waters containing a high silt load, derived from intensive ploughing (Brown et al. 2001). Although no dating evidence was recovered from the alluvial deposits at this site, a post-Early Anglo-Saxon date may be inferred from the stratigraphic sequence, whilst the absence of medieval activity may be taken indicate that

the area was prone to flooding at this time, and therefore unsuitable either for settlement or cultivation. The area was presumably exploited as meadowland during this period.

- 3.2.4 Other prehistoric activity known in the Melton area includes finds of late Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery and occupation from St Mary's Way (**MLE3948**) and Mesolithic or early Neolithic finds from a site west of Mowbray Court (**MLE7078**) and Neolithic or early Bronze Age finds from a site south of Sysonby. Roman pottery and features have been found at King Street (**MLE3945**) on a site south of Sysonby (**MLE3976**) and a possible Roman cemetery at Butts Meadow (**MLE3975**).
- 3.2.5 Anglo-Saxon evidence from this area of the town includes a brooch (**MLE6214**), pottery (**MLE9039**) and possible occupation evidence from a site south of Sysonby (**MLE3977**). The site is located to the south-west of the medieval town of Melton Mowbray which contains known sites such as the occupation at Burton Street (**MLE3943**) and the Church of St Mary (**MLE3929**).

4. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The main objectives of the evaluation were:
- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits in areas not covered by the initial phase of evaluation.
 - To provide information on the extent, character and date of archaeological deposits within the application area.
 - The archaeological evaluation, once the above information has been gathered, will help to determine a decision being made on planning permission regarding archaeological issues. Potentially further stages of archaeological investigation will be required as a condition of planning permission.
 - To produce an archive and report of any results.
- 4.2 Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation is to establish the nature, extent and significance of archaeological deposits on the site in order to help formulate a mitigation strategy for the site.

5. Methodology

- 5.1 The Specification stated that thirteen 30m x 1.6m trenches were to be excavated in areas not examined by the initial phase of evaluation. However site constraints that included gas and electric services as well as groundworks meant that the sizes and locations of the trenches varies considerably from the specification (fig.2).
- 5.2 The trenches were excavated using a JCB 3CX equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeology or undisturbed natural ground was reached, or to a depth of 1.60m.

- 5.3 The bases of the trenches were examined for archaeological remains any possible features were hand-cleaned. Where confirmed archaeological remains existed they were planned to scale and recorded. Limited excavation of archaeological features was carried out to determine the character and date of any remains. Archaeological features were recorded with reference to the ULAS recording manual.
- 5.4 The trenches were located using an Electronic Distance Measurer linked to a hand-held Psion data logger. The data was processed using N4ce survey software and the final plans completed with the aid of TurboCAD version 11 design software.
- 5.5 All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, and the Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire County Council).

6. Results

Note: Archaeological contexts as a cut are indicated by: [], those that are deposits are indicated by: ().

6.1 A total of nine trenches were excavated in Area 1 of the development area. They were arranged in order to avoid obstructions such as deep excavations, services and spoil heaps. This meant that the trenches vary considerably from what was suggested within the design specification. A total of 384 sq. m of trenching was undertaken, amounting to a 1.5% of the total c.2.56 ha. of Area 1.

6.2 Trench 1 Contexts (1) and [2]

Interval from southwest end	0m	10m	20m	30m	40m	50m	60m
Ground (OD)	71.33-72.07m OD						
Topsoil depth (cm)	35	30	40	40	40	30	40
Alluvium thickness (cm)	40	40	40	40	50	50	50
Top of natural (cm)	75	70	80	80	90	80	90
Base of trench (m)	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.0

6.2.1 Trench 1 was located in the southwest corner of the site. It measured 60m x 1.6m and was orientated northeast-southwest. The topsoil consisted of a mid greyish brown silty clay that contained occasional inclusions of small rounded pebbles. This varied in depth between 350-400mm and overlaid a mid yellowish brown alluvial clay that contained occasional inclusions of rounded/sub-rounded stones. The alluvium varied in depth between 700-900mm and directly overlaid the sandy gravelly clay natural substratum.

6.2.2 A linear feature [2] was located and excavated, towards the centre of the trench (fig. 3). It was aligned northeast-southwest and spanned the width of the trench. It measured 1m in width and had a depth of 150mm. The sides of the feature were concave and it had a flat base. It was filled by deposit (1) that consisted of a mid orangey brown silty clay that contained common pea grit inclusions.

