University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Riverside Farm, Sysonby Grange Lane, Sysonby, , Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 738 189)

Wayne Jarvis

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An Archaeological Evaluation on land at Riverside Farm, Sysonby Grange Lane, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 738 189)

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An Archaeological Evaluation on land at Riverside Farm, (Phase 2), Sysonby Grange Lane, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 738 189)

Wayne Jarvis

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in September-October 2015 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Edren Homes Ltd on land at Riverside Farm, Sysonby Grange Lane, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 738 189). The fieldwork was undertaken in relation to proposals for the construction of a new residential development, and was carried out in order to assess the potential impact of the development on any archaeological remains that may be present.

The trial trench evaluation identified a series of archaeological features, including ditches, gullies and pits. Additionally, cobbled surfaces and ephemeral ironstone structures were exposed. A range of artefacts were recovered including pottery of medieval date. The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, under the accession number XA91.2014.

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Riverside Farm, Sysonby Grange Lane, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 738 189) as part of proposals for residential development. Leicestershire County Council, acting in its role as advisor to the Local Planning Authority, recommended the need for this preliminary phase of archaeological investigation comprising an evaluation programme. The investigation was required in order to provide an adequate sample of the Phase 2 development area and to assess the likely archaeological impact of the development proposals. The agreed scheme was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (ULAS 2015).

The fieldwork specified was intended to provide further indications of the character and extent of any buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains might be assessed. Fieldwork was carried out during September and October 2015 and involved the machine excavation of seven trenches.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG March 2012). All archaeological work was in accordance with

the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2014).

Site Description, Land Use, Topography, and Geology

The site lies east of Sysonby Grange Lane, and south of the churchyard of the church of St. Mary and an area recently developed ('Phase 1'). Residential development is proposed on the site, incorporating housing, garaging and access roads (P.A: Pre-planning). The site comprises two areas of land, that in the west being rough ground used for materials storage and spoilheaps, that to the east being rough grassland. The site slopes north-west to south-east with the River Eye forming the eastern boundary, and the site covers an area of *c.*335 sq. m. The site lies at a height of *c.*70-72m aOD.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the underlying bedrock geology of the application area is likely to consist of Lias Mudstone. The superficial deposits are river deposited alluvium and Quaternary Head and river gravels (Bytham channel) http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html (accessed 15th July 2014). Alluvium was identified during this fieldwork, except in the westernmost area of the site.

Archaeological and Historical Background

A desk-based assessment and rapid buildings appraisal has been undertaken for the area (Richards 2008). The application area is within the area of the deserted medieval village of Sysonby (HER Ref: MLE3963). The village survived until 1795, when Nichols reported it as having "the Hall House and several cottages" (ibid.). The desk-based assessment indicated that there were six surviving agricultural buildings, three of which were of historic significance including a late 18th century threshing barn (ibid., Building 11) which has now been converted. This Phase 1 area has been subject to a detailed building survey (Clarke 2014).

The south-east of the current site contains part of a "possible moated site (MLE3968), rectangular in plan and still holding water. Although of unknown origin, it is likely to be medieval in date and is shown as part of the formal gardens (MLE3969) on the 1845 map" (Richards 2008, 5). The church of St. Mary just west of the site also has medieval origins, but was much restored in 1892. The formal gardens are shown on the 1842 Tithe Map, but their origin is not known (Figure 31). The land then belonged to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Melbourne and was occupied by a William Fox.

Trial trenching during the Phase 1 development (to the north) revealed only a "few features, including a stone wall-footing, yard surfaces and an unusual bone lined drain. These features all produced evidence suggesting activity of late 18th or 19th century date" (Jarvis 2014, 1).

More generally, the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record indicates that the proposed development lies in a rich archaeological landscape, with extensive medieval and post-medieval remains and close to remains from the

Neolithic period through to the Romano British period and possible Anglo Saxon funerary activity. There is therefore moderate to high potential for archaeological remains of all periods to be present within the application area.

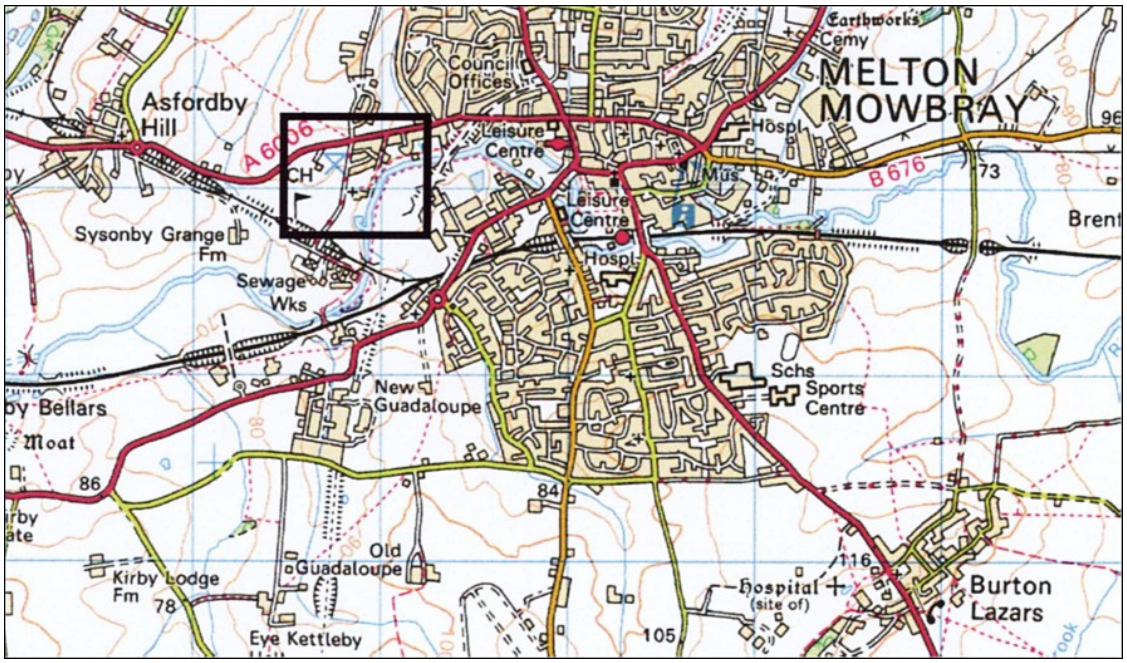

Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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Archaeological Aims and Objectives

The archaeological evaluation was identified as having the potential to contribute to the following research aims.

Neolithic and Early Middle Bronze Age (Clay 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)

There is evidence of Neolithic-Bronze Age activity from lithic assemblages located by fieldwalking in the vicinity. Palaeoenvironmental evidence may provide information on agricultural practices and land use.

The Roman Period (Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)

There are Roman sites within the study area including enclosures and a Roman road. The evaluations may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

The Medieval period (Lewis 2006, Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012

The evaluation may contribute towards research into the origins and development of medieval settlement, landscape and society. Environmental evidence could provide information on local environmental conditions as well as settlement activity, craft, industry and land use. Artefacts can assist in the development of a type series within the region and provide evidence for evidence for craft, industry and exchange across broad landscape areas. The evaluation has the potential to contribute to Research Agenda topics 7.1.2, 7.1.4, 7.2.1-7.2.4, 7.3.1-7.3.5, 7.5.4, 7.6.1-2, 7.7.1-7.7.5 and Research Objective 7E - Investigate the morphology of rural settlements.

These research aims have been identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme. The research aims will be re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

The main objectives of the evaluation were to:

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

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

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that would demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

Methodology

Archaeological Trial Trenches

Prior to the commencement of works an Accession Code was requested (XA91.2014) and the required archive deposition forms completed. An OASIS online record was initiated and the key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator forms. Following recommendations from the Senior Planning Archaeologist of Leicestershire County Council, a programme of evaluation was undertaken. This would involve the excavation of trial trenches.

Trenches were to be set out to cross the areas where groundworks were planned i.e. the proposed footprints of the new buildings.

Topsoil and overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (*c*.2m wide), under archaeological supervision. The spoil generated during the evaluation was mounded away from the edges of each trench. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately. Mechanical excavation ceased at undisturbed natural substrata or archaeological deposits. The trenches were recorded at an appropriate scale by measured drawing and photography and were GPS-located to Ordnance Survey National Grid.

A photographic record, utilising high quality digital images, was maintained during the course of the fieldwork and included:

- the site prior to commencement of fieldwork;
- the site during work, showing specific stages of fieldwork;
- Specific trench photographs and features

Upon completion of the evaluation trenching, the excavated trenches were backfilled and loosely compacted.

