



University of
Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey for land west
of Station Lane, Asfordby, Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 70027 18729

Jennifer Browning

(with contributions from Lynden Cooper and Deborah Sawday)



ULAS Report No 2014-193

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**An Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey for Land West Of
Station Lane, Asfordby, Leicestershire
(NGR: SK 70027 18729)**

**Jennifer Browning
(with contributions from Lynden Cooper and Deborah Sawday)**

For: Jelson Ltd.

Checked by:

Signed:



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CONTENTS

Summary	1
Introduction.....	1
Site Description, Topography and Geology.....	2
Archaeological Background.....	3
Aims and Methods	4
Results.....	5
The Finds	11
The Lithic Assemblage by Lynden Cooper	11
The Ceramic and Miscellaneous Finds by Deborah Sawday.....	13
Conclusion	16
Archive.....	17
Bibliography	18

FIGURES

Front cover: View of field

Figure 1: Site Location.....	2
Figure 2: Plan of proposed development area outlined in blue. Provided by Client. Scale unknown.	3
Figure 3: Aerial photograph of the site (courtesy of Leicestershire HER)	4
Figure 4: The survey area, looking north-east towards Asfordby	5
Figure 5: Ground conditions at the time of the survey	6
Figure 6: Scale-flaked knife (SFJ064)	13

TABLE

Table 1: Catalogue of worked flints recovered during the fieldwalking	11
Table 2: The medieval and early post-medieval pottery fabrics in approximate chronological order.	13
Table 3: The pottery fabrics, by sherd number, and the relative proportions present by period	14
Table 4: Distribution of the pottery assemblage	14

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Summary

An archaeological fieldwalking survey was carried out by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) for land west of Station Lane, Asfordby, Leicestershire (SK 70027 18729). The survey was commissioned by Jelson Ltd. in advance of the proposed development of the land for new housing and the work took place in October 2014.

A significant assemblage of 74 worked flints was recovered during the survey, which included 40 tools, including an unusual scale-flaked knife, a number of cores, scrapers, and piercers. The remainder of the assemblage was made up of flakes, some of which were retouched. The assemblage is believed to date from the Early Bronze Age but contains a number of re-used pieces from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. The location of the finds suggests that they are associated with two ring ditches within the field, which were originally seen as cropmarks on aerial photographs and have been confirmed by a recent geophysical survey, carried out as part of the current evaluation. The flint assemblage supports the interpretation of these features as Neolithic/Bronze Age burial mounds, which have been ploughed out.

A low density scatter of medieval and early post-medieval pottery was also recovered across the area that was surveyed. A slightly higher concentration of late post-medieval and modern pottery was also present, which has been discarded after examination and logging. These finds are likely to be associated with manuring activity, taking place from the medieval period onwards. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire Museums Service under the Accession no: X.A138.2014.

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment), this report presents the results of an archaeological field-walking survey carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land at west of Station Lane and south of Hoby Road, Asfordby, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 70027 18729). The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of proposed residential development of the site.

