

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
New Guadeloupe, Leicester Road,
Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.**

NGR: SK 741 310

Tim Higgins



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New Guadeloupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray
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For: CgMs Consulting

Checked by:

Signed: ...



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An Archaeological Evaluation at New Guadalupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.

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Summary

An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken at New Guadalupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray Leicestershire (SK 741 180) by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) between the 8 March and the 4 April 2016 for CgMs Consulting. This was undertaken in order to target potential features identified within the geophysical survey as well as to evaluate potentially archaeologically blank areas to assess the accuracy of the geophysical survey. This archaeological evaluation was part of a pre-planning enquiry requested by Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team, as archaeological advisors to the planning authority

A geophysical survey undertaken by TIGERGEO had concluded that the site had significant archaeological potential. The geophysical survey results suggested an extensive settlement of probable Iron Age - Roman date and had also identified a possible rectangular anomaly to the south in addition to ridge and furrow.

The earliest evidence for human activity found on the site was a Mesolithic leaf-shaped flint microlith recovered from a group of pit features located within the south-west side corner of the development.

One discrete area of Early Bronze Age activity, located in the north-eastern part of the site, comprised a ditch and a pit. The pit contained Beaker pottery dating from c. 2200-1900 and the features were sealed by a potential buried soil and colluvial deposit.

Trenches were excavated in the northern part of the development area targeting a 7.5 hectare trapezoidal shaped enclosure identified in the geophysical survey. The features included roundhouses eaves drip gullies, large rectangular and penannular shaped enclosures of Iron Age date. All the archaeological features had closely matched strong anomalies shown in the geophysical survey. Other trenches confirmed the presence of rectangular field enclosures and other areas that had more sporadic distribution of enclosure ditches and roundhouse gullies.

At the southern end of the development an extensive area of Roman occupation of 3rd and 4th century date was revealed. The trenches targeted rectangular geophysical anomalies and revealed numerous features, including ditches post-holes and possible beam-slots.

A number of the trenches recorded north-north-east to south-south-west orientated medieval furrows that corresponded well with the geophysical survey.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire Museums Service, under accession number X.A31.2016.

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at New Guadeloupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 741 180) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). This was undertaken in order to target potential features identified by geophysical survey as well as to evaluate potentially archaeologically blank areas to assess the accuracy of the geophysical survey.

This archaeological evaluation was part of a pre-planning enquiry for residential development. 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.

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching, which took place between the 8 March and 4 April 2016. It follows Desk-based Assessment undertaken by CgMs Consulting (Clark 2014) and a geophysical survey by TIGERGEO (Roseveare and Armstrong 2016) that concluded that the site had significant archaeological potential.

A strategy for the work was devised by CgMs Limited, which was set out in the Design Specification for archaeological evaluation Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 741 180) (Clay 2016, hereinafter 'Specification'; Appendix 5). The trial trenching was undertaken to target potential features identified within the geophysical survey as well as to evaluate potentially archaeologically blank areas to assess the accuracy of the geophysical survey.

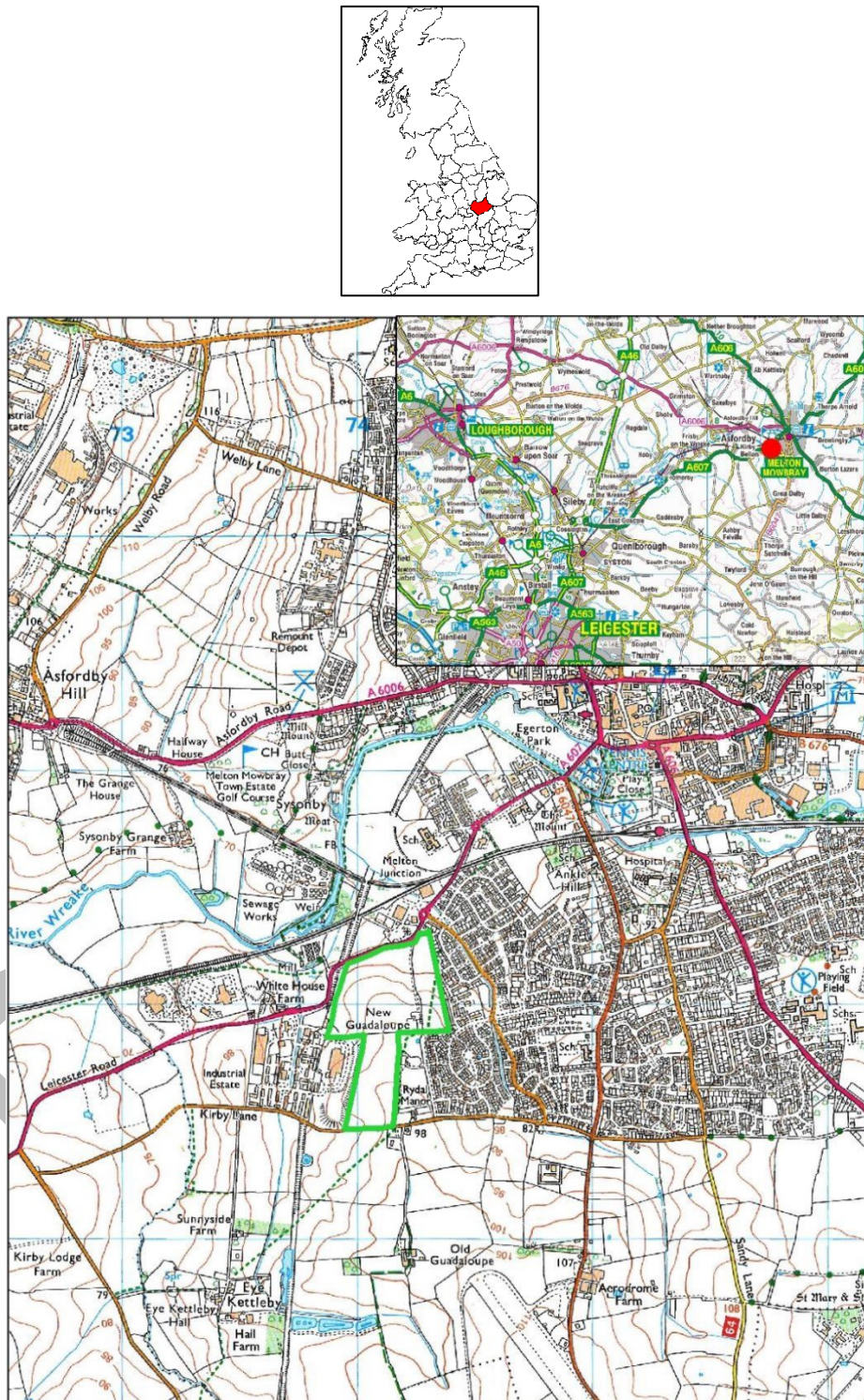


Figure 1: Site location plan within the UK and county of Leicestershire

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Site Description, Topography and Geology

Melton Mowbray lies in the eastern half of Leicestershire approximately 20km to the north-east of Leicester. The site is located on the western edge of Melton Mowbray. It comprises approximately 22.8 hectares of land centred at National Grid Reference SK 741 180 (Figure 1). The site is bounded to the north by the A607 Leicester Road and to the south by Kirby Lane. To the west it is bounded (from north to south) by a railway embankment, an agricultural machinery dealership and a large bund, screening an industrial unit. To the east, it is bounded by residential development at the northern end, and by a field containing a play area further south.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 records the solid geology of the site as Mudstone belonging to the Blue Lias Formation (British Geological Survey, 2013). A range of superficial deposits are recorded for the site, comprising (from north to south) Syston member sand and gravels; head deposits; Bytham sand and gravel formation; Thrussington member Diamicton and Oadby member Diamicton. A small pocket of colluvium is also recorded on the western side of the site. (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>).

Historical and Archaeological Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared (Clark 2014). Two Scheduled Monuments are located in the vicinity (Figure 2). Eye Kettleby deserted medieval village (List entry number 018834) is located immediately to the west of the site, while The Mount motte (List entry number 1010666) is located 700m to the north-east. The data provided by the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) lists two non-designated heritage assets within the site comprising the extrapolated line of a putative Roman road (MLE8839) and an undated cropmark complex (MLE16034). There are several heritage assets within a 1km radius of the site recorded on the HER including, of note, a Bronze Age cremation cemetery (MLE8895), Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age settlement, Roman road and Anglo Saxon settlement at Eye Kettleby (MLE3981; Finn 1998; 2011).

The geophysical survey results suggest an extensive settlement of probable Iron Age - Roman date (Roseveare and Armstrong 2016). This appears to be an aggregated settlement of a type increasingly being identified in the East Midlands (Willis 2006, 131). The geophysical survey also identified a rectangular anomaly to the south in addition to ridge and furrow (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Geophysical Survey TIGERGEO (from Roseveare and Armstrong 2016)

Aims and Objectives

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).

The Iron Age - Roman Periods (Willis 2006; Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)

The geophysical survey indicates the likely presence of Iron Age - Romano-British settlement. Therefore, the evaluation may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

Medieval (Lewis 2006; Knight et al 2012)

The area lies close to the scheduled medieval Eye Kettleby deserted medieval village earthwork remains and may contribute to the study of rural medieval settlement and East Midlands Research Strategy 6.7.7.2 (Knight et al. 2012: 94; Lewis 2006).

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the 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 will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

Methodology

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

In view of the positive geophysical survey results a trial trench evaluation had been agreed between CgMs Consulting and the LCC Principal Planning Archaeologist comprising for 19 x 50m, three 70m and one 100m trench. A provisional trench plan (Figure 2) shows the proposed location of the trenches. During the excavations after consultation with CgMs and the Principal Planning Archaeologist an additional two trenches were included, which targeted positive

geophysical anomalies. A third trench was moved from north field to the south field (Figure 3).

The trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.8m 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 (Clay 2016) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2014).

DRAFT

Results

The results of all excavated trenches are presented below in Table 1, with archaeologically positive trenches highlighted in grey. For easier cross-referencing the results of the trenches will be presented below according to each specific area of the site that was evaluated.

Table 1: Trench Summaries (positive trenches shaded)

Trench	Length (m)	Height of Trench base (m OD)	Natural Substratum	Notes	Min. depth to archaeology/natural (m)
1	50	95.38	Orange yellow clay	Negative empty trench	0.33
2	50	94.46	Orange Yellow clay	Negative trench	0.31
3	49	93.40	Yellow grey clay	Negative empty trench	0.29
4	49.5	93.48	Orange yellow clay	A ditch feature found at the east end of the trench	0.35m
5	47.5	93.40	Orange yellow clay	A narrow gully running NW-SE. Land drain	0.25
6	47.5	91.44	Orange yellow clay	Prehistoric features found towards the north end of the trench	0.30
7	50.2	94.46	Yellow grey clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Several post-holes and gully found towards the east end of the trench.	0.25
8	50.2	93.50m	Yellow grey clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Roman Ditches, gullies, beam-slots spreads and post-holes	0.25m
9	49.2	88.45	Yellow grey clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Ridge and furrow. Linear feature at the east end of the trench	0.30
10	46.3	89.48	Yellow grey clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Possible linear feature found at the northern end Possible land drain	0.32
11	49.5	89.50	Light yellow blue grey silty-clay	Possible linear feature found at the northern end. Possible land drain	0.35
12	c.48	88.48	Orange yellow clay mixed with limestone pebbles	Negative Land drain	0.27
13	c.38.5	89.68	Yellow grey clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Negative Land drain. Ridge and Furrow	0.28
14	c.49	85.45	Orange sandy clay mixed with mottled yellow clay	Iron Age large ditch feature located towards the centre of the trench	0.27

Trench	Length (m)	Height of Trench base (m OD)	Natural Substratum	Notes	Min. depth to archaeology/natural (m)
15	70.5	86.50	Light yellow silty-clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Iron Age enclosure ditches. Possible eaves drip gullies and post-holes	0.36
16	50.5	78.33	Yellow grey clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles. Reddish brown sandy silt	Iron Age large ditch feature and enclosure ditches	0.30
17	49.55	79.55	Light yellow and orange brown clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Curvilinear gully possible eaves drip feature Iron Age. Ridge and furrow	0.20
18	71.4	85.60	Light yellow and orange brown clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Iron Age enclosure ditch found towards the northern end of the trench	0.26
19	100.5	84.60	Light yellow clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	An Iron Age enclosure ditch and post-hole found at the west end of the trench. A possible track way found at the east end of the trench.	0.26
20	c.50	82.53	Light yellow clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Negative trench	0.38
21	c.50	79.60	Light yellow clay mixed with limestone angular pebbles	Negative trench	0.32
22	c.54.5	77.32	Light reddish brown silt, fine sand and gravel	Negative trench	0.45
23	c.49.5	74.30	Very light orange brown fine silt and sand	Bronze Age features found colluvial deposit	0.30
24	c.50	82.50	Light yellow and orange brown clay	Iron Age enclosure ditches post-holes	0.30
25	c.21	82.50	Mid yellow brown clay spread with limestone angular pebbles	Wide shallow feature or track way?	0.37