Results

Seven trenches were excavated, measuring between 20-25m long and by 2m wide. The trenches were set out by the architect and were situated as shown (Figure 2-Figure 3). Due to the large volume of spoil and materials already stored on site, access to expose the full trench lengths was an issue, although this was countered by the extra width of the trenches (2m wide instead of 1.6m). The trench details are shown in the Table below, and are numbered consecutively (9-15) following on from the Phase 1 trenches (1-8).

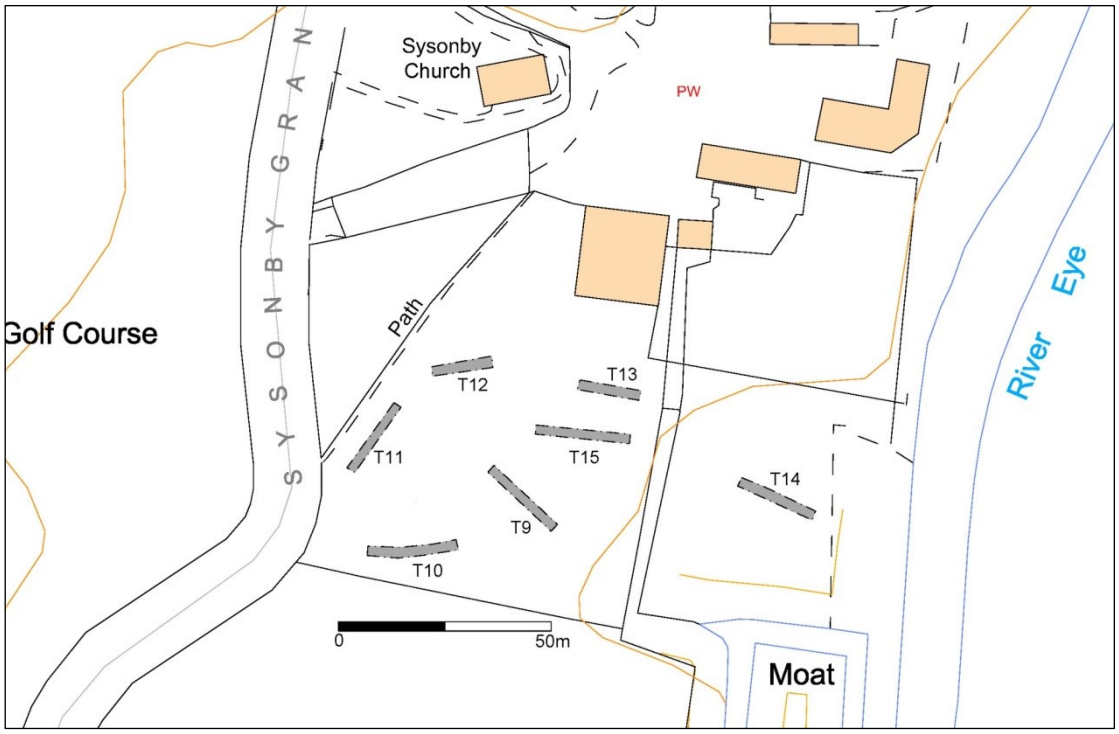

Figure 2: Site plan and trench layout shown.

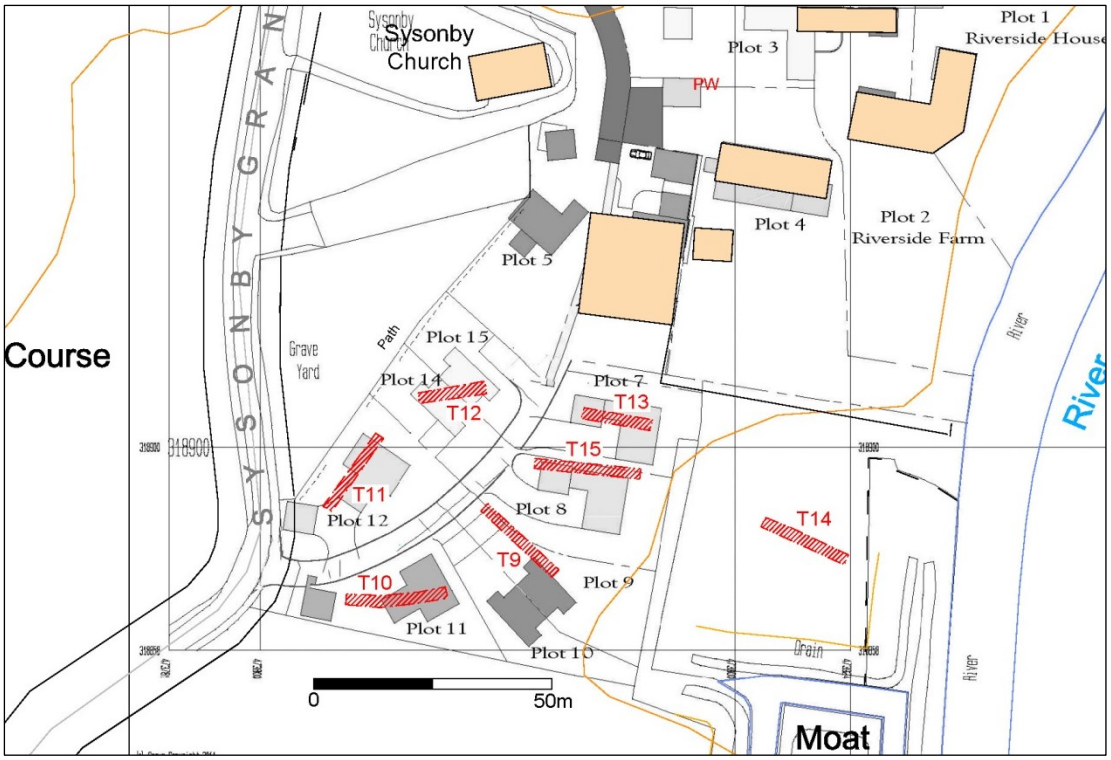

Figure 3: Site plan, trench and developer's proposed layout shown.

Table 1 Details of trenches

TRENCH	LOCATION & ORIENTATION	LENGTH (m) X 2m	DESCRIPTION/NOTES	DEPTH TO ARCH. (m)
9	Adj. to Plot9, NW-SE	20	Modern OB., seals T.S., S.S. then All. Nat. at 1.05 at W end. No features/finds	-, All. to 1.05-1.4
10	Plot 11, E-W	21	All. over cobbled surface (9). [12] [21] [27]	0.5
11	Plot 12, NE-SW	20	Ditch [13], gullies [15] [17]	0.4
12	Plot 14, ENE-WSW	12.4	Ditches [22] [30], gullies incl. ?[34] [41] [44]	0.65
13	Plot 7, WNW-ESE	15	Ditch [8]	0.5
14	*lake, WNW-ESE	19	Cobbles (48), footings (45) (46) (47), layer (49). *was to be a lake, now removed from application	0.35 (W) – 0.9 (E)
15	Adj. to Plot 8, WNW-ESE	22	Negative. Modern OB. Seals T.S., S.S. then Nat.	-, Nat. at 1.16-1.3

Key: OB. – overburden, T.S. - topsoil, S.S. – subsoil, All. – alluvium, Nat. - Natural

There was significant variation in the depths that were required to reach archaeological levels, as all trenches exposed varying depths of made up ground and/or natural alluvial deposits. In general the trenches in the west of the site encountered deposits of modern made up ground, sometimes deep, and these mostly sealed the original sequence of topsoil and subsoil. However, there were also clear areas of modern truncation and modern intrusions. Alluvium was identified in all but the westernmost trenches. One trench (Trench 9) in particular exposed a very deep sequence of both modern makeups and alluvium, and was abandoned at a depth of 1.4m where alluvial material was still present.

Topsoil where present was a dark grey sandy-clay with occasional gravel. Subsoil was a pale grey sandy-clay also occasionally stony. The natural substratum was mostly a

mottled orange clay, with occasional sands and gravels. The alluvium was a grey sandy clay.

Trench 9

This trench exposed up to 0.9m of modern overburden, sealing topsoil and subsoil (0.35m-0.45m thick in total). Below these levels was an alluvial clay, which was deepest at the south-east end of the trench where it continued to more than 1.5m below current ground (not bottomed due to safety issues). Only at the north-west end of this trench were natural deposits reached, at a depth of 1.05m, and here no features were exposed, and no artefacts were recovered. It is however possible that at greater depth and sealed by the alluvium features might survive, as alluvial deposits did seal archaeological features in Trenches 10 and 14.

Figure 4: Trench 9.

Trench 10

See drawing Figure 5.

