



**University of  
Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
on land at Enderby Road  
Whetstone, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SP 5560 9787**

**Nathan Flavell**



ULAS Report No. 2015-136

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Enderby Road, Whestone, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SP 5560 9787**

**Nathan Flavell**

**For: Westleigh Partnerships Ltd**

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# **An archaeological evaluation on land at Enderby Road, Whetstone, Leicestershire (SP 5560 9787)**

*Nathan Flavell*

## **Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Enderby Road, Whetstone, Leicestershire (SP 5560 9787) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 19-21 August 2015. The work was carried out on behalf of Westleigh Partnerships Ltd in advance of the proposed re-development of the site. In all thirteen trenches totalling 520.20 square metres were excavated. This revealed evidence of Iron Age activity in six of the trenches to the south and centre of the application area. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A89.2015.*

## **Introduction**

This document constitutes the report for an archaeological investigation carried out on land at Enderby Road, Whetstone, Leicestershire (SP 5560 9787). The work was carried out on behalf of Westleigh Partnerships Ltd by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 19-21 August 2015.

The site is sub-triangular and covers 1.64ha. The land is covered in semi-improved grassland over most of the site but is quite rough and overgrown on the southern part. The site is bounded by wooden fencing and neighbouring buildings with a ditch and bank to the north at the road edge. The line of a former hedgerow, now grown out into small trees lies close to the eastern side of the site. The land is flat and lies at a height of around 66m aOD.

The work was requested by Westleigh Partnerships Ltd, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. An evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken to provide preliminary indications of character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority. The work followed the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) as laid out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological work* (Clay 2015).

## **Geology and Topography**

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be Wanlip Member sand and gravel overlying Branscombe Member Mudstone.

## **Historical and Archaeological Background**

A desk-based assessment has been prepared for the site (Hunt 2014). The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record indicated that the proposed development lies relatively close to a group of cropmarks of enclosures and a possible ring ditch to the south-west, which are possibly prehistoric or Roman in date. Fieldwalking here has produced artefacts from the Mesolithic through to the Anglo-Saxon period. There are known Iron Age and Roman sites within the vicinity including enclosures and a Roman road.

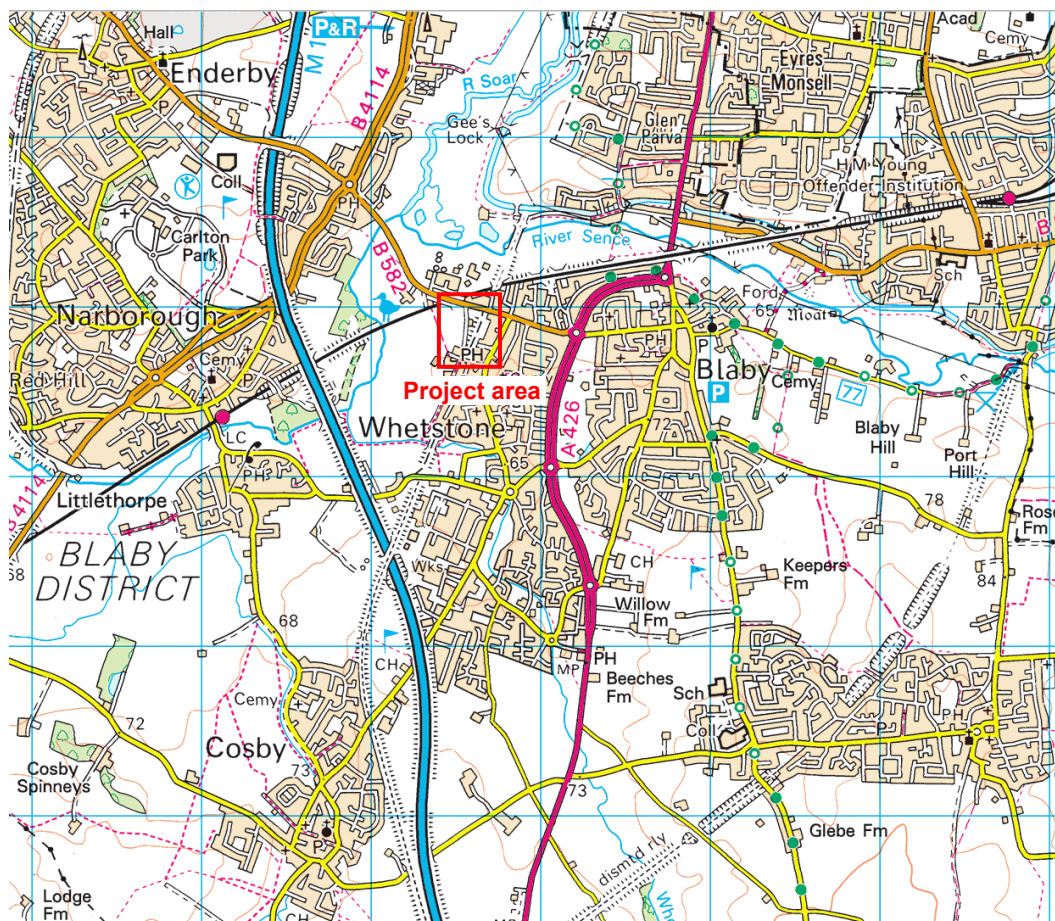


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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## Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

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

## Methodology

Thirteen trenches (Fig. 3) were excavated under continuous archaeological control and supervision using a JCB 3CX with a ditching bucket. The trenches were on average 30m long and 1.6m wide.

The trenches, sections and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Archaeological features were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as per the approved WSI (Clay 2015). Some variation from the proposed trench plan (Fig.2) was necessary in view of the presence of buried services (Fig. 3).

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (Cifa) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological field evaluations*.



