



**University of
Leicester**

Archaeological Services



**An Archaeological Evaluation
on land South-East of
Coalville, Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 437 120


Gavin Speed

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**An Archaeological Evaluation
on Land South-east of Coalville, Leicestershire
(SK 437 120)**

Gavin Speed

For: Nexus Heritage

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An Archaeological Evaluation on land South-East of Coalville, Leicestershire.

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land to the south-east of Coalville, Leicestershire (SK 437 120). The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed development. Geophysical survey across the site had identified a number of potential features and trenches were located to target these anomalies.

The evaluation revealed archaeological settlement evidence dating to the Mid to Late Iron Age (400 BC – 43 AD), the mid-late Roman period (2nd to 4th centuries AD), along with further undated activity. Archaeological features were located in 12 of the 38 trenches excavated in Areas 2, 3, and 4.

No archaeological features were identified in Area 1, just agricultural features of no archaeological significance. Area 2 contained an Iron Age ditch in Trench 3; the remaining geophysical anomalies were agricultural or geological and of no archaeological significance. Area 3 contained undated ditches and gullies in Trench 23. Area 4 contained the most concentrated zone of archaeological remains, all confirming geophysical anomalies. The evidence consisted of an Iron Age sub-rectangular enclosure along with field boundaries dated to the Roman period. Area 5 contained agricultural traces of no archaeological significance, confirming the geophysical anomalies.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire Museums Service, under accession no. XA.30.2014.

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS for Nexus Heritage in February and March 2014 on land to the south-east of Coalville, Leicestershire (SK 437 120). This was undertaken in order to inform an outline application (13/00956/OUTM) for a proposed development involving the construction of a balanced mix of residential provision, community facilities, open space, recreation, local shopping, employment and transport infrastructure in land to the south-east of Coalville, Leicestershire.

An archaeological evaluation of the site was requested by Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team, as archaeological advisors to the planning authority. The work was required to assess the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present in order to determine the potential impact of the proposed development upon them.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation, with an assessment of the potential impact on buried archaeological remains from groundworks associated with future development.

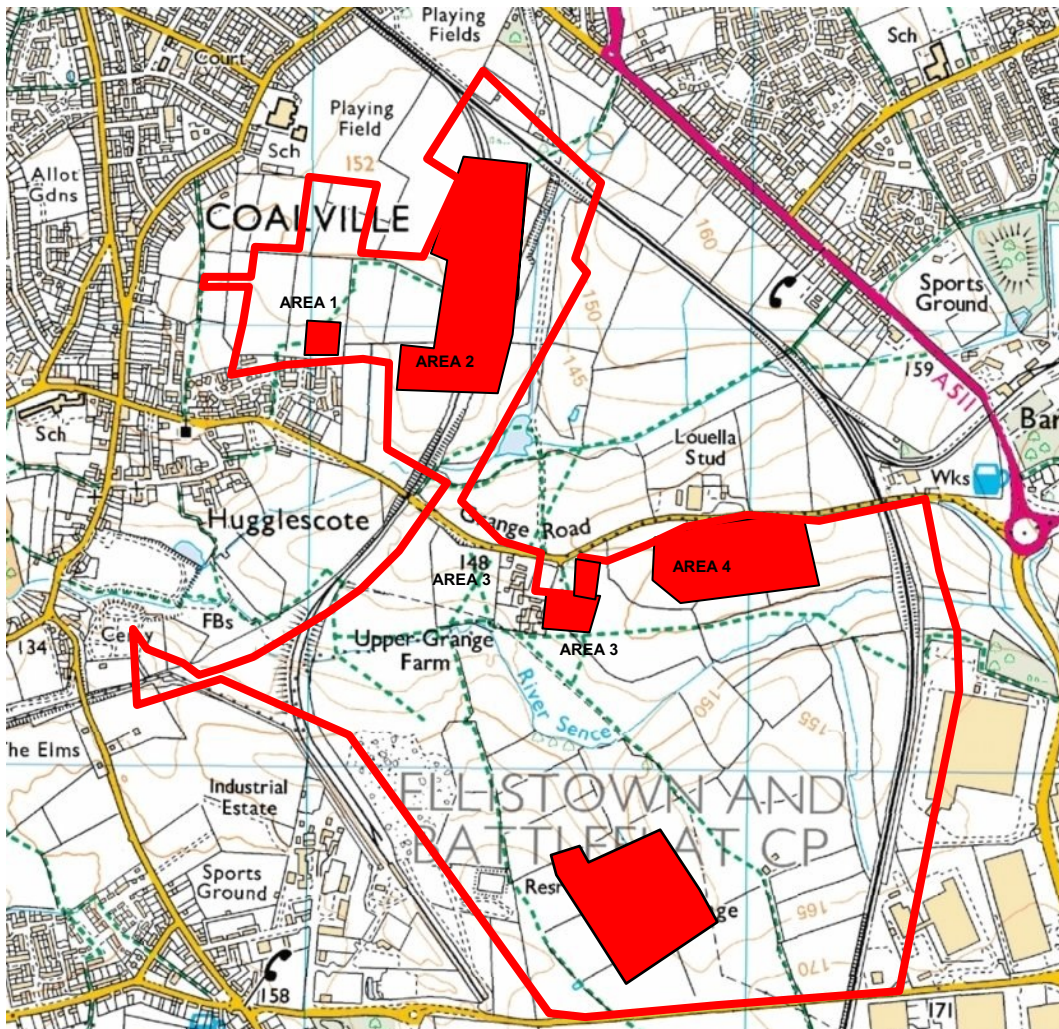


Figure 1 Site location plan within the UK and county of Leicestershire

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2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The site is located to the east of Hugglescote, in the parish of Coalville, Leicestershire (Fig. 1). The site is *c.*173.25ha in extent and is separated into two areas; the northern area (NGR: SK 431 131 centre) is located on the south-eastern outskirts of Coalville, situated to the east of Forest Road and to the south and south-west of Bardon Road (Areas 1 and 2). The southern area (NGR: SK 437 120) is located to the south of Grange Road and to the north of Beveridge Lane (Areas 3, 4, 5). Most of the fields are currently in use as arable farmland with a couple of pasture fields (Fields 18 and 26). Area 3 is a farm (garden and gravelled track). The topography is varied.

The geology of the site is mainly characterised as Gunthorpe Member Mudstone, a Sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 227 to 242 million years ago in the Triassic period with mudstones of the Edwalton Member and a band of Cotgrave Sandstones in the south. The superficial geology is Oadby Member Diamicton associated with the Anglian glaciation, *c.* 478,000ya -424,000ya (Marine Isotope Stage 12). In the centre of the southern area surrounding the River Sence is Alluvium consisting of clay, silt and gravel, again formed in the Quaternary Period (British Geological Survey, 2013).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

The archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Nexus 2012) identified that a number of archaeological and historical investigations had been undertaken within, and in the vicinity of the Site. The prehistoric evidence consists of occasional fieldwalking finds across the area with finds including lithics, medieval and post-medieval pottery (Nexus 2012, 14). Notably in Fields 11 and 12 a late Neolithic knife was found in the 1970s (MLE7288) and the Nexus report concluded that although there was evidence for prehistoric activity, the extent was unknown due to the lack of archaeological work in the area.

No archaeological artefacts of the Roman period have been discovered previously within a 500m radius of the site although Roman activity is suggested by two possible Roman Roads to the north and south of the (ibid 16).

There are no archaeological artefacts of the Anglo-Saxon or medieval periods. Hugglescote has Saxon origins (ibid, 16). Hugglescote Grange (in the location of Grange Farm) was established in the late 12th century as a grange of Garendon Abbey (ibid, 167). Earthworks survive surrounding the former grange (Hartley 1984), these have recently been resurveyed by Trent and Peak Archaeology (A. Martin pers. comm.). The results of this earthwork survey will also be submitted in order to inform the determination of the planning application and should be considered in conjunction with this report.

For the majority of the post-medieval period the development area appears to have been agricultural land with the fields enclosed by the late 18th century with the south-eastern corner of the northern area largely dominated by the railway after the 1830s with Station Farm becoming a railway depot in the late 20th century.

Geophysical Survey

A geophysical survey was undertaken in May 2013 (Phase Site Investigations 2013). This showed a uniform magnetic background in parts of the Site and a variable background in other areas. The DBA concluded that this variability is probably associated with historic manuring of some fields, which has distributed relatively modern magnetic material or localised geology (Nexus 2013, 9). Most of the identified anomalies appear to relate to agricultural practice (including relict ridge and furrow cultivation), modern material/objects or geological/pedological variations. There are also several areas where strong responses or magnetic disturbance from modern features dominate the surrounding data and other anomalies suggestive of single, strongly magnetic features / objects, some of which could be associated with industrial activity / features.

There are other anomalies of unknown or uncertain origin and linear/curvi-linear positive anomalies that are not on the same alignment as field boundaries or agricultural responses and which could indicate the presence of infilled ditches. Some of the responses could be associated with archaeological features/activity. In particular positive linear anomalies in Area 4 suggest possible enclosures / ditches of archaeological interest.

4. Aims and Objectives

The broad aims of the archaeological evaluation trenches were:

- To determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains on the site as indicated by the geophysical survey
- To establish the nature and extent of any existing disturbance and intrusion to subsurface deposits and, where the data allows, assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits of archaeological significance
- To enable the clients to establish a schedule for archaeological risks
- To allow NWLDC to make an informed decision on the planning application as advised by
- LCC.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological evaluation trenches are:

- Insofar as possible within methodological constraints, to explain any temporal, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and any relationships between these and the archaeological and historic elements of the wider landscape.
- Where the data allows, identify the research implications of the site with reference to the regional research agenda and recent work in Leicestershire.

Research Aims

The initial assessment suggested that archaeological work would be able to contribute towards several research objectives derived from *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006) and *East Midlands Heritage: An updated research agenda and strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight et al. 2012).

Lithic scatters from fieldwalking suggested possible prehistoric activity and a key objective was to determine whether the artefacts were related to identifiable features. Remains of this date could contribute to an understanding of woodland clearance and agricultural intensification, and their impact upon alluviation and colluviation in different areas. (Research Agenda topics 3.1.3, 3.2.1-2, 3.3.1, 3.4.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.4, 3.6.4, 3.8.1, 3.9.1, 4.2.2-3, 4.8.1;

Research Objective 3B - *Assess the fieldwalking resource,*

Research Objective 4C - *Characterise the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlement resource and investigate intra-regional variability).*

The geophysical survey suggested the potential for Iron Age/Roman features. The character of aggregated settlements and the reasons for their emergence are an agreed regional priority. The comparison of such sites with similar complexes in the Trent Valley and Northamptonshire and their location and intra-site spatial arrangements is also a regional research aim. Information on the sequence and chronology of boundaries and their relationship to settlements may be recovered and palaeoenvironmental evidence could provide information on agricultural practices and land use. Artefacts can provide evidence for evidence for craft industry and exchange across broad landscape areas. (Research Agenda topics 4.1.1 and 4.1.2; 4.5.2; 4.8.3; 5.4.1 to 5.4.6; 5.5.1 to 5.5.5; 5.6.1; 5.5.3; 5.5.6;

Research Objective 4B - *refine first millennium BC ceramic chronology by additional radiocarbon dating and typological analyses;*

Research Objective 4E - *Assess the evidence for the evolution of settlement hierarchies;*

Research Objective 4F - *Investigate intra-regional variations in the development of fields and linear boundary systems;*

Research Objective 4G - *Study the production, distribution and use of artefacts;*

Research Objective 5C - *Promote the systematic application of scientific dating techniques to sites of the Roman period;*

Research Objective 5E - *Promote the integration of specialist studies of material relating to subsistence, diet and health*

Research Objective 5H - *Investigate the landscape context of rural settlements).*

The evidence for the early medieval period is currently limited and the research and geophysical survey suggests the area was mostly agricultural. This could assist in understanding the development of the agrarian landscape and food-producing economy, and may produce evidence to shed light upon the origins and development of the open-field system and its impact upon agricultural practices (Research Agenda topics 6.4.3 and 6.4.4; 6.6.6, 6.7.1 to 6.7.3;

Research Objective 6A - *Elucidate the chronology and demography of the Roman to Anglo-Saxon transition period;*
Research Objective 6C - *Review the evidence for developing settlement hierarchies;*
Research Objective 6F - *Identify cultural boundaries in the Early Medieval period,*
Research Agenda topic 7.7.1;
Research Objective 7E - *Investigate the morphology of rural settlements;*
Research Objective 7I - *Investigate the development of the open-field system and medieval woodland management).*

The area around Hugglescote Grange might provide evidence for medieval settlement activity which could contribute towards Research Objective 7E - *Investigate the morphology of rural settlements.* Any later post-medieval archaeology is likely to be agricultural in nature and could contribute towards Research Agenda topics 8.3.1-4, 8.4.2, 8.4.5,
Research Objective 8E – *Identify agricultural improvements of the 16th – 18th centuries.*

5. Methodology

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site areas were taken.

The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator 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 archaeological deposits or the natural undisturbed substratum was reached. Trenches were examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning. The trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and then were backfilled and leveled at the end of the evaluation.

The work followed the approved design specification (Nexus Document 3183.R01) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2008).

6. Results

Thirty-eight trenches were excavated spread across the development site (Fig.2), ranging in length from 20 to 50 metres, the width varied from 1.6 to 2.3m wide. Some trenches were located to target geophysical anomalies, while others were to test apparently blank areas and the extent of any archaeological remains. Due to constraints by services, Trenches 25 and 26 (Area 3) were shorter than planned. A trench in the SW corner of Upper Grange Farm (area of present camp site) was not excavated at the request of the land owners and in agreement with R. Clark of LCC. An additional trench (T24) was opened in Area 4 to identify the presence of a large ditch in T27. Archaeological evidence was located in Areas 2, 3, and 4, in 12 of 38 trenches.