This trench had a thin topsoil disturbed in places by modern intrusions, as this area has been used as a track recently and was wheel-rutted. At the east end was a thin (0.1m-0.15m) clay that is most likely an alluvial deposit. This alluvium sealed a fine well-constructed metalled surface, context (9) (Figure 6). Some 6m east-west by 3m north-south of cobbled surface was identified. The surface consisted of a single course of large river cobbles, the cobbles being up to 0.15m long but mostly smaller. The cobbles were set in a broad pattern with the longer axis being north-south, but it could not be ascertained the alignment or direction the surface followed. The west edge was north-south but this looked very much like modern truncation. To the west, some modern wheel ruts had redeposited cobbles in confirming this surface had been disturbed. The cobbles were set in a thin subsoil or bedding layer (10), a greeny brown silty-sand. This was 0.05m thick and overlay the natural substratum. In view of this sequence, the date of the surface is unclear. Some of the surface (9) and the layer below (10) were therefore removed, however this did not produce any directly or indirect dating evidence. Feature [12] (11) stratigraphically below (10) was exposed and a sondage excavated, but this did not produce any dating either. The cobbled surface is not convincing as modern; as there is a large amount of modern material on site this would have likely been mixed in with either (9) (10) or the alluvium over it. Also, previous work (Jarvis 2014) did identify late features and these had brick fragments in them. It seems likely that the cobbled surface is related to either the moated site or the ornamental gardens.

Feature [12] (11) was a probable ditch, aligned north-west to south-east. The feature was over 0.4m wide (part profile) and 0.44m deep (Figure 8). The fill was a sterile mottled yellow brown silty-sand which did not produce any finds. Further west in Trench 10, feature [27] (26) was 2.25m wide (full profile) and 0.59m deep, with a sterile silty sand fill (Figure 8). This feature was somewhat similar to [12], and it was considered that this could be a return of the same feature, requiring a corner or curving alignment slightly to the north. Two struck flints were recovered from (26), one a residual blade fragment, the second a piercer. As both fills (11) and (26) were remarkably sterile, especially compared to the other features on site, it is possible that this is an earlier potentially prehistoric feature. Between these two features, adjacent to the north baulk of the trench was a shallow pit, [21] (19) (20), (Figure 9). This measured 0.8m wide, being potentially circular, and with a depth of 0.32m. Primary fill (20) was a dark yellowy grey silty clay, the secondary fill (19) was a somewhat charcoally dark grey silty-sand which produced two sherds of pottery of 12th - 13th century date.

Features further west in Trench 10 proved to be modern disturbance.

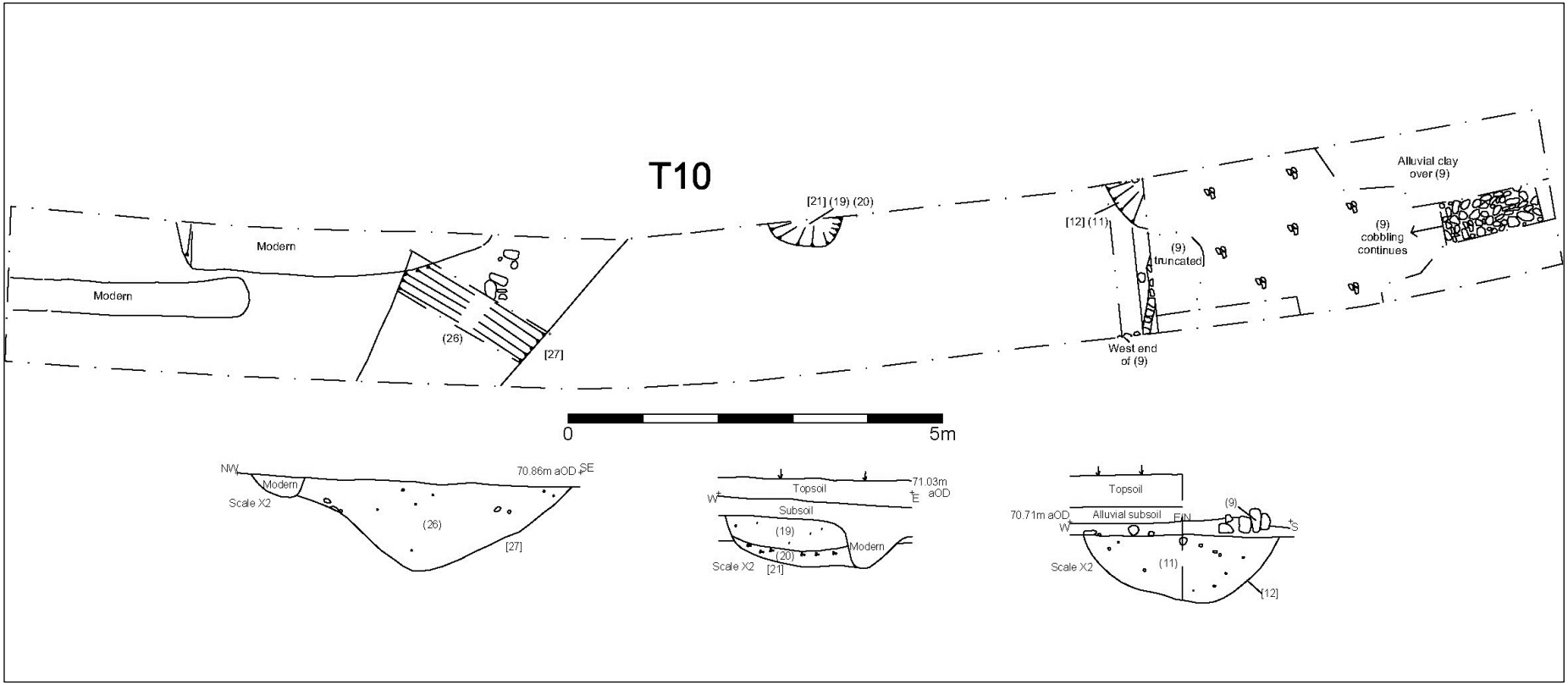

Figure 5: Trench 10, drawings.

Figure 6: Trench 10, cobbled surface (9).

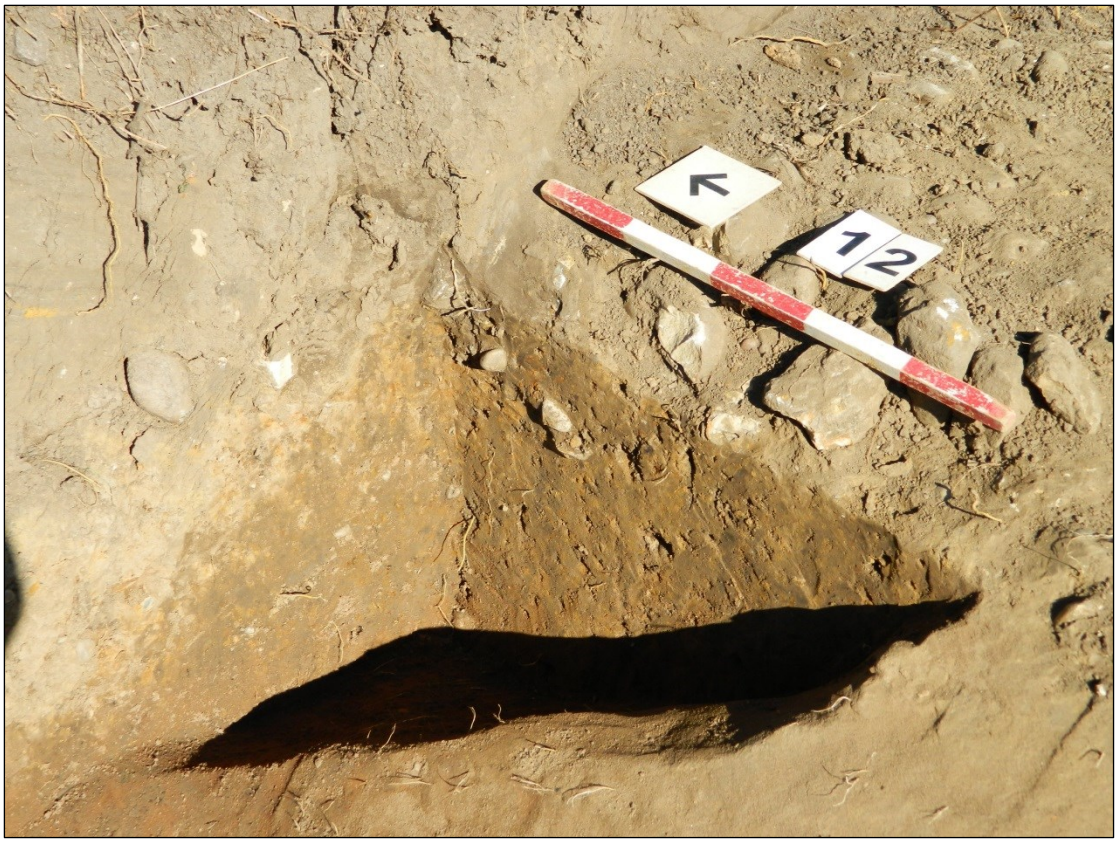

Figure 7: Trench 10, probable ditch feature [12], cobbling (9) above.