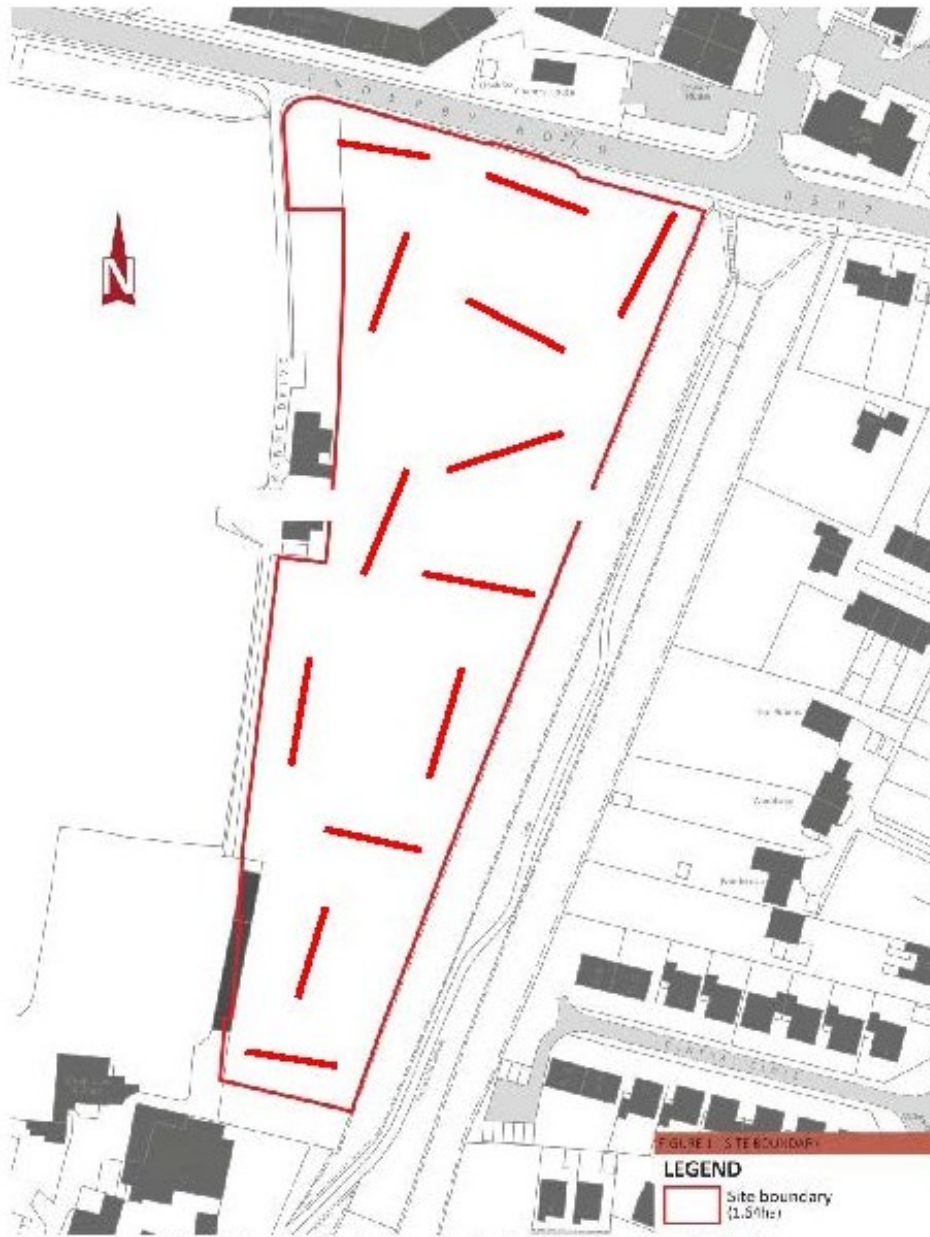


Figure 2 Proposed trench plan (from Clay 2015)