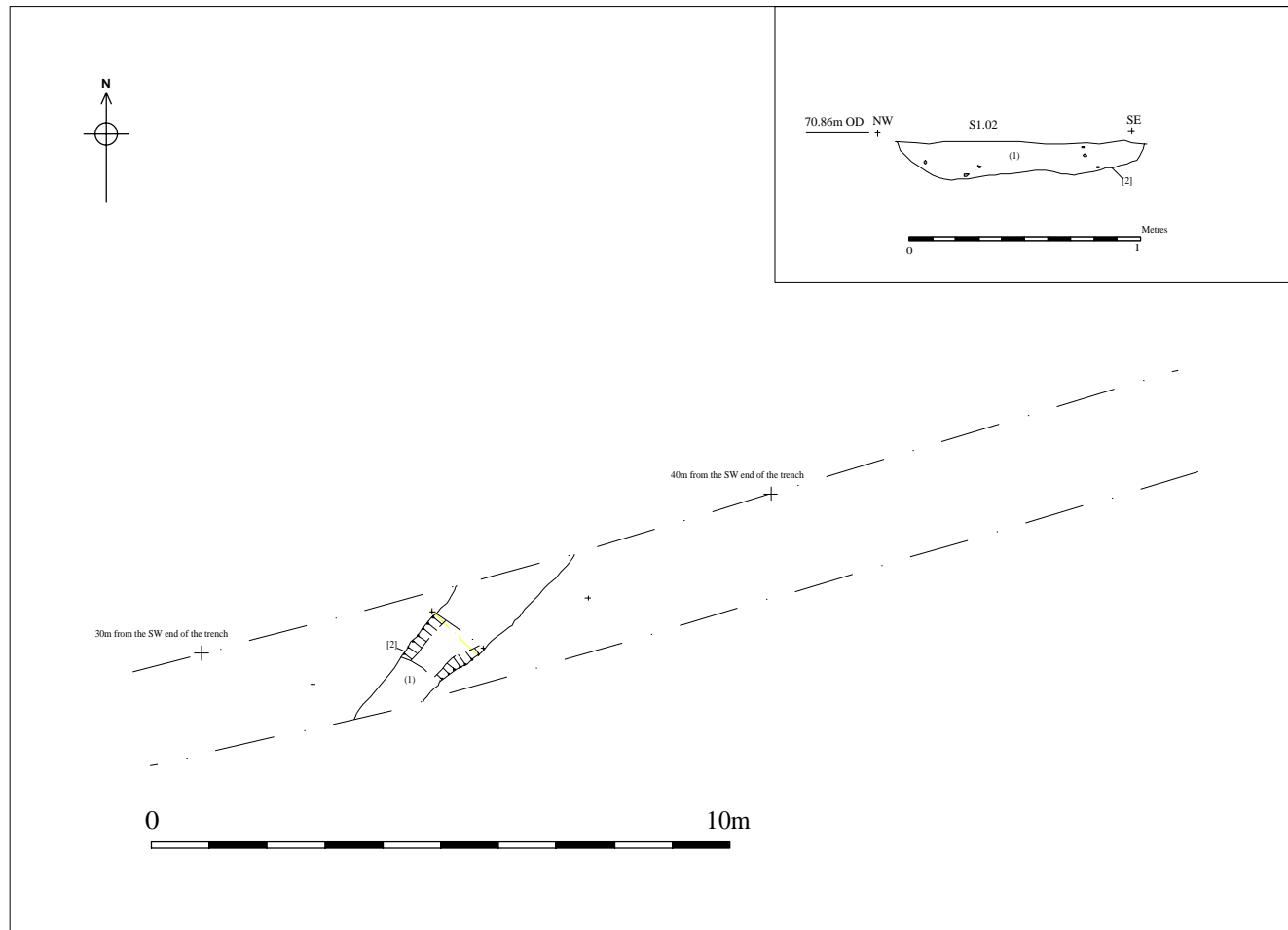


Figure 3: Plan of linear feature recorded towards the centre of Trench 1

6.3 Trench 2 Contexts (3) and [4]

Interval from north end	0m	10m	20m	30m	40m	50m	60m
Ground (OD)	71.05-71.17m OD						
Topsoil depth (cm)	35	30	40	40	40	30	40
Alluvium thickness (cm)	40	40	40	40	50	50	50
Top of natural (cm)	75	70	80	80	90	80	90
Base of trench (m)	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.0

6.3.1 Trench 2 was located *c.*50m north of Trench 1. It measured 30m x 1.6m and was orientated northwest-southeast. The overburden consisted of tarmac and concrete that varied in depth between 350-400mm that overlaid a light yellowish brown alluvial clay. This varied in depth between 750-900mm and directly overlaid the natural substratum that consisted of sandy gravelly clay

6.3.2 A poorly defined linear feature [4] was located and excavated, towards the centre of the trench. It was aligned northeast-southwest and spanned the width of the trench. It measured 750mm in width and was 250mm deep. The sides of the feature were straight with a *c.*45° incline and it had a concave base. It was filled by a light yellowish brown sandy gravelly clay deposit (3). This fill seemed very natural and it is likely that the linear could represent a change in the natural rather than be of an archaeological nature.

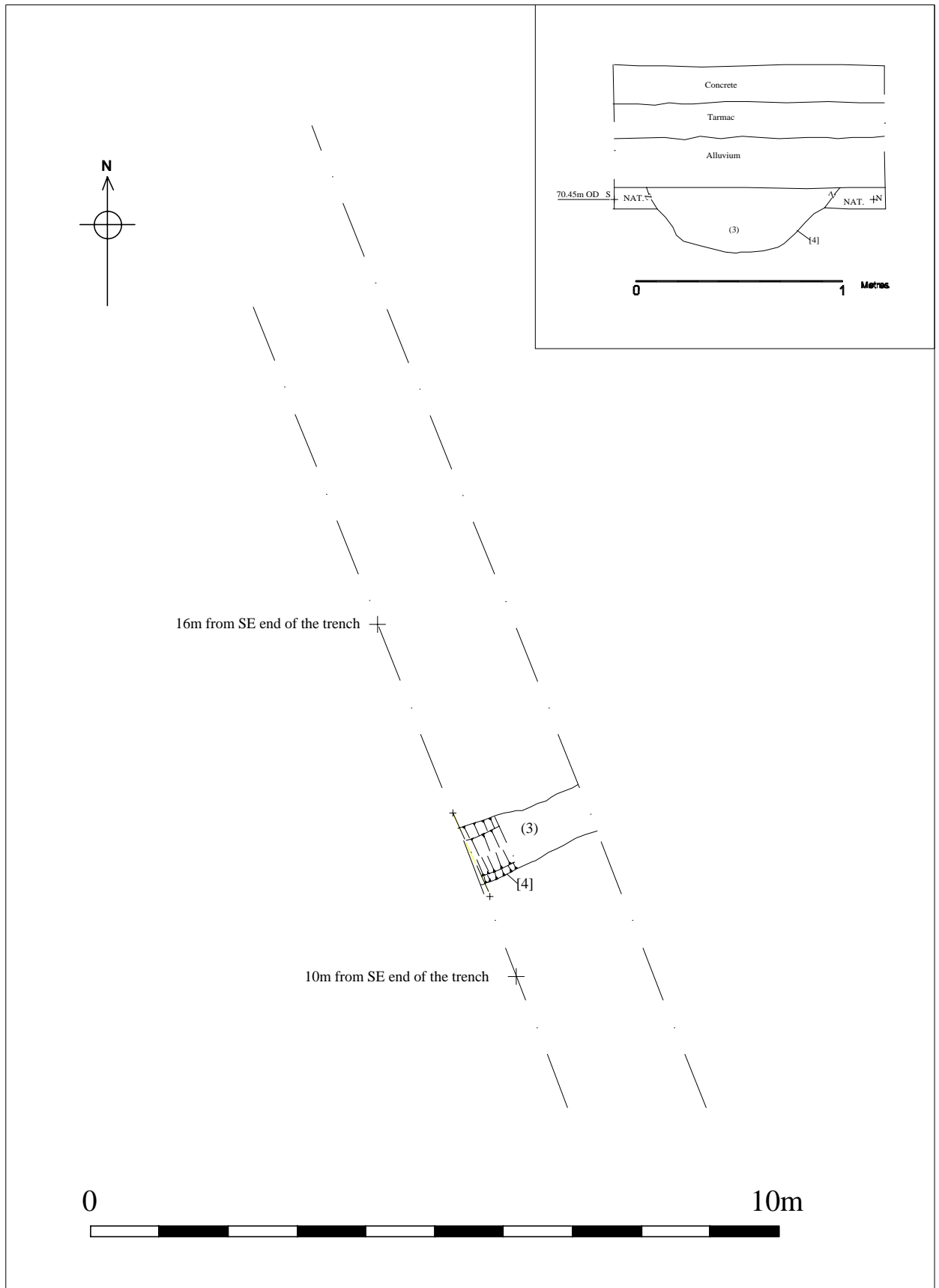


Figure 4: Plan of linear feature recorded towards the southeast end of Trench 2

6.4 Trench 3

Interval from southwest end	0m	1m	2m	3m
Ground (OD)	72.22-72.4m OD			
Topsoil depth (cm)	50	57	55	56
Alluvium thickness (cm)	>70	113?	>65m	>64
Top of natural (cm)	N/A	170?	N/A	N/A
Base of trench (m)	1.0	170	120	120

6.4.1 Trench 3 was located on the southern boundary adjacent to the ambulance station. It measured 3m x 1.7m and was orientated northeast-southwest. The topsoil consisted of a greyish brown silt that contained rare inclusions of angular pebbles. This varies in depth between 500-570mm and overlaid a deep compacted layer of mid grey alluvium. The trench was excavated to 1.2m and a sondage was excavated to 1.7m where possible natural substratum was exposed consisting of light brown clayey silty gravel. This this trench was abandoned due to safety reasons and also because the JCB was unsuitable for excavating such deep deposits.