Figure 8: Trench 10, ditch feature [27].

Figure 9: Trench 10, pit feature [21].

Trench 11

See drawings
Figure 10-

Figure 11.

The south end of this trench exposed a large ditch feature [13] (14) (50) (51). This was orientated close to east-west, was more than 2m long (the trench width), 1.4m wide and 0.7m deep (Figure 12). The primary fill (14) was a pale orangey grey fine sandy clay with rare gravel. This produced pottery of late Saxon-Norman date, residual flint, animal bone, and slate, the latter probably roof slate. The secondary fill (50) consisted of a series of very thin tiplines dropping down from the north side to the south side, indicate backfilling rather than natural infilling. The uppermost fill (51) was redeposited clay, probably representing final levelling.

North of ditch [13] was gully feature [15] (16) on a slightly different alignment (Figure 13). This was more than 2m long (trench width), 0.5m wide by 0.22m deep and west-north-west to east-south-east orientated. Fill (16) was a mid orangey grey sandy clay. Further north again was a second gully feature, [17] (18), (Figure 14). This was orientated east-west, was over 1.5m long, 0.5m wide and 0.24m deep. The single fill (18) was a dark grey brown sandy loam, which produced three sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery and residual flint. The north edge of this was disturbed by an area of redeposited soils which produced a fragment of clay pipe stem. Northwards in Trench 11 further modern disturbance was also observed.

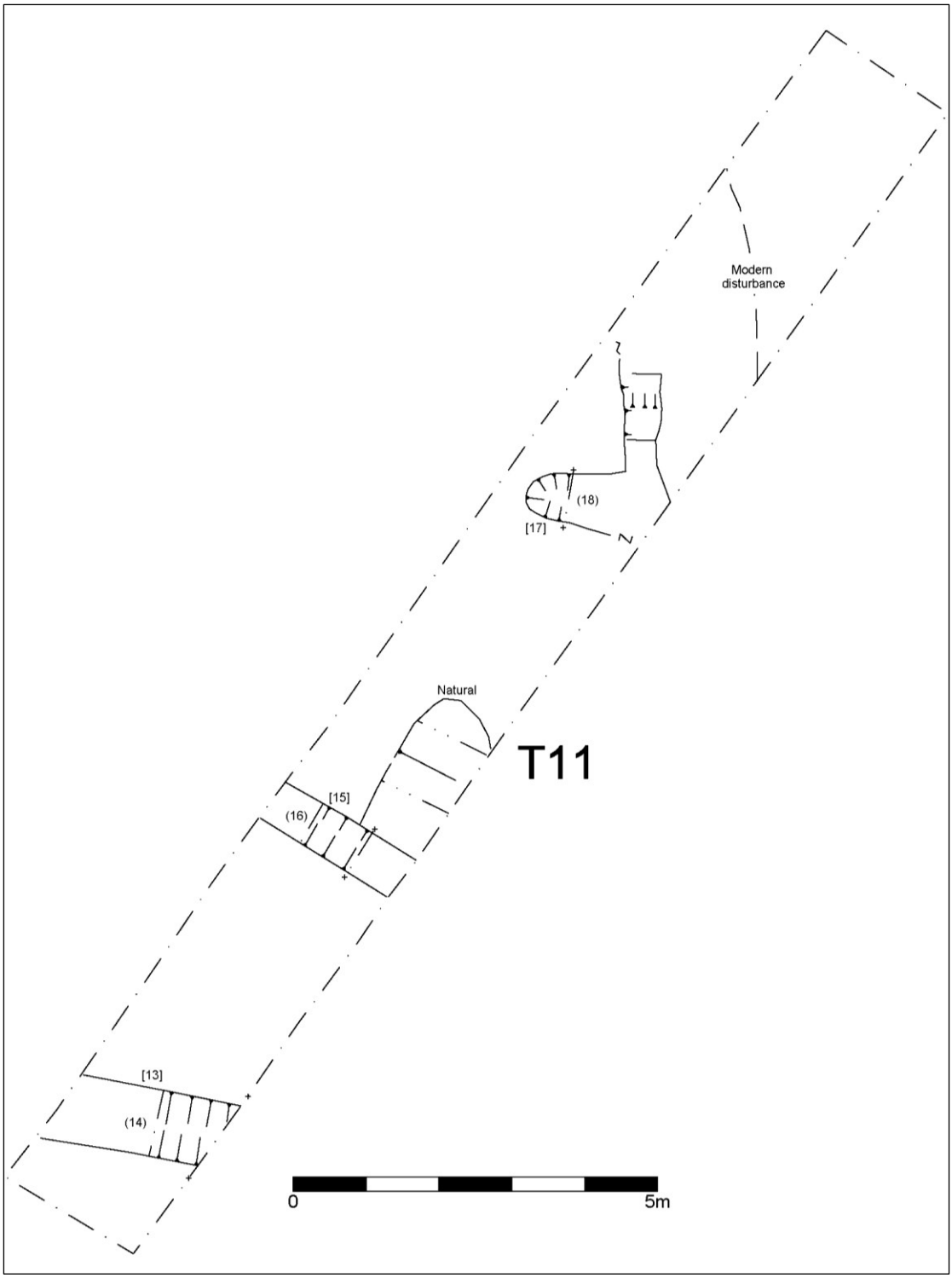

Figure 10: Trench 11, plan.

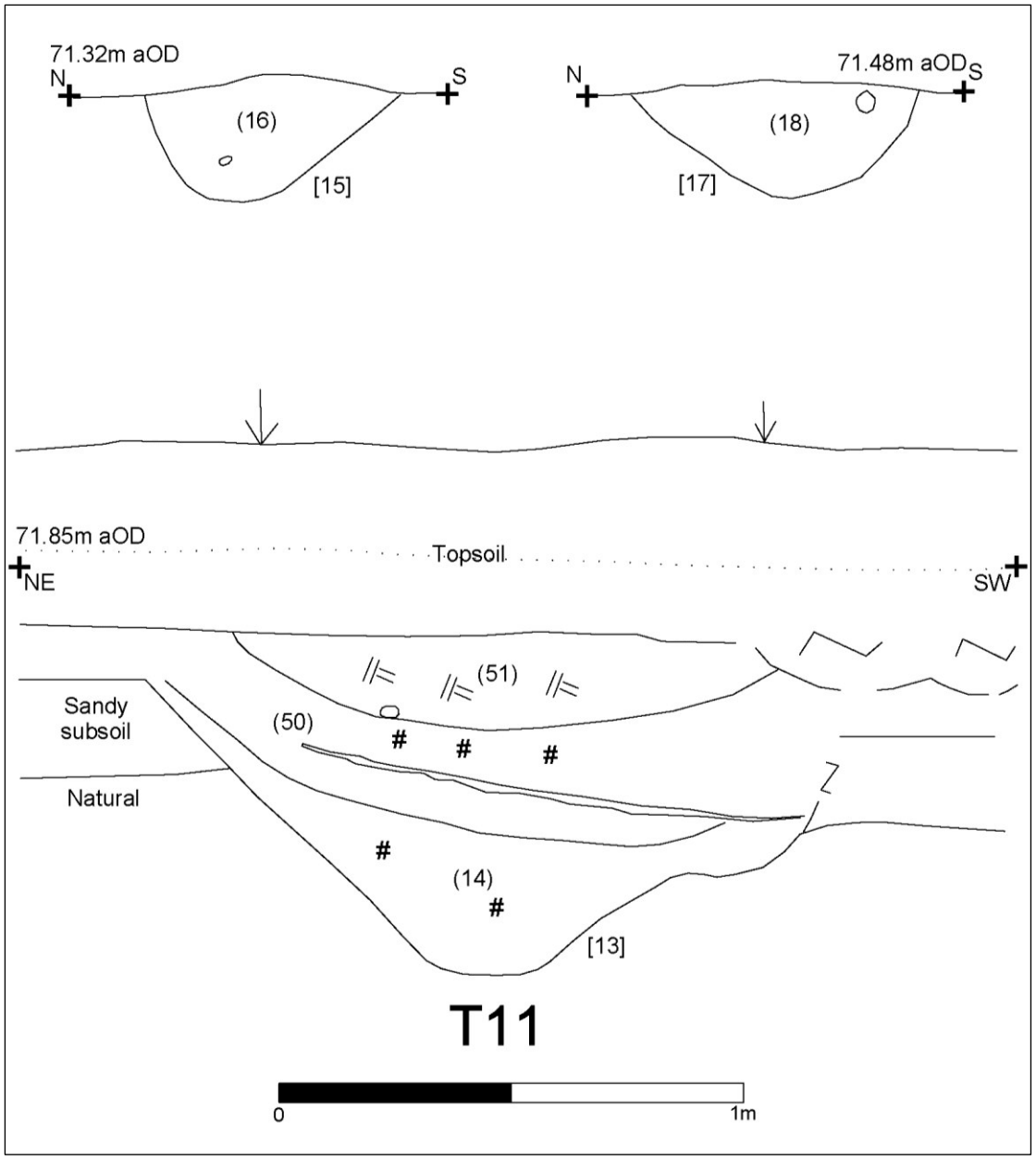

Figure 11: Trench 11, sections.