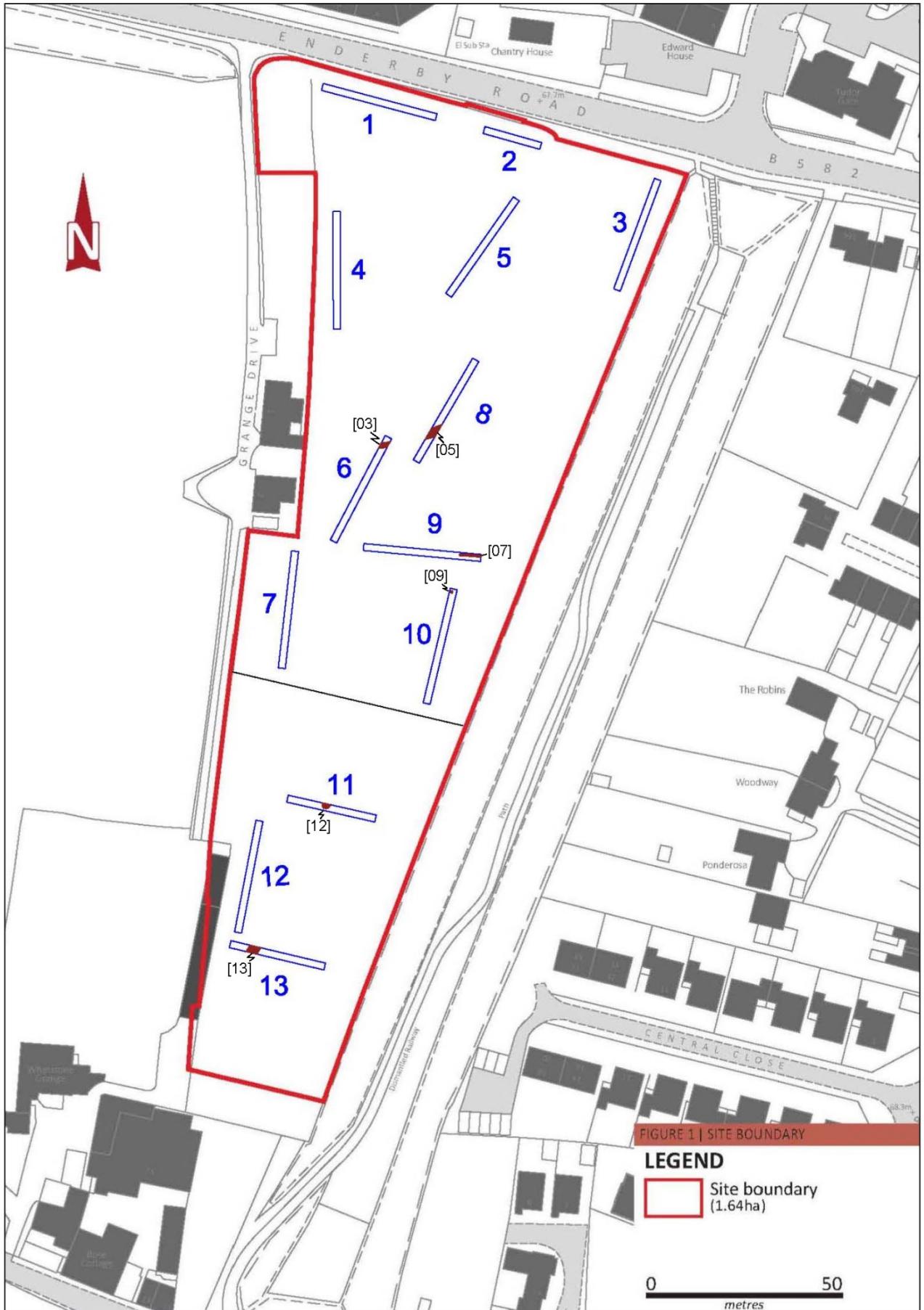


Figure 3: Final trench locations showing features



## Results

Generally the topsoil consisted of grey-brown pebbly sandy-loam. The subsoil was brown-orange silty-sand with frequent pebble inclusions. The natural geology was a beige-orange pebbly sand, with orange gravel patches. There were also some outcrops of pink clay and orange clay and brown-orange sandy-gravel noted and some yellow-orange sandy gravel.

Trenches 1-10 were located in the north field, and trenches 11-13 were located in the south field (Fig.3).

**Trench 1** was located in the north-west corner of the site aligned north-west to south-east. No archaeological features or finds were located.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
1	29		1.5	43.5		0.65		0.7		No
Interval (m) from northwest end	0	5	10	15	20	25	29			
Topsoil depth	0.3	0.29	0.29	0.32	0.3	0.28	0.23			
Subsoil depth	0.21	0.28	0.22	0.28	0.25	0.3	0.27			
Top of natural substratum	0.51	0.57	0.51	0.6	0.55	0.58	0.5			
Base of trench	0.68	0.69	0.69	0.65	0.59	0.7	0.65			

**Trench 2** was located in the north of the site aligned north-west to south-east. The full length was not excavated due to a buried service. No archaeological features or finds were located.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
2	15		1.5	22.5		0.2		0.72		No
Interval (m) from northwest end	0	5	10	15						
Topsoil depth	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2						
Subsoil depth	0.35	0.2	0.2	-						
Top of natural substratum	0.65	0.5	0.4	-						
Base of trench	0.72	0.6	0.5	0.2						

**Trench 3** was located along the north-east edge of the site aligned north-north-east to south-south-west. No archaeological features or finds were located. A buried water pipe was uncovered crossing the trench north-east to south-west.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
3	29		1.5	43.5		0.22		0.66		No
Interval (m) from south-southwest end	0	5	10	15	20	25	29			
Topsoil depth	0.36	0.22	0.26	0.22	0.24	0.3	0.3			
Subsoil depth	0.2	0.27	0.23	-	0.3	0.3	0.3			
Top of natural substratum	0.56	0.49	0.49	-	0.54	0.6	0.6			
Base of trench	0.56	0.54	0.59	0.22	0.66	0.62	0.62			

**Trench 4** was located along the north-west edge of the site aligned north-south. No archaeological features or finds were located.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
4	29		1.5	45.5		0.38		0.69		No
Interval (m) from north end	0	5	10	15	20	25	29			
Topsoil depth	0.18	0.24	0.22	0.26	0.25	0.23	0.29			
Subsoil depth	0.16	0.22	0.24	0.23	0.33	0.33	0.3			
Top of natural substratum	0.34	0.46	0.46	0.49	0.55	0.56	0.59			
Base of trench	0.38	0.57	0.49	0.59	0.61	0.69	0.69			

**Trench 5** was located to the north of the site aligned north-east to south-west. No archaeological features or finds were located.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
5	30		1.5	45		0.46		0.67		No
Interval (m) from northeast end	0	5	10	15	20	25	30			
Topsoil depth	0.23	0.2	0.18	0.29	0.26	0.22	0.24			
Subsoil depth	0.25	0.3	0.16	0.19	0.3	0.28	0.3			
Top of natural substratum	0.48	0.5	0.34	0.48	0.56	0.5	0.54			
Base of trench	0.62	0.62	0.46	0.67	0.67	0.64	0.6			