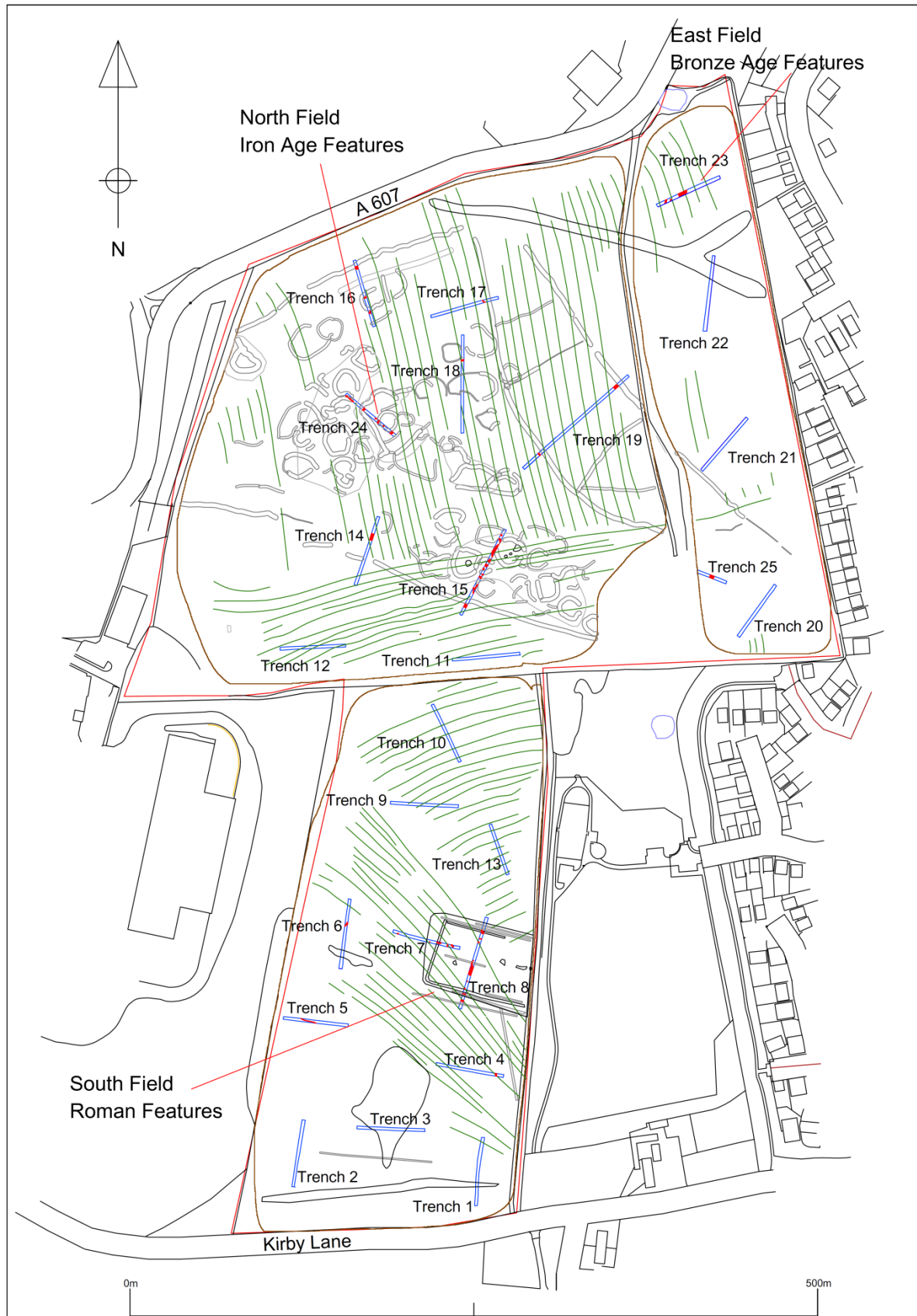


Figure 3 Trench Plan with Geophysical Features

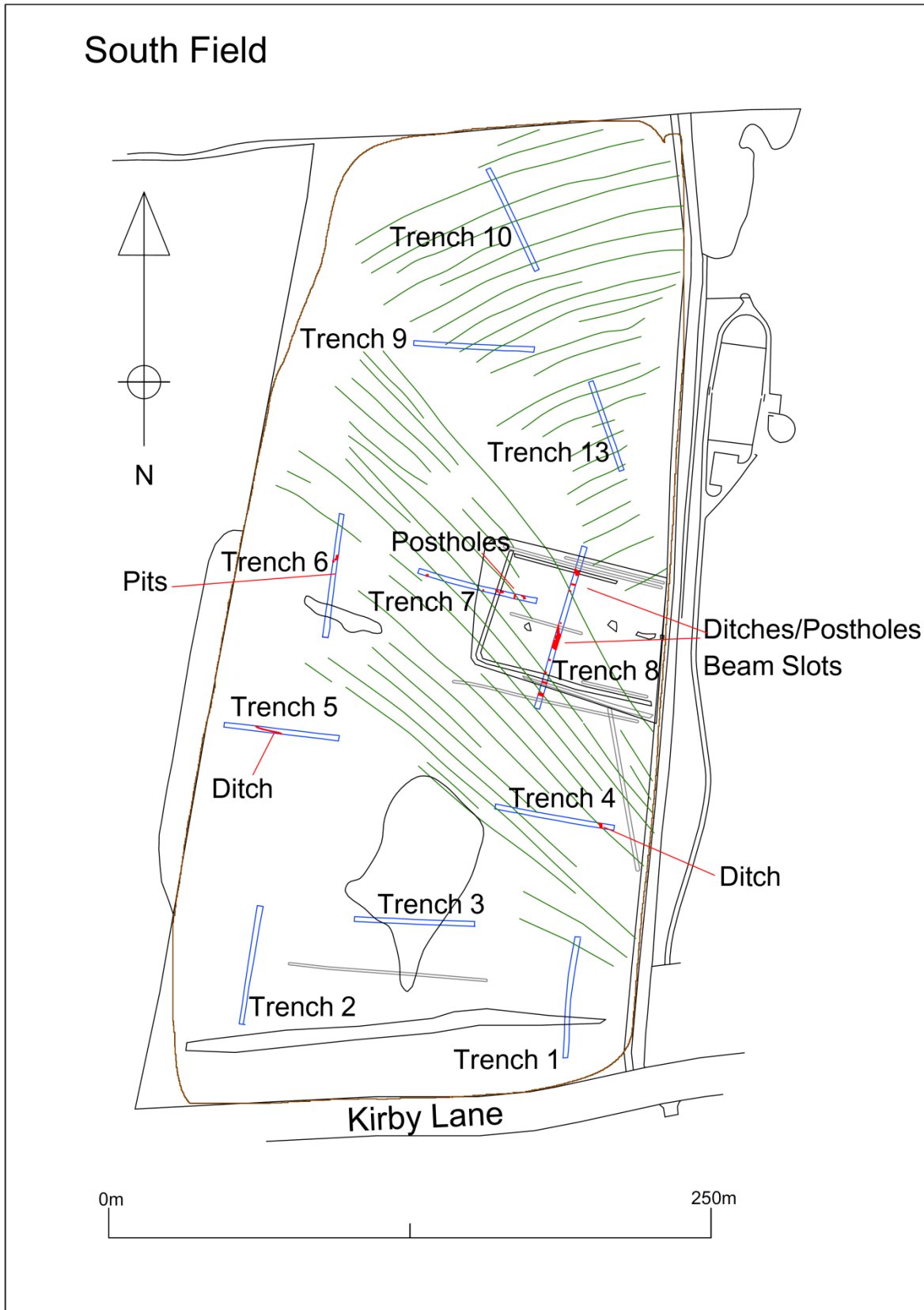


Figure 4 South Field

Trenches located in the South Field Trenches 1 to 10 and 13

A total of 11 trenches was excavated in the southern part of the development area in locations targeting a possible rectangular anomaly identified in the geophysical survey. They also targeted blank areas within the survey that contained only ridge and furrow (Figure 3 and 4).

Trenches 1, 2 and 3

Trenches 1, 2 and 3 were excavated in the southern end of the field and were excavated on north-south and west-east alignments. Three land drains crossed Trench 3 on a north-south alignment. The trenches targeted a geophysical blank area in the southern part of the field. No archaeological features were revealed.

Trench 4

Trench 4 targeted an area directly to the south of rectangular geophysical anomaly (Figure 4). At the east end of the trench ditch [56] crossed on a north-south orientation. It had steep straight sides and flat base and measured 1.05m wide and 0.45m deep. The feature contained four fills that comprised orange brown clay or grey brown silty-clay containing some pebbles. A small post-hole was found on the east side of the ditch [51] (Figure 5). No finds were recovered from these features.

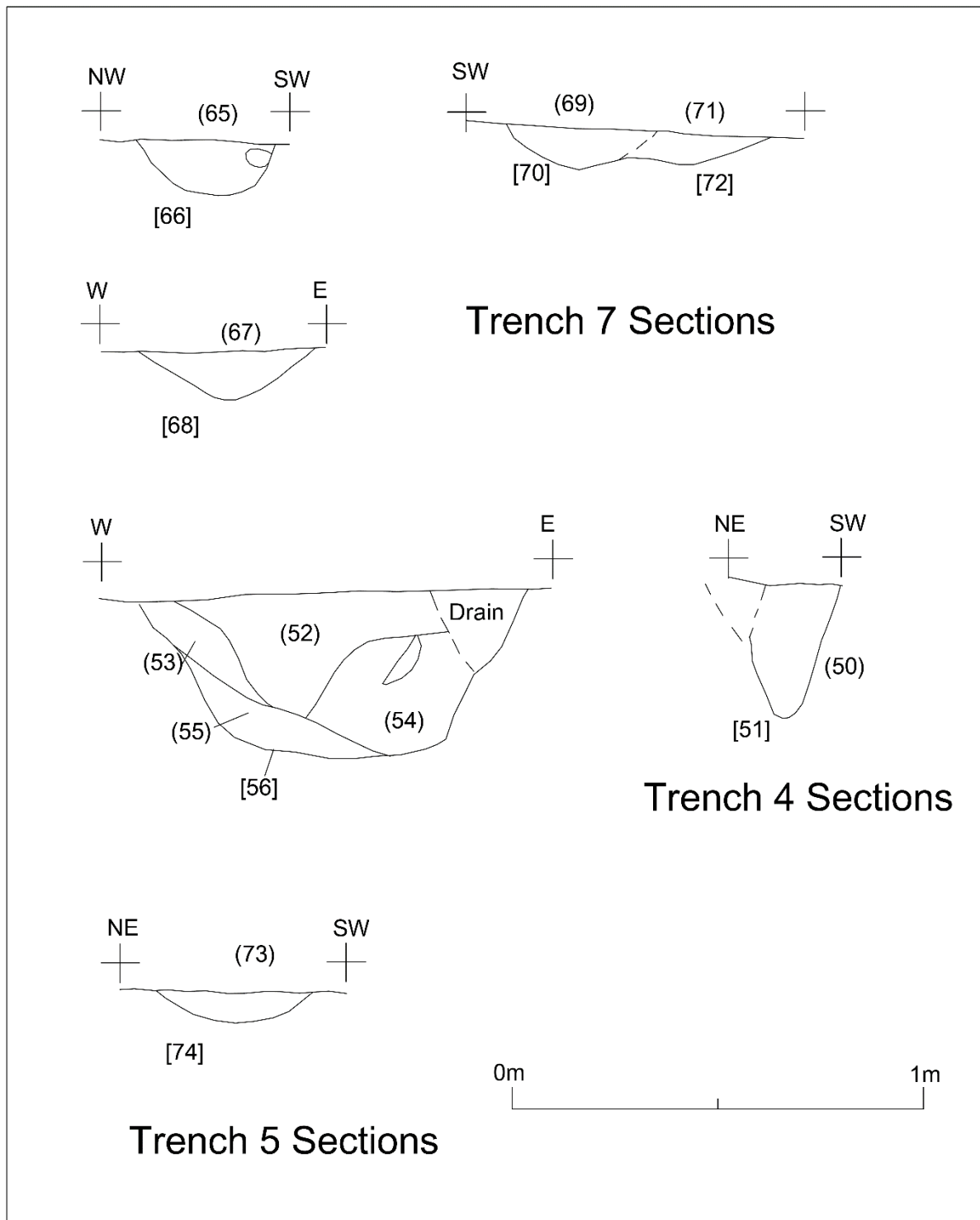


Figure 5 Trenches 4, 5 and 7 Sections

Trench 5

Trench 5 targeted another blank area in the south-west corner of this field (Figure 4). A single narrow gully or ditch [74] was located towards the west end of the trench. This feature had moderate sloping straight sides and ‘U’ shaped base (Figure 5). The feature measured 0.40m wide and 0.07m deep and contained orange brown and grey silty-clay fill (73) mixed within infrequent stones and flint. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Trench 6

This trench was placed on the west side of the southern field and targeted a large geophysical anomaly (Figure 4). The anomaly appeared to be a large natural feature found towards the southern end of the trench. Two shallow pits [61] and [63] were found at the northern end of the trench (Plate 1). These irregular sub-oval pits had moderate sloping sides and irregular base and they measured between 0.95m-1.20m long, 0.55m-0.90m wide and 0.25m-0.35m deep. They both contained greyish brown silty-clay mixed with charcoal flecks and frequent small stones, which may have been a possible packing material for a post. Finds from these features included a microlith (sf15) from the Middle Mesolithic period and animal bone (See appendices 2 and 4).



Plate 1 Trench 6 Pits [61] and [63]

Trench 7

Trench 7 targeted the west side of the rectangular geophysical feature (Figure 4). A group of ten post-holes and a single gully feature were found towards the east side of the trench although no coherent structure was discernible. These circular and oval post-holes measured between 0.36m and 0.50m in diameter and up to 0.15m deep (Figure 5). They contained a brown grey silty-clay mixed with small stones that may have been packing. No finds were recovered from these features.

Trench 8

This trench was placed directly across the centre of the rectangular geophysical anomaly and excavated on a north-south alignment (Figure 4 and 6). The trench exposed numerous ditches, gullies, post-holes, spreads and a possible beam-slot foundation all crossing the trench on west

to east orientation. At the south end of the trench a potential boundary ditch [41] was found. The ditch had straight moderate sloping sides and 'U' shaped base (Plate 3). It measured 0.95m wide and 0.28m deep and contained two fills (39) and (40) that consisted of grey brown and yellow sandy-clays mixed with occasional small stones. To the south [41] was recut by [43]. Finds associated with these fills comprised 2nd to 3rd century Roman pottery and tile (See below).

A narrow gully [02] was also located towards this end of the trench with straight moderate sloping sides and a 'U' shaped base (Figure 7). The feature measured 0.70m wide and 0.30m deep and contained a brown grey silty-clay mixed with few pebbles. At the centre of the trench two shallow features or possible trample spreads [10] (09) and [14] (13) were present. The features were up to 1.30m wide, 0.18m deep with shallow sloping sides and flat bases. They contained brown grey silty-clay mixed with some charcoal flecks, pebbles and limestone angular pebbles. These features contained late 3rd to early 4th Roman pottery and animal bone.

A possible beam-slot feature [12] was present at the centre of the trench and was an east-west orientated linear feature with straight vertical sides and flat base (Figure 7). The feature measured 0.50m wide and 0.18m deep. It contained a mottled grey brown silty-clay mixed with numerous large pebbles and some flint angular pebbles, which may be the remnants of foundation material (Plate 2). The feature had been backfilled with refuse material that included charcoal flecks, 2nd century Roman pottery and animal bone. (See Appendix 1 below). Another potential beam-slot feature [06] had been excavated, and this linear had straight moderate sloping sides and flat base, and measured 0.90m wide and 0.18m deep. The feature contained grey brown mottled silty-clay fill (05) mixed with semi frequent pebbles limestone angular pebbles, charcoal flecks, 2nd century Roman pottery and animal bone. A small assemblage of building materials and iron nails were also recovered from contexts (9), (11), (13) and (39). Additional post-holes were also located within the trench, which along with the beam-slots and building material would suggest there is potential for structural evidence within this area. The rectangular geophysical anomalies within this area would perhaps suggest an extensive spread of structures.



