UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation on Land south of Hoby Road, Asfordby, Leicestershire

(NGR SK 69951 18707)

James Patrick

ULAS Report No 2017- 023

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For Jelson Ltd.

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CONTENTS

FIGURES

An Archaeological Evaluation on Land South of Hoby Road, Asfordby, Leicestershire (NGR SK 69951 18707)

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Summary

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken during January 2017 on land south of Hoby Road, Asfordby by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. The fieldwork was undertaken in order to assess the potential impact on any archaeological remains within the area, prior to a planning application for residential development of the site. The work follows on from a previous trial trench evaluation (phase 1) in early 2015 preceded by a desk-based assessment, fieldwalking and geophysical surveys, which suggested the presence of two prehistoric ring ditches, one of which was located directly underneath the overhead power lines crossing the site. These may be associated with a significant scatter of Neolithic- Bronze Age worked flints, including tools, which were recovered during field walking and may have derived from ploughed out burial mounds.

The archaeological evaluation followed on from the previous excavation of 20 trenches on former pastoral and arable land on the east side of the overhead powerlines but proved negative for archaeological remains. A further 30 trenches were opened most of which reflected the negative results of the previous evaluation. One ring ditch was confirmed by trenching which revealed the full extent and can be interpreted as a ploughed out round barrow. Additional trenches did not locate the possible second ring ditch.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X A138 2014.

Introduction

This report presents the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out on behalf of Jelson Ltd. in January 2017. The work was designed to investigate potential archaeological deposits on land south of Hoby Road, Asfordby, Leicestershire (SK 69951 18707**).** It follows recommendations from the Leicestershire County Council, Principal Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to the planning authority for a pre-determination trial trench evaluation. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG March 2012).All archaeological work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014).

An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Hunt 2014), geophysical survey (Davies 2014), fieldwalking survey, and trial trench evaluation (phase 1), (Browning 2014; 2015) had already been carried out.

Site Location, Geology, Topography, and Description

The application area itself consists of two fields, one pasture to the east and the other arable, which lie to the south-west of Asfordby village west of Station Lane and south of Hoby Road. The pasture field and the eastern part of the arable field had previously been evaluated by trial trenching but with negative results (Browning 2015). The present evaluation included three further trenches in Phase 1, the remainder covering Phase 2 to the west. The assessment area covers a total of *c* 2.6 ha and is also bounded by hedgerows along the north including a bridle way along the west side.
The area is on a slope with a maximum height of 74m aOD at the north-east falling to 63aOD at the south west, where it bounded by a hedgerow and the River Wreake on the south.

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

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

Archaeological and Historical Background

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that there are archaeological sites located within the assessment area itself (HER Ref. No. **MLE3329**). These are a pair of prehistoric ring ditches originally identified as cropmarks on aerial photographs. These have been confirmed by the results of a geophysical survey (Davies 2014; Figure 7), while the field walking, conducted as part of the same intervention, recovered flint artefacts of Neolithic - Bronze Age date. These consisted of a significant assemblage of 74 worked flints, which included 40 tools, including an unusual scale-flaked knife, several cores, scrapers and piercers (Figure 6). The remainder of the assemblage was made up of flakes, some of which were retouched. The assemblage is believed to date from the Early Bronze Age but contains a number of re-used pieces from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. The location of the finds suggests that they are associated with the two ring ditches. The flint assemblage supports the interpretation of the cropmarks as Neolithic/Bronze Age burial mounds, which were subsequently ploughed-out.

A low density scatter of medieval and early post-medieval pottery was also recovered across the area that was field walked. A slightly higher concentration of late post-medieval and modern pottery was also present, which has been discarded after examination and logging. These finds are likely to be associated with manuring activity, taking place from the medieval period onwards. North-south aligned ridge and furrow is still extant on the pasture field, showing that the land was not developed in subsequent periods.

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

There are also several other known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the application area. Excavations carried out by ULAS on a site to the north-west of the village (the recently constructed housing area of Flint Close), 450m north of the assessment area, revealed evidence of a rare Mesolithic flint knapping site with a large later Neolithic/ Bronze Age settlement site above (**MLE21134**&**MLE21135**).

Two Mesolithic pebble hammers were retrieved from a site at Regency Road, 720m north-east of the site (**MLE7066**). Flint cores and worked flint have been found close to the Church, 700m east of the assessment area (**MLE7568**&**MLE8867**).

A pit dated to the Roman period was found during the excavation work at Flint Close (see above) (**MLE21136**).Two 4th century coins were discovered in a garden at Klondyke Way 170m north of the assessment area (**MLE7956**).

Figure 2: excavation of trenches in progress

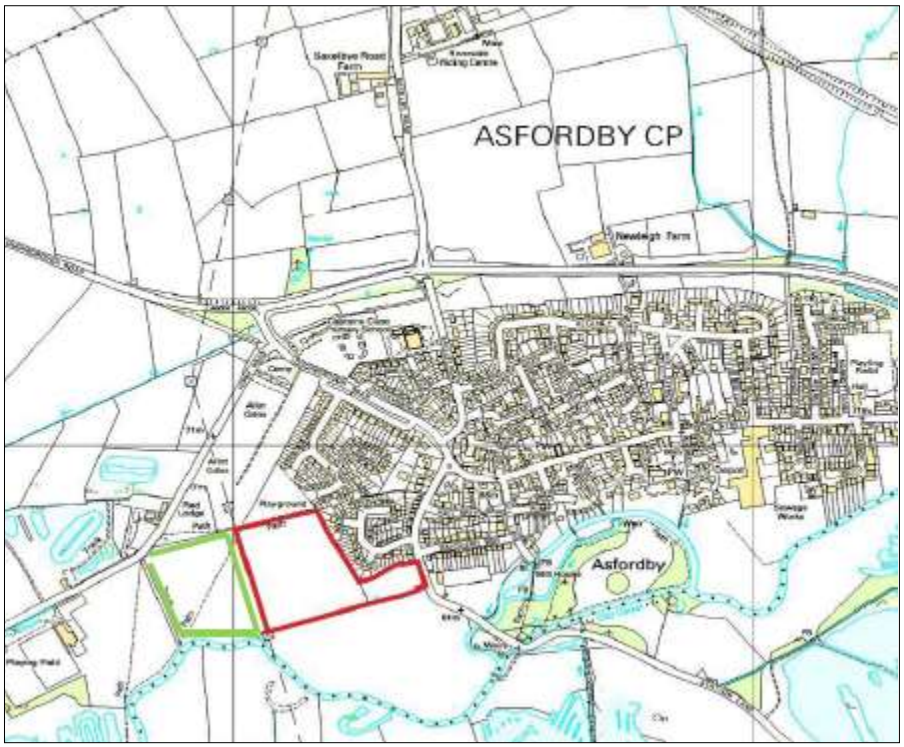

Figure 3: Plan of proposed development area outlined in green and red. Present assessment (phase 2) area outlined in green. Area of current archaeological intervention shaded. Provided by Client. Scale unknown.

Figure 4: Plan of proposed Phase 2 development. Provided by Jelson Ltd.

The village of Asfordby has Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian origins. The site lies just to the west of the historic medieval core of the village (**MLE8865**). The site of a medieval watermill lies 450m east of the assessment area (**MLE3334**). A Saxon cross is situated at All Saints' Church, 600m east of the assessment area (**MLE3334**). There are medieval remains nearby, including an early medieval house, an oven and pottery (**MLE8866**). Further medieval pottery finds were found at Woodhouse Road, 600m north-east of the site (**MLE16975**). (taken from Browning J., 2015, rpt no.2015-044).

Previous trial trenching on the pastoral land directly east of the assessment area proved negative for archaeological remains. Trenching during phase 1 excluded excavation over the ring ditch as shown by cropmark evidence. This was due to the presence of overhead power lines.

Aims and Objectives

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that can demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area and should enable reasoned and informed recommendations to be made to the local planning authority and, if appropriate, a suitable mitigation strategy for the proposed development to be formulated.