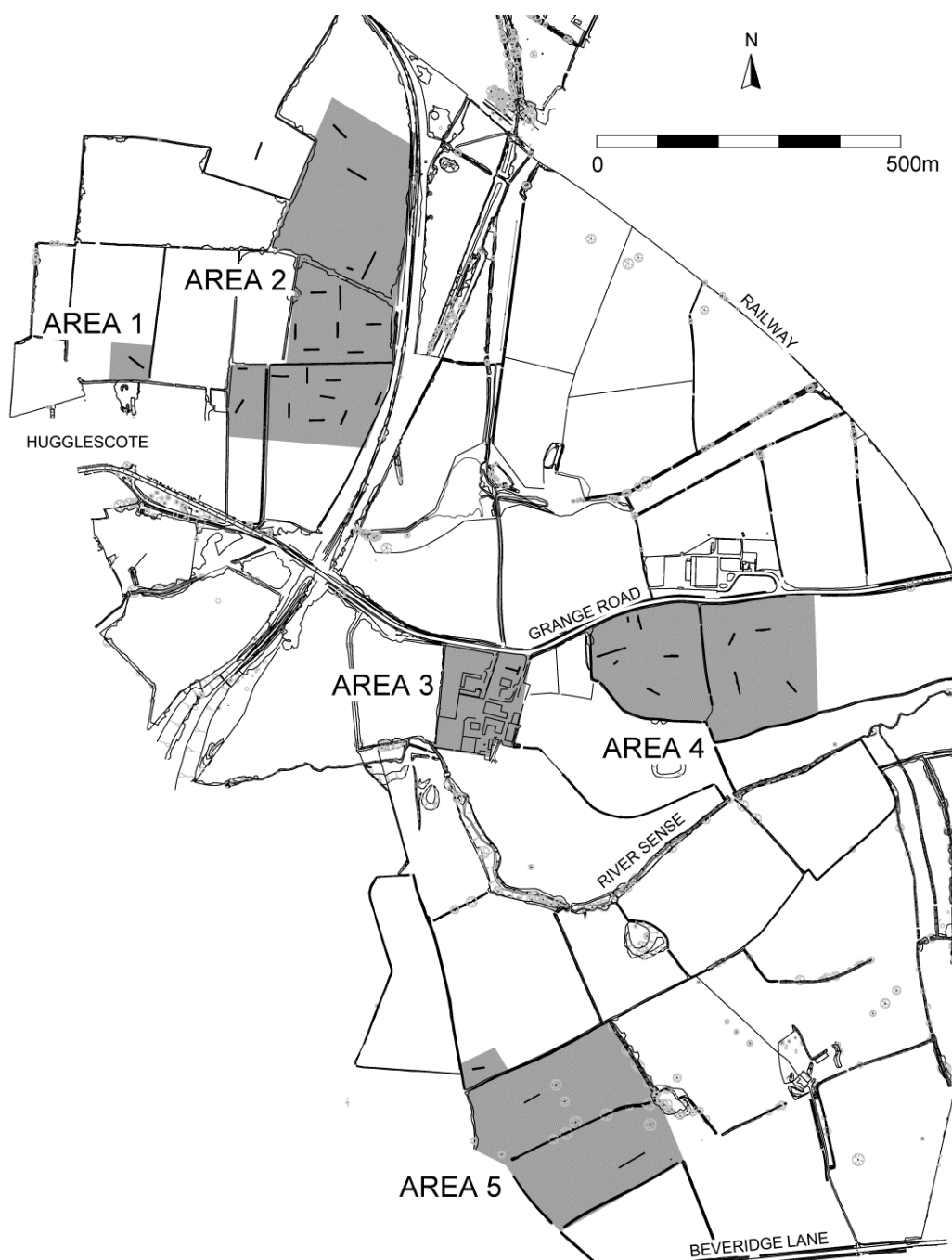


Figure 2: Area and trench location plan

Area 1 contained no archaeological evidence. Area 2 contained an Iron Age ditch in Trench 3, the remaining geophysical anomalies were agricultural or geological. Area 3 contained undated ditches and gullies in Trench 23. Area 4 contained the most concentrated area of archaeological evidence, all confirming geophysical anomalies. The evidence consisted of an Iron Age sub-rectangular enclosure along with field boundaries dated to the Roman period. Area 5 contained agricultural traces, confirming the geophysical anomalies.

Archaeological evidence was revealed in 12 trenches (3, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35), as detailed below. In the remaining trenches no archaeological finds or features were identified. In many of the trenches the remnants of plough furrows, and more modern land

drains were present. Descriptions of all archaeological evidence, and trench depths are provided in Appendix I.

Area 1

One trench (Trench 1) was located in Area 1 (Field 4, Figs 3 - 5). This trench targeted geophysical anomalies interpreted as an area of magnetic disturbance, but the trench contained no archaeological finds or deposits. Burnt patches at the very top of alluvium/ interface with plough soil are the likely explanation for this.



Figure 3: Trench 1.

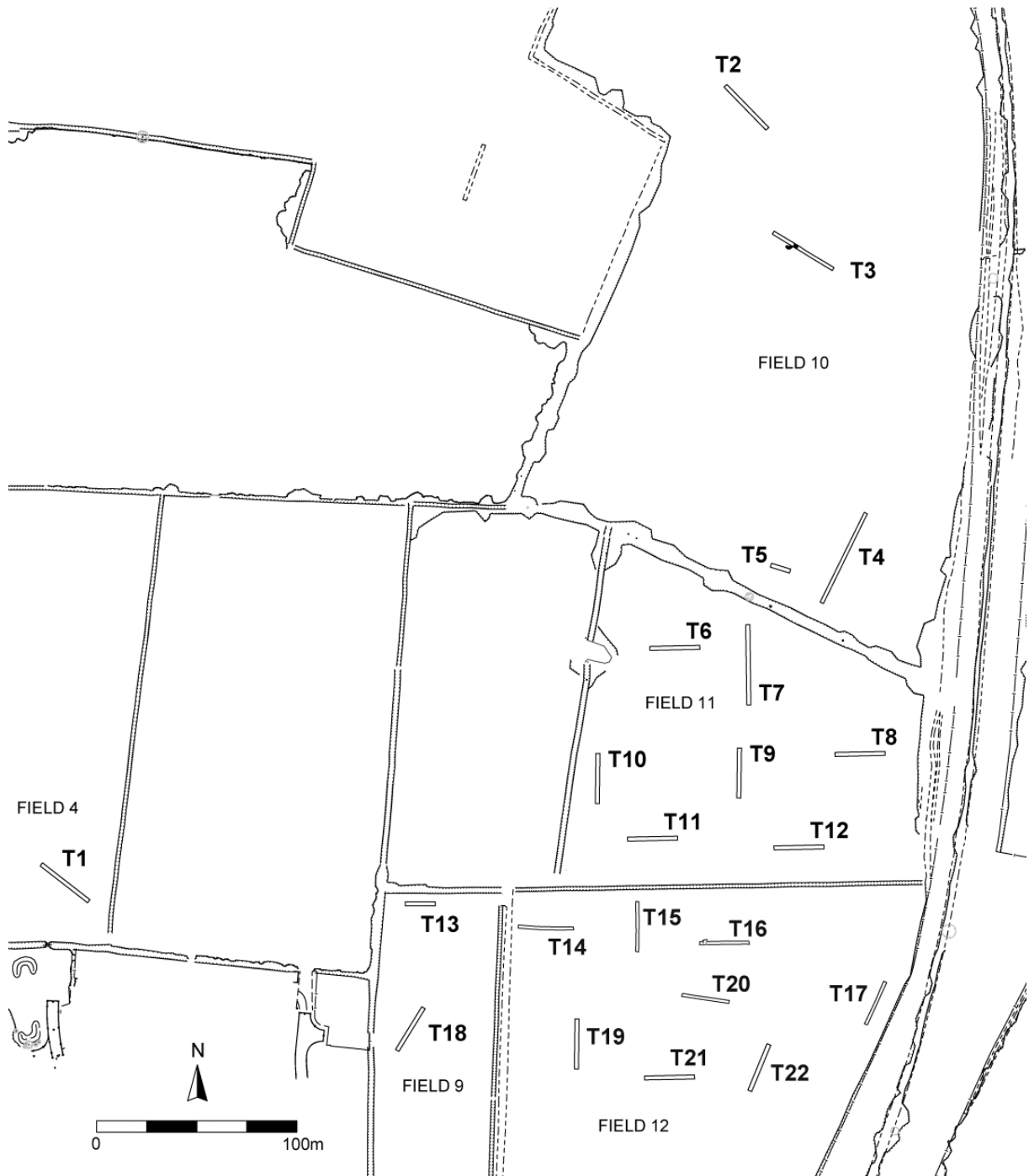


Figure 4: Areas 1 and 2



Figure 5: Areas 1 and 2 with geophysical anomalies

Area 2

21 trenches were located in Area 2 (Fields 9, 10, 11, 12). These were targeting a number of mostly linear anomalies and fieldwalking scatters. All but one of the trenches identified these anomalies as furrows, plough scars, or field drains (Appendix I). Only one trench (Trench 3), contained archaeological evidence.

Trench 3

Trench 3 contained a north-east –south-west orientated ditch [78], approximately 1.88m wide, and 0.54m deep, with concave sides and curving base (Figs 6-8). The primary fill consisted of a orange-grey silt-clay with no finds (79). Above this was a thin silt-clay (80). This contained 50 sherds of Iron Age pottery and a piece of worked flint. It corresponds to a linear geophysical anomaly (Fig. 8).

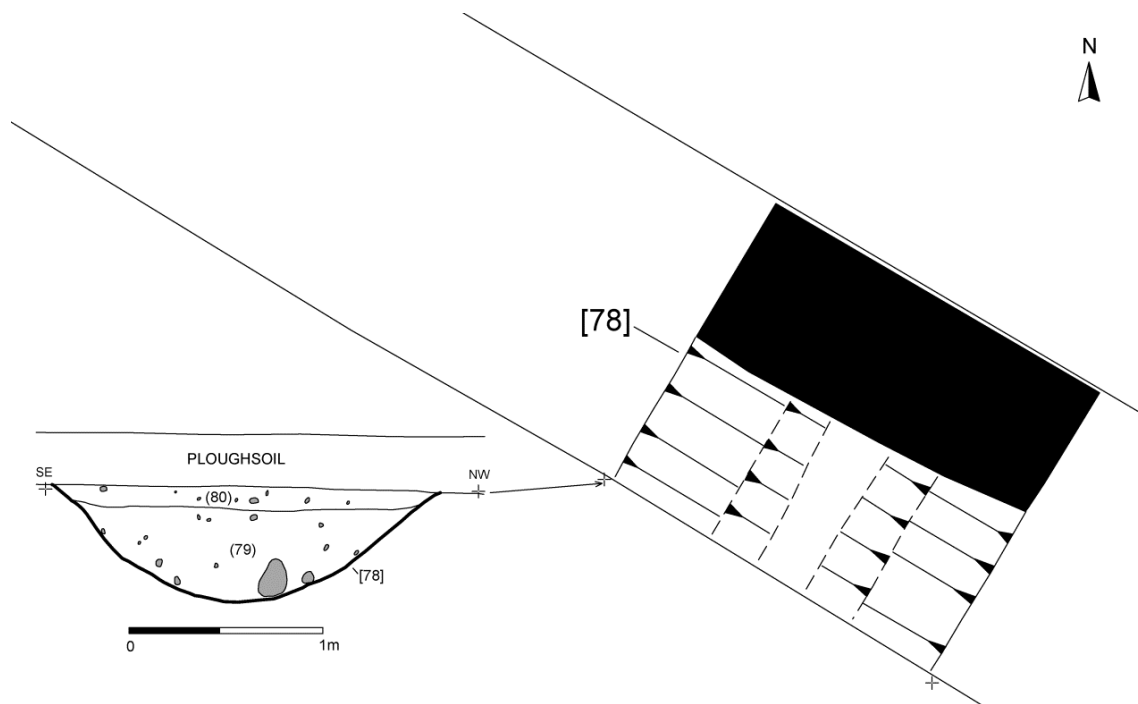


Figure 6: Ditch [78] in Trench 3



Figure 7: Ditch [78], Trench 3

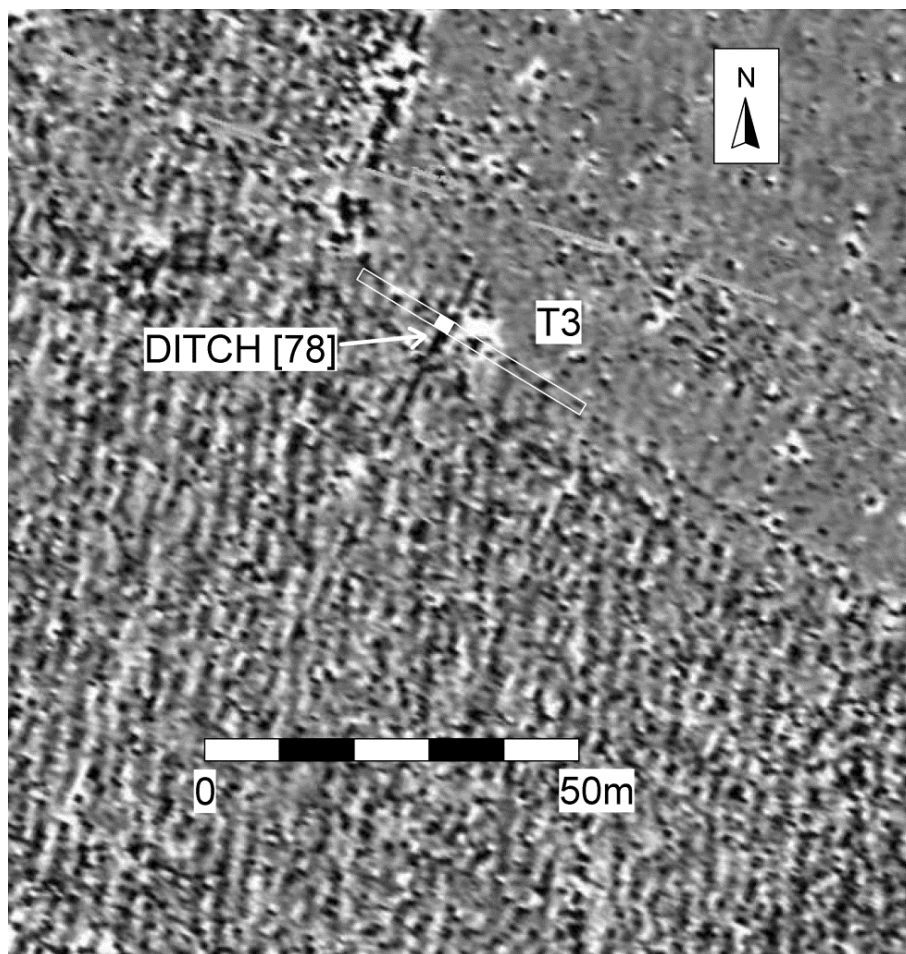


Figure 8: Ditch [78] in Trench 3 with geophysical survey

Area 3

Three trenches were located around in Upper Grange Farm in Area 3 (Fig. 9) in order to test for the presence/absence of any sub-surface archaeological remains associated with the medieval grange. Due to constraints by services Trenches 25 and 26 were shorter than planned. Archaeological features were located in Trench 23.

Trench 25

Trench contained a cobbled surface (77). This was observed on the current ground surface. It was over 0.25m thick and appears to relate to the barns to the south.

Trench 26

Trench contained no archaeological finds or deposits. The hardcore / made up ground was approximately 0.6m thick.