Plate 2 Trench 8 Beam-slot stone footings [12]



Plate 3 Trench 8 Ditch cut [41] and re-cut [43]

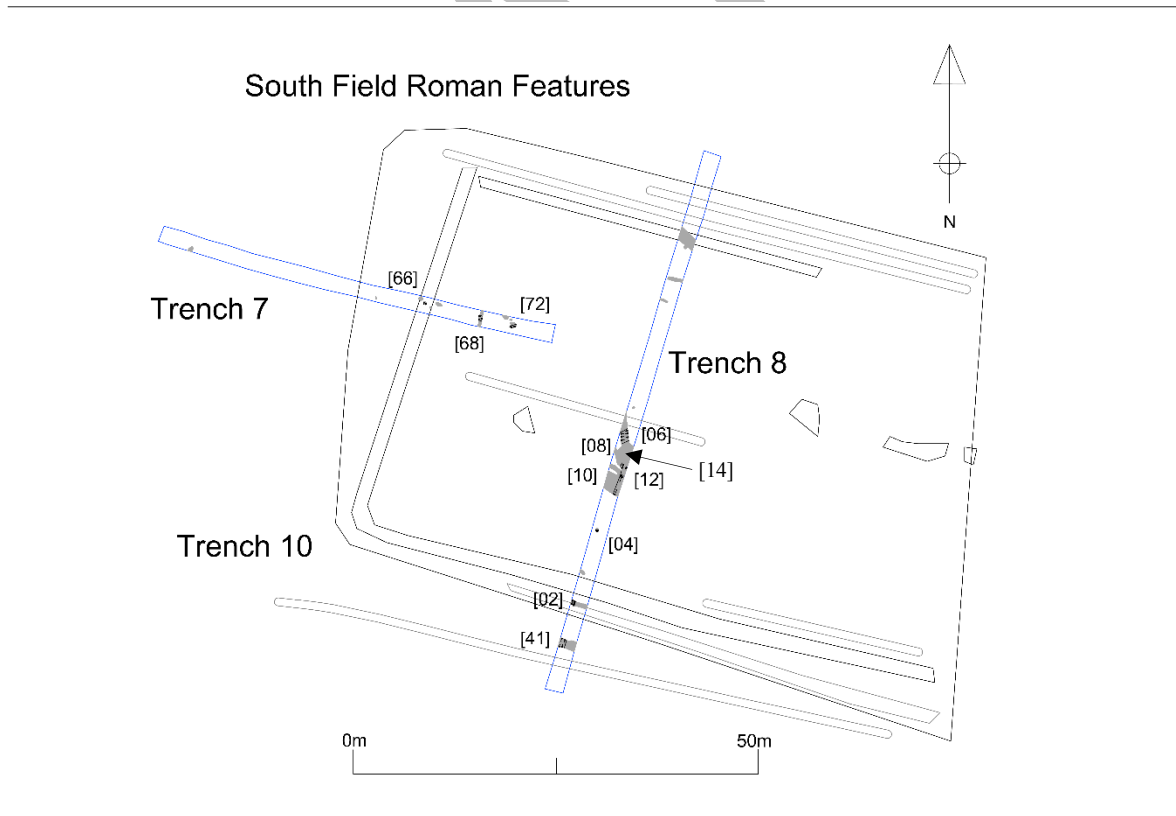


Figure 6 South Field Trenches 7 and 8 Roman Features

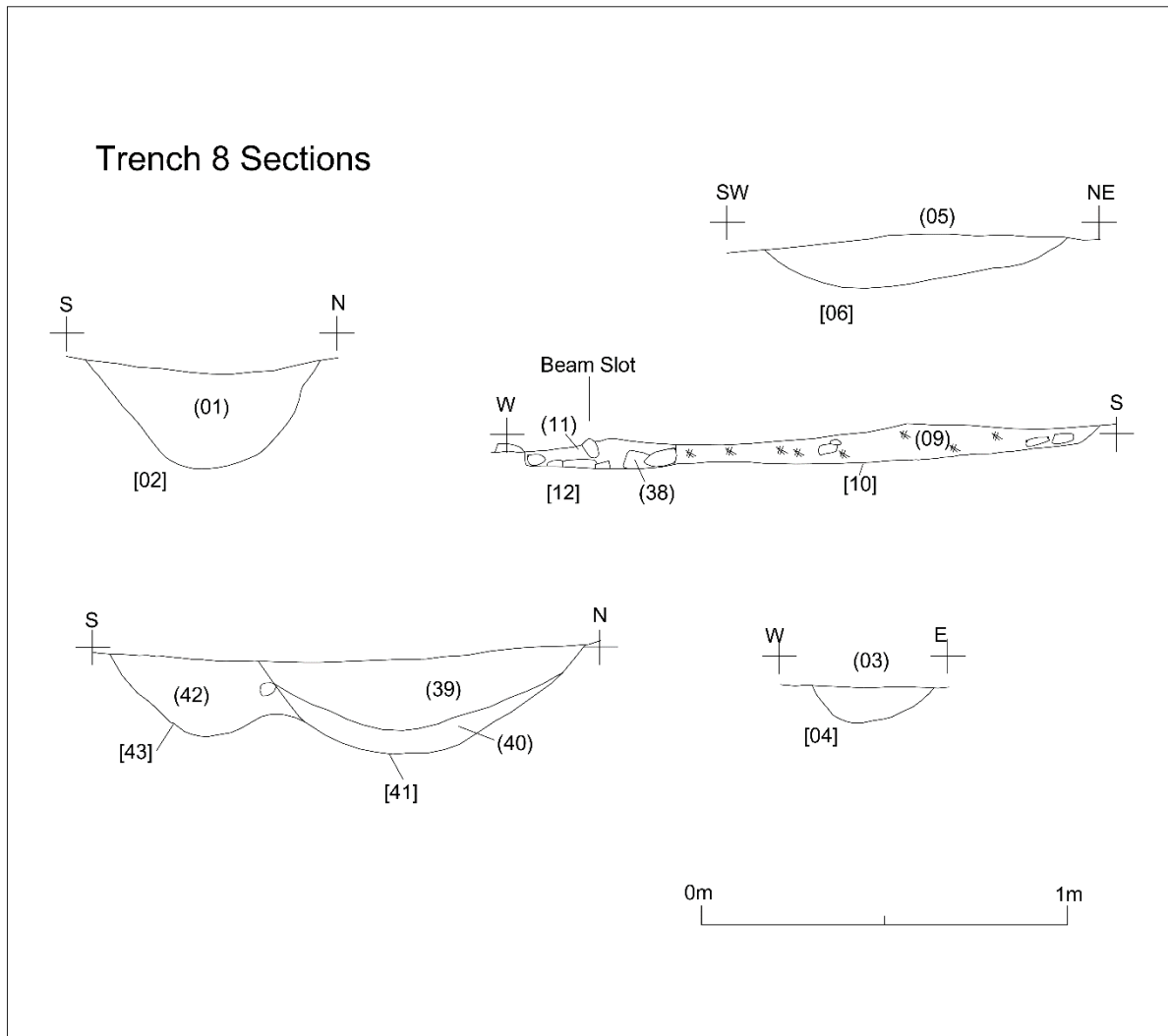


Figure 7 Trench 8 Sections

Trenches 9, 10 and 13

Trenches 9, 10 and 13 were excavated in the northern end of the field and were excavated on a north-south and north-west to south-east alignments. Land drains and furrows crossed the trenches on north-south and east-west alignments. The trenches targeted a geophysical blank area in the southern part of the field. No archaeological features were revealed.

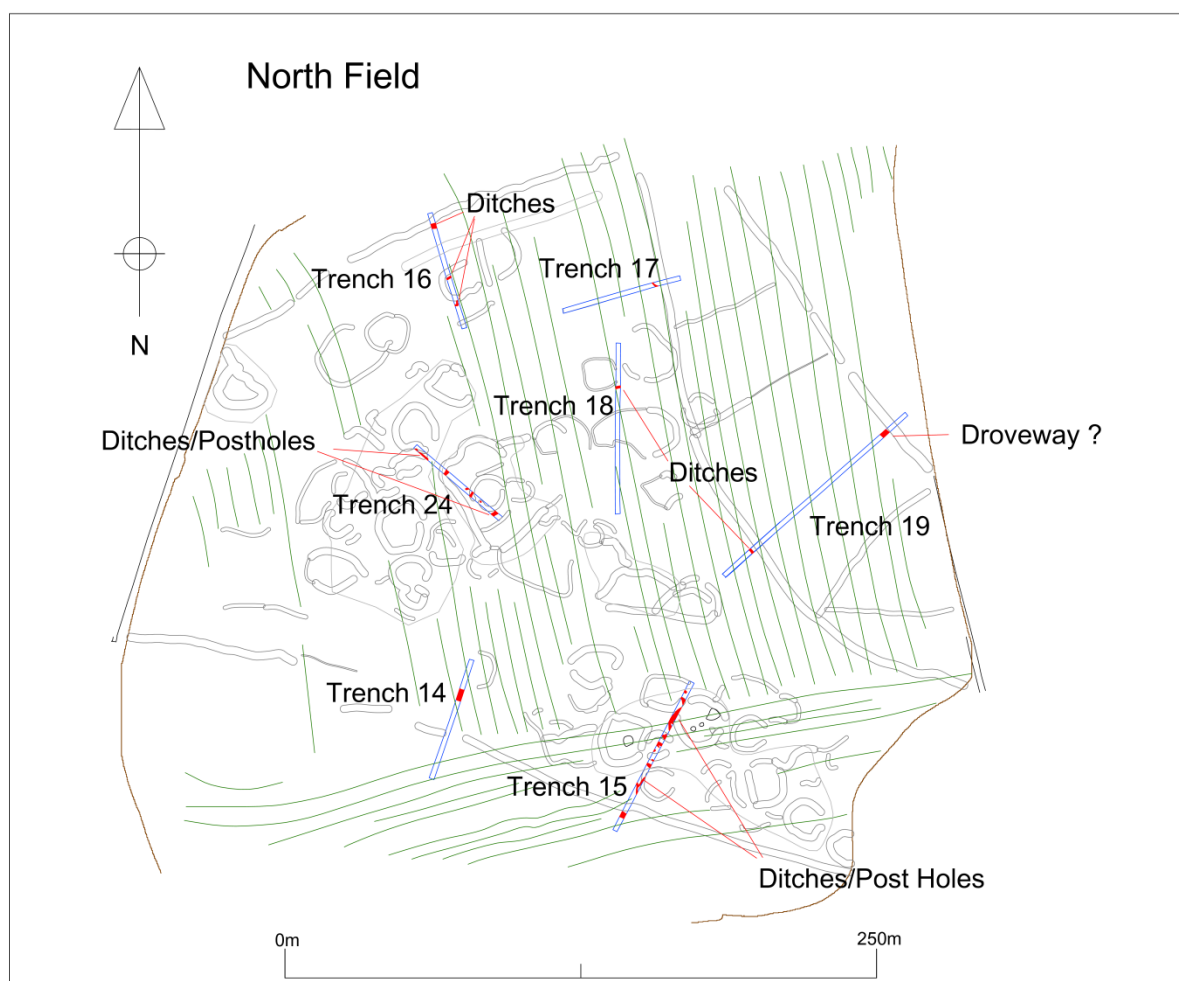


Figure 8 North Field

The North Field

Trenches 11 and 12, 14 to 19 and Trench 24

A total of nine trenches was excavated in the northern part of the development area targeting a possible a 7.5 hectare settlement, probably prehistoric in date (Figures 3 and 8) which occupies the majority of the northernmost field and identified by the geophysical survey (Roseveare et al 2016). The survey suggested an irregular, but roughly trapezoidal enclosure boundary that extended, into the eastern field. There appeared to be a kink in the southern boundary of this anomaly that may be an entrance, although this is uncertain. Within the enclosure were a series of rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary, one of which has a circular anomaly suggestive of a house enclosure in its south-west corner. However, all other settlement activity appears to be beyond these fields, with a particularly dense concentration in the centre and south-west of the enclosure and slightly more sporadic distribution along the northern boundary and in the east, adjacent to the internal fields. Two additional trenches (11 and 12) targeted blank areas at the southern end of the field.

Trenches 11 and 12

Trenches 11 and 12 were excavated in the southern end of the field and were excavated on west to east alignments. Land drains and furrows crossed the trenches on a north-south and north-west to south-east alignment. The trenches targeted a geophysical blank area in the southern part of the field. No archaeological features were revealed.

Trench 14

This trench was located in the south-west corner of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure ditch and targeted the possible entrance (Figure 8). The trench did not locate the southern boundary ditch which perhaps suggests that there is break in the ditch or an entrance. An internal enclosure ditch [90] and [93] was revealed towards the centre of the trench and probably corresponds with a semi-circular anomaly on the geophysical survey. The ditch had a primary cut [93] that had moderate straight sloping sides and 'U' shaped base (Plate 4). The feature measured 1.45m wide and 0.55m deep. This enclosure was later recut or cleared [90] and had steep straight sides and a 'U' shaped base. This cut measured 1.00m wide and 0.50m deep and contained fills (88), (89) (91) and (92), that comprised orange brown silty-clays mixed with limestone fragments.



Plate 4 Trench 14 Enclosure ditch [90] and [93]

Trench 15

Trench 15 was placed in a particularly dense concentration of geophysical anomalies at the centre of the settlement. The anomalies suggest numerous inter-cutting curvilinear ditches which may form sub-rectangular enclosures or circular house eaves drip gullies (Figures 8 and 9). The trench revealed three large curvilinear ditches, [25], [19] and [30]. These ditches were typically curvilinear with steep 'V' shaped sides and 'U' shaped bases and measured up to 0.80m wide and 0.38m deep (Figure 10). They contained dark grey brown clay-silt fills mixed with occasional Iron Age pottery sherds and animal bone (See below). Fill (31) from

ditch [30] was sampled and contained occasional charcoal fragments, two spelt wheat glume bases and seeds including dock and goosefoot, which grow on arable and disturbed land and large grasses (See appendix 3). These features appear to have been possible enclosure ditches with some refuse material deposited as part of their back fill. Another three features may be possible eaves drip gullies from roundhouse structures [15], [17] and [23]. These gullies were typically a narrow curvilinear with steep straight 'V' shaped sides and flat base (Plates 5 and 6). They measured up to 0.40m wide and 0.40m deep and all contained typically mid yellowish brown silty-clay fills mixed with occasional Iron Age pottery sherds and animal bone fragments. Additional post-holes and pits [21] and [28] were present suggesting further structural activity. The various features were dense in number and some were inter cutting perhaps indicating multi-phase occupation within this area of the settlement. The dense number of features and their character would seem to match those revealed by the geophysical survey.