**Trench 6** (Fig.4) was located near the west edge of the site aligned north-east to south-west. A single ditch [03] (Fig. 10) was uncovered at approximately 0.48m deep at the north-east end of the trench. It was aligned west-east, and was 1.25m wide by 0.4m deep. The primary fill (02) was mixed dark brown silty-sand with pink clay inclusions, 0.04m thick. The main fill (01) was mixed brown-orange silty-sand, 0.36m thick. No finds were recovered.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
6	28		1.5	42		0.59		1.1		Yes
Interval (m) from northeast end	0	5	10	15	20	25	28			
Topsoil depth	0.22	0.29	0.3	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.2			
Subsoil depth	0.43	0.3	0.28	0.4	0.4	0.42	0.3			
Buried soil depth	-	-	-	-	0.02	0.4	0.6			
Top of natural substratum	0.65	0.59	0.58	0.64	0.66	1.06	1.1			
Base of trench	0.69	0.59	0.6	0.82	0.79	1.06	1.1			

**Trench 7** was located near the west edge of the site aligned north-south. No archaeological features or finds were located. A modern service was uncovered near the north end of the trench.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
7	24.5		1.5	36.75		0.89		1.08		No
Interval (m) from south end	0	5	10	15	20	24.5				

<b>Topsoil depth</b>	0.16	0.21	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.18			
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.63	0.49	0.6	0.83	0.66	0.7			
<b>Top of natural substratum</b>	0.79	0.7	0.8	1.03	0.86	0.88			
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.89	0.89	0.85	1.08	1.06	1.08			

**Trench 8** (Fig. 5) was located near the centre of the site aligned north-east to south-west. A single ditch [05] (Fig.11) was uncovered at approximately 0.5m deep near the south-west end of the trench. It was aligned approximately west-east, 1.9m wide, and was probably the continuation of ditch [03] in trench 6. The fill (04) was red brown silty-sand. No finds were recovered.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
8	34.3		1.5	51.45		0.5		0.7		Yes
<b>Interval (m) from southwest end</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34.5</b>		
<b>Topsoil depth</b>	0.26	0.24	0.25	0.2	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.12		
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.2	0.22	0.27	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.28		
<b>Top of natural substratum</b>	0.46	0.46	0.52	0.4	0.44	0.43	0.43	0.48		
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.5	0.56	0.6	0.5	0.58	0.5	0.54	0.7		

**Trench 9** (Fig.6) was located to the east of the site aligned north-west to south-east. A single gully [07] (Figs.12, 17 and 21) was uncovered at approximately 0.83m deep at the south-east end of the trench, 4.6m north-east of its south-eastern terminal. It was aligned north-west to south-east, and was 0.45m wide by 0.17m deep. The fill (06) was red-brown silty-sand with frequent pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
9	29		1.5	45.5		0.8		1.28		Yes
<b>Interval (m) from southeast end</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>			
<b>Topsoil depth</b>	0.23	0.23	0.16	0.2	0.22	0.22	0.2			
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.45	0.3	0.4			
<b>Buried soil depth</b>	-	0.4	0.49	0.4	0.34	0.3	--			
<b>Top of natural substratum</b>	0.83	0.93	1.05	0.8	1.01	0.82	0.6			
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.96	1.1	1.27	1.08	1.28	1.02	0.8			

**Trench 10** (Fig.4) was located to the east edge of the site aligned north-east to south-west. A post-hole [09] (Figs.10, 13 and 21) was uncovered at approximately 0.9m deep at the north-eastern end of the trench. It was circular in plan, and approximately 0.45m in diameter. The fill (08) was a red-brown silty-sand with frequent pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered.

Trench No.	Length (m)		Width (m)	Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)		Archaeology?
10	25		1.5	37.5		0.7		1.09		Yes
<b>Interval (m) from northeast end</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>				

<b>Topsoil depth</b>	0.28	0.2	0.23	0.26	0.19	0.19			
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.32	0.22			
<b>Buried soil depth</b>	0.32	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.29			
<b>Top of natural substratum</b>	0.9	0.9	0.83	0.66	0.73	0.7			
<b>Base of trench</b>	1.09	1.09	0.88	0.7	0.82	0.89			

**Trench 11** (Fig.7) was located towards the south of the site aligned north-west to south-east. A pit [12] (Figs.13, 19 and 21) was uncovered at approximately 1m deep near the centre of the trench. The area visible was semi-circular in plan, 2.2m wide. The primary fill (11) was mixed brown-grey silty-sand with some charcoal and frequent burnt pebble inclusions, 0.25m thick. Iron Age pottery was present in (11). The secondary fill (10) was grey mottled brown silty-sand with frequent pebble inclusions (some burnt), 0.3m thick. Two struck flint flakes were recovered from (10).

<b>Trench No.</b>	<b>Length (m)</b>		<b>Width (m)</b>		<b>Area (sq. m)</b>		<b>Min. depth (m)</b>	<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		<b>Archaeology?</b>
11	23		1.5		34.5		0.98	1.09		Yes
<b>Interval (m) from northwest end</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>				
<b>Topsoil depth</b>	0.42	0.54	0.48	0.42	0.5	0.4				
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	-	-	-	0.18	0.15	-				
<b>Buried soil depth</b>	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.33	0.24	0.42				
<b>Top of natural substratum</b>	0.72	0.84	1.08	0.93	0.94	0.82				
<b>Base of trench</b>	1.09	1.0	1.08	0.98	1.04	1.07				

**Trench 12** was located near the south of the site aligned north-east to south-west. No archaeological features or finds were located. A layer of rubble was noted across the area of trenches 12 and 13.