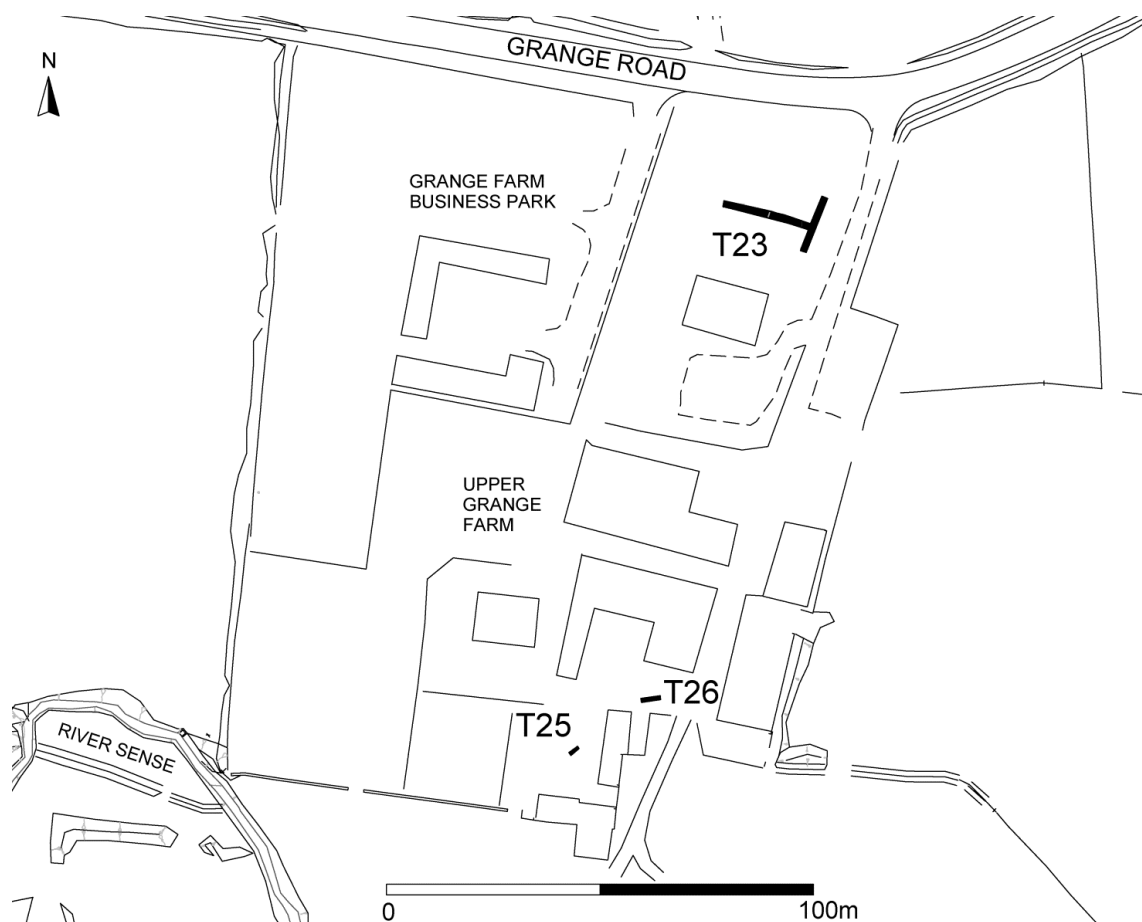


Figure 9: Area 3

Trench 23

Trench contained numerous ditches and gullies (Fig. 10), all undated. Two parallel ditches [47] and [49] were located at the west-end. Ditch [47] had a sharp western side and uneven base, whilst ditch [49] had more gradually sloping sides and a pointed base. These had both been filled with a orange-grey silt-sand (48) and (50).

A post-hole lay immediately to the west of ditch [47]. Posthole [51] had a diameter of 0.24m and depth of 0.16m. It contained an orange-grey silt-sand (52). To the east gully [54] was orientated E-W, and had gradual sides and a flat base. It contained a mid grey-brown sand-silt (53).

A probable E-W ditch [72] lay to the south of gully [54]. This was unexcavated due to waterlogging. Gully [46] lay parallel to ditch [72]. It had concave sides and a flat base and contained a mid brown-grey sand-clay (45). The excavated section was extended in the hope of retrieving artefacts, but no archaeological finds were recorded.

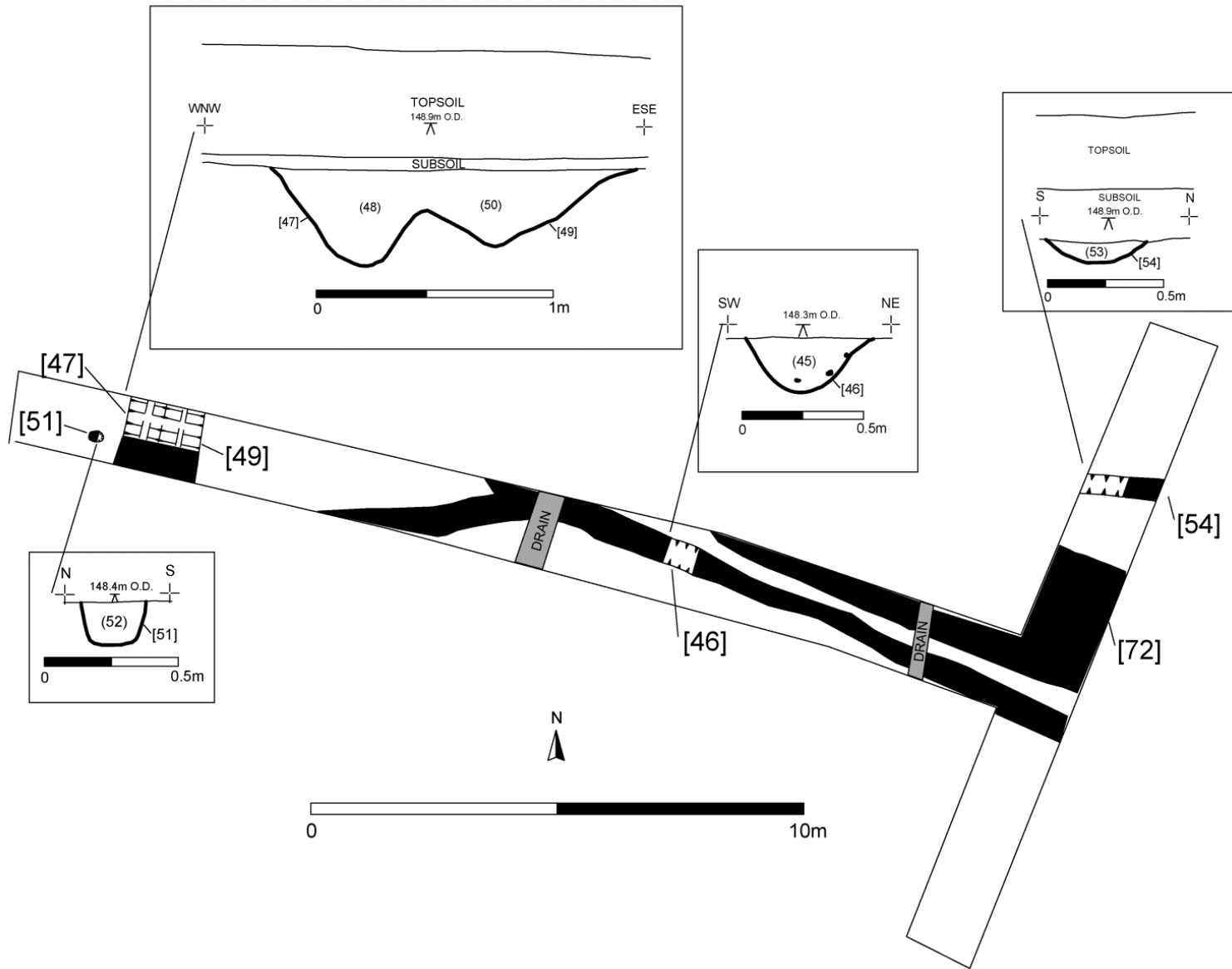


Figure 10: Trench 23, plan and sections

Area 4

Ten trenches were located in Area 4 (Fields 24 and 27), (Fig. 11). Area 4 contained the most concentrated area of archaeological evidence, all confirming geophysical anomalies. The evidence consisted of an Iron Age sub-rectangular enclosure, as well as field boundaries dating to the late Roman period.

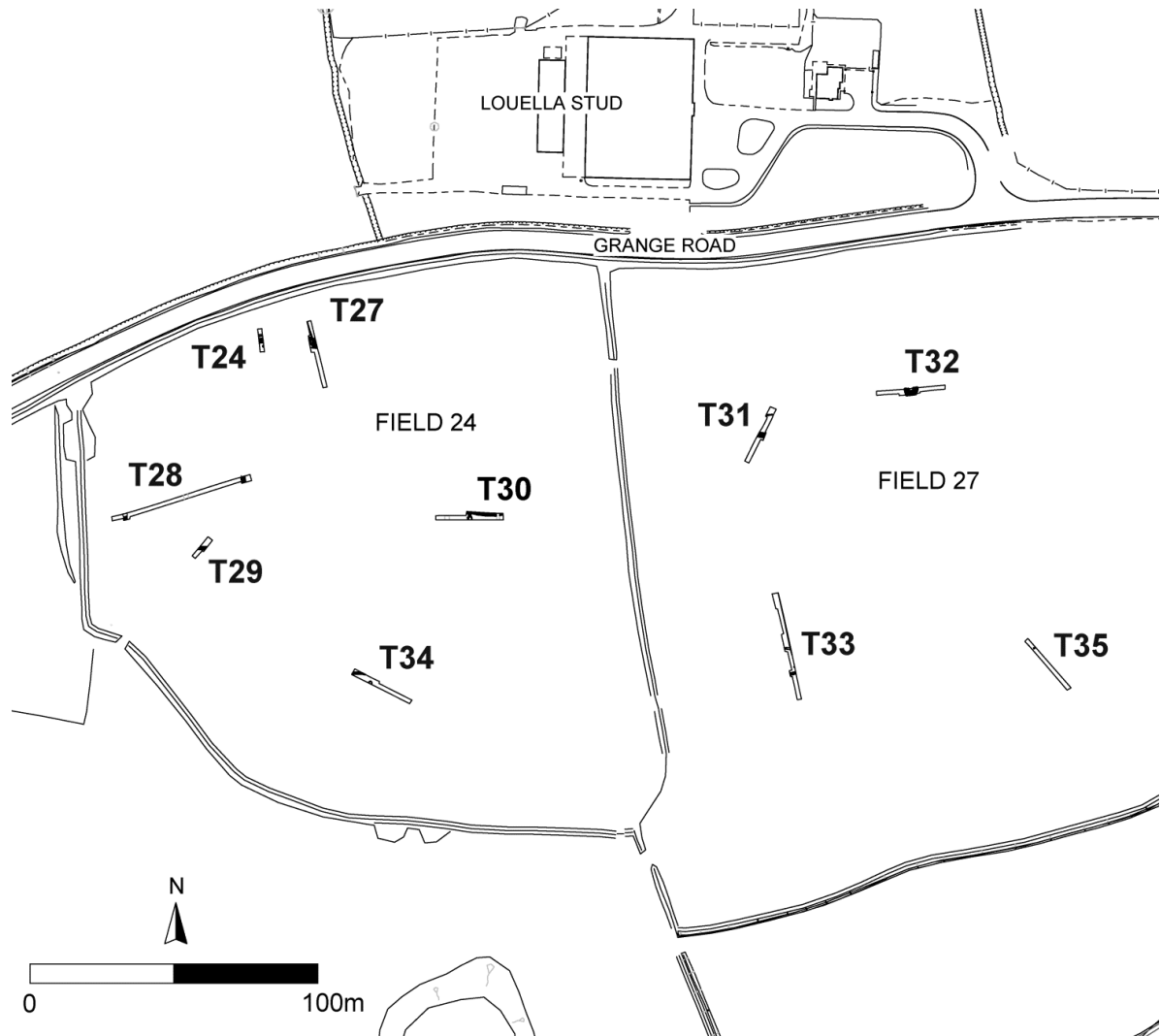


Figure 11: Area 4

Trench 24

The trench was an additional trench opened at the request of Richard Clark of LCC to confirm the continuation and define the size of ditch [29] in Trench 27. An east - west ditch was located (Fig. 12), approximately 1.7m wide. It contained a mid grey-brown silt-clay (74). A probable pit or gully terminus was located 0.7m south of this, this was 0.76m wide and only partly seen on the east edge of the trench.

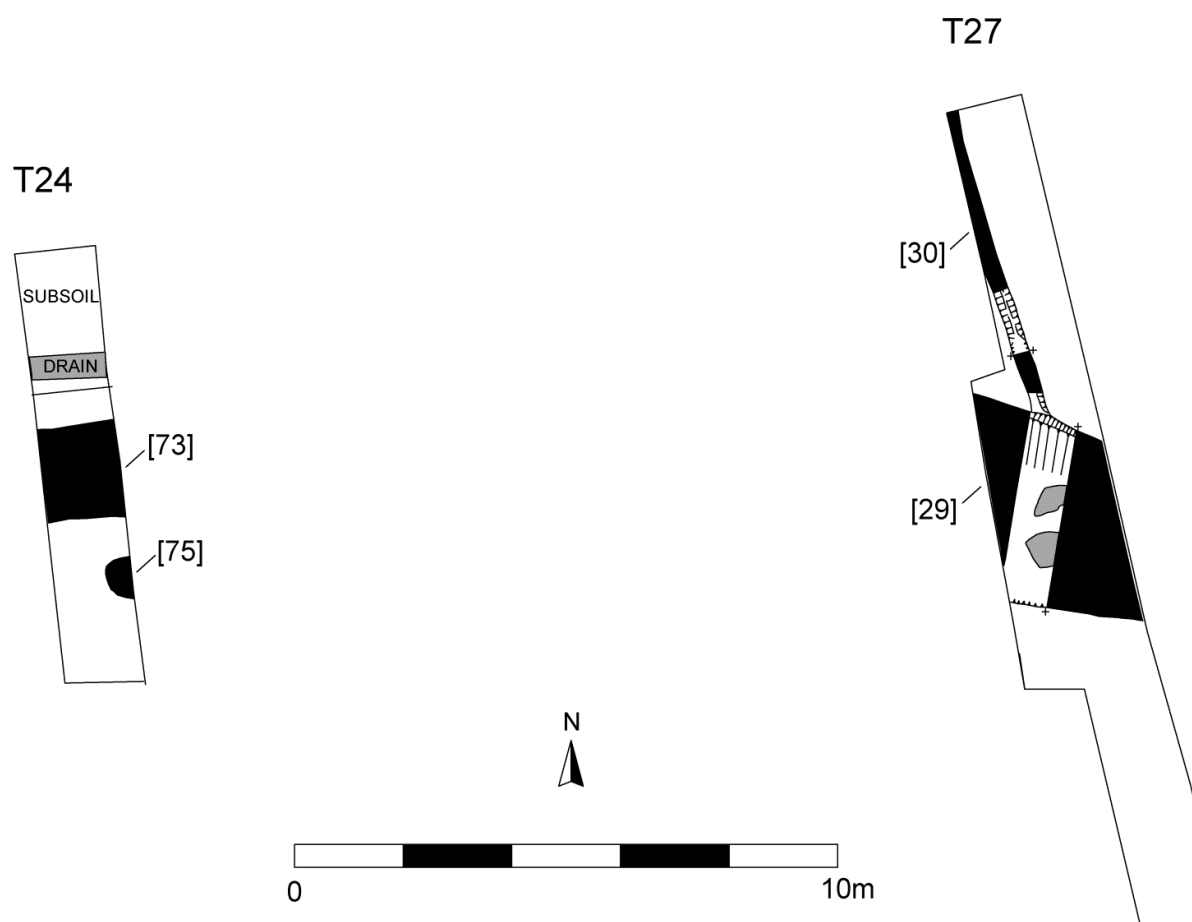


Figure 12: Plan of Trench 24 and 27

Trench 27

This trench targeted a linear geophysical anomaly (Fig. 28). This was identified as a large west – east orientated ditch [29] (Figs 13 -16). The ditch had vertical sides and was 3m wide, and over 1.5m deep (excavation ceased at this depth, due to safety concerns). The ditch was filled with a mid yellow-brown silt-clay (55), consisting mainly of redeposited natural clays, it contained no finds. Two very large stones (one sandstone, one granite) were placed / dumped within this. Overlying this was a light-mid brown silt-clay (56). This fill contained a single sherd of 2nd-4th century AD pottery (probably part of the same vessel found in gully [30] see below). Overlying this was a mid yellow-grey silt-clay (57); a few sherds of 2nd-4th century AD pottery were recovered from this. The ditch had subsequently been re-cut to a much smaller size on at least three occasions ([58], [62], [66]). Re-cut [58] was 1.3m wide and 0.4m deep with concave sides and a pointed base. The primary fill consisted of a mid-dark grey-brown silt-clay (59) containing no finds. Overlying this was a thin (0.1m) dump of dark grey-black silt-clay (60) with frequent charcoal fragments. The environment soil sample identified evidence for the cultivation of barley, emmer and spelt wheat on/near to site and the processing of grains (parching) for human consumption (see Appendix III). Ten sherds of 2nd to 4th century AD pottery (including a late 3rd – 4th century mortarium) were recovered from this layer. Overlying this was a mid grey silt-clay (61). This was sterile and truncated by a further re-cut [62]. Ditch [62] was of a similar profile to [58]. Its primary fill consisted of a grey-black silt-clay (63). Overlying this was a mid brown-grey silt-clay (64). The uppermost fill consisted of a mid grey-brown silt-clay (65). No finds were recovered in any of the three fills of [62]. This ditch was subsequently re-cut by [66]. Ditch [66] once again had a similar profile (concave sides and pointed base); it was 1.1m wide and 0.35m deep. It contained a single fill consisting of a mid brown-grey silt-