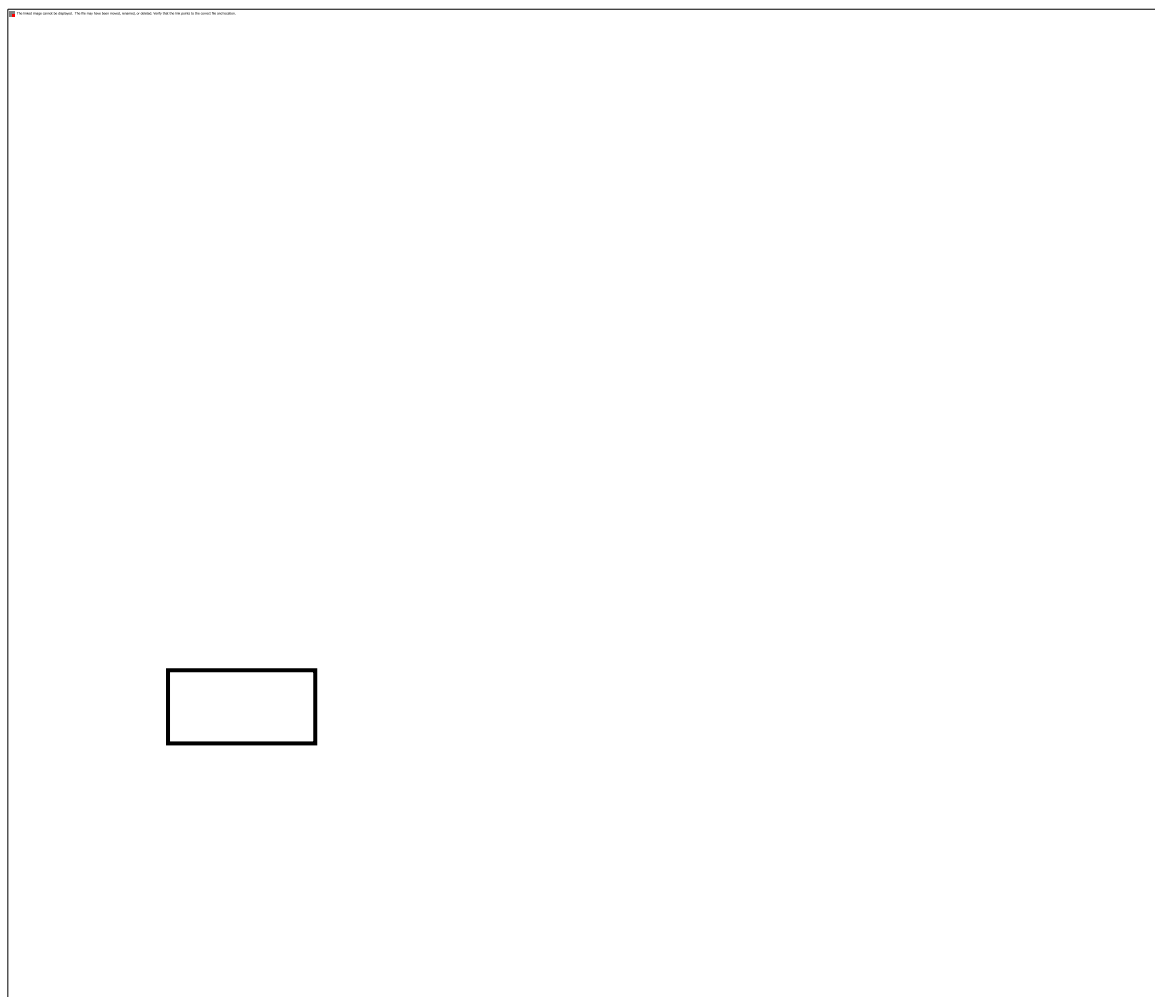


Figure 1: Site Location

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Site Description, Topography and Geology

Asfordby Parish consists of three villages, Asfordby, Asfordby Valley and Asfordby Hill, which are situated to the north of the River Wreake approximately 5km west of Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire.

The application area itself consists of two fields, one of pasture the other arable, that lie to the south-west of the village. The pasture field, which lies off Station Lane, is relatively flat at around 64m aOD and measures 0.62 hectares. The larger arable field, which lies off Hoby Road and is the subject of this survey, is *c.* 7.9 hectares and has more undulating topography; falling from north-east to south-west from around 74m aOD to 63m aOD (Figure 1).

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be Scunthorpe Member Mudstone overlain by Diamicton or sand and gravel on the northern part of the site, Blue Lias Formation Mudstone overlain by Alluvium, Head or Diamicton on the rest of the site.

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>.

Archaeological Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment for the site has been carried out (Hunt 2014). The Historic Environment Record for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that the site contains two ring ditches, possibly the remains of ploughed out Bronze Age barrows, which have been identified from aerial photography and crop marks.

An important Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age site, excavated by ULAS in 2009-2011 lies to the north-west of the village, 450m north of the assessment area. There are also other findspots for prehistoric artefacts within the village. The aforementioned site also produced evidence for Roman pits and, in addition, two Roman coins were found on the housing area to the direct east of the assessment area. Therefore, there is high potential for prehistoric remains to be discovered on the site during any development and moderate potential for Roman remains. There is low to moderate potential for medieval and post-medieval remains, since the site is located outside the medieval village core in an area used as fields in the medieval period, as indicated by the presence of ridge and furrow earthworks in the adjacent field to the east.

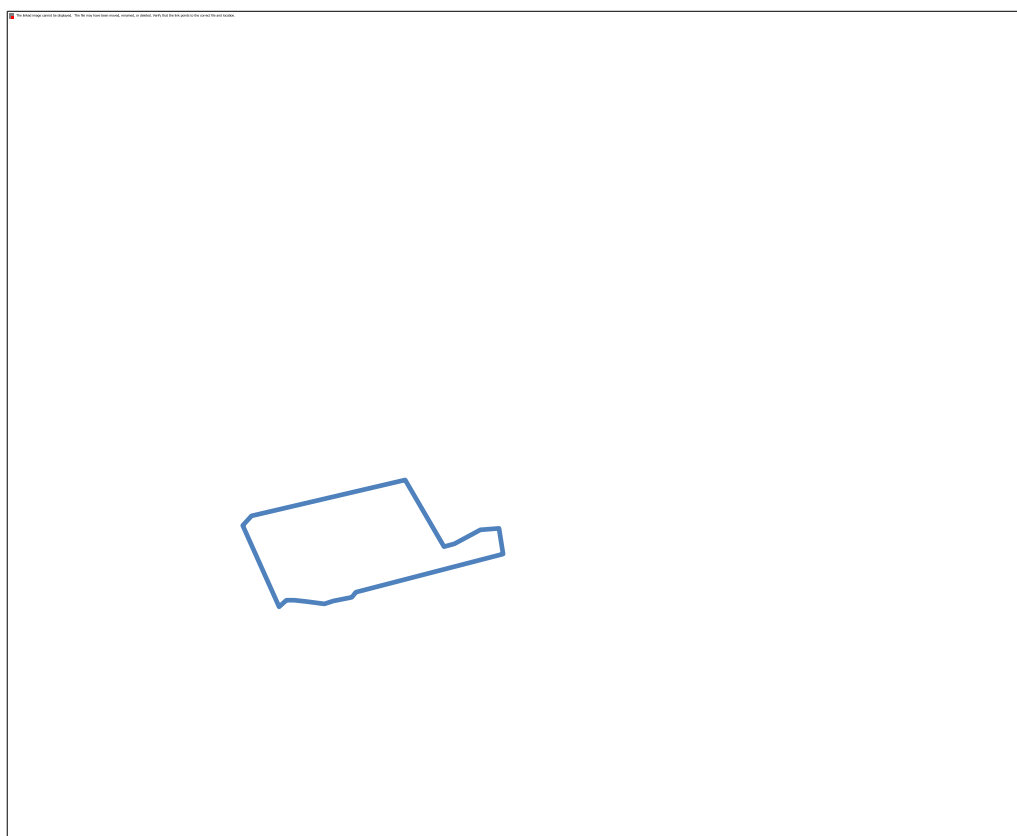


Figure 2: Plan of proposed development area outlined in blue. Provided by Client. Scale unknown.