<b>Trench No.</b>	<b>Length (m)</b>		<b>Width (m)</b>		<b>Area (sq. m)</b>		<b>Min. depth (m)</b>	<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		<b>Archaeology?</b>
12	29		1.5		45.5		0.58	0.88		No
<b>Interval (m) from northeast end</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>			
<b>Topsoil depth</b>	0.6	0.54	0.41	0.58	0.4	0.3	0.4			
<b>Subsoil depth</b>	0.2	0.4	0.25	0.21	0.4	0.32	0.38			
<b>Top of natural substratum</b>	0.8	0.58	0.66	0.79	0.8	0.62	0.78			
<b>Base of trench</b>	0.8	0.58	0.66	0.79	0.8	0.8	0.88			

**Trench 13** (Fig. 8) was located at the south end of the site aligned east-west. A ditch [13] (Figs.15, 20 and 21) was uncovered at approximately 0.86m deep near the west end of the trench. It was aligned north-east to south-west and was 1.4m wide by 0.65m deep. The primary fill (14) was grey and orange mottled silty-sand with occasional gravel and charcoal flecking, 0.09m thick. The secondary fill (15) was mid grey mottled silty-sand with some charcoal flecking, 0.15m thick. The upper fill (16) was pale mottled grey silty-sand with infrequent charcoal and gravel inclusions, 0.26m thick. Iron Age pottery was present in (16)

<b>Trench No.</b>	<b>Length (m)</b>		<b>Width (m)</b>		<b>Area (sq. m)</b>		<b>Min. depth (m)</b>	<b>Max. depth (m)</b>		<b>Archaeology?</b>
13	18		1.5		27		0.8	0.92		Yes

Interval (m) from west end	0	3	6	9	12	15	18		
Topsoil depth	0.4	0.48	0.48	0.4	0.43	0.47	0.5		
Subsoil depth	0.34	0.32	0.38	0.42	0.2	0.38	0.42		
Top of natural substratum	0.74	0.8	0.86	0.82	0.73	0.85	0.92		
Base of trench	0.74	0.8	0.9	0.88	0.87	0.85	0.92		