Plate 5 Trench 15 Possible eaves drip gully [15]



Plate 6 Trench 15 Eaves drip gully [23] and internal enclosure

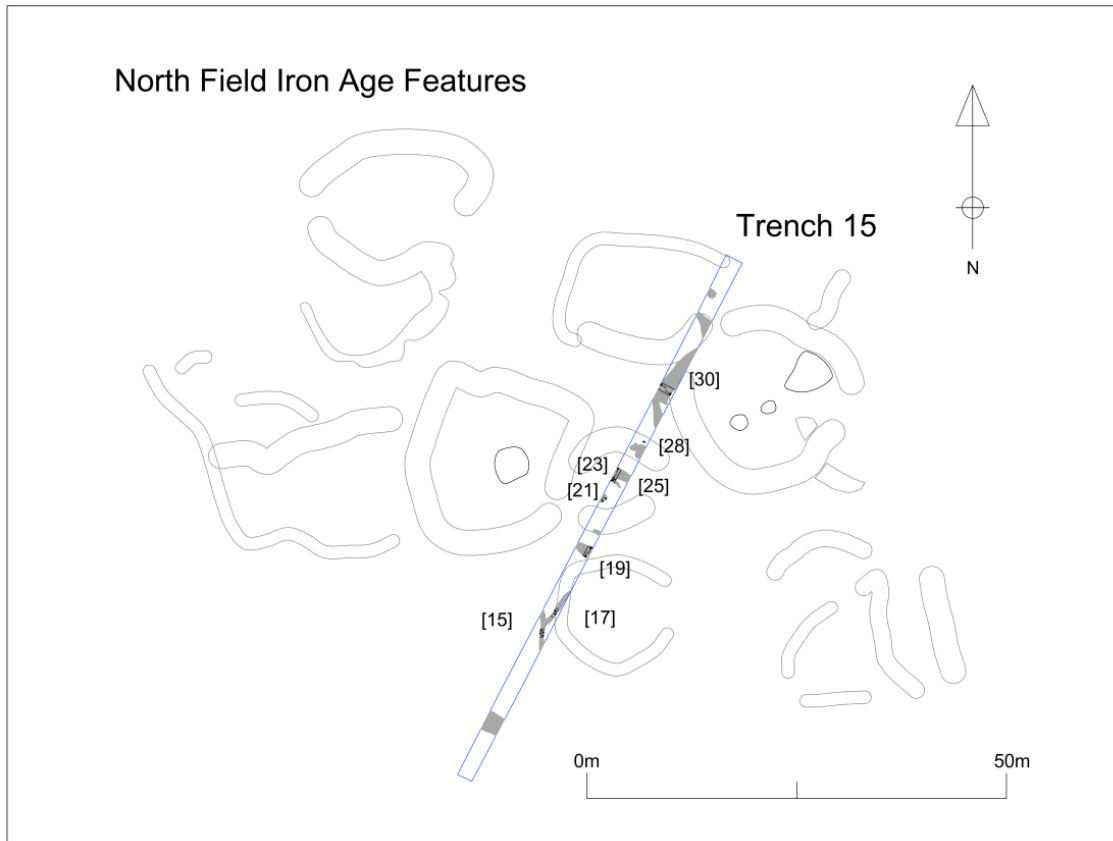


Figure 9 North Field Trench 15 Iron Age features

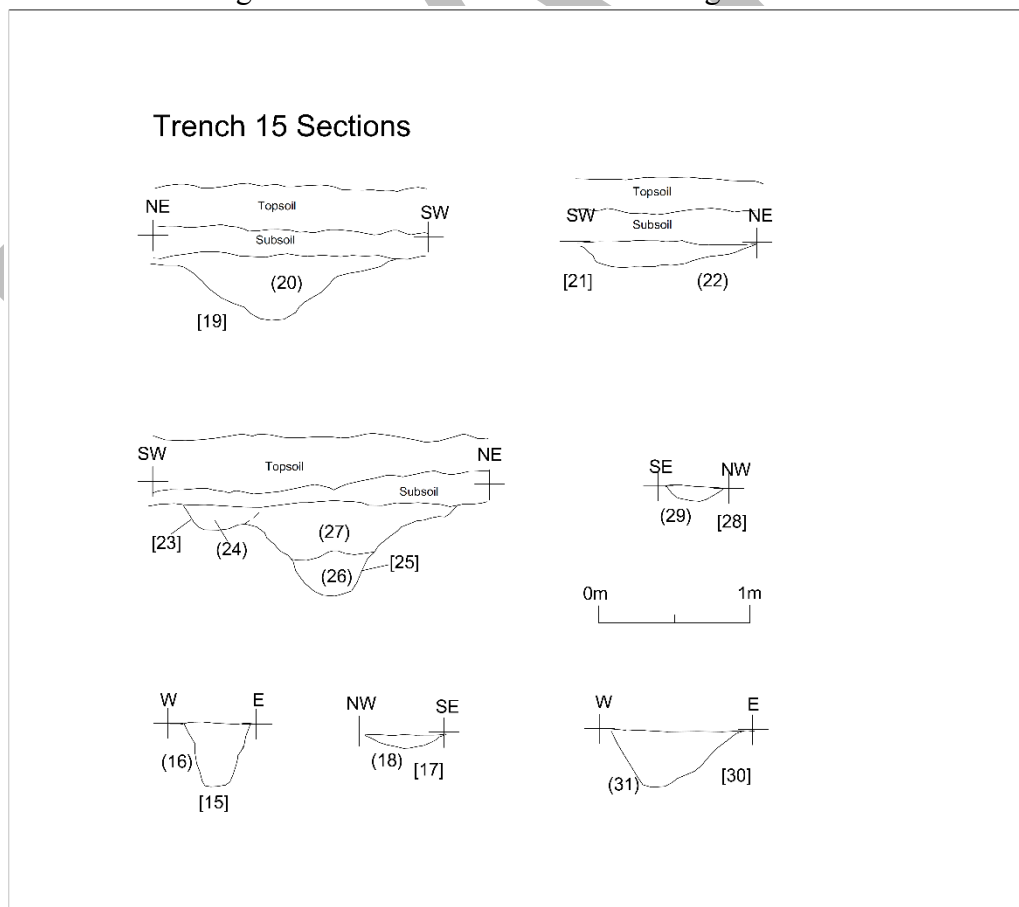


Figure 10 Trench 15 Sections

Trench 16

This trench was located towards the north-west corner of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure ditch and targeted some circular or sub-rectangular enclosures located to the south of the boundary (Figure 11). The trench revealed a large northern boundary ditch, [34] that was subsequently re cut twice [32] and [36] (Figure 12). The ditch cuts were generally steep ‘U’ shaped profiles with flat slightly rounded bases. They measured up to 1.10m wide and 0.55m deep. The fills comprised light greyish brown silty-clays mixed with occasional charcoal flecks. To south of the boundary ditch two internal enclosure ditches [100] and [102] were revealed. These features appear to have matched a scatter of potential internal small enclosures revealed in the geophysical survey. The ditch [100] had steep straight sides and a ‘U’ shaped base and measured 0.80m wide and 0.40m, whilst ditch [102] had steep ‘V’ shaped sides and a tapered point. This feature also displayed a potential shallow ‘U’ shaped re-cut ditch [104] that measured 1.10m wide and 0.70m deep. Their fills typically comprised mid brownish yellow silty-clays mixed with a few stones, flecks of charcoal, Iron Age pottery, animal bone and angular flint pebbles.

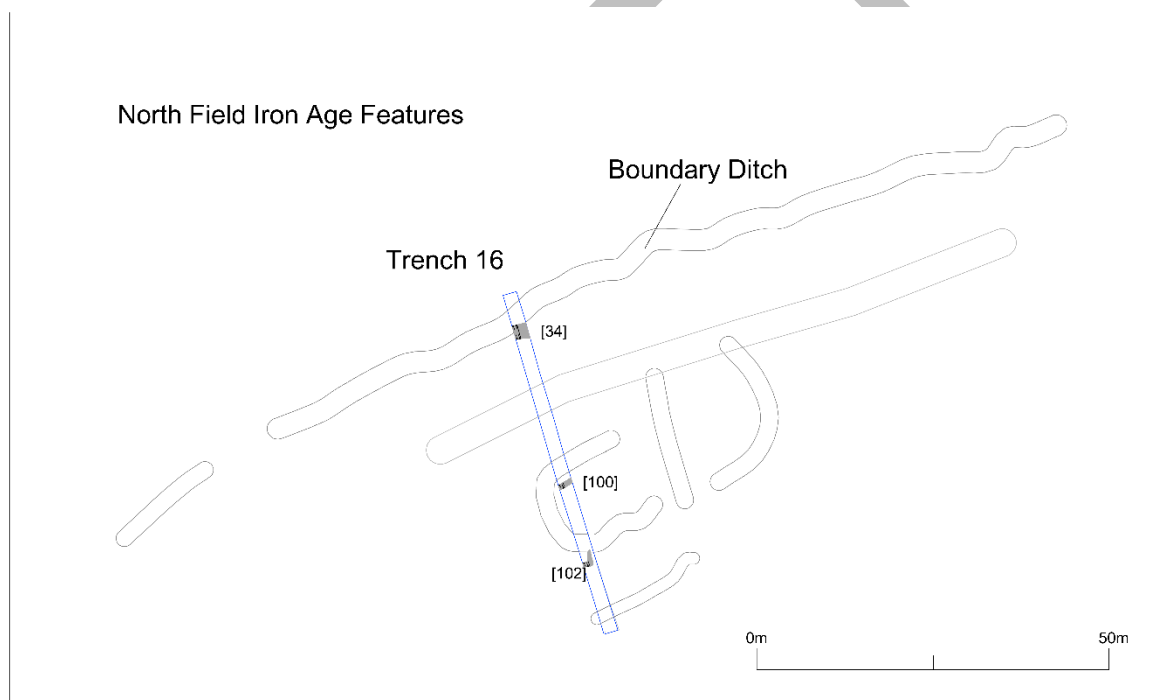


Figure 11 North Field Trench 16

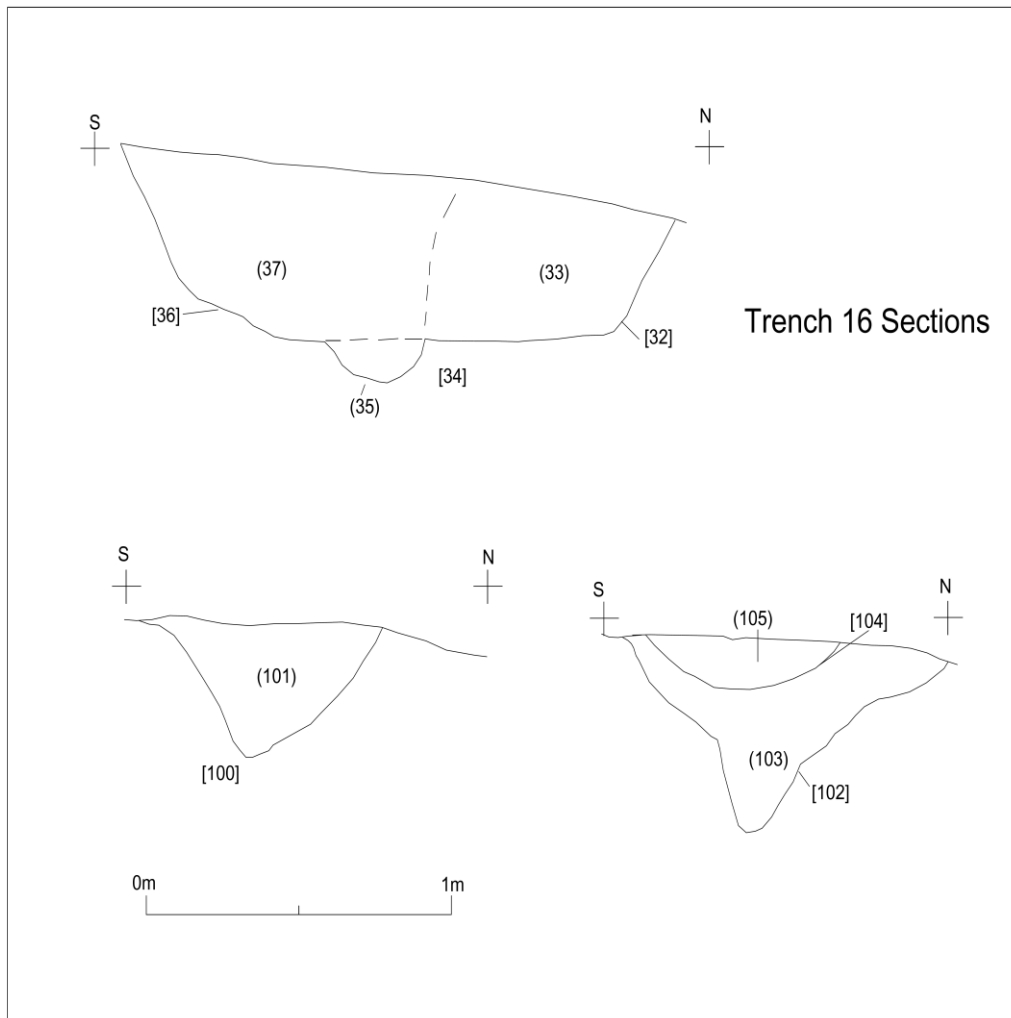


Figure 12 Trench 16 Sections

Trench 17

Trench 17 was placed towards the north-eastern quarter of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure and targeted potentially a series of rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary. The trench was excavated along a west to east orientation (Figure 8). The only feature revealed within this trench was a curvilinear ditch that may have been eaves drip gully perhaps associated with a roundhouse structure [59] (Plate 7). This narrow curvilinear feature had ‘V’ shaped steep sides and a rounded base and measured 0.65m wide and 0.24m deep. The feature contained a mid orange brown silt-clay fill (60) mixed with charcoal flecks and angular limestone pebbles, animal bone and Iron Age pottery. The pottery and animal bone would suggest that refuse was perhaps swept into the eaves drip gully as part of its back fill. This possible roundhouse would suggest that there is potential for structures within these eastern field enclosures. The trench had several land drains and furrow that crossed the trench on a north-south alignment.



Plate 7 North Field Trench 17 feature [59]

Trench 18

Trench 18 was another trench located towards the north-eastern quarter of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure and targeted more rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary (Figure 8). The trench was excavated along a north to south orientation. The only feature revealed within this trench was linear ditch that may have been an internal enclosure ditch [57]. This narrow feature had a 'V' shaped steep sides and rounded shaped base and measured 1.00m wide and 0.45m deep. The feature contained mid orange brown silt-clay fill (58) mixed with charcoal flecks and angular limestone pebbles. This possible enclosure would suggest that there is potential for internal sub-divisions or smaller internal annexe enclosures within these eastern field systems. This trench had several land drains and a furrow that crossed the trench on a north-south alignment.

Trench 19

Trench 19 targeted a potential series of rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary located towards south-eastern quarter of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure (Figure 8).

The trench was excavated along a north-east to south-west orientation. The trench revealed a ditch [46] and post-hole [48] at the western end (Figure 13). The ditch [46] had a primary cut that comprised steep near vertical straight sides and rounded base, and measured 0.30m wide and 0.25m deep. A second cut or ditch clearance event [44] had moderate irregular convex sloping sides and a 'U' shaped base and measured 1.15m wide and 0.30m deep. The fills (45) and (47) were dark orange silty-clays mixed with sparse charcoal flecks and small pebbles. Directly to the east a large post-hole [48] was located. This feature was a sub-oval in shaped

with steep straight sides and ‘U’ shaped base, and measured 0.70m long, 0.40m wide and 0.20m deep. The fill (49) comprised mid yellow brown silty-clay mixed with moderate pebbles. The ditch and post-hole would suggest that there is potential for further structures and internal enclosures within these eastern field enclosures.

This trench had also targeted the eastern boundary ditch for a trapezoidal boundary enclosure. A large wide feature [110] was found at the eastern end of the trench which had gradual sloping convex sides and an irregular wide rounded base (Figure 13). It measured 4.10m wide and 0.60m deep and contained mid brownish and orange grey silty-clay fill (111) mixed with charcoal flecks and large rounded pebbles at base.