The main objectives of the evaluation 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.

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. The archaeological evaluation has the potential to contribute to the following research aims:

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

There is evidence of Neolithic-Bronze Age activity from the area and its vicinity. Ring ditches suggest the presence of Neolithic—Bronze Age ploughed out burial mounds. Flint tools from the eastern field may be associated with these burial areas. The evaluation had the potential to contribute to our understanding of burial practices of these periods.

Methodology

All work will follow the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (2014) and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014).

A *c*.3.5% sample of the application area was evaluated by trial trenching which is the equivalent of fifteen 30m by 1.8m trenches and four 15m x 1.8m trenches (*c*. 918 sq. m.). However the coverage increased with a further five 15m x 1.8m trenches orientated north to south below the overhead power lines to locate the ring ditch (cropmark) which was not possible to evaluate during Phase 1, due to the presence of the overhead power lines and the constraints for excavating underneath them required by National Grid. A further four 30m x 1.8m trenches were excavated to the east in Phase 1. This made an initial total coverage *c.* 1,271 sq. m) making a total coverage of land to *c.* 4.8%. Coverage varied as trenches were extended and some added to locate ring ditches. Overall site coverage at the field evaluations conclusion amounted to 1,500 sq. m equating to *c.* 5.7% of the 2.6 ha area.

Figure 5 Aerial photograph of assessment area (western field), looking north-west, and showing cropmarks (provided by Leicestershire County Council)

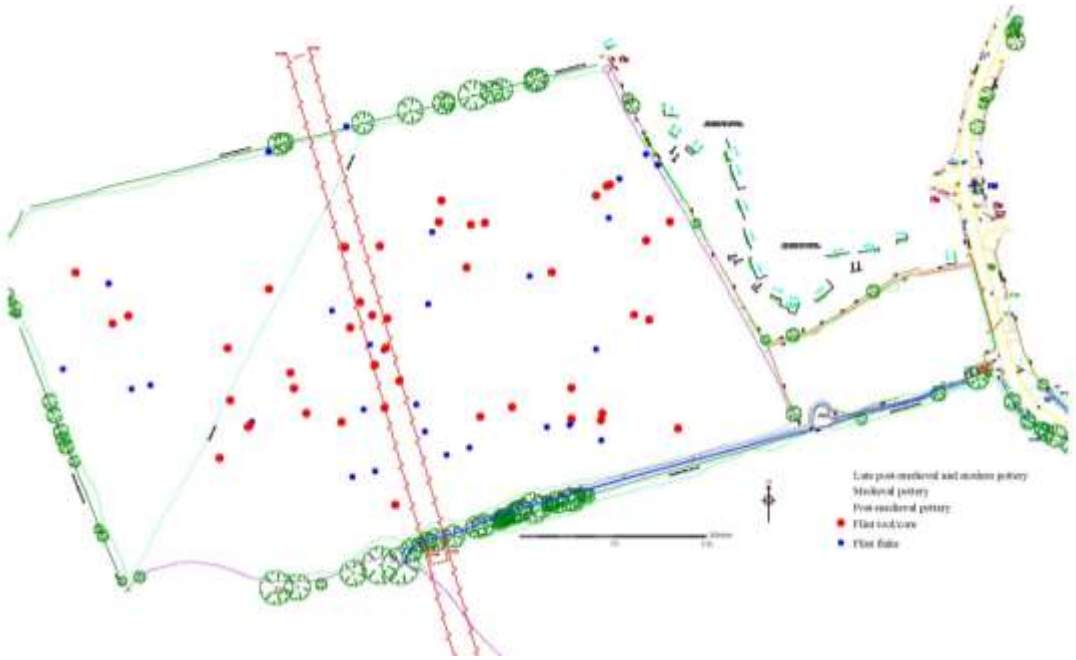

Figure 6: Distribution of struck flints recovered during fieldwalking (Browning 2014)

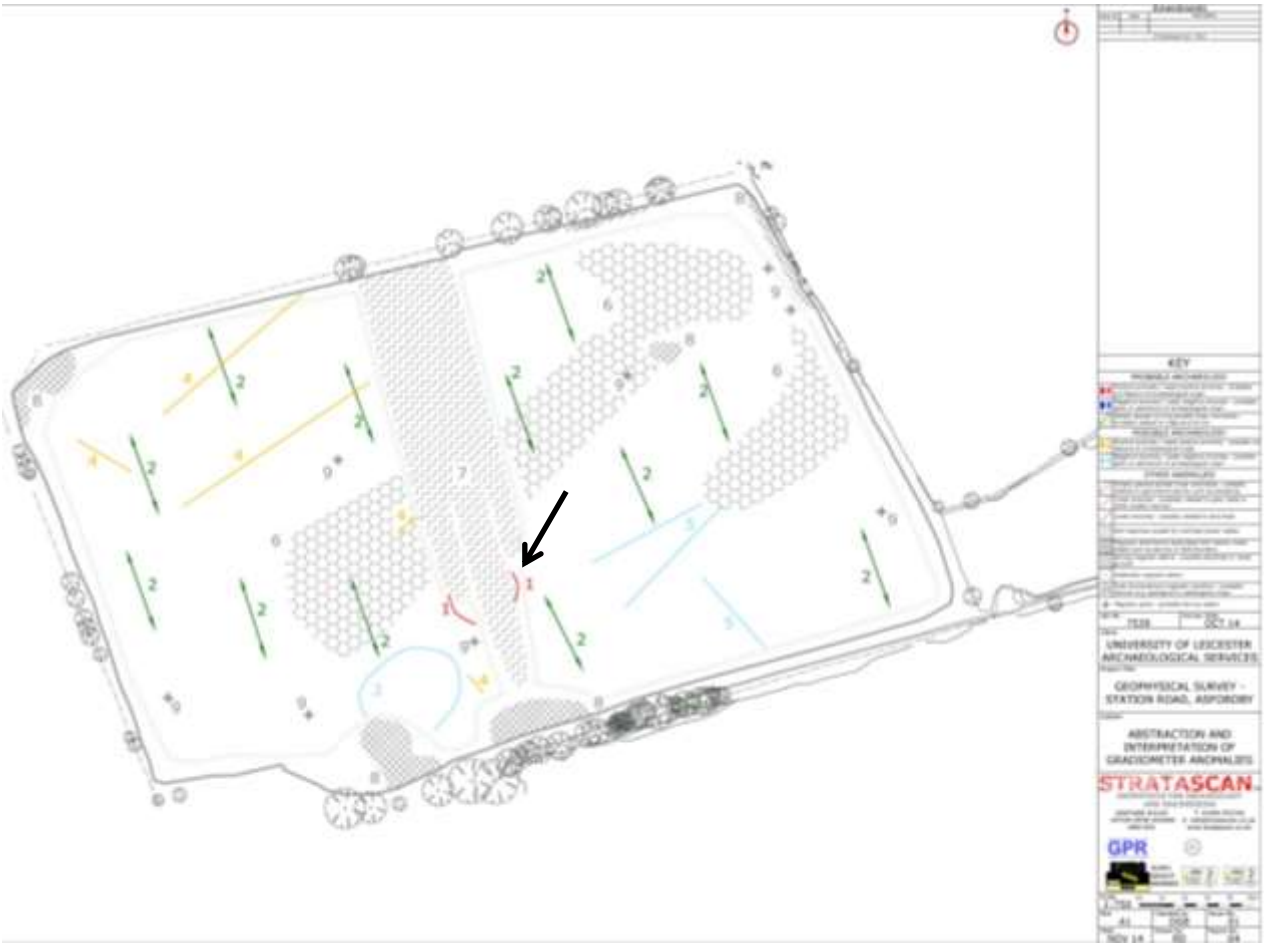

Figure 7: Abstraction and interpretation of geophysical anomalies, ring ditch arrowed (Davies 2014)

Topsoil and overburden was removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision using a small rubber tracked 360 degree mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless 2.0m wide bucket. Trenches were excavated down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed ground, whichever was reached first. All excavation by machine and hand was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of preservation *in situ* or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation. Trenches were examined by hand cleaning, where appropriate and any suspected archaeological deposits sample-excavated by hand to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. A photographic record utilising high resolution digital images was maintained during the course of the fieldwork. The location of the trenches was recorded using a Leica TC robotic Total Station. The methodology for the work was set out more fully in the WSI (ULAS 2017).