Figure 4: Trench 6 looking south-west



Figure 5: Trench 8 looking north-east





Figure 6: Trench 9 looking north-west



Figure 7: Trench 10 looking south-west





Figure 8: Trench 11 looking south-east



Figure 9: Trench 13 looking west

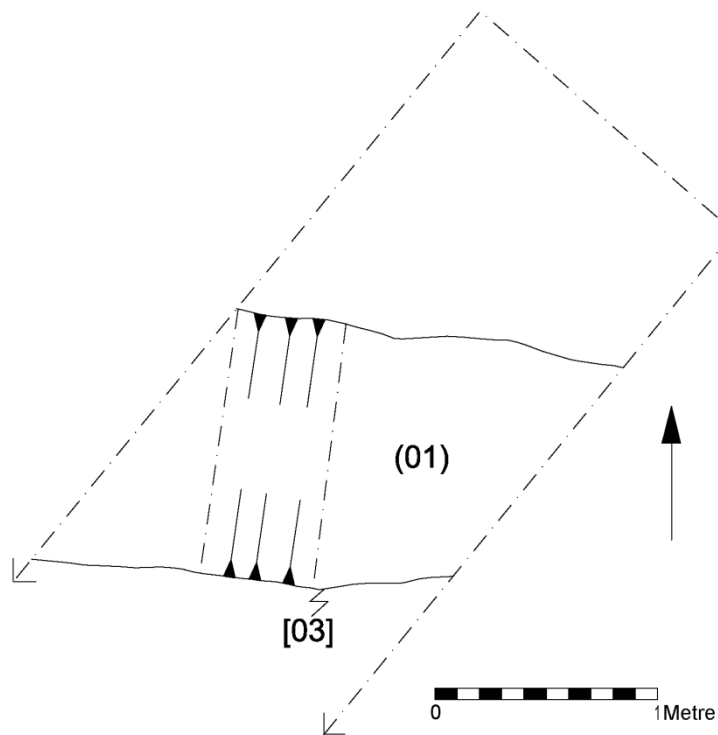


Figure 10: Trench 6, ditch [03] plan

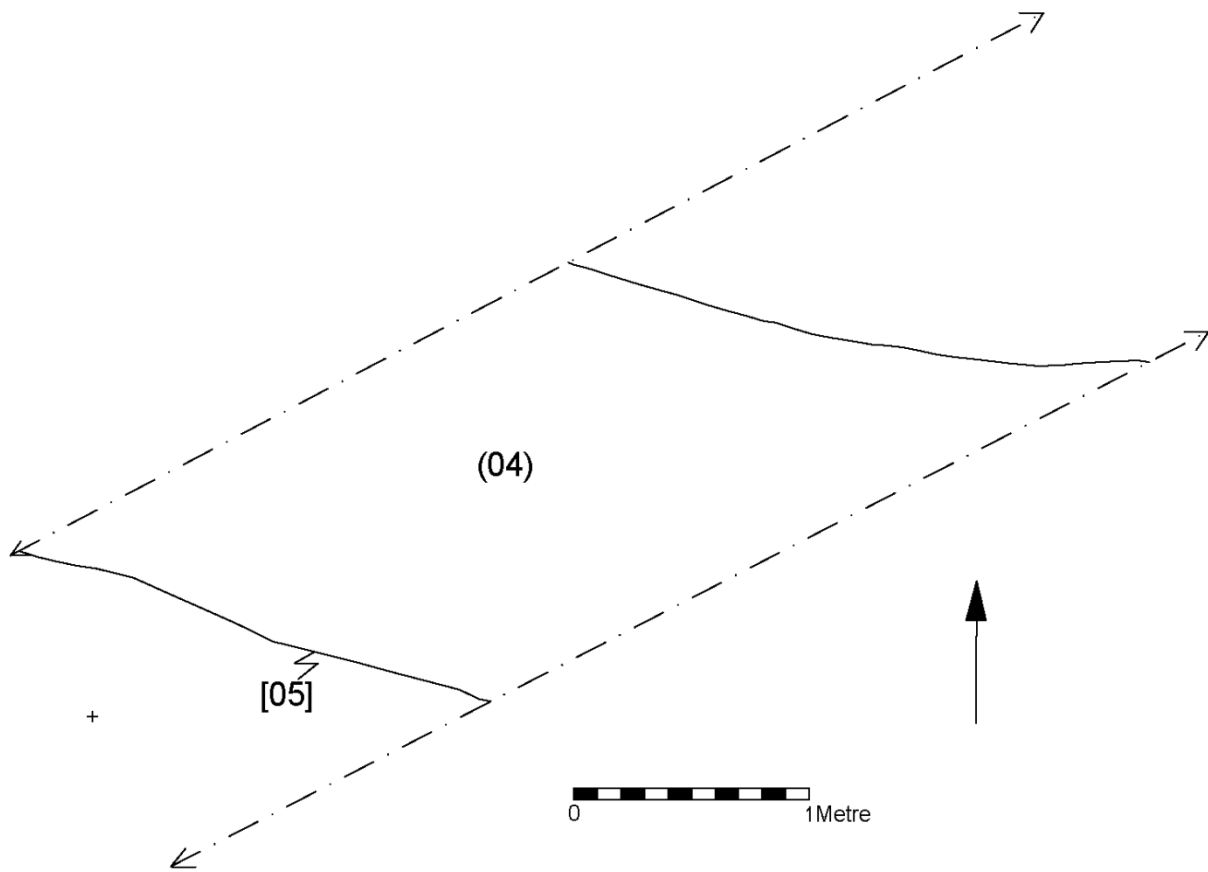


Figure 11: Trench 8, ditch [05] plan

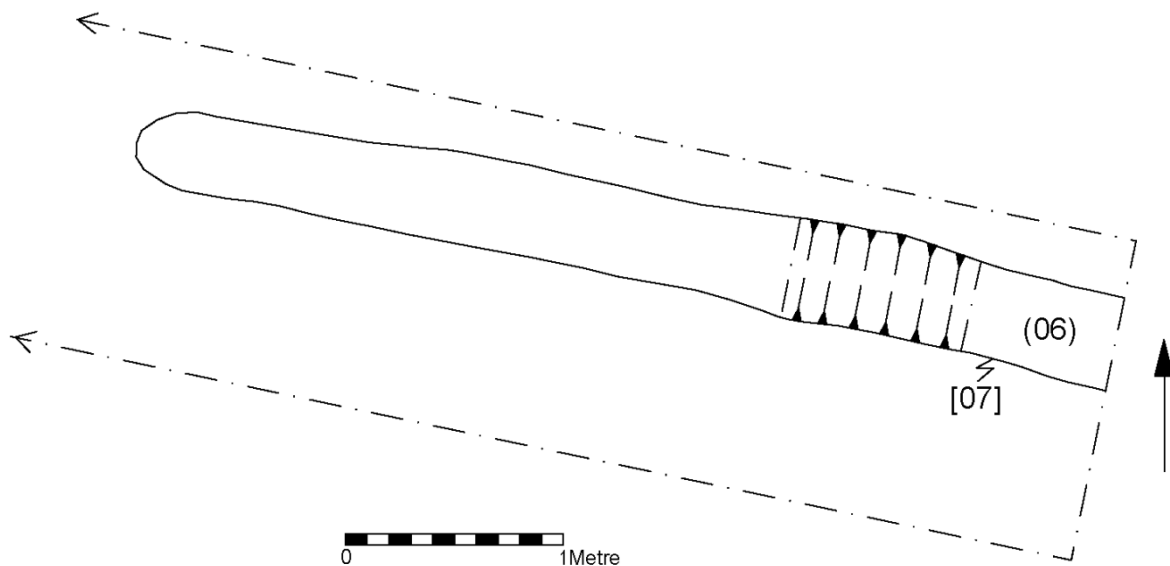


Figure 12: Trench 9, gully [07] plan

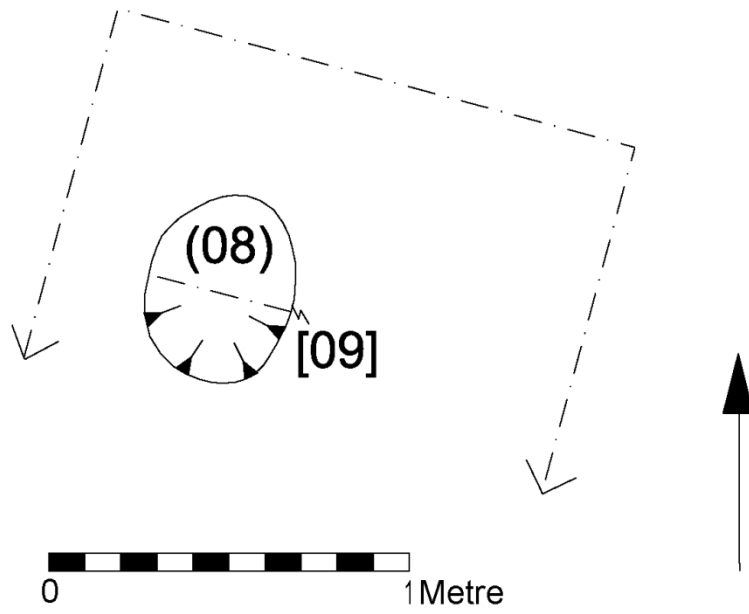


Figure 13: Trench 10, post-hole [09] plan

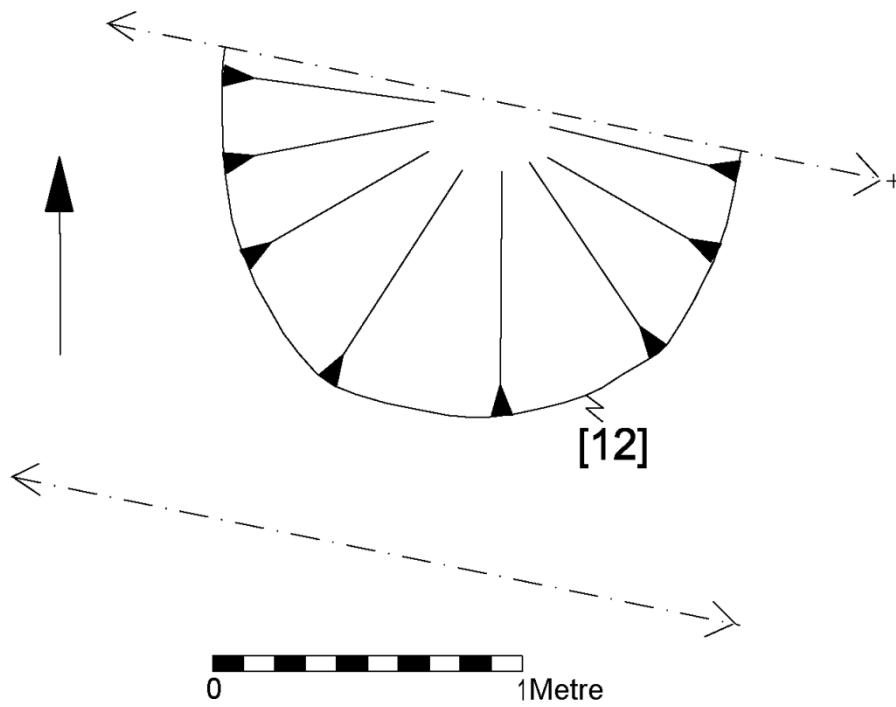


Figure 14: Trench 11, pit [12] plan



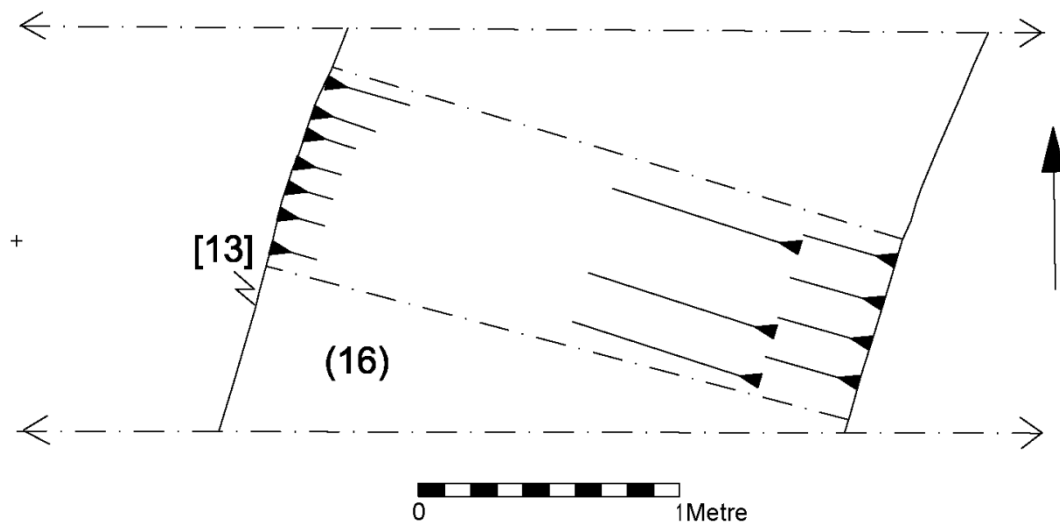


Figure 15: Trench 13, ditch [13] plan



Figure 16: Trench 6 Ditch [03] looking east





Figure 17: Trench 9 Gully [07] looking north-west



Figure 18: Trench 10 Post-hole [09] looking north-east





Figure 19: Trench 11 Pit [12] looking north-east



Figure 20: Trench 13 Ditch [13] looking south-west

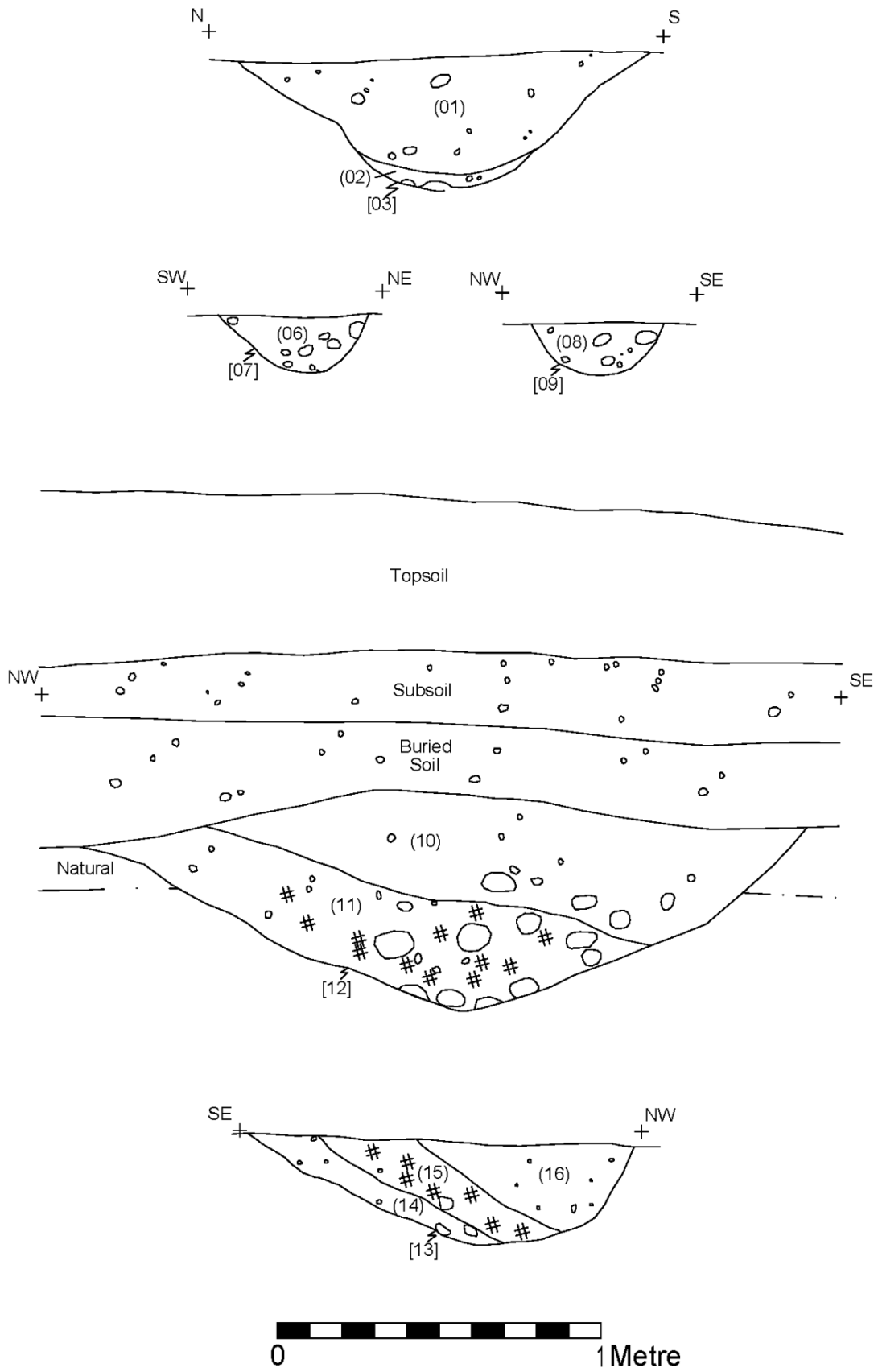


Figure 21: Sections of Trench 6 [03], Trench 9 [07], Trench 10 [09], Trench 11 [12] and Trench 13 [13]

## The Iron Age Pottery *Nicholas J. Cooper*

### *Introduction*

A total of 24 sherds of Iron Age pottery weighing 242g (average sherd weight 10g) was recovered from two contexts (11) and (16). The material was in good condition, with a relatively high average sherd weight and a number of joining sherds.

### *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*

The complete quantified record is presented below (Table 1).

<b>XA89.2015 Enderby Rd, Whetstone Iron Age Pot</b>								
<b>Context</b>	<b>Cut</b>	<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Rim</b>	<b>Decoration</b>	<b>Diameter</b>	<b>Sherds</b>	<b>Weight</b>
11		R1	jar	Upright flat	rim slashes	400	2	75