Figure 12: Trench 11, ditch feature [13].

Figure 13: Trench 11, gully feature [15].

Figure 14: Trench 11, gully feature [17].

Trench 12

See Figure 15-

Figure 16.

A series of deposits were observed in this trench representing intercutting features of medieval date. The most westerly feature was a large ditch [22] (23) (24) (52), measuring more than 2m long (trench width), 2.8m wide and 1m deep and orientated north-south (Figure 17). The primary fill (23) was a pale orangey grey clayey-sand with occasional ironstone and limestone fragments. This produced a small assemblage of four sherds of 12th-13th century pottery. Secondary fill (24) was a mixed orangey

grey sandy-clay with frequent chips and chunks of limestone, ironstone and cobbles, and this produced 13 sherds of pottery with a *terminus post quem* (TPQ) of 12th-13th century date, residual flint and animal bone. Above this, fill (25) was a mid orangey grey clay, with occasional stones and quite sterile but with occasional charcoal flecks. The uppermost fill (52) was a sterile grey clay with occasional large ironstone fragments.

Crossing the trench and parallel to and east of ditch [22] were a pair of gullies [41] (40) and [44] (42) (Figure 18). The easternmost, gully [41] was 0.75m wide, 0.37m deep with the fill (40) being a dark grey silty-clay. The westernmost gully [44], was cut by [41], measured 0.9m wide and 0.35m deep. It had two fills, the primary fill (43) was a browny orange clayey-sand with moderate gravel. The upper fill (42) was an orangey mottled mid brown sandy-clay, somewhat alluvial-like in makeup which produced a single struck flint. Parallel to the gullies and just to the east were further analogous deposits probably representing further linear features on the same alignment. Towards the east end of Trench 12 a larger feature [30] was observed (Figure 19). This was running north-east to south-west, was probably 2m wide and over 0.52m deep (not fully excavated). The lower fill (29) of this was a dark brown silty-clay also probably alluvial in origin. The upper fill was an orangey brown silty-clay. Probably the same feature was located against the south section of the trench, [39] (Figure 20). The south edge of ditch [30] cut a further series of deposits which were probably part of a separate cut [34], on an east-west axis. This feature was probably a wide shallow linear, 0.8m wide and 0.23m deep. The primary fill (33) was an occasionally pebbly yellowy orange clay sand. Fill (32) over this was a dark brown silty-clay, sealed in turn by (31) a mixed orangey brown silty-sand.

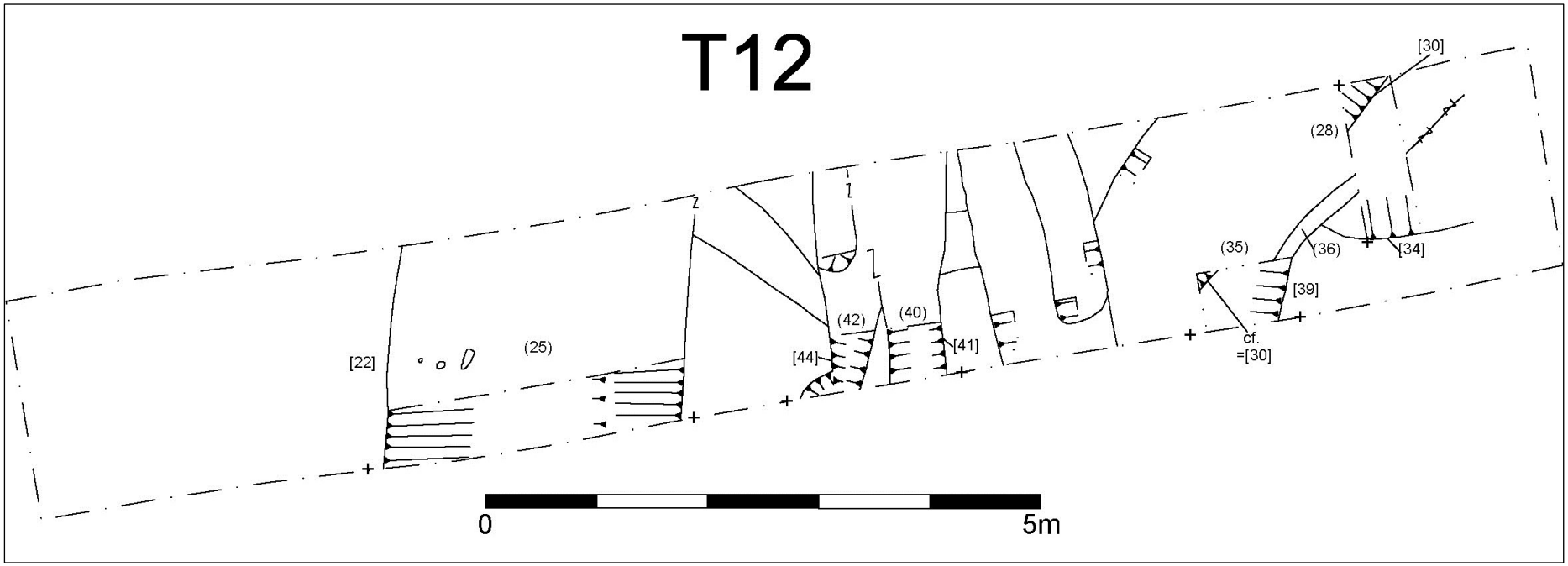

Figure 15: Trench 12, plan.

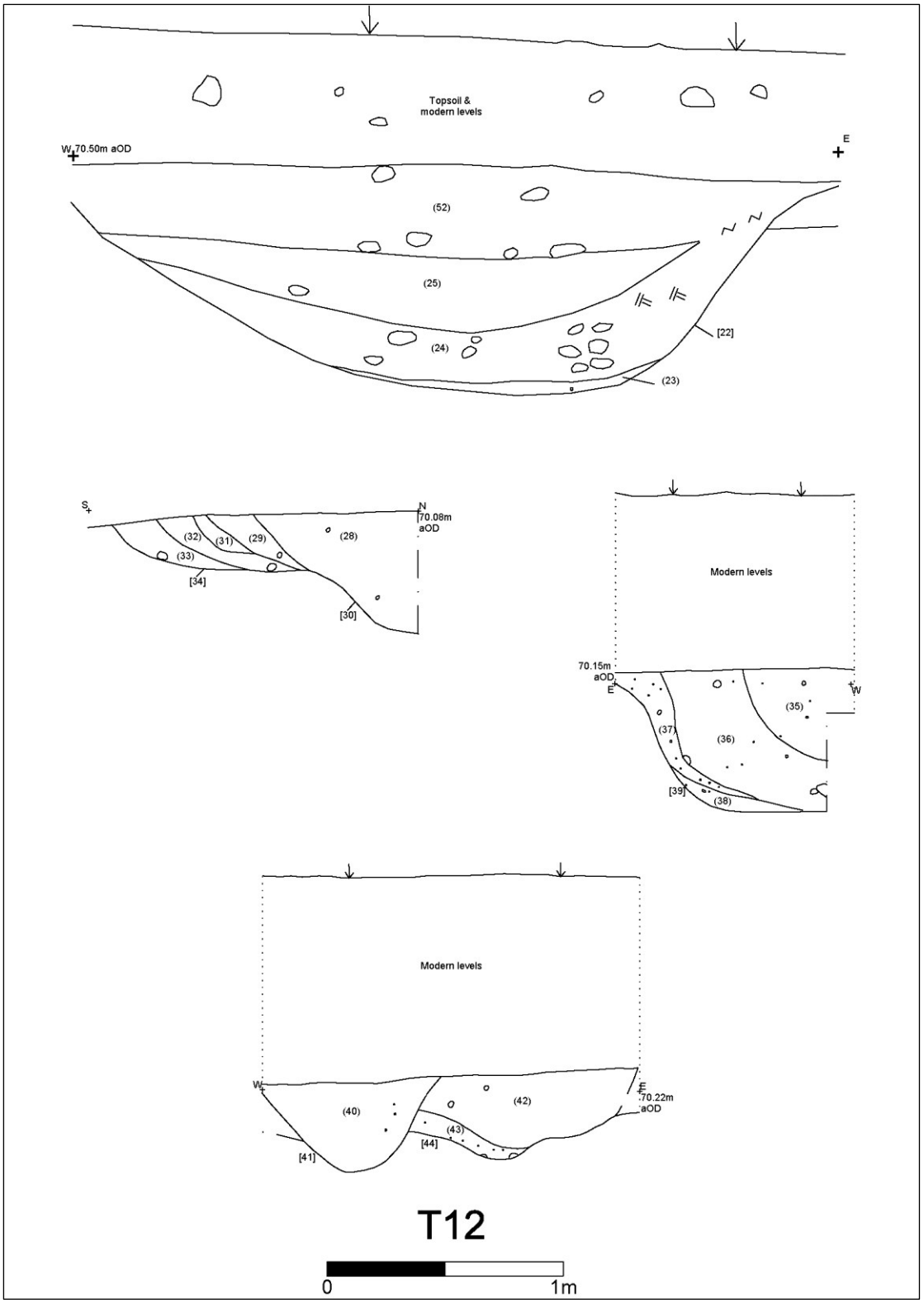

Figure 16: Trench 12, sections.