Results

Thirty trenches were excavated across the area of proposed development including the arable field, and the western side of the pastoral field into Phase1. Unless otherwise stated, the topsoil consisted of a soft, dark greenish grey/brown clayey-silt with 1- 5% pebbles, below which mid-orange brown clayey silt subsoil with 1-3% pebbles was present. The sub-soil represented a colluvium which although present at the top of the slope (north) where the land levelled out was much thinner than at the foot of the slope as to be expected. The natural geology was found to be variable across the site, ranging through clays, sands and gravels and where it differs, it will be noted in each trench description. With the exception of Trenches 42, and 44 no deposits were revealed. However a single slot [100] was excavated across the ring ditch, in trench 42 and flint and a single pot sherd was recovered. In addition to the stratified finds, a number of struck flints were observed and collected from the field surface. These were identified by Lynden Cooper all reflecting later prehistoric lithic technology.

The trenches are listed from 21 continuing from the previous Phase 1 evaluation trenches 1 - 20 (Browning 2015)

Trench 21

Trench 21 was located close to the northern boundary under the overhead power lines. This had a gentle south to north slope following the trench orientation. The natural substratum consisted of light yellow brown silty sand clays, with frequent pebbles/gravel. Two heavily ploughed east to west furrows were located which were on a different alignment to the north to south furrows revealed further down slope. No archaeological features were identified. Furrows are present cutting the natural sub-stratum is not noted.