6.4.2 No archaeological finds or features were located in this trench

6.5 Trench 4

Interval from northeast end	0m	1m	2m	3m	4.5
Ground (OD)	72.25-72.26m OD				
Topsoil depth (cm)	40	50	50	40	45
Alluvium thickness (cm)	>110	>130	>100	>40	N/A
Top of natural (cm)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Base of trench (m)	1.5	1.8	1.5	0.80	0.45

6.5.1 Trench 4 was positioned at the other end of the proposed location for Trench 3 in an attempt to find shallower overburden in this area of the site. The trench measured 4.5m x 1.7m and was orientated northeast-southwest. The topsoil consisted of a greyish brown silt that contained occasional angular pebble inclusions and modern debris. This varied in depth between 400-500mm and overlaid a light brown sandy alluvium that contained common inclusions of natural flint, occasional angular pebbles and charcoal flecks. Clear bands of alluvium were observed in the section that was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.8m but the natural substratum was not reached. Again this trench was abandoned due to safety reasons and also because the JCB was unsuitable for excavating such deep deposits.

6.5.2 No archaeological finds or features were located in this trench.

6.6 Trench 5 Contexts (5), [6], (7) and [8]

Interval from NE end	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	23.8m
Ground (OD)	71.48-71.57m OD					
Topsoil depth (cm)	30	20	32	32	25	25
Alluvium thickness (cm)	30		34	36	44	22
Top of natural (cm)	60	N/A	66	68	69	57
Base of trench (m)	0.65	0.75	0.66	0.71	0.69	0.60

6.6.1 Trench 5 was located close to the western boundary of the ambulance station and crossed the northern end of Trench 1 (2001). It measured 23.8m x 1.5m with an extension of 6m x 1.6m towards the centre of the trench and was orientated northeast-southwest. The topsoil consisted of dark greyish brown sandy loam that contained common inclusions of small angular stones. This varied in depth between 200-320mm and overlaid a mid brown alluvium that contained abundant natural flint inclusions. The alluvium varied in depth between 570-690mm and directly overlaid the natural substratum that consisted of orange brown gravelly clay.

6.6.2 A sub-circular [6] and oval/linear feature [8] were located and sample excavated within this trench (fig. 5). Feature [6] was partially exposed within the extended part of the trench. It measured 500mm x >400mm and was 260mm deep. The sides and base appeared concave although they were poorly defined. It was filled by a dark greyish brown silty sandy clay deposit (5) that contained occasional inclusions of small-large sub-rounded stones and rare pea grit. Feature [8] was partially exposed at the southwest end of the trench on a

northwest-southeast alignment and spanned the width of the trench. The curving nature of the sides of the feature indicate a discrete oval feature rather than one of a linear nature although this possibility cannot be ruled out. It measured 2.35m x >1.5m and it was 650mm deep. The sides of the feature were straight and smooth with an incline of *c.*50° and it had a reasonably flat base. It was filled by a mid orangey brown sandy silt deposit (7) that contained abundant inclusions of small rounded stones.

- 6.6.3 An irregular linear feature was also observed that ran across the majority of the trench (fig. 5). Sample excavation revealed an irregular profile with undercutting sides. A natural rather than archaeological origin seem most likely for this feature, similar to another observed in Trench 1 (2001)

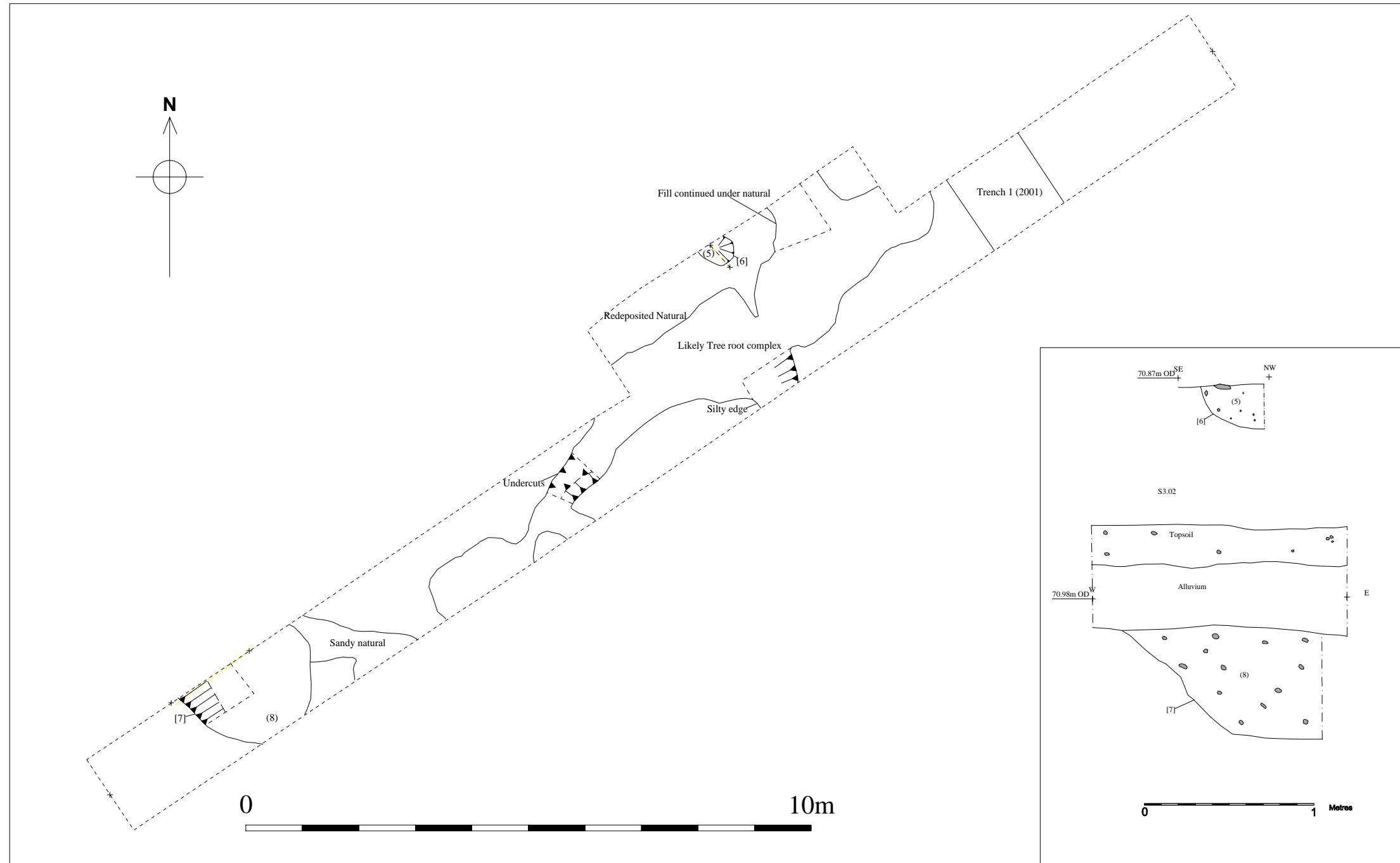


Figure 5: Plan of features recorded in Trench 5

6.7 Trench 6 Contexts (9), [10], (11), [12], (13), [14], (25) and [26]

Interval from	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	24.5m
North end						
Ground (OD)	71.24-71.59m OD					
Topsoil depth (cm)	34	37	30	32	32	35
Alluvium thickness (cm)	36	29	30	35	42	17
Top of natural (cm)	70	66	60	67	74	52
Base of trench (m)	0.70	0.68	0.63	0.70	0.74	0.53

6.7.1 Trench 6 was located directly south of trench 5. It measured 24.5m x 1.6m with an extension of 4.6m x 2.8m at its southern end and was orientated north-south. The topsoil consisted of dark greyish brown loam with abundant sub-angular stones. This varied in depth between 300-370mm and overlaid a mid brown alluvium that contained abundant inclusions of angular stones and flint fragments. This varied in depth between 520-740mm and directly overlain the natural substratum that consisted of a mid brownish orange sandy gravelly clay.