clay (67) with no finds. Overlying all three re-cuts was a light mid brown silt-sand (68). This contained two sherds of 2nd-4th century AD pottery.

A north - south orientated gully [30] lay immediately to the north of ditch [29] (Figs 13-14). This was 5.5m long (ran into the edge of the trench), 0.3m wide, and 0.2m deep. It had concave sides and a concave base. The fill contained a mid grey-brown silt-clay (31) and a single sherd of 2nd-4th century AD pottery, probably part of the same vessel as that found in ditch [29]. This ditch appears to have been contemporary with [29], and may have gone out of use at the same time as [29], allowed to silt up and not re-dug when [58], [62], and [66] were re-cut.

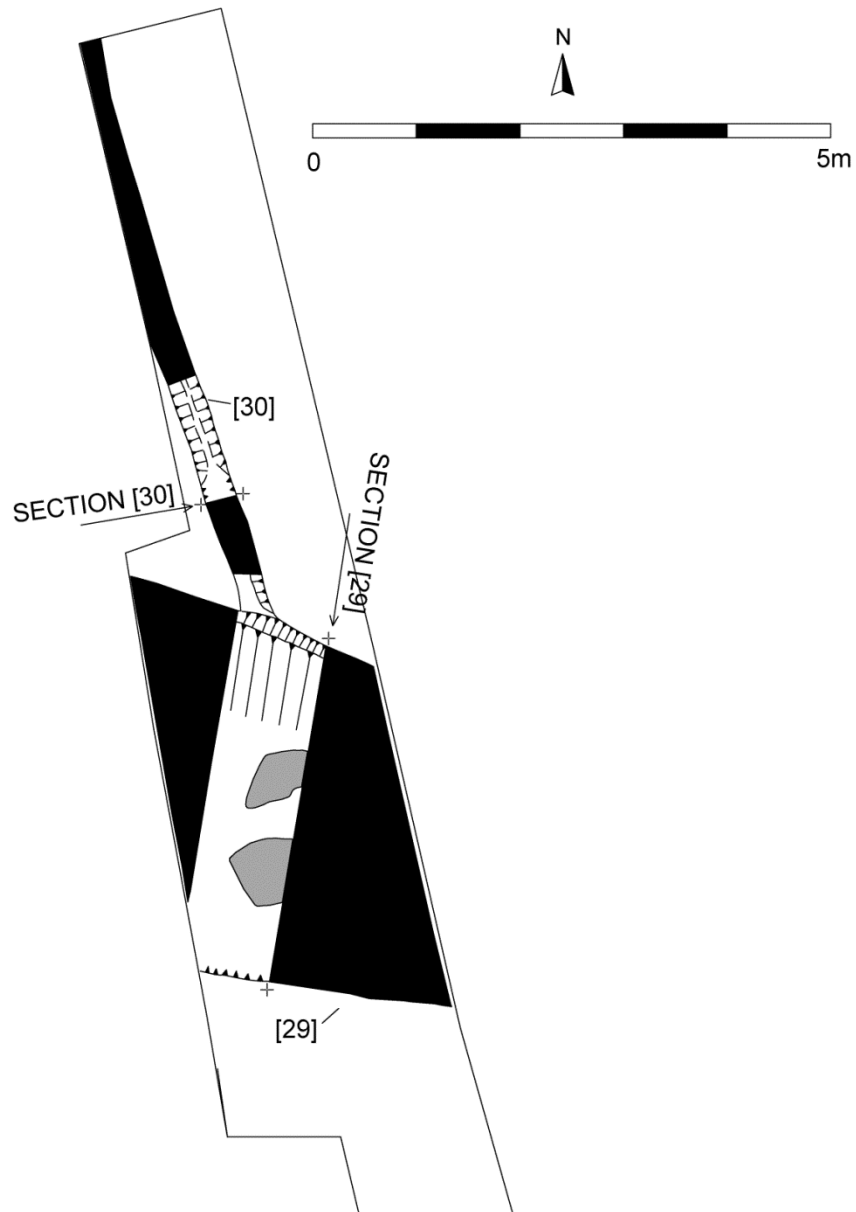


Figure 13: Detailed plan of Trench 27

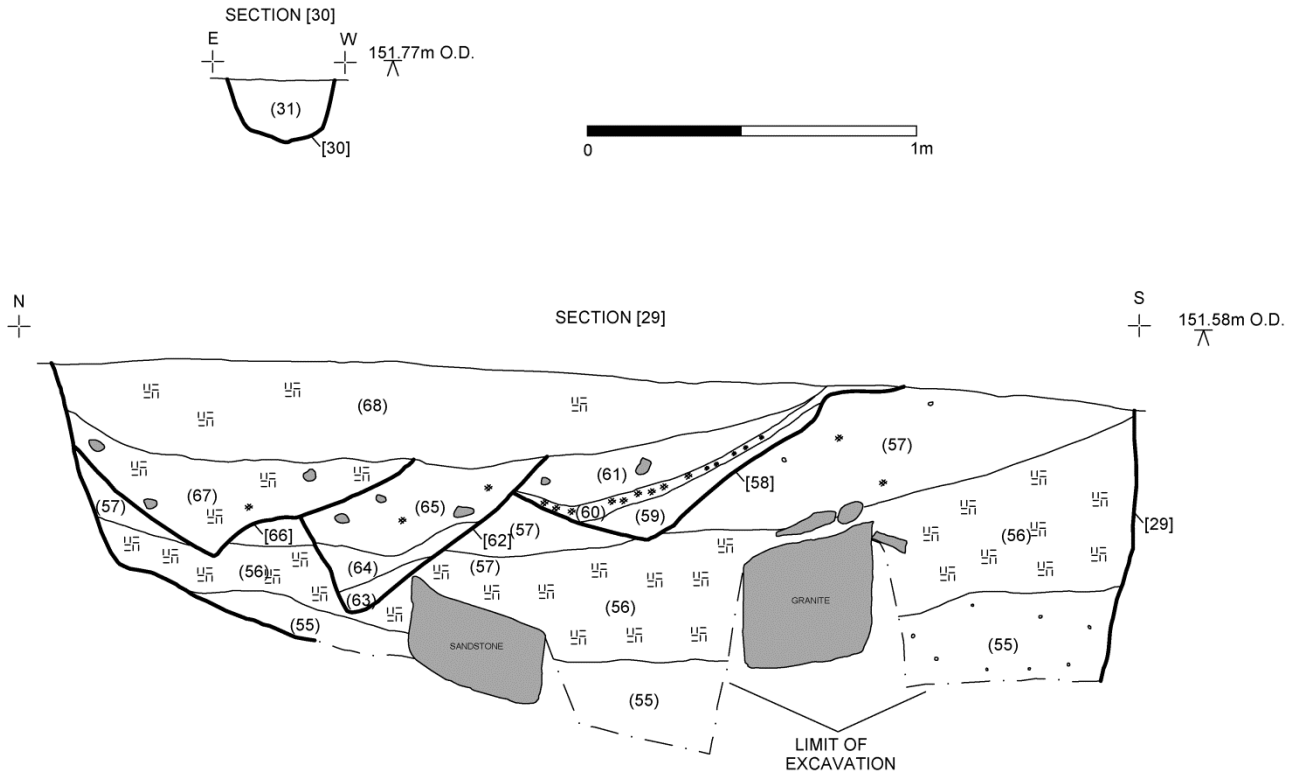


Figure 14: Sections of features in Trench 27



Figure 15: Ditch [29] section, Trench 27



Figure 16: Ditch [29] in Trench 27, looking south-east

Trench 28

This trench targeted linear geophysical anomalies. These were identified and interpreted as ditches (Figs 11 and 18), both containing Roman pottery. At the west-end a north-south orientated ditch [3] was 1.6m wide and 0.52m deep, it had gradually sloping sides and a concave base (Fig. 17). The primary fill (4) consisted of an orange-grey clay-silt with no finds. Overlying this was a grey-brown sand-silt (5). This contained one sherd of 2nd-4th century AD pottery, and a single worked flint. At the east-end of the trench a second north - south orientated ditch [6] was identified. This was 1.52m wide and 0.57m deep with gradually sloping sides and a flat base. The primary fill (7) consisted of a grey-orange silt, which contained no finds. Overlying this was a grey-brown silt-sand (8) which contained one sherd of 2nd-4th century AD pottery.

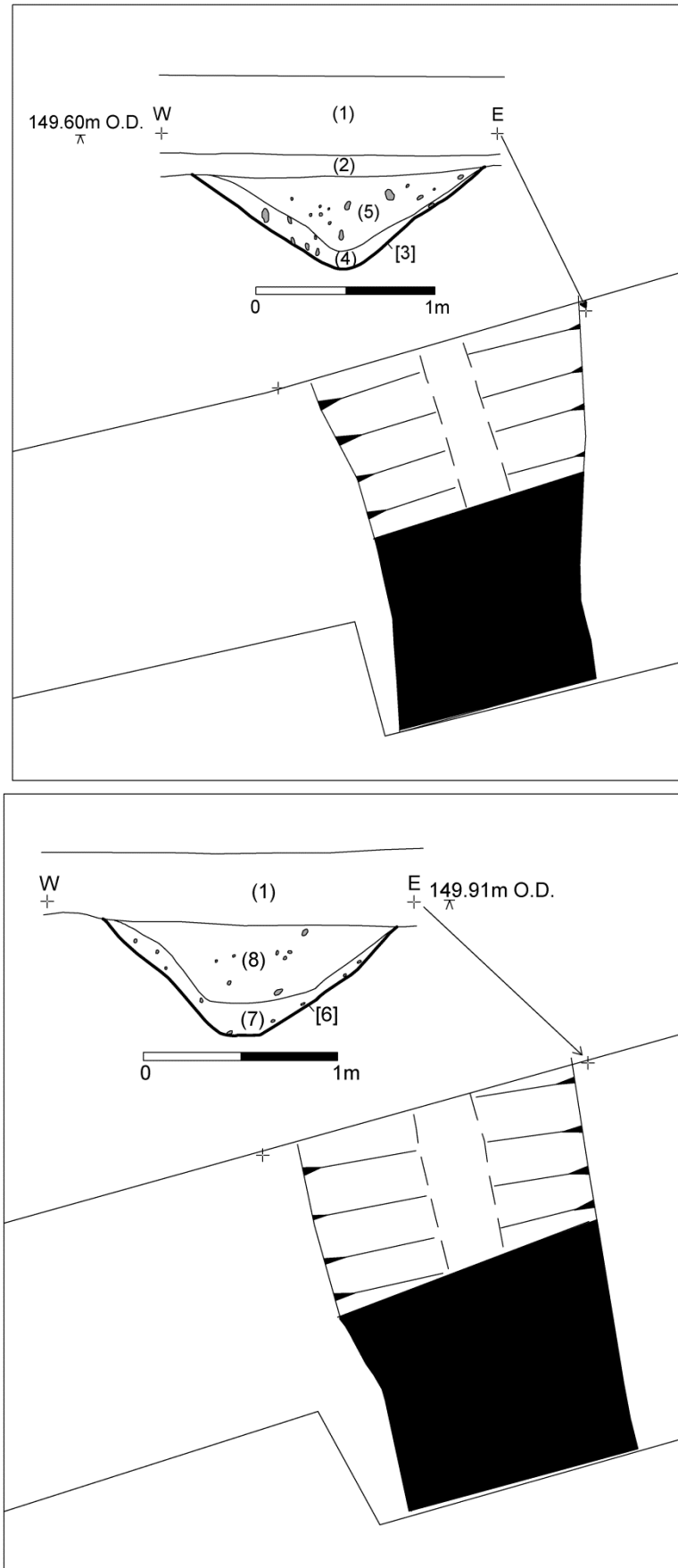


Figure 17: Ditches [3] and [6], Trench 28

Trench 29

The trench targeted a linear geophysical anomaly, presumably the same ditch as [3] in Trench 28 (Figs 11 and 28). The east-west orientated ditch [69] was 1.05m wide, and contained a mid grey-brown silt-clay (70).