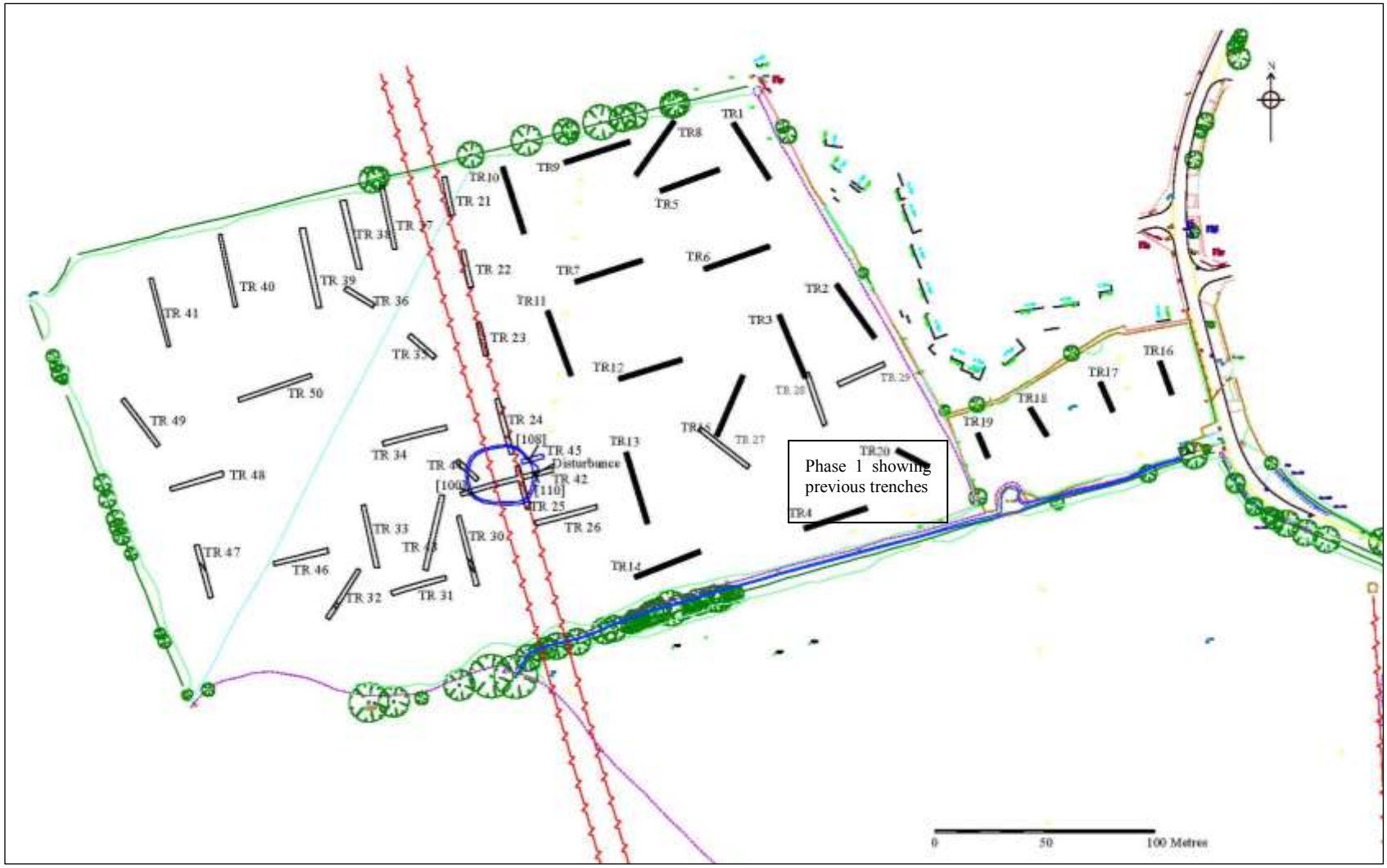

Figure 8: Plan showing location of trenches phase 1 and 2

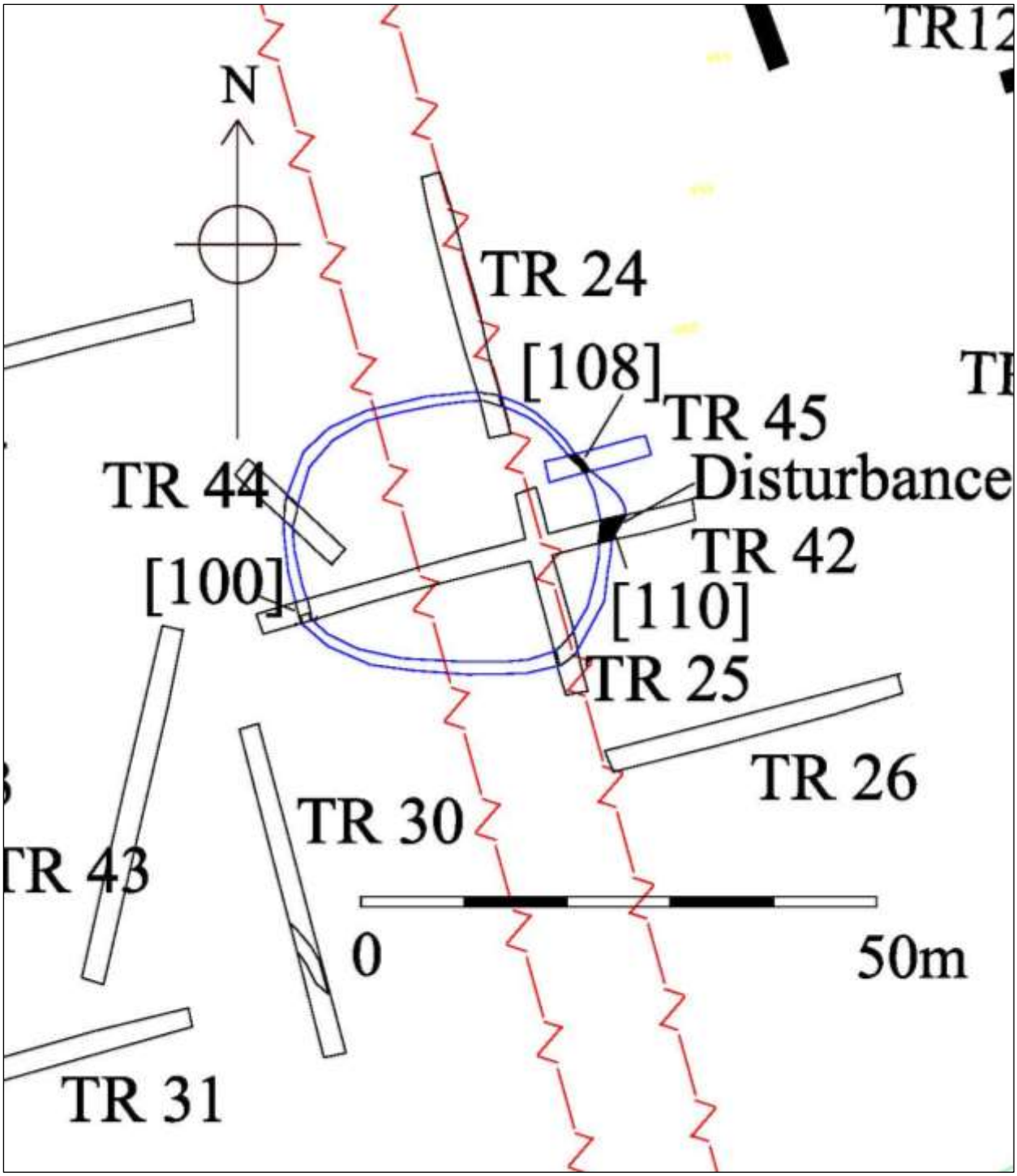

Figure 9: Plan showing location of trenches around ring ditch and barrow (postulated course highlighted in blue)

Trench 21 N-S							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
17	2.0		34		0.30		0.50
Interval (m) fromN	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**17**	**to S end**

Topsoil depth	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.28	0.40	0.40	
Subsoil depth	-	-	-	0.02	-	-	
Top of Natural substratum	-	0.40	0.50	0.30	0.40	0.40	
Base of trench	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.30	0.40	0.40	

Trench 22

Trench 22 was located in the same north to south orientation as trench 21 directly to the south situated on fairly level ground. The natural substratum was a silty clay. The trench contained no archaeological deposits.

Trench 22 N-S							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
17	2.0		34		0.35		0.50
Interval (m) from NW	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**17**	**to SEend**
Topsoil depth	0.40	0.35	0.40	0.35	0.40	0.50	
Subsoil depth	-	-	0.10	0.05	-	-	
Top of Natural substratum	0.40	0.35	0.50	0.40	0.40	0.50	
Base of trench	0.40	0.35	0.50	0.40	0.40	0.50	

Trench 23

Trench 23 was orientated north-south and sloped gently down to the south, with an increasing depth of subsoil. The natural substratum consisted of a mixture of orange brown silty-sand and gravel with moderate sorted stones. Tree roots were observed on the base of the trench along with many small roots and bioturbation. The trench contained no archaeological deposits.

Trench 23 N-S							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
15	2.0		30		0.40		0.45
Interval (m) from N	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**	**to Send**
Topsoil depth	0.35	0.35	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.35	
Subsoil depth	0.05	0.05	0.12	-	0.15	0.05	
Top of Natural substratum	0.40	0.40	0.42	-	0.45	0.40	
Base of trench	0.40	0.40	0.42	0.45*	0.45	0.40	

* denotes depth of tree throw pit

Trench 24

Trench 4 was aligned north to south and located down slope from trench 23 and the northern boundary below the overhead power lines. A slight slope to the south was evident in the trench. The topsoil consisted of the same soft dark greenish grey clayey-

silt overlying a loose light yellow brown sandy-silt colluvium sub-soil. Following extension of the original 15 metre long trench to 26 metres, the northern extent of the ring ditch was located 22 metres from the northern end of the trench. This was observed as a dark greyish brown silty-clay clearly visible curving across the trench width cutting the same substratum as that observed in trench 23. This was photographed and surveyed but not excavated as left undeveloped.

Trench 24									
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**		
26	2.0		52		0.36		0.55		
Interval (m) from N	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**16**	**20**	**23**	**to S end 26**
Topsoil depth	0.40	0.34	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.30	0.32	0.22	0.28
Subsoil depth	-	0.06	0.10	0.08	0.1 5	0.30	-	0.14	0.14
Top of Natural substratum	0.40	0.40	0.50	0.48	0.55	0.60	0.32	-	0.42
Base of trench	0.48	0.40	0.50	0.48	0.55	0.60	0.72	0.36*	0.42

* Denotes depth to top of ring ditch.

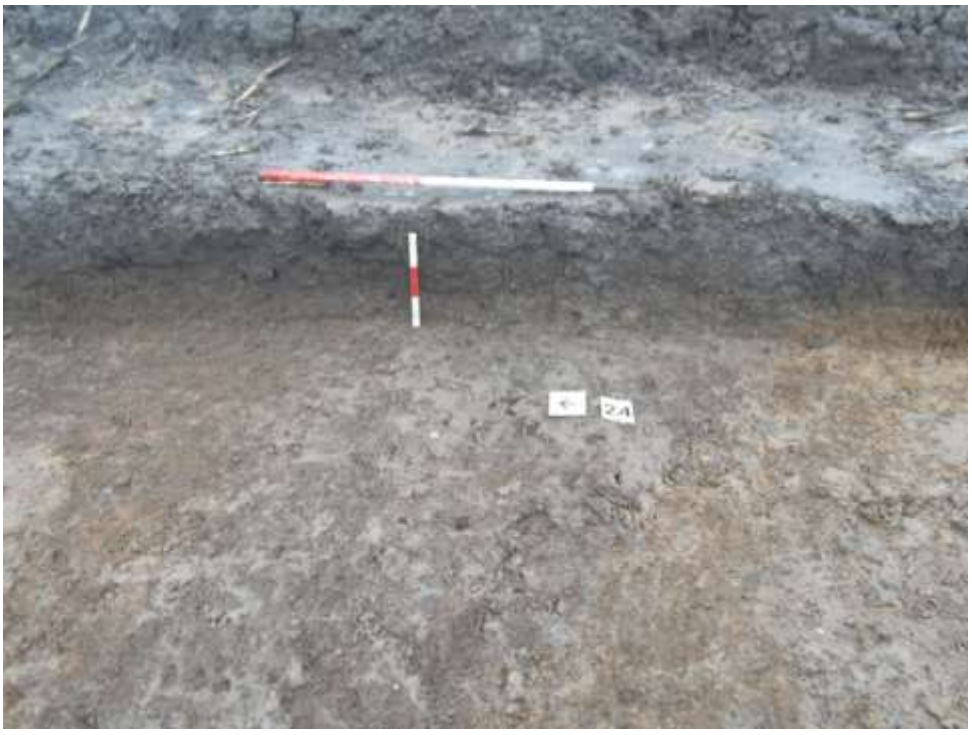

Figure 10: Trench 24 showing ring ditch. Looking east.
1 m and 0.30 m scale

Figure 11: Trench 24 showing ring ditch. Looking north.
2 metre scale

Trench 25

Trench 25 was located directly south of trench 24. Topsoil and subsoil was similar to that in Trench 24. The natural substratum consisted of light orange brown sandy clay and gravels. The southern side of the ring ditch was revealed crossing the width of the trench clearly cutting the natural substratum 16 metres from the northern end. The trench was extended from the original 15 m to 19 m crossing east to west trench 42. Observation of the ditch showed it to have more gravel and re-deposited natural substratum probably related to slippage from the barrow mound especially as the ditch is located down slope. The ditch in this trench was not excavated due to not being part of the development proposals

Trench 25								
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**	
19	2.0		38		0.28		0.45	
Interval (m) from S	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**	**16**	**to N end 19**
Topsoil depth	0.32	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.28	0.28	0.22	0.22
Subsoil depth	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.10	-	-	0.10	0.10

Top of Natural substratum	0.40	0.36	0.36	0.40	0.28	0.28	-	0.30
Base of trench	0.45	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.28	0.28	0.32*	0.30

* Denotes depth to top of ring ditch

Figure 12: Trench 25 showing Ring Ditch.
1 m & 0.30m scale. Looking east.