6.7.2 Two definite archaeological features were located and sampled within this trench (fig. 6). Feature [14] was located *c.*10m from the southern end of the trench. It measured 1.1m x 1m and had a depth of 180mm. It was sub-circular in plan, its sides were shallow but regular with an incline of *c.*45° and it had a flat base. It was filled by a dark greyish brown sandy silt deposit (13) that contained rare inclusions of large sub-angular stones and charcoal flecks. A single flint flake was recovered from this feature. Feature [26] was located at the south end of the trench, *c.*3m south of feature [14]. The feature was only partially exposed despite extending the trench westwards as far as the site constraints would allow. It measured >8m x >4m and was 1.34m deep. Its shape in plan was unclear because it was truncated through the middle by a concrete foundation/service trench and on its western side by modern disturbance. The northern edge of the feature was curving whereas the eastern side was more linear. The sides of the feature were steep and regular, the eastern side had an incline of *c.* 50°. The southern side had an incline *c.*60° that then broke to a flat level, breaking again at an incline of *c.*45°. The sides seemed to break onto a flat base although only a small area was exposed at this level so this may not give a true indication of the base of the feature. This large feature was filled by a single mid brown silty sandy clay deposit (25) that contained occasional inclusions of rounded pebbles and charcoal flecks. Four sherds of Late Iron Age and three sherds of Early Roman pottery were recovered from the fill of this feature. It is difficult to interpret this feature

from the area uncovered although a large enclosure corner is a distinct possibility.



Plate 1 View looking northwest of feature [26]

6.7.3 Two potential archaeological features were also located and sample excavated within this trench (fig. 6). Feature [10] was partially exposed *c.*4m from the north end of the trench. Its measured 600mm x >300mm and was 180mm deep. The exposed area suggested a sub-circular shape and its sides and base were concave although these were poorly defined. It was filled by a dark greyish brown sandy silt deposit (9) that contained occasional inclusions of medium-large sub-rounded and angular stones. Feature [12] was located *c.*2m south of feature [10] and also was only partially in the trench. It measured 1000mm x >800mm and was 140mm deep. The exposed area suggested an ovoid but slightly irregular shape in plan. The eastern side of the feature had in gradual incline of *c.*40°, whereas the western side was very shallow was an inline of *c.*20° that broke to an irregular shaped base. It was filled by a dark brown silty sand deposit (11) that contained occasional inclusions of small sub-rounded/sub-angular stones. It is possible both feature [10] and [12] may be natural rather than archaeological in origin.

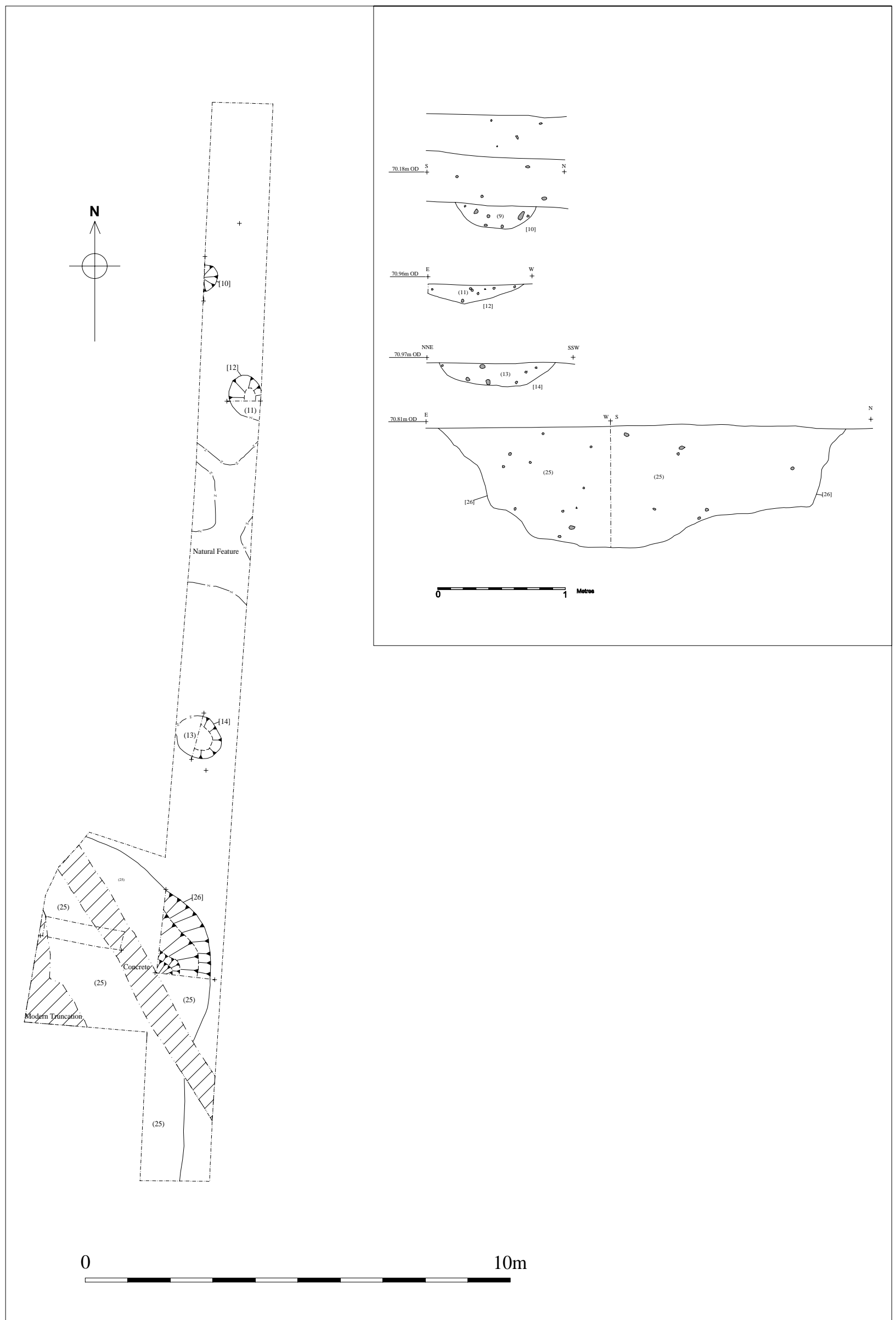


Figure 6: Plan of features recorded in Trench 6

6.8 Trench 7

Interval from north end	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	28.7
Ground (OD)	71.05-72.12m OD						
Topsoil depth (cm)	28	22	52	50	46	37	25
Alluvium thickness (cm)	67	Concrete	38	Cables	46	28	35
Top of natural (cm)	95	N/A	90	N.A	92	65	60
Base of trench (m)	0.95	0.22	0.90	0.50	0.92	0.65	0.60

6.8.1 Trench 7 was located to within the footprint of the former police station. It measured 28.7m x 1.6m and was kinked in the middle to avoid modern disturbances. The first part of the trench was orientated north-south, becoming northwest-southeast towards the centre of the trench. The overburden consisted of loose turf overlying dumps of concrete and brick. This varied in depth between 220-500mm and overlaid a mid brown alluvium that contained occasional inclusions of flint nodules and angular stones.