Figure 3: Aerial photograph of the site (courtesy of Leicestershire HER)

Aims and Methods

The overall aim of the fieldwalking survey was to gather sufficient information to establish the potential extent, condition, character and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features and deposits within the area, to target for further archaeological evaluation. The work was undertaken in advance of a geophysical survey of the site.

The surveys have the potential to contribute to the following research aims. Mesolithic, Neolithic and Early Middle Bronze Age (Myers 2006; Clay 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010). There is evidence of Mesolithic, and Neolithic-Bronze Age activity from the vicinity and two ring ditches are recorded as cropmarks from within the application area. These are likely to represent ploughed out burial mounds of Neolithic- Bronze Age date. The survey may therefore contribute to our understanding of burial practices of these periods.

Fieldwalking is a technique which can be used on arable fields in order to sample artefacts found within the ploughsoil, which may indicate the presence of buried archaeological features or previous land-use. It is preferably undertaken following ploughing and subsequent weathering of the ploughsoil. However, a field sown with crop can be walked until the crop obscures visibility or would be damaged. The field contained the stubble remains of a maize crop during the survey and visibility was considered reasonable. The weather was mostly dry, with broken cloud cover. All

archaeological work adhered to the Institute for Archaeologist's (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations*



Figure 4: The survey area, looking north-east towards Asfordby

Artefacts were collected and bagged along 10m transects. Some categories of (modern) finds were not collected; these included plastic, glass, finds such as bone and shell that are difficult to date and large quantities of ceramic building material (CBM); in the case of CBM a sample of material was be collected and retained. The location of the finds was plotted using hand held GPS loggers (Garmin Etrex 10, satellite accuracy *c.*3m). Assuming a cone of vision of 2 metres a 20% sample of the field's surface was examined. The artefact locations were logged manually on site, and plots produced using Garmin Base Camp, GPS Utility and TurboCAD.

Results

The survey area was walked from the north-west corner of the field via transects orientated north-east to south-west, spaced at 10m intervals. The topsoil consisted of dark brown clayey silt, containing frequent pebbles of assorted size. Finds were collected from most parts of the survey area with more collected from the south and south-eastern areas.



Figure 5: Ground conditions at the time of the survey

A significant assemblage comprising 74 worked flints was recovered (see the Finds), of which 40 were identified as tools. The distribution of the flints is broadly located in the central and southern parts of the field and generally in the vicinity of the cropmark (see Figure 6 and Figure 8). The remaining *c.*75 finds comprised post-medieval and modern ceramic material and modern miscellaneous finds. These appear as a generalised scatter (Figure 9) and are likely to have resulted from manuring spreads being added to the fields from the post-medieval period onwards. There is a marked absence of finds in the south-western corner of the site and this may correspond with the gentle slope of the ground towards the stream, possibly suggesting the presence of colluvial or alluvial deposits which may cover areas containing artefacts which would not be penetrated by ploughing.