Trench 26

Trench 26 was located at a right angle to trench 25 orientated east to west towards the former evaluation area Phase 1. This is one of the four extra trenches east of the overhead power lines. The topsoil was the same as the other trenches, but with a much thicker colluvium sub-soil at the base of the slope. This was also the same as the other trenches. The natural substratum which consisted of a light orange brown silty-sand with frequent gravel. No archaeology was observed.

Trench 26							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
29	2.0		58		0.55		1.15
Interval (m) fromW	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to Eend 29**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.25	0.30	0.23	0.30	0.30	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.18	0.30	0.15	0.35	0.72	0.70	0.70

Top of Natural substratum	0.48	0.55	0.45	0.58	1.02	1.0	1.10
Base of trench	0.66	0.55	0.56	0.83	1.10	1.15	1.15

Figure 13: Trench 25 showing Ring Ditch (arrowed). Looking north.
2 metre scale

Trench 27

This trench was located between trench 26 and 28 and orientated north to south within Phase 1. The topsoil, sub-soil and substratum was the same as that in Trench 24. A single north to south furrow was located at south end of the trench. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 27							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
28	2.0		56		0.55		0.80
Interval (m) from N	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to S end 28**
Topsoil depth	0.35	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.22	0.30	0.25
Subsoil depth	0.60	1.0	0.88	0.40	0.30	0.20	0.15
Top of Natural substratum	0.95	1.30	1.18	0.70	0.52	0.50	0.40
Base of trench	1.05	1.30	1.18	0.70	0.55	0.60	0.40

Trench 28

Trench 28 was located orientated north to south approximately 40 metres from the southern boundary of Phase 1 and parallel to the eastern boundary. The topsoil, subsoil natural substratum was the same as that in trench 27. A furrow was noted crossing the trench on a north-south alignment. No features of archaeological origin were observed.

Trench 28							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
26	2.0		52		0.40		0.74
Interval (m) from N	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**26**	**to S end 26**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.36	0.28	0.24	0.20	0.22	
Subsoil depth	0.34	0.38	0.16	0.26	0.20	0.24	
Top of Natural substratum	-	-	0.44	0.50	0.40	0.46	
Base of trench	0.64*	0.70*	0.60	0.60	0.40	0.50	

*Denotes furrow

Trench 29

Trench 29 was orientated east-west and located 20 metres from the eastern boundary and 70 metres north of the southern hedgerow and River Wreake. The topsoil, subsoil natural substratum was the same as that in trench 27. Heavy bioturbation was present within the natural substratum but no other archaeological features were observed.

Trench 29							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
22	2.0		44		0.30		0.46
Interval (m) from W	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**22**	**to E end**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.26	0.25	0.38	0.30	0.30	

Subsoil depth	0.16	0.14	0.12	0.08	-	-	
Top of Natural substratum	0.46	0.40	0.37	0.40	0.30	0.30	
Base of trench	0.46	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.32	0.32	

Trench 30

Trench 30 was located to the west of and parallel to the north to south overhead power cables in Phase 2 of the development area. It had a moderate southwards slope and was orientated north-south. The topsoil and subsoil was the same as that in trench 25 while the natural substratum consisted of a light orange brown clayey-sand interspersed with orange brown gravels. Despite this trench targeting the northern extent of a possible ring ditch defined by cropmarks and geophysical survey, no archaeological features were observed. Heavy bioturbation was present within the natural substratum. Following weathering, a linear feature was observed at the south end of the trench. Trench 43 (see below) was extended to cross the feature [**104]**, excavation proved it to be a north to south furrow as seen in trench 32. A possible post-hole **[106]** proved on excavation to be disturbance.

Trench 30							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
30	2.0		60		0.43		0.72
Interval (m) from N	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to S end 30**
Topsoil depth	0.26	0.26	0.30	0.22	0.22	0.28	0.36
Subsoil depth	0.08	0.08	-	0.08	0.18	0.18	0.15
Top of Natural substratum	0.34	0.34	0.30	0.40	0.40	0.56	0.51
Base of trench	0.40	0.34	0.38	0.36	0.40	0.56	0.51

Trench 31

Trench 31 was located to the west of Trench 30, on an east-west orientation. This was excavated to determine the western extent of a ring ditch shown by cropmarks and geophysical survey. However as with trench 30, it proved negative for archaeological remains. Heavy bioturbation was present in the trench. The topsoil, subsoil and natural substratum was the same as that within trench 30.

Trench 31							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
30	2.0		60		0.45		0.60
Interval (m) from W	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**26**	**to E end 30**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.25	0.25	0.20	0.30	0.35	0.35
Subsoil depth	0.15	0.10	0.20	0.18	0.30	0.17	0.15

Top of Natural substratum	0.45	0.35	0.45	0.38	0.60	0.52	0.50
Base of trench	0.50	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.52	0.50

Trench 32

Trench 32 was located approximately 25 to 30 metres from the south-west corner of Phase 2 and aligned north-east to south-west. The natural substrata were the same as those seen in Trenches 30 and 31 and there were no archaeological features, with the exception of a single north to south aligned furrow.

Trench 32							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
27	2.0		54		0.46		0.65
Interval (m) from SW	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**27**	**to NE end**
Topsoil depth	0.26	0.24	0.30	0.26	0.30	0.30	
Subsoil depth	0.10	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.10	0.10	
Top of Natural substratum	0.36	0.36	0.42	0.37	0.40	0.40	
Base of trench	0.45	0.52	0.42	0.31	0.40	0.50	

Trench 33

Trench 33 revealed no archaeological features. Heavy bio-turbation continued well into natural. The natural substratum had the same consistency and colour but was slightly lighter in colour as with trench 32. Top and sub soil remained the same. No evidence of western side of crop mark.

Trench 33							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
28	2.0		56		0.44		0.65
Interval (m) from N	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to S end 28**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.20	0.24	0.20	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.24	0.17	0.22	0.25	0.20	0.08	-
Top of Natural substratum	0.54	0.45	0.58	0.44	0.44	0.28	0.30
Base of trench	0.54	0.50	0.60	0.65	0.55	0.44	0.35

Trench 34

Trench 34 was orientated east-west from the overhead power lines and was located just north-west of the ring ditch crop mark and north of the second undefined ring ditch. Both topsoil and subsoil were the same as that in trench 31, while the natural substratum consisted of a light orange brown clayey-sand with frequent gravel. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 34							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
30	2.0		60		0.65		0.90
Interval (m) from E	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to W end 30**
Topsoil depth	0.35	0.40	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.30	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.55	0.50	0.20	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.23
Top of Natural substratum	0.90	0.90	0.50	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.53
Base of trench	0.90	0.90	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.65	0.65

Trench 35

Trench 35 was orientated north-west to south-east and was positioned approximately 20 metres south-east of trench 35 immediately west of the power lines. The topsoil, subsoil and natural substratum were the same as those in trench 34. There were no archaeological features present.