11		R1	jar	upright roll		190	6	56
11		S2	misc				4	20
16	13	Q1	jar	upright round		140	1	5
16	13	Q1	misc				1	26
16	13	R1	misc		smooth ext		1	10
16	13	S2	misc		scored		9	50
<b>Total</b>							<b>24</b>	<b>242</b>

The forms and decoration within the assemblage comprise slack shouldered and barrel-shaped jars with upright rims in a range of sizes, and with scored decoration, and confirm that it belongs to the Mid-late Iron Age East Midlands scored ware tradition (Elsdon 1992a, 84, fig.1). One large jar from (11) had oblique slashes on its upright flat rim, whilst smaller jars from both context had rolled over and rounded upright rims.

The pottery was manufactured in a variety of mineral and shell-tempered fabrics reflecting the site's location on the western central part of the East Midlands scored ware distribution area (Elsdon 1992a, 87, fig.2). Sherds from both contexts were tempered with granitic inclusions (Fabric R1) typical of the Charnwood or nearby Croft outcrops, whilst other sherds were in a sandy, shell-tempered fabric (S2), more typical of the southern part of the county. The quartz sand-tempered fabric is more often found closer to Leicester, for example at Enderby (Elsdon 1992b).

### *The Lithics Nicholas J. Cooper*

Two struck flint flakes were recovered from Trench 11 [12] (10).

### **Discussion**

The evaluation at Enderby Road, Whetstone revealed some evidence for Iron Age activity in the form of ditches, pits and post-holes. East Midlands scored ware pottery was located in two contexts. As is the case with most sites in the plough-zone landscape of the East Midlands there has been erosion of the upper deposits by ploughing probably from the medieval period onwards so no surfaces have survived. No animal bone was present and the fills were generally leached and sterile and following consultation with the ULAS Environmental Officer the deposits were not considered to be of sufficient potential for samples to be taken at this stage.