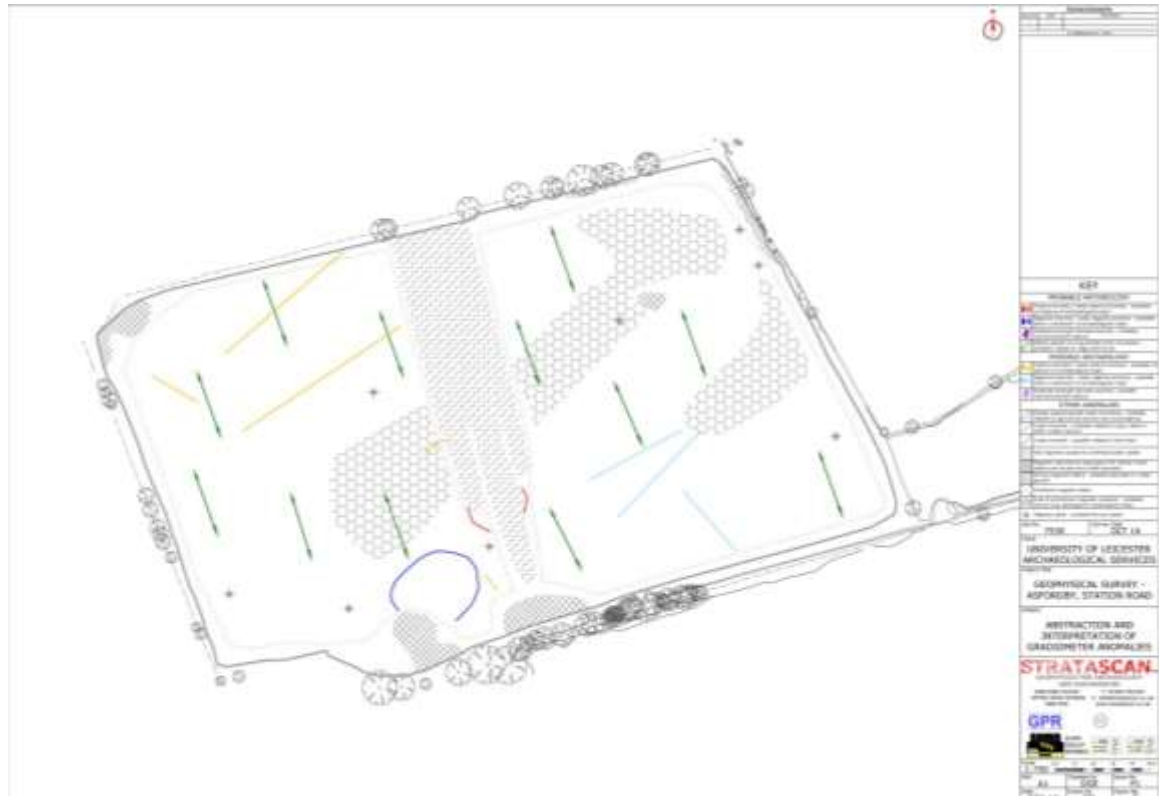


Figure 6: Preliminary geophysical interpretation (Davies forthcoming)

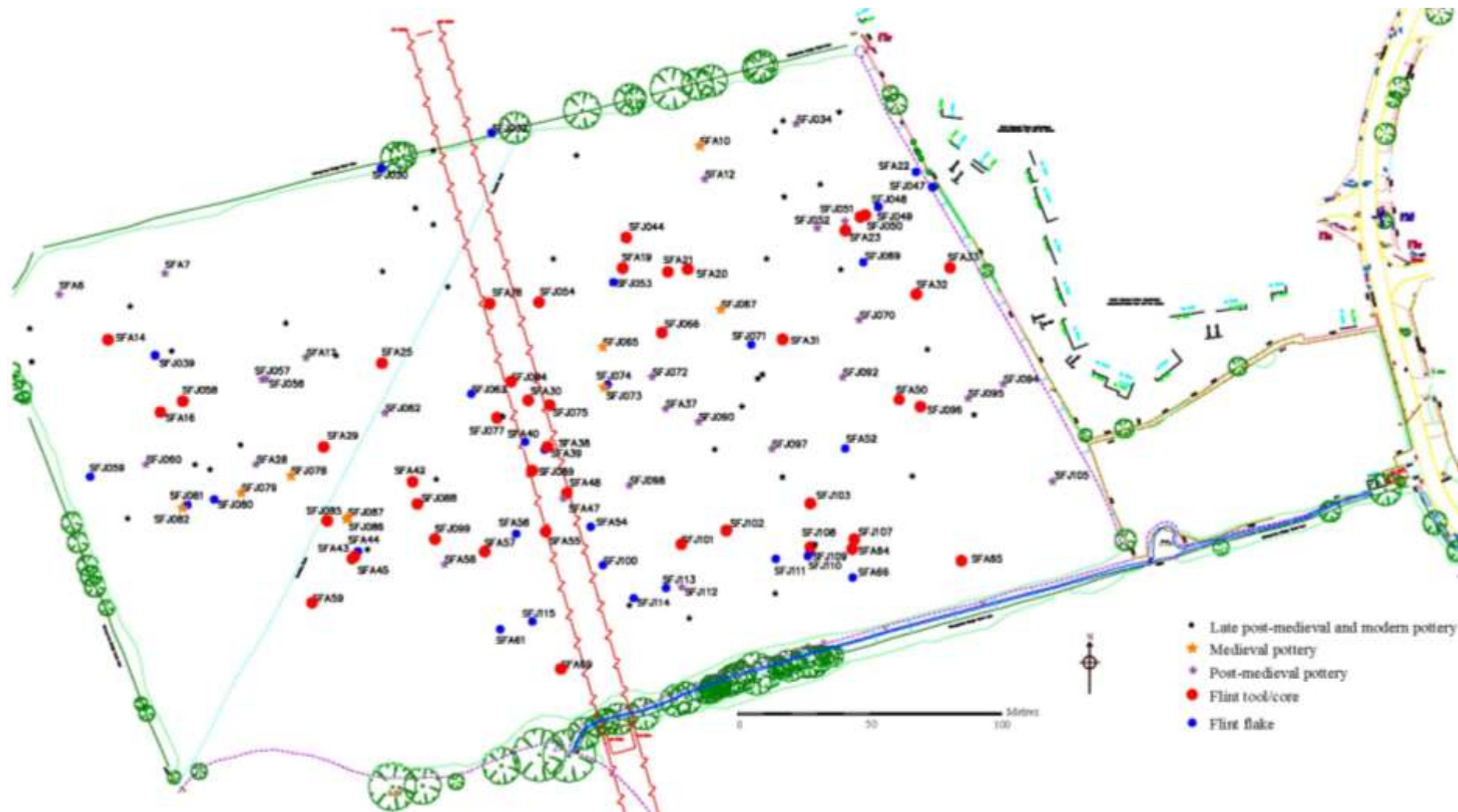


Figure 7: Location of the finds (Survey map provided by the client)