6.8.2 Live cables were exposed in this trench as well as modern truncations. However, no archaeological finds or features were encountered.

6.9 Trench 8

Interval from east end	0m	5m	10m	15m	18
Ground (OD)	71.07-71.18m OD				
Topsoil depth (cm)	30	25	24	40	31
Alluvium thickness (cm)	34	47	50	50	61
Top of natural (cm)	64	72	74	90	92
Base of trench (m)	0.66	0.79	0.74	0.92	0.94

6.9.1 Trench 8 was located in the northwest corner of the site. It measured 18m x 1.6m and was orientated east-west. The topsoil consisted of a dark grey loam mixed with modern demolition debris. This varied in depth between 240-400mm and overlaid a mid brown sandy alluvium that contained occasional inclusions of angular pebbles and natural flint nodules. The alluvium varied in depth between 650-920mm and directly overlaid the natural substratum that consisted of a mid orangey brown sandy clay with patches of gravel.

6.9.2 No archaeological finds or features were located in this trench.

6.10 Trench 9 *Contexts (15), [16], (17), [18], (19), [20], (21), [22], (23), [24]*

Interval from northwest end	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30	32.8
Ground (OD)	71.68-71.73m OD							
Topsoil depth (cm)	45	44	48	45	40	46	48	46
Alluvium thickness (cm)	25	23	20	17	19	18	26	20
Top of natural (cm)	70	67	68	62	59	64	74	66
Base of trench (m)	70	67	68	62	59	64	74	66

6.10.1 Trench 9 was located adjacent to the western boundary of the ambulance station and crossed the southeast ends of Trench 1 (2001) and Trench 8 (2001). It measured 32.8m x 1.6m and was orientated east southeast-west northwest. The overburden consisted of a dark brown sandy loam mixed with concrete and other modern building debris. It varied in depth between 400-480mm and overlaid a mid brown alluvium that contained occasional inclusions of angular stones and flint natural nodules. This directly overlaid the natural substratum that consisted of orangey brown gravelly clay.

6.10.2 Four linear features and a sub-circular feature were located and sample excavated in this trench (fig. 7). Linear feature [16] was located towards the centre of the trench. It was aligned north-south and spanned the width of the trench. It measured 1.3m in width and was 580mm deep. Its sides were steep with an incline of *c.*60° and it had a concave base. It was filled by a mid orangey brown sandy silt deposit (15) that contained rare inclusions of large angular stones. Linear features [18] and [20] form an 'L' shape 2.6m northwest of feature [16]. Feature [18] measured 1.15m in width and was 220mm deep. It spanned the width of the trench and was orientated northwest-

southeast. Its sides were shallow with a gradual incline of *c.*30° that broke to a flat base. It was filled by a mid orangey brown silty sand deposit (17) that contained occasional inclusions of large angular stones. Feature [20] was a similar in shape to [18]. Its dimensions were 1.15m x 230mm and it was orientated northeast-southwest. Its sides were also shallow with a gradual incline of *c.*30-40° that broke to a flat base. It was also filled by a mid orangey brown silty sand deposit (17) that contained occasional inclusions of large angular stones. Although the relationship between the two featured was not seen it is very likely that features [18] and [20] are contemporaneous and may form part of an ditch enclosure system.

- 6.10.3 An inter-cutting linear [22] and sub-circular feature [24] were located at the west northwest end of the trench. Feature [22] measured 850mm in width and was 120mm deep. It was northwest-southeast orientated and its sides were shallow with a gradual incline of *c.*35° that broke to a flat base. It was filled by a mid brownish orange sandy silt deposit (19) that contained occasional inclusions of medium-large angular stones. Feature [24] was only partially exposed, measuring 2.6m x >1.1m and was 70mm deep. Its shape in plan was sub-circular although slightly irregular. There were no real discernable sides to the feature but it did have a flat base. It was filled by a mid brownish orange sandy silt deposit (21) that contained occasional inclusions of small-large angular stones. No clear relationship was visible between [22] and [24] due to the shallow nature of the features and because there was no discernable difference between deposits (19) and (21).