Trench 35							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
15	2.0		30		0.50		0.60
Interval (m) from NW	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**	**To SE end**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.26	0.30	0.25	0.26	0.30	
Subsoil depth	0.20	0.15	0.06	0.14	0.25	0.10	
Top of Natural substratum	0.50	0.41	0.36	0.39	0.51	0.40	
Base of trench	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.56	0.62	0.60	

Trench 36

Trench 36 was located 20 metres north-west of trench 35 on top of the slope. The natural varied dramatically compared to trench 35 consisting of a light yellow/ grey firm clay. The topsoil consisted of a dark greenish grey soft silty-clay with sparse small pebbles with the colluvium subsoil consisting of a mid yellow brown soft silty-clay. A series of field drains of different types (slate, ceramic and gravel) crossed the trench on variable alignments. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 36							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
15	2.0		30		0.45		0.56
Interval (m) from NW	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**	**to SE end**
Topsoil depth	0.28	0.26	0.28	0.30	0.26	0.25	
Subsoil depth	0.17	0.10	0.14	0.12	0.18	0.12	

Top of Natural substratum	0.45	0.36	0.42	0.42	0.44	0.37	
Base of trench	0.45	0.46	0.46	0.56	0.48	0.50	

Trench 37

Trench 37 was located approximately ten metres the northern boundary and approximately 30 metres west of the power lines at the top of the slope on level ground. The topsoil, subsoil and the natural clay was similar to that in trench 36, although bands of light orange brown sandy-clay and gravel were also present. Like trench 36 field drains of different types crossed the trench on variable alignments. No archaeological features were present.

Trench 17							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
31	2.0		62		0.40		0.50
Interval (m) from S	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to N end 31**
Topsoil depth	0.25	0.30	0.28	0.25	0.30	0.26	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.20	0.12	0.06	0.12	-	0.16	0.10
Top of Natural substratum	0.45	0.42	0.34	0.37	0.30	0.42	0.40
Base of trench	0.45	0.50	0.40	0.42	0.40	0.50	0.50

Trench 38

Trench 38 was located approximately 20 metres west of and on the same alignment as Trench 37, within the arable field. The topsoil consisted of dark greenish grey soft silty-clay with sparse pebbles with subsoil a lighter yellowish brown with the same consistency. The natural clay substratum was the same as noted in the trench 37 with more field drains of the same alignment at the northern end. No archaeological features were present.

Trench 38							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
29	2.0		58		0.46		0.60
Interval (m) from S	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to N end 29**
Topsoil depth	0.26	0.28	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.20	0.18	0.10	0.20	0.25	0.22	0.20
Top of Natural substratum	0.46	0.46	0.35	0.45	0.50	0.47	0.50
Base of trench	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	0.55	0.60	0.60

Trench 39

Trench 39 was similar to trench 38 and located approximately 15 m from the northern boundary. The topsoil, subsoil and the natural clay was similar to that in trench 38. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 39							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
30	2.0		60		0.45		0.62
Interval (m) from S	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to N end 30**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.30	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.25	0.26
Subsoil depth	-	0.12	0.14	0.18	0.20	0.25	0.04
Top of Natural substratum	0.30	0.42	0.39	0.42	0.45	0.50	0.50
Base of trench	0.50	0.62	0.45	0.48	0.55	0.57	0.55

Trench 40

Trench 40 was located parallel to and approximately 35 metres west of trench 39, 15 metres south of the northern field boundary level ground. The topsoil, subsoil and the natural clay was similar to that in trench 38. A single field drain and various tree roots features was present. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 40							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
30	2.0		60		0.50		0.70
Interval (m) from S	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**to N end 30**
Topsoil depth	0.32	0.26	0.28	0.20	0.22	0.30	0.28
Subsoil depth	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.20	0.32	0.32	0.40
Top of Natural substratum	0.52	0.32	0.40	0.40	0.54	0.62	0.68
Base of trench	0.60	0.50	0.60	0.62	0.62	0.70	0.70

Trench 41

Trench 41 was located parallel to and approximately 35 metres west of trench 40. This trench formed the north-western extent of the evaluation of Phase 2 close to the entrance to the site from Hoby Road. The top and subsoil were the same as that in trench 40 with a light orange brown sandy-clay substratum with moderate gravel and rounded stones. The trench was at the foot of the slope and a thicker colluvium deposit was present. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 40				
Length (m)	**Width (m)**	**Area (sq. m)**	**Min. depth (m)**	**Max. depth (m)**
31	2.0	60	0.60	0.70

Interval (m) from S	0	5	10	15	20	25	to N end 31
Topsoil depth	0.40	0.30	0.18	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.30	0.40	0.20	0.18	0.20	0.30	0.20
Top of Natural substratum	0.60	0.70	0.38	0.43	0.50	0.60	0.50
Base of trench	0.65	0.70	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.65

Trench 42

Contexts: [100], (101), (102), (103), [110], (111)

Trench 42 was located across the ring ditch cropmark. The topsoil consisted of a mid brownish grey friable clean sandy-silt with occasional natural flint and small pebbles. The subsoil/colluvium consisted of a mid orange brown soft sandy-silt. The natural varied from mid orange brown sandy-clay with moderate small pebbles and flint at the west end to a light reddish / orange loose silty-sand to the east with occasional small pebbles. At the west end a well-defined part of the ring ditch **[100]** 1.13 metres wide was revealed. The sides were of a steep gradient breaking sharply with a maximum depth of 0.95 metres onto a flat base. The ditch contained three phase of deposition with the primary fill **(101)** representing a thick re-deposited natural substratum which slumped down from the eastern side of the ditch. This had a width of approximately 0.40 metres at the base with a maximum depth of 0.63 metres from the surface of the trench. The deposit consisted of a light orange/ yellow brown clay with lenses of brown silt. Moderate sub-rounded and rounded pebbles averaging 0.05m were present throughout the deposit. The secondary deposit **(102)** was consistent with the other un-excavated parts of the ring ditch observed and recorded in plan in the other three trenches over the cropmark. This consisted of a dark greyish brown soft clayey-silt with sparse rounded small pebbles averaging 0.02m to 0.05m with a thickness of 0.29m and width of 0.60m. Some worked flint was recovered throughout the upper ditch fill **(103)**. The deposit appears similar to the subsoil/ colluvium a mid greyish brown consisting of a soft clayey silt mostly showing in the north facing trench baulk. The deposit has an approximate thickness of 0.32 metres. Worked flint was recovered with a small sherd of Beaker pottery on the surface of the fill. At the east end of the trench the eastern side of the ring ditch **[110]** was located. This was heavily disturbed by animal burrowing together with recent agricultural activity. However the section did reveal a faint outline of the ditch **(111)** consisting of mid brownish grey loose sandy-silt. No finds were recovered.

Trench 42										
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**			
45	2.0		90		0.40		0.80			
Interval (m) from W	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**30**	**35**	**40**	**to E end 45**
Topsoil depth	0.25	0.28	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.30	0.30
Subsoil depth	0.15	0.18	0.16	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.40	0.30	0.30	0.25
Top of Natural substratum	0.40	0.46	0.46	0.44	0.46	0.48	0.74	0.64	0.60	0.55

Base of trench	0.40	0.60	0.58	0.53	0.51	0.48	0.75	0.80	0.80	0.70

Figure 14: Trench 42 showing Ring Ditch. Looking east.
2 metre scale

Figure 15: Trench 42 showing excavated Ring Ditch [100]. Looking south.