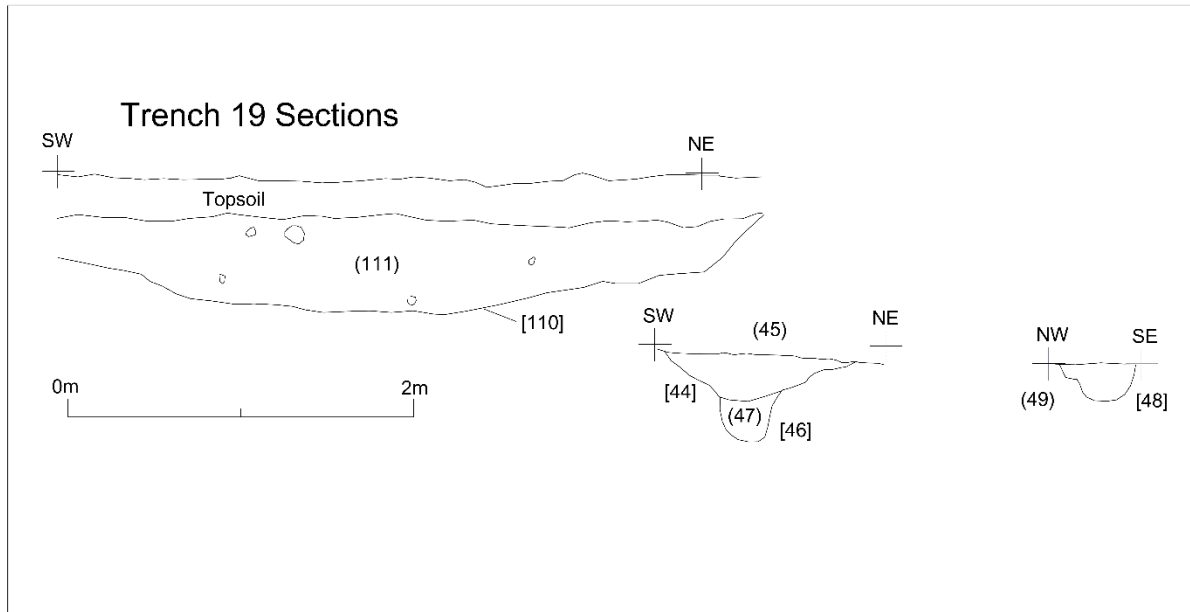


Figure 13 Trench 19 Sections

Trench 24

Trench 24 targeted another particularly dense concentration of geophysical anomalies located in the north-west quarter of the settlement (Figures 8 and 14). The anomalies suggested numerous inter-cutting curvilinear features which may have formed sub rectangular enclosures or circular house eaves drip gullies. The trench was excavated in north-west to south-east orientation. The trench revealed three large linear ditches of which two were excavated, [77] and [84] (Figure 15). Enclosure ditch [77] was a wide linear feature that had shallow convex sloping sides and concave base and measured 1.50m wide 0.46m deep. It contained mid orange brown silty-clay mixed with occasional charcoal fleck. A second ditch was excavated towards the northern end of the trench that measured 1.50m wide and 0.50m deep. This enclosure feature had steep sloping convex sides and a ‘U’ shaped base and contained several fills (85), (86) and (87). These fills comprise either dark reddish grey silty-clay or mid yellowish grey silty-clay mixed with charcoal flecks and iron pan. Some of the fills contained animal bone fragments. Additional post-holes [80] and [82] were excavated suggesting further structural activity. The various features were fairly dense in number and their character appears to have matched those depicted within the geophysical survey.

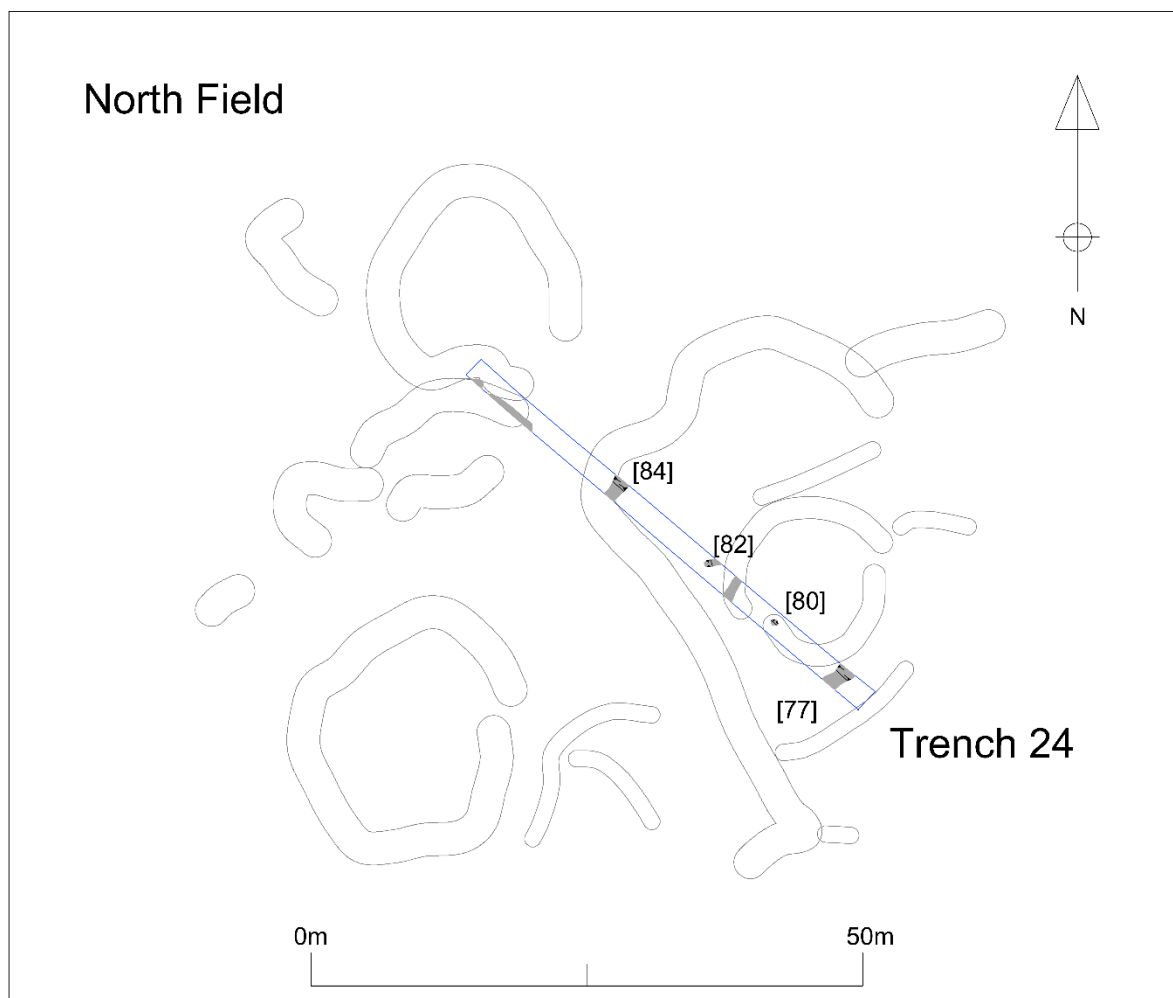


Figure 14 North Field Trench 24 Iron Age features

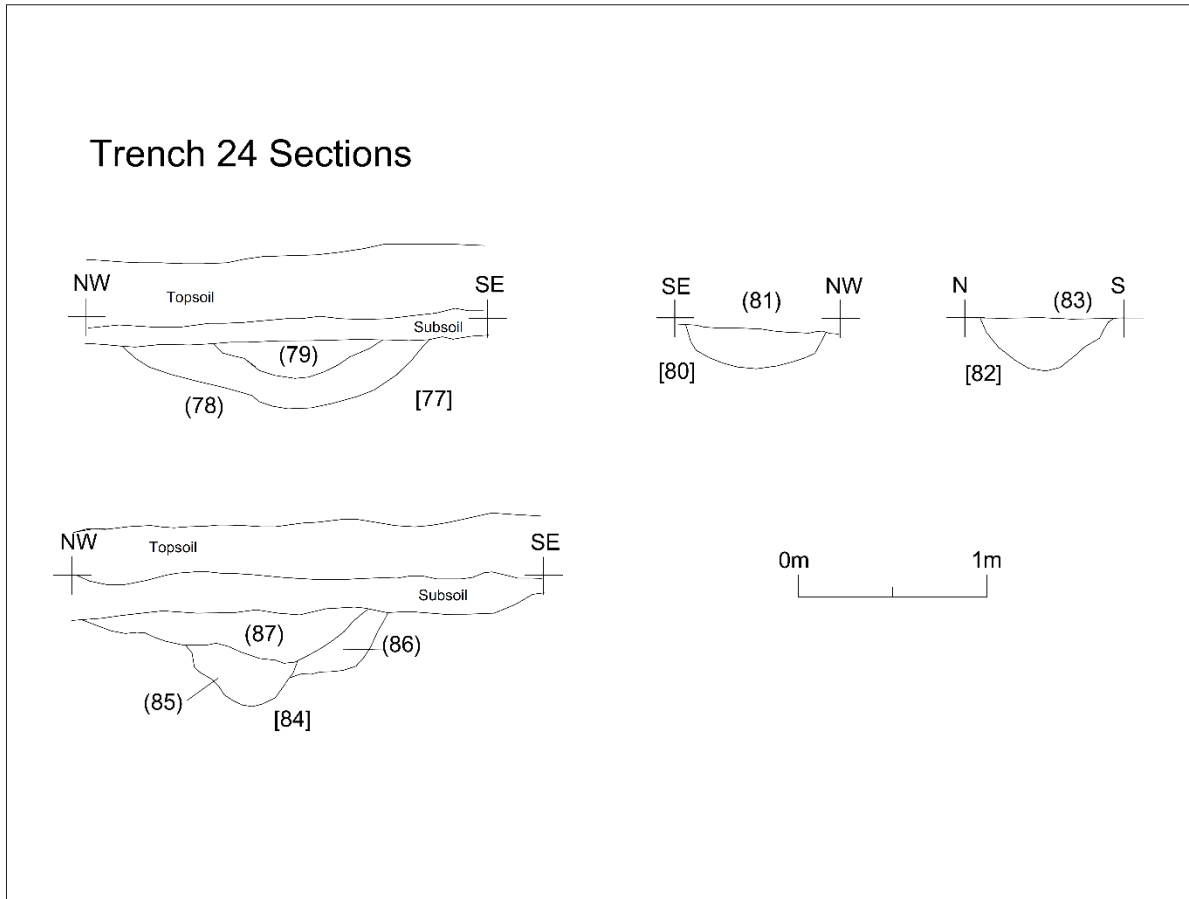


Figure 15 Trench 24 Sections

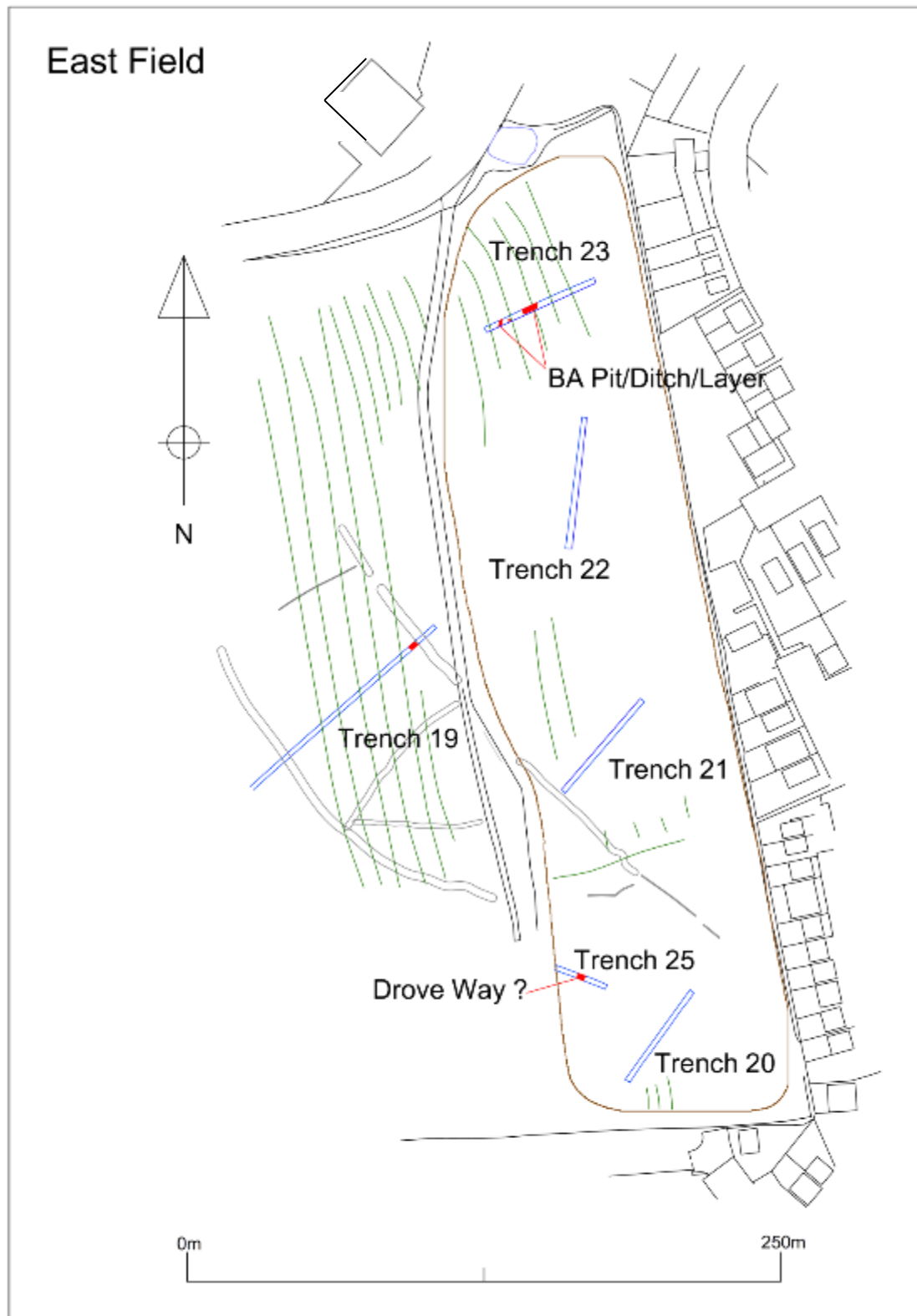


Figure 16 East Field

The East Field

Trenches 20 to 23 and Trench 25

Five trenches were excavated in the eastern part of the development area targeting geophysical anomalies (trenches 22 and 25). Three additional trenches (20, 21 and 23) targeted blank areas located to the east of the trapezoidal boundary.

Trench 20, 21 and 22

Trenches 20, 21 and 22 were excavated in the east field and were excavated on a north-south and west to east alignments. Three land drains crossed the trench on a north-south alignment. The trenches targeted blank areas and geophysical anomaly northern half of the field. No archaeological features were revealed in trenches 20 and 21. Trench 22 again had no features but did have a change in natural that was a light reddish brown silty sand mixed with gravel rather than the orange yellowish clay found in the majority of the trenches. This change in natural may account for geophysical anomaly record in this north half of the field.