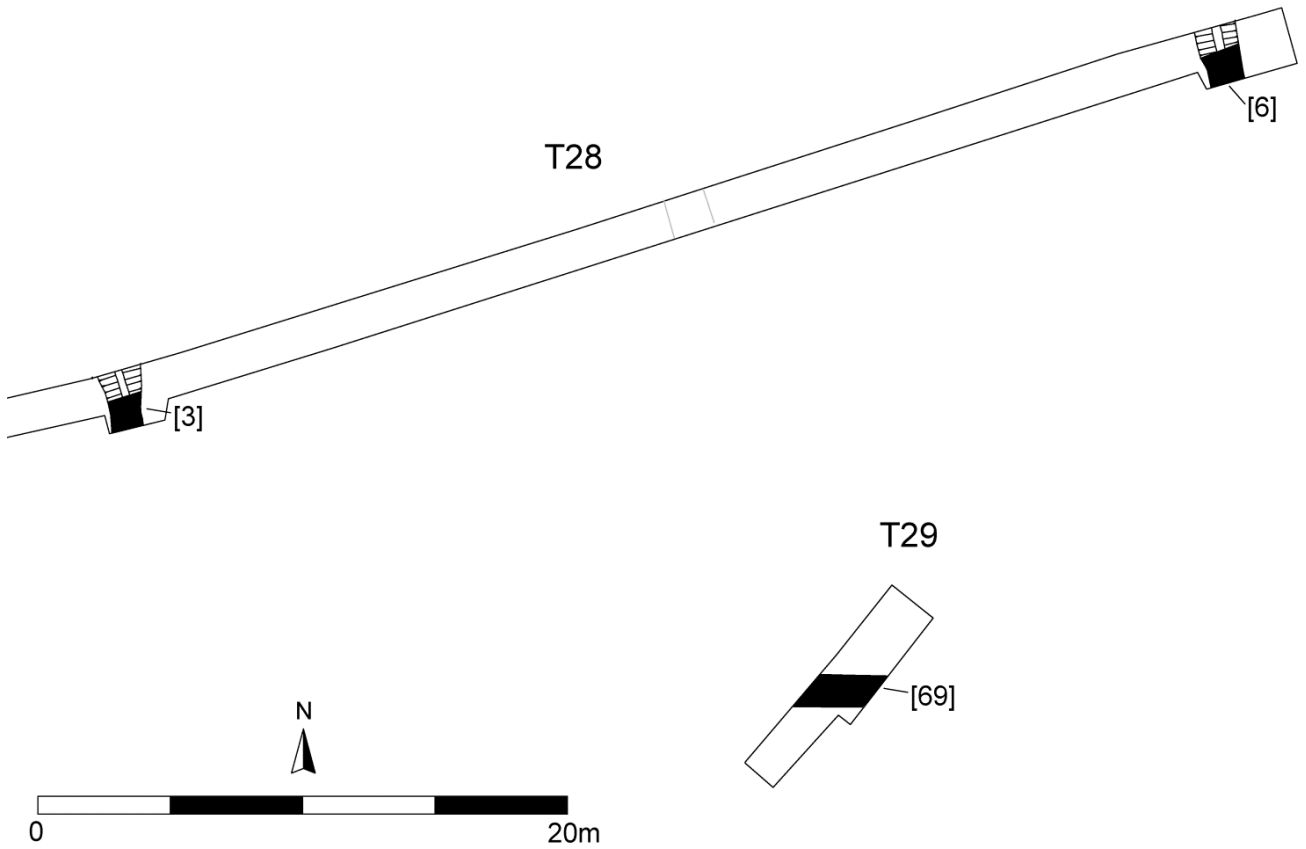


Figure 18: Trench 28 and 29

Trench 30

This trench identified two ditches, both undated. One was orientated east - west [44], the other north - south [37] (Figs 11 and 19).

Ditch [44] was located along the northern edge of the trench, it had slightly wavy sides, the base was not reached. It contained a mid-dark grey-brown sand-clay (43). Ditch [37] was 1.46m wide and 0.37m deep, its east-side was gradual, and west-side irregular and disturbed by large stones. It contained a mid-dark sandy-clay (36). Within the fill were numerous large granite stones.

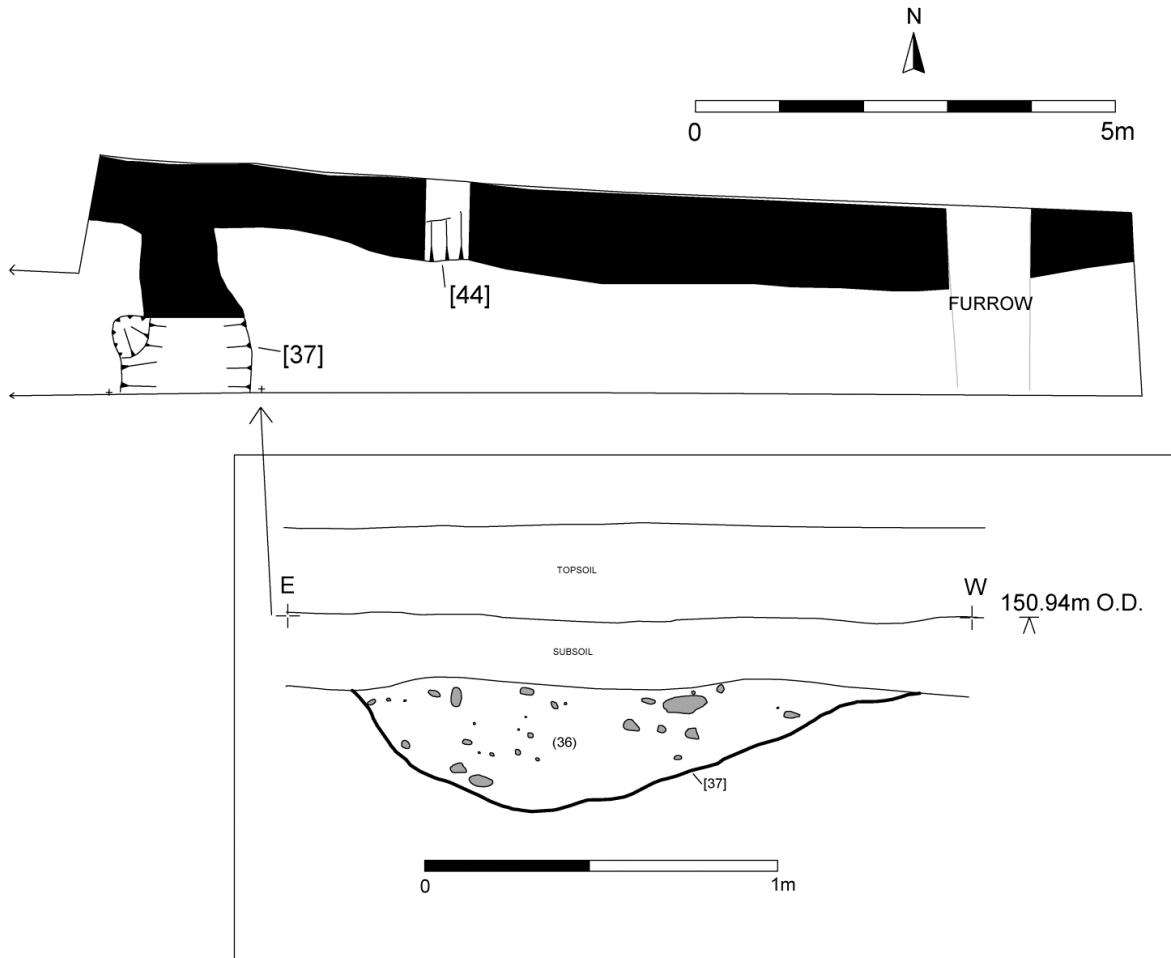


Figure 19: Ditches [37] and [44], Trench 30

Trench 31

The trench targeted a geophysical anomaly that looked like the southern side of an enclosure (Fig. 28). This was identified and interpreted as an east - west ditch [25]; a gully was also located [27] that was not identified by the geophysics (Fig. 20). Ditch [25] was 1.8m wide and 0.45m deep. It had concave sides and a flat base and contained a mid brown-grey silt-clay (26); within this was a single sherd of Iron Age pottery.

Gully [27] lay 5.8m north of the ditch and was at least 2m long (running into the edge of the trench on the west-side). It was approximately 0.25m wide, and 0.1m deep with concave sides and a flat base. It contained a mid brown-grey silt-clay (28), and no finds.

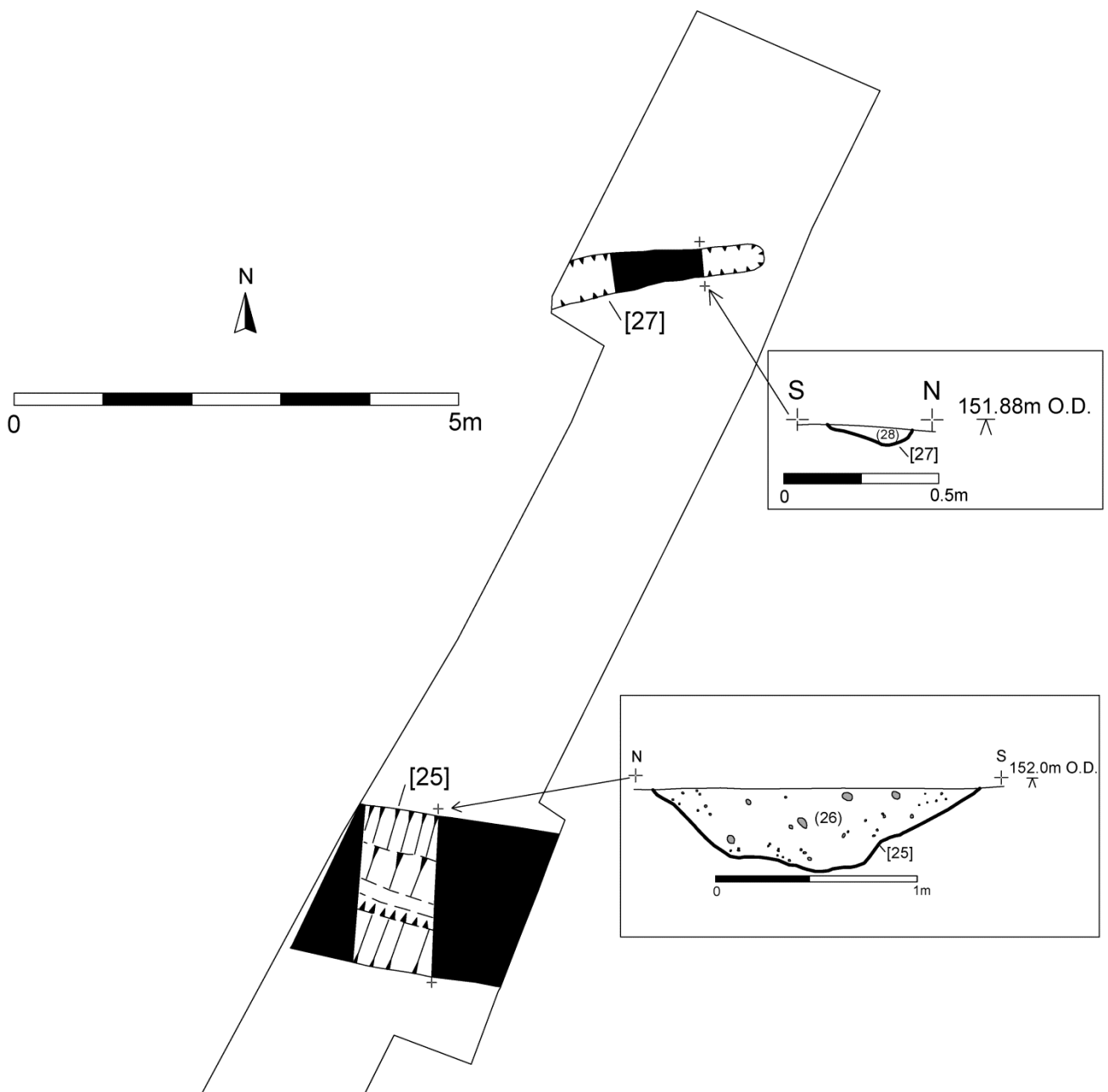


Figure 20: Trench 31

Trench 32

This trench also targeted the same enclosure identified by the geophysical survey, this time the eastern side. The anomaly was identified as a large north - south ditch [32] (Fig. 21). The ditch was 4.02m wide and over 1.05m deep (the base was not reached). It had concave and stepped sides. The fill comprised an orange-grey silt-sand (33) and within this was a single sherd of Iron Age pottery. The ditch was re-cut [34], approximately 3.16m wide and with a similar profile to ditch [32] but on a slightly smaller scale. It contained a grey-brown silt-sand (35) containing many large and medium sized stones. Three sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered from this fill.

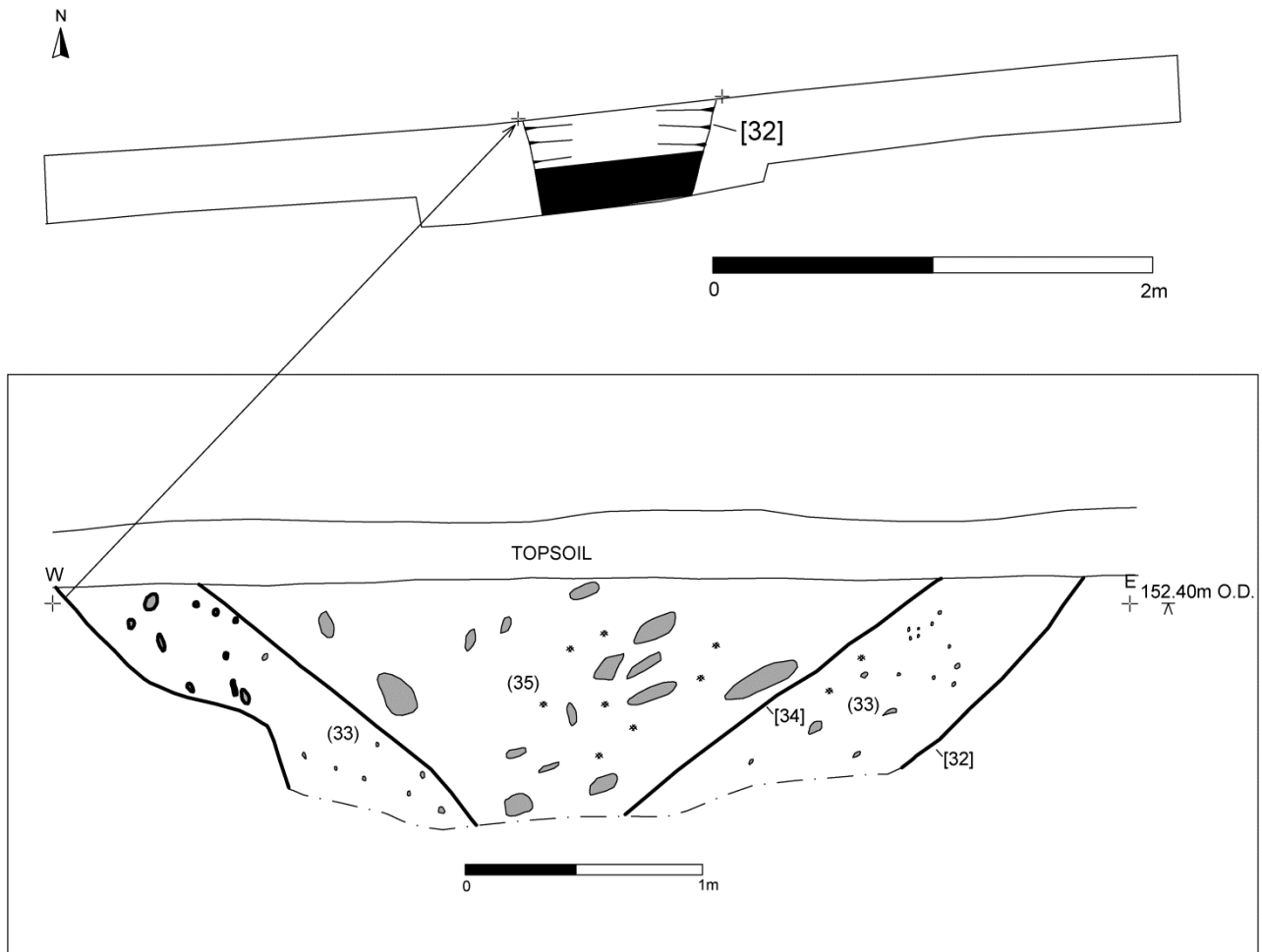


Figure 21: Ditch [32], Trench 32

Trench 33

The trench targeted a linear geophysical anomaly (Fig. 28). These anomalies were identified as two east - west orientated ditches ([14] and [16]); a posthole [12] was discovered between these (Figs 22-3). No finds were recovered from any of these features. Ditch [14] was 0.62m wide and 0.35m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base. It contained a mid brown-grey clay-silt fill (15).