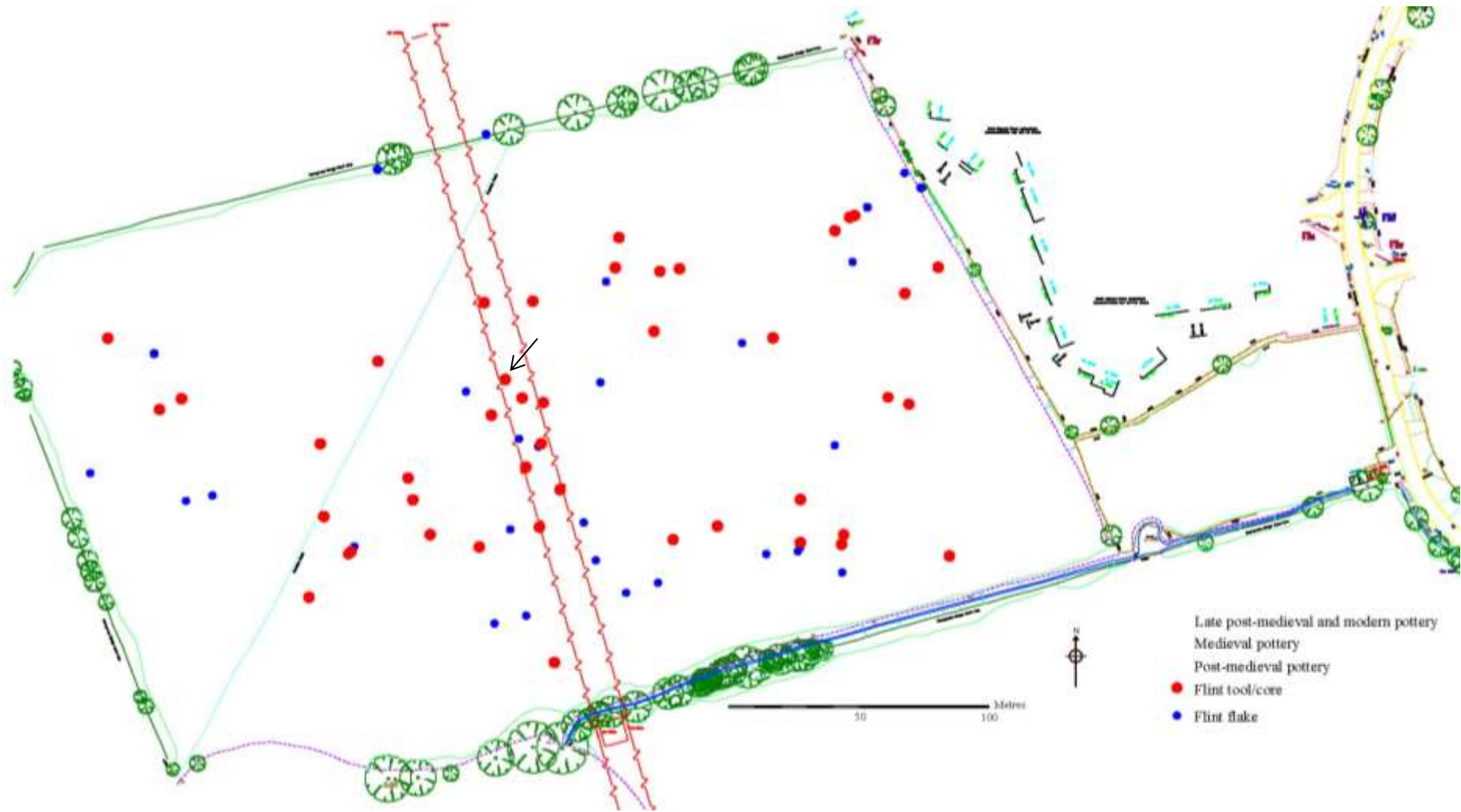


Figure 8: Flint distribution (SFJ064- scale-flaked knife arrowed)