Figure 17: Trench 12, ditch feature [22].

Figure 18: Trench 12, gully features [41] and [44].

Figure 19: Trench 12, features [30] and [34].

Figure 20: Trench 12, feature [39].

Trench 13

See Figure 21.

This trench exposed much modern makeup sealing a large east-west ditch [8] (5) (6) (7), which ran almost parallel to the length of the trench for some 10.5m (Figure 22). The ditch was wide at 1.4m at the top, 0.6m deep, with a flattish base, and had three fills. The fills showed signs of at least seasonal waterlogging, and the feature quickly filled with water once excavated, partly as it was cutting a sandy natural. The primary fill (7) was an orangey green grey clay sand with occasional pebbles. This contained pottery of 12th-14th century date. Secondary fill (6) was a mottled orangey brown silty-sand. Tertiary fill (5) was a mottled green brown clay sand with frequent large limestone fragments, and also produced 12th-13th century pottery and residual flint. This rubbly fill could be seen running through the trench, indicating that the feature was at a shallow depth from current ground level due to truncation; it is thus not necessarily a late feature.

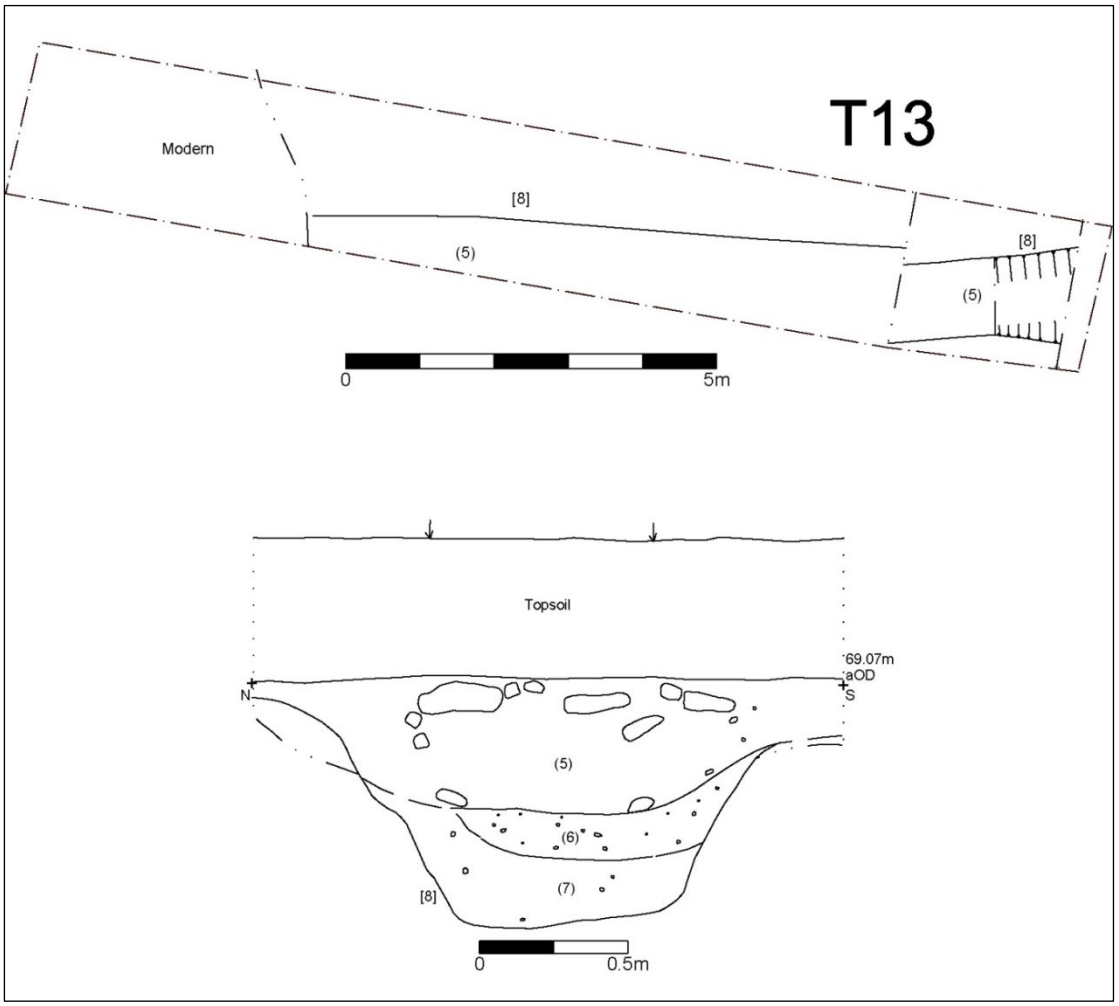

Figure 21: Trench 13, plan and section of ditch [8].

Figure 22: Trench 13, feature [8].

Trench 14

See Figure 24.

Trench 14 exposed below the topsoil an alluvial layer, deep at the east end but shallower westward (Figure 23). Removal of this alluvium exposed a series of deposits of demolition. The demolition incorporated much ironstone rubble and Charnian slate. Where possible this demolition layer was removed, exposing several structural features (45) (46) (47) (48) and (49). These appeared to be a parallel sequence of ephemeral stone settings, orientated approximately north-south. Features (45) (46) and (47) were linear features consisting of unmortared ironstone fragments, some roughly dressed, each setting being 0.4-0.45m wide and perhaps more than one course (Figure 25-Figure 27). Feature (47) at the west end of the trench did have some mortar surviving but this probably indicated reused material rather than in situ bonding. Between (47) and (46) was further demolition, alluvium, and a possible linear setting of ironstone running perpendicular to the main arrangement. To the east, between features (45) and (46) was a layer of crushed ironstone, context (49). This context was over 1.45m wide, less than 0.1m thick and looked like a surface or floor makeup. East of feature (45) was layer (48), a cobbled surface comparable to feature (9) in Trench 10, being also made of large river cobbles (Figure 28). This was only partially exposed as removal of the overlying alluvium by machine was seriously damaging the surface, and the level started flooding. The surface could be traced by small test holes for some 5m east-west from the east trench edge to where it butted up against feature (45).

The structural features identified in trench 14 were quite ephemeral, and could be for supporting a timber superstructure of one or more buildings, or perhaps related to the ornamental gardens recorded historically for this area of the site. No dating evidence was recovered from the deposits exposed in Trench 14, with the exception of a few fragments of dressed ovate-shaped ?roofing slates. These did not have nail holes but may be of medieval date.

Figure 23: Trench 14.