Eight metres to the south lay ditch [16]. This was slightly wider (0.8m), and much deeper (0.8m). The ditch appears to be beginning to terminate on the west-side of the trench, but this is unclear. The primary fill consisted of a mid grey silt-clay (17). Overlying this was a mid orange-grey silt-clay (18), containing a mix of natural sand and clay and so likely represents natural silting of the ditch. Overlying this was a mid grey silt-clay (19), above this was a mid grey-orange silt-clay (20). The

ditch was subsequently re-cut [21]. The re-cut was very similar in profile and size to ditch [14]. It contained a thin primary deposit of loosely compacted black silt (22). It was mainly filled with a mid grey silt-clay (23).

Posthole [12] lay 1.5m north of ditch [16]. This was 0.3 x 0.18m and 0.13m deep and contained a mid brown-grey silt-clay fill (13).

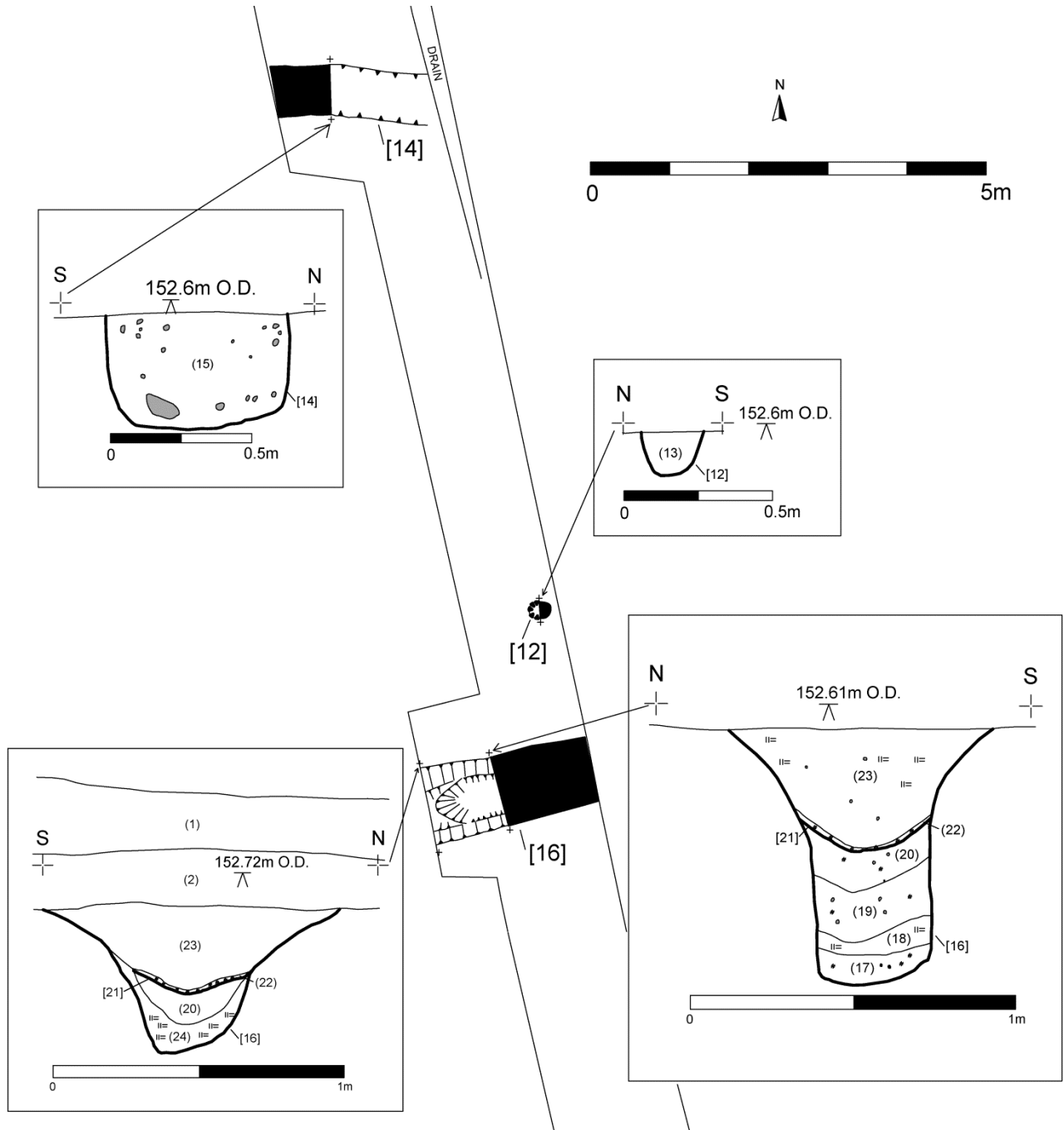


Figure 22: Trench 33



Figure 23: Ditches [14] and [16], Trench 33

Trench 34

This trench targeted a linear east-west geophysical anomaly (Fig. 28). This was identified as a ditch [38]. A pit [41] was also located (Figs 24 - 25).

Ditch [38] was 5m in length (continuing east and west beyond the edge of the trench). It was 0.9m wide and 0.5m deep, with concave sides that broke to vertical sides towards the base. It contained a primary deposit of firmly compacted yellow-brown silt-clay fill (39). Overlying this was a dark black-grey silt-clay (40). Neither fill contained finds.

Pit [41] lay 5m south-east of the ditch. It was 1.3m long, 0.92m wide, and 0.28m deep. It contained a mid grey-brown clay silt (42). Within this were frequent large angular pebbles. A single work flint (core) was recovered from this.

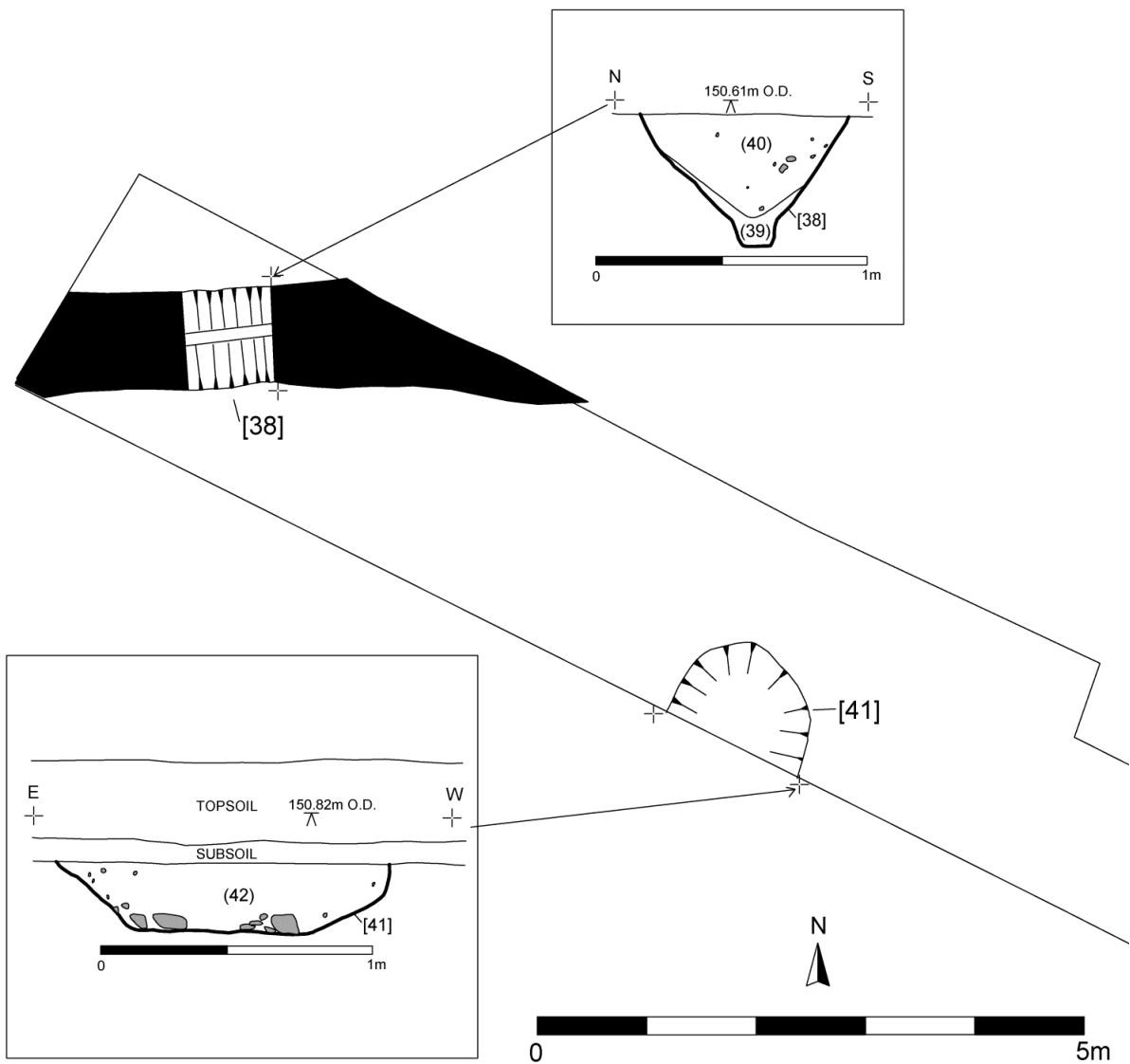


Figure 24: Trench 34



Figure 25: Ditch [38], Trench 34

Trench 35

The trench located a single undated posthole [9] (Fig. 26). This was 0.48m in diameter, and 0.16m deep. It contained a grey-orange clay-sand (10), and a further dark grey silt-sand (11) with no finds.

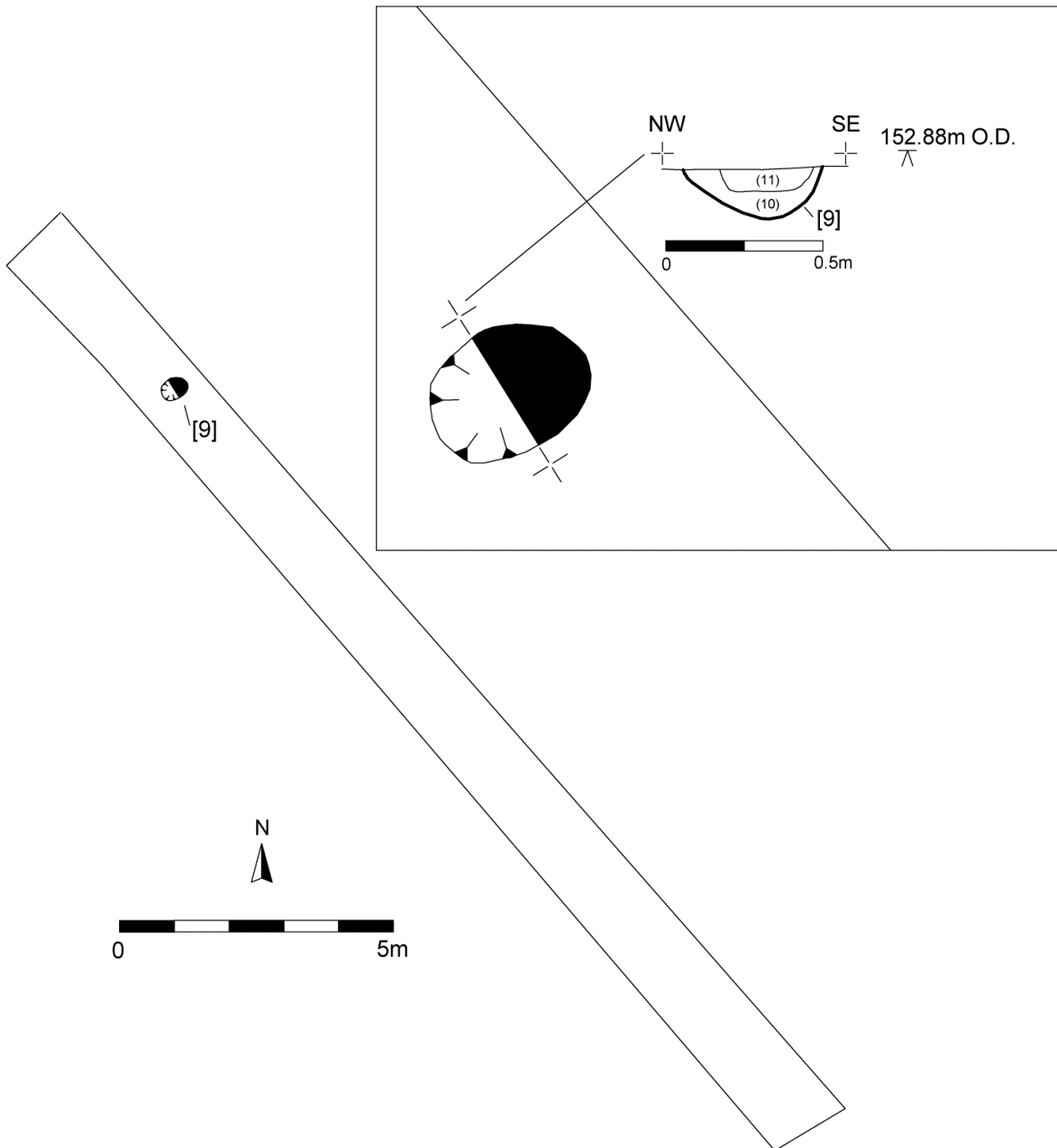


Figure 26: Trench 35

Area 5

Three trenches were located in Area 5 (Fields 19, 20, 21). All three trenches contained no archaeological finds or deposits. The trenches were targeting geophysical anomalies, these were identified and confirmed as former agricultural activity – furrows – of no archaeological significance (Fig. 27).