Trench 23

This trench targeted what was thought to be a blank area in the northern half of the field (Figures 16 and 17). This trench contained a mid orange brown silty-clay colluvial deposit up to 0.44m thick. At the western end of the trench two features were revealed a pit [94] and ditch [96]. The linear ditch was orientated south-west to north-east and had moderately sloping concave sides and a rounded base (Figure 18). The feature measured 1.00m wide and 0.24m deep and contained a relatively sterile fill (97) that consisted of mid orange sandy silt-clay. The pit [94] comprised a sub-oval shaped feature with straight vertical sides and flat base (Figure 18 and Plate 8). It measured 0.85m long, 0.60m wide and 0.34m deep, and contained a mid-greyish silty-clay (95) mixed with frequent charcoal flecks and a moderate number of pebbles. Within the fill were several Early Bronze Age pottery sherds and flint artefacts (See Appendices 1 and 4). The Early Bronze Age pottery comprised a significant group of 39 sherds belonging to 11 different vessels. The remains comprise four geometric Beakers, six rusticated Beakers and one indeterminate base. The flint artefacts included tools such as thumbnail scraper, end scraper, along with core and various flakes. Samples taken from pit fill (95) produced charcoal fragments but plant remains were not present (See below).

Directly to the east a buried soil deposit (99) was located below the colluvium deposit (Figure 18 and Plate 9). It comprised a mid greyish brown silt-clay mixed with charcoal flecks and a few small stones. A sherd of Iron Age pottery along with some animal bone were found within this deposit suggesting that it may date to this period. A sample was taken from this deposit and charcoal fragments were found to be present along with a small fragment of hazelnut (*Corylus avellana* L.) shell (See appendix 3)



Plate 8 East Field Trench 23 Early Bronze Age pit [94]



Plate 9 East Field Trench 23 buried soil spread or layer (99)

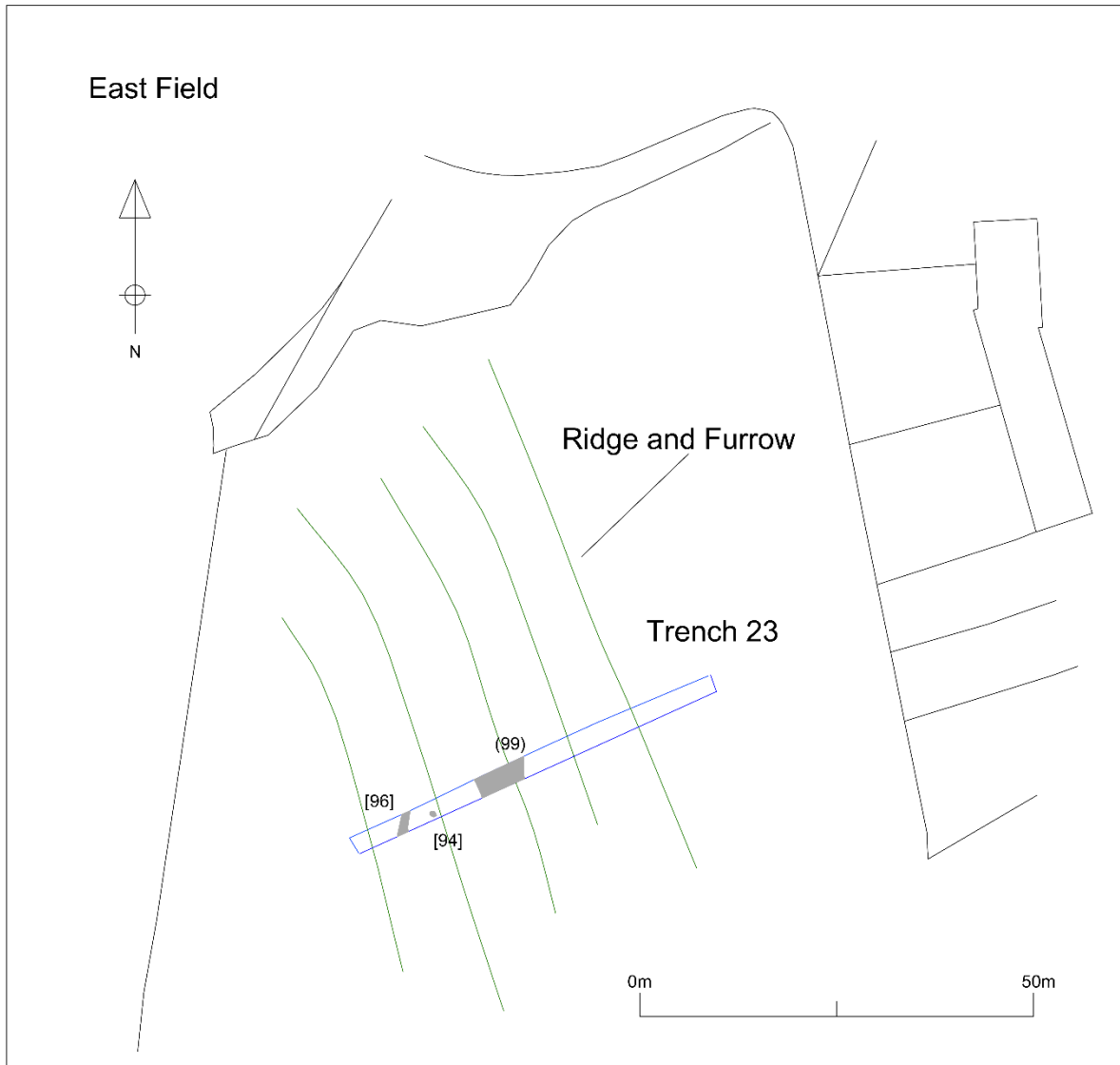


Figure 17 East Field Trench 23

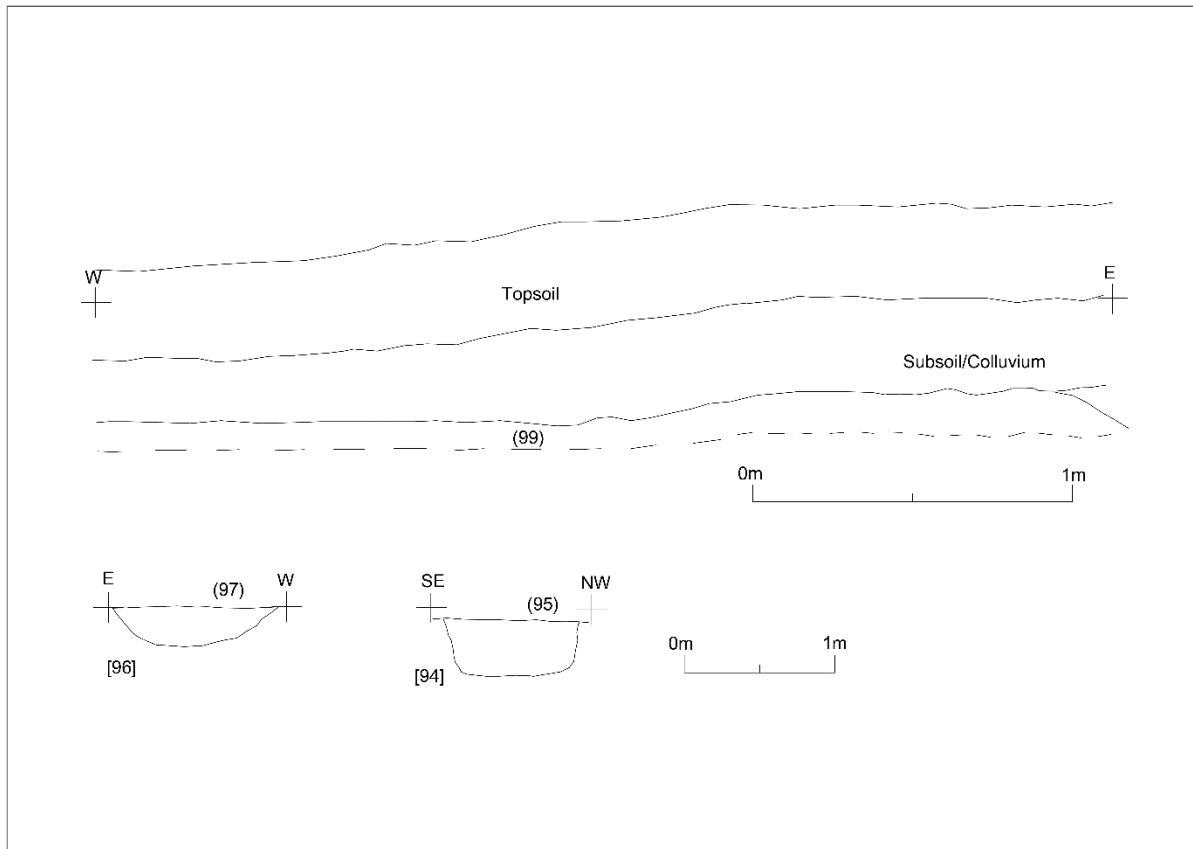


Figure 18 Trench 23 Sections

Trench 25

Trench 25 targeted a semi-circular geophysical anomaly located in the south-west corner of the field. A large wide feature [109] was found at the centre of the trench with gradually sloping convex sides and an irregular wide rounded base (Figure 19). It measured 3.20m wide and 0.40m deep and contained a mid brownish and orange grey silty-clay fill (108) mixed with charcoal flecks and large rounded pebbles at the base. This feature also contained Iron Age pottery and animal bone that perhaps indicated that some refuse material was used in the back filling of this feature. The geophysical survey had indicated that the trapezoidal boundary enclosure may have had extended, into the eastern field and this feature could be part of the south eastern extent of this feature.

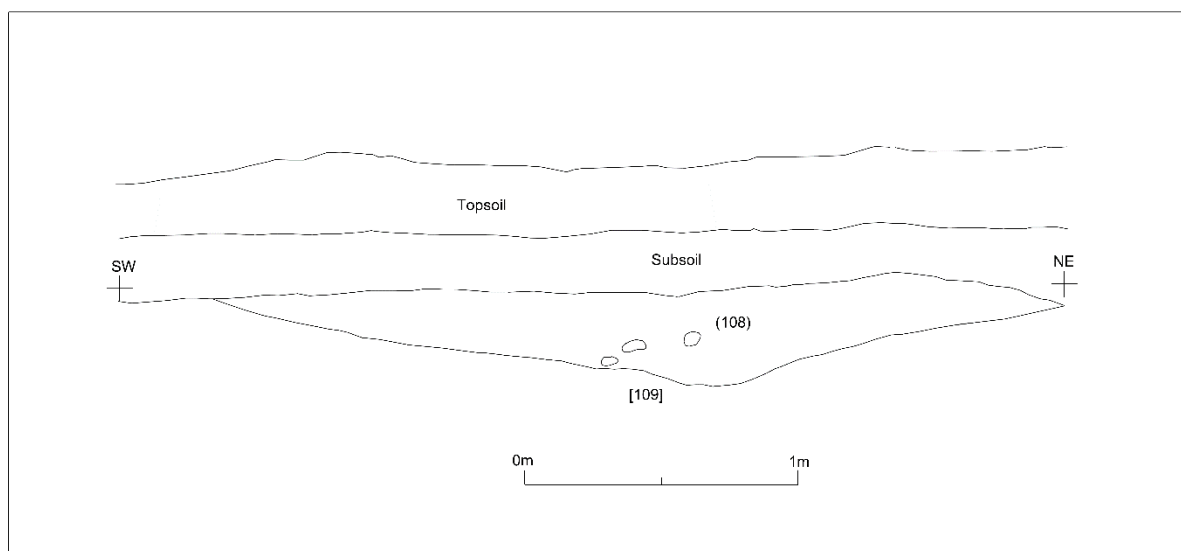


Figure 19 Trench 25 Section

Pottery and other finds

Nicholas J. Cooper

Introduction

The finds assemblage spans the Early Bronze Age to the Late Roman period and comprises, Beaker pottery (39 sherds), mid-late Iron Age pottery (99 sherds) and Roman pottery (20 sherds), with small amounts of fired clay, Roman building materials and iron nails.

Methodology

The Beaker and Iron Age pottery has been analysed by form and fabric using the Leicestershire County Museums prehistoric pottery fabric series (Marsden 2011, 62, Table 2 and see below), with reference to the Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group's Guidelines (PCRG 1997), whilst the Roman material was classified using the Leicestershire Roman pottery form and fabric series (Pollard 1994, 110-114). All the material was quantified by sherd count, weight and EVEs and recorded on MS Excel spreadsheets which are presented below (Tables 3-6).

Table 2: Summary of Leicestershire Prehistoric pottery fabric series (Marsden 2011 with additions).

Fabric	Description
Sandy Q1 <i>Quartz sand</i>	Common to abundant sub-rounded to rounded quartz sand (0.25–1mm)
Quartz Q4 <i>Sandy fabric with quartz</i>	Q1 with rare to sparse sub-angular to sub-rounded quartz (probable pebble source, 0.5–5mm, occasionally larger, up to 10mm)

Q5 Quartz	Rare to moderate sub-angular quartz (0.5–4mm) and rare to sparse sub-rounded to rounded quartz sand (0.25–1mm). Similar to R1, but with quartz rather than granite Q1 with moderate sub rectangular sandstone <5mm
Q6 Sandstone	
Granitic rock	
R1 Granodiorite	Rare to moderate sub-angular granodiorite (0.5–4mm) and rare to sparse sub-rounded to rounded quartz sand (0.25–1mm). Inclusions include plates of biotite (yellow) mica. As above but with syenite from Croft (SW Leics. sites). R1 with sand as Q1
R1 Syenite	
R2 Granite with sand	
Shell-tempered	
S1 Shell	Moderate to very common shell or plate-like voids (1–5mm)
S2 Sandy fabric with shell	As S1, but common to very common sub-rounded to rounded quartz sand (0.25–1mm)
Grog	
G1 with shell & sand	Similar to S2 with common sub-angular grog (0.5-2mm)
G2 Grog with sand	Similar to Q1 with common sub-angular grog (0.5-2mm)
Mudstone	
M1 Ferruginous Mudstone	Common rounded to sub-rounded red mudstone pellets (0.5-2mm) with sparse-moderate rounded quartz sand (0.25-1mm). Mudstone naturally occurring in the clay? Common angular mudstone fragments 0.5-5mm.
M2 Mudstone	

Beaker Pottery

A significant group of 39 sherds (452g) belonging to 11 different vessels was recovered from (95) [94]. The remains comprise four geometric Beakers, six rusticated Beakers and one indeterminate base. The full quantified record is presented below (Table 3).