On the evidence from the site this appears to be a part of small Iron Age farmstead typical of many such settlements known from the East Midlands (Willis 2006). Analysis of well surveyed landscapes in the area suggests that Iron Age sites such as this may be present every 1.82 square km (Clay 2002, 82). A multiple ditch system representing prehistoric enclosures is located on land to the south of Narborough Bogs, 750m south-west of the application area (HER Ref: **MLE366**). Further cropmarks indicate other enclosures (**MLE368**). Iron Age pottery has also been found at the site (**MLE16998**). Several Iron Age sites are also known at Enderby c. 2km to the north.

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## Archive

The site archive consists of: 1 A4 context index sheet, 13 A4 trial trench sheets, 13 A5 context sheets, 1 A4 photo index sheet, 1 A4 drawing index, 1 A4 drawing record sheet, 1 A3 and 1 A2 sheets of permatrace and 38 digital photographs.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A89.2015.

## Publication

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



University of York. A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

OASIS no.	
Project Name	Land at Enderby Road, Whetstone, Leicestershire
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Roger Kipling
Previous/Future work	Desk-based assessment
Current Land Use	Pasture
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-planning application
Site Co ordinates	SP 5560 9787
Start/end dates of field work	19/08/2015-21/08/2015
Archive recipient	Leicestershire
Study Area	c. 1.64 ha

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