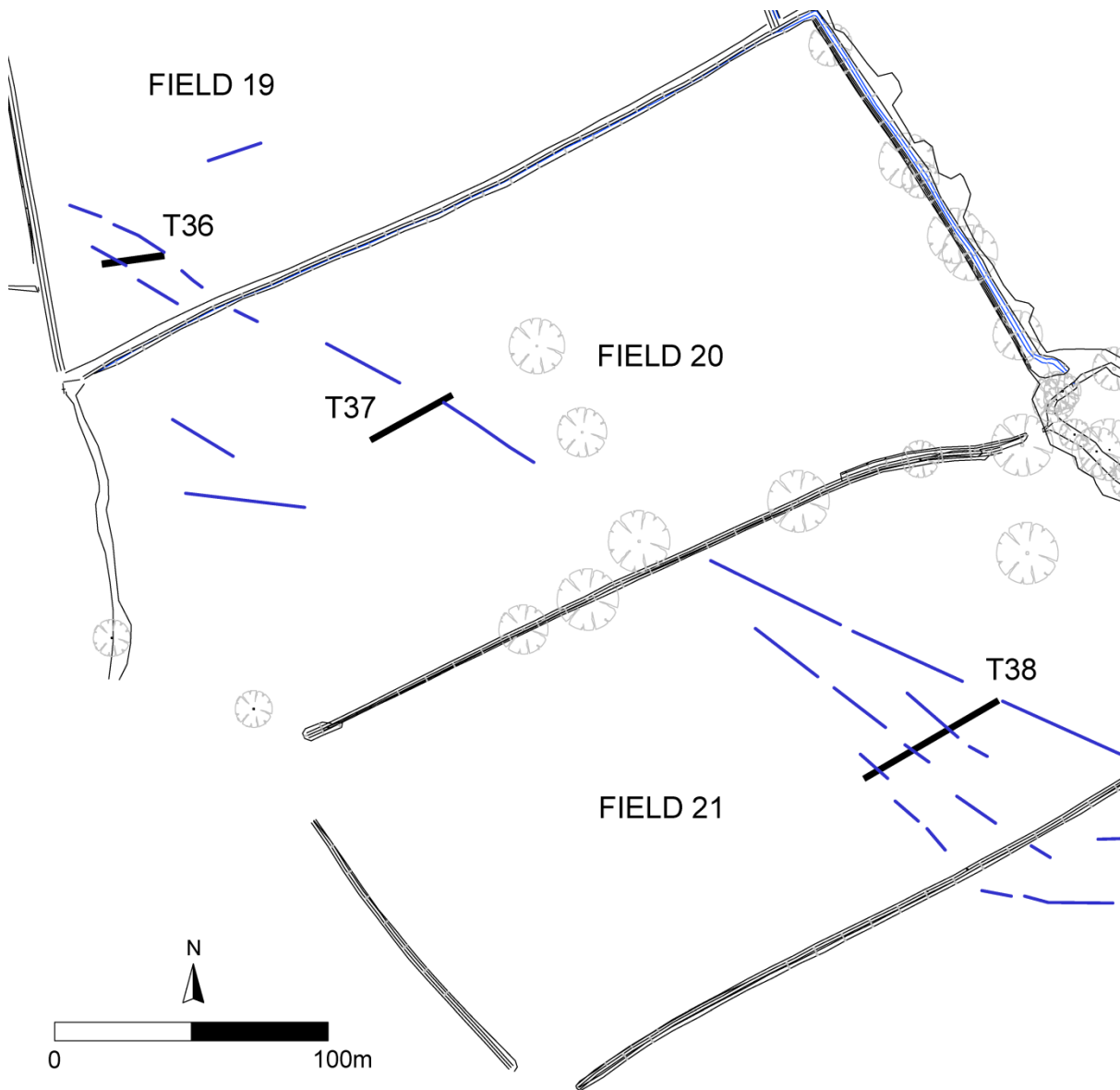


Figure 27: Area 5, trenches and geophysical anomalies

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The archaeological trial trench evaluation has successfully addressed the aims and objectives and the highest confidence can be placed in the data recovered and this report. There were some compromises in the location of trenches in Area 3, but for the remaining areas there were no physical constraints, leading to a satisfactory application of the methodological approach.

Archaeological evidence was located in Areas 2, 3, and 4, in 12 of 38 trenches. The evaluation revealed archaeological evidence dating to the mid- to late Iron Age (400 BC – AD 43), the mid to late Roman period (mid-2nd to 4th century AD), along with further undated activity. Most of the archaeological evidence is located in Areas 3 and 4.

The single ditch in Area 2 (Trench 3) contained substantial quantities of Iron Age pottery and may indicate settlement activity in this area.

In Area 3 (Upper Grange Farm) there was some limitation to the number of trenches excavated in the area of the former Hugglescote Grange. Due to constraints by services, Trenches 25 and 26 were shorter than planned. A trench in the SW corner (area of present camp site) was not excavated at the request of the land owners and in agreement with R. Clark of LCC. The undated archaeological evidence in Trench 23 may relate to the ditches seen in Area 4, they are on a similar orientation, and contain similar fills. However, they could equally be associated with medieval activity at Hugglescote Grange. Alternatively there could be a mixture of both Roman and medieval features. The absence of finds from this small sample should not be seen as surprising. The lack of dating evidence from these features prevents fuller interpretation.

The evaluation has confirmed the geophysical survey results in Area 4 that show an enclosure and associated field boundaries (Fig. 28). The rectangular enclosure (located in Trenches 31 and 32) measures approximately 65m by 55m and is dated to the Iron Age. The curvilinear gully in Trench 31 could provide evidence for internal features – possibly a roundhouse within this enclosure. Most of the other ditches in Area 4 appear to date to the mid to late Roman period (2nd to 4th century AD). The presence of post-holes in the area suggests good survival of the archaeology. The very large ditches with recuts in T27 and T32 contrast with some of the smaller ones and so may indicate concentrations of settlement activity, and certainly show prolonged use of the ditches. Overall the geophysical survey has been confirmed but there are likely to be less robust features present (post-holes and gullies) that are not visible on the survey. The sample from the Roman ditch was environmentally rich providing evidence for the cultivation of barley, emmer and spelt wheat as well as the processing of grains for human consumption.

The evaluation has shown that the archaeological evidence revealed has the potential to contribute towards several regional research objectives (Cooper 2006; Knight et al. 2012). Area 4 has good potential to contribute to regional research objectives on the character of prehistoric and Roman aggregated settlements and the reasons for their emergence. Information on the sequence and chronology of boundaries and their relationship to settlements may be recovered. Palaeoenvironmental evidence could provide information on agricultural practices and land use. Artefacts can provide evidence for craft industry and exchange across broad landscape areas. Area 3 might provide evidence for medieval settlement activity which could contribute towards investigating the morphology of rural settlements. Few detached monastic farms have been excavated in the county (Courtney 1981, 42) or region (Lewis 2006, 200-201). The undated ditches in T23 may form part of the grange, or be unrelated, much earlier activity.

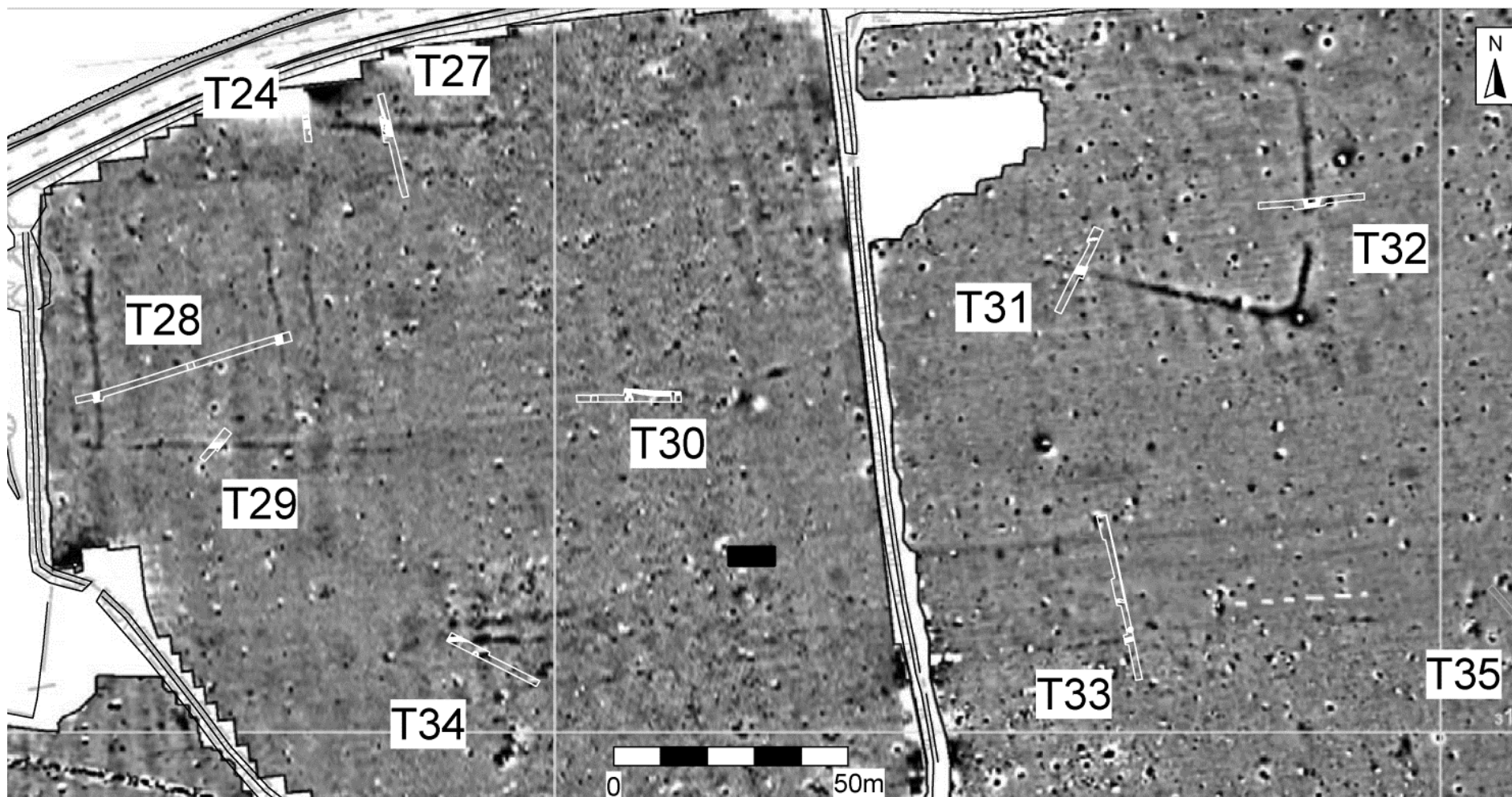


Figure 28: Area 4 with geophysical survey underlain

8. Archive

The site archive will be held by *Leicestershire Museums Service*, under accession no. *XA.30.2014*.

The archive contains:

- 38 trench recording sheets
- context summary records
- 80 context sheets
- photographic recording sheet
- Sample records sheet
- Drawing Index sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Survey data
- Unbound copy of this report
- Thumbnail print of digital photographs
- 33mm black and white contact sheet and negatives (x3 films)

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

ID 198136	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	land to the south-east of Coalville, Leicestershire
Summary	The evaluation revealed archaeological settlement evidence dating to the Mid to Late Iron Age (400 BC – 43 AD), the mid-late Roman period (2nd to 4th centuries AD), along with further undated activity. Archaeological evidence was located in Areas 2, 3, and 4, in 12 of 38 trenches. Area 1 contained no archaeological evidence. Area 2 contained an Iron Age ditch in Trench 3, the remaining geophysical anomalies were agricultural or geological. Area 3 contained undated ditches and gullies in Trench 23. Area 4 contained the most concentrated area of archaeological evidence, all confirming geophysical anomalies. The evidence consisted of an Iron Age sub-rectangular enclosure along with field boundaries dated to the Roman period. Area 5 contained agricultural traces, confirming the geophysical anomalies.
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Vicki Score
Project Supervisor	Gavin Speed
Previous/Future work	Previous: geophysics. / Future: uncertain
Current Land Use	Field
Development Type	Multi-use
Reason for Investigation	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-application
Site Co ordinates	SK 437 120
Start/end dates of field work	24/02/2014-12/03/2014
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Study Area	173.25ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession ID: XA.30.2014 OASIS form ID: universi1-XXXXX

9. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

10. Bibliography

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11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken for Nexus Heritage and was carried out by Dr Gavin Speed, Donald Clarke, Adam Clapton, and Steve Baker of ULAS. Vicki Score managed the project. Richard Clark of LCC HNET monitored the work on behalf of the planning authority.

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24/03/2014

Appendix I: Trench details

TRENCH	AREA	ORIENTATION	LENGTH (m)	WIDTH (m)	CONTEXTS	DESCRIPTION	TOPSOIL THICKNESS	SUBSOIL THICKNESS	LEVEL OF ARCHAEOLOGY (m O.D)
1	1	NW-SE	30	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Land drains E-W. Plough scars. Colluvium at SE-end. Burnt patches into colluvium.	0.19-0.27	0.3	-
2	2	NW-SE	30	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Furrow NE-SW. Plough scars.	0.32-0.40	-	-
3	2	E-W	35	1.6	78, 79, 80	N-S ditch, Iron Age pottery from upper fill	0.28-0.35	-	0.34m below ground level
4	2	N-S	50	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Land drains E-W. Plough scars. Furrows NE-SW	0.25	0.05	-
5	2	E-W	10	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars.	0.25-0.35	-	-
6	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. NE-SW furrows	0.31-0.35	-	-
7	2	N-S	40	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. NE-SW furrows	0.24-0.35	-	-
8	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. NE-SW furrows	0.29-0.33	-	-
9	2	N-S	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. NE-SW furrows	0.28-0.33	-	-
10	2	N-S	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. Drain.	0.29-0.47	-	-
11	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. NE-SW furrows	0.26-0.33	-	-
12	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. NE-SW furrows	0.24-0.32	-	-
13	2	E-W	15	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. Modern disturbance.	0.25-0.35	0.12	-
14	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Land drain N-S. Plough scars	0.25-0.4	-	-
15	2	N-S	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. Furrows NE-SW.	0.25-0.35	-	-
16	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Land drain N-S in middle of trench. Geological feature N-S.	0.3-0.35	-	-
17	2	NE-SW	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Land drain 4m from NE end. Furrow. Heavy plough scars.	0.23-0.33	-	-
18	2	NE-SW	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Land drain. Colluvium at north-end (0.27m thick). Natural 1.25m below modern ground level.	0.4	0.2	-
19	2	N-S	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Furrows E-W, plough scars N-S	0.25	-	-
20	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Furrow 1m from west-end, plough scars	0.27-0.4	-	-