Table 3 Quantified record of Beaker pottery from (95)

Leicester Rd Melton Beaker Pottery XA31.2016										
Context	Cut	Fabric	Form	Part	Decor	Sherds	Wght	EVEs	Diam	Comment
95	94	S2	GeoBeaker	rim	InciseLoz	4	105	0.1	170	Vessel 1
95	94	G1	GeoBeaker	rim	Incised	4	40	0.05	170	Vessel 2
95	94	G2	GeoBeaker	body	toothed	2	16			Vessel 3
95	94	Q1	GeoBeaker	base	toothed	1	5			Vessel 4
95	94	G	RusticBeaker	Rim	fingernail	5	38	0.1	90	Vessel 5
95	94	G	RusticBeaker	body	fingernail	6	90			Vessel 6
95	94	G1	RusticBeaker	rim	fingertip	8	91	0.05	?	Vessel 7
95	94	G2	RusticBeaker	body	fingernail	3	28			Vessel 8
95	94	G2	Beaker	base		1	11			Vessel 9
95	94	G1	RusticBeaker	body	fingernail	1	8			Vessel 10
95	94	S1	RusticBeaker	body	fingertip	3	14			Vessel 11
US	Tr23	S2	GeoBeaker	body	incised	1	6			Vessel 1?
Total						39	452	0.3		

The rims of two geometric Beakers are preserved (Vessels 1 and 2) both of long-necked form with incised decoration. Vessel 1 is manufactured in a coarse shell-tempered fabric (S2), which is unparalleled in the nearby Asfordby group and may indicate a Rutland or South Lincolnshire origin. Decoration comprises a band of incised lattice below the rim giving way to a zone of lattice-filled lozenges and a zone of lattice-filled squares. Vessel 2, in the more usual fine grog-tempered fabric (G1) with sand and shell, is rather crudely decorated with rows of fingernail impressions below the rim, giving way to pairs of oblique incised lines forming a zig-zag zone, infilled with fingernail impressions, below which bands of incised lines form lozenges again with fingernail infill. Vessel 3 is decorated with oblique bands of toothed lines and Vessel 4, a base, with horizontal toothed lines with (small) vertical fingernail impression between alternating pairs of lines.

The occurrence of rusticated Beakers alongside these, in an area of the county where they seem to be relatively common, is interesting. Two rims are represented; Vessel 4 being rather small, and Vessel 7 perhaps being of similar size to the large Vessel 1 from Asfordby (Cooper 2012, 11, fig.11). However, the decoration on all the vessels comprises individual finger nail or fingertip impressions rather than the finger and thumb pinches of Asfordby Vessel 1.

The group has many similarities to the Asfordby assemblage (Cooper 2012) in terms of the forms and decoration of the Beakers and it likely that the dating falls in the period 2200-1900 cal BC, when long-necked beakers with zoned decoration are current (Needham 2005, 95). The group therefore highlights the potential for further preservation of deposits on the site, belonging to this little-understood period in the county's prehistory.

A small chip of burnt sandstone (gritstone) (25g) also came from this context

Mid-Late Iron Age pottery and possible briquetage

A total of 99 sherds of Middle to Late Iron Age pottery weighing 720g (0.75 EVEs) were retrieved from 20 contexts, notably (45) [44] (37 sherds) and (79) [77] (16 sherds). The full quantified record is presented below (Table 4) and the fabric proportions are summarised in Table 5.

Table 4: Quantified record of Mid-Late Iron Age pottery

Leicester Rd Melton Iron Age Pottery XA31.2016									
Context	Cut	Fabric	Form	Part	Decor	Sherds	Weight	EVEs	Diam
9		S1	misc	body		1	3		
20	19	Q1	misc	body		1	10		
24	23	Q4	misc	body		3	25		
26	25	S1	misc	body	scored	1	6		
31	30	R2	jar	base	scored	2	90		
39		S1	misc	body		1	40		
42		S1	misc	body		1	5		
45	44	Q1	jar	rim	scored	2	15	0.06	120
45	44	Q1	jar	rim	scored	2	18	0.13	120
45	44	Q1	jar	rim		1	5	0.05	120
45	44	S1	misc	body	scored	12	50		
45	44	Q1	misc	body	scored	18	90		

45	44	G ferr	misc	body	scored	2	11		
47	46	Q1	jar	rim	scored	2	15	0.05	120
60	59	Q1	jar	rim	scored	2	18	0.08	140
79	77	G2	jar	rim	scored	10	90	0.12	100
79	77	Q4	misc	body	scored	6	35		
81	80	Q1ferr	jar	rim	scored	4	38	0.18	210
81	80	Q4	misc	body		3	22		
81	80	S1	misc	body	scored	1	10		
81	80	R5	misc	body		3	6		
83	82	S1	misc	body		1	16		
85	84	R5	misc	body		1	20		
86	84	Q1ferr	misc	body	scored	1	7		
99		Q1	misc	body		4	10		
99		R1	misc	body		2	1		
101	100	Q1	misc	body	scored	6	39		
103	102	Q4	misc	body	scored	1	10		
107	106	Q1	misc	body		1	2		
108	109	Q1	jar	rim		3	9	0.08	80
US	Tr23	Q1	misc	body		1	4		
Total						99	720	0.75	

Table 5: Summary of Iron Age Assemblage by Fabric Type

Quantified Summary by Fabric				
Fabric	Sherds	Weight	EVEs	%sherds
Q				
Sand/quartz	61	372	0.63	62
R Granite	4	91		4
S Shell	18	130		18
G Grog	12	101	0.12	12
R5 mixed	4	26		4
Total	99	720	0.75	100

The assemblage belongs to the East Midlands scored ware tradition current from the 4th or mid-3rd century BC to the earlier 1st century AD (Elsdon 1992a, 39, fig.24; Elsdon 1992b, 85, Fig.1.6), but in view of the relatively high proportion of scoring recorded, a date in the later part of that range might be indicated. A range of generally small jars of barrel-shaped or slack shouldered form with upright flat, incurving or beaded rims are represented, with diameters between 100-140mm and equivalent to Elsdon's Enderby Type 1 (Elsdon 1992a, 39, fig.24.1). One larger jar with a flattened bead rim of diameter 210mm of Enderby Type 2 or 3, is also represented (Elsdon 1992a, 39, fig.24.2/3).

Table 7 summarises the assemblage in terms of fabric, with 70% containing open materials of mineral origin, in this case with 62% being either quartz sand (Q1) (occasionally with ferruginous pellets) or angular crushed quartz (Q4). The proportion containing angular granite (granodiorite) (Fabrics R1 and R2) is only 4% which, given the distance from the Charnwood district is perhaps not surprising. What is more surprising, perhaps, is the low proportion of

shell-tempered fabrics (18%) given the proximity of the site to Burrough Hill, to the south where such fabrics are dominant (83% by weight) (Percival 2012, 82, Table 5).

Of note in the group is the occurrence of four sherds (26g) of what appears to be briquetage from (81) and (85) assigned fabric code R5 mixed, due to variety of different rock fragments represented, and quite unlike those encountered in prehistoric pottery in Leicestershire. Briquetage is the term used for the containers employed in salt making and transport and the fragments are also referred to as ‘stony VCP’ (very coarse pottery) in other reports. The material is thought to originate in the salt making areas of Cheshire around Nantwich and Middlewich and the remains of similar vessels have been recorded in small amounts locally at Enderby, Huncote, Birstall and Humberstone, indicating that this area represented the periphery of the trade network (Marsden 2011, 72).

In summary, the pottery assemblage highlights the potential for the preservation of stratified deposits of mid-late Iron Age date and further work would certainly yield an important group of material for detailed study from this part of the county that could be compared to that from the hill fort at Burrough Hill.

Iron Age Fired Clay Objects and Burnt Daub

A small amount of fired clay (176g) was recovered from (9) (residual in a Roman context), (31), (58), (64) and (86). The fragment (10g) from (31) had the remains of a wattle perforation, indicating that it was burnt daub from a structure, whilst the three fragments (80g) from (58) [57] were part of a perforated oven plate (providing a flat surface for cooking), with a single perforation of 20mm in diameter preserved. Such plates either have a large central perforation or a series of smaller ones, as in this case, with parallels from Higham Ferrers, Northants. (Poole 2009, 272-4, fig.5.56.2), and Empingham, Rutland (Cooper 2000, 70, fig.33).

Roman Pottery

A total of 20 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 408g was recovered from ten contexts, and the full record is presented below (Table 6).

Table 6: Quantified record of Roman pottery

Leicester Rd Melton Roman Pottery XA31.2016										
Context	Fabric	Form	Type	Part	Decor	Sherds	Wght	EVEs	Diam	Date
5	GW12	jar		body		1	11			2nd+
9	C2NV	jar		body		1	80			4th
9	BB1	jar		body	obtlat	1	10			4th
9	GW5	jar		body		3	18			2nd+
11	GW3	misc		body		2	4			2nd+
13	MO4	mortar	flanged	rim		1	80	0.1	300	L2nd- E3rd
13	GW4	bowl		base		1	10			125-250
39	GW9	jar		base		4	78			2nd+
39	GW7	bowl	flanged	rim		4	24	0.1	200	2-3rd
39	GW3	misc		body		1	3			2nd+

39	WW1	jar		base		1	90			M2nd
Total						20	408	0.2		

A small number of vessels are diagnostic enough to refine their dating within the Roman period and they tend to indicate that the assemblage as a whole is of 3rd and 4th century date, with context (39) being possibly earlier. Context (9) contained a Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware jar (Fabric C2NV) (Howe *et al.* 1980 no.76) and late BB1 cooking pot with obtuse lattice (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991 Type 20), both indicating a date in the later 3rd or 4th century. Context (13) contained the rim of a mortarium from the Mancetter-Hartshill potteries (MO4) dating to the later 2nd or early 3rd century and a sherd of Lower Nene Valley grey ware of similar date. Context (39) included a flanged bowl in a coarse grey ware (GW7) and the base of a 'burnt' white ware jar (WW1), dating to the 2nd or possibly the early 3rd century. The other grey ware (GW) vessels cannot be dated with any precision within the 2nd to 4th centuries, although the sherd in micaceous GW12 from (5) is likely to be of 2nd century date. In summary, the assemblage demonstrates the survival of stratified deposits spanning much of the Roman period and further work would yield a useful assemblage of Roman pottery from an area of the county where not many sites of this date have been excavated.

Roman Building Materials

A small assemblage of building materials and iron carpentry nails was recovered from contexts (9), (11), (13) and (39), the former quantified by fragment count and weight as detailed in Table 7.

Table 7: Quantified record of stone and ceramic building materials

Leicester Rd Melton Roman Building Materials XA31.2016				
Context	Description	Frag	Weight	Discard
13	Grey sandstone slab	2	360	sample retained
39	Tegula roof tile	4	260	sample retained
39	Swithland slate	1	5	sample retained

A single Roman ceramic (*tegula*) flanged roofing tile and a slate fragment came from 2nd or early 3rd century context (39), and a sandstone slab fragment from (13) of 3rd century date, indicating stone founded Roman buildings in the vicinity. Three near complete carpentry nails of Manning (1985) Type 1 (length 40mm with tips missing) were recovered from (9) (Sf4) and (11) (Sfs1 and 2), and part of an iron staple or joiner's dog (sf3) came from (9). All indicate Roman timber building construction in the vicinity and any further work will help define the nature and extent of such buildings on the site.

Lithics

Lynden Cooper

Some 48 worked flints were recovered including 27 from the area of Bronze Age activity. The flints were grey brown, semi-translucent and till-derived. The latter sub-group was mostly débitage displaying a fresh condition, but included four tools: two end scrapers, a thumbnail scraper and a microlith. The latter piece displays slight patination in contrast to the remainder. The microlith sf15 is an asymmetric leaf-shaped piece with partial covering retouch at the tip

on both ventral and dorsal sides. There is discontinuous flat inverse retouch including a removal at the base. The retouch is pressure flaking, a technique recorded from Middle Mesolithic assemblages of Honey Hill type (pers. obs.). However, the form is most reminiscent of *feuilles de gui* (mistletoe points) a regional Middle Mesolithic grouping restricted to North-East France and the Low Countries. Guesquiere has drawn attention to assemblages in Normandy that resemble closely English Middle Mesolithic groups and, furthermore, has pointed to the close typological similarity between continental *feuilles de gui* and Honey Hill points with inverse basal retouch.

The remaining pieces were from trenches 4, 5, 15, 16 and 25 and comprise cores, flake débitage and a single tool, a concave scraper. The sub-group displayed similar later prehistoric technology to the Bronze Age group. However, a single patinated core has two bladelet scars and is of Mesolithic type.

Animal Bone

Jennifer Browning

Introduction and Methods

Stratified hand-recovered animal bones were rapidly scanned to assess preservation and variety and therefore provide an indication of the faunal potential, should the site progress to excavation. No specimens recovered through environmental sampling were available. Twenty-four different contexts produced faunal remains; the majority of these were recovered from features dating to the Iron Age, with smaller quantities from Roman features.

The bones were examined macroscopically and their preservation was assessed using criteria defined by Harland et al (2003).

The Assemblage

A total of 133 animal bone fragments were recovered during the evaluation; however many of these were the fragmented parts of the same bones. Fragmentation was extensive, with evidence for both fresh and old breaks, resulting in an assemblage with very few complete bones. The surface condition of the fragments was predominantly poor, defined as 'surface flaky or powdery over 50% of specimen' or fair (surface solid in places, but flaky or powdery on up to 49% of specimen) (Harland et al 2003). This may inhibit identification of butchery marks and other modifications; no butchery marks were observed during this assessment. Despite problems with preservation, the range of identified taxa included cattle, sheep/goat, horse, pig, dog and hare, and a fragment of deer antler. Both cranial and post-cranial elements were represented, however there were no tooth-rows with more than one age-able tooth in situ and few epiphyses, indicating low potential for the assemblage to address questions about animal husbandry. Three fragments were gnawed, indicating the availability of some bones to dogs prior to their final deposition. Two burnt fragments were also present.

Discussion

The animal bones were primarily recovered from Iron Age features (72%), with a smaller proportion from Roman and undated features. There were no bones dating from the Beaker period. The generally poor surface condition and fragmented nature of the assemblage suggest that a larger quantity of bones than normal would be needed to provide useful information

about animal husbandry and exploitation of animal products at the site. However, the prevalence of bones within archaeological features suggests that this would not be impossible should the site progress to excavation stage. This brief examination confirms the presence of common domestic mammals, such as cattle, sheep/goat, pig and horse and in addition, dog, deer and hare were also recovered. Cattle bones were the most common. The assemblage is currently too small to suggest patterns in terms of taxa, element distribution, dietary preference or husbandry. However, the fact that many of the identified features have produced bones is encouraging. The recovery of environmental remains and animal bones is a research priority for environmental archaeology in the East Midlands (Monckton 2006, 272): despite the growing number of Iron Age sites in the region, many have produced relatively small and poorly preserved animal bone assemblages.