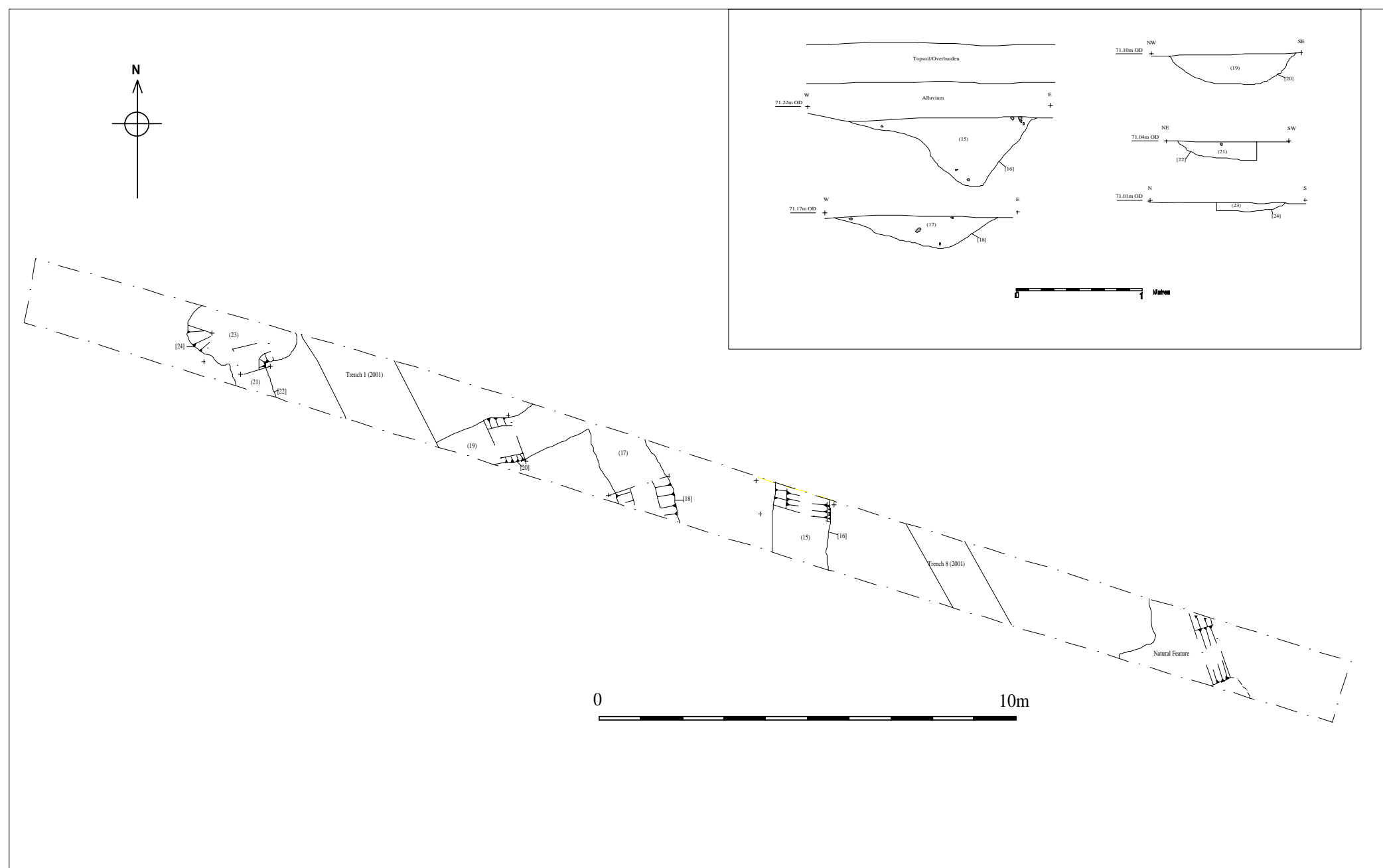


Figure 7: Plan of features recorded in Trench 9

7. Discussion

- 7.1 These evaluation trenches have served to define further, the remains revealed in earlier phases of work on the site, although the dating of the majority of the features remains problematic. It has also helped to identify areas with less potential for archaeological remains.
- 7.2 In Trench 8 (2001) several features were located relating to different phases of activity. These included several ditches, one of which has been dated to the Anglo-Saxon period. Also a pair of concentric gullies were revealed that have been interpreted as a potential roundhouse. Other features included pits/postholes and a narrow gully that had signs of a post-setting. Trenches 5, 6 and 9 were opened up in the vicinity of this trench revealing further evidence of archaeology in this area. Trench 5 and 6 revealed undated pits and postholes that may relate to domestic settlement activity. Towards the southern end of Trench 6 a large feature [26] was observed that produced pottery dating to the Late Iron Age-Early Roman transitional period. This feature has been interpreted as a potentially large enclosure ditch corner. Several ditches including a possible enclosure corner were identified in Trench 9. Examination of Trench 9 (2006) and Trench 8 (2001) has shown that the continuation of the early phase of ditches is clearly evident to the south in the new trench (fig. 9).
- 7.3 Elsewhere Trenches 1 and 2 produced further possible evidence of ditch systems although these features were more sporadic and less well defined than the ones encountered further north.
- 7.4 All of the trenches revealed a layer of alluvium beneath the topsoil/overburden. This generally varied in thickness between 200-700mm. These levels are comparable to depths of alluviation encountered during Phase 1 of evaluation. However, Trenches 4 and 5 revealed alluvium that was in excess of 1m thick. It meant that this area of the site could not be satisfactorily evaluated using the machine available.
- 7.5 Part of Trench 7 was located within the footprint of the former police station. Although considerable disturbance was encountered here, the alluvial cover still protected the underlying natural substratum. This gives a good indication that undisturbed archaeological deposits may be present within the other areas of former buildings on the site.
- 7.6 It can be concluded from the two phases of evaluation that there is a high potential for more undisturbed archaeological remains to be encountered within Area 1 of the site whereas the potential for Area 2 is lower, although this area did show rare evidence of late Neolithic activity. . The results of the trenching are difficult to characterise but do indicate a concentration of archaeology along the western boundary of the ambulance station. Here different phases of activity were observed including possible Late Iron Age settlement activity and later Anglo-Saxon ditch systems. Towards the centre of Area 1 and the southeast corner ditch further systems were observed, again dating to the Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon periods. The west of Area 1 produced no clear archaeological deposits although this area was less densely sampled. Only Trench 17 from Area 2 produced any surviving archaeology. This included two pits, attributable to the Late Neolithic that were located on an

area of un-quarried ground in the southwest corner of the field adjacent to the railway line.

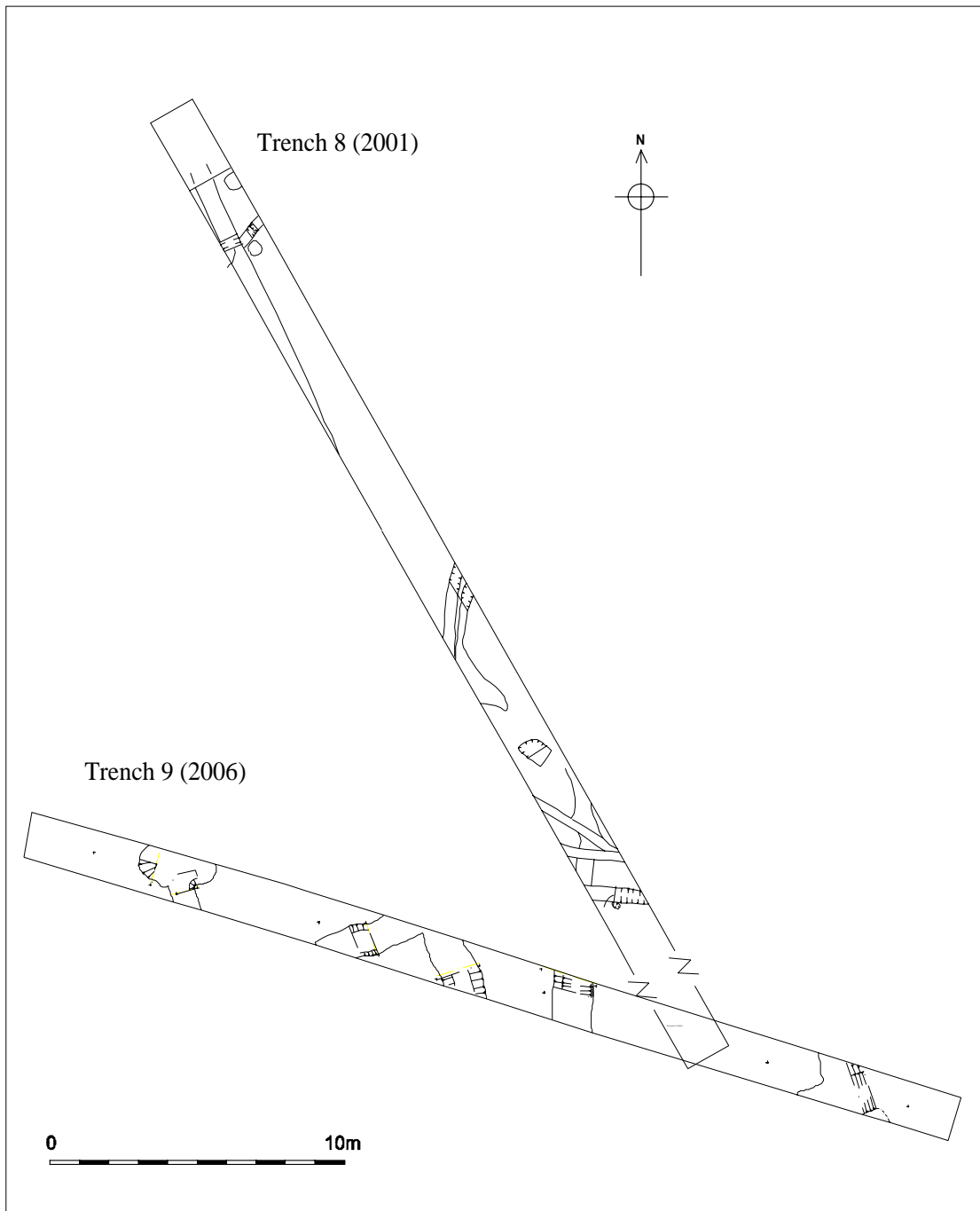


Figure 8: Plan of archaeology within Trench 8 (2001) and Trench 9 (2006)

8. Archive

- 8.1 The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council (Accession No. X.A 32.2006). It consists of trench record sheets, site records, plans and digital photographs.