21	2	E-W	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Furrow E-W	0.2-0.25	-	-
22	2	N-S	25	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars	0.25-0.4	-	-
23	3	E-W & N-S	20x15	1.6	45, 46, 47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 71, 72	Gully [72], ditch [72], gully [54], ditch [47], posthole [51]	0.2-.32	0.17-0.25	148.3
24	4	N-S	10	1.6-2.3	73, 74, 75, 76	E-W ditch [73], and ditch terminus or pit [75]. Field drain NE-SW at north-end.	0.35-0.4	0.1-0.15	151.4
25	3	NE-SW	2.2	0.6	77	Cobbled surface (77) within farmyard. Drain at NE-end	0.02	-	-
26	3	E-W	6	0.6	-	Hardcore / made up ground 0.6m. Natural at 0.85m below ground surface.	0.6	0.25	-
27	4	N-S	25	1.6-2.3	29, 30, 31, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68	A large E-W ditch and connected N-S gully. Some plough scars, field drain E-W at south end.	0.2	0.2-0.35	151.4
28	4	NE-SW	50	1.6-2.3	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Two ditches, pottery from both [5] and [8]. Furrows N-S.	0.25-0.35	0.1-0.25	149.7
29	4	NE-SW	10	1.6-2.3	69, 70	Ditch. Probably same as ditch [3] in Trench 28.	0.35-0.4	0.1-0.17	149.2
30	4	E-W	25	1.6-2.3	36, 37, 43, 44	N-S ditch (0.7m width), 11m from west-end [37]. No finds. Connected to E-W ditch [44], no finds. Furrow N-S at east-end.	0.19-0.23	0.12-0.15	150.7
31	4	NE-SW	25	1.6-2.3	25, 26, 27, 28	Large ditch [25], pottery from (26). Gully [27], no finds.	0.3-0.4	0.1-0.2	151.9
32	4	E-W	25	1.6-2.3	32, 33, 34, 35	One large ditch [32], with recut [34]. Pottery from (33) and (35). Field drain E-W mid-way along trench to east.	0.3-0.4	-	152.2
33	4	N-S	40	1.6-2.3	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	Two parallel ditches ([14] [16] [21]), and between them a posthole [12]. Field drain N-S along east-side.	0.25-0.33	0.1-0.2	152.2
34	4	NW-SE	25	1.6-2.3	38, 39, 40, 41, 42	E-W ditch [38], and ditch terminus or pit [41] 4m east. Flint from pit.	0.25-0.3	0.1-0.15	150.5
35	4	NW-SE	25	1.6-2.3	9, 10, 11	A single post-hole [9]. No finds.	0.25-0.4	-	152.8
36	5	E-W	28	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars. Furrow NW-SE.	0.11-0.32	0.12-0.2	-
37	5	NE-SW	30	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars, furrows NW-SE	0.25	-	-
38	5	NE-SW	50	1.6	-	No archaeological finds or deposits. Plough scars, field drain at east-end. Furrows NW-SE.	0.3-0.45	-	-

Appendix II: Context details

CONTEXT	CUT	TRENCH	AREA	DESCRIPTION	FINDS?	LENGTH (m)	WIDTH (m)	DEPTH (m)
1	-	-	4	Topsoil	worked flint (concave scraper)			
2	-	-	4	Subsoil	-			
3	3	28	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	1.63	0.52
4	3	28	4	Ditch fill	-			
5	3	28	4	Ditch fill	1 sherd 2nd-4th century pot, worked flint (flake)			
6	6	28	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	1.52	0.57
7	6	28	4	Ditch fill				
8	6	28	4	Ditch fill	one sherd, 2nd-4th century pot			
9	9	34	4	Posthole cut	-	0.48	-	0.16
10	9	34	4	Posthole fill	-			
11	9	34	4	Posthole fill	-			
12	12	33	4	Posthole cut	-	0.3	0.18	0.13
13	12	33	4	Posthole fill	-			
14	14	33	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	0.62	0.35
15	14	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
16	16	33	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	0.8	0.8
17	16	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
18	16	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
19	16	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
20	16	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
21	21	33	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	0.4	0.1
22	21	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
23	21	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
24	16	33	4	Ditch fill	-			
25	25	31	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3m+	1.8	0.45
26	25	31	4	Ditch fill	1 sherd Iron Age pot			
27	27	31	4	Gully cut	-	2	0.25	0.1
28	27	31	4	Gully fill	none			
29	29	27	4	Ditch cut	-		3	1.3+
30	30	27	4	Gully cut	-		0.3	0.2
31	30	27	4	Gully fill	2 sherds 2nd-4th century pot			
32	32	32	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	4.02	1.05+
33	32	32	4	Ditch fill	1 sherd Iron Age pot			
34	34	32	4	Ditch recut	-	2.3+	3.16m	1.05+
35	34	32	4	Ditch fill	3 sherds Iron Age pot			
36	37	30	4	Ditch fill	-			
37	37	30	4	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	1.46	0.9
38	38	34	4	Ditch cut	-	4.4+	0.8	0.5

39	38	34	4	Ditch fill	-			
40	38	34	4	Ditch fill	-			
41	41	34	4	Pit cut	-	1.3	0.92	0.28
42	41	34	4	Pit fill	worked flint (core)			
43	44	30	4	Ditch fill	-			
44	44	30	4	Ditch cut	-	1.7+	0.9+	0.3+
45	46	23	3	Gully fill	-			
46	46	23	3	Gully cut	-		0.5	0.24
47	47	23	3	Ditch cut	-	1.6+	0.7	0.5
48	47	23	3	Ditch fill	-			
49	49	23	3	Ditch cut	-	1.6+	0.8	0.4
50	49	23	3	Ditch fill	-			
51	51	23	3	Posthole cut	-	0.24	0.24	0.16
52	51	23	3	Posthole fill	-			
53	54	23	3	Gully fill	-			
54	54	23	3	Gully cut	-	0.4	0.4	0.1
55	29	27	4	Ditch fill	-			
56	29	27	4	Ditch fill	1 sherd 2nd-4th century pot			
57	29	27	4	Ditch fill	7 sherds 2nd-4th century pot			
58	58	27	4	Gully cut	-		1.3	0.4
59	58	27	4	Gully fill	-			
60	58	27	4	Gully fill	10 sherds 2nd-4th century pot			
61	58	27	4	Gully fill	-			
62	62	27	4	Ditch recut	-		0.75	0.47
63	62	27	4	Ditch fill	-			
64	62	27	4	Ditch fill	-			
65	62	27	4	Ditch fill	-			
66	66	27	4	Ditch recut	-		1.1	0.35
67	66	27	4	Ditch fill	-			
68	66	27	4	Ditch fill	2 sherds 2nd-4th century pot			
69	69	29	4	Ditch cut	-	2+	1.05	-
70	69	29	4	Ditch fill	-			
71	72	23	3	Ditch fill	-			
72	72	23	3	Ditch cut	-	6+	1+	
73	73	24	4	Ditch cut	-	1.6+	1.7	
74	73	24	4	Ditch fill	-			
75	75	24	4	Ditch cut	-		0.76	
76	75	24	4	Ditch fill	-			
77	-	25	3	cobbled surface	-			0.25+
78	78	3	2	Ditch cut	-	2.3+	1.88	0.54
79	78	3	2	Ditch fill	-			
80	78	3	2	Ditch fill	50 sherds Iron Age pot, worked flint (denticulate)			

Appendix III: The Finds and Charred Plant Remains

The Pottery - Nicholas J. Cooper

The Prehistoric Pottery

Introduction

A total of 55 sherds of Middle to Late Iron Age pottery weighing 1409g (average sherd weight 26g skewed by vessel from (80)) was retrieved from four contexts.

Methodology

The pottery has been analysed by form and fabric using the Leicestershire County Museums prehistoric pottery fabric series (Marsden 2011, 62, Table 1), with reference to the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group's Guidelines (PCRG 1997), and quantified by sherd count and weight.

Analysis of Assemblage by Fabric, Form and Decoration

The complete record of the stratified assemblage is presented below (Table 1)

Table 1: Quantified record of Prehistoric pottery

Prehistoric Pottery from Coalville Evaluation XA30.2014						
Trench	Context	Cut	Fabric	Dec	Sherds	Weight
	26	25	Q1	scored	1	15
32	35	34	Q1		1	10
32	35	34	R1		2	19
	33	32	R1	cordoned	1	55
	80	78	R1		1	50
	80	78	R1	scored	49	1260
Total					55	1409

All of the material is handmade in clay fabrics using opening materials of mineral origin, either quartz sand (Fabric Q1) or predominantly white granitic rock (Fabric R1). All of the material except for the cordoned sherd from (33) probably belongs to the East Midlands scored ware tradition current from the 4th or mid-3rd century BC to the earlier 1st century AD (Elsdon 1992, 85, Fig.1.6), including a large thick bodied vessel (base diameter 220mm) from (80) which very heavily tempered with granite inclusions up to 8mm in size.

The cordoned sherd is in a very similar granitic fabric (in terms of inclusion size) to the joining sherds from (35), which appear to be of Iron Age date as there is a 230g lump of iron tap slag from the same context. Cordons are not a feature of scored ware vessels but do occur on Middle and Later Bronze Age vessels, otherwise undecorated. The fact that granitic inclusions are used in locally-made vessels throughout Prehistory from the Neolithic to the Iron Age makes it difficult to be certain of the chronology.

Roman Pottery

Introduction

A total of 24 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 413g was recovered primarily from the fills of ditch [29] in Trench 27 with material also from other deposits in the same trench and from Trench 28. The high average sherd weight of 17g is rather skewed in this small group by the substantial preservation of a single mortarium from (60). With the exception of the two sherds of the same vessel in (31) and (56), the sherds are all abraded, suggesting exposure on the ground surface before incorporation into the deposits.

The material was classified using the Leicestershire Roman pottery form and fabric series (Pollard 1994, 110-114) and quantified by sherd count and weight. The full record is presented below (Table 2).

Results

Table 2: Quantified record of Roman pottery from the evaluation

Trench	Context	Cut	Fabric	Form	Type	Sherds	Weight	Dating
28	5	3	GW3	jar	misc	1	5	2nd-4th abraded
28	8	6	GW5	jar	misc	1	6	2nd-4th abraded
27	31	30	GW5	jar	misc	1	10	2nd-4th as (56)
27	31	30	OW2	base	misc	1	2	2nd-4th abraded
27	56	29	GW5	jar	misc	1	35	2nd-4th as (31)
27	57	29	GW5	body	misc	1	6	2nd-4th abraded
27	57	29	GW9	body	misc	6	33	2nd-4th
27	60	29	GW5	jar	misc	3	30	2nd-4th abraded
27	60	29	MO4	mort	hammer	7	261	L3rd-4th abraded
27	68		GW9	body	misc	2	25	2nd-4th abraded
Total						24	413	Av.Sh.Wt 17g

Discussion

The assemblage predominantly comprises body sherds from locally-made grey ware vessels (Fabric GW3, 5 and 9) in a range of sandy reduced fabrics which are not closely dateable within the Roman period, but given the mid-3rd to early 4th century date of the hammerhead mortarium, with incised line reeding, from Mancetter/Hartshill (Fabric MO4), the only diagnostic vessel from [29], a generally later Roman date for the other wares is likely (similar to Rollo 1994, 21, fig.13.32 dated AD 230-330).

References

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The Prehistoric Flint - Lynden Cooper

(1) Concave scraper
(5) 3ry flake ('retouch' is platform faceting)
(42) core
(80) denticulate
Field 11 bladelet core (in topsoil)

All on local flint. Likely later prehistoric date but the bladelet core may be Mesolithic.

The Charred Plants Remains Rachel Small

An evaluation was undertaken on land to the south east of Coalville and a Roman ditch was discovered which included a dump deposit (pers. comm. G. Speed). A soil sample was taken from the feature to assess its potential to contain charred plant remains, a useful indicator of activities associated with agriculture and/or human occupation on site or nearby.

Method

The sample was clay based and charcoal inclusions were visible, two tubs were taken. It was wet sieved in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh and flotation was carried out into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were transferred into plastic boxes and air dried. The residues were also air dried and the fraction over 4mm sorted for all finds. The flots were sorted for plant remains using a x10-40 stereo microscope. The plant remains were identified by comparison with modern reference material available at ULAS and were counted and tabulated below (table 1). The plant names follow Stace (1991).

Results

General

The sample was very good, being extremely abundant in archaeobotanical material (grains, chaff and charred seeds). Charcoal flecks (2mm and under) and charcoal fragments over 2mm were rare in the assemblage. Rootlets were common in the sample, and uncharred (modern) seeds were present but rare, this perhaps suggests a level of soil disturbance. Part 1 of the sample was studied in detail and is discussed below.

Table 3: Charred plant remains. Key: + present, ++ moderate amount, +++ abundant.

Sample	Context	Cut	Context description	Litres	Charred grains	Charred chaff	Charred seeds	Fruit stone/nut shell	Uncharred seeds	Charcoal flecks (less than 2mm)	Charcoal (2mm and larger)	Notes
1 (1/2)	60	29	Roman ditch	9	+++	+++	+++	+	+	+	+	Rootlets common
1 (2/2)	60	29	Roman ditch	9	+++	+++	+++	-	+	+	+	Rootlets common

Cereal grains and chaff

Circa 800 cereal grains were identified; these were poorly preserved, being abraded. The grains were mainly glume wheat (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta*), spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta* L.) being dominant. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) grains were also present. Around the same quantity of chaff fragments were identified, circa 800. Those of glume wheat were predominately spelt, showing the characteristic veins. Approximately 50 fragments of chaff were identified as barley. Basing the proportions of the two crops on chaff fragments, due to the poor preservation of the grains, the ratio of glume wheat to barley is 16:1. Thus, it can be concluded that glume wheat was the dominant crop.

Other food plants

A large fragment of hazel nut shell (*Corylus avellana* L.) was identified. Hazel nuts are edible and the wood has many uses, such as for fuel and basketry.

Charred seeds

Circa 40 charred seeds were identified including docks (*Rumex* sp.), goosefoots (*Chenopodium* sp.), spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*), and small grasses (*Poaceae*), which are major weeds of garden cultivation and arable land, also invading disturbed ground. It is worth considering that the edible leaves of goosefoots and docks may have been collected (Godwin 1984). Catchfly (*Silene* sp.) and knotweed (*Fallopia* sp.) were also identified and they grow in grasslands. Sweet clover (*Melilotus* sp.), a legume which grows in pastures and is good for cattle forage was present (Godwin 1984).

Discussion

Van der Veen (1992) states that samples with over 50 items are useful for the interpretation of crop processing activities by considering the ratios of cereal grains, chaff and weed seeds, for example. As this sample contains circa 1,640 it should provide a reliable indication of crop processing activities on/near to site.

Generally speaking, the ratio of cereal grain to chaff was 1, and in comparison a very low number of weed seeds (associated with agricultural activity) were present. Therefore, the assemblage probably represents the waste from parching - a process where spikelets are heated to release the grain from the chaff which encases it, in preparation for human consumption - this process can lead to accidental charring of the grain/ chaff and this waste is commonly deposited in ditches. Parching is carried out for both glume wheat and barley spikelets.

For this sample, it is not clear whether barley was grown separately to glume wheat or was a residual crop in the field in which glume wheat was grown. What is clear is that glume wheat was the dominant crop. It is probable that emmer and spelt wheat were grown together in the past, as a mix, in the same field, as they are commonly found together. Emmer predominates in assemblages from the prehistoric period, and spelt in those from the Roman period.

Conclusion

This sample from land to the south east of Coalville was very good, being abundant in archaeobotanical material. It has provided evidence for the cultivation of barley, emmer and spelt wheat on/near to site and the processing of grains (parching) for human consumption.

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