Table 8: Range of taxa noted within the assemblage by phase, based on pottery dates

	cattle	pig	sheep/ goat	deer	dog	horse	hare	large mml	med mml	indet	Total
I.A	8		5	1		2		58	17	5	96
20	1								4		5
24								1			1
26	1							2			3
31	1		3								4
45	1			1				8	4		14
60						1		15			16
79	2							5			7
81								1	1		2
85	1		1					4	1		7
86			1						7		8
99										5	5
101								12			12
103								1			1
108	1					1		9			11
Roman	1		1		1		1	5		1	10
5								1			1
9	1							4			6
11			1								1
13					1						1
39										1	1
Features with no pottery	1	1	2			1		20	2		27
1			1						1		2
16		1									1
58			1			1		19			21
62	1										1
64								1	1		2
(blank)											
Total	10	1	7	1	1	3	1	83	18	6	133

Table 9 Taxa and element arranged by context

Context/ element	cattle	pig	sheep/ goat	deer	dog	hare	horse	large mml	med mml	indet.	Total
1			1						1		2
molar			1								1
shaft									1		1
5								1			1
shaft								1			1
9	1					1		4			6
metacarpal	1										1
metapodia 1						1					1
shaft								4			4
11			1								1
femur			1								1
13					1						1
1st phalanx					1						1
16		1									1
scapula		1									1
20	1								4		5
1st phalanx	1										1
shaft									4		4
24								1			1
shaft								1			1
26	1							2			3
metacarpal	1										1
shaft								2			2
31	1		3								4
calcaneum	1										1
mandible			1								1
tibia			2								2
39										1	1
shaft										1	1
45	1			1				8	4		14
antler				1							1
pelvis	1										1
shaft								8	4		12
58			1				1	19			21
metatarsal			1								1
shaft								19			19
tibia							1				1
60							1	15			16
shaft								15			15
tibia							1				1
62	1										1
molar	1										1
64								1	1		2
shaft								1	1		2
79	2							5			7

Context/ element	cattle	pig	sheep/ goat	deer	dog	hare	horse	large mml	med mml	indet.	Total
calcaneum	1										1
molar	1										1
shaft								5			5
81								1	1		2
shaft								1	1		2
85	1		1					4	1		7
radius	1										1
rib								1			1
shaft								3	1		4
skull			1								1
86			1						7		8
femur			1								1
shaft									7		7
99										5	5
shaft										5	5
101								12			12
shaft								12			12
103								1			1
shaft								1			1
108	1						1	9			11
cervical vertebra								1			1
incisor							1				1
molar	1										1
scapula								1			1
shaft								7			7
Total	10	1	6	1	1	1	3	83	18	6	133

Key: large mml = cattle, horse, red deer size; medium mammal = undiagnostic to species but of sheep/goat, pig, roe deer size; indet= indeterminate

The Charred Plant Remains

Rachel Small and Luis Huscroft

Introduction

This report presents the study of charred plant remains recovered from seven samples taken from pits, ditches and buried soils dating to the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman periods. Plant remains, including cereal grains, chaff, and weed seeds provide a useful indication of past diet, agricultural practice and environment.

Method

Visual assessment was undertaken and samples 1 (9), 2 (64), 4 (85) and 7 (108) appeared sterile. To confirm this, one litre of each was bucket-floated into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. No plant remains were retrieved confirming this assumption (Table 10). Therefore, the decision was made not to undertake further work. The other samples were processed in a York tank using a

0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were transferred into plastic boxes and left to air dry and were then sorted for plant remains using an x10-40 stereo microscope. The residues were also air dried and the fractions over 4mm (coarse) sorted for all finds. Plant remains were identified by comparison to modern reference material available at ULAS and names follow Stace (1991).

Results

Sample 5 (95)

Fine modern rootlets were present in the sample but the quantities were small suggesting the effects of bio-turbation were minimal. Charcoal fragments equal to or greater than 2mm (and therefore suitable for radio-carbon dating) were present but rare (approximately under 10 fragments). Plant remains were not present in sample 5 (95) the earlier of the two.

Sample 3 (31) – Iron Age

Again, a small quantity of fine modern rootlets was present and charcoal fragments equal to or greater than 2mm were rare. Two spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta* L.) glume bases and seeds including dock (*Rumex* spp.) and goosefoot (*Chenopodium* spp.) which grow on arable and disturbed land and large grasses were present.

Sample 6 (99)

A small fragment of hazelnut (*Corylus avellana* L.) shell was identified in sample 6 (99). Fine modern rootlets and charcoal fragments equal to or greater than 2mm were again present.

Table 2 Assessment of Samples

Sample No.	Context	Cut	Context Type	Date	Volume (L)	Notes
1	9	10	Fill ditch	Roman	1	Sterile, no plant remains.
2	64	63	Pit or post-hole	Pre-historic	1	Sterile, no plant remains.
3	31	30	Ditch fill	Iron Age	10	Spelt wheat glume base x 2, dock x 1, goosefoot x 2, large grass seed x 2, indeterminate seed x 1.
4	85	84	Lower ditch fill	Iron Age	1	Sterile, no plant remains.
5	95	94	Pit fill	Early Bronze Age	10	No plant remains.
6	99		Potential buried soil layer	Bronze Age?	10	1 x hazelnut shell.
7	108	109	Ditch/hollow feature	Iron Age	1	Sterile, no plant remains.

Discussion and recommendations for further work

The assemblage as a whole produced very few remains. Sample 3 (31) which dated to the Iron Age contained the most, a small number of weed seeds and spelt glume bases, and is probably indicative of a scatter of burnt food preparation debris. This is typical of other prehistoric Leicestershire sites such as Kirby Muxloe (Monckton 2011, 133). If further excavation is carried out at the site or in the vicinity it is recommended that a suitable sampling strategy is implemented.

Discussion

The evaluation trenches have targeted several geophysical anomalies within the proposed development site. Positive results in a number of the trenches have confirmed extensive areas of archaeological activity.

A possible leaf-shaped flint microlith of Middle Mesolithic date represented the earliest evidence for human activity recovered during the evaluation and was found within a group of pit features from Trench 6 located within the west side of the southern field area. Although possibly in a residual context there may be some potential for activity from this period at this site.

One area of discrete Early Bronze Age activity has been revealed in Trench 23 located in the north-east corner of the site close to the A607 Leicester Road. The ditch and pit appeared to be sealed by a buried soil deposit and layer of colluvium. The ditch feature was found to be sterile and contained no finds but the pit contained Early Bronze Age pottery sherds and flints, including a significant group of Beaker pottery having many similarities to the Asfordby assemblage (Cooper 2012) in terms of the forms and decoration of the Beakers and it likely that the dating falls in the period 2200-1900, when long-necked beakers with zoned decoration are current (Needham 2005, 95). The pit had also contained Early Bronze Age flint, which was mostly débitage displaying a fresh condition. It included three tools: two end scrapers, a thumbnail scraper.

Nine trenches were excavated in the northern part of the development area of which seven of the locations targeted a possible a settlement, which the evaluation has now confirmed as mid-late Iron Age date. This site occupying the majority of the northernmost field was identified in the geophysical survey (Roseveare et al 2016) and suggests an irregular, but roughly trapezoidal boundary enclosure that extends, into eastern field.

Within the enclosure are a series of rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary, with a particularly dense concentration of features in the centre and south-western part of the enclosure and a slightly more sporadic distribution along the northern boundary and in the east. The features were thought to represent a settlement that was evidently long-lived and consisted of a spread of possible roundhouses, large penannular enclosures that may represent animal pens all intercutting one another. The two evaluation trenches (Trenches 15 and 24) excavated across these dense areas revealed features that closely match the strong anomalies shown in the geophysical survey. These features included well preserved eaves drip gullies and post-holes for probable roundhouses and enclosure ditches. Some of ditches and gullies were cleared and recut and some were intercutting, all confirming a relatively long lived site with potentially

different phases of activity. The gullies and ditches did produce good evidence of domestic activity, including pottery and animal bone.

Trench 16 was located towards the north-west corner of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure ditch and targeted some circular or sub-rectangular enclosures located to the south of the boundary. The trench revealed a large northern boundary ditch that was subsequently re cut twice suggesting again relatively long occupation. To south of the boundary ditch two internal enclosure ditches were revealed. These features appear to have matched a scatter of potential internal small enclosures revealed in the geophysical survey. Their fills contained Iron Age pottery and animal bone.

Trenches 17 and 18 were located towards the north-eastern quarter of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure and targeted a potential series of rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary. They revealed a curvilinear ditch that may have been an eaves drip gully perhaps associated with a roundhouse structure and enclosure ditches. The presence of pottery and animal bone would again indicate that domestic refuse was disposed of in its back fill. This possible roundhouse feature would suggest that there is potential for further buildings within these eastern field enclosures.

Trench 19 was another trench that targeted a series of rectangular field enclosures along the eastern boundary located towards south-eastern quarter of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure. The trench revealed a ditch and post-hole suggesting further potential for structures and enclosures in this area. This trench had also targeted what was thought to be the eastern boundary ditch for trapezoidal boundary enclosure.

The trenches to the north of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure ditch (Trenches 20, 21, 22 and 23) did not reveal any further evidence of archaeological activity. One of these trenches did target a weak geophysical anomaly but no evidence of this feature was located. A deep accumulation of colluvium was recorded within Trench 23. It is difficult to date this colluviation but an Iron Age sherd was found below this deposit and it clearly pre-dates the recorded ridge and furrow. If the build-up post-dates the Iron Age activity it would strengthen the concept that the origins of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure boundary settlement was directly related to the local topography as the downward gradient of the valley slope would have been more prominent than the current landscape would suggest.

Trench 25 was another trench and targeted a semi-circular geophysical anomaly located south-west corner of the field. A large wide feature was found at the eastern end of the trench. The fill contained Iron Age pottery and animal bone suggesting that refuse was used in the back fill of this feature. The geophysical survey suggested that the trapezoidal boundary enclosure extends into eastern field and this feature could be part of the south-eastern extent of this enclosure. The trenches to the south of the trapezoidal boundary enclosure ditch (Trenches 11 and 12) did not reveal any further evidence of archaeological activity

The distinct lack of evidence for settlement on the northern and southern sides of trapezoidal boundary enclosure suggests that it marked a point in the landscape beyond which it was not occupied. It was clear during the evaluation that the topography seemed to play a key part in the location of the settlement. The projected alignment of the settlement ran in a north-west to south-east direction along the northern edge of a prominent ridge with the land sloping away to the north.

A total of 99 sherds of Middle to Late Iron Age pottery was retrieved from various excavated features located in within this settlement. The assemblage belongs to the East Midlands scored ware tradition currently dated from the 4th or mid-3rd century BC to the earlier 1st century AD. Several of the Iron Age features were sampled for paleo-environmental evidence and these were largely positive suggesting the potential for such information was high. The animal bones were primarily recovered from Iron Age features (72%), with a smaller proportion from Roman and undated features. A brief examination confirms the presence of common domestic mammals, such as cattle, sheep/goat, pig and horse and in addition, dog, deer and hare were also recovered. While cattle bones were the most common, the assemblage is currently too small to suggest patterns in terms of taxa, element distribution, dietary preference or husbandry. The environmental samples produced very few remains. Those taken from the Iron Age deposits contained the most comprising a small number of weed seeds and spelt glume bases, and is probably indicative of a scatter of burnt food preparation debris. This is typical of other prehistoric Leicestershire sites such as Kirby Muxloe.

At the southern end of the development an area of Roman occupation was revealed. Trenches 7 and 8 were targeting a rectangular anomaly located in south-east corner of the field and identified in the geophysical survey. The trenches contained numerous linear features, probably representing ditched boundaries to plots. These features appear to match the potential linear ditches or structures revealed in the geophysical survey. Spreads and some evidence for structural activity, in the form of post-holes, possible beam-slots and roofing tile, were recovered in association with the boundaries, suggesting that the occupation included domestic activity. This is supported by a reasonable assemblage of Roman pottery, heat affected daub and animal bone that was recovered from the deposits. The animal bone was fragmentary and the pottery noticeably abraded which may be a consequence of the acidic nature of the soil. A small number of Roman pottery sherds were diagnostic enough to refine their dating within the Roman period and they tend to indicate that the assemblage as a whole is of 3rd and 4th century date. The pottery indicated a range of imports to the site including a Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware, late BB1 cooking pot, and rim of a mortarium from the Mancetter-Hartshill potteries. The Roman features were sampled for paleoenvironmental evidence but these were largely negative suggesting the potential for such information on this part of the site might be low.

A number of the trenches recorded north-north-east to south-south-west orientated furrows that corresponded well the geophysical survey. The origins of ridge and furrow can be traced to the 10th century or before and was in use in the Midlands until the early post-medieval period.

Conclusion

The archaeological trial trench evaluation has revealed possible evidence for Mesolithic activity in the form of a Middle Mesolithic microlith and Bronze Age activity associated with lithic tools and Rusticated Beaker ware.

The Middle to Late Iron Age Iron Age trapezoidal boundary enclosure occupies the majority of the northernmost field and extends, into eastern field. A geophysical survey of the site and evaluation trenches have revealed what was probably very large extensive 7.5 hectare Iron Age settlement, similar to other 'aggregated' settlements revealed in the East Midlands (Willis 2006, 101), for example, Beaumont Leys (Thomas 2008), Manor Farm Humberstone (Thomas

2008) Elms Farm Humberstone (Charles Parkinson Foreman 2000) and Kirby Muxloe (Thomas 2016). These excavated settlements were evidently long-lived and consisted of several roundhouses, animal pens and four-post storage structures. All had a range of finds including pottery, animal bone and quernstones, and occasional 'exotic' artefacts hinted at the wide ranging contacts of the settlements. The faunal remains and environmental information that was recovered from these sites have suggested that the inhabitants of these types settlement were predominantly involved with livestock farming. The settlement may have been associated with the 5 hectare Middle to Late Iron Age Burrough Hill Hillfort, 6 miles to the south-east (Thomas 2016). .

A potential extensive area of 3rd-4th century Roman settlement has been revealed in the south east corner of the development area. The area was characterised by groups of linear features, probably representing ditched boundaries and beam-slots associated with structural activity. There was further evidence of structures in the form of post-holes and roofing tile recovered from the features. There was a reasonable assemblage of Roman pottery and animal bone suggesting that the occupation included domestic activity.

The evaluation has confirm the high potential of this area of the Wreake valley for heritage assets which together with the Saxon and medieval sites to the south-west at Eye Kettleby suggest an area of significant occupation from the prehistoric to the medieval periods.

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.

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Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire Museums Service, under accession no. A31.2016.

The archive contains:

- 25 trench recording sheets
- 4 context summary records, 111 context sheets
- 3 photographic recording sheet
- 1 sample records sheet
- 1 small finds recording sheet 1
- 4 drawing index sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- survey data
- unbound copy of this report
- thumbnail print of digital photographs

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10/05/2016

Appendix OASIS data entry

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-251033		
	Project Name	Evaluation New Guadalupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray		
	Start/end dates of field work	07-03-2016 - 04-04-2016		
	Previous/Future Work	Yes / Not known		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Cultivated Land		
	Monument Type/Period	Bronze Age/Iron Age/Roman Settlement		
	Significant Finds/Period	Flints Mesolithic/Early Bronze Age Pottery Early Bronze Age/Roman/Iron Age		
	Development Type	Residential		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Pre-planning enquiry		
	Planning Ref.	Pre-planning enquiry		
	PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	New Guadalupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0FQ	
Study Area		22.8 ha		
Site Coordinates		SK 741 180		
Height OD		95m to 70m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Dr Patrick Clay		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Tim Higgins		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	CgMs Consulting		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	LCC Mus Service	LCC Mu sService	LCC Mus Service
	ID (Acc. No.)	X.A31.2016	X.A31.2016	X.A31.2016
	Contents	Flint, Pottery, Building Material, Metal	Photos Survey data	Evaluation records Field Notes
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An Archaeological Evaluation New Guadalupe, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray		
	Author	Higgins, T.		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2016-082		
	Date	07/03/2016 to 04/04/2016		
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