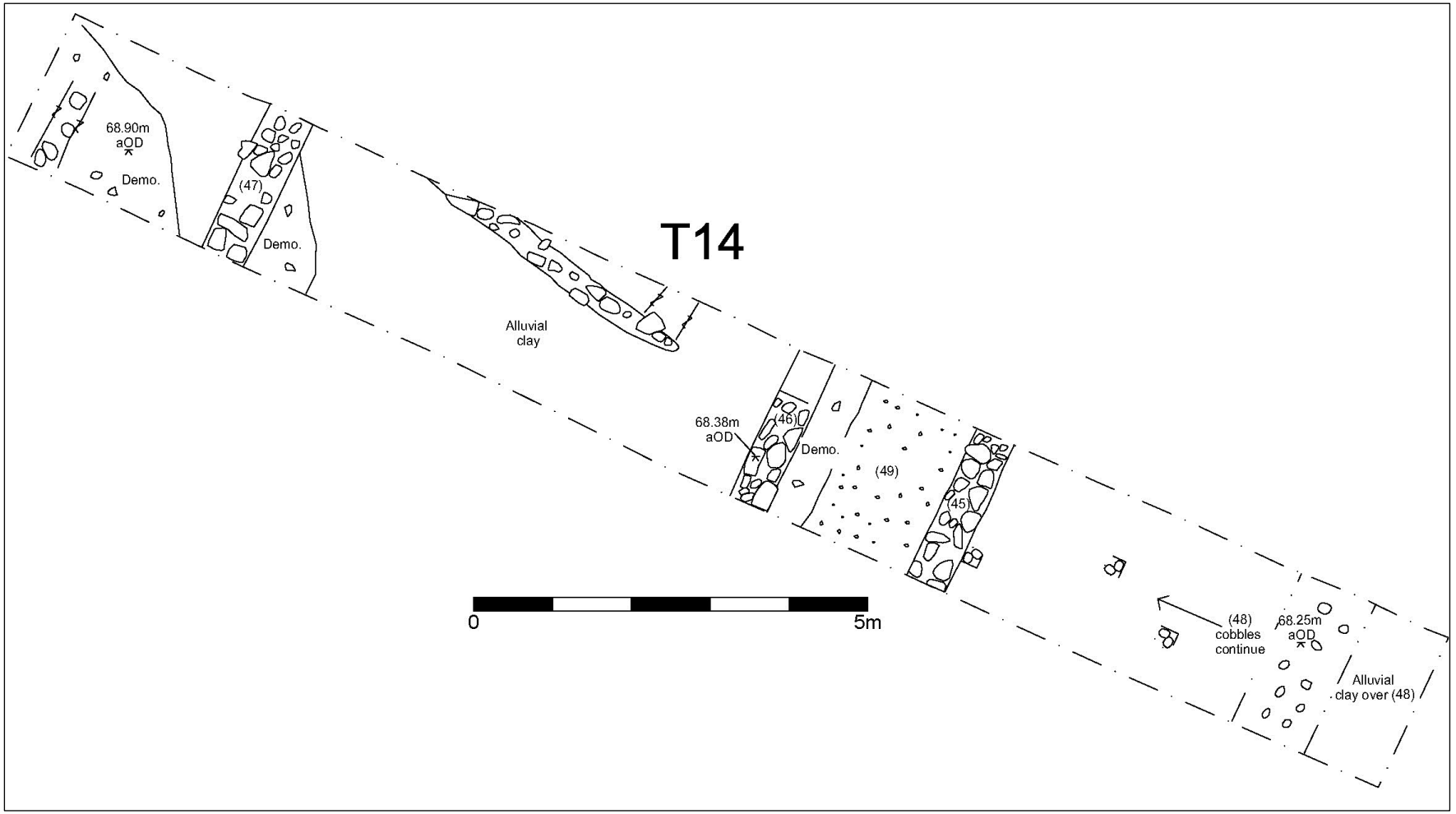

Figure 24: Trench 14, all features plan.

Figure 25: Trench 14, ironstone feature (45).

Figure 26: Trench 14, ironstone feature (46).

Figure 27: Trench 14, ironstone feature (47).

Figure 28: Trench 14, area of cobbling (48).

Trench 15

This trench exposed modern makeup above a sealed sequence of topsoil, subsoil then natural clays, with some pockets of alluvial material. The natural substratum was observed at a depth of 1.16-1.3m from current ground level. No features or finds were identified.

Figure 29: Trench 15.

The Finds

The Pottery and Building Materials by Deborah Sawday

The Ceramic Finds

Methodology

The pottery, 27 sherds, weighing 638 grams, was examined under a x20 binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, (MPRG 1998; MPRG, 2001) and the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 2009).

The results are shown below (Tables 1 and 2). The pottery was recovered mostly from the back-fill of the ditches [8], [13], [22], and a pit [17]. The earliest material, possibly dating from the 10th or 11th centuries, occurred in contexts [13] and [17]. Pottery dating from the 12th century was found in context [8] and the pit [21]; whilst context [22] produced a range of material dating from the 10th or 11th centuries into the 13th or 14th centuries.

Discussion

An interesting range of pottery is present, but the dating evidence must be treated with some caution owing to the small size of the assemblage.

Conclusion

Though small, the assemblage had a reasonably large average sherd weight of 23.62 grams, suggesting the survival of relatively undisturbed archaeological levels in the vicinity.

Table 1: The medieval pottery fabrics.

Fabric	Common Name/Kiln & Fabric Equivalent where known	General Date Range
ST1	Stamford – very fine	c.1150-13th C.
LI	Lincoln/Lincs. late Saxon Shelly ware	c.870–early 12th C.
TH	Thetford type ware	c.850-1200
RS	Reduced Sandy wares-? Local	c.850-c.1400
PM	Potters Marston ware - Potters Marston, Leicestershire	c.1100-c.1300/50+
OL	Oolitic ware – Lincs.	c.1100-1300
OS/OS1	Oxidised Sandy ware -? Local/ Brackley	c.12th-13th C.
CS	Coarse Shelly ware	c.1100-1400
NO3	Nottingham Light Bodied/Reduced Green Glazed ware	Early/mid 13th c.1350

The Slate

Four slates, from the Charnwood area, (W. Jarvis, pers. comm.) were recorded; one from the ditch context [13] and three more from demolition around the stone footing wall, context (47). The latter three appear to be complete and all are thought to be medieval, but lack the peg holes which are typically diagnostic of Roman and medieval tiles, the latter being bored rather than pecked as in the Roman period (Gnanaratnam 1999).

Table 2: The medieval and pottery by fabric, sherd numbers and weight (grams) by context, & stone building materials by number & context.

Context	Fabric/ware	No.	Gr.	Comments
POT				
5 [8] ditch	OS1 – Oxidised Sandy ware 1	2	159	Flat, knife trimmed base
7 [8]	CS – Coarse Shelly ware	1	21	Base fragment, sooted externally. ? Lincs.
14 [13] ditch	?LI- Lincoln/Lincs. Shelly ware	1	1	Fragment reduced
"	RS – Reduced Sandy	1	53	Upper body & neck of hand-made hollow ware, with coarse sandy & mineral inclusions –decorative rilling on shoulder, possibly a coarse Thetford type.
18 [17] ditch	?LI- Lincoln/Lincs. Shelly ware	3	50	Body, buff exterior, light grey core, sooted/burnt int.
19 [21] pit	OL – Oolitic ware	1	4	Body, reduced , buff surface
"	TH – Thetford type	1	16	Basal angle - oxidised
23 [22] ditch	OS - – Oxidised Sandy ware	4	148	Hollow ware, one pot, convex base, externally thickened rim, decorated with inscribed wavy lines on interior & exterior body.
24 [22]	?LI- Lincoln/Lincs. Shelly ware	1	2	Reduced/abraded fragment
"	OL – Oolitic ware	2	14	Includes a hammer headed jar rim
"	CS – Coarse Shelly ware	5	130	Misc. Body/base sherds
"	ST1 – Very Fine Stamford ware	1	9	body
"	PM – Potters Marston	2	4	Abraded/reduced fragments – granitic inclusions
"	NO3 – Nottingham Glazed ware	2	27	Join - ?jug base with stacking evidence
STONE				

14 [13]	slate	1		Incomplete – max. width 92mm, estimated length c.140mm, possibly medieval roofing slate
Over (47) stone footing	slate	2		Both complete, max width 92mm – length153mm, & 90 x 157mm. Neither has peg holes.
"	slate	1		Complete, no peg holes as above, c.180 x 240mm

Site/ Parish: Grange Lane, Sysonby. Accession No.: XA91 2014 Document Ref: sysonby2.docx Material: pot & misc. finds Site Type: ?sysonby dmv, on river Eye, opposite Eye Kettleby	Submitter: W. Jarvis Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Identification: 11.10.15 Method of Recovery: evaluation Job Number: 15-766

The Worked Flint by Lynden Cooper

Both earlier and later prehistoric flint working is suggested, from the blade and discoidal scraper, the former artefact potentially Palaeolithic or Mesolithic, the latter of late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date.

(5) Tertiary flake
(14) Secondary flake
(18) Secondary flake
(24) Discoidal scraper with prepared base. Late Neolithic,
Tertiary flake
(26) Secondary blade fragment. Patinated.
Piercer
(42) Tertiary flake

The Animal Bone by Rachel Small

Fourteen fragments of bones were recovered during an evaluation at Sysonby, Leicestershire (table 1). The specimens came from three contexts – ditch fills believed to date to the medieval period (10th – 14th centuries).

An immature pig tibia was present in context (5) from ditch [8]. Also present in this context was a near complete right sheep mandible. The identification of sheep rather than goat was made on the absence of a cusp on the third molar (Payne 1985, 143). Based on the wear of the third molar, the sheep probably died between the age of three and four years of age (Payne 1973).