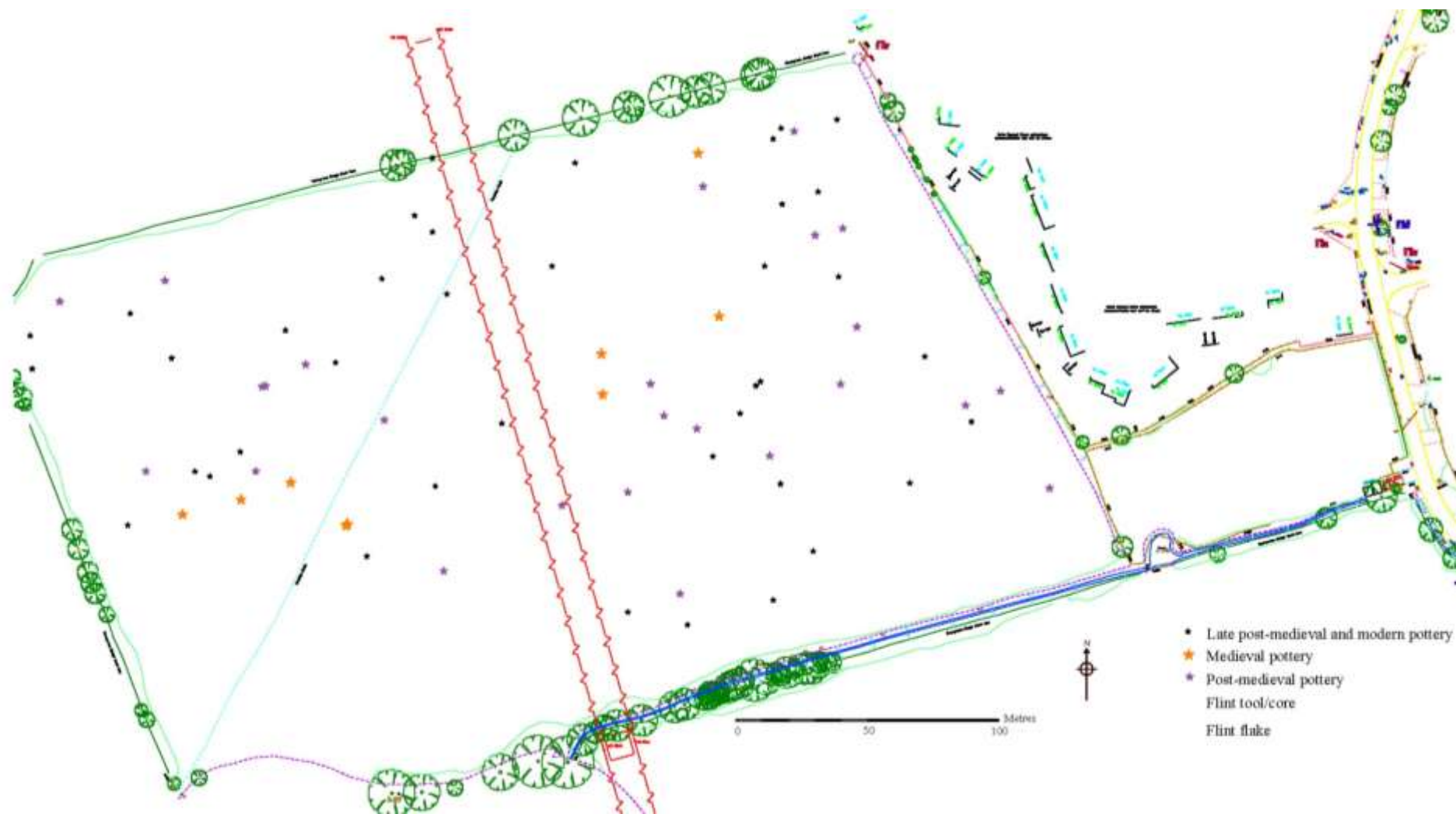


Figure 9: Pottery distribution

The Finds

The Lithic Assemblage by Lynden Cooper

The assemblage comprised 74 worked flints. The flint was grey brown translucent material with thin cortex skin, typical of the local till-derived raw material. The débitage was produced with a hard hammer and is typical of later prehistoric working. The scatter is tool-rich and includes few formal types. The piercers, scrapers and retouched pieces were mainly of an ad hoc nature. However two scrapers showed invasive pressure flaking: one was a reused thumbnail type, with later ad hoc modification. It is suggested that the assemblage is of a Bronze Age date, but some of the blanks may have been recycled earlier pieces. This is evident from a few pieces with earlier patinated scars, likely of Mesolithic origin, but several of the tools may have been recycled Neolithic flakes.

There is a noteworthy find of a scale-flaked knife. This resembles a leaf-shaped arrowhead but that is probably fortuitous. It is plano-convex in section, having only partial flat invasive retouch on the ventral side of the flake blank and has a small tang. The dorsal side shows polishing that appears deliberately manufactured. However, such polish may indicate longevity of use and wear from sheathing. It is a complex tool and may well have been a grave good.

Table 1: Catalogue of worked flints recovered during the fieldwalking

<i>Find</i>	<i>Classification</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Comment</i>
SFJ030	3ry flake		
SFJ032	Flake		Edge modified - utilised?
SFJ039	2ry flake		
SFJ044	Scraper	●	Pressure flaked invasive scars
SFJ047	3ry flake		
SFJ048	2ry flake		
SFJ049	Scraper		Re-used patinated flake
SFJ050	Piercer	●	
SFJ053	Retouched flake	●	Burnt
SFJ054	Scraper	●	
SFJ058	Core		
SFJ059	2ry flake		
SFJ063	3ry flake		
SFJ064	Scale-flaked knife	●	Part polished
SFJ066	Piercer	●	
SFJ069	Shatter		
SFJ071	2ry flake		
SFJ073	2ry flake		
SFJ075	Scraper	●	On core
SFJ077	Piercer	●	
SFJ080	2ry flake		
SFJ081	2ry flake		
SFJ085	Piercer	●	
SFJ088	Scraper	●	On core
SFJ089	Scraper	●	Straight edged
SFJ096	Scraper	●	On core
SFJ099	Scraper	●	Straight edged

<i>Find</i>	<i>Classification</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Comment</i>
SFJ100	2ry flake		
SFJ101	Scraper	●	Straight-edged
SFJ 102	Core		Utilised edge?
SFJ 103	Piercer	●	
SFJ 107	Retouched flake	●	
SFJ 108	Scraper	●	Inverse
SFJ 109	2ry flake		
SFJ 110	2ry flake		
SFJ 111	2ry flake		
SFJ 113	2ry flake		
SFJ 114	2ry flake		
SFJ 115	3ry flake		
SFA14	Retouched flake	●	Scraper?
SFA 16	Concave scraper	●	
SFA 18	Scraper	●	
SFA 19	Retouched flake	●	Strike-a-light?
SFA 20	Retouched flake	●	Probably cutting flake with retouch to facilitate handling
SFA 21	Piercer	●	
SFA 22	3ry flake		Burnt
SFA 23	Scraper	●	
SFA 25	Scraper	●	Re-used thumbnail type with later ventral flake removal and inverse retouch
SFA 29	Piercer	●	
SFA 30	Retouched flake	●	Scraper?
SFA 31	Retouched flake	●	
SFA 31	Retouched flake	●	Probably cutting flake with retouch to facilitate handling. DUPLICATE NUMBER
SFA 32	Retouched flake	●	
SFA 33	Notched flake	●	
SFA 38	Piercer	●	
SFA 39	2ry flake		
SFA 40	3ry flake		
SFA 42	Core		Re-used Mesolithic core. Later knapping incompetent – numerous incipient cones from unsuccessful attempt at removals
SFA 43	Scraper	●	Concave and straight edges
SFA 44	Retouched flake	●	
SFA 45	2ry flake		
SFA 48	Retouched? flake		
SFA 50	Core		Re-used Mesolithic core
SFA 52	Shatter		
SFA 54	2ry flake		
SFA 55	Retouched flake	●	Probably cutting flake with retouch to facilitate handling
SFA 56	2ry flake		
SFA 57	Retouched flake	●	Probably cutting flake with retouch to facilitate handling
SFA 59	Retouched flake	●	Probably cutting flake with retouch to facilitate handling
SFA 61	3ry flake		
SFA 64	Retouched flake	●	