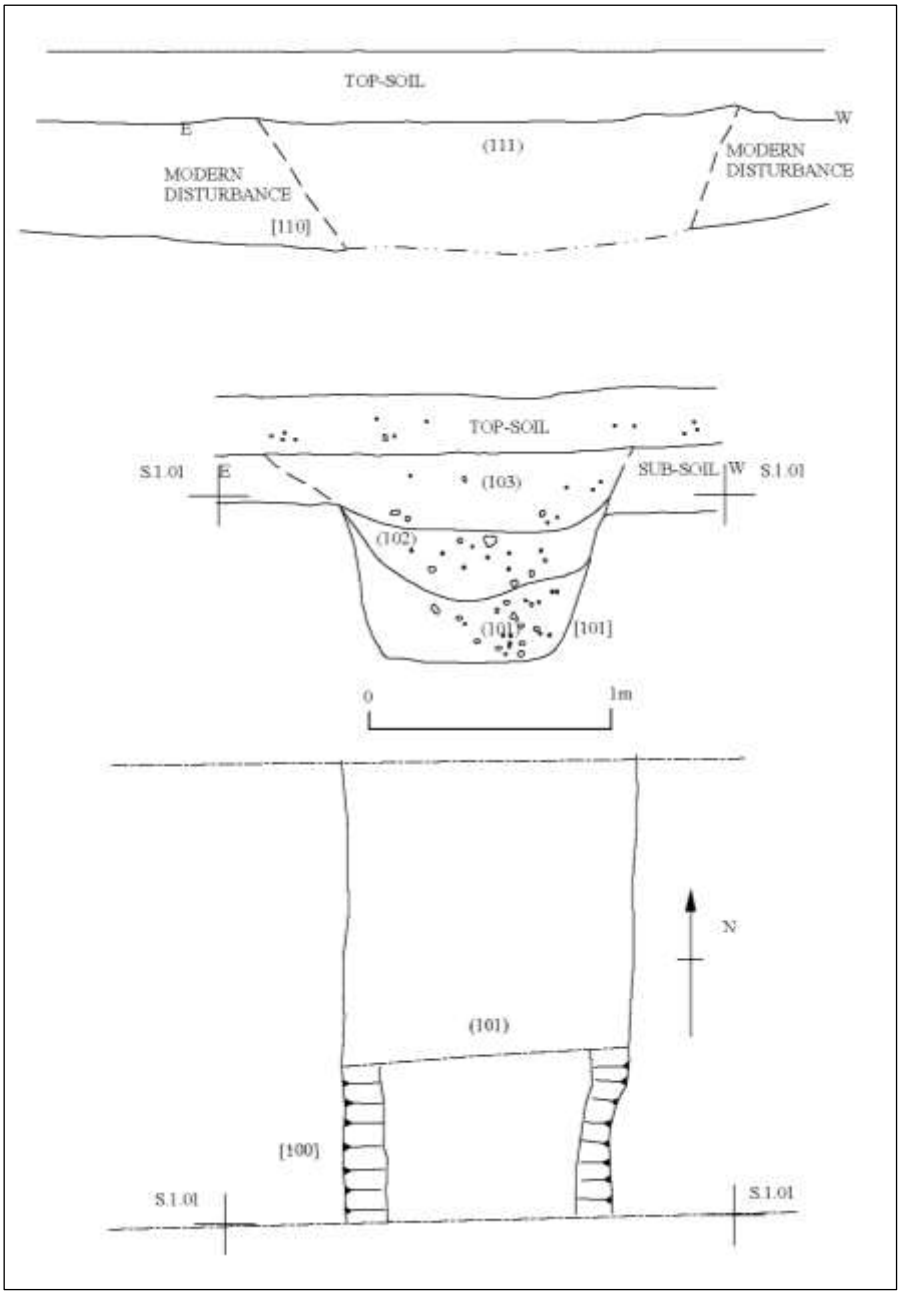

Figure 16: Trench 42 showing excavated Ring Ditch [100] machine slot (not fully excavated) [110]. 1 metre scale

Figure 17: Trench 42 showing machined excavated Ring Ditch [110] with modern disturbance. Looking south. 1 metre scale

Trench 43

Trench 43 was located over the possible second ring ditch cropmark and geophysical anomaly to the south-west. The topsoil, subsoil and substratum was similar to that in trench 30. The trench was oriented north-east to south-west but no archaeological features were located.

Trench 43							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
34	2.0		68		0.45		0.55
Interval (m) from NE	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**28**	**to SW end 34**
Topsoil depth	0.36	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.20	0.20	0.22
Subsoil depth	-	0.10	0.18	-	0.10	0.10	0.08
Top of Natural substratum	0.36	0.35	0.45	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30
Base of trench	0.50	0.52	0.48	0.55	0.50	0.30	0.30

Trench 44

Trench 44 was oriented north-west to south-east and situated north of trench 42. The topsoil consisted of a dark greenish grey soft clayey-silt with sparse small rounded

pebbles. The natural substratum consisted of a light orange brown sandy-clay with frequent gravel and small pebbles. Another well-defined section of curvilinear ring ditch was observed crossing the trench width. No other archaeological features were observed.

Length (m)	Width (m)		Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)
12	2.0		24		0.50		0.70
Interval (m) from SE	**0**	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**		**to NWend**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.28		
Subsoil depth	0.12	0.16	0.22	0.14	0.16		
Top of Natural substratum	0.42	0.46	-	0.44	0.44		
Base of trench	0.60	0.70	0.50*	0.52	0.54		

* Denotes depth to top of ring ditch

Trench 45

Contexts [108] & (109)

Trench 45 was aligned east to west and five metres north of trench 42 at the east end. This short nine metre trench was added to confirm the continuation of **[110]** found at the east end of trench 42. The topsoil consisted of a dark greenish grey soft clayey-silt with sparse small rounded pebbles with the subsoil of a mid yellowish brown soft sandy-silt. The natural substratum at the east end of the trench consisted of a very light orange brown loose fine sand. At the western extent of the trench, ring ditch **[108]** was observed cutting a light orange brown sandy clay. The feature was curvilinear with moderate to steep sides. In the south facing section/ trench baulk, the ditch deposit **(109)** was visible directly below the topsoil with an absence of subsoil/ colluvium. The deposit consisted of a mid reddish brown soft sandy-silt with a single worked flint found slightly penetrating the trench surface. No other archaeological features were observed.

Trench 45							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
9	2.0		18		0.48		0.80
Interval (m) from E	**0**	**2**	**4**	**6**	**8**	**9**	**to W end**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.28	0.24	0.26	0.28	0.24	
Subsoil depth	0.20	0.20	-	0.36*	0.24	0.10	
Top of Natural substratum	0.50	0.48	0.24	-	0.52	0.34	
Base of trench	0.80	0.75	0.48	0.62*	0.52	0.47	

*Denotes depth to ditch fill

Figure 18: Trench 44 showing ring ditch. Looking north-west.
1 metre scale

Figure 19: Trench 44 showing upper ring ditch deposit. Looking south-west.
1 metre and 0.30 metre scale

Figure 20: Trench 45 showing ring ditch. Looking east.
1 metre scale

Figure 21: Trench 45 showing partial excavation of ring ditch [108]. Looking south.
1 metre & 0.30 metre scale

Figure 22: Trench 45 showing partial excavation of Ring Ditch [108]. Looking north
1 metre & 0.30 metre scale

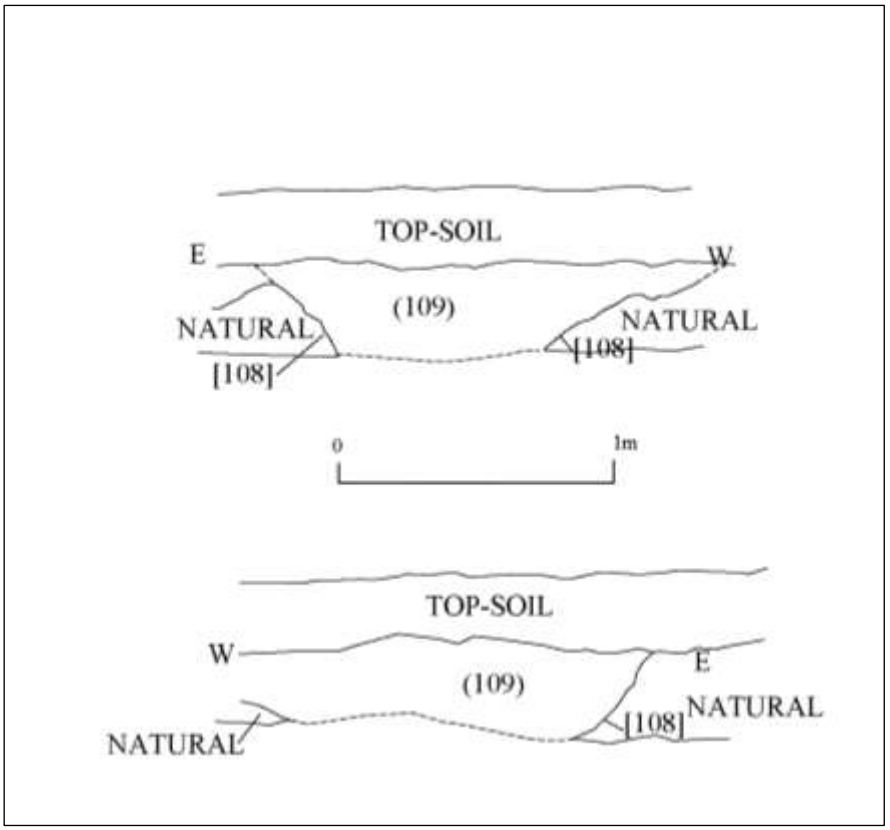

Figure 23: Trench 45 showing sections of partial excavation of ring ditch [108].