- 8.2 A brief summary of this report will be published in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

9. Acknowledgements

- 9.1 The fieldwork was carried out by the author with assistance of Greg Jones Andrew Hyam and Daniel Prior. Nicholas Cooper examined the finds. The project was managed by Dr. Patrick Clay. I was like to thank Jelson Ltd. for their cooperation during the course of the fieldwork.

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Marsden, P., 2001. An archaeological desk-based assessment for land at, and east of, Melton Police Station, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7485 1880), ULAS Report Number 2001/15 (*unpublished*).

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Pollard R.J. 1994 'The Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery' in P.N. Clay and R.J. Pollard *Iron Age and Roman Occupation in the West Bridge Area of Leicester: Excavations 1962-1971, 51-114*. Leicester: Leicestershire Museums Arts and Record Service.

Appendix 1: The Pottery and Miscellaneous Finds *By N. J Cooper*

All finds were retrieved from a large pit feature (25) cut 26. pottery has been identified according to the established County Form and Fabric Series (Marsden 1998; Pollard 1994).

The Pottery

Iron Age

Four sherds (joining) weighing 37g of mid- to late Iron Age scored ware in a shell-tempered fabric S1 (Marsden 1998, 45). Fossil shell tempering is the typical opening material used for scored ware in this part of the East Midlands. The thickness of the body (13mm), which has deep irregular scoring on the external surface, suggests a large barrel shaped jar. The dating is likely to fall between the second century BC (when the tradition becomes widely established) and the mid-first century AD. The freshness of the breaks and the lack of surface abrasion suggests that the fill of the feature may be predominantly of this date and that the pottery was quickly incorporated rather than being exposed for any period.

Early Roman

Three sherds weighing 15g in a poorly sorted, quartz sand fabric also containing red ironstone (Sandy Ware: SW1 Pollard 1994, 73). The fabric represents a transition between late Iron Age sandy fabrics and Roman grey wares proper and a date in the middle decades of the 1st century AD is appropriate. Two of the sherds are small and abraded, the third slightly so. If these were found close to the top of the feature, it may confirm a late Iron Age date for the filling with some early Roman/transitional material sitting on the surface.

Industrial

One fragment of fuel ash. Weight 11g.

Animal bone

One burnt fragment of animal bone (4g), species unknown but large, likely to be cattle.

Appendix 2: Context Summaries

Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray				X.A32. 2006
Context	Cut	Below	Area	Description
1	2		T1	Fill of linear?
2		1	T1	Cut of linear?
3	4		T2	Fill of linear
4		3	T2	Cut of linear
5	6		T5	Fill of posthole?
6		5	T5	Cut of posthole
7	8		T5	Fill of oval pit
8		7	T5	Cut of oval pit
9	10		T6	Fill of pit?
10		9	T6	Cut of pit?
11	12		T6	Fill of pit?
12		11	T6	Cut of pit?
13	14		T6	Fill of pit
14		13	T6	Cut of pit
15	16		T9	Fill of ditch
16		15	T9	Cut of ditch
17	18		T9	Fill of linear
18		17	T9	Cut of linear
19	20		T9	Fill of linear
20		19	T9	Cut of linear
21	22		T9	Fill of linear
22		21	T9	Cut of linear
23	24		T9	Fill of circular feature
24		23	T9	Cut of circular feature
25	26		T6	Fill of pit/ditch corner
26		25	T6	Cut of pit/ditch corner

Appendix 3. Design Specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching

Job title: Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

NGR: SK 7485 1880

Client: Jelson Ltd

Planning Authority: Melton Borough Council

Planning application Nos. 00/000888/6

1 Introduction

1.1 *Definition and scope of the specification*

This document is a design specification for a second phase of archaeological field evaluation (AFE) at the above site, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning, para.30). The fieldwork specified below is 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.

- 1.2 The definition of archaeological field evaluation, taken from the *Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IFA S&G: AFE) 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.

2. Background

2.1 *Context of the Project*

- 2.1.1 The proposed development site is located on land south of Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray (SK 7485 1880; fig.1). It consists of an area of c.1.5 ha.
- 2.1.2 Planning permission has been granted for residential development.
- 2.1.3 Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services as archaeological advisors to the planning authority details the level of archaeological work required (their email of 2.3.2006).

2.2 *Geological and Topographical Background*

2.2.1 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 170 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of clays. The site lies at a height of c.78 m O.D.

2.3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

- 2.3.1 A desk-based assessment and initial trial trenching has been carried out on the site (ULAS Reports 2001-15; 2001-172). The evaluation found evidence for Neolithic, Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon activity within the area. A second phase of evaluation is now required to establish the extent of the surviving archaeology and help to formulate a mitigation strategy.

3. Archaeological Objectives

- 3.1 The main objectives of the evaluation will be:
- 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

4. Methodology

4.1 *General Methodology and Standards*

- 4.1.1 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1999).
- 4.1.2 Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are included below.

4.1.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are met and professional standards are maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Senior Planning Archaeologist, the Planning authority and the Client.

4.2 *Trial Trenching Methodology*

- 4.2.1 Prior to any machining of trial trenches general photographs of the site areas will be taken.
- 4.2.2 Topsoil/modern overburden will be removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by JCB 3C or equivalent using a toothless ditching bucket. Trenches will be excavated to a width of 1.6m and down to the top of archaeological deposits.
- 4.2.3 The trenches will be backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.
- 4.2.4 The Senior Planning Archaeologist has requested further evaluation in areas not examined during the initial phase, the equivalent of thirteen 30m x 1.5m trenches (Fig. 1). The location of these may vary depending on constraints on site.
- 4.2.5 Trenches will be examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located will be planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.
- 4.2.6 Sections of any excavated archaeological features will be drawn at an appropriate scale. At least one longitudinal face of each trench will be recorded. All sections will be levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed bench mark.
- 4.2.7 Trench locations will be recorded using an electronic distance measurer. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- 4.2.8 Any human remains will initially be left *in situ* and will only be removed if necessary for their protection, under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations.

4.3 *Recording Systems*

- 4.3.1 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 4.3.2 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.

- 4.3.3 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a trench plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the areas investigated in relationship to the investigation area and OS grid.
- 4.3.4 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary, typically at a scale of 1:10. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be recorded.
- 4.3.5 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 4.3.6 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the excavations.