No pathologies were noted on the bones or butchery marks, burning or gnawing. The preservation of the assemblage was generally good indicating that bones survive well in the local soils. It is evident that the site contains waste from domestic and pastoral activities. However, the small size of the assemblage, particularly when separated into periods, unfortunately precludes interpretation beyond these few comments. Follow

up work on site should adopt an appropriate recovery strategy for surviving animal bones.

Table 3: Catalogue of bones; sheep tooth ware stages after Payne (1973).

Feature	Context	Number	Taxa	Bone	Comments
Ditch	14	2	Medium mammal	Rib	Fragments
Ditch	14	1	Medium mammal	Long bone shaft	Fragment
Ditch	5	1	Pig	Tibia	Immature
Ditch	5	4	Sheep	Mandible	Right, near complete, stage 9H
Ditch	5	4	Medium mammal	Indent.	Probably fragments from the mandible
Ditch	24	1	Large mammal	Rib	Fragment
Ditch	24	1	Medium mammal	Long bone shaft	Probably a fragment of humerus
Total		**14**			

Discussion and Conclusions

The evaluation by trial trenching on land at Riverside Farm, Sysonby identified a series of archaeological features. Five of the trenches exposed archaeological deposits, one trench identified a deep sequence of modern material and below this alluvial cover, and one trench was negative. The majority of the features produced evidence for domestic activity of an earlier medieval date. These include large ditches, and some smaller gully features and pit activity. Figure 30 shows the spread and orientation of the main features from the trenching results. The alignment of the large linear features bears little resemblance to modern or historic boundaries. The results from Trenches 12 and 13 might suggest one or more ditched enclosures with associated domestic activity on an east-west and north-south grid. The larger ditch at the south end of Trench 11 is on a similar axis. The gullies in that trench may be related to a frontage on the former line of the route-way east of the church and then west of the current area shown on the 1842 Tithe and early Ordnance Survey maps (Richards 2008, Figures 3, 5; here Figure 31). There is a possibility meanwhile that the linear features in Trench 10 are of prehistoric date, as they were so different in nature to the medieval features. The cobbled surfaces and ironstone structures produced no convincing direct or stratigraphic evidence to indicate their date; they are likely to be of medieval or later date, and associated with the former moated site or ornamental gardens. There is some similarity in the alignment of the ironstone features to the layout of the gardens as shown on the 1842 Tithe map (Figure 31). This is also the line of the avenue to the north that was also indicated as a tree-lined avenue on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1884, and is now Riverside Road.

In conclusion, the trial trenching has produced evidence of medieval activity that possibly spread across the site area. Other undated features potentially of significance were also exposed which could be both earlier and later in date than the definite medieval activity identified.

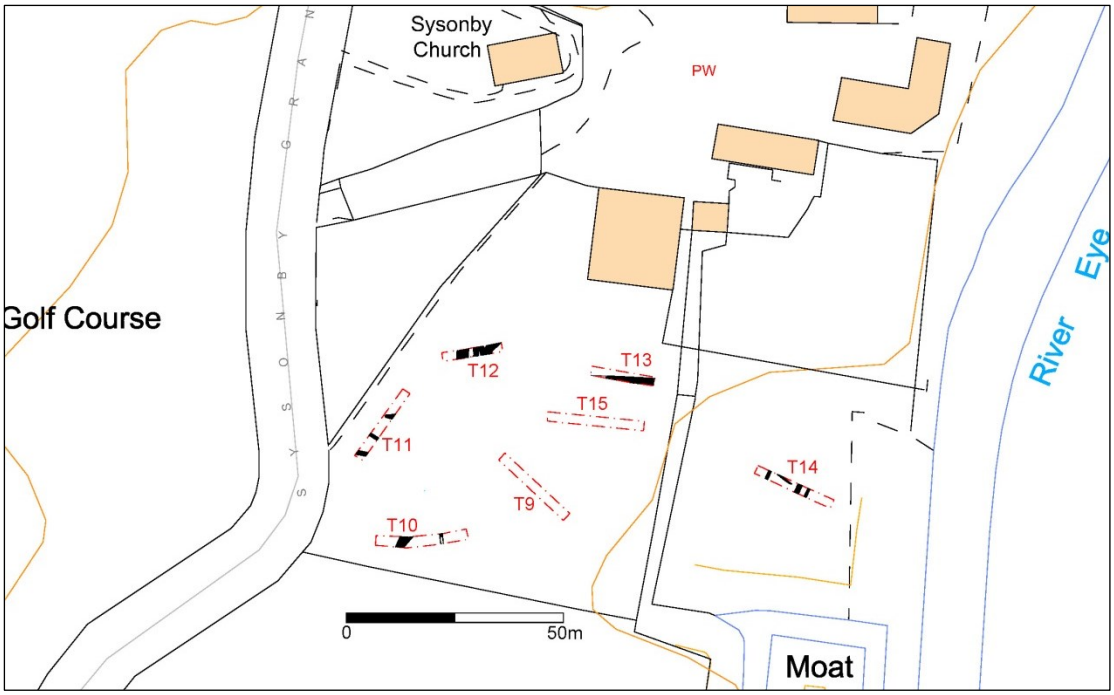

Figure 30: Block plan of trench results.

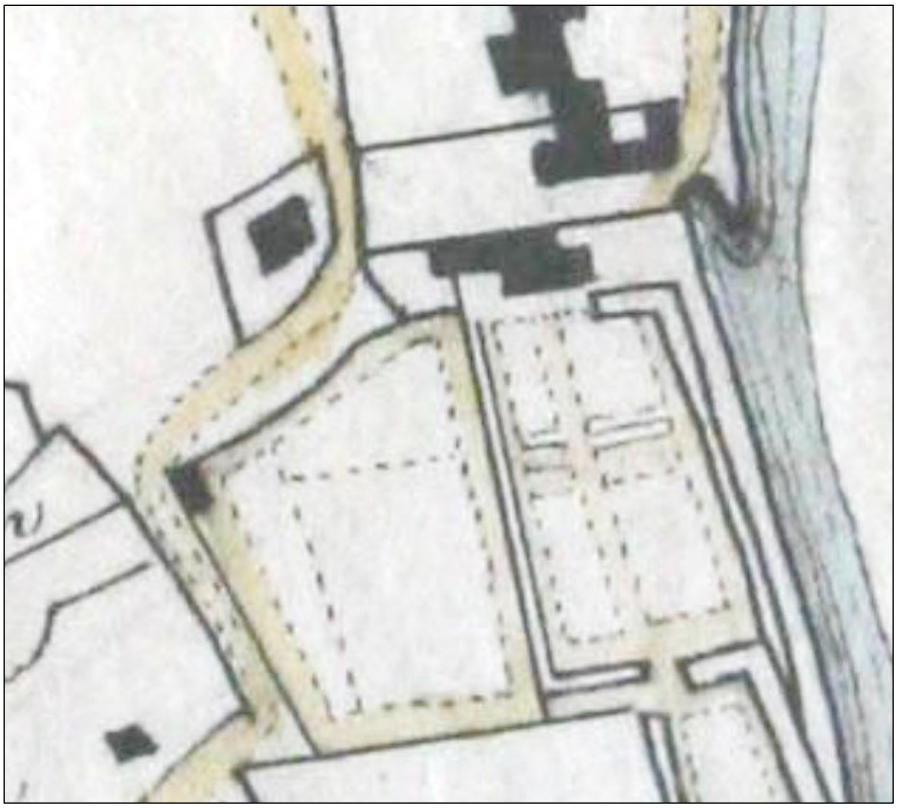

Figure 31: Detail of 1842 Tithe Map.

Archive and Publication

The site archive (XA91.2014), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, as part of a larger archive for this site.

The current archive consists of:

- 7 trench recording sheets
- Photographic record index, context and drawing indices. 4 A3 permatrace drawing sheets.
- Digital photographs on CD and contact prints
- Unbound copy of this report (2015-152)

A version of the project summary (see above) will appear in due course in a suitable journal.

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The fieldwork was carried out by the author, with assistance from Nathan Flavell. The finds were identified by the author, Deborah Sawday, Lynden Cooper, and Rachel Small. The project was managed by Patrick Clay also of ULAS. I am also grateful to David Thompson of D.J. Thompson Design Ltd. Richard Clark of LCC monitored the site on behalf of the planning authority.

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ULAS 2015 *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological work. Job title: Land at Riverside Farm Phase 2, Riverside Road, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leics.*

Oasis Information

Project Name	Land at Riverside Farm, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.
Project Type	Archaeological evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Wayne Jarvis
Previous/Future work	Development
Current Land Use	Farmyard, rough ground
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-planning
Site Co ordinates	NGR SK 738 189
Start/end dates of field work	September-October 2015
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	335 sq. m.

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