<i>Find</i>	<i>Classification</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Comment</i>
SFA 65	Retouched flake	•	
SFA 66	2ry flake		
SFA 69	Retouched flake	•	



Figure 10: Scale-flaked knife (SFJ064)

The Ceramic and Miscellaneous Finds by Deborah Sawday

The 70 sherds of pottery recovered were catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG, 2001) and the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 1989), (Sawday 2009). Miscellaneous finds of ceramic building material, glass, iron and stone were also recovered. The results are shown below, (

Table 1 to **Error! Reference source not found.**)

Table 2: The medieval and early post-medieval pottery fabrics in approximate chronological order.

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Approximate Date range</i>	<i>Notes</i>
NO	Nottingham Glazed ware,	1230-1350	Nottingham
MP	Midland Purple	1375-1550	Chilvers Coton, Warwicks, Ticknall Derbyshire
CW	Cistercian ware	1450-1550	Ticknall, Derbys/Chilvers Coton ,
MB	Midland Blackware	1550-1650+	Warwicks, Wednesbury Staffs etc.
RW	Redware	1550-1750	?East Anglia
EA1	Jar/Butter pot ware	1500-1750	Chilvers Coton/Ticknall/Staffs c
EA	Earthenware (Unclassified)	1500-1750	?local
EA2	Earthenware 2	1600-200	Ticknall/Staffs etc.
EA3	Mottled ware	1680-1780	Staffs etc.
EA6	Blackware	1650-1750	Ticknall etc.
SW4	White Salt-Glazed Stoneware	1730-1770	Staffs
SW	Stoneware	1750-200	
EA10	Fine White Earthenware/China	1750-200	

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Approximate Date range</i>	<i>Notes</i>
PO	Porcelain	1750-200	

Table 3: The pottery fabrics, by sherd number, and the relative proportions present by period

<i>Fabric/Ware</i>	<i>Sherd Nos.</i>
Medieval	
NO – Nottingham ware	1
Sub Total	1
Later Medieval/Early Post Medieval	
MP – Midland Purple	2
CW/MB – Cistercian ware/Midland Black ware	6
Sub Total	8
Post Medieval/Modern	
Midland Black ware	2
RW - Redware	1
EA1 – Earthenware 1	9
EA – Earthenware (Unclassified Red Earthenware)	8
EA2 – Earthenware 2	13
EA3 - Mottled ware	1
EA6 – Blackware	2
SW4 – White Salt-Glazed Stoneware	2
SW –Salt-Glazed Stoneware	2
Sub Total	40
Modern	
EA10 - Fine White Earthenware/China	20
PO - Porcelain	1
SW - Unclassified Stoneware	
Sub Total	21
Totals	70

The nine sherds of medieval and early post medieval pottery were of note; the fabrics are typical of that found in the region (Table 2). The earliest, an abraded fragment, was part of the neck and handle of a 13th century green glazed Nottingham ware jug. No identifiable vessel forms were evident amongst the Midland Purple and Cistercian/Midland Black ware sherds. These dated as a group from the later 14th or, more probably, the 15th and 16th into the 17th centuries. However, the two Midland Blackware sherds occurred in the early post-medieval table ware forms generally associated with this ware; the base of a cup and the handle of another cup, or jar.

The remaining post medieval or modern pottery, which made up the bulk of the finds, consisted predominantly of white china, and Earthenware, much of the latter is often referred to as pancheon ware. The unclassified red bodied Earthenware may be a local product rather than being sourced from Warwickshire or Derbyshire as is the case with much of the post medieval coarse ware found in the county. These finds were recorded and then discarded.

None of the finds was associated with any archaeological features and the whole assemblage is probably the results of the manuring of the fields from the nearby village of Asfordby from the medieval period onwards.