5. Finds and Samples

- 5.1 The IFA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.
- 5.2 All antiquities, valuables, objects or remains of archaeological interest, other than articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be subject to the Treasure Act, discovered in or under the Site during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination of the said Archaeological Discoveries shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to the relevant Museum for storage in perpetuity.
- 5.3 Before commencing work on the site, a Site code/Accession number will be agreed with the Planning Archaeologist that will be used to identify all records and finds from the site.
- 5.4 During the fieldwork, different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the strata under investigation. Close attention will always be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. If significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the environmental sampling strategy is likely to include the following:
- i. A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
 - ii. Any buried soils or well sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
 - iii. Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.
 - iv. Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.
- 5.5 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Senior Planning Archaeologist. The IFA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.
- 5.6 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best-practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context numbers and boxed by material in standard storage boxes (340mm x 270mm x 195mm). All materials will be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers.

6. Report and Archive

- 6.1 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within eight weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be dispatched to the Client, Senior Planning Archaeologist; SMR and Local Planning Authority.
- 6.2 The report will include consideration of:-
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the evaluation.

- The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
 - The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
 - The anticipated archaeological impact of the current proposals.
 - Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
 - Summary.
 - The location and size of the archive.
 - A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the potential of the archive for further analysis leading to full publication, following guidelines laid down in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage).
- 6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in *The Guidelines For The Preparation Of Excavation Archives For Long-Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), and *Standards In The Museum: Care Of Archaeological Collections* (MGC 1992) and *Guidelines for the Preparation of Site Archives and Assessments for all Finds* (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will usually be presented to within six months of the completion of fieldwork. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

7 Publication and Dissemination of Results

- 7.1 A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*. A larger report will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the evaluation warrant it.

8. Acknowledgement and Publicity

- 8.1 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.
- 8.2 ULAS and the Client shall each ensure that a senior employee shall be responsible for dealing with any enquiries received from press, television and any other broadcasting media and members of the public. All enquiries made to ULAS shall be directed to the Client for comment.

9. Copyright

- 9.1 The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

10. Timetable

- 10.1 The evaluation is scheduled to start on 27.3.2006 with two staff. Further staff will be added as appropriate.
- 10.2 The report will be ready within three weeks of the completion of fieldwork. The on-site director/supervisor will carry out the post-excavation work, with time allocated within the costing of the project for analysis of any artefacts found on the site by the relevant in-house specialists at ULAS.

11. Health and Safety

- 11.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Archaeological Services Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is attached as Appendix 1. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. The HSE has determined that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.
- 11.2 A Risks assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

12. Insurance

- 12.1 12.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Paul's Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

13. Monitoring arrangements

- 13.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. At least one weeks notice will be given to LCC Planning Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological evaluation in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.
- 13.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.
- 13.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

14. Contingencies and unforeseen circumstances

- 14.1 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the project, ULAS shall inform the site agent/project manager, Client and the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority and prepare a short written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate.

15. Bibliography

- MAP 2 The management of archaeological projects 2nd edition English Heritage 1991
- MGC 1992 Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections 1992 (Museums and Galleries Commission)
- RFG/FRG 1993 Guidelines for the preparation of site archives (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993)
- SMA 1993 Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 1993 (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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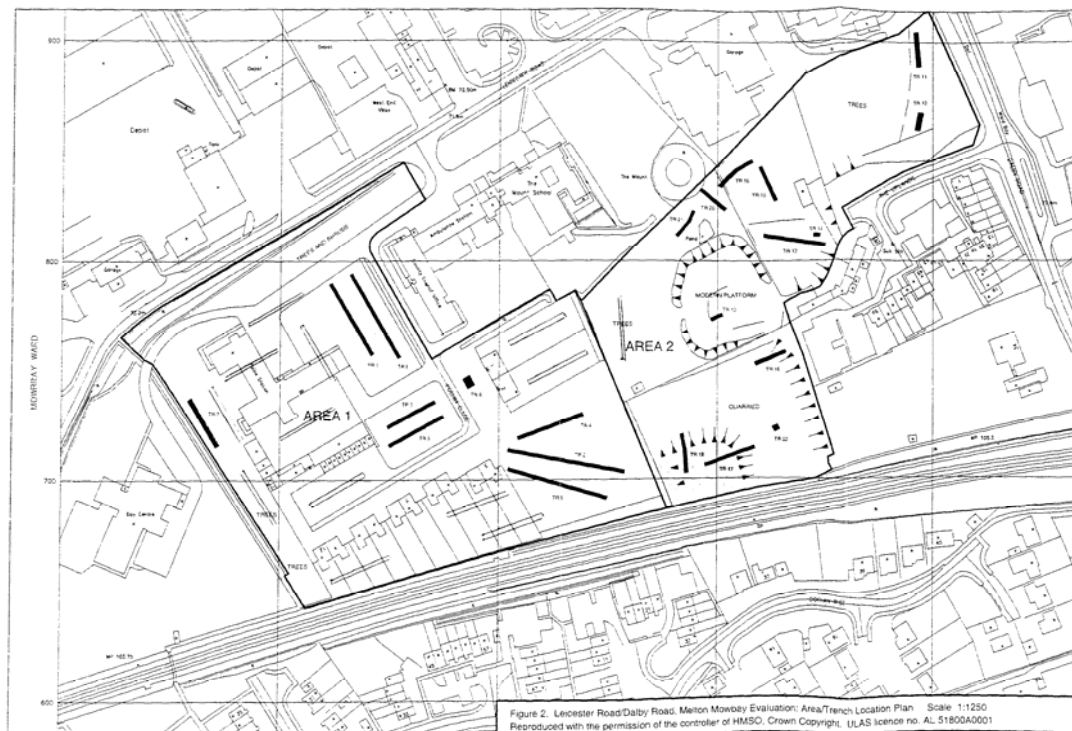


Fig 1 Proposed trench locations (open) in relation to trenches excavated during the previous evaluation phase (blocked). From ULAS Report 2001-172).

APPENDIX 1

Job title: Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

NGR: SK 7485 1880

Client: Jelson Ltd

Planning Authority: Melton Borough Council

Planning application Nos. 00/000888/6

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

A risks assessment will be produced by on-site staff, which will be updated and amended during the course of the evaluation.

1. Nature of the work

- 1.1 The work will involve machine excavation by JCB 3C or equivalent during daylight hours to reveal underlying archaeological deposits. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.5 m with possible features excavated to a depth of another 1m. Trenches will not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.3m. Spoil will be stockpiled no less than 1.5 m from the edge of the excavation, the topsoil and subsoil being kept separate. Remaining works will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. Deeper features will be fenced with lamp irons and hazard tape. Three staff will be used on the evaluation.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 Working on an excavation site.

Precautions. Trenches to not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.3m. Spoil will be kept 1.5m away from the edge of the excavated area to prevent falls of loose debris. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn when working in deeper sections or with plant. First aid kit to be kept in site accommodation/vehicle. Vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 Working with plant.

Precautions. Archaeologists experienced in working with machines will supervise topsoil stripping at all times. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. Machine driver to be suitably qualified and insured. If services or wells are encountered machining will be halted until extent has been established by hand excavation or areas where it is safe to machine have been established. Overhead power lines are present to the south of the areas to be evaluated. The machine will maintain a distance of at least 10 m to the north of the power lines.

2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.

If waterlogging occurs on site preventing work continuing it is proposed to excavate a sump, suitably fenced and clearly marked to enable the water to drain away. If this is insufficient a pump will be used. The sump will be covered when not in use and backfilled if no longer required. Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Weils disease or similar.

2.4 Working with chemicals.

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e. a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

2.5 Other risks

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g. chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases, work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.