Trench 46

Trench 46 was aligned east to west and situated at the foot of the slope to the south-east of the site. The topsoil consisted of dark greenish grey soft silty-clay with sparse small rounded pebbles with a colluvium subsoil consisting of a mid yellowish brown soft silty-clay. Investigation of a linear feature continuing from trench 32 proved to be remains of a single north to south furrow. Two field drains were observed at the east end. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 46							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
25	2.0		50		0.40		0.55
Interval (m) from E	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**To W end**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.24	0.30	0.20	0.25	0.30	
Subsoil depth	0.20	0.16	0.18	0.18	0.15	0.10	
Top of Natural substratum	0.60	0.40	0.48	0.38	0.40	0.40	
Base of trench	0.50	0.45	0.48	0.55	0.40	0.48	

Trench 47

Trench 47 was aligned north to south and situated parallel to and approximately 20 metres from the western hedgerow and trackway/ footpath towards the south-east corner of the field. The topsoil and subsoil was similar to that in trench 46 but varied to a clayey silt. The natural substratum consisted of a light yellow/ orange brown soft sand clay and gravel. Two north to south aligned field drains were present. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 47							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
24	2.0		48		0.40		0.55
Interval (m) from S	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**To N end**
Topsoil depth	0.27	0.28	0.20	0.26	0.28	0.18	
Subsoil depth	-	-	0.10	0.14	0.10	0.18	
Top of Natural substratum	0.27	0.28	0.30	0.40	0.38	0.36	
Base of trench	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.40	0.38	0.36	

Trench 48

Trench 48 was aligned east to west and situated 22 metres east of the western hedgerow and trackway/footpath. The trench ran roughly parallel to the River Wreake approximately 90 metres to the south towards the south-east corner of the field. The topsoil, subsoil and natural substratum was the same as that in trench 47. Two north to south aligned furrows were identified otherwise no archaeological features were observed.

Trench 48							
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**		**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
24	2.0		48		0.40		0.60
Interval (m) from E	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**To W end**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.22	0.26	0.30	0.25	0.26	
Subsoil depth	0.10	0.14	0.06	0.20	0.14	0.34	
Top of Natural substratum	0.40	0.36	0.31	-	0.39	0.60	
Base of trench	0.40	0.46	0.46	0.50*	0.50	0.60	

Trench 49

Trench 49 was aligned north to south and situated parallel to and approximately 25 metres east of the western hedgerow and trackway/ footpath and 70 metres south of the north-west corner and gateway into the field. The topsoil, subsoil, and natural substratum was similar to that in trench 48. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 49						
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**	**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
25	2.0		50	0.50		0.90
Interval (m) from E	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**To W end**
Topsoil depth	0.30	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.30	0.30	
Subsoil depth	0.20	0.30	0.42	0.40	0.34	0.30	
Top of Natural substratum	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.64	0.60	
Base of trench	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.90	0.80	0.77	

Trench 50

Trench 50 was aligned east to west and situated 40 two metres from trench 49. The topsoil, subsoil, and natural substratum was the same as that in trench 49. A single field drain was identified at the west end of the trench. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 50						
Length (m)	**Width (m)**		**Area (sq. m)**	**Min. depth (m)**		**Max. depth (m)**
28	2.0		56	0.50		0.56
Interval (m) from E	**0**	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**	**To W end 28**
Topsoil depth	0.28	0.30	0.30	0.28	0.22	0.26	0.24
Subsoil depth	0.16	0.14	0.26	0.24	0.12	0.24	0.16
Top of Natural substratum	0.46	0.44	0.50	0.52	0.34	0.50	0.40
Base of trench	0.50	0.50	0.56	0.52	0.50	0.50	0.60

The Lithics Lynden Cooper

Twelve worked flints were recovered as detailed below. All displayed technological indications of hard hammer percussion suggesting a likely later prehistoric date.

Unstrat	Core
Unstrat	Flake fragment
101	2ry flake
102	2 x 3ry flake
102	3ry flake, burnt
102	2 x 2ry flake
102	Scraper

103	Serrated flake
105	Concave scraper
109	3ry flake

The Beaker pottery Nicholas J. Cooper

A single, abraded, body sherd (2g) from a toothed comb-decorated geometric Beaker was recovered from (102). The vessel was manufactured in a fabric opened with fine grog and sand (up to 1mm) (Leicestershire Fabric G2; Marsden 2011, 62, Table 1), an estimated diameter of 100mm and a body thickness of 5mm. The decoration comprises two horizontal rows of toothed comb with opposed oblique toothed lines between, forming a ziz-zag. The fabric and decoration are similar to the vessels from Loughborough Rd, Asfordby dating to 2210-2030 cal BC (Cooper 2012, 9-20, fig.12.13).

The Animal Bone Jennifer Browning

Bone fragments (n=18) from a sheep/goat maxilla were present in (105) [104]. Both left and right upper arcades are represented, including deciduous 4th premolar, 1st and 2nd molar, suggesting that the individual was sub-adult at time of death.

Conclusion

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land (Phase 2) south of Hoby Road, Asfordby, which will be the subject of a forthcoming planning application for residential development. Thirty trenches were excavated following on from a previous evaluation in Phase 1 Station Road which comprised of 20 negative trenches. The Phase 2 trenching was excavated across sloping terrain through a thick colluvium layer which was at its greatest depth at the foot of the slope towards the River Wreake.

Although the results of the evaluation were generally negative with only traces of furrows continuing from the evaluation in Phase 1, a well-defined ring ditch was located in the area previously identified from a cropmark and geophysical survey and complemented with previous artefactual recovery (Browning 2014). The single ring ditch revealed at Asfordby was approximately 30 metres in diameter. Later prehistoric flint from the surface close to the ring ditch probably derived from the ploughed-out burial mound (Browning, 2015).

A single section through the west side of the ring ditch recovered a similar small flint assemblage and a single small abraded sherd of Beaker pottery in the upper fills. The Beaker pottery of late Neolithic date is comparable to vessels found from Loughborough Road, Asfordby (Cooper 2012).

Other ring ditches from ploughed out barrows are known from the Wreake Valley, including full excavations of three barrows at Cossington (Thomas 2008) situated approximately 10 kilometres to the south of Asfordby with others regular spaced along the valley between Cossington and Asfordby.

The barrow appears to be isolated, the other cropmark/geophysical anomaly evidence proving negative, so may have been part of a dispersed cemetery once occupying a

relatively high promontory over the River Wreake less than 100 metres away to the south.

The balancing ponds proposed re-location away from the ring ditch will mean there will be no impact from the development.

Archive and Publications

The site archive, consisting of paper and photographic records, will be held by under the Accession Number XA138 2014.

The archive consists of:

- 50 trench recording sheets including Phase 1
- Photographic record indices
- 10 Context sheets
- Digital photographs
- Assemblage of struck flints (stratified) & (unstratified)

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Oasis Information

Project Name	Hoby Road, Asfordby
Accession Number	X.A138 2014
Project Type	Archaeological evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Jamie Patrick & Tim Higgins
Previous/Future work	Desk-based assessment, geophysical survey, fieldwalking
Current Land Use	arable/pasture
Development Type	Residential development
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	pre-determination
Site Co ordinates	NGR SK 70027 18729
Start/end dates of field work	23rd January 2017 to 1st February 2017
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	2.6 ha (ahalf the arable field and the pasture field.

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