Table 4: Distribution of the pottery assemblage

<i>Traverse</i>	<i>Find</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Discarded?</i>
2	SFA10	MP	1	LM		Retained
2	SFA6	SW4	1	LPM/EMOD		Retained
2	SFA7	EA	1	PM	Red bodied	Retained
3	SFJ034	EA6	1	PM		Retained
4	SFA3	EA	1	PM	Red bodied jar rim	Retained
5	SFJ043	Glass	1	PM/MOD	Bottle glass	Retained
6	SFA17	EA	1	PM	Red bodied bowl, everted & hooked rim	Retained
7	SFJ051	RW	1	PM		Retained
7	SFJ052	EA1	1	PM		Retained
7	SFJ055	China	1	PM/MOD	Tobacco pipe stem	Retained
7	SFJ056	EA	1	PM	Red bodied, sandy	Retained
7	SFJ057	MB	1	EPM	Cup base	Retained
9	SFJ060	EA1	1	PM		Retained
9	SFJ062	EA	1	PM	Red bodied	Retained
9	SFJ065	MP	1	LM		Retained
9	SFJ067	NO	1	MED	Jug neck & strap handle Nottingham coarse sandy, iron rich	Retained
10	SFA28	EA1	1	PM		Retained
11	SFJ070	EA	1	PM	Red bodied jar rim	Retained
11	SFJ072	EA3	1	PM		Retained
11	SFJ074	CW	1	LM		Retained
11	SFJ078	CW	1	LM		Retained
11	SFJ079	CW	1	LM		Retained
11	SFJ082	CW	1	LM		Retained
12	SFA37	EA1	1	PM	Flared bowl rim	Retained
13	SFJ086	CW/MB	1	LM/EPM		Retained
13	SFJ087	CW/MB	1	LM/EPM		Retained
13	SFJ090	EA1	1	PM		Retained
13	SFJ092	EA6	1	PM		Retained
14	SFA47	EA1	1	PM		Retained
15	SFJ094	EA	1	PM	Red bodied, fine walled	Retained
15	SFJ095	MB	1	EPM	Jar/cup strap handle stub	Retained
15	SFJ097	EA1	1	PM		Retained
15	SFJ098	EA1	1	PM	Jar rim	Retained
16	SFA58	Fe	1	MOD	Flat, circular washer – like object with central hole	Retained
19	SFJ105	EA	1	PM	Red bodied	Retained
19	SFJ112	EA1	1	PM		Retained
1	SFJ031	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
2	SFA11	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
2	SFA8	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
2	SFA9	Drain	1	MOD	earthenware drain pipe	Discarded
3	SFJ035	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
3	SFJ036	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
3	SFJ037	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
3	SFJ038	SW4	1	LPM/EMOD		Discarded

<i>Traverse</i>	<i>Find</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Discarded?</i>
3	SFJ038	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
3	SFJO33	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
4	SFA13	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
4	SFA15	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
5	SFJ040	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
5	SFJ041	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
5	SFJ042	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
5	SFJ045	EA2	1	PM/MOD	Jar base	Discarded
5	SFJ046	EA2	1	PM/MOD	Fragmentary	Discarded
8	SFA24	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
9	SFJ061	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
9	SFJ068	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
10	SFA26	PO	1	MOD		Discarded
10	SFA27	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
11	SFJ076	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
11	SFJ083	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
12	SFA35	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
12	SFA36	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
12	SFA41	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
13	SFJ091	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
13	SFJ093	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
14	SFA46	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
14	SFA49	SW	1	MOD		Discarded
16	SFA51	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
16	SFA53	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
17	SFJ104	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
18	SFA63	SW	1	MOD		Discarded
19	SFJ108	EA10	1	MOD		Discarded
20	SFA67	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded
20	SFA68	EA2	1	PM/MOD		Discarded

Conclusion

The fieldwalking survey produced a significant assemblage of 74 worked flints, including 40 tools. The artefacts included an unusual scale-flaked knife, 15 scrapers, four cores and eight piercers. The remainder of the assemblage was made up of flakes, some of which were retouched. The assemblage is believed to date from the Early Bronze Age but contains a number of Mesolithic and Neolithic pieces which have been re-used. The location of the finds suggests that they are associated with two ring ditches within the field, which were originally identified as cropmarks on aerial photographs and have been confirmed by geophysical survey, which carried out as part of this phase of archaeological work (Davies forthcoming). The flint assemblage, particularly the finely worked scale-flaked knife which may well have been deposited with a burial, supports the interpretation of these features as Neolithic/Bronze Age burial mounds, levelled by later ploughing.

A low density scatter of medieval and early post-medieval pottery was recovered across the area that was surveyed, including Cistercian, Midland Purple and Midland Blackwares. A slightly higher concentration of late post-medieval and modern pottery, mostly earthenwares, was also recovered, which were discarded after logging. These finds are likely to be associated with manuring activity taking place from the medieval period onwards.

The apparent absence of surface finds from the south-west corner of the field on a gentle slope towards the stream may be due to the presence of colluvial or alluvial deposits, potentially masking the level where finds may be present and preventing these areas from being penetrated by ploughing.

Archive

Fieldwork was carried out by Jennifer Browning and Andrew McLeish. The pottery was identified by Deborah Sawday and the flints by Lynden Cooper. Patrick Clay managed the project. We would like to thank Jelsons Ltd and GVA Ltd for their help and co-operation.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire Museums Service under Accession No. X.A138.2014

The archive contains:

- Survey notes and plans
- Digital photos on CD
- 74 flints and 36 pottery sherds
- CD containing this report
- Unbound copy of this report

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

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	Station Lane, Asfordby, Leicestershire
Project Type	Fieldwalking
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Jennifer Browning
Previous/Future work	Previous: DBA. / Geophysical Survey, Future: Trial Trenching.
Current Land Use	Arable farmland
Development Type	Housing
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-application
Site Co ordinates	SK 70027 18729
Start/end dates of field work	20/10/2014- 20/10/2014
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Study Area	0.62 hectares
Associated project reference codes	Museum Accession ID: X.A138.2014

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